

NEW CENTRAL LIBRARY

Time flies when you're building a New Central Library for the next 100 years of learning. The structural steel framework is done and we marked the moment by inscribing our last steel beam with messages of hope, wisdom and encouragement. Read on!



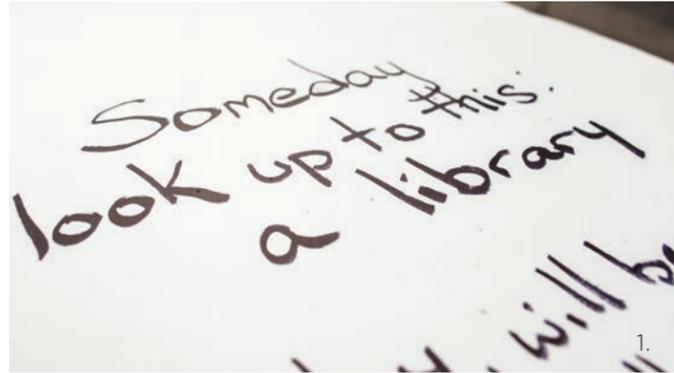
**GROWING THE NEXT
NCL GENERATION**

Spring/Summer 2017

TIME CAPSULE OF STEEL

Calgary's New Central Library recently turned the page on a major chapter of its construction: completion of the structural steel framework. Placement of the final steel beam was a milestone in Phase 2 of construction (the library's exterior), and turned the focus of the work inwards to the library's interior. That momentous occasion called for a little celebration!

On March 21, Calgarians were invited to commemorate the milestone moment in the company of His Worship Mayor Naheed Nenshi, Councillor Druh Farrell, Library Board Chair Janet Hutchison, CMLC and NCL's chief architect, Craig Dykers of Snøhetta. Prior to the placement of the final steel beam within the Truss 5 support system, nearly 700 library lovers of all ages inscribed the 9,000-kilogram (nearly 20,000-pound) beam with messages of congratulations and inspiration for future generations. At 13.4 metres (44 feet) long by 0.5 metres (1.6 feet) wide by just over 1.2 metres (4 feet) high, the mighty steel time capsule offered ample room to hold the hearts and the good wishes of all Calgarians.



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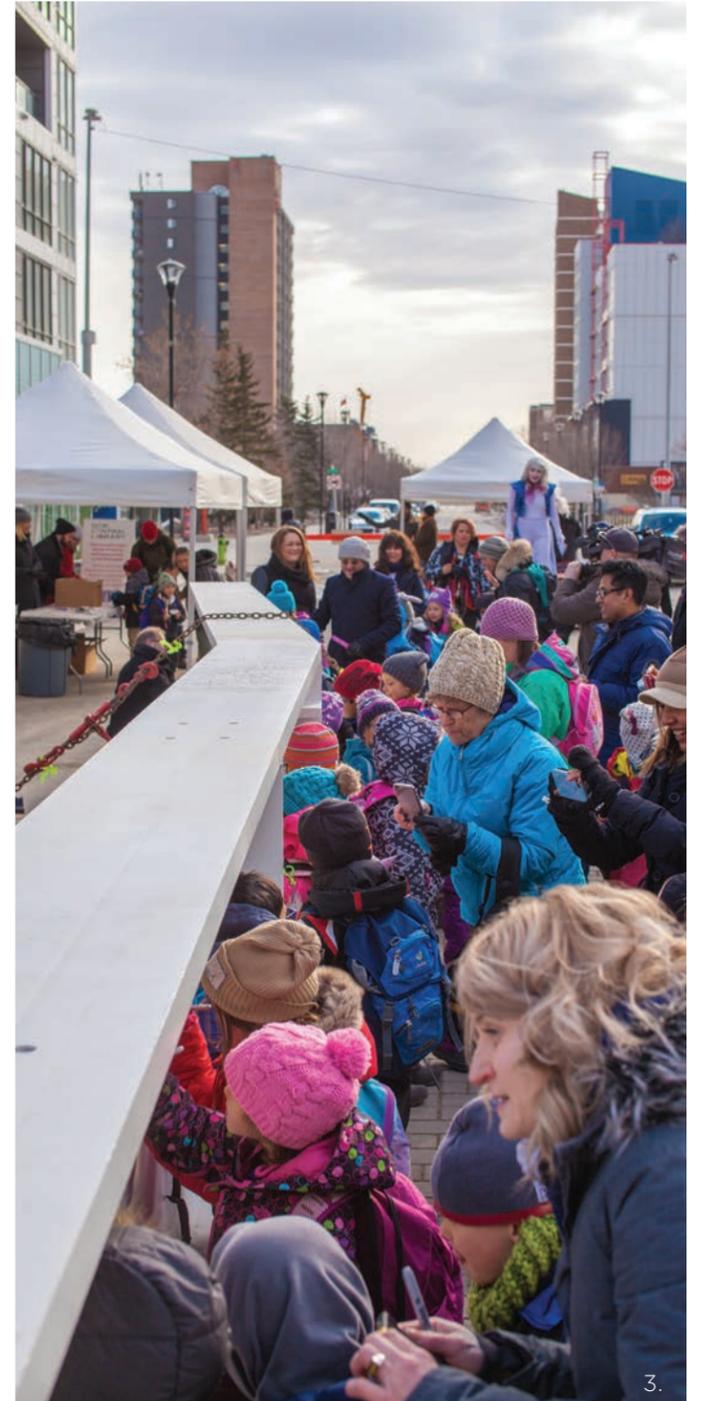
The day was marked with symbolism. Diverging from the centuries-old tradition of placing a tree atop the highest beam of a building under construction, NCL's topping-out ritual was marked with the placement of a single pine bough atop the final beam. Craig Dykers shared the history behind the ancient ceremony, and Calgary's poet laureate, Michelle Maylor, inscribed an ode upon the length of steel, entitled *Someday Look Up to This: A Library*. The final beam will be installed after all six levels of concrete have been poured and cured, likely in late April.

Construction of the library's framework was a massive undertaking. A work in progress since the completion of the LRT encapsulation in 2015, Phase 2 entailed laying the foundation, pouring three vertical concrete cores, hanging the glass cladding wall, and installing the system of enormous steel trusses that form the skeleton of the building.

With all that heavy lifting now done, Phase 3—the fit and finish phase—begins. A large team of skilled tradespeople will take over NCL's interior to install mechanical and electrical systems and complete drywall, millwork, paint and flooring.

Prior to NCL's grand opening in late 2018, library staff will undertake one more feat of heavy lifting—moving 174 tonnes of books and equipment into their brilliant new home.

1. Poet Michelle Maylor's inscribed inspiration
2. Eager readers take in the scene
3. Children, never at a loss for words, fill the beam



YOUNG (LIBRARY) LOVE

The NCL will be a dazzling city landmark, and the Children's Library within it will be nothing less than magical. Part family hub, part playground, and all learning-to-love-literacy centre, NCL's children's area promises to make kids into readers—and to make even the most mature grown-up yearn to be young again.

The NCL Children's Library is on the mezzanine between the first and second floors, and will be attached to the expansive ramp system that sweeps the length of the library. The children's area will be composed of multiple platforms that run alongside the generous ramp, and each platform will provide a unique entryway into the children's area. Each is designed to appeal to a slightly different age group—for instance, some will feature irresistible little reading nooks strictly for the junior set, through which youngsters can crawl to enter the space. "Kids love ramps!" says Sarah Meilleur, Director of Service Delivery, City Centre Libraries and the New Central Library. "I can already picture them running up the ramp and then peeking into the Children's Library. They are going to a special destination."

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Programming within NCL's Children's Library will offer variety for every age of child, with an immediate focus on children under 5. With 80,000 kids currently in that age range in Calgary, the demand for early learning programs is massive. A dedicated toddler space, with safe spaces to explore and crawl, will get NCL's youngest patrons off on the right foot (or knee) to literacy.



Room to grow readers: part of the Children's Library at the NCL

"NCL Children's Library will be an expanded early learning centre that incorporates full-body play, and that will be unique from what we've offered inside our libraries in the past," says Meilleur. The focus on whole-child development means opportunities for creative play (with light tables and chalk boards), active building play (with LEGO and Imagination Blocks) and full-body play (with a mini play space where kids can climb, slide and get their wiggles out). There will even be a special "wet room" where messier activities, like volcano-building and playing with slime, are not only tolerated but outright encouraged.

School-aged library lovers will have access to programs like Idea Lab, which encourages inquiry-based learning through hands-on experimentation and design challenges, and to Library School, which will be piloted through Campus Calgary. Programs like Math Quest will encourage exploration of NCL while improving math skills.

"This is going to be a busy, lively, active space!" says Meilleur. "NCL Children's Library will really be a destination for families, particularly in those cold winter months."

We can't wait to cosy up to the magic of our NCL.

FLOOR-TO-CEILING FINISH

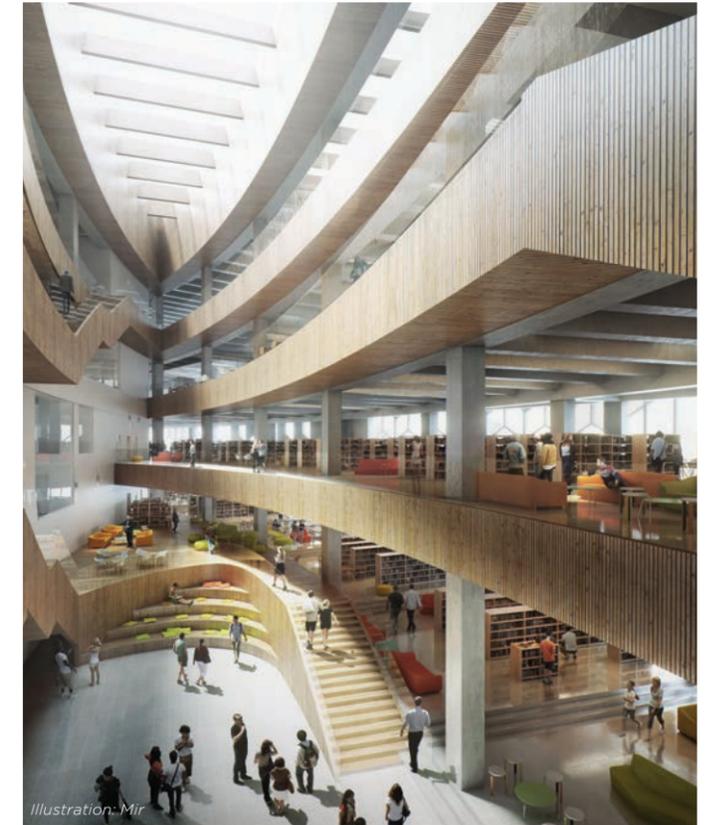
With the completion of Phase 2 of your New Central Library—construction of the exterior structure—now in the books, the buzz and the work move indoors. Phase 3—fit and finish of the interior—is highly detailed work that will result in a library that looks and functions beautifully from the very bottom, all the way to the top.

Work has already begun on the installation of raised access floors. These specialized floors consist of panels laid down 18 inches above the existing concrete floor on each of the library's five levels. This creates a void space under the floor that is actually incredibly functional.

This subfloor space eliminates the need for ductwork by functioning as a delivery system for fresh and conditioned air throughout the building. This facility adaptation was originally developed for use in data centres, where banks of computer servers require a lot of effective cooling. In NCL, small vents in the floor will distribute air upward, which is much more efficient (especially in a building with such high ceilings) than blowing air downward. As anyone who's ever been blasted by an overzealous overhead cooling vent will attest, floor cooling is also a lot more comfortable.

Just as importantly, the void space houses NCL's mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems. Safety equipment, like sprinkler pipes, which normally criss-cross a building's ceiling, will instead be concealed within the void space from which they will access the level below.

All electrical feeds and telecommunication cabling running through the void space are easily accessed through recessed boxes located in the floor panels. This makes for a highly versatile and efficient system, one that leads to increased flexibility in any future building renovations. Changing the configuration of an office, for example, will simply be a matter of lifting out a floor panel that contains one of these recessed electrical boxes and swapping it out to a different location. You won't see many extension cords snaking around the floors of this library!



The soon-to-be interior of your NCL

While the raised access floors will function quietly and efficiently behind the scenes, NCL's spectacular wood ceiling will definitely take centre stage. Clear lacquered western hemlock in one inch slats will grace the ceiling of the entire main floor, crowning the soaring space with natural warmth. It also partners beautifully with the curved western red cedar soffit that defines the main entryway. In the 340-seat main theatre, the warm wooden ceiling will be mirrored on the walls by vertical slats. The street-view windows along 3rd Street SE will make looking in just as satisfying as looking out.