United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form



_ not for publication

code

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See instructions in How to Complete National Register Forms Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic The Lassen Hotel

and/or common The Lake of the Red Cedars Museum

Location 2.

street & number 7808 W. 138th Place

city, town Cedar Lake

state Indiana

code 018 . .

3.	Cla	ssification	
Cate	gory	Ownership	

Category district _X_ building(s) structure	Ownership _X_ public private both	Status X occupied unoccupied X work in progress	Present Use agriculture commercial educational	_X_ museum park private residence
site object	Public Acquisition In process being considered	Accessible yes: restricted yes: unrestricted no	eutrational entertainment government industrial military	private residence mode residence religious scientific transportation other:

county

____ vicinity of

congressional district

Lake

Owner of Property 4.

name To	wn of Cedar Lake			
street & nu	mber 7808 W. 138th P	lace	••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••••	
city, town	Cedar Lake	vicinity of	state	Indiana
5. Lo	ocation of Leg	al Description		
courthous	e, registry of deeds, etc. Lak	e County Courthouse		
street & nu	mber 2293 North Main	Street		
city, town	Crown Point		state	Indiana
6. R	epresentation	in Existing Surv	/eys	
title No	ne	has this property be	en determined elegib	le? yes _X_ no
date			federal state	county local
depository	for survey records			
city, town			state	

7. Description

Condition excellent good X_ fair	<pre> deteriorated ruins unexposed</pre>	Check one \underline{X} unaltered \underline{X} altered E.	Check one _X_ original site <u>₩1n</u> gmoved date	1920
	L			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Lassen Hotel is a T-shaped structure, situated on the east shore of Cedar Lake. The east-west wing is the older section, which was moved across the lake in 1920 to its present location. The north-south wing was constructed at that time.

The two-story frame, clapboarded building rests on a partial basement of poured concrete. The walls are punctuated by 131 windows, most of them doublehang. There are six doors, four on the ground floor, and two on the second floor reached by wooden steps. The onestory veranda, perfect for viewing the lake, wraps around the south and west sides of the north-south wing, its hipped roof supported by large square posts. The porch railing, where it exists, is simply constructed of horizontal and vertical boards.

The roof of the building is hipped, with exposed rafter ends under the eaves. It is presently covered with asphalt shingles.

The main entrance is off the veranda on the west side. The single door is flanked by sidelights, and opens into the lobby. Inside the lobby is a large brick fireplace, the only heat source ever to exist in the building. A sturdy stairway with walnut handrails leads from here to the upper floor.

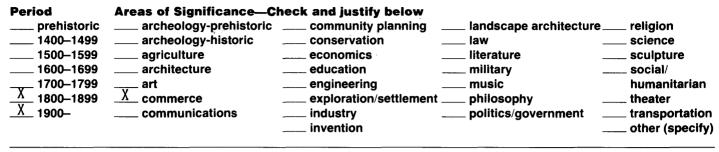
Throughout the entire hotel, rooms and hallways are lath and plaster. Plumbing was installed in 1920, with a bath for every two bedrooms in the new wing, and wash bowls in every room in the older wing. No sewers existed at Cedar Lake then, so chemical toilets were used.

The hotel did not have dining or kitchen facilities, since all food was served at the dance hall on the lake.

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8. Significance



Specific dates 1895, 1920

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Lassen Hotel is significant for its association with the height of the resort era in Cedar Lake. It is one of only two remaining hotels in the area, and the only survivor of this era on lake frontage.

Cedar Lake knew its period of greatest prosperity as a summer lake resort during the first quarter of this century Located only forty miles from the Chicago Loop along the Monon Railroad, the resort was within easy reach of families wishing to escape the city heat. Affluent Chicago families would spend the entire week there, the husbands commuting down on the weekends.

The Thomas Lassen family arrived in Cedar Lake near the turn of the century. In 1904 Chris, Harry, and Thomas Lassen, Jr. Built a dance hall, which claimed to be Indiana's largest onthe-water dance payilion. The popular dance hall drew large crowds, and was later expanded to include a Buffet and a saloon, which were on the shore but connected. In about 1914, a kitchen and dining room were added.

When the Lassensdecided to build a hotel, there were fourteen other hotels in operation at Cedar Lake. In 1920 they purchased an old hotel, that had been built on the west side of the lake in the 1890s by the Armour brothers of Chicago meat-packing fame, to house workers employed in their ice business. Working during the winter months, many of the workers were brought from Chicago to chop ice from the frozen lake to be used in the meat-packing industry. With the advent of modern refrigeration, however, the hotel was abandoned by Armour and sold to the Lassens, who towed it across the frozen lake to the western shore in 1920. That building was situated in an east-west direction, and soon thereafter a north-south wing was added, with a long veranda on the south and west sides facing the lake. Chris Lassen operated the Dewey boat line, which carried thousands of vacationers from the Monon depot on the western shore, across the lake to the 65-room hotel.

The increasing popularity of the automobile eventually made overnight accommodations less needed, however, and the summer hotel business began to fade. The Great Depression made it even more difficult for the resort to survive. In the late 1930s the community tried to attract visitors with sporting events, mostly boxing and wrestling matches held in the former Lassen garage.

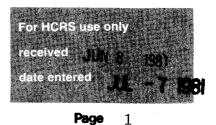
In the early 1940s the dance hall was closed and torn down because of its structural instabilty, and in 1944 Chris Lassen sold his complex to the Calumet District Evangelistic Association of Christian Churches. The facility was used as a summer camp for 32 years. In 1977 the property was taken over by the Town of Cedar Lake. The hotel will be used by the Cedar Lake Historical Association as a museum.

9. Major Bi	bliographica	I Referer	nces		
1. "Armour, a vill	lage of the past", <u>(</u>	<u>Cedar Lake Regi</u>	<u>ster</u> , (April 28	, 1976 <u>)</u> .	•
2. "Cedar Lake His (Cont)	storians plan tour, c	cleanup, icé cr APETACI M		r <u>y Post</u> , (July 2	2, 197
10. Geogra	phical Data	NUMBER AND	t montifn		
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state	code	county		code	
state	repared By	county		code	
name/title Beatrice organization Cedar Lak	e Horner e Historical Associa	ition d	ate Aprîl, 198	30	
street & number 7808 h	I. 138th Place	te	lephone 374-7000		
		ef	ate Indiana		
i <mark>ty or town</mark> Cedar La	ке	30			
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Continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

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3.	"Cedar Lake Town Board reveals complex plans", <u>Cedar Lake Journal</u> , (July 22, 1976)
4.	"Historical Association plans Lassen Hotel Tours", Post Tribune, (May 24, 1979)
5.	"Historical unit sees slide show", Gary Post, (May 7, 1979)
6.	Even article, Lake County Star, (October, 1935)
7.	Beatrice Ewer Horner, "Adventure begins on Lake's East Shore", <u>Cedar Lake</u> <u>Register</u> , (March 2, 1977), p.2.
8.	, Cedar Lake History Center, 1924, vol. VI.
9.	, "Hey Day of Cedar Lake's Eastern Shores", <u>Cedar Lake Register</u> , (November 20, 1974).
10.	, "Hotels", <u>Cedar Lake History Center</u> , Vol. VI.
11.	, "Ride Back in Time on Monon", <u>Register Newspaper</u> , (November 21, 1977).
12.	, "The Old Monon Park", Cedar Lake Journal, (January 9, 1975).
13.	Debbie Mitchell, "Hotel Part of Preserving Past", The Times.
14.	"Peter Surprise, French Fur Trader - his Indiana Wife", <u>Paisley Cedar Lake</u> <u>History Center</u> , Vol. 1.

Item number

9

15. Helen Snedden "Town Complex Brings Memories of Cedar Lake's Historic Resort Days", <u>Post Tribune</u>, (July 28, 1977).