

Buffalo Trace Regional Library located in Carlisle

# Nicholas County Library big asset to county

**HISTORY OF NICHOLAS COUNTY MEMORIAL LIBRARY**  
 Through many people in previous years had no doubt recognized the need for a public library in Nicholas county, the first definite plan for such a library was presented in the fall of 1943 at a meeting of the Carlisle Woman's Club during the presidency of Mrs. Frank Henry as a project of the Community

Service Committee. As a member of that committee, which was chaired by Mrs. Frank Hardaway, Mrs. Tommy Johnson proposed a five-year plan for collecting books purchased by a reading group of that organization and continuing in a drive for donations of books that could serve as a nucleus for a public library. This plan was accepted and immediately put into

operation. In the winter of 1946-47 (probably February) as a Ladies Night program of the Carlisle Rotary Club, a guest speaker excited the interest of the Rotarians in the importance of library facilities to a community. A committee was appointed from that organization to work with a committee from the Woman's Club on such a project.

Contract Entered in 1947  
 A contract between the Library Board, City Council, Fiscal Court, and the Library Extension Division was drawn up and officially entered into on July 3, 1947. Under the contract, \$4000 of the appropriated money was to be used for the purchase of books for the library and books valued at \$2000 were to be loaned by the Library Extension Division each contract year.

Formal dedication of the library as a memorial to those men and women who had served in the Armed Forces took place on Saturday, Sept. 20, 1947, and officially opened as the Nicholas County Memorial Library. Mrs. Lewis Robbins established her early interest in the library by conducting a Children's Story Hour each Saturday morning in one corner of the large Courtroom. "Miss Carter" as she was affectionately known by her young charges, became head librarian in October 1949.

A report of the librarian in March 1948 showed 271 borrowers averaging nine books a day in the first six months of library service. Since the library was open only two days a week, an average of eighteen books (18) were being withdrawn each week.

The earliest records of the Library Board now available date from Nov. 13, 1946, the City Council voted to appropriate \$500 to the library and appointed Mrs. James Parker and Mrs. Johnson to serve on the Library Board. On May 20, 1947, the Fiscal Court appropriated \$1000 as their share of the \$2000 necessary for a contract with the Library Extension Division and appointed Mrs. S.H. Barlow, Mrs. J.S. Wilson, and Luther Holtz to the five-member board. After serving a short time Mrs. Wilson resigned and was replaced by Mrs. Henry Carter. The officers of the first Library Board were Mrs. Johnson, chairman, Mrs. Parker, secretary, and Mr. Holtz, treasurer.

As with any community endeavor, the volunteer services and assistance of many people were required for the successful launching of the project. Mr. Charles Cox, County Attorney, offered the office designated for his use in the Court House for a library room. Rotarians, board members, and their families built and painted shelves, and moved furniture and Girl Scouts with their leaders assisted in the campaign for contributions of books which was held June 24, 1947. Sorting and cataloguing was done by Mrs. Johnson and Mrs. Tillie Feaback, a retired school teacher who had accepted the position as librarian at a salary of twenty-five cents (25c) an hour, and typing was done by the High School girls.

Correspondence with the Library Extension Division of the Department of Libraries at Frankfort, Ky., and interest of Miss Frances Jane Porter, then head of that Department, provided the committee with necessary material, suggestions and programs for the proper conduct of such a project.

The minutes of the Carlisle City Council for March 3, 1947, record the visit of Mrs. Carter, Mrs. Parker and Mrs. Johnson and the appeal to that body for their cooperation in establishing a public library. A similar request was presented to the Fiscal Court. Mayor W.C. Talbert appointed Earl Van Bovey, Commissioner, as their representative, on the committee. Judge Walter Shepherd appointed Magistrate Luther Holtz to serve in a similar capacity. Roger Womack, attorney, served the committee as advisor interpreting legislative measures.

In April 1947, Miss Porter met with the full committee and plans were made for financing the project. On May 15, 1947, the City Council voted to appropriate \$500 to the library and appointed Mrs. James Parker and Mrs. Johnson to serve on the Library Board. On May 20, 1947, the Fiscal Court appropriated \$1000 as their share of the \$2000 necessary for a contract with the Library Extension Division and appointed Mrs. S.H. Barlow, Mrs. J.S. Wilson, and Luther Holtz to the five-member board. After serving a short time Mrs. Wilson resigned and was replaced by Mrs. Henry Carter. The officers of the first Library Board were Mrs. Johnson, chairman, Mrs. Parker, secretary, and Mr. Holtz, treasurer.

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Under the able leadership of Mr. Halborn a measure for a six and one-half cent (6 1/2c) tax per \$100 assessment was placed on the ballot November 1961 and approved by the electorate enabling Nicholas county to become the Headquarters for the Regional Library serving Fleming, Robertson, Harrison, Clark, Bath, and Nicholas counties. In compliance with regulations under this program the name of the Nicholas County Memorial Library was changed in January 1962 to Nicholas County Public Library District. The name "Buffalo Trace" which had been suggested by Mr. Joe Conley, was given to the Regional Library.

In September 1964 the board was again re-organized and vacancies were

filled by Ralph Shearer and Mrs. Tommy Johnson. Mr. Shearer was elected chairman of the board and continued the preliminary plans complying with requirements for sharing construction costs with the Federal Government on the proposed library building. Contracts were entered into on Dec. 7, 1964, for Federal funds amounting to more than \$60,000 to apply to the construction and equipping of the new library.

The new library building, which was officially dedicated on May 1, 1967, is the development of a public library program. The County Library Board is of great importance. Members are Ralph Shearer, chairman; Joe Frank Conley, treasurer; Mrs. David Zachary, secretary; Mrs. Enoch Doyle and Mrs. Roger Womack. Today the beautiful and functional new library building stands proudly in Carlisle, providing the most up-to-date library service to all 4,500 county residents.

**Nicholas County Librarians**  
 The first librarian to serve Nicholas county was Mrs. Tillie Feaback from 1947 to Oct. 1949. Upon her resignation, Mrs. Carrie Robbins became librarian. Those who followed are Miss Mary Lois Campbell, Feb. 1963; Mrs. Marjorie Montgomery, Nov. 1965; and the present librarian Mrs. Elaine Swilling, April 1972.

After 1963 Mrs. Conley Robbins continued on as assistant librarian until 1969, marking 20 years service with Nicholas County Library. No story of the development of library service in Nicholas county would be complete without emphasizing the extremely important role played by the bookmobile. As the good right arm of the library, bookmobile service has been extended into the county since 1965, when the first fleet of converted panel trucks began carrying collections of books to Kentucky residents who might not otherwise have access to public library facilities. A new \$1,100 bookmobile, given to Nicholas county by the Department of Libraries in June, 1965, presently travels throughout the county three days each week with Mrs. Sparks at the wheel. The mobile library travels to schools, rural communities, homes of shut-in and the Johnson Mothers Nursing Home in Carlisle, logging thousands of miles in an all-out effort to serve county residents in all outlying rural areas.

Mrs. Rachel Stacey was the first Nicholas county Bookmobile librarian, starting in 1964. Those who followed her in the present order are Mrs. Mary Louise Campbell, librarian, and Mrs. Nancy Judge and Mrs. Freda Sparks.

Collection Numbers More Than 24,000  
 The number of books available at the library and accessible to bookmobile borrowers today is a far cry from the few volumes that lined the shelves of the first library in the courthouse. The Regional Library serving Fleming, Robertson, Harrison, Clark, Bath, and Nicholas counties, in compliance with regulations under this program the name of the Nicholas County Memorial Library was changed in January 1962 to Nicholas County Public Library District. The name "Buffalo Trace" which had been suggested by Mr. Joe Conley, was given to the Regional Library.

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# Ratliff Bros... the Oldest Retail Business in Nicholas County Joins in celebrating our 175th Anniversary



Present Location



Old Location

## Established in 1884 by W. B. and C. C. Ratliff

The Ratliff brothers were born and reared in Nicholas County, sons of Caleb Ratliff, an influential farmer of the Sharpsburg area. W.B. Ratliff was the first to engage in business, commencing at Moorefield. After several years serving as a clerk for other concerns, he moved to Carlisle and with his brother C.C. Ratliff established the firm of Ratliff Brothers in 1884. By 1900 they owned three business houses.

On Main Street was their grocery and hardware store, with a meat market at the rear of the store. Salesmen were John W. Tilton, Frank King and Edward Eales. The lumber yard, coal office and grain station were situated on Broadway (Maple) and along the side of the L&N Railroad.

In the interest of this business they erected a brick warehouse for storage of seeds, grain, salt, cement and building materials in general. The lumber yard was in the rear of the building. The coal was from the famous Jellico fields. These branches of the business were under the direct management of C.C. Ratliff.

W.B. Ratliff was a director in the Deposit Bank, a Mason and a deacon in the Christian Church.

Articles of Incorporation of Ratliff Brothers Company Jan. 2, 1915 W.B. Ratliff, C.C. Ratliff, E.J. Beers, S.C. Vaughn, Frank J. Mathias and Harry T. Burgess.

In 1918 W.B. Ratliff and C.C. Ratliff sold their interest to T.L. Clark, who was named president; G.C. Myers, secretary; W.F. Clark and L.W. Clark. And Amendments of Articles of Incorporation of Ratliff Brothers dated Dec. 19, 1922 read T.L. Clark, president; G.C. Myers, secretary; W.F. Clark and L.W. Clark. Amendments of Articles of Incorporation dated Jan. 28, 1929, T.L. Clark, president, W.F. Clark and L.W. Clark, directors.

Articles of Incorporation Ratliff Brothers dated May 8, 1941, T.L. Clark sold his interest to W.F. Clark, Floyd Clark, Kate Clark, administrator of estate of Lon Clark.

June 18, 1946 W.F. Clark, president, Emory Clark, secretary, and Floyd Clark. Jan. 1947 W.C. Talbert and A.V. Allison bought out the interest of Emory and Floyd Clark.

1952 W.G. Irvin and Howard Irvin bought the W.F. Clark interest in Ratliff Brothers, Inc.

At the death of W.C. Talbert in 1963 his son, R.L. Talbert inherited his interest.

Present owners and officers (1974) are: Howard Irvin, president; R.L. Talbert, vice president; and A.V. Allison, secretary and treasurer.

1884 to 1974 the oldest continuing retail business under its original name in Carlisle.



The Nicholas County Library

Emery Clark's Used Cars  
 Congratulates Nicholas County this year  
 We don't have this car, but we have many others to choose from.

1914 ROLLS-ROYCE

## Happy 175th Birthday NICHOLAS COUNTY

ALWAYS BE IN THE PERK OF FASHION WITH THE LATEST IN DRESSES AND THE PROPER ACCESSORIES;

COMPLETE SWIMMING ATTIRE;

SPORTS CLOTHES FOR GOLFING, TENNIS, HIKING, BIKING, BOWLING, ETC. . . . .

OR JUST SIMPLY KICKING UP YOUR HEELS, WITH SHOES FROM

**BAKER'S Dept. Store**  
 Main St. Carlisle, Ky.

We Are Proud

to be in business in Carlisle-Nicholas County.

**R & R Repair and Body Shop**  
 Leon Roundtree, Owner  
 Ph. 289-7325 Mulberry St.