

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

FINAL

STATE	INDIANA
COUNTY	KNOX
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

1. NAME	
COMMON: Vincennes Historic District	
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

2. LOCATION			
STREET AND NUMBER: Various			
CITY OR TOWN: Indiana Vincennes		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: Eighth (8th)	
STATE Indiana	CODE 18	COUNTY: Knox	CODE 083

3. CLASSIFICATION			
CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) Mixed Use

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY		STATE Indiana
OWNER'S NAME: Various		
STREET AND NUMBER:		
CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION		COUNTY: Knox
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Recorders Office, Knox County Court House		
STREET AND NUMBER: 7th & Broadway		
CITY OR TOWN: Vincennes	STATE: Indiana	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS		ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
TITLE OF SURVEY: Indiana Historic Preservation Program & Survey			
DATE OF SURVEY: 1972 <input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local			
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Indiana State Archives, Indiana State Library			
STREET AND NUMBER: 140 N. Senate Avenue		STATE: Indiana	CODE 18
CITY OR TOWN: Indianapolis			

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Vincennes Historic District is bounded on the north by the Wabash River, on the east by the center line of College Avenue (formerly Hickman), on the south by the center line of Eleventh Street to the center line of Hart Street, then the center line of Hart Street south to the center line of the continuation of Eleventh Street, then southwest along the center line of Eleventh Street to the center line of Willow Street, and then on the center line of Willow Street to the Wabash.

Included within this area are several distinct sections that relate to the development of the town containing examples of different architectural styles covering over 100 years of growth.

1. The site of the early Piankeshaw Indian Village: Although no physical evidence exists today, part or all of it was certainly contained within the district.
2. The Riverfront area bounded on the north by the Wabash, on the east by Scott Street, on the south by First Street, and on the west by Willow: This area contains the William Henry Harrison Mansion "Grouseland", 1804 (a National Historic Landmark), the riverfront with several mid-19th Century warehouses and commercial buildings, the site of the first steamboat landing, and the George Rogers Clark National Memorial (on the National Register) near or on the site of Fort Sackville: At the eastern end of this area are two very early and historically important structures: one, the Indiana Territorial Capital Memorial (on the National Register) (moved to present location in the 1950's) which was constructed in this area in 1800, and second, a newly discovered French Creole Cottage, The Brouillet House (c. 1790). The site of Fort Knox (1787) is located in this area. Elihu Stout's Print shop was located near the original site of the Territorial Capital which was originally in this area. The Indiana Gazette, later the Western Sun, the first Indiana newspaper, began operation in this office near the original location of the capital in 1804. A reproduction Stout's Shop has been included in the Territorial Capital State Memorial. Vincennes University, the oldest institution of higher learning west of the Alleghenies and north of the Ohio River was originally located on the riverfront not too far from "Grouseland". Established in 1801 as Jefferson Academy, in 1806 they requested and received part of the one township that congress had granted for higher education in Indiana in 1804. The University, now located northeast of the district, houses the collections of the Vincennes Library Company established in 1806.
3. Old French Town, bounded on the north by the Wabash, on the east by Broadway, on the south by Eighth Street, and on the west by Willow: The area contains the heart of the early French settlement, St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church (recommended for nomination to the National Register) constructed from 1826 to 1840 in the Greek Revival style. The typical French style house, the verandah running the length of the house on both sides, can still be found in this area, although many have been torn down or altered beyond recognition. As the French influence declined after 1800, the area was claimed by Americans who

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DESCRIPTION CONTINUED (2)

then built homes in the period style. The French influence can be seen in a number of houses constructed well into the 19th century.

4. The Court House area bounded on the north by Sixth Street, on the east by Hart Street, on the west by Main Street and on the south by Tenth Street: The construction of the present Knox County Court House in 1873 prompted the building of a number of fine homes, mostly done with Italianate influence, near the new seat of local government.
5. The downtown commercial area, bounded on the north by Second Street, on the east by Busseron, on the south by Eleventh Street, and on the west by Vigo Street: Main Street and Sixth Street are the central avenues of the downtown area. Some shops on Main Street between First Street and Second Street have had their fronts renovated to give the appearance of Colonial America, but many features of the buildings still exhibit the styles of the late 1800's. Classic Revival Architecture influenced the construction of several structures on Second Street. The Old State Bank (c. 1835) (a State Memorial on the National Register) and the Abner T. Ellis Mansion both reveal this style. Very little new construction has taken place on Main Street since the latter part of the 19th century and it clearly retains its architectural unity.
6. The residential area, bounded on the north by First Street, on the east by College, on the south by Eleventh, and the west by Broadway: This area exhibits no especially prominent feature or structure, but is composed of a number of structures that illustrate an architectural and cultural unity. Sixth Street west of Broadway has a number of fine residential homes of the Anglo-Italian mode mixed here and there with composite style houses.
The following key structures illustrate the character of the district:

1. The Brouillet House, 509 N. First Street, (c. 1790): A French Canadian Colonial House with vertical hewn logs with bousillage between "poteaux sur sol", approximately 35' x 25'. Original four room house has had a lean-to added to rear. The exterior has been covered with clapboard and it was remodeled before the turn of the century.
2. The Indiana Territorial Capital State Memorial (c. 1800) (on the National Register): This two story, Federal folk construction, wood building with a gallery, was originally located closer to the center of town but has been relocated near the University. Although it has been moved at least three times, the Territorial Capital has been restored and carefully placed to retain much of its significance.
3. The Ellis Mansion, 111 North Second Street: (C. 1830) Classic Revival Architecture. Roman Doric stone columns support the entablature of stone with a semicircular window in the Roman tradition. This building is maintained in excellent condition and is the present home of the Harmony Society.
4. Lacy House (present owner) - 314 South Third (c. 1840): French Colonial influence. One story wood frame with gallery across front. Original shutters and siding. Later wing at rear.
5. Dunn House - 815 & 817 Busseron Street (1847): Federal Style one

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- story brick duplex. Wood addition not part of original building but blends well with brick. Restored in the late sixties to its present condition which is certainly close to the original. It is currently being used as a duplex residence.
6. Summers House (present owner) 827 North Eighth Street (c. 1859-1866): Classic Revival. One story brick with hip roof. Exterior restored. Wood rear addition enhances the structure. Excellent example of classic facade with massive recessed entrance. The dormer is a later addition.
 7. Fyfield House, 416 South Fifth Street (1860): Classic Revival. Brick one story with later rear additions. Front door opening is a fine example of Classic Revival with semicircle window above and slender columns at side of opening. Windows and doors were changed during an extensive remodeling around the turn of the century.
 8. Grannan House (present owner), 825 Busseron Street (c. 1870): Italicized two story brick. Excellent example of this style. As originally built. The original iron fence and stone retaining wall are extant.
 9. Knox County Court House, 7th and Busseron Streets (1873): "Norman Style". Newly restored. Exterior of stone with four impressive towers, each different in detail. A masterpiece of stone masonry work and roof details.
 10. Cauthorn House, 506 N. Third Street (c. 1874): Two story brick Italicized on original lot with original fence. Rear is an addition to original square plan. Front porch remodeled. Interior is as originally built except for removal of rear stairway.
 11. Gimble-Bond Store, 200 N. Main Street (1879): Two story brick example of extreme ornate Italicized as used for commercial store facades. Windows have been closed. This is on the site of the first Gimble's store (c. 1842).
 12. Rabb House, 524 Broadway (c. 1880-1890): Massive Italicized two story brick. A new porch enhances the beauty of lovely example of this period. Interior plaster, molding and details preserved as originally built.
 13. East side of Main Street between First and Second Streets: storefronts have been renovated to give the appearance of a Colonial Style structure, but exterior features of the building above street level are good examples of Renaissance architecture.

B. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☒ 18th Century ☒ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military | | |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Vincennes had one of the oldest and largest of the French Forts in Indiana and as such is perhaps one of the oldest continuously inhabited areas in the state. An early Piankeshaw Indian Village spread out along the edges of the Wabash was there to greet the early French trappers and hunters who explored the area at the beginning of the 1700's. The French settled the area, married with the Indians, and brought protection in the form of a military fort by 1733.

Thirty years later, in 1763, England gained control of the settlement for a period of some sixteen years. However, British influence on the town has been slight.

In 1779, George Rogers Clark captured Vincennes for the American cause which in turn contributed to the addition of much of the area which became the Old Northwest Territory to the United States. By this time, Americans had begun to cross over the Alleghenies and into the Wabash Valley. By 1800, they had taken over much of Vincennes and French influence slowly blended with American traditions.

From 1800 to 1813, Vincennes was the capital of the Indiana Territory, and William Henry Harrison, Governor of the Territory from 1800 to 1812, built his house "Grouseland" in 1804 and lived in it until he resigned as governor in 1812. Following the removal of the capital to Corydon in 1813, Vincennes lost some of its importance to the State and National Political scene, but continued to grow as a commercial town serving as a steamboat port and center for the farming community. It also housed Vincennes University, the first institution of higher learning west of the Alleghenies and north of the Ohio River. When the Wabash and Erie Canal bypassed the town several miles to the east, Vincennes lost some of its commercial importance and it was not until the coming of the railroad that Vincennes again became an agricultural trading center.

Vincennes was also a center of culture and learning in Indiana for many years. The institutions associated with the Catholic Church provided education to both the settlers and the Indians for years. Vincennes University operated at several locations in Vincennes and continues in the town. The Vincennes Library Company (1806) was an important effort to provide a resource for the frontier community. In 1838, Father Simon Brute brought his large library from Europe and the East to Vincennes to

Form 10-300a
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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SIGNIFICANCE CONTINUED

further expand the cultural resources of the town and the state.

Vincennes is exemplary of many things in Indiana. Associations with the French are still visible in several structures but are most apparent in the streets laid out in the French survey system. There are archeological sites that have yet to be fully explored that certainly contain evidence of Native American, French, English and American occupation. Fort Sackville, Fort Knox I and III, a historic Indian settlement are all within this district. It also contains architectural evidence of development as a 19th century commercial center for western Indiana. The Vincennes Historic District has ties with all phases of the development of Indiana and has visible physical evidence of most of them.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

History of Knox and Daviess Counties, Chicago, The Goodspeed Publishing Company, 1886.

History of the City of Vincennes, 1702-1901, Henry S. Cauthorn, 1901.

Historical Sketches of Old Vincennes, Hubbard M. Smith, 1902.

Atlas of Knox County, D. J. Lake Publishers, 1880.

John D. Barnhart and Dorothy L. Riker, Indiana to 1816, 1971 Indianapolis.

John B. Dillon, History of Indiana, 1843 Indianapolis.

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	38°	40, 45 "	87° 32, 17 "					
NE	38°	41, 17 "	87° 31, 31 "					
SE	38°	40, 42 "	87° 31, 03 "					
SW	38°	40, 03 "	87° 32, 04 "					

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 500

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Thomas Krasean, Archivist and Director of Lewis Historical Library; Rose Aimee Broz, Architectural Consultant.

ORGANIZATION

Vincennes University

DATE

10-1-74

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:

Vincennes

STATE

Indiana

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 Indiana State Liaison Officer

Date November 6, 1974

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

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date

SEE INSTRUCTION

NATIONAL SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

AUG 4 1976



H34-PR

NOTE: BEST

DESCRIPTION OF
VINCENTNES H.D.

BANDARY AS GIVEN BY FEDS.

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Fox
1417 College Avenue
Vincennes, Indiana 47591

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Fox:

Thank you for your interest in the Historic Preservation Loan program. Although Vincennes does have an historic district, it does not appear that your home is included within it (the Vincennes Historic District is bounded on the north by the Wabash River, on the east by the center line of College Avenue, on the south by the center line of Eleventh Street to the center line of Hart Street south to the center line of the continuation of Eleventh Street, then southwest along the center line of Eleventh Street to the center line of Willow Street, and then on the center line of Willow Street to the Wabash River). Neither is your home at present listed individually in the National Register. Therefore, you are not now eligible for a historic preservation loan.

To be eligible for a historic preservation loan, a home must be listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or included within a district which is listed in the National Register. It may also qualify if it has been determined eligible for listing in the National Register, or if it is within a district which has been determined eligible for listing. Procedures for obtaining a historic preservation loan have not yet been finalized; we will let you know when the program becomes operational.

The enclosed material will supply you with additional information about the program and will indicate what you can do now to become eligible for an historic preservation loan or to find alternative means for funding your project. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to write or call us.

Sincerely yours,

William J. Murtagh
Keeper of the National Register

Enclosures

cc: Mr. Joseph D. Cloud, SHPO Indiana w/copy of inc.