



The New York City Landmarks Preservation Commission
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News Release

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LANDMARKS PRESERVATION COMMISSION DESIGNATES AN INDIVIDUAL LANDMARK IN BROOKLYN

On **May 18, 2004** the Landmarks Preservation Commission designated the DeKalb Branch of the Brooklyn Public Library at 790 Bushwick Avenue.

Brooklyn Public Library, DeKalb Branch

“The Carnegie library system opened up a whole new world to many New Yorkers,” said Robert B. Tierney, Chair of the Landmarks Preservation Commission. *“This beautiful building is part of the wonderful legacy Carnegie left to the City.”*

Constructed in 1904-05, the Brooklyn Public Library’s DeKalb Branch was one of the first branch libraries built in the Borough of Brooklyn with the money provided by a multi-million dollar gift from Andrew Carnegie. At the end of the nineteenth century, libraries were seen as an important means of improving the lives of Americans and new immigrants, and considerable effort was spent to make them available in working-class neighborhoods. Carnegie, who attributed much of his own success to the hours he was allowed to spend in the private library of Colonel James Anderson, wanted to provide the same opportunity for others and donated \$5.2 million for 67 branch library buildings in all five boroughs.



The DeKalb Branch was the first of five library designs by noted architect William B. Tubby, who served on the Architects’ Commission for the Brooklyn Carnegie branches. Following the stylistic guidelines agreed upon by that group, this building is a free-standing, brick and limestone building in the Classical revival style. The library is symmetrically arranged with a prominent central entrance, and has large, double-height windows that provide the interior with a great deal of light and air. Inside, the library follows the general scheme of most of the Brooklyn libraries, with a reading room on one side and a children’s room on the other.

Except when closed for renovations, the library has served this densely populated area of Brooklyn for a century, and, with its recent refurbishing, continues to contribute a distinguished civic presence to the neighborhood.

The Landmarks Preservation Commission is the New York City agency responsible for designating and regulating New York City’s landmarks.