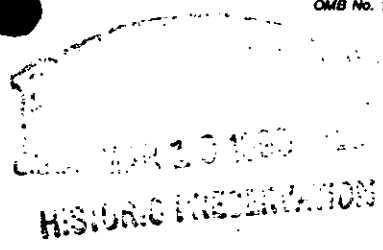


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Dreibilbis Mill  
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Dreibilbis Mill Road and Bellevue Road  not for publication N/A  
city, town Shoemakersville (Perry Township)  vicinity N/A  
state Pa. code PA county Berks code 011 zip code 19555

3. Classification

|   |   |                                     |                     |
|---|---|-------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Ownership of Property                       | Category of Property                            | Number of Resources within Property |                     |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s) | Contributing                        | Noncontributing     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-local       | <input type="checkbox"/> district               | <u>1</u>                            | <u>0</u> buildings  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-State       | <input type="checkbox"/> site                   | <u>1</u>                            | <u>0</u> sites      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal     | <input type="checkbox"/> structure              | <u>2</u>                            | <u>0</u> structures |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> object                 |                                     | <u>0</u> objects    |
|   |   |                                     | <u>0</u> Total      |

Name of related multiple property listing:  
Gristmills in Berks County, Pa.

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, 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 commenting or other 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 the Keeper

Date of Action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture/processing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/Not in use**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Gristmill

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stonewalls BrickWoodroof Tin

other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Dreibelbis Mill is located in a rural setting in Perry Township, just north of Route 662 about a mile east of Shoemakersville. It stands on a triangle of land formed by two township roads. The mill pond is immediately north of the mill. Elements of the wooden trash rack remain, along with the head gates in poor condition. A dam is located some 500 yards to the east across Pigeon Creek. The head race is visible in the meadow running along Dreibelbis Mill Road. The tail race runs under Bellevue Road and back into the creek north of the bridge on Route 662. It was operated until 1985 and is intact and operable today. Since 1944 it has been powered by a diesel motor.

The mill is of brick construction, two and one-half stories tall, with a stone basement level exposed on the south side. The mill faces west, with three solid paneled doors vertically aligned below the hoist hood roof which is an extension of the roof ridge line and has its hoist rope and chain intact. The second and attic level openings have half high lattice gates. There is a wooden loading dock. The roofing is painted standing seam metal and there is no chimney. The building is in generally good condition.

On the north facade the stone foundation is below grade, the building being set into a bank. The brick addition for storage and to house the former steam and current diesel engines is apparent at the north end extending about twenty feet. This section lacks windows on the second floor. The water entrance arch can be seen in the original section directly under the fourth window from the west on the second floor.

 See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Dreibelbis Mill

Section number 7 Page 2

The east facade is three and one-half stories with a basement entrance. The attic gable has vertical board siding. There is a large steel pipe exhaust stack and a wooden cooling tower for the diesel engine. At the southeast corner is an approximately eight feet square masonry base, the remains of the steam boiler stack.

The south facade has a whitewashed stone foundation below the first floor level with an entrance into the basement at the second bay from the front. A second entrance door is located on the north side of a two story brick addition that contains a work room in the basement and mill office on the first floor. East of this is a modern cement block addition with shed roof which replaced the the former steam boiler room of brick. This is the facade that is visible from Route 662. The name, "DREIBELBIS MILLS, SHOEMAKERSVILLE, PA", is painted on a white background between the two rows of windows on the brick office addition.

Inside the original mill basement the floor is of one level, while that in the main large addition is somewhat lower. Structural timbers supporting the first floor consist of a hewn summer beam and circular sawn floor joists. Flooring on all levels is narrow tongue and groove hardwood. There is an open ladder stair to the first floor.

The first floor is on one level in the mill proper except for the stone floor approximately twelve feet square and raised 2'6", against the north wall. In the addition the floor is raised one foot. To the south of the stone floor is the door to the office addition, a room about ten feet square which contains two desks, the ledgers of the mill, and a slate board showing the last prices charged. The summer beam supporting the second floor is larger than that in the basement and shows no tool marks. Joists are circular sawn. An open ladder stair leads to the second floor.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Dreibelbis Mill

Section number 7 Page 3

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The second floor had greater height than those below and has numerous floor to ceiling storage bins. In the southwest corner is a storage bin, approximately 12' x 14' which extends from cellar to attic floor. The entire addition is a large grain storage area on this level. A large summer beam and circular sawn joists support the attic floor, in which there is evidence of an internal bag trap. An open ladder stair leads to the attic.

In the attic, a one foot high knee wall supports the rafters, which in the original mill are hewn and pegged at the ridge. Those in the addition are circular sawn. There is no flooring in the addition, the top of the bins being open. The mill interior is in very good condition.

Originally the mill contained a wooden overshot water wheel. There is presently a cast iron encased turbine (manufacturer unknown) in the wheel pit area, near the inside of the east mill wall, below the present millstones. Cast iron flat belt pulleys on the turbine shaft, within the hurst frame, took power through twist drive belts to various counter shafts. One of these powered the roller plant and another the millstones; each was tensioned by tightening pulleys of the counterweight or rack and pinion types.

The Venn Severin diesel engine, manufactured in Chicago, is located in the mill addition. It drives all the machinery by flat belt through an opening cut in the original east basement mill wall. This engine ran so smoothly that the last miller, Earl Dreibilbis, kept a nickel standing on edge while it was operating.

The mill is flat belt powered throughout with miter gears to change direction in certain places. There are two independent drives to machinery in the attic.

United States Department of the Interior  
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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Dreibelbis Mill

Section number 7 Page 4

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Originally there were four pairs of millstones. One pair remains in place and is complete with its drive, stone furniture and necessary accessories such as stone crane with steel screw, brass nut, handle, balls, and pins, paint staff - hanging on the wall to the west of the millstones - jackstaff for traming the bedstone, overhead, extra follower blocks for the neck bearing in the bedstone, and, in a bin on the south wall, the mill picks last used by Mr. Dreibilbis. The millstones, four feet in diameter, are monolithic. They were controlled from the stone floor, the tentering wheel and shoe adjustment being located there. The hoop is of single board construction, the shoe of the type which sits on the hoop, and the damsel four sided and solid. There is a stirring stick in the runner eye.

The stones were last used by Mr. Dreibilbis for making corn meal in large quantities. Most of the corn was raised on the mill farm and was roasted before milling in a Fitz Company gas fired corn roaster, located in an addition to the barn. In the basement is a Wolf Company corn meal sifter of the reciprocating type. There is, near the sifter, an automatic bagger of the conveyor type on which five feed bags could be hung when the stones were used for feed milling.

There are three double stands of rolls manufactured by the Sprout Waldron Company, of Muncey, Pa., for milling wheat into flour. They are of fairly early design, flat belt driven from below, seven inches in diameter and fourteen inches long. Above the first break, or pair of rolls, is a wheat steaming machine for tempering the grain just before milling. In the basement is a Wolf Company wheat washing machine which was not used by Mr. Dreibilbis. There is also a Wolf Wheat Scourer, size 6420, used as a second stage wheat cleaner after the receiving separator on the second floor. There are two receiving elevators with dumps in the first floor inside the main door; the eastmost has a crane spout control on the first floor to allow direction of the elevated grain to various bins. An auger type automatic flour packer is located near the roller mills, as is a built-in Fairbanks Morse scale with typical cast iron columns. Ten bucket elevators are lined up north to south, just to the west of the roller mills, and carry the milled grain in its various stages to the separating machines on the upper floors. There is also a Forster bran finisher and platform scale.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Dreibelbis Mill

Section number 7 Page 5

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The Wolf Company receiving separator is on the second floor, near the door. In the east section of this floor is located the Wolf size 3-30 gyrating sifter connected to the roller mills by the bucket elevators; it separates the various parts of the wheat berry, allowing flour to be produced. Below the sifter is a middlings mill manufactured by the Thomas McFeely Company, of Philadelphia, Pa.

In the attic is located a round reel flour dresser, a Success Bolter Dresser C-2-630, probably by Wolf. In the east end of the original building is the bag hoist machinery which dates from the period of the building, as it is powered by a vertical wooden shaft from the floor below. It has cast iron bevel gears designed for a wooden shaft. The hoist is a slack belt machine with tensioner - of wood throughout. The hoist control drops to the north of each front door and on each level has a small grab toggle. Stored in the attic is a Carter Disc Separator, manufactured by the Carter Manufacturing Company of Minneapolis, Mn., and used at one time to remove cockle from the wheat. At the rear is a receiving bucket elevator with a first floor dump for moving grain to the bin area in the mill building addition. It has a crane spout controlled from that floor.

At one time there was a cider mill attached to the east wall of the mill, and a sawmill at some distance up the headrace.

**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     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

Architecture  
Engineering  
Industry  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

1854 - 1939  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

1854  
1904  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

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

The Dreibelbis Mill is eligible for the National Register under Criteria A, C and D. Its history is representative of larger patterns in the Berks milling industry revealed in the Conservancy's 1989-90 mill study. The water power site was developed and used for an early custom mill in the eighteenth century. In the mid nineteenth century the old mill was taken down, and the present mill was built as a merchant mill serving a wider region. This mill incorporated several modern innovations. Its brick construction was fairly unusual in gristmills, but had recently become fashionable in villages for housing stock and it was among the first of Berks mills to use steam power. In the early twentieth century, this mill continued to keep up with the times, adding greatly increased storage capacity and replacing several pairs of millstones with roller mills for the production of flour. Still later the mill specialized in its own cornmeal which was widely marketed. As is now stands, this mill is not only a well preserved example of mill architecture of the period, but it provides clear evidence of the technological changes that took place in the milling industry since the 1850's.

According to research by one of the mill's owners, Harvey Dreibelbis, the original mill on this site was made of logs and dates back to 1790. In the early days of the mill, it was owned by Johannes Schnabel, and later it was owned by Nicholas Greth and Daniel and Enoch Wartenluft. Enoch built the present mill in 1854 and supplied it with steam power, in addition to the water power, before 1870.

See continuation sheet

United States Department of the Interior  
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**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Dreibelbis Mill

Section number 8 Page 2

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On March 28, 1868, Simon Dreibelbis (the great-grandfather of the last operators of the mill, Earl and Lloyd Dreibelbis) purchased the mill from Enoch Wartzluft. Simon sold the mill on March 25, 1884 to his son Cleophas who sold it to his son William H. On September 11, 1965, the sons of William H., Lloyd E., Harvey C., and William B. incorporated the property into W.H. Dreibelbis Sons, Inc. The mill and farm have been owned until last year, 1988, by the brothers Earl, Harvey, and Lloyd Dreibelbis. The mill had been operated until 1985 when it closed due to the ill health of Earl who operated the mill for many years.

At one time, the mill had four run of grist stones; one for grinding wheat into flour for the farmers, another for rye, another for buckwheat, and the other for grinding grain for feed. In 1904, Cleophas Dreibelbis built an addition to the mill, a building 20 feet by 40 feet and 3 stories high for a cost of \$448. In this same time, two of the four stones were replaced with three double stands of rolls to make flour.

When Cleophas' son, William H., purchased the mill, the buckwheat stone was removed as area farmers no longer raised buckwheat. One stone was left to make corn meal. This product became very famous as the corn was roasted before milling. Made by the ton, people came for many miles for the roasted cornmeal. Butchers around the area also purchased it to make scrapple.

The pastry flour was sold to stores and bakeries within a radius of 50 miles. The mill was noted for its high quality flour. In later years, a bakery from Elizabeth, N.J. which bakes pastries for many of the best restaurants and hotels in the area learned about the quality of the Dreibelbis White Rose Flour and purchased large quantities of this product.



United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Dreibelbis Mill

Section number 8 Page 3

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This mill was one of the last to have operated in the county, making large amounts of wheat flour and corn meal. These were sold by miller Earl Dreibelbis from the mill, and on a weekly route to various stores as far south as Boyertown - at one time a common mill product sales method. The wheat and corn milled was, for the most part, grown on the Dreibelbis farm on which the mill is located. Mr. Dreibelbis closed the mill in 1985.

The Mill is eligible under Criteria C and D for it is a well preserved example of mill architecture of its period which provides evidence of the technological changes that took place in the milling industry during its working years from 1854 through 1939, the cut-off period for this nomination. The building is a simple but attractive functional single purpose grain mill. The presently diesel driven mill has all the elements of the

earlier water powered millstone mill including the remains of the water courses, and its turbine. The current configuration represents the typical adaptation of a stone milling mill to the more modern roller mill process, leaving one pair of millstones in place for cornmeal and feed for animals, and putting in the place of the other three pairs of stones a complete Wolf Company system for roller milling. A changeover requiring a large capital investment but necessary if the mill was to remain competitive in the wheat flour trade. As such it is a very complete example of a transformation which occurred throughout Berks County at the end of the last century and for at least the first quarter of this one.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Berks County Atlases

Berks County Conservancy Mill Survey and Multiple Property Nomination: Gristmills in Berks County, 1989.

Dreibelbis, Harvey, "The Dreibelbis Mill, Shoemakersville, PA", Old Mill News, Summer 1988. Knoxville, Tenn.

Kindig, Stephen, Dreibelbis Mill Survey, 1989.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

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

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 11 acres

UTM References

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Phoebe Hopkins, Project Director & Stephen Kindig, Project Consultant

organization Berks County Conservancy date July, 1989

street & number 960 Old Mill Road telephone (215) 372-4992

city or town Wyomissing state PA zip code 19610

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Dreibelbis Mill

Section number 10 Page 2

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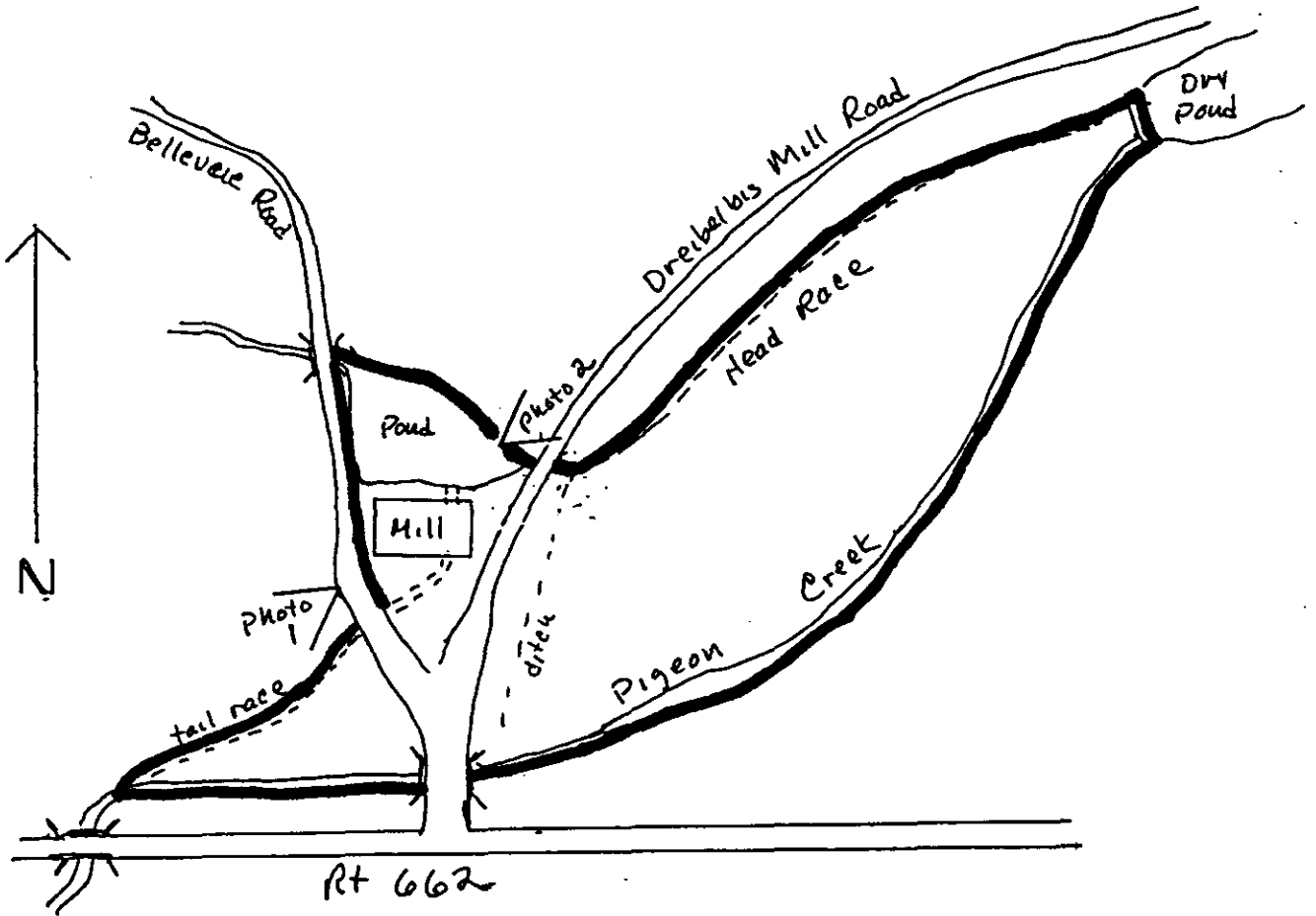
VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Starting at a point on the east side of Bellevue Road and the northern edge of the mill pond, continue along the northern bank of the mill pond northeasterly along the contour line, following the north side of the head race just south of Dreibelbis Mill Road to the north end of the dam, thence south on the east side of the dam, thence downstream along the south side of the creek to a point opposite the northwest side of the tail race where it intersects the creek, thence northeasterly along the northwest side of the tail race to the east side of Bellevue Road, thence along the road to the place of beginning.



BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The boundary is drawn to include the mill and its water-system adjuncts: dam, pond, head race and tail race. While the mill is located on a large farm property containing houses, a large barn and outbuildings, these buildings were outside the scope of the mill survey and are not closely related to the construction, architecture or technology of the mill.

DREIBELBIS MILL  
BERKS COUNTY

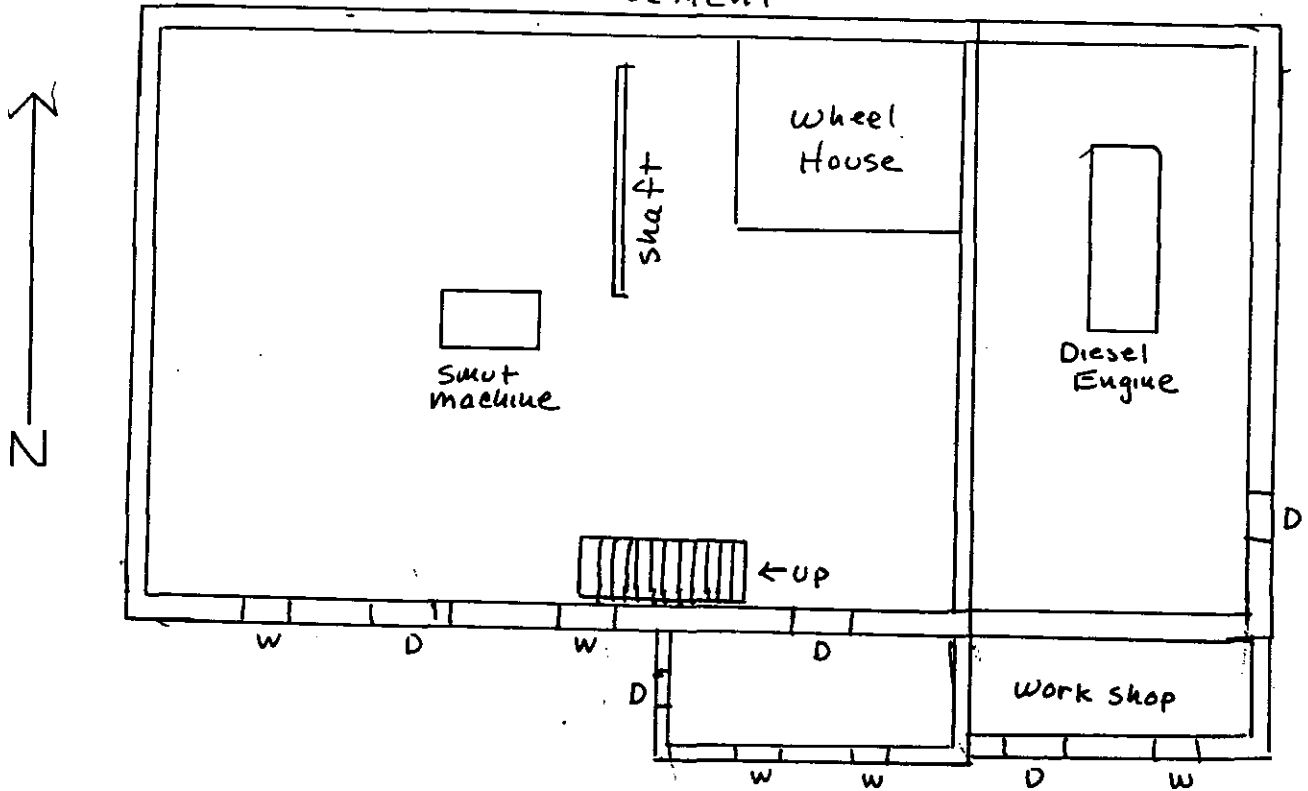


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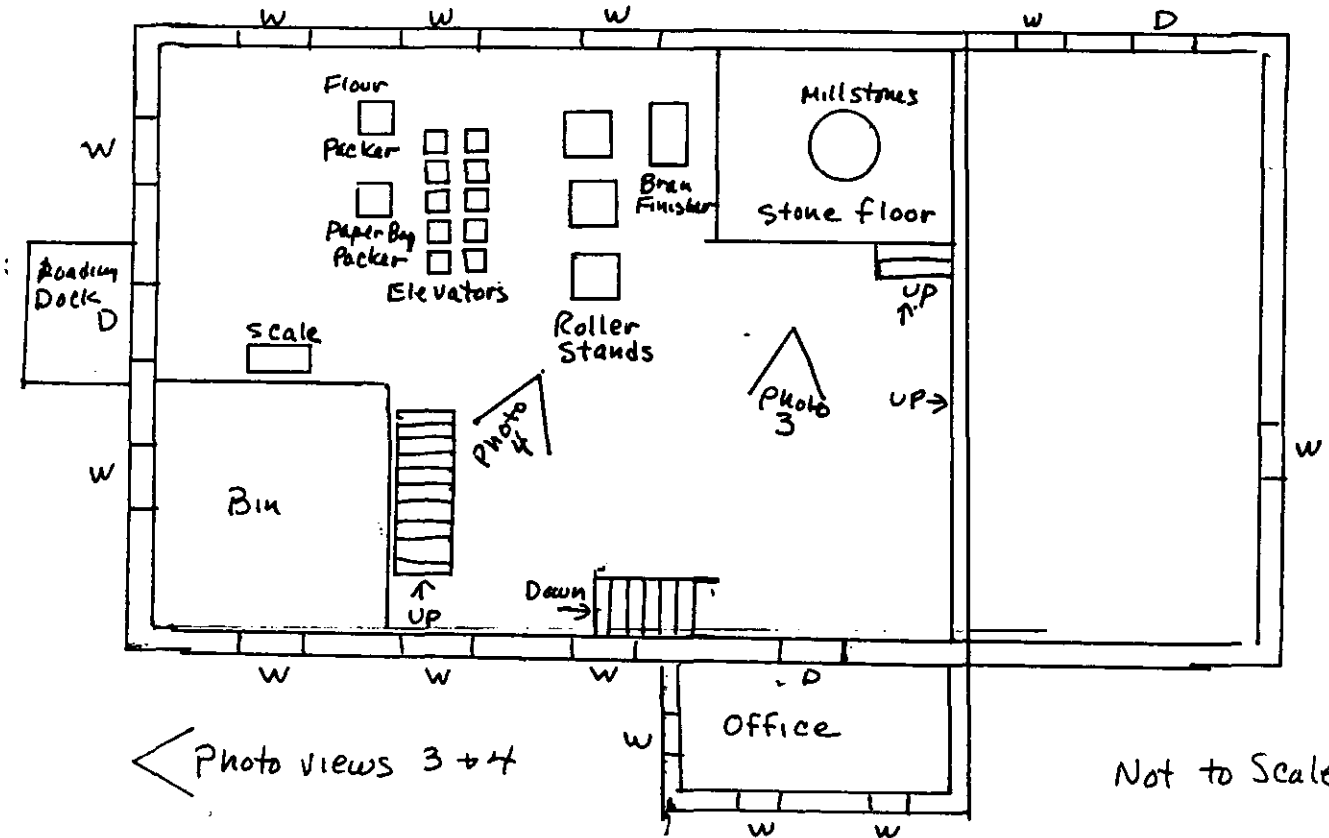
-  Boundary
-  Photo View
- Exterior 1 & 2
- Interior 3 - 6
- (See floor plans)

Dreibelbis Mill  
Benks County

Basement

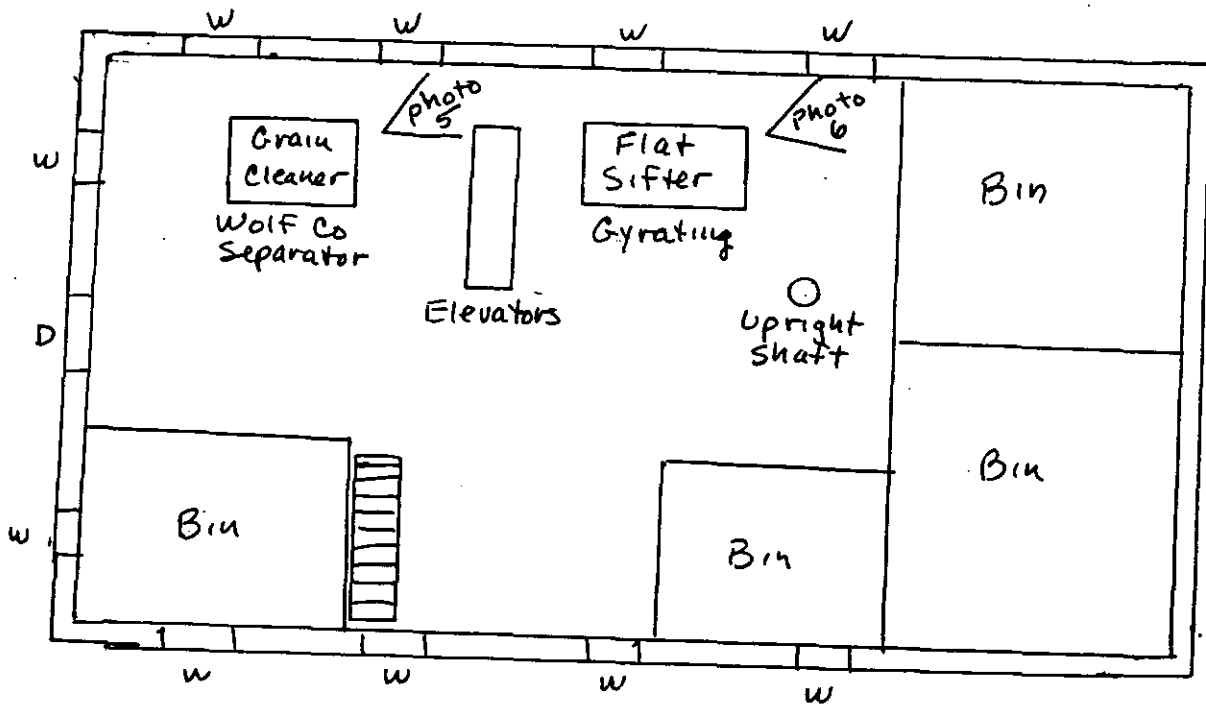


First Floor

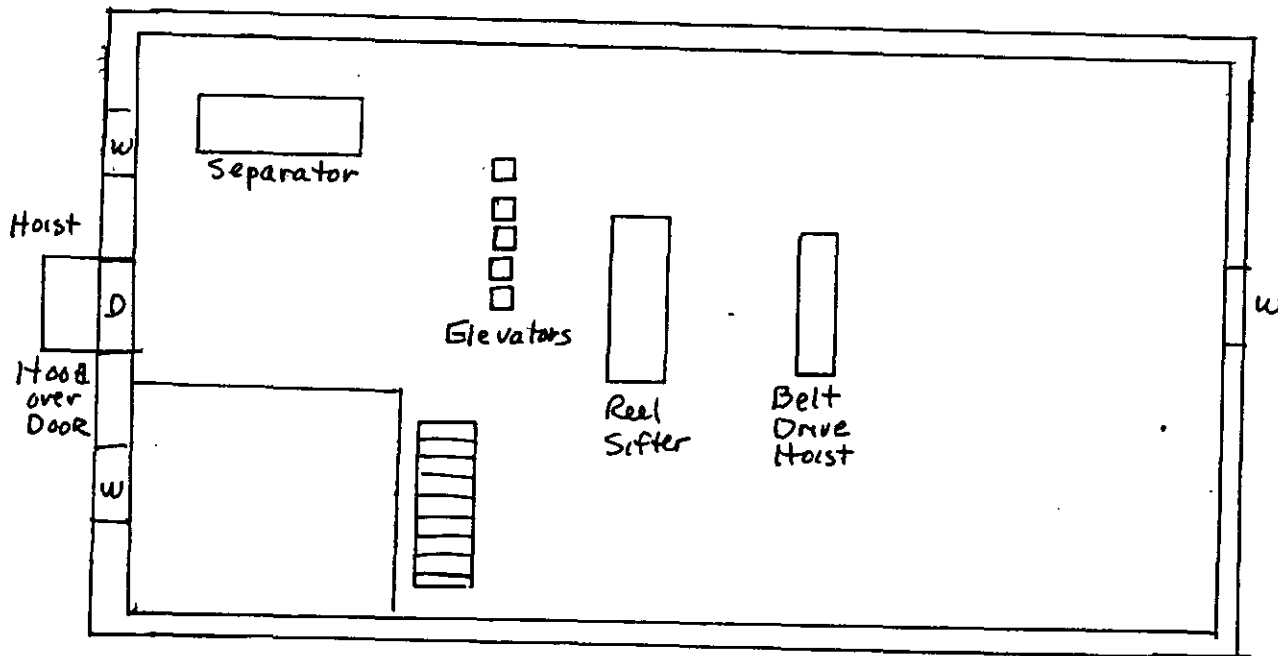


Dreibelbis Mill  
Berks County

Second Floor



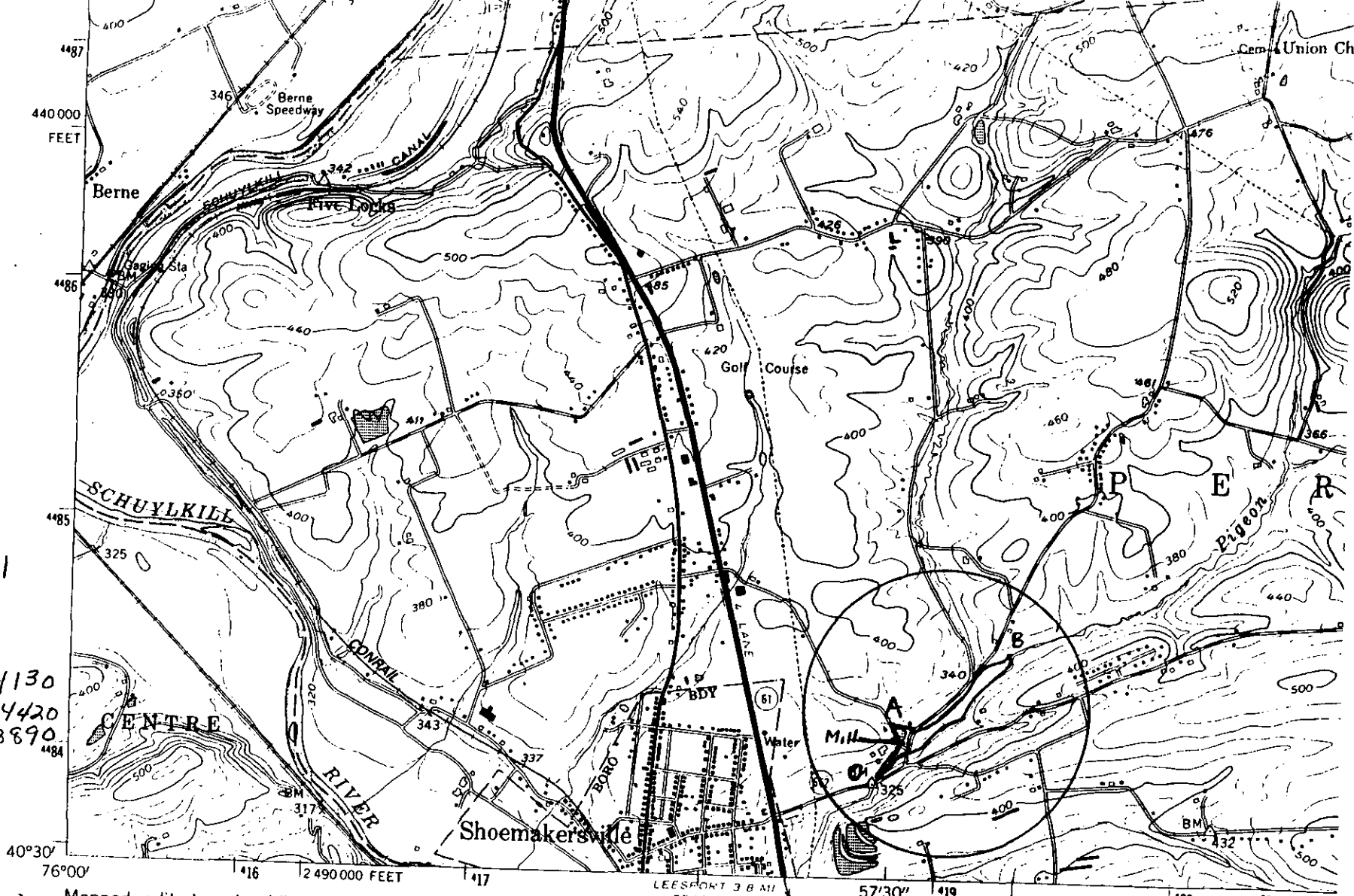
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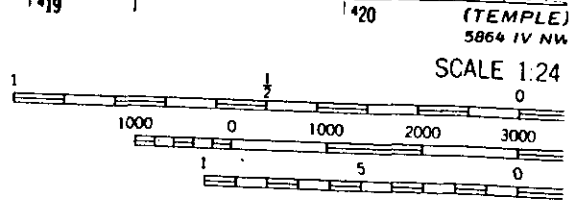
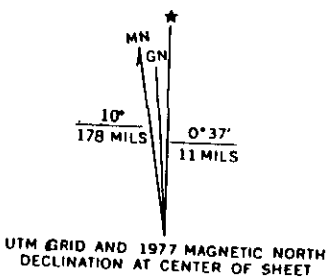
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Dreibelbis Mill  
 Berks County  
 Hamburg Quad  
 Zone 18  
 A 418830-4484130  
 B 419300-4484420  
 C 418740-4483890



(BERNVILLE)  
 5764 1 NE

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE  
 Topography from aerial photographs by multiplex methods  
 Aerial photographs taken 1951. Field check 1956  
 Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on Pennsylvania coordinate system,  
 south zone  
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
 zone 18, shown in blue  
 Unchecked elevations are shown in brown  
 Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with State of  
 Pennsylvania agencies from aerial photographs taken 1969 and 1976



CONTOUR INTERVAL  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICA

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL