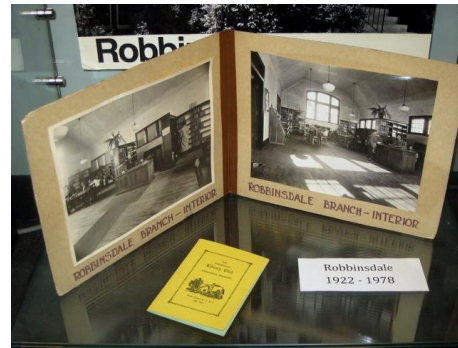


Robbinsdale Library

Address	4915 42 Avenue North Robbinsdale MN 55422
Architect	H.H. Livingston (1924)
Square Feet	2920 after 1960 addition
Cost	In 1924, \$8500 From Hennepin County Review 1-7-26
Open to Public	January 5, 1925 From Hennepin County Review 12/31/25
Renovation	1960
Dedication	New addition: March 21, 1961
Closed	April 1, 1978



Overview of the community

Originally settled as a farming community, in 1887 Andrew B Robbins purchased 90 acres of land with the intention of making it the site of a suburban town. On April 19, 1893 the village of Robbinsdale was organized. The geographic area was 2.9 sq. mi.

[From www.ci.robbinsdale.mn.us/history.htm](http://www.ci.robbinsdale.mn.us/history.htm)

Pre-Hennepin County Library History

Early in 1904 a group led by Dr. Donald Colp met to undertake the organization of a library for Robbinsdale. Books were donated and the collection placed in a hotel managed by J. Coulter. [From the County Line, 5/1950](#) The Library Club was organized on January 3, 1907 to support the Library board. Mrs. C. W. G. Hyde was the first president. The 26 members each donated \$1. per month for the librarian's salary. The Village Council gave \$1. per month but decided it could not afford this expense. It did allow the books to be placed in the village hall free of charge. Previously the books, mostly donated by citizens, had been kept in the Columbia Hotel and later in the drug store. Miss Clara Sessing served as librarian. Books began to disappear from the shelves faster than they could be replaced. Finally those left were placed in storage for two years.

In 1917 a small building on Main Street was purchased for \$225. Mrs. E. N. Russ and Mrs. E. Forsaith were the first librarians. [From Robbinsdale Then and Now by Helen Blodgett, c 1983](#)

History

The Robbinsdale Library Club originally operated the library but in 1922 it became a branch in the Hennepin County system.

In 1924 a new building was designed by H.H. Livingston, architect; cost \$8500.

From [Robbinsdale Then and Now](#) by Helen Blodgett, c 1983

The opening of the new library was held on Tuesday, January 5, 1925. Miss Gracia Countryman spoke on what a library means to a community.

From [Hennepin County Review 12/31/25](#)

In 1960 the building was remodeled, doubling its size to 2920 sq. ft. at a cost of \$22,700.

From [North Hennepin Post, 9/29/60](#) A bookmobile served the library during remodeling. From [North Hennepin Post 9/29/60](#) The new addition was dedicated on 3/21/61. From [North Hennepin Post 2/23/61](#)

Robbinsdale officially became a Community Library I in June 1975. From [Robbinsdale Review, HCL](#). Circulation decreased after the Rockford Road Library opened in 1972. In July 1976, the Library Board voted to close the library at the end of the year due to its proximity to Rockford Road and budget considerations. From [Post Newspapers, July 15, 1976](#). Following considerable Community outcry, the Library Board later voted to keep Robbinsdale open for another year. The Robbinsdale City Council offered to pay approximately \$13,700 for library service in 1977 and HCL would pay for the rest. From [Post Newspapers, Dec. 9, 1976](#). It was also decided to staff Robbinsdale with volunteers. The city manager offered the services of Robbinsdale Park and Recreation to recruit volunteers. Several dozen were selected. Virginia Lukazewski (HCL staff) supervised the volunteers and District 281 provided student shelvers. From [HCL Robbinsdale Review circa 1976](#).

The Robbinsdale branch was finally closed April 1, 1978.

In 1978 the building was listed as a National Historic Landmark.

From www.ci.robbinsdale.mn.us/history/htm.

Collection

As of March 1, 1976 Robbinsdale Library housed approximately 16,000 volumes plus paperbacks, records and 40 paid magazine subscriptions. On March 24, 1976 the collection was reduced by 7500 items to keep it in line with other Community Is. Phase out effective December 31, 1976. From [HCL Robbinsdale Review circa 1976](#).

Public Service

Robbinsdale Library was open 49.5 hours a week and had a staff of 5.1. Average monthly circulation was 10,060. From [HCL Robbinsdale Review circa 1976](#)

Friends of the Library/Volunteers

Robbinsdale Library Club was formed in 1907 when the first library was in the Robbinsdale City Hall. Mrs. C. W. G. Hyde was the first President. The group was limited to 35 members. Dues were 10 cents. [From Robbinsdale Senior Services 8/15/97.](#)

Robbinsdale Library Club celebrated its 100th year at Rockford Road library on May 17, 2007. [From Minnesota Sun Newspaper](#)

Staff

Mrs. Clara Sessing 1907-

Frances Pollard 1923-1954 [From Hennepin County Line April 1961](#)

Joy Grogan circa 1955

Peggy Georgas, Librarian 1960-

Diana Hebrink Hansen, Librarian 1962-

Alice O. Johnson, Librarian 1963-

Virginia Hadd circa 1965

Beverly Nelson, Librarian 1967-

Mary Jo Talbot, Librarian 1970-

Rita Strand, Librarian 1972-

Martha Brown, Asst. Librarian 1960?

Eileen Cavanagh, Youth Services Librarian 1960-67; 1972

Phyllis Mattill Youth Services Librarian 1970-1972

Maryann Nieberle Grage Weidt. Youth Services Librarian 1972-

Virginia Lukazewski, clerical 1970-1978

Susan Louis, clerical 1972-

Recent Happenings:

The former Robbinsdale Library now houses the Robbinsdale Historical Society, an art gallery and The Teen Annex. In 1997 the building was remodeled by Associated Architects. Cost was \$100,000. \$240,440. was set aside for additional phases as funding becomes available. [From City of Robbinsdale Newsletter, August, 1997](#)

Eileen Cavanagh

3/11/08

Revised 4/06/2009