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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received
date entered

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

1. Name

historic: Mead Johnson River-Rail-Truck Terminal and Warehouse

and or common:

2. Location

street & number: 1830 West Ohio Street — N/A ___ not for publication

city, town: Evansville — N/A ___ vicinity of

state: Indiana — code: 018 — county: Vanderburgh — code: 163

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
___ district	___ public	X occupied	___ agriculture	___ museum
X building(s)	X private	___ unoccupied	X commercial	___ park
___ structure	___ both	___ work in progress	___ educational	___ private residence
___ site	**Public Acquisition**	**Accessible**	___ entertainment	___ religious
___ object	___ in process	X yes: restricted	___ government	___ scientific
	___ being considered	___ yes: unrestricted	___ industrial	X transportation
	N/A	___ no	___ military	___ other:

4. Owner of Property

name: Mead Johnson Terminal Corporation

street & number: 1830 West Ohio Street

city, town: Evansville, — N/A vicinity of — state: Indiana — 47704

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number: Civic Center Complex

city, town: Evansville — state: Indiana — 47708

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title: Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory — has this property been determined eligible? ___ yes X no

date: June, 1981 — federal X state ___ county ___ local

depository for survey records: Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

city, town: Indianapolis — state: Indiana

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
___ excellent	___ deteriorated	___ unaltered	X original site
X good	___ ruins	X altered	___ moved date N/A
___ fair	___ unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Mead Johnson River-Rail-Truck Terminal and Warehouse is located on a 6.5 acre site situated at the confluence of the Ohio River and Pigeon Creek and immediately south of Ohio Street directly on the river. The site is barren except for the terminal buildings and the access road and railroad tracks, and is surrounded by light industries. (Photos 1-3.)

The Mead Johnson Terminal and Warehouse is actually two large, structurally independent buildings. The terminal operations take place under a huge, rectangular, canopy structure which measures 285 feet long, 110 feet wide, and 62 feet high. It is cantilevered 45 feet out over the river, providing space for two barges, and has a north-south axis. (Photos 6 & 7.) Reinforced concrete piers (photograph 21) support the superstructure over the river. The superstructure is composed of huge girders and columns of steel and iron. (Photos 16 and 17.) This superstructure supports a framework of structural steel which is covered by sheets of corrugated, galvanized sheet metal with glass panes for natural lighting. The roof consists of sheets of corrugated asbestos.

The interior of the canopy terminal structure is completely devoid of any support columns. (Photos 12 and 13.) The unique design distributes weight directly onto the superstructure supports. By eliminating interior supports, the entire length and width of the structure is open, allowing two overhead, electric gantry cranes to work in tandem if needed.

These two cranes each measure 54 feet in length with a capacity of ten tons each and a traveling speed of 500 feet per minute. (Photo 14.) Completely electric, they travel on track runways suspended from the ceiling. The original cranes installed in 1931 are still in use today. A double railroad track runs through the canopy structure at the north end for railcar access with a parallel concrete ramp for truck access. (Photo 15.) Original oak flooring (photo 18) and concrete docks (photo 19) are still used in the freight handling operations. Although some deterioration has occurred in this structure, its original integrity remains essentially intact after 53 years of service.

The original warehouse is a rectangular, one story structure, 585 feet long and 150 feet wide with an east-west axis. This structure is still in heavy use and was enlarged in 1957 by a 310 foot addition on the west end. The original warehouse had 90,000 square feet of raw warehousing space; the 1957 addition has brought this total to 140,000 square feet. (Photos 4, 5, 8-11.)

The warehouse design incorporated a floating "one floor" constructed of solid concrete which has an unlimited floor load capacity. The roof of the warehouse is supported entirely by steel columns, each of which has its own individual concrete footing separate from the floor and walls. The result is that the floor, roof and walls are all structurally independent. The walls are constructed of solid brick and the roof is of three-ply construction: steel, insulation, and roofing material. The 1957 addition was constructed in a sympathetic manner with concrete floors and concrete block walls faced with brick.

The offices, located in the warehouse structure, have been extensively remodeled. The original maintenance area is still in sue. The entire building was originally equipped with a fire sprinkler system which is still in functional use. This system, coupled

with the brick, concrete, and steel construction, renders the warehouse virtually fireproof. Numerous doors (photo 20) around the building provide access for railcars and trucks. The only major change to occur to the facility has been the switching from coal-fired steam heat to electric heat. The boiler has been removed and the room now used for storage. The electric heaters are hung from the ceiling, as were the previous radiators, for economy of floor space.

The warehouse also retains its original integrity with only slight deterioration. Nevertheless, both warehouse and terminal structures are still in service as originally designed and constructed 53 years ago, and are still considered modern and efficient today.

8. Significance

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

Specific dates 1931 **Builder Architect** M. J. Hoffman Construction Co./ Builder
Gus Seegmueller/Structural Engineer
Frank Fowler/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Mead Johnson River-Rail-Truck Terminal and Warehouse is very significant to Evansville's history for a variety of reasons. The terminal's unique, farsighted design, reflecting several new ideas, greatly enhanced the city's commerce and transportation possibilities. In addition, the terminal was built by one of Evansville's most progressive and public-spirited citizens, E. Mead Johnson, Sr.

The Ohio River has always been closely tied to Evansville's economy. Beginning in the 1840's, goods from the Green River valley above Evansville and the Cumberland, Tennessee and Wabash Rivers below Evansville would travel by water to Evansville, making the city a regional marketplace and distribution center for grain, tobacco, livestock and lumber, as well as a retail and wholesale center for the area. The federal government had recognized Evansville's importance as a transportation and distribution center by making the city an official Port of Entry in 1856. With rail links to the north and river links to the south, Evansville became an important gateway between the North and South.

The Mead Johnson Terminal and Warehouse was an important addition to Evansville's Ohio River-based commerce and transportation scene. Canalization of the Ohio River by the federal government had been completed in 1929. Canalization of the river provided a minimum, year-round safe river depth of nine feet. It had previously been common for the river to naturally subside into a shallow channel with acres of sand and snags which plagued river shipping. The river was only reliable during the winter when shipping was at its lowest. Canalizing the river made possible year-round, large scale shipping which made lower transportation rates available to shippers. The Mead Johnson facility translated these low rates into a serviceable economic advantage to the city by providing first-class access to shipping opportunities and making Evansville a world port.

Before the Johnson Terminal was constructed, Evansville's "port" consisted of a paved wharf—simply a cobblestoned section of riverbank about five blocks long—and a wharfboat—a single, large wooden barge with a one-story wood structure on top. Both the wharf and the wharfboat were originally built in 1848. At the time of the Johnson Terminal construction in 1931, the wharfboat had 12,500 square feet of space, moored at the center of the city wharf, and was an old and decrepit structure. Freight was moved completely by hand and no rail connections or truck docks existed.

In 1931, Evansville possessed a core of progressive businessmen and boosters who were led by E. Mead Johnson, Sr. Johnson had been associated for years with the commercial development of Evansville. He located the Mead Johnson Company here and developed it into a corporation which today continues to be known world-wide for its nutritional and pharmaceutical products. Furthermore, Johnson had, for several years, been interested in the potential of river transportation and terminal facilities, and believed "that whichever river towns were first provided with such terminals would...become the leading cities of the middle west." His faith in Evansville led him to make a personal investment of $500,000 for the design and construction of the terminal and warehouse, becoming the first person anywhere to provide complete private capital for such a facility.

The Mead Johnson Terminal was vastly more efficient than the wharfboat. Johnson withheld no expenditure to produce the finest and most modern facility possible. He sent the architects and engineers to examine similar operations for ideas and methods which could be improved upon and incorporated into the new terminal design. The canopy structure was designed by Gus Seegmueller, a local German structural engineer. The cantilevered design, which was revolutionary at the time, enabled the canopy structure to have no interior supports, allowing two highspeed, ten-ton, overhead electric cranes to work in tandem. The canopy cover and crane runways extended out over the river, both firsts in terminal design. Direct access by crane was possible to and from barge railcars, trucks, and the warehouse entrance, all under cover and electrically lighted, allowing work to be done day or night in any weather.

The warehouse, designed by local architect Frank Fowler, had 90,000 square feet of space which was supplemented by the 18,000 square feet under the canopy structure and three acres of adjacent open storage space to the west. This was the largest such structure on the Ohio River. The design included innovations such as a floating "one floor" construction, giving the floor an unlimited weight capacity and independently standing roof, walls and floor. Electric lift trucks, pneumatic hand trucks, and electric conveyors and stackers were used to handle merchandise as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Only two other Ohio River cities had modern terminal/warehouse facilities of any size that were available for public, general freight use and comparable to the Johnson facility The first modern terminal had been opened by a steel firm in 1926 but was for private use, only. In Cincinnati, the Mississippi Valley Barge Line Company had completed a new facility only three months ahead of the Mead Johnson Terminal. Their facility used two electric elevators (which operated more slowly than overhead cranes) and one 20-ton gantry crane with access to one railroad. A two-level transit shed was used for truck and rail transfer and warehousing (square footage unknown). Barge loading/unloading operations took place in the open. The Cincinnati Sheet Metal and Roofing Company operated a facility with 75,000 square feet of space, with one 12-ton revolving crane and access to one railroad. In Louisville, the Ohio River Terminal and Warehouse Company operated a facility with 20,000 square feet of space using one overhead electric crane, and a steam locomotive crane with access to only one railroad.

At the opening ceremonies of the Mead Johnson Terminal in February, 1931, a representative of the Mississippi Valley Improvement Association stated, "The terminal built in Cincinnati and opened last October by the Mississippi Valley Barge Line Company, at a cost of about $450,000 was the last word until Evansville's was put into operation. Now I believe you can point with pride to the Evansville terminal as being one of the most up-to-date on our inland waterways system." (The inland waterways system included all navigable rivers.

Furthermore, Carl J. Baer, vice-president of the Mississippi Valley Barge Line Company and another opening day speaker, called the Mead Johnson facility "one of the finest river terminals in America...whose completion is an epochal event in the transportation history of this country." The terminal's continued importance to Evansville was noted in 1958, 27 years after the terminal was opened. The Fantus Industrial Locating Service stated, "The existence of a large, modern and efficient terminal in Evansville is a very real advantage to the city."

The Mead Johnson Terminal's modern design and equipment promoted greater efficiency by simplifying freight handling and storage. As a result, greater handling speed was possible which translated into lower handling costs. This factor, combined with cheaper river transportation rates, made river shipping less expensive, overall, than rail or over-the-road shipping for companies able to take advantage of the Mead Johnson facilities.

One such company was the Chrysler automobile company. One of the primary reasons Evansville was chosen for Chrysler's expansion in 1935 was the availability of low river transportation rates via the Mead Johnson Terminal facilities. Chrysler used the terminal facilities to ship in steel as well as ship out finished cars by barge. Five thousand people were employed by Chrysler at the height of operations, creating quite an impact on Evansville's economy and helping Evansville weather the Depression better than many other cities.

Another industry which continued to be important to Evansville's economy and which benefited from the terminal was the manufacturing of refrigerators. The industry began to develop before the terminal was constructed, but as steel and cork began to be used in cabinets, the Mead Johnson facility was important in making refrigerator manufacturing an attractive industry in Evansville. Retail prices were again kept low by shipping raw and finished products through the terminal. For many years Evansville was the undisputed refrigerator manufacturing capital of the world, with three different companies producing refrigerators. Today, Whirlpool continues to produce refrigerators and other products, using steel shipped to Evansville through the Mead Johnson facilities.

In addition to these two major industries, the Mead Johnson Terminal also had a stimulating effect on other area products, such as tobacco, beer, furniture and diet materials. By offering low transportation rates, local industries could extend their markets much farther than before the terminal was built. As an example, Kentucky tobacco could now be competitively sold overseas.

During World War II, the facilities were used by the adjacent Naval shipyards and Republic Aviation to transport and store materials for building LST's and P-47 Thunderbolts. Products from all over the world, ranging from sugar to cod liver oil, passed through the port complex. Today, iron, steel and imported metals are the main items handled.

According to a 1973 newspaper article, the terminal has served as a model for at least two other terminals, one in Ashland, Kentucky, and another in Greenville, Missouri. "We've had visitors from all over the inland waterways system come look at this (terminal)," says Juncker (executive vice-president of the facility in 1973). "The founders of this place were very, very farsighted. Their modern engineering takes care of the needs of this area even today." William Bringleson, current vice-president in charge of the terminal operations, has echoed this statement, as well.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Please see continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 6.5 acres

Quadrangle name Evansville South Indiana-Kentucky Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	16	448020	4203160
B			
C			
D			
E			
F			
G			
H			

Verbal boundary description and justification The site comprises blocks 137, 138, and 139 of the Lamasco City plat and includes the adjacent portions of vacated South 8th and South 9th Avenues

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county		code
state		code	county		code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	A. Bruce Casteel, Historic Preservation Intern
organization	Department of Metropolitan Development Historic Preservation Services
date	May, 1984
street & number	216 Washington Avenue
telephone	812/426-4587
city or town	Evansville
state	Indiana 47713

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

___ national ___ state X 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.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature John T. Castetter

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date 11-15-84

For NPS use only

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

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration

GPO 894-788

CITY DIRECTORIES

Evansville City Directories, 1920+

ENCYCLOPEDIAS

Collier's Encyclopedia, P.F. Collier, Inc., New York, 1950-1976, Volume 20.
World Book Encyclopedia, World-Book-Childcraft International, Inc., 1980.
Encyclopedia Americana, Danbury, Conn.: Grolier, Inc., 1981, Volume 20.

HISTORIES

Charles Henry Ambler, A History of Transportation in the Ohio Valley, Glendale, California: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1932.
Ed Klingler, How a City Founded to Make Money Made It, The Economic and Business History of Evansville, Indiana, Evansville, Indiana: University of Evansville, 1979.

MAGAZINES

Exide-Ironclad Topics, Philadelphia: Exide-Ironclad Electric Storage Battery Company, April, 1932, Volume VI, Number 4.
Mississippi Valley Magazine, Saint Louis: Mississippi Valley Publishing Company, January, 1932.

NEWSPAPERS (not a complete listing)

Evansville Courier

1930 - month, day unknown

"New Terminal Promises To Be Dream Of River Traffic Revival, Come True".

1931 - February 27

"'Big Opportunity for Evansville,' Businessmen Say"
"Dawn of New Era for Transportation"
"E. Mead Johnson, Sr.'s Gift to Progress"
"Half Million Dollar River-Rail Project"
"Johnson Career Story of Colorful Contrast"
"'Open House' Celebration to Mark Completion of Big $500,000 Project"
"River-Rail Terminal a Notable Achievement in Modern Engineering"
"Warehousing Reaches New Efficiency Level"

1931 - February 28

"Johnson Honored by Thousands at Terminal Opening"

1936 - June 28

"Johnson Terminal One of Most Strategically Located in the World"

1956 - April 26

"Mead Johnson Terminal Corp. to Construct 40,000 Square Foot Warehouse"

1969 - May 29

"St. Louis Firm Buys MeJo Facility"

1979 - October 31

"The Ohio Holds Untapped Potential"

Evansville Courier and Journal

1922 - July 24

"Kahn Presents Contract for Rail-River Terminal"

1931 - May 17

"Terminal Opens City to Vast World Commerce"
"Evansville's Port Now Among Most Important In Waterway's Traffic"

Evansville Courier and Press

1973 - August 12

"Public Uses 2 Ports"

Evansville Journal

1921 - November 16

"Build Waterfront Terminal Now, Says Col. McCurdy, to Give City Maximum Benefit From Deepened River"

Evansville Press

1969 - May 28

"Mead Johnson Terminal Sold to St. Louis Company"

1973 - October 25

"Mead Johnson Terminal Acts As City's Port"

Out of Town Papers

1931 - February

Atlanta Journal; Chicago Herald and Examiner; Pittsburgh Press; Pacific Shipper; Hartford, Conn. paper; plus others.

PAMPHLETS

Evansville, Indiana, Evansville Chamber of Commerce, 1922. Mead Johnson Terminal Corporation pamphlets.

PUBLIC RECORDS

Vanderburgh County, Indiana. Articles of Incorporation.
Vanderburgh County, Indiana. Grantee/Grantor Deed Indexes.
Vanderburgh County, Indiana. Lot Deed Records.
Vanderburgh County, Indiana. Pigeon Township Assessor's Records.
Vanderburgh County, Indiana. Warranty Deed Records.

RESOURCE PEOPLE

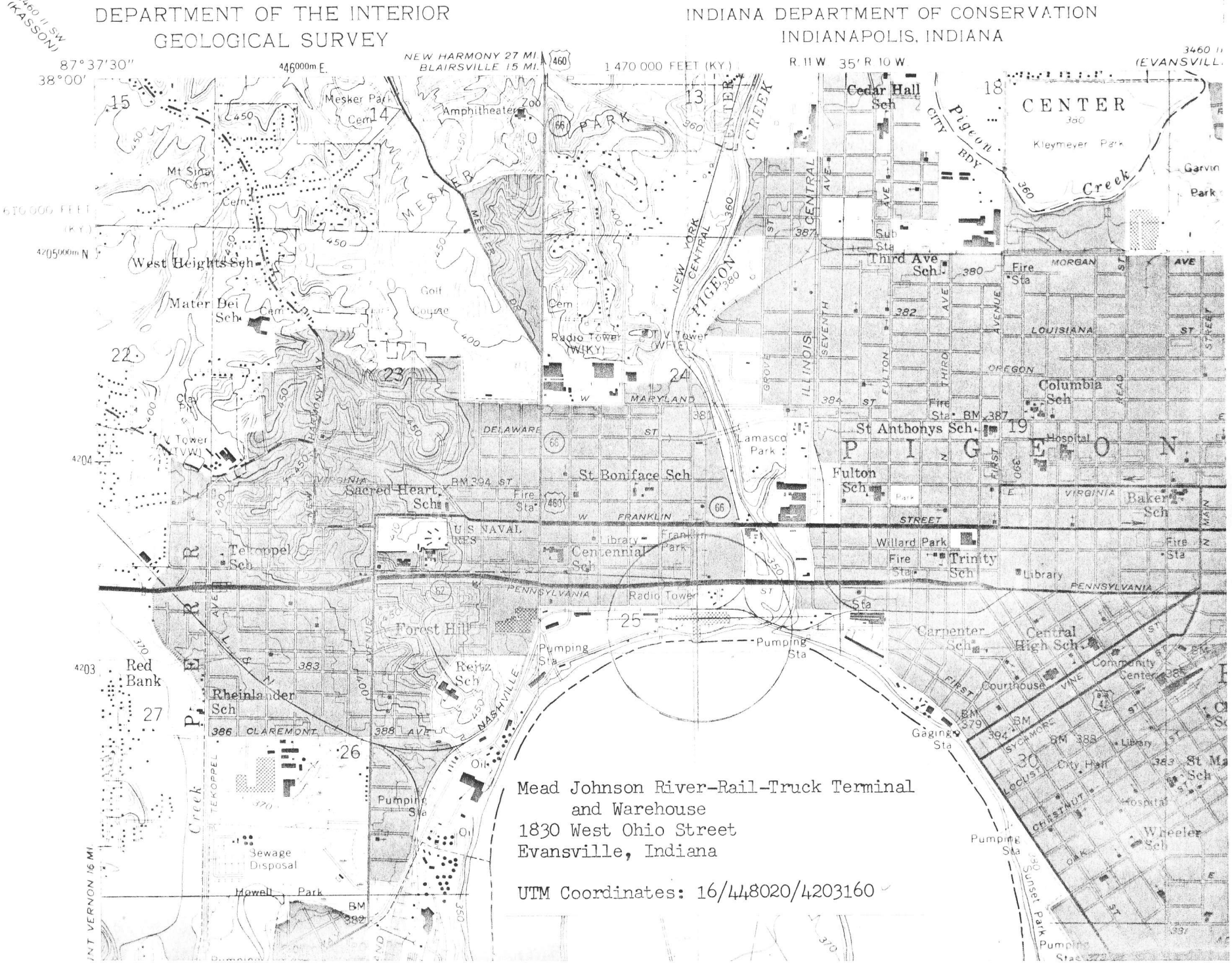
Bringleson, William - Evansville, Indiana - March, 1984
Kinsman, Mary Jean - Louisville, Kentucky - April, 1984
Lynch, John - Evansville, Indiana - March, 1984
Reichmann, Fred - Evansville, Indiana - January, 1984
Weber, Art - Evansville, Indiana - March, 1984
White, Dion - Evansville, Indiana - March, 1984

STUDIES

A Plan for Railroad and Harbor Development, Evansville, Indiana, The City Plan Commission, Evansville, Indiana, 1929.
Evansville's Potential for Industrial Growth, Fantus Industrial Locating Service, 1958.
The Ohio River, Chief of Engineers, United States Army, Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1935.

MISCELLANEOUS

Address by Carl J. Baer, Vice-President, Mississippi Valley Barge Line Company, at the Mead Johnson Terminal and Warehouse Formal Dedication on February 27, 1931.
Karges Architectural Index, Evansville, Indiana, H. Gilbert Karges, ed. J. D. Beeler's Radio Invitation to Evansville citizens to attend the Formal Dedication, February 24, 1931.


UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
STATE OF INDIANA
INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
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Mesker Park Zoo
Amphitheater
Cem
Mt Sinai Cem
West Heights Sch
Mater Dei Sch
Golf Course
Clay Pit
TV Tower (WVWI)
Radio Tower (WIKY)
TV Tower (WFIE)
Cedar Hall Sch
Third Ave Sch
Columbia Sch
St Anthonys Sch
Hospital
Fulton Sch
Lamasco Park
St Boniface Sch
Sacred Heart Sch
Fire Sta
BM 394
U S NAVAL RES
Library
Centennial Sch
Frank Park
Willard Park
Trinity Sch
Baker Sch
Telioppel Sch
Forest Hill
Pumping Sta
Carpenter Sch
Central High Sch
Community Center
Courthouse
Red Bank
Reitz Sch
Rheinlander Sch
Gaging Sta
City Hall
Wheeler Sch
Sewage Disposal
Howell Park
BM 389
Sunset Park
Kleymeyer Park
Garvin Park
Creek
Pigeon
CENTER
PIGEON
Mead Johnson River-Rail-Truck Terminal
and Warehouse
1830 West Ohio Street
Evansville, Indiana
UTM Coordinates: 16/448020/4203160