

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received AUG 5 1981

date entered SEP 3 1981

1. Name

historic Scottsbluff Carnegie Library (SF11-10)

and/or common West Nebraska Arts Center

2. Location

street & number 106 East 18th Street not for publication

city, town Scottsbluff vicinity of congressional district Third

state Nebraska code 31 county Scotts Bluff code 157

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: arts center

4. Owner of Property

name City of Scottsbluff

street & number City Hall

city, town Scottsbluff vicinity of state Nebraska

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds, Scotts Bluff County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Gering state Nebraska

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records

city, town _____ state _____

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The library building is located in a commercial area of Scottsbluff (1980 pop. 14,130), the urban center of the Nebraska Panhandle.

The library is a one-story-over-raised basement, brick, rectangular building. The original 1922 building is the 40 x 28 foot section on the western end, designed by R. A. Bradley of Hastings. The original entrance is located on the west with two round-arched, double-hung, multi-paned windows, and double-leaf doors surmounted by a transom and fanlight. The roof is flat, and a parapet with entablature rises above the walls. The basement is separated by a stone water table, and the brick is laid in bands. The north and south windows of the original building are double-hung with 12-over-1 panes.

The 62-foot addition, built in 1936 by the W.P.A., was designed by architect O. J. Hehnke of Scottsbluff. The addition maintains the original material, parapet, cornice, basement, and window lines. The windows are paired but are otherwise similar to the originals. The new entrance on the north is more prominent than the original, with paired pilasters and pediment.

The building housed the public library until 1966. Since that time the West Nebraska Arts Center has occupied the building. Plans were prepared in January, 1981, for interior renovation and architectural barrier removal. The elevator and other facilities will be located in a proposed addition on the east which will maintain the parapet, window, and basement line, and duplicate the paired windows (see drawing).

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1921–22; 1936 **Builder/Architect** R. A. Bradley, Hastings; O. J. Hehnke, Scottsbluff

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Scottsbluff Public Library is significant as one of the few remaining buildings with unique architectural features from the early period of Scottsbluff's growth. Constructed through a grant from the Carnegie Corporation, it is one of the last Carnegie libraries constructed in Nebraska. Architecturally it is one of a minority of Carnegie libraries in Nebraska erected with an off-center entrance. The building reflects the fast growth of Scottsbluff: the city expanded enough from the time of the Carnegie Corporation's initial approval in 1917 until construction began in 1921 to warrant a larger structure; more space was needed within a few years of construction and the Works Progress Administration funded a large addition to the building in 1936.

In most parts of the country, a building constructed in 1921 would not be a product of the early period of a city's development; however, in Scottsbluff this is the case. Scotts Bluff County is located in the most western tier of counties in Nebraska, and the city of Scottsbluff is one of the youngest cities in the state. The Lincoln Land Co., a subsidiary of the Burlington Railroad, platted the town when the railroad was laid through the area in 1900. The new town boomed a few years later when irrigation and the raising and processing of sugar beets were introduced in the North Platte River valley (Scottsbluff and the North Platte Valley, pp. 7–8). In its second decade of existence, Scottsbluff was developing as the urban center of the Nebraska Panhandle and became the wholesale and warehouse center for western Nebraska, a position it continues to hold today.

The first library in Scottsbluff was the Laura M. Woodford Club organized by local women. The success of the privately-owned library encouraged the City Council to establish a city-funded library in 1916. The new Library Board requested a construction grant from the Carnegie Corporation the same year. After the city met the required conditions, the Carnegie Corporation authorized a grant of \$12,500 on June 6, 1917, the second to the last city in Nebraska to be awarded a Carnegie grant.¹ After the entry of the United States into the First World War, it was decided to postpone construction until the end of the war.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Scottsbluff South, NE

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 1 3 | 6 1 1 | 1 6 0 | 4 6 | 3 5 | 3 6 0
Zone Easting Northing

B | |
Zone Easting Northing

C | |

D | |

E | |

F | |

G | |

H | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 12, Block 1, Original Town Plat, City of Scottsbluff, Nebraska.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Penelope Chatfield, Preservation Historian

organization Nebraska State Historical Society

date April, 1981

street & number 1500 R Street

telephone 402/471-3850

city or town Lincoln

state Nebraska

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Marion D. Knott

7/24/81

title Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

date

For HCERS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register

date

9/3/81

John A. Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	AUG 5 1981
DATE ENTERED	SEP 3 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

In 1919, the city had grown at such a rate that the Library Board requested more funds for a larger building from the Carnegie Corporation. James Bertram, secretary of the Corporation, requested that the project be delayed until the 1920 census returns were available to prove the increase in size. The census showed a considerable increase, and the Carnegie Corporation changed the grant to \$15,000 on May 20, 1920. The approval of the architectural plans by the Carnegie Corporation required over a year of correspondence, many revisions, and finally a new plan. Construction began in 1921, and the building was completed in April, 1922.

The building was out-grown almost immediately, and the Library Board requested additional space three years later. The Carnegie Corporation was contacted, but their construction grants had been discontinued. It was 1936 before the new addition, which was larger than the original building, was built by the Works Progress Administration.

The building is a vernacular Neo-Classical building, a style typical of civic architecture, including Carnegie libraries, in this period. It is, however, one of the few Carnegie libraries in the state with an assymmetrical entrance. Only ten of Nebraska's sixty-two recorded Carnegie libraries have off-center entrances. This design is similar to one of the floorplans recommended by the Carnegie Corporation in its 1911 booklet, "Notes on Library Bldings" (sic). The Scottsbluff library resembles Plan F: the entrance is off-center, a vestibule has stairs up to first floor and down to the basement; the dimensions are similar. For all plans, the Carnegie Corporation advocated a one-story-with-raised-basement, brick, rectangular structure. It is perhaps understandable that even this second plan caused concern with the Carnegie Corporation. Plan F was designed for one of the smaller library buildings, and a \$15,000 grant was one of the largest Nebraska grants. Only four cities (Beatrice, Grand Island, Lincoln, and South Omaha) received larger grants² and all of these were from the period 1900 to 1902 when Andrew Carnegie was more inclined to fund larger, more ostentatious buildings, and standards were not yet established.

The 1936 addition was sensitively designed to maintain key elements of the original building. The parapet, window, water table, and entablature lines are the same. The new entrance has a more prominent classical vocabulary, with paired pilasters and a pediment. Little is known about the architects; Robert A. Bradley (1872-1929) practiced in Hastings, Nebraska, for nearly twenty years, and O. J. Hehne practiced in Scottsbluff.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	AUG 5 1981
DATE ENTERED	SEP 3 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

Footnotes

-
1. For information on the Carnegie grants in Nebraska, see the NRHP nomination for the North Bend Carnegie Library, Dodge County, Nebraska.
 2. George S. Bobinski. Carnegie Libraries. (Chicago: American Library Ass'n., 1969), pp. 207-242.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	SEP 3 1981
DATE ENTERED	SEP 3 1981

CONTINUATION SHEET Significance ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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

Downing-Leach Architects & Planners. "Architectural Barrier Removal and Renovation Feasibility Study for the West Nebraska Arts Center, Scottsbluff, Nebraska." Typescript, 1981.

Green, Thomas L., ed. Scottsbluff and the North Platte Valley. Scottsbluff Golden Jubilee Celebration Committee, 1950.

Nesbit, Marguerite. "Nebraska and Carnegie Libraries." MS. and scrapbook, 1930. Filed at Nebraska State Library Commission, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Shonsey, Michael, Executive Director, West Nebraska Arts Center. Information supplied on Historic Sites Survey Form, March 17, 1979.

Drawing #1
Scottsbluff Carnegie Library/West
Nebraska Arts Center,
Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska
Proposed north elevation.
Prepared by Downing-Leach Architects
and Planners, Boulder, Colorado, 1981.

SEP 3 1981



proposed north elevation



