

# **Ida Public Library Records**

**Finding aid prepared by Jillian Fuller**

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This finding aid was produced using the Archivists' Toolkit

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Describing Archives: A Content Standard

Ida Public Library

10/03/2014

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Belvidere, IL, 61008

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Ida Public Library
<b>Title</b>	Ida Public Library Records
<b>Date [bulk]</b>	Bulk, 1885-1987
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1877-2014
<b>Extent</b>	10.5 Cubic feet
<b>Location note</b>	The Ida Public Library Records are stored in the library's Closed Stacks in: Document Boxes 1, 2, 3, and 4; Record Carton Box 1& 2; and Scrapbook Box 1.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Language of Materials note</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>This collection contains the records of the Ida Public Library Records from 1877-2014, but mostly from 1885-1987. The materials cover the founding of the library in 1885 and its growth and development over time. The records contain board minutes, financial ledgers, patron records, building construction documents, photographs, and scrapbooks, which all serve to document the history of the library and its role in the Belvidere community. The collection will be interesting to researchers interested in Carnegie libraries, small libraries, or Midwestern libraries, as well as anyone interested in Ida Public Library's history in particular.</p>

## Biographical/Historical note

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Belvidere's first library was in the form of a society called the Ladies' Library Society, organized sometime before the 1850s. It soon disbanded and another library society was formed in 1853, called the Belvidere Library Association. It also disbanded after a few years. The Ladies' Library Society was reformed in April 1874 when some original members came together to organize a new library initiative. After one year, the number of books collected by the Society totaled 354 and the society had reached 122 members, at a membership rate of one dollar a year. The library they set up operated on Saturdays from a store on North State Street. One member of the new library society was Ida Fuller Hovey.

Ida was born on 6 July 1859 in Belvidere, the daughter of General Allen C. and Candace Fuller. On July 6th 1878, she was married to Theron Adelbert Hovey in Belvidere. In the spring of 1883, Ida became sick with consumption. On August 6, 1883, Ida and her husband- with her father, a doctor, and two nurses- left Belvidere for the Fuller family's summer home in Bayfield, WI, with the hope that the climate at Lake Superior would improve Ida's health. However, Ida died several weeks later in Bayfield on August 22, 1883, at the age of 24. She was buried in the Belvidere Cemetery on August 25. Her father, Allen Fuller wrote to the Mayor and City Council of Belvidere on October 5, 1883, stating his wish to donate \$5,000 for the purpose of establishing a public library in Belvidere in memory of his daughter, Ida. This request was accepted and the Ida Library came into being.

Ida Public Library's first books included volumes from the Belvidere Ladies Library Society, as well as those selected and purchased by a select committee; at opening, Ida Library's collection included 6,813 books. City Council provided a room for the new library on the second floor of the new City Hall building on South State Street, which is now the fire station. The grand opening of the library took place on July 25, 1885. The room consisted of four cases of bookshelves, a reading table, and a librarian's desk and was furnished with plush curtains, chandeliers, and a portrait of Ida Hovey. The first librarian was Mary Crandall, who served as director of the Ida Library until 1912.

The room in City Hall soon became crowded, as more books were added to the collection and more patrons used the library. By 1897, the Board of Directors began debating ways to expand the library. In 1909, two board members requested help from Andrew Carnegie, the steel baron and philanthropist who was providing funds to construct libraries across the United States. In April 1910, funds were enlisted from Mr. Carnegie, who agreed to "give \$17,500 to erect a free public library building in Belvidere." After obtaining land on the corner of North State and Madison Street, construction began on the new building, which had been designed by architect Patton & Miller of Chicago. The contractor was Calvin O. Lewis and the masonry contractor was S.E. Griffith.

The grand opening of the Ida Public Library building took place on February 12, 1913. This space served the library well for about as the collection and patron circulation grew. In 1927, the board voted that the Ida Public Library become a member of ALA (the American Library Association). In 1939, the first summer reading program for children was started, with 176 children signed up. During the 1940s and 1950s, changes in the building took place, including the installation of an upstairs restroom and new lighting. In 1969, a Children's Room was created downstairs in what is today the Emmett and Bessie

Sullivan Meeting Room. Ida Public Library became a member of NILES (Northern Illinois Library System) in 1970.

On October 2, 1983, the library celebrated its 100th anniversary with an “open house.” At this time, it was becoming obvious that the library was again facing overcrowding. In 1981, the Board of Directors had voted to purchase the property immediately behind the library at 112 West Madison Street. In the November 1985 election, residents of Belvidere voted to approve funding for the building expansion. With this, the way was clear to receive the state grant necessary to start building a new addition. June 11, 1985 was the date of the groundbreaking. Throughout construction, the library remained open to its patrons. Moving day took place on February 21, 1987. On June 7, 1987, a dedication ceremony was held for the new addition, with over 500 people in attendance. Today, Ida Public Library continues to grow and serve the community of Belvidere.

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## Scope and Contents note

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The Ida Public Library Records document the growth and development of the library from its beginning in 1885 through the present day, as well as a few materials from the library’s precursor in the 1870s. The collection documents the construction of the library building from 1911-1913 and the construction of an addition from 1983-1985, and contains significant information on the daily and yearly operations of the library. The collection has been divided into four series: Administrative Records, Library Operation, Library Building Projects, and Scrapbooks and Promotional Materials.

The Administrative Records series provides an in-depth examination of the monthly and yearly management of the Ida Public Library. The records date from 1885-1986, but the bulk of the records are from 1885-1948. They include a complete run of board meeting minute books from 1885 through 1948, financial ledgers from 1885-1925, the 1986 Policy Statement, and a few documents concerning building maintenance from the 1980s. One board minute book contains a few loose forms and financial reports from the 1940s which have been kept in them. The meeting minutes include the official establishment of the library and the first library by-laws written in 1885. Of particular note are the meeting minutes from 1910-1913, in which the decision to construct a library building, the effort to obtain funds from the Carnegie Corporation, and information on the building’s construction are detailed.

The materials held by the Ida Public Library and the patrons who used the library are documented in the Library Operation series, dating from 1881-1993, but primarily from 1885-1953. These records offer a glimpse of how the library was used and what the library offered the community. The series contains five ledger books of borrower records titled from 1885-1953. These provide the name and residence of patrons receiving library cards, as well as the date of transaction. The series also contains records on the library’s collection, including shelf lists; accession catalog books from 1885-1926; finding lists and supplements published by the Daily Republican from 1892-1912; and notebooks of media accessions from 1955-1993. Also included in this series are records from the original Belvidere Ladies Library

Society in the 1870s, including two books from their collection, several copies of their 1877 catalog and 1879 catalog supplement, and lists of their patrons from 1881-1883.

The third series, Library Building Projects, is the largest in the collection and includes records regarding several significant construction projects for the library. This series has been broken into two subseries: Original Building Construction and Addition Construction.

The Original Building Construction subseries, dating from 1911-1913, details the planning and construction of the Ida Public Library building on the corner of State and Madison Street. The series includes work contracts, building reports, account books, property deeds, payment slips, the published dedicatory exercises, and letters to and from the architect's firm, Patton & Miller. Of special note in this series are the original blueprints of the building, as well as a few letters from the Carnegie Corporation, from which funds were obtained for the construction of the building.

The Addition Construction subseries from 1983-1985 documents the planning, design, and construction of the addition to the library building, as well as the grant-writing process which allowed the library to gain funds for a new addition. A substantial part of this subseries is grant documentation for the "Build Illinois" Project Funds, including several copies of two rounds of applications- one from 1985, which was rejected due to lack of a referendum, and another from 1986, which was accepted. Correspondence, evaluation forms, and financial papers such as invoices and financial reports are also included. Records relating to the Rose/Orr architectural firm is part of the subseries as well, including building and landscape plans and the portfolio for the architectural office of Rose Associates in Madison, WI, which was the office that opened upon the closing of the Rose/Orr firm. Finally, records relating to the construction of the addition, such as work orders, correspondence, permits, receipts, financial records, and two photo albums provide a record of the construction process from 1986-1988.

Finally, the Scrapbooks, Promotional Materials, and Ephemera series contains ephemeral documents related to the activities and history of the library from the 1880s-2008, with the bulk of the material from the 1950s-1990s. The series documents important events in the library's history; in addition, many of the documents contain information about the library's history and current statistics. Included are photographs of the library and staff members, postcards, brochures, two reports about the Ida Public Library by library science students, flyers, a letter from Edward Sabin- former janitor, eight scrapbooks of newspaper clippings from 1955-1997, programs and mementoes from events and anniversary celebrations, and the Ida-Lites newsletter from 1987-1996. Of particular note is an original photograph of Ida Fuller Hovey taken sometime before 1883, books containing the speeches made at the library building's opening in 1913, as well as photographs of the library building's interior in its early years, perhaps when it first opened in 1913.

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## Arrangement note

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The Ida Public Library Records are arranged into 4 series: Administrative Records; Library Operation; Library Building Projects; and Scrapbooks, Promotional Materials, and Ephemera.

## Administrative Information

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### Publication Information

Ida Public Library 10/03/2014

### Conditions Governing Access note

The materials are housed in the library's Closed Stacks but are available to patrons; please inquire with staff for access.

### Conditions Governing Use note

No restrictions.

### Custodial History note

The materials in this collection have been continuously owned and retained by the Ida Public Library throughout the years of its history.

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## Controlled Access Headings

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### Genre(s)

- Correspondence
- Financial records
- Images, Photographic
- Ledgers (account books)
- Minute books
- Photograph albums
- Photographs
- Scrapbooks

### Geographic Name(s)

- Belvidere (Ill.)- History

**Personal Name(s)**

- Fuller, Allen C., 1822-1901
- Hovey, Ida (Fuller), 1859-1883

**Subject(s)**

- Carnegie libraries- Illinois
- Public libraries- Illinois- Histories



## Collection Inventory

### **Administrative Records 1885-1986 (Bulk, 1885-1948)**

Board Minute book, 1885-1912

Board Meeting Minutes ledger, 1885-1917

Financial Ledger, 1885

Financial Ledger, November 1885

Treasurer's Book, 1885-1925

Trustee Meeting Notes book, 1912-1923

Board Meeting Minutes, August 1919-1948

Administrative Documents, 1940s, & Policy Statements, 1986

Work Orders & Invoices, 1982-1983

### **Library Operation 1881-1993 (Bulk, 1885-1953)**

Belvidere Ladies Library Society books, circa 1870s

Library Operation

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Belvidere Ladies Library Society Catalog and Supplement, 1877, 1879

Belvidere Ladies' Library Society List of Subscribers, 1881-1883

Accession Catalog ledger, July 1885-May 1899

Register of Borrowers ledger, August 1885-April 1906

Finding Lists and Supplements, 1892-1898

Accession Catalog ledger, May 1899-1926

Finding Lists and Supplements, 1901-1906

Finding List Supplement, 1906

Register of Borrowers ledger, August 1906-March 1919

Finding List Supplement, 1908

Finding List Supplement, 1910

Finding Lists, 1912

Register of Borrowers ledger, April 1919-October 1931

Register of Borrowers, November 1931-April 1945

## Library Building Projects

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Register of Borrowers, April 1945-June 1953

Accession Notes (A/V Materials), 1955-1993

List of Books, undated

List of Books, undated

Shelf List of Books, undated

Shelf List of Books, undated

News Clippings

### **Library Building Projects 1911-1913, 1983-1985**

#### **Original Building Construction 1911-1913**

Construction Documents, 1911-1913

Construction Documents, 1911-1913

Building Blueprints, 1912

Plans and Specifications, 1912

**Addition Construction**

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**Addition Construction 1983-1988**

Library Consultant Correspondence, 1983-1984

Rejected State Construction Grant Documentation, 1985

Grant Application Materials, 1985-1986- Folder 1

Grant Application Materials, 1985-1986- Folder 2

Grant Application Materials, 1985-1986- Folder 3

Architect Pre-Bid Cost Estimates and Project Schedules, 1985-1986

Legal Documentation and Correspondence, 1985-1987

Correspondence with Architectural Firm, 1985-1988

Job Progress Reports, 1985-1988

Job Notes, 1986-1987

Architect Post-Bid Cost Control, 1986-1987

Photo Albums (2), 1986-1987

Accepted State Construction Grant Documentation, 1986-1988

Scrapbooks, Promotional Materials, and Ephemera

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Construction Correspondence and Financial Records, 1986-1988

Construction Permits and Financial Records, 1986-1989

Rose Associates/Architects Portfolio, 1988

Architectural Plans, undated

**Scrapbooks, Promotional Materials, and Ephemera 1880s-2014; bulk, 1950s-1990s**

Anniversary Materials 1983, 2008

*Dedicatory Exercises of Building Presented by Andrew Carnegie to the City of Belvidere, Illinois for Ida Public Library* book, February 1913

**Existence and Location of Copies note**

There are 4 copies of this item; all are located in Pamphlet Box 3.

Ephemera

Guest Register, 100th Anniversary Open House, October 2, 1983

Ida-Lites Newsletter, 1987-1990

Ida-Lites Newsletter, 1991-1993

Ida-Lites Newsletter, 1994-1996

Scrapbooks, Promotional Materials, and Ephemera

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Ida-Lites Newsletter, 1997-1999

Letter from Edward Potter Sabin, 1974

Library Addition Promotional Materials and Programs, 1985-1987

Photographs

Report on Ida Public Library, 1973

Scrapbook, 1955-1961

Scrapbook, 1961-1971

Scrapbook, 1972-1976

Scrapbook, 1976-1980

Scrapbook, 1981-1985

Scrapbook, August 1984-June 1986

Scrapbook, June 1986-August 1987

Scrapbook, August 1987-December 1997

Seminar Paper (bound) on the Ida Public Library, 1984