

PH#367184

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 17 1976
DATE ENTERED JUL 12 1976

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

AND/OR COMMON

Beatrice City Library *ml*

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

220 North 5th Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Beatrice

VICINITY OF

First

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Nebraska

031

Gage

067

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

ACCESSIBLE

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Beatrice

STREET & NUMBER

204 North 14th Street

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Beatrice

VICINITY OF

Nebraska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Register of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Gage County Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

STATE

Beatrice

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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 Beatrice City Library is located near the center of the downtown business district and is surrounded on three sides by public space. The Beatrice Public Schools face the library on the west and north, while Charles Park enhances the rear (east) facade of the building. To the north are commercial buildings.

Designed by architect George A. Berlinghof, who was then working in Beatrice, the building exemplifies the principles of Beaux-Arts Classicism. Symmetrical about an east-west axis, the plan features a central (west) entrance which rises above the half basement into the main hall. Flanking the main hall are the librarians' space and reference desk to the north and the reading room on the south. On axis with the entrance and housed in a large octagonally-shaped wing is the book stack area. The overall plan-form, then, is tee-shaped with the crossing of the "tee" forming the main (west) facade. The children's reading room and book stack spaces occupy the basement along with the safe and other storage and mechanical spaces.

The library was constructed in 1902-03 with the grand opening on January 1, 1904. Rutherford Lee & Co. were the general contractors (\$17,000) with G. C. Pyle the plumbing and heating contractor (\$1615), Western Electric Company of Omaha the electric contractors (\$200), while the Beatrice City Gas Company performed the gas fitting operations (\$43.60). Architect Berlinghof received \$500 (3½%) for his plans and specifications. The building was constructed with a grant from the Andrew Carnegie Foundation, which also supplied an additional \$3000 for library furnishings supplied by The Library Bureau of Chicago.

Structurally the building is of brick construction, with iron used for the floor and presumably the roof construction. Bedford limestone was used for the basement up to the water table, with pressed brick used as a facing for the upper walls. Architectural details are executed in terra-cotta.

The symmetrical plan is reflected in the main entrance facade of the building. Designed in a classical three-part Beaux-Arts composition, the facade features a projecting entrance pavilion. Here, access to the recessed entrance is through a high arched vault which is enhanced by a coffered ceiling. The arch itself features a Corinthian keystone and is modeled with the use of enriched talon, bead and reel, and pearl motifs. Above the entrance vault is the terra-cotta name plate and, finally, the elaborate cartouche which rests on top of the parapet and serves to date the building.

Flanking the entrance vault are paired Corinthian columns which are separated sufficiently to give the entrance pavilion a strong three-part composition. The columns frame a small rectangular window and a simply detailed medallion on each side of the entrance. These columns, when viewed with respect to the whole building, however, are tantamount to the use of the coupled column which so characterizes the Beaux-Arts motif.

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Rectangular pilasters--also of the Corinthian order--model the wall behind each column and together with the columns, support an entablature of classical derivation. Here the cornice features egg and dart, bead and reel, and enriched talon motifs along with dentils while the architrave utilizes enriched talon and pearl motifs.

The classically derived entablature, which supports an articulated parapet, runs the perimeter of the building and ties the composition together. The end pavilions of the main facade each feature a round-arched window, which is detailed in the same fashion as the entrance arch. The pavilion itself is framed by heavy brick quoins. A broken string course visually ties the spring line of the three arches and forms the lintel of the small rectangular windows between the columns. Round-arched windows form the fenestration for all facades except the octagonal book stack wing, which utilizes a series of tall rectangular lights.

The building has retained its original character on the exterior with the exception of the modern entrance doors, whose non-symmetrical character is so antithetical to the Berlinghof design. The present interior--remodeled ca. 1968-71 by Shaver & Co., architects from Salina, Kansas--has been substantially altered with the use of suspended ceilings, pressed wood wall paneling and decorative translucent acrylic panels over the stack windows. Original library desk and other furnishings have been replaced.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1902-1903

~~DESIGNED~~ ARCHITECT

George A. Berlinghof

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The establishment of the Beatrice City Library was the culmination of an effort on the part of the Beatrice Literary Club which was founded in 1890. This Club confirmed the earlier efforts of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union which had established a small circulating library in the city. By 1893 the Literary Club had come into possession of a considerable sum of money and began a campaign to have the city accept the WCTU library and, with the use of the Club's capital as seed money, establish a City Library which could meet the demands of the community with full and free access. The City accepted this offer, moving the library together with a small reading room into new quarters on the upper floor of the recently completed Post Office building (October 1893).

In 1902 the Library Board was successful in obtaining a grant of \$20,000 from Andrew Carnegie for the construction of a proper library building. Sketches and designs were submitted by Beatrice architects George A. Berlinghof and R. W. Grant and by Gunn & Curtiss of Kansas City, Mo. Grant submitted two designs, one classically derived, the other Romanesque; Gunn submitted two, both of which were classical. Berlinghof's submission, of course, was classically derived also. Berlinghof's design was chosen by the Board and he agreed to a 3½% commission as well as to alterations of his original design. One month later, in August of 1902, Berlinghof was again before the Board to seek approval of his plans and construction specifications. Bids were taken and contracts awarded (see Item #7) on September 27, 1902.

The Beatrice City Library is one of only two outstanding examples of Beaux-Arts Classicism which have been identified in Nebraska to date. The library, restrained though it is, displays the basic features which are associated with the style: the strict symmetry of a three-part Beaux-Arts composition with the climactic, highly articulated central pavilion; the synthesis of Roman and Greek structure which is expressed in the combination of columns, arches and vault; the use of coupled columns and both arched and linteled openings and the broken facade, which, together with the articulated cornice and the elaborate cartouche, gives the facade a "classically pictorial" quality. Beaux-Arts principles were quite popular in Nebraska after the turn of the century but they were expressed most often in buildings of the Neo-Classical Revival style.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Beatrice Library Board: "Minutes," 1902-03. (Archives of the Nebraska State Historical Society)
- Dobbs, Hugh J.: History of Gage County, Nebraska, Lincoln: Western Publishing Co., 1918, p. 208-209.
- Haynes, James B.: History of the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition of 1898, Omaha: The Board of Directors, 1910.
- Whiffen, Marcus: American Architecture Since 1780, Cambridge, Mass.: 1969.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 4	6 9 1 5 6 0	4 4 5 9 6 7 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				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

NAME / TITLE

D. Murphy, Architect

ORGANIZATION

Nebraska State Historical Society

STREET & NUMBER

1500 R St.

CITY OR TOWN

Lincoln

DATE

February 26, 1976

TELEPHONE

(402) 432-2793

STATE

Nebraska

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE X

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

Marvin W. Knott

3/1/76

TITLE

Director, Nebraska State Historical Society

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Attesting

Jay R. [Signature]
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

7/12/76

ATTEST:

[Signature]
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

6-25-76

RBR for WJM 7/8/76

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The style, which received such impetus nationwide from the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago of 1893, received additional stimulus locally and regionally from the Trans-Mississippi and International Exposition in Omaha, Nebraska of 1898. Walker & Kimball of Boston and Omaha, architects-in-chief of the Exposition, executed the planning and provided strict architectural specifications for the individual buildings. Here, all buildings had to conform to Beaux-Arts three- or five-part compositions, were limited in height and in the composition of the skyline, and all buildings had to be white and of "simple Renaissance or Classical style." Perhaps most notable of those that fit Whiffen's definition of Beaux-Arts Classicism was the Agriculture Building by Cass Gilbert. Berlinghof's entrance pavilion of the Beatrice Library bears a striking resemblance to Gilbert's on the Agriculture Building. Much simpler in execution and devoid of figure sculpture, the main constituent elements of the Beatrice pavilion are the same as Gilbert's and produce an over-all effect very similar to that of the Agriculture Building. One can assume, from some of Berlinghof's later projects and his proximity to Omaha at that time, that he certainly must have attended the Exhibition and been influenced by it.

Little is known of Berlinghof's life. Born in 1862 in Germany, he first appears in Nebraska as a Beatrice architect in 1898. Sometime around 1906 he came to Lincoln, where in 1910 he went into partnership with Ellery L. Davis. The partnership lasted until about 1917, during which time the firm built many important structures in Lincoln and established a position of prominence which the later Davis and Wilson maintained in Lincoln for many years. Berlinghof continued his practice on his own from 1918 until 1930 when he retired. He died in Lincoln at the age of 82 in 1944.