



Laurel Heritage Museum • 215 Mechanic Street

Housed in a restored train station, the Laurel Heritage Museum is a collaborative effort between the Laurel Historical Society and the Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs. In 2022, a brand new exhibit celebrates Laurel's Charity Lodge #27 of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows.



Rosemont • 121 Delaware Avenue

Built circa 1769 by John Mitchell, Laurel's oldest and most prestigious residence was once the mansion house of a 2,000+ acre plantation, overlooking a grist-mill and a saw-mill just upstream of the Broad Creek Wading Place. Rosemont's most noteworthy resident was Nathaniel Mitchell, a Revolutionary War hero and governor of Delaware (1805–1808).

During much of the 19th century, the house was associated with the Collins family. (Some folks still call it the Collins House.) The town of Laurel spread across the old plantation, transforming farmland into the neighborhood known today as Brooklyn or North Laurel.

The nonprofit Laurel Redevelopment Corporation purchased Rosemont in 2020, and has partnered with the Laurel Historical Society in preserving, restoring, and welcoming the public into the iconic home.



Hitchens Homestead • 205 Willow Street

Featuring a Gothic Revival-style house dating to 1878 and several outbuildings, the Hitchens Homestead was acquired by the Laurel Historical Society in 2018, and is in the early stages of a painstaking restoration project. The scenic property also serves as the site of various events throughout the year.



The Cook House • 502 East 4th Street

Home to the bulk of the Laurel Historical Society's extensive collections of documents, photographs, and local artifacts as well as the Fowler Research Center, the Cook House was donated to the society by Haroldine Cook Shaner.



Bethel Maritime Museum • 312 First Street

The Bethel Historical Society has celebrated the seafaring history of Bethel (formerly Lewisville) at its museum since 1975. Some of the highlights include models of Bethel's famous "sailing rams," antique ship-carpenter's tools, and American Indian artifacts.



Old Christ Church • Christ Church Road

Step into 1772 at Laurel's lovingly preserved colonial house of worship on the banks of Chipman's Pond. The chapel was built of heart pine lumber in 1771–1772 to offer residents of the Broad Creek community an alternative to the comparatively distant mother church at Green Hill on the Wicomico River. The neighborhood was claimed and governed by Maryland at the time; folks like to joke that the church has been located in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and Delaware without moving.

After St. Philip's was established in the bustling village of Laurel in 1848, attendance at Old Christ Church declined until the venerable house of worship was only opened for special occasions. It has been maintained by the Old Christ Church League since 1922. The structure has been repaired as needed, but never significantly altered; the interior remains unpainted, and there is no electricity or plumbing.

The adjoining churchyard is home to many early graves, including that of Governor Nathaniel Mitchell.



This brochure was produced by the Laurel Historical Society. Visit us online at laureldehistoricalsociety.org.



Old Christ Church, the Laurel Heritage Museum, the Cook House, Rosemont, the Hitchens Homestead, and the Bethel Maritime Museum are all located along the Nanticoke Heritage Byway, a nearly 40-mile-long corridor which takes visitors on a scenic and historic journey through Sussex County. Learn more at nanticokeheritagebyway.org.

STEP INTO THE PAST . . .

Along Broad Creek



All six museums along Broad Creek are open to the public on the first Sunday of each month, May through November, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m..