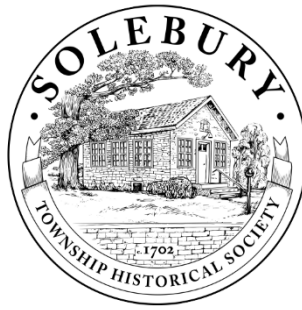


Salebury



Chronicle

A Newsletter of the Solebury Township Historical Society

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From the President

Like a majority of our visitors to the schoolhouse I came in to find some facts on my house in Lumberville. I'm going to use the word - history - a lot so bear with me. I walked into the schoolhouse in April of 2021 and met researcher Wendy Appleton. After a few visits I was hooked on how much history was hidden in Solebury and its historic districts of Carversville, Phillips Mill, Lumberville, Upper Aquetong Valley, Cuttalossa and Centre Bridge. You may know this history but I did not so I said - I'M IN!

Much thanks to Marnie Leasure who as President kept us afloat through post COVID and brought new board members. She handed off the reins to me at the beginning of this year. Several key areas are being worked on – Collection Management software, redesign of the website and the never-ending research and education about our local history. Thanks to our archive team, board members, volunteers, and the STHS members' financial support we are making progress. We have begun to catalog and digitize our archives into the new museum software "PastPerfect" with newly purchased equipment: an upgraded PC, two scanners, and a new printer. A year-long effort was led by Jim Davock and Marnie to get our re-designed website up and released this month. It has a clean new look but still retains all the great information that has been collected over the years.

Continued on next page.



We will share more information about the new website in the next newsletter

From the President, Continued

Lastly, the fun part of this work for me was finding the historical and treasured properties that exist in Solebury and entice the owners to share their properties with our members. We have done three so far – Armitage house and barn, Hard Times tavern and just recently the Samuel Eastburn farm. A tremendous thanks to the property owners for opening these properties for us. I am ready to visit the next one so give me a call!

I still have a lot to learn about Solebury but no worries there are so many rabbit holes to go down it will keep me busy for years. Thanks for all the continued support for keeping our historical preservation mission going.

-Russell Stephan

Event Recaps

Samuel Eastburn farm, June 22nd – The Solebury Township Historical Society presented an afternoon at the Samuel Eastburn farm. This historical property, purchased in 1736 containing 250 acres of land near the center of Solebury Township, was the original homestead to the Eastburn family. A blacksmith by trade, Samuel Eastburn cleared the land for farming and constructed a rough log homestead “on high ground”. He also donated the property where a stone schoolhouse was built which is the home for our historical society. Jeff Marshall provided an entertaining tour of the old barn and the family homestead house. Special thanks to owner Gerry Merriam for sharing this wonderful property with us. If you are interested in sharing your property with us for a historical tour, please give us a call.

Trivia Night, May 29th - A successful night at the 1740 House with lots of history questions on Bucks County, Solebury Township and the local villages. Winners enjoyed a \$25 certificate, and all others learned a lot of new information on local history. Look out for the next trivia night in the fall.

Empire Builders of Solebury, April 27th - Empire Builders of Solebury was presented by David Johnson who researched individuals that acquired at least 300 acres of land. He put together how, why, and what became of their legacies, and ultimately if their empires were preserved. Lowell Birrell who succeeded financially in mysterious ways has one of the most interesting stories of this land acquisition topic.



Samuel Eastburn farm, June 22nd



*Empire Builders of Solebury, April 27th.
Photo shows Hendrick Island.*

Event Recaps, Continued

Defining a Nation: An Exhibit of early Scientific and Measuring Instruments, March 16th - Our STHS school house exhibit in March was with our very own Jim Hill and included a wonderful display of instruments. The Hausman-Hill collection of scientific, surveying and measuring instruments helped define our nation's boundaries. The exhibit showcased the work of significant early makers of measuring implements, such as notable 18th and 19th-century craftsmen Anthony Lamb, Rufus Porter, Thomas Greenough, William Wurdemann, and the Chapin Family of Connecticut. We appreciate the hard work and effort from Jim and Kathy for putting this together.

Prehistoric Archaeology, February 2nd - In February, Matt Bielecki's talk focused on the Prehistoric Archaeology of the area exploring the prehistory of the Delaware Valley through an examination of artifacts and archaeological sites.



Jim Hill and the Hausman-Hill Collection



STHS President Russell Stephan and Ned Harrington Scholarship awardee Maeve Sheehan

Ned Harrington Scholarship Award

STHS presented a \$1000 award to Maeve Sheehan. The scholarship has been awarded since 2004 to a graduating senior that shows a commitment to the community, excellent overall academic record, extra-curricular activities and some interest in history in their personal statement. Maeve is headed off to Vassar College and is planning to continue to pursue history in college and beyond.

Solebury Township Trivia

Do you know which famous Pennsylvanian is credited with the quote "In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes" that is used for the article title on page 11 for the Cashless Tolling?

In Memoriam

John F. Touhey - John Touhey had been a resident of Solebury Township and a member of the Solebury Township Historical Society for many years. The Solebury Township Historical Society was formed in 1981. However, after the passing of the founder, Georges Duval, the archives of the original Society languished for almost a decade 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 Township Historical Society.

In 1998 John called a meeting for Solebury Township residents where a brief history of the original Solebury Township Historical Society was related, followed by an explanation of the hopes and future plans for a revitalized historical society. It was received with a great deal of enthusiasm and soon a new board was formed with John Touhey as president, where he remained for 5 years.

While serving as president, he was also chairman of the 300th anniversary celebration of Solebury Township and all of the many events that were included. Over the succeeding years, John continued to be a valued and supportive member of the Historical Society. He organized two dinners for the society, raising approximately \$40,000. His obituary can be found here: <https://vhmfh.com/book-of-memories/5596081/Touhey-John/index.php>

Willis Rivinus- Will Rivinus was an author, historian, and preservation activist who was a resident of Solebury Township for over 50 years. Over all those years he has read, researched, and written about the history of Solebury Township and surrounding areas. He published many books that help to inform readers of the significant history of our area. Will spent many years advocating for the preservation of the Delaware Canal. He wrote a book to draw attention to its historical and environmental significance at a time when the canal had fallen into a state of neglect. He was instrumental in lobbying the government to have the canal declared a National Historic Landmark. He served as the first chairman of the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor Commission.

Will led many history walks for the Society, presented several of our educational programs, and even hosted our annual picnic in 2006. He served on the board of directors of the Friends of the Delaware Canal and led their canal walks for many years. In 2012, Will was recognized by both the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania for his dedication to the Delaware Canal. His obituary can be found here: https://www.buckscountyherald.com/obituaries/will-rivinus/article_c7515e70-1760-46fb-9829-d7a524122046.html



John was our 2014 Honored Citizen of Solebury Township



Will was our 2007 Honored Citizen of Solebury Township

Upcoming Events

September 14th, 2025 – Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve and Thompson-Neely Grist Mill Tour. Please join us for a tour of Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve and the Thompson-Neely Grist Mill. This tour will visit both of these sites and go over the history of both locations and their relation to Solebury Township. \$25 for Members/\$30 Non-Members. Tickets available at [Eventbrite](#).

October 12th, 2025 – Annual Meeting. Please join us for our Annual Meeting at 4:00 PM on October 12th, 2025, at our schoolhouse headquarters at Sugan and Upper York Roads. The event is free and open to everyone.

Do you have an idea for an event? Would you like to give a tour of your historical property? Please reach out to us at 215-297-5091 or send an email to soleburyhistory@gmail.com.

New Hope Crushed Stone and Lime Quarry

If you were not aware, Solebury Township has officially purchased the former quarry on Phillips Mill Road. According to the township website, “Solebury Township has formally acquired the 166-acre former New Hope Crushed Stone & Lime Co. quarry located at 6970 Phillips Mill Road. This significant property acquisition secures one of the largest undeveloped tracts in the Township, including a pristine 60-acre lake and over 3,000 linear feet of stream corridor along the Primrose Creek. Originally appraised at \$3.66 million, the property was secured through a revised agreement of sale approved in May for \$3.25 million. However, through a strategic partnership with Solebury School, the Township successfully negotiated a non-exclusive easement agreement that allows the school to access a portion of the property and water features for educational and recreational purposes. In return, the school contributed toward the acquisition, reducing the Township’s net cost to \$1.6 million.”



Google Maps satellite image of the Quarry, taken in 2025. The Delaware River is located on the far top right of the image, and the intersection of Route 202 and River Road is located on the bottom right of the image. School Lane is to the left of the picture.

Quarries and mines were, and still are, prolific throughout Bucks County. As shown to the right, the 1928 Industrial Directory of Pennsylvania lists quarries active in the county. The Acme Sand & Gravel Co. was not at the same location, nor the same company, as New Hope Crushed Stone and Lime Company. Acme Sand and Gravel was located on the Rhoades Farm (formerly the Paxson Farm), pieces of which straddled the New Hope and Solebury border.

Our neighbors at the New Hope Historical Society recently wrote an article on the Northwood Farmhouse, which was also located on this property. “The date of the initial construction of Northwood has been estimated to be 1730-1740, with an addition dated to about 1763. Acreage was sold over the generations for the sand pit, the canal, the railroad, and housing on North Main Street. Starting in the 1930’s the school district obtained ownership of successive pieces of Northwood Farm through purchase and eminent domain. This culminated in 1996, when the School District acquired all but 12 acres of the remaining farm including the farmhouse.”

The New Hope Crushed Stone and Lime Company can trace its history to the 1920s - 1930s. The property, while owned by the Ely family, contained a lime kiln and a grist mill, as shown on the map to the right. Later owner Walter Melson started the Solebury Agricultural Lime Company, and then an associated venture known as the Watercress Farm. Over time, the name changed to the New Hope Crushed Stone and Lime Company and the quarry grew in size. Negative effects became pronounced starting in the 1970s and 1980s. According to the Primrose Creek Watershed Association, “In 1992 the expanding quarry bisected the Primrose Creek’s stream bed. Continual electrical pumping of 500,000 gallons per day became essential to keep the quarry dry for mining.”

144 SIXTH INDUSTRIAL DIRECTORY OF PENNSYLVANIA

Industry and name of firm	Location of plant	Main office	No. employes
MINES AND QUARRIES			
MARBLE AND GRANITE:			
Tarantino, F. L.	Quakertown	Quakertown	5
SAND AND GRAVEL:			
Acme Sand & Gravel Co.	New Hope	New Hope	11
Brennan Sand Co.	Tullytown	Tullytown	7
Eastern Sand & Gravel Co.	Morrisville	Morrisville	7
Hainesport Mining & Transportation Co.	Van Sciver; Morrisville	Parkway & 24th St., Phila. .	168
National Sand & Gravel Co.	Morrisville	137 E. State St., Trenton, N. J.	12
Tullytown Sand & Gravel Co.	Wheat Sheaf	Tullytown	3
United Sand & Gravel Corp.	Morrisville	Morrisville	20
Warner Co., Charles	Tullytown — 2 plants	Tenth & King Sts., Wilmington, Del.	217
STONE—CRUSHED:			
Cairo & Sons, Frank	Fricks	2020 Sixty-fifth Ave., Germantown, Phila.	8
General Crushed Stone Co.	Quakertown	Drake Bldg., Easton	128
Lukens & Yerkes	Rushland	924-25 Stephen Girard Bldg., Phila.	23
Mapleton Limestone Co.	Harrow	Huntingdon	23
Reich, J. Sidney (Richland Quarry)	Richland Twp. ...	711 Juniper St., Quakertown	8

Source:

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Industrial_Directory_of_the_Commonwealth/9YxLAQAAMAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=New+Hope+Crushed+Stone+Company&pg=PA144&printsec=frontc



Source 1: This image (above) from the 1876 Bucks County Atlas shows the lime kiln and grist mill on the property.

Source 2: More information from the Primrose Creek Watershed Association can be found here:

<https://www.primrosewatershed.org/saving-primrose-creek/>

Source 3: New Hope Historical Society article about Northwood Farm: <https://www.newhopehistorical.org/the-northwood-farm-a-witness-to-history>

BIG WATER CRESS 'BED' LOCATED IN SOLEBURY

10 Acres Produced Daily Average of 3,000 Bunches;
Water Rich In Lime

SHIPPED TO NEW YORK

NEW HOPE, Sept. 10 — Solebury Township is boastful that it contains one of the largest water cress "beds" in the East, operated by Walter Melson, Jr., as a side-line of the Solebury Agricultural Lime Company, which he manages.

In a hidden valley, a distance from highways, the "bed" covers 10 acres, with an average daily of 3000 bunches secured, and capacity for 5000 bunches.

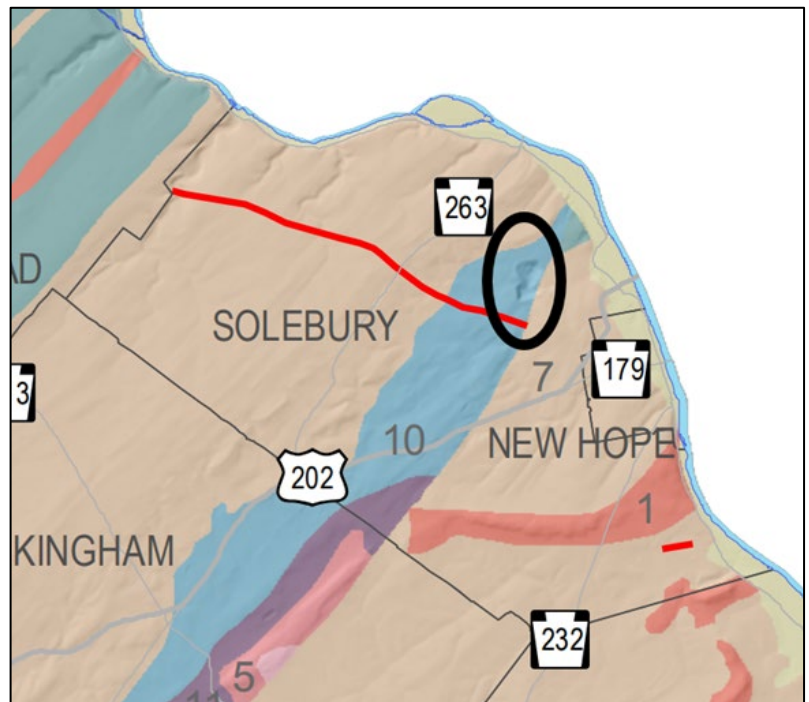
"Watercress Farm" is near Phillips Mill Road, between New Hope and Solebury. The lime company plant aids the water cress beds, as the cress is best produced in spring water which is high in lime content.

Although Mr. Melson operates both "plants," it is not by accident a "side-line." His grandfather migrated here from France, where the family had produced "French herbs." He settled near Llanerch, producing herb food plants, including water cress. He was succeeded by Walter Melson, Sr., who now operates water cress beds also at Paoli and Timberton.

When Melson built the lime pulverizing plant several years ago, at the limestone quarry on the old Ely homestead, he found water cress growing naturally along the brook from the big spring adjoining the home. It had been harvested in small quantities, but Melson saw the possibilities of big production by levelling the 10-acre valley and distributing even flows of water through it from the spring.

Over time, these operations led to environmental concerns, including the formation of sinkholes and swallow holes, especially on the nearby Solebury School campus. The school filed a lawsuit against the quarry and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), resulting in a ruling that labeled the quarry a "public nuisance" and imposed fines. In 2019, the DEP ordered the quarry to cease operations due to ongoing environmental issues and non-compliance with reclamation requirements. Subsequently, the quarry's infrastructure was dismantled.

Some sources say the quarry was started on a former watercress farm, other sources state that the lime processing company was established first, and the watercress farm followed. The article shown on the left from the Bristol Daily Courier (Bristol, Pennsylvania) on Wednesday, September 10, 1941, explains the relationship between the watercress farm and the lime operation. This map from the Pennsylvania of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) shows the lime belt in blue. The circle in black shows the rough location of the quarry.



ROCK TYPES

- | | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Dark crystalline rocks | 3. Schist* | 6. Unconsolidated sediments* | 10. Limestone and dolomite |
| 2. Light crystalline rocks | 5. Quartzite | 7. Red sedimentary rocks* | 11. Limestone or dolomite* |
| | | | 13. Shale and siltstone |

*See page 2 for a complete description.

**"We tried several big haulers...
and the 65 Payhauler tops 'em all!"**



**—New Hope Crushed Stone & Lime Co.,
New Hope, Pa.**

"Before buying two International® 65 Payhauler trucks, we had demonstrations by several large haulers," reports Edgar N. Putnam, for New Hope Crushed Stone & Lime Co.

"The '65' topped them all for production, ease of operation, and all-around efficiency. Main '65' features are ample power, balance for full-load delivery, and genuine operating ease and safety."

Both the 19-ton 65, and 27-ton 95 Payhauler trucks have the strength-multiplying International corrugated

New Hope's "65's" speed full 19-ton loads of dolomite from quarry to 300-ton-per-hr. capacity crusher—with a maximum climb-out grade of 16% and on 800-ft. haul! The 250-hp "65" travels up to 36 mph.; the 375-hp "95" up to 38 mph.!

body design—that sheds weight, increases capacity. The direct-start International "817" engine super-powers both "65" and "95"—to outspeed former models, up to 40%. And both "65" and "95" highball full loads safely with reserve-area braking and new course-holding power-steering!

Compare—prove on the job that Payhauler gives you top off-road capacity; top power-to-weight ratio; top profit-earning ability! Let your International Construction Equipment Distributor demonstrate!

Additional research into the company also found several articles referencing the equipment that *New Hope Crushed Stone & Lime Co.* purchased. The manufacturers' ads served as marketing for the company.

Source 1: [*Engineering News-Record* 1960-04-07: Vol 164 Iss 14](#)

Source 2: [*Western Construction*](#)

HOW'S THIS FOR PROFITABLE AGGREGATE PRODUCTION?

- Output per 10-hour day—
200 T. of-1/8"; 300 T. of-1/2";
500 T. of-1"; 400 T. of-1 1/4";
600 T. of-1 3/8"; 400 T. of-3".
- Total daily production—2400 Tons
- Material—Quarry-run limestone
- Silica content—Approximately 16%

**"Our CEDARAPIDS
DOUBLE IMPELLER
IMPACT BREAKER
is doing a real job"**

Says Edgar N. Putman, Supt.
NEW HOPE CRUSHED STONE & LIME CO.
New Hope, Pa.

Take it from this quarry operator—producing six sizes of specification material at a steady 240 ton per hour clip is profitable production! "With our 4350H Impact Breaker we're getting good breakage, ample crushing capacity, and operating costs are low," says Edgar Putman.

In addition to the Cedarapids Double Impeller Impact Breaker, the New Hope plant includes a 40' x 12' heavy-duty cast steel Apron Feeder and three Horizontal Vibrating Screens—all Cedarapids!



Solebury Township Historical Society in the News

Over the past year, we have been working hard to update several elements of the STHS, such as the new Website, the resumption of the Newsletter, and our new logo. The Bucks County Herald recently featured these updates in an article ([link here](#)). We invite you to please read the article, as well as stay tuned in the next newsletter for more information about our website updates.

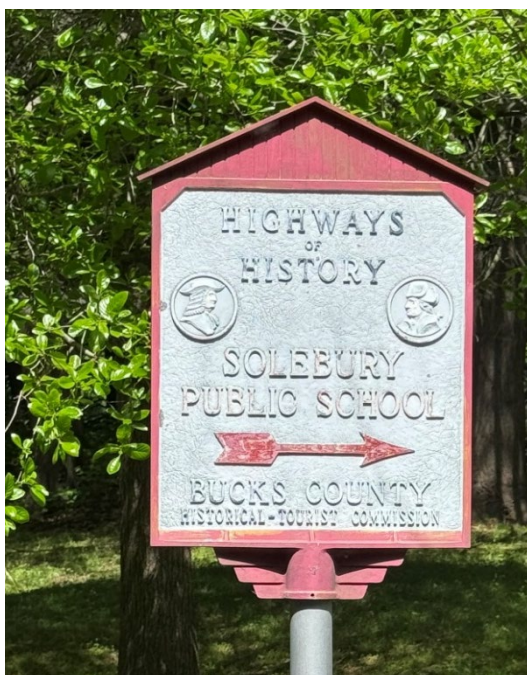
If you are interested in writing an article, or have an idea you would like us to explore, please reach out to us at 215-297-5091 to or send an email: soleburyhistory@gmail.com.



Highways of History: Request for Volunteer

If you have been around our schoolhouse property, you may have noticed the “Highways of History” marker. The marker program originally started in late 1960 as a map and brochure publication run by the Bucks County Historical Commission (which was different from the Bucks County Historical Society). The commission was later renamed to the Bucks County Historical-Tourist Commission and started creating these sign markers in 1962.

We are looking for volunteers who would love to help us restore our marker. Please reach out to us at 215-297-5091 to or send an email: soleburyhistory@gmail.com if you would like to help out.



Bucks Historical Booklet To Be Distributed Soon

Brochure Outlines Bucks Scenic Spots

By **BOB REINHARDT**
 Courier-Times Staff Writer

Soon after Bucks County's postal avalanche of Christmas cards has subsided and been consigned to desk drawers, scrapbooks and wastebaskets another colorful mailing will get underway.

The Bucks County Historical Commission will put into circulation its just-printed red, white and blue booklet, "Highways of History — A Tour of Central Bucks County."

The Historical Commission, not to be confused with the Bucks County Historical Society, was created by the County Commissioners this year and given a budget of \$4,000 to compile and disseminate historical information about the county.

48-Mile Tour

The booklet, which folds to map-size, lays out a 48-mile tour of the historic and scenic spots of Central Bucks County, with an optional ten miles for those who want even more stunning scenery.

Fifty thousand copies have been printed, at two cents each, to distribute where the commission members think it will be most appreciated and effective.

Anne Hawkes Hutton, of Edgely, chairman of the Historical Commission, and other members, presented the booklet at this week's meeting and explained how they plan to use it. They were ready to discuss next year's budget, seeking \$10,694 to publish similar works for Upper and Lower Bucks, but the County Commissioners deferred the financial discussions to early next year.

Members Attending

Other commission members attending were John S. Neal, Jr., Levittown attorney; Col. John Richardson, New Hope historian; Sara Maynard Clark, magazine editor and writer and the group's secretary, Mrs. Ruth Schmidt. Unable to attend were Maj. Charles J. Biddle, of Andalusia, Joseph Ceader, of Riegelsville and James Wood, of Morrisville, who is now in Germany.

"I have long had a feeling," Mrs. Hutton said, "that Bucks County misses out sadly in cross-country touring." She said she recently conducted automobile club officials on a tour of Washington Crossing State Park.

The tour planners, who work in many states, including Ohio, Michigan and California, told her "people go along the Pennsylvania and New Jersey Turnpikes and don't know what is along the way. Obviously they miss Bucks County."

Educational Value

Mrs. Hutton said Bucks County's attractions have great commercial as well as educational value.

"We haven't utilized this thing," she said. "We have let New England take the ball away from us. Tourists interested in our

Ben Franklin Teacher

historical attractions are going to spend money," she said. "This will mean money for the county."

The booklet lists 37 historic attractions on the 48-mile tour, including Washington Crossing, New Hope and its art colony, two quaint museums in Doylestown, a covered bridge, an eight-arch stone bridge built in 1775, a 205-year-old schoolhouse still in use and many other sites.

Hours Listed

Most of the historic buildings are open to the public and the hours are listed. Backing up the tour is a concise history of Bucks County from the Lenni-Lenape Indians to the present.

Commission Member Neal said the distribution of the booklets is being arranged in a way to assure their maximum use and appreciation and keep them from the waste baskets.

Pilot packages of three to six copies are going to all schools, to all hotels, motels and restaurants in the county, to automobile clubs, local civil and historical groups and chambers of commerce.

Public Libraries

They will go to the buildings included in the tour, to the state Departments of Forests and Waters, Commerce and Highways, to public libraries and to the County Industrial Development Corp., Planning Commission and Park Board.

"From this beginning," Neal said, "other interested inquiries will undoubtedly be added to a future distribution list. It is considered desirable for the commission to screen requests for additional copies and approve only where the reasons supporting the request appear satisfactory."

Distribution Centers

Mrs. Hutton said her group plans to visit many of the prospective distribution centers to emphasize the value of publicizing the county's attractions. Another service of the Historical Commission will be to clip news articles of county governmental action and development for the use of the commissioners and other county agencies.

The Historical Commission has its headquarters, open Tuesday through Thursday, in the Burges-Lippincott House, Meeting House Square, Fallsington.

Pennidel Youth Jailed On Eleven Charges

Bruce Enger, 18, 696 Bellevue Ave., Pennidel was committed to Bucks County Prison Monday by



NEW SITE MARKERS FOR BUCKS: The new historical markers held by members of the Bucks County Historical-Tourist Commission will soon

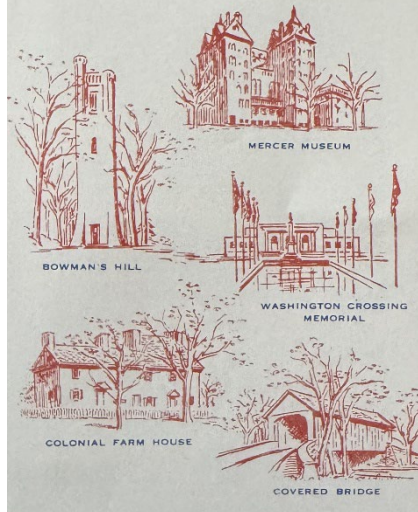
be added to those already erected along the county's "Highways of History."

James E. Wood, Joseph D. Ceader, Ann Hawkes Hutton, chairman, Claire G. Hennessy and John S. Neal, Jr.

Highways of History

No. 2

A Tour of CENTRAL BUCKS COUNTY



Sources:

- Top Left: *The Bristol Daily Courier* (Bristol, Pennsylvania), Wednesday, December 21, 1960
- Top Right: *News Herald* (Perkasie, Pennsylvania) Thursday, Nov 7, 1963. Page 20



In this world, nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes: The Route 202 Bridge Goes Cashless

If you've been driving on Route 202 recently, you may have noticed the toll booths being knocked down. The Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission (DRJTBC) announced that "the project will involve removal of the bridge's former cash-collection toll plaza and construction of an overhead toll gantry outfitted with E-ZPass toll tag reading equipment and cameras to record the license plates of non-E-ZPass-equipped motorists. The project also will include repairs to the bridge's Pennsylvania abutment backwall, which is cracked and rotating. The gantry, when completed, would mark the first time that a former DRJTBC cash-collection toll plaza gets replaced with a highway-speed all-electronic tolling (AET) facility.

The New Hope-Lambertville (Route 202) facility holds the distinction as the Commission toll bridge with the highest E-ZPass usage percentage. In 2024, 92.65 percent of toll transactions at this location were paid through E-ZPass."

Tolls are nothing new to those of us in Solebury, and people have been paying tolls along York Road for almost 200 years. The history of Turnpikes in the county is written about in two articles from *A Collection of Papers Read Before the Bucks County Historical Society*. These Include:

- *The Turnpike Roads*. BY REV. D. K. TURNER, HARTSVILLE, PA. (Meeting at Solebury Meeting-House, August 10, 1899.)
 - <https://archive.org/details/collectionofpape02buck/page/564/mode/2up?q=turnpike>
- *Turnpike Roads in Bucks County*. BY WARREN S. ELY, DOYLESTOWN, PA. (Churchville Meeting, May 23, 1917.)
 - <https://archive.org/details/collectionofpape05buck/page/18/mode/2up>

Solebury Township Trivia Answer

This line appears in a letter Benjamin Franklin wrote to Jean-Baptiste Le Roy on November 13, 1789. The exact passage reads:

“Our new Constitution is now established, and has an appearance that promises permanency; but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes.”

Context:

- Franklin was discussing the ratification of the U.S. Constitution.
- He expressed hope about its longevity but tempered it with a wry remark on life's only certainties.

The Turnpike Roads: “The Lahaska and New Hope Turnpike Company received its charter from the Legislature, February 24, 1847, but the formation of the company lingered five years. The commissioners named in the Act of Incorporation were John Blackfan, John C Parry, Edward Williams, Matthias Shaw, Oliver Paxson, William Stavely, Benjamin S. Rich. William Williams, Harvey Shaw, Thomas Paxson and William H. Johnson. The company was organized June 8, 1853, with 500 shares of stock at \$25 a share, making the capital \$12,500; afterwards increased to 516 shares and \$12,900, but the whole cost of the 574 the; turnpike; roads road was \$16,255.59, and the length four miles and three quarters and 26 rods, averaging \$3,422 a mile.”

Turnpike Roads in Bucks County: “The toll houses along our turnpike roads were not large and had no modern conveniences, but they were comfortable homes for the toll-gatherers. The occupants were not rich in this world's goods, but presumably honest and faithful to their trusts, some of them were at times a little over zealous and apparently exacting.

One gate-keeper says, that the toll-house was the best home that he ever had, although he had several dwellings of his own later. His wife attended to collecting the toll in the day time while he worked at his trade. He had no rent to pay and received \$6.50 in money per month.

Those going to or from funerals were as a rule, exempt from paying toll, and so too were those going to or from church; at times they were required to name the particular church where they intended to worship.”

These excerpts recall what life was like for the early toll booths and roads, and how far we have come.

DRJTBC Source: <https://www.drjtbc.org/2025/06/open-road-toll-collection-project-set-to-begin-at-new-hope-lambertville-route-202-toll-bridge/>

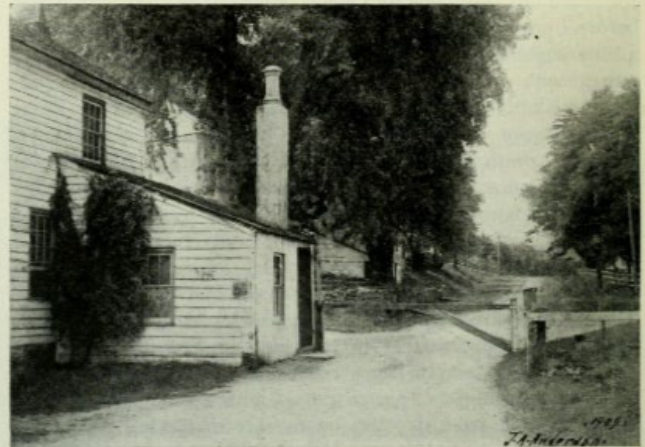
Turnpike Roads in Bucks County.

BY WARREN S. ELY, DOYLESTOWN, PA.

(Churchville Meeting, May 23, 1917.)

SINCE a considerable portion of our program for this meeting is devoted to the history of the local turnpike roads and reminiscences of toll gatherers thereon, it is well to devote a moment to the origin of the name and a brief account of the first turnpike road companies incorporated and operated in our state and county.

The first toll-bar or turn-pike, probably the crude style referred to by Mrs. Nichols, a yeoman's pike balanced on an upright stake or post erected in the middle of the highway to stop travelers and demand toll, was authorized by Edward III, of England in 1346 to cover the cost of keeping in repair the highway now known as Gray's Inn Lane, London. The first turnpike road erected by law in England was in 1663, three centuries later.



TOLL HOUSE AND SINGLE TOLL GATE
Showing "guard rail" on the right at Aquetong, formerly Paxson's Corner, on the Old York Road (Lahaska and New Hope Turnpike) looking south.

In conclusion a few reflections may not be out of place.

1. The gentlemen, who have had the management of these turnpikes for half a century, have been among our most enterprising, yet wise, prudent and judicious citizens, and the roads could not have been under the control of men, who would have conducted their affairs more carefully, more disinterestedly, or more for the benefit of the community.

2. The stone part of a macadamized road, which is much used for heavy hauling as well as light driving, should be from sixteen to twenty feet wide and thirteen or fourteen inches deep.

3. The original cost of such a road will be about \$3,000 a mile.

4. The annual expense of keeping it in good condition will be about \$200 a mile.

5. After the road is constructed it must not be neglected, as constant repairs are necessary.

6. It costs far more every year to maintain in satisfactory order a macadamized road than it does a common dirt road. Hence the reason all our roads are not covered with a coating of broken stone is to be found not, as some have intimated, in the want of knowledge and enterprise of our rural population, but in their lack of pecuniary ability to procure all the luxuries they desire.