

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

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

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16. John C. Fremont Branch Library
6121 Melrose Avenue

Significance:

The John C. Fremont Branch Library is a significant cultural and social institution to the Hancock Park and South Hollywood areas. It is a notable example of Mediterranean style architecture and is part of a thematic grouping of branch libraries nominated to the National Register of Historic Places.

The library had its beginning in 1912 when "Colegrove Station" a reading room, was opened at Vine Street and Santa Monica Boulevard. The station had strong support from the local community and, in 1916, the reading room was designated the "Colegrove Sub-branch" of the Hollywood Branch. Expansion of the library occurred in 1923 when the branch was moved to a bungalow at Vine Street School.

In 1927, local architect Merl Lee Barker drew up plans for the new branch which was to be located at the corner of June Street and Melrose Avenue. The branch cost \$20,000 and was named the John C. Fremont Branch in honor of this American explorer, soldier, and politician.

Merl Lee Barker was an architect who specialized in residential, church, and school architecture. He was born in Denver, Colorado where he received his education and training. He came to Los Angeles in 1918 and for many years had an office on South Western Avenue. He designed St. Joseph's Catholic Church in Fontana, the J. M. Sterling residence in Beverly Hills, St. Charles Catholic Church in North Hollywood (1937 portion), and numerous other ecclesiastical buildings.

The John C. Fremont Branch Library with its round portico is a notable example of Mediterranean style architecture. It was designed to harmonize with the surrounding residential neighborhood much of which is also Mediterranean in style. The library still continues to serve the same community by providing for its social and educational needs.

BRANCH LIBRARIES, LOS ANGELES, CA
#16, John C. Fremont Branch, 6121
Melrose Ave.
1 inch=60 feet

