

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.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Colusa Carnegie Library  
other names/site number Carnegie Library Building; City of Colusa Police Department

### 2. Location

street & number 260 Sixth St. n/a not for publication  
city, town Colusa n/a vicinity  
state California code CA county Colusa code 011 zip code 95932

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>      </u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
California Carnegie Libraries

Number 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  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.  See continuation sheet.

X Kathryn Huether 10/22/90  
Signature of certifying official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

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. Autawietta Gee 12/10/90  
 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:)

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

---

**6. Function or Use**

---

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

---

EDUCATIONAL/library

---

---

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

---

GOVERNMENT/correctional facility

---

---

---

**7. Description**

---

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

---

Classical Revival

---

---

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation 

---

Sandstonewalls 

---

Sandstone

---

Brick

---

roof 

---

Synthetic

---

other 

---

Metal

---

---

---

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

---

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

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

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Period of Significance

Significant Dates

Social History  
Architecture

1905-1921

1906

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person  
n/a

Architect/Builder

Stone, Louis S.  
Smith, Henry C.

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

California Carnegie Survey

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 

1	0	5	8	5	5	6	0	4	3	4	0	7	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

AP #1-083-10, the south one half of Lot No. 5, in Block No. 33 of the City of Colusa, as said lot and block are shown on the official map or plat thereof, filed on March 5, 1955, in the office of the County Clerk, Colusa, State of California

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary includes the entire city lot that has historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Lucy Kortum  
organization (Sonoma State University) date 11/89 (rev 4/90)  
street & number 180 Ely Road telephone 707/762-6219  
city or town Petaluma state CA zip code 94954

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

RECEIVED

JAN 24 1990

OHF

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: COLUSA CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING  
Section number 7 Page 1

The Colusa Carnegie Library building, Classical Revival in style, is a tall, rectangular structure, one story over a raised basement, faced with locally quarried dark gray Sites stone. The central element, projecting only slightly, features a metal pediment and entablature resting on tall sandstone pilasters; recessed within the pilasters is the low entrance with its own broken arched pediment supported by two small Doric columns. A sandstone parapet with Union Jack motif conceals the roof line. Carved into stone lintels above the first floor windows which face the street are names of famous authors. Stone craftsmanship is evident in the treatment of basement and first floor windows, corners, and courseline. The few alterations since its 1906 construction have not detracted from the building's integrity. The building served as a library from 1906 until 1964 when Colusa City and County libraries merged and a new library was provided; now the sign above the door names the current occupants of the building, "Colusa Police Department." Orange trees pre-dating the building shade the front of the building, and Colusa's historic County Court House is the most notable occupant of a landscaped block of civic buildings across the street.

The old Colusa Carnegie Library is located on a corner, adjacent to the sidewalk on two sides. It seems to fill its lot and with its height, and the tall building, one story over a high raised basement, conveys the appearance of size greater than is the case. A sandstone parapet with carved Union Jack motif rises behind the upper metal pediment, supported by pilasters which frame the centered entrance with its own columns and broken arch pediment. The dark Sites sandstone further adds to the imposing appearance, at least as appropriate to its present occupant, the Colusa Police Department, as to a public library.

Wide, low platform steps rise to the entrance. On each side of the entrance there is one window, wide and divided into three tall narrow panes below the transom, which is itself divided into nine segments: four by two, plus a circular center. Carved into the lintel above each is the name of an author: Emerson and Shakespeare above these windows, and Hawthorne, Darwin, Bancroft, and Milton above south side windows. Segmented arch lintels top the basement windows, directly under those of the first floor. Three center windows above the entrance pediment and below the entablature repeat the Union Jack motif of the parapet. Sills, lined corners where the blocks are exposed, smooth courseline, and carved ornamental pattern with egg and dart detailing at the top of the pilasters are among the notable details of craftsmanship. Pediment and cornice are emphasized with dentils. On the north side there is one window similar to those in front except that the lintels are not carved; remaining windows on that side are narrow, not as tall, simple one over one, with plain lintels and sills.

At the entrance, the door itself is below the first floor level; from the interior lobby another flight of stairs leads to the first floor. Interior walls are plaster with tongue and groove pine wainscoting. A mezzanine was originally the ladies' "retiring room." The basement was used for

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: COLUSA CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING

Section number 7 Page 2

---

cataloging and as a retiring room for men; over the years, basement space has also been provided to the Colusa [the early name for the area] County Historical Society for meetings and storage for their collections.

In 1963, the danger of hanging metal necessitated removing the metal entablature; rotted wood behind it was replaced and covered by smooth stucco. At the same time the ends of the pediment, which had previously extended for about three feet, were trimmed back. Since then the building's condition has received increased attention. Changes necessary to accommodate occupancy by city offices in 1965, and the Police Department in 1977, have generally involved only removable interior changes. Electric wiring was updated and new heating and cooling installed in 1964, and again new heating and air conditioning 1987. Entrance stairs were replaced with new concrete, plain pipe hand rails were provided, and an aluminum door replaced the original one. In 1974 a new roof of polyurethane replaced the original tar paper roof and additional drainage scuppers were provided. The only structural changes were made in 1986, when floor and roof were reinforced and the shear wall in the middle of the building was rebuilt. One of the basement windows in the front was closed for a mail drop and two basement windows on the south side were closed to provide for shear resistance; the front window closure can be removed, and the back window spaces can be filled with sandstone to blend in with the building. An area of slight deterioration in the concrete above the window to the left of the front entrance is being watched and carefully repaired. Changes that have been made do not detract from the integrity of the building as reflected in its style and in the fine workmanship applied to the local building materials. The historic location further emphasizes its character.

The library site was purchased from Dr. G.I. Cason; his medical offices were next door and the library replaced his orange grove. Trees and medical office then obscured the north side and rear of the library building, and lintels of those windows were not inscribed with authors' names. Tall old orange trees still shade the front of the building. Medical offices have since been replaced by a parking lot, beyond which may now be seen the 1880's house and newspaper office of Will S. Green, early settler, Colusa's "father of irrigation," and editor of the Colusa Sun until his death in 1925. Across from all is the historic "ante bellum" Colusa County Court House in its park like setting.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: COLUSA CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING

Section number 8 Page 1

The Colusa Carnegie building was the third of thirteen Carnegie libraries built in the Sacramento Valley between 1903 and 1917, and the only one built in Colusa County. The earliest, in Redding, no longer stands, and the next, Chico, built in the Romanesque style, was remodelled and reoriented in the late 1930's to its present Mediterranean Revival appearance. The early settlement of Colusa, incorporated in 1868, had many libraries and reading rooms over the years before the city council in 1900 voted to establish a public library in rented second floor quarters. Colusa sought Carnegie funding in 1905 and was offered \$10,000. The city purchased a site and pledged to maintain the building and the collection in accordance with terms of Carnegie giving. Many Carnegie libraries reflected the community pride in public buildings stimulated by Chicago's 1893 Columbian Exposition, and in the Colusa Carnegie themes of the Classical Revival were incorporated in a unique structure faced with a dark gray locally quarried sandstone. The total cost of \$13,158 was met with the fundraising help of the Colusa Woman's Club, and the new library opened October 6, 1906. In 1964 the library moved to a new city/county library building and city offices moved into the Carnegie building; when the city offices in turn moved to new quarters, sale of the building appeared imminent. A poll was conducted and citizens convinced the council to maintain its civic use; since 1977 the Police Department has occupied the building. It was designated a Colusa Historic Landmark in 1981 with passage of Ordinance No. 332, which noted the following particular features to be preserved: Sites sandstone veneer; metal pediment and entablature resting on pilasters; parapet of Sites sandstone with "Union Jack" decorative panels; segmental arched windows at basement level, and main floor rectangular windows with transoms; carved stone lintels with famous authors' names.

Located on the west bank of the Sacramento River, away from the more easily traveled route up the eastern side of the valley, Colusa was "undiscovered" until the 1843 arrival of John Bidwell. In 1845 the Mexican government granted to Bidwell land where Colusa now stands. Though title was clouded for many years, the grant nevertheless was sold in 1850 to a co-founder of Colusa. The new town became an early ferry site and, even after it was no longer the head of navigation, a leading port for the shipping of agricultural products, notably wheat. Colusa incorporated in 1868 and as late as 1910 was the only incorporated city in Colusa County.

Over time a number of private and subscription libraries were initiated in Colusa, including an 1867 Library Association with newspaper publisher W.S. Green as president, an IOOF library, and a WCTU library. In 1890 the WCTU was given upstairs space in the new city hall for their library and reading room. When in 1900 the Board of Town Trustees affirmatively responded to a citizen's petition for a public library, the WCTU room became the Public Library room. It had expanded into all the available space in the town hall by 1905 when the Chairman of the Library Trustees, who had initiated a correspondence with Carnegie, learned that they would receive a \$10,000 grant. There was the usual stipulation that the city provide land and annual

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: COLUSA CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING

Section number 8 Page 2

---

tax support equal to 10% of the grant. The site eventually purchased was an orange grove across the street from Colusa's 1861 County Courthouse. Orange trees, among the oldest in the county, still stand in front of the building.

"Sites stone," from a quarry near the town of Sites in the foothills northwest of Colusa, had by then become a significant Colusa export, though not rivalling wheat and other agricultural products. The stone was brought by rail to Colusa and shipped by barge to San Francisco and other ports. Well known buildings said to be built of Sites stone are San Francisco's Ferry Building and the Alexander Young Hotel in Honolulu. Early in the library planning, Sites stone became a favorite for construction of the new library. According to Colusa historian Eleze Coffman, "The community was stone oriented." As reported in the newspaper, the Woman's Club hoped for

". . . a well-equipped library of Sites stone with cozy reading rooms," and an editorial stated, "It ought to be of Sites stone. . . We do not need a large house, and a strikingly handsome one would be a much better monument to the donor than a barn."

The Board selected as architects Stone & Smith of San Francisco who had the previous year designed the Romanesque Carnegie library building for Chico, and would later design Hayward's Carnegie, a picturesque Spanish Revival. Louis S. Stone and Henry C. Smith are listed as architects, together or individually, in the San Francisco city directories between 1903 and 1936. John Snyder's compilation from California Architect and Building News of San Francisco building from 1879 to 1900 lists several small San Francisco projects by Smith. One 1916 Smith project, the Leesmont Apartments at 790 California, is included by Corbett in Splendid Survivors. Gebhard attributes the 1936 Streamline Moderne Analy High School in Sebastopol to Louis S. Stone and Henry O. Smith.

The architects were instructed to prepare plans for a stone or, alternately, a stone and brick building. Bids exceeded the grant so the stone and brick option was selected; it was also decided to omit some of the planned basement work, reducing the deficit to \$1200. The Woman's Club led the fund raising with musicals, recitations, and dramatics. Personal donations and the efforts of other groups added to the fund, and the city contributed \$700. A \$200 contribution from the Woman's Club to complete the basement was given in return for the right to hold their meetings there. Ultimately the total cost of \$13,158.47 was met, largely due to the substantial effort of the Woman's Club.

Meanwhile stone had been hauled and was ready when ground was broken October 14, 1905. On November 7 the Colusa Sun reported that stone masons were to cut and dress the stone on the site; the cornerstone was placed December 2, 1905, in a colorful Masonic ceremony. By February 13, 1906 it was reported that "The seven stone cutters will probably complete their



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: COLUSA CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING

Section number 8 Page 3

---

work this week, as there is (*sic*) only 20 inches in height to add to the walls and the steps to lay." After a delay because furniture and fixtures ordered from San Francisco were destroyed in the fire after the April 1906 earthquake, the building opened October 6, 1906.

In 1960 consolidation of the city and county libraries was suggested. The complex agreement was signed in 1964 and the Colusa Free Public Library closed. City offices, which had been scattered among several buildings, in 1965 moved into the Carnegie building where they stayed until 1977 when other space became available. Then serious consideration was given to selling the Carnegie building. A questionnaire included in the water bill resulted in a 2-1 vote in favor of not selling the building. Of several proposed uses, the police station was favored by a plurality. Supporters sought historic recognition to further safeguard the building, and subsequently the city council passed Colusa Ordinance No. 332 designating the building as an historical site; it was dedicated "Carnegie Library Building," Colusa Heritage Marker 9, in ceremonies held October 6, 1981.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: COLUSA CARNEGIE LIBRARY BUILDING

Section number 9 Page 1

---

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

Held, Ray E. The Rise of the Public Library in California. Chicago: American Library Association, 1973.

Coffman, Eleze. "The History of the Carnegie Building," unpublished.

Corbett, Michael R. Splendid Survivors. San Francisco: The Foundation for San Francisco's Architectural Heritage and California Living Books, San Francisco Examiner, 1979.

Oebhard, David, et al. Guide to Architecture in San Francisco & Northern California. Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith Inc., 1973.

Rogers, Justus H. Colusa County, Its History Traced from a State of Nature Through the Early Period of Settlement and Development to the Present Day. Orland CA: 1891.

Snyder, John W. "Index of San Francisco Building 1879-1900." MA Thesis, University of California, Berkeley. Bound transcript, no date.

Historic Resources Inventory form completed 4/81 by Eleze Butler Coffman.

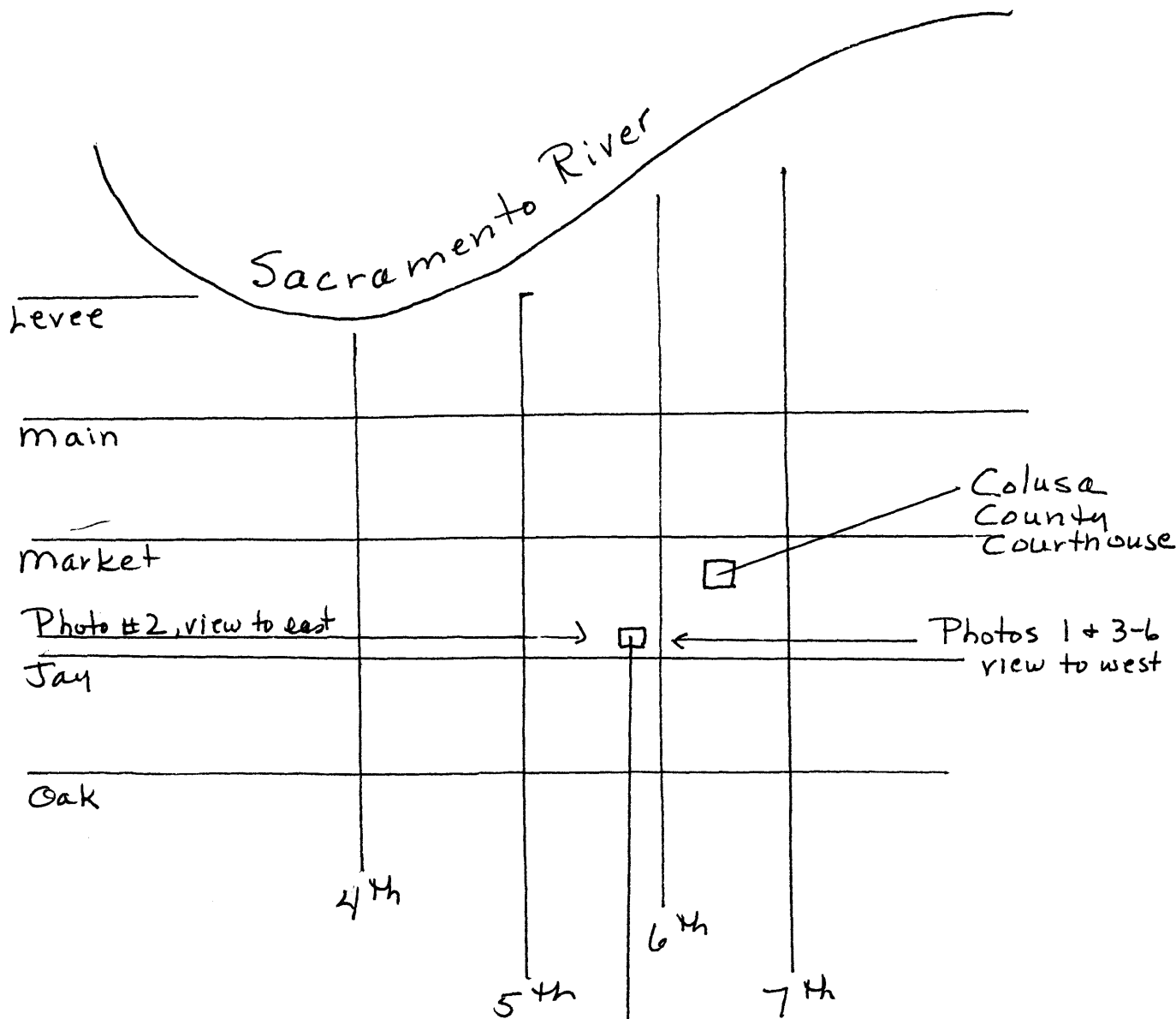
"Carnegie Building of Colusa", grant application

Ordinance #332 Providing for the Designation of the Colusa Carnegie Library as a Historical site.

Colusa Sun, 11/7/05 and 2/13/06

Colusa Sun Herald, 10.19/77 and 11/9/77

Carnegie Library survey form completed by Joyce Becker, County Librarian, Colusa County Free Library, 738 Market St., Colusa 95932



Colusa Carnegie Library  
 260 Sixth St.  
 Colusa, CA  
 Colusa County

Colusa  
 Carnegie  
 Library  
 Building