

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name Franklin Furnace Historic District

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: Circle Dr./Cinder St. (N/A) not for publication

city, town: St. Thomas Township (N/A) vicinity

state: PA code: PA county: Franklin code: 055 zip code: 17201

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: district

Number of Resources within Property:

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
<u>5</u>	<u>—</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>	structures
<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	objects
<u>7</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
 _ 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 _ meets _ does not meet the
 National Register criteria. _ See continuation sheet.

 Signature of certifying official Date

 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 Nat- _____
 ional 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

Historic Functions

10 industry _____

01 domestic _____

Current functions

98 vacant/not in use _____

01 domestic _____

Subfunctions

10A manufacturing facility _____

01A single dwelling _____

Subfunctions

01A single dwelling _____

7. Description

Architectural Classification

other: 99 iron furnace

Materials

foundation N/A roof N/A
walls 43 limestone other N/A

Describe present and historic appearance:

X see continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

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

_ Nationally X Statewide _ Locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: 160 industry

110 engineering

030 architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1828-1882

Significant Dates: 1828

Years of Alterations: N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/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 References

X See continuation sheet

Previous 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 Data

Acreage of property: 4 acres

UTM References: St. Thomas

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>		<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
A	18	258900	4426800	C			
B				D			

see continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

X see continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

X see continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Diane B. Reed, Historic Preservation Specialist

organization PHMC/BHP date March 15, 1991

street & number P.O. Box 1026 telephone (717)787-8045

city or town Harrisburg state PA zip 17108

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Franklin Furnace Historic District is located on Circle Dr. and Cinder St. in the Franklin Furnace district of St. Thomas Township. Located in the valley formed by Wilson Run, below the gap in Front Mountain, the district is comprised of the furnace stack, the manager's house/office, four worker's houses, and one site, the ruins of a barn. Although there are several newer houses built along Circle Dr., as well as a small repair shop directly north of the furnace, the district retains enough elements of the iron plantation to suggest its overall layout and feeling. The district is grassy with a number of trees, while the surrounding area is heavily wooded.

The furnace stack (1828) is located in the oxbow of Circle Dr., set against the bank from which the charging ramp extended. The furnace measures thirty feet square at the base, and is approximately thirty feet tall. The stack has a casting arch on the south side of the structure, and a tuyere arch on the west side. Both are intact. Although there has been some deterioration to the top of the stack and the face, in general the stack exhibits good integrity. The most unusual feature of the furnace is the semicircular cast iron plate above the casting arch lintel. The plate reads:

Franklin Furnace
Built in the Year
1828
by
P J & G Housum

The masonry footings of the charging ramp are still in evidence on the north side of the furnace. The foundations of the cast house to the south of the furnace are clearly evident. There are no other industrial remains evident.

There are four frame worker's houses located east of the furnace along Cinder St., remainders of a double row of facing houses which the furnace company constructed, probably c. 1828. They are 3 bays wide, one and a half stories, and are reported to have been sided with board and batten. All have been resided with vinyl or asphalt. Referring to the map, number 5 has a small addition on the north side, number 4 has had its front porch enclosed and has an addition on the north side, and number 3 has a large addition on its south side.

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To the east of the furnace is the ruins of a barn (#6), of which two masonry walls are standing - the west wall, and a portion of the north wall. The date of the barn is unknown, although it certainly dates back to the time of the furnace's operation. To the east is a stone house with frame addition (#7), c. 1828, date of ell unknown. This building was apparently the furnace office, and may have also been the manager's house. It is two and a half stories, three bays wide, and two bays deep. There is a frame ell, which is two bays wide and one bay deep. It is presently covered with asbestos siding. There is a first floor porch with lattice work on the south side of this ell.

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Franklin Furnace Historic District is significant under Criterion A in the area of industry for its association with the Pennsylvania iron industry. Franklin Furnace is representative of the small iron plantations which were established in eastern Pennsylvania, including a number which were located in the Cumberland Valley, including Franklin County. In this case the plantation was established by the Housums, who were migrating westward from Berks County to take advantage of the growing central Pennsylvania region. Franklin Furnace is also significant under Criterion C for the architecture of the existing worker's housing and the office/manager's house, which are representatives of the type of vernacular architecture typical of the modest dwellings found around many furnace communities. Although at one time there were a number of furnaces in the county, Franklin is unusual in that retains many elements of the iron plantation, including the furnace, workers' houses, and office building, and as such is a good example of an iron plantation. Under Criterion C, the furnace stack is notable as a well preserved stone furnace which illustrates the skill of the mason, and the cast iron plate chronicling the owners and date of construction on the face of the furnace is very unusual and perhaps singular in Pennsylvania.

Franklin Furnace was built in 1828 by Peter and George Housum, who were from Berks County. They purchased 1238 acres from Samuel Fisher in 1827 for \$1369. The Housums experimented with local ores, primarily using the Shearer Bank at Nor'East Forge near Ft. Loudon.

The furnace remained under Housum ownership, although from 1845-1848 it was leased by Brian, Filson and Lowe. In 1848 the furnace was sold to Benjamin and William Phraner of Lebanon County. They operated it until 1855, when Benjamin was killed while raising a building. William Phraner (Phreaner) and his siter Elmina Phraner Molly operated the furnace for several years before William sold out his interest to Peter Hollar. The last operators of the furnace were Daniel Hunter and Levi Springer, who purchased the property around 1867. By 1878, seventy five men were employed at the furnace, and there were thirty company houses in the immediate area. At that time they owned 5,000 acres of land, 400 of which were used for farming.

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One of the principal products of the furnace was stoves. However, the local ores had proved to be unsuitable, and transportation costs to obtain the ore from the Cressler Bank on South Mountain near Shippensburg, and ship the pig iron and other products to Chambersburg made the furnace unprofitable. In 1880 Hunter and Springer built Falling Spring Furnace in Chambersburg. By 1882 Franklin ceased full operation, although there was still some residual activity as late as 1886. Falling Spring failed in 1890.

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Davidson, D.H. Map of Franklin County. Greencastle: Riley & Hoffman, 1858.

Foreman, Harry E. "Birth of the Iron Industry in Franklin County." Kittochtinny Historical Society Papers. Vol. XIII, Chambersburg, 1950-57.

---- North Mountain Shadows. Chambersburg: published by the author, 1952.

Macauley, I.H. Historical Sketch of Franklin County. Chambersburg: John M. Pomeroy, 1878.

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Verbal boundary description: Franklin Furnace Historic District begins at the end of the oxbow of Circle Dr., thence 500' northeast to a point approximately 50' west of the intersection with Cinder St., thence north 200' to a point, thence 500' east to a point, thence south 200' to Circle Dr., thence west 400' to the intersection with Cinder St., thence south along the west side of Cinder St. 400' to a point, thence west 150' to a point, thence north 300', thence 200' west paralleling Circle Dr. to a point, thence south 200' to Circle Dr., thence northwest 400' to the point of beginning.

Boundary justification: The boundaries for Franklin Furnace Historic District include only those resources associated with the period of significance, and with the furnace. The ranch house northeast of the furnace is not included. A stone house southeast of the furnace is not included because there is insufficient evidence to link it with the furnace complex during its period of significance.

