



# Old Morlatton Village MESSENGER

The Historic Preservation Trust of Berks County

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## Sites & Structures Updates

### Keim House

- The frame for the cellar entry “bulkhead” has been installed; the beaded board frame was joined using traditional mortise-and-tenon techniques. The exterior will be painted to match the 18<sup>th</sup>-century “Spanish Brown” color determined to be the earliest paint finish on the house’s exterior by Matt Mosca, the Trust’s Historic Paint Finishes consultant.
- Plans will be developed for reconstruction of the stairway and raised deck at the kitchen entry and for the balcony which projected from the second story “chevron” door.

### George Douglass House and Store

- Work has begun on stabilizing the joists and floor boards of the center hallway of the 1763 house. Rotted joist segments have been cut away and will be replaced with recycled white oak extensions joined to the remaining timber by means of “scarf joints,” an authentic 18<sup>th</sup>-century technique. The



*Cellar cap frame at Keim House*

majority of original floor boards remain in place in the two north parlor spaces still fastened with original wrought-iron flooring nails.

- Grant applications have been submitted to fund repair of the parlor flooring. Additional funding will be required to proceed with other restoration efforts like re-installing interior woodwork in the grand center passage and main staircase.
- The door frame centered in the front “Georgian” elevation of the 1763 house has been repaired with “Dutchmen” timber segments scarf-jointed to the surviving original jambs. The re-installed frame has been primed with a close match to the authentic 18<sup>th</sup>-century “lead white” color.
- Non-period partition walls and plaster-and-lath ceilings have been removed from the “Amity” store addition revealing original joists, summer beams, and plastered wall-spans in the joist-bays. Joists visible in the store space have finely beaded edges along the horizontal and vertical surfaces.
- The doorway between the c.1798-1810 store addition and the adjacent front room of the 1763 house has been re-opened. This doorway had been



*Scarf-jointed floor joists at Douglass House*

converted to a closet and appears to be the original means of communication between the “house” store room and the discrete building attached to the house. This structure was dedicated from its conception exclusively to the store enterprise. According to Douglass and Douglass-Jenkins “Amity” store ledger books, the mercantile venture had been conducted in the house for at least a decade before expansion into the addition spaces fully devoted to storing and selling merchandise.

- Removal of a plaster patch above the second-story door inside the store addition revealed bricks, installed to close the opening that had lodged the timber “outlooker” that supported a pulley for hoisting goods into the storage space. The practical commercial purpose of the un-partitioned second floor warehouse becomes quite evident in its restored condition.

*Continued on page 3*

# From the President



Who first said “Be careful what ye wish for, lest ye get it”? Ben Franklin? Charlie Sheen? (Perhaps I should have said—or at least thought—that when asked to become president of the Trust, but that’s a column for Dear Abby.) The notion applies to the Trust today: Be careful what you wish for....

We have been doing some great things and, under the guidance of the Sites and Structures Committee, we have gotten a great many things accomplished in the past 36 months or so. As you know we have stabilized the Fulp House, have begun restoring Keim to its original appearance, removed inappropriate additions and stabilized Douglass, researched paint colors and formulations, have begun to build a parking lot at Morlatton and we won a statewide award for extensive work done at DeTurk. There is a word that rhymes with and often goes hand-in-hand with “extensive,” replace the T with a P and you get EXPENSIVE.

We are grateful to our board members who have prepared and submitted grants which we have been awarded. We are especially grateful to several benefactors, local foundations, and numerous donors to specific projects who have made this beautiful work possible. There is, however, a fly in the ointment. There are expenses which we have incurred and contributions and matches we have been required to make. We have committed the proceeds from several events to the work being done.

These efforts have left our general fund sorely depleted. These expenditures and the fact that we will not be having a Spring fundraiser lead me to make this plea: If you have not renewed your membership, please do so. If you can add anything to your contribution, please do so. If you have renewed and can make a supplementary contribution, please do so.

Our largest expense other than wood-stone-and-mortar preservation work is the cost of fulfilling our fiduciary duty to keep our buildings insured against flood, fire, and other casualties. This expense *alone* is more than double our total revenue from ALL of our members’ dues! One of our local benefactors has offered to match all 2012 donations dedicated to our insurance fund. Your contribution to this less publicized aspect of our essential mission will be greatly appreciated—AND MATCHED!

Our Fall fundraiser will showcase our buildings which will have new paint in the original colors and will look better than they have in centuries. You will be pleased and proud to be a part of the Trust.

Again, thanks for supporting the preservation and restoration of these magnificent treasures.

## Christmas Tea Recap

Wind, rain and cold couldn’t keep the dedicated members and friends of the Trust from the annual Christmas Tea on December 7, 2011. The beautiful home of Nancy Lang Boyer in Boyertown was full of warmth and cheer as people toured the house or gathered around the bountiful tea table. Kudos to Eleanor Shaner and her committee for the delicious food and to all the volunteers who helped provide a cozy oasis on a rainy day. Particular credit goes to Matt Barnhart, Terry Carpenter, and Brad Kissam who braved the elements all afternoon assisting with the parking. Thank you Ms. Boyer for opening your lovely home and being such a gracious host.

## SAVE THE DATE!

**Saturday, September 29, 2012**

10am to 4pm

2<sup>nd</sup> Annual

## Fall Into Berks History

The Trust will once again open all of its 18<sup>th</sup>-century buildings to visitors.

Watch future newsletters and our web site for details.





# Schuylkill Highlands Mini-grant Awarded to the Trust

The Trust was recently awarded a Schuylkill Highlands mini-grant in the amount of \$20,000 to help finance construction of the planned parking area at Morlatton Village. The grant will be matched by The Shelley Pennsylvania German Heritage Fund. The Schuylkill Highlands encompasses parts of the Pennsylvania Highlands and the Schuylkill River Watershed, including Morlatton Village. The Schuylkill Highlands Grant Program is funded by the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the William Penn Foundation to support the Highlands' goals and vision. Administered by the Schuylkill River Heritage Area, the grant awarded to the Trust recognizes Morlatton's unique position as a historic site adjacent to the Thun Trail. The parking area qualifies as a nature-based tourism project and, when completed, will facilitate use of the site by a wide range of visitors.



*Heavy equipment begins the parking area project*

## Updates...

*Continued from Page 1*



*Mapping the brick paving at DeTurk*

### **DeTurk House Archaeology**

- A methodical “dig” to the original floor level will be conducted by Chapter 21 of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology. The existing brick paving in the lower level kitchen was mapped by tracing brick-joints on clear acrylic sheets.

### **Mouns Jones Herb Garden**

- Restoration of the garden, which had been severely damaged by flooding during the past five years, will begin this spring. Workers will re-install the brick-paved paths and stone edging.

### **Morlatton Village Parking Areas**

- Work began in late March. The project is a cooperative effort among the Trust; Amity Township; Brian Boyer Engineering; and Hopewell Nursery, Excavating & Trucking Co. It is funded mainly by grants from The Shelley Pennsylvania German Heritage Fund and the Schuylkill Highlands and in-kind contributions of personnel, materials transport, and equipment by Amity Township.

### **Surplus Material Sale**

- The Trust will conduct a sale of doors, shutters, and other early architectural items not related to its structures or mission. Those interested in purchasing such material should contact the Trust's office by phone, email, or through the website at [historicpreservationtrust.org](http://historicpreservationtrust.org).

### **Skilled volunteers needed**

- Woodworkers to create post-and-rail fencing for pedestrian paths and safety zones in the Morlatton Village parking facility. The Trust will supply the locust-wood material.
- A “plumber” to cut and re-assemble drain lines, check valves, and outflow elbows at Trust flood-plain sites.

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## Annual Fund

We are incredibly thankful for all donations we receive. However, approximately 73% of money we receive is earmarked by donors to the restoration of specific buildings. This money is allocated directly to the building and restricted from use until the building requires work. However, the Trust has many more expenses associated with maintaining the historic properties, outside of restoration alone. Here is a short sampling of some organization's major annual costs not related to restoration:

Our main income flows are generated through annual membership dues, member contributions, and fundraising events such as our Christmas Tea and *Fall into Berks History* tour. In 2011, membership dues raised \$9,625, event profits \$8,100, and non-restricted contributions were \$11,434, for a total of \$30,690. Just the small sampling of expenses above is \$37,305, which exceeds these main funding methods. Annual shortfalls are covered through money retained from some of our better years where bequests may have been received.

Insurance Policies (Flood, hazard, general)	\$21,050
Electricity	\$2,100
Fuel Oil	\$3,500
Accounting Fees	\$3,420
Pest Control (wood borers):	\$1,675
Phone/Internet/Website Maintenance	\$1,300

So next time you consider donating to the Trust, please remember the general fund. We can't operate for long without it.

**We now also accept donations online through PayPal:**  
<http://www.historicpreservationtrust.org/support-us/make-donation/>

[www.historicpreservationtrust.org](http://www.historicpreservationtrust.org)