1. NAME

COMMON:

LOCATION

STATE

X Site

CITY OR TOWN:

3. CLASSIFICATION

Agricultural

☐ Commercial

Educational

Entertainment

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY OWNER'S NAME:

CATEGORY

(Check One)

Dbject

Duilding

Structure

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

AND/OR HISTORIC:

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT

CODE

29

Public Acquisition:

Private Residence

☐ In Process

Being Considered

OWNERSHIP

☐ Park

Religious

Scientific

St. Joseph Lead Mine at Bonne Te

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

Highway 47 (Office) *

63628

Bonne Terre Mine

Bonne Terre

Public

☑ Private

Both

☐ Government

Industrial

Military

X Museum

Missouri

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FOR NPS USE ONLY

OWNER'S NAME:	St. Joseph Minerals Corpor	ation		Mi
STREET AND NUMB	ER:			ssouri
CITY OR TOWN:	Bonne Terre	Missouri 63628	29	<u>3</u> .
5. LOCATION OF LEG	AL DESCRIPTION	•		•
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6. REPRESENTATION	IN EXISTING SURVEYS]
TITLE OF SURVEY:	Missouri State Historical	Survey		ENTRY
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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (II known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Bonne Terre Mine is located below the city of Bonne Terre, in St. Francois County, Missouri. The mine is approximately sixty miles south-southwest of St. Louis and is about one-half mile west of the junction of U.S. 67 and Missouri Route 47. The Bonne Terre Mine is an abandoned lead mine which has not been worked since 1962. However, this particular mine has been cleared of debris and facilities for guided tours have been established. The property remains in the ownership of the St. Joseph Minerals Corporation, but the rights of occupancy have been leased to the Bonne Terre Mine Company. This nomination includes only that portion of the St. Joseph Lead Company mine at Bonne Terre which has been opened and maintained for tourist use as of January, 1973. (See exact boundaries on topographic map).

That portion of the mine included in this nomination is approximately 400 feet below the ground surface at the lowest point, but at certain points the ceiling of the mine ("the back") is merely a few feet below the ground level. There are at least three levels of occupancy within the mine, and mining operations were formerly conducted at all levels simultaneously. There have been several entrances to the Bonne Terre Mine during the many years of active mining, but the major access today is through the "mule entrance," where raw ore was removed from the mine by mule-drawn carts. The Bonne Terre Mine Company has improved this entrance shaft and today it provides the only access for tourists.

Upon entering the Bonne Terre Mine through a series of concrete stairways in the "mule entrance," the visitor descends to the upper mining level, 55 feet below the surface. This is the oldest level of mining activity and was solid rock before mining commenced. The lead occurred in veins laced through this bedrock, and all of the debris were loosened and removed by hand. The rock was so stratified that as mining increased the cavernous volumn of the mine, the ceiling and floor surfaces remained relatively level. Rock pillars were allowed to remain at regular intervals in the mine to provide support for the ceiling. Passageways to lower mining levels occur at various places. Ore was originally removed from the mine by carting it up the "mule entrance," but as various areas were worked, the ore was dropped from higher to lower levels, and was removed directly to the refining mill on the surface. Ore and mining equipment were moved about within the mine by narrow-gage railroad. At the time of the closing of the mine in 1962, nearly 30 miles of track were in use in the Bonne Terre Mine.

At a certain point on the ceiling of the upper level, a five-by-five foot wooden covering is observed. This is the point at which the first shaft into Bonne Terre Mine was dug in 1870, and it is reportedly the first lead mining shaft sunk in the United States. Prior to that time, lead mining had been primarily confined to strip mining seams which were accessible from the surface. However, with the innovation of the diamond drill, used first by the St. Joseph Lead Company in 1869, subsurface lead mining became practical. At numerous points in the mine, various ladders, cables,

PERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	☐ 16th Century	☐ 18th Century	20th Century
15th Century	☐ 17th Century	23 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (Il Applicab	le and Known) 1864-	962	
REAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Che	eck One or More as Appropri	eto)	
Abor iginal	Education	Political .	Urban Planning
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Agriculture	Invention '	Science	
Architecture	Landscape	Sculpture	
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Communications	Military	Theater	
Conservation	Music	Transportation	

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Lead mining commenced in Missouri's "lead-belt" during the period of French occupancy. Lead has been mined in the immediate vicinity of Bonne Terre and St. Francois County since at least 1720. During that year, Mine LaMotte was established by a Frenchman named Renault and a mineralogist, LaMotte. This first lead mine was operated under a French patent and primarily produced shot for use by the French army. Lead mining is probably the earliest commercial industry in Missouri, and flourished in the vicinity of present-day St. Francois County prior to the founding of permanent white settlements in towns such as Ste. Genevieve and St. Louis. John Law's Company, operating under French license, worked Mine LaMotte (20 miles south of Bonne Terre) and various mines near Potosi, in Washington County, Missouri.

The St. Joseph Lead Company was organized in 1864 in order to exploit the lead ore at Bonne Terre. The tract which the new company acquired was a recognized lead-producing tract known as "La Grave Mines." It was operated by Anthony La Grave of St. Louis.² La Grave conveyed his property to the St. Joseph Lead Company with two outstanding mortgages which he had concealed from the new purchasers. As a result, work progressed slowly and there were no profits from the mining until demands by the Union army stimulated sales. In the autumn of 1865, General Price's troops raided the mine and destroyed the operation, causing a delay of several months before the resumption of production. In September, 1865, the mining operations were expanded and improved, and a number of permanent residences, stores, and furnaces were established at Bonne Terre. Ore was discovered in abundance at a level of four to eight feet below the surface in horizontal sheets of six to eight inches in thickness. Initially, the miners exposed the lead veins by strip mining, blasted the ore into useable blocks, and hauled the material to a smelting mill for processing. The ore was pulverized in mechanical rollers and the lead was separated from the useless "chat" waste. By heating and stirring the melted lead particles, impurities were removed and the lead was cast into ingots for shipping. Profits, however, were severely limited because of the expense and inefficiency of this method of production. In wet weather, for example, mining ceased entirely because the cuts were filled with water, and in dry months, too little water was available to crush or wash the ore. Therefore, production could occur only during six months of each year. Average annual output was about 6,000 pigs, or 240 tons during these early years.

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPI	ICAL REFERENCES	S
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- 1. Austin, Moses, "A Summary Description of the Lead Mines in Upper Louisiana...," n.p., 1804, (issued as Document No. 3, accompanying a message from the President of the United States, November 8, 1804).
- 2. Jones, J. Wyman, A History of the St. Joseph Lead Company. New York: 1892.

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	As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set			ic Law clusion been		I hereby cer National Re	rtify that this	s prop	erty is in	cluded	in the	
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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

STATE	Mis	souri	
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7. #1

BONNE TERRE MINE

mining carts, and section of railroad track are visible remains of the activity which flourished at one time. The Bonne Terre Mine Company will attempt to preserve this surviving equipment and illuminate those sections for visitor enjoyment.

The Bonne Terre Mine Company is attempting to interpret various aspects of lead mining in Missouri by explaining fully the several functions of different parts of the mine. For example, the "changeover barn" where mules were quartered and refreshed has been opened for inspection. Many of the most unusual pillars, including several reinforced with steel cable, have been lighted and are included on the tour. The "mule entrance" itself is an attraction. It was created by accident when a blasting operation on the ceiling inadvertently blew out a large portion of someone's backyard. From that day in the 1920's, it has served as the main entrance to the mine.

In the many years of mining activity in the St. Francois County "lead-belt," several shafts were sunk by many companies. The existence of lead under St. Francois County was found to be so abundant that mining operations continued steadily for about 200 years in the vicinity. Lead mining was so intensive in the region that eventually the various mines became interconnected as rival companies expanded into adjacent mines. During the later years of mining in the Missouri "lead-belt," a mere artificial underground boundary separated the domains of the various companies. It is reported that there are at least three hundred continuous miles of subterranean mines under St. Francois County. (St. Louis Post-Dispatch, May 24, 1970). Obviously it is not practical to provide historic recognition for the entire complex. Therefore the problem of delineating a certain portion involves an arbitrary decision. It was determined by the State Liaison Office, however, that a certain portion of this significant network of mines should be preserved and recognition should be afforded particularly to that portion which has been made accessible to the public through the improvements by the Bonne Terre Mine Company.

This nomination does not include any surface structures located within the boundaries of the Bonne Terre Mine. Although there is a recreated "mining town" adjacent to the "mule entrance," this facility is a tourist attraction and was built as an interpretive and entertainment center. Furthermore, there are no surviving buildings, sites, or fixed objects situated on the surface within the boundaries of Bonne Terre Mine which relate to the operation of the mine and possess a significant level of integrity to be included in this nomination.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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8. #1

BONNE TERRE MINE

In 1869, the St. Louis Lead Company began using a diamond drill to locate lead ore. This method had never previously been used in lead detection before the experiment at Bonne Terre, but the process had been successfully adapted to locating granite and marble seams in Vermont and New York. Because of the insufficient funds in the company treasury, the innovation of the diamond drill was financed through the personal resources of the President and Treasurer of the Company. The drill, however, located lead ore about 120 feet below the surface, and a shaft was sunk at that location (described in item #7). Today the shaft entrance is sealed, but it may still be observed from within the Bonne Terre Mine. After 1870, lead mining was confined to underground operations and the practice of surface mining was generally abandoned in the Missouri "lead-belt." As a result of the subsurface mining, lead production increased to 605 pigs per month in 1869, and 2,500 per month by the end of 1873. By May, 1874, an additional four shafts had been sunk. By the end of 1874, the company had paid its first dividend.4

By May, 1880, the capacity of the smelting mill had nearly been doubled, and a narrow-gage rail connection had been made to the St. Louis, Iron Mountain, and Southern line, at a point 13 miles west of Bonne Terre. After the completion of the rail line, it became possible to remove the "chat" to points outside of Bonne Terre and dump it in more remote areas. As a result of this method of waste removal, the large and numerous "chat dumps" which today abound on the St. Francois County landscape began to be formed. In addition, chat could be shipped to distant points. There is some indication that this waste mining material was used for street improvement in St. Louis. 5

In February, 1883, a fire destroyed the old smelting mill, and production was temporarily halted until a new facility was erected. Completed in July, 1883, the new facility enabled the company to attempt several new innovative smelting techniques and production increased proportionately. In July, 1886, the company purchased an additional 3, 218 acres adjacent to the mine, which had previously been worked by a competitor.

The major impediment to higher profits was transportation of the product to customers. The most econimical form of mobility for bulk ore and finished pigs was, of course, over water. But in order to ship to the Mississippi River the company had to buy passage over the Iron Mountain Railroad to St. Louis. In 1887 it was decided to construct a company-owned rail line to the Mississippi River at a point below St. Louis. The line, the "Mississippi River and Bonne Terre," was completed in 1890.7 Certain sections of the roadbed are visible today in parts of St. Francois and Jefferson counties. Passenger traffic was encouraged, and the mine railroad helped open the lands along the route for farming. With the completion of the company road, it was determined more feasible to ship raw ore to the Mississippi River and to smelt

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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8. #2

BONNE TERRE MINE

it at the railhead. Accordingly, a smelting plant was established at Herculaneum, in Jefferson County, and this enterprise provided the major income source for the community. Sand and water were abundantly available, and the shipment of coke to Herculaneum was much cheaper than to Bonne Terre. By 1890, the mining operations had become so extensive that the company operated numerous farms and stores near Bonne Terre to supply the daily needs of the miners.

Production at Bonne Terre continued throughout the early years of the twentieth century, and "lead-belt" production became essential to the manufacture of armaments during two world wars. From 1870 to 1943, the St. Joseph Lead Mine at Bonne Terre yielded a product valued at \$300 million, and before the closing of the mine in 1962, 35 million tons of lead had been removed. Production was discontinued at the Bonne Terre mine primarily because the ore had been nearly depleted and it was becoming too expensive to retrieve the existing raw material. The St. Joseph Minerals Corporation is currently mining extensively in various locations to the south and west of Bonne Terre. Other mines in the old "lead-belt" have been abandoned and are filling with water. The last producing mine in the "lead-belt" ceased operations on October 1, 1972.

FOOTNOTES

- J. Wyman Jones, (President St. Joseph Lead Company), A History of the St. Joseph Lead Company, 1892, pp. 5,7. United States War Department, Report from the Secretary of War in Relation to Lead and Lead Mines in the United States, 1828. Moses Austin, "A Summary Description of the Lead Mines in Upper Louisiana...", issued as Document No. 3, accompanying a message from the President of the United States, November 8, 1804
- 2. Wyman, A History of the St. Joseph Lead Company, 1892, p. 7.
- 3. War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, 1893, Series I, Volumn 41, part 1, p. 456
- 4. Wyman, A History of the St. Joseph Lead Company, 1892, p. 7.
- 5. "Minute Book of the Board of Improvements for Lafayette Park, 1851-1876," (Unpublished, St. Louis Public Library archives), pp. 13-14.
- 6. Wyman, A History of the St. Joseph Lead Company, 1892, p. 25.
- 7. Wyman, A History of the St. Joseph Lead Company, 1892, pp. 30-32.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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(Number all entries)

9. #1

BONNE TERRE MINE

- 4. Schoolcraft, Henry R., A View of the Lead Mines of Missouri... New York: C. Wiley and Sons, 1819.
- 5. Stockett, N.A., Mining Practices of the St. Joseph Lead Company in Southeast Missouri. New York: American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, 1943.
- 6. Thompson, Henry Clay II, <u>The County Historian</u>. Farmington, Mo. (?),: Stewart Publishing Company, ca. 1936.
- 7. United States War Department, Report from the Secretary of War in Relation to Lead and Lead Mines in Missouri, April 8, 1828. Washington, D.C.: Duff Green, 1828.

8. War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies. Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, 1893. Series I, Volume 41, part 1, p. 456.

Form 10-301 (July 1968)

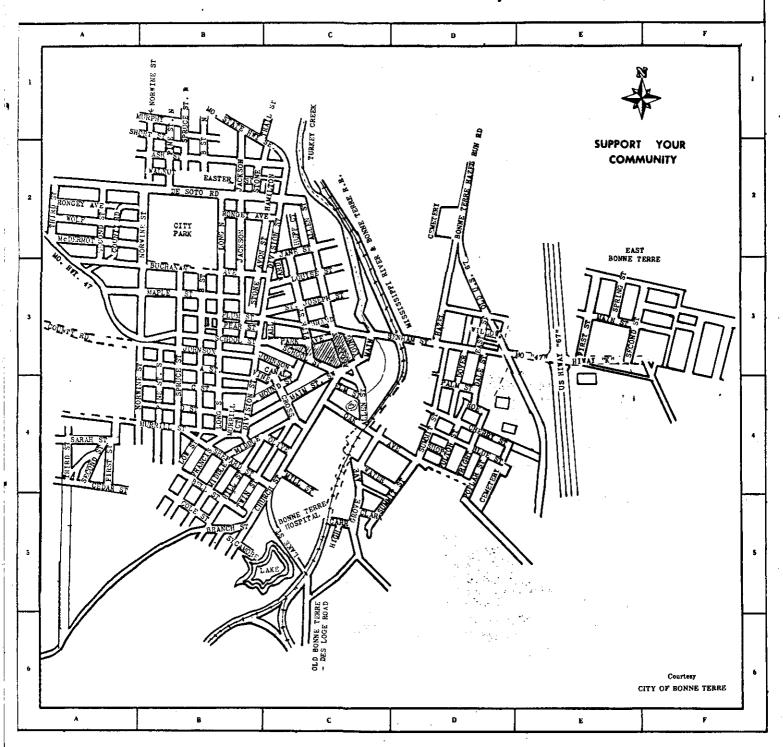
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

1. NAME		
COMMON	St. Joseph Lead	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Bonne Terre Mine	Mine at Bonne Terre	
2. LOCATION		
Missouri	St. Francois	Bonne Terre
STREET AND NUMBER		**************************************
Highway 47 (Office)		
3. MAP REFERENCE		
City map of Bonne Terre,	DATE	SCALE
Mo.	1968	Relative
REQUIREMENTS: PROPERTY BOUNDARIES,	WHERE REQUIRED, AND NORTH ARROW:	<u> </u>

WELCOME TO BONNE TERRE, MO. 1968



Form 10-301 (July 1968)

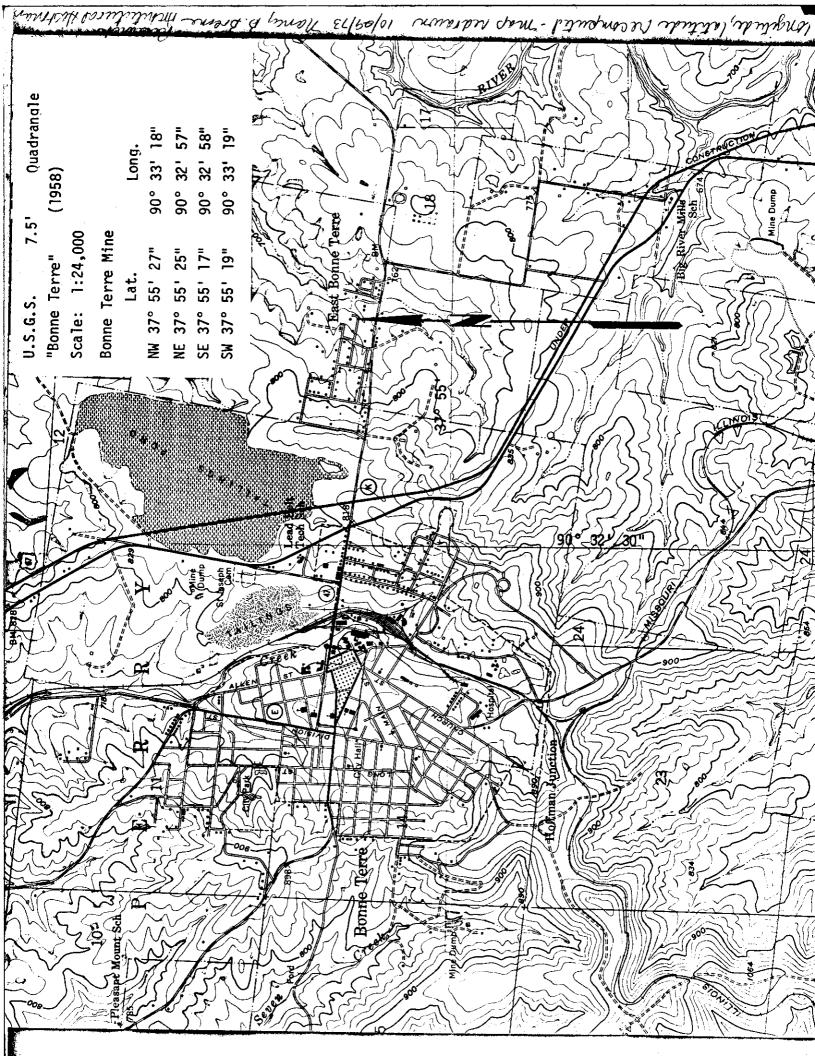
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY MAP FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with map)

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COMMON	St. Joseph Lead	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
Bonne Terre Mine	Mine at Bonne Terre	
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FORM 10-301 A

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

1. NAME			
COMMON	St. Joseph Lead	NUMERIC CODE (Aselgned by NPS)	
Bonne Terre Mine	Mine at Bonne Terre		
2. LOCATION			
Missouri	St. Francois	Bonne Terre	
STREET AND NUMBER			
Highway 47 (Office)			
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
Stephen J. Raiche Mo. State Park Board	November 10, 1972	Mo. State Park Board, Bx. 17 Jefferson City, Mo. 65101	
4. IDENTIFICATION		<u> </u>	
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.			

General view of interior of mine, along lighted visitor trail. North facing south.



FORM 10-301 A

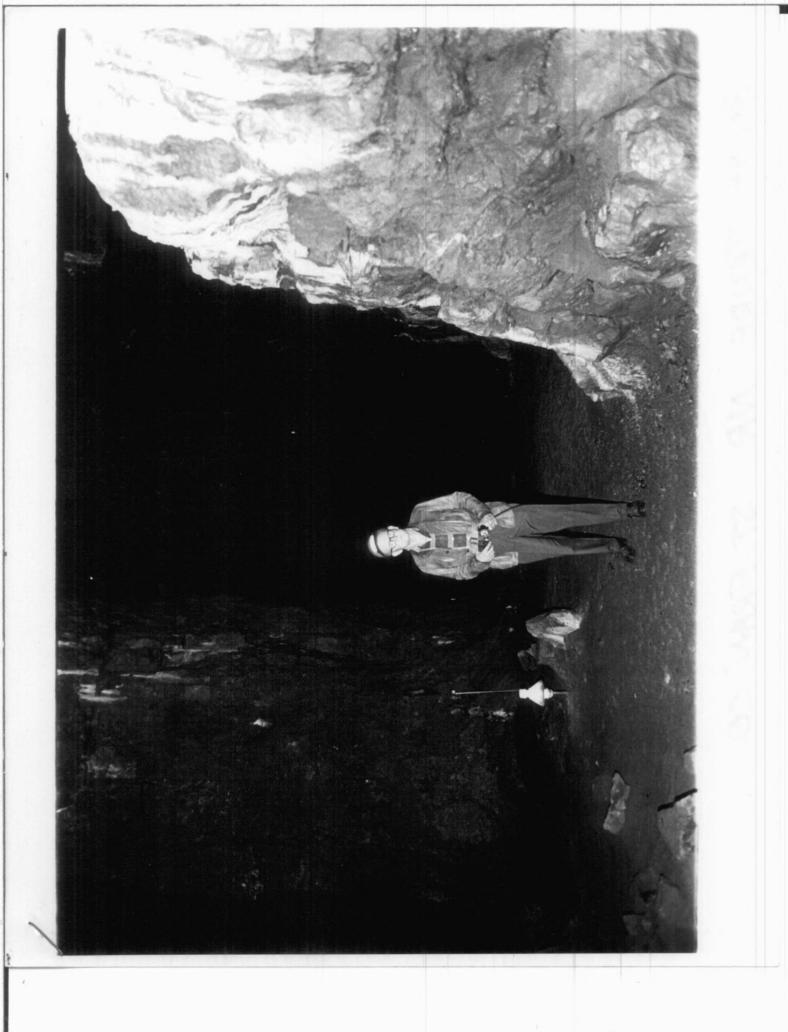
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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2. LOCATION			
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STREET AND NUMBER			
Highway 47 (Office)			
3. PHOTO REFERENCE			
Stephen J. Raiche Mo. State Park Board	November 10, 1972	Mo. State Park Board, Bx. 17 Jefferson City, Mo. 65101	
4. IDENTIFICATION			
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.		<u> </u>	

General view of mine shaft, looking from interior toward "mule entrance." West facing east.



FORM 10-301 A

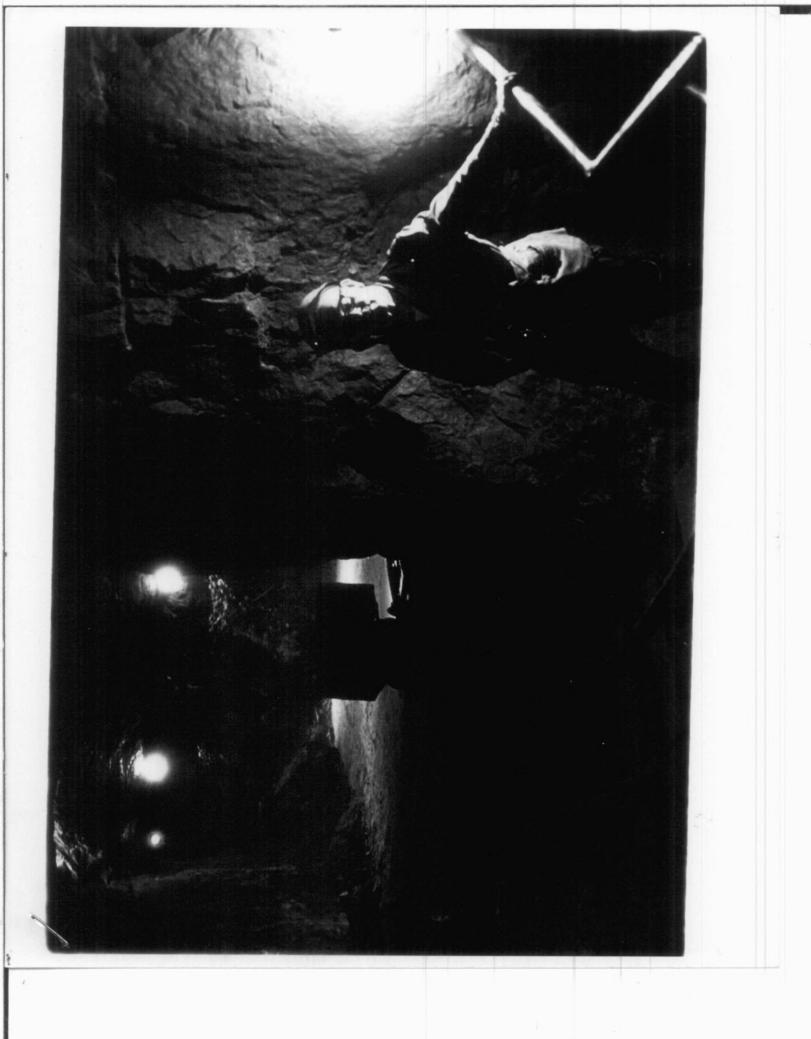
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Stephen J. Raiche Mo. State Park Board	Nover	mber 10, 1972	Mo. State Park Board, Bx. 17 Jefferson City, Mo. 65101	
4. IDENTIFICATION				
DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.				

General view of interior of mine, showing sections of the ceiling ("back") which have been removed for mining. Note improvements to facilitate visitor use. North facing south.



FORM 10-301 A (6/72)

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES PROPERTY PHOTOGRAPH FORM

(Type all entries - attach to or enclose with photograph)

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COMMON	Bonne Terre Mine	1	St. Joseph Lead at Bonne Terre	NUMERIC CODE (Assigned by NPS)
2. LOCA	ATION			
STATE	Missouri	COUNTY	St. Francois	Bonne Terre
STREET	AND NUMBER			-
	Highway 47 (Office)			
3. PHOT	TO REFERENCE			
PHOTO	Stephen J. Raiche Mo. State Park Board	DATE	November 10, 1972	Mo. State Park Board, Bx. 17 Jefferson City, Mo. 65101
4. IDEN	TIFICATION	•		

Interior of Bonne Terre Mine, near "mule entrance," showing surviving mining cart and equipment. Note illumination and visitor paths provided by Bonne Terre Mine Company. North facing south.

