

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: New Jersey
COUNTY: Morris
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE JUL 18 1974

2-18 N 43, 148-70
 HZ
 E 525 700

1. NAME

COMMON: **Chester House Inn**

AND/OR HISTORIC: **Chester Inn, Chester Institute**

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: **Main Street and Hillside Road**

CITY OR TOWN: **Chester** CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:

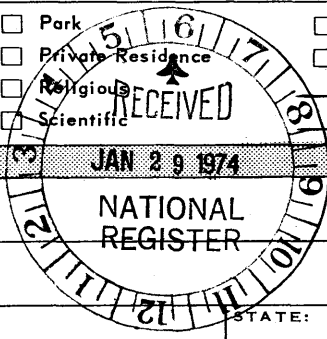
STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34** COUNTY: **Morris** CODE: **027**

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"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" 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"/> Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	Still used as an Inn and Restaurant
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious		
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: **Richard Traynor**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Horizon Drive**

CITY OR TOWN: **Mendham** STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34**

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: **Hall of Records**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Court Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Morristown** STATE: **New Jersey** CODE: **34**

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: **Historic American Buildings Survey (NJ-61)**

DATE OF SURVEY: **1937** Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: **Library of Congress**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington** STATE: **D.C.** CODE: **11**

STATE: **New Jersey**
 COUNTY: **Morris**
 ENTRY NUMBER: **JUL 18 1974**
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" 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

Exterior.

Chester Inn is a 3½ story Federal-style Flemish bond brick building constructed in 1812 as a public accomodation. The brick is presently painted white. The dimensions of the original house are 50 feet by 35½ feet. There were originally paired gable end chimneys on each end, but currently only one gable end has these chimneys. (The east gable end chimneys being removed.) The 1812 section of the Inn, appearing almost independent of the additions, has five bays and a center hall. The windows of all three floors are 6/6 sash and have stone lintels with keystones. The first floor also has louvered shutters. The inset center hall doorway has an elliptical fanlight. There is a modern two story porch with four columns on the front facade. Earlier another porch, somewhat similar, but Victorian, was divided into two floors and at that time a doorway over the center door was inserted to provide access to the porch. Today that doorway has only a small wrought-iron veranda around it.

A large 3 story clapboard wing (24' by 65') with a low pitch gable roof was added to the rear (north) of the Chester Inn when William Rankin purchased the property in 1854 and converted it into an educational institute. In addition there is a 3 story section added to the east gable end, probably during the time Rankin owned the property. This wing (57' by 28') is partially brick and partially clapboard. There is also a more recent one story wing added to the rear of this section.

Interior.

The Chester Inn has a center hall plan originally two rooms deep on either side. On the first floor the western section has been opened up into one room which now serves as a bar. (It has not been determined as to when this room was opened up, but it was before 1937.) This entire room is 32½ feet by 19 feet. The spacious hallway is 9 feet by 32½ feet and has a stairway to the rear (north). There are two rooms to the east of the hall; the one 18 feet by 15 feet and the other 18 feet by 17½ feet. Each first floor room has a fireplace and mantel, as do all the main rooms on all the floors. The second and third story rooms are nearly all identical in size (front: 19' by 18', back: 19' by 15'), except for the 3rd floor northeast room which has been divided into two rooms. All of these rooms are bedrooms as the Chester Inn still accepts lodgers.

Notable details inside the house are front door, stairs, and the elegant mantelpieces. The arch of the front door has a repetitive pattern of rosettes and bars. In addition, the door frame is fluted. The three story winding stairway has the original newel post, handrails and balusters. The mantels are all quite ornate and well carved. They are typical Adamesque style mantels with sunbursts, ellipses, rosettes, and diamonds in the patterns. An arch in the hall and the doorway to the north parlor room was recently removed.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input 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)

1812

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Commerce.

Around 1730 two roads were created along Black River (now Chester) in order to encourage settlement in the area. One road went north and south and the other east and west. The east and west road (today known as Route 24) was eventually chartered in 1806 as a state highway under the name Washington Turnpike.

Zephania Drake was a proprietor of the line of stages traveling along the road from Easton to New York. In 1810 he bought land in Chester and built the Chester Inn in 1812.

The brick house was built to accomodate overnight lodgers on their way to Easton or New York.

The stage at first ran only once a week, but gradually built up to a coach a day; further enhancing the trade of the Chester Inn and two other smaller inns in the small town.

Drake sold the Inn in 1821 to Isaiah Fairclo and his wife, who originally owned the property. The Fairclo's almost immediately sold to another Drake. This Drake, along with his wife, apparently did not operate the Inn themselves for an advertizement in the Palladium of Liberty (April 18, 1822) informed readers that Daniel Woodruff had taken over the management of the Chester Hotel.

Education.

Between 1820 and 1850 prosperity in Chester declined; partially evidenced by frequent owners of Chester Inn during that period. The Morris Canal and the railroads were the prime cause of this decline. These new and improved forms of transportation completely by-passed the village of Chester.

Probably as a result of the infeasibility of continuing to operate the tavern and lodge at a profit it was again sold, in 1854, but this time to William Rankin, who transformed Chester House Inn into a private educational facility.

Rankin, formerly a teacher at Deckertown, New Jersey, enlarged the building to its present proportions by adding two wings. His school, which he called the Chester Institute, was a college preparatory school for young men and, interestingly

(cont.)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Robinson's Atlas of Morris County. 1887.
A History of Morris County, New Jersey. 2 Volumes. Lewis Historical Publishing Company, New York: 1914.
History of Morris County, New Jersey. W.W. Munsell, New York: 1882.
The Chesters. League of Women Veterans: 1971.
"The Chester Inn!" Jean Dabrowski, 1973. Unpublished research on the Inn. Title search, included.
Chester, New Jersey: A Town's Past. Frances Greenidge. Chester Historical Society:

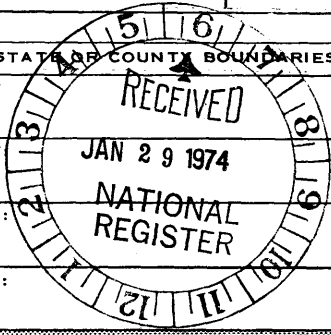
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA 1968 (7)

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	° ' "	° ' "		40° 47' 10"	74° 41' 43"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 2

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Historic Sites Section Staff (Terry Karschner, Historian)

ORGANIZATION: Department of Environmental Protection DATE: Sept. 26, 1973

STREET AND NUMBER:
Box 1420

CITY OR TOWN: Trenton STATE: New Jersey CODE: 34

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: Richard J. Sullivan
 Title: Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection
 Date: November 26, 1973

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

A. B. Wontrose
 Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: 7/18/74

ATTEST:
Wm. J. ...
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: 7-17-74

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(Continuation Sheet)

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COUNTY Morris	
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(Number all entries)

Chester House Inn
Chester
Morris County, Code:027
New Jersey, Code: 34

8. Significance (cont.)

also a school of grace for young women.

Rankin moved his classical school to Mendham in 1862 and sold the Chester Inn back to its former owners, the Budds.

Architecture.

The Chester Inn is a fine example of New Jersey Federal-style architecture; especially when considering the building was constructed as a public building. The Inn is typical Federal Period rectangular form, except for the uncommon third floor which is compensated by the somewhat larger proportions otherwise.

The fireplace mantels are exceptionally fine carved pieces. They are of the typical Adamesque style with rosettes, sunbursts, ellipses, and diamonds in the patterns. A local (Chester) craftsman named Schuyler probably did the carving for them as well as other work in the Inn and throughout Mendham.



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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE New Jersey	
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ENTRY NUMBER JUL 18 1974	DATE

(Number all entries)

Chester House Inn
Chester
Morris County, Code: 027
New Jersey, Code: 34

6. Representation (cont.)

New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory (683.2)
State Survey: 1968, 1973
Historic Sites Section, Department of Environmental
Protection
Box 1420, Trenton, NJ

