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NATIONAL REGISTER

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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 Fort Fairfield Public Library
other names/site number _____

2. Location

street & number Main Street N/A not for publication
city, town Fort Fairfield N/A vicinity
state Maine code ME county Aroostook code 003 zip code 04742

3. Classification

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

Name of related multiple property listing:
Maine Public 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.

Earle S. Fitzmaurice 11/16/88
Signature of certifying official Date
Maine Historic Preservation Commission
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. *Earle S. Fitzmaurice* 1-5-89
 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:)

Earle S. Fitzmaurice Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education: Library

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Education: Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick

walls Brick

roof Stone: Slate

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Fort Fairfield Public Library is a one-story five-bay rectangular brick building covered by a hip roof. Its modest Neo-Classical form is heightened by its tall basement and location atop a shallow knoll at the west end of Main Street.

Facing north, the principal elevation is dominated by the pedimented entrance pavilion which is reached by a wide flight of concrete steps. Deep, paneled brick pilasters support the full pediment whose frieze bears the inscription PUBLIC LIBRARY and a tympanum containing an oval window with four keystones. The recessed door is framed by a wide surround and surmounted by a six-pane transom and prominent keystone and voussoirs. The recessed flanking walls are symmetrically punctuated by two long multi-pane single sash windows with transoms and keystones highlighted with stone. Narrow long panels frame the windows at the outer sides and between the stone water table. This latter feature carries around the building separating the main floor from the basement whose six-pane windows on the front and sides are located on axis with those above. A stringcourse above the windows also continues around the library as does the narrow cornice.

The side elevations vary slightly in their fenestration patterns directly reflecting the arrangement of interior space. Three symmetrically placed windows similar to those on the facade (and three in the basement) occupy the east side whereas five are positioned on the west end, three of which are narrower multi-part units that indicate the location of the book stacks. A more widely spaced trio of these windows is set at the rear in addition to three of the large windows.

Inside, the plan is comprised of the entrance vestibule with side openings leading into the reading rooms and the circulation desk located at the rear west side. Behind the desk are the stacks and at the end of the vestibule the librarian's office. The smaller children's room is on the west side and the adult reading room and a second office on the east end. The handsome classical eared door and

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National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

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window surrounds are remarkably well preserved as is the prominent brick fireplace in the larger reading room. The basement contains the physical plant and storage area.

Resting on a concrete slab at the northeast corner of the lot is a cannon and its carriage. According to the bronze plaque attached to its side, the cannon is a relic of the Aroostook War (1837-1842) and figured prominently in the town's centennial pageant of August 8-10, 1916. It is presumed that it was placed here about that time.

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)

Education
Architecture

Period of Significance

1912-1938

Significant Dates

1912-1913

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Coombs, Harry S.

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

Designed by Lewiston architect Harry S. Coombs and built in 1912-1913 by contractor R. J. Noyes, the Fort Fairfield Public Library is an intact Neo-Classical Revival style brick building of modest scale. Funds for its construction were provided by Andrew Carnegie. It occupies a corner lot on Main Street near Fort Fairfield's commercial district. The library retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, and association. It meets the requirements for registration under criteria A and C for its educational and architectural significance as more fully described in the multiple property submission "Maine Public Libraries".

The history of Fort Fairfield's library apparently begins in 1895 when a free public library was founded by the town. (Only a year before A. C. Paul had established a circulating library of 500 volumes and, despite the formation of the public collection, it remained in operation until 1899.) This library gradually increased in size and use, and in 1910 the trustees sought a \$10,000 grant from Andrew Carnegie. This was awarded on February 20, 1911, with the typical stipulations that the town provide a maintenance fund equal to ten percent of the value of the grant and a suitable lot. Architect Coombs, whose previous commissions included library designs in Oakland and Bridgton, among others, was selected to draw the plans.

The library was formally dedicated on September 10, 1913, and remains in its original use to this day. Of additional note is the small cannon that rests on a concrete slab at the northeast corner of the lot. A plaque attached to it indicates that it was a relic of the Aroostook War and figured prominently in the town's 1916 centennial celebration. It was apparently placed here soon thereafter. For the purposes of this nomination, and until a thematic study of war memorials is conducted, this is considered a non-contributing object.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

"Report of the Trustees of the Public Library". In Fort Fairfield Municipal Report, 1911, 1912, 1913.

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: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Less Than 1

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property occupies the Town of Fort Fairfield tax map 32, lot 79.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The boundary of the nominated property embraces the building, the non-contributing Aroostook War Memorial, and the entire lot historically associated with the library.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kirk F. Mohney, Architectural Historian
 organization Maine Historic Preservation Commission date October 11, 1988
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 city or town Augusta state Maine zip code 04333