NPS Form 10-900 OMB No. 10024-0018 (Oct. 1990)

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 an 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 Propert	у
historic name	Bowerstown Historic District
other names/site nun	nber
2. Location	
	Bowerstown, Plane Hill, Lanning, and Mine not for publication Hill Roads
city or town WE	ashington Township
stateN	code 034 county <u>Warren</u> code 041 zip code 07882
3. State/Federal Ag	ency Certification
☐ request for determination of the listoric Places and I meets ☐ does ☐ nationally ☐ st Signature of certifying Assistant State of Federal ag	Commissioner for Natural & Historic Resources/DSHPO
Signature of certifyi	ng official/Title Date
State or Federal ag	ency and bureau
4. National Park Ser I hereby certify that the pr The entered in the Nat The See continuous determined eligible National Registe The See continuous determined not eligible National Registe	operty is: ional Register. nuation sheet. of for the err nuation sheet. gible for the gible for the

Bowerstown HD Name of Property		County and		
5. Classification				
Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)	Category of Property (Check only one box)	Number of Res (Do not include pre	sources within Property viously listed resources in the	y e count.)
► private □ public-local □ public-State □ public-Federal	□ building(s)■ district□ site□ structure□ object	14	•	structures
		42	9	Total
Name of related multiple p (Enter "N/A" if property is not part	of a multiple property listing.)	Number of con in the National	ntributing resources pro Register	eviously listed
N/A		2		
6. Function or Use				
Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)		Current Functions (Enter categories from	instructions)	
Domestic/ single	family	Domestic/s	ingle family	
Industry/ manufac	cturing facility	Education/	school	
Education/ resear	rch facility	Transportation/ road-related		
Transporation/ w	ater-related			
7. Description Architectural Classification		Materials		
(Enter categories from instructions)	17	(Enter categories from	•	
Mid-19th century Colonial Revival		walls <u>stone</u>	tone , brick, clapb	oard
		DT1CK		

roof ___asphalt shingle other ___clapboard_____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

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Name of Property

Warren, NJ County and State

0 6	tatement of Significance	
	icable National Register Criteria	Areas of Significance
(Mark	"x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property tional Register listing.)	(Enter categories from instructions) Science
★ A Property is associated with events that have made		Social History
	a significant contribution to the broad patterns of	Communications
	our history.	Industry
Æ B	Property is associated with the lives of persons	Architecture
	significant in our past.	Transportation
⊠ 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.	Period of Significance c. 1829 - 1945
□ D	Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.	
	ria Considerations "x" in all the boxes that apply.)	Significant Dates 1935
Prope	erty is:	
□ A	owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.	
□в	removed from its original location.	Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above) Frederick J. Schlink
□ c	a birthplace or grave.	
□ D	a cemetery.	Cultural Affiliation N/A
□ E	a reconstructed building, object, or structure.	
□ F	a commemorative property.	
□G	less than 50 years of age or achieved significance	Architect/Builder
	within the past 50 years.	N/A
(Explai	tive Statement of Significance n the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)	
	ajor Bibliographical References	
Bibile (Cite th	egraphy le books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one	e or more continuation sheets.)
Previ	ous documentation on file (NPS): $_{ m N/A}$	Primary location of additional data:
	preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested previously listed in the National Register previously determined eligible by the National Register	 □ State Historic Preservation Office □ Other State agency □ Federal agency ☒ Local government □ University
	designated a National Historic Landmark recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #	☐ Other Name of repository:
	recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #	

Bowerstown HD Name of Property	Warren, NJ County and State
10. Geographical Data	
Acreage of Property 72 approximately	Belvidere, NJ-PA & Washington, NJ Quads
UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)	
1 $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 8 \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} 5 & 0 & 0 & 4 & 6 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} 4 & 5 & 1 & 3 & 9 & 6 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$ Zone Easting Northing 2 $\begin{bmatrix} 1 & 8 \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} 5 & 0 & 0 & 6 & 6 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$ $\begin{bmatrix} 4 & 5 & 1 & 3 & 6 & 2 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$	3 1 8 5 0 0 3 4 0 4 5 1 3 4 4 Zone Easting Northing 4 1 8 5 0 0 3 4 0 4 5 1 3 3 0
Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)	
Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)	
11. Form Prepared By	
name/title Dennis N. Bertland, Director	
organization Dennis Bertland Associates	date July 1995
street & number PO Box 11	telephone 908-689-6356
	state _NJ zip code _07865
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 have	ring 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 SHPO or FPO.)	
namemultiple	
name	
street & number	telephone
city or town	state zin code

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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

		N. J. Warren County
Section number7	Page1	Bowerstown HD

Bowerstown is located in the Highlands geographical province of northwestern New Jersey, in the Pohatcong Valley of southern Warren County, about one mile north of the Borough of Washington where the long abandoned Morris Canal crossed Pohatcong Creek. A canal inclined plane and adjoining boat basin on the south side of the creek provided a focal point for the settlement which is situated largely to the north of the stream at the base of Round Mountain, one of the low range of hills forming the northern edge of the valley. The hamlet is clustered around the intersection of Lanning, Plane Hill, and Bowerstown Roads with a scattering of dwellings to the east as far as Mine Hill Road.

The Bowerstown District encompasses all of the resources associated with the hamlet, including some marsh and meadow lands along the creek and former mill pond which help establish its historical character and rural setting, but excludes all of the modern residential development surrounding it. An inventory of district's resources forms part of this section, and the resources have been categorized as "contributing" or "non-contributing" to the district's historical significance. The forty-two contributing resources include twenty-three 19th-century and 20th-century buildings with attendant outbuildings, five bridges (three vehicular, #s 9, 11 and 20 & two pedestrian, #11), a 19th-century canal aqueduct converted into a road bridge (#18), the ruins of three buildings (the grist mill and two adjoining buildings, #21) and of the inclined plane turbine pit (#22), the remnants of two 19th-century industrial hydrosystems (#s 11 and 21), a stone retaining wall (#17) and a stone hitching post (#5). There are ten non-contributing resources: two 20th-century bridges (#s 2 & 3), a modern house (#16), a modern metal-sided barn (#14), and a much remodeled 19thcentury school house (#15) which has been converted into a dwell-The remainder are small 20th-century outbuildings.

The majority of the district's buildings are simply detailed, moderately sized dwellings of frame, brick, or stone construction which date to the mid 19th-century period. Also modest in scale and detailing are its two, stone, 19th-century industrial building's (#11, a foundry, photo #8, & #21 a grist mill, photo #20) and the two masonry office buildings (#s 12 & 13, photo #s 9 - 12) erected by Consumers' Research, Inc., in the 1930s. Most district buildings have been enlarged or refurbished over the years. Modern improvements, while resulting in the loss or obscuring of early fabric and detailing in some cases, have been neither numerous nor disfiguring enough to mar the historic architectural character of

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

			N. J. warren Count
Section number	7	Page2	Bowerstown HD
Section number		raye	

the district. The buildings are generally in good condition and well maintained. With the exception of the abandoned mill property and a vacant dwelling (#1), building environs are landscaped and well kept.

Bowerstown's architecture is representative of the region's vernacular construction practices and building types. Almost all of the district's dwelling's are the traditional, 2-story, gable-roofed types with single-pile plans, gable-end chimneys, and generally regular fenestration patterns of three to five bays. Such houses are ubiquitous in northwestern New Jersey's 19th-century housing stock. Examples with two-room, side-hall and center-hall plans include #s 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10, 14 & 17 (photo #s 1, 2, 3, 4, 13, 15 & 16). The district contains one 1 1/2-story dwelling (#19), a small stone house evidently erected to house the inclined plane keeper in the 1850s, and the west wing of house #8 also is an early 1 1/2-story structure.

Both the grist mill (#21, photo #20) and the foundry (#11, photo #8) are typical of the region's small, water-powered, 19thcentury industrial buildings. The gambrel-roofed form and stacked gable-end entries of the Van Doren-Gurnee Mill, erected in 1879, are common features of area grist mills built during the period. While its roof collapsed recently, the interior floor framing remains partially intact. Portions of its hydrosystem also have survived including short head and tail races (the latter exiting the building through a round archway). Its dam breached, the mill pond to the northeast has silted up. In contrast to the mill, Bower's foundry, built c. 1829, is a long, low, 2-story, gableroofed structure which remains in good repair having been renovated in the 1930s as part of the Consumer's Research development of the The exterior retains most of its irregular original fenestration pattern, although some windows have been altered, and a double-doored entry replaced by a window. Its hydrosystem also largely remains intact including a pond (created by impounding a small stream draining a hollow hillside to the north) whose dam was rebuilt in the 1930s, a raceway created by channeling the stream, and purportedly a small raceway under the west end of the building. The long, low form of the foundry is reflected in the design of 10bay, 2-story, gable-roofed main office (#12, photo #s 9 & 10)) erected by Consumer's Research in 1934-35. The laboratory (#13, photo #s 11 & 12) is a long, 1-story gable-roofed building, built in 1939-40 behind the foundry along the raceway.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

			N. J. warren Co
Castian number	7	Page 3	Bowerstown HD
Section number _		Page	

While the exteriors of some district buildings are quite unadorned, most exhibit at least some decorative detailing. The embellishment of these vernacular structures derives from several of the architectural styles popular in the 19th century. The fanlight above the off-center front entry of house #17 (photo #16), for example, is a common Federal style motif, and Greek Revival influences are evident in the side-lighted and transomed front entry of #1 (photo #1). The round-arched door panels and boxed overhanging eaves of the latter house similarly are typical of the Italianate style, as the tracery porch posts and frieze of #5 are of the Gothic Revival style. Late Victorian Queen Anne influences can be seen in the turned posts and spandrel brackets of #6 (photo #4) and the fish-scale shingled cross gable added to house #17 (photo #16).

The district's two important 20th-century buildings. the Consumer's Research offices and laboratory (#s 12 & 13, photo #s 9 - 12) are also simply detailed but reveal Colonial Revival influences in their design. The elliptical entry fanlights of both building's and the multi pane sash windows of the laboratory are typical Colonial Revival motifs. The rubble stone construction and long, low gable-roofed form of the main building seemingly are a Colonial Revival evocation of the simple vernacular design and construction of the early 19th-century foundry.

Outbuildings of 19th and early 20th-century date are found at many district sites. They include a frame wagon house/barn (#7, photo #14), a canal mule stable (#21, photo #21), chicken coops (#6 & 8), a stone spring house (#8, photo #6), a stone out kitchen or shed (#17, photo #17) and several garages. A stone hitching post survives at #5, and the stone retaining wall at #17 incorporates stone sleepers from the inclined plane.

The district also contains several bridges, three of which are small, 20th-century structures of concrete and steel construction (#1, 2 & 9), of which the first two have been much altered. A third is the small truss bridge (#20, photo #19), now abandoned and deckless, crossing Pohatcong Creek by the mill. The fourth is the Morris Canal aqueduct (#18, photo #18), a stone barrel vaulted structure erected c. 1830, which was adapted for use as a road bridge upon the relocation of Plane Hill Road in 1926. Three small concrete and steel bridges (#11, photo #s 11 & 12) spanning the old foundry raceway on the Consumers' Research property date to the 1930s.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

			N. U. Wallen County
Section number	7	Page	Bowerstown HD

An inventory of all structures and sites within the district has been prepared as part of this description. Each principal structure and site is identified by a number which locates it on the accompanying district map. All entries have been categorized as "contributing" or "non-contributing" to the significance of the district. All outbuildings included in the inventory are contributing unless individually identified with the designation (NC).

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section	number	7	Page	4
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Bowerstown District Inventory

Brick (common bond), 2-story, gable-roofed, 3-bay, single-pile <u>dwelling</u> with gable end interior chimneys.

Style: Greek Revival/Italianate Date: c. 1850-60 influences

Exterior features include boxed overhanging eaves with corona molding, 2/2 sash windows with timber lintels and stepped trim, and central front entry which has sidelights, transom, symmetrically molded trim with plain corner blocks, and a 4-panel door (bolection molding, upper panels round-arched); the rear entry has a panel door with transom opening onto a modern wooden deck.

Contributing

B28/L3

Neg. # C 1-4

Steel and reinforced concrete <u>road bridge</u> (Warren County Bridge #22004) with steel I-beams, concrete deck (poured over corrugated metal, arched forms between I-beams), and modern (1987) guard rails (replacing steel cable railings). The south abutment and southeast wing wall are concrete; the north abutment and other wing walls are rubble stone and probably survive from its predecessor.

Warren County Engineering Department Records identify the contractor as one "Shields."

Style: none

<u>Date</u>: 1914, altered 1932 & 1987

Non-Contributing

Neg.# C 5

Concrete slab <u>road</u> <u>bridge</u> (Warren County Bridge #22006) with concrete deck slab reinforced with railroad rails, reinforced concrete side walls, and concrete abutments; the bridge was extended at both ends in 1951.

Style: none

<u>Date</u>: 1914

Non-Contributing

Neg.# C 6

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section number 7 Page 5

Frame, 2-story, gable-roofed, single-pile <u>dwelling</u> (evidently a 4-bay unit with 1-bay west extension) with small rear appendage and modern brick exterior chimney on the rear.

Style: Colonial Revival embellishment Date: mid 19th

Now covered with aluminum siding, it has boxed overhanging eaves, 6/6 sash windows, and a Colonial Revival front entry with paneled door and gabled stoop with Tuscan columns.

Outbuildings: Small, frame, shed-roofed shed (early 20th or late 19th, possibly a remodeled chicken coop) with board and batten siding and double doors (C).

Contributing

B38/L22.02

Neg.# C 7-9

Frame, gable-roofed, 2-story, T-shaped <u>dwelling</u> consisting of a 3-bay, single-pile, center-hall-plan main block with modern brick exterior chimney on the west gable end and a large rear ell with interior chimney (brick stack) and shed-roofed east appendage.

Style: Gothic Revival/Italianate Date: c. 1860-74 influences

Now covered with aluminum siding, it has a box cornice with returns that is carried on the raking eaves, 2/2 sash windows, floor-length windows on the first story front, central entry with architrave trim, transom, and heavily molded double doors (upper panels round-arched), and a 3-bay porch with tracery frieze, posts, and spandrel brackets creating an arcaded effect.

Outbuildings: (1) undressed stone <u>hitching post</u> (19th) with drill hole near top (C); (2) frame, 1-story, 2-bay, hip-roofed garage (c.1920-40) with novelty siding and modern overhead garage door (C); (3) small frame <u>shed</u> (NC).

Contributing

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown, HD

Section number __7 Page __6

Frame, gable-roofed, 2-story, 2 over 3-bay, single-pile, dwelling with modern, exterior, concrete block furnace flue on the west gable and a rear ell.

Style: Queen Anne embellishment Date: c. 1860-74

Exterior features include overhanging eaves, clapboard siding, 1/1 sash windows with plain trim, central entry with c. 1950s hollow core door, and a shed-roofed porch with turned posts and spandrel brackets,

Outbuildings: (1) frame, 8-bay, shed-roofed chicken coop (c. 1920-40) set on block piers and with front pent eave, novelty siding, and 6/6 sash windows (C); (2) frame, 3-bay, gable-roofed chicken coop (c. 1920-40) with vertical siding (C); (3) frame, shed-roofed chicken coop or shed (mid 20th) (NC); and (4), across the road on block 28, lot 2, frame 1-bay garage (c. 1920-40) with overhanging eaves (exposed rafter ends), clapboard siding, and side-entry with panel door; the overhead garage door and shed appendage are subsequent alterations (C).

Contributing

B5/L15

Neg.# C 19-23

Frame, 2-story, gable-roofed, 4-over-3-bay, single-pile, dwelling modern brick exterior chimney on the west gable end and a 2-bay rear ell.

Style: none

Date: mid 19th

It has clapboard siding boxed overhanging eaves, 6/6 sash windows with modern batten shutters, and a central entry (possibly replacing an entry and window bay) with modern shed-roofed stoop with square posts.

Outbuildings: (1) round, cobblestone well curb (c. 1920-40) with modern wooden cover (C).

Contributing

B5/L16.03

Neg.# B 34-35

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Date: mid 19th

Section numb	per Page	_		
8	gle-pile, 2-story (brick stack), a with west gable-e	y main block wit 1 & 1/2-story, 2 end chimney (bric	sisting of a 3-bay, sind west gable-end chimner over-3-bay, west wing k stack), and two shed-nded 1-bay beyond the	þ
	Style: none		<u>Date</u> : c. 1830-50	i
	siding, 6/6 sash transomed main bluith glass & panewith stone founda	windows (some willock entry with particle and two station piers and sold) stuccoed rubble	lush eaves, clapboard th modern shutters), anel door, wing entry shed-roofed front porch quare posts and spindle e stone spring house (cable, gabled-end entry	s.
	with board-lined with wooden grill (c. 1920-40) with eaves with expose	reveals and batto is (C); and (2) for a asymmetrical gal ed rafter ends, to 9-light windows	en door, and two window rame, 8-bay chicken cooole roof, overhanging wo roof ventilators, and a gable-end entry	s p
	Contributing	B5/L21	Neg.# B 2429	
9	with steel I-beam concrete abutment railing with conc	ns deck supports, cs, and pipe raili crete end "posts";	County Bridge #22050) concrete road deck, ings on the sides (north ; bridge was extended lifferent guardrails.	
	Style: none		Date: early 20th	
	Contributing		Neg.# B 30	
10			y, single-pile, <u>dwelli</u>	ng

small 1-story rear wing.

Style: none

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section number 7 Page 8

It has clapboard siding, flush eaves, 6/6 sash windows, and a small, enclosed, gabled entry porch:

Outbuildings: (1) frame, 2-story wagon shed/stable (late 19th) with lower, 2-bay west extension, clapboard siding, overhanging eaves, and batten doors (C).

Contributing

B5/L22

Neg.# B 1-4

Bowers Foundry. Rubble stone, gable-roofed, 2-story, foundry (probably built in two parts) with an asymmetrical 4-over-7-bay front, a small frame lean-to appendage with concrete block foundation, a stone appendage to the latter's east, and a block, east-gable-end shed-roofed appendage.

Style: none

Date: c. 1829, remodeled after 1934

Exterior features include flush eaves, multi-pane windows of various sizes with plain trim (some early sash; others 1930s installations), two front entries (one double leaf); and clapboard siding on the rear appendage; a c. 1929 photograph indicates that the largest front window replaces a wagon entry and the door to its west a window.

Beneath the floor and running at an angle from north to south is said to be the vaulted stone raceway.

Outbuildings: (1) small water course, immediately to its west carrying the outflow of the pond to the north and evidently adapted as a raceway and channelized with drystone walls (c. 1830s) to provided waterpower for the foundry; its connection to the vaulted raceway within the foundry is unknown (C); it is crossed by (2) two foot bridges (c. 1930s), one with wooden deck & the other with arched reinforced concrete deck, both with iron pipe railings (C); also crossed by a vehicular bridge (c. 1930s) with steel I beam and concrete road deck and iron pipe railing (C); (4) dam (19th/early 20th) of rubble stone construction with latter capping of concrete and concrete spillway to its east, impounding a small pond which provided the foundry with water power (C).

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section number 7 Page 9

Contributing B5/L22

Neg.# B 14, 19, 22, 23 & 27

Consumers Research Offices. Coursed rubble stone, gable-12 roofed, 2-story, building (10-bays wide and 4-bays deep) with interior steel framing, an interior east gable-end chimney and large rear wing with stuccoed upper story and modern stair tower to the east at the its junction with the main block.

Style: Colonial Revival

Date: 1934-35 remodeled 1980s

Exterior features include flush eaves and a central front entry with elliptical fanlight and side lights; the door and all of the windows are recent replacements; on the rear a large ramp provides handicapped access.

Contributing

B5/L22

Neg.# B 10-18

Consumers Research Laboratory. Brick (oversized, Flemish bond), 1-story, gable-roofed, 12-bay building with an 13 exterior south gable-end chimney.

Style: Colonial Revival

Date: c. 1939-40

Exterior features include flush eaves with plain frieze and rake boards, multi-pane windows (some large doubles, others 6/6 sash) with plain trim, and two front entries, southern one with flanking pilasters, elliptical fanlight and double doors and the northern one flat-headed with double doors; another flat-headed, double entry about midway along the facade has been bricked up.

Outbuildings: (1) frame, 1-bay, gable-roofed garage (c. 1950s) with clapboard siding and overhead garage door (NC).

Contributing B5/L22

Neg.# B 20, 21 & 23

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section number _____7 ___ Page _____10

Brick (common bond), 2-story, gable-roofed, 3-bay, single-pile <u>dwelling</u> with east-gable-end interior chimney and a 2-bay rear ell with low pitched roof, interior gable-end chimney, and east shed appendage; a modern 1-story brick additions adjoins the east end.

Style: Greek Revival/Italianate Date: c. 1840-60 influences

Exterior features include box cornices with returns and frieze that are returned on the raking eaves, 2/2 and 6/6 sash windows with timber lintels and narrow trim, central front entry with transom and panel door, and a 1-bay, flat-roofed entry porch with box cornice with frieze, square posts with cap and base moldings, and built-in stoop seats.

Outbuildings (1) round-arched, hangar-like garage/equipment shed (c. 1950s) with corrugated metal siding (NC).

Contributing B5/L22.01 Neg. # C 5-9

Bowerstown School. Frame, 1-story, gable-roofed, 3-bay, schoolhouse (converted into a dwelling) with interior east-gable-end chimney, a small gabled west-gable-end appendage (incorporating or replacing the original enclosed entry porch), and a 2-story east addition.

Style: none Date: 1858, reremodeled mid 20th

The exterior, whose fabric appear to be nearly all modern, includes overhanging eaves, clapboard siding, multi-pane sash windows, and a central entry on the south side.

Non-contributing B5/L23 Neg.# B 34

Frame, 1 & 1/2-story, gable-roofed, <u>dwelling</u> with attached garage; it was built on the site of the barns appurtenant to house #17.

Style: Colonial Revival influences Date: c. 1990

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section number ____7 Page _____11

It has aluminum siding, overhanging eaves, gable dormers, and recessed front porch.

Non-contributing B6/L

Neg.# A 27

Brick (common bond), 2-story, 5-bay, gable-roofed, single-pile <u>dwelling</u> with interior gable-end chimneys and a narrower 2-bay east wing rear ell with interior gable-end chimney and modern frame shed appendages on the front and rear (front one replacing a porch; the rear one a brick shed appendage). The rear 1st-story wall of the wing is of stone construction.

Style: Federal influences, Victorian <u>Date</u>: c. 1830-50 embellishment

It has an off-center front entry with fanlight and panel door and 6/6, 2/2 & 1/1 sash windows. The overhanging eaves and fish-scale shingled gable centered on the front are later 19th century alterations;

Outbuildings (1) rubble stone, partially embanked, 1-story, gable-roofed out kitchen (mid 19th) with frame gables, 6/6 sash window, and batten-doored entry (C); (2) stone retaining wall (c. 1930s) which incorporates the large stone sleeps from the adjoining Morris Canal plane (channels and spike holes cut in stone are visible) and has thin stone set on edge as a top course (C).

Contributing

B28/L3

Neg. # A 28-36

Course rubble stone, barrel-vaulted <u>canal aqueduct</u>, now used as a road bridge, (Warren County Bridge #22016) with cut stone voussoirs outlining the arch faces on both sides and concave curved abutments.

Style: none

<u>Date</u>: c. 1830

Contributing

Neg.# A 8

National Register of Historic Places NJ, Warren Co. **Continuation Sheet**

Bowerstown HD

Section number 7 Page 12

19 Stone (originally stuccoed), 1 & 1/2-story, gable-roofed, 2-over-3-bay, single-pile <u>dwelling</u> (canal plane tender's house) with interior north-gable-end chimney (brick stacks and modern 1-story south and 2-story north additions.

Style: none

Date: c. 1850s, enlarged c. 1980s

It has flush eaves, 6/6 sash windows, and an end-bay entry with modern shed porch; the gable wall dormers replace two "knee-high" windows.

Contributing

B27/L2

Neg.# B 1-4

20 Steel pony pratt truss bridge (now abandoned) with three panels on each side, I-beam road deck supports (road surface removed), and stone abutments; the upstream side of the bridge leans inwardly.

Style: none

Date: 1880s

Contributing

B28/L21

Neg.# A 6 & 7

21 Stuccoed-stone, 2 & 1/2-story, gambrel-roofed grist mill, (3-bays wide & 4-bays deep) embanked on the west gable-end to the second-story level and on the south to the firststory level (the basement story is partially above grade on the north side) and with frame west gable; the roof and interior floor framing has collapsed except at the west end.

Style: none

Date: 1838, rebuilt 1879 after 1871 fire

Now largely a roofless shell, it features boxed overhanging eaves at the west end, a largely regular fenestration pattern (most of the window sashes and frames are gone), and several entries of which the central west entry retains a batten door.

Outbuildings: (1) stone, barrel vaulted tail race (19th) extended from the north side and discharging into the

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section number 7 Page 13

creek just below the truss bridge (C); (2) remnants of the dog-legged head race run from the mill pond to the east end of the building (C); (3) breached mill pond dam (19th/early 20th) of rubble stone construction with latter capping of concrete stretching across Pohatcong Creek just upstream from the truss bridge; (4) collapsing, frame, 2story, outbuilding (probably early 20th, on site of garage depicted on 1914 Sanborn map), only north gable wall & south end bay intact, low pitched roof and clapboard & wood shingle siding (C); (5) foundation of frame house (19th) destroyed by fire, some years ago (C); (6) frame, 2-story barn (19th, probably canal mule stable) with vertical plank siding and batten doors (C); (7) small, concrete block, 1-story garage (mid 10th) with frame gable and overhead garage door (NC); (7) remnants of canal waste way (19th) with drystone side walls (collapsed in places) running along the east side of Plane Hill Road (C).

Contributing

B28/L21

Neg.# A 1-19

Remnants of <u>inclined plane #7 wheelhouse foundation/turbine pit</u> consisting of several courses of stone protruding from a dirt mound by the side of the road (thin slab of concrete sealing the hole).

Style: none

Date: mid 19th

Outbuildings: (1) tail race (mid 19th & earlier) consisting of about 100 feet of buried tunnel running downhill from the wheel pit, beyond which about 10 feet of the open tail race remain intact with the top course of stone side walls exposed above the dirt infill (C).

Contributing

B27/L3

Neg.#

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Ca. Bowerstown HD

Section	number	8	Page	1
Obcuon	HUHHDO		raye	

Bowerstown possesses significance in the areas of transportation, industry, science, social history, communications and architecture under criteria A, B and C. The community owes its existence to the Morris Canal whose transportation significance has been recognized by listing on the New Jersey and National Registers, and the district encompasses a portion of the abandoned canal including the Pohatcong Creek aqueduct and remnants of inclined plane seven west, as well as a Pratt truss bridge which carried the old wagon road adjoining the plane across the creek. The district possesses industrial significance because of its foundry and grist mill whose histories are representative of the small water-powered industries once characteristic of the region but which were eclipsed by large scale factory production in the latter 19th century. Significance in the areas of science, social history and communications, stems from Consumers' Research, Inc., a pioneer in the field of consumer advocacy founded by Frederick J. Schlink (1891-1995), which renovated the old foundry property in the 1930s to house the offices and laboratories where the organization tested manufactured products and published a bulletin with its findings. Operations at the group's new headquarters were disrupted in the fall of 1935 by a bitter labor strike, an event which directly led to the formation of the rival Consumers' Union, publisher of Consumers' Report. main office building erected by Consumers' Research, whose design evokes the form and construction of the adjoining foundry, is notable as an expression of Colonial Revival interest in America's vernacular architectural traditions. The district also has architectural significance as an assemblage of modest, 19th-century buildings which are representative of the rural region's modest vernacular architecture in that era.

The small community, which was first known as Fairmount, developed in the middle decades of the 19th century as a result of the construction of the Morris Canal in 1824-31. Inclined plane seven west and its adjoining boat basin provided a focal point of activity in what had been previously a sparsely settled agricultural neighborhood. The 1824 survey maps for the canal indicate that the land where the canal crossed Pohatcong Creek was then owned by Aaron Van Eita (Vannatta), and a house and two outbuildings depicted on his property (district site #17) were presumably his residence and evidently the only structures in the immediate vicinity. Joining the ranks of local entrepreneurs inspired by the transportational promise of the canal, Aaron's son Jesse opened a foundry (#13) in 1829 just east of his father's homestead, engaging a young man who had just learned the business, Michael B.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

	_	N. J. Warren County
Section number	Page2	Bowerstown HD
Section number	raye	

Bowers, to start the operation.² The foundry site along a small Pohatcong tributary running down the mountain, which provided a source of water power, was not only close to the canal basin, but within two miles of a potential source of iron, Oxford Furnace, which was reactivated in 1832. Such small foundries typically manufactured iron plows, which were just then coming into common use, and the necessary replacement parts, as well as hollow-ware and other small items.³

The foundry property changed hands twice before being purchased by Michael Bowers in 1843.4 The 1850 Products of Industry census reports that the foundry produced twenty tons of castings valued at \$1,500 utilizing twenty-five tons of iron and fifteen tons of coal and employing one hand. It also indicates that Bowers engaged in blacksmith work and the repair of wagons and field machines, work valued at \$550 in which he employed another hand and utilized 3,000 pounds of iron and steel and six tons of coal.5

The locality acquired its second industry in 1838 when Peter T. B. Van Doren, a lumber, grain and coal merchant from nearby Washington, purchased a 26-acre parcel from Jesse Vannatta at the foot of the inclined plane and erected a grist mill, presumably damming Pohatcong creek to provide the necessary water power. The 1850 industrial census indicates Van Doren employed a miller who produced wheat flour worth \$2,000 and various milled grains worth \$9,000, making his operation the smallest but one of Washington Township's five grist mills.

The middle of the 19th century evidently was a prosperous period of expansion for the settlement. Extensive improvements were made to the canal during that time, work which included widening the prism and rebuilding the locks and inclined planes. In addition to the reconstruction of the inclined plane seven west and the widening of the Pohatcong Creek aqueduct, the canal company evidently built a small stone dwelling for the plane tender (#19) on land purchased in 1850.8 The operations of both the foundry and grist mill also expanded during the 1850s and 1860s. By 1860 the foundry work force had grown to include a molder, two blacksmiths and a wheelwright in addition to the proprietor and his son, Sering P. Bowers, and a cupola furnace had been added to the physical plant. Output was valued at \$3,200 and included 150 plows worth In 1869, upon his father's retirement, Sering Bowers took over management of the business which in the following year with six employees produced 100 plows worth \$1,350, castings valued at

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

		N. J. Warren County
Section number8	Page	Bowerstown HD

\$7,000, and a variety of wagons, sleds, and equipment valued at almost \$700. In 1860 Van Doren's mill employed two millers and produced 880 barrels of wheat flour valued at \$6,720 and 457 tons of milled grains worth \$13,710, making its output more in line with the township's two large merchant mills on the Musconetcong River. In 1865, James F. Van Doren, who had become associated in his father's business interests, secured the right to rent water power at plane seven west from the canal company, giving the mill sixty five horsepower, a larger horsepower than that of any other township mill, and leading to a great increase in production. Van Doren purchased the mill property from his father in 1869, and the 1870 industrial census documents the expansion of the enter-Three millers worked to produce \$92,000 worth of various milled grains, much of which was shipped by canal, and a clerk conducted a store in the mill which probably catered to the canal trade.9

Fairmount obtained its one public institution in the middle of the 19th century, a one-room school house (#15), which apparently was already under construction when its site on the new road over the mountain was purchased by the trustees of newly formed School District #7 in April, 1858.¹⁰ The new school reflected a growing population, which doubled from about 50 in 1850 to around 100 in 1860. While the canal, foundry, and grist mill were important employers, farming remained central to the local economy throughout the period, and census data indicates that most households were engaged in agriculture. Even mill owner Van Doren and foundry proprietor Bowers operated farms in conjunction with their industrial enterprises.¹¹

By the 1870s, Fairmount had realized its maximum 19th-century development, and thereafter began a period of stagnation and slow decline which culminated in the early 20th century when the canal, foundry, and grist mill ceased operations. While it does not identified the hamlet by name, the map of Washington Township in the 1874 Beer Atlas documents that the community's physical layout had been clearly established by then. The map depicts approximately sixteen principal buildings, many of which survive. Van Doren's mill, however, is not identified, having been destroyed by fire in 1871, followed by the intestate death of its financially strapped owner two years later. The present stone mill was erected in 1879 by Walter and Mary Gurnee, but lost by them through financial difficulties six years later. Except for the loss and reconstruction of the mill, the community changed little in the

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

0		8	D	4
Section	number		Page	

N. J. Warren County Bowerstown HD

late 19th century. That Fairmount was a place of minor local importance is clear from the 1881 Warren County history which mentions the community as an afterthought in describing Washington Township villages, noting that it consisted only of

a school house, the foundry of Michael B. Bowers, the old Van Doren (now Gurnee) mill, and a few dwellings and tenant houses. 14

The lack of rail connections put the community's industries at a competitive disadvantage in the late 19th century, a situation, made worse by declining traffic on the canal, that boded ill for the economic health of the community, which was becoming known as Bowerstown. While the mill changed hands frequently throughout the period, markedly dropping in value as a succession of owners evidently failed to make the business prosper, the foundry remained in the hands of the Bowers family who struggled on despite lagging business and the bankruptcy of owner Robert Q. Bowers, Jr. (the nephew of Sering Bowers) in 1906 until finally closing sometime before 1914 when Bowers moved to Pennsylvania. 15 Bowers rented the blacksmith shop and the houses until 1920 when he sold the proper-The grist mill ceased operation by 1917, although a small scale ice business making use of the mill pond and two ice houses on its banks was conducted there for some years later. 16 The long moribund canal was abandoned in 1924, and the inclined plane and aqueduct were purchased by Washington Township for the relocation of the public road, the aqueduct being used to carry the road over Pohatcong Creek. With the closing of the district school in 1930, the community lost its one institution. 17

Life changed dramatically at Bowerstown in the 1930s with the arrival of Consumers' Research, Inc., purportedly "the nation's first independent organization to test consumer products." The non profit organization began as the Consumers' Club which was founded with 300 members in 1927 by Frederick J. Schlink and Stuart Chase with the mission of protecting the consumer by exposing unsafe and detective products. The two men were coauthors that same year of Your Money's Worth, the buyers beware book which provided the inspiration for the club. The club was incorporated as Consumers Research, in 1931 for the purpose of testing consumer products and publishing the results in periodic reports for subscribing members, and shortly thereafter moved its headquarters from New York to an old piano factory in Washington, New Jersey. 19 With a twenty-five member staff under the leadership of Frederick

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section	number	8	Page	5
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N. J. Warren County Bowerstown HD

Schlink as president and technical director and supplemented by about 100 technical and scientific consultants, the organization acquired the old Bowers Foundry property in the spring of 1934, and by the following spring had made the improvements necessary to provide expanded offices and laboratories. The local newspaper reported that the work included renovation of the old foundry and construction of a new "stone and steel" building at an estimated cost of \$17,000.20

Consumers' Research had only occupied its new headquarters for a few months when operations were disturbed by a bitter labor In the late summer a majority of the staff, which had grown to about seventy members, went on strike. The strike, which involved both union and nonunion employees and was marred by several incidents of minor violence, subsided early in 1936. A number of the dissatisfied employees whose demands were not meet left and formed a rival organization, Consumers' Union, the publisher of Consumer Reports. 21 Despite this development, Consumers' Research continued to pursue its mission under the leadership of Schlink by focusing on product testing and gearing its publications to professionals although its monthly periodical, Consumers' Bulletin (entitled Consumers' Research after 1973) includes product ratings and other features and information of interest to the general public. 22

In the years subsequent to the strike, Consumers' Research continued to improve its Bowerstown headquarters, transforming the property into an office campus, which included some recreational facilities for its employees, many of whom settled in the surrounding neighborhood. The old foundry dam was extensively rebuilt and a "weather exposure testing unit and fire pump house" installed, a small frame building (no longer extant) adapted for an "experimental radio and electrical laboratory," and another laboratory building (#13) was erected around 1940. The brick house on Lanning Road (#14) was remodeled as a recreation center and lunch room, and a tennis court constructed behind it.²³

Frederick Schlink, who more than anyone was responsible for the success of Consumers' Research, was born on October 26, 1891 in Peoria, Illinois, the son of German immigrants. He did his undergraduate work at the University of Illinois and received as master's degree in engineering from the same institution in 1917. In addition to his work with the Consumers' Club and Consumers' Research, Schlink was an important voice in the nascent consumers'

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown, HD

Section	number	8	Page	6

movement in the 1930s through his best selling books. Besides Your Money's Worth, he influenced public understanding of consumer protection issues through 100,000,000 Guinea Pigs, coauthored with Arthur Kallet and published in 1933, and his 1935 book Eat, Drink, and Be Wary which was reprinted a few years ago. 24 Schlink's advocacy role in the consumer protection movement was recognized by President Richard Nixon in his 1969 Consumer Message to the Congress. 25 Schlink maintained his involvement with Consumers' Research throughout almost his entire life, continuing in his position of technical director until he reached an advanced age and ending his formal ties to the organization only in 1983, when having shifted operations to Washington, DC, it closed the Bowerstown facility. 26

After the Bowerstown headquarters were closed, the most of the testing equipment and other furnishing and fittings, including several testing devices invented by Schlink, were sold at public auction. Some of the testing equipment, most notably a sock tester, was give to Rutgers University, as were most of the administrative files and testing records.²⁷

In 1986 the complex was acquired by the local regional school district to house its administrative offices and Project Excel, a special education program. Although the school district has undertaken necessary alterations, most notably to the main building, the complex retains much of the office campus character created by Consumers' Research. Unfortunately, a similarly appropriate adaptive reuse has not emerged for the abandoned grist mill whose roof has collapsed in recent years. While modern residential development now encircles Bowerstown, the hamlet retains its historical character. Recognizing Bowerstown's unique and significant place in the community's history, township officials have sponsored this nomination for the National Register of Historic Places.

Notes

- ¹ Lorenzo A. Sykes, Engineer, "Map and Field Notes of the Morris Canal & Banking Company for Warren County, New Jersey," Morris Canal & Banking Company Records. 1828.
- ² James P. Snell (ed.), <u>History of Warren and Sussex Counties</u>, <u>New Jersey</u>. Philadelphia: Everts & Peck, 1881, no page (before page 721).

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section number _8 Page _7

- ³ William M. Ferraro, "Biography of a Morris Canal Village: Bowerstown, Washington Township, Warren County, New Jersey 1820-1940." Canal History and Technology Proceedings. Volume VIII, Easton, PA: Center for Canal History and Technology, 1989.
- 4 Warren County Deeds, Book 16, page 446 and Book 22, page 225; Snell, no page (before page 721).
- ⁵ United States Census, Products of Industry Schedules, Washington Township, Warren County, New Jersey, 1850.
 - 6 Warren County Deeds, Book 16, page 448.
- 7 United States Census, Products of Industry Schedules, Washington Township, Warren County, New Jersey, 1850.
 - 8 Ferraro, pp. 12-13.
- 9 United States Census, Products of Industry Schedules, Washington Township, Warren County, New Jersey, 1860 and 1870.
 - 10 Ferraro, page 15; Warren County Deeds, Book 47, page 89.
 - ¹¹ Ferraro, pp. 11, 16 & 18-19.
- 12 F. W. Beers, <u>County Atlas of Warren</u>, <u>New Jersey</u>, New York, F. W. Beers & Co., 1873, page 62.
- ¹³ Ferraro, pp. 21-24; "Local Miscellany," <u>Warren Journal</u>, March 31, 1871, page 3.
 - 14 Snell, page 719.
 - ¹⁵ Ferraro, pp. 23-29.
- 16 Ibid., pp 30-31; Sanborn Insurance Map Company. Maps of Washington, New Jersey. New York, Sanborn Insurance Map Company, 1914 and 1924.
 - 17 Ferraro, pp. 28-29.
- ¹⁸ Wolfgang Saxon, "Frederick J. Schlink, Writer and Pioneer in Consumerism, 103," New York Times, January 20, 1995, page B8.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section number 8 Page 8

- 19 Ibid.
- ²⁰ Warren County Deeds, Book 272, page 651; Ferraro, pp. 31-32; "Important Development By Consumers Research," <u>The Washington Star</u>, April 20, 1934, page 1; "New Location For Consumers Research, Inc.," <u>The Washington Star</u>, April 26, 1935, page 1.
- Local Research Workers on Strike," The Washington Star, September 6, 1935, page 1; "Disorders Mark Consumers' Strike," The Washington Star, September 13, 1935, page 1; "Strike Battle Front Spreads in County," September 20, 1935, page 1; "Strike Shows No Sign That Indicates End," September 27, 1935, page 1.
- ²² Introduction To Consumers' Research Not Confidential, Consumers' Research, Inc., 1937, pp. 3-5; Anthony Salamone, "Warren Group Does Testing For Buyers." The Express, November 11, 1979, page E1.
- ²⁴ Wolfgang Saxon, "Frederick J. Schlink, Writer and Pioneer in Consumerism, 103," New York Times, January 20, 1995, page B8.
- ²⁵ Anthony Salamone, "Warren Group Does Testing For Buyers." The Express, November 11, 1979, page E1.
- ²⁶ Ibid., Michael Remez, "Consumer testing firm closing doors in Warren," The Express, April 23, 1983, page B1.
 - 27 Ibid.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section number 9 Page 1

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

NJ, Warren Co. Bowerstown HD

Section number 9 Page 2

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 1

N. J. Warren County Bowerstown HD

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the Bowerstown Historic District is delineated on the attached map entitled "Bowerstown Historic District Site Location and Boundary Map", and is verbally described and justified in the following paragraphs. The site and boundary map is an assemblage of portions of the following municipal tax maps: Sheets 13, 19, and 20, Washington Township, Warren County, New Jersey, prepared by American Air Surveys, Inc. in association with Edward B. Van Nolte, L. S. dated September, 1961 and last updated in 1988.

Beginning in Washington Township at the southeast corner of block 28, lot 65, which point is on the west side of Mine Hill Road, the district boundary crosses the road in a strait line to its east side and proceeds north along the east side of the road to the southwest corner of block 28, lot 20.02. It next runs east, north, and west along the south, east, and north sides of lot 20.02 to the southwest corner of lot 20.02 on the east side of Mine Hill Road and crosses the road in a strait line to the west side of the The boundary then turns north along the west side of Mine Hill Road (also the east side of block 5, lot 13) to the northeast corner of lot 13. It proceeds west and south along the north and west sides of lot 13 to that lot's southwest corner and Bowerstown Road and, turning west, runs along the north side of the road to the southeast corner of block 5, lot 15. The boundary proceeds northwest and southwest along the northeast and northwest sides of lot 15 to the southwest corner of that lot and Bowerstown Road, and crossing the road in a strait line, continues west along the south side of the road to a point opposite the southeast corner of block 5, lot 16.03.

From there the district boundary crosses Bowerstown Road in alignment with east side of block 5, lot 16.03 to the southeast corner of lot 16.03. It proceeds north along the east side of the lot 16.03, and continues west and south along the north and west sides of lot 16.03 to that lot's southwest corner and the north side of Bowerstown Road. The boundary runs west along the north side of the road to the southeast corner of block 5, lot 21, and turns north along the east side of lot 21 (also the west side of block 5, lot 20.01) to the northwest corner of lot 20.01. From that point it cuts west across lot 21 in a strait line to the north corner of block 5, lot 20 and the east side of Lanning Road. It proceeds south along the east side of Lanning Road to a point opposite the southeast corner of block 6, lot 13.06 and, crossing

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

				_	
Section	number	10	Page	2	

N. J. Warren County Bowerstown HD

the road in a strait line, continues west along the south side of lot 13.06 to that lot's southeast corner, also the northwest corner of block 6, lot 13.03.

The district boundary then runs south along the west side of block 6, lot 13.03 to the southwest corner of that lot and Old Bowerstown Road. From that point it crosses Old Bowerstown and Bowerstown Road (as well as the small strip of presumably municipally owned land between the two roads) to the south side of Bowerstown Road and the northwest corner of block 27, lot 1.01. boundary next runs east along the south side to the Plane Hill Road intersection, and then turns south along the west side of Plane Hill Road to the northeast corner of block 27, lot 2. It then runs west and south along the north and west sides of lot 2 and continues in a straight line south across lot 3 to that lot's north side. The boundary proceeds east along the south side of lot 3 to Plane Hill Road and then runs north along the west side of Plane Hill Road to a point opposite the southwest corner of block 28, lot 21. Crossing Plane Hill Road to that corner, the line continues east, north, and again east along the south east and south sides of lot 21 to the southeast corner of lot 21 and the northeast corner of block 28, lot 3.11. It then runs north a short distance along the east side of lot 21 to the stream encroachment line on the south side of Pohatcong Creek as designated on sheet 19 of the Washington Township tax maps. It follows the stream encroachment line across block 28, lot 1 to the east side of that lot and then turns north a short distance along the east side of lot one to the southwest corner of block 28, lot 3. It proceeds east along the south side of lot 3 to that lot's southeast corner and the place of beginning on the west side of Mine Hill Road.

Verbal Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the Bowerstown Historic District were delineated to include to the greatest extent possible the architectural and historical resources of the hamlet, with not only the fewest non-contributing buildings but also with sufficient amounts of visually and historically critical open space.

On the west side of the district, the boundary follows lot lines to exclude the modern residential development found on the west side of Lanning Road and along Bowerstown Road. The boundary was similarly delineated on the south side of the district except where it follows a line of convenience along the stream encroach-

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number	_ Page	Bowerstown HD
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ment line across block 28, lot 1 and where it jogs southward along the west side of Plane Hill Road to include the remnants of inclined plane west turbine pit. Thus drawn the southern boundary encompasses the inclined plane remnants, the mill and mill pond site as well as the open space along the creek which links the core of the settlement to the more loosely distributed resources to the east around Mine Hill Road. Mine Hill Road serves as the eastern boundary of the district, excluding the modern development and golf course to the east, except for a jog to include one resource on the east side of the road. The northern boundary of the district also jogs to exclude modern development and include contributing resources, as well as open space, principally woodlands, appurtenant to the Consumers' Research complex and house #8 next door.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number10	Page4	N.J.	Warren County
	•	Bowers	town Historic District

UTM REFERENCES (cont.)

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National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Photographic Identification:

The following information is the same for all of the photographs submitted with the nomination:

Name:

Location:

Photographer:

Date of photographs:

Negative repository:

Bowerstown Historic District

Washington Township, Warren County, NJ

Dennis Bertland

Spring 1994

Washington Township Historic Preservation

Commission

Washington Township Municipal Building

Washington, NJ 07882





