

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation 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 John Claus Peters House

and/or common Peters-Heffley House

**2. Location**

street & number 832 West Wayne Street        not for publication

city, town Fort Wayne        vicinity of        congressional district 4th

state Indiana code 18 county Allen code 003

**3. Classification**

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

**4. Owner of Property**

name William L. & Janet L. Heffley

street & number 832 West Wayne Street

city, town Fort Wayne        vicinity of        state Indiana 46804

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. City-County Building

street & number One Main Street

city, town Fort Wayne        vicinity of        state Indiana 46802

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

Indiana Historical Site  
title & Structure Inventory

has this property been determined eligible?        yes  no

date 1978        federal  state        county        local

Division of Historic Preservation, Department of Natural Resources  
depository for survey records

city, town Indianapolis        vicinity of        state Indiana

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

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

The building is an irregular-shaped, three-and-one-half-story home which faces south. The basement and foundation consist of exposed, rock-faced ashlar, rising three feet above the ground level and capped by a smooth stone water table.

The first and second stories are constructed with red brick. The first floor window openings are topped with segmental arches composed of rock-faced ashlar. The spring lines are further emphasized by a string course of the same material. The second floor is the same, except that the lintels are flat, radiating voussoir arches. The third floor is of wood frame construction except the brick turret.

The three-story brick turret on the east end of the facade is approximately 12 feet in diameter. Four brick pilasters start at the base of the second floor and continue to the top of the third, where the capitals have an anthemion motif. The entablature is characterized by a triglyph with a prominent semi-reversa molding around the cornice.

The central front porch is flanked by two pilasters with brick shafts and foliated capitals. These capitals support a brick corbel entablature with a metal cornice. Within the pilasters are impostes with foliated capitals, supporting a horseshoe arch composed of rock-faced ashlar. The arch frames the oak paneled double doors. The doors are distinguished by ornate brass doorknobs and hinges. The beveled plate glass in the doors is etched with a floral design. The transom window has been etched with the house number.

The windows are of many varieties. The west end of the main facade features a Chicago-styled window with three stained glass transoms, the center one featuring the likeness of an elk. Directly above, on the second floor, are three vertically accentuated windows with stained glass transoms. Above the front porch is a plate glass window, 4½ feet by 5 feet, including a leaded, beveled glass transom. Yet higher is a small, three-window gabled dormer with the Tree of Life on the pediment. In addition, the house has double-hung, curved, plate glass windows on each of the three levels of the turret, a bay window, two hinged clerestory windows, and many other conventional, double-hung windows.

The slate roof features a steep-pitched central pyramid with eyebrow dormer, and is further complicated by high peaked gables pointing in three directions. The west gable end is bisected by one of the five chimneys with corbelled smoke bells. The large, high-peaked gable to the south boasts a balcony supported by wooden corbels.

The five chimneys are in fair condition and have three flues each. Some are fluted and have elongated corbelled smoke bells with caps. They originally serviced eight fireplaces, three iron stoves, a coal burning low-pressure steam boiler, and a cooking oven in the basement.

A classical entablature encircles the building concealing, under the cornice, the built-in gutters. The frieze consists of triglyph and patera.

The carriage house is an irregular ell form, topped by a steep pitched roof with dormers similar to those of the house.

## 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 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** 1885      **Builder/Architect** John Claus Peters

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)** The Peters-Heffley House, built in 1885, is historically significant because its builder, John Claus Peters, followed a Horatio Alger, rags-to-riches pattern to wealth, occupying a prominent place in the growth of late nineteenth-century Fort Wayne. Architecturally, the home is an impressive example of the Queen Ann style. Peters built it as proof of his success and prominence, utilizing only the finest materials and craftsmen available. Because of its size and the quality of workmanship, it dominates the surrounding residential area. Additionally, the house now serves as a symbol of what can be accomplished by individuals interested in preserving structures of the past, and it has encouraged other preservation projects in the neighborhood.

John Claus Peters was a prominent, late nineteenth-century businessman and entrepreneur who made substantial contributions to the growth of Fort Wayne and the local community. Peters was born in 1848, and in 1862 his parents apprenticed him to a piano-and-general-cabinet maker in New York City. Peters remained in that city, working at his trade, until 1869.

Peters' business was highly successful and he returned to Fort Wayne in 1870, where he founded the Peters Box and Lumber Company. Blessed with excellent business sense and management skill, Peters made the company such a success that by 1878 it employed over 100 men and produced 15,000 board feet of lumber per day. As it expanded, the company also began turning out thin wood, veneers, wooden pulleys, and fine furniture. Peters plowed his profits into other ventures and between 1880 and 1900 was involved in a large number of Fort Wayne businesses, including the Indiana Road Machine Company, Eel River Drain Company, Horton Manufacturing Company, Indiana Machine Works, and Fort Wayne Knitting Mills, to name just a few. In addition, his 640 dairy cows, kept on a nearby farm that he owned, were recognized as one of the finest herds in the area.

Peters also built Fort Wayne's finest hotel in 1887. The Wayne Hotel contained 128 furnished rooms, two elevators, two central staircases, two parlors, a barber shop and a bar. The building was ornately decorated and had exquisitely tiled floors. For many years it was possibly the most prestigious building in Fort Wayne.

His many prosperous ventures made him wealthy and, in 1885, Peters built his statement of success--the Peters-Heffley House--at 832 West Wayne Street. Peters, in common with other wealthy, self-made men of the period, meant the mansion to be both proof and symbol of his prosperity and importance. To this end, he had the Queen Anne style building carefully constructed from the best materials by the finest craftsmen available. He placed the home on a corner lot, which enhanced the building's size and craftsmanship by making it highly visible from a distance.

The Peters-Heffley House remains significant because it is a symbol of an age that disappeared long ago. However, in recent years the mansion has taken on a new meaning. When Janet and William L. Heffley purchased the property in 1966, the building had deteriorated badly and a nearby hospital had plans to reduce the area to a parking lot. The Heffleys' well-publicized efforts to save the house encouraged others in the area to become resident owners and to rescue additional homes. The Peters-Heffley House serves Fort Wayne as a

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Griswald, B.J. Builder of Great Fort Wayne. Fort Wayne, 1926  
 Helm, T.B. History of Allen County Indiana. Kingam Brothers, 1880  
 Slocum, C.E. & Robertson, R.S. History of Maumee River Basin. Indianapolis, 1905  
 Robertson, R.S. Valley of Upper Maumee River. Brant & Fuller, 1889  
 McKay, Neil. Personal interviews with the grandson of J. C. Peters. 1972-79

## 10. Geographical Data

**ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED**  
**UTM NOT VERIFIED**

Acreeage of nominated property 0.2  
 Quadrangle name Fort Wayne West Quadrangle scale 1:24000

### UMT References

A	<u>16</u>	<u>655340</u>	<u>4548710</u>	B	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	D	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
E	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	F	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>
G	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	H	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>	<u>  </u>

**Verbal boundary description and justification** The nominated property containing the Peters-Heffley House and Carriage House is a rectangular lot 150 feet by 60 feet, on the northeast corner of the intersection of Jackson and West Wayne Streets.

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

state	code	county	code

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title William L. Heffley

organization   date October 23, 1978

street & number 832 West Wayne Street telephone 219/422-7900

city or town Fort Wayne, Indiana state Indiana 46804

## 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature *William L. Heffley*

title State Historic Preservation Officer date June 30, 1980

For HCRS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	
<u><i>David M. Meyer</i></u>	date <u>9/17/80</u>
Keeper of the National Register	
Attest: <u><i>W. Ray Luce</i></u>	date <u>9/18/80</u>
Chief of Registration	

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Continuation sheet	Description	Item number	Page
	<p>The Peters-Heffley House has 5,000 square feet in three-and-one-half stories, plus 1,600 square feet in a basement with nine foot ceilings. The interior is characterized by impressive woodworking throughout the first two stories. While magnificent in size, it is not overpowering, but modest and soothing. Its simplicity and craftsmanship are impressive.</p> <p>Five of the eight fireplaces grace the ground floor which consists of a foyer, parlor, sitting room, formal dining room, vestibule, informal dining room, butler's pantry, and library. The fireplace and wood trim in the library are of cherry wood, the fireplace in the sitting room is walnut, and the trim and flooring on the third story are of poplar. All remaining doors, wainscoting, window and door trim, baseboards, ceiling cornices, fireplaces, and floors are of oak.</p> <p>Front entry is through double oak doors with etched floral design (photo #3) entering into the foyer. The foyer (17 x 14) (photo #4) is dominated by the wooden decorative arch dividing the room at the opening plane of the stairway. The arch is supported on each side by a square pilaster approximately five feet high. This pilaster, in turn, supports a two foot high pilaster and Corinthian column with foliated capital. Resting on the architrave is a bracket with a terminal pendant, followed by a modillion. The bracket is decorated on the side with a rosette complemented by two fern leaves. All the above support two heavy framing members, separated symmetrically by three square grill panels, two rectangular fret-type panels, and two rectangular panels with wheat cutouts surrounding a delicate sunburst cutout.</p> <p>The foyer wainscoting is three-and-one-half feet high, consisting of two tiers—the lower panels rectangular, the upper panels square. The open stairway has turned spindles that intersect horizontally and vertically in the balustrade. The other side of the stairs is paneled. The newel post was topped with a brass figurine holding a lamp (lamp missing). A large seven foot by forty inches chalk painting (irreparable) was recessed in an oak window-styled frame.</p> <p>Exits from the foyer include paneled doors to the small central hall (7 x 11), sitting room and an open six-foot wide archway to the parlor.</p> <p>The parlor (16 x 14) has Chicago-style windows with three stained glass transoms, the center featuring an elk (photo #6). The fireplace is oak with beveled mirror and is stylized with classical ornamentation. A large combination gas and electric chandelier is centered on the ceiling. The floor was formerly carpeted. The carpeting flowed through the six-and-one-half-foot double sliding pocket doors into the sitting room. Floors in both rooms are bordered with walnut, maple and oak parquet (photo #5).</p> <p>The sitting room (17 x 20) features the only walnut fireplace, which is highlighted by patterned tile (photo #8). The combination gas and electric light fixture is also centered (photo #7). Doors exit to a side vestibule that has three oak doors with etched floral window panes. Other doors exiting from the sitting room include a solid oak paneled door to the central hall and another set of six-and-one-half foot sliding pocket doors. When both sets of pocket doors are open, it provides an expanse of 55 feet from the stained glass window in the parlor through the sitting room to the magnificent fireplace at the back end of the formal dining room (14 x 24).</p>	7	1

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Continuation sheet      Description      Item number      7      Page      2

The dining room fireplace (photo #9) spans the 11 feet from the floor to the ceiling, is six-and-one-quarter feet at the widest point, and has a three-and-one-half square foot plate glass mirror and an additional mantel shelf 18" above. Wainscoting two-and-one-half feet high encircles the room. Three eight-foot, vertically accentuated windows with shutters face the side street. Two small clerestory windows border the fireplace. The room has a large centered chandelier (not original), and four original brass wall sconces on the two walls perpendicular to the fireplace. Molded plaster motifs border the ceiling and the ceiling light. The floors are of oak with parquet border of walnut, cherry, ash and maple. The remaining doors exit to the side vestibule, butler's pantry, back stairway (stairway missing) and the informal dining room.

The informal dining room (15 x 16) has alternating ash and walnut plank flooring. The corner fireplace is Colonial-styled brick with Delft-styled tile and an iron fire screen covering the opening of the gas burning firepit. Doors exit to the back porch (now enclosed), basement stairway (stairway missing), second floor stairway (stairway missing), and to the butler's pantry (door missing).

The butler's pantry is rectangular in shape and is currently used as the kitchen and breakfast nook (remodeled in 1975). Originally, it had a dumbwaiter to the basement kitchen (removed in early 1900s). Doors exit to the basement stairway (stairway missing), center hall (door missing), and to the formal dining room.

The final room on the ground floor is the library (11 x 19, plus the turret area). It is entered from the center hall. The door and window trim are cherry, as is the fireplace. The room has an oriel window with a leather seat, a turret containing three bow windows, and an oak floor.

The second story consisted of six bedrooms and two bathrooms (now three bathrooms). There were three coal burning fireplaces (photo #10 depicts one in the turret room), two free-standing stoves (stoves missing), and one fireplace of marbleized slate. The floors are oak and the door and window trim is quilled-stain finish.

The third story has nine-foot ceilings in the two servants' rooms, a billiard room with balcony, and an unfinished storage room. Originally, there was one complete bathroom (now three). The poplar door and window trim and floors were painted. Except for the billiard room, the third floor has been totally changed.

The fourth story pyramidal roof with eyebrow window was used as an attic storage area.

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Continuation sheet

Significance

Item number 8

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standard for dedicated, sensitive restoration. The local preservation society uses the home in its slide presentations and has given the Heffleys the only award presented for residential restoration in its four-year existence. Local television and newspapers have featured the building and in the Fall of 1971, House and Garden Remodeling Guide devoted full-page coverage to the adaptation of the carriage house.