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**HISTORIC ARCHEOLOGY RESEARCH PROGRAM AT THE
WILLIAM ANTHONY HOTEL SITE (7NC-E-65)**



A historic cultural resource mitigation program is being conducted by the Delaware Department of Transportation, Division of Highways, and the Federal Highway Administration in conjunction with Thunderbird Archeological Associates at the Wm. Anthony Hotel site in Stanton, New Castle County, Delaware.

The significance of the Wm. Anthony Hotel site is the archeological data contained within the site. The number of nineteenth century hotel sites is small in comparison to domestic structure sites of all kinds, and none have been investigated previously in Delaware. The text excavations revealed the presence of two (presumed) outbuildings for the main hotel structure that are not otherwise specifically accounted for in maps or documentation. In addition to the foundation features, small pit features were identified and no evidence for plowing was detected, suggesting good potential for the recovery of additional intact archeological features.



The general research potential of the Hotel lot may be established with reference to some important developments in American history. The nineteenth century was a period of rapid growth and economic transformation in the nation. The economic constraints imposed by the colonial system were broken by the American Revolution and the different regions increased their communication and commerce with one another, for political as well as economic reasons. At the same time, the growth of industrialization created more specialized and localized units of production that became interdependent with each other. Farm produce and raw materials were transported to and between urban industrial centers, and manufactured products were exchanged back. All of these factors contributed to the growth and importance of land transport road networks, and hotels were important service facilities for the individuals who carried goods, services, and messages within both the intra-regional and inter-regional exchange networks.

Because of the function of such sites both spatial configurations and artifact inventories present at them should be demonstrably different than ordinary domestic sites. The character of such differences has yet to be clearly demonstrated archeologically but could include such things as larger stables, storage sheds, and other outbuildings together with a different arrangement of these features. Difference in artifact inventories have been hinted at in the results of the testing program: larger quantities of ceramic vessels at both the top of the cost scale ("ceremonial" items for the service of coffee, tea and liquor) and the bottom of that scale (utilitarian vessels for the preparation and storage of food).

Because the hotel at Stanton was located on a major inter-regional transportation route it is likely that the proprietors had access to a wider variety of manufactured items from a wider geographic range as well as a need for a larger quantity of them than the average household. This hypothesis is being addressed by data still contained in the lot. Another research question being addressed by this data recovery is how much similarity exists between hotels on major routes and is there any contrast with those on routes of more local use? This kind of question will provide a comparative data base.

The growth of the transportation net is an important aspect of the history of Delaware, the Middle Atlantic Region, and the young nation, and the hotel at Stanton represents an important and significant economic factor in the use of that transportation net. Documentary sources have not yielded and are unlikely to yield the kinds of specific data to address the research questions posed above. The archeological data at the hotel lot must therefore be recognized as significant at the local, state, regional, and national level, representing a relatively uncommon but economically important category of site.

If you have questions or request further information, please contact Tim Thompson at the site or Kevin Cunningham at 736-4644.