

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

**1. Name of Property**

historic name: Ross Furnace

other name/site number: N/A

**2. Location**

street & number: LR 64067 (N/A) not for publication

city, town: Fairfield Township (N/A) vicinity

state: PA code: PA county: Westmoreland code: 129 zip code: 15944

**3. Classification**

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: structure

Number of Resources within Property:

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>	sites
<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	structures
<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	TOTAL

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the  
National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Iron and Steel  
Resources in Pennsylvania 1716-1945



4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 Xmeets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Brent D. Glass 7/13/91
Signature of certifying official Date
Brent D. Glass Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying 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 Keeper Date of action

6. Function or Use

Table with 2 columns: Historic Functions and Subfunctions. Row 1: 10 industry, 10A manufacturing facility. Row 2: Current functions, Subfunctions. Row 3: 98 vacant/not in use.

7. DescriptionArchitectural Classification  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_other: 99 iron furnaceMaterialsfoundation N/A roof N/A  
walls 40 stone other N/ADescribe present and historic appearance:X see continuation sheet8. Statement of Significance

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

\_ Nationally X Statewide \_ LocallyApplicable National Register Criteria: A, CCriteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/AAreas of Significance: 160 industry  
110 engineering  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_Period(s) of Significance: 1815-1855Significant Dates: 1815, 1842Years of Alterations: 1842Significant Person(s): N/ACultural Affiliation: N/AArchitect/Builder: unknown

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

X See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical ReferencesX See continuation sheetPrevious 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other - Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical DataAcreage of property: less than 1 acre

UTM References: Rachelwood

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>		<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
A	17	662230	4465470	C			
B				D			

   see continuation sheetVerbal Boundary DescriptionX see continuation sheetBoundary JustificationX see continuation sheet11. Form Prepared Byname/title Diane B. Reed, Historic Preservation Specialistorganization PHMC/BHP date March 15, 1991street & number P.O. Box 1026 telephone (717)787-8045city or town Harrisburg state PA zip 17108-1026

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Ross Furnace is located south of New Florence, two and a half miles off Rt. 711 on L.R. 64067 at Ross Mountain Park, a private summer enclave which was established after the turn of the century. The furnace stack is located approximately 200' west of the west bank of Tubmill Creek, 200' south of Tubmill Reservoir.

The furnace sits in a flat open field (presently utilized as a golf course) about 25' from the hill to its west, which was the location of the original charging ramp to the furnace. The furnace sits directly adjacent to a golf green, and the area around the furnace, including the area of the casting floor, as well as the location of the race and wheel pit, appears to have been substantially disturbed by grading for the golf course.

The masonry of the furnace has good integrity. The stack is constructed of cut stone, with a triangular work arch and a Roman arch for the blast. It measures twenty five feet square at the base, and measures approximately thirty feet high. The bosh measures approximately eight feet. The lintel above the work arch is lightly cut out to complete the arch. The north elevation of the stack is constructed with a shelf or step approximately three feet from the base, the function of which is unknown. The top of the furnace has been capped with concrete.

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Ross Furnace is significant under Criterion A in the area of industry, for its association with the westward expansion of the Pennsylvania iron industry. Ross is representative of the several hundred charcoal iron furnaces in the western part of the state which persisted long after charcoal furnaces were being phased out in eastern Pennsylvania. Under Criterion C for engineering, Ross is eligible for the exceptional quality of its stonework. The triangular work arch and Roman arch of the tuyere arch are excellent masonry works. Although no other attendant structures survive from the furnace complex, the stack demonstrates good integrity.

The first furnace built at Ross was constructed in 1815 on Tubmill Creek by James Paull, Col. J.D. Mathiot, and Isaac Meason Jr. The extant stack was constructed in 1842 by Paul Meason, (son of Isaac Jr.) and Col. Mathiot. Although there is no physical evidence present, it would seem likely that the new furnace was hot blast, based on the date of its construction and advances in the technology by that time. The furnace made pig iron, stoves, sugar kettles, pots, ovens and skillets. The majority of its products supplied were sold regionally. Although its rated capacity was 1100 tons, the furnace never produced any more than 750.

The furnace was abandoned sometime around 1850-55. As with many furnaces at the time, the cost and difficulty of transportation, especially the absence of rail, canal or water routes, may have rendered the furnace unprofitable. In addition, although the furnace's rated capacity was 1100 tons, its largest production appears to have been 750 tons. Its failure to produce its expected capacity may have been a conscious decision on the part of its operators, as a result of its inability to ship its products at a reasonable cost, or may have been due to some failure of either its design or raw materials. An 1876 map of the county indicates that the Paull family still lived adjacent to the abandoned furnace.

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Albert, George Dallas. History of the County of Westmoreland.  
Philadelphia: L.C. Everts & Co., 1882

Bining, Arthur. Pennsylvania Iron Manufacture in the Eighteenth  
Century. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum  
Commission, 1967.

Illustrated Atlas of Westmoreland County. (1876) Rimersburg:  
Pennsylvania Record Press, 1971.

Thomas, William H. and Myron B. Sharp. A Guide to the Old Stone  
Blast Furnaces in Western Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh:  
Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 1966.



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Verbal boundary description: The boundary of the nominated property includes the furnace and a 25' area on all sides of the stack.

Boundary justification: Because the area immediately surrounding the furnace is now a golf course, there has been too much disturbance to include the adjacent area. Due to this, only the area directly around the furnace has been included.

ROSS FURNACE  
WEST MORELAND COUNTY  
RACHELWOOD  
ZONE 17  
E 662230  
N 4465470

