



Old Morlatton Village MESSENGER

The Historic Preservation Trust of Berks County

Volume XXIII Number 1

Spring 2015

Event Calendar 2015

Visit the Trust's website for a list of the events for 2015

www.historicpreservationtrust.org

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Mouns Jones Plantation Day

Looking for something fun and educational to do this summer? The Trust has an event for you! On June 27, 2015 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Mouns Jones Plantation Day at Morlatton Village will take place, rain or shine!

At the event there will be a Herb Garden Presentation; Shingle & Tile Roofing Display; Blacksmithing Demonstration; Historic Amity Village Store Display; Archaeological Dig; Amity Colonial Dancers; Mouns Jones House Wall Restoration; Open Hearth-Cooking and a Native American Cultural Display!! From 11 a.m.—2 p.m. there will be a lunch available for purchase.



Mouns Jones House (1716) - West Eaves Wall (to be restored) 2013

Menu

Pork and Beans \$8

Brunswick Chicken Stew \$8

Root Cellar Vegetarian Stew \$7

Mouns Jones Heart Vegetable Soup \$5

Above served with sides & Stone-Ground

Whole Wheat Biscuits

***Children's Menu ***

***Homemade Desserts ***

***Beverages ***

Admission \$8

Children 12 and younger FREE

Shuttle-bus parking for event is at KIWI

Lot, 447 Old Swede Rd.,

Douglasville, PA 19518

[Route 662, Amity Township]

Pedestrian/Bicycle Entry from Thun Trail

For Admission Passes, Event Programs, Menus, Lunch Tickets Purchase, Maps, Directions, Sponsorship Opportunities, or to Volunteer,

PLEASE CONTACT:

Phone: (610) 385-4762

Email: info@historicpreservationtrust.org

From the President

The Trust is making progress. We have a very knowledgeable and committed board that enjoys support from our membership and other “friends” of preservation in Berks County. The maintenance and restoration of eight eighteenth buildings and other early structures is a massive responsibility that requires continuous work. I can confidently report that our buildings are in structurally sound condition, (in the case of the Mouns Jones House, a restoration-in-progress), but all require constant and expensive maintenance. The Trust as an organization is currently on a sound footing as well, but will be sustainable only if we can grow our membership and corps of volunteers, and develop a long term capital endowment.

Our accomplishments over the recent past include:

1. The sign project at Morlatton has been completed with signs located at buildings and other sites throughout the Village explaining the history and architecture of the early community.
2. A new Trust brochure, substantially upgrading the information describing and illustrating the Trust and its sites and structures, has been completed and published.
3. Upgraded computers have been installed in the Trust’s offices.
4. In March the Trust hosted successful colonial dinners for members and guests of the Schuylkill River Heritage Area.
5. As outlined in the Sites and Structures update:
 - A) The river-side wall of the Mouns Jones house is being rebuilt and the 19th century doorway relocated to its original central position;
 - B) Substantial reconstruction work has been performed on the 1753 house at the Keim Farmstead since removal of the deteriorated 20th century porch.
 - C) The Keim Homestead has been officially certified by the National Park Service as eligible to be listed as a National Historic Landmark, the very select highest tier of the National Register of Historic Places. We have compiled a nomination for National Historic Landmark recognition and submitted it to the Park Service.
 - D) The next major maintenance effort must be the repainting and repair of substantial portions of the White Horse Inn and other buildings. The need for these numerous projects has now become critical, and is essential to the long term preservation of the prized 18th century buildings for which the Trust is privileged to be responsible.

Much of the credit for the structural stability and authentic restoration of the buildings is owed to the Shelley Foundation that has so generously funded many of these projects during the past five years.

Mouns Jones Plantation Day, a festival recognizing the early life, industry, and culture of the colonial settlement, is scheduled for June 27, 2015, at Morlatton. Keep that day free and attend what is sure to be an informative and enjoyable event (with a great “Plantation” lunch menu!).

We are also working on a Music Fest to be held at the Keim Homestead on September 26, 2015.

Finally, thanks to the generosity of our dedicated supporters, the financial position of the Trust appears to be sound. That being said, we plead with our membership and other friends and supporters to remember us with their gifts, including lifetime donations and testamentary bequests. Remember, the annual insurance premiums alone for the Trust’s buildings exceed \$20,000, more than double our total annual dues receipts.

Thank you for your continued support of the Trust and its important mission and activities.



New Brochure!!

The Trust has designed a new brochure. If you would like a hard copy, stop in at the White Horse Inn and grab one! The White Horse is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday 12pm—4pm.

Like us on Facebook!

Search for “Historic Preservation Trust of Berks County” on Facebook and “Like us!” Events, White Horse Inn hours (and changes), as well as current updates will be made on Facebook!



Annual Christmas Tea

The annual Christmas Tea fundraiser for the Historic Preservation Trust of Berks County was held on Wednesday, December 3, 2014 at Willow Run Farmhouse, home of Patricia Nichols Fry, Colebrookdale Township near Boyertown.

Preparation for the event began in May, 2014, when members of the Tea Committee met with Mrs. Fry to tour her home and plan for the event. Mrs. Fry supplied historical information for the invitations which were sent to Trust members in early November. A sketch of the home, done by local artist Julia Longacre, was used for the front page of the invitations. Ticket requests were received by Laruen Archibald.



Photo courtesy of the Reading Eagle

In November members of the Tea Committee baked 18 varieties of cookies in the kitchen of the White Horse Inn. All supplies needed for the event were moved to Mrs. Fry’s home on the Monday prior to the event by Trust members.

Tuesday, December 2nd, 20 volunteers met in the social hall of Calvary U.C.C., Reading, to make 1800+ tea sandwiches and to stuff the dried and fresh fruit that was served at the Tea. More varieties of cookies and breads were made by volunteers.

Parking for volunteers and guests was coordinated by members of the Trust Board. Over 130 guests attended the event, touring the home, which Mrs. Fry decorated, and enjoying her antique furniture and collections.

Trust volunteers served Tea and Coffee, washed and dried dishes in the kitchen, arranged trays of cookies, sandwiches and fruit in the garage and sold Trust coverlets, cookbooks, jams and craft items. Thank you to all who helped make this event a successful fundraiser. Plan to save the first Wednesday in December 2015, to attend our next annual Christmas Tea which will be held in the Wernersville area of Berks County.



Photo courtesy of the Reading Eagle

Eleanor Shaner

~ Christmas Tea Chairman

Sites and Structures Update

Morlatton Village Sign Project Completed:

Thanks to generous funding from The Schuylkill River Heritage Area and The Donald and Esther Shelley Foundation, and two years of research, writing (and re-writing!), and design and production work by dedicated Trust volunteers and professional consultants and fabricators, a group of informative and graphically illustrated signs has been created and installed throughout Morlatton Village. The signage array includes an interpretive sign at each building and at the former covered-bridge site, and larger “wayside” panels providing narrative text, photos, maps, and other illustrations portraying the 1704 settlement and its development as well as its significance. The installation was completed late last summer and now gives visitors the option of taking a self-guided tour and a wealth of historical and architectural details on the early Manatawny/Morlatton settlement and its importance in the culture and commerce of the region.

Keim House:

Reconstruction of the tiled pent roof and balcony on the restored south wall of the 1753 house was completed in late 2014. New window framing and sash will be replicated from surviving elements and installed in the original masonry openings. The kitchen entry stair and stoop structure will be completed this year.

The replaced cellar doors and other exterior woodwork will be painted with the historic 18th century “Spanish Brown” and “Prussian Blue” colors formulated by historic paint consultant Matthew Mosca based on samples taken from surviving original shutters and microscopically matched to available modern paint colors. Volunteer Hilary Fraley has taken on the critical task of advising and assisting the Trust’s Sites and Structures Committee in shepherding the selection and application of the authentic colors.



Philip Pendleton has prepared a carefully documented and thoroughly researched Nomination of the Keim House as a National Historic Landmark. Sites and buildings are eligible for this rare status only if they “possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States. Today, just over 2,500 historic places bear this national distinction.” Although the process usually takes many months and the “Landmark” criteria are demanding, the Trust has received a letter of eligibility from the National Park Service indicating a realistic possibility of success.

Mouns Jones House Wall Reconstruction:



The river-side wall of the 1716 oldest house in Berks County had, since the 1960s restoration campaign, progressively become bulged and visibly separated from the second floor boards adjacent to the interior masonry of the displaced wall-range. The Sites and Structures committee and its consulting engineer concluded that the risk of failure was unacceptable, and potentially dangerous enough to require dismantling and reconstruction of the center segment of the wall in a sound and accurately bonded alignment with the surviving end-bays of the original wall-plane. After the committee’s shoring and scaffolding plan was detailed and approved by the consulting engineer, selected for the project because of technical expertise in timber structures, carpenter-joiners Tom and Chris Lainhoff constructed

the framework which supports the roof loads during construction, a safe platform for the restoration crafts-men to work on, and storage space for the stones to be re-installed in re-laying the unstable wall segment.

In the course of reconstructing the central twenty-foot span of the wall, the existing 19th century doorway will be re-located to its original centered position beneath the date-stone. Windows will be designed, sized, fabricated, and installed based on the best evidence available, including old photographs, an early surviving window frame in the eastern wall, and early construction details surviving in the stonework. Mortar will be formulated using historically-based ingredients and techniques, and local materials to the extent possible and structurally prudent.

Heritage Area fundraiser held at Morlatton Village

There was still snow on the ground in late March, but guests at a colonial dinner had no trouble keeping warm at the White Horse Inn, where three fireplaces were burning. The dinner, held on two evenings, was a fundraising event hosted by the Schuylkill River National & State Heritage Area. Their annual dinner strives to share unique venues with their supporters. After touring the Village, guests gathered at the White Horse for a demonstration of open-hearth cooking. Later they were serenaded by harpsichordist Helen May while enjoying a dinner of colonial-era foods. Over 80 Heritage Area supporters were treated to 18th century fare such as cider baked ham, root vegetable pottage and apple “pye”. Volunteers from the Heritage Area and from the Trust helped to make the evening a success.



Trust Board members Brian Boyer (center) and Amanda Machik (right) watch while volunteer Lori Schaeffer prepares food for the open hearth cooking demonstration at the Heritage Area colonial dinner.

MEMBERS SAVE THE DATE!!

Annual Membership Meeting and Covered Dish Dinner
Wednesday June 10th. Watch for your notice in the mail!

Current Board Officers Spring 2015

President: John Hibschman

Vice President: Bradford Kissam

Recording Secretary: Lauren Archibald

Treasurer: Richard Almquist

Financial Secretary: Brian Boyer

Are you planning an event?

From weddings and birthday parties to small meetings and gatherings, the White Horse Inn may be the perfect setting for your special occasion. Located in historic Morlatton Village, Douglassville, the White Horse has a modern kitchen and seating for up to 50 guests. For more information about renting this fully restored 18th century Inn, please contact the Trust's office at 610-385-4762 or info@historicpreservationtrust.org

Historic Preservation Trust of Berks County

P.O. Box 245

Douglassville, PA 19518

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U.S. POSTAGE
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Reading, PA
Permits No. 730

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

White Horse Inn Hours

The White Horse Inn will now be open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 12—4 p.m. Feel free to stop by and look around as well as visiting the other historic buildings in Morlatton during open hours or by appointment for tours or visits. For details and changes please check the Trust's Facebook page or website.

Interested In Volunteering?

So, you're not sure whether or not you could actually be a help to the Trust? Well you are in luck! It does not matter what profession you take pride in, as long as you have a passion for history and helping, the Trust has a job for you!

Or, are you, or do you know a Boy Scout or Girl Scout who is looking for community service hours or to do an Eagle Scout project? Give the Trust a call or send us an email. You can help preserve the local history while earning hours, a badge, or even your Eagle Scout award. This also applies to civil service groups and students who need service hours. Why not learn and help preserve history while having fun? We have opportunities for volunteers for help in our mission and for upcoming events, including Plantation Day, June 27.

If you or someone you know is interested in volunteering at one of our events or if they are interested in working on projects at one of our historic buildings please contact us at (610) 385-4762 or at info@historicpreservationtrust.org.