

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic Independent Turnverein
and/or common Hoosier Athletic Club, Marott Building

2. Location

street & number 902 North Meridian Street N/A not for publication
city, town Indianapolis NA vicinity of
state Indiana code 018 county Marion code 097

3. Classification

| Category | Ownership | Status | Present Use | |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district | <input type="checkbox"/> public | <input type="checkbox"/> occupied | <input type="checkbox"/> agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> museum |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied | <input 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 | Public Acquisition | Accessible | <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 |
| | N/A | <input type="checkbox"/> no | <input type="checkbox"/> military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant |

4. Owner of Property

name 902 Partners, Ltd.
street & number 7807 Mystic Bay Drive
city, town Indianapolis N/A vicinity of state Indiana 46240

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Marion County, Center Township Tax Assessor's Office
street & number City-County Building, Room 1360, 200 E. Washington Street
city, town Indianapolis state Indiana 46204

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Survey Report for Indianapolis/Marion County has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date September 21, 1977 federal state county local
depository for survey records Indianapolis Historic Preservation Commission
city, town Indianapolis state Indiana

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved

date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

This Renaissance inspired villa with Prairie and Craftsman overtones is prominently sited at the northwest corner of Ninth and Meridian Streets (Photos 1 and 2). The main east facade presents a block-like elevation of red tapestry brick with limestone trim. The first floor is raised approximately six feet above grade. The main, three-story pavilion is connected by a two-story section to another three-story pavilion to the west (photo 10). Additions have been made to the north.

Articulation of the centered east entrance begins with a projecting five step limestone stair, which is flanked by solid limestone piers on which are set original geometrically tapered metal lampposts topped by large white globes. The upper portion of the arched entranceway, trimmed with a banded and decorated limestone frame, is filled with a clear, leaded glass fanlight which has a centered stained glass motif. Double leaf paneled doors with upper lights are flanked by glass sidelights set above rectangular wood panels (photo 3).

The entire massing of the entrance is framed by elaborately paneled and decorated pilasters which terminate at the upper belt course. Pedestals applied to the lower section of the pilasters contain metal flag poles, which are anchored by finely wrought triangular bases and straps (photo 4). The strong verticals of the pilasters, topped with elaborately scrolled limestone cartouches, frame the prominent Palladian window of the second story. The center arched window, removed and now filled with plywood, is flanked by original leaded clear glass window panels. The entrance ensemble is completed by a swagged cartouche above the center arched window, inscribed with "A.D. 1879," the founding date of the Independent Turnverein. (As is evident by Photo 5, the original inscription was the initials "u.T.v.").

This main entrance is centered in a three-bay facade. The lower level fenestration originally consisted of a set of windows on either side of the entrance bay, framed with a molded limestone flat arch. Now filled in with brick, they were originally glazed in a pattern similar to that of the entrance with stone mullions. The south bay now contains a solid door, with access provided below sidewalk level by a straight-run, open and railed staircase (photo 4).

At the elevated first floor level are three-part, casement windows with leaded and stained glass toplights. These compositions are elaborately framed with limestone quoins, a continuous belt course as sills, and label moldings. The lintels are inscribed as follows: the south composition, "MENS SANA IN CORPORE SANO," the north composition, "DUM VIVIMUS VIVAMUS." The original leaded glass casement sash have been replaced with standard, three-light casements.

Centered in the wall above the first floor window units and in the south wall of the main block are square limestone blocks containing high relief, uninscribed cartouches.

A wide, stone belt course surrounds the building at the level of the top of the previously mentioned Palladian window. Above this, the upper wall was finished originally with five center-pivoting stained glass panels, now in-filled with brick, located each side of the Palladian arrangement. Vertical accents of brick pilasters with limestone capitals and bases are paired at the corners of the main block and above the limestone pilasters, and singly placed between the windows with their brick and limestone-detailed spandrel panels (photo 5).

The whole mass is capped by a red tile, truncated hipped roof, with six-foot-wide overhanging eaves which are finished with stamped tin strapwork panels, set between knee braces which correspond to the pilasters below (photo 6).

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Immediately to the north of the main east facade is a 1946, two-story, single bay stairway addition, finished in limestone and red brick closely matched to the original (photo 11, plans 1 and 2). The flat roof is finished in limestone coping that continues the original belt course on the main facade. A double-leaf, glazed entrance with a multi-paned toplight is recessed and framed with limestone.

North of this entrance is a one-story addition, also 1946. This addition, as well as the other additions of the same period, are of red brick with limestone trim, closely matched to the original. The flat roofs of each section are finished with limestone coping which corresponds to the original belt courses.

The south elevation is divided into three distinct parts (photo 7). The eastern section corresponds in treatment to the main elevation. All upper and lower level windows are brick in-filled. A two-story bridge containing the south entrance connects the main block to the three-story west pavilion. The entrance, located at the west end of the connector, is reached by a three-step, aggregate stoop which provides access to a double leaf, security glazed metal fire door (photo 8). A limestone and brick arch, corresponding to the main block's first floor level, is set above paired, angle-cornered windows. Originally, both windows had leaded glass panels; the east section is still original. Paneled limestone pilasters which frame the arch rest on pedestals at the impost level and extend to the sill line of the second floor, the cornice of the framing element. Sculpted gargoyle-like figures, posed to show the physical fitness program of the Turnverein, are seated on the pedestals. The west figure is shown with a shot put, the east figure with a barbell, the west bell having been lost (photo 9). All windows of the first level, both in the main block and the connector, are similar limestone-framed, double casements with leaded glass toplights. Second floor windows of the connector are double-hung with soldier course lintels and continuous limestone sills.

In the west pavilion, the four first floor, double-hung windows have continuous limestone lintels and sills. The second floor windows are treated in a similar manner, but with no lintels; rather, two courses of brick are surmounted by a belt course, such as that on the main block. The hipped roof, similar to that of the main block, tops the pavilion. The flat roof of the connector, extending north-south between the main block and the west pavilion, was originally designed as a roof garden (Plan 4). The air conditioning equipment is now located in a portion of this space. The original balustrade on the south has been removed. The north open area is finished with a solid brick and limestone balustrade and brick piers, which support a hipped roof connector to shelter the open area between the two units (photo 10).

The west facades of the main block and west pavilion show a more utilitarian treatment (photo 11). The west pavilion, with its L-shaped plan, is finished as on the south facade. A one-story, flat roofed unit is set to the north, adjacent to a two-story, flat-roofed stack which contains a rear stairway. Access to the lower level is provided in the one-story unit by a straight run, open and railed stairway. All windows are double-hung with dished limestone sills.

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The gymnasium, a three-level block extending north and west from the northwest corner of the two-story stair shaft, continues to the alley on the west. A ten step, railed aggregate stoop provides access to paired security glazed doors located at the west end of the south facade of the gymnasium, adjacent to the prominent, square chimney. The west elevation of the gymnasium contains five double-hung windows in the upper level. Each has a dished limestone sill.

The far west elevation of the complex consists of a single story, gable roofed, asphalt shingled shed which extends to the north of the gymnasium, along the alley (photo 12). Two contemporary, two-car overhead doors, a single wood paneled and glazed door and a single, double-hung window with six over six light sashes open east to a large parking lot.

On the north elevation, the flat roofed gymnasium contains, in the upper level, paired utilitarian windows set between unadorned brick pilasters. On this elevation all first floor windows of the main block and connector have been brick-filled. The three second story, double-hung, staircase landing windows have the leaded glass toplights. The 1946 stair tower and single level addition east of the gymnasium, have no windows on the north.

The main entrance provides access to the large, once formal hall. Double leaf, leaded inner doors open to a full width, seven step staircase (photo 12). Eight foot high, unmolded, painted paneling, finished with a projecting cornice above and a six inch base below, lines the hall walls (photo 13). Plaster is located above. Industrial linoleum, installed in 1946, covers a white ceramic floor composed of small hexagonal tiles. Originally, all wood paneling and trim was dark stained and varnished (photo 14). The main interior staircase, centered on the north wall, provides access to the second floor. The pipe and joint metal balusters and metal newel post were painted and veined to appear as marble. Treads and risers are marble (photo 15). A three unit window composition of double-hung, single light lower windows with stationary stained glass toplights above provides light at the landing (photo 16). To the east, along the north wall, an open stairway provides access to the lower level. Original balusters have been replaced with a contemporary wrought iron railing.

All first floor rooms in this main block were social rooms, the men's and women's lounges, card room, etc., with access provided from the center hall. All rooms were finished with leaded glass casement windows containing a center stained glass motif (photo 17), or topped with a stationary glazed panel containing a similar motif. The second floor contained the large (3,840 square foot) ballroom (photo 18, Plan 3). The east Palladian composition, now completely enclosed, provided an elegant backdrop for the variety of large, seasonal dances which were regularly part of the club's social calendar. Plaster walls here were stenciled with a combination of motifs used as framing devices around the windows and outlining the ceiling. Similar borders were used throughout the building (photos 18, 19, and 14).

The lower level of the main block, the southeast corner, contained a rathskeller (photo 19, Plan 1). A vaulted plaster ceiling was originally finished with a stenciled border decoration. The brick piers remain, but the sculpted heads of Bacchus have been removed. All windows have been closed; all built-in furniture and fixtures have been removed. The brick floor is still in place.

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The remainder of the interior, those spaces contained in the west corner pavilion, were altered in 1946, to provide classrooms in the adaptive reuse. Additional floors were inserted, converting the large swimming pool into auditorium and classroom spaces (Plans 1 and 2). The original large gymnasium, in the northwest corner, remains intact as do the lower level locker rooms and service areas. Additional administrative offices were created in the main block by the installation of wood paneled and translucent glazed walls. The two story stairwell, added to the northeast corner in 1946, provides a second access to the second floor of the main block, as well as to the single story classroom addition to the north.

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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement | <input type="checkbox"/> philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> theater |
| <input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Ethnicity |
| Specific dates | 1913-14 1946 | Builder/Architect | Adolph Scherrer Walter Scholer | |

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Independent Turnverein is important both for its association with Indianapolis' German heritage, and as one of few public or quasi-public buildings in the city displaying the influence of the Prairie and Craftsman styles.

The organization, a reflection of the predominance of Germans in the population of Indianapolis beginning in the 1850's, was a social and political club associated with reform, education and physical training. By 1872 two city groups, the Indianapolis Turnverein and the Social Turnverein, had joined into one group, the Indianapolis Socialer Turnverein. The organization was associated with the National Turnerbund, which was represented by the Indianapolis weekly newspaper, "Zukunft," edited by Adolph Seidensticker. By advocating the election of Tilden and Hendricks in the presidential campaign of 1876, the newspaper created a rift in this organization, and on January 1, 1879, a minority of 33 members resigned and immediately organized another society called the Unabhaengiger, or Independent Turnverein.

The Independent Turnverein continued to maintain an emphasis on physical fitness. The first gymnastic director, Richard Pertuch, followed precisely the organization's constitutional requirement for the teaching of the German style of gymnastics. Under his leadership, the membership increased to 800 members.

In 1884, the Independent Turnverein developed the old Third Presbyterian Church, at Ohio and Illinois Streets, as their center. The present facility was begun in 1913 and completed in 1914, and was the last of four large German clubhouses to be built in the city. (Three are still standing.) A new building provided the most modern facilities, providing a social atmosphere based on the well-being of a physically fit body.

The building was designed by Indianapolis' leading German architect, Adolph Scherrer, who was also the architect for the Indiana State Capitol Building, completed in 1888. While displaying some of the exuberant sculpted limestone detailing that can also be found on the Beaux Arts Capitol Building, the Turnverein clearly shows that Scherrer had adopted the Prairie and Craftsman modes by this time. While the studied formalism of the main facade is reminiscent of the Renaissance Revival, the Prairie School mien is apparent in the horizontal accent of the hipped roof, emphasized by the wide, overhanging eaves, and the sheltered band of windows and piers. The large areas of solid, undecorated masonry walls are further characteristic of the Prairie style, but the large, ornamental brackets, stained glass, and interior woodwork are more in keeping with the Craftsman style. The ubiquitous Craftsman style and the less common Prairie style are both usually found in residential architecture in this city; it is unusual to find them combined in a quasi-public building of this scale.

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By 1925, expansion and updating of the facilities were required to accommodate the by now 1500 members. An elaborate stick style residence, seen at the right edge of Photo 2, was incorporated into the club by means of a one-story frame connection, and a tunnel into the basement kitchen areas.

When the club went into receivership in 1933, George Marott, a member and community leader, accepted a second mortgage on the property. At a Sheriff's auction in 1943, Marott purchased the first mortgage, and in 1945 he presented the building to Purdue University for use as an agricultural center. Major additions to the structure were made at that time. In 1962, the structure became known as the Marott Building, a part of the Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis campus. The university continued to use the structure on a limited basis through early spring, 1983. A developer has recently purchased the complex, intending to renovate it for commercial use.

Independent Turnverein

Item Number 9

Baist, G. William (compiler). Real Estate Atlas of Surveys of Indianapolis and Vicinity, Indiana; compiled and published from Official Records, Private Plans and Actual Surveys. Philadelphia: G. William Baist, 1899, 1908, 1916, 1927, and 1941.

Dunn, Jacob Piatt. Greater Indianapolis. Chicago: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1910, pp. 202-16.

Hoosier Athletic Club Yearbook. (Privately printed), 1923, 1937.

Indianapolis City Directories. Indianapolis: (Various publishers), 1880 to 1948, inclusive.

Indianapolis News. 2-7-1914; 1-30-1918; 10-17-1925; 9-27-1930.

Indianapolis Star. 1-25-1914; 10-10-1925; 5-26-1943; 5-28-1943; 6-22-1945; 11-29-1945; 2-16-1946.

Indianapolis Turnverein, 1851 - 1926, 75th Anniversary. (Privately printed), November 12 and 13, 1926.

Probst, George Theodore. "The Germans in Indianapolis, 1850-1914.) Unpublished M.A. thesis, Indiana University, 1951.

Scherrer, Adolf. Notebooks. Indiana Historical Society.

The Hoosier. IX (June, 1929). (Published by the Hoosier Athletic Club).