

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 09 1975

DATE ENTERED JUN 18 1975

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Ballinger Carnegie Library

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

204 N. 8th St.

CITY, TOWN

Ballinger

VICINITY OF

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

21

STATE

Texas

CODE

048

COUNTY

Runnels

CODE

399

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

DISTRICT  
 BUILDING(S)  
 STRUCTURE  
 SITE  
 OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC  
 PRIVATE  
 BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
 IN PROCESS  
 BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

OCCUPIED  
 UNOCCUPIED  
 WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
 YES: RESTRICTED  
 YES: UNRESTRICTED  
 NO

## PRESENT USE

AGRICULTURE  
 COMMERCIAL  
 EDUCATIONAL  
 ENTERTAINMENT  
 GOVERNMENT  
 INDUSTRIAL  
 MILITARY  
 MUSEUM  
 PARK  
 PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
 RELIGIOUS  
 SCIENTIFIC  
 TRANSPORTATION  
 OTHER: library

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

City of Ballinger

% Norval Meredith, Chairman  
Carnegie Library Board of Directors

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Ballinger

VICINITY OF

STATE

Texas

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Runnels County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Ballinger

STATE

Texas

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Texas State Historical Survey

DATE

1975

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Texas Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Austin

STATE

Texas

# 7 DESCRIPTION

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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 Carnegie Library in Ballinger was built in 1909 in a vernacular version of the Classical Revival style, popular around the turn of the century. Rectangular in plan, the building displays restrained ornamentation and proportions. The first level was designed to house a library and club rooms, while the second floor was built to provide a community auditorium.

The most prominent feature of the building is the two-story portico that frames the entrance portal. Eight steps form the base for the composition. Coupled fluted columns of the Ionic order rise from rock-faced ashlar block pedestals and support a simple entablature with triangulated pediment. The entrance portal is comprised of double leaded-glass doors flanked by sidelights. Above the portal is a tripartite window with a broadly proportioned central section flanked by narrow sidelights.

The entrance pavillion is projected from the symmetrical facade of the building for a distance of four feet. Surface treatment of rock-faced limestone ashlar blocks adds an unusually massive contrast to the classical detailing of the entrance portion. On either side of the portico are repeated the same tripartite windows as that located over the entrance, although the proportions are reversed with the sash openings being tall and narrow rather than short and broad. The same windows are spaced at regular intervals along the sides of the building. Capping the composition is a stepped gable which is accentuated with three rounded-arched windows.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		library		
				community center		

SPECIFIC DATES      1909                                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      J. D. Leslie

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ballinger Carnegie Library is a two-story masonry building which has served the town both as a public library and community center since 1909. Built only two decades after the settlement of the city, the structure has been significant to the social and cultural life of the community.

Ballinger, Texas, on the Colorado River in south central Runnels County, is located at the junction of the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe and Abilene and Southern Railroads. In 1886 the Santa Fe surveyed the townsite, sold lots, and persuaded the residents of Runnels City, a city founded when Runnels County was organized in 1880, to move to Ballinger and reestablish the county seat.

Within twenty years of its founding the city fathers decided to build a library and cultural center for the new town. The greatest impetus to the establishment of local public libraries throughout the United States during this period was the announcement by the industrialist and philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie, in 1881 that he would pay for the erection of library buildings in cities that would acquire a site and provide for the building's maintenance. By the time Carnegie died in 1919 he had helped in the founding of over 2500 such institutions. Ballinger received a grant in 1908 and chose to build on a site donated by Jo Wilmeth, a local banker. Mr. Wilmeth gave the plot of land with two stipulations: one, that the building should always be maintained as a public library; second, that a room must always be provided for the Shakespeare Club.

On February 17, 1908, a public meeting of the Library Association was held for the purpose of incorporating the Carnegie Library Association, the organization to be responsible for the operation and maintenance of the library. Nine directors were elected to transact the business of the library.

The cornerstone was laid on February 4, 1909. The builder, Rev. J. D. Leslie, then pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, orig-

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

ially designed a one-story building. After construction of the library had begun, the Library Association decided that a second floor was needed for an auditorium. When the Library Association applied for an additional \$5000, the Carnegie Library Foundation Board in Washington turned down the request. However, one of the original directors of the Ballinger library, Jack McGregor, wrote a personal letter to Andrew Carnegie explaining Ballinger's additional needs and Carnegie returned a personal check for \$5000. The building was finally completed and occupied late in 1909. Despite the fact that the operational requirements called for a professional librarian, the library was run by members of the Shakespear Club until 1922.

Due to insufficient funds, by 1922 the Library Association was unable to continue operating the library. In that same year the American Legion took over management and reopened the library. In 1936 the community sponsored a drive to reestablish the library under the auspices of the Library Association. By 1940 the Library Association had formed once again and began functioning under the original charter adopted in 1908. A new charter was written in 1958 under which the Library Association still operates.

Besides its function as a library, the Carnegie Library building has served as a community center for Ballinger activities. During the first years, the auditorium which encompasses the entire second floor, functioned as a community opera house, staging light opera, traveling shows and speakers. Providing cultural opportunities for the small town, the Carnegie Library hosted various opera companies and traveling lectures and concerts on the Chautaugua circuit. In addition, the library building served as a social center for parties and formal dances until the late 1950's. The building continues to operate in one of its original purposes as a meeting place for clubs and church groups.

The Ballinger Restoration Committee, a subcommittee of the Ballinger Bicentennial Commission, is planning to restore the structure as a bicentennial project so that the library can continue to serve in its original quarters.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Read, Jo, Historical monograph collected from Wilmeth family Deed records, library charter and agreement between Carnegie & Library Association, Library Association records and various newspaper articles. 1975

Texas Historical Commission Marker Files, Ballinger Carnegie Library, 1962.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY one

UTM OK  
HL

UTM REFERENCES

A 14 | 41,003,0 | 3,511,8,0,0  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B [ ] | [ ] | [ ]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C [ ] | [ ] | [ ]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D [ ] | [ ] | [ ]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Joe R. Williams, Project Director  
Marie Landon, Historian Steve Smith, Architectural Consult.

ORGANIZATION Texas Historical Commission DATE May 1, 1975

STREET & NUMBER Box 12276 Capitol Station TELEPHONE 512/475-3094

CITY OR TOWN Austin STATE Texas

# 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 National Park Service.

Steve  
 FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE Texas State Historic Preservation Officer DATE May 2, 1975

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	
<u>AK</u> DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE <u>6/18/75</u>
ATTEST:	DATE <u>JUN 17 1975</u>
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	

Property BALLINGER CARNEGIE LIBRARY  
State TEXAS Working Number 5.9.75.909

Runnels

**TECHNICAL**

**CONTROL**

Photos 2  
Maps 1

OK pl  
5.13.75

#8 is certainly minimal, but I'm inclined to accept. - with better photo etc.  
Photo in 1975 (from color slide) - they will send better, but need on NA

**HISTORIAN**

Accept  
W. R. Luce  
5/15/75

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**

in statement of significance

Callor Peterson  
LEBOVIEZ  
5-14-75

Ray -

call for current

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

photo!

- see note on control sheet

- is current but very poor

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_  
Review \_\_\_\_\_

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

Accept  
OK  
6.17.75

**BRANCH CHIEF**

**KEEPER**

[Signature]  
JUN 17 1975

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_ Send-back \_\_\_\_\_ Entered JUN 18 1975  
Federal Register Entry 8-5-75 Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

Property BALLINGER CARNEGIE LIBRARY  
State TEXAS Working Number 5.9.75.909

Runnels

**TECHNICAL**  
Photos 2  
Maps 1

**CONTROL**  
OK pl  
5.13.75

#8 is certainly minimal, but I'm inclined to accept. - with better photo etc.  
Photo in 1975 (from color slide) - They will send better, but need on NR

**HISTORIAN**  
Accept  
W. R. Luce  
5/15/75

No statement of significance  
need current photo.

**ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN**  
Callor Return  
LEBOVIEZ  
5-14-75

**ARCHEOLOGIST**

**OTHER**

**HAER**

Inventory \_\_\_\_\_  
Review \_\_\_\_\_

**REVIEW UNIT CHIEF**

Accept  
OK  
6.17.75

**BRANCH CHIEF**

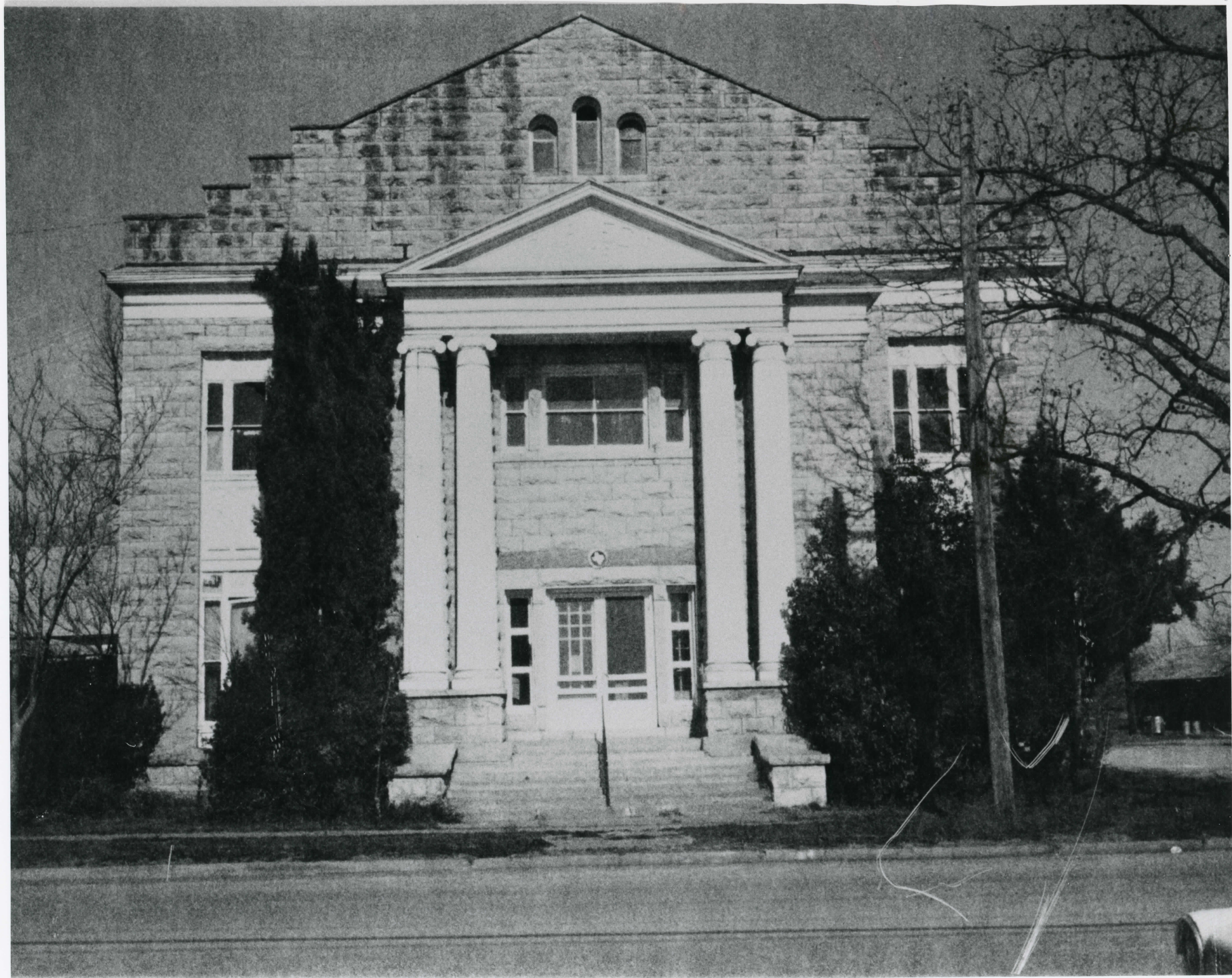
**KEEPER**

[Signature]  
JUN 17 1975

National Register Write-up \_\_\_\_\_  
Federal Register Entry 8-5-75

Send-back \_\_\_\_\_  
Re-submit \_\_\_\_\_

Entered JUN 18 1975



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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM**

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TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH PHOTOGRAPH

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Ballinger Carnegie Library

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

Ballinger

\_\_\_VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Runnels

STATE Texas

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT

Runnels County Historical Survey Committee

DATE OF PHOTO

1975

NEGATIVE FILED AT

Reproductive negative filed at Texas Historical Commission

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

PHOTO NO. 1

Main (southwest) elevation

#102

INT: 2983-75

#102

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**



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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Ballinger Carnegie Library

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

Ballinger

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY Runnels

STATE Texas

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT Runnels County Historical Survey DATE OF PHOTO 1975  
Committee

NEGATIVE FILED AT Reproduction filed at Texas Historical Commission

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT, GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

South oblique

PHOTO NO. 2

#2072

INT: 2983-75

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

#2072

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
PROPERTY MAP FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- ENCLOSE WITH MAP

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Ballinger Carnegie Library

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

Ballinger

\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Runnels

STATE

Texas

**3 MAP REFERENCE**

SOURCE

U. S. Geological Survey

SCALE

1:24000

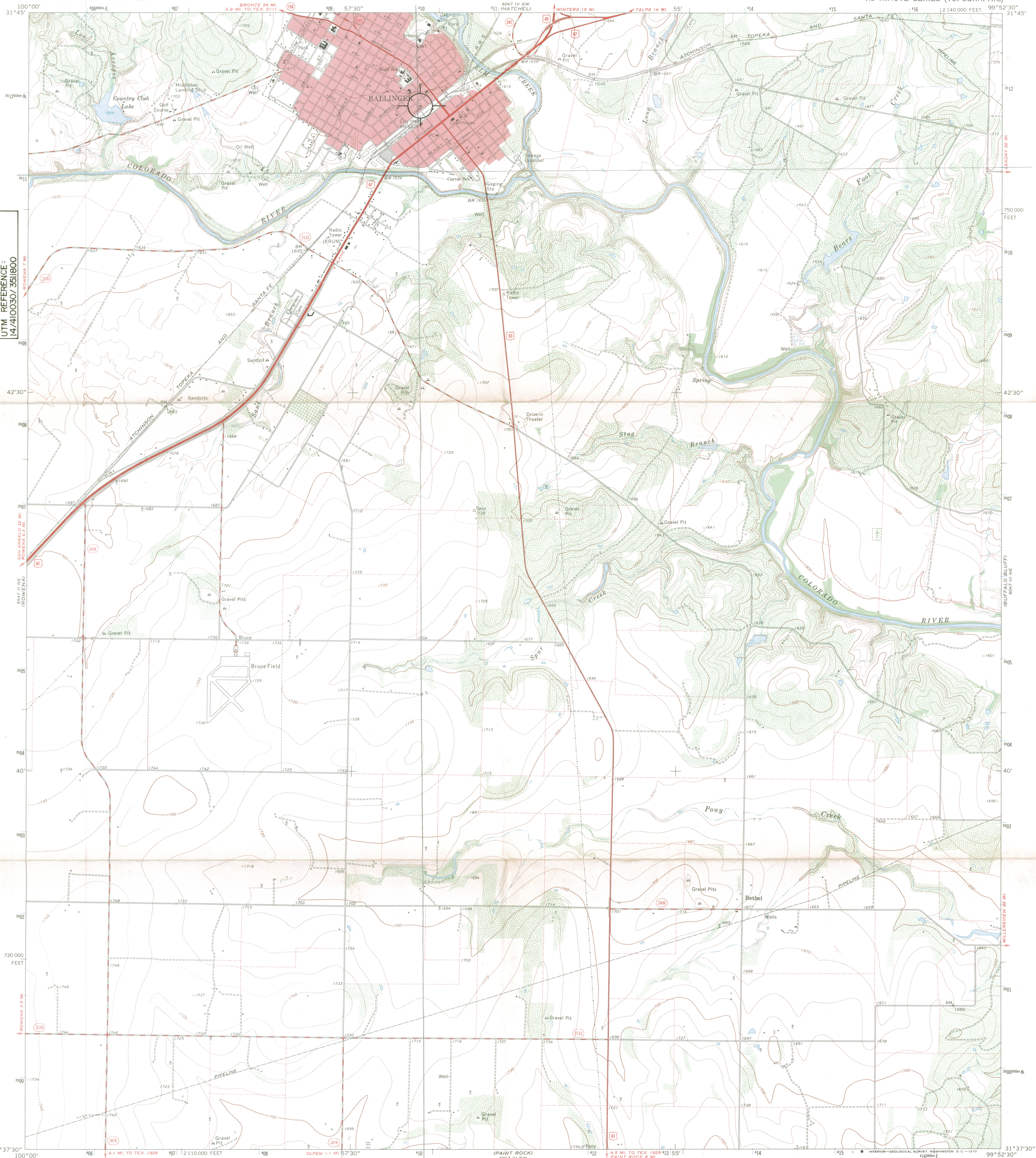
DATE

1967

**4 REQUIREMENTS**

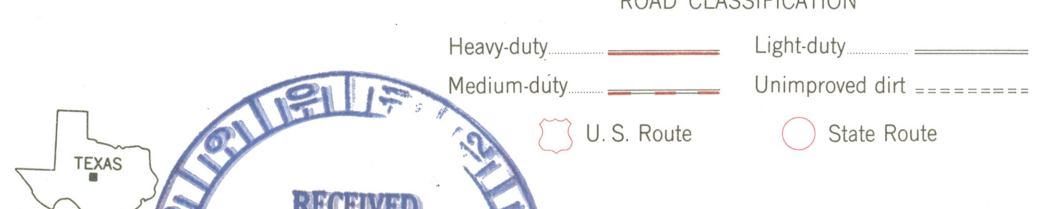
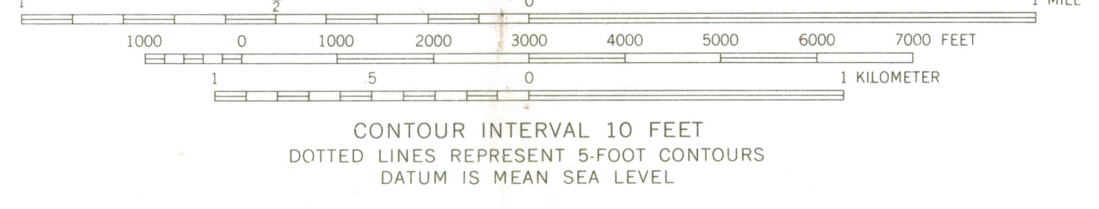
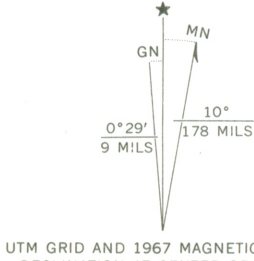
TO BE INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS

1. PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
2. NORTH ARROW
3. UTM REFERENCES



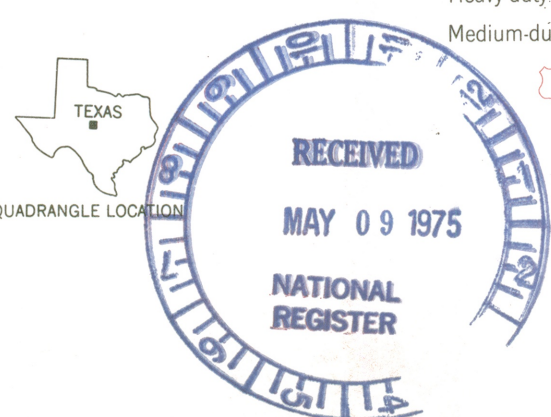
BALLINGER CARNEGIE LIBRARY  
204 N. 8th ST.  
BALLINGER, TEXAS  
UTM REFERENCE:  
14J410030/3511800

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1966. Field checked 1967  
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Texas coordinate system,  
central zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 14, shown in blue  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence lines



APR 22 1970

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, DENVER, COLORADO 80225, OR WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



BALLINGER, TEX.  
N3137.5—W9952.5/7.5  
1967  
AMS 6047 III NW—SERIES V882  
3199-323

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE      TEXAS

Date Entered    JUN 18 1975

Name

Location

**Ballinger Carnegie Library**

**Ballinger  
Runnels County**

Also Notified

Hon. John G. Tower  
Hon. Lloyd M. Bentsen  
Hon. Robert C. Krueger  
Regional Director, Southwest Region

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Truett Latimer  
Executive Director  
Texas State Historical Survey Committee  
Post Office Box 12276, Capitol Station  
Austin, Texas 78711

PR

MMott/row

6/23/75

# NR Data Sheet

DATE: 11-23-76  
 Reviewer INITIALS: nesbitt  
 NR DOE 6/18/75

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: Ballinger Carnegie Library

OTHER NAMES:

**LOCATION:**

STREET & NUMBER  
 ✓ 204 N. 8th St.  
 CITY, TOWN  
 ✓ Ballinger  
 STATE  
 ✓ Texas 048

VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
 21st  
 COUNTY code  
 ✓ Runnels 399

OWNER OF PROPERTY: (Circle) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER

ADMINISTRATOR (underline) FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME):  
 NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) N. ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST  
SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

**FEATURES:**

<u>INTERIOR</u>	<u>EXTERIOR</u>	<u>ENVIRONS</u>
✓ Substantially intact-1	✓ Substantially intact-2	— Substantially intact-3
— unknown - 4	— unknown - 5	✓ unknown - 6
— not applicable - 7	— not applicable - 8	— Not applicable - 9

— Interior, exterior, environs not intact-0

CONDITION —	— EXCELLENT	— DETERIORATED	✓ — UNALTERED	✓ — ORIGINAL SITE
	✓ — GOOD	— RUINS	— ALTERED	— MOVED
	— FAIR	— UNEXPOSED	— Reconstructed	— Unknown
		— Unexcavated	— Excavated	

ACCESS — Yes-restricted Yes-unrestricted No access Unknown

historic district? YES NO

WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO  
 IF YES, NAME:

WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? YES NO  
 IF YES, NAME:

ADAPTIVE USE: YES NO Saved? YES NO

FUNCTION(S): (use vocabulary words)

then- LIBRARY

now- LIBRARY

**SIGNIFICANCE:**

— ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	— CONSERVATION	— LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	— RELIGION	— entertainment
✓ — ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	— ECONOMICS	— LAW/Gov't/politics	— SCIENCE	— health
— AGRICULTURE	✓ — EDUCATION -10	— LITERATURE	— SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	— recreation
✓ — ARCHITECTURE -4	— ENGINEERING	— MILITARY	— TRANSPORTATION	— settlement
— ART	— EXPLORATION	— MUSIC	— OTHER (SPECIFY)	✓ — socio/cultural -30
— COMMERCE	— INDUSTRY	— PHILOSOPHY		— urban & commun
— COMMUNICATIONS	— INVENTION	— POLITICS/GOVERNMENT		planning

**Claims**

“first” YES NO “oldest” YES NO “only” YES NO

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: ~~Vernacular~~ Neo-Classical Revival ~~Elements~~

architect/m.builder:

engineer:

landscape/garden designer:

artist/artisan:

interior decorator:

builder/contractor: <sup>(2)</sup> Rev. J. D. Leslie

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES:

(label role & appropriate date)

personal (1) Jo Wilmeth - local banker, gave land on which bldg. was built (2) Jack McGregor - original director of the Library Association, wrote a personal letter to A. Carnegie asking for an additional \$5,000. events so that a 2nd floor auditorium could be added to the design

institutional (1) Library Association - organization responsible for the operation and maintenance of the building

DATES:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): ~~XXXXXX~~ 1909

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS:

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE:

(OF NOMINATION)

PRIVATE

STATE

LOCAL GOV'T

MUNICIPAL

COUNTY

OTHER

FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE:

(to nearest tenth of an acre)

one

COMMENTS:

(include architectural information here) Rock-faced stone, 2 1/2 stories, modified square, gabled roof, projecting entrance pavilion, paired columned, pedimented, Ionic portico, sidelighted double entrance door, 2nd story tripartite window, stepped gable ends, round-arch tripartite windows, additional fenestration articulated vertically with recessed spandrels; 2nd story auditorium, Vernacular Neo-Classical Revival. Carnegie Library building still used as originally planned.

*Financed by Carnegie Foundation, served community as library and cultural center.*

Rock-faced stone, 2 1/2 stories, modified rectangle, gabled roof, slightly projecting center bay with pedimented tetrastyle Ionic portico and double-door entrance with sidelights; stepped gable ends with triple-arched windows, recessed bays with windows; 2nd-story auditorium.

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)

Local example of Neo-Classical Revival. Financed by Carnegie Foundation; served as library and community cultural center.