

Baseline Survey Census Research Armstrong County

The Federal population census is an important tool for understanding the history of a community and how that community has changed over time. The census provides data that can help us to better understand Pennsylvania's diverse racial and ethnic populations (referred to as underrepresented communities for purposes of this Baseline Survey effort), where these populations settled historically, and how they left their mark on the Commonwealth's landscape.

Pennsylvania has a history of being ethnically diverse in both the urban areas of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and in the commonwealth's smaller cities and rural areas. Native Americans have called Pennsylvania's lands home for centuries. Dutch, Swedish, and Finnish settlers moved to Pennsylvania in the late 17th century, and were quickly followed by English, German and other Europeans by the turn of the 18th century. Both enslaved and free Africans and African Americans lived in Pennsylvania as early as 1690 and the commonwealth's Black communities grew exponentially with the First Great Migration in the early 20th century. By the mid-20th century, people from almost all racial and ethnic groups had settled in Pennsylvania.

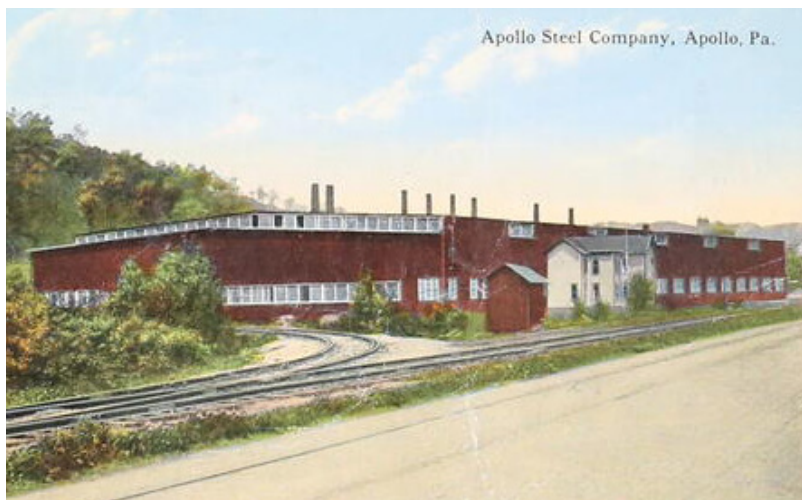
Pennsylvania's historical racial and ethnic diversity and the surviving older and historic places that embody that diversity is not well understood or well documented. By understanding what populations were present, when, and where they lived, the Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (PA SHPO) can identify and document the older and historic places associated with these underrepresented communities through targeted survey work.

Once this information is collected and added to PA-SHARE, Pennsylvania's online database of older and historic places, this important information will be available to professionals and the public alike, providing everyone with data to support the need to tell broader and more inclusive stories.

It is important to note that census data is only one part of the extensive research that is necessary to understand Pennsylvania's varied and changing communities over the last four hundred years. The information collected, methods for collecting it, and categories and definitions changed from census taker to census taker and from year to year.

Armstrong County is one of the fifty-two counties in Pennsylvania where PA SHPO and its contractors will be working over the next two years to collect information about historic places that are underrepresented in Pennsylvania's statewide historic inventory.

It is important that PA SHPO collects information about the older and historic places that Pennsylvanian's value in their communities. PA SHPO welcomes public recommendations for places that should be documented in this survey. If you would like to provide your feedback, please fill out this [short survey form](#).



Historic Postcard of Apollo Steel Company, Armstrong County

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[Historic Resources Survey in Pennsylvania](#)
[PA SHPO's Baseline Survey Project](#)
[PA-SHARE](#)

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Armstrong County

Armstrong County was founded on March 12, 1800. There are 54 municipalities in Armstrong County and as of the 2010 federal census, the total population was 68,941. The first recorded federal population census in Armstrong County occurred in 1800. A total of 2,399 inhabitants were recorded, one of whom was an enslaved Black person. The total population of Armstrong County maintained a steady level of increase from its first inclusion in the census in 1800 to 1950. By the mid-20th century, the total population of Armstrong County began to slowly decrease.

The population of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) of Armstrong County was a small proportion of the total population until 1920, when the total number of Black residents nearly doubled from 1910 to 1920. BIPOC in Armstrong County are predominantly Black.

Asians were counted as living in Armstrong County from 1890 to 1960. Most Asians in Armstrong County during that time were of Chinese descent. Hispanic people, categorized as “Mexicans”, were only documented in the 1930 census.

	White	Black	Native American	Asian	Hispanic	Other
1790	0	0	0	0	0	0
1800	2398	1	0	0	0	0
1810	0	0	0	0	0	0
1820	10511	42	0	0	0	0
1830	0	0	0	0	0	0
1840	28253	112	0	0	0	0
1850	29431	129	0	0	0	0
1860	35619	178	0	0	0	0
1870	43202	179	1	0	0	0
1880	47363	278	0	0	0	0
1890	46480	263	0	4	0	0
1900	52161	381	0	9	0	0
1910	67372	495	3	10	0	0
1920	74476	1084	0	8	0	0
1930	78105	1136	1	12	40	4
1940	80099	976	0	12	0	0
1950	79939	884	10	6	0	3
1960	78617	880	7	18	0	2

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This graph shows the relationship between total BIPOC populations (right side axis) and total population (left side axis) in Armstrong County from 1790 to 1960. Significant events that have a bearing on the population are included below the graph to show Armstrong County's total populations at these important points in time.

No data is available prior to 1800 because Armstrong County was not yet established. The 1810 federal census is not digitized and therefore there is no data. The 1830 census only provided the total population, total number of free persons, and total number of enslaved persons. There were no enslaved people in Armstrong County in 1830 and no distinction of race among free people, therefore there are no BIPOC totals for that decade.

