

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Connely/Holeman House

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 317 Chestnut Street.

not for publication N/A

city or town Pleasantville Borough vicinity N/A

state Pennsylvania code PA county Venango code 121 zip code 16341

3. 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Carol Lee
Signature of certifying official/Title

JUNE 19, 2007
Date

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

Connely/Holeman House
Name of Property

Venango County PA
County and State

4. 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

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)
count)

- private
- public-local
- public-state
- public-federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the

Contributing	Non-contributing	
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u>	buildings
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	sites
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	structure
<u> 0 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	objects
<u> 1 </u>	<u> 1 </u>	Total

Name of related multiple property listing listed in
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)
 N/A

Number of contributing resources previously the National Register
 0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

 Domestic- Single Dwelling

 Domestic- Secondary Structure

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

 Domestic - Single Dwelling

 Domestic- Secondary Structure

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)
 Second Empire

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)
foundation Stone
walls weatherboard
roof synthetic
other wood

Connely /Holeman House
Name of Property

Venango County PA
County and State

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance
(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions)

Architecture

Period of Significance

1869 - 1887

Significant Dates

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary location of additional data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University

Other

Name of repository: _____

Connely/Holeman House
Name of Property

Venango County PA
Country and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 1

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1 17 616929 4605524
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description

(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)
See Tax Map on continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kathy Coffaro
organization N/A date 3/6/2007
street & number: 317 Chestnut St Telephone: 814-589-5129 or 814-516-9140
city or town: Pleasantville State: PA zip code: 16341

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items

(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name Kathy Coffaro
street & number 317 Chestnut St telephone 814-589-5129
city or town Pleasantville State: PA zip code: 16341

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC

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Connely/Holeman House
Venango County, PA

Description

The Connely/Holeman House is a large scale (6000 square feet) three-story Second Empire structure built between 1869 and 1871. It is located on a long narrow lot of approximately one acre at 317 Chestnut Street. Chestnut is a residential street that intersects State Street, the main road through the borough. The original edifice was built on a square cut stone foundation with two projecting bays, measuring 50 by 50 feet overall. The house faces east upon a slight elevation on an otherwise flat parcel flanked by mature trees on all sides. In addition to this contributing building, a noncontributing carriage house exists on the northwest side of the property. The carriage house was erected after the period of significance, 1869-1887. Both structures are wood-framed buildings sheathed in tongue and groove siding. The Connely/Holeman House has undergone no significant alterations since the time of a rear addition in 1887.

The main elevation, three bays wide, faces east. Two cut stone hitching posts occupy their original positions at the street near a semicircular walkway that terminates at the two front entries. The east façade features two covered porches and a bay window on the first level. The southeast porch is supported by three Corinthian columns. A pair of paneled black walnut double doors topped by a large fanlight opens to a formal vestibule from this porch. The two upper panels are tall narrow sections, arched at the top. The lower pair are square sections measuring approximately one half of the upper panels. The door surround is boldly framed by deep walnut moldings. A three section bay window faces the same street side, or east elevation. A large cornice frames the bay window, ornamented by square appliqué in a belt course below the fascia. The same mansard style cast iron cresting on the roof frames the bay balcony perimeter. The bay balcony is tripartite and reflects the bay window configuration. The second street façade porch enters the parlor at the northeast corner. It is supported by three Corinthian columns, topped by a balcony trimmed with cast iron railing. Both the porch and balcony are semicircular. The entry door has an arched glass upper section with an elaborately etched floral motif and a solid lower square panel. All exterior doors are made of solid black walnut with bold surrounds of the same material. A large floor to ceiling window on this porch looks into the second parlor.

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The five tall narrow east elevation first level windows are single hung. The window surrounds are topped by splayed lintels made of wood layered in a triple ogee design. The stiles are wider at the upper and lower ends and decorated by a pair of brackets beneath the sill. A simple scroll cut integrates the wider terminal sections to the center.

The four second story east elevation windows are not as tall as first level openings, but are otherwise constructed the same. The distinguishing features of the east façade at the second level are the two balconies previously described and a series of large cornice brackets that extend around the entire house at the main mansard roof level. The brackets were made from four scroll cut boards secured together. The mansard roof was originally slate. At an unknown date, the steeper visible portions were replaced with asphalt shingles. The slightly sloped roof sections are currently rubber. The original roofing material is unknown. All sides of the mansard roof are pieced by dormer windows on the third story. The east elevation has a pair. Both feature the same lintels as the lower levels windows. Lower brackets are absent. The dormer centered above the bay has a segmented pediment over the lintel. All other dormers have shed roof construction. The dormer windows are single hung. The distinguishing Second Empire feature at the third level is the wrought iron foot high cresting that extends around all four elevations. The cresting design consists of a series of approximately 8 inch squares with central interior quatrefoils from which extend diagonals to the four corners. The upright sides of each square are topped by fleur-de-lis ornamentation. A taller spear shaped finial is positioned at all vertexes.

The north elevation is three bays wide and like the main facade, has a pair of dormers on the third level built into the mansard roof. The northeast corner projects out in a semihexagonal configuration. The dormer windows on this façade are similar in appearance to the shed roof one at the street side. The north elevation has five windows on the first level with an equal number at the second story. The five lowest level windows are identical to those facing east, although none are arranged in a bay configuration. Three second level windows on this side nearest the eastern elevation are the same as those described, however, the rear two differ. Both are dormer type windows built into a mansard style roof that tops the rear section of the house. The north elevation features mansard roofing at two distinct levels, as the rear section of the house is two stories as opposed to the three of the front section. Two brick chimneys are

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situated between the north elevation dormer windows. A new pair of steel doors, installed in 2004, opens into the full basement.

The opposite side, or south elevation, is similar to the northern facade with the major exception of a covered porch that has a single door entry with a fanlight above the door. The flat rubber porch roof is supported by square posts framed by simple S curved brackets at the eaves. This elevation also differs in the absence of the pair of chimneys on the northern side. Fenestration on this side varies from other elevations in the single hung arched window that opens to the foyer. The four other windows are the same as those found elsewhere.

The rear, or west elevation, features the house's fourth covered porch. It has a flat rubber roof and is supported by three turned columns and has a pair matching pilasters attached to the house exterior opposite the outer posts. A continuous row of turned spindles interspersed by wooden sunburst designs is located beneath the eaves on all three open sides. The lower mansard roof above the west elevation lacks dormers, however, a pair are visible at the third story roof. Wide vertical corner boards are found at all elevations, as is a chamfered exterior baseboard that extends around the entire building perimeter.

An addition was added to the rear of the house in 1887 when it passed from the Connelys to the Holemans. It is tempting to speculate the rear porch was original to the 1871 construction and was simply moved back for the addition. This addition doubled the kitchen from approximately 300 square feet to 600. The only existing exterior door to the kitchen is at the rear porch. It is a four panel door with two taller upper rectangular sections and a pair of smaller ones beneath. The exterior door hinges appear original, however doorknobs and locks are contemporary.

Six rooms are located on the first level, excluding the two pantries, half bath and vestibule. They average 400 square feet each with the exception of the larger kitchen and smaller library. The first story ceilings are thirteen feet high. All millwork at this level is made from solid black walnut produced by the Davis Tank Shop and Planing Mill in Titusville, PA. Walls and ceilings are the historic plaster with the exception of the kitchen ceiling. It was replaced by drywall (2005). Thirty inch oak wainscoting is found in the kitchen, 1887 party, and original second story bathroom. Typical of high style Second Empire houses, elaborate foliated ceiling medallions are located in most rooms and the hallway. They are not present in the day room or kitchen. Deeply cast plaster cornices.

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compliment the ornate medallions. The first level doors and windows are framed in deeply molded wood that measures just over 8 inches on the three sides. The door and window surround moldings were built from a total of seven separate boards secured together. Many windows have louvered shutters that are still functional. The downstairs baseboards are approximately a foot high and consist of five individual boards. The first level interior doors reflect the paneling configuration on the exterior doors which have two upper arched sections and a pair of lower rectangular panels. The downstairs floor plan includes a large easterly parlor with the bay window. The kitchen and day room are at the west end of the building. The library and second parlor flank the north side of the central staircase. The dining room and foyer are on the south side of the main staircase. The house gives the impression of substantial interior floor space, as halls and landings are as large as many contemporary rooms. The present day function of the first level rooms remains the same as the historic uses with the exception of the second parlor which has become a home gym.

The 8 by 14 foot foyer is accessed through double doors at the northeast porch. The room has a single arched window that faces north. Another pair of double doors opens from the foyer to a large landing at the foot of the central staircase. The double doors feature clear glass arched upper portions with solid paneled wood below.

The 1887 westerly addition that doubled the size of the kitchen from 300 to 600 square feet includes a second pantry, most likely historically used as a larder, or food preparation area. The original kitchen contains a butler's pantry with built-in cabinets. A south facing room of approximately 300 square feet, the day room, opens through a swinging door into the added 1887 kitchen area. The day room is part of the 1887 addition. The 1887 larder was converted to a bathroom by a previous owner (1985). The present owners removed all bathroom fixtures (2005). The room is used once more as a pantry. The kitchen cabinets installed by a previous owner (1975) were removed (2005) and replaced with freestanding antique pieces. The same owners (1975) dropped the thirteen feet high kitchen ceiling and covered the plaster walls with inexpensive wood paneling which was removed in 2005. The original plaster walls and oak wainscoting were exposed and repaired at the same time. Removal of the paneling revealed two curved walls, one concave near the exterior door of the 1887 addition and the other convex, outside the original pantry built in 1871. The plaster ceiling was deemed beyond repair and covered by drywall (2005).

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Another rear entrance was added to the house at the time of the 1887 addition. It opened onto the back porch from the day room. This door was removed and added to the open pantry when it was converted to a full bath in 1985. The day room exit to the rear porch was walled off at this time. The house has eight fireplaces. All are marble with the exception of a brick faced fireplace located in the third floor servants' quarters. They were originally fueled from a backyard gas well. The well was covered over at an unknown date. The fireplaces are no longer functional. The original ornate summerpieces and brass fenders remain intact on the seven fireplaces in the first and second level living areas. All fireplaces have an arched opening topped by a central S scrolled cartouche, except for the plain brick one on the third level. The most elaborately designed fireplace is found in the main parlor. The cartouche features an ornately carved bird's nest with four eggs and a pair of birds that resemble doves. The ancones are deep S scrolls with carved seashells at the lower edge.

The solid black walnut central staircase features an ornately carved octagonal newel post. Each of the eight recessed panels has chamfered edges with detailed carving outlining the interior edge of the bevels. The curtail is a rounded soft semicircle. The outer string is decorated with double S scrolled valence brackets set beneath the highly molded tread edges. The wall string is a wider version of the base molding found throughout the house. Turned balusters and a wide molded railing complete the balustrade. The staircase rises to landing of approximately seven by ten feet. The balustrade continues around the right side of the upstairs hall and terminates in a larger landing of twelve by fourteen feet.

The six second level rooms have eleven foot high ceilings. All were historically and currently used as bedrooms or guest rooms. A pair of rooms opens onto the small landing at the top of the stairs, facing west. One room is a half bath that was converted from a closet in the 1950s, and the other is a bedroom that connects to the hall landing through a small anteroom. This room is part of the 1887 addition and is located above the room adjoining the newer kitchen (1887) section. The original bathroom faces east of the staircase landing and is entered through a closed off anteroom which likely functioned as a dressing room.

The master bedroom is off the main second level hallway on the north side. It contains a separate sitting room, or dressing room, that opens between the two rooms. A marble fireplace is situated in the smaller room. Another large bedroom is adjacent, facing the street side (east) of the house. It features a

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marble fireplace and large walk-in closet. All upstairs rooms, including three of the four in the servants' quarters have large closets. There is another bedroom facing the rear of the building, or west on the right hall side. It contains another marble fireplace. All of the second level bedrooms feature ornate plaster cornices and detailed ceiling medallions that are original to the house.

The third floor is remarkable in that it remains entirely untouched from the construction completed in 1871. There are no electrical outlets, plumbing, or other evidence of modern renovation. The plaster walls have fallen into disrepair in a few limited sections. The area has a large central room with a brick fireplace and three smaller rooms. How the servants used these rooms is unknown. The third floor is accessed through a staircase at the rear of the first level kitchen that leads to a second story landing. This landing is closed off from the upstairs second floor bedrooms and has a second staircase leading to the third level. Only the Connely and Holeman households employed live-in servants and the servants' quarters has remained unused for over a hundred years. The area is lit by dormer windows built into the mansard roof. The ceilings are nine feet tall and lack the ornamental plaster work present in the downstairs rooms. The baseboards, however, a nearly a foot high and are the same as those on the lower levels. Likewise, the paneled closet doors are similar to the ones on the second level. The second and third story doors are made of softwood rather than the black walnut on the lower level. Those that are not painted white upstairs feature the original faux finish wood graining. The painted grain simulates oak.

The noncontributing single-story 16 by 32 foot carriage house was built in the early twentieth century by the third owner, Nelson Shelmadine, to shelter his Overland automobile. It has two rooms, a garage that is accessed through two openings, and a storage section with a standard four paneled exterior door. The garage section has a pair of double wood barn like doors as well as sliding doors with horseshoe flat track hardware. The sliding door has two sets of fixed six pane windows above three panel wood lower sections. Current functions of the carriage house rooms are the same as the historic. The wood framed building is sheathed in tongue and groove siding and rests upon a stone foundation. It has a gabled roof and one single hung six over six pane window facing east on the garage opening side. Several of the twelve glass panes were replaced (2005). Another boarded off window is located on the north side. It is not known when this opening was closed off.

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The Connely/Holeman House has maintained a remarkable degree of physical integrity. A late nineteenth century photograph shows the exterior unaltered with the exception of cast iron fencing out front, railing over the southeast porch, and a south side chimney that are not present in a 1972 photograph. Removal dates are unknown. No additions have been added to the house other than the 1887 rear section. The four porches and other architectural elements are the same as when originally constructed. The house interior is similarly unaltered with the exception of contemporary bathroom and kitchen fixtures, and replaced transoms on the second level. All save one of the original etched glass transoms were removed circa 1980 and later replaced with plain glass ones (2005). An original etched glass transom with an insignificant crack was found in the carriage house and repositioned in the door that between the master bedroom and master sitting room. These relatively minor alterations over a span of nearly 140 years do not impact upon the architectural significance of the Connely/Holeman House.

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Connely/Holeman House
Venango County, PA

The Connely/Holeman House is significant under Criterion C for architecture as a representative example of a large scale Second Empire residence in Pleasantville Borough, Venango County. The period of significance begins with the 1869 start of construction and ends with the construction of the two-story kitchen addition at the rear of the house in 1887. The Connely/Holeman House is the only large scale Second Empire building in Pleasantville. Excluding the 1887 addition by the Holemans, it is essentially unaltered from the time of construction, making it an outstanding example of Second Empire Victorian architecture.

Pleasantville is located in Venango County, PA and has a population of around 800 people. The town was originally called Benedictown after early pioneer, Aaron Benedict, who came to the area from New York in 1819. A charter for the borough was granted in 1850. Population maintained steady at around 300 inhabitants until the discovery of oil in 1865. By 1868, numerous wells were in full production and nearly 3000 people arrived in the borough. General stores, banks, and oil supply businesses prospered during the oil boom. The large scale homes built in the early 1870's were a direct result of revenue from oil. By the mid 1870's oil production had greatly diminished and the borough's population fell concurrently. The borough population, although slowly declining, has not changed significantly in the twentieth century.

James L. Connely, the first owner of the Connely/Holeman House, purchased four acres of land from Alexander Brown in 1868 and commissioned construction of the house the following year. The architect and builders are unknown. The Browns were among the earliest Scotch Irish immigrants to the area. The tombstone of John Brown (Alexander Brown's father) bearing his 1861 death date is located behind the carriage house. James L. Connely was born in Pleasantville in 1828. He attended local schools before leaving the borough to attend college. He was appointed associate county judge in 1867. Connely became the first president of the Pleasantville's Citizens Bank in 1871. He owned several rentals in town as well as extensive farm acreage, some of which was leased to oil speculators. Connely and his wife, Sarah, moved to the house upon its completion in 1871 with their two daughters and two sons. The younger daughter, Bertha Connely, attended the Women's Medical College of Philadelphia. She graduated in 1887 and moved to Colorado where she practiced medicine for several years. The Connelys occupied the house for a period of sixteen years. In 1887, James L. Connely was appointed to a

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judgeship in Philadelphia. He sold his numerous rental properties and farms in Pleasantville over the next few years.

Ashbel Holeman purchased the house in 1888. He was born in Holeman Flats in 1824. Holeman Flats was settled by the Scotch Irish Holeman family not long after the American Revolution. The town, which no longer exists, was located along the Allegheny River in Tionesta, not far from Pleasantville. Most likely the Pleasantville oil boom of 1868 brought Holeman to Pleasantville. Holeman owned several stores, and like Connely, invested in real estate. Following a devastating fire in 1872 that destroyed most of downtown Pleasantville, Holeman rebuilt the business district. He erected a fine three-story corner structure known as the Holeman Building that carried dry goods, clothing, hardware, oil well supplies, carpets, stoves, groceries and household furnishings. An 1879 history of the county describes the Holeman Building as, "one of the finest brick blocks in Northwestern Pennsylvania." The upper level was originally intended to be an Opera House, but the area failed to support the performing arts. Instead it was used for lectures and political meetings. When Holeman became justice of the peace, he performed wedding ceremonies on the upper story. Ashbel Holeman died in this house in 1898. His widow, the former Nancy Shelmadine, sold the house to her great-nephew, Nelson Shelmadine, shortly thereafter.

Nelson Shelmadine was an only child who lost his father at the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863. He was born on a farm a few miles from the Chestnut Street property. Shelmadine was a farmer who speculated in real estate and oil leases. He became wealthy enough to leave the farm and purchase the Connely/Holeman House at the end of the nineteenth century. He was active in borough politics and served on the city council. Shelmadine married a local teacher, the former Ida Black. Together they had a son and daughter. Nelson Shelmadine died in the house of Parkinson's disease in 1920. His wife suffered a stroke and died at the residence ten years later.

The house passed to their adult children, Stanley and Marguerite Shelmadine. Stanley died at the house in 1944 of unknown causes said to be related to World War II. He was the burgess of Pleasantville at the time of his death and had worked as a pharmacist. His widow, Beatrice Shelmadine, moved to a small house across the street where she lived until the age of ninety-four. Marguerite Shelmadine had left Pleasantville for Rochester, NY, to assume a teaching position in 1921. Previously, she taught English at Pleasantville High School. During the wartime "male shortage" of 1918, she served as the first and

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only female principal of the high school. She continued to reside at the Connely/Holeman House during the summers with her longtime companion, Maude Mitchell, another teacher and Pleasantville native. Marguerite died in 1974 and is buried in Pleasantville's Fairview Cemetery, near the Connely and Holeman family plots.

The following year the house was purchased by a Titusville High School teacher, William Greenley. Greenley added a heating system, replaced the slate roof with synthetic shingles, and restored the cut stone foundation by mortaring loose joints. At the time of the Greenley purchase in 1975, the building lacked a working heating system. In the earliest days, the home's eight fireplaces were fueled by gas from the backyard oil well. Later at an unknown date four massive brick coal furnaces were built in the basement. Neither heating source was viable at the time of the Greenley purchase. It is not known when the original heating systems failed. In 1980, Greenley sold the house to Bob Miller. New Jersey artist, Cynthia Schooley, purchased the property in 1985. Schooley sold the house to Kathy Coffaro and Mark Kovac in 2004.

The Connely/Holeman House was used continuously as a primary residence between 1871 and 1944. After Stanley Shelmadine, son of third owner Nelson Shelmadine, died in 1944, his sister, Marguerite Shelmadine, used the house as a summer residence. Following her death in 1974, the house has been continuously used as a primary residence until the present time. The rooms within have maintained the same contemporary functions as the historic with the exception of the second parlor that is currently used as a home gym. Although the Connely/Holeman House is the only large scale Second Empire house in the borough, two smaller buildings with mansard roofs were built next door around the same time. Both are described as mansard cottages in an 1869 newspaper article that notes their construction dates along with that of the Connely/Holeman House. The projected cost of the two cottages was \$3,000 each in comparison to the expected \$25,000 budget for the large house. In addition to the Connely/Holeman House, three other elaborate homes were built in Pleasantville during the 1870's. All are Italianate or Italian Villa in design. The brick Dr. John Wilson home at 248 North Main was built in 1873. With the exception of a missing central tower, the house retains most of the original exterior architectural detail. It features a heavily bracketed cornice with porches at both the first and second levels and a nearly flat roof. Elaborate incised lintels top all windows of the two story Italianate structure and an enclosed porch

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faces the street elevation. A three part bay window and second porch are located at the left and right elevations, respectively.

The two story 1875 Samuel Queen Brown house at 121 West State is an Italian Villa style home with many Italianate features. Made of brick currently painted white, the exterior is essentially unaltered. It has two porches supported by ornate wrought iron posts, with iron trim running along the porch eaves. Four large paired brackets are located on both sides of the two peaked porch roofs. All first story windows are arched. An arched Palladian window faces the street façade at the second level. The final large scale home in the borough is a wood framed eclectic style building at 351 West State Street built in 1873. It was converted to apartments in the 1940's, however has not been significantly altered on the exterior. It reflects both Italianate and Italian villa architectural lines. The building has two levels and a three-story corner tower. The tower separates a gabled wing from a flat roof section, all heavily bracketed at the eaves. The three porches were replaced with similar ones at an unknown date.

Prior to the Oil Boom, Pleasantville lacked homes of large scale. The earliest structures that remain in some form today are small, single story Greek Revivals. These structures were built around 1830 and include the Aaron Benedict House at 258 North Main. A similar house at 342 North Main is thought to be the oldest structure in the borough. It was constructed in 1823 as a Baptist parsonage. Another 1830 Greek Revival house was erected on North Main for early Pleasantville pioneer Austin Merrick. All three buildings have been remodeled over the years.

With the possible exception of the Dr. John Wilson House on North Main, the Connely/Holeman House is the largest single family dwelling in the borough and the only elaborate Second Empire building. Several fine Second Empire residential dwellings are located in nearby Titusville, a city six miles from Pleasantville. Great affluence from the oil industry flooded this region before making an impact in Pleasantville. The oil boom hit Titusville in 1859, nearly a decade before highly successful wells were drilled in Pleasantville (1868). Many opulent homes in Titusville are a direct result of oil money. Perhaps the finest intact example of Second Empire architecture in Titusville is the 1871 brick house at 226 East Main Street, built for oil mogul William Brice Sterrett. The concave mansard roof is pierced by segmented dormers that feature elaborate hoods also found on the lower level windows. Rooftop cresting has been removed. A projecting corner tower, three section bay window, two corner

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porches are the distinguishing elements on the street façade. The cornice beneath the mansard roof features modillions with interspersed brackets. A once equally opulent 1871 Second Empire residential dwelling in Titusville, the Bryan-Carter-McKinney Estate at 504 East Main, has been significantly altered. It currently houses the University of Pittsburgh at Titusville's classrooms. Although a central pavilion has been incorporated into the renovation, the building embodies little of the Second Empire aesthetic other than the mansard roof with its historic elaborate dormers. The gable roofed dormers feature arched windows framed by columns. The columns and pediments that are located on all elevations feature incised trefoils and quatrefoils. Overall, the building is currently more eclectic in appearance than Second Empire. Construction of the University of Pittsburgh at Titusville resulted in total loss of two additional large scale Second Empire homes, the Parshall House and Porter-Westgate House. The Parshall House at 526 East Main Street in Titusville was completed in 1871, the same year as the Connely/Holeman House and numerous other Second Empire homes in the region. The brick three story building featured a one and one-half story octagonal cupola with arched windows on the first level. Round windows were built into the dome roof of the cupola. Two types of dormers pieced the mansard roof, some gabled and others rounded. A single porch extended across the entire street elevation. The historic slate roof was framed by cresting, as was the cupola roof. Paired brackets define the cornice at the base of the mansard roof. The building was torn down by the university.

The 1876 Porter-Westgate House, located at the corner of East Walnut and North Browns Streets, bordered UPT and was purchased and demolished by the school in 2006. It featured classical Second Empire elements: three levels, mansard roof, dormers, many of which were paired, and tall windows. A first story porch wrapped around the house at two elevations. A two story gabled addition, constructed at an unknown date, resulted in distribution of the building mass in the horizontal rather than vertical dimension.

Another extremely elaborate Second Empire mansion was built for James C. McKinney at 314 Union Street in 1871. It no longer exists. New York architect E. A. Curtis designed this building as well as several other large scale houses in the area. The three-story building featured a four story projecting pavilion at the main elevation and two story bay windows at two elevations. Palladian type dormers pieced the mansard roof topped by ornate drip lintels. A deeply

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bracketed cornice marked the division between the second and third levels. Street elevation had a porch with highly ornate columns. The McKinney House was demolished in 1939 after having stood vacant for several years.

The Wood-Mitchell-Smith House at 424 East Main in Titusville is one of the very few existing elaborate Second Empire houses in the town. The exact construction date is unknown, however, the original owner sold the house to the second owner in 1873. The mansard cresting has been removed from the historic slate roof that remains. The three story structure features elaborately hooded windows with segmental relieving arches. The rounded dormers positioned at all elevations are framed by pediments. A three story bay projection is located at one elevation. The large main façade porch has been remodeled or replaced and the cornice brackets are no longer present.

The Connely/Holeman House is particularly noteworthy not only as an example of the affluent Second Empire style mansions built during the oil boom, but for its remarkable structural integrity. Almost certainly, no other nineteenth building has survived to the present day with less alteration in the borough of Pleasantville. The exterior is unchanged with the exception of a missing south facing chimney and cresting above one porch. The only major change to the building was the 1887 rear addition by the second owner, Ashbel Holeman, which is included in the period of significance. The addition is as originally constructed other the removal of an exterior door in 1985 that sealed off one of the two rear porch exits. Two closets in the house were converted to half baths in the 1950's, one under the central stairwell and the other in a second level closet at the top central staircase landing.

The Connely/Holeman House is significant as a classic example of fully realized Second Empire architecture with its mansard roof, iron cresting, tall narrow windows, deeply corniced brackets, dormers and multiple porches. The interior is as remarkably unaltered as the exterior and embodies Second Empire elements. All walls and ceilings are of the original plaster with the exception of the kitchen ceiling that was replaced by drywall. Classic Second Empire details are found inside, including solid black walnut shutters, ornate plaster ceiling medallions, elaborate cornices, deeply molded trim on the tall floor to ceiling windows, and very large hallways with substantial stair landings. The very minor alterations over a period of nearly 140 years in no way detract from the architectural significance of the Connely/Holeman House.

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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description (taken from deed)

Beginning in the center of Chestnut Street at the Northeast corner of W. E. House's Lot; thence running North 88 degrees West 586 feet to a post at the northwest corner; thence running North 70 degrees west 227 feet; thence running North 1 degree 30" East 262 feet; thence running South 87 degrees 10' East 419 feet; thence running South 88 degrees 385 feet to the corner of Chestnut Street; thence running along the center of Chestnut Street South 2 degrees East 103.5 feet to the corner of said W.F. House's lot, being the beginning.

Being Venango County Assessment No. 19,001.-045..-000

Excepting and Reserving the following conveyed by I. Shelmadine to Wilbur by deed dated September 2, 1922 and recorded in Deed Book 289 as follows: Beginning at a point and extending west 419 feet, thence running north 145 feet, then running east 419 feet; thence running south 209 feet. Said parcel of land containing 2 acres, more or less.

Exception and Reserving the following conveyed by I. Shelmadine to H. Haskel by deed dated June 28, 1926, Deed Book 412 as follows:

Beginning at a point in the northeast corner thence running south 116 feet, thence east 419.5 feet, thence north 116 feet; thence west 419.5 feet to the Place of beginning, containing one acre and 5125 square feet.

Boundary Justification

The nominated property includes all original historical boundaries associated with the property according to the deed. The map indicates these boundaries, including the single acre of land currently associated with 317 Chestnut Street. The original deed description indicates 3.9 acres. Nearly three acres were sold in the 1920's. The land, beyond the westerly backyard, was never developed and remains heavily wooded.

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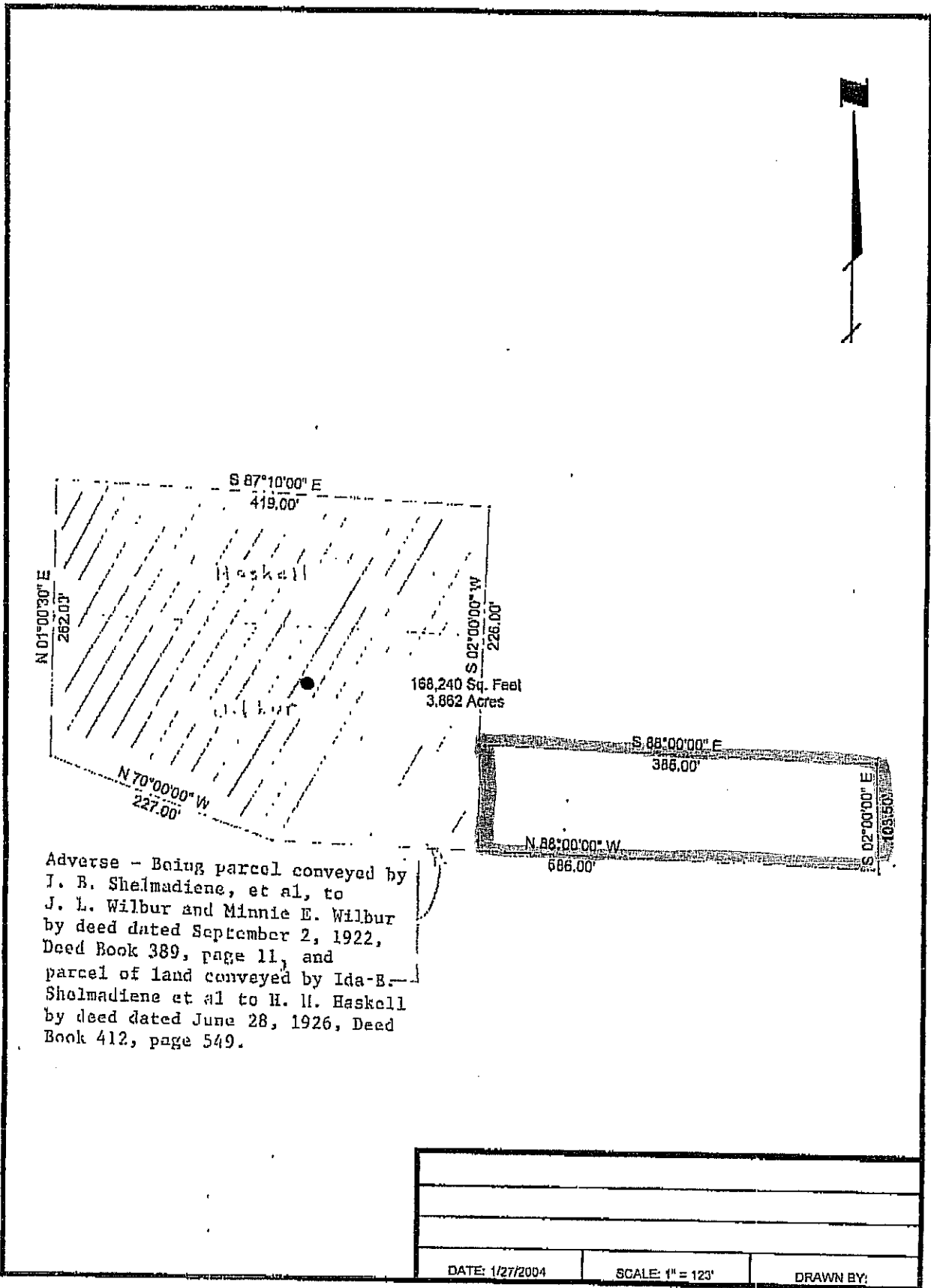
Photographs

- 1) For all: Connely/Holeman House
- 2) For all: Venango County, PA
- 3) For 5, 6, 12, 13, 14: Photographer, Richard Lucas
Others: Photographer, Kathy Coffaro
- 4) For 5, 6, 12, 13, 14, 12/06 Others: 4/07
- 5) Digital CD images included
- 6) Camera Direction:
 - Photo #1-Front Façade of Carriage House, East
 - Photo #2-Kitchen, East
 - Photo #3-Front Hall Looking toward Parlor, East
 - Photo #4-Parlor, East
 - Photo #5-Parlor, North
 - Photo #6-Parlor, near Foyer, South
 - Photo #7-Staircase, West
 - Photo #8-Second Floor Hall, East
 - Photo #9-Second Floor Hall, West
 - Photo #10-Third Floor Room 2, East
 - Photo #11-Third Floor Servant's Staircase, West
 - Photo #12-Front façade of House, West
 - Photo #13-North Façade of House, South
 - Photo #14-West Façade of House, East
- 7) Photograph numbers as indicated above and on photographs

Ink: HP 84/85 dye based ink set

Paper: HP Premium Plus Soft Gloss

Camera: Canon Digital Rebel XT (8 megapixels)





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