

The *Fort Bragg Advocate* in its January 8, 1913 issue reported:

## Fort Bragg Library founded in 1913

“The Fort Bragg Library is now completed and will be occupied in a few days. It is the third of a series of modern business structures erected within the last year. It is one of the finest library buildings in Northern California. This artistic structure adorns West Main Street, standing up on a lot, which the Union Lumber Company so generously donated. It is a thirty-five by fifty-five foot wooden structure of a very plain and attractive design. The white exterior finishing give it a very cheerful appearance. The interior is finished entirely in natural redwood-waxed. A mezzanine floor fourteen by thirty-five feet makes quite an addition to the floor space. .... We feel assured that Fort Bragg will have one of the finest libraries in Northern California, a modern library in a modern city. “The trustees of this institution who have given much of their valuable time toward the furtherance of this worthy cause, the Union Lumber Company who so generously donated the building site and the people of Fort Bragg in general who are standing the expense of this valuable addition to our city are deserving of the highest praise. They are now in a position to enjoy the fruits of their labors.”

On the morning of September 20, 1987 the library in Fort Bragg was destroyed in an arson fire.



The Canaar- Fairlee Building (built as a funeral home) was purchased with \$300,000 fire insurance money in May 1988.

Conversion of the interior to a library was completed by Fort Bragg contractor, Jerry Matson.

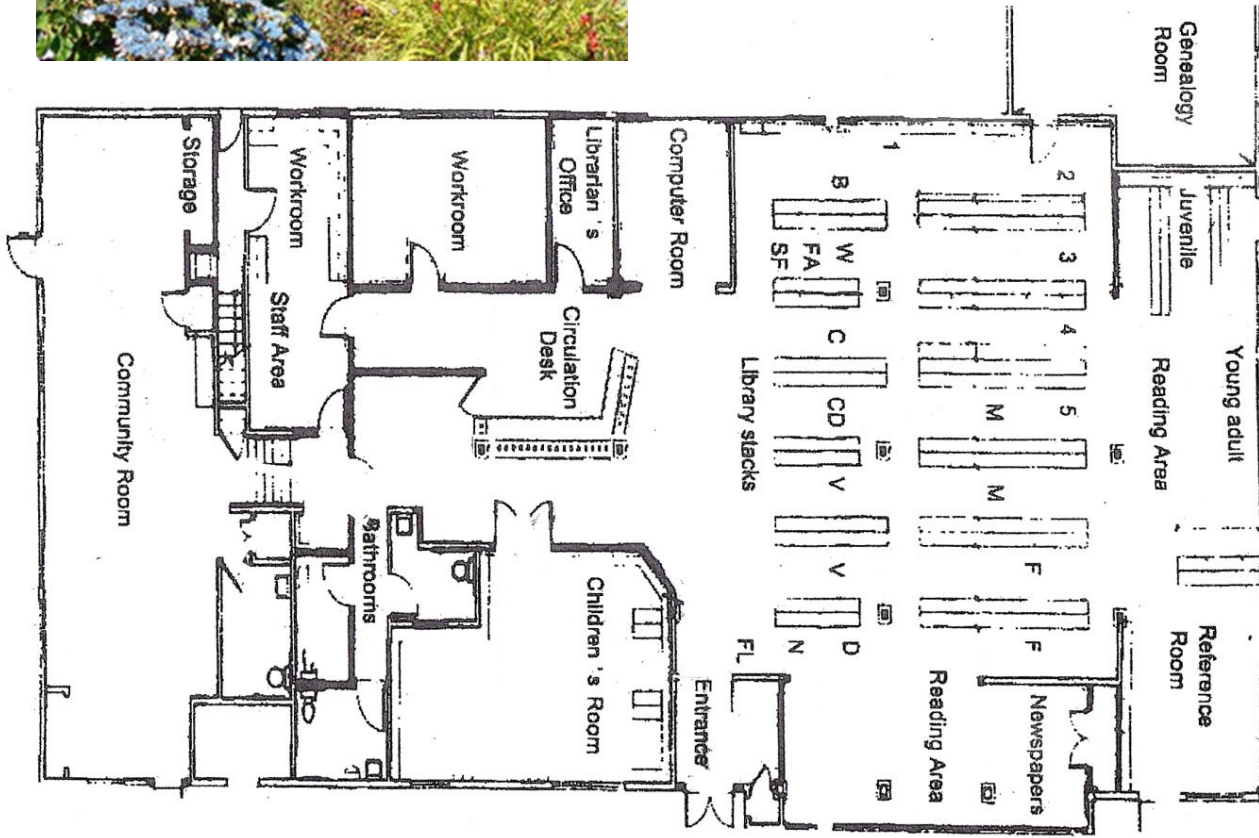
The next major remodel, which stayed within the footprint of the existing 6000 sq. ft. library was completed in 2007. The cost of the project - shared by the Friends of the Fort Bragg Library - exceeded \$520,000 of which the Friends contributed \$470,000. Not included in this cost were the many contributions of time and labor by volunteers, personnel from Parlin Forks and Chamberlain Creek and county staff.

After a year in temporary quarters, the Fort Bragg Branch reopened in July 1988 at 499 East Laurel Street in Fort Bragg





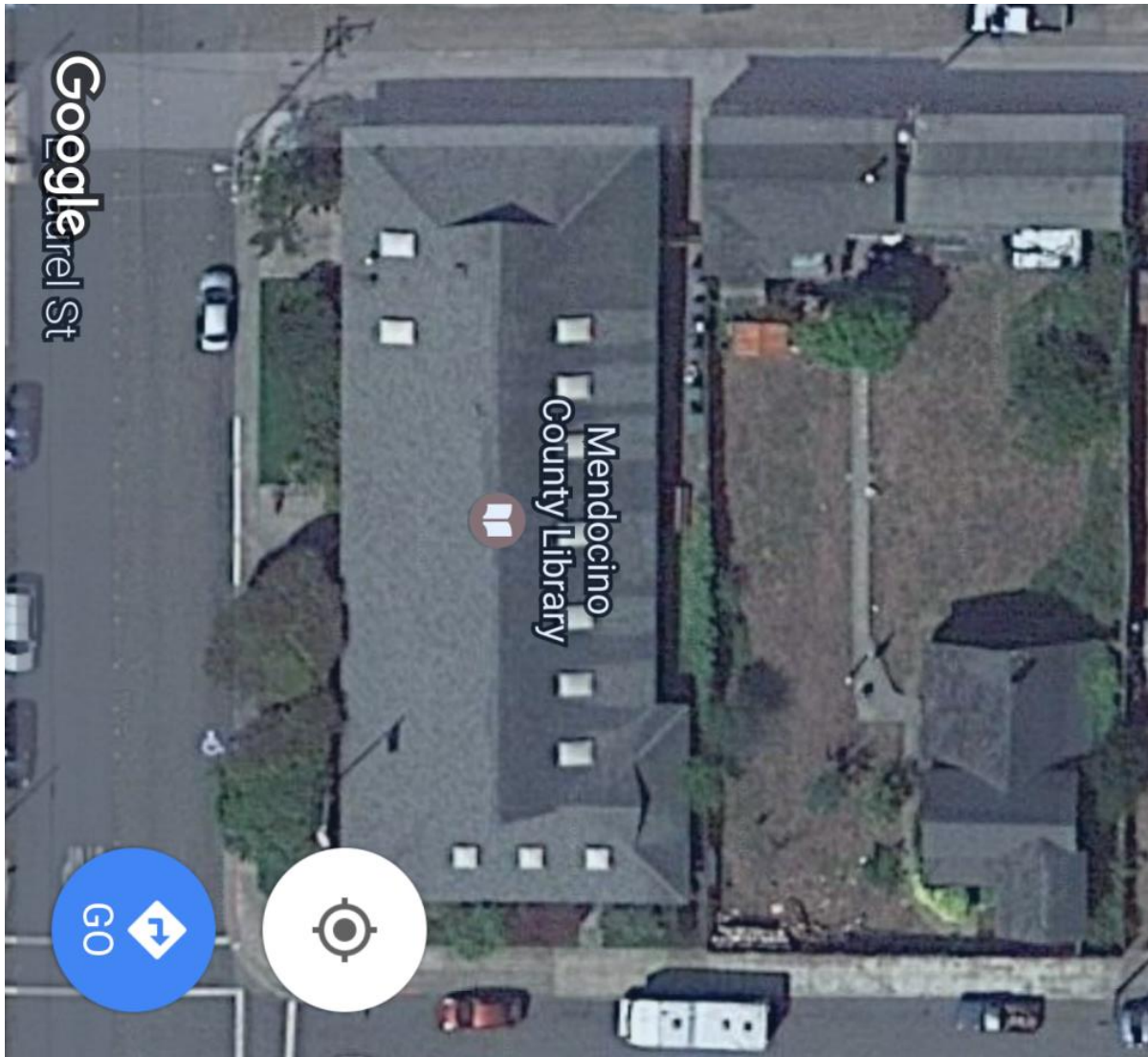
Fort Bragg Branch Library -  
 Library entrance on 499 E. Laurel St,  
 showing floor plan after  
 2007 remodel.







2015 Google Earth view prior to purchase of the Whipple Street property.  
Current library shown on left. Lot with buildings shown on right.



In September 2016, the Friends of the Fort Bragg Library purchased the lot next door to the current library. The lot and buildings were purchased for \$185,000.



The Friends plan was to level the lot, preserve redwood from the site for the new building and continue to seek funds for the expansion.





By early 2021, the lot at 421 North Whipple had been cleared, perimeter fencing installed, and a new wooden fence built along the north property line. As the Friends continue to fundraise, they contract with a local mowing company to maintain the lot.





Generous donor leaves entire estate to Library Friends group for the Expansion Project. The bequest exceeded \$500,000.

## COMMUNITY

# Library receives large bequest from local donor

### Staff report

**FORT BRAGG** » Fort Bragg lost a great reader in October 2019: LaVon Taylor was a true friend of books, as shown by her dedicated service to the Hospice Thrift Book Dept., Granny's Attic and the Fort Bragg Library. Taylor's love of reading sparked a desire to pass on that love to others. In December 2020, Friends of the Fort Bragg Library received a bequest in her name.

After her retirement from the hospitality industry, Taylor became involved in venues that served multitudes of readers on the North Coast.

Diane Lionberger and Nancy Gardner-Gmeiner, at Hospice Thrift, spoke of Taylor's remarkable vocabulary and organizational skills. She often organized donated books into categories, allowing customers to shop by genre and find good titles at great prices.

Book sales supported persons receiving hospice care on the North Coast.

Taylor was also a frequent patron of Fort Bragg Library. She worked alongside Friends of the Library volunteers and also served as paid staff for a time. Friends remember her fondness for mystery novels, and she subscribed to the New York Times Book Review to discover new authors and trends in the literary world.

Taylor's generous gift of her entire estate is the start of a major capital campaign the Friends hope to launch this year. A beautiful addition to Fort Bragg Library will house and display the library's collection in a more contemporary way, provide additional seating and a meeting and performance space.

"We think this building project would please Taylor, a lifelong fan of books and libraries," said Dan Hess, Branch Librarian.

Library staff enjoyed Taylor's frequent visits to the library. Though she often needed to sit and rest in later years, her tenacity and love of reading brought her to the branch in spite of her illness, Hess said. For the last 10 months of her life Taylor was homebound, so friends and caregivers would pick up books for her.

The community is full of generous donors, and the Fort Bragg Library would like to thank all those who've joined the "Thousand Dollar Club" or given sizable amounts since the property was bought next door in 2016, Hess said.

"On behalf of the library, I would like to thank LaVon for thinking of future readers like herself who love to be surrounded by the unforgettable characters of literature and film," said Hess.

"Her imagination lives on in her legacy to Fort Bragg Library."



Friends Board members with Founder of \$1000 Club, fundraising at craft fair.



Soroptimists and Mendocino Study Club learn about library services and donate to expansion project.



Over 85 community members have joined the \$1000 Club as individual donors, neighborhood groups, civic organizations or given in memoriam.

**PASSENGER LIST:**

1. Sandra Figueiredo
2. Myra Figueiredo
3. Norma L. Andres
4. Henrietta Bensussen
5. Becky & Winston Bowen
6. Melinda Land-Freshwater
7. Sherman & Claire Ervin Lee
8. David Linkhart
9. Louise Mariana
10. Soroptimist International of Fort Bragg
11. Carol Millsap
12. Christine Feehan
13. Centerline Medical, LLC
14. Albion Middle Ridge Library Fund
15. Presbyterian Church + Colleen Cleary & Ann Kjeldsen
16. Mendocino Women's Clothing Swap & Mendocino Study Club
17. Tarbell Family Foundation
18. Carrie Pomeroy
19. Glenn Reed & Gary Croner
20. Anya Maruscha & Jacquie Hoffman
21. David and Marianne Smith
22. Mary Fisher Love
23. Bruce + Yolanda Fletcher
24. Ruth & Joe Sparks
25. Janet & David Barnes
26. Jennifer Wolfman Memoriam
27. Jane Person
28. Judy and Paul Tichinin
29. Arthur Morley
30. Ocean Wave Quilters
31. Fort Bragg Lions Club
32. Dr. Diane Harris
33. Betty and John Dias (in memoriam)
34. Seniors on Bikes!
35. More Stories (31 strong!)
36. Renie Oschin
37. Sidney and Patricia Long
38. Shady Lane Neighbors
39. Andrew and Linda Banta
40. Kim Doyle
41. Vanette St. John
42. Fort Bragg High School Class of '69
43. In memory of Jane Vartanian from family



44. Olivia Barrager
45. Harold G. Miller
46. Mendocino Friends of the Fort Bragg Library
47. Kelci Parks Memoriam from the Fort Bragg Advocate-News
48. Tree
49. Anonymous Donor 1
50. In memory of Daisy Dodge
51. Jeanette Hansen
52. The Community Foundation of Mendocino County
53. Frances Wakerley and Marvin Galliani
54. Diane McVeigh
55. Masonic Lodge (Shriners of Fort Bragg)
56. Yolanda & Bruce Fletcher
57. David Smith
58. Frieda Clayton
59. Marilyn LeRoy & Mark LeRoy Ttees
60. Joy Korstjens & Steve Shamblin
61. Lafawnduh, a Library Cat!
62. Rotary Club of Fort Bragg
63. Cherie and Keith Wyner
64. Ray and Louise Rossi
65. Anonymous Donor 2
66. Mendocino Study Club
67. Winton and Becky Bowen
68. Jean and Tom Digulla
69. Jeffrey Flynn & Linda Lasell
70. The James Kirwan Family
71. Anonymous Donor
72. Frank Baty
73. Donna Leon: in memory of Larry Hanlon
74. Kirk O'Dwyer
75. Raymond Knapp & Daniel Hess
76. The Walzer Family
77. The Cabin
78. In honor of Susan & Mark Reaves
79. In memory of Don and Lorraine V. Kelley family
80. In memory of Diane Rosenberger
81. Gin Paul Kremer, DDS
82. Yolanda and Bruce Fletcher
83. Josie Perla
84. Holly Hawkins
85. In Memory of Betty Staveley by James Staveley & Patricia Marien

Take off with  
the \$1000 Club!  
Friends of the  
Fort Bragg Library  
Expansion Project