

Solebury Chronicle



A newsletter of the Solebury Township Historical Society

Society Honors Citizens

Each year the Society recognizes a current and past member of the Solebury community with its Honored Citizens of Solebury Award. Here are the Honored Citizens for 2011 who were recognized at the New Year's Brunch on January 1, 2012.

Paul Lanctot

Paul Lanctot graduated in 1963 as a VDM from the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine. After a few years "doctoring" in Vermont and Massachusetts, he moved back to PA and started work at the Delaware Valley Animal Hospital.

He moved to Solbury in 1969 and established the first small animal practice in the area. He also worked as a Deputy Waterways Patrolman in the early 1970's, patrolling the river for litterers and improperly registered boaters. However, he gave that up as he hated to ruin a family's weekend by arresting them because their boat wasn't registered. In addition he drove emergency trucks for the Eagle Fire Department for 23 years.

For years Paul worked with the Bucks County SPCA, making available his surgical equipment, medicines and expertise. He also volunteered with AARK, Mercer County Wildlife Center and Washington Crossing Nature Center, assisting with rehabbing animals to be returned to the wild. One of his outstanding achievements was the development of a specialized mask for anesthetizing birds. This mask allowed him to rehab many of our avian friends that otherwise would not have survived their injuries.

Paul sold his practice after 32 years and headed off to retirement. But he didn't get very far. He can still be found helping out at the SPCA or at one of the three local practices where he consults.



Selma Burke

When she was only five years old, a little girl would walk along the river bank in North Carolina watching over her parents herd of dairy cows. But often, she would kneel on the bank and mold tiny little figures out of the slippery red clay. So began the career of one of the greatest sculptors of our time, Selma Burke.

Today most every American is familiar with her work for in 1943 she sculpted the head of Franklin Roosevelt that was a model for the profile on the Roosevelt dime.

A graduate of Winston Salem University, she also studied art in Paris and Vienna. She earned a Masters of Fine Art from Columbia University, a PhD from Livingston College in North Carolina and seven honorary doctorates. Over her long life (1900-1995), she was honored with many prestigious awards.

In 1947 she bought a small house in Solebury where she lived for 40 years. One summer five of her students from Solebury School rebuilt a barn on her property to give her more room to work.

Committed to teaching art to others, she established the Selma Burke Art School in New York City and the Selma Burke Art Center in Pittsburgh.

At the age of 80, Burke produced her last monumental work, a statue of Martin Luther King, Jr. that graces Marshall Park in Charlotte, North Carolina.

In 1991 she donated a sculpture entitled *Peace* to the Central Bucks Chamber of Commerce to honor her friend Barbara Howard. She founded the annual Bucks County Sculpture Show in 1977, which continues to this day.



Presidents Message

Hello members,

The STHS Board was invited to attend the New Hope/Solebury Facilities Committee meeting on January 31, 2012. The purpose of this meeting was to evaluate our request for ownership of the one-room schoolhouse. We had an hour discussion with the committee, and the committee made a motion to approve our request. It was unanimous, much to our delight. The proposal was formally moved to the District School Board members for consideration. On Monday, February 6, we attended the School Board meeting at which the School Board unanimously approved forwarding our documentation to their solicitor. They requested that the solicitor write an Agreement of Sale for consideration. Once the Agreement is approved the School Board will take a final vote on deeding us the schoolhouse. We will keep you informed of events as they unfold. We can't thank you enough for all the support you have given us.

Meanwhile, we have also been very busy with other priorities. We have two new Board members this year and to our delight, they have jumped right in and started their projects with no hesitation. Robert McEwan accepted the position of Education Chair. He has been working with Dr. Elliott Lewis, Assistant to the Superintendent for Curriculum, to plan student programs at the schoolhouse. Robert is also working with New Hope-Solebury and Solebury School to enable our scholarship program to be more effective and relevant. Working with the school personnel is allowing us to be much more involved with the students, the selection process and the awards ceremony.

Jim Brown accepted the Oral History Chair position and is going to establish and develop a program that will help us begin to make use of these invaluable resources. We have completed several oral histories, but it is very laborious to transcribe them. Jim is purchasing software that will convert the spoken word into a document. We will have a catalogue system that will enable interested parties to determine which oral history has material relevant to their needs. Oral histories are one of our top priorities as we feel it is imperative that we gather as many as possible, as quickly as possible. It is a wonderful way to preserve the past and the stories are amazingly interesting and emotional.

We are currently planning our annual spring Open House to be held April 22nd. This will be very enjoyable as it will be the first in "OUR" schoolhouse. Robert is reinstating our "Educational Walks," with the help of Elaine Crooks. I know many of you missed the walks last year and we are delighted to be able to tell you there will be a spring and a fall walk this year.

Beth Carrick is planning a mini lecture series on genealogy research in conjunction with the Free Library of New Hope. Details will follow.

Rayna Polsky, our Digital Media Chair, has begun working on updating our web-site and Facebook pages. She is going to help us digitize our records, photos, meeting minutes, etc. It is very exciting and we are hoping you will like the final results.

Elaine Crooks and I were delighted to be invited to participate in the newly formed Community Engagement Committee enacted by Amanda Elefante and the NH/SSD to determine ways to better engage students with available community resources.

As you can see, we are looking forward to a very exciting year and hope you will come along with us.

Donneta Crane, President



Solebury Township Historical Society
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www.soleburyhistory.org

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Sally Jagoe
Mary Jackson Powell
Franca Warden

Wooden plaque created to recognize our Honored Citizens

Each year since 2002 the Society has recognized Solebury residents, past and present, who have contributed significantly to the community. Now the names of these citizens are listed on a newly created plaque that hangs in the schoolhouse for all to see.

The walnut came from **Tuckamony Farm** in Solebury. Then member **Ian McNeill** crafted it into a stunning free-form plaque. He also carved and gold-leafed the header. To complete the project **Steve Crane** attached individual brass plates with the names of the Honored Citizens. Many thanks to all involved with this project.

When you come to our Open House this April you can see the plaque close-up.



Board member Robert McEwan holds the plaque at the New Year's Brunch.

Board Update

Two new board members were elected at our Annual Meeting:

Jim Brown was born in Roaring Spring, a small town in central Pennsylvania. He graduated from West Point in 1964, and took his commission in the Air Force. After receiving a MS in Electrical Engineering from Cal Tech in Pasadena, CA, he spent 19 years building, buying and flying satellites. Retiring from the Air Force he then spent 17 years managing programs, businesses and Engineering departments for GE Aerospace (purchased by Lockheed Martin in 1990's). In 2002 Jim completed work on a Masters in American History from the University of Pennsylvania.

Jim and his wife Rhea have lived in Solebury Township since 1992. They have two grown daughters, one living in Exton PA, and one in Silver Spring, MD

Jim has served on the boards of the Gilda's Club, a Cancer support organization; Solebury Township Historical Society (STHS); and NOVA, a Lockheed Martin volunteer organization. He still serves on the NOVA board representing retirees, and has returned to the STHS to head the oral history effort which dovetails nicely with his intense interest in American History.

Robert McEwan grew up in New Jersey and Lancaster, Pa. After graduating from the Lawrenceville School, his family moved to California and he matriculated at University of California, Santa Barbara.

His earliest introduction to New Hope, in the early '60s, was via a school roommate who invited him to his home for weekends, but it was not until 1995, when Robert and his family returned from a business assignment in Japan, that they settled in Solebury. His son was passionate about horses and they moved here primarily for Solebury School and local horseback riding opportunities.

Now retired, Robert worked for a Swiss multi-national company in various sales, marketing and management positions.

His general interest in history, reading, and Solebury lead him to join the Board when asked. "It is a good place to keep learning, turn a hand to community support and be involved with good people," said Robert.



Jim Brown and Robert McEwan

Unfortunately we had to say farewell to two board members. **Sally Jagoe** leaves after serving on the board for more than 10 years, 5 of those as president. Sally was instrumental in establishing several educational programs as well as creating the Solebury Museum. Luckily for us she has agreed to continue as a Task Leader for the Museum and will continue to lead the education program for the social studies teachers from New Hope Solebury High and Middle Schools.

Linda Metcalf served just one year on the board, but her energy and organizational skills will help guide the Society for many years. Linda chaired the Development Committee and in that capacity was responsible for overseeing our events. She also served on the House Plaque Committee.

Many thanks to these dedicated community members for their service.

SPECIAL NOTE

We are in need of a Development Chair to oversee events and fund raising activities. For more information please call or email STHS.

Do You Know?



Surprisingly no one identified this building and location from our last newsletter. It is the old ice house at the Thompson- Neely House. In Colonial times, ice was likely cut from the river in winter and stored in this below-ground level structure. The cool temperature would keep ice well into the summer.

Brian R. Keyes

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Celebrating the New Year in Solebury

The 11th annual New Year's Brunch was once again a rousing success. Some 150 of our friends and neighbors from Solebury enjoyed a delicious brunch in the lovely setting of the Holly Hedge Estates. "It just wouldn't be a new year without this event," was one comment.

Attendees had the opportunity to purchase raffle tickets for a chance to win one of 26 raffle items donated by local businesses as well as to bid on five wonderful silent auction items. Proceeds from the raffle and auction help make up the difference between the ticket price and the actual cost to the Society. Next time you encounter one of the donors, please thank them for their support.

And plan now to join us on January 1, 2013!



Bill MacDowell and Jonathan Downs bid on Silent Auction items.



A guest looks over the three original paintings donated for the Silent Auction.



Our friends and neighbors enjoy a delicious brunch.



Debbie & Edna White accept the Honored Citizen's award on behalf of Selma Burke from Elaine Crooks.



Donneta Crane presents the Honored Citizen's award to Paul Lanctot.



All enjoyed the musical talent of Bob Egan seen here with Judy Zipkin.

Brunch Sponsors

Addison Wolfe Real Estate
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Jonathan & Diane Downs

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Pearl Mintzer
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| Café Europa | New Hope Winery |
| Carversville Inn | Peddler's Village |
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| C'est La Vie | Pierre's Chocolates |
| Duck Soup | Sarah's Laundramutt |
| Eagle Diner | Shady Ladies |
| Four Seasons Car Wash | Skin Smart |
| Karla's | Tuckamony Farm |
| Lexington House | Villaggio |
| Marc Elliot at ME Salon | Waterlilies |
| Marsha Brown's | Zoubi |

Bucks County SPCA celebrates 100 years

The first Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA) was organized in England in 1824, primarily to prevent the abuse of carriage horses in the days before automobiles. Horses were driven through freezing cold winters and stiflingly hot summers, often with little food, water or rest. The carriage drivers were interested only in making as much money as possible, and would beat the horses if they refused to or were unable to pull the carriages.

The SPCA helped to get laws passed that regulated the carriage-horse business. With this success, the Society expanded to include dogs and other animals in its fight against cruelty.

In 1866, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) was founded by an affluent New Yorker named Henry Bergh in New York City. Ten days later, as the head of North America's first humane organization, Bergh effectively lobbied the New York State Legislature to pass the nation's first anti-cruelty statute. This law allowed the ASPCA to investigate complaints of animal cruelty and make arrests. In 1867, the ASPCA established and operated the nation's first ambulance for horses. There are now SPCAs and other humane organizations all over the U.S., and indeed, all over the world.

In 1912 the Bucks County SPCA (BCSPCA) was founded by L. Knickerbacker Davis of Doylestown. Mr. Davis served as an agent for the BCSPCA for more than 60 years. He died in 1974.

The BCSPCA is an agency dedicated to enforcing animal cruelty laws. Although following much of the ASPCA model, the BCSPCA was established as an independent organization and remains so today. It is not a branch or chapter of the ASPCA or of any other animal welfare organization, nor is it a County-run agency. The BCSPCA built its facility in Solebury in the early 1930s, expanding its work to include the sheltering and placement of animals. The organization quickly outgrew its building, so the facility was doubled in size in 1958. Other expansions followed throughout the years, and a second BCSPCA shelter was opened this February in Upper Bucks.

Today the BCSPCA cares for approximately 4,000 animals each year. The organization employs all available means to prevent and alleviate the suffering of animals including the enforcement and improvement of the state's anti-cruelty laws, the education of the community about animal welfare issues, and the sheltering and humane care of stray and unwanted animals. The BCSPCA accepts any domestic animal at no cost to municipalities or individuals, and its work in service to the animals and people of the community is supported by donations rather than by tax dollars.

The Solebury Township Historical Society is celebrating the 100th anniversary of the BCSPCA with an exhibit at the Solebury Museum. So stop in to enjoy this exhibit or plan to attend our special event on March 25 at the Township Building lobby from 2 to 4 p.m. with refreshments and speakers from the BCSPCA.



It's a small world

In today's world where more and more young people go out of state to college and end up living far from their roots, it should not be surprising that many of them eventually become interested in where they came from and who their ancestors were. As a result, our Solebury Township Historical Society has been the recipient of more and more requests from far away places for any information we can supply about their forebears.

One of our first such requests came from a lady in Oregon who had done considerable research on the Hough Family and asked if we had anything more to add to it. A few months later, a gentleman from Florida sent an E-mail asking about the same family! He will be coming up to Solebury sometime this summer to take a look at our rather extensive file on the Houghs (pronounced Huff both in Oregon and Florida).

Then there was a gentleman from Maryland who was hoping that we could identify some photos he had of houses where his family lived 200 years ago. He wanted us to tell him if they still existed and if so what the present addresses are.

By far our most exciting request, at least from a distance viewpoint, was from a lady who lives in AUSTRALIA. She is descended from Samuel Marion Walker who was born in 1827 in Bridge Point (now called Edison just south of Doylestown) but who had ties to Solebury. He emigrated to Australia in 1856. She, in turn, E-mailed my response to a friend of hers who also lives in Australia and is also looking for any information on the same Mr. Walker. They are both descended from Samuel's sons. She, lady #2, is planning to visit the area this spring. What fun it will be showing her around our beautiful and VERY historic area.

So, if any of you reading this can shed light on these families, I would greatly appreciate it. You are all ad hoc members of the Archives Committee, aren't you? Just drop me an E-mail addressed to soleburyhistory@verizon.net.

Joan S. Fitting, Archivist

Accepting Nominations for Honored Citizens of Solebury

We encourage you to nominate past or current residents.
Call or email for a nomination form.

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A Story of a Boy

Excerpted from a paper read by Eastburn Reeder to the students of the Solebury Friends' school (now the caretaker's house), published in the Daily Intelligencer in 1897.

I will tell a story of a boy, or rather a story of two boys. Almost every boy who goes to school, has his chum. This must be natural among boys, or so many of them would not do so. I had my chum. He was one year older than I. He was a boy very peculiar in disposition, and seemed to have the power of moulding me to his will. Everything he said or did, to my mind, was exactly right. Our desks and seats were side by side. This is not only for one term of the school, but it lasted as long as we both attended this school. To secure this end on the last day of a term of school we would each of us leave a book in our desks, in order to secure possession of them for the next term. In these books he taught me to write these lines—

“Steal not this book my honest friend,
For fear the gallows will be your end.”

These lines were signed by our respective names and were supposed to be potent against depredations. We had full faith in this, and our books were never stolen. I have said that my chum had a peculiar disposition. He was inclined to be a rover—he was going to be a sailor, to be a captain of a ship. He said I should be a farmer and have a large plantation. I was to produce articles for him to carry in his ship to other countries of the world. Every day as we studied our geography together afforded him an excellent opportunity to mature his plans. He located my plantation on the Atlantic coast somewhere between Charleston and Savannah. With a stroke of pen and ink he converted a promontory or cape to an island.

This is necessary, he said, so that he could approach my plantation from every side. I was to raise rice and cotton for him to export. To enable me to do this it would be necessary for me to have large numbers of slaves, which he would go to Africa for and capture and bring to me. I will say just here, that our teacher was his aunt, and boarded in his father's family. She was a very strong anti-slavery woman, and often spoke to us of the sinfulness of slavery and the wrongs of the poor slaves. Whether it was to be in opposition to the views of his aunt and teacher, that he decided to make a slave holder of me, I never knew. I was to be married, he said, and have a family, but he was to be a sea captain, and they never married or had families. His stories of adventure were so captivating that I believed everything he told me. As I was to marry and live on a plantation and have a family, I began to think about a wife early in life. Every day, instead of studying our lessons in geography, he would say to me “Let us transact business.” That is to say, he would buy up what I had produced for export, and bring back to me any product of the earth that I might desire. This gave us knowledge of geography, in a measure, but it did not give us very often much knowledge of the lesson for the day. Very frequently were the orders given to us by the teacher, “Boys, you must get this lesson over after school.” Then we would put ourselves down to work and soon master the lesson.

I recollect one day in particular as we opened our atlas, my chum told me that he had on board for me a large number of very valuable Arabian horses, fresh from the desert, that he had, with great difficulty, secured for me. He said his ship was now in sight of land, and would soon be in the harbor. He then put up both hands to his mouth to blow the trumpet announcing the arrival of his vessel. He blew louder than he know, for the noise of the blast attracted the attention of the teacher and the entire school. We were ordered to the teacher's desk at once. Which of us had made that noise? Neither of us would

tell. Then both must be punished, and that severely. The teacher had a small chestnut sprout in her desk, from which the bark had been peeled, and it had become very dry and brittle. My chum held out his hand to receive the punishment first, and after receiving a few sharp cuts, he cried out lustily, or pretended to do so, and was sent to his seat with his face deeply buried in his hands upon the top of his desk. It was my turn next, and as I did not cry, for in boy parlance, “it didn't hurt a bit,” the teacher naturally looked to see why the punishment had not the same effect on me. Her eyes were small, black and fiery, and her expression almost convulsed me with laughter. The blows upon my hand were renewed with redoubled force. At every blow, two or three inches of the switch flew off the end, and it was speedily used up. The boy was still rebellious and defiant. The teacher was too conscientious to use a ruler, but something more must be done.

Accordingly, I was led by the shoulder over to the girls' side of the schoolroom, where “room was made” for me on the bench between two of the oldest and largest girls in the school. I suppose they were 18 or 20 years of age. They appeared to me then as mountains of flesh, both being large and fat. I was not placed opposite to a window where I could look out, and had nothing but white wall to gaze upon. I could not even see the girl on the other side of the two between whom I was placed. I could not see over or around them, and was almost buried from sight. Had I been placed between two other girls, whom I could name, and nearer my own age, I should have liked it far better. I was compelled to remain there until school closed for the day. When the school was dismissed I was told to remain. The teacher busied herself with mending our goose quill pens, and setting the copies for the next day, until all the scholars had time to reach their homes. I wondered what was to be done with me next. The teacher told me that she had made up her mind to write a note and send it by me to my parents, telling them to keep me home from the school. I promptly told her she could send no such note home by me. Then she would send it by my sister, who would not go home without her brother. I said my sister should not take the note either. I do not know whether it was the tears of my sister, or what it was, but the teacher all at once took a sudden change. She began to talk to me. She told me what a great interest she had felt in me, and what pains she had taken, and how hard she had tried to do her duty by me. And as she talked on in this strain, her tears began to flow as rapidly as her words. This overcame me entirely. I could stand punishment, and scolding, but entreaties and tears I could not stand. I yielded, and promised obedience for the future. The note home was neither written nor sent.

As I look back upon this little incident after an interval of sixty years, I can but look upon it as a victory for us both. It was a victory for the teacher, most certainly, for the boy not only promised, but gave obedience. It was a victory for the boy over himself, and it was not necessary to punish him afterward, and he continued to go to that teacher for several summers. She was a faithful, conscientious teacher, and tried hard to do her duty by us. She afterward removed from Solebury to Philadelphia, where she died many years ago, and was buried in Friends' burial ground at Fair Hill. I intend some day to visit her grave as a deserving tribute to her memory.

Our thanks to member Jesse Crooks for uncovering this precious document.

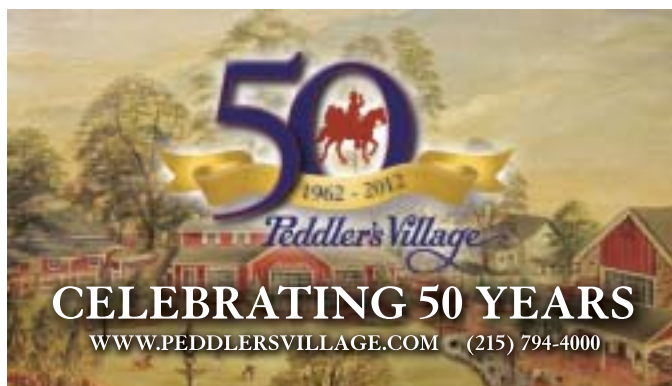
With Gratitude . . .

Members are the backbone of our organization. We are deeply appreciative of the support of the residents listed below who have renewed their membership or joined the Society since the last newsletter.

Monique Gaumont Atkin
 Peter Augenblick
 Marianne Bender
 David Benner
 Franta Broulik
 James D. & Rhea Brown
 Richard Carlson
 Mrs. M. Curtis Chianese
 Joe Chiesa
 Carol Church & Gary Wilmore
 Tim & Millena Coffey
 Frank & Patty Cosner
 R. Scott Creighton
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 Dr. Gerhard & Barbara Raabe
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 Brenda Redfield
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 Roger & Ginny Riedley
 Will Rivinus & Dickie Ann Boal
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 Patsy Tinsman & Dick Wallace
 Franca C. Warden
 Curt Wary
 Elaine Whitman
 Don Wilson
 Patricia Witlicki
 Ted & Charlotte Zanidakis
 Edward Zekus

Every effort has been made to publish a complete and accurate list of memberships received since the last newsletter (July 2011) and up to about January 31, 2012. We regret if there are any omissions.



Many Thanks . . .

The generosity of so many folks help the Society throughout the year. We greatly appreciate the support of our friends and neighbors:

New Year's Brunch

Giant Food Store for donating the table centerpieces.

First National Bank & Trust Company of Newtown for allowing us to display the three paintings for auction.

Marne Dieterich for helping set up

Auction and Raffle donors (see p. 4)

Sponsors (see pg. 4)

Donneta Crane and Beth Carrick for co-chairing

Brian Keyes for legal work.

Charles & Pearl Mintzer for hosting the annual picnic in September.

Honored Citizens Plaque

Ian McNeil for creating the beautiful free-form plaque and carving/gold leafing the header.

Steve Crane for meticulously affixing name plates.

Malcolm Crooks for donating seasoned walnut from Tuckamony Farm.

The **advertisers** in the *Solebury Chronicle* who help offset the cost of producing the newsletter. These are local businesses, and we urge your patronage.

(Call 215-297-5091 or email soleburyhistory@verizon.net to place your ad in the next *Solebury Chronicle*.)



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Solebury Township Historical Society
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Do You Know?

Upcoming Events

BCSPCA Display at the Solebury Museum

Sunday, March 25, 2012: 2 - 4 p.m.
Solebury Township Building lobby

Annual Open House:

Sunday, April 22, 2012: 1 - 4 p.m.
Solebury Schoolhouse
3010 N. Sungan Road

History Walk:

Saturday, May 12, 2012: 9-11 a.m.
Mills of New Hope, Mechanics Street Walk

STHS members will receive invitations to all events.



Do you what and where this is in Solebury Township?

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soleburyhistory@verizon.net. You may win a prize!*