

Chester County Ledger

The Newsletter of the Chester County Historic Preservation Network

Volume 11, Number 2

June 2008

A Brief History of Springton Manor Farm

Springton Manor Farm, one of Chester County's four Regional Parks, traces its origin to land granted to William Penn in 1681 by King Charles II of England. A debt owed to Penn's father led the King to grant William a tract of land he named *Pennsylvania* in honor of the elder Penn. The Royal Charter granting this land permitted Penn to reserve 10,000 acres out of every 100,000 as a *Manor* for his own use. Springton Manor, one of



Springton Manor Farm, a county park with active farming, has been in continuous agricultural use for more than 200 years.

The Chester County Historic Preservation Network is an affiliation of local organizations and individuals dedicated to promoting, protecting, and preserving Chester County's historic resources and landscapes through education, facilitation, and public and private advocacy.

eight such Manors reserved in Chester County, was named for Penn's wife Gulielma Springett. The original location for Springton Manor originally authorized by William Penn was located around what is today Downingtown. Heavy settlement in that area led the Penn family to reestablish Springton Manor further to the northwest on land in present day Wallace Township. Encompassing 8,318 acres, Springton was the largest Manor in Chester County.

As increasing numbers of European immigrants settled in the Pennsylvania colony, the Penn family eventually granted to individuals *patents*, the right to survey and potentially purchase, their reserved lands. A patent for 265 acres was granted

to Robert McConneghy in 1762, and the McConneghy family ultimately became the proprietors of the property that became known as Springton Manor Farm. The property changed hands several times after McConneghy's death, until James McIlvaine acquired it in the early nineteenth century to raise Merino sheep. McIlvaine's son and daughter-in-law, Abraham and Anna, took possession in the 1830s and built the present Manor House in 1833. The McIlvaines added indoor plumbing in 1848, with a hydraulic ram that pumped spring water into a cistern uphill of the Manor House, to supply water to the first and second floors by gravity.

Abraham McIlvaine served as Vice President of The Pennsylvania Agricultural Society, as well a state legislator and United States Congressman. Congressman McIlvaine's widow sold the property to Dr. Washington Atlee, a prominent Philadelphia surgeon, who maintained Springton Manor Farm as a country retreat. Dr. Atlee introduced a new era in Springton Manor Farm's agricultural heritage by arranging for tenant farmers such as Elisha Uxley to raise crops and tend animals, continuing the property's agricultural use, which remains uninterrupted from the eighteenth century to today.

George Bartol, a prominent Philadelphia business leader, purchased Springton Manor Farm in 1886 to use as a summer home. A successful grain exporter, Bartol was instrumental in founding The Bourse in Philadelphia, a commodities exchange similar to those he had visited while traveling in Europe. Bartol continued to improve the property,

upgrading the hydraulic ram system, adding a grand Music Room to the Manor House in 1912, and building a Carriage House, which today serves as the Park Office and Visitor Center.

Today, within Springton Manor Farm's historic landscape of fenced fields, stone walls and misty morning vistas is preserved a patchwork of colonial plantation, Industrial-Revolution-era scientific farm, Victorian tenant farm, and gentleman's country estate. Today's demonstration farming activity highlights best management practices, while park staff interpret Chester County's rich agricultural heritage through guided tours of the early-twentieth-century dairy farm, hands-on interactions with farm animals, and a newly opened Agricultural Museum that displays

original tools and implements that farm families used to raise crops, tend livestock, and process their harvest and other natural resources into usable and marketable products.

Springton Manor Farm is part of the Chester County Parks and Recreation Department, which in 2008 is ***Celebrating a Half-Century of Conservation and Recreation***. For more information on Chester County Parks and Recreation, please call 610-344-6415 or visit www.chesco.org/ccparks To rent The Manor House at Springton Manor Farm, contact Jay Gregg at 610-942-2450 or visit www.chesco.org/springton
- Jay Gregg, Park Facility Manager, Springton Manor Farm
- Karen Marshall, Chester County Heritage Preservation Officer

The Chester County Ledger

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Direct all queries 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. The CCHPN does not necessarily endorse the content of advertisements herein.

Printed on recycled paper.

Hi! Ho! Come to the Farm

Grab your partner! Bring a friend! Join us for the Network's Volunteer Recognition Celebration at Springton Manor Farm.

On June 25, 2008, board the tractor-pulled wagon on Springton Manor Farm's 300 acres to meet the costumed plantation owners and tenant farmers dating back to 1731. The Chester County Parks and Recreation Department staff and volunteers are working hard to write the animated "first person" tour as a premier for the Chester County Historic Preservation Network. They appreciate the dedication that you, the volunteer, give to your community.

The historic landscape is so diverse; if only these fields, buildings, and trees could talk. Learn how the European-Contact-Period immigrant, Robert McConaghey, assembled a fortune from land, iron, and grain before the Revolutionary War. Feel the excitement when former

Congressman Abraham McIlvaine received a letter at Springton Manor Farm from the recently elected President Abraham Lincoln. Hear the story of the Bartol family's business activity in the West Indies and Philadelphia. And there is more: Springton Iron Forge, the sheep herder from Germany, and nineteenth-century scientific farming.

There is a BONUS, not to be missed. Through a partnership with the Chester County Historical Society, explore the recently opened farming tool exhibit in the Great Barn containing almost fifty local and Chester County artifacts with expanded interpretations.

Rejoin your friends to continue celebrating at the Manor House on the hill. Wear jeans if you wish and bring your camera. Springton Manor Farm has a spectacular vista.

- Jane L. S. Davidson
CCHPN Board Member



Summer 2008 Volunteer Recognition Celebration

Hi! Ho! Come to the Farm and Don Your Country Duds

All are invited to come out to our annual Volunteer Recognition Celebration, honoring the accomplishments of Chester County's Historical Commissions and HARBs and other volunteer preservationists! We hope every historical commission and HARB will be represented!

- ✓ Come and tour the historic farm complex at Springton Manor Farm!
- ✓ Meet the costumed Country Gentlemen and Tenant Farmers of the farm!
- ✓ Visit the Agricultural Exhibit in the Great Barn!
- ✓ Find out who receives this year's CCHPN Preservation Awards!
- ✓ Share in the annual recognition of our network of preservationists across the county!

Wednesday, June 25, 2007

Springton Manor Farm, 860 Springton Road, Glenmoore, PA
(Map and direction on the back)

5:00 pm *Farm Tours Begin*
6:45 *Dinner Begins*
7:30 *Volunteer Recognition Ceremony*

Registration Fee is \$20.00 for everyone: members and non-members.

For questions, please call Elaine Husted at (610) 469-1243.

Please mail your registration form below by **June 16, 2008**.
Registration is required.
Payment can be made at the door. Reserve early because seating is limited!



Registration Form Please R.S.V.P. by June 16, 2008

Please send a completed registration form indicating the names of additional people attending to the Chester County Historic Preservation Network, P.O. Box 174, West Chester, PA 19381. Registration is required!

Name(s) of attendee(s):
Primary Contact:
Organization/Municipality:
Telephone:
Email:

CCHPN Summer 2008 Volunteer Recognition Celebration

From King of Prussia Area and the East:

Take Rt. 202 South. Exit onto Rt. 30 Bypass West. Exit onto Rt. 322 West. Follow Rt. 322 West through Guthriesville. Take a soft right onto Springton Road at traffic light. Cross Highspire Road. Continue 1/2 mile to park entrance on right.

Pottstown Area and the North:

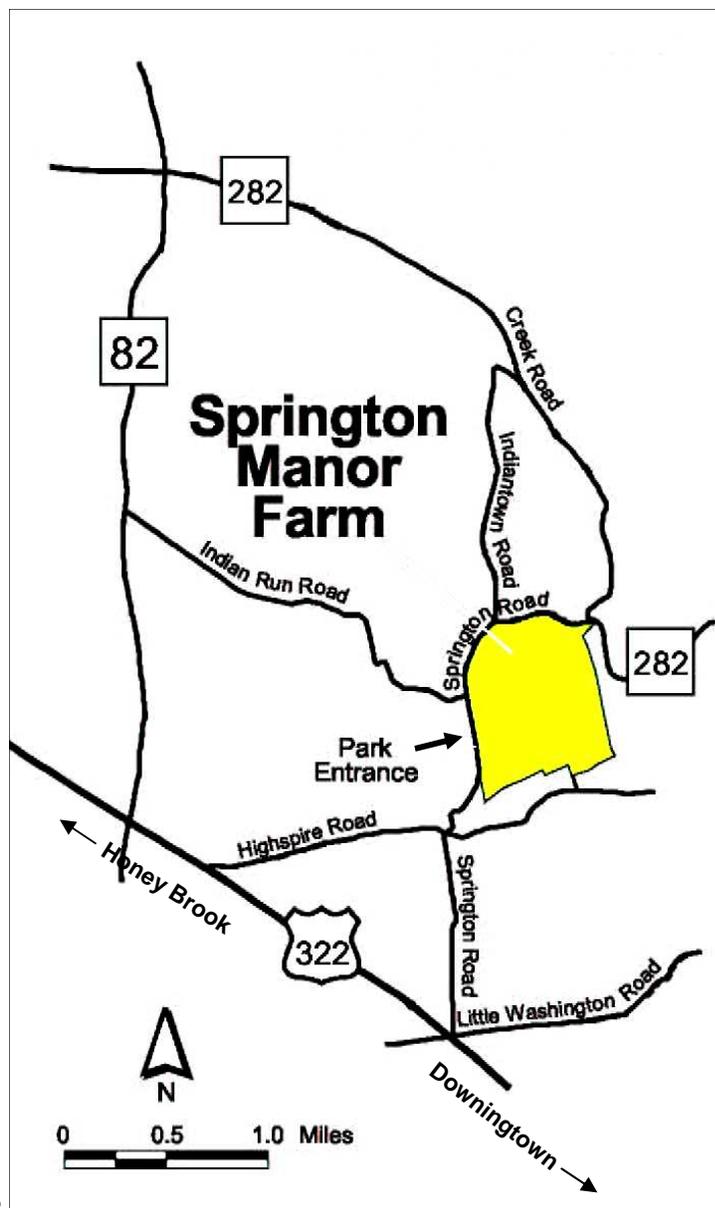
Take Rt. 100 South to Rt. 23 West. Turn onto Rt. 345 South. It merges into Rt. 82 South. Continue on Rt. 82 South to Rt. 282. Turn left onto Rt. 282 East. Go through Glenmoore, at 3.5 miles turn right at Springton Rd. Follow signs to park.

Honey Brook Area and the West:

Travel East on Rt. 322. Cross Rt. 82 and travel 0.5 mile to Highspire Rd. on left. (Just past Forks of the Brandywine Presb. Church). Turn left onto Highspire Road. At 1.5 miles, take a left at the stop sign onto Springton Rd. Travel 0.5 mile to park entrance on right.

From Downingtown/West Chester and the South:

Take Route 322 West around West Chester and through Downingtown. Cross under Rt. 30 Bypass and continue West through Guthriesville. Take soft right onto Springton Road at traffic light. Cross Highspire Road. Continue 0.5 mile to park entrance on right.



Map and directions courtesy of Chester County Parks and Recreation.
On the web at <http://dsf.chesco.org/ccparks/site/default.asp>

Wallace Township: A History

Many thousands of years before Penn made his treaties with the Lenape Indians, people were dwelling in what is now Wallace Township. Artifacts that have been found represent aboriginal cultures spanning time from 7000 B.C. to circa 1720 A.D., when the Okehocking paused briefly on their westward travel.

Following William Penn's death in 1718, his sons moved Springton Manor to what is now almost all of Wallace Township, plus segments of West Brandywine, Honey Brook and West Nantmeal Townships. People of Scotland, fleeing oppression, were attracted to Penn's woods, arriving at the port of New Castle between 1725 and 1740. After resting with fellow Scotsmen at Nottingham, they walked northward on the Nanticoke Indian path, now Route 10, to the only remaining vacant land, Springton Manor.

Of the early settlers, Henderson, Elliott, Craig and Starrett families are known to have built log structures and cleared the land. As the settlement grew to 31 plantations on the 8,313 acres, cart paths were built to "mills, meeting and market". These early roads, Paxtang (Highspire), Springton, Little Conestoga, Indiantown and portions of Creek Road, opened the area for development and industry.

By the early 1800s the original plantations were being farmed by the second and third generations. Funds were solicited to build Indiantown, Locust Grove and West Nantmeal Seminary log school houses. Edward Hunter, founder of the Mormon Church in Chester County, rebuilt West Nantmeal Seminary school after a fire, conditional "upon allowing all persons to worship in it", as well as use it as a school. Springton Methodist Church and West Nantmeal Presbyterian Church were founded during the same era.

Creation of Wallace Township in 1852 was the result of a law enacted by the State Legislature on April 14, 1851. The law also authorized the construction of an east-west state road from "Downingtown to the Conestoga Turnpike in Berks County," set off a storm of controversy that raged for almost a year between the residents of what was then known as West Nantmeal Township, which the road would bisect. Following petitions for and against this expensive roadway, the issue was resolved by the Court of Common Pleas. On April 14, 1852, the new township was officially named Wallace Township in honor of an early pioneer family.

Construction of the East Brandywine and Waynesburg Railroad through Wallace Township

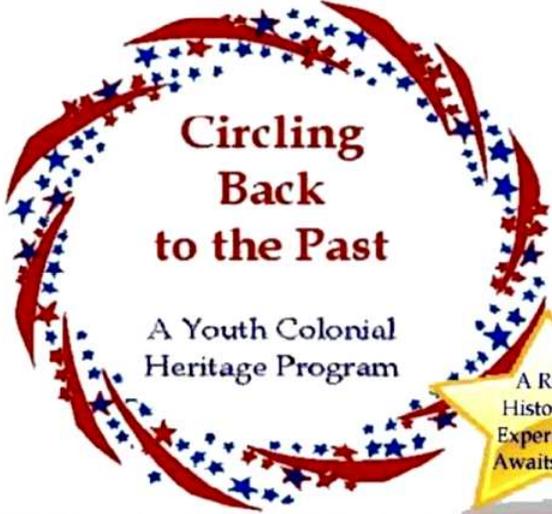
during 1860 and 1861, influenced the existing commerce patterns. Milk and cream were sent to the Philadelphia markets. In 1869 the Norwood post office opened in the hamlet beside the Brandywine Creek whose name was changed to Glenmoore less than a decade later. It grew into a picturesque village with newer structures exemplifying the finest in residential Gothic Revival and Italianate architecture.

Among many influences contributing to the sequential changes in the Township, construction of the Pennsylvania Turnpike has had the most profound impact. In 1950 this segment of the highway required closing two roads, shifting two streams, demolition of the Wyley-Watling log and stone house and barn, plus diminishing Vick's Wildflower Garden.

Of course, the significant proliferation of residential subdivisions has and continues to have an altering effect upon the rural ambience throughout Wallace Township.

- Jsabelle Blank

Chester County Parks & Recreation Department



Circling Back to the Past

A Youth Colonial
Heritage Program



A Rich
Historical
Experience
Awaits You

Experience life as a child
in the 18th century

FOR YOUTH ENTERING 4TH - 6TH GRADES



Springton Manor Farm

Dates: Wed., July 16 or Sat., July 19

9:00 AM - 1:30 PM

\$25/ participant

Registration Begins February 12

610-942-2450

www.chesco.org/ccparks

Animal

Infantry

Domestic
Arts

Music

Games &
Crafts

Stories

Spring 2008 Workshop Wrap-Up

The Spring 2008 Workshop turned out to be one of our most successful workshops in years. Great speakers, high attendance, and intense participation by all were the hallmarks. For those of you who could not attend we wanted to provide this summary of the presentations in hopes that you can put these ideas into action.

-The best tools for the preservation of historic resources are comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances that promote historic preservation, making it easier to reuse buildings and cost effective for developers to save them.

-Make sure your plans and ordinances serve your preservation interests. For example, a large historic house on a busy road should be zoned to allow for multiple uses, not residential only because no one will spend a lot of money for a home right on the road.

-In subdivision reviews, try to negotiate for higher density allowances in trade for saving extant historic resources.

-Enforce your timelines, talk to people as soon as possible, understand your demolition regulations, understand your zoning ordinances related to historic resources. The time to protect a historic structure is when someone is first considering an action that will impact it. It may be too late once an owner has invested a lot of time and money into a project.

-Work with professionals: engineers, lawyers, preservation planners

-Be part of the process, requesting special exemptions and zoning amendments.

-Know what you want, if you are not certain that resources need protection then no one else will be.

-Preservation generates revenue. The second largest income producing factor in Pennsylvania is Heritage Tourism after agriculture. The number one choice for heritage tourism is not individual sites, it's districts. People understand and appreciate historic landscapes and context.



More than 90 people attended our Spring 2008 Workshop, representing 35 municipalities. We offer our heartfelt thanks to our speakers Glenn Diehl, Sandra Momyer, Terry Woodman, and Kathy Gregory, plus our host, the Brandywine Conservancy.

-Work with your fellow commissions, particularly your Planning and Environmental Review Commissions.

-Get to know and work with your municipal authorities. Strive to be part of the process.

-Remember that education about and interpretation of history is your primary goal - have fun. Protecting historic resources is just one of a historical commission's responsibilities.

- Karen Marshall
Chester County Heritage
Preservation Officer

Town Tours and Village Walks 2008 Summer Tour Schedule

Call the number listed with each site for tour information.

June 12 West Chester, Southwest

Ramble 'Round Mr. Everhart's Grove

Information & Registration: 610-918-7348

June 19 Kennett Square Historic District

Kennett Kharacters

Information & Registration: 610-444-6020

June 26 Lionville Historic District

South Village Avenue

Information & Registration: 610-363-9450

July 10 East Pikeland

Hill Churches & Cemeteries On Clover Mill Road

Information & Registration: 610-933-1770

July 17 Modena Borough

Modena's Mode Family

Information & Registration: 610-382-6777 or

610-470-7162

July 24 Malvern Borough

Women Of Malvern

Information & Registration: 610-444-2602

July 31 West Bradford Township

Historic Marshallton Village

Information & Registration: 610-486-0790

August 7 Historic Yellow Springs

Chester Springs Soldier's Orphan School Days

Information & Registration: 610-827-7414

August 14 The Mill At Anselma

No Pre-Registration Necessary

August 21 West Whiteland Township

Lincoln Highway & Pottstown Pike: Crossroads of
Chester County

Information & Registration: 610-363-9525

Town Tours & Village Walks is sponsored by:

Chester County Board Of Commissioners

Chester County Parks & Recreation Department

Chester County Conference & Visitors Bureau

Chester County Historic Preservation Network

For more information, visit: www.chesco.org/ccparks

Individual Memberships: An Inexpensive Way To Help Our Bottom Line

Do you know that our much-visited website costs more than \$1,000 a year for hosting and maintenance?

Do you know that our newsletter, the *Chester County Ledger*, costs almost \$3,000 per year for printing and mailing?

With our other expenses, our annual budget is about \$5,000 per year.

This is not a lot of money considering what all we can get done, but we need to raise the much every year, and the Chester County Historic Preservation Network depends on paid memberships as our primary source of revenue. As we continue to expand our services, and thus our costs, we must ask for your continued help.

THANK YOU for those of you who have paid for individual memberships in the Network! And THANK YOU for all of the municipalities who have paid at that level. We need support at all membership levels, but right now we want to make a special plea for individual memberships.

Individual memberships are just \$20. They ensure all correspondence from the Network will be mailed directly to you. This is important if you leave your Historical Commission or HARB, in which your name is usually dropped from the mailing list. Plus, you get discounts to most of our events. Membership fees and any donations on top of the membership are tax deductible since the Network is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Matching corporate gifts, for any donations, can also be accepted.

Please help us by sending in your check for an individual membership to the **Chester County Historic Preservation Network, P.O. Box 174, West Chester, PA 19381.** Thank you very much for your help.

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Matthew E. Roberson

Restoration Carpenter/CCHPN Board Member

610-620-4656

meroberson@gmail.com

Period-Accurate Carpentry
For Historic Structures

For Technical Information on Historic Preservation and Contacts to help you with your historic house or with your preservation efforts, please visit:

www.CCHPN.org



Chester County Historic Preservation Network

P.O. Box 174

West Chester, PA 19381

www.CCHPN.org

PLEASE FORWARD

Please come
join us for our

**Summer 2008
Volunteer Recognition
Celebration**

June 25, 2008
Springton Manor Farm
County Park

Details Inside!