



Library Closed

Wednesday & Thursday,
December 24 & 25, for
the Christmas holidays,
and on New Year's Day.



BEAUMONT LIBRARY DISTRICT

a California Special District,
independent of both city and county
government, providing library services
to Beaumont and Cherry Valley



December 2025

Library Receives \$10,000 Carnegie Grant To Mark 250th Anniversary of the U.S.A.

by Luren Dickinson, Director Emeritus

Between 1886 and 1917, Andrew Carnegie, one of the richest men in the world at the time, funded the construction of 1,681 public libraries in the U.S. Now, to mark the 250th anniversary of the United States, the Carnegie Corporation is granting \$10,000 to each library.

According to the *New York Times*, the Corporation's "staff has tracked down 1,280 of them, including roughly 750 that still occupy their original Carnegie buildings." Beaumont Library is one of the 750, and is the last in Riverside County occupying its original Carnegie structure.

"Dame Louise Richardson, the Irish political scientist who has been the president of the Carnegie Corporation since 2023," told the *Times* "that

(continued inside)

this was a moment when she wanted to promote what libraries do. 'Libraries are intrinsically democratic institutions,' she said before quoting Carnegie himself, who called libraries 'cradles of democracy' that 'strengthen the democratic idea.'"



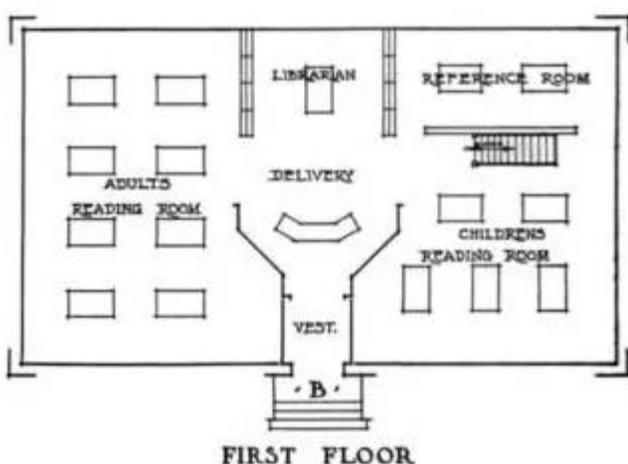
Andrew Carnegie (portrait on the left), a wealthy Pittsburgh steel magnate in the late 19th century, began funding the construction of public libraries in southwestern Pennsylvania in 1886. He began giving grants for public library construction to many communities across the U.S. in 1899.

He sold his company in 1901 at the age of 66 with the intent of giving away his money before he died.

Education and world peace were the major causes that he supported. Beaumont Library District was established by a public vote in 1911, the same year that the Carnegie Corporation was founded.

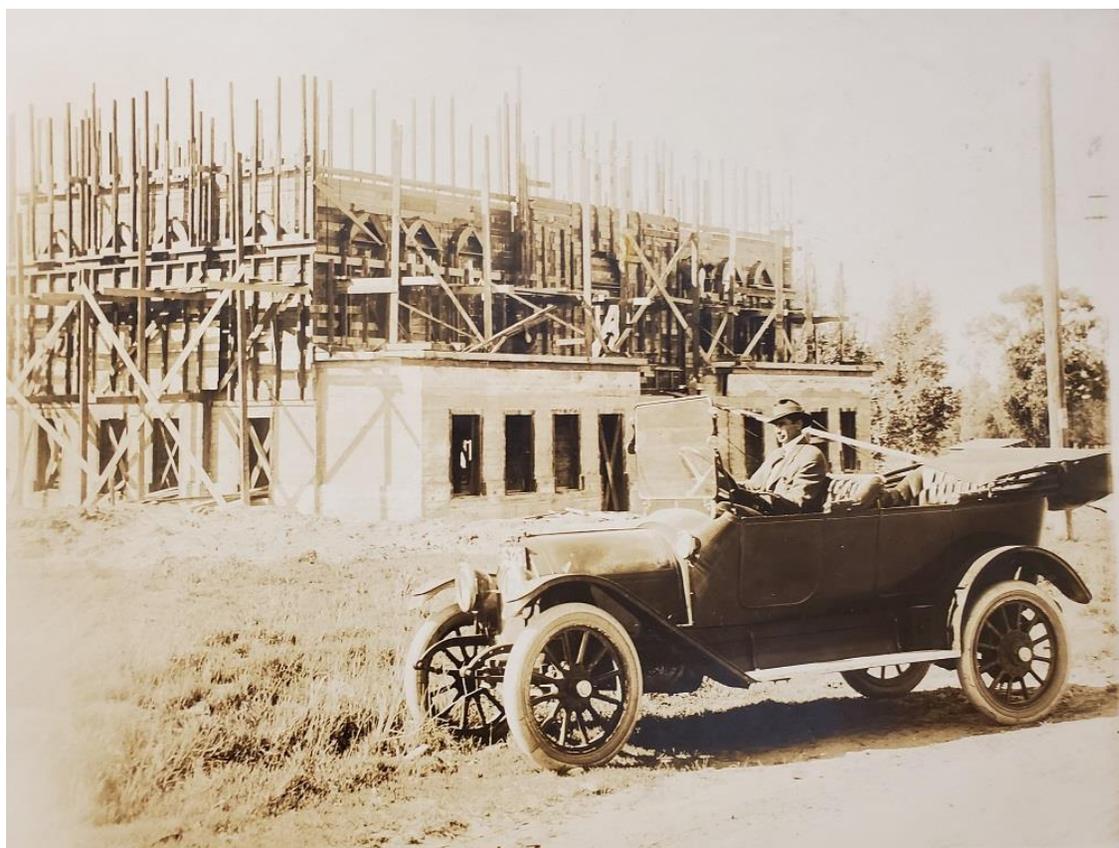
Many towns and cities received Carnegie grants through the efforts of women's groups, and our area was no exception because the Beaumont Woman's Club was instrumental in the founding of Beaumont Library District and in helping obtain a Carnegie grant of \$10,000 in 1913 to build a permanent home for the institution.

Carnegie's personal assistant, James Bertram (photo on the right), oversaw all of the public library grants. He made sure that property had been acquired, and that assurances were given that resources would be available to continue operating a library once it was built.



In addition, Bertram was very particular about the design of the libraries that Carnegie funded. About six basic concepts were allowed. The one chosen and modified for Beaumont is shown on the left with the "first floor" at the top of the staircase and the "basement" level below.

Construction began in January 1914, and the man who had the job of corresponding with Bertram was the first Secretary of the Library Board, William E. Baker. He is shown in the photo on the right at the wheel of, perhaps, a late model Maxwell



in front of the library as construction was proceeding in the spring of 1914. It is believed that the photo was taken by his daughter, Bertha. At the time there were no sidewalks, and the streets were unpaved!

Construction was completed quite quickly compared to today's standards and the library opened in June 1914. 111 years later we are in the process of expanding the library for the first time in sixty years while preserving and enhancing the original Carnegie portion.

The new south entrance to the expanded library facility (below right), is expected to be completed by June 2026, and the renovated Carnegie (below left), is expected to be completed by December 2026.



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To receive this newsletter automatically via email, please write to info@mybld.org and you can also request notices on programs for children, or teens and adults, through the same address.

Beaumont Library District

125 East Eighth Street

Beaumont, CA 92223

951-845-1357

mybld.org

Library Hours During Construction

Sunday—1 to 5 p.m.

Monday—10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Tuesday—10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Wednesday—1 to 5 p.m.

Thursday—10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Friday—10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Saturday—1 to 5 p.m.

Bookmobile Stops

Wednesdays—11 a.m., Chatigny—Storytime

Thursdays—11 a.m., Beaumont Presbyterian Church—Storytime

2:30 p.m., Liberty Village

3:30 p.m., Blossom Apartments

Saturdays—9 a.m., Mickelson Park

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