



The New York Public Library  
New York Public Library Archives

Guide to the

**New Dorp Branch records**

1909-1992

MssArc 5842

Compiled by Richard Hollinger; revised by Jim Moske; machine readable finding aid created by FAKER.

## Summary

**Creator:** New York Public Library. New Dorp Branch

**Title:** New Dorp Branch records

**Date:** 1909-1992

**Size:** 1 linear foot (4 boxes)

**Source:** Transferred from new Dorp Branch Library.

**Abstract:** Reports, brochures, program flyers, administrative files and a scrapbook documenting the New Dorp Branch of The New York Public Library.

**Physical Location:** RG 8

### Conditions Governing Access:

Box 3 is closed until 2024.

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**Preferred citation:** New Dorp Branch Records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library.

**Language of the Material:** English

**Processing note:** Compiled by Richard Hollinger; revised by Jim Moske; machine readable finding aid created by FAKER.

## Creator History

In 1907 the New Dorp Community Library, which circulated books from the Trinity Parish House, was established by local volunteers. By 1909, it had become a "station" served by the Extension Division of

the New York Public Library. The NYPL Travelling Library (later known as the Bookmobile) deposited books there for circulation, and exchanged these for new publications every few months. The local community took responsibility for the development of a permanent collection of books, the provision of library facilities, and the staffing of the library. The New Dorp Library Committee was formed to carry out these tasks.

In 1910, the library was moved to a real estate office on Rose Avenue, owned by James Watson Hughes, a prominent local resident. When Mr. Hughes required the use of this building in 1916, a garage owned by Emil Peterson on Sixth St. was remodeled to accommodate the library. The library remained there for the next ten years.

In 1920, at the request of the New Dorp Library Committee, the New Dorp Library was made a "sub-station" of the New York Public Library. The NYPL provided the books and staff for the library, but the community provided and maintained the library building. In 1925, the responsibility for the building was taken over by the New Dorp Board of Trade.

In 1926, the New Dorp Library became a sub-branch of the NYPL, which meant that the NYPL assumed full responsibility for the library. As a sub-branch, the library was given a larger stock of books and the library hours were extended. To accommodate the expansion in service, the library was moved to a store-front building at 180 Rose Avenue and re-opened on November 14th. During the same year, a lot at 155 Third St. was given to the NYPL by Mrs. Isabella O. Hughes as a site for a permanent New Dorp Library. She also contributed \$30,000 for the construction of a building, with the understanding that the library would be named after her late husband. The "James Watson Hughes Memorial Library" was opened on March 26, 1928.

In 1954, the New Dorp sub-branch was made a Branch Library, which resulted in a larger book stock and longer hours. In order to accommodate the expanding service of the branch, the library was moved to a new building at 309 New Dorp Lane in 1972.

The following have served as branch librarians at New Dorp: Miss Burke (1910-1920), Laura Davie (1920-1925), Emma Suzanne Fischer (1928-1936), Mrs. Dunwoody (1937), Genevieve Wells (1937-1939), Cornelia E. Stroh (1940-1942), Genevieve Wells (1942-1943), Ellen M. Fitch (1943), Miss E.P. Blakkestad (1944), Mary T. Howe (1945-1946), Muriel H. Bedell (1946-1949), Genevieve W. Bedell (1949), Florence M. Hildebrandt (1953-1955), John S. Robotham (1955-1956), Charlotte W. Fleck (1957), Honnora Santoro (1958), Genevieve W. Bedell (1958-1963), Ruth Kronmiller (1963-1968), Eleanor Ayoub (1970-1988), Monica Denison (1988-1990), Dorothy Davison (1990), Katherine Todd (1992-1993), Mark McCluski (1994).

## **Scope and Content Note**

The records of the New Dorp Branch Library date from 1909-1992 and consist of annual reports, correspondence, circulation records, news clippings, flyers, a guest book, memoranda, press releases, registration books, a scrapbook and other materials. The records document the history of the New Dorp Community Library (1907-1920) and its gradual incorporation into the New York Public Library. The bulk of the collection dates from after the 1928 construction of a new building to house the library as a sub-branch of the NYPL. The main sources for the history of the library prior to 1928 are the circulation statistics (1909-1918) and the correspondence (1919-1928). For the later period, the annual reports are the most important single source of information. They document the patterns of book circulation and provide information on the range of programs sponsored by the library, such as art exhibits, classes, lectures, films, and children's activities. Some of the activities are documented in greater detail in other

materials. The records also provide information on the interaction between the library and the wider community, especially during the city's fiscal crisis in the mid-1970s.

## **Key Terms**

### **Subjects**

Branch libraries

Libraries -- New York (State) -- New York

Public libraries -- New York (State) -- New York

### **Names**

New York Public Library. New Dorp Branch

## Container List

### New Dorp Branch Records 1909-1992

- b. 1 f. 1 Annual reports - Branch 1935-1948
- b. 1 f. 2 Annual reports - Branch 1954-1979
- b. 1 f. 3 Annual reports - Adult Services 1963-1964
- b. 1 f. 4 Annual reports - Young Adult Services 1970-1979
- b. 1 f. 5 Ad Hoc Committee to Save Our Libraries 1976-1977
- b. 1 f. 6 Articles about branch building 1928
- b. 1 f. 7 Bookmarks 1990
- b. 1 f. 8 Brochure 1975
- b. 1 f. 9 Children's Room reports 1958-1969
- b. 1 f. 10 Circulations Statistics 1909-1918
- b. 1 f. 11 Clippings 1946-1978
- b. 1 f. 12 Correspondence 1919-1928
- b. 1 f. 13 Guest book 1929-1959
- b. 1 f. 14 Hours n.d.
- b. 1 f. 15 Library card 1943
- b. 1 f. 16 National Barrier Awareness Day 1987
- b. 2 f. 1 New York Public Library lobbying 1974-1975
- b. 2 f. 2 Opening of the New Library Building 1928-1972
- b. 2 f. 3-5 Printed ephemera 1923-1978, n.d.
  - b. 3 Registration book 1922-1924  
Closed until 2024.
  - b. 4 Scrapbooks 1928-1948