



# Fully, Freely, & Entirely

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Newsletter of the Delaware Heritage Commission

Summer, 2004

## NEW BOOK! *THE PERENNIAL APPRENTICE* COMING SOON

*The Perennial Apprentice* was written in 1977 by George Fletcher Bennett and is his personal scrapbook of his 60 year career as an architect in Delaware. Bennett (1899-1984) was nationally recognized as an expert on English Neoclassic or Georgian or "Colonial" architecture. He worked out of an office in his home in Camden, Del. for most of his life. For nearly ten years he lived in Williamsburg, Va. and served as the senior staff restorationist for the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation. Previously Mr. Bennett did restoration work for the National Park Service.



**George Read II House**

Bennett was a devotee of colonial architecture and deemed other styles substandard or ill-conceived. His biggest complaint was with modern architecture and commented that "all walls are glass and all windows are brick."

Bennett was born and raised in Wilmington. He became a draftsman at the age of 17 and opened a practice in his early twenties. His first historical restorations began in 1927. In his career he restored the former Blue Coat Inn in Dover and the Village Inn in Little Creek. He also restored the Schmittinger & Rodriguez law offices in Dover and the north and south extensions of Legislative Hall.

This book was released in a very small run of 100 copies in 1977 and has been unavailable for many years. Bennett is also the author of *Early Architecture of Delaware*. Released in 1932, the book is a valued collector's item. *The Perennial Apprentice* was written 27 years ago and the 2,000 manuscripts were prepared but never bound or covered. These unfinished copies have been in storage since 1978. The Commission purchased the unfinished editions and will have them completed and made available for purchase.

## HERITAGE COMMISSION TO MARK 235<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF MASON-DIXON LINE THIS SUMMER

On January 11, 1769, the King in Council ratified the boundaries between Pennsylvania and Maryland, thus approving the boundary line surveyed by two English astronomers, Charles Mason and Jeremiah Dixon.



The Pennsylvania side east of the boundary line would eventually become Delaware. The Delaware Public Archives is sponsoring events to commemorate the 235<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the King's ratification with events this summer in each county.

Read about the history of the Mason-Dixon Line in Delaware. Order the Delaware Heritage Press book, *East of the Mason-Dixon Line* by Roger E. Nathan. The book sells for \$5 and can be purchased by calling the Commission at 302-577-5044 or go online to our website [www.state.de.us/heritage](http://www.state.de.us/heritage).

The Commission will sponsor a slide show and "virtual tour" of the Line at the historic Head of Christiana Church in Newark on Saturday, October 2, 10 a.m. - Noon. Mr. Nathan will be the presenter and copies of the book will be available for purchase. Attendees will then walk to Marker #85 for an up-close look at one of Mason and Dixon's unique limestone markers. Please visit our website for celebration information and details or give us a call.

## SENIOR CAMP A SUCCESS

The first Senior Camp was great fun for the Commission and our attendees. Due to demand another Senior Camp will be planned for October. The theme will be "Delaware During the Civil War." Go to our website later this summer for details.

## COMMISSION CELEBRATES THE 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF *BROWN v. BOARD*

### Redding and Seitz Honored with historical marker and publication

Governor Ruth Ann Minner, in cooperation with the Court of Chancery for the State of Delaware, the Delaware Public Archives, and the Delaware Heritage Commission celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court Decision on May 17<sup>th</sup> at the New Castle County Courthouse.

The event focused on the Delaware companion cases to the *Brown* decision. In Delaware, the two cases – *Belton v. Gebhart* and *Bulah v. Gebhart* (Gebhart was the first name alphabetically of the members of the Delaware State School Board) became part of the larger *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*. The family of Ethel Belton was attempting to gain entrance to the all-white Claymont School. Mrs. Fred Bulah requested school bus service for her daughter Shirley to attend Hockessin School. In *Bulah*, bus service was not provided for the all-black school. However, transportation was provided to the all-white school. Mrs. Bulah requested a bus be provided. The State school board denied the requests of Bulah and Belton due to the separate but equal provisions. The separate but equal doctrine was the ruling from the 1898 Supreme Court decision, *Plessy v. Ferguson*. In both cases the plaintiffs were represented by Delaware's only African American attorney Louis L. Redding.

The Delaware cases were heard in Delaware Chancery Court by Chancellor Collins J. Seitz. Seitz personally visited schools in Delaware. He allowed Redding's vast number of witnesses, and heard the testimony of countless social scientists with evidence of psychological damage caused by segregation to black students. In 1952, Seitz ordered Delaware schools to desegregate. It was an order he expected to go before the United States Supreme Court. In 1954, the two Delaware cases became part of the landmark *Brown* case. On May 17, 1954 the Court ruled in favor of *Brown*, noting that segregation is a denial of equal protection of the laws. In effect the Court said that separate was "inherently unequal." Seitz's ruling had been affirmed by the nation's highest court. Chief Justice Earl Warren cited Seitz's language in his final written opinion.

May 17, 2004 marked the unveiling of a new historic marker commemorating *Brown v. Board* and the roles of attorney Louis Redding and Chancellor Seitz.

#### Louis L. Redding Esq.

Louis L. Redding was born in Wilmington in 1911, the eldest son of Lewis and Mary Ann Redding. Redding's father was a postal worker with a salary that allowed for a middle class upbringing.



Growing up on Wilmington's Walnut Street during the era of "Jim Crow" laws, Redding (left) saw segregation first-hand in theatres, restaurants, work, and especially schools. Redding's father was aware of the times in which his young family was coming of age. He instilled in his children a sense of giving back and of fighting for what is right. These traits showed in Redding's siblings. His

brother Jay Saunders Redding, was a college professor and author of the famed book, *No Day of Triumph*. His sister Gwendolyn taught English at Howard High School.

Following graduation from Howard High School, Redding attended Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island. Initially interested in medicine, Redding was influenced instead by a small cadre of African American attorneys practicing in Providence. After completing Brown, Redding entered Harvard Law School. With a law degree in hand from one of the country's top legal schools, Redding returned to Delaware to establish his practice. At this time in Delaware, young law graduates required a sponsor. Judge Daniel O. Hastings agreed to sponsor Redding and not long after he passed the bar exam.

At the age of 28, Redding became Delaware's first black lawyer. For the next quarter-century Redding was the only black attorney in the state. Redding immediately became an advocate for the poor and champion of Civil Rights.

#### Hon. Collins J. Seitz

Born in Wilmington in 1914, Collins Seitz was a product of the city's parochial school system and a graduate of Wilmington High School. Seitz then entered the University of Delaware and graduated from the

University of Virginia Law School in 1940. Seitz returned to the First State and began a career with the Wilmington law firm of Southerland Berl and Potter. He was the primary assistant to partner Charles Southerland who would eventually become a Delaware Supreme Court Justice.



In 1946, at the age of 31, Seitz (left) was appointed to the bench as vice chancellor in the Delaware Court of Chancery by Chancellor William W. Harrington. Court of Chancery has jurisdiction over corporate legal issues in the state, and has over the years, established a glowing status in the corporate legal world.

In his early years on the bench, Seitz achieved a sterling reputation as a solid jurist. Seitz would also come to be recognized for his humanitarian and civil rights efforts. In 1951, Seitz was appointed chancellor to the chancery court following Chancellor Daniel F. Wolcott. Wolcott had succeeded the retired Harrington, but was quickly appointed to the Supreme Court of Delaware.

Seitz remained on the bench as chancellor for twenty years until 1966. He accepted the nomination from President Lyndon Johnson to be the chief judge on the United States Court of Appeals for the Third Circuit. Seitz served on the Third Circuit until his death in 1998.

Governor Minner, in recent comments at the Marker unveiling referred to Redding and Seitz as "true patriots." Men who had "faith in America, in our system and in our courts to confront the injustices that plagued society."

### Read all about it

To commemorate the *Brown* decision and the role played by the First State, the Commission produced a new publication detailing *Bulah* and *Belton* and also providing a look at the life and careers of Redding and Seitz. The publication is titled *A Proud Moment for Delaware* and is available by calling the Commission office at 302-577-5044. The booklet includes an introduction by the Hon. William Quillen. Judge Quillen knew both men and shared his unique memories of Redding and Seitz.

## TWO NEW MARKERS TO COMMEMORATE BROWN

The Commission continues to support the efforts of our sister agency in the Department of State, the Delaware Public Archives. Working together, two new State historical markers were unveiled on May 17, the 50th anniversary of *Brown v. Board*. The first marker was unveiled in Hockessin. Later in the day a marker was unveiled in Wilmington in front of the New Castle County Courthouse. The text of the markers follows:

### HOCKESSIN SCHOOL #107C

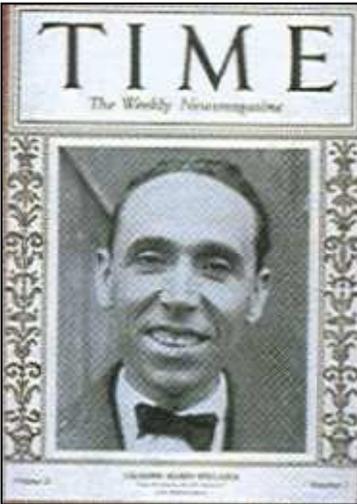
Also known as the Hockessin Colored School, this building was constructed in 1920 to serve the needs of the community's African American students. Funding for construction was provided by the Delaware School Auxiliary Association and its primary supporter P.S. duPont. Unlike white students, African American students in the community were not provided transportation to their school. After unsuccessfully attempting to convince officials to provide this service Mrs. Sarah Bulah sought the assistance of attorney Louis L. Redding, who filed suit on behalf of her daughter Shirley. The case was formally known as *Bulah v. Gebhart*. It was subsequently combined with a similar suit that had been filed on behalf of students in Claymont. On April 1, 1952, Delaware Chancellor Collins J. Seitz issued a decision declaring that the disparity between the white and African American schools was in violation of the United States Constitution. The ruling was later appealed to the United States Supreme Court where it was joined with others to become *Brown v. Board of Education*. On May 17, 1954, the court issued its historic decision declaring segregation in schools to be unlawful. Hockessin School #107C was closed in 1959. It was later converted for use as the Hockessin Community Center.

### BROWN v. BOARD OF EDUCATION

Delaware remained a racially segregated society until the mid-twentieth century. Though the segregation of public schools was supported by the doctrine of "separate but equal," the facilities and services provided for whites and African-Americans were hardly equal. Seeking to address this situation, citizens in the communities of Claymont and Hockessin solicited the counsel of Louis L. Redding, the state's first African-American attorney. In 1951, with the assistance of attorney Jack Greenberg, Mr. Redding brought suit against the State Board of Education in the Delaware Court of Chancery. Formally known as *Belton v. Gebhart* and *Bulah v. Gebhart*, the cases were combined. Redding argued that laws requiring schools to be segregated by race denied the African-American students their constitutional right to the equal protection of the law. The chief judge of the Court of Chancery, Collins J. Seitz, agreed, finding that segregation was inherently harmful to the students, and therefore unconstitutional. Integration of affected schools was ordered. The Chancellor's opinion was the first clear victory for opponents of segregation in an American court. The ruling was subsequently appealed and heard by the United States Supreme Court as part of the *Brown v. Board of Education* case. On May 17, 1954, the court adopted the reasoning of Redding and Seitz in a decision that effectively ended the segregation of public schools throughout the nation.

# The Hangar at Bellanca Field

The Golden Age of Aviation was brought to Delaware in 1927 with the arrival of Giuseppe Mario Bellanca at the invitation and with the support of Henry B. DuPont. Together, in 1928, they established a three-part aviation complex: Bellanca Aircraft Corporation, the company headquarters and factory where the increasingly famous Bellanca aircraft were designed, tested, and built; Air Service, Inc., for selling and servicing aircraft; and Bellanca Flying Field. Today, only the Air Service hangar remains.



G.M. Bellanca (left) was born in Sciacca, Sicily, in 1886, where he would conduct his first aeronautical experiments. He graduated from the Royal Technical Institute in Milan and came to the U.S. in 1911, where he built and flew the first Bellanca monoplane at Mineola, Long Island, in 1912. It was here that he taught Fiorello H.

LaGuardia how to fly.

During World War I, Bellanca designed airplanes for the Army and seaplanes for the Navy. By 1922, he designed and built the first cabin monoplane for transporting passengers. This plane lifted 14 pounds for each pound of thrust. Other designers were happy to achieve a ratio of 7 to 1. His revolutionary design was the turning point in air transportation. An advanced design of this model, the *Columbia*, was sought by Charles Lindbergh for his attempt to fly non-stop to Paris, but Bellanca's partner objected. Five weeks before Lindbergh's 33½ hour flight the *Columbia* set a world endurance record of 51½ hours. Two weeks after Lindbergh's flight, the *Columbia* flew 3,911 miles non-stop from New York to Eisleben, Germany, setting a new world distance record. The plane could have reached Moscow had not severe weather intervened.

In recognition of the developments of this revolutionary line of highly efficient, fully enclosed monoplanes, *Time Magazine* chose to put Bellanca on the July 4, 1927 cover. This significant innovation earned his plane a place of honor in the National Aeronautical Collection of the Smithsonian Institution.

Impressed by these achievements, H. B. DuPont purchased a farm in New Castle on the banks of the Delaware River and, with other inducements, convinced Bellanca to move his aviation company there.

Soon after opening the factory in New Castle, Bellanca built the *Miss Veedol*. In 1931, this plane made aviation history with the first non-stop flight across the Pacific from Japan to Wenatchee, Washington, U.S., a distance of 4,500 miles. In the same year, the new *Packard Bellanca* set a non-refueling record of 84 hours and 33 minutes. Both records stood for decades. One of his post-war aircraft, the *Cruisair*, pioneered the four-place low-wing monoplane design and won the Beech Trophy Race in Miami, Florida in 1947. His three-engine racer won second place in the Bendix Trophy Race from Los Angeles to Newark, New Jersey, averaging 249 m.p.h. Virtually all of his models established world records.

During World War II and the Korean War, Bellanca Aircraft switched to defense production. In 1954, Bellanca retired and sold the company.

The Air Service Hangar at Bellanca Field is beautifully situated on a historic roadside site of approximately 5 acres owned by the Trustees of the New Castle Common. Hoping to preserve the hangar, but concerned about the ongoing cost, they actively sought adaptive reuse ideas. Responding to this challenge, a volunteer group called the Friends of Bellanca was formed to develop a viable adaptive reuse plan to preserve the hangar.

The building has been professionally examined and judged structurally sound in all respects, including the fan truss system, the hangar's most prominent character-defining feature, which has been praised by restoration architects and architectural historians.

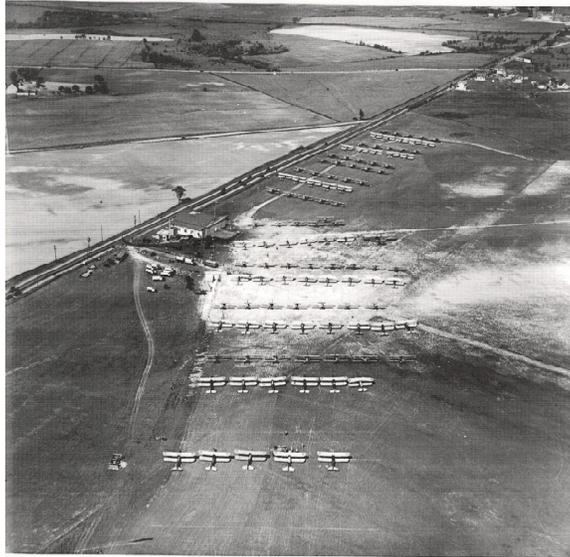


# and Giuseppe Mario Bellanca

A program is underway to educate the public about the remarkable history of Bellanca. A state historical marker now honors the site.

The Delaware Architectural Foundation has agreed to work with the friends of Bellanca to prepare a restoration and adaptive use plan for the site. Proactive efforts by the Trustees have ensured that environmental concerns have been addressed, and the site is ready for preservation work to begin.

On October 9, 2003, The Friends of Bellanca and an enthusiastic crowd of well-wishers and supporters assembled to dedicate a new state historical marker celebrating the history of Bellanca Field and the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its opening. On that day in 1928, a crowd of 30,000 people and more than 100 civilian and military aircraft joined in the festivities to welcome Bellanca and his company to Delaware.



With a footprint of approximately 7,800 square feet in the main area, plus an additional office section of 1,600 square feet, the hangar can support a range of potential uses. Friends of Bellanca are confident they will identify a variety of options for adaptive reuse of the structure.

The first priority will be to secure sufficient funding to begin the exterior restoration. A desirable interim step may be to arrange for a temporary use that would provide some revenue and improve site security. Meanwhile, the Friends will aggressively pursue avenues leading to the establishment of a major museum and event center with the hangar as the centerpiece.

Bellanca Aircraft Corporation, under the leadership of G.M. Bellanca, built hundreds of planes in Delaware during its nearly thirty-year lifespan, with virtually every model setting one or more world records. At its peak, Bellanca employed more than 3,000 workers. Today, the 350 acre once state-of-the-art lighted public airfield and adjoining factory site are almost entirely obliterated by a large business park.

The hangar at Bellanca Field stands silent and threatened at the park entrance, waiting for us to give it a voice...to tell the story of a time when a man and a company in

New Castle, Delaware, wrote a monumentally important chapter in the history of aviation and transportation.

Not only does the hangar honor Delaware's aviation history, but its "backyard" contains much of our regional transportation legacy dating from Colonial times to the present. The adjacent Route 273 is along the path of an earlier Indian trail that led to the Chesapeake Bay. It later became the New Castle and Frenchtown Turnpike, followed later by one of America's oldest railroads, the New Castle and Frenchtown Railroad. In the last century, that road would lead to the New Castle-Pennsville Ferry, to be eventually replaced by the twin spans of the Delaware Memorial Bridge. Nearby are the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal; Route 13, the pioneer dual highway in America; and I-95, America's most important Interstate highway on the Eastern Seaboard.



Article courtesy of Gen. (Ret.) Francis A. Ianni and the Friends of Bellanca. For information or to participate in the restoration of the historic hangar please call 302-322-3816 or 302-322-3574 or write:

**Friends of Bellanca**  
**2 East 4<sup>th</sup> St.**  
**New Castle, DE 19720**

## COMMISSION RECEIVES GENEROUS GIFT

At the suggestion of State Parks historian Lee Jennings, the Delaware Heritage Commission was the recipient of the large collection of reenactment gear from the estate of David Caron of Pennsville, NJ. Mr. Caron was an avid reenactor of the Revolution, the Civil War, and colonial and 19<sup>th</sup> century America. The Commission staff made three trips to Pennsville to pick up the enormous collection. Mr. Caron's widow Karen, remarked that "if one was good, two was better, and if two was better then four was best!" Needless to say the garage in the Caron home was stuffed to the rafters. From a sergeant's spontoon (held in the left hand of the soldier at right) to frock buttons, we will be able to send people back in time in accurate period clothing, cook with period kitchen necessities, and create accurate period settings.



The gear was put to use quickly at our recent Immersion Weekend held at Greenbank Mill. Our immersion campers were a part of the Lewis and Clark program. They ate off plates and used utensils from the Caron Collection. The collection will be housed in remote storage and used in many programs. This new equipment is the incentive for the redevelopment of the Commission's summer camp in 2005 (see next column for the details).



The Caron Collection was put to use making this meal during the April Immersion Weekend. The campers feasted on breads, fritters, fried potatoes and a ten-pound smoked salmon.

## NEW SUMMER CAMPS FOR 2005

The Heritage Commission will close the 11<sup>th</sup> year of the Hands On Heritage Camp later this summer. Next year we will return with all new camp experiences for kids ages 11-13. With the recent acquisition of the Caron Collection, the Commission will overhaul the Hands On Heritage Camp. For the past 11 years the camp has taken youngsters all over the state in search of fun and educational Delaware history. Each day is a different bus ride and a different trip back in time.

In 2005, we will put the Caron Collection to work in camp programs centered on Colonial Delaware and 19<sup>th</sup> century Delaware. Now the camp will stay put for one week at one location and in one unique time period.



The "Colonial Delaware" week will allow campers to experience life in the late 1700s. The campers will "retrofit" their 20<sup>th</sup> century clothing to pre-Revolutionary styles, they will learn George Washington's "Rules for Civility," we will set up a camp kitchen, visit the apothecary, be inducted into the Continental army, do gardening and much more. This new direction for camp will eliminate the bus rides and the bus expenses. The Commission will also be able to offer before- and after-care, something parents inquire about that we do not currently offer.

We will work with our friend Lee Jennings, the historian for Delaware State Parks, on an authentic colonial site to host camp. We already have a commitment from Greenbank Mill to host the 19<sup>th</sup> century camp. Find out just what "putting your best foot forward" is all about!

Our traveling camp will not completely disappear, as the Commission will sponsor one week of "Adventure Camp." Each day of this camp will visit sites normally not visited in past years of the Hands On Heritage Camp.

Stay tuned for more information and check our website often for updates as they become available.

## AT YOUR SERVICE

The Heritage Commission takes great pride in its outreach services to the citizens and organizations in the First State. Over the last six months, the Commission has been busy as we assisted with the planning of the Redding Symposium at the University of Delaware, honoring Louis L. Redding and his fight for Civil Rights and school desegregation.

The Commission has also assisted the Pencader Heritage Area Association in Newark with their first newsletter as they get off the ground as one of the State's newest historical and heritage societies. The Commission continues to assist the Delaware Aviation Hall of Fame with publicity materials and the Fort Delaware Society with programs for their annual banquet and lecture.

The Commission is about to begin a project for the town of Milford. In response to the successful "Hike 'n History" brochure created for the Newark Heritage Alliance (chronicled in volume 14, No. 2) the members of the Milford Museum and Milford Historical Society would like to update and reprint a driving/walking tour of the city.

The Commission has provided grants to individuals researching the history of the greater Brandywine Village, Fort Delaware and school segregation. The Lewes Historical Society is using a Commission Challenge Grant to publish the book, *Swanendael in New Netherland, An Early History of Delaware's First Settlement*. Also in Lewes, the Friends of Fort Miles have been provided copies of the Commission book, *Delaware's Coastal Defenses*. The Friends sell the book at their events and the Commission shares the profits with the group determined to bring Fort Miles back to life as an interpretive center detailing Delaware's role in World War II. Keeping with World War II, the Commission was a planning partner for the Delaware festivities to celebrate the new National World War II memorial. A prayer breakfast and ceremony was held on the Wilmington Riverfront to honor the First State's heroes of World War II on the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend.

The Commission prides itself on helping others and bringing greater awareness to the history and heritage of the First State.

## SEE YOU AT THE FAIR

The Delaware Heritage Commission hopes to see you at the 85th annual Delaware State Fair this summer in Harrington. The Fair opens July 22 and will run to July 31.



The Commission and other Department of State Agencies will be at the Fair with information and giveaways for attendees.

The Commission will have books from the Delaware Heritage Press Collection on display, book order forms, lapel pins, gift baskets to raffle and more. If you are at the Fair, stop by and visit with us.

The Delaware State Fair is great family fun featuring animals, midway rides and games, rock music, country stars, entertaining shows, great food and much more. Visit [www.delawarestatefair.com](http://www.delawarestatefair.com) for more information.



The Fair was conceived in 1919 as the Kent and Sussex County Fair. In 1920, adult admission was 50 cents and that first year the Fair generated a profit of nearly \$44. Today, the State Fair is a sprawling 300-acre complex and hosts over 307,000 visitors. The State Fair is a great expression of First State history and heritage.

## Delaware Book Fair and Authors Day

Saturday, November 6, 2004  
Delaware Agricultural  
Museum & Village

Route 13 South  
Dover, Delaware  
10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

### FREE ADMISSION

- Lunch tickets - \$5 while available.
- The Museum will be open with free admission on Book Fair day!
- For more information give us a call at 302-577-5044.
- Gift basket raffles

Each year Delaware Book Fair and Authors Day gets bigger and better. 2004 will mark the 9<sup>th</sup> edition of this one of a kind book showcase. Delaware Book Fair and Authors Day celebrates Delaware writers and Delaware books! New books, used books, Delaware books and more will be available for purchase at the biggest and best event of its kind in the First State. Over 75 authors will be in attendance from all over the state and the peninsula with a variety of books available for purchase. This event is held close to holiday shopping season, buy a book for gift giving! Romance to history, mystery to Christian, there is something for everyone at the Delaware Book Fair.

### New Books

We hope to have Books Are Fun, Inc. back with us this November with their discounted bestsellers, unique gifts and book bargains.

### Delaware Books

Come to Delaware Book Fair to meet authors, purchase books, get your book signed, have lunch and visit the Delaware Agricultural Museum and Village. This event is free of charge. (There is a \$5 charge for lunch.) At the event sign up for the free gift basket raffles.

### Used Books

Selected Delaware libraries will be selling used books at the Book Fair. The books selected for the sale are quality used books. You won't find the cheap paperback with the cover ripped off at this event!

### Information Tables

The Center for the Book will have an information table about upcoming literary events in 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.