

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Delaware	
COUNTY: Kent	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	FEB 1 1972

**1. NAME**

COMMON: Delaware State Museum *1832*

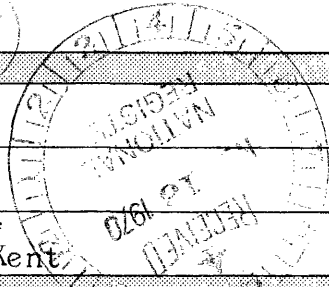
AND/OR HISTORIC: Old Presbyterian Church *Complex*

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER: 316 S. Governors Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Dover

STATE: Delaware CODE: 10 COUNTY: Kent CODE: 001



**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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	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) _____ _____ _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME: State of Delaware - Public Archives Commission

STREET AND NUMBER: Hall of Records

CITY OR TOWN: Dover STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Recorder of Deeds, Kent County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER: The Green

CITY OR TOWN: Dover STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:

DATE OF SURVEY:  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE:

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

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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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

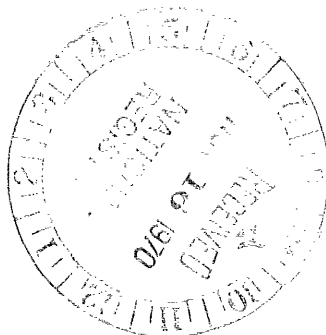
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Delaware State Museum occupies four buildings on the plot reserved as Meeting House Square on the original plot of Dover laid down in 1717. Building No. 1 is the Old Presbyterian Church erected in 1790, an excellent example of an early Federal brick meetinghouse. It is of three-bay width, nearly square, two stories and attic in height, with a belfry providing an unusual enclosed stairwell. The octagonal cupola sheltering the bell, removed in the nineteenth century to leave the truncated tower, has been restored; otherwise the exterior is in its original condition. The interior has good panelling, the unusual staircase referred to above, and a wide railed gallery. These features have been retained in adopting the structure to museum use. Originally there were box pews, one of which was found in storage and reinstalled as an exhibit. The former church is still surrounded by its well-maintained burial ground.

Building No. 2 was a brick chapel erected in 1880. Its exterior and its high Gothic ceiling remain unaltered. Building No. 3 is not a part of the church complex but the office of a gas plant which occupied half the block in the later nineteenth and earlier twentieth centuries. It is a sturdy one story brick building of late nineteenth century date. Unit No. 4 is a handsome recent structure of Georgian design, the Eldridge Reeves Johnson Memorial Building.

The Museum plant with its parking lot now occupies all the block bounded by Governors Avenue, Bank Lane, North Street and New Street. The neighborhood, long commercial interspersed with deteriorating housing, began a slow recovery upon the demolition of the gas works about 1955. The improvement is accelerating with the erection of a well-designed city police headquarters nearby and a scheduled Federal Building directly opposite.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**8. 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 checked="" 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)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

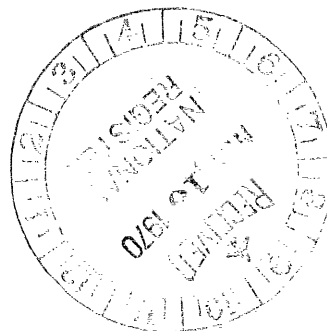
- |  |   |   |  |
|--|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal                | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric               | <input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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Old Presbyterian Church is an excellent specimen of the religious architecture of the Federal period. The congregation it housed for 134 years was the first of the denomination in Kent County and an important factor in the ethical and educational development of the town and county from 1714. Among members buried in its churchyard are John M. Clayton (1796-1856), jurist, statesman and United States Secretary of State; and Colonel John Haslet, commanding officer of the Delaware Battalion in the Revolution until his death at the Battle of Trenton in January, 1777. The present Museum Building No. 1 was erected near the close of the long pastorate of Rev. John Miller (d.1791), who was briefly succeeded by his son Rev. Samuel Miller, later a distinguished professor at Princeton. A State constitutional convention held its sessions in this building in 1831, an earlier convention, 1791-92, in which John Dickinson was the most influential figure, may also have met there.

Buildings No. 2 and 3, though not of the architectural importance of the Church, are nevertheless good examples of a later nineteenth century small town church edifice and a small industrial building. The exhibits the three units house interpret many phases of Delaware life and history to several thousand visitors yearly. The Johnson Building is devoted to the history of sound recording as developed by the Victor Talking Machine Company.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

History Of Delaware, by J. Thomas Scharf, Philadelphia, 1888, Vol. II, pp. 1053-1061, and 1033  
Delaware: A Guide To The First State, edited by Jeannette Eckman and others, published at New York in 1955, p.191  
History Of The Presbyterian Church Of Dover, Delaware ..., by J.F. Stonecipher, [Dover, Delaware, c.1887].

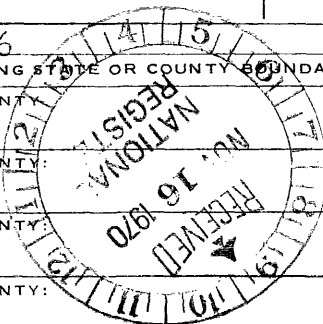
**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	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	0 ' "	0 ' "		75° 31 ' 39"	39° 08 ' 21 "	
NE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SE	0 ' "	0 ' "				
SW	0 ' "	0 ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2.6

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
Leon deValinger, Jr.

ORGANIZATION: Public Archives Commission DATE: Jan.27, 1970

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Hall of Records

CITY OR TOWN: Dover 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 Leon deValinger  
 State Archivist  
 State Liaison Officer

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date November 13, 1970

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

Ernest A. Conroy  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date FEB 1 1972

ATTEST:  
Bradford  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date Jan. 12, 1972

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