

PH 036089X

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	FEB 4 1977
DATE ENTERED	JUL 25 1977

**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
Public Library of Des Moines

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER: Locust Street

CITY, TOWN: Des Moines

STATE: Iowa

VICINITY OF: Fourth

COUNTY: Polk

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: _____

CODE: _____

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"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME: City of Des Moines

STREET & NUMBER: East 1st and Locust Sts.

CITY, TOWN: Des Moines

STATE: Iowa

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Polk County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER: _____

CITY, TOWN: Des Moines

STATE: Iowa

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE: _____

DATE: _____

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: _____

CITY, TOWN: _____

STATE: _____

___FEDERAL ___STATE ___COUNTY ___LOCAL

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Des Moines Public Library measures 80' x 150', and consists of a central, 5-bay main block and two 3-bay wings (7 bays deep). It is made of pink Minnesota limestone with terracotta detail and granite base trim. Its overall plan and exterior features suggest a scaled-down model of the Library of Congress, particularly the east facade.

The elevation is divided into three stages. A basement stage, faced with smooth, regular ashlar, has deeply recessed, six-light windows. Its upper part forms the subbase of an intermediate stage which is faced with rusticated limestone. It features semicircular-arched windows with voussoirs on east, west and north facades, and narrow rectangular stack windows on the south. These latter windows are the only interruption in the general scheme of the exterior, and are strictly functional in nature.

The first and second stages form a base for the upper stage, which features pilasters and engaged columns of the Corinthian order supporting a full entablature below the parapet. On the 3-bay pavilion of the north face (where the art gallery is located) are pedimented cossetted blind windows between engaged columns, above which are cossetted panels containing swags.

The east facade of the main block has pedimented end pavilions framing a colonaded loggia. The main floor in this section features a 3-bay arcade of keystone, semicircular arches. This was originally the main entrance, reached by a double quarter-turn staircase (removed 1956). The main entrance is now into the main block from the west. This west face features a porte-cochere with Ionic columns on high pedestals supporting a parapet and full entablature. Above the portico is a high, round-arched window with a keystone, rising to the level of the capitals of the upper stage.

The interior is planned around a central rotunda. The main floor plan is symmetrical, with circulation on the east-west axis and functional use on the north-south axis. The second floor is arranged around the rotunda, but the space is irregularly divided to accommodate a variety of cultural and social activities.

Interior design features include stained glass in the dome of the rotunda, extensive use of oak for wainscoting and other woodwork, and semicircular-arched arcades on the main floor. Alterations include the addition of an elevator and rearrangement of basement space in 1928; the opening of a children's department in the basement, with WPA murals depicting natural history, episodes of U.S. and Des Moines, history, the fine arts, and uses of the library. The staircase and acrotarium with globe, on the east facade, were removed in 1956. The main floor is unaltered, except for periodic rearrangement of shelves and counters. The upper levels have been turned into office space and storage.

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 1899-1903

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Frank Gutterson & Oliver O. Smith

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Des Moines Public Library is an excellent example of a combination of architectural influences, Beaux Arts in its concept and design, neo-Palladian in its detail. Major exterior features include the symmetrical elevation, variation of window heights by story, elevation in stages, with a main floor level in rusticated stone, and use of classical details and columns supporting a full entablature.

The completion of this structure in 1903 marked the first time the collections of the Des Moines library had been housed in a building of their own. From its founding in 1866, the library was housed in a variety of pre-existing structures, including a bank, Methodist Church, and YMCA building. Purchase of the land and financing of the library's construction was accomplished through city tax levies. However, a shortage of funds resulted in some alterations in the original plan, most obviously the construction of an interior, rather than exterior, dome.

The library was initially planned, and used, as a cultural complex rather than just a repository for books and other printed materials. Among the early activities and departments were an art gallery, music and art departments, a medical library, and facilities for public meetings, a music club, and "story hours". Most of the area on the second floor devoted to these activities has been remodelled to accommodate staff offices. The basement children's department, with its murals, is still a prominent feature of the library's service functions.

Architects: Frank A. Gutterson (1872-1901) attended the University of Minnesota, Boston School of Technology, and studied in Paris, probably at the École des Beaux-Arts. He worked with the firm of Ernest Flagg in New York City, and with H.M. Colburn in Mason City, Iowa, before establishing a partnership with Oliver O. Smith of Des Moines in 1897. Oliver O. Smith (1868-1916) appears to have studied and worked almost exclusively in Des Moines, with brief periods of study in Boston and St. Louis. Other buildings in Des Moines designed by Gutterson and Smith include the State Historical Building, Mercy Hospital, and buildings at the Iowa State Fair Grounds.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Thorpe, Casey M. (comp.) Bridging a Century. 1966.
The Architectural Journal, IX, 3 Series, 1902, pp. 229-263; VI, 3 Series, 1899, pp. 209-28
A Social History of Des Moines, mimeo, 1938.
Iowa State Register, Nov. 8, 1901, p. 3
Des Moines Register and Leader, May 29, 1916, p. 1.
Banks. Enslow W. The Public Library of Des Moines, Iowa. Unpublished thesis, 1967.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one
UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1,5</u>	<u>4,4,8</u> <u>4,4,0</u>	<u>4,6</u> <u>0,3</u> <u>9,6,0</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Jack C. Porter, Secretary

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Foundation for Historic Conservation, 216 Davidson Building, Des Moines

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

520 12th Street,

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Des Moines

Iowa

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

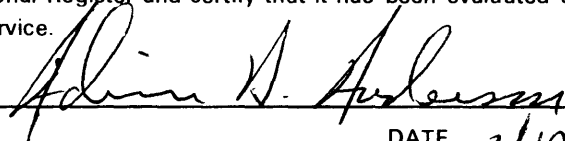
NATIONAL

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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE



TITLE

Director, Division of Historic Preservation

DATE

2/17/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

7/25/77

ATTEST:



KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

7-22-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER