

Solebury Chronicle



A newsletter of the Solebury Township Historical Society

Join us October 10, 3 to 5 p.m.

Please join us for the kick-off celebration of our kiln-fired, 8" x 12" clay tile plaques on **Sunday, October 10**, from **3 to 5 p.m.** The event will be held at historic Rolling Green Farm, at the intersection of Route 202 and Aquetong Road.

Created especially for the STHS by a local artisan, these beautiful plaques can adorn your home and/or business with the date of origin of the residence/building. If you prefer, you can have your street address numbers on the tile instead of a date.

For homes dated 1900 or prior, we will verify the date of origin using our available research provided by the late Ned Harrington and the Heritage Conservancy. If you have documentation supporting a date of origin, we will be delighted to review it for you.



We invite you to come learn more about this exciting project. Renowned author Jeff Marshall of Heritage Conservancy will give a short talk at 3:30 p.m. on the dating of historic homes and will be available to answer questions you may have. You will also be among the first to be able to order your tile. Refreshments will be served, and all are welcome.

The cost of the tile is \$100.00 for STHS members, \$125.00 for non-members (\$50.00 deposit required at time of order). Tiles will be delivered approximately 6 to 8 weeks after ordering.

To order or for more information please call 215 297-5091 or email soleburyhistory@verizon.net.

Society's Annual Meeting features Randl Bye photos

DATE: Sunday, November 14, 2010

TIME: 5 - 8 p.m.

**WHERE: Audubon Visitor Center
2877 Creamery Road
New Hope, PA 18938**

You're cordially invited to attend the annual meeting of the Society. While this meeting is required in our by-laws and some organizational business will be conducted, we promise it will be an enjoyable evening. First, the food is always amazing. (It's a pot luck dinner and we ask guests to bring a dish for 6 to share. We have some great cooks among our membership!) Your dinner will be complemented by your choice of beverages, including a fine selection of wines.

Then comes the entertainment: Randl Bye is a professional photographer, and his focus - his passion - has always been historic houses, barns and vistas in Bucks County. He will share with us some spectacular photographs of sites in and near Solebury Township. And perhaps some tips as to how to get the best possible photograph. So plan now to join your fellow Society members for a very pleasant evening.

Calling for Nominations Honored Citizens Awards

Each year the Society recognizes Solebury residents, past and present, who have significantly contributed to the township with the Honored Citizens of Solebury Award. Solebury's character today reflects the aspirations of residents over three centuries, and its future will be determined by our current citizenry.

The Society accepts nominations from the Solebury community at large. The criteria are broad: 1) past or present Solebury resident, 2) over 18 years of age, 3) contributed substantially to the community, and 4) of high moral character. Persons nominated can be current residents as well as deceased and historic persons. The awards will be presented at the Society's annual New Year's Brunch. Deadline for nominations is November 1, 2010.

For more information or a nomination form, call the Society at 215-297-5091 or email soleburyhistory@verizon.net.

President's Message

My five years as President of the Historical Society will be ending in December 2010. It's been a busy and exciting tenure.

When I took office in January '06 we had just moved into the Ingham House. We had rented the second floor from Fox Run Preserve. This was a milestone for us because it was our first home. At last our archives could be housed safely under one roof. (Well, almost. Ned Harrington's historic house research was still being done and stored in his office in Carversville.) We had a "new home shower" and members brought items from our "wish list." We were officially in "business" and we were settled. Until ...

The New Hope/Solebury School District came to us with a question. Would we be interested in leasing the one-room Stone School House in Solebury Village? We couldn't believe our good fortune! The Stone School House was originally built in 1758 and epitomizes the essence of our local history. The exterior was in reasonably good shape (though seriously in need of painting, which is still the case). The outside steps had to be replaced and a railing installed. The interior was another story. Peeling lead-based paint ... mold ... mildew ... leaky pipes ... insufficient plumbing... poor lighting and a ceiling that was wavy. It was rumored that something was living in the attic! We called in Jon Akins, a well known restorer, raised the money from our generous Solebury neighbors, and watched the transformation with great anticipation. On a balmy day in late November '07 the Society moved into its new home. A big 2-day open house was held in the Spring of 2008.

Our Archives Committee, led by Joan Fitting, went to work sorting through seemingly endless boxes of documents, photos, deeds, files, etc. Ned's files were brought in and carefully arranged by tax parcel number in large file cabinets. Joan, an avid "garage saler" unearthed everything from file cabinets to tables to lamps, which were often donated by the seller. We were even given a handsome coal stove and a large school bell. Books were donated to add to our collection. Today we boast a well-organized and extensive research library, which is open to the public on Wednesday afternoons or by appointment.

Then, with the help of a wonderful committee, we established the Solebury History Museum in the lobby of the Township Building. The changing exhibits display interesting items of historical interest, and one display case focuses on historic items from Solebury Township.

Today we continue to move forward, strengthening our board and committee structure, so that we can provide services, events and programs to educate, interpret and preserve the rich history of our Township.

We have a strong balance sheet and a committed membership, and while there's much more to be done, I'm confident the Society will keep moving forward.

None of this could have happened without the hard work and dedication of a wonderful Board of Directors. I want to give them all my heartfelt thanks. Each person who served brought their individual talent that has made the Society the success it is today.

Hope to see you at Rolling Green Farm for the house plague program on Oct. 10th. Also at Holly Hedge for our annual New Year's Day Brunch.



Solebury Township Historical Society
Drawer 525
Solebury, Pennsylvania 18963
215-297-5091
soleburyhistory@verizon.net

2010 Board of Directors

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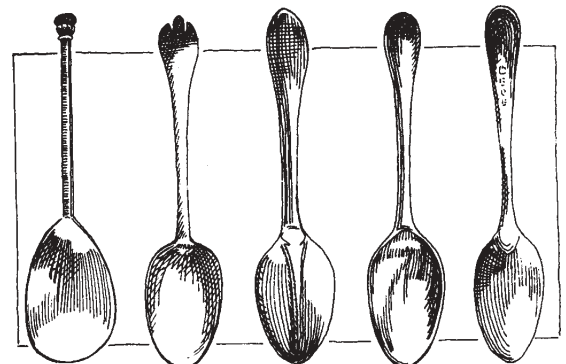
History "Tidbits"

When the Colonists settled in Pennsylvania their only eating implement was the spoon. "Spoons," says archeologist Laborde, "if not as old as the world, are as old as soup." All Colonists had spoons and needed them since much of their food was in the form of soup and stews.

Many spoons were of pewter, which were made with molds of wood or iron. Wooden spoons also were very common. In Pennsylvania the Laurel tree was known as spoonwood because the Native Americans made pretty spoons from that wood to sell to the Colonists. Horn was also used, and Indian tribes excelled in their production also. And if you were a family of considerable possessions, you had at least one silver spoon.

Forks were unknown in the English world in the 18th century, being used only in posh Italian villas.

Excerpted from Home Life in Colonial Days by Alice Morse Earle, 1993.



Highlighting Solebury's Historic Inns

Inn at Phillips Mill

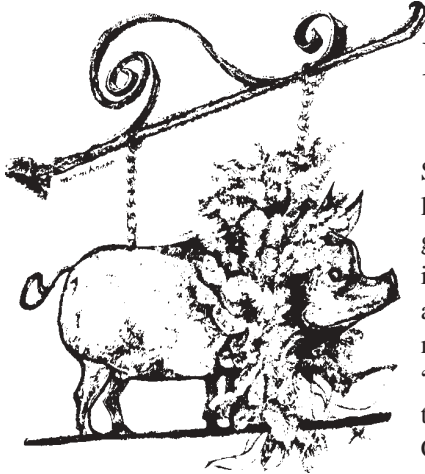
The Inn at Phillips Mill was built in 1750 as a barn for the Aaron Phillips farm. In the early twentieth century it housed William Lathrop's milk cow and driving horse.

With Lathrop's encouragement, Miss Karline Holmquist purchased and converted the stable in 1917 into the beginnings of the "Holmquist School for Girls." Initially there were six students and five teachers. The school was established on the philosophy that the whole person should be educated. Recognizing the unique character of the artists' colony in which she lived, Holmquist gave her students a sound classical education, as well as instruction by the local artists to develop their talents in music, painting, etc. World renowned anthropologist *Margaret Mead* attended the Holmquist School before it was moved to the site of the current Hotel duVillage.

To quote from an essay by long-time Phillips Mill resident Helen McCook, *"One half of the building was used for a number of years as a dormitory. After the school merger (with Solebury School) in 1949 the old historic building became a tea room because Marie Keenan, widow of George Keenan, artist and protégé of Morgan Colt, had several boys attending Solebury School, and found that every afternoon the house was full of youngsters looking for food. Growing kids are always hungry and boarding schools feed only three regular meals a day. Marie started "Tea in the Afternoon" to meet demands in the community for a place for catered parties, served in a setting of grace and charm. Mrs. Keenan's tea room evolved into The Inn at Phillips Mill."*

The Inn was bought in 1972 by architect Brooks Kaufman and his wife Joyce. They restored the interior to present Morgan Colt's imaginative carvings and generous fireplace. The Inn has five lodging rooms and five dining rooms, one of which opens out into a dining patio. The menu features an elegant French cuisine in an intimate setting.





Do You Know?

Several members knew the location of this sign. The garlanded pig overhanging the entrance of the Inn at Phillips Mill and on the menu, pays tribute to the "piggery" which had been the initial home of Morgan Colt, across the courtyard.

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“There was a family dance at Phillips’ Mill ...”

Oral History: It’s Easy and Fun to Do

by John U. Rees

In the last *Solebury Chronicle* I discussed the service of several of Solebury’s civilian-soldiers, and asked for information on other township residents who served in our country’s military over the last two hundred (or more) years. I still hope to pursue that project, but in this issue I wish to tout the fun and worth of interviewing relatives, friends, and neighbors about their life experiences,

All it takes is a bit of your time, curiosity about the universal human experience, a tape recorder or, preferably, a tiny digital recorder (available at less than a hundred dollars), a pen and paper, typewriter or computer to transcribe the recording, and the patience to do the transcription.

To show you the wonderful insights and stories to be gained, I include here an interview I did earlier this year with Sue Tinsman, wife of Bill Tinsman of Lumberville. The transcription has been edited and rearranged chronologically; any mistakes in content or narrative flow are solely mine. First, for context, a brief recounting of Mr. Tinsman’s family and service:

William Tinsman, Jr.

Born: September 7, 1918

Died: October 28, 2009 at age 91

Son of William Tinsman Sr. & Emma Fell Tinsman

Husband of Susan Dolph Tinsman for 66 years

Father of five; grandfather of seven.

Brother: Daniel W. Tinsman of Lumberville

Sister: Margaret T. Welch of Doylestown

Rutgers University, 1936 – 1940

Chemical Warfare Service Band, Edgewood Arsenal, Md. – April 1941 – May 1942

U.S. Army Air Corps, May 1942 – August 1945 (Flew 21 Combat Missions from England, over Europe. Co-pilot on B-24 Liberator Bomber, 21 combat missions, shot down over Germany, interned in Switzerland for 9 months before escaping. Discharged August 1945.)

Sue Tinsman, 24 March 2010:

“We met when I was on a barge ride coming up to Lumberville with the Doylestown Nature Club ... Bill and his brother Dan would hear the ... barge tenders ... they would blow their conch shells, and Bill and Dan would run down and open the gates so that the barge could get through, so we sort of met each other then. But there was a dancing class at Phillips Mill Community Association outside of New Hope and his mother had been trying to get him to go, and he would have no part of it, so when she said, well, I think that little gal you just saw on the barge ride is going he said that maybe he would ... that ... happened to be 4th of July weekend, and there was a family dance at Phillips Mill and Bill called me up and asked me to go ... my mother said absolutely



William Tinsman, during his internment in Switzerland, 1944.

no, no way, I don’t even know this boy ... so I used my best persuasion and I said, well, his brother is going and there will be families there, so anyway we went ... I wasn’t even a teenager I was ... still 10 or 11, so our first dance there was on the 3rd of July 1933 ... I was born in Boise, Idaho, and then when I was four my mother had remarried ... and her husband’s family lived in Philadelphia, so we came east from Boise when I was four ... I went back to visit a few times but never lived there again. Then we moved to Holicong and lived there for four years, then my father’s job was changed and we went to California and I was there for four years, but ... I had met Bill and we wrote to each other every week for four years, he was in college and I was in school ...

They had just formed the ration boards, and enacted the draft act, and Bill and his brother Dan made a deal with the local Draft Board ... that Bill would serve for a year and then Bill would come back to the business and Dan would serve for a year, well, in the mean time we had Pearl Harbor so four years later Bill got out ... he went in originally into the army into the chemical warfare service ... but ... he had played trombone in high school and college, and so he was put in the band. He hated every minute of it because his band leader sergeant was the kind of sergeant you hear about and see in the movies ... He [Bill] went in before Pearl Harbor in April of 41 and then Pearl Harbor was in December ... when Pearl Harbor happened he saw a sign in the local PX, the Air Force wants you and gave the qualifications ... a college graduate and so forth and so on, so Bill went straight and signed up, and when he told his sergeant he tried to cancel it and said no, you’re not going, so Bill didn’t pay any attention, his application was accepted and off he went ... he trained in P-51 fighters ... and then we went to Tallahassee which was his next assignment after graduating from flight training and had gotten his wings ... [Interviewer: “There was a

story that young Bill told me ... that when he went for his physical for flight training ... he suffered from a lack of depth perception?"] He didn't have any depth perception, and he failed the test [to qualify for flight training], but a carton of cigarettes took care of that ... he was transferred as soon as he got there to four engine bombers, and then six weeks later he was flying missions in England with that much training (practically none) and of course the crew must have been at their wit's end ... We were married on the 3rd of July in '43 and ... as soon as we got [to Tallahassee] he was transferred to El Paso Texas ... my sister had been married two weeks before, with forty-eight hours notice for mother, and he [Bill] was sent to the bomb squadron run by ... my brother-in-law, and so we were with them for three weeks at El Paso and then he went on to England and I came home ... he was in England for nine months, was shot down over Switzerland and was there for nine months, and while he was in Switzerland he broke his leg skiing ... well the only thing that they were ordered to do while they were in Davos ... was to stay physically fit and morally alert and so they went skiing all winter. They were given lessons Uncle Sam paid for, it was quite a life they had I guess ... so then he was in the Swiss hospital for six weeks. He had tried to escape once before and got caught and the commandant had told him that if he ever got caught again he would go to prison for good, so the day he got out of the hospital some buddy told him he was going to get taken into custody ... so he paid somebody his leather flight jacket to make him up and change his identity and he and this guy went by train to ... the capital of Switzerland at the time ... anyway he went incognito to a house ... they stayed there until they got enough people together to sneak them out. By that time the Americans had ... taken over to France and they went by cover of night in a small row boat, Bill with his cast on still, to a farmhouse on the French border and those people housed him and one other guy for a week until they were sent on someplace else ... they ended up in London and then they shipped them home ... when he came home, he said he would never again get in another airplane, he just hated every minute of it, but ... fortunately that did not last and we did have some wonderful trips ... for years and years Bill wouldn't talk about it at all, and then all of a sudden he and others like him ... time had passed and they enjoyed talking about it tremendously ... [after being sent home from England, which occurred almost immediately] he was sent to a rehabilitation center up at Plattsburgh, New York, and ... we set up housekeeping in Plattsburgh while we were stationed there because they wouldn't let him out of the service yet ... he got out in August of 45 ... [Interviewer mentions the book *Flags of Our Fathers* and the role of Medics and Navy Corpsman] ...

We are Friends [members of the Society of Friends, or Quakers] and Bill and his brother Dan both had a very hard time deciding what to do ... members of our Meeting counseled them, but never really pressured them, and said they just wanted to make sure that they thought about the possibilities and the alternatives, and if they could serve their country in others ways, but neither one of them felt that they could not serve. [Interviewer notes the

early Friends Meetings practice of reading out of meeting any member who served in the military, something that largely changed in the mid 19th century] ... That is not the case in Solebury ... [in] the Crooks family [Corydon and Malcolm were both conscientious objectors; Corydon served in several camps around the U.S., and later on a vessel carrying cattle to Poland, while Malcolm was pulled from his senior year at college for alternate service in several C.O. camps. Other Friends joined the military as unarmed Army Medics or Navy Corpsman] ... Of course it was so entirely different for all of us because we were all in the same boat. Today if you know anybody that's serving actively overseas you don't know many, but everybody was, I mean every family was involved ... we had gas rationing and food. I served on the Ration Board in Newtown, or worked for them, and they had a definite system as to how many coupons you could get for gas, depending on what your usage was, and the way people tried to work around it and stuff...

When Bill and I were married, we were married in Newtown Friends Meeting because my family was living in Newtown at the time and we couldn't get gas to come to Solebury ... our friends couldn't. You could get gas to go to a religious service, which was the wedding, but you couldn't get gas to go to the reception cause that was a party ... all the members of the Ration Board and the people on the staff got a hay wagon ... we lived about two miles outside of Newtown on 413, and they all came out the reception on the hay wagon ..."

So I recommend listening to the life stories of loved ones, acquaintances, and strangers, while at the same time practicing an old-fashioned pastime ... a plain, person-to-person conversation.

(John Rees) Interview with Sue Tinsman of Lumberville (wife of William Tinsman, Jr.)
24 March 2010, transcribed interview, 24 minutes 30 seconds)

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Annual Members' Picnic

The decision to postpone our annual picnic from the gloomy, rainy original date to Sunday, September 19 was a good one for those who joined us. We were blessed with a perfect late summer day, and the food once again was fabulous.

During the afternoon, Elaine Crooks gave tours of their 1747 stone farmhouse and provided stories and historic details of the home and antique furnishings.

Thank you to all who came.



Dining room in the Crooks' house.



*Kudos to our hard working volunteers, **Penny Armagost** and **Bill Winters**, who grilled the burgers and dogs and kept the food table fresh and tidy.*



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.

News Members

Nancy Decker Holland
David & Barbara Stoller

Members who have renewed

John Cannon
Richard Carlson
Helen Devlin
Peggy and Bill Hecht
Gregory D. Kirk
Diane B. Glossman and Richard J. Magruder
John J. Merana
Dr. & Mrs. Robert Ozols
Susan Rorer Whitby
Margery Rutbell
Suzanne and Edward Sanson
Dorothy and Joe Schillinger
Karl and Bonnie Schmidt
Michael J. and Elizabeth Schmidt
Solebury School
Anne M. Soriero
Karen Giller and Dr. William Stanell
Anne C. Stephano

Bob and Barbara Straton
Robert and Susan Sturgis
The Lexington House
Col. Joseph and Betsy Thomas
Sue Tinsman
August and Donna Turturro
Mr. & Mrs. Von Zelowitz
Genevieve Wahlgren
Franca C. Warden
Ann Warren
Curt Wary
Patricia Whitman
Charles and Pat Worth
George and Judy Yerkes
Edward Zekus

Every effort has been made to publish a complete and accurate list of memberships received since the last newsletter (May 2010) from June through September 23, 2010. We regret if there are any omissions.



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Michael Scavullo, • 215-794-3393
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Many Thanks . . .

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

Picnic Helpers: Penny Armagost and Bill Winters, the MacDowells for the loan of a grill, and hosts **Elaine and Malcolm Crooks**.

Members of the Plaque Committee: Joe Thomas, Donneta Crane, Beth Carrick, Donna Trenchard, Richard Carlson, Joan Fitting, Linda Metcalf.

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 reach the Solebury community with your ad in the next *Solebury Chronicle*.)

Calling for Volunteers

The Society is focused on increasing member participation on our various committees. We have lots of volunteer opportunities that would help with our many projects and be rewarding to you. Our major committees include: Events, Archives, Education and Fund Raising. Several sub-committees within them include individual events, like the New Year's Brunch and Annual Picnic; under Education we have programs, oral histories, Solebury Veterans, and the newsletter.

Please give us a call and let us know where you'd like to help out. We have lots of fun!

Legacy Fund

Many thanks to **Gayle Goodman** for her recent generous donation to the Legacy Fund. The Solebury Township Historical Society's Legacy Fund is an opportunity for us to secure the future of the Society and the historic legacy of Solebury Township. Please consider a donation, and remember us in your estate planning.



Solebury Township Historical Society
Drawer 525
Solebury, PA 18963

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Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars

Sunday, October 10, 3-5 p.m.

House Plaques

Join us at Rolling Green Farm to learn about the new **house plaques** being offered by the STHS. Jeffrey Marshall, Vice President of Heritage Conservancy, will talk about dating old houses. See a sample of the lovely terracotta plaque. Light refreshments served. All welcome; free. Located at 2725 Aquetong Road (intersection with Rt. 202). Enter from Route 202.

(NOTE: The October 2 History Walk has been postponed until next year.)

Sunday, November 14, 4:30 - 7:30 p.m. Annual Meeting

Audubon Visitor Center, 2877 Creamery Road, New Hope. Covered dish supper (please bring a dish for 6 to share). Brief business meeting followed by a slide presentation by renowned photographer Randl Bye focused on historic buildings of Solebury.

Saturday, January 1, 2011 Annual New Year's Brunch

Holly Hedge Estates, Route 263, Solebury

*Members will receive personal invitations to all events .
Visit www.soleburyhistory.org for updates.*

Do You Know?



Do you know where this photo was taken?

Call 215-297-5091 or email soleburyhistory@verizon.net with your answer. You may win a prize!