

**NOMINATION OF HISTORIC BUILDING, STRUCTURE, SITE, OR OBJECT**  
**PHILADELPHIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES**  
**PHILADELPHIA HISTORICAL COMMISSION**  
**SUBMIT ALL ATTACHED MATERIALS ON PAPER AND IN ELECTRONIC FORM ON CD (MS WORD FORMAT)**

**1. ADDRESS OF HISTORIC RESOURCE** (must comply with a Board of Revision of Taxes address)

Street address: 601 W Lehigh Avenue

Postal code: 19133-2228

Councilmanic District: 7

**2. NAME OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Historic Name: Lehigh Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia

Common Name: Lillian Marrero Branch

**3. TYPE OF HISTORIC RESOURCE**

Building

Structure

Site

Object

**4. PROPERTY INFORMATION**

Condition:  excellent  good  fair  poor  ruins

Occupancy:  occupied  vacant  under construction  unknown

Current use: Library

**5. BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

*SEE ATTACHED*

**6. DESCRIPTION**

*SEE ATTACHED*

**7. SIGNIFICANCE**

*SEE ATTACHED*

Period of Significance (from year to year): 1905-1930

Date(s) of construction and/or alteration: 1905-1906

Architect, engineer, and/or designer: Hewitt & Hewitt, principals, George Watson Hewitt (1841-1916) and William D. Hewitt (1847-1924)

Builder, contractor, and/or artisan: Construction: Henderson and Company

Terra cotta exterior finish and architectural details: William R. Dougherty

Original owner: City of Philadelphia.

Other significant persons: Andrew Carnegie

**CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION:**

The historic resource satisfies the following criteria for designation (check all that apply):

- (a) Has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth or Nation or is associated with the life of a person significant in the past; or,
- (b) Is associated with an event of importance to the history of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (c) Reflects the environment in an era characterized by a distinctive architectural style; or,
- (d) Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen; or,
- (e) Is the work of a designer, architect, landscape architect or designer, or engineer whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation; or,
- (f) Contains elements of design, detail, materials or craftsmanship which represent a significant innovation; or,
- (g) Is part of or related to a square, park or other distinctive area which should be preserved according to an historic, cultural or architectural motif; or,
- (h) Owing to its unique location or singular physical characteristic, represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City; or,
- (i) Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in pre-history or history; or
- (j) Exemplifies the cultural, political, economic, social or historical heritage of the community.

**8. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

*SEE ATTACHED*

**9. NOMINATOR**

Name with Title: *Ben Leech, Director of Advocacy*

Email: *ben@preservationalliance.com*

Organization: *Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia*

Date: *February 12, 2015*

Street Address: *1608 Walnut Street, Suite 804*

Telephone: *215-546-1146*

City, State, and Postal Code: *Philadelphia, PA 19103*

Nominator  is  is not the property owner.

**PHC USE ONLY**

Date of Receipt: \_\_\_\_\_

Correct-Complete  Incorrect-Incomplete

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Notice Issuance: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Owner at Time of Notice

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) Reviewed by the Committee on Historic Designation: \_\_\_\_\_

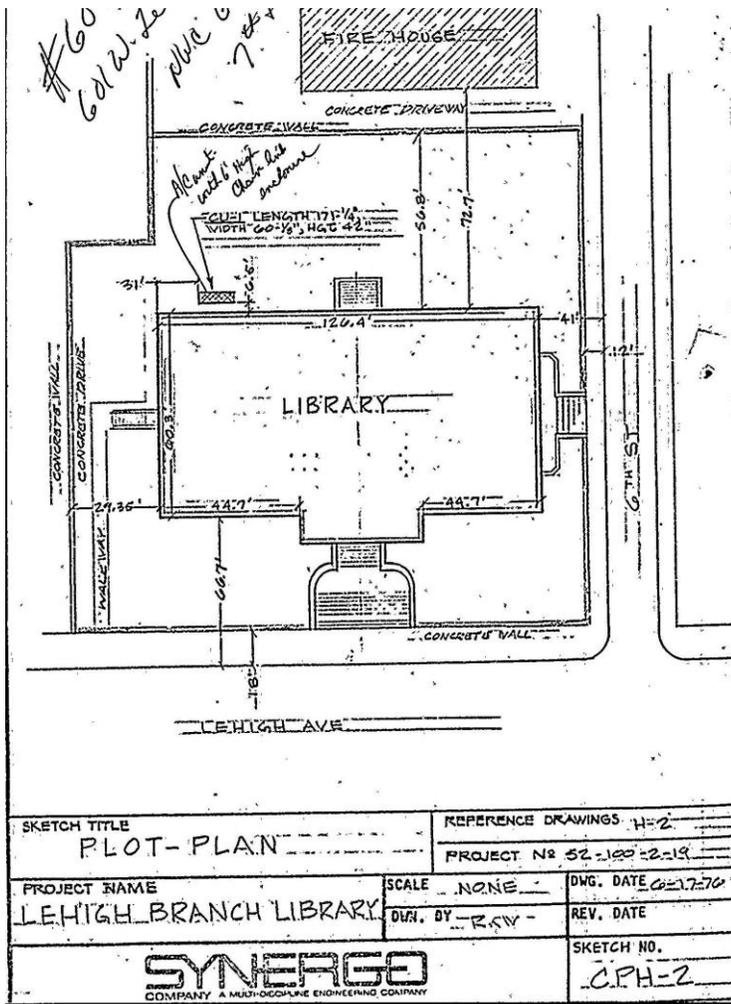
Date(s) Reviewed by the Historical Commission: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Final Action: \_\_\_\_\_

Designated  Rejected

**Acknowledgments:**

This nomination has been adapted from documentation of the Lehigh Branch Library undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the Heritage Documentation Programs of the National Park Service, Richard O'Connor, Chief during summer 2007 as part of a larger initiative to record the Carnegie-funded branch libraries of the Free Library of Philadelphia. The project was sponsored by HABS in cooperation with the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, John A. Gallery, director; and the Free Library of Philadelphia, William J. Fleming, Administrative Services Director; and made possible through a Congressional appropriation for recording in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The historical reports were prepared by Lisa P. Davidson and Catherine C. Lavoie. Large-format photography was undertaken for HABS by Joseph Elliott. These materials are attached in whole as Appendix A [Lehigh Branch HABS No. PA-6756].



### Section 5: Boundary Description

Beginning from a point at the northwest corner of West Lehigh Avenue and North 6<sup>th</sup> Street, extending westward along Lehigh for a distance of approximately 184.75 feet, thence northward perpendicular to Lehigh for a distance of approximately 130 feet, thence eastward parallel to Lehigh Avenue for a distance of 29.35 feet, thence northward an additional distance of approximately 35.8 feet, thence eastward to 6<sup>th</sup> Street for a distance of approximately 155.4 feet, thence southward along 6<sup>th</sup> Street for 165.8 feet to the place of beginning.

Note: The subject parcel occupies the southeast quadrant of a municipally-owned block bounded by Somerset Street to the north, Lehigh Avenue to the south, 6<sup>th</sup> Street to the east, and 7<sup>th</sup> Street to the west. The block contains three significant municipal structures: the Lehigh (Lillian Marrero) Branch of the Free Library, the Fairhill High Pressure Pumping Station (c.1910), and the Pipeline Company #2 Fire Station (c.1913), along with auxiliary structures and landscape features associated with the former Fairhill Reservoir. The library building and fire station stand on the subject 601 West Lehigh parcel, while the pumphouse and associated reservoir features stand on the adjacent 623 West Lehigh parcel, which occupies the remainder of the block. This nomination is intended only to include the library structure on the 601 Lehigh parcel and the boundary provided encompasses that building only, but is submitted without prejudice to future consideration of the firehouse structure on the same parcel and the pumphouse and associated features on the 623 Lehigh parcel.

## Section 6: Description

The Lehigh Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia, now known as the Lillian Marrero Library, is a rectangular, two story (raised basement and tall first floor) Beaux Arts structure situated on the northwest corner of Lehigh Avenue and 6th Street in the Hartranft-Fairhill neighborhood of North Philadelphia. The ornate limestone, marble and terra cotta building is freestanding set back from the sidewalks along Lehigh Avenue and 6th Street. The library's primary south facade faces Lehigh Avenue and features an elaborate raised portico accessed by wide, terraced steps. A secondary entrance along 6th Street accesses the basement level via a short flight of submerged steps. A modern low metal fence separates the sidewalk from mature landscaping that skirts the building. A narrow side yard runs along the west side of the building, and a parking area sits to the north. The library is seven wide bays wide across its south elevation, five uniform bays across its east and west elevations, and nine bays wide across its rear north elevation, which also features a small one-story auxiliary addition clad in modern brick. The library features a low hipped roof clad in asphalt shingles, with a low raised clerestory that originally featured a now-covered skylight.

All elevations feature a raised basement level clad in marble and a tall first floor clad in limestone and terra cotta in a coursed ashlar pattern. All first floor windows are set high along the facades to accommodate the interior placement of book stacks. Windows are fixed six-light sashes with crossing mullions. First-floor bays are separated by flat, classically-detailed pilasters carrying a classical entablature that wraps all four sides of the library. A projecting cornice features egg-and-dart and lamb's tongue moldings, and a low parapet with corner plinths delineates the roofline.

The library's main entrance is defined by a projecting, full-height pavilion centered along the south elevation. A modern double-leaf glass and metal doorway with tall transom is set within a classical pedimented surround. This surround is flanked by a pair of Ionic columns carrying a frieze with the inscription "FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA." Fixed-sash, cross-mullion sidelights are set between the Ionic columns and outer pilasters framing the pavilion. The pavilion is topped by another frieze inscribed "LEHIGH AVE BRANCH" set below an ornate central pediment flanked by lion's-head acroteria. This pediment features egg-and-dart, dentil, and acanthus leaf moldings and is also topped by an acroterion.

## **Section 7: Statement of Significance**

The Lehigh Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia meets the following Criteria for Designation as set forth in Section 14-1004 of the City of Philadelphia's Historic Preservation Ordinance. The building:

- (a) The building has significant interest or value as part of the City's development, the history of public libraries in the United States and its association with Pittsburgh industrialist Andrew Carnegie.
- (d) As one of the first Carnegie branches built in the city (and therefore, one of the city's first purpose-built library structures), it was a test for new concepts specific to library design.
- (e) Association with the architectural firm of Hewitt & Hewitt, designers of numerous public and residential buildings, notably the Drum Moir residence of Pennsylvania Railroad director Henry H. Hudson, the Philadelphia Bourse, the Bellevue Stratford Hotel, the Wissahickon Inn, Philadelphia Cricket Club, and St. Martin-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church.
- (h) The building's location was originally chosen for its prominence within the community and it remains a highly visible and accessible neighborhood amenity.

***Criterion A: The building has significant character, interest or value as part of the development, heritage or cultural characteristics of the City, Commonwealth, and Nation and is associated with important individuals: Andrew Carnegie.***

### **Andrew Carnegie's Library Program**

Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) was a Scottish-born industrialist, businessman, and a major philanthropist during the Gilded Age, a time of vast industrial and population growth and a marked disparity between wealth and poverty. His family immigrated to the U.S. when he was 12, his father a victim of the rapid industrialization of Britain's textile industry. The family settled in Allegheny, a suburb of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

As an adult, Carnegie spent more than a decade with the Pennsylvania Railroad before leaving to manage the Keystone Bridge Company, which was replacing wooden bridges with iron ones. By the 1870s he was concentrating on steel manufacturing, ultimately creating the Carnegie Steel Company, which later merged with Elbert H. Gary's Federal Steel Company and several smaller companies to create U.S. Steel. In 1889, Carnegie wrote "The Gospel of Wealth," in which he proposed that wealthy men should live without extravagance and distribute their riches to benefit the welfare and happiness of the common man. His second essay, "The Best Fields for Philanthropy," recommended seven areas to which the wealthy should donate: universities, libraries, medical centers, public parks, meeting and concert halls, public baths, and churches. Many of the organizations he founded continue their good works to this day, including the Carnegie Corporation of New York, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh.

During his youth, while working as a messenger boy for the telegraph office, Carnegie met Colonel James Anderson, who every Saturday would open his personal library to any young workers who wanted to borrow a book. Carnegie later said the colonel opened the windows through which the light of knowledge streamed and this generosity set an example Carnegie vowed to follow if given the opportunity and means. Carnegie believed that, with the proper tools and a good work ethic, anyone could be successful, and libraries had the power to create an egalitarian society that favored hard work

over social privilege. Hence, public libraries, as a key to learning and socialization, became the focus of his charitable donations.

With his belief that the wealthy were obligated to give back to society, he set out to spend before his death the entire \$400 million he received through the sale of Carnegie Steel Company. He provided \$40 million for the construction of over 1,600 libraries throughout the United States (46 states built Carnegie libraries) during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (and about 400 more internationally). Certain cities applied for large grants for multiple libraries. The largest of these went to New York City to support the construction of 76 libraries, 56 of which remain in use as libraries today. His second largest grant—\$1.5 million—went to Philadelphia for construction of 30 libraries, followed by grants to Cleveland (15), Baltimore (14) and Cincinnati (10). These endowments had a profound effect on the perception of library services as a civic responsibility as well as the development of professional library standards and the evolution of the building type.

Initially, Carnegie provided no specifications for architects designing branch libraries funded by his grants. However, there are a few indications that an attempt was made by Philadelphia's library planning group, the Carnegie Fund Committee, to develop standard plans for the city's branch libraries. Among the most convincing is a reference in the minutes for 1904 to a solicitation made on the part of the Committee to the well-known Philadelphia architectural firm of Hewitt & Hewitt for a plan for an inexpensive library prototype:

Mr. Edmunds [of the Carnegie Fund Committee] reported that he had obtained from Messrs. Stevens and Edmunds, who are both employed in the office of Messrs. Hewitt, a plan showing what kind of building could, in their judgment, be erected for \$30,000, the building to measure 60' x 40' and to be about 45' in height.<sup>1</sup>

The brief specifications outlined are for a building that is generally smaller and certainly less expensive than any of those actually built.

After 1908, Carnegie's secretary James Bertram began requiring that building plans be submitted for review before grant approval. The change came in response to what Bertram viewed as a number of poorly laid out or overly ornate libraries built with Carnegie funds. In 1911, Bertram published his "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings [*sic*]," a guide to appropriate library design, with an emphasis on functionality over aesthetics in keeping with the American Library Association's research and developments in progressive library planning.<sup>2</sup>

## **The Carnegie Grant in Philadelphia**

In January 1903, Carnegie's secretary James Bertram approved a grant of \$1.5 million to the Free Library of Philadelphia to finance the construction of 30 branch libraries. The grant was made explicitly for the construction of public libraries and required that the city provide the land for the libraries and funds for their operations. Because of the unusual nature and size of the gift, the city needed the state Legislature's approval to legally accept and administer the gift. After a year of

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<sup>1</sup> Free Library of Philadelphia, Carnegie Fund Committee Minutes, July 14, 1904.

<sup>2</sup> Abigail Van Slyck, *Free To All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 35-36.

bureaucratic maneuvering and a new state law and city ordinance, the city officially accepted Carnegie's gift and its terms in January 1904.<sup>3</sup>

The libraries were built between 1905 and 1930, with the bulk of them constructed between 1905 and 1917. Due to rising costs, only 25 of the planned 30 libraries were built, of which 17 remain in operation as libraries today.<sup>4</sup> The first Carnegie-funded branch library to be completed in Philadelphia was the West Philadelphia Branch; its cornerstone was laid in 1905 and the library opened in June 1906. The last, and the last of all Carnegie libraries built in the United States, was the Wyoming Branch, which opened in 1930. The libraries were designed by a wide range of Philadelphia architects, including such prominent architects as John T. Windrim, Albert Kelsey and Paul Cret, Cope & Stewardson, Clarence C. Zantziger, Charles Borie, Watson & Huckel, founder of Philadelphia's T-Square Club Lindley Johnson, and more.

Prior to the Carnegie endowment, Philadelphia had no purpose-built public libraries. Nevertheless, the city figures quite prominently in American library history. Philadelphia had the nation's first private subscription library, known as the Library Company, founded in 1731. The American Library Association, now the oldest and largest library association in the world, was formed in Philadelphia in 1876.

The city was also among the first American cities to institute a non-subscription public library system to provide educational material and services to a wider array of citizens, particularly the city's burgeoning immigrant population.<sup>5</sup> The Free Library of Philadelphia was founded in 1891, and proceeded to establish a central library and a network of neighborhood branches. Despite ambitious goals, however, these libraries remained rather modest affairs housed in rented spaces and utilizing mainly donated collections and volunteer staffing. Yet, as Library Board president J.G. Rosengarten stated in 1903, "Proprietary libraries have grown into valuable adjuncts to our other education institutions. None of them, however, serves the public as does the Free Library, providing good reading for our school children, for our industrious adult population, and for the city's useful employees, firemen, and telegraph operators."<sup>6</sup> This civic tradition continues today with the advent of new technologies, providing computer and internet access to those unable to afford it.

Before the Carnegie grant, the city's 14 branch libraries were each started by interested local communities, and relied on old mansions, storefronts or back rooms of commercial buildings and civic institutions for space. As library board president J.G. Rosengarten pointed out, "The [Carnegie] gift gave welcome relief from the expenses of the rented rooms occupied by the branches and from much of the risk to which the collections were subjected in these temporary quarters."<sup>7</sup> Even the Central Branch of the Free Library was housed in existing buildings (including City Hall) prior to the completion of its permanent home in 1927.

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<sup>3</sup> George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969), 44. Letter, John Thomson to James Bertram (January 13, 1904), Carnegie Corporation Correspondence microfilm, Reel 25, Special Collections, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York.

<sup>4</sup> Of the 25 Carnegie-funded branch libraries in the city, four are no longer extant (Greenwich, Nicetown, Spring Garden, Wissahickon) and four have been repurposed (Germantown, Manayunk, South Philadelphia, Southward). One branch still in use as a library (Frankford) has been significantly altered, with its façade replaced by glass.

<sup>5</sup> In the early part of the twentieth century, Philadelphia's population experienced its largest numerical increase for any similar period before or since; the number of inhabitants grew by almost one-third: from 1.293 million to 1.684 million. Lloyd M. Abernethy, "Progressivism, 1905-1919," in *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History*, ed. Russell F. Weigley (New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1982), 526.

<sup>6</sup> Theodore Wesley Koch, *A Book of Carnegie Libraries* (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1917), 85.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

## The Lehigh Branch of the Free Library

The Lehigh Branch (1905-1906) was the first of the planned 30 Carnegie branch libraries to begin construction. According to an article in the *Philadelphia Press* in April 1905, the Lehigh Branch was to be the “largest and finest of the thirty” at a cost of \$110,000.<sup>8</sup> Located on a portion of the old Fairhill Reservoir, the library was designed by the firm of Hewitt & Hewitt (George Watson Hewitt, 1841-1916, and William Dempster Hewitt, 1847-1924), which also created an early library-building prototype for the city’s Carnegie Fund Committee.

The Lehigh Branch is among the most elaborate of the Carnegie-era branch libraries and, at 126’ x 60’, is the largest. While its overall plan and design is that of a quintessential Carnegie library, its size, terra cotta façade and level of detailing set it apart from most of the Free Library’s more understated brick branch buildings.

The *Press* reported that the first floor (raised basement) would contain a lecture hall, which was claimed to be “an innovation in the building of libraries” included at the request of Andrew Carnegie.<sup>9</sup> This feature would become characteristic of Carnegie libraries. Another identifying characteristic that emerged during the design phase of the Lehigh Branch was the placement of the windows to the front of the building, which the Carnegie Fund Committee suggested should be “brought down as low as the heating apparatus would permit” or “on a line with the base of the arch of the main door.”<sup>10</sup> The implication is that the front windows were considered at full-height rather than positioned as they were, above the book stacks. The debate is worth noting since the elevated placement of windows became a standard feature in Carnegie-funded branches. Although cutting down on natural light, and possibly on the aesthetic appeal of the libraries, this placement allowed for maximum book storage.

The Carnegie Fund Committee also grappled with issues related to heating. The intent was that the “most modern equipment” be used for the “heating and ventilating apparatus and electric lighting.”<sup>11</sup> The architects met with Board of Education architect Cook, and due to the proximity of other municipal structures on site and the Northeast Manual Training School then under construction, the architects recommended creating a central plant that allowed for cost savings.<sup>12</sup> The library’s planners also decided to use ducts hidden within the book stacks.

The end result of these deliberations was the standardization of procedures as outlined in a “Memorandum of instruction to architects to be followed by them in all Branch Library Buildings.” By early October, a construction contract was approved for Henderson & Company, which was the lowest bidder at \$89,887 and was also constructing the Northeast Manual Training School on the site. The cornerstone for the building was laid without formal ceremony, as planned, on April 10, 1905—the first such laying of a cornerstone for any Carnegie branch libraries in Philadelphia.<sup>13</sup>

Three other branches followed close behind, and it appeared it would be a close race as to which would open first. As indicated in the April 1905 Annual Report to the Library Board, “The four

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<sup>8</sup> “Cornerstone Laid for Library Branch; Simplicity Marks Ceremony Incident to Preliminary Work on First of Thirty Buildings Made Possible by Carnegie Contributions,” *The Philadelphia Press*, April 11, 1905.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Free Library of Philadelphia, Carnegie Fund Committee Minutes, July 9, 1904.

<sup>11</sup> “Plans for First Carnegie Library,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, September 21, 1904.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> “Corner-Stone for Carnegie Library; Formal Ceremony Dispensed With, But Prominent Men Made Addresses at Sixth and Lehigh,” *Philadelphia Inquirer*, April 11, 1905.

new buildings in [the] course of erection at 40<sup>th</sup> and Walnut Sts, Lehigh Ave and 6<sup>th</sup> St, [at] Frankford, and at Tacony are rapidly nearing completion.”<sup>14</sup> By June the committee looked hopefully toward a grand opening by mid-October.

The opening of the Lehigh Branch actually took place on November 16, 1906, making it the third Carnegie branch library to open in Philadelphia (following West Philadelphia on June 26 and Frankford on October 2). Architect W.D. Hewitt was in attendance to speak at the ceremony on topics relating to the construction and expenditures, and to ceremoniously hand over keys to the librarian.<sup>15</sup> Reportedly, the children’s room was to be open for evening hours for the children of nearby factory workers.

*The Lehigh Branch clearly has significant interest and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of the city. It is also associated with an important individual, Andrew Carnegie, a prominent Pennsylvanian and American industrialist.*

***Criterion D: Embodies distinguishing characteristics of an architectural style or engineering specimen***

***Criterion E: Is the work of a designer or architect whose work has significantly influenced the historical, architectural, economic, social, or cultural development of the City, Commonwealth or Nation***

Philadelphia’s Carnegie Fund Committee placed librarians rather than architects at the forefront of the planning process for its Carnegie-funded branches. Carnegie’s personal secretary, James Bertram, believed librarians had a better understanding of how the building should function. In 1904, the Carnegie Fund Committee asked the well-known architectural firm of Hewitt & Hewitt (George Watson Hewitt, 1841-1916, and William Dempster Hewitt, 1847-1924) to produce “a plan showing what kind of building could, in their judgment, be erected for \$30,000, the building to measure 60’ x 40’ and to be about 45’ in height.”<sup>16</sup> Although smaller and less expensive than any branch actually built, it does conform to the Thomas Holme Branch, built shortly thereafter in 1906. This clearly suggests that the committee attempted to create an inexpensive prototype that could be used for all the branches.

The committee also chose Hewitt & Hewitt to design the Lehigh Branch Library, intended to be the largest and most elaborate of the Philadelphia branches and, at its opening, the largest library in the state. Various debates during the design process, such as window placement to allow for maximum shelving capacity, would influence the design of all the Philadelphia branches, and inform the guidelines “Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings [*sic*],” written by Bertram and published in 1911.

The Hewitt brothers were born in Burlington, New Jersey, and both attended Burlington College. George Hewitt trained with John Notman during a period of high demand for ecclesiastical architecture in the English Gothic Revival style. After Notman’s death in 1865, Hewitt joined with John Fraser and Frank Furness, forming Fraser, Furness & Hewitt in 1867. The partnership dissolved in 1871, and Furness & Hewitt continued until 1875, designing the well-known Pennsylvania

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<sup>14</sup> *Ninth Annual Report*, April 1905.

<sup>15</sup> Free Library of Philadelphia, Carnegie Fund Committee Minutes, November 16, 1906.

<sup>16</sup> Free Library of Philadelphia, Carnegie Fund Committee Minutes, July 14, 1904.

Academy of Fine Arts among other projects. In 1878, Hewitt joined with his brother, William, to form Hewitt & Hewitt. William Hewitt had received a degree in mechanical engineering from the Polytechnic Institute of Philadelphia in 1865, then immediately enlisted in the Civil War. Before joining his brother's firm, he spent six months in Europe.

The Hewitt brothers' design specialties included large estate-style private residences, churches, commercial buildings and hospital buildings. Much of their design work reflects their interest in English and Scottish architectural forms. Among their better known designs is the castle-style Drum Moir residence of Henry H. Houston, director of the Pennsylvania Railroad in Chestnut Hill. When Houston decided to develop his Chestnut Hill estate as an upper-class suburb in the 1880s, the Hewitts undertook the planning for the community and designed a number of residences and its principal buildings, including St. Martin-in-the-Fields Episcopal Church, the Wissahickon Inn (now Chestnut Hill Academy), and the first clubhouse for the Philadelphia Cricket Club.<sup>17</sup> In addition to many church and residential commissions, the brothers also designed numerous commercial and public buildings, including the Bellevue-Stratford Hotel, the Philadelphia Bourse, and Hahnemann Medical College and Dispensary. After George's retirement in 1907, junior members of the firm became partners to form Hewitt, Stevens & Paist. William formed various other partnerships over the years, working until his death in 1924 at age 76.

*The Lehigh Branch library merits listing on the Philadelphia Register for embodying distinguishing characteristics of Carnegie libraries, AND as the work of a well-known Philadelphia architectural firm, Hewitt & Hewitt (George Watson Hewitt and William Dempster Hewitt).*

***Criterion H: Owing to its unique location and singular physical characteristic, the Lehigh Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia represents an established and familiar visual feature of the neighborhood, community or City.***

At the time it was built, the Lehigh Branch of the Free Library served a growing, largely immigrant community. Within a few days of its opening, neighborhood children "practically wiped the children's department out of existence" by checking out so many books.<sup>18</sup> Now known as the Lillian Marrero Branch, the library continues to serve immigrant populations, fulfilling Carnegie's original intention, offering books and services in both English and Spanish. The branch was saved from a planned relocation in the 1960s and instead was rehabilitated in 1967. A mural on a building opposite the library on Lehigh Avenue depicts librarian Lillian Marrero, for whom the branch is now named.

The white-limestone Grecian-style Lehigh Branch holds a prominent position on the broad boulevard of West Lehigh Avenue and is part of a cluster of municipal buildings, including a water pumping station to the west side and a fire house to the north rear. Certain iconic features identify it as a Carnegie library: the existence of buffer land surrounding the library to allow for potential future expansion, and the elevated first floor and grand entry. The use of limestone suggested permanence and importance that Carnegie felt was appropriate to a library building. Carnegie was willing to fund use of more expensive materials because he felt they required less long-term maintenance and therefore reduced operating cost to the community.

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<sup>17</sup> Roger Moss and Sandra Tatman, *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects, 1700-1930* (Boston: G. K. Hall & Company, 1985), 367-377.

<sup>18</sup> Free Library of Philadelphia, "Lillian Marrero Branch History," Free Library of Philadelphia, <http://libwww.freelibrary.org/branches/history.cfm?loc=LEH> (accessed September 16, 2009).

## Section 8: Major Bibliographic References

### Lehigh Branch, Free Library of Philadelphia

#### A. Architectural drawings:

“The Free Library of Philadelphia, Lehigh Avenue Branch, G.W. & W.D. Hewitt, Basement Plan, First Floor Plans, and Proposed Carnegie Library [architect’s perspective of south front and east side elevation]” ca. 1904, The Free Library of Philadelphia, Central Library, Clippings File for the Lehigh Branch.

#### B. Early views:

Free Library of Philadelphia, *Annual Report, 1906* (Municipal Reference Division, Cities P53-1154). Includes photographs taken upon completion of the library by William H. Rau, photographer. The two views include a perspective of the exterior south front and east side elevation (where the entry to the lecture hall was located), and an interior view taken from the northeastern corner of the room looking towards the front entry to show a general view of the interior space.

#### C. Bibliography:

The records of the Free Library of Philadelphia are located at the Central Library on Vine Street. The *Annual Reports* are located in the Municipal Reference Division, Cities P53-1154; and the Carnegie Fund Committee Minute Books are located in the Director’s Vault (access by special permission).

Abernethy, Lloyd M. “Progressivism, 1905-1919.” In *Philadelphia: A 300-Year History*, edited by Russell F. Weigley, 524-565. New York: W.W. Norton and Co., 1982.

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“Cornerstone Laid for Library Branch; Simplicity Marks Ceremony Incident to Preliminary Work on First of Thirty Buildings Made Possible by Carnegie Contributions.” *The Philadelphia Press*. April 11, 1905.

“Corner-Stone for Carnegie Library; Formal Ceremony Dispensed With, But Prominent Men Made Addresses at Sixth and Lehigh.” *Philadelphia Inquirer*. April 11, 1905.

Dierickx, Mary B. *The Architecture of Literacy; The Carnegie Libraries of New York City*. New York: The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Art and Science & NYC Department of General Services, September 1996.

“Final Construction Report, Rehabilitation of Library Building.” Free Library of Philadelphia, Lehigh Ave. Branch, 1968. Clippings File on site.

Free Library of Philadelphia. *Annual Report, 1905-1906*.

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<http://libwww.freelibrary.org/branches/history.cfm?loc=LEH> (accessed September 16, 2009).

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Koch, Theodore Wesley. *A Book of Carnegie Libraries*. New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1917.

Moss, Roger and Sandra Tatman. *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects, 1700-1930*. Boston: G.K. Hall & Company, 1985.

"Plans for First Carnegie Library." *Philadelphia Inquirer*. September 21, 1904.

Van Slyck, Abigail. *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

"Will Bid Upon Two Carnegie Branches." *Philadelphia Inquirer*. October 1, 1904.

## Photographs

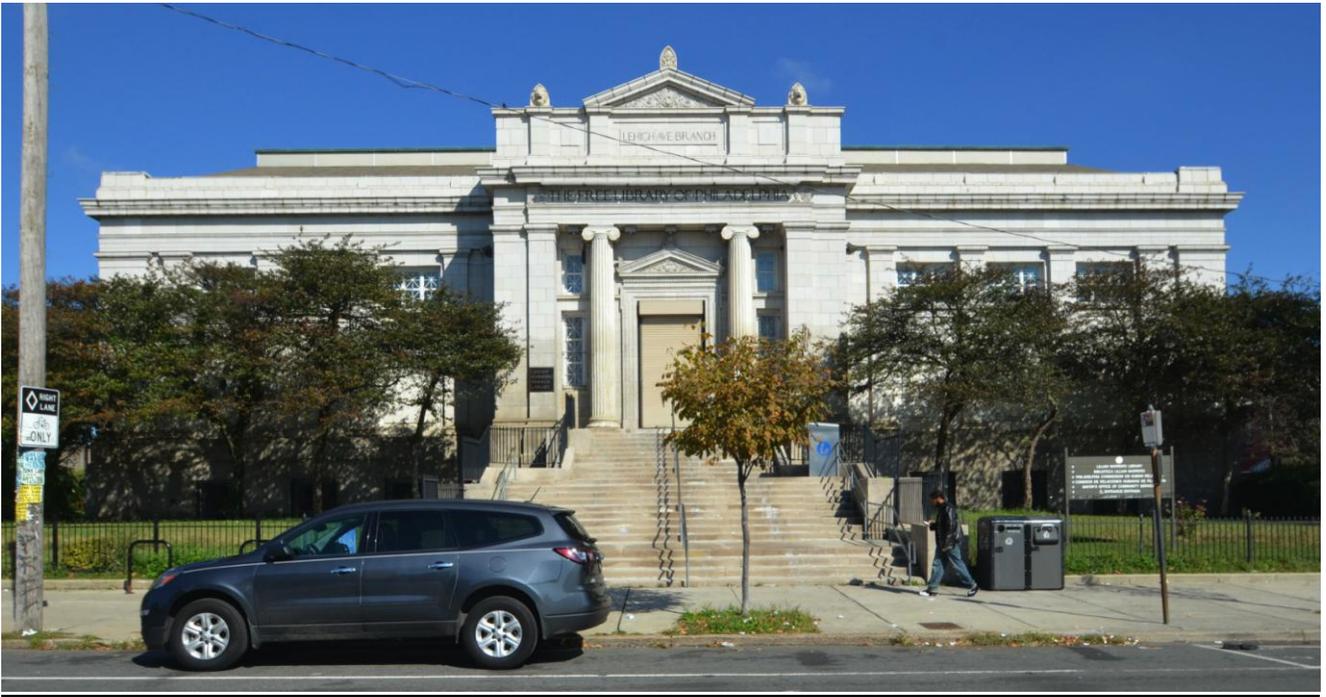


Figure 1: South (Lehigh Avenue) elevation



Figure 2: South elevation, looking northwest



Figure 3: South elevation detail



Figure 4: East (6<sup>th</sup> Street) elevation



Figure 5: East (6<sup>th</sup> Street) elevation



Figure 6: East elevation entrance detail



Figure 7: North elevation



Figure 8: West elevation (via Bing Maps)

## **Appendix A (HABS Documentation)**