

Annual Report Of The

City Librarian

For the Fiscal Year Ending

April 30, 1995

This past year, as a part of our long range planning process, the Library's mission statement was reaffirmed. Our mission statement reads;" The mission of the Decatur Public Library is to provide access to and promote the use of materials that serve the informational, recreational, educational, and cultural needs of the community. Access to information and ideas will be assured through an efficient and effective staff working in adequate facilities, commensurate with sound and responsible fiscal planning."

As the above mission statement indicates, Decatur Public Library is a service organization whose sole purpose is to provide access to, and promote the use of, materials meeting a variety of community needs. This can not be done without qualified, caring people who have an interest in their community. Whether as library staff, board members, volunteers, city officials or city staff, many individuals in the past year have given of their time to see that the Library serves the public in the manner that its mission statement desires. My thanks go out to each of them for their efforts and concern. Due to each one of them the Decatur Public Library remains a quality institution.

This past year has been a year of substantial change, change that at times is difficult to be a part of. However, with the rapid growth of information and the varied formats in which it is appearing, and the limited funding available for our purposes , we seem destined, as an institution, to a period of change and instability.

Since May 1, 1994, the Library has signed a three year contract with its bargaining unit, instituted regular Sunday hour service, purchased a smaller bookmobile unit and placed it into service, completed a major hardware and software upgrade to its circulation and on-line catalog system, completed work on and approved a new five year plan, begun work on a possible renovation of its main library facility, installed an 11 station personal computer based information center in the main library lower level, and begun work on the replacement of the main library roof. That the substantial achievements listed above were accomplished is due to a hard working, caring and responsive staff. My thanks and appreciation for a job well done go out to each of them.

On August 24, 1995, AFSCME Local 268, the Decatur Public Library Board of Library Trustees, and the City of Decatur signed a three year collective bargaining agreement covering all non-management library employees. Under the terms of this agreement bargaining unit employees will receive a 3% wage adjustment for each year of the contract. This agreement has brought needed stability to library staff operations and enabled the library to begin its Sunday hour service.

On Sunday October 2, 1994, the Library began regular Sunday hour service. Between its start in October and its ending for the year on April 30, 1995 there were 7995 individuals recorded using the library on Sundays. This averages out to 348 individuals per Sunday. The highest attendance was recorded on Sunday, February 5th when 439 individuals used the library. Staffing for this new service was done primarily with current staff. Staff, with few exceptions, were required to work every fourth Sunday on a rotating basis. Many staff volunteered for additional Sundays. Sunday hour service did add an additional burden to a tightly staffed library. The service has been well received by our user community and will continue this coming fall.

In October of 1994, Karen Anderson Head of Extension Division attended the National Bookmobile Conference in Columbus, Ohio. While at that meeting, she picked up information about a mini-bookmobile for sale. With Board of Library Trustee's approval, the Library purchased for \$7,500 this bookmobile which began service in February of 1995. By the end of May 1995, it will replace one of our large bookmobile units in providing extension service to the Decatur community. With this unit the library will be able to reach areas of the community unable to be reached with a larger unit and can provide more specialized service to distinct elements of our community.

In last year's annual report, I mentioned that our GEAC Libs 100 system had reached capacity and did not possess the capability of allowing outside information databases to be loaded on the system for use over public access terminals. Discussions begun in June 1994 with GEAC, continued during the fall and resulted in the library signing a contract with GEAC in November 1994 to provide the software needed to upgrade to the Libs 100+ system. A separate contract was signed with a local vendor to provide an IBM RS 6000 as the hardware platform for the system. Also with this upgrade an acquisitions module was purchased, which will permit the automation of our materials ordering process. This upgrade was begun in December 1994 and by April 30, 1995, all but the installation of the acquisitions module had been completed.

The system upgrade was a major project requiring considerable staff time in preparation for the upgrade, system adjustments during the upgrade and then in training staff and the general public on the new system. The library was complemented by GEAC for the ease in which the upgrade was accomplished. As with any system, there are quirks that make life challenging. Improvements with the new system include the ability, as funding permits, to install other databases for user searching from public access terminals, to add more access ports for both in-house and remote access, and the provision of information units such as bulletin boards for the display of library and community information. The library has already increased its remote access capabilities by adding additional phone lines and will be pursuing other databases as funding permits.

The library's long range planning committee worked diligently during the summer and fall of 1994 to develop a new plan that will take the library into the 21st century. The plan, adopted by the Library Board of Trustees on January 19, 1995 reaffirmed the library's mission. Major roles for the library remain those of popular materials library, reference library, and independent learning center. The role of pre-school door to learning was expanded to pre-teen door to learning to emphasize the library's determination to work with the development of a reading and learning interest in the child from birth to the teen years. The plan in its final form emphasizes that it is a vision of the future, rather than a road map to its accomplishment. In this time of constant change, any plan becomes an evolving document to be examined on an annual basis, rather than a finished product for a specific time span.

For the past several years, there has been a discussion of the need to renovate the library's main library facility. Built originally for use as a Sears building, the building was purchased from Sears in the late 1960's and renovated for use by the library. Since its opening on January 4, 1971, the main library has seen 24 years of constant use with over 6,000,000 visits. In that time period technology has taken leaps not anticipated and community demographics have changed. The children's area suffers from lack of size for not only the display of materials and proper seating, but for the employment of needed computer technology as well. Meeting rooms, which receive heavy use, need a better placement within the building, as well as renovation. With carpets worn, and HVAC in need of replacement and repair, building renovation becomes even more necessary. With the above in mind, the library's foundation hired a building consultant in 1993 who developed a building needs statement. Employing that document and the work of the long range planning committee, as well as extensive staff input, the library foundation employed BLDD Architects of Decatur to develop schematic drawings for possible building renovation. As April 1995 drew to a close, both the foundation and the library board had received reports from BLDD on renovation possibilities. A meeting is scheduled with the Decatur City Council for July 1995 to discuss the project, including funding options. It is hoped that the coming fiscal year will see much progress on this necessary project.

With the installation of an 11 station computer network in the library's lower level in November 1994, Decatur Public Library substantially increased user access to CD-ROM and other databases. Included in this network were the three terminals previously a part of the BIC Center. The purchase of additional computer terminals, as well as network and communication servers and CD-ROM towers was made possible by gifts from Communities in Partnership and the Macon County Medical Society. Without their generous support, the resulting network would not have been the size, or have the capacity that it has. In addition the Macon County Medical Society provided funding to

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start the Health Science Database subscription which, along with Info Trac is housed on the network.

At year's end the library was preparing to receive an information kiosk containing basic information on community service agencies. This kiosk, funded by the Friends of the Decatur Public Library, has been a joint project DPL, Communities in Partnership and Millikin University. In addition to this kiosk, the information network will receive an expanded data base of community service agencies with more detailed information on their services and staff which will be available for searching both in the library and at remote sites via modem and personal computer. I am excited about these new services.

The library's roof, after twenty-four years of hot summers and cold, snowy Illinois winters is sorely in need of replacement. At our levy hearings with the Decatur City Council in November 1994, it was agreed that this repair would be a part of the city's FY 95-96 capital budget. Plans are currently underway which will result in a new roof by September 1995. This project is an excellent example of the good cooperation that exists between the library and city government.

Library use statistics for the past year indicate that main library attendance was down, material circulation was up slightly, and professional assists (or questions asked of staff which are non-directional in nature) increased slightly. Attendance at the main library totaled 328,689 visits, down 5.3% from a year ago. Total material circulation for the year was 801,780 items or .7% increase over last year. Circulation at the main library facility totaled 626,990 items, or 2.7% less than a year ago. Circulation at the Extension Division's bookmobiles and outreach stations totaled 174,790 items, or 14.9% above last year's circulation. Professional assists for the year totaled 70,518 or an increase of 1.8% over a year ago. As of April 30, 1995, 56,122 Decatur residents had library cards and had used the library since January 1992. This is an increase of 1.1% over a year ago. This means that 66.9% of Decatur residents have a library card and remains an indication of the heavy community use the Library receives.

The above main library building attendance figures continue a trend that started with the 1992 - 1993 fiscal year. Part of this figure can again be attributed to the perception on people's part that downtown Decatur is not a safe place to visit after dark. As stated last year, it will take more than just action on our behalf to correct this. I continue to hear concerns about no on-site parking and this may be a contributor to building attendance decline. We are also looking into the accuracy of our data collection processes for this figure and will shortly be taking additional measuring steps to insure that this figure is a true reflection of actual visits made.

The 1994 - 1995 budget projected a balanced budget with expenditures and revenue of \$ 2,493,490. Due to an increase in revenue as the result of increased personal property replacement tax, a higher than anticipated interest rate on funds, a higher level of donations including the donations from Communities in Partnership and the Macon County Medical Society mentioned earlier, and a contract for reference service from Rolling Prairie Library System the actual revenue received was \$ 2,567,646.81. Expenditures for the year were \$2,543,400.58. Included in these expenditures was a transfer of \$112,000 to the library's capital fund.

During the year 17,108 volumes were added to the collection a decrease of 3.6% over last year. The library spent \$ 338,539.83 on materials for the year, an increase of 12% over the past year. This amounts to \$4.03 per Decatur resident. The Library currently receives 981 periodicals.

As a part of regular collection maintenance, 15,748 volumes representing 4,217 titles were withdrawn during the year, 3,246 paperbacks were bound, 9,796 periodicals were processed, 12,400 items were mended, and 3,742 book jackets were replaced. The re-labeling of the local history and fiction collections continues with 137 books processed for the local history project and 436 books for the fiction project. Additional collection maintenance projects included the transfer of books from Evans/Extension collections to the main library collection, and the re-labeling of cassettes prior to being placed on open shelving.

The Children's Division had a very successful summer reading program. This year individuals were allowed to select the number of books to be read rather than read a preselected number. There were 2,277 children participating in the program with 26% completing all steps in the program. The division participated in the "Jump Start" program sponsored by the American Library Association and Prudential Insurance Company. This program encouraged children in grades 1-3 to get library cards. The library was one of five libraries nationwide that were awarded a \$1,000 prize for participation in the project.

The Children's Division gave tours and special story-times to 209 groups attended by 4,080 individuals during the year. There were 332 SPARK(Super Parents Are Reading to Kids) contacts and 333 Baby TALK contacts during the year. During the year 2,776 individuals attended 126 programs. Programs included lap-sits, storytimes and special programs such as the Madcap Productions puppet performances at the end of the summer reading program.

The attached list of meeting room activities and programs indicates the important role that our meeting facilities play in the community. There were 53 different community

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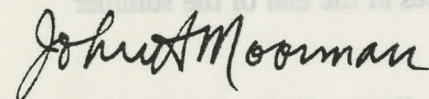
groups using the room with a total of 278 meetings held. Meetings were held in the library on 91% of the days that we were open. We turned away groups on a regular basis as space had already been reserved for desired meeting times.

As in years past, the accompanying charts graphically describe some of the statistics reported herein. Trends found on the chart are again the increasing number of informational requests of staff, the decreasing main library attendance, and an overall material circulation that has been relatively static for the past five years. What we may be seeing here is the beginning of a change in public library usage. Part of this change involves the increasing use of technology, which results in more emphasis being placed on staff assistance in locating information and more location of information in non-book sources, thus lessening the need to check out material for the preparation of papers, reports, and projects. In time, it will result in fewer visits to the library as needed information may be located at home via library access through modem and personal computers.

Any annual report would be incomplete without mentioning the hard work performed by building maintenance and cleaning. Much of their work is done unseen, or in hours when the library is closed to the public. I continually receive comments from other librarians and out-of-town visitors on how clean our facilities are. I know from personal visits that our facilities are kept in as good condition as any other public library and better than most. Whether repairing video tapes, painting book return drops, installing coax cable for computers, or stripping and waxing floors our maintenance and cleaning staff can be counted upon for a quality job.

All of the above is but a reminder that the purpose of the Decatur Public Library is to provide the information and related services needed by our user community. The library is a service organization and that is in the end our product upon which we will be measured. While we have shortcomings, I feel that, as I mentioned at the beginning of this report, the Decatur Public Library remains a quality institution providing a high level of service to the public. That this is so, is due to a hard working, and dedicated, staff of whom any administrator would be justly proud. I thank each of you for your contributions to the library this past year.

Respectfully submitted on May 25, 1995



John A. Moorman, City Librarian

MEETING ROOM ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS
FISCAL YEAR 1994-1995

African-American Genealogical Society of Central Illinois
AFSCME Council 31
Baby TALK
Baha'i Community
Barn Colony Artists
BMR Brokerage Firm
Books Between Bites
Breakfast Optimist Club
Central Illinois Power Builder Users Group
Cerenex Pharmaceutical
Children's Department Storyteller
Communities in Partnership
Decatur Celebration and Parade
Decatur Township
Decatur Macon County Clean Community System
Decatur Genealogical Society
Delta Kappa Gamma
Department of Mental Health
Estate Plan Inc.
Firestone
Freewheeler's Bicycle Club
Friends of the Library
Great Books
Human Service Agency Consortium
Illinois Interior Design
Internal Revenue Service
JTPA-Macon/Dewitt County
Kitchen Solver Marketing Group
League of Women Voters
Macon County Medical Society
Macon County Mental Health Board
May, Cocagne & King, P.C.
Mental Health Association of Macon Co.
Millikin Tax Group
One World Foundation
Planned Parenthood
Population Awareness
Professional Employment Network
Project READ
Prudential
Richland Community College--GED--Adult Education
Rolling Prairie Library System
School District #61
Service Corps of Retired Executives
SEWA River Mission of Sierra Leone
Super Parents Are Relating To Kids
Tom Nakos Art Class
United We Stand
Wildlife CPR
Women's Investment Club
Women's Progressive Club
Youth Empowerment Agency
YWCA

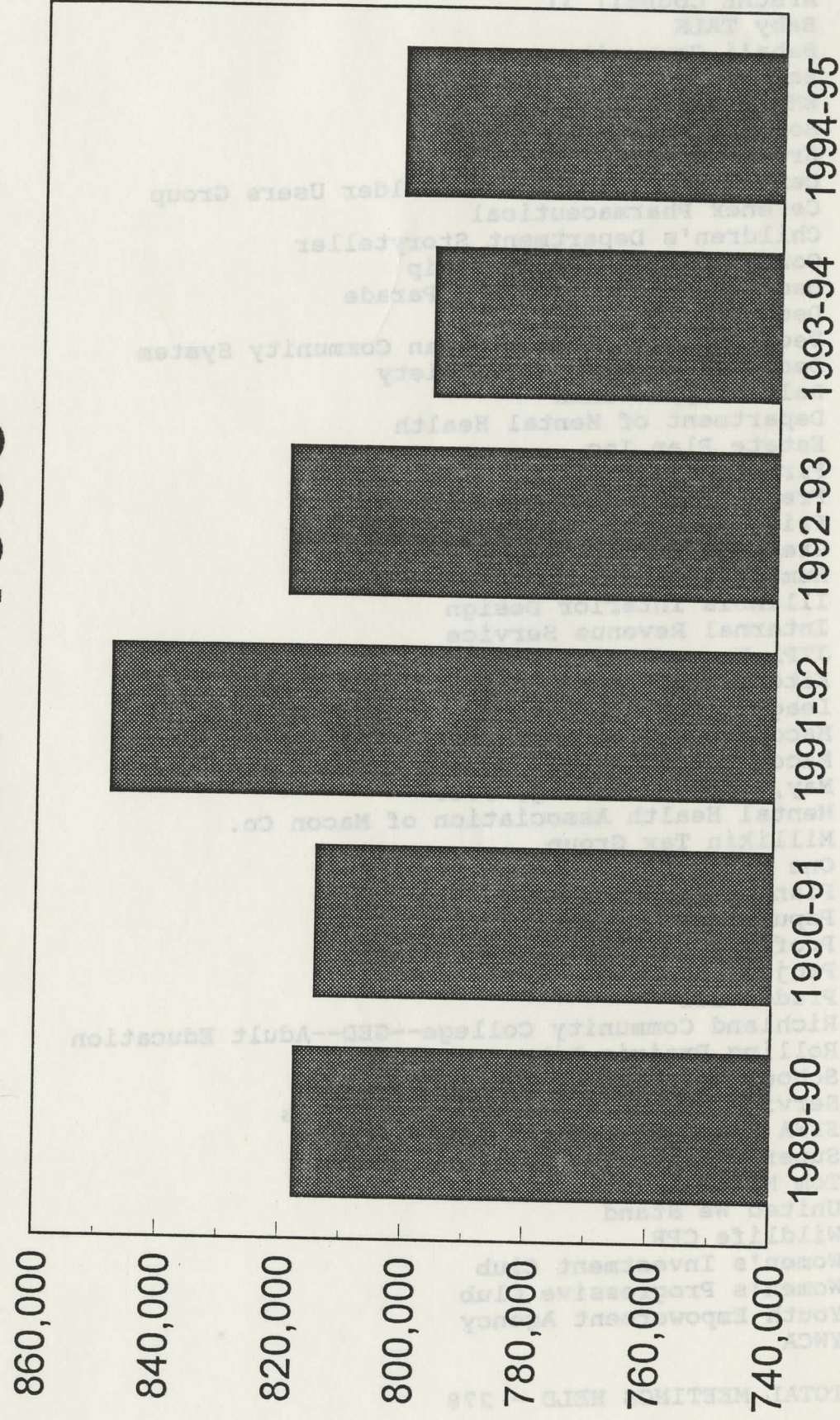
TOTAL MEETINGS HELD - 278

2000 - 0000

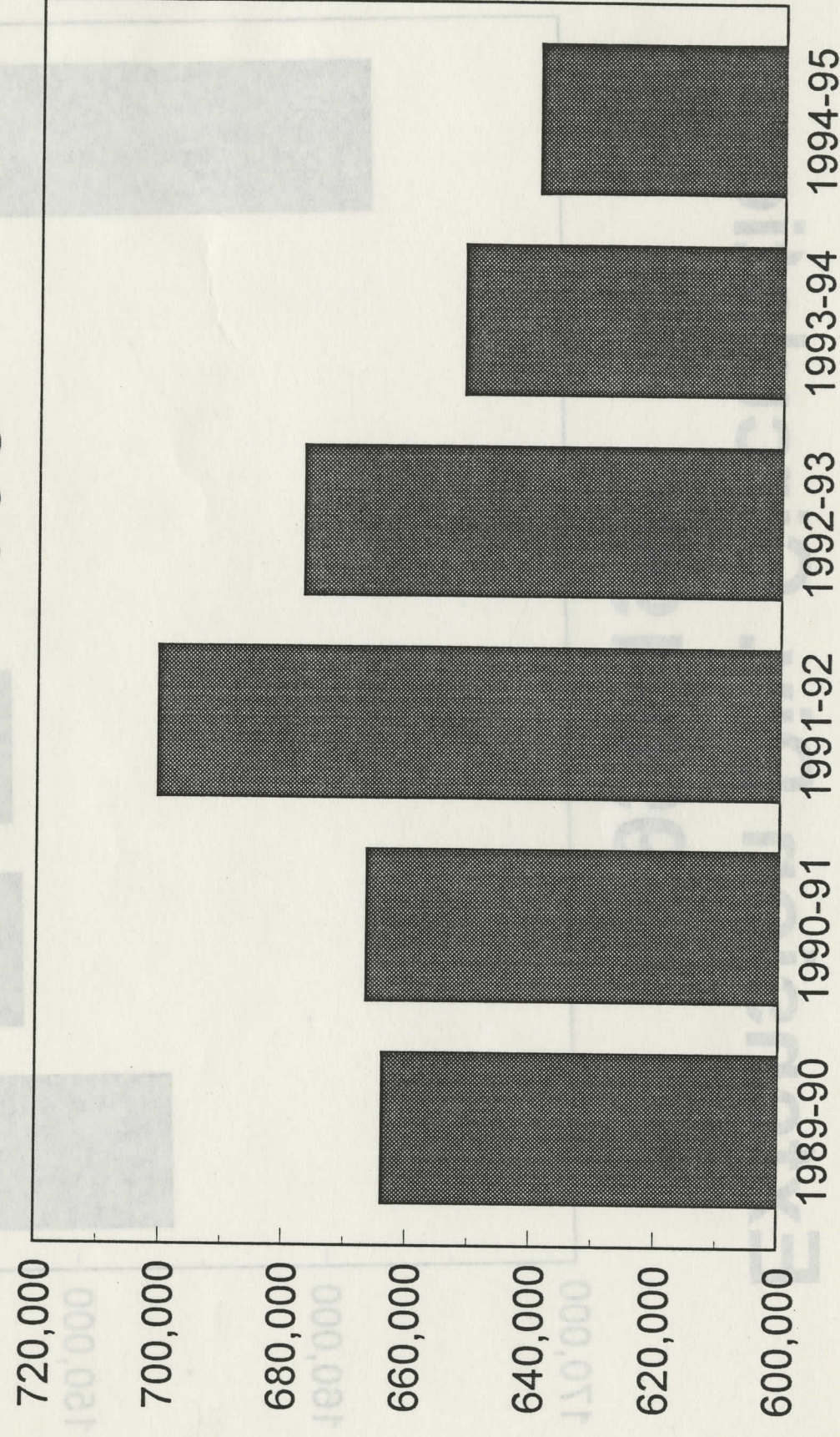
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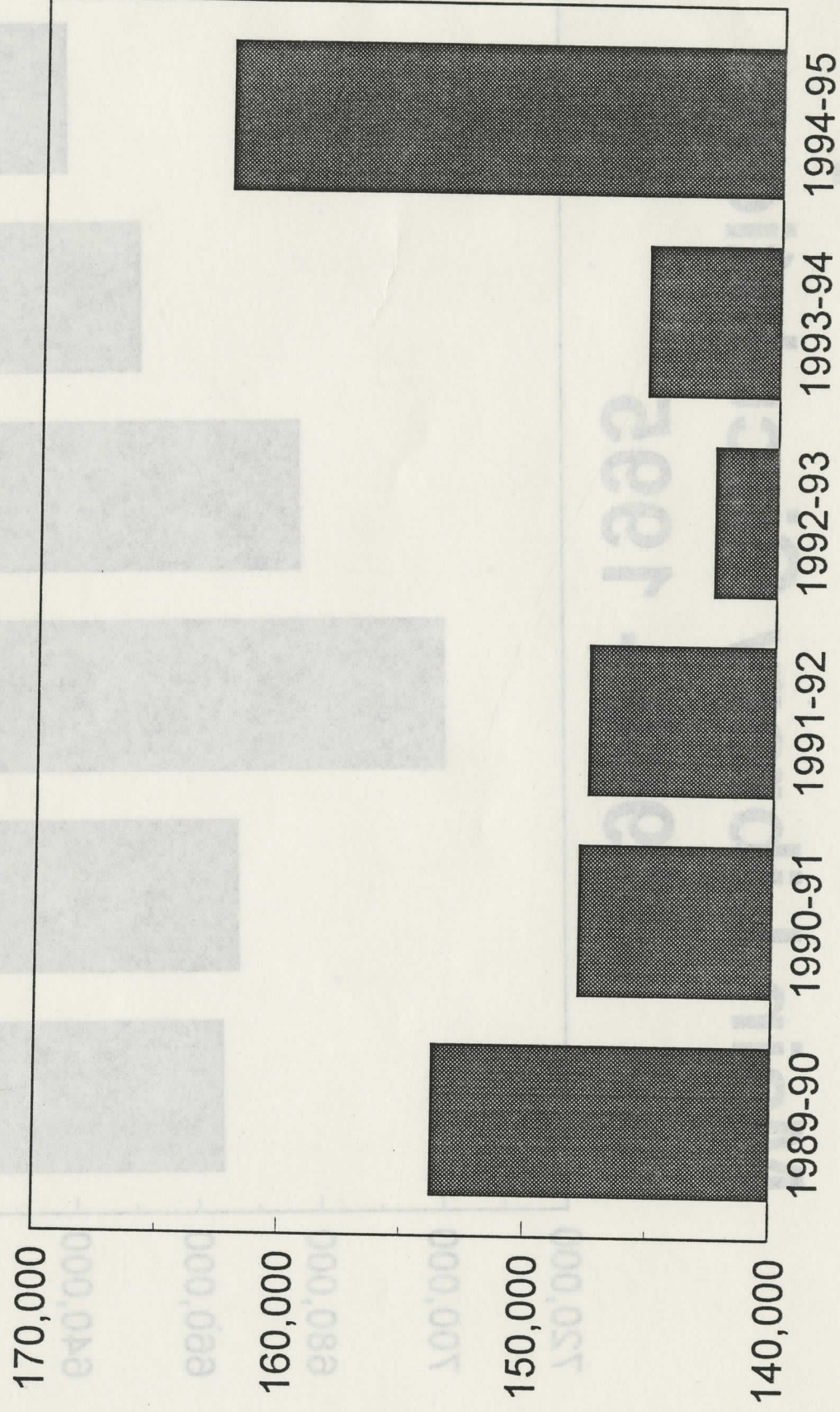
Decatur Public Library Annual Circulation 1990 - 1995



Decatur Public Library Main Library Circulation 1990 - 1995



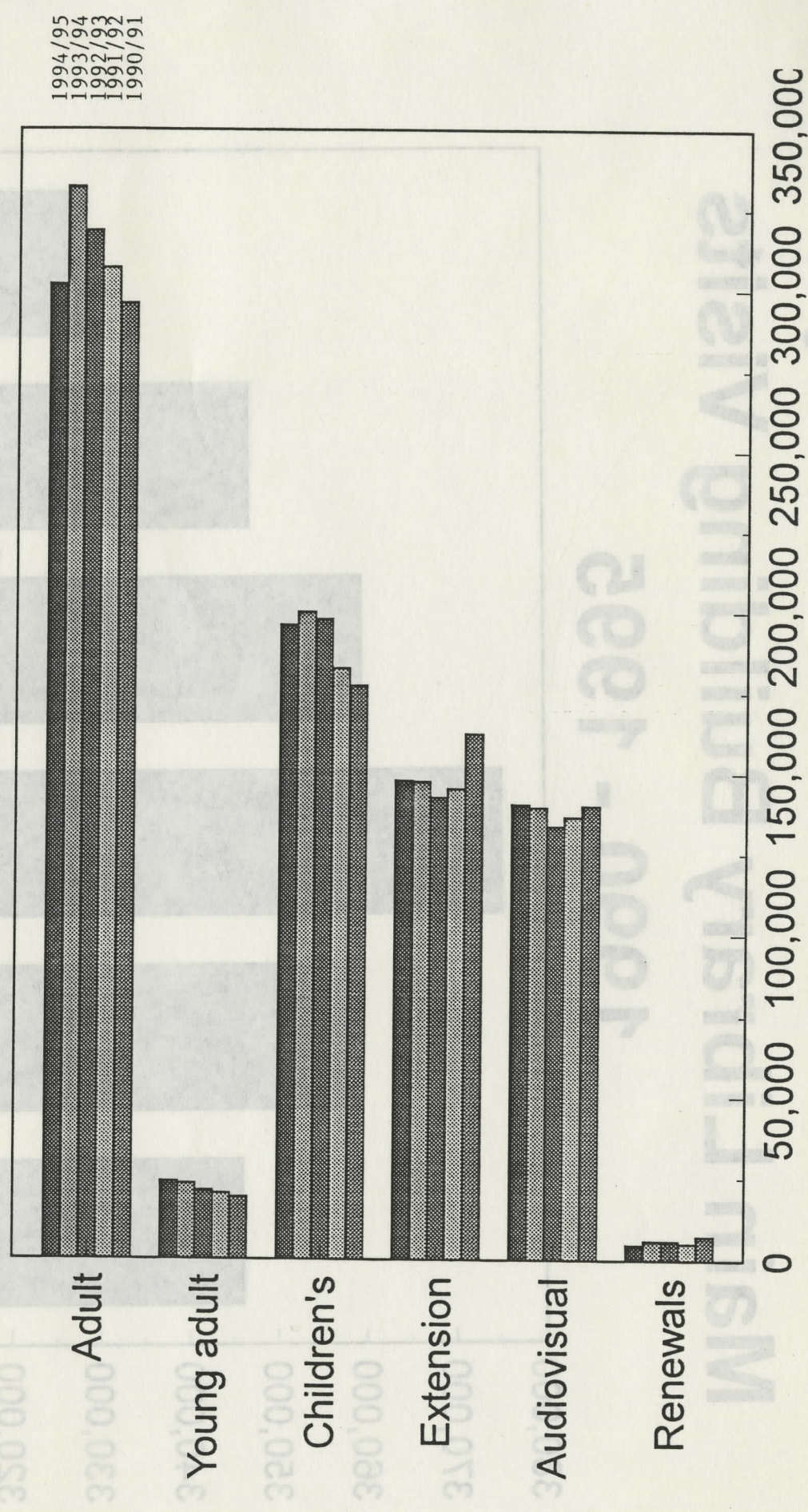
Decatur Public Library Extension Div. Circulation 1990-1995



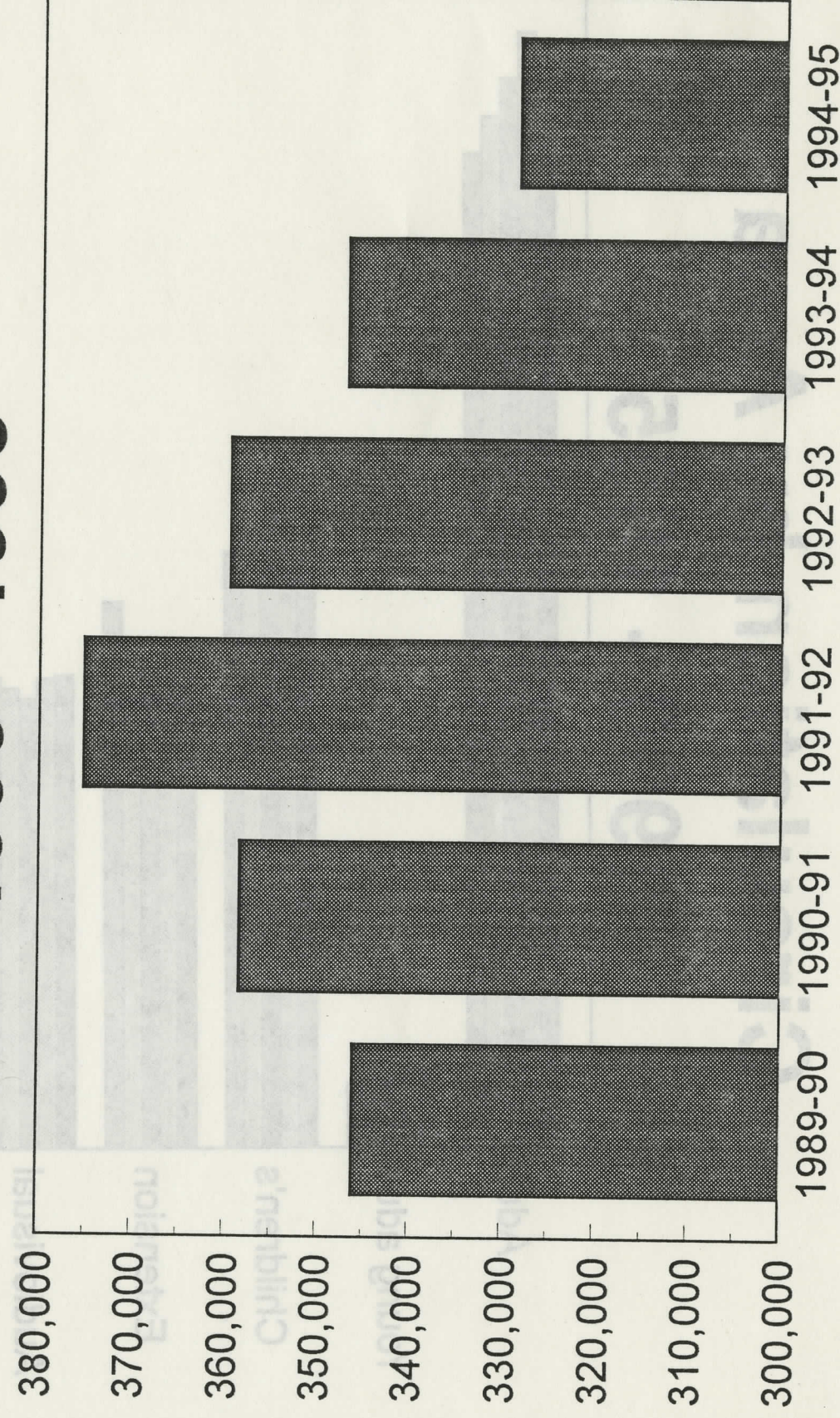
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Circulation by Area

1990 - 1995



Decatur Public Library Main Library Building Visits 1990 - 1995



Decatur Public Library Information Requests 1990 - 1995

