

Hennepin County Library

1968 Publicity Scrapbook Summary

Note: Significant newspaper articles, brochures, photos, and other items from the scrapbook have been retained and filed by subject in the archives.

System News

BRANCHES: In 1968 branches were: Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Champlin, Crystal, Edina, Excelsior, Glen Lake, Golden Valley, Long Lake, Maple Plain, Minnetonka, Minnetonka (until March 27, 1967 was Minnetonka Mills), Morningside, Orono, Osseo, Richfield, Robbinsdale, St. Anthony, St. Bonifacius, St. Louis Park, Wayzata, Westonka.

AUTOMATION: After Jan. 15, 1968, a new automated book charging system began operating in all major branches. With the cooperation of the county's Data Processing department, the new system eliminated several procedures that were done by hand. Under the new system the borrower's library card and books to be borrowed were photographed with the IBM transaction slip. Borrowing rules were changed to best use the new process, including a two-week loan period, a two-week renewal if there were no reserves waiting, and a 10-cent charge to place a reserve and receive notification by mail. (*Bloomington Sun, Jan. 11, 1968*). Note: Library automation was part of an overall Hennepin County program of using computers to perform a variety of county record-keeping tasks more effectively and efficiently.

AMNESTY DAY: Overdue books returned June 6, 1968 were not charged a fine at all Hennepin County and Minneapolis public libraries. The previous fine-free day was in 1932 when about 1,000 books were returned. (*Minneapolis Star, May 29, 1968*). [There was no follow-up article about the total of overdue books returned systemwide. At Excelsior, librarian David Waldemar said it was a slow day, but several books due in 1948 at the Glen Lake Sanatorium were returned and he noted that many people stayed home to watch coverage of the Robert Kennedy assassination. (*Excelsior Sun, June 13, 1968*).

SUMMER READING PROGRAM: Ethel Olson, children's librarian at headquarters, coordinated the summer program, obtaining permission to use Charles Schulz art for the theme: 'Charlie Brown's All-Star Summer Reading Club.' More than 5,000 children became all-stars by reading at least six books. At some libraries participation doubled from previous years. Friends of the Library assisted in several libraries and sponsored end-of-summer parties. (*Hennepin County Family, September 1968*).

BOOK FAIR: The annual Children's Book Fair sponsored by HCL and MPL took place Nov. 3-9 at the Minneapolis Public Library. More than 1,000 children's

books were featured, along with an author talk, presentation by a children's book illustrator, and magic shows. (*Hennepin County Family, November 1968*).

HELEN YOUNG COLUMNS: HCL Director Helen Young continued to provide regular (weekly?) columns to the suburban newspapers about HCL books available to public. Among the topics covered: contemporary religion, vacation planning, local authors, best books for teens, 'pop culture,' do-it-yourself guides. (*various suburban papers, 1968*).

1969 HCL BUDGET: The County Board gave preliminary approval of a \$326,000 increase over 1968 for HCL's 1969 budget. The total budget would be \$2.7 million; despite the dollar increase, the mill rate would be reduced by .3 mill to 6.07 mills. (*Minneapolis Star, Oct. 28, 1968*).

Library Construction/Improvement Program

LIBRARY BOARD: The Library Board discussed procedures for an expanded library system. The procedures outlined how the library board would work with local communities to finance and build new libraries, with the intent that eventually the county would acquire all local libraries. (*North Hennepin Post, Feb. 8, 1968*). The nine-member Hennepin County Library Board: Alan L. MacLean, Edina; Mrs. Raeder Larson, St. Louis Park; E. J. Cooper, Robbinsdale; Robert G. Rainey, Bloomington; Mrs. Sally Plank, Wayzata; and Peter A. Heegaard, Minnetonka. The three Minneapolis members on the board were Ralph Forrester, Grace Ennen, and Virginia Kremen. Heegaard was elected President. (*Edina Sun, April 4, 1968*).

LEASING LIBRARIES: The Library Board was moving ahead with a plan to buy existing libraries and establish library branches to meet countywide goals. The board faced opposition, however, from some suburbs that had built good libraries and wanted to retain greater identity and control over those buildings. In response, the Library Board created a "10-year-lease-of-facilities" option for those communities. An editorial stated: "The lease plan seems wise, as a gesture of cooperation and flexibility in this period of transition to the new policy of county library ownership. We hope its use will be limited, however, and will not serve to slow the overall development of the county library system." (*Minneapolis Star, April 24, 1968*).

MID-YEAR UPDATE; Peter Heegaard provided an update about library projects, including that in response to a letter from the Hennepin County Library Board, 42 architectural firms expressed interest in designing the new Southdale Regional Library. He also noted that of six communities contacted, to date Brooklyn Center and St. Louis Park were interested in the County's leasing/buy-back program to buy library buildings. (*Sun Newspapers, July 8, 1968*).

BLOOMINGTON: Bloomington City Council in 1967 accepted the report prepared by the Bloomington Library Study Committee that stated the city needed four

branch libraries and possibly a fifth if future growth warranted. The City Council included \$650,000 for building two libraries in the May 14 bond referendum. (*Bloomington Sun, March 28, 1968*). The HCL Board announced that Hennepin County would provide funds for construction of the new library in Bloomington -- with maximum reimbursement of \$24 a square foot, less federal grants and donations. Or, as noted above in the "Leasing Libraries," Bloomington could choose to lease their facilities or continue their independent operations with the county continuing to provide books and staff. (*Bloomington Sun, April 18, 1968*). Bloomington approved purchase of three lots as sites for two libraries. A double bungalow at 8809-8811 Queen Ave. S. was the fifth lot purchased for the new Penn Lake Library, 8800 Penn Ave. S. In east Bloomington, the City Council approved purchase of lots at 9000 and 9008 Columbus Ave. S.; the city planned to build the second new library at 90th St. and Park Ave. S. (*Minneapolis Star, July 30, 1968*). Architect fees for the new Penn Lake Library led to delay in building the library. The fees increased the total cost to \$371,575; the library board approved \$335,000 for the construction. Library Board President Heegaard said the project could be reduced or construction could be delayed until 1969 when the construction cost could be readjusted to reflect rising building costs. (*Minneapolis Star, Nov. 27, 1968*).

BROOKLYN CENTER: Brooklyn Center City Manager discussed the sale of the Brooklyn Center Library to Hennepin County. Hennepin County would lease the land from Brooklyn Center and pay the city \$1 a year on a 50-year lease. The city would control use of the land and Hennepin County would pay special assessments. The County would make an initial payment of \$86,296 for the building. The difference between this and the original construction cost, about \$99,000, would be made in 15 annual payments beginning Jan. 1, 1969. (*Brooklyn Center Post, Nov. 21, 1968*).

EDINA: The new Edina Library, 4701 W. 50th St., opened in September. Located next door to the Edina Village Hall, the new library replaced an old home that had served as the community's library. Edina constructed the building at a cost of \$439,807, including landscaping; about one-fourth of the cost was paid by a federal library grant. The staff consisted of Dorothy Dunn, head librarian; Virginia Williams, children's librarian; three other librarians and a clerk. (*Hennepin County Family, October 1968*). The new library opened Sept. 9 with 400 circulating art prints, 50,000 volumes, 1,000 reference items, 1,200 recordings and films. (*Minneapolis Tribune, Sept. 10, 1968*). Friends of the Edina Library identified four goals for 1969: purchase a 16mm film projector and four children's films; bring in more residents to use the library; promote aspects of the library beyond book borrowing (i.e. meeting space, listening alcove, art prints to borrow, etc.); promote the library as a potential recipient of memorials. (*Edina Sun, Oct. 10, 1968*). Donations to the Edina Library Fund reached about \$35,000 and officials expected they would reach their goal of \$50,000, which would be used to purchase additional books, art prints and special equipment. (*Edina Sun, Oct. 31, 1968*). An 11-foot copper sculpture that symbolized historic and geographic

elements of Edina was unveiled at the dedication Nov. 17 of the new Edina Library. U of M art professor and sculptor Katherine Nash created the the piece, which incorporates a thistle for the Scots and a shamrock and clover for the Irish. About a 100 years ago, Andrew Craik bought a flour mill on Minnehaha Creek which he named Edina after his home in Scotland. The sculpture also incorporated places, such as Valley Road Road and Nine Mile Creek. (*Minneapolis Tribune, Nov. 18, 1968*). Edina City Council authorized the City Manager to enter into a lease with Hennepin County, with the County leasing the Edina Library building from Jan. 1, 1969-Dec. 31, 1969. (*Edina Sun, Dec. 19, 1968*).

MINNETONKA: Minnetonka Villages's Library Site Committee recommended that a new village library be included in the proposed village civic center complex. The committee also recommended that city officials consider future facilities for the Glen Lake-Eden Prairie area currently served by a library in the Glen Lake School. (*Minnetonka Sun, Jun 20, 1968*). Minnetonka residents were scheduled to vote Nov. 5 on a \$550,000 bond issue to finance an new village hall to be located on city-owned land on Williston Road 1.5 blocks north of Minnetonka Blvd. The complex would include a library and rec center as well as village offices and services. (*Minneapolis Tribune, Oct. 29, 1968*).

PLYMOUTH: Village officials were searching for a site for new village hall or civic center and were considering an 18-acre site owned by Mission Farm overlooking Medicine Lake. The complex could include a library. Mission Farm offered the site for \$1,000 an acre on the condition that the land be used for a village hall-city center. (*Minnetonka Sun, Oct. 10, 1968*).

RICHFIELD: Richfield agreed to lease its public library at 7000 Nicollet Ave. to HCL for 10 years. The City Council rejected selling the the building and land to HCL for \$196,906. HCL's portion of the building was 7,492 square feet making the annual lease payment \$18,730. The city would be able to use its community center space in the building free of charge for two or three years. (*Minneapolis Star, July 25, 1968*).

ST. LOUIS PARK: Friends of the Library began a drive to raise \$10,000 to purchase needed items for the new library, such as projection and listening equipment a podium, and fireplace equipment. (*St. Louis Park Dispatch, Jan. 18, 1968*). St. Louis Park's new library opened Feb. 8, with a collection of about 40,000 volumes. The previous library was closed only a week before the new library opened according to head librarian Helen Hanson. (*St. Louis Park Dispatch, Feb. 8, 1968*). An alcove was named after former school superintendent Robert E. Scott. The room will house books left by Scott to the library, especially his collection of Mark Twain books. (*St. Louis Park Dispatch, Feb. 1, 1968*). The new library was dedicated April 21, with Senator Walter Mondale as the featured speaker. (*St. Louis Park Sun, April 18, 1968*). Library Director Helen Young reported that the St. Louis Park Library circulation was

climbing since its Feb. 8 opening -- 17,600 books were circulated, 5,500 more than in the entire month of February in 1967. (*Hennepin Family, May 1968*). The City Council voted to prepare an ordinance that would allow HCL to purchase the St. Louis Park Library. The County would give the city an immediate \$98,000 and pay another \$92,000 over a period of 15 years. The library originally cost \$287,000, with \$97,000 of that from state and federal grants. (*St. Louis Park Sun, Aug. 1, 1968*).

SOUTHDALE: The site donated by the Dayton Company for the Southdale regional library was too small, consultant Robert Rohlf told the Hennepin County Library Board. He recommended a site no less than five acres, whereas the proposed donated land was about three acres. If additional land could not be purchased, the donation should be rejected, he said. (*Bloomington Sun, Oct. 3, 1968*). The Hennepin County Board gave preliminary approval for the architectural firm Hodne Stageberg Partners to design the Southdale Library. Commissioner Bob Janes, however, questioned the move because of the site issue hadn't been resolved. (*Minneapolis Tribune, Oct. 8, 1968*).

WAYZATA: Wayzata signed a lease with Hennepin County to provide the city with \$11,332.50 each year for the next five years for a total of \$56,662.50. The county had offered to purchase the space for a price that "bordered \$100,000." (*Wayzata Sun, December 1968*).

Metropolitan Library Service Agency (MELSA)

The Hennepin County Board of Commissioners approved a three-year contract for Hennepin County Library to participate in the newly-created Metropolitan Library Service Agency. MELSA was to be 100 percent funded by state and federal grants and totally geared to improving library service in the metro area through cooperative efforts and interchange of materials and services. (*Brooklyn Center Post, Dec. 5, 1968*).

Individual Library News (except construction/improvement, see above)

BOOKMOBILE: The County Board approved continuing bookmobile service to Waverly (in Wright County) for another year. The service was extended to the community when residents there made the request since so other facility was available; residents paid \$2,000 for the service. One Republican board member said this would provide reading material for the FBI agents who accompany Vice President Hubert Humphrey when he visits his home in Waverly. (*Golden Valley Sun, May 9, 1968*).

EXCELSIOR: Excelsior Library was two years old Valentine's Day 1968 and an editorial praised the cooperation of Deephaven, Excelsior, Greenwood, Shorewood, and Tonka Bay for making the library possible. (*Minnetonka Herald, Feb. 8, 1968*). Excelsior City Council went on record as favoring a leasing

arrangement over sale of the Excelsior Library to HCL. (*Minnetonka Sun, July 25, 1968*).

MINNETONKA: Minnetonka celebrated its first year County Road 5 and Highway 101I. Gretchen Wunderlich, head librarian, noted that circulation for the first year was 101,700. (*Hopkins Sun, March 28, 1968*).

ROBBINSDALE: "A need for a community library brought the first members of the Robbinsdale Library Club together in 1907. The group received books from area residents and the Carnegie Library Association, and opened their library in a small store. Later the member-staffed library was moved into a larger building, and a fund-raising drive for a regular library building was started in 1920. In 1922 the library became part of the Hennepin County System, and the new library building was in use by 1926. It was remodeled in 1960, and now has several meeting rooms and the Community Meeting Room, where the 35-member library club meets regularly. The members maintain the library and purchase books for its collection. They also raise funds for local civic projects, the American Red Cross, the Respiratory Disease Association of Hennepin County and CARE. The Robbinsdale Library Club has been a member group of the 10th District, Minnesota Women's Federation of Clubs, since 1917." (*Minneapolis Star, Oct. 1, 1968*).

ST. LOUIS PARK: April 15-19 was designated as St. Louis Park Library Week and activities included: dedication of Robert E. Scott Room on Monday; Friends of the Library Day on Tuesday; Businessman's Day on Wednesday; Teen Day on Thursday; and Ladies Day on Friday. (*St. Louis Park Sun, April 14, 1968*). Teen Friends of the library donated their time to help with the children's summer reading program. (*St. Louis Park Sun, July 19, 1968*).

WAYZATA: A section of shelves at the library was set aside to feature "books about and by Negro people." The section was called "Black Books" and it was created by a committee from the Unitarian Universalist Church of Minnetonka in Wayzata. (*Minnetonka Sun, Aug. 5, 1968*).

Hennepin County News

MUNICIPALITY vs. COUNTY vs. METRO: County Board Chair Bob Janes spoke at a Citizens League luncheon about the role of municipalities, Hennepin County and the Metropolitan Council. He responded to some suburban municipalities that told the Metropolitan Council that Hennepin County should "give way in favor of a the stronger Metropolitan government." Janes said he was open minded about the transfer of certain services, mentioning specifically the construction of the Crosstown freeway. He said the county can work with municipalities in partnerships such as joint purchasing. The article noted that Hennepin County had a good relationship with the Legislature. (*Sun Newspapers, Nov. 14, 1968*).

This summary was compiled by Linda Jennings, March 2011.

