



The City of Seattle

Landmarks Preservation Board

700 Third Avenue • 4th floor • Seattle, Washington 98104 • (206) 684-0228

REPORT ON DESIGNATION

LPB 3/02

Name and Address of Property: **University Library**
5009 Roosevelt Way NE

Legal Description: Tax lot 41 W 180 FT of E 210 FT on N 180 FT of S 210 FT of NW ¼ of SE ¼.

At the public meeting held on December 19, 2001, the City of Seattle's Landmarks Preservation Board voted to approve designation of the University Library as a Seattle Landmark based upon satisfaction of the following standards for designation of SMC 25. 12.350:

- C. It is associated in a significant way with a significant aspect of the cultural, political, or economic heritage of the community, city, state or nation.*
- D. It embodies the distinctive visible characteristics of an architectural style, period, or of a method of construction; and*
- E. It is an outstanding work of a designer or builder*
- F. Because of its prominence of spatial location, contrasts of siting, age or scale, it is an easily identifiable feature of its neighborhood or the City and contributes to the distinctive quality or identity of such neighborhood or the City*

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Public Libraries in America

The public library in America has played a critical role in promoting literacy and self-governance. In this sense, the library reinforces a quintessentially American concept of democracy. Its existence, as such, has paralleled the emergence of an architecture of increased access and openness.

Libraries, as buildings to store written materials, have existed since ancient times. Stacked rolls of cloth containing hieroglyphic information have been found in Egyptian archaeological sites, suggesting that special places were reserved for such functions. Libraries were established in

classical Greek, Roman, and Arab cities. In Europe, the monastery and university served as repositories of information. It was during the Industrial Revolution, however, that the public institution emerged, due in part to affordable mass printing technologies, which enabled books to be available to many. Individuals and private clubs also emerged to collect and share books.

In the U. S. the first printing press was established in 1639, in Boston. The city's clergymen established a "Public Library," in 1655. This and other library collections in seventeenth and eighteenth century America were supported by the clergy, and tended to emphasize religious works. It was during this period too that the nation's system of public education expanded. Thus, the library and the school evolved simultaneously, as twin institutions of learning.

In the 1730s, the first public lending library was created in Philadelphia. Essentially it was a library club, but with voluntary dues and an open membership. It primarily served merchants and working class patrons. A century later, in 1833, the first tax-supported library was established in Salisbury, Connecticut. In 1835, the State of New York passed legislation, allowing schools to use tax funds to support school libraries that were open to the public.

The Boston Public Library opened in 1854. It served as a physical model for library buildings for more than half a century. Its design, with an interior courtyard and reading room placed along the front facade, recalled the palazzo of the Italian Renaissance, the Bibliotheque St. Genevieve in Paris, and the monastery libraries of the Medieval period. However, the plan of the Boston Public Library, with its linear spaces, mezzanine, and alcove stacks, resulted in functional inefficiencies for both patrons and librarians.

The role of the librarian emerged during the nineteenth century, marked in part by the founding of the American Library Association (ALA) in 1876. The ALA helped to establish standards for the profession, and contributed to development of public library's emphasis on increased public access. Populist ideology at the turn of the twentieth century encouraged such access. This change in library policy raised questions of whether stacks should be open to public browsing, and how librarians could both effectively monitor public activities and control the checkout of books.

The evolution of the nineteenth century library saw employment of a variety of plans. Organizational concepts included the tall reading room walled by balconied stacks, the alcove reading room, where each alcove contained books on a particular subject, and the decentralized version, in which books were kept in open or in locked cases within a series of rooms.

The Carnegie Corporation and Its Influence on Libraries

Philanthropic contributions by Andrew Carnegie and the Carnegie Corporation initiated widespread library construction in America. They indirectly fostered basic changes in library planning as advocated by the profession of librarians in the early Twentieth Century. The methods of Andrew Carnegie and his secretary and designated library planner, James Bertram, redefined the nature of library use in North America, increased the number of libraries, and provided the general public with greater access to books.

Another collective effect of the Carnegie Corporation's influence on library design was to shift from a domestic model, formerly associated with libraries, to a more orderly and efficient program based on a business organizational model.

The Pre-Carnegie era library, as a building type, was relatively limited. It generally served as a multi-purpose cultural institution, as a forum for those already having access to books to share ideas and discuss books, rather than provide access to all readers. During the 1870s and 1880s, a new, uniquely American building type emerged. This new library often employed reading rooms with high ceilings, surrounded by balconied stacks, or had books arranged by subject in separate alcoves or placed in cases, in a series of interconnected decentralized rooms.

Problems arose with these arrangements relating to storage, access, and supervision of patron activities. In addition, interior building temperatures were difficult to control in gallery halls, resulting in damage to books in the upper shelves. The exteriors, meant to be "show buildings," were frequently, from the standpoint of the librarians, "needlessly extravagant."

By serving more as a forum for public debates and book discussions rather than providing access to books, the late nineteenth century library building was regarded as a treasure house, an image inconsistent with progressive ideals. These organizational and identity problems raised questions as to whether architects or librarians should direct library planning.

In the late 1800s, programs for library administration were shaped by new ideas that advocated changes to library organization, with the intent of bringing readers and books together. This shift resulted in increased sensitivity to public needs and increased services. These changes shaped the emerging concept of the "Modern Library."

Librarian Arthur E. Bostwick described the "Modern Library" in 1910, as having public support, open shelves, children's services, and cooperation with schools, with provision of branch libraries, traveling libraries, and advertising for libraries. However, lacking funds to build new facilities, the ideas of librarians remained largely conceptual.

The Carnegie Corporation began providing grants for libraries in the late 1890s. Funds were given to municipalities and private library organizations to construct free public libraries. The efficient funding methods of Carnegie and Bertram, unequaled by other philanthropists of the time, allowed a large number of buildings to be constructed in a short period.

The Carnegie Corporation's grant stipulations encouraged progressive concepts in library planning. Thus, the concept of the Modern Library came into widespread, as a result of the increased use availability of funds, coupled with Carnegie's design stipulations.

By keeping centralized decision-making to a minimum, regularizing procedures, and initiating a system of checks and balances, the Foundation was able to increase efficiency in its review of proposals, and reduce subjective decisions.

Carnegie's philanthropy had two distinct donation periods, the retail and the wholesale. During the initial "retail" era, from 1886 to around 1896, he gave over \$1,860,000 for the construction of fourteen buildings including public libraries in six United States communities.

The "wholesale" period began around 1896. It followed a several year lag in gifts. Donations during this late period increased to total over \$39 million for 1,412 libraries throughout forty-six states. Most of the grant money was intended specifically for libraries in small communities, and more than half of these grants were for less than \$10,000. Most of the libraries constructed were in the Midwest, but forty-three, including six neighborhood libraries and the Central Library in Seattle, were built in Washington State. In capital appropriations, Washington was fourth, with \$66.90 per 100 inhabitants, and ranked fourteenth in the number of buildings received. By 1919, Carnegie had paid for half of the 3,500 libraries then in existence in the United States

James Bertram further refined the initial grant application process in 1904 when he began assessing library design plans and budgets. Bertram equated cost over-runs with inefficient planning, and by 1908, the Foundation required his signature for approval on all library designs. Increased efficiency, use of common plan types, and economy of design resulted.

Bertram compiled his thoughts, and the advice he had gained from librarians, in his 1911 Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings. He revised and expanded the book over the next eight years. By its last publication, six plans were included. The fundamental concept behind Bertram's notes, which were included with grant awards, was an "(insistence) that practical matters take precedence over artistic expression."

Bertram thus defined architecture as the "expressive stylistic elements on (the) exterior (and the building as a) practical accommodation of heating, lighting (and) structural soundness." His directives redefined the nature of the public library, and re-sorted the social hierarchy of its design. The status of the library patron rose, changing the building's identity, from a guarded treasure house to a place of welcoming trust.

Library patron status was improved within the library by removing the implied presence of paternalistic donors. Fireplaces, which had been considered a "tempting shrine to benefactors" were removed, and separate rooms for trustees were eliminated. Instead, trustees shared a meeting room in the basement with the library staff, a location that suggested both the trustees and staff members were lower in the hierarchy than the library patrons. In addition, benefactor portraits were eliminated. In later years, recipient communities were not required to inscribe donor's names on the building exterior.

Changing the library's identity also meant changing spatial relationships within the library. Stacks were opened to library users to allow people to browse and find their own books. Signs of Victorian domesticity and hierarchy were removed, and uniform ceiling heights and evenly lit rectangular rooms were created.

By 1911, the librarian's role had also changed. It had evolved to be akin to a manager, as in a factory or office building. Therefore, the circulation desk was placed prominently in a central location. This afforded the librarian a panoptical view, allowing visual control over the stacks and supervision of patron activities. The prominent central location of the circulation desk established a close association of librarians with the library's identity. Meanwhile, the simple, symmetrical exterior identified the library as a welcoming, easily understood public building.

These physical changes helped establish a relationship of trust between the library and its patron and thus instilled democratic principles through building design. As a result, the Carnegie Library came to be identified as a center of learning for the self-motivated reader. New libraries accommodated nearly the full spectrum of the community, by including children and eliminating gender segregation. "The reformed library, a single room dominated by a centrally placed circulation desk and lined with book shelves, was the physical embodiment of the contractual arrangement between the philanthropist and the beneficiaries of his gifts, an agreement that specified and limited the recipient's obligations."

Andrew Carnegie contributed immensely to the development of free public libraries. His philanthropy lifted fundamental restraints that had limited their development by providing stable funding and permanent library facilities. The resulting widespread dispersal of libraries across the United States laid the foundation for permanent and publicly financed library systems. Carnegie's clearly defined procedures, streamlined approach, and requirement of city involvement, contrasted markedly with the whim and fancy by which other philanthropists had made donations.

Andrew Carnegie and James Bertram

Andrew Carnegie was born November 25, 1835, in Dunfermline, Scotland. His formal education began at age eight, and lasted only three years. His appreciation for reading and books stemmed, in part, from listening to readings and discussions at the Tradesmen's Subscription Library. His father, a weaver, helped create this library. Industrialization of the textile business led to the closure of many small businesses, including his father's. This prompted the Carnegie family's emigration to Allegheny, Pennsylvania, in 1848. There Carnegie worked as a bobbin boy in a textile factory, and later as a messenger boy for a local telegraph company. During this time, he learned telegraphy, and made important contacts with the Pennsylvania Railroad. At age eighteen he began working for the railroad as a private telegraph operator. Over the course of the following twelve years, he rose to become superintendent of Pennsylvania Railroad's Pittsburgh division.

Carnegie was self-taught using borrowed books from a private library. He learned how to invest money, and gained the technical information to make the investments that led to his fortune. He was also active in debating and self-improvement societies.

In 1865, Carnegie left the railroad to manage the Keystone Bridge Company, which replaced wooden bridges with iron ones. He invested simultaneously in other businesses, including oil, steel, and railroad locomotives. During the 1870s, he focused on steel manufacturing and created the Carnegie Steel Company. His absolute control over his company's stock enabled him to withhold dividends in prosperous years, and buy out competitors at bargain rates during hard times. Eventually his company became the largest in the United States.

In 1889, Carnegie wrote The Gospel of Wealth to express his views on philanthropy. He noted that wealthy men should live without extravagance, provide moderately for dependents, and distribute the rest of their fortune to benefit the welfare and happiness of the common person. He organized these thoughts and plans in a second book, The Best Fields for Philanthropy, where he listed the seven recipients for donation: universities, libraries, medical centers, public parks, meeting and concert halls, public baths and churches. Later he expanded this list to include scientific research, the general spread of knowledge, and world peace.

Carnegie was generally well regarded until the steel labor strike in July 1892, in which eighteen were killed at his plant in Homestead, Pennsylvania. Though Carnegie was in Scotland at the time, his indifference to events surrounding the strike was harsh. Henry Clay Frick, in charge of Carnegie Steel while Andrew Carnegie was in Scotland, broke off negotiations with striking workers and locked them out of the plant. He then called in 300 Pinkerton detectives to protect the plant and its nonunion workers. A gun battle erupted between the union workers and the Pinkertons, and the Pennsylvania National Guard was called to restore order and guard the plant. Later that fall, the strike broke. Thereafter Carnegie's grants were often viewed as "tainted money," having been gained at the expense of the very working people for whom he promoted public libraries.

In 1901, Andrew Carnegie sold his steel company to a group of investors organized by J. P. Morgan. He retired, and devoted his energies to philanthropy. Although donating to a variety of charities, he favored branch libraries as they reached the masses of people a central library might not. To Andrew Carnegie, libraries represented change, and an opportunity for people to improve themselves. He considered people's use of the library, even when small in number, to be of great community value.

James Bertram, Carnegie's personal secretary, was born in Corstorphine, Scotland (presently part of Edinburgh) on March 17, 1872. He attended Daniel Stewart's College, receiving an education in business. In 1888, he began work with the Great Northern and Northeastern Railway Company in Edinburgh. He later moved to South Africa, where he worked in the mining industry. At age 25, after returning to Scotland, he began working for Andrew Carnegie. Bertram's personality was described as being methodical, systematic, and a stickler for precedent. He worked for Andrew Carnegie and the Carnegie Corporation from 1897, until his death in 1934 at the age of 62.

In November of 1917, the Carnegie Corporation, in response to wartime demands, ended library gifts. Following the war, construction resumed on those libraries already promised, until 1923. Endowments after 1919 were made for library education, rather than buildings. In 1925, the Carnegie Corporation began making grants to the ALA for the training of librarians.

Andrew Carnegie died in 1919, at the age of 84. He had spent one quarter of his life on causes he believed in, and had given \$350 million (roughly ninety percent of his fortune) in gifts to charities that improve people's lives through education. Carnegie's grant program had an effect in Washington, as it did elsewhere, of developing the funding infrastructure for the public library, and providing permanent library buildings. The Carnegie grants were instrumental in furthering concepts of public access, education, and literacy.

The Carnegie Grant Process

The Carnegie Grant Program was never formally advertised, but relied on word of mouth. Progressive ideas of the 1900 – 1920s fueled community improvement, resulting in a shift from private to public support of basic services. Consequently, municipal funds were stretched thin. Life safety and basic amenities, such as police, fire, and sewer and water systems, took precedent over public libraries. Private philanthropy, especially the Carnegie grants, were an important source of funding when public funds might otherwise not have been available.

To obtain a Carnegie Library, a community had to initiate the process with a written request to Andrew Carnegie or the Carnegie Corporation. The Corporation would respond, seeking statistics on the community's population, existing library facilities, the availability of a site, and extent of town council support for a library. Once this information was reviewed, the final applications would be brought to Andrew Carnegie for approval. A form letter would be sent to the community, notifying them of the award conditions and amount.

A city had to meet minimum qualifications, with a population of at least 1,000, municipal ownership of a suitable site, and proof of legislation for an annual tax (typically 10% of the grant). The amount of the gift was usually set at two to three dollars per person; a town with a population of 1,000 would receive a \$2,000 - \$3,000 grant. The Foundation's methods ensured that the grants would be an investment in people who possessed the "strength of character" to use them.

There were no specific stipulations as to where the library should be located. The annual tax was for building maintenance, purchasing books, and the librarian salaries. The local resolutions provided Andrew Carnegie the assurance his money would not be wasted on a town unwilling to commit to the long-term civic responsibility of library operations.

Prior to 1908, the community had complete freedom to design and build the library. After that date, Bertram began assessing library plans for their efficiency and possible cost overruns. Applicants negotiated only with James Bertram, to substantiate their needs with increased details. A grant amount could rarely be raised after the initial amount had been determined. Any funds already raised by the community were to be spent before the Carnegie award could be used. Bertram later even "required the mayor's personal pledge that (a) building would be completed on budget."

Following notice of a grant, communities submitted architectural drawings for Bertram's approval. After 1911, both the recipients and architect(s) had to consider Bertram's Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings. Grant funds were distributed in three installments, the first installment at groundbreaking, and the second when the foundation was completed. Final funds were disbursed

upon receipt of both the architect's certification, and library board's approval – that the amount awarded in the grant matched the work completed.

Historic Overview of Seattle's Public Library System

Seattle's first Library Association was organized on August 7, 1868. The next year, a small loan library opened in Yesler Hall on First and Cherry, with a collection of approximately one hundred books. Little is known about that particular library, as it folded after a few years, with the collection being sold to the Territorial University.

During the ensuing decade, the city spread northward along Elliot Bay during its early development. Steep grades made the slopes above Front Street (First Avenue) unattractive to horse-drawn and pedestrian commerce, but provided a location for many residences, away from the noise and odor of the harbor. By the 1880s, Seattle's population surged from less than 7,000 to nearly 64,000.

In 1888, the Ladies Library Association was organized at the home of Mrs. Bailey Gatzert, in a renewed effort to establish a free public library in the city. Assisted with seed money from Leigh S. J. Hunt (owner and editor of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*) and businessperson Henry Yesler, the library was adopted as a branch of the Seattle City Government in October 1890. From 1891 to 1894, the library was housed in the Occidental Block in Pioneer Square. It then moved northeastward to the Collins Block for two years, followed by another two-year stay in the Rialto Building. In 1898, the collection was moved to the elegant, forty-room Yesler mansion, which provided ample room, light, and convenience for its patrons.

Early downtown re-grades and those on Denny Knoll and the steeper Denny Hill, north of Pine Street, were followed by the introduction of streetcars, and commercial development along First and Second Avenues. The national depression in 1893 slowed local economic growth, and the city did not fully recover until the onset of the Klondike Gold Rush in 1897. With the transcontinental railroad connection, the city's population growth resumed, its population rising to 110,000 in 1900.

By 1900, the city's public library had over 25,000 volumes and close to 10,000 registered borrowers. Patrons were allowed direct access to shelves to browse and select books, a rarity for libraries on the West Coast. The many rooms of the Yesler mansion allowed the library staff to establish separate departments, such as a Children's Room.

On New Years Day, 1901, fire swept through the Yesler mansion, destroying almost the entire library collection. Three days later Andrew Carnegie provided the sought after assistance. Carnegie previously had declined to provide funding when representatives from Seattle approached him in 1899, due to his view that the city was a "hot air boom town." In this new time of need, he admired the city's pluck and donated \$200,000 for a new building. Subsequent gifts also allowed the Library to establish its first permanent neighborhood branches.

In 1901, the City of Seattle purchased the Central Library's present site for \$100,000. Construction began in 1905, and the central Carnegie Library opened in 1907, with a collection of 93,784 volumes and 29,118 borrowers. The new building allowed for additional departments and services, such as a

periodical room, and a Fine Arts Division. That same year, the first embossed books for the blind were circulated and several deposit stations opened around town -- nineteen of them in fire stations.

Seattle maintained an extraordinary growth rate through annexation and immigration in the early decades of the twentieth century. The city's land area nearly tripled in 1907, with annexations of Ballard, West Seattle, and Southeast Seattle, and by 1910 its population reached 285,000. Public schools, which served as national models at the time, and cultural activities, such as theater and symphony, also made great advances prior to World War I. During the first decade, the city held the Alaska-Yukon Exposition, on the site of the University of Washington campus. This event had considerable impact on the physical development patterns in the University-Roosevelt neighborhoods.

Changes and turbulence within the city's social, economic, and political fabric characterized the city's history during the decades of 1900 – 1920, and the residential population during this time increased 190 percent. Efforts were underway to bring utilities, police and fire, as well as sewer and water services under municipal control, while industrial relations and the fight for civil liberties raised issues of life quality. Reform campaigns brought these issues to the fore of public discussion.

City residents living in the neighborhoods received their first municipal library services through stations, which were managed by a separate Branch Department. In 1908, the City received a Carnegie grant of \$105,000 for construction of three branches including Greenlake and West Seattle Libraries, and the subject building, the University Library. A \$70,000 Carnegie Grant, in 1911, funded two additional branches – Columbia and Queen Anne. In 1917, the Carnegie Corporation promised \$35,000 for a branch library in Fremont. Halted by World War I, the commitment was honored and construction resumed following the war, with the library's completion in 1921.

By 1913, library patrons throughout Seattle were served from 495 distribution points: the Central Library, six drugstore deposit stations, seven branch libraries, six playgrounds, eight special deposit stations, twenty-four fire engine houses, and 443 separate schoolrooms.

In 1910 the Library's Schools Division was opened, under the supervision of the Children's Department. School children were served exclusively by SPL until 1927, when responsibility for library service shifted, and the Library System and Seattle Public Schools created the first model school library in Wallingford's Hamilton Intermediate School.

The 1920s saw a resurgence of old problems such as unemployment, and social and political unrest. The move for municipal ownership dominated city politics, while funding was reduced or eliminated for socially sensitive programs in schools. Circulation during the 1920s and early 1930s grew along with the city's literate population. By 1930, the SPL collection had grown to nearly 450,000 volumes, with over 100,000 borrowers. Nearly one-fourth of Seattle's residents had library cards. A large foreign section was in place, indicating the diversity of Seattle's growing population. Circulation reached a highpoint in 1932.

In 1930, the Library published a "Ten Year Program," which included studies of the population and collection growth; library revenues and endowment funds; school, municipal reference and county services; and expansion of the Central Library. However, during the Hoover years and the Great

Depression, Seattle experienced minimal physical development and a continuation of unresolved social and political issues. The Depression and cutbacks in municipal funds impacted public library services. Library staff, salaries, and benefits were cut, and many services were curtailed for a full decade. Library hours were restricted, extension services eliminated. In 1933, branch departments were abolished, although ten branch libraries continued remain active. All deposit stations were closed and book mobile services ceased. In 1935, workers organized the Seattle Public Library Staff Association, which led to their inclusion in the city's pension program and a return to pre-Depression salary levels. A forty-hour workweek was also instituted.

The onset of World War II eased class tensions, but it also precipitated dramatic social changes. The internment of thousands of Japanese Americans, along with an influx of large numbers of African Americans, the introduction of women to many traditionally male jobs, and the establishment of a technocratic middle class dependent on the aerospace and defense industries all contributed to a shifting of Seattle's demographics.

Seattle boomed during the war, and its library services expanded vastly to serve military personnel, as well as local residents. In 1940, the library inaugurated its film library, the Great Books Program, discussion groups and an art gallery in its downtown auditorium. Collections were expanded, including phonograph records. Free service was extended in 1941, to all soldiers and sailors in the Puget Sound region, and in 1942, to all war workers. Adult education, which was organized in 1928, to provide individual reading programs, shifted its focus in 1942, to group literacy classes. Between 1942 and 1948, twenty-five library stations were established. In 1943, the King County Library System was created, contracting with the Seattle Public Library for services.

Expansion of post war library services continued in the 1950s, in both Seattle and surrounding King County. In 1953, Seattle annexed nearly fifteen square miles, including the Lake City and Northgate areas, increasing its population by 54,000. Library services in these new areas continued to be provided by the King County Library System, which by 1956, included thirty-seven branches and two bookmobiles. Seattle's library expanded its services in the 1950s, to include chamber concerts, teas, book clubs, and annual classroom visits to 150 public schools.

A \$5,000,000 bond was sought in 1950 for a new Central Library and five branches, but it was defeated at the polls. After a second \$1,500,000 library bond failed in 1952, City Librarian John Richards successfully lobbied the Seattle City Council for funds from the Cumulative Reserve Fund for three new branch libraries and the purchase of a second mobile unit.

It was not until 1956, when voters approved bonds for construction of a new Central Library and six neighborhood branches, that significant funds would be spent on the maintenance and construction of Seattle's public libraries. By the end of 1960, registered patrons in the city numbered 260,425, nearly half the city's total resident population.

By the early 1990s, the Seattle Public Library system had grown to more than twenty-five branches. Its downtown hub was severely stressed in serving the needs of the system and its immediate patrons. The Library proposed a major bond issue in 1994, to build a new Central Library and add several regional centers. This was joined on the ballot with major bond issues for police precincts and the Seattle Public Schools. All of these bonds failed.

Following this defeat, the Library Board launched a new review of its capital needs with extensive citizen participation. This process confirmed the need for a new Central Library, and a system-wide program of improvements, “Libraries for All.” This bond passed with a majority of nearly 70 percent, and provided \$196.4 million to renovate libraries throughout the city. In addition, this bond was intended to provide support for the arts, cultural diversity, and neighborhood vitality through the renovation of Seattle’s Public Library buildings.

A new Central Library, and three new libraries, to serve the Delridge, International District, and Northgate communities, will be added to the present system of twenty-two neighborhood libraries. Plans call for renovation, and expansion of existing facilities and services, to be completed over an eight-year period from 1999 to 2007. These plans include system upgrades and expanded service and public program space in the Carnegie-era Libraries.

In addition to the public funding, the Seattle Public Library Foundation pledged to raise \$40 million from the private sector. This private investment will complete that vision and ensure funding for high quality furnishings, works of art and new technology. In addition, it will build endowment funds for books, materials, and programs.

The University District Neighborhood – An Overview

The University District is physically separated from downtown Seattle, and developed historically as a self-sufficient community, oriented around the University of Washington. Prior to 1885, the area was primarily used for logging and had seen only minimal development. In the late nineteenth century it was settled by a few farmers.

Early transportation from Seattle to the University District consisted of a horse cart ride to South Lake Union, followed by a boat ride across the lake, then by cart or foot up the hill. An alternative route was established in 1887 by the Seattle Lake Shore and Eastern Railroad. In 1890, the first electric trolley line was opened over the old Latona Bridge (replaced by the University Bridge in 1909). In 1939, the Forty-Fifth Street Viaduct, constructed south of University Village, allowed service to the University District.

Early commercial development in the University District was slow and focused on the needs of the area’s residents. Development occurred mainly along Brooklyn Avenue Northeast and University Way Northeast (then Fourteenth Avenue), and consisted of small businesses and industries. In 1893, after the University of Washington moved from its downtown site to its present campus location, and the focus of development shifted to orient itself toward the University. The first district bank was established in 1906, on Forty-Second Street and Fourteenth Avenue. The 1909 Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exposition, which held on the University of Washington campus, greatly encouraged development of the University District.

Residential growth of the University District increased as transportation was improved, following development of the University of Washington campus, and the 1909 Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exposition. The early 1900s saw the building of many of the local churches, single family houses, the neighborhood theaters, University Library, YMCA at Fifteenth Avenue Northeast and Northeast

Forty-Second Street, a J. C. Penny's Store, and several apartment buildings, all of which quickly filled most of the undeveloped area.

By the 1910s businesses in the area mainly served customers associated with University of Washington. During the building boom of the 1920s, the business district shifted north, to the area around Northeast Forty-Fifth Street and University Way Northeast. Development decreased briefly during the Depression and war years. Post war enrollment at the University of Washington increased during the 1950s, and it spurred development of retail business and construction of student housing near the campus.

Much of the area was rezoned in the 1960s to encourage multi-family, to encouraging dense apartment buildings, and to increase diversity. During this time the University campus continued to grow, which led to increased land use competition and some conflict between the University and the adjacent business and residential community.

Demographics data from the University district from 1890 to the 1950s reflects the initial presence of working class families and the subsequent shift to students, transients, and a decrease in number of families. A population increase occurred in the 1970s in the number of new families moving to and returning to the area. Presently the District serves approximately 35,000 permanent residents and an estimated 50,000 University students and staff.

Present planning efforts were initiated in the 1990 with the Neighborhood Plan. Adopted planning goals include stabilization and maintenance of all the northwest residential neighborhoods and the Northeast Fiftieth Street corridor. Existing resources along the Northeast Fiftieth Street corridor are designated to provide community facilities and services.

History of the University Library

The University Library is one of the oldest branch libraries in Seattle. Its first location, which opened in 1906, consisted of several small rooms next to the United Methodist Church at 1415 Northeast Forty-Third Street. Later, after the church was renovated, the Library was moved into the church itself, to increase floor space, with improved lighting.

The University District was chosen as the location for a new library due to its potential population growth. The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition took was planned for the site of the University of Washington campus in 1909 and housing in the neighborhood was expected to boom as a result. The Library Board had several sites in consideration within the University District including one on the corner of Tenth Avenue and East Fiftieth Street, presently the site of the I-5 Interstate.

The present site was eventually determined as a matter of necessity. Due to a shortage of municipal funds, the city asked the public to donate land for the library. In 1908, Watson and Cornelia Allen donated a 160' x 200' parcel on the corner of Tenth Avenue Northeast and East Fiftieth Street (currently Northeast Fiftieth Street and Roosevelt Way Northeast). Their donation was made contingent upon the inclusion of an auditorium in the building.

The remote location of the site, at a time when the streets surrounding it remained unpaved, brought widespread criticism from local residents. The commercial center of the District was then, as it is now, near the intersection of Northeast Forty-Fifth Street and University Way Northeast. Later popular opinion would applaud the Library Board's decision, as the alternate site, on the corner of Tenth Avenue Northeast and East Fiftieth Street, was covered by construction of I-5.

The current University Library building was built with funds from a 1908 Carnegie grant. The award amount granted totaled \$105,000, and was for three buildings – the Green Lake, West Seattle and University Libraries. Construction costs for the University Library totaled \$38,935. Of that amount, \$35,000 was covered by the 1908 Carnegie grant.

A design competition was held for the building. SPL felt all three libraries included in the Carnegie Corporation grant, should be built simultaneously. Consequently the competition was intended to produce one design, for all three libraries. Each building then would be constructed and finished with different materials. The conditions of the competition limited it to local architects. The building was restricted to a 40' x 80' structure, with one main floor and one lower floor, for spaces for reading, offices, classrooms, and storage. Of the thirty-three entries received, the architectural firm Somervell & Coté was selected in 1908.

Following the award the Library Board recommended that city librarian, Judson T. Jennings, undertake a trip to the east coast to research branch library designs. Jennings visited twenty-two recently constructed branch libraries. After returning, he consulted with architects Somervell and Coté. The architects then refined their designs, which were followed closely in the subsequent construction of the three library buildings. The building was formally dedicated and opened for public service on August 5, 1910.

In addition to regular services the Library provided for use of the auditorium, children's room, a young people's collection, and delivery service to patrons. In the first year the collection reached 7,631 volumes, library cards were issued to 1,600 people, and just over 44,000 books were circulated. During the initial year the auditorium became an important community center as few other nearby facilities existed for public use.

World War I brought a drop in patronage. During the war, the current Library was used as a meeting place for wartime agencies, such as the Red Cross, and the Well-Baby Clinic. In 1926, the Tenth Avenue Improvement Club donated a piano to the Library. The Depression in the 1930s saw an increase in readers, reaching a record number of over 355,000 in 1933. At one point, a sixty-three foot long line of patrons, waiting to check out books, formed at the circulation desk. In 1940 alone, 515 groups used the auditorium, with over 8,150 people in attendance.

During World War II, the number of readers dropped. The Library remained a meeting place for patriotic groups, such as the Women's Air Raid Wardens, the War Defense Chest, and the Camp Fire Guardians.

By the early 1950s, parking emerged as a problem. The librarians urged that the area behind the library be made into a parking lot. Eventually the present parking lot built in 1955.

The most frequently used current services provided by the University Library are books and Internet access. Book discussion and individual reading groups are also held and the Library maintains computers for library patron use. The auditorium continues to be used frequently by local community groups and is used heavily for library-sponsored programs. Use restrictions regarding the auditorium require that meetings be free, not for profit, open to all, and that no funds be solicited.

Predominant users of the University Library are students and adults who live in the area or commute. Among the students, the largest user groups are college age, with some middle school students. Young children are generally brought in with their parents. There is relatively little of the typical after-school influx of children and students, as the neighborhood's private elementary school, University Child Development School, is comprised largely of commuters. Library patrons tend to arrive by foot and bicycle, contrary to what might be expected with the general dependency on automobile transportation and the Library's location on Roosevelt Way Northeast.

The proposed closure of the nearby Green Lake Library for renovation late in 2001 is expected to create an influx of patrons for University Library services. Librarians expect the future role of the University Library to continue with the Carnegie Corporation's original intent of providing accessible public services to all. This is especially relevant to computer access, as many current patrons may not have the equipment or internet service.

The Architects, Somervell & Côté

At the turn of the nineteenth century, architects in Seattle utilized designs for civic structures that featured the Beaux-Arts Classical style, as these were considered most appropriate to a growing metropolis. Woodruff Marbury Somervell (1872 – 1939) and Joseph S. Côté (born 1874) both moved to Seattle to supervise construction of the Saint James Catholic Cathedral (1903 – 1907) for the New York firm of Heins & LaFarge. They remained in Seattle, forming a partnership that lasted only a year, from 1906 to 1910. During their subsequent residence in Seattle, they worked to adapt styles learned in their formal education to Pacific Northwest conditions.

The firm of Somervell & Côté quickly demonstrated a capacity to undertake large-scale projects. It rapidly won commissions from the Seattle Public Library through the Beaux-Arts tradition of the design competition. Their first commission, in 1907 – 1909, was for work on the entry of the Carnegie-funded Central Library. It was followed by a commission for the design of the University, Green Lake, and West Seattle Branch Libraries. The designs of these libraries clearly exhibit the influence of Somervell & Côté's grounding in Beaux-Arts Classicism.

Somervell & Côté's designs represent an early synthesis of local materials and environmental conditions, and Beaux-Arts Classicism. This synthesis can be seen in two of their largest private commissions, the Perry Apartments (1906 – 1907; destroyed) and Providence Hospital (1907 – 1912). By 1912, when *Architectural Record* published its first survey on Seattle's architecture, four of the twenty-two buildings cited were entirely or partially the work of Somervell & Côté.

W. M. Somervell

Woodruff Marbury Somervell was born in Washington D.C. on May 3, 1872 to Augustus and Mary Eliza (Somervell) Maccafferty. Through his architectural career, he was actively involved in civic improvement efforts, as well as the design of public and commercial buildings in Seattle and Vancouver, Canada.

Somervell's family name was changed by a Supreme Court decision, due to a clause in the will of his maternal grandfather (Woodruff Marbury Somervell), in order to inherit certain properties. His paternal grandfather, an Irish civil engineer, was associated with DeWitt Clinton in the Erie Canal project, and later traveled to Cuba where he built the island's first light house, railway and located the first copper mines.

Somervell apparently inherited some of this restless nature. After graduating in 1892, with a degree in Architecture from Cornell University, he left for the School of Fine Arts in Florence, Italy. He moved to Paris in 1893 to be part of an American atelier. He later worked a year in Baltimore, before moving to New York in 1902. He stayed in New York, working for the firm of Heins & LaFarge until he was sent to Seattle in 1904 to supervise construction of the Saint James Catholic Cathedral (1903 – 1907; altered), on First Hill. During his work for the New York firm of Heins & LaFarge he met fellow architect Joseph Coté.

Somervell formed a Seattle partnership with Coté for a four-year period, 1906 – 1910, before forming a sole proprietorship in 1911. He opened a branch office in Vancouver, Canada, with John L. Putnam, while retaining an independent office in Seattle. A large portion of Somervell & Putnam's work in Vancouver was for banks and office buildings, such as the Birks Building (1912; destroyed), which was the first terra cotta clad building in that city.

Somervell's independent Seattle practice built on his apparent interest in Beaux-Arts Classicism. By 1912, he and architect Harlan Thomas, in a new partnership, had secured commissions for the Queen Anne, Columbia, and Henry L. Yesler Memorial (Douglass-Truth) Libraries. Each was designed utilizing standard Carnegie building type plans, yet each retained separate qualities, with exterior features and siting well matched to their sites and neighborhoods.

These public building commissions provided Somervell an opportunity to realize and refine his thoughts on civic improvement, an important component of his professional writings. He had an avid interest in civic art, which he defined as useful and communal art. This interest corresponded well with the civic and community intent of Carnegie public libraries.

World War I saw Somervell's departure from Seattle to serve in the Corps of Engineers and Chemical Warfare. He later remained in Europe to work on restoration of cultural monuments. Following the war, he and John L. Putnam both moved to Los Angeles. There they worked together until 1929, after which Somervell worked both independently and with architect S. Tilden Norten, until 1935. He retired that year to Cannes, France, and pursued a lifelong interest in etching until his death at the age of 64 in April 1939.

Joseph S. Côté

Joseph S. Côté was born on March 9, 1874 in the Canadian province of Quebec. Trained as an architect at Columbia University in New York City, he first arrived in Seattle in 1904 when he was sent to assist W. M. Somervell in supervising the construction of Saint James Catholic Cathedral (1903 – 1907; altered) for the New York City firm of Heins & LaFarge.

Joseph S. Côté's career, after the brief partnership with Somervell, saw a period of commercial work prior to World War I, with construction of Seattle's Noble Hospital (1910 – 1911; destroyed), the original building of Swedish Hospital (1911 – 1912; destroyed) and the Sunset Club (1914 – 1915).

During World War I Côté served as a captain in the Army Corps of Engineers. Upon his return to Seattle in 1920, he focused primarily on residential architecture, favoring Georgian and Federal Revival Styles. He was associated with some of the best addresses in Seattle and was well known for adorning many of his buildings with fleur-de-lis, scrollwork, and elegant plasterwork. His architectural renderings were characterized by Lloyd Lovegren, a retired architect who worked in Côté's office during the late 1920s, as having fully developed drawings and detailing on a continuous roll of tracing paper. These could become over 100 feet long – a practice apparently quite different from his Seattle contemporaries.

Côté resided in both the Perry Hotel, for which he was the principal designer, and in the Rainer Club, where he had provided some remodel designs. An active member in the American Institute of Architects, from 1913 to 1926, he was also an officer in the Architectural League of the Pacific Coast. His last listing in the Seattle telephone directory was in 1948 when he was 74. It is unclear when and where he passed away.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

Urban Context

The built environment of the University District has experienced constant change over the years. In 1910, when the University Library was built, the surrounding area stood largely unbuilt, with some small remaining pioneer farms and newer single-family residences.

In the late 1970s, the University District's predominant three components were residential and commercial buildings, and the University of Washington. According to the 1975 Nyberg and Steinbrueck "Inventory of Buildings and Urban Design Resources," the bulk of the area north of Fiftieth Street Northeast was single family residential. The area south of Fiftieth Street Northeast was then largely multi-family residential and apartments, especially near the University of Washington campus. Auto-oriented commercial businesses line Roosevelt Way Northeast, occasionally with housing and apartments. Retail uses are on University Avenue Northeast from Northeast Fortieth Street north to Cowen Park

Presently the area is a diverse community is characterized by its residential neighborhoods, a mix of auto and pedestrian-oriented retail businesses and commercial activities, and the University of Washington.

The Carnegie Building Type

The Carnegie library plan of the early twentieth century was typically rectangular and featured bi-axial symmetry and an open main floor plan. Although variations emerged, its functions were proscribed, and the building was divided into specific spaces – entry stairs, vestibule, central area and circulation desk, open shelf area, reading rooms, work and staff rooms, and restrooms. Buildings typically featured a separate children's area, story hour room or alcove. A lecture or meeting room or auditorium located at or partially below grade, was another standard addition to the library program. Spatial volumes were tall, with perimeter window sills set at approximate six feet in height to accommodate book shelving.

University Library Site and Exterior Form

The University Library is located in Seattle's University District, at 5009 Roosevelt Way Northeast. The site, a rectangular lot, is at a corner block location. It faces east toward Roosevelt Way Northeast and abuts a paved alley on the west. The south facade is along Northeast Fiftieth Street.

The building is set back about 75' from Roosevelt Way Northeast, 25' from neighboring properties to the north, 80' from the west property line, and 40' from Northeast Fiftieth Street. The main public entry and primary front facade are oriented east, onto Roosevelt Way Northeast. The paved parking lot is on the west.

The architectural style of the University Library is Neo-Classical, with a grand entrance and formal symmetry. Some Mediterranean influence is indicated in the stucco cladding, green-colored Spanish roof tile, and exposed rafter ends (originally painted darker for emphasis).

A review of the original plans, dating from March 1909, provides a contemporary view of the building. (To coordinate between original and more recent drawings, the floors are referred to in this report as the main floor and the basement, partially below grade).

According to original drawings of the building, the historic landscape design contained very few plantings at the side or entrance. The site sloped steeply downward towards the east, and the yard in front of the library sloped gradually downward to meet a low concrete curb, adjacent the sidewalk.

The building's structure was typical for its era, and combined a number of systems and materials. Foundation, footings, and external walls below grade were all reinforced concrete. Above grade bearing walls consisted of reinforced concrete frames with hollow clay tile infill, covered with cement stucco. Floors and floor framing were reinforced concrete, with steel I-beams encased in concrete to form beams. Roof framing over the reading room consisted of simple wood trusses, with bolted joints, and steel rod tension members. The roof framing over the open shelf room, librarian's room, and staff rest room were wood trusses. There was a chimney adjacent the north side of the open shelf room.

The building featured a gable roof over its principal volume and entry and stepped gable ends. The roofs over the open shelf room, staff restroom, and librarian's office featured hipped ends. Original roofing material was green Spanish clay tile. Low slope roofs over the open shelf room, staff restroom, and the librarian's room were originally tar and gravel. Roof details included galvanized metal gutters and decorative rafter ends. Drains were also galvanized metal and copings on the gable ends were terra cotta.

The windows on the upper floor provide a vertical quality to the exterior facades, and are emphasized by the decorative roof brackets. On both level the windows are 4'-8" wide, and grouped in five within wide surrounds. Those on the upper floor are further distinguished by their height – approximately 11' – and by the two over two glazing pattern which provides a strong vertical proportion with vertical muntins set at 1'-3" o. c. The windows in the central room, the original open stack room, are double-hung types. Windows at the main floor provided a large amount of natural lighting. Another prominent feature for daylighting was the skylight with stained glass and ceiling monitor, located centrally over the open shelf room.

The main public entry featured reinforced concrete stairs, porch, and vestibule. Classical detailing characterized the round arched entry, with two large plinths, and topped with scrolls. Columns flanked the wood entry doors, with a half-circular transom, a decorative cornice, portal window and signage panel above. The vestibule featured marble wainscoting and trim, with rubber tile covered steps leading up to the circulation desk.

Exterior decorative elements included the ornate rafter ends and brackets, a treatment used along the gable roof edge on the east and west facades, and repeated along with a shallow roof section over the windows on the north and south ends. Another set of concrete stairs descended from the public

sidewalk along Northeast Fiftieth Street to the auditorium. A service entry was located on the north wall of the basement, opening into a passageway near the boiler room.

Original Building Interior

The library plan was partitioned according to function, with specific rooms on the main floor for staff activities in the staff restroom, staff toilet, and the librarian's room. A janitor's room provided for maintenance services. Public space consisted of the children's reading room, adult's reading room, women's toilet, large open shelf room, and the central circulation desk area.

Interior arrangements of public space on the main floor focused on the octagonal circulation desk. Its prominent central location and the glazed and wood panel partitions between the central area and adjacent reading rooms, allowed the librarian to easily monitor patron activities. Six-foot tall built-in bookshelves wrapped around the perimeter of the reading rooms below the tall 4'8" by 11' windows.

Finishes on the main floor were simple yet decorative. Flooring was cement, the walls and ceiling were painted plastered. Wood picture molding was provided in the children's and adult's reading rooms, as well as in the staff restroom and librarian's office. The central area, staff rest room, open shelf area, and librarian's office had a four-inch marble base along the walls. Columns between the central area and the open shelf area had decorative wood capitals. Beams spanning between the columns were covered with wood panel boxed soffits. According to a 1981 "Conservator's Report," original light fixtures include the cable supported glass globe basket uprights.

An interior stairway between the main floor and the basement was located off the vestibule. The basement landing opened onto a corridor, which led to public and service areas at the lower level.

The original L-shaped basement had a roughly even balance between public and service space. Public space included an auditorium with a raised wood platform, children's story room, men's toilet, and the corridor. Arrangement of the basement rooms provided both internal and external entries to the auditorium. Original service areas included a fan room, recessed boiler room, engineer's room, "unpacking room," and a coal room.

Finishes in the basement were simple and utilitarian. Floors and base were concrete. The corridor and auditorium both had a cement wainscot, while the children's story room and unpacking room had fir wainscots. All four areas contained wood picture molding, and a chair rail was provided in the auditorium. The men's toilet had a "Racolith" wainscot. The storage and fan rooms were whitewashed. Decorative features include the wood capitals on the columns, and the wood panel boxed soffits.

Doors between interior spaces were typically two panel types with wood stiles and rails. The upper panels of those in the stairwell, from the main floor, the unpacking room and the children's story room, were glass. Exterior doors were similar as interior doors. The primary exterior doors into the auditorium had decorative grillwork over the upper panels, and a transom window opening. The windows were wood, with wood sash and trim and concrete lintels.

Changes to the Original Building

According to building permit records, upgrading and changes over time included the following:

- 1933 Light fixtures altered with Pittsburgh reflectors
- 1951 New oil burner
- 1951 Light installed over front entrance
- 1954 Lights improved
- 1955 Railings installed on interior and exterior stairs at entrance
- 1956 Installation of natural gas heating plant
- 1961 Alter building per plan (by architects Durham Anderson & Freed)
- 1982 New conduit, wire service for library remodel
- 1983 Structural bracing of masonry gable ends and chimney to existing library building
- 1984 Alter existing library per plans, install fire alarm system, install lighting
- 1987 Construct accessibility ramp, provide new wiring, and seismic and system upgrading.
- 1999 Install 20 AMP circuit to run existing sump pump

Changes to the site included the addition of a seventeen-car parking lot to the rear of the building in 1955. At this time, the plaza leading to the main entry was also reconstructed. A master landscape plan was prepared in June 1984, which suggested extensive plantings both adjacent the building's base and around the site's perimeter. However, the current landscape does not reflect a full implementation of most of the 1984 proposed changes. During the 1984, building renovation an accessible, handicapped drop-off was added on the west side of the building, and landscape was refurbished.

Changes in public access and rooms occurred during restorations in 1961, 1984, and 1987. Existing public entries received finish upgrades, but maintained their original configuration. A second entry to the main floor was provided in 1984, off the southwest corner of the building, and the main entry repaired along with reconstruction of the original entry lamps.

Throughout these renovations arrangement of rooms on the main floor have been maintained, and they are remain characteristic of the Carnegie library building type. The arrangement of features within the public space reflects ongoing adjustments to new service needs. The configuration and location of the octagonal (as shown in original drawings and historic photos) central circulation desk has remained the same, however, the 1984 plans show the present square circulation desk.

The wall between the lower level children's story room and the unpacking room was removed in 1987, opening up this area for increased service functions. Modifications to service areas in the basement were also made in the 1980s.

In 1984, carpets were installed for improved acoustics. In 1987, an ADA ramp was installed in the auditorium along the west wall, and a new ADA ramp entry was installed from the parking lot on the southwest corner of the building. New metal handrails and lamps were added also.

Exterior repairs have included new gutter covers and re-roofing the flat roof areas and new stainless steel down spouts and gutters in the 1950s and 1960s. In 1973, the building was re-roofed with three-tab asphalt, and new gutters and downspouts were installed. In 1983, bracing was added at the gable ends. Gutters and downspouts were replaced in 1984 to match the original ones, and green Spanish tiles were provided at sloped roof areas, also to match the original roofing. Seismic ties were also added at this time, and in 1987, additional roof bracing was provided.

In 1968, the original entry doors were replaced with aluminum frame entry doors. During the 1984 renovation, these doors were replaced to more closely match the original wood doors. Windows were repaired, the original skylight was restored with a new and the skylight frame in the 1980s.

While the University Library has been changed to meet contemporary library needs, it retains most of its original character-providing features. The current Library was one of seven Carnegie Libraries to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988.

The features of the Landmark to be preserved, include:

The site, the exterior of the building, and the interior of the main floor of the building excluding movable furniture.

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