

Resources With State-of-the-Art Technology

Scotch Plains Public Library

The origins of the Scotch Plains Public Library date back to January 1, 1800, when a group of townspeople founded the Scotch Plains Reading Society to encourage cultural advancement.

The group held its first recorded meeting on January 1, 1800, according to "Scotch Plains, the Story of an Old Community," written by Reignette Marsh and published in 1936.

Since 1968, the library has been located at 1927 Bartle Avenue. The building's interior recently underwent major renovations, the first in 31 years, and now features new lighting, carpeting, tile floors and furniture, as well as technology upgrades. The library's new look was made possible courtesy of a \$50,000 grant from the State Library in Trenton.

Three new computer terminals have replaced the former card tracking system at the library's front desk. In addition, new modular sectional units have replaced the former front desk and reference desk of the library, providing improved height access for children and wheelchair-bound patrons.

The traditional card catalogue in the Adult Section has been replaced by five Patron Access Catalog (PAC) computers, accompanied by PAC work stations.

The PACs, along with five additional Internet stations, complement other resources that have long been part of the Adult Section of the library. With the PACs, library patrons can locate books according to author, title and subject, as well as by typing in key words.

In addition, individuals can access their own records on the terminals to check the status of outstanding or overdue books.

The library has also incorporated CD-ROM capabilities into its automation system, which allows patrons to tap electronic encyclopedia information. In the future, library administrators anticipate that individuals will be able to connect online with the library's PAC system from their own homes to search for books.

With the five Internet stations in the Adult Section, library patrons may access a national telephone directory and job listings posted by the state Department of Labor.

The Children's Section now features three computer terminals, including one with Internet access. Youngsters under age 12 require written parental permission each time they want to go online. The computers in the Children's Department are equipped with educational software.

Staff members also continue to nurture a love of reading among youth through a variety of programs throughout the year, such as "story time" activities for township children in pre-school through first grade, which are held in a windowed "story pit."

A mural on one window panel of the "story pit" depicts a Central American village by Salvadoran artist Carlos Sanchez, which was commissioned to whet youngsters' interest in learning about the world.

Another favorite among the library's younger set is the annual Summer Reading Club, which is open to children in Scotch Plains and Fanwood and features a special theme each year. The program is for youngsters in pre-kindergarten through fifth grade who can read or listen to stories.

Adult library card holders may borrow videotapes from the library for \$1. Foreign language records and cassettes, along with books on tape, are also available to library patrons.

Library Director Norbert Bernstein reports that the library currently has 95,000 bar-coded books and other materials available to patrons, and its offerings include more than 200 periodicals.

In addition to Mr. Bernstein, principal library staff members include Vivian Marek, Head of the Technical Processing Department, which includes cataloging, acquisitions



and processing of materials; Adult Librarian Mary Czarnomski and Children's Librarian Ann Luerssen. They head up a staff of approximately 15 people. Several individuals also serve as library "pages."

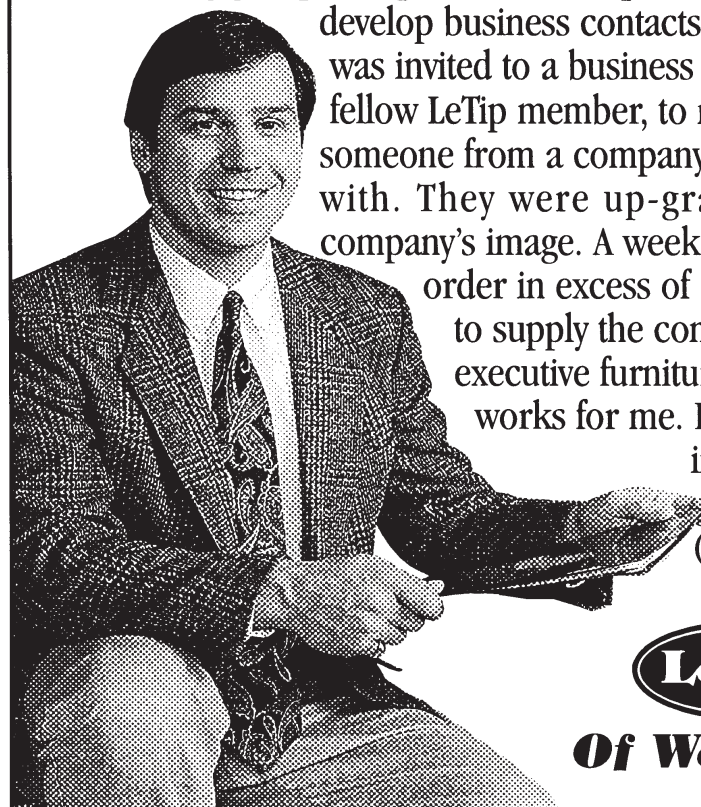
The library is governed by a seven-member Board of Trustees, with Carl Kumpf as President. Councilman William F. McClintock, Jr. serves as Council Liaison and Trustee.

A number of Scotch Plains organizations have made use of the library's meeting room in the lower level of the building. Anyone interested in reserving the room for group meetings is asked to call Joan Iuliano, Secretary of the Library, at (908) 322-5007.

The Scotch Plains Public Library is open during the school year from Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., and on Fridays and Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The library is closed on Saturdays during the summer.

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