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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name: Carnegie Public Library

other name/site number: Big Timber Carnegie Library

2. Location

street & number: 314 McLeod Street

not for publication: n/a
vicinity: n/a

city/town: Big Timber

state: Montana code: MT county: Sweet Grass code: 097 zip code: 59011

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.)

Mark F. Baumbach, State Historic Preservation Officer *MAY 21, 2002*
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Montana State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency or bureau

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

Signature of commenting or other official 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
 see continuation sheet
- removed from the National Register
 see continuation sheet
- other (explain _____)

Edson H. Beall *7/11/02*
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property: Public (local)	Number of Resources within Property	
	Contributing	Noncontributing
Category of Property: Building		
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 0	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> building(s)
	<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> sites
	<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> structures
	<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u> objects
Name of related multiple property listing: N/A	<u> 1 </u>	<u> 0 </u> TOTAL

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions: EDUCATION/Library **Current Functions:** EDUCATION/Library

7. Description

Architectural Classification: LATE 19TH AND EARLY 20TH CENTURY REVIVAL/Neoclassical	Materials: foundation: STONE/River Rock walls: BRICK; STONE/River Rock roof: WOOD/Shingle other: BRICK; METAL
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Narrative Description

The town of Big Timber is located on a wide plain between the Yellowstone and Boulder Rivers. The Yellowstone River borders the town to the north and west, and the Boulder River is located to the south and east. The two rivers converge a few miles to the east. Above the plain, the high sharp peaks of the Crazy Mountains loom to the northwest, and the Absaroka Range rises to the south. The Big Timber Carnegie Library is located on wide, tree-lined McLeod Street, the main thoroughfare in town. Located a few blocks from downtown, the library is easily accessible to businesses, surrounding residential neighborhoods and schools. Its grassy corner lot has been landscaped with large spruce trees, evergreen and flowering shrubs, and flowerbeds.

The stately library displays a standard design for Carnegie Libraries after 1904. The one-story, rectangular, brick building is constructed on a split river rock foundation, and features a daylight basement. Indicative of Neoclassical design, architectural details include a pedimented entry partially supported by Roman Tuscan columns; an elaborate boxed-eave with a moderate overhang and dentils beneath; and symmetrical fenestration. A sandstone water table separates the river rock of the basement level from the rose-colored brick of the main story. Wood shingles cover the hipped roof, and a brick interior chimney is located on the north side of the west slope. A metal, capped ventilation pipe straddles the ridgeline at the center of the building. Windows at the main level of the building are all wood-frame, two-light, double-hung style with one-light transoms above and brick sills. At the basement level, the one-light, wood-frame hoppers open to the interior and feature sandstone sills and lintels.

The three-bay façade (east elevation) is dominated by the centered, pedimented entry. A sandstone frieze reads "CARNEGIE LIBRARY." River rock knee walls flank the four sandstone steps that lead to a pair of centered, one-light, one-panel wood doors with a five-light transom above. Single sandstone Tuscan columns are located on either side of the doors, and rise between the river rock half-wall of the basement level and the frieze. The north and south bays each contain one set of tripled windows at both the first story and basement levels. A single narrow basement window is located immediately north of the entry. The north and south elevations each contain two evenly spaced pairs of windows at both the main and basement levels. The west (rear) elevation contains three evenly spaced single window openings across the first story, and four single hoppers at the basement level.

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The interior floorplan and finishes remain largely unchanged since the building's construction in 1913. True to the "Plan A" design provided in the *Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings* published by the Carnegie Corporation in 1911, the main floor consists of a central area, accessed from the entry doors via a small vestibule and flight of stairs. Single, large open reading rooms are located on either side of the circulation desk. The original book shelves and wainscoting still line the walls. At the lower level, the south side of the building contains a large open room, now used for meetings and as an adult fiction reading room. New carpet, shelving and lighting were installed in the basement room in 1974. The north side of the basement level contains a central hallway that opens to restrooms, a boiler room and a staff office/storage room.

Integrity

The Carnegie Library in Big Timber remains largely unaltered since its construction in 1913. With the exception of carpeting, bookshelves and fluorescent lighting installed in the basement meeting room, both the interior and exterior of the building retain integrity of design, workmanship and materials. The building remains in its original location, and still serves the historic residential neighborhood, downtown, and schools that surround it. It retains a high degree of integrity of setting, association and feeling.

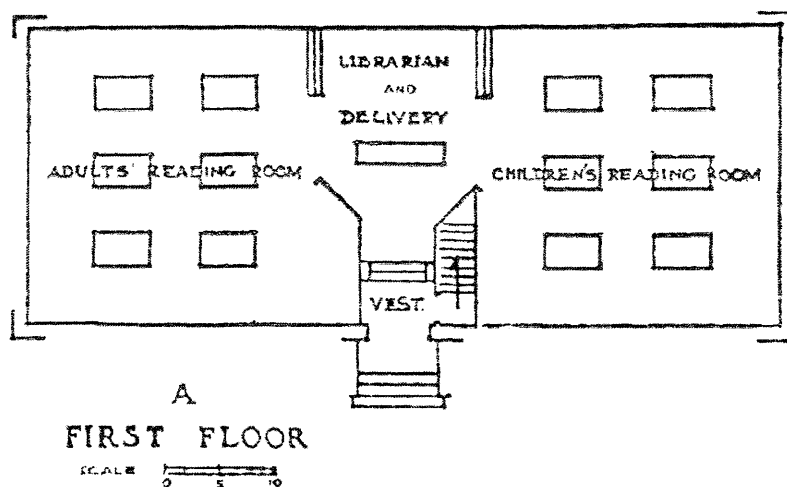
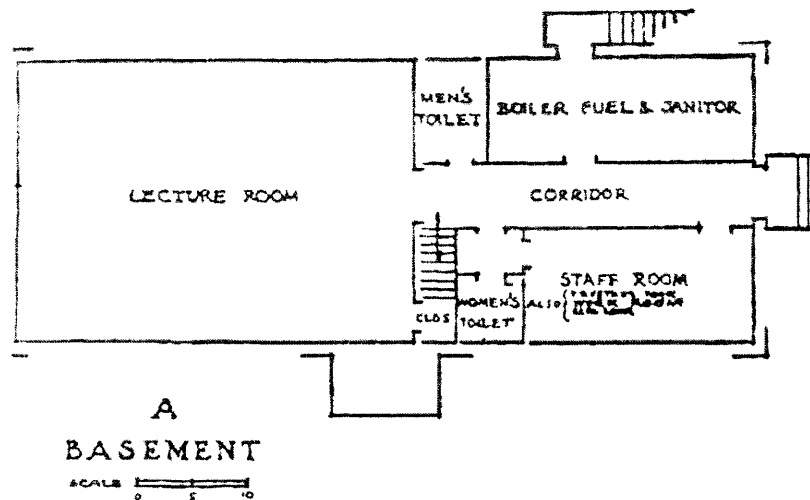
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Floorplans, "Plan A," copied from Bertram's *Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings, 1911*, and identical to the floorplan of the Carnegie Public Library at Big Timber.

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Areas of Significance: EDUCATION
EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT
ARCHITECTURE

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Period(s) of Significance: 1913-1952

Significant Person(s): N/A

Significant Dates: 1913

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Link and Haire, Architects
Gagnon & Co., Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

The Carnegie Library in Big Timber, Montana is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places at the local level under Criterion A for its associations with local patterns of community development and education. The establishment of the library speaks to the construction of infrastructure in Big Timber, the establishment of civic agencies, and the development of educational opportunity. Constructed in 1913, the library formalized the circulation and dispersal of printed materials to the community, and served as an educational anchor and public service building. The Carnegie Library of Big Timber is also eligible for listing under Criterion C, as an excellent example of understated Neoclassical design. Additionally, its floor plan conforms to that advocated by the Carnegie Corporation. Its classical architectural details, combined with its stately but not ostentatious design and standardized floorplan are representative of the philosophy and goals outlined by the Carnegie Corporation library program. The architects, Link and Haire, were the premier architects in the State of Montana during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As an excellent representative of their work, Haire's prowess in library design, and the Carnegie library type, it is significant at the state-wide level.

Historic Context

During the late 19th century, books were a rarity in the bleak open plains and mountains of the frontier West. They were valuable commodities, connections to family and familiar homelife from the east, and entertainment on lonely winter nights. Stories abound of the desperate measures individuals survived in their quest for reading material: traveling hundreds of miles through cold and snow in search of books, paying exorbitant amounts of money for single volumes, and cowboys waiting patiently for their turn to read or be read to. Books were symbolic of wealth, education, and civility, but they were also comforting companions, connections to places and people far away, and an escape from a sometimes harsh and lonely reality.

As the Montana population increased, and railroads brought more families and commercial goods to the area, books became more readily available, but were largely kept in private collections. Early libraries belonged to wealthy or educated individuals. Materials were loaned to family and friends, but the system was neither efficient nor available to entire communities. By the end of the 19th century, small towns like Big Timber recognized the need for a more formalized library system. Socially conscience groups, fueled by Progressive idealism and often led by ladies' societies, worked to raise funds and public awareness for the acquisition and disbursement of educational materials.

Libraries were desirable not only for educational purposes, but also as landmarks in growing urban centers. The construction of a stately masonry building spoke to the permanence of the town, and the optimism that the community enjoyed at the turn of the century. Together with courthouses and schools, libraries often formed the core of city development and signaled prosperity, interest in cultural enlightenment, and the focus on self-improvement. Indeed, a public library "was considered the civic center, a repository of a community's history and culture. As such, a public library in its own building was visual proof of a town's commitment to education, and to the community's history and future. One turn-of-the-century library organizer from Montana said: 'There is no city so great that it does not wear its library as its chief jewel.'"¹

¹ Theodore Jones, *Carnegie Libraries Across America* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997), p. 17.

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Community History

The town of Big Timber draws its name from the Big Timber Creek, so-named for a grove of unusually large Cottonwood trees which grew along its banks noted by Captain William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1806. As non-Indian settlement came to the plains of eastern Montana, the site of Big Timber remained Crow Indian territory until the reservation was opened in 1882. That same year, the Northern Pacific Railroad laid its track through the Yellowstone Valley, spurring settlement along the line.

The first settlement in the Big Timber vicinity consisted of a stage stop and post office below the mouth of Big Timber Creek. This was followed by a small sawmill community founded at the confluence of the Boulder and Yellowstone Rivers during the 1870s. Named Dornix (from the Greek for large, smooth stones), the town was dismantled a short time later, moving to higher ground along the railroad route. Buildings of Dornix were moved to the emerging townsite, and Big Timber was born.

During the waning years of the 1800s, Big Timber grew steadily. With the depot anchoring the town, an array of early buildings sprang up to house all activities of the young community. These included houses, businesses, a large hotel, a roller mill, a wool house, banks, a school, a post office, and the first woolen mill in the state.

In the town of Big Timber, the local politics, at least between 1902 and 1912, reflected the ideas of the Progressive Movement. The Progressive Era of American politics is identified as the period between the turn of the 20th century and World War I, when a movement toward social and political reform swept the country. Across the country at the local level, citizens began to take an active interest in local municipal reform. When the town was incorporated in 1902, Big Timber chose non-partisan elections for its mayor and aldermen. Candidates for office were nominated in open public meetings that encouraged input from all community members, including women. Indeed women played an important civic role in the town, and could vote in local elections.²

Both the Progressive Citizens Party and the Civic League of Big Timber influenced the political policies with their pledges for “the advancement, betterment and general welfare of our town,”³ and the desire to cure social ills such as the exploitation of women and children, alcohol abuse, and corruption. After 1907, the city council had voted for several civic improvements such as a city water works, concrete sidewalks, streets and streetlights, and a city park, in an effort to strive for “a bigger, better and more beautiful Big Timber,” and so “Big Timber [could] keep pace with other progressive cities in the state...”⁴ The establishment of a public library was one of the first priorities for the newly incorporated City of Big Timber, and was authorized in 1902. Library Association President J.A. Lowry expressed reasons for a library at Big Timber in 1914:

Big Timber is the county seat of Sweet Grass County, the only town of any size in the county, and the center of a large ranching, stockgrowing, and farming district. They come to Big Timber for from 25 to 30 miles from all directions, and in some directions much farther than that, and we are quite anxious to do our part to take care and interest these people, as well as help to educate them when they do come. There is not a place in Big Timber for them to spend the evening unless it is hanging around the hotel or, what is the same thing here, a salon, or pool hall, so we thot [sic] that by opening the Library building each evening to our local people as well as those from the country, we would not only be educating them in the right way, but keeping them from falling by the wayside, as so many do in these western towns.⁵

² Ron Wiggins and Lon Johnson, “Big Timber Town Hall National Register Nomination Form,” National Register Files, Sweet Grass County, Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Montana Historical Society, Helena, MT, September 1997, Section 8, pp 1-2.

³ *Big Timber Pioneer*, November 27, 1902; “Big Timber Town Hall Nomination,” Section 8, p. 2.

⁴ *Big Timber Pioneer*, April 4, 1907 and April 1, 1909; Big Timber Town Council Proceedings, May 13, 1909 and May 5, 1913; “Big Timber Town Hall Nomination,” Section 8, p. 2.

⁵ J.A. Lowry to James Bertram, February 13, 1914, Carnegie Corporation of New York Records, 1872-2000, Series II: Files on

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Carnegie Libraries

The idea for a library first came to Big Timber in 1901 when Parmley Billings Library representative W.S. Eastman established a "branch library" by placing books in J. Cameron's store. The idea took hold and in 1905 the Big Timber Library association was formed. By then the library had been moved to the Knights of Pythias building, and consisted of 270 volumes and had 60 registered cardholders. The collection and the reading room were open to the public Tuesday and Saturday afternoons and evenings.

During the next few years, the Women's Club Library Auxiliary worked with the library board to get a library building. For two years at the Sweet Grass County Fair, the auxiliary collected donations for a library building. In the meantime, the library was moved to the Council Chamber at the Town Hall. A lot was purchased and negotiations began to secure a Carnegie grant.

Andrew Carnegie's legacy is both as an industrialist and philanthropist. In a rags to riches, Horatio Alger story, Carnegie transformed himself from a poor immigrant to one of the wealthiest men in the world. While he was a ruthless businessman, Carnegie believed it the moral obligation of the wealthy to be philanthropic. He articulated these beliefs and the causes in which he believed in 1889:

In bestowing charity, the main consideration should be to help those who will help themselves; to provide part of the means by which those who desire to improve may do so; to give those who desire to rise the aids by which they may rise; to assist, but rarely or never to do all...the best means of benefiting the community is to place within its reach the ladders upon which the aspiring can rise -- parks, and means of recreation, by which men are helped in body and minds; works of art, certain to give pleasure and improve the public taste, and public institutions of various kinds, which will improve the general condition of the people; -- in this manner returning their surplus wealth to the mass of their fellows in the forms best calculated to do them lasting good.⁶

Carnegie oversaw his charitable giving personally until 1911, when he established the Carnegie Corporation of New York, an institution dedicated to manage Carnegie's continued support, development, and endowment of community projects. The most influential of these was the Carnegie Library program. Carnegie recognized the value of free and accessible libraries, and the dearth of such institutions across the country. By 1894, the number of public libraries across the country numbered only about 400, with only 46 west of the Mississippi River.⁷

The first library endowed by Carnegie was in his hometown of Dunfermline, Scotland in 1881, and three others were endowed in Pennsylvania in the subsequent decade. As word of the grants spread, the popularity of Carnegie's library program rapidly grew. By 1898, Carnegie received so many personal letters and requests for grants that he appointed his personal secretary, James Bertram, as director of the library program. Carnegie set forth the basic tenets of the program: "To be eligible, a community had to demonstrate the need for a public library, provide the building site, and promise to support library services and maintenance with tax funds equal to 10% of the grant annually."⁸ Through the first decade of Bertram's directorship the application process became more cumbersome. In spite of this, by far most applications were granted.

Microfilm, ca. 1866-1977, II.A: Gifts and Grants, II.A.1: Libraries, II.A.1.a. Free Public Library Buildings, Reel 3: Beaufort, SC-Boswell, Ind., Columbia University Libraries, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New York City.

⁶ Andrew Carnegie, "Wealth," *North American Review*, CXLVIII (June 1889), 653-64.

⁷ Jones, *Carnegie Libraries*, pp. 15-16.

⁸ Jones, *Carnegie Libraries*, p. 26.

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A Carnegie Library for Big Timber

On March 26, 1911, J.A. Lowry, the president of the Big Timber Library Association, wrote to Andrew Carnegie requesting funds for a library building:

Dear Sir:

I presume every mail brings you solicitations for aid for some good cause in all parts of the world, many of which we know you respond to, and, of course, thousands which you are unable to answer. We trust that we may be one of the many whom you aid, as we believe we have fine opening here for a good providing we are able to get a little outside help. Our situation is as follows:

Big Timber, Montana is a town of 1800 inhabitants situated on the main line of the Western Pacific Railroad midway between St. Paul and Seattle. The Big Timber Public Library here has been in existence seven years, we have 1300 volumes in our library and are adding to it each year, we bought and paid for two lots in cent [sic] of town very conveniently situated worth about \$1000.00...

The people of Big Timber and surrounding country are quite enthusiastic for a building, and trust that you can see your way clear to aid us in erecting a building that will be an honor to the town and those who aided in building it...⁹

In May of 1911, the Big Timber Library board received a conditional offer from Carnegie to provide \$7500.00 for a library building. The town council met one of the conditions of the grant the following month when it passed Ordinance 89, to establish and maintain a free public library.¹⁰ Lowry wrote again to the Carnegie Corporation requesting sample plans for a library that would cost \$7500 to build. James Bertram responded to Lowry's request: "The [library] building, of course, must be designed to fit the lot, but I am sending you...plans for a small library building which will give you a general idea of what the arrangement should be."¹¹

Construction was delayed as the suitability of the lots chosen was debated in the city. By the Spring of 1912, correspondence between Lowry and Bertram belie their frustrations with the delays. The summer passed with no progress, and Lowry explained the situation in September 1912:

I presume you think it strange that I am doing so much writing with seemingly no advancement toward a library building. But the fact of the matter is this – the writer together with several others thot [sic] that we had a very desirable location – 60 x 140 ft. on a side street for the library, but others thot differently. They thot another corner 75 x 140 much more desirable, so it took us all this time in securing the new location...¹²

The matter was finally settled in February 1913, but Lowry again requested design plans from the Carnegie Corporation that would be suitable for the new lot. Bertram sent him the plans for the library at Colfax, Iowa. Five months later, Lowry finally submitted plans for the library building at Big Timber, as drawn by prominent Billings architects C.S. Haire and J.G. Link. Bertram approved the plans in August, and later that fall Lowry signed an affidavit that the cost of the library, at the time of occupancy, would not

⁹ J.A. Lowry to Andrew Carnegie, March 26, 1911, Carnegie Corporation of New York Records, 1872-2000, Series II: Files on Microfilm, ca. 1866-1977, II.A: Gifts and Grants, II.A.1: Libraries, II.A.1.a. Free Public Library Buildings, Reel 3: Beaufort, SC-Boswell, Ind.

¹⁰ "Ordinance 89," passed June 12, 1911 by the City of Big Timber, file copy to Carnegie Corporation, Ibid.

¹¹ James Bertram to J.A. Lowry, July 18, 1911, Ibid.

¹² Lowry to Home Trust Company, September 21, 1912, Ibid. The Home Trust Company of Hoboken, New Jersey, was the bank used by the Carnegie Corporation to disburse grant funds.

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exceed the \$7500 grant.¹³ A contract for construction was granted to Gagnon & Company, a local firm responsible for the construction of numerous buildings in Big Timber. Their projects in 1913 included an addition to the high school on the lot adjacent to (west of) the library property. By January 20, 1914, the shell of the building was complete, but the interior was not. Having already exceeded the original grant, Lowry was forced to ask the Carnegie Corporation for an additional \$1000:

In order to get the size of a building we wanted, we were compelled to let the contract without the completion of the basement, electric wiring, leveling of the yard, and the heating plant. The surplus ground in the yard will be taken care of later, the basement, the Ladies Auxiliary will furnish the money to complete as well as the wiring of the building for lights, but we lack the funds for the heating of the building.¹⁴

Because Gagnon & Company was also constructing an addition to the high school on the adjacent lot, the Library Board came up with a plan that would allow the library building to be heated by a heating plant constructed for the school: "...by piping or carrying the heat from their steam plant thru pipes to the Library building, which would be quite convenient, less expensive, once the plant is installed, and assures us a clean and well heated building..."¹⁵ Bertram refused the plan, and expressed his disappointment in Lowry, noting that his letter of November 21st, 1913 had assured the Carnegie Corporation that the building would be completed and ready for occupancy at a cost not exceeding the original \$7500 grant:

...as a matter of fact, your assurance amounted to nothing, because there was the reservation that further money would be required, whereas the vital reason for requiring the assurance is to get parties erecting these library buildings to plan within the amount promist [sic].¹⁶

Despite this reprimand, Lowry continued to make his case:

...the building will be completed and we trust ready for occupancy in March next, but we DID want to connect with the heating plant in the County High School less than 100 feet distance. I presume there isn't one Carnegie Library in fifty, where the opportunity presents itself for the heating of a building, entirely free from all danger of fire, and where it can be heated at all times of day and evening without the additional cost of a janitor, and the building free from all coal dust and ashes...I trust you will see this as we do and reconsider your former statement, and allow us the additional \$1000.00 to put in and connect the heating plant with the high school building.¹⁷

Bertram flatly denied the request: "Yours of February 12 received. Will you kindly refer to the second paragraph of our letter of January 26th ! That letter was carefully prepared to cover the facts and cannot be ignored or changed. Communities must be treated with impartiality."¹⁸ The Big Timber Library Association did not pursue the matter any further, and apparently raised the needed funding to heat the library, and did not connect with the high school steam plant. As Lowry predicted, the new Carnegie Library at Big Timber was opened in the Spring of 1914. Mindful of Bertram's penchant for following the rules, Lowry continued to contact the Carnegie Corporation, even two years after the building was complete, to be sure that the board membership and use of the building was in keeping with the Carnegie Library guidelines.¹⁹

¹³ Lowry to Bertram, November 8, 1913, Ibid; Bertram to Lowry November 21, 1913, Ibid; Lowry to Bertram, November 25, 1913, Ibid.

¹⁴ Lowry to Carnegie, January 20, 1914, Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Bertram to Lowry, January 26, 1914, Ibid.

¹⁷ Lowry to Bertram, February 13, 1914, Ibid.

¹⁸ Bertram to Lowry, February 15th, 1914, Ibid.

¹⁹ Lowry to Bertram, March 24, 1916 and Bertram to Lowry April 3, 1916, Ibid.

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In 1922 the Big Timber Carnegie Library Board adopted a constitution and by-laws. At the same time, they developed policies governing the operation of the library. In 1928 a contribution toward library operations was secured from the Sweet Grass County commissioners for the first time. The county continued to support the library with annual contributions until 1967. That year, the library board, in accordance with Montana State Library laws, adopted new by-laws and entered into an interlocal agreement between the city of Big Timber and Sweet Grass County to fund the library. The new city-county library became the Carnegie Public Library that continues to operate today.

Architectural Significance

When Andrew Carnegie's personal secretary, James Bertram, became director of the Library program in 1898, the application and approval process slowly changed as problems were identified. The most tangible change to the program over the years manifested in the architectural design of the buildings. Many Carnegie libraries built prior to 1904 were constructed without design input from Carnegie or Bertram. Between 1904 and 1911, Bertram reviewed building plans and offered suggestions. By 1911, however, it was clear that many communities were constructing overly elaborate buildings. In that year, Carnegie established the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and appointed Bertram the secretary of that foundation.

One of Bertram's first efforts in 1911 was to publish *Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings*. In the pamphlet, Bertram advocated six floorplans that encouraged architects and library commissions to keep the primary purpose of the grant money in mind: "To obtain for the money the utmost amount of effective accommodation consistent with good taste in building."²⁰

Bertram did not seek to control the exterior architectural details of the Carnegie libraries, indeed, only one paragraph in *Notes* is dedicated to architectural style. In it, Bertram encouraged "the community and architect [to] express their individuality," but immediately warned against "aiming at such exterior effects as may make impossible an effective and economical layout of the interior."²¹ The result, as suggested by Carnegie and Bertram, was that most of the Carnegie Libraries constructed after 1911 are rectangular, symmetrical, one story buildings with daylight basements and hipped roofs. Most often dressed in Neoclassical design made popular at the 1893 Colombian Exposition in Chicago, this attention to balance and efficiency made the Carnegie library a recognizable building type.

Bertram's ideas regarding library efficiency resulted in a new, inviting experience for library patrons. Though often beautiful, the buildings were not imposing. Instead they were welcoming. Open reading rooms were filled with light from banks of windows. Patrons were trusted to peruse and retrieve their own materials, instead of relying on the librarian. Women were not segregated in separate rooms, and all but the smallest Carnegie libraries had large spaces devoted to children.²²

The Carnegie Public Library building in Big Timber is significant at the state-wide level for the way it represents these suggested guidelines and innovations. Indeed, the floorplan is identical to that titled "Plan A" in Bertram's pamphlet. Its size and scale were befitting a community the size of Big Timber. Its practical, balanced design and bookshelves built into the exterior walls allowed the librarian to observe patrons in all public parts of the building. Meetings and lectures were held in the lower level meeting room, removed from the reading rooms dedicated to quiet study.

²⁰ Jones, *Carnegie Librairies*, p. 33

²¹ Dr. Abigail A Van Slyck, "Carnegie Library Architecture," <http://carnegie-libraries.org/styles.html>.

²² Ibid.

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According to Carnegie Library Architectural Historian Abigail Van Slyck:

Despite these strong opinions about library design, the Carnegie program never issued complete architectural drawings, nor recommended a particular architect; municipal authorities in each town were required to hire their own architect. Yet, the Carnegie program did encourage the practice of architectural specialization. Indeed, as Bertram's reputation as an exacting critic became widespread, architectural firms that could claim expertise in the design of Carnegie libraries became extremely attractive to towns with Carnegie grants. Although there are countless examples of local architects who designed these libraries, Carnegie commissions were increasingly consolidated into the hands of a relatively small number of firms that gained at least regional prominence in this particular branch of design.²³

This was certainly true in Montana, and for their library, the Big Timber Library Board members accepted the designs submitted by the architectural firm of Link and Haire. C.S. Haire was considered the state's premiere Carnegie architect, having designed Carnegie libraries in Dillon, Bozeman, Miles City and Great Falls. While each has distinctive architectural features (the ecclesiastical feel of the Dillon Library, and the raised central square section of the Bozeman library), each displays "one-story raised basement elements," and at least three have central, pedimented entrances similar to the one Haire designed in Big Timber.²⁴

Haire was born in Hamilton County, Ohio in 1857. After graduation from the high school in Cincinnati in 1876, he worked as a teacher for three years while studying architecture. In 1886, he was employed as a draftsman in the construction department of the Union Pacific Railroad in Pocatello, Idaho. The next year, he moved to Butte, Montana in a similar position with the Great Northern Railroad. In 1888, he established an association with the realty firm of Wallace and Thornburg. Withdrawing from this firm some time later, Haire devoted himself exclusively to the practice of architecture, moved to Helena in 1893, and worked as the state superintendent of buildings. In that capacity, he oversaw the construction of numerous state institutions.

In January 1906, Haire formed a partnership with John G. Link of Billings. Link was born in 1879 in Hattnau, Bavaria, where he lived until he was 17. He was a student for six years at the royal academy at Landau where Professors William Meyers and Joseph Goetzer instructed him in architecture. He graduated in 1886. Link came to the United States in 1887, settling in Denver, Colorado. There, he worked for *Architect's Handbook* author Frank Kidder from 1887-1890, and the Fisher architectural firm from 1890-1893. In 1893, Link won a national competition for the design of the Minnesota State Capitol. On the heels of that success, he moved to St. Louis and opened his own firm. At the young age of 22, Link moved again, this time to Butte, Montana in 1896, the same year competition for the Montana State Capitol was ongoing. In Butte, he partnered with W. E. Donovan, under the name Link and Donovan, which lasted four years. During this period, state Architect John C. Paulsen commissioned him to supervise the construction of a number of state institutional buildings. Link joined in partnership with Joseph T. Carter in 1900, and continued that association until 1905, when he began working with Haire.

Link and Haire became the most prolific architectural firm in the State of Montana for a number of decades, with offices in Helena, Billings, Missoula, Butte, and Lewistown. In these offices, many of the younger architects of Montana received their training. Together, Link and Haire designed many courthouses, schools, hospitals, commercial buildings, and residences. The Big Timber Carnegie Library gains considerable significance as an example of their work and Haire's proficiency with Carnegie program ideals.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Susan L. Richards, "Carnegie Public Library Architecture for South Dakota and Montana: A Comparative Study," *Journal of the West*, July, 1991, p. 73.

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The Carnegie Public Library in Big Timber is also significant as an excellent example of Neoclassical design as executed in a public building. In 1893, leading American architects gathered to design the buildings for the World's Columbian Exposition. They chose a design based in Classical elements, not only for the massiveness, gleaming white columns, domes, and archways, but also associations with "democracy, purity, and art."²⁵ The element of classical design quickly became the vogue across the country. The Big Timber Carnegie Library is representative of this style, with architectural features such as the pedimented entry supported by Roman Tuscan columns. Other elements that contribute to the Neoclassical style are the moderate overhangs of the boxed eaves with dentils beneath, a frieze band, as well as a symmetrical footprint and fenestration, and the rectangular, double-hung windows.²⁶

Summary

For nearly 90 years, the Carnegie Library in Big Timber has provided a center for the exchange of ideas, entertainment, and cultural programs for the community. The building stands as a testament to the progressive-minded leaders of the community, its dedication to education, and the longevity of the city of Big Timber. It continues to serve the city and county with outreach programs and community events, as well as providing reading and research materials. The building continues to be an architectural and cultural anchor in Big Timber, and is representative of the understated, yet enduring community it serves.

²⁵ Jones, *Carnegie Libraries*, p. 55; Richards, "Carnegie Architecture," p. 76.

²⁶ Virginia and Lee McAlester, *A Field Guide to American Houses*, (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2000), pp. 343-346.

Carnegie Public Library
Name of Property

Sweet Grass County, MT
County and State

9. Major Bibliographic References

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary Location of Additional Data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other -- Specify Repository: Columbia University, Rare Book and Manuscript Library, New York City.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: less than one

UTM References: Zone: 12 Easting: 581406 Northing: 5075748

Legal Location (Township, Range & Section(s)): NE ¼ SE ¼ SW ¼ Section 14 T1N R14E, MPM

Verbal Boundary Description

The Carnegie Public Library is located on the S1/2 of Lot 13, and all of lots 14 and 15 of Block 27 of the Boulder Addition #1 of the City of Big Timber.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to include the property historically associated with the Carnegie Public Library.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Kate Hampton, Historian
organization: MT SHPO date: May, 2002
street & number: 1410 8th Ave. telephone: (406)444-7715
city or town: Helena state: MT zip code: 59620-1202

name/title: Lauren MacMillan, Librarian
organization: Carnegie Public Library date: November, 2001
street & number: 314 McLeod St. telephone: (406)932-5608
city or town: Big Timber state: MT zip code: 59011

Property Owner

name/title: City of Big Timber
street & number: P.O. Box 416 telephone: 406-932-5610
city or town: Big Timber state: MT zip code: 59011

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Carnegie, Andrew. "Wealth." *North American Review*, CXLVIII (June 1889).

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Jones, Theodore. *Carnegie Libraries Across America*. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1997.

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Wiggins, Ron and Lon Johnson. "Big Timber Town Hall National Register Nomination Form." Sweet Grass County National Register Files. Montana State Historic Preservation Office, Montana Historical Society, Helena, MT, September 1997.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

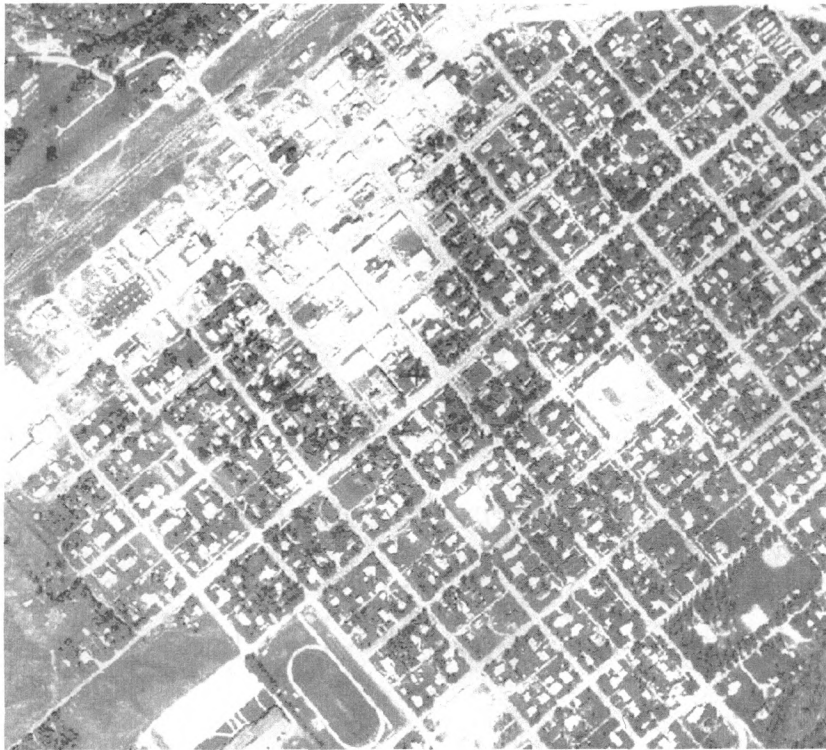
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Big Timber Orthophotoquad Detail



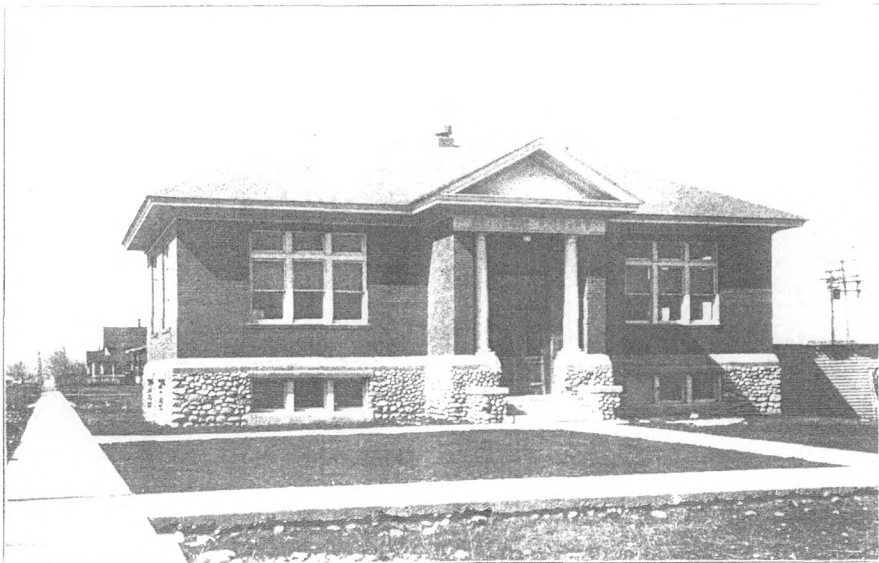
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Historic Photograph

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Carnegie Public Library, Big Timber, MT, 1917