

1 [Planning Code - Landmark Designation - 1801 Green Street (aka Golden Gate Valley  
2 Carnegie Library)]

3 **Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate 1801 Green Street (aka Golden**  
4 **Gate Valley Carnegie Library), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0554, Lot No. 001, as a**  
5 **Landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code; affirming the Planning Department's**  
6 **determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and making public**  
7 **necessity, convenience and welfare findings under Planning Code, Section 302, and**  
8 **findings of consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority policies of**  
9 **Planning Code, Section 101.1.**

10 NOTE: **Unchanged Code text and uncodified text** are in plain Arial font.  
11 **Additions to Codes** are in *single-underline italics Times New Roman font*.  
12 **Deletions to Codes** are in *strikethrough italics Times New Roman font*.  
13 **Board amendment additions** are in double-underlined Arial font.  
14 **Board amendment deletions** are in ~~strikethrough Arial font~~.  
15 **Asterisks (\* \* \* \*)** indicate the omission of unchanged Code  
16 subsections or parts of tables.

17 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

18 Section 1. Findings.

19 (a) CEQA and Land Use Findings.

20 (1) The Planning Department has determined that the proposed Planning Code  
21 amendment is subject to a Categorical Exemption from the California Environmental Quality  
22 Act (California Public Resources Code section 21000 et seq., "CEQA") pursuant to Section  
23 15308 of the Guidelines for Implementation of the statute for actions by regulatory agencies  
24 for protection of the environment (in this case, landmark designation). Said determination is  
25 on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 220009 and is incorporated herein  
by reference. The Board of Supervisors affirms this determination.

1 (2) Pursuant to Planning Code, Section 302, the Board of Supervisors finds that  
2 the proposed landmark designation of 1801 Green Street (aka Golden Gate Valley Carnegie  
3 Library), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0554, Lot No. 001, will serve the public necessity,  
4 convenience, and welfare for the reasons set forth in Historic Preservation Commission  
5 Resolution No. 1221, recommending approval of the proposed designation, which is  
6 incorporated herein by reference.

7 (3) The Board finds that the proposed landmark designation of the Golden Gate  
8 Valley Carnegie Library is consistent with the San Francisco General Plan and with Planning  
9 Code Section 101.1(b) for the reasons set forth in Historic Preservation Commission  
10 Resolution No. 1221, recommending approval of the proposed designation, which is  
11 incorporated herein by reference.

12 (b) General Findings.

13 (1) Pursuant to Section 4.135 of the Charter of the City and County of San  
14 Francisco, the Historic Preservation Commission has authority "to recommend approval,  
15 disapproval, or modification of landmark designations and historic district designations under  
16 the Planning Code to the Board of Supervisors."

17 (2) On June 2, 1999, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks  
18 Board) added the Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library to the Landmark Designation Work  
19 Program.

20 (3) The Designation report was prepared by consultant Bridget Maley and  
21 reviewed by Planning Department preservation staff. All preparers meet the Secretary of the  
22 Interior's Professional Qualification Standards, and the report was reviewed for accuracy and  
23 conformance with the purposes and standards of Article 10 of the Planning Code.

24 (4) The Historic Preservation Commission, at its regular meeting of November  
25 3, 2021 reviewed Department staff's analysis of the historical significance of the Golden Gate

1 Valley Library pursuant to Article 10 as part of the Landmark Designation Case Report dated  
2 July 22, 2021.

3 (5) On November 3, 2021, the Historic Preservation Commission passed  
4 Resolution No. 1210, initiating designation of the Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library as a  
5 San Francisco Landmark pursuant to Section 1004.1 of the Planning Code. Such resolution is  
6 on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 220009 and is incorporated herein  
7 by reference.

8 (6) On December 1, 2021, after holding a public hearing on the proposed  
9 designation and having considered the specialized analyses prepared by Planning  
10 Department staff and the Landmark Designation Case Report, the Historic Preservation  
11 Commission recommended approval of the proposed landmark designation of the Golden  
12 Gate Valley Library, by Resolution No. 1221. Such resolution is on file with the Clerk of the  
13 Board in File No. 220009.

14 (7) The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that the Golden Gate Valley Library  
15 has a special character and special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value,  
16 and that its designation as a Landmark will further the purposes of and conform to the  
17 standards set forth in Article 10 of the Planning Code.

18  
19 Section 2. Designation.

20 Pursuant to Section 1004 of the Planning Code, 1801 Green Street (aka the Golden  
21 Gate Valley Carnegie Library), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0554, Lot No. 001, is hereby  
22 designated as a San Francisco Landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code.

23 ///

24 ///

25 ///

1 Section 3. Required Data.

2 (a) The description, location, and boundary of the Landmark site consists of the City  
3 parcel located at 1801 Green Street (aka the Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library),  
4 Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0554, Lot No. 001, in San Francisco's Marina neighborhood.

5 (b) The characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation are described and  
6 shown in the Landmark Designation Case Report and other supporting materials contained in  
7 Planning Department Case Docket No. 2020-003803DES. In brief, the Golden Gate Valley  
8 Carnegie Library is eligible for local designation as it is associated with events that have made  
9 a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history, and embodies distinctive  
10 characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction. Specifically, designation of the  
11 Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library is proper given its association with patterns of social and  
12 cultural history of San Francisco, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural  
13 power between class-based groups. The building is associated with the Carnegie Library  
14 Grant Program, established by wealthy Progressive industrialist Andrew Carnegie in 1886 and  
15 intended to fund the construction of libraries for the use of the public. Through this program,  
16 Carnegie funded the construction of 1,681 libraries across the United States, including seven  
17 Carnegie libraries in San Francisco. The Golden Gate Valley Library was designed in the  
18 Neoclassical style as part of the City Beautiful Movement and conforms to the aesthetic ideals  
19 of the Carnegie Corporation, which made recommendations on the construction and design of  
20 Carnegie-funded libraries. Designation of the Golden Gate Valley Library is also proper as it is  
21 an excellent example of an institutional building designed in the Neoclassical architectural  
22 style in San Francisco by master architect Ernest Coxhead.

23 (c) The particular features that shall be preserved, or replaced in-kind as determined  
24 necessary, are those generally shown in photographs and described in the Landmark  
25 Designation Case Report, which can be found in Planning Department Docket No. 2020-

1 003803DES, and which are incorporated in this designation by reference as though fully set  
2 forth. Specifically, the following features shall be preserved or replaced in kind:

3 Exterior:

- 4 (1) Terra cotta cladding and ornamentation
- 5 (2) Clay tile roof
- 6 (3) East façade with decorative columns
- 7 (4) Buff brick at rear facade
- 8 (5) Main entry bronze doors with glazed panels and transom
- 9 (6) Wood windows, trim, pattern and configuration
- 10 (7) Basilica-shaped plan
- 11 (8) West side courtyard terra cotta walls
- 12 (9) Granite entryway steps

13 Interior:

- 14 (1) Original wood interior doors in the Main Reading Room
- 15 (2) Interior entry vestibule including wood paneled walls, wood door, and marble  
16 floor
- 17 (3) Marble side walls and stair in Main Reading Room
- 18 (4) The open spatial volume of the Main Reading Room
- 19 (5) The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room
- 20 (6) Built-in shelving around the perimeter of the Main Reading Room
- 21 (7) Architectural woodwork including shelves, cornice over shelves, pilasters,  
22 trim over windows, and plaster walls

23 Section 4. Effective Date. This ordinance shall become effective 30 days after  
24 enactment. Enactment occurs when the Mayor signs the ordinance, the Mayor returns the  
25

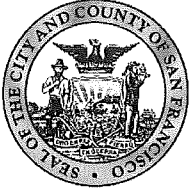
1 ordinance unsigned or does not sign the ordinance within ten days of receiving it, or the Board  
2 of Supervisors overrides the Mayor's veto of the ordinance.

3  
4 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
5 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

6 By: /s/ Andrea Ruiz-Esquide  
7 ANDREA RUIZ-ESQUIDE  
8 Deputy City Attorney

9 n:\leganalas2021\1800206\01567386.docx

10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25



City and County of San Francisco  
Tails  
Ordinance

City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

File Number: 220009

Date Passed: March 15, 2022

Ordinance amending the Planning Code to designate 1801 Green Street (aka Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library), Assessor's Parcel Block No. 0554, Lot No. 001, as a Landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code; affirming the Planning Department's determination under the California Environmental Quality Act; and making public necessity, convenience and welfare findings under Planning Code, Section 302, and findings of consistency with the General Plan, and the eight priority policies of Planning Code, Section 101.1.

February 28, 2022 Land Use and Transportation Committee - RECOMMENDED

March 08, 2022 Board of Supervisors - PASSED ON FIRST READING


Ayes: 11 - Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton

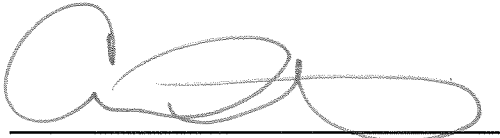
March 15, 2022 Board of Supervisors - FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 11 - Chan, Haney, Mandelman, Mar, Melgar, Peskin, Preston, Ronen, Safai, Stefani and Walton

File No. 220009

I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was FINALLY PASSED on 3/15/2022 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
London N. Breed  
Mayor

3/22/22  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved



july 22, 2020

landmark designation report  
golden gate valley branch  
san francisco public library  
1801 green street, san francisco, ca

submitted by:

bridget maley  
**architecture + history, llc**  
san francisco, ca  
415 760 4318  
bridget@architecture-history.com  
www.architecture-history.com



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**COVER LETTER**

**LANDMARK DESIGNATION FORM**

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR DESIGNATION FORM FIELDS**

**APPENDIX A**

Photographs

**APPENDIX B**

Landmark Nomination Carnegie Branch Libraries of San Francisco Context Statement, Completed by Tim Kelley, January 2001.

**APPENDIX C**

California Carnegie Libraries, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, December 1990.

**APPENDIX D**

Designation Report for Landmark 234 – Mission Branch, 300 Bartlett Street, constructed 1915, architect Albert Landsburgh.

**APPENDIX E**

Designation Report for Landmark 235 – Chinatown Branch, 1135 Powell Street, constructed 1921, architect Albert Landsburgh.

**APPENDIX F**

Designation Report for Landmark 239 – Sunset Branch, 1305 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, constructed 1918, architect Albert Landsburgh.

**APPENDIX G**

Designation Report for Landmark 240 – Presidio Branch, 3150 Sacramento, constructed 1921, architect Albert Landsburgh.

**APPENDIX H**

Designation Report for Landmark 247 – Richmond Branch, 351 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, constructed 1914, architect Bliss & Faville.

**APPENDIX I**

Designation Report for Landmark 259 – Noe Valley Branch, 451 Jersey Street, constructed 1916, architect John Reid, Jr.





July 22, 2020

Aaron Jon Hyland, President  
San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Commission  
San Francisco Planning Department  
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA 94103  
*Via email – aaron.hyland.hpc@gmail.com*

**Re: Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library  
Landmark Designation Report**

Dear President Hyland and Commission Members:

Per my letter to you on April 13, 2020, I have provided the attached Landmark Designation Report for the Golden Gate Valley Branch Library of the San Francisco Public Library at 1801 Green Street in the Cow Hollow neighborhood. As you know, six of the seven Carnegie Libraries have already been Landmarked, including:

- Landmark 234 – Mission Branch, 300 Bartlett Street, constructed 1915, architect Albert Landsburgh;
- Landmark 235 – Chinatown Branch, 1135 Powell Street, constructed 1921, architect Albert Landsburgh;
- Landmark 239 – Sunset Branch, 1305 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, constructed 1918, architect Albert Landsburgh;
- Landmark 240 – Presidio Branch, 3150 Sacramento, constructed 1921, architect Albert Landsburgh;
- Landmark 247 – Richmond Branch, 351 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, constructed 1914, architect Bliss & Faville;
- Landmark 259 – Noe Valley Branch, 451 Jersey Street, constructed 1916, architect John Reid, Jr.

However, an unfortunate oversight occurred upon completion of the Golden Gate Valley Branch renovation and the building was never formally landmarked. This branch, designed by Ernest Coxhead, and completed in May 1918, is one of the few works by the architect executed in terra cotta and the only branch Carnegie-funded library completed in a basilica-style plan. The renovation of the Golden Gate Valley Branch Library was completed in 2012; the work undertaken for this project is described in the designation report.



Page 2

July 21, 2020

Aaron Jon Hyland, President

San Francisco Landmarks Preservation Commission

As promised earlier this spring, I have assembled the attached designation report for your review. I have based the information presented herein on the similar information provided for each of the six other Carnegie libraries. While the Landmark Designation Form has changed somewhat since the other libraries were landmarked, the required fields are similar enough that there should be no question as to whether this library is eligible as a Landmark. I have also attached the California Carnegie Libraries National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Listing, which specifically mentions the Golden Gate Valley Branch of the San Francisco Public Library.

I look forward to working with you and Planning Department staff to move forward with landmark designation of the important neighborhood civic building. I should note that I have completed this report on a volunteer basis as my family and I reside nearby, gave to the renovation fund, and use the library frequently.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bridget Maley', written in a cursive style.

Bridget Maley  
Principal

Cc: Dianne Matsuda, Vice-President,  
Kate Black, Commissioner  
Chris Foley, Commissioner  
Richard S. E. Johns, Commissioner  
Jonathan Pearlman, Commissioner  
Lydia So, Commissioner  
Rich Hillis, Director San Francisco Planning Department  
Jonas Ionin, Commissions Secretary  
Marcelle Boudreaux, Principal Planner  
Melanie Bishop, Preservation Planner  
Catherine Stefani, SF Board of Supervisors, District 2  
Aaron Peskin, Chair, Land Use and Transportation Committee, SF Board of Supervisors  
Daniel Herzstein, Office of SF Supervisor Stefani  
Michael Lambert, City Librarian, San Francisco Public Library  
Cathy Delneo, Chief of Branches, San Francisco Public Library  
Susan Goldstein, City Archivist, San Francisco Public Library  
Marie Ciepiela, Friends of the San Francisco Public Library



**SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING  
DEPARTMENT**

## APPLICATION FOR

# Historic Landmark Designation

Planning Department  
1650 Mission Street  
Suite 400  
San Francisco, CA  
94103-9425

T: 415.558.6378  
F: 415.558.6409

Landmark designation is authorized by Section 1004 of the San Francisco Planning Code. The designation process includes a review of the Landmark Designation Application by the Planning Department and the Historic Preservation Commission. Final approval is made by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

## PRESERVING SAN FRANCISCO HISTORY

Since 1967, San Francisco's Historic Preservation Program has helped preserve important facets of the city's history. The list of designated city landmarks and landmark districts includes iconic architectural masterpieces, monuments to historic events, and places associated with cultural and social movements that have defined our city. However, there are still many more untold stories to celebrate through landmark designation.

## PROPERTIES ELIGIBLE FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION

Most San Francisco landmarks are buildings. But a landmark can also be a structure, site, feature or area of special historical, architectural or aesthetic interest. Collections of properties can also be designated as landmark districts.

Landmarks can be significant for a variety of reasons. The criteria are based on those used by the National Register of Historic Places. They include:

- Properties significant for their association with historic events, including the city's social and cultural history
- Properties significant for their association with a person or group important to the history of the city, state or country
- Properties significant for their architecture or design
- Properties that are valued as visual landmarks, or that have special character or meaning to the city and its residents
- Collections of properties or features that are linked by history, plan, aesthetics or physical development.

## INCENTIVES FOR LANDMARK DESIGNATION

Landmark designation recognizes the property as a significant element of San Francisco history. There are also various incentives, including the following:

- Eligibility for the Mills Act program, which can result in property tax reduction
- Eligibility to use the California Historical Building Code
- Eligibility for land use incentives under the San Francisco Planning Code
- Eligibility to display a plaque regarding the building's landmark status

## HOW TO APPLY TO DESIGNATE A LANDMARK

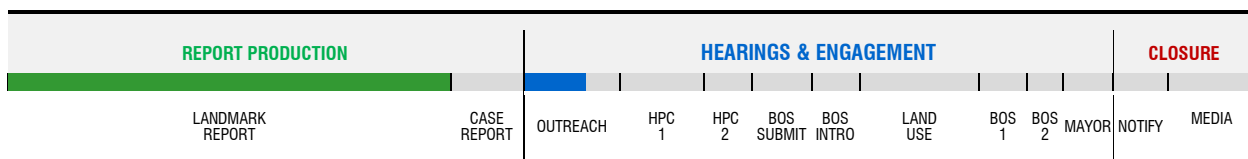
Any member of the public may nominate a property for landmark designation. The application must contain supporting historic, architectural and/or cultural documentation. More information about the Planning Department's Historic Preservation program can also be found here:

<http://www.sf-planning.org/index.aspx?page=1825>

## THE LANDMARK DESIGNATION PROCESS

The landmark designation process is a multi-step process. This includes the following:

1. Set a preliminary application review meeting with Planning Department Preservation staff. The meeting will focus on reviewing the draft designation application. Preservation staff can provide advice for improving the application, including any additional research which may be needed.
2. Submit the completed final application for review. Once it is determined to be complete, Preservation staff will place the application on the agenda for a Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) hearing.
3. During the hearing, the HPC will hear public testimony and determine if the property meets the criteria for landmark designation. If so, the Commission will vote to initiate landmark designation and schedule a follow-up hearing.
4. If the landmark designation is for a district, the Planning Commission will provide its review and comment on the proposed designation prior to the HPC making a final recommendation to the Board of Supervisors.
5. At the second hearing, the HPC will hear public testimony and vote on whether to recommend landmark designation to the Board of Supervisors.
6. An HPC recommendation supporting landmark designation will be forwarded to the Board of Supervisors and will be heard by its Land Use and Economic Development Committee. This is a public hearing where the owner(s) and members of the public can offer testimony.
7. The Land Use and Economic Development Committee will forward its recommendation on the designation to the full Board of Supervisors for a first reading. The Board of Supervisors will vote on the designation. A majority of Supervisors must vote in favor of the landmark designation for it to be approved. This is a public hearing, although no public testimony will be heard.
8. At a following Board of Supervisors hearing the proposed designation will have a second reading. This is a public hearing, although no public testimony will be heard. If the majority of Supervisors remain in favor of the landmark designation, the designating ordinance is sent to the Mayor for final signature.



## COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

Please fill out all of the sections of the application. Use the checklist at the end of this application to ensure that all required materials are included. If more space is needed, please feel free to attach additional sheets as necessary. If you are unsure how to answer any of the questions, please contact Planning Department preservation staff.

### Please submit the completed application to:

San Francisco Planning Department  
 Attn: Landmark Designation Application  
 1650 Mission Street, Suite 400  
 San Francisco, CA 94103-9425

# Historic Landmark Designation **Application**

## 1. Current Owner / Applicant Information

Date:

PROPERTY OWNER'S NAME:	
PROPERTY OWNER'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
	EMAIL:

APPLICANT'S NAME:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS ABOVE
APPLICANT'S ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
	EMAIL:

CONTACT FOR PROJECT INFORMATION:	
	<input type="checkbox"/> SAME AS ABOVE
ADDRESS:	TELEPHONE:
	EMAIL:

## 2. Location of the Proposed Landmark

STREET ADDRESS OF PROJECT:	ZIP CODE:
CROSS STREETS:	

ASSESSORS BLOCK/LOT:	LOT DIMENSIONS:	LOT AREA (SQ FT):	ZONING DISTRICT:	HEIGHT/BULK DISTRICT:
----------------------	-----------------	-------------------	------------------	-----------------------

OTHER ADDRESS / HISTORIC ADDRESS: ( if applicable )	ZIP CODE:
---	-----------

## 3. Property Information

HISTORIC NAME OF PROPERTY (IF APPLICABLE)	DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:	SOURCE FOR DATE OF CONSTRUCTION:
	<input type="checkbox"/> ACTUAL YEAR <input type="checkbox"/> ESTIMATED YEAR	

ARCHITECT OR BUILDER:	ARCHITECTURAL STYLE	
SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR ARCHITECT OR BUILDER	HISTORIC USE	PRESENT USE

PROPERTY INCLUDED IN A PRIOR HISTORIC SURVEY?	SURVEY NAME:	SURVEY RATING:
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No ...		

#### 4. Statement of Significance

The proposed landmark is significant for the following reason(s). Please check all that apply:

- It is associated with significant events or patterns, or reflects important aspects of social or cultural history
- It is associated with a person or persons important to our history
- It is significant for its architecture or design, or is a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect
- It is valued as a visual landmark, or has special character or meaning to the city and its residents
- It contains archaeological deposits that have the potential to yield important information about history or prehistory

Please summarize why the property or district should be designated a San Francisco Landmark. Whenever possible, include footnotes or a list of references that support the statement of significance. Copies of historic photographs, articles or other sources that directly relate to the property should also be attached.

#### 5. Property / Architecture Description

Please provide a detailed description of the exterior of the building and any associated buildings on the property. This includes the building's shape, number of stories, architectural style and materials. For example, is the building clad with wood, brick or stucco? What materials are the windows and exterior doors made of? Please be sure to include descriptions of the non-publicly visible portions of the building. Attach photographs of the property, including the rear facade.

#### 6. Neighborhood or District Description

Please provide a narrative describing the buildings both adjacent to, and across the street from, the subject property. This includes describing their architectural styles, number of stories, exterior materials (e.g., wood or stucco cladding) and landscape features, if any. Attach representative photographs.

If the application is for a landmark district, please provide similar information describing the architectural character of the district. Also be sure to include a map outlining the boundaries of the district, as well as a list of all properties including their addresses, block and lot numbers, and dates of construction. This information may be gathered using the San Francisco Property Information Map, available here: <http://ec2-50-17-237-182.compute-1.amazonaws.com/PIM/>

## 7. Building Permits and History of Alterations

Please list all building permits from the date of construction to present. Be sure to include any alterations or additions to the building. These include changes such as window replacement, construction of a new garage, or installation of roof dormers. Also attach photocopies of building permits. Copies of building permits are available from the Department of Building Inspection, 1660 Mission Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor (<http://sfdbi.org/record-request-form>).

*\*\*Note: Do not complete this section if the application is for a landmark district*

PERMIT:	DATE:	DESCRIPTION OF WORK:
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
6.		
7.		
8.		

Please describe any additional alterations that are not included in this table. For example, have any obvious changes been made to the property for which no building permit record is available?

## 8. Ownership History Table

Please list all owners of the property from the date of construction to present. Building ownership may be researched at the San Francisco Assessor-Recorder's Office, located at City Hall, Room 190.

*\*Note: Do not complete this section if the application is for a landmark district*

OWNER:	DATES (FROM – TO):	NAME(S):	OCCUPATION:
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

If the property is significant for its association with a person important to history, please be sure to expand on this information in Section 9.



## 9. Occupant History Table

Please list occupants of the property (if different from the owners) from the date of construction to present. It is not necessary to list the occupants for each year. A sample of every five to seven years (e.g, 1910, 1917, 1923, etc.) is sufficient. For multi-unit buildings, please use a representative sampling of occupants. A chronological list of San Francisco city directories from 1850 – 1982 is available online. Choosing the “IA” link will take you to a scan of the original document:

<http://www.sfgenealogy.com/sf/sfdatadir.htm>

Beginning with the year 1953, a “reverse directory” is available at the back of each volume, allowing you to look up a specific address to see the occupants.

*\*Note: Do not complete this section if the application is for a landmark district*

OCCUP:	DATES (FROM – TO):	NAME(S):	OCCUPATION:
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

If the property is significant for having been used by an occupant, group or tenant important to history, please expand on this information below.

## 10. Public Information Release

Please read the following statements and check each to indicate that you agree with the statement. Then sign below in the space provided.

- I understand that submitted documents will become public records under the California Public Records Act, and that these documents will be made available upon request to members of the public for inspection and copying.
- I acknowledge that all photographs and images submitted as part of the application may be used by the City without compensation.



Name (Print):

Date:

Signature:

# Submittal Checklist

Use the checklist below to ensure that all required materials are included with your application.

CHECKLIST:	REQUIRED MATERIALS:
<input type="checkbox"/>	Photographs of subject property, including the front, rear and visible side facades
<input type="checkbox"/>	Description of the subject property (Section 5)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Neighborhood description (Section 6) with photos of adjacent properties and properties across the street
<input type="checkbox"/>	Building permit history (Section 7), with copies of all permits
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ownership history (Section 8)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Occupant history (Section 9)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic photographs, if available
<input type="checkbox"/>	Original building drawings, if available
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other documentation related to the history of the property, such as newspaper articles or other references

**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**Introduction**

*The Landmark Nomination, Carnegie Branch Libraries of San Francisco, Context Statement* was completed in January 2001 by Tim Kelley, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board President at the time. The document (attached as Appendix B) outlined the history and significance of the seven San Francisco Branch Libraries completed between 1914 and 1921. Following the completion of this Historic Context Statement, six of the seven Carnegie Branch Libraries were landmarked, using the Context Statement as a tool, after each had been renovated through the Branch Library Renovation Program. However, due to an oversight a seventh branch library, the Golden Gate Valley Branch, was not landmarked after its renovation was completed in October 2011. The other six Carnegie branches and their Landmark designation numbers are:

- Landmark 234 – Mission Branch, 300 Bartlett Street, constructed 1915, architect Albert Landsburgh;
- Landmark 235 – Chinatown Branch, 1135 Powell Street, constructed 1921, architect Albert Landsburgh;
- Landmark 239 – Sunset Branch, 1305 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, constructed 1918, architect Albert Landsburgh;
- Landmark 240 – Presidio Branch, 3150 Sacramento, constructed 1921, architect Albert Landsburgh;
- Landmark 247 – Richmond Branch, 351 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, constructed 1914, architect Bliss & Faville;
- Landmark 259 – Noe Valley Branch, 451 Jersey Street, constructed 1916, architect John Reid, Jr.

These Landmark Designation Reports are attached as Appendices D-I. Additionally, attached as Appendix C is the California Carnegie Libraries, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, December 1990.

Photographs of the building are included as Appendix A.

Supplemental information for the Designation Form Questions are presented below.

**Designation Form Question 3: Property Information**

Included in previous survey? Yes, 1976 Survey Rating 4; discussed in Kelley, Tim, Carnegie Library Context Statement, 2001; discussed in Carnegie Libraries of California National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Nomination, Section E, Page 14; Section F, Page 5, 22.



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**Designation Form Question 4: Statement of Significance**

- **It is associated with significant events or patterns, or reflects important aspects of social or cultural history.**

Per the 2001 *San Francisco Carnegie Library Context Statement* and the Landmark Designation Report for the other six San Francisco Carnegie Libraries, the Golden Gate Valley Branch Library is associated with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between class based groups and middle class based Progressives.<sup>1</sup>

Between 1914 and 1921, seven San Francisco branch libraries were constructed using approximately \$375,000 in Carnegie grant funds. The branch locations chosen, often with input from neighborhood improvement associations, included: Richmond (1914), Mission (1915), Noe Valley (1916), Sunset (1918), Golden Gate Valley (1918), North Beach (now Chinatown, 1921), and Presidio (1921). The Main Library (now the Asian Art Museum) opened in 1917, and was financed with some Carnegie funds, supplemented by city approved bonds. The Carnegie funds had originally been offered to the city in 1901, but their use was delayed by political haggling at City Hall. San Francisco labor leaders, and a newly elected pro-labor mayor, Eugene Schmitz, disapproved of Carnegie's involvement, as they believed Andrew Carnegie exploited the working class, earning millions. The final decision to use the grant funds only came after twelve years of intense political and class conflict in San Francisco; the first branch was finally built in 1914.<sup>2</sup>

In June 1917, to serve residents of the growing Golden Gate Valley, Cow Hollow, and Marina neighborhoods, construction of the Golden Gate Valley Branch Library began at a site on the southwest corner of Green and Octavia Streets that had been purchased by the City for \$7,500. Though Carnegie grant funds paid for the building, City funds were used for the furnishings. The total building cost, including furnishings, came to \$43,000. On May 5, 1918, the branch was opened to the public.<sup>3</sup>

The Golden Gate Valley Branch Library was constructed in what for many years was known as Golden Gate Valley, the area below Pacific Heights and above the Marina, between Van Ness Avenue and the Green Street hill rising at Pierce Street. By providing easy access to published works for neighborhood residents, the building expresses the national and local ascendancy of Progressive political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries. It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.<sup>4</sup>



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

- **It is significant for its architecture or design, or is a notable work of a master builder, designer or architect.**

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Golden Gate Valley Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The processional entry, the basilica-shaped plan, the large arched windows along the north, south, and east elevations, all contribute to the overall grandeur of the building. Typical of a Carnegie Library the entry includes a set of stairs. The main entry is directly off Green Street, and is centered along the Green Street elevation. This leads to an interior stair that ascends into the grand, high-ceilinged main reading room conveying a sense of aspiration, and of intellectual and civic rebirth. Architect Ernest Coxhead is an acknowledged master architect, per both the National Register and California Register standards. Further, Coxhead's library is also unique among San Francisco's Carnegie Libraries for its oval-shaped, basilica-style plan.<sup>5</sup>

By the time the San Francisco branch library program began to take shape in 1914, the city had selected several different architectural firms to design the various proposed locations. Coxhead was tapped to design the Cow Hollow library, which has always been referred to as the Golden Gate Valley Branch. The son of a British schoolmaster, Ernest Coxhead trained at the British Royal Academy, immigrated with an older brother, Almeric, to Los Angeles in the mid-1800s, and eventually settled in San Francisco by about 1890. Having worked for a British architect who was an expert on the restoration of Gothic Churches, Coxhead became the "unofficial" architect of the Episcopal Church in California. His extant churches from this era, especially the Episcopal Church of the Messiah (Santa Anna 1889), Holy Innocents Episcopal Church (San Francisco 1890), and the Chapel of St. John the Evangelist (Monterey 1891) are truly magical spaces, with Coxhead's placement of windows and the use of light shaping the religious experience. He turned to residential design, creating some of the Bay Area's most significant houses including several townhouses along the Pacific Street Presidio Wall (3200 block Pacific Avenue) in the 1890s, Berkeley's Loy House of 1893, and his own house at 2421 Green Street, as well as a neighboring house, 2423 Green Street, just several blocks from the library.<sup>6</sup>

A departure from his religious and residential work, which was often executed in wood-frame construction and sheathed in wood shingles, the Golden Gate Valley Library commission came to Coxhead just before he travelled to Europe during World War I. He directed the American Expeditionary Force's Architecture program for the United States armed forces stationed in France.<sup>7</sup>



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

Of the seven Carnegie branch libraries, the author of the Carnegie Library Context Statement, Tim Kelley, noted that many consider Coxhead's library:

the jewel of the seven Carnegie branches, is somewhat atypical of his work. To begin with, he most often used shingled rustic styles, quite unlike this terra cotta clad basilica. Even his other classically inspired work such as his Home Telegraph Building 333 Grant Avenue (San Francisco Landmark #141) often featured surprising outsized elements that tweak the classical sense of order. Such departures are absent in the Golden Gate Valley building, which instead presents a studied elegance.<sup>8</sup>

- **It is valued as a visual landmark, or has special meaning to the city and its residents**

Each of the Carnegie Libraries has special meaning to their respective neighborhoods. These cherished and much utilized civic buildings are both visual and social anchors in their various locations in the city. The typical Carnegie Library included a community room. In the case of the Golden Gate Valley Library this basement room has long been used for children's programs, neighborhood gatherings and meetings.

**Designation Form Question 5: Property / Architecture Description**

The terra-cotta clad, one-story plus basement branch library sits at the southwest corner of Green and Octavia Streets. This exquisitely designed building was completed in May 1918 as San Francisco's fifth branch library funded through the Carnegie Corporation's Library Program. Designed by well-known architect Ernest Coxhead, primarily recognized for his ecclesiastical and residential works, the building incorporates a rounded end, resembling the apse of a basilica, a semicircular recess often containing the church altar.

An exercise in the formal Classicism of the City Beautiful Movement, the Golden Gate Valley Library was designed to conform to the basic Carnegie Corporation's prescription for branch libraries. Although its rounded floor plan, is a slight variation, the building has a centrally located entrance and is generally symmetrical in composition. The terra cotta pilasters sit on a floral-influenced water table and terminate at modified Corinthian capitals just below the cornice. There is a dentil course, a simple geometric string running along the façade, below the roofline. Dramatic, arched windows march along the north, south and east facades, in between the terra cotta pilasters. The main entry has a centered, elaborate terra cotta shield in front of an arched window. There are blind niches at each end of the Green Street façade. Simple sconces light the entry at night.



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

A small stair accesses the front entry, which continues several more step at the interior, forming a vestibule, then opens directly on the main reading room. A grand, high ceilinged space, the reading room is illuminated by natural light from tall, arched wood windows. The ceiling is coffered and embellished with ornate, moulded plaster flowers further giving the building a somewhat religious character. Perimeter dark wood book shelves run under the windows and low shelving is used to divide the space and control circulation. The librarian and checkout desk are centrally located just inside the main entry. A small office is located behind the circulation desk.

A small addition completed in 2012, housing an elevator, provides access to the lower level, as does an interior stairway. There is a public restroom and a multi-purpose room at the basement level. (Additional description of the addition is provided later in discussion of alterations).

**Designation Form Question 6: Neighborhood Description**

The immediate neighborhood streets include single- and multi-family residential buildings, small corner neighborhood markets, the Union Street neighborhood commercial district, a small park and house museum. The subject block includes many Victorian-era residential buildings including single family houses or flats in the Queen Anne or Stick Styles. There are several tall apartment buildings from the 1920s, uphill in the 1900 block of Vallejo Street. There are also infill small, scale-residential buildings, single family and flats constructed from the 1950s and 1960s. The building at 1791-1795 Green Street is a particularly well-executed Victorian-era residential flat building with a corner turret, bay and oval windows. There is a former garage, tall Art Deco apartment building, neighborhood park and the Octagon House Museum in the 1700 Block of Green Street. Allyne Park, which occupies the northwest corner of Gough and Green streets, is just one block from the library.

**Designation Form Question 7: Building Permits and History of Alteration**

Few alterations had been made to the library by the early 2000s. Some replace interior light fixtures and reorganization of the office area behind the check-out desk had occurred. However, the building did not have an elevator and there was no accessible entry. A thorough renovation of this branch library was completed in October 2011.<sup>9</sup> The project included accessibility, seismic, and life safety upgrades; improvements to the mechanical and electrical systems; façade restoration and a complete interior renovation. The goal of the project was to restore and enhance the beauty of this important civic and neighborhood amenity.

The existing terra-cotta and brick facades were cleaned and restored. The historic arched wood windows were repaired and made operable, helping to re-establish natural ventilation to the interior. Seismic upgrades to the existing roof offered an opportunity to



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

install a photovoltaic (PV) system to generate on-site renewable energy. The south face of the upper roof presented an ideal location for PV panels due to its orientation and because it was hidden from the primary exterior views of the library. New landscape and sidewalk improvements enhanced the building's civic presence and continue to enrich the surrounding neighborhood.

A small, addition was placed comfortably to the west of the existing structure. It is sheathed in metal panels, darker than the existing façade, but sharing the tonal warmth of the original terra cotta. The addition reclaimed an under-utilized courtyard, allowing for a new elevator to improve the accessibility of the library. The addition provided access from the street and sidewalk with accessible communication between the two levels of the building. A new courtyard gate leading to the addition was designed to reference details from the historic gate and ultimately improved security and accessibility.

On the interior, new steel moment frames were hidden in the existing walls and attic to reinforce the existing concrete structure. Pilasters introduced as a result of the seismic upgrades were wrapped in materials matching the adjacent existing surfaces and details to minimize their appearance. Existing perimeter shelving and select furniture was cleaned, restored, and reused. Non-historic lighting was removed from the ceiling, while new up-lighting and suspended pendant fixtures restore the historic character of the main reading room and its elaborate ceiling.

The reorganization of the interior support space increased the functionality of the library for both patrons and staff. Mechanical and electrical upgrades enhanced the building's energy efficiency and operability, modernizing the historic structure and improving its environmental performance.

The completed project respects and celebrates the historic architecture of the original building, while making aesthetic and functional improvements that modernized the library, allowing it to better serve the community and maintaining its presence as a cherished neighborhood gathering place.





**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**Additional Information:**

The other six Carnegie Library Landmark Designation reports include “features to be preserved.” For the Golden Gate Valley Branch Library these features are:

Exterior

- (1) Exterior terra cotta cladding and ornamentation
- (2) Clay tile roof
- (3) East facade with decorative columns
- (4) Buff brick at rear facade
- (5) Main entry bronze doors with glazed panels and transom
- (6) Wood windows, trim, pattern and configuration
- (7) Basilica-shaped plan
- (8) West side courtyard terra cotta walls
- (9) Granite entryway steps

Interior

- (1) Interior entry vestibule including wood paneled walls, wood door, and marble floor
- (2) Original wood interior doors in the Main Reading Room
- (3) Marble side walls and stair in the Main Reading Room
- (4) The open spatial volume of the Main Reading Room
- (5) The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room
- (6) Built-in shelving around the perimeter of the Main Reading Room
- (7) Architectural woodwork including shelves, cornice over shelves, pilasters, trim over windows, and plaster walls



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**References**

Bean, Walton. *Boss Ruef's San Francisco*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968.

Breisch, Kenneth A. *American Libraries 1730-1950*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2017.

Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Room, Columbia University.

Ernest Coxhead Collection, College of Environmental Design Archives, University of California, Berkeley. Finding Aid.

Ernest Coxhead, Pacific Coast Architecture Database, University of Washington.

"Libraries Reflect the City's Values." *Heritage Newsletter*, The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage, Volume XVI, Number 4. Fall, 1988. uncredited author Donald Andreini.

Issel, William and Robert Cherny. *San Francisco 1865-1932: Politics, Power and Urban Development*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1986.

Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America: A Public Legacy*. Washington, D. C., Preservation Press; New York: John Wiley Publishers, 1997.

Kahn, Judd. *Imperial San Francisco: Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897-1906*. Lincoln, Nebraska: University of Nebraska Press, 1979.

Kazin, Michael. *Barons of Labor*. Urbana-Champaign, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1987.

Kelley, Tim. *Landmark Nomination, Carnegie Branch Libraries of San Francisco, Context Statement*, January 2001.

Kortum, Lucy. "California Carnegie Libraries." National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Nomination Form, November 1989, Rev. April, 1990, Signed by the Keeper of the Register, December 1990.

Kortum, Lucy Deam. "Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture It Produced, 1899-1921." Master of Arts Thesis, Sonoma State University, 1990.



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

Longstreth, Richard W. *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century*. New York: Architectural History Foundation, 1983.

Maley, Bridget. "Golden Gate Valley Library a Treasure in Terra Cotta." *New Fillmore*. July 2015: 13-14.

Maley, Bridget. "A Pair of Coxheads." *New Fillmore*. June 2017: 12-13

San Francisco Board of Supervisors. San Francisco Municipal Reports, various years, 1900-1925.

Van Slyck, Abigail A. *Free to All, Carnegie Libraries and American Culture: 1890-1920*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995.



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**Endnotes**

---

<sup>1</sup> Tim Kelley, *Landmark Nomination, Carnegie Branch Libraries of San Francisco, Context Statement*, January 2001 and San Francisco Landmark Designation Report for Landmark #s 235, 235, 239, 240, 247 and 259.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> San Francisco Public Library History of the Golden Gate Valley Branch Library. [www.sfpl.org](http://www.sfpl.org).

<sup>4</sup> Kelley, 2001.

<sup>5</sup> Bridget Maley, "Golden Gate Valley Library a Treasure in Terra Cotta." *New Fillmore*. July 2015: 13-14.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Kelley, 2001: 16.

<sup>9</sup> San Francisco Public Library Branch Renovation Program. TEF Architecture + Interiors with Paulett Taggart Architects. <https://tefarch.com/projects/detail/42>.



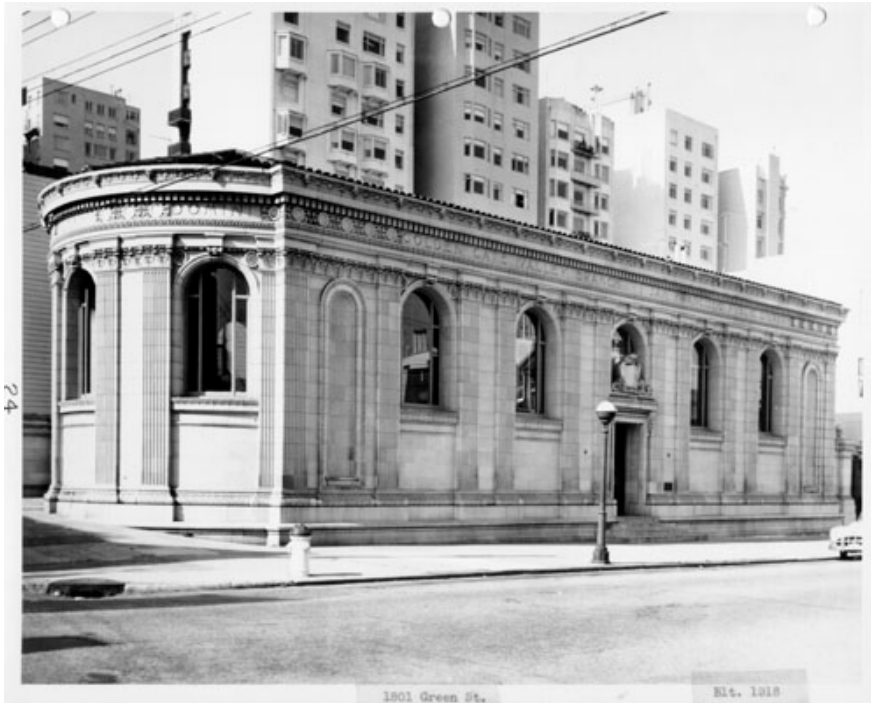
**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**APPENDIX A**

**Photographs – Historical and After 2012 Renovation and Addition**



Landmark Designation Report  
Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library  
July 22, 2020



*Above: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, looking southwest. (Source: SFPL Photograph Collection, #AAC-5676).*

*Below: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, looking southeast, circa 1970s. (Source: SFPL Photograph Collection #AAC-5850).*



Landmark Designation Report  
Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library  
July 22, 2020



*Above: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, looking south, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).*

*Below: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, looking southeast, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).*



Landmark Designation Report  
Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library  
July 22, 2020



*Above: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, looking southeast, detail of main entry, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).  
Below: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, looking south, detail of main entry, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).*





Landmark Designation Report  
Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library  
July 22, 2020



*Above: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, looking south, detail of small addition to the west of original building , 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).*



Landmark Designation Report  
Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library  
July 22, 2020



*Above: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, interior looking west, circa. 1970s. (Source: SFPL Photograph Collection #AAC-5851).*

*Below: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, interior looking southwest, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).*



architecture + history, llc  
[www.architecture-history.com](http://www.architecture-history.com)

Landmark Designation Report  
Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library  
July 22, 2020



*Above: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, interior looking east, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).*

*Below: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, interior looking east, showing rounded east end of building, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).*



Landmark Designation Report  
Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library  
July 22, 2020



*Above: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, interior looking south at circulation desk, marble side walls of entry vestibule visible, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).  
Below: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, interior looking south out windows showing relationship with adjacent building, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).*



Landmark Designation Report  
Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library  
July 22, 2020



*Above: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, interior looking south at librarian office behind circulation desk. (Source: TEF Design).*

*Below: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, interior looking east at stair and elevator shaft at addition, note original exterior wall visible, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).*



Landmark Designation Report  
Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library  
July 22, 2020



*Above: Golden Gate Valley Branch Library, remodeled basement multi-purpose room, looking west, 2012 after renovation. (Source: TEF Design).*



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**APPENDIX B**

Landmark Nomination Carnegie Branch Libraries of San Francisco Context Statement  
Tim Kelley, 2001



architecture + history, llc  
[www.architecture-history.com](http://www.architecture-history.com)

# Landmark Nomination Carnegie Branch Libraries of San Francisco

January, 2001



ORIGINS OF THE SEVEN SAN FRANCISCO  
CARNEGIE BRANCH LIBRARIES  
1901-1921

## CARNEGIE LIBRARY GRANT PROGRAM

Beginning in 1886, Andrew Carnegie, then one of the wealthiest industrialists in America, commenced what he later referred to as his “retail period” of library philanthropy. Carnegie had earlier advocated the disposal of surplus wealth to further social goals during the lifetime of the donor, a philosophy he committed to publication in 1889.<sup>1</sup> Although he financed a variety of public facilities, including schools, swimming pools, and New York’s Carnegie Hall, Carnegie favored libraries because they encouraged the active participation of the “deserving poor” for self improvement, a process with which he strongly identified due to his own early circumstances.

At first, he operated well within an established tradition of paternalistic library donorship, in which wealthy benefactors, typically on their own initiative, constructed monumental buildings in locales where they themselves either lived, did business, or were otherwise associated. Nominally dedicated to public use, these institutions were usually closely controlled by trustees drawn from the social elite and beholden to the donor. In practice, access to them was often limited. Operating expenses were met by private endowments, supplemented occasionally with public monies. However, continuity of funding was usually uncertain.<sup>2</sup>

Carnegie first donated library buildings in his Scottish birthplace, Dunfermline, followed by several Pennsylvania towns where his steel mill operations were concentrated. In Homestead, the last of these mill towns, he encountered, for the first time, public opposition to acceptance of his largesse. This resistance, strongest among union workers, stemmed from the virulent political conflict of the day between capital and labor in general, and particularly from the legacy of a bitter, violent strike and lockout that had occurred at the Carnegie Homestead Mill in 1892. During four months of conflict, armed company guards had killed several striking workers, and the Pennsylvania National Guard had been called out to protect strikebreakers. For years after this, organized labor fiercely resisted the use of Carnegie’s “tainted money” — even for public benefit.<sup>3</sup>

Stung by the growing resistance to his benevolence, Carnegie reorganized his approach to philanthropy. In 1898, he announced that he would no longer initiate library grants himself, but instead would entertain funding requests from interested

---

<sup>1</sup> Andrew Carnegie, “Wealth” (1889), quoted in Kortum, Lucy Deam. “Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture It Produced, 1899-1921”. M.A. Thesis, Sonoma State University, 1990, p27

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of 19th century library philanthropy prior to Carnegie, see : Van Slyck, Abigail A. *Free to All, Carnegie Libraries and American Culture: 1890-1920*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1995, Chapter One

<sup>3</sup> Kortum, Lucy Deam. “Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture It Produced, 1899-1921”. M.A. Thesis, Sonoma State University, 1990, p28, also Van Slyck, 19, 102

municipalities, thus shifting the initiative for the creation of a library to the community itself. In addition, he began to require successful applicants to supply the building site, and commit to levying a tax of at least 10% of the grant amount *per annum*, specifically allocated to the continued operation of the new library. This new system had the effect of displacing political controversy away from Carnegie himself by requiring the basic commitment, and the necessary political decisions, to be resolved at the local level prior to his involvement.

At the same time, the new Carnegie system strengthened the role of elected officials and the public *vis a vis* unelected boards of trustees. Since, at the very least, a municipality was required to institute a tax for library support, trustees—generally drawn from the social and cultural elite—were forced to negotiate with elected officials in order to receive Carnegie money.<sup>4</sup> In large cities, these officials were often members of recent immigrant groups who had not previously had any influence in cultural matters.

With the advent of this new system, Carnegie entered his “wholesale” period of giving. Beginning with 26 libraries funded in 1898, he went on to build an average of more than sixty per year until the program effectively ended in 1917. The peak years of activity were 1901-1903, when the now-retired Carnegie financed nearly 500 libraries. In all, he was responsible for the construction of 1,681 libraries in the United States, as well as 828 others worldwide.<sup>5</sup>

Carnegie’s private secretary, James Bertram, conducted most of the day-to-day business of evaluating requests and administering grants. Although there were no rigid requirements governing the architecture of a Carnegie library, Bertram, with the support of his employer, eventually came to exercise greater and greater influence over design, in the avowed interests of cost control and the avoidance of wasted space. By 1907, Bertram began to require that building plans be submitted for prior approval. He often demanded changes in order to avoid what he saw as wasted space or money. In 1911, he codified his views on library design in a pamphlet titled “*Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings.*”<sup>6</sup> In the same year, the newly created Carnegie Corporation of New York took over administration of the library program, with Bertram remaining the principal administrator.<sup>7</sup>

## EVOLVING ARCHITECTURE OF BRANCH LIBRARIES

The earliest buildings designed as libraries in this country were typically monumental structures, often in the Richardsonian Romanesque style, usually located in the business or governmental center of a municipality. Their asymmetrical plans and high ceilinged spaces were ill suited to library use, but reflected a hierarchical social order in which trustees were accorded spacious, elegant private rooms; books were guarded

---

<sup>4</sup> Van Slyck, Abigail A. *Free to All, Carnegie Libraries and American Culture: 1890-1920*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1995, 65

<sup>5</sup> Carnegie Corporation of New York, website, “Andrew Carnegie’s Legacy”

<sup>6</sup> Reproduced in appendix to this report, pages 31-35

<sup>7</sup> Kortum, 30

from unsupervised public contact; and the public reading space was often dominated by a large portrait of the benefactor or founder. These buildings frequently housed non-library cultural facilities as well, such as art and natural history collections, concert rooms, or theaters.<sup>8</sup>

Carnegie's early libraries were constructed in this mode, one even containing a gymnasium and swimming pool. However, as he entered his "wholesale period" Carnegie came to adopt the views of professional librarians, which emphasized more practical aspects of design, e.g. efficient handling of books, even heating of spaces, adequate storage and work space, etc. At the same time he espoused the theories of social Progressives concerned with the growing masses of foreign immigrants in American cities. Progressive theories saw libraries as sites for acculturation and education of both immigrants and native born members of the lower social classes. For those purposes, Progressives called for libraries located convenient to immigrant and working class neighborhoods, featuring open stacks, good lighting and ventilation, and an official attitude both welcoming and, at the same time, ordering.<sup>9</sup>

However, most early branch libraries were actually housed in rented or donated spaces—commercial storefronts, offices, or unneeded storage areas—spaces that generally lacked the qualities sought by Progressives. With his extensive program of grants, Andrew Carnegie ultimately came to be the single most influential force giving shape to the new branch library, a building type that had not previously existed. He increasingly favored the construction of branches over central libraries—after 1905 he refused to fund central libraries at all — and the branch buildings he financed were expected to conform to social-progressive concepts.

These views, ultimately codified by Bertram in *Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings*,<sup>10</sup> called for a symmetrical rectangular plan, a single story with basement, and windows six feet above the floor to allow continuous open shelves beneath them. On the main floor were to be a large reading room, entered through a small vestibule, and the librarian's service desk. The library collection was to be housed in open shelves lining the walls beneath the windows, and in low freestanding shelves which could be used as room dividers without restricting the librarian's ability to oversee the entire space from the service desk.<sup>11</sup> The basement was to contain a public lecture room, toilets, and service spaces. Eventually, Carnegie also came to require a separate children's reading room, again in accordance with Progressive social theory.

No such detailed guidelines governed the exterior design. Instead, *Notes on the*

---

<sup>8</sup> Van Slyck, 4

<sup>9</sup> *ibid*, 65

<sup>10</sup> Here and elsewhere, the bothersome simplified spelling used by both Carnegie and Bertram has been modified to standard usage, hence 'building' rather than 'bilding' and 'are' not 'ar.'

<sup>11</sup> Although the librarian's desk location is not specified by *Notes*, it is centrally located in the San Francisco Carnegie branches, perhaps because staffing levels were typically lower here than in other parts of the country. In the Carnegie designs, a decline in levels of comfort for staff work space coincides with a redefinition of the librarian's profession from male to female work. See Van Slyck, Chapter 5

*Erection of Library Buildings*, states:

“It will be noted that no elevations are given or suggestions made about the exteriors. These are features in which the community and architect may express their individuality, keeping to a plain, dignified structure and not aiming at such exterior effects as may make impossible an effective and economical layout of the interior.”

The interpretation of these guidelines would lead repeatedly to disagreement between Bertram and local authorities, who were frequently more interested in the exterior appearance than the interior functionality. It would also involve Bertram and Carnegie in conflict between librarians and architects, two groups then engaged in professionalizing their respective fields. Bertram, speaking for Carnegie in these situations, declared a clear bias for the needs of librarians. However, he was also deferential to the generally greater social standing of local elites and their architects.<sup>12</sup>

Most Carnegie libraries utilized Beaux-Arts historic revival styles. The “Carnegie Classical” style, a somewhat stripped down version of Classical Revival, evolved especially to enable the use of a classical vocabulary within a usually limited budget. These styles were thought to impart an appropriate dignity to the building, to make it immediately recognizable as an important civic structure. They generally feature a three part vertical composition, with base, body, and capital clearly delineated by cornices or string courses. The entrance, usually elaborated with columns, pediments, and ornate surrounds, is located in the center of the main facade. Windows and doors are deeply inset. Masonry construction is favored, using the best materials affordable in the budget.<sup>13</sup>

## INSTITUTIONAL ORIGINS OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN SAN FRANCISCO

The earliest libraries in San Francisco derived institutionally from American models that had existed since colonial times in the eastern states. These were usually organized around a collection of books made available by an individual or family, and were described as “social”, “membership”, or “subscription” libraries, the distinctions resting on how significant a fee was charged for use.<sup>14</sup> Membership was typically limited along social or professional lines. Early examples of the type in San Francisco include the 1851 Mercantile Association, the 1855 Mechanics Institute, and the 1853 Athenaeum, organized for African Americans.

Public financial support and broad general access to libraries in this country was first instituted in mid-nineteenth century New England. The earliest authorizing legislation was passed by Massachusetts in 1851, with the 1854 Boston Public Library becoming

---

<sup>12</sup> In the case of San Francisco, many of Bertram’s decisions were influenced by the personal intervention of former mayor James D. Phelan or G. Albert Lansburgh, architect of four branches.

<sup>13</sup> Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America, a Public Legacy*. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press; New York: John Wiley, 1997.

<sup>14</sup> Kortum, 3

the first tax supported institution open to all.<sup>15</sup> These early public libraries were commonly created with the donated collection of a social or subscription library. In California, the Rogers Act of 1878 authorized municipalities to levy taxes for the support of libraries, and to accept contributions of books. However, the legislation specifically barred San Francisco from accepting donated collections.<sup>16</sup>

The Rogers Act also spoke to a recurring question in the evolution of the American public library system, that is the nature of the governing bodies. Social and subscription libraries were usually controlled by self-perpetuating boards of trustees, often dominated by the founding family. As government funding became available, these elite bodies typically acted to preserve their authority over the newly public institutions, which they continued to see as preserves of high culture. However, especially in large cities, the advent of tax support gave rise to demands for more democratically selected governing bodies. The Rogers Act undertook to preserve libraries as elite cultural bastions by requiring tax-funded California libraries to be administered by self-perpetuating boards of trustees—purportedly to remove them from politics. But the new libraries were, by their nature, political creations, and were to remain contentious in many localities, certainly including San Francisco.<sup>17</sup>

In large cities, this basic political tension often translated also into a question of priority between a central library—usually favored by entrenched elites—or branch libraries—seen as a more accessible and democratic distribution plan by both Progressives and ward-based political leaders. Librarians, then just emerging as a professionalized group, tended to favor systems of branches. In most cases, early public libraries, both central and branches, were housed in makeshift quarters, either rented or made available in existing public buildings.

## POLITICS OF THE SAN FRANCISCO CARNEGIE GRANT

In 1901, Mayor James D. Phelan secured a commitment from Andrew Carnegie for a grant of \$750,000 to be used for the construction of a central main library and an unspecified number of branches. In a rare personal letter, Carnegie stipulated that “About half (not more, I think less) of this sum should be expended on the central library and the remainder on branch libraries.”<sup>18</sup> The grant also included the standard Carnegie stipulations that the city furnish building sites and commit \$75,000 per year for maintenance and operations.

Carnegie’s grant offer was immediately caught up in what was the beginning of a

---

<sup>15</sup> *ibid* 6

<sup>16</sup> *ibid* 22

<sup>17</sup> Van Slyck, 65

<sup>18</sup> Carnegie letter to Phelan, 20th June 1901, (reproduced p 36 of this report) All correspondence citations are from the Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, unless otherwise noted.

decade of tumultuous political conflict in San Francisco.<sup>19</sup> As a result, its implementation was to be delayed for eleven years. Organized labor opposed acceptance of the money on grounds that had been voiced elsewhere across the country—that it was unseemly to put the city in the debt of a man such as Carnegie, who had acquired his fortune through the ruthless exploitation of working people, and had used lethal force against them when they struck for improved work conditions. Phelan and his supporters, on the other hand, stalled any action on the Carnegie branch libraries, and instead focused entirely on their cherished main library, eventually even attempting to usurp the funds set aside for branches.

The whole library question was further complicated by near simultaneous local events. In the summer of 1901, as Andrew Carnegie was making his initial offer, Mayor Phelan, who had until then enjoyed some support from working class neighborhoods, interjected the police force into a strike by teamsters and waterfront workers. Police dispersed picket lines with billy clubs, hounded strikers off the streets, and rode as guards on non-union wagons, thus helping to break the strike.<sup>20</sup> Phelan, quoted as warning strikers “If you don’t want to be clubbed...go back to work,” now came to be seen as anti-labor, a local version of Carnegie himself—which further stiffened opposition to accepting the grant.

That November, largely as a result of Phelan’s anti-labor image, Eugene Schmitz, president of the Musicians Union and candidate of the newly formed Union Labor Party, was elected mayor. The Phelan Democrats, who retained control of the Board of Supervisors, were reluctant to cooperate with Schmitz. They did, however, formally accept the Carnegie grant, enact a charter amendment to increase the annual minimum library budget to \$75,000, in accordance with Carnegie’s requirements—and sponsor a \$1.6 million bond issue to cover land acquisition and supplemental construction costs for a new main library. The bond issue contained no supplemental funding for branch libraries.<sup>21</sup>

This political standoff continued until 1912. During that time nothing was done to move forward the Carnegie branch libraries, despite all necessary conditions apparently having been met. When the Main Library bond issue failed to sell—due partially to a low interest rate, but probably also to a nationwide boycott of San Francisco bonds issued under the Union Labor regime<sup>22</sup>—Phelan personally intervened with local bankers to arrange their sale. Enough bond revenue was obtained to finance the acquisition of land for the new main library. However, the remaining bonds rapidly became even less saleable with a rise in the market rate.

---

<sup>19</sup> For a discussion of the conflict, see especially—Kahn, Judd. *Imperial San Francisco; Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897-1906*. Lincoln, NB, University of Nebraska Press. 1979 and Issel, William and Robert W. Cherny. *San Francisco 1865-1932; Politics, Power, and Urban Development*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press. 1986

<sup>20</sup> Kazin, Michael. *Barons of Labor*. University of Illinois Press. Urbana and Chicago. 1987 p54

<sup>21</sup> *San Francisco Municipal Reports 1901*

<sup>22</sup> Kahn, p46-47

During this period, five purpose-built branch libraries were erected, none of them utilizing the Carnegie money. Two were donated to the city, one South of Market by Phelan,<sup>23</sup> the other in Eureka Valley by businessman Andrew J. McCreery.<sup>24</sup> Both were built on city owned land. Two more, one in the Mission and one in North Beach were privately constructed as libraries, and leased back from the private owners. The fifth, the Park Branch, was built on Page Street, near Cole. Building and land costs for the latter were met by city funds, with no Carnegie money involved.<sup>25</sup>

Despite the Union Labor government's removal from office in 1907,<sup>26</sup> relations between the Library Trustees and the Board of Supervisors continued to be antagonistic. Although he was a long time Library Trustee, Dr. Edward R. Taylor, installed as interim mayor to replace Schmitz, was personally opposed to accepting the Carnegie funds. His opposition, plus a dispute over the location of a new main library, meant continued inaction on the Carnegie branches. In 1910, Taylor was succeeded as mayor by the new Union Labor candidate, Patrick H. McCarthy, President of the Building Trades Council. Under McCarthy, relations between Trustees and Supervisors deteriorated even further.

Shortly after McCarthy's election, Phelan, once again serving on the Board of Trustees, attempted to secure the entire Carnegie grant moneys for construction of a new main library, thereby eliminating any branches. He appears to have claimed that Carnegie had agreed to modify the original grant conditions. Rebuffed by Bertram,<sup>27</sup> Phelan and the trustees continued to pursue this end until Carnegie himself delivered a stinging rebuke in a letter to R. B. Hale, President of the Trustees, on April 16, 1910.<sup>28</sup> If the city wanted to erect a monumental central library, Carnegie remonstrated, it should finance that project itself, and use his money entirely for branches. He declined also to assist in the sale of the bonds for the trustee-favored main library.

McCarthy and his supporters then placed a measure on the ballot to make the Library Trustees an elected body. This was defeated at the polls, whereupon the Board of Supervisors promptly cut the library budget to the minimum allowable under the charter—which nevertheless remained high enough to satisfy the Carnegie requirements. Still, Phelan and the Trustees took no action to build the much-needed branches.

In 1912, with the Union Labor Party again out of office—this time through a legitimate election— the Trustees placed a measure on the ballot to increase the interest rate on

---

<sup>23</sup> *Reports 1901*

<sup>24</sup> *Reports 1904*

<sup>25</sup> *Reports 1909*

<sup>26</sup> Schmitz and the entire Board of Supervisors were forced from office as the result of a privately financed graft investigation led by Phelan and Rudolph Spreckels. Schmitz was convicted, but his conviction was reversed on appeal. See Bean, Walton. *Boss Ruef's San Francisco*. U.C. Press. 1952

<sup>27</sup> Bertram to Phelan Feb.11,1910 — "You only refer to the modification of the promise or the conditions attached to it. You should send us copy of the letter making such modifications." (reproduced p 46 of this report)

<sup>28</sup> Carnegie to Hale April 15,1910 (reproduced p 47 of this report)

the yet unsold main library bonds. Edward Taylor, Trustee, former mayor, and opponent of the Carnegie grant, took this opportunity to put the underlying question of accepting the grant money directly to the voters. His measure calling for refusal of the grant was soundly defeated, while the bond rate increase passed. After this, Phelan again approached Carnegie to revalidate the original grant offer. Carnegie agreed to stand by his 1901 terms, with half the money to go for the planned main building, although he reminded the Trustees that he had since then ceased funding any central libraries, saying:

“I attach most importance to branch libraries, bringing books close to the homes of the people, and have for many years confined my library gifts to branch libraries exclusively...”<sup>29</sup>

Finally, between 1914 and 1921, seven new branch libraries were built, using \$375,000 in Carnegie money. The new (now old) Main Library was also opened in 1917, financed with the other half of the Carnegie funds, supplemented by \$780,000 in bond money. The branch construction budget received no local funds. Branch locations chosen, in chronological order, were: The Richmond (1914), Mission (1915), Noe Valley (1916), Sunset (1918), Golden Gate Valley (1918), North Beach, now Chinatown (1921)<sup>30</sup>, and Presidio (1921). These locations were at least partially determined by the influence of district “Improvement Clubs” which had arisen in the mainly middle class newer neighborhoods, and had proven valuable allies in ousting the Union Labor Party. The names chosen for the buildings reflect both the political impossibility of using the Carnegie name in San Francisco<sup>31</sup> and the Progressive desire to label urban geography without reference to political wards or precincts. Previous practice in San Francisco, and in other large cities, had been to designate branch libraries by number.

## PRE-CARNEGIE BRANCH LIBRARIES IN SAN FRANCISCO

The earliest branch libraries in San Francisco were opened in 1888, the same year the nine year old Main Library was moved from rented space on Bush Street to the new City Hall building. The first branches were located in rented spaces in North Beach, the Mission, and Potrero Hill. By 1901, their number had grown to six, with additions in the Richmond district, South of Market, and the Western Addition/Fillmore. Both branches and main were under the direction of the self-perpetuating board of trustees, with George H. Rogers, author of the Rogers Act, as President.

In 1901, the city acquired its first purpose-built library structure, donated by James D. Phelan and located at 4th and Clara streets. Phelan was still serving as mayor and was a member *ex officio* of the board of library trustees. The new building was architecturally derived from the emerging Carnegie library type found all across the country by this time. It was a rectangular plan, single story over basement masonry structure, classical

---

<sup>29</sup> Carnegie to Phelan December 28, 1912

<sup>30</sup> The name change took place in 1958, reflecting both a shift in the composition of the neighborhood and the construction of a new North Beach branch.

<sup>31</sup> Not a requirement of the grants, although many smaller communities, where political resistance was less intense, did incorporate the Carnegie name into the new buildings.



revival in styling, with a central entrance framed in a monumental pediment. Phelan had donated the \$16,000 construction costs, and the site was obtained from the Public School Department. In San Francisco, all of the early purpose-built branch libraries conformed, in general, to the Carnegie guidelines. The 1904 McCreery branch cost \$50,000 and featured finer detailing and finishes than the Phelan, but was designed in the same mode. The Park branch, opened in 1909, the first to be built with City funds, (\$30,000) was designed by the McDougall Brothers, again to the Carnegie recommendations.

Indeed, the Carnegie guidelines had by that time become generally accepted as the standards for branch libraries nationally. However, actual Carnegie projects continued to experience some tension between local sponsors, with their architects, and James Bertram, who insisted, on behalf of the Carnegie Corporation, on the most efficient use of Carnegie money.

## THE SAN FRANCISCO CARNEGIE BRANCHES

In San Francisco, when Phelan and the trustees were finally forced to use half of the \$750,000 grant on branches rather than on their coveted Main Library, the result was a fairly lush branch budget. At an average of over \$50,000 each, the seven buildings were conceived as stately adjuncts of the City Beautiful movement, although their fine exteriors were somewhat squandered by their mid-block or secondary corner placement—site acquisition being the financial responsibility of the trustees.

All seem to conform to the basic Carnegie prescription. Plans are rectangular, except for the Golden Gate Valley branch which is rounded at one end with an apse, and entrances are centrally located in symmetrical compositions. Entry is via a small, generally wood paneled, vestibule. All seven buildings have two levels, with a community meeting room, toilets, and service spaces on the lower floors. The upper floors all contain a grand, high ceilinged reading room occupying most of the floor, illuminated by natural light from tall windows. Perimeter shelving runs under the windows and low shelving is used to divide the space and control circulation, as prescribed in *"Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings"*. The main rooms are embellished with ornate plaster ceilings and, in some, plaster pilasters and arches. Delivery or checkout desks are centrally located.

The first two Carnegie branches, the Richmond (1914) and Mission (1916), were built without separate children's rooms. In 1923, both were retrofitted with children's rooms on the lower levels.<sup>32</sup> The latter five, Noe Valley (1916), Golden Gate Valley (1918), Sunset (1918), Presidio (1921) and North Beach (now Chinatown, 1921) were designed with children's rooms on the main level. In all but Golden Gate Valley, these occupied rear extensions of the main building, and were divided from the main rooms by wood paneled partitions with glazed upper portions, again in accord with Carnegie guidelines

---

<sup>32</sup> *San Francisco Municipal Reports 1923*

which allowed the glass for sound deadening, while preserving the sight lines, so that one librarian could supervise both rooms.

Despite general conformity to Carnegie standards, there were near constant disagreements over design throughout the period of construction, between James Bertram on the one hand, and the San Francisco Trustees and their architects on the other. Matters began well, with Bertram assuring Phelan in a letter of August 13, 1913, regarding the Richmond branch, designed by Bliss and Faville—

”As far as I remember the plans they were admirably simple and practicable, and I hope that the other plans will follow the same line.”<sup>33</sup>

But the honeymoon was brief. The design for the Mission branch, second to be built, did not please Bertram, who complained to George Mullin, Secretary of the Trustees —

“The exterior plans you sent are attractive pictorially, but cannot commend the scheme of accommodation. It does not appear to be a good plan to project a two-story building, and make the second story the main floor.”<sup>34</sup>

In fact, he had already sent the plans to W. H. Brett, Chief Librarian of Cleveland, as well as to several eastern architects, for comment. All dutifully criticized the location of the main spaces up one flight, and all agreed that the central stairway protruding in to the middle of the reading room both wasted precious space and created a potential nuisance.

Mullin defended the design, claiming it would be unwise to locate the main room on a basement level because of lighting and ventilation concerns—and noting that there had been no complaints about the stairs at the Richmond branch, which were mostly exterior. He also mentioned that the Mission branch architect, G. Albert Lansburgh, would soon be in New York, and would be pleased to discuss the plans with Bertram.<sup>35</sup>

Thus was established a pattern that would be repeated—disapproval by Bertram, followed by a visit from Lansburgh—who was to design four of the buildings, and maintained an office in New York—and finally acquiescence. Constant points of contention were the placement of the main spaces upstairs and the height of the ceilings in those spaces. Both problems stemmed, in Bertram’s view, from giving priority to architectural effects over practical concerns—as expressed in his letter of October 11, 1916 to the President of the Trustees—

“Rather than conceive his exterior architectural scheme first and then make his interior accommodation fit it, you will agree that the contrary should be the process of the architect, but generally speaking one does not get this impression from the San Francisco Branch Library plans.”<sup>36</sup>

The Noe Valley branch, next to be constructed, was designed by John Reid Jr. with a

<sup>33</sup> Bertram to Phelan August 13, 1913

<sup>34</sup> Bertram to Mullin, January 14, 1915

<sup>35</sup> Mullin to Bertram, January 29, 1915

<sup>36</sup> Bertram to O’Connor, October 11, 1916 — Although these aspects of the San Francisco designs vexed James Bertram, and today continue to present problems of access, the resulting verticality of the compositions clearly enhances the grandeur and civic presence of the buildings.

central interior stairway like the Mission's. It elicited the same objections from Bertram. Edward Taylor, then serving as President of the Trustees, replied forcefully, citing Carnegie libraries in Massachusetts and New Jersey with more stairs than the Noe Valley plan.<sup>37</sup> Bertram retreated, but sent the plans to Edward L. Tilton, a New York architect, who criticized the lack of librarian work space, and recommended a side entrance to avoid the need for the stairway.<sup>38</sup> Bertram finally approved the plans, but sniffed—

“One is somewhat disposed to think that an architectural achievement has been aimed at.”<sup>39</sup>

Bertram raised the same complaints about Lansburgh's subsequent design for the Sunset branch and Ernest Coxhead's Golden Gate Valley basilica model. In the case of the Sunset, he was additionally offended by the wasted space of the loggia.<sup>40</sup> Another personal visit from Lansburgh seemed to smooth the way for both projects, but six months later, after construction had begun, Bertram grumbled that the Sunset ceiling was too high.<sup>41</sup> Lansburgh paid another visit to him in New York, and explained in a follow up letter—

“I feel that the proportions of the exterior could not be conveniently altered...”<sup>42</sup>

Bertram again reluctantly acceded. Virtually the same dialogue accompanied approval of the last two branches, Presidio and North Beach (now Chinatown) both Lansburgh's designs.<sup>43</sup>

## ARCHITECTS

As can be seen in the correspondence regarding the San Francisco Carnegie branches, James Bertram and the Carnegie Corporation were impatient with architectural adventures they perceived as detrimental to the functioning of a library. Nonetheless, they expected a measure of architectural distinction that would suitably communicate the importance of the building—and they insisted on the use of trained architects for each building they financed. Nationwide, this led several firms to specialize in Carnegie libraries, with Bertram eager to recommend those with a successful track record.

However, the pool of architectural talent in San Francisco by the time these branches were built, having been augmented by the needs of the post-earthquake reconstruction, was quite adequate without outside help. However, the branch libraries were relatively small projects compared to the simultaneous building of the new Civic Center, including

---

<sup>37</sup> Taylor to Bertram, October 27, 1915

<sup>38</sup> Tilton to Bertram, December 8, 1915

<sup>39</sup> Bertram to Taylor, December 10, 1915

<sup>40</sup> Bertram to O'Connor, October 11, 1916; In an intriguing aside, Bertram also comments “The octagonal plans put forward are quite impossible and need not have been sent here.”

<sup>41</sup> Bertram to O'Connor, March 23, 1917

<sup>42</sup> Lansburgh to Bertram, March 29, 1917

<sup>43</sup> Bertram to Mullin, February 3, 1920: “The clearance of the main floor in the North Beach Branch is unnecessarily high, architectural affect having evidently been the controlling factor.”

the new main library, and to the Panama Pacific International Exposition (PPIE), as well as to the growing downtown area. The architects who designed the branches were all quite prominent in the profession, and, with the exception of Ernest Coxhead, they were all involved in the larger projects of the day.

## G. ALBERT LANSBURGH

G. (Gustave) Albert Lansburgh, designer of the Mission, Sunset, North Beach, and Presidio branches, was one of the chosen finalists in the competition for the Main Library. His proposal there was rejected because of what the judges considered a dysfunctional plan, with the delivery room located one floor below the reading room.<sup>44</sup>

Lansburgh was born in Panama, and immigrated to this country in 1882, at the age of six. He attended the University of California, Berkeley, but left after two years to enroll in the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris, on the strong encouragement of Bernard Maybeck, with whom he had worked in the summers. He graduated from the Ecole in 1906 with highest honors and was awarded a medal for his design of a projected new Temple Emanu-El in San Francisco.<sup>45</sup> He returned to San Francisco just in time to participate in the rebuilding of the city after the earthquake and fire of April 18.

In practice on his own by 1908, he also continued to study under Maybeck for a period of time. Lansburgh is remembered largely for his numerous theater designs, which often displayed his Beaux Arts training and made copious use of polychrome terra cotta—traits that his branch libraries here share. His Wiltern Theater in Los Angeles is a designated landmark. Locally, his best known theater works are the adjacent Golden Gate and Fox Warfield at Golden Gate, Taylor and Market. Lansburgh's theater work included a sophisticated understanding of acoustics as well. His design for the interior of the San Francisco War Memorial Opera House was highly praised for its acoustical qualities and innovative stage arrangements.

In addition to theaters, Lansburgh, a Jew himself, did a number of projects for Jewish organizations. These include the Jewish Concordia Club on Van Ness Avenue; the B'nai B'rith Grand Lodge; the Sinai Temple in Oakland, and a second unexecuted design for Temple Emanu-El. Lansburgh consulted with Arthur Brown in the design of the present temple at Lake and Arguello.

Lansburgh practiced for over 40 years. Headquartered in San Francisco, he also maintained offices in New York and Los Angeles. His theater work, especially for the Orpheum chain, where his brother was a corporate officer, kept him busy nationwide. He also executed public auditoriums in widespread locations, including Sacramento and Salt Lake City. During World War II, with theater and auditorium work generally on hold, he made drawings for seaplanes and naval vessels, before going into semi-retirement.

---

<sup>44</sup> Cahill, B. J. S. "The San Francisco Public Library Competition". *The Architect and Engineer of California*, May 1914.

<sup>45</sup> Never built due to the post-earthquake relocation of the congregation

He died in San Francisco in 1969.<sup>46</sup>

## BLISS & FAVILLE

Designers of the Richmond Branch, this firm consisted of Walter D. Bliss and William B. Faville, both native Californians and MIT graduates. The two trained under McKim, Mead & White before establishing their own firm in 1898.<sup>47</sup>

One of the partnership's earliest triumphs was the Carnegie-financed Oakland Public Library (1901).<sup>48</sup> This was followed by their original St. Francis Hotel (1904), which they rebuilt in 1907 and added to in 1913.<sup>49</sup> In the downtown rebuild following the earthquake and fire of 1906, the firm was also responsible for the Bank of California building (1907), the Geary Theater (built as the Columbia in 1909), the Geary Theater Annex (1909), the Savings Union Bank at Grant, O'Farrell & Market (1910), and the Masonic Temple (1911) at Van Ness & Market. The Bank of California, Geary Theater, and Savings Union Bank are San Francisco Landmarks, while the Geary is also listed individually on the National Register.

Bliss and Faville were also active in the design of several PPIE pavilions from 1913 to 1915. Their work for the exposition included an innovative design for the "great wall" which surrounded the fair grounds. A temporary structure covered with ice plant, the wall was intended to shelter the bay front site from the blustery San Francisco summer weather.<sup>50</sup>

The partners were unsuccessful competitors, with a massively domed entrant, in the Main Library competition. They nonetheless contributed magnificently to the new Civic Center with their State Building (1926), at 350 McAllister. Throughout the teens and 20s, they continued to establish a strong presence in the emerging downtown, with their 1916 Southern Pacific Building at 1 Market, the Bank of America at 1 Powell (1920), and the National Register listed Matson Building (1921) at the corner of Main & Market. In addition to the Masonic Temple, their club work includes the University Club, 800 Powell (1912), and the Metropolitan Club (1916).<sup>51</sup> Much of their best work incorporates polychrome terra cotta ornament, as does their Richmond Branch Library.

William B. Faville served as president of the San Francisco Chapter of the American Institute of Architecture from 1922 to 1924. The Bliss and Faville firm dissolved in 1925,

---

<sup>46</sup> Stern, Norton B. & William M. Kramer. "G. Albert Lansburgh, San Francisco's Jewish Architect from Panama" *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly*. April-May 1981

<sup>47</sup> Longstreth, Richard W. *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century*. New York. Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press. 1983

<sup>48</sup> Cahill, B. J. S. "The Work of Bliss & Faville" *The Architect and Engineer of California*. Jan 1914

<sup>49</sup> Corbett, Michael R. & The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. *Splendid Survivors; San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*. San Francisco. California Living Books. 1979

<sup>50</sup> Faville, W. B., F. A. I. A. "Phases of Panama-Pacific International Exposition Architecture" *The American Architect*. January 6, 1915

<sup>51</sup> Corbett. *op. cit.* Of the St. Francis Hotel, which is not a designated landmark, Corbett says, "...almost as much as any other building, it serves as the architectural image of the city of San Francisco."

with both partners pursuing separate careers.

#### JOHN REID JR.

Reid, a native San Franciscan, was educated at the University of California and the Ecole de Beaux Arts. Upon returning to San Francisco, he was associated with Willis Polk and the Daniel Burnham firm, before opening his own office in 1911. His work was mainly public buildings—for many years he was the City Architect or Consulting Architect. The most prominent of his many school buildings is the former High School of Commerce (1927)<sup>52</sup>, now the Unified School District Administrative Building, at 135 Van Ness Avenue (San Francisco Landmark #140). Others include the Twin Peaks School<sup>53</sup> and Mission High School (1926).

As a member, with John Galen Howard and Frederick H. Meyer, of the Board of Consulting Architects for the design of the Civic Center, Reid had a great deal of influence over the most important project of that era. The three architects are jointly credited with the Exposition Auditorium (1914), one of the key buildings in the National Register and local Civic Center historic districts. The Board also oversaw the design of smaller school and Fire Department buildings throughout the city, and Reid designed many of these himself. His Noe Valley Branch Library shares with them a proclivity for classically derived design and lavish polychrome terra cotta ornament.

#### ERNEST COXHEAD

English born and educated, Coxhead first came to San Francisco in 1890. His most notable early works here were a number of churches done for the Episcopal diocese. Of these, only the Church of the Holy Innocents at 455 Fair Oaks (1890) survives. Later, he specialized in residential work.<sup>54</sup>

---

<sup>52</sup> Corbett. *op. cit.*

<sup>53</sup> Morrow, Irving F. "Work by John Reid, Jr., A. I. A." *The Architect and Engineer*. February 1920

<sup>54</sup> "The Bay Region Styles: 1890-1930; Ernest Coxhead and the Regional Scene: The Transformation Game & Other Delights". The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage.(no date or author)

By 1918, when he designed the Golden Gate Valley branch, Coxhead was still well regarded, although his career was in a period of eclipse.

His library, which many consider the jewel of the seven Carnegie branches, is somewhat atypical of his work. To begin with, he most often used shingled rustic styles, quite unlike this terra cotta clad basilica. Even his other classically inspired work, such as his 1908 Home Telephone Building at 333 Grant Avenue (San Francisco Landmark #141) often featured surprising oversized elements that tweak the classical sense of order. Such departures are absent in the Golden Gate Valley building, which instead presents a studied elegance.

## PROPERTY TYPES AND IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS

The seven San Francisco Carnegie branch libraries are the only property type significant under this context. All seven remain in use as branch libraries.

The physical characteristics that unite and define the property type include those promulgated in *“Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings”*, the Carnegie sponsored guidelines first published in 1911:

- symmetrical rectangular plan
- single story with basement
- large windows six feet above the floor
- small vestibule
- large main floor reading room
- open shelves lining the walls beneath the windows
- low free-standing shelves used as room dividers
- basement level public lecture room

Other defining physical characteristics specific to the San Francisco Carnegie branches include:

- high ornamental plaster ceilings in the main reading spaces
- smaller rear extensions of the main rectangular volume, often containing children’s rooms in the later buildings, some now converted to staff space
- glazed and paneled partitions separating main room from rear spaces
- decorative paneling in vestibules and at main desk
- three part vertical facade compositions defined by cornices and plinths
- glazed terra cotta, sometimes polychrome, used for ornament and/or cladding
- deep-set wooden windows with ornate surrounds

The Carnegie branch libraries are significant as:

- examples of early 20th century development in library design
- manifestations of social goals of political progressives in the same time period
- indicators of the political, cultural, and architectural history of San Francisco, also in the same period.

The buildings convey their significance in several ways:

- By their conformance to the general Carnegie guidelines in *“Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings”* they typify the state of library design during the period. The inclusion of separate main floor children’s rooms in the later buildings also contributes in this category.
- By their neighborhood locations, incorporation of open stacks, lecture rooms, and large comfortable common reading spaces, as well as their symbolic entry sequences, they speak to Progressive social goals of acculturation.
- By their delayed dates of construction, and the absence of the Carnegie name in their historical designations, they represent the political and class conflict of their historical period in San Francisco.
- By their rich exteriors, they represent the cultural and architectural history of San Francisco, especially the importance of the City Beautiful movement, during the period of construction.

The physical characteristics described above, which are almost entirely intact in the seven Carnegie branches, are the attributes necessary to list these buildings as local landmarks.

## GOALS AND PRIORITIES

The main goal is to nominate the seven San Francisco Carnegie branch libraries as local landmarks, significant not only for their national and state historical associations, but also for their specific connections with the cultural, political and social history of San Francisco. The intention is to encourage historical understanding and respect for the buildings, while embracing extensive necessary alterations related to safety, accessibility, modern information technology, and shifts in the social role of public libraries.

## DEFINING FEATURES

Priority should be given to the preservation of the exteriors, and retention of the high ceilinged main reading rooms and symbolic entrances, which are major interior architectural features. Interior spaces other than the main reading rooms and vestibules are not defining features.

Within the reading rooms, the ornate ceilings, high windows, peripheral shelving, and pilasters are defining features. The introduction of free standing shelving, elevator structures, modern furniture, etc., as has already taken place, does not diminish the historic integrity of these spaces. Overhead lighting, if replaced, should respect historic models and should not destroy the fabric of the ceilings. Low shelving used for space division and to direct circulation, while historically significant, could be realigned or removed if necessary to accommodate changing usages, as could librarian’s desks. The conversion of main floor children’s rooms to other uses may also take place without reducing historic integrity. However, the glazed and paneled partitions should be preserved if possible. Although disabled access must be provided, care should be taken



also to preserve the historically significant entry sequences where possible.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Bean, Walton. *Boss Ruef's San Francisco*. U.C. Press. 1952
- Board of Supervisors. *San Francisco Municipal Reports*, various years 1900-1925
- Cahill, B. J. S. "The San Francisco Public Library Competition". *The Architect and Engineer of California*, May 1914
- Cahill, B. J. S. "The Work of Bliss & Faville" *The Architect and Engineer of California*. Jan 1914
- Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University
- Carnegie Corporation of New York, website, "Andrew Carnegie's Legacy"
- Corbett, Michael R. & The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. *Splendid Survivors; San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*. San Francisco. California Living Books. 1979
- Faville, W. B., F. A. I. A. "Phases of Panama-Pacific International Exposition Architecture" *The American Architect*. January 6, 1915
- The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. "The Bay Region Styles: 1890-1930; Ernest Coxhead and the Regional Scene: The Transformation Game & Other Delights". (no date or author)
- The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. "Libraries Reflect the City's Values". *Heritage Newsletter*, vol. XVI, No. 4. uncredited author Donald Andreini
- Kelley, Tim. "Origins of the Seven San Francisco Carnegie Branch Libraries 1901-1921", Context Statement. Planning Department. January, 2001
- Kortum, Lucy Deam. "Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture It Produced, 1899-1921". M.A. Thesis, Sonoma State University, 1990
- Issel, William and Robert W. Cherny. *San Francisco 1865-1932; Politics, Power, and Urban Development*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press. 1986
- Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America, a Public Legacy*. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press; New York: John Wiley, 1997
- Kahn, Judd. *Imperial San Francisco; Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897-1906*. Lincoln, NB, University of Nebraska Press. 1979
- Kazin, Michael. *Barons of Labor*. University of Illinois Press. Urbana and Chicago. 1987
- Longstreth, Richard W. *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century*. New York. Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press. 1983
- Morrow, Irving F. "Work by John Reid, Jr., A. I. A." *The Architect and Engineer*. February 1920
- Stern, Norton B. & William M. Kramer. "G. Albert Lansburgh, San Francisco's Jewish Architect from Panama" *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly*. April-May 1981
- Van Slyck, Abigail A. *Free to All, Carnegie Libraries and American Culture: 1890-1920*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1995

Skibo Castle

Ardgay, N. B.

20th June, 1901.

Mayor James D. Phelan,  
San Francisco.

Dear Mr. Mayor:

Your letter of March 22 is before me this morning.

If San Francisco will furnish proper sites for libraries and agree to spend \$75,000 a year in their maintenance, I shall be very glad to give \$750,000 as needed to pay for the buildings. About half (not more, I think less) of this sum should be expended on the central library and the remainder on branch libraries. The site for the central library should be amply sufficient to provide for additions in the future for San Francisco is a growing city.

Very truly yours,

(Signed) Andrew Carnegie

Feb. 11, 1910

Hon. James D. Phelan  
Phelan Bilding,  
San Francisco, Cal.

Dear Sir,

Yours of February 5th received. You send copy of letter of Mr. Carnegie making the original promise of money for Library Bilding for San Francisco. You only refer to the modification of the promise or the conditions attacht to it. You should send us copy of the letter making such modifications.

Mr. Carnegie made the promise to San Francisco before he had decided not to give central library bildings for large cities, leaving that to the community. Of course his promise to San Francisco stands as made, but he will not add to the amount allowed for Central Bilding.

Respectfully yours,

(James Bertram            P. Secretary

April 15, 1910

Dear Mr. Hale -

Please consider this letter personal and unofficial, because I wish to understand the situation fully.

I read, while at Santa Barbara, a speech by the Mayor saying that there would never be a Carnegie Library accepted by San Francisco, or words to that effect. I supposed the whole matter was off and concluded to say nothing about it. The gentleman who waited on me only asked me to take the bonds or arrange in some way to sell bonds for the main Library Building, which the city had undertaken to build, I supposed entirely independent of any offer from us. I replied that I could not engage in any business transaction of that kind.

Now it appears that the city undertook the building of a great Main Library Building. Such Library Buildings as these do not present themselves to me as proper objects for gifts from private individuals. They should be erected by the cities themselves.

Should San Francisco instead of spending the half million I promised, which should be ample to pay for a suitable Central Library Building, conclude to spend a million and a half, I naturally supposed that my money would all go to branches, and this I hope will be done. I am ...? sure that the seven hundred and fifty thousand dollars that I undertook to give will be spent in the ...? and all that I saw of that vigorous community.

We cannot hold San Francisco back.

...? talk this over among yourselves and see whether you cannot devote my \$750,000. to Branch Library Buildings as they are needed, a policy I pursued with New York, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Cleveland and Cincinnati.

We see a sad example in New York upon the great Central Library question. I believe that its cost, ready for occupancy, will reach ...? think will stagger people.

There is one point which I wish you to consider. The half million I agreed to devote to the erection of a Main Library Building was to be the whole cost of the Library Building. I was not to be a partner with the city in the Main Building to the extent of a third. On the contrary, it was to be a building furnished by me. When the city resolved on an extravagant architectural ornament that will be entered only by the well-to-do who have books of their own, my heart is not in it.

Do let us provide your Branch Library Buildings and the city take its grand architectural monument in its own hands and relieve us.

Very truly yours

(signed) A. Carnegie

**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**APPENDIX C**

California Carnegie Libraries, National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form, December 1990.



architecture + history, llc  
[www.architecture-history.com](http://www.architecture-history.com)

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

RECEIVED  
OCT 30 1990

National Register of Historic Places  
Multiple Property Documentation Form

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

This form is for use in documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Type all entries.

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

B. Associated Historic Contexts

Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture  
It Produced, 1899-1921

C. Geographical Data

Boundaries, the State of California

See continuation sheet

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Planning and Evaluation.

X Kathryn Kvalstein  
Signature of certifying official

10-22-90  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I, hereby, certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Antoinette J. Lee  
for Signature of the Keeper of the National Register

12/10/90  
Date



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number     E     Page     1    

E. Statement of Historic Context: Carnegie Library Development in California  
and the Architecture it Produced, 1899-1921

In the same year that gold was discovered in California, the nation's first legislation permitting tax support for a free public library was passed in Massachusetts; in 1850 in England the Public Libraries Act allowed cities with over 10,000 population to levy a tax in support of libraries. The evolving concept of free public libraries was not merely transplanted to the new settlements in the West, however. Rather, two centuries of New England library development were replicated in California over a period of about twenty-five years, beginning with the establishment of social libraries and reading rooms in many of the new communities of the state. In 1878 California passed enabling legislation for tax supported free public libraries. Typically, however, even the new municipal libraries were housed in temporary and inadequate storefronts, upstairs lodge rooms, and city hall basements. When, in the closing years of the nineteenth century, Andrew Carnegie initiated his most widely known philanthropy, providing funds to cities and towns for the construction of library buildings, California communities were ready to join older communities across the nation in the quest for buildings for their libraries. Terms of Carnegie building grants required that communities provide the land for the library building and a prescribed level of tax support.

California library historian Ray Held chose the year 1917 to close his record of "the rise of the public library in California" primarily because America's involvement in World War I slowed the growth of the public library movement, and also because it was the year of the sudden death of James Gillis, eminent California library leader whose accomplishment in initiating a statewide system of county libraries was recognized throughout the nation. "The year thus marked the end of an era in the evolution of the California public library."<sup>1</sup> Additionally, during the war years the Carnegie Corporation deferred grant applicants. After the war the Corporation redirected its library efforts and no further building grants were offered, although it was not until 1921 that the last of the previously funded library buildings was completed. In 1919, when all but six of the California Carnegie buildings were planned or completed, approximately 84% of California's public libraries were in Carnegie buildings.<sup>2</sup> The case can be made that by providing the library building--frequently a distinguished civic building--and by energizing a constituency to generate taxes and other funds for the library, the Carnegie program created a high level of popular and civic commitment to free public libraries that persists after more than half a century.

1. History of Public Libraries in California, 1849-1922

In his definitive studies of California public library history before the first World War, Ray Held identifies two major periods: 1849 to 1877, and 1878 to 1917. During the first period, many of the state's new communities sought to solidify their American status and accommodate

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number     E     Page     2    

---

the personal or group cultural needs of a growing population, by the initiation of small libraries. Social libraries were most often formed from the sharing of the private library of an individual or group. They were termed membership libraries when a fee was charged; when the fee was substantial, as in a more specialized or scholarly library, the term "proprietary" or "subscription" library was used. Lodges, women's improvement clubs, temperance organizations, and library associations of like minded individuals figured prominently in the establishment of early social libraries, typically run by a volunteer and located in a rented or donated room.

The Rogers Act of 1878 enabled incorporated cities and towns to levy a tax to maintain free public libraries and reading rooms, and to acquire property and erect buildings for that purpose. Of special importance to towns and cities with already established social libraries was its provision that municipalities could accept the property of a previously established library and allow the donor library to name half of the trustees of the new municipal library. The Rogers Act thus provided an incentive for library associations, lodges, and other groups, to donate their collections as the nucleus of the new public library, and provided stability and continuity to independently established small libraries. It was upon the foundation of municipal ownership of libraries that the Carnegie program was later to be predicated.

## a. Social libraries, 1849-1878

The first social libraries were initiated in 1849 in Monterey and in several mining communities. The Monterey Library Association was organized by the Reverend Samuel Willey, who upon his arrival from New England deplored the lack of Protestant churches, schools, and libraries, and set about to provide all three.<sup>3</sup> In the mining towns too, new arrivals felt the need for news, a supply of reading material, and symbols of home. Even though the latter were mostly short-lived endeavors, similar libraries and reading rooms appeared and reappeared in many parts of the state when there were sudden spurts of population. Other early libraries were in San Francisco; the three River towns of Sacramento, Marysville, and Stockton; towns surrounding San Francisco Bay as far north as Santa Rosa; and in the south at Santa Barbara and San Diego.

Particularly notable was San Francisco's 1851 Mercantile Library. Like its English and New England counterparts it was organized for and by the merchant class, with the goals of providing a meeting place away from temptation for its many young men, and to promote culture and learning. A number of other libraries were soon formed in San Francisco with similar goals and directed at various populations, including the 1853 Athenæum, organized by and for "Negroes," and the 1854 YMCA which provided the only free reading room in San Francisco.<sup>4</sup> The Odd Fellows library, for members and families, and the Mechanics Institute, incorporated by

RECEIVED

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

AUG 14 1990

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   E   Page   3  

---

craftsmen, began in 1855. Even the largest and most secure of these experienced the problems typical of all social libraries: lack of adequate space, temporary locations, and unstable financing.

Marysville's library became a municipal agency in 1858 without benefit of permissive state legislation, and it too continued to exist in various temporary rented quarters, including the city hall.<sup>5</sup> San Jose, Oakland, Vallejo, Benicia, Napa, Petaluma, and Sebastopol soon began libraries, as did coastal cities such as Watsonville and Los Angeles.

Not all of the libraries formed in the early period were the direct antecedents of later libraries in the same community. The particular significance of the early reading rooms and subscription libraries is found in the social history of the individual town. Notable among the groups who initiated many of the early community libraries were the Odd Fellows, temperance groups, and women's groups seeking either to improve their own cultural climate or to alleviate a community problem.

After 1865, the number of social libraries began to increase significantly. State legislation passed in 1863, enabling certain types of groups to incorporate, had begun to be used by libraries, increasing their stability. Also, the period following the Civil War saw economic and population growth in the state as a whole, though library activity in the mining communities slackened. In San Francisco in 1868 the Mercantile Library built its own building, as did the Sacramento Library Association in 1871; such instances were rare, however, and the debt incurred contributed to their later financial problems. Libraries were formed in the Sacramento Valley at Colusa, Woodland and Davis, and at San Rafael, Tomales, San Mateo, Woodside, and Alameda; in the North Coast communities of Mendocino and Arcata; along the Central Coast in Santa Cruz, Hollister, Gilroy, Pescadero, Salinas, and San Luis Obispo; and in the South at Ventura.

### b. The Rogers Act of 1878

By the 1870's libraries in the larger cities were experiencing not only perennial financial problems and the inadequacy of temporary housing, but, to the degree that they were successful and their collections grew, they found they needed additional space. Library leaders began to consider the advantages of using the tax base of the municipality to fund their libraries. Previous library legislation had been limited to establishment and support of the State Law Library, authorization of certain types of fund raising, and permission to incorporate. In 1874 the legislature passed a law specific to Los Angeles, authorizing \$15,000 in bonds for the purpose of buying property and erecting a library building, although it did not specify that the library need be free. For various reasons the city did not act under its provisions.<sup>6</sup>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   E   Page   4  

In San Francisco, Andrew Hallidie, an immigrant Scotsman who had established the first factory to manufacture wire rope to move cable cars, had become president of the Mechanics Institute in 1868. Like fellow immigrant Scotsman Andrew Carnegie, he was a firm believer in the educational value of libraries, particularly as a means to reduce the temptation to young men of drinking and gambling. He also believed in the necessity for a well-stocked reference library. Among the many ways by which he attempted to expand the Mechanics Institute library and increase its public availability and influence were reduction of fees from \$5 to \$1, building the endowment, and opening the library to visitors. He may have attended the first meeting of the American Library Association, in Philadelphia in 1876, and did in that year visit major libraries in the east. When he became convinced that the answer lay in a free public library, he resigned from the Mechanics Institute presidency to work to campaign for public libraries, "with State Senator George H. Rogers serving as chief spokesman."<sup>7</sup> After the Rogers Bill became law, Hallidie served on the board of trustees of the San Francisco Public Library.

Less is known of the commitment to libraries of San Mateo legislator Rogers, who had earlier represented the foothill community of Columbia, and San Francisco, in the legislature. In 1877 he introduced Senate Bill Number 1, "An Act to establish and maintain free public libraries and reading rooms." Originally intended as special legislation for San Francisco, it was expanded to enable incorporated cities and towns to levy a tax, not to exceed one mill on the dollar, to maintain free public libraries and reading rooms, to acquire property, and to erect buildings to house the libraries. Cities and towns other than San Francisco would be permitted to accept the property of another library and let that library name half of the trustees of the new municipal library. Although two years later it was revised in order to conform to the 1879 constitution, the Rogers Act was a major turning point for libraries in California and its effect was profound. The foundation for municipal libraries was laid. All towns did not take immediate advantage of its provisions; social libraries continued in many towns and new ones were formed. However, as a result of the Rogers Act the context of expectations was significantly altered.

### c. Municipal and social libraries 1878-1917

The first city to form a municipal library under the Rogers Act was Eureka, which had not previously established a library. Also using the new law in its first year were Los Angeles, Oakland, Ventura, and Petaluma. Together with Marysville, which had already formed a municipal library without benefit of Rogers, there were by the end of 1878 six municipal libraries in California. San Francisco itself, prohibited by the Rogers Act from taking over any of the existing libraries in the city, took longer to become established.<sup>8</sup>

Generally, the library-supporting municipalities were the largest cities. All eight cities shown by the 1880 census as having a population of more than 5000 had tax supported libraries by 1885. These were San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento, San Jose, Los Angeles,

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  5

---

Stockton, Vallejo, and Alameda. Eight of the ten cities with populations of between 2500 and 5000 in 1880 had libraries by 1885: Marysville, Santa Cruz, Napa, Santa Rosa, Santa Barbara, Petaluma, Eureka, and San Diego. The exceptions were Nevada City and Chico, both of which had earlier libraries but were without libraries at that time.

Although the 1878 legislation marked the beginning of widespread municipal support of libraries, in terms of housing the library collection, it meant only that the city paid the rent, or that the library was moved to a corner of City Hall. In Santa Rosa, the library was allocated space in City Hall just above the fire department where horses were stabled; the odor was said to be as objectionable as the frequent ringing of the fire bell; fortunately, after two years the city built a new fire station. A few more cities did erect separate buildings: San Pedro's first library building dates from 1888, Santa Barbara's from 1892, and Escondido's from 1894. Each of these communities later applied for and received Carnegie funding. With the help of a bequest, Stockton built a city library, and when in 1891 another philanthropist provided additional funds, a new and larger one was built and named for its benefactor. Carnegie funding was never sought.

Library historians Jesse Shera and Sidney Ditzion have identified ten causal factors of successful library development nationwide. As refined by Lewis Stieg, and applied to the first generation of municipal libraries in California, these factors were: the existence of a previous social library, favorable library legislation, economic stability, urban population, universal public education, scholarship and historical research, self improvement, religious and humanitarian groups, local pride, and leadership.<sup>9</sup>

More recently, California library historian Ray Held has applied Stieg's factors to social libraries in California before 1878, based on his own later comprehensive gathering of data for that period. He found that all the factors were to some degree important, especially where applied to a particular library; however, he found that certain factors in combination were particularly significant, whereas other factors had much less effect on pre-1878 library development.<sup>10</sup>

Held concluded that in California before 1878 there would be a library when there was a congruence of the forces of pride in community; the desire for the self-benefit to be derived from a center for books and reading; individual and, more especially, group leadership; and most important of all, "moralistic or uplift drive." If those forces were strong enough, the library would be sustained.

On the other hand, Held found that scholarship and research were far less significant in early library formation than perhaps they had been in the East. This was true in spite of the fact that there were specialized collections such as law libraries, the scientific collection of the Mechanics Institute (especially under Hallidie), and Bancroft's collection. The latter, though

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  6

---

available to the public, was not considered a public library. Held also felt that legal status was a less significant causal factor; he contended that its lack had not stopped the initiation of libraries, and it had been provided as the need arose. The population and economic wealth of the community were helpful but many libraries thrived with far less than others. He found the effect of schools in relation to libraries to be indirect.

In considering the period after 1878, Held found that population of a certain size and density, and the existence of a previous subscription library, were the best indicators that there would be a municipal library. Social libraries continued to be formed, but in the context of a variety of new legalized options. Population also correlated closely with library collection size as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Education in 1885; an exception was Los Angeles with a very small collection.<sup>11</sup>

Studying the income and services of California libraries in the period between 1900 and 1917, Held noted that libraries began to offer more services and longer hours. There were more children's rooms, books were selected in a more scholarly fashion, and many libraries developed special collections. Larger libraries instituted branches, outreach programs, and public relations. But in the case of both large and small libraries he found the the most profound change was the advantage of a having a library building, and this came about primarily due to Carnegie funding.

Held noted that in California, as in the rest of the nation, in the last decade of the century there was an increase in both wealth and social concern, as well as growth of established urban areas and formation of new municipalities.<sup>12</sup> Southern California expanded with the incorporation of many new small communities. Between 1882 and 1894, library numbers jumped from four to eleven in Southern California. In the same period, the number of libraries in the greater Bay Area increased from eight to ten, and in the Sacramento Valley from three to five.

This surge in library development was matched and then exceeded in the next few years, especially in many smaller towns that were exhibiting rapid growth. In Southern California between 1894 and 1903, fourteen libraries were established, seven in towns that had populations of less than one thousand at the previous census. Population increases of 30% to 50% were not uncommon; Long Beach was exceptional with a population increase from 2,252 to 17,809 between 1900 and 1910. During the same years, communities in the southern part of the San Joaquin Valley, and many in the Sacramento Valley, demonstrated significant growth in population and numbers of libraries. With the development of water delivery systems to the Imperial Valley, several new communities were established and libraries were incorporated in the two largest almost immediately.<sup>13</sup>

Municipal libraries and branches were meeting the needs of the urban population, and formed the basis for the growing professionalism in librarianship, but township libraries and

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   E   Page   7  

---

travelling libraries, designed to serve the rural population, were not proving as successful, providing insufficient services and proving too diverse to administer. Legislation passed in 1909 permitted the formation of library districts, and after 1911 a library could be established within an existing high school district. District libraries and county libraries accounted for most new libraries established after 1910 in unincorporated communities. An intensive effort to organize county libraries grew out of the efforts of James Gillis, State Librarian from 1899 to 1917, to bring State Library services to remote areas.

Although county libraries had been established by the legislature in 1850 as document repositories in each county seat, they existed in name only. Gillis' answer to the need for equal library service in rural areas was to expand the county library concept, with branches as needed, administered by the Board of Supervisors and backed by the resources of the State Library. Permissive legislation was passed in 1909 and revised in 1911. Teams of "library organizers" travelled throughout the state, county by county, enlisting the support of women's clubs, Farm Bureaus, parents and teachers, and the Supervisors themselves. Many of the new county libraries flourished, but a few counties have never formed a county library and instead contract for service with an adjacent county. The record of the travels and encounters of county library organizers Harriet Eddy and May Henshall provide a remarkable insight into California library development in the first two decades of the century.<sup>14</sup>

## 2. Andrew Carnegie and Library Philanthropy, 1886-1917

Philanthropy began to be a significant factor in library development in the last half of the nineteenth century. Earlier philanthropy had most often involved the gift or bequest of books from a private library, or initiating or enhancing a university, social, or municipal library. The Harvard Library, Boston's first public library, and numerous New England town libraries exemplified this private benefaction. Public library enabling legislation usually provided for the acceptance of such gifts. In the years following the Civil War, philanthropy became increasingly important and also more controversial. With the rise of the great industrial fortunes there was not only more concentrated wealth, but there were more poor. Library benefaction was viewed by some as reflecting the democratic belief in education, and by others as an attempt at social control.<sup>15</sup>

Major philanthropic gifts of John Jacob Astor and James Lenox were eventually combined with Samuel Tilden's to form the basis of the New York City library system. Enoch Pratt's Baltimore library philanthropy was specifically cited by Andrew Carnegie as his own model, demonstrating that "the best means of benefiting the community is to place within its reach the ladders upon which the aspiring can rise."<sup>16</sup> One of the major legacies of Carnegie's library program was its encouragement to other potential benefactors throughout the nation. Carnegie became the symbol of library philanthropy.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  8

---

a. Andrew Carnegie and buildings for libraries.

Andrew Carnegie, Scotch immigrant and self-educated millionaire industrialist, had already endowed several libraries by 1889 when he wrote "Wealth;" it became more widely read after its republication in 1900 as the title chapter of the more widely read The Gospel of Wealth and Other Essays. In it he advocated disposal of "surplus wealth" by attending to its distribution while alive. Libraries exemplified Carnegie's own self-help concepts; "The fundamental advantage of a library is that it gives nothing for nothing. Youths must acquire knowledge themselves."<sup>17</sup> This philosophy is said to have developed from his own youth when a private library was made available on Saturdays to the young working men of his community. In 1900 Carnegie sold his steel holdings to what would become U.S. Steel and began his philanthropy in earnest; the program was administered through the Carnegie Corporation after 1911. Of the Carnegie philanthropies, libraries were a proportionately small part but are probably the best known.

The library building itself became the focus for Carnegie funding, again as an aspect of the concept of self-help. Many communities had established social libraries or municipal libraries but continued to be handicapped by the vagaries of volunteer staffing and the difficulty of securing adequate housing for the books. Even under city management, there was a tendency to locate the collection in temporarily available, often inconvenient quarters.

Carnegie's earliest library philanthropy was more representative of the paternalistic philanthropy of the newly wealthy in the last quarter of the century. Typically, a home town or principal residence of the donor received a library, not requested by the recipient, fully endowed by the donor on a site selected by him, and dedicated with elaborate ceremony in his honor. The first Carnegie library gift was to his native Dunfermline, Scotland, in 1881. Between 1886 and 1896 he endowed several libraries in Pennsylvania, in what he later termed his "retail" period of library philanthropy.

By contrast to the more usual style of philanthropy, in the "wholesale" period beginning in 1898, Carnegie provided all or substantially all of the funds needed for a building, at the request of the community. The community was required to provide a specified level of tax support for the book collection, staffing, and building maintenance, and to provide a site; selection of the site was left to the community. Later, Carnegie did reserve the right to approve plans.

There was considerable contemporary criticism of the Carnegie program. Some members of the emerging profession of librarianship believed it inevitable that small libraries would be inadequately staffed and lacking in literary and informational resources. Some believed that



RECEIVED  
AUG 14 1990United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   E   Page   9  

the public library movement was expanding too rapidly, propelled more by Carnegie's personal conviction than from public demand; others, including cities with strong labor movements, were critical of the source of the Carnegie money. These views appeared in article and speeches, in satire and cartoons.<sup>18</sup>

Little or no architectural precedent existed for the small community library building. Typically, outside of the large cities, few architects designed more than one. However, some architects became Carnegie specialists, such as Patton and Miller of Chicago, who designed more than one hundred Carnegie libraries for midwestern towns and colleges.<sup>19</sup> In California William Weeks designed twenty-one Carnegie libraries. Large civic buildings were the frequent model and community pride led cities to demand library buildings as extravagant as their neighbors'. During most of the Carnegie period the style of the buildings was directly influenced by the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exhibition and the City Beautiful movement, where Daniel Burnham had re-introduced classical design; it was spread by subsequent exhibitions at Buffalo and St. Louis, and later San Francisco. The earlier Greek Revival had been "so widely popular that it entered the vernacular."<sup>20</sup> Carnegie funding of library buildings in many small and medium sized cities in the period immediately following the exposition contributed to a similar proliferation of the classical revival style.

A request for a Carnegie grant was as simple as a letter to Andrew Carnegie, New York, New York. The answer would come from James Bertram, hired by Carnegie to be his private secretary in 1897 when his library and church organ philanthropies had attracted sufficient attention to need personal supervision. Bertram soon had devised a questionnaire designed to elicit information about the town's population, its existing library if any, and its finances. The questionnaire carried a clear implication that the response should come from a city official, and subsequent correspondence was usually carried on at that level. Upon the receipt of an adequately prepared questionnaire, an offer would be made, with the amount based on population, and accompanied by the stipulation that the city must provide the site for the library and commit itself to an annual amount equal to 10% of the grant for maintenance of the library.

Over time there were some changes in the process. Bertram required that the city pass a resolution to verify that the land acquisition had been completed and that the tax had been voted. After 1907 Bertram required that all building plans be submitted for approval. In 1911, after consultation with library and architectural leaders, Bertram devised and sent to all applicants his "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings."<sup>\*</sup> The "Notes" suggested ways of achieving the primary purpose of the building design, "to obtain for the money the utmost amount of effectiv

*\*Note: The word "bilding" is an example of the simplified spelling, introduced to Carnegie by Melvil Dewey, originator of the Dewey decimal system of book classification and first president of the American Library Association.*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   E   Page   10  

---

accommodation, consistent with good taste in building," offered six efficient library floor plans designed for different shaped lots, and, in passing, provided an example of simplified spelling used in all of the Carnegie correspondence. Bertram stressed one story and basement as most practical, and he insisted on a large well-lighted reading area, with high windows to leave wall space for shelving. Fireplaces were discouraged, not because of fire danger but because they occupied too much space; the building could be heated more practicably from the basement. Architectural style was not specified, nor were communities asked to use the name "Carnegie" on the building.

Only after Bertram's final approval was the treasurer of the Carnegie Corporation authorized to release funds, usually in increments of a few thousand dollars on certification of completed work. In later years, cities were required to indicate by resolution, prior to release of any funds, their understanding that the grant was to cover the completed building ready to function as a library. They were also asked to send a photograph of the completed building.

Bertram insisted that all communication be by letter; personal interviews were rare. The Carnegie Corporation files, arranged alphabetically by city and now on microfilm, provide a fairly complete record of transactions. Unfortunately the original correspondence was then destroyed, and the microfilm of the fragile old letters, and of the thin carbon copies of Bertram's replies, is very difficult to read. Each file usually contains one letter from each of the respondents representing each stage outlined above, plus as many additional letters as it took for the city to correctly supply the requested information, or to ask for and usually be denied extra funds, or to achieve plan acceptance. In rare cases there is even a thank you letter.

Less rarely, a series of later letters will ask about appropriate future building use or the city's rights in regard to building alteration or disposal. Earlier in the program the response was that the building had been given for a library, and other use was a breach of faith. Later, communities were told that the building was theirs to use, sell, or destroy, but that it was the because it was long overlooked, custom in such cases to affix a plaque to the new building identifying the Carnegie history. The files contain no plans; they were returned to the cities. There are no photographs in the files and their fate is less clear; however, correspondence indicates that relatively few cities complied with this request once the building was complete.

In 1916 the Carnegie Corporation Board of Trustees commissioned an independent evaluation of the library program, resulting in the Johnson Report, which noted the important accomplishments of the program but advocated that in the future more funds should be provided for library service and less for buildings. The Board shelved the report, but two years later stopped accepting requests for building grants. In response to inquiries, Bertram cited the war as the reason for the interruption of funding; after the war it was simply not resumed. Subsequent Carnegie Corporation library funding focused on substantial contributions to the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   E   Page   11  

---

American Library Association, the Library of Congress, library schools, academic library programs, and studies and conferences in the United States and the United Kingdom.

Controversy over the value of Carnegie's contribution has not entirely abated. Writing in 1968 about the Wisconsin Carnegies, Macleod criticized Carnegie for providing library buildings only, without attempting to influence library policy in areas such as minimum standards in the hiring of librarians or in book selection. He contended that most cities just accepted the building without any sustained commitment to improve library service, and concluded that the course of library development would not have been much different without the Carnegie philanthropy. In a review of the Macleod book, Bobinski asserted that his extensive study of Carnegie libraries nationwide had documented the program's direct impact on public libraries by helping speed their development and growth; indirectly the Carnegie philanthropy stimulated other library benefaction, and the terms requiring adequate city tax for library maintenance led to a more general acceptance of the principle of government funding for public libraries.<sup>21</sup>

## b. Carnegie libraries in California

As previously noted, a few California libraries had constructed their own buildings before the beginning of the Carnegie program, including the San Francisco Mercantile Library, Sacramento and Oakland library associations, and libraries in San Pedro, Santa Barbara, and Escondido. However, by 1917, according to Held's studies, a "very large majority" of California public libraries were in their own library buildings. Most of those libraries had survived the years as struggling social libraries, followed by additional years as tax supported city libraries, moving from temporary rooms in a lodge hall to the not always more secure room set aside in City Hall. Approximately one-fourth were new libraries, formed with the expectation of a gift building to launch the project. Philanthropy thus offered security to and stimulated the expansion of the public library.<sup>22</sup>

Between 1886 and 1917 Carnegie donated over \$41 million for 1,679 library buildings in 1,412 communities in the United States. He funded another 830 library buildings were constructed in Canada, the British Isles, South Africa, Rhodesia, India, Mauritius, Australia, New Zealand, and Fiji.

The first Carnegie grants to libraries in California were made in 1899. San Diego was offered \$60,000 in July of that year, followed by Oakland (\$50,000 in August) and Alameda (\$35,000 in October.) The next offer was to Fresno in 1901, and thereafter in every year until 1917 at least one California community learned that its request for a Carnegie library had been approved. Although applications were not accepted after 1917, some buildings were not completed until as late as 1921. In the fewer than twenty years between 1899 and 1917, Carnegie funding contributed to the construction of 142 library buildings in 121 communities

RECEIVED  
AUG 14 1990United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  12 

in California, second only to Indiana's 164 buildings in 155 communities. In total funds allocated, California ranked fourth among the states with \$2,776,987. When this figure is applied to the population, California was eleventh, with \$48.9 per 100 population. 23

The grant amounts listed for San Diego, Oakland and Alameda suggest a higher expenditure per library than came to be the case. In general, earlier libraries were granted larger amounts, though there were exceptions. The smallest grant for a municipal library was \$5000 to Biggs in 1906; In 1914, Sacramento received \$100,000, the highest sum allocated for one California Carnegie.\* San Diego's \$60,000 was the second highest. Of the fourteen libraries funded before 1903, only one received \$10,000 and the average allocation for the other thirteen was \$32,000. Beginning in 1903, the sum of \$10,000 appears more frequently, and by the end of the program fifty-six libraries had been granted that amount, with funding for the remaining libraries divided approximately equally above and below.

The majority of the library grants went to small cities; in the larger cities, branch libraries were emphasized.\*\* The largest grant, \$750,000, went to San Francisco, half designated for construction of the main library and half for construction of seven branch libraries. Oakland received \$50,000 toward construction of its main library and, later, \$140,000 for four branches, and Santa Cruz and Santa Monica received additional grants for branch libraries long after construction of main their libraries. Los Angeles received \$190,000 for six branches. Some Carnegie cities "disappeared" and their libraries became branches. East San Jose was a city for only five years before annexation to San Jose, during which time it constructed its Carnegie library. East San Diego also constructed its Carnegie prior to annexation to San Diego. Eagle Rock, Hollywood, San Pedro, and Watts, all cities when their Carnegies were built, were later annexed to Los Angeles and their libraries all became branches of the larger city system.

Additional funds were occasionally granted, especially in the earlier years, for expansion and earthquake repair, but almost never to meet any unexpectedly high costs. Sometimes communities themselves provided extra funds to construct a grander library, or to complete the library as planned even though costs had exceeded original estimates. These variables, not always reported in consistent fashion, lend a degree of uncertainty to statements of the cost of a given library.

Later, smaller grants often went to new towns, or to smaller towns which had previously hesitated to undertake the commitment required for a Carnegie grant, but which later found the

*\*The exceptional example of San Francisco, funded with its branches, is discussed elsewhere.*

*\*\*The number of branch libraries in California corresponds fairly closely with the number nationwide. In California, the 142 public libraries were built in 122 cities; 14% of the Carnegies were branches. This compares with a national figure of 16% if New York City's sixty six branches are counted, 12% if they are not.*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  13

---

way opened by California legislation permitting library formation within high school districts and special districts. Also, some smaller cities applied for Carnegie grants through the county library system and were established as branch libraries. The three smallest grants, \$2500 each, were for branch libraries in what were in 1915 very small communities in Contra Costa County: Antioch, Concord, and Walnut Creek. Of thirteen grants for \$5000 or less, all to small towns or branch libraries, all but three were granted after 1913.

Site selection, left to the discretion of the towns as an aspect of their obligation to provide the site itself, was sometimes a source of controversy. In most towns with an antecedent social or municipal library located in a retail, civic, or fraternal building, a site in or near the downtown was easily decided upon. San Anselmo, Eureka, Grass Valley, and Hollister are examples. Some town, alternatively, created a "library park," as in Livermore, Exeter, and Orland. A site was sometimes donated or sold at less than market value; frequently, fund raising to meet the partial or full price would dominate the newspaper social pages for months. However, the newspaper, as well as trustee minutes, and sometimes even the Carnegie correspondence, also reveal disputes focused on the motives of the donor of a site, or a debate between rival sites. In the case of branch libraries, decisions even more political, involving decisions between rival factions and neighborhoods. Bertram rarely entered those controversies, the exceptions occasioned by a site, usually a gift, too far from a population center. Van Slyck explores these issues in two chapters entitled "The Beacon in the Slums" and "A Temple in the Park."<sup>25</sup> Her example for the former was Oakland and the role of developers in site advocacy. Ultimately two branches were located in established working class neighborhoods, and two in outlying, sparsely settled, new middle-class neighborhoods.

Siting problems highlighted some of the basic divisions about the purpose of the library.\* To "help people to help themselves," it needed to be located near those who needed help, including new immigrant populations. In the large cities, many of the most energetic proponents of public libraries, for themselves and for others, were relocating in newly developing residential areas. The cost of lots for branches in large cities posed a substantial problem. San Francisco built its first branch in the just developing Richmond district on a large city-owned lot, and its second in

*\*Enunciated in the 1852 report of the first Boston Library Board of Trustees was the concept of the free public library as providing people with the means to formulate their political ideas independently. To that end, the most popular works of fiction were to be provided to attract readers to the library, and the library should be located where fully accessible to all. It accommodated the goal of assimilation of immigrants, and was seen as a counter to "dangerous" forces seeking to organize working classes, and so is seen by some as an exercise in social control. <sup>26</sup> Also enunciated in the Boston statement, but then as now occupying a secondary role, was the public library as a resource for scholars. The relative emphasis given to meeting the needs of the several library user populations is still the subject of date.*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  14

---

its most populous district, the Mission, paying \$12,000 for property 117'x60'. Like Oakland, San Francisco divided its Carnegies, albeit somewhat unequally, between its oldest and most populous areas (Mission and Noe Valley), an area of predominantly Italian and other foreign populations (North Beach, now Chinatown), and its wealthier and newer areas (Golden Gate Valley, Presidio, Richmond, and Sunset).

Geographical locations were diverse, ranging from Alturas, Yreka, Eureka, and Ferndale in the north, to Calexico at the Mexican border. There were clusters, especially near Los Angeles and around San Francisco Bay, but Carnegies were located in thirty-eight of the fifty counties. There were twenty-one in Los Angeles County, ten in Alameda County, eight in San Francisco County, six in Tulare County. Seven counties had five Carnegie libraries and twelve counties had just one. California counties in which no Carnegie was built were Amador, Calaveras, Del Norte, El Dorado, Inyo, Kern, Lassen, Mariposa, Sierra, Sutter, Tuolumne, and Yuba. In Yuba County, Marysville was the only incorporated city during the period of Carnegie philanthropy and already had its own building. In Kern County, the only city besides Bakersfield was Tehachipi with a population of just 385. There was no incorporated town in Calaveras County and in each of the other counties there was just one incorporated town, very small.

### c. Carnegie-funded academic libraries in California

In addition to public library buildings, Carnegie funded more than one hundred college and university libraries. Carnegie library contributions to educational institutions began as early as 1900 with funding of a \$32,000 library building at Grove City College in Pennsylvania, and a \$20,000 building at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Most building grants were given between 1900 and 1906, though a few were granted as late as 1915, and in several cases funding that had begun earlier was continued into the 1920's. The number of educational institutions which received grants for library development, mostly for books, exceeded the number receiving library buildings, but the \$4.2 million for buildings was almost double the total given for library development. In California, Carnegie funded library buildings at Pomona College and at Mills College.<sup>24</sup>

Pomona College was offered \$40,000 in 1905, on the condition that the college raise another \$40,000 in new endowment to provide for its maintenance. After a successful fundraising campaign, the cornerstone was laid in 1906. The design by F.P. Burnham called for reinforced concrete. The collapse of a reinforced concrete hotel in Long Beach resulted in last minute revision of specifications; the substantial added cost of the building was borne by the college. The library opened in 1908 and served as a library until 1953 when the interior was remodelled to house the departments of economics, government, sociology, education, and oriental affairs; additional interior remodelling and exterior repair took place in 1968.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  15

---

The early days of the pre-Carnegie Pomona College library were similar to those of many California community libraries. The nucleus of the collection was the 1889 gift of a personal library, and reading room space was provided in the YWCA alcove of one of the college buildings. Subsequently the collection was moved twice, occupying space in classroom buildings until completion of the Carnegie.

The college was asked to provide the same information as were towns; because there was no municipality they emphasized their endowment and the solid character of the college trustees, "that body being composed of some of the strongest business men in Southern California." Carnegie and Bertram may also have been persuaded by the fact that the college library was open to the residents of Claremont, which at the time of application was unincorporated. Also, the proposed Carnegie location was a public park donated by the town to the college "on condition that the college library be free for the town and no other building be placed on it."<sup>27</sup>

Mills College was granted \$20,000 in 1905, and the Margaret Carnegie Library was dedicated November 17, 1906, its original dedication date of May 5, 1906 having been postponed because of the earthquake. The building was named for the daughter of Andrew Carnegie. Designed by Julia Morgan, it was the only California Carnegie building designed by by that noted architect. The senior gift of the Class of 1906 was the Pantheon frieze surrounding the wall of the vestibule. Located on a prominent campus site between the administration building and the campanile, the building still serves as college library, although considerably expanded by addition of a separate wing.

d. "Non-Carnegie" libraries: Other Philanthropists, and Towns that did not build Carnegies.

Local library philanthropists predated Carnegie in California, although Carnegie's early library giving elsewhere may have influenced the donors' decisions. In Stockton, two separate benefactors, in 1883 and 1891, left money for a library building. The Smiley brothers of Redlands were active sponsors of their library even before donating land and funds for a building completed in 1898; in 1906 they contributed additional funds for a new wing. The family of Truxton Beale in Bakersfield donated a library in his honor in 1899. Some gifts more contemporary with Carnegie's California library benefaction were in Marysville, Napa, Oroville, Red Bluff, and Modesto. Red Bluff and Modesto both applied for and were offered Carnegie funding, but it was declined presumably when the local philanthropy materialized. Oroville later applied for Carnegie funding and it was granted.

Other larger cities which did not apply for Carnegie funding include Pasadena and Santa Clara. The library association together with the city funded the Pasadena library before 1900. In Santa Clara, the matter of starting a library or applying for a Carnegie grant was the subject of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   E   Page   16  

---

debate over a period of years, with the newspapers listing names and amounts as other cities received grants. It was estimated that Santa Clara would be eligible for \$10,000. In response, the President of the Board of Trustees wrote in his 1902-1903 report:

The Library proposition crops up yearly. It is not considered the proper caper by the Board of Trustees to invite Mr. Carnegie to invest his money in a library building in Santa Clara when the Town possesses no books to fill the shelves. . . But the physical impossibility of raising the amount of money per annum which Mr. Carnegie demands, when the provisions of our charter do not allow us to levy a tax in excess of three cents for library purposes, presents itself. . . At last year's assessment basis, we could ask Mr. Carnegie for an appropriation of less than \$4,500. . . an amount entirely inadequate.<sup>28</sup>

A short while later, the Santa Clara News published a telegram purportedly from Carnegie:

Editor News, Santa Clara, Cal.--I regret that you are unable to raise \$1000 per annum for maintenance of library. I fully realize the great hardship it would be for your people were their taxes to be raised ever so little while the prune market is so very dull. I would gladly endow the library were it not that this would cause jealousy in the other places where I have established libraries. I have been spending sleepless nights trying to think of some way in which the library could be maintained without being any or much expense to your citizens. Will not some public spirited business man perform the duties of Town Treasurer without the salary, leaving the \$800 to go towards the support of the library. If there is any one in your town looking for a job, he might be appointed librarian and receive the \$800 for his services. If he had any spare time he could act as Town Treasurer also (gratis). This would leave but \$200 to be raised, which amount might be raised by a high license on the telegraph and telephone companies and on dogs. Rather than my plans should be frustrated, if you cannot find anyone willing to act as Librarian and Treasurer I would be willing to undertake the arduous task myself if you you can find some place for us to live until the new hotel is built.<sup>29</sup>



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  17

---

Benicia is an example of a town which applied for and received the promise of Carnegie funding, and then did not use it. Application was in 1903 at the instigation of the Women's Improvement Club. The City Trustees voted to provide a 50'x50' portion of City Hall grounds for the library, but a year later decided to submit the issue to the voters. The vote was then postponed until a special election to avoid confusion with other city issues on the ballot. The special election apparently was never held and it was 1906 before the city formed a free public library, again under pressure from the Women's Improvement Club, and 1910 before they provided space for it in City Hall.<sup>30</sup>

It appeared for some time that San Francisco would be among those which did not accept a preferred Carnegie offer. In a 1901 handwritten letter from Andrew Carnegie to Mayor James Phelan, \$750,000 had been offered for a main library and branches. It was 1912 before the Board of Supervisors voted to accept the money. The Labor Council, opposed to accepting money "tainted" by the Carnegie Steel anti-union reputation, then took the matter to the voters whose ratification of acceptance was reported as follows in one publication:

### Carnegie's Money is Good

San Francisco, through its Board of Supervisors, has finally announced itself as pleased to accept \$750,000 of Andrew Carnegie's money for the construction of a public library. The board is willing to forego any careful scrutiny of the method by which Carnegie accumulated his millions by trust manipulation and under paying laborers, if he will only make good his offer of 11 years ago. His wealth is not looked upon as loot, and is therefore not so tainted but what San Francisco's self-respect does not forbid it to accept the gift.<sup>31</sup>

#### e. The Carnegie Correspondence

Review of the correspondence leading to the construction of each of the Carnegies in California would contribute a great deal to the understanding of the Carnegie period in California. For most libraries there are two forms: (1) Bertram's record of application date, correspondent, and grant amount, date, and terms; and (2) the form completed by the city with requested information about population, assessed evaluation, and current library facilities if any. Unfortunately, the latter form is usually illegible on microfilm. Some correspondents included a review for Carnegie's and Bertram's benefit of the town's history or its library history, and a picture of current civic expectations, as well as names and signatures of city and library officials. The personality of James Bertram emerges as dedicated to Carnegie's principles that the library program should operate in a climate of thriftiness and self-reliance, and holding the line against the tendency of some civic advocates to oversell their case. The correspondence is not always complete and is very difficult to read, but from it can be gleaned many examples that

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  18

---

typify issues that arose as a city sought a building to provide a permanent home for its library and to symbolize its civic and cultural advancement.

Sometimes issues of siting were discussed in the correspondence, but Bertram usually left that issue to the cities unless there was a particularly inappropriate location. Most correspondence deals with Bertram's efforts to obtain from the cities proper verification regarding provision of the site and tax support, and the cities effort to obtain from Bertram an approval for their plans, after his careful review of their plans with an eye to eliminating any wasted space with the potential for wasted money.

Many cities hoped that Carnegie could be enticed to visit "his library" on a 1910 trip to Southern California with his wife and daughter. Santa Barbara and Long Beach are two cities they did visit. A common misconception about Carnegie libraries is that all were required to advertise the name of Carnegie. No instance of the subject was found in the correspondence reviewed. San Diego, Escondido and Imperial are among the several libraries that did bear the Carnegie name.

### 3. The library profession and the roles of women

Both men and women, as members of organizations and as individuals, were instrumental in the establishment of the early social libraries in California. Among the many groups involved were the International Order of Odd Fellows, temperance groups, YMCA, ministers, formal and informal women's groups, and groups of concerned citizens. Masons provided space in their lodge rooms for a number of social libraries, and ceremonies conducted by Masons made civic occasions of the cornerstone laying of many libraries. When reported in the newspapers, with background descriptions of the events preceding the auspicious day, these news stories can provide a fascinating if not always totally accurate record of the early library history. Library boards of trustees traditionally presented the officiating Masons with silver trowels symbolic of the occasion, many of which are on display in Masonic buildings. All of these groups, perhaps particularly the IOOF and WCTU, deserve additional study.

Because women appear to have played a more significant part in the support of California libraries than was the case in the eastern states, because their primary position changed over time from volunteer initiators to trustees and librarians, and because their influence was long overlooked, the role of women merits particular attention. Shera and Ditzion, library historians writing in the mid 1940's, and from a national perspective, give little credit to contributions by women to the library movement. Held, studying the development of public libraries in California, and noting the importance of men's organizations, adds that "community women's organizations were most often a prime factor in planning and sustaining a library;"<sup>32</sup> and Mussman believes that women were more influential than acknowledged by Held.<sup>33</sup>

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  19

---

a. Development of the library profession

Many early social libraries were staffed by volunteers, but there was considerable variation, geographically and over time, in this and other matters including responsibilities and hours of library service. Some might be open two hours each week night, others from 2 p.m. till 4 p.m. two days a week. A salary of \$20 a month was average to generous. Some librarians were expected only to shelve the books and sweep the floor, while in other cases retired scholars maintained the library with considerable attention to the quality of the collection.

In California, it seems clear that women played a more prominent role in the development of libraries than was the case nationally. Libraries were becoming established in California at a time when women's clubs nationally were taking the initiative in starting and sustaining libraries. Members of women's clubs frequently volunteered in the social libraries, and after the 1880's the number of women as librarians increased. Legislation passed in 1901 enabled women to serve as library trustees.

A national movement toward the development of the profession of librarianship dates from 1876 when the US Bureau of Education collected library statistics and published the "monumental library compendium" Public Libraries in the United States.<sup>34</sup> Library Journal also first appeared that year, and a national library conference in Philadelphia, under the leadership of Melvil Dewey, resulted in the organization of the American Library Association. The organization's 1891 conference was held in San Francisco; out of that meeting grew the formation of a Southern California Library Association and, in 1898, the California Library Association. Under the presidency of James Gillis from 1906 until 1917, the California association played a major role in professional development, especially in education for librarians.

Until 1891 the only available professional library training was in the East, such as the school in Albany, New York, established by Melvil Dewey. Then the Los Angeles Public Library established a program to train its librarians. Intermittent summer programs followed in San Francisco, the University of California; a program at San Jose was conducted by the State Library. Other libraries started their own, notably that at the Riverside Public Library under Joseph Daniels, and the State Library conducted a library school in Sacramento between 1913 and 1917. The beginning of the School of Library Science at the University of California dates from an undergraduate program in 1918, and the graduate program began in 1926.

Later the County librarian became influential in California, and many women were appointed to that post. James Gillis' county library concept was effectively promoted by a corps of library organizers, all women, who travelled throughout the state, meeting with public and private

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  E  Page  20

---

individuals and groups. Testimony to the respect they earned was the number of times boards of supervisors asked them to serve as the county librarian, an offer they always declined, believing that local librarians could best promote the library once established. Sarah McCardle, Fresno County Librarian from 1911 until 1945, was one of the more notable of the county librarians.

Gillis' county library effort did not meet with universal approval. One of the most outspoken opponents, Riverside's city librarian Joseph Daniels, formed a unique contract arrangement through which the Riverside Public Library provided services to the whole county. His distrust of the county library program was rooted in his distrust of the Southern Pacific Railroad and James Gillis' previous political role with it. Partly through Daniels' efforts, the county library law was revised and improved after its first year, but Daniels continued to lobby against county organization and for the provision of countywide library service through contract with municipal libraries. His work in Riverside, including Riverside's school of librarianship, themselves contributed to the advancement of library education and library service.

## b. Roles of women: initiators of libraries, trustees, and librarians

Musmann in 1982 traced the role of women in founding libraries in 114 incorporated municipalities that had public libraries between 1878 and 1910 and found that women established antecedent social libraries in 63.44% of those cities. Men and women working together accounted for another 15%. These social libraries included reading rooms and social libraries established by the WCTU, women's clubs, or an individual woman. She also concluded that the goal of the libraries was primarily to influence moral values and to control social behavior.<sup>35</sup> Of the 114 communities in Musmann's study, seventy obtained Carnegie libraries, and women established antecedent social libraries in 65.71%. Men and women working together accounted for another 12.85%. Additional evidence of women's efforts in establishing libraries was gathered in this survey of California's historic Carnegie libraries. However, calculated on the basis of all 142 public libraries, it appears that approximately 42% of the pre-Carnegie libraries were established at least in part by women or women's groups.

In her 1989 study of eighty-five Carnegies nationwide, Van Slyck also noted the significant role of women. She found many instances of women establishing libraries and promoting application for Carnegie funding, and she pursued the subject further in a paper given at a 1989 meeting of the Vernacular Architecture Forum. In this work she concluded that women participating in the women's club movement, and carrying that activity into the establishment of libraries, did not do so with any intention of challenging the status quo. Rather, they created a harmonious setting in line with women's role to nurture and educate. Van Slyck attributes the acceptance of inadequate temporary quarters for the library as indicative of women's unwillingness to engage

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number E Page 21

---

in more than the ladylike fundraising which yielded money sufficient for maintenance but not sufficient to provide a building. 36

Women's efforts to establish libraries were usually expressed in terms of social and moral issues, often through the temperance movement, but self-improvement was also a frequent goal of the women's clubs. The meetings of many clubs featured essays by the members, necessitating a good library.

Women also served as trustees and as librarians. Responses to the Carnegie survey provided numerous examples of women as trustees of early libraries in towns including San Jose, Long Beach, and Lincoln. The 1907 library board for the new East San Jose Public Library was composed entirely of women, and all but one were wives of the several men who had brought about incorporation. In the same year in Long Beach, three women who as trustees had worked in behalf of the Carnegie library found that after Long Beach changed from its previous sixth class city government to become a new charter city, only qualified electors could serve as trustees; though ineligible, the women continued their efforts in behalf of the library. In Lincoln, the librarian was also a member of the board of trustees and was a prime mover in obtaining Carnegie funding. Outside opinion was sought as to the legality of serving as both librarian and trustee, with the response that one role or the other should be selected. The dual service continued for many years, however, apparently without further challenge.

By the Carnegie years, many women were working in libraries, and a few had professional training. Two examples from Sonoma County are not atypical. In 1884 Santa Rosa trustees appointed their first woman to serve as librarian, and upon her retirement in 1890 they appointed Bertha Kumli, Sonoma County's first professional librarian. After seeing the new Carnegie library to completion in 1904, Miss Kumli hosted a State Library Association meeting there, and the next year took a leave of absence to catalog at the State Library. Subsequently she joined the State Library permanently as a public library organizer, and her name appeared frequently in Eddy's and Henshall's accounts of small town library formation until she became Kern County's first county librarian.

In another Sonoma County town, Healdsburg, "Miss Provines" was appointed librarian in 1905 and Miss Frances Provines was her assistant and substitute. When Frances resigned in 1907, Miss Mary Provines was appointed. In 1909 Mary was given a leave of absence to attend the State Library Class in Sacramento and Miss Eloise Provines was appointed. When Mary resigned later that same year, however, Miss Zoe Bates was appointed to replace her.<sup>37</sup> Mary Provines later served as head of the catalog department at Fresno County. Cornelia Provines, probably related but at some distance, was the long-time head of the Sacramento County library.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   E   Page   22  

---

#### 4. Summary

The California Carnegie libraries are notable buildings in their communities, often the only civic building of the period, sometimes the only civic building. Many are noted for their architecture, craftsmanship, or the renown of the architect. Even more significant is their social history. The product of a remarkably short period of development, libraries profited from the commitment of individuals and groups, who sought both to counter potentially negative influences in the newly settled communities and to provide for themselves the benefits to be derived from a shared collection of books and a place to read them. Even after municipalities assumed responsibility for the collection, in nearly all cases a satisfactory long-term location was elusive. The libraries' plight fortuitously intersected with the philanthropy of Andrew Carnegie to construct buildings for publicly supported libraries, "Free to All." He advocated the library as the epitome of his self-help philosophy and, after endowing several, required the city's official commitment in the provision of a site and a prescribed level of tax support. The effort of individuals and groups in the community has continued during and after the Carnegie period to be the vital factor in sustaining that public commitment. Now, the age of those Carnegie libraries, their unique public architecture, and their local and regional history combine to focus attention on the extant Carnegie buildings, individually and as a group, and to highlight the need for more in-depth study of these valuable examples of community history.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES  
Section number  E  Page  23

---

## ENDNOTES, SECTION E

1. Ray E. Held, The Rise of the Public Library in California (Chicago: American Library Association, 1973), 147.
2. This figure is derived from reports in "Quarterly News Items," News Notes of California Libraries 14:3 (July, 1919) 304-345. Information on the library buildings themselves, including their source of funding, was gathered only occasionally, the last previous report being in 1906. At the time of the 1919 report, 136 of the eventual 142 Carnegie buildings were included as completed or planned. The report also included twenty-five other libraries with buildings costing at least \$2500, the amount of the smallest Carnegie grant, and funded by a local benefactor or city tax. Carnegies then represented 136 of 161 libraries, or 84.47%. Also included in the 1919 "News Items," but not in these calculations, were numerous small libraries, branches, and stations, meeting in an "old church," or "built by husband of custodian in their front yard," at costs typically less than \$500.
3. Ray E. Held, Public Libraries in California, 1849-1878 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963).
4. Hugh S. Baker, "Rational Amusement in Our Midst: Public Libraries in California, 1848-1859," California Historical Society Quarterly, 38 (December 1959) 303-4.
5. Held, Public Libraries 1849-1878, 26.
6. Held, Public Libraries 1849-78, 79.
7. Fulmer Mood, "Andrew S. Hallidie and Librarianship in San Francisco 1869-79," Library Quarterly 16 (July 1946) 202-3.
8. Held, Public Libraries 1849-78, 88.
9. Lewis F. Stieg, "Notes on the Origins of Public Libraries in California, 1850-1900," Library Quarterly 22 (July 1952) 262-69. Reference is also made to: Sidney Ditzion, Arsenals of a Democratic Culture: A Social History of the American Public Library Movement in New England and the Middle States from 1850 to 1910 (Chicago: American Library Association, 1947) and Jesse H. Shera, Foundations of the Public Library: The Origin of the Public Library Movement in New England 1629-1855 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985).
10. Held, Public Libraries 1849-78, 113-135.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number     E     Page   24  

---

11. Held, Rise of Public Libraries, 9.
12. Held, Rise of Public Libraries, 31.
13. Held, Rise of Public Libraries, 35-52.
14. Harriet G. Eddy, County Free Organizing in California 1909-1918 (Berkeley: California Library Association, 1955) and May Dexter Henshall, County Library Organizing (Sacramento: California State Library Foundation, 1985).
15. Ditzion, Arsenals of a Democratic Culture, 153.
16. Andrew Carnegie, The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays (1900). Reprint edition, edited by Edward C. Kirkland (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1962) 27.
17. Andrew Carnegie, Autobiography (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin, 1920) 45.
18. W.D. Howells, "Examination of Library Gift Horses," The Library Journal (October 1909) 741. Reprinted from Editors Easy Chair, Harpers Magazine (September 1901). Robert Johnson, "Public Libraries and Mr. Andrew Carnegie," The Library Journal (October 1907) 440. Reprinted from The Academy, London (August 31, 1907).
19. Paul Kruty, "Patton and Miller: Designers of Carnegie Libraries," Palimpsest 64 (July/August 1983) 110-122.
20. Roger G. Kennedy, Greek Revival America (New York: Stewart, Tabori & Chang, 1989) 3.
21. David I. Macleod, Carnegie Libraries in Wisconsin (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin for the Department of History, University of Wisconsin, 1968). George S. Bobinski, "Review of Macleod," Library Quarterly 39:220 (July 1969).
22. Held, Rise of Public Libraries, 129.
23. George S. Bobinski, Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969) 17-20.
24. Florence Anderson, Carnegie Corporation Library Program 1911-1961 (New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1963), 69-87.



**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   E   Page   25  

---

25. Abigail A. Van Slyck, "Free to All: Carnegie Libraries and the Transformation of American Culture, 1877-1917" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1989), 178-191.
26. Michael Harris, "The Purpose of the American Public Library: A Revisionist Interpretation of History," Library Journal (September 15, 1973) 2510-2511.
27. E. Wilson Lyon, The History of Pomona College (publication data not provided), 90. George A. Gates to James Bertram, January 14, 1905. Copy from Pomona College Office of Public Affairs.
28. Kathleen Gleason Worsley, "A History of Public Library Service in Santa Clara, California," (M.A. thesis, San Jose State College, 1966) 31-33.
29. Worsley, "Santa Clara Library," Appendix C, quoting from the Santa Clara News, March 17, 1903, p.1.
30. Sally Soderblom, Benicia Library Board of Trustees, letter to author, September 30, 1989.
31. "Carnegie's Money is Good," Architect and Engineer of San Francisco (July 1912) 113.
32. Held, Rise of Public Libraries, 27.
33. Victoria Kline Musmann, "Women and the Founding of Social Libraries in California, 1859-1910" (Ph.D. diss, University of Southern California, 1982) 108.
34. Held, Rise of Public Libraries, 89.
35. Mussman, "Women and the Founding of Social Libraries in California," 113.
36. Abigail A. Van Slyck, "A Room with No View: Women's Clubs and American Town Libraries, 1890-1910," paper presented at the Vernacular Architecture Forum Meeting, [location not cited on paper], May 1989.
37. Minutes, Healdsburg Library Board of Trustees, 1906-1911.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 1

---

F. Associated Property Types

I. NAME OF PROPERTY TYPE: California Carnegie Library Buildings

II. DESCRIPTION

A. Styles

A variety of factors tended to create some uniformity of design among Carnegie library buildings. However, their diversity of geographical location, cost, and date combine to suggest that the commonly held assumption, "All Carnegie libraries look just alike," is an exaggeration. The period of Carnegie funding followed soon after the Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893, which had captured the national imagination. The promise of a "free" public building in the community provided an opportunity to demonstrate civic pride and cultural sophistication and, not least, to equal or outdo neighboring towns in the elegance of the new library.

In California, the Carnegie Library period began in 1899 when grants were offered to Oakland, San Diego, and Alameda for buildings which were constructed in 1901 and 1902. The last grants were offered in 1917, but in many cases planning was not begun until after the war, and the last building was not completed until 1921.

In the earlier years of the program, funding was freer and oversight minimal; municipalities were able to indulge their civic pride with more elaborate buildings. Gradually, application procedures were formalized. After 1907, municipalities were required to submit architects' plans for approval before funds were released and, beginning in 1911, cities were sent copies of "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings"\* with suggested floor plans, stressing principles of practicality and efficiency.

Population growth, as well as California's pioneering 1909 county library legislation, resulted in an increased number of applications for libraries in smaller cities, and for city and county branch libraries. Later, applications were accepted from rural areas which organized as union high school library districts, and district libraries. As funding amounts were based on population, many of the later grants were smaller. Through 1907, the average California grant was \$16,666; of forty-two libraries funded, only three received

\* *The spelling of "Buildings" is an example of the simplified spelling favored by Andrew Carnegie and used in much of the Carnegie correspondence. "Notes" are attached as Appendix B.*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   2  

---

less than \$10,000. After 1908 the average grant was \$13,478; ninety-two libraries were constructed and thirty-two received less than \$10,000.<sup>1</sup> Generally simpler styles resulted.

In California, the following styles were represented by one or more Carnegie library buildings: Richardsonian Romanesque, Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Classical Revival, Mission/Spanish Colonial, Italian Renaissance, and Bungalow/Craftsman. Classical Revival was the predominant style. Three buildings will be discussed under "Other." Aspects related to the buildings as a group, such as current use, architects, interiors, additional funding, alterations, and future prospects, are also discussed.

1. Richardsonian Romanesque

Six California Carnegie libraries exemplified the Romanesque in that they were round arched, of rock-faced masonry, with lintels and other structural features emphasized by use of a variety of stone, combined with a simplicity of form. Both arched and straight topped windows are found, divided into rectangular lights by stone mullions and transoms. Towers, arches or lintels supported by colonnettes, ribbon windows and wheel windows are also frequent.

These buildings were all constructed between 1904 and 1907: Santa Cruz and Santa Rosa, constructed in 1904 with grants of \$20,000 each, are no longer standing. Hanford, constructed in 1905 with a \$12,500 grant, represents this group on the National Register of Historic Places. San Luis Obispo, and Chico, also constructed in 1905, and Nevada City in 1907, all received \$10,000 Carnegie grants. Four are extant.

Hanford, San Luis Obispo, and Nevada City buildings exhibit the significant characteristics of the Richardsonian Romanesque. In each the style has been executed with notable craftsmanship, and their integrity has been maintained through the years. They are relatively simple and compact, and convey the weight and massiveness of the Romanesque in a building of smaller scale. Except for differences imposed by the two sites, Nevada City is almost a mirror image of San Luis Obispo as it was prior to an entrance portico addition of 1910. The San Luis Obispo building is constructed of locally quarried granite and sandstone. Nevada City is faced with man-made concrete blocks, while the foundation, arches, lintels, corners, and spaces between the windows are emphasized by blocks with the rough finish of cut granite.

In 1939 the Chico Carnegie was drastically remodelled and may now be considered an example of Mediterranean Revival. The integrity of the "new" Chico Carnegie has been maintained for more than fifty years.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  F  Page  3

---

During the short time that Richardson designed in the Romanesque style, between 1872 and his death in 1886, his contributions were numerous and influential. Harold Kirker, in California's Architectural Frontier, paraphrased the 1888 inaugural address of the new president of the San Francisco chapter of the AIA, to the effect that Richardson restored "integrity of materials and perfected a unified style system into which every building need could be harmoniously fitted." 2

Especially in the East, there was significant identification of the style with library buildings. Its association with Carnegies began as early as the 1886 invitational competition for the Allegheny City library. Several of the entrant architects had been connected with Richardson and the winning design was Richardsonian.

Three of the California Carnegie buildings constructed in the Richardsonian Romanesque style were among the works of W.H. Weeks, who later became more strongly associated with Classical Revival buildings. Stone & Smith, architects for Chico, and McDougall, architect of Hanford, each designed additional Carnegies in the Classical and Spanish Revival styles, while the Santa Rosa building was E.M. Hoen's sole Carnegie.

The 1939 Chico Carnegie remodelling was under the direction of Louis Brouchoud of Story & Brouchoud, well known in Chico both for his local buildings and his use of decorative tile. Reoriented and simplified, its tower and portico removed and tile roof and decorative tile added, it provides a unique example of an adaptation from the Romanesque. It is located in the downtown area, a few blocks from the Chico State University campus.

The other extant examples are similarly located. The Hanford Carnegie is surrounded by historic civic buildings in that city's large Courthouse Square park. San Luis Obispo also downtown, is adjacent to the Mission, surrounded by the Victorian, Mission, and Spanish architecture that characterize that city, it is notable for its use of colorful local stone. The Nevada City Carnegie is located next to the County Courthouse and the old Sears Historical Museum, just a block from the historic downtown.

## 2. Colonial Revival

Just one California Carnegie represents Georgian Revival architecture, with its strictly symmetrical facades, rectangular plan, and minimum of minor projections. Roofs are generally hipped, double pitched, or gambrel, but gables are also present. Tall, one story, and symmetrical, Oakland's Golden Gate branch has a central traditional Georgian

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 4

---

entrance, a gable roof with stepped gable ends, and a cupola. Constructed in 1918 for \$35,000 as part of a grant obtained for four branch libraries in Oakland, it is essentially unaltered.

Oakland had been a California pioneer in locating branch libraries in the neighborhoods, but branches of municipal libraries, without their own buildings, were as subject to frequent moves as had been the earlier social libraries. In 1914, Oakland city librarian Charles Greene requested Carnegie funds for branches; \$140,000 was granted. Constructed in 1918, the Golden Gate branch was the fourth of four built under that grant. It and the third branch, Alden, were located in what were then working class neighborhoods, characterized as homes of clerks, laborers, and mechanics. In contrast, the first two, Melrose and 23rd Avenue, were designated for the developing new middle class areas east of Lake Merritt.<sup>3</sup> Both Golden Gate and Alden were designed by Donovan & Dickey, who had designed Oakland's 23rd Avenue Branch the year before. In Golden Gate's neighborhood, commercial now outweighs residential. All four branches represent a significant community presence, and the buildings themselves are unique public structures.

### 3. Tudor Revival

The fanciful "Old English" style, characterized by leaded windowpanes, exposed timbers, sloping roof, and asymmetrical design, was more typical of residences than public buildings. Landscaping was usually a contributing factor. There were two Carnegie examples. No longer extant, the Hollywood Carnegie, constructed in 1906 with a \$10,000 grant, resembled a rose covered cottage in its garden setting.

The remaining example, Oakland's Alden Branch (now the Temescal Branch), is less clearly Tudor and identifies itself more surely as a civic building. Its asymmetrical L-shape, under a steep gable roof with a tall, angled, many-windowed bay, and a double row of eight windows, contribute to its romanticism. Although one story over a raised basement, it is small in scale. The building is faced in brick; there are no exposed timbers. Windowpanes are not leaded. There have been no significant alterations.

The Alden branch, constructed in 1918, was the third of the four Oakland branches constructed with a grant that provided \$35,000 for each. The Alden Branch neighborhood is still a working class residential area with a variety of commercial uses, where the library is still a significant public structure.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   5  

---

4. Italian Renaissance

Elements of the Second Renaissance Revival were used in larger-scale buildings, often faced with stone or marble, with emphasis on simplicity and order. California Carnegie libraries exemplifying the Italian Renaissance are generally urban, more sophisticated, often built adjacent to the street.

Numbering nine, they are the main libraries of Oakland, Sacramento, and San Francisco; San Francisco branch libraries in the Mission, Golden Gate Valley and Chinatown; and Los Angeles branch libraries in Cahuenga, Lincoln Heights, and Vermont Square. Oakland Main is already listed on the National Register; Los Angeles branches are included in the Multiple Property National Register listing of the Los Angeles branch libraries.

Of this group, all are extant and all are important civic buildings in their urban areas. All but Oakland were built between 1913 and 1920, and all are among the more expensive of the extant California Carnegies. Oakland was built in 1902 with a \$50,000 grant; Sacramento received \$100,000; San Francisco Main used about half of San Francisco's \$750,000. The San Francisco branches averaged about \$53,000 and the Los Angeles branches averaged about \$35,000. The group is characterized by the elegance and simplicity of their classical detailing, and use of stone and terra cotta, with the branches reflecting the same qualities on a somewhat smaller scale. Important local architects designed the buildings.

All are basically unaltered. However, Oakland was damaged in the October, 1989, earthquake and has not reopened. The Sacramento main library is currently undergoing a major renovation and expansion. Of the San Francisco libraries in this group, only the main library was seriously affected in the recent earthquake. San Francisco and Los Angeles branches are expected to soon undergo renovation and restructuring to meet seismic codes.

A significant, national example of the Italian Renaissance style, the Boston Public Library, designed by McKim, Mead & White near the end of the nineteenth century, may have influenced its use in the major urban California Carnegie libraries. San Francisco Main was an important structure in the plan for the civic plaza and reflects the influence of the City Beautiful movement. The use of the Renaissance style in the smaller but elegantly styled branches carried civic and cultural pride to the neighborhoods.

The branches are also important in that they represent the commitment of Andrew Carnegie himself to branch libraries and small local libraries. In offering to build a main library and branches in San Francisco, Carnegie wrote to Mayor James Phelan that one half of the money should be for the branches and one half for the central library, then added

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   6  

---

parenthetically, "no more, I think less."<sup>4</sup> Years later, when San Francisco wanted to divert more money to the main library, Carnegie stated in another letter to Phelan, then on the library Board of Trustees, that large cities could finance their central libraries and that his commitment was to "bringing books close to the homes of the people."<sup>5</sup>

5. Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival and Mediterranean Revival

Many California Carnegies reflect Spanish and Mission influences: arches, usually semicircular, sometimes segmental, without moldings; tiled roofs, low pitched, hipped or gable with curvilinear gable ends, or behind parapets; walls plastered, and usually smooth. Frequently there are balconies, towers, or turrets, capped by domes or tiled pyramid roofs; less frequently, there is sculptural ornament.

However, relatively few California Carnegies are true examples of either style, fewer of the Spanish Colonial than the Mission. In more cases, Spanish or Mission details are mixed with Classical elements. Of those here classified as Mission and Spanish Colonial, fourteen are extant and thirteen are no longer standing. This group spans the period from 1902 to 1918. Grant amounts range from \$2,500 to \$50,000, with the majority built with grants of \$10,000. The \$50,000 grant to Santa Barbara met only half the cost of construction and was matched with city funds.

Riverside, Santa Ana, and Hayward, constructed in 1902, 1903, and 1906 and all since demolished, incorporated towers with domed and pyramidal roofs, balconies, arches, and curvilinear gable ends, and were much more exuberant representatives of Mission style than any that remain.

The extant buildings most clearly Mission in style are Woodland, St. Helena, Monterey, and Eagle Rock, constructed in 1905, 1908, 1911, and 1915, respectively. Woodland is symmetrical with projecting portico and curvilinear parapets, while St. Helena is asymmetrical with several curvilinear gable ends with arched windows and a generous arched entrance. Both Woodland and St. Helena Carnegies are on the National Register. Eagle Rock, with its modified curvilinear gable, is included as part of the Los Angeles Branch Library multiple property listing. The Monterey Carnegie is symmetrical, with a low hipped roof, curvilinear central element with quadrifoil above the entrance. The Santa Barbara Carnegie, constructed in 1917 and several times remodelled, more closely exemplifies the Spanish Revival.

Extant Carnegies incorporating Classical detail with Mission and Spanish elements are Mills College, Pacific Grove, Dixon, Corning, San Anselmo, Exeter, Oakland/23rd Street, Oakdale, and Calexico. These are all symmetrical and faced with plaster or stucco; most

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 7

---

have or had tile roofs, either gable or hipped; arches are used in entrances or windows; tile or other decorative material is used to suggest Mission style. Mills is the oldest of this group, constructed in 1905; construction dates of the others cover the years from 1908 (Pacific Grove) to 1918 (Calexico).

A slightly larger group with these same characteristics is no longer standing: Los Gatos, Palo Alto, Visalia, Selma, Fullerton, Porterville, Coalinga, Inglewood, Chula Vista, and Concord, with construction dates from 1903 (Los Gatos) to 1918 (Concord).

Also incorporating some Mission elements are thirteen buildings (nine extant) to be discussed under "Classical Revival, Type C," in an application of the classification devised by Abigail Van Slyck in her 1989 UC Berkeley Ph.D. dissertation, "Free to All: Carnegie Libraries and the Transformation of American Culture, 1886-1917."

The Mission style was a significant California statement, an indigenous style to counter the domination of Eastern influences, strongly advocated by Lummis and Polk before the turn of the century. Whiffen associates the Spanish Colonial Revival with the work of Goodhue at the 1915 Panama-California Exposition in San Diego, noting that it takes its themes more directly from the Spanish influence in Mexico.<sup>6</sup>

Mediterranean Revival is represented by two early libraries that now exemplify this style, following extensive remodeling. Re-design of both the 1905 Romanesque Chico in 1939 and the 1908 Classical Revival South Pasadena in 1930 was planned by well known architects and the resulting buildings have long been important community structures.

## 6. Bungalow/Craftsman

Buildings here described share with bungalows their Craftsman detailing, often present in the projecting rafters and wood columns, as well as their affinity for a milder climate and informal life style, their lower cost and smaller scale. Four Bungalow/Craftsman Carnegie libraries were constructed in California, all small, low, one story frame buildings; three are extant. Yolo and Riverbank are examples of Craftsman detailing in rafters, window trim, porch columns, and, in the case of Riverbank, window boxes. Orosi features the use of random stone in a fireplace. None has been significantly altered. Santa Cruz/Eastside, no longer extant, and Yolo, were designed by W.H. Weeks, and were almost exact duplicates. Each was constructed with a \$3,000 grant, Yolo in 1918 and the other three in 1921.

These buildings are significant because the Bungalow and Craftsman styles are rarely associated with civic buildings. Also, they reflect Carnegie's support for branch libraries. Santa Cruz/Eastside was a branch of a municipal library. Yolo, Riverbank, and Orosi are



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   8  

---

county branches, products of the statewide program to bring service to California's small rural communities. The establishment of a county library system, and the achieving of a branch in a given rural locality, were processes that involved extensive grass roots organizing and intense community participation.

## 7. Classical Revival

The Classical Revival style as represented in California Carnegie library buildings achieves a monumental effect, but in most cases the buildings are surprisingly small. Their size may be a reflection of the community's population, and therefore the size of the grant it received, while their classicism displays its cultural achievement. Symmetrical, with few angles or projections, their roof lines are generally level, or slightly hipped, and mostly unadorned. Greek orders are used more than Roman, and pedimented porticoes are frequent. Beaux Arts paired columns appear only in San Francisco Main.

Not all of the California Carnegie library examples can be said to incorporate "fine materials" more generally associated with Classical Revival. Perhaps these are among the reasons that the Carnegie libraries are seldom listed in area architectural guides. The small buildings may have been considered more parochial and imitative, and many are designed by less generally well known architects, notwithstanding their considerable local reputations at the time.

Lintel windows and doorways are frequent among the Classical Revival Carnegies, but many have incorporated round arched windows; those buildings are listed here as "Classical Revival (C)," again referring to Van Slyck's classification. While smooth or polished stone surfaces are frequent, brick and, later, concrete and plaster were used in many of the California buildings.

In her nationwide study, Van Slyck concluded that similar designs were used in many communities because local trustees lacked confidence in their own ability to deal with the architect, and so chose to copy designs they admired in other cities.<sup>7</sup> In California there do not seem to have been as many instances of nearby towns having similar libraries as perhaps was the case elsewhere, though there was considerable competition to achieve the superior building. The hardest problem faced by the communities was to get a building they wanted within the funds allocated. The choice of Classical Revival may have been a "safe" choice on both counts. The influence of the City Beautiful was widespread and easily recognized.

Many attribute the symmetry of a majority of Carnegies to the library planning imposed by Carnegie secretary James Bertram. The first three of the six floor plans in "Notes on the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 9

---

Erection of Library Buildings" are symmetrical, and the fourth is symmetrically oriented around a corner door, and the fifth and sixth are asymmetrical. Few California Carnegies were built along the lines of the latter three plans. Although the "Notes" specifically address the smaller library, Bertram focused on the efficiency of plans for the largest as well as the smallest of library buildings. He seldom commented on the exterior appearance, but gave as much attention to the arrangements for stairs, restrooms, and boiler rooms, as he did to the space for books and location of the librarian's desk.

Perhaps because of the guidelines, Van Slyck concluded that "aside from a handful of unique designs, the majority of Carnegie libraries fall into one of three compositional categories, or their closely related variations. In all three, the buildings are symmetrical . . . with a dominant central motif giving them all an overall A-B-A rhythm. What distinguishes one category from another is the treatment of the central element."<sup>8</sup> Her categories:

Type A: "The central pavilion is modeled on a Roman triumphal arch, that is, four or five columns (either free-standing or engaged) serve to subdivide the central pavilion into three bays, and at the same time support an entablature and attic. San Diego, California, built such a library in 1899, as did Taunton, Massachusetts, in 1902, both evidently seeking to emulate the non-Carnegie New York Public Library which had such an entrance pavilion and which was under construction in those years. In one variation of this type, the central pavilion maintained its tripartite composition, but instead of stepping forward from the lateral wings, was subsumed within the mass of the building. . . Another variation. . . the central pavilion stepped forward, but lost its tripartite composition and did not rise higher than the roof line of the lateral wing."

Type B: "The central pavilion was dominated by a temple front, that is, with a triangular pediment above the entablature. Here, there were even more variations than there were in the first category. [Some] temple fronted libraries. . . had centrally placed domes, although this was a practice condemned by Bertram as an extravagance, and which did not continue past 1908 when Bertram began approving plans. Whether they had domes or not, temple fronted libraries could have either four or more free-standing columns, . . . four or more engaged columns, . . . two or more free-standing columns in antis, . . . or two or more engaged columns in antis. . . As in the first category, the central pavilion could step out in front of the building or it could be subsumed within it. . . In a less common variation on this theme, the entablature and pediment were not supported by columns at all, but either by piers or with an arched opening."

RECEIVED  
AUG 14 1990

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 10

---

Type C: "The central element can hardly be called a pavilion at all. Instead it is more correctly a three-dimensional door frame which extends forward from the flat plane of the rectangular building, and which does not break the roof line. . . It was a style that easily accommodated a variety of stylistic vocabulary. . . Colonial Revival. . . Mission Revival. . . Image of the Tudor. . . What is more, it became increasingly popular in later years, as recipient towns found rising material costs undercutting the buying power of their Carnegie grants."

In Van Slyck's system, the remaining styles are grouped into one category:

Type D: "Those buildings that fit none of the three main categories, and accounted for less than 10 percent of the buildings in the sample.

Examples of Type D are discussed above under Romanesque, Colonial Revival, Tudor, Italian Renaissance, Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival, Bungalow/Craftsman, and, later, under "Other."

Following is an application of Van Slyck's Classical Revival compositional categories to California Carnegie buildings.

### Classical Revival Type A (Triumphal Arch)

California examples of Type A (triumphal arch) span the state's Carnegie history from the first year (San Diego, completed in 1901) to the last (San Francisco/Presidio, one of the four Carnegie libraries completed in 1921.) However, fewer were constructed in the later years. This group is not represented on the National Register for Historic Places. Twenty-four California Carnegies were constructed in this style. Eight were constructed prior to 1908 when Bertram initiated his plan review, and none of these remain. Extant are seven representatives of the style and two that have been drastically remodelled.

Those no longer standing, in chronological order of construction, are San Diego, Pomona, San Jose, San Bernardino, Fresno, Tulare, Watsonville, Monrovia, Long Beach, San Leandro, National City, Glendale, Los Angeles Arroyo Seco and Vernon, and East San Diego. San Jose and San Bernardino, and perhaps others, were domed. The earliest of this group to be demolished was San Diego in 1952, and the 1950's saw the largest share of these buildings destroyed. These were usually substantial buildings. The smallest Carnegie grant among them was \$10,000, received by only four. San Diego received \$60,000, San Jose \$50,000, Fresno and Long Beach \$30,000, and Pomona \$15,000. By contrast, among those extant, San Rafael received the largest individual grant, \$25,000, and five received \$10,000.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 11

---

Extent representatives of Type A are San Rafael, South Pasadena, El Centro, Hollister, Upland, Grass Valley, Oakland/Melrose, South San Francisco, and San Francisco/Presidio. All except the Presidio Branch are judged in fairly good condition. Some have been altered to provide additional library space or to meet subsequent uses. Grass Valley, Oakland/Melrose, and San Francisco/Presidio are essentially unaltered. El Centro was substantially altered due to earthquake repair as well as expansion. South Pasadena has been expanded and restored several times and few if any elements of the Carnegie remain.

### Classical Revival Type B (Greek Temple)

Type B (Greek temple) California Carnegies were built between 1902 and 1915. This group is represented on the National Register by Alameda, Colton, Eureka, Gilroy, Healdsburg, Oxnard, and Petaluma. Fifteen are no longer standing: Santa Monica, Vallejo, Covina, San Pedro, Ontario, Corona, Whittier, Orange, Imperial, Salinas, Santa Marina, Azusa, Escondido, Hemet, and Watts. Santa Monica and San Pedro, along with the extant Eureka, featured domes. As a group these buildings received smaller grants than the Type A and were generally smaller. Top amounts were received by extant Alameda (\$35,000), and Eureka and Vallejo (\$20,000); then various lesser amounts down to \$10,000, received by twenty-one communities; and four grants for less than \$10,000, the least being East San Jose's \$7,000. In 1978 the Corona building, which had been on the National Register, was demolished; no California Carnegie has been lost since that date.

The twenty-one extant public library representatives of this group range from medium sized to small, with probably Alameda the largest and Lincoln the smallest. Alameda, Eureka, Petaluma, Colusa, Pomona College, Colton, Auburn, Gilroy, Healdsburg, Lompoc, Willows, Livermore, Oroville, Roseville, and Vacaville are essentially unaltered, though several have been renovated and interior adjustments made to accommodate new uses. Major extensions to Oxnard, Lodi, and Richmond have been carefully incorporated in terms of style and materials. A small addition to the rear of Paso Robles was also well integrated. In both East San Jose and Beaumont, separate buildings, simple in style, were constructed and then connected to the original building. A mansard roof was added to both the old and new sections of the Beaumont library, and the portico significantly altered. Their space needs seem to be fairly satisfactorily met at this time, but Vacaville, privately owned and currently vacant, seems potentially endangered.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   12  

---

## Classical Revival Type C

As described by Van Slyck, the type lends itself to incorporation of elements of other styles. In California, the type can be divided into (1) the more purely classical, (2) those incorporating Mission elements, and (3) other. Possibly those few buildings listed as Tudor and Colonial Revival could have been included under Type C. In many cases the line was very thin between classification as Classical Revival Type C with Mission elements, or as Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival with classical elements.

The Anaheim Carnegie building represents Type C on the National Register. Thirty-two buildings are included in this group and twenty-three are extant. Reasons for the high survival rate of this type are ambiguous. They are generally more modest buildings, as reflected in their size, cost, and materials. Regarded as a whole, the group spans approximately the same time as the previous groups, 1903 to 1921. However only three of the libraries were constructed prior to 1908 when Carnegie Corporation secretary James Bertram instituted more careful scrutiny of library plans. Berkeley and the metropolitan library branches, all at approximately \$40,000, are unusual in having received substantial grants. Seventeen grants were less than \$10,000, and the least was \$2500. Berkeley was demolished in 1929, the first California Carnegie to be lost. Most of the other destructions occurred about equally through the 1960's and 1970's.

Examples of Type C that are more strictly Classical, without extensive incorporation of elements from other styles, total sixteen with twelve extant. Symmetry and a central entrance element, projecting, but lower than the roof line, or recessed, characterize the group, with an assortment of segmented pediments, columns, pilasters and parapets. Redwood City is the only one of the group built prior to 1908. With the exception of two metropolitan branches, Santa Monica/Ocean Park at \$12,500 received the largest grant; below that were five grants of \$10,000; the remainder range from \$2,500 to \$8,000. No longer standing are Redwood City, San Mateo, Huntington Beach, and Sebastopol.

The extant examples of the type are Ferndale, Mill Valley, Sonoma, Willits, Yreka, Antioch, San Francisco's Noe Valley and Sunset branches, Santa Monica/Ocean Park, Bayliss, Newman, and Alturas. All are in good condition. Yreka, Ferndale, and Santa Monica/Ocean Park have been expanded. Alturas has been substantially altered, inside and out, and now more closely resembles the Moderne style. Others are unaltered; none seems unduly threatened.

Also in this category, although less clearly Classical, are three other Carnegies, of which two are extant. Redding, constructed in 1903, was asymmetrical and somewhat Classical with an arched loggia and tall parapet; it was destroyed in 1961. Lakeport and Ukiah are

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 13

---

both symmetrical, simple and dignified. Ukiah has also been described as "Prairie" and "Modern." Each was constructed with an \$8,000 grant, Ukiah in 1914 and Lakeport in 1917.

Examples of Type C with Mission elements total thirteen, with nine extant. Symmetry and a central entrance element, projecting or recessed but lower than the roof line, characterize the group; arched and tile openings, tile roofs, hipped or gable rooflines, curvilinear gable ends, wide arched windows, are variously present. All, with the exception of Berkeley, were constructed after 1908. Those which have been demolished are Berkeley, Sanger, Dinuba, and Los Angeles/Boyle Heights. Extant examples are Anaheim, Lincoln, Santa Cruz/Garfield and Santa Cruz/Seabright, San Francisco/Richmond, Turlock, Gridley, Orland, and Patterson. Excepting the metropolitan branch, this group is bracketed by Anaheim and Turlock with grants of \$10,000, and the Santa Cruz branches and Patterson at \$3000. However, the amount of the grant is not always the cost of the library, as will be discussed later; Patterson is a notable example, as that community raised an additional \$8000 to construct their library. All are in good condition, and, with the exception of Santa Cruz/Seabright, are essentially unaltered.

8. Other Styles

Three Carnegie buildings at Biggs, Clovis, and Walnut Creek, do not exemplify a particular style but demonstrate considerable craftsmanship and community effort. The extant examples, Biggs and Clovis, are important community buildings.

The Biggs Carnegie, small, brick, one story over a raised basement, is almost a cube under a low hipped roof. An original recessed front porch extending across the front of the building is now two-thirds glassed in; the remaining one-third remains a recessed porch. Notable for its brick craftsmanship, it was constructed with a \$5,000 grant in 1908, a small amount for that period, but large considering that its population was less than 500.

The Clovis Carnegie, built in 1915 with a \$7,000 grant, is stucco, under a low hipped roof, with a projecting central entrance also under a hipped roof. It has been remodelled after a concerted community effort, and the projecting entrance altered somewhat.

The Walnut Creek building, demolished in 1961, was a one story stucco structure having two wings placed at an angle with an entrance between, each with its own gable. It was a product of the county library system; grants of \$2,500 each for Walnut Creek, Antioch and Concord, all then small Contra Costa communities, represented the cooperative effort of the county Board of Supervisors, the town, and the townspeople.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   14  

In Appendix A, three Classical Revival buildings have been listed as "Classical Revival/Other," to indicate that alterations have substantially changed their character. Alturas was remodelled to a version of the Moderne style by a private owner for its new use as an office building. A mansard roof was added to Beaumont. El Centro was "wrapped in steel bands" following earthquake damage and then plastered over, then a new wing was constructed adjacent to it. All are extant.

9. Summary

Using Van Slyck's classifications, the California Carnegies may be summarized as follows:

Summary of California Carnegies, Van Slyck classifications

	# of Buildings	% of 144	# Extant	% Extant in Type
Type A (triumphal arch)	24	16.67	9	37.50
Type B (Greek temple)	36	25.00	21	58.33
Type C (Simplified classical)	32	22.22	23	71.88
Type D* (All other)	<u>52</u>	<u>36.11</u>	<u>34</u>	65.38
	144	100.00	87	
*D Romanesque	6	4.17	4	66.67
Colonial Revival	1	.69	1	100.00
Tudor Revival	2	1.39	1	50.00
Italian Renaissance	9	6.25	9	100.00
Mission/Spanish	27	18.75	13	51.85
Bungalow/Craftsman	4	2.78	3	75.00
Other	<u>3</u>	<u>2.08</u>	<u>2</u>	66.67
	52	36.11	34	

As noted earlier, the line was very thin between classification as Classical Revival Type C with Mission elements, as opposed to Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival with Classical elements. Following, the numbers are re-grouped. Buildings with Mission elements are removed from Classical Revival Type C, Mission Revival is removed from Type D, and the

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 15

two are combined. The new "Mission" group totals forty, with twenty-three extant, a somewhat higher rate of survival than the Mission/Spanish group alone, but lower than Type C considered as a whole.

	# of Buildings	% of 144	# Extant	% Extant in Type
A + B (Classical)	60	41.67	30	50.00
C (Classical only)	19	13.19	14	73.68
C with Mission + D Mission	40	27.78	23	57.50
Other D	<u>25</u>	<u>17.36</u>	<u>20</u>	80.00
	144	100.00	87	

Also, examining classical alone:

	# of Buildings	% of 144	# Extant	% Extant in Type
A + B + C	92	63.89	53	57.61
A + B + C (Classical only)	79	54.86	44	55.60

The predominance of the Classical Revival among Carnegie library buildings may be traced to nationwide enthusiasm for the City Beautiful movement. Inspired by Daniel Burnham and his design for the 1893 Columbian Exposition in Chicago, architects and fairgoers brought the City Beautiful to all parts of the country. "Grand in scale, monumental, symmetrical, luxuriously appointed, with a broad and richly pictorial vocabulary of Classical ornament. Its mode was noble, for it was the architecture of a society that sought reform, progress--perfection."<sup>9</sup> It lent itself to "civic monuments," including libraries. Van Slyck studied a sample of 85 Carnegie libraries in towns and cities nationwide which received a Carnegie grant for a single building. She identified buildings in each category, and then grouped them before and after 1908, the year when Bertram began requiring that plans be submitted.

<u>Van Slyck's Sample of 85 libraries</u>	<u>1899-1917</u>	<u>1899-1907</u>	<u>1908-1917</u>
Type A (triumphal arch)	22.4%	22.6%	21.7%
Type B (temple front)	48.3%	53.2%	34.8%
Type C (simplified)	20%	14.5%	34.8%
Type D	9.4%	9.7%	8.7%



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  F  Page  16

In the following comparison for California, academic libraries are not included because they were not subject to the Bertram plan review; the total number of libraries here is 142.

<u>California Carnegie Public Libraries</u>	<u>% of each category constructed between</u>		
	<u>1901-1922</u>	<u>1901-1907</u>	<u>1908-1922</u>
Type A (24)	16.90%	18.60%	16.17%
Type B (35)	24.65%	30.23%	22.22%
Type C (32)	22.54%	9.30%	28.28%
Type D (51)	<u>35.91%</u>	<u>41.87%</u>	<u>33.33%</u>
Total = 142	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

<u>Of the above, those extant</u>	<u>% of extant in each category constructed between</u>		
	<u>1901-1922</u>	<u>1901-1907</u>	<u>1908-1922</u>
Type A (9)	10.59%	0%	12.00%
Type B (20)	23.53%	50%	20.00%
Type C (23)	27.07%	0%	30.67%
Type D (33)	<u>38.82%</u>	<u>50%</u>	<u>37.33%</u>
Total = 85	100.00%	100%	100.00%

Van Slyck's sample of 85 Carnegies and the California Carnegies both demonstrate that when cities erected the building of their choice, that building was often a "temple" Type B. Van Slyck surmises that Bertram offered cities smaller amounts of money in the later years to bring about a more modest architectural style.

In California, among the buildings identified as Type C, thirteen used classical elements in such a way as to suggest a Spanish style. This characteristic was most notable in buildings of the later years when, in addition to Bertram's closer scrutiny, there was the added fact that smaller cities, counties, and assessment districts were able to apply for branch libraries, and they received less funding based on their population. Included in Type D are, from the earlier years, several buildings influenced by H.H. Richardson's Romanesque style, plus a number of Spanish Revivals, and a few examples of Cottage and Tudor; from the later years, several examples of the Craftsman and Bungalow styles appear.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 17

---

**B. Extant libraries and their uses**

In 1967, 103 of California's 142 Carnegie-funded public library buildings were still standing, according to Bobinski's nationwide survey of Carnegies. In 1989, 85 remain. Testimony to the esteem in which the buildings are held, and to the increasing effectiveness of the preservation movement in California, is the fact that since 1978 none has been demolished. In only two counties have all of the Carnegies been lost -- San Diego which had five and Shasta which had one. Communities with the remaining Carnegies increasingly express awareness of a community Carnegie treasure.

In California communities, extant libraries are used in a variety of ways, with public library still the predominant use. (See Appendix A, sorted by use.) Following is a summary of current uses of California's extant Carnegies, including the two academic libraries, bringing the total to 144.

**Richardsonian Romanesque:** (6 in group, 4 extant)

Hanford, San Luis Obispo and Chico (now Mediterranean) are museums; Nevada City is a library; all are in public ownership.

**Colonial Revival:** (1 in group, extant)

Oakland/Golden Gate is still a public library, and also houses the Northern California Center for Afro-American History and Life.

**Tudor Revival:** (2 in group, 1 extant)

Oakland/Alden is a public library.

**Italian Renaissance:** (9 in group, all extant)

Sacramento, San Francisco Main, and the San Francisco and Los Angeles branches are public libraries; Oakland Main contains city offices, but has been closed since the 1989 earthquake. San Francisco Main has not fully reopened since the earthquake and planning has already begun for it to house the Asian Art collection upon completion of a new library. Renovation and seismic upgrade is planned for San Francisco and Los Angeles branches; Los Angeles branch operations will move to nearby alternative locations in Spring 1990 while this work is being completed. Sacramento is undergoing renovation and expansion. All are publicly owned.

**Mission/Spanish:** (27 in group, 14 extant)

Woodland, Pacific Grove, Dixon, Santa Barbara, and San Anselmo are public libraries. St. Helena and Exeter are community centers; and tentative plans call for the now vacant Eagle

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number     F     Page   18  

---

Rock to become one. Oakland/23rd Avenue, also vacant, is to become a book storage area; Callexico is used for city storage. These buildings all are in public ownership. The future of the latter two may be somewhat precarious.

Corning and Oakdale are office buildings; Monterey is a library for the Institute of International Studies; the Margaret Carnegie Library at Mills College still serves, with an addition, as the school library. All appear to have satisfactory occupancy with the possible exception of Corning, which has vacancies.

Bungalow/Craftsman: (4 in group, 3 extant)

Yolo and Orosi are public libraries; Riverbank houses the Chamber of Commerce and a small museum. All are publicly owned, but Orosi may be in some danger due to a shortage of county funds for libraries.

Classical Revival, Type A (Triumphal arch): (24 in group, 9 extant)

San Rafael, South Pasadena, El Centro, Grass Valley, Oakland/Melrose, San Francisco/Presidio, and South San Francisco still serve as public libraries; Hollister is a City Hall, and Upland is vacant but a library-related use is planned. All are in public ownership. (Following remodelling, South Pasadena and El Centro no longer represent the style.)

Classical Revival, Type B (Greek temple): (36 in group, 21 extant)

Alameda, East San Jose, Paso Robles, and Beaumont (though no longer representative of the style) still serve as public libraries. Petaluma, Oxnard, Colton, Gilroy, Healdsburg, Richmond, Livermore, Lompoc, and Willows, are now museums, in whole or in part. Colusa and Oroville house civic departments, Auburn an art and senior center, Lodi a civic meeting hall, and community use is planned for Roseville. Eureka is used for library administration and book storage, and Vacaville is vacant. The Pomona College Carnegie houses several academic departments. All but Vacaville and Pomona College are in public ownership. There is evidence of community commitment to preserve all of the buildings, but in the case of the privately owned and vacant Vacaville, this may be somewhat harder to exercise.

Classical Revival, Type C (with classical elements): (19 in group, 14 extant)

Still used as public libraries are Ferndale, San Francisco/Noe Valley and Sunset branches, Santa Monica/Ocean Park, and Bayliss. Newman is a museum, Antioch is a museum and historical society, Sonoma houses the Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Center, Willits is being used as an office for a city-owned cable TV, and Yreka is a police department. Lakeport is vacant; plans to restore it and surrounding park landscaping have been delayed. These buildings are all in public ownership. Privately owned are Mill Valley, now a residence, Alturas, leased back to the county for offices, and Ukiah, housing profit and non-profit activities. There appears to be a consensus of commitment to their protection.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 19

---

Classical Revival, Type C (with Mission elements): (13 in group, 9 extant)

Lincoln, Santa Cruz/Garfield, and San Francisco/Richmond still serve as public libraries. Santa Cruz/Seabright is a museum, Turlock an art and crafts center, Orland a community center, and Gridley is vacant. These buildings are all in public ownership. Gridley is county-owned, so concern about its welfare is once removed from the community. The Patterson Carnegie is privately owned and new owners are in the process of planning its restoration.

Other Styles: (3 in group, 2 extant)

Biggs is a public library, with basement offices for the city government; Clovis is a community center with basement offices for the Chamber of Commerce. Both are publicly owned and well used.

Summary of uses: (144 in group, 87 extant)

Seventy-seven of the extant Carnegies are in public ownership: thirty-eight are public libraries (including one which shares space with city offices); one is used for library administration and book storage; five are community centers for seniors and arts and crafts; three house Chambers of Commerce as the primary use, with other uses sharing the space also; six are used exclusively for major city functions, although one of those, Oakland Main, is temporarily closed due to earthquake damage; two provide space for lesser city activities (city cable TV equipment and city storage); thirteen are museums of history or art; three others, also museums, share space with activities such as Chamber of Commerce and senior center; six are vacant, with future plans including historical library, community centers, and book storage.

Ten of the extant Carnegies are privately owned: one is still the college library; one houses college administrative offices; one is a residence; one is the library of a private institute; four house office buildings; one is being renovated for professional offices; one, formerly a restaurant, is now vacant.

### C. Carnegie architects

There were a few "Carnegie specialists," and most Carnegies were designed by architects who designed only one; this was true nationwide and in California. Probably the most prolific of the specialists were Patton & Miller of Chicago, who designed more than one hundred Carnegies in the Midwest and as far afield as Wyoming and Louisiana. They were said to have designed one in every six of Iowa's Carnegies. In California, William H. Weeks designed twenty-one Carnegies, approximately 15% compared to Patton & Miller's 16% of Iowa Carnegies. F.P. Burnham and Burnham & Bliesner accounted for another eleven

RECEIVED  
AUG 14 1990

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number F Page 20

Carnegies. Four architects designed three each, ten architects designed two each. Over fifty per cent of the Carnegies were designed by architects who designed just one Carnegie library.

In addition to being numerous, the Carnegie libraries of William H. Weeks span nearly the entire Carnegie period from 1902 to 1921 and demonstrate the chronological evolution of style over those years. Three of his earlier commissions, in 1902, 1903, and 1904, were in the Romanesque style. The fourth, his 1903 design for Watsonville, was an elaborate variation on the triumphal arch theme. From 1906 through 1911 he designed eight Classic Revival Carnegies, of which seven were the pedimented type, and one Spanish Revival building. Between 1913 and 1921 he built just six Classical Revival libraries, two in the triumphal arch style and four in the more minimalist style, as well as two Craftsman cottage libraries.

For his first library commission, Santa Cruz, Weeks designed a building in the Richardson style. At \$20,000 it was one of the more expensive libraries he designed. Santa Cruz had in fact been expecting a grant of \$30,000 to \$40,000 and had envisioned a splendid building, but Carnegie offered only \$15,000. In one of the rare instances when Bertram granted a personal interview to a petitioner, a Santa Cruz advocate, aided by a shared Scotch ancestry, won the increase to \$20,000. Weeks' design won in a competition against eight other architects and its construction used the entire Carnegie grant. Additional funds to furnish the building were raised through public subscription and benefits.<sup>10</sup> Weeks' other two Romanesque libraries, in San Luis Obispo and Nevada City, were on a smaller scale but are notable for their use of natural and man-made stones.

Nine of Weeks' Classical Revival libraries are extant, including all seven of his "temple style" buildings, pedimented and columned, mostly of brick with quoins. As a group, these are the familiar "look-alike Carnegies." They are Gilroy, Paso Robles, Livermore, Lompoc, Richmond, Oroville, and Roseville. Some were saved after considerable local effort. One is listed on the National Register for Historic Places; one is still a library; four are museums, and one is maintained by its city and houses public works departments, one has recently been renovated and is expected to become a community center, possibly including a museum. Weeks' "triumphal arch" Oakland/Melrose, and South San Francisco Carnegies are both libraries; but the San Leandro and Watsonville buildings have been demolished.

Other Weeks' Carnegies include the Spanish Revival Monterey library, the smaller Classical Revival buildings designed for Santa Cruz/Garfield, Santa Cruz/Seabright, Yreka, and Orland, and the Yolo Craftsman cottage, all extant. Yolo's duplicate, Santa Cruz/Eastside, is no longer standing. In all, seventeen of the twenty-one Weeks Carnegies are still standing, as is his 1915 addition to Woodland.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 21

---

Weeks opened his office in Watsonville in 1894 and lived in and around that area until more distant projects dictated a move, first to Palo Alto and then to the East Bay. Among his varied projects were more than fifty civic and commercial buildings, more than ninety residences in Watsonville, and the Casino at Santa Cruz. His schools, libraries, banks, lodge halls, churches, gymnasiums, hospitals, hotels, and residences are found in more than 140 communities covering almost all of California north of the Tehachapi. He designed at least one building in Southern California, an orphanage in Pomona, and at least one non-Carnegie library, the McHenry Library of Modesto, funded by a local philanthropist.<sup>11</sup>

F.P. Burnham might have designed as many Carnegies as Weeks had he not died at a relatively early age in 1909. Already noted in the east, especially for his work on the State Capitol in Atlanta, Georgia, Burnham arrived in Southern California at the turn of the century and his work was concentrated in that region. Between 1901 and 1908, first as Burnham & Bliesner and later on his own, he designed eleven libraries, mostly in the greater Los Angeles area. In 1901, with Bliesner, he designed the Spanish Revival Riverside library; in 1902, the triumphal arch Pomona and San Bernardino libraries, the latter with a dome. All were relatively expensive buildings, with grants of \$20,000, \$15,000, and \$20,000 respectively, and none remain. With the exception of the \$30,000 Long Beach building, his last libraries, beginning in 1904, were all in the temple mode, and their grants were smaller: \$12,000 for Oxnard, \$10,000 for Whittier and Corona,\* Ontario, Colton, and Santa Maria, and \$9000 for Covina. Only Colton and Oxnard are extant, and both are on the National Register, as was Corona, later demolished. Burnham also designed the Pomona College library, built with a \$40,000 grant and extant.

Several cities hosted competitions for the design of their libraries, San Diego and Fresno competitions were won by the New York firms of Ackerman & Ross, and Copeland & Dole. These early libraries were funded for the relatively higher amounts of \$60,000 and \$30,000, respectively, and both were substantial buildings in the triumphal arch style. Both were demolished in the 1950's.

Well known architects were enlisted by San Francisco when, after a 1912 public vote, it finally accepted its 1901 Carnegie grant. Bliss & Faville designed the first, the Richmond Branch. They had designed the Carnegie-funded Oakland Main Library in 1901, and their San Francisco buildings included the Southern Pacific and Matson Buildings, Geary Theater, St. Francis Hotel, Bank of California, and the State Building at the Civic Center. Also in 1914, George Kelham, Albert Lansburgh, Albert Pissis, and the Reid Brothers were invited to compete for the main library commission. Kelham's design was selected, the only

*\*Although Whittier and Corona grants were increased by Carnegie to \$12,500 and \$11,500, respectively.*

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 22

---

representative of Beaux Arts style among the California Carnegies and an important element in San Francisco's City Beautiful Civic Center plan. San Francisco's Russ Building and Shell Building are also attributed to Kelham. John Reid Jr., designer of many schools including Mission High, and Ernest Coxhead, known especially for his distinctive shingle-style residences and churches throughout the Bay area, were responsible for the Noe Valley and Golden Gate branches in 1916 and 1918. The remaining four branches, Mission, Sunset, North Beach (now Chinatown), and Presidio, were designed by G. Albert Lansburgh, noted for his design of theaters and auditoriums including, in San Francisco, the Warfield and Golden Gate.<sup>12</sup>

Of the other notable Carnegie architects, probably the best known today is Julia Morgan, whose sole Carnegie was the Margaret Carnegie Library at Mills College. Allison & Allison, who arrived in Los Angeles from Pittsburgh in about 1910, also designed just one Carnegie. They designed many Southern California schools and residences, promoted local manufacture of brick and used it extensively, and introduced schools with arcades or outside corridors. Their design for an "intellectual park" in the fast-growing city of Calexico drew widespread admiration, but when Carnegie funding was less than expected the building was severely compromised. Later, with Kelham, Allison & Allison planned the UCLA campus, and in the 1930's they designed a number of post offices.<sup>13</sup>

Many of the Carnegie architects were well known locally or regionally. Except for the branch designed by Weeks, the Oakland branches were the work of Donovan and Dickey. In Sonoma County, Brainerd Jones designed three Carnegies; locally honored, he has yet not been extensively studied and little is known of his work outside of Sonoma County. Stone & Smith of San Francisco designed three very different Carnegies, the Romanesque Chico, Classical Revival Colusa, and Spanish Revival Hayward. In San Jose, Jacob Lenzen designed many commercial, civic and residential structures in addition to the East San Jose Carnegie; he also designed the Salinas Carnegie. Both his brother Theodore and his son Theodore were architects, and apparently each sometimes worked with Jacob, making exact attribution difficult. Marsh & Russell designed Carnegies in Santa Monica, Hollywood, and South Pasadena, and Norman Marsh himself is associated with the layout of the canal concept for Venice, adjacent to Santa Monica. Benjamin McDougall designed the National Register Carnegie in Hanford, as well as Carnegies in Visalia and Pacific Grove, and the Federal Building in Oakland.<sup>14</sup>

Homer Glidden of Los Angeles designed the Upland Carnegie and the fire house adjacent to it, and was to also design the city hall; however, that building was not constructed until some twenty-five years later, and then as a WPA project. Locally, the contractor, John Gerry, was very well known. He constructed many buildings in Ontario and Upland, and his importance to the development of the community is widely recognized. He has been the subject of an oral history, on file in the library.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page  23 

---

Many of the Carnegie architects and builders await more in-depth study. Not listed in the major reference works, they may be becoming better known locally and regionally as more communities complete historic surveys.

D. Library Interiors

When James Bertram began to exert more direct control over library planning, his concern was the overall efficiency of the building. The Carnegie goal, as expressed in capital letters by Bertram in his "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings," was TO OBTAIN FOR THE MONEY THE UTMOST AMOUNT OF EFFECTIV ACCOMMODATION, CONSISTENT WITH GOOD TASTE IN BILDING. The apparent obstacle to that goal was the architect, who would direct his attention to architectural features and neglect interior practicality.

As noted earlier, only a few Carnegie architects, and certainly only a few library trustees, built more than one library. Also, few libraries were staffed by trained librarians with professional education, experience, or contact with other librarians; they lacked the knowledge and confidence to specify interior design for user satisfaction and library efficiency. Floor plans and admonitions provided by Bertram in the "Notes," designed to meet the needs of small and medium-sized libraries, were the result of his own consideration of "hundreds of plans," in the process of which he sometimes sought consultation from representatives of the newly emerging profession of librarianship.

The many-storied hall of European university libraries had been combined with the alcoves of the English university libraries to create the first real architecture of libraries in the United States, the 1854 Astor Library, "a three story row building, whose exterior was fashioned in the manner of a Renaissance palazzo,"<sup>15</sup> Its pattern was followed in the 1859 Boston Public Library, the 1861 Peabody Institute, and the 1874 Cincinnati Public Library.

Hall and alcoves were incorporated by H.H. Richardson in the Winn Memorial Library in Woburn, Massachusetts; his innovation was to plan spaces with shape and height appropriate to each function, and then allow the exterior to reflect that variation of shape and height.<sup>16</sup> The Richardsonian Romanesque style, as it developed in the design of three more libraries by Richardson, additional libraries by contemporaries, and many more by imitators, was the style of choice when the first Carnegies were built in the East.

The American Library Association had been organized in 1876, the same year that Richardson began work on Winn Memorial. At the fourth meeting of the association, in 1881, a panel of librarians discussed planning and was almost unanimous in its criticism



RECEIVED

AUG 14 1990

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 24

---

of the tall hall and alcoves of the Astor and Winn style of library. Specifically they noted that the very high ceilinged halls were a danger to the books because of the inevitable uneven heating, that time and energy were wasted in climbing staircases and ladders to retrieve books from high shelves, and that the alcoves were difficult to supervise. In general they criticized the placing of architectural effect ahead of library function.

Nor were practical interiors a major consideration in the Classical Revival buildings of the City Beautiful movement, inspired by the 1893 Chicago Columbian Exposition. Incorporated in civic plans throughout the nation, the style's popularity insured its application to many of the libraries which were built in such large numbers as a result of the Carnegie philanthropy.

Among the librarians who began to write extensively about interior library design was William F. Poole, present at the 1881 meeting, who in 1885 expressed many of the ideas to be put forth by Bertram twenty-five years later. Broadly interpreted, many are valid today. Number one was sufficient light and ventilation, from all sides; if lot size didn't permit that, he advocated a corner lot, with a skylight only if necessary. Reading rooms should be placed to benefit from north light. Although he specified reading rooms for ladies, gentlemen, reference, and periodicals, these divisions would be achieved by half-partitions so as not to block light; only the librarian's office and directors' meeting room would be separated by floor to ceiling partitions. He placed the librarian in the center, able to view the entire library. Above all, the counsel of librarians should be sought.

Also like Bertram, Poole called for one main floor over a basement; he also stressed the need for good basement drainage and a good heating system. He advocated planning from the beginning to enable future enlargement of the building, and a site selected to accommodate the expansion. In contrast to Bertram, he advocated a plan in the form of a cross, with expansion upwards to a second floor before extending one of the arms of the cross.

Poole also noted the importance of craftsmanship and quality in the building interior. Bertram did not comment on this aspect of design, but the Carnegies are generally characterized by interior architectural detail, workmanship, and well-made furnishings such as bookcases, tables and chairs.

Bertram's "Notes" were prepared for the library costing \$10,000, "more or less." He seemed to recognize an innocence, except perhaps of pride, of library committee members who have "lacked time or opportunity to obtain a knowledge of library planning," and perhaps placed more responsibility on the part of architects, when he said that the committees "are led" to select impractical or uneconomical designs. As for architects

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 25

---

themselves, some "are liable, unconsciously, no doubt, to aim at architectural features and to subordinate useful accommodation;" he also noted their lack of practical information about library functions.

Bertram specified a rectangular building, one-story and basement, with the main floor housing the books, check-out counter, and adult and children's reading rooms, the basement housing lecture room, heating, and "all conveniences for library patrons and staff." Assuming the presence of just one librarian, he recommended one large rectangular room, "sub-divided as required by means of bookcases," with a glass partition above if necessary for quiet. The basement should be four feet below grade, allowing natural light, with basement ceilings at nine to ten feet, first floor ceilings at twelve to fifteen feet. Rear and side windows should begin at about six feet to allow space for book cases below. The site selected should permit light from all sides and allow for later addition to the building, and Bertram found occasion to remind trustees who ignored this admonition that they should not expect to receive later money for a new library. He especially noted waste in entrance, cloak rooms, toilets and stairs. Regarding the exterior, "the community and architect may express their individuality, keeping to a plain, dignified structure and not aiming at such exterior effects as may make impossible an effective and economical layout of the interior."

The six floor plans that accompanied the Notes were basically all variations of the theme, adjusted for lots of various shapes and sizes. A and B are for wide lots, C for a deep lot; A, B, and C have central entrances; D, for a corner lot, has a corner entrance. The smaller E and F have the entrance to one side. D and E are square, the rest are rectangular.

With the exception of some Craftsman, the post-1911 small to medium buildings are rectangular with central entrance and are basically one large room. With the exception of the Tudor, Mission, and Romanesque, the same could be said of most of the small to medium pre-1911 buildings. The only California Carnegie that might be plan E is Biggs, built before the Notes were issued. Buildings with Plan D corner entrances pre-dated the plans and were also larger buildings. It is not possible to specifically allocate the various plans among the small to medium sized Carnegies built after 1911, or to compare a sufficient number of pre-1908 or pre-1911 buildings according to plan.

News Notes of California Libraries published reports on library buildings in their issues of July, 1906, and July, 1919.<sup>17</sup> However, libraries were self-described; two libraries might have listed five rooms, one library including in the count various small workrooms, while another listed as separate rooms the various spaces in an undivided large main room. It is probably safe to say, based on the file of Carnegie Corporation correspondence, that few libraries followed the plans exactly, but that most followed them in principle, often after considerable cajoling from Bertram.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 26

---

News Notes included plans of several libraries, which are attached as Appendix E. Those shown in the 1906 issue are Corona, constructed in 1906 for \$11,500\*; Palo Alto, 1904, \$10,000; Tulare, 1905, \$10,000; Watsonville, 1905, \$12,000; and Covina, 1905, \$9,000. Interestingly, all are Carnegies, and all have been demolished. Though fairly open in plan, especially Palo Alto, all include workrooms and restrooms on the first floor. Later, trustees would have many debates with Bertram to establish the convenience and efficiency of locating these facilities on the first floor, and many succeeded.

In the 1919 issue, News Notes chose to focus on branch and county libraries. Plans are shown for Walnut Creek, 1916, \$2,500; Bayliss, 1917, \$4,000; Yolo, 1918, \$3,000; Oakdale, 1917, \$7,000; and Oakland/23rd Avenue, 1917, \$35,000. Again, all are Carnegies; in this case, all but Walnut Creek are extant. Oakdale is a fairly accurate rendition of Plan B. Neither Bayliss nor Yolo had basements, and toilets are located on the first floor. In Bayliss, spaces are separated by large arched openings. The Craftsman Yolo building, and Walnut Creek, do not fit the plans. The Oakland branch was more expensive than those libraries covered by the Notes. As demonstrated by Oakdale, libraries that cost closer to the \$10,000 are more likely to adhere to the plans.

Most new small libraries today are open in plan, and certainly light remains a major consideration. Most are located on one floor, and all are designed to be accessible to handicapped persons. The most often cited interior design obstacles to continuing use of the smaller Carnegie libraries have been size, basement, and inner stairs. Real problems arise, too, concerning lighting, wiring, heating and plumbing, and roof leaks.

A 1985 California conference for librarians, on the planning of both new buildings and renovations, included several workshops on pre-planning and working with architects.<sup>18</sup> The most emphasized renovation problem was space and the expense of achieving it, to accommodate more books, more users, more services, more technical equipment, and usually more than one librarian. The other area of serious problem noted was to provide for modern electrical needs. In some cases these problems have been met by building a separate building with the desired modern features, connected by an entrance element to the older building which is retained as a reading room, as in San Rafael, or children's room, as in East San Jose, where the amenities of the older building can be appreciated apart from the more efficient library functions.

*\*Some cost amounts vary from those listed in this report; see section E, "Grant amounts."*

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   27  **E. Grant Amounts**

When the first California Carnegie grants were made, to San Diego, Oakland and Alameda, many of the processes that later characterized the program had not yet been developed. Response to requests for more money is one example of this. San Diego was originally offered \$50,000, but requested and received an additional \$10,000 for steel book stacks. Alameda first accepted a \$10,000 Carnegie grant, expecting to raise additional local funds to provide a "proper edifice," but soon went back to Carnegie, and their grant was raised to \$35,000. Fast growing Long Beach, offered \$12,500 in 1905, was eventually granted \$30,000. As that sort of request became more frequent, it was even more often rejected. Bertram eventually required that recipients sign a letter indicating their commitment to complete the building, ready for occupancy for the use intended, with the funds provided.

One supplementary request that was hard to deny was for earthquake damage. No Carnegie libraries had been built in San Francisco before the 1906 earthquake, but nearby many were damaged, and Carnegie granted additional funds for repair of several. Santa Rosa's two-year old Romanesque library lost its tower, and Carnegie provided \$6900 for repairs, as well as for improved lighting. Other cities receiving additional funds for 1906 earthquake repair included San Mateo, \$2500; Redwood City, \$6000; and Hayward, \$1750. The earthquake caused costly delay where it did not do actual damage. Petaluma's new library was complete but had not yet opened; repairs delayed its opening until November, but additional funding was not requested. In Colusa, many miles from San Francisco, completion of the new library was delayed because furniture and fixtures, ordered from San Francisco, were destroyed in the fire following the earthquake. In Nevada City, work was delayed, with disastrous results for the contractor, because needed workmen were engaged in earthquake repair. Later Los Angeles and Imperial Valley earthquakes also caused serious damage, eliciting extra funding in a few cases; the El Centro library, in particular, required drastic renovation.

The more recent October 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake resulted in the temporary closing of most of the San Francisco libraries pending an engineering check. Most of those soon reopened; the Presidio Branch remained closed for a longer period, and the Main Library opened even later and on a limited scale. Carnegie buildings in Hollister, Monterey, Pacific Grove, and Santa Cruz all survived with minor, if any, damage.

The granting of additional funds has led to some confusion about the actual cost of the buildings. Figures listed in the several sources vary, some including supplementary funding and some listing the original amount. The actual chain of events may or may not be found in Carnegie correspondence or library minutes. When libraries ran over cost, or when cities determined they wanted to spend more than the allotted amount, private fund

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 28

---

raising and city contribution augmented the budget, making it sometimes difficult to gauge the actual cost of a given building based on the reported Carnegie grant. When cities did report the real cost of the building, they sometimes added in the cost of the land, further confusing an attempt at comparison.

### F. Later libraries

In the later years of the program, funding in California was not limited to municipalities. California legislation of 1909, revised in 1911, permitted formation of county library systems; after that, rural areas could meet the Carnegie prerequisites of a tax to support the library. The 1911 legislation also permitted formation of library districts and of public libraries in union high school districts. Municipal grants did continue, mostly to smaller towns, with the notable exceptions, in 1914, of Sacramento and Santa Barbara. Several municipalities also received later funding for branches, including the four branches for Oakland, three for Santa Cruz and one for Santa Monica.\*

Beaumont is an example of a library district formed in an unincorporated area. A library had been initiated by the women's club in 1909, and in 1911 an election was held to establish a library district covering an area of 60 square miles.\*\* Beaumont incorporated in 1912 but the library has remained a district library, serving the wider population.

Carnegie funds paid for libraries in union high school district libraries at Coalinga, Dixon, and Vacaville. The Coalinga building no longer stands. Vacaville's Carnegie became a restaurant, "The Library," but is now vacant. In Dixon the Women's Improvement Club organized the library in 1911, and corresponded with Bertram to obtain the library, but the Dixon Union High School Library District signed the deed when the library site was purchased for \$10. The library continues to serve the area as the Dixon Unified School District Library District.

From 1915 until 1917 when the last awards were made, the majority of the grants went to county branches including Antioch, Concord, and Walnut Creek in Contra Costa County; Clovis and Sanger in Fresno County; Dinuba and Orosi in Tulare County; Oakdale, Patterson

*\*San Francisco branches, as noted earlier, were funded very early, but were not constructed until almost the end of the program.*

*\*\* Only men were then allowed to vote; the library district was approved, 59 for and 27 against, a vote which seemed to strongly endorse both the library and the women's effort in its behalf. Two months later, however, women's suffrage barely passed in Beaumont, 71 for and 67 against.*

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   29  

---

and Riverbank in Stanislaus County, and Yolo. In these cases it was the County Library which negotiated with Bertram.

In Yolo County the county librarian's request met with considerable resistance from Bertram, who questioned the proposed location and the equitableness of providing more funds for Yolo County. The Woodland library, originally funded in 1903, had in 1914 received from Carnegie an additional \$12,000 for expansion of the building to meet countywide needs. Woodland's 1917 request for Carnegie funding of a series of branch libraries was at first refused, but after much correspondence, \$3000 was granted for one branch, built at Yolo.

A later library that does not fit into any of the above categories, and which is perhaps unique in the United States, is the Bayliss District library. It is said to be the first instance of Carnegie funding of a library in a rural unincorporated community that was not part of any district, the only such library "built at a crossroad." The library grew from a travelling library established in the "Bayliss Tract" by the Glenn County Library, and became so important to the residents of the area that they sought a permanent building. Land was donated by the Sacramento Valley Irrigation Company and Glenn County guaranteed the tax support required for the \$4000 Carnegie grant. University of California classes planned the landscaping. The library is staffed by volunteers.

**G. Additions and changes**

Many communities found themselves outgrowing their libraries within a few years. Much of the Carnegie correspondence relates to predictions by library and city officials that this would be the case, as they tried unsuccessfully to convince Bertram that population figures from the last census scarcely described their present size and expected growth, nor took into account the numbers of people from surrounding areas.

Homer Glidden, architect of the Upland Carnegie, defending himself against Bertram's criticism of his floor plan, explained that his plans would accommodate future expansion: "The only possible expansion for the building is directly to the rear and the rear wing was given entirely to the Stack room with the intention that the rear wall (which is of frame, veneered on the outside with brick) may be removed and a straight or Tee wing according to future requirements be added." 19

The Glidden correspondence with Bertram is unusual because Bertram made it a rule not to correspond with architects. He wrote to the City Clerk of Upland that "We prefer to conduct our correspondence with you, the architect being responsible to you and you to us."<sup>20</sup> It is fortunate that Glidden did write to Bertram, because his letter is the only explanation found

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIS

Section number   F   Page   30  

---

for the fact that the rear wall of the Upland library is finished in a brick of lesser grade, and is without the fine detailing of the balustrade and cornice.

A number of other libraries did expand by adding directly to the back. Sometimes the size of the rectangle was more or less doubled by a rear extension which duplicated the building materials and design elements of the original building. Richmond, Lodi, Ferndale, Hollister, Oxnard, and San Anselmo are examples of this approach. At Oxnard, the interior of the original building remained the same, with columns and high ceilings, but in the new addition a lower first floor ceiling and an upper gallery provided considerable additional space. Second floor space in the Ferndale rear addition was accomplished by a slight adjustment to the roofline.

At South San Francisco, the addition is larger than the original, but is compatible and, even though visible from the front, is not a detraction. An addition to the rear of Dixon is less structural, less integrated, but is invisible from the front. In Alameda, a residential structure around the corner to the rear is used for additional library space. Santa Cruz/Seabright has been extended to the rear twice, but in such a way that its appearance from the front is much the same. Now an extension to the side is contemplated, which will be more visible. Pacific Grove is a unique example because its several additions have been to the front, while the back of the old building is still visible from the rear, and original elements of the first and second versions are clearly discernible in the interior.

The San Rafael, East San Jose, Santa Monica/Ocean Park, Mills College, Beaumont, and El Centro libraries are examples of a new wing constructed as a separate building, attached to the original structure by a connecting element which serves to differentiate between the old and the new. In the first four, the connecting corridor also provides the entrance to the larger building, and the original entrance to the old building has been allowed to retain its classic entrance facade.

At Beaumont and El Centro, however, incorporation of a new wing was accomplished by changing the character of the building. A Mansard roof now encircles both the old and new sections of the Beaumont building, with the intent of tying the two elements together stylistically. The El Centro library suffered severe earthquake damage in the late 1920's. Reinforcement was added to the old building, which was then plastered over, and classical elements removed. The effect is modern, and a new modern wing was added, placed at an angle to the original. The form of the original Classical Revival building is discernible in the large recessed window, which was formerly the recessed entrance.

Considerable community effort was brought to the 1985 restoration of the Clovis Carnegie, long vacant, resulting in the creation of the Clovis Chamber Community Hall, a social and meeting room upstairs, with the Chamber of Commerce downstairs. In the renovation the

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   31  

---

front portico was somewhat restructured and new elements have been added. The building has been declared a Fresno County Historic Landmark.

Sometimes Carnegie funding was provided for additions, such as in Riverside, Pomona, San Bernardino, and South Pasadena, but more often the city was expected to use its own taxing and bonding powers once its original library had been constructed. In the case of South Pasadena, Carnegie funded only the 1916 addition. The original architect, Norman Marsh, served as consultant for a complete remodelling and change of style in 1930, and a representative of the firm he had founded served as consultant on the extensive 1981 renovation. The old Carnegie was never actually destroyed, but it is encompassed by the new building. South Pasadena does not consider its present building to be a Carnegie, and the remodelled building is a significant architectural asset in its own right.

If the revised and altered South Pasadena library is no longer perceived by the community to be a Carnegie, the question arises whether Eagle Rock, rebuilt on its old foundations, and Santa Barbara, remodelled several times, are still Carnegies. By contrast, Azusa provides an example of a library building being completely razed and then another building constructed on the site, while retaining the original setting.

The original Santa Barbara Carnegie, which opened in 1917, was designed in Spanish Revival style by Francis W. Wilson of Santa Barbara, with Pittsburgh architect Henry A. Hornbostel. An earthquake in 1925 severely damaged the eight year old building, collapsing two of its walls. Under the direction of Carleton Winslow, it was restored and somewhat altered the next year with city funds. Shortly thereafter the library received two gifts: adjacent land for an art gallery, and substantial funds for an art library. Architects for the new wing were Myron Hunt, who planned the Huntington mansion and library, and H.C. Chambers. The new building, in Egyptian style, is adjacent to the old and connected to it. A later bequest and substantial city and federal funding have permitted subsequent rehabilitation and remodeling in 1958 and 1977. It remains a building of considerable integrity, a significant contributor to the local architecture, and an important cultural resource in the community.

H. Planned changes and threats to present buildings

Several libraries are now in the process of renovation, restoration, and expansion. In Sacramento, a full block "Library Plaza" under construction will contain the restored Carnegie, a compatible new library alongside the old, with a connecting element, a gallery behind the library and set back from the street, an office building, and a parking structure with retail space. In Lodi, library restoration is within a civic plaza, with unifying walkways. At Monterey, the Carnegie is now known as the William Tell Coleman Library of



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   32  

---

the Monterey Institute of International Studies; it is being expanded with construction of a large new wing to the rear and off to one side. It appears that the original entrance will be maintained.

Some libraries previously expanded are now considering new buildings, incorporating later library design to accommodate expanded modern library functions. These include Alameda, San Rafael and San Anselmo, committed to preservation of the Carnegie building but in need of additional library facilities. Library buildings that have been adapted to other uses may again lack space to meet current needs. An adjacent storage building is being considered for the Petaluma Carnegie, now a museum. When buildings are occupied by city services, sometimes a shifting of departments can compensate if the present tenant outgrows the space, as in Colusa; then interior space must usually be rearranged.

Pending construction of a new library, the Nevada City Carnegie is expected to become Nevada County's historical and archival library. The Upland Carnegie has been vacated by its previous city tenant; there, an historical archival library is also an option being considered. Other Carnegies vacant at this time are Oakland/23rd (planned to become city storage), Gridley, and Vacaville. When ownership is private, as is the case in Vacaville, the building's lack of space or efficiency could potentially pose more of a threat for the building.

Privately owned Carnegies, in addition to Vacaville, are Mill Valley, Ukiah, Alturas, Monterey, Oakdale, Patterson, and Corning. All seem well maintained and in good condition. The Mill Valley building is a private residence; Patterson has been recently purchased and is being restored for professional office space. Corning and Oakdale have been restored for business use and their integrity maintained. Corning, however, lacks a sufficient number of tenants to insure its future prosperity.

Site is an important factor in the future of individual Carnegies. With the exception of the branches, most Carnegies were located proximate to downtown, as their pre-Carnegie predecessors had been. These buildings are now in or adjacent to "old downtown." Among the many examples of Carnegies located in towns which have been able to retain a viable downtown, or where an active preservation movement is restoring the downtown, are San Rafael, San Luis Obispo, Petaluma, Pacific Grove, and Santa Barbara. Some Carnegies that were located in residential areas and parks, such as Clovis, Turlock and Exeter, are well suited to community use. Branch libraries, although more often originally located in neighborhoods, or near small shopping areas, are similarly affected. The extant Santa Cruz branches and several of the San Francisco branches are in neighborhoods that have changed demographically but are still essentially residential.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number     F     Page   33  

---

When the old downtown or the neighborhood exhibits large numbers of vacant buildings, the options for the Carnegie, as library or in another capacity, are more limited. Examples include Gridley, Yacaville, and Richmond. Some neighborhood change is being accepted as a challenge. East San Jose, Oakland/Melrose, and Los Angeles/Lincoln Heights are examples of libraries meeting the needs of their new constituents with outreach programs and books in five or more languages. The neighborhood of Oakland/23rd Avenue has become primarily industrial and commercial, with evidence of potential vandalism in the high chain link fences surrounding the few residences and the vacant library building, which is scheduled to be used for storage. All extant Carnegies are on their original sites; only Hollywood, since demolished, was relocated.

The threat of earthquake is ever present for Carnegies, all of which predate current knowledge of construction methods for building in or near fault zones. Earthquake safety is probably the prime reason given for demolishing those buildings already lost, although earthquakes can be a handy scapegoat when economics and convenience are the actual motivators. New earthquake protections have been incorporated in many public buildings, and because of current legislation, many communities are surveying their pre-1934 buildings and appointing broadly based committees to draft local ordinances for building renovation and protection.

Probably the most threatened Carnegies at this time are Oakland/23rd Ave., Yacaville and Calexico. The editor of the Calexico Chronicle reports: "I trust the old library will be preserved as it is an important link with the past...it is also a serviceable building, but a local architect believes it is too expensive to remodel...there are some who wish to tear it down, others to remodel, others to use it as an additional office for city hall which is adjacent to it...some want it as a museum...I want it used and saved."<sup>20</sup>

### III. SIGNIFICANCE

Carnegie Libraries are important in their respective communities under Criterion A in the area of Social History for the association with library development in California during the years 1849-1921. In the newly settled communities of California, the history of the public library was re-enacted within a few years as individuals and groups established reading rooms, formed library associations, and, after 1878, promoted municipal responsibility for libraries. However, few groups or cities could provide more than temporary and often inconvenient space for their library. The need for a library building was addressed by retired industrialist turned philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, who undertook the beneficial distribution of his "excess wealth" and perceived the gift of a library as a means to help people to help themselves. In accordance with this philosophy of "self help," Carnegie provided the funds for the building, while requiring the community to

**United States Department of the Interior**  
**National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   34  

---

provide the land on which it was built, and to maintain the library with an annual tax of at least 10% of the gift. Communities were energized to seek the funds, locate a site, pass the tax, and achieve a significant public building. Carnegie financed 2509 libraries throughout the English-speaking world. In California, 142 public library buildings and two academic libraries were constructed between 1901 and 1921 with Carnegie funding. As communities grew and library needs changed, some buildings were demolished, seldom without opposition from a library constituency which wanted to preserve its Carnegie. Today eighty-five of the public library buildings and the two academic library buildings are still standing. Thirty-eight Carnegies continue to serve as public libraries, while others now house museums, civic offices, community centers, professional buildings, and offices. The commitment to preserve those that remain has intensified.

The Carnegie Libraries are also important in their respective communities under Criterion C in the area of Architecture because they reflect the popular styles of the time and because they exemplify a particular and specialized building type which, stimulated by Andrew Carnegie's library philanthropy, was by 1921 to be found in approximately 84% of California's communities. Library buildings were constructed to provide a permanent home for the community's existing or anticipated library, and that home was seen as a civic structure, a demonstration of the community's intellectual and cultural status and of its prosperity. The *City Beautiful* movement added further incentive to communities to apply to Carnegie for an opportunity to unify progress and aesthetics. Later Carnegie policies emphasized the library role over civic pride; nevertheless, over the span of the program, workmanship, materials, and artistic values combined to produce a structure that today is identified as the Carnegie Library, often the community's only remaining civic structure of the period. Since World War II, the "information explosion," the building's structural or design limitations, and increased population have resulted in a demand for new and larger libraries with increased technological capabilities. Many libraries were expanded, and many others were demolished. However, since 1978 no California Carnegie has been demolished and commitment to preservation has led to more Carnegies being adapted to other uses. At this time there is an extant representative of each architectural style of Carnegie library building that was constructed in California.

**IV. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

All of the buildings of the property type, California Carnegie Library Buildings, were built during the period of significance, 1901 through 1921. Each demonstrates some aspect of the historic development of libraries in California during the period and the social history of their communities, and will have served for some period of time as public libraries in their communities. Several architectural styles are represented in the property type.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   35  

---

Carnegie granted funds to cities, small communities and rural districts, with the amount based on population; grants for a single building ranged from \$2,500 to \$350,000. After 1908, building plans were reviewed prior to approval, with the goal of emphasizing efficiency of design. Buildings range from the very simple to the elaborate.

To be eligible for the National Register, a building should demonstrate architectural integrity. It need not be a clear example of one style, but must possess the essential elements of its style, and retain most of its original construction elements and other features, including original character forming features such as columns, friezes, pediments, and ornamentation.

It is recognized that libraries must serve the public by providing space for the collection, for reading and study, and ease of access. Since construction seventy to ninety years ago, they have faced increases in numbers and types of books and reference works, new library technology, user population, and sensitivity to the needs of handicapped citizens. Often it will have been found necessary to carry out alterations and additions. Carnegies adapted to other public and private use may face similar challenges. Insofar as possible, the Secretary of the Interior's Standard #4 regarding changes that are part of the history and development of the building, should be used as a guide.

Keeping in mind the above, alterations and additions are acceptable insofar as they are made only to the rear, and the proportions and mass of the building, as seen from the street or streets, appear to be compatible. The original entrance should be retained, though it need not serve as the main entrance. A new entrance should be easily located but not detract from the old. The original roof may be replaced with modern materials which appear to be similar to the original. If window materials are changed, fenestration patterns must remain. Any added windows or doors should be compatible with the existing patterns, or be replaceable. In cases where a separate wing has been built, it should not imitate the original building, but should be compatible; any connecting element should not be dominant.

Replacement of materials in kind is acceptable, as are minor alterations that do not impinge upon the historic character of the building. However, widespread use of new materials, such as stucco siding or aluminum windows, would render the building ineligible as long as those elements remain.

Stairs may have been replaced with similar stairs, and simple hand rails may be provided. Handicapped access ramps or elevators should be so placed as to be accessible to those who need them, yet not detract from the essential form or design elements of the building, and, if possible, should be removable without damaging the fabric of the building.

RECEIVED

AUG 14 1990

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 36

---

Presence of original interior woodwork, columns, window frames, moldings, ceiling, and library furniture, and outside elements such as light standards, may in some cases compensate for some less satisfactory alteration, especially for one that may be reversed.

Carnegie library buildings that have been remodelled in such a way that it then represents a different architectural style, the integrity of which has stood the test of time, may be considered under the above requirements.

Only one California Carnegie building, later demolished, has been moved from the original site and it is preferable that the building should be in its original location and setting. However, it is possible that in the future such a move might again be found necessary, and such a building would be eligible if its new location and setting were similar to the original and appropriate to the building.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number F Page 37

---

## ENDNOTES, SECTION F

1. This calculation does not include a 1901 grant to San Francisco which was not used until 1914-1921; the grant was offered pre-1907 and it was used post-1907. The amount of the grant, \$750,000, exceeded the \$700,000 total of all other California Carnegie grants between 1899 and 1907, and the amounts spent per building were also far higher than the average. To include either amount, in either chronological category, would skew the figures considerably. The San Francisco grant was an interesting anomaly in other respects as well:
  - a. Andrew Carnegie offered the grant in a personal letter to then-Mayor James D. Phelan.
  - b. San Francisco did not act on the offer until 1912. Then, when the Board of Supervisors voted to accept the offer, the Labor Council objected and took the matter to a vote of the people; however, the Board's action was ratified by the public.
  - c. The 1901 offer was made before James Bertram had initiated the requirements for plan review which were in effect at the time the money was spent. Bertram acknowledged this and although he criticized the plans extensively, even referring them to consultants and passing on to San Francisco library trustees the criticism of the consultants, he wrote to San Francisco that under the circumstances he could "only appeal to the common sense" of the trustees (October 11, 1916). He reminded them that he did wish to review all of the plans, as "it is our rule to stamp plans with approval for identification." (January 15, 1917)

Also not included in the above calculations were grants to two academic libraries. California received Carnegie funding for 142 public libraries and two academic libraries, at Mills College and Pomona College. Because public libraries were his subject, Bobinski used the number "142" for California's Carnegies. The historic context of this survey is rooted in the public library movement also, but the Mills and Pomona libraries are notable Carnegie buildings. They are included throughout Section F except in tables comparing library styles before and after 1908, that date referring to the beginning of James Bertram's close attention to the efficiency of library plans; academic libraries were not subject to this scrutiny.

Additionally, elsewhere reference is sometimes made to Riverside's Arlington and Glendale's Grandview branch libraries as Carnegies. According to Ron Baker's Serving Through Partnership: A Centennial History of the Riverside City and County Public Library, 1888-1988, Carnegie funds were applied to a Burnham-designed addition to the main library, and city funds used to construct to the Arlington branch. In part this may have been because the Arlington Branch was to include a fire station, the type of combination definitely not approved by James Bertram.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number  F  Page  38

---

Glendale librarians have referred to the Grandview branch, no longer extant, as a Carnegie building in two separate letters, one to the author in 1989 and one to Betty Lewis of Watsonville in 1985. However a Glendale branch is not listed by Anderson or Bobinski, and no reference to it was found in the Carnegie correspondence. Also, its completion date of 1926 is not consistent with Carnegie funding. In a phone call by the author to the Glendale correspondent, it was learned that unfortunately they have no documentation or articles about the building, but also no doubt that it is a Carnegie. Further research would be worthwhile. However, it is not included here.

2. Harold Kirker, California's Architectural Frontier: Style and Tradition in the Nineteenth Century (New York: Russell & Russell, 1960), 101.
3. Abigail A. Van Slyck, "Free to All: Carnegie Libraries and the Transformation of American Culture 1877-1917" (Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1989), 205.
4. Andrew Carnegie to James D. Phelan, then Mayor of San Francisco, dated 20 June 1901. Microfilm copy of handwritten letter, in Carnegie Corporation correspondence.
5. Andrew Carnegie to James D. Phelan, then Library Trustee, dated 23 [?] December 1912. Microfilm copy in Carnegie Corporation correspondence.
6. Marcus Whiffen, American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles (Cambridge: The M.I.T. Press, 1981), 225.
7. Van Slyck, "Free to All," 283.
8. Van Slyck, "Free To All," 283-295.
9. Carole Rifkind, A Field Guide to American Architecture (New York: Times Mirror New American Library, 1980), 217.
10. Margaret Ann Souza, "A History of the Santa Cruz Public Library System" (M.A. thesis, San Jose State College, 1970), 18-29.
11. Betty Lewis, W.H. Weeks, Architect (Fresno: Panorama West Books, 1985), 16-18.
12. "Libraries Reflect the City's Values," Heritage Newsletter 16:4 (date unknown), 9-11. This is the newsletter of The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage; no author named.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   F   Page   39  

---

13. Myron Hunt, "The Work of Messrs. Allison & Allison," The Architect & Engineer of California 42:3 (September, 1915), 38-75.  
Susan L. Richards and Sally R. Sims, "The California Post Offices of Allison & Allison," Prologue, 20:2 (Summer, 1988), 101-117.
14. David Gebhard et al, A Guide to Architecture in San Francisco & Northern California (Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith, Inc., 1973) 285.
15. Van Slyck, "Free to All," 24.
16. Van Slyck, "Free to All," 26-36.
17. "California Libraries," News Notes of California Libraries 1:1 (July 1906) 94-127.  
"California Libraries -- Quarterly News Items," News Notes of California Libraries 14:3 (July 1919) 266-274, 304-345.
18. Raymond M. Holt, ed., Talking Buildings: A Practical Dialogue on Programming and Planning Library Buildings. Proceedings, Building Workshop, October 1985 (Del Mar, California: California State Library, 1985), passim.
19. Homer W. Glidden, architect of Upland Carnegie Library, to James Bertram, May 23, 1912. Correspondence, files of the Carnegie Corporation, New York.
20. James Bertram to City Clerk, Upland, California, May 15, 1912. Correspondence, files of the Carnegie Corporation, New York.
21. John H. Stepping, Editor, Calexico Chronicle, to author, August 15, 1989.  
Correspondence, files California Historic Carnegie Library Project.



---

**G. Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods**

---

Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.

See continuation sheet

---

**H. Major Bibliographical References**

---

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional documentation:

- State historic preservation office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency

- Local government  
 University  
 Other

Specify repository: California Carnegie Library Survey Sonoma State University

---

**I. Form Prepared By**

---

name/title Lucy Kortum  
organization (Sonoma State University) date November 1989 (rev. 4/90)  
street & number 180 Ely Road telephone 707/762-6219  
city or town Petaluma state CA zip code 94954

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   G   Page   1  

---

## Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

### I. THE SURVEY

The first task was to identify all of the California Carnegie libraries; the most widely known, recent, and accessible information resulted from Bobinski's 1967 national study:

George Bobinski, Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development, published in 1969. The text is an excellent introduction to Carnegie and Carnegie libraries. His Appendix B lists all U.S. Carnegie communities (grouped in one alphabetical list) with date and amount of the grant, and whether a public library was established prior to the Carnegie grant. Available in most public libraries, this is the most commonly used resource on Carnegies. The 1967 survey found 103 extant California Carnegies but they were not identified. A telephone call to Dr. Bobinski revealed that the raw data was no longer available but that he was considering various ways of reviving his study.

There is an extensive literature on library philanthropy, Carnegie's program, and the buildings themselves. During this project I continued to follow bibliographic leads and to read on the subject. Carnegie libraries in Iowa, Washington, and Kansas have been the subject of individual reports, and The Best Gift is an outstanding report on Carnegies in Ontario, Canada. More directly related to the present study are the following:

Florence Anderson's Carnegie Corporation Library Program 1911-1961, published by the Carnegie Corporation in 1963. Anderson has revised several earlier Carnegie Corporation lists, which were said to contain some errors, to produce this official list. All Carnegie public libraries throughout the world are listed by state or country, plus Carnegie academic libraries and other library-related funding to academic institutions and to professional and scholarly library organizations. For each library, Anderson lists only community, year of grant, and amount.

Ray E. Held's Public Libraries in California, 1849-1878, published in 1963, and The Rise of the Public Library in California, published in 1973, are essential general resources for California libraries. Carnegies, of course, appear only in the second volume, which additionally provides, in its Appendix 5, a list of California Carnegies. Held's list contains a "notes" column showing, among other things, increases in the original grants (sometimes for earthquake repair) and explains some of the discrepancies between other lists and information from the libraries.

News Notes of California Libraries, July 1906 and July 1919. The July 1906 issue is Volume 1, Number 1 of this important library resource. That issue attempts to list all of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   6   Page   2  

---

the existing California public libraries. Occurring so soon after the April 1906 earthquake, it also serves as a report on losses for a number of libraries. Some libraries didn't respond and information isn't always comparable or accurate, but among its most valuable information is the notation of funding for the property and the building. Also the name of the architect, often omitted from news stories of the day, is generally included. News Notes apparently did not again provide this overview until the July 1919 issue.

The Carnegie Correspondence, some thirty-two rolls of microfilm available from the Carnegie Corporation in New York. This primary resource contains the extant correspondence between Carnegie private secretary (and primary manager of the library program) James Bertram, and the Carnegie communities worldwide, arranged alphabetically by community. Its perusal for verification of a list of California Carnegies would be duplicating previous work, and the information contained is not internally consistent or even always legible. However, it is an invaluable resource in terms of the program as a whole and for many individual communities. Its best general use is to get a feeling for the kinds of issues raised and how Bertram handled by them.

When the identified Carnegie communities were located on the map, something of a cluster effect was revealed (see map, Appendix C). Libraries centered in the areas surrounding metropolitan port centers of San Francisco/Oakland, Monterey Bay, Los Angeles, and San Diego; along the major north-south highways, and in the San Joaquin, Sacramento, and Imperial valleys. Except for the cluster in the Sierra foothill mining communities, most that were scattered farther field tended to be the result of the county library movement. Alturas, in the far northeast corner of the state, represents both mining and the county libraries, and was the only Carnegie library to be built east of the Sierra. Library locations corresponded closely to population densities; the few incorporated municipalities existing at the time of the Carnegie movement which did not seek and obtain Carnegie funding have been discussed in Section E. Two important resources which shed light on public libraries of the Carnegie period and the communities which supported them, as well as the county library movement, are:

Harriet G. Eddy's personal recollections collected in County Free Library Organizing in California, 1909-1918, published by the Committee on California Library History, Bibliography, and Archives of the California Library Association, in 1955; and those of her successor, May Dexter Henshall, in County Library Organizing, published by the California State Library Foundation in 1985. Carnegie libraries existed in incorporated areas only, and the county library system was conceived to bring library service to rural areas. However, the process was political, through Boards of Supervisors; professional, through librarians of existing (and frequently Carnegie) libraries; and cultural, involving individuals and groups such as Women's Improvement Clubs, PTA's, Farm Bureaus, and Granges. Each group had its share of proponents and opponents, and the records of Eddy and Henshall are lively and detailed. They should be of great interest to local historians of the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   G   Page   3  

---

individual counties and communities, and they provide considerable information about the Carnegie libraries of the later years.

A draft survey form was tested by using it in the review of Carnegie libraries already on the National Register of Historic Places or the Historic Resources Inventory. It then was revised, was tested again by sending it to those who responded to an article in the Fall 1988 Historic Preservation Newsletter, and revised again. Appendix D is the version of the survey form that was then sent, along with a brief introductory letter and a copy of the Historic Preservation Newsletter article, to the Local History Librarian of the public or historical library (as listed in the current directory of public libraries) in Carnegie communities. The survey included all libraries, extant or demolished. Forms were not sent, however, for those Carnegies most recently documented for the National Register. Generally, forms for branch libraries were sent to the main library. When a library was not listed in the directory, the letter, enclosure and forms were sent to the county library. In some cases a library, because of limited staff time, referred the form to the county library.

Two particularly fortuitous responses to the Historic Preservation Newsletter article, in addition to those from libraries, were from:

Betty Lewis, local historian from Watsonville. Ms. Lewis had written a book on architect W.H. Weeks, who lived in Watsonville in the early part of his professional career (W.H. Weeks, Architect, Fresno: Panorama West Books, 1985). She is also an avid collector of postcards. In her research for the Weeks book, funded through grants from the Sourisseau Academy, San Jose State University, Ms. Lewis had contacted the California Carnegie libraries and also gathered information from News Notes of California Libraries, 1906 and 1919, about each library, and she generously made available three notebooks. Two notebooks contained responses from the libraries to her questions (address, architect, is the library still standing or date of destruction) plus any clippings provided; one notebook contained a sheet for each library listing summary information, most often accompanied by an historic postcard. Ms. Lewis' collection was invaluable at the beginning of the study for an overview of all of the libraries, and was useful throughout to compare and contrast with other information received, especially in regard to early and later building appearance. Several pages from her notebooks have been copied for the project files, and are stamped "From the Collection of Betty Lewis, Watsonville."

Jane Kimball, reference librarian at the Social Sciences Library, UC Davis. Having become interested in Carnegie libraries in England and Wales, Ms. Kimball has taken color slides of about two-thirds of the California Carnegies, and had also read a great deal about them. Use of her slides was very helpful in gaining early familiarity with the buildings, and information exchanged was mutually helpful.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   G   Page   4  

---

Articles about the study in the California State Library Newsletter (September 1988), the League of California Cities Small Cities Newsletter (February 1989), and Preservation Forum (Winter 1988-89), stimulated additional response. A second mailing, phone calls, and exploration of other sources, eventually elicited some response about all but four Carnegies.

## II. EVALUATION

The quality of responses varied. The survey form itself was brief, but supplemental information was encouraged. A minimum response at least achieved the goal of a dated and signed record of the most essential information regarding that library; I then sought out further information from other sources. In some cases, the survey form inspired additional research on the part of the library; it was gratifying to receive comments like "The research prompted me to create our own file of these news stories for future reference, so the research has been doubly useful," and "This was fun." A library assistant who provided outstanding documentation for all four Santa Cruz libraries is just one of several examples of excellent participation from librarians, historians, Friends of the Library, library board members, and city representatives. Several libraries had already completed books and brochures on their libraries, most notably Ron Baker's excellent social history of the Riverside library. At least two masters theses have been completed on local library systems, including their Carnegies. Margaret Souza's history of Santa Cruz public libraries was completed in 1970 and updated; Robert Hook's 1968 history of the San Jose public library covers the dates 1903-1937.

However, deficiencies in the survey form also became evident. Dates that the building actually served as a library were not specifically requested and were sometimes difficult to accurately recreate from the information provided, necessitating a second contact. Identification of building material was not specifically requested, and few responded to the narrative request for it. Not all information required on the Historic Resources Inventory form was adequately addressed on the form. Too, most respondents felt free to skip unfamiliar questions. There should have been a direct question about the the library's or historical society's archival resources or the existence of building plans. However, most libraries seemed to reply to the extent that their resources permitted and expressed interest in the project, and many requested a copy of an eventual product.

Few provided photographs and it became evident that xerox, brief descriptions, and those few photos were insufficient, even with the help of the Kimball slides. An effort was made to visit most of the extant buildings but trips were, of necessity, rushed. In all too many cases it was not possible to time visits during open hours; photographs also suffered from noontime sunshine, dusk, and parked cars. One benefit of visiting the libraries was to see them in their

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   G   Page   5  

---

surroundings, in scale. Nearly all are smaller than they appear in pictures. Though some seem "worn," the quality of their workmanship prevails, and frequently a passer-by would comment on the remembered "old Carnegie."

A database had been set up with basic information from Bobinski and Lewis. That format, too, was revised several times to accommodate the nature and amount of information received; it includes all of the 144 Carnegies (142 public and two academic). All responses were double checked and supplemented as appropriate from Bobinski, Anderson, Held, News Notes of California Libraries, the Betty Lewis file, and Musmann. The latter resource provided more detailed information about the formation of those libraries where women had played a key role:

Victoria Musmann, "Women and the Founding of Social Libraries in California 1859-1910," Ph.D. dissertation, USC, 1982. Ms. Musmann conducted a detailed study of the role of women in the founding of libraries, finding that in many cases the role of women was more substantial than had been credited by Held. Although her sample seemed unnecessarily small, she presented well documented evidence in those cases which she did study.

When considering the building styles, Van Slyck's work was especially helpful:

Abigail A. Van Slyck, "Free to All: Carnegie Libraries and the Transformation of American Culture, 1886-1917," Ph.D. dissertation, UC Berkeley, 1989. Van Slyck's thesis deals in large part with Carnegie and his relationship to significant issues of the time including those of philanthropy, the role of women, and labor and reform movements. She selected ten libraries nationwide as examples. California libraries treated at some length were *Oakland as an example of branch site selection, and Calexico for its cultural center plan*. She also analyzed Carnegie library architecture, selecting eighty-five for more detailed study. As discussed in Section F, she found that they fell into four main categories, and she considered their occurrence in the earlier and later (post Bertram review) periods.

Both the historical importance and the architecture were considered in evaluating the merits of the Carnegie buildings. It is the intent of this paper to establish that all of the Carnegie buildings are important in terms of their social history as libraries established over time within their communities, for which buildings were provided through the philanthropic program of Andrew Carnegie. Monumental in style if not in size, generally exhibiting a high level of craftsmanship, often located in the heart of the old town, they testify to the early community's pride in its library. In many communities the Carnegie building is a unique example of its style. Though there is a preponderance of Classical Revival in its various manifestations, the buildings are diverse in their application of it, as well as in the choice of materials and in their siting. Even with the similarity of some of the Weeks' pedimented "Greek temples," it is safe to say that each can be recognized individually. Today the community

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   G   Page   6  

---

demonstrates that pride by its continuing commitment to preserve the building and to find innovative future use if its library function cannot be maintained.

### III. SELECTION

Selection for National Register nomination was necessarily made prior to study of all of the extant Carnegie buildings. Ten were identified which appeared to demonstrate the diversity of the property type in terms of architectural style, architect, cost, building materials, date of construction, geographical location, individual community and library social history, alterations and additions, and current use. Only a few of those that seem obviously eligible are among the ten nominated, because the primary consideration was not preeminence but, rather, representativeness.

### IV. FUTURE STUDY

Carnegie library buildings merit much more intensive study than was possible within this project. Some information is lacking entirely and some disparities remain unresolved, providing local history projects for many of the communities. Of particular future importance are the study now contemplated by Dr. Bobinski, and the engineering studies now being reactivated by the State following the October 1989 earthquake.

Dr. Bobinski wrote an article in Wilson Library Bulletin (May 1988) suggesting that the 100th anniversary of Carnegie library philanthropy be celebrated by a national campaign to identify and preserve at least one unaltered Carnegie and to make it a museum dedicated to the public libraries of the United States. This was a goal for 1989, one hundred years after the first Carnegie library opened in Braddock, Pennsylvania (the first one funded, Allegheny, did not open until 1890). Dr. Bobinski hoped to bring together a national conference to this end, but funding was insufficient; he now hopes to conduct a survey to update the information from his 1967 study.

The threat of earthquake has been a dominant one in the history of Carnegie libraries, and is probably one of the most often cited reasons for the abandonment of many Carnegies lost in the middle part of this century. Since the recent earthquake, efforts have been renewed to complete a statewide survey of unreinforced masonry buildings that was mandated in 1986. Many Carnegies may be facing very high costs of rehabilitation, in competition for funds with other buildings.

In terms of local history research, some areas for further study include expanded information about the architect, names of builder and craftsmen, the actual cost of the building, and sources

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   6   Page   7  

---

of additional funding. The amount of Carnegie funding was reported variously in different sources, including occasions when additional funding was requested to compensate for earthquake damage, when funds were granted several years later for an addition, or when funds for branches were comingled. Bobinski and Anderson generally but not always used a total figure without identifying the specific uses for which additional money was granted; the Correspondence is not always complete or legible, and libraries frequently rely on Bobinski for their information. Held's Appendix B notes come closest for accounting for subsequent library requests and needs.

Dates of the "earliest library" for a city may vary according to definition or to sources. In this study, the "early library" date was generally the earliest found, even if it proved to be transitory or intermittent. Also noted are later, more permanent attempts and then the assumption by the city of library responsibility. Held does not generally attribute later public library development in a municipality to the early community reading rooms and social libraries that may have flourished there in the past. The transient nature of the reading rooms, the multiplicity of their reasons for existence, and the frequent lack of documentation, make such attribution tenuous. However when it has been possible to locate sufficient records, newspaper articles, and reminiscences in a given community, a continuity of membership and even successive transfer of the book collection from old library to new, may be documented.

Railroad and company libraries were most often located in smaller towns and the subject was not pursued here, but at least one railroad library is still standing in Tulare (now used as a women's clubhouse) while the Carnegie that succeeded it is long gone. The role of women, as club women, librarians, and trustees, also merits further study, as do State and County libraries. Generally ignored in this study were library hours, size of collection, library fees and rules, available for many libraries in the News Notes. Also omitted are details of library financing as it related to the legal aspects California city incorporation at various levels and through time.

In respect to further study, two other resources should be noted, although they were not particularly helpful to this study of California's Carnegies. Preservation News of August 1985 referred to a California State University exploration of social and architectural aspects of Carnegie libraries, and named the project director, Constance Glenn. Eventually I located Dr. Glenn at CSU Long Beach, where she is director of the University Art Museum. Her survey had been nationwide; she requested copies of early photographs, inquired as to the architect and existence of plans, whether there had been an architectural competition, and how the building was now used. Response had been slight and the project had been put on a back burner, but she invited me to review her files. The numbers nationwide would probably constitute an interesting sample. However, the approximately 39% response from California, said to be higher than from other states, contained little that the survey had not already obtained. Auburn,



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   G   Page   8  

---

Beaumont, and Chula Vista indicated there had been a competition; Alturas, Beaumont, Calexico, Chula Vista, Gilroy, Glendale, Imperial, Lakeport and Roseville indicated that they had plans.

Also in 1985, Architectural Record carried an article by Timothy Rub entitled "'The day of big operations': Andrew Carnegie and his libraries." Reference was made to an exhibition at the Cooper-Hewitt Museum, with Rub as curator, on the "social and architectural implications of Carnegie's patronage." Apparently no catalog was prepared for the exhibit, and I was able to obtain only a copy of the press release and, eventually, a check list of the items on exhibit and xerox copies of photographs made of the exhibit. California Carnegies represented were Azusa, with a watercolor, pencil and colored pencil elevation study, and Oakland Main, Oakland 23rd Street Branch, and Riverside with photographs. This exhibit or a version of it has been mounted as a SITES (Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service) exhibit, still available to libraries and museums for four-week periods for \$800.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES

Section number   H   Page   1  

---

## MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Anderson, Florence. Carnegie Corporation Library Program 1911-1961. New York: Carnegie Corporation of New York, 1963.

Bobinski, George S. Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development. Chicago: American Library Association, 1969.

Carnegie Corporation, files of correspondence between Carnegie representatives and those writing in behalf of the communities seeking Carnegie grants. Carnegie Corporation, New York.

Eddy, Harriet. County Free Library Organizing in California, 1909-1918. Berkeley: California Library Association, 1955.

Held, Ray E. The Rise of the Public Library in California. Chicago: American Library Association, 1973.

Held, Ray E. Public Libraries in California, 1849-1878. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963.

Kimball, Jane. Collection of slides of many of the extant Carnegie library buildings.

Lewis, Betty. Unpublished research regarding Carnegie Libraries, including collection of historic postcards.

Musmann, Victoria Kline. "Women and the Founding of Social Libraries in California, 1859-1910." Ph.D. diss., University of Southern California, 1982.

Van Slyck, Abigail A. "Free to All: Carnegie Libraries and the Transformation of American Culture 1877-1917." Ph.D. diss., University of California at Berkeley, 1989.

Whiffen, Marcus. American Architecture Since 1780: A Guide to the Styles. Cambridge MA: The MIT Press, 1969.

**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**APPENDIX D**

Designation Report for Landmark 234 – Mission Branch, 300 Bartlett Street, constructed 1915, architect Albert Landsburgh



FILE NO.

ORDINANCE NO.

RECEIVED

JAN 09 2002

CITY & COUNTY OF S.F.  
DEPT. OF CITY PLANNING  
ADMINISTRATION

1 [Ordinance to Designate the Carnegie Mission Branch Library At 300 Bartlett Street As a  
2 Landmark Under Planning Code Article 10.]

3 **Ordinance Designating 300 Bartlett Street, The Carnegie Mission Branch Library, As**  
4 **Landmark No. 234 Pursuant To Article 10, Sections 1004 And 1004.4 Of The Planning**  
5 **Code.**

6 Note: Additions are single-underline italics Times New Roman;  
7 deletions are ~~strikethrough italics Times New Roman~~.  
8 Board amendment additions are double underlined.  
9 Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough normal~~.

10 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

11 Section 1. Findings:

12 The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 300 Bartlett Street, the Carnegie Mission  
13 Branch Library, Lot 1 in Assessor's Block 6515, has a special character and special historical,  
14 architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a Landmark will  
15 further the purposes of, and conform to the standards set forth in Article 10 of the City  
16 Planning Code.

17 (a) Designation: Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code, 300 Bartlett  
18 Street, the Carnegie Mission Branch Library, is hereby designated as Landmark No. 234.  
19 This designation has been fully approved by Resolution No. 535 of the Landmarks  
20 Preservation Advisory Board and Resolution No. 16210 of the Planning Commission, which  
21 Resolutions are on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No. \_\_\_\_\_  
22 and which Resolutions are incorporated herein and made part hereof as though fully set forth.

23 (b) Priority Policy Findings.

24 Pursuant to Section 101.1 of the Planning Code, the Board of Supervisors makes the  
25 following findings:

1 (1) The designation is in conformity with the Priority Policies of Planning Code  
2 Section 101.1 and with the General Plan as set forth in the letter dated January 7, 2002 from  
3 the Director of Planning. Such letter is on file with the Clerk of the Board in File No.  
4 \_\_\_\_\_

5 (2) The Board of Supervisors finds that this ordinance is in conformity with the  
6 Priority Policies of Section 101.1 of the Planning Code and with the General Plan, and hereby  
7 adopts the findings set forth in the letter dated January 7, 2002 from the Director of Planning  
8 and incorporates such findings by reference as if fully set forth herein.

9 (c) Required Data:

10 (1) The description, location and boundary of the Landmark site is Lot 1 in  
11 Assessor's Block 6515.

12 (2) The characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation are described  
13 and shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation  
14 Advisory Board on June 20, 2001 and other supporting materials contained in Planning  
15 Department Docket No. 2001.564L. In brief the characteristics of the landmark which justify  
16 its designation are as follows:

17 (a) Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the  
18 period of significance, particularly with the contesting of political and cultural power between  
19 working class based groups and middle class based Progressives.

20 (b) Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur  
21 used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and  
22 immigrant populations.

23 (c) Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library  
24 building, especially those delineated in "Notes of the Erection of Library Buildings".  
25

1 (3) That the particular exterior features that should be preserved, or replaced in-kind  
2 as determined necessary, are those generally shown in the photographs and described in the  
3 Landmark Designation Report, both which can be found in the case docket 2001.564L which  
4 is incorporated in this designation ordinance as though fully set forth. In brief, the description  
5 of the particular features that should be preserved are as follows:

- 6 (a) Exterior composition and materials.  
7 (b) The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.  
8 (c) The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.  
9

10 Section 2. The property shall be subject to following further controls and procedures,  
11 pursuant to this Board of Supervisor's Ordinance and Planning Code Article 10.  
12

13 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
14 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

RECOMMENDED:  
PLANNING COMMISSION

15 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
16 Sarah Ellen Owsowitz  
17 Deputy City Attorney

15 By:   
16 Gerald G. Green  
17 Director of Planning

SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION NO. 16210

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE APPROVAL OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF SUCH DESIGNATION OF 300 BARTLETT STREET, THE CARNEGIE MISSION BRANCH LIBRARY, ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 6515, LOT 1, AS LANDMARK NO. 234.**

1. **WHEREAS**, on June 2, 1999, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) established its Landmark Designation Work Program for fiscal year 1999-2000. Planning Department staff prepared Landmark Designation Reports for each of the eight sites chosen for the Landmark Designation Work Program. All eight sites were to be brought to the Landmarks Board for review, comment, and consideration of initiation of landmark designation. Included among the sites was the Carnegie Mission Branch Library, 300 Bartlett Street (also 3375 24<sup>th</sup> Street), Assessor's Block 6515, Lot 1; and
2. The Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the Context Statement, *Origins of the Seven San Francisco Carnegie Branch Libraries, 1901-1921*, on June 20, 2001 and directed that it be placed in the Landmarks Preservation Library. Included in the seven branch libraries was the Carnegie Mission Branch Library, 300 Bartlett Street (also 3375 24<sup>th</sup> Street), Assessor's Block 6515, Lot 1; and
3. The Landmarks Board, at its regular meeting of June 20, 2001, reviewed a draft the Carnegie Mission Branch Library Landmark Designation Report for 300 Bartlett Street prepared by Tim Kelley. The Landmarks Board considered the report to be a final Carnegie Mission Branch Library Landmark Designation Report; and
4. At its regular meeting of June 20, 2001, the Landmarks Board found that the Carnegie Mission Branch Library Landmark Designation Report described the location and boundaries of the landmark site, described the characteristics of the landmark which justifies its designations, and described the particular features that should be preserved and therefore meets the requirements of Planning Code Section 1004(b) and 1004(c)(1), such Designation Report is fully incorporated by reference into this resolution; and
5. At its regular meeting of June 20, 2001, the Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the description, location and boundary of the Landmark site as 300 Bartlett Street, encompassing all of and limited to Lot 1 in Assessor's Block 6515; and
6. The Landmarks Board, in considering the proposed landmark designation employed the National Register Criteria and found that the Carnegie Mission Branch Library is significant under Criterion A (associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history) and C (embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose

## PLANNING COMMISSION

Case No. 2001.564L  
Carnegie Mission Branch Library  
Assessor's Block 6515, Lot 1  
Resolution No. 16210  
Page 2

- components may lack individual distinction); and
7. At its regular meeting of June 20, 2001, the Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the following description of the characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation:
    - (a) Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives.
    - (b) Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations.
    - (c) Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "Notes of the Erection of Library Buildings".
  8. At its regular meeting of June 20, 2001, the Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the following particular features that should be preserved:
    - a) Exterior composition and materials.
    - b) The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
    - c) The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.
  9. The Landmarks Board reviewed documents, correspondence and oral testimony on matters relevant to the proposed landmark designation, at the duly noticed public hearing held on June 20, 2001; and
  10. At the same June 20, 2001 hearing, the Landmarks Board recommended that the Planning Commission approve the landmark designation of 300 Bartlett Street, the Carnegie Mission Branch Library, Assessor's Block 6515, Lot 1 as Landmark No. 234, pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code; and
  11. At the same June 20, 2001 hearing, the Landmarks Board directed its Recording Secretary to transmit Landmarks Board Resolution No. 535, The Carnegie Mission Branch Library Landmark Designation Report and other pertinent materials in the case file 2000.564L to the Planning Commission; and
  12. The Planning Commission reviewed the case file (No. 2000.564L) and considered the findings and recommendation of the Landmarks Board set forth in the Landmarks Board Resolution No. 535, and held a duly noticed public hearing on the matter on August 23, 2001;
  13. THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, First, That the Planning Commission does hereby concur with the findings and recommendation of the Landmarks Board and **APPROVES** the landmark designation of the property at 300 Bartlett Street, known as the Carnegie Mission Branch Library, in Assessor's Block 6515, Lot 1, as Landmark No. 234;



**PLANNING COMMISSION**

Case No. 2001.564L  
Carnegie Mission Branch Library  
Assessor's Block 6515, Lot 1  
Resolution No. 16210  
Page 3

14. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value of the landmark is set forth in the adopted the Carnegie Mission Branch Library Designation Report, Landmarks Board Resolution No. 535 and other materials on file in the Planning Department Docket No. 2000.564L, which is incorporated herein and made a part of thereof as though fully set forth;
15. AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Planning Commission hereby directs its Secretary to transmit the adopted the Carnegie Mission Branch Library Designation Report, the photographs and other pertinent materials in the Case File No. 2000.564L, and a copy of this Resolution of Approval to the Board of Supervisors for appropriate action.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Planning Commission on August 23, 2001.

Linda D. Avery  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Baltimore, Chinchilla, Joe, Lim, Theoharis and Salinas

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Fay

ADOPTED: August 23, 2001

DATE:

CASE NO.:

PAGE 1

APPROVED:

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:

APPROVED:

PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.:

**HISTORIC NAME:** Mission Branch**POPULAR NAME:** same**ADDRESS:** 300 Bartlett Street, SW corner of 24th St.**BLOCK & LOT:** 6515-001**OWNER:** San Francisco Public Library  
Civic Center  
San Francisco, CA 94102**ORIGINAL USE:** Public branch library**CURRENT USE:** Public branch library**ZONING:** "P"**National Register Criterion (a)**

- (A)  Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- (B)  Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- (C)  Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- (D)  Has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

\* **Period of Significance:** 1915-present

\* **Integrity:** The building presently retains reasonable integrity. Recent seismic work and alterations have resulted in the loss of the historic main stairway and conversion of the historic main entrance to a fire exit, as well as changes to the fabric of the Main Reading Room.

**Article 10 Requirements—Section 1004 (b)**

\* **Boundaries of the Landmark Site**

The boundaries of the Landmark Site are the footprint of the building and its small lot.

\* **Characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation**

1. Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives.
2. Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations.
3. Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings".

\* **Description of the Particular features that should be preserved**

1. Exterior composition and materials.
2. The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
3. The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.

## DESCRIPTION

Combining elements of Italian Renaissance and Spanish Eclectic styles, the Mission Branch Library is rectangular in plan, fully occupying its small lot, one story over a grade level basement, with a tiled, overhanging hipped roof. There are no major projections or recesses in the main mass. It is steel framed concrete construction, clad in cream colored glazed terra cotta.

The main elements of the symmetrical composition are large, recessed arched windows on the upper level, five on the front facade and two on each of the sides. Each has a monumental arched surround, and is divided by muntins into two concentric arches. Each is also divided in two horizontally, at the spring of the arch. Beneath each window, contained within the arched surround, is a terra cotta plaque inscribed with the names of famous authors. The plaques are topped with broken pediments. On the ground floor, beneath each upper window bay, are smaller, paired rectangular windows. There is a dentilated cornice with frieze under the overhanging roof, a belt cornice marks the upper floor level, and a plinth defines the base.

Polychrome glazed terra cotta is used for ornament, which consists of the arched window surrounds, with a garland motif interspersed with open books; the pedimented authors plaques; and the cornices. The historic main entrance, now used as an emergency exit, is centrally located on the 24th Street facade, and is flanked by pilasters and surmounted by a shallow bracketed portico. Atop the portico is a sculpted group of two figures and an open book, by Leo Lentelli. The frieze on the 24th Street facade is inscribed "MISSION BRANCH OF THE SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY".

The lower level windows are unadorned, but for iron grilles. Ornamental grillwork is also present in the transom for the historic main entrance. The original double main entrance doors also featured grillwork over glass. The new main entrance on Bartlett Street, formerly an entrance to the children's and community meeting rooms, is unornamented.

Recent alterations have resulted in the loss of the main stairway which formerly led from the 24th Street entrance up to the center of the main reading room. This stairway no longer exists. Instead, entry is in to a small lobby off Bartlett Street, which connects to a shallow new addition at the rear of the historic building. Contained in this addition are an elevator and stairway leading to a small rear entrance to the main reading room, which occupies most of the upper floor.

Most of the historic fabric of the high ceilinged main reading room is intact. The historic stairwell has been floored over. The ceiling has a central underpitched vault intersected by side vaults at each window bay, with ornamented spandrels between. Peripheral shelving beneath the windows has been supplemented with high, free standing shelves. Much of the original woodwork has survived.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### CRITERION A: SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC PATTERNS

The Mission Branch Library was the second of seven branch buildings financed by a Carnegie grant. The grant itself was the subject of

twelve years of intense political and class conflict in San Francisco. This branch was constructed in the populous, well established Mission neighborhood, which had been the site of the earliest branch library (in rented space). By providing easy access to published works for neighborhood residents, the building expresses the national and local ascendancy of Progressive political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries.

#### CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Mission Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The prominent windows, chief compositional elements, impart an orderly rhythm to the design from the exterior, while inside they enshrine the books and create a site for acculturation. The historic entry path was carefully controlled, with the transition from the street, through the small constricted vestibule upwards to the grand, high ceilinged main reading room conveying a sense of intellectual and civic rebirth. Although recent alterations have redefined this entry sequence, enough of the historic fabric remains to recapture its intent.

#### REFERENCES:

Bean, Walton. *Boss Ruef's San Francisco*. U.C. Press. 1952

Board of Supervisors. *San Francisco Municipal Reports*. various years 1900 to 1925

Cahill, B. J. S. "The San Francisco Public Library Competition". *The Architect and Engineer of California*. May 1914.

Cahill, B. J. S. "The Work of Bliss & Faville" *The Architect and Engineer of California*. Jan 1914

Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University

Carnegie Corporation of New York, website, "Andrew Carnegie's Legacy"

Corbett, Michael R. & The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. *Splendid Survivors; San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*. San Francisco. California Living Books. 1979

Faville, W. B., F. A. I. A. "Phases of Panama-Pacific International Exposition Architecture" *The American Architect*. January 6, 1915

The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. "The Bay Region Styles: 1890-1930; Ernest Coxhead and the Regional Scene: The Transformation Game & Other Delights". (typescript, no date or author)

The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. "Libraries Reflect the City's Values". *Heritage Newsletter*, vol XVI, No. 4. uncredited author Donald Andreini

Issel, William and Robert W. Cherny. *San Francisco 1865-1932; Politics, Power, and Urban Development*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press. 1986

Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America, a Public Legacy*. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press; New York : John Wiley, 1997.

Kahn, Judd. *Imperial San Francisco; Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897-1906*. Lincoln, NB, University of Nebraska Press. 1979

Kazin, Michael. *Barons of Labor*. University of Illinois Press. Urbana and Chicago. 1987

Kelley, Tim. "Origins of the Seven San Francisco Carnegie Branch Libraries, 1901-1921" Context Statement. Planning Department. January, 2001

Kortum, Lucy Deam. "Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture It Produced, 1899-1921". M.A. Thesis, Sonoma State University, 1990

Longstreth, Richard W. *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century*. New York. Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press. 1983

Morrow, Irving F. "Work by John Reid, Jr., A. I. A." *The Architect and Engineer*. February 1920

Stern, Norton B. & William M. Kramer. "G. Albert Lansburgh, San Francisco's Jewish Architect from Panama"

**RATINGS:** 1976 Citywide Survey "3"

**PREPARED BY:** Tim Kelley  
San Francisco Landmarks Board  
1660 Mission Street, SF, CA

**ADDRESS:**

**Attachments:**  523A  523B  523L (continuation sheets)  Context Statement  Other...

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI# \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 4 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Mission Branch Library

P1. Other Identifier:

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

\*a. County San Francisco and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad na Date \_\_\_\_\_ T \_\_\_\_\_; R \_\_\_\_\_; 1/4 of 1/4 of Sec \_\_\_\_\_; B.M.

c. Address 300 Bartlett Street, SW corner City San Francisco Zip 94110

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone \_\_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_\_ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Block

\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 6515, lot

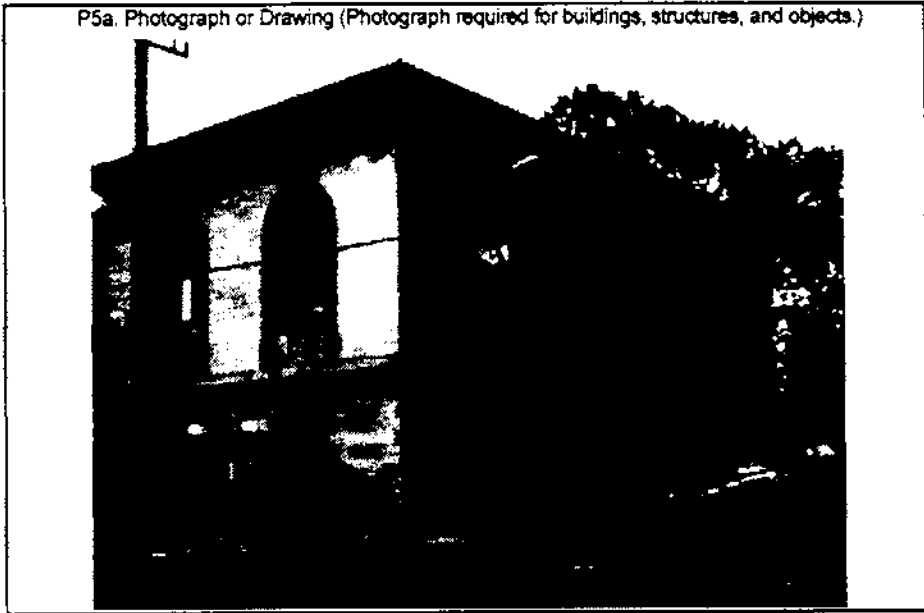
Combining elements of Italian Renaissance and Spanish Eclectic styles, the Mission Branch Library is rectangular in plan, fully occupying its small lot, one story over a grade level basement, with a tiled, overhanging hipped roof. There are no major projections or recesses in the main mass. It is steel framed concrete construction, clad in cream colored glazed terra cotta.

The main elements of the symmetrical composition are large, recessed arched windows on the upper level, five on the front facade and two on each of the sides.  
(continued)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP14 Govt. Building; HP13 Community Center;

\*P4. Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #)

NE corner, new main entrance, 5/30/99

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and

Source:  Historic  Prehistoric  Both

1915, San Francisco Public Library Trustees Report

\*P7. Owner and Address:

San Francisco Public Library  
Civic Center  
San Francisco, CA 94102

\*P8. Recorded by:

(Name, affiliation, and address)

Tim Kelley  
San Francisco Landmarks Board  
1660 Mission Street, SE, CA

\*P9. Date Recorded: 12/1/00

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) Thematic Landmark Nomination

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

\*Attachments:  NONE  Location Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure & Object  
 Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  
 Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (List):

State of California - The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_

HRI # \_\_\_\_\_

\*NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Page 2 of 4 \*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Mission Branch Library

B1. Historic Name: Mission Branch

B2. Common Name: same

B3. Original Use: Public branch library

B4. Present Use: Public branch library

\*B5. Architectural Style: Italian Renaissance, Spanish Eclectic

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Built 1915, Children's room added 1923, main entrance altered, stairway removed 1998

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: G. Albert Lansburgh b. Builder: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B10. Significance: Theme Cultural History, Library Area: San Francisco

Period of Significance: 1915-present Property Type: Branch Library Applicable Criteria: A, C

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

CRITERION A: SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC PATTERNS

The Mission Branch Library was the second of seven branch buildings financed by a Carnegie grant. The grant itself was the subject of twelve years of intense political and class conflict in San Francisco. This branch was constructed in the populous, well established Mission neighborhood, which had been the site of the earliest branch library (in rented space). By providing easy access to published works for neighborhood residents, the building expresses the national and local ascendancy of Progressive political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries. (continued)

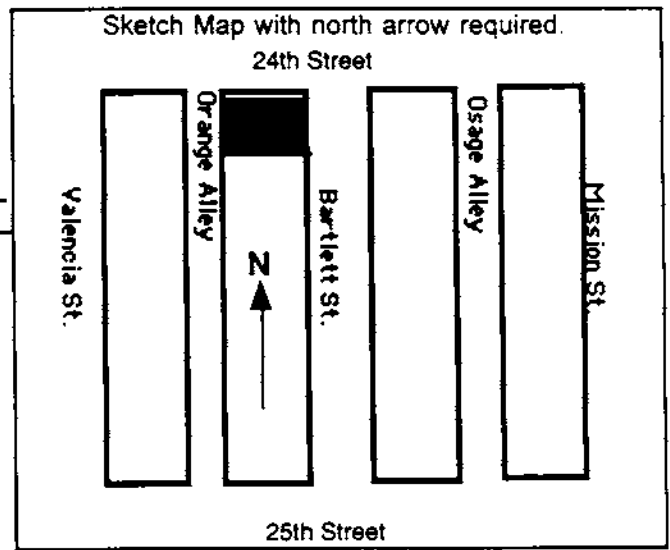
B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP14 Govt. Building; HP13 Community Center; HP39 Other

\*B12. References: See continuation sheet, page 4

B13. Remarks:

\*B14. Evaluator: San Francisco Landmarks Board

\*Date of Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_  
( This space reserved for official comments)



Page 3 of 4

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Mission Branch Library

Recorded by: Tim Kelley

Date: 12/1/00

Continuation

Update

**P3a. Description:** (continued)

Each has a monumental arched surround, and is divided by muntins into two concentric arches. Each is also divided in two horizontally, at the spring of the arch. Beneath each window, contained within the arched surround, is a terra cotta plaque inscribed with the names of famous authors. The plaques are topped with broken pediments. On the ground floor, beneath each upper window bay, are smaller, paired rectangular windows.

There is a dentilated cornice with frieze under the overhanging roof, a belt cornice marks the upper floor level, and a plinth defines the base.

Polychrome glazed terra cotta is used for ornament, which consists of the arched window surrounds, with a garland motif interspersed with open books; the pedimented authors plaques; and the cornices. The historic main entrance, now used as an emergency exit, is centrally located on the 24th Street facade, and is flanked by pilasters and surmounted by a shallow bracketed portico. Atop the portico is a sculpted group of two figures and an open book, by Leo Lentelli. The frieze on the 24th Street facade is inscribed "MISSION BRANCH OF THE SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY".

The lower level windows are unadorned, but for iron grilles. Ornamental grillwork is also present in the transom for the historic main entrance. The original double main entrance doors also featured grillwork over glass. The new main entrance on Bartlett Street, formerly an entrance to the children's and community meeting rooms, is unornamented.

Recent alterations have resulted in the loss of the main stairway which formerly led from the 24th Street entrance up to the center of the main reading room. This stairway no longer exists. Instead, entry is in to a small lobby off Bartlett Street, which connects to a shallow new addition at the rear of the historic building. Contained in this addition are an elevator and stairway leading to a small rear entrance to the main reading room, which occupies most of the upper floor.

Most of the historic fabric of the high ceilinged main reading room is intact. The historic stairwell has been floored over. The ceiling has a central underpitched vault intersected by side vaults at each window bay, with ornamented spandrels between. Peripheral shelving beneath the windows has been supplemented with high, free standing shelves. Much of the original woodwork has survived, including the doorway to staff space behind the librarian's desk, with a broken pediment enclosing a clock.

**B10. Significance:** (continued)

It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.

**CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES**

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Mission Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The prominent windows, chief compositional elements, impart an orderly rhythm to the design from the exterior, while inside they enshrine the books and create a site for acculturation. The historic entry path was carefully controlled, with the transition from the street, through the small constricted vestibule upwards to the grand, high ceilinged main reading room conveying a sense of intellectual and civic rebirth. Although recent alterations have redefined this entry sequence, enough of the historic fabric remains to recapture its intent.



**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**APPENDIX E**

Designation Report for Landmark 235 – Chinatown Branch, 1135 Powell Street, constructed 1921, architect Albert Landsburgh.



AS AMENDED IN COMMITTEE  
4/4/02

FILE NO. 020196

ORDINANCE NO. 60-02

[Ordinance to Designate the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library At 1135 Powell Street As a Landmark Under Planning Code Article 10.]

**Ordinance Designating 1135 Powell Street, The Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library, As Landmark No. 235 Pursuant To Article 10, Sections 1004 And 1004.4 Of The Planning Code.**

Note: Additions are single-underline italics Times New Roman;  
deletions are ~~strikethrough italics Times New Roman~~.  
Board amendment additions are double underlined.  
Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough normal~~.

Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

Section 1. Findings:

The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 1135 Powell Street, the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library, Lot 4 in Assessor's Block 191, has a special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a Landmark will further the purposes of, and conform to the standards set forth in Article 10 of the City Planning Code.

(a) Designation: Pursuant to Section 1004 of the Planning Code, 1135 Powell Street, the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library, is hereby designated as Landmark No. 235. This designation has been fully approved by Resolution No. 536 of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and Resolution No. 16211 of the Planning Commission, which Resolutions are on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No. 020196 and which Resolutions are incorporated herein and made part hereof as though fully set forth.

(b) Priority Policy Findings.

Pursuant to Section 101.1 of the Planning Code, the Board of Supervisors makes the following findings:

1 (1) The designation is in conformity with the Priority Policies of Planning Code  
 2 Section 101.1 and with the General Plan as set forth in the letter dated January 10, 2002 from  
 3 the Director of Planning. Such letter is on file with the Clerk of the Board in File No.  
 4 020196.

5 (2) The Board of Supervisors finds that this ordinance is in conformity with the  
 6 Priority Policies of Section 101.1 of the Planning Code and with the General Plan, and hereby  
 7 adopts the findings set forth in the letter dated January 10, 2002 from the Director of Planning  
 8 and incorporates such findings by reference as if fully set forth herein.

9 (c) Required Data:

10 (1) The description, location and boundary of the Landmark site is Lot 4, in  
 11 Assessor's Block 191.

12 (2) The characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation are described  
 13 and shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation  
 14 Advisory Board on June 20, 2001 and other supporting materials contained in Planning  
 15 Department Docket No. 2000.568L. In brief the characteristics of the landmark which justify  
 16 its designation are as follows:

17 (a) Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the  
 18 period of significance, particularly with the contesting of political and cultural power between  
 19 working class based groups and middle class based Progressives.

20 (b) Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur  
 21 used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and  
 22 immigrant populations.

23 (c) Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library  
 24 building, especially those delineated in "Notes of the Erection of Library Buildings".  
 25


1 (3) That the particular exterior features that should be preserved, or replaced in-kind  
2 as determined necessary, are those generally shown in the photographs and described in the  
3 Landmark Designation Report, both which can be found in the case docket 2000.568L which  
4 is incorporated in this designation ordinance as though fully set forth. In brief, the description  
5 of the particular features that should be preserved are as follows:

- 6 (a) Exterior composition and materials.
- 7 (b) The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
- 8 (c) The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.

9  
10  
11 Section 2. The property shall be subject to <sup>the</sup> ~~following further~~ controls and procedures,  
pursuant to this Board of Supervisor's Ordinance and Planning Code Article 10.

12  
13 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
14 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

RECOMMENDED:  
PLANNING COMMISSION

15 By:   
16 Sarah Ellen Owsowitz  
Deputy City Attorney

15 By:   
16 Gerald G. Green  
Director of Planning



City and County of San Francisco  
Tails  
Ordinance

City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

File Number: 020196

Date Passed:

Ordinance Designating 1135 Powell Street, The Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library, as Landmark No. 235 pursuant to Article 10, Sections 1004 and 1004.4 of the Planning Code.

April 15, 2002 Board of Supervisors — PASSED ON FIRST READING

Ayes: 11 - Ammiano, Daly, Gonzalez, Hall, Leno, Maxwell, McGoldrick,  
Newsom, Peskin, Sandoval, Yee

April 22, 2002 Board of Supervisors — FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 9 - Ammiano, Daly, Gonzalez, Hall, Leno, Maxwell, McGoldrick, Peskin,  
Sandoval

Absent: 2 - Newsom, Yee

SAN FRANCISCO

PLANNING COMMISSION

RESOLUTION NO. 16211

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE APPROVAL OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION AND RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF SUCH DESIGNATION OF 1135 POWELL STREET, THE CARNEGIE CHINATOWN BRANCH LIBRARY, ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 191, LOT 4, AS LANDMARK NO. 235.**

1. **WHEREAS**, on June 2, 1999, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) established its Landmark Designation Work Program for fiscal year 1999-2000. Planning Department staff prepared Landmark Designation Reports for each of the eight sites chosen for the Landmark Designation Work Program. All eight sites were to be brought to the Landmarks Board for review, comment, and consideration of initiation of landmark designation. Included among the sites was the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library, 1135 Powell Street, Assessor's Block 191, Lot 4; and
2. The Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the Context Statement, *Origins of the Seven San Francisco Carnegie Branch Libraries, 1901-1921*, on June 20, 2001 and directed that it be placed in the Landmarks Preservation Library. Included in the seven branch libraries was the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library, 1135 Powell Street, Assessor's Block 191, Lot 4; and
3. The Landmarks Board, at its regular meeting of June 20, 2001, reviewed a draft the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library Landmark Designation Report for 1135 Powell Street prepared by Tim Kelley. The Landmarks Board considered the report to be a final Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library Landmark Designation Report; and
4. At its regular meeting of June 20, 2001, the Landmarks Board found that the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library Landmark Designation Report describes the location and boundaries of the landmark site, describes the characteristics of the landmark which justifies its designations, and describes the particular features that should be preserved and therefore meets the requirements of Planning Code Sections 1004(b) and 1004(c)(1). That Designation Report is fully incorporated by reference into this resolution; and
5. At its regular meeting of June 20, 2001, the Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the description, location and boundary of the Landmark site as 1135 Powell Street, encompassing all of and limited to Lot 4 in Assessor's Block 191; and
6. The Landmarks Board, in considering the proposed landmark designation employed the National Register Criteria and found that the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library is significant under Criterion A (associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history) and C (embodies distinctive characteristics

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

Case No. 2001.568L  
Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library  
Assessor's Block 191, Lot 4  
Resolution No. 16211  
Page 2

- of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction); and
7. At its regular meeting of June 20, 2001, the Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the following description of the characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation:
    - a) Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives.
    - b) Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations.
    - c) Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "Notes of the Erection of Library Buildings".
  8. At its regular meeting of June 20, 2001, the Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the following particular features that should be preserved:
    - a) Exterior composition and materials.
    - b) The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
    - c) The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.
  9. The Landmarks Board reviewed documents, correspondence and oral testimony on matters relevant to the proposed landmark designation, at a duly noticed public hearing held on June 20, 2001.
  10. The Planning Commission reviewed the case file (No. 2000.568L) and considered the findings and recommendation of the Landmarks Board set forth in the Landmarks Board Resolution No. 536, and held a duly noticed public hearing on the matter on August 23, 2001;
  11. **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, First, That the Planning Commission does hereby concur with the findings and recommendation of the Landmarks Board and **APPROVES** the landmark designation of the property at 1135 Powell Street, known as the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library, in Assessor's Block 191, Lot 4, as Landmark No. 235;
  12. **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value of the landmark is set forth in the adopted the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library Designation Report, Landmarks Board Resolution No. 536 and other materials on file in the Planning Department Docket No. 2000.568L, which is incorporated herein and made a part of thereof as though fully set forth;
  13. **AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, That the Planning Commission hereby directs its Secretary to transmit the adopted the Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library Designation Report, the photographs and other pertinent materials in the Case File No. 2000.568L, and a

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

Case No. 2001.568L  
Carnegie Chinatown Branch Library  
Assessor's Block 191, Lot 4  
Resolution No. 16211  
Page 3

copy of this Resolution of Approval to the Board of Supervisors for appropriate action.

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Planning Commission on August 23, 2001.

Linda D. Avery  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Commissioners Baltimore, Chinchilla, Joe, Theoharis and Salinas

NOES: None

ABSENT: Commissioner Fay

ADOPTED: August 23, 2001



DATE:

CASE NO.:

PAGE 1

LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE:

APPROVED:

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:

APPROVED:

PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.:

**HISTORIC NAME:** North Beach Branch**POPULAR NAME:** Chinatown Branch**ADDRESS:** 1135 Powell Street**BLOCK & LOT:** 191-004**OWNER:** San Francisco Public Library  
Civic Center  
San Francisco, CA 94102**ORIGINAL USE:** Public branch library**CURRENT USE:** Public branch library**ZONING:** "P"**National Register Criterion (a)**

- (A)  Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- (B)  Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- (C)  Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- (D)  Has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

- **Period of Significance:** 1921-Present

- **Integrity:** The building presently retains adequate integrity. Recent seismic work and alterations have resulted in changes to the fabric of the Main Reading Room, as well as a large addition to the rear of the building, and alterations in the ground level fenestration.

**Article 10 Requirements—Section 1004 (b)**

- **Boundaries of the Landmark Site**

The boundaries of the Landmark Site are the footprint of the historic building and exterior stairway.

- **Characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation**

1. Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives.

2. Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations.

3. Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "*Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings*".

- **Description of the Particular features that should be preserved**

1. Exterior composition and materials.
2. The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
3. The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.

## DESCRIPTION

Constructed of yellow-brown brick in Flemish Bond, the Chinatown Branch Library is built to the side lot lines and set back slightly from the street to accommodate a prominent exterior double-return switchback stairway that leads from the street to the main floor. The building has one story over a grade level basement, with a flat, parapeted roof.

The symmetrical composition has five bays on the upper level, the center occupied by a double-doored entrance with pilasters and arched pediment. Each side bay contains a pair of single-light vertical arched windows, the pair contained within a larger arch slightly smaller than the central pediment. Two steps up from the street, where the stairs first split, is a central arched entrance, now converted to a window, flanked by an arched window on each side. New grade level entrances have recently been cut at each end of the facade.

Horizontal divisions are marked by a glazed terra cotta cornice, with dentils and frieze, at the roof line; and a belt cornice molding at the main floor level. The upper frieze is inscribed "SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY CHINATOWN BRANCH". This inscription was altered from the historic "...NORTH BEACH BRANCH" in 1958, when a new North Beach branch was constructed. The alteration is still discernible because of differing coloration.

Glazed terra cotta also forms the colonnaded window surrounds, the entrance pilasters and pediment, and the balustrade on the central stairways. Decorative brick work below the large windows forms panels featuring Flemish diamond shapes. A soldier course subtly marks the spring of the five arched openings; and each arch is outlined with stretchers.

The main entry is through a small paneled vestibule into the large main reading room, which occupies nearly the entire floor space of the historic building. Behind it is a large 1992 addition. Prominent diagonal seismic bracing intrudes into the reading room, but is stepped back from the large windows. There is also a modern mezzanine addition in the historic reading room, also stepped back from the windows and wall fabric. A new grade level entrance at the south end of the main facade gives access to an elevator which connects to the main reading room and the mezzanine.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### CRITERION A: SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC PATTERNS

The Chinatown Branch Library, built as the North Beach Branch, was the sixth of seven branch buildings financed by a Carnegie grant. The

grant itself was the subject of twelve years of intense political and class conflict in San Francisco. This branch was constructed in the

densely settled North Beach neighborhood, which was continually referred to by the Library Trustees as the home of "the foreign element." Although the need for a branch building here had been explicitly acknowledged for many years in the annual Trustee reports, it was the next to last constructed. By providing easy access to published works for neighborhood residents, the building expresses the national and local ascendancy of Progressive political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries. It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.

#### CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Chinatown Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The prominent windows, entrance, and stairway impart an orderly rhythm to the design from the exterior. The historic entry path is carefully controlled; with the transition from the street, up the grand stairway and through the small constricted vestibule into the main reading room conveying a sense of intellectual and civic rebirth. The switchback stairway lends even greater ceremonial gravity to the entrance for this branch, which historically has served large numbers of immigrants.

#### REFERENCES:

Bean, Walton. *Boss Ruefs San Francisco*. U.C. Press. 1952

Board of Supervisors. *San Francisco Municipal Reports*. various years 1900 to 1925

Cahill, B. J. S. "The San Francisco Public Library Competition". *The Architect and Engineer of California*. May 1914.

Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University

Carnegie Corporation of New York, website, "Andrew Carnegie's Legacy"

Corbett, Michael R. & The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. *Splendid Survivors; San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*. San Francisco. California Living Books. 1979

The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. "Libraries Reflect the City's Values". *Heritage Newsletter*, vol XVI, No. 4. uncredited author Donald Andreini

Issel, William and Robert W. Chemy. *San Francisco 1865-1932; Politics, Power, and Urban Development*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press. 1986

Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America, a Public Legacy*. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press; New York : John Wiley, 1997.

Kahn, Judd. *Imperial San Francisco; Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897-1906*. Lincoln, NB, University of Nebraska Press. 1979

Kazin, Michael. *Barons of Labor*. University of Illinois Press. Urbana and Chicago. 1987

Kelley, Tim. "Origins of the Seven San Francisco Carnegie Branch Libraries, 1901-1921" Context Statement. Planning Department. January, 2001

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT  
DATE:  
CASE NO.:  
PAGE 4

LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE:  
APPROVED:  
PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:  
APPROVED:  
PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.:

---

Kortum, Lucy Deam. "Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture It Produced, 1899-1921". M.A. Thesis, Sonoma State University, 1990

Longstreth, Richard W. *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century*. New York. Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press. 1983

Stern, Norton B. & William M. Kramer. "G. Albert Lansburgh, San Francisco's Jewish Architect from Panama" *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly*. April-May 1981

Van Slyck, Abigail A. *Free to All, Carnegie Libraries and American Culture: 1890-1920*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1995

**RATINGS:** 1976 Citywide Survey "3"

**PREPARED BY:** Tim Kelley  
San Francisco Landmarks Board  
1660 Mission Street, SF, CA

**ADDRESS:**

**Attachments:**  523A  523B  523L (continuation sheets)  Context Statement  Other...

PRIMARY RECORD

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI# \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 4 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Chinatown Branch Library

P1. Other Identifier:

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

\*a. County San Francisco and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ T \_\_\_\_\_ ; R \_\_\_\_\_ ; 1/4 of 1/4 of Sec \_\_\_\_\_ ; B.M.

c. Address 1135 Powell Street City San Francisco Zip 94108

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone \_\_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_\_ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Block 1311

\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) Lot 4

Constructed of yellow-brown brick in Flemish Bond with flare headers, the Chinatown Branch Library is built to the side lot lines and set back slightly from the street to accommodate a prominent exterior double-return switchback stairway which leads from the street to the main floor. The building has one story over a grade level basement, with a flat, parapeted roof. A modern rear addition more than doubles the main floor area.

The symmetrical composition has five bays on the upper level, the center bay occupied by a double-doored entrance with pilasters and arched pediment. (continued)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP14 Govt. Building; HP13 Community Center;

\*P4. Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #)

Powell Street facade  
3/29/00

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and

Source:  Historic  Prehistoric  
 Both

1921, San Francisco Public Library Trustees Report

\*P7. Owner and Address:  
San Francisco Public Library  
Civic Center  
San Francisco, CA 94102

\*P8. Recorded by:  
(Name, affiliation, and address)  
Tim Kelley  
San Francisco Landmarks Board  
1660 Mission Street, SF, CA

\*P9. Date Recorded: 12/1/00

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) Thematic Landmark Nomination

\*P11. Report Citations: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

\*Attachments:  NONE  Location Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure & Object  
 Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  
 Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (List):

State of California - The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_

HRI # \_\_\_\_\_

\*NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Page 2 of 4 \*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Chinatown Branch Library

B1. Historic Name: North Beach Branch

B2. Common Name: Chinatown Branch

B3. Original Use: Public branch library

B4. Present Use: Public branch library

\*B5. Architectural Style: Italian Renaissance

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Built 1920; Seismic upgrade, ADA work, rear addition & mezzanine added 1992

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features:

B9a. Architect: G. Albert Lansburgh

b. Builder: McLeran & Peterson

\*B10. Significance: Theme Cultural History, Library

Area: San Francisco

Period of Significance: 1921-Present Property Type: Branch Library

Applicable Criteria: A, C

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

CRITERION A: SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC PATTERNS

The Chinatown Branch Library, built as the North Beach Branch, was the sixth of seven branch buildings financed by a Carnegie grant. The grant itself was the subject of twelve years of intense political and class conflict in San Francisco. This branch was constructed in the densely settled North Beach neighborhood, which was continually referred to by the Library Trustees as the home of "the foreign element." Although the need for a branch building here had been explicitly acknowledged for many years in the annual Trustee reports, it was the next to last constructed. (continued)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP14 Govt. Building; HP13 Community Center; HP39 Other

\*B12. References: See continuation sheet, page 4

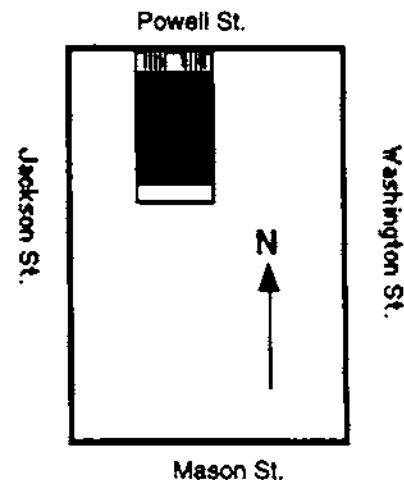
B13. Remarks:

\*B14. Evaluator: San Francisco Landmarks Board

\*Date of Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

(This space reserved for official comments)

Sketch Map with north arrow required.



\*Required Information

**P3a. Description:** (continued)

Each side bay contains a pair of single-light vertical arched windows, the pair contained within a larger arch matching the central pediment. Up two steps from the street, where the stairs first split, is a central arched entrance, now converted to a window, flanked by an arched window on each side. New grade level entrances have recently been cut at each end of the facade.

Horizontal divisions are marked by a glazed terra cotta cornice, with dentils and frieze, at the roof line; and a belt cornice molding at the main floor level. The upper frieze is inscribed "SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY CHINATOWN BRANCH". This inscription was altered from the historic "...NORTH BEACH BRANCH" in 1958, when a new North Beach branch was constructed. The alteration is still discernible because of differing coloration.

Glazed terra cotta also forms the colonnaded window surrounds, the entrance pilasters and pediment, and the balustrade on the central stairways. Decorative brick work below the large windows forms panels featuring Flemish diamond shapes. A soldier course subtly marks the spring of the five arched fenestrations; and each arch is outlined with stretchers.

The main entry is through a small paneled vestibule into the large main reading room, which occupies nearly the entire floor space of the historic building. Behind it is a large 1992 addition. Prominent diagonal seismic bracing intrudes into the reading room, but is stepped back from the large windows. There is also a modern mezzanine addition in the historic reading room, also stepped back from the windows and wall fabric. A new grade level entrance at the south end of the main facade gives access to an elevator which connects to the main reading room and the mezzanine.

**B10. Significance:** (continued)

By providing easy access to published works for neighborhood residents, the building expresses the national and local ascendancy of Progressive political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries. It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.

**CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES**

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Chinatown Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The prominent windows, entrance, and stairway impart an orderly rhythm to the design from the exterior. The historic entry path is carefully controlled; with the transition from the street, up the grand stairway and through the small constricted vestibule into the main reading room conveying a sense of intellectual and civic rebirth. The switchback stairway lends even greater ceremonial gravity to the entrance for this branch, which historically has served large numbers of immigrants.

**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**APPENDIX F**

Designation Report for Landmark 239 – Sunset Branch, 1305 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, constructed 1918, architect Albert Landsburgh.





1 [Ordinance to Designate 1305 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the Carnegie Sunset Library, as a Landmark  
2 Under Planning Code Article 10.]

3 <sup>designating</sup>  
4 **Ordinance 1305 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library as Landmark No. 239**  
5 **Pursuant To Article 10, Sections 1004 And 1004.4 Of The Planning Code.**

6 Note: Additions are single-underline italics Times New Roman;  
7 deletions are ~~strikethrough italics Times New Roman~~.  
8 Board amendment additions are double underlined.  
9 Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough normal~~.

9 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

10 Section 1. Findings

11 The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 1305 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the Carnegie Sunset  
12 Library, Lot 1 in Assessor's Block 1773, has a special character and special historical,  
13 architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a Landmark will  
14 further the purposes of, and conform to the standards set forth in Article 10 of the City  
15 Planning Code.

16 (a) Designation: Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code, 1305 18<sup>th</sup>  
17 Avenue, the Carnegie Sunset Library, is hereby designated as Landmark No. 239. This  
18 designation has been fully approved by Resolution No. 565 of the Landmarks Preservation  
19 Advisory Board and Resolution No. 16712 of the Planning Commission, which Resolutions  
20 are on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No. 040442 and which  
21 Resolutions are incorporated herein and made part hereof as though fully set forth.

22 (b) Priority Policy Findings

23 (1) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, this Board of Supervisors finds that this  
24 ordinance will serve the public necessity, convenience and welfare for the reasons set forth in  
25 Planning Commission Resolution No. 16712 recommending approval of this Planning Code

Supervisors Peskin, McGoldrick, Maxwell, Ma, Gonzalez  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

1 Amendment, and incorporates such reasons by this reference thereto. A copy of said  
2 resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 040442.

3 (2) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 101.1, this Board of Supervisors finds that this  
4 ordinance is in consistent with the Priority Policies of Section 101.1(b) of the Planning Code  
5 and, when effective, with the General Plan as proposed to be amended and hereby adopts  
6 the findings of the Planning Commission, as set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No.  
7 16712, and incorporates said findings by this reference thereto.

8 (c) Required Data:

9 (1) The description, location and boundary of the Landmark site encompass the 1305  
10 the Carnegie Sunset Library at 1305 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which is the footprint of the building.

11 (2) The characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation are described and  
12 shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory  
13 Board on September 3, 2003 and other supporting materials contained in Planning  
14 Department Docket No. 2001.0566L. In brief, the National Register characteristics of the  
15 landmark which justify its designation are as follows:

16 Its association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco, particularly  
17 with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and  
18 middle class based Progressives (National Register Criterion A); its architectural embodiment  
19 of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social  
20 organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations; and its  
21 architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building,  
22 especially those delineated in "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings" (National Register  
23 Criterion C.)


24 (3) The particular exterior features that should be preserved, or replaced in-kind as  
25 determined necessary, are those generally shown in the photographs and described in the

1 Landmark Designation Report, both which can be found in the case docket 2001.0566L,  
2 which is incorporated in this designation ordinance as though fully set forth. In brief, the  
3 description of the particular features that should be preserved are as follows:

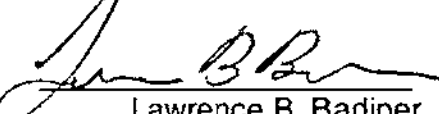
4 The building's exterior composition and materials, the paneled vestibule, the spatial  
5 volume of the Main Reading Room, the ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room and the  
6 glazed and paneled partition between the Main Reading Room and the Children's Room.

7 Section 2. The property shall be subject to further controls and procedures, pursuant  
8 to this Board of Supervisor's Ordinance and Planning Code Article 10.

9  
10 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
11 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

12 By:   
13 Sarah Ellen Owsowitz  
14 Deputy City Attorney

RECOMMENDED:  
PLANNING COMMISSION

15 By:   
16 Lawrence B. Badiner  
17 Director of Planning  
18 ACTING



**City and County of San Francisco**  
**Tails**  
**Ordinance**

City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

**File Number:** 040442

**Date Passed:**

Ordinance designating 1305 18th Avenue, the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library as Landmark No. 239 Pursuant To Article 10, Sections 1004 And 1004.4 Of The Planning Code.

---

May 25, 2004 Board of Supervisors — PASSED ON FIRST READING

Ayes: 10 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Gonzalez, Ma, Maxwell,  
McGoldrick, Peskin, Sandoval  
Excused: 1 - Hall

June 8, 2004 Board of Supervisors — FINALLY PASSED


Ayes: 9 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Gonzalez, Maxwell, McGoldrick,  
Peskin, Sandoval  
Absent: 1 - Ma  
Excused: 1 - Hall


File No. 040442

I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance  
was FINALLY PASSED on June 8, 2004 by  
the Board of Supervisors of the City and  
County of San Francisco.

JUN 10 2004

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Approved

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gloria L. Young  
Clerk of the Board

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Gavin Newsom

**Case No. 2001.0566L**  
1305 18<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Carnegie  
Sunset Branch Library,  
Assessor's Block 1773, Lot 1

SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION NO. 16712

ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE APPROVAL OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF 1305 18th Avenue, THE CARNEGIE SUNSET BRANCH LIBRARY, ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 1773, LOT 1 AS LANDMARK NO. 239.

1. WHEREAS, on June 2, 1999, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) established its Landmarks Designation Work Program for fiscal year 1999 – 2000. Up to 8 sites were chosen to have Landmark Designation Reports developed and brought to the Landmarks Board for review and comment, and consideration of initiation of landmark designation. Included on that list was 1305 18th Avenue, the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library; and
2. Tim Kelley, President of the Landmarks Board, prepared and submitted a draft landmark Designation Report for 1305 18th Avenue, the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library, for the Landmarks Board to consider initiation of the landmark designation of the property; and
3. At its regular meeting of September 3, 2003, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) adopted Resolution No. 565, initiating designation of and recommending to the Planning Commission that they approve the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library as Landmark No. 239; and
4. The Landmarks Board finds that the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library Designation Report describes the location and boundaries, of the landmark site, describes the characteristics of the landmark which justifies its designation, and describes the particular features that should be preserved and therefore meets the requirements of Planning Code Section 1004(b) and 1004(c)(1). That Designation Report is fully incorporated by reference into this resolution; and
5. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the description, location, and boundary of the landmark site, which is the footprint of the building; and
6. The Planning Commission, in considering the proposed landmark designation employed the "National Register of Historic Places" rating criteria and found 1305 18th Avenue, the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, (association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history), and C (embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction); and

7. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the following description of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation:
  - (a) Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives;
  - (b) Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations; and
  - (c) Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings."
8. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the following particular features that should be preserved:
  - (a) Exterior composition and materials.
  - (b) The paneled vestibule.
  - (c) The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
  - (d) The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.
  - (e) The glazed and paneled partition between the Main Reading Room and the Children's Room.
9. The designation of the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library meets the required findings of Planning Code Section 101.1 in the following manner:
  - The proposed Project will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved, such as the designation of the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library as City Landmark No. 239. Landmark designation will help to preserve a significant historic resource associated with patterns of social and cultural history in San Francisco.
  - That the proposed project will have no significant effect on the other seven Priority Policies: the City's supply of affordable housing, existing housing or neighborhood character, public transit or neighborhood paring, preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake, commercial activity, business or employment, or public parks and open space.
10. The designation of the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library is consistent with the following Urban Design Element of the General Plan:

**OBJECTIVE 2: CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES THAT PROVIDE A SENSE OF NATURE, CONTINUITY WITH THE PAST, AND FREEDOM FROM OVERCROWDING.**

Policy 4 Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.

Designating this significant historic resource as a local landmark will further a continuity with the past because the exterior of the building will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Landmark designation will require that the Planning Department and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board would review any proposed work that may have an impact on character-defining features. Both entities will utilize the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation in their review to ensure that only appropriate, compatible alterations are made. The proposed landmark designation will not have a significant impact on any of the other elements of the General Plan.

11. The Planning Commission has reviewed documents, correspondence and oral testimony on matters relevant to the proposed landmark designation, at a duly noticed Public Hearing held on January 15, 2004 and finds the proposal will help to preserve a significant historic resource associated with patterns of social and cultural history in San Francisco.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission hereby approves the landmark designation of 1305 18th Avenue, the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library, Assessor's Block 1773, Lot 1 as Landmark No. 239 pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission hereby directs its Recording Secretary to transmit this Resolution, the 1305 18th Avenue, the Carnegie Sunset Branch Library Landmark Designation Report and other pertinent materials in the Case File 2001.0566L to the Board of Supervisor's.



**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
January 15, 2004

**Case No. 2001.0566L**  
1305 18th Avenue, the Carnegie  
Sunset Branch Library,  
Assessor's Block 1773, Lot 1  
Resolution No. 16712  
Page 4

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Planning Commission on January 15, 2004.

Linda Avery  
Planning Commission Secretary

AYES: Antonini, Boyd, Bradford-Bell, Feldstein, Hughes, Sue Lee, William Lee

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: January 15, 2004

DATE:  
CASE NO.:

PAGE 1

LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE:  
APPROVED:  
PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:  
APPROVED:  
PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.:

**HISTORIC NAME:** Sunset Branch  
**POPULAR NAME:** same

**ADDRESS:** 1305 18th Street, SW corner of Irving

**BLOCK & LOT:** 1773-001

**OWNER:** San Francisco Public Library  
Civic Center  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**ORIGINAL USE:** Public branch library

**CURRENT USE:** Public branch library

**ZONING:** "P"

**National Register Criterion (a)**

- (A)  Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- (B)  Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- (C)  Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- (D)  Has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

- \* **Period of Significance:** 1918 to present
- \* **Integrity:** The building presently retains a high degree of integrity, both interior and exterior.

**Article 10 Requirements—Section 1004 (b)**

- \* **Boundaries of the Landmark Site**  
The boundaries of the Landmark Site are the footprint of the building.
- \* **Characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation**
  1. Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives.
  2. Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations.
  3. Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "*Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings*".
- \* **Description of the Particular features that should be preserved**

1. Exterior composition and materials.
2. The paneled vestibule.
3. The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
4. The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.
5. The glazed and paneled partition between the Main Reading Room and the historic Children's Room.

## DESCRIPTION

Italian Renaissance in style, the Sunset Branch Library is clad in matte glazed terra cotta. It is rectangular in plan, built to the sidewalk lines of its corner lot, with a smaller rectangular extension at the rear. The main mass is one story over a slightly raised basement, with a red tiled hipped roof. The roof overhangs on all sides, and features glazed terra cotta modillions. There is also a small dentilated cornice with ornamental frieze inscribed "SUNSET BRANCH SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY" on the 18th Street facade and "PUBLIC LIBRARY" on the Irving Street side. A belt cornice marks the upper floor level.

The composition is symmetrical, with a central loggia of three high arches with ornamented archivolts, as well as unfluted terra cotta columns and pilasters with composite capitals. The main entrance is in the middle of the loggia, with high, recessed arched windows flanking it and a matching arched transom above. There are two more identical windows in the main facade, and three on the Irving Street facade. Beneath each window is an ornamental tablet inscribed with the names of famous authors.

The main entrance leads through a small wood paneled vestibule into the main reading room, which occupies almost the entire upper floor. Peripheral shelving runs under the high windows. The high ornate ceiling is intact. At the rear of the main room is a wooden partition, the upper half glazed, separating the original children's room, which occupies the rear extension of the building, and has been converted to staff use. The doorway to the rear room is pedimented, with a clock enclosed in the pediment. The transition from the main part of the building to the rear extension is marked by plaster pilasters. Historic fabric in the old children's room is also intact, here including the historic skylight and multi-light diffuser.

In the main room, a wood paneled elevator enclosure has been added, free standing in the northeast corner of the room. The elevator, as well as a stairway behind the check-out desk, lead down to the new children's room, toilets, and service areas. There is a handicapped accessible entrance from Irving Street to the lower level.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### CRITERION A: SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC PATTERNS

The Sunset Branch Library was the fourth of seven branch buildings financed by a Carnegie grant. The grant itself was the subject of twelve years of intense political and class conflict in San Francisco. This branch was constructed in the new and growing Sunset neighborhood.

By providing easy access to published works for neighborhood residents, the building expresses the national and local ascendancy of Progressive

political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries. It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.

#### CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Sunset Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The prominent windows impart an orderly rhythm to the design from the exterior, while inside they enshrine the books and create a site for acculturation. The entry path is carefully controlled, with the transition from the street, through the loggia and the small constricted vestibule into to the grand, high ceilinged main reading room conveying a sense of intellectual and civic rebirth.

#### REFERENCES:

Bean, Walton. *Boss Ruef's San Francisco*. U.C. Press. 1952

Board of Supervisors. *San Francisco Municipal Reports*. various years 1900 to 1925

Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University

Carnegie Corporation of New York, website, "Andrew Carnegie's Legacy"

The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. "Libraries Reflect the City's Values". Heritage Newsletter, vol XVI, No. 4. uncredited author Donald Andreini

Issel, William and Robert W. Cherny. *San Francisco 1865-1932; Politics, Power, and Urban Development*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press. 1986

Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America, a Public Legacy*. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press; New York : John Wiley, 1997.

Kahn, Judd. *Imperial San Francisco; Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897-1906*. Lincoln, NB, University of Nebraska Press. 1979

Kazin, Michael. *Barons of Labor*. University of Illinois Press. Urbana and Chicago. 1987

Kelley, Tim. "Origins of the Seven San Francisco Carnegie Branch Libraries, 1901-1921" Context Statement. Planning Department. January, 2001

Kortum, Lucy Deam. "Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture It Produced, 1899-1921". M.A. Thesis, Sonoma State University, 1990

Longstreth, Richard W. *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century*. New York. Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press. 1983

Stern, Norton B. & William M. Kramer. "G. Albert Lansburgh, San Francisco's Jewish Architect from Panama" *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly*. April-May 1981

Van Slyck, Abigail A. *Free to All, Carnegie Libraries and American Culture: 1890-1920*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1995

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

DATE:

CASE NO.:

PAGE 4

LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE:

APPROVED:

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:

APPROVED:

PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.:

---

RATINGS: 1976 Citywide Survey "3"

PREPARED BY: Tim Kelley

San Francisco Landmarks Board

1660 Mission Street, SF, CA

ADDRESS:

Attachments:  523A  523B  523L (continuation sheets)  Context Statement  Other...

**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**APPENDIX G**

Designation Report for Landmark 240 – Presidio Branch, 3150 Sacramento, constructed 1921, architect Albert Landsburgh.



FILE NO. 040450

ORDINANCE NO. 107-04

[Ordinance to Designate 3150 Sacramento Street, the Carnegie Presidio Library, as a Landmark Under Planning Code Article 10.]

designating

**Ordinance 3150 Sacramento Street, the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library as Landmark No. 240 Pursuant To Article 10, Sections 1004 And 1004.4 Of The Planning Code.**

Note: Additions are single-underline italics Times New Roman;  
deletions are ~~strikethrough italics Times New Roman~~.  
Board amendment additions are double underlined.  
Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough normal~~.

Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

**Section 1. Findings**

The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 3150 Sacramento Street, the Carnegie Presidio Library, Lot 12 in Assessor's Block 1006, has a special character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and that its designation as a Landmark will further the purposes of, and conform to the standards set forth in Article 10 of the City Planning Code.

(a) Designation: Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code, 3150 Sacramento Street, the Carnegie Presidio Library, is hereby designated as Landmark No. 240. This designation has been fully approved by Resolution No. 564 of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and Resolution No. 16711 of the Planning Commission, which Resolutions are on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under File No. 040450 and which Resolutions are incorporated herein and made part hereof as though fully set forth.

(b) Priority Policy Findings

(1) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, this Board of Supervisors finds that this ordinance will serve the public necessity, convenience and welfare for the reasons set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. 16711 recommending approval of this Planning Code

Supervisors Peskin, McGoldrick, Maxwell, Gonzalez, Alioto-Pier  
PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

17-04  
3  
4

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 Amendment, and incorporates such reasons by this reference thereto. A copy of said  
2 resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 040450.

3 (2) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 101.1, this Board of Supervisors finds that this  
4 ordinance is in consistent with the Priority Policies of Section 101.1(b) of the Planning Code  
5 and, when effective, with the General Plan as proposed to be amended and hereby adopts  
6 the findings of the Planning Commission, as set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No.  
7 16711, and incorporates said findings by this reference thereto.

8 (c) Required Data:

9 (1) The description, location and boundary of the Landmark site encompass the  
10 Carnegie Presidio Library at 3150 Sacramento Street, which is the footprint of the building and  
11 the Sacramento Street setback.

12 (2) The characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation are described and  
13 shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory  
14 Board on September 3, 2003 and other supporting materials contained in Planning  
15 Department Docket No. 2001.0569L. In brief, the National Register characteristics of the  
16 landmark which justify its designation are as follows:

17 Its association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco, particularly  
18 with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and  
19 middle class based Progressives (National Register Criterion A); its architectural embodiment  
20 of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social  
21 organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations; and its  
22 architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building,  
23 especially those delineated in "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings" (National Register  
24 Criterion C.)




1 (3) The particular exterior features that should be preserved, or replaced in-kind as  
2 determined necessary, are those generally shown in the photographs and described in the  
3 Landmark Designation Report, both which can be found in the case docket 2001.0569L,  
4 which is incorporated in this designation ordinance as though fully set forth. In brief, the  
5 description of the particular features that should be preserved are as follows:


6 The building's exterior composition and materials, the spatial dimensions of the  
7 Sacramento Street setback, the paneled vestibule, the spatial volume of the Main Reading  
8 Room, the ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room and the glazed and paneled partition  
9 between the Main Reading Room and the Children's Room.

10 Section 2. The property shall be subject to further controls and procedures, pursuant  
11 to this Board of Supervisor's Ordinance and Planning Code Article 10.

12  
13 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
14 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

15 By:   
16 Sarah Ellen Owsowitz  
Deputy City Attorney

RECOMMENDED:  
PLANNING COMMISSION

17 By:   
18 Lawrence B. Badiner  
19 ACTING Director of Planning



# City and County of San Francisco

City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

## Tails

## Ordinance

---

**File Number:** 040450

**Date Passed:**

Ordinance designating 3150 Sacramento Street, the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library as Landmark No. 240 Pursuant To Article 10, Sections 1004 And 1004.4 Of The Planning Code.

---

May 25, 2004 Board of Supervisors — PASSED ON FIRST READING

Ayes: 10 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Gonzalez, Ma, Maxwell,  
McGoldrick, Peskin, Sandoval  
Excused: 1 - Hall

June 8, 2004 Board of Supervisors — FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 9 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Gonzalez, Maxwell, McGoldrick,  
Peskin, Sandoval  
Absent: 1 - Ma  
Excused: 1 - Hall


File No. 040450

I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was FINALLY PASSED on June 8, 2004 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.

JUN 10 2004

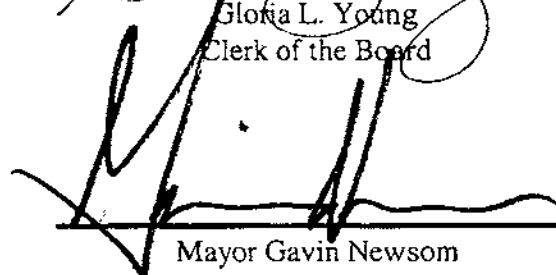
---

Date Approved



---

Gloria L. Young  
Clerk of the Board



---

Mayor Gavin Newsom

**Case No. 2001.0569L**  
3150 Sacramento Street,  
Carnegie Presidio Branch Library,  
Assessor's Block 1006, Lot 12

SAN FRANCISCO  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
RESOLUTION NO. 16711

ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE APPROVAL OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF 3150 SACRAMENTO STREET, THE CARNEGIE PRESIDIO BRANCH LIBRARY, ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 1006, LOT 12 AS LANDMARK NO. 240.

1. WHEREAS, on June 2, 1999, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) established its Landmarks Designation Work Program for fiscal year 1999 – 2000. Up to 8 sites were chosen to have Landmark Designation Reports developed and brought to the Landmarks Board for review and comment, and consideration of initiation of landmark designation. Included on that list was 3150 Sacramento Street, the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library; and
2. Tim Kelley, President of the Landmarks Board, prepared and submitted a draft landmark Designation Report for 3150 Sacramento Street, the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library, for the Landmarks Board to consider initiation of the landmark designation of the property; and
3. At its regular meeting of September 3, 2003, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) adopted Resolution No. 564, initiating designation of and recommending to the Planning Commission that they approve the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library as Landmark No. 240; and
4. The Landmarks Board finds that the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library Designation Report describes the location and boundaries, of the landmark site, describes the characteristics of the landmark which justifies its designation, and describes the particular features that should be preserved and therefore meets the requirements of Planning Code Section 1004(b) and 1004(c)(1). That Designation Report is fully incorporated by reference into this resolution; and
5. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the description, location, and boundary of the landmark site, which is the footprint of the building and the Sacramento Street setback, and
6. The Planning Commission, in considering the proposed landmark designation employed the "National Register of Historic Places" rating criteria and found 3150 Sacramento Street, the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A, (association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history), and C (embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction); and

7. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the following description of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation:
  - (a) Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives;
  - (b) Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations; and
  - (c) Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings."
  
8. The Planning Commission reviewed and endorsed the following particular features that should be preserved:
  - (a) Exterior composition and materials.
  - (b) The spatial dimensions of the Sacramento Street setback
  - (c) The paneled vestibule.
  - (d) The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
  - (e) The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.
  - (f) The glazed and paneled partition between the Main Reading Room and the Children's Room.
  
9. The designation of the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library meets the required findings of Planning Code Section 101.1 in the following manner:
  - The proposed Project will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved, such as the designation of the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library as City Landmark No. 240. Landmark designation will help to preserve a significant historic resource associated with patterns of social and cultural history in San Francisco.
  - That the proposed project will have no significant effect on the other seven Priority Policies: the City's supply of affordable housing, existing housing or neighborhood character, public transit or neighborhood paring, preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake, commercial activity, business or employment, or public parks and open space.

10. The designation of the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library is consistent with the following Urban Design Element of the General Plan:

**OBJECTIVE 2: CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES THAT PROVIDE A SENSE OF NATURE, CONTINUITY WITH THE PAST, AND FREEDOM FROM OVERCROWDING.**

Policy 4 Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.

Designating this significant historic resource as a local landmark will further a continuity with the past because the exterior of the building will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Landmark designation will require that the Planning Department and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board would review any proposed work that may have an impact on character-defining features. Both entities will utilize the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation in their review to ensure that only appropriate, compatible alterations are made. The proposed landmark designation will not have a significant impact on any of the other elements of the General Plan.

11. The Planning Commission has reviewed documents, correspondence and oral testimony on matters relevant to the proposed landmark designation, at a duly noticed Public Hearing held on January 15, 2004 and finds the proposal will help to preserve a significant historic resource associated with patterns of social and cultural history in San Francisco.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission hereby approves the landmark designation of 3150 Sacramento Street, the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library, Assessor's Block 1006, Lot 12 as Landmark No. 240, pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission hereby directs its Recording Secretary to transmit this Resolution, the 3150 Sacramento Street, the Carnegie Presidio Branch Library Landmark Designation Report and other pertinent materials in the Case File 2001.0569L to the Board of Supervisor's.

**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
January 15, 2004

**Case No. 2001.0569L**  
3150 Sacramento Street,  
Carnegie Presidio Branch Library,  
Assessor's Block 1006, Lot 12  
Resolution No.  
Page 4

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Planning Commission on January 15, 2004.

Linda Avery  
Planning Commission Secretary

AYES: Antonini, Boyd, Bradford-Bell, Feldstein, Hughes, Sue Lee, William Lee

NOES:

ABSENT:

ADOPTED: January 15, 2004

LANDMARK DESIGNATION RE.

DATE:

CASE NO.:

PAGE 1

LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE:

APPROVED:

PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:

APPROVED:

PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.:

**HISTORIC NAME:** Sunset Branch

**POPULAR NAME:** same

**ADDRESS:** 1305 18th Street, SW corner of Irving

**BLOCK & LOT:** 1773-001

**OWNER:** San Francisco Public Library  
Civic Center  
San Francisco, CA 94102

**ORIGINAL USE:** Public branch library

**CURRENT USE:** Public branch library

**ZONING:** "P"

**National Register Criterion (a)**

- (A)  Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- (B)  Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- (C)  Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- (D)  Has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

- \* **Period of Significance:** 1918 to present
- \* **Integrity:** The building presently retains a high degree of integrity, both interior and exterior.

**Article 10 Requirements—Section 1004 (b)**

- \* **Boundaries of the Landmark Site**  
The boundaries of the Landmark Site are the footprint of the building.
- \* **Characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation**
  1. Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives.
  2. Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations.
  3. Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "*Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings*".
- \* **Description of the Particular features that should be preserved**



political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries. It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.

**CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES**

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Sunset Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The prominent windows impart an orderly rhythm to the design from the exterior, while inside they enshrine the books and create a site for acculturation. The entry path is carefully controlled, with the transition from the street, through the loggia and the small constricted vestibule into the grand, high ceilinged main reading room conveying a sense of intellectual and civic rebirth.

**REFERENCES:**

Bean, Walton. *Boss Ruef's San Francisco*. U.C. Press. 1952

Board of Supervisors. *San Francisco Municipal Reports*. various years 1900 to 1925

Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University

Carnegie Corporation of New York, website, "Andrew Carnegie's Legacy"

The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. "Libraries Reflect the City's Values". Heritage Newsletter, vol XVI, No. 4. uncredited author Donald Andreini

Issel, William and Robert W. Cherny. *San Francisco 1865-1932: Politics, Power, and Urban Development*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press. 1986

Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America, a Public Legacy*. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press; New York : John Wiley, 1997.

Kahn, Judd. *Imperial San Francisco; Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897-1906*. Lincoln, NB, University of Nebraska Press. 1979

Kazin, Michael. *Barons of Labor*. University of Illinois Press. Urbana and Chicago. 1987

Kelley, Tim. "Origins of the Seven San Francisco Carnegie Branch Libraries, 1901-1921" Context Statement. Planning Department. January, 2001

Kortum, Lucy Deam. "Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture It Produced, 1899-1921". M.A. Thesis, Sonoma State University, 1990

Longstreth, Richard W. *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century*. New York. Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press. 1983

Stern, Norton B. & William M. Kramer. "G. Albert Lansburgh, San Francisco's Jewish Architect from Panama" *Western States Jewish Historical Quarterly*. April-May 1981

Van Styck, Abigail A. *Free to All, Carnegie Libraries and American Culture: 1890-1920*, The University of Chicago Press. Chicago, IL, 1995

State of California - The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI# \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 4 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Sunset Branch Library

**P1. Other Identifier:**

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

\*a. County San Francisco and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary.)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad na Date na T \_\_\_\_\_; R \_\_\_\_\_; 1/4 of 1/4 of Sec \_\_\_\_\_; B.M.

c. Address 1305 18th Street, SW corner of City San Francisco Zip 94122

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone \_\_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_\_ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Block

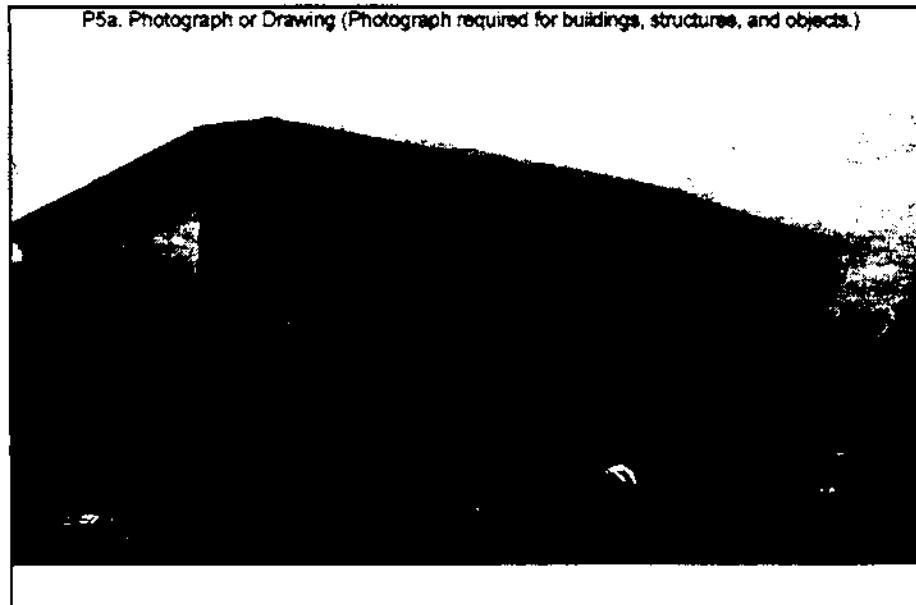
\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1773 Lot

Italian Renaissance in style, the Sunset Branch Library is clad in matte glazed terra cotta. It is rectangular in plan, built to the sidewalk lines of its corner lot, with a smaller rectangular extension at the rear. The main mass is one story over a slightly raised basement, with a red tiled hipped roof. The roof overhangs on all sides, and features glazed terra cotta modillions. There is also a small dentilated cornice with ornamental frieze inscribed "SUNSET BRANCH SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY" on the 18th Street facade and "PUBLIC LIBRARY" on the Irving Street side. A belt cornice marks the upper floor level. (continued)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP14 Govt. Building; HP13 Community Center;

\*P4. Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #)

18th Street facade & loggia  
(repairs in progress); 4/6/00

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and

Source:  Historic  Prehistoric  
 Both

1918, San Francisco Public  
Library Trustees Report

\*P7. Owner and Address:

San Francisco Public Library  
Civic Center  
San Francisco, CA 94102

\*P8. Recorded by:

(Name, affiliation, and address)

Tim Kelley  
San Francisco Landmarks Board  
1660 Mission Street, SF, CA

\*P9. Date Recorded: 12/1/00

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) Thematic Landmark Nomination

\*P11. Report Citations: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

\*Attachments:  NONE  Location Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure & Object  
 Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  
 Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (List):

Recorded by: Tim Kelley

Date: 12/1/00

Continuation

Update

**P3a. Description:** (continued)

The composition is symmetrical, with a central loggia of three high arches with ornamented archivolts, as well as unfluted terra cotta columns and pilasters with composite capitals. The main entrance is in the middle of the loggia, with high, recessed arched windows flanking it and a matching arched transom above. There are two more identical windows in the main facade, and three on the Irving Street facade. Beneath each window is an ornamental tablet inscribed with the names of famous authors.

The main entrance leads through a small wood paneled vestibule into the main reading room, which occupies almost the entire upper floor. Peripheral shelving runs under the high windows. The high ornate ceiling is intact. At the rear of the main room is a wooden partition, the upper half glazed, separating the original children's room, which occupies the rear extension of the building, and has been converted to staff use. The doorway to the rear room is pedimented, with a clock enclosed in the pediment. The transition from the main part of the building to the rear extension is marked by plaster pilasters. Historic fabric in the old children's room is also intact, here including the historic skylight and multi-light diffuser.

In the main room, a wood paneled elevator enclosure has been added, free standing in the northeast corner of the room. The elevator, as well as a stairway behind the check-out desk, lead down to the new children's room, toilets, and service areas. There is a handicapped accessible entrance from Irving Street to the lower level.

**B10. Significance:** (continued)

It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.

**CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES**

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Sunset Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The prominent windows impart an orderly rhythm to the design from the exterior, while inside they enshrine the books and create a site for acculturation. The entry path is carefully controlled, with the transition from the street, through the loggia and the small constricted vestibule into to the grand, high ceilinged main reading room conveying a sense of intellectual and civic rebirth.

**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**APPENDIX H**

Designation Report for Landmark 247 – Richmond Branch, 351 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, constructed 1914, architect Bliss & Faville.



FILE NO. 050092

ORDINANCE NO. 41-05

1 (Ordinance to Designate 351-9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the ~~Carnegie~~ Richmond/Senator Milton Marks  
2 Branch Library, as a Landmark Under Planning Code Article 10.]

3 **Ordinance Designating 351-9th Avenue, the ~~Carnegie~~ Richmond/Senator Milton Marks**  
4 **Branch Library, As Landmark No. 247 Pursuant To Article 10, Sections 1004 And 1004.4**  
5 **of the Planning Code.**

6 Note: Additions are single-underline italics Times New Roman;  
7 deletions are ~~striketrough italics Times New Roman~~.  
8 Board amendment additions are double underlined.  
9 Board amendment deletions are ~~striketrough normal~~.

10 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

11 Section 1. Findings

12 The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 351-9th Avenue, the ~~Carnegie~~  
13 Richmond/Senator Milton Marks Branch Library, Lot 7 in Assessor's Block 1441, has a special  
14 character and special historical, architectural and aesthetic interest and value, and that its  
15 designation as a Landmark will further the purposes of, and conform to the standards set forth  
16 in Article 10 of the City Planning Code.

17 (a) Designation: Pursuant to Section 1004 of the City Planning Code 351-9th Avenue,  
18 the ~~Carnegie~~ Richmond/Senator Milton Marks Branch Library, is hereby designated as  
19 Landmark No. 247. This designation has been fully approved by Resolution No. 575 of the  
20 Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and Resolution No. 16788 of the Planning  
21 Commission, which Resolutions are on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors under  
22 File No. 050092 and which Resolutions are incorporated herein and made part hereof as  
23 though fully set forth.

24 (b) Priority Policy Findings

1 (1) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, this Board of Supervisors finds that this  
2 ordinance will serve the public necessity, convenience and welfare for the reasons set forth in  
3 Planning Commission Resolution No. 16788 recommending approval of this Planning Code  
4 Amendment, and incorporates such reasons by this reference thereto. A copy of said  
5 resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No.050092.

6 (2) Pursuant to Planning Code Section 101.1, this Board of Supervisors finds that this  
7 ordinance is consistent with the Priority Policies of Section 101.1(b) of the Planning Code and  
8 with the General Plan and hereby adopts the findings of the Planning Commission, as set  
9 forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. 16788, and incorporates said findings by this  
10 reference thereto.

11 (c) Required Data:

12 (1) The description, location and boundary of the Landmark site encompass the  
13 footprint of 351-9th Avenue, the ~~Carnegie~~ Richmond/Senator Milton Marks Branch Library, as  
14 well as the landscaped setback on 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, which is the principal façade.

15 (2) The characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation are described and  
16 shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory  
17 Board on April 21, 2004 and other supporting materials contained in Planning Department  
18 Docket No. 2001.0563L. In brief, the National Register characteristics of the landmark which  
19 justify its designation are as follows:

20 Its association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the  
21 period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between  
22 working class based groups and middle class based Progressives, the architectural  
23 embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of  
24 social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations  
25 (National Register Criterion A). Its status as the architectural embodiment of the distinctive

1 characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "Notes on the  
2 Erection of Library Buildings" (National Register Criterion C.)

3 (3) The particular exterior features that should be preserved, or replaced in-kind as  
4 determined necessary, are those generally shown in the photographs and described in the  
5 Landmark Designation Report, both which can be found in the case docket 2001.0563L,  
6 which is incorporated in this designation ordinance as though fully set forth. In brief, the  
7 description of the particular features that should be preserved are as follows:

8 Exterior composition and materials; the spatial dimensions and the mature palm trees  
9 of the 9th Avenue setback; the paneled vestibule; the spatial volume of the Main Reading  
10 Room; the ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.

11 Section 2. The property shall be subject to further controls and procedures, pursuant  
12 to this Board of Supervisor's Ordinance and Planning Code Article 10.

13  
14 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
15 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

RECOMMENDED:  
PLANNING COMMISSION

16 By: *Sarah Ellen Owsowitz*  
17 Sarah Ellen Owsowitz  
18 Deputy City Attorney

By: *see original*  
Dean Macris  
Interim Director of Planning



# City and County of San Francisco

City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

## Tails Ordinance

---

**File Number:** 050092

**Date Passed:**

Ordinance designating 351-9th Avenue, the Richmond/Senator Milton Marks Branch Library, as Landmark No. 247 pursuant to Article 10, Sections 1004 and 1004.4 of the Planning Code.

---

February 15, 2005 Board of Supervisors — PASSED ON FIRST READING

Ayes: 10 - Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Elsbernd, Ma, Maxwell, McGoldrick,  
Mirkarimi, Peskin, Sandoval  
Excused: 1 - Alioto-Pier

February 22, 2005 Board of Supervisors — FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 10 - Ammiano, Daly, Dufty, Elsbernd, Ma, Maxwell, McGoldrick,  
Mirkarimi, Peskin, Sandoval  
Absent: 1 - Alioto-Pier



File No. 050092

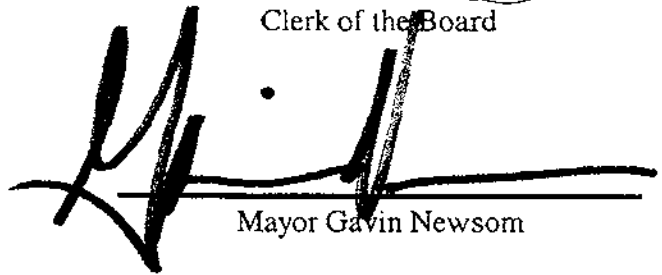
I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance was **FINALLY PASSED** on February 22, 2005 by the Board of Supervisors of the City and County of San Francisco.



Gloria L. Young  
Clerk of the Board

MAR 08 2005

Date Approved



Mayor Gavin Newsom

SAN FRANCISCO

LANDMARKS PRESERVATION ADVISORY BOARD

RESOLUTION NO. 575

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE INITIATION OF LANDMARK DESIGNATION AND A RECOMMENDATION TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF CARNEGIE RICHMOND BRANCH LIBRARY AS LANDMARK NO. 247.**

1. WHEREAS, on June 2, 1999, the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (Landmarks Board) established its Landmark Designation work program for fiscal year 1999-2000. All eight sites were to be brought to the Landmarks Board for review, comment, and consideration of initiation of landmark designation. Included among the sites was the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library, 351-9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Assessor's Block 1441, Lot 7; and
2. The Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the Context Statement, "Origins of the Seven San Francisco Carnegie Branch Libraries, 1901-1921," authored by Tim Kelley on June 20, 2001 and directed that the document be placed in the Landmarks Preservation Library. Included in the seven branch libraries is the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library, 351-9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Assessor Block 1441, Lot 7; and
3. The Landmarks Board, at its regular meeting of September 17, 2003, reviewed a draft of the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library Landmark Designation Report for 351-9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Assessor Block 1441, Lot 7 prepared by Tim Kelley. The Landmarks Board considered the report to be a final Carnegie Richmond Branch Library Landmark Designation Report; and
4. The Landmarks Board finds that the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library Designation Report describes the location and boundaries of the landmark site, describes the characteristics of the landmark which justifies its designation, and describes the particular features that should be preserved and therefore meets the requirements of Planning Code Section 1004(b) and 1004(c)(1). That Designation Report is fully incorporated by reference into this resolution; and
5. The Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the description, location, and boundary of the landmark site as 351-9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Assessor Block 1441, Lot 7, encompassing the footprint of the building, as well as the landscaped setback on 9th Avenue, which is the principal façade; and
6. The Landmarks Board, in considering the proposed landmark designation employed the "National Register of Historic Places" rating criteria and found that the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library is significant under Criterion A (associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history) and C (embodies distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that

represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction); and

7. The Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the following description of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation:
  - (a) Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives;
  - (b) Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations; and
  - (c) Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings."
  
8. The Landmarks Board reviewed and endorsed the following description of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation:
  - (a) Exterior composition and materials.
  - (b) The spatial dimensions and the mature palm trees of the 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue setback.
  - (c) The paneled vestibule.
  - (d) The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
  - (e) The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.
  
9. The designation of the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library meets the required findings of Planning Code Section 101.1 in the following manner:
  - The proposed Project will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved, such as the designation of the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library as City Landmark No. 247. Landmark designation will help to preserve a significant historic resource associated with patterns of social and cultural history in San Francisco.
  - That the proposed project will have no significant effect on the other seven Priority Policies: the City's supply of affordable housing, existing housing or neighborhood character, public transit or neighborhood paring, preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake, commercial activity, business or employment, or public parks and open space.

10. The designation of the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library is consistent with the following Urban Design Element of the General Plan:

OBJECTIVE 2: CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES THAT PROVIDE A SENSE OF NATURE, CONTINUITY WITH THE PAST, AND FREEDOM FROM OVERCROWDING.

Policy 4 Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.

Designating this significant historic resource as a local landmark will further a continuity with the past because the exterior of the building will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Landmark designation will require that the Planning Department and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board would review any proposed work that may have an impact on character-defining features. Both entities will utilize the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation in their review to ensure that only appropriate, compatible alterations are made. The proposed landmark designation will not have a significant impact on any of the other elements of the General Plan.

11. The Landmarks Board has reviewed documents, correspondence and oral testimony on matters relevant to the proposed landmark designation, at a duly noticed Public Hearing held on April 21, 2004 and finds the proposal will help to preserve a significant historic resource associated with patterns of social and cultural history in San Francisco.
12. At its regular meeting on October 16, 2002, the Landmarks Board considered an informational preservation on a proposed rehabilitation and addition project for the Richmond Branch Public Library. While there were concerns expressed about the detailing of the proposed addition, the Landmark Board finds the proposed project consistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The plans, titled Richmond Branch Library Renovation and dated June 2002, are on file with the Planning Department.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board hereby initiates landmark designation of 351-9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library, Assessor's Block 1441, Lot 7, as Landmark No. 247 pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board hereby recommends that the Planning Commission approve the landmark designation of 351-9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library, Assessor's Block 1441, Lot 7, as Landmark No. 247 pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board hereby directs its Recording Secretary to transmit this Resolution, the Carnegie Richmond Branch Library Landmark Designation Report and other pertinent materials in the Case File 2001.0563L to the Planning Commission.

**Case No. 2001.0563L**  
351-9<sup>th</sup> Avenue/Carnegie  
Richmond Branch Library  
Assessor's Block 1441, Lot 7  
Page 4

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board on April 21, 2004.

Andrea Green  
Recording Secretary

AYES: Kelley, Skrondal, Cherny, Dearman, Samuels, and Finwall,

NOES: None

ABSENT: Kotas and Shatara

ADOPTED: April 21, 2004

*G:\TBT\historic\351-9th Avenue LPAB Resolution.doc*

**LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT****DATE:**  
**CASE NO.:****PAGE 1****LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE:**  
**APPROVED:**  
**PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:**  
**APPROVED:**  
**PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.:****HISTORIC NAME:** Richmond Branch**POPULAR NAME:** same**ADDRESS:** 351 Ninth Avenue**BLOCK & LOT:** 1441-007**OWNER:** San Francisco Public Library  
Civic Center  
San Francisco, CA 94102**ORIGINAL USE:** Public branch library**CURRENT USE:** Public branch library**ZONING:** "P"**National Register Criterion (a)**

- (A)  Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- (B)  Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- (C)  Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- (D)  Has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

- \* **Period of Significance:** 1914-present
- \* **Integrity:** The building presently retains a high degree of integrity, both interior and exterior.

**Article 10 Requirements—Section 1004 (b)**

- \* **Boundaries of the Landmark Site**  
Boundaries of the Landmark Site are the footprint of the building, as well as the landscaped setback on 9th Avenue, which is the principal facade. Block 1441, Lot 7
- \* **Characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation**
  1. Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives.
  2. Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations.
  3. Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "*Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings*".
- \* **Description of the Particular features that should be preserved**

1. Exterior composition and materials.
2. The spatial dimensions and the mature palm trees of the 9th Avenue setback.
3. The paneled vestibule.
4. The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
5. The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.

## DESCRIPTION

Constructed of reinforced concrete with stone facing, the building has a rectangular plan, one story over a slightly raised basement, with a flat roof. The 9th Avenue facade composition consists of three monumental arched windows, the center one of which frames the main entrance. The entrance, up a central flight of 17 steps, contains double, wood framed glass doors with double transoms, and is surmounted by a shallow bracketed portico. Cornices mark the roof line and the first floor level. A projecting plinth and water table form the base. Above the roofline cornice is a stepped parapet.

Ornament is of polychrome glazed terra cotta. The center window and door surround features a calf's-tongue molding and massive ornamental keystone, with a round medallion on each side. The cornice has a dentil course, and the soffit was originally tiled with terra cotta which has been replaced with a synthetic imitation after being damaged. The parapet is marked at the center with a high relief, crowned cartouche.

All windows are divided into three parts vertically, and within each part are multiple lights. The pattern of lights has been altered from the original, which contained much smaller panes, each further divided by muntins into a starburst pattern. The window composition also has one strong horizontal division at the spring of the arch. There is a small rectangular window beneath the sill of each larger window. These open in to the peripheral bookshelves in the main reading room, apparently for ventilation.

The 10th Avenue facade has three matching monumental arched windows, and there are two more on both the north and south sides of the building. There is a rectangular, one-story projecting rear entrance structure on the 10th Avenue side, with a plain, grade level entry flanked by simple columns. This structure has its own stepped parapet, and the belt cornice from the main structure continues around this one also. The parapet on the main structure is again stepped on this facade. Over the rear entrance is inscribed "LECTURE HALL", denoting the original use of the lower level space, which has now been converted to the children's room.

The lot, which runs between 9th and 10th Avenues, rises slightly from 9th to the front of the building and drops again to the rear, leaving the lower floor at grade at the rear of the building. The lot is landscaped on all sides of the building, with two especially prominent palm trees flanking the front entrance, and there is a children's playground at the rear. There is also a side doorway from the Children's Room to a terraced patio on the north side.

The main reading room retains its ornate ceiling, paneled vestibule, perimeter and room divider shelving, as well as the check-out desk.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

## CRITERION A: SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC PATTERNS

The Richmond Branch Library was the first of seven branch buildings financed by a Carnegie grant. The grant itself was the subject of twelve years of intense political and class conflict in San Francisco. This branch was constructed in the rapidly developing, middle class Richmond neighborhood. By providing easy access to published works for neighborhood residents, the building expresses the national and local ascendancy of Progressive political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries.

It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.

## CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Richmond Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The prominent windows, chief compositional elements, impart an orderly rhythm to the design from the exterior, while inside they enshrine the books and create a site for acculturation. The entry path is carefully controlled, with the transition through the small constricted vestibule into the grand, high ceilinged main reading room conveying a sense of intellectual and civic rebirth. However, the controlled path also leads to the librarian's desk, the embodiment of cultural authority.

## REFERENCES:

- Bean, Walton. *Boss Ruef's San Francisco*. U.C. Press. 1952
- Board of Supervisors. *San Francisco Municipal Reports*. various years 1900 to 1925
- Cahill, B. J. S. "The Work of Bliss & Faville" *The Architect and Engineer of California*. Jan 1914
- Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University
- Carnegie Corporation of New York, website, "Andrew Carnegie's Legacy"
- Corbett, Michael R. & The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. *Splendid Survivors; San Francisco's Downtown Architectural Heritage*. San Francisco. California Living Books. 1979
- Faville, W. B., F. A. I. A. "Phases of Panama-Pacific International Exposition Architecture" *The American Architect*. January 6, 1915
- The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. "Libraries Reflect the City's Values". *Heritage Newsletter*, vol XVI, No. 4. uncredited author Donald Andreini
- Issel, William and Robert W. Cherny. *San Francisco 1865-1932; Politics, Power, and Urban Development*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press. 1986
- Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America, a Public Legacy*. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press; New York : John Wiley, 1997.
- Kahn, Judd. *Imperial San Francisco; Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897-1906*. Lincoln, NB, University of Nebraska Press. 1979



LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

DATE:  
CASE NO.:

PAGE 4

LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE:  
APPROVED:  
PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:  
APPROVED:  
PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.:

---

Kazin, Michael. *Barons of Labor*. University of Illinois Press. Urbana and Chicago. 1987

Kelley, Tim. "Origins of the Seven San Francisco Carnegie Branch Libraries— 1901-1921" Context Statement. Planning Department. January, 2001

Kortum, Lucy Deam. "Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture It Produced— 1899-1921". M.A. Thesis, Sonoma State University, 1990

Longstreth, Richard W. *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century*. New York. Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press. 1983

Van Slyck, Abigail A. *Free to All, Carnegie Libraries and American Culture: 1890-1920*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1995

**RATINGS:** 1976 Citywide Survey "0"

**PREPARED BY:** Tim Kelley  
San Francisco Landmarks Board  
1660 Mission Street, SF, CA

**ADDRESS:**

**Attachments:**  523A  523B  523L (continuation sheets)  Context Statement  Other...

State of California - The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
HRI# \_\_\_\_\_  
Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 4 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Richmond Branch Library

**P1. Other Identifier:**

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

\*a. County San Francisco and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad na Date na T \_\_\_\_\_; R \_\_\_\_\_; 1/4 of 1/4 of Sec \_\_\_\_\_; B.M. \_\_\_\_\_

c. Address 351 Ninth Avenue City San Francisco Zip 94118

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone \_\_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_\_ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Block

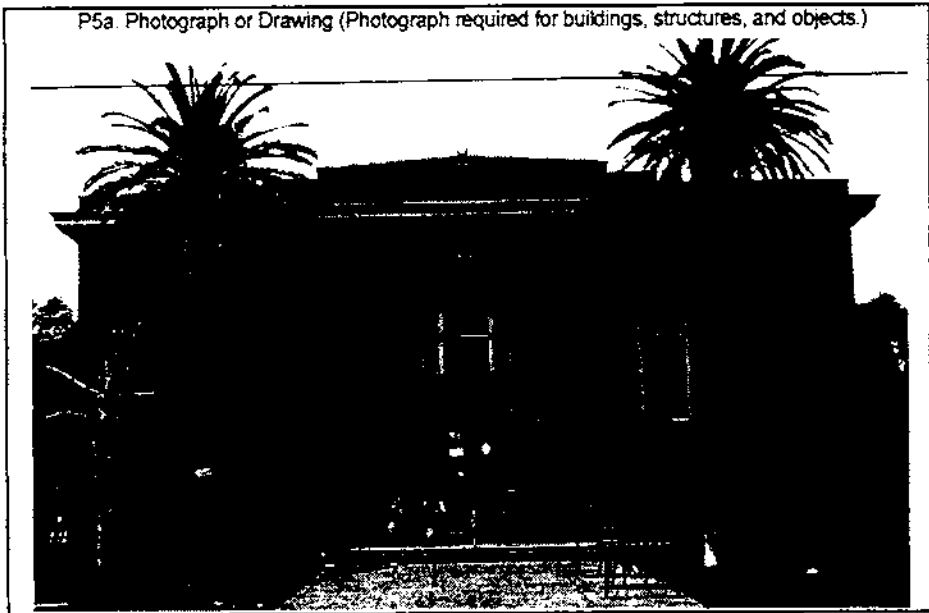
\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries) 1441, lot 7

Constructed of reinforced concrete with stone facing, the building has a rectangular plan, one story over a slightly raised basement, with a flat roof. The 9th Avenue facade composition consists of three monumental arched windows, the center one of which frames the main entrance. The entrance, up a central flight of 17 steps, contains double, wood framed glass doors with double transoms, and is surmounted by a shallow bracketed portico. Cornices mark the roof line and the first floor level. A projecting plinth and water table form the base. Above the roofline cornice is a stepped parapet. (continued)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP14 Govt. Building; HP13 Community Center;

\*P4. Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects.)



P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #)

9th Avenue facade; 1/23/00

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and

Source:  Historic  Prehistoric  
 Both

1915, San Francisco Public Library, Trustees Report

\*P7. Owner and Address:

San Francisco Public Library  
Civic Center

San Francisco, CA 94102

\*P8. Recorded by:

(Name, affiliation, and address)

Tim Kelley

San Francisco Landmarks Board  
1660 Mission Street, SF, CA

\*P9. Date Recorded: 12/1/00

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) Thematic Landmark Nomination

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

\*Attachments:  NONE  Location Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure & Object  
 Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  
 Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (List):

State of California -- The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_

HRI # \_\_\_\_\_

\*NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Page 2 of 4 \*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Richmond Branch Library

B1. Historic Name: Richmond Branch

B2. Common Name: same

B3. Original Use: Public branch library

B4. Present Use: Public branch library

\*B5. Architectural Style: Classical Revival

\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)

Built 1914, Children's Room added on lower floor 1923

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features: Two large mature palm trees

B9a. Architect: Bliss & Faville

b. Builder: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B10. Significance: Theme Cultural History, Library

Area: San Francisco

Period of Significance: 1914-present Property Type: Branch Library

Applicable Criteria: A, C

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

CRITERION A: SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC PATTERNS

The Richmond Branch Library was the first of seven branch buildings financed by a Carnegie grant. The grant itself was the subject of twelve years of intense political and class conflict in San Francisco. This branch was constructed in the rapidly developing, middle class Richmond neighborhood. By providing easy access to published works for neighborhood residents, the building expresses the national and local ascendancy of Progressive political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries. (continued)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP14 Govt. Building; HP13 Community Center; HP39 Other

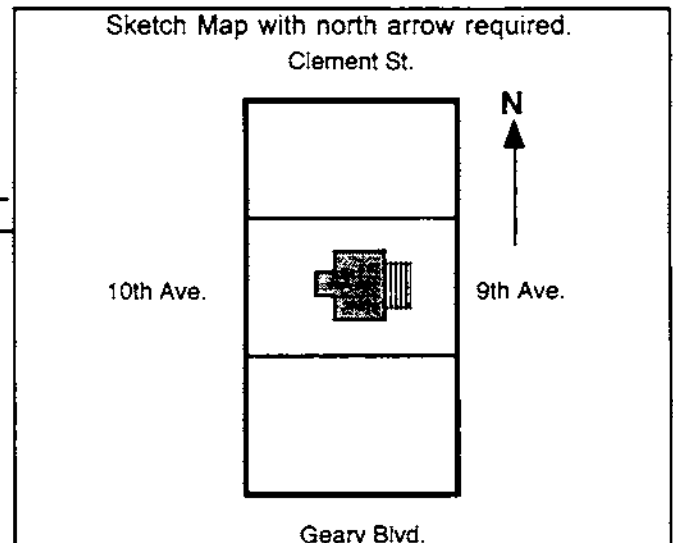
\*B12. References: See continuation sheet, page 4

B13. Remarks:

\*B14. Evaluator: San Francisco Landmarks Board

\*Date of Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_

( This space reserved for official comments)



Recorded by: Tim Kelley

Date: 12/1/00

Continuation

Update

**P3a Description:** (continued)

Ornament is of polychrome glazed terra cotta. The center window and door surround features a calf's-tongue molding and massive ornamental keystone, with a round medallion on each side. The cornice has a dentil course, and the soffit was originally tiled with terra cotta which has been replaced with a synthetic imitation after being damaged. The parapet is marked at the center with a high relief, crowned cartouche.

All windows are divided into three parts vertically, and within each part are multiple lights. The pattern of lights has been altered from the original, which contained much smaller panes, each further divided by muntins into a starburst pattern. The window composition also has one strong horizontal division at the spring of the arch. There is a small rectangular window beneath the sill of each larger window. These open in to the peripheral bookshelves in the main reading room, apparently for ventilation.

The 10th Avenue facade has three matching monumental arched windows, and there are two more on both the north and south sides of the building. There is a rectangular, one-story projecting rear entrance structure on the 10th Avenue side, with a plain, grade level entry flanked by simple columns. This structure has its own stepped parapet, and the belt cornice from the main structure continues around this one also. The parapet on the main structure is again stepped on this facade. Over the rear entrance is inscribed "LECTURE HALL", denoting the original use of the lower level space, which has now been converted to the children's room.

The lot, which runs between 9th and 10th Avenues, rises slightly from 9th to the front of the building and drops again to the rear, leaving the lower floor at grade at the rear of the building. The lot is landscaped on all sides of the building, with two especially prominent palm trees flanking the front entrance, and there is a children's playground at the rear. There is also a side doorway from the Children's Room to a terraced patio on the north side.

The main reading room retains its ornate ceiling, paneled vestibule, perimeter and room divider shelving, as well as the check-out desk.

**B10. Significance:** (continued)

It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.

**CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES**

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Richmond Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The prominent windows, chief compositional elements, impart an orderly rhythm to the design from the exterior, while inside they enshrine the books and create a site for acculturation. The entry path is carefully controlled, with the transition through the small constricted vestibule into the grand, high ceilinged main reading room conveying a sense of intellectual and civic rebirth. However, the controlled path also leads to the librarian's desk, the embodiment of cultural authority.

Landmark Nomination  
Carnegie Branch Libraries  
of San Francisco



January, 2001

**Landmark Designation Report**  
**Golden Gate Valley Branch San Francisco Public Library**  
**July 22, 2020**

**APPENDIX I**

Designation Report for Landmark 259 – Noe Valley Branch, 451 Jersey Street, constructed 1916, architect John Reid, Jr.



1 [Landmark Designation of 451 Jersey Street (Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch  
2 Library).]

3 Ordinance designating 451 Jersey Street, the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch  
4 Library, (Assessor's Block Number 6539, Lot Number 034), as a Landmark under  
5 Planning Code Article 10; and adopting General Plan, Planning Code Section 101.1(b)  
6 and environmental findings

7 Note: Additions are single-underline italics Times New Roman;  
8 deletions are ~~strikethrough-italics Times New Roman~~.  
9 Board amendment additions are double underlined.  
10 Board amendment deletions are ~~strikethrough-normal~~.

11 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

12 Section 1. Findings.

13 A. On November 8, 2007, at a duly noticed public hearing, the Planning  
14 Commission in Resolution No. 17508 found that the proposed landmark designation of 451  
15 Jersey Street (the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library) was consistent with the  
16 City's General Plan and with Planning Code Section 101.1(b). In addition, the Planning  
17 Commission recommended that the Board of Supervisors adopt the landmark designation. A  
18 copy of said Resolution is on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No.  
19 \_\_\_\_\_ 080189 \_\_\_\_\_ and is incorporated herein by reference. The Board finds that the proposed  
20 landmark designation is consistent with the City's General Plan and with Planning Code  
21 Section 101.1(b) for the reasons set forth in said Resolution.

22 B. Pursuant to Planning Code Section 302, the Board finds that the proposed  
23 landmark designation will serve the public necessity, convenience and welfare for the reasons  
24 set forth in Planning Commission Resolution No. 17508, which reasons are incorporated  
25

1 herein by reference as though fully set forth. A copy of said Resolution is on file with the Clerk  
2 of the Board of Supervisors in File No. 080189.

3 C. The Planning Department has determined that the actions contemplated in this  
4 Ordinance are in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (California Public  
5 Resources Code section 21000 et seq.). Said determination is on file with the Clerk of the  
6 Board of Supervisors in File No. \_\_\_\_\_ and is incorporated herein by reference.

7 D. The Board of Supervisors hereby finds that 451 Jersey Street (the Carnegie Noe  
8 Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library), Lot No 034 in Assessor's Block No. 6539, has a special  
9 character and special historical, architectural, and aesthetic interest and value, and that its  
10 designation as a Landmark will further the purposes of and conform to the standards set forth  
11 in Article 10 of the San Francisco Planning Code.

12 Section 2: Designation. Pursuant to Section 1004 of the Planning Code, 451 Jersey  
13 Street (the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library), Lot No 034 in Assessor's Block  
14 No. 6539, is hereby designated a Landmark under Article 10 of the Planning Code. This  
15 designation was initiated by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board through its  
16 Landmark Designation Work Program for fiscal year 1999-2000, and affirmed with Resolution  
17 No. 619 of the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board and Resolution No. 17508 of the  
18 Planning Commission, which Resolutions are on file with the Clerk of the Board of  
19 Supervisors in File No. 080189 and which Resolutions are incorporated herein by  
20 reference as though fully set forth.

21 Section 3. Required Data.

22 (a) The description, location, and boundary of the Landmark site consists of the City  
23 parcel located at the south side of the middle of Jersey Street, on Assessor's Block 6539, Lot  
24  
25



1 034, with a street address of 451 Jersey Street (the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch  
2 Library).

3 (b) The characteristics of the Landmark that justify its designation are described and  
4 shown in the Landmark Designation Report adopted by the Landmarks Preservation Advisory  
5 Board on October 17, 2007 and other supporting materials contained in Planning Department  
6 Docket No. 2001.0565 L. In brief, the National Register of Historic Places characteristics of  
7 the Landmark that justify its designation are as follows:

8 (1) Association with the work of a master architect, John Reid, Jr.;

9 (2) Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during  
10 the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power  
11 between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives;

12 (3) Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic  
13 grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working  
14 class and immigrant populations; and


15 (4) Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch  
16 library building.

17 (c) The particular exterior features that shall be preserved, or replaced in-kind as  
18 determined necessary, are those generally shown in photographs and described in the  
19 Landmark Designation Report, which can be found in Planning Department Docket No.  
20 2001.0565L and which is incorporated in this designation by reference as though fully set  
21 forth. In brief, the description of the particular exterior and interior features that should be  
22 preserved are the exterior composition and materials, the paneled vestibule, the primary  
23 stairway, the spatial volume of the Main Reading Room, the ornamental ceiling of the Main  
24  
25

1 Reading Room, and the glazed and paneled partition between the Main Reading Room and  
2 the Children's Room.

3 Section 4. The property shall be subject to further controls and procedures, including  
4 Certificate of Appropriateness requirements, pursuant to Planning Code Article 10.

5  
6 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
7 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

8 By:   
9 Marlena G. Byrne  
Deputy City Attorney



# City and County of San Francisco

City Hall  
1 Dr. Carlton B. Goodlett Place  
San Francisco, CA 94102-4689

## Tails

### Ordinance

---

**File Number:** 080189

**Date Passed:**

Ordinance designating 451 Jersey Street, the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library, (Assessor's Block Number 6539, Lot Number 034), as a Landmark under Planning Code Article 10; and adopting General Plan, Planning Code Section 101.1(b) and environmental findings.

---

February 26, 2008 Board of Supervisors — PASSED ON FIRST READING

Ayes: 9 - Ammiano, Chu, Daly, Elsbernd, Maxwell, McGoldrick, Mirkarimi, Peskin, Sandoval

Absent: 1 - Alioto-Pier

Excused: 1 - Dufty

March 4, 2008 Board of Supervisors — FINALLY PASSED

Ayes: 11 - Alioto-Pier, Ammiano, Chu, Daly, Dufty, Elsbernd, Maxwell, McGoldrick, Mirkarimi, Peskin, Sandoval

File No. 080189

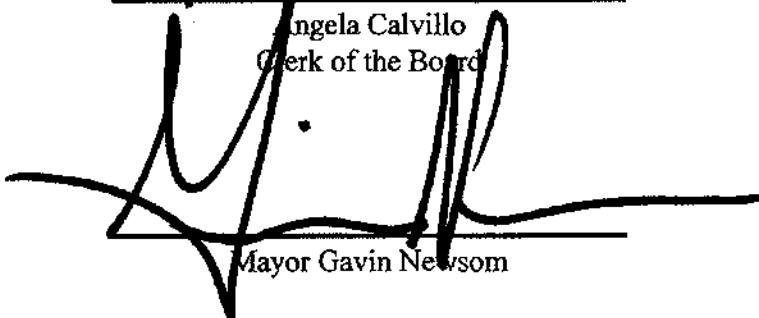
I hereby certify that the foregoing Ordinance  
was **FINALLY PASSED** on March 4, 2008 by  
the Board of Supervisors of the City and  
County of San Francisco.



Angela Calvillo  
Clerk of the Board



Date Approved

  
Mayor Gavin Newsom

Proposed Landmark Designation of the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library

**SAN FRANCISCO**

**PLANNING COMMISSION**

**RESOLUTION NO. 7508**

**ADOPTING FINDINGS RELATED TO THE RECOMMENDATION OF APPROVAL OF THE LANDMARK DESIGNATION OF THE CARNEGIE NOE VALLEY/SALLY BRUNN BRANCH LIBRARY (LOCATED AT 451 JERSEY STREET, ASSESSOR'S BLOCK 6539, LOT 034) AS A SAN FRANCISCO LANDMARK UNDER ARTICLE 10 OF THE PLANNING CODE.**

**WHEREAS**, On June 2, 1999 the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board (LPAB) established its Landmark Designation work program for fiscal year 1999-2000. Eight sites, seven of which are Carnegie Branch libraries, were selected to have landmark designation reports developed and brought to the Landmarks Board for review, comment, and consideration of initiation of landmark designation. Included on that list was the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library; and

To date, five of the Carnegie Branch libraries have been designated by the Board of Supervisors as local landmarks through Article 10 of the Planning Code – the Carnegie Chinatown, Mission, Sunset, Presidio, and Richmond Branch libraries; and

Tim Kelley, past President of the LPAB, prepared the landmark designation report for the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch library (**Attachment A**), and the Department of Recreation and Park's DPR 532(A) form (**Attachment B**). The property owner, San Francisco Public Library, reviewed the designation report in May, 2001 and supports the designation of the Carnegie Noe Valley Branch library as a City landmark. Planning Department staff reviewed the report and prepared comments and opinions for the Landmarks Board; and

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, at its regular meeting of October 17, 2007, reviewed the Landmark Designation Report for the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library. The Landmarks Board found that the Designation Report describes the location and boundaries of the landmark site, describes the characteristics of the landmark that justify its designation, and describes the particular features that should be preserved, and therefore meets the requirements of Planning Code Section 1004(b) and 1004(c)(1). That Designation Report is fully incorporated by reference into this resolution; and

The Landmarks Board unanimously adopted Resolution No. 619, in which they recommended to the Planning Commission that they adopt a Resolution recommending that the Board of Supervisors adopt an ordinance to designate the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library as a local San Francisco landmark pursuant to Article 10 of the Planning Code; and

The Commission held a duly noticed hearing at a regularly scheduled meeting on November 8, 2007 to consider the proposed Ordinance and the Landmarks Board's recommendation.

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board, in considering the proposed landmark designation employed the National Register of Historic Places criteria and found the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library to be eligible for listing on the National Register under Register under Criterion A (Associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history), as well as Criterion C (Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master,

or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction); and

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board reviewed and endorsed the following description of the characteristics of the landmark which justify its designation:

- a. Association with the work of a master architect, John Reid, Jr;
- b. Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives;
- c. Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations;
- d. Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early Branch library building, especially those delineated in "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings<sup>1</sup>;" and

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board has reviewed and endorsed the following particular features that should be preserved:

- a. Exterior composition and materials.
- b. The paneled vestibule.
- c. The primary stairway.
- d. The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
- e. The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.
- f. The glazed and paneled partition between the Main Reading Room and the Children's Room; and

The Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board found that the designation of the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library meets the required findings of Planning Code Section 101.1 in the following manner:

- a. The proposed Project will further Priority Policy No. 7, that landmarks and historic buildings be preserved. Landmark designation will help to preserve a significant historical resource that is associated with architecture that embodies the work of a master, and that embodies the tenets of the City Beautiful movement.
- b. The proposed project will have no significant impact to the other seven Priority Policies: the City's supply of affordable housing, existing housing, or neighborhood character, public transit or neighborhood parking, preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an earthquake, commercial activity, business or employment, or public parks or open space; and,

The Planning Commission concurs with the Landmarks Board's findings and its recommendation of approval

---

<sup>1</sup> "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings," excerpted from *Free to All, Carnegie Libraries and American Culture: 1890-1920*, Abigail Van Slych (Chicago, 1995), Appendix I, Page 1.

of the landmark designation of the Carnegie Noe Valley/Sally Brunn Branch Library.

The proposed landmark designation is consistent with the following General Plan Policies:

Urban Design Element

- POLICY 2.4            Preserve notable landmarks and areas of historic, architectural or aesthetic value, and promote the preservation of other buildings and features that provide continuity with past development.
- POLICY 2.6            Respect the character of older development nearby in the design of new buildings.
- POLICY 2.7            Recognize and protect outstanding and unique areas that contribute in an extraordinary degree to San Francisco's visual form and character.

*The proposed landmark designation would increase the protection of and outstanding and unique historical resource, thereby helping to better implement the above policies.*

The proposed amendments to the Planning Code are consistent with the eight Priority Policies set forth in Section 101.1(b) of the Planning Code in that:

1. That existing neighborhood-serving retail uses be preserved and enhanced and future opportunities for resident employment in and ownership of such businesses enhanced;

*The proposed landmark designation will not impact such uses or opportunities.*

2. That existing housing and neighborhood character be conserved and protected in order to preserve the cultural and economic diversity of our neighborhoods;

*The proposed landmark designation will not negatively impact existing housing or neighborhood character.*

3. That the City's supply of affordable housing be preserved and enhanced;

*The proposed landmark designation will not negatively impact the City's supply of affordable housing.*

4. That commuter traffic not impede MUNI transit service or overburden our streets or neighborhood parking;

*The proposed landmark designation will not impede transit service or overburden our streets of neighborhood parking.*

5. That a diverse economic base be maintained by protecting our industrial and service sectors from displacement due to commercial office development, and that future opportunities for resident employment and ownership in these sectors be enhanced;

*The proposed landmark designation will not impact the diversity of economic activity.*

6. That the City achieve the greatest possible preparedness to protect against injury and loss of life in an

earthquake;

*The proposed Ordinance would not modify any physical parameters of the Planning Code or other Codes. It is furthermore not anticipated that the proposed Ordinance would result in any building activity and therefore would have no affect on the City's preparedness for an earthquake.*

7. That the landmarks and historic buildings be preserved;

*Designating this significant historic resource as a local landmark will further a continuity with the past because the character-defining features of the building will be preserved for the benefit of future generations. Landmark designation will require that the Planning Department and the Landmarks Preservation Advisory Board review any proposed work that may have an impact on character-defining features. Both entities will utilize the Secretary of Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties in their review to ensure that only appropriate, compatible alterations are made. The proposed landmark designation will not have a significant impact on any of the other elements of the General Plan.*

8. That our parks and open space and their access to sunlight and vistas be protected from development;

*The proposed Ordinance would not impact or facilitate any development which could have any impact on our parks and open space or their access to sunlight and vistas.*

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Planning Commission hereby recommends to the Board of Supervisors that it approve the proposed ordinance; and

I hereby certify that the foregoing Resolution was adopted by the Commission at its meeting on November 8, 2007.

Linda Avery  
Commission Secretary

AYES: Alexander, Antonini, S. Lee, W. Lee, Moore, Olague, Sugaya

NOES: 0

ABSENT: 0



PAGE 1

HISTORIC NAME: Noe Valley Branch Library  
POPULAR NAME: same

ADDRESS: 451 Jersey Street  
BLOCK & LOT: 6539-034  
OWNER: San Francisco Public Library  
Civic Center  
San Francisco, CA 94102

ORIGINAL USE: Public branch library  
CURRENT USE: Public branch library  
ZONING: "P"

National Register Criterion (a)

- (A)  Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- (B)  Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- (C)  Embody distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
- (D)  Has yielded, or may be likely to yield information important in history or prehistory.

\* **Period of Significance:** 1915-present

\* **Integrity:** The building presently retains a high degree of integrity, both interior and exterior.

Article 10 Requirements—Section 1004 (b)

- \* **Boundaries of the Landmark Site**  
Boundaries of the Landmark Site are the footprint of the building and the Jersey Street setback.
- \* **Characteristics of the Landmark which justify its designation**
1. Association with patterns of social and cultural history of San Francisco during the period of significance, particularly with the contestation of political and cultural power between working class based groups and middle class based Progressives.
  2. Architectural embodiment of Progressive and City Beautiful tenets of civic grandeur used as a means of social organization, particularly the acculturation of working class and immigrant populations.
  3. Architectural embodiment of the distinctive characteristics of an early branch library building, especially those delineated in "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings".
- \* **Description of the Particular features that should be preserved**

1. Exterior composition and materials.
2. The paneled vestibule.
3. The main stairway
4. The spatial volume of the Main Reading Room.
5. The ornamental ceiling of the Main Reading Room.
6. The glazed and paneled partition between the Main Reading Room and the Children's Room.

## DESCRIPTION

Exhibiting mainly Classical Revival features, the Noe Valley Branch Library is rectangular in plan, with a smaller rectangular extension at the rear. The main mass is one story over a raised basement, with a tiled end-gabled roof. The roof overhangs on all sides, and features carved rafter ends. The building is set back slightly from the street, and is several feet above sidewalk level, reached by a low central flight of steps.

The composition is symmetrical, dominated by five tall rectangular casement windows on the upper floor and the pedimented central entrance. The upper windows are framed together, separated by pilasters, with a common sill and lintel. The lintel is inscribed "NOE VALLEY BRANCH PUBLIC LIBRARY". A dentilated cornice with frieze runs beneath the eaves, a belt cornice marks the upper floor level, and a plinth forms the building's base. On the lower level, beneath each of the flanking four upper windows, is a small rectangular, barred window.

Walls are tawny brick laid in a tapestry pattern, while polychrome glazed terra cotta is used for ornament. The upper cornice and frieze feature several courses of terra cotta molding, including a dentil course, glyptic course and a key molding. The lower cornice is similarly complex, featuring several courses including a wave scroll, a beaded molding, and a floral or dogtooth pattern. The plinth too is decorated with a strip of molding. Beneath the sill for the upper windows is a row of fruit garlands punctuated with open books.

The pedimented door surround is elaborately ornamented with glazed terra cotta, and is crowned by a large medallion featuring another open book. The double doors are wooden framed glass. Inside is a small vestibule and a wide, straight stairway that leads up to the middle of the main reading room, which occupies nearly all of the upper floor. The check-out desk is at the head of the stairs. To the rear, through a paneled partition with glazed upper half, lies the children's room, occupying the rear extension of the building. The doorway is pedimented, with a clock enclosed in the pediment.

In the main room, the ceiling is ornately paneled. The room is lighted by the high windows, five in the front and three on each side. Low shelving serves as a ballustrade around the stairwell, and peripheral shelving runs under the windows. The transition from the main part of the building to the rear extension is marked by plaster pilasters.

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

### CRITERION A: SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC PATTERNS

The Noe Valley Branch Library was the third of seven branch buildings financed by a Carnegie grant. The grant itself was the subject of

twelve years of intense political and class conflict in San Francisco. This branch was constructed in the well established Noe Valley neighborhood. By providing easy access to published works for neighborhood residents, the building expresses the national and local ascendancy of Progressive political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries. It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.

#### CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Noe Valley Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The pedimented entrance and large grouped windows create the sense of a temple. The entry path is carefully controlled, with the transition from the street, through the small constricted vestibule upwards to the grand, high ceilinged main reading room conveying a sense of aspiration, and of intellectual and civic rebirth.

#### REFERENCES:

- Bean, Walton. *Boss Ruef's San Francisco*. U.C. Press. 1952
- Board of Supervisors. *San Francisco Municipal Reports*. various years 1900 to 1925
- Cahill, B. J. S. "The Work of Bliss & Faville" *The Architect and Engineer of California*. Jan 1914
- Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University
- Carnegie Corporation of New York, website, "Andrew Carnegie's Legacy"
- Faville, W. B., F. A. I. A. "Phases of Panama-Pacific International Exposition Architecture" *The American Architect*. January 6, 1915
- The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage. "Libraries Reflect the City's Values". *Heritage Newsletter*, vol XVI, No. 4. uncredited author Donald Andreini
- Issel, William and Robert W. Cherny. *San Francisco 1865-1932; Politics, Power, and Urban Development*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, University of California Press. 1986
- Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America, a Public Legacy*. Washington, D.C. Preservation Press; New York : John Wiley, 1997.
- Kahn, Judd. *Imperial San Francisco; Politics and Planning in an American City, 1897-1906*. Lincoln, NB, University of Nebraska Press. 1979
- Kazin, Michael. *Barons of Labor*. University of Illinois Press. Urbana and Chicago. 1987
- Kelley, Tim. "Origins of the Seven San Francisco Carnegie Branch Libraries, 1901-1921" Context Statement. Planning Department. January, 2001
- Kortum, Lucy Deam. "Carnegie Library Development in California and the Architecture It Produced, 1899-1921". M.A. Thesis, Sonoma State University, 1990

LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

DATE:  
CASE NO.:

PAGE 4

LANDMARKS BOARD VOTE:  
APPROVED:  
PLANNING COMMISSION VOTE:  
APPROVED:  
PROPOSED LANDMARK NO.:

---

Longstreth, Richard W. *On the Edge of the World: Four Architects in San Francisco at the Turn of the Century.* New York. Architectural History Foundation; Cambridge, Mass. MIT Press. 1983

Morrow, Irving F. "Work by John Reid, Jr., A. I. A." *The Architect and Engineer.* February 1920

Van Slyck, Abigail A. *Free to All, Carnegie Libraries and American Culture: 1890-1920,* The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, IL, 1995

RATINGS: 1976 Citywide Survey "2"

PREPARED BY: Tim Kelley  
San Francisco Landmarks Board  
1660 Mission Street, SF, CA

ADDRESS:

Attachments:  523A  523B  523L (continuation sheets)  Context Statement  Other...

**State of California – The Resources Agency**  
**DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION**  
**PRIMARY RECORD**

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_  
 HRI# \_\_\_\_\_  
 Trinomial \_\_\_\_\_  
 NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Other Listings \_\_\_\_\_  
 Review Code \_\_\_\_\_ Reviewer \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Page 1 of 4 \*Resource Name or #: (Assigned by recorder) Noe Valley Branch Library

**P1. Other Identifier:**

\*P2. Location:  Not for Publication  Unrestricted

\*a. County San Francisco and (P2c, P2e, and P2b or P2d. Attach a Location Map as necessary)

\*b. USGS 7.5' Quad na Date na T \_\_\_\_\_; R \_\_\_\_\_; 1/4 of 1/4 of Sec \_\_\_\_\_; B.M. \_\_\_\_\_

c. Address 451 Jersey Street City San Francisco Zip 94114

d. UTM: (Give more than one for large and/or linear resources) Zone \_\_\_\_\_ mE/ \_\_\_\_\_ mN

e. Other Locational Data: (e.g., parcel #, directions to resource, elevation, etc., as appropriate) Block 6539, lot

\*P3a. Description: (Describe resource and its major elements. Include design, materials, condition, alterations, size, setting, and boundaries)

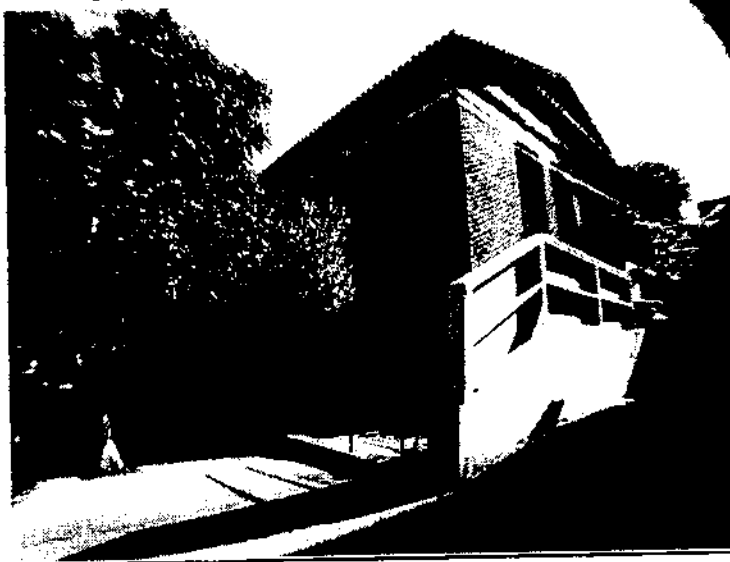
Exhibiting mainly Classical Revival features, the Noe Valley Branch Library is rectangular in plan, with a smaller rectangular extension at the rear. The main mass is one story over a raised basement, with a tiled end-gabled roof. The roof overhangs on all sides, and features carved rafter ends. The building is set back slightly from the street, and is several feet above sidewalk level, reached by a low central flight of steps.

The composition is symmetrical, dominated by five tall rectangular casement windows on the upper floor and the pedimented central entrance. (continued)

\*P3b. Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP14 Govt. Building; HP13 Community Center;

\*P4. Resources Present:  Building  Structure  Object  Site  District  Element of District  Other

P5a. Photograph or Drawing (Photograph required for buildings, structures, and objects)



P5b. Description of Photo: (view, date, accession #)

NW corner; 11/17/00

\*P6. Date Constructed/Age and

Source:  Historic  Prehistoric  Both

1916, San Francisco Public Library Trustees Report

\*P7. Owner and Address:

San Francisco Public Library Civic Center  
San Francisco, CA 94102

\*P8. Recorded by:

(Name, affiliation, and address)

Tim Kelley  
San Francisco Landmarks Board  
1660 Mission Street, SF, CA

\*P9. Date Recorded: 12/1/00

\*P10. Survey Type: (Describe) Thematic Landmark Nomination

\*P11. Report Citation: (Cite survey report and other sources, or enter "none.")

\*Attachments:  NONE  Location Map  Continuation Sheet  Building, Structure & Object  
 Archaeological Record  District Record  Linear Feature Record  Milling Station Record  Rock Art Record  
 Artifact Record  Photograph Record  Other (List):

State of California -- The Resources Agency  
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION  
BUILDING, STRUCTURE, AND OBJECT RECORD

Primary # \_\_\_\_\_

HRI # \_\_\_\_\_

\*NRHP Status Code \_\_\_\_\_

Page 2 of 4 \*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Noe Valley Branch Library

B1. Historic Name: Noe Valley Branch Library  
B2. Common Name: same  
B3. Original Use: Public branch library  
B4. Present Use: Public branch library  
\*B5. Architectural Style: Classical Revival  
\*B6. Construction History: (Construction date, alterations, and date of alterations)  
Built 1915

\*B7. Moved?  No  Yes Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Original Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\*B8. Related Features: Deck and garden in rear

B9a. Architect: John Reid Jr. b. Builder: C. C. Terrill

\*B10. Significance: Theme Cultural History, Library Area: San Francisco

Period of Significance: 1915-present Property Type: Branch Library Applicable Criteria: A, C

(Discuss importance in terms of historical or architectural context as defined by theme, period, and geographic scope. Also address integrity.)

CRITERION A: SIGNIFICANT HISTORIC PATTERNS

The Noe Valley Branch Library was the third of seven branch buildings financed by a Carnegie grant. The grant itself was the subject of twelve years of intense political and class conflict in San Francisco. This branch was constructed in the well established Noe Valley neighborhood. By providing easy access to published works for neighborhood residents, the building expresses the national and local ascendancy of Progressive political and social values, as well as the development of public libraries. It also expresses the City Beautiful philosophy by presenting a building (continued)

B11. Additional Resource Attributes: (List attributes and codes) HP14 Govt. Building; HP13 Community Center; HP39 Other

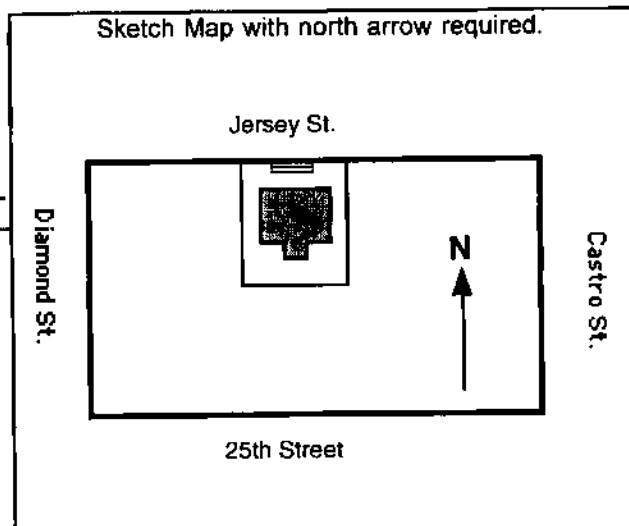
\*B12. References: See continuation sheet, page 4

B13. Remarks:

\*B14. Evaluator: San Francisco Landmarks Board

\*Date of Evaluation: \_\_\_\_\_  
( This space reserved for official comments)

[Empty box for official comments]



\*Required information

Page 3 of 4

\*Resource Name or # (Assigned by recorder) Noe Valley Branch Library

Recorded by: Tim Kelley

Date: 12/1/00

Continuation

Update

**P3a. Description:** (continued)

The upper windows are framed together, separated by pilasters, with a common sill and lintel. The lintel is inscribed "NOE VALLEY BRANCH PUBLIC LIBRARY". A dentilated cornice with frieze runs beneath the eaves, a belt cornice marks the upper floor level, and a plinth forms the building's base. On the lower level, beneath each of the flanking four upper windows, is a small rectangular, barred window.

Walls are tawny brick laid in a tapestry pattern, while polychrome glazed terra cotta is used for ornament. The upper cornice and frieze feature several courses of terra cotta molding, including a dentil course, glyphic course and a key molding. The lower cornice is similarly complex, featuring several courses including a wave scroll, a beaded molding, and a floral or dogtooth pattern. The plinth too is decorated with a strip of molding. Beneath the sill for the upper windows is a row of fruit garlands punctuated with open books.

The pedimented door surround is elaborately ornamented with glazed terra cotta, and is crowned by a large medallion featuring another open book. The double doors are wooden framed glass. Inside is a small vestibule and a wide, straight stairway that leads up to the middle of the main reading room, which occupies nearly all of the upper floor. The check-out desk is at the head of the stairs. To the rear, through a paneled partition with glazed upper half, lies the children's room, occupying the rear extension of the building. The doorway is pedimented, with a clock enclosed in the pediment.

In the main room, the ceiling is ornately paneled. The room is lighted by the high windows, five in the front and three on each side. Low shelving serves as a ballustrade around the stairwell, and peripheral shelving runs under the windows. The transition from the main part of the building to the rear extension is marked by plaster pilasters.

**B10. Significance:** (continued)

intended to create a sense of civic grandeur and dignity in the citizen who enters, or merely views it.

**CRITERION C: POSSESSES HIGH ARTISTIC VALUES**

In both its exterior composition and its grand main reading room, the Noe Valley Branch Library possesses high artistic values. The pedimented entrance and large grouped windows create the sense of a temple. The entry path is carefully controlled, with the transition from the street, through the small constricted vestibule upwards to the grand, high ceilinged main reading room conveying a sense of aspiration, and of intellectual and civic rebirth.

# Parcel Map



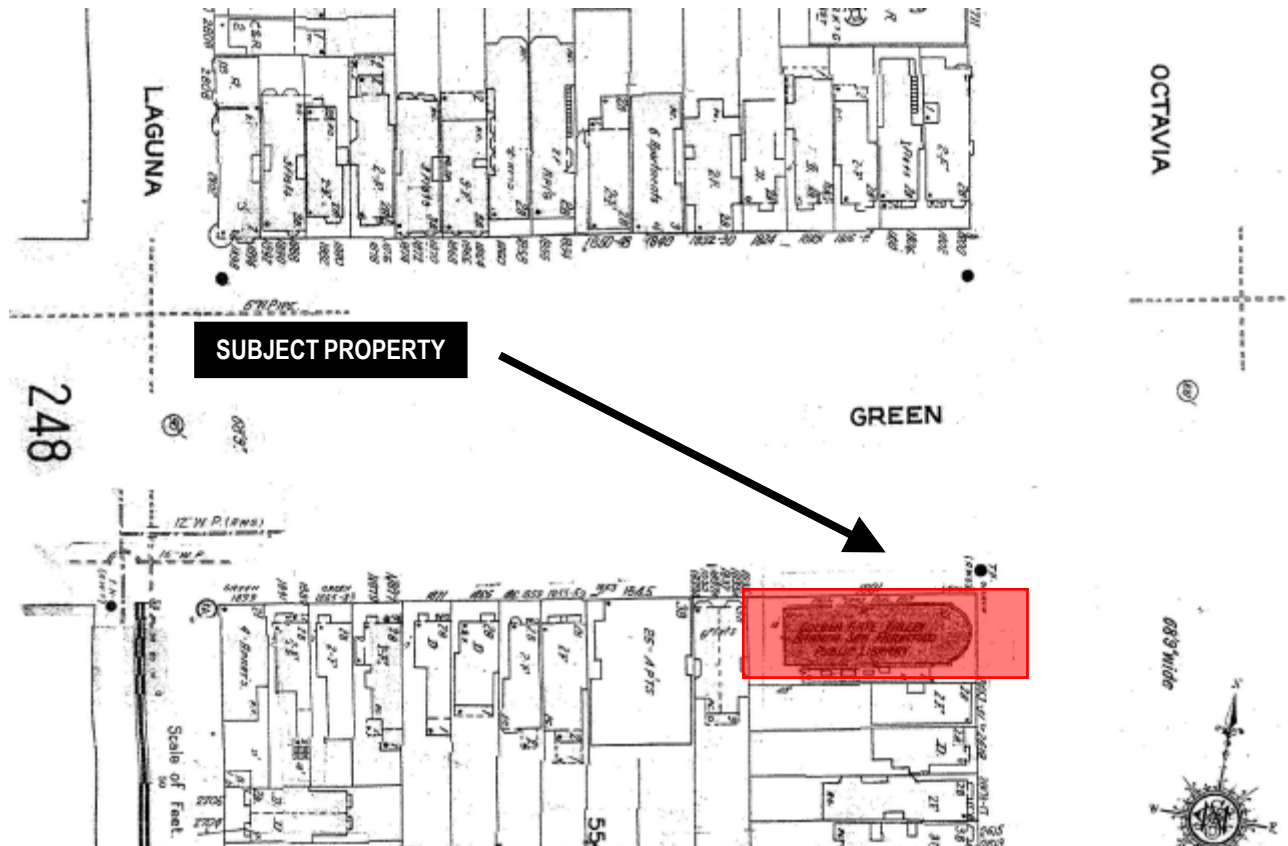
**SUBJECT PROPERTY**



Article 10 Landmark Designation  
Case Number 2020-003803DES  
Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library  
1801 Green Street



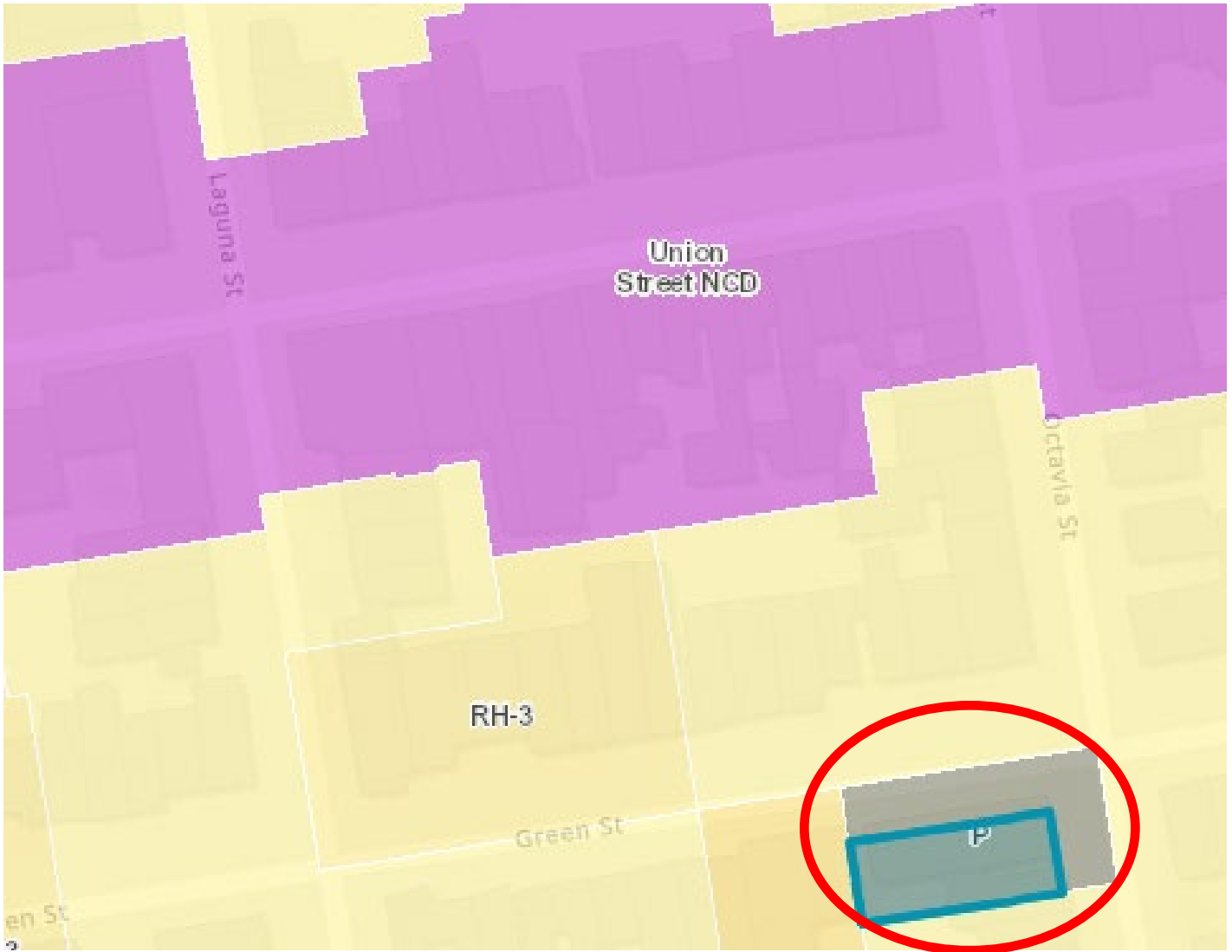
# Sanborn Map\*



\*The Sanborn Maps in San Francisco have not been updated since 1998, and this map may not accurately reflect existing conditions.



# Zoning Map



# Site Photo



Article 10 Landmark Designation  
Case Number 2020-003803DES  
Golden Gate Valley Carnegie Library  
1801 Green Street