



"Eveleth, the city of individual co-operation. May it live and grow and embrace forever! May the spot where it commenced be always green. For here is the home of everything worthwhile. Love, friendship, religion, altruism, devotion to career, and last but not least—true community spirit...Our parks, streets, libraries, and schools reflect the public will to have the best for Eveleth citizens and those who may come to join us."

*Where Mines and Farms Meet
Eveleth Commercial Club
March 1921*



Eveleth Public Library
100 years

1914-2014



Eveleth Public Library

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS



June 2014

To the Eveleth Public Library:

I grew up in the late 1940's and early 1950's. There were no television sets, computers, video games, etc. Our entertainment consisted of an occasional movie, playing outdoors, radio, board games and of course, reading. The Eveleth Library was, and still is one of my very best friends.

During the time of my youth, the library housed a children's section in the lower level of the building; the entryway was the door facing Chandler Avenue. I enjoyed checking books out to take home, but also spent many hours reading in the quiet atmosphere. I read many, many books and most of the classics – Heidi, Black Beauty, Tom Sawyer, and Huckleberry Finn, etc. – and really remember enjoying the Black Stallion series penned by Walter Farley. As you probably know, The Black Stallion was made into a movie starring Kelly Reno, Teri Garr, and Mickey Rooney.

Another vivid memory of the children's section was the charming, attractive librarian, Grace Ryan. She had beautiful white hair and always wore pastel clothing with her string of pearls. She turned out to be one of my future mother-in-law's best friends.

One feature I remember vividly about the upper level of the building was the newspapers being on display on long, wooden, split dowels. This way, patrons could read the news without subscribing to the various local, regional, and national papers.

I remember the beautiful "Library Park" with the band shell on the south end and attending band concerts performed by the Eveleth city band. I don't recall when the band shell was torn down, but do remember with sadness when the Eveleth-Fitzgerald Hospital was built (around 1957-1958) as our beautiful park disappeared forever.

Needless to say, those formative years made me into an avid reader. I rarely, if ever, buy books as the library personnel is always able to fulfill my requests for reading material.

Congratulations to our public library and Happy 100th Birthday. I hope the people, young and old, of Eveleth continue to avail themselves of the treasures within.

Barbara Sarno Turk

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Mesabi Daily News • Virginia Enterprise

Acknowledgements

Eveleth Public Library

Arrowhead Library System

City of Eveleth

Virginia Area Historical Society

Eveleth Library Board

Iron Range Historical Society

Iron Range Research Center

Columbia University, New York City

East Range Developmental Achievement Center

All images are from the Eveleth Public Library unless otherwise noted.

The City of Eveleth and the Eveleth Public Library thank Tucker Nelson, Roberta Palin, Mary Ellen Higgins, and everyone who helped in the creation of this booklet.

Additional Services

The Eveleth Public Library has served the City of Eveleth, and surrounding communities, in addition to other branches (smaller auxiliary libraries overseen by the Eveleth Public Library) throughout the years.

1918: A Men’s Reading Room was established in a former saloon after St. Louis County voted on a county-wide prohibition of alcohol that same year. The Reading Room had lounging and writing rooms, a general reading room, and a room for “war work.” Upstairs were two rest rooms for country women, where they could rest or have their lunch when in town.

1918-1919: The Grant Avenue Branch was turned over to veterans of World War I. A branch was also located in the building that housed the Iron Junction Post Office and the Moline Brothers’ General Store; branches were also located at the Eveleth Fire Hall, and school classrooms.

1921: The library was open to the people of Gilbert, Elba, Embarrass, Forbes, Wolf, Zim, Iron Junction, and the surrounding farmland.

1931: People living in the Drake-Stratton Location south of town were considered resident borrowers, and a special committee was established to talk to Gilbert city officials about charging a fee for Gilbert citizens wishing to use the Eveleth Public Library, as Gilbert had none until 1938.

Interlibrary loan was available as far back as 1915. Materials could be borrowed and exchanged between the public libraries in Two Harbors, Duluth, Hibbing, Chisholm, Virginia, and Eveleth. This is still a key part of the library’s operation today. Through both the Arrowhead Library System and the statewide MNLink program, Eveleth patrons are able to obtain materials not on hand within the Eveleth Public Library collection.

Currently the library provides Internet access both through library computers and free Wi-Fi access. Through the Legacy Program free passes are available to a wide variety of museums throughout Duluth and the Arrowhead region. The Legacy Program also provides free tickets to a wide variety of theater, musical, and dance performances.

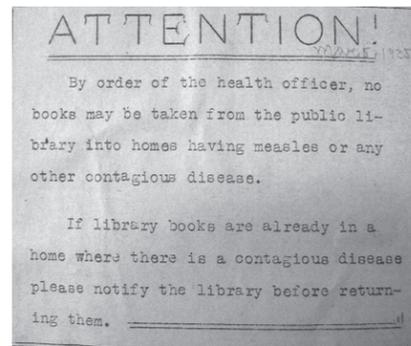
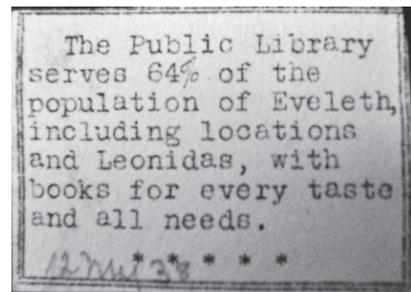


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Early Days

The beginning of library service in Eveleth is uncertain, but it may have begun as early as 1896. According to Margaret More's History of Eveleth, an "old timer" recalled a reading room on Main Street (which was then Kimberly Avenue) before the town was moved up the hill. No other mention of this reading room has been found. The Eveleth Reading Club was organized sometime before 1905, but little is known about its activities. This organization later became the Eveleth Art Club, and still later, the Eveleth Women's Club.

In 1903, a membership service called the Tabard Inn Library established branches in Eveleth and in Virginia. The Philadelphia-based company was formed in 1902 and offered lifetime memberships for \$1.50 at stations located across the country. The book collections at each station were housed in tall, revolving bookcases and rotated weekly. Members paid a nickel to exchange a book. The Tabard Inn Library was a private enterprise in competition with the new concept of free public libraries, as evidenced by its slogan, "The Best Reading Rooms in the United States are the Homes of the American People."

Horsleb L. Grotheim became manager of the Eveleth and Virginia stations in February 1903. However, misunderstandings between Mr. Grotheim and the company representatives in Duluth and Minneapolis caused a delay in the first shipment of books, so the service to these communities did not start until late April. The Virginia Enterprise said, "The new innovation" should prove a successful venture, and we predict a large membership." Mr. Grotheim had secured sixty members in Virginia and twice that amount in Eveleth, but the prediction made by the Virginia Enterprise proved inaccurate. Little mention was made of the Tabard Inn Library in either town after the two stations opened, although the 1903 Polk Directory did list H. L. Grotheim as the library's manager at Clark's Virginia Pharmacy. The Tabard Inn Library declared bankruptcy in 1905.

H. C. Garrott, owner-publisher of the Eveleth Mining News, wrote a letter to Andrew Carnegie in 1903 inquiring about the possibility of securing funding for a new public library. Carnegie apparently never responded to that first letter, but Mrs. Garrott took matters into her own hands and created a makeshift library at the Eveleth Mining News

Kimberly Avenue, Eveleth's Main Street in 1895. Henry Hookwith's saloon to the left was just one out of dozens of such establishments in Eveleth which prompted citizens to establish a public library.



the reference room. This allowed younger patrons more freedom and once again gave them a place of their own. The number of tables and chairs that had occupied most of the available floor space in the main section of the library had been reduced to allow the free standing bookshelves to be relocated into the original portion of the library.

2005 brought a new program to the Eveleth Public Library. A grant through the Institute of Museum

and Library Services, a Federal agency that fosters innovation, leadership, and a lifetime of learning, in conjunction with Minnesota State Library Services and School Technology, was the start of Read Aloud: Dog Days at Your Library. MaryBeth Kafut's dogs Badger and Bella were trained Therapy Dogs International dogs. Using the R.E.A.D. (Reading Education Assistance Dogs) program, Eveleth Public Library became one of the first libraries in Minnesota to offer this comprehensive program, built around the idea that reading to a dog allows children to expand their reading skills in a non-judgmental environment.

In November 2008, Minnesotans passed the Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Amendment to the Minnesota Constitution. As part of this amendment, until 2035, a portion of the state's sales tax will be allotted to an arts and cultural heritage fund. The amendment states that this fund "may be spent only on arts, arts education and arts access and to preserve Minnesota's history and cultural heritage." This Legacy Program has increased the number and variety of offerings from the Eveleth Public Library. Authors, musicians, and re-enactors have all brought their talents to share.



Cathryn Saliski, seated, reading with Badger. MaryBeth Kafut and Rebecca Patton, Regional Librarian, looking on.

Construction is underway for the new elevator and handicapped-accessible restroom on September 25, 2000.



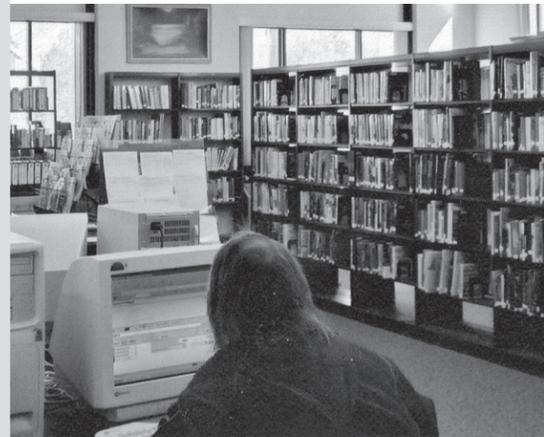
The completed elevator and restroom addition in 2002.

The 2½-year lease agreement between the City Council and the School Board took effect July 1, 1968. The City of Eveleth maintained the former public library building with lease revenue from the East Range Day Activity Center and the Civilian Defense Department, which began occupying rooms in the ground floor of the library in 1966 and 1968, respectively. The former library was used for cataloguing and storage, while the main collection items were brought to the Senior High. Media specialists Charles Muhich and Donald Weisbrod worked to increase efficiency and were able to help update the materials available to patrons. The library was open to students and the public from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday and also had weekend hours. The lease was renewed for another 2½ years in January 1971. After five years, in 1973, control of the public library was transferred back to the City of Eveleth and plans were made to move back into the public library building.

Back in the Building

On March 5, 1973, the Eveleth Library Board held its first organizational meeting since 1968. It renewed the Eveleth Public Library's membership with the Arrowhead Library System and discussed how to go about bringing the library back to life in its proper location. The Board hired Julia Jerome as the new Head Librarian on April 2, and organized a cleanup day with Eveleth students. The students polished furniture and woodwork, mopped the floors, washed and repaired windows, and cleaned books. Leona Marcaccini donated a new bell for the front desk and an open house was held on April 13 and 14. After a five-year vacancy, the fifty-nine-year-old building was officially reopened to the public on April 16, 1973.

In 1976, three years after the Eveleth Public Library reopened in its original home, the Library Board purchased new furnishings and equipment to complement the renewed interest in the valuable civic asset. New record albums, films, and film projectors were added to the library's audio-visual collection. Also, the children's area received new beanbag chairs, while leather armchairs were supplied for the adult library patrons. That same year, the library hosted a Bicentennial Tea for the United States' 200th Anniversary.



A library patron uses a now obsolete Gateway computer.

The return of the Eveleth Public Library to its original home brought the return of library staff and parent volunteers overseeing story hours and summer reading programs. Computers became part of the library landscape during the 1990s. When Library Director MaryBeth Kafut arrived in 1999, the library had two computers available for public use. Through the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that number increased to six in 2002, allowing Eveleth Public Library visitors to interact digitally with the world around them.

The addition of the computers was not the only change seen by the library and its patrons in 2002. Work had been completed on the elevator addition and the layout of the library itself was radically changed. The children's area, which had occupied the west section of the main floor for most of the library's existence, was now moved into what had been

office. She ordered children's books through the Northern Library Association, the first shipment of which arrived from the Duluth Public Library on May 2, 1903. Eveleth children could borrow the books Sunday through Thursday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. daily. Several prominent citizens helped distribute books, which were popular with the children for a time. The time must have been fairly short, since the service died out after a while.



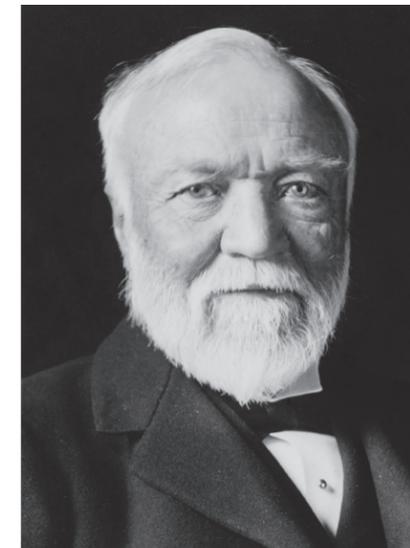
The building that housed the Eveleth Mining News (later the Eveleth News) offices, where Mrs. H. C. Garrott established the first known library in Eveleth. Today the Italian-American Apartments are located on that site.

Carnegie Grant

Steel baron Andrew Carnegie knew the value of individuals having access to a library, as libraries played a vital role in his life. Starting as a bobbin boy in a weaving factory when he was thirteen years old, books taught him what he was missing in school, helping him to achieve his success. Carnegie personally funded the construction of 1,679 American public libraries from 1889 to 1918.

Communities that applied for a Carnegie grant had to meet four requirements: the need for a public library, a building site, ten percent of the construction costs per year, and free service to all. Andrew Carnegie donated over \$200,000 to towns that greatly influenced the success of his steel mills through the mining and shipping of iron ore. Eveleth, Coleraine, Mountain Iron, and Two Harbors still have functioning Carnegie libraries, while the former Grand Rapids and Duluth buildings have been converted into office space.

James Bertram, Carnegie's private secretary, acted as a liaison between the communities and Mr. Carnegie. Bertram was known for being blatantly blunt in his letters to local library boards. To him, shorter was better. Some of Bertram's responses bordered on being rude, but he was also very organized and efficient. He handled nearly all of his boss's personal correspondence, including library matters. Bertram personally approved the grants and building plans and from there contacted Carnegie's financial manager, Robert Franks, who then distributed money to grant recipients.



Andrew Carnegie
1835-1919

The 1,679 Carnegie libraries are the single largest group of historic buildings, nationally and in each state, standing as libraries, museums, or historic icons.

"We have had many compliments on the spacious look of the library, its cleanliness and its beginning 'new look.' I wish to express my appreciation for the help given me this summer. All the girls worked especially hard, and did a great deal of hard bullwork."

– Head Librarian
Julia Jerome
August 1973

The architectural styles of the libraries varied greatly, but Bertram began paying closer attention to the designs after some towns built structures with lavish exteriors but inefficient interiors. Some towns sought other forms of funding when Bertram and Carnegie rejected plans they deemed inadequate. The two men's influence in the libraries' architecture may have been overly particular, but it was also symbolic. Nearly all Carnegie libraries were symmetrical, rectangular buildings with a central vestibule. Steps leading to the front door represented a person's elevation through learning, and lampposts on either side of the steps signified enlightenment. In fact, the Edinburgh Central Library in Scotland has an excerpt from Genesis 1:3 "Let There Be Light" inscribed above its main entrance.

Application Process

H. C. Garrott first began communicating with Andrew Carnegie on April 1, 1903. A portion of that original letter is included in Kevin Clemens' book "Carnegie Libraries of Minnesota".

"I take the liberty to write to you regarding the city of Eveleth, which needs a library. Are you willing to make this city the same offer you have made to many others for building a library? Eveleth is a city of about 6,000 inhabitants at the present time; this includes mining locations which are within one mile of the center of the city. There are hundreds of intelligent people here, and there is practically no recreation for them outside of the city's forty saloons. There is no town near here with a library. I know a library would do more for this city than all of its churches put together. The children especially need something to occupy their minds which is away from the evil influences of the streets. Eveleth, as you know, has two of the greatest iron mines in the world, The Fayal and the Adams and Spruce. Any offer you can make us will be eagerly considered by all who have the welfare of this city at heart."

Eveleth Postmaster Fergus R. Ellsworth also sent a letter to Carnegie on April 28, 1905, explaining the need for a growing and prosperous city to have a suitable public library. Eveleth was one of only three Minnesota towns with populations over 5,000 in 1906 without a public library. Although the High School library was open to the public, its size and collection were inadequate for the whole town. The Eveleth Business Men's Association (better known as the Eveleth Commercial Club) began correspondence with Andrew Carnegie in early 1906 and began a vigorous campaign to arouse the interest of the Eveleth citizens in creating a public library, and the idea eventually took hold with the Eveleth City Council. The Council decided in 1910 to appropriate \$4,000 annually toward the maintenance of a new library building.

Seven years had gone by since Garrott's original letter, yet no known replies were sent by Carnegie to any of these early entreaties. City Clerk J. R. McIntyre wrote to the steel magnate in early December 1910 with a request for a library grant. Two months and a follow-up letter later, Carnegie's secretary, James Bertram, finally responded on February 20, 1911 by saying that Mr. Carnegie would "be glad to give fifteen thousand dollars to erect a free public library building for Eveleth."

Mayor Jacob Saari appointed the first Eveleth Library Board, which held its first meeting on February 8th, 1911. Mr. Carnegie's grant was accepted by the Library Board at City

1968-1973 Consolidation with Eveleth Senior High Library

The 1960s were economically challenging for the Iron Range. The underground mines on the Vermilion Range shut down, and mining on the Mesabi Range sharply declined due to the exhaustion of high-grade iron ore. Schools and businesses closed, buildings were torn down, and public services suffered. The City of Eveleth made across-the-board budget cuts, and taxes were increased to make up the difference. The City even considered moving the City jail to the Eveleth Fire Hall. The public library did not escape the economic downturn. The library served as the reference center for the Eveleth Junior College, which occupied what is now the east wing of the Senior High School. When the Eveleth and Virginia Junior Colleges merged to form Mesabi State Junior College in 1966, the public library lost a significant portion of its patronage and had to reduce its service hours. In 1966 and 1967, the library was closed for one month each summer due to lack of sufficient funds in the City's budget. Books were not lent out during those times, and books checked out prior to the temporary closures were not due until the library reopened. Tension arose when the City Council took away the Library Board's operation of the library building itself and only allowed the Board to oversee the library's staff, programs, and services.



By 1968, the Eveleth Public Library was open just twenty-two hours each week, but the Eveleth School District offered a solution to the library's troubles. A proposal was made to transfer the operation of the public library from the City of Eveleth to Independent School District 697 and have the public library and school library share space at the Eveleth Senior High. Reaction to the proposal varied immensely. Proponents believed it would be the only viable way to maintain quality library service in Eveleth without further increasing taxes. The new arrangement would greatly increase the number of hours the public could use the library, patrons would have access to an expanded audio-visual collection, the school could offer more books to students within the senior high building, and both the City and the school district would save precious money.

On the other hand, opponents felt the need for additional budget cuts and the reduction of some library services in order to save the most important services. Also, the school library was considerably smaller than the public library's original building, which limited reading and work space. The school library could not be a member of the Arrowhead Library System, and thus could not receive the associated cooperative services, such as interlibrary loan. Students at the Lincoln, Franklin, and Junior High schools still had access to libraries in their respective schools, but programs like Book Week and Story Hour would be no more. Furthermore, none of the public library's staff would be retained.



Original letter from
H. C. Garrott

– From the Carnegie
Corporation's
Archives at
Columbia University

DAC in Library Basement

From 1966 to 1972, part of the Eveleth Public Library's basement was occupied by the East Range Day Activity Center, which provided activities and education for mentally challenged people in the Eveleth area. The center originated when a group of Iron Range parents and school board members discussed alternatives for students who were too old (over the age of 21) to legally attend special education classes in public schools. The East Range DAC officially opened on September 7, 1966 in what had previously been the children's Story Hour room. Present at the grand opening in Eveleth were Senator Thomas Vukelich of Gilbert and Governor Karl Rolvaag, who was known for reforming treatment of the mentally handicapped. By the time the center had its dedication and open house on October 19th, a group of eight students between the ages of eight and thirty-four were very happy and eager to be enrolled in the much-needed program.

The Day Activity Center began to grow rapidly at the end of the 1960s. In 1967, it expanded to an additional room in the library, and in 1971, the DAC outgrew its legally required thirty-five square feet per student. The following year, the Eveleth School Board closed the Lincoln School on A Avenue after public school enrollment declined.

Eveleth Independent School District 697 leased two floors of the sixty-year-old Lincoln School to the DAC before selling them the building in 1975 for just \$1. The East Range Developmental Achievement Center is still in the old Lincoln School, and although its services have changed and evolved, it remains a valuable part of the community.

Department of Revenue Minerals Tax Office

After the Day Activity Center and Civilian Defense Department moved to other locations, the Minnesota Department of Revenue Minerals Tax Office moved into the ground level of the Eveleth Public Library and have shared the building with the library for the past 35 years. Among their many duties, the Minerals Tax Office track the various taxes paid by mining companies and how these monies are distributed. Among the taxes that mining companies pay are the production tax, occupation tax, sales and use tax, and income tax on mining royalty, and net proceeds tax.

The tax information collected annually is regularly published in the Mining Tax Guide. Mineral Tax Office personnel also give presentations and provide question and answer discussions.

Hall on March 4, 1911. The Library Board wrote to James Bertram expressing its sincere gratitude, but also requesting an additional \$10,000 so as to guarantee an adequately-sized facility. Library Board President George A. Whitman personally explained that an error had occurred with the 1910 Federal Census and that there were approximately 8,000 to 9,000 people residing within one mile of Eveleth. He even went as far as to request an interview with Bertram when Whitman was in New York in April 1911, but Bertram's curt reply was, "I am sorry I cannot give you an interview, because it would only waste your time and mine."

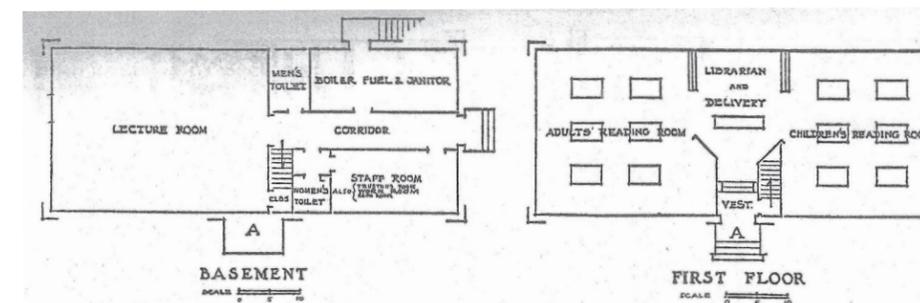
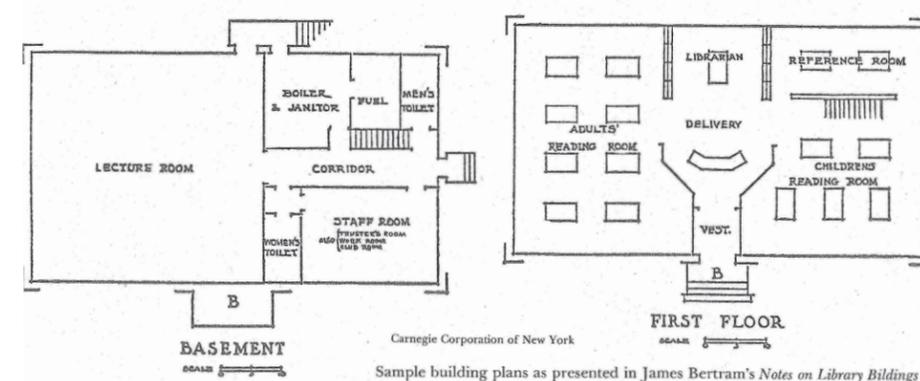
The Library Board corresponded with Bertram for several months attempting to acquire additional money for the library. (Carnegie and Bertram spent some time in Carnegie's native Scotland, which accounts for some mailing delays.) Despite negotiation and courteous correspondence, Bertram would not budge. He said, "We should like to have your explicit assurance that the building according to plans is to be erected complete and ready to occupy within the amount promised." Bertram also wanted more influence on the design of the building (he apparently thought he knew more than a licensed architect) but the Library Board wanted the plans kept as they were, a decision that likely avoided tense conflict between the two parties. Meanwhile, the Library Board and the City Council were having problems deciding on a location for the library. Uncertainties about the official agreement between Carnegie and the Eveleth Library Board and about minor design details dragged on until early 1913.

Andrew Carnegie accepted the building plans in June 1913 when the Library Board showed that it had found a suitable site, had awarded contracts, and the funding and bonds were secure. The construction of the new Carnegie library marked the beginning of true public library service in Eveleth. The Tabard Inn Library was a privately-owned business that had charged a membership fee, and although the Eveleth Mining News lent out children's books free of charge, the service was never intended to be permanent.

Quotations from James Bertram's letters have been modified for easier reading. Originally his December 12, 1912 letter said,

"We should like to have your explicit assurance that the bilding according to plans is to be erected complete and redy to occupy within the amount promist."

The seemingly poor spelling was intentional. Bertram and Carnegie supported Simplified Spelling, a movement founded by Dewey Decimal System inventor Melvil Dewey. Simplified spelling modified the English language's many idiosyncrasies in order to make spelling more phonetic.



Two examples of the four library floor plans recommended by James Bertram for use in a Carnegie Library.

The concept of a true public library is relatively new. Most “free” libraries in America were membership organizations, but Andrew Carnegie, who believed the government had an obligation to educate its people, changed this practice by donating money to city governments so they could operate public libraries themselves. A total of thirty-three letters were sent to and from the citizens of Eveleth, Andrew Carnegie, and his secretary between April 1, 1903 and Christmas Eve, 1913 to make Eveleth Public Library a reality.

Site Selection

Several possible locations were discussed by the Eveleth Library Board and the City Council. While the Library Board negotiated with Carnegie for more money, a number of very good sites were discussed, and temporary quarters for books were arranged at an unknown location. A June 1911 Eveleth News article said the City Council considered constructing a beautiful civic square at the corner of Adams Avenue and Pierce Street. Under that proposal, the library would have been built on the east side of Adams Avenue facing the Holy Family Catholic Church, while a new armory on Pierce Street would have faced the Glode Hotel. By the beginning of 1912, construction began on the Eveleth Auditorium and Armory on Jackson Street, but the location of the public library was still uncertain. That summer, Adams Avenue remained the preferred choice for the new building, with sites considered at the Adams Avenue intersection with Pierce and Jones Streets. In late summer of 1912, the City of Eveleth finally secured and purchased the plot of land bordered by Pierce Street, McKinley Avenue, Fayal Road, and Chandler Avenue.



Looking east from the steeple of the Holy Family Catholic Church, circa 1909. The Episcopal Church can be seen in its original location before it was moved to make room for the new library.

– Photo courtesy of Marcaccini Archives

A cow pasture and a garbage dump once occupied the site on which the Eveleth Public Library now proudly stands, which is just one example of that block’s colorful history. In 1902, the first Fayal School was converted for use as the Eveleth Presbyterian Church and was moved to the northwest corner of Fayal Road and McKinley Avenue. The former one-room schoolhouse, now equipped with pews and a pulpit, was formally dedicated on Sunday, November 2, 1902. Another church was established on that lot when Reverend W. E. Morgan and Mrs. Caroline Barrett organized the construction of Saint John’s Episcopal Church on the southeast corner of Pierce Street and Chandler Avenue in 1905.

Early Collaboration with Eveleth Public Schools

Before the City of Eveleth and Andrew Carnegie agreed to build Eveleth Public Library, residents of Eveleth could utilize the public schools as a source for books. Miss Teckla Jackson was the high school librarian for the 1907-08 school year, during which 5,536 books were circulated over a six-month period. Eveleth High School and its books burned to the ground on June 17, 1908. The new high school did not open until the fall of 1909, and sentiment for a dedicated public library grew stronger. Miss Polly Bullard was an English and sewing teacher, in addition to manager of the school library in 1910. The school library was open each afternoon in summer of 1911, which may have been the temporary quarters of the Library Board in April 1911.

The fiction collection from Eveleth High School was transferred to the public library once the library opened, and school teachers initially managed Story Hour each week. The teachers told stories to one grade of students at a time, and a teachers’ literary club also met at the library. In 1915, one of the public librarians instructed a freshman English class on using the library, a skill to which many were likely unaccustomed. The students were taught how to use the card catalog, how to find books on the shelves, and how to read encyclopedias and other reference materials. Grade school children frequently visited the library to learn about events, exhibits, and new books. Over the summer of 1915, 76 children became registered borrowers.

Further collaboration included a course in Children’s Literature taught in the Normal Department (teacher education) of Eveleth High School. The first part of the class discussed different kinds of children’s fiction and non-fiction, while the second part went more in-depth on such topics as book selection, ordering and cataloging, classification, and book maintenance. The course was reportedly well worth while in strengthening co-operation between library and school, and giving future teachers a clearer conception of what good reading material is.

Parent-Teacher Associations

Parent-Teacher Associations frequently met in the library club rooms, hosted social hours, and learned more about what the library had to offer children. Eveleth’s two PTAs were formerly the Lincoln-Franklin and the Fayal-Spruce. The former likely included the parents and teachers of the Lincoln Annex School until it closed in 1939, while the latter included the Spruce School at Carrie Avenue until it closed in 1930. Mrs. Norrid also gave talks to the Parent-Teacher Association of the Leonidas School, which was then part of the Mountain Iron School District.

Fayal-Spruce P.-T.A. Will Have Founders Day Program Soon
On Thursday evening, February 20, the Fayal-Spruce P.-T.A. will have a Founders Day program at the Fayal kindergarten, starting at 8 o’clock. Following is the program: Community singing, led by Miss V. Croze; reading, P.-T.A. Prayer, by Mrs. W. H. Downing; candle ceremony (lighting the 33 candles on the birthday cake); P.-T.A. creed. Mrs. H. W. Robertson; paper on the work done by the Minnesota P.-T.A. by Mrs. Vivian Norrid, librarian.

O. T. Bundlie Heads Lincoln-Franklin P. T. A. Organization
O. T. Bundlie was elected president of the Lincoln-Franklin Parent-Teacher association at the regular meeting held last night in the music room at the Benjamin Franklin school. A. A. Trost was named vice president, W. J. Tobin, secretary, A. F. Cherne, treasurer, and Mrs. Frank Solazzi, historian. Miss Annabelle Hoy rendered a vocal solo, accompanied by Miss Grace Brown, following which Miss Leone Furtney of the Eveleth public library gave a short talk during which she invited all the members of the P. T. A. to attend the Book Week exhibit at the library. Miss Emelia Thorsen.

Eveleth Art Club/ Eveleth Women's Club

The Eveleth Women's Club originated as the Eveleth Reading Club, which in turn became the Eveleth Art Club in 1906. The exact date is uncertain, but the Art Club was renamed as the Women's Club by 1919. Over the years, the Eveleth Women's Club gave scholarships to young Eveleth women, bought war bonds, donated to charities, and organized community service projects. The group was affiliated with the Greater Federation of Women's Clubs and hosted the GFWC's 8th District Convention in 1910, 1931, and 1940.

The ladies of the club were instrumental in securing funding and support for both the original library and the 1928 addition. In fact, the Library Board personally asked the Women's Club members to use their influence in securing the necessary appropriation from the City. The Art Club was asked to make curtains for the Club Room, in which the women met twice monthly from September to May. The club also donated a coffee and tea set with silverware to the library. One member said, "It was a friendly group, and we enjoyed visiting while having our coffee and goodies." In March 1919, the Women's Club initiated "social afternoons" for foreign-born women where the ladies could socialize and become acclimated to life in America.

The Women's Club planned and organized the Eveleth Public Library's 50th Anniversary program in 1964. They hosted a tea on November 16, 1964, which included a presentation on the library's history. The library was adorned with gold-colored decorations, and the women served a large cake shaped like an open book and surrounded by gold candles. That same year, the Women's Club began seeking donations to help replace outdated and worn out library books. By November 1965, the project received over \$700 from twenty-nine different community sponsors.

The Eveleth Women's Club's nearly 100-year history came to an end when the group dissolved in the late 1990s.



One of the many tea parties held over the years at the Eveleth Public Library.

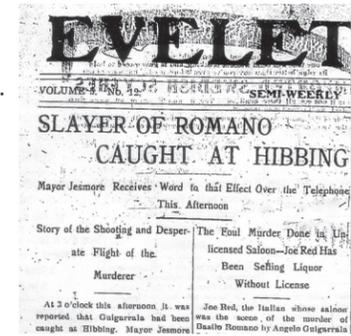
Eveleth Women's Club Party circa 1925



- Photo courtesy of Iron Range Research Center Archives

The plot of land also had an interesting history of "might have beens." In 1904, the Eveleth School Board considered that block as a potential site for a new brick high school, but the location was too far away from the center of town, and school officials were concerned about possible mining activity in the future. After fire destroyed the second Fayal School building on April 25, 1911, the Board again tried and failed to build a new facility on the site, but as of June 1911 the Oliver Iron Mining Company reportedly planned other uses for the space. There were also plans to build houses on the property.

George A. Perham, who came to Eveleth and purchased the Eveleth Mining News in 1903, was involved with some of the events on the library site leading up to the building's construction. The first was a manhunt after a Fourth of July murder in 1906. While playing cards at Joe Red's saloon downtown, a man named Angelo Guigarrala fatally shot Basilo Romano and injured Bruno Cervess. Guigarrala (whose name was apparently also spelled "Gianearello," "Giangerilli," "Guigerilli," or "Gingerelli") then escaped out the saloon's back door and ran southeast toward the Fayal Location. From the back porch of the Perhams' house on Jones Street, Mr. Perham saw a mob chasing a man across the open area on the edge of town. Perham joined the crowd, which lost Guigarrala when the Sparta-bound killer crossed the Miller Trunk Road and disappeared into a swamp. The murderous Italian later walked to Virginia and got on a train to Hibbing, where he was finally arrested.



In the years following that interesting incident on July 4, 1906, George Perham's involvement with real estate and the Eveleth Commercial Club partially led to the creation of Central Park and the construction of the public library. Perham was one of many citizens who wanted a designated public park for picnics, strolling, and holding outdoor concerts. However, a group of Eveleth businessmen named Robb, Poole, and Smith had purchased the surface rights to the future park in 1911 with the intention of leveling the terrain and selling residential lots. Perham strongly objected to this plan because it would have left Eveleth without an open firebreak on that side of town, and the site was the perfect location for the desired public park. Fed up with the bickering and political squabble, Perham left for a fishing trip (one of his favorite pastimes), and upon his return found out that the City had bought the land rights with the intention of finally creating a city park and building a public library. In preparation for construction and landscaping, the City paid to move the Presbyterian and Episcopal churches to their current locations on the corner of McKinley Avenue and Pierce Street.

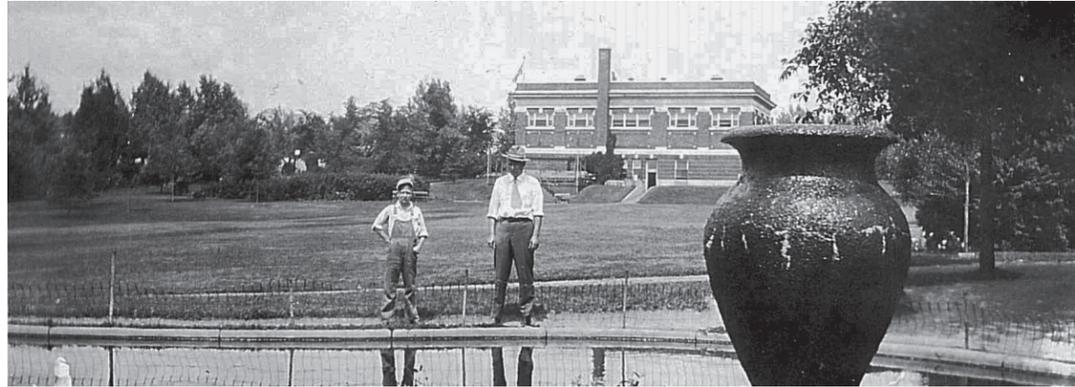


Closer view of the 600 block of Pierce Street prior to building of Eveleth Public Library.

- Photo courtesy of Marcaccini Archives

Mr. and Mrs. Perham's daughter Marjorie carried on her father's interest in libraries. In 1929, Miss Perham passed an entrance examination and entered the University of Wisconsin Library School after apprenticing at the Eveleth Public Library. Aldia Kotze, another Eveleth girl, also studied at the UW Library School.

Central Park

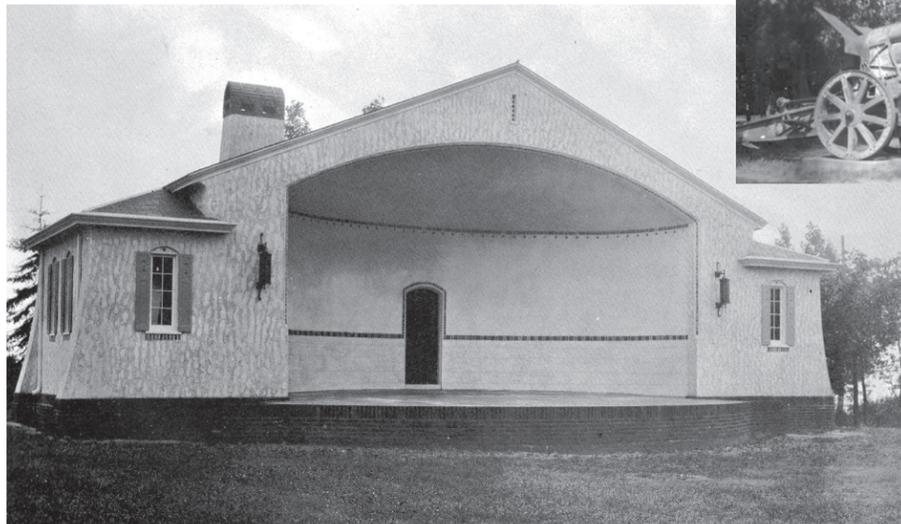


Beautification of the six-acre site near the Fayal Mine began in August 1912, and Central Park was born. City Parks Superintendent James A. Spurrier planted trees and designed landscaping that converted the former dump "into a little Garden of Eden," in the words of Mrs. George Perham. Rather than fill in the divots and knolls, Spurrier worked with the land and created what became known as Turtle Pond in the center of the park. The City spent \$9,000 creating the park, which included walking paths, benches, and a fence surrounding the whole block. May 1915 saw 3,000 trees planted under Spurrier's direction along the boulevards of Eveleth's streets. These beautification projects helped the city progress from a frontier town with muddy streets and clear-cut forests to a growing and progressive city.

Central Park was renamed Memorial Park after World War I, and fifteen elm trees were planted in 1925 as a memorial to Eveleth men who lost their lives in the conflict. Eveleth Post 221 of the American Legion obtained an eight-inch German howitzer from the United States War Department which for a time was on display in the park.

In a 1947 Eveleth News-Clarion article about the history of the library, George McCormick recalled foot races were held on Pierce Street and around the park during holidays. Two long-distance races, one with five laps around the park and one with ten, were usually won by some of our Finnish long-distance runners who afterward became quite famous.

The \$5,000 Eveleth Municipal Band Shell at the southern end of Memorial Park was dedicated in July 1928. The Eveleth Municipal Band held concerts at the bandshell for thirty years, and the Chamber of Commerce once had an office to the left of the stage. The band shell was torn down when the Eveleth Fitzgerald Hospital was built in 1958.



Librarian Julia Jerome is seated at the left as Mayor Joseph Begich signs a proclamation designating April 21-27, 1974 as National Library Week. Standing is Jeanne Sabetti who assisted in the library.



Librarian Marlys Swalboski's 1999 going-away party.



Librarian Ellen Rauzi's retirement party in February 1996.



Librarian MaryBeth Kafut assisting a patron.

Eveleth Head Librarians

Miss Margaret Hickman: March 1914 - July 1923

Miss Alice Lyons: August 1923 - August 1925

Miss Lillie Lindquist: January 1926 - April 1927

Miss Marion R. Clark: June 1927 - May 1928

Mrs. Vivian Gray Norrid: July 1928 - December 1949

Miss Kathleen McCormick: December 1949 - 1965

Mrs. Signe Johnson: 1965 - July 1968

Mr. Charles Muhich & Mr. Donald Weisbrod: July 1968 - 1973
(Eveleth Senior High Media Specialists)

Miss Julia Jerome: April 1973 - June 1983

Mrs. Ellen Rauzi: July 1983 - February 1996

Miss Marlys Swalboski: 1996 - August 1999

Miss MaryBeth Kafut: October 1999 - Present (2014)



Miss Kathleen McCormick answering a patron's question.

Charles Muhich, left, and Donald Weisbrod, Eveleth Senior High Media Specialists. In addition to assisting students, the two men helped members of the public who used the school library.



Grand Opening

The Eveleth Public Library's foundation was laid in late July 1913, and it officially opened, albeit behind schedule, on Wednesday, July 1, 1914. The Library Board extended a general and most cordial invitation to all citizens of Eveleth to be present and enjoy the short opening program and inspect the building. At 2:30 p.m., children became the first community members to walk through the doors of the beautiful new library, where the young people were treated to stories read by Miss Louise Richardson and Miss Ethel Wright (children's librarians in Hibbing and Virginia, respectively). Later that evening, over five hundred citizens of Eveleth and its neighboring towns attended a brief dedication program hosted by the Library Board, Miss Hickman, and the ladies of the Eveleth Art Club. In addition to a variety of speakers, which included Miss Clara Baldwin speaking on the benefits of public libraries, there were several musical selections from Tobin's Orchestra and other soloists. The Art Club held a small reception and served frappes in the Club Room downstairs.

Undoubtedly the opening of the Eveleth Public Library accomplished what H. C. Garrott had was asking for when he contacted Andrew Carnegie all those years before.



"No other town of its class in Minnesota has displayed as much civic progress in the last few years as this thriving Mesaba Range city of over 7,000 people. Under the influence and direction of farseeing and broadminded officials, a system of permanent improvements has been planned and executed and great strides have been made along lines of social and intellectual development."

The 1915 Virginian Supplement

In terms of opening date, the Eveleth Public Library is the 5th oldest library building of the 31 Arrowhead Library System libraries. It is 35th of 356 library buildings in Minnesota. It is one of 65 Carnegie libraries built in Minnesota, 48 of which are still standing. Only 25 of the original 65 are still public libraries.

1914 Hours

Weekdays:
1:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Weekends:
2:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.
(Reading Room only)

Architecture

The Library Board hired the firm of Ellerbe, Round, and Sullivan to draw plans for the new library on December 11, 1911. This firm had also designed the Lyric Opera House on Chestnut Street in Virginia. Early in 1912, William J. Sullivan left the firm, but retained the contract with the Library Board and designed the Eveleth library with Abraham Holstead. The two men based the design of the Eveleth library on that of the West Duluth branch library, which opened in 1912 (and was demolished in 1991). Sullivan and Holstead also worked on renovation and expansion at the old North Hibbing Carnegie Library (1917) and designed the Lincoln Branch Library (1916) in Duluth. In addition to their work on libraries, Sullivan and Holstead designed the County Jail (1923) and Denfeld Senior High School (1926), among other notable Duluth structures.

The Classical Revival architecture of Eveleth Public Library is elegantly simple. The exterior consists of red brick and cream-colored terra cotta. A metal cornice, adorned with small rectangular corbels surround the building and the center pediment. Terra cotta trim and molding is extensive and can be found in the columns and scrolls flanking the main doorway, the trim below the cornice, above and below the windows, and in the triangular pediment in the center of the front façade.

In the main reading room, patrons walked on “absolutely noiseless” cork tile floors and enjoyed the flower boxes at the windows. The walls were painted a soft greyish tan, and crown molding contained similar elements to the exterior trim. Semi-indirect bowl pendant lights hung from the ceiling, and the main circulation desk was directly under a skylight. The Library Bureau company supplied the dull-finished oak shelves, tables, desks, chairs, and coat racks, most of which are still in the library today.

The library’s exterior remains relatively unchanged since it first opened, with the exception of new windows, carpeted front steps, and the removal of the lampposts at an unknown date. In 2001, a new elevator and handicapped accessible bathroom were added to the south side of the building, in order to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. The elevator is housed in a small addition designed by Mark Wirtanen of Architectural Resources Inc. and built by Lenci Enterprises. Great care was taken to match the bricks and ornamentation to those of the original structure, thereby maintaining the library’s historic integrity. The interior has seen more changes, including a carpeted floor, new fluorescent lights, new radiators, and computer stations. Although still intact, the skylight is now covered by a new roof.



The Eveleth library has a significant, but easily overlooked, symbol above its front door: an abstract terra cotta owl, a symbol of wisdom, sitting on a branch and keeping watch over the library’s front lawn.

The first Eveleth Library Board

*George A. Whitman,
President*

Peter Peterson

J. C. Poole

*Burton O. Greening,
Superintendent
of Schools*

David Larin

George E. McCormick

Soloman Sax

F. R. Ellsworth

Dr. Charles W. More

Staff

The Library Board hired Miss Margaret Hickman as the new library’s first Head Librarian in March 1914. Miss Hickman was a graduate of the Pratt Institute School of Library Science in Brooklyn, New York. Before coming to Eveleth, she worked at the Lawther Library in Red Wing and at the Hearst Free Library in Lead, SD. Miss Hickman left the Eveleth library in July 1923. In 1928, she became the director of the Foreign Department of the Los Angeles Public Library. The Los Angeles Public Library was the 5th largest library in the country at the time, and the Foreign Department contained an impressive collection of books in twenty-nine languages.

Miss Hickman was also member of the Clara Baldwin Library Club. Established in 1914, this group’s purpose was to “promote the interest of the libraries on the Mesaba Range.” It was named after Clara Baldwin, a Minnesota library pioneer. Miss Baldwin made over 700 visits to libraries across the state and was director of the State Library Division. The club was mostly a social organization that sponsored entertainment and educational programs, community service, and library fundraisers. Club meetings were held at the various libraries across the Range, including Eveleth’s. At the January 23, 1918 meeting, the group decided to adopt a French and an Armenian orphan for one year. In 1935, the club’s name changed to the Arrowhead Library Club, which had its first meeting in Eveleth. Mrs. Vivian Norrid, Head Librarian in the 1930s, was the first treasurer of the Arrowhead Library Club in 1935 and was elected president in 1938. The Arrowhead Library Club officially dissolved in 1960.

By the year 1928 the staff consisted of Head Librarian: Mrs. Vivian Gray Norrid, Reference Librarian: Miss Glendora Bell; Circulation Department: Misses Margaret More and Aili Heikkila; Children’s Librarian: Miss Leone Furtney; full-time assistants: Misses Esther Peterson and Alice Johnson

Children’s Librarian Miss Leone Furtney resigned in summer of 1930 and was temporarily replaced by Miss Esther Peterson. Miss Winnifred Bright became new Children’s Librarian on March 1, 1931. She was formerly the Children’s Librarian at Wilmette Public Library in Illinois.

Unfortunately not alot is known about many of the librarians who have served through the years at the Eveleth Public Library. Their dedication and service to their patrons has been appreciated by our community.



Arrowhead librarians gather for a meeting at the Eveleth library in 1952.

The 1921 library staff was Miss Hickman and four assistants who either shared a last name or variants of a first name:

Alma Niemi

Signa Niemi

Singrid Johnson

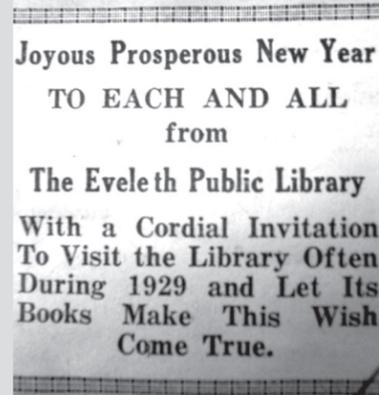
Signe Benberg

“An intensive campaign has been pursued by the present library staff for some time, and it is safe to say that local people are more familiar with the library and what it has to offer than ever before.”

“Book Week is Popular with Local People.”

*– Eveleth Clarion
Nov. 21, 1929*

The Great Depression

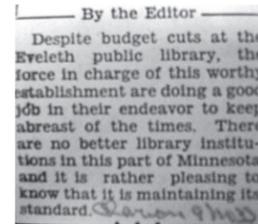


On display at the main desk as of 2014 is a proverb that says, "Libraries will get you through times of no money better than money will get you through times of no libraries." That saying was no truer than during the economically and emotionally crippling Great Depression of the 1930s. The Eveleth City Council was forced to make drastic budget cuts for a majority of City departments, including the library. This significantly affected the library's ability to purchase new books and other materials, but newspaper clippings and various library announcements indicate that the 1930s at the Eveleth Public Library was, for the most part, business as usual.

Laid-off miners, destitute business owners, and struggling families could all find solace in the library's vast collection of books and its wide variety of programs and events. Children's Librarians Leone Furtney, Esther Peterson, and Winnifred Bright still held Story Hour on the weekends, albeit not as consistently as it had been before the Depression. Patrons could entertain themselves with a joke book or learn about topics as diverse as party planning and pickle making. Dozens of clubs continued to use the Club Room for meetings, and lectures, concerts, and art displays were commonplace.

Despite the economic hardship experienced throughout Eveleth, the Iron Range, and the rest of the country, the Eveleth Public Library was number one on the Iron Range during the Depression. A 1937 Duluth Herald article titled "Public Library at Eveleth is Range Leader" said the library served more people at a lower cost per capita than the public libraries in Hibbing, Chisholm, and Virginia. The 1936 Annual Report showed that the Eveleth library served 8% more people at \$.37 less than Hibbing, 25% more people at \$2.50 less than Chisholm, and 15% more at \$.77 less than Virginia.

Near the end of the Depression, the WPA Guide to the Minnesota Arrowhead Country written in 1941 had this to say about the Eveleth Public Library.



"The Public Library, in Memorial Park, with more than 22,500 volumes, is one of the most modern and complete in the Arrowhead."

Despite financial woes, the library remarkably continued to serve patrons better than ever before.



Entryway 1918



Front Desk 1918



South Wall 1918

Note the books are shelved only along the outer walls.

Rooms Club Rooms

The ground floor was originally going to contain a small auditorium, but these plans were canceled because the 600-seat City Auditorium was much better suited to large performances. Instead, two club rooms were built. To the right of the stairwell on the ground floor was the men's Reading and Smoking Room, designed for fellows who "desired to spend a quiet evening with a book or magazine and a pipe." The room was equipped with a fireplace, and the Eveleth Chess Club donated chess tables and chess men in 1915.



**Men's
Smoking &
Game Room
1915**

**Club Room
1915**



The club meeting room was to the left of the stairwell. Dozens of groups and organizations used the space for meetings and events. In the library's first years of operation, the Eveleth Art Club, the Drama League of Eveleth, the City Improvement Club, the Eveleth Rotary Club, City committees, and various lecturers all used the room, and the Red Cross held bandage rolling sessions there in 1921. The Club Room was enlarged with the construction of the 1928 addition, and a kitchen and a kitchenette were added. The inviting space was well patronized by groups of all sizes and functions. A wide variety of community organizations held 226 meetings in the Club Room in just 1920 alone. In 1937, twenty-three clubs, church groups, and educational organizations used the Club Room a total of 117 times.

Addition

The Eveleth Library Board started planning to expand the building as early as 1920. Andrew Carnegie and his secretary frequently turned down requests for larger or more elaborate plans, which was a problem that the Eveleth Board encountered when initially applying for its grant. Although the population of Eveleth increased by only two hundred between the 1910 and 1920 Censuses, the public library's usage and popularity had surged. To accommodate a growing collection and patronage, the children's section was moved to the remodeled club room in the basement in 1926, but that solution was only temporary. The location of the children's room was deemed inconvenient and inadequate, and the adult collection still needed more shelf space. To alleviate the cramped quarters and allow for future growth, the City Council appropriated \$30,000 for an addition to the library in August 1927. Elwin H. Berg designed the new addition. Ground was broken in the fall of 1927.

Mr. Berg came to Eveleth from Duluth in May 1917. He also designed the Eveleth Swedish Lutheran Church, the Eveleth Recreation Building (1918), the Essling Apartments (1921), the Gus Hendrickson House (1919) on the southeast corner of McKinley Avenue and Hayes Street, the school bus garage (1927) just north of the Manual Training Building, and the addition to the Eveleth Masonic Temple (1920). E. H. Berg was the architect for several other public buildings on the Range, including the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Hibbing, Zion Lutheran in Virginia, Virginia City Hall, and the Alango School.

The expanded and remodeled Eveleth Public Library was formally opened and dedicated on May 7, 1928. The formal dedication in the program for the event reads, "To the People of Eveleth and vicinity this enlarged free public library is dedicated, with the hope that it may continue to grow as a living force for good in the community and as a source of inspiration to all."

The new windows on the main floor were twice as tall as the small windows in the east and west walls of the original building, so patrons could now look out over the beautiful Central Park and take in more natural light. The slope of the land behind the library allowed for taller windows on the ground floor, as well. The main reading room was now solely for the adult materials, and a stack room in the center of the addition held more bookshelves. A reference and study room in the southeast corner was entered via two sets of French doors. In the southwest corner were the Board room, librarian's office, and a work room. The Library Board spent \$10,000 on new furnishings and decorations, including new oak furniture and woodwork for the reading rooms, mahogany in the office and board room, and walnut for the club room downstairs. A fireplace and tile walls were installed in the new children's room.



A "stack room" is a room devoted to stacks of bookshelves.

1927 Hours

Weekdays:
9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m.

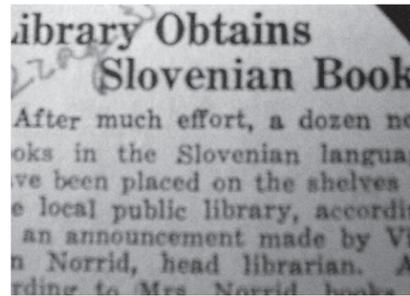
Telephone Number:
275

The total cost to build the library in 1914 was \$37,054. The Eveleth News-Clarion later reported that the Eveleth Public Library was worth about \$80,000 by the end of the 1920s, and by January 1, 1947, the purchase of furniture, books, and fixtures had increased the library's value to \$155,000.

The Collection

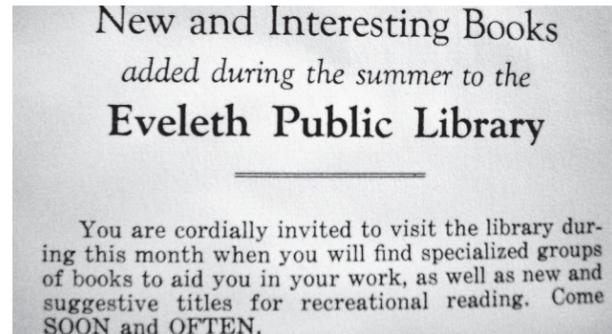
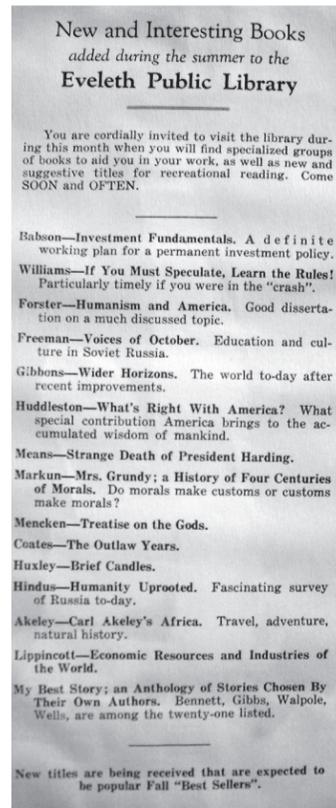
The initial inventory of books numbered 1,721 volumes. By the end of 1915 the collection had grown to 4,387 volumes serving 43,872 visits and circulating 45,071 pieces. The collection had doubled again by the end of 1919 when the total number of books reached 8,961.

Not all the books were in English. Foreign language books found on the shelves in 1914 were in Swedish, Norwegian, Finnish, and Polish. There were also magazines in English, Finnish, and Austrian. More languages were added in 1915 - Slovenian, Italian, Croatian, French, German, and Yiddish. Books in Serbian were on the shelves by 1921.



Books weren't the only thing to enjoy at the Eveleth Public Library. There was an extensive Victrola recording collection and Sunday afternoons would find the citizens stopping in to be entertained by recorded music from leading performers of the day.

Stereoscopes and their dual image pictures allowed Eveleth library patrons to see the world. By 1927 the library had a collection of 11,412 pictures for patrons to view and allowed check-out of both the stereoscopes and pictures into the 1960s.



Titles in Finnish and Slovenian were the highest circulated foreign language books in 1914 and 1918, respectively.

2013 Statistics Registered Eveleth

Borrowers: 3,335

Total Inventory:
Books: 24,874
DVDs: 1,368

Here is a sample of 1916-1917 library programs:

- A handicraft exhibit, featuring sewing, cooking, and model airplanes
- A bird house contest with twenty-seven entries. The bird houses and the model airplanes were displayed in downtown storefronts.
- An American Indian photography display by Karl Moon, which was greatly appreciated.
- A geography exhibit highlighting King Cotton. Cotton-related items were supplied by library patrons' Southern friends and family.
- A flag display for countries affected by the Great War (World War I).

Children's Room

The original children's room was located on the west half of the main reading room. The walls were adorned with posters, pictures, and lists of books the children might have found interesting. Story Hour for students in kindergarten through eighth grade was held every Saturday morning. School teachers volunteered to read stories to children one grade at a time. In 1916, the children's area received a small electric lantern that throws a picture about three by four feet, and gives successful results.



The original Children's Room on the west half of the main floor in 1918.

In 1926, the children's room moved to the club room on the ground floor, but that space was small and could not meet the needs of the library and Eveleth children. When the addition was constructed in 1928, the colorful new children's room looked out at the park and even had its own entrance on the west side of the building. The charming room held all of the children's books, and the young people sat in size-appropriate chairs. The windows were adorned with pretty curtains, the walls were patterned, and the decorated acoustical ceiling tile further added to the bright and cheerful children's room. The main feature was a large Batchelder tile fireplace on the east wall of the room. Located off of the children's room was a work room that connected to the previous children's room, formerly a club room, which became the new Story Hour room.

Besides the popular Story Hour, the library offered crafts and other activities for youngsters. Children's Librarian Winifred Bright organized a Children's Book Week November 15-21, 1931. The next year, a Summer Hobby Club brought kids together to make various items, from handicraft books to books about different countries. Students in grades four through eight participated in a Summer Reading Club in 1938, and the student who read the most books won a prize. Collections of children's poems dated 1934 and 1938 still bear the names of the dozens of children who came to the library to learn and grow.

For many children, the library functioned as a second home. For those whose home lives were less than ideal or whose families were poor, the library gave them a distraction and took them on adventures through books. One patron remembers the only Christmas tree she had as a child was the one in the Eveleth library.

"The library was our refuge, especially in the cold winter months. It was divided into two parts: the upstairs for adults and students in junior high and above, and the downstairs for giggly grade schoolers. I remember how impatient we were until we could move into that upper sanctuary and peruse those books...Several of us youngsters would have contests to see how many books we could read in a week. We stayed at the library until it closed at nine, reading magazines—especially Boys Life."

— Home is the Range
Raymond Newman



Through the years, children's reading programs drew the youngsters of the community to the Eveleth Public Library.



Volunteer Storytellers

Teens and parents aided library staff as volunteers to help with children's reading programs.



Book Week displays were a highlight of the year and featured clowns, carousels, and erector sets, along with the books showcased for each year.



An unidentified child (possibly a Platner), Georgeanne Ahlfors, and Louise Ahlfors examine a festive display of Christmas books in December 1953.

(This note was written on the back of the original photograph.)



Jean Prebeg, Ellen Armstrong, and Mary Mancina smile at dolls of various cultures during Book Week 1952.