

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Pennsylvania</b>
COUNTY: <b>Butler</b>
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON: <b>Harmony</b>
AND/OR HISTORIC: <b>Harmony</b>

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Harmony</b>		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:	
STATE: <b>Pennsylvania</b>	CODE:	COUNTY: <b>Butler</b>	CODE:

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: <b>Individual ownership, public and private; address correspondence to: Stanley E. Whiting, President, Harmonist Historic &amp; Memorial Association</b>	STATE: <b>Pennsylvania</b>
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>101 Washington Avenue</b>	
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Pittsburgh</b>	CODE: <b>15202</b>

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: <b>Butler County Courthouse</b>	COUNTY: <b>Butler</b>
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Butler</b>	STATE: <b>Pennsylvania</b>
	CODE:

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY: <b>National Register of Historic Places (continued)</b>	ENTRY NUMBER
DATE OF SURVEY: <b>3/21/73</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: <b>National Register of Historic Places</b>	DATE
STREET AND NUMBER: <b>1100 L Street NW</b>	
CITY OR TOWN: <b>Washington</b>	STATE: <b>District of Columbia</b>
	CODE:

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



STATE:  
COUNTY:  
ENTRY NUMBER  
DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Harmony was laid out by George Rapp in 1804 on land (5,000 acres) purchased from Detmar Basse for \$10,217.74. The village was located near Pittsburgh in the forests of Butler County on the Connoquenessing River.

"Undeterred by the cold and primitive conditions in the new region that was to be their new home, a considerable number of families appeared on the scene a few days after the sale had been confirmed. By January 14, 1805, thirty-one families were on the new lands and were beginning the work of building the first Harmonie. Some of them ... were quartered in the homes of Germans living nearby."<sup>1</sup>

By the spring of 1805 some 300 of Rapp's followers, who had spent the winter in Philadelphia and Baltimore, moved to the new village. In the ensuing 10 years, the "Harmonie Society" developed into a prosperous agricultural and manufacturing community.

The log houses built during the first year of settlement were quickly replaced by more substantial brick buildings, and a number of these are still extant. According to William K. Watson of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, "the architectural style is a fusion of Old World tradition and the current colonial styles."<sup>2</sup> Surviving Harmonist buildings are as follows:

Great House or Bentle Building (Mercer & Main Streets; owned by the Harmony Volunteer Fire Department)--Built in 1811, this large two-and-one-half-story brick building is currently occupied by the Harmonist Historic and Memorial Association and contains exhibit rooms and meeting rooms of the Association. There is a stone vaulted wine cellar with an arched entrance on the South side of the building. On the exterior, the main entrance has a carved stone lintel with a keystone depicting the "Virgin Sophia"; it is said that Frederick Rapp himself sculptured this famous doorway.

Langenbacher House (Main Street; owned by the Fire Department)--Possibly the oldest Harmonist building in town (c. 1805), this is a two-and-one-half story stucco over brick house with a two-story rear hall and meeting room addition. A two-story porch runs across the front facade. The gable roof is covered with sheet metal.

<sup>1</sup>Karl J. R. Arndt, George Rapp's Harmony Society 1785-1847 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965), p. 71.

<sup>2</sup>National Register Nomination, January, 1973.

Continued

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**8. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                       |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century            | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century  | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century |                                       |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1805-1814**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |   |   |   |  |
|---|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal     | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric    | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering            | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy            | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic       | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture    | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture                      | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art            | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater                        | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation                 | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |   | _____                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation   |   |   | _____                                    |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Harmony, Pennsylvania, was the first home of the "Harmonie Society," the beginning point of the religious community formally established by George Rapp in 1805. Organized as a communitarian theocracy under Rapp's spiritual control, the small group of German pietists built a prosperous community in the Pennsylvania wilderness within a span of 10 years. It proved to be one of the most successful of America's many utopian communities, and was soon famous for its wines, whiskey, woolens, and other products. "George Rapp's Harmony Society was the socio-economic showplace of America in the first half of the nineteenth century," according to Karl J. R. Arndt, foremost historian of the Harmonists.<sup>1</sup> Because of their high degree of commercialization, Arndt believes that the Harmonists had a greater intercourse with American society than perhaps any other separatist group.

The proposed Harmony Historic District includes all of the extant buildings of the Harmonists' first settlement in America. This comprises some 10 brick buildings, among which are the Harmonist Church, the "Stohr," and numerous dwellings. The Harmonist Cemetery, with its imposing limestone walls and gate, is also included in the nomination.

History

In Württemberg, Germany, George Rapp was the leader of a group of religious separatists numbering about 200 families. For several years he and his adherents endured fines, imprisonment, and harrassment for their beliefs. Then, in search of religious freedom, Rapp emigrated to the United States in 1803, accompanied by his son John and a few friends. He arrived in Baltimore, bought a large tract of unimproved land in Butler County, Pennsylvania the next year, and sent for his followers in Germany to join him. Rapp and his group then set about carving a town out of the wilderness--Harmony. On February 15, 1805, they formally organized themselves as the "Harmonie Society" and adopted a written constitution.

<sup>1</sup>George Rapp's Harmony Society 1785-1847 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965), p. 7.

Continued

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Arndt, Karl J. R. Arndt. George Rapp's Harmony Society 1785-1847.  
Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1965.

"Harmony: Commemorating the Sesquicentennial of Harmony, Pennsylvania."  
Compiled and edited by Arthur I. Stewart and Rev. Loran W. Veith. Harmony, Pa., June, 1955.

Duss, John. The Harmonists: A Personal History. Harrisburg, Pa.:  
The Pennsylvania Book Service, 1943.

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	40°	48'	18"	80°	07'	47"	°	'	"
NE	40°	48'	18"	80°	07'	36"	°	'	"
SE	40°	48'	05"	80°	07'	36"	°	'	"
SW	40°	48'	05"	80°	07'	47"	°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 17

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Carol Ann Poh, Survey Historian**

ORGANIZATION **Division of Historic and Architectural Surveys,  
National Park Service** DATE **12/5/73**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**1100 L Street NW**

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE **District of Columbia** CODE

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), 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 National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Keeper of The National Register*

Date \_\_\_\_\_

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STATE Pennsylvania	
COUNTY Butler	
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(Number all entries)

6. Representation in Existing Surveys (page 1) Harmony

Pennsylvania Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks  
State, 4/16/72  
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Box 1026  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

9. Bibliography

Knoedler, Christiana F. The Harmony Society: a 19th Century American Utopia. New York: Vantage Press, Inc., 1954.

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Number all entries)

7. Description (page 1)

Harmony

Harmonist Church (Mercer and Main Streets; owned by the Grace Reformed Church)--The Harmonist Church, built in 1808, is a two-story brick building with long rectangular windows. The side wall and rear are still standing, but the front entrance, tower, and steeple were removed when a modern church addition was added.

The "Stohr" (Main Street; privately owned)--This two-and-one-half-story brick building served as the Harmonists' community store. The brick, laid in common bond, has been painted red. There is a partial wine cellar under the east end of the house.

Beam Hotel (Main and Mercer Streets; privately owned)--This three-story-brick building now contains a small supermarket as well as a private residence. The third story is a much later addition, as is a rear addition which conceals a lintel stone over one entrance bearing the date "1806."

Frederick Rapp House (North Main Street; privately owned)--The house built for George Rapp's adopted son is two-and-one-half stories tall and constructed of brick laid in Flemish bond with glazed headers. There is a fine Georgian doorway with fanlight and the gable roof is of slate. The entrance hood is a later addition.

Wagner House (Main Street; owned by the Fire Department)--This two-and-one-half story house is constructed of common bond brick which has been painted buff. The gable roof is of slate.

Schmitt House (Main Street; privately owned)--An enclosed sun porch across the full width of the rear has been added to this two-and-one-half story house. The brick, of common bond, is painted red; the gable roof is of slate.

Schreiber House (Wood Street; privately owned)--This is another early brick house built by the Harmonists, one-and-one-half stories and of simple design. The red brick is laid in common bond and is unpainted.

Mueller House (Mercer Street; privately owned)--This two-and-one-half story house is of brick, laid in common bond and painted red. An architectural curiosity of this house is that it was constructed with the street corner deliberately cut back at a 45° angle, possibly to allow long wagons to turn the corner more easily.

Continued



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Pennsylvania	
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(Number all entries)

7. Description (page 2)

Harmony

Harmonist Cemetery--Here, in unmarked graves, lie 100 early Harmonists. The only gravestone is that of John Rapp, son of the group's leader, Father Rapp. For years the cemetery was not marked off, but in 1869 the Harmonists, then in Economy, paid \$6,029 to Charles and George Cable and Elias Ziegler to build the wall that now surrounds it.

The rectangular wall of cut limestone measures 79 feet by 139 feet. It is intersected by 17 pilasters at regular intervals, each topped by a carved finial. The entrance at the east end features a slab stone gate with a vertical pivot in the center. The Harmonist Cemetery is in excellent condition, except for the carved inscription over the gate which has worn so badly that it is no longer legible.

Boundaries: The proposed Harmony Historic District includes all of the extant buildings of the original Harmonist settlement. The boundaries of the District run as follows: Beginning at the point of the intersection of the north side of German Street and the east side of Church Alley, thence eastward along the north side of German Street to the west side of Wood Street; thence north along the west side of Wood Street to the northwest corner of Mercer and Wood Streets; thence east along the north side of Mercer Street to the rear property line of the houses fronting on Wood Street; thence north to the northeast corner of the Schreiber property; thence west along the north property line to the west side of Wood Street; thence north along the west side of Wood Street to the South Bank of the Connoquenessing Creek; thence west along the South Bank to the east side of Wilson Alley extended; thence south along the east side of Wilson and Church Alleys to German Street. The Harmonist Cemetery, also to be included in the Harmony Historic District, is located approximately one-fourth mile southeast of the center of the District, on Pennsylvania Route 68. The cemetery, as mentioned, is bounded by a limestone wall.

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8. Significance (page 1)

Harmony

The Society was a communistic theocracy with Rapp as absolute ruler. Their religious teachings were "those of Lutheran pietism heavily overlaid with a millenarianism derived from Bengal and Jung-Stilling, a fantastic interpretation of Genesis out of Swedenborg, various minor features from Böhme and other mystics, and the practice of celibacy ...,"<sup>2</sup> the last of which ultimately doomed the Society to declining power and extinction. In the constitution of the Society, members pledged to give to Rapp "and Society" all their possessions, they pledged their obedience and cooperation in promoting the best interests of the congregation, and agreed to ask no recompense for services rendered to the community. Rapp in turn promised to teach them, provide for their material needs, and return their estate without interest should they determine to leave the Society. In Arndt's words, "congregational life was to represent totalitarian Christianity in real life."<sup>3</sup>

Under the guidance of Frederick Rapp, George Rapp's adopted son, the economy of Harmony grew from one of subsistence agriculture to one of diversified manufacturing. By 1814 the Society boasted 700 members, a town of about 130 brick, frame and log houses, and numerous factories and processing plants. Their manufactured products, particularly textiles and woolens, gained a widespread reputation for excellence, as did their wines and whiskey.

The Harmony Society soon outgrew its markets, and this along with the desire to find more fertile land and a kinder climate prompted them to sell all their holdings to a Mennonite group for \$100,000 and move to a site on the Wabash River in Indiana. Here again they built a prosperous community (New Harmony), only to sell it to Robert Owen in 1825. The Harmonists returned to Pennsylvania and built their third and final home at Economy, in Ambridge on the Ohio River. The Harmonists reached their peak of prosperity in 1866, but the practice of celibacy and several schisms thinned the Society's ranks, and the community was finally dissolved in 1905.

<sup>2</sup>George Harvey Genzmer, "Rapp, George," Dictionary of American Biography, 1943, XV, 383.

<sup>3</sup>Arndt, George Rapp's Harmony Society, p. 75.

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Pennsylvania	
COUNTY Butler	
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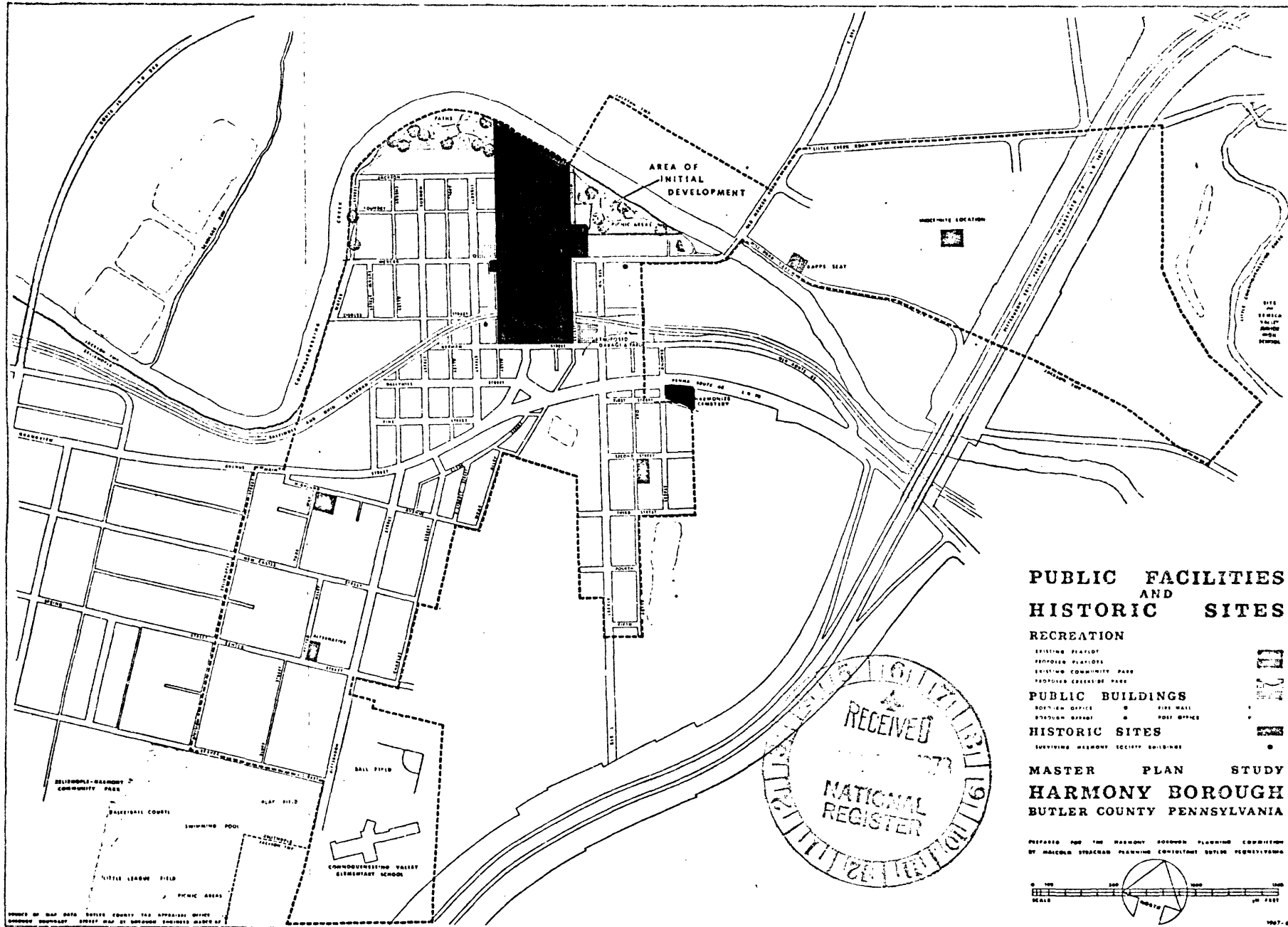
(Number all entries)

8. Significance (page 2)

Harmony

The surviving buildings of the first settlement at Harmony provide a keen insight into the early years of community life--the sturdy, simple brick dwellings, the Great House with its arched wine cellar, the imposing Harmonist cemetery, and the original town plan all merit attention. These tell the story of the Harmony Society, a story "destined," according to one observer, "to be one of the truest American illustrators of the meaning of 'Community.'"<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup>E. Gordon Alderfer, in his preface to John Duss, The Harmonists: A Personal History (Harrisburg, Pa.: The Pennsylvania Book Service, 1943), p. x.



**PUBLIC FACILITIES  
AND  
HISTORIC SITES**

**RECREATION**

- EXISTING PLAYLOTS
- PROPOSED PLAYLOTS
- EXISTING COMMUNITY PARK
- PROPOSED COMMUNITY PARK

**PUBLIC BUILDINGS**

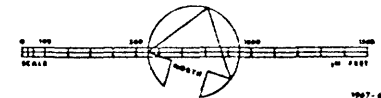
- BOY SCOUTS OFFICE
- POST OFFICE
- STROUDS GARAGE
- FIRE WALL

**HISTORIC SITES**

- SUPERVISING HARMONY SOCIETY BUILDING

**MASTER PLAN STUDY  
HARMONY BOROUGH  
BUTLER COUNTY PENNSYLVANIA**

PREPARED FOR THE HARMONY TOWNSHIP PLANNING COMMISSION  
BY MALCOLM STROUDS PLANNING CONSULTANT BUTLER PENNSYLVANIA



SOURCE OF MAP DATA BUTLER COUNTY TAX APPRAISAL OFFICE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT STREET MAP BY SURVEY ENGINEERS DRAWN BY

**PROPOSED HARMONY HISTORIC DISTRICT (INCLUDING HARMONIST CEMETERY)**

