

FINAL - No Sig

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	
COUNTY:	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Willard Library

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Willard Library of Evansville, Indiana

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
21 First Ave.

CITY OR TOWN:
Evansville

STATE: Indiana CODE: COUNTY: Vanderburgh CODE: 16-7-1

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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 (Specify) <u>Library</u>

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
The Willard Library of Evansville, Indiana

STREET AND NUMBER:
21 First Ave.

CITY OR TOWN: Evansville STATE: Indiana CODE: 16-7-1

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Vanderburgh Co. Recorder's Office and Pigeon Township Assessor's Office City-County Building

STREET AND NUMBER:
Civic Center

CITY OR TOWN: Evansville, Indiana STATE: Indiana CODE:

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Building Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1970 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Historic American Buildings Survey Office

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

OK

The past and present appearance of Willard Library which are the same are most accurately described by Howard Wooden in his book Architectural Heritage of Evansville. The structure contains almost all of the characteristic features of the Victorian Gothic including a tall stately tower, mansard roofs with heavy dormer windows, cornice turrets, window arcades supported by modified Moorish or Byzantine columns, surface color-contrast and surface ornamentation especially beneath the window arches in the form of large rosettes. The placement of the tower to one side of the building achieved the intended asymmetry so characteristic of much of the 19th Century revival movement. Just as the exterior of Victorian Gothic construction is marked by the use of heavy forms, so on the inside one finds considerable attention given to heavy woodwork." The main doors show the Victorian architect's interest in heavy carving, as does the staircase and other woodwork. The floor of the main reading room is of multi-colored tile in geometric designs.

The building is constructed of red brick with limestone used for contrast. The original dated hardware is still in use throughout the building. Shutters original to the building are in use on the first floor. Two original fireplaces are still in use. On the second floor there are round stained glass windows, capping the arched windows, which depict literary personages

The building is situated in a four and a half acre park maintained for public use.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | <u>Historic research</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | <u>Built as a Library</u> |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | <u>and constantly</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | <u>been so used</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | <u>unchanged</u> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This Victorian Gothic library is significant for several reasons. It is a building in mint condition designed by the eminent architect James W. Reid, who lived in Evansville before he moved to the West Coast where he designed such buildings as the Del Coronada Hotel, and since its completion in 1884 it has remained unchanged both inside and out except for the conversion of two rooms of the basement for a children's library.

The massive brass hardware, dated 1883, is still in use throughout the building. The fine tile floors, in geometric designs, have been preserved as have the original coal burning fireplaces and their mantles.

The ornately carved woodwork, even to the heavily carved front doors, has been preserved in its original appearance. Some of the Carpenter furniture is still in use.

The purpose of the building and land has not been changed since the land was transmitted to the trustees in 1876. Willard Carpenter wrote then, "I have concluded, without further delay, to establish and endow a Public Library, to be located in a public park on land owned by me, situated in the City of Evansville.....in the hope that such an institution may become useful toward the improvement of the moral and intellectual culture of the inhabitants of Evansville, and collaterally to those of the State of Indiana; and also toward the enlargement and diffusion of a taste for the fine arts."

He specifically directed that the Library be for "the use of people of all classes, races and sexes, free of charge forever" and have a reading room, be both a reference and circulating library and maintain a research and art library. All the directives have been carried out, even to the maintenance of a public park on the 4.50 acres belonging to the Library.

The Willard Library is situated in the old part of Evansville bordering on the commercial center of the city

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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(Number all entries)

and within walking distance of the old Courthouse (The Conrad Baker Foundation) and the old Post Office which is now listed on the National Register. It possesses the most extensive collection of primary sources; old books, many of them rare, on the history of southern Indiana. It has a fine rare book collection as well as very extensive newspaper and periodical collections, and a number of books from earlier libraries of Evansville which were defunct when Willard was begun. The Library also contains the Bayard collection.

The building faces one grave danger. The imminent continuation of an expressway which at present ends at the street on which the Library faces. The widening of the street south of the Library will encroach on the Library park and endanger the building.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Willard Library "Statement of Trustees 1915"
 Esary, Logan, History of Indiana, from Its Exploration to 1922
 also an Account of Vanderburgh County from Its Origin
 Edited by John Igleheart Vol. III Dayton Historical Publish-
 ing Co., Dayton, Ohio 1922
 Wooden, Howard E. Architectural Heritage of Evansville
 Published by the Evansville Museum of Arts and Sciences
 Brant and Fuller History of Vanderburgh County, Indiana
 Democrat Printing Company. Madison Wisconsin 1889
 "The Evansville Turner" Vol. 23 No. 5; May 1953

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		N 38 ° 58' 43"	87° 30' 37"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 4.5 acres

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Indiana		Vanderburgh	16-7-1
none		none	
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Mrs. James B. Igleheart, Secretary of the Board of Trustees

ORGANIZATION: The Willard Library of Evansville. DATE: April 6, 1967

STREET AND NUMBER: 21 First Ave.

CITY OR TOWN: Evansville STATE: Indiana CODE:

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

National State Local

Name _____

Title _____

Date _____

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

 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

 Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS