United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received   AUG 21 1986

date entered   SEP 22 1986

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

1. Name

historic   Thorntown Public Library

and or common

2. Location

street & number   124 North Market Street   N/A___ not for publication

city, town   Thorntown   N/A___ vicinity of

state   Indiana   code 018   county   Boone   code   011

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	_X_ public	_X_ occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
_X_ building(s)	___ private	___ unoccupied	___ commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	_X_ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	_X_ yes: restricted	_X_ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	___ transportation
	N/A	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name   Thorntown Public Library

street & number   124 North Market Street

city, town   Thorntown   N/A___ vicinity of   state   Indiana   46071

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.   Boone County Recorder's Office

street & number   Boone County Courthouse

city, town   Lebanon   state   Indiana   46071

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title   Indiana Historic Sites & Structures
Inventory   011-629-16114   has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes _X_ no

date   1982   ___ federal _X_ state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records   Indiana Department of Natural Resources

city, town   Indianapolis   state   Indiana

7. Description

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Thorntown Public Library is located on a corner lot in a residential area of this small town of about 1400 people. The building is typical of the small-town Carnegie libraries with a three-bay facade on a raised foundation. This building is of brown brick with a red clay-tiled, hipped roof and limestone trim (photo #1). The central entrance bay on the west side projects from the facade, and is approached by a flight of steps flanked by brick stair buttresses with limestone coping. The round-arched doorway is sheltered by a round-arched wooden canopy, which is supported by massive, paired brackets. Brass light fixtures were originally suspended from the brackets, but have been removed. The double-leaf entrance is set within a compound brick arch with a stone keystone. The original glazed oak doors have been replaced by modern extruded aluminum doors, set beneath a painted, wood-framed, round-arched transom that is divided into several small rectangular lights (photo #3).

A limestone water table encircles the building. On either side of the entrance steps below the water table are two double-hung basement windows, with stone sills and a soldier course forming the heads. Above the water table on each side of the entrance is a large double-hung, 1/1 window flanked by smaller one-over-one double-hung windows, with multi-light transoms. This Chicago-style composition is framed by a stone sill with block modillions, and a head of alternating soldier bricks and limestone blocks. At each upper corner of the building is a simple decorative brickwork panel with a small diamond-shaped stone at its center. The hipped tile roof is underscored by broad eaves, and is broken by one chimney on the south end and one on the rear.

The north end of the building features three pairs of windows, set high in the wall to allow the placing of bookshelves below (photo #2). These windows are three-over-three, double-hung sash, with plain stone sills and alternating brick-and-stone heads. Below each pair is a decorative rectangular brick panel with stone blocks at the corners. Basement windows are also three-over-three double-hung, and an outside entrance into the basement is located beneath the center pair of windows. The rear part of the building is offset on this elevation.

Inside the main entrance is a short flight of steps, leading to a second set of doors (photo #4). These are glazed oak doors, with a rectangular transom of eight lights. At the top of transom is a wood picture rail, which encircles the entire main room of the library. Original wood trim, shelving, furniture, and desk are still in use (photos #5, #6). Interior light fixtures have been replaced.

An office has been partitioned off behind the circulation desk (photo #7). An operable fireplace is located on the south wall, with a brick face and a heavy oak mantel (photo #8).

The downstairs of the library was originally a lecture room, but is now used as a children's library. A small, semi-circular stage is located at one end of the room. Two oak, four-panel folding doors are at the north side of the room, which can be opened to enlarge the lecture room.

8. Significance

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Thorntown Public Library is important as the first public library building in Thorntown, and one of its most prominent and utilized public structures.

The building, designed by Wilson B. Parker, of Indianapolis, opened on January 10, 1915. The first library in the town had been started as part of the local school by Frank E. Long, Superintendent of Schools, and was maintained in his office. The growing library was made public in 1912-13, and in 1912 Mr. Long applied to the Carnegie Corporation for funding. The original $6,000 grant was increased to $10,000 when Sugar Creek Township joined the effort and increased the maintenance fund. The Town Council of Thorntown and Sugar Creek Township agreed to contribute an annual amount to the maintenance of the library, and the money to purchase the lot was raised by private subscription.
The Thorntown library building followed the general guidelines set out by the Carnegie Corporation, which began exercising control over the design of the libraries when it became evident that there were few architects experienced in building libraries for small towns. A leaflet entitled "Notes on Library Bildings" [sic] accompanied each grant, providing certain minimum standards for the main requirements of accommodations in the libraries built with Carnegie funds. Each community was to obtain the greatest amount of usable space consistent with good taste in building. The best results for a small library could be obtained in a rectangular-shaped building with a basement and one floor. The main floor, 12 to 15 feet high, would accommodate the bookstacks, the circulation desk area, and suitable space for reading by adults and children. Rear and side windows were to be about six to seven feet from the floor, thus permitting shelving all around. The floor could be subdivided as desired by means of bookstacks. The basement could be used for a lecture room and restrooms, as well as a staff room and a boiler room.[1] The Thorntown Public Library met all of these requirements, and therefore was typical of the Carnegie libraries. It was designed by Wilson B. Parker, of Indianapolis.

The basement of the Thorntown Library was the scene of many activities such as lectures by prominent people, programs by and for students, parent and teacher meetings, art exhibits, teas and club meetings. Baked goods and rummage sales were held and proceeds were donated to the school to buy equipment. The library was an integral part of the school system until the new school was built in 1955 with a library of its own.

The library served a community of about 2,000 people until 1984, when it merged with two more townships. The Thorntown Public Library now serves over 4,000 people. The building has undergone very few changes.

[1] Bobinski, George S. _Carnegie Libraries_. American Library Association: Chicago, 1969, p. 58.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Thorntown Sesquicentennial Book (1980).
Bobinski, George S. Carnegie Libraries. American Library Association: Chicago, 1969.
Boone County Magazine.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property __less than one acre__

Quadrangle name __Thorntown, Indiana__   Quadrangle scale __1:24000__

UTM References

A |1,6| |5,3,3,5,7,0| |4,4,4,2,1,0,0| B |__| |_____| |_____|
  Zone Easting   Northing   Zone Easting   Northing

C |__| |_____| |_____| D |__| |_____| |_____|

E |__| |_____| |_____| F |__| |_____| |_____|

G |__| |_____| |_____| H |__| |_____| |_____|

Verbal boundary description and justification Commencing at the northwest corner of lot 53 and running first south seventy (70) feet, thence east seven and one-half (7½) feet, thence north seventy (70) feet, thence west seven and one-half (7½) feet, to the place of beginning. Also, 70 feet of uniform width off the north end of Lot 5[...] Original Plat of Thorntown.

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
state		code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title   Mary Ann Mathews, Head Librarian

organization   Thorntown Public Library   date   April 1, 1986

street & number   124 North Market Street   telephone   317/436-7348

city or town   Thorntown   state   Indiana   46071

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

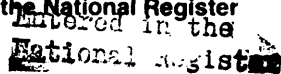____ national   ____ state   _X_ local

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 _[signature] for J. M. Ridenour_

title   Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer   date   7-23-86

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the National Register

[signature]   date   9-22-86

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

GPO 894-788