



### Free on-line resources that you might like

The library is an excellent clearing house for the best informative internet sites, including ones specific to Michigan literature and history. Such sites will be more popular if people know they exist and if they are easy to access. All sites in this week's column allow readers to gain access and download texts free of any charge and free of advertising.

This week we're going to focus on a site, **Envision the Past**, that is well organized with authors and information about the last century in Michigan and four other Great Lakes states. This site is a compendium of resources rather than ones original to the site. It brings things together.

My potentially favorite link is **[envisionthepast.com/great-lakes-states/Michigan-fiction](http://envisionthepast.com/great-lakes-states/Michigan-fiction)**. This is a comprehensive listing of novels set in Michigan or written by Michigan authors such as Nevada Barr, Judith Guest, Elmore Leonard, and Joyce Carol Oates to name a few. The time line is 1800 to the present. Books can be downloaded as a PDF file on your computer for two weeks. Although it initially says, "on your device," I couldn't figure out how to use something like a Kindle, for instance. But if you have up to date Adobe and a computer, you're in instant business. I did have to sign up for a free account by simply giving an email address, screen name, and password selection. This gives me an "Open Library" account which is the mechanism for downloading choices.

I will say that although this isn't the quick and easy access of a typical library download, it's a good free resource for those interested in our Great Lakes area. We have many local history buffs among our patrons.

Another part of the site is **[envisionthepast.com/great-lakes-states/Michigan-local-history](http://envisionthepast.com/great-lakes-states/Michigan-local-history)** has a detailed history of parts of Michigan. A University of Michigan grad myself, I opened "Ann Arbor: the First Hundred Years." I'm picturing right now all my MSU friends in town rolling their eyes. (Go Blue.) East Lansing is also there. I haven't located Frankenmuth on this site which seems like an oversight, but we already have a lot on Frankenmuth history.

If you explore this whole site, you'll discover all kinds of historical information about Michigan and the Great Lakes include maritime shipping.

If you want quick and easy downloads though (and who doesn't), familiarize yourself with **Libby** by downloading the app on your phone from the library's homepage at [www.wicksonlibrary.org](http://www.wicksonlibrary.org). Have your library card number available to sign up the first time. Right

now, for example, you can borrow in the neighborhood of 4,000 audiobooks as well as more e-books. Looking at this right now, I see I need to borrow the audiobook of Melinda Gates's **The Moment of Lift** which is so highly recommended by Library Director Pamela Williams. You can renew your Libby book provided no one is on a wait list for it – unlikely in the case of the Gates book.

And don't forget to download the **Library Mobile app**, also from the library's homepage. You can keep track of all your activity on it, including what you have checked out, putting a hold on books, whether anything is overdue (and how much you might owe in a fine) – it's a personal library in your hand, especially nice when you don't have time to stop in and browse or the mood hits you after hours.

Certainly, for ease of use, Libby and the Library Mobile app are wonderful. I keep both on my phone home screen. Don't forget to get those – you'll use them.

The library wants to make sure you have a good grasp of the depth of resources at your disposal whether at or outside the library and that it facilitates your access through friendly apps. Or of course, face to face, our very favorite way to help our patrons. Look for more columns about these resources.

See you at the Library!

**Upcoming Events:** Please follow us on **Facebook**. This week we'll make sure that you can find hot links of resources, plus reminders about how to download your Mobile App and Libby.