



NHL Executive Summary



Name of Property: Carrie Blast Furnaces Number 6 and 7 (Update Documentation)

City, State: Swissvale, Rankin, Munhall and Whitaker Boroughs, Pennsylvania

Period of Significance: 1906-1941

NHL Criteria: 1 and 4

NHL Themes: V. Developing the American Economy (1. Extraction and Production)
VI. Expanding Science and Technology (2. Technological Application)
VIII. Changing Role of the United States in the World Community (2. Commerce)

Previous Recognition: National Historic Landmark (September 20, 2006)

NHL Significance:

- The Carrie Blast Furnaces Number 6 and 7 NHL district is significant under Criterion 4 (Engineering) for its exceptional ability to illustrate the dominant technological concepts of American ironmaking at an integrated steel works during the first half of the twentieth century.
- In particular, the furnaces are significant examples of what was variously referred to as “Northern” or “Mesabi” practice—a technological style of iron smelting based upon the peculiar qualities of the fine Mesabi ores of Minnesota—within the context of northern integrated steel production.
- Additionally, the property is significant under NHL Criterion 1 (Events and Broad Patterns) for its ability to clearly illustrate nationally important aspects of American industrial production.
- In particular, advances in ironmaking technologies that are reflected at Carrie Furnaces 6 and 7 were critical to the development of mass-production in the American steel industry that made Pittsburgh the



leading iron- and steel-manufacturing district in the world and made United States Steel the largest steel company in the world.

- The beginning date for the period of significance (1906) is the year construction began on Furnaces 6 and 7 (they were completed the following year). The end date (1941) marks America's entry into World War II, which ended the period of dominant technological advances in iron production associated with these two furnaces.

Integrity:

- The Carrie Blast Furnaces Number 6 and 7 National Historic Landmark has a discontinuous boundary, which includes the following two properties:
 - 1) The Carrie Blast Furnaces Numbers 6 and 7 Plant, which includes twenty-six industrial resources associated with ironmaking, is located on the north shore of the Monongahela River in the Pennsylvania boroughs of Rankin and Swissvale. The 22-acre plant is located approximately seven miles east-southeast of the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers and downtown Pittsburgh.
 - 2) The Carrie Furnaces Hot Metal Bridge, encompassing approximately 3 acres, which is located approximately 1,400 feet upriver of the plant in the boroughs of Rankin, Munhall and Whitaker.
- Overall, the district retains a high level of integrity of pre-World War II furnace technologies uncommon among the few blast furnaces of the period still in existence in America.
- With this update, the NHL encompasses 21 contributing resources (5 buildings and 16 structures) and 6 noncontributing resources (1 site and 5 structures).
- Two buildings, the Blowing Engine House and Alternating Current Powerhouse (i.e., A.C. Power House), are being reevaluated as contributing resources. Although they were considered noncontributing in the 2006 NHL designation because much of the interior machinery has been removed, reevaluation has determined that these buildings retain sufficient integrity of design to convey their critical role as highly integral components of the iron-making process. Furthermore, the overall NHL setting is greatly enhanced by the continued presence of these massive buildings, and both retain integrity of location, materials, workmanship, feeling and association.
- As noted in the 2023 edition of *NHL Bulletin: Guidelines for Preparing National Historic Landmark Nominations*, "The [Carrie] property's condition, while typical of many former industrial sites, has deteriorated and the larger setting has been compromised through losses associated with deindustrialization. These losses have somewhat affected the property's degree of feeling and setting. However, the assemblage of remaining components maintains a high degree of integrity in the areas of location, design, materials, workmanship, and association, because of their continued ability to provide a complete view of an iron production process that once occurred at the steel works."

Owner of Property: Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County

Acreage of Property: Approximately 25 total (22 for Furnaces/Plant property and 3 for Bridge property)

Origins of Nomination: The present NHL update was initiated by the Rivers of Steel Heritage Corporation, the stewards of the site, in order to change the status of the two largest buildings on the property, the Blowing Engine House and the A.C. Powerhouse, from noncontributing to contributing, reflecting evolving scholarship and preservation practices along with NHL staff guidance.



Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program: Updating the nomination will expand funding opportunities for the Blowing Engine House and A.C. Power House, which will allow for significant advances in their preservation, interpretation and public access.

Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program: None known.

Public Comments Favoring Designation (received as of 10/4/2024):

- U.S. Senator John Fetterman, Pennsylvania
- U.S. Senator Robert P. Casey, Jr., Pennsylvania
- U.S. Representative Summer L. Lee, 12th District, Pennsylvania

Landmarks Committee Comments:

- Add information regarding labor force at furnace, particularly Black workers segregated in certain jobs

Landmarks Committee Recommendation:

The Committee recommends that the National Park System Advisory Board recommend to the Secretary of the Interior designation of the *Mr. Charlie* Offshore Oil Rig in Morgan City, Louisiana, as a National Historic Landmark with any additions and corrections as noted by the Committee being made prior to the nomination being forwarded to the Secretary of the Interior for action.

Advisory Board Recommendation: