



THE MONTANA HISTORY
FOUNDATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Blaine County Library Welcomes Carnegie Libraries Traveling Exhibit

The [Blaine County Library](#) is pleased to welcome a traveling exhibit on Montana's Carnegie libraries from July 1-17. The exhibit is part of a year-long celebration of the libraries in connection with the release of the book [The Best Gift: Montana's Carnegie Libraries](#).

Residents are invited to come learn more about the history of Montana's 17 Carnegie libraries, which were built across the state at the turn of the 20th century with the help of funding provided by Andrew Carnegie.

In Chinook, members of the Women's Study Club wrote to the Carnegie Corporation in 1916 to ask about funding for a library. Carnegie Secretary James Bertram responded with instructions and the group went to work. They secured lots on which to build the library and canvassed the county for the necessary signatures to place the library tax before voters. It was not an easy task, but the group got the measure on the ballot and it passed in the fall of 1916. Two years later, the Carnegie Corporation approved \$15,000 for the project. Several years of setbacks and financial hardships followed before the Blaine County Library officially opened in January of 1922. The Carnegie building served the Chinook community as its library for 54 years.

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In *The Best Gift: Montana's Carnegie Libraries*, author Kate Hampton brings each of the libraries' stories to life, showing how they impacted communities. Captivating photographs by Tom Ferris transport us to the libraries' doorsteps and within. New York Times bestselling author Jamie Ford of Great Falls provides the forward, sharing his memories on the role libraries have played in his life. The traveling exhibit highlights the importance of libraries, the financial contributions Carnegie made to help build them, their individual architectural styles and the significant role of Montana women.

The Montana Carnegie libraries traveling exhibit will be on display at the Blaine County Library, 112 4th St. W., Chinook, from July 1-17. For more information, please contact library director Valerie Frank, at (406) 357-2932.

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