

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: INDIANA	
COUNTY: DECATUR	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 27 1978

1. NAME

COMMON: Decatur County Courthouse

AND/OR HISTORIC: Courthouse Park

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Courthouse Square

CITY OR TOWN: Greensburg

STATE: Indiana	CODE: 18	COUNTY: Decatur	CODE: 031
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Decatur County residents

STREET AND NUMBER: Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Greensburg 47240

STATE: Indiana

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Recorders Office

STREET AND NUMBER: Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN: Greensburg 47240

STATE: Indiana

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historical American Bldg. Survey - H A B S K, I H P P & S

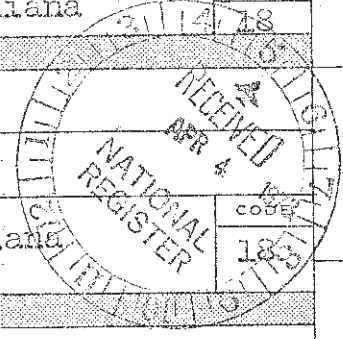
DATE OF SURVEY: 1950 - 1968 - 1970 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress 1950 - National Park Service

STREET AND NUMBER: -U. S. Department of Interior

CITY OR TOWN: Washington

STATE: D.C.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: INDIANA

COUNTY: DECATUR

ENTRY NUMBER: 271988

DATE: APR 27 1978

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Decatur County Courthouse was built 1854-1860, and is a pink brick building with stone trim and is "structurally sound".¹ Its many arches and pilasters are very much in evidence.

March 1890 remodeling was completed by dividing the 40' plus high court room, moving the court to the second floor, and converting the first floor to additional offices. The old court room extended the width of the building (n to s) and the Judges stand and Jury box were north of the walkway - or where the stairway now occupies.

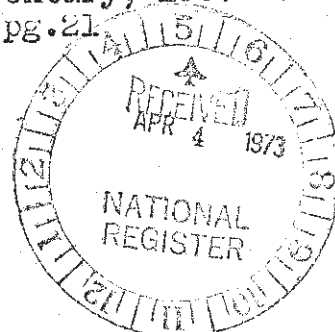
The stone-like stucco placed on the exterior in 1903 is failing now. Where it was scrapped off in 1972 to again show only brick and the original stone trim on the towers, one wonders why the original brick surface was ever covered. The color contrast is lost, with the gloomy stucco covering much beauty. The exterior alterations divided the windows, tho the trim above was kept to carry out the same lines of architecture.

The interior of the building has been much neglected, especially the court rooms. The offices are crowded because of the many historic files in their working rooms. Presently there is much unused space which might be utilized to better advantage. The main hall is most attractive because of its historic floor and needs no improvement. The walls in the offices and halls were decorated about 5 years ago except for the Court rooms and its been many years since the WPA painted them and there is a large decoration painted on the wall that is still discernable and a drawing of it is enclosed.

The surrounding yard is well graded, but the landscaping leaves something to be desired. Atop the 115 foot clock tower a series of large toothed aspen trees have thrived since about 1870, giving noteriety far and wide to the city of Greensburg. "But the trees seem to have clouded the architectural significance of the building!"² Truly our Courthouse and its park is the one and only landmark that we have and should be preserved.

- Footnotes:
1. Sieco Eng. Inc. , Columbus, Ind. 1970
 2. Greensburg Daily News Aug 18, 1966 Pg. 1 Sec 3
 3. Decatur County History - Harding 1910 pg 81
 4. Famous Trees - U.S. Forestry pamphlet 1936
 5. Indiana Courthouses of 19th Century, 1967-68
David R. Hermansen pg. 21

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi-	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>War Memorials</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Itigation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> Music	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Architecture : "The Decatur County Courthouse is one of the finest examples of the Romanesque Revival in the United States. In fact, I can think of only one better example: The old Smithsonian building in Washington, D.C.¹ Edwin May, who was the architect for several Hoosier County Courthouses and the present State Capitol Building, designed the Decatur County Courthouse.² "Although the present Decatur County Courthouse was started in 1854, it was not completed until 1860. It is an interesting and curious solution, asymmetrical in plan and picturesque and rambling in silhouette, but suggestive of the Gothic idiom. Conversely, the semicircular arches are more indicative of Romanesque expressions---!"³

Political: William Cumback was 4th Congressional District Representative in 1854 after admitted to the bar in 1853 here and later was Lieutenant-governor and collector of Internal-Revenue for 12 years tho he practiced law the balance of 40 years in the court of this building.⁴ It was thru his influence that Lincoln stopped here Feb. 12, 1861 enroute to his inauguration and made a brief speech, tho he had the Band play several numbers. They played weekly on the Courthouse lawn and later became the 7th Regiment Band early in the Civil War.⁵

U.S. Senator Thomas (A?) Hendricks spoke at the Courthouse before a large political rally on Sat. April 25th, 1863. He later became U.S. Vice-President in 1884 (?)⁶

For one week-end during the Civil War, the new Courthouse became a temporary armory and its park a bivouac area for "troops" on July 11th, 1863 as word spread that "Morgans Raiders" were coming and armed advance scouts set foot in our County. The Treasurer's office had provisions to feed 10 Reg't.

While visiting Greensburg on a speaking tour in 1908, Wm. Jennings Bryan sat in a carriage on the S.W. corner of the Courthouse Square with Mayor Northern and his visit is remembered for his statement that the Decatur County Courthouse was the finest specimen of Gothic Architecture that he had seen in his travels throughout the world.⁷

William Allen White used the trees on the Courthouse tower as the subject of one of his famous editorials and later visited the site enroute to New York.⁸

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Compendium of National Biography by the Lewis Publishing Co.
 Chicago 1900 - Genealogical and Biographical Record of Dec.Co.
 Famous Trees U. S. Forestry Service 1936
 Greensburg Daily News 7/11/63, 7/20/63, 8/18/63, 5/3/68, 2/16/73.
 Historical Atlas of Decatur Co 1822
 History of Decatur County by Lewis A Harding 1915
 Indiana County Courthouses of the Nineteenth Century by
 David A Hermansen in 1967-68 Ball State Univ. Faculty Series
 Letters of : Calvin D. Davis, Assoc. Prof. in Dept. History Duke, Um
 H. Roll McLaughlin, 2/17/73 State Preservation,
 Coordinator.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

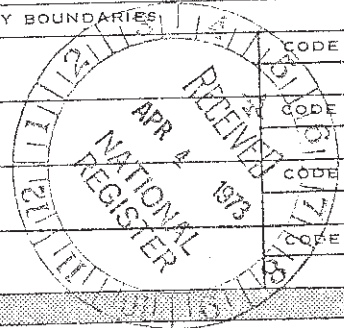
LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		39	20	14
SE	° ' "	° ' "		North lat.		
SW	° ' "	° ' "		85	29	00
				West long.		

UTM
 16/6306
 435507
 CD

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: approx. 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES:

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
None		None	
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Dale G. Myers, Treas. of Comm. (Presid. of Historical Society
 OF HISTORICAL
 ORGANIZATION: Courthouse Restoration Committee Society of Dec.Co DATE: 19
 March 16, 73
 STREET AND NUMBER:
 220 East Walnut St.
 CITY OR TOWN: Greensburg zip47240 STATE: Indiana CODE: 18

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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 National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: [Signature]
 Title: Indiana State Liaison Officer

March 28, 1973

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 4/27/73

ATTEST: [Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 4 26 73



Washington Sch

GREENSBURG

BROADWAY

LINCOLN ST

County Memorial Hospital

Rossmore Sch

High Sch

Odd Fellows Home

Courtthouse

CA PO

N 39-20-14 LAT
W 85-29-00 LONG