

Peter Pielmeier Blacksmith Shop  
(Beahm's Garage)  
208 16th Street  
Fourth Ward Neighborhood  
Altoona  
Blair County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5868

HABS  
PA,  
7-ALTO,  
70-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

PETER PIELMEIER BLACKSMITH SHOP  
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Location: 208 16th Street

Date of Erection: 1906-07

Description: This small one- and two-story commercial structure was a blacksmith and wagon shop.

The Pielmeier Shop, now a two-story garage, is situated on the alley behind 2nd Avenue, and is constructed in frame, brick, and concrete block. Close examination of its irregular form suggests that the building originally had a gable-front, two-story section with a one-story shed extension to the east. This shed area has been greatly augmented with flat-roofed, one-story brick additions on the street facade and east side, which extend the first-floor interior well beyond the two-story walls.

The sliding garage door on the street front hangs from a track that runs below the roof eave. Above the first floor the shop is still clad with horizontal wood siding. Other sections are sided in brick and asphalt shingle.

According to property records, the two-story brick, concrete block, and frame section at left is 20' x 50'. The one-story addition at right is 18' x 50', is built of brick and block, and dates from 1986.

History: This structure has made a successful and not unsurprising transition from neighborhood blacksmith's shop to neighborhood garage.

Peter Pielmeier, who built the shop, purchased land directly from John Wright's heirs in 1905. In total he acquired one half and one full lot, 91' x 120', building not only the shop but houses on 2nd Avenue. A late addition to 1906 tax-assessment records shows Pielmeier with a 91' x 73-1/2' lot with the amendment "started to build wall up." In 1907 he is taxed for a lot plus house and smith shop valued at \$2,500. In that year's city directory, Pielmeier is listed as a blacksmith at this address, living at 1532 2nd Ave., the house on the front of the property. Teresia C. Pielmeier lived there as well. In 1925, both Louis and Peter Pielmeier were blacksmiths at this address; living at the house were Louis, Otto, Peter and his wife, Anna, and Teresia.

Pielmeier passed the property to Louis and Teresia in 1928. Despite these changes in ownership within the family, he was still a practicing blacksmith at this address as late as 1945, one of three still working in Altoona.

Teresia Pielmeier sold the entire lot with house and shop to Joseph A. and Julia Paolucci, husband and wife, for \$7,000 in November 1951. By 1953, Ken Howard's Garage occupied the building; in 1955 the building was occupied by Hartman & Wolf Auto Repairs, formerly at an address on 9th Avenue. Robert P. and H. Louis Beahm acquired the property in February 1957. Beahm's Garage first appeared at this address in 1957; the Beahms occupied the brick house at the property's front.

Sources: Maps: 1894, 1909. Deed books: 732/538, 650/399, 425/445, 375/635, 375/637, 375/633, 160/211. Tax assessment records. City directories.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. Overviews of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) and the fourth ward neighborhood (HABS No. PA-5786) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Susan Garfinkel in the summer of 1989 under the supervision of HABS senior historian

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Alison K. Hoagland and Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian. Garfinkel's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.