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BOARD UPDATE

Please join us in welcoming our new officers: Lauren Archibald, Vice President & Michelle Lynch, Recording Secretary. Also, Hilary Fraley began her term as a brand-new board member.

Pedaling to Morlatton



Photo courtesy of Tom Carroll & the Schuylkill River Heritage Area

Pedal & Paddle participants in front of the Michael Fulp House

Mouns Jones most likely traveled to Morlatton by boat, but many more recent visitors are arriving on bicycles. The proximity of the Schuylkill River Trail has brought an influx of cyclists, often as part of organized tours. This past summer the site was visited by members of the Berks County Bicycle Club and participants in a ride organized by French Creek State Park. But one of the most popular events was a Pedal & Paddle tour sponsored by the Schuylkill River Heritage Area. Participants began their bike ride at the Heritage Area headquarters in Pottstown. They followed the Trail to Morlatton, where they were given a tour of the Village by Trust volunteers. Their next destination was Ganshawny Park, in neighboring Douglas Township, where they had lunch and then traded their bicycles for kayaks for the return trip to Pottstown via the Schuylkill River—not unlike Mouns Jones.

The first Pedal & Paddle, which was limited to fifteen participants, was held in June. It was so popular that the Heritage Area scheduled two additional events over the summer, both of which were also quickly filled. The second event was held in August. Unfortunately, the third event, scheduled for September, had to be cancelled because heavy rains had caused unsafe conditions for kayaking on the River—a reminder of what the earliest visitors to Morlatton probably had to deal with, too.

The Trust was pleased to host all of these visitors, many of whom were unfamiliar with Morlatton and expressed a great deal of interest in the buildings and their history.

From the President



Matt Barnhart,
Trust President

**“We
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Man, what a summer! We got a lot done with the properties, we had a successful event, we won an award. We also had a(nother) flood, we said goodbye to our caretaker, and... **WE WON AN AWARD!!!**

I hope everyone saw the rather good coverage we've recently gotten in the local press. Preservation Pennsylvania recognized our work at the DeTurk House with an award for *Restoration of a Special Historic Property*. Award-winning projects ranged from the miniscule (DeTurk) to the gargantuan (Philadelphia Post Office: thousands of square feet, millions of dollars). Somewhat galling was an award given to a stone arch bridge initiative in neighboring counties. Berks County just lost a beautiful triple arch stone bridge over the Tulpehocken Creek. It *was* a contributing structure in a National Register Historic District, and its demolition should never have been allowed. The Trust played a small role at the eleventh hour, to no avail.

We need to be more vigilant and visible in these matters. We need to be represented on planning boards, as elected officials, through local historical societies. The Trust is the only “county-wide” organization focused on historic resources. We need to know of “structures at risk,” and our members are our antennae. Please let us know of concerns you may have about structures in your neighborhood, we may be able to help.

Once again I'm stressing/obsessing on how important our members are. In addition to being eyes and ears throughout the county, our members are ambassadors promoting the importance of historic resources. Our members help recruit more members. Our members help us accomplish our goals. Each time I make the request, a couple of you respond by referring someone to us or by offering to work on a project or serve on a committee.

Right now we are organizing a group to develop policies and procedures for marketing the White Horse Inn as a space for events. We also have opportunities on the *Sites and Structures* committee for folks who want to help make decisions about the restoration work we do. As always, we welcome input regarding our public relations efforts, fundraising, events planning, etc.

In addition to our dedicated members, we were fortunate to have a dedicated caretaker for the past five years. Doug Eisemann recently returned to his ol' stompin' grounds, State College. Ironically, we were flooded days after he came to Old Morlatton Village *and* days before he left. In each case, and for the intervening years, Doug was invaluable. He did an excellent job in maintaining the grounds, he played a big role in keeping the Fulp restoration on track through the winter, he was attentive to work that needed to be done, and he contributed in planning meetings. We wish him well. We have a new caretaker, Jennifer Jensen. She, like her predecessor, has been proactive in caring for our property, and we look forward to her participation. Introduce yourselves when you meet her.

In other “Village News” We are losing our tenant in the cottage. If anyone knows someone who might be interested in renting a little house in a neat area, let us know. We are also working with the township to develop a parking area across from the White Horse that benefit the Trust and trail users.

On the first Saturday of fall this year, we opened all of our buildings to the public for the *Fall into Berks History* event. We were gratified by the response. Nearly 200 hundred people visited all eight of our 18th-century structures—helping us raise approximately \$2000. It was the first time in the Trust's 44-year history that all sites were open on the same day! The day proceeded as planned despite extensive flooding two weeks earlier that impacted all of Morlatton Village.

Finally, If you are receiving this newsletter and are not a member it is probably because you left your address with us that day. If you found our collection compelling, please join. The benefits of membership are few: we will put you to work and subject you to quarterly harangues by me about “volunteering.” But keep in mind that we are all volunteers, and with each of us chipping in (time and/or money) we can keep Berks County looking like no other place on the planet.



L to R: contractor Jim Groff, engineer Rick Ortega & Trust President Matt Barnhart receiving the PresPA award

Douglass & Keim Restorations

Work has been steadily progressing on both the George Douglass House and the Jacob Keim House. Below is a list of the actions taken at each property since August. A local grants foundation has agreed to double-match any funds donated to either the Keim or Douglass House. To donate visit our web site historicpreservationtrust.org for online giving, mail a check to P.O. Box 245 Douglassville, PA 19518, or call as at 610-385-4762 . Don't forget to specify which project you are supporting!

GEORGE DOUGLASS HOUSE

- 20th-century board-wall removed. Roof-extension hood constructed.
- Brick store-yard repaved using 19th-century paving bricks found in Morlatton.
- Stone paving under the roof edge pitched to shed water away from buildings.
- Stone stoops set at the 1765 kitchen door, the store addition doorway & smoke chamber stair-block.
- Disintegrated vent-well reconstructed.
- Dismantled & reconstructed the gable wall of the later addition to preserve interior wall of the fireplace.
- Charred stones from the chimney-back re-laid in the same places from which they were removed.
- Walled-up former window opening in the upper gable was re-closed and demarcated for interpretive purposes.
- Remnants of the brick arch for an exterior oven, closed-up when the oven was removed, remain exposed on the interior wall as evidence of the early structure.



Keim House w/ 20th-century porch & fencing removed



Reconstructed brick paving at Douglass



Arched cellar doorway revealed at Keim House

JACOB KEIM HOUSE

- 20th-century porch removed, revealing a brick-arched cellar window & an arched cellar doorway.
- Masons reconstructed retaining walls & steps at cellar entry.
- Full-scale model installed of proposed reconstruction of a wooden bulkhead to protect the cellar entry.
- Rusted fence & invasive vegetation removed from the yard between the house & barn.
- New sill fabricated for the balcony doorway to replace the rotted original.
- Balcony door frame consolidated, repaired, and joined to new wooden sill.
- Professional paint analyses begun on Keim House, Douglass House & DeTurk House.

YEAR-END CONTRIBUTIONS

As 2011 comes to a close, please consider making a donation to our general operations fund. Remember all gifts are tax deductible.

Historic Preservation Trust of Berks County
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Christmas Tea 2011

The Trust's annual Christmas Tea will take place **Wednesday, December 7, 2011** at the home of Ms. Nancy Boyer in Boyertown.

The Boyer home, a copy of a Pennsylvania stone farmhouse, was constructed in 1958 in an old orchard planted many years ago. As the trees fell down the Boyers planted new ones. Most people think the house dates back to the 1800s, but four children, a horse, sheep, and many cats and dogs have helped produce the aura of antiquity. The home is filled with family antiques including dining room furniture from Mrs. Boyer's grandparents home in Germantown and cut glass from their wedding in 1890. The bar in the family room was removed from the Boyertown Post Office in the 1940s.

Admission is by pre-paid ticket only. Invitations have been mailed to Trust members. If you did not receive an invitation, or have misplaced it, please telephone us at 610-385-4762.



www.historicpreservationtrust.org