

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 Homestead Hotel
other names/site number West Baden Springs Hotel

2. Location

street & number Highway 56 between Ballard and First Streets N/A not for publication
city or town West Baden Springs N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Orange code 117 zip code 47469

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this Y 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 36CFR 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.)

[Signature] 5/18/66
Signature of certifying official/Title 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 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

Homestead Hotel

Orange IN

Name of Property

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
- 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.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC:

Hotel

COMMERCE/TRADE:

Specialty Store

COMMERCE/TRADE:

Restaurant

GOVERNMENT:

Post Office

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

VACANT

Not in use

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

19th & 20th c. REVIVALS: Classical Revival

19th & 20th c. AMER.: Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation BRICK

walls BRICK

STUCCO

roof METAL: Tin

other

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)

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION _____

Period of Significance

1913-1948 _____

Significant Dates

1913 _____

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

undefined _____

Architect/Builder

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographic 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:

Paoli Public Library _____

Homestead Hotel
Name of Property

Orange IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property >1

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|------|---------|----------|---|------|---------|----------|
| 1 | 16 | 533650 | 4268550 | 3 | | | |
| | Zone | Easting | Northing | | Zone | Easting | Northing |
| 2 | | | | 4 | | | |
| | | | | | | | |

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 Camilla Deiber, Program Assistant
organization Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana date 8-20-97
street & number 113 W. Chesnut St. telephone (812) 284-4534
city or town Jeffersonville state IN zip code 47130

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 Town of West Baden
street & number P.O. Box 297 telephone (812) 936-4614
city or town West Baden state IN zip code 47469

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.

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The Homestead's site, today devoid of any landscaping, slopes gradually from north to south. The hotel is directly across the street from the entrance drive to the West Baden Springs Hotel. The Homestead is located in what was in the early 20th century, the commercial center of West Baden Springs. Hotels and other commercial enterprises lined both sides of Harrison Avenue at, or close to the sidewalk line (see photo 1). Today, almost all of these other buildings have been demolished leaving the Homestead as not only one of few commercial survivors, but the largest surviving building in the commercial center. The small Neoclassical West Baden Springs Bank (Springs Valley Bank & Trust Company, NR listed 9/16/93) is located on the west side of SR 56 at the West Baden Springs Hotel entrance.

The Homestead Hotel is sited directly at the sidewalk on the east side of State Road 56 (formerly known as Harrison Avenue) as it runs through West Baden Springs headed south toward French Lick, Indiana. The hotel has an L-shaped footprint comprised of a three story, twenty-two bay block to the north and a narrow, one story solarium that connects to the three story block by means of a two story, brick and stucco section of the north block. As a result of the sloped site, the solarium's main floor is set on a high brick foundation so that it is at the same level as the first floor of the north block. A one-and-a-half story cubiform pavilion with its own hip roof marks the center of the solarium wing. The solarium is set back from the street, originally with a shaded landscaped lawn extending to the sidewalk. Spring No. 7 originally was located in a flagstone walk that extended from the solarium to the street. The lawn has been replaced by bare surface parking.

The ground floor of the main block was originally divided into an undetermined number of store fronts. A historic photo dated c.1915 (photo 6) suggests that originally a separate storefront existed between each of the ten ground floor brick piers (photo 3,4). Storefronts consisted of a central recessed entrance with transom above flanked by tall windows with transoms (photos 5 & 6). Some of the original storefronts remain intact but over the years other storefront configurations have been altered by the reduction of window size and the introduction of permastone and wood infill (photo 3). Today, six storefronts exist.

The Harrison Avenue facade of the north block has restrained but dignified classical enrichment (photo 2). This is accomplished by the use of limestone plinths on each of the first floor piers, string courses running under the second and third floor fenestration, rectangular lintels above the second floor windows and keystone lintels above the third floor windows, as well as quoining at the ends of the block at the second and third floors. The building's restrained entablature is comprised of an architrave of shallow recessed panels set between two limestone string courses, a corbeled dentilled frieze, and a slightly projecting limestone cornice (photo 3). A low parapet surmounts the cornice. The facade's one-over-one double hung second and third floor windows are unevenly spaced in an A-A-B-C-C-C-B-A-A rhythm on the second floor and an A-B-C-C-C-B-A rhythm on the third. None of the window openings have been altered and virtually all of the original sash remains although some sash is in poor condition.

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The north elevation of the hotel has a shallow offset (photo 17). This was enough to allow some light into the segmentally arched second and third floor windows in the eastern portion of this elevation when the neighboring Perrin House hotel (torn down in the 1960s) existed to the north.

From the east, the hotel's central light well that admitted light into the second and third floor rooms is clearly evident (illustration 2, photo 16). A balcony runs the entire length of the east elevation at the second and third floor levels with a cantilevered steel stair connecting the two levels. Sanborn maps drawn in 1925 indicate that a balcony originally existed in this location that connected interior hallways to the rear of the structure. On the ground floor X-shaped concrete block screens the area under the balcony. The elevation is penetrated by an irregular rhythm of segmentally arched doorways and windows. Almost all the original double hung sash has been replaced by casement window on the second floor. Window openings are boarded on the third floor.

The two story extension that connects the main block of the hotel to the solarium originally had a stuccoed exterior (photo 12). This may have been done to serve as a transition between the brick main block and the stuccoed solarium. The stucco has been removed from this elevation revealing the roughly textured, discolored subsurface brick (photo 9). The elevation is divided into seven bays by two story piers that project slightly above the parapet. The two end bays of this elevation are narrower than those in between. The first floor of this elevation rests on a limestone string course that separates it from the windowed foundation. Originally tall, two-part and three-part casement windows at the first floor that echoed the storefronts on Harrison Avenue lit this part of the building. Some of these have been reduced in size while other remain intact. At the second floor, one-over-one, double hung sash identical to those on the west elevation repeat in each bay.

The solarium to the south is five bays long and two bays deep. Its main floor rests on the high basement also runs under the two story south extension. As the site slopes downward, windows in this basement change from square, single lights to one-over-one, double hung sash. The main floor and central pavilion were originally stuccoed. A hipped fixed awning or pent roof sheathed in tin Roman style tile extends across both wings of the solarium. A pyramidal hipped roof, also of tin Roman tile, covers the central pavilion.

Originally, the three central bays of the solarium's main floor were open (photo 12) but at some point between 1913 and 1925 they were enclosed with double hung windows (photo 13). At some point, possibly around 1955 when major changes were made to the solarium to accommodate a motel function, the main entrance stair to the solarium was replaced by a narrow, utilitarian stair (photos 10, 13). At the same time, most of the double hung windows were removed and the main floor facade was sheathed in permastone.

The hotel's main lobby (photo 18) ran east to west in the two story extension of the north block just

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inside the main entrance which was refashioned with an Art Deco metal canopy and entrance doors some time after 1934 (photo 7). The lobby floor was paved with encaustic tile in a pattern of alternating large and small circular forms. On the north side of the lobby an open, balustraded stair led to the upper floors. The main space of the lobby remains largely intact although the stair has been partially enclosed and has lost its balustrade (photos 19, 20, 21).

The six commercial spaces on the ground floor retain many of their original finishes including paneled wainscot and tile floors (photos 22, 23, 35, 36, 38). A historic view (photo 37) of one space that housed a restaurant reveals the original Spartan interior. On the walls of a space that once housed a local bar, murals of local historic points of interest remain (photos 24, 25).

On the upper floors of the north block a U-shaped hallway gave access to rooms arranged around the perimeter of the building and the interior light well (photo 26). An interior stair (photo 34) on the west side of the light well gave access to the third floor. Guest rooms had plain plaster walls broken only by a thin picture rail (photos 27,31,32) Door and window enframements were very simple and floors were tile. Those rooms at the rear of the block had direct access to the exterior balcony. Most of the rooms have not been altered although six rooms on the second floor along the front facade had bathrooms added in the 1970s.

The interior of the solarium has been drastically altered. A long lobby space in one wing of the first floor that also was used as a ballroom (photo 28) was subdivided into a five room apartment in the 1970s. A central hallway in the apartment provides access to rooms on either side. A stairway leads to a small upper story room in the central pavilion. The basement area also was subdivided in the 1950s to accommodate small shops and a medical clinic. A hallway runs from the hotel lobby to the south side of the building and provides access to rooms on either side. Two of the rooms were retrofitted as shower rooms, presumably around 1976 when Northwood Institute used the hotel as a dormitory. Despite extensive alterations, the first floor of the solarium retains much of its wood flooring and plaster finishes.

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The Homestead Hotel is eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A for its association with recreational history of the Springs Valley as a resort area. Built in 1913, the Homestead was one of twenty-six hotels in the valley that housed the multitudes of people who came to drink the mineral waters and try their luck in the local casinos. It continued to serve as a hotel until 1955 when a string of motel rooms was added. In 1976 Northwood Institute used the property as dormitory rooms. The hotel came into disuse when a speculative buyer purchased it in 1984. The Homestead Hotel is significant in the area of entertainment/recreation as a sole survivor of the once plentiful mid-sized hotels built during the spa era in West Baden Springs to accommodate travelers who came to partake of the mineral waters and/or gaming casinos. It is significant in the area of commerce at the local level for the important role it once played in the local tourist-driven economy.

The Springs Valley area, in the center of Orange County has historically been rich in salt deposits and mineral springs. George Rogers Clark discovered the area's resources in 1778 while on expedition. The "curative powers" of mineral springs were well known in the United States by 1830 when Dr. William A. Bowles bought land to build a small resort called French Lick Springs Hotel. By 1855 another mineral springs resort, the Mile Lick Inn, was built. The arrival of the Monon Railroad in 1887 provided easy access from both Chicago and Louisville and the two resorts flourished into the early 1900s. At the turn of the century, the economic health of the valley became dependant upon the success of the two resorts as the valley became the destination for people from around the Midwest. However, with rates of \$2 to \$3 per day, only the most wealthy could afford the luxury of the West Baden Springs and French Lick hotels. As a result of the exclusive nature of the resorts, several smaller hotels began appearing in the late 1890s with substantially cheaper rates; \$1 per day including meals. Though the French Lick Springs and West Baden Springs hotels had exclusive rights to the mineral springs in the valley, people who stayed in smaller hotels could purchase a "Water Privilege Ticket" that allowed them to use the mineral springs at the two big hotels.

Mineral springs were not the only attraction in the valley. By the early 1900s, West Baden Springs and French Lick had become a gambling mecca. People came by the thousands to the valley to try their luck at the tables as well as to partake of the waters. Mr. Ed Ballard started a lucrative gambling business at the West Baden Saloon and Restaurant, located on the site of the Homestead Hotel. In 1895, Lee Sinclair hired Ballard to operate a casino at his West Baden Springs hotel. Mr. Ballard went on to operate several casinos including the Brown Casino in French Lick.

In 1906, there were thirteen hotels in the valley besides the French Lick Hotel and West Baden Springs Hotel. Seven years later in 1913 when the Homestead Hotel was built, the number of hotels had increased to twenty-one. Those then existing included The Gorge, Waddy's Hotel, The Well's, The Colonial (Hoosier Club), The Grand Hotel, The Brown, The Sutton, The Ritter, The Perrin House, The Claxton, The Windsor, The Burton, The Round Top Inn, The Toliver, The

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Southern, and the Ellis (Hardesty), The Lindley House, The Oxford House, The Avenue, and the Grigsby. Of those, The Gorge, The Hoosier Club (formerly, The Colonial), and The Brown Hotel contained established public casinos. Hotels ranged from fairly large residential structures that had been added onto and turned into rooming houses to moderately sized structures built exclusively as hotels. Inexplicably, many of these smaller hotels were destroyed by fire: the Waddy (1955), The Wells (1916), and The Colonial (1935). ;Others were demolished in the 1960s like The Brown Hotel in French Lick. The Homestead remains as the only mid-size hotel built during the resort/spa era in West Baden Springs' history.

The Homestead was built in 1913 exclusively as a hotel with shops on the first floor and hotel rooms on the upper floors. It did not contain any gambling facilities. The hotel did offer limited bathing facilities for mineral mud baths - even though there was no mineral spring on the property. Spring #7, located outside the solarium, is actually a fountain, not a spring. It was likely put there to give visitors the impression that the hotel had its own supply of spring water.

Two structures were located on the lot on which the Homestead now sits; The Perrin House and The Dead Rat Saloon. The Perrin House was a small-scale hotel with retail shops on the first floor. On April 23, 1913, The Homestead Hotel Company, whose Board of Directors consisted of Harry, Norman, and Manda Ballard, incorporated to buy property and construct the Homestead Hotel. It was built on lots 1, 2, and 3 on Harrison Avenue directly across from the West Baden Springs Hotel and adjacent to The Perrin House. As the Homestead was built, The Perrin House facade was changed to match the new Homestead Hotel.

The first floor of the Homestead served as commercial space in the heart of downtown West Baden Springs. A saloon, drugstore, dry goods store, restaurant (photo 29), the town post office, and a ladies' fashion shop called The Homestead Style Shop, were located in the hotel. The Homestead, like most other hotels, offered mud baths to its guests. The bath room was located in the center of the first floor (photo 30). The solarium served as a ballroom for guests.

In December of 1919, The Homestead Hotel Company sold its property to The Lost River Investment Company for \$1. Ed Ballard, who owned the West Baden Springs Hotel from 1923 to 1932, created the Lost River Investment Company which held numerous properties in the valley. It was under Ed Ballard's ownership that several improvements were made. By 1925, part of the open porch on the solarium was enclosed and the hotel office was moved into the south section of the solarium. The entire hotel was equipped with electricity and steam heat from a flourmill owned by Ballard located behind the property.

By 1930, Ed Ballard owned both the West Baden Springs Hotel and the Homestead Hotel among others. However, the Great Depression hit Mr. Ballard hard and by 1932-33 he was forced to liquidate his assets including the Homestead and West Baden Springs Hotel. The closing of the

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West Baden Springs Hotel hit the economy of the valley hard. This started the downfall of the valley as a resort destination. Mr. Ballard sold the Homestead back to his cousins Harry and Norman in 1934 for nearly \$55,000. Harry and Norman renamed the Homestead, The West Baden Springs Hotel. Sometime after 1934 the main entrance was redesigned with a recessed revolving door and an Art Deco style canopy. The entire open porch of the solarium was enclosed with double hung wood windows although it is unclear exactly when those changes occurred. Photos from c.1935 show these changes (photo 1,8). The first floor continued to be used for various commercial businesses and the post office. Harry and Norman Ballard continued to own and operate the hotel until 1951 when Oscar Bloom of West Baden Properties, Inc. Purchased the property for \$1. Mr. Bloom owned the hotel for four years and then sold it to Charles and Amanda Fritzsche.

The Fritzsches added a string of motel rooms to the south elevation of the solarium and a small office to the south of the main hotel entrance sometime after 1955. They operated the motel until 1976 when Northwood Institute, which was operating a school in the West Baden Springs Hotel, purchased the Homestead to use as dormitory rooms for its students. That function continued until 1984 when the Homestead was sold to local speculator, Eugene McDonald. McDonald returned the motel function to the Homestead until the property was turned over to Orange County. Currently the town of West Baden Springs has possession of the hotel and is in the process of conducting feasibility studies for its future use.

The Homestead Hotel was one of over two dozen hotels, inns, and rooming houses that came into existence during a very short period of time in the Springs Valley to accommodate visitors and to profit from the spa/resort phenomenon that drove the local economy at the beginning of the 20th century. It was one of a smaller number of such establishments specifically built as a hotel and is the only mid-size hotel left in West Baden Springs to convey the significance of that era to the valley. The grand West Baden Springs Hotel, of course, also still exists and is experiencing a remarkable rejuvenation but is in a class by itself. Although the Homestead has undergone alterations over the years and, today, stands in deteriorated condition, it has really lost little of the important characteristics that identify its original function. As a sole survivor of an important class of hotel that was once so important to the local economy, The Homestead Hotel meets National Register Criterion A.

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BIBLIOGRAPHY

Advertisements, West Baden Journal, September 25, 1913, p. 3.

Advertisements, West Baden Journal, November 27, 1913, p. 2.

History of Lawrence, Orange, and Washington Counties. (Chicago: Goodspeed Brothers & Co.), 1984.

History of Orange County. Paoli, Indiana. 1965.

Lane Jeffrey. Historic postcard collection.

Moffatt, Floyd. Historic photograph collection

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----|------------|
| Orange County Deed Books | 53 | p. 304 |
| | 54 | p. 203 |
| | 57 | p. 85 |
| | 67 | p. 180 |
| | 73 | p. 11 |
| | 81 | pp. 445-47 |
| | 96 | pp. 561-63 |
| | 100 | pp. 220-21 |
| | 127 | p. 10 |
| | 138 | p. 201 |
| | 141 | p. 96 |

Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps. 1906, 1913, 1925.

Shigley, J. Robert. The West Baden Springs Hotel: The Jewel of the Valley. French Lick: Springs Valley Herald, 1991, pp. 102-06.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Homestead Hotel is located on lots 1, 2, and 3 in the original Town of West Baden and on lot 33 and part of lot 34 in an adjoining tract of land in Section 34, Township 2 North, Range 2 West in Orange County, Indiana.

BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

This is the legal description of the property being nominated.