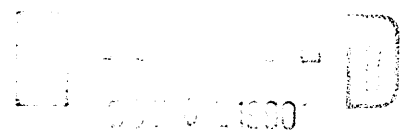


174

NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8/86)
Wisconsin Word Processor Format (1331D)
(Approved 3/87)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. 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. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries. Use letter quality printer in 12 pitch, using an 85 space line and a 10 space left margin. Use only archival paper (20 pound, acid free paper with a 2% alkaline reserve).

1. Name of Property

historic name Columbus Public Library

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 112 South Dickason Boulevard N/A Not for Publication

city, town Columbus N/A vicinity

state Wisconsin code WI county Columbia code 021 zip code 53925

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	No. of Resources within Property	
		contributing	noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

Public Library Facilities of Wisconsin

No. of contributing resources
previously listed in the
National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

[Handwritten Signature]

9/20/00

Signature of certifying official
State Historic Preservation Officer-WI
State or Federal agency and bureau

Date

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet

Beth Boland

11/15/90

 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet

 determined not eligible for the National Register.

 removed from the National Register.

 other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date

6. Functions or Use

Historic Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions
(enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/Library
SOCIAL/Meeting Hall

EDUCATION/Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials
(enter categories from instructions)

Prairie School

foundation concrete
walls stucco

roof asphalt
other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Columbus Public Library is a small, one story Prairie School design, which resembles a cottage. The library is located immediately adjacent to the downtown commercial district of Columbus, Wisconsin, a community of approximately 4050 residents. The prominent corner location is adjacent to the historic city hall and the Farmers and Merchants Bank (designed by master architect Louis Sullivan).

The library is a stucco, brick and wood structure, with a side-facing gable roof, flanked by projecting gable pavillions on each side of the entrance. The plan is basically a T-shape. The structure is placed centrally on a large, landscaped lot, allowing a set-back of approximately fifty feet from the facing boulevard, creating a residential-like feeling to the site.

The front (southwest) facade is dominated by a low-pitch side-gable roof with exposed rafter ends. It has a symmetrical composition, centered on a recessed porch with concrete steps and solid brick balustrades. Two projecting gable pavillions on each side of the porch are flanked by battered buttresses and feature large tripartite one-over-one sash windows with pedimented lintels. Under each window is a decorative wood flower box which is original to the design.

The northeast facade is centered on the side gable pavillion, with the brick chimney separating two sash windows. A side entrance, protected by a small overhanging roof, is near the rear corner. A row of ground level basement windows are exposed here.

The south west facade is very similar to the northeast side, excepting that there is no chimney and a ribbon of three 2 x 2 windows replace the sash windows.

The northwest (rear) facade has a projecting pavillion, featuring a high row of five 2x2 "ribbon" casement windows, and three small ground level basement windows. A small, covered, shed roof basement entrance is attached to the right of the rear pavillion.

Landscaping around the building includes several large, hardwood trees, small, hedge-like shrubs close to the building and flower box plantings.

X See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 1 Columbus Public Library
Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin

The main entrance to the library is through the wooden multi-light front doors into a small foyer with ceramic tile floor. Immediately inside, to each side, are built-in oak benches which are original to the building. The open reading room is anchored by the original half-hexagon oak circulation desk at the center-rear. Original built-in oak book shelves are located on the rear and side walls, in-filled by free standing bookshelves and tables. The right (northeast) wall features a small, red brick fireplace, with a simple wood mantel. A door to the rear right enters a lecture room, which has built-in cabinets on its southeast wall. Another doorway to the rear right leads to a small office, which in turn leads to the side exit and a stairwell to the basement.

The basement stairs enter a hall, with doors on the northeast side leading to restrooms and storage. Doors to the southwest leads into a full kitchen and another open room, once a dining room, now utilized as a pre-school playroom.

Relationship to Property Type

a) Integrity: The library has remained in continual use as a library since its construction in 1912 and the major physical characteristics which relate it to its broader property type are largely unchanged. The only exterior changes from the original plan are the concrete entrance steps, which replace earlier wooden steps. The interior of the library has been left unaltered, except for the addition of ceiling suspended florescent lighting, a dropped ceiling in the office and carpeting on the hardwood reading room floors and linoleum tile on the lecture room floor. A skylight over the circulating desk has been covered for energy conservation purposes. As is common, a basement room has been converted into a children's room. These minor changes do not detract from its outstanding overall integrity.

b) Plan: The library follows the eclectic T-shaped floor plan with reading areas, administrative area, book stacks, and office on the first floor and a community room in the basement.

PS Form 10-900a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processor Format
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7 Page 2 Columbus Public Library
Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin

c) Massing and Elevation: The library has the typical rectangular, symmetrically-composed front facade with the characteristic large expanses of windows. The entrance is located in the center of the facade as is usual, but is recessed and visually down played in a manner atypical of common library design.

d) Materials: Building materials are typical of the type: stucco with wood trim on the exterior and extensive wood adorned interior with a fireplace.

e) Siting: Like the typical 20th century plan, the Columbus Public Library is located on the edge of the downtown commercial district, with a substantial "residential" setback and landscape.

f) Style: Exhibits the informal features of the Prairie Style, but is executed in a "cottage" form which is a unique manifestation of the style.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: _____ nationally X statewide _____ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria X A _____ B X C _____ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) _____ A _____ B _____ C _____ D _____ E _____ F _____ G

Areas of Significance

(enter categories from instructions)

Areas of Significance	Period of Significance	Significant Dates
Education	1912-1938	1912 (1)
Social History	1912-1938	
Architecture	1912	

Areas of Significance	Cultural Affiliation
	N/A

Significant Person	Architect/Builder
N/A	Claude, Louis W. and Starck, Edward F.(2)

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Introduction:

The Columbus Public Library is locally significant in the context of Public Library Development of Wisconsin under Criterion A in the areas of education and social history. It achieves a state level of significance under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a distinctive example of the work of Master architects Claude and Stark who specialized in Prairie style library design. The library belongs to the Free-standing Public Library Facilities property type and was Carnegie funded.³ This library building has served as an important educational and social center as well as an attractive focal point to this rural, farming community.

Historical Background:

The Columbus community formed a library association in January 1877, with the donation of 54 volumes and the use of two rooms above a store-front.⁴ The library moved to a room in the City Hall in 1867, at which time the library was supported by public subscription.⁵ The Columbus Library Association formed in 1901⁶, as the library expanded, then in 1910 the Columbus Womens Civic Club solicited the Carnegie Foundation for a \$10,000 grant to construct the present library building.⁷ The Library Committee of the Federated Women's Club, in a fund-raising drive, was able to raise surplus money, which furnished the building.⁸ The Women's Federation convinced the library board to allow them to furnish the two basement rooms as dining room and kitchen.

The new library was dedicated on November 1, 1912⁹ for the contracted cost of \$9888.¹⁰

X See continuation sheet

PS Form 10-900a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processor Format
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 1 Columbus Public Library
Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin

Architecture:

The Columbus Public Library is an excellent example of a Prairie School library design by master architects Louis W. Claude and Edward F. Starck. The Madison, Wisconsin based firm, Claude & Starck were the city's most prolific firm in the first two decades of this century. As noted in the Public Library Facilities of Wisconsin Multiple Property Form, the firm specialized in library design, with at least 39 public library buildings, mostly in Wisconsin, from 1903 to 1925. Claude & Starck chose a typical plan, featuring an open reading room, a center circulation desk, with lecture and offices to the rear of the building.

Though Claude & Starck designed library buildings in a variety of period revival styles including English Tudor, Classical Revival and Mediterranean, the largest number were designed in the Prairie style. Generally, their Prairie designs were fairly straight-forward adaptations of standard Prairie motifs, utilizing low-pitch hipped or side-gabled roofs, horizontal emphasis (often emphasized by Sullivanesque terra cotta frieze under the eaves), broad eaves and large ribbon windows, but a few of the firm's designs demonstrated a strong sense of originality. In 1908, Claude wrote "some few [designs are based] upon original but logical lines, and these, to my mind, are the most satisfactory of all, as they represent intelligent growing thought, not the mere knowledge of the antiquarian who reproduces intelligently, perhaps, but does not give birth to a new idea."¹¹

The Columbus Public Library achieves statewide architectural significance as one of the most original designs of a firm noted for its distinctive libraries. Nominally, the building belongs in the the general class of their Prairie works, but the design is also strongly influenced by the English Arts and Crafts movement. The deliberate combination of stucco and brick and vaguely tudor-like ornamentation is more closely related to the craftsman design philosophy of the Arts and Crafts movement.

A "cottage" form is created by the low-slung appearance, residential setback, and used of residential scale in the massing and fenestration. Residential elements such as the recessed "front porch" and the flower boxes create a compelling and home-like ambience. The significance of this residential design is in its

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 2 Columbus Public Library
Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin

relationship to the change in library siting which occurred at the turn of the century. As noted in Public Library Facilities in Wisconsin, nineteenth century facilities were likely to be located in the downtown commercial district. Twentieth century, library planners increasingly sited the buildings on the edge, or slightly removed from, the excessive noise, traffic and congestion of the downtown. While most libraries continued to be designed in "civic" architectural styles, the Columbus Public Library uniquely expresses this residential preference in the style of the building itself. Several of the firm's other such as the Durand Public Library (NRHP) and the Jefferson Public Library seem to attempt to evoke the same intimacy, but the end result is more more institutional in effect.

A number of Prairie libraries were built in southern Wisconsin during the same era as the Columbus Public Library. Jefferson, Wisconsin (1911) and Reedsburg, Wisconsin (1911) both are fine examples of Claude & Starck Prairie School libraries, and the Kilbourn Public Library (1912) in Wisconsin Dells ¹² is an arts and crafts variation on Prairie School. The Columbus Public Library is another slight Prairie School variation, in that it resembles a cottage ¹³ with its domestic looking window flower boxes and residential-like landscaping.

Education:

The community of Columbus has actively encouraged the education influence of a library since the organization of the Columbus Library Association in 1877., which remained active until 1901, making it one of the oldest such associations in the state. The 1901 Columbus Free Library Association further exhibited the community's dedication to the educational opportunities made available to the general public. The Columbus Women's Civic Club, considering one of their main objectives to promote the educational welfare of the community, actively solicited funds which built the current library.¹⁴

The library was instrumental in providing facilities for the education and acculturation of citizens of all ages. Together with the public schools it was a primary educational facility in the city of Columbus. The library has continued to be an educational center throughout the years, with an adequate children's book selection, and a fine adult book and magazine section. The basement is currently utilized by a private pre-school group.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 3 Columbus Public Library
Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin

Social History:

The library, since its opening in 1912 has served as a social center to the community, primarily through the Columbus Women's Club. The Library Committee of the Federated Women's Club circulated subscription papers to raise money to purchase the lot for the new library. They raised surplus money to furnish the basement rooms as a dining hall and model kitchen. Since that time the Women's Civic Club has held their meetings in these rooms, and occasionally rented to other community groups. The proceeds from rentals were divided between the Women's Club and the Library.¹⁵

Through the years, the Women's Club was a major social force in the community of Columbus. They sponsored a wide range of projects aimed at community betterment including financial sponsorship of the city's kindergarten program, furnishing the schools domestic science classroom. Other social activities included money-making salted peanut production ¹⁶, funding a school health program, Christmas Seal sales, the Women's Club Flower Shows.¹⁷ The Women's Club Beautification Project, initially funded shrubs to landscape the new library grounds.¹⁸

The Women's Club was instrumental in the efforts to secure a Carnegie grant, purchase the property and furnish the library. The library's meeting room is the physical representation of their activities which not only supported the library, but other beneficent projects which had a broad impact on the local community. Ever since its founding, the history of the library and the Women's Club have been closely intertwined.

The Columbus Public Library makes a significant contribution to the Columbus community, by providing an attractive educational and social center in a distinctively designed building. The Carnegie funded Prairie School Library, designed by the prominent architectural firm Claude & Starck, housing the library's resources as well as the meeting center for the extremely active Columbus Women's Club, stands as a historically significant symbol to the community of Columbus, Wisconsin.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 4 Columbus Public Library
Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin

Registration Requirements

The Columbus Public Library meets the registration requirements for Free-standing library facilities specified in the Multiple Property Form as follows:

- a) Criterion A: The Columbus Public Library served a significant role in the local community as educational center, cultural center and social focal point.
- b) Criterion C: The library is the work of master architects Claude and Starck.
- c) Integrity: The library has remained in continual use since its construction in 1912 and the physical characteristics are largely unchanged.

FOOTNOTES

- 1) Columbus Democrat, Fri., November 1, 1912, Vol. XLV, No. 8, page 1.
- 2) Columbus Public Library original blueprints, March 21, 1911.
- 3) Columbus Republican, May 13, 1911, No. 33, page 1. For detailed information concerning Carnegie-funded libraries, see Public Library Facilities of Wisconsin Multiple Property Form.
- 4) "Columbus Public Library - 75 Years Service to the Community", leaflet prepared by Margaret Lee for Columbus County History, 1982, p. 1.
- 5) Columbus Public Library informational pamphlet, 1987.
- 6) James E. Jones, History of Columbia County, 1914, pp. 238-9.
- 7) The History of the Columbus Women's Civic Club, 1972, pp. 5-6.
- 8) Ibid., p. 6
- 9) Columbus Democrat, Friday, Nov. 1, 1912, Vol. XLV, No. 8, p. 1.
- 10) Columbus Republican, May 13, 1911, No. 33, p. 1.

PS Form 10-900a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processor Format
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 5 Columbus Public Library
Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin

FOOTNOTES CON'T

- 11) The Prairie School Review, Vol XIV, Final Issue (1981), pp. 14.
- 12) Ibid., p. 17-18.
- 13) Ibid., p. 17.
- 14) The History of the Columbus Womens' Civic Club, 1972, pp. 1-6.
- 15) Ibid., p. 7.
- 16) Columbia County History Book, 1982, Columbia County Historical Society, Wisconsin, p. 11.
- 17) The History of the Columbus Women's Civic Club, 1972, pp. 8-10.
- 18) Ibid., p. 7.

9. Major Bibliographical References

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

X See continuation sheet

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
 previously listed in the National Register
 previously determined eligible by the National Register
 designated a National Historic Landmark
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

X State Historic preservation office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 X Other

Specify repository:

Columbus Public Library, Columbus, WI

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less than one (1) acre

UTM References

A 1/6 3/3/6/5/6/0 4/8/0/0/2/0/0 B / / / / / / / / / / / /
Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing
C / / / / / / / / / / / / D / / / / / / / / / / / /

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lots 1 & 2; Block 4; Ludington's Town Plat in the City of Columbus.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Entire parcel of land historically associated with property.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara Kooiman, Intern
organization State Historical Society of WI date November, 1988
street & number 1704 E. Locust St., #1 telephone (414) 332-4061
city or town Milwaukee state Wisconsin zip code 53211

PS Form 10-900a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processor Format
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 9 Page 1 Columbus Public Library
Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Claude, Louis W. and Edward F. Starck, Original blueprints for Columbus Public Library, March 21, 1911.

Columbia County Historical Society, Wisconsin, Columbia County History Book, 1982, Taylor Publishing Co., Dallas: 1982.

Columbus Democrat, Nov. 1, 1912, Vol. XLV, No. 8.

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Jones, James E. History of Columbia County. Chicago: Lewis Publishing Company, 1914.

Lee, Margaret, "Columbus Public Library - 75 Years of Service to the Community," prepared for Columbus County History, 1982.

Lusignan, Paul. Public Library Facilities of Wisconsin. National Register Multiple Property form, 1988.

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Wyatt, Barbara, ed. Cultural Resource Management in Wisconsin. Madison, WI: State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1976.

PS Form 10-900a
(Rev. 8-86)
Wisconsin Word Processor Format
Approved 2/87

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number Photos Page 1 Columbus Public Library
Columbus, Columbia County, Wisconsin

PHOTOGRAPHIC DOCUMENTATION

The following applies to all photographs:

Columbus Public Library
112 South Dickason Street
Columbus, Columbia County, WI
Photos by Barbara Kooiman, August 1988
Negatives located at State Historical Society of Wisconsin

Photo 1 of 8	Exterior, East (Main) facade, Looking West.
Photo 2 of 8	Exterior, North facade, Looking South.
Photo 3 of 8	Exterior, West facade, Looking East.
Photo 4 of 8	Exterior, West and South facades, Looking Northeast.
Photo 5 of 8	Interior, View of Entry doors and benches.
Photo 6 of 8	Interior, View of Circulation Desk.
Photo 7 of 8	Interior, View of Book stacks.
Photo 8 of 8	Interior, View of Fireplace.

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