

WISCONSIN LIBRARY HERITAGE CENTER

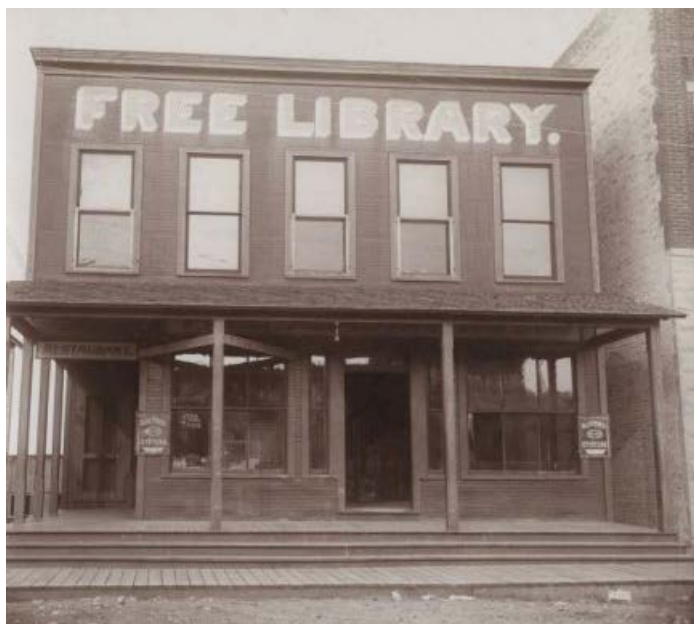


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Wausaukee's First Free Library

Posted by Larry Nix on Tuesday, January 19, 2010 in [Library buildings](#)

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[Harlan P. Bird](#) (1838-1912) made his fortune in the lumber business in Northeastern Wisconsin. In 1902 he established the Wausaukee Free Library from his own funds in the hope that it would prove "sufficiently popular to draw from places of evil resort." He was elected as a [state senator](#) in 1902 and served two terms in the legislature. He served as President of the Wisconsin Library Association in 1904-1905. The library was part of a "social hall" that also included a reading-room, lunch and dining room, and amusement room. Unfortunately the venture proved to be too costly and Senator Bird abandoned this experiment. The image above is [WHi-65460](#) from the [Wisconsin Historical Images collection](#) and is part of a [collection of public library photographs](#) from the Wisconsin Free Library Commission. Wausaukee is now served by the [Wausaukee Branch](#) of the Marinette County Consolidated Public Library Service.

Tags: [Library People](#)

Comments

Larry Nix Friday, January 22, 2010

THE WISCONSIN LIBRARY HERITAGE CENTER IS A PROGRAM OF THE WISCONSIN LIBRARY ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION PROMOTING UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION OF THE HISTORY OF LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANSHIP IN WISCONSIN.

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Brian, thanks for sharing this information with me. Feel free to link to my site. It's nice to see a history page on a community website. Best wishes, Larry

[Reply](#)

Brian Hartnell Friday, January 22, 2010

Just found your site and the historical info on the library from one of my sources. The web site www.wausaukee.com has this image and the stories supporting Harlan P Bird on our Village Website Historical section. I would like to link your site to assist others interested in library history. After Bird shut down the library, he donated all the volumes to the school which burned to the ground a few years later, all books and school property were a loss. The school did recover and to this day our library is located in the downtown Wausaukee Village, doing very well and serving the needs of readers, with computers, lectures, and video/audio tape materials.

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Larry Nix Thursday, January 21, 2010

Caroline, thanks for commenting on the post and sharing your connection with Wausaukee and Marinette County. Larry

[Reply](#)

Caroline McMahon Unick Thursday, January 21, 2010

Dear Larry,

There is such a thing as serendipity!

I was just browsing the Chatham Libraries website and saw your page. I saw the link for the WI Library Heritage Center and clicked on the Wausaukee link.

Wausaukee is my hometown and had no library all the while I lived near there on a farm. Sometime in the 40's we did become a stop for the Marinette County Bookmobile.

Currently, there is a library which has recently moved to a historic building on main street. The residents feel very lucky to have a library at all since the population is around 600 persons, as it was when I was growing up. (I was born in 1938)

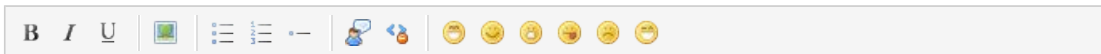
Thank you for maintaining this website.

Caroline Unick

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Guest Saturday, February 03, 2018



Library People Delia

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