



Old Morlatton Village MESSENGER

The Historic Preservation Trust of Berks County

Volume XV

Number 2

August 2007

OPEN VILLAGE



On Sunday, August 12, Trust members and the public are invited to Old

Morlatton Village to attend the first in a series of free monthly events to be conducted throughout the year as weather permits. The program, "An Afternoon of 18th Century Music", will be presented at the White Horse Inn and will feature music by Dr. Helen May on the harpsichord, Michele Rohrbach playing the harp, and cellist Noelle Rohrbach.

The program will begin at 2 pm and last for approximately 45 minutes. Following the concert there will be refreshments and the musicians will be available to answer questions.

The Mouns Jones House and the Bridge Keeper's House will also be open with costumed docents to provide information.

Daruis Puff, Lenni Lenape descendant, will present a program on Sunday, September 9, discussing Native American life and lore.

2007-2008 BOARD MEMBERS

At the annual meeting held at the White Horse Inn on June 6, 2007 the following officers were elected:

President	John Hibschan
Vice President	Matthew Barnhart
Treasurer	Betsy Ward
Secretary	Linda Hughes
Financial Secretary	Susan Yoder
Membership	Laura Schmale



The following are board members were elected to serve until June 2010:

Linda Hughes	Philip Pendleton
Laura Schmale	Eleanor Shaner
Susan Miller-Speros	Susan Yoder
*Marjorie Yocum	*Donna Carpenter

*Margie Yocum, one of two new board members, has lived in Berks County all her life. She was born and raised in Amityville. In addition to being the mother of two grown children, Margie works for Merritts Antiques, buying, restoring and selling antique dolls. She has been a vendor at the Mouns Jones Fair for 30 years selling watercolors of local landmarks. She currently lives in Douglassville with her husband Jim.

*Donna Carpenter is also new to the board. She is a direct descendant of Johannes Keim and Katarina DeTurk and has taught high school for 32 years. She has a BS in Family and Consumer Sciences and a M.Ed in Technology Integration for Teachers. Donna has lived in the area all her life and enjoys gardening, sewing, and crafting. She and Terry, her husband of 40 years, are avid sailors and fishermen and have sailed from Maine to Florida. They have one son and three grandchildren.

Did You Know? The land surrounding the Mouns Jones House was a location of Indian encampments before and after the settlement of the site by Mouns Jones. He acted as an interpreter and negotiator with the Indians. In 1728 there was a major conclave between Indian tribes and white settlers aiming to settle differences that had led to an outbreak of violence. Governor Gorden of Pennsylvania participated in the meeting to negotiate peace terms.

NEW SCHUYLKILL RIVER HERITAGE GRANT TO BEGIN THIS FALL

The Trust has received a Special Purpose Study Grant to undertake a transition from its traditional focus on preserving buildings to embracing the Schuylkill River Heritage Area goals of resource conservation, interpretation, education, recreation, community revitalization, and heritage tourism. Since its founding the Trust has "saved" the four existing buildings that formed the core of the original Swedish settlement site. Formerly in states of ruin or dilapidation, they have all been stabilized and partially restored. Further restoration and resource conservation will continue. This grant will enable the Trust to use Morlatton Village as a Heritage Site that depicts 18th century history.

The Special Purpose Study will develop a master plan for interpreting historic Morlatton including guidelines and lesson plans for a series of living history programs and demonstrations that illustrate 18th century life.

Consultants will be hired to research, collect and organize historical information and develop an interpretive plan for the site, the individual buildings, and the regional context. This plan can include exhibits, guided tours, signage, slide shows, videos and hands-on activities. Interpretive programs will be proposed for each of the buildings and for several periods through history

from the initial settlement to the later village expansion into Douglassville.

Living History consultants will be hired to develop specific living history programs, to prepare guidelines and lesson plans, and to train volunteers to portray life in the 18th century at Morlatton Village.

The 1716 Mouns Jones House represents the first generation of Swedish settlers who lived among the native Leni Lenape and used the resources of the Schuylkill River and surrounding forests until land could be cleared and seeds could be planted.

After a wagon road was built connecting Berks County with Philadelphia, the White Horse became an early tavern and meeting place. It had rooms for travelers, stabling for horses, and hearty food and drink. When tavern keeper and merchant George Douglass bought the White Horse he constructed his important Georgian mansion nearby as he depended on the Old Philadelphia Pike for his shipping enterprises that supplied the city with iron industry goods from Berks County.

All that is learned about this place and these buildings must be recorded and interpreted so their important stories are not lost and forgotten.

MOUNS JONES COUNTRY FAIR SEPTEMBER 29, 2007

At last the houses are clean, the green is clear and from 10 am to 4 pm the Mouns Jones Fair will once again enliven Morlatton Village. A light lunch will be served next to the Bridge Keeper's House, the Living Historians will be in the Mouns Jones House and the green will be alive with vendors. Dessert, colonial music and dancing will be featured at the White Horse Inn.

Volunteers are needed to help the day before and the day of the Fair. If you can help set up on Friday or help Saturday at the food stand, bake table, quilt raffle or sell jams and jellies, **PLEASE** call the Trust office (610-385-4762).

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION

The first volunteer orientation class conducted by Peggy Gingrich was held July 8. The class consisted of people who have helped at the Fair or Christmas Tea but lacked historical knowledge about the village. **Docents are needed for the monthly open village program.** If you are interested please call the Trust office (610-385-4762) and leave a message for Peggy and she will arrange a convenient time and date.

Would you like to learn something new and have fun at the same time? Join the Amity Colonial Dancers who meet on Thursday evenings from 6-8 at the White Horse Inn. Interested? Call the Trust office or Peggy Gingrich (610-404-7463)

Schuylkill River Sojourn: June 2-8 2007

The Schuylkill River Sojourn is a 110 mile guided canoe or kayak trip on the Schuylkill River sponsored by the Schuylkill River Greenway Association. Beginning in Schuylkill Haven and ending in Philadelphia Sojourn participants register for as many days as they can or for the entire trip. Overnight camping accommodations and lunch stops are arranged at parks and heritage sites that provide educational programs or entertainment. For the past several years Morlatton Village has welcomed the sojourners as a lunch stop between Gibraltar and Pottstown.

On Tuesday, June 5th, a beautiful sunny day, volunteers from the Historic Preservation Trust and Union Township United welcomed a happy group of river travelers. They disembarked along the shore just below the Thun Trail Bridge over the river and approached Morlatton Village on a trail through the woods. Their first stops were Mouns Jones and Bridge Keeper's houses shown by the Trust's Living Historians. This was followed by a delicious buffet luncheon served by our Union Township neighbors and enjoyed under the trees

near the river. For dessert our guests strolled to the White Horse Inn for some Italian Ice and a slide program about the Flood of June 28, 2006. Featured were photos taken by Tom Keim, Trust board member, showing views of rushing water swirling from the Douglass House to River Bridge Road. Residents living along Old Philadelphia Pike had to be evacuated. The sojourners were told that cleanup and replacement losses at Old Morlatton resulted in the shutdown of all Trust activities for almost a year. It made them grateful for clear skies and a gentle current as they resumed their journey downstream.



Keim Family Reunion

Earlier this year members of the Keim Family decided to organize a family reunion to celebrate the 300th anniversary of the Keim family in America. They contacted the Trust about using the Jacob Keim Farmstead in Pike Township, one of the Trust's most significant historic landmarks. The Trust was eager to participate and is now busy preparing the property for this auspicious gathering of family members from near and far.

The date of the reunion is October 13-14, 2007. It will be a weekend of activities for adults and kids to celebrate our ancestors pioneering heritage.

Johannes Keim was a native of Speir, Germany, and was born about 1675. Like many well to do residents of this Rhine region of Germany, the French invasion of the Palatinate (1688-1697) financially ruined him. He visited the New World on a prospecting tour in 1698. Coming to this section of Penn's almost impenetrable woods, he staked off a claim in the Oley Valley near the headwaters of the Manatawny Creek. He returned to the fatherland, wooed, won, and married Katarina DeTurk and with her returned to America. There in 1706 as one of the first white settlers in the region, he erected a crude log cabin. The current house was built in 1753. Johannes dies in 1758 and presumably is buried in a family plot on the property.

If you have forgotten to pay your 2007 dues, please do so as soon as possible. Your support is vital to the work of the Trust.