

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "X" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-800a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Arlington Branch Library and Fire Hall
other names/site number _____

2. Location

9556 Magnolia Avenue
street & number As above not for publication
city, town Riverside vicinity
state California code CA county Riverside code CA065 zip code 92504

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>2</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet

Heidi P. Craze June 11, 1992
Signature of certifying official Date
California Office of Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet. Delores Byers 7/22/93
 determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
 determined not eligible for the National Register.
 removed from the National Register.
 other, (explain): _____

for Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/library

GOVERNMENT/fire station

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION/library

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

LATE-19TH AND 20TH CENTURY REVIVALS/

Classical Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls CONCRETE

BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

see continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

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The Arlington Library is a rectangular, cement-covered, brick structure on a concrete foundation with a flat roof enclosed by parapet walls. The Library rests on a corner lot 100 feet by 150 feet, facing Magnolia Avenue to the West and Roosevelt Street to the South. The architectural design of the building is Classical Revival.

The front or west side of the Library building features the main facade and original entrance (now used as an emergency exit). The facade features a porch with a Classical pedimented entablature supported by two Ionic columns. The pediment has a decorative rosette and a plain frieze beneath a projecting cornice that encases the entire building except for the rear. The porch has a gabled roof and two lamps on either side of an aluminum door. The facade is symmetrical, with identical arched windows on each side of the porch. The windows have sunburst mullions and green opalescent glass in the upper portion. The facade is finished with Roman capital letters spelling "RIVERSIDE PUBLIC LIBRARY" across the frieze of the porch and "ARLINGTON BRANCH" above the entrance.

The south side of the Library features the secondary facade and the present entrance to the building. This facade has a detached, free-standing metal weather porch. The entrance is a glass door with an aluminum frame with glass panels on each side of the door. The porch has a small arched window to the east side of the door which is similar to the building's large arched windows but made entirely of green opalescent glass. The entrance has both steps and a handicap access ramp. The front half of the south side has three large arched windows identical to those in the front facade of the building and the rear has a large archway, now enclosed, which was once the fire truck entrance.

The north side of the Library has the same three arched windows as the west side but it also has four enclosed rectangular windows at the rear, in the space which the fire hall originally occupied. The north side also features the only remaining entrance to a ten-foot wide basement which runs north to south under the rear room of the Library.

The rear or east side of the Library, facing an alley, contains a metal door which serves as the staff entrance to the Library. This side also has a partially enclosed fire truck entrance, which now houses a metal emergency exit door. The east side has three rectangular windows, one to the left and two to the right of the staff entrance. The northernmost of these windows is enclosed. The east side is devoid of any decorative architectural details.

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The interior of the building consists of two main rooms: a front (west) room and a rear (east) room. The front room still has the original ceiling, which consists of 1" by 8" tongue and groove, and beams running both West to East and North to South, creating a coffered effect. The walls rise twelve feet from the floor to the ceiling and are split into two sections by a rosette eight feet above the floor. The walls are stuccoed and the room is painted white. The rear room has a dropped ceiling and lighting which cover up the original ceiling. The walls have a variety of finishes, including plaster, stucco, and paneling.

The small auxiliary building is located behind the Library, at the northeast corner. It too is rectangular, with fabric, exterior design, and construction similar to the main building. The roof is flat with a peaked cupola for ventilation. This building's main facade is on the West and consists of a double door entrance with a rectangular window on either side. Raised plaster arches accent the tops of these windows. The south side has two rectangular windows with the same type of decorative plaster arches above them. The north side of the auxiliary building abuts a commercial brick building. A small rectangular window is recessed into an arch to the rear of where the two buildings adjoin. The rear (east side) of the building, which faces an alley, has a partially enclosed stable entrance where a wooden door has been added. A rectangular window is recessed within an arch on either side of the stable door. The windows and rear entrance of this building have been boarded up to prevent vandalism.

The Library building has been altered twice, first in 1927-28 and again in 1967-68. The first alteration did nothing to change or modify the architecture, but rather it structurally reinforced the building. The second alteration modified both the interior and the exterior. The fireplace on the east wall of the front room was removed, and the exposed brick walls of that room were stuccoed from floor to ceiling. The staircase to the basement was removed from the rear room and a dropped ceiling and offices were added. The rear room was partially paneled and partially plastered. This alteration did away with most of the Mission Revival interior elements. Minor changes were made to the exterior as well. The most notable exterior changes were the enclosure of the two fire truck entrances and the relocation of the main entrance from the front facade to the Roosevelt Street facade. Both of these changes were made with a minimum disruption of the building's design and fabric. The framing of both fire truck entrances was retained and a new free-standing metal weather porch did not seriously compromise the fabric of the Roosevelt Street facade.

Over the years other changes have taken place which are minor and reflect no major compromise to the integrity of the complex. The main building was reroofed several times due to leaks. In

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approximately 1938 a metal tower housing a fire bell was removed from the roof of the main building. In 1958 the awnings over all of the windows of both buildings were removed.

The Arlington Library complex today still reflects the original design of the structures as they were built in 1908-09. The modifications to the main building have been few and are reversible. The auxiliary building remains virtually unchanged. However, the fabric of that building has deteriorated somewhat due to water damage, inept attempts to improve drainage from the flat roof, and recent earthquakes. The basic fabric and exterior design integrity of both buildings in the complex remain intact.

8.

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture
Education
Social History

Period of Significance

1908-1943

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

Significant Person

Architect/Builder

Pillar, Seeley

Wilson, G.S.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet.

See continuation sheet

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Under Criterion C of the National Register Criteria, the Arlington Branch Library is significant at the local level as the last remaining Classical Revival style public building in Riverside, California, and as the oldest library building in Riverside County. Two prominent regional architects were associated with the building: Seeley L. Pillar (1865-1968) with the original 1908 design and G. Stanley Wilson (1879-1958) with the 1927-1928 reinforcement and remodeling. The Library should also be considered eligible for National Register consideration under Criterion A, as an early attempt in arid Southern California to bring equitable civic amenities to an "agricultural city," whose extensive territory had resulted from concerns over irrigation water.

At the time of its incorporation in 1883, Riverside was geographically the largest city in California (52 square miles) but had only 3,000 inhabitants. The motive behind the creation of such a large city involved water rights and the municipal power to regulate the cost and usage of irrigation water in the citrus groves surrounding the fledgling downtown. Riverside was an early and characteristic example in arid Southern California of municipal form being determined by the development and regulation of the water resource. The geographic sprawl of Los Angeles was later to become, of course, the most spectacular example of this phenomenon.

The 1908-09 Arlington Branch Library and Fire Hall represented Riverside's first real attempt to bring civic services to the prominent residents in the large grove homes in the southern two-thirds of the City. Since the opening of Riverside's downtown Carnegie Library in 1903, the Arlington suburb to the south had been lobbying for its own branch library and for a fire hall. Although in straight-line distance only five and a half miles from the downtown, Arlington was geographically isolated by a steep canyon, the Tequesquite Arroyo, which made travel between the two communities difficult. Not until 1913 would a fill project provide a direct link via Magnolia Avenue.

The proposed Arlington project was ineligible for Carnegie Foundation funding because it involved a multi-use building. The City's decision, in the face of added municipal cost, to go ahead with a multi-use building demonstrated the considerable need for a public service center in the Arlington community. Indeed, La Sierra, a 13-square-mile area south of Arlington, actually seceded from the City in 1908 over the lack of streets and other civic improvements and was not "re-annexed" until 1964.

By 1908 it was obvious that Riverside's downtown library had been built on too modest a scale. Through taxes and private donations, the City raised \$15,000 to fund an expansion project. The Library Board also once more appealed to Andrew Carnegie for funds and he agreed to provide half of the expansion costs. This donation freed \$7,000, which the City then used to build the joint

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library and fire hall in Arlington. Carnegie demonstrated a proprietary interest in the Arlington building by visiting it in March, 1910, during a Southern California inspection tour of the libraries funded by his foundation.

The Arlington Branch Library has served its community continuously since June, 1909, except for brief periods when repairs or remodeling work were being done. The fire hall at the back of the building served its original purpose until 1938, when a new fire hall was built two blocks away. Thereafter, the space was used for a variety of other civic purposes. From 1938 until 1941 it served as offices for the Works Progress Administration. During the next several years, the hall was used as a meeting place and recreation room for Boy Scouts, Sea Scouts and several other Arlington organizations, while National Guard munitions were stored in the basement. The Arlington Chamber of Commerce occupied the former fire hall from 1949 to 1952, when it was converted into a living quarters for the head librarian at the branch. In 1967-68 the hall was finally fully integrated into the library, becoming a children's reading room and offices.

The auxiliary building to the northeast of the Arlington Library was initially designed as a stable and storage area for the fire hall. In the late 1920s, the City moved a light and water substation into the building, where it remained until the Arlington Welfare Association offices replaced it in 1938. That organization occupied in the former stable until 1960. Since that date the building has served as storage for the Library.

With the recent razing of Riverside's I.O.O.F. Hall, the Arlington Branch Library became the last Classical Revival style public building in the City. The design was the work of Seeley L. Pillar, a self-taught architect and contractor who came to Riverside from Canada as a young carpenter in 1887. From that date until about 1920, he was involved in some capacity with most of Riverside's major building projects. As an architect he designed local churches, schools, commercial blocks, and a large number of distinctive private residences. He was also responsible for the Carnegie Library in Hemet, California.

The structural reinforcement and modernization of the Arlington Library in 1927-28 was the work of G. Stanley Wilson, Riverside's premiere architect from the 1920s until his death in 1958. After serving a long apprenticeship under several architects, including Myron Hunt, Wilson became a licensed architect in 1923. Until the first years of the Great Depression, he was a key figure in the architectural transformation of Riverside into an Hispanic Revival City and brought that style to many small rural communities in the region through his designs for schools and other public buildings. His most notable achievement was probably the Rotunda Wing of the Mission Inn. Wilson served for many years on the California State Board of Architectural Examiners.

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Today, the Arlington Branch Library is one of the few distinctive structures and landmarks in an ethnically changing area of Riverside characterized by considerable commercial blight and aging housing stock. For more than four generations, this building has been a tangible symbol of civic life to its surrounding community. In 1980 it was designated as "City Landmark 46" by Riverside's Cultural Heritage Board in recognition of its architectural distinction and the social history it embodied.

The Arlington Branch Library has architectural significance as the sole remaining exemplar of public Classical Revival architecture in Riverside, as the oldest library building in a county the size of Massachusetts, and as a product of two prominent regional architects. The Arlington Library's social significance derives from its representing an early attempt to deliver equitable public services in a Southern California locality made geographically unwieldy by water concerns and from the building's lengthy and varied role as a community center.

The period of significance has been ended arbitrarily at 1943, fifty years ago, because significance beyond that date has not been shown to be exceptional.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation Sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

City of Riverside: Central Library
Arlington Library, Redevelopment Agency

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property Less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	1
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4	5	8	7	2	0
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3	7	5	3	1	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

D

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--	--	--	--	--	--

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The property boundaries given here are the same as those at the time of the Library's construction

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ron Baker, Local History Librarian
organization Riverside City, County Library date 12-8-92
street & number 3581 Seventh Street telephone 909-782-5211
city or town Riverside state CA zip code 92687

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Baker, Ronald J. Serving through Partnership: A Centennial History of the City and County Public Library, 1888-1988. Riverside: Riverside City and County Public Library, Riverside, California, 1988.

Curl, Alan. "Historical Resources Inventory . . . Arlington Branch Library," Jan. 16, 1980.

Klotz, Esther and Joan Hall. Adobes, Bungalows, and Mansions of Riverside, California. Riverside: Riverside Museum Press, 1985.

Patterson, Tom. A Colony for California: Riverside's First Hundred Years. Riverside: Press-Enterprise Co., 1971.

Patterson, Tom. Landmarks of Riverside and the Stories Behind Them. Riverside: Press-Enterprise Co., 1964.

Riverside, California. Cultural Heritage Board. "Nomination of the Arlington Branch Library, 9556 Magnolia Avenue, to CHB Landmark Status," Aug. 20, 1980.

Riverside, California. Riverside City and County Public Library Archive. Including:

Riverside City Board of Library Trustees, "Minutes," 1911 to 1954.

"Arlington Branch Library and Fire Hall Blueprints and Specifications."

Arlington (Calif.) Times 1909-1960.

Riverside (Calif.) Enterprise 1967-1968.

Riverside (Calif.) Press 1908.

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Verbal Boundary Description

The Arlington Branch Library and Fire hall is located on Lot One (1) in Block Twenty-six (26), as shown by Map recorded in Book 1 page 62 of Maps, records of San Bernardino County, California, described as follows:

Commencing at a point on the Southeasterly line of Magnolia Avenue thirteen (13) feet Northeastly from the Northeastly line of Roosevelt Street, and

Running thence Northeastly along the Southeasterly line of Magnolia Avenue, seventy-five (75) feet for the point of beginning:

Thence at a right angle and parallel with Roosevelt Street Southerly one hundred fifty (150) feet:

Thence at a right angle and parallel with Magnolia Avenue Easterly twenty-five (25) feet:

Thence at a right angle and parallel with Roosevelt Street Northerly one hundred fifty (150) feet:

Thence at a right angle Westerly along the Southerly line of Magnolia Avenue, twenty-five (25) feet to the point of beginning.

Arlington Branch
Library & Fire Hq
Riverside, Calif



Van Buren Boulevard

Magnolia Avenue

Library

Stables

Roosevelt Street

