

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Court of Chancery Convenes in New Castle Court House Museum in
Celebration of Delaware's Semiquincentennial**

Continuing an over 300-year-old tradition, Vice Chancellor Paul A. Fioravanti, Jr., convened two hearings of the Court of Chancery in the New Castle Court House Museum in Old New Castle on June 10, 2026, turning the museum into a working courthouse for a day, and maintaining the building's legacy as one of the oldest working courthouses in the country.

Vice Chancellor Fioravanti described the courthouse as "one of Delaware's most treasured landmarks—the site of Delaware's first courthouse, which served as the center of Delaware's colonial government, and where legendary figures such as Thomas McKean, George Read, David Finney, and Richard Rodney practiced law."

The late-Chancellor William T. Quillen, a New Castle resident, began the tradition of holding arguments in the historic building on May 17, 1974. That was the day before the 50th anniversary of A Day in Old New Castle, an annual celebration where the courthouse and many historical homes are opened to the public. As Chancellor Quillen said in anticipation of the hearing: "It seems appropriate that such a session be held at this time of the year when the town of New Castle is preparing for its annual historical celebration."

The New Castle Court House is Delaware's first courthouse and first state capitol. It is also where, on June 15, 1776, Delaware's colonial assembly passed a resolution to separate from Pennsylvania and Great Britain, creating the State of Delaware. Vice Chancellor Fioravanti timed the June 10 event to occur in close proximity to the 250th anniversary of the event, now called Separation Day.

Superior Court Judge Richard R. Cooch, a New Castle native who attended the June 10 event, held at least four non-jury hearings in the museum. Vice Chancellor Fioravanti expressed his personal gratitude to Judge Cooch for inspiring him to continue the tradition.

Counsel in two pending Court of Chancery matters, *Tillman v. Tillman*, C.A. No. 2025-0475-PAF, and *RMCM Holdings, Inc. v. Brenntag Solutions and Services, LLC*, C.A. No. 2025-0848-PAF, presented argument over the course of three hours. They expressed their appreciation for being invited to participate in such a unique setting.

Vice Chancellor Fioravanti also extended his thanks to Chief Court Reporter and New Castle resident Juli LaBadia and to Judicial Case Manager Kecia Wilder-Rahming for making the hearings possible. He also thanked a number of other individuals and organizations, including the New Castle Court House Museum and staff, the Capitol Police, the City of New Castle, his law clerks—Gilda Prestipino, Madison Wulff Elbich, and Seth Ford—his judicial assistant, Doreen Wojciechowski, and Court of Chancery Historical Society Co-Chairs Michael McDermott and Jenness Parker.

Following the hearings, the Court of Chancery Historical Society hosted a reception at the Read House & Gardens on the Strand in New Castle. The house was the home of George Read, Jr., the son of one of Delaware's signatories to the Constitution and Declaration of Independence, George Read. The home is known as one of the finest examples of Philadelphia federal architecture outside of the city and for its exceptional "punch-and-gouge" woodwork.

Vice Chancellor Fioravanti is the 42nd Constitutional Officer of the Court of Chancery, an institution with a 234-year history, but he also has a personal connection to the historic site of the June 10 event. "I am not a native of this historic town," he said. "But I did grow up 1.45 miles away as the crow flies and spent much time in this lovely town as a youth at the Earl Theatre on Saturdays and at the library with my father."