

Pittsylvania County Public Library History Timeline

1913: The Chatham Library Association was organized by the Federation of Women's Clubs and the Rotary Club. The first library, staffed by volunteers, was located on the second floor of Thompson's Haberdashery.

1936: Home Demonstration Clubs established community libraries in Hurt, Weal and Callands.

1939: Mr. and Mrs. David Bruce donated a building equipped with books. From this and the 1500 books amassed by the Chatham Library Association, the free public library system of Pittsylvania County was born. The new library opened on August 30, 1939, with Miss Florence Fowlkes as librarian.

1940: The library's first bookmobile, a small covered truck holding 250 books, made its first run. Bookmobile service was provided through the federally funded Works Progress Administration (WPA) Statewide Library Project.

1943: The Pittsylvania County Public Library purchased the Bookmobile after the WPA proposed moving it to another area.

1964: The Gretna Town library "station" was organized and staffed by volunteers.

1965: The Gretna Town Library became part of the County library system.

1982: The Westover Branch Library was opened in June.

1984: The PPL Foundation was established as 501(c)3 nonprofit to support the library.

1988: Westover Branch library relocated to Oakes Store in Brosville after Annexation.

1990: The main library moved to its current headquarters on Military Drive in Chatham.

1992: New Brosville/Cascade library opened.

1999: The Gretna library moved into its current building on Coffey Street.

2006: The library inaugurated its newest and current Bookmobile, which makes approximately 60 stops throughout the county each month.

2008: The Mt. Hermon library opened.

2013: The History Research Center & Library opened as a joint project with the Pittsylvania Historical Society.

2018: The Mt. Hermon library moved to a larger county-owned building at 5048 Franklin Turnpike.

2019: Library Feasibility Study recommends three new library buildings of approximately 11,000 sf and renovations to existing buildings (Gretna, Chatham, Brosville). On August 20, 2019, the Board of Supervisors adopted Resolution 2019-08-02 Resolution on Library Expansion in Pittsylvania County, endorsing the findings of the Feasibility Study.

2021: Gretna library slated for renovation, expansion from 3900 sf to 6375 sf.

2023: Gretna library renovations complete. Indoor and outdoor

2024: Chatham library received new carpeting and renovations.

Chatham library received Danville Regional grant to create outdoor terrace

2024: Brosville library receives new carpeting

2024: BoS provides \$100,000 deposit for replacement bookmobile.

Note: Westover Branch Library and Annexation of County land by the City of Danville

1980 Annexation discussions started

1982 Pittsylvania County Public Library opens the Westover branch in leased space at 3104 Westover Drive (owned by Mrs. Thelma Lewis)

1980s -- discussions and mediations between City and County result in a 1986 Court Annexation Order that changed the boundaries of the annexation request. County assets within the original annexation area included 3 elementary schools, a branch library (Westover), several refuse receptacles, water lines owned by PCSA and 2 volunteer fire departments. The final annexation order included only 2 elementary schools and added Westover Hills and Bradley Road neighborhoods to annexed area and deleted the Mt. Hermon residential area and the Disston and Brockaway Glass companies.

The Court granted 26.83 square miles and 10,300 residents to Danville. It required the city to pay the county \$9.5 million over 5 years and assume payment of 23.5% of the county's debt. Also had to compensate the county for Coates and Glenwood Elementary Schools, contents and busses.

Of note (per Craver): "The Court required Danville to make capital improvements to the annexed area's sewers, waterlines, fire protection, park and recreational facilities, library facilities, roads and streets, street lighting, and schools."

Also per Craver, "In order to furnish the annexed area with library services, a branch of the Danville City Library was opened in a leased building that was located in the Westover Hills neighborhood in July 1988. By 1988, the City was renovating the Coates Elementary School, which had been closed after annexation because it required extensive repairs, to use as its new branch library. Two multi-use recreation centers were located at both annexed elementary schools in order to provide residents who lived in the annexed eastern and western sections of the city with recreational services. The Glenwood Recreation Center was built in 1992 and the Coates Recreation Center was built in 1993."

February 25, 1987, the PCPL Library Board of Trustees was considering options for Westover after annexation. Options included moving the branch into the county or shutting it down, but either option required budgeting.

June 30, 1987, the PCPL Library Board of Trustees was considering a proposal from the City of Danville to lease library services from the Westover Branch after annexation went into effect. The Board approved leasing services for up to 18 months at an annual rate of approximately \$30,000 (from Danville) and \$18,000 supplied by Pittsylvania County for operating costs.

August 21, 1987, the PCPL Library Board of Trustees was considering a proposal from the Brosville Ruritan Club to relocate the Westover Branch into Pittsylvania County.

December 1, 1987, the PCPL Library Board of Trustees authorized signing a lease with the City of Danville to lease library services to the City from the Westover Branch for six months with an option to review for six months.

January 13, 1988, the PCPL Library Board of Trustees approved a motion to move the Westover Branch to the Oakes Store site on Rt. 58 W after June 30, 1988 (and after building improvements were made to bring it to code).

April 13, 1988, the PCPL Library Board of Trustees reported that Mrs. Lewis had been notified that the lease on 3104 Westover Drive would be terminated on July 31, 1988, and that improvements to the Brosville site for the library were underway. The Ruritan Club would assist with moving the library contents and furnishings.

June 27, 1988, the Library Director informed the PCPL Library Board of Trustees that the Westover library would be vacated by July 31, 1988, and that the building owner had been informed.

July 1988 (per Carver) the Danville Public Library branch in Westover opened (at 94 Clifton Street)

March 7, 2013 WSET reports "Westover Library Faces Ax Again." The news story notes that the Westover branch has been proposed for closure for budget reasons over the two previous budget cycles as well as FY2014. "The library came into being as part of the 1988 agreement for the annexation of Westover Hills, and City Council members questioned last year whether the closing would break the agreement. King said Wednesday that legal counsel had advised the city that the obligation had been met, and the city was not required to keep the library open forever."