



Joseph Jackson House, London Grove Township, 1742

The Chester County Ledger

The Newsletter of the Chester County Historic Preservation Network

October 2007

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Do You Have A Sears, Roebuck and Co. Catalog House In Your Neighborhood?

Come and join us on Thursday, November 29, 2007, in East Bradford Township to explore and learn about the Sears, Roebuck and Company's catalog houses constructed in Chester County.

Frequently, we as local historians get so involved with researching the eighteenth-century European contact period and nineteenth-century landscape expansion that we overlook the importance of the turn-of-the-century phenomenon: the prefab house shipped by rail.

Sears sold 100,000 mail-order "Honor Bilt" houses between 1909 and 1937. Using the popular Bungalow, American Four-Square, and Arts-and-Crafts architectural styles of the day, the company made it possible for the American family to finally own a solid, well-built home.

Shipments arrived in stages that coordinated with the construction schedule. First the lumber came – cut, notched, mitered and numbered, identifying its place in the house. Then came window frames, plaster, plumbing, wiring, trim, glass, shingles, nails, and enough paint for three coats. By the way, if you lived in the

country, one could order a matching outhouse for \$39.00.

The Network invites you to come to our presentation and to bring



This two-story home, marketed as "The Princeton", was built in the western end of the Eachus Dairy Historic District of East Bradford Township. This model, listed in the Sears catalog in 1924 for \$3,073, featured six rooms, one bath, living room fireplace, built-in bookcases and an open staircase. The original plan included the porch hood, and the local owner added the pent roof to enhance the interpretation of the Colonial-Revival architectural style.

photographs of Sears houses in your neighborhood and match it with a sampling from the Sears collection, of which some have floor plans. See you on November 29th for a fun-filled evening with your Chester County neighbors.

- Jane L. S. Davidson

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.

Schuylkill Township Board of Supervisors and Historical Commission Honored

The Schuylkill Township Board of Supervisors and the Historical Commission were honored at the recent Chester County Historic Preservation Network annual meeting at Easttown Township on June 27, 2007.

The Honor Award for Historic Preservation for Chester County Municipalities was given to the township for its support to historic preservation in Schuylkill Township. This is a new award given for the first time by the Network and adds to the prestige of the presentation.

Recently retired Chester County Preservation Officer and member of the Network Board Jane L. S. Davidson stated, "Schuylkill Township jumped to the challenge in preserving the history in its community. When the historic Schuylkill School was threatened with demolition, Sandy Momyer rallied to speak up to save the structure. With support of the Phoenixville Area School District, she formed the Friends of Schuylkill School (FOSS) composed of local residents, architects, municipal leaders, school representatives and myself. The building was listed as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places and the Schuylkill Township Board of Supervisors gave its support to the cause."

Further, it encouraged the Supervisors to step up to the challenge and pass an ordinance establishing the Historical Commission to protect the historic resources of the township as well as preserve the way of life that is available here due to that history. Working together, the Supervisors and Commission have established Founders Day for Schuylkill Township at which time a distinguished citizen is

honored. Work is on-going to protect historic structures in the township and to advise township citizens on the value of the history in their own community. The Revolutionary War cemetery on Valley Park Road has been rehabilitated and efforts are on-going to restore the Valley Park ticket booth.

Davidson added, "My job was to train the historical commissions in the townships of Chester County and this was the first time ever that one or more supervisors attended our training sessions. I was impressed with the interest and support given by the Supervisors."

The certificate presented includes a beautiful drawing of historic Schuylkill School executed by award-winning graphic artist Ann Bedrick who serves on the Historical Commission in East Nantmeal Township and the Chester County Historic Preservation Network's Board of Directors. The original drawing will be framed and presented to Schuylkill Township.

Receiving the award for Schuylkill Township was Historical Commission member Joanne Brown. Other commission members attending included Diane Cram and Pamela Applegate-Frasch. Supervisor Lee Ledbetter represented the Board of Supervisors. Ledbetter also serves as liaison for the Commission. Historical Commission chairperson Sandra Momyer was unable to attend. Also serving on the Commission are: Jay Stearly, Khalil Hihi, Glen Hawkins, and Dan Cullen.

In addition to Ledbetter, Board of Supervisors include: Chairperson Norman Vutz, Sandra Henzie, Barbara Cohen and Dan Keough.

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.



Fall Presentation 2007 Sears, Roebuck, and Co. Houses Architectural Lecture Series

November 29, 2007

6:30 pm for House To
at 712 W. Nields St., West Chester

7:30 pm for Presentation
at East Bradford Township Building
666 Copeland School Road

Tour a historic, nearby Sears House!

Walk through an actual Sears Kit Home, shown at right, in the Eachus Dairy Historic District of East Bradford Township, right outside of West Chester.

Then come to the township building to hear Jane's talk.

Jane L. S. Davidson, CCHPN Board Member and retired Chester County Preservation Officer, will give a presentation of how these houses were developed, shipped and constructed, and how they served a specific housing market in Chester County.

This presentation is hosted by East Bradford Township Historical Commission.



This house, known as the "Walton" model, was built by the Edgar family at 712 West Nields Street on the western outskirts of West Chester. The house is part of the Eachus Dairy Historic District of East Bradford Township. Sears, Roebuck and Company offered this and many other house kits in its catalog. This model was a one-story bungalow offered in 1921, 1922, 1925, 1926 and 1929 at a cost of \$2,225 to \$2,489.

Its low profile emphasized an oversize wraparound porch with either wood or masonry piers and notched bargeboards. The latter was an interpretation of the Arts and Crafts period, in vogue at the time of construction. A fireplace in the living room plus a handsome built-in bookcase colonnade between the living and dining rooms enhanced the interior design.

Directions to the Sears House Tour: Go to West Chester - From South High St turn west onto Price St. Continue past the first traffic light on Price St. to the stop sign on S. Bradford Ave (Rt. 52). Turn left onto S. Bradford Ave to first traffic light and turn right onto West Nields St (into strip mall). Continue on entrance road until you get to the service road behind the mall. You will see a sign on left side of the road pointing left to 712 W. Nields St. Follow this road to the parking around the 2-story white building. This is the restoration and adaptive reuse of the Sears House.

Directions to East Bradford Municipal Building from Sears House Tour: Turn left onto Bradford Ave until first traffic light (at corner of Strasburg Rd or Rt. 162 - about 8 blocks). Turn right onto Strasburg Rd and follow to traffic light at Hannum Ave/Downingtown Pike (Bus. Rt. 322) and turn left onto Downingtown Pike. Follow it (Rt. 322) to the fourth traffic light (one light after the Rt. 322 By Pass). Take right turn at light onto Copeland School Rd. Follow Copeland School Rd to E. Bradford Township Building (on left side of road, after ball park/basketball courts) just before Copeland School Rd makes a 90 degree turn.

Please come out this Fall and join us for the last of our series of presentations on the architectural history of the region, and Don't Forget to Bring Pictures of any Sears Houses in Your Community!

Dr. Faye R. Doyle Honored

Dr. Faye R. Doyle was honored during the Summer Volunteer Recognition Celebration for her long-time preservation efforts. She was born in Briceville, Tenn., and moved to Pennsylvania in 1931. Her parents were Mildred Kimble Robinson and Fount Beverley Robinson, M.D. She has a younger brother, Carl W. Robinson, residing in Newark, Del. She graduated from Oxford High School in 1946, Maryville College, Tenn., in 1950 with a BA, and obtained an MD at Temple Univ. School of Medicine in 1954. Also in 1954 she married Russell G. Doyle, MD. She has four children, one granddaughter, and two step-grandchildren.

Dr. Faye was a family physician with her father and husband. They had an office practice in Oxford, made house calls, and did home deliveries among the Amish. During this time she maintained hospital privileges at Community Memorial Hospital (Southern Chester Co. Medical Center, now Jennersville Regional Hospital), being vice chief of staff for a term. She was

Medical Director of Oxford Manor Nursing Home, now Ware Presbyterian Village, from its establishment until her retirement in 1993.

In 1993 she joined the Oxford Historic Commission. She assisted in the restoration of the Oxford Town Clock, organized and promoted Oxford Town Walks, and aided the establishment of the Oxford Historic District (finally approved in Feb. 2007). Realizing she had an interest in local history, she encouraged the formation of the Oxford Area Historical Association in 2000. She maintains their records, oversees their meetings on local history, helps with local history activities, displays, and preservation projects, and maintains a small collection of local historical records for reference. Faye has written a few Oxford history articles for local publications. Other activities have included assisting with OHS Emeritus Association luncheon arrangements. She enjoys skiing, canoeing, and mountain biking.

Meet the CCHPN Board

As the CCHPN grows and evolves, our board changes and we gain new faces. We have decided this year to make an effort to introduce our board members; those who have been here awhile and those who are new.

Elaine Husted

One's passion for history and historical preservation can emerge at any time. My affinity started later, after I retired from decades in Nursing and Health Care Administration and became involved with the East Vincent Historical Commission. As I worked with this group, I found a new exciting world of many avenues. One was conducting life-history interviews with long term residents of East Vincent Township. These fascinating people alerted me further to the disappearing historic resources in each of our own backyards, such as bridges, houses, barns or a lone stonewall, even the view of back roads, woods and wildlife. The other reality was historical preservation was not considered a significant factor in the changes and development of today's landscape. I am not an historian nor am I schooled in preservation, but I am learning. My education includes a doctorate in Nursing. Having recently joined the CCHPN board, I have found my background in organization, education,

personnel management and interpersonal skills are contributing to the purposes and goals of historic preservation to which we all are dedicated. As chair of the Education & Program Committee, I invite you to tell us what subjects or information you would like presented because each board member is eager to make this organization better able to meet your needs.

The Board of Directors of CCHPN has recently grown with the addition of three new members, helping us to better represent the county geographically and professionally.

- **Ann Bedrick** is a member of the East Nantmeal Historical Commission.
- **Spencer Claypoole** is the Chairman of the North Coventry Historic Commission.
- **Karen Marshall**, as many of you know by now, is the new Heritage Preservation Coordinator and County Historic Preservation Officer for the Chester County Parks & Recreation Department.

We welcome them all!

David McCullough to Speak in The "Chester County Reads" Program

On October 26 2007, famed historian and author David McCullough, winner of two Pulitzer Prizes and National Book Awards, will speak at Immaculata University about his book *1776*: the Chester County Reads program 2007 book selection.

Chester County Reads was started two years ago to promote the value of reading and community by sponsoring countywide activities and discussions based on the shared reading experience of either one book or one author. The books are selected by a special committee in the areas of classic and contemporary fiction and non-fiction works.

David is the perfect fit for this program - one of his most repeated quotes is "You are what you read." He is a born Pennsylvanian from Pittsburgh where he attended the Shady Side Academy. He graduated from Yale University with honors in English literature. His first book, *The Johnstown Flood* was started while working at *American Heritage*.

Remembering this time in his life he said, "I used to see the old fellows in their 40s, talking about the book they were going to write someday. I was determined I was not going to be like that." And after more than ten years writing and editing for magazines he devoted his life to writing.

His works also include *The Great Bridge*, *Brave Companions*, the National Book Award winners: *Path Between the Seas*, and *Mornings on Horseback*, and Pulitzer Prizes winners: *Truman* and *John Adams*. David also is well known for his voice narratives in many documentaries and his engaging speeches. Awarded the 2006 Presidential Medal of Freedom, he is the recipient of many recognitions, including the Francis Parkman Prize, the National Humanities Medal and 40 honorary degrees.

Locally, David McCullough is the Founding Chairman of the American Revolution Center's Board of Scholars. Much of both *John Adams* and *1776* take place in and around Philadelphia. Thomas J. McGuire, author of *The Battle of Paoli* and the two-volume *Philadelphia Campaign*, is a history teacher at Malvern Preparatory School and has been one of McCullough's research associates.

In *1776*, McCullough brings us face to face with the harsh reality of one of the pivotal times of our nation's founding. It focuses on the character and

fortitude of the persons who were "leading a cause that has no unifying symbols and have men in the ranks who heartily dislike each other because of where they come from. The whole effort was continuously threatening to pull apart."

David McCullough will give his speech (and book signing) on October 26, 2007 at 7 PM at Alumnae Hall at Immaculata University. It is free to the public on a first-come first-serve basis. Go to the Chester County Library System's website:

<http://www.ccls.org> and click on the "Chester County Reads" icon for the mail-in registration form. All forms must be received no later than October 8, 2007.

The Chester County Reads program is a project of the County Commissioners and the Library System. The speech is co-sponsored by Immaculata University's History Department and the Paoli Battlefield Preservation Fund. The Chester County Book & Music Company helped arrange the speech.

- Bruce Knapp
CCHPN Board Member



David McCullough

Summer Volunteer Recognition Picnic, 2007 A Night to Celebrate

There was an air of expectation floating in the breeze. The excitement and energy for the CCHPN Annual Picnic had evolved into an enhanced time to celebrate a very special project envisioned by Jane L. S. Davidson, the then Chester County Historic Preservation Officer. Along with Mark Mattie, GIS Analyst with the Chester County Computer & GIS Department, and John Mikowchok, Director of Chester County Parks and Recreation, the goal was to

community use. Thus, the Volunteer Recognition Celebration began to evolve.

New as a group to preservation efforts yet with eager interest to participate was Easttown Township. Under the leadership of Anna Sicalides, her crew—yet to be officially appointed as a historic commission—offered to host the Volunteer Recognition Celebration. Their roster included Herb Fry, author of a book on the history of Easttown, Margaret DePiano, Marla Musman,



The Chester County Historic Preservation Network and the Chester County Department of Parks and Recreation were proud to acknowledge the many efforts of Chester County's preservationists!

utilize the GIS mapping to create an Historic Overlay of all historic sites in Chester County. How to accomplish this enormous task was a small challenge for Jane. She went directly to all existing municipal Historic Commissions, HARBs and historic societies soliciting their cooperation. All responded with the realization that this was a united way to accomplish what was known to be a need, to update and to create a comprehensive inventory for each of their communities.

In the past, the picnic was established as an annual “thank you” to all preservation volunteers. This year it became even more. The Network wanted to enthusiastically recognize the municipalities completing their historic resources inventory resulting in what would become a chapter in the County GIS mapping and a bound Atlas for each municipality for

Hans Jensen and Trudy Stewart—a team of energy and commitment.

Of good fortune was the location of the Waterloo Mills National Register Historic District within Easttown Township. This historic site is owned and operated by the Brandywine Conservancy. Their Land Manager, Thomas Larson, readily agreed to provide tour guides and information as the educational component of the Celebration. The grounds are lovely and rich in architectural, occupational and living history.

The Hilltop House was a spectacular location for the festivities complimented by the presence of five living-history, period-costumed residents known for their handmade attire. As an early farmhouse, it expanded over time into more of a Victorian appearance



Dr. Faye Doyle receives an award for her preservation efforts from Jane L. S. Davidson, with Ann Bedrick looking on.

with large rooms and an expansive view of green lawns and trees and made the question of rain unnoticeable.

The festivity was well attended. CCHPN President Bob Wise greeted the volunteers while Richard Frazier, Vice-Chairman of the Easttown Township Board of Supervisors, and Bonnie Dean of State Representative Duane Milne's office reflected on the importance of historic preservation. The municipalities completing their GIS mapping project or at the editing stage numbered thirteen plus two who have submitted data. Framed certificates designed for this purpose by Illustrator Ann Bedrick in conjunction with Jane L.S. Davidson were awarded by Jane and Ann plus Karen Marshall, Mark Mattie, and John Mikowchok. Recipients were Downingtown Borough, East Bradford Township, East Brandywine Township, East Nantmeal Township, London Grove Township, Londonderry Township, Malvern Borough, North Coventry Township, Upper Oxford Township, Uwchlan Township, Wallace Township, West Caln Township and West Nottingham Township. The two submitting data—East Goshen Township and Upper Uwchlan Township—received modified certificates. Of special note was the option of each municipality to select a historic site to be drawn by Ann Bedrick and placed on their certificate. Thus each certificate was individualized in an artful way never to be duplicated.

New to the Volunteer Recognition Celebration this year was the Individual Award given to Dr. Faye Robinson Doyle of Oxford Borough. Her

determination and dedication to preservation over many years has enabled the community to have a vibrant Historic Commission and the completion of the Oxford Borough National Register Historic District and the creation of Oxford Area Historical Association.

Another first-time award was the Municipalities Award given to Schuylkill Township Board of Supervisors and its Historical Commission for their focus and adherence to the goal of preserving and preventing demolition of Schuylkill Elementary School circa 1936.

Accomplishments and moments of pride elicited by Kathryn Yahraes during the Roll Call of Historical Commissions and HARBs were delightful to hear. Each portrayed a large measure of effort and love of Chester County's heritage.

The Education and Program Committee has already begun to plan for next June's Volunteer Recognition Celebration. CCHPN is looking for both a site and a municipal sponsor for the event. If you have suggestions or are interested in helping to plan our Annual Volunteer Recognition event, please contact me, Elaine Husted, CCHPN Vice President, at 610-469-1243 or by email: 1classycat@comcast.net.

- Elaine Husted
CCHPN Board Member

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catch your socks?

Is your **PORCH**
falling down on the job?

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Notice of Change!

The Fall presentation on Demolition by Neglect has been rescheduled and added to the Spring 2008 Workshop on Demolition in March. We hope to see you at this timely and informative workshop!

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Historic Preservation Network

P.O. Box 174

West Chester, PA 19381

PLEASE FORWARD

Please come and join us for our

Fall Presentation, 2007

**Sears, Roebuck and Co.
Catalog Houses
in Chester County**

Come and Join us for a
Tour and Presentation!

November 29, 2007

East Bradford Township Building
Details Inside!