

United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

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

For HCRS use only

received

date entered

1. Name

historic

and/or common Clemson Island Prehistoric District

2. Location

street & number on Clemson Island, [redacted] not for publication

city, town Halifax vicinity of congressional district 17th

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Dauphin code 043

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input 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 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	<input type="checkbox"/> 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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other:wildlife area

4. Owner of Property

name State of Pennsylvania

street & number c/o Game Commission, P.O. Box 1567

city, town Harrisburg vicinity of state Pennsylvania

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Recorder of Deeds, Dauphin County Courthouse

street & number Front and Market Streets

city, town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Pennsylvania State Museum Archaeological

title Site Survey & Recording Program has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 2/26/68 federal state county local

depository for survey records William Penn Memorial Museum

city, town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

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

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Clemson Island Prehistoric District is a series of three spatially discrete loci, [REDACTED] These loci, which include a transitional Middle Woodland-Late Woodland (ca. 900-1100 A.D.) mound and associated village, spans from Early Archaic (6900 B.C.) through Historic (late 18th century) in time, and contains time sensitive markers for each period in between.

Clemson Island is a large (123 acre) island currently owned by the State of Pennsylvania and managed by the Game Commission as a wildlife improvement area (part of State Game Lands 254). Prior to its purchase by the state in 1965, the Island had been under cultivation for more than 50 years. In 1968-69, the Game Commission converted the center portion of the Island into a waterfowl improvement area by constructing a series of five ponds. Each pond, which measured roughly 40 meters by 120 meters, was constructed by pushing topsoil from the center of the pond to the sides, forming embankments. The ponds generally hold 1-2 feet of water during the migratory seasons only. During the rest of the year, they are planted in seed crops for use by resident wildlife. Approximately one-half of the island is under cultivation, following a rotational schedule of corn, wheat, oats, and hay. The portion under cultivation is classified as a Tioga sandy silt loam, while the remainder, in a mixed oak-hardwood forest, is classified as a Lindside silt loam, coal overwash phase by the USDA Soil Conservation Service (Soil Survey of Dauphin County, 1972). Both soil types are rated as excellent for upland oak and yellow poplar and are conducive to red oak, walnut, ash, and sugar maple. A large resident population of Canadian geese habits the Island, along with a sizable deer population, and various small animals, such as groundhog.

It is presumed that the Clemson Mound on the Island had been known for some time prior to excavation of it in May and June of 1929, under direction of Robert W. Jones, through the Pennsylvania Historical Commission. This Mound, located by them as being 1816 feet from the southern tip of the Island, at a bearing of 35 degrees East of North, was contained within an area of 55 feet by 50 feet, and did not rise perceptibly above the land surface (Jones 1931). Originally, the mound was conical in form, rising some eight feet in height, but had been levelled by continuous plowing (p.89). At that time, in 1929, the entire mound was excavated by Jones, revealing 19 or more disarticulated burials in that area, as well as several features, described as "floor pits" and one fire pit. Very few artifacts were recovered other than pottery, including four arrowpoints, a net sinker, and hammerstone. The pottery which came from the mound excavation, and another, by Jones at that time some 162 feet west of the Clemson house, was described by McCann (1971) as the same as found in the Book Mound in Juniata County, and indistinguishable from the early Owasco vessels in New York State. Although most of the pottery found in the mound and the second excavation were of this type, diagnostic Shenks Ferry and Susquehannock pottery was also found, indicating a multi-component situation at the site of the mound. The pottery from the Clemson and Book Mounds have since been identified as a pottery style, associated with the Clemson Island culture, a Central Pennsylvania archaeological phenomenon dated roughly 900 A.D. - 1200 A.D.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

1

In the 1931 report to the Commission, Jones noted that a possible village site, associated with the mound, was located on the "southwest end of the island(p. 97)," but that it was under vegetable cultivation and inaccessible. In the Summer of 1980, an attempt was made to locate the associated Clemson Island village and delineate its boundaries(Beckerman n.d.). Through a series of test holes, placed at 50-75 yard intervals, the artifact densities were monitored along a transect. In addition, a series of surface collections made to the west of the area tested provided data as to surface visibility of the possible loci, under recently plowed conditions. In the test hole procedure, approximately 30 liters of plow zone^{from each test} was sifted through ¼-inch hardware cloth. Artifact densities from this procedure were estimated at from 0-983 artifacts/ cubic meter, yielding mainly debitage and flakes, but also some pottery and historic materials. Three peaks in artifact densities were identified and labelled as Locus 1, 2, and 3(see associated map). Locus 1 was argued to be the probable location of the Clemson Island village on the basis of its proximity to the Mound, the abundance of pottery found in spatial proximity to the area, and the size of the Locus(about 2 acres). In addition, two other loci were indentified. Locus 2 was suggested as a possible isolated Late Woodland household, although this remains as a hypothesis for further testing. Locus 3 was identified as a multi-component base-camp, chronologically bracketed from Archaic through Woodland times. In the case of each locus, no subsurface features were noted, although the amount of area exposed in each (.2-.3 square meters) could easily have missed settlement features. Testing off the edge of the high field that contains the loci demonstrated that artifact densities dropped off the edge of the high field, and that the loci were probably delimited topographically.

In addition to three prehistoric loci, the distribution of historic artifacts suggested a historical component on the Island, which was confirmed by inspection of a 1947 series USGS topographic map of tht Halifax Quadrangle (7½ minute),^{and} which revealed a structure at the location of most historical artifacts located through testing. Although probably not associated with the house, a late 18th century french gunlfint spall was recovered in this area.

A deep (up to 39 centimeters) plow zone was noted in the area of most intensive testing, suggesting that much of the site context has been disturbed. As in the case of most plowed sites, deeper subsurface features are preserved. In Jones' report, he noted features as shallow as 7 inches(p.91), which suggests that the impact may not be as severe in the northern part of the site. The 1980 testing program also noted a shallower plow zone in the northern part of the site than in the southern part. In addition to plow disturbance, it appears that the construction of the ponds to the West of Locus 1 may have destroyed part of that site. These ponds are also in the high field and because the boundary was drawn topographically, the degree of impact on the site may be more or less than noted. In the future no further construction is planned by the Game Commission, with the only other impact being continued plowing of the open fields.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER

7

PAGE

2

The Clemson Island culture is poorly understood in Pennsylvania. It is closely related to the Hunter Home (late Middle Woodland) and Carpenter Brook (early Late Woodland) phases in New York State in both pottery style and in mortuary practice. It may be presumed that the settlement patterns are also similar. If this is the case, then Clemson Island sites are located next to their burial mounds. One example of this has been forwarded by William Turbaugh for the Brock Mound in Lycoming County. In New York, Owasco period sites have been divided into four settlement types: villages; hamlets; workshops; and camps. The site on Clemson Island is undoubtedly a village site, because of its size.

The boundary of the district is defined as starting at a point 400 meters at 207 degrees (from Magnetic north) from the southwest corner of the barn on the Island. From there, the boundary runs 85 meters at 297 degrees, then 500 meters at 205 degrees, then 45 meters at 117 degrees, then 230 meters at 46 degrees, then 280 meters at 27 degrees, then 55 meters at 297 degrees, back to the starting point. The area enclosed is 14.5 acres and includes the area of the three loci, plus the Clemson Mound, and the lower areas surrounding the three loci, which would be prime areas for secondary artifact deposition.

Period	Areas of Significance	—Check and justify below				
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input checked="" 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 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 type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation		
<input 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

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Clemson Island Prehistoric District is important as a district in that it represents all time periods in Pennsylvania prehistory, except Paleo-Indian, within a very small area. This, by itself, would not be significant, but it allows archaeologists to evaluate changes in settlement pattern, adapted to the same environmental parameters, through time. Any changes would not be assignable to environment, but rather technological or cultural changes.

Although the Clemson Mound no longer stands, the pottery from the mound and adjoining midden, can continue to be used to refine the typology within the Clemson Island time period. Additional ceramics from the village portion of the site can also serve to add to chronological and typological studies. From the 1931 report, it was evident that subsurface features were intact in the Mound portion of the site. Future work on the intra-site settlement pattern of this type site for Clemson Island can serve to improve our knowledge of the Clemson Island village pattern. In addition, the possibility exists of some midden deposits in situ just off the edge of the high field to the west, undisturbed by the pond construction. If this is the case, then this midden may be stratified, much as it was at the Fisher Farm Site in Centre County¹, and serve to provide stratigraphic control over pottery style and change.

¹ James W. Hatch (ed.) 1980 The Fisher Farm Site: A Late Woodland Hamlet in Context. The Pennsylvania State University, Department of Anthropology Occasional Papers, Number 12.

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

Period
 1800-1899
 1900-

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9

PAGE 1

Statement of Significance

Major Bibliographic References

Jones, Robert W.

1931 Report of Robert W. Jones, Wild Rose Wisconsin: The Clemson Mound.

Fifth Report of The Pennsylvania Historical Commission, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Harrisburg. pp.89-97.

McCann, Catherine

1971 Notes on the pottery of the Clemson and Book Mounds. In Foundations of Pennsylvania Prehistory. B. Kent, I. Smith III, and C. McCann (eds.)

Anthropological Series of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Number 1. Harrisburg. pp. 419-424.

Beckerman, Ira

n.d. Report to Dr. Barry Kent on the National Register related excavations carried out on Clemson Island, August 14-15, 1980. Manuscript on file at the William Penn Memorial Museum, Archaeology Laboratory. 7pp.

and change.

Occasional Reports

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 1

Verbal boundary description and justification

Starting at a point 400 meters at 207 degrees (from Magnetic North) from the southwest corner of the barn on the Island, the boundary runs [redacted] meters at 297 degrees, then [redacted] meters at 205 degrees, then [redacted] meters at 117 degrees, then [redacted] meters at 46 degrees, then 280 meters at 27 degrees, then [redacted] meters at 297 degrees, back to the starting point. The area enclosed is 14.5 acres (5.96 hectares) and includes the area of the Clemson Mound, the three Loci (including the Clemson Island village) and the lower areas surrounding the three loci, which contain artifact concentrations in sufficient densities to warrant inclusion as secondary deposition areas.

See continuation sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreege of nominated property 14.5

Quadrangle name Halifax

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
Zone	Easting			Northing						

B	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
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

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

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ira C. Beckerman

organization _____ date _____

street & number 630 Humphrey Court #202 telephone (717) 545-5698

city or town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania 17109

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 Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____ date _____

For HCRS use only
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register
_____ date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: _____ date _____

Chief of Registration