



Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office

PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION

August 14, 2019

Joy Beasley, Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service, US Department of Interior  
1849 C Street, NW, Mail Stop 7228  
Washington DC 20240



Re: Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine Grotto, Nesquehoning, Carbon Co., NPS# 11000923

Dear Ms. Beasley:

Enclosed please find a notarized letter from the St. Joseph Parish of the Panther Valley, representing the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allentown, stating that the Diocese (the owner of the property) is no longer opposed to the listing of the Grotto at the Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, and is requesting that the property's status be changed from "eligible" to "listed."

In 2011, as the Grotto was being nominated, we received a letter of objection from the Diocese. On December 19, 2011, a formal Determination of Eligibility was issued instead of the originally anticipated listing.

The community has remained vigilant in their care and support for the Grotto, and is gratified by the Diocese's change of heart. Enclosed are recent photos that show the appearance of the Grotto remains unchanged from its 2011 nomination.

If you have any questions regarding this request to change the status of the property from "eligible" to "listed" please contact me at 717-783-9922 or [afrantz@pa.gov](mailto:afrantz@pa.gov).

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

April E. Frantz  
SHPO NR Reviewer

enc.

NPS #  
11000923  
12/19/2011 DOE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Requested Action: Nomination

Property Name: Grotto, The--Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

Multiple Name:

State & County: PENNSYLVANIA, Carbon

Date Received: 8/20/2019      Date of Pending List:      Date of 16th Day:      Date of 45th Day: 10/4/2019      Date of Weekly List:

Reference number: 11000923

Nominator:

Reason For Review:

Accept       Return       Reject      9/20/2019 Date

Abstract/Summary AOS: Ethnic Heritage: Italian-American; POS: 1941-1961; LOS: local      Builder: Placido  
Comments: Guido LaRizzio

Recommendation/ NR Criterion A  
Criteria

Reviewer Lisa Deline

Discipline Historian

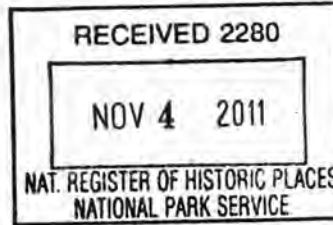
Telephone (202)354-2239

Date 9/20/19

DOCUMENTATION:      see attached comments : No      see attached SLR : No

If a nomination is returned to the nomination authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



923

# 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 National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. 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 certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
other names/site number The Grotto

### 2. Location

street & number 15 East Garibaldi Avenue NA not for publication  
city or town Nesquehoning NA vicinity  
state Pennsylvania code PA county Carbon code 025 zip code 18240

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets    does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

   national    statewide X local

Andrea McDonald October 7, 2011  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date

PA Historical and Museum Commission  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property    meets    does not meet the National Register criteria.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting official Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Title State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register
- determined eligible for the National Register
- determined not eligible for the National Register
- removed from the National Register
- other (explain:)

Patrick Andrews 12/19/2011  
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

**The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine**

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**5. Classification**

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

Category of Property  
(Check only one box.)

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

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
		buildings
		sites
		structures
1		objects
1	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed  
in the National Register

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Current Functions  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Religion: religious facility

Religion: religious facility

**7. Description**

Architectural Classification  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Materials  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: No Style

foundation Stone

walls: Concrete, stones

roof: NA

Other Shells, coral

**Narrative Description**

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a summary paragraph that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

**The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine**

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The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, is located in a residential neighborhood on a lot that is bounded by East Garibaldi Avenue, Angelini Avenue, and East DaVinci Alley; in the Italian neighborhood known as New Columbus, in northern Nesquehoning, Carbon County, PA. The Grotto is a dome-shaped concrete and stone creation with decorative stones and objects embedded all around the exterior, and features an inset marble statue of Our Lady of Lourdes on the south-facing side. It is flanked by other marble statuary. Construction of the distinctive concrete and stone object was begun in 1941 and completed in 1945 by a local resident, Placidio Guido LaRizzio. The Grotto is the focal point of a church complex owned by Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Diocese of Allentown, PA. Also located on the property is a church (1950), rectory (1967), and social hall (1949). While these buildings relate historically and provide the setting to the Grotto, the nominated boundary includes the Grotto alone, including just a small area of surrounding lawn and the steps on the south side of the object. The Grotto is located adjacent to the northeast corner of the church. The Grotto retains its integrity, most importantly the aspects of workmanship, materials, and feeling that make it so distinctive, unique, and important to the community.

Nesquehoning is a small borough located in a narrow valley, known as Panther Valley, that runs between Jim Thorpe and Tamaqua. The valley was once a busy part of the coal industry. Nesquehoning stretches up the hillsides on either side of Route 209; a distinct neighborhood known as New Columbus is located just above the rest of Nesquehoning, on the north side of the borough. The Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church complex is in the heart of the New Columbus neighborhood. South of the church property is a large open park, Cerchario Park, which once contained the neighborhood's elementary school (see Figure 14). The Grotto is nestled in the center of the church property, at the rear northeast corner of the building.

The formal approach to the Grotto is from East Garibaldi Avenue; there is a distance of 106.5 feet from the edge of Garibaldi Avenue to the Grotto. A sidewalk leads from East Garibaldi Avenue to a broad flight of steps (kneeling steps) that lead up to the Grotto itself. DaVinci Alley is 18 feet from the rear of the Grotto and 54 feet from Angelini Avenue to the west side of the Grotto. The Rectory is 6.5 feet to the right of the kneeling steps and the church is 5 feet to the left of the Grotto.

The Grotto is 13.8 feet x 12 feet. There are ten concrete steps on the south side of the Grotto, 18.4 feet from the foot of the steps to the Grotto. These steps are also used as kneeling steps for those who wish to pray. There are flood lights to illuminate the Grotto at night mounted to the west of the Grotto on the cement wall, on the roof of the Church, and on the Rectory. There are two angel statues (6 & 8 on site map) overlooking the kneeling steps. A statue of St. Bernadette (5 on site map) is kneeling in reverence to Our Lady of Lourdes (4 on site map), who is located in the center of the Grotto. A water trough (6 on site map), which collects the water that flows from the rocks, is attached to the left side of the Grotto. A small angel (3 on site map) statue is on top of the Grotto overlooking the shrine. Many of the decorative rocks or other objects (for example 13, 15, 16, 18 on site map) that were incorporated into the Grotto's surface were carried back home by local Italian-American service men and women from areas they served during WWII as well as from other areas of the United States and other continents. In addition there are sea shells (see 17 on site map) and coral (12 & 14 on site map).

The Grotto was built on a grassy knoll to the right of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. The stone creation was simple in design and replicated the Grotto at Lourdes, France. Many of the rocks came from quarry at the end of town and the surrounding mountain area. The back drop to the Grotto at that time was the Appalachian Mountains, better known as the Broad Mountain (see

**The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine**

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Figure 9). A row of native pine trees once lined DaVinci Alley behind the Grotto. The current Maddona Hall (church social hall) now stands behind the Grotto, across the alley, and the large pines have been removed. In some photos, a wild honeysuckle vine planted near the Grotto is visible, and eventually engulfed the entire Grotto and was removed (see for example Figures 33 & 34). Currently, there are no vines planted on the Grotto. The original design included water circulated from a pump behind the Grotto flowing from the rocks into a drainage system in front of Grotto. While the mechanical system remains in place, it is not currently operational. Blue and white lights arched over the top of the Grotto.

A large white marble statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, which stands on a stone shelf in the niche of the Grotto, is the focal point. World War II helmets had a place of honor on the two rock protrusions on both sides of Our Lady. Also located in front of the Grotto are various other white marble statues: two angel statues and one depicting the child Bernadette. These statues were all unveiled at the dedication in 1945. At the foot of the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, a votive candle continuously burned. A golden halo surrounded the Blessed Virgin's head. A number of years later a statue of St. Theresa of Lisieux, the Little Flower of Jesus, was added to the east edge of the Grotto. A datestone is located at the lower front, southeastern corner of the Grotto

Concern that the constant flow of water would cause damage to the Grotto prompted the construction of a water trough. The work was completed in the 1970s by Monsignor Angelini and members of the parish. At that time, the kneeling steps were added, and the statue of Bernadette was moved from the west side to the east side of the Grotto. The honeysuckle vine was removed and perennials and shrubbery were added to the grounds surrounding the Grotto. After Monsignor's passing, the St. Theresa statue which stood on the east side of the Grotto was used in creating his memorial monument (1987), which stands on the east side of the Grotto but is slightly apart.

The addition of steps to the grassy knoll approaching the Grotto and the water trough in the 1970s are the major physical changes to the Grotto. They do not detract from the integrity of LaRizzio's design and do not diminish the Grotto's integrity.

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**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.)

Areas of Significance  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

- 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.

**Ethnic heritage**

Period of Significance

**1941-1961**

Significant Dates

**1945**

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

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

**NA**

Property is:

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

Cultural Affiliation

**Italian American**

Architect/Builder

**LaRizzio, Placidio Guido**

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**Period of Significance (justification)**

The Grotto's period of significance begins with the beginning of construction in 1941, and extends until 1961. This timeframe is in accordance with the National Register's general 50-year guideline, as the Grotto continued to be an important part of the community after 1961. Even as Placidio Guido LaRizzio was building the Grotto, it became a focal point of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church complex. The Grotto was (and is) the setting for numerous regular religious, patriotic, social and family events and celebrations of the Italian-American community throughout the year. Although other statues and monuments were added to the church grounds and the adjacent Cerchario Park, the Grotto has continued to be the most prominent and integral object to the congregation's, and greater community's, religious, ethnic, and patriotic observances.

**Criteria Considerations** (explanation, if necessary)

**Religious Property** – While the Grotto is a religious property, it derives its significance from its unique folk artistic design and its association with the Italian American community of New Columbus. It therefore meets Criterion Consideration A.

**Commemorative Property** – The design of the Grotto and the importance of it within the Italian American community both enable it to meet Criteria Consideration F. The Grotto has acquired its own significance, and is not merely a replica or interpretation of other variations of the Grotto at Lourdes.

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Grotto has been an important cultural place within the Italian-American neighborhood of New Columbus, in Nesquehoning Borough, since its construction during World War II. It is culturally and architecturally significant and is an example of Italian American religious architecture in North America. The Grotto is a tangible expression of New Columbus's Italian American community. The traditions of this community are reflected in its design, setting and use, both as a pilgrimage for Catholics throughout the Northeast and as a prominent presence in the daily life of the New Columbus, Nesquehoning community. The Grotto was built on the grounds of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church by a local coal miner, Placidio Guido LaRizzio, during a time when Italian immigrants and their descendents were struggling to define a place within the American culture. The Grotto is locally significant under *Criterion A for Ethnic Heritage* as an example of the efforts made by this Italian American community to acknowledge and retain their heritage while contributing to the larger culture. The Grotto was dedicated to the memory of all those service men and women who died in WWII and as a thanksgiving memento for those returning safely. Numerous stones, shells, pieces of coral, and other objects that were embedded during the Grotto's construction were supplied by local servicemen and women from their service locations around the world. The Grotto became an important focus during many weekly and annual events organized by the Church. It was also the focus of many informal family and community gatherings (Figure 22) that weren't sanctioned by the Church.



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**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance)

Until 1880, Italian migration to Pennsylvania was sporadic and primarily centered in Philadelphia. The movement to unify Italy during the 19<sup>th</sup> century created increasing challenges for the residents of the southern part of the Italian peninsula. The economic depression gave these Italians little hope and the situation in southern Italy c.1880, led to critical hardships for the population. Heavy mud slides and an ecological disaster, including deforestation, took place in southern Italy and Sicily. The economy evaporated.<sup>1</sup> News of the growing industries in America, along with a severe economic depression in Italy, resulted in an influx of immigrants whose impact eventually went far beyond Philadelphia. The US Census showed that in 1870 there were only 784 Italian-born residents of Pennsylvania; by 1910, there were 196,122.<sup>2</sup>

When this new wave of immigration began, most of the newcomers were single young men from the villages of southern Italy. Gradually they were joined by family members and neighbors forming new communities. There were some tailors, barbers and stonemasons but most were manual laborers who took work in agriculture, mining and construction. In Berks County, they worked in the iron mills. In the Bangor area, they worked in slate quarries. In the Panther Valley area (Nesquehoning) they were coal miners.

Those who were able to move into more skilled trades helped find employment for people from their native villages. Some United States towns, such as Roseto (approximately 60 miles east of Nesquehoning) consisted primarily of immigrants from one specific Italian village (in this case, Roseto Valforte), or the nearby countryside. Other immigrants were mixed from numerous towns or villages, but often from one or two specific regions. The Italians who settled in the Nesquehoning area on Sharpe Mountain (which they named Little Italy) were primarily from the southern peninsula regions of southern Campania, Calabria, Basilicata, and Sicily. In areas where numerous different immigrant populations were found, such as in Philadelphia, the immigrants continued to identify themselves based on their native region, and thought of themselves as individual groups, even though they were lumped together nationally as "Italians" by the Americans and other Europeans.

Italian immigrants formed clubs and fraternal organizations to help adjust to life in the United States and preserve their culture. This was common practice for other ethnic groups as well. Many of the jobs held by the new immigrants were dangerous and low paying and the fraternal organizations provided insurance and death benefits for their members. Immigrants also developed religious, political, and social institutions to support their adjustment to life in Pennsylvania and to preserve their heritage. Catholic immigrants worked to establish their own parishes – with Italian priests – and schools. Italian religious institutions played a key role in helping families preserve their culture. At the same time, their colorful feast-day celebrations often drew non-Italian observers, helping to blend cultures.

<sup>1</sup>The History of Carbon County, P338

<sup>2</sup>The Italians in Pennsylvania, P 2-3

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Annual religious holidays were important to Italian American communities. Feast day celebrations that honored individual saints, often the patron saints of their native towns or villages, were also important. These celebrations were symbolic, not just of their Italian heritage but honoring particular saints also reflected their connections to specific regions and localities in Italy. In the additional history below, details are provided about the impact of New Columbus's Catholic Church, and its beloved priest Monsignor Angelini. He organized many festivals and celebrations that were attend by members of his parish and also non-Italians. Many of these types of events are similar to those documented in histories of Italian-American communities such as Philadelphia, Reading, and Roseto in Pennsylvania, New York City, and other towns and cities. Folklorists have documented the importance of these public celebrations, observances, and events – whether based in religion or not – in continuing the communities' connections to their ethnic heritage and helping to establish new identities in the United States. Many of these special events continued well into the twentieth century. Some still go on today. In New Columbus, after 1941 the processions, parades, holiday observances, and other community events almost always involved a gathering and ceremony in front of the Grotto. (Figure 16,27,28,29,31,32,35)

Prior to World War II, Italians in America were still connected closely to their homeland and the trend toward Italian nationalism was spreading. In the opening paragraph of her article *Italians in Public Memory: Pageantry, Power, and Imagining the Italian American*, Joan Saverino describes how the Italian community of Reading, PA, "appropriated and recontextualized a bricolage of American and Italian folk and popular images and rhetoric in ritual public events of ceremony and celebration" during the period between the two World Wars. Using the Columbus Day and Italian Day Festivals, she examines how the Italians used their ethnic heritage to reshape their public image. Events such as parades or festivals were traditional and ritualistic, but also became more American-style public events in an effort to exchange existing beliefs and social relations. One purpose of the festivals in Reading was to help knit immigrants from different regions into one shared community and – especially regarding the Columbus Day festival – to seek enhanced public standing among Reading's primarily Pennsylvania Dutch population by endorsing "Americanization".<sup>3</sup> As the United States entered World War II, continued efforts were made to publicly reinforce the communities' commitment to the United States. This community commitment is the reason the Grotto was dedicated to *all* lost and returning servicemen and women, not only members of the parish. It was a way to demonstrate patriotism.

It is a mystery as to LaRizzio's motivation for building the Grotto Shrine. Perhaps it was the request of Monsignor Angelini or his knowledge of shrines in Italy. In his article *Yard Shrines and Sidewalk Altars of New York's Italian Americans*, Joseph Sciorra explains that "street shrines" and small neighborhood religious sites resembling grottos "represent one of the most diffuse expressions of folk religion in Italy, especially in the south" and became common in the United States at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>4</sup> Sciorra's documentation of a prominent New York shrine includes a discussion about the essential use of stone in constructing Grottoes, in an attempt to recreate the rustic

<sup>3</sup> *Italians in Public Memory* p.5

<sup>4</sup> "Yard Shrines and Sidewalk Altars of New York's Italian Americans," Joseph Sciorra, p188

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mountain sites of numerous tributes to Mary throughout southern Europe. He goes on to recount the story of a military veteran returning home to Bensonhurst, NY, in 1955 and recreating a replica of Lourdes in his front yard.<sup>5</sup> The story of Bernadette and her visions of Mary at the Grotto at Lourdes was well-known even before the Oscar-winning film was released in the early 1940s (*The Song of Bernadette*).

One of New York's most impressive shrines is the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Shrine in Rosebank, Staten Island, listed in the National Register in 2000. It was built between 1937 and 1939 (although it continues to be added to) by a Sicilian immigrant with support from a lay religious organization, the Mount Carmel Society, which owned the land and is independent from the parish church. The Rosebank shrine is much larger and more elaborate than the New Columbus grotto, but they share many similarities, including stone and cement construction and ornamentation achieved by embedding small stones and other objects into the surface. Both also focus on Mary, who is traditionally a very important figure to Italian Catholics.

Although it is not well-documented, it appears that LaRizzio's Grotto is strongly connected to a European tradition, especially one found in southern Italy. It served multiple purposes for his community: honoring those who served in World War II while expressing the community's heritage. Through these purposes and perhaps others, the Grotto helped to publicly strengthen New Columbus residents' ethnic heritage.

**The History of Little Italy**

In the early 1880s a few families settled in Little Italy. Located on Sharp Mountain, southwest of Nesquehoning, Little Italy began in 1884 with the arrival of Angelo Bochicchio from Potenza, Italy.<sup>6</sup> From various locations in Italy others soon came to settle in Little Italy. Pasquale Malascalza, Gaetano Fiorentino, Antonio Grieco, and Michele Mele arrived from Rio Nero Volture. From Rivello came Giuseppe Fiumicelli; from Altomonte came Antonio Panebianco and Francesco Panebianco. Cosimo Mustacchio came from Corleone; Francesco LoRusso, Donato LoRusso, Vincenzo Gallo, Nicola and Leonardo Damiano from Avigliano. From San Donato Ninea came Francesco and Luigi Iannitelli; Vito Loiacano from Partinigo; Giuseppe Aulicine and Pasquale Cirimelli from Verbiacaro.<sup>7</sup> These pioneers, with their families and friends from other states and from Italy, formed the nucleus of the "Our Lady of Mount Carmel" Parish. As in Italy, in the new world, the church was the center of the Italian American Community. These early settlers, numbering approximately 120 families, worshipped at the Sacred Heart Church which was a mission church of the Immaculate Conception in March Chunk (presently Jim Thorpe), but wished for a church of their own.<sup>8</sup> In 1904, the Rev. Paolo Gentile of St. Michael's Church in Lansford held mass in a shanty at Little Italy on Sundays and Holy Days. One year later, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church was born.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> "Yard Shrines and Sidewalk Altars of New York's Italian Americans," Joseph Sciorra, P6

<sup>6</sup> Golden Jubilee Booklet, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 1913-1965, P2

<sup>7</sup> The History of Carbon County Vol 4, 1994, Mauch Chunk Township, "Little Italy", P396

<sup>8</sup> Op.cit.

<sup>9</sup> History of Carbon County, March Chunk Township, "Church", P400

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### *The Move to New Columbus*

The Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company owned the land and had leased it to the inhabitants of "Little Italy", but in 1918 the Company decided to expand its mining operation underneath Little Italy. Safety was a concern since houses were subject to cave-ins and this prompted the relocation. The major relocation of Little Italy to New Town took place in 1918-19, when over 100 families tore down their former residences and moved planks and boards to the new, safer designated area. The village of New Town was renamed New Columbus in honor of Christopher Columbus in 1918. About one-fifth of Little Italy's families had new residences in New Columbus by the summer of 1918. By June 27, 1920, the entire population had moved to New Columbus. The Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company constructed houses in New Columbus. Employees paid \$10 monthly installments to purchase their homes.<sup>10</sup>

A unique feature of a deed from the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company contained the "liquor restriction clause." This prohibited the distillation or sale of intoxicating spirits at any time on the premises. No commercial barrooms were ever built in New Columbus, although several speakeasies operated. These covenants in the deeds were vigorously enforced through 1926.<sup>11</sup>

During the major relocation, the Foresters of America (an Italian Club) moved to the corner of Messina and East Garibaldi Avenues. It was common for the men to sit outside the club and play Italian folk music with mandolins, piccolos, and concertinas. The Foresters had death benefits for its members. The Citizens Club of America moved to the corner of Messina and East Columbus Avenues. The Citizens Club began at Little Italy in 1913. The Citizens Band of New Columbus was the former Little Italy Band.<sup>12</sup> (Figure 14)

Local residents believed that a polling place in Little Italy would be an incentive for unnaturalized inhabitants to vote, but county officials denied the election district. The prospect of having to travel to Hudsondale to vote prompted a move to bring New Columbus into Mauch Chunk Township in 1918. The local priest, Father Philip Bernardi, became the drive's spokesman.<sup>13</sup> Residents finally had their own election district after the move from Little Italy to New Columbus was completed. The polling place was in the schoolhouse of Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company along Park Street in Nesquehoning. Samuel Collura was judge of election.<sup>14</sup>

During the major relocation through 1920, the school in Little Italy remained open. An elementary school was constructed in 1919-20 and operated in the New Columbus Park until 1958. Until 1920, students in New Columbus attended school in Nesquehoning.

<sup>10</sup> History of Carbon County, March Chunk Township,, "Church", P400

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, P400

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, P401

<sup>13</sup> Ibid, P400-401

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, P400-401

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Mail delivery was initiated in the late 1920s when Francis Walters, local representative, advised Samuel Collura of the free service. Previously residents traveled to Nesquehoning for mail service.<sup>15</sup>

In 1922 the Macaroni Manufacturing Company was built in New Columbus for the "manufacture, purchase and sale of macaroni in all its forms and other cereal products." It was known as the Italian Macaroni Company, and it was located across the street from Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, which was relocated from Little Italy in 1918.<sup>16</sup>

Italians were fond of food and drink of the ancestral country including peppers, tomatoes, and wine. Growing and cultivating grapes was customary in Italy. Grapes were needed for the preparation of wines that were used daily in the Italian household. After moving to New Columbus, residents abandoned their grape vines in Little Italy. To help fill the void, about 30 Italians collaborated and ordered a railroad boxcar load of grapes from the Napa Valley in California to make their own wine. Muscatel and Zinfandel were popular wine choices. When the grapes arrived at the Central Railroad of New Jersey train station, residents used horses and wagons to transport the wooden boxes of grapes to their homes in New Columbus. Up to four large vats, each with a 50 gallon capacity, were used in the basement wine making process. Sugar and water were added to the grapes to prepare wine. Following the initial run, which was solely for drinking, a second, and sometimes a third run, was made for the woman's domestic household consumption, including food preparation. Around 1933, many homes were updated with furnaces and indoor plumbing. This abruptly ended the wine making era since the heat from the furnace affected the fermenting process. Attempts to use preservatives failed and wine making was finally abandoned. Ironically, Prohibition ended in 1933.<sup>17</sup>

Italians also brought their fondness for bread making to America. Frank Paul, a mason of Nesquehoning, constructed many outdoor ovens in New Columbus. These "Closed units" were commonly shared by two or three family members, so almost every family in New Columbus had access to an outdoor oven. (Figure 25) Bread products were prominently displayed at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church on March 19<sup>th</sup>, St. Joseph's Day, following a Sicilian traditional custom.<sup>18</sup> There is one small oven intact on West Columbus Avenue.

George C. Greco, a popular grocer had a general merchandise store at the corner of Columbus and Venice Avenues. Miranda's Grocery Store, located at 231 West Columbus Avenue in New Columbus was started by Antonio Miranda. Farmers converged on the young community with farm produce following its relocation in the 1920s. Truckloads of cabbage sold for a nickel a head, with larger quantities selling for even lower prices.<sup>19</sup> Even today, nearby farmers from outlying areas sell their truckloads of fresh vegetables to the residents of New Columbus.

<sup>15</sup> The History of Carbon County, Mauch Chunk Township, "Entrepreneurs", P403

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, P401

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, P404

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, P402

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, P403

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New Columbus was still a part of Packer Township when Citizens Fire Company No. 1 formed in June 1918. Trustees were all residents of New Columbus. The American Hose Company of New Columbus was founded in January 1921, and is still in existence today.<sup>20</sup>

Since 1787, Nesquehoning was a popular mining town with nearby operations. It was centered on the mining of anthracite coal that was the highest quality in the state, and the mining operations still continue to this day.<sup>21</sup>

The narrow mountainside streets were lined with single detached homes contributing to the areas' "native homeland" feeling. Children and grandchildren of immigrants still live in the houses built by their ancestors. People who visit the Grotto from other parts of the Northeast, especially Italian Americans, are struck by the area's ethnic continuity. The streets were unpaved and had no curbing or sidewalks. The gardens were abundant with a variety of fruit trees. Everyone had vegetable gardens in their backyards and some had created their own vineyards. The produce from the abundant gardens were canned and stored in basement kitchens for use over the winter. Many families had their own livestock including cows, chickens, goats, and pigs to name a few.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church was founded in 1905 in Little Italy, Nesquehoning, PA. In 1918, the Most Reverend Dennis J. Dougherty, Archbishop of Philadelphia, acquired four lots from the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company along Garibaldi Avenue for \$1.00 "for church purposes only." This became the site of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in New Columbus.<sup>22</sup> The church was relocated from Little Italy and rebuilt at the corner of Garibaldi and Venice Avenues. The latter was renamed Angelini Avenue (1988) in honor of Monsignor Angnello J. Angelini.

Frank Romano, a former resident of Little Italy, painted the interior of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church following its relocation to New Columbus. Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church grew as a parish with the birth of New Columbus in 1918.<sup>23</sup>

**Monsignor Angelini and the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church**

Father Angnello J. Angelini was born in Caivano, Italy, in the Diocese of Aversa on October 18<sup>th</sup>, 1899, and came to America at the age of 5 years with his mother Teresa and his sisters. He arrived in Roseto, PA, on Sunday, November 6, 1904.<sup>24</sup>

Father Angelini received his formal education in the Roseto and Bangor, PA schools, graduating from the Bangor High School on May 31<sup>st</sup>, 1918. He entered the Seminary of St. Charles Borromeo, Overbrook, Philadelphia in September, 1918, and was ordained in the Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul in Philadelphia, PA, by the Most Reverend Bishop Thomas J. Shahan on June 6, 1925.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>20</sup> The History of Carbon County, Mauch Chunk Township, "Entrepreneurs", P403

<sup>21</sup> Ibid, P402

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, P401

<sup>23</sup> Website prepared by Dennis Creitz, Nesquehoning, PA; <http://nesquehoning.us/scrapbooks1.htm>

<sup>24</sup> Golden Jubilee Booklet, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 1913-1965, P6

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, P6

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On September 12, 1932, Father Angelini became the pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church in New Columbus. In 1950, the new church building was built along Garibaldi Avenue under Father Angelini's ministry, to replace the earlier frame building.<sup>26</sup> He also oversaw rebuilding of the rectory in 1967. Father Angelini was well-known throughout the region for visiting the departing trains to wish departing service-men, regardless of parish membership, safety during their time abroad. He also organized many local events that turned into major attractions for the region, such as an event blessing cars (he gave up driving as a young man following several accidents), a baby parade, and the famous Shower of Roses parade.

The parish rejoiced with the appointment by Pope Paul VI on May 11, 1964, when Father Angelini was elevated to the rank of Domestic Prelate, and now had the title conferred on him of Rev. Monsignor Agnello J. Angelini. The parishioners were very proud of the many accomplishments their pastor successfully completed for the church and the Diocese. Monsignor Angelini had the honor of celebrating a Mass with Pope John Paul II as the Allentown Diocese's representative when the pontiff was in Philadelphia in 1979. He was a man of great vitality, intellect, rhetorical ability and he possessed a dynamic personality. He was in constant demand as a speaker throughout the Panther Valley and surrounding counties for all occasions and by all organizations. His humanitarian efforts earned him many awards including the prestigious State of Pennsylvania American Legion Award.<sup>27</sup>

The love and respect that Monsignor Angelini had for military service personal was demonstrated throughout his lifetime of service to the community of Nesquehoning. He was honored at his funeral in 1987 with a military honor guard.

Many military service men and women departing for World War II, Korea, and Vietnam have fond memories of a dedicated, loving priest at the train station in Jim Thorpe blessing them and praying for their safe return. Monsignor Angelini saw brave men and women leaving to serve their country rather than Catholics, Protestants or any other religious denominations. He gave each one his blessings and a religious medal and scapular to carry with them overseas. To this day many of these medals are still carried by veterans or their surviving family members.

When the bell tolled on May 16, 1987, announcing Monsignor Angelini's death, the Panther Valley was hushed in silence and respect for the dynamic, forceful, congenial, simpatico priest whose numerous trips to area hospitals and the prison in Jim Thorpe may have ceased but will never be forgotten by those patients and inmates that he visited. His memory lingers on, and is still a strong influence on those who followed him.<sup>28</sup>

**History of Italian American Religious and non Religious Festivals and Celebrations at the Grotto**

The feast of Corpus Christi was celebrated by the Italian American community with a procession through the streets of New Columbus. The procession began at the Grotto and concluded at the Grotto with benediction. A shrine to Our Lady was at each street corner. Each shrine was decorated

<sup>26</sup> Golden Jubilee Booklet, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 1913-1965, P6

<sup>27</sup> Diamond Jubilee Booklet, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 1913-1998, P4,5

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, P5

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with flowers, candles, and food to be blessed. The priest and pilgrims stopped at every shrine and prayed. Altar boys carried candles, holy water and incense.

The feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was also important to the Italian American Community. Each year on July 16, the men and women of the parish carried the statue of Our Lady through the streets of New Columbus. (Figure 19) The procession was led by the Citizens Club Italian Band. (Figure 38) At the conclusion of the procession, benediction was held in front of the Grotto. During the year, the statue was carried weekly from one home to another where the women would gather to pray the rosary.

Every October 12, the Italian American community gathered around the statue of Christopher Columbus that stands in the center of the New Columbus Park. The statue was erected and dedicated in 1951. The Knights of Columbus led the ceremony to honor Christopher Columbus. Father Angelini would conduct benediction and all prayed for world peace.

The Italian community came together on the feast of St. Christopher and assisted Father Angelini with the blessing of the cars. People would drive from surrounding towns to have their cars blessed by Father Angelini, and they would receive a metal of St. Christopher for safe travel. Many cars were seen with the St. Christopher metal attached to the car mirror, visor or dashboard.

The tradition of St. Joseph's Table was started in 1949, and was fostered by the Sicilians of the parish because of their strong faith in St. Joseph. Soon the entire parish followed this practice, from which evolved the popularity of the pignolata sought by all classes of people throughout the Panther Valley.<sup>29</sup> The feast of St. Joseph, the Carpenter, was celebrated on the Sunday before March 19th. A traditional St. Joseph table was set up in the church where parishioners would bring a variety of foods and wine to be blessed. Later the table was moved to Madonna Hall where a spaghetti dinner was served which included saffron rice, homemade bread, salad and desert. Fried bread crumbs, which represented saw dust, were sprinkle on top of the spaghetti. The week leading up to the feast day, the ladies of the church would make the traditional Italian pignolatas which were served at the dinner. Fava beans were an integral part of the celebration because this was the food that saved the Sicilians from starvation. The bean is said to bring good luck, and it is believed that if the St. Joseph's bread is kept in the home, the family will never starve.<sup>30</sup>

The St. Theresa celebration was a regional Italian festival. Monsignor Angelini's dedication and devotion to St. Theresa of Lisieux, France, The Little Flower of Jesus (Figure 13) was the inspiration for the St. Theresa Shower of Roses celebration. This celebration started in 1932 and remained highly attended during its 75 years. Pilgrims from the tri-state area and beyond came by car and bus to join in the celebration. The Grotto was not only a focal point but the destination for all pilgrims during the feast day of St. Theresa.

The day began with several masses in the church and during the third mass there was a procession which included the Rose Queen, a selected teenage parish member and her court. At this mass, the

<sup>29</sup> Diamond Jubilee Booklet, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, 1913-1998, P3

<sup>30</sup> [www.initialy.com/regions/sicily/joetabl.htm](http://www.initialy.com/regions/sicily/joetabl.htm)



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Rose Queen was crowned. At 1:30 pm a mass was held at the Grotto, (Figure 13) with the Rose Queen accompanied by her court. After this mass, the Queen was escorted to the St. Theresa's float. The float was adorned with blessed roses and a life-like statue of St. Theresa. (Figure 43) At 2:30 pm, crowds of people congregated in front of the church to participate in the procession. The rosary was recited during the procession throughout the streets of New Columbus.

Throughout the day, people gathered at the grounds of the Grotto and they brought with them containers to fill the water that flowed from the rocks of the Grotto. The water was blessed by the many priests who were present at the Grotto. People also gathered at Madonna Hall (located behind the church) to join in the festivities of music, a spaghetti dinner and other delicious ethnic foods. Each year more than one thousand St. Theresa candles were lit in the church (Figure 41) and at the Grotto at the request of the pilgrims for their special intentions. Vendors from within the tri state area also came with their wagons of goods.

At the conclusion of the procession, the Rose Queen would dress in the likeness of St. Theresa. (Figure 16) Prior to 1975, the Rose Queen would be taken to the local airport in Lehigh, PA, where she boarded a helicopter filled with hundreds of long stem roses. The helicopter, escorted by several single engine airplanes, flew over New Columbus and showered roses over the area. The helicopter then landed in the John Cerchiaro Memorial Park (across from the church). The Queen then departed the helicopter and walked through the crowds to the Grotto. This was the highlight of the celebration. Monsignor Angelini used his influence to have a fly over of Naval jet planes from Willow Grove, PA, during one of the celebrations. After the procession, Benediction was held at the Grotto. Due to insurance liabilities, the Rose Queen no longer flew in a helicopter after 1975, and the co-pilot tossed the long stem roses. Thousands of people would run to catch a rose falling from the sky. People would even climb on the rooftops of homes to acquire a blessed rose.

The day ended with Monsignor boarding every bus to bid farewell to the pilgrims with a long stem rose for each person. At the height of the St. Theresa celebration there were more than 60 buses that found their way to New Columbus (a population of 800+). The event was carried by the local news stations and as far away as Philadelphia, PA and Florida. Many articles were written by newspaper reporters who attended the event from all over the area. A statue of St. Theresa sits to the right of the Grotto in memory of Monsignor. The street adjacent to the church was renamed Angelini Avenue in 1988.

**Placidio Guido LaRizzio, builder of The Grotto**

Placidio Guido LaRizzio was born in New York City on June 23, 1907, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Carmen LaRizzio. The family moved to New Columbus when he was a young child. He was employed as a rock contractor for the Lehigh Navigation Company, (LCN) at Nesquehoning colliery. He was a member of the Loyal Order of Moose (LOOM), Mauch Chunk, and the Sons of Italy, New Columbus. LaRizzio was married to Rose Ann Warholak of Hauto (Nesquehoning). They had two sons, Carmen and Theodore and three daughters, Bessie, Helen and Anastasia. He passed away on February 20, 1949, (Figure 29) four years after completing the Grotto.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>31</sup> Death of Placidio Guido LaRizzio, Old Newspaper article, Unknown Source

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LaRizzio was known as a local folk artist and his daughter Bessie recounted that many people requested his art. According to her, her father was very creative and enjoyed carving pieces out of coal and wood. In the woods surrounding New Columbus, LaRizzio would gather twigs from which he would make picture frames (Figure 2) and ash tray stands. His work was referenced in the February, 1938 edition of *Popular Science Magazine*. (Figure 1) His song, "Introduce Me" is copyrighted and is filed and recorded in the Library of Congress (1939, Volume 34, No. 1, Entry Part 3, P737).

For a short time, LaRizzio lived in Paterson, NJ, working in a clothing factory doing silk screening. Upon his return to Pennsylvania, he relocated to the town of Mauch Chunk, presently Jim Thorpe. He resumed working in the coal mines.

LaRizzio was a humble, devoted parishioner of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. He brought Monsignor Angelini's vision to life when he began the construction of the shrine in 1941 with guidance from the pastor. After his shift in the mines, he would spend a few hours every day working on the Grotto. The shrine was completed and dedicated in 1945. The statues around the Grotto were purchased by Monsignor Angelini in an attempt to recreate the famous scene of the visitation of the Blessed Mother to the children at Lourdes, France. The shrine over the years has become a place of comfort where thousands of visitors have come to offer their prayers for peace and for the safety of family members or friends who serve in harms way.

From its inception, the Grotto was dedicated to the servicemen and women. On major national holidays, such as Veterans Day and Memorial Day, (Figure 39, 40) services are held by the local Veterans Association in Nesquehoning. A prayer service is held every Wednesday evening at 6:00 pm at the Grotto. (Figure 38)

The Grotto work was completed by LaRizzio in 1945. It was dedicated on October 15, 1945, (Figure 11) in the memory of the hero dead of our nation and as a thanksgiving memento for the safe return home of members of the parish and all fellow servicemen. In the past, it was used as a setting for benediction at the annual St. Theresa's Day Celebration. Other Italian American community events such as Columbus Day, Memorial Day, Veterans Day, the feast of the Assumption, and the feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel were held at the site of the Grotto. It was the back drop for family photographs for weddings, Confirmation, Holy Communion and Baptisms and other family gatherings. (Figure 22, 33, 34, 37) To this day, a weekly assembly takes place on the steps of the Grotto for prayer and spiritual reflection. The Grotto clearly reflects the values and practices of this traditional local Italian American Community. This traditional cultural property meets *Criterion A* for its association with the ethnic, social, and religious history of the local Italian American community. The Grotto is a well preserved example of a religious structure, and is maintained to this date by members of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. The Grotto represents a continuation of tradition of religious activity surrounding natural and man-made grottos in Christian Europe and in particular Italy. The Grotto's stone-studded ornamentation and rough surface reflects the aesthetics of southern Italian architecture. Incorporated into the Grotto are stones and other mementoes brought back or sent home by servicemen and women. These items were from the existing 48 states and all seven continents. A time capsule is buried in the cement base of the Grotto, behind the

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marker dated 1941 A.D. A glass jar of change was set in the Grotto rock above the statue of the Virgin Mary for good luck.

The Grotto is special and is a symbol of the patriotism of the community. Its significance demonstrates honor and is a tribute to our Veteran's of World War II. Nesquehoning was one of the most patriotic towns during World War II. Over 1200 men and women served in the war which made the town unique with more per capita service people than any other town in the USA. Some families had numerous sons fighting in the war at the same time and many lives were lost. Local Veterans today pay homage to Our Lady of Lourdes by having memorial services at the Grotto on Memorial Day and Veteran's Day.<sup>32</sup> The first Women's Division of the US Army Corp recruiting poster was of Corp. Helen McConnon of Nesquehoning. When General George C. Marshall first saw her picture, he exclaimed, "My eyes have seen the glory." One of the original posters (Figure 8) hangs in the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 8008, Nesquehoning, PA.

The Grotto enshrines the community values of creativity and craftsmanship, religious conviction, ethnic tradition, and a sense of family and neighborhood. The traditional cultural significance of the Grotto is derived from the role it plays in the local Italian American community's historically rooted beliefs, customs, and practices. The Grotto is an extraordinary, vivid example of Italian American religious culture and was built and maintained by the parish. This popular religious icon is a distinctive and important feature of the Italian American community of New Columbus, Nesquehoning. It serves as a vital center on the boundaries of official church structures, for Italian religious experience and expression. Originally established as a part of an Italian-American church, it is the centerpiece of the community. It broadened its representation throughout the vicinity as a symbol of local Italian heritage and the American spirit. It is a constant patriotic reminder of those who fight for freedom past and present. LaRizzio's quality workmanship was influenced by patriotic and spiritual dedication to the men and women who served on foreign soil. The Grotto is an integral part of the ethnic heritage of the Italian American Community of New Columbus.

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### **9. Major Bibliographical References**

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Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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<sup>32</sup> Website prepared by Dennis Creitz, Nesquehoning, PA.; <http://nesquehoning.us/scrapbooks1.htm>

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*The Golden Jubilee Commemorative Booklet, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 1913-1963*

*The Diamond Jubilee Commemorative Booklet, Our Lady of Mount Carmel, 1913-1988*

*The Times News, Lehighon, PA*, Pencor Publishing Company

Dennis Creitz, Nesquehoning, PA: <http://nesquehoning.us/scrapbooks1.htm>

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other  
Name of repository: \_\_\_\_\_

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): **NA**

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**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property Less than one acre  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

1	<u>18</u>	<u>431231</u>	<u>4524523</u>	3	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	4	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>	<u>                    </u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

**Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)**

The boundary includes the Grotto itself and a very small amount of yard surrounding it to include the landscape and steps leading up to the Grotto. The boundary is shown on the site map, and is located near the northeast corner of the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church building, which is on the northeast corner of East Garibaldi Avenue and Angelini Avenue in the New Columbus neighborhood of Nesquehoning Borough.

**Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)**

The Grotto is the focus of this nomination. Although the Grotto is historically and physically associated with the church complex, it has developed individual significance to the community. The adjacent buildings are not essential to convey the significance of the Grotto, and the absence of those resources from the nominated boundary does not have a negative impact on the integrity of the Grotto.

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Lucille M. Richmond & Rose M. Arieta

organization OLMC, Inc date June 27, 2011

street & number 1004 Center Street

telephone                     

city or town Jim Thorpe

state PA

zip code 18229

e-mail Lucille.richmond@century21.com, rosearieta@yahoo.com

Additional Documentation

**Submit the following items with the completed form:**

- 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. Key all photographs to this map.
- Continuation Sheets
- Additional items: (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine**

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**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: **The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine**  
City or Vicinity: **Nesquehoning**  
County: **Carbon** State: **PA**  
Photographer: **Lucille Richmond**  
Date Photographed: **November 10, 2010**  
Location of Original Digital Files: **1004 Center Street, Jim Thorpe, PA 18229**  
Number of Photographs: **20**

**Description of Photograph(s) and number:**

Photo #1 Approach to the Grotto, camera facing north  
Photo #2 Kneeling Steps, facing north  
Photo #3 Angel on top of the Grotto  
Photo #4 Statue of Our Lady of Lourdes, facing north  
Photo #5 Statue of Bernadette, facing north  
Photo #6 Water trough and statue of angel  
Photo #7 Memorial to Monsignor Angelini  
Photo #8 Statues of Angel and Bernadette  
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Photo #14 Coral brought back by Veterans  
Photo #15 Rocks brought back by Veterans  
Photo #16 Rocks brought back by Veterans  
Photo #17 Shell brought back by Veterans  
Photo #18 Rock brought back by Veterans  
Photo #19 Back of Grotto, camera facing south  
Photo #20 St. Christopher Statue, camera facing north

**Property Owner:**

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

name **The Diocese of Allentown**

street & number **4029 Tilghman Street**

telephone **610-289-8900**

city or town **Allentown**

state **PA**

zip code **18104**

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.460 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 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 Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

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NA

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Section number Additional Information

Page 1

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 Figure 41 Newspaper Article; Grotto is a Vision, May 21, 2008  
 Figure 42 Hundreds of candles are lit in the church, c.2002  
 Figure 43 Figure 43: Carmen LaRizzio, son of Placido Guido LaRizzio  
 Figure 44 Figure 44: Carmen LaRizzio holding the original art work  
 Figure 45: Original picture of Placido Guido LaRizzio that was used in *Popular Science* magazine

**Personal Notes and Reflections**

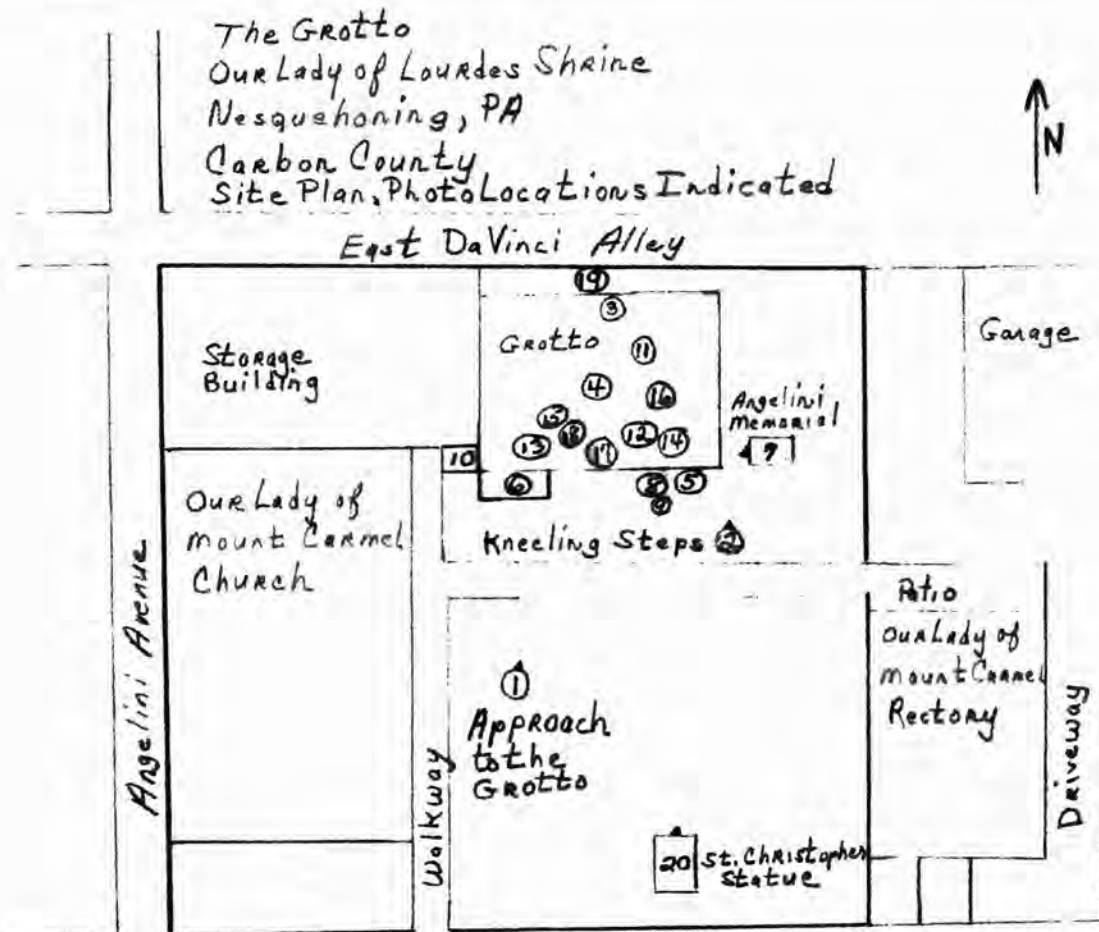
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- |                                  |                            |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Approach to the Grotto        | 14. Coral                  |
| 2. Kneeling Steps                | 15. Rock                   |
| 3. Angel on top of Grotto        | 16. Rock                   |
| 4. Our Lady of Lourdes Statue    | 17. Shell                  |
| 5. Statue of Bernadette          | 18. Rock                   |
| 6. Water Trough & Angel          | 19. Back of Grotto         |
| 7. Mosa. Angelini Memorial       | 20. St. Christopher Statue |
| 8. Statues of Bernadette & Angel |                            |
| 9. Cornerstone                   |                            |
| 10. Brass Flag Holders           |                            |
| 11. Angel on Rock                |                            |
| 12. Coral                        |                            |
| 13. Rock                         |                            |



Site Plan and Photo Key



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## Miner Makes Art Objects Out of Hard Coal

MAKING decorative novelties from lumps of coal is the unusual hobby of Guido Larizzio, Nesquehoning, Pa., miner. Protecting his eyes with goggles made of fine wire screening, Larizzio chips out ash trays, lamps, mantel ornaments, and other art objects in his leisure time. No special instruments are employed in the work, the common tools including a hammer, chisel, cuticle knife, nail, rasp, and double-edge razor blade. At the right, the hobbyist is shown using his crude tools to make ash trays from a large lump of anthracite.



Guido Larizzio finishing an ash tray chipped from a lump of anthracite coal as pictured at the right



FEBRUARY, 1938

Figure 1: Item from *Popular Science* magazine, February 1938 issue, page 67, about Placido Guido LaRizzio, the builder of the Grotto. Little else was documented about his work, although family members remember that his carved objects and figurines were in demand from friends, relatives and neighbors. While coal carvings became popular in the 20<sup>th</sup> century souvenir trade, many pieces were unsigned and it is unknown if LaRizzio sold his work or gave it as gifts.

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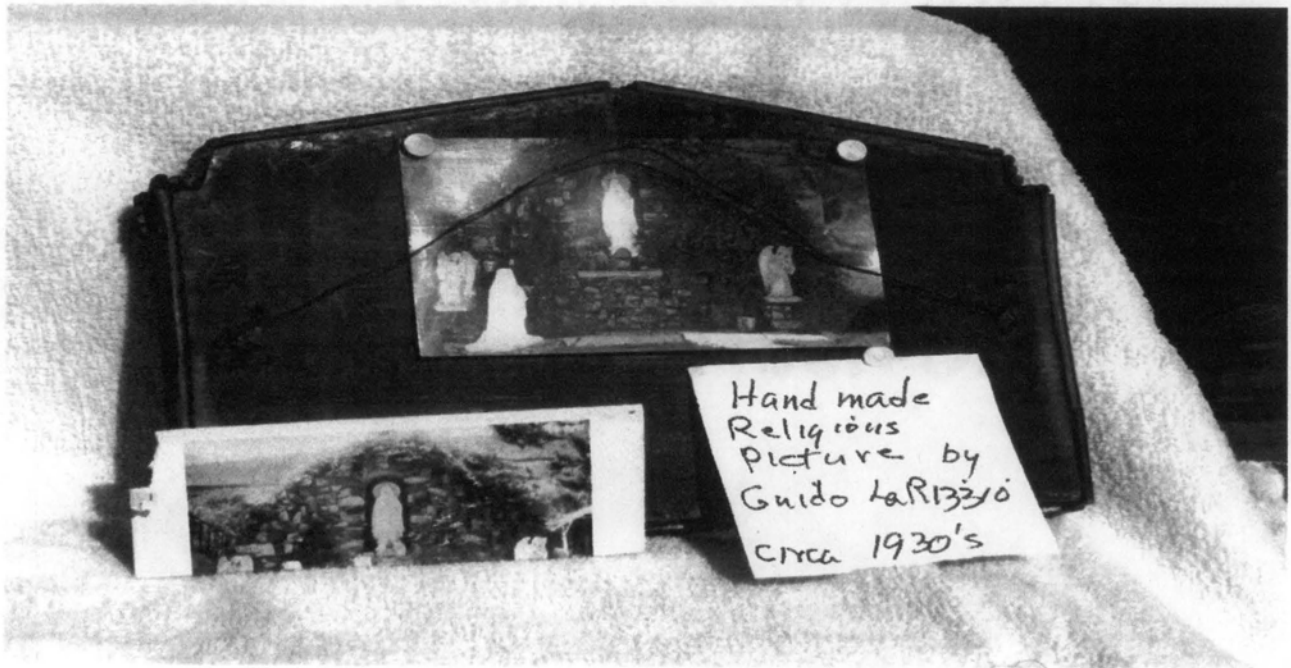


Figure 2: LaRizzo, picture frame created from twigs, c.1930s

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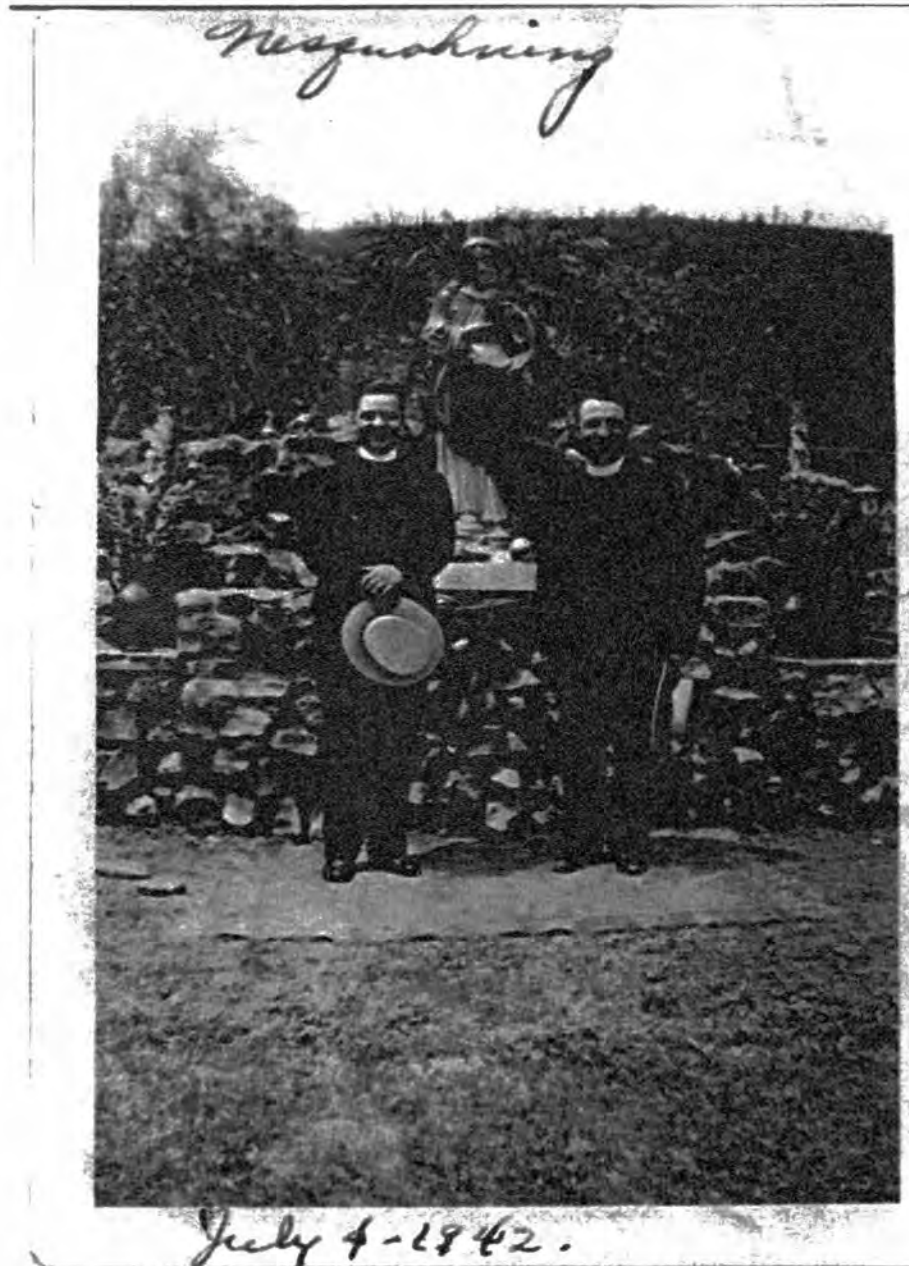


Figure 3: Grotto under construction, Father Angelini and unknown priest, c.1942.

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Figure 4: Grotto under construction with LaRizzo and Father Angelini, c.1942.

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Figure 5: Bessie, daughter of LaRizzo, c.1950s



Figure 6: Granddaughter of LaRizzo, c.1950s

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Figure 7: LaRizzo, c.1940s

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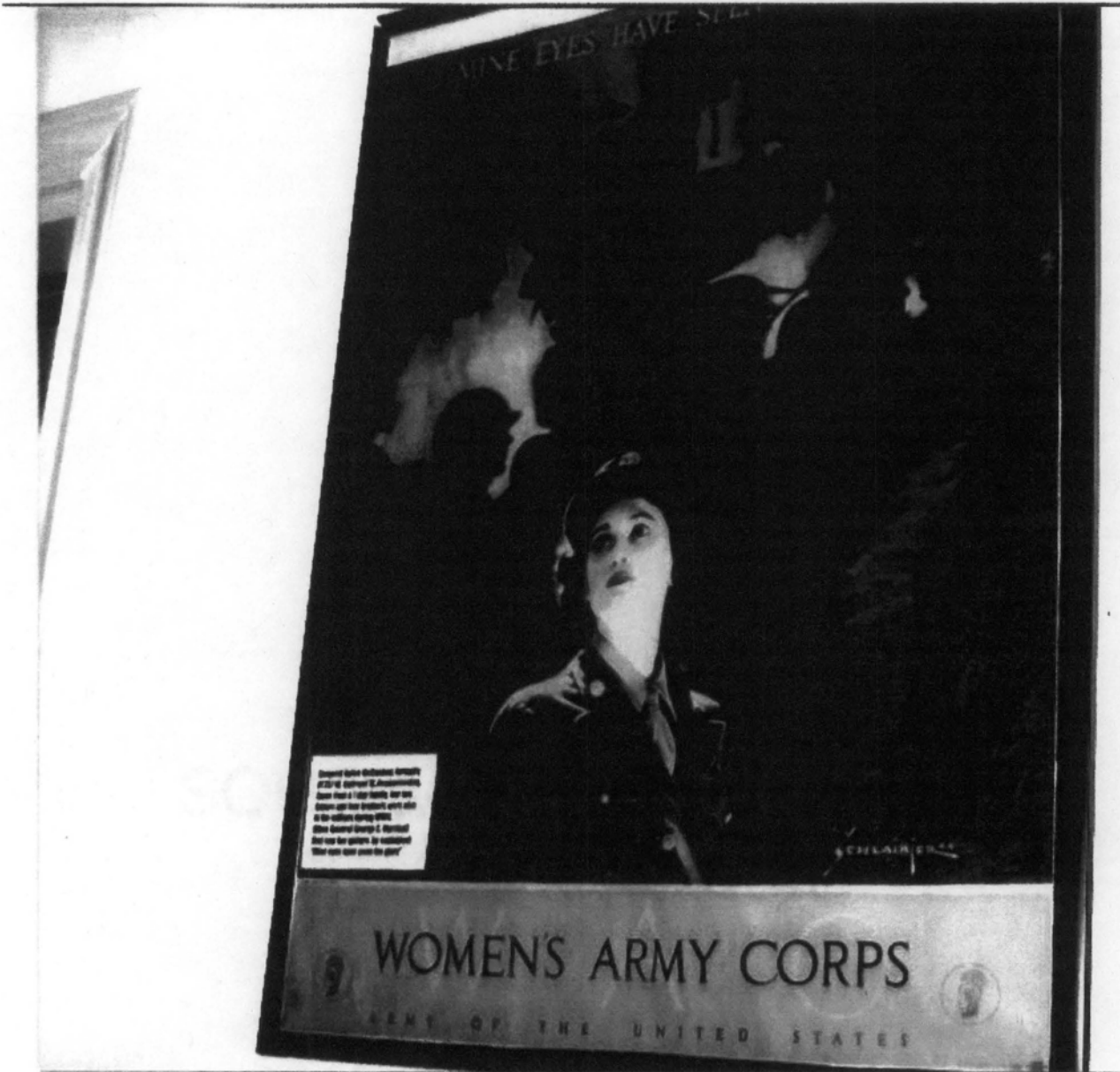


Figure 8: Helen McConnon, First poster, WWII, Women's Army Corps, c.1944

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The Grotto-Shrine, adjacent to Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, built in 1941, was dedicated to the memory of the hero dead of the nation and as a thanksgiving memento for the safe return home of members of the parish and their fellow service men of the nation after World War II on October 15, 1945. It took many hours of the spare time of a coal miner, Placido Guido LaRizzio, to alone build this unique memorial. Rocks, earth and other mementos from over 100 places in the world, make it a "miniature world" at which thousands of visitors have felt close to people of all nations as they came to New Columbus in the past years. Requests for prayers have come from throughout the whole country. Many sick and distressed people were blessed with water that flows from the rocks of the Grotto-Shrine.

Figure 9: This early photo was used in a local history, the web site of Dennis Creitz, Nesquehoning, PA: <http://nesquehoning.us/scrapbooks1.htm>. At the time the photo was taken, Madonna Hall was not yet constructed, nor were there other buildings now located beyond Diaz Avenue. The young white pines visible in this photo eventually formed a screen behind the grotto seen in some later photos. Photo believed to date to 1940s.



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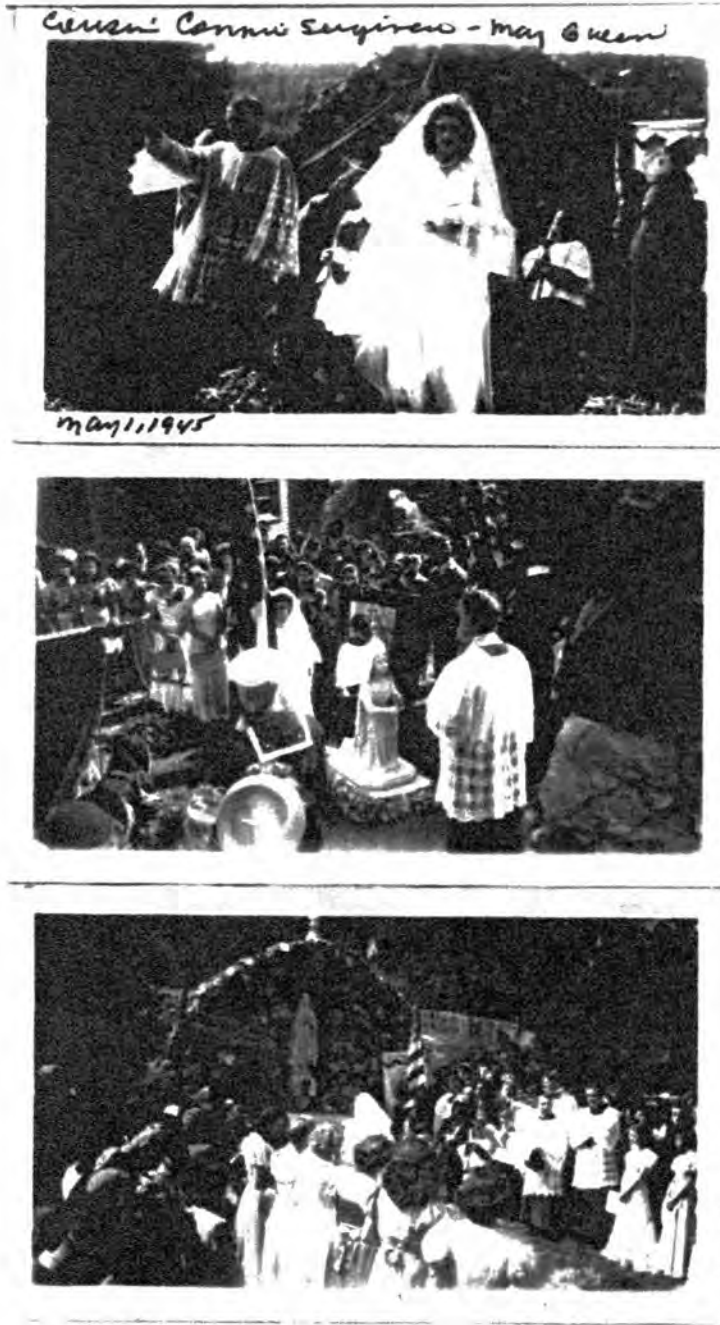


Figure 10: May Queen, Connie Serignese, 1945

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This photo illustrates the dedication and unveiling of the Our lady of Mount Carmel Grotto. The Grotto is a replica of the Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine in France and features many statues and adoring angels. Pictured was the Rev. A.J. Angelini, pastor for Our Lady of Mount Carmel parish, Guido Larizzio, designer and builder of the Shrine, and Rev. Francis Mellino, guest speaker at the celebration.

Figure 11: Newspaper article about the dedication of the Grotto, c.1940s

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"...we have con-  
ducted him by our prayers into the  
house of the Lord." ST. AMBROSE.



Sweet Jesus have mercy on the soul of

Guido La Rizzio  
Died February 20, 1949  
Age 41 years

⓪ GENTLEST Heart of Jesus, ever present in the Blessed Sacrament, ever consumed with burning love for the poor captive souls in Purgatory, have mercy on the soul of Thy servant, bring him far from the shadow of exile to the bright home of Heaven, where, we trust, Thou and Thy Blessed Mother, have woven for him a crown of unending bliss. Amen.

May He Rest in Peace

Figure 12: Prayer card, LaRizzio, 1949

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Figure 13: Father Angelini at Grotto, c.1950s

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Figure 14: Citizens New Columbus Italian Band, facing Grotto & Church c.1950s. Pictured in the background is the Elementary school torn down in 1958.

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Figure 15: St. Theresa, Benediction at the Grotto with Father Angelini, little girls dressed in the likeness of St. Theresa, c.1950s

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Figure 16: Father Angelini, St. Theresa procession, early 1950s

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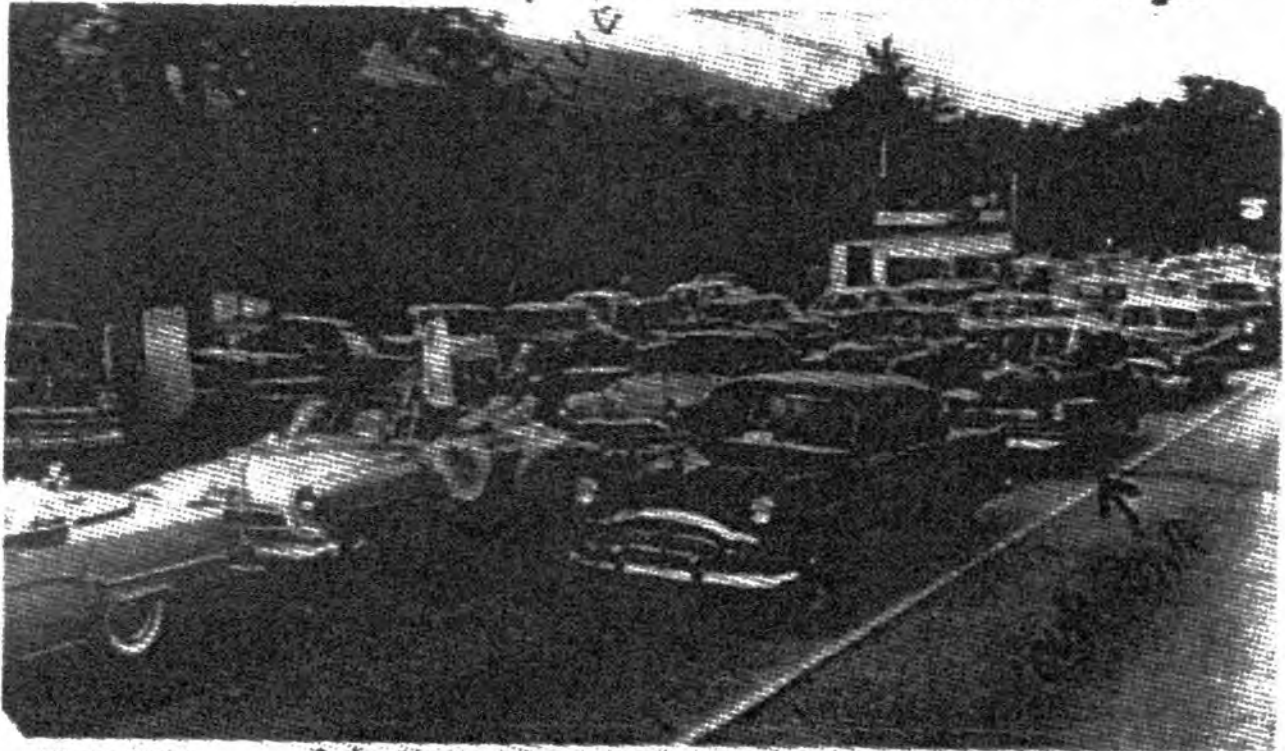
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# Cars Clog Highway To Greet Statue Of Virgin



A photograph of the huge caravan of cars seen in the region of Nesquehoning which gathered at the intersection of Route 209 and Route 93 to greet the statue of the Blessed Virgin. The cars formed a double lane on Route 209. The statue of the Blessed Virgin is being escorted to the New Columbus Grotto. The traffic jam is seen in the foreground. The statue is being escorted to the New Columbus Grotto.

Figure 17: A huge caravan is seen at the Intersection of R209 & R93, Nesquehoning, escorting the statue of the Blessed Virgin to the New Columbus Grotto. c.1950s. The cars formed a double lane on Route 209.



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Figure 18: Grotto 1959, and Mary C. and Frances Arieta, 1960

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Figure 19: Feast of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, July 16, old Rectory on right, c.1960s

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This grotto-shrine dedicated on October 15th, 1945, nestling at the foot of Broad Mountain, is located in "New Columbus," Nesquehoning, Pa.—on U. S. Routes 209 - 29 - 45. It is a replica of the famous Grotto of Lourdes, France, containing rocks from over 200 places,—from every state of the U. S. A., and from every continent of the earth. It is a miniature world over which God's Immaculate Mother benignly smiles and showers blessings. Visitors can carry home water, which flows from the rocks; they are always welcomed.

Devotions for World Peace and Private Intentions are held every Sunday at 6:30 p. m.

Built in A.D. 1941 by Placido Guido LaRizzio, a hard coal miner.

POST  
CARD

PLAC
STAM
HER

© 1960 — Colorcraft Studios, 114 E. 32 St., New York 16, N. Y.

U5877

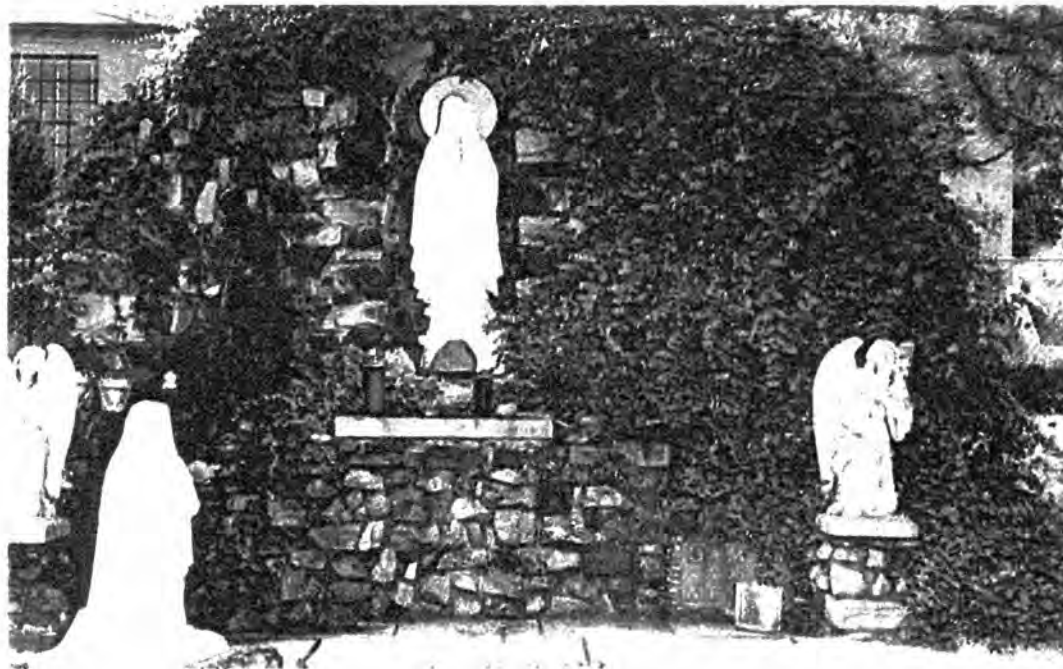


Figure 20: A 1960 postcard featuring the Grotto. Note the vine that covers much of the structure. It is a honeysuckle vine that was planted near on the Grotto in the 1950s and was removed in the mid 1970s.

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"ORIGINAL SHOWER OF ROSES"  
YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO HONOR

*St. Therese,*

*The Little Flower of Jesus*

at

*Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church*

HIS EXCELLENCY, MOST REV. JOSEPH MCSHEA  
Beloved Bishop of Allentown, will celebrate  
the Special Pilgrims' Mass at 11:30 a.m., Sunday,  
October 2, 1966 with sermon in Italian and  
English.

Crowning of the ROSE QUEEN (La Regina  
della Rose) will precede this Mass.

SOLEMN PROCESSION, Benediction and the  
SHOWER OF THOUSANDS of FRESH CUT  
ROSES at 2:30 P.M.

Pilgrims' Masses — 6, 8:30, 10:30 a.m. and  
12:15 p.m.

Nesquehoning (New Columbus) Carbon County,  
Pa. West of (Mahoning Valley Interchange) on  
Routes 34 - 209 - 29 - 45 from Lehigh, Near  
Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton, Hazleton, Jim  
Thorpe, Lansford, Pottsville, Tamaqua.

Consult Newspapers, Radio and TV for further  
information. Plenty of good food and refresh-  
ments served all day . . .

YES! COME!

ST. THERESE WILL LOOK FOR YOU!



Figure 21: Postcard (c. 1966) invitation of Monsignor Angelini to celebrate a special mass said by the Most Reverend Joseph McShea, Bishop of Allentown, PA.

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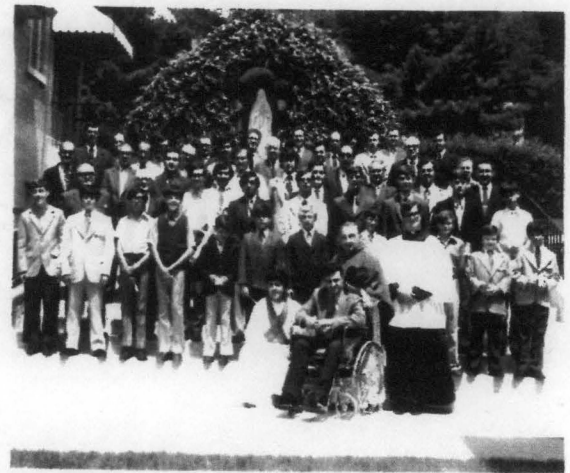
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Mrs. Ann Fauzio & Godchild/Confirmation, 1960s



Holy Name Society, 1973



Confirmation, 1975



Mr. and Mrs. Samuel Ricciardi & Son, 1980s

Figure 22: An assortment of family or group photos taken during special occasions or holidays

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Figure 23: Crowd gathers in front of the Grotto during the St. Theresa festival/event c.1970s. Note that the Madonna Hall, built in 1949, is now visible behind the Grotto.

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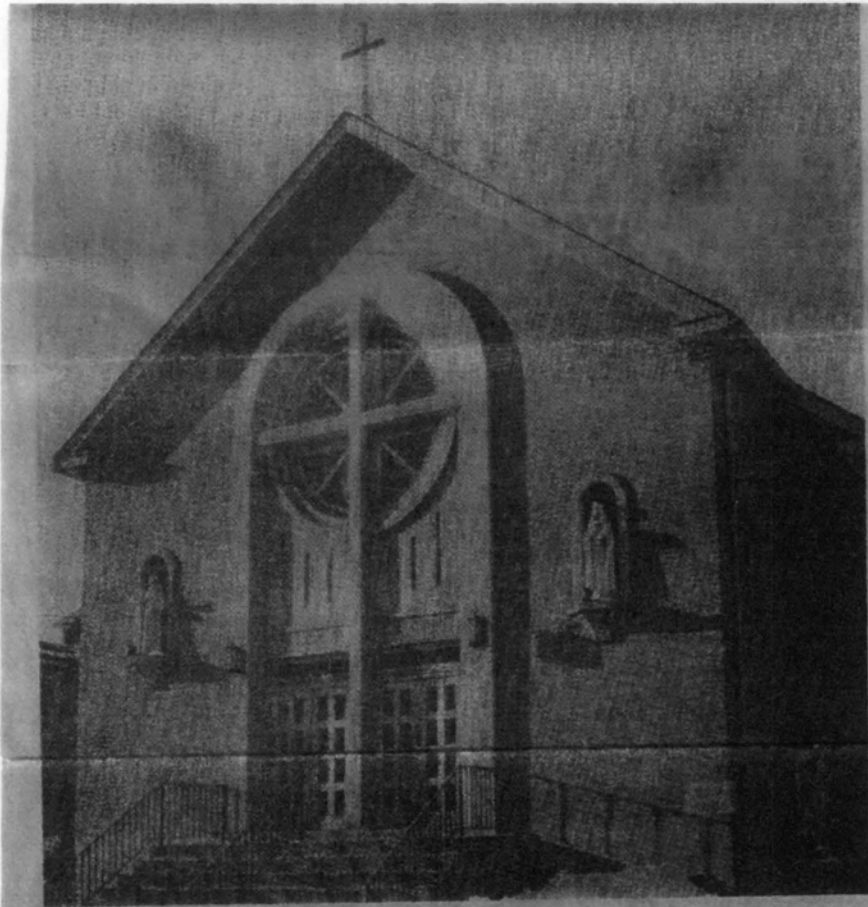
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**Our Lady of Mount Carmel Roman Catholic  
Nesquehoning**

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish was founded as a mission to St. Joseph's Church, Pottsville, July 16, 1904 by the Rev. Giovandomenico DeStefano. As many as 100 Italian families had settled in Nesquehoning as early as 1884. The mission became a parish with 150 families in the village of Little Italy, Nov. 13, 1913 with the Rev. Luigi La-Bella as the founding pastor.

Between 1917 and 1920 Little Italy was moved to New Columbus in the 3rd Ward of the Borough of Nesquehoning. The church dedicated on July 16, 1905 was rededicated in New Columbus, June 27, 1920. The present church was dedicated May 29, 1955 by the Most Rev. Joseph McShea, then auxiliary bishop of Philadelphia. The church, of brick in romanesque style of architecture, seats 500 persons. The adjacent rectory was dedicated Nov. 26, 1967.

Confessions are on Saturday and eve of Holy Days, 4 to 5:30 and 7 to 8 p.m. Sunday masses are at 6, 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. On Holy Days of Obligation they

are at 6 and 7:30 a.m. and 7 p.m. and daily, 7:30 and 8 a.m. The Rt. Rev. Magr. Agnello J. Angelini, member of the Council of Priests of the Diocese of Allentown, present pastor, began his ministry Sept. 15, 1932. The Rev. Nicholas P. A. Troccola, first assistant assigned to the parish, began his ministry Oct. 10, 1967.

Present membership is 196 families. Sons of the parish in the priesthood are the Rt. Rev. Magr. William N. Serrado, Arcata, Calif. and the Rev. Joseph J. Ferrara of Lettimer Mines, Pa. Sister Marie Anton (RoseAnn Tanzola) is a member of the Sisters of Mercy stationed in Richmond, Va.

Thousands of motorists make their way to New Columbus for the blessing of automobiles on St. Christopher's Day, July 25. Thousands also attend the Original Shower of Roses held the first Sunday in October for the last 25 years. A grotto-shrine, built by a coal miner with stones from every state in the Union, has drawn people for devotions to Our Lady of Lourdes.

Figure 24: Newspaper article with reference to the Grotto.

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Figure 25: Back & Front of stone oven located at the home of Blaise DiMicelli, 46 West Columbus Avenue, Nesquehoning, PA, constructed c1925; these were common behind the homes of New Columbus residents.



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Figure 26: St. Theresa celebration procession c1965, with Rose Queen, Ann Marie DiMicelli, and her court, Rose Marie Arieta and Ann Marie Bochicchio.

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Figure 27: St. Theresa celebration, 1974: Monsignor Angelini, and Bishop McShea , Top

Figure 28: St. Theresa celebration, 1974: Monsignor Angelini, Bishop McShea, Joanne Miranda and court, bottom

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Figure 29: Shower of Roses, October 1975, State Judge Genevieve Blatt, Msgr. Angelini, Mary C. Arieta, Rose Queen, top Left

Figure 30: Shower of Roses Float, Mary Catherine Arieta, top right.

Figure 31: Shower of Roses Float, Mary Catherine Arieta, bottom left

Figure 32: State Judge Genevieve Blatt, Monsignor Angelini, Mary Catherine Arieta, bottom right

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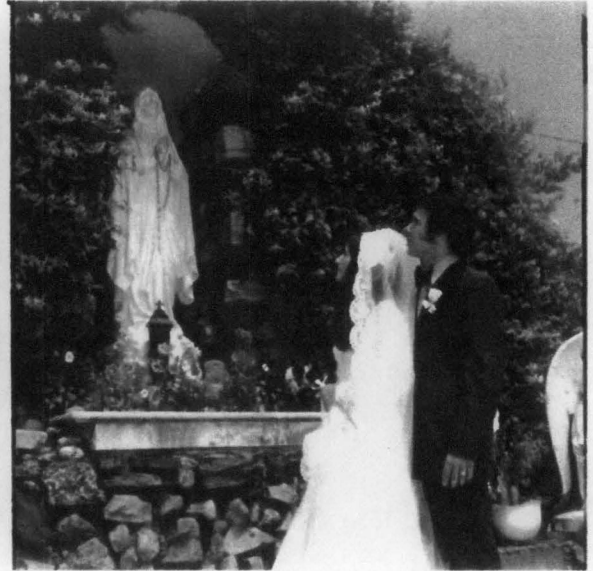


Figure 33,34: Samuel & Theresa Molinari and bridal party, 1972.



Figure 35: Crowd at Grotto, St. Theresa celebration, new Rectory to right, c.1980

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*Allentown Morning Call*  
**NASA Balks  
At Giving  
Moon Rock**

A Nesquehoning prelate's bid for a piece of moon rock to add to a religious shrine at his church has been turned down.

Msgr. A.J. Angelini, rector of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church, asked the National Aeronautics and Space Administration for a moon stone to add to the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes at his church.

The shrine has a stone from each of the 50 states. The last two, from Alaska and Hawaii, were cemented in place last April in conjunction with the 15th annual Mass and dinner of the Panther Valley Daughters of Mary.

Msgr. Angelini said last night the rejection came in a letter from H. Dale Grubb, NASA assistant administrator for legislative affairs.

"All of the surface material returned from the moon by the astronauts is either under controlled or continuing scientific study. A limited number of samples are on display in this country and overseas locations where the maximum number of people may see them.

"Now and in the foreseeable future, there appears little possibility that lunar samples will become items available for permanent disposition."

The shrine was built in 1941 by Placido Guido LaRizzio, a miner afflicted with black lung disease.

Msgr. Angelini made his request through Rep. Daniel J. Flood, Wilkes-Barre Democrat.

Figure 36: Moon rock requested by Monsignor Angelini through Representative Daniel Flood; refused by NASA.

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Figure 37: Baptism of Beth Ann Molinari, 1978, St. Theresa statue in the back ground was relocated to Monsignor Angelini's memorial monument.



Figure 38: Prayer Group, October 2008.

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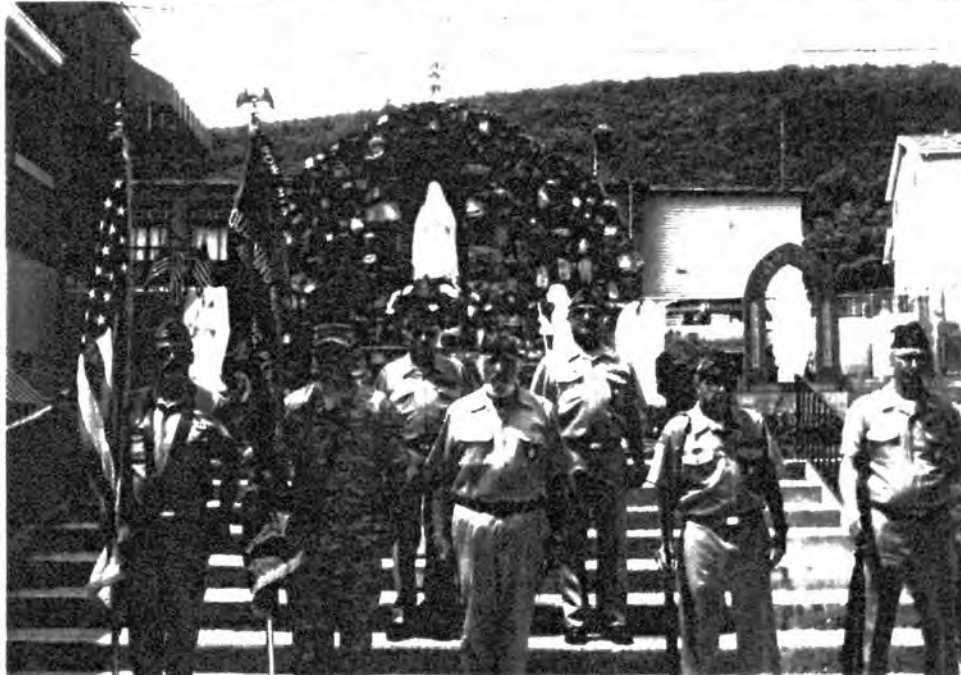
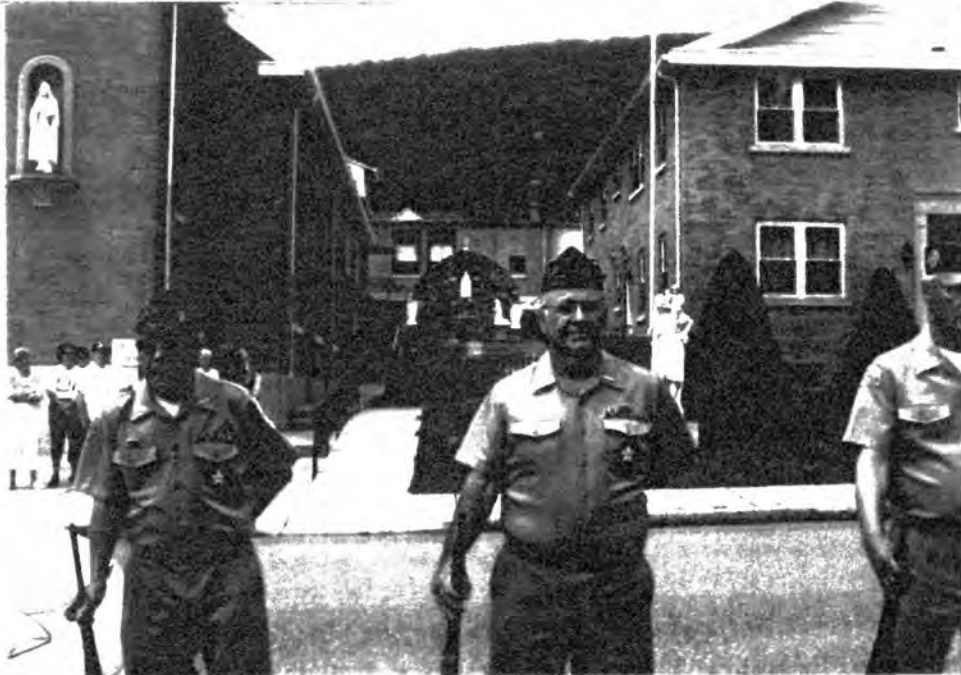


Figure 39: Memorial Day, May 30, 2011, Honor Guard (top) on street with Grotto in background.

Figure 40: Memorial Day, May 30, 2011, Veterans of Foreign Wars, Post 8008 (bottom) in front of Grotto.

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**DNESDAY**  
MAY 21, 2008

Neighbor Sponsor  
In For Friendly Service!

**nallard**  
MARKETS

South Second St.  
**HIGHTON**  
MEAT, DELI & PRODUCE  
OF GROCERIES & PA LOTTERY

# TIMES NEWS

The grotto shrine at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in the New Columbus section of Nesquehoning. CAROL ZICKLER/TIMES NEWS

## Grotto is a vision

### Shrine stands for safe return of war veterans

By CAROL ZICKLER  
zickler@tdn.net

It was the vision of the late Rev. Monsignor Agnello J. Angelini to build a grotto shrine in loving memory of those who died during World War II and in tribute to God

for the safe return of American service men and women from across the USA.

The Grotto Shrine sits at the foot of the Broad Mountain in the "New Columbus" section of Nesquehoning, just off Route 209, adjacent to Our Lady of Mount Carmel

Roman Catholic Church. The shrine is a replica of the famous grotto of Lourdes, France, and is constructed of native stone and stones gathered by various military personnel from over 200 different places, including major battlefields of World War II. It

includes stones from every continent on the globe, and every state in the nation.

Placido Guido LaRizzio, a humble, devoted parishioner, brought Msgr. Angelini's vision to life when he began the construction of the shrine. See **GROTTO** on Page 2

Figure 41 : Times News, May 31, 2008, (front page).



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Figure 42: Hundreds of candles are lit in the church for special intentions of the pilgrims, October 8, 2002.

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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Figure 43: Carmen LaRizzio, son of Placido Guido LaRizzio holding the original coal carving featured in "Popular Science" magazine.



Figure 44: Detail of the original art work of the coal carving

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

Name of Property

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Figure 45: Original picture of Placido Guido LaRizzio that was published in "Popular Science" magazine

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

Name of Property

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**Personal Notes and Reflections of the Grotto Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine**

Respectfully Submitted by Member of the Parish

The Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine has always been a special place for our family. It was our tradition to visit the Grotto as a family after Sunday Mass to pray for any special intentions we may have had at that time. Church functions at Our Lady of Mount Carmel always centered on the Grotto whether it was a solemn event such as Corpus Christi or the Shower of Roses, or a social event such as the "Baby Parade." As a child growing up in New Columbus, the Grotto was a peaceful place where we were welcomed by our pastor, Father Angelini to sit and listen to stories told by him or visiting priests or to just play games. I can remember bringing my younger sister there when she was 3 years old. It was my way of introducing her to this peaceful, happy place. As I grew older I visited the Grotto when I was troubled for any reason. I always came away with a tremendous feeling of relief. I firmly believe it is a place of true holiness worthy of our protection. Frances J. Arieta

Since 1945 the Grotto has been an integral part of the history, culture, and traditions of the citizens of the Carbon County area. When I need a spiritual, emotional, or even physical lift, the Grotto provides me with comfort, tranquility, and strength. It's the place I visit when I want to reflect and be close to nature. Since the death of my father, the Grotto has become even more meaningful to me because his memory (like those of so many others who contributed) lives on in not only the rocks he sent from the Holy Lands during WWII, but also in the occasions we celebrated there. Throughout my life, I have witnessed many religious functions and have seen many religious pilgrims and brides who have shown their devotion to the Blessed Mother. Significant occasions in my life were marked with a picture in front of the Grotto: my reign as Rose Queen, my wedding, the baptisms and confirmations of my son and daughter, the engagement of my daughter, and finally, her wedding. Perhaps someday the tradition will continue with her children. Becoming a historical monument will preserve the Grotto as a place of worship and reflection and will allow the next generations to experience its beauty and peace. Also, its history will teach future generations what strong devotion and hard work can accomplish. Theresa Molinari

Recently my girlfriend was diagnosed with breast cancer. The Grotto became a source of hope and faith for me. I went there (and still intend to) everyday to pray to the Blessed Mother for her to come through this with no cancer in her lymph nodes or anywhere else. Frank Riccette

The Grotto at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church in Nesquehoning, PA has a very special place in my life. At the Shower of Roses celebration in 1982, my oldest daughter Carolyn was selected to be in the Rose Queen's court. Then in 1985 my youngest daughter Samantha was asked to be one of the little princesses. It was such an honor for my family to be chosen to participate in such a wonderful tradition in own little town which has made headlines all over for 75 years. Barbara Rutch

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

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The Our Lady of Mount Carmel Grotto, located in the New Columbus section of Nesquehoning Pennsylvania has always been a place of peace and honor. Growing up in New Columbus, the Grotto stood as a monument that has been cherished and respected by the thousands that live in the town along with the many that have visited over the years. As a child many of us gathered in the evening and would talk for hours at the Grotto with Monsignor Angelini.

My father, who is now 78 years old, will tell stories of how the annual "Baby Parade" would be held on the grounds every year. Thousands of people would have their cars blessed in front of the Grotto by Monsignor Angelini. All denominations of the faithful stood in line to have the blessing that was instilled upon them and their vehicles in the front of the shrine.

I remember young brides and grooms having their wedding photos taken at the Grotto. Many of these young couples did not even get married in the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, but came specifically to have photos taken due to its beauty and significance.

I also remember my family coming to visit from New Jersey on Sundays. After our traditional family dinner we would all walk to the Grotto for prayer and reflection. Many family photos were taken in front of the Grotto.

This beautiful Grotto must be preserved for the generations to come so they can continue the traditions that have been carried on since it has been built. The history and the wealth of the Grotto along with the meaning that it holds to so many should be acknowledged. Mary T. Miller

The Grotto is a place of prayer and peace and continues to be an important part of my Italian heritage. When I was a young girl I had the honor of crowning the statue of Our Lady of Lourdes at The Grotto and placing a bouquet of flowers at her feet.

Every year during the month of May flowers and candles are placed at The Grotto in honor of Our Lady.

When I went on a trip to Hawaii, Monsignor Angelini gave me a letter to present to the Governor of Hawaii asking for a piece of lava rock to put at the Grotto.

The statue of Saint Christopher which stands below the Grotto is also very dear to my heart. It was my honor as a child to unveil the statue of Saint Christopher, the patron saint of travelers. Monsignor Angelini, who never drove or owned a car, would have a blessing of the cars to keep travelers safe. People would come from all over the area for his blessing. Antonina Ricciardi

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
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Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

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My husband Tom was born and raised in New Columbus. The Grotto was a great part of the church. When he was a youngster of about 10 or 12, the angels at the side of the Grotto were unveiled. He was one of the young boys picked to help with the unveiling. He remembers his mother telling him it was an honor to be selected even though he was sick at the time.

We have 4 sons and were parishioners of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church. When each son made First Holy Communion and Confirmation the Grotto was the place to visit and have pictures taken to remember the occasion. All of the boys were altar servers until they graduated from high school.

It was about 1974 when the steps were installed in front of the Grotto. Previously it was a sloped lawn. Father Kean was an assistant priest assigned to help Monsignor Angelini. My husband Tom, his father and Father Kean, along with other men from the parish built the steps in front of the Grotto. These steps gave easier access to the Grotto to visit and pray.

The Grotto has been and continues to be an everyday part of the Italian American Community of New Columbus. We see it everyday as we drive or walk past it. It is a shrine to always remind us of the many who served and has a part in our country's history. Thomas & Felicia Pilla

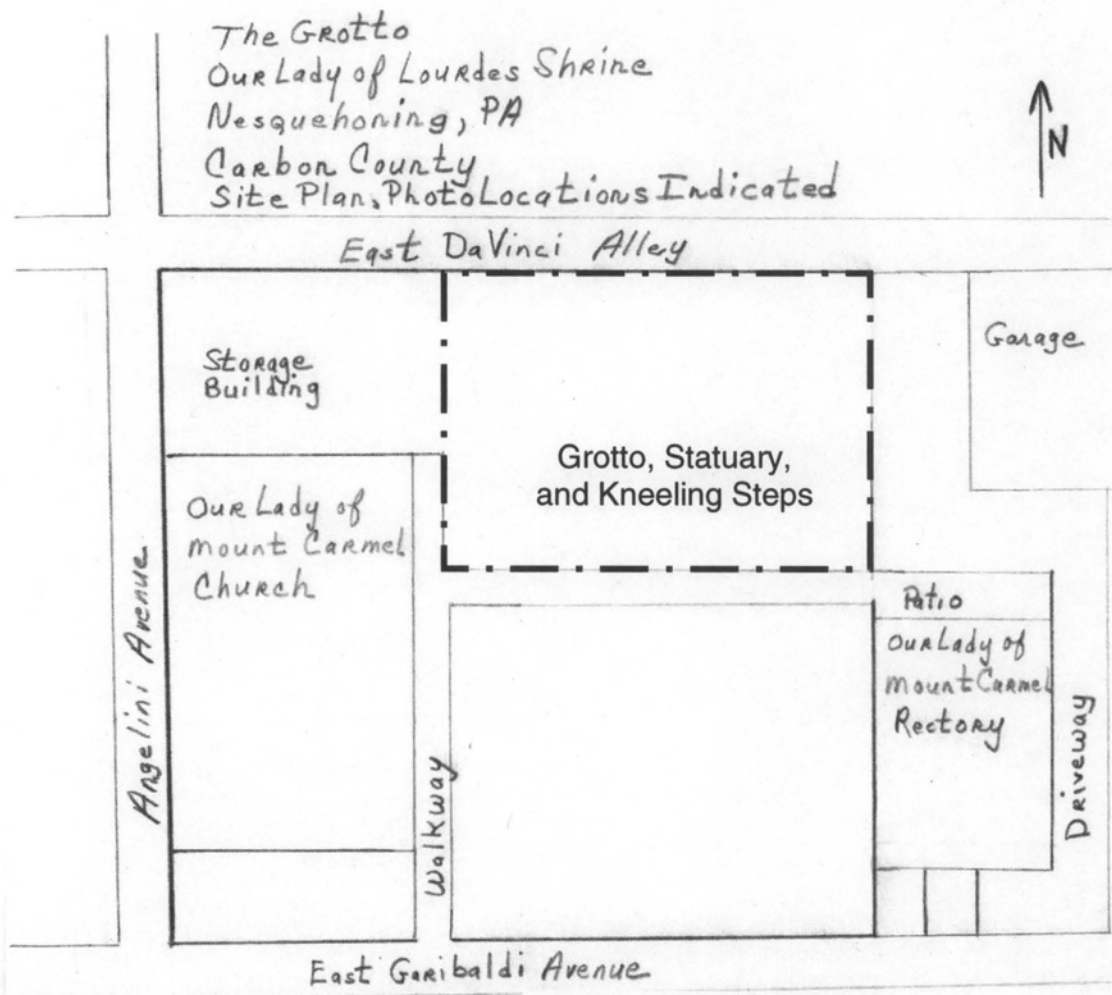
United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine
Name of Property
Carbon County, PA
County and State
NA
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

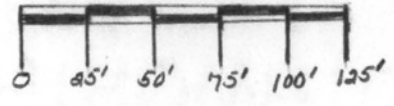
Section number Additional Information

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----- National Register Boundary

The boundary extends from the northeast corner of the storage addition to the Church along East DaVinci Alley to a sidewalk leading from the rear of the Rectory to the Garage, south to the northwest corner of the Patio, and west along the kneeling steps to the walkway along the east wall of the Church. The boundary includes a narrow grassy area north of the Grotto along East DaVinci Alley, the grassy area between the Grotto and Garage, and the kneeling steps south of the Grotto, including all statuary and objects incorporated into the Grotto design and landscaping.







The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 1 of 20



The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 2 of 20



The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 3 of 20



The Grotto

Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

Carbon Co., PA

Photo 4 of 20





The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 5 of 20



The Grotto

Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

Carbon Co., PA

Photobaf 20



SAINT THERESIA

LITTLE FLOWER

DEDICATED 4 OCT. 1987 35TH SHOWER OF ROSES

IN MEMORY OF  
REV. MSGR. AGNELLO J. ANGELINI  
BORN 18 OCT. 1899 ORDAINED 6 JUNE 1925 DIED 16 MAY 1987

The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 7 of 20



DAVIDSON

80

The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 8 of 20



CAVADO  
VADINHO  
AV. 1/2/1/2/1/2



The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 9 of 20



The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 10 of 20



The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 11 of 20



The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 12 of 20





The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 13 of 20



The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 14 of 20



The Grotto

Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

Carbon Co., PA

Photo 15 of 20



The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 16 of 20





The Grotto

Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

Carbon Co., PA

Photo 17 of 20



The Grotto

Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine

Carbon Co., PA

Photo 18 of 20



The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 19 of 20



ST. CHRISTOPHER MARTYR  
PRAY FOR US  
ERECTED JULY 25, 1954 MARIAS YEAR

The Grotto  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
Carbon Co., PA  
Photo 20 of 20



THE PHOTO  
OUR LADY OF LOURDES  
SHRINE  
CARBON COUNTY, PA  
18Z  
E 431231  
N 4524523

Produced by the United States Geological Survey in cooperation with Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Topographic and Geologic Survey. Topography compiled 1942. Planimetry derived from imagery taken 1987 and other sources. Photos inspected using imagery dated 1997, no major culture or drainage changes observed. Survey control current as of 1948. Boundaries, other than corporate, revised 1999. North American Datum of 1927 (NAD 27). Projection: Pennsylvania coordinate system, north zone (Lambert conformal conic). 10,000-foot ticks: Pennsylvania coordinate system, north and south zones. 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18. North American Datum of 1983 (NAD 83) is shown by dashed corner ticks. The values of the shift between NAD 27 and NAD 83 for 7.5-minute intersections are obtainable from National Geodetic Survey NADCON software. There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map. Information shown in purple may not meet USGS content standards and may conflict with previously mapped contours.

SCALE 1:24 000

CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET  
NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929  
TO CONVERT FROM FEET TO METERS, MULTIPLY BY 0.3048

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Primary highway hard surface	Light-duty road, hard or improved surface
Secondary highway hard surface	Unimproved road

ROAD CLASSIFICATION

- Interstate Route
- U.S. Route
- State Route

QUADRANGLE LOCATION

1	2	3	1 Hazelton
			2 Weatherly
			3 Christiansburg
4	5	6	4 Tamaqua
			5 Lehighton
			6 New Ringgold
			7 New Tripoli
6	7	8	8 Slatersdale

ADJOINING 7.5' QUADRANGLE NAMES

NESQUEHONING, PA

1997

NIMA 5865 IV SE-SERIES V831

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS. FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, P.O. BOX 25286, DENVER, COLORADO 80225. A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST.

9 780607 023688

4444

\$ 6.95



National Register of Historic Places  
Memo to File

# Correspondence

The Correspondence consists of communications from (and possibly to) the nominating authority, notes from the staff of the National Register of Historic Places, and/or other material the National Register of Historic Places received associated with the property.

Correspondence may also include information from other sources, drafts of the nomination, letters of support or objection, memorandums, and ephemera which document the efforts to recognize the property.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: OWNER OBJECTION

PROPERTY NAME: Grotto, The, Our Lady of the Lourdes Shrine

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Carbon

DATE RECEIVED: 11/04/11 DATE OF PENDING LIST: 11/29/11  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/14/11 DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/20/11  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 11000923

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N DATA PROBLEM: N LANDSCAPE: N LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N PDIL: N PERIOD: N PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y SAMPLE: N SLR DRAFT: N NATIONAL: N

COMMENT PERIOD WAIVED: N REDUCED: N

\_\_\_ ACCEPT \_\_\_ RETURN \_\_\_ REJECT \_\_\_ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Historically significant for its association with the cultural life and practices of the Italian-American community of New Columbus in Nesquehoning Borough, PA.*

*The owner has formally objected to the nomination, which is now reviewed for a Determination of Eligibility*

RECOM./CRITERIA Determine Eligible - Criterion A

REVIEWER Patrick Andrews DISCIPLINE Historian

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date 12/19/2011

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the National Park Service.

***ROBERT T. YURCHAK***

---

Attorney at Law

September 2, 1011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA. 17120-0093

One East Catawissa Street  
P.O. Box 127  
Nesquehoning, Pennsylvania 18240  
Telephone:(570)669-6650  
Fax:(570)669-6105

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA.

To whom it may concern,

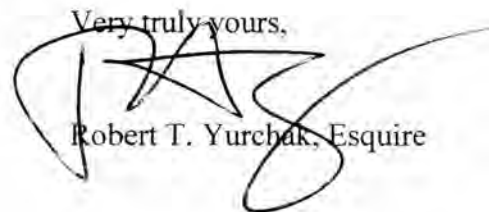
Please be advised that I wish to offer my support to have the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto has played a continuing important role in the history of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto has, over time, become a focal point for many celebrations in Nesquehoning. While it is an integral part of the Italian American community of the New Columbus section of Nesquehoning, it was built and dedicated to all our veterans of all wars past and present. At this particular point in our history when so many of our soldiers are overseas fighting for the ideal that is America, it would indeed be a satisfying tribute to both our fighting men and women along with a reaffirmation of our heritage as a "Melting Pot" for all those who have come to our country seeking the freedoms offered here.

The Borough of Nesquehoning would be greatly honored to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site and it would be a special acknowledgment by our government of the fact that Nesquehoning, as a small town of approximately 4,000 people, sent more men and women per capita to fight in World War II than any other town in the United States.

Thank you for your consideration in this regard.

Very truly yours,



Robert T. Yurchak, Esquire

RTY/

September 6, 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093


Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

As a lifelong resident, and a current Borough Councilman, of Nesquehoning, I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the Borough of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of the New Columbus section of Nesquehoning. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars, past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site. And it will be a great tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita, including my father and several of my uncles, to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David A. Hawk". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "D" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.

David A. Hawk

185 West Diaz Avenue  
Nesquehoning, PA 18240



# Sacred Heart Hospital

*Affiliated with Sacred Heart (Catholic) System*

421 Chew Street, Allentown, PA 18102-3490  
610-776-3500 • www.shh.org

**September 6, 2011**

**Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093**

**Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA**

**While the separation of Church and State serves society well for political purposes, in reality, for the average citizen, love of God and love of Country are so intertwined, they really cannot be separated. A perfect example of this is the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes located in the town of Nesquehoning, PA.**

**During World War II, this small, patriotic community sent more men and women per capita off to battle, than any other town in the United States. A rallying point for these soldiers was the Grotto where their faith would be strengthened through a blessing, enabling them to courageously go off to war with God's protection.**

**This Grotto has been, and continues to be, an integral part of the community and a focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was constructed and dedicated to our veterans of all wars, past and present.**

**I am writing to offer support to have this Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. Because of its cherished history, it would be a great honor to have it receive this distinction which it rightly deserves.**

Sincerely,

**Rev. John G. Hilferty  
Director, Pastoral Care  
Sacred Heart Hospital**

14TH DISTRICT  
**JOHN T. YUDICHAK**

SENATE BOX 203014  
THE STATE CAPITOL  
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3014  
TELEPHONE (717) 787-7105  
FAX (717) 783-4141

154 SOUTH MARKET STREET  
NANTICOKE, PA 18634  
TELEPHONE (570) 740-2434  
FAX (570) 740-2438

1701 WYOMING AVENUE  
EXETER, PA 18643  
TELEPHONE (570) 883-4690  
FAX (570) 883-4694

1201 NORTH STREET, SUITE 3  
JIM THORPE, PA 18229  
TELEPHONE (570) 325-3274  
FAX (570) 325-3780



## Senate of Pennsylvania

### COMMITTEES

ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES AND ENERGY,  
MINORITY CHAIRMAN  
AGING AND YOUTH  
APPROPRIATIONS  
LOCAL GOVERNMENT  
VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY  
PREPAREDNESS  
DEMOCRATIC POLICY

yudichak@pasenate.com  
www.senatoryudichak.com

September 7, 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

**RE: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA**

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site.

The Grotto has been an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus since its construction during World War II. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars, past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in World War II than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John T. Yudichak".

**John T. Yudichak**  
State Senator

JY/mm

**JOSEPH G. GRECO, JR.**

ATTORNEY AT LAW

AREA CODE 570  
TELEPHONE 669-6635  
FAX 570-669-9884

571 EAST CENTER STREET  
NESQUEHONING, PENNSYLVANIA 18240

September 8, 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Buresu for Historical Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, Pa. 17120-0093

IN RE: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, Pa.

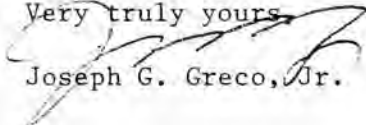
Dear Sir/Madame:

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the History of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus, as well as the Borough itself. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. I remember, as a child, serving as an altar boy for many masses there for the community and the veterans both living and deceased. One of Monsignor Angellini's last wishes was to have the Grotto become a National Historic Site. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in World War II than any other town in the United States.

Very truly yours,

  
Joseph G. Greco, Jr.



Craig A. Zurn  
President & CEO

September 12, 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars, past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Craig A. Zurn", written in a cursive style.

Craig A. Zurn  
CEO/President

alb



*Frank Arieta Plumbing, Heating and Fuel Oil*

*2 West Willow Lane*

*Nesquehoning, Pa. 18240*

*(570) 669-9341*

Sept. 20, 2011

Re: The Grotto at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel  
Nesquehoning, Pa.

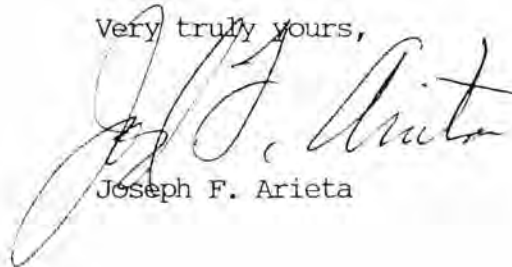
Pa. Historical & Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building,  
Second Floor  
400 North St.  
Harrisburg, Pa. 17129-0093

It is my understanding that the Grotto referenced above is being considered for nomination as a National Historic Site. The Grotto in the past played an important role as it related to the culture and history of the town. It continues to do so today.

The Grotto was and is a central part of the celebrations involving the families not only of the Italian American community in Nesquehoning but of many families throughout the mid-atlantic. The Grotto is also a monument to our veterans and our World War II veterans in particular.

It is my firm belief that the Grotto qualifies as a National Historic Site.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "J. F. Arieta". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name of the signatory.

Joseph F. Arieta

OFFICE OF THE  
**CARBON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

William J. O'Gurek, Chairman



Court House Annex  
P.O. Box 129  
Jim Thorpe, PA  
18229-1238

Telephone: (570) 325-3611  
FAX: (570) 325-3622  
E-mail: cccommis@ptd.net

PA Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau of Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street, Second Floor  
Harrisburg PA 17120-0093

September 26, 2011

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veterans' programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars, past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that we believe may have sent more men and women per capita to fight in World War II than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

William J. O'Gurek  
Chairman

LOU BARLETTA

17TH DISTRICT | PENNSYLVANIA

TRANSPORTATION AND  
INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE

EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE  
COMMITTEE



WASHINGTON, DC OFFICE  
510 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING  
WASHINGTON, DC 20515  
(202) 225-6511 PHONE  
(202) 226-6250 FAX

HAZLETON, PA OFFICE  
1 SOUTH CHURCH STREET, SUITE 100  
HAZLETON, PA 18201  
(570) 751-0050 PHONE  
(570) 751-0054 FAX

Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-3811

September 27, 2011

Carol Lee  
Historic Preservation Supervisor  
The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

I am writing to express my support to have The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine in Nesquehoning, Pennsylvania nominated as a National Historical Site. The Grotto has been a significant and important part of this community serving as a gathering place within the town of Nesquehoning since its construction in 1941.

The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine is an important part of the Italian-American community of New Columbus, and in fact, is an excellent example of Italian-American architecture in North America. The Grotto has served as the focal point of many community celebrations over the years, including festivals and programs for our military veterans.

The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine is truly a symbol of the rich history of Carbon County, Pennsylvania. To list the Grotto as a National Historic Site would be a fitting tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in World War II than any other town in the United States. I thank you most sincerely for your time and consideration of my request.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lou Barletta".

Lou Barletta  
Member of Congress

September 28, 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chief Jim Nardozi". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial "C".

Chief Jim Nardozi

New Columbus Fire Company

**MICHAEL S. GREEK**  
Attorney at Law  
42 East Patterson Street  
P.O. Box 19  
Lansford, Pennsylvania 18232  
570-645-2200 fax 570-645-2202

September 29, 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

**RE: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA**

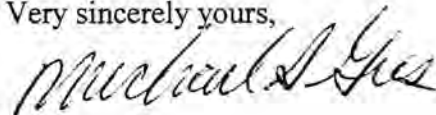
Dear Sir/Madam:

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars pas and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Very sincerely yours,



Michael S. Greek

MSG/mln

# BOROUGH OF NESQUEHONING

114 WEST CATAWISSA STREET  
NESQUEHONING PA 18240

[www.nesquehoning.org](http://www.nesquehoning.org)  
[nesqboro@ptd.net](mailto:nesqboro@ptd.net)

Phone: 570-669-9588  
Fax: 570-669-9306

September 30, 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

RE: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

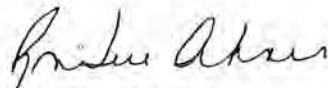
To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the Borough of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American Community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present.

It would be a great honor to have the Grotto designed as a National Historic Site and it would be a great tribute to a small town, such as Nesquehoning, that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Very Truly Yours,



RoniSue Ahner  
Secretary/Treasurer  
Borough of Nesquehoning

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

*Mary Arieta*

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093


Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

  
Vice President,  
Mauch Chunk Historical Society



September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John B. ...". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

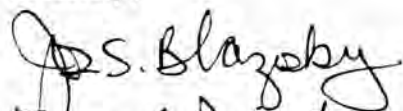
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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

  
Funeral Director

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

Amanda Breiner, Women's Auxiliary President Post 8008  
Walter Breiner VFW Post 8008

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

*William M. Corf*



September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

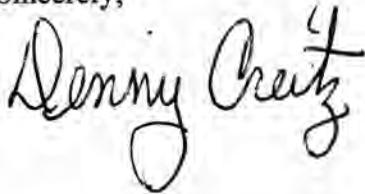
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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Denny Greitz". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Donald DeMou".

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

Henry M. Desrosiers  
County of Carbon  
Veterans Affairs

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

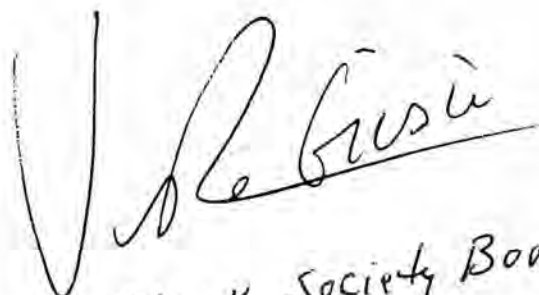
Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

  
Mauch Chunk Society Board  
of Directors Since 6, 2003



September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

*Stephan Hunka*  
PRESIDENT MAUCH CREEK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

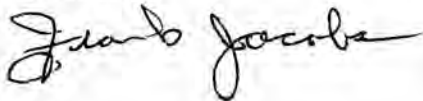
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I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Frank Jacobs". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, Carbon County, PA

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present by a local coal miner, folk artist, Placidio Guido LaRizzio at the request of Monsignor A.J. Angelini.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site. It will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

*Sharon Markenas*  
*Director Northumberland Co.*  
*Historical Society*

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

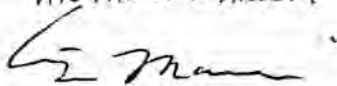
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I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,  
ANTHONY MARCONI



VICE-PRESIDENT

ITALIAN MUTUAL BENEFICIAL SOCIETY

16 CENTER STREET

LANSFORD, PA. 18232

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

*Christine McLooney DeBiosio*  
*From The Mauch Chunk Historical Society*  
*14 W Broadway, Jim Thoyer PA 18229*  
*On The Mauch Chunk Historical Society*  
*Board of Directors Since 6, 2003.*

*Bruce A. Nalesnik*  
*Funeral Home*

57 West Center St.  
Nesquehoning PA 18240  
(570) 669-9898

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

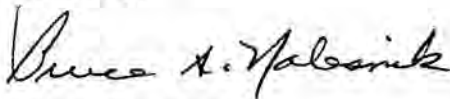
Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning PA

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus, where I reside. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present. As a veteran, this Grotto is considered a sacred site to myself and all the veterans in Nesquehoning.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,



Bruce A. Nalesnik  
Funeral Director  
War on Terrorism Veteran

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

*Juni Samolinski*  
*Det Samolinski*

*SNG Service Center, Inc.*

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

*Michael J. Smurcok*  
Councilman Board of Nesquehoning



September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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Sincerely,

*Mark Stromelo*  
*Pres. Nev. Boys Council*

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "K. Tony Walsh". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "K. Tony Walsh".

September 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

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It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

*Rose M. Walck*

October 1, 2011

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Committee  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, Pa.

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site.

At the start of World War II, my father, Cpl. William J. Henry, left to begin his military service from the train station in Jim Thorpe, PA. On that day, he (a protestant) was presented with a small bible from a priest he had never met. That bible meant a great deal to him throughout his service and the rest of his life. He spoke of the priest to my sister and I many times and showed us the bible that meant so much to him. The bible is one of my most treasured mementos of my father.

Now that I live in Nesquehoning and have learned the story of the priest, Father Angelini, and his grotto the significance means even more. Please consider the designation of the Grotto to a national historic site. Father Angelini cared not the religious preference of those men he sent off to war and his grotto is a testament to his faith and love of man.

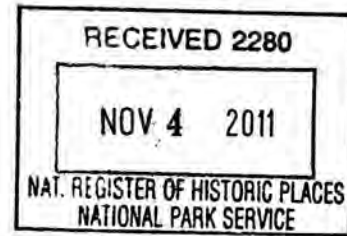
Sincerely,



Linda Henry Adiletto  
580 E. Catawissa St.  
Nesquehoning, PA 18240



Pennsylvania  
Historical & Museum  
Commission



November 2, 2011

Carol Shull, Acting Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
U.S. Department of Interior  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW, 8th floor  
Washington D.C. 20005

Re: NR nomination forms

Dear Ms Shull:

The following nomination forms are being submitted for your review:

Bell Telephone Company of Western Pennsylvania, Allegheny County  
D. S. Keith junior High school, Blair County  
Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine-- the Grotto, Carbon County  
Sharpless Homestead, Chester County  
Green Hills Farm Hotel, Montgomery County  
Park Towne Place, Philadelphia County

The proposed action is listing in the National Register.

If you have any questions regarding the nominations please contact Carol Lee at 717-783-9918.

Sincerely,

Andrea L. MacDonald, Chief  
Division of Preservation Services

Enclosures!

Historic Preservation Services  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093  
[www.phmc.state.pa.us](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us)  
*The Commonwealth's Official History Agency*

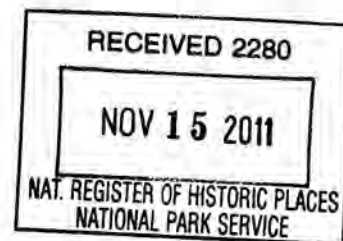
**DOYLE HEFFLEY, MEMBER  
122ND LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT**

PO BOX 202122  
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-2122  
PHONE: (717) 260-6139  
FAX: (717) 772-8418



**House of Representatives**  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Harrisburg

LEHIGHTON BOROUGH ANNEX  
110 NORTH THIRD STREET  
LEHIGHTON, PA 18235  
PHONE: (610) 377-6363  
FAX: (610) 377-5675



November 14, 2011

Keeper of the Register  
National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye Street NW (2280)  
Washington, DC 20005

Dear Keeper of the Register;

The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, New Columbus, Nesquehoning, PA, was recently approved by Pennsylvania's Historic Preservation Board for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination has been forward to you for further review. The Pennsylvania Board endorsed The Grotto for its significance under National Register Criterion A, for Ethnic Heritage, for its association with the Italian American community of New Columbus and its role in continuing the cultural identity of the community.

I would like to offer my support to have The Grotto officially listed in the National Register of Historic Places and urge you to add this to the nation's official list of properties recognized for their importance in history, architecture and culture. I believe that The Grotto meets all criteria required to be placed on this distinguished list.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Doyle M. Heffley".

Doyle Heffley, Member

**LEESON, LEESON & LEESON**  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
70 EAST BROAD STREET, P. O. BOX 1426  
BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA 18016-1426

JOSEPH F. LEESON, JR.\*  
WILLIAM P. LEESON

TELEPHONE (610) 691-3320  
FAX (610) 691-8719

JOSEPH F. LEESON  
(1965-1991)

November 18, 2011

VIA FEDERAL EXPRESS

National Park Service  
National Register of Historic Places  
1201 Eye Street, N.W. (2280)  
Washington, D.C. 20005

ATTN: Paul Loether



Re: **Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine**  
Our File: 19-22-11

Dear Mr. Loether:

I represent the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allentown (which includes the former Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church and St. Francis of Assisi Church).

My client owns the Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine.

It is our understanding that my client's property was submitted to the National Park Service's National Register of Historic Places, for possible nomination for placement on the National Register.

My client objects to the placement of its property on the National Register. Enclosed is a notarized statement certifying that the Diocese owns the Grotto, that it is the sole owner, and that it objects to the listing.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

JOSEPH F. LEESON, JR.

JFL, JR/dja

Enclosure

cc: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
\* Certified Civil Trial Advocate by National Board of Trial Advocacy  
A Pennsylvania Supreme Court Accredited Agency

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA )  
 ) SS:  
COUNTY OF NORTHAMPTON )

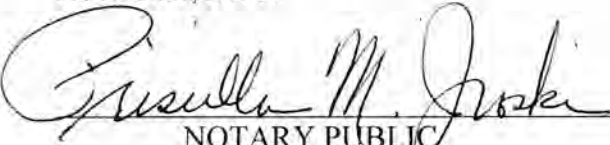
AFFIDAVIT  
(NOTARIZED STATEMENT)

The undersigned, being duly sworn according to law, does depose and state that the following is true and correct:

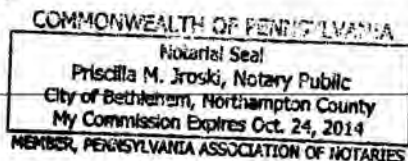
1. My name is Kelly C. Bruce, and my office address is 1515 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Allentown, Pennsylvania 18102-4500.
2. I am employed as the Director of Insurance and Real Estate for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allentown (hereinafter "Diocese of Allentown").
3. The Diocese of Allentown includes the former Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic Church and St. Francis of Assisi Church.
4. The Diocese of Allentown is the sole owner of the Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, located in Nesquehoning, Carbon County, Pennsylvania, which is located on the campus of St. Francis of Assisi Church.
5. As the Director of Insurance and Real Estate, I am authorized to execute this Affidavit, and I have personal knowledge of the facts stated in this Affidavit.
6. The Diocese of Allentown objects to the listing of the Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine on the National Register of Historic Places.

  
KELLY C. BRUCE

SWORN to and subscribed  
before me this 18<sup>th</sup> day of  
November, 2011.

  
NOTARY PUBLIC

My Commission Expires:







Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
**Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission**  
**Bureau for Historic Preservation**  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093  
[www.phmc.state.pa.us](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us)



November 29, 2011

Carol Shull, Interim Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
National Park Service  
United States Department of the Interior  
1201 Eye Street NW, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Washington, DC 20005

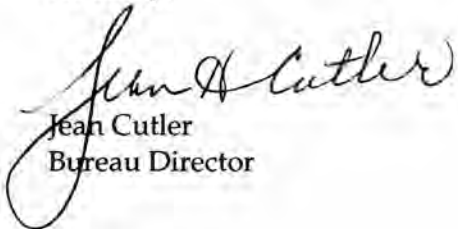
Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine; Carbon County, PA; Key# 155806

Dear Ms. Shull:

On November 2, 2011, we submitted a National Register nomination for the Grotto in Carbon County for your review. We have since received a formal objection to listing by the property's owner, the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allentown (copy enclosed).

Due to the owner's objection to listing, we request that your office instead review the Grotto for a Determination of Eligibility as specified in National Register of Historic Places regulations, 36 CFR 60.6(n). If you have any questions regarding the property, the nomination, or our request, please contact Carol Lee at 717-783-9918 or [calee@pa.gov](mailto:calee@pa.gov). Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

  
Jean Cutler  
Bureau Director

JC/aef

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, Second Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

Re: The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, PA

I am writing to offer support to have the Grotto nominated as a National Historic Site. The Grotto continues to play an important role in the history of the town of Nesquehoning.

The Grotto is an integral part of the Italian American community of New Columbus. It has been the focal point of many celebrations, festivals and veteran programs. It was built and dedicated to our veterans of all wars past and present.

It will be a great honor to have the Grotto designated as a National Historic Site, and it will be a tribute to a small town that sent more men and women per capita to fight in WWII than any other town in the United States.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Russell George Lewis". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Russell George Lewis".

*To whom it may concern:*

*This letter is written with encouragement and support of an application you have received to nominate "The Grotto, our Lady of the Lourdes Shrine" to the national registry.*

*Our Lady of the Lourdes Grotto- located in Nesquehoning, Pa. in a hillside village called New Columbus. This Grotto represents history, heritage and religion of the Italian-American immigrants who courageously struggled to move forward and build a new and better life for themselves.*

*When you visit this Grotto, it is evident of the deep Catholic devotion of its founders. It exudes Holiness; one can sense its divinity. You also experience a profound sense of Patriotism, and an enormous sense of community. It is here that you may witness many forms of prayer and petitions from local and visiting pilgrims.*

*This Grotto was constructed from a blend of stones and coral brought home from World War II soldiers from all 7 continents and local stones from the mountains surrounding this unique village. This modest amphitheatre shaped structure has emulated the Lourdes's Shrine in France and has adorned itself with statues of Saint Bernadette, The Blessed Virgin Mary, our Patron Saint- St. Therese and many angels.*

*Protruding from it structure is a World War II helmet. It is there in remembrance of our soldiers both alive and fallen. Immigrant mothers and fathers proudly sent these young boys off to war with a foundation based on faith and resilience.*

*The heart of this village is its Catholic Church and parish, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel. This grotto resides within its grounds.*

*This church community played host to an annual pilgrimage /feast celebration famously known as "The Shower of Roses". Thousands of people flocked by the busloads to worship and celebrate St Therese on the first Sunday in October each year. The steps*

*leading up to the Grotto were filled with devout Catholics from all over the world deep in prayer knowing the deity of this shrine.*

*On a personal note, I am an ancestor to those remarkable immigrants I have spoken about in this letter. I love to listen to the stories of that time and know their struggles and how they persevered. It was a time of adversity and despair and they rose above a lot of obstacles with great hope. They used their faith, church and worship site to remind them of what was important.*

*I have received many sacraments and baptized my children in that church, I have also found great solitude in our Grotto. Please, Please, help us preserve something so wonderful.*

*We encourage and invite you and the world to visit, share, and experience our modest yet extraordinary shrine in which we proudly say "IN GOD WE TRUST".*

*With warm regards,*

*Tonimarie Macaluso*

*Tonimarie Macaluso*

**The Grotto Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine  
15 East Garibaldi Avenue  
Nesquehoning, PA, Carbon County  
Letters of Support**

- 1. Louis Barletta, Congress of the United States, 11<sup>th</sup> District PA**
- 2. John T. Yudicak, State Senator, Pennsylvania**
- 3. Tony Walck, Mayor of Nesquehoning, PA**
- 4. The Borough of Nesquehoning**
- 5. William J. O'Gurek, Chairman, Carbon County Commissioners**
- 6. Henry M. Desrosiers, Carbon County Veterans Affairs**
- 7. Ms. A. J. AuRuchon, Vice President Mauch Chunk Historical Society**
- 8. Vincent DeGiosio, Mauch Chunk Historical Society, Director**
- 9. Christie McGorry DeGiosio, Mauch Chunk Historical Society, Director**
- 10. Sharon Markunas, Director Northumberland County Historical Society**
- 11. Stephen Hluska, President Mauch Chunk Historical Society**
- 12. Craig A. Zurn, CEO/President Jim Thorpe National Bank**
- 13. Anthony Marconi, Vice President Italian Mutual Beneficial Society**
- 14. Mark Stromelo, Nesquehoning Borough Council, President**
- 15. Frank Jacobs, Nesquehoning Borough Council**
- 16. David A. Hawk, Nesquehoning Borough Council**
- 17. Rose Walck, Nesquehoning Borough Council**
- 18. Michael T. Sniscak Jr., Nesquehoning Borough Council**
- 19. Joseph G. Greco Jr., Attorney at Law**
- 20. Michael S. Greek, Attorney at Law**
- 21. Rev. John G. Hilferty, Director Pastoral Care, Sacred Heart Hospital**
- 22. Donald DeMarco, Past Member Nesquehoning Borough Council, Veteran**
- 23. Robert T. Yurchak, Attorney at Law**
- 24. Wilbur M. Cox, Veteran**
- 25. Gina & Scott Samoleski, SNG Service Center, Owners**

- 26. Joseph F. Arieta, True Value Hardware, Owner**
- 27. Joseph Blasosky, Blazosky Funeral Home, Owner**
- 28. Bruce A. Nalesnik, Nalesnik Funeral Home, War on Terrorism Veteran**
- 29. Amanda Breiner, President Woman's Auxiliary VFW Post 8008**
- 30. William Breiner, President VFW Post 8008**
- 31. Tony Marie Macaluso, Macaluso @ The Lantern, Owner**
- 32. Dennis Creitz, Creitz Service Center, Owner**
- 33. Mary Arieta, Frank Arieta Plumbing, Heating and Fuel Oil, Owner**
- 34. Michael Cerimele, Cerimeles Catering Service, Owner**
- 35. James Nardozzi, President New Columbus Fire Company**
- 36. Linda Henry Adiletto, Daughter of a WWII Veteran**



St. Joseph Parish  
of the Panther Valley

118 N. Market St.  
Summit Hill, PA 18250-1108

August 1, 2019

Ms. April E. Frantz, National Register Reviewer/Eastern Region  
PA State Historic Preservation Office  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

**RE: Grotto of Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine - Nesquehoning, Pennsylvania**

Dear Ms. Frantz:

As an authorized representative of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Allentown, please allow this correspondence to confirm the Diocese no longer objects to the listing of the Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine on the National Register and accordingly requests the status be changed from "eligible" to "listed." The Diocese remains the sole owner of the Grotto, located in Nesquehoning, Pennsylvania, on the campus of St. Francis of Assisi Church.

Per your request, current photos of the property are attached.

Sincerely,

Rev. Allen J. Hoffa  
Pastor of St Joseph Parish of the Panther Valley

**NOTARY**

*Siobhan M. O'Hurek*  
Commonwealth of Pennsylvania - Notary Seal  
SIOBHAN M O'GUREK - Notary Public  
Carbon County  
My Commission Expires Apr 5, 2023  
Commission Number 1122274

*August 1, 2019*

The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, Carbon County PA  
NPS # 11000923; Keeper DOE 12/19/2011

Current Photos: July, 2019





The Grotto, Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine, Nesquehoning, Carbon County PA  
NPS # 11000923; Keeper DOE 12/19/2011

Current Photos: July, 2019



(Rear of Grotto)