

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Nathan's Department Store

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
426-432 Main Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

12

CITY, TOWN
Johnstown

VICINITY OF

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

STATE
Pennsylvania

42

Cambria

021

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- MUSEUM
- COMMERCIAL
- PARK
- EDUCATIONAL
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- ENTERTAINMENT
- RELIGIOUS
- GOVERNMENT
- SCIENTIFIC
- INDUSTRIAL
- TRANSPORTATION
- MILITARY
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Dino S. Persio and Estate of Stephen Siciliano

STREET & NUMBER

231 Market Street

CITY, TOWN

Johnstown

VICINITY OF

Pennsylvania

STATE

15901

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Cambria County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

South Center Street

CITY, TOWN

Ebensburg

Pennsylvania

STATE

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

4-16-79

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

CITY, TOWN

Harrisburg

STATE

Pennsylvania

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT

GOOD

FAIR

DETERIORATED

RUINS

UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED

ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE

MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The former Nathan's Department Store at 426-532 Main Street in Johnstown, PA, was constructed in 1917 and is four stories tall with a finished basement. Overall dimensions are; front-80'+ & Height - 70'+ and the area per floor is 10,560 sq. ft. In recent years the ground floor has been used as retail space and the remaining floors have been used as warehouse storage areas. Location of the building is across from Johnstown's Central Park in the commercial center of the city. (The building has been vacant since the July, 1977, flood.) Construction of the building is as follows: glazed architectural terra-cotta in a simplified classical motif along Main Street and portions of the side alley, concrete foundations, brick exterior walls at side and rear alleys and a composition flat roof. Interior construction consists of 21 equal structural bays of 26'-6"+ x 18'-9"+ of steel columns and beams with wood joists and maple floors. The exterior integrity has not been disturbed with the exception of the ground floor retail area which apparently has been renovated various times through the life of the building. The exterior terra-cotta decoration on Main Street along with the original wooden windows on the upper floors appear to be in an extremely good state of repair. A majority of the windows along the side and rear alleys have been blocked shut with brick construction through the years. The open interior structural bays are all intact and overall, the interior is intact with the exception of the ground floor which was damaged in the July 1977, flood. A tribute to the solidity of the structure is that in recent years the upper floors have been used as a furniture warehouse. The stairways and elevator are in the locations as originally constructed.

10 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"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES **1917**

BUILDER/ARCHITECT : *Unknown*

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Constructed in 1917, this building housed one of Johnstown's important department stores in the decade that followed World War I.

In the late 1920's, management attempted an image change from a low-priced, general merchandise department store, catering to framers, miners and steelworkers, to a higher-priced, carriage trade unit. Unfortunately the operation could not withstand the pressures of cultivating new customers, combined with the impact of depression, and it went out of business.

The site was subsequently leased to S.S. Kresge, which operated a fairly good variety store for many years.

More recently, Kresge transformed the unit to a Jupiter, which survived until the flood on July 20, 1977.

This building has been a significant retail location in Johnstown through World War I, the 1929 crash, the great depression, the Johnstown Flood of 1936, a prolonged steel strike in 1937, World War II, and the disastrous 1977 flood.

In center city, facing Johnstown's picturesque Central Park, this building deserves to be preserved, restored and put back into a state of economic usefulness.

The architectural significance of the former Nathan's Department Store constructed in 1917, is that it is one of the few remaining examples of glazed architectural terra-cotta work on a large scale in the Johnstown Area. Of importance is the source of the architectural motif - a simplified classical style using an incised pilaster relief with derivations from the 19th century commercial architecture of Chicago (as manifested in the Reliance Building, 1890 to 1985, by John W. Root and the Schlesinger and Meyer Dept. Store (now Carson, Pirie, Scott and Company), 1899 to 1904 by Louis Sullivan. The similarities are evident in the use of the "Chicago Window" (division of the various window areas into 3 main parts by mullions), the glazed architectural terra-cotta on the Main Street Elevation, and the open structural bays framed in metal. The relationship to the proto-modern commercial/skyscraper style of Louis Sullivan (and later Frank Lloyd Wright) are apparent in the simplification of the classical elements resulting in an extremely bold and sure design.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Green, Samuel M. *American Art: A Historical Survey*. New York: Ronald Press Company, 1966.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY .25

QUADRANGLE NAME _____

QUADRANGLE SCALE _____

UTM REFERENCES

A 17 676800 4465720

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C _____

E _____

G _____

B _____

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D _____

F _____

H _____

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Starting at a point at the intersection of Main Street and Park Place moving east along Main Street for 80 ft. then southwest 132 ft. to alley then west 80 ft. to Park Place then northeast along east side of Park Place for 132 ft. to starting point.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

John B. Gunter

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Winston Corporation

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

WJAC Building - Hickory Lane

814-535-4157

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Johnstown

Pennsylvania 15905

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL _____

STATE _____

LOCAL X

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 *ED WEINTRAUB*

DATE

State Historic Preservation Officer

FOR NPS USE ONLY

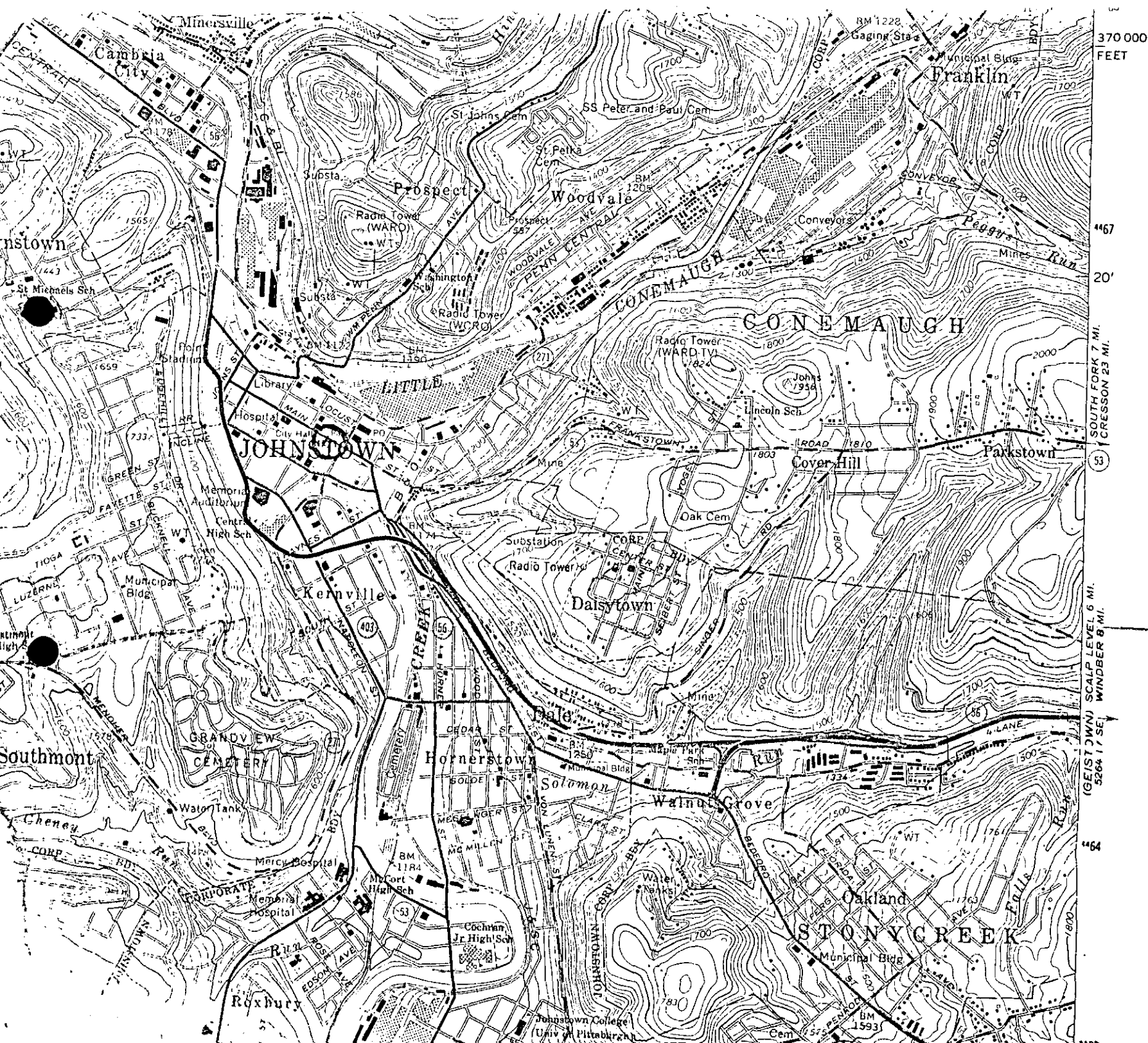
I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

ATTEST: KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION



Nathan's Department Store
 Cambria County
 Zone 17
 E676800 N4465720