

# The Campus Library: Supporting Research and Scholarship Since 1886

Since 1886, there has been a library serving the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga campus and metropolitan area. As the campus has grown and changed over the years, so too has the library, responding to the needs of the university. Although many of the library resources available to current students, faculty, staff, and community members look different than those of years past, this exhibition celebrates the library's commitment to supporting information discovery and providing infrastructure for learning that have been a part of its mission from day one.



Exterior of Old Main, circa 1900s.

## Old Main (1886-1917)

When Chattanooga University opened in 1886, a small, single room in the school's only building, affectionately known as "Old Main," was designated as the university library. In the early years, the collections grew as administrators and faculty members donated from their personal collections. Since many leaders of the school in the early years were affiliated with the Methodist Church, a large number of books in the library's collection pertained to religious or theological subjects.

The one-room library in Old Main served the campus for 30 years. Marguerite Aull, a student at the University of Chattanooga who graduated in 1911, served as the first caretaker of the collection. In 1912, the University Board of Trustees approved funding to hire Mildred Hart, an alumna and professor of Modern Languages as the first official University Librarian.

1917- Old Main is razed. The 8,000 volume library is moved to the newly constructed administration building.



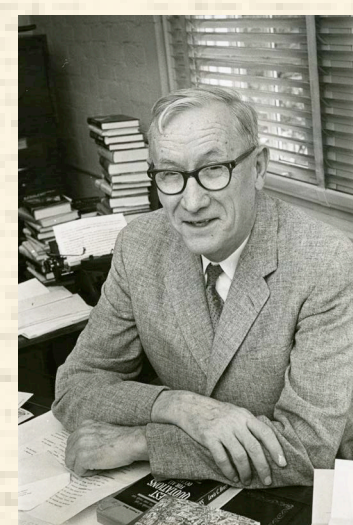
1912- Professor Mildred Hart appointed as first official University Librarian.

## Founders Hall (1917-1939)

Before the demolition of Old Main in 1917, the library moved to the Administration Building (renamed Founders Hall in 1950), where it remained for over 20 years. During this time, the library was overseen by several different librarians. In 1934, Gilbert Govan, history professor and author, was appointed as University Librarian. Under his leadership, the library holdings grew tremendously.

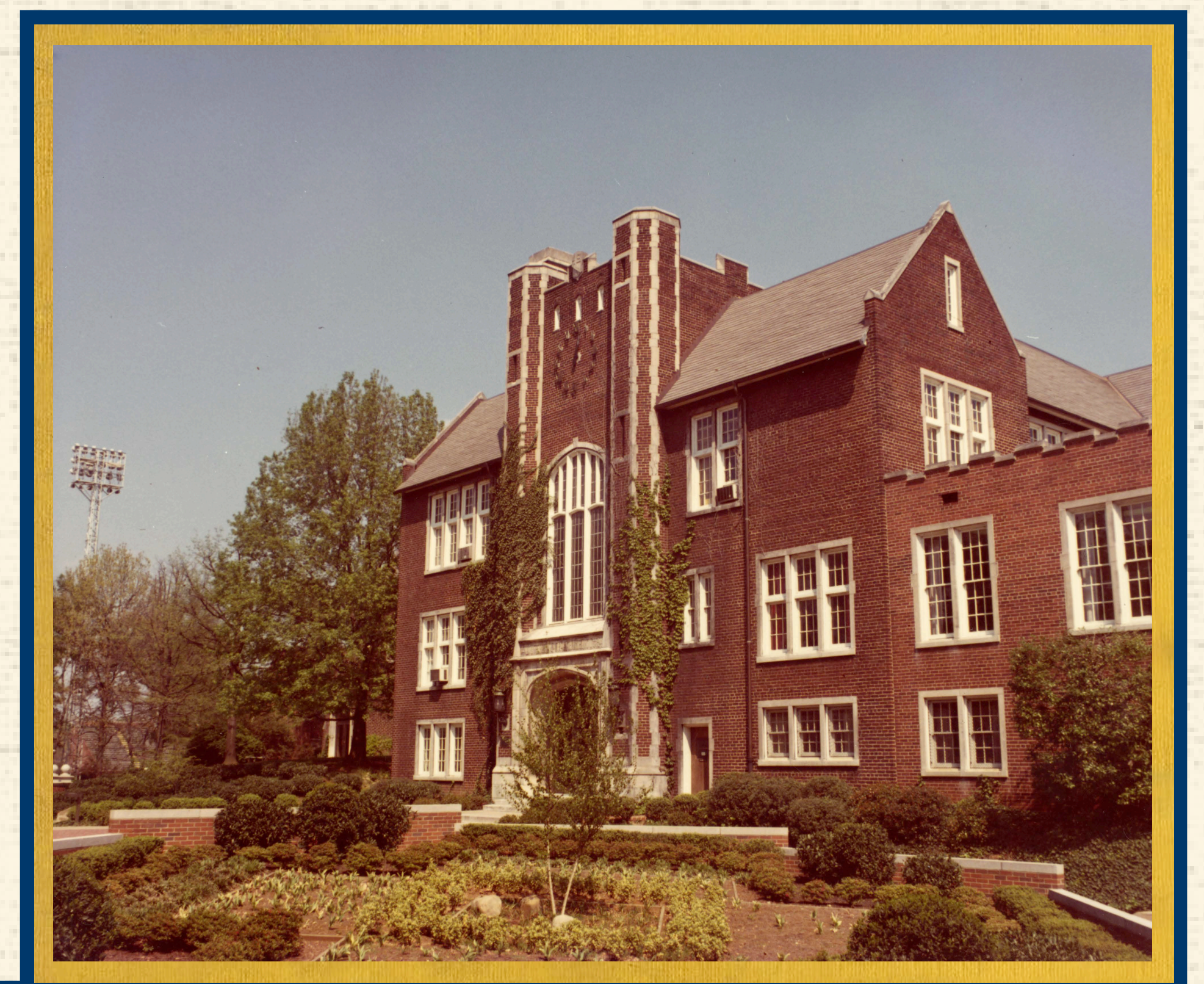
1925- All library books reclassified using the Dewey Decimal system.

1928- Library periodical subscriptions surpass 250 titles.



1938- Library collection grows to over 25,000 volumes.

1935- Gilbert Govan oversees a reorganization of the library space. A recreational reading room with comfortable furniture is added.

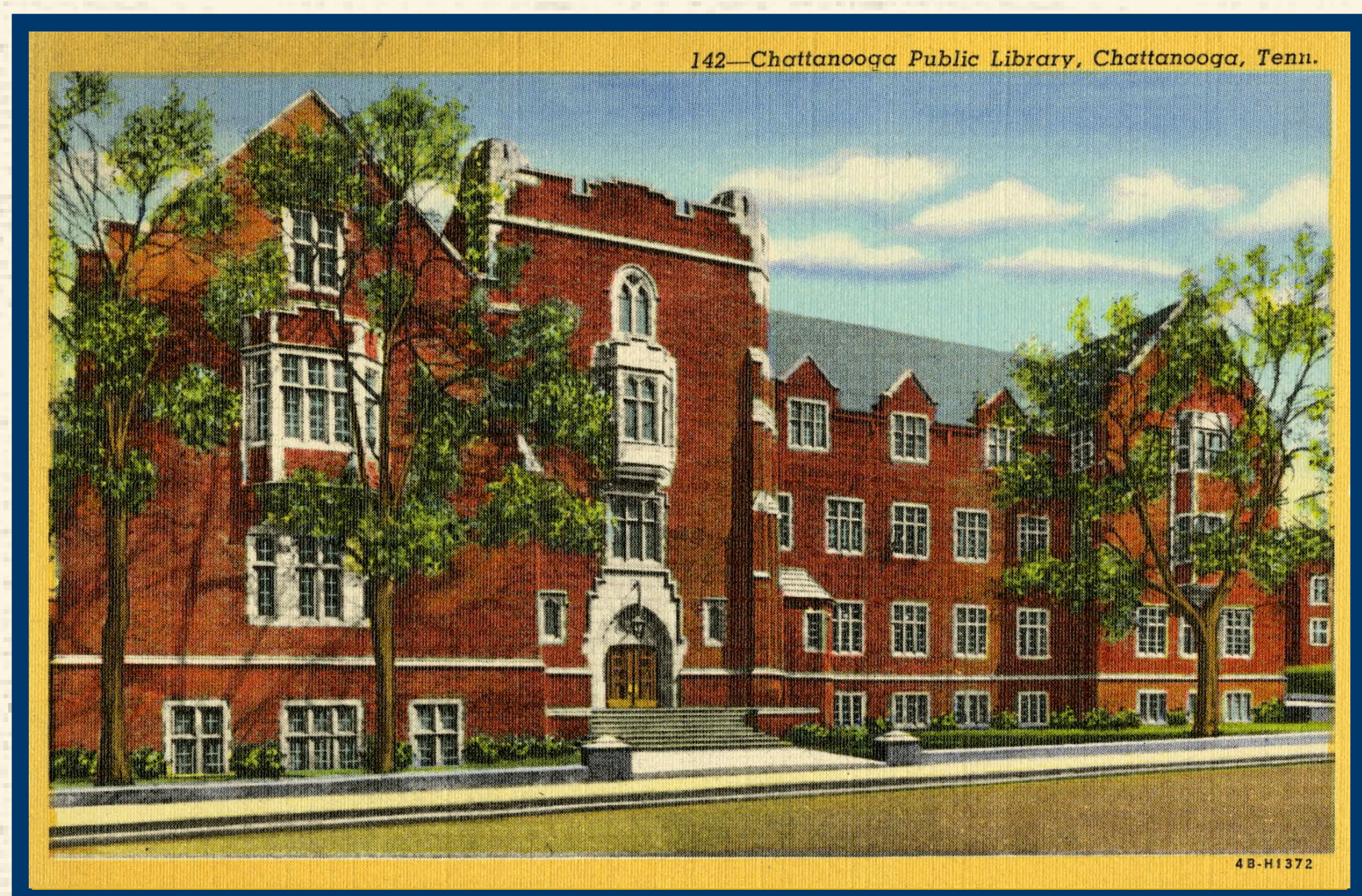


Exterior of Founders Hall. The library was located on the second floor of the building.

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## John Storrs Fletcher Library (1939-1974)

The third location of the university library was a shared building with the Chattanooga Public Library. Adolph S. Ochs, the owner of the *Chattanooga Times* and the *New York Times* newspapers, was one of the earliest proponents of a single space for the collections of the Chattanooga Public Library and the University of Chattanooga. Although the idea was discussed in the late 1920s, the realities of the Great Depression stymied fundraising and planning for the project was delayed. In 1938 the construction was announced and by 1939, the University of Chattanooga began moving its collections into its allocated space.



Circa 1940s postcard depicting the exterior of the Chattanooga Public Library, which also housed the University Library, and was later renamed the John Storrs Fletcher Library.



1971- Construction begins on new library building.

1969- University of Chattanooga merges with University of Tennessee System to become the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga.

1961- Library building renamed John Storrs Fletcher Library in honor of late trustee and legal counsel for the university.

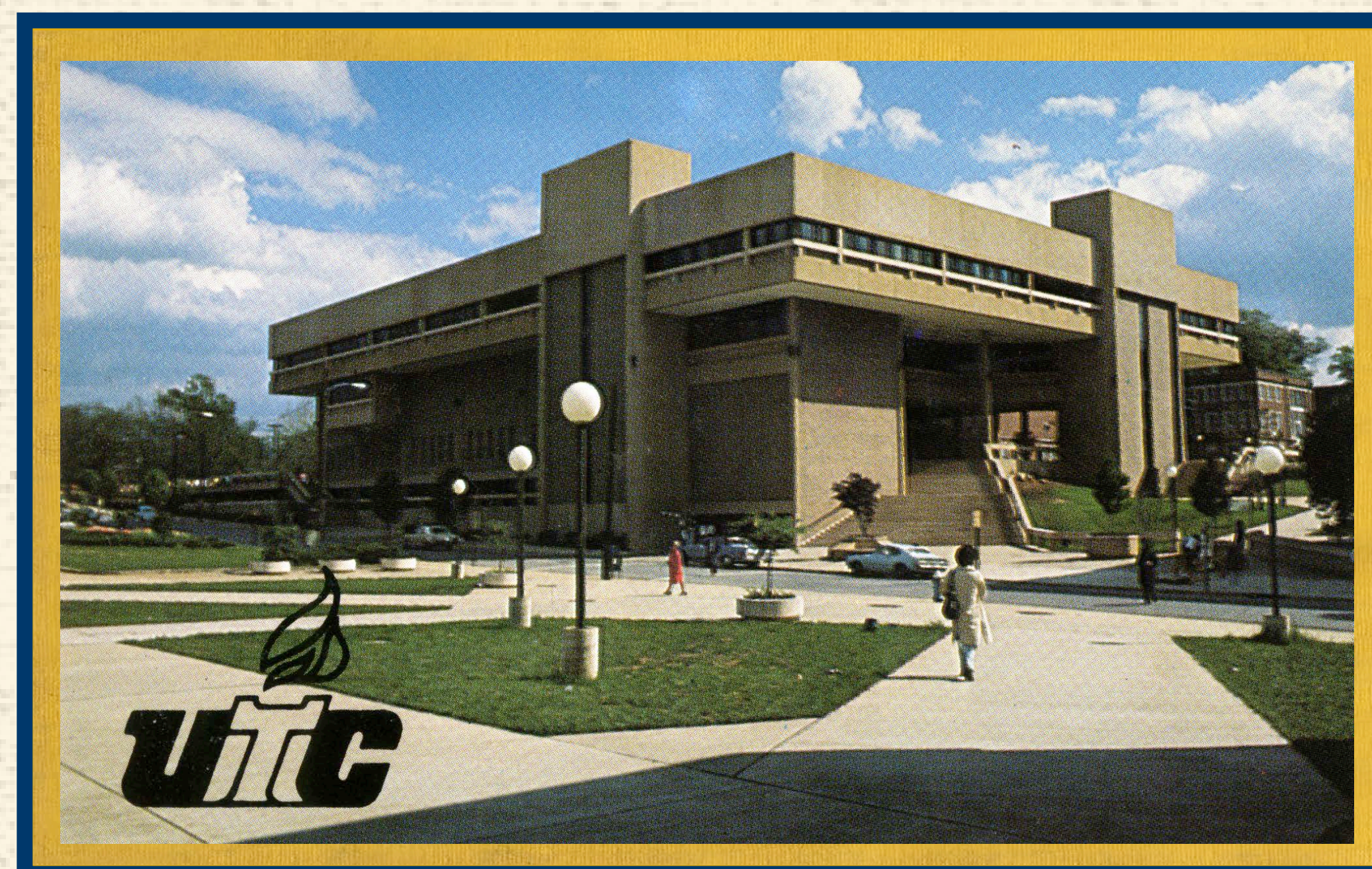
1940- Library dedicated and open to students and the Chattanooga community.

1963- Library moves to open stack system to allow for user browsing and discovery.

1973- Library joins Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET), which spurs modernization initiatives.

## T. Cartter and Margaret Rawlings Lupton Library (1974-2014)

The university grew steadily from the 1940s to the 1960s, and calls for a new, larger library building began as early as 1967. In 1971, a self-assessment for accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) determined the library's space, staffing levels, and collection size to be inadequate. Revitalized by the merger with the University of Tennessee System in 1969, the newly renamed University of Tennessee at Chattanooga secured the necessary funding to build the much-needed library by the early 1970s. After several years of planning and construction, the \$5.4 million building was dedicated in 1974 with great fanfare.



University of Tennessee at Chattanooga postcard featuring Lupton Library, circa 1980.



1981- Library collections completely reclassified using Library of Congress system.

1986- Library is named T. Cartter and Margaret Rawlings Lupton Library in honor of the late local philanthropists.

1984- The Library installs Hewlett-Packard minicomputers and an Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC), becoming one of the first libraries in Tennessee to move away from the card catalog.

1991- Fellowship of Southern Writers Room established in the library as a place for the group to convene during the Conference on Southern Literature.

2007- Tennessee General Assembly approves \$48 million towards the construction of a new library.

2010- Groundbreaking ceremony held for current library building.



## UTC Library (2015-present)

By the early 2000s, student enrollment approached 10,000 and the once-spacious 116,000 square feet in Lupton Library were no longer sufficient to meet campus needs. In 2007, the Tennessee General Assembly approved nearly \$50 million for a new building, and two years were spent planning and designing the 180,000 square foot library. The groundbreaking ceremony was held on January 29, 2010, and the library was opened in early 2015. Today, the university library is one of the most highly trafficked buildings on campus and is enjoyed by the entire community.

In addition to supporting the research and scholarship needs of the university community, the library building is a campus landmark in and of itself. Photograph courtesy of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga Office of Communications and Marketing.