

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

## Recent Accomplishments March 1, 2012



*Statue of Caesar Rodney by James E. Kelley, a contributing element of Wilmington's Rodney Square Historic District which was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 2011.*

# Delaware State Historic Preservation Office

## Recent Accomplishments

A unit of the state's Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, the mission of the [Delaware State Historic Preservation Office](#) is to locate, study and record Delaware's historic buildings, structures, objects, districts, landscapes and archaeological sites. The 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 some significant recent accomplishments of the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office.

### **Expeditious review keeps federal projects moving**

During fiscal year 2011, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office received for review and comment 529 new environmental-review projects in Delaware that are being undertaken, funded or permitted by federal-government agencies including, among others, the Army Corps of Engineers and the departments of Agriculture, Energy and Housing and Urban Development. The preservation office closed nearly 90 percent of these projects. The remaining cases, complex and lengthy in nature, are proceeding through stages of activity. As part of this process, the preservation office expedited 89 environmental-review projects associated with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (an approximately 19 percent increase over the previous fiscal year), with 96 percent of these projects reviewed within three weeks.



*Archaeologists excavate a 19th century tenant-house site in advance of a road widening project on Chotpank Road. Plans for this project were subject to a Section 106 review by the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office.*

Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, 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 20 such agreements covering 19 different agencies' programs, the most recent being the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management's regional agreement for the "'Smart from the Start' Atlantic Wind Energy Initiative."

## \$1.9 million in historic preservation tax credits awarded



The Delaware State Historic Preservation Office awarded nearly \$1.9 million in [Historic Preservation Tax Credits](#) during fiscal year 2011. These state-tax credits were granted, to property owners for eligible expenses incurred during the rehabilitation of 14 historic buildings in communities across the state including Bear, Delaware City, Laurel, New Castle, Newark and Wilmington.

*The Studley House in Laurel, rehabilitated with assistance from the Delaware Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program.*

## \$52,492 re-granted to certified local governments

During FY 2011, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office re-granted \$52,492 in funds it had received from the federal [Historic Preservation Fund](#) to support preservation-related activities conducted by three of the state's certified local governments: New Castle County, Wilmington and Delaware City. The grants were as follows:

### ◆ **New Castle County**

A \$17,748 grant provided assistance for the county's preservation planner, with the assistance of an intern, to prepare booklets on "green" energy solutions, and energy conservation and sustainability. It also provides funding for a consultant to document the properties within Appendix 4 of New Castle County's Unified Development Code (UDC) that have been found to be losing significant structural and/or architectural integrity

### ◆ **Wilmington**

A grant of \$25,444 provided support for Wilmington's preservation planner who assists, among other tasks, the citizens of Wilmington and city-government personnel in the areas of identification and evaluation of historic properties, nominations to the National Register, preservation planning, treatment options including tax incentives, review and compliance activities, heritage education and public outreach activities on preservation issues

### ◆ **Delaware City**

A \$9,300 grant was used to provide training for members of the Delaware City Historic Preservation Commission as well as members of other commissions throughout the state under a contract with [Preservation Delaware](#), a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving the architecture and historical settings of the state



*The Sterling Hotel in the Delaware City Historic District.*

## Preservation-planning process underway

Beginning in January 2012, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office began a year-long process of updating Delaware's statewide historic-preservation plan. (Go to the following to see the current [Delaware historic-preservation plan for 2008-2012](#).) Required as part of the state's [Historic Preservation Fund](#) grant from the National Park Service, development of a new historic-preservation plan provides an invaluable method for focusing on the broader goals and needs of Delaware's preservation community for the next five years.

Throughout the process, the planning committee will be seeking the widest possible public comments in order to thoroughly understand the needs and desires of Delawareans regarding the preservation of the state's historic places. Development of the plan includes:

- ◆ Seeking input via an [on-line survey](#) to garner public comments on historic preservation views, desires, dislikes and needs. Results to date (see Delaware Preservation Planning 2012 Key Findings on the enclosed compact disk) indicate that respondents think historic preservation is beneficial to the state's economy and deserves government support. This survey will be open through March 2012
- ◆ Providing additional information-gathering opportunities via a series of public meetings in late February and early March 2012



*Members of the public gather in 2007 to offer their comments on historic preservation concerns.*

- ◆ Forming a working group of planners and preservationists to help develop goals and suggest strategies for implementing the historic preservation plan, based on input from the survey and public meetings
- ◆ Seeking input from the National Park Service and the State Review Board for Historic Preservation on the draft plan, amending the plan accordingly, and then publicizing the final document by January 2013.

While the Delaware historic-preservation plan will be extremely useful for the preservation office, it is not a blueprint for state government alone. Rather, it will include goals and strategies that benefit preservation advocates across Delaware. The plan will provide all Delawareans who are passionate about historic preservation with a framework for effective decision-making, for coordinating statewide preservation activities and for communicating statewide preservation policy, goals and values to the preservation constituency, decision-makers and interested and affected parties across the state.

## Four new additions to the National Register of Historic Places

During 2011, three historic properties and one historic district in Delaware were added to the [National Register of Historic Places](#). State Historic Preservation Office staff members provided vital assistance to the property owners in preparing and submitting their National Register nominations for review.

### Carswell House (Newark)

Built in 1948 in the International Style, the design of the Carswell House is based on plans by the well-known modern architect Edward Durell Stone which were developed and published in a series of six articles in *Collier's Weekly* magazine during the second quarter of 1936. The house is built into a hill that slopes gently to the rear of the property, allowing penetration of natural light into the finished basement through a series of west-facing windows slightly above ground level.



### McColley's Chapel (Georgetown Hundred)

McColley's Chapel is a well-preserved example of the Methodist meeting houses that were built across Delaware in the 19th century. Virtually identical in size, shape, massing and scale, these structures reflect the architectural aesthetic promoted in the early Methodist Discipline which called for houses of worship to be plain and decent. Built in 1898 in Colonial Revival style, the one-story, wood-framed, gabled-end chapel continues to offer worship services for its congregation on a weekly basis.

### Rodney Square Historic District (Wilmington)

The civic and commercial core of downtown Wilmington, the contributing elements of the Rodney Square Historic District present an aesthetic unity in both their general and specific design elements. All of the buildings and the square have symmetrical elevations, formal access points, flat rooflines and masonry cladding. Many of the details are similarly consistent including rusticated bases, engaged columns, ornamented cornices and Classical moldings.



*Wilmington Institute Free Library, a contributing property to the Rodney Square Historic District.*



### Water Witch Steam Fire Engine Company No. 5 (Wilmington)

Located at 1814 Gilpin Ave. in Wilmington's Forty Acres neighborhood, the firehouse was built in 1893 for the Water Witch Steam Fire Engine Company. Designed by Edward L. Rice, Jr. (1848–1933), known at the time of his death as the dean of Wilmington architects, the building is a 2 ½ story, red-brick structure with a slate-covered mansard roof that reflects the influence of the Second Empire and Queen Anne architectural styles of the late-Victorian period. Its interior includes many original features in its two engine-bays, watch box, office, staircase, assembly room and hayloft.

## **Lightship Overfalls is Delaware’s latest national historic landmark**

On June 30, 2011, U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced the designation of [14 new national historic landmarks](#) from across the nation including Lightship LV-118 (Overfalls) located in Lewes, Del. This designation brings to 13 the number of [national historic landmarks in Delaware](#). The successful application for national historic landmark status was submitted by the [Overfalls Foundation](#), which owns and operates the ship as a floating museum, with assistance from the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office.

The Overfalls was the last lightship built for the United States Lighthouse Service. It was commissioned as the LV (light vessel) 118 in 1938 and was considered at that time to be state of the art in lightship design. Between 1938 and 1972, it was stationed at three different lightship stations: first at Cornfield Point off the coast of Connecticut, then at the Cross Rip Station off the coast of Massachusetts and finally the Boston Station just off Cape Cod. After suffering major structural damage in a December 1970 storm, the ship was taken out of service in 1971, decommissioned in 1972 and donated by the Coast Guard in 1973 to the Lewes Historical Society which moved it to the canal in downtown Lewes. The vessel is one of only 17 remaining American lightships out of a total of 179 built from 1820 to 1952, and one of seven lightships in the United States that are still open to the public.



*Lightship Overfalls*

## **“Embracing the 20th Century” conference a success**

On Wednesday, March 30, 2011, the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office hosted the conference, [“Embracing the 20th Century: Documenting Delaware Contemporary Cultural Resources”](#) which focused on the historic potential of buildings constructed between 1900 and 1961. Featured speakers included Patrick Andrus, a National Register of Historic Places historian who discussed his agency and its programs; Carol Lee, Pennsylvania’s National Register coordinator who discussed post-World War II suburbs in Pennsylvania; and Joan Larrivee, an architectural historian for the preservation office who discussed Delaware’s Historic Preservation Tax Credit Program.

## NCSHPO board members enjoy tours of historic-preservation successes in New Castle County

As part of its summer meeting that was held on June 13 and 14, 2011 at the Hotel du Pont in Wilmington, the board of directors of the National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers was treated to guided tours which focused on the following topics: “[Rehabilitation tax credits](#) as key economic development tools—a walking tour of downtown Wilmington,” “[New Castle National Historic Landmark District](#)—a new kind of national park” and “[Buena Vista](#)—can a state historic site pay for itself?”



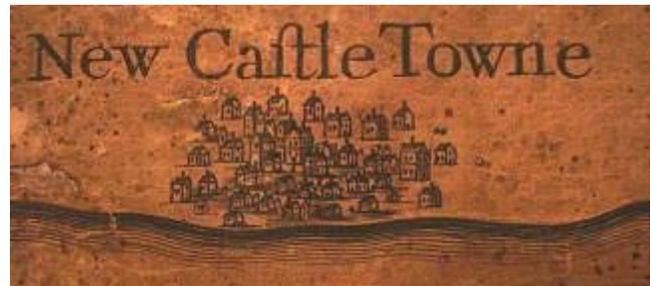
*NCSHPO board members visiting the New Castle National Historic Landmark District.*

The tours highlighted several of the most significant historic-preservation achievements that have taken place in Delaware over the past 40 years including successful rehabilitation projects at the former Delaware Trust building, the [Grand Opera House](#), the [Queen Theatre](#) and the railroad station in Wilmington; the [New Castle Court House Museum](#), New Castle Academy and the [Read House and Gardens](#) in New Castle; and Buena Vista south of New Castle. While visiting the New Castle Court House, board members were briefed by Josh Magarik, projects director for U.S. Sen. Thomas R. Carper, on efforts to bring a unit of the National Park Service to Delaware.

The [National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers](#) is the professional association of the state government officials who carry out the national historic preservation program as delegates of the Secretary of the Interior pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

## Symposium on the Early Colonial Archaeology of the Delaware Valley

On Saturday, May 14, 2011, the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, in collaboration with the [Archaeological Society of Delaware](#), presented a Symposium on the Early Colonial Archaeology of the Delaware Valley. An annual event, the symposium is dedicated to building a regional-level dialog that can identify the uniqueness of the cultures that existed in the Delaware Valley during the early period of European colonization. Held at the New Castle Court House Museum, the 2011 symposium featured a variety of topics including “Early Settlement at Bombay Hook, Kent County, Delaware”; “Locating Early Colonial Sites in Delaware: Examples From Recent DelDOT Projects in Middletown and Milford”; “Documentary Evidence for Colonial Patterns of Technologies in the Unique Area Around the Delmarva Peninsula: Insight for Archaeologists and Historians”; and several others.



## **Gwen Davis named deputy state historic preservation officer**

On Oct. 3, 2011, Tim Slavin, director of the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs and state historic preservation officer, announced that long-time staff member Gwen Davis had been selected as the agency's new deputy state historic preservation officer. She succeeds Steve Marz who is now the director of the Delaware Public Archives.



*Gwen Davis*

Davis has been a valuable member of the State Historic Preservation Office team for over 19 years, serving as its liaison to the Federal Highway Administration and Delaware Department of Transportation in the review of transportation projects. In 2009, she was [honored for her leadership efforts](#) in helping to compile meaningful statistical data on Native American areas in Delaware. Davis holds degrees in anthropology with a focus on archaeology of the pre-European-contact period. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Delaware and her master's degree from the State University of New York at Albany. In addition to her service with the division, she has worked for several cultural-resource consultants conducting archaeological investigations in Delaware and New York State. Davis is a long-time resident of Delaware who currently lives near Laurel.

## **Craig Lukezic named Out-of-State Archaeologist of the Year**

At its annual meeting on Oct. 15, 2011 in Staunton, Va., the [Archaeological Society of Virginia](#) named Delaware State Historic Preservation Office archaeologist and Delaware Archaeological Society president Craig Lukezic as its 2011 Out-of-State Archaeologist of the Year. The award is made to an out-of-state recipient who has contributed in an outstanding fashion to Virginia archaeology.

Lukezic has had a long history of involvement with Virginia archaeology. He served for many years as an archaeologist with the Virginia Department of Transportation and was an active member of the Roanoke chapter of the Archaeological Society of Virginia. After moving to Delaware, he worked with Virginia archaeologists in developing a certification program for Delaware that was patterned after the one used in Virginia. Lukezic is active in the [Middle Atlantic Archaeological Conference](#) and continues to participate in archaeological excavations in Virginia, as well as those in Delaware, Pennsylvania and Maryland.



*Craig Lukezic*

## State Historic Preservation Office commended for team excellence

During an agency-wide meeting of the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs which was held at the Buena Vista Conference Center in New Castle on Feb. 28, 2011, Delaware Secretary of State Jeffrey W. Bullock commended the staff members of the division's State Historic Preservation Office who had been nominated for, but were ultimately unsuccessful in receiving, the 2010 Governor's Team Excellence Award.

During 2010, the preservation office team expedited the review of 75 federal environmental-review projects associated with the [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act](#), with 72 projects reviewed within three weeks. Expeditious review helped get these projects moving, injecting federal spending into the state's economy, updating the state's infrastructure and putting people to work.



*Delaware State Historic Preservation Office honored for team excellence. (from left) Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs Director Tim Slavin; Delaware Secretary of State Jeffrey W. Bullock; and team members Jesse Zanavich, Jim Yurasek, Joan Larrivee, Alice Guerrant, Chuck Fithian, Madeline Dunn, Gwen Davis and Terence Burns.*

In nominating the State Historic Preservation Office team, division director Tim Slavin noted that team members had been “extremely successful in addressing ARRA [American Recovery and Reinvestment Act] projects and had consistently met timeframes for decision making in this regard. A case in point is the Wilmington Amtrak Station—a historical rehabilitation project that had been on hold for almost 2 years until the ARRA money became available. A Section 106 review was completed and responded to by the SHPO [State Historic Preservation Office] staff within three business days of the request. ... This same approach—expedious and thorough review of ARRA projects remains a guiding principle for SHPO staff.”

## 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.

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:



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

- ◆ 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, that include 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: New Castle County, City of Wilmington, Delaware City, Lewes and Milton
- ◆ 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 under the stewardship of 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 information technology, most recently through the establishment of a blog

