Historic Centreville Delaware * Brandywine Valley

CENTREVILLE CIVIC ASSOCIATION

VILLAGE OF CENTREVILLE
CENTREVILLE, DE

Early settlers began acquiring land in and around Centreville as early as 1680 and a Friends Centre Meeting House has existed since 1711. The year 1750 is generally accepted as the founding date for the Village of Centreville. Centre Friends Meeting house was built in 1796 to replace the original 1711 log structure. [Photo 1]

By the mid-1800s, Centreville offered two inns, a school, a town hall, a blacksmith shop, a general store, a post office, and taverns all around. Town doctors served patients in both Pennsylvania and Delaware. The "Wilmington and Kennett Turnpike," an 1811 improvement of Kennett Road, facilitated travel north and south. Centreville was Christiana Hundred's town center. [Photo 2]

Lower Brandywine Church is one of the oldest Presbyterian churches in the country. The events of the village and the church have been closely intertwined for many years which is clearly indicated by the people who gave their time to both. Names such as Delaplaine, Chandler, Gregg, Hollingsworth, Woodward, Seals, Carpenter, Ely, Armstrong, and Fredrick dot the pages of the church history, just as they do that of Centreville. [Photo 3]

The James Delaplaine House, circa 1820, is a two-andone-half-story, five-bay brick structure with a flemish bond facade. It was originally built to serve as both a residence and a store for the Delaplaine family. Mr. Delaplaine operated the Centreville Post Office at this location from 1836 until 1846. The facade contains a pair of doors, the smaller, on axis, led to the house, while the larger, to the left, opened to a general store. Each door is surmounted by a fanlight and surrounded by molded trim with bull's eye corner blocks. The property is currently leased for commercial purposes. [Photo 4]

Buckley's Tavern (the only Tavern now operating in Centreville) is a newcomer to the local hospitality business. The building has existed since 1817 but was a residence until 1926, when Ted Antoine converted the first floor into a taproom. W.W. "Chick" Laird purchased the property in 1951 and with Dennis Buckley as manager, established Buckley's Tavern. [Photo 5]

The Joseph Chandler House, circa1800, is the oldest house in Centreville. Dr. Joseph P. Chandler, who built the house used it as residence and an office. The house was listed by the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. [Photo 6]

Centreville Lodge No. 37 was constructed in 1876 through a community effort to meet the demand for public meeting space. After more than 125 years, The Grange, as it is sometimes called, still serves the purpose for which it was built: first floor retail, second floor community space and third floor organization meetings. [Photo 7]

Photo 1: Friends Centre Meeting House

Photo 2: Aerial View of Centreville

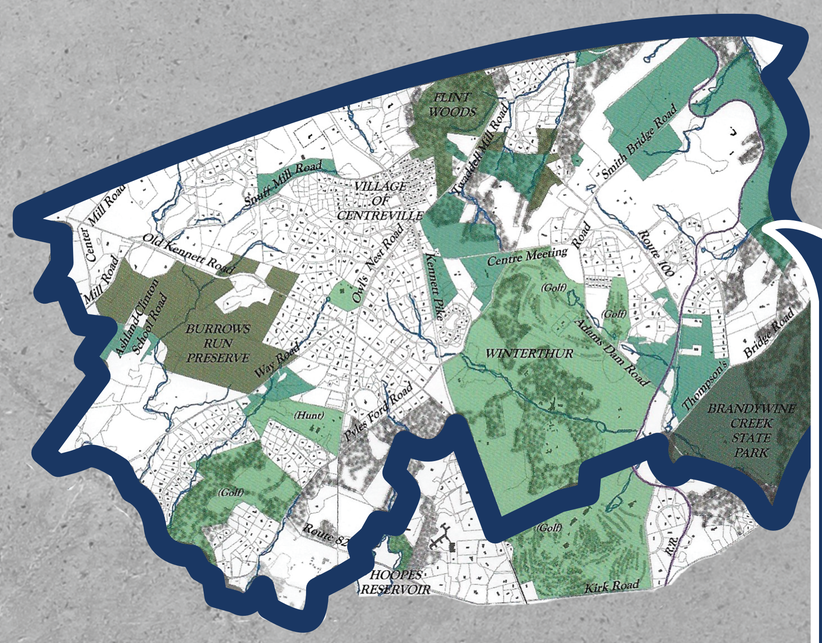
Photo 3: Lower Brandywine Church

Photo 4: The James Deleplaine House

Photo 5: Buckley's Tavern

Photo 6: The Joseph Chandler House

Photo 7: Centreville Lodge No. 37



Canby Grove Park was the site of an early inn and then a hotel. The property was purchased by P.S. du Pont during the 1918-1920 construction of the Kennett Pike Highway. When the road was finished, Mr. du Pont authorized demolition of the building and the resulting vacant lot was transferred to the City of Wilmington in 1926. Friends of Centreville resident Henry M. "Harry" Canby petitioned the city to name the property "Canby Grove" in remembrance of their friend after his death in 1928. The Centreville Civic Association (CCA) was established in 1970. Through open board-of-directors meetings and annual meetings, the CCA endeavors to promote and encourage civic improvements, protect property rights and values, disseminate information and encourage community involvement. The CCA is committed to preserving the heritage of the Village and surrounding environs as well as planning for the community's future. Association boundaries as of September 1992 are set out in Article II of its bylaws.

The people of Centreville and state and local officials have provided benches, shrubs, tables, playground equipment, a flagpole and a gazebo, in addition to basic maintenance. The Centreville Civic Association also provides insurance, electricity and waste removal.

Centreville is a non-incorporated village in New Castle Country with no municipal government or tax basis. All funds controlled by the Centreville Civic Association are by voluntary contribution.

All historical information and photos have been provided by the Centreville Civic Association's 250th Anniversary Edition of "The History Of A Delaware Village" published in the year 2000.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT:

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