

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FINAL

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DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Monroe County Courthouse

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Sq. bounded by Walnut, College, 5th & 6th Sts

CITY, TOWN

Bloomington

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

7th

STATE

Indiana

CODE

018

COUNTY

Monroe

CODE

105

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Monroe County Commissioners

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Bloomington

VICINITY OF

STATE

Indiana

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Monroe County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Courthouse Square

CITY, TOWN

Bloomington

STATE

Indiana

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Monroe County Courthouse in Bloomington, Indiana is a Beaux-Arts Classical structure built of native limestone. The 3 story building is constructed in four distinct protrusions which extend from beneath a central dome.

The ground level is rusticated with keystones above the windows and a central doorway in each of the four sections. Above the doorways are four ionic-capitaled pilasters with shafts rising two stories to support the entablature beneath the roof. Above the roofline are carved panels. The side walls of each section feature doric capitaled pilasters and a balustrade above the entablature.

The main (south) entrance is dominated by a sculpted group of three classical figures entitled "The Light of the World" which are located above the doorway. The group is flanked by two ionic columns, and behind it the recessed second and third level feature a large stained glass window. The name "Monroe County Court House" is carved in the frieze, flanked by festoons. Above the entablature is a carved panel featuring two caryatids. The walls supporting the dome contain a four-faced clock with each face framed by pilasters topped with a pediment. The dome is copper, has panels containing vents, and is topped by cresting. Above the dome is a 3' 9" gold-leafed copper weathervane in the shape of a fish, which has been an ornament on all of Monroe County's courthouses since 1826.

The courthouse interior was originally highlighted by a rotunda, culminating in a set of eight classically inspired murals beneath the dome. Matched double stairways led to the second level from north and south entrances. The second and third levels consisted of a central circle of columns connected by an iron railing, with offices located along the exterior walls of the building.

In 1962 the interior was altered to provide more working space without building exterior additions, and east and west doorways were closed, northern staircases removed, and floors inserted on second and third levels beneath the dome to create a Superior Court room and expand office space.

Despite the remodeling the main southern entrance and staircases remain intact. The central hallway is finished in limestone with columns in Egyptian Revival style. Two murals in the same classical theme as the dome murals are located beside the stairwell. Stairs, floors, and portions of the walls are of marble laid in a two color design. Stair railings are cast iron. On the third level the Circuit Court room retains its original mahogany woodwork and brass lighting fixtures.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES 1910

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Wing & Guy M. Mahurin

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The present Monroe County Courthouse is the fourth such structure to occupy the public square. Although today's courthouse is the only public building on the square, in earlier times the land also contained the first county jail, fire house, and a public well.

The Courthouse was designed by the Fort Wayne architectural firm of Wing and Mahurin, who drew plans for at least three other Indiana courthouses. Contractors were George W. Caldwell and Lester Drake of Columbus, Indiana. They are most noted for two structures which were pioneering efforts for their period - the West Baden Hotel which had the largest dome built up to that time and the Palace of Agriculture which was erected for the St. Louis World's Fair and was the largest building ever constructed under one roof at the time of its execution.

Two artists who made substantial contributions to embellishment of the Courthouse were Albert Molnar, Sr., and Gustave Brand. Molnar who came from Hungary in 1903 to work on the art work at the St. Louis World's Fair, sculpted "The Light of the World" for the main entrance. Gustave Brand was a German emigrant who supervised the ornamentation on the German exposition in the Chicago Columbian Exposition. Brand is credited with ten murals, the stained glass dome, and the large stained glass window on the second level landing. The murals, depict figures in classical dress and incorporate themes of local importance. Brand's stained glass window features an American eagle and is an impressive focal point for the main entrance staircase.

Many statues and plaques are found throughout the Courthouse grounds. The dominating structure on the lawn is the imposing Captain W.M. Alexander Memorial, "To the Soldiers of All Wars". George W. Bunting designed this obelisk topped by the figure of a Civil War Soldier; it was erected by the Grand Army of the Republic in 1928. Around the base are friezes depicting battle scenes from the Mexican War, Civil War, Spanish - American War, and World War I. A second soldier statue, "The Spirit of the Fighting Yank," created by Ernest M. Viquesney, a ubiquitous sculptor of public memorials.

Harry Donato, carver of "Fighting Yank," also had a national reputation, his work can also be seen in the carvings on the Museum of Art in Chicago. Another monument is the "Freedom Lane" inscribed with Franklin Roosevelt's Four Freedoms.

The accumulation of these memorials over the years indicates the Courthouse's continuing role as a center for honoring those individuals, values, and events which county residents consider of lasting merit. The most popular single feature of the Courthouse Square remains its oldest -- the fish-shaped weathervane. The weathervane was forged by a pioneer local blacksmith named Austin Seward.

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With its courthouse and lawn of monuments Courthouse Square is the focal point for Bloomington and Monroe County. At the time of its construction, the Courthouse was the grandest and costliest (\$250,000.00) structure ever raised in the community. Its elegance and architectural detail represent the hopes and optimism of an earlier age, when small Midwest communities struggled to bring grandeur, beauty, and a sense of affluence to hamlets which had recently been hacked out of wilderness. The courthouse remains one of the few public buildings of substantial architectural detail in the county. It is the product of outstanding representatives of the fields of architecture, construction, and sculpture.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

(See attached continuation sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

UTM REFERENCES

UTM per SHAARD 4/26/11

A 16 540250 4335210
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B 540243 4335425
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C

D

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Dana D'Esopo

ORGANIZATION

Co-Chairman, Historic Preservation Sub-Committee

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

1010 Manor Road

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Bloomington

STATE

Indiana

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Major Bibliographical References

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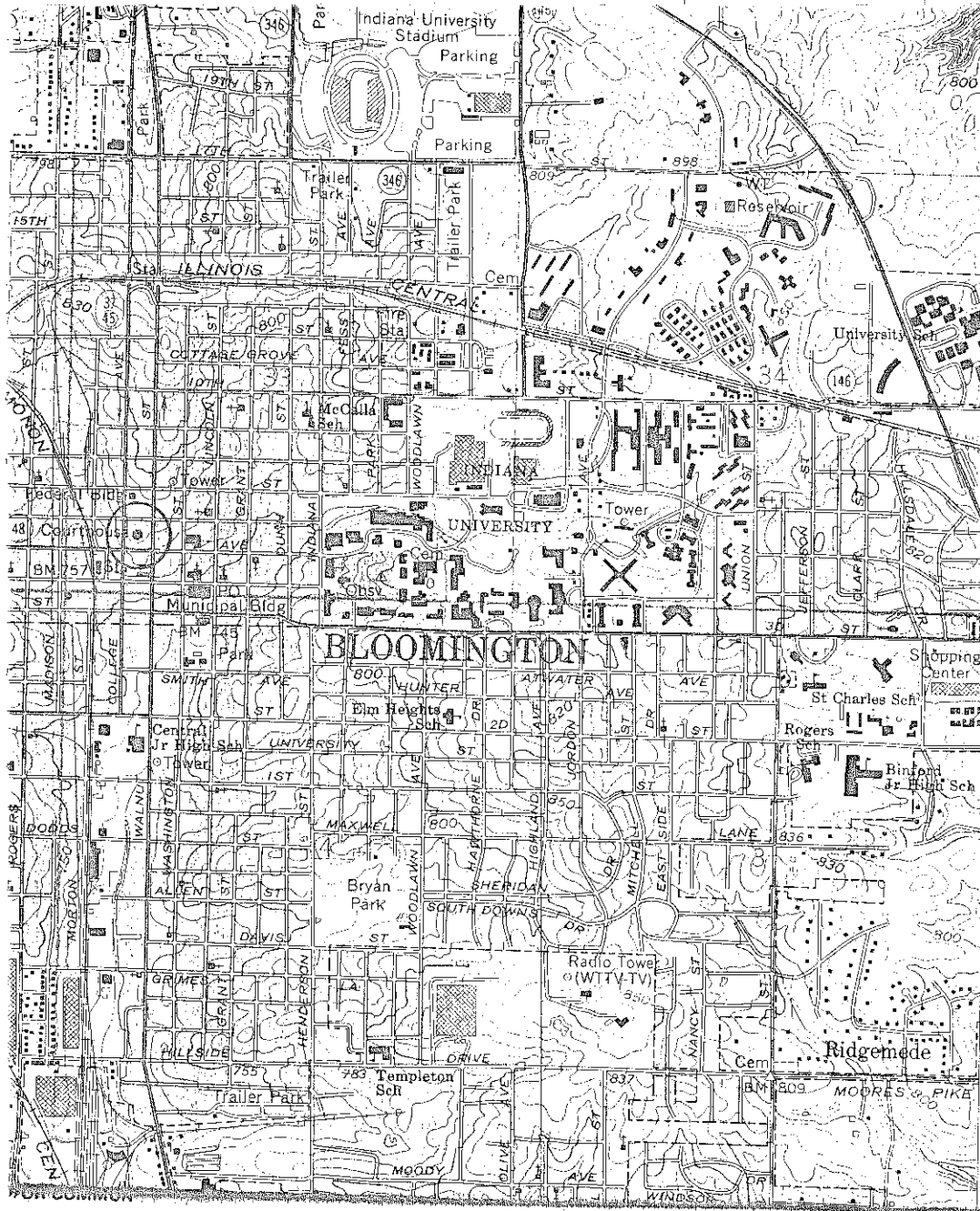
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Monroe County
 Court House,
 Bloomington,
 Indiana
 UTM References
 16/540250/4335210

LOCATION

TOWN Bloomington VICINITY OF COUNTY Monroe STATE Indiana

MAP REFERENCE

Scale U.S.G.S. Topographical 7.5 min. series, Bloomington Quadrangle

Scale 1:24 000 DATE 1966

REQUIREMENTS

- BOUNDARIES INCLUDED ON ALL MAPS
- PROPERTY BOUNDARIES
- NORTH ARROW
- UTM REFERENCES

INT: 2986-75