

BENEFACTORS

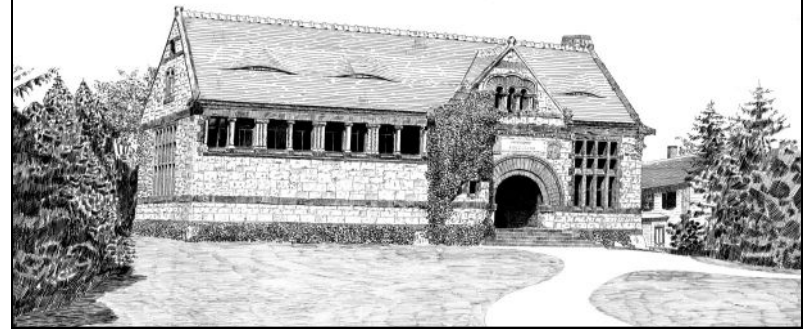
THOMAS CRANE

Born in 1803 on George's Island in Boston Harbor, later the site of Fort Warren, Thomas Crane moved with his family to Quincy Point when he was seven years old and it was here that he attended school and learned his trade as a stone cutter. A stoutly religious man, Crane often walked to Boston and back, a distance of twenty miles, to attend church. He moved to New York City in 1829 where he made his fortune in real estate and as a dealer in granite during a very active period of construction. He furnished the granite for the New York City Custom House and the Grand Central Depot as well as many other buildings in the city. When the Universalist church founded Tufts University in 1852, Crane gave generously to its fund and served as a trustee for many years. Although he left Quincy at an early age he retained his love of his boyhood home and a portion of his summers were spent here for many years. He died at the age of 72.

ALBERT CRANE

Born in 1842, he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Tufts University in 1863 and a law degree from Columbia University in 1866. He died at the age of 76 in Stamford, Connecticut.

THOMAS CRANE PUBLIC LIBRARY



THOMAS CRANE PUBLIC LIBRARY

40 Washington St., Quincy
617-376-1301
thomascranelibrary.org

RICHARDSON BUILDING, 1882

\$50,000

This original Thomas Crane Library building was a memorial to Mr. Crane presented to Quincy by his widow Clarissa (Starkey) and his sons Benjamin and Albert, seven years after his death, in 1875. Construction began in September of 1880 and ended in the spring of 1882.

Now beautifully restored and used as a reading room, the building was designed by Henry Hobson Richardson in the Romanesque style. It is considered his masterpiece in the field of library architecture and was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1987. The foundation is of Quincy granite, the upper structure of North Easton granite and the trimming of Longmeadow brownstone. The interior woodwork is of North Carolina pine, with hand carved native plants and berries forming part of the ornamental woodwork of the fireplace. The restoration process used old photographs to guide the repainting of walls, the recreation of period light fixtures, and the uncovering of wide planked floors. Tables and chairs designed by Richardson were refinished and put back into use for the public to enjoy.

The “Old Philosopher” window in the front of the building was crafted by John LaFarge and is considered a masterpiece of stained glass work. There are seven pieces of glass in the ear alone and a total of about one thousand pieces. At the left of the fireplace is another LaFarge window, “Angel at the Tomb,” given in memory of Thomas Crane’s son, Benjamin Franklin Crane. The original landscaping of the library lawn was done by Frederick Law Olmstead.

AIKEN ADDITION, 1908

\$64,000

A donation from Albert Crane made possible the erection of this addition to the north façade of the original library. It was designed by William Martin Aiken, who had worked in Richardson’s office. The addition increased the reading and book stack space and provided a children’s room in the basement. The stained glass windows at the rear, most of which represent bookplates, were moved from the end of the original reading room. Translucent glass floors and larger windows add natural lighting.

COLETTI ADDITION, 1939

\$200,000

Designed by Quincy brothers Paul A. and Carroll Coletti in a Romanesque style that complemented the Richardson building, the exterior is of granite and brownstone. The original quarries were reopened to provide matching building materials, and the red slate roof and eyebrow windows continue the harmony of the two buildings. The two carved brownstone bas reliefs flanking the main entrance symbolize Quincy’s granite and shipbuilding industries, and the cranes on the gable end are a tribute to the generosity of the Crane family.

CBT ADDITION, 2001

\$16 million

The Boston architectural firm of Childs, Bertman and Tseckares, with Richard Bertman as principal architect, designed the 42,500 square foot addition. The exterior combines the old and new with the use of Vermont granite, cast stone to simulate brownstone, and slate to match the existing roofs. The addition’s interior combines old and new by redefining much of the Coletti space. An exterior wall of the 1939 Coletti addition serves as the interior atrium wall. Interior materials include makore (African cherry) woodwork and furniture, Indian slate floors and granite library desks.

