

HIGHLAND PARK NEWS-LETTER

Public Library, Mrs. Jennings Oct 1 05

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LIBRARY BUILDING REPORT

As President of the Highland Park Public Library board of directors during the time the new library building, on lot 2, block 50, on Luarel avenue, was being constructed, I herewith submit my report of said work of construction. After the deeds for the lots had been executed by Arthur C. Thompson and wife in March 1905, and the same filed of record in the Recorders office at Waukegan, Mr. Carnegie's fiscal agent informed me that the Carnegie gift of \$10,000.00 was available. The architects, Messrs Patton and Miller, 140 Dearborn street, Chicago, were instructed to complete the plans for the new building and submit the same to the board of directors. The plans were made, submitted, modified several times during the summer until adopted by the board, when bids were called for, which were opened in the architects office September 11th, 1905, and contracts let, substantially as follows, though slightly modified in some cases. The figures given in the following table are those by which final settlement was made with our contractors after deducting bills for freight, repairs etc. from the original contract prices.

LIST OF CONTRACTS.

Bulley & Andrews, general contract	.....\$12,099 50
Schaeffer Co, roofing	..... 787 00
McFell Co, electric wiring	..... 417 75
Abercromby, plumbing	..... 597 00
Abercromby, heating, hot water plant	..... 1,305 00
Spierling, decorations	..... 400 00
Linden Glass Co, ornamental glass	..... 200 00
Marshall Fields & Co., window shades	..... 33 80
Ford & Johnson Co., chairs	..... 83 92
Chicago Gas & Electric Fixture Co., light fixtures	..... 446 63
Globe Fixture & Furniture Co., Tables and desks	..... 364 00
North Shore Gas Co., piping building	..... 35 00
Hawes & Dodd, copper mantel and tile	..... 150 00
Patton & Miller, architects fees (5%)	..... 845 42
North Shore Gas Co., outside piping	..... 14 95
Brand Brother's, repairing ceiling	..... 1 00
North Shore Electric Co., lamps and supplies	..... 21 40
"Extras," not included in contracts	..... 91 37
Total cost of building and furnishing	.....\$17,893 27
"EXTRAS, ABOVE MENTIONED,	
Roberts, Insurance	.....\$60 00
Duffy, freight and cartage	..... 3 14
Duffy, freight and cartage	..... 9 68
Repairing two old book stacks	..... 15 55
Pierson, repairs on tables	..... 3 00
Total "extras" as above	.....\$91 37

The receipts for the building fund were as follows, to-wit:

Andrew Carnegie's first gift	.....\$10,000 00
Supplementary Carnegie gift	..... 2,000 00
Sale of old lot and building, net	..... 436 100

Special appropriation by city council	..... 1,500 00
Balance by Library Board	..... 32 27

Total receipts for building fund.....\$17,893 27

From the above statement as to the Building Fund, the following things appear:

First, Mr. Carnegie has given to the people of the City of Highland Park the sum of Twelve Thousand Dollars, outright as a gift. Would it be beneath our dignity to make some recognition of this fact in the elegant building erected so largely through his princely generosity, by a bronze tablet, or in some other suitable manner? In my judgment, it is the least we can do, consistently with our own self-respect.

Second, the City of Highland Park is now in the possession of a substantial and elegant library building, second to none for its size and cost in the Northwest, and one which will serve us these many years, without alterations, and with very slight repairs, being at the same time one of the chief ornaments and objects of pride of our people, representing, at a very moderate estimate a cash value of at least \$20,000, or in other words, the city has, through the persistent and unwearied efforts of the Woman's Club, in securing the Carnegie gift, come into the possession of a building just adapted to its present and future needs, worth at least four times the highest valuation of the old property and this exchange has been effected at the cost of the city of only \$1,500.—I am happy to be able to say that when it became known that the building committee, after much thought and deliberation had decided to go on and finish it according to the original plans, even at the risk of an indebtedness of two or three thousand dollars, the expressions of approval came from all classes of our citizens, and what pleased me most, was, that so many and so earnest expressions of approval came from the working men, men of limited means, who said in substance, "Mr. Hibbard, you did right; we want that building finished, now, it is economy to do it and we will cheerfully pay our extra tax to make up the deficit, whatever it may be." With such assurances, from such sources, I felt amply compensated for the few feeble and somewhat far-fetched criticisms to which we were subjected.

Third, I wish here and now to put on record my profound regret that the building was not located on the little Hazel Park and then its name changed to Library Park, and I have been surprised as well as pleased at the many expressions of such regret that I have from persons who never expressed an opinion during the protracted controversy over the site. Putting that building where it is, was part the city's fatal blunders, and one which cannot, for generations, if ever, be remedied. The only partial remedy, now possible, is for the city to secure possession of the remainder of that corner, lots 1 and 2, in block 50, as the future home for our city building. Secure the lots now, and build when we must, or can, erect a building which in size, appointments, and architecture will fittingly and permanently represent

and adequately serve the city for the years to come. Let us not any more, every four or five years, practically waste from two to five thousand dollars, patching up or so called "improving" an old, ill arranged, and inadequate structure, which can never be made what it should be.

I say this with no reflection on the generosity of Mr. Thompson who presented us with two thirds of the present site and sold us the balance at a reduced price. He recognized, as did every other public spirited person, the fact that the Hazel Park was the place for such structure as our new Public Library building. Our thanks are therefore due not only to Mr. Carnegie for his magnificent gift, but also to Mr. Arthur C. Thompson, a resident of the State of Massachusetts, for a site for our building, and to President Fred M. Cushing, of the Highland Park State Bank, in so courteously and successfully bringing the library situation to Mr. Thompson's attention.

I cannot close this brief report without some reference to our contractors. One and all did good work and rendered full values for the moneys paid them. While most of them were paid promptly on presentation of architects certificates, a few waited with rare patience, for months for their money, from causes over which I had no control, though I sought it diligently. Our general contractors, Bulley & Andrews, 115 Dearborn street, Chicago, more than met all our reasonable expectations; their one desire seemed to be to give us a first class job in all respects. Their Foreman, Mr. Thomas Sleeman, now a resident of this city, could not be surpassed. Our own Mr. Abercromby, who put in the plumbing work and heating plant seemed to have a personal pride in doing the best he could do, is all we could ask. Mr. Spierling the decorator, was turned into the building and told to use his own judgment and all were more than satisfied with the result; not a word of adverse criticism have been heard. The Architects, Patton & Miller, were unwearied in their efforts to meet our wishes, and at the same time give us a structure which would embody the highest and best ideals, and though they have erected something like four score Carnegie public library buildings, they regard ours as one of their best, and we have abundant reasons to be more than satisfied. I have, in short, yet to learn of a single visitor from abroad who is not delighted with our building.

I append an itemized statement of the receipts and expenditures in connection with the erection of our public library building.

RECEIPTS.

Sept. 7 1905	Check from Carnegie fund	\$ 333 34
Nov. 22	"	2,500 00
Dec. 18.	"	2,000 00
Dec. 20.	"	2,700 00
Jan, 1906.	From sale of old library property	4,351 00
Feb. 26.	Check from Carnegie fund	2,000 00
May 18.	"	466 66
Oct. 3.	" extra gift	2,000 00

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