

NORTHERN'S LIBRARIES OVER 127 YEARS
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The development of the Northern library began in 1899 in a room in city hall consisting of a single bookshelf over seen by William McCracken, the science teacher and was followed by President Waldo's wife, Minnie Strong Waldo who over saw the library in Longyear Hall until her death in 1903. Very soon more room was needed and in 1904 a Library Annex was added. At this time a group of Marquette businessmen, led by Peter White bought the collection of scholar Moses Coit Tyler consisting to 3,000 volumes on American history, theology and literature. At this time the Northern library was considered the largest in the UP numbering over 12,000 volumes. When Longyear Hall burned in December 1905, fire doors and an efficient fire department saved the library. The Tyler collection remains as a little known but significant collection on campus.

The relatively small library found a new home in Kaye Hall built in 1915. However, as enrollment increased and new programs developed, there was a growing demand for the book and journal collections to expand. At the time of the 50th anniversary of the college it was decided to obtain funds to build a separate structure to house what became known as the Lydia Olson Library. Olson served from 1908 to 1941 and is Northern's longest serving librarian and saved many precious documents, when we did not have an archive! The library opened in 1951, had storage space for 125,000 books and was immediately used and enjoyed by 300 students who never had adequate space in the old library. The library was at the north end of Cohodas Hall and was connected to the Peter While Hall of Science and Kaye Hall. Given today's open space in the library then you were restricted from going into the stacks to find your book. You filled out a slip and the library staff obtained the books for you.

Beginning in summer session of 1954, library science courses were first offered. Between 1957 and 1965 the library was home to the UP Law Library – the first regional law library in Michigan. It is now in the court house.

Naturally, the library out lived its usefulness. And in the late 1960s as Northern grew a new library was planned. It was built in the Learning Resources Center on the site of the present library minus the fourth floor and opened in 1969. Faculty were excited when the new facility opened as they would have their own offices on the first floor of the library in easy access of the books and journals on the floors above.

The new library expanded its collection: faculty filled out cards to order books and a book-buying company came on the scene and boxes of books arrived monthly. One history professor purchased the journals of the English parliament and I was able to build up the Latin American and local history collection. By June 30, 1994 there were some half million books in the library.

In the early 1990s, efforts began to unite the Lydia Olson Library, academic computing, University Archives, and Instructional Media Services under Academic Information Services. This was in operation in 1993-1994 and Dr. Thomas Peischl was the first dean of this newly formed unit.

Changes kept coming. The large card catalogue which dominated the entrance was removed, when book and journal searches were made on-line. In more recent years for instance the 73 volumes of *The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents* taking up some three feet of space could be found and used on-line. The same thing happened with journals in all fields.

Once again, a new facility had to be developed. In early 2026 the new Lydia Olson Library was dedicated. No longer is it a place with dark rows of books and journals, desks without electrical outlets for computers and hard wooden chairs students sat in waiting for their ride home. The new

library is focused on student and public convenience. The archives and Beaumier Heritage Center are within the structure. Public areas allow lectures. The student-created animal mural at the entrance is a delightful addition that ties students to the facility. Faculty offices on the 4th floor, no longer in former dorm rooms have direct access to resources. Leslie Warren and Jim Thams and his staff are to commended for the excellent and useful instructional center they have created, which will attract new students to Northern. Bravo to all concerned.