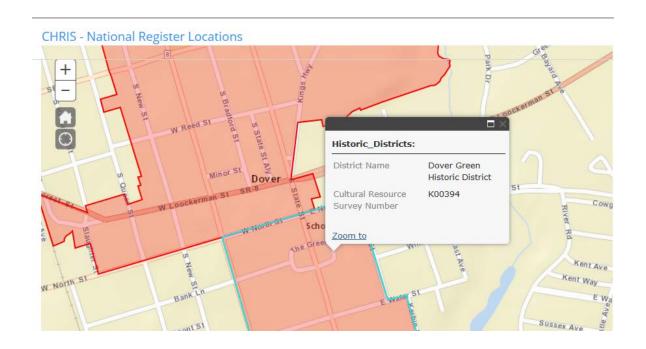# User's Guide

for

Delaware's Cultural and Historical Resources Information System

a service of the

Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

Delaware Cultural and Historical Resources Information System

User's Guide

Introduction

The Delaware Cultural and Historical Resources Information System (CHRIS) is a web-based map system (https://chris-users.delaware.gov) that provides location and cultural information on historic properties recorded by the State Historic Preservation Office, a section of the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs. The newest version of the system uses the ArcGIS On-line (AGOL) mapping service provided by ESRI. This system makes extensive use of pop-up windows to provide information about properties and layers, so be sure to turn off the pop-up blocker for this site. Not all information is available to the public (e.g., archaeological site location information is restricted).
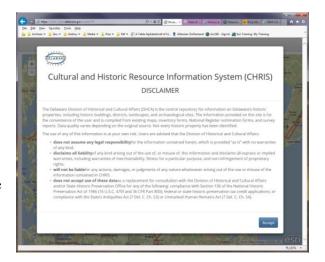
In CHRIS, you can:

- Explore houses, districts, and National Historic Landmarks listed in the National Register of Historic Places
- View National Register nominations and photographs
- See how places have changed through aerial photographs dating back to the 1930s
- See if buildings have been previously surveyed and digitally mapped in the system
- Review boundaries of surveyed areas and download associated survey reports

NOTE: CHRIS works best with a large monitor (17" or better). However, it can be viewed on a smaller monitor or tablet. You will need to scroll down to get all of the information available in the map you are viewing. Illustrations in this guide were taken from a large monitor.

A Work in Progress

CHRIS contains information on all National-Register listed and National Historic Landmark properties in Delaware. However, not all the other properties surveyed over the last 40-plus years have yet been mapped in CHRIS. We are working continuously to update our information and to get our survey forms and photographs posted. Because CHRIS is not yet complete, you will first see a disclaimer warning users about the gaps in the data.

Using CHRIS and AGOL

Like many mapping systems, the settings on your computer and the type of internet browser you use can affect your experience with CHRIS. In recent versions of Internet Explorer, you **must** add the Delaware.gov web site to the compatibility view settings (Tools, Compatibility view settings, then the pop-up box shown here). In older versions, you can just turn on Compatibility View (under Tools in the menu bar). Some users have reported that Google Chrome occasionally loses the links in the Gallery view (the home page for CHRIS), and the only solution has been to reboot the system. Thus far, we have not heard of any issues with Firefox. If the system isn't opening properly, try updating your browser or using a different one.

NOTE: Because some layers have large amounts of data, these are slow to load, and will not fully load until you zoom in to a fairly tight scale. Be patient; do not open layers such as the Tax Parcels until you are zoomed in to the area you want to examine. Speed of use and redrawing depends as well on the speed of your Internet connection; dial-up connections may not provide enough speed to use CHRIS comfortably.

The Gallery

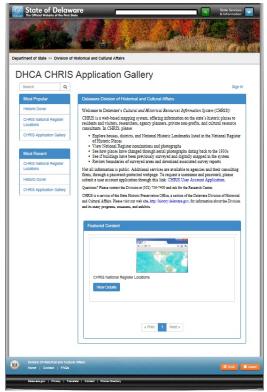When you go to CHRIS, you will start at the Gallery. This shows the maps that are available for you to use and view, as shown here.
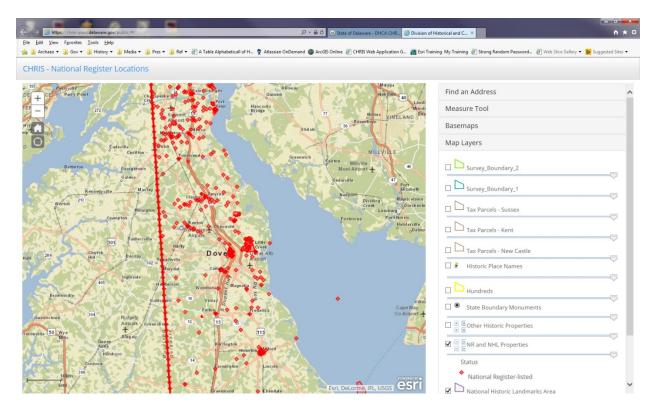
The National Register map shows non-confidential National Register, National Historic Landmark, and surveyed historic properties in Delaware. When you click on the map icon or on the link to the left, the system takes you to some information about that particular map, with a launch button to run the map.

Launch

The map will open in a separate tab. **Do not close the Gallery tab**. That way, you can always get back to the Gallery if you want to look at a different map.

First, the site will show you the disclaimer (see above). The public map starts with the National Register and National Historic Landmarks layer on by default. Be patient; this map has a lot of data and may be slow to load fully.

Getting Around

Once you are in CHRIS, the changes you make to the map view happen in the current tab/window. You cannot use the browser back arrow to get to any previous views, nor is there a back arrow in CHRIS. There are a number of techniques that make it easier to navigate around the maps and to access the information:

Function	Technique	Notes
Zoom in	Click[1] on the + sign in upper left corner	zooms to center of window
Zoom in	Hold down Shift key, click and hold mouse button, then move mouse to draw a rectangle	zooms to rectangle
Zoom in	Roll mouse wheel away from you	zooms to where mouse pointer appears
Zoom out	Click on the – sign in upper left corner	zooms out centered on window
Zoom out	Roll mouse wheel towards you	zooms out, keeping mouse pointer in window
Zoom to full extent of map	Click on the Home sign in upper left corner	
Pan	Click and hold the mouse button down while moving cursor on map	

---

[1] AGOL uses only the left mouse button, so all references to clicking with the mouse refer to the left button.
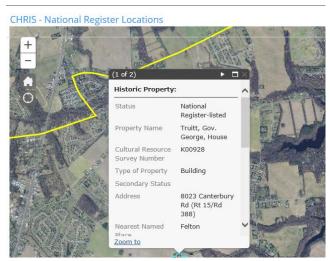
Changing the Base Map

CHRIS starts with the Streets layer as the default base map. If you look at the image on the previous page, you will see this map behind all the points that indicate historic property locations. If you click on the Basemaps button, you will see a list of the available base maps. These include Streets (the default view), the USGS topographic maps (joined into a seamless layer), and statewide aerial images. Just click on one of the map names to change the image. Only one base map can show at a time, and there must always be a base map on.

You can change the base map to one of the older aerials, such as 1937 or 1954. This way, you can see what the historic landscape was like at that time, and then change to the 2012 one to get the modern conditions. Note that the earlier aerials do not have the fine resolution that the 2012 map does; if you zoom in too closely, the picture will pixelate, that is, show as large cloudy splotches. Zoom out gradually until the picture takes form again.

Learning about a Feature

To find information about a feature or property, make sure that the layer is on; it will be on when the little box next to the layer name has a check mark in it. Click in this box to turn layers on and off as you need them. Use the scroll bar to the right if you cannot see all the layers. Some layers will not appear until you are more closely zoomed in, especially those with a large amount of data, such as Tax Parcels. You may get an error message that not all of the data could be shown at that scale; just zoom in closer to your area for all the data to appear.
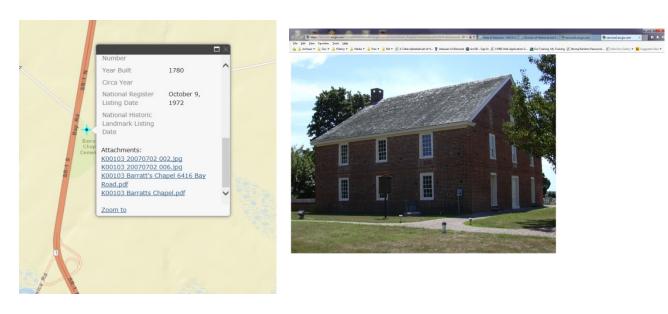
Then click on the point that represents the historic property, or in an area covered by a polygon layer, such as Hundreds or Tax Parcels. A pop-up window will appear with the name of the layer and the table of information associated with the feature. All information contained in each active layer shows in a pop-up; there is no labeling on this map.
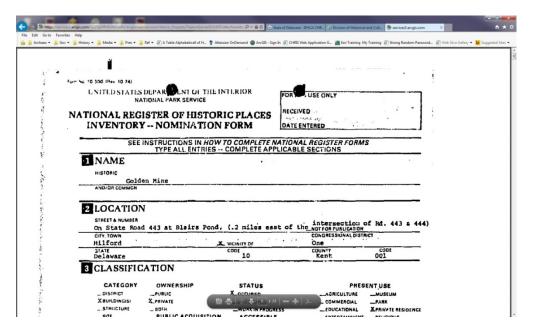

If more than one layer or feature could be referenced, then there will be a number sequence, such as **1 of 2**, at the top of the pop-up. Click on the arrow at the top of the pop-up to move one by one through the available information. As you move through them, the currently selected feature will be highlighted on the map.

Inventory forms, National Register and National Historic Landmark nominations, photographs, drawings, and other available information are presented as attachments to the point. Use the scroll bar in the pop-up window or the scroll wheel on your mouse to move down to the rest of the information and the names of any attachments. Clicking on one of the attachment links will open that attachment **in a separate browser tab**:

A tool bar will appear at the bottom of a document if the cursor hovers over that area. This toolbar allows you to save the document to your computer, print the document to your printer, zoom in or out to make the document easier to read, or page down or up through the document.

Click on the second tab opened to return to the map window. You can keep any number of attachments open in their separate tabs, but the tab names will be identical. You should consider closing tabs as you go to avoid confusion.

Available Layers

Historic property layers:

Layer Name	Definition
NR and NHL Properties	central point of property listed in the National Register of Historic Places or as a National Historic Landmark
National Historic Landmarks Area	boundary of a National Historic Landmark property
National Register Districts	boundary of a historic district listed in the National Register of Historic Places
National Register Lines	linear extent of a property listed in the National Register of Historic Places
Other Historic Properties	central point of other properties, not currently listed
Sussex Co. Mill Locations	approximate locations of 19th and 20th century mills in Sussex Co., based on historic maps (a DelDOT project)

Other layers:

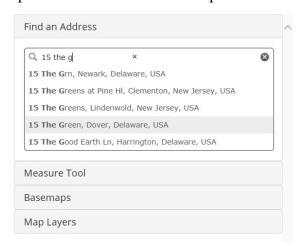| Layer Name	Definition
State Boundary Monuments	point location of official monuments marking Delaware's boundary with Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey
DelDOT Bridges	location of bridges owned by the Delaware Dept. of Transportation
Hundreds	boundary of hundreds – historically, sub-county land recordation, polling, taxing, and census units; today only used for land recordation
Historic Place Names	point location of places named on historic maps; note that there may be multiple names for the same place
US Fish & Wildlife Service Lands	boundary of lands owned by the US Fish & Wildlife Service
Tax Parcels (New Castle, Kent, and Sussex)	boundary of county tax parcels; note that information attached differs somewhat for each county
Survey Boundary 1	boundary of area surveyed at a reconnaissance level, usually for federally funded or permitted project
Survey Boundary 2	boundary of area surveyed at an intensive level, usually for federally funded or permitted project

Note: The 1868 Pomeroy and Beers Atlas maps will be available in the future, but will not immediately be available through the CHRIS Gallery. If you need these maps before the new Beers map is up, please contact our office.
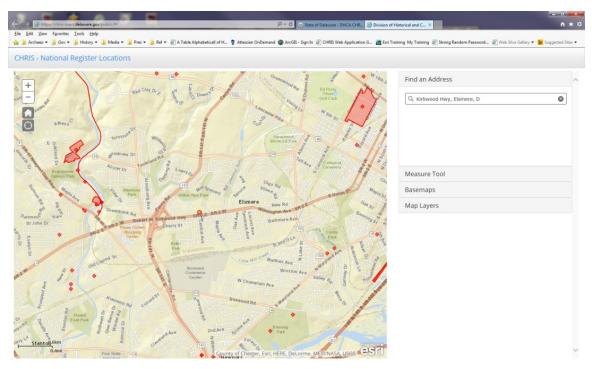
Tools to Help You

There are some tools at the top of the legend to the right which can be very helpful to you.

If you know the street address (911 address) of the property you are looking for, you can use **Find an Address**. Click on the tool name, and type or paste the address in the box that appears. As you enter the address, approximate matches for it start showing in the list below the box. You can click on one of these or press the Enter key, and the map will move to that address, noted by a pin marker centered in the map window. This pin appears in the street, in front of or close to
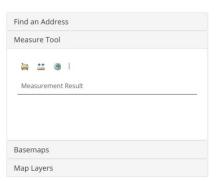

the address. Remember that this may be only an approximate location. You may need to look at one of the aerials or the tax parcel information (if you know the tax parcel number) to be sure you are looking at the correct property.

You can also enter a street name, partial street name, or a place name to have the map take you to those areas:
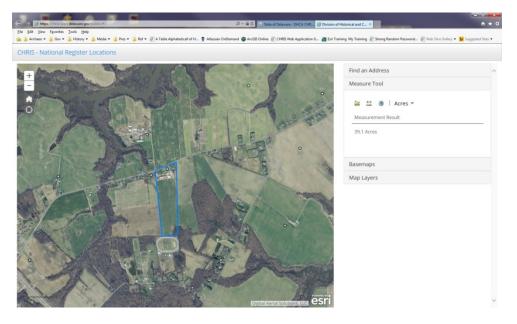

The **Measure Tool** is helpful if you need to figure out how far two properties are apart, how far a main house is off the road, the area of a possible district, or the geographic coordinates for a particular property or location. Click on the Measure Tool and then click on the kind of measurement you want to do.
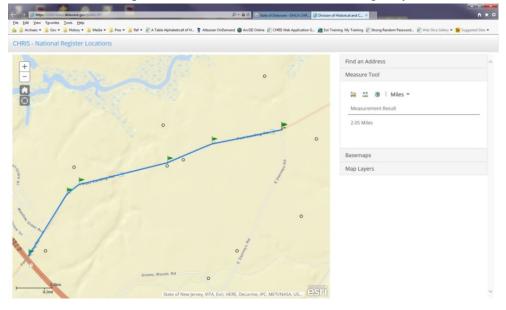
The first icon measures area in a polygon; the second measures the length of a line, and the third measures geographical position. Each of these allows you to choose a unit of measurement, and then returns the result in the box shown.

After you select a type of measurement, click on the point where you want to start, release the mouse button, move to the next point, click again, move to the next point, and so on, until you get to the next-to-last point (for a polygon) or last point (for linear distance). Then double click, and if you are measuring a polygon, the polygon will close and the total area measured will appear.
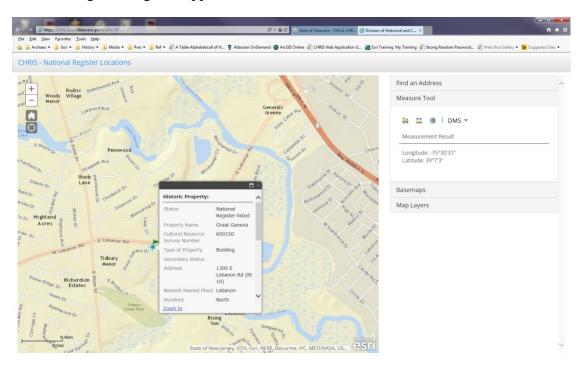

If you are measuring a linear distance, each click will be marked with a green flag and give you the distance to that point, and the final double-click will give you the total distance.

NOTE: When the distance or polygon measure tool is active, **the informational pop-up is turned off**. This makes it possible to measure areas when you have a tax parcel layer on, for example, without the pop-ups getting in your way. Be sure to click on the tool again to turn it off before you click on a point or tax parcel to get the pop-up window to show!

If you need to determine the latitude and longitude of a place, click on the geographic position icon, choose Degrees (decimal degrees) or DMS (degree, minute, second), and then click on the location. A green flag will appear and the results will be shown in the Measure Tool box.

You will notice that the informational pop-up for a historic property does appear when using the geographic position tool on that location.

Printing a Map

There is no tool to automatically produce a map. You can use the **Print** function in your browser to immediately print the visible window. However the pop-up windows become transparent when printed this way, so the map may not be satisfactory.

There are several ways to capture the map image. You can use **Alt-PrtScn** (upper right on most keyboards) or a snipping tool to acquire a screen image of the active window, and then paste this image into a program such as Paint or other image editing software. These programs allow you to crop and mark up the image and to add text information. We advise you to include the source and date of the image, as well as the base map shown. This is particularly important if you are using one of the historic aerials.

More to Come

As noted above, this new edition of CHRIS is a work in progress. In the future, we will be adding more information from our existing files, and other researchers will create new survey points and upload forms.   We also plan to continue enhancing the features of the system. If you have suggestions or questions about CHRIS, please feel free to contact us at the Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs, (302) 736-7400; ask for the Research Center.