

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900A). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Forest Lodge Library  
other names/site number Cable Community House

**2. Location**

street & number 13450 County Highway M N/A not for publication  
city or town Cable N/A vicinity  
state Wisconsin code WI County Bayfield code 007 zip code 54821

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Alicia J. Green  
Signature of certifying official/Title  
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer-WI

May 21, 2001  
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  
( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau



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Forest Lodge Library  
Cable, Bayfield County, Wisconsin

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**INTRODUCTION**

The Forest Lodge Library, in Cable, Wisconsin, was built in 1925-26. Originally intended as a meeting place and only secondarily as a library, it has played a significant role in the lives of women and girls in the Cable area. It was designed by its donor, Mrs. Mary Livingston Griggs, working with a local builder, Elmer McKay, and is dedicated to the memory of Mrs. Griggs' mother, Mary Potts Livingston. Today, Mrs. Mary Griggs Burke, daughter of Mrs. Griggs and granddaughter of Mrs. Livingston, continues her mother's interest in and support of the building. These three generations of women have made their summer home at nearby Lake Namekagon, where Mrs. Livingston and her husband turned a former lumber camp into a grand estate, and where their daughter and granddaughter spent large parts of their childhoods. The log construction of the estate buildings, especially the lodge, built in 1893, became the inspiration for the Rustic Style of the Forest Lodge Library. The library is locally significant for its rustic log construction and fine detailing, for its association with Mary Livingston Griggs, who made lasting contributions to the development of the community, and for its role in the social development of the village.

The building is now attached by a glassed-in walkway to the Cable Natural History Museum, an award-winning building that houses offices and natural history displays aimed primarily toward the area's children. The Forest Lodge Library building is owned by the Museum. The library collection is owned by the Town of Cable and the building functions as the public library for the Town. The connected Museum is considered a non-contributing addition to the Forest Lodge Library.

**DESCRIPTION**

The Forest Lodge Library is virtually unaltered from its original appearance and design. The building is a simple rectangle, 22' x 46', with an entry porch, 5' x 5', at its south, gable end. The low-pitched roof, originally covered in roll roofing, is currently wood shakes. The rafters are exposed under the eaves. The walls are round pine logs, approximately 12" in diameter, stained brown and chinked with oakum and white cement mortar. At the corners of the building the logs are saddle-notched and project about 10" beyond the corners. The logs have been adzed to form insets for the 4' x 4' windows and the two doors. The axial walls are interrupted ten feet from the south end of the building by an intersecting log interior partition; the ends of the partition logs project from the east and west exterior walls, beginning above their lower two logs. The eleven 4' x 4' windows are glazed with ten panes in the upper sash, with a single pane below. In the center of the north wall is an imposing fieldstone chimney.

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The front entry porch is centered on the south wall. About four feet lower than the roof of the main building, its roof has the same pitch, and its log walls, constructed of smaller logs than the walls of the main part of the building, project a smaller distance at the corners, preserving a fine sense of proportion. The roof of the main building, supported by the extended top logs of the axial walls, projects to shelter almost the whole depth of the entry porch; in turn, the porch roof projects to shelter the fieldstone stoop. Leading to the stoop are fieldstone steps and balustrade, with rustic railings made from curved branches. An undated photo shows a slender log extending vertically from the roof of the entry porch. It is anchored to the ridge of the main part of the building and rises some five or six feet above the ridge. This log is no longer there.

Inside the building, the log walls have been adzed flat. From the entry porch, the visitor arrives in a reception room formed by a transverse interior log wall 10' from the front wall of the building, and by an axial log wall that separates the reception room from a small kitchen in the southwest corner of the building. Except for two windows, the reception room is completely lined with (non-original) bookshelves, which also cover a doorway into the kitchen. A door opposite the front entrance leads into the main room of the building. Facing this door from the north wall of the room is a large fieldstone fireplace with a cast concrete mantle. Along the east wall are four windows; on the facing wall a solid door covered by a bulletin board replaces one of the corresponding windows. East of the fireplace in the north wall is the only substantial alteration to the building: the entrance to the walkway leading to the Cable Natural History Museum.

Overhead are exposed pole rafters and pine sheathing. There is no framing under the roof but a transverse steel cable has been anchored to the top logs near the center of the room and a pair of axial cables is anchored to the ridgepole. Two hand wrought chandeliers hang from short lengths of log which depend from the ridge pole, which is a log approximately 8" in diameter. The pendant logs are notched to guide the axial cables that pass on either side of them.

The 10" deep bookshelves that virtually line the entire room are made of halved logs supported on small ends of branches that have been mortised into the log walls. Bookends, also mortised into the log walls and into the shelves, are formed from smaller branches. The flooring is narrow width maple. A patch just inside the door from the reception room shows the former position of a large heat grate. This has been replaced with two vertical heat vents against the partition wall in the reception room and the kitchen, respectively, with grates opening into the main room above the level of the door lintel. The room was originally furnished with two long, hand made maple library tables and a matching desk, and a number of wooden chairs. The latter have been enameled. One of the tables and the desk remain and a number of additional bookshelves, book carts and small cupboards have been added to house the

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overflowing book collection. Bookcases under the windows replace the original window seats.

Against the east wall of the main room, in the corner formed by the east wall and the wall separating the reception room, is a transverse stair leading down to a partial basement under the reception room and the kitchen. The stairwell is entered by a rustic gate made of 4' logs; a matching railing extends along the stairwell to the east wall. The steep, narrow stair turns at its foot to enter the basement. In the basement is a closet containing a toilet, and a modern gas furnace. An oil tank indicates that there was once an oil furnace. Correspondence (see below, in DESIGN HISTORY) mentions provision for getting coal and wood into the basement, for a "pipeless" furnace.

The kitchen is reached by a door in the southwest corner of the main room. It has a sink with a cold water tap and built-in cupboards, which may not be original. The kitchen is approximately 6' by 10', and has windows facing west and south.

#### DESIGN HISTORY

Correspondence concerning the origins of the building has been preserved in the files of the Cable Natural History Museum, (CNHM.) Letters from Mrs. Griggs' husband, Theodore W. Griggs, a wholesale grocer in St. Paul, indicate that the original idea for the building and its overall design came from Mrs. Griggs herself. Mr. Griggs then had a St. Paul architect, ("Mr. Stem, one of our leading local architects...") draw up blueprints for the building.<sup>1</sup> These drawings are preserved at the Museum. Upon examination of the drawings and the correspondence during construction, however, it appears that Mrs. Griggs and Mr. McKay were guided by their own conception of the building. Specifically, the drawings and the building do not agree on the foundation, the number, placement and size of the windows (Mrs. Griggs insisted that they be the same dimensions as those at her lodge), the heating system and plumbing, nor the dimensions of the partial basement (the building does not have the pressure tank nor the heating vents shown in the plan, also the placement of the furnace and the toilet

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<sup>1</sup> The plans show that Stem intended the building to reflect the Craftsman style. Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin, (CRMP) Vol 2, "Architecture" 2-24 notes that American Craftsman Style (1900-1920) "...was a philosophical descendant of the English Arts and Crafts movement of the nineteenth century (and)...demonstrated (a) natural aesthetic in distinctive, well-crafted, wood houses..." Among the characteristics mentioned are "broad gable or hipped roofs,...decorative brackets or rafters, prominent chimneys and simplified Queen Anne sash." Under "Bungalow (1910-1940)", 2-26, CRMP states, "Philosophically linked with William Morris' Aesthetics (or Arts and Crafts) Movement in England, Craftsman tenets included the honest use of materials and expression of structure, inspiration from natural forms, and quality hand craftsmanship. An illusion of rusticity, conveyed by elements like log rafters, characterizes Craftsman detailing in Bungalows."

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room in the basement are not as shown, and the plans show the basement only under the reception room, not the kitchen.) The decorative details differ also: the plan shows an Arts-and-Crafts bracket supporting the front door hood, bargeboards extending upward at the roof peak of both the building and the portico to form a decorative "x", and a plank door. The actual door hood is supported by outsized logs extending from the top ranks of the side walls of the porch. The plans show a concrete slab; however, a stone foundation supporting joists and a hardwood floor was substituted. There is no decorative detail on the eaves and the door is made of shiplap set on a bias. The plan shows the logs in the walls projecting at the corners in an irregular "rusticated" fashion, but in fact they have been carefully trimmed to form a precise vertical. The plan shows bookcases only under windows flanking the fireplace in the north wall, but bookcases were built into the walls between the windows on both axial walls and from floor level on either side of the fireplace. In the west wall, in place of one of the regularly spaced windows, is a door, also of biased shiplap. This door, which was apparently never used, was ordered by Mrs. Griggs during construction when it appeared that an outhouse might have to be substituted for the basement toilet. Finally, the chimney on the north wall is shown in the architect's drawing to be the same height as the brick chimney near the front of the building, which serves the furnace. Looking at the stonework from outside the building, the chimney appears to have been raised about 4 feet, probably soon after construction and to create a better draft.

In March, Mr. Griggs writes that Mrs. Griggs is in California, and he has turned the drawings over to Mr. Stem, "to have same finished up to scale." The building is to be 46' by 22', with windows "nearly the same size as in our big cabin." He asks McKay to start cutting the logs, although as to the site and Mr. Drummond, who is expected to sell or donate the site, "I haven't the slightest idea..."

On April 2, 1925, McKay writes a four-page letter to Mr. Griggs, enclosing an estimate for a building with a partial basement and a stone foundation. He asks whether sawed rafters or poles are wanted. (Mr. Griggs opted for poles.) Logs are to be peeled, oiled and varnished, hewed on the inside, and on both sides for partition walls. Logs are to be spiked together every two feet with 3/4" iron spikes. The total is \$3120 plus the cost of a well and pump, 200' of rope oakum, (plus freight, no charge for cartage,) joists and hardwood flooring, and a stone foundation. McKay remarks, "It is quite hard to give the exact cost as there is no specifications with the plans."

There is no way of knowing how complete the correspondence on file may be. However, there is no indication that, as changes were made, the architect was consulted. A letter from the State Board of Health to Mrs. Griggs informs her that while a chemical toilet may be permissible, it will not be allowed in a basement.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In an interview (8/24/2000) with lifetime local resident and newspaperwoman Mrs. Charlotte Reynolds, she stated that

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As late as August 8, 1925, T.W. Griggs writes to McKay,

“Circumstances, as you are undoubtedly aware of, have made it impossible for me to attend to matters properly. Likewise the questions that you have asked me in your report and favor of July 28th, I reiterated to Mrs. Griggs and doubt very much if she has been able to give them a thought on account of the recent death of Mrs. Livingston....

“You will have to use your best judgment in trying to carry out the plans and building of the Community House. I wasn’t surprised on hearing of delays owing to Mr. D’s habits. Confidentially, procrastination seems to be his greatest fault, but otherwise he is O.K. with me. However, I have not had anything in writing since his letter of last winter in which he stated what he was willing to do. Probably sometime after the building is completed he will have deeded over the property to us. (?)

“You suggested a basement under the entire building. How much more do you think this would have added to the cost of the building?

“...I am sure Mrs. Griggs made no definite arrangements with any particular one to assist in the building of the Community House. However, presume there are those who may be capable and would like to assist in the work and at less wages than the regular scale. You might inquire around and see if there are any such individuals, but do not let it delay in any way the completion of the building at as early a date as possible.

“Hoping to hear from you that things are going along more rapidly and all well...”

If he found the situation a bit dicey, McKay nonetheless proceeded to build.

At the end of November, 1925 he submitted a statement “of Community house as first talked of,” showing the contract price of \$3120, plus “Extras approved of by Mr. Griggs,” including a “double roof, well, stone wall instead of concrete above ground,” coming to a total of \$3584.21. He then lists payments received in July, September, October and November totaling \$3087.22.

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there was never an outhouse connected with the library. She believes that whatever the obstacles may have been to having a toilet in the basement, they were overcome during construction.

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A separate listing shows the breakdown of the \$3120, including labor to peel the logs, \$60, hewing, \$110, rolling up, boring and spiking, \$150, 2000 linear feet of 12" logs, \$360, iron spikes, \$50. Labor costs for McKay at \$4.00 per day and for Harley Simington and John Cancamp at \$3.25 and J.C. Gray at \$8.00 (was he the mason?) are carefully broken out into work on the Community House and "for Mrs. Griggs." The addition of board, at 80 cents a day, only for the days billed to the Community House suggests that none of the workers lived in Cable. \$12 was billed for hay and feed for a team.

In February of 1926, McKay billed Mrs. Griggs for labor building tables and a magazine rack... "no charge for oil, sandpaper, and a reduced rate due to the time of year..." In April, 1926, Mrs. Griggs writes to McKay, "A man is coming from St. Paul...to landscape the property ...please plough and fence...a catalog is enclosed...I want the fence to show as little as possible. There would be one gate and I thought you might have the ordering and advantage of wholesale prices...Kindly let me know if you can do this work at once." (An undated picture in the files shows a chain link fence, which no longer exists.)

#### SETTING

The Forest Lodge Library is located near the center of the village of Cable, on County Highway M, which is the main route eastward from the village toward Lake Namekagon. The library is on the north side of the road, facing south. To the west is a private residence between the library and the beginning of the business district, which continues for 1 1/2 blocks to State Highway 63. To the east of the library when it was built, there was an adjoining residential lot. East of this lot was a public square. "M" continued east and then took a left turn to the north, framing the square, and, after a block, made a right turn eastward. About 1960 this double turn was "improved" into a wide s-curve in the road, which now forms the east and south boundaries of the Library/Cable Natural History Museum property. To the east, in what remains of the square, is a war memorial and flag pole. To the south is a church. Cable was once an incorporated village but in recent years the taxpayers found the cost of maintaining a separate village burdensome and it is now an unincorporated part of Cable township. The population of the village is about 6-700. The population of Cable township in 1990 was 828. The area is a popular resort for vacationers from the Twin Cities and elsewhere. The village boasts a post office, a community center, a supermarket and general store, a restaurant and two gas stations as well as a real estate office, a doctor, a lawyer and a chiropractor, and four small stores and boutiques. The two-story school, built in 1912 and once the pride of the village, has become an antique mall.



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**INTEGRITY**

The Forest Lodge Library appears to stand alone in its wooded setting. The artfully designed addition to the north is a single story, glass and concrete block building; it is constructed so that it blends almost invisibly into the landscape elements surrounding it. Only when standing a few feet of the glassed-in walkway between the two wings can one observe that they are connected. As a result, the Cable Natural History Museum addition does not detract from the integrity of the Forest Lodge Library.

Forest Lodge Library  
Name of Property

Bayfield  
County and State

Wisconsin

## 8. Statement of Significance

**Applicable National Register Criteria**  
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Criteria Considerations**  
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Social History

**Period of Significance**

1925-1950

**Significant Dates**

1925-1926

**Significant Person**  
(Complete if Criterion B is marked)

Griggs, Mary Livingston

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Stem, Allen H.  
McKay, Elmer

## Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Forest Lodge Library  
Town of Cable, Bayfield County, Wisconsin

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**INTRODUCTION**

The Forest Lodge Library, in Cable, Wisconsin, is a Rustic Style log building constructed in 1925 to serve the people of the village as a community meeting place, a warming place for winter visitors, and a library. The building was donated to the village by Mary Livingston Griggs. It is dedicated to Mrs. Griggs' mother, Mary Steele Livingston, who died just as construction was begun. The activities in the library were supported by Mrs. Griggs and were an important part of the social and educational life of the village, especially for women and girls. Since 1971 it has been a part of the Cable Natural History Museum, which owns the property and has constructed a building that is attached to the library by an enclosed walkway.<sup>3</sup> The daughter of the donor, Mary Griggs Burke, continues to support the activities of the library and museum through the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke foundations. Since 1994 the library has been officially the public library of Cable Township. The building is locally significant under Criterion C as a nicely detailed example of the Rustic Style, for its association with Mary Livingston Briggs who is important in the history of Cable and the surrounding area, and for its influence on the social development of the village. The period of significance runs to 1950 following the National Register 50 year guideline.

**BACKGROUND**

Cable is located in Bayfield County, one of the northernmost tier of counties in Wisconsin, part of the area once covered by a vast forest of white pine and, in the early part of the 20th century, the object of efforts by the State of Wisconsin to attract farmers to what was known as the "cutover." Southern Bayfield County, where Cable is located, is not suitable for farming and has grown up into a new forest of mixed birch, poplar, pine, and fir. Tourism and vacation and retirement homes are mainstays of the economy. Until recently the village of Cable was incorporated, but the governing municipality is now the township of the same name. The village was created by the Northern Wisconsin Railway, which constructed a line across the county in 1880. Platted by the railroad and originally known as Gunderson, it was re-named by Ransom Reed Cable, President of the Rock Island Railroad, who visited it in the 1880s.<sup>4</sup> The town achieved local prominence, according to lifelong resident and newspaperwoman Charlotte Reynolds<sup>5</sup>, because it is at the top of a long rise from Lake Superior.

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<sup>3</sup> "The Origin of the Cable Natural History Museum" by Mary Griggs Burke, Manuscript at the Cable Natural History Museum, c1990?

<sup>4</sup> Cable Cullings (Cable, Wisconsin Centennial, 1880-1980) Hayward, WI: North Country Association, 1980? pp. 14-19.

<sup>5</sup> Interviewed August 24, 2000 in Cable.

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Trains coming from Ashland, to the north, had to have two engines, necessitating a turntable and other maintenance facilities at Cable. Because it was a contact point to the outside world Cable became comparatively cosmopolitan from an early date; where nearby towns were almost exclusively of one ethnicity, and had one church apiece, Cable had a mixture of residents, and had four churches. The village built its first school in 1901, and a brick, two and one-half story high school in 1913.<sup>6</sup>

Lumbering was the main occupation until about 1908, when the cutover was swept by fire. Soon after, the area began to attract vacationers, mainly from Minneapolis/St. Paul.<sup>7</sup> In 1913 the Town of Cable built a hall to replace the Woodmens' Hall, which burned in 1912. The hall was used for public events, elections and local court.<sup>8</sup> Before the construction of the Forest Lodge Library, the women of Cable had already done their best to provide a library. Soon after the turn of the century, volunteers, realizing that the depot was Cable's contact with the outside world, rented a room near the depot, and stocked it mainly with newspapers and magazines which passengers could read while they waited for the train.<sup>9</sup>

**THE LIVINGSTON/GRIGGS/BURKE FAMILIES AND THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF CABLE**

Despite, or perhaps in aid of, local efforts to relieve the stark conditions of life in Cable, Mrs. Griggs was moved to help and in early 1925 she wrote to Mr. F. H. Drummond, who owned land in the center of the village:

“For sometime I have had in my mind the idea of building a Community House in Cable and have now decided definitely to build one this spring. It is to be a three room log cabin 22 ft. x 45 ft. The large room, to be used for a library, readying room, (sic; reading room?) club room, and general meeting place, a small kitchen and a rest room for the use of people either motoring through or coming into town for shopping. I imagine it will be especially useful in winter to those who come in from outlying parts.

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<sup>6</sup> Cable Cullings, p. 122.

<sup>7</sup> Cable Cullings, p. 47.

<sup>8</sup> Cable Cullings, p. 94.

<sup>9</sup> Charlotte Reynolds, August 24, 2000.

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I am chiefly interested in the children of Cable so that they may be given in some part those opportunities in life which I feel they so sadly lack. I am planning on having some one responsible person in the House whenever it is open, who can be of help to anyone wishing to use the rest room or library and to care for and advise the children.

I have not yet, however, procured a site for the building and wish to inquire whether you will be willing to sell me a small lot in the corner across from the town hall where the Community tree stood. If not that perhaps one of the other lots to your square. I promise you will not regret it as I am planing to have the Community House as artistic as possible, on the outside as well as the inside and shall also do some plating around it so that it will be an improvement to surrounding property.

Kindly let me have an answer as soon as possible as shall have to have logs hauled in before the road gets too bad. Please pardon me for bothering you again about this matter but I feel you are interested and I know that it is a small beginning of better things for the children there.”

We have the letter as an attachment to a letter from Mrs. Griggs’ husband, Theodore W. Griggs, to Elmer McKay. From handwritten notes on the letter and another attached letter to Mr. Drummond we learn that Mr. Griggs was about to leave for California. Evidently McKay had expressed some concern about whether the site for the library was confirmed, as he was already seeing to getting the logs cut and hauled. Mr. Griggs writes to Mr. Drummond on April 14, 1925:

“Just received a letter from Mrs. Griggs regarding her Cable Community House or whatever it is to be called. Says she has received a very nice letter and favorable reply from you to her epistle of March 24, 1925 in which she outlined the whole idea.

Naturally, I am extremely interested in the success of this worthy and needful enterprise especially for the present and future good of the youths in Cable and nearby vicinity. As Mrs. Griggs is going to erect an appropriate and attractive building, the lot and location of same is of vital importance - I presume you have given her the terms or price of the necessary plot of ground for this building. I believe she is most anxious to buy opposite the town hall or some lot in your center square convenient and centrally located for all...”

Griggs then puts a bit of pressure: “...I would appreciate some definite figures on the subject from you...Please write me (in California)...I can then discuss the matter further with Mrs. Griggs and come to some definite arrangement and agreement on hurrying the building through...It is quite gratifying to know the assistance promised by others and how many worthy ones are willing to donate their help...in

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pushing this matter to a completion..." And he adds, "For your information beg to say that Mr. Stem, one of our leading local architects, has drawn up the plans. Elmer McKay has had them in his hands for sometime and is now looking after the necessary logging, and will do the hauling, and construct the building." Drummond was well known for his procrastination but he had another reason to delay. According to Mrs. Reynolds, he feared that the building would be donated to the village and was sure that the village fathers would then sell it. But these difficulties were, apparently, overcome. The lot, which Drummond seems to have donated, was not directly on the square but one lot away from its northwest corner.

Both of Mrs. Griggs' parents were prominent members of society in Minneapolis/ St. Paul.<sup>10</sup> Her mother, Mary Steele Potts, was the daughter of the head surgeon at Fort Snelling in Minneapolis. She married Crawford Livingston, railroad entrepreneur and a Wall Street broker. They lived in a large Italianate house in St. Paul.<sup>11</sup> Chauncey Griggs, President of the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Company, built an elaborate Romanesque house in St. Paul in 1883. His son, Theodore W. Griggs, married Crawford Livingston's daughter, Mary, in 1915. Both families were, the history notes, "from the old Northeast." Theodore Griggs owned a wholesale grocery firm in St. Paul. The Lodge at Lake Namekagon was begun in 1889 when Crawford Livingston and a group from Chicago, "The Chicago Club," leased the quarters of a lumber camp. The lodge was built in 1893 and added to in 1902 and 1904. Other families began to build summer homes on the lake. Mary Livingston Griggs was deeded the property in 1916. She built the guesthouse and enlarged the boathouse. Her daughter, Mary Griggs Burke, acquired the property in 1943. Additional acreage was acquired in 1937, and some smaller parcels were subdivided or given away.<sup>12</sup>

Mary Griggs Burke wrote in 1999:<sup>13</sup>

"I hope it is apparent how much I love and value Forest Lodge...The original log cabin, built in 1893, is full of memories for me...In 1925 my grandparents both died and mother's siblings

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<sup>10</sup> "Crawford Livingston, Colonel Chauncey W. Griggs and Their Roles in St. Paul History" Ramsey County History, Ramsey County (Minnesota) Historical Society, 34,3 Fall, 1999 pp. 4,18.

<sup>11</sup> Pictured in "Crawford Livingston, Col. Chauncey W. Griggs and Their Roles in St. Paul History," p.4 op.cit. The Griggs house is shown on p. 18.

<sup>12</sup> Matteson, Robert Eliot, A Search for Adventure and Service, Part VI, A New Life in the North 1922-1988. np,nd. copyright 1989. imprint: REM, pp. 130, 269, 270 (In CNHM files)

<sup>13</sup> "Reflections on Forest Lodge," On The Land, Midwest newsletter of the Trust for Public Land, Winter/Spring 1999.

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moved east leaving her in possession of Forest Lodge.”

“Mother learned to hunt with her father and brothers but she also developed a great love of the land. After her marriage to my father -Theodore W. Griggs - and my birth she continued to spend much of her time there and I grew up filled with a similar love of the country but without a desire to hunt.

“Mother’s affection for Forest Lodge extended to the nearby town of Cable and its people - particularly its children...The most important thing she did for the town was to build a heated log community house, which eventually became the Forest Lodge Library, on land given her by the local banker Mr. Drummond. She did this in honor of her mother, Mary Potts Livingston.<sup>14</sup> Mother continued to keep this building in good condition until her death...”

From this short memoir it can be seen that the succession of female descendants that began with Mary Potts Livingston has had a large impact on Cable. The establishment of an enclave of wealthy vacationers on Lake Namekagon has affected the history of the entire area and the most important historical resource that recalls that influence is Forest Lodge itself, the estate that began with the lumber camp and has grown in magnificence over the years. The estate was deeded to the US Forest Service in March 1999. A bulletin put out by the Forest Service<sup>15</sup> states: “The buildings and their surrounding cultural landscape will likely qualify for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Forest Lodge buildings are unique Rustic Style structures...” But for the village, the Forest Lodge Library is the resource that best recalls the impact of Mary Livingston Griggs, whose work was continued by her daughter Mary Griggs Burke, on several generations of its children and on the social life of Cable. Almost thirty years after they ended, the annual Christmas parties which Mrs. Griggs began during the Depression, and paid for, that were held first in the town hall and later in the school, are remembered in detail: each child received a gift, at first a stocking with an apple, and orange, nuts and raisins, and a small box of chocolate cremes. There was food and, of course, decorations. People came in from the country in sleighs. Later the women of the village made cakes for the Christmas party. The custom continued into the 1960s, but after Mrs. Griggs’ death, in 1967,

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<sup>14</sup> A letter from T.W. Griggs to Elmer McKay, dated August 14, 1925, indicates that there was to be a memorial cornerstone, dedicated to Mary Livingston. At the southwest corner of the buildings, the logs are cut out, leaving a space, but according to CNHM director Allison Slavick, the stone “never happened.”

<sup>15</sup> USDA Forest Service, Chequamegon - Nicolet National Forest, “Forest Lodge - A Conservation Legacy,” (bulletin) August 2000.

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Forest Lodge Library  
Town of Cable, Bayfield County, Wisconsin

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the school board decided the affair had gotten out of hand, and it was discontinued.<sup>16</sup>

At the library, Mrs. Griggs started a Girl Scout Group, and a 4-H Club. To the 4-H Club she gave seeds and lessons on how to plant. On at least one occasion she took the Girl Scouts to her home in St. Paul. She made movies of the children visiting Forest Lodge. The Women's Club, which had existed before the library was built, took over working for the library, although Mrs. Griggs paid a full-time librarian. Velma Knapp worked there for 42 years, and was succeeded by Katie Flowers. Mrs. Griggs gave the club a set of "beautiful dishes" for the meetings and teas that were held in the library, and was a member, although she "did not really mix," according to Mrs. Reynolds. The club had book reviews and music. Membership was limited to 30, and was dominated by the teachers and ministers' wives. Books were bought both by the Women's Club and by Mrs. Griggs; once a year books were received from the State of Wisconsin. The library was open every day from 10 to 5. Mrs. Flowers remembers spending "a lot" of time in the library as a child. The school brought the children to get books during the day, as many could not have come after school, and there was no library at the school. She remembers that it was a comfortable place in winter, with a screened off area with a couch in the small room at the front, and seats under the windows in the main room. Through World War II the fireplace was used during meetings. For a time the Lutheran Church met at the library. It was also a spot for townspeople to meet and chat, and for out-of-town visitors to take refuge from the cold and use the basement toilet facility. "Mrs. Griggs wanted the building used," she recalls.

In 1967, the same year that saw the last of the Christmas parties, Mary Griggs Burke, daughter of the founder of the Forest Lodge Library, helped to form the Cable Natural History Museum. The new organization was funded in large part through the Mary Livingston Griggs and Mary Griggs Burke foundations, but was organized as an independent entity, with a board of directors. Lois Nestel, a self-taught naturalist and 4-H leader who gave a summer lecture series at the Congregational Church and later at the Cable Community Center, became its first director. In 1971 the museum bought adjacent land and built a museum building, attached to the Forest Lodge Library by a glass-enclosed walkway.<sup>17</sup>

Both Mrs. Reynolds and Mrs. Flowers mentioned that the library was inspired by the buildings at Forest Lodge. Of Mrs. Griggs, Mrs. Reynolds recalls, "She wanted a treasure, in memory of her mother...She did her best to give Cable a glimpse of a better life...."

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<sup>16</sup> Interviews with Charlotte Reynolds and with long-time librarian Katie Flowers, August 24, 2000, in Cable.

<sup>17</sup> Mary Griggs Burke, "The Origin of the Cable Natural History Museum," manuscript, about 1990, in the files of the Cable Natural History Museum.



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The Forest Lodge Library is therefore significant under Criteria A and B, both for its association with Mary Griggs and in the area of social history. The library building served an important role in the life of the community. In addition to being the site of meetings for the local women's club, the Girl Scouts and the 4H, the building with its fireplace and public restrooms provided a warming station and facilities for visitors to Cable during the winter months. As a library, the building provided a valuable service to the community. As noted above, a rudimentary library existed at various locations before the construction of this building. However, after the Forest Lodge Library was built, this building centralized and expanded library services. Through the generosity of Mrs. Griggs, books were purchased and a librarian was employed. Through an arrangement with the local school, children were brought to the library during the school day to check out books. The building played a seminal role in the educational and social history of the community as a primary focus of efforts at social betterment.

Mary Livingston Griggs is significant under Criterion B in the area of social history. She was the benefactress who made the above amenities and services possible through her generosity and her interest in the well being of the community and its children. While Mary Griggs summer home is also located in this area, it is her association with the Forest Lodge Library that makes this property the resource most closely related to her ongoing interest in the community. It was through the activities sponsored by Mrs. Griggs at the library that she addressed her interest in the social development of Cable area residents, especially of its children. In addition to starting organized clubs for the children to join, and access to library materials, Mrs. Griggs paid for an annual Christmas party and small presents. Mary Griggs role as a benefactress reflects the broader effects of progressive era women in the areas of educational, social and cultural improvement.

The expressed fear of the local banker, Mr. Drummond, that the building, if put into actual public ownership, would soon be sold off,<sup>18</sup> serves to illustrate the discontinuity in historical process that Forest Lodge Library represents. (By contrast, Andrew Carnegie did not build libraries but rather created a process and funding by which towns could build and own libraries.) Forest Lodge Library was made possible because the building remained the property of the donor, who until recently, paid for its upkeep and staff.

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<sup>18</sup> Interview with Charlotte Reynolds, August 24, 2000, Cable.

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Forest Lodge Library  
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THE ARCHITECTURE OF FOREST LODGE LIBRARY

“...The mountain camp is coming to be regarded as almost a necessity for the business and professional man...Land in the wilderness is cheap, and a log cabin ...can be put up at comparatively trifling cost...it should... have a good sized living room with a wide stone fireplace...There are so many possibilities in (the) use of tree trunks, boughs and branches...in all sorts of contrivances and quaint decorative effects.”

This excerpt from a 1910 article opens with the argument that a retreat in the wilderness is necessary for the health of the harried businessman and goes on to sell the idea to his wife by illustrating the decorative effects appropriate to such a possession.<sup>19</sup> Not coincidentally, it appeared in a magazine devoted to the Craftsman style. The author was suggesting a camp in the Rockies, but the magazine, with a national circulation, no doubt served to promote the idea of a retreat elsewhere.

The notion that a camp might be “almost a necessity” indicates that by this date the idea had percolated to the middle class, who needed justifications for extravagance in a way that the very wealthy originators of the style probably never thought of. The Rustic Style has been described by Harvey H. Kaiser as the “logical, inevitable convergence of local craft traditions and readily available materials.”<sup>20</sup> He does mention similarities to the European chalet, but fails in this article to relate the Rustic Style to its roots in the eclectic romanticism of the time. In an earlier article<sup>21</sup> Kaiser dates the interior design tradition of the camps from 1870 to 1930 and states “...industrialists, financiers and railroaders played on the romantic tradition of the pioneering spirit and the simple life.” He gives credit to William West Durant for bringing the interior decorative style to its height in the 1870s, including the use of beeswax to preserve natural grain, white plaster chinking, massive granite fireplaces, and wrought iron light fixtures.

Once spread to the middle class, the idea of the health-giving qualities of a vacation in the wilderness was ripe for dissemination to the masses through the growing state and national park systems. And with it came the use of the Rustic Style in park structures. The National Park Service was created in 1916, and from the beginning there was concern that buildings should not intrude on the natural

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<sup>19</sup> Gant, Helen Lukens, “The Charm and Usefulness of a Mountain Camp” The Craftsman XVIII, 6 August 1910 pp 593,595

<sup>20</sup> “The Adirondack Rustic Style,” Old House Journal Jan/Feb 1983

<sup>21</sup> “Rustic Interiors of the Adirondack Camps,” Old House Journal, Jan/Feb 1990

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Town of Cable, Bayfield County, Wisconsin

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settings.<sup>22</sup> By the mid 1920s, Gilbert Stanley Underwood had decreed the style using logs and rough stone that would be used in landmark buildings at Bryce, Zion and the north rim of the Grand Canyon, and later, at Mt. Rainer, Yosemite and Yellowstone. Even before this, however, the Rustic Style was used nearer to Cable, at Minnesota's Itasca State Park. Douglas Lodge was built in 1905, using peeled logs, saddle notched corners, split stone foundation, log rafters and purlins.<sup>23</sup> By 1930 the Rustic Style was appearing in utilitarian structures as well, as for instance the railroad depot in Woodruff, Wisconsin, also not far from Cable,<sup>24</sup> which was "designed to resemble a log cottage, with the peeled pine logs coming from local sources. The fireplace and chimney are of native fieldstone..." The illustration shows crossed bargeboards forming an "X" above the roof ridge, in the same unexecuted design that architect Stem had specified for the Forest Lodge Library.

Thus it is not surprising that Mary Livingston Griggs, wanting, in 1925, to provide a glimpse of a better life to the people of Cable, would choose the Rustic Style for the library she donated. The hunting camp of her parent's day had been transformed into an estate in the Rustic Style favored by the wealthy in the Adirondacks. Now the style had begun to keep company with the urge toward social improvement and the emphasis on healthy living that characterized social thought in the era of Teddy Roosevelt and the suffragettes.

The Forest Lodge Library is an unusual Wisconsin example of a style which flourished in the Adirondacks from about 1870 to 1930.<sup>25</sup> These lavish summer "camps" built by wealthy families, were influenced by mid-nineteenth century romantic ideals of nature and craftsmanship as expressed by John Ruskin and Andrew Jackson Downing. The architectural style was codified at the end of the century as the Craftsman style which emphasized natural materials such as logs and fieldstone, exposed rafters, deeply overhanging eaves, and low roof pitch. After the turn of the century log construction appeared in more modest summer cottages and in the tourist and recreational buildings that burgeoned with the rise of the vacation automobile trip. The National Park Service adopted it in constructing park lodges and shelters. The Forest Lodge Library, built in 1925, is interesting in this regard because it was

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<sup>22</sup> Harrison, Laura Soulliere, Architecture in the Parks: National Historic Landmark Theme Study, Washington D.C. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1986

<sup>23</sup> Anderson, Rolf T. "Itasca State Park," Architecture Minnesota March/April 1991, p.38

<sup>24</sup> "The Midwest's Only Log Depot," The Fast Mail (newsletter) Twentieth Century Railroad Club, December, 1995, #295 p. 8

<sup>25</sup> Kaiser, Harvey H. "Rustic Interiors of the Adirondack Camps" Old House Journal, Jan/Feb 1990 and "The Adirondack Rustic Style" Old House Journal Jan/Feb 1983

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Town of Cable, Bayfield County, Wisconsin

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conceived by the owner of an estate built in the Adirondack style and was constructed by a local craftsman in interaction with, but not dictated by, a professional architect's plan.

**CONCLUSION**

The Forest Lodge Library, in Cable, Wisconsin, is a local example of the Rustic Style. The style was originally used by wealthy estate owners in the Adirondacks; here it was transferred directly to a building intended for public use in Wisconsin. By the time of the building's construction, the idea of rustic architecture had already spread beyond the world of the very wealthy to the upper middle class and then to State and National Park systems. In the case of the Forest Lodge Library, the owner of an estate, built in 1893 in the Adirondack Rustic Style of the 1870s and 1880s, undertook, in 1925, to construct a public building inspired by the Rustic Style of her estate. Elements of the style are seen at the library in its use of log construction and interior detailing, such as the large fieldstone fireplace and the split logs used for shelving.

The building today recalls the influence over many years of the donor, Mary Livingston Griggs, and continued her daughter, Mary Griggs Burke, on the social development of the village of Cable, and the impact of the library on the lives of school children and the village as a whole. It is significant for that influence, for its association with Mary Livingston Griggs, and for its Rustic Style architecture and furnishings.



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Town of Cable, Bayfield County, Wisconsin

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Forest Lodge Library  
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**Verbal Boundary Description**

The Forest Lodge Library and the Cable Natural History Museum together occupy three lots in the village of Cable. The legal description of these lots is as follows:

- Assessors plat #1 of village of Cable in NE SW Lot 2 Block E, .18 acres
- Assessors plat no. 2 Lots 13 and 14 Block 9 (AKA) Par in SE NW, .49 acres
- Assessor's Plat no. 1 of village of Cable in NE SW Lot 1 Block E, .1 acres

**Boundary Justification**

The original lot that was donated for construction of the library is the first named, above.

The lot in Plat no. 2 is included in the nominated property because it is the site of the Cable Natural History Museum. The Library and the Cable Natural History Museum are joined by a walkway; also the two institutions are administratively joined in that the Cable Natural History Museum provides heat, insurance and maintenance for the library. (Per letter from Allison Slavick, Executive Director of the Cable Natural History Museum, Dec. 12, 2000.)

The last named lot, (Lot 1, Block E) is one tenth of an acre to the east of the library, bounded by Hwy M. It is the remnant of a residential lot and reflects modifications made in the 1960s to Hwy M (see map and Section 7.)

The boundary includes all the property currently associated with the library and the museum addition.

Forest Lodge Library  
Name of Property

Bayfield  
County and State

Wisconsin

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

#### Continuation Sheets

**Maps** A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.  
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs** Representative black and white photographs of the property.

**Additional Items** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

### Property Owner

Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

<b>name/title</b>	Cable Natural History Museum, Inc.	<b>date</b>	December 2000
<b>organization</b>		<b>telephone</b>	715-798-3890
<b>street&amp;number</b>	PO Box 417	<b>zip code</b>	54821
<b>city or town</b>	Cable	<b>state</b>	WI

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**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects, (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.



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FOREST LODGE LIBRARY  
Bayfield County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
August, 2000  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
View from S

Photo 2 of 9  
FOREST LODGE LIBRARY  
Bayfield County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
August, 2000  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
View from SE

Photo 3 of 9  
FOREST LODGE LIBRARY  
Bayfield County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
August, 2000  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
View from NE

Photo 4 of 9  
FOREST LODGE LIBRARY  
Bayfield County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
August, 2000  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
View from NW

Photo 5 of 9  
FOREST LODGE LIBRARY  
Bayfield County, WI  
August, Photo by Jane Eiseley  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
View from N

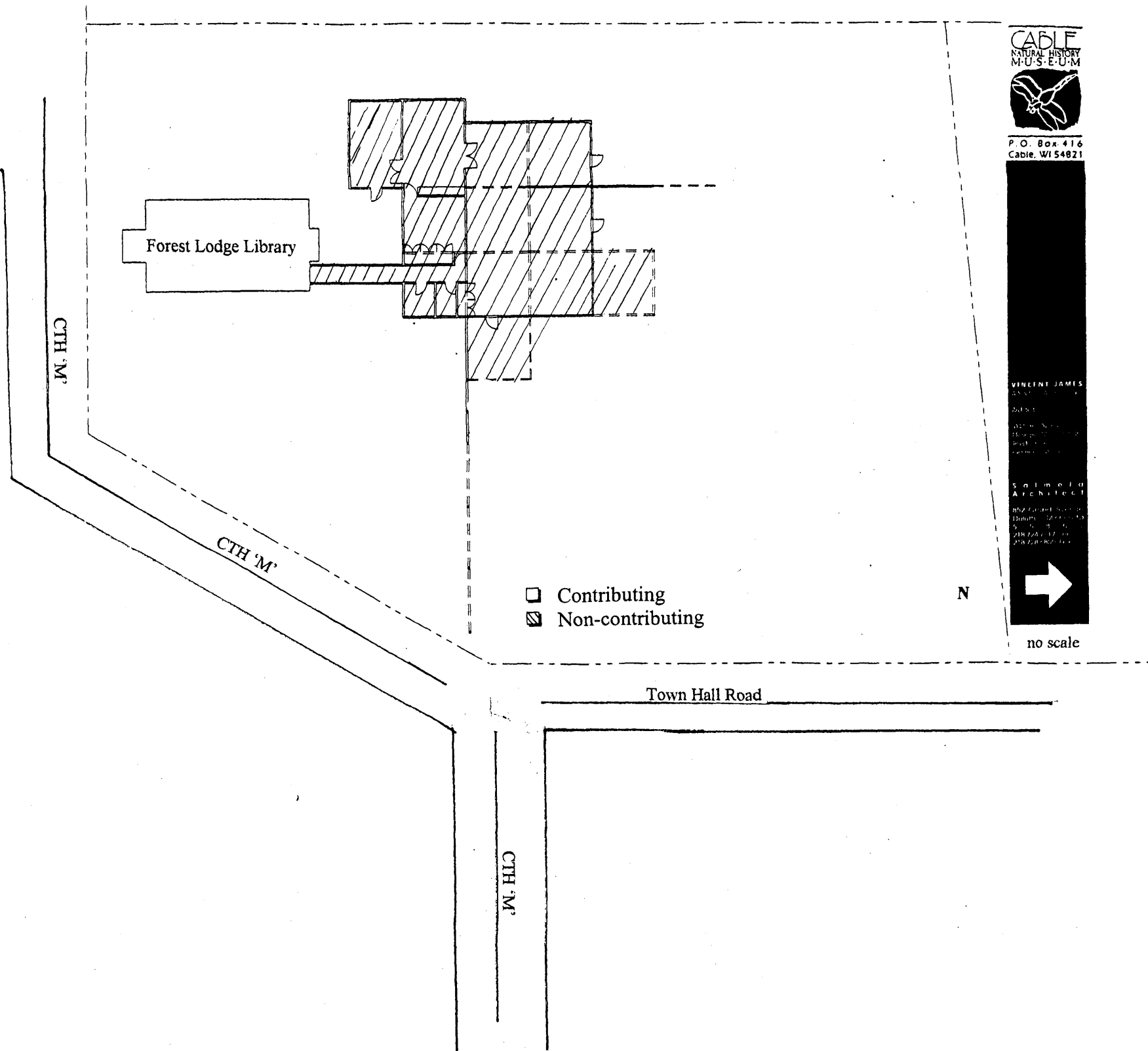
Photo 6 of 9  
FOREST LODGE LIBRARY  
Bayfield County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
August 2000  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
View from NE - walkway

Photo 7 of 9  
FOREST LODGE LIBRARY  
Bayfield County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
August, 2000  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
Interior detail--fireplace

Photo 8 of 9  
FOREST LODGE LIBRARY  
Bayfield County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
August, 2000  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
Interior detail of rafters, chandelier,  
cables

Photo 9 of 9  
FOREST LODGE LIBRARY  
Bayfield County, WI  
Photo by Jane Eiseley  
August 2000  
Negative at State Historical  
Society of Wisconsin  
Interior detail of bookshelves

Forest Lodge Library  
Cable, Bayfield County  
Wisconsin

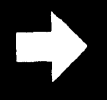


P. O. Box 416  
Cable, WI 54821

VINCENT JAMES  
ARCHITECT  
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Salmela  
ARCHITECT  
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- Contributing
- Non-contributing

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no scale