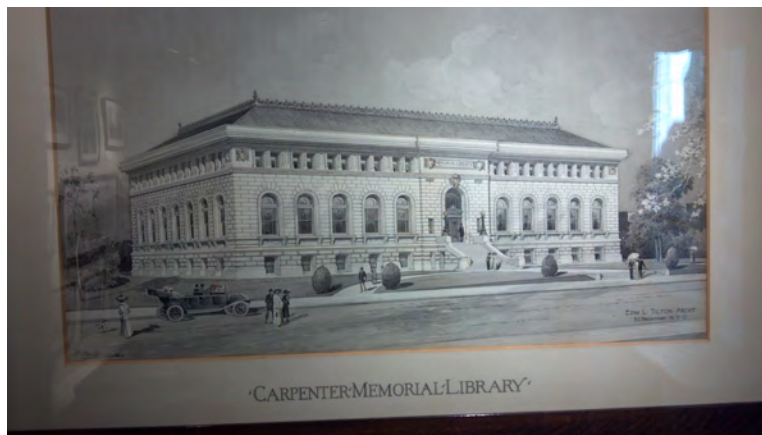


MANCHESTER (NH) CITY LIBRARY



On Friday, September 14, 2012 I toured the Manchester (NH) City Library with Denise van Zanten, Executive Director. The Manchester City Library was of particular interest as it was designed by Edward Tilton, the same architect who designed Knight Memorial Library. The Manchester Library is ten years older than Knight. I was curious about how the library building had been modernized and to see what lessons might be learned for future Knight renovations.

The two buildings have both similarities and differences. The major structural difference is that Manchester has a full second floor, which is used for administrative offices, and an attic that runs between the roof and that second floor. Both second floor and attic are built around a rotunda that includes a skylight (much smaller than Knight's). Like Knight, Manchester has a multi-level stacks. While Knight's stacks are completely hidden from the public and are located solely beneath the building's main level, Manchester's stacks begin on the lower floor and rise up to occupy (visibly) the rear section of the main library floor.

Air conditioning was installed in the Manchester library only within the last decade. Much of the HVAC controls and ductwork can be seen in the attic.

Manchester was also not accessible to the handicapped until recently. An accessible entrance was added to the left side of the building, entering into the Children's Room on the lower level (same location as Knight's original Children's Room. The monumental front staircase is still the building's most visible public entrance. Both entrances are open during all open hours.

The elevator connecting the building's three levels sits in a small addition built onto the center-rear of the building. For the public sections of the lower level to have access to the elevator it was necessary to remove some of the stacks to create a passageway.

HVAC in attic:



Accessible entrance:



Elevator addition:



Stacks:



Hallway cut through the stacks on lower level (note underside of floor panels at top):



Floor panels similar to Knight's:



Skylight:

