

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

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Montpelier Carnegie Library  
other names/site number Public Library of Montpelier and Harrison Township 009-427-02033

**2. Location**

street & number 301 South Main Street N/A  not for publication  
city or town Montpelier N/A  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Blackford code 009 zip code 47359

**3. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be consider significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that the property is: Signature of the Keeper Date of Action  
 entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet  
 determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet  
 determined not eligible for the National Register.  
 removed from the National Register.  
 other, (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

Montpelier Carnegie Library  
Name of Property

Blackford County, IN  
County and State

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**5. Classification**

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**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

**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

| Contributing | Noncontributing |            |
|--------------|-----------------|------------|
| 1            | 0               | buildings  |
| 0            | 0               | sites      |
| 0            | 0               | structures |
| 0            | 0               | objects    |
| 1            | 0               | Total      |

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

N/A

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

0

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**6. Function or Use**

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**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: library

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**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

EDUCATION: library

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**7. Description**

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**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY REVIVALS: Classical Revival

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**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestone  
walls BRICK  
STONE: limestone  
roof ASPHALT  
other \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

Montpelier Carnegie Library  
Name of Property

Blackford County, IN  
County and State

**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for the 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, 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.)

Property is:

- 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 of age or achieved significant within the past 50 years.

**Areas of significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

EDUCATION

**Period of Significance**

1908-1955

**Significant Dates**

N/A

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Kibele, Cuno

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

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

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

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

**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

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

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

Montpelier Harrison Township Public Library

Montpelier Carnegie Library  
Name of Property

Blackford County, IN  
County and State

### 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** Less than one acre

#### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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See continuation sheet

#### Verbal Boundary Description

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

#### Boundary Justification

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

### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Craig Leonard / Amy Walker

organization Consultant / DHPA date 12-01-2005

street & number 5211 SE SR 116 telephone 260-824-4010

city or town Bluffton state IN zip code 46714

#### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

##### Continuation Sheets

##### Maps

A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

##### Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

##### Additional items

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

#### Property Owner

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

name Laura Lee; Montpelier Harrison Township Public Library

street & number 301 South Main Street telephone 765-728-5969

city or town Montpelier state IN zip code 47359

**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 listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance to the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.)

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding the burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Montpelier Carnegie Library

Section number 7 Page 1 Blackford County, Indiana

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**Description**

The Montpelier Carnegie Library is located on the southeast corner of Green and Main Streets in a predominantly residential area just south of the central business district (Photo 1). Almost the entire block on which the building stands was once occupied by other public buildings including a city hall/firehouse, a high school, and an elementary school (Photo 2). All of these buildings have been demolished over the years. The site of the city hall was used for a 1992 addition to the library and a parking lot.

The 1908 library is a one-story flat-roofed rectangular mass set on a partially raised basement. The height of its brown tapestry brick walls is broken up by a series of horizontal bands of limestone: a course at the grade line, a water table that visually divides the basement from the main level, and an entablature with cornice between the wall and parapet. A plain stone entablature is surmounted by a brick parapet. The building has a regular pattern of fenestration and features pairs of one-over-one double-hung sash set in masonry openings on the west, north and south facades. On the rear (east) elevation, there is a pair of windows only in the center bay and single sash otherwise (Photos 3 and 4). All basement level windows match the alignment and pairing of the upper level windows on the respective facades. Additionally the windows on the first floor are surmounted by transoms and plain limestone lintels and sills, while the water table serves as the lintel for the basement windows and the limestone at grade serves as sill. The windows have modern storm panels but retain their original sash.

West Elevation

On the front (west) elevation, the centralized entrance bay projects from the main mass of the building and breaks the façade into a three-part scheme. This entrance bay is approached by a set of nine steps buttressed by limestone knee walls. A pair of brick pilasters with limestone bases and capitals flanks the entrance. Narrow single sash windows adorn the side walls of the entrance bay and mimic the arrangement and materials of the windows on the main body of the library. The entrance itself is recessed within the larger projecting bay and includes limestone accents such as paneling, a slightly projecting cornice supported by consoles at each end and a tablet engraved with "Public Library". Though the exterior doors are now glazed aluminum, a historic photo (Photo 5) shows that the entrance originally had a pair of wooden doors with full-length lights beneath an elaborate transom with criss-crossed mullions. On both sides of the entrance bay is a single pair of one-over-one double-hung sash centered on the west elevation.

In 1992 a brick addition was located on the south end of the library, thus altering its balanced west façade. It appears as a fourth bay to the library, quite similar to the north and south bays of the west elevation. It continues the horizontal limestone banding and window openings of the original library only in simplified form. The addition connects to the original structure via a recessed handicapped accessible entrance.

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Montpelier Carnegie Library

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**Description-continued**

North Elevation

The north elevation has four pair of one-over-one double-hung sash evenly spaced across the main level. The center two bays of the wall project minimally from the main block of the library. The two sets of windows in the projecting section have a similar lintel treatment as the main entrance with hooded lintels with consoles at each end holding a projecting cornice. The basement level has four bays including three sets of windows aligned with those on the main floor. However the eastern-most windows are covered with plywood and the bay to the immediate west is a secondary entrance. This was always an entrance but now it is a modern aluminum and glass door with a side light in the upper portion. A book return bin is located in the lower panel. The limestone banding from the main façade continues around the north side although the water table is wider than on the front.

East Elevation

The major difference for the east elevation is the windows. There are seven openings but only the central one is a set of paired, double-hung windows. All of the others are single double-hung sash. Unlike the other windows on the 1908 portion, the windows on the rear elevation do not have transoms. All have limestone sills and lintels. The basement windows on the east side are also single units. The middle one located under the paired windows has been bricked in. The limestone banding from the north elevation continues around the east elevation and matches up with similar banding located on the addition at the south end. The addition does not have any windows on this side.

South Elevation

The south elevation is the south wall of the recent addition. It mimics the form of the north elevation in that the central portion slightly projects minimally from the main wall of the addition. The only windows on this elevation are located on the middle area. There are two sets of paired one-over-one double hung sash with transoms. Like all other windows on the library, there are limestone sills and lintels. Paired basement windows are aligned with those above. The limestone banding continues across this elevation as well.

Interior

Upon entering the main entrance of the library there is a tile-floored vestibule and a set of inner doors. To the south of the vestibule is a coat room; to the left is a doorway with stairs leading to the lower level. The stairs to the main level are in direct alignment with the entry doors. The main level consists of a circulation desk, reading room, three general stack rooms, director's office, lavatory, with a handicapped accessible entrance and additional stack space in the addition (Photos 6 and 7). The basement level includes a furnace room, a large and a small meeting room, a second lavatory, and additional stack space and mechanical room in the addition. Original plans show that the arrangement is intact including the oak circulation desk located on axis with the main entrance.

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Montpelier Carnegie Library

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**Description-continued**

Interior finishes on the main floor include plaster walls and ceilings, simple stained oak trim, and carpet (original oak laid in concentric bands is intact underneath). The addition has drywall, thin oak trim, and carpet. Fluorescent light fixtures have replaced the original fixtures. The basement level is a mixture of brick and plaster walls, acoustical tile ceiling (original stamped metal ceiling intact underneath—Photo 12), and a concrete floor covered in both carpet and vinyl flooring. Wood trim is Southern yellow pine. A variety of fluorescent light fixtures exist in the basement. The windows throughout the finished areas of the original building are set in plain rounded plaster reveals with molded oak sills and aprons. The doorways have architrave casings and horizontally paneled leaves.

Main Floor

The majority of the main floor is the reading room/general stack area which is visually sectioned on by a series of squared columns and support beams. At the center of this area, indeed of the library itself, is the oak circulation desk. It is three-fourths of an octagon in plan and each face of the counter has a pair of molded recessed vertical panels. The desk is flanked by matching paneled rails running perpendicular to the face of the counter that would have separated patrons from the book stacks. These rails have swinging gates to permit access behind the circulation desk. The remainder of the general stack area consists of a variety of shelving and furniture, most of which was produced by the W. B. Brown Company of Bluffton, Indiana. It is made of stained oak and includes trestle tables, four sizes of ladder-back chairs (Photos 21 & 22), a book stand (Photo 23), a magazine rack (Photo 24), and a set of stacking storage units in the basement (Photo 25). All of the interior elements are made with the simple lines popularized by the Arts and Crafts Movement.

The W. B. Brown Company also created the original interior lighting, all of which was removed in 1950. Two of the original fixtures have been recovered but are not in the library's possession at this time: a model 217 pendant that hung in the vestibule (Photos 16 & 17) and a model 66 sconce that was in the main level lavatory (Photos 18 & 19). Both are glazed with green slag glass. Missing fixtures include suspended ceiling fixtures in the corners of the main room (Photo 14), tall fixtures with curved brackets and pyramidal shades at the circulation desk (Photo 15), and lamps affixed to reading tables (Photo 20).

Limited physical investigation of the main level indicates that the reading room walls may have been finished with two shades of creamy tan paint, with the lighter shade used on the ceiling and the tops of the walls. A simple stencil of a small fan-shaped motif originally ran along the boundary between the two colors but it is no longer visible.

The director's office is in the northeast corner and measures approximately twelve feet square. The adjacent lavatory is in its original location but has modern fixtures.

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Montpelier Carnegie Library  
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**Description-continued**

Lower Level

Access to the basement is provided by an original door on the landing in the vestibule, as well as by the side entrance stairs off the north side of the building and a set of stairs located in the modern addition. The main stairs open into a hallway with a small board room to the north. A stack room is located in what would have been the southwest corner of the basement. A large entry way exists on the south wall and extends into the modern addition.

The side entrance stairway is finished with a Colonial Revival balustrade that uses plain square balusters and square newels trimmed with necking rings (Photo 11). At the bottom of the side stairs, a door leads to a furnace/storage room in the northeast corner. To the west there is a second door that leads in the meeting room in the northwest corner (Photo 8). Another lavatory is located alongside the furnace room; this is another original restroom that presently has modern fixtures installed. The southeast corner of the original library is part of a larger meeting room/stack area. It is connected by an operable partition to an open area in the modern addition (Photos 9 and 10).

**Statement of Significance**

The Montpelier Carnegie Library is eligible for the National Register under Criterion A as a local example of Andrew Carnegie's philanthropy and under Criterion C as an outstanding example of Classical Revival architecture. The Period of Significance is from 1908-1957.

Historical Context

Montpelier is located in the northeast corner of Blackford County in the east-central part of Indiana. The area is predominantly agricultural with only two towns: Hartford City (the county seat) and Montpelier. There were Native American settlers as early as 1818 when the federal government granted land to Chief Francois Godfroy. The first white settlers arrived in 1831 but the county was not officially organized until 1839.<sup>1</sup>

Montpelier was platted by Abel Baldwin in 1836. Baldwin was originally from Vermont and, not only named the new town after his former home, but also laid it out in a similar fashion. Baldwin's original plan for the city featured a series of triangular shaped parks that survive today. By 1840, Montpelier had its first store and post office. The first schoolhouse was built in 1850. Two years later the population had grown to forty-five residents. In 1870 that number had climbed to 231 and Montpelier was officially incorporated as a town.<sup>2</sup>

Montpelier Carnegie Library

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<sup>1</sup> Blackford County Interim Report: Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory, Indianapolis: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana (2005), p.12.

<sup>2</sup> Blackford County Interim Report, p.42.



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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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**Statement of Significance-continued**

A major discovery was made in 1887 that changed the lives of Blackford County residents. Oil and natural gas fields were found throughout the north and east central portion of Indiana. The extraction of these resources resulted in the emergence of new communities and dramatic growth of existing ones—dubbed the state’s Gas Boom. In fact, from 1870-1900 the population of Blackford County almost tripled. Montpelier even became known as “Oil City.” By 1910 the boom was over and many communities suffered. Schools were consolidated and businesses struggled.<sup>3</sup> Life in Blackford County returned to its agricultural roots.

Creation of the Montpelier Library

By 1907 Montpelier had achieved its greatest period of physical expansion. In that year, members of the city’s school board began to pursue the project of creating a public library as an adjunct to the school system. They secured an offer of \$10,000 from Andrew Carnegie, contingent upon a pledge by the city that an amount equal to one-tenth of Carnegie’s gift would be pledged by the city government to maintain the library.<sup>4</sup> On March 7, 1907, the Montpelier City Council made the required pledge of support, and a seven-member library board was created shortly thereafter to pursue the project.<sup>5</sup>

A three-member committee comprised of Dr. F. M. Reynolds, Mrs. A. G. Johnston, and T. C. Neal was formed to select an architect for the new building. After interviewing Cuno Kibele of Muncie, Marshall Mahurin of Fort Wayne, and Alfred Grindle of Indianapolis, Kibele was selected to design Montpelier’s library. He had previously designed homes for Dr. Reynolds and Mrs. Johnston, as well as the 1905 Carnegie library in nearby Bluffton.<sup>6</sup> Bids were opened in June for a number of alternative methods of cladding the exterior, ranging from all limestone, partial stonework, and a combination of brick with stone trim. All but one of the three bids received were deemed too expensive, and the architect was instructed to confer with the bidders to find a way to reduce the cost of the project.<sup>7</sup> A second set of bids were received in July, but were again too high. However, the committee instructed Kibele to negotiate a contract with the low bidder, Hines and Townsend of Hartford City.<sup>8</sup> As a result, a bid of \$9,000 for a building clad in brick and trimmed in stone was accepted with the proviso that the price did not include

Montpelier Carnegie Library

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<sup>3</sup> Blackford County Interim Report, p.12.

<sup>4</sup> “Public Library for Montpelier,” Evening Herald, March 6, 1907, p.3, c.5.

<sup>5</sup> “Will Accept Carnegie’s Offer,” Evening Herald, March 8, 1907, p.2, c.2 “Council Meeting,” Weekly Herald, March 21, 1907, p.4, c.2, “Library Board Met,” Evening Herald, March 26, 1907, p. 2, c.4, and “Library Board Completed,” Weekly Herald, March 28, 1907, p.4, c.3.

<sup>6</sup> “Will Submit Library Plans,” Evening Herald, March 28, 1907, p.2, c.2, “Library Board Met,” Evening Herald, March 28, 1907, p.2, c.4, “Grindle interview,” Evening Herald, April 3, 1907, p.3, c.2, “Architect to be Chosen,” Evening Herald, April 9, 1907, p.2, c.4, “Kibele Chosen Architect,” Evening Herald, April 10, 1907, p.2, c.3.

<sup>7</sup> “All Bids But One Too High,” Evening Herald, June 18, 1907, p.3, c.4.

<sup>8</sup> “Bids Still Too High,” Evening Herald, July 3, 1907, p.2, c.2.

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**Statement of Significance-continued**

heating or furnishings, though it would include wiring and plumbing.<sup>9</sup> The site for the proposed library was in the same block as the elementary and high schools, thus making it a convenient stop for young library patrons. Work began on July 11, 1907 and by January 1908 the roof was being built and the lath was being installed on the interior.<sup>10</sup>

As the building neared completion, librarian Grace Maddux began calling upon local businesses and individuals to raise the additional funds needed to furnish the building and purchase books to supplement those that would be brought from the school library. Of the \$1,200 that was pledged, about half was to be used for furnishings and the remainder for new books.<sup>11</sup> In April, the Library Board met with William B. Brown of Bluffton and gave his firm a contract to supply the light fixtures, furniture, and other fixtures for the building. The account in the *Bluffton Weekly Chronicle* noted that they “will be in the mission design throughout, patterned after the furniture in the Bluffton public library.”<sup>12</sup> By summer 1908 the library was nearing completion. In June the heating plant had been installed; the architect inspected the building in July, and in August the Library Board accepted the building from the contractor on the condition that it deducted \$465 from the contract price because of delays in the completion of the building.<sup>13</sup> The formal dedication and open house for the building were set for Friday, September 11, 1908.<sup>14</sup> On that evening, the Library Board acted as a reception committee for the public’s first viewing of the new building, which was described in the local paper as, “undoubtedly one of the neatest and best arranged little public libraries in the state.”<sup>15</sup>

Since that time, the Montpelier Carnegie Library, today formally known as the Public Library of Montpelier and Harrison Township, has been one of the premier cultural institutions of the City of Montpelier. There have been two major changes to the building over time. One is that the original entrance doors and interior light fixtures were removed as part of a remodeling campaign in 1950.<sup>16</sup> The other major alteration occurred as a result of the collapse of the south wall of the library. On February 3, 1990 the adjacent city building was being demolished. The north wall of

Montpelier Carnegie Library

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<sup>9</sup> “Contract Let,” *Evening Herald*, July 5, 1907, p.2, c.4.

<sup>10</sup> “Ground Staked and Work Begun,” *Evening Herald*, July 11, 1907, p.5, c.2, “Work Delayed by Lack of Stone,” *Evening Herald*, September 26, 1907, p.5, c.1, “Carpenters at Work,” *Evening Herald*, January 30, 1908, p. 5, c.2, “Work Progressing Rapidly on Interior,” *Evening Herald*, February 6, 1908, p.5, c.2.

<sup>11</sup> “Are Responding Liberally,” *Weekly Herald*, March 4, 1908, p.5, c.6.

<sup>12</sup> “W.B. Brown Got Contract,” *Weekly Chronicle*, April 15, 1908, p.8, c.3.

<sup>13</sup> “Heating Plant Installed,” *Evening Herald*, June 27, 1908, p.3, c.3, “Architect Visits,” *Weekly Herald*, July 16, 1908, p.5, c.2, “Board Accepted Library,” *Evening Herald*, August 5, 1908, p.2, c.3

<sup>14</sup> “Dedication of Public Library,” *Weekly Herald*, September 3, 1908, p.4, c.3.

<sup>15</sup> “Library Opening,” *Evening Herald*, September 12, 1908, p.2, c.4.

<sup>16</sup> “Montpelier Library Observes Indiana Library week,” *The Montpelier Herald*, April 27, 1950, p.1, c.5.

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**Statement of Significance-continued**

that building fell on the south wall of the library causing it to collapse. That damage, combined with the need for additional space, resulted in the construction of the addition in 1992.<sup>17</sup>

Architecture

Andrew Carnegie began his philanthropic gifts for the creation of public libraries at roughly the same time as the library movement was beginning in Indiana. As a result, Indiana has more Carnegie libraries (164) than any other state.<sup>18</sup> Prior to 1908, communities requesting funds from Carnegie were permitted to design their individual buildings as they saw fit. However, Andrew Carnegie and his private secretary, James Bertram, noticed that some were overly extravagant and poorly planned. For those libraries constructed between 1908-1911 plans had to be submitted and approved by Bertram. In 1911 Carnegie and Bertram had created a set of design standards for all future libraries funded by Carnegie entitled "Notes on Library Buildings (sic)". Even though the Montpelier library predates the creation of "Notes," it follows several of the guidelines established therein, including:

- 1) a rectangular shaped building with a partially exposed basement and main level;
- 2) a 12-15 foot high main floor to accommodate bookstacks, circulation desk, and reading space for adults and children;
- 3) rear and side windows placed 6-7 feet from floor level so shelves could be placed under windows, thus maximizing space;
- 4) small entrance vestibules to prevent wasted space at the building entrance;
- 5) place the circulation desk close to the entrance, and;
- 6) arrange heating, restroom, storage, work, and lecture space in basement<sup>19</sup>

Despite the plethora of Carnegie libraries in Indiana, Blackford County only has two: one in Montpelier and another in Hartford City. The 1903 Hartford City library is also in the Classical Revival style however it is slightly larger and a more elaborate design than the Montpelier building. The Hartford City library was designed by Joel L. Brown, a native of Hartford City who practiced architecture in both Hartford City and Bluffton during the Gas Boom. Brown utilized buff colored brick on this building. It is only natural that this library is more highly styled given that it is located in the county seat and it was constructed during the height of the Gas Boom. It has a rusticated partially exposed foundation, Ionic capitals on both columns and pilasters, a larger projecting entry topped by a large arched transom, quioning on all of the corners, and more detailed sills and lintels on all facades of the building. The Montpelier library illustrates a less decorative version of the Carnegie library that would have been found in smaller towns.

Montpelier Carnegie Library

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<sup>17</sup> "Montpelier Library Buckled, Damaged in Dozer Accident," News-Banner, February 6, 1990, p.1, c.1.

<sup>18</sup> Alan McPherson, Temples of Knowledge: Andrew Carnegie's Gift to Indiana, p.16.

<sup>19</sup> George S. Bobinski, "Carnegie Libraries: Their History and Impact on American Public Library Development," Chicago: American Library Association (1970 printing), p.57-63.

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**Statement of Significance-continued**

The only other Carnegie library known to have been designed by Cuno Kibele is the 1904 Bluffton Carnegie Library. Like the library in Hartford City, it is a more elaborate Classical Revival building than the Montpelier design. Constructed of limestone, the building was one of Kibele's last works. The projecting entrance bay is flanked by pairs of limestone columns that support a dentilated pediment. The entire building is surrounded by a dentilated cornice and a balustrade above. Scrolled brackets support a cornice and set off the double entrance doors. The windows are topped by a keystone centered in a shouldered window hood. The library moved out of this building in 1992 and it is now used for county offices.

Few examples of Classical Revival architecture exist in Blackford County. The style was traditionally used for public buildings to project an air of monumentality, strength, and steadfastness. The seven instances of the style in the county include the two Carnegie libraries, two churches, a bank and two schools. The two libraries were rated "outstanding" in the Blackford County Interim Report, as was the Hartford City First United Brethren Church (1927). The Montpelier Church of Christ (1921), the Farmers Deposit Bank in Montpelier (1910), and the Goodboo School/Harrison Township District #4 School (1902) received "notable" ratings. The sole "contributing" rated building is the Waugh School/Harrison Township District #1 School (1900).

The library's interior fittings add to its architectural significance. The W. B. Brown Company (1906-1916) was locally known for its production of inexpensive Arts and Crafts style lighting and custom-built interiors.<sup>20</sup> Much of the firm's output was produced for resale by retailers, wholesale lighting houses, and furniture companies, including Montgomery Ward (Chicago, IL), Come-Packt Furniture Company (Toledo, OH), the R. Williamson Lighting Company (Chicago, IL), the M.L. Nelson Furniture Company (Chicago, IL), the Brooks Manufacturing Company (Saginaw, MI), the Stuart-Howland Lighting Company (Boston, MA), and the Tower-Binford Electric and Manufacturing Company (Richmond, VA).<sup>21</sup> While integrated interiors done in the Arts and Crafts mode tended to be mostly residential, those done by the Brown Company were almost exclusively for commercial and institutional uses, such as department stores, clothing

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<sup>20</sup> Dr. Michael Clark and Jill Thomas-Clark, "Shedding Light on the Arts and Crafts Environment: the W. B. Brown Company," *Style 1900: the Quarterly Journal of the Arts and Crafts movement*, 13:4 (Winter, 2001) p.31-34.

<sup>21</sup> Catalogue and Buyers Guide Number 87, Chicago: Montgomery Ward, 1918, p.538; Illustrated Mission Furniture Catalog, 1912-1913, Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1991, p.59-62; Jo Anne Thomas, Early Twentieth Century Lighting Fixtures, Paducah, KY: Collector Books, 2000, p.52, 53, 86, 124, 137, 138; Arts and Crafts Furniture, Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1993, p.43-45. The Stuart-Howland Company, c.1910, p.414, 419; The Tower-Binford Electric & Manufacturing Company, c.1910, p.467-471.

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**Statement of Significance-continued**

stores, drug stores, restaurants, and churches.<sup>22</sup> Montpelier's is the only library known to have been decorated by the Brown Company.

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<sup>22</sup> W. B. Brown Company Catalogue 16, Bluffton, IN: W. B. Brown Company, c.1916, p.2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 31, 33, 43, 51, 59, 69, 75, and 77.

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**Bibliography-continued**

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Verbal Boundary Description

A part of the southeast corner of Greenbush Square as formed by extensions of the south line of Green Street and the east line of Main Street, plus Lot 3 of Block 15, all in the Original Plat of Montpelier, Indiana.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundaries selected are those presently owned by the Montpelier-Harrison Township Public Library.

Photo Descriptions

All photographs used in this nomination were taken in September 2005 by Craig Leonard.  
Location of the negatives is as follows:

Craig Leonard  
5211 SE SR 116  
Bluffton, IN 46714

- Photo 1: General view looking southeast of the library in its present context
  - Photo 2: c.1910 historic postcard looking southeast showing the library in its original context
  - Photo 3: General view looking northeast
  - Photo 4: General view looking southwest
  - Photo 5: c.1920 historic postcard looking southeast
  - Photo 6: General view looking north in the main reading room
  - Photo 7: General view looking southeast in the main reading room
  - Photo 8: General view looking northwest in the northwest basement reading room
  - Photo 9: General view looking north in the large basement meeting room
  - Photo 10: General view looking southeast in the large basement meeting room
  - Photo 11: General view looking north of the basement landing of the side entrance stairs
  - Photo 12: Detail in the northwest basement meeting room of the concealed metal ceiling
  - Photo 13: General view looking southeast from The Montpelier Herald (4/27/1950) of main reading room
  - Photo 14: 1912 Brown Company Catalogue showing model 283 electric chandelier
  - Photo 15: 1912 Brown Company Catalogue showing model 291 two light electric newel
  - Photo 16: Original vestibule ceiling light fixture
- Montpelier Carnegie Library

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**Photos-continued**

Photo 17: 1912 Brown Company Catalogue showing model 217 one light electric pendant

Photo 18: Original main level lavatory sconce fixture & stem from a table lamp

Photo 19: 1912 Brown Company Catalogue showing model 66 one light electric bracket

Photo 20: 1912 Brown Company Catalogue showing model 458 two light electric portable

Photo 21: View of three of the sizes of original chairs

Photo 22: View of the scaled-down table and chairs in the children's area

Photo 23: View of the original book stand

Photo 24: View of the original magazine rack

Photo 25: View of the original stacking storage units in the basement





MONTPELIER CARNEGIE LIBRARY BLACKFORD, IN PHOTO 1



MONTPELIER CARNEGIE LIBRARY BLACKFORD, IN PHOTO 2



*MONTPELIER CARNEGIE LIBRARY BLACKFORD, IN PHOTO 3*



*MONTPELIER CARNEGIE LIBRARY BLACKFORD, IN PHOTO 4*



MONTPELIER CARNEGIE LIBRARY BLACKFORD, IN PHOTO 7



MONTPELIER CARNEGIE LIBRARY BLACKFORD, IN PHOTO 10

MANHATTAN ASSURANCE LIBRARY BROWNS IN BURN 11



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Photo 11





MONTPELIER CARNEGIE LIBRARY BLACKFORD, IN PHOTO 22