

DELAWARE
Trust & Company



ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL (EPISCOPAL)
Indian River Hundred, Sussex County
 (See Reverse Side For Legend)

1968

JULY

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AUGUST

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SEPTEMBER

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ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL (EPISCOPAL)

Indian River Hundred, Sussex County

Possibly no historic building in all Delaware has been backed by more determined restoration efforts from its small congregation than St. George's Chapel.

Sequestered on a Sussex County road some ten miles south of Lewes, this center began as a formal unit in 1706; records of the founding visit by the Rev. Thomas Crawford of Dover still exist. The original frame building was put up around 1719; the rector was the Rev. William Beckett of the associate parish, St. Peter's at Lewes. The present church of brick, locally-made, was erected in 1794.

Congregations of the early 1700s were large, consisting chiefly of prosperous landowners, their tenant farmers and servants. Known nationally as one of the few old Episcopal centers to hold continuous services, St. George's has annually attracted visitors to its late spring observance of Rogation Day—a time of special prayers with emphasis on intercession for successful crops. In recent years, regular membership has been small but staunch; the dream of restoring St. George's to its earlier Georgian style is one of long standing.

The chapel was "redone" in 1850 and again in the late Victorian era—transformations which bricked up a handsome palladian window, shifted the central pulpit and removed original paneling and box pews. Last summer, years of planning were rewarded with completion of work which restored the 1794 interior. The window with its three stained glass medallions has reappeared along the original lines discernible beneath the brick and plaster. The unique high pulpit and pews are as they once were; much of the original paneling was preserved and reinstalled. Spurred by the interest of the Rev. Richard S. Bailey and the congregation, gifts from friends in many denominations underwrote the reconstruction. Architect Allan Wood Fraser and Lewes contractor Samuel C. Russell headed the working teams.

Now a sister parish to All Saints in Rehoboth Beach, St. George's has been designated a Delaware Heritage Building, holds Sunday service at 11 a.m. in summer and at 2:30 p.m. the remainder of the year. Motorists headed south to Rehoboth can find the chapel by turning right on Delaware 14 south of Five Points, traveling about four miles to another right, and a half-mile more to the site. Those wishing to inspect the church during non-service hours should contact Father Bailey at Rehoboth in advance.