A dream 30 years in the making is finally here

San Diego Central Library begins its next chapter

San Diego Public Library staff

More than three decades ago, San Diego’s leaders and citizens recognized that if we truly wanted to be a great city, we needed a new Central Library to replace the old one at 820 E Street.

The existing facility built in 1954 was designed to serve a population of 466,000 and was woefully out of date. It lacked the space to serve the existing and future population of San Diego. Even then, the facility was beyond its capacity with much of its collection in two basement storage areas, off limits to the public. The building suffered from decaying infrastructure, outdated plumbing, inefficient electrical systems, as well as obsolete heating and air systems that were costly to maintain.

Together, the city, civic leaders and citizens of San Diego embarked on a journey to create a new library that would serve as the civic destination that would have the space, infrastructure and technology to address community needs and engender regional pride. The goal was to improve access to information and resources, support student achievement, provide a venue for community gatherings and top-quality cultural and educational programs.

An aerial photo taken in September 2012 of the Central Library while under construction, prior to the addition of the auditorium, shows the new library’s close proximity to Petco Park.

See A dream on 4
The women behind the construction project

By MARION MOSS HUBBARD
San Diego Public Library

The new 497,652-square-foot nine-story Central Library is one of the largest municipal projects in the city's history. To successfully construct it within three years took an immense amount of coordination, teamwork and leadership.

While the construction field is still primarily led by men — and there were many men who played prominent and vital roles on this project — several women in key positions were instrumental in moving the Central Library project to completion.

Carmen Vann, project executive with Turner Construction, provided the oversight of intricate workflows and detailed schedules to keep the project moving as quickly and efficiently as possible. As the person in charge of the construction project, she had to coordinate among the various trade professions onsite, including carpenters, ironworkers, concrete workers, electricians and infrastructure experts. Vann grew up in Washington, D.C., and has always had a fascination with buildings. "I do what I do out of passion for people, and it is way beyond bricks and mortar," she said.

Kristine Wunder was Turner Construction's safety manager on this project. She instilled in the entire team the importance of maintaining a clean and safe worksite throughout construction. Her commitment to safety was key to Turner's impressive safety record on this project of more than 1,000 days without any injuries. A former Army aviation officer and UH60 Blackhawk helicopter pilot, Wunder has a long history of commitment to leadership and passing on her expertise to others. She is a mentor with the ACE Mentor Program, which mentors professionals from leading design and construction firms.

Cynthia Meinhardt is the city of San Diego's project officer with public works, engineering and capital projects, and helped oversee this $185 million Capital Improvement project. Through her oversight, she assured that the architectural and engineering services — including technical and operational support, design and construction — were performed with the highest degree of quality, while remaining on schedule and within budget. Throughout her career, Meinhardt has been committed to making sure that building projects are designed to enhance our overall quality of life and communities.

Deborah Barrow, library director for the San Diego Public Library, worked closely with all of these women. She also worked with the architects, other Turner Construction professionals, other city departments, outside consulting organizations and partnering organizations to assure that what was built actually met the needs of the community and goals of the library.

A native San Diegan with more than 20 years of experience in public library management, Barrow is no stranger to library building projects. She has managed the design and construction of several new libraries, including the South Chula Vista Library.

All of these extraordinary women came together in their careers at just the right time and place to help make this new library a reality. Through this remarkable accomplishment, they will serve as role models for young women who will be inspired to achieve their own great success.

Source Code: 20130927cerc

Meet the architects

San Diego Public Library staff

The distinctive design of the new Central Library with its iconic dome has changed not only our city's skyline, but also the way we will interact with one another and our environment. This remarkable transformation is due in large part to the architects who worked with the community and the city to achieve a collaborative vision for this library of the future.

In the mid-1990s, through an international competition, local design architect Rob Wellington Quigley was selected to work on the new Central Library project. As an early proponent of green design, Quigley's firm specializes in sustainable architecture, which has been incorporated into projects ranging from affordable housing and single-family homes, to The New Children's Museum and the Solana Beach Transit Station.

A hallmark of Quigley's practice is his ability to build consensus, whether during a public participation process or with a multiple-client project.

"What I am most pleased about is the way the people of San Diego worked together to make this happen in the absence of any traditional funding from the city," Quigley said, reflecting on the project. "It is truly a remarkable accomplishment and unprecedented, in my knowledge, in the country."

Working with Quigley on this project was Arturo (Art) M. Castro, principal/partner for Tucker Sadler Architects, a San Diego-based design firm. Castro served as project director for the design of the new Central Library. He provided accountability for the project while ensuring the timely commitment of resources from Tucker Sadler and sub-consultants. With more than 36 years of experience with Tucker Sadler, Castro has been involved in various building types — ranging from simple to complex — and he now serves as managing principal for the firm's most complex projects.

"I am overjoyed by the fact that after decades of waiting, the community finally has its new Central Library," Castro said, when asked what he most valued about his involvement on the Central Library project. "It represents a civic building specifically designed for use by the public. Many of the features incorporated into the design reflect input from the Community Workshop. This is a testament to the design process for a major civic building."

The success of this civic building project is already evident. The Central Library won the 2013 "Best in Show" by the Decorative Concrete Council, a specialty council of the American Society of Concrete Contractors. This independent panel of industry professionals who recognize decorative concrete projects around the world, based this award on the project's aesthetics, craftsmanship, functionality and creativity.

As the city moves to the next phase of actually using the Central Library on a day-to-day basis, we can all take civic pride in how the community's collective vision was translated into an aesthetically stunning and functional space by these two great local architects, who are so passionate about their community.

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The Central Library's dome is a remarkable addition to the city's skyline.

The Central Library's dome is a remarkable addition to the city's skyline. It is already coming to represent San Diego and is being integrated into publications, advertisements and photos. The specific dome design was inspired by the domes in Balboa Park. At night, the 255-foot-high dome anchors the cityscape with a soft and welcoming glow.

Domes have long symbolized enlightenment and civilization. In our culture, domes also have come to represent democracy. “This dome stands as a symbol of the city’s commitment to literacy and learning,” said architect Rob Wellington Quigley. At 143 feet in diameter, the Central Library’s dome is larger in size than the U.S. Capitol (135 feet), comparable to the Pantheon in Rome (142 feet) and the Doma in Florence (149 feet), and smaller than St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican (195 feet).

This dome is a one-of-a-kind engineering marvel, and is fondly referred to as the “Dome of Knowledge.” But this amazing structure is not actually a dome. It is constructed from eight overlapping steel “sails,” with the tallest one at 113 feet. Together, the sails constitute the spine of the dome. The sails each weigh approximately 17 tons. They were constructed offsite in Arizona, transported to San Diego and assembled onsite. Two huge cranes were erected to lift the sections into place. Once in place, they were welded together. Covering the sails are 1,500 aluminum panels weighing 32,000 pounds to shade the glass reading room below.

The latticework design of the dome doesn’t look finished and it never will. Like the human spirit that thirsts for knowledge, the dome is designed to be in the perpetual act of becoming. “It is intended to stand as a paradox, grand yet accessible, familiar yet unique, comforting yet provocative,” said architect Rob Quigley. “It is permanent yet kinetic, and ever-changing to the sun and the sky and clouds.”

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A dream

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programming, and increase access to key technologies that creates a level playing field for all.

Citizen committees studied possible sites for the new Central Library through 45 independent studies. Beginning in 1999, six potential downtown sites were analyzed through public hearings. An extensive series of workshops were held with thousands of citizens participating. In 2001, the City Council reviewed the analysis on each of the sites along with associated costs, and unanimously re-affirmed that the city-owned approximately 68,000 square foot site at Park Blvd. and J Street was the best location.

This location in East Village a block from Petco Park is significant. It helps fulfill Alonzo Horton’s vision more than 100 years ago when he purchased the land now known as downtown San Diego to build a vibrant waterfront center. The new Central Library is at the node of the Park-to-Bay Link that connects San Diego’s majestic waterfront to the rich cultural activity of Balboa Park. Its strategic location, with easy access to parking and public transportation options, makes the new Central Library the heart of downtown and center for civic activity by bringing together people from all spectrums of life including residents, businesses, students, tourists, and those in search of cultural programs and entertainment.

The city put together a funding plan for this $185 million Central Library building project. The California State Library awarded San Diego a $20 million grant for the new Central Library. The Centre City Development Corporation allocated $80 million for construction with funds earmarked for downtown development. The San Diego Unified School District approved $20 million for a 40-year lease on unused space on the sixth and seventh floors of the building for a charter high school. And private donors stepped forward to secure the remaining $64.9 million needed to complete construction. Private donors contributed an additional $10 million to cover the first five years of additional operating costs at the new facility. This amount of private funding was almost 40 percent of the total funds.

With this funding package commitment in place, on June 28, 2010, the San Diego City Council approved construction of the new Central Library and a month later, ground was broken on construction. On June 9, 2013, the old Central Library was closed to move to the new Central Library and prepare for opening. The new Central Library celebration, street festival, and sneak peek of the first floor of the library is scheduled for Sept. 28, 2013, with an opening for full operations on Sept. 30, 2013.

Building the new Central Library is a testament to the tenacity, perseverance and partnerships — it took decades to get to this point in our city’s history. This project has been a long time in coming, but people who visit the library will know it was well worth the wait.

The time has come for the San Diego Public Library, library users and the whole region to celebrate this accomplishment and discover the next chapter that we are just beginning to jointly create.

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Innovative technology integrated into new library

By MARION MOSS HUBBARD
Special to The Daily Transcript

When planning for the new Central Library, one of the goals was to have the infrastructure and technology to address community needs now and in the future. When planning began more than three decades ago, no one knew what technology would actually be available at the time of construction. But, as this project became real, the latest technology has been integrated wherever possible into the structure of the building and services offered, making this library one of the most technologically advanced libraries in the country.

At the heart of the Central Library’s infrastructure is the cutting edge Gigabit Passive Optical Network fiber optic architecture. GPON takes up less space in the building, allows for high bandwidth transmission and supports next-generation services. It allows for separate high-speed broadband networks for public and staff use. It also allows the library to use Voice Over IP (Internet Protocol) to transmit voice over a single broadband connection, which reduces communication and infrastructure costs.

Another innovation is Radio Frequency Identification materials tagging, which allows for more efficient materials handling. The book return at the lobby’s customer service desk, known as the San Diego Padres Home Plate Book Return, uses an automated conveyor system to transport returned materials to a back office area where they are automatically sorted for quick return to the collection. RFID processing means faster check out for library users and reduced staff time required to ready materials for re-shelving.

In addition to free WiFi throughout the library, there are multiple opportunities to learn, use and interact with the latest technology:

- Nearly 300 computer workstations and digital devices are available for use in the library, including computer workstations, iPads and iPad Minis, Chromebooks, and Kindle and Sony eReaders (preloaded with the most popular titles).
- In the Betty C. Zable Foundation Computer Lab, there are 42 state-of-the-art computers that allow library users to access the Internet and computer programs they may not otherwise have at home or through other sources.
- The Wells Fargo Computer Training Center has 24 state-of-the-art computers and features a TV and Smart Board for group technology training sessions.
- The Denny Sanford Children’s Library has 27 child-sized computer workstations, including Early Literacy Stations (AWE) with 60 educational software titles spanning seven curricular areas for children ages 2-8.
- The Pauline Foster Teen Center in Memory of Stanley has computers specifically set aside for teens, a media and gaming room, and a multimedia collaborative table that allows teens to work together on multimedia projects and attend movie screenings and gaming nights.
- The Dene and Elizabeth Oliver ICAN Center for customers with disabilities has 13 specialized adaptive technology workstations, as well as mobile computing devices and trained staff to assist with the technologies.
- The I CAN, Too! Center in the Sanford Children’s Library will provide resources geared to children with special learning needs. It will include TAP! learning stations, iPads and other tablets, text magnifying software, ADA-compliant furniture, adaptive toys, Braille and audio books and resources for parents.

There are many other innovative technologies, including new apps (SDPL On the Go and Library Elf) and collaborative technologies with the onsite charter school, e3 Civic High such as the IDEA (Innovation and Digital Expression Activity) Lab with 10 high-end computers and a 3-D printer and the YES! (Youth Empowerment for Success) Learning Lab onsite supporting television production.

For more information about technology in the new Central Library, visit sandiegolibrary.org and click on newlibrary.org.

Source Code: 20130927crh
e3 Civic High: A model for 21st century Education

E3 Civic High was designed by the joint venture team of Rob Wellington Quigley, FAIA and Tucker Sadler Architects, and is being built by Turner Construction Company, who serves as the project’s Construction Manager at Risk.

Turner Construction is honored to have been a part of bringing this phenomenal facility to the San Diego community. The new school, e3 Civic High, opened with 260 ninth- and tenth-grade students. The plan is to add a grade each year through the 2015 academic year, when there will be more than 500 students.

e3 Civic High is focused on preparing students for college and their careers by providing them with real-world challenges to solve. “This is why our partnerships with business and government are so important to students,” said Dr. Helen Griffith, e3 Civic High’s executive director. “This opportunity is exciting to students because it is a perfect synergy of location, curriculum and connections.”

The location of e3 within the library offers extensive opportunities for mutual collaboration, as both organizations support a mission of lifelong learning and literacy. The students will have access to all of the rich resources of the Central Library, expertise of specialized reference librarians, tutoring in the Homework Center and online, opportunities to intern in the library system, access to small and group study rooms, and the relaxed and engaging environment of the Library’s Teen Center.

In addition, students will have access to the YES! Learning Lab, a multimedia studio facility that develops television production skills, stop-motion animation, music recording, webcasting, web publishing and game creation. They will also have access to the IDEA (Innovation and Digital Expression Activity) Lab, which includes a 3D printer and 10 high-end computers with software for graphic design, photo editing, architectural design, music production, video editing and technology.

City Television staff will also serve as consultants and mentors to the school’s digital media program.

The partnership between the San Diego Central Library and e3 Civic High is a huge triumph in creative partnering and collaboration. The students and the community are already greatly benefiting from bringing these two organizations together in one location. More than 40 other organizations have joined the community, including business, colleges and universities, have agreed to partner with e3 Civic High in providing internships, teacher training and development, concurrent college enrollment, and ensuring that students are “future-ready.”

The collaborative possibilities are just beginning to come to fruition. It will be fascinating to see how this model for 21st century education continues to evolve and becomes a catalyst for more cities as they study San Diego’s educational success story. For more information about e3 Civic High, visit e3civichigh.com.

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Floor-by-floor at a glance

There are so many interesting areas of the new Central Library that will leave you wanting to come back again and again to explore. Here is a floor-by-floor description to whet your appetite.

**Basement (2 levels)**
- 250 parking spaces, which are free for a limited time with library validation.

**First floor**
- 350-seat auditorium with floor-to-ceiling doors that open to the courtyard
- Garden Courtyard with café (café opens by the end of the year)
- Library Shop — Museum-quality literary-themed gifts and library branded items
- Clark Conference Center
- Lobby — Three-story grand entrance featuring dramatic gravity arch
- Friends of the Library Used Book Store
- Dickinson Popular Library
- Oliver ICAN Center for disability services
- Sanford Children's Library — Fun and engaging Dr. Seuss-themed library with primary and intermediate grade collections, child-sized computers, colorful storytime and play area, and the future home of the I CAN, Too! Center for children with special learning needs

**Second floor**
- Foster Teen Center — Beach-themed, safe and relaxing environment for teens with computers, a gaming room, collaborative areas and snack area
- Union Bank Homework Center — After-school tutoring tailored to local curricula
- Health and Wellness Information Center — Regional, one-stop hub for health education
- Business, Science and Industry Collection
- Social Science Collection

**Third floor**
- Patent and Trademark Resource Center
- Government Documents
- Newspapers and periodicals
- Relaxed setting and quiet study areas

**Fourth floor — Qualcomm Technology Floor**
- Zable Computer Lab with 42 state-of-the-art computers
- Wells Fargo Technology Training Center with 24 state-of-the-art computers, a TV and Smart Board for group technology training
- Multimedia TV Studio and YES! Learning Lab to teach students television production, stop-motion animation, music recording, webcasting, Web publishing and game creation
- Wall art installation by internationally recognized video artist Gary Hill
- Literature Collection

**Fifth floor — Armando de Peralta Jr. World Affairs Floor**
- Bank of America-Merrill Lynch Career Center — In partnership with San Diego Workforce Partnership, a one-stop career center offering comprehensive employment and job skill development services
- Diamond Rock Garden — Restful rock garden for viewing next to the spacious, light-filled Jaffe Mountain View Reading Area
- History collection

**Sixth and seventh floor**
- e3 Civic High School — The first high school to be integrated into a large central library in a major metropolitan city

**Eight floor — Manpower Innovation Floor**
- Price Reading Room — “The People's Penthouse," an airy three-story inspiring glass room under the dome with panoramic views for reading and study
- Mae Bell Page - READ/San Diego adult literacy services
- Sullivan Family Baseball Research Center — Home of the Ted Williams Chapter of the Society for American Baseball Research (SABR), the largest and most comprehensive baseball research center outside the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York
- IDEA (Innovation and Digital Expression Activity) Lab — featuring a 3-D printer and 10 high-end computers with software for graphic design, photo editing, architectural design, music production video editing and more
- Art, Music and Recreation Collection

**Ninth floor**
- Hervey Rare Book Room — Tranquil feel of a 19th-century private library with a modern flair, housing the Wangenheim Collection of rare materials tracing the history of the book
- The California Room, including the Marx San Diego Heritage Center, allows library users to access heritage materials, city directories, and genealogical resources. Thanks to the San Diego Genealogical Society combining their collection with the Library's, this is now the largest genealogy collection in the region.
- Art Gallery — 3,000-square-foot museum-quality exhibit space that is home for the library's award-winning Visual Arts Program
- Valeiras Sculpture Garden — Open-air ivy garden that is ideal for quiet reflection or special gatherings
- Rooftop Terraces — Three furnished public terraces with sweeping views of the bay and city
- Qualcomm Dome Terrace
- Epstein Bay View Terrace
- Woods Sunset View Terrace
- Shiley Special Events Suite — Flexible rental space with stunning views of the bay and Petco Park, which accommodates 500 people standing, 333 lecture seating, and 216 dining
- Sullivan Commission Room — Wood-paneled boardroom used for the Board of Library Commissioners meetings and other library-related gatherings.
The intersection of visual art and the library

City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture

Visitors to San Diego’s new Central Library will be surrounded not only by rich collections, culturally diverse programming and dynamic architecture, but also by vibrant and inspiring visual art.

“Art is a natural fit for libraries,” said City Librarian Deborah Barrow. “Art helps connect us to our humanity. Just as lifelong learning engages our hearts and minds, so does art. The library is thrilled to play such an important role in showcasing the region’s artistic talent and the city of San Diego’s art collection. Millions of people who come through the doors of this library will be enriched by the art they encounter here.”

Four major public art installations were commissioned by the city of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture for the new Central Library as part of the city’s percent-for-art program.

In 2002, the commission released a national call for artists and attracted hundreds of applications. Following a competitive review process by a panel of local visual art experts, library representatives and community members, four artists were selected to create site-specific artworks for the library.

A “book painting” titled “Hiding My Candy” by Donald Lipski can be found on the east wall of the auditorium. “Corpus Callosum,” a group of ornate sculpture dioramas by Einar and Jamex de la Torre, is located in the central elevator bay on the first floor. “Triangulating Hives (for Magdalena),” an enigmatic video artwork by Gary Hill, is on the east-facing wall of the north side of the fourth floor near the fiction stacks, and Roy McMakin’s 25-piece blue furniture installation, “Recreations of Furniture Found Discarded in Alleys and on Curbs While Driving Around San Diego” is on the ninth floor of the Helen Price Reading Room on the eighth floor.

The opening of the new Central Library will mark a major milestone in the San Diego Public Library’s acclaimed Visual Arts Program. With new 3,000-square-foot museum-quality art gallery on the ninth floor, the program now has the exhibit space to further its mission — which is to demonstrate the library’s role as a cultural institution while assisting San Diego’s midcareer and older professional artists in achieving wider local, regional and national attention.

The first exhibition, from Sept. 30 to March 29, 2014, has been organized by guest curator Kathryn Kanjo, the chief curator of the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego. The exhibition, “Renewed: A Short Story About the San Diego Public Library’s Visual Arts Program,” features 32 artworks by Faiya Freedman, Suda House, Jeff Irwin, Philipp Scholz Rittermann, Gail Roberts, Lynn Schuette, Ernest Silva and Vicki Walsh.

Adjacent to the art gallery on the ninth floor is the Valeiras Sculpture Garden. Ten sculptures by San Diego sculptor Kenneth Cupps are featured in the exhibition, which will be on view from Sept. 30 to Sept. 21, 2014.

In addition, more than 150 paintings, drawings and photographs from the city of San Diego’s own Civic Art Collection have been permanently installed on all floors of the library. Of particular importance are 14 artworks by San Diego artist Russell Baldwin. Other works of significance by San Diego area artists include Sheldon Kirby, Jean Swigget, Robin Bright and Jay Johnson.

The Special Collections section of the library on the ninth floor houses some of the city’s early California paintings by Alfred Mitchell and Elliot Torrey. The Hervey Family Rare Books Room will exhibit six newly conserved and rarely seen prints from the 1800s, three by William Hogarth and three by Ando Hiroshige. In addition, paintings by Alfred Mitchell, Charles Fries and Maurice Braun and sculptural works by Donal Hord will be on display in the Rare Books Room. Another special artwork on exhibit in the Sullivan Family Baseball Research Center on the eighth floor is a contemporary sculpture by San Francisco-based artist Yoram Wolberger (“Male baseball #1”) on loan to the city through an arrangement with the Mark Moore Gallery and the Museum of Contemporary Art San Diego.

“Simply put, the new Central Library is a showcase for the largest display of city-owned artwork in the 100-year history of the Civic Art Collection,” said Dana Springs, interim executive director of the city of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture. “I couldn’t be more proud of the quality and breadth of the artworks that San Diegans will be able to experience at the library. To every artist, donor and lender who supported our exhibitions, a very big ‘thank you.’”

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Donors

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State Library; and $20 million from the San Diego Unified School District, for a 40-year lease of the library’s sixth and seventh floors for a new charter high school.

Private, charitable sources provided the final piece of the funding puzzle — $64.9 million for construction and an additional $10 million toward operations — nearly 40 percent of the project’s total. This historic level of private support means the library was built with no new taxes, bonds or even one cent of San Diego’s General Fund money.

The foundation thanked Joan and Irwin Jacobs for their anchor gift. In 2010, they donated $20 million to the project — $15 million toward construction and $5 million toward library operations. This July, the Jacobses made an additional $10 million matching gift.

“The entire community has played a part in supporting this library,” said Library Foundation Vice Chairwoman and Library Commissioner Katie Sullivan. “Lender who supported our exhibitions, a very big ‘thank you.’”

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