

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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.

### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: Xenia Carnegie Library

Other names/site number: Greene County Library, Xenia Library/GRE-206-12

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

### 2. Location

Street & number: 194 East Church Street

City or town: Xenia State: Ohio County: Greene

Not For Publication:  NA

Vicinity:  NA

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national    statewide X local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

X A    B X C    D

#### DSHPO Inventory & Registration

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

State Historic Preservation Office, Ohio History Connection

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official:

Date

Title :

State or Federal agency/bureau  
or Tribal Government

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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

- Private:
- Public – Local
- Public – State
- Public – Federal

**Category of Property**

(Check only **one** box.)

- Building(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register           

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**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

EDUCATION: Library  
            
            
            
          

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Vacant/Not In Use

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## 7. Description

### Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE 19<sup>TH</sup> & 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival/Neo-Classical Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

Principal exterior materials of the property: BRICK; LIMESTONE

### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### Summary Paragraph

The Xenia Carnegie Library is a Classical Revival-style building constructed in 1904 on the east side of Xenia, Ohio. Located in a mostly residential area, the Xenia Carnegie Library is sited on a 200 foot by 165 foot grassy corner lot with minimal landscaping. The Xenia Carnegie Library is an ornate example of a Carnegie library, featuring an elaborate central entrance portico with fluted Ionic columns, enclosed entablature, and a sculptural tympanum. Designed by William S. Kaufmann, Architects of Pittsburgh, and built by Xenia contractor Thomas C. Owens, the symmetrical-plan building is constructed of buff brick with a raised limestone foundation and limestone trim. The interior space includes a 726 square foot rotunda supported by faux pink marble Ionic columns with a stained glass skylight. Other spaces in the building's interior include reading rooms, the stacks, and office spaces. The Xenia Carnegie Library retains a high degree of historic integrity, with the overall appearance and character of the building remaining largely unchanged from the historic period.

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## Narrative Description

### Setting

The Xenia Carnegie Library is located east of downtown Xenia in a mostly residential area (Figures 1-2). The building faces East Church Street at the corner of North Collier Street, sitting at the northeast corner of the intersection on a level grassy lot that is approximately 200 x 165 feet. West of the library, stands the Xenia YMCA and the Xenia Adult Recreation and Services Center. Otherwise, the surrounding area is primarily residential, containing a mix of dwellings dating from the late 19<sup>th</sup> to mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. A walkway from the front steps connects to the public sidewalk along Church Street and a second walkway leads from the front steps to a paved area on the east side of the lot. The building is free of foundation plantings, and two mature trees stand at the front of the lot.

### Exterior

The masonry building rests atop a foundation of rock-face granite block below grade with an ashlar-cut limestone plinth course above (Photo 1). Basement windows punctuate the plinth course on all elevations. The south-facing façade rises above the limestone foundation and is separated from it with a limestone water table that continues around the entire building. The walls are of buff brick laid in a running bond. A continuous frieze and overhanging cornice with a dentil band below are located below the main roofline. The hipped roof is clad in asphalt shingles. The library has a front-facing T-shape plan with wings shorter in height than the main section in each rear corner. A garage addition was added to the northeast corner of the building in 1935 to house the book mobile.

The façade is composed of a slightly projecting central portico flanked on either side by large one-bay side wings housing the reading rooms (Photos 2-3). The portico is accessed by a series of stone steps flanked by a low limestone knee wall. The two-story portico extends above the main roofline to incorporate fluted Ionic columns and brick pilasters supporting a full entablature which includes a simple architrave and a frieze with “FREE TO THE PEOPLE” incised across the front in block letters. The brick pilasters stand on the outer edges of the portico while the columns flank the central entryway. The cornice on the portico incorporates large dentils that are part of the enclosed pediment gable containing a sculptural tympanum of a center medallion surrounded by a wreath and flanked by garlands and rosettes.

The main entry features the original double-leaf, wood paneled half-glazed doors. Above the doors is a sixteen-light transom with geometric-patterned lights. Framing the entry is an ornate carved limestone surround and ornamental pediment. Stone consoles support the ornate carved stone coronet with an open book as its centerpiece. Below the pediment is a geometric frieze that continues to the brick pilasters. Narrow one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows are

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located on the façade between the pilasters and columns, directly below the geometric-patterned limestone frieze.

The two identical side wings, which housed the reading rooms, contain tripartite windows of one-over-one double-hung sash with transoms above on the facade. Ornate carved limestone divides the windows. A limestone panel is below the limestone sills and contains a band of carved garland. Another decorative band of limestone surrounds the windows, and a carved console is centered above the middle window.

The three-bay east and west elevations of the side wings are identical and exhibit wall treatment and window configurations similar to that of the main façade (Photo 4). The center bay of each elevation contains tripartite windows identical to those on the façade. The outer bays feature single one-over-one double-hung wood sash windows with decorative cartouches above. Each cartouche features an open book in the center surrounded by ornamental scrollwork and flanked by torches.

The two-story rear section, which originally housed the stacks, contains five evenly-spaced single-light wood sash windows on both the first and second stories (Photos 5 -6). The first-story windows have limestone sills and keystones flanked by voussoirs as decorative hoods. The second story windows also have limestone sills and are set directly below the frieze. The one-story wings located to either side of the main section have flat roofs with a cornice and dentil band at the roofline. The side (west) elevation of the west wing has two windows, while the rear elevation contains a single centered window. The windows are framed in limestone, with limestone sills and a keystone centered above. The east wing has been mostly obscured by the 1935 garage addition which features a flat roof, yellow brick walls, and a concrete block foundation (Photo 7). The north elevation of the garage addition has a wood-paneled overhead garage door, and the east elevation has four-light metal sash window with a concrete sill.

## Interior

The interior details of the building are quite elaborate and remain mostly intact. The front entry doors lead into a small vestibule space with a second set of double-leaf, one-light wood paneled doors providing access into the rotunda space of the library. The doors are framed by a heavy wood cornice and frieze (Photo 8). East of the entrance vestibule, and accessed from the rotunda space, is a small room that functioned as the cloakroom, while on the west side of the vestibule are stairs leading from the rotunda space to the basement. The stairs retain their original wood banister with a turned-post balustrade (Photo 9).

The rotunda at the center of the library is supported by a series of faux pink marble Ionic columns and features the original stained glass dome. The faux marble throughout the rotunda space is most likely made of a hard lime plaster painted to emulate pink marble. Above the columns is a decorative plaster frieze of garland with a dentil band above (Photo 10). Above the frieze, the ceiling curves inward to meet the stained glass dome. Dropped fluorescent lights extend from the rotunda. The walls of the center space are clad in faux pink marble wainscoting with decorative paneled plaster sections above (Photo 11). The floor in the entry vestibule and

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rotunda space was originally tile mosaic that was covered with linoleum at an unknown date (Photo 12). The circulation desk was originally located in the rotunda space, facing the front door.

On either side of the rotunda space are reading rooms which feature plaster walls with wood baseboards, wood trim at the door and window openings, and drop-down fluorescent lights (Photo 13). The walls between the reading rooms and rotunda space are wood paneled with single-light glazing above to allow for natural light to reach the center of the library and provide visibility into the reading rooms from the circulation desk (Photos 14-15). Small rooms with lower ceiling heights are located in the rear wings on either side of the two-story stack section. The rooms originally functioned as a reference room, a cataloguing room, and an office and have similar finishes except for having much lower ceiling heights.

The doorway to the stacks, which is located at the back of the rotunda space, is framed in dark wood with a large plaster cartouche centered above (Photo 11). The stack section is two-stories with a metal framing system creating the second story level which is accessed by metal stairs with metal banisters (Photo 16). The room's shelving is a series of metal ranges (shelving units) that can be lifted floor to floor (Photo 17-18).

The full basement is divided into five rooms. The finishes include concrete floors and glazed tile walls (Photo 19). A kitchen and bathroom were inserted into one of the rooms when the library functioned as a residence.

#### Alterations

A garage to house the bookmobile was added in 1935, which falls within the period of significance. The Xenia tornado of 1974 damaged the original hipped clay-tile roof, stained glass dome, and several trees. The stained glass window was repaired, while the clay-tile roof was replaced with asphalt shingles. At an unknown date the tile floor was covered in linoleum. Used as a residence from 1983-1992, a bathroom, kitchen and living quarters were added in the basement.

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## 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 grave
- D. A cemetery
- E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- F. A commemorative property
- G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Architecture

Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1904-1965

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

1904

1906

\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

William Kauffman

Thomas C. Owens, Xenia contractor

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**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Xenia Carnegie Library is significant at the local level under Criterion A in the area of Education for its contribution and important role in the educational history of Xenia and surrounding area as well as for its association of the nation-wide free public library program instituted by philanthropist Andrew Carnegie during the early twentieth century. Built in 1904, the library is also significant under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as an ornate example of a library that embodies the distinctive characteristics of the Carnegie library type featuring the Classical Revival-style of architecture. The period of significance is from 1904 when the library was completed to 1965, per the National Register 50 year guideline.

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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance)

*Andrew Carnegie's Library Building Program*

In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, broad public support began to grow for the establishment of free libraries due to a growing interest in sharing knowledge and educating the public. Advocates for free public libraries believed the libraries provided people a means for self-improvement and would enlighten their communities. Generous donations were often made by private philanthropists to support a community's endeavors to establish a public library; however, none were as generous in the support of public libraries as steel-magnate Andrew Carnegie. One of the richest men in America during his lifetime, Carnegie made his fortune by investing in the booming post-Civil War industries such as the railroads and oil and then steel. Following his retirement in 1901 at the age of 65, Carnegie increased his focus significantly on philanthropy, more particularly to funding the construction of library buildings. Carnegie was inspired by his own experiences as child and his pursuit of self-education with limited means, and the generosity of Colonel Joseph Anderson who made his own personal library collection available to Carnegie (Armentrout 2003: vii).

Carnegie's library program began on a small scale in his own hometown of Dunfermline, Scotland, in 1881 and then in Pittsburgh and Allegheny, Pennsylvania. However, word of his generosity quickly spread and requests for funds came in throughout the country. By the end of his library program in 1919, Carnegie and the Carnegie Corporation provided grants totaling more than \$56 million to build 2,509 libraries throughout the world, in addition to his other philanthropic pursuits (Armentrout 2003: iii). In the United States, grants were provided for the construction of 1,689 public libraries throughout the country.

Carnegie's library philanthropy revolutionized the public library program in the United States by providing a means for small communities to establish public libraries. Prior to his program, most libraries were typically subscription libraries run by local literary or women's groups, as was the case in Xenia. Most had troubles finding affordable places to house the library and difficulty

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raising funds to operate them. In the end, many of these early attempts by communities to establish a public library were unsuccessful.

News spread quickly of Carnegie's library building program, a program that had no official name. James Bertram, Carnegie's secretary, was assigned the task of coordinating the library grant program and would issue the money in three installments- at groundbreaking, at one-third completion, and at full completion. Since the program had no official name or application, a representative of the library or a town official would initiate the process by writing a letter to Carnegie requesting a grant. Bertram would in return send the interested party a form to complete that required proof of need, a suitable building site, and the assurance of local tax support (Armentrout 2003: iv). As part of the program, the communities were required to provide a building site, books, staff, and it was to tax itself yearly at a tenth of Carnegie's grant to support operation and maintenance costs of the library.

The Midwest was the largest recipient of Carnegie library grants in the United States with Ohio ranked 5<sup>th</sup> in country. The first Carnegie libraries to be funded in Ohio occurred in 1899 and were located in Steubenville and East Liverpool both places were where Carnegie had spent time. By the end of the program, Ohio received 78 grants from Carnegie used to construct 111 libraries. In Greene County, there were two other Carnegie-funded libraries in addition to Xenia. They included the Carnegie Library on the Old Wilbur Force University Campus built in 1907 at Wilberforce University (listed on the National Register in 2004) and the Cedarville Carnegie Library, which was built in 1908 to serve both the Cedarville College community and the town residents (Armentrout 2003: 27 and 181).

### *A Public Library for Xenia, Ohio*

In 1803, the geographic center of the newly formed Greene County was selected as the location for the county seat. The new town was named "Xenia," which signifies hospitality in Greek. A public square was laid out, and the county jail and courthouse soon relocated to the square followed by businesses to serve both the needs of Xenia residents as well as those conducting business at the courthouse. In 1817, Xenia was incorporated as a town, having a population of nearly 600 by 1819. The town grew slowly, yet steadily until the arrival of the railroads in 1845 when industry and growth took off. Between 1840 and 1850, the population of Xenia more than doubled from 1,406 to 3,021 residents (Avdakov and Griffin 2014: 31-32).

Xenia's first library dates to March 1816 when a group of 52 men formed a subscription library. Little is known about this first library's activities, but the group remained active into the 1870s, holding meetings annually on the fourth Saturday in March to conduct business and elect officers and charge annual subscriptions of \$5.00 (Armentrout 2003: 189). In the 1840s, a "Lyceum" was founded, but it only survived for a few years, with its books passing to the YMCA (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 7/3/1976: A-4).

The library movement in Xenia truly began when eight women who were graduates of Xenia College formed the Tuesday Club on August 20, 1878. The intentions of the club were for members to prepare literary papers and discuss literature, activities that would require access to a

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library. Eventually emerging into the Young Women's Library Association in 1881, the group was given a library space in a large room on the second floor of a building on Greene Street by Mr. Eli Millen, and the books that had been passed on to the YMCA were given to the newly formed library (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 7/3/1976: A-5). Helen Hoven Santmyer, a Xenia native and known for the bestseller *And The Ladies of the Club*, recalled this library location in *Ohio Town* as being just off the courthouse square, with the second story location being accessed by a flight of narrow, rickety wooden steps located between two buildings (Santmeyer 1962: 190-191). The building which housed the library also contained the post office on the ground floor, a milliner's shop and the Woman's Exchange. The room was provided to the group rent free, as one of the members was the niece of the building's owner.

For many years, the library was only open on Wednesday afternoons and all day Saturdays with the members taking turns volunteering as librarians. In 1885, due to demand, the library hours were extended, and the Association called on the citizens for donations. With donations, amounting to \$227.50, the association was able to bring on its first librarian, Clara Martin (*Xenia Daily Gazette*: 5/30/1970). In 1888, Etta McElwain became the official librarian, a role she held for over 40 years. In 1899, a new state law enabled school boards to levy a tax, so the library went public when it started receiving public tax support through the school board (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 7/3/1976: A-5).

By 1902, the Young Women's Library Association had learned about Carnegie's library building program and decided to apply for a grant. Louisa Lackey and Diana Roberts donated a 200 x 165 foot lot, part of their estate, for the site of the library building (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 10/24/1977). That same year, James Bertram, private secretary to Andrew Carnegie, in a handwritten note, granted the organization \$20,000 for a library building.

The architect William Kauffman, who was the nephew of Louisa Lackey and Diana Roberts, donated his services in the design of the library. A 1903 local newspaper article described him as a leading architect of Pittsburg and read:

“Some months ago, during a visit of Mr. Kauffman to Xenia he manifested great interest in the library enterprise and in view of this and his sentiment in the matter, expressed the feeling that it would be gratifying to him to be allowed to supervise the erection of the building, and said if the ladies would allow him he would be much pleased to furnish the plans and oversee the work of building wholly free of cost” (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 6/22/1903: 8).

Born in Bellefontaine, Ohio, Kaufmann was most notably involved in the design of the First Presbyterian Church (now Trinity United Presbyterian) in Uniontown, Pennsylvania, and the Westmoreland County Courthouse, in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. The members of the Young Women's Library Association took him up on his offer and were permitted to review his plans upon completion. Based on the plans, the building was described as being “the most suitable and beautiful building” by the association (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 6/22/1903: 8).

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A notice to contractors was posted in the *Xenia Daily Gazette* in June 1903, and Thomas C. Owens, who was from Xenia, was hired as the contractor. The foundation work on the library began in the fall of 1903, with construction continuing through the following spring. On July 22, 1904, the cornerstone of the library was laid, and it contained all correspondence from Carnegie and Bertram, a Bible, a history of the library, and other items of the time (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 10/24/1977). Construction of the building was completed in 1904, and in June 1905, the ladies requested additional funds from James Bertram. An additional \$3,500 was granted by Bertram for furniture for the building (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 11/21/1935).

The library's official public opening was on June 26, 1906. The dedication ceremony was a gala affair attended by Xenia's social and political leaders. A poem composed specifically for the occasion by noted Xenia native and well known poet, Frederic Ridgely Torrence (1874-1950), was read at the ceremony by Miss Clara Allen. Ridgely Torrence was a noted poet and playwright who wrote some of the first serious and accurate dramas of African American life that were strongly influenced from his experiences growing up in Xenia, an integrated town that had been part of the Underground Railroad. The following is the inscription poem:

Of granite and of marl we build us walls  
With iron and oak for outward furniture  
Within are dreams. The stone may not endure,  
To one faint ask with wood the metal falls,  
The dreams remain in dim eternal halls,  
Builded of mind on mind, that do immure  
Beauty and strife and prayer and all things pure  
Which to the soul the written page recalls

So here the lulled, Greek flutes may wake some youth  
Or one may burn with Aegememnon's glance  
Or watch with David by the shadowy cattle  
Biding his hour. With Portia or with Ruth  
Maids may find sisterhood, or old romance  
Louden upon the wind and win a battle (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 6/27/1906: 8).

The completed 'little temple', as it was referred to by the mayor of Xenia at the opening, featured two reading rooms, one for children and one for adults, at either side of the lobby (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 6/27/1906: 2). The *Xenia Republican* described the children's reading room as "especially inviting, and the little folks have already evinced strong appreciation of the round tables and low comfortable chairs provided them" (7/3/1906). The librarian's desk was placed at the back of the lobby followed by the stack room. A reference room was located behind the adult reading room while a cataloging room and the office of the library trustees were behind the children's reading room (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 5/7/1904). At the time of its opening, the library housed 9,916 books on its shelves, with Etta McElwain continuing to serve as librarian.

The 1920s saw an expansion of the library system in Greene County when a new library law passed resulting in the formation of the County District Library. Library branches were built in

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Ross, Bowersville, Spring Valley, Beaver creek, and Jamestown and deposit stations were established in several small communities (*Xenia Daily Gazette* 7/3/1976: A-5). In 1928, a book mobile was purchased to transport books between branches, and the garage addition was added to the library to house the book mobile in 1935.

In 1974, a tornado devastated the town of Xenia and caused the library to close for a number of days. The tornado damaged the hip clay-tile roof, stained glass dome, and several trees. The stained glass dome was repaired, while the clay-tile roof was replaced with asphalt shingles. Additionally, 2,000 books were also lost, and total damages to the library were more than \$27,000, with some reports as high as \$42,000 (*Xenia Dailey Gazette* 10/24/1977).

It was eventually decided that the Xenia Carnegie Library no longer provided enough space for the growing community. A new two-story library facility was built in 1978 closer to downtown, and the Xenia Carnegie Library closed its doors and was used for storage. In 1983 the building was purchased with the intention of using it as a private residence, and a kitchen and bathroom were added in the basement. However, the building was sold back to the county and currently remains under county ownership.

### *The Carnegie Library as a Building Type*

The Carnegie Library building program had an enormous impact on the design of small libraries throughout the country and on how the libraries functioned. When the program started in 1899, Andrew Carnegie requested better layouts, more public access, and professional staff to be included in the libraries he funded. Therefore, Carnegie libraries were typically designed to encourage communication between the librarian and the patrons, in large part by locating the librarian's desk in a central location. Carnegie libraries also had open stacks, which encourage people to browse and choose for themselves, in contrast to earlier libraries, where patrons had to ask for books from closed stacks.

In *Ohio Town*, Helen Hooven Santmyer compares her experiences as a young girl visiting the new Xenia Carnegie Library with those at the old, closed-stack, library, illustrating how the above concepts employed at the Carnegie library significantly changed how she used the library:

It wasn't immediately that you did go home from the new library: you were no longer restricted to choosing your book and going off with it. Here there was a separate room for children: all the way around its walls, beneath the windows, were open shelves, none so high as to be above eye level; there were chairs and tables, and on the tables magazines, and an old-fashioned stereopticon with slides. You could stay until suppertime if you liked. If you were torn between two books, you could read one of them there and take the other with you. Lovely long quiet afternoons: it didn't matter that it was hot, that Miss McElwain was being tart with someone at the desk, or that there were pages gone, here and there, from the book you were reading (Santmyer 1962: 205-206).

During the late nineteenth century, a conflict existed between the library professionals who wanted libraries designed for efficiency in library administration and the library benefactors and

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their architects who wanted the buildings to reflect current trends in civic architecture. One of the leading architects of the time in library design was Henry Hobson Richardson who designed several small libraries in the United States between 1879 and 1885. Influenced by his exposure to library design in France, his libraries featured compartmentalized interior spaces designed for specific uses with those uses reflected in the exterior elevations of the library. He favored, like other architects of the time, the alcoved-hall library plan—typically placing the book hall on the building's long axis with the reading rooms and other secondary spaces on the cross axis (Van Slyck 1995: 4).

Librarians, on the other hand were, opposed to libraries designed with alcoves, closed stacks, and the emphasis on visual effect over the ease of library administration (Van Slyck 1995: 7). They found reading rooms placed in nooks and alcoves difficult to supervise and too much time and effort was involved in retrieving books from the upper levels of the book alcoves. They were also concerned about uneven heating levels and the lack of ventilation in the upper stacks. As the librarian profession developed at the end of the nineteenth century, librarians became more vocal about their concerns and became inserting their influence on library design, an influence that can be seen in the designs of Carnegie libraries.

Although specific architectural standards were not developed by Carnegie or required for a library grant, he placed importance on economy and efficiency, and he and Bertram became more involved in offering suggestions as the program expanded. Prior to 1904, they never issued blueprints, design requirements, or recommended a particular architectural style. Eventually they became aware of architectural excesses, such as grand colonnades, massive entry halls, and the use of marble and other expensive building materials, going into the designs of the libraries they were funding, and Bertram began reviewing Carnegie library blueprints in 1904 for buildings that ran over budget. By 1908, Bertram's approval was required on all building plans for Carnegie funded projects, and he also sought expert advice on library design from library professionals (Van Slyck 1995: 34 and Anderson 2000: 8). In 1911, Bertram issued a pamphlet called "Notes on the Erection of Library Buildings" that presented six floor plans to assist communities and architects in designing their libraries. The most commonly adopted of the plans 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. As seen in the Xenia Library, this plan was well in use in the design of Carnegie libraries prior to 1911.

Bertram encouraged grant recipients to hire architects, preferable ones with experience designing libraries. Although Bertram encouraged the hiring of architects, he declined to communicate directly with the architects and only corresponded with the grant recipients themselves (Anderson 2000: 8). The architects, however, were often placed in a conflicting role between Carnegie and Bertram and the grant recipients. On one hand, Carnegie and Bertram saw the purpose of the grants as to construct efficient and cost-effective buildings to house a public library, while communities saw it more as an opportunity to construct a building of status (Anderson 2000: 9). This forced architects to come up with designs that would satisfy Bertram's desire for efficiency with a community's desire for a landmark building.

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Even prior to the distribution of Bertram's pamphlet, Carnegie libraries were often similar in design and the guidance provided by Bertram throughout the program and the emerging trends in library design resulted in the specific characteristics that help define a Carnegie building type. The most common design featured the one-to-two-stories on a raised basement, stairs leading to a central entrance, and first floor windows set high on the façade. Brick was the preferred exterior wall treatment since it was the least expensive fire-proof building material. Interior features include a small vestibule entering into one large room, open reading rooms, and perimeter book shelves. The raised basement allowed for a more habitable interior space that could be used for storage or offices. A Carnegie library typically placed more emphasis on public spaces, such as a reading room especially for children. For efficiency, the librarian's desk was centrally located where it had a clear view of the patrons, bookshelves, and entrance, thus, requiring less library personnel.

### *The Classical Revival Carnegie Library*

Popular following the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, Classical Revival became the preferred architectural style for libraries. Although Carnegie Libraries were designed in a number of architectural styles, including Romanesque Revival, Arts and Crafts and Beaux Arts, Classical Revival was most commonly used. The traits of a Classical Revival style library, often referred to as "Temples on Main Street," include evenly spaced columns, a pediment, masonry construction, flat or hipped roof lines, symmetrical plans, decorative window surrounds, and often a dome. Abigail Van Slyck writes that the dome both "literally and figuratively transformed the centrally placed delivery desk in the locus of public enlightenment" (Van Slyck 1995: 28-28). A study of Carnegie libraries across the country found that 79% of Carnegie libraries are in the Classical Revival style and that 10% of the libraries were built with domes, of which, about 80% of those libraries were approved prior to 1904 (Anderson 2000: 31).

In *Ohio Town*, Helen Hooven Santmyer reflects on the wide-spread similarity of Carnegie-funded libraries, although clearly not always the case, she writes "Courthouse, High School, and Carnegie Library: in any middle western country town these are buildings impossible not to recognize; particularly, all Carnegie libraries are so alike that one's memories hardly seem associated with an individual set of yellow-brick walls, white stone trim, and granite steps." (Santmyer 1962:187). As the inspiration for the above quote, the Xenia Carnegie Library is a typical example of the Classical Revival-style library funded through the Carnegie library program. It features the common design features associated with a Carnegie library including a Classical Revival design with a symmetrical pedimented façade, a raised foundation, masonry construction, windows set high on the elevation, a small entry vestibule reached by a flight of stairs, and a central lobby with reading rooms on either side. Constructed prior to Bertram's required approval of building plans, the presence of the ornate pediment and stained glass dome are indicative that the library had been built prior to Bertram's more critical review of library building plans.

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*Conclusion*

The Xenia Carnegie Library is locally significant under Criterion A in the area of education for its role in the history of education in Xenia by providing a public library and meeting place for the community for over 70 years. The building represents the perseverance of a group of women to provide their community with a center for learning, illustrating the importance of education historically to Xenia residents. The library is also significant for its association with Carnegie's nation-wide free public library program which funded the construction and furnishing of the library. It is also significant under Criterion C in the area of architecture as a library that embodies the distinctive features of the Carnegie library building type designed in the Classical Revival-style of architecture.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

### **Bibliography** (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Anderson, Marcia. Illinois Carnegie Libraries National Register of Historic Properties Multiple Property Documentation Form, 2000.

Armentrout, Mary Ellen. *Carnegie Libraries of Ohio: Our Cultural Heritage*. Published by author, Wellington, Ohio, 2002.

Avdakov, Steven and Deborah Griffin. Downtown Xenia Historic District National Register Nomination Form, 2014.

History Committee of the Greene County Sesquicentennial Organization. *Out of the Wilderness 1803-1953, 150 Years of Greene County History*. Edwards Brothers, Inc., Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1953.

Santmyer, Helen Hooven. *Ohio Town*. The Ohio State University Press, Columbus, Ohio, 1962.

Van Slyck, Abigail A. *Free to All: Carnegie Libraries & American Culture, 1890-1920*. The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1995.

*Xenia Daily Gazette*, 6/22/1903, 5/7/1904, 11/21/1935, 5/30/1970, 7/3/1976, 10/24/1977.

*Xenia Republican*, 7/3/1906.

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**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 # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other
- Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** GRE-206-12

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**10. Geographical Data**

**Acreeage of Property** less than one acre

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

**Latitude/Longitude Coordinates**

Datum if other than WGS84: \_\_\_\_\_

(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| 1. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 2. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 3. Latitude: | Longitude: |
| 4. Latitude: | Longitude: |

**Or**

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**UTM References**

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 17 | Easting: 249042 | Northing: 4396978 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:    | Easting :       | Northing:         |

**Verbal Boundary Description** (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Built on a 200 foot by 165 foot lot (4/10 of an acre) donated as part of an estate owned by Louise Roberts Lackey and Diana Roberts. Bounded on the west by Edison Boulevard, on the north by Hayes Avenue, on the east by a closed alleyway, and on the south by Church Street, known as Parcel Id M4000020005003200 on the Greene County Auditor website. See Figure 1.

**Boundary Justification** (Explain why the boundaries were selected.) The boundary contains all property historically associated with the library.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title: Josephine L. Reno with assistance from Megan Rupnik and Carrie Simmons of the Ohio History Connection

organization: \_\_\_\_\_

street & number: P.O. Box 361

city or town: Xenia state: Ohio zip code: 45385

e-mail herbdiva45385@yahoo.com

telephone : (937) 361-2354

date: 21 May 2014

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location. M40-2-5-320landscapeaerial2013
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: Xenia Carnegie Library

City or Vicinity: Xenia

County: Greene

State: Ohio

Photographer: Josephine Reno and Megan Rupnik

Date Photographed: April 2014 and August 25, 2014

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

1 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0001)  
Front and east façade facing northwest.

2 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0002)

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Front and west façade facing northeast.

3 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0003)

Front (south) façade facing north.

4 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0004)

East elevation facing west.

5 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0005)

Northwest rear corner facing southeast.

6 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0006)

Rear elevation facing southwest.

7 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0007)

East and north elevations of the garage addition.

8 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0008)

Interior view of rotunda space facing south toward front door.

9 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0009)

Detail view of wood bannister of stairs leading to basement.

10 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0010)

Interior view of stained glass dome.

11 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0011)

Interior view of rotunda space, facing north.

12 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0012)

Detail view of original tile floor.

13 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0013)

View of reading room looking southwest.

14 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0014)

View looking west from reading room.

15 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0015)

View looking west from rotunda space towards reading.

16 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0016)

View of second level of stacks section.

17 or 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0017)

View of metal ranges on the first level of the stacks.

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18 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0018)  
View of metal framing system in stacks section.

19 of 19 (OH\_GreeneCounty\_XeniaCarnegieLibrary\_0019)  
View of basement interior.

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.