

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**FOR NPS USE ONLY**  
RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC PATEE HOUSE  
AND/OR COMMON Patee House Museum

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER 12th and Penn Streets  
CITY, TOWN St. Joseph VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 006 (sixth)  
STATE Missouri CODE 29 COUNTY Buchanan CODE 021

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Mr. Charles Potter, President, Pony Express Historical Association  
STREET & NUMBER 3312 Newport Road  
CITY, TOWN St. Joseph VICINITY OF STATE Missouri 64505

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Buchanan County Courthouse  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN St. Joseph STATE Missouri

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE Historic Sites Survey  
DATE 1960  FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Historic Sites Survey, 1100 L Street, N.W.  
CITY, TOWN Washington STATE D.C.

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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## DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

In 1856 John Patee began construction of the Patee House, a huge hotel at the foot of a bluff on Penn Street at 12th in St. Joseph, Missouri. The Patee House was an imposing structure of red brick, four stories tall and built in the shape of a "U". A two-story center section was enclosed on three sides. The block-size structure featured several balconies, front steps running the length of the building and an ornate cupola. The dining room was well equipped with steam tables and the floors were covered throughout with thick, red carpeting.

The Patee House was completed in 1858 and was very profitable until the outbreak of the Civil War. Its conversion into a shirt factory in 1885 led to massive interior alterations. The building was vacated in 1957 and stood empty for five years. During that time, the interior was continuously vandalized. In 1963 the Pony Express Historical Association was formed, and through their efforts the building was saved from demolition.

In 1975 the Patee House was partially restored. The cupola was replaced but balconies and the steps which ran the length of the west side of the hotel have not yet been reconstructed. The interior has been largely altered through the years but retains the second-floor ballroom, several original hotel rooms and a staircase. These will be restored as funds permit. Several areas have been renovated for use as museum space. One such area, the "Transportation Hall," contains antique cars, wagons, buggies, fire trucks, sleighs, and the 90-foot Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad steam locomotive and mail car. The museum has been open free to the public since its inception.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES                      1860                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Patee House in St. Joseph, Missouri was the headquarters for Russell, Majors, and Waddell, the owners of the Pony Express. The cannon which inaugurated the opening of the Express was fired in front of this building on April 3, 1860. Arthur Chapman describes the Patee House as follows in The Pony Express:

In keeping with its dignity as the chief way-point between East and West, St. Joseph had provided itself with a hotel which was one of the marvels of the time. John Patee, in 1856, began the construction of what was to be the finest hotel in the West. The Patee House cost \$200,000, but, unfortunately for its promoter, its location was such that the project could not be made to pay. Stage coaches ran special excursions when the hotel was opened. Guests came from Liberty, and Weston and all the way from Hannibal. The long hitching rack in front of the hotel was lined with the "rigs" of the young bloods from St. Joseph and vicinity. But the railroad terminal, instead of being located on Penn Street, as Patee had been assured, was built several blocks away, at Eighth and Olive streets, and St. Joseph's marvel among hotels was a financial failure from the start.

Many distinguished guests of stage-coach days put up at the Patee House, notwithstanding. For the east-bound it afforded the first glorious plunge into the luxuries which the "States" possessed and the frontier lacked. For those bound west, it afforded a farewell revelry in such luxuries. William H. Russell and Alexander Majors were familiar figures about the Patee House when they were establishing their stage line and later the Pony Express. Richard F. Burton, keen to penetrate the mysteries of Mormondom; Horace Greeley and the correspondent Albert D. Richardson, intent on "writing up" the Colorado gold camps; adventurers headed for the distant excitements of Washoe; sportsmen who wanted to shoot buffaloes and perhaps have a not-too-dangerous brush with Indians--such figures gave the corridors of the Patee House something more than local swank.

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Upwards of thirty riders, a large proportion of those selected to ride the eastern half of the trail, had been quartered at the Patee House, at company expense. The boys found that nothing in St. Joe was too good for them. Dances were given at the big hotel, and the "Pony " riders were privileged to dance in the costumes which they were to wear in the saddle, even spurs being permitted.

(continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Chapman, Arthur, The Pony Express, 1932.  
 Chilcote, Gary, "Patee House History," unpublished ms., HSS files, 1974.  
 Mattison, Ray, "Patee House," Historic Sites Survey Report, 1960.  
 Work Projects Administration, Missouri: A Guide to the "Show Me" State, 1941.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 5	3 4 1 9 5 0	4 4 0 2 0 9 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The Patee House boundaries are described by the rectangular plot owned by the Pony Express Historical Association at the corner of 12th and Penn Streets in St. Joseph. The plot contains the Patee House and its industrial additions.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Stephen Lissandrello, Historian, Landmarks Review Project

ORGANIZATION

Historic Sites Survey, National Park Service

DATE

12/23/75

STREET & NUMBER

1100 L Street

TELEPHONE

523-5464

CITY OR TOWN

Washington

STATE

D.C.

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL     

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*[Signature]*

DATE

1/23/79

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

*[Signature]*

DATE

1/15/79

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

(NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARKS)

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On April 3, 1860, the Pony Express began operations between St. Joseph, Missouri, and Sacramento, California. The ceremonies were held in front of the Patee House, culminating with the cannon shot which signalled the first Express rider, at the stables two blocks west, to gallop full-tilt through town and into Kansas.

Patee House was a hotel three times, a women's college twice, and a shirt and overall factory for almost 80 years, before it became a museum. During the Civil War, the provost marshal's office was located in the building, as well as the Union Army recruiting office. In 1865, when the war left the hotel in a failing financial condition, John Patee held a lottery, selling tickets throughout the U.S. for \$2 each. When the Winning ticket was drawn April 28, 1865, Patee won back his own hotel.

Patee House was a hotel from 1858 to 1865, a Methodist women's college from 1865 to 1869, a hotel again from 1869 to 1874, and a Baptist women's college from 1875 to 1881. It was called World's Hotel in 1881, with Dr. S. A. Richmond's epileptic sanitarium located on the top floor. During this period, Jesse James was killed April 3, 1882, on the hill just a block north of Patee House at 1318 Lafayette street. His widow was interviewed at the hotel the next morning.

The building became a shirt factory in 1885. During World Wars I and II millions of army uniforms were made here. Patee House was vacated in 1957, and stood empty for five years while vandals ruined the interior. The Patee House is now owned by the Patee House Historical Association with a museum in operation since 1965.