

Heritage Park

1988

The Heritage Park Regional Library opened on Friday evening, June 3, 1988, as Irvine's second public library and the county's third regional public library. The library's 18,000 square feet was filled with an opening collection of over 110,000 volumes to serve the city's population of 62,134 per the 1980 census.

Barbara Brook served as its branch manager from opening until 2006 upon retirement.

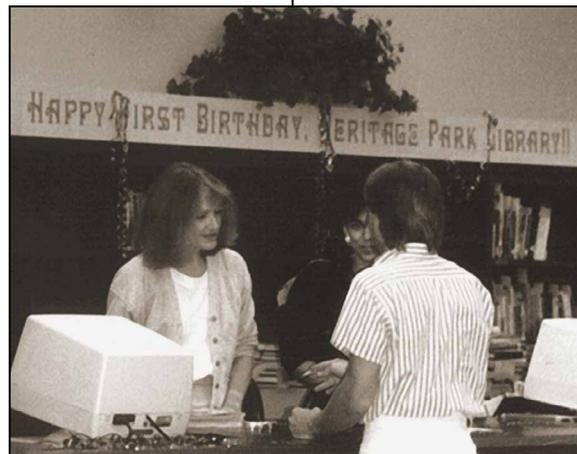
The library was the beneficiary of Irvine's Art in Public Places program, which resulted in the emplacement at the entrance to the library of a three part sculpture by Mark Lere called *Man, Nature, and Culture*. Irvine's first permanent piece of public art includes a slate and marble throne-like chair, a twelve-foot headless figure constructed of 200 stacked pieces of anodized aluminum, and a spiraling slate and marble timeline, which includes 44 significant dates in Irvine history.

No sooner did the Heritage Park Library open then an expansion was planned and eventually executed in 2002. This expansion increased the facility to 29,000 square feet. As one of OC Public Libraries' three regional branches, its collection has an emphasis in philosophy and psychology, social sciences, pure sciences, technology, arts, and history and travel.

Exterior, 1991



Barbara Brook helps a patron on the branch's first birthday, 1989



The library is located in the expansive Heritage Park, which includes a community center, art center, day care center, aquatics center, Irvine High School, and fire station. It serves a diverse multicultural community whose appetite for the written word extends to a collection with magazines in languages ranging from Arabic to Urdu. Its central location within the county makes it an ideal location for a meeting place. The library's 119 person capacity community room is used daily by the community for everything from library programs to English and Tai Chi instruction.

The library is the government repository for documents related to the closure of the El Toro and Tustin Marine Corps Air Stations. From 1990 through 1991, the library functioned temporarily as

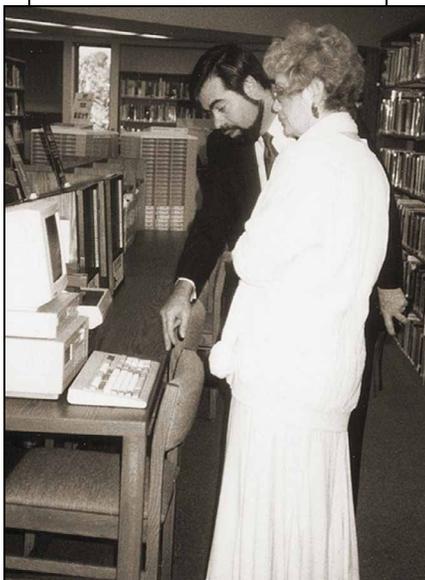
the home for the library headquarters staff until their offices in Santa Ana were ready for occupancy.

The library is served by its bookstore, which is operated by the Friends of the Library. The Friends provide considerable financial support that allows the library to acquire materials, run programs, and provide equipment, including machines and portable magnifiers for the visually impaired.

The library has always been a hub of activity. As Irvine's population has grown, so too has the library, not only physically but also in use by its citizens. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the 2010 population for Irvine was 212,375. In 2010, Heritage Park alone had over 1 million items in circulation out of almost 7.3 million items in circulation for the entire county system. Not only is it the busiest library in the thirty-four branch system, it is also the largest library in the size of its collection and third largest in square footage. Bigger and busier is better at Heritage Park Library.



Opening Day, 1988



*Thomas Fitch and Pat Berg
exploring the program
SuperMap, 1988*