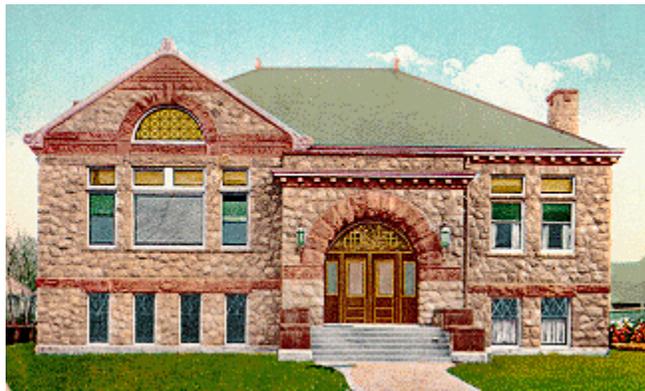


The History of the
Santa Cruz Public Library System
By Margaret Souza



1904 Postcard of the Carnegie Library (Main Library)

CONTENTS

Part 1—The Library Association, 1868-1881

Part 2—The Public Library, 1881-1904

Part 3—Building the Carnegie Free Library, 1901-1904

Part 4-- Minerva Waterman, Librarian, 1890-1941

Part 1 - 1868-1881: The Library Association

The Santa Cruz City and County Public Library System had its origins early in 1868 when interested citizens resolved to provide books and magazines to participating members. A key personality of this group was Frank Cooper, who, on June 6, 1868, drafted the following proclamation:

"The undersigned agree to form a Library Association in Santa Cruz under "An Act in reference to Library Associations" Approved April 27, 1863, and to attend a preliminary meeting, when twenty signatures are procured to take the necessary steps to commence and perfect the Incorporation." [1]

Thirty men signed it: Paul Pioda, Geo. T. Hoff, O. T. Hecox, Benj. P. Kooser, Duncan McPherson, A. S. Cooper, Oroville Root, F. A. Hihn, Edward L. Williams, F. W. Wright, J. H. Logan, Albert Hagan, Frank Cooper, Wm. P. McDermott, C. L. Anderson, J. C. Willson, Joseph Boston, W. F. Peabody, Ferdinand J. McCann, Alfred Baldwin, S. H. Bailey, C. F. Loop, Louis Glass., S. A. Bartlett,, Albert Brown, Albert Heath, Walter Frear, H. E. Makinney, Lucien Heath, and James J. Dyer. The Library Association which was thus formed was to be known as the "Santa Cruz Library."

"The organization in 1868 followed seven years of discussion and effort. The first move for a library had been made in 1861, when Tom Beck, the carpenter and builder, had presided over a meeting in Temperance Hall. T. T. Tidball, who acted as secretary, was a young man from Soquel then filling a deputy's job in the court house but soon to leave as captain of the cavalry company Santa Cruz raised for the Civil War."

Although the 1861 meeting voted to draw up a constitution and establish a reading room, the effort was probably allowed to lapse because of the war, to be resumed again in 1868." [2]

The Association held its first meeting on June 15, 1868, and although not all members were present there were enough to form a quorum. C. L. Anderson was elected the Association's Chairman and Frank Cooper was elected its Secretary. The Association then proclaimed that there would be seven trustees for the Santa Cruz Library; the first ones elected to this position were: C. L. Anderson, F. J. McCann, Lucien Heath, Albert Hagan, Paul Pioda, Walter Frear, and Joseph Boston.

Before this meeting adjourned, Frank Cooper was instructed to communicate with Hon. Cornelias Cole, U.S. Senator, about obtaining a "large and substantial supply"[3] of Public Documents. Mr. Cole had lived in Santa Cruz before he was elected to the Senate in 1865.

The Association meeting adjourned, and immediately afterwards the First Board of Trustees assembled. The Board elected the following officers: President, C. L. Anderson; Vice President,

Lucien Heath; Treasurer, Paul Pioda; Corresponding Secretary, Walter Frear; and Recording Secretary, Albert Hagan. Frank Cooper was appointed the first Librarian; however, he had no room, no salary, and no books.

The Public Documents sent by Senator Cole soon arrived, and the members of the Association donated books. In November, 1869, a committee was appointed to solicit membership and to collect funds and books. Dr. J. Sims, a Physiognomical Character Delineator,[4] delivered several lectures in Santa Cruz, and \$100.00 in proceeds went to the Library for the purchase of reference books.

The library, located in Frank Cooper's store, was opened to member use on April 1, 1870, nearly two years after the Library Association was formed. In July, 1870, John Brozer, a "college bred" [5] man, bought out C. W. Williams and started a bookstore in the Rhodes Building (Lower Plaza near the Williamson and Garrett building, near the grocery store of McHugh and Bianchi in 1964). Brazer provided space for the library in his bookstore and thereafter he was appointed Librarian. He held that position until January 4, 1871, when he resigned to become the Postmaster.

Edwin Shepard was elected Librarian on January 4, 1871, and the library was moved to two upstairs rooms in the Anthony Block, corner of Mission and Water Streets. (Samuel Leask, Jr., said the library was located in Joel Shepard's drugstore.) He received ten percent of the dues and fines collected for his services. A year later, Mrs. Shepard was appointed Librarian with Edwin as her assistant. Her compensation equaled ten percent of the dues and fines plus five dollars for rent and care of the rooms.

Until January, 1872, the members of the Library Association paid six dollars a year for the use of the books; it was then reduced to four dollars per year.

A. J. Hinds was appointed Librarian on April 16, 1872, and the library was moved to his bookstore. He received no salary but he was allowed five dollars per month for rent. Later the library was moved to the *Sentinel* building and for a time, there was very little growth.

In November, 1874, Santa Cruz ladies organized a Reading Room in the Anthony Block. Periodicals were subscribed for and the Reading Room was maintained by monthly subscription. "The rooms and papers were free to all." [6] The Library and Reading Room had become one by January, 1876. Mr. Elihu Anthony donated the rent for the rooms used by the Library and Reading Room for the month of January, 1876.

The Library Board of Trustees authorized the purchase of books and subscriptions to some papers. In February, 1876, Mr. Dexter was appointed Librarian at a salary of twenty dollars per month.

The Library and Reading Room were moved to the two upstairs rooms of the Whidden building in March, 1876; the rent was ten dollars per month.

Mr. Lawson was the Librarian for a time, then in March, 1878, Mrs. E. A. De Wolfe was appointed to the position at twenty-five dollars per month (rent for rooms and salary).

At the Regular Quarterly Meeting held on January 6, 1879, a committee was appointed to solicit subscriptions and to report to the trustees on the advisability of keeping the Library and Reading Room in the present location (Whidden building).

"On the 2nd of October, 1879, after the Library had been presented to the City and accepted as a gift from the Library Association, agreeing to take care of it, and Trustees of Unity Church, owning a lot and building just opposite our present Post Office, offered to donate that property to the city of Santa Cruz, provided the City would assume an indebtedness of about \$1,800, which was resting on said property. The offer was refused and the opportunity lost." [7]

The Church building cost five thousand dollars and the lot was valued between twenty-five hundred and three thousand dollars. But according to the Library Board Records the library and Reading Room were not transferred to the City's care until December 15, 1881.

In January, 1881, the library was packed in boxes and stored in the top floor of the Mission Hill School opposite Temperance Hall. There had been no new books for two years.

In December, 1881, the Library Association's library was presented to the City of Santa Cruz:

"Resolved, That the trustees of Santa Cruz free library be and are hereby instructed and authorized to make all necessary arrangements with the municipal authorities of the city of Santa Cruz by which the Santa Cruz library shall be transferred to the said city, to be managed, owned and protected for the public use in accordance with an act to establish free public libraries and reading rooms, passed by the legislature of the State of California and approved April 26, 1880." [8]

Notes

1. Minutes of the meetings of the Santa Cruz Library Association. Signature agreements are loose in front of first book of minutes.
2. Leon Rowland, "Circuit Rider: Civil War Halted Library Plans," *Santa Cruz Sentinel-News*, March 16, 1952, p.15.
3. An Old Settler, "History of the Santa Cruz Free Library," *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*, Dec. 14, 1899, pp. 3 and 4.
4. Ibid.
5. "Looking Backward over Library Life in Santa Cruz," *Santa Cruz Surf*, Sept. 28, 1903.
6. Dr. C.L. Anderson, "Semi-Centennial of the Public Library-Sketch of the Early Days of the Institution-Written by Dr. C.L. Anderson in '99," *Santa Cruz Surf*, June 6, 1918, p.2.
7. "Looking Backward over Library Life in Santa Cruz," *Santa Cruz Surf*, Sept. 28, 1903.
8. Meeting of the Santa Cruz Library Association, Dec.15, 1881. "Semi-Centennial of the Public Library," *Santa Cruz Surf*, June 6, 1918, p. 2.

Part 2 – 1881-1904: The Public Library

When the Library was transferred to the City of Santa Cruz, there were about three thousand volumes in the library. Eight hundred seventy-nine volumes were taken from storage in the schoolhouse and moved to the second floor of the City Hall on January 3, 1882. The City Treasurer and Collector was placed in charge until April, 1882, when the following Board of Trustees was elected: A. A. Taylor, D. Tuthill, A. J. Hinds, Robert Effey, and George W. Place. They appointed Peter R. Hinds Librarian of the Santa Cruz Free Library.

The book which contains the Board Meeting records of the Library Association and of the City's second Library Board of Trustees does not have any record of the meetings of the first Board of Trustees although they spent \$327.50. It was while the Library was under their control that the first library tax levy was established. On October 2, 1882, the tax was set at five cents on each one hundred dollars of assessment.

The second Board of Trustees was elected on April 14, 1884, and took office on the following May 6. Those elected were: Dr. P. B. Fagan, F. W. Bliss, E. Spaulsbery, C. L. Anderson, and E. L. Williams. Peter Hinds continued as the Librarian. The trustees found \$1,115.72 in the fund.

Trustees Fagan, Anderson, and Bliss were authorized to investigate the costs of obtaining more suitable rooms for the library. They decided that moving was unwise.

In August, 1884, the private library of the Farmer's Club was incorporated into the City Library. The Library Board of Trustees agreed to the conditions set by the Farmer's Club. The members of the Farmer's Club were given the same privileges of library usage as city resident members for the duration of the merger.

There were several attempts to consolidate or purchase the library of the Odd Fellows. This had been considered by the Library Association in December, 1879. By February 5, 1885, Dr. C. L. Anderson had visited the IOOF Library and found that there was a large number of books which the Santa Cruz Free Library could use. The Odd Fellows offered to sell their library for three hundred dollars. A communication came from the Odd Fellows later in the year inviting the Board of Trustees to select such books from the IOOF Library as they deemed necessary and the Board was to make an offer for the books. There are no records to indicate whether these proposals were accepted.

Trustees D. C. Clark, C. L. Anderson, and H. Fay were appointed in May, 1888, to consider the advisability of selecting another location for the library. This committee was authorized to select a suitable room for the library in February, 1889, and to engage it provided the rent did not exceed twenty-five dollars per month, and they were to provide the necessary furniture. By March, the library had been moved to the first floor of the City Hall.

The Trustees met on March 1, 1889, to "transact such other business as was made necessary on account of removal of Library"[1] and to elect a Librarian. Major W. T. Kittredge of Santa Rosa was selected at a salary of thirty-five dollars per month. Miss Minerva Waterman was elected his assistant.

Major Kittredge began the work of cataloging the books he found in the Santa Cruz Library. The Board of Trustees set this policy for handling new books:

1. The library was to be kept open while the numbering was done;
2. All books were to be numbered before they were lent out;
3. Miss Waterman or another competent person was to be employed to do the numbering.

Miss Waterman finished the work of cataloging. In February, 1896, Mr. Hinds made the following proposal: "That if the trustees would furnish copy, he would have printed a catalogue free of cost, he to be allowed to insert advertising matter." The trustees authorized him to print 1200 copies of the catalog. Then in 1899, Mr. George C. Bacon offered to print 1500 copies of the catalog; his payment was space for advertisements and \$30.76. This catalog, which listed all 1300 volumes, was to be sold by the Librarian for ten cents a copy.

It was while Major Kittredge was Librarian that the "open shelf" system came into practice in the Santa Cruz Library.

"It was not an easy task to formulate a system of library work suited to our city. Fortunately it was so simplified that "open shelves" came into use without seriously causing loss or confusion, and with a minimum of assistance from the librarian or annoyance to the borrower."[2]

Miss Minerva Waterman, who started as assistant to Major Kittredge, became Librarian on June 6, 1890, after the Major resigned. Miss Waterman and Major Kittredge were both nominated for the position of Librarian on June 3, 1890; Trustee Kirby nominated Miss Waterman, while Trustee Anderson renominated Major Kittredge. Elected with a vote of four to one, Miss Waterman was to begin her duties on July 1. But Major Kittredge resigned on June 5, effective that day, and Miss Waterman became Librarian on June 6, 1890.

Trustee Linscott was commissioned in October, 1894, to see what the City Council would do regarding the library's move to other quarters. The Council agreed to pay the first eight months' rent (two hundred fifty dollars) and to furnish the necessary fuel and electric lights in the Hotaling Building, because the "city government decided that the city hall was not large enough for all the municipal offices and the library too."[3] The Library Board resolved

"To enter into an agreement with A. P. Hotaling to lease the premises hereinafter described for a period of five years, on the following terms. The first two months of occupancy of the premises by the Library rent free, the next seven months at monthly rental of thirty dollars. Three years following at monthly rental of forty dollars, and the

following or fifth year at monthly rental of fifty dollars, by votes of Anderson, Bliss, Linscott & Clark. Noes, none, absent Williams.

On motion of trustee Clark, seconded by trustee Bliss, a committee of three was appointed to determine with Mr. Hotaling's Architect, the arrangement of the new rooms. And to attend to all the arrangements and details pertaining to the removal of the Library at the proper time. Committee appointed -Clark, Linscott, Bliss."[4]

The move was made to this building later known as the St. George Hotel. Miss Waterman was very pleased with the rooms: ". . . everything is convenient and right under my eye. . ."[5]

But it became evident that the Library and hotel could not remain harmoniously, so another move was considered.[6] Mr. E. H. Garrett proposed in March, 1899, that the library move to the Williamson and Garrett building soon to be erected by the firm. Library Board President C. L. Anderson was instructed to write to A. P. Hotaling to determine his plans in extending the library's lease. Mr. Hotaling's agent, Mr. Miller, told Miss Waterman that the rent would be forty dollars per month instead of fifty as the lease called for.

Mr. Garrett presented plans for the library in the new building and explained in some detail. He said the rent would be fifty dollars per month for a period of ten years. The light fixtures, closets, grates, back stairway, skylights, etc., were to be arranged satisfactorily. This proposal was accepted and the rent was to commence on February or March 1, 1900.

In May, 1899, Trustees Anderson, Clark, and Williams were appointed to enter into an agreement with Williamson and Garrett. The lease was to be drawn with the terms "in accordance with the understanding had at [the] meeting held March 28th, 1899."[7]

The library was closed between January 15 and February 1, 1900, so that F. R. Cummings, lowest bidder, could move the library shelving. The rooms in the Williamson and Garrett building were double the space of the previous building. The two large Reading Rooms which faced Pacific Avenue were connected with the Library by arched doors. There was a small room on the north side for the trustees, while the main room was large and commodious. All the rooms were pleasant with plenty of light and ventilation. "Williamson and Garrett have ever been mindful of our comfort and liberal in our requirements."[8]

The library remained in the Williamson and Garrett building until it moved into the Carnegie Free Library in 1904.

Notes

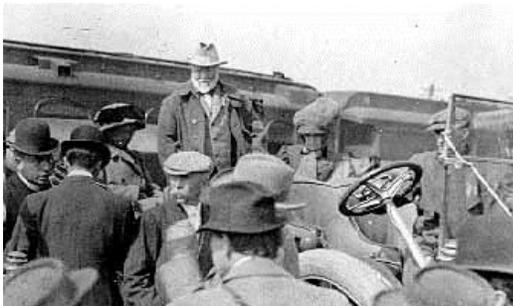
1. Minutes of the Meetings of the Santa Cruz Library Board of Trustees, March 1, 1889, p. 69.
2. "Semi-Centennial of the Public Library," *Santa Cruz Surf*, June 6, 1918, p. 2.
3. Ibid. "Looking Backward over Library Life in Santa Cruz," *Santa Cruz Surf*, Sept. 28, 1903.

4. Minutes of the Meetings of the Santa Cruz Library Board of Trustees, Oct. 2, 1894, p. 119.
5. Minerva Waterman, Monthly Report to the Board of Trustees, June, 1895.
6. "Looking Backward over Library Life in Santa Cruz," *Santa Cruz Surf*, Sept. 28, 1903.
7. Minutes of the Meetings of the Santa Cruz Library Board of Trustees, May 2, 1899, p. 148.
8. "Looking Backward over Library Life in Santa Cruz," *Santa Cruz Surf*, Sept. 28, 1903.

Part 3 – 1901-1904: Building the Carnegie Free Library

[There were four grants from the Carnegie Corporation, between 1903 and 1921, for library construction, a main library and three branch buildings. The Carnegie Free Library discussed here refers to the first Carnegie library built, which became the main library -- Editor]

From the beginnings of the Library in 1868 to April 14, 1904, the Santa Cruz Public Library was located in various places; some of the rooms were rented, others were not. The idea for a permanent building began in October, 1899, when the Library Board meeting "Adjourned to permit citizens to consider matters pertaining to securing a site and permanent building for the Library."^[1]



This photograph shows Andrew Carnegie at the train depot, being met by local officials. Later that day he visited the library.

Andrew Carnegie Visiting Santa Cruz in 1910

Evidently from this citizens' meeting, a committee was appointed to look into the possibility of a permanent building because Samuel Leask, Sr., was appointed in 1899 to serve on a committee to secure financial assistance from the Carnegie Corporation for a public library. Among others on this committee were Dr. C. L. Anderson, Dr. F. W. Bliss, and F. A. Hihn.

In February, 1900, a citizen suggested that Henry Cowell convert the St. Charles Hotel into a library and give it to Santa Cruz. Mr. Cowell said he was not under any obligation to Santa Cruz County; he had spent millions of dollars there already. The roads he used were not kept up and he was taxed heavily.

Until March, 1901, there was no further mention of progress in getting a library building in either the *Sentinel*, or the Library Board Records, when the following appeared in the *Sentinel*:

"The Sentinel calls Mr. Carnegie's attention to the fact that there is not a city in the world that would appreciate a library building more than Santa Cruz. Wonder if the retired steel king will take the hint?

Well, we don't know. He has Santa Cruz's application." [2]

According to the *Sentinel*, the citizens of Santa Cruz were speculating on the amount of money that they would receive from Mr. Carnegie even before they had word that their application had been received. Santa Cruz needed between \$25,000 and \$50,000. And by February 7, 1902, the San Jose Mercury stated that several San Jose businessmen were helping a movement to get a donation from Andrew Carnegie for a library in Santa Cruz. It was understood that Mr. Carnegie looked with favor on the proposition and would make a gift of \$30,000 or \$40,000.

On January 2, 1902, Santa Cruz learned that Andrew Carnegie had heard Santa Cruz's request and had sent a form to Dr. C. L. Anderson to be filled in. (This form had been received by other cities which had subsequently gotten funds for their libraries.) Provisions for the funds were: a site which was not to be near a saloon was to be provided, and the library was to be maintained. By January 5, 1902, this form was filled in and on its way back to Andrew Carnegie.

The *Sentinel* reported that Mr. Carnegie was studying the population and size of Santa Cruz between January 11th and 13th. A few days later, Dr. C. L. Anderson was requested to explain the difference in the population figures given by him and those taken by the census. Dr. Anderson stated that the population was 10,000; he had included the population of East Santa Cruz (outside the city limits) and the vicinity, both having library privileges, plus the population of Santa Cruz City. He presumed that the amount of the donation was based on the population.

THEN, the great day came! On February 21, 1902, it was learned that Andrew Carnegie would provide \$15,000 if Santa Cruz would support the library at a cost of not less than \$1,500 per year and would furnish a suitable site. The letter was dated February 15, 1902, and was from James Bertram, Private Secretary to Andrew Carnegie.

"There was great disappointment among the committee members that the sum was not larger." [3] Editorials in the *Sentinel* on February 16th and other dates stated that Santa Cruz had hoped to get a \$20,000 to \$30,000 grant and would have received at least \$20,000 if East Santa Cruz had been within the municipal limits.

Several days after Mr. Carnegie's offer had been received, D. C. Clark., F. A. Hihn, and H. F. Kron were appointed to go before the City Council and request that a sum of not less than \$2,500 per year be provided for library purposes. It was hoped that this amount might lay the foundation for a still greater gift from Mr. Carnegie. On March 3, the City Council adopted a resolution for the levying of a library tax. The rate would be set at a level to raise \$3,000 annually provided this rate was not greater than that fixed by law.

Mr. Samuel Leask went to New York at his own expense in an effort to get an augmentation to the amount already given by Mr. Carnegie. Dr. Bliss received a letter from Mr. Leask on April 6, 1902, telling about his interview with Mr. Bertram, Mr. Carnegie's Private Secretary. Later, Samuel Leask wrote this account of his trip.

"The Andrew Carnegie institute gave \$15,000 for the project. This news was conveyed to me one morning by Dr. Bliss as he was passing the store on the way to his office... The amount seemed altogether inadequate for a building such as Santa Cruz needed. After thinking over the matter a few hours, I approached Frank Mattison, County Treasurer, explained the situation, asked what he thought of my going to New York to make a personal appeal for an increase of the grant to \$25,000. Mr. Mattison thought this wonderful, if I could spare the necessary time and money. As a matter of fact, I had already made up my mind and after a few days collecting facts relating to Santa Cruz and its library, I left for New York. This was in the spring of 1901.

At the Carnegie Corporation I was met by a bright young man with a pronounced Scotch accent whose attitude was decidedly skeptical. I unloaded my facts and arguments at considerable length without, as far as I could see, making any impression whatever and was about to retire when something inspired me to ask,

What part of Scotland are you from?

Edinburgh, he said.

I immediately announced *I'm from Aberdeen.*

It developed that Mr. Carnegie also was an Aberdeen-shire man. For the first time there was a faint suggestion of a smile on the face of my hardboiled countryman. As we made our way to the door he said,

When you get back to your hotel embody in a letter the facts we have been discussing. I will submit them to our committee.

I lost no time in mailing the letter requested, to which a reply, based on a misunderstanding of something I had said, was received. This gave me an opportunity to reply, the next development being a second letter from the corporation saying the grant had been increased to \$20,000. This was later supplemented by three additional grants of \$2500 each to aid in construction of branch libraries at Seabright, Garfield Park and Soquel Avenue at Water Street."

Years later, City Treasurer F. W. Lucas, one of the pioneers, Father of the late Superior Judge Harry C. Lucas, running for reelection gave additional details of the Carnegie transaction. The money was paid in and paid out through Mr. Lucas' office as ex officio Tax Collector, an office in part paid by a percentage of receipts. He was clearly entitled to the percentage on this money, which would have amounted to \$200, a handy sum to one in his circumstances; but he waived his right to it on the ground that it was not a regular part of the city's receipts. His decision, he said, to forgo his legal rights on ethical grounds was largely strengthened by the conduct of Mr. Leask.

The Carnegie bequest came in the form of drafts on New York in denominations of \$5,000, each payable as the work advanced. As the money was turned over into the treasury, Mr. Leask asked whether I preferred the draft or the cash. I replied that since I would deposit it, cash would be equally acceptable. New York exchange was then \$10 on a draft of that size; but instead of taking the draft and using it in his business as Mr. Leask had a right to do, he paid into the library fund the cost of exchange. Mr. Leask explained that he had been undecided before as to his duty in this matter, but that he then resolved not to take his lawful commission, but become the invisible donor to the library fund.[4]

Samuel Leask returned to Santa Cruz on May 3, 1902, and on May 6, he was appointed to the Library Board. He took the place of David C. Clark, who had had to resign because he had been elected Mayor of Santa Cruz.

Bickering about the site of the new library began before Andrew Carnegie donated the \$15,000 grant in February, 1902. An editorial in the *Sentinel* on January 5 insisted that the location must be solved immediately, that there was no time to bicker. "Anywhere and now is better than nowhere and never." [5] In the bitter controversy that followed this statement, over twenty different suggestions were printed in the *Sentinel* between January and August. On September 2, 1902, this letter was delivered to the City Council by Samuel Leask:

"To The Honorable Mayor and Council of the City of Santa Cruz, Cal.
Gentlemen:-

The Board of Trustees of the Santa Cruz Free Library beg leave to call the attention of your honorable body to certain portions of the law providing for the establishment and maintenance of public libraries within municipalities, approved March 23, 1901, the construction of parts of which seems to be somewhat obscure.

In view of the donation of \$20,000 by Mr. Andrew Carnegie for the purpose of providing a building for library purposes in this city, a donation which we understand was formally accepted by the Mayor of the City, the purchase of a lot on which to erect said building has become necessary.

Section 7 of the law referred to seems to imply that the legislative body of any municipality shall levy a tax for the maintenance of an established public library and for purchasing property necessary therefor. There is a provision in said section which limits the amount that may be levied for the purposes named after two years from the passage of the act referred to above, which time would expire March 23, 1903.

In order to take advantage of the gift of Mr. Carnegie, and under the provisions of the law referred to, we feel that immediate action is necessary.

We believe that the only just and practicable way in which a suitable lot for a library building may be procured is by the levy of a tax on the property of the entire city, and

we respectively ask your honorable body to make such levy as will in your opinion be adequate for the purposes named.

Respectfully submitted,
Board of Library Trustees"[6]

Mr. and Mrs. F. A. Hihn offered to deed property which they had owned for forty years to the City of Santa Cruz for forty dollars a month for ten years, beginning November 1, 1902. The City was to pay all taxes levied on the land since September 14, 1902. A library was to be built within two years. Mr. Hihn was to be allowed 90 days from September 22 to remove any improvements he desired. This lot, 100 feet by 200 feet, had 100 feet of frontage on both Church and Locust Streets.

This proposal was accepted by the City Council on Saturday, September 27, 1902, and the City Clerk was instructed to have the deed filed that day in Recorder Cooper's office.

Early in November, 1902, Andrew Carnegie's agent notified the Library Trustees that the \$20,000 grant was ready in blocks of \$5,000.

This sum would be sent to the Library Board as needed upon receipts signed by the President and Treasurer accompanied by the supervising architect's certification that a certain amount of work had been done and that funds were needed. This indicated that the Library Board could proceed with the selection of building plans and putting the plans out to bid.

Preliminary steps toward the erection of the library building were taken on November 8. Trustees Leask and Linscott wrote the draft of notice to the architects for the plans while Trustees Bliss and Anderson were sketching the lot and its surroundings. Architect interviews were set up by November, with Mr. Bliss interviewing Mr. Van Cluck and Mr. Leask interviewing W. A. Weeks of Watsonville.

On November 18, 1902, the *Sentinel* stated that the Library Trustees would soon advertise for plans and that they had been communicating with the trustees of the Carnegie libraries to ascertain the method of procedure. By November 26, 1902, it was learned that Mr. Carnegie was satisfied with the lot and that the Santa Cruz Library Trustees had submitted a general plan for his approval.

The specifications for the library which was to have a California style of architecture were:

"The Board of Library Trustees of Santa Cruz, California, hereby invite architects to submit plans and estimated cost of construction for a public library building.

The site selected for the proposed building is a lot running from Church Street 200 feet north to Locust Street, and has a frontage of 100 feet on each street from east to west. On the west of the lot is the garden of Mr. F. A. Hihn, the distance from the westerly line

of the lot to his residence being about 200 feet. To the east of the lot are residences and outbuildings connected therewith, the highest structure being 30 feet. Both Locust and Church are residence streets and present no architectural features with which the proposed building must harmonize. The soil is river loam, subsoil gravel.

A sketch showing the location of the lot and its surroundings will be furnished on application, also the cross-section of the lot from north to south.

It has been decided that a story building with basement will best serve the purpose in view. The building will be visible from all four sides. The Board does not wish to limit architects to any special style of architecture, but it is the unanimous opinion that convenience of arrangement should not be sacrificed for architectural effect. No special building material is insisted on, but the structure must be as nearly fireproof as possible.

BASEMENT

It is desired to have a basement, the ceiling of which shall be of sufficient height so that rooms may be fitted up for lecture or club rooms. Provision should be made in basement for:

- Receiving room for books, etc.
- Storage of Fuel.
- Fuminating [sic] Room
- Bicycles.
- Inside stairway to main floor.
- Men's Toilet.
- ?iter connecting with Librarian's Room on main floor.

All parts of the basement must be accessible from outside of building.

That portion of basement not needed for purposes named above may be left unfinished, but so arranged that if at any time the unfinished part should be needed for lecture room, reading room and heating plant it will be suitable for those purposes.

MAIN FLOOR

The main floor should contain the following:

- General Reading Room about 28 x 32.
- Juvenile Room 18 x 22.
- Librarian's Room 12 x 16.
- Committee Room 18 x 22.
- Book or Stack Room to accommodate 30000 vols. on main floor.
- Librarian's Desk.
- Ladies' Toilet, opening in to Committee Room and also into Main Room.

In planning for this floor, special attention is requested to the problem of how to secure the greatest possible amount of sunlight for the Reading and Juvenile Rooms without depriving the books of the light and heat necessary for their preservation. In this

connection the use of skylights is suggested. It may also be stated that arrangements for proper ventilation will be regarded as indispensable.

Permanent partitions are to be avoided except where absolutely necessary, and a view to economy of administration, simplicity, convenience and flexibility is a necessity. No partition is desired between Stack Room and Reading Room.

The Juvenile Room should be near to and in plain view of librarian's desk, and so located that visitors to it will not have to pass through Reading Room.

The librarian's room should be easily accessible from the desk and should contain a large cupboard or closet.

DRAWINGS

All drawings shall be drawn to a scale of four feet to one inch, on white paper, and shall contain the following:

1. Basement or foundation plan.
2. Main floor plan.
3. Elevation on the west.
4. Elevation on the south.
5. Sectional Drawing.
6. Perspective of exterior.

The plans must be delivered flat, covered and sealed, all express charges prepaid, on or before 12 o'clock M., February 15, 1903, to J. W. Linscott, Secretary of the Board of Library Trustees. Each drawing shall be signed with the architect's name and address.

Architects are requested to furnish an itemized estimate of cost of construction.

The successful architect will be required to deposit with the Secretary of the Board of Library Trustees a certified check for \$200 as a guarantee that the building can be constructed as per his plan for the sum available, \$18000.

All plumbing, gasfitting and fixtures, electric wiring and fixtures, cost of designs, specifications and superintendence should be included in estimate which must not exceed \$18000. Architect's fee for plans and specifications should be given with and without superintendence.

The Board reserves the right to reject any or all plans submitted., and no decision shall be regarded as final until working plans are made, estimates obtained, and the cost of carrying out the chosen designs shall be found to come within the limit stated in the conditions of competition.

F. W. Bliss
E.L. Williams
C.L. Anderson
J. W. Linscott
Samuel Leask

Board of Library Trustees
Santa Cruz, California.
December 15, 1902."[7]

Eight sets of plans from five companies had been received by February 17, 1903. Two were from W. H. Weeks of Watsonville, two from Burnham and Bliesner of Los Angeles, one from Ernest Martin Hoen of Sacramento, one from Skidmore and Schroeffler of San Francisco, and two from J. Marquis of Santa Cruz. The consensus of public opinion favored the Skidmore plan after these plans had been put on display. The Library Board thoroughly studied and discussed the plans; on April 20, they decided to adopt one of Mr. Weeks' plans.

By June, the *Sentinel* was complaining that not one brick had been laid in the construction of the new library and that the community had hoped to see the building under cover.[8]

The Library Board was advertising for contractors and builders early in July in the local newspapers - *Santa Cruz Daily Surf* and *Santa Cruz Sentinel*. Six sealed bids were opened at 8 p.m. on July 18 by the Library Board. Four days later, the indications were that the contract was to go to McPhee and Sutton of San Francisco. The Library Board discussed the articles of agreement, bond, etc., with McPhee and Sutton on July 24. The bond they had put up was not in correct form; after McPhee and Sutton had corrected it, it was approved by the acting City Attorney, Mr. K. B. Knight. Finally, on August 5, Samuel Leask proposed that the Library Board accept the \$17,925 bid of McPhee and Sutton to construct the Santa Cruz Free Library; the Board adopted the resolution unanimously.

Local labor was to be used, according to McPhee and Sutton. On August 8, Mr. C. D. Folsam was appointed the local superintendent with the approval of Architect Weeks.

Early in August, 1903, the Library Board began to make the arrangements for the formal laying of the cornerstone. The work of constructing the foundation had to be stopped from August 22 through September 1 because there was no more cement. The ordered cement was stranded at the Napa railroad depot; there were no engines and cars to ship the cement to Santa Cruz.

September 29, 1903, was the date chosen for the laying of the cornerstone. The Masonics, Grand Lodge of California, F & A M, were the hosts of this great event. All Santa Cruz turned out to participate. The cornerstone, which had been inscribed "Gift of Andrew Carnegie-1903," contained a copy of the *Santa Cruz Morning Sentinel*, September 29, 1903, a copy of the *Santa Cruz Surf* dated September 28, a guide to Santa Cruz, rules and regulations of the library, a 1903

directory of Masonic Lodge members throughout the state, a history of the library, examples of library cards, and a list of the books the library had accumulated by 1899.

Contractors McPhee and Sutton sublet the plumbing to Byrne Brothers, the painting to George Root, and the electric wiring to Robert Cardiff, all of Santa Cruz; the concrete work went to Granite Rock Company of Watsonville.

The *Santa Cruz Sentinel* and the *Santa Cruz Surf* kept up a running commentary on the progress of the construction of the library. During this same period, September, 1903, through April, 1904, the Library Board of Trustees' Records contained changes in plans and materials which were approved.

On April 14, 1904, the new Carnegie Library of Santa Cruz was formally opened with the appropriate ceremonies. The Santa Cruz Ladies' Improvement Society were the hostesses for the evening. A detailed account of the opening ceremonies is provided in the *Santa Cruz Surf Free Library Supplement*.^[9]

This *Library Supplement* also contained:

1. a thorough room-by-room description of the library;
2. the statement that "the Santa Cruz library has the largest collection of books in proportion to population of any town in the State"; ^[10]
3. lists of contributors to the Art and Loan Exhibit;
4. letters from Theodore Roosevelt, Edward Everett Hale, Edwin Markham, and W. D. Howells;
5. gifts to the library and their donors;
6. information about Mr. Carnegie.

Because the Library Trustees had decided to use the entire \$20,000 grant for the building itself, there were no funds for its furnishings. Two large events were promoted to provide the library with furniture. The Santa Cruz, Capitola and Watsonville Electric Railway Company donated the receipts of December 29, 1903, toward the fund. The young lady conductors collected \$144.70, while the regular conductors took in the remainder of \$167.80 as Santa Cruz turned out for the event. An Art and Loan Exhibition was conceived early in December, 1903; it was held in the new library on April 14, 15 and 16, 1904. The Santa Cruz Improvement Society hosted this project, which netted \$450. The Society also donated another \$300 toward the fund.

Other large gifts and benefits for the Furnishing Fund were a lecture given by Dr. Emily Noble entitled "Among the Brahmins of India," with receipts of \$163; a Poster Exhibit on November 27, 1903, which netted \$24.20; \$100 donated by the Humane Society; and Scottish entertainment presented on February 19, 1904, by the Native Daughters at the opera house in order to furnish the lecture room in the southwest corner of the basement (which in the contract was not supposed to be finished).

On April 28, 1904, the Santa Cruz Free Public Library was opened to the public at 9 a.m.

Notes

1. Minutes of the Meetings of the Santa Cruz Library Board of Trustees, Oct. 3, 1899, p. 150.
2. *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*, March 27, 1901, p. 2.
3. Robert Burton and Thomas L. McHugh, *Samuel Leask; Transplanted Scot Citizen par Excellence* (2nd printing, 1964; Felton, Calif.: The Village Print Shop), about p. 4. (Unpaged.)
4. *Ibid.*, about p. 5-7.
5. Editorial, "Library Location," *Santa Cruz Morning Sentinel*, Jan. 5, 1902, p. 2.
6. Letter found in scrapbook.
7. Specifications, scrapbook.
8. Editorial, *Santa Cruz Evening Sentinel*, June 11, 1903, p. 2.
9. Free Library Supplement, *Santa Cruz Surf*, n.d., p. 2.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
11. Edward Martin, *History of Santa Cruz County* (Los Angeles: Historic Record Company, 1911), p. 77.

Part 4 – 1890-1941: Minerva Watterman, Librarian

Minerva Watterman, who became a librarian through a quirk of fate, ended up serving in that role for 51 years, and in the process became the guiding force behind the development of the Santa Cruz Public Library System.



*Minerva Watterman, 1907,
at the Summer Seabright
Branch*

She worked first as a rural school teacher, but was called home in 1889 to help care for her ailing father; she took the assistant librarian position only as a temporary way to work near home. Just one year later she was elected to the post of head librarian - a position she held until her retirement in 1941.

Miss Watterman's first task was to create a functional catalog system, as there was no standard method in use at the time. In her own careful handwriting, she not only made file entries by author and title, but also added brief, perceptive statements about each author and book, based on her own reading.

The space at City Hall proved to be inadequate, and civic interest focused on securing a permanent, suitable facility for the library. In 1901 the trustees approached Andrew Carnegie regarding a major gift to build a local library; their effort was successful, and in 1904 the Santa Cruz Free Public Library opened its doors at the corner of Church and Center.

Minerva Waterman had goals for her library that exceeded its modest budget, so she turned to the community for help. Countless fund raisers were held on its behalf. Miss Waterman also actively sought and received personal collections from many influential citizens. The donation of the Otto Kunitz Music Library in 1937 formed the nucleus of [what would become] the Art and Music Room, a concept that was years ahead of its time.

Other innovative programs sponsored by the library included lectures and art exhibits. Keeping up with modern times, phonograph records and stereoscope views (in sets of 25) were added to the circulating collection in 1910, and in 1925 a parking lot was added for the convenience of patrons.

Miss Waterman's long tenure also saw the expansion of the system to include branches at Seabright, Garfield Park and East Santa Cruz, and a contract to extend services to the county. And until the school district established its own library in 1940, the public library also served the area's high school and elementary schools.

On the occasion of Miss Waterman's retirement in 1941, the Santa Cruz Sentinel observed,

"Through the years the various trustees of the library performed their duties well, but Santa Cruz will always remember that at the head of the growing institution throughout the most vital 51 years of its expansion was Miss Minerva Waterman, with her vision, energy and initiative."

Source

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