



**THE MONTANA HISTORY**  
FOUNDATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Phillips County Library Welcomes Carnegie Libraries Traveling Exhibit**

The Phillips County Library is pleased to welcome a traveling exhibit on Montana's Carnegie libraries from now until June 30th. 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 Malta, it was 1916 when a signature gathering effort got underway in order to garner the necessary support to create a county library. That effort was based on the County Library Law, which was created a year earlier. The law required 20-percent of county taxpayer signatures to create a library and Phillips County they succeeded. Around the same time, organizers also pursued a Carnegie gift for the library building. Carnegie Secretary James Bertram offered them \$15,000 in December of 1916. The Phillips County Library would become the state's first purpose-built county library when it opened on January 9, 1918. The building would house the Phillips County Library for the next 60 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 Phillips County Library, 10 S. 4th St. E., Malta, from now until June 30th. For more information, please contact library director Janeen Brookie, at (406) 654-2407.

The exhibit is made possible by the [Montana History Foundation](http://www.mthistory.org), with generous funding provided by Tom and Barbi Donnelley (The Donnelley Foundation) and BNSF.

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