

Preface



The Delaware Department of Transportation (DeDOT) is recognized as a leader in protecting and preserving cultural resources, and in disseminating information to both the professional community and the general public. DeDOT challenged its consultants to produce a creative, educational, and informative report that would appeal to the non-technical reader at multiple levels yet satisfy explicit state and federal technical guidelines required by the cultural resources industry. This then was the impetus for our experimental two-volume format for the Cabbage Pond Mill Site report.

Volume I was prepared as a substantially illustrated, reader-friendly manuscript focused on topics of interest to the general public. Volume I includes an introduction to the archeological process, the geography and history of the site, a discussion of how archeologists and historians “piece together” the clues of a site to reconstruct its history, and a synopsis of these results. Volume II presents detailed results of our archeological investigations and discussions of the research context, state plan, interpretations, and site comparisons.

We believe that the remarkable preservation and extraordinary history of the Cabbage Pond Mill Site lends itself to the two-volume format. Importantly, the site illustrates that significant industrial resources exist beneath milldam/bridge crossings, prompting careful consideration of the archeological potential of future bridge replacement projects.

There was much to learn from this site as revealed through the integration of documentary research, geomorphology, archeological investigations, and dendrochronology. Cabbage Mill studies documented changes in mill technology and construction through time, multiple building episodes, and the operation and economy of the mill—much of which was focused on components of the site’s waterpower system. As such, the site provides a working model for similar mill sites throughout the region.

It is our hope that this two-volume report will be available in area libraries, museums, and schools as a resource of information about the compelling industrial heritage of Delaware communities. Effective public education, however, reaches beyond production and dissemination of a single report. It must be routine, proactive, and recurring in the form of lectures, presentations, web sites, lesson plans, and artifact displays involving the community-at-large. In this way, the public has the opportunity to become actively engaged in *their* history—one that is interesting, meaningful, and rewarding.