

FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA, FALLS OF SCHUYKILL  
BRANCH  
3501 Midvale Avenue  
Philadelphia  
Philadelphia  
Pennsylvania

HABS PA-6764  
*PA-6764*

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street NW  
Washington, DC 20240-0001

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

### FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA, FALLS OF SCHUYLKILL BRANCH

HABS NO. PA-6764

- Location: 3501 Midvale Avenue at the corner of Warden Drive, Falls of Schuylkill neighborhood of Philadelphia, Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania. The library is banked on the hillside and faces southeast onto Midvale Avenue. A street-level entrance also appears on the Warden Drive side of the building.
- Owner: The library is part of the Free Library of Philadelphia system and is owned by the City of Philadelphia.
- Present Use: Branch Library
- Significance: Completed in 1913, the Falls of Schuylkill Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia was one of twenty-five branch libraries built through an endowment from industrialist-turned-philanthropist Andrew Carnegie. The impact of Carnegie's grant program on the development of public libraries cannot be overstated. He came of age in an era when libraries were rare, privately funded institutions and access was through subscription. Believing in the power of libraries to create an egalitarian society that favored hard work over social privilege by allowing equal access to knowledge, between 1886 and 1917 he provided forty million dollars for the construction of 1,679 libraries throughout the nation. The vast resources that he allotted to library research and construction contributed significantly to the development of the American Library as a building type. In addition, by insisting that municipalities supply a building site, books, and annual maintenance funds before bestowing grants Carnegie elevated libraries from the arena of private philanthropy to that of civic responsibility.

Philadelphia was the recipient of one of the largest Carnegie grants for library construction. Although the city was among the first to establish a free library system, it had no purpose-built structures prior to the Carnegie endowment. The branch libraries were built between 1905 and 1930, under the direction of the city appointed Carnegie Fund Committee, and designed by a "who's-who" of Philadelphia's architects. The twenty extant branch libraries remain as a remarkable intact and cohesive grouping, rivaled only by that of New York City, with fifty-seven.<sup>1</sup> The Falls of the Schuylkill Branch was designed by the well-known architectural firm of Rankin, Kellogg & Crane. It is among the most

---

<sup>1</sup> Carnegie provided funding beginning in 1903 for thirty branch libraries, but with rising construction costs, only twenty-five could be built. Of Philadelphia's twenty-five libraries, four are no longer extant and a fifth (Frankford) has been greatly altered. Four others are no longer used as library buildings. In New York, fifty-seven were still standing, and fifty-four still operating as libraries as of the 1996 publication of *The Architecture of Literacy; The Carnegie Libraries of New York City* by Mary B. Dierickx. The next single largest grants for branch libraries were given to Cleveland (15), Baltimore (14), and Cincinnati (10).

elaborate of the branch libraries, erected in a Tudor Gothic style rather than the more staid Beaux Arts of most of the other branch libraries. It also differs from the typical branch in that it lacks the rear ell section that results in a T-shaped configuration. Its sloped site allows for a distinctive and easily accessible entry into the basement lecture hall. The lot was donated to the city by William H. Merrick and the Warden Estate. Prior to the construction of the branch library, Falls of the Schuylkill enjoyed a Free Library deposit station, which was established within a local church in 1901.

Historian: Catherine C. Lavoie

## PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: The Falls of Schuylkill Branch was built between 1912 and 1913, as is indicated by both the 1912 cornerstone and dedication plaque located in entry vestibule. Ground was broken in April of 1912, and the library officially opened on 18 November 1913.<sup>2</sup>

2. Architect: The library was designed by the Philadelphia architectural firm of Rankin, Kellogg & Crane (John Hall Rankin, Thomas M. Kellogg, and Edward A. Crane). It appears that Edward Crane was the principal architect involved in the project, based on the fact that it is his name that appears in the Committee minutes with regard to reports about the Falls of the Schuylkill Branch. The firm was perhaps best known for their large-scale government commissions, such as the design for the U.S. Department of Agriculture Building in Washington, D.C. and several U.S. Marine Corps structures in Philadelphia. They were also considered to be one of the most successful Philadelphia-based firms working in the Beaux Arts style. While the Beaux Arts was by far the most popular style adopted for library buildings of this era, ironically enough, the firm chose the more elaborate collegiate Tudor Gothic for the design of the Falls of the Schuylkill Branch Library.

All three partners trained at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, America's first school of architecture. And each worked for successful architectural firms before their merger; Rankin and Kellogg became partners in 1891, and were joined by Crane in 1903. Rankin worked for John H. Windrim, Wilson Brothers & Company, Boring & Tilton, and finally, for Frank Miles Day prior to beginning his own firm. Interestingly, Windrim, Tilton, and Day each designed a branch library for the Free Library of Philadelphia as well. Kellogg worked for the well-known firm of McKim, Mead & White; and Crane worked for the supervising architect of the U.S. Treasury prior to joining with Rankin.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> Free Library of Philadelphia, *Annual Report of the Librarian, 1912*, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup> American Architects and Buildings database, Rankin, Kellogg & Crane (1903-1925), [www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab](http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org/pab).

Concurrent with the construction of the library, Crane served in 1912 as Supervising Architect for the restoration of Independence Hall. Following the completion of the library, from June 1913 to June 1914, he served as City Architect for Philadelphia. Crane was also active in both the Philadelphia chapter and the national organization of the American Institute of Architects (AIA). He served on the Committee on Government Architecture in 1910, in 1911 on the Board of Directors for the Judiciary and Finance committees, and in 1912-1914 on the Committee on Institute Publications. Crane also served as the president of the Philadelphia Chapter of the AIA in 1919-1920.<sup>4</sup>

3. Owners: The library is part of the Free Library of Philadelphia system and is owned by the City of Philadelphia. The land for the library was provided by trustees under the will of William G. Warden and by William H. Merrick, Esq., as indicated by the dedication plaque in the entry vestibule.

4. Builder, contractor, suppliers: The general contractor for the construction of the library was Jacob Myers & Sons Company, whose low-bid proposal was estimated at \$34,690.25. The contract for the heating was awarded to Harry F. Murphy & Company, Incorporated at a cost of \$4,499; and the electrical contract went to Walker and Kepler at a cost of \$1,675.49.<sup>5</sup>

5. Original plans and construction: The Falls of the Schuylkill Branch was built to contain a single large reading room on the main level, but without the ell that appears to the center rear of most of the Philadelphia Free Library branches. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that the library is banked against the hillside. The steep grade of the site, in fact, posed problems during the planning stages. While it did not permit a rear extension, the banked site did allow for a unique at-grade entry into the basement lecture hall at the southwest side elevation. As indicated in a letter, the architects proposed to “follow the present confirmed grades as given on the survey finished by the Bureau of Surveys but to omit from the specifications all approaches, so that if it is decided by the City to lower the grade at the corner of Calumet Street and Warden Drive within a reasonable time, the change can be readily made as far as the corner is concerned.”<sup>6</sup> Thus the basement included a large lecture hall complete with an elevated stage with access to ante rooms and other areas for office and storage space, and a stair to the main level.

As indicated by a photography taken by William Rau upon completion of the library in 1913, built-in bookcases appear along all the walls and low shelving, running southeast to

---

<sup>4</sup> Roger Moss and Sandra Tatman, *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects* (Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1985), 171-72.

<sup>5</sup> Free Library of Philadelphia, Carnegie Fund Committee, Minutes, March 11, 1912, “Mr. Crane, architect of the Falls of the Schuylkill building was present at the request of the Committee, and reported that the lowest bids were as follows.”

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, Minutes, 23 November 1911, Letter from Messers Rankin, Kellogg, and Crane as to the Falls of Schuylkill Branch, “with letter from Chief Webster on the subject of the grades was considered . . . architects instructed to proceed as suggested in their letter of Nov. 21, 1911 in which they” make their proposal.

northwest, bisect the room into three areas. There was a large central circulation desk and balustrade to control traffic at the entrance. A combination of round tables with Windsor chairs and square tables with Mission chairs were scattered throughout the room. The reference section appears to the northeast side of the room, with a librarian's desk in the north corner.<sup>7</sup> The lighting included three large elaborate brass chandeliers with glass globes, and scones (also with glass globes) were mounted to the top of the bookcases.

6. Alterations and additions: A number of changes were made to all the branch libraries beginning in 1959. At that time the original circulation desk and other furnishings were replaced with sleek modern designed furniture of the period. The original light fixtures were also replaced, and linoleum flooring was laid. A handicapped entrance was later added to the northeast side elevation of the building.

## B. Historical Context:

### **The Carnegie Funded Free Library of Philadelphia Building Campaign**

On 3 January 1903, Carnegie's secretary James Bertram responded to the Free Library of Philadelphia's request for a grant to finance the construction of libraries with the promise of \$1.5 million for a planned thirty branch libraries. Despite the fact that Philadelphia figures quite prominently on the timeline of American Library history, it had no purpose-built public libraries prior to the Carnegie endowment. Philadelphia *did* have the nation's first private subscription library, known as the Library Company, founded in 1731. Numerous other private libraries were created as well, such as the Mercantile Library, Ridgeway Library, and the library at the University of Pennsylvania. And it was in Philadelphia that the American Library Association was formed in 1876. The establishment of the Free Library in 1891 placed Philadelphia among the first American cities to institute a non-subscription public library system for the benefit of all of Philadelphia's citizens. As Library Board president J.G. Rosengarten stated in 1903, "Proprietary libraries have grown into valuable adjuncts to our other education institutions. None of them, however, serves the public as does the Free Library, providing good reading for our school children, for our industrious adult population, and for the city's useful employees, firemen, and telegraph operators."<sup>8</sup> As Rosengarten's comment indicates, the library system was an important component of the city's public education.

However, prior to the Carnegie funding, the city's fourteen branch libraries, each started by interested local communities, were dependent upon old mansions, storefronts, or back rooms of commercial buildings and civic institutions for library space. As Rosengarten points out, "The [Carnegie] gift gave welcome relief from the expense of the rented rooms occupied by the branches, and from much of the risk to which the collections were subjected in these temporary quarters."<sup>9</sup> Likewise, prior to the completion of its permanent home in 1927, the Central Branch

---

<sup>7</sup> William H. Rau, photographer of Philadelphia. Image taken upon completion of the Library appears in the Free Library of Philadelphia, *Annual Report, 1913*.

<sup>8</sup> Theodore Wesley Koch, *A Book of Carnegie Libraries* (New York: The H.W. Wilson Company, 1917), 85.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

of the Free Library was housed within three different preexisting buildings, including City Hall, an abandoned concert hall on Chestnut Street, and a building at the northeast corner of 13<sup>th</sup> and Locust streets. Carnegie's \$1.5 million grant would change all that. Beginning in 1905, the endowment was used for the design and construction of twenty-five branch libraries throughout the city (three of which are no longer extant). They were built between 1905 and 1930, with the bulk of them constructed by 1917, and designed by a wide range of Philadelphia architects.

Philadelphia was just one of many cities to receive a library grant. Andrew Carnegie provided forty million dollars for the construction of over 1,600 libraries throughout the United States during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (and about 400 more abroad). Carnegie was motivated by both his own immigrant experience and by his social/political beliefs. Despite his poor, working-class upbringing, he made a fortune through the production of steel. Believing that the wealthy were obligated to give back to society, Carnegie set out to spend during his lifetime the entire 400 million dollars that he received through the sale of Carnegie Steel Company. Carnegie also believed that given a good work ethic and the proper tools, anyone could be successful. He was self-taught and credited his success to the access he received to one gentleman's private library. Carnegie came to believe in the power of libraries to create an egalitarian society that favored hard work over social privilege. Hence libraries, as a key to learning and socialization, became a focus of his charitable donations.

While Carnegie's motivations were in large part paternalistic, the impact of his library campaign is far greater than merely providing the working class with access to books. The vast resources that he applied to this area led to great advances in library science as well as to the development of the American Library as a building type. Carnegie applied the corporate business models that had made him successful as an industrialist to the development and production of libraries. He insured that local municipalities had a stake in their libraries by insisting that they supply the building site and the books, as well as ten percent of the total construction cost annually for maintenance. By so doing, Carnegie took libraries from the arena of private philanthropy to that of civic responsibility. Any town that was willing to meet those terms was basically able to receive grant funding. The process began via a letter of application submitted to Andrew Carnegie's personal secretary and the individual charged with management of the library grants, James Bertram. In 1903, the city of Philadelphia did just that.

Unlike its rival New York City, Philadelphia's planning group, the Carnegie Fund Committee, placed librarians and not architects at the forefront of the planning process. This is likely the primary reason for the relative standardization of Philadelphia's branch libraries, particularly with regard to layout. This important decision on the part of the Library Board was in keeping with the sentiments endorsed by the Carnegie Corporation. James Bertram was generally distrustful of architects as library planners, believing that they tended to make libraries too expensive by adding unusable space and superfluous detail merely for affect. He preferred the advice of librarians who better understood how libraries needed to function. Both the Philadelphia Library Board and Carnegie Fund Committee included well-placed librarians, the former being Pennsylvania state librarian and American Library Association representative Thomas L. Montgomery, and the latter, librarian for the Free Library, John Thomson. President of the Board of Education Henry R. Edmunds was also on the Committee, an indication of the significance of the libraries to public education in Philadelphia. Prominent local businessmen

and attorneys filled the other positions. As the Committee minutes indicate, the Librarian and Assistant Librarian were left to work out the details with the architects, and generally had the last say when it came to finalizing the plans.<sup>10</sup> (For more information about the Carnegie Library construction program and the Free Library of Philadelphia's own library building campaign see, Free Library of Philadelphia, Central Branch, HABS No. PA-6749, Historical Context section.)

### **Falls of the Schuylkill Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia**

The library is located near the Falls of the Schuylkill River and the former site of industrial activity that began in the early eighteenth century with the establishment of textile mills, a fishery, and a brewery. The construction of a dam in 1822 further supported the area's industrial expansion. This pattern of development, however, was soon reversed as the city recognized the need to protect the water supply provided by the Schuylkill River. As part of this effort, the Fairmount Water Works was created and so too began the establishment of Fairmount Park, turning the working riverfront into a green zone. While remnants of the area's industrial heritage remain, the Falls of the Schuylkill library is a product of its later development as a suburban enclave. The library grew out of community interest and support to first create a deposit station of the Free Library in 1901. As with all of the early branches, the library was located within a preexisting structure, in this case on the second floor of the Old Academy building.

In April 1911 the Library Board reported that a donation of land needed to erect a purpose-built structure had been provided by the estate of William G. Warden and William H. Merrick, Esq. The lot is located at the corner of Midvale Avenue and Warden Drive.<sup>11</sup> The architectural firm of Rankin, Kellogg, and Crane was hired to prepare plans at the recommendation of the Librarian and Assistant Librarian of the Free Library, and by June the architect's plans were approved.<sup>12</sup> A construction contract was signed with Jacob Myers Sons in March 1912, and almost exactly one year later, ground was broken. The Falls of the Schuylkill Branch was one of six branches concurrently under construction, including Southwark, South Philadelphia, Passyunk, Paschalville, and Haddington. Of them, the Falls of the Schuylkill was the first to open.<sup>13</sup> The library, then deemed a "very handsome building," opened on 18 November 1913.<sup>14</sup> According to the minutes of the Carnegie Fund Committee that oversaw the design and construction process,

---

<sup>10</sup> Free Library of Philadelphia, Board of Trustees, Minutes, 1 July 1904. "On motion resolved, that the matter of procuring plans and securing bids be referred to the Carnegie Fund Committee with power." And also, Carnegie Fund Committee Minutes, 17 May 1912. An entry from this meeting (one of many) illustrates that practices: "Mr. Richards [architect] be instructed to prepare plans for the proposed new Paschalville Branch and that the President be authorized to approve plans for such Branch when same were agreed upon by himself, the Librarian, Asst. Librarian and the architect."

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., *Annual Report of Librarian, 1912*, John Thomson, April 1911.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., Carnegie Fund Committee, Minutes, 21 April 1911.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., *Annual Report of the Librarian, 1912*. It was reported that the construction of the the Falls of Schuylkill was experiencing problems with grading and construction that caused delays. In March 1912 contract awarded, ground broken in April. According to p. 25 of the report, work was accomplished in plans for six new branches to be placed in service this year (Falls of Schuylkill – Warden Dr and Midvale Ave; South Philadelphia – Broad & Ritner; Passyunk – 20<sup>th</sup> & Shunk; Paschalville – 70<sup>th</sup> & Woodland; Haddington – 65<sup>th</sup> & Girard).

<sup>14</sup> Report of the Librarian, June 1914.

The new branch at Falls of the Schuylkill was formally opened on the evening of Tuesday November 18, 1913. . . the Librarian [of the Free Library, John Thomson] presided and after Mr. Crane had explained some details in connection with the construction and material of the building the keys were handed to the [Falls of the Schuylkill] Librarian who accepted them on behalf of the Trustees. Mr. Woodruff then made the address of the evening. The audience in attendance was large and satisfactory.<sup>15</sup>

The library was modernized as part of a larger program to upgrade the city's libraries that occurred during the late 1950s and early 1960s. A photographic image taken by Lawrence S. Williams for the Free Library captures the interior as it was in 1966. The changes included the painting of the book stacks and the replacement of the original fittings and furnishings with Modern style elements. The wood floors were covered with linoleum, and an area within the main reading room was partitioned off for use by the librarians. New restrooms were added and the mechanical systems were replaced. The libraries were again upgraded in 1997. Original features such as the vaulted ceiling and other decorative wood elements, such as the entry entablature with clock, still provide the Falls of the Schuylkill Branch a character all its own.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The architectural style of the Falls of the Schuylkill Branch library is Tudor Gothic. It is beautifully articulated and fairly unusual to the design of Philadelphia's branch libraries; the only other of its style is the Richmond Branch. Among its distinguishing architectural details are crenellated and stepped parapet walls, arched doorways, tracery windows, buttresses, and stone quoins, window surrounds and belt courses. Falls of the Schuylkill Branch is a one-story structure that is banked so that from the southwest side it appears as two stories. While the steeply graded site presented challenges in the design and construction of the library, in the end it allowed for an easily accessible and aesthetically pleasing entryway into the basement level lecture hall. The library is seven bays across with a single large tracery-style window at each gable end. It is made of rubble stone with cut stone details and surrounds. The main entry is to the center of the principal façade and projects outward to create an entry vestibule. The typical window is a tripartite arrangement with a stone buttress between each bay. It has a steeply pitched roof with stepped gable ends and crenellation along the sloping front and rear elevations of the building and in the entry vestibule.

2. Condition of fabric: The library appears to be well maintained and in good condition.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The interior plan is of a rectangular-shaped open space and measures 37'-4" in depth by 103'-4" in length. The basement lecture hall measures 37'-4" by 44'.

---

<sup>15</sup> Free Library of Philadelphia, Carnegie Fund Committee, Minutes, 9 January 1914.



2. Foundations: The foundations are of stone.
3. Walls: The walls are formed largely from slabs of rubble stone, with random blocks of more square-shaped stones added to the mix. The stone, which appears to be Wissahickon Schist, is also used to form the buttresses. A light-colored, cut stone is used to form the window and door surrounds, water table, belt-course, and buttresses caps.
4. Structural systems, framing: The library is of load-bearing stone construction.
5. Porches, stoops: A broad stairway, supported to either side with rubble stone walls capped with cut stone, provides a front stoop for the principle entryway.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: The principal entry is to the center of the southeast elevation and projects forward to form an entry vestibule. There is an elaborate carved stone frontispiece with a Tudor-arched door surround that includes a trefoil, an open-book, and other decorative patterns, as well as the inscription "FREE LIBRARY OF PHILADELPHIA FALLS OF THE SCHUYLKILL BRANCH." The double doors contain glass lights and there is a wood panel above. The entry is flanked by buttresses. There is a second double-door entry to the side elevation which has the same arched stone surround. The entry lacks the frontispiece that appears at the main entry, but has a fixed glass transom between the doors and the top of the arched surround). The entry is flanked with buttresses that have pointed stone caps incised with a trefoil pattern. There is another entry to the northeast side that consists of a simple metal doorway intended to provide for handicapped access. There is also a stairwell underneath and to the side of the main entryway, creating a secondary entry into the basement.
  - b. Windows: The typical window is a tripartite arrangement, each section of which contains a six-over-six-light sash window. Above each sash is a smaller, fixed six-light window. The windows are set in beveled stone reveals that includes quoining. At each gable end is a large tracery-style window with a shallow pointed Tudor-style arch. The window at the southwest end is segmented into sections, five across and four high, each one containing diamond-pattern leaded windows. The large window at the northeast end is a truncated version of this, measuring only three bays in height. The windows are flanked by buttresses and topped with a beveled stone trim that meets to form a belt-course around the building. There is a small six-light casement window in each gable end. The basement windows appear in sets of three, four-over-four-light casements with stone lintels and sills.
7. Chimneys: There is a square-shaped exterior stone chimney stack located near the center of the rear elevation.

8. Roof: The roof is a steeply pitched gable with low crenellation to the front and rear with a stepped parapet in the gable ends. It is covered in slate and there is a lantern or ventilator to the center.

### C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: The library is entered via a vestibule. The vestibule contains wainscoting and the flanking walls contain marble panels upon which are mounted dedication plaques; one credits Carnegie with the building, and the other, the Trustees under the will of William G. Warden and William H. Merrick, Esq. with the land. The interior consists of a single large space with a ceiling rising up two stories to create a barrel vault segmented by diagonal and transverse wood ribs culminating in a large bracket. There is a seat beneath the tracery in the southwest gable end; the northeast end is surrounded by newly formed partition walls used to create a work area for staff. The interior is divided into sections by the centrally positioned circulation desk and by low shelving. Built-in book stacks line the walls. The children's reading room is situated to the northeast end of the room, to the front of the staff work room. There is an adult reading room to the center and southwest end of the room. An enclosed stairway to the rear of the building leads to the basement. At the bottom of the stairway is a hall with access to utility, work, and rest rooms. A few steps down to the southwest is located a large lecture hall. The hall is supported by iron posts and there is a raised stage area (also accessed via a room adjoining the upper basement hall). There is an exterior entry at the end wall.

2. Stairways: The stairway to the basement is located in a bump-out section to the center of the rear wall. The open stair forms a straight run with winder steps near the bottom that turn ninety degrees. The balustrade is plain, including squared balusters and a similar newel post with cap. The stairway is lit by two small four-over-four light sash windows.

3. Flooring: The floor on the first level is covered with industrial-grade carpeting, and those on the basement level are covered with linoleum tile.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls and ceiling are of plaster. The ceiling is vaulted and bisected by wood ribs with perpendicular wood bracing. Coffered skylights are located in the third and fifth of the seven bays formed by the wood ribs. The walls are lined with book stacks that sit on a high plinth and the windows are positioned above them.

#### 5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: There is an elaborate paneled doorway surround at the front entry with a crenellated cornice with finials to the center and at each end. It is topped by clock mounted in a rounded, wood casing.

b. Windows: Tripartite windows appear along the front and back walls within each bay created by the wood ribs of the ceiling. They are placed high on the walls in order to accommodate the built-in book stacks that line them. At both ends of the room, the book stacks break to make way for the large simplified tracery style windows. Window seats are positioned beneath these windows.

8. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating: Heat registers are located above and below the built-in book stacks.

b. Lighting: Half-dome opaque white glass light fixtures hang from those sections of the ceiling located along the center and two flanking areas (with the exception of the sections that house the skylights). They replace the three original brass chandeliers (and the sconces that were once mounted on the bookcases).

c. Plumbing: The library includes restroom and kitchen facilities in the basement.

D. Site: The library sits on a steeply graded site that backs up to the wooded hillside and falls downward to the southwest side to allow for an at-grade basement entrance. The site is lush with trees, bushes, and other plantings. Large pine trees tower over the front of the building, and there are numerous deciduous trees to the sides and rear. There is an iron fence along the front between the pines and the sidewalk. Bushes and ground ivy are also prevalent. There is a formal garden to the southwest side where the entry to the basement lecture hall is located. A slightly terraced, broad walkway leads from the street to the side entry. There is a low, dry-laid stone wall along the perimeter of the property at this side. At the southeast side, a curving walkway provides access to the handicapped entry. The walk is lined by bushes and other plantings. A cedar bench invites patrons to rest and enjoy the grounds.

### PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Architectural drawings: The original architect's drawings of the plans and elevations are located at the Athenaeum of Philadelphia.

B. Early Views: Free Library of Philadelphia, Annual Report, 1913 (Municipal Reference Division, Cities P53-1154). Includes photographs taken upon completion of the library by William H. Rau, photographer. The two views include a perspective of the exterior front and banked side elevations, and an interior view taken from the northern corner of the room looking towards the front entry to show a general view of the interior space.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary sources: The records of the Free Library of Philadelphia are located at the Central Library on Vine Street. The *Annual Reports* are located in the Municipal Reference Division, Cities P53-1154; and the Carnegie Fund Committee Minute Books are located in the Director's Vault (access by special permission).

Free Library of Philadelphia, *Annual Report, 1912 & 1913* (Municipal Reference Division, Cities P53-1154).

Ibid. Carnegie Fund Committee, Minute Book 1912 & 1913 (located in the director's vault of the Central Branch of the Free Library of Philadelphia).

2. Secondary sources:

Bobinski, George S. *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development*. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969.

Dierickx, Mary B. *The Architecture of Literacy; The Carnegie Libraries of New York City*. New York City: The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Art and Science & NYC Department of General Services, September 1996.

Moss, Roger and Sandra Tatman, *Biographical Dictionary of Philadelphia Architects*. Boston: G.K. Hall & Co., 1985.

Philadelphia Real Estate Record and Builder's Guide, as cited in "Philadelphia Architects and Buildings Project" of the Athenaeum of Philadelphia, [www.philadelphiabuildings.org](http://www.philadelphiabuildings.org).

Van Slyck, Abigail. *Free to All; Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.

#### PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

The documentation of the Falls of the Schuylkill Branch Library was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS) of the Heritage Documentation Programs of the National Park Service, Richard O'Connor, Chief during summer 2007 as part of a larger initiative to record the Carnegie Funded branch libraries of the Free Library of Philadelphia. The project is sponsored by HABS in cooperation with the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia, John A. Gallery, director; and the Free Library of Philadelphia, William J. Fleming, Administrative Services Director, and made possible through a Congressional appropriation for recording in Southeastern Pennsylvania. The historical reports were prepared by Lisa P. Davidson and Catherine C. Lavoie. Large-format photography was undertaken for HABS by Joseph Elliott. Measured drawings were prepared of the Thomas Holme Branch as the typical branch library during the summer 2008. The drawings team was led by Robert Arzola, working with Jason McNatt, Paul Davidson, and Ann Kidd, architectural technicians.