

Hennepin County Library

1967 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.

1967 Legislation – A Landmark Year for Hennepin County

“Hennepin County library officials presented a proposed \$11.1 million expansion program to a legislative subcommittee...calling for four regional libraries and 20 community branches.” They were seeking to increase the tax levy limit (from 5 mills to 7.5 mills) and to gain authority for the County Board to issue general obligation bonds for the library. [The \$11.1 million legislation did not pass, but the tax levy increase passed in the special session; see below.] (*Sunday Suburban Sun Life, April 2, 1967*). “Bills approved by the Minnesota Legislature may help bring county government throughout the state ‘out of the horse and buggy era,’” according to Robert Janes, Hennepin County Board chair. Hennepin County bills passed in the regular legislative session included: permitting a county administrator to be named, the creation of a unified county personnel system, and making the county auditor, treasurer, and register of deeds appointive jobs instead of elective. (*Minneapolis Star, May 23, 1967*). In the special session, the Legislature authorized Hennepin County to sell up to \$16 million in bonds, without a referendum, for construction of a new county courts and office building. (*Minneapolis Tribune, June 5, 1967*). A summary list of 1967 legislation included: “Allow county library board to increase levy by 2.5 mills, partly [1 mill] to build new suburban libraries; eliminate three Minneapolis Library Board members from service on the county library board; require negotiations between both boards to merge library systems by 1973.” (*Minneapolis Star, June 5, 1967*).

HCL Use

In 1967 branches were: Bloomington, Brooklyn Center, Champlin, Crystal, Edina, Excelsior, Glen Lake, Golden Valley, Long Lake, Maple Plain, Minnetonka, Minnetonka Mills (became Minnetonka branch on March 27, 1967), Morningside, Orono, Osseo, Richfield, Robbinsdale, St. Anthony, St. Bonifacius, St. Louis Park, Wayzata, Westonka. There were two bookmobiles and 13 stations. Total use was 2,060,036, up 96, 923 over 1966 (*Summary of Circulation Statistics 1967*). “Professional planners studying the county library system recommended that, to provide quality service, eventually the county should own all of the buildings in which it operates.” This recommendation was from the ‘Jacobs report,’ named after one of the ‘professional planners.’ Librarians in the Minnetonka area were David Waldemar at Excelsior; Gretchen Murphy at Glen Lake; new Minnetonka branch at Hwy. 101 and County Road 5 about to open; Dona Roy (no phone) at Hamel; Lillian Burkhardt at Long Lake; Winifred Bryant at Maple Plain; Mrs. Melvin Envil at Minnetonka Mills (Burwell School); Mrs. Hugh Coats (no phone) at Orono; Eleanor Dittrich (no phone) at St. Bonifacius; Thelma Jones at Wayzata; and Irene Thomson at Westonka. (*Minnetonka Herald, Feb. 9, 1967*).

Library Construction/Improvement Program

The 1967 Legislature reduced the size of the Hennepin County Library Board from six suburban members and six city members to six suburban members and three city members. On July 18, the Hennepin County Commissioners named the first nine-member Hennepin

County Library Board, retaining : Alan L. MacLean, Edina; Mrs. Raeder Larson, St. Louis Park; Charles Q. Hillstrom, Crystal; Robert G. Rainey, Bloomington; Mrs. Raymond Plank, Wayzata; and Peter A. Heegaard, Minnetonka. The three Minneapolis members on the board were Ralph Forrester, Grace Ennen, and Virginia Kremen. (*Minneapolis Star, July 18, 1967*).

The Hennepin County Library Board set meetings to ask advice from local communities on how to spend the annual one-mill levy for library buildings authorized by the 1967 Legislature. In a letter to municipal officials, these alternatives were presented: 1. A buy-back program, acquiring immediately local library facilities owned by individual suburban communities. 2. Acquire existing facilities in a buy-back program by contract, over a period of time. 3. Apply the available funds entirely on a new community library building program, and make no change in ownership of existing libraries. 4. Leave the construction and maintenance of libraries entirely up to communities as they are and use county funds for regional libraries. The one-mill levy would raise \$330,000, not enough to consider even one regional library, according to Allen Friedman, library business manager. (*Suburban Life, June 26, 1967*). The first of four meetings with community officials was held in St. Louis Park. St. Louis Park, Richfield and Edina did not favor the buy-back plan. They were interested, however, in building new libraries using matching funds. (*Monday Suburban Life, July 31, 1967*). The Hennepin County Library Board tabled a proposed policy statement about its 1968-69 building program after a stormy hour of objections from suburban officials. Edina Mayor Arthur Bredesen urged the board to let local communities keep their own facility and have pride of ownership. Alan MacLean defended the buy-back program, stating that without it, inequities and lack of uniformity would result. (*Suburban Life, Oct. 2, 1967*). The Hennepin County Library Board voted to recommend that up to \$100,000 each be granted in 1968 for new libraries in Bloomington, Edina and St. Louis Park. If the three suburbs agreed to the county grant, which was limited to \$7 a square foot, they had to agree to standards and requirements set by the county library. The Library Board adopted a policy statement that allowed a municipality to maintain ownership of the physical facility as long as the facility continued to meet the library needs of the community. The policy stated: "It is not the intent of the Library Board to decline to provide the services of the Hennepin County Library system to a municipality which has provided a library building if that municipality prefers to maintain ownership of the physical facility." The policy also called for planning to begin immediately for the Southdale Regional Library. (*Bloomington Sun-Suburbanite, Nov. 2, 1967*). Edina had not given up plans to secede from the Hennepin County Library. Mayor Bredesen said "it's almost blackmail," referring to the county's new policy statement that offered Edina \$100,000 to build a new library. Bredesen charged that the whole plan was to "get Minneapolis out of the library business and dump another of the core city's problems on the suburban taxpayers." (*Edina Courier, Nov. 23, 1967*). An editorial noted that Hennepin County Library is a fantastic resource – one that would be difficult for Edina alone to match. The HCL per-capita cost in 1966 was less than \$4. "If a family of four bought four books a year it would take them 375,000 years to match the resource of the 1.5 million books available to them today and every day through the Hennepin system." (*Minnetonka Herald, Dec. 14, 1967*).

Lady Bird Johnson Visits Minnesota

As part of a tour of seven Midwest states, Lady Bird Johnson visited Minnesota. Among her stops was a visit to the Waverly home of Vice President and Mrs. Hubert Humphrey, where

she toured a bookmobile sponsored by Hennepin County Library. (*Minneapolis Tribune*, Sept. 18, 1967).

Metropolitan Library Service Agency Proposed

Dr. Herbert Goldhor, dean of the Graduate School of Library Science at the University of Illinois, conducted an 18-month, \$25,000 study to help determine long-range plans for library development in the seven-county metro area. A major recommendation of his report called for central ordering, classification and processing of new books for member libraries. He also recommended a streamlined centralized system of book selection, a central reference service available only to libraries, toll-free telephone lines among the member libraries, a printed catalog of all books available in every library, daily truck delivery, development of a data processing center including a computer for member libraries, rapid communication between libraries via teletype, and a central film library. (*Sunday Suburban Life*, March 26, 1967). "Along with diversity in present library services, high mobility, and a profile above the national average in educational achievement and income, the metropolitan area seven counties together hold 2821 square miles of land, into which an estimated 2,157,000 population (1975) and 4,000,000 (by the year 2000) will flow." The goal is to lower the barriers between counties so that books and information may pass freely to all metro residents. (*MELSA brochure "...to secure area-wide solutions to area-wide problems."*). "It is also auspicious that the proposals for expanding library resources and using those resources more efficiently throughout the metropolitan area are ready for public consideration just as the Metropolitan Council, with its charge of co-ordinated public planning, is ready to go to work." (*Minneapolis Tribune*, Oct. 30, 1967). The Citizens League published a report based on Goldhor's report. Included in the report were Goldhor's recommendations for 12 regional libraries, including: BURNSVILLE at County Road 42 and Interstate 35W; BLOOMINGTON at 98th St. and Interstate 35W; EDINA at W. 69th St. and Valley View Road.; ST. LOUIS PARK at Hwy. 12 and County Road 18; BROOKLYN CENTER at Osseo Road and 56th Ave. N.; and MINNEAPOLIS at Chicago Ave. and Lake St. (*North Hennepin Post*, Dec. 15, 1967).

Library Branch News

BLOOMINGTON: "The city's library study committee presented to the City Council a well documented and well reasoned report...Major recommendations included staying with the county library system and the 'immediate' establishment of two more branch libraries in the city. Purchase of land for an area library also was recommended." (*Bloomington Sun-Suburbanite*, May 4, 1967). "For years the present library at 98th and Nicollet has been woefully overcrowded and shamefully inadequate for the more constantly increasing numbers of Bloomington residents." (*Bloomington Sun-Suburbanite*, July 27, 1967). "Funds for stocking, furnishing, equipping, and staffing another Bloomington branch library are included in the 1968 Hennepin County Library budget." (*Bloomington Sun-Suburbanite*, Aug. 13, 1967). The Bloomington City Council complimented the library study committee for its work and asked its help in selecting sites for libraries in east and west Bloomington. Committee Chair Robert Rainey strongly recommended that the first new building be near 90th St. and Penn Ave. S. (*Bloomington Sun-Suburbanite*, Aug. 24, 1967). "The Hennepin County Library Board last Thursday approved the location of Bloomington's first permanent library on a site at 88th Street and Penn Avenue." (*Bloomington Sun-Suburbanite*, Dec. 7, 1967).

EDINA: "The Edina Village Council Monday night approved building a 14,500 square-foot, one story-library on village-owned land near the village hall at Willson Road and W. 50th St. The new structure would replace the present Hennepin County Library branch at W. 50th St. and Halifax Av., and would have a capacity of 50,000 volumes." (*Minneapolis Star, Feb. 21, 1967*). "Hennepin County Library Board has given the final OK for construction of the new Edina Library... Earlier plans had proposed construction of the library within the 50th and France Avenue business district, but problems with acquisition of land, drainage, and street alignments proved insurmountable in the area which controlled by many private owners. (*Edina Courier, March 16, 1967*). "Edina Council gave its approval for the \$479,000 Edina Library facility proposed for construction adjacent to village hall, but not before Mayor Art Bredesen called for those interested in the project to dig deeper for private financial assistance. (*Edina Courier, May 18, 1967*). Friends of the Library launched a community funds campaign to raise money for the new library. (*Edina Courier, Sept. 21, 1967*). Ground was broken for the new library on Oct. 6 by the Edina mayor and Friends of the Library. The Friends of the Library set a goal of raising \$50,000 for the new library for items that would otherwise be included in the project. (*Edina Courier, Oct. 5, 1967*).

GOLDEN VALLEY: "The Village Council took what steps it could to insure a new library building in Golden Valley's future." The Council approved a special library building fund and also identified a site for the library – on Winnetka Ave. just north of the civic center. Current library space in the basement of the civic enter is completely inadequate according to the Library Committee Chair. (*Golden Valley Press, Oct. 5, 1967*).

OSSEO: An Open House and Dedication of the new Osseo Municipal Building, 415 Central Ave., took place Sept. 10, 1967, with U.S. Senator Eugene McCarthy featured speaker. The Osseo Library is located on the main floor of the new building. It was relocated there on July 31, 1967. (*Information from Osseo Municipal Building dedication booklet*).

ST. LOUIS PARK: The new St. Louis Park Library will be built at 33rd and Louisiana Ave. It will double the book capacity and give seven times as much space for library service as the present rented facility at 6509 Walker. The new library will accommodate a 50,000 volume collection and will be 14,500 square feet. Included will be a George Scott alcove housing a collection of books mainly by and about Mark Twain. Scott, a former SLP school superintendent, left \$5,000 and Mark Twain first editions to the library. The St. Louis Park branch was started at Central Junior High in 1922. (*Sun-Suburbanite, April 2, 1967*). "A new library for St. Louis Park came one step closer Monday night as the city council awarded contracts totaling \$253,630 for the project." (*St. Louis Park Dispatch, May 25, 1967*). St. Louis Park officials and Hennepin County Library Director Helen Young broke ground June 5 for the new library. (*St. Louis Park Dispatch, May 25, 1967*). The new library was expected to be completed in early December, but will not open until February or March, when all furnishings and shelving are expected to be in. The architects, S.C. Smiley and Associates, said the library will be completed very close to the original estimate (\$254,585). (*St. Louis Park Dispatch, Nov. 30, 1967*).

This summary was compiled by Linda Jennings.

