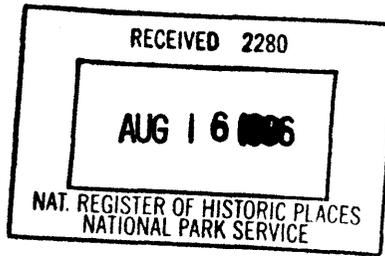


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



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 Horner, Imre and Maria, House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 2 Merrivale Avenue N/A  not for publication

city or town Beverly Shores  vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Porter code 127 zip code 46301

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.)

*Pat L. R. Roberts*

8-5-96

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:

entered in the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

*Carrie D. Shull*

Date of Action

9-25-96

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

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

MODERN: International Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

walls WOOD: Weatherboard

GLASS

roof ASPHALT

other BRICK

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

**Period of Significance**

1949

**Significant Dates**

1949

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A

**Architect/Builder**

Kolb, Otto

**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:

Property Owner

Horner, Imre and Maria, House  
Name of Property

Porter IN  
County and State

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 1.13

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1 

16	501700	4615420
Zone	Easting	Northing

3 

Zone	Easting	Northing

2 

--	--	--

4 

--	--	--

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

**Boundary Justification**

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Camille B. Fife & Thomas W. Salmon II, ASLA  
organization The Westerly Group, Inc. date 7-6-95  
street & number 556 W. 1175 N. Rd. telephone 812/696-2415  
city or town Farmersburg state IN zip code 47850

**Additional Documentation**

Submit the following items with the completed form:

**Continuation Sheets**

**Maps**

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

**Photographs**

Representative **black and white** photographs of the property.

**Additional items**

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

**Property Owner**

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name Maria Horner  
street & number 2 Merrivale Avenue telephone 219/879-0020  
city or town Beverly Shores state IN zip code 46301

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et seq.*).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number       7       Page       1      

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

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### Description

The Horner House and its materials are quite straightforward: glass, redwood and pine lumber, transite with some aluminum and brass flashing. The roofs are flat; built-up with paper, tar, gravel and in some cases, on the terraces, for instance, the addition of pine duck boards.

The central, or main house is a 24' by 45' rectangle. 32' of this is a one-story living room and screened porch. The remaining 13' contains, on the first floor, a kitchen, bathroom and small study (originally designed as a guest room.) The second floor of the main house is comprised of a bathroom, a large bedroom and a space, (originally designed as a studio) which now serves as a second bedroom/studio. This floor also has two closets, a hall and a flight of stairs to the ground floor as well as a door to the roof of the main house. A deck was originally designed for a portion of this roof, but never completed.

The north and south walls of the one-story living room are wood framed 4" x 8" columns surmounted by a single 2" x 6" clad with two 2" x 8" timbers. These three members make up the rafters. The living room is comprised of four, 8' bays. The columns are carried beneath the floor line to rest on concrete block foundation walls. 2" x 8" floor joists on 16" centers carry the rough floor. The base of each column is braced to the block foundation with two steel "L" sections which also serve to support the 12" high bulkhead. Today these stools have been repaired and clad with copper sheeting. Originally, the bases contained vents of copper insect screen with hinged plywood doors. A similar treatment was incorporated into the 8" window heads on the south side. Some of these vents are still in place.

The full-height exterior bay walls are of plate glass ("TWINDO" was called for in the specifications.) The glass was shipped from Pittsburgh, on special order, by rail and delivered to the contractor at the site for erection. One of the panels, on the screen porch or south side of the living room wall, is capable of sliding open to a full door of 8' x 9', by means of a continuous steel slide and steel barn door hangers.

As stated above, the exterior materials used in the Horner House include naturally bleached heart redwood (3/4" x 4"), bevelled joint

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 7 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 2

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

cladding, always used vertically, and plate glass. The two-story core of the main house contains manufactured casement windows, transite spandrels and heads with redwood corners and facias. The doors are solid lumber core, stained and varnished.

The screened porch is constructed of four built-up 2" x 4" columns, suspended from the previously mentioned cantilevered ceiling joists. The floors are 3/4" x 4" pine varnished. The copper screen has been attached with copper-headed nails to the uprights in 36" horizontal bands and then hand-sewn with copper wire at the selvage edges to form a floor-to ceiling screen "wall", in four bays, along its 32' length. A second 2" x 4" exterior member was nailed over the exposed nail heads. The screens presently in place on the porch are original.

The basement lies beneath the two-story core portion of the main house. It has no exterior openings and contains a gas furnace, a hot water heater and several appliances.

The ground floor of the main house is finished almost entirely of natural, stained redwood. There are no painted surfaces. The ceilings are of birch plywood nailed directly to the rafters and where used as walls, to the studs. Cabinets of birch plywood are the only other non-redwood finishes. The floors are of 1/2", ground, consolidated cork tiles, one foot square, with a waxed finish. The stair treads to the second floor are white oak. The free standing fireplace was designed to have two openings with a one foot deep pit on the west side. Today the rear or second opening is unused. The chimney breast is of steel plate, with a plaster applicade, in a neutral grey finish. This surface presents an interesting texture. The fireplace is of tan brick. A second chimney leads from the gas furnace up through a chase behind the stair well to the roof.

The compact, efficient kitchen utilizes white steel cabinets with grey sliding doors and clean white formica counter tops. All are original. An obscure glass pass-through serves both the living room and the screened porch.

The interior of the main house is remarkable in that a great deal of ingenuity was employed in the utilization of space, in the design of cabinets, the efficient arrangement of utilities and furniture, even in the location of permanent lighting fixtures. The integrity of the interior is extremely high, with only slight changes having taken place since its construction. For example, an interior ventilation system, based on narrow, below-window hinged wooden panels, has been permanently closed and is rarely used today, but a workable transom survives over the front door and the south plate glass windows. The former are the only non-operable features in the house.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number       7       Page       3      Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

The other two structures which comprise the residence are detailed similarly to the main building, but they do not include any large paned (floor to ceiling) glass windows. The two story Guest House, 18' x 18' was originally designed as a one-room workshop. In 1965, a second story was added. It is quite sensitive to the architect's design and maintains the footprint of the original plan. On the roof of the canopy which connects the main house with the garage and the guest house (former workshop), a light-weight screened terrace was added. In addition, a timber frame was constructed on the north elevation of the guest house to provide a screened patio and outdoor shower. Neither of these adaptations affect the integrity of the original structures, as they are both semi-transparent and removable. Today, the ground floor of the guest house serves as a studio-type living room with a kitchenette and the upstairs contains a generous bedroom and bath.

The garage is 18' x 22' with a south facing roll-up door. There is sufficient space for a full size hot water heater and a gas furnace. The building is equipped with a personnel door which gives onto the covered walk area between the three structures of the residence. The interior of the garage is finished with 4' x 8' plywood panels. The ceiling is of sheet rock with a concrete floor. Access to the garage from Merrivale Avenue is via a concrete drive/walkway, with a central median.

The house and its supplemental buildings are conjoined with concrete walkways. These in turn, are covered with roofs. The only columniation is a single tree trunk near a fish tank. The canopies are all cantilevered from the adjacent buildings.

The concrete block foundations are not expressed on the exterior of the house, except that on the ravine side, under the porch, a portion of block shows. Additionally, along this depressed margin of the building a railroad tie, walled terrace has been built. It connects to the entry of the screened porch on the west and to a flight of field stone steps on the east, leading to a patio. Situated in this area is an 8' x 10' fish tank. Concrete lined, it is supplied by well water. Adjacent to the pond and slightly hanging over one lip is a large, flat slab of field stone -- a support for a tree trunk which carries a portion of the patio canopy soffit.

Other designed field stone or timber steps and trails circle the house, lead to the ravine or travel to the top of the secondary, large dune to the south of the house. The sandy bottom or low point of the ravine provides an additional trail. A gravel lane leads from the driveway to the south property line. It provides access for maintenance of the house well, which is located up the dune hill, and to a rustic staircase leading to the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 7 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 4

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

crest of the dune. Concrete foundations for a previous garage have been left as a retaining wall in the woods near the Merrivale Avenue entrance to the property.

The present configuration of the property is the result of two purchases by the owners, the initial purchase included Lot 15 only. In the decades following the construction of the house the real estate was increased with the purchase of Lot 14. This provided a small buffer between the next landowner and added to the ravine and dune landscape. The site is a pentagram, with a north-south axis and contains typical dune country features. The convex-sided fore-dune, located within 60' of the present lake shore, has been interrupted and stabilized by Lake Front Drive which runs parallel to the shore. Merrivale Avenue runs nearly perpendicular to the Drive and steeply up the hill. A secondary, or fixed dune, south of the fore-dune is a typical feature of the local topography. In the case of the Horner property, this dune is considerably larger than the mound close to the lake, and forms a natural backdrop for the house. These secondary dunes have, in modern times, become so matted with vegetative growth and man-made materials that they are no longer wind-blown.

Between the dunes runs a ravine or swale in an east-west direction. It has been partially filled by the neighbor to the west, but does lead to an ancient "blow out" ascending the fixed dune to the south. The ecology and formation of these dunes is one of the important features of the property and its immediate vicinity. The residence and landscape of the site are both extremely sensitive to their environment. The owners of the Horner property began an intensive naturalization of both the dune on which the building complex is situated, the fixed dune and the ravine. They utilized proper, that is to say authentic, native species of trees, shrubs and ground cover. The site today is an arboretum of pines, hemlock, red, white and burr oaks, cedars, viburnum, golden rain tree, black locust, bass wood, cherry, maple, dogwood and tulip poplar (see plant list which follows). Currently, because of periodic plantings, these species are in various states of maturity, and are mixed with early volunteers. The appearance of this small forest is magnificent.

Because of the great canopy provided by the deciduous and evergreen trees, the understory, especially the introduced ground covers, have lost or gained ground, according to their robustness. However, one can see trillium, pachysandra, periwinkle, ajugas, maiden hair and polypodal ferns, lily of the valley, may apple and wild or fox grapes, mixed, or in groupings about the building compound.

The quest for a natural and original dune growth has been a pre-occupation of the owner. The reintroduction of the pines, for example, recreates views and scenes absent from this area for three or four decades.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 5

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

Naturally, some of the plants have escaped up the dunes to mix with invasive natives, but this furthers the naturalization of the overall landscape. The property abounds with many forms of migratory or resident birds, with raccoon, red and grey squirrels, deer, skunk and other animals. Many of these creatures delight in performing their arboreal tricks for human viewers watching from the screened porch, which seems lofted, mid-story, above the ravine next to the spectacular southern dune. Outdoor lighting at the rear of the house highlights this natural wonder during the evenings.

A soil type known as podsol (Russian: Ash earth) has become predominant, just below the leaf and branch humus litter. It is acid, weak and not very nutritious, but is a good moisture holder and covers the sand. The conjoining of the house and the landscape is an organic triumph and a credit to the owners and their architect.

Partial tree and plant list at Horner property

TREES:

white oak	<i>Quercus alba</i>	periwinkle	<i>Vinca minor</i>
bur oak	<i>Quercus macrocarpa</i>	lily of the valley	<i>Convallaria majalis</i>
black cherry	<i>Prunus serotina</i>	ajuga	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>
service berry	<i>Amelauchier canadensis</i>	mallows	<i>Malva rotundifolia</i>
viburnum	<i>Viburnum leutago</i>	sandbur	<i>Cenchrus longispinus</i>
black locust	<i>Robinia pseudoacacia</i>	wild grape(fox grape)	<i>Vitis labrusca</i>
American linden	<i>Tilia Americana</i>	trillium	<i>Trillium ovatum</i>
cottonwood	<i>Populus deltoides</i>	May apple	<i>Podophyllum pelatum</i>
American redbud	<i>Cercis canadensis</i>	liver leaf	<i>Hepatica</i>
ash	<i>Fraxinus Americana</i>	columbine	<i>Aquilegia</i>
tulip poplar	<i>Liriodendron tulipifera</i>	windflower	<i>Anemone</i>
red cedar	<i>Juniperus virginiana</i>	phlox	<i>Phlox</i>
sycamore	<i>Platus occidentalis</i>	blood root	<i>Sanguinaria canadensis</i>
dogwood	<i>Cornus florida</i>	tiger lily	<i>Tigridia pavania</i>
pinus	<i>Pinus nigra (Austrian), Pinus resinosa (Red), Pinus strobus (White)</i>	blue flag	<i>Iris</i>
		astor	<i>Erigeron</i>
			Plus many species of mosses and ferns.
spruce	<i>picea</i>		
hemlock	<i>tsuga canadensis</i>		
elm	<i>ulnus fulva</i>		

SHRUBS:

privet	<i>Ligustrone obtusifolium</i>
forsythia	<i>Forsythia suspensa</i>
rhododendron	Var.
wisteria	<i>Wisteria sinensis</i>
barberry	<i>Berberis vulgaris</i>
witch hazel	<i>Hamamelis</i>
(and others)	

GROUND COVERS:

pachysandra	<i>Pachysandra terminalis</i>
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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 6

**Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana**

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## Statement of Significance

### Summary

The Horner House is an excellent example of the mid-twentieth century architectural movement known as the International Style, interpreted by architects like Marcel Breuer, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Walter Gropius and Philip Johnson for buildings constructed in America following World War II. It is the work of a master artist of the second generation to be influenced by this school, the Swiss architect and designer, Otto Kolb.

Its setting, in the planned resort community of Beverly Shores, Indiana, gives it added significance as part of a broad social movement which began in the 1920s and which enjoyed a period of popularity and expansion just before and after the Second World War. More explicitly, because of the unique lives of its owners, it evokes a particular regional association, for recreation and relaxed living, between Chicago's urban community and Indiana's lake shore dunes.

Finally, the Horner House can be associated, in its physical context, in its design, and through the development of its landscape, with movements toward increased ecological and environmental awareness in the second half of this century.

### Statement of Significance

Europe was just recovering from World War I when the designer, architect and teacher, Walter Gropius founded the Bauhaus School in Weimar, Germany in 1919. It was a totally new kind of school, whose concerns ranged across multi-disciplinary lines, from architecture and industrial design to food and health regimes. Its influence on modern art and architecture is still being felt. The architecture of the Horner House has its roots in this interesting and important movement.

Looking around them at the devastation of the war, the architects and artists of the Bauhaus saw themselves "starting from zero" -- viewing the challenge of a new age with no preconceptions. They favored clean, pure lines, rejecting the high ornamentation of former eras. Flat roofs, sheer facades, expressed structural elements and extensive use of glass became hallmarks of the Bauhaus style. (All these elements can be seen in the Horner House.) Throughout the 1920s and 30s, this school attracted an astounding number of talented faculty, including Paul Klee, Marcel Breuer, Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe, Lazlo Moholy-Nagy, Wassily Kandinsky, Herbert Bayer, Josef Albers and others. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Tom Wolfe, *From Bauhaus to Our House*, pp. 10-12.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 7

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

X The Bauhaus influence was felt in Europe, especially in schools such as the Dutch group known as "de Stijl" (The Style), in France, in the work of the architect, Le Corbusier and in countries like Switzerland, where the architect of the Horner House was trained. While the early Bauhaus movement had championed natural materials and peasant art forms, later proponents saw the use of concrete, steel and other "modern" materials as appropriate for the new style. Some, like Marcel Breuer continued to espouse both throughout their careers. The use of materials in the Horner House is reminiscent of the latter.

The work of Gropius and other Bauhaus architects was brought to the United States, along with the name, "The International Style" in a show of models and photographs of their work at the Museum of Modern Art in New York City in 1932. "The International Style", was the title of the show's catalog, taken by Henry-Russell Hitchcock and Philip Johnson from Walter Gropius' book of the same name.<sup>2</sup>

During the decade of the 1930s, as Hitler's Third Reich came to power, intellectuals and artists from Germany and all over Europe emigrated to America, seeking peace and freedom for their work. They would change forever the course of American art and architecture. By the late 1930s, Gropius was head of the School of Architecture at Harvard University, joined by Breuer.<sup>3</sup> In 1937, Moholy-Nagy directed for a brief time a "New Bauhaus" in Chicago. When it closed, he founded the revered Institute of Design at the Illinois Institute of Technology, whose faculty Otto Kolb would join during the next decade. Mies van der Rohe had emigrated to Chicago in 1938 and joined Moholy-Nagy's team at the Institute. Kolb later became acquainted with the great master through their mutual connections with the school.<sup>4</sup> Others, like the composer Schoenberg, the artist Max Ernst and a host of psychiatrists were changing the way America thought and looked.<sup>5</sup>

The future owners of the Horner House would be among those who followed this path to America. Dr. Imre Horner, a physician, and his wife Maria emigrated from their native Hungary in 1939, eventually arriving in Chicago.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 37

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., pp. 45-49.

<sup>4</sup> Gruning, Christa & Michael, "Architekt und Designer Otto Kolb, Vom Ziegel zum Ting", *50 Jahre Otto Kolb Design*, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Wolfe, pp. 45-49.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number \_\_\_\_\_<sup>8</sup> Page \_\_\_\_\_<sup>8</sup>Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

Architects of the International Style found fertile ground in the American spirit, with its democratic elevation of the rights of the common man. The Europeans' emphasis on the use of technological advances in materials appealed to capitalism's innovators. The clean, spare lines of Mies' "glass blocks", and Corbusier's small, but well-planned rooms seemed to presage a brave new world of efficiency and modernity. The havoc of World War II held construction in abeyance, but a post-war building boom saw examples of the International Style rising upon the American landscape, especially in urban centers -- and most especially in Chicago. Many branches of industrial design benefitted from these new ideas. Furniture took on a sleek new look. The Barcelona chair had been designed by Mies of leather and stainless steel in 1929, and Marcel Breuer's chromium-plated, tubular steel cantilever chair about the same time. Now all the architects of the new style were designing complete environments, in minimalist colors: white, grey and beige, with wood-slab tables and shaped chairs of wood, leather and metal.

Otto Kolb was a young man when the leaders of the Bauhaus emigrated to America. Nonetheless, he was destined to embody the ideas of this movement in his professional life as a designer and architect. He was born in Switzerland in 1921 and attended architectural school at the Technikum Winterthur, where he graduated with degrees in architecture and engineering in 1944. He gained a reputation for efficiency in planning and design through his work as a designer in various architectural offices.

During his early years as a young architect in Zurich, he became aware of the work of Max Bill and Alfred Roth, "prophets of the modern", practicing in Switzerland.<sup>6</sup> Bill had arrived at the Bauhaus as a student in 1927, having left Zurich's School of Arts and Crafts, dissatisfied with its traditional approach. In an interview conducted with students in 1928, he said: "At the Bauhaus I wanted first to study architecture because Corbusier had turned my head..."<sup>7</sup> The young Kolb was also deeply influenced by the dynamic new movement. He became the head of Alfred Roth's architectural office in Zurich, where he met many exponents of the new modern art and architecture. Among these acquaintances was an influential industrialist and patron, Sigfreid Giedion, whose modern home became a gathering place for architects of the Bauhaus style in Switzerland.

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<sup>6</sup> Gruning, p. 2.

<sup>7</sup> Interviews with students, from *Bauhaus Zeitschrift fur Gestaltung*, vols 2,3, & 4, quoted in Frank Whitford, *The Bauhaus*, p. 271.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation SheetSection number \_\_\_\_\_<sup>8</sup> Page \_\_\_\_\_<sup>9</sup>Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

Kolb opened his own architectural office in 1947 in his home town of Bruttisellen. His first commission was for a multi-family housing complex, an experiment in the design ideas of the Bauhaus philosophy. The houses stand there still and many first inhabitants or their descendents are still in residence, a credit to the resiliency of the architect's planning. The project gained attention, in Switzerland and elsewhere, even earning a review in a Japanese publication. Kolb became known in his home country and Europe for his work, Richard P. Lohse, an editor of the Swiss publication, *Bauen und Wohnen*, said that he had loosed a chain reaction.<sup>8</sup>

About this time, Sergei Chermayeff, who had followed Moholy-Nagy as director of the Institute of Design in Chicago, read about the work of Kolb. Writing to Chermayeff, who was looking for additional faculty for the Institute, the Swiss Bauhaus enthusiast, Sigfreid Giedion stated: "Kolb is the best (architect) Switzerland has to offer..."<sup>9</sup> In 1948 he traveled to the United States to join the industrial design faculty at the Institute of Design of the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago. His commission for Dr. & Mrs. Horner's house in Beverly Shores came early in his American career. The next year he opened his own offices in Chicago for "industrial design, architecture, lighting, furniture, interior design, etc."<sup>10</sup>

At the Institute of Design, Kolb was head of the product design department. Although Moholy-Nagy had died in 1946, before Kolb arrived, the master's studio in Chicago had been a magnet for architects, artists and designers from around the world, beginning with the aborted "New Bauhaus" in 1937, and continuing for decades. Among the many whose art and philosophy Kolb came to know were Aalto, Saarinen, Eames, Albers, Calder and Mies van der Rohe. Of the numerous personalities who moved in this creative sphere, Meis, Konrad Wachsmann and Xanti Schawinsky became Kolb's closest friends in America. Recently, on the fiftieth anniversary of his design career, Kolb reflected on his friendship with Meis: "I was young enough to learn from him, but too old to be his epigone [imitator]." And he called the master of modern architecture, "... the last great Baumeister of this century." The architect also recalled the 1952 comment of critic Crombie Taylor that in Illinois there were two outstanding residential

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<sup>8</sup> Gruning, p.2

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Resume of Otto Kolb, c.1958.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 10

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

examples of modern architecture: the Farnsworth House of Meis van der Rohe and the Horner House of Otto Kolb.<sup>11</sup>

By 1952, he had relocated to Hudson Heights, New Jersey, later opening an office across the river in New York City. During this era he designed houses for clients in New Jersey, Connecticut and Long Island, New York, as well as various furnishings. His chairs, lamps and other furniture won many awards, including two "Good Design" awards for lamps, from the reknown Museum of Modern Art in New York. By 1959-60 he was serving on the faculty of the prestigious Rhode Island School of Design. Kolb returned to his native Switzerland in the 1960s where he continued to practice the many design arts. Last year he celebrated 50 years of practice.

The house that Otto Kolb designed for the Horners followed the design tenets of the International Style. He began work on the project in 1948 and construction was completed by 1949. It was a structure that would reflect both the strict, minimalist ideas of Meis, Le Corbusier and Gropius as well as a new appreciation for the natural world. The latter probably saw its apotheosis in the Kaufmann residence, "Fallingwater" designed in 1935 by the American architect, Frank Lloyd Wright.

Kolb's design for the Horner House brings the outdoors "inside" in a most intimate manner. The window walls on both north and south elevations, make the floor and ceiling seem to "float" in the midst of a natural bower, supported only by the massive, free standing fireplace. The screen-walled porch, cantilevered over the south ravine, gives the impression that the arboreal green of the lushly planted dune is the true "wall". Nonetheless, the building is surely the child of the International Style. Its clean lines, functional inner spaces and simplicity of plan echo the tenets of the movement. Marcel Breuer, another master of the style, (like the Horner's, a native Hungarian) gave the following comments on modern architecture in a 1948 speech at New York's Museum of Modern Art. His words evoke much of the feeling of the Horner House:

The most contrasting elements of our nature should be brought to happiness at the same time, in the same work, and in the most definite way. ... The crystallic quality of an unbroken white, flat slab is there, together with and in contrast to the rough. "texture-y" quality of natural wood or broken stone. ... The sensation of man-made space, geometry and architecture is there, together with and in contrast to organic forms of nature and of man. "Sol y sombra," as the Spanish say; sun and shadow, not sun or shadow.<sup>12</sup> Breuer's own house, built

<sup>11</sup> Gruning, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Peter Blake, *Marcel Breuer: Architect and Designer*, p. 122.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 11

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

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in 1947 in New Canaan, Connecticut shares similar details with the Horner House, such as the central fireplace, window walls and use of vertical wood siding.<sup>13</sup>

The magazine *arts & architecture* discussed the Horner House, in October of 1952:

The longitudinal development of the house made it possible to change the aspects of the view with different contrasts. As one enters the main part of the house through a narrow hallway which leads to guestroom, bathroom and kitchen, one arrives in the living room where the view is open in all directions. ... All the rooms of the two-story block have been kept at minimum dimensions to use the luxury space in a 32 by 24 foot living room.<sup>14</sup>

The south elevation of the Horner House exemplifies the Bauhaus philosophy of contrast and simplicity. The long, single story element to the west, with its screen wall, appears as a dark band, nearly invisible in the foliage, while the two-story section to the east is bright with white applicade, and two wide horizontal bands of casement windows. (The present casement windows are replacements, however, the size, color and shape of the originals have been almost exactly maintained, and thus the original fenestration has been preserved.)

The angularity of the other two buildings in the composition, and the walks which connect them is contrasted with the soft irregularity of the pool area with its tree-supported canopy. Throughout, the use of natural wood finishes and "texture-y" materials contrasts with the strict lines of the brick fireplace and the clean efficiency of the white kitchen. In his realization of the Horner House, Kolb achieved an amalgam between the strictly minimalist International Style and the aspirations of post-war America for a world in which man and nature lived in harmony.

During the years he spent in Chicago, Kolb expanded upon his naturally varied talents and interests, in addition to teaching, his interests in lighting, furniture, interior design and exhibit design. True to the tenets of the Bauhaus tradition, his design philosophy crossed many media. He won the Chicago Tribune competition for interiors in 1949 and 1950, the Swedish modern competition (furniture), New York, in 1949 and others. In addition to faculty exhibits at the Institute for Design, his work was

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., pp. 76,77,78, 101 and 102.

<sup>14</sup> "House in Indiana", *arts & architecture*, Vol. 69, No. 10, October, 1952.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 12

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

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shown at the San Francisco Exhibit for Better Living, an architectural exhibit at Urbana, Illinois and an Exhibit for Better Living in Houston, Texas, all in 1949. The Horner House and an exhibit installation he designed for the Museum of Science and Industry (Chicago) are probably the only remaining examples of his work in the Illinois/Indiana area.<sup>15</sup>

After 1952, when Kolb relocated to the New Jersey/New York area, his residential design work included houses and/or interiors in Pines Lake, Watchung and Princeton, New Jersey, in Westport, Connecticut and Northport, Long Island, New York. It has not been possible to determine at this time, which, if any, of these projects still remains intact. Kolb's work in the New Jersey/New York area, was included in *arts & architecture*, December, 1959 ("House by Otto Kolb, Architect), in *Interiors* for March, 1955 (lighting by Kolb Lighting Co.) and *Interiors* of August 1956 (house in Watchung, New Jersey), September, 1956 (interior, circular kitchen by Otto and Ridi Kolb) and in August of 1956, when the magazine commented:

Swiss-born architect and engineer Otto Kolb, who was represented in our 1956 "Year's Work" with a house in New Jersey, is represented here with a three bedroom house in Westport, Connecticut.<sup>16</sup>

The designer employed some of the same elements in this house, and others, as can be seen in the earlier Horner House: a free-standing, see through fireplace, linear configuration and the use of interior, natural finish woods. Some of the furnishings were also designed by the architect and his wife.<sup>17</sup>

Throughout his career, as a multi-faceted architect and industrial designer, Kolb has enjoyed consistent coverage of his work in international design and architectural journals. A partial list of these (not including the citations above) encompasses: *Arts and Architecture*, 1950, 1952, 1956, 1957; *Interiors*, 1949, 1951, 1955; *Industrial Design*, 1954; *Werk*, 1946, 1948, 1958, 1961, 1963 (3 times), 1964, 1965, 1966, 1967; *Domus*, 1946, 1949, 1952, 1957, 1961, 1964, 1965; *Arch. d'aujourd'hui*, 1947, 1962, 1966, as well as the Swiss publication, *Bauen + Wohnen*. He has also authored articles on such diverse subjects as heating systems, furniture (including assembly line manufacture), the Chicago Institute of Design and the Architecture of Alvar Aalto.<sup>18</sup> Mr. Kolb's circular house in

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<sup>15</sup> Resume of Otto Kolb, c. 1958.

<sup>16</sup> *Interiors*, August 1957, p.89.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Resume of Otto Kolb, c. 1958.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 13

**Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana**

Switzerland is still visited by architects from around the world and his later enthusiasms have included the design and construction of everything from stairs to ships. He recently returned from a trip aboard his racing yacht which he designed and whose construction he supervised. He has abandoned much of his earlier architecture and design pursuits, but is pleased that chairs of his design are standing in the Louvre. Now, having achieved the three-quarter century mark, he enjoys creating sculpture, a recent work of Chinese influence is called "Ting", and writing his memoirs. <sup>19</sup>

### Beverly Shores and the Indiana Dunes

The Horner House also gains significance from its location within the early twentieth century resort community of Beverly Shores. It was the brainchild of Frederick Bartlett, a Chicago real estate developer who purchased the land on which it would become located in 1927 from the Eastern Indiana Company, a group of British investors. The latter had purchased a large tract of land in 1901, but had been unsuccessful in their attempts to develop it. Rather than allow this land with its unique mix of floral and faunal species to be overrun by encroaching industrial operations, a few early residents encouraged protection and sensitive use of the land. In 1925, the western portion was sold to the State of Indiana for use as the Indiana Dunes State Park -- the eastern half was sold to Bartlett. <sup>20</sup>

Beverly Shores served residents of congested downtown Chicago as a railroad suburb as well as a weekend resort, since commuters were only an hour from their destination via the popular Chicago, South Shore and South Bend Railroad. Although many changes have since taken place, Beverly Shores still enjoys active passenger service to downtown Chicago. While regular commutation was possible, most of Bartlett's new owners were weekend residents, anxious to refresh themselves along the dunes by the lake shore.

Railroad suburbs evolved at the turn of the century. Developers created controlled social and physical environments where people of similar social status could raise a family, sheltered from the city's congestion,

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<sup>19</sup> Gruning, p. 6, and telephone conversation, CBF with Otto Kolb, May 31, 1996.

<sup>20</sup> William G. Taft, *BEVERLY SHORES AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MODERN SUBURBAN RESORT*, (no page number).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 14

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

yet continue to gain employment from its business center. <sup>21</sup> In his Beverly Shores development, Barlett was also influenced by a boom in resort communities during the 1920s, especially the vacation towns of Boca Raton, Coral Gables and Palm Beach in Florida. In Palm Beach an architect named Addison Mizner began to design buildings in the Mediterranean and Spanish revival styles. They were quickly copied in other Florida towns and even in northern communities, although the genre was hardly adaptable to harsh climates. When the skeletal town of Beverly Shores was laid out, these Florida precedents were evident, including the design of important town buildings in the Spanish Revival Style. <sup>22</sup>

Unfortunately, the stock market crash of 1929 dampened development in Bartlett's new town. Although many lots were sold in his first marketing drive, by 1935 only twenty-five houses had been built. In 1933, Frederick Bartlett's son Robert took control of the development. To try to spur interest, he sponsored a whirl of activity. In addition to constructing a hotel, a theater, houses and other structures, he purchased surplus buildings from the 1933-34 "Century of Progress" Chicago World's Fair and moved them to Beverly Shores. They came from two exhibits: the Colonial Village and the Home and Industrial Arts Exhibit. Those from the former were small-size replicas of "famous" buildings in American colonial history. Lightweight, most were easy to transport by truck. At the site they were re-erected, plumbed and wired and sold to private buyers. They served as tourist attractions as well as residences. The buildings which Bartlett purchased from the Home and Industrial Arts Exhibit brought a new dimension to the community, as well as setting a precedent for contemporary design in Beverly Shores. Six buildings were purchased, and transported to their new locations on the Indiana Dunes. Among them, the House of the Future, and the Armco-Ferro House were notable for their use of modern materials and up-to-date technology. <sup>23</sup> The importation of these structures provided a much-needed publicity boost to Beverly Shores and opened the door for owners, like the Horners, to bring the best of modern architectural ideas to the resort community.

The dunes region (east and west of Beverly Shores) was slowly becoming a place for innovative architecture. The town of Long Beach, in adjacent LaPorte County was home to John Lloyd Wright, the son of Frank Lloyd Wright, who followed in his father's career footsteps. Beginning in 1923, when the younger Wright moved to Indiana, structures of his design began to

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 15

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

grace the lakeside landscape. Much of his practice was built designing summer homes for Chicago's elite. After a European trip in 1929, some of these, reflected his interest in the International Style, especially the work of Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius.<sup>24</sup> The architect of the House of Tomorrow, George Fred Keck designed a summer home in nearby Ogden Dunes, which was featured in the *Architectural Forum*, April 1940. Thus, although examples are somewhat few and far apart, the Horner House can be seen to exist in a larger context of architectural innovation and design which occurred just before and after World War II along the Indiana Dunes.

Although the second wave of activity in Beverly Shores, after 1935, increased the number of residents somewhat, the population was still very small when the Horners first purchased Lot 15 in Beverly Shores in 1942 (a previous summer cottage on the property burned, engendering their need for the new house.) They had much in common with other residents of the community. Sophisticated exurbanites, they enjoyed and appreciated the natural wonders of the dunes; as professionals with strong ties to the University of Chicago, they had an affinity with the trickle of other artists and intellectuals who had become residents of the area.

Among these residents were Mr. & Mrs. Jacob W. A. Young, (she was a pianist, he a distinguished mathematician at the University of Chicago.) Mrs. Young commented in a 1963 newspaper article: "In the 'Venice of the North,' between Antwerp and Bruges in Belgium, people think they have magnificent dunes, and visitors go there from all over to see them. They are as nothing compared to ours."<sup>25</sup> As friends of Mrs. Young, the Horners were aware of her early influence in the dunes' conservation.

The residents of Beverly Shores supported efforts to preserve and protect the fragile environment which was then, as today, a unique natural place. With Senator Paul H. Douglas of Illinois, residents were successful in achieving a National Lakeshore Park at the dunes, under the auspices of the National Park Services. This effort greatly expanded the number of acres which were set aside for conservation and recreation and protected the existing State Park from industrial development of the surrounding area. Today, Beverly Shores is an enclave, surrounded by both state and national park lands. Like many other desirable locations, it has now become vulnerable to overbuilding, a situation which, according to Mrs. Horner has only existed for the last decade.

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<sup>24</sup> Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana, *LaPorte County Interim Report*, pp. 48-54.

<sup>25</sup> Boyden, Sarah, "The Indiana Dunes—A Wealth of Natural Wonders", *MIDWEST MAGAZINE, THE CHICAGO SUNDAY SUN-TIMES*, June 30, 1963.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 8 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 16

**Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana**

Dr. & Mrs. Horner typified the forward-thinking intellectuals of the era. Their home in Beverly Shores hosted many well-known Chicago artists and writers. At his death in 1988 at the age of 86, Dr. Horner (a well-known Chicago physician) was remembered for his association with renown musicians and novelists, including Saul Bellow and Richard Stern (he was the basis of fictional characters in novels by both authors.)<sup>26</sup> His colleagues and his patients admired him for his insight, both of the physiology and psychology of human healing. Although known and loved for his work as a physician, he was the inspiration for an artistically and intellectually stimulating atmosphere which surrounded him. The Horner House in Beverly Shores with its innovative, yet environmentally sensitive design, was the setting for many vivid gatherings. Gerhard Casper, the former Dean of the Law School at the University of Chicago recalled his own experiences at a memorial service in Goodspeed Hall, February 28, 1988:

All of us who had the privilege of being the Horners' guests in Beverly Shores remember discussions of medicine, music, poetry, and the Dunes. But we also recall how much history and politics were important subjects at dinner. The events which drove Imre and Maria out of Hungary, the events which destroyed the Central European civilization to which they belonged, ... the internal developments and politics of our country, were all subjects about which Imre was better informed than most and expressed his views gently, but clearly. ... politics was not a dreary subject ... but a topic on which he stayed informed as a citizen and which he saw in all its rich implications.

<sup>27</sup>

His widow, Maria, continues to maintain the traditions of their lives, including an abiding concern for the environment of the dunes. She has re-introduced and continues to nurture many native plants in the landscape surrounding their home, creating a lush and naturalized setting for the Horner House.

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<sup>26</sup> *Chicago Sun-Times*, Friday, February 5, 1988.

<sup>27</sup> "IMRE HORNER, M.D., Eulogies given at the memorial service., Goodspeed Hall, Sunday, February 28, 1988. Unpublished MSS courtesy of Mrs. Maria Horner.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 9 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 17

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Section number \_\_\_\_\_<sup>9</sup> Page \_\_\_\_\_<sup>18</sup>

Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana

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**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

# **National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>9</sup> Page \_\_\_\_\_ <sup>19</sup>

**Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana**

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## **Other Sources**

Interviews with Mrs. Maria Horner, 1995; telephone interview with Otto Kolb, May 31, 1996.

Prints and original sketches by Otto Kolb, surveyor's documents, bibliographic material and newspaper articles in the collection of Mrs. Horner.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 20

**Horner House**  
**Porter County, Indiana**

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**Verbal Boundary Description** - The property includes lots 14 and 15 in Block 81, Town of Beverly Shores, Unit "D", located in Northeast Quarter of Section 3, Township 37 N, Range 5 W., Porter County, Indiana.

**Boundary Justification** - The original property was purchased prior to the construction of the present residence and included only lot 15. Lot 14 was purchased by 1961 and today incorporates much of the southwestern viewshed for the property. Both lots are bounded by Lake Front Drive on the north, beyond which is the shore of Lake Michigan. Lot 15 is bounded on the east by Merrivale Avenue. A pentagram, the present site includes all of the significant elements of the property: the residence, guesthouse and garage as well as the primary dune and the old dune (south of the house).

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ 11 Page \_\_\_\_\_ 21

**Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana**

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**Contemporary and historic photographs:**

The following information is the same for all photographs, unless otherwise noted.

1. Horner House
  2. Beverly Shores, Porter County, Indiana
  3. Camille Fife and Thomas W. Salmon , The Westerly Group, Inc.
  4. June, 1995.
  5. WGI, RR 1 Box 141, Farmersburg, IN 47850
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6. View from driveway, looking northwest toward garage and house.
  7. Photo 1 of 10.
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6. View looking southwest from north yard toward north elevation of main house.
  7. Photo 2 of 10.
- 
6. View from front yard, north of house, looking woutheast toward north elevation.
  7. Photo 3 of 10.
- 
6. View looking east, toward west elevation of main house.
  7. Photo 4 of 10.
- 
6. View looking north from south, fixed dune showing toward the south elevation of the main house, showing the contrasting two and one-story aspects of the building.
  7. Photo 5 of 10.
- 
6. Photo looking northeast toward fish tank, between the three buildings. Entry to the compound is in center of photograph.
  7. Photo 6 of 10.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 11 of 22

**Horner House  
Porter County, Indiana**

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6. Interior view of the livingroom in the main house, looking southwest from the northeast corner toward the fireplace, and showing the screen porch in the background.

7. Photo 7 of 10.

6. Detail interior view of the central fireplace from the center of the livingroom, looking west.

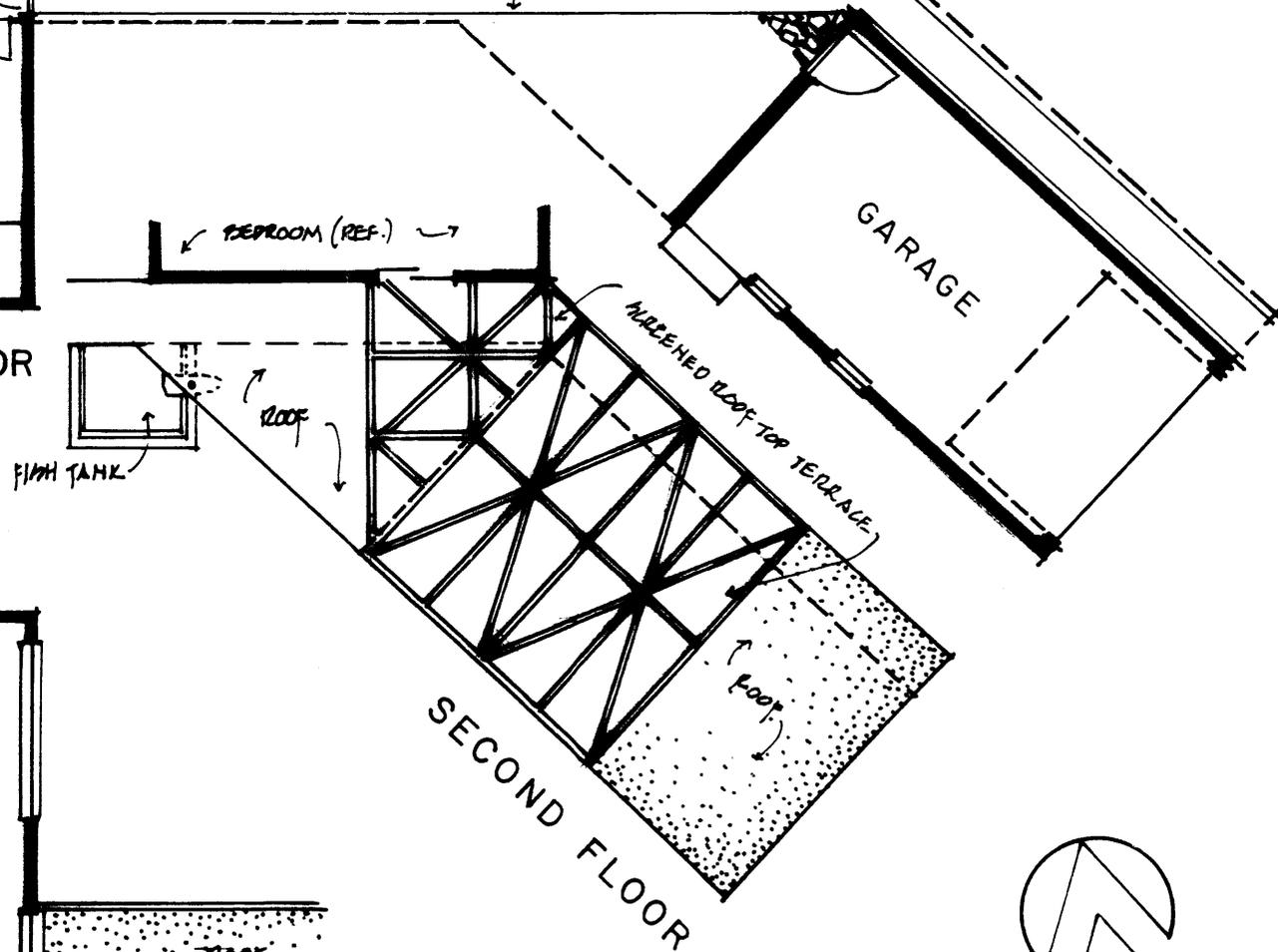
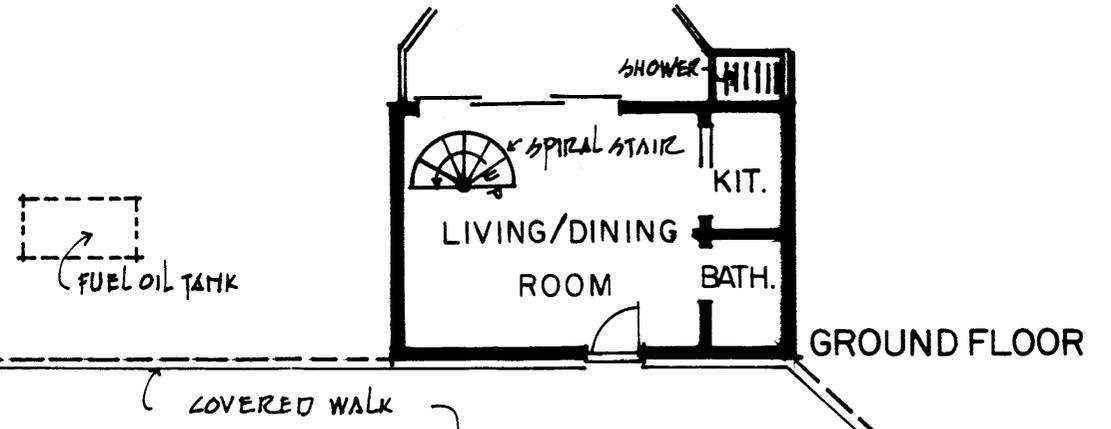
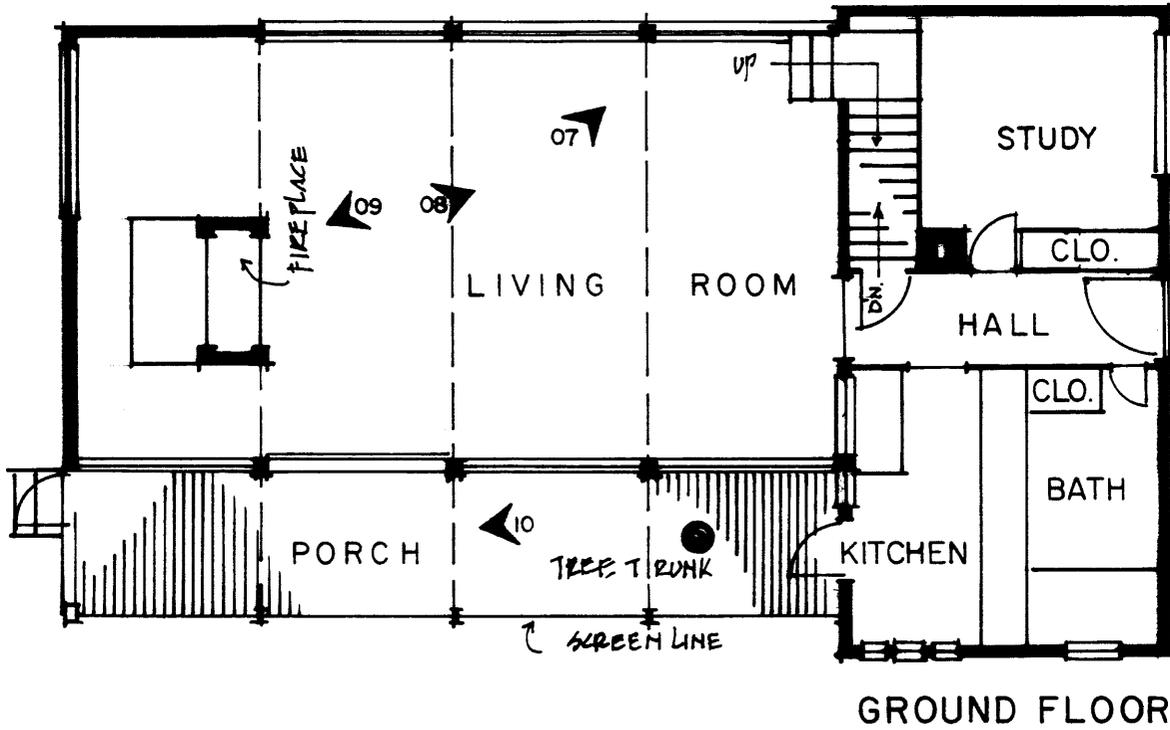
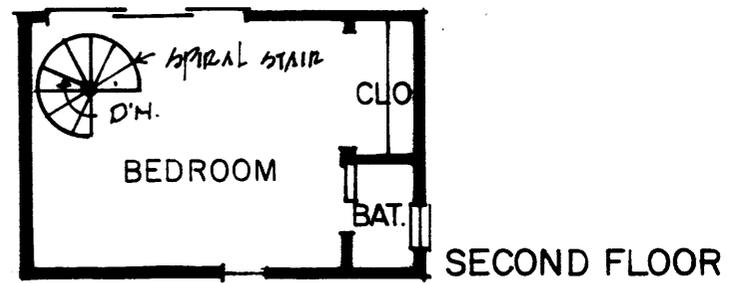
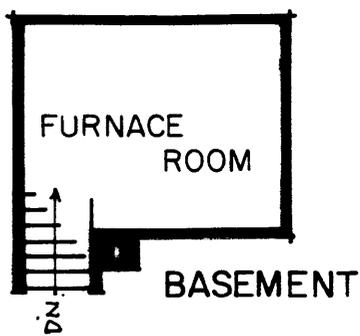
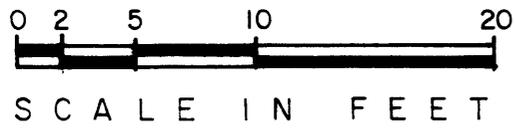
7. Photo 8 of 10.

6. An interior view of the livingroom from the west side looking east toward the stairway to the second floor.

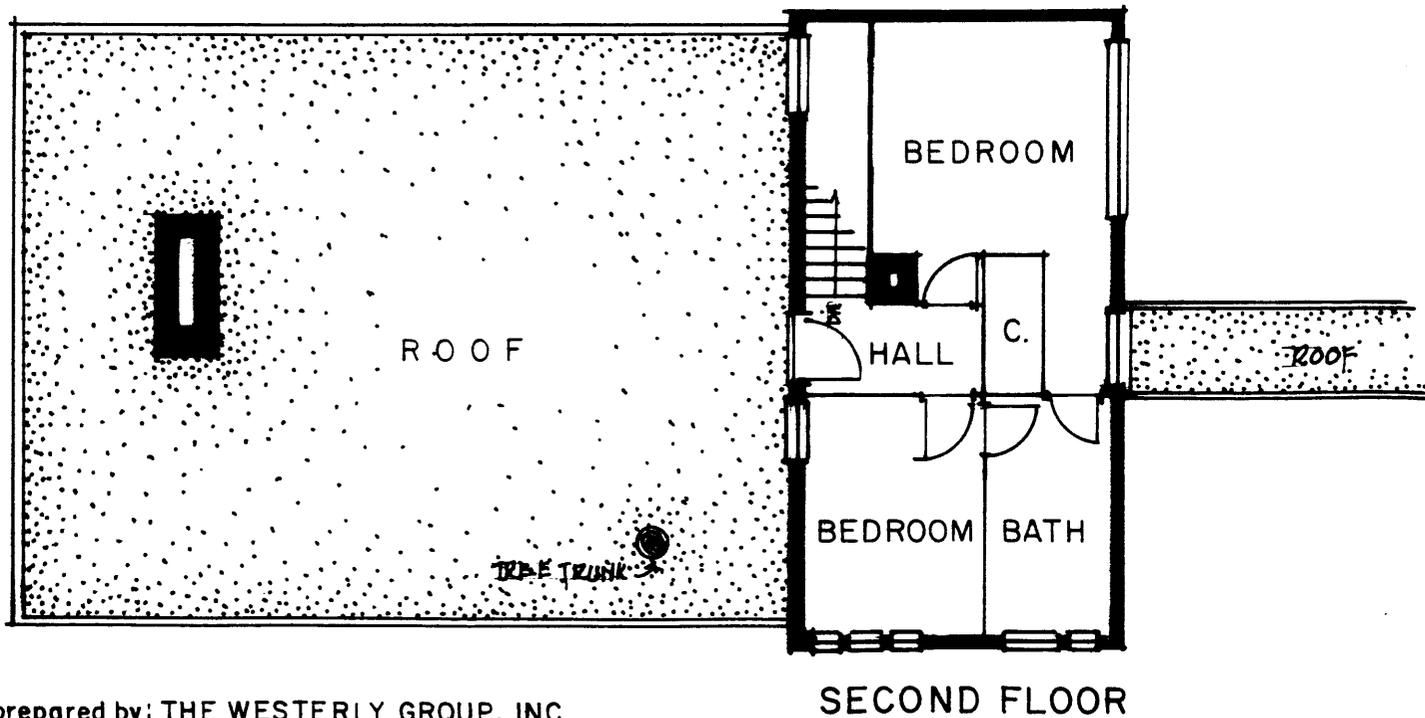
7. Photo 9 of 10.

6. Interior photograph, view looking east toward the kitchen from the west end of the screened porch.

7. Photo 10 of 10.



6 PHOTO LOCATIONS



PLAN OF EXISTING BUILDINGS  
HORNER HOUSE  
2 MERRIVALE AVENUE  
BEVERLY SHORES, PORTER CO. INDIANA

