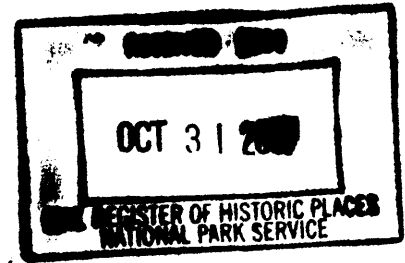


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

1344



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 Pleasant Lake Depot
other names/site number New York Central Railroad Depot

2. Location

street & number 1469 West Main Street N/A not for publication
city or town Pleasant Lake N/A vicinity
state Indiana code IN county Steuben code 151 zip code 46779

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.)
Jon C. St 10-25-01
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Indiana D-SHPO
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 Edson H. Beall Date of Action 12/7/01

Pleasant Lake Depot

Steuben IN

Name of Property

County and State

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)

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-Related

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-related

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

LATE VICTORIAN: Gothic

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE

walls: WOOD: Weatherboard

roof: ASPHALT

other

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)

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1882-1951

Significant Dates

1882

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

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:

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The Pleasant Lake Depot (formerly of the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern, later New York Central Railroad) is located in the small Steuben County, Indiana, town of Pleasant Lake. The depot stands south of Main Street on the east side of the tracks. While there is a siding west of the tracks, most of the immediate area is open ground that was once occupied by four more sets of tracks, a water tower, and the pens of a stockyard. An additional siding for passenger trains once ran along the east side of the depot (Photos 1-3).

The downtown area is located to the northeast of the depot, and the lake that is the town's namesake is southeast of the depot; neighborhoods of houses encircle the open area of the railroad right of way.

The depot itself is a simple wooden structure composed of two gabled rectangular forms aligned end to end with their roof ridges parallel to the tracks. The smaller of the two, which forms the north third of the depot, contains the passenger waiting room in its single storey. The larger mass is one and a half stories high and houses the former agent's office and a freight room beneath a grain storage area in its loft (Photos 4, 5). Comparison of the present building with historic photographs (Photos 5, 6) shows that the building has retained most of its original appearance.

The exterior walls of the depot are clad entirely in vertical board and batten siding beneath a wide frieze and projecting rafter ends under plain open eaves. The depot's only architectural elaboration is the use of pedimented casings with label-mold outlines for all of the openings except the wide doors of the freightroom (Photo 7).

The outline of the pediment and label mold motif is emphasized by the use of plain fillets to outline the head casings beneath projecting architrave moldings. The windows have plain wooden shutters that have been added to protect the original four-over-four double-hung sash from vandalism (Photo 8); the doorways have three-light transom sash over five-panel doors (Photo 9). Similar transoms with eight lights over the plain boarding of the freight doors have been replaced with solid wooden panels. A modern platform with a wooden railing has been built around the base of the building on the south and west sides of the freight room wing. A small modern structure that contains

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restrooms (not included in the nomination) stands beside the southeast corner of the depot (cf. Photo 5).

The interior of the building follows an arrangement typical of small combination depots. The passenger waiting room is separated from the freight room by a central area that contains the agent's office and an enclosed stairway to the loft area. All these spaces except the freight room are lined with beaded boarding; their casings are made of plain wide boards with a large center bead, and the side casings extend past the head casings to suggest the outlines of head blocks (Photo 10). The walls of the waiting room are further enriched with a wooden cove cornice. A modern partition projects into the waiting room on the south wall to provide openings for ticket sales and food service from the agent's office area (Photo 11). To the left of this wall is a broad opening that leads into the original corridor to the freight room by passing alongside the stair enclosure, which is along the outside (east) wall. The original agent's office includes a bay window that enabled views up and down the tracks; the wall that would have separated the east side of the office from the corridor has been replaced by an open counter (Photo 12). The freight room is a space with open framing and a central file of three stop-chamfered wooden piers that are topped by timber saddles (Photo 13). The east and west sides of the room each have two large freight doors that roll on overhead tracks. Between the joists over the room are the original sluice boxes whose hand-operated gates allowed grain to drop from the bins above (Photo 14). In the loft area above, the outside walls are built of pancake planking, but only the sawn-off ends of the cross walls that defined the grain bins remain to show how the space was once subdivided (Photo 15). A pair of hinged doors in the south gable provides exterior access to the loft.

The Pleasant Lake Depot is a simple Gothic Revival style building that has survived with a high degree of architectural integrity. Other than the alteration of the partition between the waiting room and agent's office areas and the loss of the bin partitions in the loft, the only major alteration that can be detected is that the tops of the waiting room windows have been raised approximately eight inches, as shown by paint shadows on the exterior

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(cf. Photo 8). This change was apparently made some time ago, since the building had its present appearance when a postcard view of c.1910 was made (Photo 3). This probably also explains why the sash of the waiting room have six-over-six lights, while the rest of the building's windows have four-over-four sash. The greatest changes to the property have been to the surroundings, namely, the loss of the original platforms and the disappearance of most of the appurtenances of the rail line, including the signal mast that stood on the northwest corner of the building and the raised wooden platforms that probably encircled it, as well as the water tower and coal dock platform that stood across the tracks and the sets of tracks that have been removed west of the main line and on the east side of the depot.

Despite these changes, the depot remains largely intact as a tangible reminder of the transportation history of Pleasant Lake. Though historic photographs of the buildings along the Fort Wayne-Jackson line show that there were no such other passenger/grain depot combinations, the Pleasant Lake depot does resemble the general form used for some freight houses elsewhere on the line, such as Horton (1870), Jonesville (1870), Reading (1876) and Fremont (1887). The same simplified Gothic Revival detailing was used on one other small New York Central depot on the line, at New Era (1894); two other New York Central depots in Indiana, at Rolling Prairie and Culver, used the same style of window casings. None of these structures is extant.¹ The 1882 date assigned to the station is taken from the 1914 valuation report of the Interstate Commerce Commission, as reported in Dr. Francis Parker's Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage, which provides a statewide inventory of the 295 Indiana depots which survive out of an estimated 1500 structures.²

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The Pleasant Lake Depot is of local historical significance for its association with rail transportation as a factor in the development of the community.

Historical Context

The town of Pleasant Lake was initially platted by Payne C. Parker in 1846; it developed as a village on the east side of Pleasant Lake, acquiring the status of a post office in June, 1851. But the real growth of the town began in 1870, when it was re-platted to the west to put it in proximity to the tracks of the Fort Wayne, Jackson and Saginaw Railroad, which was built through Steuben County in that year.³ This railroad was leased to the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad in September, 1882; in December, 1914, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern and its leased properties became part of the New York Central Railroad. The New York Central was once the line that operated the greatest number of miles of track in Indiana (1,629), accounting for twenty-two per cent of the total track mileage in the state. The line through Pleasant Lake extended south through Fort Wayne and north to Jackson, Michigan. One significant feature of this route is that it crossed several of the main east-west rail lines between New York and Chicago, including two lines built across southern Michigan and northern Indiana by the New York Central and its predecessor, the main Baltimore and Ohio line through Auburn and Garrett, and it brought travellers within reach of the Pennsylvania western division line through Fort Wayne. At its height, the line carried six daily passenger trains.⁴ Some of these were excursion trains that brought tourists for visits to a resort at Pleasant Lake. Much of the traffic on the line, however, was devoted to carrying grain and livestock from the farms of northeastern Indiana to markets in Chicago and the East. Other local products included "Pleasant Lake Pure Northern Lake Ice," which was sold in Fort Wayne. An extensive gravel quarry was begun north of the depot in 1898; it furnished washed gravel that was used by the railroad as track ballast for several years.⁵ Passenger service had ended by World War II.

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The New York Central Railroad was merged with the Pennsylvania to form Penn Central in 1970; this was reorganized as the Consolidated Rail Corporation (Conrail) in 1976. In that same year, the line through Pleasant Lake was taken over by a new short-line carrier, the Hillsdale County Railroad; this line operated until 1992, when it was superseded by the Indiana Northeastern Railroad, which still operates the line for local freight. From 1975 until 1991, the depot and track from Pleasant Lake south to Steubenville were used by the Little River Railroad, which ran excursion trains using what was said to be the smallest standard-gauge Pacific-type steam locomotive in the nation. These trains still operate in southern Michigan.⁶

Through all of these changes in the type of rail service and the identities of the carriers, the Pleasant Lake depot has served the local community, first, as its exclusive portal to the outside world, and finally as the most tangible reminder of the role of rail travel in the growth and development of Pleasant Lake.

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FOOTNOTES

1. Baird, "The Fort Wayne Branch," pp. 19, 25, 27, 29, 33, 37 for historic views of these structures.
2. Parker, Indiana Railroad Depots, pp. 10, 16, 63.
3. Morley, The 1955 History of Steuben County, pp. 107, 181.
4. Parker and Simons, Indiana Railroads, p. 101ff.
5. Morley, op. cit., p. 106, 107.
6. Parker and Simons, op. cit., pp. 101, 184ff.

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The property boundary consists of the outline of the depot building and the land directly beneath it, located in a part of the Southwest quarter of the Southeast quarter of Section 15, Township 36 North, Range 13 East, in Steuben Township of Steuben County, Indiana.

This is the boundary of the property as conveyed to its present owners.

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BOOKS

- Morley, Harvey W., Atlas of Steuben County, Indiana, Angola, Indiana, 1912.
- Morley, Harvey W., The 1955 History of Steuben County, Indiana, Angola, Indiana, 1956.
- Parker, Francis H., Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage, Muncie, Indiana: Ball State University Department of Urban Planning, 1989.
- Parker, Francis H., and Simons, Richard S., Railroads of Indiana, Bloomington and Indianapolis, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1997.
- _____, Atlas of Steuben County, Indiana, Chicago: J. H. Beers Company, 1880.
- _____, County of Steuben, Indiana: Atlas and Directory, Angola, Indiana: Imperial Publishing Company, 1898.

PERIODICALS

- Baird, Victor A., "The Fort Wayne Branch Circa 1918: A Journey Frozen in Time." Central Headlight, Vol. XX, No. 3 (Third Quarter, 1990), pp.12-44.

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All photographs used in this nomination were taken in October 2000 by Craig Leonard. Location of the negatives is as follows:

Craig Leonard
5211SE SR116
Bluffton, Indiana 46714

Photographs

1. View looking southeast of the general area of the depot and environs.
2. View looking northeast of the general area of the depot and environs.
3. Historic postcard view of the depot and tracks c. 1910. Collection of Craig Leonard.
4. General view of the depot looking southwest.
5. General view of the depot looking northeast.
6. Historic view looking northeast January 11, 1918, from the collection of the Allen County, Ohio Historical Society, as reproduced in Victor A. Baird, "The Fort Wayne Branch Circa 1918: A Journey Frozen in Time." Central Headlight, Vol. XX, No. 3 (Third Quarter, 1990), p. 25.
7. Detail view looking northeast of the operator's bay and west elevation of the depot, showing exterior detailing.
8. Detail view looking south of typical window detailing on passenger waiting room, showing paint shadow beneath label molding.
9. Detail view looking west of typical doorway treatment.
10. Detail view looking northwest showing typical interior casing treatment, seen here in the operator's bay.
11. General view looking southwest in the passenger waiting room.
12. General view looking east in the agent's office.
13. General view looking southwest in the freight room.
14. Detail view looking southwest of original sluice gate in the ceiling of the freight room.
15. General view looking south in the loft area over the freight room.