

FINAL

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic Bals-Wocher House

and/or common Bals-Wocher House

**2. Location**

street & number 951 North Delaware Street \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Indianapolis \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 11th

state Indiana code 018 county Marion code 097

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name S and F. Trading Company

street & number 725 St. Clair Avenue, N.W.

city, town Cleveland \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of state Ohio 44113

**5. Location of Legal Description**

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

street & number City-County Building

city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title None has this property been determined eligible? \_\_\_\_\_ yes  no

date \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

The Bals-Wocher House faces a busy street in a predominantly commercial area, and stands as a lonely reminder of the respectable residential neighborhood that once existed there. The house is separated from the Old North Side Historic District by an Interstate Highway which is in part responsible for its isolation.

The house occupies a corner lot, with a small side yard on the right, and a large garage towards the rear on the left. The garage is of brick with a sort of port-cochere next to the house, and most certainly dates from the period in which the house was occupied by a mortuary. A brick addition at the rear also dates from the 20th century, and is not in keeping with the rest of the house.

The two-story Italianate house is composed of brick, with heavy limestone trim giving the house a very solid appearance. Its massing resembles that of the Italian Villa style, with asymmetrically grouped rectilinear blocks, except that the tower common to the villa is here interpreted as a projecting bay, the same height as the rest of the house. Other Italianate elements present here are stone quoins, an off-center arcaded loggia, paired brackets supporting projecting eaves, and the low-hipped roof with a deck.

The house rests on a stone foundation and water table. The limestone loggia shelters the main entrance and is the focal point of the exterior. Its square columns feature capitals with a simple etched design that includes fleurs-de-lis. Spandrels between the keystone arches are textured by gouges in a regular grid-like pattern. On the backside of one spandrel, visible only from inside the porch, is the inscription, "A.D. 1869-70".

The main entrance features double doors with sculpted wood ornamentation on the lower panels, and small panes of glass in the upper panels. The fixed transom is arched, and the entire opening is framed in stone with keystone and tab trim. This is also true of the arched window that opens onto the porch to the right of the door.

Another prominent element is a projecting one-story bay on the right side. Both the side bay and the loggia are crowned by a cast-iron decorative railing.

Ground floor openings are taller than those on the second floor. Windows on the main facade repeat the detailing of the loggia, their round-arched openings exhibiting the same keystones and textured spandrels as the porch. A small entablature squares off the window trim and mimics the cornice of the porch. The stone extends down the sides of the windows with textured stone tabs like those on the main entrance. Side windows are simple rectangles, with stone sills resting on small stone brackets, and an entablature above the stone lintels.

Above the second story windows is a stone string course which functions as a sill for the attic or monitor windows. These windows are almost hidden by the large paired wood brackets that support the broad wood eaves. Where the eaves join the walls is a carved wood rope, which runs the entire circumference of the house. The hipped roof is of slate.

The interior retains much of its original detailing, including white walnut woodwork, parquet floors, five fireplaces, mirrors, doors, the main stairway, and hardware.

## 8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1869-70

Builder Architect

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Bals-Wocher House is significant as a fine example of the Italianate style, and as the home of a prominent Indianapolis businessman.

The house was built in 1869 by Charles H. G. Bals, a German immigrant who made his fortune in wholesale liquor. Bals' ability to build this substantial home in a prosperous upper-class neighborhood depending upon two things—his place in the elite and his maturing business interests. Both, in turn, depending upon two interrelated changes in local society—the acceptance of the German population, and the decline of the temperance movement as a political force.

A tension existed between the expanding German population and temperance advocates, building up to a riot in 1855. During the rest of the decade animosity toward both Germans and liquor diminished. Popular attention shifted to the slavery issue, and the State Supreme Court threw out a local-option licensing law that was the temperance forces' mainstay. These changes paved the way for liquor dealers to become both wealthy and respectable.

Upon Mr. Bals' death in 1876, the house passed to his daughter, Mrs. John Wocher. The house was used from 1916 to 1975 by Hisey and Titus, funeral directors. In 1975 the Hoosier Salon Patrons Association occupied the house as an art gallery. The home was purchased in 1978 by S and F. Trading Company, and presently houses the offices of Record Data of Indiana, Inc. The home has been fortunate in that it has been continuously well-maintained over the years.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Indianapolis West, Ind.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A 

1	6	5	7	2	5	10	10	4	4	0	2	4	9	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B 

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C 

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D 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 37 and 38 of Sorin's Subdivision of Out Lot 175.

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 Nancy J. Long, Architectural Historian

organization Division of Historic Preservation date 10-26-79

Indiana State Museum

street & number 202 North Alabama Street telephone 232-1646

city or town Indianapolis state Indiana

## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

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

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 11-1-79

For HCRS use only

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

date