



Memorial Library 40-year Anniversary, 1930-1970

Memorial Library, 40 years old this month, has a history which is unique in LAPL's branch system. The land on which it stands was purchased in 1923 by the student body and alumni association of Los Angeles High School in commemoration of 20 alumni of that school who were killed in World War I. In 1929, six years after L.A. High deeded the land to the City Parks Department, the Parks Board gave LAPL the right to build a branch library on the site. The English Tudor architectural style was chosen to harmonize with the buildings of L.A. High just across the street. The school then donated a beautifully intricate, \$2500 stained glass window to Memorial Library, with the names of the 20 alumni and an inscription stating a hope for "peace among nations."

To honor the branch, Fourth District Councilman John Ferraro has introduced a resolution in City Council declaring April 29 as *Memorial Branch Library Day*. The Library itself will have an Open House Anniversary celebration on April 18.

Branch Librarian Mrs. Selma Benjamin reports that the book collection and the reading public has grown steadily through the years. Ties with L.A. High School are still close. The bulk of Memorial's patrons are students - high school, junior high, elementary and adult - which means a constant stream of questions on an infinite variety of subjects for Mrs. Benjamin and YA Librarian Mrs. Elizabeth Dillard. Regular programs are offered for youngsters by Mrs. Yeiko Nakashima, Children's Librarian. Business firms on Wilshire Boulevard are discovering the advantages of having a branch library so conveniently close by.

The goal of the staff is to serve the entire community by keeping in touch with all facets of the current turbulent times, according to Mrs. Benjamin. Materials desired and needed by the area's many Black, Oriental and Jewish residents are high priority on the buying list, and a new Friends of the Library group is being formed. All these factors help make Memorial Library a more viable force in the local community - more useful to more people than ever.