

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

February 25, 2015

State Historic Preservation Office
Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs



Historical and Cultural Affairs



Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs' State Historic Preservation Office

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A unit of the [Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs](#), the mission of the [State Historic Preservation Office](#) is to locate, study and record Delaware's historic buildings, structures, objects, districts, landscapes and archaeological sites. The preservation office consults with federal and state agencies on projects subject to preservation laws and regulations, oversees tax-credit programs that promote rehabilitation of historic properties, assists local governments with preservation programs, works with individuals and organizations to nominate eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places and maintains the Historic Properties Research Center, a repository of information on historic properties within the state.

Following is a sampling of significant recent accomplishments of the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office.

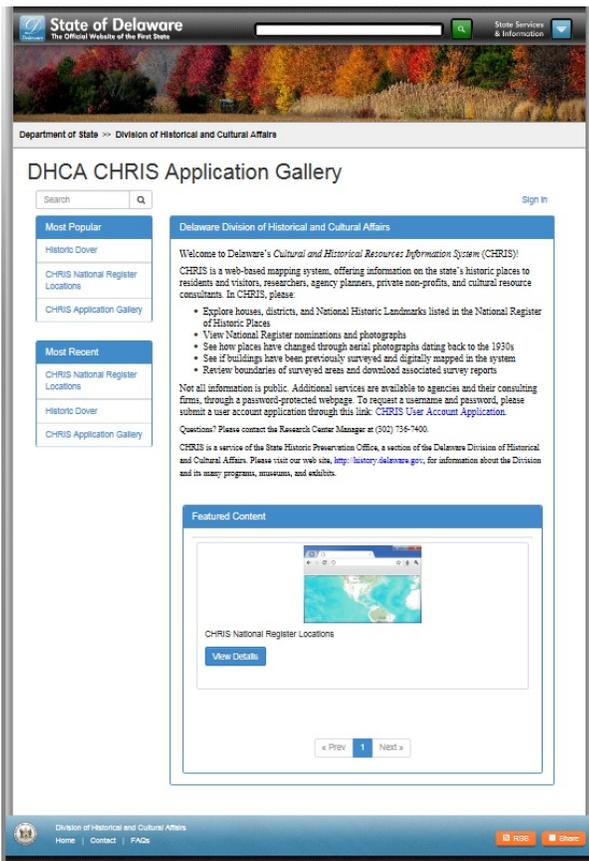
Updated geographic information system launched

On Feb. 16, 2015, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office unveiled the updated version of its Cultural and Historical Resource Information System (CHRIS), a Web-based [geographic information system](#) (GIS) on historic

properties that are located in the state of Delaware. A geographic information system integrates hardware, software and data for capturing, managing, analyzing and displaying all forms of geographically referenced information. The new edition of CHRIS is more comprehensive, interactive and faster than the original version that was launched in 2009. Available to the public at no charge, CHRIS may be accessed on the Web at the following address: <https://chris-users.delaware.gov>.

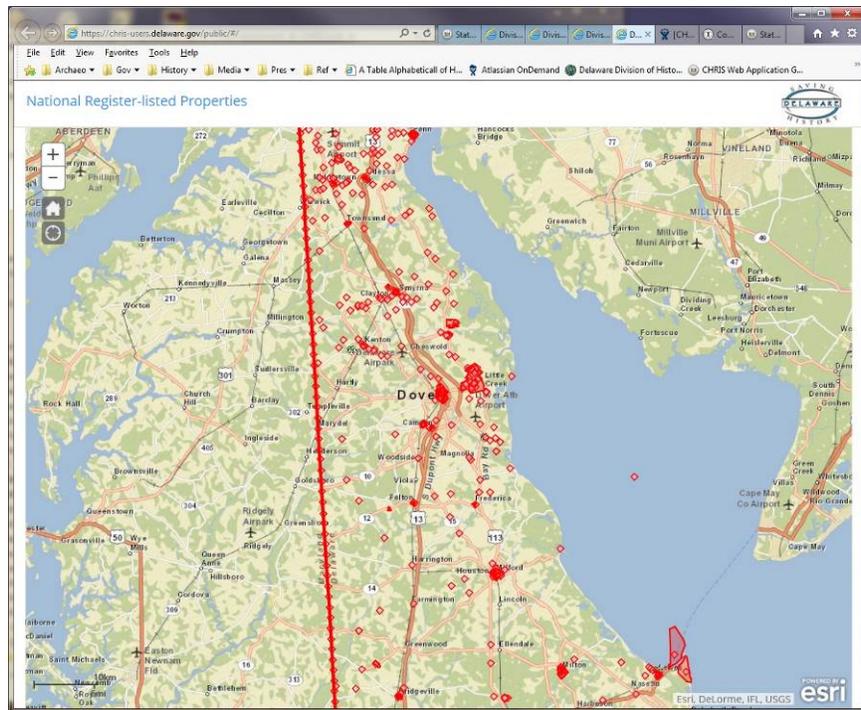
Designed to help preserve, maintain and foster awareness of Delaware's historical resources, CHRIS is an important tool for government agencies and their consultants in project planning, for local governments concerned with protecting historic properties in their jurisdictions, for Delaware's citizens seeking information on the history and architecture of their communities and for millions of Web users who may be interested in learning about Delaware's historic places.

The public side of the new CHRIS delivers information on Delaware's National Register of Historic Places-listed properties with a quick reference-table pop-up and attached nominations and photographs that can be viewed on-line or downloaded to a computer. In addition, forms and reports on non-confidential properties are available (archaeological-site locations are considered confidential).



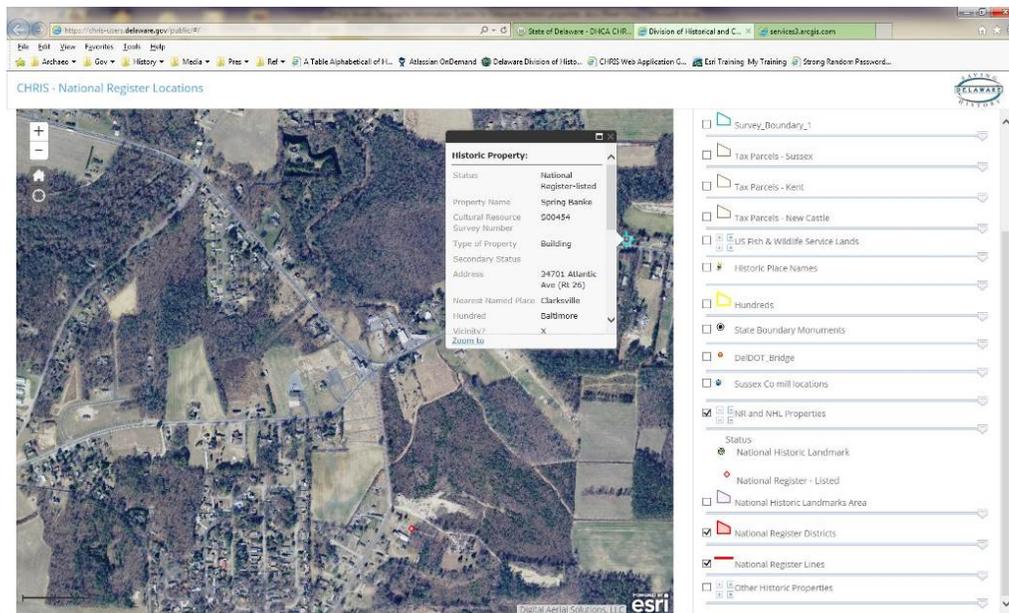
The opening page of CHRIS.

As with the original version of CHRIS, cultural-resource-management consultants; some academic researchers and private non-profit organizations; and federal-, state- and local-agency staff members that are planning projects can apply for passwords that will allow them to access the full range of information, conduct research and view archaeological reports. For the first time, the system allows people who survey historic properties to interactively map and upload forms, making for more rapid review and posting of new information.



National Register locations in Delaware.

The new version of CHRIS was developed as a collaborative project involving preservation office staff, the Delaware Department of State and [GeoDecisions](#), an information-technology company that specializes in geospatial solutions. GeoDecisions is a division of Gannett Fleming. Additional assistance was provided by the Delaware Department of Technology and Information.



Aerial image of a National Register-listed property.

Delaware awards grants to historic properties damaged by Hurricane Sandy; plans for improving disaster preparedness

On July 29, 2014, the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs announced that three Delaware sites—the Harbor of Refuge Lighthouse in Lewes harbor, the Milford New Century Club and the Phillips Potato House in Laurel—had been awarded funding under the [Hurricane Sandy Disaster Relief Assistance Grants for Historic Properties](#) program. Additionally, in accordance with its agreement with the National Park Service, the preservation office plans to apply disaster-relief funds toward improving data on the location and nature of historic properties in areas vulnerable to such storm events, thereby assisting in disaster planning.

The program is funded under the [Disaster Relief Appropriations Act, 2013](#), passed by Congress and signed into law by President Obama in response to the effects of the destructive hurricane that struck the East Coast of the United States in late October 2012. As part of the act, \$50 million was appropriated to the [National Park Service](#) to cover the costs of preserving and/or rehabilitating historic properties damaged by the storm. Subsequently, the Park Service allocated \$1 million for Delaware’s component of the program which is being administered by the division’s State Historic Preservation Office. The purpose of the program is to help return damaged historic properties to useful condition, preserving the state’s cultural heritage for future generations.

The preservation office received three applications for funding under the program. A technical-review committee found that all three of the applications qualified for support according to the selection criteria and application requirements. All award amounts are based on initial estimates. Work on the projects will take place in 2015.

Following are profiles of the funded projects:

- ◆ The **Harbor of Refuge Lighthouse**, situated on the outer breakwater in Lewes harbor, was built in 1926 and listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1989 as a contributing structure within the National Harbor of Refuge and Delaware Breakwater Harbor Historic District. Owned by the non-profit [Delaware River and Bay Lighthouse Foundation](#), the structure continues to serve as an active aid-to-navigation



Harbor of Refuge Lighthouse with intact dock (left), and dock after being damaged by Hurricane Sandy.

Wind-driven water and waves from Hurricane Sandy caused significant damage to the site's dock and stairs. As a result, the Delaware River and Bay Lighthouse Foundation was awarded up to \$360,000 for the replacement of those structures, and for an assessment of the overall condition of the lighthouse. The grant-funded work will define the critical preservation steps necessary to maintain and preserve this iconic landmark, and will restore proper access to allow such work to occur and to further the foundation's public interpretation and educational programming

- ◆ Built in 1885, the **Milford New Century Club** was individually listed in the National Register in 1982 as part of a multiple-property nomination for the city of Milford. The non-profit-owned building is significant for its architectural features and for its long-standing use as a community center. As a result of damages caused by Hurricane Sandy's high wind, wind-driven rain and rising water, the club was awarded up to \$60,000 for the replacement of the facility's heating-ventilation-air-conditioning system; replacement of the building's roof; exterior painting; and associated interior and exterior repairs. The grant-funded work will secure the building's exterior to prevent further damage and deterioration, and will allow the structure to again be used year-round for civic projects and as rental space for local events



Milford New Century Club after Hurricane Sandy.

- ◆ The **Phillips Potato House** was built circa 1900 and individually listed in the National Register in 1990 as part of a multiple-property nomination for sweet potato houses, a specialized agricultural outbuilding in Sussex County. The potato houses reflect the modernization of agricultural practices in southern Delaware during the first half of the 20th century including the emergence of truck farming.



Phillips Potato House after Hurricane Sandy.

Located outside the town of Laurel, the privately owned structure was damaged during Hurricane Sandy by high wind, wind-driven rain and water runoff. As a result, the property owner was awarded up to \$42,000 for the removal of damaged asphalt siding and repair of wood siding and trim, window repair, foundation repairs and the removal of metal roofing and restoration of wood shingles. The grant-funded work will secure the building's exterior to prevent further damage and deterioration, and provide an opportunity for returning the building to agricultural use and/or for an adaptive reuse to include public interpretation of agricultural practices

Federal and state preservation tax incentive programs revitalize communities

Each year, historic preservation tax credits not only assist with the rehabilitation of significant buildings and revitalization of communities, they also generate enormous amounts of private investment and create jobs. In Delaware, there has been an increasing interest in the benefits of both the federal and the state historic tax credit programs.

During fiscal year 2014, [Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives](#) provided assistance to property owners ranging from large developers in Wilmington who rehabilitated an abandoned warehouse into affordable rental-housing units, and who converted an abandoned government office building into corporate offices, to an individual owner in Sussex County who rehabilitated a structurally damaged rental property.

In Delaware's program, \$5 million in [Historic Preservation Tax Credits](#) were awarded during fiscal year 2014. These state tax credits were granted to owner-occupied, non-profit-owned and income-producing properties for eligible expenses incurred during the rehabilitation of 26 historic buildings in communities across the state including Bear, Delaware City, Dover, Lewes, Magnolia, New Castle and Wilmington.

Beginning in 2015, a portion of Delaware's historic preservation tax credits will be set aside for projects that help to revitalize the downtown areas of the state's cities and towns as part of the [Downtown Development Districts Act](#) that was signed into law by Gov. Jack Markell on June 5, 2014.



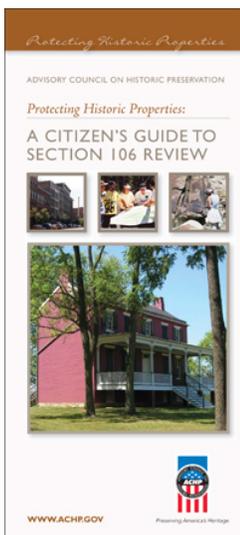
This private residence in Lewes was rehabilitated in 2014 with assistance from the Delaware Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program.

Expeditious environmental-reviews keep federal projects moving smoothly

During fiscal year 2014, the State Historic Preservation Office received for review and comment 378 new [environmental-review](#) projects in Delaware that are being undertaken, funded or permitted by federal-government agencies including the U.S. departments of Agriculture, Housing and Urban Development and Education; the Federal Highway Administration; the Federal Emergency Management Administration, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Communications Commission. The preservation office closed 90.2 percent of these projects. The remaining cases, complex and lengthy in nature, are proceeding through stages of activity.

Under Section 106 of the [National Historic Preservation Act of 1966](#), federal agencies are required to take into account the effects of their undertakings on buildings, districts and archaeological sites that are listed, or are eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places. Under Section 101 of the act, state historic preservation offices are responsible for advising federal agencies on the presence or absence of historic properties in a project area, and on ways that adverse effects to historic properties may be avoided or mitigated.

The Delaware State Historic Preservation Office works with federal agencies and applicants to update or create new programmatic agreements to streamline project reviews. The office currently operates under approximately 30 such agreements covering 12 different agencies' programs. For more information, go to [A Citizen's Guide to Section 106 Review](#).



Three new additions to the National Register of Historic Places

During the past year, three historic properties in Delaware were added to the [National Register of Historic Places](#), the United States government’s official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures and objects deemed worthy of preservation. State Historic Preservation Office staff members provided vital assistance to the property owners in preparing and submitting their National Register nominations for review.

Burton-Blackstone-Carey Store (Millsboro)

Built circa 1840 in the vernacular Greek-Revival style, the Burton-Blackstone-Carey Store is Millsboro’s oldest-known commercial building with intact historic fabric. Over its 170-year history, the two-story, rectangular frame-structure has housed a wide variety of businesses including a dry-goods store, a drug store, a finance company and a paint store. It currently serves as a custom frame-shop operated by Beatrice Carey. During the mid-1800s, the building was owned by Benjamin Burton, the town’s wealthiest resident and the largest-known slave owner in Delaware. Burton is noted for accompanying Delaware Congressman George Fisher to Washington, D.C. in 1861 for a meeting with President Abraham Lincoln in which they discussed plans for the compensated emancipation of the state’s slaves.



St. Stephen’s Protestant Episcopal Church (Harrington)

Built in 1876, St. Stephen’s Protestant Episcopal Church is a small, wood frame, one-story structure that is the town’s only known example of vernacular [Carpenter Gothic architecture](#). Though originally constructed for religious purposes, the building is currently owned by the Harrington Historical Society which operates it as a museum that chronicles the town’s history. The structure retains a substantial degree of architectural integrity including the original stained-glass window at the apex of the west façade, a bell tower with X-shaped cross-bracing at the southwest corner of the building, original decorative electroplated-hardware and its original board-and-batten siding.



Early “tent” buildings at the Union Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church camp-meeting ground.

Union Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church (Clarksville)

The Union Wesley Methodist Episcopal Church Complex is a grouping of buildings dating from the 19th century to the present that serves as a center of religious life and traditions in the African-American community of southern Delaware. The parcel contains the Union Wesley United Methodist Church (1959), the Blackwater School (1890), a camp-meeting ground (circa 1873) and a large cemetery. The camp-meeting ground features a circular design with a centrally placed large bower (covered but open-sided structure for worship) surrounded by the “tents” that serve as residences for attendees during the two-week-long annual camp-meeting. The earliest surviving “tents” are small-frame, gable-roofed, two-bay wide and two-stories tall.

The building that serves as the camp's refectory, or dining hall, is the former one-room Blackwater School which served the educational needs of African Americans from 1890 until 1922 when it was replaced by a school built by industrialist Pierre S. du Pont. Constructed under the auspices of the Delaware Association for the Moral Improvement and Education of the Colored People, the Blackwater School retains a high level of architectural integrity and is the best surviving example in Delaware of the school buildings constructed for black children during the post-Civil-War period.



The Blackwater School

\$52,832 sub-granted to Certified Local Governments

During fiscal year 2014, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office re-granted \$52,832 in funds it had received from the federal [Historic Preservation Fund](#) to support preservation-related activities conducted by the five [certified local governments](#) in the state. The grants were as follows:

◆ **Delaware City**

A \$5,712 grant is being used to study the African-Union Church (demolished) and cemetery as well as the Polktown community

◆ **Lewes**

A grant of \$5,712 is being used for the first phase of updating the historic-property information in Lewes' National Register of Historic Places nomination

◆ **Milton**

A grant of \$5,712 is being used for the second phase of updating the historic-property information in Milton's National Register nomination

◆ **New Castle County**

A \$17,848 grant is funding a consultant to work with the county's acting preservation planner to document historic properties within the county that have been found to be losing significant structural and/or architectural integrity. In addition, the grant provided funding for the consultant to prepare nominations for eligible properties to be listed in the National Register

◆ **Wilmington**

A grant of \$17,848 is providing support for Wilmington's preservation planner who assists, among other tasks, the citizens of Wilmington and city-government personnel in identifying and evaluating historic properties, preservation planning, treatment options including tax incentives, review and compliance activities, heritage education and public-outreach activities on preservation issues. The grant also provided funding for developing a walking tour of the Rodney Square Historic District, and updating comprehensive plans for the Midtown-Brandywine and Browntown-Hedgeville analysis-areas



Wilmington Institute Library, a component of the Rodney Square Historic District.

About the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office

The widespread demolition of older buildings and neighborhoods in America's cities in the early 1960s helped spur the federal government to enact the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. This legislation provided for the designation of a state historic preservation officer and a qualified staff within each state to help promote preservation of historic properties of local, state and national significance.



The Kirk/Short Building, a contributing property to the Dover Green Historic District and office of the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office.

Delaware's State Historic Preservation Office resides within the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, with the division director serving as the state historic preservation officer. Working in concert with academic and professional communities, preservation organizations, concerned citizens and all levels of government, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office coordinates preservation efforts throughout Delaware and serves as an advocate for the preservation of Delaware's historic places and unique cultural identity.

The Delaware State Historic Preservation Office is supported with federal Historic Preservation Fund formula grants on a 60 percent share/40 percent matching basis. In general, the State Historic Preservation Office performs the following services, fulfilling federal and state mandates:

- ◆ Administers the annual federal Historic Preservation Fund appropriation
- ◆ Reviews federally-funded, permitted or licensed undertakings/projects and advises the sponsors of the effects on historic properties including buildings, structures, districts, archaeological sites, objects and landscapes
- ◆ Reviews and comments on land use and development proposals under the state [Preliminary Land Use Service](#)
- ◆ Leads efforts in securing and accepting nominations of significant properties and sites to the National Register of Historic Places in conjunction with the [Delaware State Review Board for Historic Preservation](#)
- ◆ Encourages and assists local governments in securing certified local government designation which makes them eligible to receive a portion of the Historic Preservation Fund grant for local historic preservation activities. Delaware has five certified local governments: Delaware City, Lewes, Milton, New Castle County and the City of Wilmington
- ◆ Administers federal and state historic preservation tax incentive programs for the rehabilitation of properties listed in the National Register of Historic Places
- ◆ Monitors and enforces the terms of maintenance and public-benefit covenants and easements that are administered by the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs
- ◆ Provides guidance upon the discovery of [unmarked human burials](#) and/or skeletal remains, and advises on appropriate treatment and disposition, in accordance with state law. Works with developers and landowners on efforts to avoid such discoveries
- ◆ Conducts, or supports others in conducting, statewide [cultural resource surveys](#) of historic properties
- ◆ Maintains a central [research repository](#) of historical and cultural resource information related to historic properties and sites in Delaware
- ◆ Provides technical assistance to the public on historic preservation topics
- ◆ Provides and participates in educational programs about Delaware history, archaeology and historic architecture
- ◆ Drafts every five years and maintains a commitment to implement Delaware's state historic preservation plan
- ◆ Disseminates historic preservation information via the latest technologies including a [WordPress blog](#), [Twitter feed](#), [YouTube channel](#), [Flickr photostream](#) and Facebook pages at the [six museums](#) of the state of Delaware

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NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

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