

NEWS RELEASE

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ICfL Celebrates 120 Years of Service to the Idaho Library Community

BOISE, Idaho -- The Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL) celebrates 120 years of service to the Idaho library community.

In 1899, the Columbian Club of Boise formed a traveling library that brought culture and education to 51 settlements in the Idaho territory.

The Idaho State Library was established by the Idaho Legislature on April 1, 1901, to organize new libraries and improve existing ones.

Under Margaret Stevenson Roberts' third term as state librarian, 1919 to 1933, 118 library stations were using the traveling library. During the 1930s, more than 14,000 books were catalogued at the State Library, and staff began using the Dewey Decimal System and the card catalog. In the 1950s, the State Library moved to the basement of the Idaho State Historical Society's Museum in Boise. In 1973, the State Library was designated by the Idaho Legislature as the site for the regional library for blind and physically handicapped services, which is now the Idaho Talking Book Service.

On July 1, 2006, the Idaho State Library became the Idaho Commission for Libraries (ICfL), which builds the capacity of the more than 850 public, school, academic, and special libraries in Idaho to better serve their communities through statewide programming and resources, consulting, continuing education, partnerships, and aid to underserved populations.

Libraries have evolved from places known only for research, reading, and reflection, to becoming a community's bustling hub of innovation, education, and engagement.

In state fiscal year (FY) 2019*, 1,027,183 Idahoans attended one of the 40,593 programs held in public libraries, and library internet use increased 180% from the previous year, with 2,409,083 uses of library wireless networks.

"The Idaho Commission for Libraries continues the State Library's rich history of bringing books to Idahoans, but, today, we also provide a wealth of other resources that assist libraries -- big and small, urban and rural -- in serving their communities and meeting the individual needs of Idahoans throughout the Gem State," said State Librarian Stephanie Bailey-White.

For more on the Idaho State Library, visit: <https://libraries.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/ICfL-fact-sheet-historical-1.pdf>.

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*[Idaho 2019 Annual Public Library Statistics](#)