

BIBLIOTEKSLOKALER

**Deras utformning och nyttjande nu och då och
framöver**

MERÖPPET

En utvecklingstrend i tiden

BIBLIOTEKSMUSEET

ÅRSSKRIFT 2019

BIBLIOTEKSMUSEET

Årsskrift 2019

Biblioteksmuseets skriftserie nr 13.

Borås mars 2020

Redaktör: Tommy Olsson

Innehållsförteckning

Förord, Tommy Olsson, s.4

Inledning och bakgrund, Magnus Torstensson, s.4

Biblioteket blev upptakten när Lomma blev Sveriges bästa boendekommun, Göran Schmitz, s.10

Den långa vägen till Ode, Ilkka Mäkinen, s. 17

The design of the Carnegie Library in Evanston, Alistair Black och Oriel Prizeman, s.26

Ängelholms bibliotek, Martin Menet Könick, s. 38

Hjärnarps bibliotek, Marianne Lindström och Annika Jarnbjer, s. 40

Meröppet Norrtälje bibliotek, Annalena Carlstedt, s. 42

Mikko Laakso: Kansanvalistajasta kansalaisten olohuoneeksi. Helsingin kaupunginkirjasto 1940-2005. Helsingfors 2010. [Från folkupplysare till medborgares vardagsrum. Helsingfors stadsbibliotek 1940-2005. Svensk resumé s. 363-372.]

Information om biblioteket på svenska på webbsidan:
<https://www.oodihelsinki.fi/sv/vad-ar-ode/>

The Design of the Carnegie Library in Evanston, Illinois (1908)

In the United States the philanthropy of the steel magnate Andrew Carnegie was responsible for helping to build 1679 public libraries between 1889 and 1923.¹ Carnegie's influence extended globally, of course, a further 900-plus library building grants being offered worldwide before his universal programme came to an end in the late 1920s.² Built to last, many Carnegie libraries still stand, either continuing to function as libraries or having been adapted for other purposes.³ This is the story of one Carnegie library that did not make it into the information age: that provided for the town of Evanston, Illinois, on the shores of Lake Michigan, fifteen miles north of Chicago. During the course of its relatively short lifespan of half a century, Evanston's Carnegie library was one of the town's most cherished and revered buildings. Its demise encourages us today to reflect on the changing popularity of Carnegie libraries as public buildings in relation to their potential for ongoing or future use – a potential that is increased by revising any negative images that may persist regarding their original design.

The Carnegie library in Evanston opened its doors on New Year's Day 1908.⁴ Evanston was named after the Methodist politician John Evans, who was instrumental in founding Northwestern University, in 1851. Three years later, the University settled on the site of what was to become Evanston, which was officially incorporated as a village in 1863. The aftermath of the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 saw a growth of towns and suburbs around the metropolis. As both suburb and independent town, Evanston offered a peaceful alternative to the hustle and bustle of a resurgent Chicago, and the once modest township rapidly became the site of leafy streets and new homes, many architect-designed. In 1892, Evanston was incorporated as a city. By the turn of the century its population had reached just under 20,000 (a figure which thereafter was to increase threefold in as many decades).⁵ Evanston at this time was seen as at once 'an up-to-the-minute city' and a 'residential City Beautiful' – the 'most beautiful city in the world', according to the Director of Works at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair.⁶

By the time the Carnegie library came along, Evanstonians had already enjoyed access to a free library for over three decades. A local library association had been founded in 1870, and in the following year it was in a position to open a library, its mission being 'to awaken a desire for sound knowledge and a correct taste, and to provide for the gratification of all classes of the community'.⁷ Although technically open to all, the library operated on the basis of membership subscriptions, the cheapest of which was set at \$5 per year (or just over \$100 in 2020 prices). Shortly afterwards, however, in 1873, local citizens voted unanimously to turn their fledgling fee-based

social library into a free public library. Nearly a thousand volumes were transferred from the subscription library into the ownership of the public library. The public library soon began purchasing new stock, and in 1879 it began buying books for children under the age of ten. In 1894 the library received its first trained librarian who immediately oversaw the introduction of a card catalogue, the Dewey classification system and the offer of membership to students from Northwestern University. The open-shelf, or open-access, system, by which readers were given direct access to shelved books, was adopted in 1898, Cleveland Public Library having inaugurated the system in the United States eight years earlier.⁸

Although in 1893 relatively spacious accommodation for the library had been found on the first floor of the new city hall, by the early-twentieth century the demands of a growing and increasingly prosperous and educated population were placing a considerable strain on the library's facilities and administration, as the librarian's annual reports repeatedly reported. In 1900, a wealthy local resident, Charles Grey, offered \$100,000 for a new library building, on the understanding that the city could provide a site for its construction. This substantial pledge was withdrawn two years later, when it was made clear, partly as a result of municipal financial difficulties, that no site could be found, at least not in the near future.

The city thus approached Andrew Carnegie for help and in 1903 the philanthropist promised to gift \$40,000 (excluding the cost of the site and ongoing maintenance) for a new library building. In 1904 the Library Board asked for a further \$10,000, the President of the Evanston Library Board, J.W. Thompson, and the city's mayor, John Barker, meeting Carnegie's secretary, James Bertram, in person in New York to discuss the matter. The Evanston representatives believed they had received a pledge from Bertram to meet the request, but Bertram later wrote to them saying that he could not recall the meeting. Nonetheless, Carnegie eventually increased the grant to \$50,000.⁹

Spurred on by the gift, in 1904 the city was able to procure a site from Northwestern University, for \$31,600. To make good the shortfall in the funding required to build a new library, the city allotted \$65,000 for the project and in 1906 a bond issue of \$25,000 was unveiled. In addition, a number of private donations were forthcoming, eventually amounting to \$12,000. Money for a collection of music sheets and literature was donated by George Coe, a professor at Northwestern University. The collection, named after his wife, Sadie Knowland Coe, was extensive and would require a dedicated space when the new library came to be built. Other donations included: a mantel for the children's room; a statue of Psyche (Greek goddess of the soul), made in Italy, for the reference room; and the book collection of the Evanston Medical Science Library Association. It was predicted that a local library tax would raise \$10,000 per year.

To design the new library the Library Board placed its faith in Charles Phillips (of the firm Rogers and Phillips). Phillips worked up several designs for consideration by the Board and in the late summer of 1905 a decision was reached on what was believed to be the best option. The original estimate of costs was \$110,000 but this was for a building substantially constructed of wood. Clearly, for reasons of fire safety the predominance of wood in the design was less than acceptable for a library building, so a revised design and associated schedule of costs – increasing to \$130,000 – were drawn up. The new design gave the building a steel frame, steel roof trusses, cement floors, tile partitions, a tile roof and wire lathing. The exterior was to be dressed in buff Bedford stone.

Bertram, representing Carnegie, expressed his disappointment that the so much money was being spent on the new library building in excess of the \$50,000 Carnegie had promised; and even threatened to withhold payment of the grant.¹⁰ However, the Evanston Library Board defended its expenditure, and the design of the new building, arguing that: 'Utility has been the primary object in planning, and the exterior will be as devoid of ornamentation as it possibly can be, and [will] present a pleasing and symmetrical appearance'.¹¹ Briefing the local press, when the new library was finished the Library Board re-asserted its belief in the modernity of the design: 'the building has been built with a view to utility and economy of administration seldom found'.¹² Any disagreement with this defence by Carnegie's office did not last long because eventually the grant was paid.

The foundation stone was laid on 2 June 1906. Construction was speedy and the library was opened on 1 January 1908. The design of the new library was said to have 'met with general approval throughout, both on the part of the public and experts in architecture and library construction'.¹³ Most reports described the library as 'classical Greek' in style but one source was more specific in its description: 'Classical-Ionic'.¹⁴ Set back from the road, the building was surrounded by generous and pleasant gardens either side of a long walkway leading to a tall flight of entrance steps typical of a Carnegie library (**Figure 1**). Clearly, in respect of its Classical-Revival lineage and the manicured, green environment that was flung around it, the library chimed with the City Beautiful movement of the time, as did the urban development of Evanston generally. The library was said to be 'beautiful inside and out'.¹⁵ The library's 'haven', or 'oasis', appearance was never more obvious than in the depths of Illinois' dark and frigid winters, when resort to a warm and bright environment was a bonus to the enjoyments of reading and recreation, as images published in the local press implied (**Figure 2**).



Figure 1. Evanston Public Library in the mid-1930s. Source: Evanston Record (15 November 1937)



Figure 2. Evanston Public Library on a wintry night, in the mid-1930s. Source: Evanston Review (13 January 1938).

Cut in Roman capitals on the cornice of the building were the words 'Evanston Public Library'. The word 'free' was not included in the name, as it was felt that the truly *public* nature of the public library in America had already imbedded itself in people's minds. The word 'Carnegie' was also deemed unnecessary, as city elders believed they had already enthusiastically expressed their gratitude for the great philanthropist's assistance; and Carnegie certainly never demanded that his name be used in connection with the gifts he bestowed.

The interior of the building was said to be in keeping with its grand, classical exterior. Entering through a vestibule, readers found themselves in a spacious delivery hall illuminated during the day by a full-width skylight (**Figure 3**). The hall was finished in mahogany, as were all the principal rooms. In the children's, general reading and reference rooms slabs of marble formed the base of every piece of woodwork and furniture. Throughout the ground floor, cork flooring laid on soft cement helped reduce noise. Directly opposite the vestibule, situated at the back of the delivery hall and flanked by catalogue cabinets and book-display cabinets, was a loan (circulation) desk, lit by two tall lamps and 'equipped with all modern conveniences for the necessary records of circulation'.¹⁶



Figure 3. Delivery hall, Evanston Public Library, in the early-1930s. Source: Evanston News-Index (20 February 1931)

Behind the delivery hall and its loan desk the architect placed a large bookstack room. Extending to four stories, the iron framework of the room, made by the Sned and Company Iron Works, was built on concrete foundations.¹⁷ The firm specialized in the construction of multi-tier, self-supporting book-storage rooms. Columns supporting the shelving also bore the weight of the tiers above. Later, under the direction of Angus Sned Macdonald, the Company became closely involved in developing the concept of the 'modular library'.¹⁸ To diffuse light, as in other Sned projects, the floors of the Evanston room were made of ground glass. With a capacity of 100,000 volumes, the room had more than enough capacity to house the 38,000 volumes transferred from the old library (this spare capacity in part ensured the survival of the building for over 50 years, its replacement not being required until 1960).

Two floors of the bookstack room were open on one side, facing into the delivery hall. In the tradition of oversight from a central position, Evanston librarians thus had a direct view of the public's movements in the stacks from their positions at the loan desk

in the entrance hall. However, oversight of the children's room and the reading room were limited from this central position, views only being available into these apartments through their open doorways, unlike in many small Carnegie libraries where the absence of solid partitions facilitated full and direct lines of sight.

Access to the reading room was off the delivery room, to its right-hand side. An entire wall was devoted to a periodical rack, and some volumes on open-access wall shelving were made available. A large doorway on one wall of the room gave access to the reference department, 'a large, light room, somewhat apart from the rest of the library' (**Figure 4**).¹⁹ Each reading table had four places and two reading lamps. Alcoves on both sides of the reference room provided 'cosy retreats for students'.²⁰ Situating the reference accommodation at the rear of the library in a secluded position, and using the reading room as the means of conveyance into the hallowed reference space, echoed a traditional hierarchical arrangement of library spaces. Art folios were arranged at the far end of the reference room, accompanied by large tables convenient for their examination (alongside medicine and music, art was promoted as one of the library's major specialisms).



Figure 4. Reference room, Evanston Public Library, in the mid-1930s. Source: Evanston Review (13 January 1938).

Returning to the delivery hall, readers leaving it to the left of the loan desk entered a large children's room (**Figure 5**). With their own catalogue, children were promised personal assistance in selecting books. The children's collection contained not only children's books but also a selection of standard works of adult literature aimed at challenging children to become familiar with 'the master minds of the world' and providing an antidote to 'undirected and misguided reading in youth'.²¹ At the rear of the library and proximate to the children's room, thus offering easy oversight of younger

readers, was an office for librarians, which was also connected to cataloguing and work rooms. These, in turn, were connected to the four-level bookstack.



Figure 5. The children's room, Evanston Public Library, in the mid-1930s.
Source: Evanston Review (13 January 1938).

Above the ground floor, a mezzanine floor accommodated a Directors' room, a staff room and a women's lavatory, as well as the aforementioned Sadie Knowland Coe Music Collection. Moving below ground, in the building's half-basement a lecture/meeting room – which the design termed 'audience room' – was provided (like the rest of the basement as well as the mezzanine level, flooring was in hardwood). The audience room could accommodate up to 150 persons and was furnished with a stereopticon (magic lantern). Space next to the audience room was reserved for a historical room, the contents and use of which, it was anticipated, would expand rapidly. The third major space in the basement was a boys' room, to be used for both reading and activities arranged by boys' clubs. A special, separate space for boys was regarded as important in order to attract them away from the immorality of street life: 'The boy who is won over from the loafing habit is on the safe road to good citizenship'.²² A men's lavatory, a janitor's room and areas for heating and ventilation equipment completed the basement plan (a fan system was adopted in preference to the natural-draft system that operated in Evanston's schools).²³

After the library opened 'Evanstonians rediscovered their library and patronage figures jumped sharply'.²⁴ Numerically, the new building was an immediate success, use of it increasing by 12% in the period 1 March to 31 May 1908, compared with the same period the year before.²⁵ By 1935 half of the city were using the library.²⁶ In the years that followed much was made of the growing development of the children's room, a stimulating isotype image being distributed to the local press to depict a 120% increase

in children's reading in the decade to the end of 1937 (**Figure 6**).²⁷ The library was viewed as not only efficient but also comfortable, the latter characteristic being enhanced by the provision of an 'outdoor reading room' – likened to the upper deck of a cruise ship – on the roof of an addition built in 1934 from Federal funds to facilitate the expansion of the collection and its user base (**Figure 7**).²⁸

After World War II the building became seriously overcrowded. In 1953 local citizens voted against a serious remodelling of the building. A minor remodelling was undertaken in 1955 but this was not enough to allay fears that the building was not fit for purpose. It was razed in the late-1950s and a building was opened on the same site in 1961. This in turn was succeeded (though not on the same site) by an elegant, new building in 1994 (**Figure 8**). Had the Carnegie library in Evanston made it into the era when, as a reaction to modernism's embrace of radical urban development, the preservation and re-cycling of buildings became more popular, its fate might have been different. However, constructing an extension to provide the same amount of space that eventually became available in the building that replaced it would have required a good deal of architectural creativity; for despite the benefits that might be perceived with a cursory glance from upgrading and extending Carnegie library buildings, in reality their age and the nature of their original design makes them costly to maintain, heat, cool, remodel and adapt to accessibility codes and to the needs of the digital age.²⁹

Yet it would be wrong to underestimate the potential of extant Carnegie libraries for the future.³⁰ Any tendency to do so, in fact, can be reduced by rehabilitating the reputation of their original designs which, notwithstanding the affection they have often engendered, have sometimes been disparaged, posited retrospectively as architectural 'mistakes'.³¹ This study of the design of the Carnegie library in Evanston points not to architectural folly but to a significant advance in library design, in keeping with ideas on the matter that had been developing for a generation.³² The amalgam of progressive components of the Evanston design – open stacks; generous children's accommodation; the provision of reference, study and meeting spaces; a prominent 'civic landmark' location; and the employment of an architectural style that invoked the public culture of the ancient polis – contradicts the discourse that Carnegie libraries simply represented an episode of elitist over-indulgence in wasteful aesthetics at the expense of functional library economy.

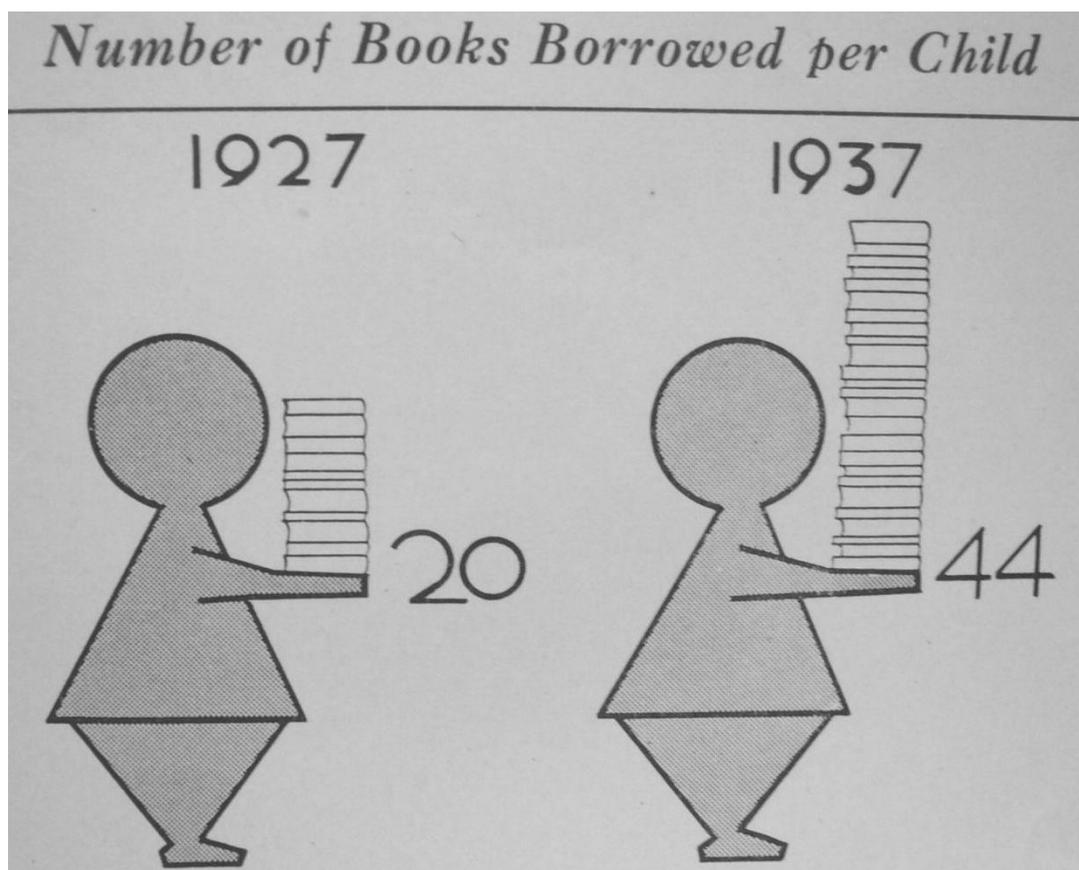


Figure 6. Increase in children's reading, 1927-1937, Evanston Public Library. Source: Evanston Review (13 January 1938).



Figure 7. Outdoor reading room, Evanston Public Library, in the mid-1930s. Source: S.S. Booklovers sail the seas, news cutting, source unidentified (1935), Evanston Public Library Archives.



Figure 8. The current Evanston Public Library (opened 1994), photographed in 2009. Source: Wikimedia Commons.

Notes

¹ G.S. Bobinski, *Carnegie libraries: their history and impact on American public library development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969), p. 3. Also on Carnegie libraries, see: A. Van Slyck, *Free to all: Carnegie libraries and American culture, 1890-1920* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1995); T. Jones, *Carnegie Libraries Across America: A Public Legacy* (New York: Wiley, 1997); and O. Prizeman, *Philanthropy and light: Carnegie libraries and the advent of transatlantic standards of public space* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2012). On the history of public libraries generally in the United States, see W. Wiegand, *Part of our lives: a people's history of the American public library* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

² The number of libraries built does not correspond exactly, as not all grants were accepted and some single grants provided for a suite of libraries: see D.R. Miller, *Carnegie grants for library buildings 1890-1917* (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1946), and the records of the Carnegie UK Trust, National Archives of Scotland.

³ In Illinois, to take the example of just one state, In Illinois, for example, only fourteen of the original 106 Carnegie libraries there have been demolished: List of Carnegie libraries in Illinois, *Wikipedia* (25 October 2018),

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Carnegie_libraries_in_Illinois.

⁴ This history is based on the following sources, listed in date order: *Twenty-fourth annual report of the Free Public Library of Evanston, Illinois* (1897); *Thirty-first annual*

report of the Free Public Library of Evanston, Illinois (1904); Evanston Free Public Library Building Committee Minutes (22 November 1905); *Thirty-third annual report of the Free Public Library of Evanston, Illinois* (1906); *Evanston Index* [special issue on the Evanston Public Library] (2 June 1906); Evanston's new library ready, *Evanston Index* (28 December 1907); *Thirty-fourth annual report of the Evanston Public Library* (1907); *Thirty-fifth annual report of the Evanston Public Library* (1908); V.C. Reeling, *Evanston: its land and its people* (Fort Dearborn Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, 1928), pp. 333-337; *Evanston News-Index* (20 February 1931); Library traces 60 years of progress, *Evanston Review* (13 July 1933); More than half of the city uses public library, news cutting, source unidentified (c. 1935), Evanston Public Library Archives; S.S. Booklovers sail the seas, news cutting, source unidentified (c. 1935), Evanston Public Library Archives; *Evanston Record* (15 November 1937); *Evanston Review* (13 January 1938); *Library lore: moments in the history of Evanston Public Library* (Evanston, 1973); Lloyd Lowinger, *A history of the Evanston Public Library from its birth to its emergence as a modern public library system* (University of Chicago Thesis, December 1974).

⁵ League of Women Voters of Evanston, *This is Evanston*, 2nd ed. (Evanston, 1955), p. 1.

⁶ Reeling, *Evanston*, op. cit., p. 456.

⁷ *Twenty-fourth annual report of the Free Public Library*, op. cit., p. 4.

⁸ W.H. Brett, Access to the shelves in the Cleveland Public Library, *The Library Journal*, 16 (San Francisco Conference No., 1891), pp. 34-35; W.H. Brett, Re-arrangement of the Cleveland Public Library, *The Library Journal*, 5 (May 1890), pp. 136-137.

⁹ Andrew Carnegie to J.W. Thompson (8 December 1903); James Bertram to J.W. Thompson (23 May 1905); John Barker to James Bertram (7 June 1905); James Bertram to John Barker (20 June 1905); James Bertram to J.T. Thompson (12 September 1905). Carnegie Library Buildings Grants, Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Columbia University, New York.

¹⁰ James Bertram to Seymour Currey (13 December 1906). Carnegie Library Buildings Grants, Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Columbia University, New York.

¹¹ J.T. Thompson to Andrew Carnegie (10 July 1905). Carnegie Library Buildings Grants, Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Columbia University, New York.

¹² Evanston's new library ready, op. cit.

¹³ Library traces 60 years of progress, op. cit.

¹⁴ Library traces 60 years of progress, op. cit.

¹⁵ Evanston's new library ready, op. cit.

¹⁶ *Thirty-fourth annual report of the Evanston Public Library*, op. cit., p. 16.

¹⁷ Snead and Company Iron Works, *Library planning, bookstacks and shelving, with contributions from the architects' and librarians' point of view* (Jersey City, New Jersey, 1915).

¹⁸ C.H. Baumann, *The influence of Angus Snead Macdonald and the Snead bookstack on library architecture* (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow, 1972); A. Black, *Libraries of light: British public library design in the long 1960s* (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 122-125.

¹⁹ *Thirty-fourth annual report of the Evanston Public Library*, op. cit., p. 17.

²⁰ *Evanston News-Index*, op. cit.

²¹ *Thirty-fourth annual report of the Evanston Public Library*, op. cit., p. 17.

²² *Thirty-fourth annual report of the Evanston Public Library*, op. cit., p. 18.

²³ Evanston Free Public Library Building Committee Minutes, op. cit.

²⁴ Library traces 60 years of progress, op. cit.

²⁵ *Thirty-fifth annual report of the Evanston Public Library*, op. cit., p. 13.

²⁶ More than half the city uses public library, op. cit.

²⁷ *Evanston Review* (13 January 1938).

²⁸ S.S. Booklovers sail the seas, op. cit.

²⁹ On the matter of sustainability in library design, see B. Edwards, Sustainability as a driving force in contemporary library design, *Library Trends* 60, no. 1 (Summer 2011), pp. 190-214.

³⁰ O. Prizeman, et al., How can century-old architectural hierarchies for the design of public libraries be re-interpreted and re-used?, *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management* 8, no. 4 (19 November 2018), pp. 481-494.

³¹ In 1976, for example, the library educator Walter Allen, in contributing to a celebration of the centenary of the American Library Association, remarked that: 'it is doubtful ... that they [Carnegie libraries] added much to the development of library architecture': W.C. Allen, Library buildings, *Library Trends*, 25(1) (July 1976), p. 96.

³² For a distillation of such ideas, see C. Soule, *How to plan a library building for library work* (Boston: Boston Book Club, 1912).

Alistair Black and Oriel Prizeman

ÄNGELHOLMS BIBLIOTEK

En offentlig plats av möjligheter som utvecklar demokratin

Jag heter Martin Memet Könick och är sedan april 2019 bibliotekschef för Ängelholms nio bibliotek. Ängelholms folkbibliotek är inne i en spännande och rolig era som kommer att göra avtryck i kommunen, landet och den vida världen för en lång tid framöver. I början av 2020 så är det dags för en totalrenovering av stadsbibliotekets lokaler, ett arbete som kommer att göra lokalerna modernt ändamålsenliga och härligt inbjudande. I samband med renoveringen så sker också en organisationsöversyn. Allt för att ge samhället, besökarna och personalen en innovativ och hållbar biblioteksverksamhet för både samtid och framtid.

Det går inte att understryka nog hur viktigt det är med omvärldsbevakning för att vara med i och leda det viktiga förändringsskede som folkbibliotek står inför världen över. Under min ledning i Ängelholm ska vi titta och lyssna utåt och diskutera vad vi ser och hör så att det blir levande i verksamheten. Jag lägger därför stor vikt vid kompetensutveckling, nätverkande och experimenterande. Jag vill att personalen här ska våga testa och misslyckas.

På höstens första APT la jag fram tankarna framåt ungefär så här:

Vi renoverar inte bara stadsbiblioteket utan vi hittar på det på nytt, med mål att få folk att se bibliotek och biblioteksverksamhet med nya ögon.

Vad det gäller biblioteksverksamhet fram tills att vi flyttar in i de nya lokalerna så ska vi experimentera istället för att cementera. Testa och våga misslyckas. Sedan utvärdera, justera, och göra om eller behålla.