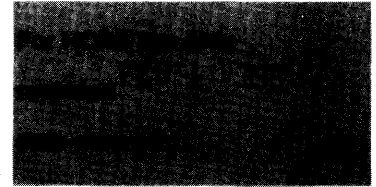


**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 Racine Public Library (~~preferred~~)

and/or common Racine County Historical Museum

2. Location

street & number 701 South Main Street ___ not for publication

city, town Racine ___ vicinity of congressional district 1st

state Wisconsin 53403 code 55 county Racine code 101

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 checked="" 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 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	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" 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 County of Racine (Gilbert Berthelsen, County Executive)

street & number County of Racine - 720 Wisconsin Avenue

city, town Racine ___ vicinity of state Wisconsin 53403

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds - Racine County Courthouse

street & number 730 Wisconsin Avenue

city, town Racine ___ vicinity of state Wisconsin 53403

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Racine Architectural Survey -
title Johnson, Johnson & Roy

has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1974 ___ federal ___ state ___ county local

depository for survey records Racine Public Library

city, town Racine ___ vicinity of state Wisconsin 53403

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Located on the southeast corner of 7th and Main, the library building is a two-story Beaux Arts brick and stone building, 80 feet square (including a one-story rear wing) and 42 feet tall. It is located diagonally opposite St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Edward Townsend Mix's imposing brick Gothic church. To the south is a mixed residential/office neighborhood of mostly frame construction buildings, while to both the northeast and southeast are uncompleted structures of masonry and concrete. The west elevation contains a central projecting entrance pavilion; there are similar projecting end pavilions on the north and south elevations.

The basement is of rubble, faced with cut Bedford stone with a Bedford stone water table. Above the basement the walls are faced with grey "St. Louis granite pressed brick" and rusticated with bands of buff terra cotta. The deep, mutuled cornice is also of terra cotta. A high parapet with terra cotta coping runs around three elevations of the building.

On the face of the entrance pavilion the cornice breaks forward around wide corner pilasters. Between the pilasters is a large Roman arch containing a broken-pedimented Ionic portico with double doors, over which is a large, mullioned semicircular window. The walls on either side of the entrance portico contain a single large, two-story rectangle of windows.

The building has a number of highly-embellished terra cotta decorative elements, including strapwork, festoons, cartouches, consoles, panels and other classical forms. A panel on the south elevation is inscribed "Ye Shall Know the Truth and the Truth Shall Make You Free." A panel on the north elevation reads "Intelligence is the Foundation of Prosperity and Social Order." Over the door is a cartouche inscribed "MCMIII", and the portico frieze reads "Free to the People."

On the main floor there were two large reading rooms, offices, and service areas. An assembly room and museum were located on the second floor, while the basement was used for newspaper storage, toilets and furnace/boiler compartments. Considerable alteration to the trim has been made over the years, while the basic floor plan has been altered by the addition of exhibits and storage areas.

Some changes have been made in the parapet. Originally terra cotta panels faced the four pedestals on the front elevation of the library. These were topped with squat urns. There was also a balustrade with an elaborate cartouche in the parapet above the entrance. The transom over the front door has been filled with a marble panel inscribed with the museum's name.

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 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 1903-1904¹ **Builder/Architect** John Lawrence Mauran, Architect²
A. H. Marcus & Co., Contractor

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The County Historical Museum building is Racine's oldest structure built solely for use as public library, a purpose it fulfilled from 1904 to 1958. It is a handsome, well-composed example of American Beaux Arts architecture, which is rare in Racine and throughout the state.

The County Historical Museum building is significant as the work of a nationally-recognized architect--John Lawrence Mauran. Mauran, of the firm of Muran, Russell and Garden, was part of a leading architectural office in St. Louis and the Midwest and Texas for many years with a large and successful practice. Muran won national recognition during his professional career. He was made a FAIA in 1902 and from 1915 on served three successive years as president of the St. Louis AIA. He was a member of the Public Building Commission, the St. Louis Community Council and president of the Plaza Commission, in charge of erection of new civic buildings. Mauran served under Presidents Roosevelt and Hoover on the National Commission of Fine Arts.

John Lawrence Mauran was selected as architect after providing a preliminary sketch of plans. Completed plans were presented to the Western Library Association at its meeting in Madison in August, 1902, where they were pronounced "The Library Beautiful." Modifications to the design caused construction to be delayed until February, 1903. A. H. Marcus and Company were the contractors. The cornerstone was laid May 30, 1903, and the building opened to use March 16, 1904.

Significant as a vigorous small-scale example of the Beaux Arts style, the design itself is important. Usually reserved for buildings of great civic or commercial importance, American versions of the style of the French Ecole des Beaux Arts were varyingly successful. The visual strength of the former Carnegie Library is evidence of the talent of architect Mauran, who used the standard vocabulary to create a viable piece of design.

The library was housed in several rooms of the McClurg Building, 245 Main Street, from September of 1897 until the Carnegie-funded building was completed. The Common Council formally accepted Carnegie's offer in January, 1902, voting a budget of \$5,000 per annum. After initially selecting the northwest corner of Wisconsin and Fifth Streets as a library site, the library trustees purchased the home and property of Mary Hall at 7th and Main Streets for \$15,000. The cost of the site was met by subscription and the sale of the house and outbuildings.

¹Cornerstone on building states 1903, while a dedication plaque states 1904.

²"Corner Stone Laid Tomorrow," Racine Daily Journal, May 29, 1903, p. 1

9. Major Bibliographical References

Burckel, Nicholas C. ed., Racine: Growth and Change in a Wisconsin County, Racine: Racine County Board of Supervisors 1977.

Sankey, Alice, Racine: The Belle City (Racine: Racine Board of Education).
 Zimmerman, H. Russell, The Heritage Guidebook (Milwaukee: Heritage Banks Inland Heritage Corporation) 1976.

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreege of nominated property c. 0.11

Quadrangle name Racine South, Wis.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

A

1	6	4	3	5	9	5	0	4	7	3	0	4	5	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H

Zone		Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot 2, North 1/2 of Lot 3 of Block 2 of School Section, City of Racine, Racine County, Wisconsin

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 Robert D. Long - Architectural Conservationist

organization Architectural Conservation Program date 1/15/80

street & number 730 Washington Avenue telephone 414-636-9280

city or town Racine state Wisconsin 53403

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Richard Murray

title Director, State Historical Society of Wisconsin date 2/5/81

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u>[Signature]</u>	date <u>3/20/81</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u>[Signature]</u>	date <u>3-16-81</u>
Chief of Registration	

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet

Item number

6

Page

1

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS (continued)

Wisconsin Inventory of Historic Places
1975

State Historical Society of Wisconsin
Madison

State

Wisconsin 53706