

Kayla Shelley

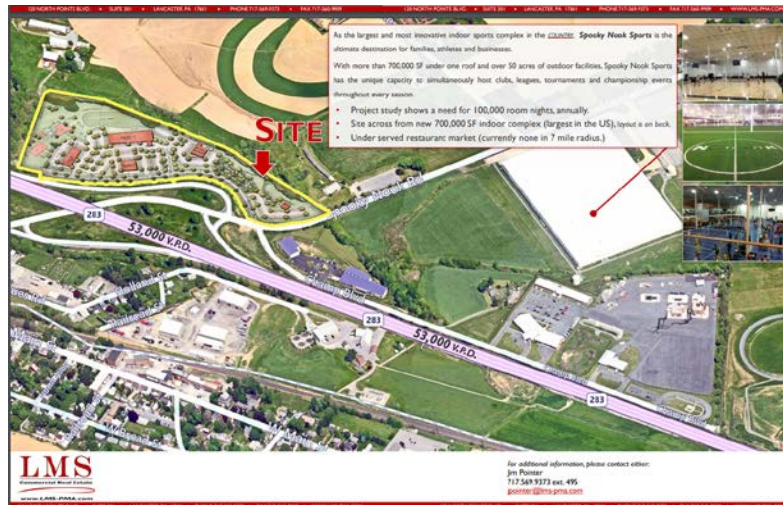
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Unit 6 Extra Credit, De-industrialization Paper

### Spooky Nook: Former Factory to Sports Venue

Given the amount of traffic you are stuck in, you would think it was rush hour in any major city, but instead you are in central Pennsylvania, somewhere between Harrisburg and Lancaster. The heavy traffic is heading for the Spooky Nook Sports venue. Traffic to the area is not new, as previously it was heading to the same spot but for a different reason. Spooky Nook used to be factory that employed a lot of people in the area, however, now Spooky Nook is part of a trend that is seeing old manufacturing locations converted to new use facilities for a changing de-industrialization of America.

Spooky Nook wasn't always a Sports Venue, but was a factory of Armstrong World Industries according to Spooky Nook's website (<https://www.spookynooksports.com/the-facility>). The former Armstrong Factory was for sale in 2011 as depicted in an advertising brochure from LMS Commercial Real Estate. Apparently the Spooky Nook founders had followed their daughter's volleyball tournaments all over the east coast and came up with the idea of making a venue closer to the Lancaster area of Pennsylvania to cut down on their travel.



### Advertising Brochure (LMS Real Estate)

According to Lancaster Online, the former factory once was bustling with over 1000 employees making floor and ceiling tiles. Demolition of many parts of the factory and associated buildings began in 2007. In 2011 the property was sold and was turned into the largest and most innovative sports complexes in the country.



Converting factory to sports complex (Lancaster Online)

Spooky Nook Sports now is a destination for athletes, families and businesses. They have more than 700,000 square feet indoors, and over 50 acres outside of athletic facilities of every type for every season. Sports featured at “The Nook” include baseball, basketball, climbing, field hockey, flag football, gymnastics, lacrosse, soccer, softball, track and field, and volleyball.



**Spooky Nook overview (Tandemgeek World Press)**

With a name like Spooky Nook and given that Fall is just around the corner, you might think the name is Halloween Themed. According to The Scribbler website, the name is derived from a “Spuk Haus” which supposedly stood at the corner of today’s Spooky Nook and was reported to be haunted.

My personal experience with Spooky Nook is similar to the founder’s story. My parents travelled all over the mid-Atlantic with my sister and I going to volleyball tournaments as well. We ended up at Spooky Nook a number of times for the “Irish Rumble” Volleyball tournament held every year in March. I was amazed at just how big the facility is. We had to walk through entire areas of batting cages, indoor baseball fields, basketball courts and soccer fields, just to get

to the area where the volleyball tournament was occurring. We even had to park in distant lots and ride a shuttle bus to the front door.

I would imagine the impact on the Lancaster area has been great. Although the factory workers are all gone, they have been replaced with food vendors, referees, building maintenance people, shuttle bus drivers, and much more. Each weekend, throughout the year, they have numerous activities and tournaments, which draw athletes from all over the country. This has resulted in hotels and restaurants around the area are now constantly booked due to activities in The Nook. My own family has spent a number of nights in various hotels between Hershey and Lancaster over the past five years.

According to the Biz Journal website, the Spooky Nook conversion was so successful, the owners started looking in 2016 to open another venue in Hamilton, Ohio that will take over and redevelop the vacant Champion Paper factory complex. According to various online sources this conversion is still in the beginning stages.

There are a number of vacant factories left over from America's industrial age. In addition, travel sports have enjoyed huge success over the past few decades for both boys and girls. It seems logical that conversions like Spooky Nook will continue into the future.



One of many soccer fields at The Nook (photo: G. Shelley)



My sister serving during a tournament (photo by G. Shelley)

**Sources:**

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