



**PROJECTED VIEW:** Above is a sketch of how the library expansion will look.

The library is also dedicated to keeping up with the electronic information age. The expanded library will dedicate more shelf space to printed materials, but computers can access an infinite collection. Head Librarian Mariel Verdibello said she hopes to create an island of six computer workstations in a central location in both the adult and children's library so librarians can assist patrons. The library has applied to a number of foundations for grant assistance to fund the new computer stations. In fact, fundraising consultant Susan Love has applied for more than 15 different foundation grants.

Patrons can also look forward to an imposed community meeting space with a separate entrance for after-hours events. Right now, the only real common room is in the basement, and even the librarians admit it's a bit dreary down there. A common room would accommodate various local clubs like Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, garden clubs and book clubs. It would also provide a space for author readings and art exhibits of all kinds.

Perhaps the most exciting improvement will be the addition of a local history room. The Bennett Alumnae Association is likely to make a large donation towards this room, for it would house the boxes and boxes of materials now stored in the library attic, retrieved from Bennett College when it closed in the late 1970s. There are hundreds of volumes on The Hunt, photographs of Millbrook through the 20th century and a massage of historical treasures. The history room will also become a repository for historical materials families of Millbrook may want preserved in the public domain.

"I'm very excited about that prospect," said Village Historian David Greenwood. "We are increasingly in need of a community focal point where

people can find out about their houses and local history ... what better place than the library?"

The stacks are likely to increase by at least 50% as a result of these passions. Verdibello said they need a 25% increase just to properly accommodate these new volumes housed in the library right now, but the library is looking at long-term space needs, planning 20 years into the future.

Those who consider the library a home away from home will be pleased to know comfortable chairs and reading space are also part of the renovation plans. There will also be an elevator to the lower level, handicap accessible bathrooms and more generous aides between stacks.

### Library funding

Most people assume free libraries are funded by tax dollars, but the Millbrook Free Library receives no tax money from Millbrook or Washington. The primary source of operating funds is income generated from the library trust created in 1929 by the Harry Harkness Flagler family. The remaining 40% of the operating income is generated by individual contributions, library operations, Mid-Hudson Library grants and fundraising. Needless to say, an organization that exists for the sole purpose of serving, educating and enlightening the community must now look to the community for its support.

"This is really a community effort. It's about everyone getting together and doing this for the bettering of the community as a whole," said Susan Love, who has an MBA in nonprofit management, points out that only 10-12% of philanthropic donations are made by foundations and corporations. "The rest come from individuals, the vast majority of whom make under \$40,000 a year," she explained, asking,

"People can be proud of that."

### Fundraising campaign

Residents of Millbrook, Washington Union Vale, Verbank and Clinton Corners can expect a knock on the door sometime between Oct. 2 and Oct. 17. In the spirit of a similar campaign in 1932, a group of about 40 residents will hit the pavement, soliciting neighbors door-to-door in a grassroots effort to raise funds for the library expansion.

Kirsten Rappleyea has rallied the troops. "What we tried to do is find people in neighborhoods willing to go to their neighbors and solicit anywhere from \$1 to whatever they can afford," said Rappleyea. Beyond seeking monetary support, she said the idea of this personal door-to-door canvassing is to "create a lot of enthusiasm for the project ... if you are enthusiastic, you hope to get neighbors to feel the same way ... The renovation is something the whole community will benefit from."

### The walk of fame

For those who wish to make larger contributions, you can be immortal and in a kind of Millbrook walk of fame. For \$250 up front or \$300 on a three-year payment plan, you can purchase an 8" x 8" brick with your name inscribed in it. The library also offers a larger 8" x 8" brick for \$1,000, perfect for corporations. The personalized bricks will become part of a walkway leading up to the new Franklin Avenue library entrance.

### Fundraising kickoff

The library will kick off its fundraising campaign on Sat., Oct. 2 with a day of music, parades, live entertainment and historical exhibitions. Events will continue throughout the month to raise campaign awareness and get the community involved with the fundraising activities. Please see accompanying article for details.