

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
 NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

5

 NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
 INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FORM'S USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

HISTORIC

Lerch Tavern

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

182-184 West Penn Avenue

--NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Wernersville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

6

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE

42

VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Berks

CODE

011

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Heidelberg Heritage Society, Inc.

STREET & NUMBER

182-184 West Penn Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Wernersville

STATE

Pennsylvania

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Berks County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

6th and Court Streets

CITY, TOWN

Reading

STATE

Pennsylvania

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

12/20/78

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

CITY, TOWN

Harrisburg

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 Lerch Tavern is situated on one acre of land on the corner of South Elm Street and West Penn Avenue in the Borough of Wernersville. It is located on Route 422 and this route was known as the Tulpehocken Turnpike from Philadelphia to Shamokin. This road was later acquired and incorporated as the Berks and Dauphin County Turnpike, completed in 1817.

The Lerch Tavern is a two story limestone structure with one story frame Mansard roof. The Tavern originally had a gable roof but the roof style was changed to mansard between 1865 to 1870. Five bays by two bays, the Tavern measures 42 feet by 32 feet. A wide cornice with dentils separates the limestone walls from the frame mansard roof. Fishscale shingles line the roof and gable-roofed dormers. Decorative bracings are located on each dormer. Dormer windows are large two over two lights.

Windows in the limestone structure are two over two or six over six. The front facade has doors in the third and fourth bay from the left. These deeply panelled doorways have glass transoms. A shed-roofed porch supported by wooden pillars and decorated with spindles, covers the two doorways.

A kitchen addition, one story limestone with a one story mansard was added at a latter date. Dormers in the addition are identical to those in the main structure.

The interior of the first floor is in fair condition with the exception of the removal of some partitions by former owners. Much original woodwork remains. An unusual three - manteled fireplace is located in the east wall. Fine built in corner cupboards are also located in the east room. A large stone and brick fireplace is located in the kitchen addition. Restoration of this fine structure is proposed by its current owners.

8. SIGNIFICANCE

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

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lerch Tavern was built in 1797 by John Yost Lerch, and was used as a tavern originally and later as a tavern and store. John Yost Lerch was born on January 30, 1752 and died December 8, 1805. Originally from the Oley Valley of Berks County, he was a shoemaker by trade and purchased the land on which he built his tavern on April 8, 1786. The borough of Wernersville was not laid out until December of 1855, so the tavern predates the town by 50 years. The area was basically agricultural in nature, the one main link between Reading and Philadelphia was the Tulpehocken Turnpike (later the Berks and Dauphin County Turnpike.) Major transportation was by stage, numerous inns and taverns developed along the stage routes to accomodate travelers. The Lerch Tavern was one of the earlier taverns along the route. It was in operation into the 1850's with David Lerch as proprietor. The structure was then used as the Lerch family home and was in the Lerch family until the 1950's.

This early and well-preserved tavern is an important local landmark and as a tavern was the forerunner of development in what was to become Wernersville in the 1860's to the present.

A fine example of local use of limestone for building, its only major alteration was the addition of its mansard roof in the 1870's. Its unusual three-mantelled fireplace and finely worked corner cupboard and woodwork make the Lerch Tavern a valuable resource for the study of local craftsmanship and woodworking.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Patent P-8-482 to John Yost Lerch.

Montgomery, Morton L., History of Berks County in Pennsylvania.
Philadelphia: Everts, Peck, Richards, 1886, p. 1115-1118.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1

QUADRANGLE NAME _____

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24,000

UTM REFERENCES

A	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

E			
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F			
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G			
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H			
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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See Continuation Sheet)

Starting at corner of Penn Avenue and South Elm Street moving SW along East side of S. Elm St. for 405' to Reading Railroad then NE for 120'8"

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Leroy Machmer, Chairman

ORGANIZATION

Heidelberg Heritage Society, Inc.

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

182-184 West Penn Avenue

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Wernersville

STATE

Pennsylvania

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE ED WEINTRAUB, Director
Office of Historic Preservation

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

