United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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

1. Name

historic

and/or common Deffenbaugh Site, 36FA57, PH & MC

2. Location

street & number

city, town Nicholson Twp. vicinity of congressional district 22

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Fayette code 051

3. Classification

Category

district

building(s)

structure

site

object

Ownership

public

private

both

Public Acquisition

in process

being considered

Status

occupied

unoccupied

work in progress

Accessible

yes: restricted

yes: unrestricted

no

Present Use

agriculture

commercial

educational

entertainment

government

industrial

military

museum

park

private residence

religious

scientific

transportation

other:

4. Owner of Property

name C. W. Balling

street & number R. D. 2

city, town Smithfield vicinity of state Penna.

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Fayette County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Uniontown state Penna.

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

For HCFS use only
received date entered
The Deffenbaugh Site, 36PA57, is a Monongahela village site located within Fayette County, Pennsylvania. The general area is typical of the foothill topography of the Unglaciated Allegheny Plateau of southwestern Pennsylvania. The most westerly ridge of the Allegheny Mountains - Chestnut Ridge - begins to rise in elevation 5 miles east of the site. The nearest source of water is a spring located some 200' south-east of the site and it is the source of an unnamed tributary which in turn flows into Georges Creek. The latter flows west to empty into the Monongahela River. Georges Creek is approximately 1 1/2 miles south of the site.

The site first received formal archaeological attention from local amateur George Fisher who designated the site as D-5. A burial of a child, excavated by Fisher, was reported by Engberg (1931:155-156) in an article entitled "Algonkian Sites in Westmoreland and Fayette Counties." The burial had been covered by a slab and was accompanied by forty turkey bone beads in the area of the waist.

According to his field notes, Fisher did not spend much time at Deffenbaugh although he did consider the past occupants to be of "high culture" based on the 37" nicely worked bone beads around the waste" of the child burial. Deffenbaugh was recorded in 1960 by Carnegie Museum Field Associate Donald Tanner. A small quantity of artifacts were surface collected at that time and these have since been donated to Carnegie Museum. They include shell tempered body sherds, mussel shell fragments, several fragments of bone refuse, 2 dicordals and a chert scraper. In June, 1965, Tanner test excavated the site and determined that it had a diameter of approximately 240'. He also noted that the site had, in the past, been bisected by a tramway right-of-way.

The September, 1980 visit to the site by the survey crew affirmed the presence of the right-of-way that would have severely disturbed that portion of the site effected. This elongated, elevated strip is now covered by small trees, brush and weeds. The unaffected portions of the site to the east and west are now utilized for agriculture although, in 1980, both were in pasture. The present owners, the Ballings, raise and train horses on the land and will continue to plow and plant in the area covered by the site.

Fayette County, Pennsylvania has been adversely effected by surface coal mining and the preservation and/or mitigation of prehistoric sites has become increasingly difficult. Sites like Deffenbaugh are thus prime candidates for nomination to the National Register of Historical Places.
8. Significance

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<th>Areas of Significance—Check and justify below</th>
<th>Specific dates</th>
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Although there has been a continuing program of Monongahela site investigation especially by Carnegie Museum of Natural History archaeologists, no sites in eastern Fayette County has received attention. Further to the east, in Somerset County, a phase of Monongahela has been recognized by this author based on artifact attributes, especially ceramics. The Somerset Phase of Monongahela can be distinguished by a high percentage of cordmarked, limestone tempered pottery with a minor attribute of added rim strips that seem to have a regional Middle Appalachian distribution. Settlement pattern attributes are, however, Monongahela in type with the typical circular house ring enclosed by a stockade which in turn, surrounds an "open" plaza. Houses were round and had an attached appendage that may have been utilized for food storage. Two and possible three clusters of village sites were recognized for Somerset County and these were spatially separated by at least 25 miles. Whether or not other village clusters existed to the west of Somerset County in present-day Fayette County is not known due to the lack of concentrated survey and investigation.

Deffenbaugh could be related to other locally known Monongahela village sites. Site 36FA63 is located a little over 3 miles to the southeast and 36FA22 is 3 3/8 miles south. Both are upland Monongahela village sites like Deffenbaugh but whether or not they were occupied by the same village group as suggested for the separate Somerset County clusters is not known. Artifact samples and temporal placement using C-14 dating would be required to determine the intra-village relationships. Thus, at present, the Monongahela village sites of central and eastern Fayette County are little understood. None are represented by museum curated collections so that material culture comparisons cannot be made. All of these village sites occupy upland locales and the nearby floodplains along Georges Creek were apparently ignored. Whether these were considered to be too spatially limited or too prone to flooding is not known but the incidence of upland siting, as is the case with Deffenbaugh and neighboring sites, would seem to be more than accidental. The high incidence of upland siting of Monongahela village sites is believed to have been the result of internecine warfare. Perhaps, central Fayette County as occupied by Deffenbaugh and other upland sites was an area of defensive refuge as was hypothesized for at least one portion of Somerset County to the east. There the upland village sites could be recognized for their defensive posture by the high incidence of burials on sites that were otherwise unproductive of artifacts.
9. Major Bibliographical References

Fisher, George n.d. Unpublished manuscript on file at CMNH

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2
Quadrangle name Smithfield 7.5'
Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

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Verbal boundary description and justification
See Item Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title Richard L. George, Field Archaeologist
organization Carnegie Museum of Natural History date 7/31/81
street & number 4400 Forbes Avenue telephone 361-0500
city or town Pittsburgh state Penna.

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

   national   state   X local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-685), 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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature
title Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer date

For HCGR use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: date

Chief of Registration
Based on 1965 test excavations and field observation the 240' diameter Deffenbaugh site occupies a 1140' saddle between hills to the north and south. The 1140' contour line, somewhat inaccurately traverses the site from southwest to northeast. The area of the site is more realistically level at 1140' with elevations gradually falling off to the east, west and south while rising to the north. The northern boundary of the site is closer to the 1200' hill than is the southern one.