

FINAL

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Lake County Sheriff's House and Jail  
other names/site number Sheriff's House

### 2. Location

street & number 232 South Main Street N/A not for publication  
city, town Crown Point N/A vicinity  
state IN code IN county Lake code 089 zip code

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: \_\_\_\_\_  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Robert Hunt for J.M. Padon 11-15-88  
Signature of certifying official Date  
Indiana Department of Natural Resources  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date  
\_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain: \_\_\_\_\_)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
GOVERNMENT: correctional facility

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)  
Work in progress

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Second Empire

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestone

walls BRICK

roof ASPHALT

other METAL

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Lake County Sheriff's House, 1882, is the last remaining residence on this immediate block of Main Street, a neighborhood originally containing several homes. Having the prominence of a 6'-0" elevation above the street, it remains free standing within its landscape and unaltered on its north, west and south elevations. It stands twenty feet from a former criminal court building on its north boundary, where a paved drive occurs. The south yard is twenty five feet in width and extends to a wall with brick relief work at the east end of the original house. The house is landscaped with bridal wreath shrubbery; an old Maple tree stands at the south corner of the porch. Other shrubbery is more recently added on the south property line. The nominated property includes one contributing building only.

The masonry building, in the Second Empire style, is two stories in height with a three story, projecting, central tower at the west end of the plan. A mansard roof encloses the attic level adding to the building's height, the same roof style caps the tower. The building is symmetrical in plan on an east-west axis. The only significant changes from earliest available photographs are the addition of an expansive front porch and two large plate glass windows replacing pairs of double hung windows on the first floor front elevation. The house has a limestone foundation, with windows aligned to the first and second floor openings. The walls of the building are constructed of red brick.

The west, or main, facade is symmetrical in composition (photo 1). Originally, the house had no front porch, and the current porch was added around 1890. It is a wood, one story addition with Tuscan columns supporting its flat roof. The columns are tripled at the outside corners. The house's only entrance on the west elevation is a single glazed door with side lights. Although over fifty years old, it replaces an earlier pair of doors shown in an old photograph. Two large transomed windows flank the entry/tower projection. These windows were originally identical to the second floor double windows, but around 1890, the brick divider strip was removed and the window pairs replaced by one fixed pane.

Pairs of double hung windows, with two over two sash, are balanced on the second floor. Decorative brick relief in a belt formation parallels

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the sheet metal cornice and outlines the segmental window heads. Brick work pilasters, the height of the two floors, occur at the building's corners. A single window is located in the third story of the tower. It has a hood mold similar to the second floor windows. On this story of the tower, its sides have oculus vents with wood louvers.

House and tower cornices, of painted sheet metal, incorporate eave brackets regularly spaced and in pairs above pilasters and on the tower corners. Eaves are of sufficient depth to create a pronounced overhang effect. A low pitched standing seam metal roof covers the central part of the house, whose main elevations are defined by the mansard's angles. The tower originally contained an iron widow's walk railing mounted on its central peak.

The north and south elevations have four windows on each story (photo 2). The sash type and brick belt coursing are the same as the west facade, but the windows are not paired. The pilaster and corbel work is also similar, and an additional pilaster divides these facades in half.

The adjoining east portion of the building extends beyond the house's south and north walls approximately five feet in each direction. An undertermined part of this addition, closest to the house, was built in 1910 to replace the original one story jail wing. Most of the addition was built in 1934.

Both north and south elevations of the wing have three floors of double hung windows, one over one, spaced evenly across them. Most are covered with security bars. A single door occurs at ground level on the north wall. Basement windows set in area ways are aligned with windows above. All elevations of this portion of the structure are plain, having no cornices, only functional eaves and exposed drain piping. The bearing wall joining this wing to the house has a stepped parapet rising slightly above the roof line of the house. A wall defining the east side of the 1882 house is not exposed at this time. It contains two doors and a beamed opening, presently within the interior of the kitchen, all on the first floor. The second floor wall has no openings and the basement level has three doorways. A chimney with arched relief brickwork extends above the wall which joins the house to its wing.

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The interior of the building retains many historic features. Both floors of the house are arranged on a central hall and staircase.

Entry is through an enclosed vestibule in the first floor of the tower (photo 6). The main staircase is in its original location, but appears to have had Craftsman style newels and railings installed to replace the original posts and balustrade (photo 7). A large parlor opens off the hall to the north (photo 8). A sitting room and dining room join the hall on the south (photos 9 and 10). Ceilings are twelve feet tall on the first floor. All of these rooms have hardwood floors, routed ornamental baseboards, chair rails, and cornices. Wall surfaces are plaster over lath. Doors and windows have architrave style surrounds with entablature headers. Interior doors are single leaf and paneled in design.

The second floor of the house contains four bedrooms, two each arranged north and south of the main hall. Each bedroom has its own wardrobe closet. A full bathroom within the east wing adjoins the rear southeast bedroom. Wood trim is similar to that of the first floor, except that these rooms do not have chair rails or cornices. Hall doorways are transomed (photo 12).

The eastern addition has a stark, functional interior. Hallways and a rear stair are located behind the halls of the house proper. A steel door on the east wall of the parlor leads to a booking room and small vault on the first floor. A pantry and kitchen are located behind the dining room of the house, also on the first floor. On the second floor, a corridor (photo 15) leads to a bathroom (photo 14) and then to numerous jail cells (photo 16). The rest of the addition housed similar jail cells.

The building was abandoned in 1974 in favor of a new, centralized county complex. It has been vacant since this. The Old Sheriff's House Foundation, Incorporated, a private non-profit organization, was recently founded in order to preserve the Sheriff's House.

The owners of the building (a bank) will deed the property to the city of Crown Point. In turn, the city will agree to deed the property to the Foundation, providing that enough capital can be raised to rehabilitate the structure. The foundation plans to rehabilitate the old house and maintain a twenty-five foot portion of the jail addition (the area immediately adjoining the house, extending four windows to the east). The building will be used for office space.

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Although vacant for over ten years, the house is in sound condition, its masonry construction holding the edge against the lack of maintenance. The main deterioration, aside from the poor roof condition, is in the form of surface damage.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally  statewide  locally

Applicable National Register Criteria  A  B  C  D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Period of Significance

1882-1938

Significant Dates

1882

1910

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Lake County Sheriff's House and Jail is significant as a well preserved, high style example of a typical nineteenth century American building type. The building is architecturally important for its Second Empire design, few examples of sheriff's homes built in this briefly popular style exist in Indiana. Also, few buildings in Lake County were built in this mode. The Lake County Sheriff's House and Jail is also a significant governmental building in Crown Point. The house and jail was the first such permanent structure for the county, and it remained in continuous use from 1882 until 1958.

The Lake County Sheriff's House and Jail stands today as a significant symbol of the development of county government, combining the functions of a sheriff's residence, offices, and jail in a typical late 1800s manner. The position of county sheriff is incorporated into Indiana's first constitution of 1816. The provisions establishing this post have remained essentially unchanged over the years. Lake County was organized as an independent county in 1837, and the Governor, Noah Noble, appointed the first sheriff of the county. The first elected county sheriff took office in November of 1837.

A log building constructed in 1837 just southwest of the current courthouse was the first governmental building in Crown Point when the city was chosen to be the Lake County seat in 1840. In 1849, a frame courthouse was erected on public county land on Clark Street, north of the current courthouse. A wood jail, with heavy hardwood cross planking and sheet iron lined cells was built nearby (on Clark Street) in 1851.

The 1860s and 70s was an era of rapid development in Crown Point. Prosperity was brought by railroads in 1865, and by the end of the 1870s, Crown Point had become an incorporated town, with its own fire company, new schools, large commercial blocks, and a new courthouse. Shortly after these developments, the 1851 jail was replaced.

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The Lake County Sheriff's House and Jail was erected to replace the thirty year old plank jail in 1882 at a cost of \$24,000. It was the first permanent sheriff's house/jail building in the county, and it remained in continuous use for seventy-six years. The county required sheriffs and their families to line adjacent to the jail, many Indiana counties apparently required this for security purposes.

County Sheriff's homes/jails are an uncommon and endangered historic resource in Indiana. Less than thirty pre-1940 buildings of this type are known to exist in Indiana, according to the Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory and the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology's National Register files. Compared to other Second Empire sheriff's homes in the state, the Lake County example is more formal and austere in design. Of the seven Second Empire style sheriff's houses known to exist in Indiana, only three are symmetrical. The Lake County home occupies a significant place among Indiana's county sheriff's homes because of its Second Empire style, symmetrical design and good integrity.

By around 1910, the population of Lake County was such that the jail wing was inadequate, and the first of a series of additions to the sheriff's house were built. The first of these alterations involved the demolition of the one story 1882 jailwing and erection of a plain, three story brick jail adjoining the house, and probably extending to the east for about thirty to forty feet. A series of identical bays was added to this area, until by 1934, the building reached its current form. The proposed rehabilitation will require the demolition of most of this twentieth century addition, however, a portion of the oldest section of the jail will be retained (see description). The additions should be considered non-contributing, since they have no distinctive architectural detailing and are out of character with the 1882 sheriff's house. The proposed project, therefore, should not affect the eligibility of the building.

One event has added an infamous note to the building's history. Gangster John Dillenger escaped the jail on March 3, 1934. Although numerous tall tales surround the event, it seems that Dillenger's attorney was able to bribe a judge. The judge smuggled a pistol to Dillenger, who made his escape good after incarcerating several of his jailers and raiding the building's arsenal.

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As previously noted, the Lake County Sheriff's House and Jail remained in use until 1958. In that year, the residency requirement was discontinued, and the house area was converted to addition law enforcement offices. The jail remained in use for about twenty years in this capacity.

In 1974, a new county government complex was completed on North Main Street in Crown Point. The sheriff's offices moved out of the house and the jail was left vacant. The house and jail was partially converted to commercial use after this, as part of a complex including the adjacent Criminal Court Building. If the newly formed Old Sheriff's House Foundation, Inc., is able to raise sufficient funds, the Lake County Sheriff's House and Jail will continue to stand as a useful and historic building in downtown Crown Point.



**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Ball, T. H. From 1800 to 1900. Chicago: Donohue and Henneberry, 1900.  
Brown, Jean Marie. "Lake Sheriff's Post has Checkered Past,"  
Gary Post Tribune, September 15, 1985.  
Crown Point Historical and Architectural Survey. Crown Point, IN:  
Design Organization, Inc., 1984.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreeage of property Less than one acre.

UTM References

A 16 469564 4584762  
 Zone Easting Northing  
 C \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing  
 D \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Lot 39 in the original plat of Crown Point, Indiana, a parcel 91 feet by 240 feet in size.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

This is the historic boundary of the property, including all additions to the Sheriff's House.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title John Heidbreder  
 organization Old Sheriff's House Foundation, Inc. date September 7, 1988  
 street & number 308 South Main Street telephone 219/663-3765  
 city or town Crown Point state IN zip code 46307

LAKE COUNTY  
SHERIFF'S HOUSE  
AND JAIL  
16 469564 4584762

