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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions on back of form for the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Marion Steam Shovel

other name/site number LeRoy Steam Shovel

2. Location

street & number Gulf Rd

city or town LeRoy

state New York code NY county Genesee code 037 zip code 14482

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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 2/22/08

Date
5. Classification

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<th>Ownership of Property</th>
<th>Category of Property</th>
<th>Number of Resources within Property</th>
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<td>(check only one box)</td>
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<td>□ district</td>
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<td>Noncontributing</td>
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Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

<table>
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7. Description

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Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)
Marion Steam Shovel

Name of Property

Genesee County, New York

County and State

8. Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(28) A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.

(28) B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.

(28) C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.

(28) D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(28) Property is:

(28) A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.

(28) B removed from its original location.

(28) C a birthplace or grave.

(28) D a cemetery.

(28) E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.

(28) F a commemorative property.

(28) G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Period of Significance

ca 1911 - 1949

Significant Dates

ca 1911

Significant Persons

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

Marion Steam Shovel Co

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 Name of repository:
10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.1

UTM References
(Place additional boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Zone Easting Northing
2 18 260760 4763930
3 18 4763930

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title contact/editor: Robert T. Englert, Historic Preservation Program Analyst
organization NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation date August 2007
street & number PO Box 189 telephone 518-237-8643
city or town Waterford state NY zip code 12188-0189

Additional Documentation
Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets
Maps
A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs
Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner
(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO.)

name/title Town of LeRoy
city or town LeRoy state NY zip code 14482

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.
The Marion Steam Shovel occupies approximately 0.1 acres east of the Village of LeRoy, on the north side of Gulf Road in the Town of LeRoy. It is on the north side of the road adjacent to the former Lehigh Valley Railroad tracks and the limestone quarry where the shovel was in use. Directly opposite the shovel, is the main entrance to an active limestone quarry operated by the Hanson Company. The shovel and the five acres of land are owned by the Town of LeRoy. The area around the shovel has been cleared and a chain link fence extends across the property between the shovel and the road. The area is accessible through a locked gate.

The shovel is roughly the size of a railroad boxcar and is carried on two large caterpillar type crawler trucks. The front crawlers are on outriggers that extend approximately five feet on each side of the shovel. The main body of the shovel is sheath with riveted sheet metal with a simple arched roof, also of riveted sheet metal. The front end of the shovel is open, with seating for the operators, control levers, and the large arm and bucket.

The working weight of the shovel is 105 tons. It is a partial swing shovel (as opposed to a revolving shovel.) The engine house measures 10 foot wide by 42 feet long, with an eight foot extension on the back for coal. It
originally moved on railroad tracks, but the wheels were removed in either 1923 or 1924 and replaced with tractor crawlers. The Marion name is cast in several places on the machine, including the arms of the outrigger and the boiler doors. Although the model plate was removed, the patent plate is still in place. The boiler is five feet wide and 15 feet long with horizontal flues. A plate mounted on the boiler door is marked “5304”. It is not in working condition.

There are three engines on the machine. The reversible hoisting engine is a double-cylinder horizontal type with a 12 inch bore and a 16 inch stroke and is the largest engine on the shovel. It is located inside the engine house and propels the machine forward or backward by chains connected to the axels. Close examination indicates that about 50 feet of the main hoist chain has been removed. The shovel could move ¾ mile per hour. The second engine has an 8 inch bore and is called the swing engine. It manipulates the boom from side to side and is attached to a chain around the swing circle. The third engine is the boom engine (also called the crowd engine) and is mounted on the boom. It has an 8 inch bore and raises and lowers the bucket (or dipper). The boom engine, because of the exposure to the weather is not in working condition; however, the hoisting engine and the swing engine, mounted inside the engine house are likely in working condition and could be operated on compressed air.
The Marion Steam Shovel in LeRoy is historically significant as a rare surviving example of the technology that evolved in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to provide large, inexpensive supplies of crushed stone for the vast American railroad network and later for the construction of roads for the rapidly expanding numbers of automobiles and trucks. It also believed to be the only Model 91 Marion shovel in existence, which is same model that was shipped to Panama for the excavation of the Panama Canal; though research to date has not confirmed it, it is also believed to be one of the shovels sent to Panama. It is also significant for its association with the limestone industry in LeRoy and the history of the General Crushed Stone Company.

The early limestone industry in LeRoy was for the production of architectural building stone. Several quarries in the LeRoy area produced stone for foundations, homes, churches, sidewalks, steps, fireplaces, gravestones, hitching posts, architectural details, commercial buildings, and bridge abutments. The earliest account of a limestone quarry in LeRoy is the 1815 quarry opened by Harry Holmes at Limerock. Houses built of the LeRoy stone date to the early 1820s. In 1841, limestone quarried from the Warner quarry northwest of LeRoy was cut in LeRoy at the Knowleton Rich Mill in LeRoy and transported to Batavia to build the Genesee County Courthouse. (National Register listed, 1982.)

Hundreds of men were employed in the quarries, blasting, drilling, cutting and drawing stone. In the late 1870s many of these men were skilled stone cutters who had emigrated from Italy. Their descendants continued working in the LeRoy quarries for generations. Between 1865 and 1910, several significant buildings in LeRoy were constructed of local limestone, including St. Peter’s RC Church, St. Mark’s Episcopal Church, St. Anthony’s RC Church, the Art Institute and Staunton Conservatory at Ingham University (razed), Matthews Malting Company (razed), Lathrop Memorial Chapel in Machpelah Cemetery (National Register listed, 2007), and the Citizen’s Bank (now Pontillo’s Pizza). During this time, huge quantities of stone block were used by the railroads for bridges and culverts. The W.S. Brown Quarry, in 1875 had contracts with the New York Central and Hudson Railroad for twenty cars of stone per day. This quarry also supplied stone to the Erie Railroad and sent limestone to the blast furnaces in Buffalo and Pennsylvania. In 1880, the quarry was contracted for stone for bridge abutments and culverts near Dale, New York. The quarry produced enough stone to fill 14 18-ton cars per day.

The limestone that is quarried is the deposit known as the Onondaga layer and extends in Western New York from Buffalo east to Syracuse where it derives its name. The limestone is in the middle of the Devonian Strata and is composed of pulverized corals and mollusks that were deposited on the bottom of an inland sea 383 to 398 million years ago. The layer in LeRoy is nearly 150 feet deep and is filled with nearly 200 species of fossils including an armored fish called Macropetalichthys. A specimen of this rare prehistoric fish, taken from the LeRoy quarry, is in the collection of the Field Museum in Chicago.
The production of cut stone from the LeRoy quarries waned in the early 1900s, as production of crushed stone—aggregate—became paramount. The need for crushed stone developed in the middle of the 19th century as the growth of the railroads demanded large quantities of ballast for railroad beds. Unbelievably, most of the crushed stone at this time was produced by manual labor. Quarrymen pounded rocks with sledge hammers 12 hours a day, six days a week reducing huge limestone blocks into gravel. The development of a mechanical rock crusher by Eli Whitney Blake in 1858 changed the crushed stone industry.

Blake, the nephew of Eli Whitney, was born in 1795 and graduated from Yale University. While watching the construction of a road near New Haven, Connecticut, Blake was impressed with the need for a mechanical crushing machine. He was granted patent #20542 on June 15, 1858 for a “jaw crusher” and soon after formed the Blake Rock Crusher Company. By 1879, 500 of his machines were in use. With alterations, the jaw crusher has remained a viable type of rock crusher for 150 years. Blake was inducted into the National Inventors Hall of Fame in 2007.

Another type of crusher, the “gyratory crusher” was patented in 1881 by Philaetus W. Gates. With the development of mechanical crushing machines, it became necessary to move larger quantities of stone to and from the crushers. The traditional method of moving rock from the quarry face to the crushers was with hand labor and horse-drawn carts. The stage was set for the development of a stronger excavating steam shovel.

The steam shovel, invented in the United States in 1835, was originally designed to excavate earth. The first efficient single-bucket excavator was the Crane Excavator designed in 1836 by William S. Otis, but very few of these machines were manufactured. There were three basic movements that had to be powered by the steam engine. First there was the “hoist” for the dipper; then the “crowd” to thrust the dipper in and out; and “travel” which moved the entire machine. The Otis machine accomplished all three of these movements from one single-cylinder, non-reversing engine. Many improvements would be made to make the early shovel strong enough to handle rock.

Eventually, three sets of independent engines, and a locomotive-type boiler replaced the Otis style design. As the machines became heavier it was necessary to transport them from place to place and they were mounted on railroad trucks. Known as “railroad shovels” there was little difference between machines made by the various American companies: Bucyrus, Marion, Osgood, Ruston and Vulcan.

In LeRoy, the crushed stone business that eventually became known as General Crushed Stone began at the end of the 1800s. The quarrying and crushing were sublet to A.G. Morris of Tyrone, Pennsylvania, but he failed to meet the demands of the Lehigh Railroad in 1899 and three investors, Lozier, Mitchell and Duerr merged their interests in a Delaware corporation under the name of the Duerr Contracting Company. At the Director’s meeting on January 31, 1900, it was agreed to take over the quarries at Redington, Pa and LeRoy. One year later, George L. Hancock, from the LeRoy quarry, was elected to fill a vacancy on the board of directors. On February 21, 1902 the company was again reorganized and the name of the company was changed to the
General Crushed Stone Company. The main offices were in the Anthracite Building in South Bethlehem Pennsylvania. Over the next seventy-five years General Crushed Stone Company became a pioneer in the aggregate industry, and the quarry in LeRoy became part of the legacy.

Under the leadership of James Madison Porter, President of General Crushed Stone Company from 1901 to 1909, the LeRoy quarry was equipped with the world’s largest stone crusher. It was also at this time that General Crushed Stone acquired its first steam shovel which was installed at the LeRoy quarry. The LeRoy Gazette, on March 14, 1906, printed the details about the new facilities. “On Monday morning the work of installing the largest crusher in the world commenced. It is known as the McCulley crusher No. 10, manufactured by the Power & Mining Company.” In addition to this mammoth crusher, the quarry also purchased a new #6 manufactured by the Allis Chalmers Co of Milwaukee. A # 5 crusher was already in use and the three machines could reduce stones 25 inches in diameter to dust. To handle the huge quantities of aggregate, the quarry was equipped with a 100-ton steam shovel which was manufactured specially for General Crushed Stone by the Barnard (sic Barnhart) Steam Shovel Company of Marion, Ohio. The Gazette article gave details about the shovel: “It is known as a 5-yard dipper, and every time it is dipped down into the stone, it will lift enough of it to fill one of the cars. This is a great improvement over the old way will greatly increase in output of the plant with less labor. In order to facilitate the loading of cars and the shipping end of the business, two 12-ton locomotives have been purchased and will be in operation this year.” At that time, General Crushed Stone had contracts for over 500,000 tons of stone and the expected to manufacture between 300,000 and 350,000 tons before the end of the year. The Lehigh Valley Railroad utilized two-thirds of the output and the rest was sold for road improvement. The daily output in 1906 was 2,000 tons a day and the stone for the Lehigh was being carried 175 miles south for the southern line near Sayre, Pennsylvania.

It is not certain that the LeRoy shovel on Gulf Road, is the 1906 shovel mentioned in the LeRoy Gazette, because a 1932 photograph published in the History of General Crushed Stone written by former president Julian Parton, shows two shovels of this size in operation. It is part of the oral history of the company that two shovels had been purchased in 1911 from the ICC - Isthmian Canal Commission. At least one Panama shovel was supposedly in use in LeRoy, although no written records have been found. Unfortunately, the model number plate on the LeRoy shovel was removed many years ago. The 1906 LeRoy Gazette account mentions that the shovel was equipped with a 5 cubic yard dipper and the existing shovel has a 2 ½ cubic yard dipper, although the dipper could have been replaced. Never the less, even without the model number it is almost certainly a Model 91 because its measurements match the Model 91 specifications. It is one of the most famous Marion railroad shovel models produced; one hundred and thirty one of these models were built between 1902 and 1912 and sixteen were supplied to the Isthmian Canal Commission. The LeRoy shovel is the only known Model 91 in existence. On May 12, 1912, a Marion Model 91 set a world’s record at the Barrow pit at the Gatun Dam for moving 5554 cubic yards of earth at the Panama Canal. There are no other known surviving Model 91 Marion shovels.
The Marion Power Shovel Company began in the 1880s when Henry M. Barnhart, a shovel operator, frustrated by frequent delays because of breakdowns, designed a new shovel. Barnhart approached Edward Huber of Marion, Ohio for the necessary funds and they secured a patent in 1883. They built the "Barnhart's Steam Shovel and Wrecking Car and then in 1884 they founded the Marion Steam Shovel Company with another industrialist, George King. The company also manufactured ballast unloaders, log loaders and a ditcher. Crawler tracks were installed on Marion shovels in 1916, and kits were available to switch railroad shovels to crawler shovels. As the Marion Steam Shovel Company grew, and the steam engine was replaced by diesel and electric engines, the Marion Company changed its name to the Marion Power Shovel Company. In 1997, Marion was purchased by its rival Bucyrus International and the plant in Marion, Ohio was closed. The records of the Marion Company, from 1912 are held in the archives of the Historical Construction Equipment Association in Bowling Green, Ohio which provided copies of the catalogue specifications for the various Marion shovels. The specifications and measurements helped identify the LeRoy shovel as a Model 91.

The working weight of the shovel is 105 tons. It is a partial swing shovel (as opposed to a revolving shovel.) The engine house measures 10 foot wide by 42 feet long, with an eight foot extension on the back for coal. It originally moved on railroad tracks, but the wheels were removed in either 1923 or 1924 and replaced with tractor crawlers. The front crawlers are attached to the 20 foot wide outrigger or jacks that stabilize the machine. Model 91 was known as the "Consulship". The Marion name is cast in several places on the machine, including the arms of the outrigger and the boiler doors. Although the model plate was removed, the patent plate is still in place. The boiler is five foot wide and 15 feet long with horizontal flues. A plate mounted on the boiler door is marked "5304". It is not in working condition.

There are three engines on the machine. The reversible hoisting engine is a double-cylinder horizontal type with a 12 inch bore and a 16 inch stroke and is the largest engine on the shovel. It is located inside the engine house and propels the machine forward or backward by chains connected to the axels. Close examination indicates that about 50 feet of the main hoist chain has been removed. The shovel could move ¼ mile per hour. The second engine has an 8 inch bore and is called the swing engine. It manipulates the boom from side to side and is attached to a chain around the swing circle. The third engine is the boom engine (also called the crowd engine) and is mounted on the boom. It has an 8 inch bore and raises and lowers the bucket (or dipper). The boom engine, because of the exposure to the weather is not in working condition; however the hoisting engine and the swing engine, mounted inside the engine house are likely in working condition and could be operated on compressed air. The original wood housing and doors have been replaced with sheet metal and wire mesh; the replacement materials may date from the railroad to caterpillar modification of the 1920s, but in any event appear to predate World War II. The house was extended to enclose the coal bunker and firemen's station. Several guards were fabricated and installed to protect operators from some of the moving parts.

Operating the shovel was a dangerous job and required a crew of seven men. The operator stood by a set of levers that operated the hoist, opened the throttle on the hoist engine and wound
the hoist chain which moved the dipper up and down. The cranesman controlled the thrusting (crowd) engine of the dipper, regulating the depth of the cut and releasing the contents of the dipper. The engineer (or runner) maintained the boiler and the fireman shoveled coal. At least four laborers were necessary to keep the shovel in operation. When the shovel was first used, it was mounted on railroad wheels. After the shovel approached the rock face, the two jack screws which stabilized the machine had to be set in place. When the rock face was dug away as far as the dipper could reach—three to five feet, the shovel could move forward, the jack screws set again and the shovel was put into operation again. When the rock face was dug away and the shovel had to be moved, the laborers had to lay new track and take up the existing track. Efforts were made to make the railroad shovel more maneuverable by installing crawler or caterpillar gear. In 1922, Marion made track kits available that made it possible to replace the railroad wheels with the caterpillar trucks. General Crushed stone company records indicate that the LeRoy shovel was adapted in 1923 or '24. Despite these improvements, the partial-swing shovel was soon outmoded by the revolving shovel. The fact that the LeRoy shovel survived the scrap drives of World War II until 1949 when it was driven out of the quarry and put on display is nothing short of amazing.

The demand for railroad ballast began to wane in the later part of the 19th century but demand for crushed stone continued to grow with the introduction of the automobile and the development of paved roads. In 1916, Congress passed the Federal Aid Highway Act which accelerated the need for hard surface roads. The original type of road surface was waterbound macadam with stone spread upon the surface and covered with puddle screenings. Following this step, asphalt or tar was poured upon the surface of the stone from little pails. In the early 1900s, John Amies developed a method of mixing asphalt and stone together at the quarry. He obtained a patent on the plant mix and called it Amiesite. John Rice, Sr. President of General Crushed Stone collaborated with Amies and erected Amiesite plants at the company's quarries—although LeRoy was never one of the Amiesite quarries. The mix was delivered via railroad in flat bottom freight cars which had to be steamed at destination for unloading. However, LeRoy did provide crushed stone that was trucked to other locations for Amiesite production.

In 1942, a crushing plant that produced stone for the Blue Stone Dam reservoir in Hinton, West Virginia, was moved to LeRoy and in 1948 produced crushed stone for the Mount Morris Dam on the Genesee River. The Mt Morris Dam was completed in 1951 and the crusher in LeRoy was dismantled and transferred to another quarry. The 1955 Federal Interstate and Defense Highway Systems Act launched another period of unprecedented demand for crushed stone in LeRoy with the construction of the New York State Thruway. General Crushed Stone merged with Koppers Company, Inc and continued to operate as a subsidiary until 1988 when Koppers was acquired by BNS Inc an affiliate of Beaser P.L.C. In December 1990, Beaser PLC was reorganized and its American and European interests were sold to Hanson, PLC. Although the quarry in which the LeRoy shovel operated has been closed for many years, two other quarries in LeRoy, operated by the Hanson Company continue to produce crushed stone for road construction. Hundreds of trucks each day haul aggregate from the crusher.
The Marion steam shovel in LeRoy exemplifies American ingenuity and the development of the excavation steam shovel and the contribution of the Marion Steam Shovel Company. As the last example of the Model 91 Marion shovel, it is a reminder of the unequalled excavation of the Panama Canal. And above all, it is a testament to the limestone industry in LeRoy and the hundreds of men who worked in the quarries.
Historical Construction Equipment Association, editor, “Marion Construction Machinery 1884-1975” Photo Archive; Hudson Wisconsin: Iconografix, 2002

Historical Construction Equipment Association, Marion Steam Shovel archives, Bowling Green, Ohio

LeRoy Gazette in the collections of LeRoy Historical Society


The nominated property is located approximately fifty feet north of Gulf Road and is defined as a polygon that extends 10 feet beyond the steam shovel on all sides. Location is depicted by annotated aerial photograph below.
Draft Nomination prepared by

Lynne Beluscio, Director
LeRoy Historical Society
23 East Main St
LeRoy, NY 14482
Photographs

Photographer: Mark Peckham
Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau
Peebles Island
PO Box 189
Waterford, NY 12188-0189

Date: March 2007

Tiff Files: CD-R of .tiff files on file at
National Park Service
Washington, DC

NY_GeneseecCo_MarionSteamShove

1. Exterior: View to SW
2. Exterior: Bucket, View to W
3. Exterior: Cab, View to W
4. Interior: Hoist machinery, View to W
5. Interior: Boiler, View to SW