

BOROUGH OF TOTOWA PUBLIC LIBRARY

2023 Annual Report



STATE AND CONDITION OF THE LIBRARY FACILITIES

The Borough of Totowa Public Library was constructed in the late 1960s. The original portion of the facility is a two story building approximately six thousand square feet in size and is attached to the Borough of Totowa's Municipal Complex.

In 2012, an addition and renovation project was completed. This project added twenty seven hundred additional square feet to the original structure on two levels. The expansion added a two floor elevator, a Children's Room, a lobby on the upper level, the Eisenhower Community Room, and two ADA compliant restrooms on the lower level. The project also renovated existing space including the Meeting Room, Multi-Purpose Room, and storage room. Library savings provided the funds for this endeavor.

In 2022, the Main Room Renovation project commenced. This renovation included a Reading Room, Teen Room, updated administrative and staff office space, and an updated new materials section. Funding was provided by the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act with matching funds provided by the Borough of Totowa Mayor and Council, the Library Board of Trustees, the Library Foundation, and the Friends of the Library. This project was completed in October 2022.

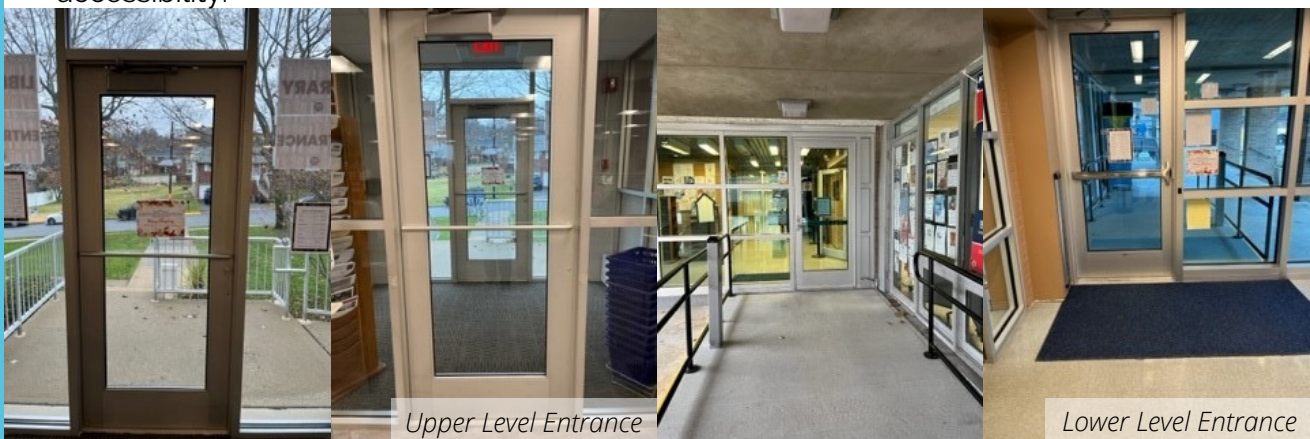
ACCESSIBILITY

There are four entrances to the building. The main entrance is located in front of the building on Cherba Place. There is also a side entrance that connects to the hallway that leads to the Municipal Building Complex. In the rear of the building there are two entrances; the primary door that enters into the lower lobby and a secondary entrance that enters the Multi-Purpose Room. There are also two Emergency Exit Doors; one on the main floor and one in the Eisenhower Community Room; both emergency exits are located on the western side of the building.

As part of the 2011/2012 expansion, the main staircase was moved to the rear of the building and connects the lower and upper lobby. An elevator was also added in the same 2011/2012 expansion project and connects the two levels. The emergency power control will be replaced in 2024.

In 2022, the rear and front entrance doors were replaced as part of the renovation project, the front entrance was replaced with an ADA compliant door and the rear entrance door was replaced with an ADA compliant door equipped with a mechanical opener. The automatic door is currently not working, plans for 2024 include the repair. The existing rear ramp was replaced with a wider entrance ramp to allow for the door to swing open safely. This improvement was funded in part by the New Jersey Library Construction Bond Act.

Plans for 2024 include the renovation of the Rear Entrance including leveling off the area, replacing the concrete sidewalks, adding curbs and recessing curb for improved accessibility.





Exterior Rear



Illuminated Sign / Front

EXTERIOR

The building's masonry brick exterior remains in good condition. In 2022, the roof above the Main Room was replaced with funding from the Borough of Totowa and library savings. This roof comes with a 25 year warranty. The roof above the Children's Room was installed as part of the 2011/2012 expansion and was starting to leak in several areas as well, this was repaired in 2023.

In the past, the library did have water infiltration issues at the front of the building after a very heavy rainfall. Leakage and ensuing damage occurred in the Meeting Room and kitchen. The potential cause of this leakage was addressed by the Department of Public Works in 2019 with the installation of new drainage system in front of the building. Unfortunately, due to the significant amount of rain coupled with the excessive Hurricane Ida rainfall, water has started to creep in the same areas. This will have to be addressed in 2024.

A memorial garden with concrete pavers and two benches was constructed in 2005 and is located in the front of the building. It is dedicated to the late library trustee, John Krautheim Sr. The garden was completely transformed in June 2023 by la serra gardens of Totowa. Trees, shrubs, sculptures and flowers were added to the garden.



Memorial Garden

With funding provided by a library supporter, the late John Soldoveri, an illuminated sign was purchased and placed on the front lawn of the facility in 2008. The sign is dedicated to his late sister, Ida Marotta a longtime library trustee. Plans for 2024 include replacement of this sign with a modernized digital sign. Also there are two outdoor book and media returns in front of the building.

Three masonry benches reside in the rear of the facility.

A garden area with a weeping cherry tree that was provided by the Shade Tree Commission was planted in the rear of the building in 2013.

Window lettering was installed in December 2023.

Exterior lighting at the front and rear entrance was upgraded in December 2023.



Upper Level Entrance

Lower Level Entrance

HEATING VENTILATION & AIR CONDITIONING (HVAC)

The two 25 plus year old Carrier HVAC units were replaced in 2023 with two York units. These units were purchased on the Library's behalf by the Borough of Totowa through the PSE&G Energy Saver Program. The project was paid for in full by the Library in 2023.

Plans for 2024 include a new interior grill and added duct work in the Main Room to improve the room temperature in the Reading Room.

A third Lennox HVAC unit was installed as part of the 2011/2012 expansion. This unit is located on the roof directly above the Children's Room. Currently the unit is inefficient and unable to heat and cool both levels comfortably. The unit also generates a very loud noise while running. The noise problem was addressed in 2014, but only reduces the noise level slightly. In 2023 two TIO wireless sensors were installed, however the inability to regulate temperatures on both levels continues. The installation of a new split HVAC VRF system is currently being considered as a remedy to the problem

The Board of Trustees approved a quarterly preventative maintenance contract for the HVAC units in an effort to stay ahead of any potential problems. This inspection is performed four times a year and includes filter and belt changes, lubrication of fan and motors, compressor, condenser and thermostat checks, and refrigerant and pulley checks.



INTERIOR

CEILING, LIGHTING, AND ELECTRIC

In 2022 the ceiling and lighting was replaced as part of the Main Room Renovation project. Funding was provided by the NJ Construction Bond Act Grant, the Borough, Library Savings, the Library Foundation and Friends of the Library.

The electric breaker panels for the facility are located in the Main Room, the Meeting Room storage closet and the Children's Program Room storage room. The panel located in the Main room was updated in 2019 with newly installed exterior switches by two entrances. An additional breaker panel was installed as part of the Main Room Renovation Project.

FLOORING

The flooring in the Main Room was replaced in 2022 as part of the Main Room Renovation project with funding provided by the previously aforementioned sources. A combination of carpet and vinyl flooring was used. The floor tiles in the Eisenhower Community Room, Meeting Room, lobbies, and reading area were installed as part of the expansion in 2011/2012 and are in fair condition and beginning to show wear. Additionally the carpeting in the Children's Room was installed as part of the expansion in 2011/2012 and is also beginning to show wear in certain areas. The last section of flooring is in the Multipurpose Room and is in poor condition. Plans for 2024 include the replacement of this flooring.



Ceiling Lights



Breaker Panel



Flooring in Main Room



Flooring in Meeting Room

Flooring in Multipurpose Room

INTERIOR PAINTED WALLS

The Main Room and all of the additional rooms were painted as part of the 2022 Renovation Project. Additionally all of the rooms included in the expansion project were painted in 2012 including the lobbies, workroom, hallway, administrative offices and Young Adult room. The remaining rooms include the multipurpose room and kitchen, these rooms were painted in 2013 and will be repainted in 2024 as part of a capital improvement project.



Reading Room



Teen Room

RESTROOMS

Two ADA compliant restrooms were installed on the lower level in the Meeting Room as part of the expansion in 2012. The hot water heater that heats water for these two rooms was replaced in August 2023. There are two additional restrooms on the lower level that are outdated and in need of updating. The two public restrooms located on the upper level in the Main Room were completely renovated by the Department of Public Works in 2020.



KITCHEN

With funding provided by the Borough of Totowa Public Library Foundation and the Friends of the Library, a renovation of the 40-year-old kitchen was performed in August 2013. This project included the removal of a handicap accessible restroom in the old section of the lower level in order to gain more space. The renovations included new cabinets, Formica countertop, a deep sink, a double oven range, a microwave and a freezer. A section of the cabinets has suffered water damage due to previous water infiltration; the relocation or repair of this section is under consideration. A four-burner Bunn coffee maker was purchased in 2016 to accommodate the needs of the ever-growing groups that meet on a regular basis.



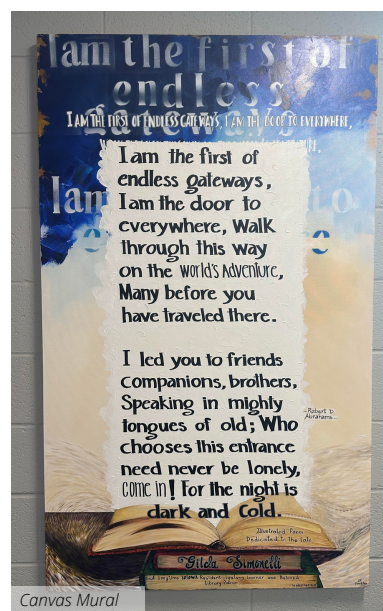
FURNITURE, FIXTURES & ART

- The shelving for reading materials in the Main Room is original (over 40 years old) and will need to be replaced eventually. In 2020, as a result of a major weeding project, four stacks were removed in the nonfiction section to make way for the planned Reading Room. The Department of Public Works dismantled the units and re-purposed most of the shelves in other areas of the stacks that were in need of replacement. The rest of unused shelving was put into storage.
- A shelving unit was purchased by the Friends of the Library for the "NEW" section in 2022.
- Shelving for reading materials in the Children's room include two new shelving units, purchased in 2009, and two donated bookshelves. A picture book shelving unit was purchased in 2016 with funding provided by the Borough of Totowa Public Library Foundation and a dedicated gift. Many of the shelves were replaced in 2020 with shelving from the discarded non-fiction units. In addition a carrel was also purchased to display the cake pan collection.
- The Director's and administrative assistant's furniture was purchased in 2002.
- New Public seating was purchased as part of the 2022 Main Room Renovation Project including six tables, four computer tables, and eight computer chairs. Six soft lounge seating, twenty armless chairs, and two "c" tables.
- Public area seating on lower level includes; eighty chairs purchased in 2005 with funds from a State grant. The remaining chairs are original (over 40 years old) and were repainted in 2012. Five portable stackable chairs were purchased in 2020 and are available for loan.
- A circulation desk was purchased for the Main room in 2022 as part of the Renovation Project.
- The Children's Room circulation desk and librarian's desk was purchased in 2009.
- Public seating in the Children's room includes: four tables and eighteen chairs purchased in 2009. Additionally, soft benches with two chairs that resemble books were purchased in 2014 through a dedicated gift donation. An additional loveseat was purchased with funding provided by a dedicated gift.



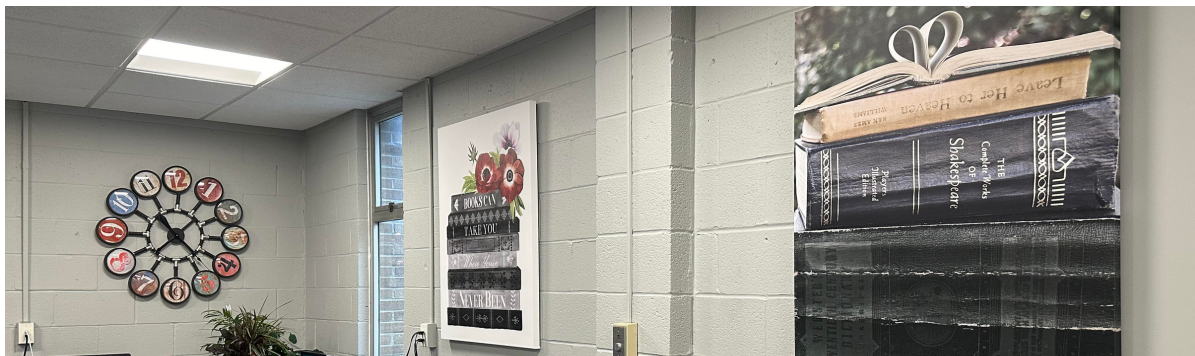
Children's Room

- Three staff room desks were purchased in 2012.
- Public seating in the Young Adult room was replaced in 2022 as part of the Main Room Renovation Project, it includes two round top tables and four chairs.
- There are two previously owned computer tables in the Meeting Room that were purchased in 2012 with funds provided by the Borough of Totowa Public Library Foundation.
- The Library Foundation purchased ten lightweight folding tables and a cart in 2012. Eight additional lightweight folding tables were purchased in 2018 to replace the extremely heavy 20 year old tables. In 2020, two 6 foot folding tables were purchased for the Library of Things and are available for loan by the public.
- A 90 gallon freshwater aquarium was installed in June of 2014, seed money for this aquarium was provided by Girl Scout Troop 70088. The aquarium is home to over 20 different species of fish. "SpongeBob SquarePants" themed décor was purchased in 2019 and added to the aquarium. The aquarium is starting to show signs of wear and tear and will most likely be replaced in 2024.
- Media shelving was replaced in 2016 with funds provided by the Borough of Totowa Public Library Foundation.
- Two movable portable folding walls were purchased in 2016. Three additional card tables were purchased in 2018 to accommodate the needs of the bridge, pinochle and mahjong groups.
- In early 2018, the Library purchased Oklahoma Sound Series700 Podium/PA System with funds provided by a dedicated gift.
- A donated used upright piano resides in the Eisenhower Room and was repaired in 2022.
- A twenty foot canvas mural was donated to the Library in 2019 and is on display in the Multi-Purpose Room. The mural was created by Passaic Valley High School Art Honor Society students and features characters from children's literature.
- A step and repeat banner with the Totowa Library logo was purchased in 2020 and is used for social media and events.
- In 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Personal Protective Equipment and other health and safety related fixtures and equipment were purchased with the majority of the funding provided by the CARES Act and the Borough of Totowa. The following were installed; Thermal temperature camera systems, touch-less water faucets, sensor enhanced toilets and hands free hand dryers and water fountains.
- In 2021, the Totowa Love and Care Cabinet was created by the DPW. The cabinet was painted with contest winning designs by a local artist. The cabinet is located in the rear of the building and is stocked with everything from non-perishable food to cleaning supplies, paper products to school supplies and pet food.
- In 2022 a canvas mural, illustrating the poem "INSCRIPTION FOR LIBRARY DOORWAY" by Robert Abrahams was painted by a local artist, Evelyn Perez. This piece of art is dedicated to longtime library patron Gilda Simonetti. It hangs in the new Reading Room.
- In December 2023 new art was purchased for the Main Room.



Canvas Mural

NEW ART IN MAIN ROOM



MULTI-PURPOSE ROOM



EISENHOWER COMMUNITY ROOM



MEETING ROOM



SECURITY SYSTEM

The security monitoring system was upgraded in March 2023. A 16 channel DVR with a power supply light 3.6 MM superhigh, interior dome, def infrared cameras were installed. In addition, two 55-inch Smart TV monitors were installed in the Director's office and staff room. Panic buttons were upgraded in March 2023 and are strategically positioned for the safety of staff and patrons.

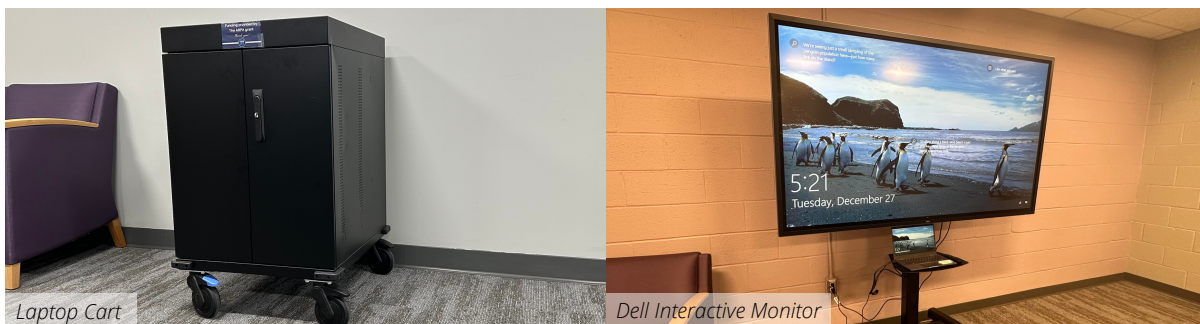


Main Room Public Computer Area

TECHNOLOGY

- The main server that provides Internet access for the Library is housed in the Young Adult Room in a secure locked cabinet. A NETGEAR battery backup was purchased in December 2017 and is housed in the cabinet.
- Internet access was upgraded in November 2023. The new service is a ethernet virtual private line with a connection to PALS Plus. It uses Verizon internal fiber network to segment traffic for a WAN connection to PALS Plus. Additionally a new CISCO router was installed.
- Password protected free Wi-Fi access is provided by Optimum/Cablevision. In 2023, Wi-Fi wiring, hardware and access points were upgraded and replaced with Meraki access points . This upgrade significantly improves the user experience.
- A standalone Dell management console to support Envisionware was purchased in 2019 and is housed in the circulation desk in the Main Room.
- Computer inventory currently includes nine public access and nine staff use Dell Optiplex machines. Older units were discarded in 2023. Funding for most of these machines was provided by the Friends of the Library and Library Foundation in 2018.
- In 2022 three iPads were received as part of the NJHealthConnect Grant. They are available for loan.
- Sixteen Dell Latitude 3310 laptops and a mobile cart were purchased with funding from the ARPA grant with IMLS and NJSL support. In 2022 they were primarily used in house for computer and coding classes. Plans for 2024 includes loaning several of them out to patrons for use within the building.

- Currently there are three hotspots in the collection and are loanable. They were purchased with funding from the ARPA grant with IMLS and NJSL support.
- Presently the library has three copy machines. Included in this inventory is a newly leased 2022 multi-functional machine. It offers standard black and white copying, faxing, and scanning capability. It also has the ability to sort and fold jobs. It will be used primarily by the staff. The other two machines are the 2018 models. They were retained as part of the lease end agreement. One is in the Main Room and the other is in the Children's Room. Both machines provide the public with copying, printing, scanning, and faxing services. All three machines have monthly maintenance agreements. Additional electronic devices for staff and program use include a projector and inflatable movie screen.
- Wireless printing software was installed in 2014 and is made available via GO Print.
- A typewriter is available for public use.
- An Ellison machine and laminator were purchased in 2009 and are located on the lower level in the Multi-Purpose Room.
- Telephone service was upgraded to a Nextiva Cloud/Hosted system in 2018. Thirteen Polycom telephones were installed in February. This upgrade included the installation of three phone lines on the lower level. The new phone system offers a myriad of functionality including most notably an external paging system and web based phone message availability. Two traditional hard wire phone lines were retained in order to support the elevator and fax line.
- An ActivPanel was purchased with funds provided by the Friends of the Library and delivered in January 2022. This device is used for various programs including computer classes, coding, story times, games, and movie showings.
- A 76 inch Dell Interactive Monitor was purchased with ARPA funds in 2022.



Laptop Cart

Dell Interactive Monitor

IMPROVEMENTS

Prior exterior improvements include replacement of several sidewalks in front of the building. The front door was replaced in 2016. Additional interior improvements include nine acoustic panels in the Eisenhower Room (2015), a privacy wall and new storage closet in the Meeting Room (2014). Electric panel upgrade and lighting replacement in hallway by kitchen (2019). The Friends of the Library purchased two commercial wall fans for the Eisenhower Room in 2019.

The completion of Main Room Renovation Project was celebrated on April 25th 2023. A plaque commemorating the event was installed in the Main Room and a new library card was created.



"While taking pride in this beautiful structure, I look upon it not as an institution of stone and cement, but as the pulsating heart of a municipality stimulated by the activity of its people."
 --THE LATE MAYOR SAMUEL CHERBA,
 Library and Municipal Complex Dedication, 1969

"Over the years, our library has become more than just a place to read and borrow books. It has become a vibrant community center where residents can come to meet and enjoy each other's company, participate in many types of activities offered, and of course, read!"
 --MAYOR JOHN COIRO
 Annual Community Read-Ahead, 2023

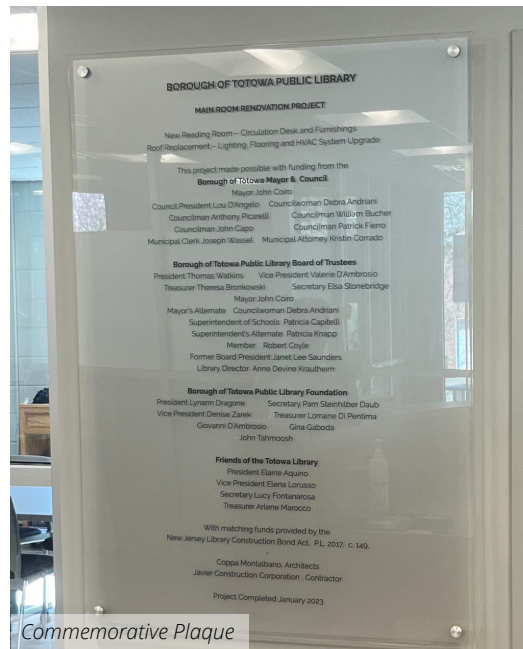
You are cordially invited to a dedication of our newly renovated Main Room!

**TOTOWA PUBLIC LIBRARY
 "RENOVATION CELEBRATION"
 OPEN HOUSE EVENT
 APRIL 25TH, 2023
 AT 6PM**

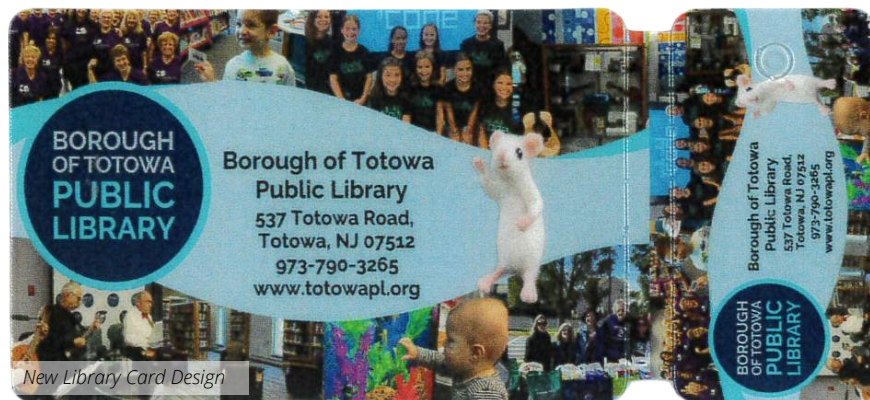
Join us as we welcome the community to our updated space, enjoy some light refreshments, and honor the group leaders, organizations, and volunteers who devote their time and efforts to make the Borough of Totowa Public Library the best that it can be. As part of National Library Week 2023, it's the perfect time to celebrate the start of a new era in the Totowa Library's rich history.

RSVP BY APRIL 14TH
 by calling 973-790-3265
 or sending a message to
 totowapl@gmail.com

Open House Invitation



Commemorative Plaque



New Library Card Design

MAIN ROOM



FUTURE PLANNING

Capital Projects for 2024 include the following:

- Replace the illuminated sign that is located on the front lawn with a digital sign.
- Renovate the Meeting Room & Multipurpose Room on the lower level. The plans for this project include replacing the storefront of windows with solid walls and some windows, new flooring and lighting, partitions and painting.
- Renovate the rear entrance area with new curbs, steps pavers, railings and a retaining wall.



Windows on lower level



Rear Entrance

In closing, the Library has come a long way since its humble beginnings in 1957. It continues to expand and respond to the ever changing needs of the community. Through dedication, hard work and the generosity of many, it has become the hub of the community and serves as a gathering place for residents of all ages.



FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOROUGH OF TOTOWA
UNION BLVD. CIRCA 1957

