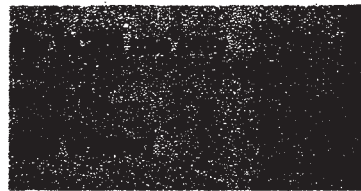


**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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



**1. Name**

historic ~~Bowers House~~ Bowers, John S., House  
and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number 104 Marshall not for publication  
city, town Decatur vicinity of congressional district 10  
state Indiana code 018 county Adams code 001

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" 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:

**4. Owner of Property**

name Joseph R. & Joanna S. Stanley  
street & number 104 Marshall  
city, town Decatur vicinity of state Indiana

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Adams County Courthouse  
street & number Second Street  
city, town Decatur state Indiana

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title None has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no  
date  federal  state  county  local  
depository for survey records  
city, town state

# 7. Description

Condition  
\_\_\_ excellent    \_\_\_ deteriorated    Check one    Check one  
\_\_\_ good        \_\_\_ ruins            X unaltered    X original site  
X fair         \_\_\_ unexposed       \_\_\_ altered       \_\_\_ moved    date September 13, 1979

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

Situated in Decatur, the Bowers House is a three story building, with only two stories finished.

It sets on 6.25 Acres, has 42 windows on the two main floors, four of which are stained glass, imported from Italy and a lead crystal window, imported from Germany. The attic has 13 windows and the two basements (side by side) have ten windows. The main basement has nine foot ceilings with a dirt floor and at one time the walls and ceiling were plastered.

There is also a dumb waiter that travels from the first floor to the main basement.

There are two gas fireplaces, an open stairway and three in-the-wall sliding doors all of which are done in oak woodwork.

Nine-inch mop boards and six exterior doors, are also highlights of the home.

\* An 80 foot porch, with pillars, also wraps itself around the front half of the home. Rough measurements of the exterior shows the home is 49 feet wide and 62 feet long.

The siding is green poplar and is in fair to good condition, for its age.

It has built-in eaves troughs which are rusted and leaking causing the fascia and soffit boards to rot and also some leakage to the interior of the home has been developing.

The roof is slate and tin which is in poor to fair condition and has developed leaks into the attic and also through the ceiling of the front porch.

The main chimney has two flues, both of which are working properly, but the brick needs pointing, as well as a part of the top has fallen off.

Structurally, the house is very sound, though if something is not done soon to carry the water away from the house, the foundation will deteriorate rapidly. The foundation is river rock and is quite sound at this point.

With the exception of an outhouse, the house is the only building still standing on the property. (It also contained a barn and a carriage house originally.)

The first time the house was painted, in the 30's, five coats of white paint were applied. Around 1972 or 1973, a grey stain, with ebony trim was applied to most of the house. (Especially the south and west sides, which can be seen from the streets.)

The grey hides the size of the house and lends itself as a beautiful background for pictures.

# 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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates 1900-1905

Builder/Architect

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The John S. Bowers House, built ca. 1900-1905, is significant for its size, 14 rooms and the fact that it sets on 6.25 Acres inside the city limits of Decatur.

John Bowers owned a stone quarry in Decatur and also had an interest in the natural gas wells at Geneva, Indiana.

He traded stone for the wood in the house and also used stone from his quarry for the foundation, as well as, the sidewalks around the house, as they are large slabs of limestone.

Bowers bought the land in June, 1894 for \$2,050. The appraised value on this land today is of course more than this amount.

According to styles of homes that have been researched so far, this a Queen Anne.

The home took two years to build and another two years passed before Mr. Bowers could talk the whole family into moving into the house.

The Bowers family retained ownership of the property until 1971 at which time it was sold to Louis McGinnis.

McGinnis changed quite a few things, though structurally he did not upset the house. He had the interior, with the exception of three rooms, wall papered, all the ceilings were sprayed with Raydex, rewired the house (not a good job), replumbed, put in a new furnace and carpeted most of the house (not a good grade of carpeting).

Joseph Stanley purchased the home in 1976 at which time a land survey was conducted. It was purchased as a home with five acres more or less, but after the survey was completed, it was said to contain 6.25 Acres.

The downstairs has been recarpeted, a breaker box for electricity has been installed, the exterior walls have been insulated, a wood burning stove/fireplace has been added as auxially heating and another bathroom is being installed.

The grounds have not had much work in recent years and at this time Stanley is taking care of approximately four and a half acres.

It is the type of home that draws immediate attention and is a favorite for Sunday and holiday pictures, as several passersby stop at curb side to take a picture, causing numerous close calls and near misses of auto accidents.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliographical and Historical Record of Adams and Wells Counties, Ind, Chicago, The Lewis Publishing Co., 1887  
 Interviews with Esther Bowers, one of the surviving daughters of John S. Bowers - conducted - March 1976., Snow, J.F., Snow's History of Adams County, Ind, Indpls. Br.F. Bowen & Co., 1907,  
 Tyndall, John W. and O.E. Lesh, eds. Standard History of Adams and Wells Counties, Ind. - 2

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 6.25 Acres  
 Quadrangle name Decatur, Ind. Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	16	675040	4522230	B					
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing		
C				D					
E				F					
G				H					

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The west line runs from Marshall Street 206 feet north, then 23 feet east, 146 feet north, 10 feet east, 76 feet north, then 252 feet east to the west bank of the St. Marys River, then southeasterly along the St. Marys to Marshall Street, then 810 feet west to the starting point.

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

state	code	county	code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joseph R. Stanley  
 organization \_\_\_\_\_ date September 13, 1979  
 street & number 104 Marshall telephone 724-9813 or 724-7121  
 city or town Decatur state Indiana

# 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_

title	date

20100501, county, sec 1, T11N, R11E



## DESCRIPTION

The John S. Bowers House is a <sup>2 1/2</sup> ~~three~~ story frame structure covered with poplar siding, ~~and~~ built in the Queen Anne style. Constructed between 1900 and 1905, the house is located on a 6.25 acre site within the Decatur, Indiana city limits. The central, hip-roofed, rectangular section has several attached wings which creates the irregularity of floor-plan and massing, characteristic of the Queen Anne style.

Steps lead to the rear porch as well as the front porch entrance. The rear, front and side porches are supported by limestone and brick piers with limestone coping. The piers are connected by lattice-work at the base of the porch and wooden balustrades on the upper level. Tuscan Order columns rest on the coping and support the porch roof which is covered with slate ~~tile~~ of alternating patterns. The 80' front porch wraps around the entire front half of the house. The main entrance is accented by a pedimented gable roof with a sunburst design *over the corner steps.*

From the <sup>porch</sup> roof behind the sunburst pediment rises a two story polygonal turret which is attached to the <sup>Southwest corner of the</sup> central rectangle of the house. The three ~~bay~~ windows on each story of the turret are one-over-one, double hung sash. The turret is covered by a polygonal <sup>slate</sup> tent roof, topped by a finial. <sup>on the west side</sup> The rectangular <sup>central portion of the house</sup> center has a second story window with a semi-circular platform at its base, covered with wood shingles. The window is one-over-one double hung sash. <sup>Above this,</sup> A steeply pitched dormer is placed in the <sup>slate</sup> side of the larger hipped roof.

A gabled wing between the large front porch and the small rear porch is attached to the <sup>west side of the</sup> main wing <sup>section.</sup> Its limestone foundation is penetrated by two basement windows which flank the cellar door. Decorative wood panels separate the cellar door from the large first story picture window above. The window has a wooden sill, wooden surrounds and a straight wooden window <sup>wood cornice.</sup> sill. The second story window consists of three ~~sets of~~ double-hung sashes <sup>separated</sup> divided by wooden mullions.

PAGE 2 DESCRIPTION

Above this window is a cornice, which <sup>Continues</sup> ~~wraps~~ around ~~all~~ the <sup>rest of the</sup> building <sup>and all its wings</sup> structures <sup>above</sup> the second story level. The gable end of this wing contains a third story bay window of three ~~sets of~~ double-hung sashes. The gable end or pediment is covered with wood shingles of alternating patterns. From the apex of the gable <sup>down</sup> to the top of the bay window is a surface covered with wooden shingles, which curves out to form a shelter over the window.

*A similar wing projects from the south side of the house, its lower story sheltered by the porch. A 1 1/2 story porch wing is attached to the rear (north). The rear porch shelters another cellar door.*

The original color of the house is unknown, but during the 1930s it was painted white. In 1972-3 a grey stain with ebony trim was applied to all but the south and west elevations.

*The house features two basements, one with nine foot ceiling.*

*After* Highlights of the house include four stained glass windows imported from Italy and a lead crystal window imported from Germany. A dumb waiter travels from the first floor to the main basement. The house contains two gas fireplaces, <sup>an open stairway</sup> and three oak panelled sliding doors, *as well as nine-inch baseboards.*

## SIGNIFICANCE

### JOHN S. BOWERS HOUSE

The John S. Bowers House in ~~Decatur, Indiana~~, is historically significant because it was built by ~~John S. Bowers~~, a prosperous local businessman of the late nineteenth-century. At various times, Bowers had interests in a local bank, hardware store, telephone company, stone quarry, and machine manufacturing company. Extremely successful, he built the Queen Anne style~~x~~ house as a symbol of his prominence. Constructed between 1900 and 1905, the house features several stained glass windows imported from Italy, and a leaded crystal window imported from Germany. The building was beautifully crafted and its quality, style, and magnificent size add to its ~~prominence~~ *architectural significance.*

The career of John S. Bowers began in the hardware business in partnership with Barney John Terveer, Decatur's leading hardware merchant. The partnership, of Terveer & Bowers, lasted until 1881. Afterward, Bowers owned and operated a stone quarry in partnership with a man named Rice. Bowers is perhaps best remembered in the county as a successful quarry owner. In 1888, the Rice & Bowers Stone Quarry began crushing stones for road surfacing. Gravel roads were an important political topic that year because of the need for a special tax to pay for the work of surfacing several county roads. Bowers worked hard to have the special tax passed. Although he was successful, most of the subsequent orders for gravel went to Ohio quarries.

After the turn of the century~~2~~, Bower's wealth and prominence allowed him to expand his field of endeavor. He, for example, served as a director to the oldest banking corporation in Adams County, the Niblick & Nutman Bank. At the same time, he was president of the Citizens' Telephone Company, organized in Decatur in 1894. Bowers also expanded his own business holdings; in 1909, he and several associates incorporated the Decatur Foundry Furnace and Machine Company.

Bowers bought the site for the house now nominated in June, 1894, <sup>and</sup> ~~but~~ began construction six years later. In common with other successful men of the period, Bowers constructed the house in the ornate Queen Anne style <sup>as</sup> ~~to be a home and a statement of success~~. Bowers quarry provided the stone used for construction, and he also traded stone for the lumber required by the house. The house took two years to build, and another two years passed before the <sup>entire</sup> family occupied the home. The house remained in the Bowers family until 1971.



9.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Biographical and Historical Record of Adams and Wells Counties, Indiana, Chicago, The Lewis Publishing Company, 1887.

Interviews with Esther Bowers, March, 1976, Decatur, Indiana.

Snow, J. F., Snow's History of Adams County, Indiana, Indianapolis, B.F. Bowen & Company, 1907

Tyndall, John W. and O. E. Lesh, eds., Standard History of Adams and Wells Counties, Indiana, 2 volumes, Chicago, The Lewis Publishing Company, 1918.