

EARLY HISTORY OF THE ALAMOSA CARNEGIE LIBRARY

May 11, 1946

Alamosa had a library in the early 1900's. It was maintained in a room over the fire house and was supported by membership fees and quarterly dues. Members of the Current Events Club and other town women volunteered their services as librarians, keeping the reading room open every afternoon from two to five and every evening except Sunday.

Early in 1908 a movement was started to obtain a library building. Mr. George S. Darley, Presbyterian Minister, and the Reverend Harrison, rector of the Episcopal Church, were appointed to choose a site for the library building. Andrew Carnegie had agreed to erect a \$6,000 library building in Alamosa as shown in the following resolution recorded in the files of the City Clerk of Alamosa under date of July 1, 1908.

-RESOLUTION-

BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Trustees of the Town of Alamosa that whereas the Hon. Andrew Carnegie has signified his willingness to erect and construct a library in the Town of Alamosa, Colorado, to cost \$6,000.00, provided the town will levy tax of 10 per cent of the cost of the building, annually, to maintain same.

WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the Board of Trustees of the Town of Alamosa that said Town shall levy a tax of two mills for its maintenance for the year of 1908 which said two mills is equal to the sum of \$600 and that said Town pledges itself to make a levy each and every year thereafter for the said amount of \$600.

Adopted as read, unanimously.

McDonald	Shone
Swanson	Lahrnen
Sundquist	Emperius.

Trustees.

On May 6, 1908, a motion was passed by the Town Trustees that "the Baptist location - the North 50 feet of Lots 1, 2, 3, and 4 in Block 40 be selected for the library, providing they furnish a warranty deed for the same, without expense to the Town."

This challenge was accepted by Mr. Darley and Mr. Harrison and other members of the Library Association and in a swift campaign of two weeks the sum of \$605 was raised, the Baptist lots were paid for and the Town was given the warranty deed.

Wes Cole was given the contract to build the library after submitting his plans to Andrew Carnegie.

By October 1909 the building was progressing so far that the Town Trustees were worrying about how much money was left from the contribution, if there would be enough left of the \$6,000 to pay for a heating plant and furniture.

At the December 1909 meeting of the Town Council the Library Committee reported that Wes Cole had been paid \$5796.50 and that the balance of \$203.50 had been placed to the credit of the Library Fund.

The formal opening of the new library was held February 24, 1910. There was a reception, with music and refreshments and a book shower. The Alamosa Courier report of February 25, 1910, records that the library already had about 1000 volumes and it was hoped that 1000 more would be added from the book shower. The heating plant must have been adequate. The newspaper report said "In spite of cold weather the rooms were well heated and comfortably furnished". The balance of \$203.50 must have expanded like the widow's cruse of oil.

Mrs. Bertha E. Roberts was appointed the first librarian with a monthly salary of \$45.00. The first book was cataloged February 8, 1910, and was Oliver Wendell Holmes' "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table."

This data was compiled by Mrs. W. W. Platt, Secretary of the Library Board of the Alamosa Carnegie Library.

Caroline A. Platt  
Mrs. W. W. Platt, Secretary.

