

NEW BOOK! **COLONIAL DELAWARE ARRIVES THIS WINTER**

Swedish and Dutch in origin, Delaware was unique among the colonies in its anomalous and semi-independent status, as well as in its justified concern to preserve its identity and its equality with the other colonies united in waging a war for independence and in forming a constitutional union. This December the Commission will republish *Colonial Delaware* by Dr. John Munroe (right). It will be the 22nd book in the Delaware Heritage Press collection. Professor Munroe has written a detailed history of colonial Delaware which covers the political, social, and economic growth of the colony. This comprehensive volume traces the development of Delaware from its first Dutch settlement, in 1631, through times of conflict and of calm, to its final ratification of the Constitution and its emergence as the first state in the nation.



During the seventeenth century there were many controversies over the land that eventually became the state of Delaware. Its possession always in doubt, Delaware was, at various times, part of New Sweden, New Netherland, and New York, as well as the subject of intermittent claims by Maryland. In 1682 the Duke of York, whose title was questionable, transferred his claim to this land to William Penn, who then sought to solidify his own claim by uniting the Delaware counties to Pennsylvania.



William Penn

Having attained political autonomy and identity after a long struggle, Delawareans were not enthusiastic about any radical change in their condition. Yet they joined their sister colonies in the Revolution, and once assured of their status in the new government, they were eager for a strong constitutional union. Acting with virtual unanimity, Delaware became the first state to ratify the Constitution.

SUMMER CAMP NOT JUST FOR SUMMERTIME ANYMORE

In response to the successful Hands On Heritage Advanced Summer Camps the Delaware Heritage Commission hosted a special "Immersion Weekend" at Greenbank Mill on November 22-23, 2003. The weekend explored the history of the Lewis and Clark expedition (The "Corps of Discovery") to the Pacific, which began in 1803. Nine campers were fully immersed in the early 19th century from the time they arrived at Greenbank Mill until they were dismissed the following afternoon.



The campers wore period clothing and relived the experiences of William Clark and Merriwether Lewis (left). The high schoolers trapped, did military drills, hiked the Red Clay Valley, surveyed, mapped, threw tomahawks, fired muskets, assembled a collapsible boat (it floated!) and much more all according to the actual procedures from Lewis and Clark. The camp dinner was venison, rutabaga, and parsnip stew with buffalo sausage and black-eyed pea soup prepared and cooked over an open fire by the campers. Cornmeal mush was served at breakfast and each were provided a dried meat and hardtack lunch ration. The campers slept in the 1794 farmhouse on the mill's property.

An Immersion Weekend will also be planned for the spring. The spring weekend will focus on Colonial Delaware. Campers will work with members of British and American Revolutionary War reenactment groups.

Also this spring the Commission will hold the first annual "Senior Camp" for 55+ Delawareans. Senior Camp will explore small town Delaware with day trips to such places like the Seaford Museum, Smyrna Opera House, downtown Milford, historic Lewes, and more. It will include walking tours, house tours, and museums exploring fascinating First State history and heritage.

COMMODORE MACDONOUGH DAY

Capt. Thomas Macdonough was born in Delaware in an area near Middletown known as The Trap. The Macdonough House still stands and has seen a restoration worthy of *This Old House* by its owner Brigitta Moulson.



Part of the ceremonies at Commodore Macdonough Day was the unveiling of new historic marker #NC-133 MCDONOUGH BURIAL GROUND. Members of the SAR, DAR, the Christiana High School Navy JROTC, and State Senator James Vaughn assisted with the marker's dedication.

Ms. Moulson has operated Moulson Antiques on the property for over two decades. For a number of years the Delaware Heritage Commission held Commodore Macdonough day at the former Thomas Macdonough Elementary School in St. Georges. The school closed a few years ago and since then no Macdonough celebration was observed. The Commission, with the assistance of Ms. Moulson, decided to bring back Commodore Macdonough Day with a day of events at the historic Macdonough home just past Boyd's Corner in Middletown. The day consisted of local artisans with their crafts for sale, War of 1812 demonstrations, a rededication of the Macdonough family cemetery, music, food, and children's activities. Moulson Antiques was open with a barn-full of antiques for sale. We spirited on despite the sometime torrents of rain.

Referred to as Commodore (it was an honorary rank) Delaware-born Thomas Macdonough was the hero of the Battle of Lake Champlain. Aboard his flagship, the USS *Saratoga*, Macdonough led his out-numbered force to victory over the British fleet in the famous battle near Plattsburgh, New York on September 11, 1814. This day was held to honor the memory of one of Delaware's little-known heroes. President Theodore Roosevelt referred to Macdonough as "Our greatest sea captain."

COMMISSION EARNS ITS WINGS

In addition to the new marker unveiled at Commodore Macdonough Day the Heritage Commission, through our outreach services, has helped new markers go up honoring nearly forgotten First State aviation history. In May the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame unveiled Marker #NC-127 SITE OF DUPONT AIRFIELD and the Commission was present. The plaque commemorates the site of the DuPont Airport on Route 141 and Barley Mill Road near Greenville, Delaware. In 1938 the airfield was one of the most modern privately owned public-use facilities in the country. Charles Lindbergh landed on the site in 1927.

In October the Commission assisted the Friends of Bellanca and the Trustees of New Castle Common unveil marker #NC-134 SITE OF BELLANCA AIRFIELD. The last remaining structure of the Bellanca Airfield is the Air Service Hangar located adjacent to Route 273. The hangar, completed in 1936, replaced the original hangar of 1928 that was lost to fire. It is the last vestige of what was once a three-part aviation complex: Bellanca Aviation, Inc., Bellanca Flying Field, and Air Service, Inc. Bellanca Aviation, now vanished, built more than 300 award-winning planes during its forty-year life span, and at its peak during World War II, employed more than 3,000 workers. What was once a 350-acre state-of-the-art lighted public airfield is now covered mostly by a mammoth industrial park.



A native of Sicily, Giuseppe Mario Bellanca (1886-1960) immigrated to the United States in 1912. He was an aeronautical genius and aviation pioneer. His plane *Columbia* was Charles Lindbergh's choice for a Trans-Atlantic crossing, but he was unable to secure its use. It set a record of 51½ hours five weeks before Lindbergh's historic 33½ hour solo flight in 1927. Two weeks later the *Columbia* was flown non-stop to Berlin, a world record of 3,911 miles. His *Miss Veedol* flew the first Trans-Pacific flight from Japan in 1931.

TAKE A HIKE

The Commission was approached by the Newark Heritage Alliance for assistance in the creation of a walking tour of the historic structures of downtown Newark, "Hike 'n History." The group was hosting their first annual Newark Harvest Festival in October and wanted to have the walking tour available at the event.

The tour was written several years ago by Newark residents Barbara Stengel and Victoria Owen but never printed. Complete with photos and a brief history of each historic structure the tour is a glimpse into the history and heritage of one of Delaware's oldest Main Streets. Newark's Main Street and nearby "University Loop" has 24 buildings listed on the National Historic Register. One such structure, the Exchange Building was erected in 1880 and has served as a cooperative store, grange hall, post office, barber shop and police lockup. Today it is Klondike Kate's, a popular local restaurant. The Commission has produced documents similar to "Hike 'n History": In the early 1990s the Commission, with the assistance of New Castle County, printed a "Driving Tour of Historic Properties in Southern New Castle County."



Green Mansion, Main Street, Newark, so named because of the use of green granite on the front façade.

"Hike 'n History" is available for purchase by calling the Commission off at 302-577-5044. It sells for \$2 and all proceeds benefit the Newark Heritage Alliance. The NHA was formed to promote and preserve the history of Newark. They have been instrumental in acquiring Historic Markers and in fostering preservation in the town's architecture and natural landscapes.

WORLD WAR II VETERANS WANTED

The Commission is looking for Delaware's World War II veterans not listed in the recently reprinted book, *Delaware's Role in World War II*. The book details the war stories of over 10,000 First State men and women who served during the war. In December 1941, eight days after Pearl Harbor the Delaware Public Archives Commission began to collect information on Delawareans serving in the armed forces. Newspaper clippings were the main sources of information but not every soldier or sailor or nurse was written in the paper so they were not included in the book. Also, collection of information ceased sometime in early 1945, so those men and women who served in the later stages of the war were not included in the first edition. For the next few months the Commission will be collecting information from the "forgotten" veterans for an addendum that will be available this summer.

One such veteran is Nicholas R. Teti of Wilmington. In 1945 Cpl. Teti was a Marine paratrooper serving with H and S company of the 27th Marines during the Battle of Iwo Jima. (Cpl. Teti viewed the famous flag raising by members of the 28th Marines). Cpl. Teti was also part of the occupation of Japan following the war and served with forces in Kyoshu and Sasabo (Japan's former Naval Academy).



Mrs. Elvin B. Nichols wrote to the Commission with the story of her late husband, LCDR Elvin Nichols. LCDR Nichols served as the executive officer aboard the USS *Caliente* - AO 53, (above), from December 1943 until the war's end. He left active duty with the Navy in 1953. LCDR Nichols received 9 Stars on his Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal.

Another veteran is the late Nobel Fraser of Rehoboth Beach. Seaman Fraser served aboard eight different ships in the Merchant Marine service during the war and received the Atlantic War Zone Medal and the Merchant Marine Combat Bar.



Veterans, please write a one-page WWII remembrance to the Commission at 820 N. French St., 4th Floor Wilmington, DE 19801. Your name and story will be included in an addendum to be published next summer.

Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Station

Many Americans believe that when their ancestors came to this country in the late 1800s and early 1900s, the only place that their ship stopped was its destination, most likely being the well known immigration station, Ellis Island, New York. However, not all immigrants went to Ellis Island, some went to Philadelphia or to Wilmington, but on their way, they stopped in Cape Henlopen, Delaware.ⁱ These immigrants, mainly coming from European ports, Mediterranean ports and Cubaⁱⁱ not only carried with them enormous dreams and hopes of a new life, but also many contagious diseases such as tuberculosis, yellow fever, cholera, typhus, smallpox, and bubonic plague. Since there was no national system, quarantining was left up to the state until a report was made by the College of Physicians. They wanted a national system to protect the United States from such diseases. Therefore, the federal government established the national Quarantine System in 1880.ⁱⁱⁱ The Quarantine System was a group of coastal hospitals and stations that inspected and cared for the immigrants on all incoming ships. Making up part of this system was the Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Hospital.

The first hospital buildings for the Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Hospital were erected during the months of September and October 1884, under the supervision of the Marine Hospital Service's Primary Acting Surgeon, Dr. George W. Stoner (the Marine Hospital Service later became known as the United States Public Health Service). They included surgeon's quarters, a hospital with six beds, a kitchen, and a small shed all of which were situated on the Delaware Bay about one half mile from the point of Cape Henlopen and about two and a half miles on a single lane dirt road from the town of Lewes, Delaware.^{iv} The area was very isolated with forty-one bay front acres and so few trees that the hospital staff purchased over two hundred cottonwoods^v and planted them on the property. On the twentieth of October 1884, the Quarantine Hospital was opened for the reception of patients. Also on this date Surgeon George W. Stoner left for Cairo, Illinois and transferred all governmental responsibilities of the Delaware Quarantine Hospital to the Marine Hospital Service's Assistant Acting Surgeon, William P. Orr.^{vi} One month later on the eighteenth of November, the hospital received its first collection of eighteen medical books.^{vii}

On the seventh of February 1885, the hospital received three United States flags, one of which was the first to be hoisted over the area.^{viii} One year and three months later^{ix}, in the month of May 1886, the quarantine facility was officially opened to ships carrying immigrants. These ships, usually on their way to Philadelphia,

Pennsylvania, had to proceed through the Delaware River in order to reach their destination. Upon passing the Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Hospital, all ships were ordered to anchor and hoist their "private signal," usually a yellow flag. A small whaleboat manned by four or five hospital attendants (each earning a maximum of forty dollars per month^x) and either the Primary Acting Surgeon or the Assisting Acting Surgeon proceeded to the anchored vessel. Once on board, the doctor would inspect all passengers and crewmembers for any signs of contagious disease. If no disease was found, the ship passed inspection and was permitted to proceed to its next port. However, if a person was suspected of being contagious, they were removed from the ship and placed in the hospital for the duration of their illness. The infected individual was ordered to change clothes so that those he/she was wearing could be fumigated in a machine that pumped out hot steam and/or sulfur. While the sick passenger was in the hospital, the other passengers remained in the anchored ship, quarantined for two to twelve weeks, to see if any one else developed the disease. The Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Hospital operated in this manner from May 1886 until fall of 1892.^{xi}

As the number of immigrants grew, the Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Hospital had to expand. They began with the surgeon's quarters and on the thirtieth of November 1890, a brick building with ten rooms and a basement was completed by a contractor at a total cost of \$16,222.57.^{xii} A telephone was installed that connected with Lewes. Other additions and repairs included: a new summer kitchen for \$296.75, a boat house for \$385.00, barracks for \$695.00, a boiler house and laundry for \$71.98, an Artesian well was drilled for \$23.76, some fences were built around the barracks for \$19.83, a water tower for \$245.00, a boat named *Sir Foster* was painted for \$162.50, a new life boat for \$63.00, and repair to *Sir Foster's* hull for \$24.69.^{xiii} The facility was now self-sufficient since it had its own sewer and wells. It also had a bathhouse, stables, which were built much earlier on the twenty-third of February 1886 for \$134.99^{xiv}, a boathouse, a blacksmith, a disinfecting house, a crematory, and a graveyard. The hospital was expanded and became the "men's hospital," and a "women's hospital" was built.^{xv} Two separate detention barracks were also built in September and October 1893 with detached dining rooms and kitchens. It became very routine to see fifteen to twenty steamers and small vessels flying their flag at the Breakwater. Because of its enormous growth, in 1892 the Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Hospital officially became the Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Station.

The First Stop in a New World

By Nicole Solinger, former Hands On Heritage Camp attendee, Camp Counselor and Camp Director. Nikki is a senior at the University of Delaware majoring in History.

The growth of the Quarantine Station brought on a change in the inspection procedures. When a ship came in and a person was found with the possibility of having a contagious disease, not only were they taken off of the ship to the hospital, any one could have come in contact with the infected person was also admitted.^{xvi} Also contributing to the procedure change was what was thought to be a "cholera" epidemic of 1892. A passenger on a ship coming from a European port was reported as having suspicious symptoms of cholera. On the eighteenth of September 1892, the Primary Acting Surgeon, Devan, boarded the ship for a routine inspection. When he examined an individual who was suspected of having cholera, Devan noted that the person's pulse and temperature did not coincide with the usual measures of a cholera patient. He then concluded that he was seeing a general case of tuberculosis. Devan immediately removed the person from the ship and admitted him to the hospital. The next day however, the patient died. Because of the old rules, the other passengers who came in contact with the tuberculosis patient remained on the ship. Unknowingly, six of the other passengers had tuberculosis. Because it was not diagnosed in time and they remained on the ship, each of them consequently died from the disease.^{xvii}

Although the facilities on shore sounded wonderful, the immigrants quarantined on the ships for weeks or even months suffered greatly, often causing more illnesses resulting in an even longer stay. Passengers were compelled to wait thirty to forty minutes for their very small helping of meat that was hardly fit for even an animal to eat. One bathroom was sometimes used for up to eighty passengers and both the drinking and bathing water was pumped to the facility from the Delaware River.^{xviii}

The doctor inspections were oftentimes very confusing and stressful. The immigrants were coming from areas of the world in which the primary language was not English. During an inspection, the doctor would begin explaining what he was doing and what the immigrants must do in order for the procedure to run smoothly. However, the immigrants could not understand their orders, which was increasingly frustrating for the English-speaking inspectors. Consequently, the doctor would yell commands making both he and the passengers more upset. According to the *Pennsylvania News*, many passengers even began wondering why they left their home for a place where the people treated them as the doctors did during an inspection. Because the ill were taken ashore to an area where no one spoke their language, it was even more stressful for them. These

problems were not, however, the only ones at the Quarantine Station.

Many incidents also occurred with the people who worked at the station. One afternoon, on the twenty-seventh of December 1896, loud noise attracted the commanding officers' attention. Upon entering the attendants' quarters, the officer found attendant Hans Thorsen very intoxicated. So intoxicated, in fact, that he was beyond control and had to be placed under guard. Because there was no guardhouse, or prison, Thorsen was securely confined in the pest house. Under normal circumstances, someone found intoxicated on duty would automatically be released. However, Thorsen had been in the service for a very long time and this was his first offense. Therefore, he was permitted to resign.^{xix}

Despite the numerous problems, the flood of immigrants continued to arrive at the Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Station until World War I. At which time the station's immigration rate dropped considerably. Between 1917 and 1918 the United States Navy used the station as a naval base. The quarantine station was kept in a state of readiness until it was abandoned in 1926. In September 1937, Acting Secretary of the Treasury Wayne C. Taylor stated the station was no longer required and that the Federal Government abandon the facility officially. Following the Secretary's order all the remaining buildings were demolished leaving absolutely no trace of the estimated 200,000 immigrants whose bright hopes and dreams became realities at the Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Station.

ⁱ Ippolito, J.C., "Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Station"

ⁱⁱ Delaware Public Archives, Microfilm RG9025, Roll 22 Vol. 37.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ippolito, J.C. "Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Station"

^{iv} Orr, Dr. Wm. P., DBQH location document, DPA Microfilm RG9025, Roll 22, vol. 37.

^v Hospital Records, DPA Microfilm RG9025, Roll 22, vol. 37.

^{vi} *ibid.*

^{vii} *ibid.*

^{viii} Flag-staff Erection Document, DPA Microfilm 9025, Roll 22, vol. 37.

^{ix} Hospital Records, DPA Microfilm RG9025, Roll 22, vol. 37.

^x Orr, Dr. Wm. P., Salary for Hospital Attendants, DPA Microfilm RG 9025, Roll 22 Vol. 37.

^{xi} U.S. Treasury Department, Public Health Service, DPA Microfilm RG 9025, Roll 22, Vol. 37

^{xii} *ibid.*

^{xiii} *ibid.*

^{xiv} Report of Additions and Repairs, DPA Microfilm RG9025, Roll 22, Vol. 37.

^{xv} Hospital Records, DPA Microfilm RG 9025, Roll 22, vol. 37.

^{xvi} Ippolito, J.C., "Delaware Breakwater Quarantine Station."

^{xvii} *ibid.*

^{xviii} Hospital Records, DPA Microfilm RG 9025, Roll 22, Vol. 37.

^{xix} *ibid.*

DELAWARE BOOK FAIR & AUTHORS DAY

On Saturday, November 8, the Delaware Heritage Commission will hosted the 8th annual Delaware Book Fair and Authors Day. This event is the only event of its kind that showcases Delaware writers and Delaware books! New books, used books, Delaware books and more were available for purchase at the biggest and best event of its kind in the First State. Over 50 authors were in attendance from all over the state with a variety of books available for purchase. This event is held close to holiday shopping season, so many books were purchased for gift giving! Romance to history, mystery to Christian, there was something for everyone at the Delaware Book Fair.

In addition to Delaware authors and Delaware books this year the Commission also hosted the display of Books

Are Fun, Inc. They had new books and bestsellers for sale at 40%-50% off. Books Are Fun brought a large selection of cookbooks, self-help books, kids books, gifts and more. Proceeds benefited the Friends of Delaware Libraries, Inc.



Delaware Book Fair provides an opportunity for the public meet authors, purchase books, get books signed,



Delaware authors Roger Martin (left) and Bill Williams review each other's newest works

have lunch and visit the Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village. This event is free of charge. (There was a \$5 charge for lunch.) At the event many visitors signed up for the free gift basket raffles. One of the raffles was for a basket full of books from our "Delaware

goes to war" collection—*The Delaware Continentals*, *Delaware During the Civil War*, *Delaware's Coastal Defenses* and *Delaware's Role in World War II*.



Author Bruce Mowday greets books buyers

The Newark Free Library and the Milford Public Library sold used books at the Fair. The books selected for the sale were quality used books. You won't find the cheap paperback with the cover ripped off at this event!

The Center for the Book had an information table about upcoming events in Delaware and bookmarks that included coupons for 20% off at all Delaware Borders Books and Music until Dec. 31, 2003.

The Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village was once again the event's gracious host. Visitors were treated to a free museum visit and some of the first folks to explore the newly renovated gift shop. New exhibits were displayed such as *My Place Between the Bays* in the Round Barn gallery and the photography of Hope Dayhoff and Donald Blow in the atrium and exhibit hall.

Delaware authors enjoyed another fun year of mingling with other authors, greeting the public and learning from John Von Hoelle (below) during his morning seminar, "Contracts." Nancy Carol Willis of Middletown, writer of natural science books for children was in attendance. Her titles include *Raccoon Moon* and *The Robins in My Back Yard*.

Ted Ireland of Wilmington had his new book about the *Kalmar Nyckel*. Grace Caulk of



Woodside returned with her book *Cows Crops and Causes*. Written with her late husband Pat Caulk the book is about life on a Delaware farm. These and other authors were available all day with their books and great stories.

See you next year—Saturday, November, 13, 2004

2003 Challenge & McKinstry Grant Recipients

The Delaware Heritage Commission, following its mandate to promote the history and heritage of the State of Delaware, provides two grant programs available to individuals or organizations interested in delving into the rich heritage of the First State.

The Commission offers matching grants—Challenge Grants, available to groups to encourage permanent heritage projects. These projects have in the past consisted of historic markers, posters, videotapes, printed listings of archival holdings, and books. Funds for the printing of books are to be returned once the sales of the books allow, so that monies may be circulated to other organizations. The concept of "heritage" has been expanded to include the backgrounds and stories of more recent immigrants and the histories of local industry such as maritime, transportation and the environment. Goals created by the Commission include the following:

1. To encourage local institutions and organizations to maintain an ongoing interest in Delaware history/heritage;
2. To encourage greater awareness of Delaware history/heritage among Delaware school children;
3. To encourage scholarship and publication of Delaware history/heritage;
4. To encourage continued outreach to all segments of the community;
5. To encourage co-sponsorship of heritage projects.

Our second grant program is the McKinstry Award. In the early 1970s the nation prepared for its bicentennial with the formation of the American Revolution Bicentennial Commission. James T. McKinstry of Wilmington was one of a small group chosen to develop Delaware's contribution to the national celebration. From his tireless efforts the Delaware Heritage Commission evolved. He served as its second Chairman from 1977 to 1985. In recognition of his extraordinary efforts and character, the Commission has established these awards for historical research in his honor.

There are no fixed amounts, recent McKinstry Awards have ranged from \$250 to \$3,000. They are intended to aid regional travel, obtaining materials, photocopy and other fees at libraries and archives, and preparation of materials for publication.

While there is little restriction on subject matter, there is an expectation that the work will lead to publication and thereby benefit other Delawareans. Anyone may apply for a McKinstry Award.

We are proud and excited to announce our 2003 grant recipients to date this year. **Challenge Grants have been awarded to the following:**

- **Washington Rochambeau Revolutionary Route** Coalition for assistance with its' celebration of the 225th Anniversary of the Treaty of French Alliance at the Robinson House in Claymont on February 8, 2003.
- The **Rehoboth Beach Historical Society** to partially pay the cost of designing and constructing a display about the shipwrecked Steamship *Tracy*.
- **El Centro Cultural** in Georgetown with funding toward the Teleduction, Inc. video project "Las Polleras: Hope in America."
- **Rehoboth Art League** for help in publishing the book *Portals to the Past: The RAL Doors of Fame*.



- **Greenbank Mill** Associates, Inc. with funds for materials and supplies used in programs presented to the Delaware Heritage Commission's Hands on Heritage Camp.

↑ Greenbank Mill

McKinstry Awards were presented to the following individuals for their work.

- **Deborah P. Keese** to defray costs of her research on her project on the history of the Pomeroy Railroad and an associated clay quarry operation.
- **Laura M. Lee**, Director of Iron Hill Museum for her research of the Iron Hill School #112C, formerly an African-American school from the days of segregation.
- **Jessica Hansen** to research the history of Woodland Beach, once a resort town and hub of activity in Kent County.

Congratulations and thanks for helping to keep Delaware's history alive for us all. The Commission is proud to be able to support so many different individuals and groups from all three counties in Delaware.

DIRECTOR DEB HASKELL RETIRES



Deborah P. Haskell, Ph.D.

Dr. Haskell was honored for her years of service at a reception held in her honor at Buena Vista Conference Center in September.

On August 1 of this year, Dr. Deborah P. Haskell retired as the Executive Director of the Delaware Heritage Commission. Deb was the ED for over 12 years and the person most responsible for the programs and direction of the Commission today. We hope to continue on the path Deb mapped out for us. When Deb was appointed there was no Delaware Heritage Press, today the book collection has 22 titles chronicling many different aspects of Delaware history. At the time Deb was hired the Commission had no summer camp program. Next summer we will have six weeks of summer camp serving middle and high school kids. Under Deb's leadership the office was always busy. In 2002 the Commission managed countless special events, produced two newsletters and released two books. The summer camp program expanded to a fifth week and we undertook one of the grandest and largest events to come along in 25 years—The Battle of Cooch's Bridge Reenactment. The reenactment involved a planning committee of nearly 25 people and required the support and commitment of over 100 organizations and individuals. We managed to pull it off with flying colors as over 2,500 people attended the reenactment and the weekend of events surrounding the 225th anniversary of the only battle of any war fought on First State soil. A tireless worker, Deb's mind was always alive with program ideas. She would arrive in the morning and say, "I was up all night thinking..." Originally from Auburn, NY Deb developed a true passion for her adopted home state that showed in her enthusiasm for the Commission. We wish Deb the best of luck for the future and thank her for her dedication to the State of Delaware.

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"Fully, freely, and entirely approve of, assent to, ratify and confirm" is the language Delaware's delegates used to ratify the United States Constitution.
