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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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NATIONAL REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name West Baden National Bank

other names/site number Springs Valley Bank & Trust Company

2. Location

street & number North SR 56 at the West Baden Springs Hotel entrance not for publication

city or town West Baden Springs vicinity

state Indiana code IN county Orange code 117 zip code 47469

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Paul R. Roberts 8-5-93
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
State of Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the property is:

entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain: _____)

Signature of the Keeper *Alison Byrum* **Entered in the National Register** Date of Action 9/16/93

Name of Property

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private, public-local, public-State, public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s), district, site, structure, object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Table with 2 columns: Contributing, Noncontributing. Rows for buildings, sites, structures, objects, Total.

Name of related multiple property listing

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

na

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE: financial institution

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

COMMERCE: financial institution

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Neo-Classical Revival

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestone

walls BRICK

STONE: limestone

roof ASPHALT

other WOOD

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

- Criteria A through G with checkboxes and descriptions.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1917-1932

Significant Dates

1917

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

na

Cultural Affiliation

na

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- Documentation checkboxes: preliminary determination, previously listed, designated landmark, recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey, recorded by Historic American Engineering Record.

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository: National Register files

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West Baden National Bank
Orange County, Indiana

7. DESCRIPTION

The West Baden National Bank (now operated under the name of Springs Valley Bank & Trust Company) is located several feet north of the entry arch to the West Baden Springs Hotel complex (NRHP, 6-27-74, NHL, 2-27-87). Neither the boundary given in the National Register nomination nor in the NHL nomination includes the bank, although it was directly linked to the operation of the hotel. The purpose of this nomination is to recognize the West Baden National Bank building for its architectural merit and for its association with the history of the West Baden Springs Hotel.

The West Baden National Bank, built in 1917, is a 30' by 60' structure of reinforced concrete construction, with exterior walls veneered in yellow face brick and limestone detailing. It is essentially two stories in height, yet, only a portion of the interior has a second story. The bank has a low pitched gable roof not visible from ground level.

The main elevation faces south (photo 1). The composition consists of a recessed central entrance flanked by giant order limestone unfluted Scamozzi Ionic columns *in antis*. The glazed entry door has a limestone surround with entablature. It is surmounted by a large round arched, multi-light transom having a limestone archivolt molding with cornice-like imposts and a large scroll keystone. The flanking columns and antae support a full entablature with roundels marking the frieze over the columns and a dentil molding under the cornice, all of limestone. This elevation of the building has a parapet of brick and limestone. The central parapet limestone plaque has a pedimental rake and a raised panel bearing raised letters which read "WEST-BADEN-NATIONAL-BANK." Triglyphs mark the lower corners of the raised area.

A portion of the entablature returns to the east elevation (photos 2 and 3). The east elevation has five symmetrically placed round arched openings. The southernmost bay has a large fixed rectangular window, the transom area is infilled with herringbone

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brickwork (an original feature). The opening arch, as with all other openings on the east and west elevations, has simple stone springers and a stone keystone with radiating voussoirs. Each opening has a stone sill. The next opening to the north has been converted to a drive-up teller station. In 1980, the porte-cochere was added and the wall opening extended to accommodate a teller window. Architectural motifs derived from the pavilions of the West Baden Springs Hotel grounds were used in the design of the porte-cochere. The third and fourth openings have multi-light fixed windows with semi-circular fanlight transoms. The final aperture is similar to the southernmost, but has always accommodated a doorway with rectangular transom rather than a window.

The north elevation echoes the front elevation in spirit (photo 5). Centered is a large round arched opening with simple stone springers and a plain keystone, infilled by a round arched multi-light window. A band of rectangular windows lines the bottom of the opening. Flanking this are recessed niches with simplified square stone blocks at the top and small double hung windows at the bottom of the niche. The stone blocks have bas-relief roundels.

The west elevation has five openings detailed like the east elevation (photo 6). The central three windows have fanlights, but the flanking openings have blind transoms with herringbone brickwork.

The interior consists of an open banking room to the front and private areas and a loft to the rear (photos 7 and 8). Originally, the teller's line had steel bar cages, and the banking room had an elaborate plaster ceiling. The teller's cages were replaced with bullet-proof glazing and turntable transaction units sometime in the 1930s. The loft area was only accessible by retractable stairs and was used for storage. During the 1960s, the plaster ceiling collapsed, forcing a hasty rehabilitation. A suspended ceiling was installed, walls were paneled, and the loft area was obscured by a partition wall. The banking vault remained in its original

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location, as it does today.

In 1987, the interior was rehabilitated once again, this time to return it to a more original appearance. The loft was opened to view and a permanent staircase was installed. The teller stations were replaced. Paneling was removed. Private offices were added to the loft area, toward the rear of the building. Moldings and trim were refinished to replicate original finishes as best as possible. The most significant decorative features of the interior are the plaster bas-reliefs by Italian artist Dellarobi (photo 9). On the front wall are two panels representing Spring and Winter (photos 11 and 12). The side walls have fruit garland panels (photo 10). Two other panels representing Fall and Summer were destroyed when the ceiling collapsed.

Overall, the West Baden National Bank has good integrity. Additions and alterations to the building have not compromised its architectural or historic significance.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

The West Baden National Bank building meets National Register Criteria A and C. The West Baden National Bank is primarily significant for its associations with West Baden Springs Hotel, a nationally known spa and casino resort which was constructed in 1902. Built in 1917 as part of a grand scheme to remodel and improve West Baden Springs Hotel, the bank served visitors of the hotel and casino until the hotel was closed in 1932. After this time, the bank served the local community. West Baden National Bank is also significant as a fine example of the Neo-Classical Revival style.

The operation of the bank was integral to the success of West Baden Springs Hotel. The bank was an essential service for the upper class clientele of the hotel, and from its opening in 1917 until the hotel closed in 1932, it played an important role in commerce in West Baden Springs. During this time, it was the only bank in town.

Col. Lee W. Sinclair, president of the Bank of Salem (Indiana) and owner of the hotel, founded the institution in 1902 with the original location of the bank being within the atrium of the new hotel itself. Articles of association dated August 4, 1902 list directors as Lee W. Sinclair, president; Lillian Sinclair; Charles Ed Ballard; Lester H. Sutton; James F. Persise; vice-president and cashier; Eugene Heim; assistant cashier; and Adam Burton. The Comptroller of Currency issued Charter 6388 to the West Baden National Bank on August 18, 1902 for a term of twenty years on capital stock of \$25,000 with corresponding banks of National City Bank of New York, National Bank of North America, and Union National Bank of Louisville, KY.

Ms. Lillian Sinclair, daughter of Lee W., resided at the hotel with her husband Charles Rexford after their marriage in 1912. Lillian assisted her father with the remodeling of the hotel which occurred from 1916 to 1918. Lee W., however, died in September of 1916, before the remodeling was complete, and the Rexfords assumed

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control of the hotel. The spacious atrium of the hotel was transformed into a luxurious space with marble veneered walls and mosaic floors. The new work precluded the bank from resuming its former location; property was deeded under the West Baden Springs Corporation for the current (nominated) site of the bank.

The West Baden National Bank was soon completed and opened in August 1917, two months before the reopening of the hotel. James Persise was the first president. Persise died in 1918 and Louis Brown succeeded him and remained president until 1932. During this time, Ed Ballard gradually assumed control of both the hotel and bank. The Lost River Investment Company, a mortgage and real estate holding firm established by Ballard, was highly successful in acquiring holdings in the community. By 1923, Ballard controlled over half of the West Baden National Bank's stock and owned the West Baden Springs Hotel.

The Depression and stock market crash of 1929-32 put no hindrance on the bank's performance. Capital and surplus of \$100,000 remained fixed, with a reserve in case of withdrawals. With the closure of the hotel in 1932 and its donation to the Society of Jesus (Jesuit) order in 1934, the bank became a community institution. Ballard's death in 1936 led to a change in leadership based on control of the Ballard estate. Dr. Clarence Boyd was president from 1937 to 1947, followed by Willis Pinnick and Homer Allbright, who had bought shares of the Ballard estate offered for .50 cents on the dollar in the Wall Street Journal. At this point, the bank was half owned by the Ballard estate and half by shareholders.

When Pinnick offered his shares for sale upon his retirement in 1951, Mr. Carl Kuehnle of Chicago obtained control of them and was made president. In turn, Arnold F. Habig and a group of businessmen purchased Kuehnle's stock when he retired in 1958. Habig also purchased the French Lick State Bank in 1958 and merged both institutions to form the Springs Valley National Bank.

The West Baden National Bank building is also architecturally

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significant. Echoing the classical themes and building materials (yellow brick and limestone) used in the hotel and especially in the many pavilions built on its grounds, the design utilizes much classical vocabulary. Although its architect remains unknown, the bank is fine example of early twentieth century classicism. Most notable is the main facade, featuring colossal Scamozzi Ionic columns *in antis*, combined with a large fanlight entry arch.

9. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Ballard, Charles E. The Ballards in Indiana. Peru, IN: The C.E. Ballard Literary Trust, 1984.

A Brief History of the State Bank of Salem. Salem, IN: Washington County Historical Society, July 1974.

Brown, Louis P. "Application to Organize a National Bank," Personal memoir, submitted by Harriet Brown from her grandfather Louis Brown.

Comptroller of the Currency Office, Washington, D.C. "Articles of Association," West Baden National Bank, August 4, 1902.

O'Malley, John W., S.J. "The Story of the West Baden Springs Hotel," from Dillard, Arthur L., ed., Orange County Heritage. Paoli, IN, 1971.

"Minute Boos," West Baden National Bank, 1902-1931, 2 vol., collection of Springs Valley Bank & Trust, West Baden Springs, IN.

Paoli County Recorder's Office, various records, including:
Warranty Deed, June 8, 1917, record book 70, p. 292.
Corporate Quitclaim Deed, Springs Valley Bank & Trust and Indiana Railway Musuem, Inc., 1991.

Unknown author. "The Story of the West Baden Springs Hotel," Unpublished Master's Thesis, Loyola University.

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10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA, Verbal Boundary Description

A part of the west half of the north east quarter of section 34, township 2 north, range 2 west and described as follows, to-wit: Beginning at a point on the north line of West Baden Avenue, which point is north 71 degrees and 40 minutes west 217 feet of the south west corner of Lot number 1 of the original plat of the town of West Baden, Orange County, Indiana, thence south 84 degrees and 15 minutes west along the north curb line of the walk along the north side of said West Baden Avenue 60 feet, thence north 15 minutes east 100 feet, thence north 84 degrees and 15 minutes east 60 feet, thence south 15 minutes west 100 feet to the place of beginning. Together with a right of way for ingress and egress to the above described real estate along, over, and upon all that part of land immediately south of said described premises to the width of 20 feet and now used as a sidewalk and boulevard and also a right of way for ingress and egress along, over, and upon all of the lands belonging to the grantor which lies east and adjoining said premises herein conveyed.

Boundary Justification

This is the historic property boundary.