

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Indiana

COUNTY: Lake

FOR NPS USE ONLY

ENTRY NUMBER: 1750 DATE: 11/17/59

1. NAME

COMMON: Lake County Court House

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Public Square or Commons in the Center of the Corporate Limits of

CITY OR TOWN: Crown Point

STATE: Indiana CODE: 18 COUNTY: Lake CODE: 080

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"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

Agricultural Government Park Transportation Commercial Industrial Private Residence Other (Specify) Educational Military Religious Scientific

Board of Commissioners will abandon for new Court House complex

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Board of Lake County Commissioners, for a public square

STREET AND NUMBER: "Court House"

CITY OR TOWN: Crown Point STATE: Indiana CODE: 18

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Lake County, Indiana Recorder Deed Record 9 page 11

STREET AND NUMBER: Court House

CITY OR TOWN: Crown Point STATE: Indiana

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

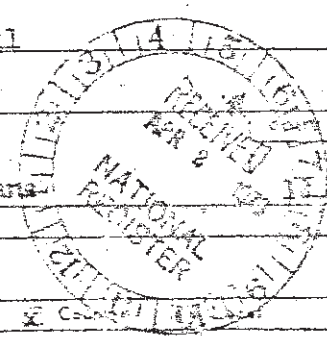
TITLE OF SURVEY: Town Plat of the Town of Crown Point

DATE OF SURVEY: November 3, 1840 Federal State County

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Lake County Recorder's Deed Rec. "B" page 171

STREET AND NUMBER: Court House

CITY OR TOWN: Crown Point STATE: Indiana CODE: 18



STATE: INDIANA

COUNTY: LAKE

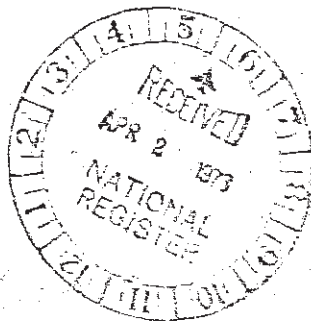
ENTRY NUMBER: 1750

DATE: 11/17/59

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7. DESCRIPTION		(Check One)				
CONDITION	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruined	<input type="checkbox"/> Unrepaired
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (If known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE.						
<p>The Court House is located in Crown Point, Indiana, which is a typical county seat of the Middle West when court houses were placed in the center of a business square and also centrally located in the county. The Lake County, Indiana, Court House is a focal point in a residential community because it is the biggest building in the area.</p> <p>The Court House portrays a type of architecture of the Victorian Period which has made for a most interesting combination of Renaissance and Georgian styles. It has created a sort of quasi-military effect in appearance.</p> <p>The Court Houses at present houses the Lake County Indiana governmental offices of the Assessor, Auditor, Board of Commissioners, Clerk, Recorder, Sheriff, Surveyor, Treasurer and the Lake Circuit Courtroom.</p> <p>The Court House is built of red brick and limestone and has a red glazed roof. The foundation varies in width from 2½ to 3½ feet and is laid on oak plank. The walls are structurally sound with hardly any evidence of cracks. The roof is supported by a massive array of wooden timbers. The exterior and interior has suffered because of lack of painting for more than two decades. Some of the galvanized iron was blown off the north tower in a hundred-mile-an-hour gale in 1964, but is not beyond repair. All of the first floor hallways are lined with a marble dado.</p> <p>The original and central portion with the clock tower was designed by J. C. Cochran of Chicago, Illinois. On July 13, 1878, a contract was awarded to Thomas and Hugh Colwell of Ottawa, Illinois, to build at a cost of \$45,000.00.</p> <p>On June 28, 1907, Beers & Beers of Chicago, Illinois, were selected as architects for the North and South, two-story extensions of the Court House. A contract was let to W. J. Turness Company, Chicago, Illinois, on September 14, 1907, for construction cost in the amount of \$78,800.00 (See copy of blueprint attached--Item #7a).</p> <p>The last single-story wings were built in 1928 perpetuating the same architectural design. Henderlong Lumber Company of Crown Point, Indiana, was awarded the bid at a cost of \$85,000.00.</p> <p>In the words of Martin Behnke, President of the Lake County Board of Commissioners, its physical stability can best be expressed, "The Court House is an old fort and will last forever."</p>						

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



Form 10-306
(July 1957)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Indiana	
COUNTY Lake	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	May 1 1973

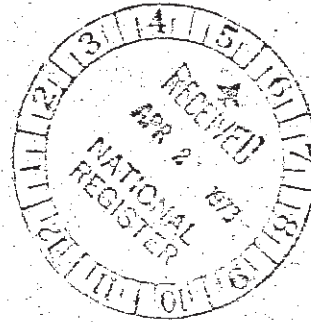
(Number all entries)

7a. (description continued)

The attached blueprint: By Beers & Beers, Architects,
Chicago, Illinois

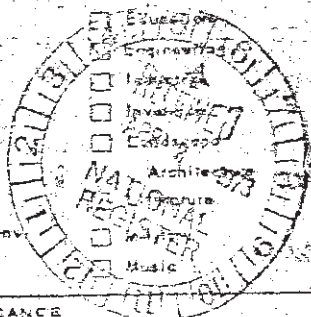
Date: June 26, 1907

Copy of blueprint furnished October 3, 1972 by Lake County
Surveyor, Crown Point, Indiana.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE			
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Colonial	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATES: (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 type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>Museum & Cultural Center</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Events	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			
STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE			
<p>The Court House has been, since its erection in 1878, a landmark in Lake County, Indiana, for many years the most massive structure in breadth and height, constructed by early settlers, that can be seen for miles on top of the continental divide.</p> <p>The Court House is a most important symbol of the character of the citizens of Lake County. It stands for integrity of its citizens, an element in the character of the community, which has been built for more than a hundred years, and of which the citizens of the present are justly proud and want to maintain for future generations.</p> <p>In early days the farmers held "horse sales." The horses were tethered to the chain fence around the Court House square. Those who drove a long distance to purchase produce of any kind in those days of winter and exchange also hitched their horse-drawn vehicles to the same chain fence around the Court House.</p> <p>All Memorial Day and Veterans Day services and other patriotic gatherings are also conducted on the East Court House steps. Post-humus awards have been presented by the United States military in the Circuit Court Room of the Court House.</p> <p>On October 7, 1896 William Jennings Bryan, the silver tongued orator, addressed the citizens of Lake County when he was campaigning for the United States Presidency and stressed the importance of free silver.</p> <p>The Court House enlarged in 1907-08 depicts an age which reflects the development and growth of Lake County, Indiana. It mirrors the changing role of local government in Hoosier life. This period reflects the great economic expanse of the oil industry started by John D. Rockefeller and the beginning of the steel mills begun by Judge Elbert Gary, making the Calumet Region of Lake County, Indiana, one of the great industrial regions of the world.</p> <p>On June 19, 1909, the first major auto race in the United States was held south of the Court House over an approximate 25 mile track and known as the Cobe Cup Race. This grueling contest was the forerunner of the famous Indianapolis "500". The winner's cup was presented on the steps of the East entrance of the Court House to Louis Chevrolet, the Swiss-born master mechanic who later became the famous engineer and designer of the General Motors Co.</p>			



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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Indiana	
COUNTY Lake	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
17	1973

(Number all entries)

8a. (Significance continued)

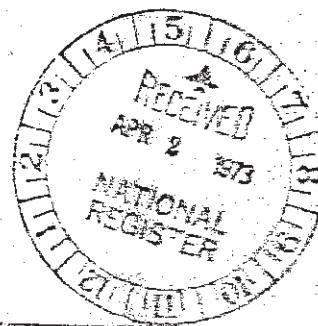
For decades, Crown Point, Indiana was known as the "Green" of the United States. Many famous movie personalities as Rudolph Valentino procured their marriage license in the Lake County Court House.

The East steps of the Court House provided the background for the photograph of John Dillinger, notorious outlaw, after his capture with Lake County Prosecutor Robert Estill at his side.

In a letter dated September 21, 1972, to the Board of Commissioners of Lake County, Indiana by Mr. David R. Hermansen, Professor of Architecture and Planning, at Ball State University and noted authority on historical buildings in the State of Indiana, it was stated, "The Lake County Courthouse is without question one of the finest architectural expressions in Indiana. It is a major monument and I would strongly recommend that it be preserved and hopefully restored to it's original luster. It is I think without question the most significant building in Lake County. I would sincerely hope an adaptive use could be found for this magnificent structure."

In a letter dated October 3, 1972 to the Board of Commissioners of Lake County, Indiana by Mr. Hubert Hawkins, Executive Secretary of the Indiana Historical Society, he asked, "In deciding the fate of the old courthouse at Crown Point you have an opportunity to make a constructive contribution to the educational facilities of your area. The old courthouse has substantial architectural merit. It is unquestionably a familiar landmark and rich in historical associations. It could continue to be a significant community asset if, as has been suggested, a museum of industry could be established there. In this capacity a valuable contribution could be made to the educational processes, both for school children and adults. As the museum developed it could become a substantial tourists attraction. It would be appropriate for such a museum to be located in Lake County which is the home of so large a proportion of the State's industrial resources."

The Northern geographical and industrial area of Lake County, Indiana is one of the "melting pots" of the United States. Numerous ethnic groups have expressed gratification to the Lake County Historical Society for the opportunity to relate its heritage in a museum - cultural center as proposed.



MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Timothy Ball, "Lake County, Indiana 1834-1872"
 Lake County, Indiana Commissioners Record. (7/13-1872), page 35
 Lake County, Indiana Commissioners Record. (6/28-1872), page 141
 Old Settlers Association of Lake County, Indiana, Minutes of 1876
 Dr. Wm. D. Weis, "Lake County Court House" published 1950
 Powell A. Moore, "The Calumet Region" copyright 1955 by Indiana
 Historical Bureau
 "125 Years of Progress, Crown Point, Indiana" (1959)

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	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	41	25	04	87	21	54
NE						
SE						
SW						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1.53 Acres (217.5' x 307' square)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES: NONE

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
 Wilbur Meidreder, Chairman, Lake County Court House Preservation Committee

ORGANIZATION:
 Historical Association of Lake Co., Indiana, Inc. January 16, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:
 P. O. Box 556

CITY OR TOWN: STATE CODE
 Crown Point Indiana 45707 19

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 99-665), 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

Date: March 26, 1973

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

[Signature]
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 5/7/73

ATTEST:
[Signature]
 Keeper of the National Register

Date: 5 15 73

LATM
 14/469421
 4584940
 CD

SEE INSTRUCTIONS