



## Bedford Public Library System's Historical Timeline

**November 30, 1900**

*Women's Library Association of Bedford founded, and library was established in a two-room office building on Bridge Street. Initial subscription rate was \$1.00.*

**1914**

*Original building expanded.*

**1941**

*Association shares cost of construction of new library with Town of Bedford. Following years of increasing financial support from the Town of Bedford, the Association votes to transfer its assets to the Town. New building constructed next to the old building, which is moved and used as residence.*

**1942**

*New building opened to public. The first building built as a library in the Bedford area, it served until 1993, when it closed for renovation and expansion.*

**1950's**

*The Bedford Public Library develops a reputation for excellence in the state, based on financial support, patron registration, collection size and circulation figures.*

**1968**

*Following years of discussion of the critical space needs of the library and possible plans for expansion, the City purchases the Louise Wharton house next door. This historic house serves as the Children's Library from 1969 until 1995.*

**1969**

*Bedford County and City of Bedford sign library services contract to share operating costs based on patron registration figures.*

**1970's**

*Forest, Moneta and Huddleston library stations open; Huddleston later closes. Library space needs become critical again.*

**1981**

*Bedford County and the City of Bedford sign a contract to establish a regional library system.*

**1982**

*Big Island, Montvale and Stewartsville stations open; Montvale later closes.*

**1984**

*Book van services begins.*

**1987**

*Forest station moves to new, larger location and becomes first Branch.*

**1989**

*New bookmobile is placed in service.*

**1988**

*Bedford Public Library Foundation, Inc. established to raise and receive funds for construction of Big Island library facility.*

**1989**

*Moneta station moves to larger quarters and becomes Branch. Big Island Branch library is built by students at Bedford Educational Center and placed on campus of Big Island Elementary School. The Big Island Branch of the Bedford Public Library opens to the public on October 15, 1989. Construction and furnishing is funded by public-private partnership, including Bedford County, local businesses and individuals.*

**1991**

*Stewartsville station moves to larger facility and becomes Branch.*

**1991**

*Bedford Public Library Foundation, Inc. begins capital fund raising campaign for construction of new library in Bedford.*

**1993**

*Construction begins on new library in Bedford, to encompass, renovate and greatly expand the 1942 building.*

**May, 1995**

*Library board adopts new name and logo, containing a stylized representation of the 1942 building and the words "Bedford Public Library System" in contemporary outward-facing type.*

**July, 1995**

*The 26,500 square foot, \$2.4 million Bedford Central Library opens to the public. Funding is from City of Bedford, a small federal grant and over \$600,000 raised by the Bedford Public Library Foundation, Inc. from individual and corporate donors. The greatly expanded facility also serves as the headquarters of the Bedford Public Library System, housing Administration, Technical Services, Outreach and the Bookmobile, as well as Adult Services, Youth Services and Circulation.*

**November, 1995**

*To address critical space needs caused by rapid population growth, Bedford County voters approve a \$7.1 million bond referendum to construct or renovate libraries in Big Island, Forest, Moneta, Montvale and Stewartsville. The plans include funds for opening day collections and state-of-the-art information technology, including public Internet access.*

**January, 1999**

*The 3,000 square foot Montvale Library, renovated in part of the former Montvale Elementary School, opens to reestablish public library service in the Montvale community.*

**May, 1999**

*The renovated and expanded 2,245 s.f. Big Island Library reopens to the public.*

**June, 1999**

*The new 10,220 s.f. Forest Library opens to the public.*

**August, 1999**

*The new 3,220 s.f. Stewartsville Library opens to the public.*

**September, 1999**

*The new 10,220 s.f. Moneta/Smith Mountain Lake Library opens to the public, completing a 46 month expansion project that resulted in a 454% increase in the size of county library facilities.*

**November 30, 2000**

*The Bedford Public Library System turns 100 and the [community comes out to the library to celebrate.](#)*

**July, 2004**

*Bookmobile service is discontinued.*

**November, 2004**

*Forest Library receives the NASA/ALA visiting exhibit.*

**November, 2004**

*Wireless Internet is available at Bedford Central Library.*

**March, 2007**

*Wireless Internet is available at Forest and Moneta/SML Libraries.*

**April, 2007**

*RFID Self-Checkout begins at Forest Library.*

**July, 2007**

*E-mail notification of holds and overdue notices implemented system wide.*

**September, 2007**

*Wireless Internet is available at the Big Island, Montvale, and Stewartsville Libraries.*

**May, 2008**

*Bedford Central Library's first-floor re-design completed. Changes included:*

- *New flooring,*
- *Combining the circulation and reference desks into one centralized library services desk,*
- *Moving the public access computers,*
- *Implementing CASSIE, a self-checkout system for the public access computers, and*
- *Opening a self-service cafe. (This portion of the re-design was fully funded by the [Bedford Public Library System Foundation, Inc.](#))*

**January, 2009**

*A re-design of the Forest Library results in the public services desk being moved to the center of the floor and the opening of a self-service cafe. The cafe was funded in part by the [Friends of the Forest Library](#).*

**November, 2009**

*Implement automatic calling system as an option for notification of holds and overdues.*