



# Chester County Ledger

The Newsletter of the Chester County Historic Preservation Network

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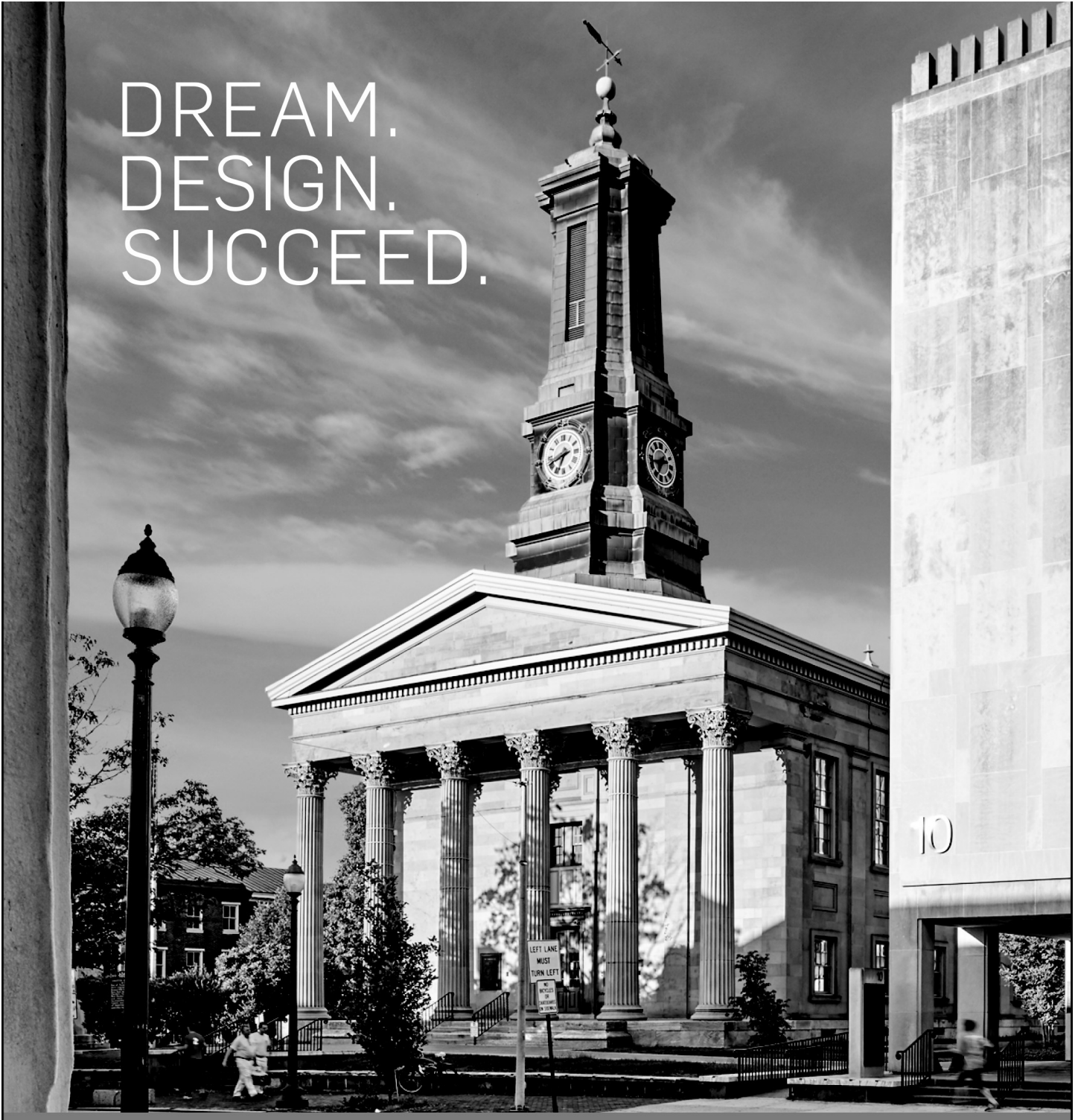
August 2018

## Sense of Place





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## THE PRESIDENT'S LETTER



*James B. Garrison*

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“Sense of Place” is a phrase being used more widely outside the academic arena these days. The precise meaning may be hard to describe, and persons from different backgrounds will have preconceptions, but the essential commonality is a perception of quality. For all of its different landscapes and environments, Chester County has a special sense of place that was noted by many respondents in a county poll last year. I believe that the observation that there is a sense of place comes from a feeling about how the built and natural environments have related to each other over three centuries of recorded history in the region. This history brings the relationship between nature and human activity into high relief. The memorable sense of place is the result of these forces being in balance.

It is good to see “sense of place” enter the mainstream dialogue. It indicates an awareness that there actually is such a thing, and that it requires stewardship. By speaking of *place* rather than individual resources or specific landscapes, a broader context is added. The context consists of both the larger environmental setting as well as the narrative from the past and present that speaks to the future. Without a narrative and context, objects lose meaning, and thereby, significance. Preservation of place is a multi-layered endeavor that offers opportunities for participation by everyone, residents and visitors alike. Sometimes it takes visitor comments to remind us that what we have is special.

With the County's Town Tours and Village Walks Program and our Network events, we celebrate the diversity of places in Chester County, while showcasing the common threads of history. This all happens in a living environment, not a museum.

Landscapes3, the latest version of the Chester County Planning Commission's county-wide Comprehensive Plan, also responds to the interest in uniqueness of place by recognizing the ties between open space, environmental, and historic resource protection, and the importance of keeping the region vital and relevant through carefully planned growth and development. The great thing is that historic resources are an important component for both open spaces and denser redevelopment opportunities.

The Chester County Historic Preservation Network is a place for this dialogue to be enriched by discourse, and the sharing of preservation successes and failures by our member municipalities and individuals. Through an understanding of how sense of place transcends locality and a specific landscape, the discussion is richer and better informed. The Network's educational events connect us to each other at municipal and county levels, and to the state and federal government agencies which influence the shape of the environment so profoundly.

**James B. Garrison, President**

### ATTENTION!

2019 will be the Chester County Historic Preservation Network's  
**30th Anniversary!**

Stay Tuned for More Information on the Year's Anniversary Events

### CCHPN MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of CCHPN is to connect local governments, organizations, and individuals in their efforts to protect, preserve, and promote the historic resources and cultural landscapes of Chester County through communication and education.

### Chester County Ledger Directory

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Direct all queries, please, to: The Editor, CCHPN, P. O. Box 174, West Chester, PA 19381. Letters to the Editor and articles for the *Chester County Ledger* are welcome. There is no guarantee, however, that submissions will be published. No such submissions will be returned. CCHPN does not necessarily endorse the content of advertisements herein.

The front cover photographs are by Jane E. Dorchester (upper right) and James B. Garrison (the rest).

## A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

The original intention of this issue of the *Ledger* was to have no official theme; however, I discovered in looking over the myriad articles and photo essays herein that an informal theme seemed to have spontaneously occurred. That theme is, of course: "Sense of Place." The term is used in four of the submissions and one of them makes an attempt to define it. Indirectly, it permeates all of the articles. Sense of place is in the spotlight nowadays in no small part because of the two-year effort on the part of the Chester County Planning Commission to create another award-winning (we hope) county-wide Comprehensive Plan, which they have appropriately called *Landscapes3*. While that process is winding down with the Comprehensive Plan set for submission to the Board of County Commissioners by the end of the year, the term has already begun to make its way into the consciousness of both planning professionals and the public. We hope you find the articles and columns that mention "sense of place" both informative and thought-provoking, and that you will partake of the final opportunity to comment on *Landscapes3*, which will be on October 2, 2018. Please see Brian O'Leary's article in the "Hot off the Press" section, page 6, for more information.

In addition, you will find a variety of articles on a multitude of subjects. As the old circus barkers used to say, "We have something for everyone!" We have a round-up of 2018 CCHPN events with photo essays of the Municipal Historic Preservation Leadership Luncheon from January, the Spring Workshop from March, and the Volunteer Recognition Dinner from June. In addition, there is a bonus photo essay of a carpentry workshop held at Historic Yellow Springs by CCHPN Board member Andy Gustine (please see ps. 10-11). We have five articles this time, on everything from a history of Dowlin Forge, to the abovementioned update on *Landscapes3*, to descriptions of different efforts to preserve the physical evidence of our heritage. And finally, we have the second entry in our Architectural Style Guide for Chester County.

We also want to formally introduce the Chester County Historic Preservation Network's website, [www.cchpn.org](http://www.cchpn.org). And to do that, I asked Candice Myruski, the Network's webmaster, to explain how the website came about, how it is organized, and what kinds of information can be found on it.

Finally, on behalf of the CCHPN Board of Directors, I would like to extend a huge thank you to long-time CCHPN Board member Steven M. Brown, AIA, for his long years of service to the Board and CCHPN, including at least two stints as President of the Board. Steve is stepping down from the Board in order to pursue several exciting new projects. Thank you, Steve, for all your support of CCHPN and the *Chester County Ledger*!

As always, I would be delighted to hear from you about possible articles and submissions. And we are ALWAYS looking for advertisers. To contact me, e-mail me at: [jeditorhspv@gmail.com](mailto:jeditorhspv@gmail.com). Please note the new e-mail address.

**Jane E. Dorchester, Editor**



## FROM THE CCHPN BOARD

### **CHESTER COUNTY LEDGER Mission Statement**

As the official newsletter of the Chester County Historic Preservation Network (CCHPN), the purpose of the *Chester County Ledger* is to raise awareness of Chester County's history and historic character, to encourage the public to preserve the physical evidence of that history, and to educate the public and members of municipal historical organizations in best preservation practices.

The purpose of the Chester County Historic Preservation Network (CCHPN or the Network) Website is to help to fulfill part of CCHPN's mission by connecting and educating various groups of people in their preservation efforts. The website has been around since 2006, but had not been redesigned since its inception. In 2016, the CCHPN Board of Directors decided that it was high time the website was redesigned and revamped. Phil Yocum, the then Chairman of the Communications Committee, created a Website Subcommittee consisting of Carolyn Roland, himself, and me. It took about eighteen months to redesign the Website, including finding a web designer. The Website Subcommittee finally ended up working with web designer Michael Lally of Lally Web Innovations. In June of 2017, I went through a brief training session and then became the CCHPN Webmaster.

The main purpose of the website design is to cater to the needs of the various groups of people who will be using the site. The three main groups of CCHPN Website users are: Preservation Partners (which includes both organizations and institutions interested in historic preservation), Municipalities, and Property Owners (including members of the general public). These groups are listed at the top of the home page. Under each group category is a list of the information to be found in that category. Different categories include different information. For example, under "Municipalities" can be found information about the Municipal Service Areas; under "Preservation Partners" can be found information about National Park Service resources; and under "Property Owners" can be found information about tax incentives. These are not the only types of information to be found under these categories.

In addition to the group categories mentioned above, the following information can be found on the website:

1. General Chester County history
2. Membership information, including how to join the Network
3. Events information, including information about both CCHPN events and other history-oriented or preservation events around the County
4. The *Chester County Ledger* Archives (located under the category "About Us").

I hope you will find the information on our newly revamped website to be very useful. If you have any suggestions about the kinds of information you would like to see on the website or if you have any questions or concerns, please contact Karen Marshall at [kmarshall@chesco.org](mailto:kmarshall@chesco.org).

**Candice Myruski, CCHPN Secretary and Webmaster**

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## **HOT OFF THE PRESS**

### ***Landscapes3* Appreciates and Embraces Chester County's History** by Brian O'Leary, Executive Director of Chester County Planning Commission



Stories of our past provide a connection between county residents and visitors and the physical resources still evident across our landscapes. The county's cultural heritage is defined by these stories in the form of homes, mills, meeting houses, and many other structures found across all of our landscapes, with new stories added every day. When developing the historic preservation element of *Landscapes3*, the update to Chester County's Comprehensive Plan, we realized it was critical to appreciate our cultural heritage and its evolution over time.

Appreciate is one of the six goal areas in *Landscapes3*. The Appreciate goal is to preserve the historic resources and landscapes that help to define our cultural heritage and which can inspire the future through tangible connections to our shared past. To ensure those tangible connections remain strong, the plan focuses on seven implementable recommendations:

1. Expand historic preservation interpretation and education opportunities that promote core themes of the county's history and sense of place, with an emphasis on linking past, present, and future.
2. Foster the creation of funding programs for protection of designated historic resources.
3. Promote adaptive reuse and compatible development in historic areas to preserve their vitality and diversity while respecting their historic sense of place.
4. Update and maintain a countywide inventory of designated historic resources.
5. Enhance the historic record of the county by incorporating new information and making it more accessible to the public.
6. Expand high quality historic and heritage preservation training for municipal officials, volunteers, staff, and historic preservation partners.
7. Grow heritage tourism programs to strengthen cultural awareness and the beneficial economic impacts of historic and cultural resource preservation.

Chester County is a collection of diverse and living cultural landscapes, where historic resources and their surroundings embody a connection to our past, and can be integrated into the fabric of the county's future. Historic resources are irreplaceable but renewable in the sense that new uses for them can be found, new meaning for them can be sought, and interpretations of them can evolve and grow.

In addition to the Appreciate goal area, the plan includes goals related to Preserve, Protect, Live, Prosper, and Connect. Over the past year, the *Landscapes3* Steering Committee has prepared a draft of the overall vision (which includes the "Landscapes Map," descriptions, and overlays), as well as goals, objectives, and recommendations for each goal area. The draft vision, goals, and recommendations continue Chester County's emphasis on preserving our wonderful quality of place while accommodating new growth and opportunities effectively and appropriately.

There have been multiple opportunities for residents, partner agencies, and stakeholders to be involved with the *Landscapes3* development process, including two photo contests, public meetings, stakeholder meetings, a public survey, and community events. As we begin to wrap up the plan, final comments on the full draft can be shared through online commenting or at a Chester County Planning Commission and *Landscapes3* Steering Committee joint public meeting on October 2, 2018. For more details on the meeting and *Landscapes3*, visit [www.chescoplanning.org](http://www.chescoplanning.org).

***Chester County Planning Commission***

***can be found online at***

***[www.chescoplanning.org](http://www.chescoplanning.org),***

***in person at***

***601 Westtown Road,***

***West Chester PA, 19380***

***and by phone at (610)-344-6285***



## **HOT OFF THE PRESS**

### **The Importance of a Proactive Approach to Preservation Issues by Jim Buczala**



This house, having been rescued from a threat of demolition, is now under renovation. Photograph by Jim Buczala.

It would be nice to prevent the loss of any historic resource, period. Reality can make that difficult because most resources are privately owned and are often the homes of the owners. If an owner cannot properly maintain the resource, or if reuse seems financially unfeasible, attempts at preservation may provoke conflicts; how those conflicts are handled can affect the general perception of historic preservation itself. Approaching such conflicts in a confrontational, ham-fisted way hardens opposing perspectives. My view is that it is important to try to work proactively with the property owner/developer, in order to work towards a goal that benefits everyone. That's not to say that you can avoid confrontation if the owner/applicant is unwilling to work with your historical commission. And, it helps to have an Article in your Zoning Ordinance that specifically

addresses Historic Resource Protection Standards; it will usually bring the owner/applicant to the table to work with you.

There were two examples in the past year where a proactive approach worked to preserve historic resources in East Brandywine Township, with both the owners and the Historical Commission walking away happy. The first example illustrates the importance of having an ordinance that protects historic resources because it involved a housing development containing a resource protected by the Township. The developer wanted to demolish the resource, arguing that the structure was in very poor condition and could not be economically reused. The owner came to the Historical Commission with his lawyer, two structural engineers (with their reports), and a construction contractor to support the developer's contention. However, they did not provide a cost estimate for the renovation work required for resale of the property, an estimate necessary for the consideration of a demolition permit application (per the Demolition Permit section of our Historic Resource Protection Standards). Our historic preservation consultant, the Township's zoning officer, and a resident of the Township who had grown up in the house were present in support of our Historical Commission, which voted to table the decision until the renovation cost relative to the economic feasibility of reuse was better understood. It also suggested that we have our own rehabilitation expert review the structure and provide a cost estimate for the necessary renovation work. The conversation at the first meeting was kept positive despite initial disagreement, and the developer agreed to setting up a site visit and paying for our expert's evaluation.

Our expert concluded that although work was required, the structure was sound and had "good bones." Moreover, the cost of renovation was reasonable with regard to resale, so the Commission provided the developer with our detailed estimate plus an option for an addition with landscaping suggestions provided by an architect on the Commission. The Commission also pointed out that the location of the house on a ridge provided a beautiful vista from the house and an important "sense of place" for it and a neighboring historic resource – strong selling points for a potential buyer.

Seeing that the cost of renovation was not prohibitive, the developer elected to try marketing the property as it was. The Commission offered the name of a realtor specializing in marketing historic homes, which proved unnecessary because at least two perspective buyers came forward in short order. Both intended to refurbish the house and resell it: one now owns it and is currently renovating it.

## **HOT OFF THE PRESS: Proactive Approach to Preservation Issues, Cont'd.**

There were two important factors that made this positive outcome possible. First, the protocol required by our ordinance to demolish a historic resource slowed the process down, providing time for discussion and consideration of alternatives to demolition. And second, and at least as important, our Historical Commission did its best to maintain regular communications and provide information and resources to facilitate the owner's consideration of alternatives to his original intention. In this case, the outcome was a positive result for the developer and the Township.

The second example involves a property known as Locust Knoll Farm. This historic resource is very significant to the Township, having been built as a tavern (Green Tree Tavern) in the 1750s, and had been a concern of the Historical Commission for some time, as it was apparently being allowed to fall into disrepair. Although the Township's zoning officer had issued orders to the owner to address potential demolition by neglect issues, it was unclear whether the full extent of the deterioration was being addressed. So, when the owner and a potential buyer of the property came to visit our Historical Commission to discuss his plans for the property, we approached the meeting with guarded optimism. The potential owner is in the historic restoration business, working with antique wood and custom millwork, and was interested in moving his business to this location from Malvern. Due to the current zoning, however, his proposed use would require a variance to allow the business on that property. He also said that he has a strong interest in historic preservation (an interest validated by his business) and planned to rehabilitate the historic structures on the property. He was looking for support from the Historical Commission. We gladly provided a letter to the Township's Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission in support of his planned use for the property and even had a member of the Commission attend the Zoning Hearing Board meeting to support his request for a variance. In the end, the variance was granted and he purchased the property. He is now clearly making progress on cleaning it up and renovating the barn. This is an example of being proactive in providing support to help positive change on two levels. First, an important historic resource in the Township is actively being rehabilitated and preserved; and second, a business that supports historic preservation is being brought into the Township.



Barn (left) and farmhouse (right) at Locust Knoll Farm. Photograph by Jim Buczala.

**An Aside From Jim Buczala:** The purchase and rehabilitation of this property turned out to be a God-send because it was discovered that the barn was in much worse condition than could be seen from the road, with a large portion of the back roof missing. This situation highlights the difficulty of identifying demolition by neglect issues. But that is a subject for another article!



## **HOT OFF THE PRESS**

### **Snyder's Mill Restoration** **From Information Shared with the *Ledger* by East Pikeland Township Manager Kim Moretti and Carol Jean Quigley of Frens and Frens Restoration Architects**



Snyder's Mill before the recent restoration. Photograph by James B. Garrison.

were brought in to provide design services for a new roofing system for the Mill. The intent of their designs was to reflect the form of the original mill roof and to protect and preserve the stone walls of the shell. After consideration of different methods and materials that would serve this function, the design team focused on the use of replicate historic materials of taper-sawn cedar shake roofing and vertical board siding at the exterior skin, while incorporating modern prefabricated wood trusses in lieu



Snyder's Mill after completed restoration project. Photograph by James B. Garrison.

of traditional framing members, as they would be visible only from the interior and would meet the Township budget. In accordance with an early decision, the window and door openings were filled with replicated sashes and frames where they were most visible and vertical board siding closure panels on the rear façade. The general contractor for the project was F.W. Houder, Inc., led by Frank W. Houder with his team of Harry Griest, Fred Whitaker, and Mike Smith.

Snyder's Mill is thought to have been first constructed between 1830 and 1847 near the site of an old graining mill for gunpowder that was briefly operational as part of the Continental Powder Works during the Revolutionary War. Over the years, this mill was operated at various times for milling clover, linseed oil, and grain, and then final-

Attendees at the annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner had the opportunity to hear about several preservation projects and initiatives in our municipalities. Many of these efforts occur over long periods of time with a combination of action by volunteer boards and local governments. One of this year's success stories is the restoration of the remains of Snyder's Mill, located along French Creek, in East Pikeland Township.

The restoration of Snyder's Mill took place over a period of ten years and, thanks to the persistence of the volunteer Historical Commission, was completed in 2018. Because the Board of Supervisors recognizes the importance of preserving historic resources in the Township, they authorized funding for the project from the Township's Capital Fund. Dale Frens and Carol Jean Quigley of Frens and Frens Restoration Architects



Snyder's Mill during restoration process. Photograph by James B. Garrison.



ly as a spoke mill for wood turning. Snyder's Mill ceased operations in 1935, at which time it was making carousel parts. From that period on, the building was unused and gradually deteriorated. Realizing its importance, the Township had the mill partially stabilized in the early 1990s, and then re-stabilized again in 2008 when the four walls were reconstructed. The final phase of restoration included installation of a roof, windows, and doors, and minor repointing of the masonry.

The Mill is now a focal point of the French Creek Trail at the Rapp's Dam trailhead. Visitors are invited to learn the history of the Mill and the Continental Powder Works through a series of interpretive signs located along the Trail.

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## **FOR THE RECORD**

### **Preservation Carpentry Workshop at Historic Yellow Springs From Information Shared with the *Ledger* by Andrew Gustine**

Over a soggy Memorial Day weekend, CCHPN Board member Andy Gustine, along with master roofer Tony Vizzi, held the first of a planned series of hands-on workshops for persons interested in the nuances of working on older structures. The first workshop focused on replacing the cedar shingle roof on the Crystal Diamond Springhouse at Historic Yellow Springs, a mid-Nineteenth Century building that had been substantially reconstructed in the early Twentieth Century. The existing cedar roofing was probably forty or more years old and ready for replacement.



Crystal Diamond Springhouse with deteriorated roof.  
Photograph by James B. Garrison.

Anyone who has watched "This Old House" or engaged contractors for work on an older building recognizes that there is a special level of artistry involved. There is a big difference between watching the slickly edited TV segments with Tom Silva and Norm Abram and the realities of out-of-level or deteriorated structural members and the myriad decisions that need to be made to have replacement materials and assemblies integrate with the existing building fabric. The workshops offered through Historic Yellow Springs enable

participants and observers to gain hands-on experience from our local master builders.

Andrew Gustine, owner of Native Woods Restoration Carpentry, is a master carpenter who holds a Master of Science in Historic Preservation from the University of Pennsylvania and has focused on rehabilitating and restoring houses, barns, and outbuildings for more than twenty-five years. Tony Vizzi, owner of Affordable Copper Roofing, has specialized in historic roofing materials and techniques since about 1981. With a background in finish carpentry, he developed a keen interest in the highly detailed installation of slate, tile, and metal roofs. For the last fifteen years, he has enjoyed sharing his knowledge with other contractors and has collaborated on many historic projects.

The construction challenges at the Springhouse included walls and a roof structure that were neither straight nor level and a cutout in the center of the ridge for an oculus. The two outside participants, Scott Perry



Assessing the condition of the roof structure. Photograph by James B. Garrison.



## **FOR THE RECORD: Carpentry Workshop at Historic Yellow Springs, Cont'd.**



Applying new western red cedar shakes. Photograph by James B. Garrison.

and Martin Tyszka, assisted by Historic Yellow Springs Board member and Treasurer Mark Ashton, began the project by tearing off the existing roofing in order to fully assess both the condition of the structure beneath and what additional work might be involved with the eaves and fascias. The next step was establishing the work points for the new roof edges which would affect the shingle coursing. This was done because it was important to set up coursing that worked with the existing nailing lath which had curved with the deflection of the structure over time. The last step was to shingle the roof using western red cedar shakes, generously donated by Dave Stoltzfus of Stoltzfus Construction in Honey Brook.

The team was able to complete one full side of the roof over the weekend and the result shows the skill and artistry of the execution. The various quirks of the building were all accommo-

dated in the careful layout and installation of the roofing so the new materials will perform well on an underlying structure that is not quite perfect. The Crystal Diamond Springhouse is a building that displays its history in the way that it has aged over time, with new and old materials in harmony with each other.

Andy and Tony will be scheduling a follow-up workshop to complete this project and other workshops in the future to look at other aspects of working on older structures when a laser level doesn't provide all the answers.



Andy Gustine (front) and Tony Vizzi (back) working on the new roof. Photograph by James B. Garrison.

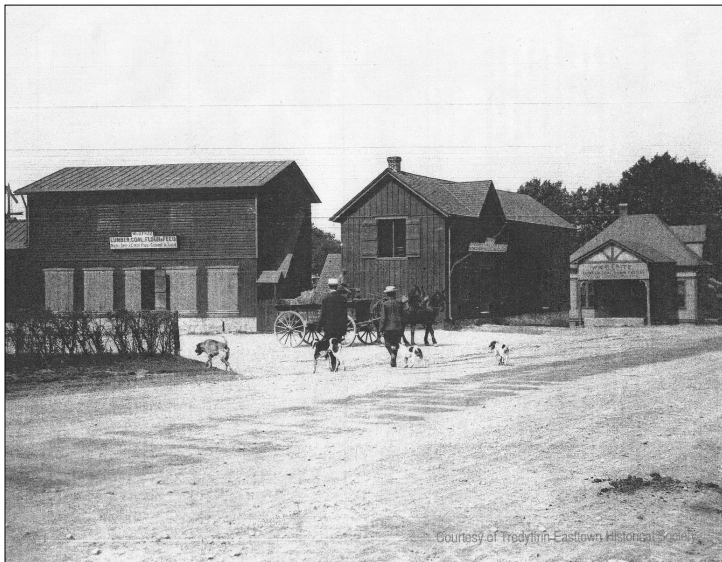


The finished side of the roof. Photograph by James B. Garrison.

## **FOR THE RECORD**

### **The Fritz Lumber Company, Berwyn by Robert Wise**

The William H. Fritz Lumber Company was one of the oldest lumber yards in Pennsylvania when it closed in 2016. Functioning as a full-service lumberyard for 156 years, it contained Nineteenth and Twentieth Century buildings arranged around an interior yard with the principal building located along Lancaster Avenue. Fritz provided lumber and milled products, coal, gravel, and feed. Products for sale arrived by both road and rail. It was the epitome of a small town, full-service independent lumber yard. By the end of the Twentieth Century, Fritz Lumber was one of only three lumber yards in Pennsylvania whose ownership had remained in the same family for a century. Once ubiquitous in nearly every village and small town, independent lumberyards have largely disappeared in suburban Philadelphia due to land use changes and later, competition from retail chains.



Fritz Lumber Company, 1904.

Photograph courtesy of Tredegar-Easttown Historical Society

In the mid-Nineteenth Century, the village of Reeceville emerged along the Lancaster Turnpike, on the south side of the Pennsylvania Railroad's "Main Line" tracks. It encompassed several businesses, including the Spring House Tavern, two general stores, and a blacksmith shop. The Reeceville station was located at the west end of the village.

In 1860, Henry Fritz opened a lumber yard in Reeceville on land he leased along the Lancaster Turnpike. Fritz purchased that land in 1863. Witmer's Atlas of 1873 shows an office off the Turnpike and a feed store in the rear. A small lot was sold to Maurice Lewis, a carpenter and long-time friend of Fritz. Lewis constructed his house there, which in 1946 became the Berwyn Tavern, which continues to operate. Tragedy struck in 1870 when Henry Fritz was killed at the Strafford train station while attempting to calm a horse frightened by a passing train.

The lumberyard was then operated by Henry Fritz's in-laws, the Lobb family, from 1870 until Henry's son, William H. Fritz, assumed the operations in 1885. William owned the business until his death in 1938. The Baist Atlas of 1887 shows five buildings on the property, including the sales office, the early portion of the coal house, and three buildings along the western boundary. All but one of these buildings were used until 2016.

As a young man, Henry Fritz became active in local affairs to be familiar with his clientele. He served as Berwyn Town Clerk and helped to found the Berwyn Bank. Later in life, he served as President of the Bank and was also active in the local Presbyterian congregation. Fritz ushered in new technology, including a telephone. The company's phone number was originally 2; it later changed successively to 9, then 608, then Berwyn 0608, then Nlagra 4-0608, and finally 610-644-0608.

An early photograph of the lumberyard, taken circa 1904 by Lucy Sampson, shows the Moulding, a lumber building (removed in 1964), and the office. A porte-cochere covered the scales that were used to weigh coal deliveries. Apparently, the Moulding House was originally the company's stable. At this time, the Masonic lodge held its meetings on the third floor of the Moulding House. In 1917, William Fritz purchased adjacent buildings which then served various purposes, first as the local office of William H. Fritz, Jr.'s lumber marketing business, then as a restaurant and copy center before their last roles as the Hardware Shack and Old Plywood House.

In the 1920s, William H. Fritz purchased an adjacent property along Lancaster Avenue, containing



## **FOR THE RECORD: Fritz Lumber Company, Continued**

what became known as the Triple House. This early Nineteenth Century house was converted into three units and exhibited a Carpenter Gothic exterior. It served as a boarding house for half a century, with the tenants working at the lumber yard or for the railroad. In the mid-Twentieth Century, the house was converted into storage space.

William H. Fritz died in 1938 and William H. Fritz, Jr. inherited the business. The younger Fritz had already established a successful business marketing white pine lumber. He sold lumber via rail to other lumber yards throughout Pennsylvania and in adjacent states. Busy with his own business, William H. Fritz, Jr. hired George Jacobs to manage the Fritz lumber yard business in Berwyn. The decision to hire a manager helped the lumberyard survive when William H. Fritz, Jr. died of a heart attack in 1941 at the age of 49.

With his death, his pine lumber business ceased operating. His wife Marion Fritz assumed the management of the business, and overcame harassment from customers who preferred to purchase building supplies from men rather than women. She remarried and left the company in 1954.

When William H. Fritz III assumed the company operations in 1954, its sales were concentrated in “lumber, coal, masonry supplies, cement, plaster, and feed.” Coal arrived via the Pennsylvania Railroad from the Main Line tracks (now SEPTA/AMTRAK) and a siding immediately north of the lumberyard. The cars were brought along the siding over a bin where the coal was deposited and then sorted into five grades based on the size: stove coal, chestnut, pea, buckwheat, and rice. Lumber was similarly delivered by rail. Demand for another Fritz product – animal feed – fell after World War II. It was discontinued circa 1957. The railroad siding was discontinued circa 2000, the coal building remained in use for other purposes until 2016.

By the end of the Twentieth Century, W. Howard Fritz IV had taken a larger role in the overall management of the lumber yard operations.

In the second decade of the Twenty-first Century, when his children had chosen to pursue other interests, W. Howard Fritz IV decided to sell the property and auction the inventory. On August 3, 2016, Berwyn developer WWED Development, LP purchased the property, and the William H. Fritz Lumber Company’s inventory was auctioned that October. The property is being redeveloped into an apartment and retail complex, indicative of the evolving nature of the village of Berwyn.

For over 150 years, the Fritz family played a major role in the history of Berwyn, providing lumber for the construction of the residences throughout the area while being engaged in religious, civic, and other business activities. Like so many community lumber yards, the William H. Fritz Lumber Company supplied not only materials to help

build the community but to heat the houses and feed the livestock. The property’s new use is perhaps more consistent with the changing neighborhood, and its residents will be able to make use of the adjacent Berwyn Train Station. Its legacy, however, will also live on in Tredyffrin Township, where some of the timber framing used for the older buildings, will, thanks to the developer, be used in the reconstruction of the historic Jones Log Barn at DuPortail House.

(This article was excerpted from the 2016 *Fritz Lumber Pennsylvania Historic Resource Survey Form* compiled and written by Seth Hinshaw and Kelly Wiles of RGA, Inc.)



Fritz Lumber Company, 2016.

Photograph Courtesy of Seth Hinshaw and Kelly Wiles of RGA, Inc.

## **FROM THE ARCHIVES**

### **Dowlin Forge by Susannah Brody**

The ruin of an old iron forge lies along the east branch of the Brandywine Creek about two miles north of Downingtown in Uwchlan Township. This ruin and others nearby document an industrial community that flourished and then nearly disappeared in the Nineteenth Century.

In the early iron industry, a finery forge was the middle operation between the furnace and finishing operations like blacksmiths and nail factories.

Using charcoal as a fuel, the furnace separated the iron from other minerals in the iron ore. The forge reheated pig iron and pounded it into the more malleable wrought iron. The blacksmith reheated the wrought iron and shaped it into the final product.

Founded in 1785 by Willistown resident Samuel Hibberd, the Mary Ann Forge became better known during the Nineteenth Century as the Dowlin Forge. The Mary Ann Forge was about 40 x 40 feet, with two-foot-thick stone walls, two water wheels, two giant tilt hammers, three stone fireplace hearths, and a huge dam just up creek to provide the water power. Hibberd was a blacksmith specializing in the production of sickles and scythes. He invested in the Forge to enhance his business, but he never lived in Uwchlan and he hired others to run the



Dowlin Forge Ruins.

Photograph courtesy of Susannah Brody.

Forge. He died in 1793, leaving ownership of the Forge in the hands of his six daughters and their husbands.

John Dowlin purchased the forge from Hibberd's heirs in 1801. Dowlin processed pig iron into wrought iron rods. In the early years of Dowlin's ownership, the forge had nearly 100 blacksmiths as steady customers, plus the occasional special orders. In 1818, John Dowlin began to process pig iron into plate iron for production of boiler plate by the Brandywine Ironworks and Nail Factory. At that time the ironworks were operated by Dr. Charles Lukens, the first ironmaster in America to successfully roll commercial boiler plate.

During the three-generation Dowlin ownership, a small industrial community grew in the western part of Uwchlan Township and eastern East Brandywine Township. John Dowlin increased the family holdings to more than 2,000 acres, which included: the Forge, two grist mills, a sawmill, a denim factory, a company store, a school, workers' housing, several farms, and acres of forested land for making charcoal. By the time John Dowlin retired in 1830, nearly half the iron produced by the Forge was the specialty plate iron sold to Rebecca Lukens who continued to run the Brandywine Ironworks after the death of her husband.

When John's son William took over the management, he upgraded the equipment and devoted nearly twenty years of effort into bringing the railroad to the community. The East Brandywine and Waynesburg Railroad Company was finally chartered in 1854. The rail line ran north from Downingtown along the Brandywine Creek and further to Waynesburg (now known as Honey Brook). The railroad transported manufactured products such as iron and paper, shipped farm produce and dairy products, and carried passengers as well. Chester County's popular Struble Trail follows the old railroad right-of-way. It was the railroad that officially gave the community its name: Dowlin Forge.

William and his eldest son Augustus modernized the Forge in 1850, improving the water power and the hearth sites for heating the iron. The Dowlin Forge survived longer than many of the early forges because they had a reputation for high quality wrought iron. Business was good until the end of the Civil War. With the emergence of steel production in the 1860s, the charcoal iron industry went into its final decline.



## **FROM THE ARCHIVES: Dowlin Forge, Continued**

None of Augustus' sons were interested in continuing the operation, so the Forge closed sometime after 1875. The grist mill, sawmill, and factory gradually closed and the community quietly faded into ruin. Dowlin family members continued to own the lands through much of the Twentieth Century.

In 1991, Uwchlan Township purchased several acres along the Brandywine watershed that included the ruins of the Forge and grist mill. The Uwchlan Township Historical Commission researched and wrote the history of the Forge (available for purchase). Markers were erected along the Uwchlan Trail identifying ruins associated with the history of the forge community. Dowlin Forge Park now incorporates nearly 200 acres in an unusual shape that follows much of Brandywine and Shamona Creeks with private residential properties lying within and adjacent to its rambling boundaries.

If you have the opportunity, walk along the Struble and Uwchlan Trails. Viewing the scenic watershed, the forested parklands, and the recent residential developments, you may find it difficult to imagine these lands as an industrial site. However, 150 to 230 years ago the lands surrounding Brandywine Creek in Uwchlan and East Brandywine Townships were alive with the sounds, smells, and activities of the grist mill, blacksmith, sawmill, farms, charcoal hearths, wagon teams, water wheels, and iron forge -- the community once known as Dowlin Forge.

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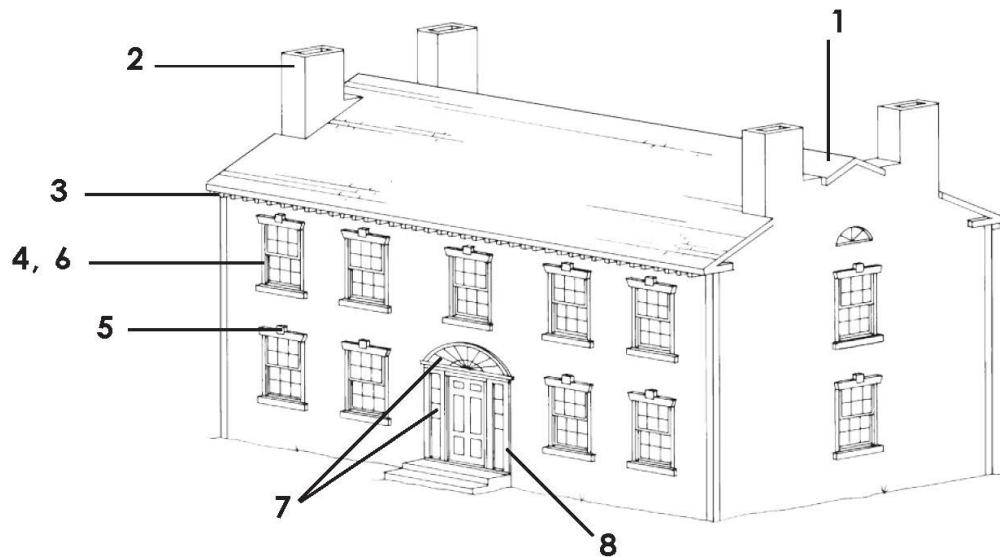


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## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### Architectural Style Guide: Federal



### FEDERAL (c. 1780 - c. 1830)

1. Low pitched side-gabled or hipped roof
2. Paired chimneys on both gable ends
3. Cornice decorated with dentils and other decorative molding
4. Multi-paned sash windows, generally with 6 panes in each sash, never paired
5. Flat stone lintel above window, sometimes with keystone
6. Windows in odd numbers aligned in horizontal rows balanced around entrance
7. Accentuated entrance with door surround and elliptical fanlight
8. Delicate columns or pilasters around door

### Other Features:

- Brick or fieldstone construction dominant regionally
- Windows are generally larger and have larger glass panes than Georgian examples
- 3-part Palladian windows centered in 2nd story above the entrance or in gable end
- Decorative elements include swags, elliptical shapes, garlands, and urns

(Excerpted from the Chester County Planning Commission's 1998 *Preserving Our Places: Historic Preservation Planning Manual for Chester County Communities* - <http://pa-chestercounty.civicplus.com/DocumentCenter/View/3756>.)



## ITEMS OF INTEREST

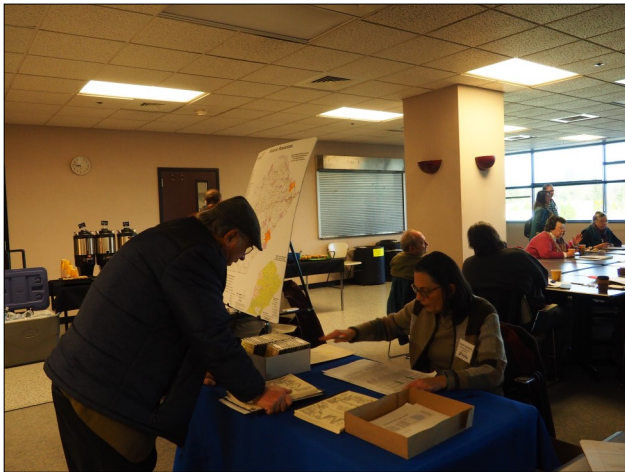
### **Municipal Historic Preservation Leadership Luncheon**

January 20, 2018

Chester County Government Services Center  
601 Westtown Rd., West Chester, PA

Sponsors: Chester County Historic Preservation Network  
Chester County Planning Commission

Thank you to Nancy Shields for taking the photographs.



Chester County Heritage Coordinator Karen Marshall helps West Chester Historical Commission Chairman Tom Walsh sign-in.



Board Member Ann Bedrick with Municipal Service Area (MuSA) 2.



Board Members Alex Rice and Kathryn Yahraes with Municipal Service Areas (MuSA) 8 and 9.



Board Members Candice Myruski and Carolyn Roland with Municipal Service Areas (MuSA) 5 and 12.

## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### **2018 CCHPN Spring Workshop Refining Our Local Commitment To Historic Preservation**

March 10, 2018

Brandywine Conservancy and Museum of Art

1 Hoffman's Mill Rd., Chadds Ford, PA

Thank you to Candice Myruski for taking the photographs.



2018 CCHPN Spring Workshop Speakers  
(from left to right): Cory Kegerise, Pa.  
SHPO Preservation Coordinator, Eastern  
Division; Jane E. Dorchester, Architectural  
Historian and Historic Preservation Con-  
sultant; and James B. Garrison, Chairman,  
East Pikeland Township Historical Commis-  
sion

View of Workshop attendees  
listening to Cory Kegerise



View of Workshop attendees listening  
to James B. Garrison



## **ITEMS OF INTEREST:**

### **2018 Volunteer Recognition Celebration**

June 20, 2018

Nottingham County Park

150 Park Rd., Nottingham PA

Thank you to Jim Buczala for taking the photographs.



Past CCHPN President John Miller (center), pictured here with colleagues from Wallace Township, received the Jane L. S. Davidson Historic Preservation Award.

Mother Nature cooperated by holding off the predicted rain and thunderstorms until the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Volunteer Recognition Celebration was over on Wednesday, June 20, 2018. This was especially important since it was held at Nottingham County Park in one of the outdoor pavilions. Attended by eighty volunteers from over forty of the seventy-two County municipalities, it was a big success according to President Jim Garrison who served as the evening's MC.

John Randolph Miller was awarded the Jane L. S. Davidson Historic Preservation Award. John served as a Wallace Township Supervisor and as a Wallace Historical Commission Chairman and as such, he worked closely with the late Jane L. S. Davidson on promoting the history of Wallace Township. John provided leadership in the long process of getting the Glenmoore Historic District on the

National Register of Historic Places and was a park educator and historian at Springton Manor Farm for many years. As the immediate past President of CCHPN, he was committed to continuing Jane's legacy of preserving Chester County's historic resources. John left CCHPN a stronger organization ready to embrace the future.

East Brandywine Township earned the Municipal Historic Preservation Award in recognition of the Board of Supervisors' support of the restoration of Bondsville Mill (c. 1842). Using open space funds, East Brandywine acquired the historic mill on forty-seven acres in 2004 and has continued to support the on-going work to clean up the property and make the collapsed buildings safe.

The West Nantmeal Historical Commission was awarded the Grace Under Fire Award because, for the past eight years, it has diligently worked with homeowners to preserve the more than five miles of stone walls that were built by the employees of the Isabella Furnace after it had blown out in 1894. In addition, they have spent the last four years working to nominate Langoma Mansion to the National Register of Historic Places.



West Nantmeal Historical Commission receiving the Grace Under Fire Award from CCHPN Board Member Karen Marshall (right).



## ITEMS OF INTEREST

### **2018 Volunteer Recognition Celebration, Continued**

June 20, 2018

Nottingham County Park  
150 Park Rd., Nottingham PA

Linda Kaat was given a Special Preservationist Award for her staging of the 2017 Battle of Brandywine Reenactment that celebrated the 240th Anniversary of the Battle, and which drew over 10,000 people over a two-day weekend in September 2017. Linda worked with Birmingham Township which was thrilled to offer the rare chance for a re-enactment on the actual site where the Battle took place.

Jane Kennedy, a Carver Court, Caln Township, resident, earned a Special Historian Award for her nomination of Carver Court to the National Register of Historic Places. This neighborhood was nominated in 2015. Carver Court, designed by renowned Philadelphia area architects George Howe, Louis Kahn, and Oskar Stonorov, was named after African-American scientist and inventor George Washington Carver, and was developed in 1944 as a public housing project for African-American veterans of World War II and their families.

Bill Gladden and Judy Thomas of the Chester County Department of Open Space Preservation were made Lifetime Members. Bill and Judy were recognized for guiding the preservation of both the -acre Osbourne Hill tract and the 14.4-acre Dilworth Farm, both important parcels in the Brandywine Battlefield National Landmark.



Jane Kennedy, resident of Caln Township, receiving the Special Historic Preservation Award from CCHPN President James B. Garrison.



Judy Thomas (left) and Bill Gladden (center) were made Lifetime Members, award presented by CCHPN President James B. Garrison.



CCHPN Treasurer Blair Fleischmann gave the Roll Call report for Upper Oxford Historical Commission.



## BULLETIN BOARD

### WHAT IN THE WORLD IS IT?! QUIZ #2

#### WHAT WAS IT?



This building used to be located in the center of the Quad at WCU. What was it?

#### WHAT IS IT?



This artifact is in the collections of the Antique Ice Tool Museum (located at 825 Sconnelltown Rd., W. C.). What is it?

### ANSWERS TO WHAT IN THE WORLD IS IT?! QUIZ #2

The picture on the left is the Old Gymnasium. At the time of its construction, West Chester University was called the State Normal School at West Chester. The picture on the right is of an ice-cutting plow. Many thanks to the Chester County Historical Society for the use of the photograph on the left and the Antique Ice Tool Museum for use of the photograph on the right which came from their website: [antiqueicetoolmuseum.org](http://antiqueicetoolmuseum.org).



### JOIN US!



The Chester County Historic Preservation Network (the Network or CCHPN) invites you to become *an individual member* of the Network. The Network's purpose is to promote historic preservation by bringing together historical commissions and committees, HARBS, organizations, and residents of Chester County who work to preserve their neighborhoods and communities. Our historic landscapes greatly enhance the sense of place for all of us; CCHPN's programs enhance our sense of community as we come together to learn about our rich history. As a member, you will be helping CCHPN continue its work of assisting municipalities in their efforts to preserve our historic resources and educating municipal officials and volunteers, and Chester County residents about the importance of historic preservation. To become a member, visit our website at [www.CCHPN.org](http://www.CCHPN.org) and look under "Membership."

#### ***ATTENTION!!!***

If you would like to continue to receive the *CHESTER COUNTY LEDGER* after you have moved, then please send your **CHANGE OF ADDRESS** to the Editor!! Simply send your old (so we can identify you) **AND** new addresses to:  
CCHPN / P. O. Box 174 /  
West Chester, Pa. 19381 / ATTN: Editor

#### **SAVE THE DATE!!!!**

##### **Municipal Historic Preservation Leadership Luncheon:**

January 19, 2019, Snow Date: January 26, 2019  
Location: TBA

##### **2019 CCHPN Spring Workshop:**


March 16, 2019  
Location: Brandywine River Museum

##### **CCHPN 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Volunteer Recognition Celebration:**

June 19, 2019  
Location: TBA

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*Photo by Tom Crane*



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The next *Ledger* will be published in February 2019!



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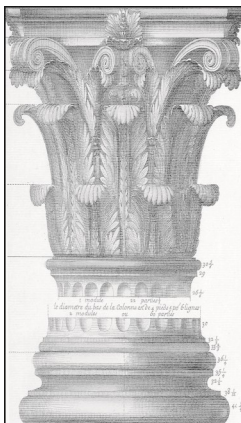


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Photo by Bill Wunsch

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***Chester County Ledger***

The Chester County Historic Preservation Network

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