

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION

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 Mill Rift Hall

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Bluestone Boulevard

NA not for publication

city, town Mill Rift [Westfall Township]

NA vicinity

state Pennsylvania

code PA

county Pike

code 103

zip code 18340

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

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

Name of related multiple property listing:

Historic and Architectural Resources of the  
Upper Delaware Valley, New York and Pennsylvania

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

DR. BRENT D. GLASS

*Brent D. Glass*

6/21/93  
Date

Signature of certifying official

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND 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 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)

social / meeting hall

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

recreation & culture / museum

social / meeting hall

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

other: vernacular meeting hall

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone / sandstone

walls wood / weatherboard

roof asphalt

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

See continuation sheet

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## Mill Rift Hall

Historic and Architectural Resources of the Upper Delaware Valley  
NY: Delaware, Sullivan, Orange Counties  
PA: Wayne and Pike Counties

## Narrative Description

Built in 1905, the Mill Rift Hall is a simple, wood frame community hall, located at the center of the isolated village of Mill Rift, Pennsylvania. It is characterized by a high degree of architectural integrity, both on the interior and exterior, virtually unaltered since its construction. It has been maintained in excellent condition.

The building is sited on a narrow lot, with its east facade parallel to the west side of Bluestone Blvd., very close to the road. It faces a small open parking area on the south side. Mature evergreens line the embankment on the west side of the building, where there is a steep drop-off to the Mill Rift Creek below. Nearby residences are shielded from view by mature plants.

The Mill Rift Hall is a one-story, gable-ended building, with a foundation of native bluestone. It is clapboard sided, with a shingled roof. The east side of the roof line is penetrated by a small gable, topped with a brick chimney. Windows along the side walls are six-over-six double hung. Exterior decorative elements, including door panels, window and door frames, band trim below the roof line, and corner boards, are flat and unornamented. Centered on the front (south) facade, the gabled entry is flanked by two two-over-two double hung windows, with a double two-over-two window over the peak of the entry. Double entry doors are paneled. Steps leading up to the entrance are of finely dressed, native bluestone.

Henn's Westfall Township, Gateway To The West describes the interior:

The unfinished ceiling of the basement feasting room reveals a sturdy complex of neatly hewn foundation logs, and a massive beam extending the entire length of the building supported by three stout props. The kitchen corner contains a sink without running water. Original dishes remain stored in the cabinets. The interior walls and ceiling of the "audience room," including the stage, are finished in wainscoting.

Today, the basement room can only be reached by going down three stone steps, behind the front entrance steps. Originally, a trap door on the stage gave interior access to the basement; the trap door still exists, but has been sealed off. The floor of the

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Historic and Architectural Resources of the Upper Delaware Valley  
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basement room is dirt, with the stone foundation forming the walls. The ceiling is unfinished, revealing the large, hand hewn logs which form the floor joints for the room above. The dry sink and built-in cabinets stocked with old crockery are located along the south wall.

The "audience room" takes up the entire main floor of the building. It is an open plan hall, used for Civic Association meetings. An elevated stage extends across the entire north end of the room. The stage, walls, and side display cases house the museum's collection of local artifacts. A large 46-star flag hangs from the wide balcony, which stretches across the south end of the room over the front entrance, facing the stage. The balcony is reached by a narrow, enclosed, interior stairway at the southeast corner of the building. The walls, ceiling, and the front of the balcony are completely covered with highly varnished wainscotting. Windows and doors are framed with wooden bulls eye moldings.

**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)  
social history

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance  
1905-1943

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates  
1905

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation  
N / A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person  
N / A

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder  
Sawyer, William

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

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## Mill Rift Hall

Historic and Architectural Resources of the Upper Delaware Valley  
New York: Delaware, Sullivan, Orange Counties  
Pennsylvania: Wayne and Pike Counties

### Significance

Mill Rift Hall satisfies Criterion A, for its association with the social and cultural history of the Mill Rift area. At the time of its construction, it was the only meeting place available to the general public in this isolated community, and was the center for cultural and social life during the period before automobiles provided convenient access to facilities in other communities. It is the only general purpose meeting hall, from this period, extant in the river valley. Associated with Context 3: Upper Delaware Industry, 1614-1942, the Mill Rift Hall's origins and use were closely related to both the tourism and quarrying industries.

Mill Rift Hall resulted from formation of the Literary Society in the early 1890s. The Society was fostered, in large part, by the summer visitors, who came to Mill Rift from the New York metropolitan area with establishment of the railroad station at the center of the village. It also provided the primary cultural life for year-round residents, nearly all of whom derived some income from either the quarries or the boarding house trade. The Society sponsored varied activities including weekly Lyceum programs, a stock company, a glee club, a weekly newspaper, quilt contests, calico carnivals, suppers, and a lending library. Initially, the group met in the schoolhouse. But by 1905, they had founded the Mill Rift Library Association with 215 active members, and were ready to build a community hall and public library.

The building was constructed in 1905, along Bluestone Boulevard. The Boulevard derived its name from large quarries located about two miles to the north, along this road. This was a time when bluestone quarries were big business in the Mill Rift area, shipping tons of flagstone out on the railroad. Quarry workers and their families were geographically isolated, often poor and uneducated. Events at the hall provided the social and cultural opportunities otherwise unavailable to them. The Mill Rift Debating Society held heated political debates here. There were also strawberry socials, community suppers, and ice cream socials.

Land for the building was donated by the Sawyers, Mill Rift's founding family, on the condition that the hall be used for public

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Mill Rift Hall

Historic and Architectural Resources of the Upper Delaware Valley  
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purposes, or that ownership revert to the family. William Sawyer was both property donor and builder of the hall. Other local residents donated labor. Guests at local boarding houses combined with Mill Rift residents to raise \$695.10 for building materials. The Standard Bluestone Company laid the cornerstone, which was quarried nearby.

With the advent of automobiles and the decline of the boarding house and quarrying industries, the character of Mill Rift and the function of the Mill Rift Hall began to change. No longer did crowds of summer visitors arrive by train. No longer were tons of bluestone shipped out to the cities, for curbstones and sidewalks. By the 1950s, Mill Rift had become a quiet hamlet of local commuters and second home owners, who could easily drive to cultural events and libraries at Matamoras, Milford, Port Jervis, and beyond. The Mill Rift Literary Society died, and the Mill Rift Civic Association was born. The Hall, no longer a primary social/cultural center for the community's residents, shifted to a historic/civic focus, providing a museum and continuing as a facility for public meetings.

The building is characterized by a remarkable level of architectural integrity and unbroken use pattern. Historic fabric remains intact, and there have been no structural changes. In an area where bluestone quarrying was once dominant, its bluestone foundation and neatly dressed bluestone front steps are especially significant.

As an early twentieth century meeting hall, the Mill Rift Hall is unique in the river valley. While literary and cultural organizations were popular throughout the area at the time, other groups utilized space in private homes, schools, and hotels. Only in Mill Rift was a facility built specifically for this kind of public social and cultural use.

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

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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:

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

Specify repository:

National Park Service, Resource Mgt. Office  
Milanville, Pennsylvania

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property less than one acre

UTM References

A 

1	8	5	2	1	2	5	0	4	5	8	4	2	7	0
Zone				Easting				Northing						

C 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

B 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

D 

Zone				Easting				Northing						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

SEE CONTINUATION SHEET

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary E. Curtis, Cultural Resources Specialist

organization National Park Service date 2/2/93

street & number P O Box C telephone 717-729-7842

city or town Narrowsburg state NY zip code 12764



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Mill Rift Hall  
Historic and Architectural Resources of the Upper Delaware Valley  
NY: Delaware, Orange, Sullivan Counties  
PA: Pike, Wayne Counties

**Major Bibliographic References**

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Mill Rift Hall  
Historic and Architectural Resources of the Upper Delaware Valley  
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PA: Pike, Wayne Counties

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundaries of this site correspond with tax map 53.8, lot #19 (incorrectly labeled on tax map as "Millrift Church"), Westfall Township, Pike County, Pennsylvania.

**Boundary Justification**

This boundary includes all buildings and features directly related to the Mill Rift Hall. It follows the legal property lines.

128A 571KES - MN 1 0000 98W  
AND 0000 1 NW - SEKERS 4821



Mill Riff Hall  
Aire County  
Zone B - Abut Janus  
North Road  
E 521250 N4584270

510 000 FEET  
(N. Y.)