

### Automation

In 1977 steps were taken to automate the library's lending system, a measure that is a short-term economy and a long-term increase in efficiency and productivity. Bar-coded zebra labels began appearing in books in preparation for the computerized checkout system planned for 1978.

An electronic book detection system has already curtailed book losses from the main library collection.

### Parking

One of the most popular features of the new library is its Elk Street parking lot.

### Income - 1977

City of Albany	1,020,102.00
State	8,104.00
State Aid-UHLF Grants	34,432.00
Fines, fees	16,845.00
Rental	20,416.00
Miscellaneous	7,506.00
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	\$1,107,405.00

### Expenditures

Salaries, benefits,	738,697.00
Books, other library materials	112,378.00
Building operation, maintenance	62,741.00
Automotive	2,630.00
Supplies, telephone, services	79,175.00
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	\$ 995,621.00

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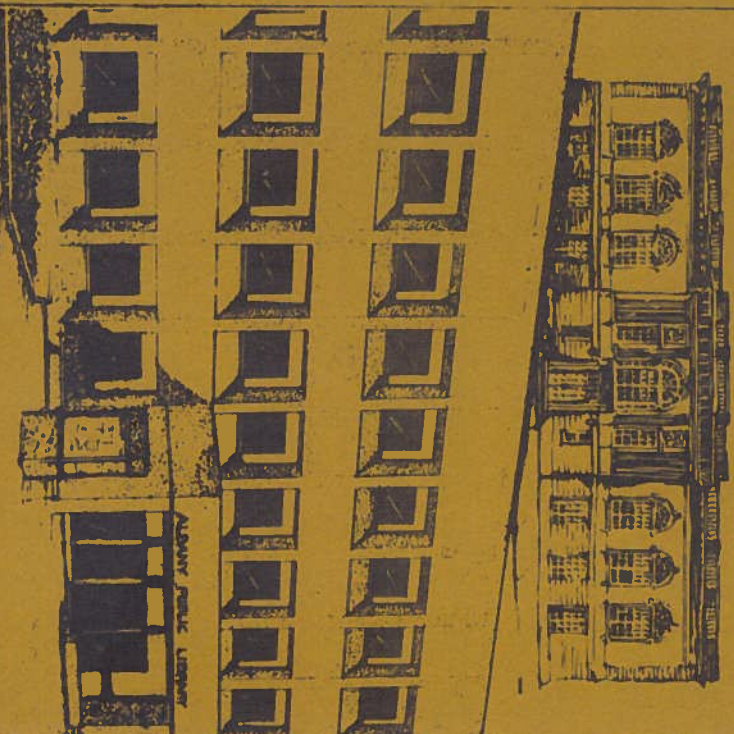
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# 1977 ANNUAL REPORT

ALBANY  
ROOM  
COLLECTION



## The Year of the Move



**1977 was the year of the Move.** The first part of 1977 was spent in preparation for the move from the old Harmanus Bleecker Library, where it had been since 1924. In June, service to the public ceased, and on June 27 after three weeks of hard work by the staff, the new main library quietly opened its doors. It received an instant vote of confidence from the public.

There were some who had doubts about the decision to convert the *IRS Office Building* to a new main library for Albany, but these doubts were immediately dispelled upon discovery of the attractive and functional interior.

The balance of 1978 found the staff adjusting to the move to larger quarters. By the time that the library was dedicated on August 6, both the staff and the public had become very much at home in the new setting.

#### **Library Use**

Even with the interruption of service at the main library, the public's use in 1977 of the Albany Public Library increased over that for 1976 substantially. More people registered for borrower's cards in 1977 than in the previous year.

The library was a busy place all year. To meet public demand, the collection grew by 5,040 volumes even though the main collection was severely pruned before the move. The collection of recordings maintained by the library increased substantially. It includes both cassettes and phono-records. Recording use has increased by one-third.

#### **Branches**

There were major gains in library circulation of books at the main library, however these gains were offset by losses which occurred in the branch libraries. Branch library staff are conducting neighborhood surveys to see how they can better meet the demands of changing population and conditions.

#### **Reference Use**

The number of informational questions asked and the amount of information service provided by our reference staff increased by over thirty-one percent and is steadily increasing. The greatest increase of reference service is to the off-the-sheet borrowers. Telephone reference questions did not increase in the same proportions. Sunday's reference use increased by forty-one percent since the move.

#### **Ideas and Information**

In its role as an information disseminator, Albany Public Library engaged in a variety of programs, such as noon hour talks, book reviews, appearances by authors, film series, story hours and puppet programs, baby-sitting workshops, city living seminars, an American Indian Day, children's book week.

A highlight of 1977 was the appearance of Edwin Newman, television commentator and author, for National Library Week in April at Harmanus Bleecker Hall, the new library's auditorium in the as yet unfinished new library. An overflow audience turned out on a rainy evening. Unfortunately many had had to be turned away.

#### **Children's Services**

One of the most gratifying changes resulting from the new library is that children are using the Main Library again. They are reading, studying and participating in the active programs of the Children's Department.

#### **Community Use of New Facility**

In previous years, a frequent comment about the old Harmanus Bleecker Library was how effectively the community made use of the building for programs and activities. This tradition continues. The use of the library meeting rooms in the new Albany Public Library from the beginning was steady. It is not uncommon to find all meeting rooms in use at the same time.

#### **New Services**

The job information center continues to be a very active resource in its new location. Literacy volunteers made use of our facilities for training reading teachers and offering remedial reading. Bibliographic literature searches from 16 data bases were offered to Capital District residents through a federally funded project.

#### **Retirement**

The library staff was relatively stable in 1977 with only one retirement: Mrs. Marie Garrison, librarian at the Delaware Branch, after sixteen years of continuous service.

