

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

PH 0111252 DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED APR 01 1975  
DATE ENTERED APR 21 1975

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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC Eastern Lock of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Battery Park

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Delaware City

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

One

STATE

Delaware

VICINITY OF  
CODE 10

COUNTY  
New Castle

CODE  
003

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME Mayor and Council of Delaware City

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Delaware City

VICINITY OF

STATE  
Delaware

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Recorder of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Public Building

CITY, TOWN

Wilmington

STATE  
Delaware

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Survey of Delaware Historic Sites and Buildings

DATE

1975

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS

Hall of Records

CITY, TOWN

Dover

STATE Delaware

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The lock at Delaware City is a stone structure, resting on wooden underpinnings, with a wooden floor. It stands near the mouth of the old C&D Canal, at the east end of the former cut. The lock gates no longer exist.

The short section of canal between the east end of the lock and the river has been filled, to provide parking. Westward from the lock, the old canal remains navigable for small pleasure boats.

The original canal locks were a hundred feet long and twenty-two feet wide. When the canal was originally built, the Delaware City lock had a lift of six to eight feet, and provided ungated passage on a high tide. From Delaware City to St. George's, a distance of 4.39 miles, the canal maintained a level of 7.66 feet above mean low water. Between 1851 and 1854, during a general improvement of the canal facilities, the locks were enlarged to 220 feet by twenty-four feet.

Even with enlarged facilities, the canal soon reached the limits of its capacity. As early as 1871, proponents of a ship canal were agitating for a sea-level waterway across the Delmarva isthmus. Other routes were considered, but in 1919 the federal government obtained title to the C&D Canal and began digging a sea-level cut along its route. The new canal was finally opened to oceangoing traffic, without locks, in 1927.

When the sea-level canal was built, all the locks were destroyed except the one at Delaware City. This lock survived because the new route entered the Delaware River by a new mouth at Reedy Point, two miles south.

Today, the old cut at Delaware City serves as a harbor for small boats. Since the entrance lock is blocked by an earth berm, small boats must travel south from this anchorage into the canal, in order to enter the river.

*1  
2/15/77*

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES                      1829, 1854                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The eastern lock of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal in Delaware City is the last remaining lock structure on the old canal. At Chesapeake City, the western terminus, a pumphouse has been preserved.

In 1829, the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal first opened for traffic, culminating a half century of negotiations, proposals, false starts, and failures. Although the canal was only about fourteen miles long, it was a vital link in the all-water transportation system envisioned in Albert Gallatin's 1808 report to Congress.

Until it became federal property in 1919, the lock navigation was operated by a private corporation chartered in Delaware and Maryland, but backed by Philadelphia business interests. The original work was expanded during the early 1850's, when larger locks were installed and the cuts were deepened. The surviving lock and the pumphouse at Chesapeake City date from this expansion. Between 1854 and 1919, the canal's physical plant was little altered.

Battery Park in Delaware City was the eastern terminus of the canal navigation. This public open space remains virtually as it appeared during canal days. Mounted on a pedestal in the park is a diving bell, which was built to enable workmen to repair underwater equipment. West of Battery Park was a basin, now filled, which could accommodate several boats at a time.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Gray, Ralph D. The National Waterway. Chicago: The University of Illinois Press, 1967.

Snyder, Frank E., and Brian H. Guss. The District. Philadelphia: U. S. Army Engineer District Philadelphia, 1974.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Less than one acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 8	4 4 9 5 3 0	4 3 8 0 1 9 5 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The lock is bordered on the northeast by Delaware River, on the southeast and southwest by the Chesapeake and Delaware branch canal, and on the northwest by Battery Park.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Edward F. Heite, <sup>H</sup>istoric Registrar

ORGANIZATION

Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs

DATE

February 1975

STREET & NUMBER

Hall of Records

TELEPHONE

302-678-4564

CITY OR TOWN

Dover

STATE

Delaware

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation 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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

*Edward F. Heite*

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer and Acting Dir.

DATE

3-27-75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*A. H. Weirhausen*

DATE

4/21/75

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

*Charles A. ...*

DATE

4.18.75

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*acting*