

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Delaware	
COUNTY: New Castle	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	DEC 31 1974

1. NAME

COMMON:
Old Town Hall

AND/OR HISTORIC:

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
512 Market Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Wilmington

STATE Delaware	CODE 10	COUNTY: New Castle	CODE 003
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure 	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both 	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress 	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment 	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum 	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific 	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Comments _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Historical Society of Delaware

STREET AND NUMBER:
505 Market Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Wilmington

STATE: Delaware	CODE 10
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Public Building

STREET AND NUMBER:
Rodney Square

CITY OR TOWN:
Wilmington

STATE: Delaware	CODE 10
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Junior League of Wilmington Survey 1-10

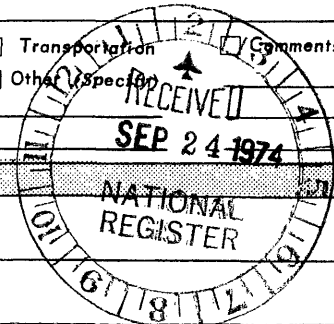
DATE OF SURVEY: Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Historical Society of Delaware

STREET AND NUMBER:
505 Market Street

CITY OR TOWN:
Wilmington

STATE: Delaware	CODE 10
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Old Town Hall is a large two-story brick building in late-Georgian, early-Federal style. The roof is surmounted by a large octagonal cupola; a wooden balustrade runs the entire width of the rooftop. Two chimneys rise above the roof at each end of the balustrade. A pediment which sets off the middle three bays of the building has a large clock face set into it. There is an ornamental wooden cornice in the pediment and across the front and back of the building. The first and second stories are separated on the facade by a thin band of marble belting, accentuated by a large marble block, inset in each bay. The large double doors on the first floor front are enclosed by a large marble, surrounded with a keystone. Windows mark each of the five bays of the facade. Those on the first floor are enclosed in arched openings; and those on the second floor are rectangular and are surmounted by brick flat arches. All of the windows have marble keystones.

The sides of the building are plain, except for the stairs leading from ground level down to the cellar doors. The back of the building has a half-octagonal bow extending outward.

The roof is neither a true gambrel nor a pitched roof. The gently sloping roof ends in a slightly bowed flat on which sits the cupola. There is only one other known example of this in Delaware. The pattern of the first floor windows is repeated in the Keystoned arched openings of the cupola. The cornice is similar in style though not in scale to the main cornice. Under the cornice is found a border with swags in the Adamesque style, rather than the Wall of Troy found on the main cornice.

The only departure from the original exterior appearance of the Old Town Hall has been the addition of a small brick room added to the southeast corner. The interior has been restored under the direction of Lee Nelson. Well over 50% of the exterior and interior fabric is original.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) **1798**

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Town Hall is the only surviving 18th Century public building in Wilmington. It housed the Wilmington city government until 1916. It is an excellent example of late-Georgian, early-Federal architecture, and is comparable to Old City Hall, Congress Hall, and Carpenter's Hall in Philadelphia. Aside from its importance as the seat of city government, the Old Town Hall served as a focal point of many public events in Delaware's history. Several United States Presidents, including Jefferson, J.Q. Adams, Jackson, and William Henry Harrison visited the Old Town Hall. A grand banquet for Lafayette was held in the building in 1824 during the French hero's triumphant return tour of the United States. Public meetings in Wilmington were always held in the Old Town Hall, and virtually every important Delawarean, as well as visiting national figures, spoke in, visited, or were feted in the building between the time it was built and the late 19th century.

The Old Town Hall was also the site of the Wilmington City Prison until the mid-19th century. The original cells in the building's cellar offer an opportunity to examine one facet of early American penology.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Lee H. Nelson and Henry A. Judd, An Architectural Study of Old Town Hall, 1965, unpublished restoration survey made at the request of the Historical Society of Delaware.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		39 ° 44 ' 30 "	75 ° 33 ' 4 "	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES:

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Roland H. Woodward, Museum Curator

ORGANIZATION: Historical Society of Delaware DATE: 2/27/74

STREET AND NUMBER:
505 Market Street

CITY OR TOWN: Wilmington STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: Ronald M. Finch
Dr. Ronald M. Finch

Title: Director, Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

Date: 2/18/74

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 12/31/74

ATTEST:

[Signature]
Keeper of The National Register

Date: 12/31/74