

FINAL - No sig

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Indiana
COUNTY: Vanderburgh
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
John Augustus Reitz House

AND/OR HISTORIC:  
same as above

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
224 Southeast First Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Evansville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:  
Eighth

STATE: Indiana      CODE: 18      COUNTY: Vanderburgh      CODE: 163

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
Catholic Diocese of Evansville

STREET AND NUMBER:  
219 Northwest Third Street

CITY OR TOWN:  
Evansville

STATE: Indiana      CODE: 18

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:  
Ridgeon Township Assessor's Office, City-County Building

STREET AND NUMBER:  
8th and Main Streets

CITY OR TOWN:  
Evansville

STATE: Indiana      CODE: 18

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
No known existing survey

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:      STATE:      CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: COUNTY: ENTRY NUMBER: DATE:

7. DESCRIPTION

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

The home was built in 1872. It is constructed of brick with wooden trim. The brick is painted yellow and the trim is brown. There are three floors plus a basement. The mansard roof is pierced by dormer windows which afford a view of the Ohio river. The roof is capped by a cast iron balustrade. The main facade is an L-shape plan with a porch tucked into the L. The surface of this porch as well as the side porch is mosaic tile. The spikes on the iron fence which encircles the house were originally gold leaf.

The ceilings on the first floor are 13½ feet high, elsewhere they are 12 feet high. The ceiling in the living room is an oil painting which was done to match the original oriental carpet. In the study the ceiling is blocks of molded plaster. The one in the dining room is molded plaster with subtle color worked into the design.

The floors in the five main rooms and the hallways on the first floor are hardwood parquet. Each room has a different design.

All of the light fixtures are original and have been converted from gas with the exception of those on the third floor which are still gas. The chandeliers in the living room are gold leaf and were made especially for the room.

There are ten fireplaces. Each mantel is different in design and material. There is a hand-carved walnut one in the dining room, a tiny glazed tile one in the music room, and a cast iron one in a bedroom. The onyx mantel in the living room is twelve feet high and was added in 1893 when it was purchased at the Chicago Exposition. It had been entered as an exhibit by Tiffany's of New York.

Stained glass is used extensively. The inner set of front doors has stained glass panels as do the two doors at the side. The upper section of the bay window and another window in the study plus the windows in the master bedroom are also stained glass. The wood lattices in the archways of the halls have stained glass worked into them.

With the exception of the living room, the cornices on the first floor are hand carved wood in a sphinx-head design. The cornices in the living room as well as the ceiling molding and two 13 foot mirrors are gold leaf.

Some original furniture is still in the home.

There is a large carriage house in the rear.

The home remains today as it was when it was built with only a few minor interior changes. It seems to be in good repair.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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 type="checkbox"/> Political	<input 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	losophy	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human-	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	itarian	_____
<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			
<p>The home was built by John Augustus Reitz, Evansville's pioneer lumber king. Mr. Reitz used the finest building materials available in the area in its construction. Mr. Reitz and his son, Francis Joseph, were civic as well as industrial leaders. "Churches, schools, and charitable enterprises have benefited by their gifts of more than \$3,000,000." Two of the city's high schools are named for Francis Joseph.</p> <p>The home was purchased by John Fenderich and his sister Laura Gertrude Fenderich McCarthy, grandchildren of John A. Reitz, and donated to the Daughters of Isabella. When Evansville became a diocese the home was sold to the Diocese and was used as the home of the first Bishop of Evansville until his death in 1972.</p> <p>The house is located two blocks from the Ohio River in an area of historic homes. This was the finest residential area of early Evansville. The residents were responsible for establishing the business and civic institutions of the town. They were also involved in state and national affairs: A Governor of Indiana lived there as well as a U. S. Secretary of State, two U.S. Ambassadors, some U.S. Congressmen and state representatives. The Area Plan Commission of Evansville is, at this time, drawing up an ordinance setting aside the area as a historic district. The Junior League of Evansville is working to get the entire area listed on the National Register. Walking tours in the area are popular with residents and visitors. It displays most of the architectural styles popular in the Midwest from 1860 to 1920. The home is located within walking distance of the downtown hotels where conventions are held, the museum and three buildings already listed on the National Register. The Delta Queen docks about four blocks from the house and passengers often walk through the area.</p> <p>The home, which is going to be for sale in the near future, is being considered for restoration and establishment as a living museum. Many of the original furnishings will be returned to it.</p> <p>The house is significant as the residence of three prominent Evansville citizens. It is most significant, however, as a well-preserved example of mid-American Nineteenth Century architecture.</p>			
<p><sup>1</sup> Morlock, James E. <u>The Evansville story</u>. (1956), p. 64.</p>			

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Morlock, James E. The Evansville Story. 1956

Peat, Wilbur D. Indiana Houses of the Nineteenth Century. Indianapolis Indiana Historical Society, 1962.

**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	°	'	"	°	'	"	37°	57'	56"	87°	34'	9"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"						
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"						

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2 acre

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Mrs. Richard Snodgrass, Chairman of Historic Preservation Committee

ORGANIZATION: Junior League of Evansville

DATE: August 1, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:  
1113 Greenfield Road

CITY OR TOWN: Evansville

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 \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS