

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	
DATE ENTERED	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC OLD MAIN and the CHEMISTRY BUILDING

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

14th St. between Melrose Ave. & Walnut St. NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Chester

VICINITY OF

7th

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

STATE

Pennsylvania

CODE
42

COUNTY
Delaware

CODE
029

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Widener College

STREET & NUMBER

14th and Chestnut Streets

CITY, TOWN

Chester

VICINITY OF

STATE
Pennsylvania

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Delaware County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Front and South Avenues

CITY, TOWN

Media

STATE
Pennsylvania

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Pennsylvania Inventory of Historic Places

DATE

10/24/77

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission
William Penn Memorial Museum, P. O. Box 1026

CITY, TOWN

Harrisburg

STATE
Pennsylvania

DESCRIPTION**CONDITION**

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The exterior construction consists of stone and stucco. The stone used is of a variety indigenous to Southeastern Pennsylvania (Wissahickon Shist). The stucco surfacing's dominant coloration is sand (exclusive of various repairs) and is original. There are four floors. The ground floor exterior walls are surfaced in the exposed stone and mortar mentioned above. The remaining three floors are surfaced in stucco. The walls are 2½ feet thick. The building is finished with a two-pitched roof ornamented with one central grand and two minor pediments. Old Main is topped with its uniquely characteristic "dome" extending from the central grand pediment. Extending from either minor pediment are matching cupola.

The dimensional aspects of the building are 243 feet (east to west) by 65 feet (East end) and 55 feet (West end). The discrepancy in the width measurement is due to renovations occurring in 1883 after the upper floor was partially destroyed by fire at its eastern exposure. Renovations were made by the original architect, John Crump, in accordance with the plans submitted during first construction in 1867. The symmetry of the building was lost with the 1883 eastern addition of an auditorium and additional classroom and dormitory space. The integrity of the exterior was not compromised however.

Adjacent to the Old Main structure is the three floored Chemistry Building. Built during the 1883 renovations to the original structure, it served as an integral unit of the educational facilities on the 19th century campus. Measuring 37 feet by 51 feet it is connected to the main structure by a wrought iron and plank-board walk-way extending from the 2nd floor of each structure. The Chemistry Building was also designed by John Crump and was built to alleviate dangerous laboratory situations from the main dormitory area of the original structure.

The main entrance to the structure has a southern exposure. It is fashioned through the use of a raised porch by a wooden estab- ature-like canopy supported by doric columns. Entrance from the porch to the building is made on the first floor level (see photo) above the ground level floor. Entrance to the porch from ground level is made by using existing stairs on either side of the porch. The porch area measures approximately 12 feet by 20 feet and pro- trudes from the front of the building.

Each building is adorned with extensive, ornate cornice work all around the roof. Old Main has additional ornamental detail around its gables and soffits.

It is unclear as to the originality of materials used in the structure as it appears today. It is known that all support struc- tures within the building date as early as original construction. Additional structural support work was required during the renovations necessitated by the fire of 1883. It is certain that the stone work

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OLD MAIN and the CHEMISTRY BUILDING - Delaware County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

Description Continued:

is the original stone laid during 1867. The stucco work would have been refurbished during the renovations as would some of the molding and exterior woodwork. Windows, doors, gutters, etc. are more than likely not original as they must conform to modern safety codes in order for the building to be occupied. Roofing, dormers, gables, the cupola, and dome were replaced when additions and renovations were made in 1883.

The buildings are situated on an ellipse which formally served as the "muster for roll call" area. This area contains two proportionately equal copper beach trees which were on the property at the time of original construction. The entire area is cordoned off through the use of shrubbery and fencing not part of the original landscaping.

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)		
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION				

SPECIFIC DATES 1867, 1882 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Architect: John Crump (1867-
 Builder: John Shedwick 1882)
 & John Crump (1882)

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The significance of the structure rests in the historical nature of the institution itself. When Pennsylvania Military Academy, located in West Chester, Chester County, Pennsylvania, sought new quarters, Chester, Delaware County, Pennsylvania, civic leaders organized and developed a corporate body to begin planning for the Academy's relocation to their city.

"Old Main" constructed in 1867, was designed by John Crump to accommodate a military institution comprised of 350 cadets, several faculty and service functionaries, classrooms and office space. The self-contained edifice served as the principal domicile of the institution for several generations with minor alterations being made to accommodate growth and expended needs.

True to military austerity, the building had spare yet comfortable barracks quarters on the upper levels. The main floor and certain "southern exposure" rooms on above floors served as classrooms and laboratory space. As one of the first schools to have a permanently assigned U. S. Army Officer (commencing 1869) on staff, the facilities enhanced the institutions standing with the War Department. Due to its facilities and military education status Pennsylvania Military College was continually placed high upon the list of distinguished military institutions in the United States.

The building (Old Main) served as the primary quarters for Pennsylvania Military Academy and Pennsylvania Military College from 1867 to 1957. After that date the College went through a period of expansion which necessitated the construction of additional facilities to house faculty, classrooms and students. Currently, as Widener College's oldest existing structure, Old Main is used as the center of administrative services for the College.

In continuous operation since its original occupancy in 1868, the "Old Main" building has been used simultaneously for classroom instruction and laboratory space, administrative and faculty offices, and as dormitory and resident life units. Currently, it is principally the center for administrative services for the College.

Since 1821, Widener College has had a distinguished history of service to education. Begun as a select school for boys in Wilmington,

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Old Main and the Chemistry Building - Delaware County

CONTINUATION SHEET

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Significance Continued:

Delaware, a series of changes in educational direction and related mergers led to the adoption of subsequent names, Alsop School (1848), Theodore Hyatt's Select School for Boys (1853), Delaware Military Academy (1859) and Pennsylvania Military Academy (1862). In 1892, the school emerged as Pennsylvania Military College.

Beginning in the 1960's, a series of profound changes occurred which altered the destiny of the College. In 1960, civilians as well as cadets were enrolled and a major capital development campaign expanded the physical plant from 25 to 90 acres, increasing plant values from \$2.7 million to \$27 million. In 1967, the historic all male military tradition of the College ended with the admission of the first female students. To reflect this, the name was changed to PMC Colleges (Pennsylvania Military College - Penn Morton College).

During the 1970's an enlightened Board of Trustees and College administrators sought new affiliations which would enhance the College's academic status. In 1970, PMC Colleges acquired the College of Nursing of the Crozer Foundation. On July 1, 1972, the College adopted the name Widener to reflect the termination of the military program and the College's new identity as a full service institution. In June, 1975, the College merged with the Delaware Law School, re-establishing historic ties with Wilmington. Brandywine College, a two year private college in suburban Wilmington formally affiliated with Widener in October, 1976, and the Delaware Law School of Widener College will be relocated at the Brandywine College facility this fall.

The work of John Crump is not unknown in the Philadelphia area. Throughout his long career, he was responsible for the design and construction of several well known landmarks in Philadelphia and along the eastern seaboard. Most notably in Philadelphia are the Union League and University Hospital (University of Pennsylvania). He is credited with the initial conceptualization of the fashionable Chestnut Hill suburb section (now adjoining Fairmount Park) as was the primary developer of that exclusive residential community. His work and attention to detail may be found in any number of private homes in the area as well as major edifices including the original War and Navy Department Building in Washington, D. C. His lavish yet functional architectural style survives and is said to have been considered the prime example of Philadelphia architectural style during the second half of the 19th century.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Deed Books, Recorder of Deeds Office, Delaware County Courthouse, Media, Pa.
 A History of Pennsylvania Military College --- 1812-1954 by Clarence R. Moll.
 Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor
 of Philosophy in the School of Education of New York University.
 Obituary: John R. Crump, Philadelphia Public Ledger, March 21, 1892.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>18</u>	<u>469600</u>	<u>441240</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Thomas Carnwath & Nancy M. Steele

ORGANIZATION

Widener College

DATE

October, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

14th and Chestnut Streets

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Chester

STATE

Pennsylvania

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE WILLIAM J. WEWER, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

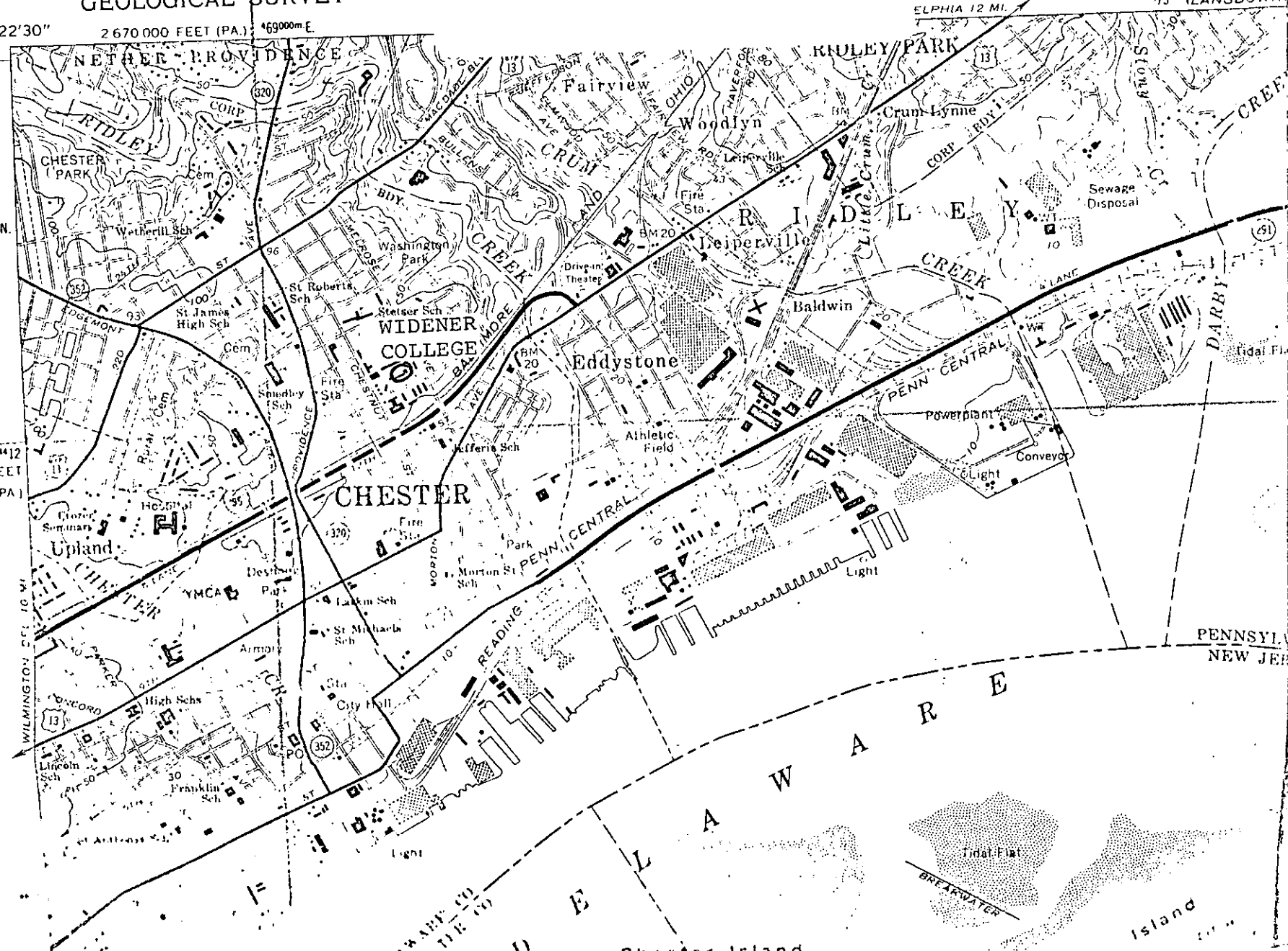
Old Main & The Chemistry Building
Delaware County
Zone 18 N4412240 E469600

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

5963 IV NW
(MEDIA)

5963 IV NE
(LANSDOWN)

75°22'30" 2 670 000 FEET (PA.) 469000m E
39°52'30"



4413000m N

4412
200 000 FEET
(PA)

WILMINGTON ST. 10 W.

PENNSYLVANIA
NEW JERSEY

Delaware County
Chester Island

