

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

For NPS use only

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

received **MAY 29 1985**

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Seneca Glass Company Building

and/or common Seneca Glass Company Building (Seneca Glass)

2. Location

street & number 709 Beechurst Avenue not for publication

city, town Morgantown vicinity of

state West Virginia code 54 county Monongalia code 061

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>N/A</u> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	planning other: for commercial

4. Owner of Property

name Sanders Floor Covering, Incorporated

street & number 2908 University Avenue

city, town Morgantown vicinity of state West Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Monongalia County Courthouse

street & number High and Walnut Streets

city, town Morgantown state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Historic American Engineering Record has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1973 federal state county local

depository for survey records Library of Congress

city, town Washington, state District of Columbia

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date <u> N/A </u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

Highly visible from the major highway (US 19, WV 7, Beechurst Ave.) through Morgantown, WV, the Seneca Glass Company building is situated on a narrow piece of land between the highway and the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad tracks. Although it was built in 1896-1897, a fire in 1902 apparently destroyed much of the interior of the original brick part of the complex. There are discrepancies in local writings about what burned, but the June 11, 1902, Morgantown Evening Post reported that early that morning, a night watchman discovered the fire in the Packing Room, which was then located in a one-story brick section at the northwestern end of the main complex. Before it could be contained, the fire had spread to other areas. The writer also stated that the Furnace/Blowing Room and the Lehr Room were not damaged but that there was considerable damage to other areas, glass and machinery. Certain inconsistencies in materials and construction and an interview with a former Seneca worker who was born in 1903 and started work there seventeen years later, indicate that most of the damage was to the interior and that only portions of the brick walls needed rebuilding. Today, the location where the old Packing (etching was done in part of the area as well) Room was located, is a two-story brick section which fire insurance maps show as having been used for packing (1st floor) and storage (2nd floor) for most of its history.

A prominent Morgantown architect, Elmer F. Jacobs, designed the new two-story replacement, a new Needle Etching Room in a separate building connected by a bridge, and the reconstruction of the Grinding, Glazing, Cutting Areas. In 1947, a large addition was constructed on the northwest end and some newer appendages on the front and back of the old building. The building has changed very little since 1902. Important appraisals and inventories of the building, dating from the early 1900s, are preserved and will be valuable for restoration and interpretation.

The building is an industrial complex of work areas, all connected by doors, passageways, or bridges. In order to describe it, this Description Section is keyed to one of the last sketches of the building, a 1981 sketch. Letters on the sketch refer to the building's sections described in this nomination. Numbers are original to the sketch. It, HAER drawings, an insurance map and a copy of a circa 1906 photograph, are attached.

From the road, two of the highly visible features of the former factory are its water tower and its main brick stack. A water tank is elevated on a steel tower 80 feet high and has the words "Seneca Glass Co." painted in black around it. The tank is at least sixty-five years old; it is seen on a photograph published in 1920 although a 1911 Sanborn Insurance map shows a water tank.

The second feature of the exterior which is highly visible, is the conical brick stack which projects 36 feet above the roofline of the Furnace/Blowing Room (Section C). The stack is especially striking because of its geometric brick pattern near the top. Brick masons in the area must have taken great pride in the design of their industrial stacks. Other glass factories had distinctive designs.

There are other chimneys located in other areas of the building. However, two historic ones are located with Sections D and E. Both are tall rectangular brick chimneys with bandings. That on Section D, the present Storage Area for Blowing Room Materials, is the original and that on the outside of Section E, the Pot Arch Room, may be.

The 1896-1947 complex is a mixture of frame, brick, original iron siding, new tin and steel siding, asphalt and concrete block. In the brick section, all window fenestrations are rounded with predominately double, brick jack arches above. Doors have three jack arches. The majority of the double sash frame windows were replaced by double sash aluminum. Sills are stone and wood and it appears that the wooden sills predate the stone. The unit in which Sections J & K are located has a distinctive water table and is partly on an older foundation. Foundations throughout the complex are stone and brick. The facades of the front (northeast) and the 1896-1902 back (southwest) are separated by plain brick pilasters into twelve bays, two and three windows across. Those bays which Jacobs may have replaced have predominately three fenestrations across. There were four door openings from the second story to bridges or tramways, but only one is still used; others are enclosed. Brick bonding varies from one header to seven stretchers; one to seven is more common. Brick is soft; colors range from red to soft-reddish peach (where it was worn away or was protected); most of the brick is now a sooty, grey-red, even black.

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Several sections still have original lanterns on their roofs. The non brick and non concrete buildings are clad in iron or other metal siding attached to original structural supports. The 1947 additions and alterations will be described later.

Sections A & B. Mixing Rooms and Ramp. Circa 1947 or later. These are built of corrugated steel and have cement floors. Small work rooms and storage areas delineate former functions.

Section C. Furnace/Blowing Room. 1896. One story and basement. This large area, 80' x 80', houses the magnificent brick stack, furnace and pots and was the glass blowing area for the industry. It has corrugated steel walls and fiberglass nailed to the original studs and girts which had held the original corrugated iron siding. The hipped roof has a lantern around the chimney. The roof appears to have a very old standing-seam tin and asphalt covering. Natural lighting is obtained through the lantern (when it is opened) and through the fiberglass and industrial windows with wire glass. Many of the newer windows are in the location of originals. Loading doors open to the railroad siding at the rear of the building. The building has a brick foundation and basement under the present reinforced concrete floor which replaced brick, laid over sand. At least ten feet of the original brick is still exposed around the furnace area.

The furnace, its stack and the roof trussing are the most significant features of the entire Seneca Glass Company complex. The stack rises close to thirty feet from the floor to its point of penetration through the roof. There are no wooden supports from the roof to the stack. The furnace, itself, is approximately 26 to 30 feet in diameter and approximately 9 feet high. Fourteen fire clay pots fit into the fourteen ovens which are located and numbered around the furnace. The construction and significance of the reverberatory furnace can be found in the HAER description (not attached). Adding to the interest of the furnace area is a metal ring with hundreds of vents and levers, which completely surrounds the furnace. This blowing device supplied cool air to the glass workers for their blowing operation (and their own comfort?).

All of the original wooden structural members of the complex roof trussing are exposed: oak posts, girders, bolsters, rafters, bridges, sills--literally hundreds of parts made of various woods--which form the dramatic truss system. High up on the roof are the louvered vents of the lantern which can be opened and closed to allow hot air to escape and light and cool air to enter.

Section D. Storage Room--Blowing Room Materials. 1900 & 1920s. This area is still clad in much of its original corrugated iron siding, black from paint and soot. A shed extension was added after 1920 to house machinery. It is covered with both the old iron and new metal, particularly where old windows were covered over. A long lantern with eight louvered openings per side is still located along the roof ridge. The interior reflects the exterior. The shed addition has no foundation and a dirt floor. Most of the main room's brick foundation is missing or deteriorating. The original brick-over sand floor is worn. Section D is in poor condition.

Section E. Pot Arch Room. Probably 1947. Concrete Block. Not significant architecturally.

Section F. Lehr Room. 1896. Brick. This is a one-story area, 60' x 60' with a lantern on its roof. The roof is standing-tin and asphalt. Exterior walls are common brick and there seems to be little relationship between the brick masonry, workmanship and design of this area and others. The area is not bright, its windows are few, most with buildings or other work rooms blocking any natural light. Brick walls and wooden structural members show signs of early white-wash. As the annealing ovens got longer, parts of the brick wall separating this section from Section I were opened.

Section G. Boiler Room. Date unknown. Concrete Block. Not significant architecturally.

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Section H. Central Storage. 1902. Brick. One story brick with iron in the pediment of the front gable. This was originally the Glazing Room; it was later used for etching and finally in the 1940s, became storage. The floor is plywood over dirt (not original). The room measures 31' x 32'. Eleven windows, one originally a door, provide excellent lighting. Jacobs' 'proposed' floor plan is on file.

Sections I & J. Warehouse Area, Packing Department & Back Appendage. 1896-1902. Brick. Lower level of two-story structure. Both Sections I & J are large, the two totalling 60' x 190'. Like other rooms on the first floor, the original flooring (wood and/or brick) was replaced by concrete many years ago. All structural materials are exposed. In Section I, several sashes are gone from window openings of the 1896-1902 rear wall (now part of the 1947 addition and currently housing a re-annealing Lehr) and original sliding batten doors are missing. An original door is still in its arched opening in Section J and can be used as a pattern. Several window openings on the northwest and southwest walls of Section J were filled in with brick in 1947. A solid brick wall separates Sections I & J and includes an original large iron fireproof door with "pedestrian door." There is a faint outline of a window having been located along that wall as well. Of particular interest is the 1902 freight elevator made by Marshall Brothers of Pittsburgh and an early freight scale. A conveyor belt (1950) to the second floor pierces part of the interior brick wall.

There has always been an appendage along the rear of these rooms and the Lehr Room (Section F); the present was rebuilt in 1947. Its exterior wall is made of the same brick which was used on the major addition in 1947. The back wall of the 1896-1902 building is intact, but as described above, some windows have been enclosed or removed.

There are numerous small rooms and alcoves located off the larger significant areas. Most are interesting because of the machinery and tools which are still in them.

Section K. Factory Outlet. Second Floor. 1902. Brick. Located directly over Section J, the room was used for storage prior to becoming Seneca Glass Company's sales outlet. This area is similar to that below, except that the ^{back} fenestration is still original. The northwest windows, although enclosed, have interior shutters and small shelves. Floors are beautiful maple boards, 1" x 3", laid diagonally over a subfloor of hemlock (seen from below). A former doorway to a bridge linking the building to another now gone, is bricked in with the 1947 red-orange brick. Boards replace an original skylight. This is the only room in the brick section which may have been totally new in 1902 since the area below was one story before the fire.

Section L. Warehouse. Second Floor. 1896-1902. Brick. The original Cutting Room is very bright and contains 47 windows (two were once doors) on three walls. As noted above, aluminum double hung windows are replacements. Boards replace three "skylights" (Jacobs' plans and inventory). Diagonally laid maple and some white pine boards, 1" x 3" are outstanding. Fire damage on ceiling beams is evident in the southeast end of the room. Interviews suggested that the damage was from the 1902 fire, indicating that some of the roof did not need replacing. Two fire doors, similar to that between Sections I & J below, are located between Sections K and L. The freight elevator, discussed above, will be locked in place in this area. Of particular note in this room is the original line shafting with wood pulleys which run the length of the 139 foot room. A conveyor belt comes into the room from below. Seen empty, the room is stunning.

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Section M. Shipping and Receiving Room. 1902. Former Needle Etching Room. Jutting out from the former cutting area and attached to the main brick building via a bridge, is a predominately corrugated black iron building with basement. This section is the only part of the complex which is completely level with Routes 7, 19 and Beechurst Avenue. Its stone and brick foundation is painted black. At the front (northeast), Dock Door A is located in the front gable. One of Jacobs' proposed plans (not titled) may be for this building; it shows a cross gable at the back near the bridge; today, only a half gable is located there, on the northwest wall. The building still has eleven of its original wooden double sash windows (6/6) exposed. Others are covered. The fenestrations are not arched, but are straight. Because of its high visibility, this building has several signs advertising the factory tours and outlet. The exterior is in poor condition, interior good.

Section N. Offices, Cutting Department and Acid Polishing Rooms. 1947. Built by Baker and Coombs of Morgantown, the addition includes a two-story, two bay section, a one-story seven bay section, and a small building which housed the acid polishing operations. The first floor measures 80' x 200'; second floor comprises eight offices and measures 80' x 40'. The interior of the first floor is presently being divided into rooms. Although this portion of the old Seneca Glass Factory is obviously a newer vintage, particularly because of its steel windows and its scale, the brick and bays do provide some relationship with the older parts. Furthermore, it has not changed in thirty-eight years.

Footnote

¹ Architectural information was obtained by Dolores Fleming using a 1908 inventory, "proposed" plans of Elmer Jacobs which are not complete; numerous fire insurance maps, photographs, newspaper articles, interviews, the HAER drawings attached, and architectural fieldwork at the factory. An interview with Nick Rancinger provided some substantiation for observations made by Fleming. Old newspapers and photographs were studied at the West Virginia and Regional Collection. A copy of an artist's rendering of the Seneca Glass Factory in 1896 was studied carefully. It must have been a "proposed plan" because much of the complex was never built. The rendering was invaluable for comparison with photographs taken of the plant before the fire. The Sanders' family was extremely helpful.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
			<input type="checkbox"/> science
			<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
			<input type="checkbox"/> social/humanitarian
			<input type="checkbox"/> theater
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1896; 1902- **Builder/Architect** Nichols & Matthews, 1896
Cummings & Davies 1896; Elmer Jacobs 1902;

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Seneca Glass Company building is historically significant as having been the home of one of the finest hand-blown, hand-cut and etched, lead glass factories in the world; significant as having been one of the oldest factories of its kind in America using a centuries-old technology; and significant as having been the former work place of several generations of local craftspeople and artisans, many of whom lived within walking distance of it. The building is significant architecturally as an example of a small industrial complex, its most striking exterior feature being the original conical stack which towers over the rambling brick and metal building housing the original 1896 reverberatory furnace, blowing and Lehr rooms, pots, ovens, and other areas needed for the factory's operations. Further architectural significance is that much of the original 1896 brick portion is still standing and that which had to be rebuilt after the 1902 fire, was designed by Elmer Jacobs, Morgantown's prominent architect at that time. Furthermore, the building's dominant site in the heart of the neighborhood named after it, its proximity to the river, the railroad tracks, main automobile route through Morgantown, and the computerized Personal Rapid Transit System linking the various West Virginia University campuses, give the building and its "glass house cone" high visibility. In an era when industrial buildings and their stacks are being demolished because of plant closings, Seneca Glass Company remains a visible symbol of America's industrial past. Further significance is that there are extant Seneca Glass Company appraisals, inventories, ledgers and other company papers which are valuable for historical interpretation and restoration.

Seneca Glass Company closed August 1983 but it had almost a century of history. The firm had its roots in the Black Forest of Germany. In 1891, a small group of glass artisans from that area who had migrated to Cumberland, Maryland, decided to purchase the defunct Fostoria Glass Company in Ohio. The new stockholders, however, preferred a West Virginia charter and a new name. Thus, Seneca Glass was born in Moundsville, West Virginia in December 1891 and named in January 1892.

The decision to move the plant to Morgantown coincided with and was an integral part of the growth of industry in the area. In the early 1890s, three important factors caused the area to grow rapidly. First, travel opened from Pittsburgh via the river because of a new river lock. Second, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad line was built through Morgantown. Third, newly discovered gas and oil provided further inducements for growth. In order to entice companies to settle in the area, an investment firm gave free land, cheap gas, and, in the case of Seneca, a \$20,000 subsidy to move. Seneca Glass Company and at least nine other glass firms settled in the area.¹

The glass factories had a tremendous impact on the economy of the county. None received the national reputation that Seneca did. The firm of Cummings and Davies of Wellsburg, West Virginia constructed the plant in 1896-1897 and another firm, Nichols and Matthews, the furnace, its fourteen pots and four annealing ovens. The firms started operations early in 1897. In June 1902, a fire destroyed much of the interior of the brick portion but the Furnace and Lehr Rooms were untouched. Evidently, the fire was more destructive to the back and interior of the brick building and to equipment and glass. The reconstruction and building of whole new sections were done under the supervision of Elmer F. Jacobs.²

Elmer F. Jacobs was the most prominent architect in Morgantown. He was trained as a civil engineer at West Virginia University before moving to Pittsburgh, Pa. where he was associated with two firms before returning to Morgantown in 1894. The same year that the Seneca plant burned, Jacobs designed an extensive industrial complex for the Hygienic Market Association of Pittsburg (one of the original spellings). The same year he became a member of the AIA.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property — Approx. 2.65 acres

Quadrangle name Morgantown North

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

1	7	5	8	9	0	4	0	4	3	8	8	2	4	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

Zone		Easting				Northing								

E

Zone		Easting				Northing								

F

Zone		Easting				Northing								

G

Zone		Easting				Northing								

H

Zone		Easting				Northing								

Verbal boundary description and justification See Continuation Sheet for full legal description
All of blocks 32 and 36, as laid down and designated on the official sales map of the lands of the Morgantown Buildings and Investment Company's Addition known as Beechurst Addition, duly recorded in the office of the Clerk. . . Deed Book 38, pages 186-187.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dolores A. Fleming, Consultant

organization Dolores A. Fleming Associates

date January 15, 1985

street & number 27 Citadel Road

telephone 1-304-599-3105

city or town Morgantown

state West Virginia (26505)

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title State Historic Preservation Officer

date May 2, 1985

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Hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

for Patrick Andrews
Keeper of the National Register

date 12/19/85

Attest:
Chief of Registration

date

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Jacobs specialized in domestic architecture and "slow burning factory construction."³ Therefore, the rebuilding of the Seneca plant was within his firm's expertise. Jacobs contributions to northern West Virginia are significant and only just being realized.

Skilled workers were necessary in a plant with the technology of Seneca Glass. During the early decades of its existence, most of the workers came from Europe, particularly from France, Belgium and Germany. A closely knit community grew up around Seneca; in fact, the neighborhood became known as Seneca. There are still people who remember some of the early craftsmen. Until Seneca ceased making glass in August 1983, it was using much the same technology as it had when it opened in 1896. Sophisticated hand labor and a great deal of time were two important factors in the production of a single piece of glass. Numerous people handled a goblet and it could take at least eleven man hours to produce one.⁴ By the end of World War II, it was apparent that the firm needed to expand in order to bring the cutting operations up to date.

It was the uniqueness of the total technology, from the operation of the reverberatory furnace to the weighing and mixing of raw materials, the firing, blowing, shaping, annealing, cleaning, decorating and polishing which enabled the company to produce fine tableware and, importantly, to preserve the building. Mechanization would have been costly and impractical for lead glass production.

Lead glass has always been preferred by the wealthy because of its brilliance and bell-like tone. It can be etched and cut in intricate patterns and, because of the high quality produced, Seneca's market included some of the finest stores and hotels in America, as well as international steam ship lines. Eleanor Roosevelt, Lyndon Johnson and the President of Liberia were only three of the many dignitaries who purchased Seneca crystal. In fact, one President of Liberia owned 218 dozen pieces of Seneca's custom-cut crystal.

Seneca Glass Company was the most popular single tourist attraction in the county,⁵ its factory and showrooms were visited annually by thousands of people from many areas of the country. Most people in Morgantown remember the factory tours which they took as school children; a 16mm documentary film, Seneca Glass: An Allegheny Glassworks, produced in 1973 by the National Park Service, HAER, and the State of West Virginia, has acquainted numerous others to the plant. A tradition which had started many generations ago was carried out at Seneca. Unfortunately, tradition was not able to carry the factory through the twentieth century. It became more and more difficult to acquire quality materials and ovens needed for some of the technology. Furthermore, labor and, especially, fuel costs rose tremendously in the 1970s. Although it has been believed that the public no longer wanted crystal, there is evidence that the firm was having no problems getting orders, only that it could not fill them due to frustrations of production.

In 1982, the plant, which had been owned by a small group of stockholders, many whose parents had also owned it, was sold to a Malaysian firm which hoped to combine the sale of glass with pewter. By August 1983, factory operations closed and the firm filed bankruptcy. (Numerous calendars opened to August 1983 in various work rooms are still hanging on walls, a poignant reminder of the last days.) In November 1984, most of the firm's glass inventory and equipment were sold. Sanders Floor Covering, Inc. of Morgantown, a long-established family-run firm, specializing in floor coverings and furnishings, purchased the plant December 28, 1984. Thus, some of the plans are not finalized. Unfortunately, for historians, numerous crates of papers were destroyed before the Sanders' family acquired Seneca. Nevertheless, there are still several important ledgers, inventories and appraisals, some dating from the early 1900s, which will be saved. The new owners plan to open a clothing and furnishings outlet. After adaptive re-use and restoration, the family will rent the historical portion and the 1947 addition.

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Only one plant which produces a quality of glass equal to that of Seneca, remains in operation in the United States.⁶ Just a few hundred feet from the former Seneca plant are the remains of two glass house cones, the buildings which once housed them, no longer in existence. Another plant in Seneca, the Beaumont Glass Company, is producing only specialized lamp parts and some giftware. Most of the goods are very large and, because of injury, there are no tours.

Obviously, statements should be made about the significance of the technology and its relationship to the work areas. Although some sections are not valuable architecturally and could be removed, their functions were critical to the total glass making process. The HAER Report states: "Although the technique employed to produce glass at Seneca is centuries old, the plant itself is in many ways an artifact of the 1890s." The Seneca Glass Company building reflects the technology it was designed for. A brief review then of the most important work areas with regard to their architectural and industrial significance is needed. Please refer to the HAER Report (not attached) for specific information about processes.

Section C. Furnace/Blowing Room. 1896. It was the heart of the industry and is undoubtedly the most valuable and significant portion of the complex architecturally and historically. The huge furnace with its fourteen pots and tremendous brick chimney which soars through the original wooden truss system is impressive. It is valuable because of its type. The glass-making technology at Seneca needed to "separate the flames from the object being heated" and the furnace's interior and exterior features relate to the finite heating it produced. It was the attempt to replace this furnace with something more fuel efficient which proved to be a tragedy because the newer furnaces did not have the capability for melting lead crystal the way the old one did. One of the new furnaces has been dismantled; a smaller one will be removed.

Another valuable feature of the room is the blowing ring which encircles the furnace and operates from an early machine, a Buffalo Cupola-Forge Blower of Buffalo, N.Y. A few tools and stands which were not sold are still in the room and add to the interpretation.

The Sanders' family intends to retain as much of the integrity of the room as possible. The corrugated steel walls do not detract significantly from the full impact of the furnace area. However, proper replacement of them and/or the fiberglass overhead, would enrich the area. The eye is drawn to the furnace, stack and then above to the roof. The Furnace/Blowing Room is an industrial cathedral and may be the most significant structure in Monongalia County.

Section F. Lehr Room. 1896. The room maintains much of its architectural integrity in the fully exposed wooden structural members, lantern and brick walls which are still whitewashed. Only one of the two 72 foot lehrs is still in the area. It and another located in the rear appendage will be removed. The room is an extension of the Furnace Room and complements it visually.

Section H. Central Storage. 1902. A gem of a building, it is restorable.

Section I. Warehouse Area. 1896-1902. The massive room reflects the past uses for it. The inventories for the building will aid in any written or oral interpretation and existing windows and doors can be used for restoring those missing.

Section L. Warehouse. 1896-1902. The former Cutting Room is particularly significant because of the original line shafts and wooden pulleys. Glass cutting was the most precise operation of the whole industry and a new addition to the building was needed by 1947 when the firm replaced the old line-belt method with individual electric motors. Fortunately, the old lines were never removed. At one time during the 1940s, there were over ninety men and women working in the cutting department at Seneca.⁸ The freight elevator will be locked in place on this floor which along with the numerous windows, original floors, line shafts and wooden pulleys, will contribute greatly to the significance of the building.

Section M. Shipping and Receiving. Much of the original fabric is left of this 1902 room although some of it is hidden. It will be a bright area and can be used as a handicapped entrance to the second floor.

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The plant, like most other industries in America after World War II, needed to expand. The 1947 addition was necessary to keep the plant alive as it moved into the postwar years. Several small buildings and the main Etching Building, which was separate from other buildings, were removed and the plant was put under one roof. Red-orange and grey bricks, similar bonding, and a pattern of three windows per bay, link the old and new although scale and window style are different. Interestingly, in areas where the brick of the 1902 building has not been exposed to years of dirt and coal soot, the two colors are not too different. Undoubtedly, cleaning the brick on the main structure will make the differences less apparent. If black is once again used for the metal buildings and white for the wooden trim, the whole complex will be striking. The present owners plan to landscape several of the small areas where non-historic sections will be removed. There is still old brick which can be used for small restorations. The Sanders' family hopes to bring the Seneca neighborhood back to life and to draw attention, once again, to the former factory building that made the neighborhood famous. With the Bicentennial of the city of Morgantown being celebrated in 1985, the city is remembering its past. The former Seneca Glass Company complex is all that is left of what was once the prime "example of the survival of hand methods within a complex mechanized industry."

Footnotes

¹ Much of the general background information for the plant as well as for the technology came from a pamphlet published by the Seneca Glass Company circa 1961-1963 entitled, History of Seneca Glass Company and from the Historic American Engineering Record, Historic West Virginia Engineering Structures, "Seneca Glass Company," 1973.

² See Footnote 1, Description.

³ Charles J. Holmes, ed. The New Dominion Industrial Edition, May 10, 1906, p. 51. Holmes also states that the fire was in June 1903 but all other sources state 1902.

⁴ HAER, p. 22.

⁵ Interview with Terry Jones, Director, Morgantown Chamber of Commerce, 3 January 1985.

⁶ Interview with Eugene Sanders, Sanders Floor Covering, Inc., 5 January 1985.

⁷ HAER, p. 15.

⁸ Ibid., p. 20.

⁹ Ibid., p. 23.

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The Seneca Glass Company Building achieved state-wide and national significance in the period 1896-1930. Technologies used in the production of Seneca hand-blown and hand-cut glass were centuries old; they were employed on a continuing basis at the Morgantown plant during the period of the facility's greatest historical significance from about the turn-of-the-century until the coming of The Great Depression. With depressed business conditions during the 1930s, Seneca ceased to expand; Seneca's physical plant and technologies therefore remained much as they had been during earlier decades.

Skilled immigrant workers provided much of the plant's manpower during the early 20th century. Belgium, Germany, and France were countries especially well represented in the workforce. By the time of the Great Depression the influx of such skilled labor virtually ceased. Plant facilities accordingly, remained static.

While the 1947 addition to the Seneca Company's building reflects the post World War II nationally expanding economy, the addition cannot be considered a contributing element despite the presence of the ancient technology beneath its roof because the addition itself did not achieve exceptional importance, architecturally or otherwise, within the past 50 years.

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Seneca Glass Company History of Seneca Glass Company. Morgantown, 1961-1963. (Photocopy)

Wiles, J. W. Morgantown's Suburbs, 1902. Photograph of Seneca Glass before the fire.

Woman's Edition of the New Dominion (Morgantown), December 30, 1896. A rendering of Seneca Glass Company buildings, but most buildings were not built.

Maps: Fire Insurance Maps: Sanborn, Western Factory, Manufacturer's Appraisal, Seneca Glass Company. Fowler Bird's Eye View of Morgantown, 1897.

"Proposed" plans for Seneca Glass Factory, Elmer Jacobs, 1902. There were changes to his plans.

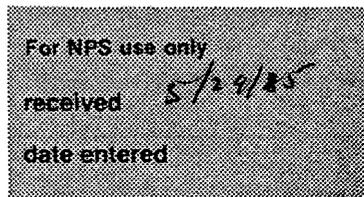
Interviews: Steve Britvic, Beaumont Glass Co.; Emory Kemp, WVU; Terry Jones, Morgantown Chamber of Commerce; Andy Rowand, former Seneca Glass Co. employee; Nick Rancinger, former Seneca Glass Co. employee (for 65 years), the Eugene Sanders' family.

All interviews were held between January 3 and January 15, 1985.

All unpublished manuscripts and photographs were studied at either the former Seneca Glass Factory offices or the West Virginia and Regional History Collection, West Virginia University, Morgantown.

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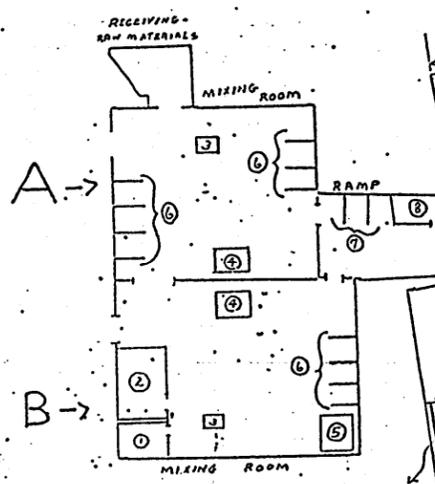
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Verbal Boundary: From CERTIFICATE OF TITLE FOR SANDERS FLOOR COVERING, INC.

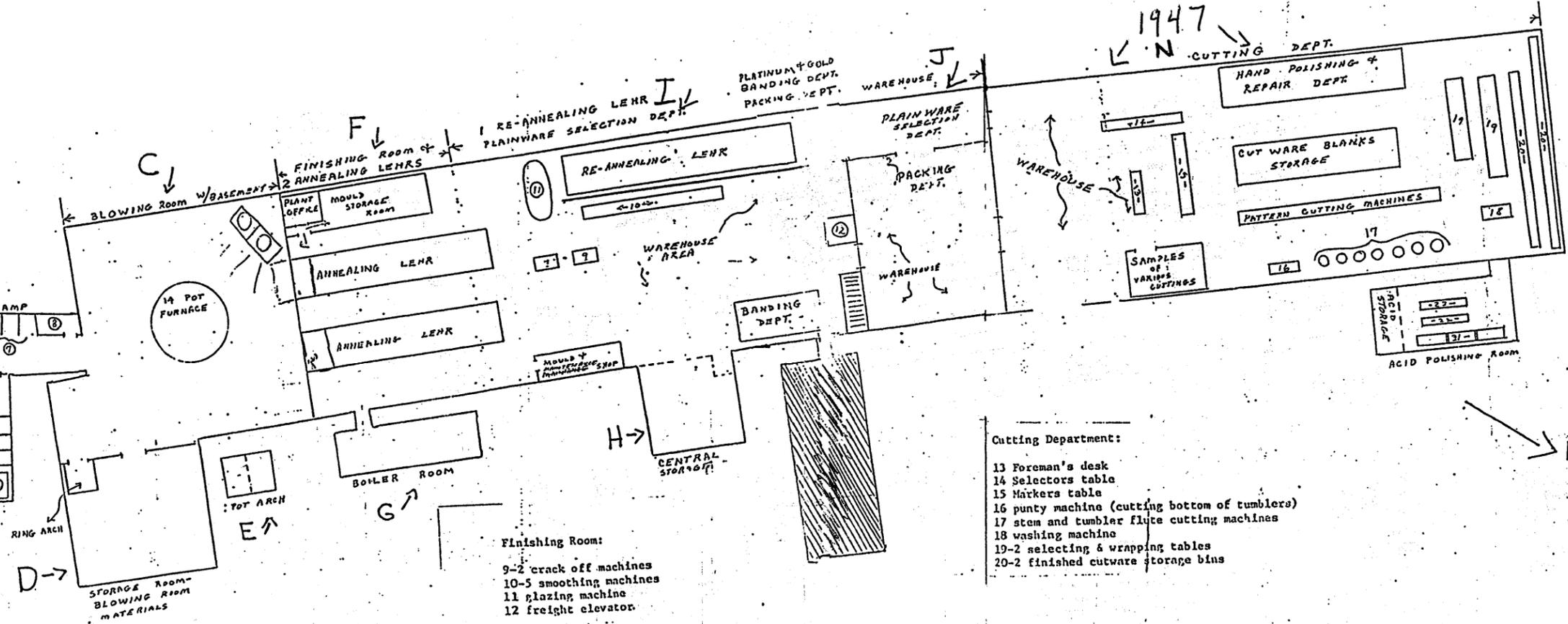
BEGINNING at an iron pin, said iron pin being in the Northeastern right-of-way line of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, formerly the Fairmont, Morgantown and Pittsburgh Railroad Company (Deed Book No. 36, at page 245, with plat at page 249), and in Northern line of Sixth Street; thence running from said beginning point, as thus established, and with the Northern line of Sixth Street, N. 45° 00' E. 148.69 feet to an iron pin in the Southern line of Beechurst Avenue at its intersection with said Sixth Street; thence with the Southern line of Beechurst Avenue, N. 45° 00' W. 639.93 feet to an iron pin in the Southern right-of-way line of Eighth Street; thence with the Southern line of Eighth Street, S. 45° 00' W. 215.93 feet to an iron pin in the Northern right-of-way limits of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad; thence with three (3) lines of said railroad right-of-way, S. 42° 11' E. 20.63 feet to an iron pin; thence S. 52° 03' E. 397.90 feet to a lead plug; thence with a curve to the right having a radius of 3,066.086 feet a distance of 225.32 feet to the point and place of beginning, containing 2.65 acres, more or less, and being all of Blocks 32 and 36, as laid down and designated on the official sales map of the lands of the Morgantown Buildings and Investment Company's Addition known as Beechurst Addition, duly recorded in the office of the Clerk of the County Commission of Monongalia County, West Virginia, in Deed Book No, 38, at page 186 and 187, including the undedicated portions of 7th Street and Alley A.

Mixing Room:

- #1 "Color" Room for mixing ounces and grams of raw materials
- 2 Sand Bin
- 3-2 Floor scales
- 4-2 batch Mixers
- 5 Dust Collection System
- 6 Several cullet storage bins



Ramp:
7 Cullet storage bins
8 Blow pipe room



Finishing Room:
9-2 crack off machines
10-5 smoothing machines
11 glazing machine
12 freight elevator

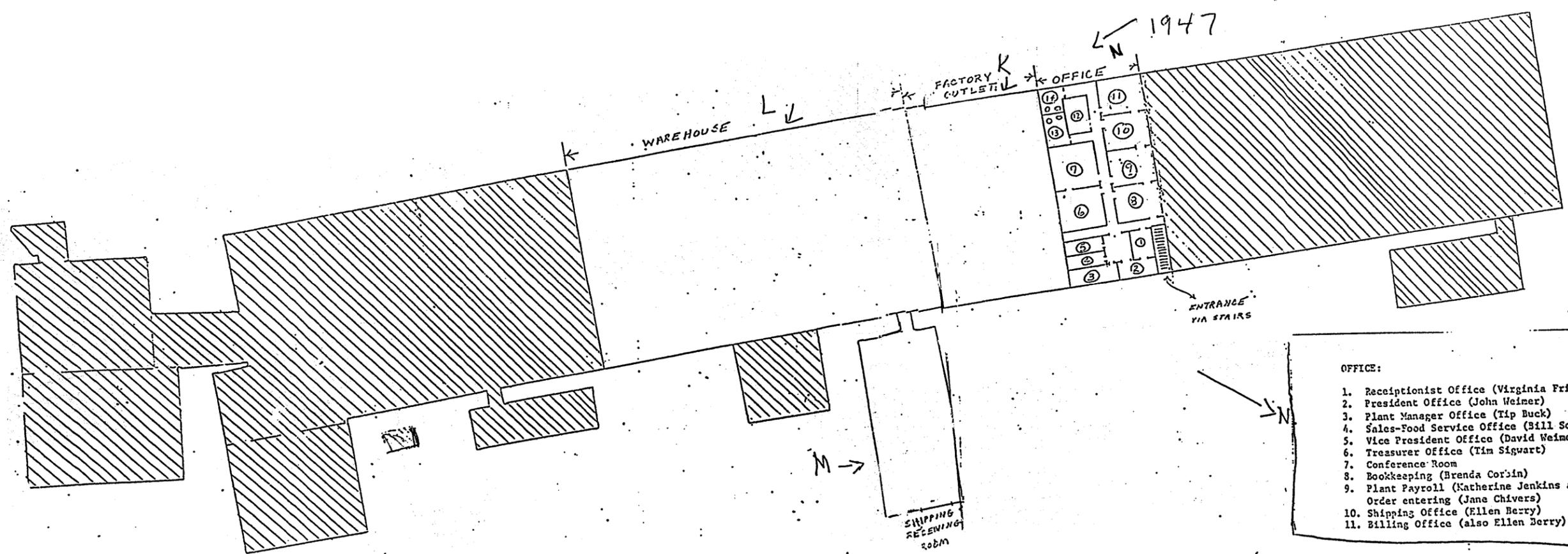
Cutting Department:
13 Foreman's desk
14 Selectors table
15 Markers table
16 punty machine (cutting bottom of tumblers)
17 stem and tumbler flute cutting machines
18 washing machine
19-2 selecting & wrapping tables
20-2 finished cutware storage bins

Acid Polishing Room:
21 Acid polishing tanks
22-2 assembling tables

SENECA GLASS COMPANY
MORGANTOWN, W.V.

1ST FLOOR
+23 ft

5/29/65



- OFFICE:
1. Receptionist Office (Virginia Friend)
 2. President Office (John Weimer)
 3. Plant Manager Office (Tip Buck)
 4. Sales-Food Service Office (Bill Sommer)
 5. Vice President Office (David Weimer)
 6. Treasurer Office (Tim Sigwart)
 7. Conference Room
 8. Bookkeeping (Brenda Corbin)
 9. Plant Payroll (Katherine Jenkins and Order entering (Jane Chivers))
 10. Shipping Office (Ellen Berry)
 11. Billing Office (also Ellen Berry)
12. Walk in office Supplies Storage
 13. Ladies Restroom
 14. Mens Restroom

SENECA GLASS COMPANY
MORGANTOWN, W.V.
2nd FLOOR
4/24/21
S.W.