

## Celebrating 100 Years of Public Library Service Sulphur Springs Public Library

Since February 27, 2000 Sulphur Springs Public Library has resided at its newest location at 611 North Davis Street, providing service to well over 100,000 patrons annually throughout Sulphur Springs and Hopkins County. The original Carnegie Library on Oak Avenue was one of 31 libraries in Texas funded by the Andrew Carnegie Foundation. Mr. Carnegie gave \$645,000 to 31 Texas communities for public libraries in various amounts ranging from gifts of \$5,000 up to \$37,500 an amount donated to El Paso Public Library. It has been stated that on January 9, 1910 Carnegie gave \$12,000 to the Sulphur Springs Public Library toward the construction of the facility and Citizens of Sulphur Springs donated the lot, known as the “Warren High School Lot” on Depot Street, which later became known as Oak Avenue. On November 19, 1910 the City of Sulphur Springs officially accepted the new Carnegie Library whereby the Waverly Club donated 500 books for its patrons. At the dedication was Miss Effie Brinker, its first librarian.

In 1966 J.E. Payne, a former Mayor of Sulphur Springs, suggested that the old post office be bought for a new library. Thus, the Carnegie facility was sold by the city to the Banks Company, a business dealing in the sale of appliances, in June of 1966 and was later donated to First Baptist Church. In May of 1977 as part of the Sulphur Springs spontaneous urban renewal program, the Carnegie Library was demolished in order to make way for a new parking lot for First Baptist Church.

In November 1967 the Library was moved to the former United States Post Office building located at 201 North Davis. The Post Office building which was originally constructed in 1912-1914 was remodeled for use as the Public Library. Several changes in the original floor plan were eventually made. Among the most noticeable was the removal of the wall, which ran north and south just behind the Davis Street vestibule. All that remained of that wall were the columns with marble bases. Another change was the addition of a second story balcony with an additional staircase. This was to allow for more bookshelves and work areas for the expanding collection. For the most part, the original bronze hinges, doorknobs, staircase railing, ornate woodwork, and plaster remain intact.

This year the library will celebrate 100 years of service with *Books, Bytes, and Beyond* a centennial celebration March 1-5. Please join us for this weeklong event which will include an art exhibit, book sale, book talk and dessert sampler. For more information contact Sulphur Springs Public Library at 903-885-4926 or see our website at [www.sslibrary.org](http://www.sslibrary.org).

### Historical references:

1. The Handbook of Texas Online, retrieved on January 28, 2010 at <http://tshaonline.org/handbook.online/articles/CC/I;cc.html> for Carnegie Libraries.
2. History of Sulphur Springs Public Library by Mrs. Carolyn Tuley, July 20, 1979.
3. Source material for “Today in History” collected for Mr. Bill Bradford by Ms. June Tuck retrieved on January 13, 2010.