

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED

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

**1** NAME

HISTORIC BIG and LITTLE INDIAN ROCK PETROGLYPHS

AND/OR COMMON

**2** LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER In the Susquehanna River, approximately 4000' downstream  
from [REDACTED]

CITY, TOWN

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

— VICINITY OF

16th

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE  
42

COUNTY  
Lancaster

CODE  
071

**3** CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: None

**4** OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Pennsylvania Power and Light Company

STREET & NUMBER  
2 North Ninth Street

CITY, TOWN  
Allentown

— VICINITY OF

STATE  
Pennsylvania

**5** LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Lancaster County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER  
King and Duke Streets

CITY, TOWN  
Lancaster

STATE  
Pennsylvania

**6** REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

DATE  
November 12, 1976

— FEDERAL  STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission  
William Penn Memorial Museum, P. O. Box 1026

CITY, TOWN  
Harrisburg

STATE  
Pennsylvania

# 7 DESCRIPTION

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The site consists of two large rocks located in the Susquehanna River approximately [REDACTED]

Big Indian Rock is 60' by 40' and carvings are located on all four sides of the rock. Little Indian Rock is 38' by 32' and most of the carvings are located on the north facing side and top.

Both rocks, as indicated by the photographs, are above the normal waterlevel of the Susquehanna River. The height of the water on the sides of the rocks varies considerably and is controlled by the impoundments and during discharge of both Safe Harbor and Holtwood dams. However, it is only during periods of severe flooding that the tops of the rocks and the petroglyphs are covered by water.

The present condition of the petroglyphs is somewhat deteriorated due to weathering and recent graffiti, as compared to the time when they were studied by Cadzow (1934). However, most of the carvings recorded by Cadzow are still visible today. Big Indian Rock now has a cinderblock duck blind built on its downstream end.

# **B SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input 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 original meaning or symbolism of these human, animal and geometric forms carved and pecked into the mica-schist outcrops of the Lower Susquehanna Valley is not known. It is generally considered that North American petroglyphs do not represent a true form of writing, but rather that they must have been ideographs or mnemonic devices with ceremonial significance. Others have suggested that they are simply Indian doodling or graffiti.

All authorities agree that they are of Indian origin. However, their dating is still uncertain. Cadzow (1934:34-35) suggested that the petroglyphs on Big and Little Indian Rocks might be the work of an Algonkian tribe. Indeed, their closest ethno-historic parallels are among the Algonkian speaking Ojibway Indians of the Upper Great Lakes region. These people still produce rather similar painted designs on birch bark scrolls, which serve as memory devices for their Grand Medicine Society ceremonies.

No Algonkian tribes which have been historically associated with Pennsylvania were known to use such symbols or to have participated in anything like the Grand Medicine Society ceremony. Culturally, the potential was there, and for that reason Algonkian origins for the petroglyphs seem the most logical.

Swauger (1974) has suggested an association between ancient or "proto" Shawnee, who were members of the Algonkian linguistic stock, and the Petroglyphs of Western Pennsylvania.

Shawnee peoples were known to have settled, for a short period, in the Lower Susquehanna Valley as early as 1690 A.D. One of their villages was located only a few miles to the east of Big and Little Indian Rocks. Based on this kind of reasoning it is tempting to attribute these petroglyphs to the Shawnee, but obviously this is far from proven fact.

In spite of any clear evidence for their dating, cultural origins, or their meaning, they are still extremely significant as rare survivals of Indian art. The Big and Little Indian Rocks represent the only surviving petroglyphs still in place in the Susquehanna Valley.

**BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Cadzow, Donald A. Petroglyphs in the Susquehanna River Near Safe Harbor, Pennsylvania. Reprint #1, Publications of Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Vol. III, Harrisburg, 1934.  
 Malloy, Garrick. Picture Writings of American Indians. 10th Annual Report of Bureau of Ethnology, 1888-89, Washington, D. C., 1893.  
 Swauger, James L. Rock Art of the Upper Ohio Valley. Akademische Druck-u. Verlagsanstalt, Graz, Austria, 1974.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

**UTM REFERENCES**

Big Indian Rock  
 A [REDACTED]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 C [REDACTED]

Little Indian Rock  
 B [REDACTED]  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 D [REDACTED]

**VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION**

[Faint, mostly illegible text describing the boundary]

**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: Dr. Barry C. Kent, State Archeologist/Susan M. Zacher, Curator  
 ORGANIZATION: Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission DATE: November 8, 1976  
 STREET & NUMBER: P. O. Box 1026 TELEPHONE: 717-787-4980 or 787-4361  
 CITY OR TOWN: Harrisburg 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: [Signature]

TITLE: William J. Wewer, Executive Director DATE: 2-24-77  
Penna. Historical and Museum Commission

<b>FOR NPS USE ONLY</b>	
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER	DATE
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION	DATE
ATTEST:	DATE
KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER	