

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

FINAL

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Hall of Tell City Lodge, No. 206, I.O.O.F.

other names/site number Oddfellow's Hall; 123-625-36084

2. Location

street & number 701 Main Street na not for publication

city or town Tell City na vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Perry code 123 zip code 47586

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Patrick R. Roberts

10-20-92

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

Indiana Department of Natural Resources

State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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

Lodge 206, I.O.O.F.

Name of Property

Perry Co., IN

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
1	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

na

Number of contributing resources previously listed
in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- SOCIAL: Meeting hall
- COMMERCE: Specialty store
- COMMERCE: Business
- DOMESTIC: Multiple dwelling

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

- COMMERCE: Specialty store

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

- ROMANESQUE
- OTHER: Romanesque Revival

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation STONE
- walls BRICK
- STONE
- roof SYNTHETICS: Rubber
- other METAL: Cast iron

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance

1894-1942

Significant Dates

1894

1926

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

na

Cultural Affiliation

na

Architect/Builder

Schlotter, Frank

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: Lodge #206, I.O.O.F., 701 Main St., Tell City, IN

Lodge #206, I.O.O.F.
Name of Property

Perry Co., IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property Less than one acre

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Link Ludington, Historic Preservation/Restoration Consultant

organization Restoration Design Associates date 10 May 1992

street & number 511 Broadway telephone 812-265-3714

city or town Madison state IN zip code 47250

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Christopher and Dorothy Watts

street & number 741 10th St. telephone _____

city or town Tell City state IN zip code 47586

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1 Hall of Tell City Lodge, No.206, I.O.O.F.

The Hall of Tell City Lodge, No. 206, I.O.O.F. ("Oddfellows' Hall") is a three-story brick Romanesque Revival commercial structure located on the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and Mozart Streets, opposite Tell City's town square. The original rectangular plan of the building, forty feet wide by eighty feet deep, was supplemented in 1926 by a small one-and-one-half story addition to the rear of its southwest corner. The shed roof of the main block slopes downward from north to south; the addition has a flat roof. The only extant chimney is an exterior stack at the rear, apparently built in conjunction with the 1926 addition-- the several interior chimneys which originally lined the perimeter of the roof are now missing.

Significant architectural detailing is confined to the east elevation (the façade) and the south elevation, with primary emphasis on the former. The façade is symmetrical, the five bays of the upper stories delineated by brick pilasters, and the cast iron columns of the storefront defining six bays on the first story. The storefront is marked as the product of the George L. Mesker & Co. ironworks in Evansville, Indiana. The upper portion of the storefront was left intact when a modern pent-eave canopy was added (canopy removed since photography was done).

In the upper stories of the façade, verticality is accentuated by plain pilasters which rise from a stone belt course, at the bottom of the second-story windows, to the frieze. The second story windows have stone lintels, one-over-one light double-hung sash, and raised brick relief rectangles in the spandrels above them. The central bay of the third story contained a window with a semi-circular headed, stationary sash in an abbreviated semi-circular arched opening formed by radiating brick voussoirs, outlined with corbelled brick string courses; while the shape of the opening is still discernible, it has been filled in with concrete block. The same was done to three of the four other third-story façade windows; however, one remains intact, similar to the second-story windows, but with an additional single sash above a transom rail. (Although the window jambs were apparently discarded in the course of this unfortunate past remodelling, the window sash were spared, and are still stacked against the walls of the third-floor auditorium.) Raised brick relief panels also embellish the spandrels below the central bay's window sill and those above the flanking bays' stone lintels.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 2 Hall of Tell City Lodge, No.206, I.O.O.F.

The lower tier of the frieze has horizontal bands formed by recessed courses of brick, interrupted by two narrow double-hung attic windows, and terminating at corbels at the corners. Corbels support piers which divide the upper tier of the frieze into three bays, with the taller central panel containing stone tablets bearing the inscription "IOOF/ 1894" in relief surmounted by a parapet ornamented with two rows of raised brick relief squares. The flanking panels are composed of rows of corbels capped with stone belts courses, forming a sort of pseudo-machicolation, and these, too, are surmounted by parapets, though not a tall as the central one, and with only single rows of relief squares.

The decorative formula of the façade is duplicated in the immediately-adjacent, eastern-most bay of the south elevation. The remaining four bays of the original structure are irregularly-spaced. The openings on all three stories have segmental-arched heads with radiating brick voussoirs, outlined with concentric string courses of corbelled brick, but on the second story, the string courses drop to form label moulds, and, on the third story, the 'feet' of the labels are continued as string courses traversing the piers between the openings. Original openings in the first story were doors with transom windows in the first two bays (reading west to east) and abbreviated windows in the next two. At the time of the addition, or thereafter, the door in the first bay was removed and the lower portion of the opening filled in with brick, leaving only a small window at the top; the door in the second bay was removed and the opening completely filled in with brick. A new entrance was incorporated into the south elevation of the addition.

On the second story of the south elevation, the window of the first bay is a solitary double-hung one-over-one-light sash; the three middle bays have paired one-over-one-light sash separated by mullions. Openings on the third story correspond with those on the second, but they had an additional single sash above each transom rail; although the openings are still discernible, all of them have been filled in with concrete block, the same as the façade. Their sash are stacked inside with the others, but the jambs are lost. At the top of the south elevation, corbelled courses of brick form a simple cornice, punctuated by attic vents aligned with the openings below. The west and north elevations are unadorned other than having several windows of various configurations still intact, and the outlines of other openings still visible but filled in.

The retail commercial space on the first floor comprises one large room with a row of timber columns running the length of the floor, providing the support for the joist system of the second floor. The southwest

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 3 Hall of Tell City Lodge, No.206, I.O.O.F.

corner of the space appears originally to have been occupied by an entrance/stairhall vestibule affording access to the second floor from Mozart Street; the 1926 remodelling included addition of the new vestibule to the rear, relocation of the first floor flights of the staircase there, and removal of the partition walls which had separated the old vestibule from the rest of the store room. The original ceiling material was beaded-edge tongue-and-groove boards; this was superceded by an embossed sheet metal ornamental ceiling which is mostly intact, despite being obscured by ephemeral modern materials. All other old or original primary surfaces in the first-floor interior are similarly shrouded in easily-removable modern materials. The ceiling height in the first floor is approximately thirteen feet.

The second floor plan consists of rooms of various sizes arranged along a narrow corridor running longitudinally the entire length of the building. Various old alterations have included the additions of closets and bathrooms, as well as modifications to doorways and other features, but the arrangement of rooms remains largely unchanged, and doors, woodwork, and other old or original primary features are mostly intact. The staircase to the third floor is intact and in its apparent original configuration. The ceilings in the second floor are eleven feet, six inches high.

The third floor housed the lodge hall proper, with antechambers at the west end, and the balance of the floor devoted to the auditorium, over thirty-seven feet wide and fifty-nine feet long, its fifteen-foot, eight-inch high ceiling covered with ornamental embossed sheet metal. Doors and woodwork other than the window jambs and casings are mostly intact. Although the jambs and casings from the blocked-up windows are gone, the window sash are still present and available for refitting during the rehabilitation which is currently contemplated.

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

**National Register of Historic Places
 Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 4 Hall of Tell City Lodge, No.206, I.O.O.F.

The Hall of Tell City Lodge, No. 206, I.O.O.F. is significant (under NR Criterion 'A') as the seat, for more than eight decades, of Tell City's oldest fraternal organization (and one of the oldest social institutions of any kind in Tell City). Because it is the most prominent and imposing of the few late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century structures associated with fraternal organizations in the city, it is also a tangible indication of the stature and influence of such organizations during that period. The Hall is also significant (under NR Criterion 'C') because it is the only major example of commercial architecture among the small handful of important Romanesque Revival structures remaining in Tell City; because it appears to contain the only specimen of a complete, full-fledged cast iron storefront in town; and finally, because it is a major representation of the work of Evansville architect Frank J. Schlotter, who achieved regional recognition during a long and prolific career.

The Independent Order of Oddfellows (I.O.O.F.) is a benevolent fraternal organization which originated in England early in the nineteenth century. It was rooted in the tradition of the 'friendly societies' which provided systems of mutual self-help among dues-paying members and their families during times of need; these, in turn, had ties to the mediaeval guild system and to the 'burial clubs' of various cultures dating to ancient times. The I.O.O.F. is a 'secret' society, some of its ritualistic aspects showing evidence of the influence of this heritage.

The Order in the United States was founded by Thomas Wildey in Baltimore in 1819 as an American cousin to the English Order; the ties to England were maintained until 1843, at which time the I.O.O.F. in this country became sovereign unto itself. The organization's motto is "Friendship, Love, Truth" and the charge to its membership is to "Visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead, and educate the orphan." These purposes are reflected in the system of beneficent provisions for members which were developed during the early years of the organization, some of them surviving to the present in one form or another. These provisions included 'sick benefits' for members who found themselves unable to work,

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 5 Hall of Tell City Lodge, No.206,I.O.O.F.

'travelling cards' which helped members make contacts when seeking work in other communities, payments for funeral expenses, and benefits to widows. The Oddfellows also supported orphanages and otherwise promoted the public good through their various activities.

The first Oddfellows lodges in Indiana were those formed in New Albany and then in Madison, both in 1836. The popularity of the organization spread rapidly, judging from the number of lodges formed in the first half of the nineteenth century. There were also other 'branches' of Oddfellowship, including the Daughters of Rebekah, which also admitted women as members. The 'Degree of Rebekah' was created in 1851 by one Schuyler Colfax (1823-1885), Indiana resident from 1836, editor of a newspaper in South Bend, later U.S. Representative, Speaker of the House from 1863 to 1869, and Vice-President of the United States from 1869 to 1873.

Tell City was the creation of the Schweizer Ansiedlungsverein (Swiss Colonization Society), an organization of German-Swiss immigrants formed in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1857 for the purpose of promoting new settlements in the 'West'. In that year, the Society purchased a tract of land totalling more than 4100 acres of Ohio River bottom in Perry County, Indiana and platted the new town of Tell City, so named in homage to Swiss folk hero William Tell. The following year, more than 1800 people populated the city, and, throughout the remainder of the century, the residents busied themselves making homes, nurturing industries and businesses, and otherwise working to produce what proved to be a burgeoning-- if small-- manufacture-oriented economy.

On 12 January, 1859, less than a year after the founding of Tell City, twelve Oddfellows met for the purpose of forming a new lodge. Tell City Lodge, No. 206, I.O.O.F. was granted its charter on 12 April, 1859, and the first official meeting lodge took place on 9 May. The Lodge met in various buildings in town until 1869, when the Brothers had a new building constructed for their use on the southwest corner of Main and Humboldt Streets (only a portion remains today). In 1875, the organization was augmented by the formation of Hope Lodge, Daughters of Rebekah. In 1891, its membership was further expanded by its consolidation with Perry Lodge, No. 418, I.O.O.F.

From its inception, the official records of the Lodge were written in German, this practice continuing until 1899 (in Tell City, even official public records were maintained in German as late as 1894). Members of the Lodge during the nineteenth century constituted a "Who's Who" of the citizenry, including August Schreiber (first mayor of Tell City and owner

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 6 Hall of Tell City Lodge, No.206, I.O.O.F.

of the Tell City Drug Store or "Deutsche Apotheke"), Magnus Kreisle, Sr. (owner of the Tell City Planing Mill), Remig Einseidler (owner of Einseidler's Salloon), A.P. Fenn (mayor of Tell City, manager of the Tell City Chair Company, and Lodge secretary), the Hermann brothers, Jacob Clements, Adolph Obrecht, and other influential citizens. New applications for membership in the lodge made between 1880 and 1899 show that Tell City Lodge represented a cross-section of the adult male population of the town, with business owners and professionals, skilled trades, agriculture-related occupations, and industrial workers. Membership remained relatively constant at between 72 and 78 during the years from 1868 to 1874, but reached 108 by 1895. Besides the direct benefits of membership, and the accompanying opportunities for fellowship and conviviality, the Lodge also provided a setting in which citizens with common interests could create networks of support, enhancing themselves and their communities both materially and socially, and developing skills which could be translated into civic affairs, work, and family life.

In 1893, the Lodge purchased two lots at Main and Mozart for the site of a new Hall. Evansville architect Frank J. Schlotter was commissioned to design the edifice, and was paid \$150.00 for his services. Work on the foundation began in March, 1894 and construction, carried out by Oddfellows Fred Miller, Henry Arndt, and James M. Cooper. The total cost was slightly over \$10,000.00. The new Hall was dedicated on 29 November, 1894, Thanksgiving Day ("Danksagungstag"), and the occasion celebrated with a parade of Oddfellows wearing the regalia of the Order. In its early life, the building not only housed the Lodge, but also provided retail commercial space on the first floor (apparently always occupied by clothing stores) and meeting rooms for various other organizations as well as office space (and, in later years, residential flats) on the second floor. The building served the Lodge until 1976, when the Oddfellows moved to a different location and sold the old Hall. The current owners, Christopher and Dorothy Watts, purchased the property in 1991 and are contemplating rehabilitating it in accordance with the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines.

Aside from the Oddfellows' Hall, the only other major Romanesque Revival structures remaining in Tell City are City Hall (1899), IHSSI #123-625-3301, in the town square opposite it, the First Evangelical Church (c. 1890), #123-625-34066, on the northeast corner of Tenth and Jefferson, and, although not as complete a representation of the Romanesque Revival vocabulary, the Franklin Street School (1909), #123-625-34028. The cast iron storefront of Odd fellows' Hall appears to be the only documented Mesker storefront in Tell City, and may be the only complete cast iron

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 8 Page 7 Hall of Tell City Lodge, No.206, I.O.O.F.

storefront remaining in town: one other identifiable example of the use of ornamental cast iron structural components is the corner pilasters found in a building at 411 Main Street, but it is unclear whether this represents a minimal use of cast iron or instead is simply the remnant of what was originally a complete storefront in cast iron components.

The architect, Frank J. Schlotter, was a native of Evansville born 21 July 1864, the son of German immigrants. He began his career in architecture as a draftsman with the firm of Reid Brothers in 1882 and remained so employed until 1886, when he established his own independent practice; ten years later, he bought the Reid Brothers firm. Schlotter's oeuvre is found largely in Evansville and the surrounding area. His completed commissions, many of which are still standing, numbered in the dozens and included firehouses (among them, the 1888 Hose House #10 at 119 East Columbia Street, Evansville, listed on the National Register of Historic Places 11 February, 1982), the Alhambra Theatorium of 1913 at 50 Adams Avenue, Evansville (National Register 1 October 1979), the 1892 Arcade Building, and several other commercial structures, schools (including one in Cannellton in 1923), churches, and numerous residences and other buildings. He also designed a bank building (1907) and a Carnegie Library (1909) in Harrisburg, Illinois, as well as at least two other I.O.O.F. Halls, one in Petersburg, Indiana (1907) and one in Stewartsville, Indiana (1916). His work demonstrates a versatile command of a broad range of stylistic vocabularies including Romanesque Revival, Queen Anne, Moorish and other revival styles, and a facility in their adaptations to diverse building types.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 9 Page 8 Hall of Tell City Lodge, No.206, I.O.O.F.,

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A Stroll through the Bayard Park Neighborhood. (Booklet) City of Evansville, (Indiana), 1990. (#14: Hose House #15)

City of Evansville, Indiana, Department of Metropolitan Development,
Historic Preservation Services, index file (notes on Frank J. Schlotter)

Esary, Logan: History of Indiana from its Exploration to 1922 (Vol. 3: An Account of Vanderburgh County from its Organization, pgs. 437,438 (sketch of life of Frank J. Schlotter)

Historic West Franklin Street. (Booklet) City of Evansville, Indiana, 1989. (#18: Hose House #5)

The International Oddfellow, Vol. 5 No. 4: "Sesquicentennial Extra Edition". April, 1969; Dallas, Texas.

I.O.O.F. Book of Buildings, Including Complete Statistical Summary of Lodges Since Origination of the Order in Indiana... . Compiled by W.H. Leedy; Press: William B. Burford, Indianapolis, Indiana, 1917.

Maurer, Will: A Historical Sketch of Tell City, Indiana. (Indiana Magazine of History, Vol. XIV, No. 2 (June, 1918)

Perry County Interim Report: Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, Indianapolis, Indiana; April, 1992.

Records of Tell City Lodge, No. 206, I.O.O.F.:

- Accounts due 1868-1882
- Auditing Committee Reports 1877-1910
- Ledger 1903-1915; Ledger 1879-1898
- Minutes (Protokolle), 1889-1895 (incl "Abschrift der Protokollen vom Bau Committee" ["Transcript of the Minutes of the Building Committee"], pgs. 493-507.
- Minutes (Protokolle) 1895-1901
- Roll of Members, 1904-1911
- Untersuchungs-Committee Berichte (Examination Committee Reports), 1877-1899

Reflections Upon a Century of Architecture. (Booklet) The Junior League of Evansville, Inc. Evansville, Indiana; 1977. (Schlotter buildings illustrated pgs. 21, 24, 27, 32, 43, 53, 58; biographical sketch of Schlotter, p. 64.)

The News, Tell City, Indiana, 3 September, 1987, p.8-A (newspaper article about Oddfellows' Hall).

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 9 Hall of Tell City Lodge, No.206, I.O.O.F.

GEOGRAPHIC DATA-Verbal boundary description

Lots Number Twenty-seven (27) and Twenty-eight (28) in Block Forty-seven (47) in the City of Tell City (situated at the northwest corner of the intersection of Main and Mozart Streets, and together constituting a parcel having forty feet (40') frontage on Main Street and one hundred forty feet (140') on Mozart Street).

Boundary Justification

These two lots compose the parcel historically associated with the nominated resource.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number Photos Page 9 Hall of Tell City Lodge, No.206, I.O.O.F.

For all photographs:

- Item #1: Hall of Tell City Lodge, No. 206, I.O.O.F.
- Item #2: Tell City, Perry County, Indiana

For photograph #1:

- Item #3: Photographer unknown
- Item #4: Date, 29 November, 1894
- Item #5: Made from copy negative; location of original negative, unknown.
- Item #6: View to northwest, as seen from the middle of the intersection of Main and Mozart Streets; celebration of dedication of building.

For photographs #2-10:

- Item #3: Art Gerber, photographer
- Item #4: Fall, 1991
- Item #5: Art Gerber Studio; 739 Main Street, Tell City IN 47586
- Item #6: descriptions for each photograph, as follows:

Photo #2- Oblique view to northwest, as seen from southeast corner of Main and Mozart Street intersection.

Photo #3- View to west, as seen from east side of Main: facade.

Photo #4- Oblique view to northeast, as seen from south side of Mozart Street: south and west sides of building.

Photo #5- Interior view, first floor: ceiling detail.

Photo #6- View to north, interior first floor of 1926 addition.

Photo #7- View to east, interior second floor: corridor.

Photo #8- View to northeast, interior second floor, Room 203: typical interior.

Photo #9- View to west, interior second floor, Room 210: typical interior.

Photo #10- View to west, interior third floor: auditorium.