

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received MAY 12 1987
date entered

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

SEP 23 1987

1. Name

historic Wichita City (Carnegie) Library Building

and/or common Wichita Omnisphere and Science Center

2. Location

street & number 220 S. Main _____ not for publication

city, town Wichita _____ vicinity of

state Kansas code 20 county Sedgwick code 173

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

4. Owner of Property

name City of Wichita

street & number City Hall

city, town Wichita _____ vicinity of state Kansas 67202

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Sedgwick County Clerk

street & number Sedgwick County Courthouse

city, town Wichita _____ state Kansas 67202

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Kansas State Historical Society has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1970 _____ federal state _____ county _____ local

depository for survey records Kansas State Historical Society, 120 W. 10th Street

city, town Topeka _____ state Kansas 66612

7. Description

<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
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Wichita City (Carnegie) Library Building (c. 1915) is located at 220 S. Main Street in Wichita, Sedgwick County, Kansas (pop. 279,835). The two-story, limestone Beaux Arts building stands in the southwestern part of Wichita's central business district, directly south of the old City Hall. Its facade orientation is west. The building measures approximately one hundred and twenty-eight feet from north to south and eighty-three feet from east to west. After the completion of Wichita's present library in 1966, the Wichita City (Carnegie) Library Building served as city offices and the municipal court until the present occupant, the Wichita Omnisphere and Science Center established its tenancy in 1976.

The two-story, ashlar cut, limestone block building sits on an ashlar cut, limestone block, raised foundation with a multiply moulded watertable. Three bays comprise the rectangular building's facade and rear. The building's main body is one bay deep, a one-bay-by-one-bay brick unit extends from the rear elevation's center bay. A parapetted entry pavilion projects from the facade's center bay. A short, square tower rises from the building's central bay, covered by a rounded, truncated hipped roof sheathed with pantiles and surmounted by a monitor roof. Tripartite windows with translucent glass pierce each wall of the central tower. Standing seam metal covers the gable roofs of the two main wings, the metal may have been tarred. Two skylights, which have been covered due to water leakage, pierce the gable roofs midway. The entry pavilion and the rear extension have low roofs hidden by parapets, they are likely covered with tar and gravel. The building retains its original metal drain pipes on the outer edges of the facade and the rear extension.

A limestone or terracotta entablature, comprised of a multiply moulded bottom course surmounted by an egg and dart architrave, a bracketed frieze, and an incised vegetal and shell motif cornice engages the building on all elevations except the rear. A limestone parapet surmounts the entablature on all elevations except the rear. Large limestone blocks underscore the entablature. This frieze is underscored by a limestone moulding which breaks to allow the second level window penetration. A limestone beltcourse engages the building below the second story windows on all elevations except the rear.

The projecting entryway pavilion contains a recessed, transomed double door surmounted by a fanlight. The metal and glass door and transom replace an original set of taller, wood framed and glass paned double doors surmounted by a narrower, artglass transom. The doors appear to have had metal grilles attached inside of them. A multiply moulded limestone architrave with a modillioned frieze delineates the doorway. Two oversized brackets with acanthus carvings support the architrave's limestone, multiply moulded, modillioned entablature. Two pairs of limestone Ionic columns stand against the entryway walls, supporting the multiply moulded limestone beltcourse which engages the building below the second story. The beltcourse is engaged within the doorway recession as well as resting on the door's entablature. A multi-paned, translucent glass fanlight surmounts the beltcourse above the doorway. A wooden frame contains the window. A two course terracotta or limestone arch surrounds the window. The arch concludes in the pavilion's vaulted and coffered ceiling. Terracotta or limestone pieces with a repeating floral motif line the vault. A terracotta or limestone single course arch with floral

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motifs surround the upper level of the doorway. A lion headed keystone sets at the arch's apex.

A parapet wall surmounts the pavilion's classical entablature. The parapet is comprised of a central wall bearing the inscription "City Library", flanked by balusters and end blocks. Sloping, closed walls form the parapet on the pavilion's side elevations. A single, narrow, 1/1 double hung window pierces the wall space of the pavilion's side elevations on the first level. The original cast iron sconces with triple, milk glass bowls hand on either side of the doorway. Stone steps with flared limestone abutments lead up to the doorway.

Two identical bays flank the central pavilion. On the first level, each bay is comprised of three pairs of casement windows surmounted by a multi-paned, translucent glass transom. The frames are wooden and appear to be original. Each window capped with floral and vegetal limestone or terracotta architrave and underscored by projecting limestone sill supported by brackets with acanthus leaf carving. Three pairs of casement windows stand above each first level window. The second level windows are surrounded with a floral and vegetal limestone or terracotta architrave and rest on the projecting beltcourse. Small windows with grilles pierce the foundation below these windows, three on each side.

The side elevations' first level fenestration is comprised of three pairs of casement windows identical to those on the facade, surmounted by a tripartite fanlight with a terracotta or limestone floral and vegetal surround with a lion head keystone, like that around the door. The first level, center window on the south elevation has been cinder blocked in.

A triple course of brick corbelling ornaments the frieze above the upper level windows on the rear elevation. The rear elevation is fenestrated with 1/1 double hung windows of varying sizes. Many of these windows have been cinder blocked in. Some of the first level windows retain their original multi-paned, translucent glass transoms. Brick lintels surmount the windows, limestone sills underscore them.

The interior of the building maintains its original atrium floorplan and ceramic tiled floors. The beamed and coffered first level ceiling, the Doric pilasters below the ceiling beams, the first level marble columns, the egg and dart moulding ceiling cornice on the first level, the wooden door and window surrounds, the double cast iron staircase in the vestibule, and the three story, classically detailed atrium surround are retained. The atrium surround is comprised of two levels of wooden balustered railings, wooden Ionic columns on the second level, wooden Corinthian columns on the third level, the tripartite windows previously described on the third level, and plaster cast, coffered panelled ceilings. A bronze memorial plaque fills the interior window space of the center bay of the first floor's southern wall. Originally the building contained twelve sunflower motif, stained glass windows designed by Elizabeth Stubblefield Navas, these have been removed. The circa 1915 murals by Arthur Covey are not visible. The interior of the library maintains a very high degree of integrity.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1915 **Builder/Architect** Anthony Allaire Crowell - Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Wichita City (Carnegie) Library Building (c. 1915) is being nominated to the National Register as part of the Carnegie Libraries of Kansas thematic resources nomination (c. 1902–1921) at the local level of significance under criteria A and C for its historical association with the Carnegie Corporation Library Building Program and for its architectural significance as a new building type. A library association was organized in Wichita in 1873. The community received their \$75,000.00 Carnegie Library grant in 1912, library construction was completed in 1915. The Wichita City (Carnegie) Library Building is an example of the Beaux Arts style.

Sixty-three Carnegie funded libraries were built in Kansas during the first three decades of the Twentieth Century; four of these libraries were built on college campuses. In most cases, the Carnegie funded library represented the community's first library building although many Kansas communities had book clubs and library organizations well before the Carnegie Corporation Library Building Program was founded. In the case of the four college libraries, the building represented the first structure which was solely devoted to housing the institution's books and providing study space. Carnegie did not solicit interest in the program, with the exception of the Anderson (Carnegie) Memorial Library which was built by Carnegie as a memorial to his friend John Anderson and was the first college library nationally to receive Carnegie funding. Communities initiated contact with the corporation by letter, indicating their desire for a Carnegie funded library. If the Corporation responded favorably to the request, a firm local commitment to the program's requirements, which generally resulted in a public election in support of the library, followed. Obviously these actions represented a perceived need within the community for a library building and the Carnegie Corporation Library Building Program represented an excellent way to secure the funds to build one. Many of the Carnegie Libraries built in Kansas reflect the high space utilization design guidelines promoted by the Carnegie Corporation after 1910, underscoring the point that before the Carnegie Corporation Library Building Program, few architects and/or builders had experience designing this building type.

Twenty-eight Carnegie Libraries are included in this nomination (see inventory). Twelve Carnegie Libraries have been listed individually on the National Register: Argentine, Case Library (Baker University, Baldwin City), Caldwell, Dodge City, Emporia, Goodland, Lawrence, Leavenworth, Newton, Ottawa, Parsons, and Pittsburg. The Carnegie Library at Arkansas City is included in a downtown historic district. Thirteen Carnegie Libraries have been demolished: Great Bend, Halstead, Hays, Iola, Kansas City, McPherson, Morrison Library (Fairmont College, Wichita), Olathe, Osawatomie, Plainville, Russell, Salina, and Washington. Five Carnegie Libraries have been altered enough to make them ineligible for the National Register: Abilene, Garden City, Hiawatha, Lyons, and Stockton. (The nominations for the Concordia, Eureka, Independence, and Winfield libraries were deferred.) Twenty-two of the nominated libraries retain their original function. All of the buildings are in use or have an active use planned for them. The

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nominated libraries maintain a high to moderate degree of architectural and structural integrity.

Industrialist Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919) and the Carnegie Corporation significantly influenced the development and expansion of public library systems worldwide. Between 1886 and 1921 Carnegie funds assisted in the construction of 1,681 city and 108 college libraries in the United States. As a region, the Mid-West, Kansas included, did not have a well established public library system until the Carnegie Program and ranks highest in the number of communities which obtained Carnegie Libraries nationwide. Out of the forty-six states to participate in the library building program, Kansas ranks approximately eleventh in the number of Carnegie Libraries built. For many Kansas communities, the Carnegie Library represented its first library building, providing an environment that all members of the community could share for the purposes of reading, learning, and education.

Eligibility for Carnegie Library funds rested on several factors. Firstly, the population of the community had to exceed 1,000; in Kansas this indicated at least a second class city status. This population requirement generally resulted in county seat communities applying for and receiving Carnegie Libraries. Some communities with populations less than 1,000 banded together with neighboring communities to achieve the 1,000 mark and applied for township libraries, as in the case of the Peabody and Canton Township libraries. In the case of college libraries this constraint may not have applied, although the four Kansas colleges to receive Carnegie libraries were located in cities which had populations in excess of 1,000 by 1900. Secondly, the applicant had to provide a site for the library. The sites tended to be one or two blocks outside of the community's main business district. Thirdly, the applicant had to provide an annual endowment for the maintenance and improvement of the library which amounted to at least ten percent of the initial grant from the Carnegie Corporation.

This last factor contributed to the ending of the Carnegie Library Building Program in 1917, although grants for books and other improvements continued for several more decades. An inherent problem for second class cities in Kansas was the .4 mill levy restriction for libraries, making it difficult for some communities to meet the annual ten percent maintenance appropriation solely through public dollars. In 1917 the Kansas State legislature increased the library levy to .5 mill for second and third class cities, an amendment which affected most of the communities in the State that had Carnegie Libraries. In 1916, large communities such as Topeka, Wichita, Hutchinson, and Leavenworth had library mill levies of 1.06, 1.2, 1.8, and 3.5 respectively. In Kansas, the average public library grant was \$12,000 and the average college library grant was \$37,000. These monies covered the cost of the building, the necessary furniture and fixtures, and the architects' fees.

Prior to 1910, the Carnegie Corporation did not provide design guidelines for the libraries that it funded and because the library was a relatively new building type, few architects and/or builders had experience with its design. Many of the early libraries were expensive examples of the Beaux Arts style with little focus on floor plan and space

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efficiency. In 1910, Carnegie's personal secretary James Bertram developed model specifications and floorplans for proposed libraries, entitling his work Notes on Library Buildings. The Notes on Library Buildings provided the first widely circulated guidelines for library design in this country.

Bertram wrote:

Small libraries should be pland (sic) so that one librarian can oversee the entire library from a central position.... The bilding (sic) should be devoted exclusively to: (main floor) housing of books and their issue for home use; comfortable accomodations for reading them by adults and children; (basement) lecture room; necessary accommodation for heating plant; also all conveniences for the library patrons and staff. Experience seems to sho (sic) that the best results for a small general library are obtained by adopting the one-story and basement rectangular type of bilding (sic), with a small vestibule entering into one large room sub-divided as required by means of bookcases.... The rear and side windows may be kept about six feet from the floor, to giv (sic) continuous wall space for shelving. A rear wing can be added for stack-room (when future need demands it) at a minimum expense, and without seriously interfering with the library servis (sic) during its construction. The site chosen should be such as to admit lite (sic) on all sides, and be large enuf (sic) to allow extension, if ever such should become necessary.

The thirty-six Carnegie Libraries built in Kansas after 1910 reflect Bertram's precedents, exhibiting high space utilization, and often including full basements, although the raised basement is a design element employed in the earlier libraries as well. Most of these one-story libraries exhibit a three bay, Neo-Classical facade with a projecting central pedimented entry pavilion and are one bay deep. The use of native limestone is evident in some of the libraries but the most common material combination is brick with a limestone foundation. While there is some tendency toward a vernacular interpretation to the design ornamentation of these libraries, the general approach verges on high style.

Correspondence between the Carnegie Corporation and the library boards from the Kansas communities that received Carnegie Libraries indicates that the designs for these libraries were carefully scrutinized by Bertram and in many cases, were resubmitted several times before meeting his requirements. Upon the completion of a library, the library board was instructed to send a full set of blueprints and elevations of the building to the Corporation. However, recent correspondence between the Kansas State Historical Society and the Carnegie Corporation reveals that the Corporation does not have blueprints of the Kansas libraries. The Corporation does have some library photographs but the collection is not inclusive.

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Three architects were particularly active in the design of Kansas Carnegie Libraries: George P. Washburn of Ottawa, Kansas designed nine, A. T. Simmons of Bloomington, Illinois designed six, and William Warren Rose of Kansas City, Kansas designed four. Washburn's libraries are primarily of the standard three-bay, Neo-Classical variety. His firm is credited with the Carnegie libraries in Burlington, Canton, Cherryvale, Columbus, Eureka, Halstead, Osawatomie, Ottawa, and Sterling. Simmons engaged in a more eclectic approach, designing libraries in Abilene, Chanute, Council Grove, Downs, Hays and Yates Center. Rose is credited with the classically inspired libraries in Argentine, Kansas City, Manhattan, and Newton. In Kansas, many Kansas based architects were commissioned to design Carnegie Libraries as well as architects from Illinois, Missouri, Nebraska, and Texas.

Today, many of the state's Carnegie Libraries are facing serious space shortages. The alternatives of adding on or vacating both present preservation problems. Additions to these libraries must be such that the building's original character is not altered. Vacating the library for a larger facility leaves the problem of an empty building, in some communities county historical societies have inherited the empty Carnegie Library. In any event, when these buildings are no longer recognized from a design standpoint as Carnegie Libraries, their architectural significance ceases.

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Bertram, James. Notes on Library Building. (New York: Carnegie Corporation, 1910).

Bobinski, George S. Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development. (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969).

Carnegie Corporation. Micro-film reels of correspondence between the Corporation and Kansas Carnegie Library Communities, 1902-1921. Carnegie Corporation of New York.

Gardiner, Allen. The Carnegie Legacy in Kansas: A Retrospective View of the 59 Public Libraries Built by Andrew Carnegie; A Souvenir Publication to Commemorate the Sequicentennial of Carnegie's Birth. (Topeka: Kansas State Library, 1985).

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Koch, T. W. A Book of Carnegie Libraries. (New York: H. W. Wilson, 1917).

State of Kansas. Session Laws, 1917. Chapter 113. "Limiting Tax Levies in Cities of the Second and Third Class."

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