

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**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 PropertyHistoric name: South Milford I.O.O.F. Hall

Other names/site number: _____

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/A

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

2. LocationStreet & number: 8015 E 750 SCity or town: South Milford State: IN County: LaGrangeNot 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:

 A B x C D

Signature of certifying official/Title:

Date

Indiana DNR-Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property meets 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

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>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

COMMERCE/TRADE: department store

COMMERCE/TRADE: financial institution

SOCIAL: meeting hall

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions.)

WORK IN PROGRESS

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7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions.)

LATE VICTORIAN: Italianate

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: STONE

walls: BRICK

CONCRETE

roof: SYNTHETICS: Rubber

other: METAL: iron

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.)

Summary Paragraph

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows Hall in the town of South Milford in Milford Township, LaGrange County, Indiana, is a Late Victorian-era Italianate commercial structure with good historic integrity. Built in 1893 on the northeast corner of Indiana State Road 3/Lima Road and E 750 S, the brick, two-part commercial block building was built with space for a mercantile business on the lower level and a meeting hall and offices for the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Lodge No. 619, on the upper floor. In 1910, a two-story brick and concrete block addition was built on the east side which added a bank on the lower level and expanded the meeting hall. The building is the only surviving historical commercial structure in the business center of South Milford.

Narrative Description

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The Independent Order of Odd Fellows Hall (IOOF Hall) faces south on the northeast corner of Indiana State Road 3 (SR 3)/Lima Road and E 750 S, a relatively busy intersection that serves as the commercial center of the small, unincorporated town of South Milford, Indiana. Behind the building on the north is a short alley running east between SR 3 and S 805 E. The lot directly across E 750 S to the south is vacant, but the area to the east along E 750 S is developed with residential structures on both sides of the road. Buildings along SR 3 near the IOOF Hall include two churches, a gas station/convenience store, small restaurant, and a commercial structure housing the local post office and a mechanical, electrical, and plumbing contractor business (photo 1).

Exterior

Built in 1893,¹ the IOOF Hall is a long, narrow, two-part commercial block building that spans nearly the entire length of the lot from south to north. In 1910,² a two-story addition, approximately the same width as the IOOF Hall, but half as deep, was built on the east side.

Sitting on a fieldstone foundation (photo 2), the front two-thirds of the 1893 structure is constructed of buff-colored brick whereas the rear third of the building³ features an orange-colored brick with the bricks of both sections laid in a common bond pattern of seven stretcher courses per header course. On the south elevation (photos 1 and 3), the foundation has been parged with concrete, and a three-bay, cast-iron storefront comprises the first story. The storefront's recessed middle bay, containing the main entrance and reached by a concrete step up from the public sidewalk, has a diamond-patterned, cast-iron floor. Stamped along the outer edge of the flooring are letters that read "L WINGERT"⁴ and the worn remnants of other letters. Within the doorway is a pair of wood-framed doors with glass in the upper two-thirds and carved panels below. The glass is covered with plywood. Over the doorway is a large transom window with a border of small squares of colored glass. Flanking the doorway are two tall windows with paneled bulkheads and glass transoms like that of the doorway. Framing the entrance are two, narrow cast-iron columns with fluting and bullseye details. Stamped on the columns are "L.WINGERT MONTPELIER." The two outer bays are set slightly back from the building's south edge to allow for a narrow band of the cast-iron flooring to continue along the width of the storefront. Each bay contains a large display window with transom and bulkhead like those of the entrance. Several of the smaller square glass panes of the east transom have been painted to

¹ Ira Ford and others, eds., *History of Northeast Indiana LaGrange, Steuben, Noble and DeKalb Counties*, vols. 1 and 2 (Chicago and New York: The Lewis Publishing Company, 1920), 87.

² "South Milford Odd Fellows to Erect Bank Building," *Kendallville (IN) Daily News*, 31 August 1910, 1.

³ Due to the change in brick color, the north third of the 1893 structure appears to be a later addition, but this research was not able to confirm a specific date of construction. It is visible in a c.1915 photo of the building.

⁴ The "L WINGERT" lettering likely refers to Wingert Foundry of Montpelier, Ohio. Lewis Wingert opened the foundry in 1865, and the company produced iron work for a number of buildings in Montpelier. Jacquelyn Whetro, "Montpelier Platted in 1845," *Bryan (OH) Times*, 2 July 1976, Section IV, 1; and "Historical and Architectural Resources of Montpelier, Ohio, 1875-1950," accepted 19 April 2001.

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appear like stained glass. As a protection measure, the storefront, with the exception of the doors and columns, are covered in metal panels from the outside.

Evenly spaced on the second story of the south elevation are two tall, narrow windows topped with brick segmental arches. As a protective measure, the windows have been covered with metal panels, and the windowsills have been covered in stone-colored aluminum. Centered on the façade just below the cornice is a limestone panel that reads "I.O.O.F. HALL 1893." The simple decorative metal cornice, painted black, has evenly-spaced, orange-colored corbels.

The foundation of the west elevation (photos 3 and 4) has also been parged with concrete. The façade itself is visually divided into three bays. On the first story of the south bay, toward the north side, there are two small, single windows placed high on the wall with sills that have been wrapped in stone-colored aluminum. In the center of the middle bay is an entrance with a solid metal door and transom topped with a brick segmental arch. To the south of this is a wide square window opening with metal sill. To the north is a narrow doorway, for access to the second story, topped with a brick segmental arch. The third bay is the portion of the building constructed with the orange brick. In its center, at grade level, is a wide doorway containing two solid metal doors. The transom over the doorway is topped with a brick segmental arch. Flanking the doorway are two narrow, segmental arched windows with painted metal sills.

On the second floor of the south bay there are two, small single windows, with aluminum-wrapped windowsills, placed widely apart. The middle bay contains one tall, narrow widow placed slightly offset from the center. It is accented by a brick segmental arch, and its windowsill is wrapped in aluminum. The north bay contains three tall, narrow windows spaced evenly across the façade. They are topped with brick segmental arches and have painted metal sills. With the exception of the doorways containing solid metal doors, all openings on the west elevation have been covered with metal panels as a protective measure. A stepped down roofline adds further visual interest to the façade.

The foundation is not visible on the north elevation (photos 4 and 5), though there is a section of concrete retaining wall that extends from the northwest corner of the building to approximately the center of the wall. There are no openings on this elevation. Along the bottom of the north bay of the east elevation, near the south side, is a small area of wall that has been infilled with concrete block. The only openings on the entire elevation are two tall, narrow windows topped with brick segmental arches and with metal sills placed evenly within the north bay.

The 1910 structure is constructed of buff-colored brick very similar to that of the original building, but only on the south façade (photos 1 and 3) and in a running bond pattern. The east and north elevations (photo 6) are built of rock face concrete masonry units. Also similar to the original building, the south façade contains a three-bay storefront on the first story. The recessed middle bay, containing the main entrance and reached by a concrete step up from the public sidewalk, has a concrete floor. Within the doorway is a single wood-framed door with glass in the upper two-thirds and raised panel below. The glass in the transom over the door has been painted. Two tall windows, each with painted transom glass, flank the door. Within the entrance area, the ceiling is covered with painted, stamped tin tiles. Each of the two outer bays contains a

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large, wood-framed display window with transom and concrete sills. They are currently covered with plywood panels as a protective measure. On the second story are two tall, narrow windows topped with brick segmental arches matching those of the original building except with concrete sills. They are currently covered with metal panels. Giving the building a cohesive appearance, the simple decorative metal cornice of the original building continues onto the addition.

On the north elevation (photos 5 and 6), the only opening is a single, centered entrance door that was recently cut into the wall. Four windows with concrete sills and lintels are evenly spaced across the first floor of the east elevation (photo 6). The two closest to the north side are taller than the two near the south side. Along the second story are three windows with concrete sills and lintels. Two windows near the north side are in line with the two windows on the first story, while the third window is in line with the first story window nearest the south side. The windows are all covered with plywood.

Interior

The 1893 building was constructed with space for a mercantile business on the lower level and a meeting hall and offices for the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Lodge No. 619, on the upper level. The 1910 addition was built to house a bank on the lower level and to expand the meeting hall.⁵ Overall interior features include painted plaster walls, some covered in aging and peeling wallpaper, wood floors, and original wide wood molding surrounding windows and doorways.

Work is currently underway to rehabilitate an area of the first floor for use as a coffee shop which will encompass the front half of the 1893 building and the entire 1910 addition. In the 1893 building, the coffee shop will feature an open seating area in the front with a hallway along the west wall, and about half the length of the west wall, leading to two bathrooms. The bathrooms will be entered by doors in the east wall of the hallway. There will be a work/storage area between the east bathroom walls and the east wall of the building.

Long-standing water in the basement of the original building caused many of the floor joists to rot. After work was done to remediate the water, new posts and joists were constructed (photo 2). Many of the original floorboards were saved and will be re-installed. On the east wall of the first floor (photo 7), in the front of the former mercantile space, some of the plaster has been removed to reveal the brick structure. An original wide opening to the addition toward the north side of the wall remains and a new opening to match has been made toward the south side of the wall. On the south wall (photos 7 and 8), the wood surround of the storefront is painted white, and the doors are flanked by narrow, fluted wood columns. Still visible on the west wall (photo 8) are the ghost outlines of the casework used by the mercantile. Two windows, framed in wide wood molding painted white, are placed high on the wall. The ceiling of the coffee shop space is comprised of wood planks (photos 7 and 8).

Immediately adjacent to the hallway and bathrooms, to the north, is the rear area of the former mercantile space. Currently it is a large open area with plywood flooring and a large window and

⁵ "South Milford Odd Fellows to Erect Bank Building."

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entrance door on the west wall. New stairs to the second floor will be constructed east of the bathrooms. Near the middle of the north wall and leading west are the stairs to the basement. East of the stair entrance is a wide opening to a garage on the north end of the building (photo 9). Not including the garage, the ceiling in this space matches that of the coffee shop area. The garage is unfinished space with exposed brick walls and concrete floor.

The first floor of the 1910 addition is divided into two rooms. The larger south room (photos 10 and 11), which functioned as the banking area, has a mix of flooring materials including narrow, wood boards and plywood on the west side, and original tile, featuring a geometric design in cream and dark brown, on the east side. On the east wall (photos 10 and 11) are two, wood-framed, one-over-one, double-hung windows. Each is topped with its original wide, brown-stained wood casing. The remaining window casing is missing. The wide, wood trim and baseboards of the storefront (photo 11), also stained dark brown, is largely intact. On the west wall are the two wide openings into the 1893 building. Toward the west side of the north wall (photo 10), with its original wide, wood baseboard which has been painted gray, is the former bank vault which still retains its ornate cast-iron surround and vault door. Toward the east side of the north wall is a doorway into a room on the north end of the addition. Covering the ceiling of the bank space are the original stamped tin tiles.

The north room of the addition, likely originally used as office space for the bank, has largely been stripped of its original features. While there are some areas of plaster walls, drywall is being installed to cover them as well as the windows on the east wall. Plywood currently serves as the flooring. In the middle of the north wall is the recently opened doorway, and toward the north end of the west wall is a doorway into the original building.

On the second floor, details throughout include painted and wallpapered plaster walls, wood floors, and a dropped ceiling. Small areas of the ceiling have been opened up to reveal the original plaster ceiling above. Also present are the original wide, darkly stained, wood baseboards and trim around the windows and doors. When the building was built, the only stair access to the second floor was by an exterior first floor door on the west elevation. Once the new staircase is built within the first floor space, it will lead to the Meeting Hall which spans the full width of the front of the building. In the Meeting Hall, the wood flooring is covered in red carpeting. The plaster walls are covered with wallpaper in the area above a darkly stained chair rail and painted below. The east (photos 12 and 14) and west walls (photo 13) each have two, wood-framed, one-over-one, double-hung windows. The apron of the windows is in line with the chair rail. The four windows along the south wall (photo 14) are of the same design except they extend below the chair rail.

Off the northeastern corner of the Meeting Hall (photo 12) is a doorway with glass transom opening into a long narrow storage room that also houses mechanical equipment. There is a small double-hung window on the east wall, and on the west wall is a doorway into Room 1 that is also accessible from the Meeting Hall through a wide doorway, with pocket doors, at the top of the new stairs (photo 13). Along the west wall of Room 1 is built-in storage trimmed with beadboard. On the north wall (photo 15), a doorway leading to Room 2 is toward the west side, there is a closet in approximately the middle, and there is a doorway toward the east side leading

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to Hallway 1. Room 2 has a window in the middle of the west wall, closet in the northwest corner, and doorway at the north end of the east wall that opens into Hallway 2. Hallway 1 (photo 15), a short, narrow space running north to south on the east side of the building, has built-in cabinets along the east wall. At the north end of Hallway 1 is a doorway connecting to Hallway 2. Accessed from the south side of Hallway 2, and opposite the closet in Room 1, is a small bathroom. On the west side of where Hallway 2 terminates is a staircase, with balustrade of turned wood balusters on the south opening, down to the original exterior entrance to the second floor (photo 16). Where Hallway 2 terminates at the north is a doorway into Room 3 with three double-hung windows on the west wall and two double-hung windows on the east wall. Extending from the middle of the east wall, and between the windows, is a small closet housing mechanical equipment. There are no historical baseboards or door or window trim in Room 3.

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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.)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

1893 - 1910

Significant Dates

1893, 1910

Significant Person (last name, first name)

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder (last name, first name)

Wingert Foundry

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Period of Significance (justification)

The period of significance begins in 1893, with the construction of the IOOF Hall, and ends with the completion of the 1910 addition.

Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)

N/A

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 Milford IOOF Hall housed the meeting hall for the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Lodge No. 619, from the time of its construction in 1893 until circa 1955. Of the usual array of fraternal and social clubs found in cities and towns, it is the only known historic meeting place of its kind in South Milford. In 1910, the lodge planned and built an addition that initially housed a local bank.

The South Milford IOOF Hall is significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion C in that it embodies the distinctive characteristics of type, period, and method of construction as a locally significant example of a 19th-century, two-part commercial block building with Italianate-style elements. The building is the only surviving historical commercial structure in the business center of South Milford.

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

The South Milford IOOF Hall was an important institution for the town, from the time it was built in 1893 until circa 1955,⁶ the upper floor served as the meeting space for the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Lodge No. 619.

With roots in Europe, early secret societies and fraternal orders in America were established in New England by groups of colonial leaders whose ideas influenced the founding of the United

⁶ Monica Rowe, IOOF Hall property owner and life-long South Milford resident. Email to Jill Downs, 31 March 2023, Fort Wayne.

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States. Later organizations formed across the country for civic engagement and entertainment purposes, and to elevate one's social status.⁷ In 1896, total organizational membership was estimated to be 5.4 million with the three largest orders being the Masonic, Odd Fellows, and Knights of Pythias.⁸ Between the 1870s and the 1930s saw the largest participation in such organizations,⁹ including in LaGrange County, Indiana. The first Masonic lodge in the county was organized in 1849 in Lima/Howe, with later Masonic lodges organized in the towns of LaGrange, Wolcottville, and Topeka. Knights of Pythias lodges were organized in Howe and LaGrange, and Independent Order of Odd Fellows lodges were organized in Wolcottville, LaGrange, Topeka, Shipshewana, and South Milford.¹⁰

The Independent Order of Odd Fellows (IOOF), one of the oldest and largest fraternities in the world,¹¹ strives to "visit the sick, relieve the distressed, bury the dead and educate the orphan."¹² Non-political and non-sectarian, members of the IOOF promote the principles of friendship, love, and truth, and seek to impart moral principles exemplified through story, drama, and symbols adapted from Medieval trade guilds. The IOOF promotes a tolerance and understanding among people of different walks of life.¹³

The earliest known references to "Odd Fellows" and "lodges" occurred in 18th-century England. Such lodges were "formed by workingmen for social purposes, and for giving the brethren aid and assisting them to obtain employment when out of work." Different branches of Odd Fellows became known as "Orders." In 1813, the "Independent Order of Odd Fellows, Manchester Unity Friendly Society" was formed in Manchester, England, when several Odd Fellows lodges split from the Union Order and set about issuing charters and establishing lodges throughout England. The American Order was formed in Baltimore, Maryland in 1819 by five English Odd Fellows headed by Thomas Wildey.¹⁴ The IOOF in America grew, and in 1851, evolved to accepting female members.¹⁵ By early 1887, almost 600,000 men and women were IOOF members.¹⁶ Two years later there were IOOF lodges in every state, and by 1896, the IOOF was the largest among all fraternal organizations.¹⁷

⁷ Ruth Massingill, "The founding and development of secret societies and fraternal orders and their influence on modern American society," *International Journal on Social and Education Sciences* (IJonSES), 5(1), 99-110. 2023, <https://doi.org/10.46328/ijonsses.415> (accessed 20 Sept 2024).

⁸ W.S. Harwood, "Secret Societies in America," *The North American Review* Vol. 164 (May 1897): 617, 620, <https://archive.org/details/jstor-25118819/page/n3/mode/2up> (accessed 20 Sept 2024).

⁹ Massingill.

¹⁰ *History of Northeast Indiana*, vol. 2, 85-88.

¹¹ Independent Order of Odd Fellows, "Odd Fellows," <https://odd-fellows.org/about/odd-fellows/> (accessed 27 February 2023).

¹² Independent Order of Odd Fellows, "Our Mission," <https://odd-fellows.org/about/our-mission/> (accessed 27 February 2023).

¹³ "Odd Fellows."

¹⁴ Theodore A. Ross, *Odd Fellowship: Its History and Manual* (New York, The M.W. Hazen Co., 1888), 2, 9-10, 588, 591, <https://archive.org/details/oddfellowshipit01rossgoog/page/n29/mode/2up> (accessed 27 February 2023).

¹⁵ Independent Order of Odd Fellows, "History of American Odd Fellowship," <https://odd-fellows.org/history/wildeys-odd-fellowship/> (accessed 4 March 2023).

¹⁶ Ross, 2.

¹⁷ "History of American Odd Fellowship."

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The first IOOF lodge in Indiana was established in New Albany in 1835,¹⁸ and the first IOOF lodge in LaGrange County was established in 1855. In 1886, the South Milford IOOF Lodge 619 was organized with 11 charter members, and by 1919, had grown to 157 members. At that same time, it was the only meeting lodge in South Milford.¹⁹ The chapter went defunct in 1969.²⁰

The IOOF Hall is locally significant under National Register of Historic Places Criterion C. Built in 1893 and expanded in 1910, it is a two-story, two-part commercial block building with architectural features associated with the Italianate style. A news story about the 1910 addition proclaimed the IOOF will have “one of the finest lodge buildings in the state.”²¹ It is also the only surviving historical commercial structure in the business center of South Milford.²²

The origins of the two-part commercial block building may be traced to Roman antiquity when many urban buildings contained shops at street level and living quarters on upper levels. Used for small and moderate-sized commercial structures throughout the United States between the 1850s and 1950s, the building type is typically two to four stories in height and is characterized by a horizontal division into two distinct zones reflecting the differences in the interior use. The street-level zone indicates public spaces such as retail stores, a bank, or hotel lobby, while the upper zone suggests more private spaces such as hotel rooms or a meeting hall. This design is followed in the IOOF Hall as the first floor was built with street-level public entrances for a mercantile store and bank and the second floor space was largely open to accommodate large gatherings of people such as would happen with lodge meetings. The architectural features of two-part commercial block buildings reflected the tastes of the time period in which they were built. At the time the IOOF Hall was built, the diversification of uses between the first and upper stories had become more obvious. Storefronts were constructed with large expanses of glass within window frames and thin cast-iron columns on the first story,²³ as reflected in the IOOF Hall’s design. Cast iron, in its application to commercial buildings, developed hand-in-hand with the Italianate style. Many of New York City’s cast iron fronts were the earliest of their kind in the 1850’s and were Italianate in style.

The Italianate style, popular between 1855 and 1890, is one of the most common styles in Indiana. Used for public, commercial, and residential buildings, identifying features include a heavy bracket work and a wide entablature; tall, narrow windows with hooded, arched, or decoratively treated window lintels; and details of cast-iron or sheet metal on public or commercial buildings.²⁴ While relatively simply detailed, the IOOF Hall displays elements of the style in its wide, decorative cornice accented with brackets uniting both sections of the building,

¹⁸ Ross, 378.

¹⁹ *History of Northeast Indiana*, vol. 2, 165, 87.

²⁰ James Romack, Indiana GE IOOF. Email to Jill Downs, 7 March 2023, Fort Wayne.

²¹ “*South Milford Odd Fellows to Erect Bank Building*.”

²² Indiana Department of Natural Resources, State Historic Architectural and Archaeological Research Database, <https://secure.in.gov/apps/dnr/shaard/welcome.html> (accessed 11 February 2023).

²³ Richard Longstreth, *The Buildings of Main Street* (Washington, D.C.: The Preservation Press, 1987), 24-41.

²⁴ Indiana Department of Natural Resources, “Italianate Style,” <https://www.in.gov/dnr/historic-preservation/learn-about-topics/buildings-and-bridges/architectural-styles/italianate-style/> (accessed 4 March 2023).

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the brick segmental arched windows, and use of cast-iron columns within the storefront of the original building. As noted in the description, Wingert Foundry of Montpelier, Ohio, appears to have manufactured the storefront elements.

In late July of 1928, the business district of South Milford was virtually destroyed by a fire. Starting in a grocery store on the west side of SR 3 and spreading to nearby structures, a strong southwest wind helped the fire leap across SR 3 where it destroyed or damaged more buildings. Lost to the fire were the grocery store, an onion storage building, the opera house, the Church of Christ, the South Milford hotel, a garage and implement business, the LaGrange County Telephone Exchange, a meat market, and a hardware store. Three barns and several residences were also affected. The bucket brigades that had been called to help fight the fire succeeded in saving the IOOF Hall, although the windows were broken by the heat.²⁵

The second floor of the IOOF Hall was designed exclusively for use by the IOOF Lodge No. 619, but was vacant for a long period of time after they stopped meeting there circa 1955. Between about 1980 and 1989, it was used as office space for J.O. Mory, a local mechanical, electrical, and plumbing contractor, but has since been vacant again. There currently are no plans to rehabilitate the space.²⁶ The first floor of the 1893 building was initially rented by the Keller Company for use as a mercantile. Later merchants included Will F. Kline and Mory and Sons. Since about 1955, the space had been vacant until the work started for the coffee shop.²⁷ The 1910 addition was built to house The Farmers Bank, organized in South Milford that same year²⁸ and operated by J. Keller and Co., as well as to expand the IOOF meeting hall on the second floor.²⁹ The Farmers Bank later became People's Bank and finally South Milford State Bank.³⁰ After South Milford State Bank closed in 1931,³¹ the space was never again used in that capacity. It was later used as a hair salon³² and then for the service department for J.O. Mory. It had been vacant since about 1982 until the work started for the coffee shop.³³

Developmental History/Additional historic context information

South Milford, Indiana, is a small, unincorporated town located in Milford Township in LaGrange County, near the northeastern corner of the state. Situated along State Road 3/Lima Road, it is approximately 13 miles southeast of LaGrange, the county seat.

²⁵ "\$50,000 Loss is Caused by Fire at So. Milford," *Garrett (IN) Clipper*, 2 August 1928, 3.

²⁶ Mike Rowe, IOOF Hall property owner and long-time South Milford resident, interview by Jill Downs, 10 March 2023, South Milford.

²⁷ Monica Rowe, IOOF Hall property owner and life-long South Milford resident, interview by Jill Downs, 10 March 2023, South Milford.

²⁸ *History of Northeast Indiana*, 57.

²⁹ "South Milford Odd Fellows to Erect Bank Building."

³⁰ Monica Rowe.

³¹ "Two Small Banks Close," *Hammond (IN) Lake County Times*, 17 January 1931, 15.

³² Monica Rowe.

³³ Mike Rowe.

South Milford I.O.O.F. Hall

Name of Property

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As the land in the area was suitable for cultivation, early settlers arrived in the area from Southern Michigan and from Fort Wayne, located to the south along the Fort Wayne and Lima Road. While there is some question as to which settler was first, whomever it was, it is said that he arrived sometime in the early 1830s.³⁴ LaGrange County, named for the home of General LaFayette near Paris France, was organized in 1832. The county was then divided into townships with Milford Township being one of the last to be formed in 1837.³⁵ As more settlers arrived, schools were built, and business interests sprang up including a country store, a hotel, and wagon and carriage shop. It wasn't until 1856 that the village of South Milford was created when John A. Bartlett and Francis Henry laid out 47 lots on Section 32.³⁶ In about 1893, the Wabash Railroad was constructed through South Milford, just south of the IOOF Hall. By 1920, the businesses of South Milford consisted of the typical retail stores and shops needed to support the surrounding farming community.³⁷ In 1928, South Milford's population was approximately 500.³⁸

³⁴ *Counties of LaGrange and Noble, Indiana. Historical and Biographical* (Chicago: F.A. Battey & Co., 1882), 242

³⁵ *History of Northeast Indiana*, 27, 28.

³⁶ *Counties of LaGrange and Noble, Indiana. Historical and Biographical*, 253.

³⁷ *History of Northeast Indiana*, 165.

³⁸ "\$50,000 Loss is Caused by Fire at So. Milford."

South Milford I.O.O.F. Hall
Name of Property

LaGrange County, IN
County and State

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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South Milford I.O.O.F. Hall

Name of Property

LaGrange County, IN

County and State

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Ross, Theodore A. *Odd Fellowship: Its History and Manual*. New York: The M.W. Hazen Co., 1888. <https://archive.org/details/oddfellowshipit01rossgoog/page/n29/mode/2up> (accessed 27 February 2023).

Rowe, Mike. IOOF Hall property owner and long-time South Milford resident. Interview by Jill Downs, 10 March 2023, South Milford.

Rowe, Monica. IOOF Hall property owner and life-long South Milford resident. Email to Jill Downs, 31 March 2023, Fort Wayne.

Rowe, Monica. IOOF Hall property owner and life-long South Milford resident. Interview by Jill Downs, 10 March 2023, South Milford.

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"Two Small Banks Close." *Hammond (IN) Lake County Times*, 17 January 1931.

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South Milford I.O.O.F. Hall
Name of Property

LaGrange County, IN
County and State

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): 087-690-35093

10. Geographical Data

Acres of Property less than one acre

South Milford I.O.O.F. Hall

Name of Property

LaGrange County, IN

County and State

Use the UTM system

UTM References

Datum (indicated on USGS map):

☐ NAD 1927 or ☒ NAD 1983

- | | | |
|-------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. Zone: 16 | Easting: 644198 | Northing: 4599459 |
| 2. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 3. Zone: | Easting: | Northing: |
| 4. Zone: | Easting : | Northing: |

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

The boundaries of the Hall include the entirety of lots 24 and 25 of the Citizens Addition to the Town of South Milford, Indiana.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundaries of the Hall encompass the property associated with the significant resources of this nomination during the period of significance.

South Milford I.O.O.F. Hall
Name of Property

LaGrange County, IN
County and State

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Jill Downs
organization: on behalf of Monica and Mike Rowe, property owners
street & number: 1202 Elmwood Avenue
city or town: Fort Wayne state: IN zip code: 46805
e-mail jdowns1908@gmail.com
telephone: (260) 437-1192
date: September 23, 2024

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.)

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

South Milford I.O.O.F. Hall

LaGrange County, IN

Name of Property

County and State

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 Milford I.O.O.F. Hall

City or Vicinity: South Milford

County: LaGrange

State: IN

Photographer: Jill Downs

Date Photographed: February 17, 2023

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

- 1 of 16. South and east elevations, looking northwest.
(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0001)
- 2 of 16. Basement looking northwest.
(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0002)
- 3 of 16. South and west elevations, looking northeast.
(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0003)
- 4 of 16. West and north elevations, looking southeast.
(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0004)
- 5 of 16. North and east elevations, looking southwest.
(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0005)
- 6 of 16. North and east elevations, looking southwest.
(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0006)
- 7 of 16. Mercantile (front), looking southeast.
(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0007)
- 8 of 16. Mercantile (front), looking southwest.
(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0008)
- 9 of 16. Mercantile (rear), looking northwest.

South Milford I.O.O.F. Hall

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LaGrange County, IN

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(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0009)

10 of 16. Bank, looking northeast.

(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0010)

11 of 16. Bank, looking southeast.

(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0011)

12 of 16. Meeting Hall, looking northeast.

(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0012)

13 of 16. Meeting Hall, looking northwest.

(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0013)

14 of 16. Meeting Hall, looking southeast.

(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0014)

15 of 16. Room 1, looking north into Room 2 (left), closet (middle), and Hallway 1 (right).

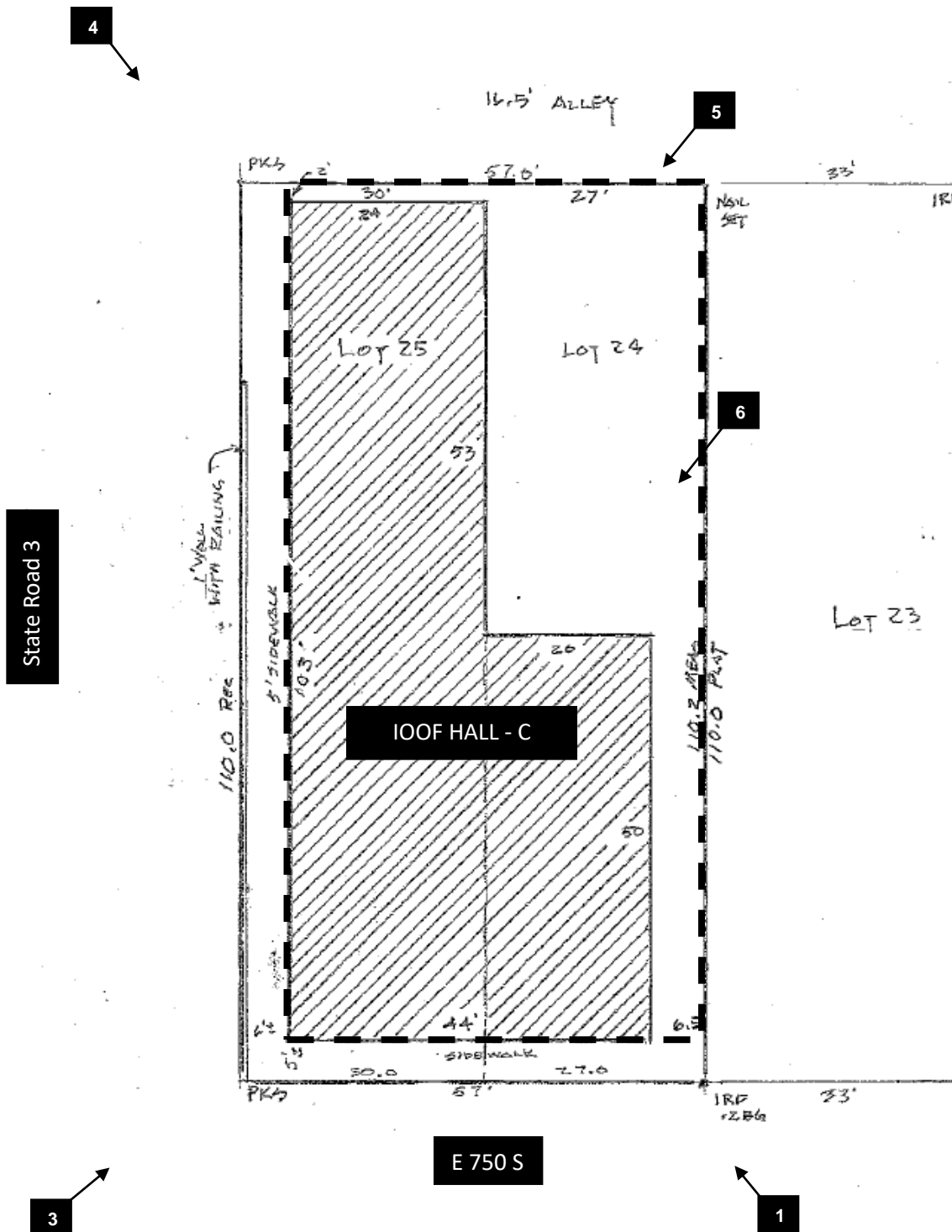
(IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0015)

16 of 16. Hallway 2, looking southwest into Hallway 1 (left), bathroom (middle), and

Room 2 (right). (IN_LaGrangeCounty_ SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0016)

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.



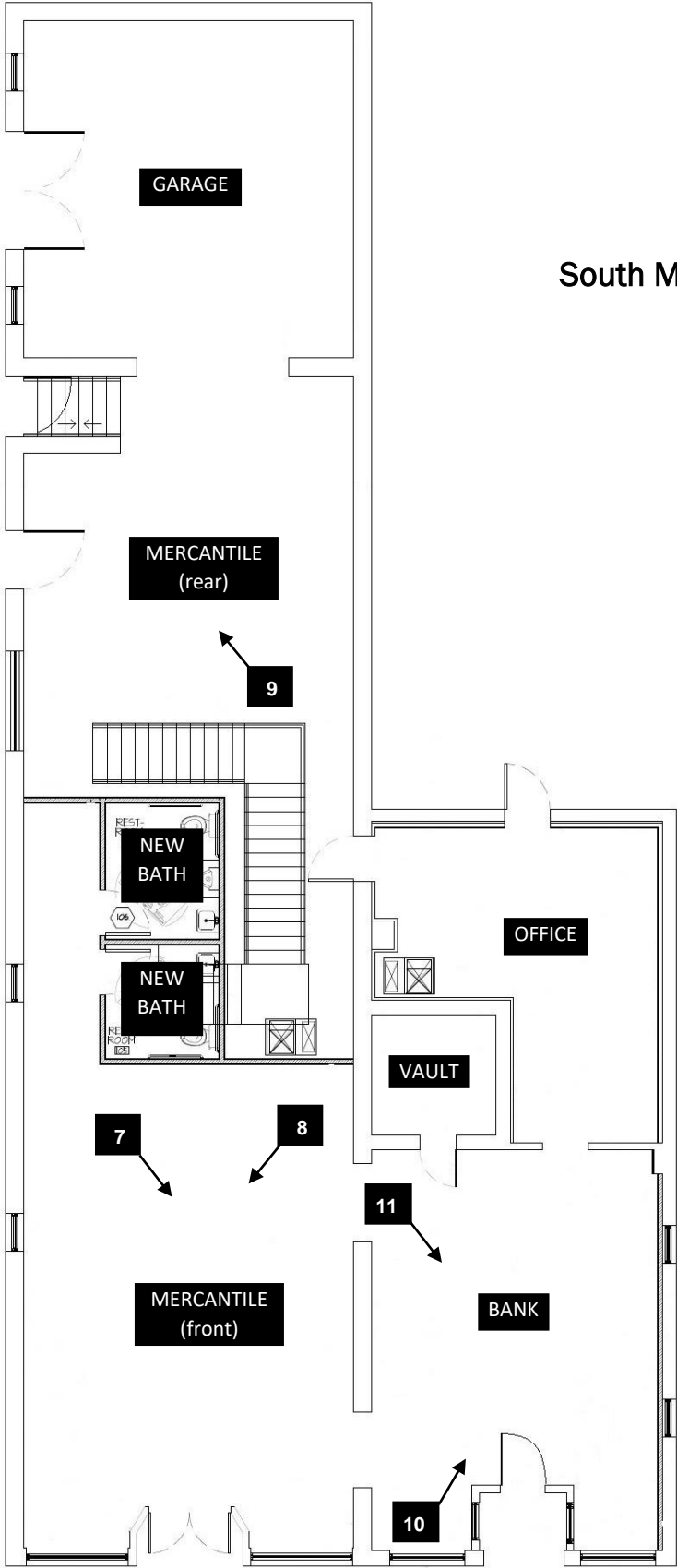
I.O.O.F Hall
 8015 E 750 S
 South Milford, LaGrange County, Indiana

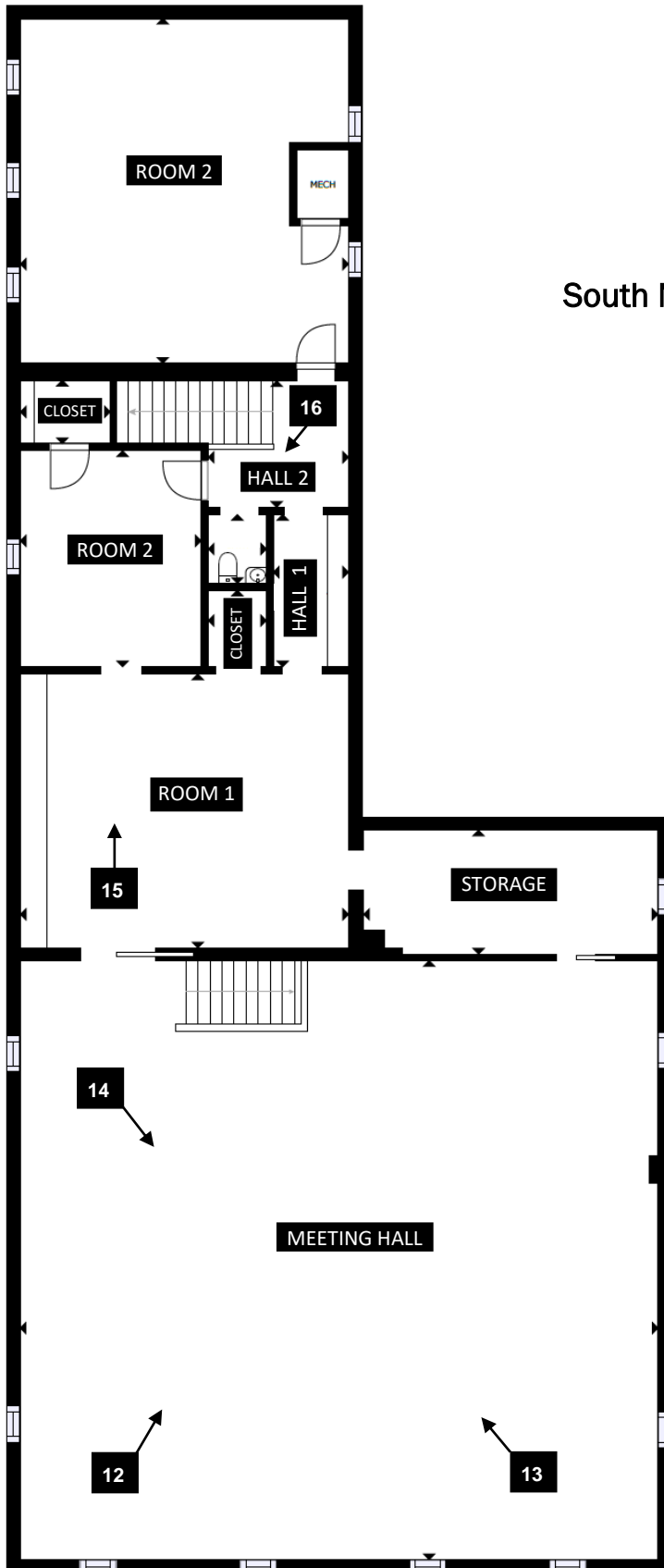
Site Plan

= photo  - - - - = boundary

I.O.O.F Hall
8015 E 750 S
South Milford, LaGrange County, Indiana
First Floor Plan

= photo 

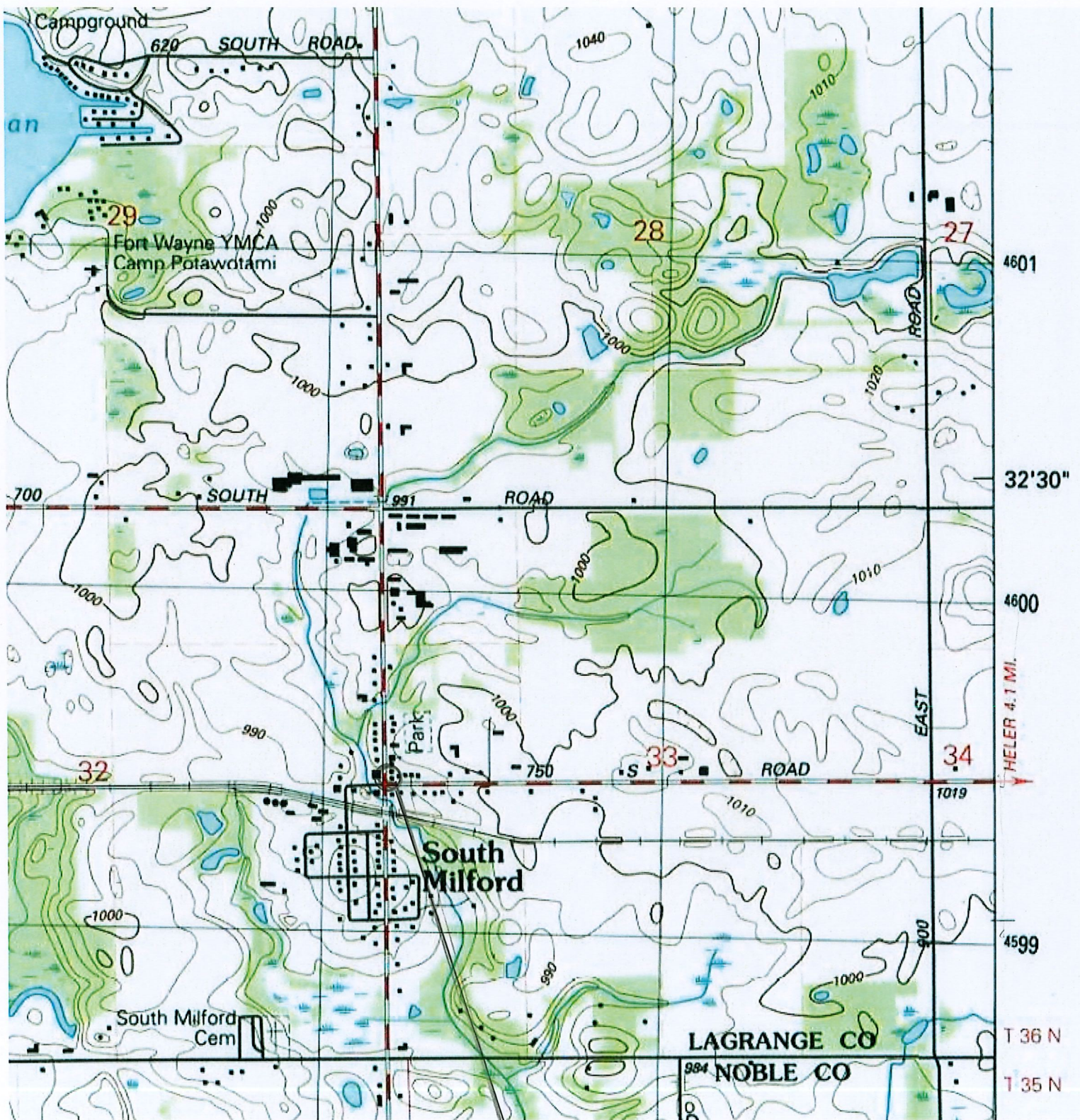




I.O.O.F Hall
8015 E 750 S
South Milford, LaGrange County, Indiana
Second Floor Plan

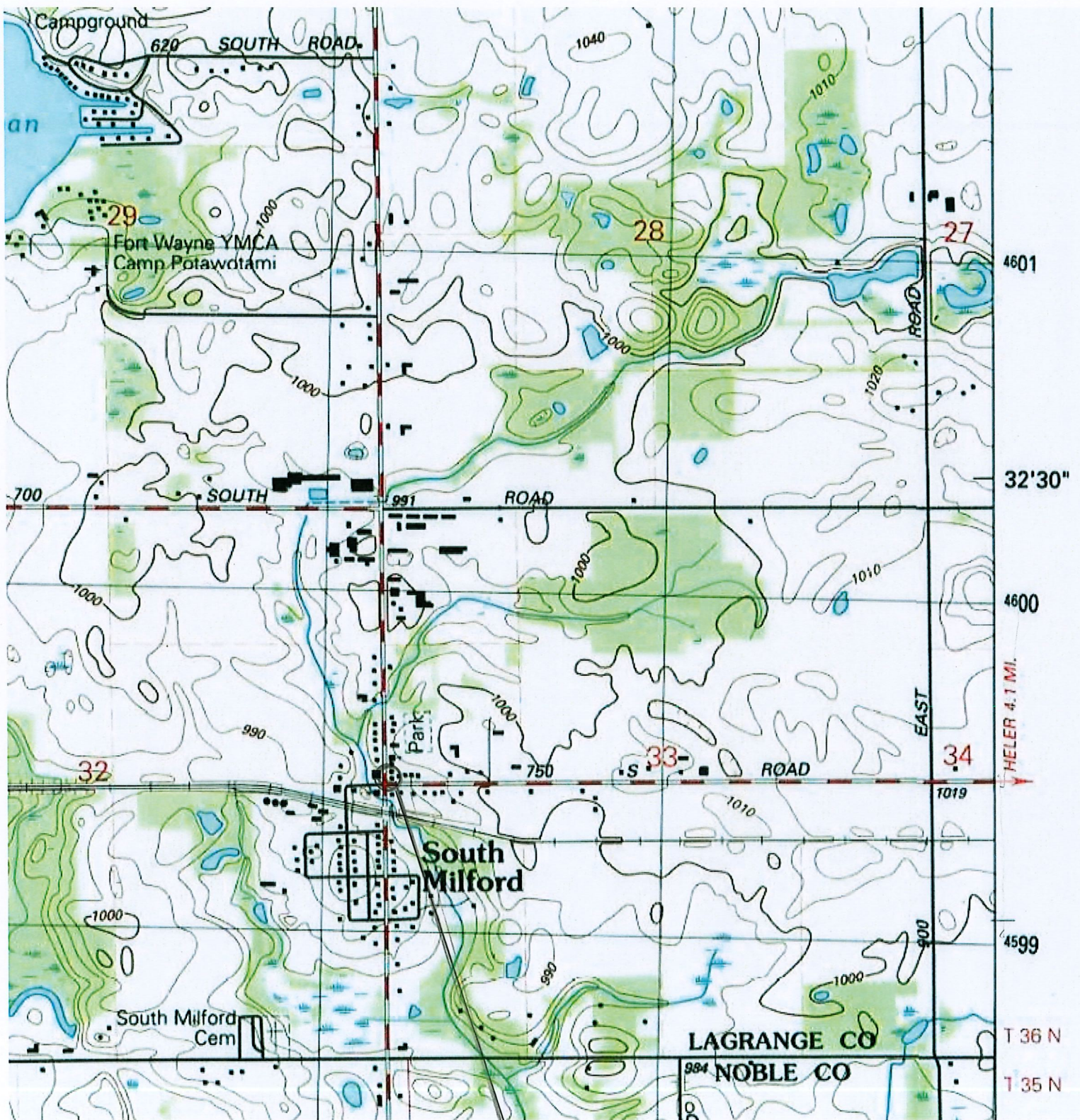
= photo





NAD 83 UTM =
16 644198 4599459

South Milford
I OOF Hall
8015 E 750 S
South Milford, LaGrange Co, Indiana



NAD 83 UTM =
16 644198 4599459

South Milford
I OOF Hall
8015 E 750 S
South Milford, LaGrange Co, Indiana



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0001



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0003



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0004



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0005



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0007



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0010



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0011



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0012



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0014



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0015



IN_LaGrangeCounty_SouthMilfordIOOFHall_0016