

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH0677060

FOR NPS USE ONLY
MAR 26 1979
RECEIVED
DATE ENTERED MAY 7 1979

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

William K. Kohrs Free Memorial Library

AND/OR COMMON

William K. Kohrs Library

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Corner Fifth Street and Missouri Avenue

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Deer Lodge

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

01

STATE

Montana, 59722

CODE

30

COUNTY

Powell

CODE

077

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

City of Deer Lodge

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Deer Lodge

VICINITY OF

STATE

Montana

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Powell County Courthouse
Office of Clerk & Recorder

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Deer Lodge

STATE

Montana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

None

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Essentially, the form of the detached library building consists of a story $\frac{1}{2}$ central rectangular block that is pinned down on either side by an intersecting rectangular mass that defines itself, in plan, as a Greek Cross. A centralized projecting portico and a secondary bay lend the facade a three tiered profile that disrupts the perfect balance of the Greek Cross plan while lending dramatic attention to the entry porch. The main building measures 45 x 65 feet with a vestibule and approach of 12 x 16 feet. It is 34 feet high.

Stylistically, the library is a classical revival outgrowth of the late Beaux-Arts tradition. More specifically, in an attempt to find a suitable prototype for this repository of rare books (as well as general circulation volumes) the architects, Link and Carter draw upon the historical associations of a Greek treasury. Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge, in 1904, would take a similar approach to the design of the John Carter Brown Library in Providence, Rhode Island.

Leading up to the entrance and to a below grade basement door (inserted on the S.W. side of the entry stairs) is a semi-circular concrete walk. The original walk which followed the same path was made of tile.

The superstructure rises visually from a smooth ashlar water table that rests on grade. A twenty-four inch thick gray rock faced granite foundation continues above the water table level. The granite basement is laid in random courses. This $\frac{3}{4}$ story wall mass is punctuated deeply by one-over-one sash windows that align themselves with larger windows above on the main floor.

A rock-faced beltcourse establishes a horizontal band around the building that marks the transition from the basement story to the main floor elevation. It is on the same plane as the basement wall. The 1902 corner stone is inserted at this level on the S.W. corner of a projecting second bay and is set off by the change of texture of dressed stone.

Above the basement beltcourse runs a smooth stone molding strip in an ogee pattern; it is set back from the rough granite base and is of dressed Columbus sandstone as is the main elevation above which it introduces. The superstructure is merely faced with sandstone and relies for support, instead, on the load bearing brick walls behind it. The interior frame work is of structural steel with concrete floors resting on steel girders.

The dressed ashlar main floor is laid in long narrow courses alternating $\frac{1}{2}$ width-full width dimension in blocks. The alternating course pattern is echoed at each corner wall in the form of raised quoins (also of dressed sandstone) which are meant to read as rusticated pilasters -- square shafts interrupted by square plain blocks. The shafts of the pilasters utilize the ogee molding band as column bases and receive Tuscan capitals above.

There are three parallel double hung sash windows with fixed transom lights on the library end walls. They rest on smooth stone sills and are surmounted by smooth stone flat arches with pronounced keystones. The three keystones accent

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a raised central Voussoir against a raised wedge backdrop. The crown of the Keystone extends the full distance from the base of the architrave to the top of the frieze.

A projecting cornice line, set off by a continuous row of dentils, marks the starting point for the elongated hip roof. The terracotta tile roof establishes a generally uninterrupted horizontal line that defines the main body of the library; it is set at right angles to the opposing elements of the projecting entry and rear stack room which each sponsor a tile hip-style roof. There are two metal ventilation ducts mounted on either end of the central roof ridge; a glass and metal skylight is on the south slope of the hip roof. The roof is steel lathing and tile. The original roof tile leaks in many areas (especially over the rear stack room where books are suffering water damage).

In true beaux-Arts fashion, the entrance to the library is functionally expressed by a tile roofed pedimented portico. The outline of the pediment is accented at the ends and central pitch by Greek-style antefixae. Brackets line the base of the pediment and raking cornice. The frieze line, below, is undecorated but holds the inscription: "Wm. K. Kohrs Memorial". The architrave consists of two fascia oversailing each other. The fascia decorated architrave and unadorned frieze extend around the portico and continue to define the base of the entablature of a second projecting bay which visually serves as a backdrop for the entrance portico. A single sash window and fixed transom, light each wall of this bay which functions as a children's room to the west of the entrance, and a periodical room to the east.

The entrance portico faces south and is monumentalized by paired monolithic stone columns (unfluted) which support the classical entablature. The paired columns utilize ionic "corner capitols" whose four-cornered volutes were designed to look the same on the two sides facing outward. The column shafts terminate in simple double-roll bases which, in turn, rest on double tiered stone plinths. Stone lintel caps rest on rock-faced granite stair abutments. Eight cement steps lead to the entry door, and a recent wrought-iron stair rail divides the walkway in half; the first step is badly cracked and needs stabilizing. The iron stair rail is the only change to the original exterior.

At the top of the stairs is a recessed doorway whose stone lintel reads, "Library" completing the inscription above. An 8 x 12 foot marble memorial hall or vestibule leads the visitor into the "general reading room". The periodical room and children's reading room, which flank the memorial hall, are accessible only by doors entered into from the general reading room. The general reading room measures 27 x 44 feet with a ceiling height of 15 feet. There is a large central dome of colored glass. In the west wall is a stained glass memorial window, 6 x 9 feet, presented by John N.W. Bielenberg in memory of his nephew, William K. Kohrs. Its classical subject is "A Reading from Homer". The lead comes of this window had to be reinforced in 1977 because of the extreme bulging of the glass. The interior woodwork is done in oak; it dates from the

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original build and is in good repair. Some of the original furniture remains and is in use. The book stacks are of steel, copper and wood and are also original.

A narrow aisle leads to a north bay which serves as the stack room. The stack room measures 12 x 30 feet. (There are two reference rooms each 10 x 15 feet within the stack room.) A clerk's room and lavatory is located off to the west of the aisle leading to the stack room. Opposite this room (to the east of the aisle) is a delivery room and stairway. Both rooms off the stack room aisle measure 8 x 22 feet. Here, except for modernized lighting, the only interior changes have been the removal and closing of two doors opening from the reading room to the clerk and delivery rooms. Other doorways and entrances remain unchanged.

The basement with a ceiling height of 10 feet, has a main room 27 x 44 feet. This main room was originally an assembly hall but now contains stacks, shelving and work tables. Two smaller rooms are 10 x 14 and 14 x 18 feet. Furnace and fuel rooms measure 20 x 18 feet, and a very small lavatory is located under the stairway leading to the first floor. All measurements are unchanged. There is considerable crumbling of the basement's below-surface walls. The plumbing, as on the main floor, is in very bad condition and has caused extensive damage to books over a period of time from broken or leaking pipes. Mildew and dry rot also are present in the basement. Many valuable books have already been ruined. The furnace and plumbing of the water heating system need to be replaced.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
—PREHISTORIC	—ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	—COMMUNITY PLANNING	—LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	—RELIGION
—1400-1499	—ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	—CONSERVATION	—LAW	—SCIENCE
—1500-1599	—AGRICULTURE	—ECONOMICS	—LITERATURE	—SCULPTURE
—1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	—EDUCATION	—MILITARY	—SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
—1700-1799	—ART	—ENGINEERING	—MUSIC	—THEATER
—1800-1899	—COMMERCE	—EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	—PHILOSOPHY	—TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	—COMMUNICATIONS	—INDUSTRY	—POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	—OTHER (SPECIFY)
		—INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1902

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Link and Carter

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The William K. Kohrs Free Memorial Library, built in 1902, is significant for its historic associations with the development of Deer Lodge, Montana and the particular participation of the Conrad Kohrs family in the growth of Western Montana (Criteria B). The library, in addition, is a fine example of Beaux-Arts classicism executed by able craftsmen and designed with an economy of space to suit the needs of a small community. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a small town library that, while being fully funded by Conrad Kohrs, responds in format to the prototypical Carnegie Library plan; as such, the Kohrs Library reflects significant cultural as well as architectural patterns at play at the turn of the century (Criteria C).

Significance to the Cultural history of Deer Lodge, Montana:

Located originally in a college town (Montana College), the library, today, stands as a symbol of the economic prosperity and social stability which Deer Lodge, Montana and the Conrad Kohrs family had attained by 1902. Deer Lodge participated in the general commitment of the times to establish cultural institutions in burgeoning American towns; a major library building, opera house or institution of higher learning gave small communities in the West as elsewhere, the intellectual credibility sought after. The November 15, 1901 minutes of the Deer Lodge public meeting recounts:

Resolved that we regard a free public library, equipped with an adequate number of desirable books and properly managed, as one of the most desirable institutions an intelligent community can be possessed of.

Certainly, H.H. Richardson's small town libraries of the 1870's and 80's and more monumental structures such as the Boston Public Library pre-date (and in term of grandeur, outrank) the Kohrs Library; however, the Kohrs Library is significant nonetheless as a local expression of the desire to imbrace the cultural "necessities of life", and to take part in the national cultural movement. In addition, the stated purpose of the library reflects the sentiments of the progressive era, where all people (supposedly) had an equal right to learn. The Nov. 15, 1901 minutes continues:

It is the common ground where all good people of every condition of life and of every religious and political belief can meet and act in accord...and coordinately with good schools and churches, is one of the primary things considered by intelligent people in selecting a home.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Catalogue of William K. Kohrs Free Memorial Library, State Publishing Co. Helena, Montana, 1904.

The Silver State, published Deer Lodge, Montana

March 27, 1901
November 13, 1901
November 20, 1901

January 29, 1902
January 22, 1902

June 3, 1903
September 16, 1903

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

QUADRANGLE NAME Deer Lodge, Montana

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:62,500

UTM REFERENCES

A 1, 2 3, 6, 7, 9, 0, 0 5, 7, 3, 9, 6, 0, 0

B

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Consists of lots 7-10, each 29.8 x 131 feet, in block 13 of the original townsite of Deer Lodge. This is in T8N, R9W, Sec. 33, NE4SW4 SE4.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Jan Smith Stewart, Library Assistant

July 10, 1978/March 19, 1979

Kingston Heath, State Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

DATE

State Historic Preservation Office

406-449-4584

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

225 North Roberts

Helena,

Montana

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

[Handwritten Signature]

TITLE

DATE

Mar 19, 79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

[Handwritten Signature]

DATE

5-7-79

ATTEST: William H. Shelton

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

5-8-79

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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The democratization of learning represented by the public school movement and demonstrated in major 19th century public buildings as the Boston Public Library, realized its full popular support in the growth of local "free" libraries. To demonstrate that the Wm. K. Kohrs Free Memorial Library was not imposed on the citizenry of Deer Lodge simply to aggrandize the Kohrs name--and hence, not attaining its primary significance as a commemorative structure--over 100 citizens signed a petition and presented it to the City Council on January 20, 1902. This Council unanimously ordered that a one-mill tax be submitted to the voters to maintain the library. The submittal carried almost unanimously. At the time the Kohrs Library project was approved, then, it symbolized, on the one hand, a type of "people's univers. (as some communities chose to call them), and the broad based prosperity achieved by Deer Lodge on the other. The library, today, still maintains its strong emblematic presence.

The specific sponsorship of State Senator Conrad Kohrs (elected from Powell County in 1902) for this library project lends added associational significance. The name of Conrad Kohrs is inseparable from the history of Deer Lodge, Powell County and Montana. The library he built as a memorial to his son is as much a part of that history as is the Grant-Kohrs Ranch (a National Historic Site 8-25-72).

Architectural Significance:

The library project appears to be the first major surfacing of Beaux-Arts academicisms in the work of the Montana architectural firm, Link and Carter. Yet, despite its newness, the careful attention paid to classical details (whose presence produced the desired effects of light and shadow), the functional expression of the entrance portico, and the complimentary scale of the structure to design features, reflect a clear understanding of Beaux-Arts design principles. In addition, the architects make use of rich materials carried out with quality craftsmanship to reinforce the fine design elements; the granite basement, Columbus sandstone main elevation, terracotta tile roof, marble memorial hall, serve to underline the historical associations of the Greek treasury, while the oak interior finish, elaborate stained glass window, and colored glass interior dome recall clearly the sumptuousness of materials preferred by late Victorian taste.

The builders, Shaffer and Moncrieff, have taken care to provide a substantial structure. At the time the library was constructed, bonded ashlar was recognized for its superior strength, yet an additional wall support of brick was introduced. The interior framework of structural steel with concrete floors resting on steel girders, and steel lathing and tile used for the roof show a concern for sound, non-flammable materials.

This early example of Beaux-Arts design in the work of Link and Carter, while still restrained, points clearly to the direction of Link's future work and notoriety as a leading Montana Architect. By 1910, Link had begun a successful partnership

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with C.S. Haire and the two produced the major work of the Silver Bow County Court House in Butte, Montana. The Beaux-Arts leanings introduced in the 1902 Kohrs Library, would be fully exploited in this later project. Hence, the Kohrs Library serves as a significant milestone in the stylistic shift that would highlight the career of the eventual firm of Link and Haire.

History of the building project:

On March 20, 1901 in New York City William Kruse Kohrs, (at that time the only son of Conrad and Augusta Kohrs) died after a short illness. He was born in Deer Lodge, Montana on November 1, 1879. He attended public school and the College of Montana in Deer Lodge, Cornell University and was a student at Columbia at the time of his death. The major portion of William Kohrs' life, then was spent in scholarship.

Considering what memorial could best perpetuate the memory of their son in his home town and state, Mr. and Mrs. Kohrs (themselves forty-year residents of Deer Lodge at this point) decided that a free public library presented to the city would be most appropriate.

At a public meeting held on November 15, 1901, Mr. and Mrs. Kohrs gave funds for a memorial library dedicated to their late son, Wm. K. Kohrs. Funds for the library, grounds, several thousand books and complete equipment were given as an unsolicited gift to the community provided that the city accept and maintain their gift. The sum of \$15,000 was given to secure grounds and construct a library building; an additional \$5,000 was allocated for books and equipment. A site for the library, on the corner of Second and E Streets (now the northeast corner of Fifth and Missouri) east of Court Square, was purchased from Mary E. Mitchell for \$3,000. The site has not been decreased or added to since. Plans for the building were submitted by leading architects, and, after modification, those of Link and Carter of Butte were accepted. Shaffer and Moncrieff of Helena were awarded the construction contract at an estimated cost, including furniture, of \$22,000.

Mr. Kohrs had planned to donate \$20,000 to the library project; by the time the building was completed, he had paid over \$30,000. When a question arose as to plans, materials or equipment, he would say, "Get the best and send the bill to me." The library was opened to the public on June 3, 1903. For several months John F. Davies, former Butte librarian, had supervised the purchase and preparation of over 3,000 books. Public documents and bound periodicals were donated by individuals and groups. Because of Conrad Kohrs' dedication and the overwhelming community support given to the project, the Wm. K. Kohrs Library remains, unaltered, a leading example of a small town public library.

At the time the William K. Kohrs Free Memorial Library was built and presented to the City of Deer Lodge, the majority of libraries in small towns across the United States were built by the Carnegie Foundation. The arrangements for all of the

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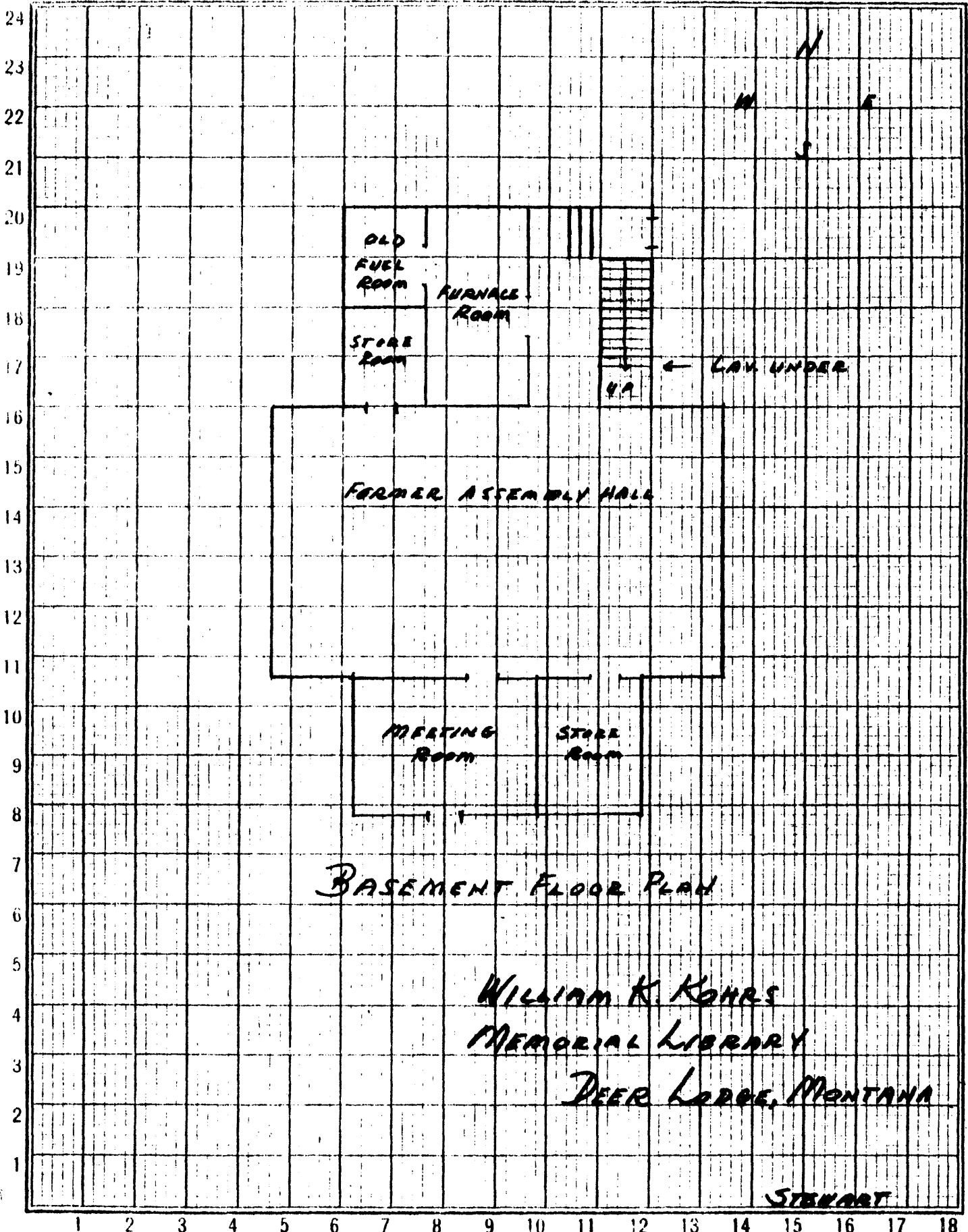
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gifts were the same: Carnegie would provide the funds for the building, but only after the municipal government provided a site for the building and had arranged for the purchase of books through taxation. In view of this, the gift of the library, site, books and equipment by the Kohrs family was unusual and of exceptional value to the city. The size and quality construction of the building, the architectural detailing, (generally restrained in Carnegie projects) and discriminating selection of the first book collection make the library unique among small town libraries. With particular regard to Powell County, the Kohrs Library of 1902, provided the county with its first public "organized" library.

Interestingly, not only does Conrad Kohrs follow the role model of Carnegie--as a munificent benefactor of a community library--but he draws upon the Carnegie building format as well. Even though the leaflet entitled, "Notes on Library Buildings" written by Carnegie's personal secretary, James Bertram, was not published until 1911, the majority of Carnegie libraries had been built and a consistent building format had emerged; a rectangular-shaped library with a basement and one main floor was called for. The main floor 12-15 feet high (as in the Kohrs Library), would accommodate the entrance, the librarian, a reading room, bookshelves and a circulation desk area. The same space utilization holds true for the Kohrs Library, with the Librarian's desk originally located in the center of the reading room. Rear and side windows were to be six or seven feet above the floor in order to provide space and lighting for bookcases along the wall. Here, the Kohrs' Library departs from the Carnegie scheme by placing radiators under the windows and using the three interior walls for additional bookstacks. The basement traditionally housed a large lecture room, a combination boiler-janitor's room, toilets and staff room. It was desirable for basements to be 9-10 feet high and about 4 feet below the natural grade level; the Kohrs Library basement (10 feet high) provided spaces for an assembly hall, staff room, boiler room and lavatory. When larger library space was desired, a stack room was usually appended to the rear of Carnegie Libraries. Perhaps in response to the initial 3,000 volume purchase, the Kohrs Library was constructed with a rear stack room as part of the first build.

By 1902, Carnegie Libraries had been built elsewhere in the State such as Bozeman and Dillon (both built by C.S. Haire, Link's future partner) so the format was surely known. However, even Carnegie's strict control over the use of the library that stipulated only library oriented activities (eg. no dancing, dining, etc) was mimicked by Conrad Kohrs. The deed to the property states that if at any time the building is not used as a Free Public Library, its title will revert to the Conrad Kohrs or one of their heirs. It was stipulated as a condition of the gift that the library building was not to be used for dancing or for sectarian or political meetings.

Hence, this building, a private gift, shows clearly the positive popular impact the Carnegie Library movement had on small town communities in America, as well as on local wealthy residents who saw a means of channeling the positive associations of the capitalist system to the benefit of their local communities.



BASEMENT FLOOR PLAN

**WILLIAM K. KOHRS
MEMORIAL LIBRARY
DEER LODGE, MONTANA**

STEWART

MAR 26 1919

