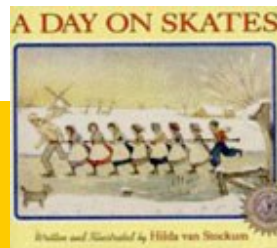
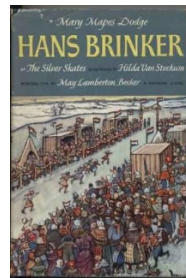


“The library contains rich collections and rare treasures, but I think all who use the institution will agree that it possesses no greater asset than the devotion and intelligence of its staff.”

Hiller C. Wellman, June, 1932



Standing next to the East Springfield Branch Library in 1941 is author Hilda Van Stockum (1908-2006). Born in Rotterdam, Holland she wrote and illustrated more than 20 books. *A Day on Skates* was awarded a Newbery Honor.

## Library Locations

*A Brighter Future for Springfield Today*

### Central Library

220 State Street  
(413) 263-6828

### Brightwood Branch

(413) 263-6805  
359 Plainfield Street

### East Forest Park Branch

(413) 263-6836  
122 Island Pond Road

### East Springfield Branch

(413) 263-6840  
21 Osborne Terrace

### Forest Park Branch

(413) 263-6843  
380 Belmont Avenue

### Indian Orchard Branch

(413) 263-6846  
44 Oak Street

### Mason Square Branch

(413) 263-6853  
765 State Street

### Pine Point Branch

(413) 263-6855  
204 Boston Road

### Sixteen Acres Branch

(413) 263-6858  
1187 Parker Street

**SPRINGFIELD CITY LIBRARY:**  
*PART OF SPRINGFIELD'S HISTORY,  
PART OF SPRINGFIELD'S FUTURE*

# The East Springfield Branch

1932–present



21 Osborne Terrace  
Springfield MA 01104



## No formal dedication marked opening day, March 9, 1932.

Being part of a neighborhood can provide a sense of belonging and feeling welcome, almost like family. People watch out for each other and care what happens there. Often residents own a business or work in their own neighborhood. Tight knit community groups are established and work together towards a common goal. The area around Springfield's old Westinghouse Plant on Page Boulevard is such an example. Residents knew the importance of reading and having access to the enrichment offered by the Springfield City Library Association.

So in 1926 the East Springfield Women's Club and the East Springfield Citizens' Club worked to establish a deposit collection of the city library in their neighborhood, for two years housed in the Central hall building before moving to the East Church community house. The little library was open only two hours per week, yet was wholeheartedly supported by the neighborhood, with over 900 library cardholders patronizing the room and checking out more than 500 books per month.



In 1930 the East Springfield Home Builders Company donated a lot on Osborne Terrace to the city and the City Library Association began plans to build an official branch on the site, but lacked the necessary funds. Some months later (September 17, 1931) the Springfield Union newspaper printed an article complemented by an impressive sketch of the proposed new branch, noting the architect would be M.H. Westhoff (well-known local architect who also designed the Liberty Branch Library and the Connecticut Valley Historical Museum), and Longmeadow's W. J. Quinn Company the construction company. Librarian Hiller Wellman estimated the cost at \$22,000. The plans called for a one-floor 3,500 square foot stucco building, 67' by 37'.

No formal dedication marked opening day, March 9, 1932. It's a wonder that it opened at all, considering the bleak economic times. The Great Depression was at its lowest point with unemployment over 20%, recent riots had killed four men at a Ford factory in Dearborn, Michigan and little Charles Lindbergh, Jr. had just been kidnapped. But the Westinghouse Electric Plant on nearby Page Boulevard employed over 4,000 workers at the time and library staff expected the new East Springfield Branch Library to be well supported. The interior was described as "quartered oak with harmonizing linoleum floors, and a pleasing touch is the use of golden yellow window curtains, flecked with red." Originally stocked with 2500 adult books and 1000 children's, there was enough room on the new oak shelves for 15,000. Open hours were Monday,

Wednesday, and Saturday from 3-8:30 p.m. and by September twelve members of their first children's Summer Travel club celebrated at a party with games, prizes, displays and bookmarks. Irene Paquette received special recognition for answering 13 questions correctly! The Guest Story Hour in March of 1939 was a visit by author/illustrator Clare T. Newberry. Focusing on cats and kittens, four of her 18 books were named Caldecott Honor Books. And, in November 1949 author C.W. Anderson brought many of his original drawings of horses to accompany his talk at the East Springfield Branch. Mr. Anderson wrote and did the illustrations for more than 30 books on horses and their care.

Library staff catered to neighborhood interests, finding unique art to show, for example a 1976 display of free-hand bronze work and award-winning tinsel paintings by Mrs. Katherine Pratt of the Springfield Guild of Craftsmen.

Nourishing this sense of community has continued through the years as shown by the popular Fall Fest and Open House, when this cozy branch is filled with friends and neighbors sharing their love of books, music, food, and laughter. Be sure and check it out!

