

7. Description

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| Condition | | Check one | Check one |
| <input type="checkbox"/> excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated | <input type="checkbox"/> unaltered | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good | <input type="checkbox"/> ruins | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered | <input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> fair | <input type="checkbox"/> unexposed | | |

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The nine nominated sites designed by the A. C. Eschweiler firm are located in the cities of Mosinee and Wausau in Marathon County, central Wisconsin. Some fifteen miles apart, the cities are both sited along the Wisconsin River, the power source for the area's logging and paper industries. Mosinee is the smaller of the two with a population of just over 3,000; the principal employer has been and continues to be the Mosinee Paper Company. Wausau, the county seat, has several paper-related industries, nationally-prominent insurance companies, and a population of more than 33,000. Except for a series of small villages located along the river and major highways, the county is heavily-forested and rural in character.

The two remaining Eschweiler works in Mosinee [a third, the Mosinee School (1900) was demolished in 1977] are within several blocks of each other. The Joseph Dessert Public Library is located on a corner site on Main Street in the heart of the business district; the Karl Mathie House, northeast of the Library, is on Water Street overlooking the Wisconsin River and the paper mill a short distance away. The Eschweiler sites in Wausau, with the exception of the Marathon County Fairgrounds, are loosely grouped in a residential area east of the Central Business District. Building lots tend to be generous in size, with ample landscaping. The Fairgrounds are located across the Wisconsin River on the western edge of the city. Although the surrounding area is commercial and residential, the Fairgrounds themselves are in a forested park setting, creating the impression of an isolated location.

Joseph Dessert Library (1898) 123 Main Street, Mosinee
Jack Maguire, Mayor
City of Mosinee
301 Main Street, Mosinee, WI 54455

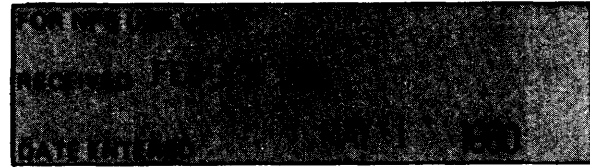
Map 1, B
Acreage: 0.165

The Joseph Dessert Public Library is a two-story plus attic rectangular brick-veneer building with prominent stone-trimmed, simplified Flemish-type gables on the front (west) and rear (east) facades. The disposition of openings is regular throughout. Large, cross-gable dormers with center mock chimneys and steps at the side are set into the center of the slopes of the gable roof. Windows on the first story are rectangular with glazed transoms overhead, while those on the second story are set in pointed wood frames and brick arches. The center recessed entrance on the west facade is covered by a corbelled-brick pointed arch, surmounted by a large, English Perpendicular window with cusped wood muntins on the second story. A projecting label moulding of moulded brick caps the window. A flight of concrete stairs gives access to the entrance above the high basement. The words "Joseph Dessert Public Library" are inscribed in Gothic script in a stone band over the entrance and flanking windows. The library itself, with original paneled circulation desk and brick fireplace, occupies the first floor. With its large, arched proscenium and stage at the east end, and open area for seating in front, the second story once served as the community's auditorium for social entertainments; the space is now used for library storage. The auditorium is reached via a wood staircase with turned-wood balusters just inside the front entrance of the library.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**



Eschweiler Thematic Resources of Marathon County, Wisconsin

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8. Significance (continued)

and long, gable-roof ranges are appropriately barn-like, but in contrast of colors (white stucco with red tile roofs) and forms are pleasing design entities. Even the grandstands, with an arcaded steel canopy, are an elegant solution for a practical purpose. It is rare that such a complex, with so specialized a function and so little-used, survives in essentially original exterior condition

Association with Prominent Citizens

Located near swift rapids at the junction of two of the largest tributaries of the Wisconsin River, the Wausau-Mosinee area was a natural focal point for industry in the region. The river system's drainage basin includes about 21% of the state,⁵ making it a significant transportation link in logging operations. It is logical, then, that the area would become the home of a number of prominent leaders in Wisconsin industry, government, and commerce. With their association with significant figures in the central area of the state, as well as their kinship as Eschweiler designs, the nominated properties are doubly significant.

JOSEPH DESSERT

Joseph Dessert, donor of the Mosinee library, worked in the lumbering industry in Quebec before coming to the area in 1844. In 1849 he and three partners purchased the saw mill in which they had been working. By 1859, Dessert was sole owner of the mill and its power source at Little Bull Falls, which was renamed Mosinee at his suggestion.⁶ In the next forty years, Dessert did much to advance logging operations and technology, and built his company into the most productive lumbering concern outside the Wausau-Scholfield area. As part of the "...genuine spirit of cooperation between the parent company and the dependent community" of Mosinee, and Dessert's "...active interest in enriching the quality of his employees' lives,"⁷ Dessert sponsored the construction of the library named in his honor. Dessert himself appointed a board of trustees and financed the purchase of new books and maintenance expenses for the next several years.

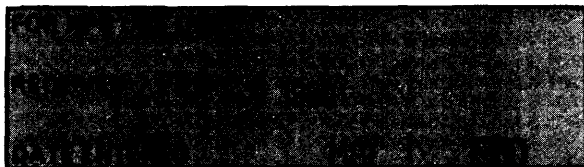
KARL MATHIE

Karl Mathie was imported from the Watab Pulp and Paper Company of Sartell, Minnesota, by the Wausau Group, an entrepreneurial committee of heads of Marathon County timber concerns, to direct the Wausau Sulphate Fibre Company in 1910. The paper mill was located on the Little Bull Falls in Mosinee where Dessert's earlier operation had been. With the arrival of the mill, a new surge of prosperity hit Mosinee in the 1920s, causing a boom in population and in building and village improvements. Norman S. Stone, who owned the Mathie House from 1929-69, was a president of the same firm renamed the Mosinee Paper Company.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**



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8. Significance (continued)

of the congregation and the premier lumberman in Wisconsin at the time,¹² paid for construction and furnishing of the parish house and parsonage. Other well-known citizen who belonged to the church at the time were E. A. Gooding (president of the Wisconsin Box Company), Frank Kelley (president of Wausau Novelty Company), W. B. Scholfield (president of the Wausau Box Company, and a later owner of the C. H. Wegner House), and A. S. Kreutzer (a Wisconsin state senator).

Social Activity

The Joseph Dessert Library and Marathon County Fairgrounds have additional significance as sites of social activity in their respective communities. The public-spirited manner in which Dessert endowed the library carried over into its use throughout the years as a center of social and educational activity. Plays and small entertainments were held in the second-story auditorium. Library usage continues downstairs to this day in a setting essentially unchanged since its construction. The scene of yearly county fairs, the Fairgrounds are closely allied with regional identity and agricultural activity in the area. Set apart from the city in a park setting, the grounds are given an added festive emphasis. Rarely are such areas so well-tended and preserved.

¹Architectural Archives, Milwaukee Public Library, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

²Richard S. Davis, Fifty Years of Architecture - The House of Eschweiler, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1943, unpagued.

³Ibid.

⁴Mark A. Latus and Mary Ellen Young, Downtown Milwaukee, Copyright 1978, Milwaukee Landmarks Commission.

⁵Howard R. Klueter and James J. Lorence, Woodlot and Ballot Box, Marathon County in the Twentieth Century, Copyright 1977, Marathon County Historical Society, Wausau, Wisconsin, Worzalla Publishing Company, Stevens Point, Wisconsin.

⁶Ibid., p. 32.

⁷Ibid., p. 33.

⁸Ibid., p. 114.

⁹Ibid., p. 117.

¹⁰Walking Tour of Historical Homes, Wausau, Wisconsin 1872-1972, Wausau Chamber of Commerce.

¹¹Dictionary of Wisconsin Biography, State Historical Society of Wisconsin, Madison, Wisconsin, 1960, p. 36; M. M. Quafe, Wisconsin: Its History and Its People, S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, Chicago, Illinois, 1924.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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| DATE ENTERED | MAY 1 1980 |

Eschweiler Thematic Resources of Marathon County, Wisconsin

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Addendum: Social Activity

The Joseph Dessert Library and the Marathon County Fairgrounds have additional significance as sites of social activity in their respective communities. The public-spirited manner in which Dessert endowed the library carried over into its use throughout the years as a center of social and cultural activity, to a degree characteristic of a town hall or community center. Plays and small entertainments were often held in the second-floor auditorium. Library usage continues downstairs to this day in a setting essentially unchanged since its construction.

The scene of yearly county fairs, the Fairgrounds are closely allied with regional identity and agricultural activity in the area. Set apart from the city in a park setting, the grounds are given an added festive emphasis. Rarely are such areas so well-tended and preserved.

¹²Ibid., p. 47. Yawkey founded Yawkey & Lee Lumber Company in 1889, was president of the Hazelhurst & Southeastern Railway Company and the Yawkey-Bissell Lumber Company, vice-president of the Wisconsin Box Company, first president of the Marathon Paper Mills Company in 1909, and in 1912 was elected vice-president of Wausau Paper Mills Company in Brokau, Wisconsin.

