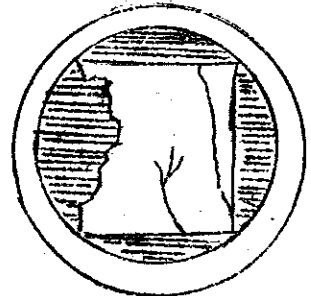


1971

HT NEWSLETTER



Volume I, Number 1

1971

EDITORIAL

Think of all those beautiful and well polished old mansions you have visited! Remember how you admired them? Now you told your friends to go see them?

Now, Dame Fortune smiles on us, having taken note of the excellent efforts of the noble ones. Nitre Hall is going to be THE showplace of Delaware County if not Pennsylvania. And we are the lucky ones! We are in on the ground floor. We have the chance to dress up this grand old lady and introduce her to society.

It isn't often that we are given the opportunity of restoring a landmark, but we can do it. It isn't the first time.

Remember the cabin? It was brought to life and we keep it going. The community knows and loves it.

Will the Federal School be Number Three?

Aren't we members of the Historical Society lucky? Be sure to get in your share!

GOOD NEWS AT NITRE HALL

The restoration of Nitre Hall is one of the two local Pennsylvania projects approved and funded by the Federal Government under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. This act authorizes matching grants-in-aid for projects having as their purpose the preservation for public benefit of properties that are significant in American history, archeology, and culture. Although authorized in 1966, the grants-in-aid part was not funded until the 1971 Federal fiscal year.

The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission requested funds for the restoration of historic properties where an active local program was apparent and local matching funds were available. Fortunately Nitre Hall met the standards of the Commission as well as the National Park Service.

Work cannot start until the Pennsylvania Department of Justice provides the proper agreement, to be executed by the Township. With \$4,000 from the
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 3)

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CLEAN-UP DAY

Our first Work Day in Karakung Park was on Saturday, October 16. It was fun! You really get to love a place when you get to the nitty-gritty.

About 20 members of the Society were joined by some 10 members of Students for a Better Community to do some maintenance work at the Lawrence Cabin and environs. Miss Ann Gilbert is their sponsor.

Furniture was first removed from the cabin and then waxed and polished. Cracks in the floor boards were carefully cleaned out so that Chlordane solution could be poured down, to repel insects. The windows were re-puttied, scraped down and painted. Where whitewash was flaking, flat white paint was applied to both walls and doors, on the interior of the cabin.

Roofing shingles were either replaced or nailed down as needed. The fireplace was cleaned and a supply of kindling appeared.

Outside, the grading around the cabin was lowered for better drainage;

some of the steps were realigned and the general area was policed.

Mrs. Anne Blair had coffee and soda ready when needed. The work on the cabin was under the direction of Lee Nelson; Harry Young was general chairman.

FEDERAL SCHOOL

The Federal School or Seminary No. 1 is the oldest building erected solely for school purposes in Haverford Township. Earlier classes had been held in Haverford Friends Meeting House. Built in 1797 on the road to Goshen in Coopertown (Darby Road), the name is derived from the pride our forefathers took in being a Federation of States. At that time, the Federal Government had nothing to do with education.

This building is the property of the Haverford Township School District, and our Society has been asked to provide plans for its restoration and to act as advisors on furnishings and use.

Mr. Arthur White, a registered architect, will chair the committee working on the Federal School.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
SPONSORED BY OUR SOCIETY

We have been invited into the schools as para-professionals (that means you don't get paid), to give slide lectures on Haverford's history; the Pennsylvania Trail of History, which covers the historic properties owned by the state; and Houses, U. S. A., about the domestic architecture from our earliest homes.

We also give demonstrations of spinning, with a discussion of growing and processing flax and wool to make cloth. Models of spinning tools and samples of flax and wool in various stages are displayed to the group. Also herbs and plants used in dyeing are shown, and may be examined by the children.

Special guides are provided for class and group visits to the Lawrence Cabin Museum, and a short history of Powdermill Valley is supplied. Many of the classes have divided into two groups, and take turns sketching the cabin and its contents. Some of our schools also request that we supply guides for bus tours of the township.

So far, this autumn, four kindergartens, one third grade, and four Haverford Township Senior High School classes have visited the

cabin. Two of the groups were from Lower Merion and one from Chester.

Heritage Day in Karakung Park is a major educational project, with exhibits and demonstrations of a variety of early crafts. Our next Heritage Day will be in May, 1973.

Nitre Hall (continued)

Historical Society, \$4,000 from the Township and matching Federal funds of \$8,000, we hope to get work under way before the end of 1971.

Nitre Hall is on the National Register of historic places, a distinguished listing that includes, in Delaware County to date, only the Brandywine Battlefield, Brinton 1704 House, Morton House, Benjamin West House, Pusey House, Massey House, and the site of the Printzhof in Tinicum.

Our Society appreciates the exhibits of Firemen's medals and helmets, brought to our last meeting by one of our firemen-policemen from Manoa - Bernard Romani. Larry Drake of Oakmont also brought some old fire marks. We then discovered Mrs. Stafford has one of the oldest fire marks, the four clasped hands.

Officers and Board Members of the Historical Society

Mrs. Robert H. Johnston, President

Mr. Lee H. Nelson, Vice President

Mr. Harry Ross Young, Treasurer

Miss Elizabeth McClain, Recording Secretary

Mrs. Grenville Wilcox, Corresponding Secretary

Mrs. B. Franklin Blair

Mrs. John Clemmer

Mrs. John Engle, Program Chairman

Mrs. Francis Kelly, Hospitality Chairman

Miss Susanne Loder, Publicity Chairman

Mr. William Laramy

Miss Carolyn McCoy

Mr. David B. Robb

Mrs. Frederick Stafford

Mrs. Eliot Stellar

Mr. Albert Weaver

Mr. Arthur White, Chairman - Federal School Committee

Mrs. Frank Wolfington, Membership Chairman

All of our officers and board members are working hard and are happy for your support. If you have any suggestions - perhaps for a program or speaker, or names of possible new members, please pass them on to any of the above. If you have any suggestions for ideas that our society can use, please feel free to pass them on. Meetings are held regularly (see calendar) with committees meeting as necessary.

We wish to remind you that reservations for our lecture series may be obtained from the chairman,

Mrs. David Robb
2713 Haverford Road
Ardmore, Pa. 19003

Any comments, suggestions, or future news items will be most gratefully received by the editor.

MID-WINTER LECTURES

Our subscription lecture series will be held on Sunday afternoons from 3 to 5 P.M. for the benefit of Nitre Hall.

On January 23, 1972, Dr. Edward Teitelman will give a slide lecture on "Wilson Eyre and the American Country House 1885 - 1925." We are fortunate to have Allgates, a home designed by Wilson Eyre, for this program.

Eric deJonge of the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission will discuss "Country Furniture - So-Called" at Bryn Arden on February. Pont Reading will be open for the March 19 lectures, when Lita Solis-Cohen will speak on "The Art of the 18th Century Silversmith."

Invitations are being mailed to members and friends, but we are limited by the size of the houses. So get your reservation in early. Tickets for the series are \$20.00, \$14.00 tax deductible. When there is sufficient space, single lecture tickets are \$8.00

RECENT ACCESSIONS

We have received a fascinating collection of some 94 items to add to the many articles just waiting to go into Nitre Hall. We will be glad to give you a list at the February meeting.

ARCHITECT SENDS PLANS

John D. Milner, AIA, our architect from Chadds Ford, has presented plans for Nitre Hall. He also states this is a mansion house of 175 years or more which is "one of the most historically and architecturally significant buildings in Delaware County with national importance." At its peak, this powdermill was second only to Dupont's. The house has survived to this date in its relatively original condition.

The first floor will be made into an apartment for the caretakers. A public lavatory will also be there. The three upper floors will house the Society's office and library, and display areas.

Workmen on our future public museum will be told to notify Mr. Milner immediately if any artifacts or unusual features are uncovered.

GIFT FROM HIGH SCHOOL GROUP

The Society is most grateful to the students for a Better Community, from our Haverford High School, sponsored by Miss Ann Gilbert. They recently purchased and gave to us 13 rare old school books, dating from 1860 to 1894. These were presented at the last meeting by Miss Laurie Bruce.

HELP WANTED!

TYPISTS - to copy items for our permanent records.

LIBRARIANS - to properly catalogue our growing collection of books.

GUIDES AND AIDES - to be trained to serve at the Lawrence Cabin Museum and Nitre Hall.

GARDENERS - to plan and prepare landscaping

VOLUNTEERS - to scrape, paint, glaze, and carpenter as work at Nitre Hall gets under way.

PASTERS - to put clippings in our files.

If you have willing hands, we need you. Do call - FL2-0611 or HI6-1026 or drop a card to Haverford Township Historical Society, P. O. Box 825, Havertown, Pa. 19083, if you wish to apply for any of these exciting unpaid positions.

CALENDAR FOR HTHS

January 20 - Board Meeting

January 23 - First Lecture

February 10 - General Meeting

February 27 - Second Lecture

March 16 - Board Meeting

March 19 - Third Lecture

April 13 - General Meeting

May 6 - Heritage Tour

*Mr. and Mrs. John Milner
~~Cannon Creek Rd.~~ Rite 100 + Baltimore
~~Maple Township~~ Pike
~~Pa 19064~~ Chadds Ford, Penn.*

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