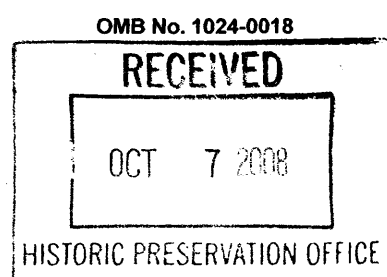
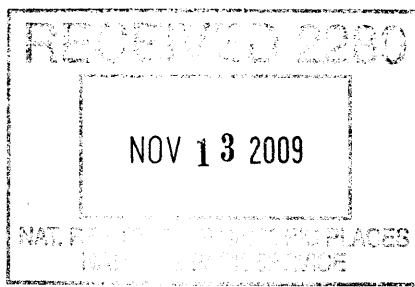


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

1154



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Edgewater Public Library
other names/site number: Edgewater Public Library

2. Location

street & number: 49 Hudson Avenue not for publication: n/a
city or town: Edgewater Borough vicinity:
state: New Jersey code: NJ county: Bergen code: 003 zip code: 07020

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Amy Cradic 1/5/09
Signature of certifying official Date

Amy Cradic, Assistant Commissioner Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO
State or Federal Agency or Tribal government

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register
 See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain): _____

for Elson H. Beall
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action 12.23.09

=====
5. Classification
=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

Category of Property (Check only one box)

private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	buildings
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	structures
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

=====
6. Function or Use
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: EDUCATION Sub: Library

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Education/library

=====
7. Description
=====

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL REVIVAL

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

Foundation: LIMESTONE
Roof: SLATE
Walls: BRICK MASONRY

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

8. Statement of Significance

=====

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "X" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
EDUCATION

Period of Significance: 1915-1950

Significant Dates:

Significant Person:

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: WALKER, HOBART A., ARCHITECT;
EYRICH, WARREN B., BUILDER

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

=====

9. Major Bibliographical References

=====

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: EDGEWATER PUBLIC LIBRARY

=====
10. Geographical Data
=====

Acreage of Property 0.28 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing	Zone Easting Northing
118 586482 4520364	2 _____	3 _____	4 _____

____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

=====
11. Form Prepared By
=====

name/title: Margaret M. Hickey, Historic Preservation Specialist and Kathryn Ritson, Architectural Historian
organization: HJGA Consulting Architecture & Preservation date: October, 2008
street & number: 36 Park Street telephone: 973-746-4911
city or town: Montclair state: NJ zip code: 07042

=====
Additional Documentation
=====

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

=====
Property Owner
=====

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

Name: Edgewater Public Library telephone: 201-224-6144
street & number: 49 Hudson Avenue state: NJ zip code: 07020
city or town: Edgewater

=====
Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.). A federal agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number.

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 36 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the National Register of Historic Places, National Park Service, 1849 C St., NW, Washington, DC 20240.

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National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Name of Property Edgewater Public Library
County and State Bergen County, New Jersey

Section 7 Page 1

Overall

The Edgewater Public Library is a Colonial Revival style building constructed for the Borough of Edgewater in 1915-1916 using funding provided by the Carnegie Corporation. The building faces south towards Hudson Avenue. It is one story over a partially exposed basement except on the east façade where the basement is fully exposed. The main entrance, centered on the south façade, projects slightly and is distinguished by a projecting pediment supported by ionic columns. Three bays wide by two bays deep, the original library footprint measures approximately 60 feet wide by 38 feet deep. The rectangular shaped ground plan was altered in 1989 by the construction of an L shaped masonry addition that encloses the northeast corner. This addition is one story with fully exposed basement and projects from the east façade approximately six feet and from the north façade 17 feet enclosing approximately two-thirds of the east and half of the north sides of the main building. The exterior is clad with brick masonry. There is a secondary entrance on the east side at the basement level via the northeast addition (photo 8).

The roof of the main building is a shallow hip with graduated slates shingles with a built-in gutter enclosed by the entablature. The roof at the northeast addition is also a shallow hip clad with slate and has a built-in gutter enclosed by a shallow wood cornice. The building is constructed of a reddish brown brick laid in Flemish bond with limestone detailing at the water table and first floor window sills and wood detailing at the entablature. The window sills at the basement level are bluestone.

A monumental masonry stair rises to the main entrance (photo 3). The stair has brick risers and limestone treads and brick side walls capped with limestone; the stair was rebuilt in 1982. Modern metal railings run the center of the stair and along the copings of the sidewalls. The center railing has narrow vertical legs with a top rail composed of two narrow horizontal bars separated by regularly spaced scrolls. The outer railings are round horizontal pipe supported at intermediate points by the same pipes set vertically. The horizontal and vertical components are joined by metal couplings. At the lower reaches of the stair, a side railing is mounted horizontally on the coping stones.

The first floor serves as the primary entrance and the main public space. The first floor level of the main building is a double-height space consisting of one main reading room and a small librarian's office. The northeast addition creates two additional rooms. The main public space at the basement level is located at the front of the building with the smaller support spaces located to the rear. The addition forms a single room to the north and a vestibule to the east.

Local Area

The Edgewater Public Library is located in the Borough of Edgewater, Bergen County, New Jersey. Located in northeastern New Jersey, Edgewater is an urban residential town within .8 square miles.¹ Edgewater is bordered by the Hudson River, the Borough of Cliffside Park and Fort Lee. Nearby cities include New York City. Located on the west bank of the Hudson River, the Borough rests at the foot of the Palisades, approximately 1 1/2 miles south of the George Washington Bridge and directly opposite 125th Street in Manhattan.²

The Edgewater Public Library is located at 49 Hudson Avenue, within a residential neighborhood. The Library is located on a corner of lot with Hudson Avenue to the south and Undercliff Avenue to the west. The homes within the neighborhood are small and tightly packed together within the neighborhood's narrow streets.

¹ Census Bureau Homepage; available from <http://www.census.gov/>; Internet; accessed December 2007.

² Radio Script. Port Community Information File; Edgewater, New Jersey. "Salute to Edgewater, New Jersey." Broadcast: January 29, 1955.

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Site

The library is bounded on its east and north sides by adjoining properties, on its south side by Hudson Avenue and on its west side by Undercliff Avenue. The building is centered on the lot with a small yard and a narrow paved drive that runs along the east side of the property from Hudson Avenue. Along the street, the yard is enclosed by an early metal fence composed of square posts with narrow intermediate posts connected by similarly narrow horizontal bars top and bottom. The monumental stair which rises from the sidewalk on Hudson Avenue separates the east and west sides of the front lawn.

Most of the lot is lawn with trees and bushes scattered throughout. A shallow retaining wall constructed of interlocking masonry units form a raised planting area on the south and west sides of the building. On the north side the yard is planted with ground cover and mature trees.

The east end of the lot was altered by the 1989 addition (photo 1). At the northwest corner of the addition, there is an interlocking masonry retaining wall. The east side of the lot is covered by a paved drive that ends at a short retaining wall. The southeast yard is divided by a modern curved brick retaining wall running diagonally from the east side of the monumental stair to the southeast corner of the building. It supports the original southeast lawn with trees and bushes located adjacent to the facade. The retaining wall marks the edge of a concrete path that allows access from the main entry to the basement level entry. A small patch of grass fills the remaining corner of the lot.

Cast-in-place concrete areaways allow light to the basement windows along the north, west and the west end of the south facade. They range in depth depending on the height of existing grade; the shallower areaways are along the south and west sides and deeper ones are on the north side. Each has a drain connecting to an underground drainage system.

Exterior

Roof

Original building has a shallow hip with graduated slate meaning larger and longer slates are located along the bottom edge and the size progressively decreases in size and exposure toward the ridge. The ridge is finished with a copper ridge roll and there are triangular copper louver vents located below each ridge at the east and west ends (photo 6). The hips are closed while the valleys are copper. The roof over the bay window on the north elevation is a shallow hip which appears to be flat seam copper. A brick chimney is located in the northeast corner of the main building where the main roof meets the addition. The addition roof is composed of two elements: the east section is a flat roof clad with built-up rubber roofing and the larger north has a hip roof clad with slate shingles. The slate at this roof is not graduated and has a main hip running east/west and a secondary hip running north/south that intersects with the main roof.

The main roof and the northeast addition roofs have built-in copper gutters which are supported by a wood cornice entablature. The gutters drain to leaders that penetrate the entablature. The existing leaders are either aluminum or galvanized metal depending on their location. The wood entablature is defining architecturally and contributes to the library's monumental appearance. It is composed of a molded cornice with dentil detailing along its lower edge above a plain frieze band and molded architrave. The whole entablature stands slightly proud of the masonry wall below. At the front entrance where the building projects, the cornice is carried across the front and adjoins the wood molded pediment (photo 2). Set within the frieze are the words "Edgewater Free Library". The pediment is similarly detailed to the cornice entablature. Decorative wood detailing composed of the seal of the Borough of Edgewater is located within tympanum.

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Elevations

The Flemish bond red brick has alternating colors of red, burnt umber, and brown creating a varied appearance. The limestone water table encircles the entire building just at the head of the basement level windows. This limestone water table is not continued on the northeast addition. The addition employs the same Flemish bond pattern but the bricks are slightly smaller and are of differing shades of red and brown than the main building. The limestone and bluestone window sills project slightly from the masonry including at the addition.

The fenestration pattern varies at the basement and first floor levels and at each elevation and therefore will be discussed at each elevation. The entablature serves as the window head at the first floor and the watertable serves as such at the basement. Almost all of the exterior windows and doors are replacements set within the original frame; replacements were installed between 1991 and 1993. The window types also vary at the floor levels and at each elevation with a mix of fixed, casement and double-hung sash utilized; all of the replacement windows are wood clad with aluminum on the exterior.

South Elevation

The south elevation, which faces Hudson Avenue, is the front of the building (photos 1, 3, 4, 5). This elevation is symmetrical at both the basement and first floor levels. The main entrance is located at the top of the monumental stair and is centered within the projecting columned front entrance portico (photos 2, 3). The front entrance is set within masonry recesses and is flanked on either side by Ionic wood columns with entasis. Each column has a wood base set on a limestone step which projects slightly from the edge of the portico projection. The pair of entrance doors are wood and set in a wood frame. The doors are single lites over two panels with snap-in mullions creating the illusion of an 8-lite panel. Above the pair of doors is a single-light transom also fitted with snap-in mullions creating 12 lites.

A single window opening centered in the east and west bays each have a large center fixed 20 over 20 window flanked by a pair of stacked casements with 8 lites each separated by mullions (photo 4). The mullions are semi-divided in an effort to match the original windows which were true-divided lites. Centered below these windows at the basement level are a pair 6-over-6 wood hung sash. Each window has intermediate masonry serving as a mullion. The west windows were formerly enclosed by a deep concrete areaway which has been diminished by the installation of concrete.

Two rectangular corrugated aluminum leaders drain the existing gutters on this elevation. Each leader is located inset from the east and west ends of the building.

West Elevation

The west elevation faces Undercliff Avenue (photo 6). This elevation is symmetrical at both the basement and first floor levels. The primary defining elements beyond the cornice entablature are four evenly spaced window openings on each level. Each opening has a pair of 8-lite casement windows separated by mullions. The basement level windows are partially obscured by concrete areaways. A single areaway runs almost the full length of the west façade with intermediate walls set between each window pairing.

North Elevation

The north elevation is composed of the center and west bay of the original building to the west and the addition to the east; the basement is fully exposed at the addition. A defining feature is the three-sided projecting bay located at the first floor.

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This wood projection sits above the limestone water table and corresponds on the interior to the librarian's office. The center bay of the projection contains a 12-over-12-lite wood hung sash flanked in the two angled projections by 9-over-9 wood hung sash. Below each window is a paneled bottom. The wood cornice entablature is carried along the roof line of the bay projection.

The windows within the west bay of the original section are four evenly spaced 8-lite wood casements set in masonry openings. There is also a narrow 8-lite wood casement window located to the west of the main bay window within the center bay. A basement level window is centered under each first floor window. Additionally there are two basement windows centered under the first floor bay window. The basement windows and the narrow casement within the center bay are original true-divided lite wood sash. The built-in gutter drains in one location at the main building to a rectangular corrugated aluminum leader inset at the west end of the north façade.

The north addition occupies the east end of the main building obscuring its original features. It has two pairs of single-lite aluminum casement windows evenly spaced on the first floor and one centered at the basement level. A leader drains the addition roof on the west side at the north corner.

East Elevation

The east façade (photo 8, 9) is dominated by the two story northeast addition constructed in 1989. The exposed section of the main building contains a typical pair of 8-lite casement windows at both the basement and first floor levels.

The north addition is composed of two components: a slightly shorter section to the south and a taller section to the north. The lower section has the flat roof while the taller section has the hip roof. Both have a wood cornice but it is more simply detailed than the main building and the smaller south section is even simpler than the taller north section; the south section is without dentils.

The east façade of the addition is two bays wide with each bay corresponding with the change in height. The first bay contains the main basement entrance while the second bay contains a secondary basement entrance; there is no intervening fenestration. The main basement entrance mimics the historic entrance which was located in this area and is off center to the south. The overall opening is set within a brick arch with limestone keystone at the head and limestone impost. The rise of the arch is in-filled with a fanlight. The door is composed of a single wood door with one-lite over two panels and flanked at its sides by one-lite sidelights and at its top by a 6-lite transom, which utilizes snap-in mullions. The secondary basement door is a flush metal door set in a metal frame.

At the first floor level, there are three pairs of single-lite aluminum casement windows similar to those on the north elevation set equal distance apart. At the second bay is a typical casement window which is slightly shorter than the other windows on this elevation. There are two aluminum leaders one at each the north and south ends of the addition.

Interior

The description of the interior relies heavily upon room callout notations (see orientation plans at the end of this section). The first number of each notation indicates the floor on which the item is found. For example: 101 is a first floor room. The doors and windows are similarly noted in consecutive order but are distinguished between each other and that of a room

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name by the indication of a "W" for window and "D" for door. For example: W101 would indicate a window located on the first floor.

General

The interior of the building is composed of two floor levels, the basement and first floor with an uninhabitable attic space. The original building is rectangular at each floor level. The additional is L-shaped attached to the northeast corner. The first floor level is oriented through the arrangement of spaces in a north/south axis while the basement level is arranged around an east/west axis. The entrance to the first floor is to the south and at the basement to the east.

The architectural description provides the basic layout for each space including room size and position within the building, and notes important adjacencies and building materials.

Basement

General

The primary space at the basement level is the Children's Reading Room (101) which occupies the south two-thirds of the main building with a Foyer (008) located to the east, a Hall (003) to the north and an office (002) in the northwest corner. Adjacent to the Hall are a series of rooms and closets including the stair to the first floor, a lavatory, and the furnace room. The Foyer serves as the pivotal space for circulation to and from the main building to the addition which includes the passenger lift and a conference room (007). The Vestibule (006) is a transitional space that separates the conference room and lift and occupies the northeast corner of the original footprint of the main building.

The floor to ceiling height at the basement level varies. The walls and ceiling are typically finished with plaster within the main building and gypsum board at the addition. The flooring materials and base moldings vary. The windows, which vary in type, are typically recessed in the masonry openings and trimmed with wide wood trim with a slight molded edge and window sill with molded edge and apron. The types of doors and the trim at their openings are typically two-panel wood doors with molded wood trim. Lighting is typically ceiling hung fluorescent fixtures; there are a few locations where an original gas fixture remains partially intact.

Rooms 001 and 001A – Children's Reading Room and Teen Room

The Children's Reading Room and Teen Room (photo 13), along the south face, were once one large space with a platform at the west end which was changed in the mid-20th century. The two spaces together measure approximately 20 feet (east/west) and 57 feet (north/south) and occupy the full length of the main building and approximately two-thirds of the width. The ceiling height is 8'-10" and all radiators are located just under the level of the ceiling. The Children's Reading Room has access to the exterior through the Foyer and to the Hall (003). There is a closet within the underside of the monumental stair accessed through D021 located center of the south exterior wall. The partition separating the Children's Reading Room from the Teen Room is wood frame with gypsum board finishes. The partition contains a single door at its north end and three fixed windows set in a series to the south of the door.

Rooms 002 – Office 1

Office 1, also known as the Staff Room, occupies the northwest corner of the main building and is accessed via a single door at the west end of the Hall (003) with a former opening located along the south wall to the Teen Room (001A) currently

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blocked. The space measures approximately 14'-6" north/south and 20 feet east/west at its widest dimension. The main part of the space is approximately square in plan with a small kitchenette and closet located in the northeast corner. The ceiling height is 8'-8".

Rooms 003 – Hall

The Hall serves as the main circulation space with stair access to the first floor. The space runs in an east/west direction and measures approximately 3'-6" (north/south) by 41 feet (east/west). There are three auxiliary spaces along the north wall, a closet (003A) at the west end, and a janitor's closet and dumbwaiter located at the center of the space. The stair to the first floor is located between the closet (003A) and Lavatory 1 (004) at the west end of the hall. It is a straight run until it reaches the first floor where it winds to the west for three steps. The stair is wood covered with modern carpeting, with a wood baseboard carried along either side of the stair, and a round wood handrail located on the east wall. The ceiling height is 8'-8".

Rooms 004 – Lavatory 1 (Children's Lavatory)

Lavatory 1 contains a sink and toilet and is accessed via the Hall (003). The space measures approximately 11 feet north/south by 4'-6" east/west. There is a single window along the north wall and the door is centered on the south wall. The ceiling height is approximately 8'-8".

Rooms 005 – Furnace Room

The Furnace Room is located between the dumbwaiter and Vestibule 1 (006) on the north side of the building. There is access to this space from the Hall (003) and the Vestibule. The space is slightly L-shaped and measures at its greatest dimensions approximately 11 feet north/south by 16 feet east/west. The exterior walls are exposed brick and the interior partitions exposed structural clay tile. The ceiling height is 8'-8".

Rooms 006 – Vestibule 1

The Vestibule serves as an anteroom to Conference Room 1 (007) and is part of the original footprint and the addition. There is a lift located in the northeast corner that provides access to the first floor. The space measures approximately 10 feet north/south by 18'-6" east/west. There are no windows. There is a large opening to the Conference Room along the north wall. The ceiling height is 8'-8".

Rooms 007 – Conference Room 1

The Conference Room is part of the northeast addition. The primary access is via the Vestibule with a secondary access to the exterior along the east wall. The space is rectangular in plan with a small closet occupying the northeast corner and built-in cabinets along the west wall. The space measures approximately 16 feet by 28 feet. The ceiling height is 8'-10".

Rooms 008 – Foyer

The Foyer (photo 14) is located in the southeast corner of the northeast addition. Its primary adjacencies are the Children's Reading Room (001), the Hall (002) and the Vestibule (006). The space measures approximately 14 feet (north/south) by 5 feet (east/west). The ceiling height is 8'-10". The walls are finished with wood wainscot reused from the original vestibule.

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First Floor

General

The first floor is essentially one main room the Main Reading Room (101) with a single space Librarian's Office (102) (photo 10, 12) centered along the north wall. The location of the office creates a U shaped main room and essentially forms three spaces within the room: the east reading space, the west reading space and the center circulation space. The northeast addition forms the narrow Office (103) to the east as well as a larger Resource Room (104) with Restroom (105) located to the north. There is a small Vestibule (101A) that creates a buffer between the Main Reading Room and the exterior.

The floor to ceiling height at the first floor level varies from 10'-5" to 12'-11". The walls and ceiling are typically plastered within the main building and gypsum board at the addition. The flooring materials are typically carpet. Base moldings vary. The window types vary. The windows are typically recessed in the masonry openings and trimmed with wide wood trim with a slight molded edge and window sill with molded edge and apron. Although almost all sash were replaced between 1991 and 1993, the moulding and frame are original. The windows at the librarian's office differ slightly as they are set in a frame opening and do not have the deep reveal. The doors are typically 2-panel wood with wide molded wood trim at the original openings. Flush doors with plain wood trim are utilized within the new addition. Lighting is typically modern fluorescent fixtures hung on pendants.

Rooms 101A - Vestibule 2

Vestibule 2 (photo 12) serves as the point of entry at the first floor level with the space projecting slightly into the Main Reading Room. The space measures 5 feet north/south by 11 feet east/west and the ceiling height is 12'-11".

Room 101 - Main Reading Room

The Main Reading Room (photo 11, 15, 16, 17) serves as the main reading area and book display area. The room is oriented around the service counter (photo 16) located a few feet from the main entrance, the counter serves as a buffer between the patrons and the librarian's office (102) located to the north. The counter appears to be original. Radiators line the outside perimeter of the room set between the bookcases that also line the space. The Main Reading Room measures approximately 35 feet north/south by 57 feet east/west at its greatest dimensions. The ceiling is flat but transitions to concave at the exterior walls and interior partitions. The ceiling height is 12'-11".

Room 102 - Librarian's Office (including 102A, 102B and 102C)

The Librarian's Office (photo 15, 17) is a block of rooms carved out of the center of the Main Reading Room. These block of spaces include the Librarian's Office at its center, the stair to the basement in the northwest corner, one closet to the south of the stair, and a closet and restroom along the east side of the office. The only rooms that are directly accessed from the reading room are the office and the stair, the remainder of spaces can only be reached from the office. At the north end of the office is a projecting bay window with wood window seat. The overall space including the stair and closets, etc. measures 18 feet north/south including the bay project by 16'-6" east/west. The ceiling is flat and 11'-8" in height.

Room 103 - Office 3

The Office is located adjacent to the reading room at its east side and is part of the northeast addition. The exterior windows are set equal distance apart within the east exterior wall and provide borrowed light to the reading room through the entrance doorway and the three former window openings in the original exterior wall of the main building. The opening to the reading

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room is a simple opening without trim or other embellishments; it is without a door. The overall space is long and narrow measuring approximately 20 feet north/south by less than 5 feet east/west. The flat ceiling is 10'-5" in height.

Room 104 – Resource Room

The Resource Room is located off the main reading room and is part of the northeast addition. The space is open to the reading room via a large opening that is simply trimmed with gypsum board finishes. There is a small elevation change via a ramped walking surface between the two spaces. The floor is raised at the perimeter creating a data chase. Access to the accessible restroom and the lift are via this space; the restroom is located at its west end and the lift at its east end. The space is rectangular measuring approximately 16 feet north/south by 28 feet east/west at its greatest dimension as the restroom occupies the spaces southwest corner. The flat ceiling is 8'-8" in height.

Room 105 – Accessible Restroom

The Accessible Restroom does not have windows and contains a lavatory and toilet. The space is approximately square measuring 6'-10" north/south by 7'-1" east/west with a small chase occupying its southeast corner. The flat ceiling is 7'-0" in height; there is a mechanical room located above the restroom that is accessed via a flush wood door from the resource room side.

Chronology of Construction

The Edgewater Public Library has experienced physical modifications since its original construction which range from routine maintenance to an addition in 1989.

Since construction, the interior has experienced changes to its finishes. At the first floor, an acoustical textured paint was applied to the ceilings and cove moldings, fluorescent light fixtures were installed in the main reading room, electrical upgrades were made to accommodate computers, copiers and other support services for library operations, and the linoleum flooring has either been removed or covered with carpet. At the basement level, some minor changes were created to the former auditorium to create the children and teen reading rooms, and to provide staff rooms. At the exterior, the most significant modifications to the original building were the replacement of wood windows with modern wood double-glazed windows and the installation of a new metal door, transom and side-light assembly at the front first floor entrance. The dates of these interior and exterior modifications vary. The dates of specific changes are listed below; however, those not listed appear to have been undertaken beginning in the 1970s through to the 1990s. Much of these changes appear to have been in response to meeting the changing needs of library services which have evolved since the Carnegie era.

- 1978 Installation of interior fluorescent light fixtures.
Installation of "California" acoustic ceiling treatment.
- 1991 – 1993 Installation of new double-hung and casement windows. The front windows were replaced in 1992. This work appears to have been undertaken as funds were made available.
- 1997 Installation of carpeting.

In 1982, the condition of the front entrance stairs was poor and required rebuilding due to inadequate supports of the existing stairs according to David N. Cybul, AIA, an Architect from Edgewater. The original stairs were constructed entirely of cast-in-place concrete based on historic photographs; however, the new stairs are brick and limestone and the construction is

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supported by new concrete block supports which were installed under the stairs, accessible from the interior, help to cut the span of the treads and risers.

In 1989, the Library undertook its most significant physical modification, a one-story brick addition with full basement at the northeast corner of the building to accommodate the growing needs of the Library and to comply with barrier-free requirements. The addition houses a meeting room at the basement level, and additional reading room and staff space and an accessible restroom on the first floor, and a passenger lift which provides access at the basement level to the first floor for the disabled. The architecture of the addition complements the original utilizing the same materials and carries the horizontal lines of the original building to the new addition. The addition was designed by the firm of The Harsen & Johns Partnership, Architects.

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Summary Statement

Built in 1915, the Edgewater Public Library is locally significant as a representative example of the more than thirty Andrew Carnegie-funded public libraries in New Jersey. The growth in civic establishments in the late 19th and early 20th centuries brought about in response to the effects of rapid development in industry included social reform, more involvement of government in the quality of life of their citizens, and an increase in philanthropy. It was during this period the Carnegie Library Movement was borne bringing about the free public library. The Edgewater Public Library followed many of the design and visitor accommodation rules recommended by Andrew Carnegie and James Bertram, Carnegie's personal secretary. The Edgewater library building is an example of popular public architecture in the early decades of the 20th century, as well as the physical embodiment of Andrew Carnegie's ideals and the innovations he introduced to public libraries. The time of construction, 1915, marks the beginning of the period of significance while upgrades in services to patrons in the mid-20th century mark the end of its period of significance.

Historical Background

Brief History of the Borough of Edgewater

The Borough of Edgewater's rich history has always been determined in great part by its geography; its unique position on the Hudson River involved it in significant historical events and helped to shape its character. In the 18th century, Edgewater became known for its ferry crossing across the Hudson River, a service which became particularly vital for farmers and merchants transporting their products to New York City. By the 19th century, Edgewater, like many localities at this time, began to undergo changes wrought by rapid industrialization in the United States. Edgewater in particular underwent a drastic industrial transformation and grew along with expansion in transportation and industry.

Edgewater's industrial growth grew in direct correlation to its transportation advancements. In August 1892, the New York, Susquehanna & Western Railroad Company began building an Edgewater branch.¹ Edgewater's transformation to a factory town was complete in 1894 when the Railroad was completed, connecting the Borough to its Jersey City line.² Following the opening of the railroad, the pace of industrialization in the Borough increased.³ By the turn of the century, the area was regarded as a factory town, and much of the western, Palisades side of the borough became a residential area of row houses for the thousands of workers in the Borough's industries.⁴ Between 1895 and 1920, the population grew from 1,000 residents to 3,800.

Brief Biography of Andrew Carnegie

Andrew Carnegie, the great 19th century businessman who would later be nicknamed the "Patron Saint of Libraries" was born in Dunfermline, Scotland on November 25, 1835. The family moved to the United States in 1848, settling in Allegheny, a section of Pittsburgh. At 13 years old, Andrew Carnegie took a job at a local cotton factory where he worked as a bobbin boy for \$1.20 a week. Carnegie slowly worked his way up the ladder, and took on a variety of jobs with Western Union and the

¹ Port of New York Authority. *Port Communities: Edgewater*. Vol. 12, No. 7. July 1960.

² Cheslow, Jerry. "If You're Thinking of Living In: Edgewater; Factory Town is Now Bedroom Community." *New York Times*. July 30, 1995. Internet; accessed August 2007.

³ Port of New York Authority. *Port Communities: Edgewater*. Vol. 12, No. 7. July 1960.

⁴ Cheslow.

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Pennsylvania Railroad. He eventually claimed his employer's position and spent twelve years in the railroad business before turning his attentions to the steel industry. By 1899, Carnegie had consolidated all of his interests into the Carnegie Steel Company, becoming the industry's leader.

Despite Carnegie's enormous success and determination to succeed in business, in his personal time he often worried over the implications of such wealth and his desire to attain it. Carnegie recorded these thoughts, publishing two famous essays in 1889, entitled *The Gospel of Wealth* and *The Best Fields for Philanthropy*, both of which lay out Carnegie's personal philosophies on wealth and philanthropy. Carnegie began his philanthropic work with the donation of a library to his hometown of Dunfermline, Scotland, and went on to establish various philanthropic foundations and organizations. While Carnegie began his philanthropic work in the 1890s, he did not organize it under a single foundation until 1911, when he founded the Carnegie Corporation of New York. During his lifetime he gave away \$350 million, and his impact continues today through the work of the Carnegie Foundation which continues to endow numerous educational and cultural programs. Carnegie died in Lenox, Massachusetts on August 11, 1919.

Introduction to the Carnegie Library Movement

Considering the philosophies Carnegie set forth in his essays, *The Gospel of Wealth* and *The Best Fields for Philanthropy*, and his desire to assist those institutions which help people help themselves; public libraries were the perfect embodiment of Carnegie's philanthropic ideals. These ideals were greatly derived from Carnegie's own life experience. During his early years working at a telegraph office for a Colonel James Anderson, Carnegie often took the opportunity to educate himself through the use of his employer's personal library. In 1853, Carnegie submitted a letter to the *Pittsburgh Dispatch*, defending workers' rights to library use. In the same letter, he resolved that if he should become rich, he would make such opportunities available to his own workers.⁵ Carnegie later wrote of Anderson's library: "This is but a slight tribute and gives only a faint idea of the depth of gratitude which I feel for what he did for me and my companions. It was from my own early experience that I decided there was no use to which money could be applied so productive of good to boys and girls who have good within them and ability and ambition to develop it, as the founding of a public library in a community"⁶

At the time Carnegie's interest in libraries began, library collections were just beginning to develop from subscription libraries supported by business owners, to those supported by government. Citizens and legislators alike gradually began to recognize that libraries were needed to serve the general population, and began to consider the role government should take in providing them. During the second half of the 19th century, the ideals of the "free" library movement began to spread, as reformers saw libraries as a means to repair what they saw as flaws that had developed as a result of rapid industrialization and a rapidly developing nation.⁷ Even with tax levies, though, many communities could not afford proper facilities for their library. Carnegie's interest in public libraries as an outlet for his generous philanthropy came at the perfect time, then, at "the peak of library expansion in the US"⁸ and Carnegie's buildings fulfilled the needs of small towns who could not have otherwise afforded a new building. In addition to the localities that Carnegie directly aided, his influence extended to other small towns,

⁵ "Carnegie Libraries: The Future Made Bright." Available from <http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/vvwlp/lessons/50carnegie/50carnegie.htm>; Internet; accessed August 2007.

⁶ Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. Available from <http://www.clpgh.org/exhibit/anderson.html>; Internet; accessed August 2007.

⁷ "Carnegie Libraries: The Future Made Bright."

⁸ George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact in American Public Library Development* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1969), 191.

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where local philanthropists were inspired to support libraries at their own scale. In the United States, public libraries grew from 900 in 1896 to almost 4,000 by 1925.⁹

Carnegie made his first library endowment in his hometown of Dunfermline in 1882.¹⁰ Carnegie's third library, dedicated in 1890, was the Carnegie Free Library and Music Hall of Allegheny City, which was later annexed to Pittsburgh. This was the first of the Carnegie libraries where the municipality was required to subsidize the library, therefore making it the first publicly-funded Carnegie library in the world.¹¹ Carnegie's library endowments were divided into two periods, known as his "retail" and "wholesale" periods. During the "retail" period, from 1886 to 1896, Carnegie gave \$1,860,869 for 14 library buildings. The individual donations covered not only a local public library, but were actually for community centers, which also contained recreational facilities along with the library. After 1896, during the "wholesale" period, money was no longer donated for such multipurpose buildings. At this time he began to give money to smaller communities with less access to cultural institutions.¹²

It was during the wholesale period, then, that localities like Edgewater received their funding. In order to apply for a grant, a municipality began by writing a letter of request to Carnegie's secretary, James Bertram.¹³ If the town was deemed qualified Bertram would send them an application in return. In requesting a grant, the town was expected to provide a statement of its population, as well as a pledge of a site and a pledge for future maintenance. Each community was expected to provide the site, the books and interior equipment and furnishings, and an annual maintenance budget that equaled one-tenth of the cost of construction. The population was important because a town had to have a population of at least 1,000 to receive assistance, and secondly because the amount donated to most communities was based on population and averaged approximately \$2 per person. The second and third conditions spoke to Carnegie's desire to only help those who wish to take responsibility and help themselves. Carnegie believed that "the community which is not willing to maintain a Library had better not possess it."¹⁴ The third provision in particular "lay in the principle that the only justification for investing philanthropic funds in the provision of library buildings was the prospect of efficient library service. A donation was, therefore to be granted only after it had been made reasonably clear that the beneficiary community would maintain an active and not a passive service".¹⁵

Unfortunately, the provision of a building did not necessarily make for a successful library; that was contingent on the quality of the services each library provided and on their capability of providing a sufficient and interesting circulation of reading material. In 1916, Dr. Alvin Johnson was hired to study 100 existing Carnegie libraries, and report on their social significance, physical aspects, effectiveness and financial condition.¹⁶ Johnson's most important conclusion was that while the provision of

⁹ George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact in American Public Library Development*.

¹⁰ "Andrew Carnegie and Library in East Liverpool"; available from <http://www.carnegie.lib.oh.us/andrewcarnegie.htm>; Internet; accessed August 2007.

¹¹ "History of Andrew Carnegie and Carnegie Libraries." Available from <http://andrewcarnegie.tripod.com/>; Internet; accessed August 2007.

¹² "Carnegie Libraries: The Future Made Bright."

¹³ James Bertram (1872-1934), Andrew Carnegie's Secretary, and after 1911 Secretary of the Carnegie Corporation.

¹⁴ "Carnegie Libraries: The Future Made Bright."

¹⁵ George S. Bobinski, *Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact in American Public Library Development*, 153-154.

¹⁶ "Carnegie Libraries: The Future Made Bright."

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the building itself was important, to be truly effective these libraries needed professional staff members to create efficient libraries.

Within several years the Corporation decided to terminate grants for library construction. Library gifts officially ended on November 7, 1917. From then on, the Corporation chose to focus its energies on assisting library education and such organizations as the American Library Association.¹⁷ Over 1600 libraries were built in 46 states;¹⁸ in New Jersey, 35 libraries for 3,155,900 people were built by 1920.¹⁹

Architecture of the Carnegie Libraries

Andrew Carnegie's public library initiative did not introduce the idea of free public libraries, but rather presented municipalities with the opportunity to establish them, and influenced how such libraries were designed and organized. Library reforms encouraged by Carnegie included more efficient layouts, professional staff and perhaps most importantly, access to the general public. In attempting to create efficient, functional and accessible libraries, the Carnegie Corporation directly affected the architecture of public libraries during this period and for years to come.

Carnegie's effect on library architecture began with the gift of a library building alone. Communities that satisfied the site and maintenance pledges were free to build whatever they saw fit. Soon, though, Carnegie and his secretary, James Bertram, realized that more control would have to be exerted on towns to produce buildings that appropriately represented Carnegie's simple tastes and that would efficiently serve the public. Beginning in 1904, Bertram began to review library plans during the application process.²⁰ Carnegie and Bertram thought that many of the plans, with their expensive exteriors and inefficient interiors, were not practical. As a result, in 1908, the Carnegie Library Board began to require that applicants submit building plans with their applications. By 1911, Carnegie's secretary, James Bertram, had published a pamphlet entitled "Notes on Library Buildings" (sic), which set forth important considerations such as the most efficient interior layout and reflected Carnegie's personal preferences. Bertram's "Notes" established a standard for the 20th century public library, helping to cement in the public consciousness what a library "should" look like, and the way in which we expect them to operate.

After the publication of Bertram's *Notes*, communities such as Edgewater were more careful with their designs, as the Carnegie Corporation became known for its strict standards. Carnegie preferred dignified exteriors that would have been considered plain compared with many of the more ornate styles popular during the "Gilded Age" of the early 20th century. While variation was allowed, particularly in matters of exterior style, the *Notes* exerted enough of an influence to produce libraries with distinctive similarities. For example, the Carnegie Corporation's preferences often led communities to choose a dignified Classical style for the exterior. On the exterior, probably the most identifying architectural characteristic was the imposing front steps usually associated with Carnegie libraries. The steps allowed for Carnegie's preferred interiors, with high ceilings and second-level areas to allow for natural lighting and ventilation. Another common similarity at the exterior is masonry construction, which one source speculates is directly related to Carnegie's maintenance policy. A majority of existing

¹⁷ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, Alvin S. Johnson, *A Report to the Carnegie Corporation of New York on the Policy of Donations to Free Public Libraries*, 159.

¹⁸ Dierickx, Mary B. "The Architecture of Literacy; Carnegie Libraries in the U.S." National Trust for Historic Preservation, November 3, 2006. Available from <http://www.carnegielibraries.info/nthp/natltrust-presentation1.pdf>; Internet; accessed August 2007.

¹⁹ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *Distribution of Carnegie Libraries in 1920*.

²⁰ Dierickx.

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Carnegie Libraries are brick, a material that while more expensive in construction, is less expensive to maintain than other materials like wood.²¹

While many may recognize Carnegie libraries at the exterior due to their well-known front steps, it is at the interior that Carnegie made his most important architectural contributions to library services. The layout Carnegie encouraged directly influenced library operations and how patrons would make use of these services. From Bertram's *Notes*, the most common plan adapted by towns was that which "called for a main floor with an adult reading area on one side, a children's area on the other, and the librarian's desk between the two. The front door was located in the middle, opposite the librarian."²² All of the Carnegie Corporation's plans, though, encouraged such characteristic features as "large, open spaces rather than small nooks; accessible, perimeter bookshelves; reference desks located so that the librarian can see several spaces."²³ These features encouraged libraries that were accessible to their patrons. One of the most significant features that Carnegie libraries encouraged was the use of open stacks, a significant departure from 19th century libraries where the shelves were closed and not directly accessible to patrons. These libraries also encouraged the idea of children's reading rooms, and space for meeting rooms for lectures and other uses, therefore providing a center for all members of the community.

History of the Edgewater Public Library

The Edgewater Public Library began much as many other collections of its time period did, as a subscription library. In 1909, six women formed a Book Club where the members purchased the books and circulated them among themselves. The women initially met in a member's home, but as the program grew, they asked the Borough for permission for space to house a small library in the Borough Hall.²⁴ In May 1910 the Club formed the Edgewater Library Association, which would be supported by voluntary contributions. Book circulation began on September 10, 1910.²⁵

The Borough of Edgewater indicated its initial interest in an official public library program in 1910. On November 14th of that year a notice was posted that announced: "A special meeting of the members of the Edgewater Free Library Association will be held in the council room, Municipal Building, next Monday evening, November twenty-first, at eight-thirty. This meeting is called for the purpose of making a formal transfer of the library to the Borough of Edgewater."²⁶ Ninety percent of the ballots cast in the November election approved of establishing a municipal library. On January 1, 1911, the Edgewater Free Public Library officially opened in Borough Hall, allotted a space of only 18 x 27 feet.²⁷ With the continuously growing number of patrons and books this space was soon outgrown. Like many other municipalities at the time whose interest in a library outpaced the resources for a sufficient space, the Borough of Edgewater decided to approach the Carnegie Foundation for a grant.

Much consideration was given to a letter of request to be sent to James Bertram, as evidenced by remaining letters between Borough citizens. Members of the library board of trustees worried over the approach to take with the notoriously difficult

²¹ "Carnegie Libraries: The Future Made Bright."

²² "Carnegie Libraries: The Future Made Bright."

²³ Dicrickx.

²⁴ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *50 Years of Woman's Club*.

²⁵ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *50 Years of Service*.

²⁶ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library.

²⁷ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *Carnegie Application 1913*.

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Bertram and Carnegie. At this time, Bertram's *Notes* would only have recently been published, but the Borough clearly already had a good understanding of Carnegie's exacting standards.

In acknowledgement of Bertram's architectural standards, board members put serious consideration into hiring a professional architect with library experience. Edna Pratt of the New Jersey Public Library Commission stated that "There are so many things to consider in the building of a library, such as lighting, ease of supervision, noise, comfort of staff, economy in administration, etc., etc., that I do not see how can you get the best results, even the proper results, if you do not have an architect who has had experience in this particular kind of work."²⁸ The board sent their letter of request to Bertram on July 9, 1913. The letter emphasized Edgewater's status as an industrial town, a characteristic which may have appealed to Carnegie's personal background and interests. The letter concluded by requesting \$20,000 for the erection of a building. Despite the Library Board's well thought request, Edgewater received this brusque reply from Mr. Bertram: "Yours of July 9 received. Unless, however, a donation of about half the amount you ask for would be satisfactory for your purpose, there is no use in corresponding further. We do not give \$20,000 for the erection of a building for your population."²⁹

In 1915, a personal interview between Arthur C. Mack, a trustee of the Library, and Mr. Coffin of the Carnegie Foundation, led to a renewal of Edgewater's application.³⁰ A 1967 article from the local Bergen County paper, *The Record* stated that: "The Carnegie Corporation had lost interest in building libraries when Edgewater went looking for money in 1914, said Dr. Conway, an early library trustee and supervising principle of the local schools for 41 years. But luckily for Edgewater, Arthur Mack, one of the trustees, had gone to school with Andrew Carnegie's nephew, and the local grant was approved, Dr. Conway said."³¹ This time, the Borough requested \$15,000 from the Foundation, supported by a more lengthy explanation of the town's population and character. This second attempt was also not completely without difficulty. In a letter dated March 10, 1915, addressed to the library board, Bertram says: "Yours of March 6th receivd (sic), with schedule. Ar (sic) we to understand that the Boro (sic) of Edgewater is prepared to make a contribution of \$5,000 toward the erection of a Free Public Library Bilding? (sic) This enquiry is adress (sic) to you on account of your anser (sic) to Question 11 in the schedule, and because your Boro evidently has in mind a bilding (sic) out of proportion to what this Corporation usually provides for a place of the size."³² Finally, though, Bertram approved the application on the usual conditions that the Borough provide the site for the building and pledge to continue to support the Library in the future.

In a letter dated March 16, 1915, Bertram wrote to the Borough: "In connection with the accompanying letter, we enclose herewith a suggested form of pledge, together with a copy of 'Notes on the Erection of Library Bildings.' Plans should be submitted in the form of blueprints or similar rolls. Do not send plans or sketches mounted on card-board. Pleas (sic) note that all communications should come from civic authorities; we do not wish to correspond with architects."³³ Aware of Bertram and Carnegie's exacting standards, the Borough was very serious about finding an architect who was familiar with libraries in particular. In a letter dated April 6th, the writer states that a Mr. Whitfield, a relative of Carnegie familiar with his requirements, "urges the importance of obtaining an architect who is a library specialist and one who is entirely familiar with the Carnegie requirements. Otherwise he states it is difficult to get plans approved by Mr. Bertram or a satisfactory building

²⁸ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *letter from Edna Pratt*.

²⁹ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *letter to Bertram, March 6, 1915, quoting his reply to the Board's July 1913 letter*.

³⁰ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *50 Years of Service*.

³¹ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *The Record 1967 article*.

³² From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *letter from Bertram, March 10, 1915*.

³³ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *letter from Bertram March 16, 1915*.

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designed...He advises for us the Colonial style..."³⁴ The Library Board made various trips to libraries in New Jersey and New York in order to gain a further understanding of appropriate library architecture. Finally, the board decided to hire Hobart A. Walker, office located at 437 Fifth Avenue, New York City, to design the Edgewater Library. Walker had previous experience designing the Elmwood branch of the East Orange Library, also in New Jersey. The Board submitted Walker's plans and specifications for Bertram's approval on July 2, 1915.³⁵

In addition to finalizing architectural plans, the Borough also had to secure a building site. On April 6, 1915, the Borough Council made several formal resolutions for the purchase of the building site. The first resolution formally accepted Carnegie's gift, as well as accepted the responsibility for annual maintenance of the site and the appropriation of \$5,000 to purchase the site. The second resolution was for the issue of ten \$500 five percent bonds, which would go towards future maintenance.³⁶ The site had been obtained from Mr. W. O. Ross, lots Numbers 92, 93, 94 and 95 purchased for \$4,000. The library site was formed from these four lots, with the plot's dimensions measuring 100 x 123 feet. At the time, the Civic Record reported that the site was "located in a rapidly up-building section and close to the center of the population".³⁷ Title to the land was taken on May 21, 1915.³⁸

Once the plans were approved and the site secured, Warren B. Eyrich of Grantwood was hired as contractor on July 19, 1915. On July 26, ground was broken for construction and the cornerstone was laid August 26th.³⁹ A local newspaper article of the time describes the completed library: "The building, of which Hobart A. Walker, of East Orange is the architect, is colonial style, built of art brick trimmed with Indiana limestone, roofing of slate by Mr. Bleyer. The main floor contains the adults and children's reading rooms, librarian's office, women's lavatory, book stacks, etc., dimensions 40 by 60 feet. The basement floor contains an auditorium seating 135, librarian's work room, men's lavatory, store room, fire room and coal bin, etc. The trim throughout the building is quartered oak, silver gray finish".⁴⁰ The same article praises its corner location, saying that the adjoining open lot belonged to the Church of the Mediator and provided the library with excellent lighting.

The building was dedicated February 8, 1916, and officially opened for business on February 9, 1916.⁴¹ In addition to its main function as a library, the building also served as "the established meeting place of the Edgewater Women's Club, Musicals, Art Exhibits, Historical Exhibits, Lectures, etc. are also held here."⁴² Another article mentions the basement auditorium, as well as a work room and kitchen.⁴³

³⁴ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *from letter to Miss Meyer, April 6, 1912.*

³⁵ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *letter to Bertram.*

³⁶ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *Civic Record April 1915.*

³⁷ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *Civic Record April 1915.*

³⁸ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *Civic Record December 1915.*

³⁹ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *Civic Record December 1915.*

⁴⁰ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *Civic Record December 1915.*

⁴¹ From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *Dedication of New Building.*

⁴² From the Files of the Edgewater Public Library, *Libraries.* Works Progress Administration. Project No. 693. Edgewater Historical Survey, Edgewater, New Jersey.

⁴³ Bowman, Nancy F. *History of the Edgewater Free Public Library.* Available in the records of the Edgewater Public Library.

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Significance of the Edgewater Public Library

Evaluation under Criterion A

Emergence of organized philanthropy in the United States in the late 19th and early 20th century was targeted at large institutions like museums, hospitals and schools. Business leaders like Carnegie organized their giving in the same form as the business corporations that had made them successful, introducing such ideas as a Board of Directors to charitable foundations.⁴⁴ These business leaders felt that by approaching philanthropy as they did business,⁴⁵ they would be able to solve challenges like poor educational opportunities. Former Carnegie Corporation president John Gardner once wrote: "Wealth is nothing new in the history of the world. Nor is charity. But the idea of using private wealth imaginatively, constructively, and systematically to attack the fundamental problems of mankind *is* new".⁴⁶ Carnegie set forth such ideals and principles in his "The Gospel of Wealth" and his in-depth writing on his philanthropic ideals and even more so, his active giving, have led to his credit as the pioneer of modern American philanthropy.

Carnegie public libraries like the Edgewater Public Library are a physical expression of the period between the late 19th and early 20th centuries which saw both the Second Industrial Revolution and the Gilded Age, and Andrew Carnegie's ideals specifically. Carnegie, the "patron saint" of libraries in the United States, led a life that directly parallels the greater trends of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, becoming a leader of the steel industry during the Industrial Revolution, and later helping to forge American philanthropy during the Gilded Age. Not only involved in the growth of industry and then philanthropy, Carnegie was actually a leader in both. Carnegie embodied the contradictions of the age, ruthlessly acquiring his own wealth and power, while simultaneously promoting philanthropy through his writings and generous giving.

The public library often became one of the most important buildings in many small towns across America, providing a space for the cultural and educational needs of the community. Each library made an important contribution to public education in its community, representing the greater Carnegie Corporation goals. The Carnegie Library program not only provided physical space for community libraries, but improved services and established standards of operation and library architecture and equipment for all public libraries. Lastly, the library program's standards, which required that town's provide an annual maintenance budget for their libraries, led to the general acceptance that local governments should be responsible for free public libraries.⁴⁷

Andrew Carnegie deeply believed that every individual is capable of success through his own merit, and his libraries remain as a lasting physical expression of his convictions of personal responsibility and hard work. The Edgewater Public Library was the first permanent structure in the Borough built specifically to house a book collection, providing a centralized and permanent location for cultural and educational activities, in a town that had long been noted for its industrial character. The Edgewater Public Library is a physical expression of Carnegie's standards, and has provided an educational and cultural center for the Borough of Edgewater for almost one hundred years.

⁴⁴ Council on Foundations; Defining Philanthropy for the 21st Century; available from <http://www.cof.org/>; Internet; accessed December 2007.

⁴⁵ Carnegie Corporation of New York.

⁴⁶ Carnegie Corporation of New York.

⁴⁷ Roper, Roger. Carnegie Library Thematic Resource Nomination. *National Register Nomination*. Prepared June 1984.

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Evaluation under National Register Criterion C

The Edgewater Public Library, built in 1915, is significant for its embodiment of the distinct features set forth in James Bertram's "Notes on Library Buildings" (sic), published by the Carnegie Corporation in 1911. The Edgewater Public Library remains a significant example of Carnegie library architecture at the local level. Bertram's *Notes*, a compilation of Bertram's and Andrew Carnegie's personal tastes and ideas on function and efficiency, had a significant impact on public library design throughout the United States. Carnegie libraries are not only physical expressions of Carnegie's ideals, but are physical reminders of the beginnings of free public libraries in this country, which have influenced library architecture and organization to this day.

From 1898 until 1904, the Carnegie Corporation did not enforce specific design standards on localities which received grants. Soon, though, Carnegie and his secretary, James Bertram, began to realize that without such standards, many municipalities were constructing buildings that did not represent Carnegie's personal tastes or fulfill his philanthropic vision. Many spent too much of their budget on extravagant ornamentation on the exterior, and gave little thought to creating efficient interior space. In 1908, the Corporation began to require that building plans be submitted and approved before construction. In this way, Carnegie exerted greater influence on library architecture, and therefore their function as well. As a result, his Carnegie libraries became more architecturally similar, and their appearance influenced public library architecture across the country. By 1911, Bertram had formalized his library design ideals into a pamphlet titled *Notes on Library Buildings* (sic), which was based on Carnegie's notions of appropriate public architecture, suggestions from librarians, and Bertram's own intuitive ideas about efficiency. The Corporation sent the guide to all communities who were promised funding. The Edgewater Public Library was built to fulfill the standards set forth in *Notes on Library Buildings* (sic), and today retains many of these original and distinctive features. The exterior of the Edgewater Library retains several distinctive features of Carnegie libraries including its simple Colonial Revival style, its masonry façade, and most significantly, the steep flight of steps leading to the main entrance that is so often associated in the public consciousness with Carnegie Libraries.

More importantly, the Edgewater Library reflects Carnegie's standards of function and efficiency at the interior. The main entrance is located at the center of the front façade, and enters into a small vestibule before opening to the main library. Following one of Bertram's more popular model plans, the Librarian's desk is located directly in front of the main entrance, with the Head Librarian's office located behind this desk. This splits the room into two sides, allowing the patrons easy access to the front desk, and the librarians' a good visual of the spaces around them. The interior also reflects Carnegie's desire for patrons to have direct access to the library's books, with the windows placed several feet off the floor, allowing for wall shelving. Today, part of the basement is set aside for a children's reading room, but in the past, the basement held an auditorium for other cultural functions as well as room for club meetings, a common feature in the early days of Carnegie libraries. Today, the remaining basement space continues to provide space for storage, work rooms and mechanical equipment, much as it was originally planned for.

While the Edgewater Public Library has undergone several changes, most notably an addition constructed in 1989, the building has retained its significant original features, particularly in its interior layout, which continue to reflect Andrew Carnegie's exacting standards for library architecture.

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Name of Property Edgewater Public Library
County and State Bergen County, New Jersey

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County and State Bergen County, New Jersey

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GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

Verbal Boundary Description

The Edgewater Public Library is located at 49 Hudson Avenue, within a residential neighborhood. The Library is located on the corners of Hudson and Undercliff Avenues, with the front façade facing onto Hudson. Its placement leaves its south (front) and west elevations open, with a small fenced in area to its rear and a school and parking lot bordering its east side. The homes within the neighborhood are small and tightly packed together within the neighborhood's narrow streets.

Boundary Justification

The nominated structure is limited to the Edgewater Public Library and that property owned and occupied by the Borough of Edgewater. Title to lots 92, 93, 94, and 95, measuring 100 x 123 feet total, was purchased by the Borough of Edgewater on May 21, 1915.

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

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Name of Property Edgewater Public Library
County and State Bergen County, New Jersey

Typical for all photographs:

1. Edgewater Public Library
2. Bergen County, New Jersey
3. Margaret Hickey
4. May 2008
5. HJGA Consulting, 36 Park Street, Montclair, NJ

Photograph #1: Exterior: View looking northwest at front (south) façade of Library.

Photograph #2: Exterior: Detail view of columned portico with cornice and pediment at Library entrance.

Photograph #3: Exterior: Detail view looking north at Library stairs and entrance.

Photograph #4: Exterior: Perspective view looking northeast at south (front) and west side elevations.

Photograph #5: Exterior: Contextual view looking northeast at south (front) and west side elevations.

Photograph #6: Exterior: View looking east at west elevation of Library.

Photograph #7: Exterior: Detail view of front façade looking northeast.

Photograph #8: Exterior: Detail view looking north at the northeast addition to the original Library.

Photograph #9: Exterior: Contextual view looking northwest of the south (front) and east elevations.

Photograph #10: Interior: View looking north at the head librarian's office.

Photograph #11: Interior: View looking southwest at portion of the main reading room at the first floor.

Photograph #12: Interior: View looking southeast at front entrance door.

Photograph #13: Interior: View looking east in children's reading room at the basement level.

Photograph #14: Interior: View looking north into entrance of children's reading room.

Photograph #15: Interior: View looking northeast in main reading room at circulation desk.

Photograph #16: Interior: Detail view looking northeast at circulation desk.

Photograph #17: Interior: Detail view looking northeast at circulation desk and entrance to head librarian's office.

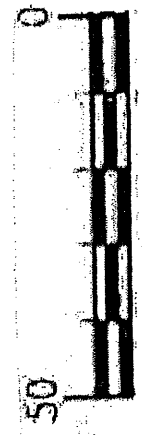
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CREDIT: SANBORN LIBRARY LLC

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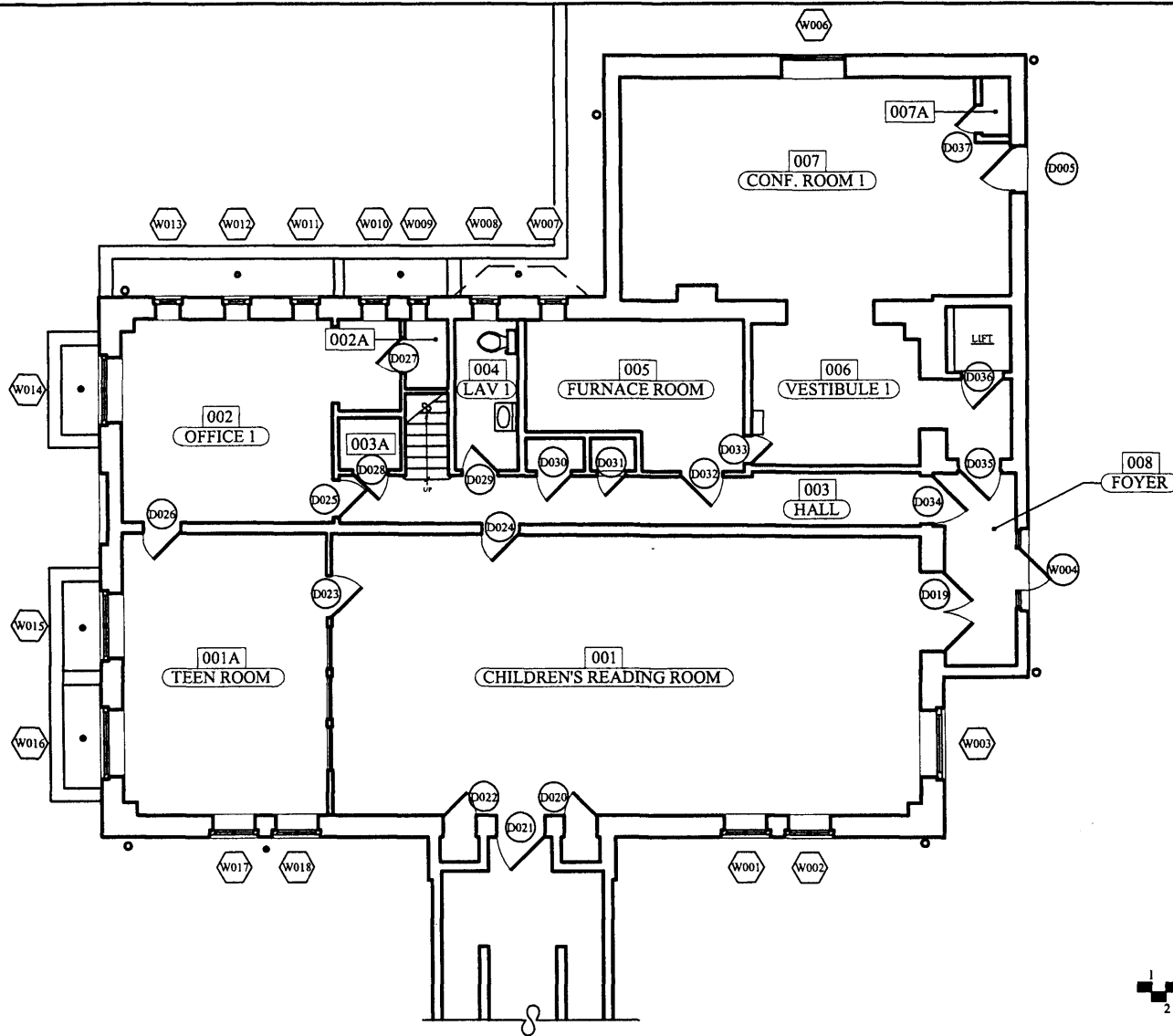
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BASEMENT PLAN



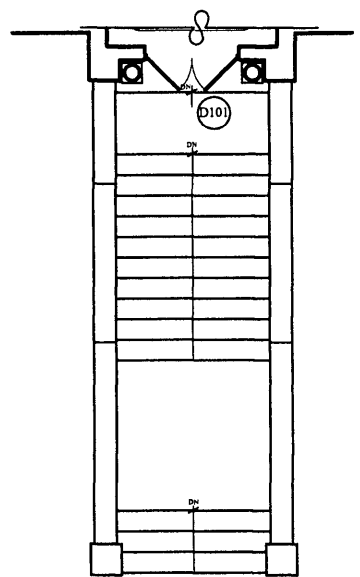
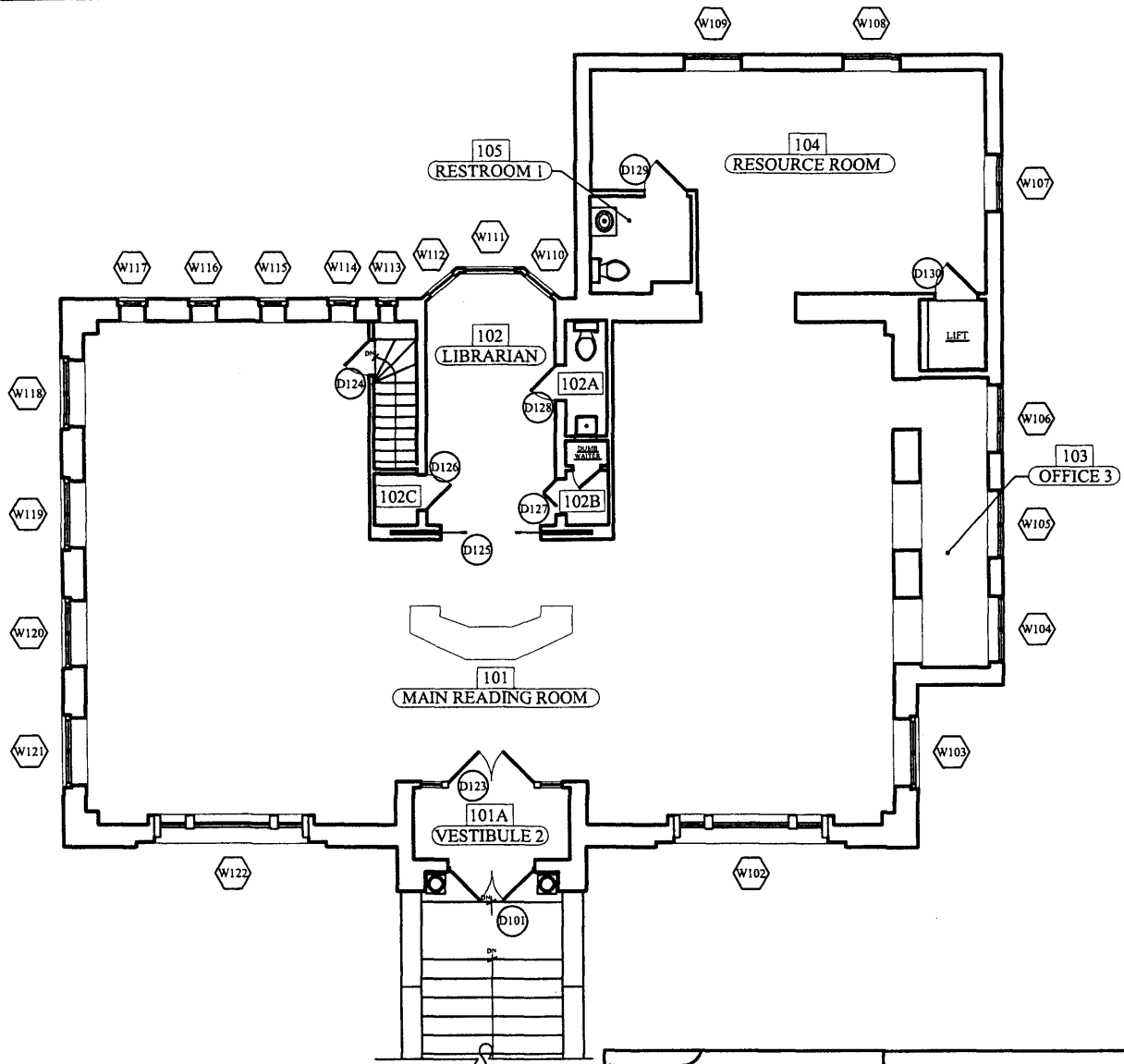
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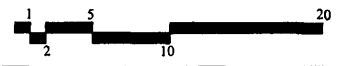
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STAIR DETAIL



FIRST FLOOR PLAN

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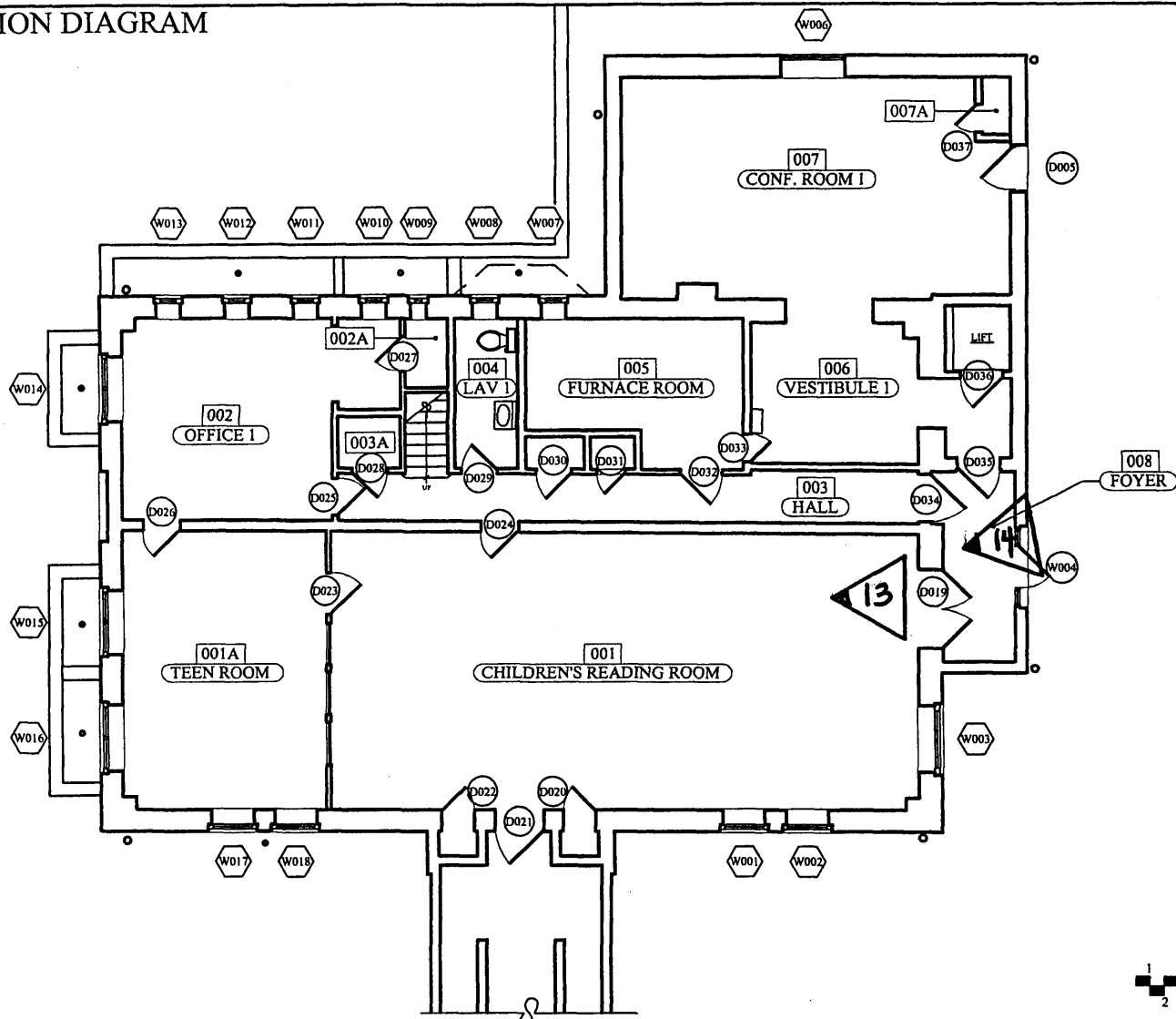
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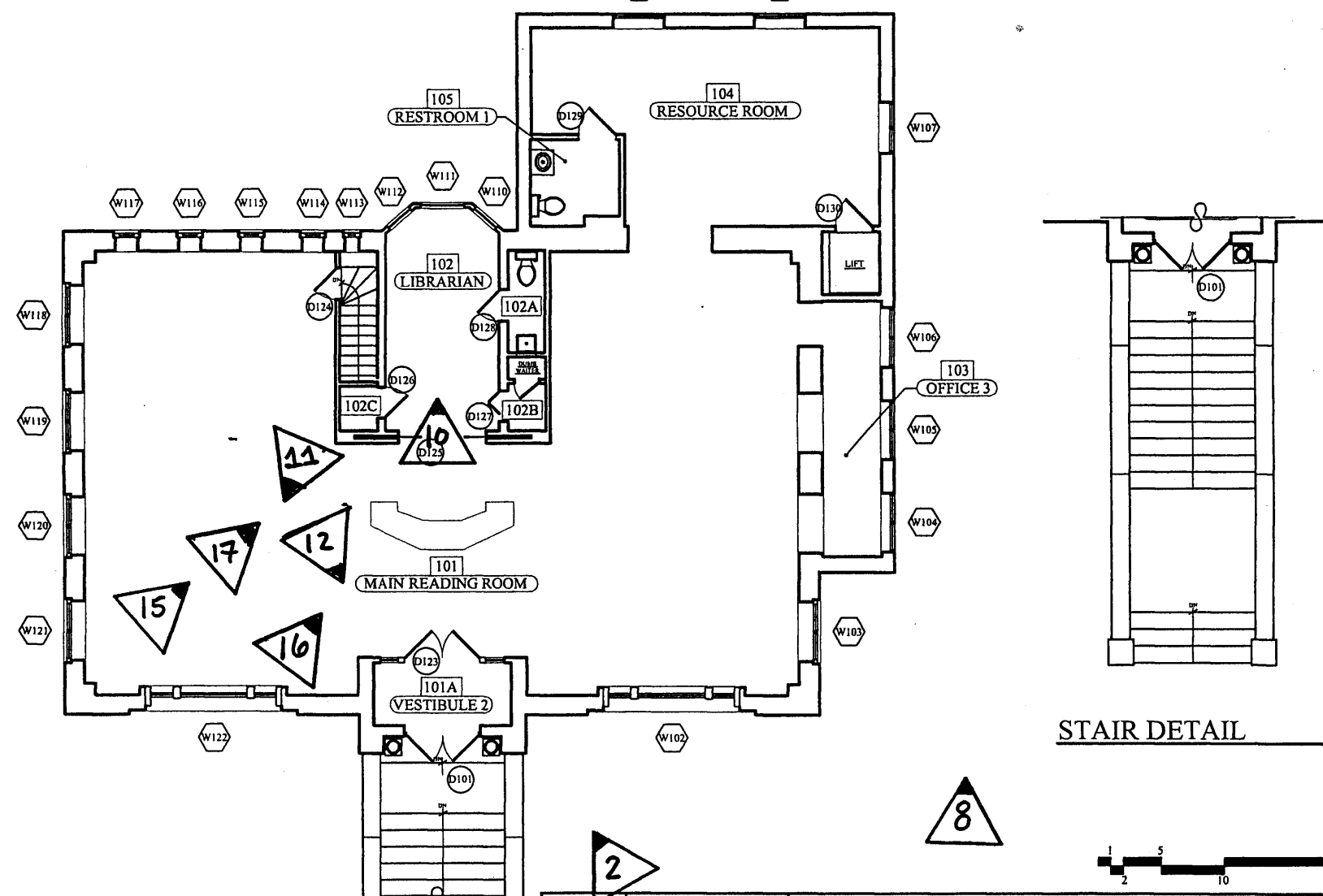
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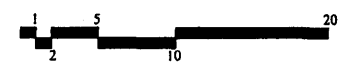
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FIRST FLOOR PLAN

STAIR DETAIL

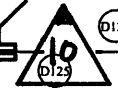


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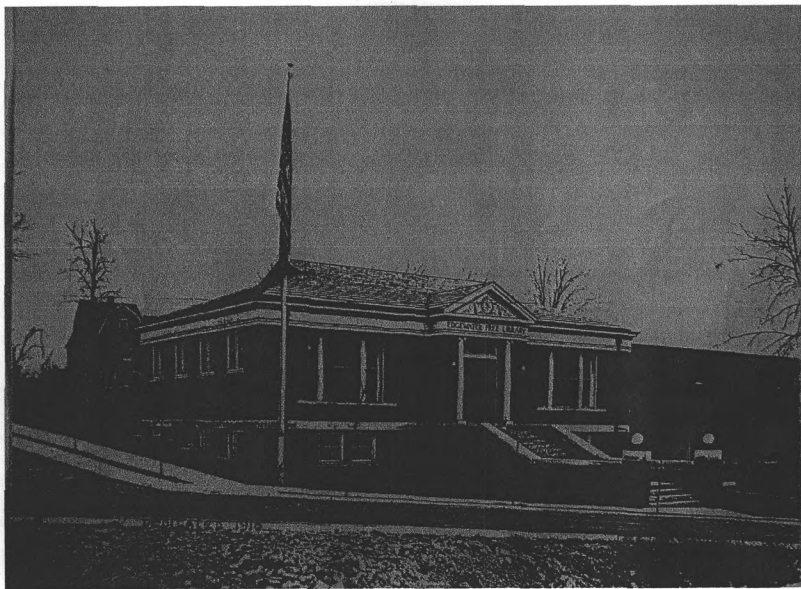
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EDGEWATER PUBLIC LIBRARY
EDGEWATER, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY

PROJECT No. 07064
DATE: 19 MAY 2008

2



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EDGEWATER PUBLIC LIBRARY
EDGEWATER, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY



Historic Image No. 1

Historic Image of the Edgewater Public Library

Early 20th century image of the exterior of the library, date unknown.

Courtesy: Edgewater Public Library



Historic Image No. 2
Historic Image of the Edgewater Public Library

Early 20th century image of the exterior of the library, date unknown. Note the basement entrance which was essentially incorporated into the 1989 addition to the north including adding a second level over the basement entrance.

Courtesy: Edgewater Public Library

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EDGEWATER, BERGEN COUNTY, NEW JERSEY



Historic Image No. 3
Historic Image of the Edgewater Public Library

View of the Edgewater Library in 1980; this photograph shows the configuration of the original doors, the stairs before they were rebuilt and the configuration of the front lawn prior to the construction of the addition.

Courtesy: Edgewater Public Library



Historic Image No. 4
Historic Image of the Edgewater Public Library

Interior view of the first floor level of the Reading Room looking at the southwest corner.

Courtesy: Edgewater Public Library

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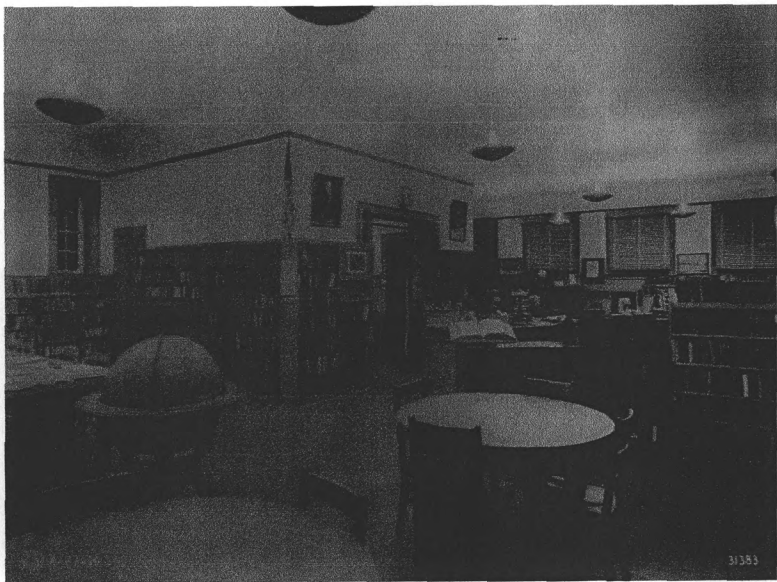


Historic Image No. 5

Historic Image of the Edgewater Public Library

Interior view of the first floor level of the Reading Room looking at the northeast. This is the location where the rear and east addition were added to the building. The existing window openings along the east wall were retained.

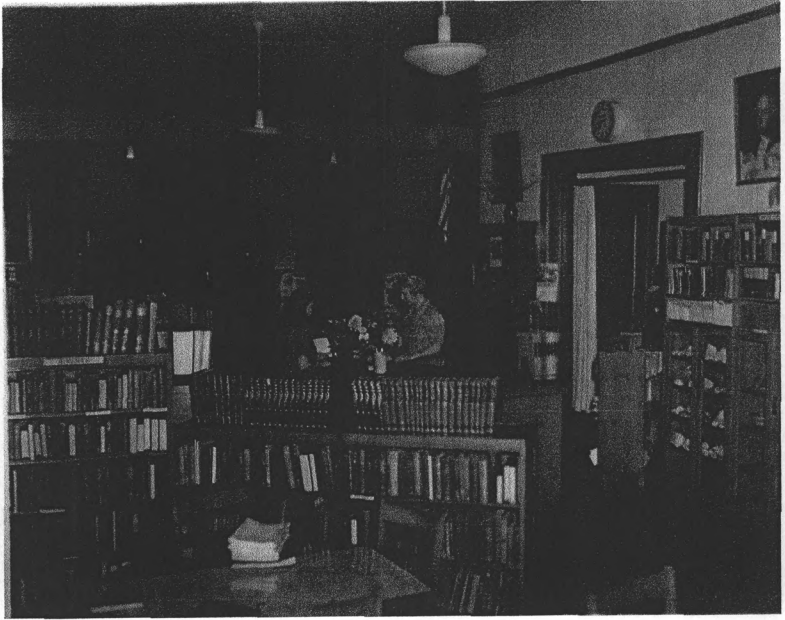
Courtesy: *Edgewater Public Library*



Historic Image No. 6
Historic Image of the Edgewater Public Library

Overall view of the Reading Room taken from the southwest corner looking northeast. This image was taken in 1936. Note the covers to the radiators have been installed and the light fixtures upgraded.

Courtesy: Edgewater Public Library



Historic Image No. 7
Historic Image of the Edgewater Public Library

Overall view of the Reading Room taken from the southeast east looking toward the circulation desk. The date of this image is unknown, but the light fixtures are similar to those seen in the 1936 image.

Courtesy: Edgewater Public Library



Historic Image No. 8

Historic Image of the Edgewater Public Library

View of the raised platform that was once located at the west end of the Auditorium at the basement level.

Courtesy: Edgewater Public Library

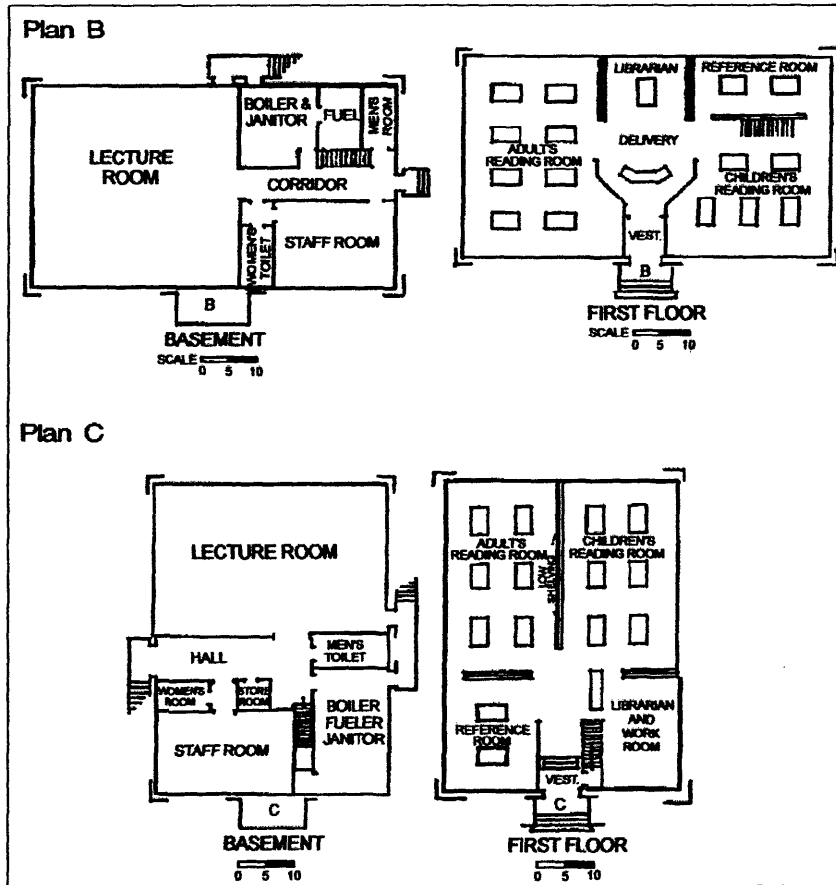


Image No. 9
Bertram's Plans

Diagrams prepared by James Bertram, Carnegie's secretary, showing the design criteria for libraries as found in the pamphlet titled "Notes on Library Buildings" (sic). This pamphlet formalized Carnegie's notions of appropriate public library architecture.

Credit: Sample of Bertram's plans in "Notes on Library Buildings" (sic).
<http://www.nps.gov/history/nr/twhp/wwwlps/lessons/50carnegie/50images/50draw1bh.gif>