

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

RECORDED
AUG 24 1993

**National Register of Historic Places
Multiple Property Documentation Form**

**NATIONAL
REGISTER**

This form is used for documenting multiple property groups relating to one or several historic contexts. See instructions in **How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form** (National Register Bulletin 16B). Complete each item by entering the requested information. For additional space, use continuation sheets (Form 10-900-a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer to complete all items.

New Submission Amended Submission

A. Name of Multiple Property Listing
AFRICAN-AMERICAN RESOURCES IN DELAWARE

B. Associated Historic Contexts
SETTLEMENT AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE; 1630-1942; ENTIRE STATE OF DELAWARE

c. Form Prepared by

Name/Title: Stephen G. Del Sordo, Historian

Organization: DE State Historic Preservation Office Date: December 1992

Street & Number: 15 The Green

Telephone: 302-739-5685

City or Town: Dover

State: Delaware

Zip Code: 19901

D. Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this documentation form meets the National Register documentation standards and sets forth requirements for the listing of related properties consistent with the National Register criteria. This submission meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60 and the Secretary of the interior Standards and Guidelines for Archeology and Historic Preservation. ([See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David P. G. [Signature]
Signature and title of certifying official

August 19, 1993
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

I hereby certify that this multiple property documentation form has been approved by the National Register as a basis for evaluating related properties for listing in the National Register.

Patrick Andrus
Signature of the Keeper

10/5/93
Date

Table of Contents for Written Narrative

Provide the following information on continuation sheets. Cite the letter and the title before each section of the narrative. Assign page numbers according to the instructions for continuation sheets in **How to Complete the Multiple Property Documentation Form** (National Register Bulletin 16B). Fill in page numbers for each section in the space below.

	Page Numbers
E. Statement of Historic Contexts (If more than one historic context is documented, present them in sequential order.)	2
F. Associated Property Types (Provide description, significance, and registration requirements.)	1
G. Geographical Data	1
H. Summary of identification and Evaluation Methods (Discuss the methods used in developing the multiple property listing.)	1
I. Major Bibliographical References (List major written works and primary location of additional documentation: State Historic Preservation Office, other State agency, Federal agency, local government, university, or other, specifying repository.)	1

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section E

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name of multiple property listing
AFRICAN-AMERICAN RESOURCES IN DELAWARE

STATEMENT OF HISTORIC CONTEXT

Immigrants from the continent of Africa and African-Americans have been living within the State of Delaware since the mid-seventeenth century. The first African in the state was known as Anthony. He arrived in Delaware as part of the Swedish colony that was established between 1638 and 1655. His relationship to the colony is not clear.¹ The Dutch who supplanted the Swedes in 1655 brought Africans to Delaware as slaves. That practice was continued by the English settlers who took over Delaware in 1664. The exact numbers of persons of African descent in Delaware either as slaves or as free individuals in not known until the federal census of 1790 was taken. In that year there were 8,887 slaves and 3,899 free African-Americans within a total population of 59,096.

From 1790 to 1860, the number of slaves in Delaware declined as the principal group of slave owners, farmers, began to realize that it was not profitable to maintain slaves in the face of changing agricultural technology that emphasized the use of fertilizers and machines, and a shift away from labor-intensive groups. There were also some religious reasons for the almost universal movement away from the ownership of slaves. Quakers had always been opposed to the institution of slavery. That opposition may account for the large number of manumissions in Kent County which had a large Quaker population.² By 1860, there were only 1,798 slaves in the entire state. The population of free African-Americans stood at 21,627. The entire population of the Delaware was 112,216.³

¹ John A. Munroe, "The Negro in Delaware", The South Atlantic Quarterly. 56(Autumn, 1957), 429.

² E.M. Homsey, "Afro-Americans in Kent County, Delaware" Working Papers of the Regional Economic History Center.

³ For a discussion of the growth of the African-American population in Delaware see: David Ames, et.al. "African-American Population in Delaware: 1800-1980." February, 1991, manuscript prepared for the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office, Dover, Delaware.

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African-American Resources in Delaware

As African-Americans were freed from slavery and entered the work force in Delaware, many either left the state for jobs in the urban areas of Pennsylvania or further north, or they moved away from their original farm sites to the small towns of Delaware and to Wilmington for jobs in the service sector of the economy or for jobs in the many small mills and factories that were established in the nineteenth century. The movement to the towns by the African-American population meant that small neighborhoods were created by them either of their own choice or by the dominate white population of each community. For the most part these communities have maintained their viability and identity to the present time.

No matter who made the decision to establish the separate communities for African-Americans, every town in Delaware has a section that has been traditionally identified with that group since prior to the Civil War for the older towns such as Smyrna, Dover, Milford, and Bridgeville. In the newer towns such as Harrington or Clayton that were established as a result of the railroad coming to the state in the 1860's, separate sections were established for the African-American community. In each of the three counties of Delaware, there are also small rural settlements that served the needs of the African-American community. These are similar to those that exist for the white community and they are often near each other. For example, the community of Star Hill is located near the town of Camden in Kent County and Bell Town is near the town of Lewes in Sussex County.

The African-American communities in rural areas or those neighborhoods in settled towns architecturally resemble the buildings and settlement patterns of the white population. There is no readily identifiable African-American building tradition in Delaware. The African-American communities are usually marked by a church, which is the dominate institution in the Delaware African-American community. There is often a school located near the community. Often these schools, especially in the rural areas are remnants of the segregated schools created for African-American students.

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AFRICAN-AMERICAN RESOURCES IN DELAWARE

ASSOCIATED PROPERTY TYPES

The property type associated with the African-American Resources in Delaware has only one characteristic that is different from any other form of historic resource. That characteristic is that the resource must have been associated with the African-American community in some fashion such as use for a school, church, cemetery, lodge hall or some other similar function. In addition, a resource could relate to the this community if it illustrated an historic theme such as tenancy or property ownership for a member of the African-American community in a period prior to 50 years before the present.

In order to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places under this theme, the resource must have a direct association with the African-American community and posses sufficient integrity that the resource still maintains an appearance that is similar to that which it had during its period of significance. This requirement is that which is in place for all submissions to the National Register with the exception that consideration should be given to the diminished economic ability of the African-American community to maintain their historic resources. Consequently, attractive appearance is less critical for listing than is the consideration of the social history and association with significant individuals that might be associated with the resource.

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AFRICAN-AMERICAN RESOURCES IN DELAWARE

Geographical Data

The theme study, African-American Resources in Delaware, is important to the entire State of Delaware. As such this study applies to the entire geographic area of the state.

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AFRICAN-AMERICAN RESOURCES IN DELAWARE

Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

The identification of all Delaware resources associated with the African-American community or with significant members of the African-American population is a difficult if not impossible project. Since there is no recognizable African-American architecture in the state, there are no visual clues to look for in seeking African-American sites. Therefore, the identification of such resources is based on oral tradition and documentary research. A key document for the location of mid-nineteenth-century communities is the 1868 Beer's Atlas of the State of Delaware. This atlas shows the location of all buildings in the state and further identifies some specialized buildings such as schools and churches. The churches, for the most part, are labelled as african or mulatto if they served the African-American community. The location of these churches can be used to pinpoint the location of rural and small town African-American communities.⁴

Once these communities have been located, survey activity would determine the extent of the eligible resources and their ability to illustrate the flow of African American History in Delaware and their potential for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. All survey and identification activities will comply with the appropriate Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines. All nominations will comply with the guidelines of the National Register of Historic Places program and with the guidance of the Delaware State Historic Preservation Office and of the Delaware State Review Board for Historic Preservation.

The resources that are part of this initial submission are those resources that have already been listed on the National Register of Historic Places because of some other attribute of their history or because they directly relate to African-American history and were originally listed because of that relationship.

⁴ Stephen G. Del Sordo, "From New Sweden to New Zion; African-American Communities in Delaware" paper read at the annual meeting of the Afro-American Historical Society of Delaware, February, 1991.

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**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number _____ Page _____

African--American Resources in Delaware MPS (AD)
DELAWARE

Date Listed

COVER

77000393	Lewes Historic District	<u>10/5/93</u>
92000462	Lewes Historic District (Boundary Increase)	<u>10/5/93</u>
71000227	Odessa Historic District	<u>10/5/93</u>
80000930	Smyrna Historic District	<u>10/5/93</u>

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C. Form Prepared by

Name/Title: Stephen G. Del Sordo, Historian

Organization: DE State Historic Preservation Office Date: December 1992

Street & Number: 15 The Green Telephone: 302-739-5685

City or Town: Dover State: Delaware Zip Code: 19901

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David P. ...
Signature and title of certifying official

August 19, 1993
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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Patricia Andrews
Signature of the Keeper

10/5/93
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