



KNAPP NOTES

MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Annual Holiday Open House at Knapp Farm

Sunday, December 2, 1:00-4:00pm

Tours, Seasonal Refreshments, Holiday Cheer

Open to the Public Information: 215-699-7687

The past few months have been quite eventful for MTHS. Subsequent to the General Meeting in March, we added a new member to the Board of Directors. Joe Freas joins us in the spot vacated by Anne Roller. We also conducted tours of the Knapp House for several Questers groups, as well as 40 four- to

seven-year-olds from Goddard School in Montgomery Township.

Thanks to Brady Gallagher, an Eagle candidate from Troop 547, we now have a reconstructed smoke house behind the farmhouse. Brady



MTHS President, Rich Roller entertains students from the Goddard School with tales of life at Knapp Farm long before TV and electric lights.

selected the smokehouse reconstruction as his Eagle project. It will greatly enhance our ability to interpret life in the old days. We may even smoke our holiday turkeys and hams.

Beyond the activities at the Knapp Farm, in October we participated in the Montgomery County History Fair, a bi-annual get together of County Historic Societies who gather to exchange information and share their stories. It is quite interesting to learn more about our County's rich history. We also supported the reconstruction of the Limekiln Pike stone arch bridge which opened on September 7, 2012 after being closed for over a year.

Several MTHS members are participating in the Committee that is planning Montgomery Township's 300th Anniversary. The Committee is working hard to organize a series of events over the next couple of years to mark our 300th year as an incorporated township. For comparison, Lans-

dale has only been around for about 140 years; Souder-ton, for 125.



Volunteers from Boy Scout Troop 547 work to construct a new frame on the foundation of the old smoke house.

Finally, I have two favors to ask MTHS members and friends. First, please save the date, December 2, 2012 for our annual Holiday Party at the Knapp House. Second, membership renewal will be coming up shortly. Please help us continue our mission of preserving Montgomery Township's history for future generations by renewing your membership promptly.



Rich Roller, President
Montgomery Township Historical Society



You can keep up with the Montgomery Township Historical Society on our website: www.knappfarm.org or by visiting www.Facebook.com/knappfarmMTHS. Become our FAN today!

STONE ARCH BRIDGE BLENDS HISTORY WITH MODERN ENGINEERING

The recently reconstructed stone arch bridge which carries Limekiln Pike over the Little Neshaminy Creek has quite a history. The original bridge was built by Montgomery County in 1838. The original date stone is in the center of the bridge. The road was known as Butler Road and subsequently Whitehall Turnpike before being renamed Limekiln Pike. It was a major link between Bucks and Montgomery Counties and served as a thoroughfare for commerce between both counties and Philadelphia.

About six years ago, the bridge showed signs of wear and tear. It was the victim of a number of crashes into its retaining walls, and failing mortar. From the outset, MTHS voiced its support for reconstructing the bridge. PADOT's original assessment was that it was "not recommended for long term preservation." Our society, Rep. Todd Stevens and other groups from Horsham Township finally convinced PADOT to reconstruct the bridge to its original configuration.

After a year-long closure and six months of reconstruction by J. D. Eckman, Inc. the bridge has reopened showing off its past glory. We anticipate another 174 years of service from the bridge.



MTHS 2012-13 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Lisa Knapp Siegel, Vice President
David Levin, DO, Secretary
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DID YOU KNOW?

Many of the colonial religions in America banned any holiday festivities because they thought it harked back to pagan traditions. In New England, Puritans passed a law in Massachusetts that fined anyone who celebrated Christmas with five-shillings. For the Quakers, Christmas was just another day--nothing special. Presbyterians who wanted to celebrate, started attending the Anglican Church services until the Presbyterian ministers noticed the exodus and started planning their own Presbyterian services to lure the members back into the flock. (source: Suite101.com)

In colonial America, the festival of Hanukkah was celebrated in homes and synagogues with the kindling of menorahs of hand-beaten brass, tin or pewter, in the tradition of Dutch Jewry. In 1763, the first day of Hanukkah was chosen for the dedication ceremonies for the new Touro Synagogue in Newport, R.I., recalling the rededication of the Temple in Jerusalem following the Maccabean revolt. In 1790, George Washington visited the sanctuary, and later wrote a famous letter to the congregation pledging that the new nation would "give to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance."

(source: interfaithfamily.com)

Christmas cookies, as we know them today, trace their roots to Medieval European recipes. Dutch and German settlers introduced cookie cutters, decorative molds, and festive holiday decorations to America. German lebkuchen (gingerbread) was probably the first cake/cookie traditionally associated with Christmas. Sugar cookie type recipes descended from English traditions. And Animal crackers began as edible ornaments?

(source: foodtimeline.com)

REMINDER: Memberships will renew in January, 2013. We thank you for your ongoing support.