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## HISTORY

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Friends of the San Francisco Public Library was founded in 1961 by Marjorie Stern, Mary Louise Stong, Hilde Kolb, and Grace Macduff Parker. Volunteers performed every task in the first few years including organizing book sales, processing membership contributions, staging special exhibits, and sponsoring citywide poetry contests.

As time went on, Friends began to play a more active role as an advocacy organization for the Library. Those efforts culminated in 1988, when Friends realized their long time goal of a new Main Library by championing Proposition A, a bond issue that would fund \$109.5 million to build a new Main Library. Friends helped pay for the costs not covered in the bond; an extraordinary outpouring of more than 17,000 donations from the residents and organizations of San Francisco and beyond made the vision of a new Main Library into a reality, and the New Main opened its doors on April 18, 1996.

Friends continued advocacy efforts by championing the Library Preservation Fund, or Proposition E, in 1994. The passage of Prop E established 15 years of funding by earmarking a percentage of City revenue for the Library. The Fund has had tremendous effect on our libraries; it enabled the library to increase operating hours by 53% and expanded the budget for books and materials by almost 400%.

Noting the dire need to revitalize San Francisco's branch libraries and equip them for the twenty-first century, in 2000, Friends led a \$106 million bond measure to build and refurbish 24 neighborhood branch libraries city-wide. As with the Main, public bonds will not pay for equipment or furnishings inside the branches. To meet this need, Friends was charged with raising \$16 million through the Neighborhood Library Campaign.

In 2007, San Franciscans again resoundingly asserted the vitality of libraries when they overwhelmingly passed Proposition D, which asked voters to renew the Library Preservation Fund and ensure another fifteen years of stable funding for the library system. Prop D received 74.5% of the vote, more votes than any other proposition on the ballot. Over the next fifteen years, Prop D will bring in more than \$1.2 billion to the library—without raising taxes.

Since its grassroots beginnings, Friends' mission has grown to encompass advocacy, fundraising, and programming to serve all neighborhoods of San Francisco.

## LIBRARY ADVOCACY

### THE NEIGHBORHOOD LIBRARY CAMPAIGN

From 2000 - 2012 Friends led the Neighborhood Library Campaign (NLC), the largest building campaign in San Francisco Public Library history! Friends raised over \$14 million dollars to renovate or rebuild 24 branch libraries.

**Background:** The historic Branch Library Improvement Program (BLIP) was an unprecedented, city-wide project that called for 16 branch renovations, construction of new buildings at three existing branches, the replacement of four leased facilities with city-owned buildings, and the construction of the brand new Mission Bay Branch. Funded by a bond measure that passed overwhelmingly in 2000, BLIP funded the building and renovation of our branches, but the bond did not provide funding for furnishings, fixtures and equipment. Friends' Neighborhood Library Campaign filled these gaps by raising the funds to equip and furnish our libraries.

The Neighborhood Library Campaign provided the much needed furniture, fixtures and equipment for every branch, ensuring that children, teens, adults and seniors all have access to information and programs, a safe community space and the resources to empower 21st century learning.

In each neighborhood, Friends organized a fundraising committee comprised of library supporters, local businesses, parent groups, City Supervisors, school teachers and other members of the community. We raised much of the needed funds at the grassroots level to help build a sense of ownership and neighborhood pride in the Library.

The last branch to re-open as part of the Neighborhood Library Campaign was the beautiful new North Beach Branch Library in the spring of 2013. Check out our calendar of events for Branch Anniversaries & NLC Celebrations.

### PROPOSITION D: THE RENEWAL OF THE LIBRARY PRESERVATION FUND

On November 6th 2007, San Franciscans voted overwhelmingly to pass Proposition D and protect our libraries. Libraries are a top priority for our electorate; Prop D received 74.5% of the vote, more votes than any other proposition on the ballot. Over the next fifteen years, Prop D will bring in more than \$1.2 billion to the library - without raising taxes.

Prop D asked voters to renew the Library Preservation Fund, which was due to expire in 2008-2009. Passed overwhelmingly in 1994, the Library Preservation Fund created an essential and stable funding source for the library system. The Fund enabled the library to increase operating hours by 53% and expanded the budget for books and materials by almost 400%. In addition, Prop D grants the City the authority to issue revenue bonds to ensure that the Branch Library Improvement Program can continue to renovate San Francisco's neighborhood libraries.

Prop D received tremendous support from political and community leaders and associations. Mayor Newsom, Senator Feinstein, Speaker of the House Pelosi, State Senators Migden and Yee, State

Assembly members Leno and Ma, the President of the Board of Supervisors Peskin and ten of the eleven Supervisors, plus many more, all supported Prop D. Over 30 organizations endorsed the measure, and Prop D received unanimous endorsements from The San Francisco Chronicle, The San Francisco Examiner and The Bay Guardian.

The passage of Prop D ensured that our libraries continued to:

- Inspire, educate and empower
- Level the playing field for all; regardless of age and background
- Be a safe haven for children and families
- Provide support for under-served communities and the people who need it most
- Ensure equity among San Francisco neighborhoods and contribute to their vitality
- Empower business development and long-term success
- Provide free, high-quality programs and classes
- Preserve local history
- Be truly democratic spaces

#### PROPOSITION E: THE LIBRARY PRESERVATION FUND

Friends championed the Library Preservation Fund, or Proposition E, in 1994. The passage of Prop E established 15 years of funding by earmarking a percentage of City revenue for the Library. The Fund has had tremendous affect on our libraries; it enabled the library to increase operating hours by 53% and expanded the budget for books and materials by almost 400%.

#### PROPOSITION A: BUILDING A NEW MAIN LIBRARY

In 1988, Friends realized their long time goal of a new Main Library by championing Proposition A, a bond issue that would fund \$109.5 million to build a new Main Library, which opened its doors on April 18, 1996.

#### PUBLIC AWARENESS

In addition to ballot measures, Friends commissioned a study that outlines the economic benefit of the SFPL.

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**Friends of the San Francisco Public Library** is a 501(c)(3) that serves to strengthen, support and advocate for a superior free public library system in San Francisco. Friends provides critical support for the San Francisco Public Library and related literary and educational programs, and provides the community with opportunities to invest in the success of the Library as well as literary and education communities by donating funds or by donating time through volunteering. [friendssfpl.org](http://friendssfpl.org)