

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Weidenboerner, John E., House
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 20 North Michael Street not for publication n/a
city, town St. Mary's vicinity n/a
state PA code PA county Elk code 047 zip code 15857

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> buildings(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>One</u>	_____ buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	_____	_____ sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	_____	_____ structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	_____	_____ objects
		<u>One</u>	<u>None</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
n/a

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Dr. Brent Glass, Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this 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

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC--single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

SOCIAL--civic

7. DescriptionArchitectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Italianate

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation sandstone

walls brick

roof asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The John E. Weidenboerner House is a detached two-story brick residential structure, designed in the Italianate style. It was built in 1880, the first house in a neighborhood immediately adjacent to the central business district of this rural community. The house is built on a rise, and rests upon a stone foundation. The structure is oriented on a north-west-to-southeast axis with its principal mass measuring 37'x28'. An original two-story brick ell, 14'x16', extends in a northeasterly direction from the left rear of the building. The integrity of the resource is uncompromised, despite its 30-year use as a center for local Girl Scouting activities. The uncompromised character of the Weidenboerner House has been enhanced further by a 2-year rehabilitation program begun in 1990 which has included the restoration of damaged ornamental plasterwork, the cleaning of the floors of the principal spaces, the application of period-appropriate wall coverings and lighting fixtures, and the stabilization of the exterior.

The facade (Photo 1) is the building's most distinctive exterior element, and features a five-bay configuration with a centered double doorway. The main entry contains a pair of flat-topped wood doors with paneled lower sections and upper sections of glass. The door assembly is set into a segmental-arched void and is capped with a transom of art glass. Windows are segmental-arched as well, one-over-one lights, set upon extended stone sills and capped with stone lintels featuring incised ornament. At cornice height is a corbeled brick treatment, including five recessed brick panels which correspond to the five bays of the facade as a whole. Historic photos reveal that this building never had one of the elaborate cornices associated with so much of the architecture of the 1880s. An original open veranda with a shallow hipped roof extends across the facade and is supported by a series of six posts and two pilasters, articulated with turned and sawn ornament (Photo 2). A band of curvilinear dentils extends along the soffit of the porch roof.

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National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**Section number 7 Page 2**JOHN E. WEIDENBOERNER HOUSE**

St. Mary's Elk County, Pennsylvania

7. Description, Page Two

The side and rear elevations of the Weidenboerner House are detailed very simply [Photo 3]. Along the right side of the building is a one-story bay window trimmed with a modest dentil band. Windows on the sides and rear are flat-topped. The paneled brick treatment of the facade extends along the right side of the house, but not on the left or rear. A small porch is situated in the angle of the ell and is shielded by a shed roof. This element replaced an earlier porch at the same approximate location; the newer porch's position is in an interior corner of a non-principal elevation and in no way compromises the integrity of the resource as a whole.

The interior of the Weidenboerner House originally is arranged on a four-over-four room plan with a central hallway and a kitchen ell at the rear. The conventional four-over-four plan was modified somewhat in that the large area on the first floor to the right of the hallway was not bisected into two rooms. The central hallway and all major elements of the original plan survive intact [Photo 4]. The hallway features a substantial straight-run stair with a walnut newel, handrail, and turned balustrade [Photo 5]. Most woodwork is intact and original; the baseboard and door and window surrounds feature the heavy molding characteristic of the period. The principal rooms on the first floor are highlighted by plaster crown molding and ceiling medallions, all original and in good condition. Framing an arch at the bay window on the first floor is molded plaster ornament [Photo 6]. Some fireplace mantels are original, others have been modified, and some have been removed since the original time of construction. The floors in the principal rooms retain their original wood finish. Walls are of plaster and are either painted or papered with period-appropriate wall coverings.

There are no outbuildings associated with this property.

The building served as a residence until the 1950s; since that time it has been used as the center for the local Girl Scout activities. Beyond normal "wear and tear" the integrity of the building has been threatened very little. In 1990, the above-referenced renovation project was begun. The property has been rehabilitated in a sensitive and architecturally-compatible manner. This renovation consisted of the complete updating of the mechanical systems, the stabilization of the veranda, interior plaster repair, interior painting and wallpapering, and the application for and receipt of a Certificate of Occupancy from the state.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1881

Significant Dates
1881

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The John E. Weidenboerner House is a locally significant example of the Italianate style of architecture within the context of the Borough of St. Mary's, Pennsylvania. This particular mode is not well represented in the residential architecture of this rural Pennsylvania community.

Distinctive exterior elements characteristic of the Italianate style include the tall, narrow window proportions and the turned and sawn ornament on the veranda. On the interior, the heavily molded woodwork, the ornate plaster treatment, the monumental stair, and the floor-to-ceiling dimensions are all characteristic of the period. Of equal importance is the fact that all of these distinctive Italianate qualities are intact and uncompromised in this particular resource. The only Italianate feature which is not exhibited on the Weidenboerner House is the typical cornice was never constructed on this particular building.

St. Mary's was founded in 1842 as "Marienstadt" by the German-American Catholic Brotherhood. Immigrants met in Baltimore and Philadelphia to discuss the feasibility of establishing a new settlement to escape the anti-immigrant feelings of the times on the East Coast. An exploration team was sent out and eventually settled on the site of the present town. The early economy was based on farming, but by the 1880s had grown to depend upon the timber and coal deposits found in the area. As the community grew, so did the merchant class, and it was from the fortunes of merchandising that John Weidenboerner built his new home after the Fire of 1880.

The house is also important as the town's most intact example of the architecture which arose immediately from the ashes of the fire of July 25, 1880. This major conflagration destroyed much of the downtown, including the store of merchant J. E. Weidenboerner, the builder of the nominated resource. Weidenboerner (1835-1914) came to St. Mary's as a child of ten.

See continuation sheet

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

JOHN E. WEIDENBOERNER HOUSE

St. Mary's, Elk County, Pennsylvania

8. Statement of Significance, Page Two

He learned the cobbler's trade from his father, but soon entered the study of civil engineering. After service in the Civil War, he returned to St. Mary's and was becoming a successful merchant at the time of the 1880 conflagration. After seeing his business wiped out, he purchased a centrally-located downtown tract at the corner of "the Diamond," and began the erection of a new business building and home. By the spring of 1881, the local newspaper reported, "Workmen are busily engaged on the two new buildings of John Weidenboerner." By September, it was reported that "the dwelling house of J. E. Weidenboerner is progressing finely. When finished it will be an ornament to the town."

Weidenboerner lived in this home until his death in 1914. It remained in the ownership of his heirs until 1950. A 1952 local history noted

The store [now drastically altered from the original] and residence are some of the few early landmarks still standing in mute recognition of pioneer perseverance.

In 1953 the Weidenboerner House was purchased for the use of the St. Mary's Local Council of Girl Scouts; it retains this use to the present.

The inclusion in the nomination of a closely associated resource such as Weidenboerner's Store would be justified but for the fact that the store has been altered beyond recognition and no longer retains enough integrity to be considered as an historic resource. Originally a simple brick commercial structure with a storefront on the first story and a three-bay facade on the second, the building was later used by the Farmers' and Merchants' Bank; it continues to be used as a bank at the present. Completely clad in contemporary materials and with no evidence suggesting its original function, the store building shares only physical proximity--no longer historical association--with the home of its builder.

As simply ornamented as the Weidenboerner House is, it remains a significant local interpretation of the Italianate style and a locally-acknowledged landmark for its historical associations. The community's recovery from the 1880 fire was slow, and by the time high-style homes were being built with the fortunes of new ventures, the fashions had changed and the local interpretations of the Colonial Revival style were in vogue

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Section number 8 Page 3

JOHN E. WEIDENBOERNER HOUSE

St. Mary's, Elk County, Pennsylvania

8. Statement of Significance, Page Three

(e.g., 122 and 138 center Street). Most other neighborhoods throughout the community developed later than the area in which the Weidenboerner House is situated. These sections of the community were drastically compromised by the application of synthetic siding, the removal of porches and other detail, etc. Further, the very earliest buildings in the community are no longer standing and those built in the later years of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century exhibit design characteristics of the various styles popular during the present century.

9. Major Bibliographical Referen

Schaut, Charles J. Early St. Mary's and Some of Its People 1838-1931 (Clearfield, Penn-
sylvania: Kurtz Brothers, 1952), pp. 10, 16, 18, 21, 39, 42, 43-45, 141.
Elk County Gazette, 7/26, 10/21, 12/16/1880; 5/12, 8/11, 9/15, 11/17/1881.
The Daily Press, 9/25/1914.

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A

1	7
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7	0	3	6	8	0
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4	5	8	9	0	6	0
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Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property corresponds to the deed recorded in Elk County, Pennsylvania, Deed Book 117, Page 432, dated May 13, 1953 and recorded May 29, 1953.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Boundary reflects the legally recorded boundary lines for the single lot upon which the resource is sited.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title David L. Taylor, Preservation Consultant date February 6, 1992
 organization _____ telephone 814-849-5321
 street & number 150 Valley Street city or town Brookville state PA zip code 15825

