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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

DEC 27 1988

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 Old Alexandria Public Library  
other names/site number Alexandria Historical and Genealogical Library and Museum

2. Location

street & number 503 Washington Street N/A not for publication  
city, town Alexandria N/A vicinity  
state Louisiana code LA county Rapides code 079 zip code 71301

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>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

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.

Leslie Tassin 12/20/88  
Signature of certifying official Leslie Tassin, State Historic Preservation Officer, Dept of Culture, Recreation & Tourism 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.  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:) \_\_\_\_\_

Allan Byers Entered in the National Register 1/19/89

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
EDUCATION/ libraryCurrent Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
EDUCATION/library

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Beaux Arts

foundation concrete

walls brick

roof tile

other terra-cotta

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Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The old Alexandria Public Library is a single story brick and terra-cotta Beaux Arts style building located in downtown Alexandria. Despite a couple of alterations, the library retains its National Register eligibility.

The library space itself is raised well above grade on a stuccoed basement which contains service/storage areas. The main portion of the building, the piano nobile, is faced in brick with red colored mortar. It is articulated with four massive pier-like pilasters which culminate in terra-cotta molded capitals with oeil-de-boeuf motifs along the necking. These pilasters support a thin brick entablature with a very pronounced jutting cornice. This in turn is surmounted by a slight parapet and a spreading pantile hip roof.

The library building is very axial, with a central entrance approached by two flights of steps with a landing between. Each flight of steps is accented by a pair of flanking pedestals. The entrance has an impressive molded terra-cotta surround with an ornamental transom and a modillion cornice. The cornice is surmounted by scroll volutes supporting anthemions and a central tablet ornamented with an open book flanked by flaming torches and surmounted by a scallop shell.

The interior is large and open with windows set in axial fashion directly across from each other. Paneled columns, false beams, and a Greek key tile floor emphasize the entrance axis. The library space itself is open except for a pair of symmetrically placed offices at the rear.

**Alterations:**

Since the building's construction a small ornamental strip above the exterior cornice has been lost (see enclosed early photo). In addition, the windows have all been replaced with metal units. Though unfortunate, these changes have not significantly affected the overall building as a stylistic statement. As can be seen in the photos accompanying the submission, the aluminum windows are not that noticeable. Also, the original above grade basement windows have been enlarged to form basement level entrances.

**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    N/A

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
architecture

Period of Significance  
1907

Significant Dates  
1907

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
N/A

Architect/Builder  
Architects: Crosby & Henkel (New Orleans)  
Contractors: Caldwell Brothers

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

The old Alexandria Public Library is locally significant in the area of architecture as a landmark in the somewhat diminished architectural patrimony of downtown Alexandria.

Alexandria is considered one of seven major metropolitan areas of the state. Its central business district has suffered considerable loss of building fabric in recent decades due to demolition, suburbanization and more recently, the coming of Interstate 49. In addition, a goodly number of older structures have been modernized beyond recognition, thus depleting the historic fabric even further. The Comprehensive Historic Structures Survey has identified some 437 buildings in Alexandria's downtown area that are fifty years old or older. These consist almost entirely of cottages, shotgun houses, Queen Anne Revival residences, and some 131 party wall commercial buildings, most of which are either one or two stories high. The old Alexandria Public Library is clearly one of about a dozen landmarks which stand above the normal range of downtown building stock. Unlike the party wall commercial buildings, it is a free-standing pavilion with a fair degree of monumentality despite its relatively small size. Moreover, the vast majority of the buildings downtown are products of the builder tradition. The library is one of very few structures which represent the work of a high style practitioner, being a full blown academically designed Beaux Arts style building. It features a monumental classical vocabulary, an axial layout and noteworthy ornamentation around the entrance.

Historical Note:

The old Alexandria Public Library stands on the center square of the original town plat commissioned by Alexander Fulton in 1805. The center square was set aside for public use "solely for advancement of learning and culture." As early as 1824 the Alexandria Library Society was granted a charter by the legislature, although no record of a building exists. It is known that a public library was burned, along with the rest of the city, during the Civil War.

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Historic Structures Survey, Rapides Parish, Louisiana State Historic Preservation Office.

Historical data on site and present building provided by Alexandria Historical and Genealogical Library and Museum.

Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A  
 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: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 

1	5	5	5	2	8	0	0	3	4	6	3	7	6	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description Please refer to enclosed property plat map. Boundaries are highlighted in blue.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification Boundary lines follow property lines of the lot on which the building stands.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

ASSISTED BY ALEXANDRIA HISTORICAL & GENEALOGICAL

name/title National Register Staff LIBRARY AND MUSEUM  
organization Division of Historic Preservation date November 1988  
street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 342-8160  
city or town Baton Rouge state Louisiana zip code 70804

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Alexandria Public Library, Rapides Parish, LA

Section number   8   Page   1  

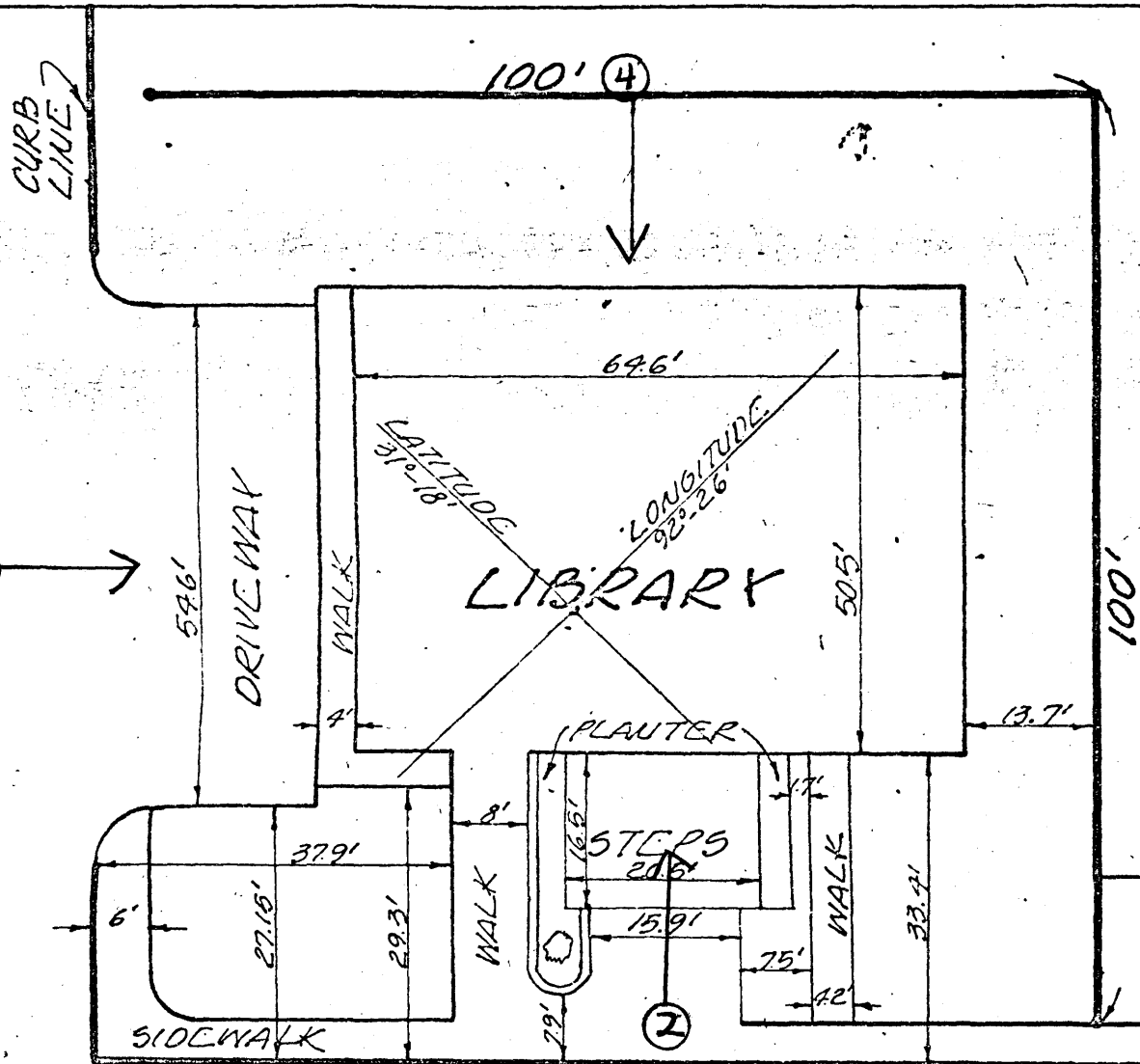
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In 1907, Mr. S. S. Bryan of Alexandria and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie each offered \$10,000 to the city for the construction of a free public library. The Board of Aldermen designated a lot in the center square and hired the New Orleans architectural firm of Crosby and Henkel to design the building. It is now the home of the Alexandria Historical and Genealogical Library and Museum and is still owned by the City of Alexandria.

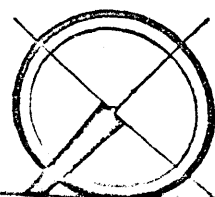
Alexandria Historical + Genealogical  
 Library + Museum  
 (Old Alexandria Public Library)  
 Rapides Parish, LA

FIFTH ST.

③ →



POLICE  
 STATION



WASHINGTON ST.  
 ① ↗

LOT 100' X 100' IN UNNUMBERED SQUARE  
 (CENTER SQ.) CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, LA., ADD. 1

SCALE 1"=20'	APPROVED BY: <i>Charles W. Cook</i>	DRAWN BY B.L.
DATE 8-20-71	CITY ENGINEER	REVISED