

# Library History

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According to a newspaper article published in 1897, besides a few private libraries in Mezőkövesd, the Casino, the Reading Society, and Catholic Young Men's Club also had their own libraries. These libraries however were available to club members and patrons. The "Lending Library" with its 750 books, opened by Ferenc Balázs on 1st September 1899 might be seen as the forerunner of today's public library. Monthly membership fee equalled 50 penny, and on the booklist one could find such great authors as Jókai, Herczeg, Mikszáth, Bródy, Gárdonyi and Zola. The library soon gained popularity and the number of visitors increased hugely by the beginning of the 20th century. The development of the Lending Library was financed by Ferenc Balázs, whereas the clubs developed their own libraries by organizing charity balls.

World War II stamped a change on the state of Hungary. Casinos were abolished. In 1947 the "Common Libraries" for people were born and set up nationwide. This is how the so called "Mobile Library" reached Mezőkövesd, that used to supply the residents with books until the introduction of the local "Common Library" in 1949.

Thanks to many enthusiastic librarians more Common Libraries were set up in the area that started to attract readers. By 1955 all the villages had their own library.

Librarians took great effort to popularize both fiction and non-fiction. They zealously got into the swing of the work of organizing screenings, talks, book launchings to attract the readers into libraries, draw them on to read and get them to enjoy literature.

In 1964 the local District Library is given a new 220 square meter building in which under the same roof runs both the adult and the children section. In 1980 the musical section is added. Due to increasing stock, in 1985 the library moves to separate buildings. The old building continues to house the children library and the musical department, making the adult library to move to a new spot, expanding the floorspace to a total of 880 square meter.

The year 1990 brings a change in the life of the library. Due to local government boundary changes, the library is reduced. Currently the library provides the local community with a comprehensive range of library services such as readers group, talks and seminars, group talks, children clubs, library lessons for primary and secondary students.

Since 1985 the library has run two clubs: the senior public servants' club and the senior teachers' club. The Mobile Library's supply has been active since 2006 in the Mezőkövesd Region. This service was disposed by the Town Library. In that first year nine villages were using it. They are Borsodgeszt, Egerlövő, Kács, Mezőnagymihály, Mezőnyárád, Négyes, Szomolya, Tibolddaróc and Vatta. The following year, in 2007, seven additional villages joined in : the villages of Bogács, Borsodivánka, Bükkábrány, Csincse, Sály, Szentistván and Tard. By 2008 the number of villages using the supply rose to 18 with Bükkzsérc and Cserépfalu.