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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

JUN 08 1992
DHP

DEC 11 1992
NATIONAL REGISTER

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 Willits Carnegie Library

other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number 85 E. Commercial Street not for publication

city or town Willits vicinity

state California code CA county Mendocino code 045 zip code 95490

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.)

Stade R. Craygo

12/8/92

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

California Office of Historic Preservation

State of 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 certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- 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

Helene Byers

Entered in the National Register

Date of Action

1/7/93

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>1</u>		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

California's Carnegie Libraries

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Education/library

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

INDUSTRY/Communications facility

RECREATION, CULTURE/Sports facility

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Classical Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Asphalt

other Terra Cotta

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for 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.

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- 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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Social History _____

Architecture _____

Period of Significance

1915 - 1942 _____

Significant Dates

N/A _____

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Bullder

Deshiell, Dan _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Willits Carnegie Library
Name of Property

Mendocino County, CA
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 110 469650 4362350
Zone Easting Northing
2

3
Zone Easting Northing
4

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathleen Stanton

organization Cultural Resources Consultant date May 1, 1992

street & number P.O. Box 185 telephone 707-826-7139

city or town Bayside state CA zip code 95524

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.)

name City of Willits

street & number 111 E. Commercial Street telephone 707-459-4601

city or town Willits state CA zip code 95490

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

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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Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 1 Willits Carnegie Library, Mendocino County, CA

Description

The Willits Carnegie Library building is an outstanding architectural example of the Classical Revival style. The red brick, rectangular shaped structure has a low hip roof with projecting eaves and box cornice. The gable roof of the front portico is similarly treated. The building is one story with a high basement that is pierced by square windows at the ground level. The effect of the window and door piercings on the front facade produces a balanced tripartate symmetry. The building is on a corner lot and fronts East Commercial Street. The front of the building is set behind a cultivated lawn with a mature English Holly tree that was planted at the dedication of the building in 1915. The east facade of the building is adjacent to the sidewalk on Humboldt Street. The west facade faces the Women's Improvement Club Building and a residential house abuts the rear property line. The property is in excellent condition and has had very little alteration since its construction in 1915.

The front entrance to the library is emphasized by a vertical projection that is housed under a gable roof. This central element of the front facade provides a deeply recessed entrance all of white terra cotta. An arched pediment with seal and frieze that is bracketed above pilasters is heavily decorated with egg and dart molding and acanthus leaves. In the center of the projecting pediment is a patterned frieze with the words Carnegie Library incised in the terra cotta. Rosettes decorate the terra cotta ceiling and walls of the recessed entrance which leads to a set of wooden double doors with a divided transom lite above. Globe light fixtures designed as torches flank the entrance portico.

A pair of walkways lead from the sidewalk on East Commercial Street to straight double stairs. Simple handrails have been added to supplement low solid rails as the stairs ascend and a wrought iron rail extends across the landing between stout brick posts. The brick in the building is laid in the common bond pattern and is used throughout to create patterned designs. Radiating bricks cap the top of the first floor rounded windows. Brick lug sills emphasize the recessed nature of the windows and darker brick is used to create horizontal bands and vertical brick to establish courselines.

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At the main floor level, on either side of the entrance, is a slightly recessed double hung window, 3x2, under a segmentally arched transom. These windows are divided into three parts (the transom, the upper sash, and the lower sash) with three vertical lites each. The building's tripartate pattern is thereby reinforced vertically and horizontally by the window design. These large, arched windows are repeated around the sides and rear of the building. Below each window at the ground level is a small, square window with three vertical lites. These windows provide natural light for the basement and are found on the front and sides of the building, but not on the rear.

The rear, south facade is pierced with four, large, arched windows on the first floor. In 1985, a heating vent was installed in one of these windows near the southwest corner of the building. The upper sash was lowered to allow access for the vent into the interior of the building. The window is intact, however, the upper and lower sash are blocked from view by the metal vent. This alteration has not destroyed the window's historic fabric and could easily be removed. An electrical power box is also visible on the southwest corner of this rear facade.

A rear entrance to the basement pierces the rear, south facade in the southeast corner. A simple, wooden shed roof with asphalt shingles over this doorway is supported by two square posts and a straight picket fence. This awning projects from the brick wall and provides protection from inclement weather. The doorway is original to the building, however the wooden awning and fencing appear more modern. One informant remembered that the awning was there in the 1940's when she was a teenager. This feature would likely date from the period of significance.

Various architectural elements and landscape features contribute to the importance of this building. Copper downspouts delineate the corners of the building on the east and west facades. A brick chimney on the west facade emphasizes the building's vertical rhythm. In the front of the building, an English Holly tree that was planted at the dedication of the library in 1915 is now mature and partially obscures the front entrance. A bronze plaque imbedded in a large boulder was recently placed in front of the library and is visible from East Commercial Street. The marker commemorates the building as a City Landmark.

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Section number 7 Page 3 Willits Carnegie Library, Mendocino County, CA

Description cont.

Significant interior features include the plaster, coffered ceilings and original woodwork for the stair banister, wainscoting, and door moldings. The attic access in the ceiling originally had a plaster molding in a Greek Key design. The plaster decoration was removed from the attic access at the south end of the building when a light fixture was installed there.

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Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1 Willits Carnegie Library, Mendocino County, CA

Significance

The Willits Carnegie Library meets the requirements for National Register nomination as set forth in the Multiple Property nomination entitled "California's Carnegie Libraries".

The Willits' library history dates from discussions reported in the local newspaper in 1904 about the need for a public library. The following year a free reading room was established by a local businessman, John Snow. The demand for books became so great that in 1906, at the request of the Women's Improvement Club, the city passed an ordinance creating a free public library and allocated \$400 for a library fund. Additional funding for a building from the Carnegie trustees was unsuccessfully sought in 1906. Although incorporated since 1888, Willits' population after the 1900 census was just 792.

The library continued to function in various locations including the bowling alley of the Willits Hotel. In 1912 the Women's Club renewed their effort to obtain a Carnegie building. This was a year after Ukiah had obtained a grant for \$8,000 and Willits, with a 1910 population of 1153 (still only half that of Ukiah) received a grant of equal amount in 1913. The city provided its required \$800 annual library support not through a direct library tax, but from general funds. The Women's Club's active involvement continued when they raised money for the lot. The building was designed and built by Dan Deshiell, a local contractor. The City accepted the bid from Northwestern for \$800 to construct the building.

The day of the library dedication, October 5, 1915, was declared a town holiday. An English holly tree from the San Rafael Nursery was planted in front of the building and now towers above it. Located next to the Women's Improvement Club building, the Carnegie building was briefly unoccupied following completion of a new library in May of 1989. The building now serves as a studio and equipment storage for the city's community access cable TV station. The Police Action League occupies the basement as a sports facility for boxing and recreational programs.

The multiple property nomination set forth the significance areas of architecture and social history, the latter for the buildings' place in the history of philanthropy.

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Section number 9 Page 1 Willits Carnegie Library, Mendocino County, CA

Bibliography

INFORMANTS:

Mrs. Crone, Librarian from 1968-1982. 707-459-5693

Dorothy Sanders, Former Library Assistant. 707-459-2161

Peggy Rhodes, Librarian. 707-459-5908

NEWSPAPERS:

Willits News. 9 Oct. 1915.

RECORDS:

Pritchard, Susan J. 1988. Willits Carnegie Library Historic Resources Inventory Form. City of Willits, California.

SHPO. 1990. California Carnegie Multiple Property National Register Nomination. Appendices A, C, & F. Sacramento, California.

Streib, Nelson and Susan Pritchard. 1988. The Architectural Heritage of Willits. City of Willits, California.

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Section number 10 Page 1 Willits Carnegie Library, Mendocino County, CA

Geographical Data

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Assessor's Parcel #5-147-08

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This is the lot historically associated with the Willits Carnegie Library.

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Section number _____ Page 1 Willits Carnegie Library, Mendocino County, CA
Additional Documentation _____

Photographs

The following information (1.- 5.) applies to all six photos:

- 1.) Willits Carnegie Library
- 2.) Mendocino County, California
- 3.) Alex Stillman, photographer
- 4.) 1991
- 5.) Photo Negatives on file with:
Alex Stillman
c/o Design Work
905 H Street
Arcata, CA.

6. & 7.)

Photo #1. Front, north facade of library. Camera facing southeast.

Photo #2. Front, north facade of library. Camera facing southwest.

Photo #3. Central, projecting Front Portico with terra cotta entrance on north, front facade. Camera facing south.

Photo #4. East facade facing Humboldt Street. Camera facing west.

Photo #5. South, rear facade and east facade. Camera facing northwest.

Photo #6. Northwest corner of library showing west facade and chimney. Camera facing southeast.