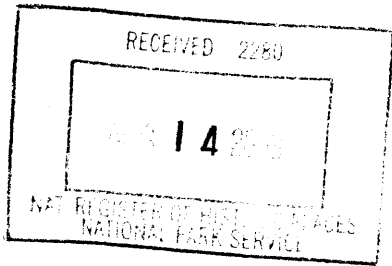


985

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 **Griffith Grand Trunk Depot**

other names/site number

2. Location

street & number **201 South Broad Street** N/A not for publication

city or town **Griffith** N/A vicinity

state **Indiana** code **IN** county **Lake** code **089** zip code **46319**

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.)

Signature of certifying official/Title
Indiana Department of Natural Resources

Date
8-8-03

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

Edison K. Beall

Date of Action
SEP 28 2003

Griffith Grand Trunk Depot
Name of Property

Lake _____ IN _____
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
- landscape

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.)

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

N/A

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION: Rail-Related

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION/CULTURE: Museum

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

OTHER:

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation CONCRETE

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.)

- Criteria A, B, C, D with checkboxes and descriptions.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- Criteria A-G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

TRANSPORTATION

Period of Significance

1911-1953

Significant Dates

1911

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Grand Trunk & Western Railroad

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):

- Bibliographic reference checkboxes and fields.

Primary location of additional data:

- Primary location checkboxes: State Historic Preservation Office, Other State agency, Federal agency, Local government, University, Other.

Name of repository:

Griffith Grand Trunk Depot
Name of Property

Lake IN
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than 1 acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	16	464320	4596480	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		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 Christopher Baas
organization _____ date 01-30-2003
street & number 21116 North Banbury telephone 317/ 877-7799
city or town Noblesville state IN zip code 46060

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 Griffith Historical Society, Inc.
street & number P.O. Box 678 telephone 219/ 924-9701
city or town Griffith state IN zip code 46204

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

The Griffith Grand Trunk Depot, Lake County, Indiana

Description

The Griffith Grand Trunk depot is a single-story wood structure set on a modern concrete block basement. It is cubical in form, measuring 20' x 30' in plan. A small bay protrudes from the north wall.

The depot was moved in 1980 to a section of abandoned Michigan Central right-of-way in what is now the Griffith Historical Park and Railroad Museum. The site is located at the junction where two active railroads intersect the town's main north-south thoroughfare (Broad Street), just south of the Griffith business district. The majority of the museum property is located east of the structure, the rail lines are to the south, Broad Street to the west, and Avenue A and the business district to the north. The museum has several railroad related artifacts including an interlocking tower and several retired railcars. The structure's original location was approximately 100 yards to the southwest, in an open area between the Grant Trunk and E.J. & E.'s rail lines on the west side of Broad Street.

The depot's hipped roof is steeply pitched pitch (10:12) with flared, enclosed eaves with car siding soffit. A three-sided polygonal dormer-like roof covers the bay. A brick stove chimney is located on the east side of the roof's peak, and is laid in a common bond. It has a brick band near its top.

The exterior walls are covered in clapboards. The lower third, from the bottom of the windows down, is shipboard. The upper two-thirds are thinner clapboards. A horizontal trim board separates the two siding types, and wraps around all four sides of the structure. Trim boards are located at the building's corners and around windows and doors. A frieze-like board and molding is located at the top of the walls, which is also the top of the windows.

Large wood one-over-one windows are located on the west and south facades, and the north wall of the bay. More slender wood double-hung one-over-one windows are located on the bay's angled sidewalls, and between the bay and the entry door.

The north, or main, façade has a centrally located full-story bay. The bay has a large window on its north wall, and smaller single windows on each of its angled sidewalls. A small window and the entry door are located east of the bay, and a larger door that accesses the freight storage room is located to the west.

Concrete steps access the main entrance. The entry door is wood with five equally sized recessed panels. It is covered by a modern screen door. A two-light transom tops the door. The eastern-most doorway, constructed of car siding, is wider to accommodate baggage, and is accessed by a concrete ramp.

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 7 Page 2

The Griffith Grand Trunk Depot, Lake County, Indiana

The east façade is plain and has no window or door openings. The south façade has a pair of windows located at the wall's center, and two single windows located between the pair and each of the building's corners. The west facade has a window centered on the wall, and one located between the wall's center and the northeast corner. The basement is accessed from an exterior stairwell on the east façade, and has a window well located on the west façade.

The interior walls and ceilings are painted car siding. The floor is tongue-and-groove wood planks. The entry and restroom doors are wood with five equally sized recessed panels with two-light transoms. A grill is located in the bathroom door's bottom panel.

The windows and doors have a wide, plain architrave, and thinner jambs and sills. A molding is located on top of the architrave, and where the architrave rests on the jambs. The doorjambs rest on small, column-like bases. The baseboards are plain and capped by a molding. A cornice molding is located where the wall meets the ceiling. A picture rail wraps the wall at the height of the window's architrave, and a chair rail is located about a third of the wall's height up from the floor.

The depot's interior plan, as shown in the enclosed original drawing, was slightly modified in the 1950's. It is comprised of three rooms: the main operational space, or office; a small restroom; and a freight room that was historically a waiting room. The main operating space has an operator's desk in the bay that spans the length between each of the angled sidewalls. Floor-to-ceiling cabinets are located in the southwest corner. The cabinet doors are made from car siding and have metal pulls. They are stacked two high and four across.

The restroom is located in the building's southeast corner and has a window. The freight storage room is located in the northwest corner and is accessed from the outside by a door on the north wall, and from the office by a door in the west wall. The wall separating the freight room and the office has a door, and a boxed-in stove flue the height of the wall.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 3

The Griffith Grand Trunk Depot, Lake County, Indiana

Statement of Significance

The Griffith Grand Trunk depot is a simple, utilitarian, single-story wood-frame structure constructed in 1911. It is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A for its local significance in the development of the Town of Griffith. Although it was relocated approximately 200 feet to the northeast in 1980, it meets Criterion Exception B because it remains in a railroad context at the original Griffith rail junction, and maintains its architectural integrity. It was rated Outstanding in the Lake County Sites and Structures Survey.¹

Griffith's nickname is "The Town That Came to the Tracks." At the height of its rail days in the 1950's, five railroads operated eleven tracks on the south side of the town's business district. On an average day the citizens of Griffith witnessed 180 trains or 7.5 trains per hour.²

The town's association with railroads is even evident in its name, assumed from a "Mr. Griffith," the Grand Trunk surveyor who set the grade for rail. The "casual reference" to the "Griffith Section" of track became synonymous with the location of the town.³

Griffith History

The swampland of what was to become Griffith was first settled following Indiana's 1853 offer to homestead wetlands at \$1.25 an acre.⁴ The town's association with railroads came soon after when, in 1854, the Michigan Southern built a line east from Joliet through what would become Griffith, and north to Michigan.⁵ Several others followed: The Grand Trunk (1880), the Erie (1881), and the Elgin, Joliet, & Eastern (1888). The railroads opened new markets in the area for farming and building supplies, and consumer goods. It opened the Chicago market to farmers for the sale of milk and produce.⁶

¹ Historic Landmarks Foundation of Indiana. *Lake County Interim Report* (Self published, 1995).

² Post Tribune article from museum collection. Date unknown.

³ Diamond Jubilee Committee, *75 Years of Growing Together: The History of the People of Griffith, Indiana* (Self published, 1979) 10.

⁴ Kulinski, Karen Ed. *The Town That Came to the Tracks: A Children's History of Griffith, Volume III* (Griffith Historical Society, 2001) 4.

⁵ Diamond Jubilee Committee. *75 Years of Growing Together: The History of the People of Griffith, Indiana* (Self published) 8.

⁶ Kulinski, Karen Ed. *The Town That Came to the Tracks: A Children's History of Griffith, Volume I*. (Griffith Historical Society, 1999) 4.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 4

The Griffith Grand Trunk Depot, Lake County, Indiana

The Town of Griffith was founded in 1891 when Jay and Elmer Dwiggin purchased the 140 acres of farmland around the junction of the four railroads. The brothers platted a town and made grand offers to companies to open and operate factories and businesses. Griffith was billed as "Chicago's Best Factory Suburb" and had sales offices in both Griffith and Chicago, and even a booth at the Columbian Exposition.⁷

The idea of a planned, or prospected, factory town appears to be a common theme in the Chicago region. Pullman was developed in 1880, and in Lake County, the United States Steel Company developed Gary starting in 1906, and East Chicago's Marktown was constructed beginning in 1917. The Dwiggin's venture failed when they borrowed against the land during the Panic and Depression of 1893. By 1898 the brothers had fled to their next opportunity, and the town was left on its own. The remaining locals relied on the presence of the railroads for their livelihood, many as lifelong employees. A second source of employment and economic stability was the Standard Oil Company's pipeline staging area west of the town, a final preparation area before the crude's ultimate destination to the Whiting refinery.⁸

The Grand Trunk and Western Railroad

The Grand Trunk and Western Railroad's parent company is Canadian owned, and the rail line spans that country's length. In the United States it is comprised of only 334 miles of rail line from Port Huron, Michigan- where it connects to Canada- to Chicago, Illinois. In Indiana it runs from north of Mishawaka, through South Bend, south to Valparaiso, and west through Griffith to Illinois.

The company's origin dates to 1860 when Canadian companies began leasing U. S. rails. Construction of its own line reached South Bend by 1868, and Lake County in the 1870's. In 1890 a tunnel connected St. Clair, Ontario to Port Huron eliminating the need to ferry trains. This tunnel was replaced in 1995, and the Grand Trunk remains a highly active freight line.

Like most railroad companies, they employed an architectural staff. The Griffith depot was designed in Durand, Michigan for the South Bend Subdivision at an estimated 1911 cost of \$1,050.

⁷ Diamond Jubilee Committee. *75 Years of Growing Together: The History of the People of Griffith, Indiana* (Self published, 1979) 12.

⁸ Diamond Jubilee Committee. *75 Years of Growing Together: The History of the People of Griffith, Indiana* (Self published, 1979) 19.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 8 Page 5

The Griffith Grand Trunk Depot, Lake County, Indiana

Railroad Depot Resources

The leading source for depots in Indiana is Francis H. Parker's *Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage*. Parker described the origin of the depot coming from England in the form of "train barns," a structure that covered several tracks and parked trains. The structures were essentially large warehouses. The depot evolved into a form based upon prescribed functions that ranged from simple shelters to large-scale terminals. Parker described the Griffith depot as a "combination depot," or a depot that combined "freight, passenger, and office functions in one building." This form was the most prevalent in Indiana.⁹

A "tool" of the railroad, the Griffith depot was a central office space flanked by a passenger waiting room on one side, and baggage and records rooms on the other. The office contained an operator's desk that was located in the bay to provide views of the track. The wall between the office and the waiting room had a door, ticket window, and a stove flue, presumably to vent heat stoves in both spaces. The waiting room contained wood benches.

The typical Indiana small town depot profile is a low, somewhat elongated, one-story brick or frame structure. While both gable and hipped roofs were prevalent they had wide eaves to help shelter outside activities. While well proportioned, the Griffith Grand Trunk depot is somewhat smaller, perhaps two-thirds the size of what you would expect to see. It is more cubical than rectangular, and its hipped roof with reasonably deep eaves is somewhat more steep than its longer counterparts. Amid Lake County's early Twentieth Century Revival and Craftsman style architecture, the structure does not clearly evoke a style for its time. The roof massing, pitch, and flare is somewhat Chateausque. The exterior clapboard walls, trim, and protruding bay are characteristic of the Queen Anne style (1911 being somewhat late for northwest Indiana). Perhaps the designer was simply presenting a nostalgic recall to the railroad's Victorian heyday.

At some point the railroad expanded the office space by removing the interior walls of the baggage and records rooms (their existence is evidenced by paint build-up on the depot ceiling). The waiting room was transformed into a freight storage room by expanding the width of the exterior door, and removing the windows on what is now the east wall. An interior door replaced the ticket window. A restroom, accessed from the office, was framed into the rear of the waiting room space.

⁹ Francis H. Parker. *Indiana Railroad Depots: A Threatened Heritage* (Ball State University, 1989) 4.

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CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 8 Page 6

The Griffith Grand Trunk Depot, Lake County, Indiana

It is not clear exactly why and when these changes were made, but it is speculated that it was simply the railroad altering the structure to better meet their needs. The Griffith depot was always a yard office for the Grand Trunk and Western, and would have benefited from the additional office space. The railroad also focused primarily on the transport of freight, and never fully developed passenger service. At its height the line provided twelve daily passenger trains, but by World War II had already diminished to six (Griffith residents had access to more viable passenger rail lines).¹⁰ The waiting room space made a sizeable freight storage area, and the elimination of the baggage and records rooms revealed more office space. Since the structure was not designed with a restroom, its inclusion to serve the operators seems a logical addition. Locals recall the present layout dating back to at least the late 1940's.¹¹

The depot was originally located on the west side of Broad Street between the E. J. & E. and Grand Trunk rail lines (note framed museum photograph in Photo #8). As with most historic rail structures, once they are obsolete they are a financial, maintenance, and safety burden for the railroad. Many structures are demolished, or sold on the condition that, for safety reasons, they be removed from the railroad right-of-way. The Griffith Grand Trunk Depot operated until 1980 and was purchased by the Griffith Historical Society, Inc. with the provision that it be moved from railroad property. In 1980 it was moved approximately 200 feet out of Grand Trunk right-of-way and onto society's railroad museum located on the adjacent abandoned Penn Central right-of-way. It was placed on a concrete block basement so that the society would have additional meeting and storage space. The depot is now operated as Griffith's only museum. While the move compromises the depot's contextual integrity, it remains at the same railroad junction, is in a rail setting, and the architectural integrity of the structure has not been altered.

¹⁰ Simons, Richard S. and Francis Parker. *Railroads of Indiana* (Indiana University Press, 1997) 162.

¹¹ Interview with Griffith resident Howard Anderson, November 2002.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES CONTINUATION SHEET

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The Griffith Grand Trunk Depot, Lake County, Indiana

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET**

Section number 10&11 Page 8

The Griffith Grand Trunk Depot, Lake County, Indiana

Verbal Boundary Description

In plan, boundary lines offset 10' from the north, east, and south walls; and the extension of the north and south offset lines west to the museum's west property line.

Boundary Justification

The rectangular boundary includes only the depot, and excludes the adjacent non-contributing museum collection.

Photographs

Photos taken by Christopher Baas- August 25, 2002

1. View of north façade.
2. View of north and west facades.
3. View of south and east facades.
4. View of south and west.
5. Interior view of entry.
6. Interior view of operator's desk and bay.
7. Interior view of corner storage cabinets looking southwest.
8. Interior view of stove chimney.
9. View interior of door.
10. Detail view of transom.