

## **Bonne Terre, Missouri - Survey Report**

### **Bonne Terre, Missouri -An Historical Overview**

The early history of Bonne Terre is capsulated in a promotional publication produced by the St. Joseph Lead Company in 1892. Written by J. Wyman Jones, "A History of the St. Joseph Lead Company," provides insight into the early years of the company and the formation of Bonne Terre. Wyman was president of the company from 1865 to 1904 and played an instrumental role in the development of the Bonne Terre mines.

Lead is a prized mineral which has been mined and utilized during much of recorded time. Accounts of lead mining and archaeological ruins date back thousands of years to the beginning of civilization in Egypt, Greece, and throughout the Middle East. Lead has been used for a variety of implements and combined as an alloy with other metals. Lead was one of the first minerals mined in North America and deposits were found in limited quantities across the eastern United States.

During the late 18th century, explorers in the Mississippi Valley region found large quantities of lead ore in the central and southern sections of Missouri. Some small mining efforts were undertaken in the early 19th century but it was not until after the Civil War that large scale mining efforts were begun. Dozens of mines were opened throughout central and eastern Missouri and several large companies were formed in New York and Chicago to exploit the state's mineral wealth. The large quantities of lead produced in Missouri found their way into a variety of new and improved uses such as in paint, in glass manufacture, in electric batteries, and in sheets for hard metal uses.

The area around the present site of Bonne Terre was known by the French who did limited surface mining in the area in the 18th century. The mineral wealth of the area so impressed these miners that it was named "La Bonne Terre", or the "good earth." Surface mining was later continued by property owner Anthony LaGrave before the Civil War and the area's substantial lead deposits became widely known. This tract of land was known as the "LaGrave Mines" with LaGrave obtaining the property through U.S. land grants and Spanish land grants.

The potential of the LaGrave Mines resulted in the formation of the St. Joseph Lead Company on March 25, 1864 in New York City. This company was incorporated with a capital of one million dollars and in April purchased 946 acres of land from LaGrave for \$75,000. J. Wyman Jones was named president in 1865 and organized the first efforts of large scale mining at the site. Wyman visited the site which was then largely

wilderness and thirteen miles away from the nearest railroad. Despite its remoteness and the crude mining techniques employed, Wyman was impressed with the possibilities for the mines and brought in various professionals to take charge at the site.

A group of Cornish miners were brought to the site by the company and J.C. Winslow served as the first superintendant. The company constructed several buildings and a small mining camp composed of small log residences were built at the site. The most promising area was along the banks of Turkey Run where horizontal sheets of ore were found six to eight inches thick and from four to six feet below the ground. Early mining techniques included the uncovering of the sheets of ore, blasting them into blocks, and then conveying them to the mill. The mill was a wooden structure containing a crusher and rollers which ground the ore into fine particles. The ore was then separated from the embedded limestone through a process known as "jigging" and then conveyed to a furnace where the lead was smelted into bars or "pigs" weighing seventy-two pounds. The bars of lead could then be transported by wagon to the railroad for shipment to plants across the country.

These mining techniques were employed during the company's early years of operation in the late 1860s and were found to be of limited profitability to the company. The company was encouraged by the quantities of ore at Bonne Terre but continually examined methods to extract the ore in a more efficient manner. Work was often halted by inclement weather and in summer Turkey Run would frequently dry up completely leaving the mining operation without water to run the jigging process. Despite these problems an inventory of the company's property in May of 1867 included a number of houses, a stable, furnaces, engines, crushers, and other equipment totaling over \$60,000 in value.

Surrounding the mining operation were several dozen residences and other buildings. As in the case with many early mining communities these early buildings were crudely constructed and of a temporary nature. Sketches and photographs of Bonne Terre from this period show a collection of one- and two-story frame and log dwellings with numerous outbuildings such as stables and barns. The majority of these are small, single room log structures with gable roofs and exterior stone chimneys. Wooden picket fences were also common to pen livestock and separate dwellings from the milling operation. All of these early log dwellings were later razed to make way for more substantial buildings and none are known to survive to the present.

The fortunes of the St. Joseph Lead Company improved considerably following the hiring of Charles B. Parsons in 1867. Parsons had worked for a number of years in mining

operations in Massachusetts and was hired by the company to be superintendant at the Bonne Terre mines. Parsons purchased new machinery, hired additional workers and streamlined the operation of the mines. The finances of the company were also improved following the hiring of H.N. Camp in 1868 as treasurer.

The most significant improvement to the Bonne Terre mining operation in its early years was the purchase and employment of a diamond drill. The diamond drill was invented in 1869 by a Vermont company and consisted of a boiler and engine on wheels which revolved a hollow iron pipe into the ground. At the end of this pipe were small diamonds which cut into the rock and could go to a depth of 500 feet. Through this process core samples could be brought to the surface which could enable the company to know the location of the best lead ores underground. The drill was purchased by president Jones and brought to Bonne Terre in March of 1869. Accompanying the drill was engineer Albert Shepard who was hired to be chief operator of the drill.

Initial testing of the drill proved its usefulness and a rich core sample was produced resulting in the boring of a vertical shaft into the area. Throughout the early 1870s large shafts were dug into the ground and seams of ore were followed horizontally through the rock for hundreds of yards. Large rooms were eventually excavated through the mining operations which employed mules and mining cars on tracks to remove the ore. The increased productivity of the mines necessitated the construction of numerous new furnaces, mills, storage buildings, and other mill buildings. During these years the company purchased an additional 1,000 acres of land in the Bonne Terre vicinity believed to contain lead deposits.

The ore produced in the Bonne Terre mines was galena or lead sulphides, being in a combination with sulphur, and when separated was about 86% lead. These lead deposits were interspersed within the limestone which was the primary rock underlying the Bonne Terre area. The lead ore was often found in thick strata of 60 feet thick and covering several acres. The Bonne Terre mine was one of several opened in the east central section of Missouri in these years and the area soon gained national prominence as the center for lead mining in the country.

The increased productivity and profitability of the Bonne Terre mines led to the construction of more substantial frame dwellings during the late 1860s and 1870s. Engineer Albert Shepard and his wife constructed a two-story frame building in 1869 as both their dwelling and a hotel. This building was constructed with a rear two-story wing and originally had a separate one-story frame kitchen. The building was erected at 203 E. School Street and around 1900 was moved to its present

location on Main Street. This building continues to stand and is the oldest residential structure known to exist in Bonne Terre.

The community continued to grow in the early 1870s and on April 19, 1876 a post office was established. An earlier post office at this location had been called Bontear but the 1876 spelling changed the name to two words "Bonne Terre." The 1870s also witnessed the laying out of the original town plan and the construction of residences along Church, Main, School, and adjacent streets. As laid out by company engineers, the plan of Bonne Terre was unusual in not following a standard grid pattern. The community was designed with the main streets converging at a central public park area adjacent to the mines.

This public park area was the location for the company's offices, stores, and other buildings and streets radiated out from this park in a northwest and southwest direction. School, Main, and Church Streets were the widest streets laid out and were designed to be the home to company managers, foremen, and other officials. Additional streets were laid out at right angles to be the area for worker residences. To the west of Division Street a section for worker housing was also laid out which became known as "Bogy Town" and additional areas for worker housing were located on the hill to the east of the mines. This area of worker housing located on the hill was populated largely by workers from Hungary and this section of Bonne Terre became known as "Hunky Hill."

The plan for Bonne Terre combined most public and company buildings in a compact area at the intersection of School, Main, and Church Streets. A triangular shaped park was located at this intersection complete with a gazebo. To the east of this community center was the mill complex of the lead company while to the west were the primary residential areas. This layout took advantage of the flat terrain and the prevailing winds also protected the residential areas from the smoke and fumes emitted from the mills.

The earliest remaining residences in Bonne Terre were constructed in the 1870s. These include the Shepard House on Main Street and the Superintendent's House on Oak Street. The Superintendent's House was built of stone construction in a T-plan with rounded arch windows and eave brackets. This building was later enlarged in the early 20th century but its original stone section remains visible.

The dates of construction of the worker housing is less clear and it is not known if any of the existing dwellings were constructed in the 1870s or instead date to the 1880s and 1890s. Accounts of the period do not discuss the construction of the worker housing and the replacement dates of the early log dwellings with frame dwellings by the company is not

known. Balloon frame construction of frame dwellings was a common occurrence in the post-war years and the company could have erected some areas of the worker housing at this time. Analysis of the designs and construction techniques of the existing worker dwellings suggests that most were constructed after 1885 but some earlier dwellings may also exist.

A description of Bonne Terre from 1879 survives and states that the dwellings were mostly "small, unpainted buildings of box construction usually of two rooms with an attic reached by an outside stairway." Only a few larger frame residences were noted and many log dwellings continued to be occupied. The superintendant's stone house and a frame residence owned by the Desloge family (now razed) were considered "palatial" by the town's standards. This description indicates that most buildings in the town continued to be small worker houses and the majority of the existing residences were built after 1880.

A map of the community was also published by the company in 1884 which further illustrated the development of Bonne Terre. By this time a number of large residences had been built on Main Street, Church Street, School Street and Park Street. The first building occupied by the Congregational Church was located on Church Street and numerous company buildings were on Main Street west of the mining area. Worker housing was located to the east of the mining area on "Hunky Hill" and a section populated by black workers was to the southeast of the mines.

In addition to the development of the Bonne Terre mine by the St. Joseph Company an adjacent mine was opened directly to the north by the Desloge Mining Company. This tract of land was originally owned by the Pratte family and as the Bonne Terre mine proved profitable the family sold the land to Firman Desloge. Desloge immediately began mining operations and constructed a mill, furnace, and sank several shafts. This mine was located across the road from the St. Joseph property and the road became known as Division Street (now Benham Street) to signify the separate property of the two mining enterprises. To the west of the Desloge mills a residential area was laid out on a grid pattern for worker and manager housing. Streets in this residential area were named for Desloge's daughters Jane, Louise, and Zoe.

Both the St. Joseph and Desloge mining operations were hampered by the lack of direct rail connections in the 1870s. The ore produced by both mines had to be hauled by oxen and mules to the Iron Mountain Railroad on a road which was impassible many times during the year. To alleviate transportation problems the St. Joseph Company and the Desloge Company combined their capital to construct a narrow gauge railway from Bonne Terre to the town of Summit on the Iron Mountain Railroad. Tracks were run adjacent to the mills

and in January of 1880 the line was completed. Known as the St. Joe and Desloge Railroad, the line greatly increased the shipping facilities of both plants and proved to be a profitable venture for the companies.

The St. Joseph Lead Company mining operation was temporarily setback in February of 1883 when the main mill complex was destroyed in a fire. The fire razed the main section of the mill and resulted in a loss of a quarter of a million dollars. The company decided to rebuild immediately and set out to construct a new complex of brick and iron mill buildings with completely modern equipment. The construction of the mill went speedily and by July milling operations at the Bonne Terre mine had resumed.

Throughout the 1880s additional lands were purchased by the St. Joseph Company including the Penn Diggins tract northeast of the town. This tract was purchased for its timber but a shaft was later sunk and found to contain a large quantity of lead ore. A major acquisition of the firm was the purchase of the Desloge Lead Company's property following the destruction of the company's mill by fire in 1886. These purchases increased the holdings of the St. Joseph Company by over 3,000 acres at a cost of \$400,000.

By the mid-1880s, the narrow gauge railway to Summit was no longer economically viable to the St. Joseph Company and it was decided to construct a new railroad eastward to the Mississippi River. This route would give the company direct access to river transportation and save on hauling and shipping costs. The Mississippi River and Bonne Terre Railroad Company was organized and completion of the thirty-two mile line occurred in 1890. The construction of this railroad enabled the company to move its smelting furnaces from Bonne Terre to the Mississippi River and the community of Herculaneum was created to house this operation. A large two-story, Queen Anne style railroad station was constructed at Bonne Terre to serve passenger and freight traffic and is the only existing railroad building in the community.

By 1891, the St. Joseph Mining Company had become one of the major mining companies in the state. Between 1884 and 1891, the mines produced an average of 12,000 tons of lead per year worth over three million dollars. Its mill complex was considered to be one of the most modern in the country and the company owned thousands of acres of productive timber and mining lands. During the 1880s, dozens of residences to house company workers were constructed and by the early 1890s the population of Bonne Terre was estimated at 4,000 to 5,000 residents.

A wide variety of house styles and forms were built in the residential areas of Bonne Terre during these years. Several streets and areas have been identified as having standard

plans particularly in the Hunky Hill section and on A, B, and C Streets. For the most part, however, the St. Joseph Company appears to have allowed substantial flexibility in residential design by its workers and encouraged home ownership. In his description of the company in 1894, president Wyman Jones outlined that while the company supplied homes, "the building of houses by the employees themselves has been encouraged, and at least 250 of the men own their own homes." The land itself was largely owned by the company although some lots were sold to the employees.

This level of home ownership and variety of residential construction is in marked contrast to many company towns which evolved in the country during the 19th century. Company towns were built for a variety of industries such as cotton mill towns in the Piedmont, coal towns in the Appalachians, and mining communities in the West. Many of these communities were marked by a limited number of standard house forms and floor plans. The St. Joseph Company appears to have been especially solicitous towards its employees and encouraged variety as opposed to conformity.

This relationship between the company and its employees was recognized in 1891 by an official of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. In a letter to the St. Louis newspapers the official stated that the company was "the most striking example of an ideal corporation I have had the pleasure of coming in contact with." The company was commended for supplying a company store yet "the company leaves each employee free to trade where he pleases, without any discrimination or fear of losing his job." The official also commended the company for its philanthropy towards its employees and maintenance and upkeep of streets and residences. The fact that the official insisted on making his report a public record indicates that the St. Joseph Company was the exception, rather than the rule, in its operation and management.

In addition to the residences built by the company, numerous public buildings and offices were erected by the St. Joseph Company. These buildings included a company store, lyceum, library, and school. The company also erected a bathhouse and swimming pool for its employees which was known as the Natatorium. These buildings were largely clustered around the intersection of Main and School Streets just to the west of the milling complex.

The company store was a two-story frame structure which was operated by the St. Joe Company and sold a wide variety of merchandise. Despite the existence of the store the St. Joseph Company allowed private merchants to also operate stores in Bonne Terre and by 1890 almost two dozen dry goods, grocery stores, and drug stores were in operation in addition to the company store. The majority of these businesses were

located along East and West School Street and a sizeable commercial area arose on these blocks by the late 19th century.

The company also donated land for the construction of churches in Bonne Terre and congregations of the Methodist, Catholic, Baptist and Congregational Churches all had their beginnings in these years. The St. Joseph Catholic Church was organized in 1873 and had its original church constructed on St. Joseph Street. The Baptist congregation organized in 1882 and built a one-room church on Fite Street in 1888. A Congregational Church was formed in 1878 and a church was erected on Church Street the next year. The Methodists were also active in these years, organizing in 1882 with a church completed in 1885.

By the early 1890s, Bonne Terre was a thriving community with most residents employed by the St. Joseph Lead Company. The 1894 Sanborn Insurance Map of the community shows that the majority of dwellings were located to the east of present day Division Street. While some commercial buildings and dwellings were shown on the west side of the street few other residences existed and the map shows this area as containing "scattered dwellings beyond." The streets composing the original Desloge residential section along Jane and Louise Streets are shown as are the black residential area southeast of the mill.

In addition to the large lead mills the community also contained a large flour mill operated by W.E. Fite on Division Street and over two dozen stores and shops. The Shepard House continued to be a well known hotel and several other hotels were in existence including the M.A. Brown Hotel which still stands on School Street. Most buildings continued to be of frame construction with only a few commercial buildings of brick or stone construction.

Significant buildings completed during the 1880s and 1890s included the Lyceum which was built as a community hall. This building still remains on School Street although it has been extensively altered. Another major building was the Farmers' and Miners' Bank of Bonne Terre which was a one-story stone building completed on the south side of Main Street. This building is one of only a few stone building completed in the community before the end of the century and it retains its original design. The main section of the Natatorium survives from this period as do several commercial buildings along School Street.

By 1900, many of the existing buildings on Main Street and Church Street had been erected and represent the most significant collection of late 19th century high style residential architecture in the city. The influence of the Queen Anne style can be seen on several of the blocks. Other



residences at the turn of the century were built with the influences of the Colonial Revival style which came into popularity in the 1890s.

In addition to the high style residences, dozens of modest worker residences were built in the Bogytown and Desloge sections of the community as well as interspersed on streets adjacent to Main, Church, and School Streets. These residences were both one- and two-story frame residences built in Folk Victorian forms of the period. Common forms included I-House designs, T-plan, or gable front and wing forms, and gable front forms. The majority of these residences were built with exterior siding of weatherboard, stone or stone pier foundations, interior brick chimneys, and detailing confined to millwork at the eaves or porches. Most residences appear to have been built as single-family dwellings although a number of duplexes and other multi-family dwellings also exist from this period.

From 1900 into the 1920s, the community of Bonne Terre was at its height and was one of the most significant mining communities of east central Missouri. The St. Joseph Lead Company continued to expand in these years and many new residences and commercial buildings were constructed. Another major industry, the Bonne Terre Foundry, was started around 1904 and occupied a large plant on Grove Avenue. This iron foundry shipped iron products on the adjacent railroad and was an important industry of the town for many years. In 1907, the population of Bonne Terre was estimated at its peak, totaling some 7,000 residents.

Buildings constructed during this time period included the Company Store and YMCA on School Street and the Administration Building on Elm Street. Both buildings were designed in the English Tudor style and represent the largest non-industrial buildings constructed by the St. Joseph Lead Company. These buildings are excellent examples of this style and remain as two of the most prominent buildings in Bonne Terre.

The responsibility of governing Bonne Terre was exercised during the late 19th and early 20th centuries by the St. Joseph Lead Company. The county sheriff and constables provided local law enforcement and the St. Joseph Company assumed responsibility for street maintenance, electricity, and other utilities. With the coming of World War I, a number of townspeople pushed for incorporation of Bonne Terre and in 1917 the town's first government was created.

The town of Bonne Terre incorporated in 1917 with a commission form of government with a mayor and two city councilmen. The first mayor was Robert Sellors who was followed by Dr. Lee Turley. Dr. Turley served until 1920 when Dr. Hicks Matkin was elected mayor who then served in this

office until his death in 1951. Following incorporation, the city government provided utility service and other municipal functions. A dispute over stock laws erupted in the early 1920s and attempts were made to change the town government, however, these efforts proved unsuccessful and the original form of government remained in effect.

The 1920s continued to be prosperous ones for the St. Joseph Lead Company and Bonne Terre. The mill was again updated with modern machinery and a large chat conveyor was put into operation. The limestone residue of the lead extracting process, or "chat", had previously been dumped outside the town but the company changed this policy in favor of a central dumping area. This elevated conveyor ran from the mill across Benham Street and dumped the chat into an abandoned mining area. This chat pile grew steadily for several decades to become one of the major landscape features of the town. New buildings such as the Machine Shop and Supply House were constructed by the St. Joseph Company during the 1920s.

The Bonne Terre Chamber of Commerce was formed in 1922 to attract new businesses and commercial development to the town. A number of new businesses formed in these years, the most notable of which was the Rice-Stix Shirt Factory which opened in 1923. Transportation to Bonne Terre was also improved with the creation of the new concrete highway (U.S. 67) to St. Louis. Despite the gradual reduction of the town's population during the 1920s, Bonne Terre remained a thriving community with many new commercial buildings constructed in the downtown area and brick and frame Bungalows erected in residential areas.

The Depression years hit Bonne Terre hard and the St. Joseph Lead Company was forced to layoff workers for long periods of time. Many workers left the town for work elsewhere due to the scarcity of employment. Some found jobs working on government projects such as the construction of sidewalks and the paving of streets but most workers in Bonne Terre suffered through the hard times with the St. Joseph Company.

With the coming of World War II, the demand for lead products increased for war materials and the St. Joseph Company expanded their operation and constructed new buildings. Following the war, the St. Joseph Company experienced a strike in 1948 and later found itself with a product that was no longer profitable. The company gradually phased out many of its mining operations and in 1961 the mining operations were permanently closed. The company continued to have a presence in the community for several more years but the local offices were discontinued after 1976. The closing of the St. Joseph Lead Company's offices brought an end to one hundred years of its close association and involvement with Bonne Terre.

Today, Bonne Terre has a population of just over 3,600 residents who work in various industries in the town or commute to work in neighboring communities. Many of the original residences built at the turn of the century remain and the town possesses a large collection of historic residential and commercial architecture. Most new development has taken place in suburban areas to the east and south of the original community and the historic character of Bonne Terre remains. In recent years Bonne Terre has gained fame for its underwater diving opportunities in the old mine shafts beneath the town. Several bed and breakfast facilities have opened to cater to divers and renovation has recently occurred on the Mississippi River and Bonne Terre Railroad Depot. Promotion of the town's historic resources is also a goal of the Old Bonne Terre Association which is actively involved with promoting the rehabilitation of the Shepard House. The distinguished heritage of Bonne Terre is expected to continue to be an important part of future economic development of the community.

## Residential Architecture of Bonne Terre

The earliest residences constructed in Bonne Terre were structures to house the miners and managers of the St. Joseph Lead Company operation. The majority of these were of a temporary nature and historic photographs and drawings show many one-story log dwellings and small frame houses scattered to the west and east of the mill complex. These appear to have been vernacular or Folk Victorian house types typical of frame and log construction built in Missouri in the mid-19th century.

As the mining operation began to assume a more permanent nature several substantial buildings were erected in the late 1860s and 1870s. The Shepard House (#121) is the oldest known residential building standing in Bonne Terre and was completed around 1870 to serve as a residence and hotel. This building has been moved from its original location and is presently sited on Main Street. The building retains much of its original floor plan and detailing including interior architrave molding around doors and windows. The house was built in an I-House plan with central chimneys and a large rear ell wing. The building is in poor condition but plans are underway for its renovation.

Another notable structure built in the 1870s was the Superintendant's House constructed on the hill to the southeast of the mill complex. This building was erected to house the company superintendent and his family around 1870 and was originally an Italianate style residence of stone construction. This building was enlarged and transformed into a Colonial Revival design ca. 1920. While elements of the original design exist the residence is more reflective of its remodelings of the early 20th century.

With the exception of the Shepard House and Superintendent's House, no residential buildings known to have been built in the 1870s were surveyed in the community. Following the rebuilding of the St. Joseph mill in 1883 it appears that the company embarked on a building program for its workers and numerous residences were built for its managers and other officials employed by the company. The town's plan was formalized with Church, Main, and School Streets intersecting at the public park around which the company built several commercial and office buildings. These three streets became the preferred residential area for the town's middle-class while sections containing worker housing were located to the west and east. In addition to these developments the Desloge Company also laid out a residential area to the west of their mill complex on the northern edge of Bonne Terre.

The working class sections of the town evolved primarily from the mid-1880s to the early 1900s as the town grew to its peak population. The earliest developed areas included Bogytown

west of Division Street and the Hunky Hill area to the east of the mill. The Desloge area was also developed in these years by the Desloge Mining Company. The St. Joseph Lead Company encouraged its employees to build their own houses or to at least select a design which they desired. The result was a diversity in housing forms and plans unusual for industrial communities of the period.

The number of residential structures which appear to have been built from stock plans by the St. Joseph Company are relatively few. The most prevalent design in the worker housing areas is a one-and-one-half story frame house containing a single room on both floors and a rear one-story wing to house the kitchen. A good example of this type of construction can be seen at 208 Louise Street (#114). These residences are found not only in the Bogytown and Hunky Hill sections but also in the Desloge area. Several streets in Hunky Hill contain three or four of these residences. Historic photographs show residences of this house type built by 1892 and all of those in existence could have been built during this period.

With the exception of this single room plan residence no other significant collection of identical plan worker housing exists in Bonne Terre. Other identical plan residences were also identified in the Bogytown area such as T-plan designs and I-Houses. A good example of a common T-plan residence can be seen at 310 S. Long Street (#109) while a good example of an I-House is at 219 S. Long Street (#107). It is possible that other identical plan worker houses were built in these years by the company which were later razed and replaced with other structures in the 20th century.

Between 1900 and 1908, the town's population continued to grow reaching some 7,000 residents. To meet the increased demand for housing, additional residential areas were developed in the northwest section of the community which were known as Fullerton and Settleton. Construction was also active on many of the previously developed streets in Bonne Terre. Dozens of residences were built during this period and constitute an important collection of historic architecture.

The majority of residences built in the town's working class sections during these years were vernacular designs typical of those built throughout the state. Common characteristics included balloon frame construction, exterior siding of weatherboard or shiplap, one-over-one sash windows, stone foundations, and both interior and exterior brick chimneys. The majority of residences were built with porches on the main facade which were supported by either milled or Tuscan columns. Embellishment or detailing included eave vergeboard, spindled porch friezes, variations of wood shingles in gable fields and other millwork. Some of the large homes also featured a stained or leaded glass window on the main facade.

Most common house forms of the period are represented in Bonne Terre including gable front and wing, or T-plan forms, I-Houses, and gable front plans. These residences are dispersed throughout the community and no one house form is dominant in a particular section. Good examples of T-plan residences can be seen at 115 Allen Street (#10) and 310 S. Long Street (#109) which retain their original design. I-House forms include the residences at 219 S. Long Street (#107) and 302 Hill Street (#90). Gable front plans are less common but a good example can be found at 115 Jackson Street (#91).

The larger high style designs of the late 19th and early 20th century are found primarily on Church and Main Streets with others scattered along Park Avenue and adjacent blocks. These streets were designed to be the homes for the company managers and middle class residents and are larger and more substantial buildings than most in the working class sections.

Church and Main Streets contain a fine collection of Queen Anne influenced residences built from the late 1880s to the early 1900s. Common characteristics include asymmetrical form and massing, two-stories in height, high pitched gable or hipped roofs, stone foundations, weatherboard or shiplap siding, and interior brick chimneys. Decoration is often extensive consisting of milled porch columns, millwork at the gables and porch eaves, various designs of wood shingles, and stained or leaded glass lights in the windows or doors. Good examples of these residences can be seen at 242 Church Street (#66) and 47 Main Street (#129). Several residences are examples of the towered Queen Anne style such as the residence at 309 Church Street (#67).

The Colonial Revival style was also popular after 1900 with a number of Foursquare design residences built on Church, Main, and other streets. These houses were symmetrical in form with hipped roofs and classically derived decoration such as Tuscan porch columns, eave dentils, modillion blocks, and Palladian windows. This house form was especially popular between 1905 and 1920 and good examples can be seen at 118 Main Street (#136) and 118 Park Avenue (#156).

Another popular house form of the period is the Bungalow or Craftsman designed residence which became common after 1910. This house form gained prominence across the country during the 1910s and 1920s and is well represented on many streets in Bonne Terre. These residences were available from stock plans as well as through mail order firms such as Sears and Montgomery Ward. Bungalows were usually horizontal in appearance with porches on the main facade and symmetrical in form and plan. Porches often had tapered frame posts on brick piers and eaves were supported by large knee brace brackets.

Bungalows were built throughout the town and ranged from simple frame structures built in the working class sections to more elaborate brick veneer designs constructed along Church and Main Streets. Good examples of Bungalows can be seen at 16 Oak Street (#144) and 215 N. Division Street (#70).

After 1930, residential construction was limited for several decades due to the Depression and World War II. No residence built in the Art Deco, Art Moderne, or other high styles of these years were identified in Bonne Terre. In recent decades many pre-1940 residences were razed for new construction or remodeled to suit changes fashions. The addition of artificial sidings, removal of milled decoration, and replacement of original porch details were common changes to historic residences. Despite these alterations a large number of residences retain their historic and architectural character and reflect the early 20th century heyday of Bonne Terre.

### **Commercial Architecture of Bonne Terre**

The St. Joseph Lead Company built the first commercial structures in Bonne Terre to supply the needs of its miners. These early buildings were later razed and replaced with more substantial structures in the 1880s. The best remaining example of this type of structure is the old store and post office which now stands on Allen Street. This two-story frame building housed a store and post office on its first floor and meeting hall on the second floor. Although moved, the building retains its original detailing such as a glass and frame door, and decorative wood shingles in the gable field.

As the town grew and prospered in the 1880s and 1890s, several other businesses were established and a number of commercial buildings were constructed. This construction took place primarily in two locations: the area surrounding the public buildings on Main and Allen Streets; and on School Street in the blocks to the east and west of Division Street. The commercial buildings which remain on Main and Allen Street are one-story frame structures which housed barber shops and stores. They were built in symmetrical designs with large glass storefronts and were embellished with decorative shingles and eave vergeboard. Examples of these buildings are found at 11 N. Allen Street (#6) and 132 E. School Street (#178).

The Farmers and Miners Bank Company built an excellent Victorian Romanesque bank building in 1892 on Main Street (#117). This building housed the offices and vaults of the bank and is a notable example of the Romanesque style. Another important commercial building was the brick structure erected ca. 1905 to house the offices of the Farming and Cattle Company on Main Street. This building was designed with arched windows and decorative brickwork.

The largest concentration of commercial buildings developed along School Street and this area continues to be the primary commercial center of Bonne Terre. The earliest building which remain along these blocks include the two stone buildings on West School Street (#183 and #190). Both buildings are of rock faced limestone construction and were built in the 1880s or 1890s. Other commercial buildings were built of brick construction and reflect detailing of the Commercial Italianate style. Common details include storefronts with large display windows, recessed entrances, and cast iron columns. Upper facade decoration includes corbelled brickwork and decorative brick and terra cotta inlay. A good example of a commercial building from this period includes the Odd Fellows Hall at 44 W. School Street (#91).

With the growing prosperity of the community in the early 1900s several notable commercial structures were built in these years. The largest and most significant is the store and meeting hall built by C.B. Parsons on School Street in 1909 (#176). This building was designed in the English Tudor style for use as a store, offices, and YMCA. A bowling alley was installed in the building and a second floor dance hall was the site of entertainment and dances. This building was later purchased by the town of Bonne Terre and now holds city offices.

Another important commercial building was the Vallo store built on Benham Street adjacent to the Hunky Hill area (#45). This two-story brick building was completed in the early 1900s and contained a store and saloon on the first floor and meeting hall on the second floor. The building was designed with decorative brick detailing and arched windows on the second story. The store and saloon were well known in the community throughout the 20th century.

Most other commercial buildings constructed in these years continued to be built along West and East School Streets. Several of these were built with elaborate terra cotta facades such as the one-story building at 23-27 W. School Street (#186). This building was constructed with large storefronts and the upper facade has decoration fashioned in glazed terra cotta facades. A more unusual design was built at 35-37 W. School Street ca. 1930 which combines elements of the Tudor and Spanish Revival styles (#189). This building is also embellished with terra cotta tiles and decorative brickwork.

Commercial construction halted during the 1930s and 1940s with no major buildings inventoried from these decades. In recent years most new commercial construction has occurred adjacent to U.S. Highway 67 on the eastern edge of town. The historic commercial area along School Street continues to be



active and there are few empty buildings. Changes to these buildings have been largely confined to storefront remodeling although several two-story buildings have had their upper facades covered with artificial siding.

### **Public Building Architecture in Bonne Terre**

Public buildings in Bonne Terre include churches, social halls, and community structures such as the library and post office. Most of these buildings were erected by residents of Bonne Terre or the St. Joseph Lead Company. The St. Joseph Company was responsible for the construction of the town's public library in 1905 which is an excellent example of the Beaux-Arts style (#120). The library is of stone construction and was built with features including Doric engaged columns and eave modillion blocks.

Several notable social halls also remain in Bonne Terre including the Samaritan Temple on Church Street (#49) and the Odd Fellows Hall on School Street (#191). The Odd Fellows Hall was built in 1909 and retains its original storefront and upper facade detailing. This two-story brick structure continues to be used as a social hall and has not been altered. The Samaritan Temple was completed in 1927 and is also a two-story brick building. This building continues to serve the local lodge.

All of Bonne Terre's existing historic churches were built in the early 20th century. The most architecturally significant church is the St. Joseph Catholic Church completed in 1916 (#166). This large brick church was constructed with Byzantine influences and has a tall bell tower on the main facade. The church is one of the largest buildings in the city and has not been significantly altered. Other notable churches include the Colonial Revival design First Baptist Church (#172) and Centenary Methodist Church (#148). The First Congregational Church (#50) and St. Peter's Episcopal Church (#137) are good examples of the Gothic Revival style of the early 20th century.

Bonne Terre's high school of the 1920s remains standing on Allen Street although it has been added to and altered in recent decades (#9). The original school was built in 1927 and was constructed with Colonial Revival influences. The Blue Street School (#47) is the only school building which remains associated with the town's black community. Although vacant the original form and plan of this school remains.

### **Industrial Buildings in Bonne Terre**

Despite the importance of the lead industry in Bonne Terre very few structures remain which were directly associated with the operation of the St. Joseph Lead Company. Following the closing of the mill in the 1960s, many of the original

19th century buildings were razed and only thirteen buildings associated with the mill operation remain. These buildings are sited to the east and north of Allen Street and Main Street and south of Benham Street. Much of this area is presently owned by the Egyptian Concrete Comapny which operates a concrete fabrication mill at the site of the original St. Joseph mining operation.

The largest building remaining from the mill complex is the two-story metal Machine Shop built ca. 1920 (#21). Another large building is the Supply House also built of metal ca. 1920 (#22). This building has been remodeled in recent years but its original form and plan remain intact. Other notable buildings constructed in the mill area include the Chemistry Laboratory built ca. 1930 (#24) and the Superintendant's Office built ca. 1930 (#25). The one-story frame Changing House is also in existence and has not been extensively altered (#29). All of these buildings were constructed with minimal arcitectural detailing and are typical industrial buildings of the period.

Several buildings associated with the company's offices also stand. The most notable of these is the Admministration Building which was completed in 1910 in th English Tudor style. This two-story birck building served as offices for the company in the early 20th century and its significance was recognized with its listing on the National Register in 1984. Behind this building is a large one-story frame garage which served as a parking facility for the building.

Other industrial buildings are scattered throughout Bonne Terre but most of these have been altered or are in poor condition. To the north of Benham Street is the old Desloge Mining Area and a one-story brick building associated with this mining operation was identified (#44). Built in the early 1900s, this building's exact function is not known and only its exterior walls remain. No other standing building associated with the town's various mining operations was surveyed.

On Grove Avenue are the remains of the Bonne Terre Foundry which was begun in the early 1900s. This iron foundry operated for many years and was one of the town's major industries of the 20th century. The foundry operation occupied a large complex but most of these buildings burned or have been razed in recent years. Two buildings associated with the operation of the foundry were surveyed but both have been altered in recent years (#87 and # 88).

All of the original buildings associated with the operation of the Mississippi River and Bonne Terre Railroad have been razed with the exception of the train depot. A large complex of buildings to serve the railroad's operation originally

stood to the east and north of the depot but these buildings have all been removed and the area is now the site of a modern industry. The train depot is an excellent example of the Queen Anne style and was listed on the National Register in 1984.

The Moran Mill on Mill Street is a good example of a late 19th century flour mill (#141). This one-story mill building retains its original exterior and interior design and was the center for a large mill operation in the 20th century. No other flour mill building was surveyed in Bonne Terre. Another important collection of industrial buildings is the complex associated with the Miner's Lumber Company (#94). This sawmill and lumberyard was located just off Division Street on Johnson Street and was one of the major lumber suppliers of the early 20th century. The lumber shed with its monitor roof remains intact and is a good example of an early 20th century mill building.

### **Archaeological Sites in Bonne Terre**

Important archaeological features associated with the town's lead mining operation exist in several locations. The most visible and accessible feature is the original mine shaft located to the south of Park Avenue. This mine shaft was listed on the National Register in 1974 and is the site of the town's famous diving and tour operation. Visitors can view the shafts associated with the mining operation of the late 19th and early 20th century.

Another important center for archaeological remains is the original St. Joseph Lead Company's mill site south of Benham Street. This area retains a variety of mill foundations, foundations for settling or flotation tanks, foundations for crusher buildings and other aspects of the mill's operation. These foundations are found adjacent to the existing structures in the area. Despite the abundance of archaeological resources, much of this area has been disturbed in recent years through excavations and grade changes by the present owner. These changes have altered many of the original historic archaeological features of the area and made identification of remains difficult.

The site of the St. Joseph Shaft # 2 east of Allen Street contains several foundations and these remains have not been extensively disturbed. The foundations for the shaft (#11) and the adjacent hoisting house (#13) are visible and retain integrity. This shaft was in operation in the early 20th century and is the only other collection of significant surface remains associated with the lead mining operation of the St. Joseph Company.

The site of the Bonne Terre Foundry and the Flat River Ice and Cold Storage building also contain several archaeological

sites. This complex of buildings was located on Grove Avenue and only a few associated standing structures remain. The foundation walls of the foundry are clearly visible (#86) as are the remains of the building which housed the Flat River Ice and Cold Storage Building (#89).

## **Bonne Terre Survey - Summary and Recommendations**

The survey of Bonne Terre's historic, architectural, and archaeological resources was conducted during 1989 and a total of 212 properties were surveyed. The majority of the properties inventoried were residential buildings constructed between 1870 and 1940. Commercial buildings, industrial buildings, and public buildings were also inventoried as were over a dozen archaeological sites.

Most of the resources surveyed in Bonne Terre were located in the original sections of the community which were laid out and settled at the turn of the century. Residential resources were scattered throughout this area with substantial concentrations on Church and Main Streets. Commercial properties were located primarily on School Street with another concentration located around the public park area. Industrial buildings and sites were found primarily in the old St. Joseph Lead Company mining area and at a few smaller mining and industrial operation areas.

The survey results display a community which retains much of its rich mining heritage. The original town plan of Bonne Terre has not been extensively altered and represents an important part of the town's character. The public park and arrangement of public and mine company buildings clearly demonstrates a community plan out of the ordinary. Church and Main Streets are also impressive for their wealth of architectural resources of the turn of the century and many of the streets of worker housing are also intact. Perhaps the only area which has not fared well in the 20th century is the commercial area on School Street. Altered storefronts and covered upper facades have resulted in a loss of architectural character. However, with renovations to a few of the buildings this area could once again reflect its heritage.

The Old Bonne Terre Association is actively promoting the historic and architectural character of the community. It has provided funding for the recent survey and is presently active in raising money for the stabilization and restoration of the Shepard House. Future recommendations for Old Bonne Terre and the city are as follows:

- \* Seek funding for the preparation of a National Register nomination to include all identified districts and properties within the city.
- \* Prepare a walking tour brochure for visitors to Bonne Terre to explain the community's mining heritage and important sites.
- \* Have a central location for a museum or display area for visitors which details the town's mining heritage.

\* Provide assistance for the creation of promotional materials which outlines the town's heritage, attractions, and accomodations.

### **Recommendations for National Register Listing**

The city of Bonne Terre contains a wide variety of resources which appear to meet listing on the National Register of Historic Places. There are presently three properties currently listed on the National Register as individual sites in Bonne Terre. These are: the St. Joseph Lead Company Administration Building; the Bonne Terre Mine; and the Mississippi River and Bonne Terre Railway Depot. The Administration Building and Railway Depot were listed for their architectural designs and all properties were also listed for their association with the St. Joseph Lead Company.

In addition to these properties at least one large historic district and several individual properties appear eligible based upon the historic contexts identified during the survey and research design phase. These are as follows:

The Bonne Terre Historic District: A large section of the original plan of Bonne Terre appears to meet National Register criteria under several areas of significance. The recommended boundaries for the district should include both sides of Church Street from Lake Drive to Main Street, Main Street from Division Street to School Street, a section of School Street to include City Hall and adjacent buildings, and the collection of buildings centered around the public park at the intersection of Allen, School, Main, and Church Streets.

This district would include significant residential buildings along Main and Church Streets, the public buildings around the public park, and the buildings associated with the St. Joseph Lead Company along Main, Elm, and Young Streets. This district would contain approximately ninety properties and include the most significant buildings associated with the St. Joseph Lead Company operation. The edges of the district boundary are not clearly defined and require further examination when the nomination is undertaken. This district would include a variety of property types and would be significant through the historic contexts of industry, community planning, architecture, and commerce.

The actual mill and mining area of the St. Joseph Lead Company does not appear to retain sufficient integrity to qualify as part of the district or individually. The site has been disturbed extensively in recent years and many of the original foundations and site features have been removed. This area should be re-examined by a state archaeologist prior to an exact determination of eligibility.

The areas of worker housing should also be re-examined prior to the final determination of eligibility of the town's resources. Many of the streets such as A, B, and C Streets and some sections of Hunky Hill retain much of their original architecture. However, integrity of these areas is a problem with many houses having added artificial sidings, altered porches and other changes. There are several points of view now being expressed in the National Register program concerning areas such as these and a re-examination of the eligibility of streets in Bogytown and Hunky Hill should occur during the nomination process.

St. Joseph Lead Company Superintendent's House (#145): Located on Oak Street, this two-story stone and frame residence housed the superintendent's of the company from the 1870s to the 1960s. The residence was remodeled ca. 1920 into its present form and reflects the Colonial Revival style. This property appears eligible for its association with the St. Joseph Company.

Odd Fellows Hall, 44 W. School Street, (#191): This two-story brick building is a fine example of an early 20th century commercial building which has not been altered and is significant for its role in the social history of the community.

Mansion Hill, 651 Oak Street, (#146): This building was constructed in the early 20th century to serve as a clubhouse and meeting place for St. Joseph officials. Sited on a hill to the south of town, this imposing two-story structure was the center of social activities for the company in the early 20th century. The building has not been extensively altered and retains its original exterior and interior detailing.

Blue Street School, 916 Blue Street, (#47): Constructed in the early 20th century, this one-story brick school is important for its association with Ethnic History. The school is the only public or social building surveyed which was directly associated with the town's black residents and history. Although vacant the building retains much of its original form and detailing.