

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name: Robertsdale Historic District

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: Roughly bounded by USGS 1840 contour line, S. Main, Wood, Lincoln, Cliff, and Cherry Streets.

not for publication N/A

city, town: Robertsdale (Wood Township) vicinity N/A

state: Pennsylvania code: PA county: Huntingdon code: 061
zip code: 16674

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private; Public-local

Category of Property: District

Number of Resources within Property:

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
<u>103</u>	<u>10</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>	sites
<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	structures
<u>—</u>	<u>—</u>	objects
<u>104</u>	<u>10</u>	TOTAL

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: 1

Name of related multiple property listing: The Industrial Resources of Huntingdon County, Pennsylvania, between 1780 and 1939

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. - See continuation sheet

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. - See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

Domestic

Extraction

Commerce

Current functions

Domestic

Subfunctions

Multiple dwellings

Extractive facility

Dept. store, business

Subfunctions

Multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

No style

other: _____

Materials

foundation stone

roof asphalt

walls wood, concrete

other _____

Describe present and historic appearance:

see continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

Nationally Statewide Locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C, D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): G

Areas of Significance: Industry

Community planning

Architecture

Archaeology

Period(s) of Significance: 1873-1948

Significant Dates: 1873

Years of Alterations: _____

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical ReferencesX See continuation sheetPrevious 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:

- X State Historic Preservation Office
- Other state agency
- X Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- X Other - Specify Repository: HABS

10. Geographical DataAcreage of property: 81UTM References:

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>		<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
A	17	745040	4451520	C	17	745620	4452310
B	17	745450	4452270	D	17	746980	4451980

X see continuation sheetVerbal Boundary DescriptionX see continuation sheetBoundary JustificationX see continuation sheet11. Form Prepared Byname/title R. Ann Safleyorganization PHMC/BHPdate 5 February 1992street & number 319 Washington St., Ste. 370 telephone 814/539-2016city or town Johnstown state PA zip 15901

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Robertsdale Historic District

The town of Robertsdale, located in the southwest corner of Huntingdon County, lies on the east side of Broad Top Mountain in the Allegheny Mountains. The Robertsdale Historic District encompasses most of the town laid out in 1873 by the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company. The Great Trough Creek and East Broad Top Rail Road runs through the town in generally a north-south direction. The town consists of two grids, separated by the Creek and connected by the S curves of State Route 913 which runs in a north-south direction. Primarily residential and vernacular in style, the historic district includes the company office, store, and rail road depot, as well as the workers housing. The 95 extant company houses date between c1873-c1925 and are mostly semi-detached wood frame buildings. Most of these houses retain a high degree of integrity. Other building types represented are a church, hotel, school, and a theatre. Most of the structures related to the mining industry have not survived, although many foundations are scattered throughout the mine area, located west of Water Street and south of Church Street, along the rail road bed. The portal to mine five is visible as well as the ruins of the lamp house, fan house, barn, and other structural remains.

The layout of the village conforms to the topography of the area, dictated by the wooded hills to the east and west and the north-south path of the Great Trough Creek. The district is bounded to the west by the hills above the mining area and railroad bed, but otherwise generally follows the back property lines and streets which define the outer edges of the village.

The Rockhill Iron and Coal Company buildings are located at the intersection of Main Street (State Route 913) and The East Broad Top Railroad. The company store stands on the northeast corner of this intersection. Built of local buff colored stone, the two-story structure was built in 1873-4 and measures 28 x 74 feet. The roof is front gabled, facing west, with a large wall dormer facing south. A two-story ell located on the north side measures 18 x 33 feet. At the rear (east) of the store, a two-story addition was constructed in the early 20th century of cinder block, measuring 68 x 51, oriented perpendicular to the original structure.

The company store served the miners and their families in the Robertsdale area, supplying a variety of dry goods and food. The stability of this structure, the most architecturally and historically significant building in Robertsdale, is threatened

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from years of standing vacant; the poor condition of the roof and windows have left the structure exposed to the elements.

Located across the tracks from the store, on the southeast corner, stands the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company office building constructed in ca. 1914. Now occupied by the Robertsdale Post Office, this two and a half story building measures 25 x 60 feet with an ell on the south side which measures 10 x 24 feet. The roof is hipped with hipped dormers at the east and west ends. The cast stone walls contain brick quoins, door surrounds, lintels, sills, and corbelled cornice. This decorative treatment emphasizes the company's importance in the community. The company office building retains a high degree of integrity and is well maintained.

The original, ca. 1915, Robertsdale Post Office is located across Main Street from the company office, on the southwest corner of Main and the East Broad Top Railroad tracks. Constructed of cast stone, the Post Office also housed a barber shop at one end and the second floor was used as a community room. The building also functioned as a jail at one time. This building has been vacant for some time and experienced some vandalism but otherwise retains its integrity.

The East Broad Top Railroad, a subsidiary of Rockhill Iron and Coal Company, constructed a cast stone depot in 1914 across the tracks from the original Post Office. This depot replaced a previous board and batten one which stood next to the company store, on the east side of Main Street. The building measures approximately 25 x 40 feet, is one story, and has a metal standing seam hip roof with wide overhanging eaves. A bay is located on the south side of the building, facing the tracks where track scales were at one time located. The depot recently underwent some restoration by a local interest group, The Friends of the East Broad Top Rail Road. This work stabilized the building while retaining its original distinctive features.

Two independent stores operated in Robertsdale. One of these stores was built and owned by Jessie O. McClain between 1911 and 1923. McClain had been the manager of the Company store but after a disagreement with the company, opened his own store. This long frame structure, located on Lincoln Street, is in very poor condition yet displays the original side gable, massing, and end gable porch. Fannie Morgan ran a candy store at No. 7 South Main Street. The one story store was built onto the front of the

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home of Fannie Morgan, an otherwise typical company house.

Around 1912, the company, acknowledging the significant increased production in the area, constructed a hotel on Main Street just south of the company office building to provide lodging for officials of the company when visiting Robertsdale. As evidenced in an early photograph, this clapboard building exhibited more architectural detail than the worker housing, with three wall dormers and a large front veranda. Today, the two and a half story building with side gabled roof has undergone renovations, such as vinyl siding, a two story height porch replacing the veranda, and new windows and door, which disguises some of the original details. The building still functions as a hotel and retains the overall massing, setting, and some of the original window configuration.

Only one other commercial building remains in Robertsdale, the Reality Theatre. Constructed in 1948, it replaced an older theater, the Liberty, which was built by the coal company at the intersection of State Route 913 and Main Street. This wood frame building burned in 1936 and was not replaced by the company but was sold to a former employee in 1948, who then constructed a new theatre. The Reality is a concrete block structure with a brick parapet facade. Details in the facade include a bulls-eye window with stone keystones in the arched parapet, two lancet-like windows on the second floor filled in with glass blocks, stone keystones above the other windows, and a wood marquis. Although less than 50 years old, the architectural singularity of the Reality Theater makes it a contributing resource to the village.

Like those in many other coal company towns, the miners' houses in Robertsdale are similar in size, setback, massing, and materials. They are situated at the front of large lots measuring approximately 50 feet by 100 feet. There are some exceptions where lot size is limited by topographical features. The majority of the houses are of plank construction. Those built in later years used balloon frame construction. They are mostly semi-detached, four bay, with hip or side gable roofs and usually contain four to six rooms. When built, the houses contained no indoor plumbing or electricity (Bennett, p. 21.). Typically the houses featured front porches and additions on the rear. Alleyways, running behind the lots, acted as fire breaks and gave access to the privies, gardens, and sheds for deliveries and other services. Current residents use the many extant outbuildings as tool sheds or storage.

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Exceptions to the typical miners' housing are the superintendent's house on Church Street, the grouping of one-story cottages on Spring Street, and the Methodist parsonage on Lincoln Street. The superintendent's house is located just below the Methodist Church and near the portal to Rockhill mine #1. It was constructed around 1896 as a single family dwelling. This balloon frame, two story, side gabled house has the same size and massing as the semi-detached miners' houses but has the added detail of a porch with turned posts, an element seen only on two other houses, the postmaster's and the engineer's.

Around 1910, the company constructed nine balloon frame one-story cottages along Spring Street. Eight of these remain consisting of a front facing, clipped gable roof, concrete block foundation, and front porch. These buildings sit on smaller lots and closer to the street than the semi-detached houses. All but one have undergone little or no changes over the years. The remodeling that has occurred on the one includes an added second story, chimney on the facade, two car garage, and new fenestration, which totally obscures its original identity.

The only other example of a single dwelling in Robertsdale is the Methodist Parsonage, constructed around 1922 in the Colonial Revival Style. Little change has occurred to this two story, four square house since its construction. It retains the original shingle clad walls, hipped roof, and three over one double hung sash windows. The one story front porch covers the whole length of the facade and is supported by square columns.

The United Mine Workers were permitted to construct a miners' hall in the 1920s behind the hotel. This building no longer exists but from early photographs, it was a two story, rectangular, wood frame structure with a hip roof. Another Union building that no longer exists is the barracks constructed during the 1927 strike to house evicted miners and their families. It was located on Lincoln Street Extension which at the time was outside of the village.

Robertsdale's one remaining school building is located on South Main Street next to the theatre. Its length runs parallel to South Main with the main projecting block providing entry to the building at the north end through three tall masonry arches and a gabled secondary entrance at the center of its length. Now the Wood Township elementary school, this WPA project, constructed in 1934, was originally the high school. It is in

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the Colonial Revival Style, one story tall, and faced in stone.

Prior to this school, the Robertsdale school was located on "school house hill" in the north section of town, above North Main Street. There have been three buildings located at this location. The first was built in 1907 and destroyed by fire in 1917. Shortly thereafter, the Township constructed a new brick school in its place and added a second brick building two or three years later. After the 1934 school house was erected, the buildings on school house hill were torn down and only the steps leading up the hill from North Main Street remain. Although Robertsdale had schools as early as the 1870s, the above buildings are the only ones whose location and description are known.

Originally, Robertsdale boasted three churches, of which only one remains in the proposed historic district. The Methodist Episcopal Church was erected at the end of Church Street in the 1890s. This white clapboard wood frame building measures 100 feet by 60 feet and is topped by a small spire. Besides an addition which was constructed in the early 1920s, the church has undergone very little change beyond simple maintenance (Bennett, p. 29.).

Besides the Methodist Church, a Presbyterian Church and Roman Catholic Church also existed. The Presbyterian Church was located at the intersection of North Main and Linn Streets. This wood frame building was shared with the Lutheran congregation and was later, around 1923, sold to the Church of God. In the 1970s, this congregation built a new church to the north of town, outside of the proposed historic district, and demolished the 1883 church. The Roman Catholic Church was located on New Grenada Road. This building was constructed in 1922 and moved to Dudley in 1970. The site is now occupied by the Robertsdale, Wood, and Broad Top Volunteer Fire Company station.

Robertsdale appears much as it did during the years the mines were in operation, rows of identical houses sitting close to the road; only now the roads are paved and nature has reclaimed much of the mining site, now rich with vegetation. The mine site stretches from just south of Church Street and west of the old post office following the rail road bed south toward Woodvale. Although most of the structures from the mining operation are gone, this area is rich in archaeological resources. Many foundations and shells of structures remain

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which can be identified with particular functions in the mining process. The foundation for the engine shop is located west of the old post office, retaining the pit below the tracks. Rockhill mine 1 is located south of the Methodist Church. Near mine 1 is the shell of the concrete lamp house and the remains of the tipple. Further to the southwest, the fan house, the brick boiler house, and the foundation for the main and tail rope system are visible along the tracks among other structural remains. The portal to the slope mine and its wood tipple create the southern end of the mine site in the historic district. In 1951, a portion of the area directly west of the old Post Office was made into the Ruth George Playground (Bennett, p. 10.). At the center of town, to the east of Main Street and behind the company office building, is a large green field where the wye was located. The wye allowed engines to turn around.

In spite of some modern improvements, the integrity of the village on the whole is excellent. The consistent massing and setback of the houses, the few non-contributing buildings, and the little new construction enhances the timeless quality of Robertsdale. Most of the houses have experienced some alteration such as rear or side additions, new siding, and some window replacement. These changes have done little to change the overall character of the building beyond making some of the units individualized.

Of the 113 buildings in the proposed historic district, there are only 10 non-contributing buildings. Eight of these are mobile homes that have recently been moved onto empty lots. Although they are intrusions, the mobile homes are scattered which decreases their impact on the historic district. Two houses have undergone incompatible alterations such as faux brick siding, an added level, and changes in fenestration. These non-contributing resources do not detract from the overall integrity of the village. All new construction occurs on the outskirts of the village leaving a cohesive historic district.

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The Robertsdale Historic District is significant in the areas of industry, community planning, architecture, and archaeology. It was built by the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company which was established to exploit the semi-bituminous coal fields in the East Broad Top region. The company was the most productive of all the Broad Top mining operations between 1873 and the 1920s and Robertsdale was the center of these activities. The Rockhill Iron and Coal Company eventually operated nine coal mines in the Robertsdale-Woodvale area.

The Robertsdale Historic District is a typical example of a Pennsylvania coal patch town containing company-built dwellings, company store and office making it significant in the area of community planning. The company housing forms the bulk of the building stock and represents an important concentration of typical mining town architecture in the region making it significant in the area of architecture. The Robertsdale Historic District includes the mine site which retains the structural remains of the mining operations. This site has the potential to reveal information, through archaeological study, on the mining processes and changes that took place during the period of significance. The East Broad Top Railroad, a subsidiary of the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company, and now a National Landmark, was constructed to transport the coal from Robertsdale to Mt. Union where it was transferred to the Pennsylvania Railroad.

The coal fields on Broad Top Mountain were first documented in the 1830s by the First Geographic Survey of Pennsylvania. The area at that time was occupied by a few pioneers, some of whom mined the coal. William Houck, for example, settled in the Robertsdale area in the 1830s and opened a mine that later became the first Rockhill Iron and Coal Company Mine. Mining did not prove profitable in the isolated region for lack of an efficient way to transport the product to market. This changed by the 1850s when the Pennsylvania Railroad was constructed and a spur line, the Huntingdon and Broad Top Railroad, began hauling coal from the fields on the west side of the mountain.

The east side of the mountain was unaffected by the successful operations on the west side. The East Broad Top Railroad and Coal Company was chartered in 1856 but funding to build the line that would connect the fields on the east side of the mountain to the Pennsylvania Railroad at Mt. Union was not secured until 1872. By this time several Philadelphia

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businessmen, Edward and Algernon Roberts, Richard D. Wood, Ario Pardee, and Gillingham Fell, had purchased about 11,000 acres of the coal rich land on the east side of Broad Top Mountain including William Houck's land. In partnership with Percival Dewees, owner of an iron furnace at Rockhill, they formed the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company. Rockhill is approximately 15 miles northeast of Robertsdale. The company was incorporated in 1872 and immediately bought a controlling interest in the East Broad Top Railroad and Coal Company. The railroad was completed from Mt. Union to Broad Top Mountain in 1873 where the first mine was located and the town of Robertsdale was developed.

Between 1873 and 1875, the Company constructed 27 houses for 100 miners and their families, a stable, a store, blacksmith's shop, carpenter's shop, shanties, railroad office, and an engine shop. (Bennett: 8). In 1875, Rockhill #1 was producing 200 tons of coal a day. A year later, the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company operated three mines in Robertsdale, which had grown in population to 479, and had built 42 houses, all semi-detached. In 1886, the mines produced 121,023 tons of coal. In 1889, Rockhill Iron and Coal Company opened one of their most productive mines, Rockhill #5. In that year the mines in Robertsdale produced 160,147 tons of coal (Broad Top Bulletin, September 18, 1991).

Within the next decade, the company continued to expand, opening new mines, extending the railroad south, developing the new community of Woodvale, and constructing more housing in Robertsdale; bringing the total number of houses there to over 57. This expansion continued into the early 20th century. In 1913, Robertsdale had 76 houses (Bennett: 12). The increase in production soared with the increase in demand for coal, especially during World War I. More miners were employed which meant more housing was needed. In this peak period of production, the company also constructed the hotel, Liberty Theater, new train depot, post office, and company office building as well as additional housing.

After World War I, demand for coal declined significantly and expansion and development along the East Broad Top ceased by the 1930s. Labor strikes, especially those in 1922 and 1927, affected most of the coal producing regions of the United States and contributed to the decrease in production of the Rockhill mines. The miners of Robertsdale formed the United Mine Workers Association Local #1031 in the early 20th century. Later, in the

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1920s, the Union was allowed to build a hall in Robertsdale behind the hotel. Most coal companies employed similar methods to break the strikes. Using their position as landlords, companies hired private police to break up meetings and evict striking miners and their families from their company housing. The Union erected barracks outside the village limits on Franklin Street Extension to house some of the homeless. Neither the Union hall nor the barracks exists today.

Strikes in the 1920s contributed to the decline of many coal companies as did the competition from new coal fields in West Virginia. The Rockhill Iron and Coal Company was no exception and by 1928, they went bankrupt. New management kept the company afloat until 1956 when the company sold their holdings to the Kovalchick Salvage Company.

In, A Legacy of Coal, Margaret Mulrooney studied many company towns in southwestern Pennsylvania and surveyed three in depth: Star Junction, Windber, and Colver. She discusses the common characteristics of southwestern Pennsylvania coal company towns as being towns financed, built, owned, and operated by a single company. The control the company asserted from this position of power, referred to as "paternalism," began with the concept that employers were obligated by their moral and social superiority to establish rules and regulations that would improve the morals of the workers. This was quickly distorted by the companies' desires for profit.

A southwestern Pennsylvania company town, as described by Mulrooney, contained workers' houses which were usually two stories, semi-detached, wood frame with four to six rooms per dwelling with no indoor plumbing until after World War II (Mulrooney: 33). Houses were always of similar style and materials with similar spatial arrangement, set at the front of deep housing lots with individual gardens. The typical coal town also had a company store, usually at the center of a town which was laid out in a grid or linear plan with wide unpaved streets (Mulrooney: 1).

Robertsdale, named after two of the company founders, was typical of most company towns; the company owned most of the land and buildings. The company buildings form the center of town with an office building, depot, post office, and store. The company threw up plank housing cheaply and quickly with few amenities such as indoor plumbing. By providing housing, the

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company not only hoped to attract a stable work force but also make a profit; and with ownership came the power to direct most aspects of life in the town.

Most of the characteristics observed by Margaret Mulrooney in her survey occur in Robertsdale; rows of identical wood frame, semi-detached houses along wide unpaved streets, which were only recently paved within the last twenty years, and set at the front of long narrow lots with gardens. Some variations in the houses are evident and different types tend to be grouped together. In her study of Robertsdale and Woodvale, Bennett found ten dwelling types (Bennett: 49), six of these occur in the Robertsdale Historic District. Differences are slight, such as door placement or hip roof as apposed to side gabled, sustaining the general impression that the houses are identical.

As landlord, the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company could dictate through restrictive covenants in deeds and leases who could or could not live where and what events and meetings could or could not take place on their property. In this way they tried to prevent known union organizers or sympathizers from settling in the town and discourage dissension in the labor force. Similar restrictions occurred in Woodvale and many other coal towns such as Star Junction, Windber, and Colver, studied by Mulrooney.

When the company expanded their operations in 1890 and developed additional mines, the company applied the same principles in the development of Woodvale that were found in Robertsdale, just two miles to the north, and other coal company towns in southwestern Pennsylvania. Woodvale exhibits a grid plan with groups of similar semi-detached, wood frame houses with four to six rooms, set at the front of long narrow lots. The town was developed in close proximity to the mining operation, as was Robertsdale, and had a company store.

A common element in most coal patch towns was the company store. The Rockhill Iron and Coal Company store in Robertsdale was constructed between 1873 and 1874 and was the sole source of supplies for the community. Owning all the land allowed the company to block any other business from operating within the town. In addition, the company owned the East Broad Top Railroad, the primary mode of transportation, thus controlling all freight into the community. Between 1890 and 1917, then again after 1937, the residents of Woodvale relied on the company

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store in Robertsdale for all their needs. The company built a store in Woodvale in 1917, during the peak years of mining, but it was destroyed by fire in 1937 and not replaced, leaving the community thereafter dependant on the Robertsdale store.

In the early 1900s, Jesse O. McClain managed the company store until a dispute with the company persuaded him to open his own store on Lincoln Street. In response, the company set up fences around the store, trying to block business. McClain took the matter to court and won the suit forcing the company to take down the barriers. In 1924, Jesse's son Norman took over the management of the McClain Store. The following year, the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company asked Jesse to lease the company store again, both in Robertsdale and Woodvale. The company store lease remained in the family until 1958, the last manager being Leslie McClain, the grandson of Jesse.

The company store in Robertsdale, as in most company stores in coal patch towns, was an integral part of community life. Being the sole source of goods, the community depended on it for all their needs. Before the post office was built, the mail was handled by the company store. Companies could not run their own stores so they leased them to individuals who then paid the company a percentage. In Robertsdale, the lease required that the store function on a credit system which meant that the merchant had to pay the company whether they received the money from the customer or not. In other coal patch towns, the credit accrued at the company stores the companies docked from the miners' paychecks. Other companies paid their miners in script which could only be used at the company stores.

The theater was also central, not only to community life, but to regional life as well. The first theatre was constructed by the company in 1918. Providing entertainment was not an altogether altruistic action but an attempt to keep a labor force that tended to be transient. The Liberty Theater seated around 425 people and attracted people from the Broad Top Region in general. When the theater burned in 1936, the company did not replace it but, in 1948, sold the property to a former miner, Gene Yanni, who had worked in the mines until an accident left him paralyzed. The East Broad Top Coal Miner's Historical Society plans the renovation of the theater for multiple uses such as a miners museum, theater, and meeting hall. Its distinctive architectural style within a setting of vernacular architecture makes this building a contributing resource.

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The company supported recreational and social activities as a way of encouraging miners to settle in Robertsdale. Like many other companies, the Rockhill Iron and Coal Company sponsored a baseball team in Robertsdale as well as provided for other social activities like the summer train excursions to the picnic grounds in Woodvale. These became so popular that the East Broad Top Railroad resorted to the use of cattle cars to transport passengers on these excursions because they were unable to purchase more passenger cars (Daily News, 25 Sept. 1991).

The Coal company also donated land to religious groups, retaining below ground mining rights. Such donations were typical of most coal companies. In 1883, the Presbyterian congregation erected their church on a lot on North Main Street given to them by the company. The company also donated the land at the end of Church Street to the Methodist Church in 1890.

The mine site today has the potential to reveal much about the mining operation in Robertsdale through an archaeological survey. The structural remains of a mule barn, shanties, boiler house, various sheds, blacksmith shop, engine house, fan house, and tipples, for example, and their layout can relate how the mines in Robertsdale operated, including ventilation, transportation of coal and miners to and from the mines, and processing the coal. Determining dates of the construction of these structures can reveal how operations changed over time. An archaeological analysis of the site would help form a more complete picture of life and mining operations in Robertsdale.

The Rockhill Iron and Coal Company started to sell its houses to their employees in 1948 and today most of the houses in Robertsdale are owner occupied. The once identical houses, through additions, new siding, and other modifications, have become personalized yet the basic plan and massing of the company house remains. Two houses, 17 Spring Street and 46-48 North Main Street, have been drastically altered, totally changing their original characters. Several modern intrusions are present but are scattered and therefore have little adverse impact on the integrity of the historic district.

The closing of the mines in 1956 threw Robertsdale into an immediate economic decline leaving most unemployed. Some strip mining operation in the area provide a few with employment but the village supports no businesses. Today, Robertsdale survives as an intact example of a company town representing the local

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mining industry and community development in the area. The depressed economic condition and the isolation of the area has protected it from some modern intrusions yet at the same time has been the cause of some deterioration as seen in the company store. In spite of this, Robertsdale retains much of the physical manifestations of the coal era and offers an ideal glimpse of a typical Pennsylvania coal patch town.

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Robertsdale Historic District: Bibliography.

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Robertsdale Historic District

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at a point at the northeast corner of 48 North Main Street, proceed generally west along the north property line of that property, crossing North Main Street and proceeding west along the south side of Cherry Street to a point on the northwest corner of the property of 1 Hill Street. Then follow the back property lines of 1-12 Hill Street, turn northeast along the east property line of 12 Hill Street to a point on the northeast side of Hill Street, and proceed southeast along the northwest side of Hill Street to the intersection with North Main Street. Proceed southwest along the southeast side of North Main Street to a point opposite the northeast corner of 27 North Main Street. Then proceed to the northwest corner of 27 North Main Street, turn south and follow the back property lines to a point at the southwestern corner of 21 North Main Street, turn west and follow the back property lines of 2-8 Church Street to the northwest corner of the Methodist Church lot. Then proceed west to the USGS map 1840 foot contour line.

Follow the 1840 foot contour line in a southwesterly direction to a point 200 feet southwest of the portal to mine 5. Turn southeast to the southwest corner of 74 South Main Street. Proceed along the back property lines to the southeast corner of 52 South Main Street. Proceed northwest along the southwest side of Beech Street. Cross Beech Street and proceed along the back property lines of 50 to 40 South Main Street. Proceed east across Route 913, turn south along the east side of Route 913 to a point on the northeast corner of the intersection of Wood Street and Route 913. Proceed in a northeast direction along the north side of Wood Street to a point opposite the northwest corner of 15 Spring Street. Proceed south along the back property lines of 15 to 25 Spring Street to the southwest corner of 25 Spring Street. Turn east to Spring Street and proceed north along the west side of Spring Street to a point opposite the southwest corner of 20 Spring Street, then turn east and proceed to the southeast corner of that property, then north to the northeast corner of 8 Spring Street. Turn west, proceed to the northwest corner of Spring Street and Walnut Street, then proceed north along the west side of Spring Street to the intersection of Spring and Lincoln Streets and the north side of Lincoln Street.

Following the north side of Lincoln Street, proceed east to a point opposite the west corner of 9 Lincoln Street, turn generally east to the southeast corner of that same property. Proceed northeast along the back property lines of 9 to 23 Lincoln Street to the southwest corner of 23 Lincoln Street and continue northeast to the north side of Lincoln Street Extension. Turn east following the north side of Lincoln Street Extension to the southeast corner of 36 Lincoln Street Extension, then north to the northeast corner of that lot, continue north along the east property line of tax lot #05 to its northeast corner. Turn west, proceed along the north property line to the northwest corner of tax lot #05, continue west approximately 300 feet across Great Trough Creek and the East Broad Top Railroad bed to the southeast corner of proposed tax lot #14.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 2

Robertsdale Historic District

Turn north along the back property lines of 11 to 40 Cliff Street to the northeast corner of 40 Cliff Street, then west along the north property line of 40 Cliff Street. Continue west along the south side of Birch Street to a point opposite the southwest corner of 36 North Main Street. Turn north and follow the back property lines of 36 to 48 North Main Street to the northeast corner of 48 North Main Street and the point of beginning.

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number 10 Page 3

Robertsdale Historic District

Robertsdale Historic District: Boundary Justification.

The boundary includes the mine site, company houses, company buildings, church, and school that have historically been a part of the village of Robertsdale and that maintain historic integrity. The southwest portion includes the mine site with the remains of the various buildings associated with the mining operations. This constitutes the industry significance of the district. Excluded from the district, lying further to the south, are Rockhill mines 2 and 4 and five semi-detached houses because of the large gap which separates them from the village. The boundary otherwise follows property lines and streets

The boundary excludes resources that do not contribute to the district's historical or architectural significance. At the east, where Spring and Lincoln Streets meet, two mobile homes are excluded from the district. Schoolhouse Hill has also been excluded from the district because of modern intrusions. Cherry Street acts as the northern boundary line since all construction to the north is new.

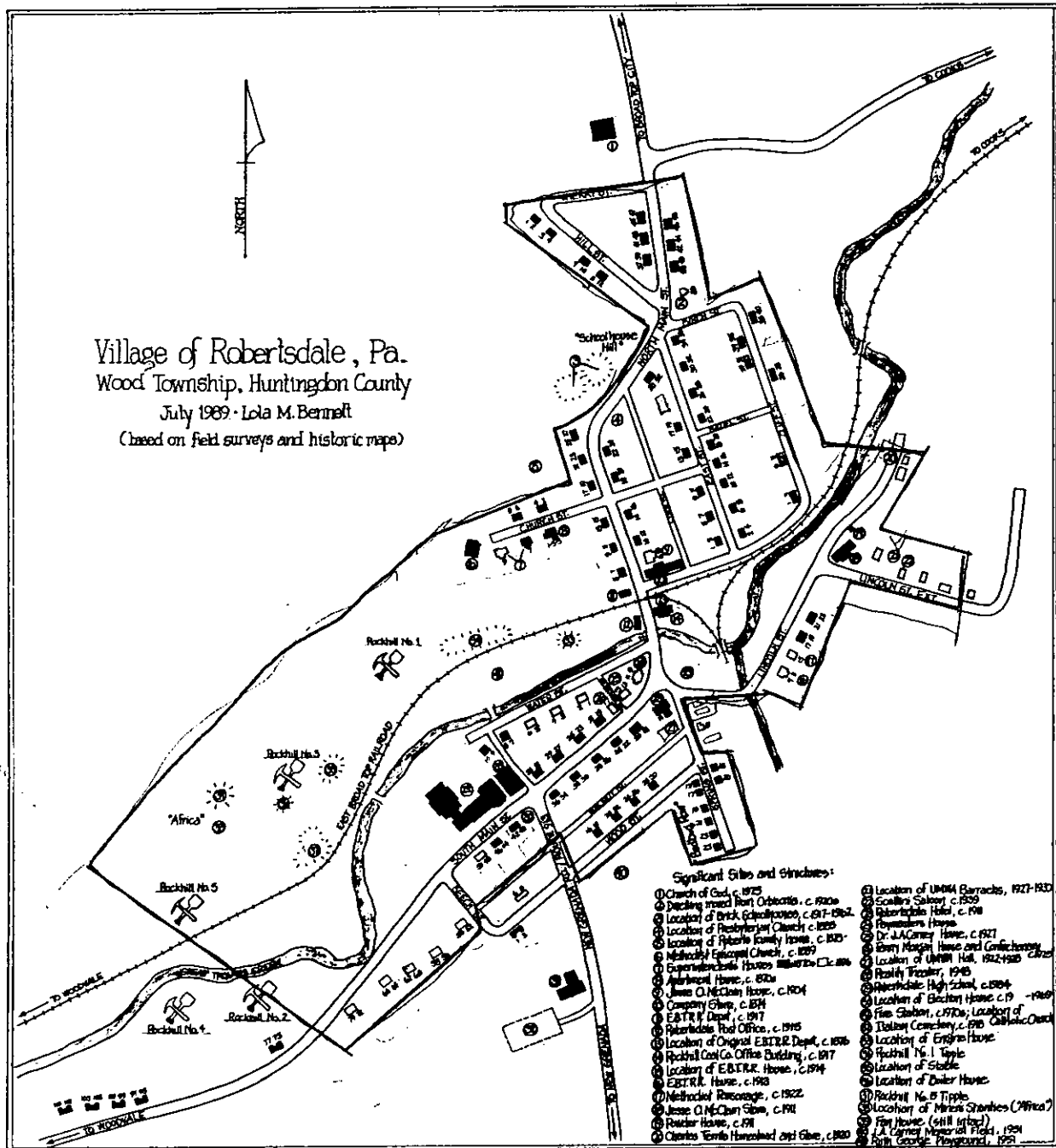
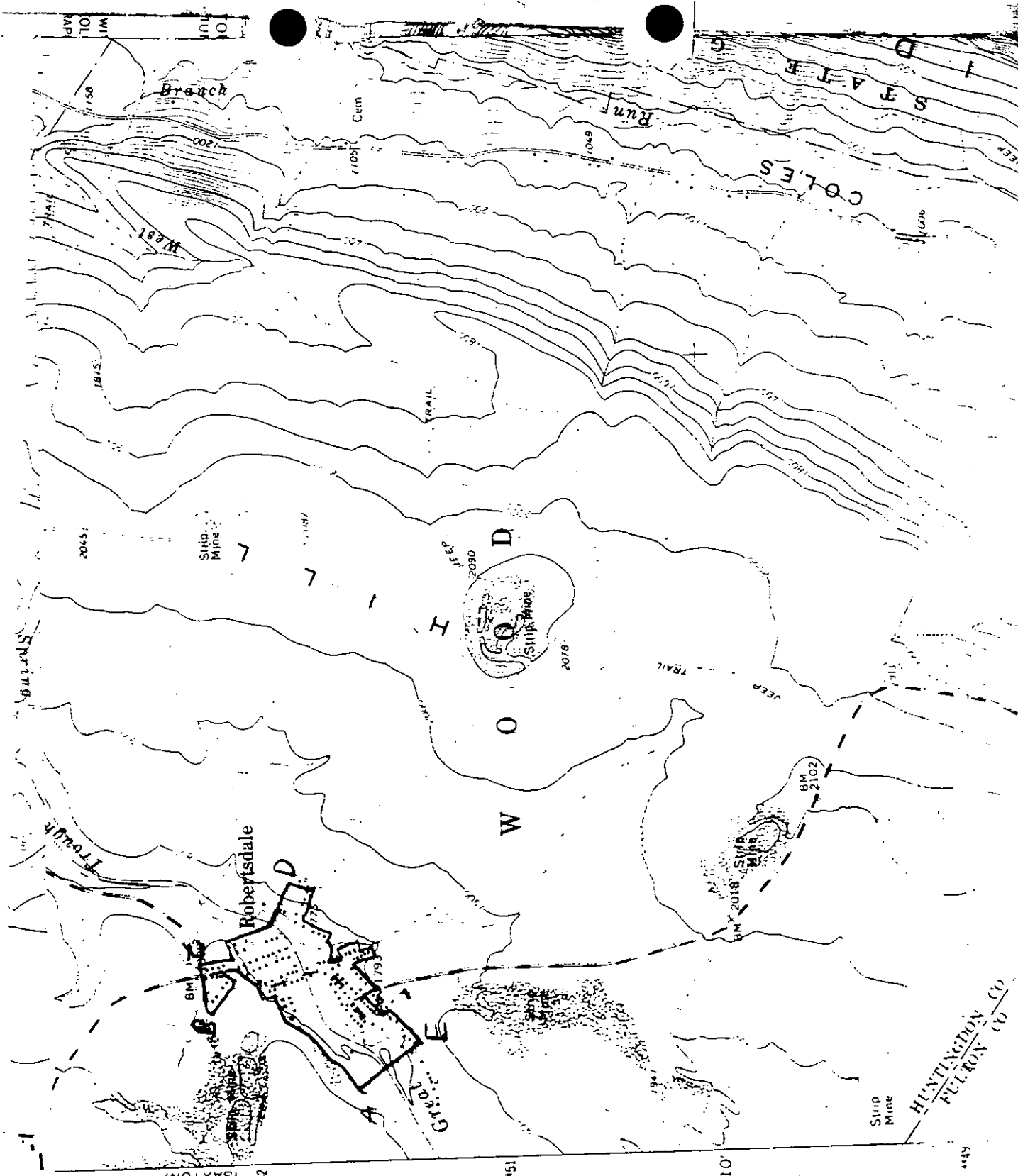


Fig. 29 Village of Robertsdale, map showing mine openings, significant sites and structures (author).



Robertsdale Historic Landmark
 Huntington County - Zone 17
 Section 110 - 112

4	E 745040 N 2151520	D E 746980 N 2151520
3	E 745150 N 2152270	E E 715201
2	E 745220 N 2152310	