

**120 EUGENIE STREET – ST. BONIFACE PUBLIC LIBRARY
CORONATION PARK BRANCH**
Nikola Mathew Zunic and Victor Sobkowich (1961)



In the late 1950s, the St. Boniface Parks Board made a small piece of property in Coronation Park’s northeast corner available to the St. Boniface Public Library Board, who was seeking to modernized and expand its facilities. The park, in St. Boniface’s Norwood neighbourhood, had been set aside by St. Boniface City Council, opening it officially on May 12, 1937 to coincide with the coronation of King George VI.

On this piece of property at the corner of Eugenie Street and Taché Avenue, the City built a new public library, the Coronation Park Branch. It was one of three libraries the city opened in 1960-1961, along with Windsor Park, Cottonwood Road and North St. Boniface (Provencher Park), Avenue de la Cathédrale.

The one-storey, reinforced concrete and red brick structure is built with an internal structural system of steel posts and laminate wood beams. The main (north) façade includes the main entrance, smaller rectilinear window openings, clerestory windows (also found on the rear façade), and larger glass panels. It does not appear that any major changes have been made to the original exterior design.

The interior features a full basement with stairs at the northeast and northwest corners. Original laminate wood beams and ceilings are found throughout.

The designer of the Coronation Park Branch was the local partnership of Nikola Mathew Zunic (1921-2006) and Victor Sobkowich (1923-2013). The pair were responsible for a number of fine modern buildings located throughout the city and province, including the other two St. Boniface libraries, St. Alphonsus Catholic Church, 341 Munroe Avenue (1958), Holy Family Ukrainian Catholic Church, 1001 Grant Avenue (1963), St. James Civic Centre, 2055 Ness Avenue (1965-1966), and Transcona Police & Fire Hall, 730 Pandora Avenue West (1966).

Surety Construction Company, operated by W.J. Ducharme and H.J. Perron, built the library.

This library is a good example of the International Style, a modern architectural movement of the post-World War II era that lasted into the late 1960s and can be identified by its use of hard, angular edges, severely plain surfaces, large areas of glass and square or rectangular modules.

Contextually, this library was planned as St. Boniface's English-language branch, the Provencher Park Branch serving the Francophone community. Even after 1970, when the City of St. Boniface was amalgamated into the City of Winnipeg, the two small branches continued to fill this area role. In 1985, after several years of study and consultation, a new bilingual branch was planned for St. Boniface, opened on Taché Avenue in 1987. The Coronation Park Branch has been leased since the late 1990s by a local art group founded in the 1960s.

Elements of the building that would require approval if alterations were planned are:

A. Exterior-

- i. One-storey, red brick structure with flat roof with main (north) façade facing Eugenie Street, east façade facing Taché Avenue and the rear (south) and west façades facing Coronation Park with concrete retaining walls to the east and west;
- ii. The front (north) façade with its west end entrance surrounded by large single-pane glass panels, smaller rectangular window openings, large single-pane glass panels at the east end and set of thin clerestory windows running the entire length of the façade;
- iii. The rear (south) façade with its band of clerestory windows running the entire length of the façade and brick chimney;
- iv. The west façade with four rectilinear window openings; and
- v. The east façade with four rectilinear openings and entrance door.

B. Interior-

- i. Examples of the original laminate wood beams and ceilings.