

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received OCT 23 1987

date entered NOV 30 1987

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Southern Pacific Railroad Depot

~~XXXX~~ common Louisiana & Delta Railroad Headquarters Building

2. Location

street & number 402 W. Washington N/A not for publication

city, town New Iberia N/A vicinity of

state LA code 22 parish Iberia code 045
~~county~~

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Railroad company offices

4. Owner of Property

name Louisiana & Delta Railroad Forrest L. Becht, General Manager

street & number 402 W. Washington Street

city, town New Iberia N/A vicinity of state LA 70560

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Iberia Parish Courthouse

street & number Iberia Street (no specific address) P. O. Drawer 1208

city, town New Iberia state LA 70560

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

La Historic Structures Survey title has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979 federal state county local

depository for survey records LA State Historic Preservation Office

city, town Baton Rouge state LA

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u> N/A </u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Southern Pacific Railroad Depot (c.1900) is a single story brick structure with Romanesque Revival details. It is located adjacent to the Louisiana and Delta railroad tracks near the New Iberia Central Business District. Despite some changes over the years, the depot still retains its turn-of-the-century character.

The building consists of a main block which contains two waiting rooms with a ticket office between. Originally these waiting rooms provided segregated facilities. West of the main block is an open breezeway which leads to a freight room. The depot is surmounted by a broad flared hip roof system with wide overhangs on all sides. The ticket office opens into each of the waiting rooms through a ticket window. The depot also has a protruding polygonal bay which faces the tracks. Many of the windows are surmounted by rock-face lintels of cast concrete. Other openings are surmounted by round arches with rock-face concrete voussoirs. In addition, the round openings feature stylized leaf forms at the impost level. The overhanging roof is ornamented with decorative wrought iron brackets. The interiors feature milled window and door surrounds and a high wainscot formed of vertical beaded boards.

Alterations:

In about 1940 the open breezeway was bricked in to provide extra office space. Since that time the roof has lost all of its applied decorative features. At one time the ticket office bay was surmounted by a polygonal dormer with a conical roof. There was also a rooftop vent and a second conventional dormer. Finally, in 1986 most of the windows were replaced.

Assessment of Integrity:

Despite these changes, some of which are admittedly noteworthy, the building is still obviously a turn-of-the-century railroad depot. In addition, it retains integrity of setting and location which is very important for historic depots. Moreover, it retains most of its primary character defining elements, including the broad overhanging hip roof, the wrought iron brackets, the concrete stonework, and the overall mass and form. Hence, in our opinion, the depot still conveys its historic role.

Note Regarding Date of Depot: The depot does not appear on the 1899 Sanborn Insurance map but does on the 1903 map, hence our c.1900 date.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c.1900

Builder/Architect Builder: Southern Pacific Railroad

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Criterion A

The Southern Pacific Depot is of state significance in the area of transportation because it is one of a very limited number of cultural resources directly associated with the peak of railroad growth and development in Louisiana.

Although there were a few railroad lines constructed in Louisiana prior to the Civil War, railroading did not begin in earnest until about 1880. For example, by 1860 only 335 miles of track had been laid, and by 1880 that figure had not even doubled. But between 1880 and 1910 over 4,000 miles of track were laid. These were the boom years of Louisiana railroading, a period during which railroads competed with, and generally defeated, older forms of transportation such as steamboats. In many ways the railroad remade the state. In choosing major outlines of their routes, railroad officials were governed not by existing settlement patterns, but by their overall plan for continental development. Many new towns were created as a result of railroad expansion. Examples include Crowley, DeRidder, Eunice, and Many to name just a few. In addition, there were cases where existing towns relocated to be near the railroad. Moreover, it is certain that the rice boom and the lumber boom, which were so important to the economy of Louisiana, would not have been possible without a well developed railroad network. In the late nineteenth century railroads were as much desired as interstate highways were in the mid-twentieth century. Every small town Chamber of Commerce waited for "the great day" when the railroad would come. Those towns which were bypassed by the railroad ceased to thrive and ultimately became economic backwaters with small populations.

When in 1910 the railroads reached their maximum growth in Louisiana, scarcely anyone imagined that they would decline nearly as rapidly as they arose. After 1920 the amount of mainline trackage began to dwindle, and by 1970 it had declined from a peak of over 5,000 miles to just over 1,500. To a large extent this decline was triggered by competition from automobile transportation and ultimately the interstate highway system. Thus the great railroad era is a distinct epoch in Louisiana history which has largely come to an end. Despite its importance, it has left us with relatively few directly associated cultural resources. Of course, the railroads caused much development, so in a general sense numerous townscapes are associated with railroading history, but there are comparatively few resources left which are directly associated with railroading itself. Virtually all of these are depots. It should be noted that although somewhere about 50 old railroad depots survive in Louisiana, most date from the post World War I era. The Southern Pacific Depot is one of only about five or six depots which date from before 1910 and hence represent the very peak of railroading.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Sanborn Insurance Maps, New Iberia, 1899, 1903.

Conrad, Glenn R. New Iberia: Essays on the Town and Its People. Center for Louisiana Studies, USL, 1979.

Newton, Milton B., Jr. The Historic Settlement of Louisiana. Prepared for LA SHPO Comprehensive Plan.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property @ 2/3rds of an acre

Quadrangle name New Iberia North, LA

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	5	6	1	3	4	4	0	3	3	2	0	1	0	0
Zone			Easting				Northing							

B

Zone			Easting				Northing							

C

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D

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Please refer to enclosed sketch map. Boundaries were drawn to encompass only the significant resource. To have followed property lines would have meant including miles of railroad track and right-of-way.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title National Register Staff ASSISTED BY THE OWNER
Division of Historic Preservation

organization State of Louisiana date August 1987

street & number P. O. Box 44247 telephone (504) 922-0358

city or town Baton Rouge state LA 70804

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

 national X 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 

Robert B. DeBlieux

title State Historic Preservation Officer date October 20, 1987

For NPS use only

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

Entered in
National Register

date 11-30-87


Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

SCALE 1" = 50'

SOUTHERN PACIFIC
RAILROAD DEPOT
IBERIA PARISH, LA
BOUNDARY

