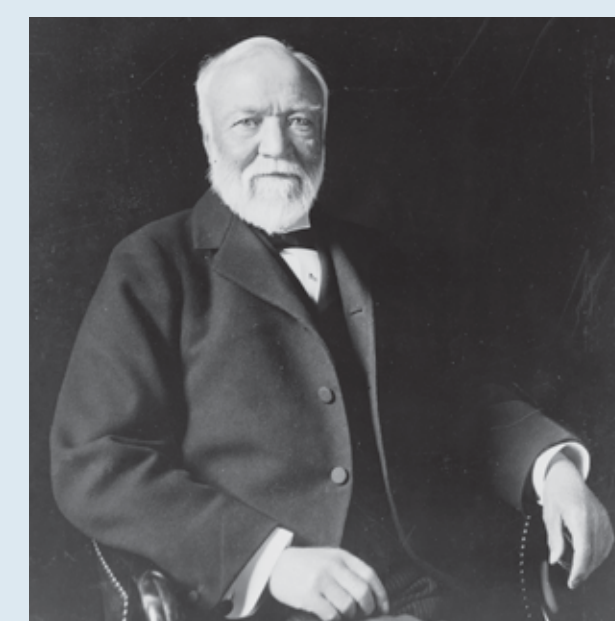


HIGH PARK BRANCH HISTORY

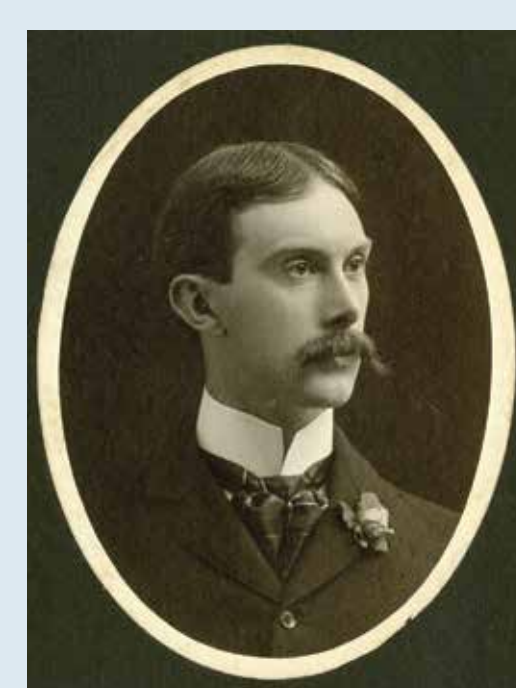
Prepared by Toronto Public Library staff for the 2016 Centennial

PLANNING AND BUILDING, 1914 - 1916 Eden Smith and Sons, Architects

High Park Branch was the second of three nearly identical libraries (together with Wychwood and Beaches) that the Toronto Public Library opened in 1916 with a \$50,000 grant promised by the Carnegie Corporation of New York on 25 November 1914. Its final cost was \$17,735 for the building and \$27,400 for the land.



Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) was one of the wealthiest industrialists of his day whose best-known philanthropy was libraries. Between 1903 and 1915, he and his foundation gave \$487,500 to build ten public libraries in what is now Toronto.

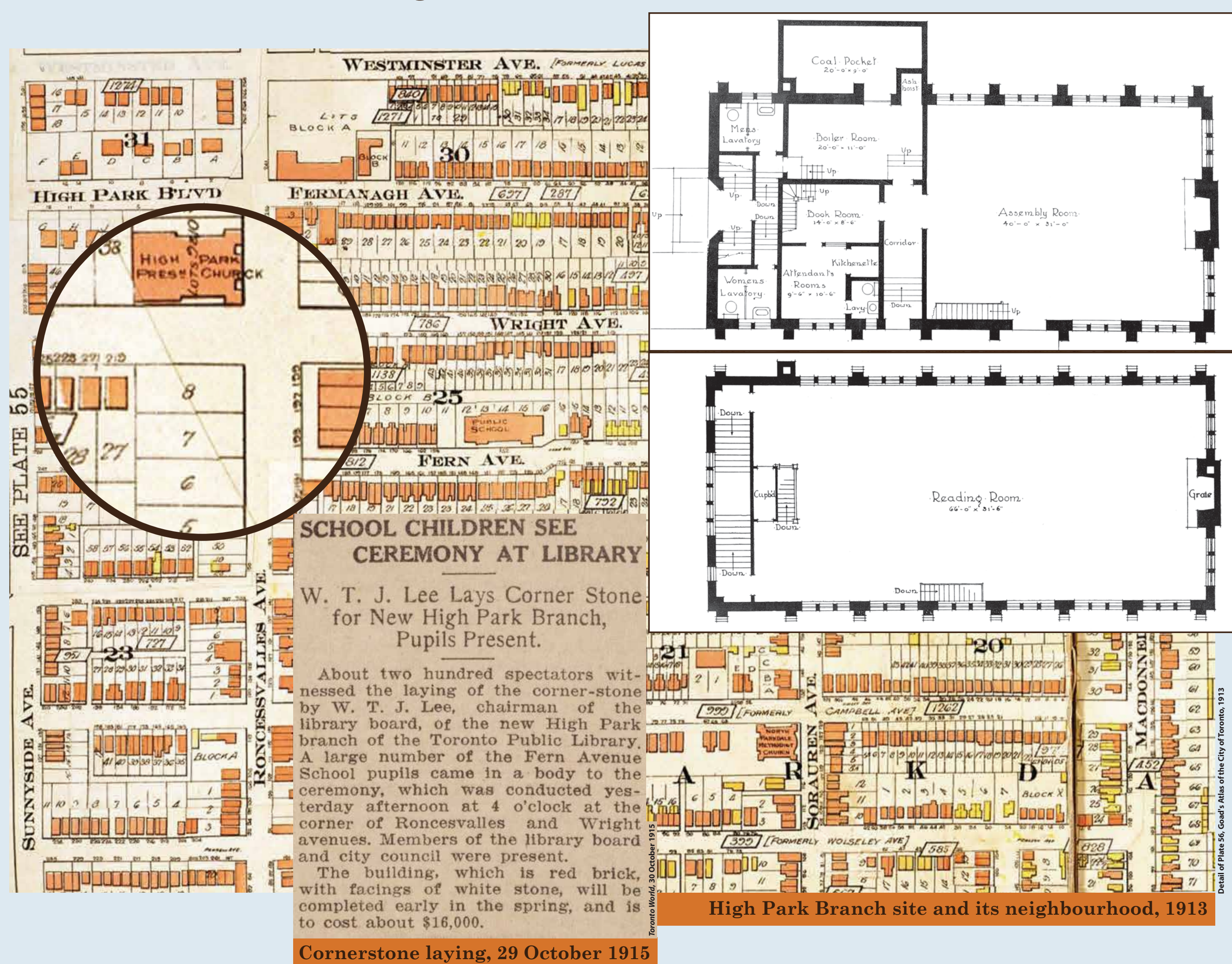


George H. Locke, Toronto Public Library's chief librarian from 1908 to 1936, wrote his first letter to the Carnegie Corporation on 22 June 1914 requesting funds to build branches "in three far-outlying portions of our city where the need is particularly pressing".

One Carnegie grant condition was the provision of a library site by the local municipality. On 31 May 1915, Toronto City Council approved supplying lots 7, 8 and part of 27 of Registered Plan 972 for High Park Branch. The property had a frontage of 107 feet on the west side of Roncesvalles Avenue and a depth of 137 feet on the south side of Wright Avenue.



Eden Smith (1859-1949), called "the most consistent Arts and Crafts architect in Toronto," designed the three new libraries, Wychwood Branch being the prototype. The plans were approved by the Carnegie Corporation on 22 March 1915.



PROVIDING LIBRARY SERVICE FROM 1916

High Park Branch was very well used from the time that it opened on 31 October 1916, quickly becoming one of the busiest in Toronto Public Library. In 1928 and 1929, the Library Board recommended an extension to the library, but that work was not done for another 50 years.

MAKE NEW LIBRARY A COMMUNITY HOME

This is What High Park Branch Promises to Be

YOUNG PEOPLE'S CENTRE

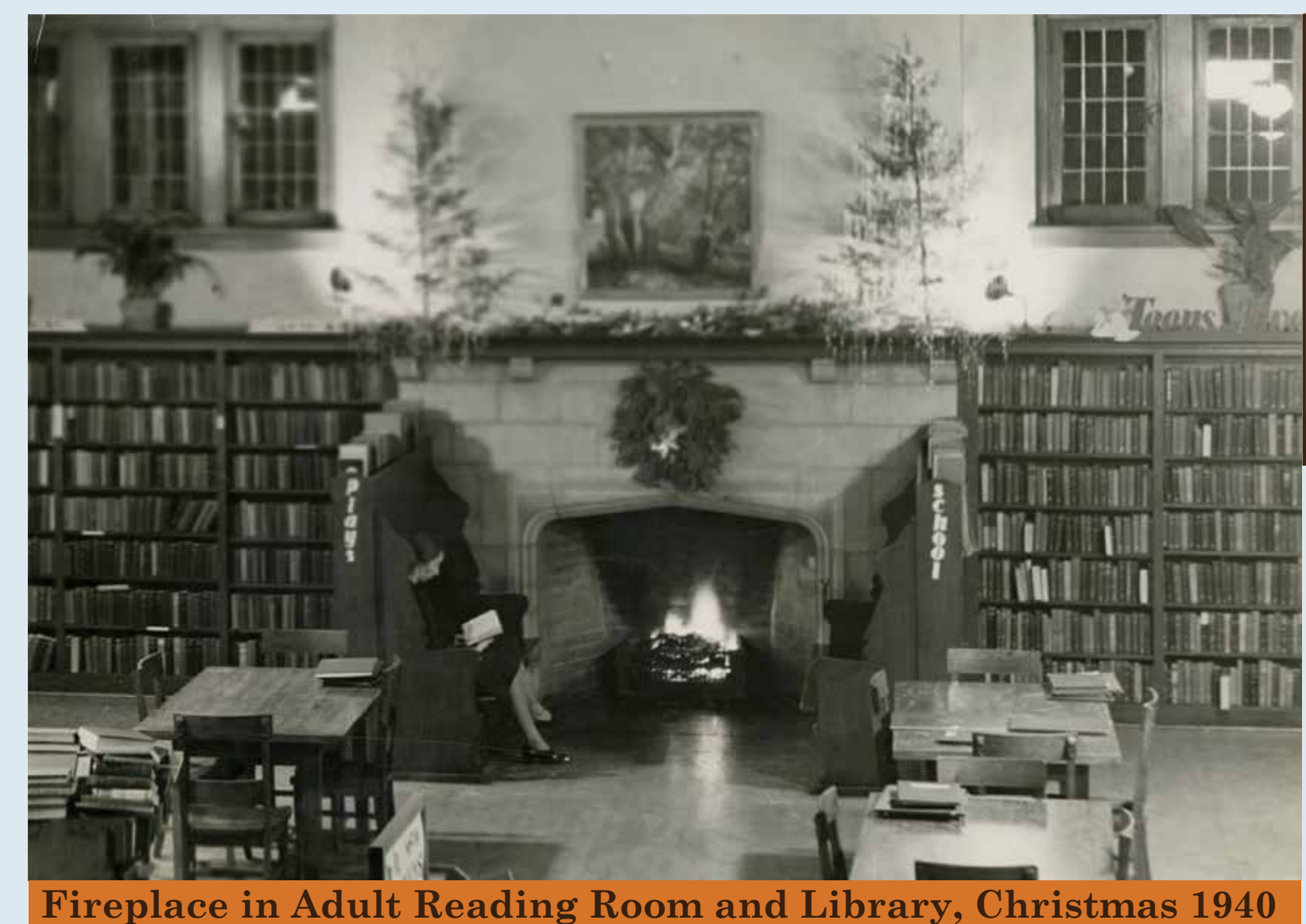
Live Civic Topics Introduced at Opening Ceremony--Controller Cameron Would Give Cook Book Place on Shelves--A Word for Firemen.

The function of the public library as a public forum was exemplified at the opening of the new High Park branch library last evening. There was a large and representative attendance, the building being filled. There was hearty enthusiasm, and the speakers tackled live civic topics with the vigor and decisiveness of a ratapayers' association.

Opening ceremonies, 31 October 1916



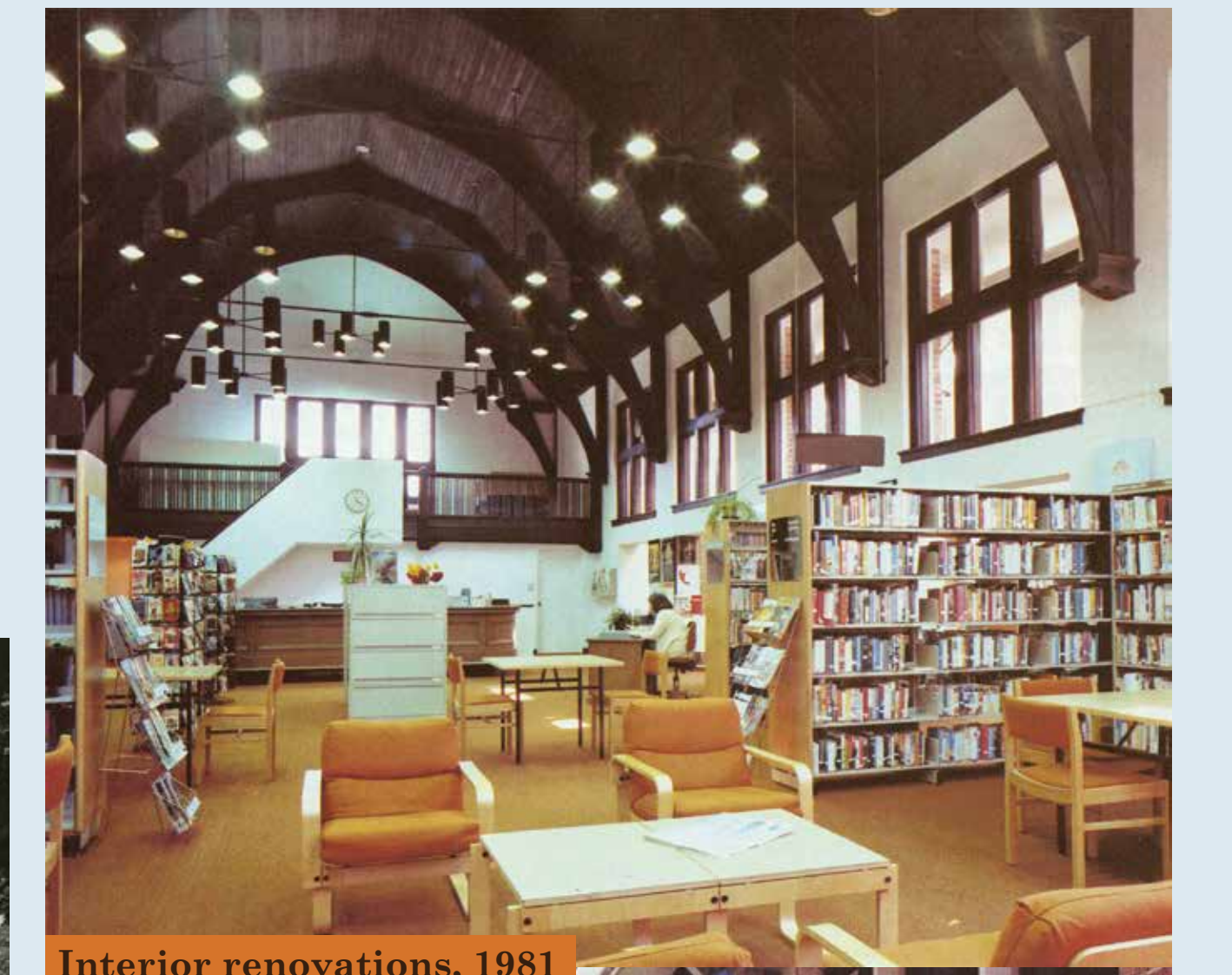
The church opened in 1910, became Erskine United Church in 1925 and was destroyed by fire in November 1927. A room in the replacement church (1928) was used for library service during High Park Branch's first renovation and addition.



Canadian artist Fred S. Haines (1879-1960) created the landscape oil painting above the fireplace.

FIRST RENOVATION AND ADDITION, 1977-79 Moffat, Moffat & Kinoshita, Architects

Two pitched roof wings were added to the north and south sides providing 40 percent more floor space. Costing \$435,000, the renovated branch reopened on 31 March 1979. It was listed on the City of Toronto's Inventory of Heritage Properties on 11 June 1979.



SECOND RENOVATION AND ADDITION, 1990-91 Joseph Bogdan Associates, Arch.

The \$850,000 project included a new two-story wing on the north side that referenced the roof form and scale of the original building. The branch reopened on 9 November 1991 and was awarded a Certificate of Commendation from the Toronto Historical Board in 1992.



HIGH PARK BRANCH CENTENNIAL, OCTOBER 2016

HIGH PARK BRANCH, TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY 1916

High Park branch opened on October 31, 1916. This was the second of three nearly identical libraries (together with Wychwood and Beaches) built by the Toronto Public Library with a \$50,000 grant from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The new library was needed to serve the rapidly growing community. Designed in the 17th-century English Collegiate style by architects Eden Smith and Sons, the building did not follow the Classical style of earlier Carnegie libraries. Chief librarian George Locke wanted the branch to remind residents of "Scottish and English village type of architecture" while being "adapted to modern requirements." The brick and stone library features an upper floor modelled on a Tudor Gothic great hall, with a soaring hammerbeam ceiling and stone fireplace. The building was renovated in 1979, when two pitched-roof wings were added, and in 1990, when the north wing was extended and a glass canopy added at the entrance.

Listed on the City of Toronto Heritage Register
HERITAGE TORONTO 2016