

HISTORIC NAME Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. Service Store B. COUNTY Vanderburgh C. NUMBER 82-196-00076  
 ADDRESS 900 Main Street E. TWP/CITY Pigeon F. QUAD NAME Evansville South  
 RATING  Outstanding  Significant/Notable  Contributing/Reference  Non-Contributing UTM REFERENCES 16 450290 4202960

STATE OF INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES INDIANA HISTORIC SITES AND STRUCTURES INVENTORY REVISED 1981

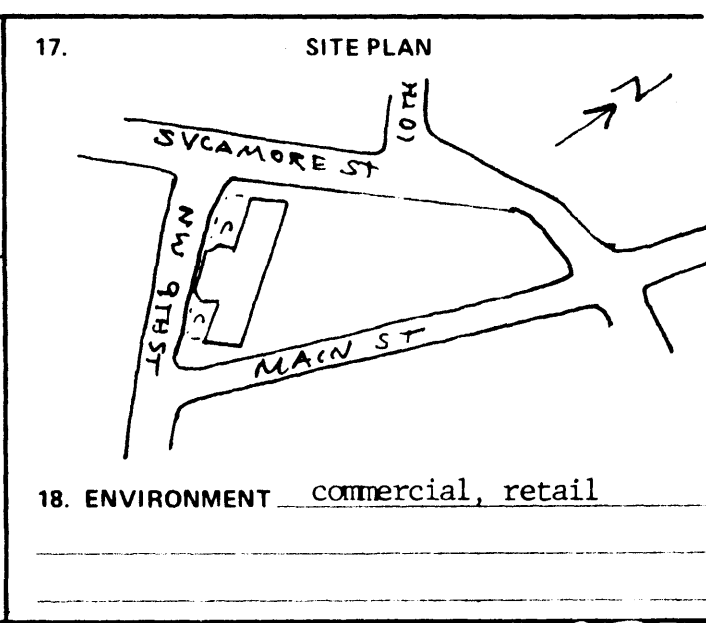
MOUNT CONTACT PRINTS HERE

FEB 23 1984

1. COMMON NAME <u>See below.</u> 2. OWNERSHIP <u>Public</u> * Private 3. VISIBLE * Yes No	4. PROPERTY'S MAILING ADDRESS <u>Kenneth &amp; Mabel Henke, et al</u> <u>6310 Kratzville Road</u> <u>Evansville, Indiana</u>	5. LOCATION NOTES <u>Seminary Tract, part lot 18 and</u> <u>Lilleston &amp; Lockhart's Sub, part lot</u> 14. Tax Code: <u>21-6-19</u>
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6. USE Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Govt./Pol. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Organization <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	PRESENT PAST <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	PRESENT PAST <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	7. ENDANGERED <input type="checkbox"/> Vacant <input type="checkbox"/> Neglected <input type="checkbox"/> Encroachment <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____ 9b. SURVEYS SR _____ NR _____ NHL _____ HABS _____ HAER _____	8. CATEGORY <input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	9a. LOCAL LEGAL PROTECTIONS <input type="checkbox"/> Historic District <input type="checkbox"/> Landmark <input type="checkbox"/> Deed Restriction <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
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10. CONDITION <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	11. BUILDING INTEGRITY <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input type="checkbox"/> Date _____	11a. Specify Alterations Removals _____ Structural _____ Replacement _____ Additions <u>several vehicle bays (?)</u>
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12. DATE 1930 13. STYLE Art Deco 14. ARCHITECT/BUILDER Fowler & Karges

15. DESCRIPTION See below.

Inscriptions none Facade Material brick

16. OUTBUILDINGS none

19. AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE: Specify the significance for each area checked

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal <input type="checkbox"/> Arts <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> * Architecture <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> * Commerce <input type="checkbox"/> Communications <input type="checkbox"/> Community Planning <input type="checkbox"/> Education <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering <input type="checkbox"/> Environs/Neighborhoods <input type="checkbox"/> Exploration/Settlement <input type="checkbox"/> Humanities <input type="checkbox"/> Indian <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Politics/Government <input type="checkbox"/> Religion <input type="checkbox"/> Science/Technology <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Ethnicity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> * Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Vernacular/Construction <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	15: <u>The ground plan for the polygonally-shaped old Firestone building generally corresponds to the lines of the letter "T." The base, or front of the structure, faces onto N W Ninth Street while the long (about 154 feet), narrow (about 24 feet) bar, or rear section, extends the length of the lot from Main to Sycamore Street. Each end of this latter section contains a vehicle opening with an overhead door. The front part of the building (measuring about 62 feet wide and 50 feet deep) combined retail and probably some service operations. Its front wall, with beveled corners, is still entirely of glass. The building is constructed of brick (painted) and is enclosed by a flat roof. Exterior walls are further characterized by a number of vehicle and pedestrian entries which denote the functionalism of the building. Some vehicle bays may be of more recent origin. Stationary canopies shelter the angular areas on either side of the front section. Ornamentation is minimal. Fluted stone pilasters surmounted by volutes and stylized leaves in low relief mark the corners of the front display window area. A continuous, narrow stone border of interlocking ovals trims the tops of the windows. This motif is repeated in the stamped metal fascia of the canopy. The building is believed to be relatively unaltered since its construction. It is now occupied by the business services section of the Community Action Program of Evansville, a social service agency. The approximate acreage of the site is four-tenths (.4) acre.</u>
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ATTACH  
NEGATIVE  
ENVELOPE  
HERE

19: See Additional Architectural Information form.

20. INFORMATION SOURCES Public records: Township; City directories; Cleveland and Williamson. The Road Is Yours. The Greystone Press: New York, 1951; Courier, 16 March, 30 March, 5 April and 27 April 1930; Who Was Who In American. Vol. V, 1969-1973 and vol. I, 1897-1942.

21. SURVEYOR Douglas L Stern 22. DATE 07 February 1983 (Amended)

**STATE OF INDIANA  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
INDIANA HISTORIC SITES AND STRUCTURES INVENTORY**

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Additional Architectural Information

A. NAME Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. Service C. NUMBER 82-196-00076  
B. ADDRESS 900 Main Street Store  
D. UTM References [1,6] [4|5,0|2,9,0] [4,2|0,2|9,6,0]

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E. 19:

"As late as the 1920's, the retail tire shop was often a dismal hole-in-the-wall, alongside of plumbers and roofers, in the middle of a town's run-down business section." This is the way in which one noted author characterized the climate surrounding the growth and development of an important aspect of Evansville's commerce and transportation scene. Before the end of the Twenties, shops and mechanics held forth from rented quarters, converted stables, and the like. But motoring was fast becoming a standard way of life, and the willingness of consumers to tolerate such ad hocism was quickly diminishing.

The major tire manufacturers and retailers in Evansville knew their markets well enough. Both Goodyear and Firestone were established locally by 1928. Goodyear took the plunge in about that year with the major conversion of a former mortuary into a full-line tire and service station.

Firestone was soon to follow, with the result being its facility at 900 Main Street. The national management, actively guided by Harvey S. Firestone, Sr. after some thirty years, was in the midst of an elaborate plan for market expansion and construction of new facilities. In Firestone's personal message to those gathered for the 5 April 1930 opening of the Evansville Firestone Service Store, the company's founder alluded to a "huge program of dealer stations at strategic points over the state of Indiana."

In language sounding suspiciously similar to that used to describe another facility of about the same time--the Auto Hotel Building of 1929 (82-196-00189, amended)--the local press pictured the Firestone station as an important step in the city's automotive coming-of-age. "Evansville again proves its fitness as a leader in the realm of the motor march," declared the morning newspaper on April 5th. "Automotive transportation again demonstrates its role as a booster of community progress," the paper continued, "...bringing city, town and hamlet and the open spaces nearer." The "attractive store and service station" at Ninth and Main would not only "make motoring more pleasurable, satisfying, and longer-lived," but would also stand as "recognition of the progressive spirit

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F. INFORMATION SOURCES \_\_\_\_\_

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G. PREPARED BY Douglas L Stern H. DATE 07 February 1983

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(Amended)

Firestone Tire & Rubber Co. Service Store

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of Evansville.

As an architectural expression, the Firestone Service Store symbolized the marriage of product and building. The automotive imagery in the building was underscored by the zig-zag ahistorical ornament. The newspaper account put it this way on April 5th 1930: "Owners and architects have demonstrated that attractiveness may be combined with utility in the automotive sales and service station of the progressive order." Long gone were the days of the cramped and darkened mechanic's shop: The showroom was notable for its "cheersome character," the "illumination plan clothes the building in colorful brilliance at night" and "powerful 300-candle floodlights provide an exterior illumination which rivals daylight." The local designers, (Frank) Fowler and (H. Gilbert) Karges, clearly showed their exposure to the Modern Movement from their years with Clifford Shopbell & Company, the Evansville firm which became noted in the early-20th Century for work in the Prairie and Chicago Schools.

Along with gas stations and motels, this building is one of a rapidly vanishing breed of early structures designed to service the needs of the automobile and its users. Since these structures are only now coming of sufficient age to qualify for the Register, it is not surprising that they have heretofore gone unrecognized for their important role in the early days of the auto. The Firestone Tire Store has the added significance of being one of the city's most detailed and least altered examples of the Art Deco style.

FEB 23 1964