

interest

adopted

COUNCIL DOCUMENT # 74
Assigned by Resolutions
Committee: Ad
Member Initial

RESOLUTION TO ENDORSE A NATIONAL LIBRARY SYMBOL

WHEREAS, one priority of the American Library Association is public awareness; and

WHEREAS, a national library symbol is one means of increasing public awareness; and

WHEREAS, the White House Conference on Library and Information Services recommended the development of a national library symbol; and

WHEREAS, the ALA President's Task Force on a National Library Symbol has studied this issue and recommended a symbol for national use;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the American Library Association officially endorse the symbol recommended by the ALA President's Task Force and promote its use.



Kay M. Elliott
Kay M. Elliott
Councilor

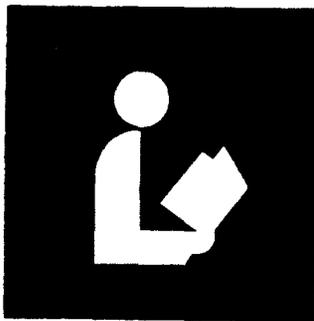
Seconded by:

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NATURE OF CONTENT: Policy

ALA UNITS SPONSORING: Chapter Relations Committee

REVIEWED FOR CONFORMANCE WITH
GUIDELINES
by Council Resolutions Committee



A NATIONAL LIBRARY SYMBOL FOR THE U.S.

The proposed national library symbol is being launched at the 1982 American Library Association Annual Conference for use by libraries throughout the U.S. in promoting awareness of their services. Originally developed by the Western Maryland Public Libraries for system-wide use, this symbol is being recommended for national use by an ALA presidential task force charged with exploring the possibility of a national symbol for America's libraries.

PURPOSE

The purpose of a national library symbol is to increase public awareness of libraries through widespread use of a standardized symbol on library directional signs and promotional materials. The symbol is designed primarily for use on exterior library signs appearing on streets, highways, campuses, and buildings; but it can also be used by individual libraries on newsletters, posters, booklists, library cards, bookmarks, letterhead, and other promotional materials.

BACKGROUND

Impetus for adopting a national library symbol developed from a recommendation of the 1979 White House Conference on Library and Information Services which suggested "adopting a library symbol for the Nation" as one means for increasing public awareness of libraries. In the fall of 1981, ALA President Betty Stone established a task force to study the possibility of implementing this recommendation. In considering the relevant work that has been done in the U.S. and other countries on library symbols, the task force identified the Western Maryland symbol for potential use on a nationwide basis.

SELECTION

The task force is recommending the Western Maryland symbol for national use because it was designed as part of a total, coordinated sign system and because it meets the following criteria for a good library symbol as outlined by a design consultant on the task force:

- instantly understood by the average person without supporting text;
- easily reproduced for both large and small applications;
- universally recognized and associated with a library;
- suggestive of the active use of information by library patrons;

- aesthetically pleasing, clear, and simple in design, similar to the graphic style of international symbols already in widespread use;
- capable of modification if the nature of libraries should change significantly in the future.

The symbol triggers instant recognition of a library through a graphic representation that people instantly associate with libraries--the book and reader. It does not attempt to capture the essence of the modern library or represent the range of its resources. In the task force's opinion, this would be impossible to do in a clean, easily recognized image. Once the public is cued to the presence of a library by the basic symbol, additional symbols, signs, and promotional materials can be used to further educate users about the full range of library resources.

USAGE

Development of this library symbol in Maryland included the preparation of an excellent sign system manual which gives specifications for using the symbol independently or as part of a total sign system for the library. This manual has been published by ALA to assist libraries across the country in implementing the symbol.

The manual specifies a standard shade of blue (PMS 285) as the background color for exterior use of the symbol on directional and building signs. The manual also presents a coordinated system of signs and symbols for the interior of library buildings, including symbols for special collections and facilities. Detailed information and recommendations are given regarding:

- color, type style, and layout;
- terminology to designate specific library areas and services;
- materials and specifications for construction and mounting of signs;
- locations for exterior and interior signs;
- use of the symbols on library publications; and
- special signage for blind and physically handicapped readers and non-readers.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Carol Nemeyer, the 1982-83 ALA President, is establishing a new task force to advise and assist libraries in implementing the proposed national library symbol on the local level. The group will work closely with local, state, and national associations, Friends of Libraries groups, and individual libraries. The implementation task force will be headed by Bob Garen, Coordinator, Service to Shut-ins and Retirees, Detroit Public Library.