

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Penn's Park General Store Complex

and or common Gaines Property

2. Location

street & number 2310 - 2324 Second Street Pike not for publication

city, town Penn's Park vicinity of

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Bucks code 17

3. Classification

<b>Category</b>	<b>Ownership</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Present Use</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name William G. and Nancy L. Boettger

street & number 47 North Tamenend Avenue

city, town New Britian vicinity of state Pa., 18901

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Bucks County Courthouse

street & number Main And Court Streets

city, town Doylestown state Pa., 18901

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title NONE has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

### Condition

### Check one

### Check one

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" 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			N/A

### Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The complex is set at the intersection of two country roads. Immediately north of the complex is a small eighteenth century village, Penn's Park. To the west is farmland. The complex was constructed on generally level ground and is surrounded by a few large shade trees. The complex contains three primary buildings, including the farmhouse, the store building and a barn, as well as several outbuildings.

The farmhouse, built in the vernacular Georgian style, is two-and-a-half stories in height, six bays wide and rectangular in plan. Built of fieldstone with stone quoining, the farmhouse is stuccoed on the first story. The structure has a gable roof of tin with a standing seam. There are two brick chimneys on either end of the roof and three evenly spaced segmentally arched dormers on the roof. Windows throughout the structure are six over six with wooden pegged sashes. Shutters with hand forged strap hinges have been retained on the first story. The two primary entrances have panelled reveals and three light transoms. A mid-nineteenth century porch with turned columns and ornate brackets extends from the first story of the eastern elevation. The porch has a shed roof of tin with a standing seam similar to the structure's gable roof. On the north end of the building is a one story stone summer kitchen with a shed roof. The kitchen has been stuccoed.

The farmhouse interior retains most of its original features. Original chair rails, built-in wall cupboards and walls with built-in iron hooks are all common throughout the first story. The summer kitchen has a stone floor, exposed rafters and its original hand pump. The house kitchen has a large cooking fireplace. Second story rooms are used as bedrooms and the end rooms contain fireplaces with heavy mantels. Floors throughout the building are random width pine or oak.

The store is a three story, stone structure. Rectangular in plan, the building is three bays wide and three bays in length. Built of fieldstone with stone quoining, the store building is visually similar to the house though it carries a late nineteenth century mansard roof of slate. The roof has two dormers on both the eastern and western elevations and three dormers on both the northern and southern elevations. Windows on the lower two stories are six over six with panelled shutters similar to those on the house. Dormer windows are two over two and have no shutters. The structure's primary entrance, located in the middle bay of the eastern wall, has double doors. A porch with a shed roof of tin extends from the first story of the eastern elevation. The porch is original to the structure. The building also has a dentilated friese that is repeated on the porch. A frame fire escape has been added to the northern elevation.

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Like the house interior, the store interior has undergone only minor alterations. The first floor space contains a single room and once served as both a store and a Post Office. Shelving extends from front to rear, and from floor to ceiling along much of both the north and south walls. The shelves, bins, counters and drawers all date to the mid-nineteenth century. A wood burning stove once located in the middle of the first floor has been removed, but otherwise the space remains much as it was one hundred years ago. Second story space is divided into two front rooms and a rear room. Much of the second floor has shelving, drawers and bins similar to those on the first floor lining the walls. The third floor contains a single room with beaded wainscotting and interior shutters. The space was once used as a meeting place for local organizations.

Southwest of the store and house is a large bank barn. The frame barn has a six foot stone foundation. The frame section of the barn overhangs the foundation on the east and south elevations. The building has no significant architectural details. The interior of the barn contains stalls and a few remnants of farm machinery that have been removed in recent years. Though the barn is in somewhat deteriorated condition the building is sound. The only serious problem is a leaking roof.

The complex contains six other outbuildings which are in poor condition. Directly west of the store is a storage shed. Built on three foot supports, the shed is frame and has a corrugated shed roof. A two story, wood frame wagon building resembles the barn though is much smaller and has no stone foundation. The building is in poor condition. A chicken house, once part of the wagon building, now rests along side the store and is about ready to fall. A two story livestock barn is also in a state of near ruins. Likewise, a corn crib is beginning to fall. A wood shed directly behind the house is salvageable though its condition is bad. The only minor outbuilding that is in good condition is the outhouse which is just southwest of the house.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	religion
1400-1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	education	military	social/
1700-1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	exploration/settlement	philosophy	theater
1900-	communications	industry	politics/government	transportation
		invention		other (specify)

**Specific dates** c.1810/ 1837 **Builder Architect** house- Simon Witherill, store-James Gaines

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Built in the late eighteenth century as a farmstead, the Penn's Park General Store Complex has served as the commercial heart of Penn's Park for over a century and a half. Located at the intersection of Newtown Road and the Old Philadelphia Road, both primary thoroughfares in the area, the complex became a place of commerce and community and offers a glimpse at village life during the nineteenth century. The farmhouse, general store and barn are also good examples of the type vernacular architecture common to the area.

The acreage surrounding the Penn's Park General Store complex was first used as a farmstead. Thomas Allibone purchased the site in 1775 and soon after built a frame farmhouse. To market his produce Allibone erected a small, log store just north of his house. From the store Allibone sold produce and other ware to neighbors as well as travelers on the Old Philadelphia Road. In 1810, Simon Witherill, a local mason, purchased the property and replaced Allibone's farmhouse with a larger, stone dwelling. Built in the Georgian style, the new two-and-a-half story, six bay structure was the largest in Penn's Park and reflected the developing prominence of its owner. Witherill continued to operate a small business from the log store structure.

In the late 1810's James Gaines purchased the complex and fifteen acres which surrounded it. Though Gaines still operated the farmstead, his over-riding interest lay in the commercial potential of the store. During the next century the Gaines family expanded the store's business and made it the heart of the Penn's Park area. By 1836 the enterprise had grown beyond the limits of the original log building. To facilitate the expanding commerce, Gaines built a two story general store. Constructed of stone similar to the stone used in the construction of the house, the new store was much larger than the earlier log building and significantly added to the local prominence, both commercial and visual, of the complex.

Throughout the rest of the century the store served its community as both a commercial center and a village meeting place. The store's shelves were always well stocked with items ranging from seeds and shovels to ribbons and bows. At the same time the store satisfied some of the social and cultural needs of Penn's Park. In the middle years of the century a portion of the store doubled as the village library with as many as six hundred volumes. During the Civil War a local Post Office was established in the store and made the complex a place of daily congregation for the community. In the years that followed residents spent countless hours at the general store sharing information about crops, politics and local matters. A third floor addition to the store, built in the 1880's, provided additional space for social events including regular meetings of a local trade association and a fraternal organization.

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The area's agricultural base carried the Penn's Park General Store smoothly into the twentieth century. As local farmers began to concentrate on specialized crops in the early 1900's, the store became increasingly important to the general well being of the community. As late as 1945 the store was reported to have had "articles that have become extinct in urban stores - mens' shirts, peppers, spices, all types of cooking utensils," as well as farm implements and produce. Despite the long term viability the store's business began to fall off in the mid-twentieth century. In 1971 the Post Office moved out and a few years later the store ceased operations altogether thus ending a hundred and fifty year tradition in Penn's Park.

In addition to its historic significance, the Penn's Park General Store and house are two of the better architectural examples in Penn's Park. The Georgian style house is one of the larger dwellings and is, perhaps, the best preserved structure in the village. Aside from the addition of a mid-nineteenth century porch, the building's exterior has experienced few alterations. Likewise, the dwelling's interior retains many of its original features including a large cooking fireplace with removeable doors and a "bible" door above the mantel. Much of the woodwork - from moldings to panelling - is original. The store building appears much as it did in the late nineteenth century. The store counters, shelves, bins, handcut dovetailed drawers and other woodwork all date to the mid-nineteenth century. Further, the store interior proportions have changed little in the past century. Auxilliary buildings including the barn and summer kitchen, though not as well maintained as the house and store, also retain their early character. As a whole, the complex is the best collection of buildings in Penn's Park.



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Edgar Williams, "Country Store: Sounding Board of the Times for Nearly  
One Century," Philadelphia Inquirer, Dec. 1, 1946.  
Wrightstown Township Tax Records, 1784-1840, Sprurance Library, Doylestown, Pa  
Interview, Mrs. Sara (Gaine) Kuni, May 12, 1984.  
Interview, Mrs. Elsie (Mathias) Price, August 26, 1984.

10. Verbal Boundary Description (cont'd).

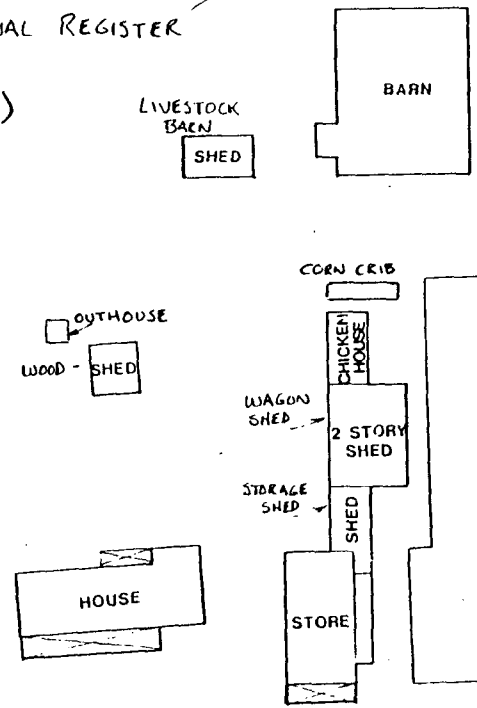
600 feet in a line that parallels Pa. 232 to a point; then, at a right  
angle to the east a line that returns to the starting point.

PENNS PARK GENERAL STORE COMPLEX  
 WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP, BUCKS COUNTY  
 PENNS PARK, PA. 18943  
 TAX PARCEL 53-12-7-2

PENNS PARK  
 (TWP NO. 4369)

ROAD

BOUNDARY FOR NATIONAL REGISTER  
 APPLICATION  
 (APPROX. 2.4 ACRES)



PARKING FOR 15 CARS  
 BUFFER

561.43' S  
 74° 11' 33" E  
 N/F DAVID K. WRIGHT  
 N/F RICHARD PACE & PATRICIA WYCKOFF

GEOFF

SECOND

STREET

PIKE

(PA. STATE RT. 232)

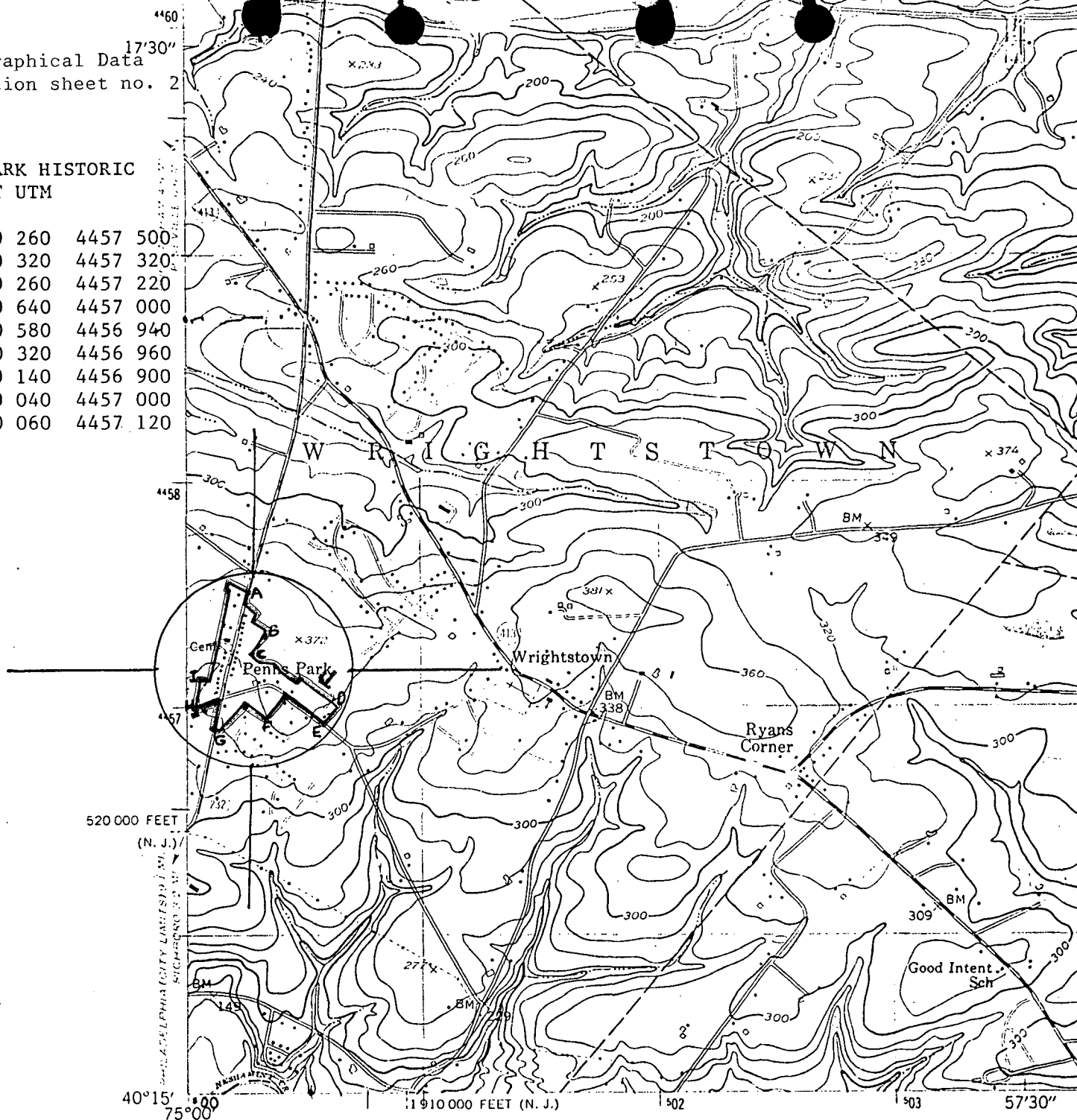
232.04' S 17° 09' 21" W  
 181.50'

S 79° 05' 20" W



PENNS PARK HISTORIC  
DISTRICT UTM

A	18	500	260	4457	500
B	18	500	320	4457	320
C	18	500	260	4457	220
D	18	500	640	4457	000
E	18	500	580	4456	940
F	18	500	320	4456	960
G	18	500	140	4456	900
H	18	500	040	4457	000
I	18	500	060	4457	120



(HATBORO)  
5904 II NE

Mapped by Army Map Service  
Edited and published by the Geological Survey

LAMBERTVILLE, PA - NJ  
1953 Rev. 1968, 1973

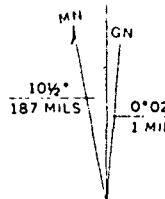
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and New Jersey Geodetic Survey

Topography from aerial photographs by stereophotogrammetric methods. Aerial photographs taken 1942  
Culture revised by the Geological Survey 1953

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grids based on Pennsylvania coordinate system,  
south zone, and New Jersey coordinate system

1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
zone 18, shown in blue

Revisions shown in purple compiled by the Geological Survey in  
cooperation with State of Pennsylvania agencies from aerial  
photographs taken 1968 and 1973. This information not field checked



UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET