

**A Brief History of the West Carleton Township Public Library:** The origins of the Library Service in former West Carleton Township. The following excerpt was found in the newspaper "Carp Review" dated November 5, 1908.

"The Library is situated in the review office and is open from 8am to 8pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. A ticket costing 50 cents, entitled the holder to a book which may be changed for another on any of the above days until December 31, 1908; people living in the country and who cannot get to the library very often, are entitled to two books. Catalogues, containing titles and authors of all the books in the library, 10 cents each. A box of the latest books and by standard authors loaned the library every three months by the Provincial Government so that the institution is never without new books. Leave your subscription with any of the Directors or Officers or with the Librarian at the library."

There is no record of how long this particular library was in operation. The next recorded history of the library in the former West Carleton Township is 1974 when three local people got together to discuss the formation of what was to be known as the West Carleton Township Public Library.

West Carleton Township Public Library started its operation in a Recreational Vehicle, locally known as the "Bookmobile." The Bookmobile was on the road 5 days a week going door to door from 8:30 to 6pm and three days a week from 8:30 to 10pm. This was the library until a permanent home could be found.

In 1979 the library moved into the basement of the Memorial Hall in the center of Carp. This location had little parking, little staff space and couldn't house all the library's collections.

In 1979 the Kinburn Branch was opened in the original Fitzroy Township building. It stayed in operation for about 18 months.

The former West Carleton Township Public Library operated two branches located in rooms of local community centres. The Fitzroy Harbour Branch was opened in June 1980 and the Constance and Buckham's Bay branch was opened in May 1983.

The Township of West Carleton bought the decommissioned Canadian Forces Site at 3911 Carp Road and made plans to move the library into the structure previously used as the Engineering Building. Guided tours of the "Diefenbunker" raised enough money to retrofit this building to accommodate the library. Fundraising efforts have continued through the Friends of the West Carleton Library and the annual Diefenbooker Run / Walk and Ride event. The new "main" library of the West Carleton Township Public Library opened in April 1997 to serve the population from its 6000 square feet. Local groups have played a large part in the life of the library. The local arts society raised funds to install picture rails and a display case in the library and regularly display local artists' works. The local garden club hosted garden tours to raise money for the reading garden on the grounds of the library and most recently the local historical society have installed a shadow box to display artifacts of local historic interest.