

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Spannuth Mill  
other names/site number Crosskill Mill

### 2. Location

street & number Frystown Road and Crosskill Creek Road  not for publication N/A  
city, town Bethel Township  vicinity N/A  
state Pa code Pa county Berks code 011 zip code 19507

### 3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: Gristmills in Berks County  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 commenting or other 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 the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/processing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/not in use

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: gristmill

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls tin

roof metal

other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Spannum Mill is located near the western boundary of Bethel Township at the point where two small streams, Hummels and Leshes Creeks, converge to form the Crosskill Creek. The mill is east of Crosskill Creek and north of Frystown Road. The two historic resources on the property consist of two contributing buildings, a Second Empire style c 1891, frame, three stories plus basement mill measuring 40'4" by 42' 9" with a 50' extension on the north side, and c 1910 one story building of brick construction adjacent to the mill. The resources have few changes that interfere with their ability to depict the significant time period.

The one story brick building adjacent to the mill on the south side formerly housed a steam boiler. The building has a tin gable roof. There is a large drive-on truck scale outside the front of the mill on the south side with the scale being located on the loading dock in front of the mill, made by the Howe Scale Co. of Rutland, Vermont.

The foundation of the mill is stone, while the upper sections are of frame construction, covered with tin sheathing in a simulated brick pattern. The building is distinctive for its mansard roof design and its attractive Victorian detailing. The mansard roof features gabled dormers and has fishscale slate on its more vertical slopes. A well proportioned cupola at the center of the roof features a pointed spire and windows on each side. All the windows in the mill including those in the cupola and dormers have arched lintels with cutout scroll decoration.

The interior of the mill is intact as an operating mill of the mid 1980's, with office, floor plan, and equipment in place. The mill is structurally strong, built to carry the weights that would be expected when fully loaded on the various floor levels. There is evidence of several posts having chamfered corners but the summer beams are built up of 3" x 12" timbers. The floor joists are dimensional sawn material approximately 3" x 12". The flooring is 3" tongue-and-groove throughout. There is an office in the southwest corner of the mill. There are numerous wooden bins, floor to ceiling throughout to contain the grains and products in their various forms. The mill does not appear to have been altered to any great extent to contain the current machinery. The building is in good structural condition.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Spannuth Mill

Section number 7 Page 2

This mill is powered by electric motors. There are no millstones or evidence of them. The milling machinery is roller mill machinery and consists of two Midget Marvel Mills manufactured by the Anglo-American Mill Co. of Owensburg, Kentucky. Each is a 50 barrel mill, the earliest patent dated Septemer 25, 1908 and the latest, November 23, 1915. These patent dates suggest that the mills could not have been installed when the mill was rebuilt in 1891 after the fire and must have been later additions. The two Midget Marvels are powered by their own individual electric motors. Also on this floor is a Sprout-Waldron attrition mill driven by two individual Westinghouse motors.

On the first floor near the Midget Marvel mills is a Eureka double wheat scourer powered from the shaft in the basement which has a large electric motor. There is also a Monarch bag packer E-88. From the two roller mills the flour is taken to the attic area by elevator, where it is discharged into a gyro-whip finishing sifter manufactured by the Richmond Manufacturing Company, Lockport, N.Y. This is a twentieth century machine which has its own motor. Other equipment on this floor are an entoleter, which is a modern 20th century machine used to break up grains of bug-infested wheat, and a wire reel machine made by Wolfe of Chambersburg. Inside the front door on the east side of the mill is a Fairbanks scale with two cast iron reeded columns.

There is a modern flat belt driven cob breaker in the basement, made by the Nichol Engineering Co. of Saginaw, Michigan. The breaker broke up ear corn before it went into the attrition mill. There is a Sprout-Waldron Monarch corn cracker and grading outfit, # 601. The corn cracking machine cracked shelled corn for chicken feed called "Scratch". In the addition to the north are two vertical dry feed mixing machines and a molasses mixing machine. All the machines necessary for the feed production and operation of a mill are intact.

The Spannuth Mill is basically intact, although, there have been several additions to the building. There is a 50', single story, flat roofed addition on the north side. The two windows in the addition reproduce the Victorian detailing on the main part of the mill. The second floor west side has a short eight foot extension with a shed roof, again with the windows reproducing the Victorian scrollwork. A shed type roof was added over the main entrance to the mill. The structure of the interior has been little altered, having only those changes necessary to install new milling machinery. However, none of these changes interfere with the identity or change the character of the mill as it was built -- a Second Empire style late Victorian mill building. These changes do not interfere with the essential physical features that enable the historic resources to convey their past identity and character and portray the significant time period c 1891 to 1939 the cut-off date for National Register eligibility.

**8. Statement of Significance**

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

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Industry  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

c 1891 to 1939  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

c 1891  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

The Spannuth Mill is eligible for the National Register under criteria A and C. This mill is important for its association with the county gristmill industry as it is representative of the large, late nineteenth and early twentieth century mills built specifically as roller mills. Architecturally, this mill is a good example of late, high style Victorian mill architecture.

Less than 10 of the 104 mills in the Berks County Gristmill survey can be described as utilizing high style detailing and period architecture. Mr. Solomon Rhoads (The Weidner Mill) in Amity Township and Mr. Wertz in Wernersville are two other owners who decided, when building their mills, to use Victorian style detailing on their buildings. The vast majority of the mills in the survey were utilitarian vernacular type buildings with little or no embellishments. This mill typifies the Second Empire style with a Mansard roof featuring decorative fishscale slate shingles, projecting gabled dormers and a cupola with spire. All of the windows have arched lintels with detailed scrollwork. The brick-like tin covering is of interest and one-of-a-kind in the survey. Rather, than rebuild his mill in the traditional vernacular gristmill design after the fire in 1891, Mr. Spannuth chose to emulate the modern Victorian period innovations, making it certainly one of the most stylish buildings in rural Bethel Township in the 1890's.

The Spannuth mill contributes to our knowledge of Berks County milling history and technology by depicting the use of early twentieth century milling equipment. It produced flour by the use of Midget Marvel mills which were a form of mill invented in England and manufactured in large numbers in the United States. They are so-called "self-contained mills" in that practically all the machinery needed to produce white wheat flour is contained within each individual cast iron box. Of additional interest is the use of individual electric motors throughout the mill which is the system to which modern mills eventually turned. Many of the motors used in this mill are of apparently early date for electricity.

See continuation sheet

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Spannuth Mill

Section number 8 Page 2

This has been an important mill site in Berks County since 1756. According to Berks County historian Morton Montgomery (1886), Abraham Newcomet built a mill here soon after the settlement of the township. The 1816, 1854, and 1862 maps show the mill as being owned by the Newcomet family. The 1850 census of manufacturing shows the owner as Jacob Newcomet, the mill having four pair of stones processing 8,500 bushels of wheat and rye with a product value of \$7,070. Two men ran the mill each earning \$15 a month. In 1848, a post office was established at the mill which was known as "Crosskill Mills".

In the 1870s, Emmanuel Spannuth became the owner and proprietor. Spannuth was the first miller in Western Berks County to use the roller process to produce a finer grade of flour. The mill was well-known for its Crosskill Mills White Foam Flour. The original mill built in the 18th century was damaged by fire in 1891, and rebuilt the same year with a mansard roof.

Around 1900, the Showers brothers from Bernville used this mill to bring electric power to rural Western Berks. They connected a generator to the mill wheel and when the water wasn't being used to run the mill it was generating electricity for the local electric lines.

Aquillas Alexander Spannuth, son of Emmanuel, took over the operation of the mill in 1906 and continued until 1933. At this time, the mill was completely run by electric motors. George and Roy Spannuth, sons of Aquillas, carried on the work until Roy died in 1956. George continued until 1959 then ownership was passed on to his nephews, Clarence and Roy Spannuth Jr. The last miller was Clarence Spannuth, and he ran the mill with the help of six employees. In addition, to the gristmill the Spannuth family at various times operated a cider mill and creamery on the property. The mill ceased operating in 1982 when Mr. Spannuth retired, marking the end of milling at this location by the Newcomet and Spannuth families, two prominent milling families of Berks County.

This mill has played a key role in the life of the residents of the area for many years. In addition to doing a large merchant business, the mill also ground grain for the local farmers and provided other services by housing the local post office and generating electricity. The Spannuth Mill is an important part of the history of milling in Berks County.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Berks County Conservancy Multiple Property Nomination and Survey: Gristmills in Berks County, 1989

Morton L. Montgomery, History of Berks County in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: Evert, Peck & Richards, 1886).

**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 # \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

**Specify repository:**

Berks County Conservancy

**10. Geographical Data**

Acres of property Approximately 2 acres

**UTM References**

A	1 8	3 8 5 1 4 0	4 4 7 8 1 8 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
C	1 8	3 8 5 0 8 0	4 4 7 8 0 8 0

B	1 8	3 8 5 1 5 0	4 4 7 8 0 8 0
	Zone	Easting	Northing
D			

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Louise Emery, Consultant date June 1990  
 organization Berks County Conservancy  
 street & number 960 Old Mill Road telephone 215 - 372-4992  
 city or town Wyomissing state PA zip code 19610

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 2

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Spannuth Mill

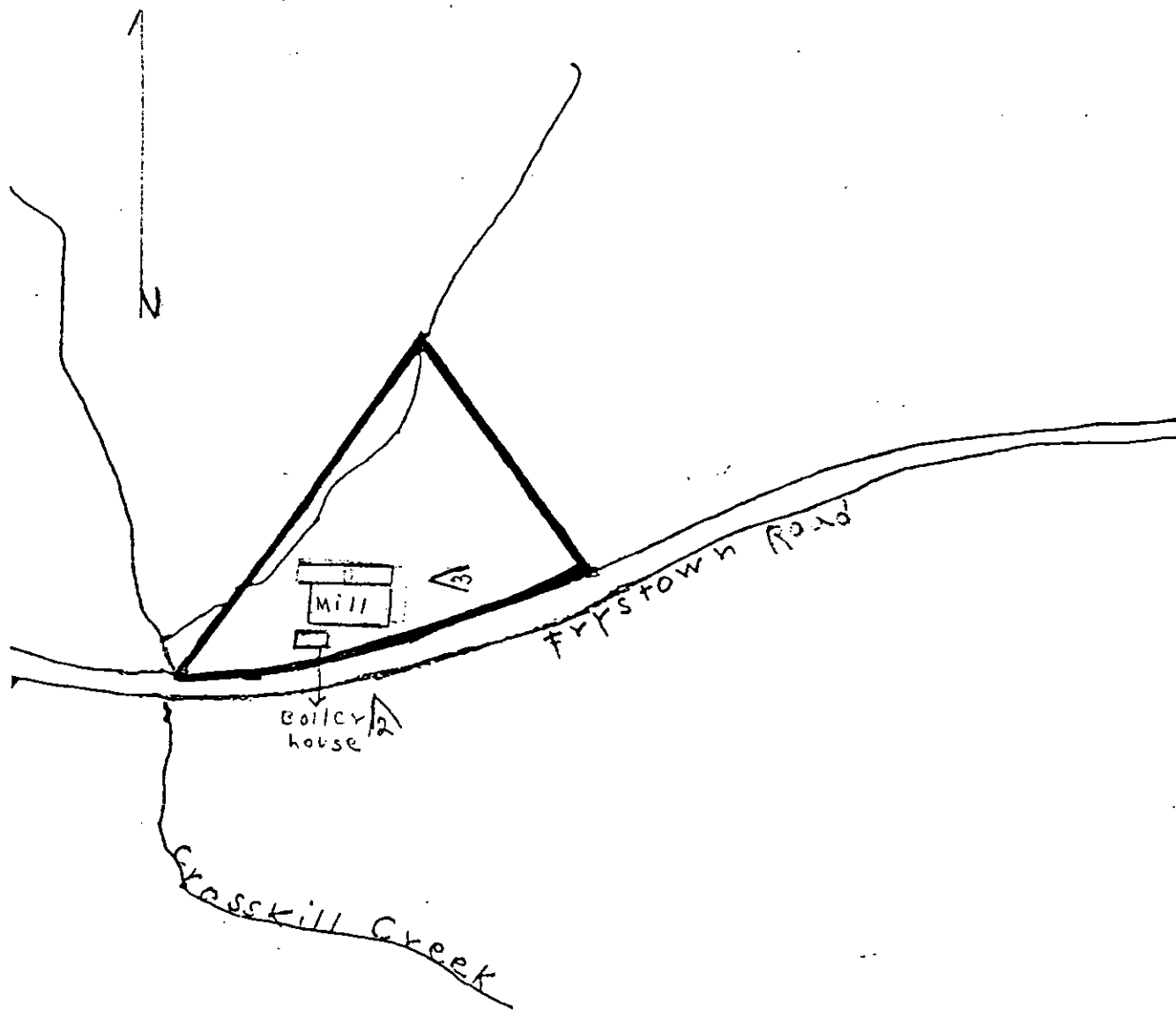
Verbal Boundary Description

Starting at a point on the north side of Frystown Road where Crosskill Creek passes under the road proceed northeasterly 450', thence southeasterly approximately 400' to Frystown Road, thence westerly 470' along the north side of Frystown Road to place of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary is drawn to include the two contributing buildings, the mill and the adjacent brick boiler house. The boundaries are drawn in a triangular plan using the road as the southern boundary line. Excluded from the nominated property is the adjoining farmstead which has buildings of a different period and style than the mill building and which are separated from the mill by the public road.

SPANNUTH MILL  
BERKS COUNTY, PA

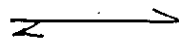


Key

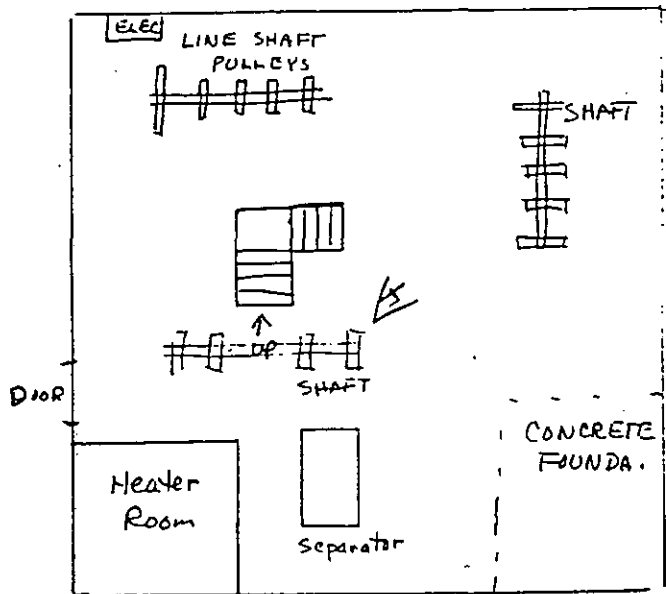
- \_\_\_\_\_ Boundry
- ◁ Photo Direction
- Not to Scale



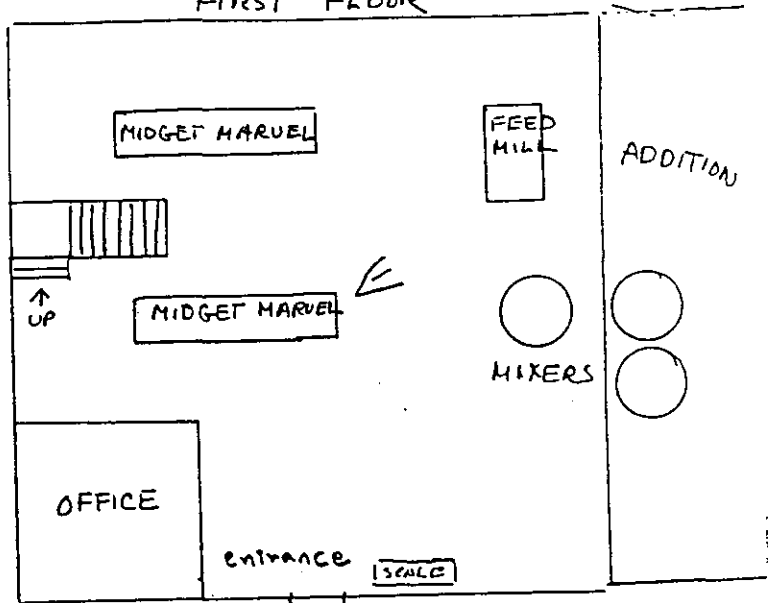
SPANNUTH MILL  
 BERKS COUNTY, PA



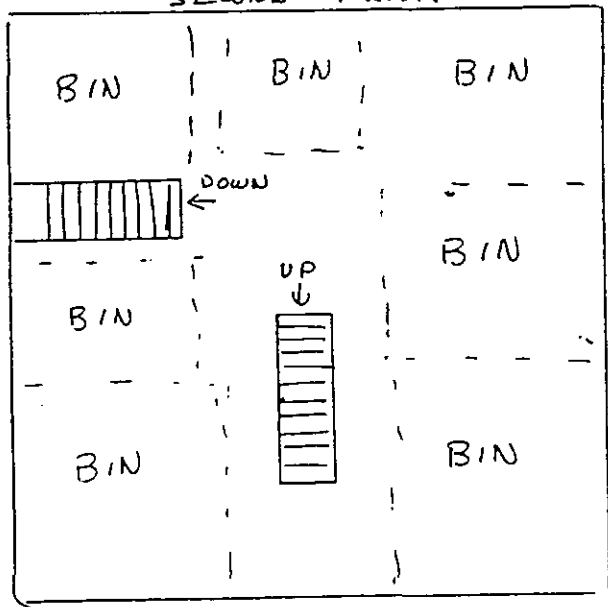
BASEMENT



FIRST FLOOR

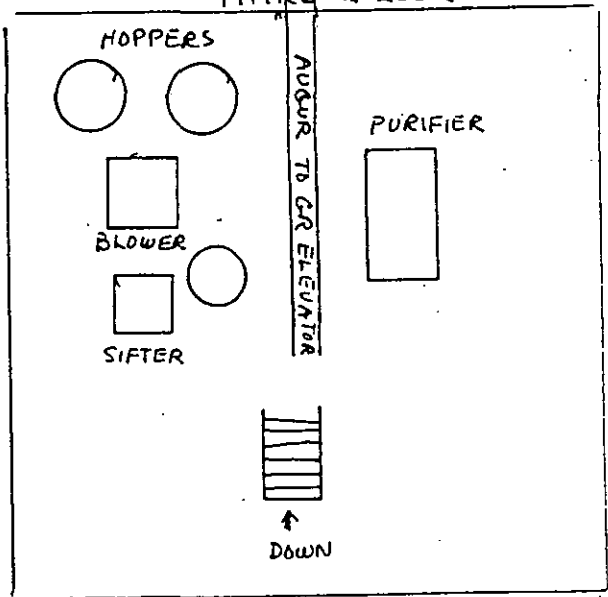


SECOND FLOOR



STORAGE OF GRAIN

THIRD FLOOR



< Photo Direction

Not to Scale

SPANNUTH mill  
Berks County  
Bethel Lead  
zone 18

A 385140 4478180 4478  
B 385150 4478080  
C 385080 4478080

