

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Tripp Memorial Library and Hall

and/or common Tripp Memorial Library

2. Location

street & number 565 Water St. _____ not for publication

city, town Prairie du Sac _____ vicinity of congressional district Second

state Wisconsin code 55 county Sauk code 111

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Village of Prairie du Sac

street & number 560 Park Ave.

city, town Prairie du Sac _____ vicinity of state Wis. 53578

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sauk County Court House

street & number 515 Oak Street

city, town Baraboo _____ state Wis.

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1977 _____ federal _____ state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Historic Preservation Division, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

city, town Madison _____ state Wis. 53706

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Tripp Memorial Library is on the main street of Prairie du Sac, surrounded by commercial structures. There is a small park on its north side.

A concrete foundation supports the two-story rectangular building. The exterior walls are brick, laid in colored mortar to match the brick. The front $3\frac{1}{2}$ feet of the building, the grade sill on both ends and rear of the building including door sills, and the pillar base and caps are of cut Kettle River sandstone, quarried at Sandstone, Minnesota. The top cornice is of heavy galvanized iron with a wide gutter extending all around the building. The roof is constructed of wood, hipped from all four sides.

The entrance is into a 10 by 13 foot vestibule, which has floor, steps, and base of Joliet limestone on concrete. A double door connects the vestibule to the stairway hall. The library occupies the 33 by 30 feet room, with a 13 foot high ceiling, on the main floor. A large fireplace is in the center of the south wall. The 11 by 13 foot hall on the main floor has an open stairway of two flights extending to the second floor hall. The former village clerk's office, $14\frac{1}{2}$ by 16 feet in size, is connected to the hallway. The assembly hall on the second floor is 33 by 39 feet with the ceiling arched from all four sides, the height on the side walls being 12 feet with a rise of 4 feet to the center. All interior wood work is clear red oak.

Alterations have been minor. When the main floor library was refurbished in 1968, the high ceiling of the large room was lowered just a few inches to allow for recessed fluorescent lights. The decorative scrolls at the ends of the ceiling beams were retained and highlighted with touches of gold paint.

Two 8 by 16 foot murals, mounted on the outside north wall in 1978, are evidence of the village's continuing interest in the building. The murals, depicting 100 years of village history, were designed and painted by artist Michael Connors, who lives north of Spring Green. Connors studied at the Art Students' League in New York City.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Assoc. w/Sig. Person
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1912 (cornerstone) **Builder/Architect** Joseph Dresen
w/Ferry & Clas¹ Community Service

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Tripp Memorial Library, important in the civic and cultural life of Prairie du Sac for many years, is associated with a significant person, J. Stephens Tripp, who left most of his fortune to the University of Wisconsin when he died in 1915.

Association with Significant Person

Tripp's gift of \$10,575 of the \$13,000 cost of the library building gave a hint, while he was still living, of the generous amounts he would leave in his will for hospitals and educational institutions, especially the University of Wisconsin in Madison. (2) The gift was a complete surprise to the University.

Tripp, born in New York state in 1828, had a hard time completing his education. (3) He was admitted to the bar in New York in June 1853. He came to Wisconsin in November, and settled in Sauk City in 1854. He added banking to his law practice in 1868. Beginning in 1887 he confined his attention to banking.

Tripp was active in community affairs. He was postmaster of Sauk City from 1854 to 1861, president of the village of Sauk City for 8 years, clerk of the town of Prairie du Sac for 16 years, and president of the village of Prairie du Sac for 20 years. He was a member of the Sauk County board of supervisors much of the time for 30 years, serving several times as its chairman. He was elected to the Wisconsin Assembly in 1862.

At the time of his death in 1915, he was remembered in a joint resolution of the state legislature. The resolution noted, "A public spirited citizen, Mr. Tripp gave active aid to many enterprises and rendered many services of a public character to which no allusion has here been made. In the quiet and judicious giving of money and services for the relief of those in need, for the good of his country and state, he was liberal."

When the estate was settled after the death of the last surviving member of his family, the University received more than \$600,000. The funds were used for Tripp Hall dorms, about \$300,000; Memorial Union, \$200,000 (the commons was designated Tripp Commons); Tripp Fellowships, \$10,000; and Arboretum land, \$85,000. (4)

Community Service

The building also has significance in the cultural and civic life of the community. Prairie du Sac's first library was established on this site in 1900 in two rooms of a hotel, purchased by the village in 1902. When the Tripp Memorial Library was completed in 1913, the library and village offices were housed here. Elections were held in the second floor room, where annual and other meetings of the village were held. Mr. Tripp cast the first ballot in the first election in the building in August 1913. All village government activities were concentrated on the second floor until a new, ground level village hall was completed behind the library in 1964.

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Sauk County News. Prairie du Sac, Wis. Aug. 29, 1912; Oct. 9, 1913; July 29, 1915.
 Atwood, Mary J. "J. Stephens Tripp." Wisconsin Magazine of History 10, no. 3: 304-309.
 Mueller, Erhart. "Jedediah Stephens Tripp." Also in Sumpster. 1980. pp. 53-59.

10. Geographical Data ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Acres of nominated property less than one

Quadrangle name Sauk City, Wis.

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

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4	7	9	6	5	6	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

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 Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification

A part of lots 7, 8, 9 of Block 3 in Prairie du Sac bounded, viz: Beginning at the SE corner of land owned by Thos. Baker being a point on the W line of Water St. 23 feet 9 inches SE from the SE corner of Lot 10 in Block 3, thence SE along the W line (continued)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title John Gruber

organization

date June 27, 1981

street & number 1430 Drake St.

telephone 608/255-7713 or 262-8296

city or town Madsion

state Wis. 53711

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

Richard Murray

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin

date 7/30/81

For HCERS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

Entered in the
National Register date 9/14/81

John Gruber
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Tripp Memorial Library, Prairie du Sac, Sauk Co., Wisc.

Continuation sheet

Item number 8, 10

Page 1

8. The library, still located on the main floor, is used six days a week by local residents. The second floor room has become a museum operated by the Sauk Prairie Historical Society. The museum includes floor to ceiling cases of birds done by a talented local taxidermist, Edward Ochsner (1871-1944). Ochsner sent many rare specimens of Wisconsin wildlife to the Milwaukee museum.(5) The collection, donated by Ochsner and his brother, has been displayed here since 1935. The former village clerk's office was dedicated as the library's local history center in 1978.

The library is an example of Neo-Classical commercial design. An impressive cornerstone laying ceremony was held October 24, 1912, and the building was in use in 1913. Joseph Dresen was the architect. Ferry and Class, a prominent Milwaukee firm, were consulting architects. Alfred Clas (1859-1942), a partner in the Milwaukee firm, was born in Sauk City. (6) He retained an interest in his home area throughout his lifetime. He and Dresen worked together on other local buildings, including the Free Congregation Hall in Sauk City. Dresen, a registered architect in Sauk City and Prairie du Sac for more than 40 years, was a member of the Dresen Brothers Lumber Company, Sauk City, contractors for the library.(7)

Footnotes

1. Sauk County News, Prairie du Sac, Wis., Aug. 29, 1912.
2. Sauk County News, July 29, 1915. Copies of will also are available at the UW-Madison Archives.
3. Mary J. Atwood, "J. Stephens Tripp," Wisconsin Magazine of History 10, no. 3 (March 1927): 304-309.
Erhart Mueller, "Jedediah Stephens Tripp," Also in Sumpter (1980), pp. 53-59.
Jt. Resolution 93 S, in Senate Journal (Madison: 1915): 1373-1374.
4. E. B. Fred, ed., A University Remembers (Madison: University of Wisconsin 1969), p. 27.
5. Sauk County News, Aug. 2, 1934, Dec. 14, 1944.
6. Pioneer Press, Sauk City, Wis., July 9, 1942.
7. Pioneer Press, Dec. 6, 1934.

10. LEGAL DESCRIPTION (Item 10, page 4)

of Water St. 82 feet, thence SW at right angles with Water St. 100 feet, thence W to Second St., thence N along the E line of Second St. to said Baker's land, at right angles with Water St. to place of beginning.