NPS	Form	10-900
(3-82)		

**United States Department of the Interior** National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

ELHA OMB No. 1024-0018 Exp. 10-31-84

received

date entered

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

### 1. Name

historic	Villa North Histo	oric Di	str	ict	- 11 - 155 - 15 1 - 11 - 155 - 14 1 - 14 - 14 - 15				
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state	Indiana c	ode	018	county	Well	S	ensis Annoi	code	179
3. Clas	sification								
Category X district building(s) structure site object	Ownership public X private both Public Acquisition in process being considered N/A	Acc	wo wo yes	cupied occupied rk in progress sible s: restricted s: unrestricted	com educ enter	culture mercial ational rtainment ernment strial		museun park private religiou scientifi transpo other:	residence s c
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6. Rep	resentation	n in I	Ex	isting	Survey	/S some			
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## 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Che	eck one	
excellent X good fair	deteriorated ruins unexposed	unaltered X_altered	Х	original s moved	ite date

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

Villa North is a residential area on either side of North Main Street (Indiana Highway 1) in Bluffton, Indiana. Although the area is today bounded on both the north and south by roadside commercial development, Villa North has maintained its identify as a distinctive residential area. The houses are set back from the roadway behind lines of shade trees, and the houses are widely spaced in much the manner of a modern suburb. The integrity of the area's landscape has been a major factor which has contributed to the area's continued viability as one of single-family residential use, in spite of the volume of traffic on North Main Street, which is the principal highway in Bluffton. The landscape elements are also a significant factor in Villa North's visual identity as an easily recognizable unit. both today and historically (Photos 14, 15, 16, 17).

Villa North began with the construction of the Lent Williamson Residence, "Longfields," in 1891 and the historical development of the area was largely complete by 1915, although the newest houses in the area, those of John Young (1949) and Corvin Briner (1959) were built well into the 20th century (the Young and Briner residences are not included in the area here nominated). During the period of historical development, open farmland separated the houses from nearby Bluffton, whose development was limited to the south bank of the Wabash River. Only roadside commercial development after 1945 finally ended the physical separation of Villa North, and the area was not formally annexed into the city until 1965.

The 13 houses which compose Villa North are local examples of the styles of residential architecture common in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and include among their number works by local architect/builders and one structure by an architectural firm of regional significance. In addition to the houses, most of the properties also include original carriage barns and other outbuildings. All of the buildings in the area are in good physical condition, and many display a high degree of architectural integrity; the most commonly seen form of alteration is asbestos or aluminum siding. The houses of Villa North include:

1. The Lent A. Williamson Residence, 760 North Main Street

The Williamson Residence is a two story Queen Anne style design, and was the first house built in Villa North (1891). The house was designed by the prominent Fort Wayne architects, Wing and Mahurin, who also designed the Bluffton building of the Wells County Bank (1888) of which L. A. Williamson was President. In addition to its historical associations with Williamson, the house is of additional architectural significance for its similarity to the Fort Wayne residence of architect Marshall Mahurin (1891, demolished 1920) as shown by comparison of the original plans, which are in the possession of the present owners, with the plans of the Mahurin Residence as shown in the November, 1891, issue of the Chicago trade magazine, <u>Inland Architect</u> and News Record. (Photo 1.)

2. The Amos G. King Residence, 750 North Main Street

The King Residence is a two story design which combines an Italianate form with Colonial Revival details. The home was designed and built by Alvin J. Stewart, local civil engineer, for his daughter and son-in-law in 1894. Although Stewart was a resident of Bluffton from 1871 and was active as a local builder and architect, only this residence and his own home at 414 West Market Street in Bluffton (1882), which is the present Wells County Historical Society Museum, have been clearly

## 8. Significance

archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	religion
archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
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art	engineering	music	humanitarian
commerce	exploration settlement	philosophy	theater
communications	industry invention	politics government	transportation other (specify)
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Specific dates 1891-1915

Builder Architect Various

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Villa North is primarily of local historical and architectural significance as Bluffton's first suburban development. The size and disposition of the houses built by some of Bluffton's most prominent citizens is tangible evidence of the prosperity the area enjoyed at the turn of the century, during a gas and oil boom (1877-c. 1905). The designs and siting of the houses reflect not only generally popular architectural styles and concepts of suburban development and landscape planting, but are also illustrations of the works of local and area architects and builders. Credit for the planting of the trees along the west side of North Main Street belongs to one of the most significant local figures in the field of botany, Charles C. Deam (1865-1953), who served as the first State Forester of Indiana, and was of statewide significance not only in that capacity, but as the author of several seminal works on Indiana flora.

As noted in the descriptions of the properties, the houses in Villa North each have significant historical associations with persons prominent in the commercial, social, and governmental life of the local community. That the residents of Villa North also thought of themselves as members of a distinct community is illustrated by their adoption of the name, Villa North, in 1901, at the suggestion of Mrs. Lent Williamson, their purchase in 1901 of a communal lawn mower, and their opting for Craigville, rather than Bluffton telephone service in 1905 (for the sake of lower service rates). These acts of local autonomy led Bluffton residents to dub the area "Dodgertown" as a derisive reference to Villa North's lower county taxes. While most of Bluffton's other 19th century suburban areas have lost their identity due to contiguous residential expansion of the city, both the lateness and difference of land use of the surrounding development which has made Villa North a part of Bluffton has only served to reinforce and extend the sense of the visual and historical identity of Villa North as a significant residential district.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet

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10. G	eograp	hical Data				
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65), I hereby	nominate this p	roperty for inclusion in t	the National Regis	ster and certify	y that it has bee	en evaluated
according to the	ne criteria and j	procedures set forth by t				
State Historic	Preservation O	fficer signature	John	T. Cost	the	
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United States Department of the Interior National Park Service

## National Register of Mistoric Places Inventory—Nomination Form

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date entered

Villa North		
Continuation sheet Historic District	Item number 4	Page 1
OWNERS OF PROPERTIES - WEST SIDE		
1. Lent A. Williamson Residence:	Gordon and Marcella Hart 760 North Main Street Bluffton,Indiana 46714	
2. Amos G. King Residence:	Clarence Kim and Kathleen Kline 750 North Main Street Bluffton, Indiana 46714	
3. James H. Chaddock Residence:	Daniel and Charlene Lantz 742 North Main Street Bluffton, Indiana 46714	
4. Judge E. C. Vaughn Residence:	Ronald and Judith Hanusin 734 North Main Street Bluffton, Indiana 46714	
5. John Trostel Residence:	Victor and Theresa Biberstine 730 North Main Street Bluffton, Indiana 46714	
6. Peter Beeler Residence:	William and Dorothy Fryback 718 North Main Street Bluffton, Indiana 46714	
7. William Dustman Residence:	Raymond and Daisy Cox 712 North Main Street Bluffton, Indiana 46714	α, πορεί παε Charla, adJ chilono, adf
8. Andrew H. Reed Residence:	Duane and Frederica Nodine 706 North Main Street Bluffton, Indiana 46714	
OWNERS OF PROPERTIES - EAST SIDE		
9. Charles H. Houck Residence:	Dale Mann 731 North Main Street Bluffton, Indiana 46714	
10. William Merriman Residence:	Virginia L. Mayer 727 North Main Street Bluffton, Indiana 46714	
11. W. J. Newhard Residence:	William Haifley R. R. 3 Bluffton, Indiana 46714	
12. J. A. Poffenberger Residence:	Alvin and Coleen Ringger 715 North Main Street Bluffton, Indiana 46714	
13. Wiley Messick Residence:	William and Mary Steffen 707 North Main Street	

Bluffton, Indiana 46714

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The completion of the King	Residence by Stewart was

identified as Stewart designs. The completion of the King Residence by Stewart was noted by the <u>Bluffton Weekly Chronicle</u> November 14, 1894. King and Stewart were partners in the Bluffton Creamery, and King was later (1901-1904) elected Wells County Treasurer. (Photo 2.)

OMB No 1024-0018

3. The James H. Chaddock Residence, 742 North Main Street

The Chaddock Residence is a two story Queen Anne style design which has a Colonial Revival style porch and interior details. Chaddock, who came to Bluffton in 1876 as superintendent of a woolen mill located on East Market Street in Bluffton, built this retirement home for himself in 1898. The design is very similar to that of the John Trostel Residence nearby, and the features of both houses are very similar to those of known works by the local architect and builder, William H. Powers, especially Powers' earliest known residential design, the Wilson Mason Residence at 404 West Washington Street in Bluffton (1888). (Photo 3.)

4. Judge Edwin C. Vaughn Residence, 734 North Main Street

The Vaughn Residence is a two story Colonial Revival style design whose present gambrel roofline is a later alteration made after the original steeply pitched gabled roof was struck by lightning. The design is documented as the work of local architect William H. Powers (1897), who did a number of similar, though less elaborate, residences in Bluffton. The original owner of the property, Edwin Vaughn, had a distinguished career in local politics, which included terms as mayor of Bluffton, prosecutor and later judge (1893-1906) of the 28th Indiana Judicial Circuit, as well as county attorney and President of the Wells County Bar Association. (Photo 4.)

5. The John Trostel Residence, 730 North Main Street

The Trostel Residence is a two story ell-shaped Queen Anne style design which features a second story loggia on its facade above a Colonial Revival style porch. As noted above, the Trostel and Chaddock residences bear a marked similarity to the known works of local architect William H. Powers. John Trostel was proprietor of a livery barn in Bluffton and is also notable for having served one term as Wells County Surveyor (1895-1898). Trostel built his home in Villa North c. 1893, and his residence here probably influenced his next-door neighbor and brother-in-law, Edwin Vaughn, to build in Villa North, as well. (Photo 5.)

6. The Peter Beeler Residence, 718 North Main Street

Peter Beeler was an Adams County resident who built this two story Colonial Revival style residence as a retirement home in 1899. After having only lived in the house since November of that year, Beeler died in January, 1900, and the house was occupied by his widow and five children for several years. In 1910 the property was bought by Phanuel McIntire, a retired Jackson Township farmer, who had served as a Wells County Commissioner from 1888 to 1890, during the construction of the present county court-house; McIntire later (1901-1906) served as the first First District Councilman when that element of local government was created. The design of the Beeler house suggests that it is probably the work of local architect William H. Powers, since the north end bay of the front porch was originally a square, flat-roofed pavilion of the type seen on other Powers designs, such as the Harry Studabaker Residence (1901) at 513 West Market Street in Bluffton. (Photo 6.)

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7.	The William J. Dustman Residence, 71		
	The Dustman Residence is a one story Revival features, such as a lunette c. 1902 by William Dustman, who late During his term in public office, Du Henry Hunsicker and W. F. Simon, Dus surprisingly, in a room rented on th (Photo 7.)	window in the front gal er served as Wells Coun- ustman started a real es stman and Company, whose	ble. The house was built ty Treasurer (1909-1912). state and loan firm with e offices were located, not
8.	The Andrew H. Reed Residence, 706 No	orth Main Street	
	Bluffton hardware merchant, Andrew R in 1899, at which time he was a part at 115 West Market Street in Bluffto sign of the John A. Morris Residence suggests that the Reed design was do	cner in the Cline, Zimme on. The similarity of t e (1898) at 427 West Wi	er and Reed Hardware store the Reed house to the de- ley Avenue in Bluffton,
9.	The Charles H. Houck Residence, 731	North Main Street	
	Local architect Charles H. Houck bui himself c. 1908. Houck was one of t after the wane of the local gas and dential design which can be ascribed was busy with the design of the Germ Christ) at 301 West Cherry Street in School (1910), and eventually reloca City Hall (1925) and High Street Met Smenner. (Photo 9.)	the last remaining location oil boom (1887-1905), a l to him. At the time h an Reform Church (prese Bluffton, and later he ted in Muncie, Indiana	architects in Bluffton and this is the only resi- be built his house, Houck ent First United Church of e designed the Central where he designed the
10	. The William Merriman Residence, 727	North Main Street	
11.	The W. J. Newhard Residence, 721 Nor	th Main Street	
	These two very similar Colonial Revi have second floor areas within their Residence is further enriched by the probably possessed the kind of narro Tuscan porch still seen on the Newha Newhard, William Merriman is remembe later veteran insurance broker for t Fort Wayne (Photos 10, 11).	gambrel rooflines, the use of cross gables or w lock siding seen on t rd Residence. While li ored as both a onetime r	e form of the Merriman the side elevations. Both the Merriman House and ttle is known of W. J. restaurant proprietor and
12.	John Poffenberger Residence, 715 Nor	th Main Street	
13.	Wiley Messick Residence, 707 North M	ain Street	
	These two very similar Craftsman bun- represent the effective end of the hi area. Both houses have the broad, lo house form popular from 1905 until 19 fine example of its style, since it 19	istorical development of ow roofline characteris 930. The Messick Resic	the Villa North residential tic of the bungalow, a lence is a particularly

tapestry brick porch piers, and narrow clapboard siding. Both houses still retain the original truss brackets under their broad eaves. (Photos 12, 12.)

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As noted above, although the Villa North area is now flanked on both the north and south by commercial development, the residential area itself has maintained a high level of integrity, both of original use and of its original landscape appearance (Photos 14 through 17). The area has seen only one intrusion of non-residential use at its south end, where the Reed Residence is used as a dental office. The maintenance of the single family use of the buildings is reflected in the high general level of maintenance of all of the area's structures. Taken together, these factors have helped to maintain the distinct identify of Villa North as a recognizable district.

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Villa North Continuation sheet Historic District	Item number 9	Page 5
BOOKS		
Joyce Buckner and Dorothy Rose, <u>History</u> Wells County Bicentennial Publicat	of Wells County, 1776- ion Committee, 1976.	1976, Bluffton, Indiana
O. E. Lesh and John Tyndall, <u>Standard H</u> Chicago, Illinois, Lewis Publishing	istory of <u>Adams</u> and Wel g Company, 1918.	<u>ls Counties, Indiana,</u>
NEWSPAPERS		
Titled Articles		
, "All Lots Were Sold in Villa No Indiana, September 19, 1906. , "Andy Reed Trades Fred Noble," , "Judge E. C. Vaughn Called by D July 10, 1935. , "Our New Bank," <u>Bluffton Weekly</u> , "Trostel Dies at Home in Van Bu January 2, 1936. , "Very Sudden Death," <u>Bluffton W</u> , "W. H. Merriman is Claimed by D 26, 1949.	<u>Evening Banner</u> , Blufft Death," <u>Evening News-Ba</u> / <u>Chronicle</u> , Bluffton, uren," <u>Evening News-Ban</u>	on, Indiana, May 25, 19 nner, Bluffton, Indiana Indiana, December 13, ner, Bluffton, Indiana,
Intitled Articles		t
, Peter Beeler lets contract for	house, Bluffton Weekly	Chronicle, Bluffton.
Indiana, July 5, 1899. , Peter Beeler moves into new res Indiana, November 16, 1899.		
, James Chaddock building a new r Indiana, September 7, 1898.	esidence, <u>Bluffton Week</u>	(ly Chronicle, Bluffton
, James Chaddock obituary, <u>Blufft</u> December 27, 1911.	on Weekly Chronicle, Bl	luffton, Indiana,
, Dustman and Company formed, Eve , King and Stewart Bluffton cream Indiana, November 4, 1886.	ery opens, <u>Bluffton</u> Wee	ekly Chronicle, Bluffton
, King and Stewart dissolve partn Indiana, January 10, 1889.		
, New King residence nearly compl Indiana, November 21, 1894.		
, Mrs. Olive McIntire obituary, <u>E</u> 1922.	Vening Ranner Bluffton	, Indiana, February 6,
, Wiley Felts Messick obituary,		

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(3-82) MB No 1024-0018 xp 10-31-84 United States Department of the Interior National Park Service For NPS usergraty National Register of Historic Places received 'nventory-Nomination Form date entered Villa North Historic District Continuation sheet 9 Item number 6 Page , Reed and Cline buy Zimmerman interest in their hardware store, Bluffton Weekly Chronicle, November 9, 1910. , Mrs. A. H. Reed obituary, Bluffton Weekly Chronicle, Bluffton, Indiana, October 26, 1904. Mrs. John Trostel obituary, Evening News-Banner, Bluffton, Indiana, July 1, 1937. , Vaughn buys property to build a residence, Bluffton Weekly Chronicle, Bluffton, Indiana, June 25, 1897. , Villa North communal lawn mower purchased, Bluffton Weekly Chronicle, Bluffton, Indiana, May 1, 1901. , Villa North residents adopt name, Bluffton Weekly Chronicle, Bluffton, Indiana, May 29, 1901. , Villa North has Craigville telephones, Bluffton Weekly Chronicle, Bluffton, Indiana, March 25, 1904. , Williamson property being surveyed, Bluffton Weekly Chronicle, Bluffton, Indiana, July 16, 1891. , Williamson residence nearly done, Bluffton Weekly Chronicle, Bluffton, Indiana, August 6, 1891. , Lent A. Williamson obituary, Evening Banner, Bluffton, Indiana, December 21, 1914.

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#### VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Commencing at a point on the West line of North Main Street one hundred feet South of the Northeast corner of the property of Gordon and Marcella Hart, then proceeding West a distance of two hundred eighty feet along a line parallel to the North line of the property of Gordon and Marcella Hart, then proceeding South and West on a line parallel to the West line of North Main Street, to the intersection of said line with the South line of the property of Duane and Frederica Nodine, then proceeding East along said South property line and its direct extension to intersect the East line of North Main Street, then South and West along said line to intersect the South line of the one acre tract owned by William and Mary Steffen, then East along said line a distance of two hundred feet, then North and East along a line parallel to the East line of North Main Street to the South wall of a garage building on the property of William Haifley, then East, North, and West along the walls of said garage building to return to an intersection with a line parallel to and two hundred feet to the East of the East line of North Main Street, then North and East along said line to its intersection with the North line of the property of Dale Mann, then West along said property line and its direct extension to intersect the West line of North Main Street, then North and East along said line to its intersection with the point of beginning, all enclosed area located in Section 33, Township 27, Range 12 East of Lanceaster Township within the limits of the City of Bluffton, Wells County, Indiana.

## Justification:

The area described has been selected to include only the residences and outbuildings of the Villa North area. The land held by the owners extends in varying depths on either side of North Main Street, and varies in individual extent from one to ten acres. Rear portions of the properties, however, are open land which has never been subject to any historical development other than agricultural use, and these areas were therefore judged not to be of contributing significance to the district.

The boundary along the west side of North Main Street follows the present right-of-way line of State Highway 1, which is also the original property line for the residence.



