

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Delaware	
COUNTY: Sussex	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER FEB 10 1975	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Bethel Historic District

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Lewisville, Lewis' Wharf

2. LOCATION

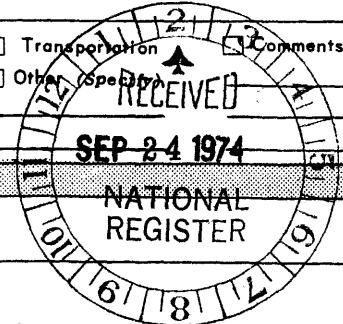
STREET AND NUMBER:
North of Broad Creek, 4/10 mile west of Laurel

CITY OR TOWN:
Bethel

STATE: Delaware CODE: 10 COUNTY: Sussex CODE: 005

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)



4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Multiple Ownership

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: Bethel STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
Sussex County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:
The Circle

CITY OR TOWN: Georgetown STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Historic American Building Survey, Del. 150-151

DATE OF SURVEY: 1960 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:

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

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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

The town of Bethel is situated in a primarily agricultural section of Sussex County. It stands on the northern bank of Broad Creek, which served as a stimulus for the town's financial success. Incorporated within the town's limits, primarily along the main street, are a number of significant domestic structures.

Several of these clapboard houses were erected by mariners during Bethel's prosperous shipbuilding years. They are characterized by the same meticulous construction techniques that were employed by the village's skilled ship carpenters in their sailing vessels. Four houses can be cited as typical examples of the town's vernacular architecture.

The ~~low~~ Ship-Carpenter Houses (S-198), fronting Bethel's Main Street, were erected before 1868 on adjoining lots by two sea captains, John Quillen and John Owens. Each house consists of a low, one-story-and-attic section with an adjoining rear wing and a taller story-and-a-half addition. The facades are complemented by simple bow cornices and contemporary pedimented dormers. The interiors of these two dwellings exhibit the quality of workmanship that was characteristic of Lewisville's skilled craftsmen.

The paneled interior end walls contain fireplaces with finely constructed mantels and a steep, winding, enclosed stairway. Wide floor boards and beaded joists complement the paneling. Each residence is enclosed by a narrow picket fence.

The Moore House (S-265), located at the corner of Main and Vine Sts., was erected by Captain Thomas Moore about 1868. This dwelling, like several other village structures, was designed as a story-and-attic dwelling with a two-and-a-half-story addition. The Moore House features a Victorian cross-gable adorned with gingerbread trim. Adjoining this is a one-story kitchen wing with rear additions. The facade features a double entrance and louvered shutters.

As Lewisville's prosperity increased, variations in its vernacular architectural style emerged. Two Italianate cottages were erected in the village during the 1870's. The "4 R's Farm" (S-271), which best exemplifies the style, stands on Vine Street. The facade of this square, three-bay, two-story clapboard dwelling features a modillion cornice, louvered shutters and an entrance portico.

The ~~Vicorian~~ ^{Victorian} era was represented in Lewisville by large nineteenth century houses with spacious verandas, gingerbread trim, and ornate cut-shingle sheathing.

The interiors of many Bethel residences have been extensively altered. The preservation of their original exteriors has, however, provided visual evidence of this small community's conception of nineteenth century American folk architecture as first inspired by a rugged seafaring life and later by agricultural pursuits.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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STATE Delaware	
COUNTY Sussex	
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7. Description, cont'd.

The area nominated is congruent with the incorporated town limits, as delineated in the 1968 Delaware Department of Highway and Transportation map of Bethel, as revised in 1972. The village is bounded on the south by Broad Creek, and on the other sides by lines.



SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input 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 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Bethel is a small, well-preserved shipbuilding and trading community of the nineteenth century. Wooden sailing vessels were constructed by Bethel's skilled ship carpenters until early in this century. The most significant class of Bethel craft were the Chesapeake sailing rams, which originated from this Broad Creek port.

The town of Bethel was formerly known as both Lewis' Wharf and Lewisville. The site was originally part of five hundred acres granted by the province of Maryland to James Caldwell in 1728. Settlement of this area was inhibited by the continuous boundary disputes between Maryland and the Penn family.

In 1795, Kendal Major Lewis, the founder of Bethel, acquired much of James Caldwell's original grant as well as a smaller tract on Broad Creek, known as Mitchell's Harbor. Here he established a landing that grew to become a prosperous trading center. In the 1840's, Lewis' Wharf developed into a thriving community known as Lewisville.

Within the next twenty years, Lewisville was to become an important shipbuilding center. The extensive forests along the Nanticoke provided abundant supplies of virgin pine, oak and cypress.

In 1869, Jonathan Moore of Lewisville established the most important marine railway on the peninsula south of Wilmington. John M. C. Moore, superintendent of Lewisville's Marine Railway Company, originated the well-known Chesapeake sailing ram. This class of sailing vessel was designed as an economical, flat-bottom, three masted schooner; its operation required only a small crew. Rams were used for coastal freight primarily on the Chesapeake Bay.

Between 1871 and 1918, as many as thirty rams were built in Lewisville shipyards.

In 1880, when the village applied for a post office, its name was changed to Bethel, since another Lewisville, Delaware, post office already existed.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Sussex County Deeds
 Marvil, James, M.D., Sailing Rams. Ann Arbor: Edwards Brothers, Inc., 1961.
 Eberlein, Harold D. and Hubbard, Cortiantd V. D. Historic Houses and Buildings of Delaware. Dover, Delaware: Public Archives Commission, 1963.
Beer's Atlas of Delaware. Philadelphia: Pomeroy & Beers, 1868.
 Conrad, Henry C. History of the State of Delaware. Wilmington: By the Author, 1908.
 Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Delaware, 1609-1888. Philadelphia: L. J. Richards & Co., 1888.

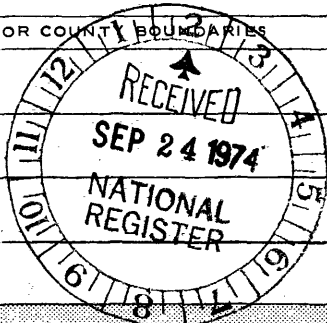
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

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
NW	38°	34'	38"	75°	37'	55"			
NE	38°	34'	38"	75°	36'	45"			
SE	38°	33'	49"	75°	36'	45"			
SW	38°	33'	44"	75°	37'	55"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **55**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE



NO
 10/10/74
 CD

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Madeline Dunn, Historic Site Surveyor

ORGANIZATION: Division of Historical & Cultural Affairs DATE: 3/13/74

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 Dr. Ronald M. Finch

Title Director, Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

Date 9/18/74

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

AK Morley
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 2/10/75

ATTEST:
W. J. [Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date 2.6.75

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COUNTY	Sussex	
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(Number all entries) 8. Statement of Significance

Several of Lewisville's leaders served the state as members of its legislature, including Kendal Major Lewis who was four times elected as a state representative and twice as a state senator between 1827 and 1834; John M. C. Moore who served as a state representative in 1894 and 1896; and William T. Moore who was also a state senator.

The town of Bethel has grown very little since the commercial shipyards closed in 1918. Although the shipyards and the drawbridge no longer exist, the town retains a large number of houses that were built during Lewisville's seafaring days.



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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Delaware	
COUNTY	
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(Number all entries) 9. Major Bibliographical References

Hutchinson, Henry H. "Collected Notes on Bethel, (Formerly Lewisville) Del."
The Archeolog. XXI (March, 1969), No. 1.

