

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 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 New York Central Railroad Passenger Depot  
other names/site number 127-108-09011

2. Location

street & number 220 Broadway N/A  not for publication  
city or town Chesterton N/A  vicinity  
state Indiana code IN county Porter code 127 zip code 46304

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 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] 7-16-98  
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:

<input type="checkbox"/> entered in the National Register. <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	Signature of the Keeper	Date of Action
<input type="checkbox"/> determined eligible for the National Register <input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet.	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> determined not eligible for the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> removed from the National Register	_____	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> other, (explain:)	_____	_____

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)

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-Related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE/TRADE: Business

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

19th & 20th c. AMER.: Craftsman

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls BRICK

STUCCO

roof TERRA COTTA

other WOOD

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

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1914-1947

Significant Dates

1914

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

Architect/Builder

Lakeshore & Michigan Southern Railroad

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:



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***Section 7--Description***

Chesterton's New York Central Railroad Passenger Depot stands in center of town adjacent to the historic commercial district. The flat topography is typical of urbanized areas in this region. The building has not been moved and its proximity to the still active railroad tracks gives it a proper setting. It is a one story, long and low, hip roofed, brick and stuccoed building oriented so that the long elevations parallel the tracks. In style, the railroad architect combined various ideas from the Arts and Crafts movement, with the broadly overhanging eaves treatment recalling Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie Style.

The north elevation was in view to passengers disembarking from trains (photo 2). Exterior walls rest on a stone foundation and have a hard face brick veneer, forming a high wainscot, with stucco above this wrapping over to the eaves. A variety of Craftsman brick laying techniques break up the wall surfaces, a soldier course brick belt runs above the stone foundation and at the window sill level runs a belt of header brick (sill headers are tilted for water run-off); building or bay corners are marked with stone tabs corresponding to the brick courses; windows and other openings have header brick surrounds extending into the stuccoed areas; and header brick tops the brick wainscot.

Two windows and a door are east of the operator's bay on this elevation. The windows are original wooden six-over-six double hung sash. A replacement wooden door is east of the bay; this was a passenger door and it has a plain square transom. The rectangular operator's bay has extra brick header coursing and two windows facing north as well as one each window facing east and west. The bay has a stepped parapet with a running band of stone and brick lozenges and stone coping work. The door west of the operator's bay was for baggage. It is a replacement door sized to fit by installing a sidelight, though the original transom remains.

The main roof is covered in red French Imperial terra cotta tile, and large Prairie Style brackets support the deep eaves. Another significant feature of the depot is the canopy, which extends from the east end of the building roughly forty feet and is carried on heavy wooden posts. Its tile roof pitch and materials match those of the main building. This area served passengers arriving or waiting for a train.

The south elevation of the depot faced toward the commercial streets of Broadway and Calumet (photo 3). This side is detailed like the north elevation, with a passenger door (replacement) roughly centered on the wall, flanked by two windows on each side. A baggage door is to the far left (west) edge of the elevation; it's original door has also been replaced with a decorative grill in this case. The tile roof is punctured by a short chimney placed toward the west end of the ridge line.

The west end of the building presents a striking composition with three windows toward the center, and the typical wall materials and details (photo 5). The east elevation connects to the canopy and has one off center window and another opening, now boarded over, that once served as a drive-through teller window for a bank that was once located in the depot.

Functionally, the depot's interior was split into two areas: the west half was a baggage room and offices, and

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the east half held a passenger's waiting room, ticket booth/operator's bay, and restrooms. The Arts and Crafts feeling of the exterior is carried to the interior by the finish and details. Typical interior finishes in public or office areas include terra cotta tile flooring, brick wainscoting with wood chair rail, simple cased wood moldings around openings, and plaster walls. A hallway leading to the west former baggage area has a brick surround quoined segmental arch, next to the operator's bay/ticket booth.

The original passenger waiting room remains largely intact, as one large open room, complete with the wainscot treatment, window moldings, and large cased wood beams on the ceiling (photo 10).

On the interior, a few minimal changes have been made to accommodate the latest occupant of the building, an engineering firm. A short section of partition wall was added parallel with the original wall that separates the west and east halves of the building in order to create a semi-private reception area. A bathroom door on the inside wall of the waiting area was relocated to face the interior hallway, and the brick wainscot was repaired to blend in with the original brick. Suspended tile ceilings were removed to reveal the original height and beam work. The wood work (except the beams) had been painted and was repainted to match the wood finish of the beams. Ceiling fans with lighting were added. The former baggage area is now finished office space. New HVAC ducts were run in the attic.

The Chesterton New York Central Depot remains a striking example of a small town, early 1900s rail station inside and out.

### *Section 8--Statement of Significance*

The New York Central Railroad Passenger Depot in Chesterton meets Criteria A and C. Railroads were the prime agent of change and industrialization in the Calumet region of Indiana, and locally, the Chesterton Depot is one of two historic buildings that represents the importance rail travel once held in the area. The depot is also a locally outstanding example of the Arts and Crafts style.

Railroads long predated the construction of the New York Central Depot in 1914. Chesterton was first a village, under various names. Thomas Mill, Coffee Creek or Calumet were names for various settlements on or near the current site of Chesterton. Settlers created a village named Coffee Creek in 1833, and in 1852 when the Lake Shore and Michigan Railroad built tracks nearby, land owners began to gradually move the village closer to the tracks. The Thomas brothers, owners of a local mill, sold a parcel of land to the railroad for a depot and wood yard in 1852 for \$120.00. The railroad built a combination freight and passenger depot with grain elevator. In 1869, the village incorporated and soon became know as Chesterton.

Rail travel and transport allowed Chesterton to prosper as never before. Chesterton was the only stop between Chicago and Michigan City until 1872. The nearby village of Porter was becoming an industrial center; in the 1880s, eight brick yards were manufacturing products and soon the Chicago Hydraulic Brick Company established a factory in town. Porter brick yards were a major supplier to the growing Chicago construction market until the turn of the century, when dwindling clay deposits and other suppliers put the Porter yards out

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of business. These and other industries prospered because of rail access. Passenger travel to and from Chesterton also brought more business to town than the old Michigan Road had, so, downtown Chesterton grew. Hotels and stores drew business from being located adjacent to the depot.

The depot site would have been a bustling place in its heyday. The railroad used the large lot in part as a cattle yard, and at one time (during the steam locomotive age) farmers were paid for chord wood brought to the lot for burning in locomotives.

The Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad had been formed out of various lines that connected New York and Chicago in 1869. New York Central had owned the line for years when, in 1914, they formalized ownership of the Lake Shore line by renaming this branch as a New York Central Railroad line. Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad built a frame depot in Chesterton in the 1850s, but on November 22, 1913, the depot burned.

Just over a year later in December of 1914, New York Central had designed and built replacement depots in Chesterton. A separate freight depot was built (still standing 125 feet west of the nominated depot), and the present passenger depot was complete. The town held a banquet for 135 prominent persons and railroad executives in honor of the event with an elaborate menu and musicians from Chicago. This was the first such celebration that the New York Central Railroad had held.

While commercial rail shipping on the line remained viable due to the Chicago marketplace, passenger traffic eroded after World War II. In 1966, New York Central discontinued passenger service at Chesterton and sold the passenger depot to the City of Chesterton for \$35,000.00. The city used the depot for a police station and offices for the town water company. Various private companies have leased the building through the years. In October 1995, Duneland Group, Inc., a private engineering firm, leased the building from the city and began to rehabilitate the depot. Amtrack and Conrail trains still rumble by the depot, recalling the days when railroads contributed so much to Chesterton's economy and way of life.

### ***Section 9--Bibliography***

***Combined Atlases of Porter County, Indiana: 1876, 1895, 1906, 1921.*** Evansville, IN: Unigraphic, Inc., 1979.

Goodspeed, Weston A. and Charles Blanchard, eds. ***Counties of Porter and Lake, Indiana.*** Chicago: F.A. Bailly and Co., 1882.

***History of Porter County, Indiana, Vols. 1 and 2.*** Chicago: Lewis Publishing Co., 1912.

Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory. ***Porter County Interim Report.*** Indianapolis: Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, 1991.

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Parker, Francis. *Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage*. Muncie, IN: Ball State University, 1989.

*Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps*, Chesterton, Indiana. 1912, 1922.

Thomas Memorial Library, Chesterton. Railroad files (vertical files).

*Westchester Township History: Eleven Papers, 1916*. From a manuscript held by the Porter County Historical Society.

***Section 10--Geographical Data--Verbal Boundary Description***

That part of the South half (S ½) of Section Thirty-six (36), Township Thirty-seven (37) North, Range Six (6) West, in the Town of Chesterton, in the County of Porter, in the State of Indiana, bounded and described as follows:

Bounded on the North by a straight line which is South of, parallel to and distant Fifty (50) feet, by rectangular measurement, from the center of the Westbound Main Track of the New York Central Railroad Company;

Bounded on the East by the center line of the Calumet Road (formerly Valparaiso Road);

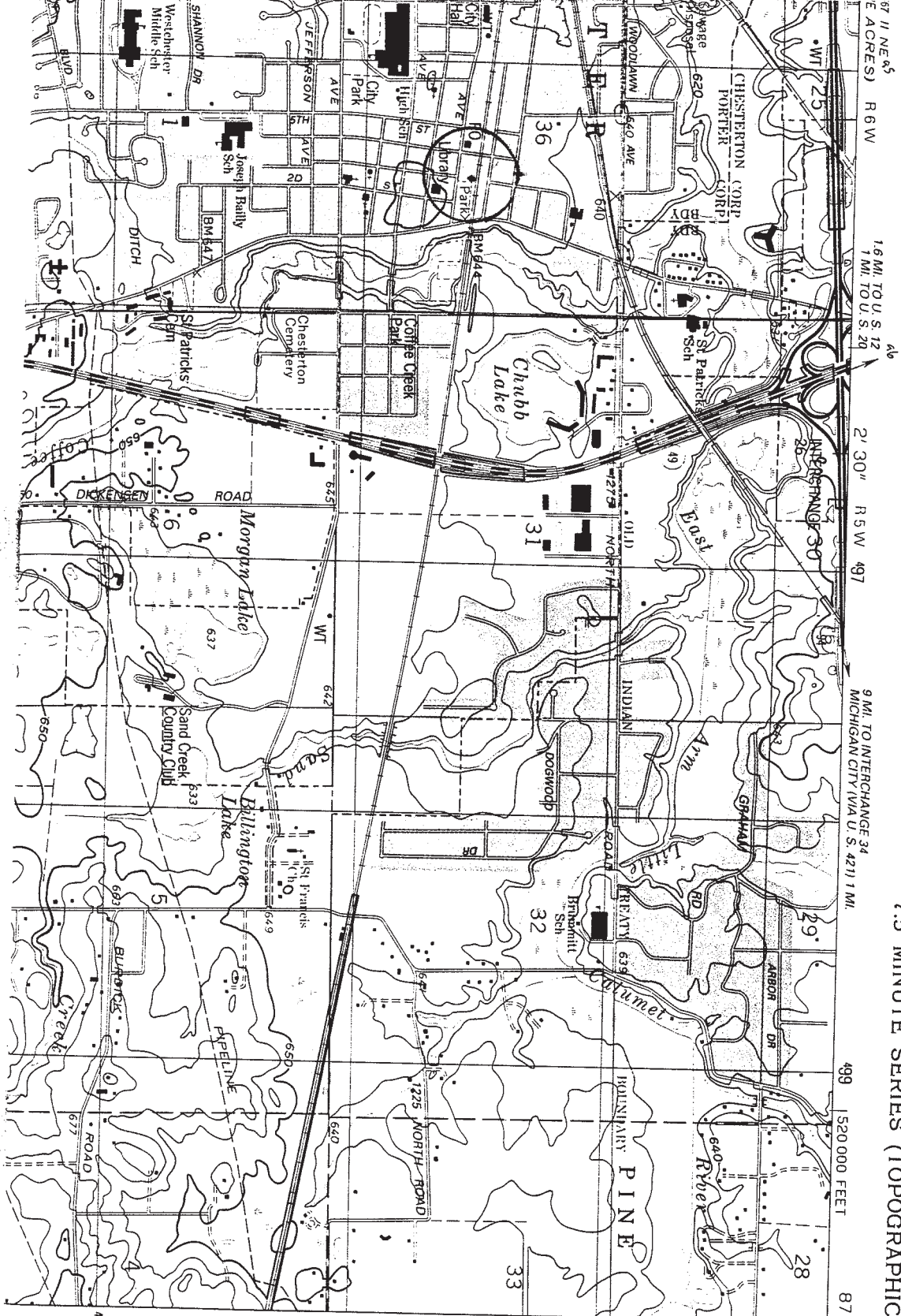
Bounded on the South by the center line of Broadway (formerly Main Street);

Bounded on the west by a line described as beginning at the point of intersection of the previously described North line and a line which is East of, parallel to and distant Four Hundred Two (402) feet, by rectangular measurement, from the center line of Fourth Street (formerly Station Street), as now established, thence South along the last described parallel line Thirty-eight (38) feet, to a point; thence West, at right angles to last course, Twenty-two feet to a point; thence South at right angles to the last course, One Hundred Eighty-seven (187) feet, more or less, to the center line of Broadway; *excepting therefrom easement granted by agreement dated October 4, 1929, between the New York Central Railroad Company and American Telephone and Telegraph Company of Indiana covering the construction, reconstruction, repair, maintenance, and operation of a Twenty (20) duct vitrified clay conduit, to carry telephone cables, in a North and South direction in line with the extension of Second Street; containing One Hundred Twenty-two Thousand One Hundred Twenty-six (122, 126) square feet, more or less.*

***Boundary Justification***

This boundary includes the nominated depot.





**CHESTERTON QUADRANGLE**  
**INDIANA-PORTER CO.**  
**7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)**

1:50,000  
 (MICHIGAN WEST)

1500 000  
 FEET  
 4807 New York Central  
 Railroad  
 Passenger Depot  
 PORTER CO. IN  
 Z 116  
 E 495470  
 N 4606110  
 1 38 N

67 11 NE 45  
 E ACRES) R 6 W  
 1.6 MI. TO U.S. 12  
 1 MI. TO U.S. 20  
 2' 30" R 5 W 497  
 9 MI. TO INTERCHANGE 34  
 MICHIGAN CITY (VIA U.S. 421) 1 MI.  
 499 1520 000 FEET  
 87° 00'  
 41° 37' 30"