



THE MONTANA HISTORY
FOUNDATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Havre-Hill County Library Welcomes Carnegie Libraries Traveling Exhibit

The Havre-Hill County Library is pleased to welcome a traveling exhibit on Montana's Carnegie libraries from July 18-31. 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 Havre, the library was first organized by the Women's Club in 1904. They operated each afternoon and evening from a basement room in the Security Bank, but it wasn't long before they outgrew that space and moved to city hall in 1907. In 1911, the city approved ongoing funding for the library, which included hiring the city's first paid librarian, Lillian Hammond. At the same time, the Havre Women's Club began the process to try to secure a Carnegie library building. Havre was offered a grant of \$12,000 by Secretary James Bertram in March of 1914 and the building opened in November of that same year. The building served as Havre's library for the next 72 years. In 1986, the Havre-Hill County library moved to its current location and today the original Havre Carnegie has been repurposed as the Old Library Gallery by Kathy Shirilla.

In *The Best Gift: Montana's Carnegie Libraries*, author Kate Hampton brings each of the libraries' stories to life, showing how they impacted communities.

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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 Havre-Hill County Library, 402 3rd St. #3644, Havre, from July 18-31. For more information, please contact library director Rachel Rawn, at (406) 265-2123.

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