

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: PENNSYLVANIA	
COUNTY: BLAIR	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
MISHLER THEATRE

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1208 TWELFTH AVENUE

CITY OR TOWN:
ALTOONA

STATE PENNSYLVANIA	CODE 42	COUNTY: BLAIR	CODE UI3
-----------------------	------------	------------------	-------------

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) THEATRE

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
BLAIR COUNTY ARTS FOUNDATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
1208 TWELFTH AVENUE

CITY OR TOWN:
ALTOONA

STATE: PENNSYLVANIA	CODE 42
------------------------	------------

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
BLAIR COUNTY COURT HOUSE

STREET AND NUMBER:
423 ALLEHENY STREET

CITY OR TOWN:
HOLLIDAYSBURG

STATE: PENNSYLVANIA	CODE 42
------------------------	------------

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
PENNSYLVANIA REGISTER OF HISTORIC SITES & LANDMARKS

DATE OF SURVEY: JUNE, 1972
 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION

STREET AND NUMBER:
WILLIAM PENN MUSEUM Box 1026

CITY OR TOWN:
HARRISBURG

STATE: PENNSYLVANIA	CODE 42
------------------------	------------

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: PENNSYLVANIA
COUNTY: BLAIR
ENTRY NUMBER
DATE
FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

ORIGINAL:

THE MISHLER THEATRE WAS DESIGNED BY ALBERT E. WESTOVER, WHO BUILT OVER 70 THEATRES FOR THE KEITH THEATRE CIRCUIT. BUILT IN 1906 THE BUILDING WAS DECORATED WITH A CLASSIC MOTIF. THE THREE STORY BUILDING (120 FEET DEEP AND 104 FEET WIDE) IS CONSTRUCTED OF RED BRICK WITH INDIANA LIMESTONE ACCENTS. THE FIRST STORY IS COMPLETELY FACED WITH LIMESTONE. A LIMESTONE CORNICHE ALSO SEPARATES THE SECOND AND THIRD STORIES. A LARGE CORNICHE AND BALUSTRADE CROWNED THE THIRD STORY. GIGANTIC BRACKETS AND CLOSE SET MODILLIONS WERE SET ABOVE A CLASSIC FRIEZE OF SWAGS.

THE MAIN ENTRANCE CONSISTS OF FOUR DOUBLE DOORS FLANKED BY LANTERNS. TWO WINDOWS SURMOUNTED BY ELABORATELY CARVED CARTOUCHES AND BRACKETS, AND A DOOR WITH LEADED GLASS TRANSOM OCCUPY THE FRONT WALL ON BOTH THE LEFT AND RIGHT SIDE OF THE ENTRANCE. ORNAMENTATION ON THE SECOND STORY IS CENTERED IN THE AREA ABOVE THE ENTRANCE. ABOVE FOUR SMALL WINDOWS IN ROUND ARCH NICHES ARE FOUR COLOR REPRESENTATIONS OF THE MUSES (COVERED BY GLASS). THESE ARE SEPARATED BY IONIC COLUMNS MOUNTED ON A STONE BALUSTRADE. TWO WINDOWS IDENTICAL TO THOSE ON THE FIRST STORY ARE LOCATED ON EACH SIDE OF THE COLUMNS. IN THE UPPER THIRD OF THE BUILDING ABOVE THE ENTRANCE DOORS ARE FOUR CIRCULAR WINDOWS WITH CARVED STONE GARLANDS. THE WINDOWS ARE FLANKED BY TWO LIFE-SIZED FIGURES OF MELPOMENE, THE MUSE OF TRAGEDY, AND TERPSICHOE, THE MUSE OF DANCE.

EIGHT MONTHS AFTER THE THEATRE OPENED, THE INTERIOR WAS GUTTED IN A FIRE. THE ENTIRE INTERIOR WAS REBUILT AND THE THEATRE REOPENED IN 1907. THE MAIN LOBBY IS 30 FEET WIDE, 15 FEET HIGH, AND 12 FEET DEP. FOUR SETS OF DOUBLE DOORS OPEN TO THE PROMENADE AT THE REAR OF THE THEATRE. TWIN STAIRCASES LEAD OFF THE PROMENADE TO THE FIRST AND SECOND BALCONIES. THE FIRST MAIN FLOOR CONTAINED 499 SEATS UPHOLSTERED IN RED. THE AISLES BETWEEN SECTIONS WERE ALSO CARPETED IN RED. THERE WERE 402 SEATS IN THE FIRST BALCONY. THE MISHLER STAGE IS 43 FEET DEEP AND 82 FEET WIDE. THE PROSCENIUM IS 38 FEET WIDE AND 31 FEET HIGH.

THE INTERIOR DECORATION COULD BE DESCRIBED AS IPLAYFUL BAROQUE. THE CEILINGS, BOXES, PROSCENIUM AND OTHER AREAS ARE DECORATED WITH FAT LITTLE CHERUBS. ELABORATE PLASTER SCULPTURES ADORN THE WALLS AND CEILINGS. SWAGS, SCROLLS, ACANTHUS LEAVES, AND CLASSICAL FIGURES ARE FOUND IN PROFUSION. WAINSCOTING IN THE LOBBY AND FIRST FLOOR IS FACED WITH MARBLE. A WIDE CORNICHE WITH EGG AND DART DESIGN IS USED THROUGHOUT THE THEATRE. ORNATE BRACKETS ARE ALSO USED TO EMBELLISH THE CORNICHE.

PRESENT:

THE THEATRE WAS SCHEDULED TO BE TORN DOWN FOR A PARKING LOT IN 1965, WHEN IT WAS PURCHASED BY THE BLAIR COUNTY ARTS FOUNDATION. IN THE RESTORATION WORK CARRIED OUT BY THIS GROUP, THE BEAUTIFUL CORNICHE AND BALUSTRADE THAT ADORNED THE FACADE WERE REMOVED, AND REPLACED WITH BRICK AND SIMPLE MOLDED BANDS OF LIMESTONE. ASIDE FROM THIS ALTERATION, BOTH THE FACADE AND THE INTERIOR RETAIN THEIR BASIC ORIGINAL APPEARANCE.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Interesting definition of "restoration"

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1906

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MISHLER THEATRE LIES NOT ONLY IN ITS ARCHITECTURAL QUALITIES, BUT ALSO IN THE BROADER SOCIAL AND CULTURAL SPECTRUM OF THE COMMUNITY. THE BUILDING RETAINS MUCH OF ITS ORIGINAL APPEARANCE AND IS AN EXCELLENT EXAMPLE OF THE BEAUX-ARTS CLASSICISM STYLE THAT DOMINATED PUBLIC ARCHITECTURE IN THE EARLY YEARS OF THIS CENTURY. RECENT REFURBISHING OF THE INTERIOR HAS FAITHFULLY MAINTAINED THE GAUDY GRANDEUR OF THE EARLY DAYS OF THE THEATRE.

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF I.E. MISHLER, THE THEATRE PRESENTED THE BEST ENTERTAINMENT THE AGE HAD TO OFFER. A VARIETY OF ENTERTAINMENT UNEQUALLED OUTSIDE THE GREAT METROPOLITAN AREAS GRACED THE STAGE OF THE MISHLER. FROM 1906 TO 1923, MR. MISHLER BOOKED ALMOST DAILY A STAGE PRODUCTION OF THE TIME, BOXING MATCHES, MOVIES, WRESTLING, BURLESQUE, YIDDISH THEATRE, AND MATINEE LECTURES FOR THE LADIES OF THE TOWN. SUCH GREAT NAMES IN THEATRE, A CONCERT, DANCE, AND VAUDEVILLE AS W.C. FIELDS, MAUDE ADAMS, SARAH BERNHARDT, LILLIAN RUSSELL, ETHEL BARRYMORE, ED. WYNN, AL JOLSON, RUSSIAN SYMPHONY, JASCHA HEIFITZ, ISADORA DUNCAN, ANNA PAVLOWA, RACHMANINOFF, ETC. ALL PLAYED AT LEAST ONCE AT THE MISHLER. THE PEOPLE OF THE AREA WERE THUS AFFORDED AN OPPORTUNITY TO SAMPLE THE BEST OF EARLY 20TH CENTURY CULTURE AND ENTERTAINMENT. INDEED THE MISHLER BROUGHT THE WORLD TO ALTOONA.

FROM 1923 TO 1962, THE THEATRE WAS USED PRIMARILY AS A MOVIE HOUSE. SINCE 1965 UNDER THE BLAIR COUNTY ARTS FOUNDATION THE THEATRE HAS UNDERGONE INTERIOR RESTORATION AND LIVE ENTERTAINMENT IS AGAIN PRESENTED ON THE STAGE OF THE MISHLER.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

BAER, SANDIE. "THE COMEBACK THEATRE" MID-STATER, WEEKEND MAGAZINE OF THE PENNSYLVANIA MIRROR. ALTOONA: JAN. 25, 1969.

MAURER, ELEANOR. BLAIR COUNTY'S FIRST HUNDRED YEARS: 1846, 1946. ALTOONA: MIRROR PRESS, 1945.

SHIRLEY, FRANCES. "SAVING THE MISHLER", THE MODERN STAGE MANAGER'S PROMPT BOOK. PULLMAN, WASHINGTON: WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 1972.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		40° 30' 58"	78° 24' 08"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: LESS THAN ONE

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: ELEANORE H. STECKMAN/CONSULTANT WILLIAM K. WATSON/HISTORIAN

ORGANIZATION: PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION DATE: AUGUST, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER: Box 1026

CITY OR TOWN: HARRISBURG STATE: PENNSYLVANIA CODE: 42

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

Owner of property notified 10/5/72

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name William K. Watson
STATE LIAISON OFFICER

Title DEPUTY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMM.

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

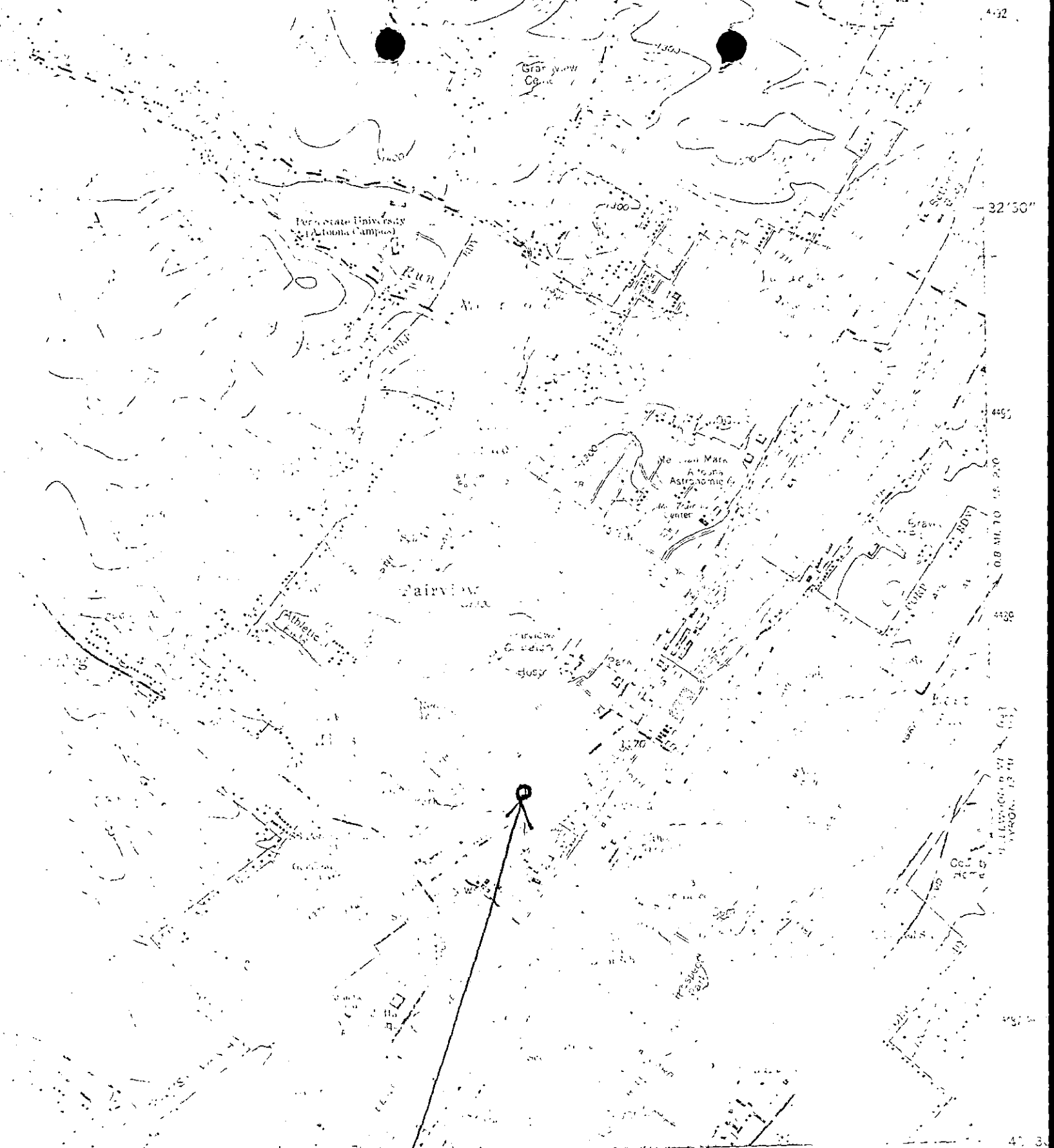
Date _____

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



25' 719 (754) DUNCANSVILLE (U.S. 22 & 220) 6 MI. (228) INTERIOR-GEOLOGICAL SURVEY MAP HOLLIDAYSBURG 5 MI. PA. TURNPIKE 05 MI. 4' 3

45° 30' 58"
78° 4' 00"

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Heavy-duty —————
- Medium-duty - - - - -
- U. S. Route (circle with number)
- State Route (circle with number)

1 mi
0 1 2 3 4 5