

To Have a Carnegie Library

(From the Perry Daily Chief, Jan. 16, 1903)

Perry will have a Carnegie library building erected on the triangle within the next 12 months. If it does not it will not be the fault of Andrew Carnegie. He has offered to give the city \$10,000, the only if's or conditions are at his end of the line. In return for the donation Mr. Carnegie exacts the pledge from the city in the shape of a resolution binding the city to maintain the library and provide \$1000 annually for that purpose.

THE TRIANGLE PERRY IOWA



Carnegie Library

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program from when the Carnegie was first opened in 1904, so we're following that," said Pam Jenkins, director of research for Hometown Perry, Iowa.

The afternoon events will feature John Witt, who will speak about Iowa's Carnegie Libraries, a reading by Nebraska poet and author Ted Kooser, a book reading by Iowa's First Lady Christie Vilsack, a lecture by Iowa historian Tom Moran, and tours of the Carnegie Refreshments will also be served in Soumas Court.

Take a room-by-room tour. In the main reading room an exhibit panel will offer an overview of the museum. Next you can peruse the collection of best-selling and award-winning books from authors, including Edna Ferber and J.R.R. Tolkien.

In addition, the room will house a collection of the Carnegie's first 1,000 books, with authors ranging from Lord Byron and John Milton to Wilkie Collins. The history of the local library and a collec-

tion of local family Bibles are also included in this area.

In the stacks, you can explore a variety of exhibits featuring Andrew Carnegie, ancient libraries, travel, the printers' trade, how libraries work, women librarians, the history of libraries, banned books, literacy and libraries, and immigrants and libraries.

The former reference room has been renamed the Prairie Room and will contain Iowa and Midwest books. "Authors will include Willa Cather and

Smelair Lewis, and the room will provide an overview of what it means to be from the Midwest," said Linda Reis, a Hometown Perry, Iowa researcher.

In the Room of Wonder (formerly the children's room), you'll find children's literature, science fiction, Westerns, mysteries, and romance novels by popular authors ranging from Laura Ingalls Wilder to Louis L'Amour and Danielle Steel. Downstairs in the Women's Room, you can browse your favorite women's fiction, and

Above: Circa 1915 photo of the Carnegie Library in Perry, Iowa.

cookbooks, including historic Fanny Farmer guides. "Since women in years past used this area to read, visit, and do needlework, the room will also include a quilt created by Murray Johnston called 'Woman's Work' to interpret how local women used this room," McCloskey said.

Adding artwork

The Carnegie will also feature a variety of new artwork, including a Doug Shelton mural in the main entry and a floor-to-ceiling mural in the lobby lower hallway, designed by Los Angeles public artist Kent Twitchell. The mural will portray the faces of people both past and present who have been part of the Perry community.

The diagonal wall in the courtroom will feature a map of Iowa's Carnegie Libraries painted by Des Moines artist Darren Evans. The exhibit "Perry in Pictures (Across Time)" will be included in the elevator upper level area.



Jennifer Wahlert

Wahlert Manages Carnegie's Special Collections

When Iowa native Jennifer Wahlert heard about Hometown Perry, Iowa's (HPI) mission, she knew she wanted to be a part of it. When the staff at HPI learned about Wahlert's training in art and history, she became the top candidate to coordinate the special collections at the Carnegie Library.

"I want to help people learn about all the wonderful people and events that have been important to Perry," said Wahlert, who earned her master's degree in art and history from DePaul University.

Wahlert manages the Carnegie's exhibits and is helping develop a training program so volunteers can offer tours of the museum. "The exhibits here will help show the important role that small towns like Perry have played in American culture," she noted.