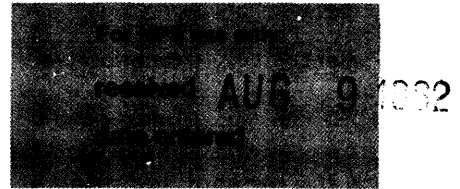


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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 Central House

and/or common Tavern Inn

**2. Location**

street & number <sup>SW</sup> Highway 229 N/A not for publication

city, town Napoleon, N/A vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Indiana code 018 county Ripley code 137

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name Napoleon Community Recreation and Restoration Corp.

street & number Hwy. 229

city, town Napoleon N/A vicinity of state Indiana 47034

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Ripley County Courthouse

street & number Town Square

city, town Versailles state Indiana 47042

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town state

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## 7. Description

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**Condition**

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

**Check one**

unaltered  
 altered

**Check one**

original site  
 moved date N/A

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**Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance**

Central House, located near the center of Napoleon, Indiana, is a large, two-story structure of Federal design. Thought to have been built sometime in the late 1820's, it was constructed of red brick and has a simple gable roof. Stepped gables and flush gable chimneys are located at the east and west ends of the structure. One additional chimney is situated on the ridge toward the center of the building. The original roofing material has been replaced with a metal standing-seam roof.

The south (front) of the building is comprised of seven bays. Counting from the east, the third and seventh ground floor bays contain doorways; all other bays in this facade contain six-over-six, double-hung windows. All of these openings feature stone sills and flat-arch lintels with radiating voussoirs. The doorway in the third bay also features narrow windows at either side of the door, descending down from the transom to within 30" of the grade level.

The east and west facades, both gable ends, have no openings other than the quarter-round vents located at either side of the chimneys in the attic areas. The west wall appears unaltered; markings on the east wall suggest that a one-story addition was formerly attached here. This addition apparently had a shed roof and was connected to the main building by two doorways on the ground level of the east wall, now bricked in. The construction or demolition dates for this structure are not known.

The rear (north) wall of the structure also gives evidence of a now-demolished wing. This wing was a one-story structure with a gable roof, and covered slightly more than half of this rear wall. Wall openings which connected with this wing have been filled in with modern doors and windows. No specific dates are available for this addition.

The interior of the building consists of six rooms, with three located on each floor. All are relatively austere, with few decorative elements. The three identical fireplace surrounds are the only exceptions; these feature an unusual design of classic inspiration. On each, battered pilasters are located on either side of the fireplace opening and support a molded architrave and a wide plain frieze, surmounted by the mantelpiece.

Restoration of this building is being done by the Napoleon Community Recreation and Restoration Corporation, which hopes to make the building available for use by various community organizations.

## 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** Before 1856

**Builder/Architect** Unknown

### Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Central House is significant for its association with the settlement of southeastern Indiana, and also for its unusual architectural features. The building is one of the oldest structures in Napoleon, and is a reminder of the importance of the town in the early 19th century.

Napoleon, platted in 1820, is the second oldest organized community in Ripley County. By 1835, the town had become an important crossroads, as it was situated at the eastern terminus of an early pioneer trace, and it was also transected by the Michigan Road, by a state highway leading to Vevay on the Ohio River, and by various turnpikes leading to Aurora and Lawrenceburg, Indiana. It was also an important stop along the route of the Cincinnati-Indianapolis stagecoach line. Central House was one of several buildings in Napoleon operated as inns, to serve the many travelers passing through the town during that era. The prosperity of the town eventually waned as railroads supplanted the early road systems, but the building remains a local landmark, well-known for its role in the area's development. Only four other buildings remain in the community which date from that era. It is believed that this building was constructed in the late 1820's.

While basically a simple Federal style structure, Central House is architecturally significant for its use of stepped gables. While this feature is not uncommon in the eastern United States, it is generally considered to be anachronistic on buildings constructed after 1800, and is seldom seen in Indiana.

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

"Napoleon—Pioneer Junction of the New Purchase." Herbert R. Hill

"Outdoor Indiana", Vol. 38, No. 9. November, 1973.

The observance in 1970 of Napoleon's 150 years by the citizens, which was reported in Ripley County newspapers, especially the Versailles Republican and Osgood Journal.

-- See Continuation Sheet --

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Osgood, Indiana

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 

1	6
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6	4	4	3	3	0
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4	3	4	0	6	6	0
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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lot #58 in Napoleon, 82'6" x 165'

Main Street, Napoleon, Indiana, State Rd. 229 on 82'6" side.

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 Frank P. Straber, Resident Agent

organization Napoleon Community Recreation and Restoration Corp.

date 3-14-79

street & number R. R. 1

telephone 812/852-4818

city or town Batesville

state Indiana 47034

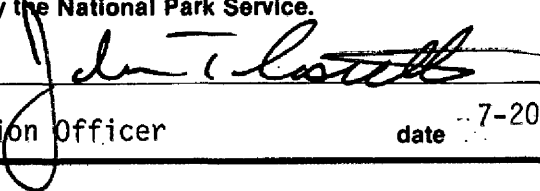
## 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

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

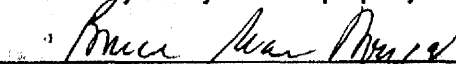


title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer

date 7-20-82

For NPS use only

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



date 9/23/82

Keeper of the National Register

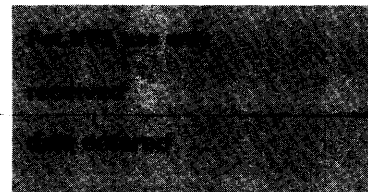
Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Central House

Item number 9

Page 1

"History of Ripley County", published by the Business & Professional Women's Club  
in 1968, printed by the Clermont Printing Co., Batavia, Ohio

A booklet entitled, "Napoleon & Vicinity", a historical souvenir covering the period  
from 1820-1970. This was Napoleon's Sesquicentennial.

Peat, Wilbur D. Indiana Houses of the Nineteenth Century, Indianapolis: Indiana  
Historical Society. 1962, p. 17.