

Solebury Chronicle



A newsletter of the Solebury Township Historical Society

Citizens Honored

The Solebury Township Historical Society honored two citizens for their contributions to the Solebury community.

The Solebury Township Historical Society was formed in 1981. However, due to founder Georges Duval's passing, for a decade the archives of the Society languished in the attic of the Township offices. They were rescued by John Touhey. His efforts to preserve the records of our history evolved into what is now our present Solebury Historical Society.

In 1998 John called a meeting for some Solebury residents. A brief history of the original Historical Society was related followed by an explanation of the hopes and plans for a revitalized society. It was received with a great deal of enthusiasm and soon a new Board was formed with John Touhey as president. John was president for 5 years.

In 2002 John chaired the 300th Anniversary celebration of Solebury Township which included a variety of events.

He served on Solebury Township's Historic Architecture Review Board for 11 years, 10 of those as chairman.

Over the succeeding years, John has continued to be a valued and supportive member of the society. He has produced 2 fund-raising dinners raising more than \$30,000 for the Society.



STHS president Donneta Crane presents the Honored Citizen of Solebury award to John Touhey



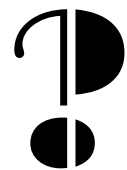
Jacqui Griffith shows off the plaque naming her as an Honored Citizen of Solebury

In a quiet yet efficient manner, Jacqui Griffith has devoted years to local organizations and causes. Here are a few of her accomplishments: Chair of the New Hope Solebury Library; co-chair of the Trinity House Tour, VP of Phillips Mill Community Assn., member of the board and development committee of Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, also chairing their annual Gala. She has served on the Trinity Church Vestry, chaired the Phillips Mill Art Show, and volunteered for the SPCA Capital Campaign, Library Gala and Hepatitis B Foundation Gala.

Jacqui epitomizes volunteerism in the community and is an inspiration to all of us.

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History Quiz

In years past, when a school held Field Day, what did that entail?

Answer on page 5

Presidents Message

Hello members.

Things have certainly been cold enough around here lately, haven't they? But for the Society, it has been a hot fall and winter. The renovations to the schoolhouse have been completed (see article page 3). Thanks to the generosity of the community, \$33,000 has been raised toward the \$50,000 renovation project.

In September our "help restore the schoolhouse" dinner raised approximately \$14,000. Many thanks to Melody Hunt who chaired the event and John Touhey, the coordinator who pulled it all together for us. If you missed this sold-out event, you missed an amazing evening. Our gracious hosts and hostesses pulled out all the stops making their already lovely homes even more special. Ian Knauer, our chef for the evening, created a delicious meal that attendees talked about for days afterward. With guests being assigned randomly to their destination homes, it was an opportunity to meet many new people and catch up with old friends; it was truly a magical night.

In October Jesse Crooks led us on another tour of the Solebury Friends Cemetery. This tour covered different gravesite residents and their history. Once again it was a big success. Jesse relays the most interesting stories and tidbits of information.

In November we were delighted to acquire three new board members to help keep the Society moving forward. Information about each of them is in the newsletter so I will only briefly introduce them. Stephanie Garomon has accepted the position of Secretary, Marnie Newman-Leasure will guide our Education goals and Charlotte Zanidakis will help with grants and fundraising. We are really looking forward to this year with our returning and new board members.

Finally, our New Year's Brunch was a huge success with almost 150 attendees. Holly Hedge was beautiful and their staff, as always, was so efficient and attentive. It is a joy to work with them. Many thanks to Joe Lucarro and his staff. The silent auction and raffle items were better than ever, the food delicious, and Bob Egan always makes the event above average. We recognized two Honored Citizens this year, Jacqui Griffith for the extraordinary amount of volunteerism she does for the community and John Touhey for his tenacity and perseverance in restoring our Historical Society after it had been dormant for ten years and leading the 300th anniversary celebration of Solebury. We are so lucky to have such dedicated and involved people in our lives.

We have been working for several months on a project to be able to offer discounts at several local businesses and restaurants and are proud to announce a new "member benefits program" starting in 2014. See article for details.

We could use some help with membership and archives, so please call me at 215 589-3681 or Elaine Crooks at 215-534-7200 if you have an interest in becoming involved in these or other aspects of the Historical Society.

Happy New Year to all,

Donneta K Crane



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2014 Board of Directors

Donneta Crane, *President*
Robert McEwen, *Vice President*
Elaine Crooks, *Treasurer*
Stephanie Garomon, *Secretary*
Gwen Davis, *Research*
Joan Fitting, *Archives*
Melody Hunt, *Development*
Linda Kenyon, *Events*
Margaret Newman, *Education*
Charlotte Zanidakis, *Grants*

Board emeritus

Sally Jagoe
Franca Warden

New benefits to Membership

Thanks to the generosity of some local businesses, the Society is able to offer discounts for our current members. When you renew for 2014 you will receive a membership card to use to obtain these benefits:

- 10% off meals at the Black Bass Hotel on Monday through Thursday.
- 10% off dinners at The Inn at Phillips Mill on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.
- 10% off dinners at the Centre Bridge Inn on any day the restaurant is open.
- 10% discount at the New Hope Winery.
- 5% discount at Chico's, Peddler's Village, on top of all other discounts.



Do You Know?

This is a photo from 1935 of unpaved Old York Road (Rte. 202) looking north from what is now the entrance to Logan Square, with the Cartwheel being the only building in site.

Schoolhouse renovation update

We are please to report we have just passed all the building and electrical inspections! While a number of small painting details have to wait for spring (it is 7 degrees as I write this) we have completed a good list of updates to our schoolhouse.

It is what you do not see that counts.....

At our New Year's Brunch John Touhey encouraged us take care of the Schoolhouse as an important part of Solebury's heritage. There are no other 1755 Schoolhouses in our township, and hardly any in Bucks County, still serving the public as a center for education and history. We know the following list of improvements go a long way to preserving this living history site.

- A new roof and gutters not only look great but have reversed the problem of water flooding into the basement each time it rains. Our basement, which also sports a new door and steps, is quite dry, and we can now use this space as a needed storage area.
- A new, buried electric line brings our power up to 200 AMP, up from 100 AMP and gives us ample room to grow.
- The phone, computer and power lines have all been removed from overhead where they marred the buildings appearance in the front and on the Sugan Road side. Burying the wires allowed us to eliminate 6 lines of which only two were working (history we do not need!). In addition we removed air-conditioning pipes from the Sugan Road building wall which returns us to a simple, clean and more original facade.
- The windows, which paradoxically we did see, were a major issue. These have been renewed by preserving all the old frames, moulding and sashes. We fixed the sash cords and weights so the lower sash is no longer frozen by decades of paint. Sunlight, shining through 190 new panes of 1800s style glass, now brightens the schoolhouse interior. The difference is impressive. Students would actually be able to see what they are reading, or in my case, improve the outside world view of a daydreamer.

While a long list of future improvement tasks suggest themselves as we continue to devote renovation time to the site, we are very thankful to our contractors and suppliers who have continually given 'extras' as well as good ideas and enthusiasm for the Schoolhouse: Dale Jolliffe of East State Carpentry Inc. , Brad Livezey of J. Walter Livezey and Sons Inc. , Middle Buck Mechanical, Inc. and our vendors Tinsman Bros. Inc. and Marvic Supply Company, Inc.

Finally the Board thanks all our members and business supporters for enabling our Society to achieve these building restoration milestones.

Robert McEwan

Reach us by email

We are transitioning to a new email address. It is info@soleburyhistory.org. Our Verizon email will still be usable for a while, but please make note of the new address and begin using it.

Board news

As of January 1, we are pleased to welcome three new members to our Board:

Stephanie Garomon moved from New York to Solebury with her young family nearly 30 years ago. Soon afterwards she earned her real estate license and has been selling real estate in New Hope ever since. For nearly 7 years she has been with Addison Wolfe Real Estate. She is the proud mother of three grown children and recently became a grandmother.

Stephanie has served on many local committees and boards throughout the years and has been a member of numerous local organizations, dedicating her support to the community. She is currently on the board of the Friends of the Delaware Canal and serves on the committee for the New Hope Historical Society Garden Tour. Stephanie is excited to be on the Board of Solebury Township Historical Society. She will serve as secretary.

A resident of Carversville for over ten years, **Marnie Newman** earned her Masters from Penn in historic preservation. After working for the State of New Jersey and an architecture firm, She is now an independent preservation consultant and adjunct lecturer at Drew University.

Marnie is a member of the Historic Architectural Review Board for Solebury Township as well as on the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission Historic Preservation Board. Marnie lives in Carversville with her husband and two daughters. She will Chair the Society's Education Committee.

Charlotte Zanidakis and her husband, Ted, moved to Solebury from New Jersey 12 years ago. Charlotte grew up across the river in Hopewell Township and has always shown interest in the culture and history of the Solebury/New Hope area. She is currently on the Solebury Township Land Preservation Committee.

Employed at Princeton University for 30 years, her academic experiences started in fundraising and quickly moved towards the academic departments after earning her master's degree in higher education at Drexel University. She is on the Alumni Board of Directors at Thomas Edison State College.

Charlotte looks forward to contributing towards the preservation of Solebury Township and working to meet the goals of the Historical Society. She will work with Melody Hunt on development and serve as grant coordinator.

We owe a great deal of gratitude to our two outgoing Board members, **Jim Brown** and **Beth Carrick**. Jim began the process of transferring oral histories from tape to digital format and investigated and purchased software and equipment that will lead our oral history program into the digital age. Beth served as VP for 3 years and while she has contributed to just about every project, her crowning glory is working with the web designer to totally rework our website. And she has offered to continue to monitor and update the website. Many thanks, Jim and Beth!

Slavery in Solebury?

The Solebury Township Historical Society, in partnership with the New Hope Historical Society and Solebury Friends Meeting, will be offering a lecture and tour about the Underground Railroad in this area. The tour will be held on Saturday, May 17, preceded by a lecture on the subject on Thursday evening, May 15.

Our historian, Jesse Crooks, gives us some background below on this fascinating part of our history:

Slavery and Servitude in Solebury

While Pennsylvania is often associated with Quaker abolitionism, slavery existed in Pennsylvania from at least 1639 and persisted until state law completely ended slavery in 1847. While slavery was not heavily practiced in Bucks County, there was a fair amount of slave ownership in the lower half of the county, where it was especially concentrated within certain white families. However, unlike the conditions of slavery in southern states where the farming of cash crops was prevalent, slave owners rarely owned more than one or two slaves, and generally would have worked alongside them doing the same work.

By the late 18th century public opinion had turned against slavery, led by Quaker abolitionism. The abolitionist sentiment was not evenly distributed across the state, however, and slave ownership was still entrenched in the western counties along the Maryland border. However, enough of the state opposed the practice that in 1780 the revolutionary government was able to pass the Act for the Gradual Abolition of Slavery. As the name implies, the law was a compromise intended to protect the property rights of slave owners. Slaves born before the law would remain slaves for life, and their children would remain bound as indentured servants until the age of 28, and they could still be bought or sold for the duration of their term. Furthermore, based on a previous law, biracial children born before the 1780 law went into effect would remain slaves until the age of 31. Whether freed at 28 or 31, this period of bondage constituted the majority of their productive lives.

Bucks County slave owners, however, ended the practice at a faster rate than was required by the law. Many manumitted their slaves, while perhaps others rid themselves of the practice by selling off their servants. Regardless of the method, there was a rapid decline in slave ownership in the county, and by the first good measure available, the 1790 Census, free blacks already outnumbered slaves. In 1790 there were 261 slaves and 346 free blacks. In 1800 the number of slaves plunged to 54, with 456 free blacks, and by 1810 there were only 11 slaves in Bucks County, with 478 free blacks.

In Solebury, a similar pattern can be seen. The 1790 Census is not divided by township so it's difficult to determine the rate of slave ownership, but it did exist to a limited extent. By comparing the census records with well-known Solebury residents, we can gain some insight into the situation. In 1790 David Forst, Richard Courson, and Joseph Hart held five slaves between them, while Benjamin Parry, William Neely, Jonathan Ingham, and Isaac Pickering were among the heads of household that included free blacks, some of whom were probably indentured servants. The

Solebury Quakers, while opposed to slavery, had fewer qualms about keeping black servants. There was a single free black household in 1790, headed by James Nesbit. By the next federal census in 1800 there were only 9 black residents in Solebury. A man named Henry headed the only free black household with 4 residents, while 5 free black residents lived in white households. By 1810, the black population had increased to 60, 75% of whom lived in independent free households. By 1816, Mount Moriah African Methodist Episcopal Church had been established in New Hope (still part of Solebury Township until 1836), with a free black community forming around it.

The Underground Railroad

By the time that slavery became a point of national conflict, Solebury was solidly abolitionist, and both Quakers and free black residents participated in the Underground Railroad. Three of the most active Quaker abolitionists were John E. Kenderdine, who operated mills along the Cuttalossa; John Blackfan, who owned a farm on the eastern side of Meetinghouse Road; and Jonathan P. Magill, who owned a farm on Aquetong Road. In some instances, these men and their families simply helped fugitives along the Underground Railroad. They also provided long-term refuge for a number of former slaves who had escaped to Solebury.

One indicative story is that of Samuel Scott, who was born into slavery in Centerville, Maryland, in about 1820. In about 1847 or 1848, Scott was among a group of seven men who fled from Queen Ann County, Maryland, seeking freedom in the North. One was lost along the way and the other six made it to Bucks County. Two of the men, Parry Helmsley and James Griffith (identified by new names they assumed as free men), were Scott's cousins.

Scott and Helmsley made their way through Newtown and eventually came to Jonathan P. Magill's on Aquetong Road just north of Windy Bush. His son Watson brought Scott to the farm of John Blackfan, where John gave him a new identity. Scott worked on the Blackfan farm for years afterward. Later in his life, Scott provided a home for other black families, including the Moores, who also escaped slavery.

Solebury's African American residents were also deeply involved in the Underground Railroad. Scott's cousin Perry Helmsley went to stay with Mahlon Gibbs on Aquetong Road just south of Lower York, and he appears in the Gibbs' household on the 1850 Census, where Helmsley claimed he was born in Pennsylvania. Gibbs, a black man who had grown up an orphan under the care of the Quaker Moses Eastburn, was a regular participant in the Railroad. He went on to name his sons after Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and the Quaker abolitionist Anthony Benezet.

Other escaped slaves found refuge in the free black community at Mount Moriah, where census records show the family of Rachel Moore, known refugees, claiming to have been born in Pennsylvania. Other people told the census enumerator that their birth place was "unknown" and were probably also fugitives.

Jesse Crooks

Check out what's new at soleburyhistory.org

In the last Chronicle we told you we were in the process of improving our website. We are now happy to announce that the redo is complete and the revised website is in use. You might have noticed some of the improvements.

- Important information is visible right on the **Home** page when you open the site. The area on the right of the screen is used for announcements and information that you need to find easily.
- Key Society documents are available on the **About Us** page found under **The Society**.
- Information about upcoming events is easy to find under **Events** and then either **Calendar** or **Next**. If sign-up is necessary you can do it from the page.
- PayPal is now available. You can now register for events, pay your dues, and make purchases from STHS on line using PayPal. You do not have to have a PayPal account. When you click to pay you are asked if you have an account. If you do not, PayPal accepts major credit cards.
- Forms for nominating honored citizens, ordering house plaques, or joining the Society are all on line. You can send the information by email or print the .pdf form and mail it.
- Oral history recordings can be listened to on line. Just click **Programs, Oral History**. Currently there are 14 oral history recordings available at this time and the number will be increased soon. If you are interested in a particular subject you can search by tags, words that appear in the interview and have been indexed.
- Along with short biographies, we have included pictures of most of our Honored Citizens., including the two for 2014, John Touhey and Jacqui Griffith. Click **Programs, Honored Citizens**.
- Newsletters from 2008 to the present are available for you to read or print.
- The photo section has been improved with galleries of photos from events from the last year. Also, don't miss the gallery of old Solebury Township postcards. Scroll to the bottom of the photo page to see them.
- There is a search feature available from any page. Look for it on the upper right of each page.
- There are links to area businesses that support the Society and to community organizations.

Check out the site at www.soleburyhistory.org. There are more improvements to come in the future. Keep a look out for them.

History Quiz

On Field Day, students were sent out in the field closest to the school to clean up weeds, rake and remove trash and debris. If they did a good job, the teacher would have a picnic under a tree and games would follow.

"STHS Repeats History" Dinner raised money for schoolhouse renovations

More than 100 people enjoyed a festive reception at Rolling Green Farm and a gourmet dinner in one of ten private homes.



Dinner organizers John Touhey and Melody Hunt, with STHS president Donneta Crane.

Many thanks to the dinner Patrons:

Augenblick and Son P.L.
Finkles Hardware
Rago Art
Art Mazzie & George Kuebrich
Naudain Sellers
John Touhey & Michael Prediger
Barbara Donnelly
Gayle Goodman & Jim Searing
George Nakashima Woodworker S.A.
Tinsman Bros., Inc.
Frederick Lansill
Bountiful Acres
Rockwood Associates

With great appreciation to our hosts and hostesses:

Dr. & Mrs. George Heyrich
Dr. & Mrs. Robert Ozols
Dr. & Mrs. John Meggitt
Mrs. Earl Jamison
Mr & Mrs. Douglas Kale
Mr. & Mrs. Buz Teacher
Mrs. Suzanne Lowe
Mr. Dan Macey
Dr. Edward Wilson
Ms. Linda Kenyon



Thanks to Dick Carlson, the barn at Rolling Green Farm was a beautiful venue for the opening reception.



Happy New Year!

Nearly 150 people filled the beautiful hall at Holly Hedge Estate to celebrate the New Year with their friends and neighbors. The 13th annual New Year's Brunch was a great success. If you missed it this year, don't worry — the Society will do it again for 2015. A special thanks to Joe and Amy Lucarro, owners of Holly Hedge, for the delicious food and wonderful service.



Guests enjoying the brunch: (l-r) Mark Cowell, Carol Spiewak, Franca Warden



Everyone enjoys Bob Egan and his music!

Many thanks



Sponsors: Addison Wolfe Real Estate
Bountiful Acres

Auction & Raffle Donors:



Dick Carlson
Malcolm & Elaine Crooks
Linda Kenyon
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1740 House
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Carversville's Inn
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C'est la Vie
Chuck & Pearl Mintzer
Cock 'n Bull
Dilly's Done Different
Dot Bunn
Eagle Diner
Four Seasons Car Wash
Holly Hedge
New Hope Winery
Pudge Cakes
Salon Gratitude
Tuckamony Farm

Table Decorations:

Giant Food Store, Solebury
Bountiful Acres
Tuckamony Farm

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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.

Marianne Bender
The Brussock Family
John and Carol Carpenter
Thomas & Jenny Carroll
Frank Chicarelli
Carol Church & Gary Wilmore
Judith Clarke
Tim & Millena Coffey
James Cole
Paul & Mary Cosdon
Frank & Patty Cosner
R. Scott Creighton
Suzanne Crilley
Julie Davies
Helen Devlin
Barbara M. Donnelly
Sally Drayer
Ruth Durnin
Ronald & Shirley Felix
Paul & Rita Flack
Michael & Jean Fowler
Bruce & Sheryl Fredendall
Clifford Funk
Pamela Burrell & Peter Gatto
Jacqui & David Griffith
Lola & Robert Haddow
Don & Martha Harris
Sharon Anderson & Walter Hauck
Peggy & Bill Hecht
Dennis & Melanie Hedlund
Sally Jagoe
Mary Johnson
Alan & Gail Keim
Brian & Lisa Gladden Keyes
Gregory D. Kirk
Sandra & Richard Kittredge
Richard G. & Margaret Knoster
Lonel LaMariana
Ann & Yanek Liebgold
David DiMicco & Meagan Longcore
Suzanne Lowe
Dan Macey & Paul Savidge
Diane B. Glossman & Richard J. Magruder
Dominic Marano

Wendy E. McGarry
Ian & Jane McNeill
Bob & Bobbie Melby
Sarah Melson
John & Gerry Merriam
Charles & Pearl Mintzer
David Morey
Marnie Newman Leasure
Michael & Amy Petrosini
Candace Jones & Stephen Phillips
Anthony Prestipino
Ann R. Rainey
Robin & David Raunig
Brenda Redfield
Geoffrey Ridout
Joyce & David Rivas
Will Rivinus & Dickie Ann Boal
Bryce & Jane Sanders
Eric Sauter
Patricia D. Savadove
Paul Schwehm
Michael & Lavinia Smerconish
Marc & Ellen Stiefel
John & Irene Szykowski
Betsy Thomas
Melody Hunt & William E. Tinsman
Ernest Torres
Michael Prediger & John Touhey
Mrs. I. Von Zelowitz
Franca C. Warden
Curt Wary
Bonnie & Warren Wilbur
Mike & Ruth Ann Wilson
Patricia Witlicki
George A. Yarnall
George & Judy Yerkes
Ted & Charlotte Zanidakis

New Business Members

Bountiful Acres
Finkels Hardware

Every effort has been made to publish a complete and accurate list of memberships received since the last newsletter (August) and up to about January 15, 2014. 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:

Marnie Dierrich for helping the board decorate and set up for the New Year's Brunch.

Repeats History Dinner; Ian Knauer, chef; Richard Carlson, owner of Rolling Green Farm.

Jesse Crooks for leading the Cemetery Tour; **Pat Whitman** for helping with refreshments for the tour.

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

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

Support our Business Members

We are most grateful for the support of the local business community and encourage you to patronize these fine businesses:

Steward

Bountiful Acres
Holly Hedge Estates/1740 House
Rockwood Wealth Management

Protector

Black Bass Hotel, Lumberville
Tinsman Brothers Inc., Lumberville

Guardian

Augenblick & Co. PC
Delray Plus True Value
Eagle Diner
Finkels Hardware
First Federal of Bucks County
First National Bank & Trust Company of Newtown
Mancuso Show Management
Nakashima Woodworkers
New Hope Crushed Stone



Solebury Township Historical Society
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Solebury, PA 18963

Upcoming Events

April 6 1-4 p.m.	Open House at the Schoolhouse
May 15	Underground Railroad lecture
May 17	Underground Railroad trolley tour
August 24	Summer Picnic
November 16	Society Annual Meeting
January 1, 2015	New Year's Brunch

*Visit soleburyhistory.org for details closer to the dates.
STHS members will receive invitations to all events.*

We're looking for some furniture items for the schoolhouse

As we reconfigure the interior furniture of the schoolhouse to accommodate more educational events, we have identified the need for several items. If you can donate one or more that is taking up space in your house, please call Robert McEwan at 215-479-4711.

- ✓ 3-4 old fashioned student desks: (wooden desks with bench in front of desk and metal legs like the one we now have in the schoolhouse.)
- ✓ Steel Storage racks:
6 feet or less high; 18" to 24" deep.
We will be using these in our now dry cellar for storage.
- ✓ 24 to 36 identical folding chairs, 18" wide.

Thank you for thinking of us.