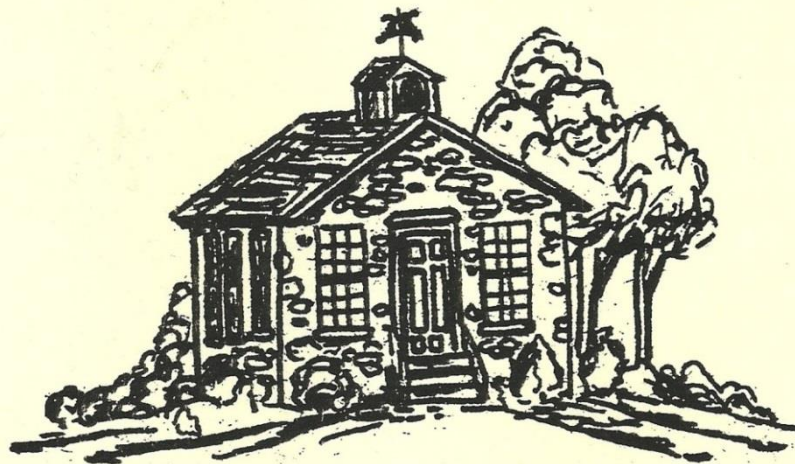




# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FILBERT FOX

*There  
Was a  
Time When .....*



*A book of interviews*



# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FILBERT FOX

This book is dedicated to the people who gave  
of their time and knowledge.....so that  
we might grow.

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# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## FILBERT FOX

These interviews were conducted simultaneously with an archaeological dig at the Solebury one-room school house by the fifth and sixth grade Social Studies Enrichment students of New Hope-Solebury Elementary School in the 1981—1982 school year.

We would like to thank the people who helped us with this book.

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# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## FILBERT FOX

### INTERVIEWS

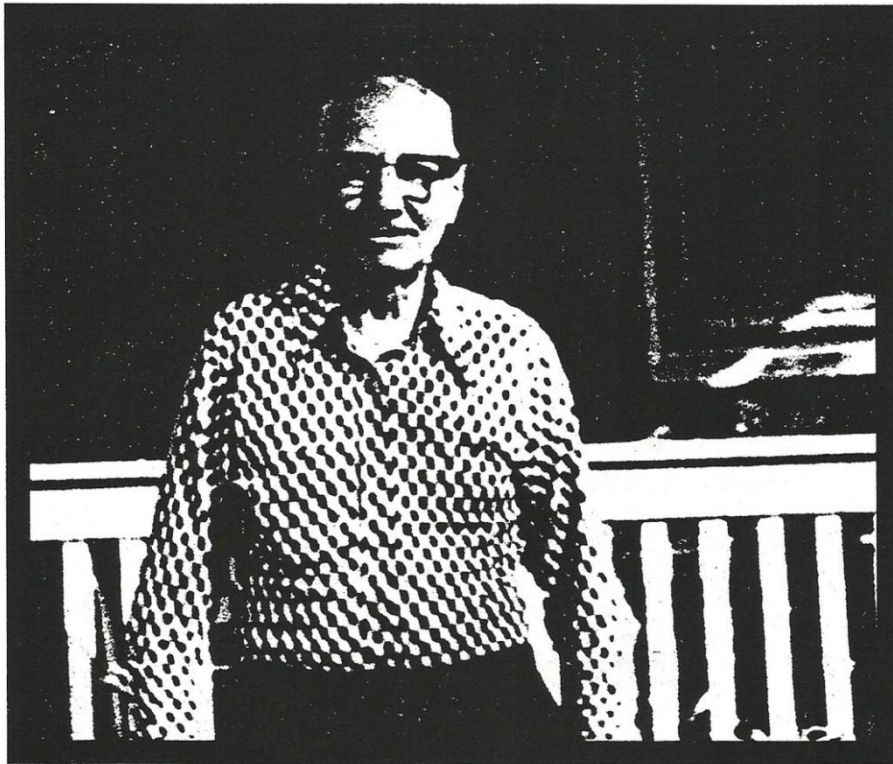
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# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FILBERT FOX

*Mr. Filbert Fox*



Interviewed by: Becca Tilden  
David Prytherch  
David Williams



# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## FILBERT FOX

Mr. Fox

Intvwr.: When and where were you born?

Mr. F.: I was born on a farm near New Hope, in 1904, but I don't remember that, I was too little. The first I remember, is living in New Hope. I was about four or five. We lived right at the bottom of a big hill and the school was up on top of the hill.

Intvwr.: Did you have any brothers or sisters?

Mr. F.: Yes, two that were older than me. The oldest was four years older than me and the other one was two years older than me.

Intvwr.: What was school like?

Mr. F.: School started at 9:00, then halfway between 9:00 and lunch we had a fifteen minute recess. We could go out and play and do whatever we wanted to do. Then we would come back in, and at 12:00 we would have an hour for lunch. We would bring our lunch in a paper bag. In the middle of the afternoon we had another recess, for fifteen minutes. School left out at 4:00. In the winter, when it was sledding time, the teacher would give us an hour and a half recess. The teacher would sled with us too,

Intvwr.: We don't have any teachers like that.  
We're not even allowed to go sledding.

Mr. F.: No! I had very nice teachers, they played games with us out in the schoolyard.

Intvwr.: How much area did you have to play in?

Mr. F.: Well, you know the old stone building, we had the whole front of it. We had no toilets in the school house, we had little outhouses, one side for the boys and one side for the girls, in the back of the stone building.

Intvwr.: Where the boys treated differently than the boys?.

Mr. F.: No, we all played together. Sometimes the girls would play something on their own and us boys would play prisoners base or hide and seek, Sometimes when we were sledding, we would take turns looking for the teacher. When it was almost time for us to go in, we would watch for her to get the bell and before she could ring it, we jumped on our sleds and down the hill we went. It would take us a long time to get back up the hill. Sometimes we didn't get back in until 2:00. But we never got in trouble for that.

Intvwr.: Where were your parents born?

Mr. F.: My father was born in Tinicum and my mother was born in Pineville.



# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## FILBERT FOX

Intvwr.: Did your mother work or did she stay at home?

Mr. F.: My mother stayed at home and did the cooking, baking and the washing. No, she didn't work out.

Intvwr.: What do you think about mothers working outside the home?

Mr. F.: The way the prices are, they almost have to nowadays. But I don't agree with it. If the father could make enough money, then I would say, the mother should stay home. Just because of the simple reason that when the children get out of school, there is nobody home. They can do anything they want to. They don't have anybody to guide or supervise them, that's the reason that I don't think that the mother should work.

Intvwr.: What would you think of the father staying at home and the mother working?

Mr. F.: The father should be out working, making money, so the family will have food.

Intvwr.: What kind of chores did you do?

Mr. F.: We used to burn wood in the stove, to keep warm and to cook with, so I had to go out and carry the wood in. We had a big wooden box and I used to have to keep it full.

Intvwr.: How would you describe your mother and father?

Mr. F.: We were a close family. I thought a lot of my mother and father.

Intvwr.: Do you remember what the inside of the stone building looked like?

Mr. F.: The seats were double. We had a desk with an ink well in it. Sometimes we wrote with a pen but mostly we wrote with a pencil.

Intvwr.: Did you ever use a slate?

Mr. F.: Yes, we had a slate with chalk. Sometimes the teacher would let us write on the chalkboard, you know. I always liked to clean the blackboard off.

Intvwr.: Where did you get your water?

Mr. F.: We had a well and a pump.

Intvwr.: What was the terrain around the school like?

Mr. F.: The schoolyard was mostly bare because of us kids running around. The grass didn't have much of a chance to grow.





# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## FILBERT FOX

Intvwr.: Can you remember anything about World War I?

Mr. F.: I was about 10 years old then. They had the National Guard in Doylestown called Company G, Rifle Division. They had rifles and automatic pistols. The only thing I remember about that was, after the war had started, I went down to the train station, with two or three other boys, to see the company get on the train, to go to the war.

Intvwr.: Did you have any relatives that went to war?

Mr. F.: Yes, I had a brother that went to the second World War but he came back.

Intvwr.: How did World War I affect your family?

Mr. F.: Well, it didn't affect us too much. They didn't have enough men to go to war, so they set up a draft that went from 18 to 45: father was included in that draft and it took a lot of men. But my father was never drafted because the war ended before he was called. I was glad of that.

Intvwr.: How about the Depression.. Did that affect your family?

Mr. F.: I remember it but it didn't affect us because we lived on a farm. Then we moved into Doylestown and my Dad had a job and I had a job so it didn't bother us any.

Intvwr.: Were there any tensions between the races?

Mr. F.: No, I don't recall anything like that.

Intvwr.: What do you think of the world situation now?

Mr. F.: I think it's a mess! It's an awful mess, I'll tell you that, people don't seem to care for other people. Every morning I listen to the radio, I hear somebody shot or stabbed somebody else. I think this, and I think a lot of other people do to, when they catch somebody doing something wrong, they don't give them hard enough sentences. I think if somebody kills someone, they ought to be given the electric chair. Why put them in jail, lots of them have been put in jail and they let them out, if they are given a ten year sentence, they are out in five or six years, If they are sentenced to ten or twenty years, let them stay in there.

Intvwr.: What was your reaction when the President was shot?

Mr. F.: Oh, I couldn't believe it. I just couldn't believe it at first, That was terrible.

Intvwr.: Here's a big switch. What was your favorite holiday?

Mr. F.: Favorite holiday!? Favorite! I liked them all!  
We didn't have to go to school.





# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## FILBERT FOX

Intvwr.: How much allowance did you get for your chores or didn't you get any?

Mr. F.: I didn't get any, no. I got my clothes, I had enough to eat, I had a nice warm place to stay in and sleep. One time when I lived here and I was about seven years old, four or five of us kids got a job planting corn. I got fifty cents for working all day.

Intvwr.: Was fifty cents good then?

Mr. F.: Oh boy, fifty cents, I was tickled to death.

Intvwr.: What type of work did you do when you started working?

Mr. F.: When I started to work? I lived in Doylestown and I got a job at the movies. I collected the tickets at the top of the stairs. If they didn't have a ticket, I wouldn't leave them in. After they got someone else to do that job, I started to usher. I had a flashlight and showed them where to sit. I got five dollars a week. That was pretty good. I would take it home and give it to my mother and she would put it away for me. Once in a while, if I needed something, she would give me the money. When I was sixteen I got a job in a textile mill, in Doylestown. We made suiting for men and clothing for women. When World War II started we made cloth for army uniforms.

Intvwr.: Do you agree with the way children are being raised today?

Mr. F.: Not really. You know in Doylestown we have two big high schools, C.B. West and C.B. East. When the kids get out, they seem happy go lucky, they don't seem to care about anything. That's the impression I get. They have a bunch of books under their arms. When I went to school, we did all our work in school.

Intvwr.: Homework is assigned to them, it's not work they have to make up.

Mr. F.: Well, what do you do in school?

Intvwr.: We work but for each subject we are assigned homework.

Mr. F.: Every school I went to, I did all my work in school. You know, when the teacher was finished her work, she would knit. I remember one time when I got all my work done, I asked the teacher if I could knit. So I used to help my teacher knit.

Intvwr.: Were 263 and Sugan Road here when you went to the stone building?

Mr. F.: Yes, but they were dirt roads. And where this school is, was just a field.

Intvwr.: Did you have any animals when you were a child?

Mr. F.: I had a favorite horse and three dogs. I liked riding the horse. When I was little, I wanted to be a cowboy.



# SOLEBURY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## FILBERT FOX

Intvwr.: Did you have many books?

Mr. F.: Well, I don't now but I used to have a lot of books.

Intvwr.: Did you get out of school early in the year, so you could help out on the farm?

Mr. F.: No, we got out in May.

Intvwr.: When did you go back to school?

Mr. F.: I think it was the latter part of September.

Intvwr.: What did you do on your vacation?

Mr. F.: I worked on the farm.

Intvwr.: What did you do during your free time?

Mr. F.: Well, we didn't have much time to play, because you know, when you live on a farm there are things that have to be done seven days a week. The cows have to be milked, the horses have to be cleaned, stables have to be cleaned, the only time we had to play was Sunday afternoon.

Intvwr.: Did you go to church?

Mr. F.: Oh, yes. We went into Doylestown for church and Sunday school. Every Sunday, it was a good walk.