

The Calgary Public Library

2011

Report to the Community



## Our Vision

A world of information and ideas within reach of every Calgarian.

## Our Mission

To transform lives and build community by creating opportunities for discovery, enrichment, and connection.

## Our Values

Our actions demonstrate that we value: customers and colleagues; knowledge and learning; accessibility and openness; diversity and collaboration; innovation and commitment; accountability and integrity; our environment; and sustainable resource management.



## Table of Contents

Message from the CEO	4
Message from the Board Chair	5
Signal Hill Library Looking Better Than Ever	6
Getting Smarter at Serving Calgarians	8
A New Era, a New Centre for Service	9
Library Takes the Lead in Early Literacy	10
Historical Foundations	11
It's in the Bag: Everything You're Into "Feet" Campaign.	13
More Than Google	14

# Letter from the CEO



As this year comes to a close, I am extremely happy with the strength of the Library's presence in our growing and developing city. Calgarians continue to find our extensive free resources to be meaningful throughout each stage of their lives. This dedication has created a sense of community among our customers and the Library's staff, which goes further than just the provision and receipt of a service.

After an exciting year full of changes, the Library is active in new opportunities, reaching for as many in our large community, as we can. Utilizing new technologies, we have found ways to extend this reach to maintain a higher level of service and understanding for all Calgarians.

This year has seen the Calgary Public Library successfully continue to provide top-quality programs for those in Calgary's communities. These successes reflect the Library's commitment to the community and are made possible by the Library Board, our hard-working staff and the collective efforts of our customers, volunteers, and partners.

The coming year marks our 100-year anniversary. I look forward to celebrating this milestone with Calgarians as we reflect on how our organization has grown and matured and in recognizing how significant of a role the Library has played in shaping our communities.

Thank you for your continued support of the Library. We are excited to see what will unfold in the Library's story in the next century to come.



Gerry Meek, CEO



# Letter from the Board Chair



Jamie Niessen, Board Chair

As the city of Calgary grows, it is up to us to keep up with the demands of our changing demographics and to continue to support members of our community using all the resources available to us. In the past year, the Library has continued to adapt to the changing demands that accompany rapid increases in technological development throughout not only our city, but also society as a whole.

In 2011, the Board's committees have successfully strengthened the roles of governance within the organization. This positively affects our customers as it allows our organization the opportunity to provide a higher quality of service that is more connected to the community.

Although we have strong support from our partners, funding continues to be a challenge for the Calgary Public Library. To supersede this challenge, the Board has become more active in advocacy initiatives. Through strategic planning, we will continue demonstrating to public officials how valuable the Library's programs, services, and staff are to those in our community, and how much they make a difference in the daily lives of our customers.

The Board is passionate about working to provide outstanding resources to Calgarians through unique services available at each of our branches. On behalf of the Board, I thank our customers for their continued support as we move forward into the Library's next 100 years of service.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jamie". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jamie Niessen, Board Chair



## Signal Hill Library Looking Better Than Ever

In March, the Calgary Public Library celebrated the grand re-opening of Signal Hill Library. During the winter of 2010/11, the branch underwent a \$5.3 million state-of-the-art expansion, which was made possible by the City of Calgary, the Province of Alberta (through the Major Community Facilities Program), and the Calgary Public Library – each providing one-third of the funding.

Gerry Meek, CEO of the Calgary Public Library; the Honourable Ron Liepert, Calgary-West MLA; Alderman Richard Pootmans, Ward 6; and Laura Sugimoto, Vice Chair of the Calgary Public Library Board joined the community in celebrating the branch's official grand re-Opening. The event featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony, a special Storytime, face painting, balloon animals, and more.

The need for an extensive renovation was great; the branch serves more than 80,000 people in the city's southwest, more than double the

population from when the branch opened in 1998. About 70 per cent more space and 20,000 more collections were added to the branch and now features a larger program room, more casual seating including beautiful leather chairs and fireplace, large windows, expanded children's space with banquettes, and quiet study space.

Signal Hill Library was also the first branch to install automated Self Check-Ins, paving the way for enhanced customer service. With the new machines, items are checked-in instantly, which allow customers to check out new materials immediately. The machines also allow customers to print a receipt so they can keep track of their returns.

In addition, the Signal Hill Library was designed to meet the requirements of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program. It maximizes energy efficiency (automated lighting, heating and cooling; maximizes natural lighting; etc.), while making as little impact as possible on the environment (eco-friendly building materials, recycling of old building materials, etc.).



*The cutting of the ribbon, officially marking the re-opening of Signal Hill Library.*

*From left to right: Gerry Meek, Laura Sugimoto, Alderman Richard Pootmans, and the Honourable Ron Liepert.*



*Alderman Richard Pootmans showing his enthusiastic support for the new Signal Hill Library.*



*Children enjoyed a special Storytime with Laura Sugimoto, Alderman Richard Pootmans, and the Honourable Ron Liepert.*



# Getting Smarter at Serving Calgarians

As the city of Calgary expands, the Library works to keep pace with these expansions by continuing to provide relevant services to Calgarians in innovative new ways. With a century of experience behind us, the Library now prepares for its next 100 years of service.

In this next stage, the Library will continue to focus on making the Library experience better for customers. Keeping programs relevant and resources current, the Library plans to build-up its network of branches so that they are points of convenience for information seekers and literary lovers across Calgary. Resources have been allocated to revitalizing some of the older branches, so they can better accommodate the needs of library patrons.

## Getting Into the Green Scene

With the growing concern for the environment, the Library has become more involved in promoting environmental awareness both inside and outside the organization. The Library's services and programs promote environmental awareness to the community, while staff continues to follow environmentally-friendly initiatives internally.



The Signal Hill Library's recent renovations were designed to meet the requirements of the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Program. This branch successfully maximizes energy efficiency while making as little impact on the environment as possible. As a result, this branch has received its LEED certification, setting the standard for future Library renovations and construction.

In 2011, the Library organized a general awareness project for customers who were interested in green initiatives. The Ecopolooza 2011 event presented a series of activities and workshops on green sustainability at various Library locations.

The project's goal was to demonstrate a leadership role in promoting environmental stewardship. Ecopolooza was so successful that it will be returning in 2012 with new activities and workshops for those who wish to make an eco-friendly difference.





## A New Era, a New Centre for Service

The Library will be relocating its Central branch to a new and improved location in the newly revitalized East Village. This new Central branch will be built to serve as the headquarters of administration and the center of a vibrant and growing network of branches. Its completion will launch a second century of service for our city, as the Library continues to work as an influential and integrated part of the community.

Throughout this next year, the Library invites you to be a part of its continuing story as it seeks new ways to provide service and access to all Calgarians, while maintaining its unique sense of community. Not only as a beacon of learning, but as the most unshakeable social and cultural institution in the city.



## Library Takes the Lead in Early Literacy

The Calgary Public Library has launched a major campaign to help the parents of preschoolers develop their children's language and pre-reading skills. With up to 90 percent of a child's brain development taking place before the age of six, literacy needs to begin long before school starts.

In a series of 30-second videos, the Library's Growing Readers promotion focuses on five behaviours that help parents prepare their child for success with reading and writing before they reach kindergarten. The behaviours lead to the improved development of important language and motor skills for children.

"A child born today will be exposed to more print information than at any time in human history," Library CEO Gerry Meek says. "Whether they grow up to read novels or cell phone screens, write longhand or text message, literacy skills are important to their future success."

The Library shows how parents can talk, sing, read, write, and play with their children to help them learn words, develop listening skills, understand sounds, build hand-eye coordination for writing, and understand how stories and sentences convey ideas.

Working with pre-school children and their families is one of the Library's most important roles, and the new campaign backs up existing programs and workshops on children's language and pre-reading skills.

With the assistance of Citytv, CTV, Global, Shaw and Cineplex Theatres, the five videos will run over 4,800 times by December 31, encouraging Calgary parents to take an active role in early literacy, and letting them know the Calgary Public Library is there to help.

You can view the commercials at [calgarypubliclibrary.com/kids/growing-readers-videos](http://calgarypubliclibrary.com/kids/growing-readers-videos).



*A screen shot of one of the Library's five Growing Readers commercials that aired this fall.*

## Historical Foundations

Like the thousands of books that fill our shelves, the Calgary Public Library has a story – and it’s a long one. In 2012, the Library will be hitting an important milestone as we celebrate 100 years of serving Calgarians. What better time to look back to the beginning and discover how the Library became the vibrant heart of a great city.

Our mission to inspire life stories was set in motion by a few people with inspiring life stories of their own, like community advocate Annie Davidson. Davidson had a passion for literature and believed that if Calgary was to become a great city, it needed a great library. With the help of the Women’s Literary Club that she founded in 1906, Davidson door-knocked all over Calgary to drum up the necessary support to create the city’s first public library board. She also petitioned for funding from another key member of the Library’s history, Scottish-American philanthropist Andrew Carnegie.

© Donald A. Davidson



Annie Davidson

If Davidson was the driving force behind the birth of the Calgary Public Library, Carnegie was the financial force responsible for the creation of its first branch. The first public library in Calgary opened its doors on January 2, 1912; the same year that saw a number of the literary classics published that would later line

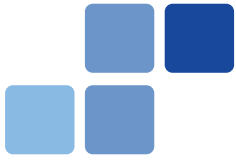
Library shelves, like Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s *The Lost World* and *Pygmalion* by playwright George Bernard Shaw.

The Central Library, now known as the Memorial Park Library, still stands proudly in its original location on 2 St. and 12 Ave. It was one of the 125 public libraries in Canada and 2,509 libraries worldwide funded by Carnegie in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Carnegie was a firm believer in equal access to information, which is why he contributed \$80,000 to the project and pressed the City of Calgary to pay for the rest of the building’s \$100,000 price tag.

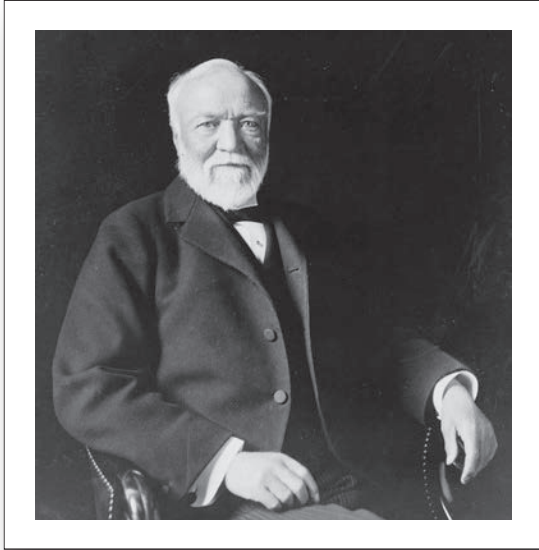
Davidson’s passion and Carnegie’s endowment helped ensure the Memorial Park branch and the 17 others that followed would give Calgarians access to the resources needed to learn, grow and connect with their community. But it was Alexander Calhoun, Calgary’s first chief librarian, who was responsible for forging the Library’s connection to the city.

Calhoun accepted the post of chief librarian in January 1911 and during his 34-year tenure, helped establish the Library’s role as an arts and education leader in the community. While under his leadership, the first branch of the Library served as home to the Calgary Women’s Literary Society, as well as the first university classes taught in the city.

He retired in 1945 and nine years later when a second Calgary Public Library branch opened on March 24, 1954, it was named for Alexander Calhoun in honour of his years of service. Calhoun himself was in attendance at the opening, unaware that his namesake branch would later house important novels like William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and J.R.R. Tolkien’s *The Fellowship of the Ring*, which were both published that year.



© Library of Congress

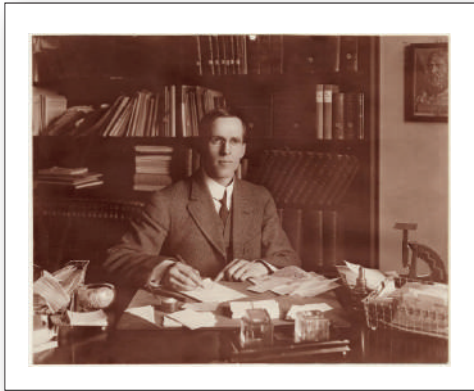


*Andrew Carnegie*

While the foundation remains, much has changed between then and now. Circulation at the Calgary Public Library has increased to nearly 17 million items borrowed in 2011 from the original 114,566 materials circulated in 1912. And the estimated \$275 million to build the new Central Library facility in the East Village is a far cry from the original Central branch's modest \$100,000 cost. But while the times, the city's population and the value of a dollar have changed, the Calgary Public Library's values of intellectual freedom, openness, inclusion, curiosity, innovation, sustainability and excellence have not.

As we enter into a second century of service to Calgarians, we will continue to grow, mature and evolve to meet the needs of our ever-changing city.

Annie Davidson, Andrew Carnegie and Alexander Calhoun would be proud.



*Alexander Calhoun*

# It's in the Bag: Everything You're Into "Feet" Campaign.



Everything Buddy's into.



Get your card for: Christmas Carols • Cookie Recipes • Craft Magazines • Holiday Movies



Everything Lana's into.



Get your card for: Business Magazines • Chick Flicks • Biographies • Top 40 Music



Everything Julie's into.



Get your card for: Honeymoon Planners • Chick Flicks • Ceremony Music • Relationship Guides



Everything Wesley's into.



Get your card for: Spooky Times • Monster Movies • Medieval Stories • Dragon Facts

In May, the Calgary Public Library unveiled the new Everything You're Into "feet" campaign.

With a multi-layered targeted marketing strategy in place, Calgarians were able to see and connect with a diverse group of "personalities", depicting what they were 'into', using the iconic purple bag.

A staple in the community, the purple Library bag can be seen on the streets, at the gym, in grocery stores, and, of course, at Library branches. What's in someone's purple bag defines what they are 'into', an idea the new ads tapped into.

Every facet of our incredible collection was promoted: from classic novels to magazines, cds to Blu-Rays, even eBooks and reference materials were lauded.

The campaign's presence was felt all over the city, with big visibility on Calgary transit c-train platforms, c-trains, buses, various billboards, as well as various targeted editorial placements including Broadway Across Canada, Calgary Opera and Alberta Ballet programs, Avenue, Impact, Calgary's Child, City Palette, Calgary Herald, Apple, Swerve, Wedding Bells and others.

Calgarians easily identified with the personalities and their varied interests, reinforcing that the Calgary Public Library continues to be the place that truly does have something for everyone.

We truly are, 'Everything You're Into'.



## More Than Google

In the past century, the Library has re-defined itself from a lender of books, to a lender of information through various mediums and technologies.

Today's Library provides more than books, CDs or DVDs. It is a place to study, to access the internet and to attend special programs designed to help achieve your goals. Home to creative and helpful staff, the Library delivers what most retailers can't – face-to-face information delivery and vast resources for your simultaneously specific and incredibly varied needs. This role has led the Library to create a new vision of its services as it enters into the next 100 years of service.

### **“I can Google at home, so why would I need to go to the Library?”**

Today, isolated information gathering is the norm, where people remain in their homes to search for what they need.

But consider this – the Library can offer professional staff that act as walking search engines. They are skilled at conducting research and narrowing down your Google searches, which will get you the answers you are looking for faster. In addition, they can assist you in finding related published materials, offering a social experience outside the realm of the digital. The best part? It's all free as long as you have a Library card.

Currently, the Library faces the challenge of competing with book store conglomerates and the internet. How does the Library cope with this challenge?

Easily – there are a vast amount of books in each of our branches' collections and free internet access for all. Several other services are also offered that aren't available elsewhere such as services for new Canadians, varied programs for adults, kids and teens, and special events and initiatives held for community members.

The real challenge is promoting an awareness of these services, to remain a relevant information centre for Calgarians.

The Library's services include unique programs for an assortment of interests. Championing literacy in every form, these programs range from helping kids learn the basics of reading, with programs such as Baby Storytime and Baby Bookworms, to relationship development with Single in the Suburbs, to what to do to help you find a job with Coaching for Business Professionals. These programs are popular because Library staff has taken the time to find out what Calgarians want to know more about, and what they are interested in.

At the Library, you are never too young to learn and grow, and early literacy programs such as our Growing Readers Program, help parents teach their children the basics of literacy at a young age. The world language section along with settlement services helps newcomers from all cultures learn English, and provides the necessary tools for an easy transition into Canadian culture. Special events are also held at the Library, including 2012's book readings/challenges such as One Book, One Calgary and green initiative activities with Ecopalooza and many more.

Additionally, the Library continues to look for new ways to enhance its e-tools and remain on top of the new and constantly changing technology. Improvements have been made to the website so that it houses updates on everything from Library programs and events, to live chats with librarians through the “Info Chat” feature.







The Library maintains a regular Twitter feed and you can also “like” us on Facebook. These developments make the Library a relevant part of the community as customers are invited to experience the Library on a multi-platform level.

As the Library acts on its new Strategic Plan within the next few years, it is important that these goals align with the demands of a growing city.

After an in-depth look at the needs of Calgarians, the Library’s services and programs will continue to grow and change to impact the lives of customers as they are provided with the “human” experience.





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