

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Property

\_\_\_\_\_  
County and State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

### SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 100004724

Date Listed: 12/03/2019

Property Name: South Side Turnverein Hall

County: Marion

State: IN

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This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of the Keeper

12.3.2019  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Action

#### Section 9: Previous Documentation on File

The box for "preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested" is hereby checked.

Tax project #37,418

\_\_\_\_\_  
The Indiana State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

#### DISTRIBUTION:

**National Register property file**  
**Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment)**

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

4724

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any 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.



### 1. Name of Property

Historic name: South Side Turnverein Hall

Other names/site number: Südseite Turnverein, South Side Turner Hall,

South Side Turner Gymnasium, Madison Avenue Athletic Club

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

### 2. Location

Street & number: 306 Prospect Street

City or town: Indianapolis State: IN County: Marion

Not For Publication:  Vicinity:

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,

I hereby certify that this X 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 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets     does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

    national     statewide   X   local

Applicable National Register Criteria:

  X   A     B   X   C     D

		ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF PRESERVATION SERVICES		10.17.19	
Signature of certifying official/Title:			Date		
<u>Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology</u>					
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government					
In my opinion, the property <u>   </u> meets <u>   </u> does not meet the National Register criteria.					
Signature of commenting official:			Date		
Title :			State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government		

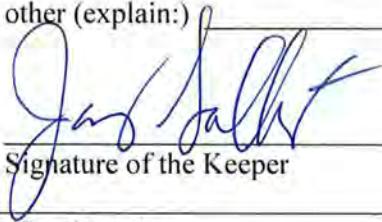
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**4. National Park Service Certification**

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

  
Signature of the Keeper

12. 3. 2019  
Date of Action

**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(s)
- District
- Site
- Structure
- Object

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**Number of Resources within Property**

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	buildings
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	sites
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	structures
<u>          </u>	<u>          </u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>          </u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

SOCIAL/Clubhouse

SOCIAL/Meeting Hall

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Sports Facility

RECREATION AND CULTURE: Auditorium

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

VACANT/NOT IN USE

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Renaissance Revival

LATE 19th AND EARLY 20th CENTURY REVIVALS: German Renaissance Revival

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**Materials:** (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE: Limestone  
walls: BRICK  
STUCCO  
roof: ASPHALT (shingles)  
other: WOOD  
STONE: Limestone

### **Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

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### **Summary Paragraph**

The South Side Turnverein Hall sits within a one-block by four-block remnant of the south side neighborhood that developed during the 1880s and 1890s and suffered extensive demolition to make way for post-World War II expressway projects that border the site on two sides. The site consists of a quarter block at the northeast corner of Prospect Street and Alabama Street (vacated), with the building sited above terraced lawns on the south and west, with a parking lot to the north on the site of the original pleasure garden and an alley (vacated) to the east. Designed by the prominent Indianapolis firm of Vonnegut & Bohn, the German Renaissance Revival style building rises two stories above a raised basement, is clad in red brick with limestone trim, and is capped by a hipped roof with gabled projecting pavilions. The building maintains a high degree of integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association.

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### **Narrative Description**

The South Side Turnverein Hall is of generally rectangular form, of two stories on a raised basement, with a hipped roof. [Photos 1, 2, 5] Gabled pavilions project from the outer ends of the south façade and north elevation, giving the building a subtle I-shaped plan. The center bar of the “T” contains the double-height main hall, with the end bars forming the east and west wings. The exterior walls are of red brick laid in red mortar with limestone trim. The building retains almost all its original wood sash windows and its original wood entry doors, all of which underwent restoration during 2018. [Photo 6] The original wood entry doors feature horizontal panels below glazed lites. Basement egress doors are topped by transoms to match the height of adjacent

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window openings. The historic basement doors were replaced by modern steel residential entry doors c.1979-1980 and these were replaced with new steel doors based on the design of the lost originals in 2018. The basement level generally features pairs of one-over-one double-hung windows with limestone lintels integrated into the building's water table. The gabled pavilions on the south façade and north elevation feature a two-story semicircular arched opening accented by limestone voussoirs. The southwest pavilion includes the main entrance within the lower part of this opening. This entrance consists of a flight of limestone steps leading to two pairs of partially-glazed horizontal-panel wood doors topped by two tiers of single-lite transoms and sheltered by a bracketed hipped-roof canopy. The face of the top step bears the inscription "Sudseite Turn Halle erbaut 1900 / Schluß Stein," translating to "Southside Turn Hall built 1900 / Closing Stone."<sup>1</sup> Other pavilions include a typical basement window and a bank of three one-over-one double-hung windows at the first-floor level. The second floor of each pavilion features half-timbered panels containing pairs of 15-over-15 divided-lite wood sash. The half-timbering and stucco had been covered by plywood panels before 1972; these were removed in 2018 and the half-timbering and plaster were repaired and repainted. [Photo 6] The central section of the building contains the two-story main hall, with characteristic windows along the north and south elevations. [Photos 2, 5] These windows consist of a single one-over-one double-hung sash at the first-floor level topped by a tripartite composition of two one-over-one double-hung windows flanking a single-lite fixed central sash aligned with the first-floor window below, each window having a single-lite transom set within a larger brick masonry arch accented by limestone voussoirs. These windows follow a composition developed by Vonnegut & Bohn for the west wall of the auditorium of Das Deutsche Haus's 1897-1898 wing. A pair of doors was cut into the center bay of the north elevation sometime between 1900 and 1910, connecting to a wooden platform overlooking the pleasure garden. The original deck was demolished and replaced by a concrete block stoop before 1978 and the historic doors were replaced by paneled wood doors c.1979-1980. In 2018, the stoop and modern doors were removed, and new doors based on the design of the lost historic doors were installed.

The west elevation served as a secondary façade for the building, overlooking the adjacent Noble Place park (created 1910) and visible from Madison Avenue, an early highway and major city thoroughfare located one block west. [Photos 1, 3, 4, 5] This elevation is divided into three bays. The outer bays each contain a typical basement window unit, a bank of three narrow windows at the first floor consisting of a one-over-one double-hung sash flanked by two single-lite casements (with sills roughly at the level of the double-hung window's meeting rail) under a contiguous limestone lintel, and circular clerestory windows with raised brick surrounds and limestone voussoirs at the second floor level. The center bay contains a hipped-roof polygonal bay containing the intermediate landing of the main staircase. This bay features lower walls of brick and limestone, with battered brick corner buttresses, and features half-timbering at its upper level. The window at the original intermediate landing between the basement and first floor appears to have been removed c.1979-1980; it was replaced in 2018 by a new wood window following the documented design of the original. The window at the intermediate

<sup>1</sup> "Schluß Stein" is often translated as "Keystone."

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landing between the first and second floors consists of a pair of 42-over-one double-hung windows. The upper part of the center bay is a masonry gable that originally bore a cementitious stucco sculpture group by Austrian-American sculptor Rudolf Schwarz. The sculpture group suffered serious deterioration between the 1970s and 2017, with extensive spalling of stucco caused by corrosion of the internal iron structure. Assessment by a team of professional conservators and engineers determined that the level of deterioration of the stucco and the corrosion of the black iron armature precluded repair and continued display in an exterior location. The sculpture group was removed in sections and was reproduced in fiberglass, using the surviving sections and historic photographs to reconstruct missing elements. The reconstruction was installed in 2019 and intact components of the original sculpture were conserved and are now displayed inside the building. [Photos 4, 19, 20]

The east elevation is treated as the rear of the building. Its segmental-arched double-hung windows are arranged to light three levels on the north and south and the basement and stage level at the center. The center section contains a through-eaves wall dormer. A large, square brick chimney rises from the northeast corner.

Brick pilasters along the south facade rise through the roof and were originally topped by sheet metal domes, removed sometime before 1977. The building's gables originally featured sheet metal coping and ornaments, all removed sometime between 1941 and 1977. New coping based on the design of the original was installed in 2018. The roof was originally covered with slate, replaced by asphalt shingles in 1979. The present asphalt shingle roof dates from c.2009-2010. The original sheet-metal-clad octagonal cupola remains intact on the ridge of the roof. The eaves feature exposed rafter tails.

The building's interior consists of a full basement, above which is the central double-height main hall flanked by two levels in the east and west wings. The main hall retains its original plaster walls, bead-board ceiling, wood wainscoting, paneled wall trim, viewing gallery, and proscenium. The main hall and the foyer were the building's primary public spaces and contain the most elaborate woodwork. Sections of original gymnastics equipment, including telescoping ceiling-mounted poles and wall-mounted ladders, remain in place. A modern hardwood basketball floor dating from 1979-1980 covers the original diagonal hardwood flooring.

The west wing contains (from south to north) the entry vestibule, ticket booth, foyer, and original refreshment room at the first-floor level. The vestibule features a wide set of steps leading up to the first floor from grade. The west quarter of the vestibule stair was cut out during the 1980s to create a second means of egress from the basement bar, accomplished through a new enclosed stair leading up to the westernmost entry door. Rehabilitation in 2018 removed the modern basement stair and restored the vestibule stair to its historic configuration. The vestibule retains original casing, doors, borrowed-light windows, wood flooring, and wood steps. [Photo 8] The foyer features a grand staircase leading up to the second floor. [Photos 10-11] The balustrade of the stair was disassembled in the 1980s, but the balusters, newel posts, and handrails were stored in the building. The balustrade was reassembled in 2018. The original stair from the first floor to

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the basement was dismantled c.1980 and the opening floored over. The refreshment room north of the foyer retains original bead-board wainscoting, door and window trim, and paneled doors. This room has been partitioned into three smaller spaces, with the historic finishes remaining intact at the perimeter of the room. The vestibule, foyer, and refreshment room have oak flooring. The second floor of the west wing consists of an upper foyer open to the grand staircase and to the viewing gallery of the main hall. [Photos 11, 12, 14, 17] To the north and south of the upper foyer are enclosed cloak rooms. These spaces all retain their historic doors, windows, and trim. [Photo 19] The softwood flooring at the second floor of this wing is believed to have originally been covered with sheet linoleum or carpet. New carpet was installed in 2018.

The east wing originally contained a stage open to the main hall, with two levels of dressing rooms to the north and south of the stage. In 1979-1980, the stage floor and the wall between the stage and the south dressing rooms were removed. A new steel structure was inserted to carry the roof structure over this former bearing wall and a racquetball court enclosure was built within the stage area and part of the south dressing rooms. This structure was built behind the historic proscenium opening and covered this opening as well as windows along the east wall. In 2018, the racquetball court and associated steel structure were removed, new steel was placed in the position of the original bearing wall, the proscenium was reopened, and a new mezzanine level was built within the stage. [Photos 13, 15] Original woodwork remains intact along the east wall of the stage and the south dressing rooms. The north dressing rooms remain largely intact, with their original staircase featuring turned wood balusters. [Photo 18] The first-floor dressing room retains its historic woodwork and painted wood flooring.

The basement level below the west wing and main hall is divided into three sections by two rows of iron columns. The north section originally contained a *kneipe* or *rathskeller* bar to the west, with a men's locker room to the east. The center section contained a wide hall running from the base of the grand staircase to the west wall of the east wing. This hall contained a bowling alley of two lanes in the northern two-thirds of its floor space and was illuminated by borrowed-light windows in the partitions along the column lines to the north and south. It terminated into a north-south corridor under the east end of the main hall, with borrowed light windows in the partition above the end of the bowling lanes. The south section contained a ladies' parlor at the west end, a dining room in the center, and a serving room at the east. The east wing originally contained (from north to south) a boiler room, a ladies' dressing room, a kitchen, and a living room, along with two staircases leading to the dressing rooms flanking the stage.<sup>2</sup> The bar and the bowling alley section of the center hall featured pressed-metal ceilings while other spaces had flat plaster ceilings. The beams supporting the joists of the first floor were encased in wood molding, dividing the ceilings into bays. The basement was remodeled in the late-1940s, when the bowling alley was removed and the partitions separating it from the dining room and bar were demolished, creating a large multipurpose room. At that time, suspended acoustical ceilings and wall paneling were added, causing damage to original plaster and pressed-metal ceilings. The basement was remodeled again between 1979 and the early 1980s, removing all material

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<sup>2</sup> The purpose of this space is unclear. It was labeled "Living Room" on the original construction documents but appears to have been an unfinished room with exposed masonry foundation walls.



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associated with the 1940s remodeling and concealing much of the remaining historic fabric. This space was occupied as a bar and restaurant known as the 5<sup>th</sup> Quarter Lounge from 1980 until 2017.<sup>3</sup> Rehabilitation of the basement in 2018 removed the c.1980 partitions and finishes, uncovering exterior windows, surviving historic partitions, ceilings, and borrowed-light windows. Surviving historic partitions along the north and east sides of the original bowling alley were uncovered and the surviving borrowed-light windows were restored. [Photo 7] New mechanical systems serving the basement and first floor levels are concealed within ceiling clouds that are held back to expose the full height of the windows and the historic beam casings.

Although the building suffered the loss of some fabric and unsympathetic alterations between 1970 and 2017, rehabilitation in 2018 removed almost all intrusions, uncovering and repairing long-concealed historic fabric. The building retains a high degree of integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, particularly at the exterior and within its primary interior spaces. Most of the loss of fabric at the interior was due to deterioration of flat plaster wall and ceiling surfaces, alterations within the former stage area behind the proscenium, and the addition of modern finishes over the top of historic finishes at the basement level, leaving the building's primary spaces and character-defining features largely intact. The loss of exterior decorative sheet metal ornaments on the gables and on top of the brick piers of the facade has reduced the richness of the exterior but does not compromise the overall integrity of the building's design. The building's setting maintains a moderate degree of integrity, with much of the context beyond the property's boundaries having been radically altered during the construction of automobile expressways between 1954 and 1976. Overall, the property maintains a moderate to high degree of integrity to the period of significance.

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<sup>3</sup> The bar featured country music performances during the 1980s. From 2014 to 2017, it was a well-known venue for heavy metal concerts. David Lindquist, "Taps Live will keep metal raging after Fifth Quarter," *Indianapolis Star*, 21 April 2017, <https://www.indystar.com/story/entertainment/music/2017/04/21/indianapolis-metal-taps-live-mona-demaggio-shannon-wood-bombshell-lyfestile/100697442/>

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## 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.)

- 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 old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

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**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

ETHNIC HERITAGE: European

ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION

ARCHITECTURE

**Period of Significance**

1900 – c.1940

**Significant Dates**

1900, 1901

**Significant Person (last name, first name)**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder (last name, first name)**

Vonnegut & Bohn

Vonnegut, Bernard, Sr., (1855-1908)

Bohn, Arthur (1861-1948)

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The site was acquired in February 1900, the South Side Turnverein Hall was built between June and November 1900, and the building was dedicated in January 1901. The building appears to have experienced very few alterations between 1901 and the late-1940s, when the basement underwent an interior remodeling. All fabric associated with the late-1940s remodeling appears to have been removed during a remodeling between 1979 and the early-1980s. The South Side Turnverein appears to have been in decline as an organization following World War II, ultimately leading to the building's abandonment in the mid-1970s. For these reasons, it is recommended that the Period of Significance end at c.1940.

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**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

None

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The South Side Turnverein Hall is eligible for individual listing in the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion A and Criterion C. Under Criterion A, the building is significant in the areas of **Ethnic Heritage: European** for its association with the German-speaking immigrant community in Indianapolis, and in the area of **Entertainment/Recreation** as a center for athletic training, sporting events, performances, and recreational amusements as well as for events associated with organized labor and politics. Under Criterion C, the building is significant in the area of **Architecture**, being a major work by one by Vonnegut & Bohn, one of the city's most prominent architectural firms of the period and a part of the larger German-American community. The Indiana Division of Historic Preservation & Archeology provided a preliminary determination that the building is eligible for individual listing in the National Register on June 14, 2017.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

**Ethnic Heritage: European**

Under Criterion A, the South Side Turnverein Hall is significant at the local level in the area of **Ethnic Heritage: European** for its association with the German-speaking immigrant community in Indianapolis. The *Turnverein* (gymnastics association) movement was founded in Prussia in 1811 and spread rapidly throughout the various German-speaking states, disseminating liberal politics and pan-German nationalism. Many Turners, seeking to unify the 39 independent states of the German Confederation into a single German nation, participated in the Revolutions of 1848-1849. Following the failure of the revolutions, more than a million German-speaking immigrants—many of them political refugees—came to the United States, bringing their language and cultural traditions, including the Turnverein.

Local Turner organizations helped to maintain German-Americans' language, culture, and identity in their new homeland. The German-American Turners were active physical education, social, political, and cultural organizations. Indianapolis' first turnverein, the *Socialier Turnverein*, was established in 1850. In 1893, about 200 German-Americans living on the south side of Indianapolis broke away from the *Socialier Turnverein* to establish the South Side Turnverein (*Südseite Turnverein*). The campaign for the construction of a clubhouse began in 1899. Land was purchased in February 1900 and the building, designed by Vonnegut & Bohn,

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was built between June and November of that year. The design, dedication, and early use of the building underline its association with the ethnic heritage of Indianapolis' German-American community.

The dedication festivities of the South Side Turnverein Hall in January 1901 highlight its place within the German-American community of Indianapolis. The interior was "beautifully decorated throughout with American flags and German emblems" and about 400 people representing all the German clubs of Indianapolis gathered for a *kommers* or commercium, an academic feast typically featuring, beer, singing, theatrical performances, and speeches. The speeches—all in German—were delivered by representatives of the South Side Turnverein, North American Turnerbund, and Indianapolis Public Schools. These were interspersed with choral selections by a variety of German singing societies and demonstrations of Turner calisthenics.<sup>4</sup>

The South Side Turnverein Hall formed part of a group of four architecturally significant club buildings built by Indianapolis' German-American community between 1893 and 1914. The first two, Das Deutsche Haus/The Athenaeum and the South Side Turnverein Hall were designed by Vonnegut & Bohn, first-generation German-Americans. The latter two, the Maennerchor Club House (1906, demolished 1974) at 502 N. Illinois Street and the Independent Turnverein (1913-1914, NR 1983) at 902 N. Meridian Street, were designed by Swiss-born Indianapolis architect Adolph Scherrer (1847-1925).<sup>5</sup> All of these facilities included social rooms, large assembly spaces, and a German-themed bar. Das Deutsche Haus, the South Side Turnverein, and the Independent Turnverein each featured a *rathskeller* (basement beer hall and restaurant), while the Maennerchor included a *kneipe* (pub) and a separate dining room. The turnhalle (gymnastics gymnasium) spaces of the three Turnverein facilities were simple and functional, while the stair halls, bars, dining rooms, and social halls often featured more elaborate interior treatments and furnishings.

The South Side Turnverein Hall is connected to Indianapolis' defining landmark, the Indiana State Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument (1888-1902), through common links to Indianapolis' German-speaking immigrant community. The monument, resulting from an international design

<sup>4</sup> "South Side Germans," *Indianapolis Journal*, 21 January 1901, 3; "Closed with a 'Kommers'," *Indianapolis Journal*, 23 January 1901, 3.

<sup>5</sup> Scherrer studied in Vienna and Budapest before coming to the United States c.1870. He worked at New York and Chicago before coming to Indianapolis c.1873, working as a draftsman for prominent Indianapolis architect Edwin May (1823-1880). Born in Boston, May came to Indianapolis in 1842, working as a carpenter on projects designed by architect John Elder (1785-1851). May began to practice as an architect about the same time that Elder left Indianapolis for California in 1850. He went on to design numerous county courthouses and other landmark buildings before winning the competition for the design of the new Indiana State House in 1878. Upon his death early in the project, Scherrer took over the firm, completing the State House in 1888. Scherrer's colleagues in May's office included Louis H. Gibson (1854-1907), author of *Convenient Houses* (1889) and *Beautiful Houses* (1895). Scherrer's sons, Anton and Herman, later joined the firm, later known as Adolph Scherrer & Sons. Greg Hertenstein and Dorothy A. Nicholson, "Adolph Scherrer Papers, 1853-1928," Indiana Historical Society Collection #M0245 BV1722, 1723, May 2011, <http://www.indianahistory.org/our-collections/collection-guides/adolph-scherrer-papers.pdf>

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competition, was designed by German architect Bruno Schmitz and included allegorical sculpture groups by Austria-Hungary-born sculptor Rudolf Schwarz (1865-1912).<sup>6</sup> Schwarz, who had previously worked with Schmitz on a series of monuments to Kaiser Wilhelm I during the late 1880s and early 1890s, came to Indianapolis in 1897 to work on the monument project and remained in the city after its completion. He established a studio on the south side of Indianapolis and would create an allegorical stucco sculpture group for the west gable of the South Side Turnverein Hall in 1900, receiving \$275 compensation for his work.<sup>7</sup> From 1905 until his death in 1912, Schwarz was an instructor at the John Herron Art Institute, now the Herron School of Art and Design of Indiana University.

The South Side Turnverein Hall reflects the importance of physical fitness and the maintenance of German culture among German-Americans in Indianapolis at the turn of the twentieth century. By 1905, there were 300 separate Turner societies in the United States with a total membership estimated at 38,000. This membership was said to consist of about 7,000 “active members” (young men who took regular gymnastics classes every week), about 7,000 “old gentlemen” (members of gymnastics squads), 4,000 young women enrolled in gymnastics classes, and more than 20,000 boys and girls in Turner gymnasia and schools.<sup>8</sup> The South Side Turnverein Hall served as one component of a national network of Turner societies, connecting members with German-Americans across the country.

The Turner movement helped to establish the concept of physical education in the United States. In 1905, William A. Stecher, director of physical training in Indianapolis Public Schools, spoke of the value of the city’s Turner organizations:

The turnvereins train the masses, although the individual gets full opportunity to show his physical qualities. The weakest member of a turnverein is so trained that he may rank with the strongest member. This brings about uniformity... The turnvereins work for all-round development. They have specialists, of course, but do not place the greatest weight on them.<sup>9</sup>

That same year, the *Indianapolis Morning Star* noted: “In the Middle West, the Turner gymnasts are in great demand as teachers in the public school systems of physical education, and a normal school under the management of the Turner Bund is conducted in Milwaukee to help supply this demand for instructors.”<sup>10</sup> This school, the Normal College of the American Gymnastic Union (NCAGU), would move to Indianapolis in 1907, occupying part of Das Deutsche Haus, and is

<sup>6</sup> Benjamin L. Ross, “The Indiana State Soldiers’ and Sailors’ Monument: German Nationalism and Hoosier Commemoration of the Civil War,” (27th Annual Meeting, Southeast Chapter of the Society of Architectural Historians, Jackson, Mississippi, 2009).

<sup>7</sup> Schwarz’s studio was in a shed behind a house at 821/823 Daly Street from 1901 to 1905. Dan Carpenter, “Southside Turners to Get Deserved ‘Big Blowout’ Party,” *Indianapolis Star*, 24 July 1977, 47.

<sup>8</sup> “The Society of the Turnverein,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 8 May 1905, 6.

<sup>9</sup> “Enthused Over Coming Festival,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 30 April 1905, A14.

<sup>10</sup> “The Society of the Turnverein,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 8 May 1905, 6.

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now the Indiana University School of Physical Education.<sup>11</sup> William L. Selm has noted that “The foundation for the success in making physical education mandatory in public schools derived from the Turner movement, an important expression of German-American culture in the nineteenth century.”<sup>12</sup> While Das Deutsche Haus achieved national significance as home of the NACGU from 1907, the South Side Turnverein Hall reflects the local significance of neighborhood Turner organizations. The organization provided gymnastics classes for about 300 students at the time of the building’s dedication in 1901, declining to about 250 by the late-1930s and thence precipitously during the 1940s.

Indianapolis’ turnvereins included Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and freethinker members brought together by their common heritage, language, culture, and identity as German-Americans. Between 1900 and 1913, newspaper articles document use of the South Side Turnverein Hall for weddings, receptions, and plays associated with Congregation Kenesses Israel,<sup>13</sup> Hungarian Orthodox Congregation Ohev Zedek,<sup>14</sup> St. Paul’s German Lutheran Church,<sup>15</sup> Indianapolis Hebrew Congregation,<sup>16</sup> and St. John German Evangelical Lutheran Church.<sup>17</sup> A club allowing members of varying religious beliefs and nonbelief to gather together is significant within the larger context of national, state, and local segregation of religious groups between the 1840s and the 1960s. During this period, the Anglo-Protestant majority often regarded Freethought, Roman Catholicism, and Judaism as “dangerous” and “foreign” influences, participating in recurring campaigns to limit the influx of immigrants from minority religions and to limit the rights of those already in the country. These outbreaks of xenophobic, nativist, anti-Semitic, and anti-Catholic prejudice were manifested most emphatically by the Know Nothing movement of the 1850s, the Second Ku Klux Klan of the late-1910s and 1920s, and the Immigration Acts of 1921 and 1924. Within this context, it is notable that the South Side Turnverein Hall served as a place where Freethinkers, Jews, Catholics, and Protestants could come together through their shared German-American identity.

Many Catholic and Protestant German-Americans maintained the cultural tradition of Christmas, including decorated Christmas trees, brought from their homelands. Christmas had been a marginal holiday in the United States at best prior to the late-1840s.<sup>18</sup> A variety of cultural

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<sup>11</sup> Henry Metzner, *A Brief History of the North American Gymnastic Union*, trans. Theodore Stempfel, Jr. (Indianapolis: North American Gymnastic Union, 1911) 59; “Shaping the Circle: Physical Education,” Ruth Lilly Special Collections & Archives, IUPUI University Library, last updated 29 April 2004, [http://www.ulib.iupui.edu/static/exhibits/circle/exhibit4\\_4.html](http://www.ulib.iupui.edu/static/exhibits/circle/exhibit4_4.html); William L. Selm, Athenaeum (Das Deutsche Haus), National Historic Landmark nomination, 2015, 21.

<sup>12</sup> William L. Selm, Athenaeum (Das Deutsche Haus), National Historic Landmark nomination, 2015, 21.

<sup>13</sup> “Society Day by Day,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 24 November 1903, 6.

<sup>14</sup> “New Year’s Gift: A Free License,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 2 January 1904, 3.

<sup>15</sup> “Society,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 24 November 1904, 5.

<sup>16</sup> “Social Events,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 20 March 1904, 6; “Wedded in Turner Hall,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 21 March 1904, 12.

<sup>17</sup> “News of Churches,” *Indianapolis Star*, 26 March 1913, 13.

<sup>18</sup> American Protestants often regarded Christmas with suspicion or hostility, associating it with Roman Catholicism or “foreign” cultural traditions. Christmas celebrations had been outlawed by Puritans in England and the

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forces, including the influx of German immigrants after 1848, led to the limited spread of Christmas in the wider American culture during the 1850s.<sup>19</sup> The celebration of Christmas and the decorated Christmas tree surged in popularity after the Civil War, corresponding to the growing consumer economy in the United States. Christmas Day was designated a federal holiday in 1870, setting a precedent for businesses and schools to close in observance of the day. By the 1880s, many native-born Protestants were celebrating the holiday by decorating Christmas trees. The South Side Turnverein Hall was built at a point when the celebration of Christmas had become widespread in American culture, but the club celebrated the holiday in a manner that related to its members' German heritage. The club held an annual Christmas Celebration in late December during its early years. The 1901 event included an appearance by "Kris Kringle, clad in robes and furs, who readily found the large Christmas tree that stood at one side of the stage and handed out presents."<sup>20</sup> Songs were sung in German, an orchestra played, the gymnastics classes gave exhibitions of their skills, and club president Henry Victor gave an address asking the children "to all grow up to be good and active Turners."<sup>21</sup> The 1902 event included "a huge Christmas tree, decorated with tinsel, electric lights and numerous toys" in one corner of the hall and an appearance by Santa Claus in a sleigh on the stage.<sup>22</sup> The evening included a two-act "Christmas sketch," followed by a "callisthenic exhibition" by members of the boys' and girls' junior classes, wand and dumbbell drills by the active classes, and the awards of merit prizes to the gymnastics students.<sup>23</sup>

The South Side Turnverein Hall also served as a venue for civic and political activism within Indianapolis' German-American community. In 1905, Charles A. Bookwalter held an event in his successful mayoral campaign at the building, including a speech in German by Jacob L. Bieier, president of the Roosevelt Club. "The audience was composed almost entirely of German-Americans, who understood the mother tongue."<sup>24</sup> In 1906, a celebration of George Washington's Birthday was hosted in the building by the German-American Veteran Association of Indianapolis and included a flag drill by the women's class of the South Side Turnverein, "using the national emblems of the United States and Germany in a combination that gave a very pretty effect," and musical selections by the Indianapolis Liederkrantz and its orchestra.<sup>25</sup> A rally of the Progressive Party during the 1912 presidential campaign included a speech in German by

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Massachusetts Bay Colony for part of the seventeenth century and the holiday was rarely celebrated by the Protestant majority in the United States prior to 1850.

<sup>19</sup> Washington Irving drew Americans' attention to the holiday's traditions in England in *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* (1819-1820). Queen Victoria's marriage to Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha in 1840 led the couple to adopt the German tradition of the Christmas tree and Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol* (1843) helped to encourage the Victorian revival of the holiday. German-speaking immigrants brought this tradition to the United States in the late-1840s and 1850s. In 1850, *Godey's Lady's Book* published a revised version of an 1848 engraving of the British royal family with their Christmas tree at Windsor Castle, setting a precedent for American Protestants to follow.

<sup>20</sup> "Christmas Celebration," *Indianapolis Journal*, 30 December 1901, 2.

<sup>21</sup> "Christmas Celebration," *Indianapolis Journal*, 30 December 1901, 2.

<sup>22</sup> "Late Stunts by Santa," *Indianapolis Journal*, 29 December 1902, 5.

<sup>23</sup> "Late Stunts by Santa," *Indianapolis Journal*, 29 December 1902, 5.

<sup>24</sup> "Strange Man Asks for Enlightenment," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 5 November 1905, A31.

<sup>25</sup> "Patriotic Address Given," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 26 February 1906, 12.



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Dr. John Schubert, who noted that Progressive Party presidential candidate Theodore Roosevelt would demand no further restrictions on immigration and would not tolerate inhumane treatment of immigrants arriving at Ellis Island.<sup>26</sup>

After the United States entered World War I in 1917, anti-German sentiment put pressure on German-American organizations, with many non-Germans viewing these groups as hostile and potentially anti-American for their use of the German language and maintenance of German cultural traditions.<sup>27</sup> Wartime fuel restrictions caused clubs like the South Side Turnverein to limit programming or close their clubhouses due to lack of fuel, further reducing the organizations' activities.<sup>28</sup> In February 1918, amid this pressure, Das Deutche Haus renamed itself the Athenaeum. That same month, "persons of German blood" held a mass meeting in the South Side Turnverein Hall, passing unanimous resolutions endorsing United States principles in war against Kaiser Wilhelm II. Speakers, including former Indianapolis mayor Charles A. Bookwalter, addressed topics of German-American identity and patriotism and stressed that the present war was a continued fight for freedom and equality against the Prussian intolerance that had brought them to the United States.<sup>29</sup> The South Side Turnverein's English name—South Side Turners—became more common during the 1910s and the building was widely known at the South Side Turner Hall or South Side Turners' Gymnasium by the mid twentieth century.

The South Side Turnverein maintained a membership of about 400 people, including about 250 active gymnasts, through the late-1930s. World War II further alienated many descendants of German immigrants from their identity as German-Americans. Postwar transportation projects demolished much of the surrounding neighborhood, including the homes of many club members, between 1954 and 1972. Others were drawn out of the city in the wave of suburban flight that followed the desegregation of Indianapolis Public Schools in the early-1950s. The organization dwindled to 62 members (including about 25 gymnasts) by 1977, when it decided to close the South Side Turnverein Hall.<sup>30</sup> The club held a "Boom-Out" or "Blow-Out" final event on October 1, 1977, with former members and the public invited to view "nostalgic photographs of Turner activities at the turn of the century" and to enjoy German food, German music, dancing, floor shows, and "a cocktail hour with reduced drink prices."<sup>31</sup> The club sold the building to a

<sup>26</sup> "Schubert Discusses Immigrant Question," *Indianapolis Star*, 26 October 1912, 12.

<sup>27</sup> In January 1918, a group called the Marion County Council of Defense investigated the Independent Turnverein on Meridian Street, causing its leaders to assert that it "long has been a thoroughly Americanized institution, loyal and patriotic, having no pro-German sympathies." Witnesses testified to the council that the organization consisted of "loyal Americans" and not "German-Americans." The organization announced plans to change its name "so that the club should no longer appear as an organization in any sense anti-American or encouraging German 'kultur.'" "Give Clean Bill to Turnverein," *Indianapolis Star*, 9 January 1918, 1.

<sup>28</sup> "Ban Gives Clubs Complications," *Indianapolis Star*, 16 January 1918, 9.

<sup>29</sup> "Patriotic Meeting Tonight," *Indianapolis Star*, 18 February 1918, 14; "Pledge Faith to Adopted Land," *Indianapolis Star*, 19 February 1918, 1; "Mr. Bookwalter's Address at South Side Turner Hall," *Indianapolis Star*, 28 February 1918, 20.

<sup>30</sup> "Turners to Close Southside Home," *Indianapolis News*, 15 July 1977, 13; "South Side Turners To Close Doors Oct. 1," *Indianapolis Star*, 16 July 1977, 21; "Southside Turners To Close Doors," *Indianapolis News*, 29 September 1977, 19.

<sup>31</sup> "Turners to Celebrate Closing," *Indianapolis Star*, 29 September 1977, 15.

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group of investors in December 1978, moving remaining operations to German Park in the far south suburbs of Indianapolis, eight miles south of the South Side Turnverein Hall.<sup>32</sup>

The South Side Turnverein Hall is associated with the evolving ethnic identity of Indianapolis' German-American community during the period of significance. Its association with Turner gymnastics, physical education, German-American patriotism, and pan-German solidarity demonstrate its significance in the area of Ethnic Heritage: European. The building is a key landmark of Indianapolis' German-American community and an integral part of the heritage of south side German-Americans.

### Entertainment/Recreation

Under Criterion A, the South Side Turnverein Hall is significant at the local level in the area of **Entertainment/Recreation** as a center for athletic training, sporting events, performances, recreational amusements, and public assemblies. The building was designed to house Turner gymnastics and physical training while accommodating a wide range of other uses. During the period of significance, the building hosted events ranging from gymnastics expositions and bowling league tournaments to basketball games and boxing matches, plays and concerts to garden parties and cultural festivals, political rallies and organized labor events to euchre parties and wedding receptions. The building was heavily used and programmed from its opening in 1901 into the 1930s, declining with the club's membership from the 1940s to the 1970s. Events occurred both within the building and within the fenced pleasure garden to the north (site of the present parking lot), with many warm-weather events including both indoor and outdoor components.

The South Side Turnverein held its annual exhibition in the building every April. These events included demonstrations of gymnastics practices, various drills (with wands, Indian clubs, or dumbbells), gymnastic dancing, apparatus work on ladders (vertical, inclined, and horizontal), works on horizontal bars and bucks, class exhibitions (gymnastics *tableaux vivants* revealed by the opening of the stage curtains), folk dances, and intermissions with orchestral performances.<sup>33</sup> The events often drew audiences that "taxed the capacity of the hall."<sup>34</sup>

The 1903 Indianapolis Turnfest, held at Germania Park and the South Side Turner Hall and garden, brought together about 500 athletes from the Indiana District of the North American Turner Bund. This district included the cities of Indianapolis, Terre Haute, Fort Wayne, South Bend, Evansville, and Tell City, Indiana; Chicago and Danville, Illinois; and Louisville, Kentucky. Competing organizations included the Socialer Turnverein and South Side Turnverein of Indianapolis, Terre Haute Turnverein, Fort Wayne Turnverein, South Bend Turnverein, Evansville Central Turnverein, Chicago, Chicago Turngemeinde, Chicago South Side

<sup>32</sup> Federation of German Societies – Indianapolis, "About Us," last updated 2012, [http://germanparkindy.org/home/about\\_us](http://germanparkindy.org/home/about_us)

<sup>33</sup> "South Side Turnverein Gives Annual Exhibition," *Indianapolis Star*, 12 April 1915, 15.

<sup>34</sup> "South Side Turnverein Gives Annual Exhibition," *Indianapolis Star*, 20 April 1914, 4.

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Turngemeinde, and Louisville Turngemeinde.<sup>35</sup> In 1909, the South Side Turnverein Hall and its pleasure garden hosted exhibitions by Turners from Chicago, Louisville, Fort Wayne, and Indianapolis in preparation for that year's Turnfest at Cincinnati. A standing-room-only crowd watched various demonstrations of gymnastics, calisthenics, barbell drills, club-swinging drills, maypole dances, class exhibitions, and "difficult acts on the horizontal bar," followed by "a fancy dance."<sup>36</sup> These events reflect the building's place within the regional and national network of Turner organizations.

In addition to the many gymnastics classes that formed its core function, the South Side Turnverein had baseball, bowling, track and field, and basketball teams.<sup>37</sup> The building served as one venue for the South Side Bowling League (est. 1903) and as the home of the South Side Turnverein's Aerial Club, a young women's bowling team.<sup>38</sup> In 1907, a bowling league formed by employees of nearby Eli Lilly & Company gave a banquet in the building and organized a company athletic association.<sup>39</sup>

Boxing is first documented at the building in an article about a bag-punching contest in 1904.<sup>40</sup> The first known boxing match in the building occurred in 1906.<sup>41</sup> By 1922, the South Side Turnverein had a boxing team that faced the Hoosier Athletic Club in eight bouts.<sup>42</sup> Boxing matches were regularly held in the building through the early-1970s, including many Golden Gloves amateur boxing competitions.

The first known basketball team at the South Side Turnverein is reported in 1904, when it lost a game to the Independent Turnverein.<sup>43</sup> By 1920, the team played against Crawfordsville High School, the team at Christamore House (a settlement house on the west side of Indianapolis), and the team of Morris Street Methodist Episcopal Church.<sup>44</sup> In 1922, the Hoosier Square and Compass Club basketball team, one of four teams in the Fraternal Federated Basketball League, practiced at the South Side Turnverein Hall.<sup>45</sup> Dozens of basketball leagues used the hall during

<sup>35</sup> "Big Turnfest is to Begin Today," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 27 June 1903, 3; "Turnfest is On; Contest Today," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 28 July 1903, 14; "Kiss and Crown for the Winner," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 30 June 1903, 3.

<sup>36</sup> "Turners Present Drills," *Indianapolis Star*, 26 April 1909, 12.

<sup>37</sup> "All the Results of Amateur Games," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 20 July 1903, 7; "Some of the Trained Brawn of South Side Turnverein," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 3 June 1904, 7; "Active Class of the South Side Turnverein," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 10 May 1905, 3.

<sup>38</sup> "S. Side Bowlers Organize League," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 6 October 1903, 7; "Aerial Club Bowls," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 14 January 1904, 3.

<sup>39</sup> "Bowlers Have Big Banquet," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 11 April 1907, 7.

<sup>40</sup> "Will Punch the Bag," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 28 May 1904, 9.

<sup>41</sup> "Three Bouts Next Saturday," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 4 June 1906, 8.

<sup>42</sup> "Amateur Boxers in Big Show Tonight," *Indianapolis Star*, 9 June 1922, 11; "H.A.C. Boxers Win in Amateur Bouts," *Indianapolis Star*, 10 June 1922, 13.

<sup>43</sup> "Independent Boys Win," *Indianapolis Star*, 12 February 1904, 7.

<sup>44</sup> "Turners Home to Meet Crawfordsville Squad," *Indianapolis Star*, 16 February 1920, 12; "Locals State Season Closer," *Indianapolis Star*, 27 March 1920, 19; "Amateurs, Semi-Pros and their Sports," *Indianapolis Star*, 3 December 1921, 13.

<sup>45</sup> "Square and Compass Net Team Looks Strong," *Indianapolis Star*, 14 November 1922, 15.

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the 1940s and 1950s, when it was reported to be the only basketball gym in Indianapolis with a bar and restaurant downstairs.<sup>46</sup> The main hall was reported to have held more than 18,000 refereed basketball games between 1904 and 2014.<sup>47</sup>

In addition to its many athletic uses, the South Side Turnverein Hall hosted numerous social events, plays, concerts, balls, and receptions. Four known events in 1904 give a sense of the range of uses: a masked ball on St. Patrick's Day given by Koerner Lodge No. 1, Independent Order Knights of Pythias; an event with about 500 guests including a concert by the Columbia Quartet with dancing to the music of Montani's orchestra, renditions of James Whitcomb Riley's poems, and songs in English and German; the South Side Turnverein Fall Festival, including performances by the club's singing society, dancing, and speeches; and an entertainment and dance given by the Indianapolis Drum Corps.<sup>48</sup> The club held an annual masked ball in February from at least 1909 to 1911, with the hall interior elaborately decorated.<sup>49</sup> During the 1910s, the Ladies' Auxiliary of the South Side Turnverein hosted regular card parties, including games of euchre, pinochle, or lotto, sometimes with dancing.<sup>50</sup> The 1914 and 1915 South Side May Day celebrations included events at the South Side Turnverein Hall and Garfield Park. The 1914 celebration included a banquet in the building sponsored by south side merchants. The event included fancy drills by the club's gymnastics classes, dances, music by the Indianapolis Military Band, a speech titled "The South Side, a good Place to Live," and petitions for women's suffrage.<sup>51</sup> The 1915 banquet drew more than 200 south side residents and included "fried-chicken-brown-gravy dinner" cooked in the "good old German way" by the ladies of the South Side Turnverein. Associated events included a musical program with 1,200 school children and a May pole drill by 150 girls from the South Side Turnverein.<sup>52</sup> The wide range of events reflect the building's position as a community center for the south side of Indianapolis

The South Side Turnverein hosted numerous events held by local labor unions, including balls, dances, concerts, and celebrations for May Day (International Workers' Day) and Labor Day. Between 1904 and 1911, newspaper notices indicate that labor unions using the building included brewery engineers and firemen, bindery workers, machinists, plumbers, United German Trade Unions of Indianapolis (brewery workers, bakers and confectioners, carpenters, woodworkers, printers), Printing Pressman's Union No. 17, Central Labor Union, and the State

<sup>46</sup> Thomas R. Keating, "Mercer, Elrod Won't Let Old S.S. Turner Die," *Indianapolis Star*, 26 August 1979, 102.

<sup>47</sup> Gregg Doyel, "This gym has some history," *Indianapolis Star*, 14 December 2014, C1, C9.

<sup>48</sup> "Line News of Local Fraternities," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 9 March 1904, 9; *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 16 March 1904, 7; "Columbia Quartet Concert," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 7 February 1904, 4; "Fine Sunday Concert," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 8 February 1904, 8; "Turners' Fall Festival," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 19 September 1904, 3; "City News in Brief," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 28 October 1904, 7.

<sup>49</sup> "Prepare for Mask Ball," *Indianapolis Star*, 7 February 1909, A20; "Surprises Feature Ball," *Indianapolis Star*, 16 February 1911, 12.

<sup>50</sup> "Parties-Meetings," *Indianapolis Star*, 23 April 1914, 16; "Parties—Meetings," *Indianapolis Star*, 19 September 1915, 12; "Society," *Indianapolis Star*, 15 March 1918, 7.

<sup>51</sup> "May Day Festivities Will Begin Tonight," *Indianapolis Star*, 30 April 1914, 6; "Success Crowns May Day Events," *Indianapolis Star*, 2 May 1914, 5.

<sup>52</sup> "1,200 Pupils to Give Concert on May Day," *Indianapolis Star*, 31 March 1915, 16; "May Day Fete Opens with Dinner Tonight," *Indianapolis Star*, 29 April 1915, 3.

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Federation of Labor (Typographical Union, Painters' Union, Molders' Union No. 56).<sup>53</sup> Strike negotiations were held in the building during the 1940s and 1950s.<sup>54</sup> The building's association with organized labor is closely tied to its entertainment and recreation functions.

In its capacity as a south side community center, the building housed a variety of political events. In 1905, Charles A. Bookwalter held an event in his successful mayoral campaign at the building.<sup>55</sup> In 1907, the Thirteenth Ward Democratic Club held series of monthly dances in the hall.<sup>56</sup> A rally of the Progressive Party during the 1912 presidential campaign included a speech in German by Dr. John Schubert highlighting candidate Theodore Roosevelt's tolerance for immigrants.<sup>57</sup> In 1921, candidates in the Indianapolis mayoral race spoke at the South Side Turnverein Hall.<sup>58</sup> The building hosted a 1960 presidential campaign appearance by John F. Kennedy.<sup>59</sup>

Other organizations known to have held events—ranging from social receptions to charity balls to concerts—in the building during the 1900s and 1910s include the Ladies' Auxiliary of Capitol Council No. 276, Young Men's Institute<sup>60</sup>; Rabbi M. Messing Lodge, Order of Brith Abraham<sup>61</sup>; the Schwaebischer Ladies' Society<sup>62</sup>; Company A, Uniform Rank, Improved Order Knights of Pythias<sup>63</sup>; Knights of Fidelity<sup>64</sup>; the Alpha Society<sup>65</sup>; the (South Side) Boys' Club<sup>66</sup>; *Süd Seite Liedertafel* (South Side Choral Society, a German musical organization<sup>67</sup>; the Athenian Club<sup>68</sup>;

<sup>53</sup> "Among the Unions," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 30 May 1904, 3; "City News in Brief," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 9 November 1904, 4; "Wanted—Female Help," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 4 August 1904, 9; "General News of the Unions," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 23 May 1904, 5; "City News in Brief," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 31 October 1904, 7; "German Laborers' Day," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 29 February 1904, 3; "Dance to be Given in Turner Hall," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 28 August 1905, 8; "Among the Unions," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 11 December 1905, 4; "Union Gets Turner Hall," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 28 August 1906, 10; "Army of Laborers Celebrates Today," *Indianapolis Star*, 4 September 1911, 1.

<sup>54</sup> Jep Cadou, Jr., "Truck Strike Parleys Fail," *Indianapolis Star*, 7 May 1947, 12; "Special Meeting," *Indianapolis Star*, 16 August 1953, 7; "Chrysler Strike Cost Employees \$600,000 in Pay," *Indianapolis Star*, 22 September 1957, 49.

<sup>55</sup> "Strange Man Asks for Enlightenment," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 5 November 1905, A31.

<sup>56</sup> "City News in Brief," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 4 April 1907, 15.

<sup>57</sup> "Schubert Discusses Immigrant Question," *Indianapolis Star*, 26 October 1912, 12.

<sup>58</sup> "Party Loyalty Urged by Denny," *Indianapolis Star*, 26 April 1921, 10.

<sup>59</sup> "Downtown Gym with a History Hides in Plain Sight," *Indianapolis Star*, 16 December 2014, <http://www.indystar.com/story/sports/columnists/gregg-doyel/2014/12/12/doyel-downtown-gym-with-a-history-hides-in-plain-sight/20310947/>

<sup>60</sup> "Around the Town," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 8 November 1903, 7.

<sup>61</sup> "Twelfth Anniversary," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 13 February 1904, 10.

<sup>62</sup> "City News in Brief," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 11 February 1905, 14.

<sup>63</sup> "City News in Brief," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 26 January 1906, 10.

<sup>64</sup> "City News in Brief," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 21 February 1906, 7.

<sup>65</sup> "City News in Brief," *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 16 March 1907, 10.

<sup>66</sup> "Boys' Club Gives Christmas Cheer," *Indianapolis Star*, 24 December 1909, 10.

<sup>67</sup> "Women Present Banner," *Indianapolis Star*, 30 July 1910, 3; "New Club in Festival," *Indianapolis Star*, 31 July 1910, B32; "Gift Banner Dedicated," *Indianapolis Star*, 1 August 1910, 4.

<sup>68</sup> "In Indianapolis Today," *Indianapolis Star*, 31 October 1912, 1; "In Indianapolis Today," *Indianapolis Star*, 31 October 1913, 1.

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and the employees of the Globe Outlet.<sup>69</sup> These many uses attest to the building's position as a community center for entertainment and recreation on the south side of Indianapolis.

The South Side Turnverein Hall retains sufficient integrity of design, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association to convey its connection to past entertainment and recreation uses. The building's long history of public use resulted in deep ties to the surrounding south side neighborhood.

## Architecture

Under Criterion C, the South Side Turnverein Hall is significant at the local level in the area of **Architecture**, being a major work by Vonnegut & Bohn, one of the city's most prominent architectural firms of the period. Established in 1888 by Bernard Vonnegut, Sr., and Arthur Bohn, Indiana-born sons of German immigrants, the firm remained active until the early-1940s. Bernard Vonnegut, Sr. (1855-1908), was the son of prominent German-American merchant Clemens Vonnegut (1824-1906). Born in the Province of Westphalia in the Kingdom of Prussia and educated at Hanover, Clemens came to the United States in 1848 and settled in Indianapolis in 1850, establishing the Vonnegut Hardware Company. Clemens was a Freethinker who was active in many civic organizations, including the *Socialer Turnverein*. Bernard, Sr., studied architecture at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and the Polytechnic Institute of Hanover, Germany. Arthur Bohn (1861-1948) was the son of Gustavus Bohn, a native of Karlsruhe—then in the Grand Duchy of Baden—who came to Indianapolis after participating in the Revolutions of 1848-1849. Arthur studied architecture at the *Polytechnische Hochschule* (now the Karlsruhe *Institut für Technologie*). He returned to Indianapolis to practice architecture and founded the *Gewerbeschule* (vocational training school) before taking a study tour through Germany, France, and Italy. Both young architects worked in the office (est. 1853) of German-American Indianapolis architect Diedrich A. Bohlen (1827-1890) before establishing their own firm in 1888. Following Bernard's sudden death in 1908, Arthur maintained the firm and was joined in 1910 by Bernard's son, Kurt Vonnegut, Sr., (1884-1957).<sup>70</sup>

Prior to their commission for the South Side Turnverein Hall, Vonnegut & Bohn had designed two successive homes of the *Socialer Turnverein*. The first was an annex (1887) with gymnasium and basement bowling alley built on the rear of the former German English Independent School at 212-216 E. Maryland Street.<sup>71</sup> The *Socialer Turnverein* outgrew this facility by 1891 and began planning for the construction of a larger facility that could serve the organization as well as the city's entire liberal German-American population. This project, known as *Das Deutsche Haus* (The German House) was realized in two phases (1893-1894 and 1897-1898) at 401 E. Michigan Street. The building covered a quarter of a city block, containing a turnverein wing with gymnasium and locker rooms, a large auditorium, meeting rooms, social parlors, a *rathskeller* (basement beer hall and restaurant, still in operation as the Rathskeller),

<sup>69</sup> "Employes [sic] Arrange Picnic," *Indianapolis Star*, 13 September 1913, 3.

<sup>70</sup> Kurt Vonnegut, Sr., was the father of atmospheric scientist Bernard Vonnegut (1914-1997) and writer Kurt Vonnegut, Jr. (1922-2007).

<sup>71</sup> This is the address of the building after the 1898 renumbering that created the system in use today.

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bowling alleys, and a large outdoor *biergarten* (beer garden, still in operation as the Rathskeller Biergarten). The facility was renamed The Athenaeum in 1918 amid anti-German sentiment during World War I. It was listed in the National Register in 1973 and was designated a National Historic Landmark in 2016.<sup>72</sup>

William L. Selm has made a compelling case for the classification of Das Deutsche Haus' architectural style—and, by extension, that of the South Side Turnverein—as German Renaissance Revival, noting the association of this style with pan-German nationalism in the German Empire and with sentiment for shared cultural heritage among German-American immigrant groups.<sup>73</sup> Selm notes:

The German Renaissance Revival Style... was very popular in Wilhelmine Germany from 1871 to 1918. This was the period of national unification wherein Germany finally became a unified, modern nation-state with a monarchy (Kaisers Wilhelm I and II and Friedrich III); an elected national assembly (*Reichstag*); rapid industrialization; and a search for symbols of national unity... The style was popular with the expanding German middle class building their houses, commercial buildings, and clubhouses...<sup>74</sup>

Architectural historian Ralf Mennekes, in his 2005 *Die Renaissance der Deutschen Renaissance* documented the popularity of the style in Wilhelmine Germany for residential and commercial buildings, schools, train stations, hotels, museums, exposition halls, club houses, post offices, court houses, city halls, churches, theaters, and office buildings. There was a universal application of the style during the rapid expansion of Germany's economy, cities and suburbs. Bernard Vonnegut and his partner, Arthur Bohn, were both in Germany in this period of rapid growth and popularity of the German Renaissance Revival Style. The style was also exhibited at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. The German pavilion there, Das Deutsche Haus, was the work of architect Johannes Rodke. Vonnegut and Bohn more than likely saw this pavilion, as did most of the leadership of the Stock Association [of Das Deutsche Haus]...<sup>75</sup>

The general characteristic of German Renaissance architecture is the melding of classically-derived Italian Renaissance ornamentation and organization to buildings that are still Gothic in form, producing vertical orientation and steeply pitched roofs. These elements include stepped and scrolled gables, horizontal

<sup>72</sup> William L. Selm, Athenaeum (Das Deutsche Haus), National Historic Landmark nomination, 2015.

<sup>73</sup> William L. Selm, Athenaeum (Das Deutsche Haus), National Historic Landmark nomination, 2015, 45-47.

<sup>74</sup> William L. Selm, Athenaeum (Das Deutsche Haus), National Historic Landmark nomination, 2015, 45-46.

<sup>75</sup> William L. Selm, Athenaeum (Das Deutsche Haus), National Historic Landmark nomination, 2015, 46.

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stratification with floors articulated by cornice lines, and the use of pilasters and engaged columns in the orders used by the Romans...<sup>76</sup>

Vonnegut & Bohn's design for the South Side Turnverein Hall features the characteristics of the German Renaissance Revival outlined by Selm. Although more modest in scale and expression than the larger Das Deutsche Haus/The Athenaeum, the building competently expresses the style tied to the ethnic heritage and identity of the club's members.

The South Side Turnverein Hall is a major surviving work by Vonnegut & Bohn and is closely tied to their membership in Indianapolis' German-American community. The building's German Renaissance Revival architecture reflects Indianapolis' German-Americans' shared cultural heritage and the larger concept of Romantic nationalism that flourished among German-speaking peoples during the nineteenth century. The building retains sufficient integrity of design, materials, workmanship, and feeling to convey the architectural effect present during the period of significance.

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<sup>76</sup> William L. Selm, Athenaeum (Das Deutsche Haus), National Historic Landmark nomination, 2015, 47.



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## Developmental History/Additional historic context information

### EARLY HISTORY & SITE CONTEXT

In 1818, the Miami ceded the central third of Indiana to the United States in the Treaty of St. Mary's. In 1820, the Indiana General Assembly authorized a committee to select the site for a new capital city near the center of the state. The city, named Indianapolis, was laid out in 1821 by surveyors Alexander Ralston and Elias Pym Fordham. Marion County was created around Indianapolis in 1822. The seat of government officially relocated from the old capitol of Corydon on January 1, 1825. The National Road, the first federally funded highway in the United States, connected to Indianapolis' Washington Street in 1827. The city's first railroad connection opened in 1847, connecting to major ports on the Ohio River, and Indianapolis began a period of rapid growth that would continue through the 1870s. Following the end of the Civil War, Indianapolis experienced a commercial boom and grew rapidly outward through the 1920s.

### Morris Estate, "Hardscrabble Hall"

Margaret Eliza Vance (1803-1860), daughter of Capt. Samuel C. Vance, founder (in 1802) of Lawrenceburg, Indiana, and builder of the Vance-Tousey House (c.1818), married Lazarus Noble (1795-1825), brother of future Indiana Governor Noah Noble (in office 1831-1837), on December 31, 1823. Their son, William Hamilton Lazarus Noble (1825-1877) was born at Brookville, Indiana. Lazarus was appointed receiver of public monies at Brookville but was taken ill while travelling and died at the residence of his friend, Judge Mount, in September 1825. His young widow and five-month-old son returned to Lawrenceburg, living with Margaret's father and her brother, St. Clair Vance, at the Vance-Tousey House. She then moved to Indianapolis to live with another brother, Lawrence Vance (1816-1863). In July 1832, Margaret married Bethuel Franklin Morris (1792-1864). Morris had come to Indianapolis in the early 1820s and served at various times as land agent, law partner of Calvin Fletcher, judge of the Marion County Circuit Court, cashier of the Indianapolis Branch of the Indiana State Bank, and co-founder (in 1830) of the Indiana Historical Society.<sup>77</sup> Margaret and Bethuel were founding members of Second Presbyterian Church, which separated from First Presbyterian in 1838 during the Old School–New School Controversy schism and was led by Henry Ward

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<sup>77</sup> Agnes M' Culloch Hanna, "'Hardscrabble Hall,' Early Homestead, is 90 Years Old," *Indianapolis Star*, 31 August 1930, 29.

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Beecher from 1839 to 1847.<sup>78</sup> Margaret's letters of the 1840s reflect her devout Presbyterian beliefs and anecdotes of life in Indianapolis during this period.<sup>79</sup>

In 1836, Margaret and Bethuel purchased the eight-acre Out Lot No. 108, off the Madison Road (now Madison Avenue) three-quarters of a mile south of Indianapolis.<sup>80</sup> They built a brick house on the property and moved out from the town to live on the property during a snow storm in February of 1841 or 1842.<sup>81</sup> The Morris family named the house "Hardscrabble Hall." The one-and-one-half-story brick house faced west toward Madison Avenue and featured a porch along the south elevation.

The Morris family farmed the land around the house and tapped 90 sugar maple trees to produce syrup. Mordecai Cropper, a resident of Indianapolis from 1828 to 1839, recalled during an 1877 visit "the tick forest, prolific of may-apples, pocoon [puccon, a plant used to make dyes] and ginseng, south of Merrill street and wrapping all around the old Bethuel Morris house, and stretching over to the Bluff road and the river..."<sup>82</sup> Bethuel F. Morris died in the house in February 1864.<sup>83</sup>

Following Bethuel Morris' death, the Morris farm was divided between W. H. L. Noble and his half-brother, Samuel Vance Morris, and Clarissa Morris.<sup>84</sup> Samuel Vance Morris married Mary Jane "Jennie" Harrison (1836-1867), sister of future President Benjamin Harrison, in 1859. Following Jennie's death, he married her sister, Anna Symmes Harrison (1842-1926), in 1869. Samuel occupied "Hardscrabble Hall" until about 1868. The land around the house was subdivided and developed between 1870 and 1875. Morris Street was cut through south of the house and the south side became the new front when a frame cottage was built next to the original west façade. It was given the address of 166 E. Morris Street, renumbered to 224 E. Morris Street in 1898. The "Hardscrabble Hall" was remodeled into a double house between

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<sup>78</sup> Second Presbyterian Church completed a large frame Greek Revival church at the northwest corner of Monument Circle and Market Street in 1840. The building featured a distyle in antis portico and a multi-tiered cupola. It was used until the completion of a new stone church (1864-1867) at the northwest corner of Vermont and Pennsylvania Streets, after which it was remodeled as Circle Hall and was used until 1896, when it was demolished to make way for the expansion of the adjacent Hotel English.

<sup>79</sup> Excerpts of these letters, then in the possession of Margaret's granddaughter, Mrs. Ferris Taylor, were reproduced as a series in Kate Milner Rabb's "A Hoosier Listening Post" column in the *Indianapolis Star*, 12 September 1930, 6; 13 September 1930, 8; 15 September 1930, 6; 17 September 1930, 8; 22 September 1930, 6; 23 September 1930, 8; 24 September 1930, 8; 25 September 1930, 8; 26 September 1930, 8; 28 September 1930, 46; 30 September 1930, 10; 1 October 1930, 10; 3 October 1930, 8; 4 October 1930, 8; 5 October 1930, 44; 6 October 1930, 6; 20 August 1931, 8.

<sup>80</sup> "Life of Sanford Morris," *Indianapolis News*, 28 December 1897, 9.

<sup>81</sup> Agnes M'ulloch Hanna, "'Hardscrabble Hall,' Early Homestead, is 90 Years Old," *Indianapolis Star*, 31 August 1930, 29.

<sup>82</sup> "Nearly Forty Years After," *Indianapolis News*, 21 May 1877, 2.

<sup>83</sup> *Indianapolis Journal*, 2 February 1864, 2.

<sup>84</sup> Agnes M'ulloch Hanna, "'Hardscrabble Hall,' Early Homestead, is 90 Years Old," *Indianapolis Star*, 31 August 1930, 29.

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1898 and 1913, likely in 1901.<sup>85</sup> The house was divided into three units by 1915. It was featured in a series of articles on historic houses of Indianapolis in 1930 and identified as the second oldest house in Indianapolis by the *Indianapolis News* in 1936, following the William Sanders House (c.1822) at 1020 Palmer Street.<sup>86</sup> “Hardscrabble Hall” was demolished c.1938 and the site is now the north embankment of the Morris Street Expressway just east of Madison Avenue.

The southern portion of the farm was laid out as Bethuel Morris’ Subdivision in 1850. In 1872, James O. Woodruff platted a new addition around the Bates-Hendricks House<sup>87</sup> within Morris’ Subdivision, featuring an esplanade like those included in his Woodruff Place suburb east of Indianapolis, laid out the same year.<sup>88</sup> This area is now known as the Bates-Hendricks Neighborhood.

### **Noble-Dean Estate**

William Hamilton Lazarus Noble, son of Lazarus Noble and Margaret Eliza Vance Noble Morris, attended the Marion County seminary and graduated from Wabash College in 1846.<sup>89</sup> In 1852, Noble married Anna McChord (1827-1870), daughter of David McChord of Vicksburg, Mississippi. The couple had five children. Noble worked as an agent of the Indianapolis & Cincinnati railroad.

In 1857, five acres along the north side of the Morris property was given to W. H. L. Noble in consideration that its purchase had been funded, in part, by money from his father. Noble built a large brick house on the property by 1863. He subdivided the east part of his property in the early 1870s, creating W. H. L. Noble’s Subdivision of Out Lot No. 108 between Woodlawn and Prospect Streets, the alley east of Alabama Street, and the alley east of New Jersey Street.

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<sup>85</sup> William Weisner received a building permit for an addition at 224 E. Morris Street in November 1901. “Building Permits,” *Indianapolis News*, 9 November 1901, 15.

<sup>86</sup> Agnes M’Culloch Hanna, “‘Hardscrabble Hall,’ Early Homestead, is 90 Years Old,” *Indianapolis Star*, 31 August 1930, 29. The second article lists an adjacent address, 1556 Barth Avenue, for the Sanders House. “South Side Site of Oldest House,” *Indianapolis News*, 25 April 1936, 1.

<sup>87</sup> During 1859-1860, Hervey Bates, Jr., built a large brick house at what is now 1526 S. New Jersey Street. The 1860 census (June 1860) lists his household in the south part of Center Township, presumably at this house. City directories list him living at this house during 1861-1862 and at the Bates House hotel in 1863. In 1865, he sold the house to Thomas A. Hendricks, later Indiana’s Governor and Vice President under Grover Cleveland. Hendricks greatly expanded the house between 1865 and 1872, when he sold it to James O. Woodruff. Woodruff platted a new addition around the house, featuring an esplanade like those included in his Woodruff Place suburb east of Indianapolis, laid out the same year. The house survives and is known as the Bates-Hendricks House. “Horrible Murder,” *Daily State Sentinel* (Indianapolis), 8 December 1859, 3; *Evansville Daily Journal*, 18 March 1865, 2; Bates-Hendricks House, Historic American Buildings Survey No. IND-64; Lois Hagedorn, Bates-Hendricks House, National Register nomination, 1975; Agnes M’Culloch Hanna, “Mrs. And Mrs. Faust Maintain Traditions of Old Bates-Hendricks-Coburn Home,” *Indianapolis Star*, 2 February 1930.

<sup>88</sup> Bates-Hendricks House, Historic American Buildings Survey No. IND-64; Lois Hagedorn, Bates-Hendricks House, National Register nomination, 1975; Agnes M’Culloch Hanna, “Mrs. And Mrs. Faust Maintain Traditions of Old Bates-Hendricks-Coburn Home,” *Indianapolis Star*, 2 February 1930.

<sup>89</sup> “Death of Maj. J. P. Pope,” *Indianapolis Journal*, 30 August 1902, 10; Kate Milner Rabb, “A Hoosier Listening Post,” *Indianapolis Star*, 12 September 1930, 6.

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Following Noble's death in 1877, the house passed to his children. It was occupied by his daughter, Kate May Noble, and her husband, Edward Handy Dean, following their marriage in 1878. Edward H. Dean was a partner in the Dean Bros. Steam Pump Works at the southwest corner of Madison Avenue and Ray Street. The Dean family resided in the house until about 1894, when they moved to 1317 N. Meridian Street.

In 1880, John C. Dean, brother of Kate Noble's husband Edward H. Dean, built a large frame Stick Style house on the east part of the Noble-Dean estate.<sup>90</sup> This house was located on the northwest corner of Prospect and High Streets at 336 Prospect Street (formerly 36 Coburn Street and then 242 Prospect Street). It was occupied by the Dean brothers' mother, Harriet R. Peck Dean (1815-1896), until c.1889. From c.1889 to c.1909, the house was occupied by dentist Joseph M. Dwyer (1859-1916) and his parents. His father, Thomas Dwyer (1830-1906), came to Indiana from Ireland in 1857 and was a member of St. Patrick's Catholic Church in Fountain Square.<sup>91</sup> The house was owned by Mrs. Harry Joseph and occupied by the Athenian Club from 1915 until December 1917, when it was badly damaged by fire.<sup>92</sup> In 1922, William A. Reading sold the Dean-Dwyer property to David Krieger, who began wrecking the house to make way for a pair of frame apartment building designed by architect Thomas H. Harris, proposed for completion within 90 days.<sup>93</sup> These apartment buildings remain today.

### **Noble Place Park**

In 1897, the City of Indianapolis considered purchasing the Noble-Dean property to create a park in the center of this near-southside neighborhood. Public sentiment turned in favor of expanding Garfield Park instead of acquiring a new park, and the project was abandoned. Part of this land was sold to the South Side Turnverein in 1900. Between 1899 and 1905, the grounds of the Noble-Dean property hosted lawn fetes for educational and religious groups, including a neighborhood free kindergarten, Indianapolis Public Schools' Fresh Air Mission (a fresh air school for special needs children), the Woman's Missionary Society of the Second German Reformed Church, the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Ancient Order of Hibernians (an Irish Catholic fraternal organization), and congregation picnics of several African American churches.<sup>94</sup> About 1907, Alabama Street was cut through the property, separating the Noble-Dean House from the South Side Turnverein's property. In 1909, the Indianapolis Board of Park Commissioners purchased the remaining one-acre Noble-Dean property, bounded by Madison Avenue, Prospect Street, Alabama Street, and the alley known as Turner Drive or Woodlawn Avenue, envisioning it as a component of the Indianapolis Park and Boulevard system then under development. The Noble-Dean House was demolished in 1910 and the grounds were developed as a park named

<sup>90</sup> "City News," *Indianapolis News*, 19 August 1880, 4.

<sup>91</sup> "Died," *Indianapolis Star*, 1 November 1906, 14.

<sup>92</sup> "Many Fires in the City, But Few Large Losses," *Indianapolis News*, 11 December 1917, 4; "Three Homes are Fired by Overheated Stoves," *Indianapolis Star*, 12 December 1917, 22.

<sup>93</sup> "Raze Building for New Apartment Residences," *Indianapolis Star*, 13 March 1922, 5.

<sup>94</sup> "A Colored Barbecue," *Indianapolis Journal*, 18 August 1899, 3; "Free Kindergarten Lawn Fete," *Indianapolis News*, 8 September 1899, 22; "Paragraphs of the Day," *Indianapolis News*, 24 July 1901, 8; "Brief City Items," *Indianapolis News*, 29 August 1901, 2; "The Star's Fresh Air Fund," *Indianapolis Star*, 22 August 1905, 7.

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Noble Place, honoring W. H. L. Noble.<sup>95</sup> The urban square was framed on the east by the South Side Turnverein Hall across Alabama Street and on the west by a series of three- and four-story brick factory buildings across Madison Avenue.

The Indianapolis Public Library's Branch Library No. 4 (Madison Avenue Branch) initially opened in 1909 in a frame cottage at 1034 S. Alabama Street, just north of Noble Place Park.<sup>96</sup> This cottage and an adjacent cottage to the south were demolished and a new building (1913-1914, E. G. Graves & Robert Frost Daggett, architects) was built on the site, expanding Noble Place Park and adding a civic landmark for the neighborhood. The new Madison Avenue Branch Library was one of five Carnegie branch libraries built in Indianapolis between 1910 and 1914.<sup>97</sup> The branch served a neighborhood with a large Jewish population and many Italian, German, Austrian, Hungarian, and Swiss immigrants.<sup>98</sup> By 1921, the library system faced a book shortage and the Madison Avenue Branch began holding daily story hours, attended by an average of 80 children per day, to allow more patrons to hear stories from the limited number of available books.<sup>99</sup>

Indianapolis Fire Station No. 17, designed by the Indianapolis firm of Pierre & Wright, was built over the south part of Noble Place Park in 1941.<sup>100</sup> This replaced an 1880-1881 fire house at the northwest corner of Madison Avenue and Morris Street, which was demolished during a 1938 highway improvement project that created a curving connection between Morris and Prospect Streets at Madison Avenue.<sup>101</sup> The Art Moderne building reflects the evolution of a design developed by Pierre & Wright in the 1930s and employed for Station No. 18 (1936) at the northeast corner of Washington Street and Tibbs Avenue and Station No. 1 (1938, demolished) at 1445 W. Michigan Street.

The Madison Avenue Branch Library was consolidated with the Prospect Branch in 1968 to form a new Fountain Square Branch. The Madison Avenue building was demolished during the construction of Interstate 70, the encroachment of which reduced the park to 0.94 acres.<sup>102</sup> Fire

<sup>95</sup> "Names Plot Noble Place," *Indianapolis Star*, 14 August 1909, 10; "Nugent Bros. May Loose Boulevard Contract," *Indianapolis News*, 22 April 1910, 13.

<sup>96</sup> "Last Meeting is Held by Old School Board," *Indianapolis News*, 29 December 1909, 7; "New 150,000 Schoolhouse," *Indianapolis News*, 25 August 1910, 8.

<sup>97</sup> "Branch Library to be Built This Summer," *Indianapolis Star*, 24 April 1913, 6.

<sup>98</sup> Lawrence J. Downey, *A Live Thing in the Whole Town: The History of the Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library, 1873-1990* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis-Marion County Public Library Foundation, 1991), 150-151.

<sup>99</sup> "Book Famine, Stalking Through the City's Libraries," *Indianapolis News*, 19 February 1921, 15.

<sup>100</sup> "Legal Notices," *Indianapolis Star*, 13 February 1941, 25; "Contracts Let for South Side Fire Station," *Indianapolis News*, 18 March 1941, 24; "South Side Plans Civic Festival," *Indianapolis Star*, 23 February 1941, 26.

<sup>101</sup> Built for Hose Reel No. 10, the firehouse was initially planned for a site at Coburn (Prospect) and High Streets offered for sale from the heirs of W. H. L. Noble. "City News," *Indianapolis News*, 22 June 1880, 3; "City News," *Indianapolis News*, 7 February 1881, 1; "New Fire Engine House in Prospect St. Urged," *Indianapolis News*, 15 June 1938, 13; "South Side Asks Board to Rebuild Fire Station," *Indianapolis News*, 16 August 1938, 13; "South Side Asks New Fire Station," *Indianapolis Star*, 17 August 1938, 22.

<sup>102</sup> "I-70 Construction," *Indianapolis Star*, 6 April 1972, 28; "Interstate 70 Shaping Up On Westside," *Indianapolis News*, 2 September 1972, 18.

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Station No. 17 was closed in 1984, despite more than two years of neighborhood protests.<sup>103</sup> The building has been used by the Indianapolis Metropolitan Police Department (IMPD) since 1984.<sup>104</sup> The remaining portions of Noble Place Park were paved over as a parking lot by 1986. Noble Place was listed in the National Register of Historic Places as a part of the Indianapolis Park & Boulevard System in 2003.

### Post-World War II Changes

The context of the South Side Turnverein Hall was altered by two major post-World War II infrastructure projects focused on automobile transportation. The first was the Madison Avenue Expressway project and the associated Morris Street interchange, located south of the building. The second was the construction of Interstate 70 north of the building. These projects resulted in extensive demolition of Indianapolis' historic urban neighborhoods, decreasing surrounding property values and increasing suburban flight and disinvestment.

Madison Avenue, then U.S. Route 31, was rebuilt as a sunken expressway during the 1950s. The Madison Avenue Expressway project, completed between 1954 and 1958, cut off numerous cross-streets to create a two-mile stretch of limited-access six-lane highway between Prospect Street and Pleasant Run Parkway.<sup>105</sup> In an associated project completed between 1957 and 1959, the blocks between Prospect and Morris Street from Madison Avenue to the alley west of East Street were demolished and a sunken expressway interchange was created to connect the Madison Avenue Expressway to Virginia Avenue at Fountain Square via Prospect and Morris Streets. The project also created underpass below the railroad corridor east of Madison Avenue.<sup>106</sup> These changes to Morris Street altered the context of the South Side Turnverein Hall, leaving it on a hill above the grassy slopes flanking the sunken interchange.

Plans for Interstate 65 and Interstate 70 were developed in the 1950s. Ninety percent of the project cost was to be funded by federal monies under the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1956. Plans for the downtown Indianapolis segments, to be treated as elevated expressways, were announced in 1963, after some outlying sections of both highways had been completed. The plans for the "inner belt" or "inner loop" involved displacement of more than 2,000 families, demolition of thousands of buildings in the path of the proposed expressways, and the cutting-off

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<sup>103</sup> "New Fire Station for Fountain Square," *Indianapolis News*, 25 September 1980, 39; Steve Hall, "Proposed Pumper Removal Makes Southsiders Burn," *Indianapolis News*, 29 July 1982, 10; Steve Hall, "Neighbors Protest Removal of IFD's Station 17 Engine," *Indianapolis News*, 23 August 1982, 1; "Fire Protection Changes Made at 2 City Stations," *Indianapolis News*, 20 February 1984, 19.

<sup>104</sup> Hugh Rutledge, "Police to Use Idle Station 17," *Indianapolis News*, 3 July 1984, 1.

<sup>105</sup> "Madison Avenue Expressway Plans Approved," *Indianapolis News*, 8 February 1952, 1; Jack Averitt, "Underpass to Wipe Out 80 Buildings," *Indianapolis News*, 1 October 1953, 1; "Madison Freeway to Open in Year," *Indianapolis News*, 10 September 1957, 1; "Madison Expressway to 'Open' Tuesday," *Indianapolis Star*, 21 September 1958, 12.

<sup>106</sup> "Morris Project Still Undecided," *Indianapolis News*, 10 August 1954, 1; "Madison Ave. Shuffle," *Indianapolis News*, 8 March 1956, 25; "Plan Expressway Access Route," *Indianapolis Star*, 29 March 1957, 17; "Underpass to Be Opened," *Indianapolis News*, 15 April 1959, 50.

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of more than 100 streets in neighborhoods surrounding downtown.<sup>107</sup> More than 8,000 structures within Indianapolis' city limits were believed to be within the 16½ miles of proposed right-of-way, half of which had been demolished by 1968.<sup>108</sup> Interstate 70 was to run along the south side of downtown, immediately north of the South Side Turnverein Hall, and was to connect to Madison Avenue via a new interchange. This proposed interchange was later abandoned in favor of interchanges with Illinois and Meridian Streets and Morris and Prospect Streets. The section of Interstate 70 along the north side of the South Side Turnverein property was under construction by 1972.<sup>109</sup> This section was completed and opened in 1976.<sup>110</sup> The construction of Interstate 70 placed the rear of the South Side Turnverein Hall in a visually prominent position along the new elevated expressway corridor. The expansion of the campus of Eli Lilly & Company north of the interstate corridor removed the remaining neighborhood as far north as Merrill Street by the early-1970s.

## **SOUTH SIDE TURNVEREIN**

Indianapolis' South Side Turnverein grew out of a larger movement among German-speaking peoples in Europe and the United States.

### **The Turner Movement**

The Turner movement was founded by Prussian gymnastics educator Friedrich Ludwig Jahn (1778-1852) in 1811. Following Napoleon's defeat of Prussia, Jahn sought to restore the physical and moral strength of his countrymen through gymnastics. The *Turnverein* (gymnastics association) movement spread rapidly throughout the various German-speaking states, disseminating liberal politics and pan-German nationalism. Many Turners participated in the Revolutions of 1848-1849, which sought to unify the 39 independent states of the German Confederation into a single German nation. Following the failure of the revolution, many of the German states suppressed liberal political activism and freethought, leading to mass immigration of political refugees. Those Turners who remained in the German-speaking states would become active in the process of German unification, leading to the merger of 26 states to form the German Empire in 1871.

More than a million German-speaking immigrants came to the United States during the 1840s and 1850s, bringing their language and cultural traditions, including the Turnverein. German-speaking immigrants were confronted by a rising wave of xenophobia in the United States, where native-born Anglo-Protestants feared foreign influence, particularly from radical Germans who promoted Freethought, abolition, and socialism. A 1911 history of the movement noted:

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<sup>107</sup> "State Unveils Revolutionary Access Plan for Expressways to Dead-End 100 Streets," *Indianapolis News*, 21 May 1963, 10; Charles McKinney, "City to Lack Housing for the Displaced," *Indianapolis News*, 21 October 1966, 2.

<sup>108</sup> "Path Clearing for Interstate is Half Done," *Indianapolis News*, 18 June 1968, 21.

<sup>109</sup> "I-70 Construction," *Indianapolis Star*, 6 April 1972, 28.

<sup>110</sup> "New Southeast Loop Section Open," *Indianapolis News*, 14 September 1976, 19.

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These men who had sacrificed all for their ideals, and had come to this country as political refugees, were not received with open arms, but were regarded by many with mistrust and suspicion. It was not easy for them to overcome these barriers to establish gymnastic societies... It is characteristic of those days that the revolutionary tendency which had driven these men from their fatherland was still maintained.<sup>111</sup>

The widespread discrimination faced by German-Americans cut them off from involvement in the wider community, forcing newly-formed German organizations to cater to the wide-ranging social and recreational needs of the community. Turner organizations were formed at Cincinnati and New York in 1848, at Philadelphia and Baltimore in 1849, and at Brooklyn and New York in 1850. In 1850, these first six organizations established the *Turnerbund* (Turner Federation), “urging a closer union of all the societies in order to insure their own existence, to protect the common interests and to give a basis for mutual cooperation.”<sup>112</sup> Initial conflicts arose over whether the organization should limit itself to physical training or whether it should also promote socialism. All organizations agreed that it should promote freethought in the broadest sense of the term. By 1851, the *Turnerbund* included 22 societies (including Indianapolis) with a total of 1,672 members, and it was renamed the *Socialistischer Turnerbund* (Socialist Gymnastics Federation).

### Turners in Indianapolis

The first Turnverein in the United States was formed in 1848, and the first in Indianapolis, the *Socialer Turnverein* (Social Turnverein), was established in 1850. Local Turner organizations helped to maintain German-Americans’ language, culture, and identity in their new homeland. The German-American Turners were active physical education, social, political, and cultural organizations and typically supported secular public education and organized labor. Many of Indianapolis’ leading Turners, including Herman Lieber and Clemens Vonnegut, were prominent freethinkers. Indianapolis’ turnvereins included Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and freethinker members brought together by their common identity as German-Americans. Indianapolis was home to the Turner National Headquarters from 1898 to 1923 and 1978 to 1980.<sup>113</sup>

### South Side Turnverein Hall

In 1893, about 200 German-Americans living on the south side of Indianapolis broke away from the *Socialer Turnverein* to establish the South Side Turnverein (*Südseite Turnverein*).<sup>114</sup> The South Side Turnverein’s stated purpose was to provide athletic training for children and young

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<sup>111</sup> Henry Metzner, *A Brief History of the North American Gymnastic Union*, trans. Theodore Stempfel, Jr. (Indianapolis: North American Gymnastic Union, 1911) 23, 26.

<sup>112</sup> Henry Metzner, *A Brief History of the North American Gymnastic Union*, trans. Theodore Stempfel, Jr. (Indianapolis: North American Gymnastic Union, 1911) 24.

<sup>113</sup> William L. Selm, Athenaeum (Das Deutsche Haus), National Historic Landmark nomination, 2015, 21.

<sup>114</sup> Although “Südseite” translates as “Southside,” the organization appears to have styled it “South Side” (two words) in English. “Indianapolis South Side Turners Records, 1893-1956,” last updated 28 January 2016, <http://www.ulib.iupui.edu/collections/german-american/mss061>



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adults and to create a pleasure resort for German-American families. The organization initially rented space in the club house Phoenix Garden, a pleasure garden that operated at the southwest corner of Meridian and Morris Streets from about 1877 to 1902. After a few uncertain years, the organization grew rapidly under the leadership of German-American saloon keeper Henry Victor.

In 1899, Victor began a campaign for the construction of a permanent home for the organization. In February 1900, the South Side Turnverein purchased a 160 by 200 foot parcel off the east end of the Noble-Dean estate at 1043 S. Madison Avenue, fronting Prospect Street. The property cost \$5,000 and the organization announced its plan to build a new building on the site.<sup>115</sup> The South Side Turnverein Hall was designed by the prominent Indianapolis architectural firm of Vonnegut & Bohn, who had recently designed Das Deutsche Haus (1893-1894/1897-1898, now the Athenaeum) for the *Socialer Turnverein*, and included a sculpture group by Austria-Hungary-born Rudolf Schwarz (1865-1912), who had come to Indianapolis to execute the allegorical sculpture groups of the Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument.

Construction began in June 1900 and the building was completed in November of that year. The building was of red pressed brick with stone trim and featured steam heat and combination gas and electric lighting. The basement level contained two bowling alleys, a reception and dining room, a fully-equipped kitchen, a barroom, and bathrooms with connected locker rooms for members of the gymnastics classes. The upper floor was a large space serving as a combination gymnasium and auditorium, with a 30-foot-deep stage across the east end "suitable for first-class entertainments." The space was designed to comfortably seat 800 on the main floor and 200 more in the gallery.<sup>116</sup> The north and west parts of the site contained mature trees, offering desirable space for picnics and other outdoor activities.<sup>117</sup>

At the time of the building's completion, the South Side Turnverein had eight turning classes serving 300 male and female students between ages 6 and 25. The organization itself had about 250 members. The building's dedication commenced 20 January 1901, with about 3,000 friends of the association. "The hall was beautifully decorated throughout with American flags and German emblems."<sup>118</sup> On 22 January, about 400 people representing all the German clubs of Indianapolis gathered for a *kommers* or *commercium*, an academic feast typically featuring, beer, singing, theatrical performances, and speeches. This event included music by Beiser's orchestra and speeches by Fred Mack, chairman of building committee; Henry Victor (1838-1910), president of the South Side Turnverein; Herman Lieber, president of North American Turnerbund; Gottfried Monniger, representing the Independent Turners; and a keynote speech by Charles E. Emmerich, superintendent of the Indianapolis Manual Training School. "All the addresses were in the German language." "Interspersed with the speech-making were calisthenics by a young ladies' class, the members dressed in their white [shirt] waists and blue

<sup>115</sup> "New Turnverein Building," *Indianapolis News*, 21 February 1900, 2.

<sup>116</sup> "South Side Turner Hall," *Indianapolis Journal*, 1 December 1900, 3.

<sup>117</sup> "South Side Turner Hall," *Indianapolis Journal*, 1 December 1900, 3.

<sup>118</sup> "South Side Germans," *Indianapolis Journal*, 21 January 1901, 3.

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bloomers.” Choral selections were presented by the various German societies of the city, including the Maennerchor, Indianapolis Liederkrantz, Saengerchor, South Side Maennerchor, South Side Turnverein, Social Turnverein, and the Independent Turnverein.<sup>119</sup>

## Decline

The organization maintained a membership of about 400 people, including about 250 active gymnasts, through the late-1930s. Anti-German sentiment during the World Wars and increasing assimilation of the descendants of German-Americans led to the decline of clubs like the South Side Turnverein. A 1940s remodeling reconfigured the basement, removing the partitions between the bar, bowling alleys, and dining room to create one larger social hall. Most of the club’s members had lived in the surrounding neighborhood, accessing the building on foot. Postwar transportation projects between 1954 and 1972 demolished much of the surrounding neighborhood, including the homes of many club members. Others were drawn out of the city in the wave of suburban flight that followed the desegregation of Indianapolis Public Schools in the early 1950s.

The organization dwindled to 62 members (including about 25 gymnasts) by 1977, when it decided to close the South Side Turnverein Hall, announcing plans to seek a five-acre suburban tract and erect a new facility.<sup>120</sup> The club held a “Boom-Out” or “Blow-Out” final event on October 1, 1977, with former members and the public invited to view “nostalgic photographs of Turner activities at the turn of the century” and to enjoy German food, German music, dancing, floor shows, and “a cocktail hour with reduced drink prices.”<sup>121</sup> The club sold the building to a group of investors in December 1978 for \$28,500. The Southside Turners and Southside Turners Ladies Auxiliary remained in existence as of 2012 and were member organizations of the Federated German Societies in Indianapolis (est. 1932), headquartered at German Park in the far south suburbs of Indianapolis, eight miles south of the South Side Turnverein Hall.<sup>122</sup>

## Madison Avenue Athletic Club

The new owners, Tony Elrod, Rob Mercer, and Ray Bauman, rehabilitated the South Side Turnverein Hall between 1979 and the early-1980s. The roof was replaced, broken windows were repaired; a new heating system was installed; the basement remodeled to house a bar, barber shop, weight room, and updated locker rooms; and the stage and dressing rooms were demolished to build a racquetball court, with an American flag mural by Leonard Speziale inside

<sup>119</sup> “Closed with a “Kommers,” *Indianapolis Journal*, 23 January 1901, 3.

<sup>120</sup> “Turners to Close Southside Home,” *Indianapolis News*, 15 July 1977, 13; “South Side Turners To Close Doors Oct. 1,” *Indianapolis Star*, 16 July 1977, 21; “Southside Turners To Close Doors,” *Indianapolis News*, 29 September 1977, 19.

<sup>121</sup> “Turners to Celebrate Closing,” *Indianapolis Star*, 29 September 1977, 15.

<sup>122</sup> Federation of German Societies – Indianapolis, “About Us,” last updated 2012, [http://germanparkindy.org/home/about\\_us](http://germanparkindy.org/home/about_us)

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the historic proscenium.<sup>123</sup> The gym became popular with corporate basketball teams, including those from Eli Lilly & Company, Allison Transmission, Rolls-Royce, and Angie's List.<sup>124</sup>

The basement bar was known as the 5<sup>th</sup> Quarter by the late-1980s and became popular as a venue for heavy metal bands until it left the building in 2017.<sup>125</sup> In 2016, the building was placed on Indiana Landmarks' "10 Most Endangered Places" list.<sup>126</sup>

## Rehabilitation

In 2017, the building was purchased by Point Comfort Properties, LLC, for rehabilitation and adaptive reuse as a corporate headquarters. The building underwent a comprehensive rehabilitation between September 2017 and February 2019. This rehabilitation made use of the Historic Tax Credit and all work was reviewed for compliance with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation by the Indiana Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology and the National Park Service. The rehabilitation removed almost all the intrusive modern partitions, finishes, suspended ceilings, and systems introduced c.1979-1985, uncovering long-concealed historic fabric and architectural features. The building's historic wood sash windows were restored and fitted with nearly invisible storm sash. Historic doors were restored, and the dismantled balustrade of the main staircase was reassembled and repaired. Structural repairs were made and long-term water infiltration problems at the basement level were addressed. The building was fitted with a high-efficiency, variable-refrigerant flow (VRF) heating, ventilation, and air-conditioning system carefully designed for minimal impact on the interior. New plumbing and electrical systems were carefully placed within the building. The project team consisted of the following:

- RATIO Architects, Inc. | Architecture & Historic Preservation
- Lynn Hines Design Associates | Interior Design & Furniture
- Brandt Construction, Inc. | General Contractor
- Ignition Arts, LLC | Reproduction of Sculpture Group

## Henry Victor

Henry Victor (1838-1910) was a prominent leader of Indianapolis' German-American community and was widely regarded as the father of the South Side Turnverein. He came to the United States in 1884 and worked for the Terre Haute Brewing Company before opening a saloon on the South Side of Indianapolis. Victor operated a saloon at the southeast corner of Madison Avenue and Morris Street c.1889-1891. He managed the saloon and restaurant in the first floor of Mozart Hall (later Germania Hall), 37-39 S. Delaware Street, from March 1892 to

<sup>123</sup> Thomas R. Keating, "Mercer, Elrod Won't Let Old S.S. Turner Die," *Indianapolis Star*, 26 August 1979, 102; "Raising' Old Glory," *Indianapolis Star*, 23 January 1980, 41.

<sup>124</sup> Gregg Doyel, "This gym has some history," *Indianapolis Star*, 14 December 2014, C9.

<sup>125</sup> "Last Weekend of Metal at 5<sup>th</sup> Quarter Lounge," *Indianapolis Star*, 13 April 2017, W5.

<sup>126</sup> Will Higgins, "Historic Hoosier buildings are in trouble," *Indianapolis Star*, 1 May 2016, E2.

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May 1900. After the expiration of the lease, he closed the bar and took a trip to Europe.<sup>127</sup> In July 1901, Victor completed the remodeling of a building at the southeast corner of Noble Street (College Avenue) and St. Clair Street at the intersection with Massachusetts Avenue, opening The Victor Bar in the first floor. The bar served imported and domestic beers, wines, and liquors and included pool tables. Victor resided in an apartment on the second floor.<sup>128</sup> Victor never married and died in 1910.

In 1894, Victor became the president of the South Side Turnverein. Established in 1893 with about 200 members, the organization had declined to about 20 members before Victor took control. His 11 years of leadership saw a dramatic turnaround of the organization, including the establishment of a physical training school with about 500 pupils, inspiring confidence in the future of the club. In 1899, Victor led the effort to build a permanent home for the South Side Turnverein. The organization only had \$440 cash on hand when the building campaign began. A stock corporation was formed to support the construction, with members taking out shares of stock and becoming members of the corporation. Subscriptions circulated beyond the South Side Turnverein's membership, with many shares purchased by outside members of the larger German-American community in Indianapolis.<sup>129</sup> This effort allowed the acquisition of land and construction of a landmark building for the organization, representing an outlay of \$45,000. A 1902 description of the one-year-old building called it "a monument to the energy and self-sacrifice of Henry Victor, one of the best-known and most liberal and energetic German citizens of this city."<sup>130</sup> Victor was also an active member of Das Deutsche Haus (The German House / The Athenaeum), the Knights of Pythias, and the Süd Seite Liedertafel (South Side Choral Society). At the time of his death in 1910, the *Indianapolis Star* noted his leadership of the South Side Turnverein, noting that "the flourishing condition of the society is attributed largely to his efforts."<sup>131</sup>

### **Pleasure Garden / Bungalow**

The north part of the site originally contained a fenced pleasure garden for outdoor events and recreation. A frame bungalow was built northwest of the building at 1041 S. Alabama Street sometime between 1928 and 1941 and is believed to have been demolished between 1972 and 1979. For much of this period, the bungalow was occupied by the custodian of the South Side Turnverein Hall. The north part of the site now contains a gravel parking lot.

### **St. Lucas Halle**

A 1907 building built in Evansville, Indiana, approximately 170 miles southwest of Indianapolis, appears to have been patterned on the design of the South Side Turnverein Hall. St. Lucas Halle was built at the southwest corner of Baker Avenue and Virginia Street in Evansville's Jacobsville

<sup>127</sup> "Personal and Society," *Indianapolis Journal*, 3 May 1900, 3.

<sup>128</sup> "Henry Victor," *Indianapolis Journal*, 25 July 1901, 8.

<sup>129</sup> "South Side Turnverein at Floodtide in History," *Indianapolis Journal*, 21 April 1904, 6.

<sup>130</sup> Max R. Hyman, *The Journal Handbook of Indianapolis* (Indianapolis: Indianapolis Journal Newspaper Company, 1902) 180.

<sup>131</sup> "Henry Victor, Active in Many German Clubs, Dies," *Indianapolis Star*, 25 September 1910, B24.

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neighborhood to serve the congregation of St. Lucas German Evangelical Church (now St. Lucas United Church of Christ) diagonally across the street. Members of the St. Lucas congregation may have become familiar with the South Side Turnverein Hall through involvement with the Evansville Central Turnverein, which participated in the 1903 Indianapolis Turnfest events held in the building.<sup>132</sup>

Plans and a perspective rendering of the building by Evansville architects Harris & Shopbell appeared in the *Evansville Journal-News* in April 1907.<sup>133</sup> William “Will” J. Harris (1865-1908) and Clifford Shopbell (1871-1939) established the firm in 1897 and operated it until Harris’ death in October 1908.<sup>134</sup> The rendering appears to include the signature and date “RAY B 06.” Ray Bittrolff (1879-1908) was employed as the draughtsman in the firm of Harris & Shopbell for ten years. Bittrolff died in November 1908, having just been promoted to the position of junior partner in the firm following Harris’ death the month before.<sup>135</sup> The firm was reorganized as Clifford Shopbell & Company in 1910.<sup>136</sup> The cornerstone of St. Lucas Halle was laid on May 5, 1907, and the building was dedicated on October 27, 1907.<sup>137</sup>

Harris & Shopbell’s design for St. Lucas Halle adapted the overall composition of the South Side Turnverein Hall and many of its details for a building with a similar plan and program. St. Lucas Halle included a grade-level vestibule with a pair of staircases leading down to the basement-level dining room, kitchen, and service spaces or up to the upper-floor auditorium. The auditorium occupied the center portion of the building, with a balcony in the east wing and a stage in the west wing, mirroring the basic composition of the South Side Turnverein’s main hall and flanking wings.

St. Lucas Halle is of similar height to the South Side Turnverein Hall, but its plan is at roughly eight-tenths scale, giving the exterior a more vertical effect. Its north and south side elevations adapted the seven-bay composition of the South Side Turnverein Hall’s facade into a six-bay composition. The gabled pavilions in the outer bays include large brick arches accented by limestone voussoirs and containing half-timbered panels, while the central bays include

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<sup>132</sup> “Big Turnfest is to Begin Today,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 27 June 1903, 3; “Turnfest is On; Contest Today,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 28 July 1903, 14; “Kiss and Crown for the Winner,” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 30 June 1903, 3. The Central Turners occupied the former Kingsley Methodist Episcopal Church at 720 SE Eighth Street in 1908 and built a new, purpose-built facility on the site during 1913-1914. Evansville’s Turner Hall was demolished in 2015. Joe Engler, “Turner Hall razed,” Vanderburgh County Historical Society, last updated 9 August 2015, <http://www.vchshistory.org/2015/08/09/turner-hall-razed/>; “Central Turners,” Historic Evansville, accessed 15 April 2019, <http://historicevansville.com/site.php?id=turners>.

<sup>133</sup> “St. Lucas Hall,” Historic Evansville, accessed 15 April 2019, <http://historicevansville.com/site.php?id=stlucashall>.

<sup>134</sup> “Death Comes to Will J. Harris,” *Evansville Press*, 10 October 1908, 1.

<sup>135</sup> Bittrolff appears to have been born at Mount Vernon, Illinois, and was working as a draftsman in Evansville by 1897. “Promising Career is Cut Short by Death,” *Evansville Press*, 14 November 1908, 1.

<sup>136</sup> “Clifford Shopbell Services are Held Today; Burial Here,” *Princeton Clairon-News* (Princeton, Indiana), 7 August 1939, 1.

<sup>137</sup> “Lay Corner Stone,” *Evansville Press*, 6 May 1907, 4; “Unique Curtain Device is Placed in New School Hall,” *Evansville Press*, 24 October 1907, 3; “Will Dedicate St. Lucas Hall,” *Evansville Press*, 26 October 1907, 1.

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simplified adaptations of the South Side Turnverein Hall's arched windows and pilasters that rise up through the roof and are capped with sheet metal domes. The building originally featured an octagonal cupola. The east façade on Baker Avenue includes a projecting central bay adapted from the pavilions on the north and south and contains a grade-level entrance sheltered by a bracketed, hipped-roof canopy that also appears to have been adapted from that of the South Side Turnverein Hall. Harris & Shopbell's published rendering included the following features closely following Vonnegut & Bohn's design: a flagpole centered on the pavilion of the east façade, half-timbering patterns on the upper floors of the pavilions, and ornaments on the pavilion gables.

St. Lucas Halle has also been known as the St. Lucas Sunday School Hall or St. Lucas Parish Hall. A parish hall wing was added to the south during 1939-1940. The complex was redeveloped as Lucas Place between 1997 and 2000.<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>138</sup> Joe Kernan, "Older building gives ECHO agency a facility for transitional housing," *Journal and Courier* (Lafayette, Indiana), 3 December 2000, F3.

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- “South Side Turner Hall.” *Indianapolis Journal*, 1 December 1900.

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- “South Side Turners To Close Doors Oct. 1.” *Indianapolis Star*, 16 July 1977.  
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“Turners Present Drills.” *Indianapolis Star*, 26 April 1909.  
“Turners to Celebrate Closing.” *Indianapolis Star*, 29 September 1977.  
“Turners to Close Southside Home.” *Indianapolis News*, 15 July 1977.  
“Turnfest is On; Contest Today.” *Indianapolis Morning Star*, 28 July 1903.
- 

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned):** \_\_\_\_\_



South Side Turnverein Hall  
Name of Property

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## 10. Geographical Data

### Acreeage of Property Less than one acre

Use the UTM system

#### UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

NAD 1927 or  NAD 1983

- |             |                 |                   |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 16 | Easting: 572533 | Northing: 4400641 |
| 2. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 3. Zone:    | Easting:        | Northing:         |
| 4. Zone:    | Easting :       | Northing:         |

#### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Beginning at the northeast corner of Prospect Street and Alabama Street (vacated, but open), running north along the east curb line of Alabama Street to the right-of-way line for Interstate 70, thence east northeast along this line to the west line of the former alley (vacated) between Alabama and High Streets, thence south along this line to the north edge of the sidewalk along the north side of Prospect Street, thence west along this line to the point of beginning.

#### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The South Side Turnverein Hall is located on an urban site at the northeast corner of Prospect and Alabama Streets. It is bounded on the south and west by those streets, on the east by the alley between Alabama and High Streets, and on the north by the elevated Interstate 70 expressway. The north boundary of the site was formerly defined by an alley known as Turner Drive / Woodlawn Avenue, closed when the interstate was built in the early 1970s. The site was originally rectangular but the alignment of the interstate right-of-way and construction of the associated embankment cut off the north border of the original garden, creating the present trapezoidal site boundary. All surviving ground associated with the building during the period of significance is included within these boundaries.

South Side Turnverein Hall  
Name of Property

Marion County, Indiana  
County and State

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### 11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Benjamin L. Ross / Historic Preservation Specialist/Architectural Historian  
organization: RATIO Architects, Inc.  
street & number: 101 S. Pennsylvania Street  
city or town: Indianapolis state: Indiana zip code: 46204  
e-mail: BRoss@RATIOdesign.com  
telephone: 317-633-4040  
date: August 2019

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### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

South Side Turnverein Hall  
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### Photographs

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 3000x2000 at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

### Photo Log

Name of Property: South Side Turnverein Hall

City or Vicinity: Indianapolis

County: Marion

State: Indiana

Photographer: Benjamin L. Ross

Date Photographed: July 17, 2019

Description of Photograph(s) and number, include description of view indicating direction of camera:

- 1 of 20 West elevation and south façade, facing northeast
- 2 of 20 South façade showing windows of main hall, facing north
- 3 of 20 West elevation from Alabama Street, facing east
- 4 of 20 Detail of reconstruction of Rudolf Schwarz sculpture group at west gable, facing southeast
- 5 of 20 North and west elevations, facing southeast
- 6 of 20 Detail of main entrance and typical half-timbered panel, facing northwest
- 7 of 20 Basement interior showing historic borrowed-light windows, pressed metal ceiling, beam casings, and columns, facing east at former bowling alley
- 8 of 20 Vestibule interior, facing northeast
- 9 of 20 Foyer interior looking toward vestibule, facing southeast
- 10 of 20 Foyer and main staircase, facing northwest
- 11 of 20 Detail of main staircase at upper foyer, facing southwest
- 12 of 20 Upper foyer, facing northwest
- 13 of 20 Main hall from gallery, facing southeast
- 14 of 20 Main hall, gallery, and upper foyer, facing south
- 15 of 20 Main hall from gallery, facing northeast
- 16 of 20 Main hall showing woodwork, ceiling, and surviving gymnastics equipment, facing south

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- 17 of 20 Main hall, gallery, and upper foyer, facing west
- 18 of 20 Detail of staircase at northeast dressing room, facing southeast
- 19 of 20 Southwest cloak room with conserved pieces of original Rudolf Schwarz sculpture group from west gable, facing southwest
- 20 of 20 Detail of conserved piece of original Rudolf Schwarz sculpture group from west gable displayed in southwest cloak room, facing north

**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.460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.



1

3

Alabama Street (vacated)

5

4

6

Interstate 70 Expressway Right-of-Way

Property Boundary

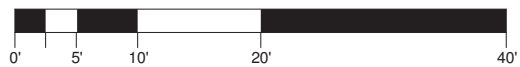
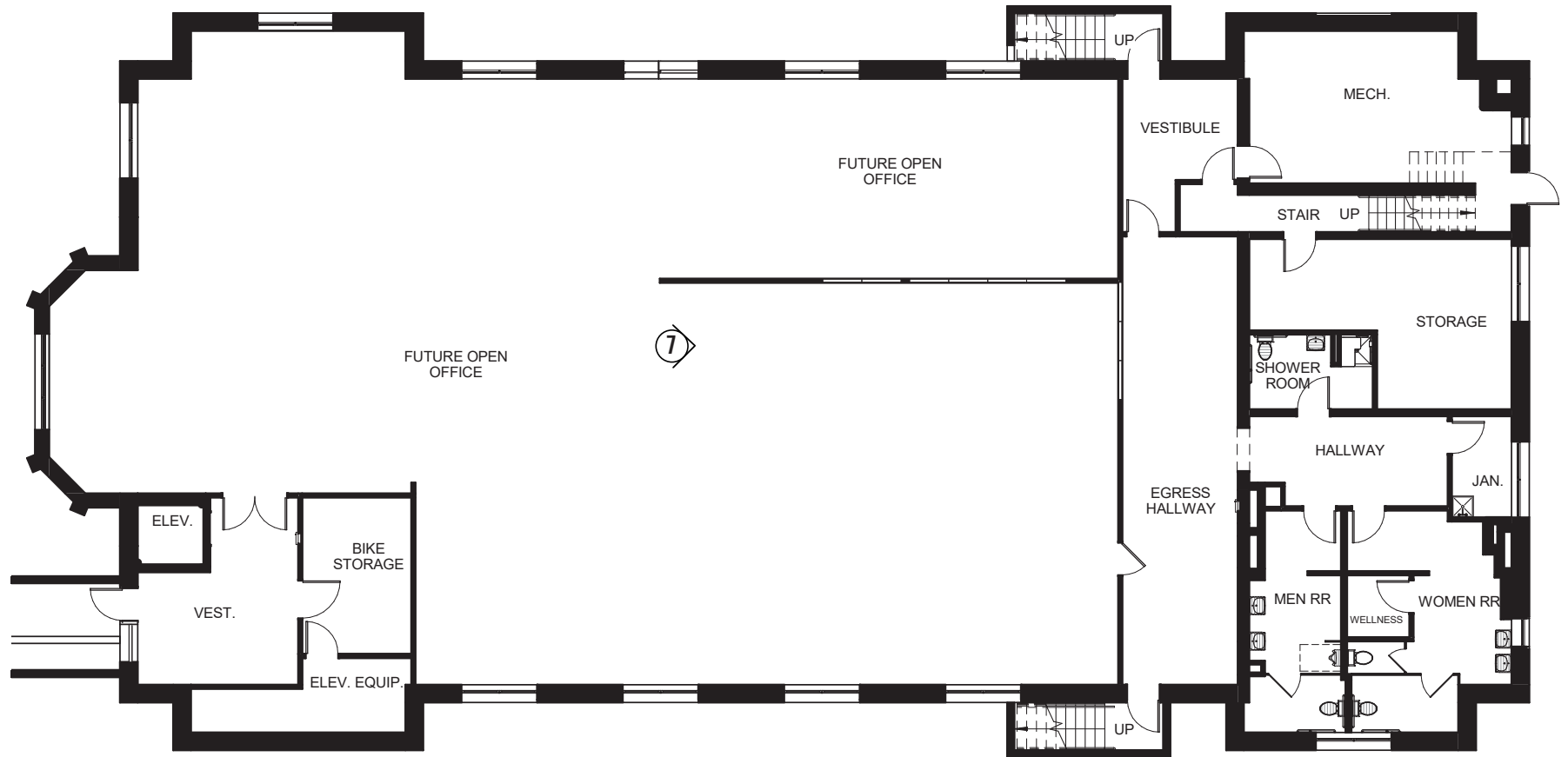
Parking Lot  
(former Garden)

South Side Turnverein Hall

Alley (vacated)

Prospect Street

2



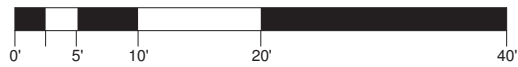
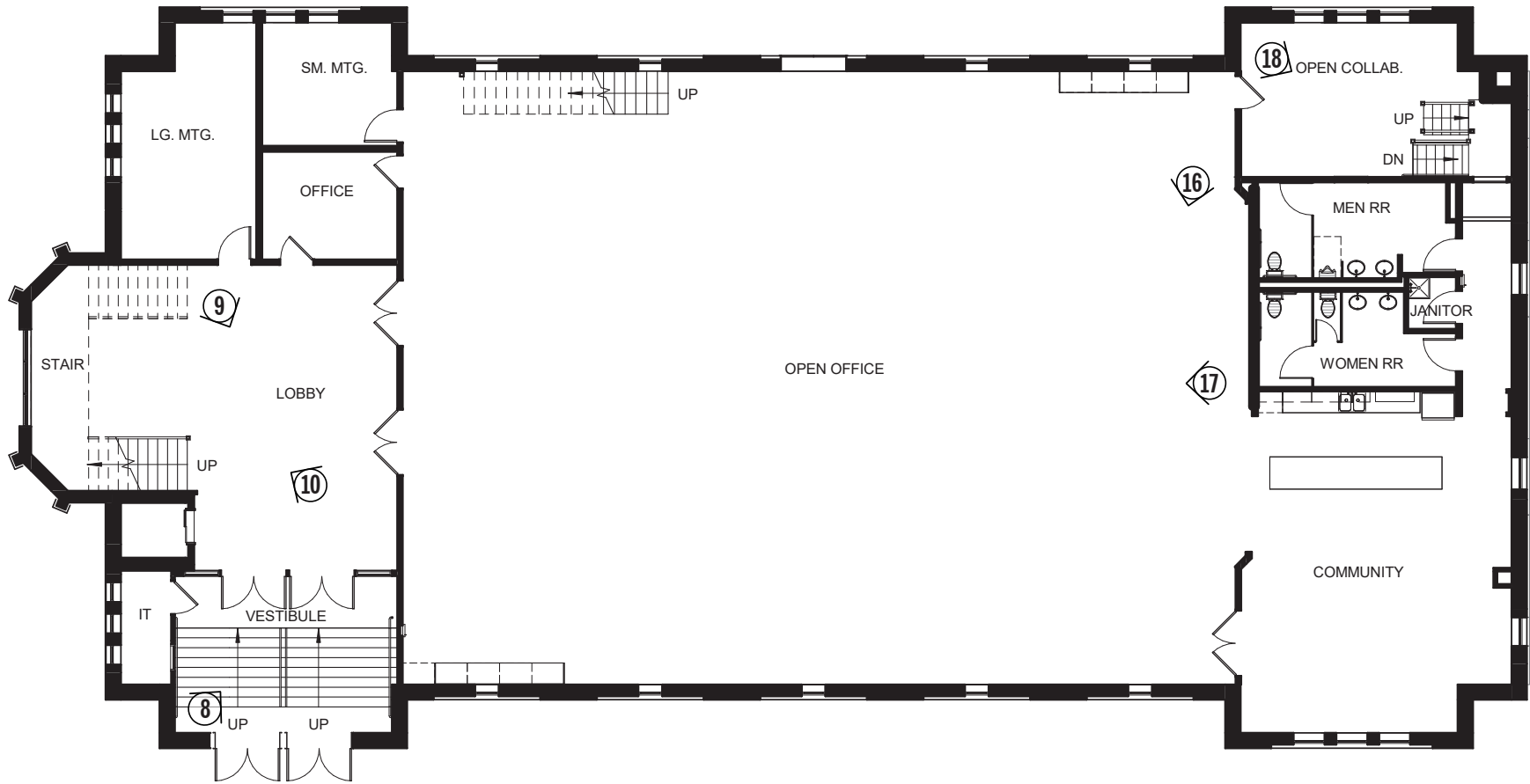
South Side Turnverein

**BASEMENT LEVEL**



**RATIO**

**South Side Turnverein Hall, 306 Prospect Street, Indianapolis, Center Township, Marion County, Indiana 46225**



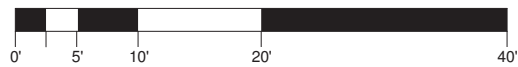
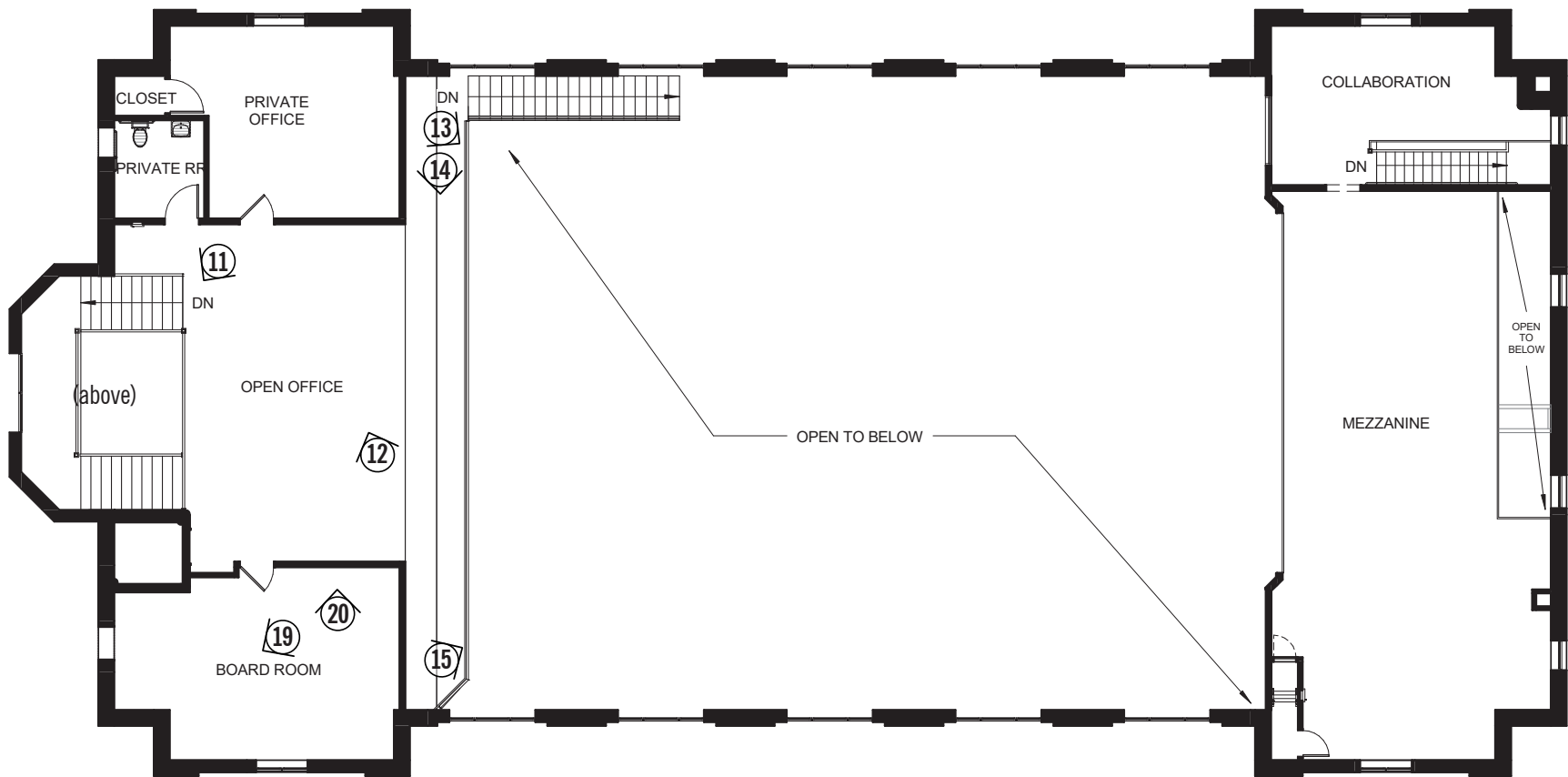
South Side Turnverein

FIRST LEVEL



RATIC

South Side Turnverein Hall, 306 Prospect Street, Indianapolis, Center Township, Marion County, Indiana 46225



South Side Turnverein

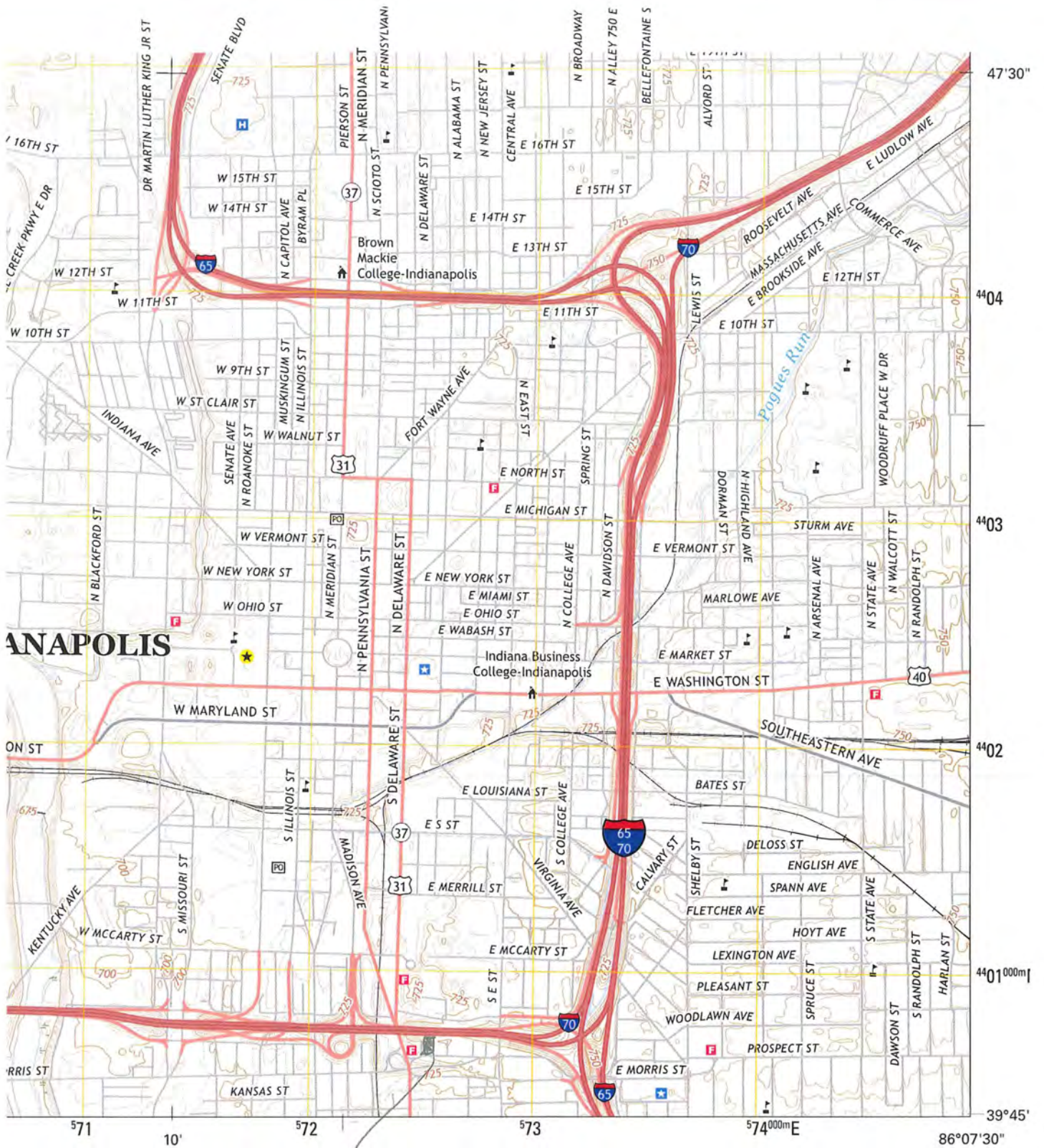
**SECOND LEVEL**



RATC

**South Side Turnverein Hall, 306 Prospect Street, Indianapolis, Center Township, Marion County, Indiana 46225**





NAD 83 UTM  
 16 572533 4400641

USGS Map: Indianapolis West Quadrangle, Indiana - Marion Co., 7.5-minute series

### South Side Turnverein Hall

Indianapolis, Marion County, Indiana | 2017





Point Comfort  
Underwriters  
226 Prospect Street

For  
Lease











For Lease  
713 2100











EXIT

EXIT

OPTES, HEMODIALYSIS





























UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: South Side Turnverein Hall

Multiple Name: \_\_\_\_\_

State & County: INDIANA, Marion

Date Received: 10/22/2019      Date of Pending List: 11/14/2019      Date of 16th Day: 11/29/2019      Date of 45th Day: 12/6/2019      Date of Weekly List: \_\_\_\_\_

Reference number: SG100004724

Nominator: SHPO

Reason For Review:

- |                                       |  |   |
|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Appeal       | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PDIL | <input type="checkbox"/> Text/Data Issue    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SHPO Request | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape       | <input type="checkbox"/> Photo              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver       | <input type="checkbox"/> National        | <input type="checkbox"/> Map/Boundary       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resubmission | <input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Resource | <input type="checkbox"/> Period             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other        | <input type="checkbox"/> TCP             | <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 50 years |
|                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> CLG             |   |

Accept       Return       Reject      12/3/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary Comments: Excellent example of a Turner's hall, executed in German Renaissance Revival style by the architects Vonnegut & Bohn. The building was a center for the German community on the south side of Indianapolis, and also served as a meeting hall for any number of events and organizations for decades.

Recommendation/ Criteria: Accept / A & C

Reviewer Jim Gabbert      Discipline Historian

Telephone (202)354-2275      Date \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION:      see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : **Yes**

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.



Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology • 402 W. Washington Street, W274 • Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739  
Phone 317-232-1646 • Fax 317-232-0693 • [dhp@dnr.IN.gov](mailto:dhp@dnr.IN.gov) • [www.IN.gov/dnr/historic](http://www.IN.gov/dnr/historic)

October 17, 2019

Ms. Joy Beasley  
Keeper of the National Register  
National Register of Historic Places  
Mail Stop 7228  
1849 C St, NW  
Washington, D.C. 20240



Re: South Side Turnverein Hall, Marion County, Indiana

Dear Ms. Beasley,

Enclosed is a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the South Side Turnverein Hall, Marion County, Indiana. The Indiana Historic Preservation Review Board reviewed the application and voted to recommend its approval to the National Register of Historic Places.

The enclosed disk contains the true and correct copy of the nomination for the South Side Turnverein Hall, Marion County, Indiana to the National Register of Historic Places.

Please address any questions you or your staff may have about this nomination to my National Register staff members, Paul Diebold or Holly Tate.

Sincerely,

Cameron F. Clark  
State Historic Preservation Officer

CFC:PCD:pcd

enclosure: nomination package