

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For NPS use only
received
date entered

1. Name

historic West, Fisher, Farm

and/or common

2. Location

street & number 17935 West Road

N/A not for publication

city, town Huntertown

vicinity of

~~congressional district~~

state Indiana

code 018

county

Allen

code 003

3. Classification

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

RECEIVED
NOV 26 1984
DIV. OF HIST.
PRES. & ARCHEOL.

4. Owner of Property

name Joseph C. Seyfert

street & number 17935 West Road

city, town Huntertown

vicinity of

state Indiana 46748

5. Location of Legal Description

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

street & number City-County Building

city, town Fort Wayne

state Indiana 46802

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Fisher West Farm is located on West Road (which takes its name from Fisher West) approximately three quarters of a mile south of the Allen County line, near adjacent Dekalb County. The buildings of the farm crown a ridge on the west side of the road, and the property extends to the north, south, and west of the barnyard and house. The buildings which compose the farmyard (the area here nominated) are as follows:

Residence

The Fisher West House is a brick residence in the Italianate style. The form of the house is composed of three distinct parts. The main wing of the house is a two story cubic mass whose low hipped roof is truncated by a square pyramidal-roofed belvedere; a one story porch extends across the front of this part of the house (Photo 1). The second part of the house is a two story hip-roofed wing which extends to the north of the main wing and is aligned with the rear wall of that wing in order to form a porch alcove on the facade. The total height of this secondary wing is such that the ridge of its roof intersects the main wing just below its frieze. A one story gabled kitchen wing extends behind the secondary wing to the west, forming a continuous wall with the end of the secondary wing on the north and another porch alcove on the rear (west) elevation (Photos 2, 3). The ridge of the kitchen wing intersects the secondary wing just below its cornice.

The ell formed by the main and secondary wings is given visual primacy by its architectural detail. The soft pressed brick of the walls of these parts of the house is laid to create a projecting water table at the top of the brick foundation wall, projecting hoods of header coursing which spring from corbels over the windows, and the frieze of the main wing. The windows of the principal elevations have segmental-arched tops on the first floor and round-arched tops on the second floor; all have their original two-over-two double-hung sash. The walls of the main wing are corbelled out above the second story windows to form a deep frieze which is divided into three panels on each elevation by pairs of panelled wooden brackets which have turned drop finials. An oculus in the center of each frieze panel is flanked on either side by a recessed rectangular panel in the brickwork. The molded wood frieze which runs above these brick panels and between the tops of the brackets is repeated along with the brackets on both the secondary wing and above the three round-arched one-over-one double-hung windows on each face of the belvedere (Photo 4). Simpler pairs of sawn brackets are mounted on the walls of the kitchen wing beneath its plain boxed eaves.

A principal feature of the facade is the one story porch which extends across the main wing. This porch has square piers with molded bases and capitals and stop-chamfered shafts. From the tops of the piers spring knee arches which are continuous with the architrave on which pairs of panelled brackets with drop finials are set above each pier (presumably the adjacent porch of the secondary wing had a similar treatment before its enclosure by a previous owner in 1946). The porch shows no evidence of having had a rail or balustrade originally, although its wooden deck has been replaced with a concrete slab. The main entrance to the house is located in the right (northernmost) bay beneath the porch; its pair of doors is set in a round-arched opening with panelled jambs. Each door has a single square panel under a round-topped glazed panel, and these are outlined with the same heavy moldings used on the jambs. The doors are set beneath a round-arched transom which is bisected by a vertical mullion (Photo 5).

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Immediately within the main entrance is the stairhall, which separates the parlor in the front of the main wing from the dining room in the secondary wing (Photo 6). The base of the stairway is adjacent to the door into the parlor on the south wall of the hall; the rear wall of the hall curves to follow the curve of the half-turn of the upper part of the stair, as does the plastered apron wall under the stairway. The stair stringer is decorated with scroll-sawn trim beneath the nosing of the treads, and two tapered turned spindles stand on each tread to support an oval rail which begins as a continuation of the top turning of the starting newel, whose urn-shaped tapered shaft stands on a square base with chamfered corners (Photo 7). The rail follows the curve of the stairs, curves around the rounded corners of the stairwell, and returns against the south wall of the upper landing without any additional newels.

Both the stairhall and the adjacent parlor are trimmed in segmental-topped casings which have an ovolo profile on their inner edge and a heavy bolection molding composed of a shallow cove inside a heavy round bead; this profile is repeated on the projecting plinth blocks at the bases of the doorways, which have flat-topped frames and four-pannelled doors with round-topped upper panels (Photo 8). The heads of the parlor windows are segmental-arched and panelled aprons are used under the recessed sills of the windows. Both rooms have high baseboards topped by quirked ogee moldings.

The principal feature of the front parlor is the fireplace which is centered on the south wall and flanked by windows (Photo 9). The original mantel has been mounted on a projecting chimney which contains a modern circulating fireplace. The mantelpiece repeats the form used on the front porch as molded pilasters on either side of a hearth opening whose three-centered arch breaks the deep architrave above to recall the knee-arch form seen on the porch. The architrave has a row of molded dentils beneath a round-ended shelf whose front is cut in a French curve and whose edge is finished in an inverted ogee profile.

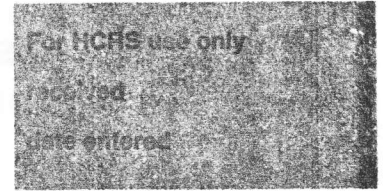
A similar mantelpiece may once have graced the hearth on the north end of the dining room which is opposite the parlor on the other side of the stairhall (Photo 10). That room now has a red brick fireplace installed sometime in the last forty years. The dining room is otherwise intact and has woodwork which consists of high ogee-topped baseboards and pedimented, shouldered casings trimmed with a bolection molding which consists of a half-round flanked on either side by a fluting and a smaller half-round (Photo 11). The doors in this room and the remainder of the house are four-pannelled leaves with ogee trim around plain panels.

On the wall of the dining room opposite the hearth, doors provide access to the stairhall, a closet under the stairway, and a pair of rooms behind the parlor. These latter rooms are trimmed with the same base as the dining room, but have flat-topped casings with a shallow ogee bolection molding and a quirked ogee architrave molding (Photo 12). A door on the east wall of the dining room opens onto the enclosed front porch, and a door on the opposite wall opens into the kitchen, which is in the rear wing.

The kitchen has modern cabinets and plain casings (Photo 13). The original brick of the kitchen chimney has been exposed on the west end of the room. Beyond the kitchen are a rear entrance vestibule, a laundry room, and a garage which occupies the end of the rear wing.

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Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

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The second floor of the house consists of a stair landing flanked on either side by bedrooms which correspond in plan to the parlor and dining room on the first floor. Directly behind the stair landing is an enclosed stairway to the attic and the belvedere. A modern bathroom is tucked beneath the roof of the secondary wing at its intersection with the rear wing, and store rooms extend behind the attic stairs and the master bedroom in the main wing. The master bedroom has a mantelpiece mounted on the same chimney used in the parlor (Photo 14). The mantelpiece is a simplified version of the one in the parlor; its plain Tuscan pilasters support a deep architrave and a shelf with a rounded edge. This was apparently a backdrop for a stove, since the baseboard extends through the mantel and no evidence of an open hearth exists.

The second floor is trimmed in a base topped by a quirked ogee molding and a casing with a narrow bolection molding. The bedroom above the dining room has been panelled in knotty pine.

The Fisher West House is largely intact. For the most part, the greatest alterations have occurred in those parts of the house which probably lacked significant architectural details, such as the rooms in the rear wing. The greatest changes to the exterior have been the garage door added to the north side of the rear wing, enclosure of one front porch, and the creation of a ramped basement entrance on the north end of the secondary wing. The house still has its original slate roof and its panelled and corbelled chimney tops. The present owners have done a great deal of work to repair the house, and have restored many deteriorated original elements in the process.

Barn

The principal farm building is the gabled rectangular bank barn which stands north of the house (Photo 15). The barn is built into the face of the ridge so that the higher grade provides access to the barn's main level, and its lower level opens onto the bottom-land to the north (Photo 16). The barn has a saltbox profile whose longer rake is on the north. The eastern half of the barn has a brick foundation and appears to be older than the western half, which has a poured concrete foundation. Inspection of the barn's heavy timber frame does not show any evidence that the vertical boarding of the exterior was ever broken by any louver panels or windows other than those extant. The ramp to the barn is flanked on the west by a round ceramic block silo roofed by a ribbed round metal dome; on the opposite side of the ramp is a two story gabled wing of the barn which was once attached to the south side of the main wing of the house as a servants' quarters. This former addition to the house was moved to its present location about forty years ago.

Outbuildings

Directly adjacent to the east end of the barn is a shed-roofed pump house whose high concrete base supports walls clad in lock siding and broken on the south by two square windows with four-light sash (Photo 17).

Outbuildings

To the east of the pumphouse a gabled rectangular granary extends perpendicular to the face of the ridge. The granary's poured concrete foundation walls are exposed on the building's north end, and a door on the north wall provides access to the lower level of the granary (Photo 18). The granary walls are clad in plain vertical boarding.

Between the house and the barn, the west side of the barnyard is defined by a gabled rectangular equipment shed whose east side has three open bays (Photo 19). Directly to the north of the equipment shed is a round crib clad in corrugated tin and topped by a ribbed round metal dome. Directly behind the equipment shed and at right angles to it is a one story shed-roofed chicken coop (see Photo 15).

With the possible exception of the older part of the barn, most of the outbuildings probably date from this century, though some may be based upon the framing of earlier structures, a common rural practice. No historic views of the farm or house have come to light.

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 c. 1860

Builder/Architect unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Fisher West Farm is of architectural significance for its Italianate style residence, and is of local historical significance for its association with Fisher West, a man whose colorful exploits enabled him to become the largest land holder in Perry Township of Allen County in the late nineteenth century.

The Italianate style house which Fisher West built about 1860 represents an architectural type which has vanished from northeastern Indiana with the exception of rural examples. The house uses the tee-shaped plan introduced in the area in the 1840's as a part of the architectural heritage brought from New York and Pennsylvania by settlers such as West, who came from New York. Although initially used for examples of the Greek Revival style such as the Burgess-Schnelker House at nearby New Haven (c.1850), this formal type was soon adapted for use in Italianate style designs. The most grandiose was the William Rockhill House (1857) at Fort Wayne, where the type was also represented by several other examples on the scale of the West house, such as the C. Carey Evans House (c.1870) and the Henry Olds House (George Trenam, 1875). These examples of houses with a cubic main mass topped by a belvedere were upper middle class homes built in the 1860's and 1870's. Their proximity to the business district led to their displacement by commercial growth, starting in the late nineteenth century. Today this formal type is represented in the area entirely by rural examples such as the West House and its nearby neighbor, the Smith-Cornell House (c. 1870; listed on the National Register in Dekalb County). The Fisher West House is thus one of the few remaining structures which embody a significant part of the architectural heritage of northeastern Indiana.

Fisher West (1827-1914) is of local historical interest as a man who lived some of the fondest aspirations of his century. Local lore states that shortly after arriving in Allen county with other family members, West answered the call of the California Gold Rush in 1849. Leaving his newly claimed land in the hands of relatives, West left for the gold fields, where he "struck", and returned to Indiana a wealthy man. West bought the land on which the farm stands in 1852, and through the 1860's he added to his holdings until he owned parts of four adjacent sections of land in Perry Township totalling one thousand five hundred acres. West had this land farmed by tenants, and he supposedly used the belvedere of his house to inspect his holdings from its vantage point above the prairie. West lived until 1914. Surprisingly little information is provided about him in his obituary or other available records; apparently he outlived most of the contemporaries who could have written a more informative account of his life and achievements. Nonetheless, the legend of the source of his prosperity seems to be supported by the palatial house he built and the extent of his land holdings.

9. Major Bibliographical References

- ___, "West" (Fisher West obituary), Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, Fort Wayne, Indiana, April 8, 1914.
- ___, "Historic Farm Scenic and Highly Productive," Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, Fort Wayne, Indiana, May 28, 1962.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 4 acres

Quadrangle name Garrett

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

A

1	6
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6	5	4	6	4	0
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4	5	6	8	2	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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6	5	4	7	7	0
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4	5	6	8	2	0	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

1	6
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6	5	4	6	4	0
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4	5	6	8	0	5	0
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D

1	6
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6	5	4	7	7	0
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4	5	6	8	0	4	0
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E

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Part of the west half of the southwest quarter of Section 4, Township 32 North, Range 12 East, consisting of a square measuring five hundred feet on each side and containing the house and farm buildings of the former Fisher West farm (see site plan)

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 Craig Leonard, Historic Preservation Consultant

organization date October 1984

street & number 521 West Market Street telephone (219)-824-4010

city or town Bluffton state Indiana 46714

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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date

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