

History of the Belleville Public Library - Main Library

On July 17, 1836, the German Library Society of St. Clair County was founded at Dr. Anton Schott's farm in the Shiloh Valley. The library operated out of Dr. Schott's home until March 13, 1853 when the library moved to Belleville. The library was located in a room provided by the Belleville Literary Society in the Odd Fellows Hall (today known as the Brede Building).

In 1854 the library moved to the store of Messrs, Goedeking and Kircher. In 1861 the German Library Society merged with the Belleville Saengerbund Society under a charter obtained by the Illinois General Assembly in 1861. The Belleville Saengerbund and Library Society was located in the Eimer Building.

On February 5, 1883, the Belleville Saengerbund and Library Society dissolved and the Belleville City Council voted to take ownership of the collection and officially establish the Belleville Public Library.

On March 10, 1884, the Belleville Public library opened at the Union Engine House located on South Jackson St.

On September 21, 1892, the cornerstone for the building that would be used as both the library and City Hall was set. The library opened at this location on October 9, 1893.

On January 20, 1916, the Belleville Public Library opened at its current location on E. Washington St. The building was built with funds provided by the Carnegie Corporation.