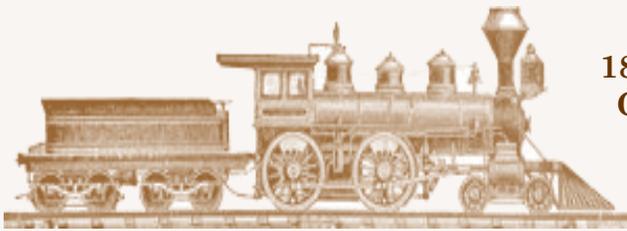


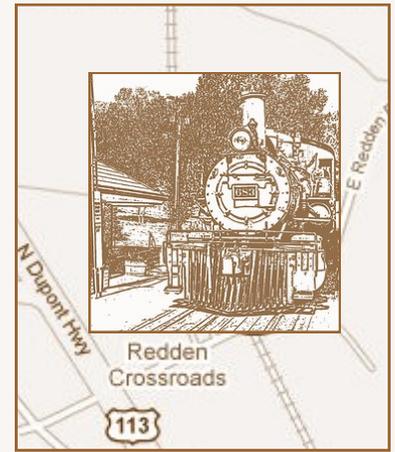


# REDDEN STATE FOREST

## on the National Register of Historic Places



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### History of Redden State Forest

Much of Redden State Forest's history is tied to the railroad. The Junction & Breakwater Railroad, one of Delaware's earliest rail systems, was completed in 1868. A railroad station was established in 1870 near what would later become Redden State Forest. The station was originally known as Carey's Station, but a short time later was renamed for Col. William O. Redden. Col. Redden played a prevalent role in Sussex County as he served in the Civil War, was sheriff of Sussex County from 1838-1840, a member of Delaware's House of Representatives from 1840-1846 – including Speaker of the House in 1843, and was instrumental in establishing a railroad system in Delaware.

In 1877, a 230-acre farm near the Redden Station and owned by William W. Donovan proceeded through Orphan's Court following his death. This land is now a portion of Redden State Forest's Headquarters Tract. Transcripts of the court proceedings mention a large, two-story dwelling with an attached single story, which fits the description of Redden State Forest's Manager's House (currently the Redden office).

Charles C. Stockley, the Governor of Delaware from 1872 to 1876, purchased the Donovan Farm in 1879. In 1901, Frank Thompson purchased 844 acres of land including the original 230-acre Donovan Farm. Mr. Thompson was the son of the president of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. In 1903, the club house (Redden Lodge) appeared on Sussex County tax records. From 1903 to 1919, the Lodge was used by Pennsylvania Railroad Company officials and guests for hunting (primarily quail, since much of the surrounding area at that time was fields and hedgerows). Visitors arrived at the Redden Station by train from Philadelphia and proceeded to the Lodge by horse and buggy. The carriages and horses were kept in the Horse Barn, which is now the Redden Education Center.

In 1936, under the leadership of Delaware's first State Forester, William S. Taber, the State Forestry Department purchased the 844 acres that is now the Headquarters Tract from Richard Houghton, who had acquired the property following its use by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. Since that time, the Headquarters Tract has grown to over 1,800 acres. On July 4, 1970, lightning struck the Lodge, and the resulting fire burned the entire west wing and kitchen. The burned section was rebuilt in 1976. In 1990, the Lodge, Manager's House, and Horse Barn were placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The Delaware Forest Service, through the generosity of the General Assembly and working with the Department of Administrative Services, Division of Facilities Management, renovated these historic structures. The Lodge was rededicated in 1996, the Manager's House opened as the Redden office in 1998, and the Horse Barn opened in 2000 as the Education Center. These three structures are now the centerpiece of Redden State Forest.



Education Center



State Forest Office



Redden Lodge