

Solebury Chronicle



A newsletter of the Solebury Township Historical Society

Honored Citizens of Solebury awards presented at New Year's Brunch

Each year the Solebury Township Historical Society recognizes residents, past and present, who have significantly contributed to the township. Chosen to receive the 2009 Honored Citizens of Solebury awards were Daniel Garber and Franca Warden.

Daniel Garber (1880-1958) was an American Impressionist landscape painter and a founding member of the art colony at New Hope. He is best known today for his large impressionist scenes of the New Hope area, in which he often depicted the Delaware River. In addition to his painting career, Garber taught art at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts for over forty years. So deep was his love for this area that he once wrote, "To know me now you would have to know the place, everyone knows it's half me."

In 1907, on the advice of artist William Langson Lathrop, he settled at Cuttalossa Farm where he lived and worked until his untimely death in 1958 after falling from a ladder at his studio. Garber's paintings are considered by collectors and art historians to be among the finest works produced from the New Hope art colony. His paintings are owned by major museums including the Smithsonian American Art Museum in Washington, DC, and the Art Institute of Chicago.

Garber was nominated for this award by Suzanne Lowe, who lives in the artist's former home on Cuttalossa Road. The award was accepted by his granddaughter Dana Garber Applestein.

Franca Warden was born in Italy and has been a resident of Solebury Township since 1958. All her life she has worked tirelessly in support of the arts. She is a founding member and chairman emeritus of the Bucks County Opera Association, and she has actively pursued support for young singers through the Academy of Vocal Arts for more than 50 years.

Warden has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Solebury Township Historical Society for 8 years. She also serves on the Central Bucks Chamber's visual arts committee and was honored with the Chamber's Business & Arts Award in 2007. She continues to be involved in protecting the arts in her native Italy through the American-Italy Society and has worked on restoration projects in Venice, Assisi, and Florence.

At 80 years young, Franca inspires us all with her energy and commitment to the arts. Franca was nominated by her friend and former STHS president John Touhey.

The Society accepts nominations for the awards from the community throughout the year. Call 215-297-8447 or email soleburyhistory@comcast.net for a nomination form.



Dana Applestein accepts the Honored Citizens Award for her grandfather Daniel Garber.



Daniel Garber



John Touhey and STHS president Sally Jagoe listen as Franca Warden acknowledges her Honored Citizens Award.

Presidents Message

2009 – A Year of Growth

Now that we have all the essentials (the Schoolhouse and its archives) in place we now have the framework to grow. Mary-jo May, our newly hired Administrative Director, has been an invaluable asset. No task is too much for her to handle.

This year we will be reaching out to members who have checked “volunteer” on the membership form. A letter will be sent with a “survey of skills” form to be returned. We will then match skills with needs. By doing this we hope to launch programs that have previously been considered “wouldn’t it be nice if we could only . . .”

Donna Trenchard has joined our Board. Donna has been working with Joan Fitting for more than a year at the Schoolhouse. The Schoolhouse is now open to the public for research every Wednesday from 3 - 5 PM. We hope to open more hours this coming year.

We have appointed David Benner as our “Resident Naturalist.” David is a retired professor at Delaware Valley College and is more than qualified for this task. During our spring and fall walks, David has accompanied us and taught us about various trees and fauna. He has taken it upon himself to locate and catalogue the major trees in our township and has reminded us that our history is also located in our natural surroundings. The huge white ash tree at the Marsh Gibbon farm comes to mind. It is a truly magnificent specimen that needs to be recorded. Hopefully we will find a photographer or photographers to assist David with the huge project.

Mary Powell and I met recently with the New Hope/Solebury Education Fund (NHSEF) (the “thermometer” outside the high school reflects their progress). We hope that our Education Committee can create a program of mutual interest. NHSEF awards grants to teachers who wish to, among other things, enhance community involvement and bring special programs into the school district.

We will be calling on all residents of Solebury to search for old photos that depict our history. I have recently visited with Mrs. LaRue whose family owned the LaRue Bottling works on Stoney Hill Rd. What wonderful stories she told about bottling soda and delivering it to small stores and farms. These treasured photos were scanned and returned to her. They are now saved and will be enjoyed by all.

We have created our 2009 Events Calendar (see back page), so please circle the dates on your calendar.

See you then,



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Solebury, Pennsylvania 18963
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Board of Directors

Sally Grant-Jagoe, *President*
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Rhoda Renschler
Donna Trenchard
Franca Warden

Administrative Director: Mary-jo May



Donna Trenchard and her husband Paul enjoy the New Year's brunch.

Board Update

We are pleased to welcome Donna Trenchard to the STHS board. Born in New Jersey, Donna worked in human resources for Exxon-Mobil for 30 years. In 2006 she and Paul were married and moved to Solebury Township. They discovered the Historical Society and found it a great way to meet neighbors and to learn about their community. Donna began working with Joan Fitting on the Archives Committee when the Society moved into the Schoolhouse last year and has been a huge help in organizing our reference materials. She was elected to the board at our annual meeting in November. She serves on both the Archive and the Events Committees. Donna says she and Paul are very happy to call Solebury Township their home; we say we're very happy to have her on "board."



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Highlighting Solebury's National Historic Landmarks

This is the 3rd of a series of articles describing the three National Historic Landmarks in Solebury Township.

The Delaware Canal

In the early 1800's, America was growing rapidly and business was booming. Poor roads and unnavigable rivers could no longer meet the young nation's needs. Legislators and entrepreneurs looked to canals. These man-made waterways had been used successfully in Asia and Europe for centuries as a way to provide better, faster and cheaper transportation.

Inspired by the tremendous success of New York state's Erie Canal, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania began building a 1,200-mile system of canals to connect Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Lake Erie. These new transportation routes would carry the raw materials and manufactured products that would power this country's industrial revolution.

The Delaware Canal is part of this great network. Completed in 1832, it runs for 58.9 miles from Bristol to Easton, where it connects with the Lehigh Canal. The primary purpose of these two waterways was to transport anthracite coal from the northeastern Pennsylvania coal regions to the cities on the eastern seaboard.

In the most productive years just prior to the Civil War, over 3,000 mule-drawn boats traveled up and down this route, moving over one million tons of coal a year. Smaller quantities of goods such as lumber, building stone, lime, and produce were also carried.

Life was hard for the men, women, and children who worked on the canals. A typical day started before 4 a.m. with the grooming and harnessing of the mule-team. It ended at 10 p.m. or later, when the lock tenders stopped operating the locks and the boats could go no further. A mule-powered boat loaded with 80 tons of cargo traveled 30 miles or more each day.

Over its course of 60 miles, the Delaware Canal drops 165 feet through some twenty-three locks. Ten aqueducts carry the waterway over small valleys and streams. Including its towpath and berm bank, the canal is approximately 60 feet wide and originally was five feet deep.



This postcard shows a canal boat on the canal in Solebury.

Times change

As railroads began to seriously compete for freight contracts, canal-generated revenues to the Commonwealth dropped. In 1858, the decision was made to sell the Delaware Canal to private operators. From 1866 to 1931, the Delaware Canal was run by the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. Traffic and revenue declined as the "iron horse" finally beat the mule, and the last paying boat locked through in October 17, 1931. The same day, 40 miles of the Delaware Canal was deeded to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It was named Roosevelt State Park by Governor Gifford Pinchot, to commemorate his fellow preservationist, Theodore Roosevelt.

In 1940 the Commonwealth acquired all 60 miles of the canal. By popular demand, the park was renamed Delaware Canal State Park in 1989. The significance of the Delaware Canal was recognized in 1978, when it was designated a National Historic Landmark. The 60-mile Delaware Canal is the only remaining continuously intact canal of the great towpath canal building era of the early and mid-19th century.

Today

The Canal has become an important scenic and recreational resource. In recent years floods have devastated the canal, but the Commonwealth is committed to restoration. In addition the Delaware Canal has an excellent advocacy group, the Friends of the Delaware Canal, which continues to devote its energy and resources to a fully-watered canal. As of this date, twelve different flood repair and capital project contracts are in various stages of completion. The reconstruction plan involves installing a stable core material within the bank, providing a liner that is more reliably impervious than clay, and laying down a trail surface that will be less prone to erosion. The towpath trail surface will be "stabilized turf." It consists of 85% stone aggregate mixed with 15% topsoil seeded with a special non-clumping grass. The stabilized turf will not be as smooth as the argillite gravel trail, but will hold together better in a flooding situation.

Approximately 8 miles of the Delaware Canal traverse through Solebury Township with several access points including the Virginia Forrest Recreation Area, providing abundant recreational opportunities in a bucolic peaceful setting. So take a stroll or bike ride on the towpath and enjoy lovely views of the Delaware River, historic homes, and the wildlife in this unique State Park and National Historic Landmark.

(parts excerpted from www.fodc.org, website of the Friends of the Delaware Canal)

Do You Know?

This photo in the last newsletter was identified by Les Isbrandt. Amazingly he knew that it was a wastegate, also known as a waste weir, a structure built into the canal bank as a means of regulating the height of the water in the canal. The waste gates are operated by a mechanism installed at the top of the structure. The gates are opened when water in the canal rises to a dangerous level, or when it needs to be drained for other reasons. This waste gate is located at the Virginia Forrest Recreation Area. Les asked that he receive the *Solebury Chronicle* as his "prize".



Happy New Year!

The Society's eighth annual New Year's Brunch was another great success, bringing friends and neighbors together to celebrate the New Year!



Special thanks to our sponsors:

Addison Wolfe Real Estate
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The First National Bank & Trust of Newtown



Doug McArthur (l) was the luck winner of an oil painting by Daniel Anthonisen.



Board member Joan Fitting read a letter from the archives depicting life in Solebury many years ago.



Franca Warden (r), 2009 Honored Citizen, with her son Michael, his wife Katie and son Christopher.



(l-r) Bill and Sue Tinsman, Patsy Tinsman and Dick Wallace.



George and Ellen Anthonisen (r) chat with Guy Glass and Lewis Baratz.



Local historian Will Rivinus with Dickie Ann Boal.



(l-r) Malcolm Crooks, Donna Trenchard (new Society board member) and her husband Don, Don and Joan Fitting.



(l-r) Pat and Jay Petrie, Audrey and Bob Long.



You just can't say no to Bill MacDowell when he's selling raffle tickets!

Music of Solebury

If you are reading this newsletter, you already know how special Solebury Township is. You know it is steeped in history and was and is home to many artists. But did you know that a number of famous musicians also called Solebury Township their home? Those lucky members who attended our annual meeting enjoyed a concert featuring songs by these musicians. Pianist Bill Gottshall,

Moss Hart



A postage stamp issued in 2004 honored Moss Hart.

Moss Hart was born in New York City in 1904. Family finances forced him to drop out of high school and take a job as a clothing folder at a garment factory. He was so enterprising that his boss agreed to let him write and produce a musical review to highlight the company's clothing line. A few years later, Hart

took a job as the entertainment director for a series of summer resorts in the Catskills.

Hart's dream came true when he became part of the Golden Age of Broadway. Hart worked on Broadway plays and musicals with the greatest talents of his day, including Irving Berlin, Lerner and Loewe, and his lifelong friend and collaborator, George Kaufman. He created some of the best known musicals in Broadway history, including *My Fair Lady* (1956) and *Camelot* (1960).

Hart and his wife Kitty Carlisle, an actress and game show participant, lived in Solebury Township on Aquetong Road near the intersection of Route 202. It is known now that he suffered from long bouts of depression and although fathering two children, Hart was gay. Hart, who once said that all successful people in the theater came from unhappy childhoods, died in 1961.

Paul Whiteman



Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra was the most popular band of the 1920s and represented the apex of jazz to the general public. Paul Whiteman was one of the most important figures in twentieth century American pop music.

Eventually dubbed the "King of Jazz,"

Whiteman grew into one of the biggest promoters of players, singers, and arrangers of all times.

Many well-known musicians got their first big boost in his band including Tommy and Jimmy Dorsey, Bing Crosby, Frank Trumbauer, Bix Beiderbecke, Johnny Mercer, Mildred Bailey, and Ferde Grofé. In 1924 Whiteman commissioned George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue*, which was premiered by Whiteman's orchestra with Gershwin at the piano. In 1933, Whiteman had a #2 hit on the *Billboard* charts with the song, *Willow Weep for Me*. His band recorded more than 200 hits through 1936 that included *Three O'Clock in the Morning*, *My Blue Heaven*, *Ol' Man River*, and *Smoke Gets in Your Eyes*.

Whiteman lived on Great Oaks Road in Solebury for many years. He died at the age of 77 in Doylestown.

accompanied by singer Beverly Brown, put on quite a show, which took place in a renovated barn that was not only full of charm, but constructed for near perfect acoustics. Here is some background on these famous musicians of Solebury.

Paul Simon



Born in Newark, NJ in 1941, Paul Simon of famed Simon & Garfunkle lived on Stoney Hill Road in Solebury for a number of years. His most well-known music includes *Bridge Over Troubled Water*, *Still Crazy After All These Years* and *The Sounds of Silence*. In the 60s and 70s, he made moving testaments to the times, fusing folk and rock music. In the 1980s he pioneered a popular

cross-cultural music that brought South African musicians into mainstream America. More recently, Simon finished his most ambitious project yet — *The Capeman*, a Broadway musical. Over his more than forty years in the business, Paul Simon has continued to bring an innovative voice to everything he does. He has won 12 Grammy Awards and is in both the Songwriters Hall of Fame and the Rock n' Roll Hall of Fame.

Leon Redbone



Born in 1949, Leon Redbone is a singer and guitarist specializing in interpretations of early 20th-century music, including jazz and blues standards and Tin Pan Alley classics.

Recognized for his trademark Panama hat, dark sunglasses, and bow tie, Redbone first appeared on stage in Toronto, Canada, in the mid-1970s. Little is known about his background. Redbone has been called "the most

famous non-famous American musician." He has released fifteen albums and earned a sizable cult following who will travel significant distances to hear him perform. His concerts blend performance, comedy, and skilled instrumentals.

It is believed that Redbone is married to jazz producer Beryl Handler and has two daughters. The couple co-produced Redbone's 2001 album *Anytime*. Redbone is a very private person. But we do know that he lives in Solebury Township.

Don Walker

Composer Don Walker arranged the scores for many Broadway musicals, including *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Damn Yankees* and *The Music Man*. He also scored a few feature films. In 1965, his score for *A Thousand Clowns* received an Oscar nomination. Walker also worked as a conductor on the television show *Your Hit Parade* and arranged music for Fred Waring & His Pennsylvanians.

Walker was born in Lambertville, NJ, and lived in Solebury township at Aquetong & Covered Bridge roads, a property known to this day as Harmony Hill. He died in 1989.

Armitage Road Walk highlighted famous residents



Bob Mulligan (right, front) tells the group about his horse breeding operation on Marion Farms. Walk leader Will Rivinus, front, left.



The group of walkers enjoy the amazing view from Marion Farms..



Roland Massimino greeted our walkers and provided details on the history and careful restoration of the former home of poet John Greenleaf Whittier.



Walkers enjoy the tranquillity as they stroll down picturesque Armitage Road.



Rhoda Renschler shares some history about her home where explorer Zebulon Pike lived as a child. Refreshments were served at the Renschler home.

Remembrances



*The Society planted a tree on the schoolhouse grounds last fall in memory of **Wallace Sellers**, a long-time supporter who passed away in 2008. (l-r) Sally Jagoe, Barbara Sellers, Naudain Sellers.*



***Marge Elliott** (left front) always enjoyed all the Society events. Marge passed away on December 20, 2008.*



*We also mourn the loss of **Peggy Adams**, a friend of the Society. Peggy republished the book *Solebury Township* by Col. John Richardson for the Society.*

Donneta Crane

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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.

Marcia Angerman	Sonja & Richard Irwin
George & Ellen Anthonisen	Sally & Harvey Jagoe
Rick & Julie Bagshaw	Douglas & Wendy Kale
Cristian Blackwood	Linda Kenyon
Steven Cohen and Pamela Blake	Gregory D. Kirk
Jim & Mary Borthwick	David & Kimberly Kline
Betty & George Bramhall	Richard G. & Margaret Knoster
Dale & Ruth Broderick	Juergen & Elizabeth Kruse
Franta Broulik	Michael & Donna Lacey
James D. & Rhea Brown	James & Nancy Lockhart
David Cramer and Anna Burbank	Joe & Amy Luccaro
John Cannon	Diane B. Glassman and Richard J. Magruder
Richard Carlson	Thomas and James Markey
Frank & Barbara Carolan	Steven Marschall
John & Carol Carpenter	Ian & Jane McNeill
Mrs. M. Curtis Chianese	David R. McShane
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Richard & Gerry Cooper	J.M. Metzger
Frank & Patty Cosner	Eleanor Miller
Stephen & Donneta Crane	Pamela Morrison
R. Scott Creighton	Lillian & Ed O'Connor
Elaine & Malcolm Crooks	Megan & Ken Peterson
Deanna & Bob Cross	Stephen & Marie Raab
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Barbara M. Donnelly	Paul & Lisa Ruo
Jonathan & Diane Downs	Mr. & Mrs. Mortimer Ryon
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Ronald & Shirley Felix	Jurgen Schweickhardt
Geoffrey & Kathleen Fisher	Beth & Bill Short
Paul & Rita Flack	Michael & Lavinia Smerconish
Michael & Jean Fowler	Janice Spurr
Bruce & Sheryl Fredendall	John & Irene Szykowski
David & Connie Gillis	Melinda & Ted Tally
Tamsen Granger	Daniel Telep
Dave & Jacqui Griffith	Melody Hunt and William E. Tinsman
Star & Peter Grover	Michael Prediger and John Touhey
Patrick Bell & David Guilmet	Paul & Donna Trenchard
Jane & Simon Hallett	Jon Volwieder
Dave Handy	Mr. & Mrs. Von Zelowitz
Alix & Chris Hansen	Patsy Tinsman & Dick Wallace
Don & Martha Harris	Franca C. Warden
Kathy Hausman and Jim Hill	Curt Wary
Alan & Mildred Hoberman	Elaine Whitman
Burt & Nancy Holland	Mike & Ruth Ann Wilson
Richard Gold and John Hollyday	Patricia Witlicki
F.Patrick & Mary Holmes	Dr. Robert Hunter Wood
Robert & Sally Huxley	Mr. & Mrs. Richard A. Yarnall

Every effort has been made to publish a complete and accurate list of memberships received since the last newsletter (September 2008) and up to January 21, 2009. We regret if there are any omissions.

Many Thanks . . .

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

Stephen Phillips and Candace Jones for hosting the Society's Annual Meeting in the wonderful barn at Cradle Valley Farm

Sponsors of the New Year Brunch:

Addison Wolfe Real Estate

George Nakashima Woodworker S.A.

The First National Bank & Trust of Newtown

Donors of Raffle prizes:

Daniel Anthonisen

Black Bass Hotel

Giggleberry Fair (Chee Jamison)

Centre Bridge Inn

Hotel duVillage

Sweet Lorraine's (Chee Jamison)

Carsversville Inn

Anna Williams & Franca Warden

Giant Food Stores for Brunch centerpieces

Bountiful Acres for large pointsetias

Dave Benner for providing music at the brunch

Marne Dietterich, Marti Harris, and Rhoda Renschler for tying ribbons and branches on to the Brunch programs

Elaine Crooks for designing the Brunch invitations and program and the *Solebury Chronicle*

Travis Gallery for displaying the Anthonisen painting and selling raffle tickets

The First National Bank & Trust of Newtown for displaying the Anthonisen painting and selling raffle tickets

Armitage Road Walk: Will Rivinus, leader; **Rhoda Renschler**, planner; **Connie & David Gillis** for telling about the turkey farm; **Bill & Eileen Mulligan**, for giving us a tour of their horse breeding farm; **Roland and Mary Massimino** for welcoming the group to their home – former residence of John Greenleaf Whittier; **Rhoda and Daryl Renschler** for hosting the refreshments

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 215-297-0885 or email soleburyhistory@comcast.net to reach the Solebury community with your ad in the next *Solebury Chronicle*.)

Plan for the Future

The Solebury Township Historical Society has established an Endowment Fund to help secure our future. Please remember us in your estate planning.



Solebury Township Historical Society
Drawer 525
Solebury, PA 18963

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Upcoming Events

Mark your calendars for a fun-filled, fascinating year with the Solebury Township Historical Society

- | | |
|---|---|
| Sunday, April 26, 1-4 p.m. | Schoolhouse Open House |
| Saturday, June 6, 9 a.m. | Spring Walk in Lumberville featuring the Black Bass and Lumberville Store; lead by Willis Rivinus |
| Sunday, August 30
Rolling Green Farm | Annual Picnic |
| Saturday, October 3 | Fall Walk - Mills along Mechanics Street, New Hope |
| Sunday, November 15 | Annual Meeting
Square Dance |

Some dates are tentative. Members will receive personal invitations to all events and updates in future newsletters.

If you didn't renew your membership in 2008, this will be your last issue of the Solebury Chronicle. Renew your membership today to stay on our mailing list. Several renewal notices have been sent.

Do You Know?



In this photo taken inside one of Solebury's most historic public buildings a stairway was built across an old doorway. Which building?

Call 215-862-5033 or email soleburyhistory@comcast.net with your answer. You may win a prize!