



BERKELEY  
PUBLIC  
LIBRARY  
ANNUAL  
REPORT  
2013



# Contents



# 2013

marks the 120th anniversary of the birth of the Berkeley Public Library, which began from a strong public mandate for its creation in 1893. In the intervening years we have not strayed far from the core of our purpose to support the community, and the people that make up Berkeley's neighborhoods, in their collective and individual pursuits.

2013 also brings to completion the public's mandate to renovate and improve the four branch libraries, supported by Measure FF. The newly built South Branch Library opened on May 11, 2013. If you haven't had a chance to stop by, please do as this is a lovely light-filled space, with inviting areas for all age groups and a large community meeting room for hosting local neighborhood events and Library sponsored programs. The much-loved Tool Lending Library, attached to South Branch, opened as well, with a much larger and more user-friendly layout. The final project, the new West Branch Library, opened this calendar year on December 14, 2013 as one of Berkeley's newest landmarks in the University Avenue gateway corridor near San Pablo.

**1892** Central Library, called the Holmes Public Library, opens at 2156 Shattuck Ave. in a storefront  
Roll over the timeline to view more of **Berkeley Public Library's 120 years of history**



From the  
Director



It represents all that a modern state-of-the-art public building in Berkeley should be, from its sustainable and green features to its spaces designed for library services, contemplation and community engagement. The Branch is home to the Library's adult literacy program BerkeleyREADS, one of our most collaborative library services. This program brings together individuals, families, and other service providers to offer an array of life-changing tutoring and instructional services to adults seeking to improve their literacy skills.

The staff and I are proud of all we've accomplished this year with your help and support and that of the Friends of the Library and the Library Foundation. The latter, by the way, raised \$3 million in support of the branch libraries in their successful *Neighborhood Libraries Campaign*.

Please join us in 2014 as we continue to celebrate our new and renovated community branch libraries, undertake a planning process to set the direction for the Library in the next three to five years, and make some needed repairs and improvements to the beloved Central Library.

— Donna Corbeil, Director of Library Services

1960

1970

1980

1990

2000

2010



Rickey Vincent, host of KPFA's The History of Funk show, brings The Funk along with his knowledge and charm to the Library for an evening of deep grooves and funky good times.

## Statistical Highlights

As one of the most heavily used libraries in California among public libraries serving similar-sized communities, Berkeley Public Library ranks as "extremely popular." This translates to an incredible number of visits to Central Library, the branches, and our website, and an enormous number of items reaching the hands and minds of our patrons. While we are pleased with our successes, we strive to serve everyone in Berkeley that may not be taking full advantage of their public library

- **2013 saw a 10% increase in the number of items checked out** — even with two branches closed for construction. That's **145,000 more books, movies, music, audio recordings, tools, downloadable electronic books and audiobooks, and magazines.**
- Central Library and our two open branches, Claremont and North, **welcomed 1,044,000 visitors.**
- **Librarians answered even more of your questions this year** — about **193,000 of them**, coming to us through our website, in-person, and by telephone.
- Although the traditional book continues to be the most popular format — 1.1 million of the 1.9 million check-outs were books — **our collection of downloadable books, magazines, and audiobooks is steadily growing. Our collection of titles is up to 4,500, with checkouts at 50,000.** Movies, music, and other media account for 36% of the items checked out.



Magic Dan wows children and adults alike at Central Library with a performance filled with positive messages that reinforce reading and self-esteem.

- Children and their caregivers are dedicated library users and ravenous readers, with **approximately 36% of our total checkouts coming from the children's collections**. Children's picture books represent the category with the highest number of checkouts among all collections — over 100,000 in FY 2013.
- At 45,000 checkouts, those that use the Library's Tool Lending Library at South Branch Library know that every tool they bring home contributes to a repair completed, tree house built, garden tended, and money saved, satisfying the DIY gene in all of us. If you haven't been to the new South Branch and Tool Lending libraries, they are open and well stocked for your project and hobby needs.
- The public library has a key role in providing community access to online and electronic resources. In the past year, staff at Central Library held basic computer classes with over 1,100 attendees. More informal learning and assistance takes place every day at all Library locations, with 74 public access computers, 28 laptops and 10 Apple iPads available in-house, and technically savvy staff ready to help.



Presenters from Bangka Journey, a group of Filipinos/Filipino-Americans, mixed heritage people and the Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific Northwest, share their story through poetry and dance.

## Services and Programs

As part of our effort to enrich the lives of our patrons, we offer a wide variety of events and programs for all ages, free at a Branch or Central Library. With over 1,900 programs in FY 2013 and 40,000 attendees, our staff was busy arranging performers, booking authors and putting the finishing touches on a children's story time or a special event.

- Our annual **Summer Reading Program**, and all of the programs for children and their families, are extremely popular, cumulatively accounting for over half of the number of total Library-wide programs and 70 percent of attendees annually.
- Adult focused programs range from the practical, including Résumé Writing and Drop-in Job Counseling, to feeding all of the senses, with rotating art exhibits and artist receptions held at Central Library. Among the year's highlights of amazing artists was a special exhibit by **Berkeley-based artist Vita Wells** — a large installation of some **two hundred floating books spanning three levels of the atrium of Central Library, titled *Flights of Mind***. The exhibit was such a hit that it was extended by several weeks.
- More than books and art, the Library contributes to the Bay Area's eclectic music scene by featuring opera, blues and jazz musicians. The Library is a place to experience the intimate setting of a lap-sit with your baby with one of our mesmerizing children's librarians, and for adults, a place to hear



Author Joseph Fischer brings a selection of colorful puppets and other objects from his extensive collection of Javanese art to Central Library.

author **Michael Lewis** in conversation with Linda Schacht Gage, describing his experience **shadowing President Obama during his first term in office.**

- Staff organized several series during the year with poignant topics touching on themes and issues of particular interest to Berkeleyans. In January, a two-part film discussion series called ***Our Stories, Our Voices*** explored the **wartime experience of Japanese-Americans in California during World War II.** Each session included a film screening followed by discussion and Q&A moderated by a range of special guests, including **local filmmaker Ken Kokka, noted cultural historian Donna Graves, Academy and Emmy award winning director John Korty,** and author of the memoir *Farewell to Manzanar*, **Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston.**
- In May, staff launched the **Berkeley Comic Arts Festival**, a 6-month series of events for teens and others interested in this dynamic medium, which included **author visits, workshops, and educational events.** Celebrating comic books and graphic novels, and their creators, these events explored the breadth of stories told through the comics form, and the full impact and popularity of comics and graphic novels as diverse, high-quality reading material for readers of all ages. This series was jointly funded by a California State Library administered LSTA (Library Services and Technology Act) and the Will and Ann Eisner Family Foundation.





A young LEGO enthusiast wades through the pile of blocks at *LEGO in the Library* at Central.

In addition to presentations, we are particularly proud of those programs that give our patrons a hands-on opportunity to learn and grow with us.

- The Library participated in the annual **celebration of Peace Day** in June with **origami crane folding**. This event has become a tradition for many Berkeley families.
- The Library held a six-session **Memoir-Writing Workshop led by Frances Lefkowitz** for people of all ages and backgrounds. Students wrote essays and stories about the events, people, and places in their lives.
- Last but not least, the North Branch Library opened its doors to a special group of furry visitors. The Branch's popular **Paws to Read program paired children with a gentle dog provided by TherapyPets**, a nonprofit all volunteer organization, for **20 minutes of reading aloud to their newfound friends**. Paws to Read is a great way for children to practice oral fluency, spend time with a friendly dog, and have fun while helping to boost their self-esteem and confidence, as well as foster a fondness for reading.

Early literacy continues to be a focus for staff. Research continues to show that early exposure to language and print support literacy and school performance throughout a child's life. Staff developed a full suite of programs, in addition to our weekly story times, to foster early literacy.

- Staff worked with a local community resource specialist to offer our second five-week series of "**play-shops**," combining **developmentally appropriate play with information about child devel-**



Daniel Barash, of The Shadow Puppet Workshop, introduces audience members to the art of shadow puppetry, performing best-loved stories from around the world with puppets from Southeast Asia.

opment. We also completed a successful session of *Read-to-Me*, our at-home reading challenge for parents of preschoolers and younger children.

- Staff participated in **Preschool Family Literacy Nights** at all Berkeley Unified School District preschools, reaching 368 kids and caretakers with **stories, early literacy tips, and a book of rhymes (in English and Spanish) to take home.**
- Other programs designed for families of young children included ***Amazing Elephants*, which introduces STEM** (science, technology, engineering and math) concepts to kindergarteners.

Of course, programming doesn't stop once children start school. Library staff found fresh ways to connect children to the written word, through activities including the well-facilitated **4th and 5th Grade Book Group** and our monthly **Games Galore**. With the generous support of the Friends, we presented programs ranging from shadow puppets to beekeepers, from magicians to the enigmatic **Dave the Horn Guy**.

- One of the highlights this year included a visit from **well-known children's musician José-Luis Orozco**, who packed the South Branch Library community room with families enjoying his energetic sounds.
- Also this summer, Claremont Branch Library hosted **Cooking with Chef Tracie**, giving kids the chance to **sample tastes of the world they cooked themselves.**
- And in June, we hosted our inaugural **Author's Tea**, featuring local favorite **Annie Barrows**, creator of the **Ivy & Bean** series of books.

# Branch Improvement Program November 2008 — December 2013

2013 brought Berkeley the last of our four beautiful much-improved libraries, a result of Measure FF, the library bond measure passed by Berkeley voters in 2008. **That's four branches in five years!** North Branch Library and Claremont Branch Library reopened in spring 2012 after undergoing substantial renovation, the new South Branch Library and Tool Lending Library reopened in spring 2013, and the new West Branch Library opened in December 2013.

The upgrades to the branch libraries were designed to improve visitor comfort and accessibility, make the buildings seismically safe, create adequate space for community use, and conserve natural resources.



Photo: David Wakely

The new South Branch Library and the Tool Lending Library building added 3,300 sq. ft. of space to the old footprint.

## South Branch Library

On May 11, 2013, this new facility, built with an eye to the future, opened its doors to the eagerly awaiting community. Designed to be inviting, efficient and flexible, Library patrons now enjoy plenty of natural light, a state-of-the-art community room for use by local groups and organizations, easier access to a rejuvenated tool collection, adequate space for users of all ages, including a new teen room, an early literacy playspace for very young children, beautiful mosaics by Gina Dominguez, a sculpture by renowned Berkeley artist Stephen De Staebler, and expanded seating and Internet access throughout the library.

### Project facts

**Architects:** Field Paoli

**Civic Art Component:** *Mosaics*, by Gina Dominguez

**Project cost:** \$6.5 million (construction \$5 million)

**Scope:** Full construction of a new 8,700 square foot facility comprised of the Library, the community room and the Tool Lending Library

The new South Branch offers:

- Spacious reading rooms for children and adults, with plentiful natural light
- Separate teen room with dedicated computers



Photo: David Wakely

The new Tool Lending Library's larger space accommodates a great selection of tools to borrow, as well as their growing collection of DIY books.

- Expanded, comfortable seating
- Study room for small group use
- Community room with state-of-the-art technology
- More public access computers, including laptops for in-library use
- Automated materials handling for faster reshelving of materials
- An expanded Tool Lending Library with improved layout and storage areas
- Energy efficient lighting and water systems
- Sustainable building design including rooftop solar panels, radiant heating in the floors, and wood paneling recycled from the 1961 building
- Improved layout with all areas ADA accessible



West patrons now enjoy a new, state-of-the-art Library, with large windows that provide lots of natural light.

## West Branch Library

The new West Branch Library re-opened on December 14, 2013. This facility has been designed from the ground up with energy efficiency in mind. From over-window heating elements and radiant floor heating to engineered airflow, the building is comfortable and welcoming while using a minimal amount of energy. Rooftop solar panels generate energy to replenish the energy used, resulting in a Zero Net Energy facility. Patrons immediately notice the plentiful natural light from the large windows and skylights. The expansive main reading room provides comfortable seating, as well as ample space for people using the Library's computers or their own.

### Project facts

**Architects:** Harley Ellis Devereaux

**Civic Art Component:** *Spectrascapes #1-4* by WOWHAUS, Scott Constable and Ene Osteraas-Constable

**Project cost:** \$7.5 million (construction \$6 million)

**Scope:** Construction of a new 9,300 square foot library

The new West Branch offers:

- Expanded comfortable seating and tables
- Cozy storybook nook for young patrons and their families



Children and teens have their own spacious areas with dedicated computers and plenty of table space.

- Environmental design that minimizes use of energy combined with rooftop solar energy collection, targeting Zero Net Energy
- Spacious reading rooms for children and adults; high ceilings with plentiful natural light
- Separate teen room with dedicated computers
- Study room for small group use
- Community room with state-of-the-art presentation technology
- More public access computers, including laptops for in-library use
- Automated materials handling for faster reshelving of materials
- Improved program space for the BerkeleyREADS adult and family literacy program, including dedicated space for client services, and a training/computer lab
- Improved layout with all areas ADA accessible



One of Claremont's younger patrons enjoys a book.

## Claremont Branch Library

On a sunny May 5th in 2012, many hundreds of library fans, serenaded by the Berkeley High Jazz combo, eagerly celebrated the grand reopening of the Claremont Branch on Benvenue Avenue. This expansion and updating of the historic 1923 library resulted in a fully accessible facility with more space, computers, a children's programming area, a dedicated space for teens, automated materials handling systems, and improved working areas for employees.

Renovated and improved, Claremont Branch Library is poised to serve future generations, with updated and state-of-the-art spaces that are inviting, efficient, and flexible.

### Project Facts:

**Architects:** Gould Evans/Baum Thornley

**Civic Art Component:** *Bookshelves*, by Eric Powell

**Project Cost:** \$4.2 million (construction \$3.3 million)

**Scope:** Restoring the interior historical elements of the 1920s building and expanding the 1970s wing.

The new Claremont offers:

- Historically sensitive restoration of the 1920s wing
- Natural light throughout
- Improved design and layout providing full ADA accessibility





Cellist and award-winning composer Ben Hamilton performs at Claremont Branch.

- Seismic strengthening and improved fire protections
- Flex space for programming in children's area
- More public access Internet computers
- Separate teen room with dedicated computers
- Energy efficient lighting indoors and out
- Automated materials handling for faster reshelving of materials
- Attractive Bay Friendly landscaping
- Expanded bicycle parking



Cowgirl Karen Quest brings her whip-cracking rope tricks to North Branch.

## North Branch Library

On April 7th, 2012, over 1000 people welcomed the reopening of the beloved and beautiful historically landmarked North Branch Library. With a 3,850 sq. ft. addition, a new community room, a dedicated and roomy teen space, and filled with scores of new books, recordings, movies, and computers, the reborn facility was celebrated — to the musical accompaniment of virtuosi from The Crowden School — by library-lovers from far and wide.

### Project Facts

**Architects:** Architectural Resources Group with Tom Eliot Fisch

**Civic Art Component:** *A Patchwork of Trees*, by Marion Coleman

**Project Cost:** \$5.9 million (construction \$4.7 million)

**Scope:** Improvement and expansion, 3,850 sq. ft. 2-story addition to an existing 5,500 sq. ft. building

The new North offers:

- Historically sensitive restoration of the original building
- Improved design and layout providing full ADA accessibility
- Seismic strengthening and improved fire protections
- Spacious multipurpose community room with state-of-the-art technology



At the popular *Paws to Read* program at North Branch, children and therapy dogs enjoyed some quality reading time together.

- 45% more public access Internet computers
- Larger teen room
- Energy efficient lighting indoors and out
- Automated materials handling for faster reshelving of materials
- Attractive Bay Friendly landscaping
- Expanded bicycle parking

# Library Support



Photo: Richard Friedman



The Friends maintain two bookstores — this one, on the first floor of Central Library and a larger store on Channing Way.

## Friends of the Berkeley Public Library

The Friends of the Library is a non-profit membership organization whose purpose is to support the educational, cultural, and outreach programs of the Library. New and gently-used donated books are sold at the Friends' two bookstores: one in Central Library and one at 2433 Channing Way near the Cal campus. Money raised through the bookstores and at annual book sales funds children's reading events, author talks, musical events, Internet computer classes, and branch library events. The Friends has been an early and significant donor to Library capital campaigns. Anyone with an interest in supporting the Library is welcome to join the Friends.

Sandy Bails, President  
Friends of the Berkeley Public Library

[www.berkeleylibraryfriends.org](http://www.berkeleylibraryfriends.org)



Photo: Richard Friedman

## Berkeley Public Library Foundation

The Berkeley Public Library Foundation promotes the excellence of Berkeley's public libraries and augments strong public funding through fundraising, advocacy and raising awareness of the Library as a vital center of community activity. Donors to its recent Neighborhood Libraries Campaign generously gave more than \$3 million to outfit the renewed Claremont, North, South and West branches. For twelve years running the Foundation has celebrated the Bay Area's vibrant literary community and raised funds through their annual Authors Dinner and unique cultural events throughout the year.

Patricia D. Hawthorne, President  
Kirsten Cowan, Executive Director

[www.bplf.org](http://www.bplf.org)

Each year, the Foundation hosts a much-anticipated gala event, the Author's Dinner.



## Budget Summary

The services and programs offered by the Library are supported by funding from the local Library Services Tax, private and public grants, awards from the California State Library, and the generous monetary gifts and donations received from individuals, businesses, organizations, and trusts.

### Fiscal Year 2013 (July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013)

#### Year-end report (Library Tax Fund)

Final total income	\$15,488,692
Final total expenses	\$14,688,415
Ending fund balance	\$1,868,245 (net of reserves)

**Milestones:** During FY 2013 the Library undertook several initiatives funded out of operational funds. Notable programs included a total redesign of the Library's website for an expected early 2014 unveiling, introduction of an automated materials handling system in Central Library, participation in the City-led program to convert to a VoIP telephone system, and installation of a new boiler at Central Library to lower our environmental emissions.

**Projections:** FY 2014 opens the biennial budget cycle for FY 2014 and 2015. Under the guidance of the Board of Library Trustees the new biennial budget will be characterized by an increase in the



Library's reserves to bring the Library up to the City's general guideline of 8% of gross revenues. Additionally, in FY 2014 and 2015 the Library expects further increases to the Library materials budget up to approximately \$1.2M in annual spending. And, as the Branch Libraries Improvement Program draws to a close the Library will shift its focus to upgrading the user experience at Central Library through possible additions of private study rooms and the creation of an enclosed teen space.

**Branches:** The Measure FF Branch Library Improvement Program, which began in 2009 following the November 2008 voter approval of \$26M in general obligation bonds to improve the four neighborhood Branch libraries, concluded construction prior to the end of the calendar year with all facilities opened for public services. At the close of FY 2013, to-date bond program expenditures topped \$21,248,242.





Back row, from left: Jim Novosel, Darryl Moore, Winston Burton  
Front: Abigail Franklin, Julie Holcomb

## Board of Library Trustees

The five-member board, appointed by the City Council, is charged with management and governance of the Library. The Board meets monthly to formulate major policies and long-range plans for the Library. Members serve four-year terms.

Winston Burton  
Abigail Franklin, Chair Person  
Darryl Moore, City Councilmember  
Julie Holcomb, Vice-chair  
Jim Novosel

### FY 2013 Accomplishments

- Approved expansion of open hours at the branch libraries to take effect in FY 2014.
- Made recommendations to Council on Measure FF, bond program-related timelines, budget, and contracts.
- Accepted gifts and grants from the Library Foundation, Friends of the Library, the California State Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) the Alameda County Bay Friendly landscaping program, and other organizations.
- Recommended the Library Tax rate for FY 2014 and the FY 2014/2015 biennial Library budget to the City Council for approval.

[www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org/about/bolt](http://www.berkeleypubliclibrary.org/about/bolt)