

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DEC 8 1976

DATE ENTERED

OCT 21 1977

**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 Anacortes Public Library

AND/OR COMMON

Anacortes Museum of History and Art

**LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

1305 8th Street

\_\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Anacortes

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2nd - Lloyd Meeds

STATE

Washington

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

CODE  
53COUNTY  
SkagitCODE  
057**CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
___ DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	___ AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	___ PRIVATE	___ UNOCCUPIED	___ COMMERCIAL ___ PARK
___ STRUCTURE	___ BOTH	___ WORK IN PROGRESS	___ EDUCATIONAL ___ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
___ SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	___ ENTERTAINMENT ___ RELIGIOUS
___ OBJECT	___ IN PROCESS	___ YES: RESTRICTED	___ GOVERNMENT ___ SCIENTIFIC
	___ BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	___ INDUSTRIAL ___ TRANSPORTATION
		___ NO	___ MILITARY ___ OTHER: Art Gallery

**OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Anacortes

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Anacortes

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Washington

**LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Auditor's Office, Skagit County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Mount Vernon

STATE

Washington

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Washington State Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

1974

\_\_\_ FEDERAL  STATE \_\_\_ COUNTY \_\_\_ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Washington State Parks &amp; Recreation Commission

CITY, TOWN

Olympia

STATE

Washington

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Anacortes Public Library, built in 1909, was financed by a \$10,000 Carnegie grant to the City of Anacortes. The building was designed by the Bellingham firm of Piper and Cox. It is situated on Eight and "M" Streets in an older residential neighborhood of Anacortes, approximately three blocks west of the downtown business district. Five blocks to the north is the Guemes Channel, which connects Rosario Strait with Fidalgo Bay. The library itself faces north, on a one-half block lot landscaped with trees and evergreen shrubbery. Various decorative elements not original to the site, such as planters, a sculptural fountain, a flagpole and a sundial, adorn the steps and surrounding lawn.

The plan of the library conforms roughly to the shape of a Greek cross. The building is essentially two stories in height owing to its full, above-grade basement. Two tiers of cement steps provide access to the formal public entrance at second-story level. The foundation and ground-floor walls were constructed of Skagit County cement and are scored on their exterior surfaces. The superstructure is of load bearing masonry, faced with buff-toned pressed brick. In recent years a coat of white paint was applied to all exposed brickwork. The flat roof with its centrally placed skylight is sealed with built-up roofing.

A classical treatment of the front, or north elevation of the building lends dignity to an otherwise austere design. The treatment represents one of the many variations one Renaissance and Neo-classical themes so frequently employed in Carnegie library projects.

The projecting centermost bay of this facade functions as a portico, and is articulated by four engaged Ionic columns. These support a full masonry entablature with a metal cornice. Above this cornice rises a high parapet with a central panel bearing the words "CARNEGIE LIBRARY". Flanked by two Ionic columns, the formal portal consists of a round-arched structural opening recessed slightly into the plane of the wall. Archivolts mouldings of brickwork echo the arch line above the impost. Glazed double doors with side-lights and transom are topped by a leaded glass tympanum.

The projecting east and west wings of the Anacortes Library are given surface variation at second-floor level by regularly spaced, broad brick pilasters. These pilasters, capped by a full entablature with metal cornice and masonry parapet, define rectangular, fenestrated bays. The entablature on these lateral wings occurs at a slightly lower level than that of the north elevation's portico. Only the cornice and parapet extend around the rear, or south projection of the library. On this portion of the building, no architectural wall treatment was employed.

The visual character of the exterior of the Anacortes Library has been altered to some degree in the recent manipulation of fenestration. At second-floor level, the original one-over-one light, double-hung sash have, for the most part, been obscured behind wooden grills painted dark brown in color. On the rear wing, windows at this level have been covered with plywood. Ground-floor openings have been largely hidden in the same manner. The present-day usage of the library as a museum and art gallery necessitated this fairly extensive alteration, in order to achieve greater wall area for interior displays. Two decorative window openings on the north facade remain intact, however. On either side of the main portal are tall narrow openings with fixed wooden sash and multiple triangular lights. Stuccoed "Gibbs surrounds", new painted white, once contrasted with the buff brick facing.

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The original spacial design of the interior of the library at main, or second-floor level remains intact, although it has been given over entirely to museum use. The central one-third of the open east-west axis is clearly defined by four Ionic columns and pilasters situated at each of its four corners. The columns support a full wooden entablature, above which rises a coved ceiling and central, multi-paned skylight. Within this center space, the library's original panelled circulation desk remains in use. The easterly and westerly wings to either side of this area were, in all likelihood, once occupied by open stacks and reading tables. Here the ceilings have been lowered, and all windows have been obscured behind new wall surfaces. Behind the circulation desk in the rear extension of the building are two small offices now utilized for storage and display purposes. Within these rooms, the original door and window trim is still exposed. Throughout these public areas, modern overhead light fixtures have been recently installed.

The early appearance of the library's interior woodwork, much of which has been painted white at main-floor level, can be best observed in the foyer and on the staircase which leads to the ground-floor, or basement level. One-third of the ground-floor space has been partitioned and is occupied by the Anacortes Art Gallery. A separate entrance at that level, on the east side of the building, has been provided for the Gallery's use. The remaining basement space functions as an additional display area for the museum. Here also the ceiling has been lowered and recently inserted wall surfaces cover all window openings.

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1909      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      Piper and Cox

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Anacortes Public Library was the city's first especially-constructed library facility. Built in 1909 by the architects Piper and Cox of Bellingham, the library was funded by the Andrew Carnegie Corporation in the amount of \$10,000. Its construction was one of the community's major public building projects of the first decade of the Twentieth Century. Until 1967, the structure served as the town's only public library, at which time it was converted to the Anacortes Museum of History and Art. In its present-day function, the building retains its stature as a center of community education. Although by no means a monumental work of architecture, it remains a visual landmark within its residential neighborhood and provides a link to the adjoining business district of Anacortes.

In the first decade of the Century, Anacortes was experiencing a period of expansion and prosperity. The Great Northern Railroad had brought both passenger and freight service to the community. Surrounded by the vast waterways and forests of the Puget Sound region, Anacortes was economically dependent upon its fishing and lumbering industries. While its streets were still unpaved and planked with timbers, the physical development of the town continued in the aftermath of the recent railroad boom era. In 1908, in response to continual growth and an ever-increasing population, concerned citizens of Anacortes began to recognize the need for a public library.

On December 31, 1908, the ladies of the Anacortes Public Library Association met to outline plans for the first public library in Anacortes. A few interested gentlemen were present at the gathering. A letter was read from the Andrew Carnegie Corporation in which a \$10,000 grant was offered, provided that the City would secure a site and agree to an annual expenditure of \$1,000 for books and expenses. On March 11, 1909, five lots at 8th and "M" Streets were purchased by the Association from the Great Northern Railroad for \$1,000. The plot included Lots 1-5 in Block 99. At that time, Mayor W. V. Wells issued the following endorsement of the project,

*The proposed Carnegie Library will prove a source of instruction to old and young alike, in many ways assisting Anacortes in its march toward a larger and more populous city.*

The newly-elected officers of the Library Committee solicited bids from regional architects. Competitive designs for the library were submitted by G. W. Ballard of Tacoma and William Cox of Bellingham. The Committee selected the design of Cox and Piper, Architects, on June 3, 1909. One week later the plans were forwarded for approval to the Carnegie Corporation. The facility was to include: men's and women's dressing rooms, janitor's room, main reading room, book stock room, and office. The Committee acknowledged the guidance of Miss Grace Switzer, Bellingham Librarian, in the final formulation of the plans.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Anacortes American newspaper files 0 1909.

City Hall Records, Anacortes.

Prosser, William F. History of the Puget Sound Country.  
Lewis Publishing Co., 1903.

(continued on attached page)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,0	5,2,8	3,2,5	5,3	7,3	4,5,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			
C						

B						
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING			
D						

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY - based on information provided by:

NAME / TITLE

Marie Hapeman, Chairman of Museum Board

ORGANIZATION

Anacortes Museum of History and Art

DATE

March, 1975--October, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

3020 "R" Avenue

TELEPHONE

293-3247

CITY OR TOWN

Anacortes

STATE

Washington

# 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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Arthur M. Sholnik*

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

November 30, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

*10/21/77*

ATTEST

*Robert B. Ketting*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

*10/12/77*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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On June 24, 1909, the plans were approved by the Home Trust Company of Hoboken, New Jersey, administrators of the Carnegie Corporation's grant program. The \$10,000 award was to be released in installments of \$2,000 to \$3,000, upon the architects' certificate, as needed during construction. Piper and Cox were duly employed and directed to call for construction bids. The cornerstone ceremony was held on September 25, 1909, with the Anacortes Masonic Lodge officiating. A tin box was placed at the base of the stone, containing a copy of the City Charter, names of the Library board members, and a list of donors to the fund.

In the State of Washington, thirty-three Carnegie grants were awarded to communities for the construction of public library facilities between the years 1901 and 1916. The earliest gifts were made to the cities of Tacoma and Seattle in 1901. It is not known precisely how many of Washington's Carnegie libraries remain standing today. However, the Anacortes Library is thought to be one of a dwindling number. Its survival is owing, no doubt, to its timely adaptation and reuse as a city museum.

In the initial years of the Carnegie program, virtually no design guidelines were issued to grant applicants. It was not until 1908, one year prior to Anacortes' project, that the submission of plans for approval became a requirement for all prospective grantees. General guidelines for the layout of small libraries were made available by the Carnegie Corporation in 1911, and in several respects the Anacortes Library of 1909 reflected that eventually-adopted standard. A one-story and basement type plan, with a centrally-located circulation desk in the main reading room, and storage and utility rooms at basement level, were recommended as important elements of an efficient and economic design. The already-completed Anacortes Library was proof of the success and popularity of such a layout.

F. Stanley Piper and William Cox, both British immigrants to the Pacific Northwest, enjoyed a brief partnership in Bellingham from 1909 - c. 1914. Piper received architectural training at Blundell's College in Devonshire, England. He emigrated to the United States in 1907, and spent the first two years with an established firm in Seattle. In 1909, he opened his own office in Bellingham where the Anacortes Library must have been one of his first commissions. During the following years he designed the Bellingham Herald Building, the Bellingham National Bank, the Northwest Hardware Building, the Donovan Building, St. Luke's Hospital, St. Paul's Church, and many others. William Cox, a carpenter, joiner, and wagonbuilder from Lincoln, England emigrated to America in 1887. He practiced architecture in New York for two years before moving to Bellingham Bay in 1889. In addition to practicing architecture, Cox was a successful businessman and dabbler in real estate. He was president of the Canadian-American Mining Company, Inc., and owner of the Bellingham Bay Guerneby Cab and Transfer Company.

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Roth, Lottie R. History of Whatcom County, Pioneer Historical Publishing Co., 1926.

Unpublished notes of Elisabeth Walton Potter on the history of Carnegie Library construction.

SURVEY-INVENTORY FORM  
COMMUNITY CULTURAL RESOURCE SURVEY

1. NAME

Historic Anacortes Carnegie Library (*Carnegie Library of Washington TR*)  
and/or Common Anacortes Museum of History and Art

2. LOCATION

UTM References:  
Zone 10 Easting 528325  
Northing 5373450  
- not for publication

Street & Number Anacortes  
1305 8th Street  
City, Town Anacortes - vicinity of  
State WA County Skagit

3. CLASSIFICATION

Ownership: public private both  
Status: occupied unoccupied work in progress  
Present Use: agriculture commercial educational entertainment government  
industrial military museum park private residence  
religious scientific transportation other:

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

Name City of Anacortes  
Street & Number  
City, Town Anacortes - vicinity of State WA

5. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hapeman, Marie. National Register nomination. October 1976.

6. FORM PREPARED BY

Name/Title J.H. Vandermeer, Historian  
Organization Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation Date July 1981  
Street & Number 111 West 21st Avenue Telephone (206) 753-9685  
City or Town Olympia State WA 98504



## 7. DESCRIPTION

Condition:      excellent    good    fair    deteriorated    ruins    unexposed  
Circle one:      unaltered      altered  
Circle one:      original site      moved      date \_\_\_\_\_

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Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance  
attach photo

Located in a residential neighborhood near downtown, the Anacortes library has a floor plan like a Greek Cross. Now painted white, it was originally concrete faced with buff-toned pressed brick. The principal facade, which faces north, is articulated by four engaged Ionic columns. These support a full masonry entablature with a metal cornice, above which rises a high parapet. The exterior of the building has been altered somewhat by placement of wooden grills over the original sash windows.

Verbal boundary description:

**Lots 1-5, Block 99, Anacortes Original Plat**

Acreage: **Less than one**

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## 8. SIGNIFICANCE

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Specific dates    1909

Builder/Architect

Piper & Cox

---

### a. History

In 1908 concerned citizens of Anacortes, recognizing the need for a library, persuaded the city to apply to Andrew Carnegie for a grant. Their request was honored, and \$10,000 was promised. The building was erected in 1909 and served as the city's library until its conversion to a museum in 1968. The Bellingham, Washington firm of Piper and Cox was the architect.

### b. Evaluation of Significance

This building was entered on the National Register of Historic Places on October 21, 1977. It was considered significant based on its stature as a center of community intellectual activity and its long service as a library. One of the architects, F. Stanley Piper, is credited with two Bellingham landmarks, the Great Northern Railroad station and the Bellingham National Bank building.