

Coral Gables Library Advisory Board
Request For Commission Action
On Library Historic Furniture and Artifacts
April 10, 2018

The Library Advisory Board by unanimous vote on January 16, 2018 moved to request the City Commission to allow certain historic furniture and artifacts to remain in the Library after completion of the building renovations. Excerpt of the minutes are attached.

The renovation of the Library was spearheaded by the Library Advisory Board through documenting the poor condition of the building and advocating for improvements with the Miami-Dade Public Library Administration and, with the help of the Coral Gables Commission, bringing it to the urgent attention of the Miami-Dade County Commission. The planned improvements and modernization of the building are great news for our community, but the distinctive character of our historic landmark, the Coral Gables Library, should not be lost in the process.

The Historical Resources and Cultural Arts Director Dona Spain notified the Board that certain items (furniture and books) will be removed from the Library and permanently relocated to other City owned buildings (see attached e-mail from Dona Spain). These items have a special connection to the Library and were donated specifically for the Library's use. Several items of furniture were donated by Mrs. George E. Merrick. (See attached Resolution No.14503 of the Coral Gables City Commission dated 1/14/69 "...accepting the donation of furnishings to the new public library..."). In addition to the gift of furniture from Mrs. Merrick there are 4 throne chairs that have been in the Library for many years, and the original book collection contained in 2 glass-fronted bookcases. Some are among the original 300 books that the Women's Club, the founders the Coral Gables Library in 1927, obtained by writing to well known authors and asking them to donate their favorite book to the Coral Gables Library. Some of the books have inscriptions from prominent local citizens.

We submit that there is no City owned building that is more suitable to house these items than the Coral Gables Library. Arrangements for their display and safekeeping can be incorporated into the renovation design so that citizens can view them and appreciate the connection our Library has to the City's history. It is respectfully requested that the Commission take action to review this matter.