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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Delaware Historical Society Announces
Civil War Flag Conservation Project**

The Delaware Historical Society is launching a campaign to raise \$30,000 for professional conservation of two iconic objects of Delaware's heritage: the regimental and U.S. flags carried by the 1st Delaware Volunteer Infantry in the Civil War.

The regimental flag is the earliest known example of the Delaware state flag. Eyewitness accounts detail the dramatic action the flags saw in the battles of Antietam, Chancellorsville, and Gettysburg in 1862 and 1863. The flags were badly damaged in these encounters, yet the color guard proudly displayed the flags' tears in a photograph taken in Wilmington in January 1864, when the flags were formally retired. The Delaware Historical Society received the flags in 1884 and their continued preservation represents the Society's core mission to preserve Delaware's rich history.

The flags' battle wounds have made them dangerously fragile and at risk of further deterioration. The flags cannot be exhibited in their current condition. Following professional conservation, the flags will be introduced to the public in an exhibition at the Delaware History Museum.

The Society's campaign to raise funds to preserve the flags will begin on September 17, the anniversary of Antietam, the first battle in which the flags were used. Supporters can contribute by sending a check or by making an on-line contribution. Checks are made out to the Delaware Historical Society and mailed to the Delaware Flags Fund, Delaware Historical Society, 505 N. Market St., Wilmington, DE 19801. An on-line crowdfunding appeal will begin on September 17 at <http://dehistory.org/rally-round-the-flags>. Contributions of any amount are welcome. All supporters will be invited to a reception when the flags are ready for public exhibition. On the 150th anniversary of both the Civil War and the Delaware Historical Society, the Society urges everyone to participate in preserving a precious part of the First State's Civil War history.

The Delaware Historical Society's Chief Curator Dr. Constance Cooper will give an informal presentation on the history of the flags at 12:15 p.m. on Wednesday, September 24, 2014 in the Christopher Ward Reading Room of the Delaware Historical Society Research Library, 505 N. Market St., Wilmington, DE 19801.

Photographs available upon request.

In addition to its permanent collections, exhibitions and education programs, the Delaware Historical Society owns several significant historic buildings. These include the 1804 Read House and Gardens; the Delaware History Museum; four late-eighteenth-century buildings comprising Willingtown Square; the 1798 Old Town Hall; and the 1930 Artisan's Bank Building, home to the organization's Research Library.

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