

**United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

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

**1. Name**

historic *Christian Bechdel II House*

and/or common

**2. Location**

street & number *Along Liberty Two. Rd. LR 14056  
on the southern Bank of Marsh Creek* \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town *Liberty Twp.* \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district *23*

state *Pennsylvania* code *42* county *Centre* code *027*

**3. Classification**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input checked="" 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 *John L. and Margaret S. Thomas*

street & number *Box 192*

city, town *Blanchard* \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state *Pennsylvania 16826*

**5. Location of Legal Description**

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. *Centre County Courthouse*

street & number *Allegheny Street*

city, town *Bellefonte* \_\_\_\_\_ state *Pennsylvania*

**6. Representation in Existing Surveys**

title *Centre County Historic Sites Survey* has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date *1980 (site #027-4-63)* \_\_\_\_\_ federal \_\_\_\_\_ state  county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records *Centre County Library and Historical Museum*

city, town *Bellefonte* \_\_\_\_\_ state *Pennsylvania*

## 7. Description

### Condition

excellent  
 good  
 fair

deteriorated  
 ruins  
 unexposed

### Check one

unaltered  
 altered

### Check one

original site  
 moved date \_\_\_\_\_

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Christian Bechdel II House, built in 1831, is a well preserved Georgian-style brick dwelling. This two-story rectangular structure is 42 ft. 8 in. long and 32. 6 in. wide; it follows the five bay, centre hall, four-over-four plan. Resting on a partially exposed stone basement, the building's brick work is done in Flemish bond on the front facade and Common bond on the rear and side facades. Crowning each of the gable and walls are two brick chimneys joined by a parapet. The single-gable, medium-pitched roof originally covered by wood shingles was changed in approximately 1920 to its present galvanized roofing.

Windows throughout the dwelling are single-hung and are framed by simple wood sills and transom bars. All windows on the first floor are six-over-nine lights, while the second floor windows and those in the gables of the end walls are six-over-six lights. The first floor windows are accompanied by the original pannelled shutters; the second floor windows have fixed slat louvers (with the exception of shutters and louvers removed from one end wall). Also intact are hand-wrought S-shaped holdback fixtures.

The most distinctive architectural item of the house is a Palladian window on the front facade, in the central bay of the second story. The main body of the window is a single-hung, six-over-six light topped by a semicircular fanlight. Flanking this are windows of three lights topped with simple squared heads.

Directly below the Palladian window is the main entrance. Its door is topped by a rectangular five-light transom window and is flanked by half-length side lights consisting of four panes. This part of the entrance is recessed behind plain pilasters and a simple cornice. The space below the side light as well as the door jambs are done in complementary recessed panels.

Although the exact date is undetermined, porches of wood construction were added to the front and rear somewhat prior to 1925. The more elaborate front porch of Chinese Chippendale style is enriched by railing with square balusters and porch porch with open framing. Cutout pattern ornamentation hangs beneath a simply designed entablature which is covered by a flat low-pitched roof. Centered on the rear facade is a small, rectangular, semi-enclosed porch. Topped by a hipped roof, this door-framed and sided addition sheids two doors of six-panel design. Access to the kitchen is provided by the left rear door; above this are two windows that are nestled together, the right window of which aligns with the door. The other window is set to its left. The right rear door enters into the central hall, while just above this door, at approximately half-wall height, is a window which serves the landing. Centered on the remaining portion of the rear wall are one first-and one second-story window.

The structures symmetrical design is again picked up by the placement of the windows in both end walls. Here, the four windows of the first and second-story are alined in somewhat squared position. The window on the first floor are vertically alined with those on the second floor. This alinement is closely set to the outer edge of the wall. The southern wall's gable portion (the front facade facades faces eastward) has one six-over-six window which is centered between the two chimney shafts that rise independently from the lower floors. In contrast to this arrangement are two six-over-six-light windows situated in the gable portion of the northern end wall. Here, one single window flanks the outer side of each shaft. Centered between and slightly higher than the windows of this wall is the datestone. Inscribed on a small recessed brick face are Christian Bechdel II's initials (CB) along with two small spoked-wheel ornaments and the date 1831.

Within the interior of the house little has changed from the original. No major structural changes have been made; the only alterations were enlargement of one doorway, bricking-up two of ten fireplaces, and creation of several openings in the flooring from the addition of plumbing, electricity, and oil heat was put in, five of the remaining fireplaces were paneled shut with wood, though these could easily be opened to exhibit the original brick work and hearth.

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INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Bechdel II House

CONTINUATION SHEET

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The main entrance of the house opens into a central hallway. A staircase on its right side leads to the second and attic floors; underneath runs a stairway to the basement. The left side of the hallway leads to a rear entrance. To the left of this central hall are two parlor rooms. These front and rear rooms are connected by two double sets of folding doors of ten-panel design. Each of these rooms is complemented by simply paneled pilastered mantelpieces; the detail of both differs only slightly by design of the mantelpieces; the detail of both differs only slightly by design of the mantelpiece shafts. The fireplaces of these and the homes other rooms are set parallel to the end walls. They intrude somewhat into the interior space of their respective rooms since the chimney shafts are internally placed. The first floor rooms each have a six-panel door which leads into the central hallway. These are enclosed within molded frameworks, and are decorated by bulls-eye corners. In addition, the doors have fixtures of hand-wrought iron. On the opposite side of the house, the right front room has had its door removed to create a large open entrance-way to the hallway. To the rear of this room is the kitchen. Though it has been modernized with a wood burning stove, range, and refrigerator, there are no built alterations.

The majority of the chair-railing in the house survives. This two-piece railing continues into the central hall, ascending alongside the stairway through its two-thirds level. The stair railing is of simple rounded oversailing supported by square balusters. It is accented with turned newels at its button ends and below its mitre-return at the landing level. This design is continued between the second floor and attic.

On the second floor are four equally sized bedrooms, each with its own fireplace (except one removed from the rear right room); the rooms open into a central hallway through individual doors. These doors are enclosed within molded frameworks which are not as ornately crafted as those of the first floor. This contrast between the first floor and second floor can also be seen in the window treatment; the second-floor jambs are flat, whereas the first floor has recessed panelled jambs. Simply framed wood closets have been added to the two rear bedrooms. Still many of the original peg clothing hooks remain. The second floor hallway has been somewhat altered; in its front section a partitioned bathroom was added. In the attic, the roof framing of hardwood pegged rafters and collar ties are intact and sound.

In addition to the house, there are three other structures which lie within the site boundaries. A six-by-eight-foot milk house constructed of wood framing and siding was built in 1910. Also, there is a similarly constructed 10-by-16-foot garage built in 1914. There also is a 1-by-2-foot wood-covered well of an undetermined date.















