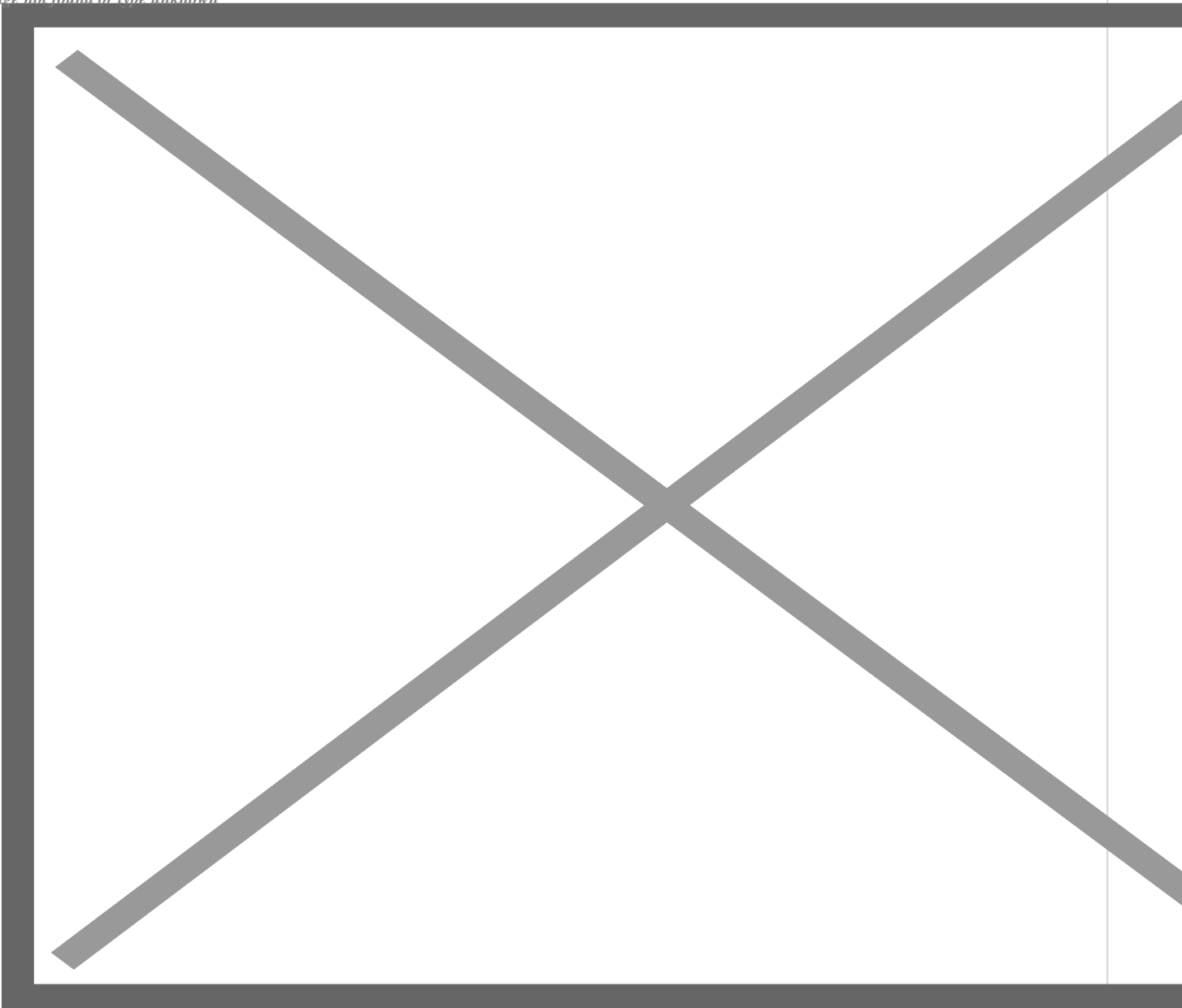


# *Cuba celebrates anniversary of the José Martí National Library*

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**The current building of the José Martí National Library was inaugurated on February 21, 1958**

Havana, Oct 18 (RHC) Readers and librarians of Cuba today celebrate the 122nd anniversary of the founding of the José Martí National Library (BNCJM), which assumes governing functions of the rest of these institutions in the country.

Intellectuals from the Caribbean island promoted the idea of ??establishing the institution to care for and preserve books, as well as create and operate libraries.

According to the library's digital site, in a small hall of the Castillo de la Fuerza, without books, shelves, or a librarian, on October 18, 1901 its first director, the prominent intellectual Domingo Figarola Caneda (1852-1926), took office.

Figarola himself donated the first texts from his private collection, which was enriched by generous donations from prominent collectors and his incessant efforts to encourage exchanges and purchases from bibliophiles.

Later in 1902 the library was located in the Artillery Master's Office, site where the National Library Magazine was born thanks to the donation of a small printing press in 1909, by Mrs. Pilar Arazosa de Muller.

In 1949, at the initiative of the Cuban scientist Fernando Ortiz (1881-1969), it was agreed to name the building that would be built years later and which today is one of the most emblematic buildings in Havana with the name of José Martí.

In the deposits of the José Martí National Library of Cuba, the historical memory of the nation is treasured, becoming the center of the Cuban political and cultural world, according to the projects of those years. The building was inaugurated on February 21, 1958.

Currently, the National Library of Cuba is recognized as an institution that preserves the national bibliographic heritage, governs the National Public Library System, and proposes library policies.

According to the institution's website, the entity leads the nation's cooperative effort in the preservation, research and dissemination of bibliographic heritage and cultural and scientific production. (Source: PL)



**Radio Habana Cuba**