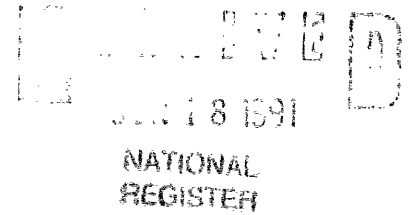


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM

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1. Name of Property

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historic name: Teddy's Tavern

other name/site number: S-8384

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2. Location

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street & number: Du Pont Boulevard  
0.6 miles north of Route 16, east side

city/town: Ellendale, Cedar Creek Hundred not for publication: NA  
vicinity: X

state: Delaware county: Sussex code: 005 zip code: 19941

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3. Classification

=====

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: NA

Name of related multiple property listing: NA

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4. State/Federal Agency Certification  
=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

David P. [Signature] \_\_\_\_\_ June 6, 1991  
Signature of certifying official Date

Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_\_\_ meets \_\_\_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria. \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

[Signature] \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

=====  
5. National Park Service Certification  
=====

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_\_\_
- removed from the National Register \_\_\_\_\_
- other (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

~~Entered in the~~  
**National Register**

[Signature] 7/22/91

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Keeper Date of Action



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The exterior is clad in polychrome brick in which headers, often chipped and broken, project from the surface at irregular angles. Laid up in Flemish bond with deep mortar joints, this brickwork creates animated shadows which give the wall a very rough and rich texture. The northern part of the rear addition is also clad in this rough brickwork as is the chimney at the northwest corner. The walk-in cooler on the southeast corner is laid up in Flemish bond and is a later addition. The interior chimney in the southeast corner is laid up in common bond and painted white. The foundation consists of a concrete slab set at grade level. It is lined on the north, south and east with a course of stretchers laid on-end.

Originally, the Blue Hen Garage appeared as a well equipped service station catering to motorists traveling along the Du Pont Highway. Two sets of three "visible measure" pumps flanked a central service bay. Common in the 1920's, this type of pump drew gas into a glass graduate, which was protected with wire mesh, so the customer could see what he was buying. The gas was then released to flow into the tank of an automobile.<sup>1</sup> Drive-in porches, such as the Blue Hen Garage's, had become a common site by the time of World War I.<sup>2</sup> Originally, the supports of Blue Hen Garage's porch were square wooden posts and its broad overhang provided both service and shelter for numerous vehicles. The entire building consisted of blue and yellow painted stucco over a wood frame. Owing to the family's Swedish descent, the blue and yellow paint scheme was chosen.

The interior of Teddy's Tavern can be categorized by three types of spaces: the package store, the dining areas and the labyrinth of service rooms. The package store, which is located in the southwest corner of the building, serves take-out customers and has its own exterior entrance as well as a doorway that connects it with the bar. Shelves of bottles line the walls and a cooler stores merchandise and functions as a counter. The ceiling of the package store is tin and dates to the original construction of the building.

The dining areas compose the largest space. The main dining area is entered directly from the porch and contains a heating stove and jukebox. The dado level of the walls are finished with vertical, lacquered pine panelling and the ceiling has been lowered. This area seats fifteen to

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twenty people and contains the serpentine bar. The bar, like the center bay, is constructed of glass block. It accommodates eight to ten people and, having no taps, serves only cold cans and bottles.

The rear dining room is smaller than the main dining area and is separated by a partition wall that rises five to six feet. There is a large fireplace in the northwest corner which is constructed of the same polychrome brick that covers the exterior. The top edge of the fireplace opening and the base of the brick pile are lined with stretchers laid on-end in a manner similar to those that line the foundation.

The collection of smaller rooms that provide service functions to the package store and dining areas are located in the southeastern part of the building. Of these rooms, the men's and women's restrooms are the only public spaces. The wall dividing these two rooms terminates at a sash window on the south wall. These are the smallest service rooms and each measures approximately 5 x 8 feet. The three remaining service rooms are entered through the office. The office contains a chest of drawers, desk and window sink as well as the ubiquitous pine panelling. The walk-in cooler, which occupies the southern half of the rear addition, is entered through the office. A storage room to the north is also entered from the office. This storage room has a large, two door closet and offers access to a second storage room which, in turn, has an exterior entrance. The west wall of this second storage room maintains the rough brickwork found on the exterior walls.

Little of the garage interior remains. The central service bay is filled-in with glass block. The service pit, however, still exists below the floor of the bar. The original service station office now serves as a package store and the auto service areas are now dining rooms. Electricity was brought indoors from batteries stored in a "colder shed" behind the garage. This system was used until electricity was introduced to the area.

Much of the interior detail and the basic articulation of the rooms dates from the building's service as Teddy's Tavern. The layout of the dining areas, office and storage rooms has not changed since the garage was converted to a tavern in 1937. The office also served as living quarters

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for the tavern owners and had a cook stove in addition to the sink. The chimney in the northeast corner was added in the late 1930's. Its rough brickwork is contemporaneous with that on the exterior of the structure. The pine panelling also dates from this period.

The tavern still serves a mostly local clientele though the package store accommodates travelers on the Du Pont Highway just as the Blue Hen Garage did in 1923.

1.Liebs, Chester H. Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985), 96.

2.Ibid., 97.

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8. Statement of Significance  
=====

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Locally.

Applicable National Register Criteria: A and C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) : NA

Areas of Significance: Commerce and Architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1923-1941

Significant Dates : 1923, 1937

Significant Person(s): NA  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation: NA  
\_\_\_\_\_

Architect/Builder: Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.  
X See continuation sheet.

Originally built in 1923 as a service station and converted into a roadside tavern in 1937, Teddy's Tavern is part of a vanishing example of a commercial enterprise that was once very popular in Delaware. These structures were erected after the construction of all-weather highways prior to World War I. As one of the few surviving service station/roadside taverns remaining from the pre-1940 era in Delaware, Teddy's Tavern is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under criterion A for its relationship to roadside commerce and trade during the first period of America's infatuation with the automobile and criterion C for its unusual brickwork and Mission style of architecture. This was never a popular building style in Delaware for which there are few extant examples.

Construction of the Du Pont Highway, one the nation's first modern roadways, began in 1908 in effort to ease the often difficult intrastate travel. It was originally built by T. Coleman Du Pont, operating through a private corporation, and a completed portion of the highway was donated to the State of Delaware in 1917. Du Pont continued to fund the project until it was completed in 1923 at a cost of \$3,917,000. The highway was eventually incorporated into the federal highway system as Routes 13 and 113.

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Gasoline was originally sold at existing businesses such as hardware stores, grocery stores and service stations. At about the same time, 1905-1910, oil companies began to develop their own system of gasoline distribution and chains of gas stations began to appear in urban areas.<sup>1</sup> As the popularity of the automobile soared and the quality of the roads improved, increasing numbers of gas stations began to appear. By the time of World War I, such stations were appearing at a rate of 1,200 a year and in 1922, Shell Oil Company supplied 1,841 retail stations on the West Coast alone.<sup>2</sup>

The Du Pont Highway, completed the following year, was touted along much of the eastern seaboard. Among those who relocated near the newly constructed highway were Charles and Ted Walius of New York City. In 1923 they opened the Blue Hen Garage to gas and service automobiles travelling along the highway. The drive-in structure the Walius's constructed is part of a tradition of gas station design that began with a Shell Oil affiliate in St. Louis in 1909 and has since become a ubiquitous part of the American landscape from the 1909-1941 period.<sup>3</sup> The Blue Hen Garage was a Sinclair affiliate.

In 1937, four years after the repeal of Prohibition, the Walius brothers transformed the Blue Hen Garage into Theodore's Tavern, later called Teddie's Tavern and now commonly known as Teddy's Tavern. Along with an extensive liquor and wine list, Teddy's offered salads, sandwiches and platters for under forty cents. The informality of the tavern catered to both locals and travellers alike.

The opening of Teddy's Tavern follows a trend in the evolution of the restaurant industry in this country. At the turn of the nineteenth-century, dining out for most Americans was generally limited to lunchtime eating establishments that catered to the busy urban workers such as cafeterias, delicatessens, lunch counters and luncheonettes. The greater numbers of men and women working away from the home, the end of Prohibition and the lack of availability of domestic help led to a marked increase in the number of restaurants in the 1930's. Technological advances in food storage and preparation also contributed to the growing number of restaurants.<sup>4</sup> The automobile added to this rise as well, as more people drove to restaurants and dined out while travelling to other destinations.<sup>5</sup> The once limited dining alternatives afforded to the long distance traveler dramatically increased during this period.



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Teddy's Tavern is an example of such a restaurant that served the early travellers along one of the nations first modern highways. It is one of the few remaining facilities of its type in operation in southern Delaware. Most of the structures have been demolished or, as they have become outdated, were altered so they are no longer recognizable for their original function. This process has been accelerated in the last fifteen years as the chain restaurants and gasoline stations have expanded their hold on the market in southern Delaware.

In 1937, when the Blue Hen Garage was converted to Teddy's Tavern, the building was clad in polychromatic brick and the wood posts supporting the porch were replaced with conical, brick and concrete columns. These elements, along with the parapet, give the building a low, horizontal appearance, characteristic of the Mission style of architecture of the desert southwest. This style of architecture is rare in Delaware with no more than four surviving examples from the period.

The roughly laid up, polychromatic brick cladding found in Teddy's Tavern contributes both in color and texture to the nature of the Mission style and is unique to the region. A partially enclosed porch on a late nineteenth-century house in Milford is clad in running bond with red mortar joints and brick of a similar color. The deep shadows, however, are created by sloppy mortar joints which project over the bricks like waves. St. John the Baptist Episcopal Church in Milton, approximately eight miles southwest of Ellendale, is also clad in running bond with red mortar joints. The bricks are laid up in a manner similar to those at Teddy's Tavern. This brick facing was applied to the church in 1936, a year before Teddy's was clad in brick. The similarity of the brickwork and the close proximity of the two buildings suggest that either the mason who laid up Teddy's knew of the Milton church or was the same mason who laid up its brick walls a year earlier. This unusual brickwork and the Mission style of architecture to which it contributes, makes Teddy's Tavern a property of great local significance.

1.Liebs, 96.

2.Liebs, 96 and Jakle, John A. "The American Gasoline Station, 1920 to 1970." American Culture 1 (Fall 1978): 521.

3.Jakle, 521.

4.Ibid., 97.

5.Ibid., 197.

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Comprehensive Planning Statement

Teddy's Tavern is located in the Lower Peninsula/Cypress Swamp zone of Delaware. Cedar Creek Hundred is mostly flat and well drained so that marsh lands are not commonly present except along the coast line of the Delaware Bay which is on the eastern edge of the hundred or along the hundred's northern boundary which is defined by the Mispillion River. Non-tidal wetlands are common throughout much of the hundred, hence drainage ditches are an important feature of the landscape.

The tavern is directly associated with the transportation theme in Delaware's history since its construction and long history was the direct result of the appearance of all-weather, hard-surfaced roads in the state and the resulting increased need for facilities to provide services to private and commercial travelers. The tavern's construction and first use as a service station occurred within six years after the completion of the first length of the DuPont Highway and in the same year in which it was completed the length of the state. The stretch of the highway the tavern sits alongside of is the only surviving original two lane portion of the DuPont Highway as built by T. Coleman DuPont and donated by him to the State of Delaware.

The construction of the tavern in 1923 is within the 1880-1940 period of increased concentration of Delaware's population in larger communities during an intense period of suburbanization and urbanization. In addition, the Tavern represents a new type of building which was developed during the first period of America's intense interest in automobiles during the period between the end of World War I and the beginning of World War II. The demand for highways and for automobiles and both the governmental and private response transformed the face of the State of Delaware, and especially had a profound impact on the appearance of rural Delaware.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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X See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

NA preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.

NA previously listed in the National Register

NA previously determined eligible by the National Register

NA designated a National Historic Landmark

NA recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

NA recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Location of Additional Data:

X State historic preservation office

   Other state agency

   Federal agency

   Local government

   University

   Other -- Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_

=====

10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of Property: 1.5 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing      Zone Easting Northing

A 18 461930 4296100

B \_\_\_\_\_

C \_\_\_\_\_

D \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

The bounds of this nomination start at the intersection of the Route 113 road edge at the south side of the lane to the rear of property and then proceeds along that lane edge to a spot 250 feet east of the beginning and then proceeds south for 300 feet behind the tavern and then turns due west to the road edge of Route 113 and then proceeds north to the place of the beginning. This bound is marked on the USGS map. The western bound conforms to the current legal parcel line between the Tavern and the highway.

Boundary Justification: \_\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.

This boundary includes the tavern and sufficient space around the tavern to include the historic environment of the tavern. This is especially important for the space between the tavern and the road edge and for the parking area south of the tavern. It is all located on tax parcel map 2-30-26-35.

=====  
11. Form Prepared By  
=====

Name/Title: Steven H. Moffson, Research Assistant

Organization: Bureau of Archaeology and Historic Preservation

Date: April 1991

Street & Number: 15 The Green

Telephone: 302-739-5685

City or Town: Dover

State: Delaware ZIP: 19901

## Bibliography

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Page # 1

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Jackle, John A. "The American Gasoline Station, 1920-1970." American Culture 1 (Fall 1978): 521.

Leibs, Chester H. Main Street to Miracle Mile: American Roadside Architecture. Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1985.

Zebley, Frank R. The Churches of Delaware. Wilmington, DE., 1947.

**TEDDY'S TAVERN  
NORTH DU PONT BOULEVARD  
CEDAR CREEK HUNDRED, ELLENDALE VICINITY  
SUSSEX COUNTY, DELAWARE  
PREPARED BY STEVEN H. MOFFSON**

