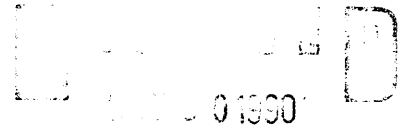


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



# 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 Ferndale Public Library  
other names/site number Ferndale Public Library; Carnegie Library

### 2. Location

street & number 807 Main St. n/a  not for publication  
city, town Ferndale n/a  vicinity  
state California code CA county Humboldt code 023 zip code 95536

### 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 Heatter* Signature of certifying official 10/22/90 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. 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): \_\_\_\_\_

*Helene Byer* Signature of the Keeper 12/10/90 Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

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EDUCATION/library

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---

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

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EDUCATION/library

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**7. Description**Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

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Classical Revival

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Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation \_\_\_\_\_

walls \_\_\_\_\_ Concrete

\_\_\_\_\_ Stucco

roof \_\_\_\_\_

other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

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Section number 7 Page 1

The Ferndale Carnegie Library is small and almost cubical, a concrete one story building on a low foundation. Constructed in 1910, it is an example of Classical Revival in which the projecting central element does not break the roof line. Two pilasters support the entablature, and the roof is surrounded by a low, level, parapet. Below the cornice is a row of large dentils, almost like exposed rafters. A low gable roof, above and within the parapet, was added in 1977 when the building was extended to the rear. In the gable end, at the front of the building, there is the suggestion of a low pediment just above the top of the parapet. The integrity of the building's design has been maintained while providing needed additional space. In Victorian Ferndale, the building's classic image is enhanced by its raised site, set well back from the sidewalk on a landscaped corner lot.

Historic pictures show the tiny Classic Revival Ferndale Library to be a tall one story building over low foundation, with a slightly projecting central entrance. A low parapet surrounded the roof line above a projecting cornice. Horizontal lines of the cornice, dentils, courseline just above the entrance, and the foundation, were emphasized in white, and were countered by the vertical emphasis, also in white, of the prominent pilasters on either side of the entrance, trim around the windows, with keystone above, and solid stair rails.

The original building was approximately 40' x 40', and consisted of one main room and, across the back, small rooms for workroom and bathrooms. The extension added approximately 20' more feet to the length of the building. Also, a part of the extension was divided into two floors, with the workroom above and bathrooms below. This freed the entire original building for library use, and added space for a children's room.

At the time the new building was extended, a low gable roof was added within the parapet; the parapet itself was not altered. The gable end faces the front and within it there is an angled eyebrow, suggesting a pediment. The Ferndale Enterprise of June 10, 1976, described the plans for added space, then continued, "The extension will match the existing building's style of architecture and should become an integral part of the building both in exterior appearance and in interior functions. A continuing roof line is planned and will make the new structure barely distinguishable from the old." Presumably, the added height was needed to incorporate the two stories in part of the addition, and the higher roof was extended forward. The plan may have seemed advantageous, too, if the flat roof leaked; the gable roof would prove more satisfactory in Ferndale's very wet climate. Inside, the ceiling of the old library is unchanged, and the children's room ceiling is the same height as the rest of the building. The extension was carefully integrated into the original building, with similar materials used throughout. The building is now light cream in color, with details -- edge of roof and cornice, dentils, courselines, and window frames -- emphasized with dark red paint.

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CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: FERNDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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Low steps lead to the library entrance, slightly recessed beyond the pilasters which are decorated with medallions and small light fixtures which have replaced original period light brackets. The original door is wood paneled glass below a transom with small lights, 3 x 2, and is recessed within a wide projecting frame with keystone motif. Above are the words "Ferndale Public Library." Windows on either side of the door are 2 x 1, giving the effect of paired windows, each pane under a small transom. They are set within a frame with stepped sill, with the keystone motif repeated above. On each side there is an additional window set and then a single window, one over one, similarly framed and with keystone. Further along the sides, the seam of the new addition is barely discernible. The new portion of the side wall is windowless, but on one side a door and wheelchair access have been provided. Across the back, smaller windows, treated in a fashion similar to that of the original windows, are high enough to provide light to the new second floor workroom, as well as the lower floor; additionally, there is a small window in the end of the added gable. There is no basement and the area below the first floor was gravelled in some time ago, due to moisture and standing water, to be expected in the low land of the Eel River delta even though the building is set on a slight rise. The flagpole in the front lawn honors a prominent local physician and early settler who died in 1930.

In the interior, too, the effort to coordinate the new with the old has been continued, with use of similar wall and rug treatment. Original wooden bookcases, tables and chairs have been retained. In the new wing, the children's reading room features a corner brick fireplace.

The Ferndale Carnegie is a rare example of classical architecture in a community noted for its well maintained Victorian residential and commercial buildings. Structural change to both the interior and exterior of the library, though significant, has been carefully planned to maintain the integrity of the building's style and scale, while enabling this classic civic building to continue its valuable community role.

**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)

Social History  
Architecture

Period of Significance

1909-1921

Significant Dates

1909

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

Skellings, Warren

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**

Acreage of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A 

1	0	3	9	3	3	6	0	4	4	9	2	6	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

APO # 30-143091  
Lot No. 9, City of Ferndale.

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 Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: FERNDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Section number 8 Page 1

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Ferndale is one of perhaps a dozen California communities which, with a population of fewer than one thousand, achieved its own Carnegie Library. Settled in 1854, the tiny community incorporated in 1893; its 1890 population was only 763 but it had increased to 846 by 1900. Until the arrival of the railroad to Eureka, travel to Humboldt County from the more settled parts of California was adventurous at best; the further trip to Ferndale, across the Eel River, constituted an additional hazard and was impossible for many months of the year. Ferndale was first settled as an area of farms and dairies. By 1878 there was regular steamship transportation for its dairy products, as well as for produce from Bear River and Mattole farms, down the Salt River to the Eel to the the ocean and directly to San Francisco. Self contained and independent, and increasingly prosperous, Ferndale citizens maintained a small library begun before 1880. In 1904 the Native Daughters urged city support of the library, after which the city also signed up for the State's travelling library. In 1908 Carnegie funds were granted and the new library opened in 1910. Noted for its well maintained Victorian architecture, Ferndale has preserved its Classical Revival library.

In Humboldt County, there were three incorporated towns in 1900. Eureka was by far the largest and oldest, having incorporated in 1856; Arcata, only slightly larger than Ferndale and almost as old as Eureka, incorporated in 1858. Eureka had been the first California city to establish a municipal library after passage of the Rogers Act in 1878; Arcata followed later that same year and was for many years the smallest California town to have a municipal library. Arcata is not known to have applied for Carnegie funding, and in 1914 it joined the Humboldt county library system. Meanwhile, Eureka received a \$20,000 Carnegie grant in 1901 and that library is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Ferndale, first settled in 1854 and for much of the year isolated beyond the Eel River, developed at a slower pace than the larger lumber towns to the north. Its first agriculture was dairy, and butter its primary product. Dairy and farm products could be shipped to Eureka by ferry and temporary summer bridges, or by river and coastwise steamer to San Francisco. By 1878 a steamer was making regularly scheduled runs and the city thrived, with nearby Port Kenyon serving also as a port for the scattered farms and orchards to its south. The many Victorian homes for which Ferndale is so widely noted are testimony to the prosperity of that period. Ferndale was linked to the mainland in 1911 by the construction of a bridge across the Eel, the longest concrete span of its time and considered an engineering marvel.

Long before the coming of the bridge, the small community supported numbers of churches, lodges, and other organizations. Ferndale's first known reading room began some time prior to 1880, but it is not known whether it was sponsored by an organization or by an individual; it is known that it was free and boasted 200 volumes. An 1880 news story refers to a successful fund-raising masquerade ball for the library. In early 1904 the Native Daughters of the Golden West initiated a campaign for a city library and by the end of the year trustees had been appointed -- three women and two men -- and the public library opened in a commercial

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CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: FERNDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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building. To the library collection of 689 books reported at that time was added a circulating collection of fifty books provided through membership in the State's travelling library.

Like most libraries prior to Carnegie funding, a permanent building proved elusive. The trustees in early 1908 applied to Carnegie and \$8000 was offered March 21, 1908. In accordance with Carnegie policies, the city was required to provide a site and pass a resolution of annual library support in an amount equal to 10% of the grant. This required an increase of the city's annual appropriation from \$600 to \$800. Desiring a Main Street lot, the community set out to raise the money, with the Chamber of Commerce making up the last \$25 of the \$1000 cost. Correspondence with the Carnegie Corporation reveals no major problem, either before or after the grant, but it was not until April 12, 1909, that Warren Skellings' plans were put out to bid. The \$7775.40 bid by contractors Ackerman and Ackerman of Eureka did not leave sufficient funds for furnishings, but the city lent the library board additional money allowing building to commence, and the library was opened with a party of tea and cold cuts on April 2, 1910.

Ferndale joined the Humboldt County library system shortly after its initiation in 1914. County library organizer Harriet Eddy describes her Humboldt County campaign as her easiest in terms of community interest and support of public officials, but the most difficult in terms of travel, referring to difficulties experienced on trips to meetings all over the county. She had arrived in Eureka by steamer from San Francisco, but after the Supervisors' final vote she began her return to San Francisco on the first train to run on the new line from Eureka to Scotia, then was transported from Scotia to Longvale by car through the redwoods "without benefit of roads."

The flagpole and plaque on the library lawn honor Hogan Ring, MD, 1851-1930. A native of Norway, Dr. Ring was already a physician when he came to Ferndale, where he and his brother owned the early Trost and Ring drug store. One of Ferndale's more elaborate Victorians, the Gingerbread Mansion, was once Dr. Ring's hospital.

In 1977 the very small Ferndale Carnegie was enlarged by an extension to the rear of about 20', within the existing lot. The extension provided space for a children's room and, by adding height to the building, and stacking the workroom and bathroom which were formerly side by side, further increased the space benefit of the new wing. Again, philanthropy was instrumental in Ferndale's library history. This construction, accomplished with the aid of the Bertha Lytel Estate and the Bertha Russ Lytel Foundation, enabled the old Carnegie to continue to serve the people of Ferndale. It remains the most impressive public building in Ferndale, and one of only two examples of Classical Revival among the many well preserved Victorians for which the town is noted.



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CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: FERNDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY

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

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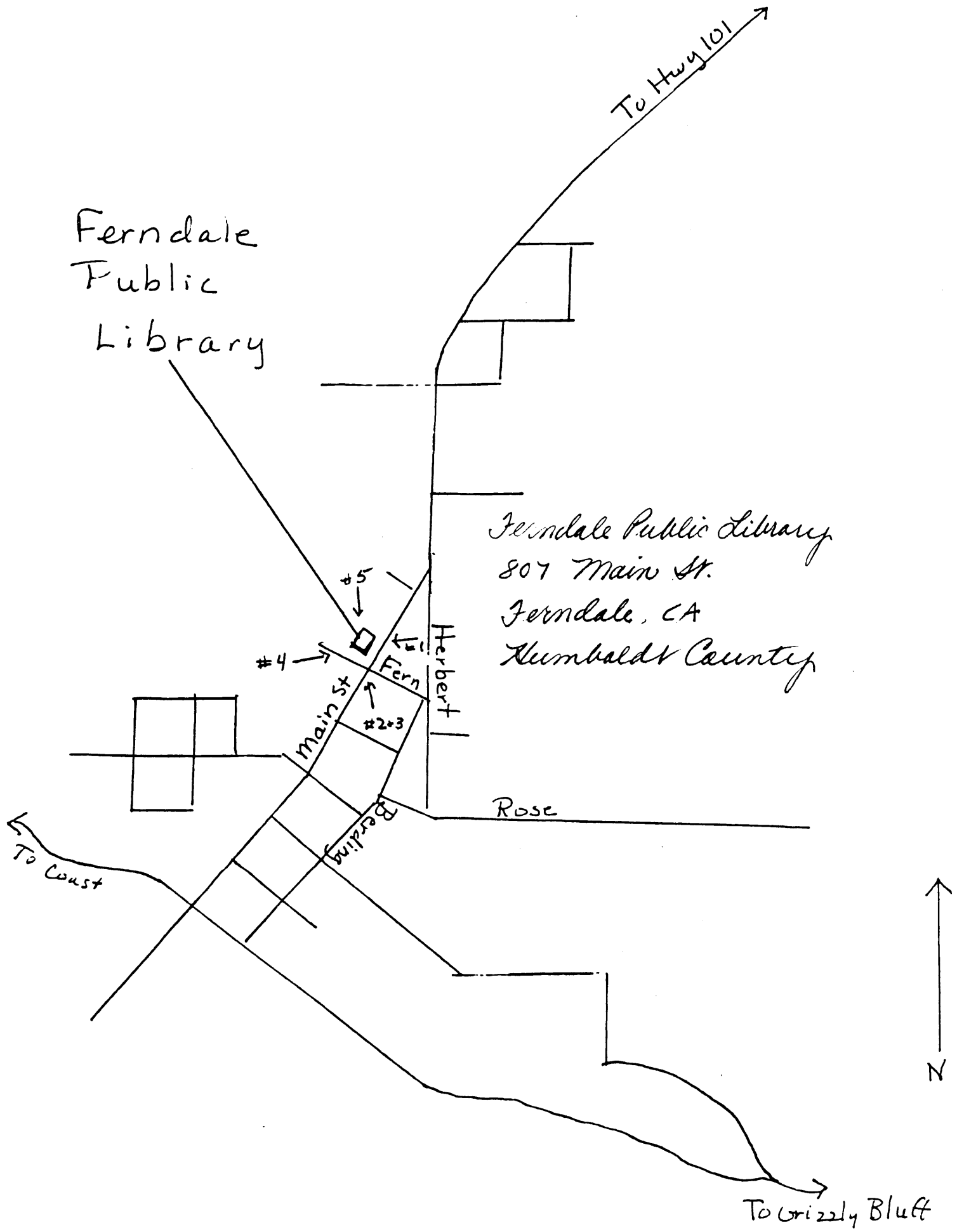
Letter, Marilyn Genzoli, Ferndale.

"Library Open House," Ferndale Enterprise, February 24, 1977.

"Where the Ferns Grew Tall: An Early History of Ferndale." Compiled and written by the Class of 1977, Ferndale Union High School. pp 265-67.

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Carnegie Corporation of New York: Ferndale correspondence



Ferndale  
Public  
Library

*Ferndale Public Library*  
807 Main St.  
Ferndale, CA  
Humboldt County



CALIFORNIA CARNEGIE LIBRARIES: FERNDALE PUBLIC LIBRARY  
PHOTOGRAPHS

1. Ferndale Public Library
- 807 Main St.
2. Ferndale CA 95536
  
3. Janet Smith
4. May, 1989
5. California Carnegie Survey
6. Front of building, view to southwest
7. Photo #1
  
6. Front and left side, view to north
7. Photo #2
  
5. California Carnegie Survey
6. Side, view to northwest
7. Photo #3
  
4. Jane Bradford
5. California Carnegie Survey
6. Left side and rear, view to northeast
7. Photo #4
  
6. Right side and rear, view to southwest
7. Photo #5