

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

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date entered

**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 Meyer, Joseph Ernest, House

and/or common Meyer Castle

2. Location

street & number 1370 Joliet Street N/A not for publication

city, town Dyer N/A vicinity of

state Indiana code 018 county Lake code 089

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name East Dyer Development Company

street & number 1000 E. 80th Place

city, town Merrillville N/A vicinity of state Indiana 46410

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lake County Courthouse

street & number 2293 N. Main St.

city, town Crown Point state Indiana 46307

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Indiana Historic Sites and Structures Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records Indiana Department of Natural Resources

city, town Indianapolis 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 Meyer Castle is located on the south side of U.S. 30 in Dyer in the northwest corner of Indiana, approximately eight miles south of Hammond. The mansion is situated on ten acres of land, the highest ground in the area. It is on a corner and has an 800' frontage. One enters the property from U.S. 30 through wrought iron gates set in Lannon stone piers, and drives along a 1/4 mile driveway which circles the mansion before reaching it. The grounds are terraced and many original plantings still survive.

The mansion is an outstanding example of Jacobethan Revival architecture. A three story building of random ashlar Lannon stone construction, the house is highlighted by carved Indiana limestone stairways, trim and ornamentation. Lannon stone is a variety of solarian limestone quarried at Lannon, Wisconsin.

The structure is divided into two main sections: the main house, and a garage/service wing angled to the southwest. (See site plan). The main house features two octagon-shaped bays located at the northeast and southwest corners. These bays contribute to the irregular configuration of the house and garage. The contour of the land exposes three stories on the south side, but only two on the north.

A quarry-tiled porch stretches 125' long by 12' wide and wraps around the south (principal) facade of the house (photo 1). The porch railings and spindles are of Indiana limestone. There are 18 large, hand-carved limestone urns spaced at regular intervals among the spindles on the porch. A large double stairway leads from the lower level outdoor pool to the main (south) entrance at the second level, and is highlighted by large stone ball ornaments located at both ends of the steps. There is another 20' wide stairway on the northeast corner of the house at the octagon porch.

Three double-stack and four single-stack chimneys with limestone funnels and caps rise above the steeply pitched hip roof. The roof is further articulated by a center gable on the north facade (photo 2), grouped with a cross gable which is carried throughout the east facade. The roof is laid with red clay slab tile and hip roll tile in good condition. All flashings, gutters and downspouts are of copper.

The large, three car garage is joined to the west side of the house and is angled towards the southwest (photo 2). The garage is one and one-half stories with a steeply pitched gable roof incorporating a side gable (southeast facade) and two gable dormers (northwest facade). On the southwest side of the garage there is a Tudor style bay of heavy beams and stucco cantilevered out of the upper floor (photo 4). The garage doors are arched.

All windows are either 3/8" cut or acid-etched crystal in a scored or diamond pattern. All window surrounds are limestone with plain sills with, on the first and second floors, label head molding. All exterior doors are solid oak with leaded glass inserts. Most of the glass is original and intact. Several of the second and third floor windows are equipped with louvered awnings.

Inside are three fully utilized stories: the ground floor, main (second) floor, and third floor. The main floor is in good condition, as is most of the house, and is completely original. The grand entrance hall features north and south entrances with the principal entrance being from the south. The living room and octagonal porch are located to the east of the entrance hall, and the study, kitchen, formal and informal dining rooms are located to the west. A large hallway and staircases divide the kitchen area from the maid's quarters and the garage below.

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The grand entrance, living room, dining room, and grand staircase are highlighted by fine carved oak paneling and detailing. European craftsmen spent almost two years doing the carving on the mansion. The grand entrance features oak paneled walls as well as the two exterior doors. The doors are 3" solid white oak divided into 15 panels. The oak is carved to give a highly textured look. The grand staircase railings include facing griffons. There are carved rosettes, dragons, griffons, serpents and leaves throughout the main and upper floors. The balusters and railings were carved from 10" blocks of oak. A brass chandelier, weighing approximately 400 lbs., hangs in the grand entrance from the third floor ceiling. The ornate fixture includes brass tassels, lions and shields, ropes, flowers and ivy.

The paneling and trim in the formal dining room is black walnut. The fireplace face, mantel and overmantel are unique due to their fine and intricate carving. The floors of the main (second) and third floors are solid teak parquet. On the stair landing between the main and third floors there is a magnificent stained glass window wall (north facade) with castle motifs and the Meyer family crest.

The third level consists of four bedrooms and three baths. It is accessible via the grand staircase from the main floor. The ornate ceilings in the living room and the vestibules are continued to the third floor hallways. The master bedroom is 18'x 26' and is highlighted by hand-molded plaster relief work of very high quality. All bedroom closets and doors are cedar lined. The west bedroom has a door leading to an upstairs balcony which affords a view of the grounds and woods.

Located in the northeast corner of the third floor, the master bath is a prolific example of the Art-Deco period. The special ceramic tiles are imported and the colors are black, orange, beige and buff. There are colorful flowered tiles applied at random. The large, (exceeding 7') bathtub has a seat at the north end. A unique feature is the large underwater scene made of porcelain, which is set into the wall next to the tub. There is a large sink to the left of the tub (north wall). It features a basin carved from black marble and is 3" thick. The bath also includes a steam room in which there is an unusual sunlamp fixture.

All doors on the third level are double-faced, with two panels on the room side and eight panels on the hall side in oak. The third floor is served by an elevator (ca. 1948) a dumb waiter, and a laundry chute. The maid's quarters, consisting of three rooms and a complete bath, are located over the garage.

The lower level is situated below the main part of the house, as well as under the 125' porch and the two octagonal projections on each end. The lower level is entered from the outside through two oversized doors, on the east and west sides. The unusual west door is arched in stone. Access from within the house is by two stairways, one located below the grand staircase, which descends to the lounge area, and the other through the service hall between the kitchen, garage and maid's quarters. Upper and lower outside porches can also be reached from this hallway.

There are 12 rooms in the lower level. The bowling alley runs east-west along the south foundation of the mansion. West of the bowling alley is the stage and poker room and the unexcavated foundation of the garage. Separating the laundry room from the stage room is the stairway which gives access to the main floor service hall.

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Located under the octagonal informal dining room is the poker room. Adjacent to the poker room and the bowling alley are the lounge, wine cellar, billiard, and general use rooms. These are located under the formal dining room, the grand entrance hall, and the living room. Located in the northeast corner of the house under the octagon porch is the playroom. All rooms on the lower level originally had two inch cork ceilings. The walls are plastered, and with the exception of the bowling alley, the entire lower level had 3/8" to 1/2" cork flooring.

There are two historical markers on the property, one commemorating the Old Sauk Trail, and the other, erected in 1920, commemorating Henry Ostermann. Ostermann was instrumental in the engineering and construction of U.S. 30. Also on the grounds are two rock gardens, one a sunken garden with a unique stone windmill which filled a goldfish pond. The grounds are terraced and many ground cover ivies and unusual plantings still survive. There are several specimens of trees and evergreens and many deer and other animals on the grounds.

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 type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> other (specify) Botany

Specific dates 1929-31

Builder/Architect Cosby Bernard, Sr., Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Meyer Castle is significant as both an outstanding example of Jacobethan Revival architecture and as a former home of one of Hammond's early millionaire businessmen, Joseph Ernest Meyer. A three and one-half story mansion of hand chiseled Lannon stone, this structure is a showcase of excellence in craftsmanship as shown in all its details.

Meyer was born on September 5, 1878, in Kenosha, Wisconsin. After his father died he was sent to an orphanage where he learned botany and printing. He worked as a printer first in Milwaukee, and later in Chicago. After working in Chicago, Meyer went to work for the Hammond Times.

Feeling the financial pinch caused by the size of his family (he had eight children), Meyer bought some land in Hammond, and drawing on his background in botany, Meyer began growing medicinal herbs which he then sold door-to-door. This evolved into the Indiana Herb Gardens, later renamed the Indiana Botanical Gardens. Meyer made a fortune from the sale of his herb medicines. He promoted his herbal therapy through a series of publications that included The Herbalist & Herb Doctor (1918), and The Herbalist (1934).

With the growth of his fortune Meyer branched out into other business activities. With the failure of the Calumet State Bank in 1933, Meyer saw an opportunity to get into banking. He bought the bank and reorganized it as the Calumet National Bank.

Seeking an impressive residence for himself and his family, Meyer hired Architect Cosby Bernard, Sr., to design for him a mansion that would copy a Scottish castle once seen by Meyer. Construction began in 1929 on a specially selected hill site surrounded by woods. When completed in 1931, it was the largest and most lavish mansion in the Calumet region. Built in a large, park-like setting, Meyer was able to indulge his interest in botany. He covered the grounds with an abundance of trees, shrubs, flowers, and ground covers. Two stone windmills were built (one of which still exists); two sunken rock gardens and a gazebo still grace the property. A goldfish pond, bird sanctuary, fruit and berry orchards were enjoyed by the family in the early years.

Meyer lived in the mansion until his death in 1950. His wife, Cecilia, remained in the mansion for several years after her husband's death. The estate was sold by the survivors in 1975 to the East Dyer Development Company after the death of Mrs. Meyer. The acreage surrounding the estate became the Castlewood subdivision.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Buckner, Scott, Sun Journal, May 23, 1981. Vol. 49, No. 139, P. 1, IN edition.
 Hoelscher, Jvanne, Hammond Times, May 25, 1981, No. 288, P. 1, Hammond, Indiana.
 Hoelscher, Jvanne, Hammond Times, May 24, 1981, No. 287, P. B-2, Hammond, Indiana.
 Meyer, Elinore, Post Tribune, May 26, 1981, Issue 234, P. 1, Lake County News

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 9.7 acres

Quadrangle name St. John

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	6
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4	5	8	4	2	0
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4	5	9	3	2	2	0
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B

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4	5	8	4	2	0
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4	5	9	3	0	2	0
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C

1	6
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4	5	8	6	8	0
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4	5	9	3	2	0	0
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D

1	6
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4	5	8	6	8	0
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4	5	9	3	0	0	0
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E

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Verbal boundary description and justification Starting at the southwest corner of the intersection of U.S. Highway 30 and Castlewood Drive; thence south 498.38' along the west side of Castlewood Drive; thence west 809.45'; thence north 547.15'; thence east 118.78' along the south side of U.S. Highway 30; thence south 20'; thence east 30'; thence north 20'; thence east 594.76' along the south side of U.S. Highway 30 to the point of beginning.

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 S. John Stamos

organization Stamos Development Company date June 3, 1981

street & number 1532 Janice Lane telephone 219/931-0230

city or town Munster state Indiana 46321

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 

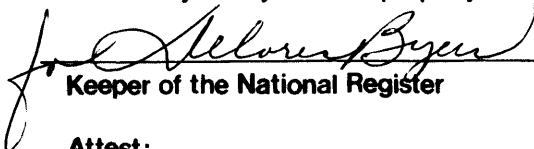
title Indiana State Historic Preservation Officer date 1-24-84

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date 3/1/84


Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

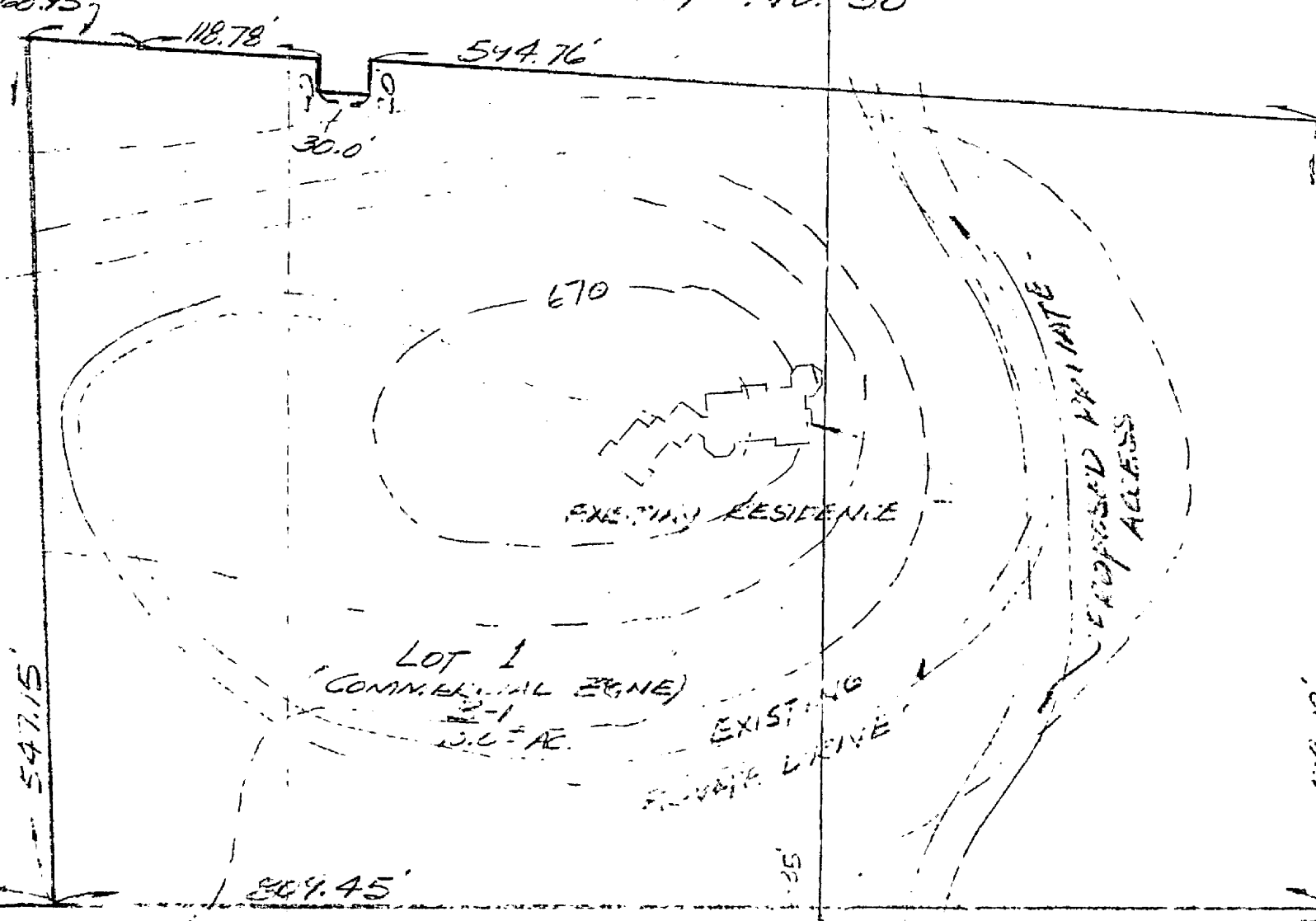
Chief of Registration _____

CASTLEVIEW (SITE PLAN)

DYER, LAKE COUNTY, INDIANA

ACC.
68.95'

U.S. HWY NO. 30



1.25[±] MI. N

E. U.S. HWY NO. 41

CASTLEWOOD DRIVE (25' R/W)