

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1/19/83

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Akron Public Library

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 69 East Market Street N/A not for publication

city, town Akron N/A vicinity of congressional district 14th (John Seiberling)

state Ohio code 039 county Summit code 153

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name R & A Properties

street & number 20th Floor, One Cascade Plaza

city, town Akron vicinity of state Ohio 44308

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Summit County Recorder's Office

street & number 175 S. Main Street

city, town Akron state Ohio 44308

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Akron Historic Landmark Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1978 federal state county local

depository for survey records Dept. of Planning, City of Akron 166 S. High St.

city, town Akron state Ohio 44308

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The former Akron Public Library is a monumental single story block (of piano nobile and basement delineation) with a central projecting pavilion, surmounted by a mansard-roofed attic behind a blind parapet. The entire structure, in the style of Beaux Arts Classicism, is faced with smooth-dressed, coursed ashlar of Ohio buff sandstone, with the basement of rusticated blocks forming a projecting water table.

The interior layout is suggested by the components of the facade, a projecting center pavilion and flanking bays defined by wide piers. The centers of the side bays are unornamented, the original fenestration having been replaced by stone carefully matched to the facing.

The double side-ramped stairs of the center pavilion ascend to the double-doored entry, which is framed by an architrave with crossettes. The dentilled cornice, supported by a pair of elongated modillions set beyond the crossettes, is centered with a prominent scrolled and foliated cartouche. The motto "Open to All" is cut into the frieze. The entry is set between fluted Ionic columns in antis. Each anta is emphasized by rusticated quoins flanking two narrow windows, one above the other, treated as a unit within an elongated round arch, the whole resting on a heavy sill with corbels. The keystone is extended upward to connect with a drop ornament from a foliated cartouche in the building's frieze. Similar cartouches with an open book device are set into the frieze above the piers at the far ends of the facade. Engirdling the structure is a robustly modillioned cornice, on which rests a blind parapet, raised over the center pavilion, with tableted plinths defined by the quoined piers below. Each tablet bears the names of authors.

In the center of the pavilion parapet is a dramatic trophy ornament: a large festooned and garlanded escutcheon enriched by a mascarón under an open book which bears the date of construction. Above the book, set in an enscrollment projecting beyond the parapet coping, is an Athenian lamp of knowledge. The mansard-roofed attic, once covered in red tile but now tarred sheeting, is raised at the pavilion.

The building has undergone exterior alteration three times. The entry staircase, originally providing steps facing East Market Street, has been altered twice. The first alteration was necessitated by the widening of East Market and involved replacing the original stairs with a new set providing side entry. The second alteration involved facing the facade of the staircase with stucco. The third change resulted in removal of a colossal tripartite tabernacle window from each of the side bays to accommodate requirements of the Akron Art Institute (1948). After the Art Institute occupied the building, the interior was substantially altered and a mezzanine was installed to provide gallery and office space. During rehabilitation of the building the tabernacle windows will be reinstalled and the side entry staircase will be resurfaced with sandstone matching the exterior of the building so as to restore the structure as much as possible to its original appearance.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1903-04 Builder/Architect Frank O. Weary, Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The former Akron Public Library is architecturally significant because it is the best example in downtown Akron of Beaux Arts Classicism in the French Renaissance mode and it is one of the most highly regarded buildings that Frank O. Weary, a major turn of the century architect, designed in his long career; it is educationally significant because it was the first permanent home of the city's first general circulation library (1904-1942) and the first permanent home of the Akron Art Institute (1948-1981).

Frank Orlando Weary (1849-1921) practiced architecture in Akron from 1875 until shortly before his death. He specialized in the design of public and business buildings and churches. Among his major commissions were Ohio court houses in Hancock and Carroll counties. While serving as architect for Oberlin College, he designed three stone buildings—Peters Hall, Baldwin Cottage and Talcott Hall—that are listed in the National Register.

During the period of his partnership with George W. Kramer of Akron (1886-95) Mr. Weary saw his reputation grow rapidly and his practice attain what local historian Samuel A. Lane described as "phenomenal success." Weary & Kramer started out as highly skilled interpreters of the High Victorian Gothic style. In later work they added the most Gothic elements of Richard Norman Shaw's style.

By the time Mr. Weary did the Akron Public Library he had fully embraced the Neo-Classical style that had been popularized by the Columbian Exposition of 1893. In designing the Library he took great pains to compliment the newly erected (1899) Akron Post Office building that was directly across the street and, if possible, even to surpass it. In a letter to the Library's Board of Control dated March 22, 1902, he noted that "the design of our building is 30 feet high from grade line to sidewalk which, we learn, is just about the height of the Government Post Office building opposite." He added: "I would take great pride in giving this building the benefit of much closer personal attention than is possible on other new structures being built at more remote and inaccessible localities, to the end that this shall be the ideal piece of construction ever attempted in our City."

The Library is, strictly speaking, a Beaux Arts/French Renaissance building. The French elements include the mansard roof, the projecting central pavilion and the grotesque mask above the entry. The colossal columns flanking the entry, enframed windows, rusticated ashlar basement, enriched entablature and parapet are all reflective of the Beaux Arts style generally.

The only other Beaux Arts/French Renaissance structure in downtown Akron is the Akron Armory. Two blocks south at 161 S. High Street and less ornate than the Library, it will soon be demolished so that an office building can be erected on the site.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Samuel A. Lane, Fifty Years and Over of Akron and Summit County
Akron, Ohio 1892 p. 489

Richard N. Campen, Ohio—An Architectural Portrait
West Summit Press, Chagrin Falls, Ohio 1973 pp. 188-189

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 0.34

Quadrangle name Akron West

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	7
---	---

4	5	6	7	8	0
---	---	---	---	---	---

4	5	4	8	1	0	0
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Zone Easting Northing

B

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Zone Easting Northing

C

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

D

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

E

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

F

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

G

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

H

--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--

--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Verbal boundary description and justification

All of Lot #1, Block 17 of A. G. Mallison Survey of Town Plat of Akron, recorded in Summit County Ohio Transcribed Plat Records, Pgs. 16 & 17



List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title William V. Wallace, Jr., Consultant

organization date August 16, 1982

street & number 282 Somerset Road telephone 216/867-5037

city or town Akron, Ohio state Ohio 44313

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature W. Ray Luce

title SHPO date 11/16/82

For HCRS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



Akron Art Institute
 formerly:
 Akron Public Library
 (Carnegie Library)
 Akron, Summit County

Easting : 17 456/780
 Northing: 4548/100

4548
 5'
 NORTH CANTON 16 MI. ↗
 4546
 T. 2 N
 (AKRON EAST) 4766 III SW
 YOUNGSTOWN 40 MI. ↘
 80's (18)

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

Ohio Historical Center I-71 & 17th Avenue Columbus, Ohio 43211 (614) 466-1500

February 8, 1983

R & A Properties
20th Floor, One Cascade Plaza
Akron, Ohio 44308

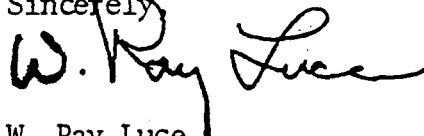
Dear Sirs:

I am pleased to inform you that the Akron Public Library has been entered in the National Register of Historic Places by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior.

The nomination was made in connection with a state plan to identify and document prehistoric and historic places in Ohio which qualify for National Register status under provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. All nominations are approved by the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Advisory Board.

Enclosed is information explaining the purposes and goals of the National Register of Historic Places.

Sincerely,



W. Ray Luce
State Historic Preservation Officer

WRL:dd

enclosure

X.c: Mayor
NEFCO
Senator Oliver Ocasek
Representative Pete Crossland
Jeffrey Brown

Ohio Historic Preservation Office

National Register of Historic Places File Checklist

The following materials are contained in this file of the National Register form for:

Name: Akron Public Library

County: Summit

Original National Register of Historic Places nomination form

Multiple Property Nomination form

Photograph(s)

Photograph(s) (copies)

USGS map(s)

USGS map(s) (copies)

Sketch map(s)/figure(s)/exhibit(s)

Correspondence

Other _____
