

The Anza branch was dedicated in 1932. Its construction followed a successful campaign resulting in the passage of a City Charter amendment which raised additional taxes. Residents of the Park-Presidio community realized that the existing Richmond branch library at 9th Avenue had long not been sufficient to serve the neighborhood from 24th Avenue to the ocean. Located on 37th Avenue on the site of the old Lafayette school, a steeply sloping lot less than a mile from the ocean, the building was designed by John Reid Jr. who had already designed several public buildings in San Francisco, including Mission High School.

A two-story stucco building with a red tile roof, it is entered by ascending two flights of brick stairs to the main floor. The entrance foyer has an elaborate gilt ceiling and decorative tiles. Ceilings in the main rooms have hand-stenciled designs on the ceilings.

The public areas measure 3,867 square feet. The 2,383 square feet on the lower floor contain the utility and staff areas, a meeting room space, and toilets. Another public restroom area is on the main floor.

Full-time staff includes one Adult Service librarian who serves as branch manager, one Children's Service librarian, and a Library Technician. Four part-time pages work a total of 40 hours a week.

The branch collection contains 34,756 items; all but 4,000 are hardcover books, the rest are paperbacks, recordings, and periodicals. Of the non-English materials Chinese language books and periodicals make up the majority. There are books in Russian, Vietnamese, and Korean languages, too.

The audio collection consists of 80 books-on-tape, a collection of children's cassettes, and some music tapes. There are 261 language cassettes and 166 vinyl records. The most heavily used tapes are language cassettes. Instructional tapes for improving English are rarely available due to the demand by Chinese- and Russian-speaking newcomers. The 600 vinyl records are not much used. These recordings are mainly of classical music, in excellent condition, jazz, spoken, and Chinese song recordings.

The Children's Librarian schedules regular story hours, lapsit programs, and class visits. Special programs are scheduled throughout the year. In 1992/93 3,757 children and their caregivers attended over 70 programs. 1,612 participated in group visits to the library. The Librarian also saw another 1,789 children during outreach visits. The Children's Room is heavily used by children doing homework assignments--mostly students from Lafayette and St. Thomas the Apostle elementary schools, located nearby. Infants and preschoolers, and their parents also make frequent use of the room.

With the exception of a volunteer tax-assistance program for seniors covering six Saturdays, March to April, there were no scheduled adult programs during recent years.



Circulation for fiscal year 1992-93 was 89,565, averaging 3.23 items per capita. Each item circulated, on the average, 2.58 times. Patron-use count was 58,251, an average of 37.61 visits per open hour. The branch is open 31 hours per week, Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Anza branch serves a population of 27,790. The neighborhood served range from modest apartment dwellings, to middle-class homes, to affluent Seacliff overlooking the straits of the Golden Gate. This population is statistically evenly divided between White (48%) and Asian (45%). Adults and young adults make up 63.3% of registered patrons; children make up 32.4%, and seniors 4.2%. Students from Presidio Middle School and Washington High School make use of both the children and adult library resources. New arrivals from the former Soviet Union have, in recent months, made their presence felt as they use the library for recreation and for both improving their English and their jobs potential.

As in many other branches Anza's shelving space is limited making it a challenge to reorganize and expand the foreign language and young adult collections, even though that is needed. Although both the children's and adults' collections have been recently weeded, much more needs to be done, particularly in the adult nonfiction. Anza maintains a strong basic fiction and literature collection because the long-established clientele likes the neighborhood library to reflect a traditional quality. On the other hand, current trends require meticulous collection management. Resources, in the future, will have to be sought to extend the collections in Chinese, Russian, and other languages, as well as provide much asked for books and tapes to aid persons wanting to improve their English.

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