

Landmarks Preservation Commission  
May 30, 2000, Designation List 314  
LP-2045

**THE QUEENS BOROUGH PUBLIC LIBRARY, POPPENHUSEN BRANCH, 121-123 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue (aka 121-27 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and 13-16 College Point Boulevard), Queens. Built 1904; Heins & LaFarge, architects.**

Landmark Site: Borough of Queens Tax Map Block 4042, Lot 113

On October 19, 1999 the Landmarks Preservation Commission held a public hearing on the proposed designation as a Landmark of the Queens Borough Public Library, Poppenhusen Branch and the proposed designation of the related Landmark Site (Item No. 1). The hearing was duly advertised in accordance with the provisions of law. Two people spoke in favor of designation: including a representative of the library and the historian for the Queens Borough President; there were no speakers in opposition. In addition, the commission received a letter in support of designation from City Council Member Michael J. Abel.

#### Summary

Opened on October 5, 1904, the Poppenhusen Branch is one of five remaining Carnegie branch libraries of the Queens Borough Public Library system. It is one of the sixty-seven built in New York City when Andrew Carnegie donated \$5.2 million in 1901 to establish a citywide branch library system. The respected architectural firm of Heins & LaFarge designed the Poppenhusen Branch, their only Carnegie library. The firm is well-known for its designs of the first New York City Subway stations, the earliest part of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, and seven buildings in the Bronx Zoo. The library, with its characteristic corner site, exuberant Classical Revival style, projecting-arched center entrance marked by a broken pediment and decorative stone banding, and flight of stairs leading to an interior brightly lit by large windows, clearly illustrates the characteristics of the freestanding Carnegie library. The citizens of College Point donated the land for the library, and the Poppenhusen Institute donated the books. The library has played a prominent role in College Point's social and civic life for nearly one hundred years.



## DESCRIPTION AND ANALYSIS

### History of College Point<sup>1</sup>

College Point, a peninsula located on Flushing Bay, was inhabited by the Matinecocks before the arrival of the Dutch in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In 1645 the area, known as Tew's Neck, became part of the 900-acre estate of William Lawrence, a refugee from Puritan New England. In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries the area was named Lawrence Neck, after William Lawrence. The Lawrence family was prominent in New York, and William's brother John twice served as Mayor of New York. William was a signer of the 1657 Flushing Remonstrance, a declaration of religious freedom that was a forerunner of the Declaration of Independence.<sup>2</sup> In 1776 the Lawrence family supported the revolution, and the English destroyed their estate. They sold part of their College Point property to Eliphalet Stratton in 1789, and the name of that area was changed to Strattonport.

In 1836 the Reverend William Muhlenberg bought land from the Strattons for St. Paul's College, a seminary which opened in 1836 and closed in 1848. The land the college occupied was called College Point. The peninsula remained rural and undeveloped until the 1850s. In 1851 John A. Flammer and Peter Longley bought 141 acres south of 15<sup>th</sup> Avenue and established Flammersburg. The population of Strattonport, College Point, and Flammersburg rose from a few hundred in 1853 to 2,000 in 1860. By 1870<sup>3</sup>, the three neighborhoods were incorporated into a single village and named College Point.

Conrad Poppenhusen moved his Enterprise Rubber Works from Williamsburg to College Point in 1854. More industries, including a paint factory, potteries, silk mills, and breweries, moved into the area throughout the nineteenth century. Most of the residents and workers were German immigrants. Industrious, working-class College Point was also known as a "party town" in the late nineteenth century. In 1876, when the population was 6,000, it was estimated that College Point had one saloon for every 100 inhabitants. People, mainly German immigrants from Manhattan, traveled by steamship for the day to visit the amusement parks, beer halls, bowling alleys, and roller rinks. By the time of its consolidation with New York City in 1898, College Point had a resident population of 9,000. It was estimated that the population of the town would double and even triple on the weekends. Over 16,000 people visited Witzel's resort in September 1903. During World War I and Prohibition resorts in College Point dramatically declined. Housing developments and aircraft parts

factories replaced the resorts by the 1920s but the neighborhood still retained some of its resort character through the 1930s. College Point today is a residential neighborhood with some light industry, still defined and set apart by its geography.

### The Poppenhusen Institute<sup>4</sup>

Conrad Poppenhusen was a German immigrant who prospered by manufacturing hard rubber combs and other household products. He built a factory and workers' houses for his employees in College Point. As his company prospered, he became a community leader and was responsible for progressive improvements to the village. The swamps were drained; a cobblestone road built to Flushing; streets were paved; street trees were planted; and gas and water lines were installed. In 1876 he took all of his employees to visit the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. He built the Flushing and North Side Railroad and was an early owner of the Long Island Railroad. The railroad, managed by his two sons, went into receivership in 1877. In his last decade, Poppenhusen shuttled between New York and his retirement home in Germany. He succeeded in recovering part of his fortune and died at his home in College Point in 1883.

Conrad Poppenhusen founded the Poppenhusen Institute in 1868 as a kindergarten for children of working class mothers and a community center for the workers in his factories. The Italianate style Poppenhusen Institute building (1868-70, Mundell & Teckritz, architects, a designated New York City Landmark), is located a few blocks from the library. The two buildings form part of the civic core of College Point.

### Andrew Carnegie and the Queens Borough Public Library<sup>5</sup>

Andrew Carnegie rose from poverty to become one of the wealthiest men in the United States after he sold his steel business to J.P. Morgan in 1901. That same year with a \$5.2 million grant to New York City to construct branch library buildings, he began the vast, worldwide operation which made him unique in the world of philanthropy. Andrew Carnegie based his donations on a philosophy of giving he developed in the 1870s and 1880s. He believed that the wealthy should live simply and, while still living, give away their funds for the good of humanity. He considered seven areas worthy of his philanthropy: universities, libraries, medical centers, parks, meeting and concert halls, public baths, and churches. Like other wealthy New

Yorkers involved in the social reform movement, he understood the problems facing New York City at the beginning of the twentieth century: the overcrowding from massive immigration, poverty, lack of education and lack of such facilities as baths, playgrounds and libraries. Andrew Carnegie gave away about 90% of his wealth by the time he died in 1911. More than 1,680 Carnegie libraries were built in the United States and over 2,500 worldwide. Today the Carnegie Corporation and twenty other foundations and funds carry on his aspirations.

The inventor of cost accounting, Carnegie gave away his money with great efficiency. His grant provided for the construction of the buildings but New York City had to contribute the land as well as the books, maintenance and operation of the libraries in perpetuity. The acquisition of sites for the Carnegie branches cost the New York Public Library, for example, over \$1.6 million, just under half the cost of the buildings.

The Queens Borough Public Library resulted from the merger of the Long Island City Public Library, formed in 1896 from the collection of William Nelson, and the Steinway Free Library, the Steinway and Sons Company's employee library. Just after the consolidation of New York City, in 1899 the Queens Borough Library was incorporated with three branches: Long Island City (Nelson), Astoria, and Steinway. The Poppenhusen Institute library was transferred to the Queens Borough Library on June 1, 1903. By 1908 several independent libraries, including Flushing and Richmond Hill, Hollis, Ozone Park, and Whitestone merged with this new municipally-supported institution. In return for merging into the larger library system, Astoria, College Point, Richmond Hill, and Flushing received the first Carnegie branch library buildings.

The original Long Island City building functioned as the central library and held administrative offices until 1906. In 1907 the Queens Borough Library became the Queens Borough Public Library. Although an independent corporation, its trustees were appointed by the mayor and the staff was in the civil service. Administrative offices moved between branches until 1930 when a central building opened in Jamaica. Since 1968 this building has been occupied by the Queens Family Court, with the Queens Borough Public Library Central Branch now located on Merrick Boulevard in Jamaica.<sup>6</sup>

Andrew Carnegie and John Shaw Billings, Director of the New York Public Library, strongly supported the amalgamation of all three of the libraries, including the Brooklyn Public Library and the Queens Borough Public Library although they ultimately chose to remain

independent.<sup>7</sup> In 1901, when the library institutions were large and cohesive enough to suit him, Andrew Carnegie donated \$5.2 million to New York City to build a system of branch libraries in all five boroughs. The grant was divided among the three library systems based on population: \$3.36 million to The New York Public Library, \$1.6 million to Brooklyn, and \$240,000 to Queens, the least populous borough. The grant allowed for the construction of sixty-seven libraries in all five boroughs, two more than originally envisioned.<sup>8</sup> In a 1901 letter to John Shaw Billings, Carnegie said that:

Sixty-five libraries at one stroke probably breaks the record, but this is the day of big operations and New York is soon to be the biggest of Cities.<sup>9</sup>

The Queens allocation was originally intended to buy three libraries at \$80,000 each. The library trustees believed that more branches were needed for this large and rapidly growing borough. They requested an additional \$80,000 to \$160,000 from the Mayor and the Controller and were refused. The Trustees then resolved to build more branches that were smaller and less expensive and brought a plan to Andrew Carnegie to construct eight libraries with the \$240,000, to which Carnegie readily agreed. Ultimately, seven libraries were built with the Carnegie grant: Astoria; Elmhurst; Far Rockaway (demolished); Flushing (demolished); Poppenhusen; Richmond Hill, and Woodhaven.

The Queens Carnegie Committee consisted of three members of the Queens Borough Library Board of Trustees, Walter G. Frey, also president of the library, Walter L. Bogert, and Philip Frank. Andrew Carnegie approved the individuals on the Carnegie Committees for each of the library systems.

In 1902 the Queens Carnegie Committee appointed the two architectural firms: Lord & Hewlett, a firm that also designed Brooklyn Carnegie branches, and Heins & LaFarge. They were selected from the fourteen firms that applied for the project. Lord & Hewlett designed three libraries but Heins & LaFarge designed only one. The third firm, Tuthill & Higgins, was appointed slightly later and designed two libraries. The seventh library was built twenty years later and was designed by library architect Robert F. Schirmer.<sup>10</sup>

It appears that the Queens committee followed the lead of The New York Public Library in its design philosophy. In 1901 The New York Public Library Board Executive Committee appointed a temporary architects' advisory committee consisting of Charles F. McKim of the firm McKim, Mead & White, John M.

Carrere of Carrere & Hastings, and Walter Cook of Babb Cook & Willard, to advise them on how to proceed with construction. The committee advised that the branches be uniform and recognizable in materials, style, plan, and scale and that different site requirements would provide variety. They recommended forming a committee of two to five architectural firms who would design the buildings in cooperation with each other. Andrew Carnegie objected to the lack of competition in this system but was ultimately convinced that it would be more efficient and would produce a more unified collection. The architects consulted with the librarians on planning and design, which was an innovation for the period.

### Heins & LaFarge<sup>11</sup>

The Manhattan-based firm of Heins and LaFarge was well known in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century for the design of the Cathedral of St. John the Divine, buildings at the Bronx Zoo, and Interborough Rapid Transit System stations. Many of the IRT stations designed by the firm are designated New York City Landmarks. George Louis Heins (1860-1907) and Christopher Grant LaFarge (1862-1938) established their firm in 1888. One of their first projects was in 1888 when they won a nation-wide competition with over sixty contestants for the new Cathedral of St. John the Divine. The firm completed the choir, part of the crossing, and two chapels. In 1911 the church hired the firm of Cram, Goodhue & Ferguson to complete the building in the Gothic style. Heins & LaFarge specialized in ecclesiastical architecture, designing St. Matthew's Church (1894) in Washington, D.C., the Roman Catholic Chapel (1902) at West Point, the Fourth Presbyterian Church (1893-4, West End Avenue at 91<sup>st</sup> Street, located in the Riverside Drive-West End Historic District), and the Chancel extension (1903) and Clergy House (1902-3) of Grace Church at Broadway and 10<sup>th</sup> Street (a designated New York City Landmark).

The firm also designed residences, including the townhouse of Clarence Winthrop Brown (1900, 5 East 63<sup>rd</sup> Street), and the Beaux-Arts style Bliss Mansion (1905-7, 7-9 East 68<sup>th</sup> Street), both located within the Upper East Side Historic District. The firm designed public buildings like the administration building (1899) for the New York Zoological Park. LaFarge designed six animal houses in 1910 after Heins' death. The firm was especially known for its design of the city's first subway stations in 1901-4. The Carnegie Committee mentioned the firm's work at St. John the Divine and on the subway system when they announced its selections.<sup>12</sup>

George L. Heins was born in Philadelphia and educated there and at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

He practiced briefly in St. Paul before moving to New York City and opening up an office in 1886 in the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Studio Building, a famous center for artists. Heins was a Fellow of the American Institute of Architects and was appointed New York State Architect in 1899 by Governor Theodore Roosevelt. He remained in this position, as well as partner in the firm, until his death in 1907 at the age of 47.

Christopher G. LaFarge was born in Newport. He was the son of John LaFarge, the famous painter and stained glass artist. Like Heins, Christopher LaFarge attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). LaFarge studied with Henry Hobson Richardson in Brookline, Massachusetts and then moved to New York City to open a practice. Both Christopher LaFarge and his father had space in the 10<sup>th</sup> Street Studio Building at the same time as Heins, in 1886-8. LaFarge was active in the architectural profession, as board member and Fellow of the American Institute of Architects, and as secretary and trustee of the American Academy in Rome. He served on various architectural advisory committees at MIT, Columbia, and Princeton universities. LaFarge continued practicing architecture after the death of his partner, designing housing in Washington, D.C. during World War I, the Naval Hospital in Brooklyn, and St. Patrick's Church (1915) in Philadelphia with Benjamin Morris, his partner from 1910 to 1915. LaFarge practiced architecture with the firms LaFarge, Warren & Clark, LaFarge, Clark & Creighton, and LaFarge & Son, until his death in Rhode Island in 1938.

The builder was Thomas Williams, who also built the Flushing Branch Library (demolished).

### Design and Construction

The sites for the Carnegie libraries were selected by Queens Borough Public Library with approval from the city. Every community wanted a Carnegie library and site selection was the only part of the smooth-running building process where there was any contention. College Point received one of the first Carnegie libraries because of early and vociferous community support, which included donation of the site, and because of the donation of the Poppenhusen Institute library. It was the library's early intent to build Carnegie branches where libraries already existed, to save on rent and to service the existing population centers. The donation of the Poppenhusen Institute library made College Point a community with

an existing branch and the donation of the site apparently proved irresistible.<sup>13</sup>

The Carnegie branches were intended to stand out in their communities, to be centrally located and, if possible, to be near schools and other civic structures. The library trustees believed that if the libraries were in conspicuous positions, like retail stores, they would be used by the public. John S. Billings stated this position in 1901:

Every one of these buildings ought to be of one distinctive and uniform type, so that the most ignorant child going through the streets of the City will at once know a Carnegie Library when he or she sees it.<sup>14</sup>

The New York City Carnegie branch libraries share many design characteristics and are clearly recognizable as Carnegie libraries. They are separate and distinct structures, an innovation in 1901 when most of the branch libraries were located in other buildings. They are classical in style, a simplified version of the Beaux-Arts model. The 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago popularized the classical style and the use of white stone for facades. The City Beautiful movement of the period advocated the classical style for civic structures. The recently built, Beaux-Arts-style main branch of the New York Public Library also influenced the design committees. The branch libraries are clad either in limestone or in brick with limestone trim. There are two distinct types, the urban and the suburban. The urban branch, vertically oriented and sited on mid-block, was located in densely-populated Manhattan and sections of the Bronx.

The suburban branch type was suited to the less densely-built-up areas of the Bronx, Brooklyn, Staten Island, and Queens. It is freestanding, one-to-two-stories high, located on a corner, and set back from the street on a lawn. The Poppenhusen Branch embodies the major characteristics of the suburban branch. It is constructed of brick and stone with a prominent center entrance reached by a flight of steps. It is classical in style, with such classical ornaments as a broken pediment and modillioned cornice. There are tall windows trimmed in stone and a hipped roof. While it is clearly a Carnegie library, it is unlike any other branch in the city due to its unusual ornament surrounding the entrance, heavy cornice, broad flat stone window enframements, and hipped roof.

The plans of the Carnegie libraries were drawn up in collaboration with librarians. The plans featured accessible stacks, a central librarian's desk, and light, spacious, reading rooms, all innovations at the time.<sup>15</sup>

The Poppenhusen plan shares these characteristics. Typically, there was a central charge desk, adults' and children's reading rooms on each side, and a librarian's room at the rear. There was storage and working space in the basement. The books were located along the perimeter of the reading rooms under the windows and in freestanding shelving. The windows are set high in the facade rising to the cornice to accommodate the perimeter shelving.

The College Point community donated the site for the Poppenhusen Branch. It was located prominently on a corner in a central location, near a school and a park. As soon as the Carnegie fund was announced, the citizens of College Point began raising money for a site. Over 400 residents donated money. Schoolchildren gave up their candy money for the library and every employee of the India Rubber Company gave a dollar to the fund. The 100' x 100' plot of land was part of the Funke estate which sold the property at a reduced amount to the library.<sup>16</sup>

The Poppenhusen Institute transferred its 3,250-book collection to the Queens Borough Library in 1903 with the stipulation that the name remain the Poppenhusen Library. Katherine C. Finan, the librarian at the time, praised the transfer:

New Life is so strongly infused in the atmosphere of the Poppenhusen Library that progress all along the line of Library work is hailed. The fact that the children who frequent the Branch have never been members of the Library and that almost all reading is new to them, gives the Librarian at the Poppenhusen large opportunities. Open shelf system which is in use in all branches of the Queens Borough Public Library has been introduced at Poppenhusen and has greatly increased the usefulness and popularity of the Library.<sup>17</sup>

The library opened on October 5, 1904 with a ceremony that included presentations by Philip Frank, the chair of the Queens Carnegie Committee and Queens Borough President Joseph Cassidy. John Delany, the New York Corporation Counsel, and Arthur Bostwick of The New York Public Library also participated.<sup>18</sup> The building and equipment cost \$30,114. The first three Queens Carnegie branches were all opened in 1904; the Astoria Branch opened first, Poppenhusen second, and the Far Rockaway Branch was third.<sup>19</sup>

#### Subsequent History

The Poppenhusen Branch has continuously operated as a library since its opening in 1904. It has

continued to serve the German and Irish immigrant community and their descendants and today has an extensive Chinese language book collection. All of the Carnegie branches in Queens were renovated with Works Progress Administration (WPA) funds in the 1930s.<sup>20</sup> In 1937 a one-story brick rear addition matching the existing building was built with WPA funds. A new children's reading room was the main feature of the addition. The branch's front lawn was chosen as the site for the neighborhood's World War II monument. The library was renovated in 1964 and the front door and windows were replaced in 1989. Today the Queens Borough Public Library has the largest circulation of any urban library system in the United States, and the Poppenhusen is a frequently used branch within the system.

### Description

The Poppenhusen branch library is located on the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and College Point Boulevard with the front façade facing 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The building is set back on a lawn that is landscaped with shrubs and trees. A World War II monument in the form of a granite slab is on the lawn facing the corner of 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and College Point Boulevard. The monument is set at an angle to the building.

The property is enclosed by a historic, decorative wrought iron railing on a low, coursed fieldstone wall along 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and College Point Boulevard. The wall ends in a pier on the 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue western border. This fence has large double gates at the front entrance and two similar gates at the College Point Boulevard side. The stone wall appears without the fence on early, c. 1904 photographs, but the fence was probably installed by the 1930s if not much earlier.<sup>21</sup> The wrought iron perimeter fence is a common feature of the Carnegie branches. A non-historic chain link fence encloses the rear alley and a yellow brick wall, possibly dating from the 1937 WPA renovation, encloses the side alley and wraps around to part of the rear alley. Two sets of granite steps and a long concrete landing lead to the front entrance. The flight of stairs closest to the entrance has non-historic metal railings on the sides and in the center.

The library is a freestanding, five-bay masonry structure. The rectangular building is one story over a basement with a double hipped roof clad in modern copper standing seam sheet metal. The original roof, judging from historic photos, was shingle with standing seam metal at the outer edges. All four façades are clad in yellow Roman brick with over-scaled limestone trim.

The projecting center entrance has a keystone-arched doorway marked by bold stone banding. There is a triangular broken pediment in stone with a plaque with the words "PUBLIC LIBRARY" in the center. The pediment cornice has stone shells at the top, on the center and sides, and is embellished with characteristic classical designs, including egg-and-dart molding. Two stone cartouches under the pediment have open books in relief. This open book motif can also be seen on other New York City Carnegie branch libraries, including the 96<sup>th</sup> Street and Tompkins Square branches. The limestone cornice has stone modillions and a blank limestone frieze. The modillions are replaced by the capitals atop the brick piers on the corners and between the windows. Two replacement metal lanterns similar to the original fixtures flank the door. The aluminum double doors and fanlight are not historic.

Limestone banding separates the basement level from the main floor. The rectangular basement windows on all façades contain non-historic aluminum one-over-one sash and non-historic metal grates, in the original building and the addition. The basement terminates in a low water-table composed of sandstone in the original structure and cast stone in the addition.

The two sets of tall, rectangular double windows on either side of the center entrance are trimmed with continuous flat limestone bands. The non-historic windows are separated by brick piers with simple molded stone capitals and small stone bases that blend into the stone banding. A flat limestone mullion divides the sash. The aluminum one-over-one sash is not historic. There are two non-historic metal downspouts between the windows and a non-historic vent and cover at the basement level.

The four-bay east and west (side) façades are composed of two original bays and a 1937 two-bay addition. The original bays have the characteristic modillioned cornice and brick corner and center piers. The cornice on the addition is a simplified version of the original cornice, with no modillions and a brick parapet above. There is a brick parapet with no cornice at the northwestern corner of the building. There is a projecting one-story, one-bay brick addition, apparently dating from 1937, in the center of both the east and west façades.

Each of the projecting additions has a rectangular doorway with a non-historic door and non-historic metal flashing at the parapet. The windows on the east and west façades are very similar in detail to those of the front façade, but they were shortened in an alteration, and the remaining space was filled with brick that closely matches the original brick. These

windows have non-historic aluminum, one-over-one sash. There is a non-historic metal downspout to the rear of the second bay, two non-historic light fixture casings and one non-historic light fixture, and one non-historic vent pipe on each side façade. There is a non-historic outdoor speaker on the rear window of the east façade.

The four-bay rear façade, which can be seen from College Point Boulevard, has a modillioned cornice in the original two center bays, a 1937 molded cornice over the east bay and a simple brick parapet over the west bay. There is a c.1937 center doorway with a non-historic door, reached by a flight of non-historic concrete steps. The rear windows share the details of the side façades, except that there is a triple window in

the eastern center bay and a door and single window in the western center bay. All of the windows contain non-historic, aluminum, one-over-one, double-hung sash. The rear façade has three non-historic light fixtures, exterior electrical and communications conduit, a non-historic air conditioner cut through the wall, and a later concrete base for a ventilation grate on the walkway.

Report prepared by  
Mary Dierickx  
Landmarks Consultant

#### NOTES

1. This section on College Point is based on the following sources: Robert A. Hecht, *A History of College Point* (College Point: Poppenhusen Institute, 1978); The Federal Writers' Project, *The WPA Guide to New York City* (New York: Pantheon Books, reprint, 1982, originally published 1939) p. 570-71; Kenneth T. Jackson, Ed., *The Encyclopedia of New York City* (New York: New-York Historical Society, 1995) p. 251, 917-8, and Edwin G. Burrows and Mike Wallace, *Gotham* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999) p. 661, 746, 875, 992-4, Dorothy Speicher Murray, *Conrad Poppenhusen*, undated pamphlet in the Queens Borough Public Library (QBPL) Branch Library Files.
2. *Encyclopedia of New York* p. 420.
3. The dates 1867 and 1870 are both given in the above histories for incorporation.
4. The section on the Poppenhusen Institute is based on the Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Poppenhusen Institute Designation Report*, LP-0662 (New York: City of New York, 1970); Christopher Gray, "Streetscapes/The Poppenhusen Institute in College Point" *New York Times*, 10/31/99, S11: 9; Hecht, and Murray.
5. This section on QBPL and Andrew Carnegie is adapted from Mary Dierickx, *The Architecture of Literacy, The Carnegie Libraries of New York City* (New York: Cooper Union and NYC Department of General Services, 1996) p. 19-43 with additional information from "Public Libraries" in *Chamber of Commerce of the Borough of Queens* (New York: Queens Chamber of Commerce, n.d., c. 1912) located at the QBPL Central Branch, Theodore Wesley Koch, *A Book of Carnegie Libraries* (New York: H.W. Wilson Company, 1917).
6. Dierickx, p. 23-4.
7. Today, New York City still has three separate library corporations, the New York Public Library (NYPL), the Brooklyn Public Library (BPL), and the Queens Borough Public Library.
8. The original 1901 agreement called for sixty-five libraries, but in 1902 the estimated cost per branch was lowered, and the total number was optimistically established as a maximum of seventy-three. Because of rising costs, the number of branches totaled just two more than the original sixty-five. See Dierickx for more details.
9. Andrew Carnegie, *Letter to John Shaw Billings*, Director of The New York Public Library, March 12, 1901, in the "Brooklyn Collection," BPL.

10. "Carnegie Branch Libraries," *New York Times*, Sept. 12, 1901, pp. 3-4 ; "Queens Carnegie Libraries," *New York Times*, June 5, 1903, p. 3; "Recent Doings of Library Trustees," *Flushing Journal*, March 8, 1900; "Architects Selected for Queens Libraries," *Flushing Journal*, Mar. 8, 1902; "Queens Library Trustees," *Brooklyn Eagle*, Feb. 2, 1900.
11. This section was adapted from the Landmarks Preservation Commission, *Upper East Side Designation Report LP-1051* (New York: City of New York, 1981), p. 1255-6; Adolf K. Placzek, ed., *MacMillan Encyclopedia of Architects*, Vol. 2 (New York: The Free Press, 1982), p. 351; *Encyclopedia of New York*; and Henry F. and Elsie R. Withey, *Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased)* (Los Angeles: Hennessy & Ingalls, 1970), p. 276.
12. "Architects Selected for Queens Libraries," *Flushing Journal*, Mar. 8, 1902 in BPL, *Scrapbooks, 1902-07*.
13. "College Point and Poppenhusen Branch," *Monthly Bulletin*, Queens Borough Public Library, Feb., 1936, No. 621, and "Queens Wants \$400,000," *New York Sun*, July 19, 1901.
14. John S. Billings, *Letter to Andrew Carnegie, 11/9/1901*, NYPL Collection, NYPL Archives.
15. There is no documentary evidence for collaboration between the architects and librarians in Queens, but there is evidence for BPL and the NYPL. The plans of the Queens libraries share the innovative characteristics of the libraries of the other two systems. The Carnegie Committees were in touch with each other and did not operate in vacuum. It is likely that Queens participated in the collaborative effort with the librarians or at least that they followed the program already established by the BPL and NYPL.
16. This information comes from an undated and unidentified newspaper clipping in BPL, *Scrapbooks, 1902-07* and from *Monthly Bulletin*.
17. "The Queens Borough Public Library: Poppenhusen Branch Library," October 7, 1954, a one-page press release in the QBPL Branch Library *Scrapbooks*, c. 1901-1960, located at the Main Branch.
18. Dierickx, op. cit. p. 197.
20. The Far Rockaway Branch burned down in 1966.
20. WPA is used generically here. The funds were Federal but some were Works Progress Administration (WPA), and some were Civil Works Administration (CWA).
21. Photos at the QBPL Long Island Collection and in *Real Estate Owned by the City of New York* (New York: NYC Department of Finance, 1908).

## FINDINGS AND DESIGNATION

On the basis of a careful consideration of the history, the architecture and other features of this building, the Landmarks Preservation Commission finds that the Queens Borough Public Library, Poppenhusen Branch, has a special character, special historical and aesthetic interest, and value as part of the development, heritage and cultural characteristics of New York City.

The Commission further finds that, among its important qualities, the Queens Borough Public Library, Poppenhusen Branch, was built in 1904; that it is the second Queens Carnegie library opened and one of five surviving library branches in Queens built with funds provided by the \$5.2 million gift from Andrew Carnegie to New York City for the purpose of establishing a citywide branch library system; that it was designed by the well-known architectural firm of Heins & LaFarge; that the classically-inspired style that was characteristic of New York City's Carnegie libraries and other public buildings of the period is articulated through the symmetrical composition, projecting pedimented central brick-and-stone entrance portico, stone-trimmed, rectangular door and window openings, hipped roof with modillioned stone cornice, and other features; that it is characteristically sited on a corner set back from the street with a lawn bordered by a stone-and-iron fence; that the Poppenhusen Branch has been culturally, visually, and historically an important component of its community for ninety-five years; and that the exterior of the building has retained its significant architectural characteristics.

Accordingly, pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 74, Section 3020 of the Charter of the City of New York and Chapter 3 of Title 25 of the Administrative Code of the City of New York, the Landmarks Preservation Commission designates as a Landmark the Queens Borough Public Library, Poppenhusen Branch, 121-123 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue (aka 121-27 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and 13-16 College Point Boulevard), College Point, Queens, and designates Borough of Queens Tax Map Block 4042, Lot 113, as its Landmark Site.

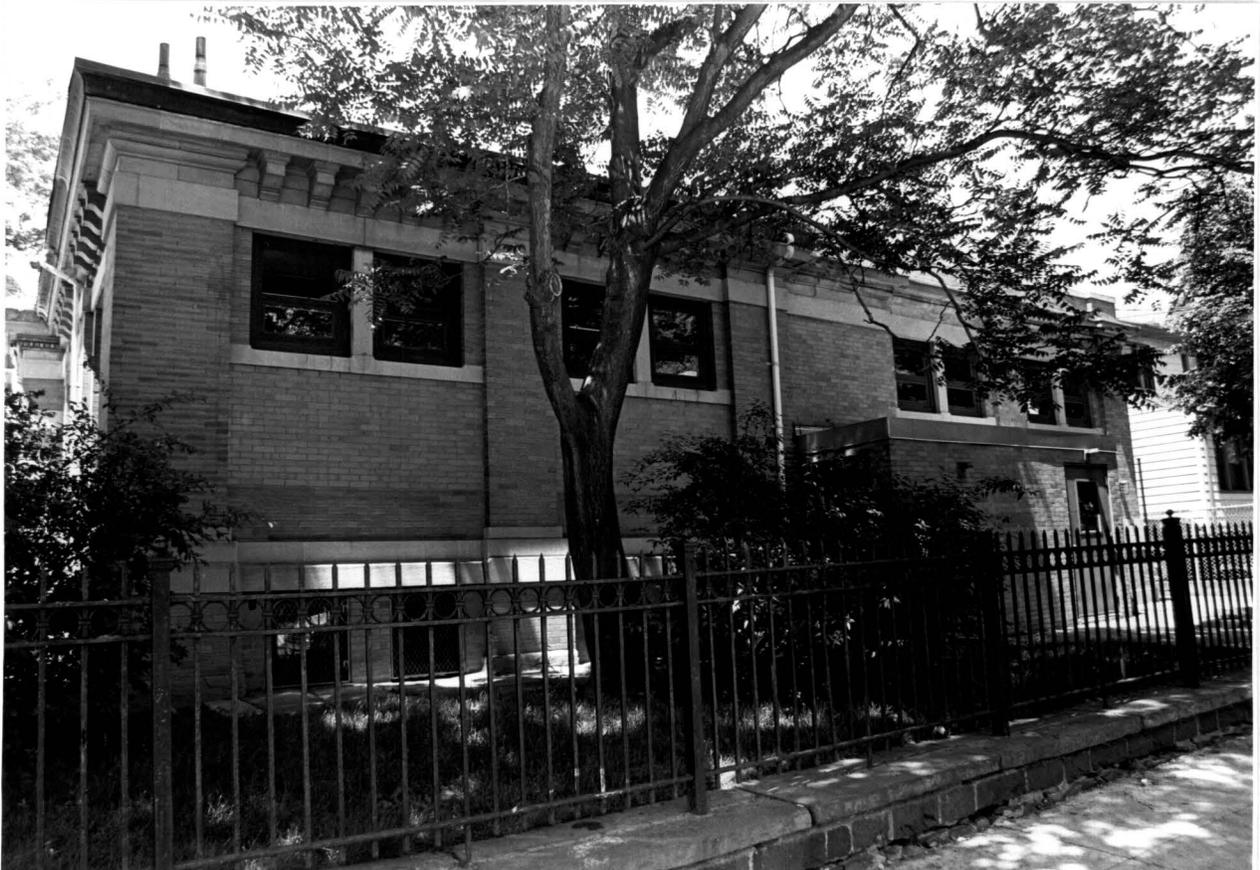


The Queens Borough Public Library, Poppenhusen Branch  
121-123 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue (AKA 121-27 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and 13-16 College Point Boulevard), Queens  
*Photo: Carl Forster*



South (Front) Elevation

The Queens Borough Public Library, Poppenhusen Branch  
*Photos: Carl Forster*

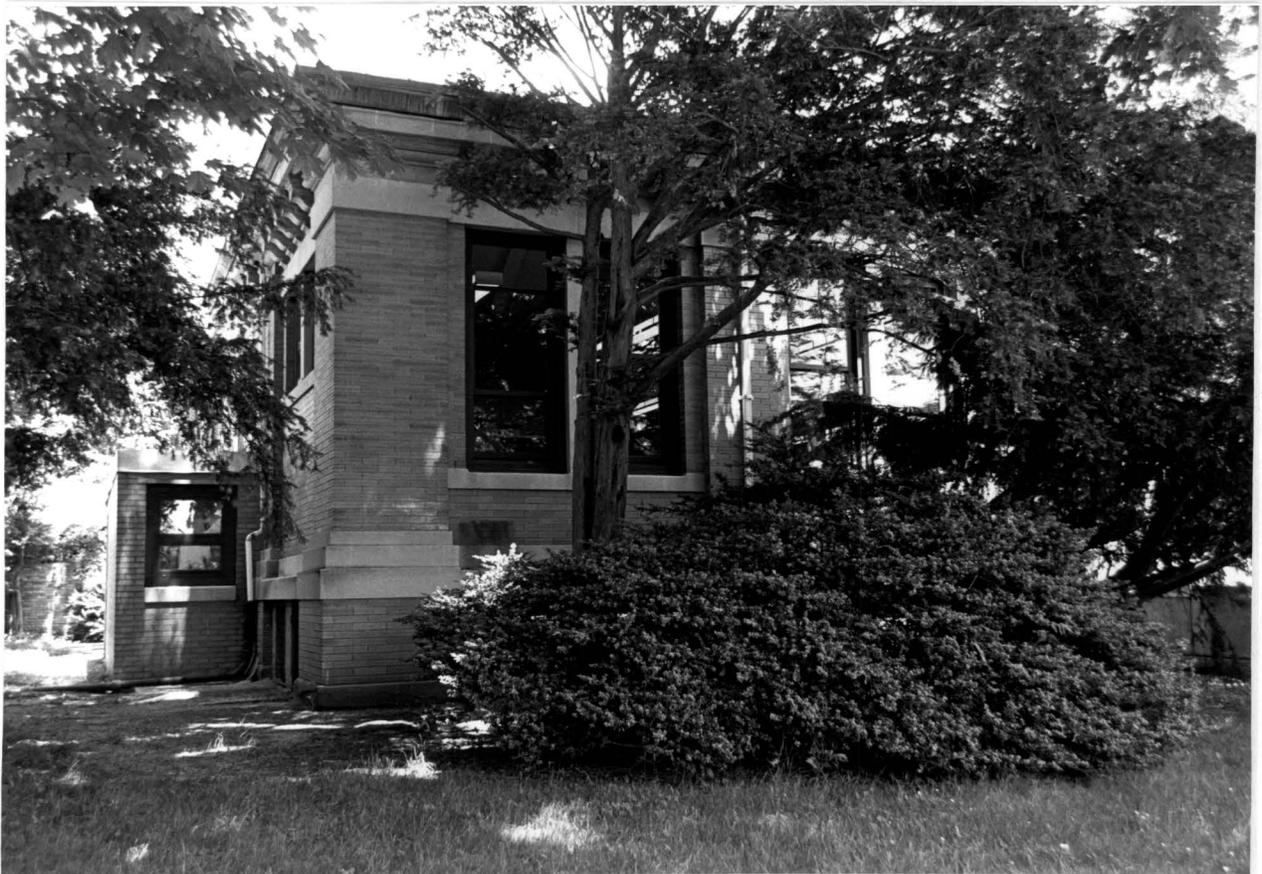


East (Side) Elevation



East (Side) and North (Rear) Elevations

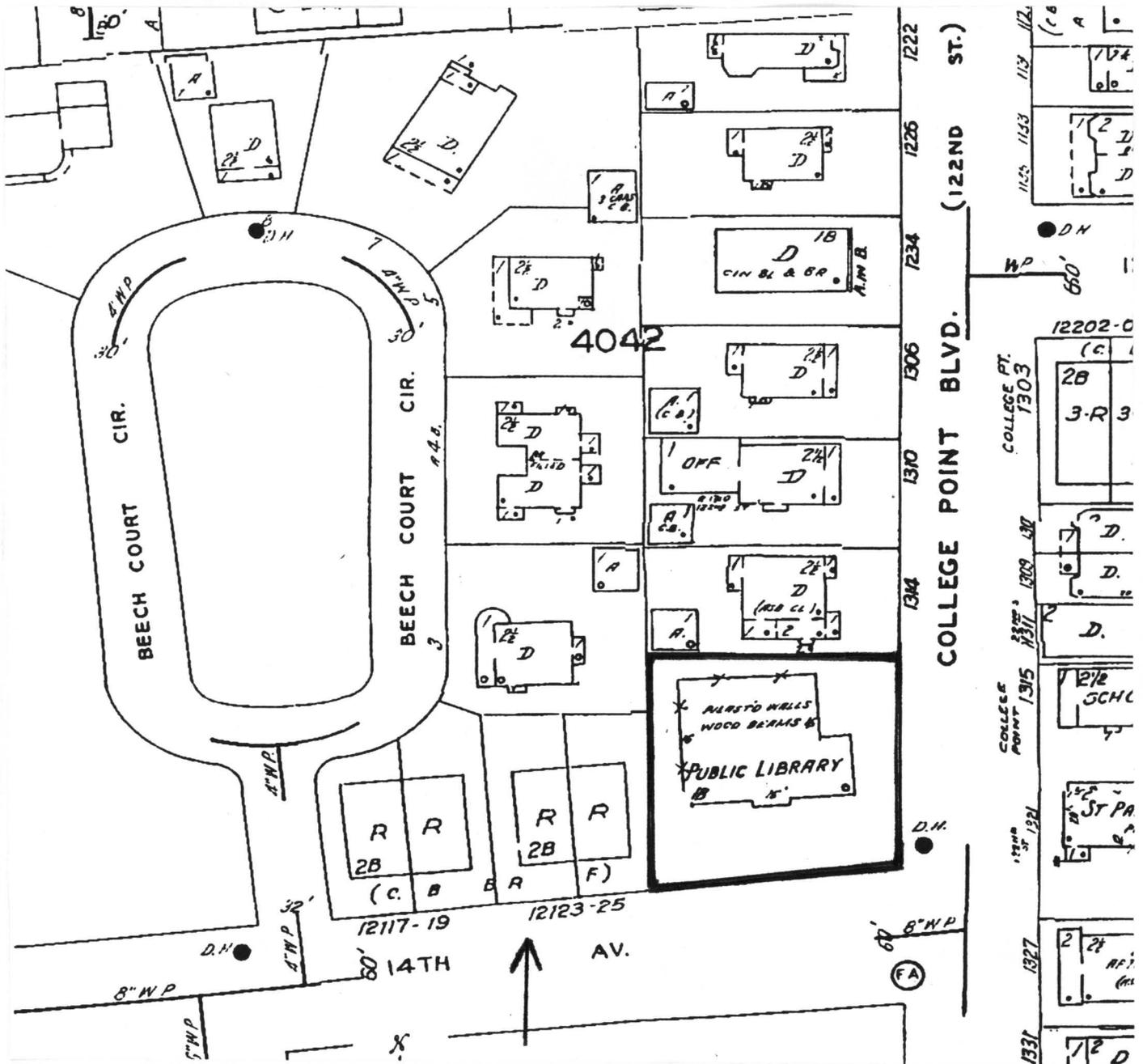
The Queens Borough Public Library, Poppenhusen Branch  
*Photos: Carl Forster*



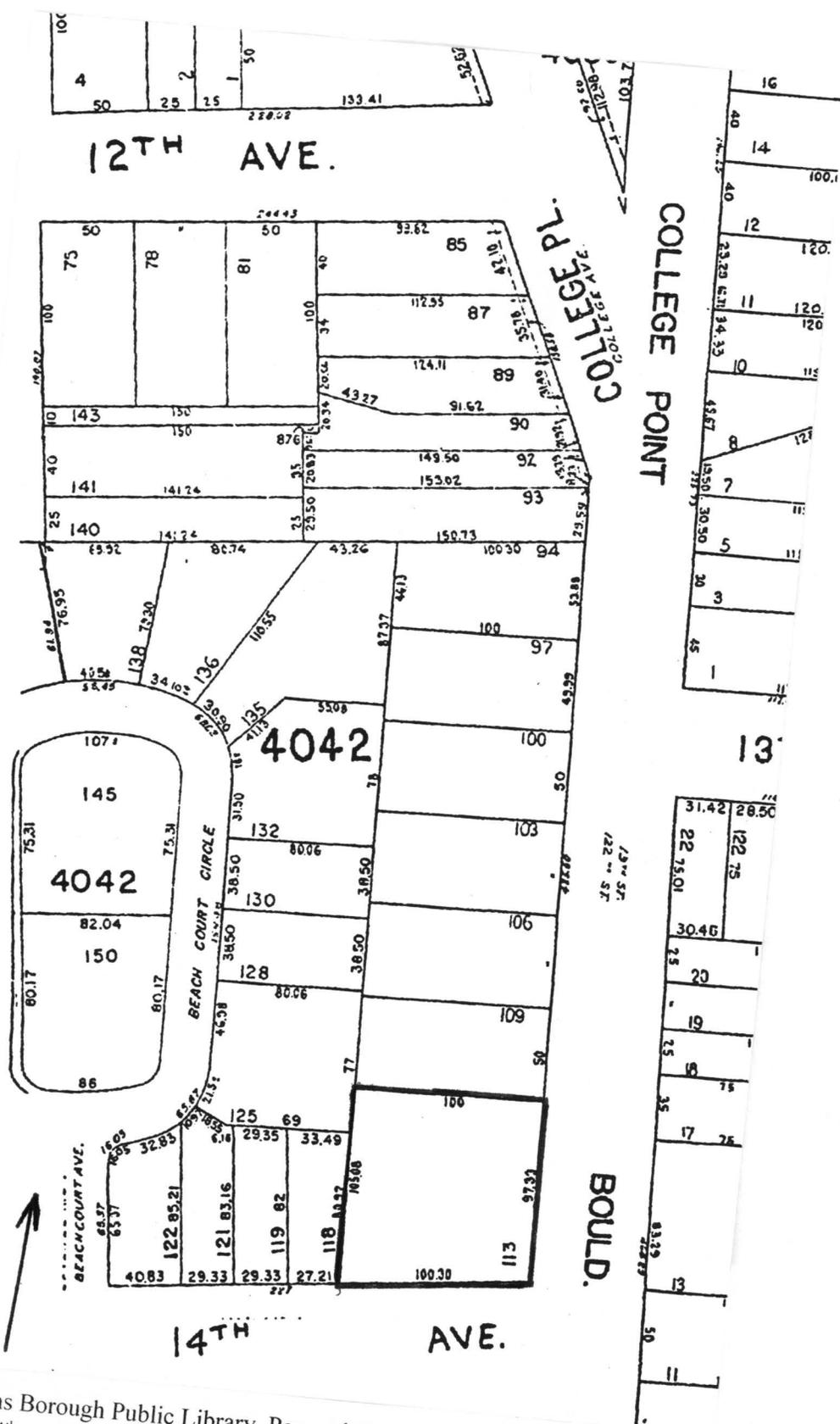
West (Side) and North (Front) Elevations



The Queens Borough Public Library, Poppenhusen Branch  
Entrance Details  
*Photos: Carl Forster*



The Queens Borough Public Library, Popenhusen Branch  
 LP-2045  
 Landmark Site : 121-123 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue (aka 121-27 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 13-16 College Point Boulevard),  
 Queens  
 Designated May 30, 2000



The Queens Borough Public Library, Poppenhusen Branch  
 121-123 14th Avenue (aka 121-27 14th Avenue, and 13-16 College Point Boulevard), Queens  
 Map: Sanborn Building and Property Atlas, 1999, vol. 5, pl. 34