



# Knapp Notes

MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

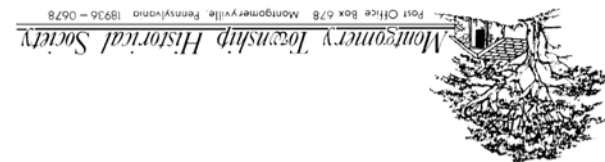
## House Tour to Highlight Township History and Knapp Farm

Montgomery Township has a long and vibrant history, but evidence of its colonial roots and prosperous agricultural past is not always easy to spot. The township's once thriving villages are gone; and its remaining historic buildings are often hidden in the middle of sprawling housing developments or behind busy shopping centers.

The Knapp Farm is one of five properties to be featured along the tour which will begin and end at the Joseph Ambler Inn. Details and ticket information are available at the 300th Anniversary website: <http://www.montgomery300.com>.

That's why MTHS members are excited to join the township's 300th Anniversary Committee to shine a spotlight on some of our municipality's remaining historic properties. On **Saturday, November 30, 2013** the committee will sponsor the first-ever **Montgomery Township Historic House Tour** as part of a year-long tricentennial celebration.

The Historic House Tour will give our society a chance to showcase the Knapp Farm and MTHS activities to the broader community and many potential members; it's also a great volunteer opportunity for current members. If you can spare an hour or two to serve as a host at the Knapp Farm or to help at one of the other tour sites, please e-mail Richard Roller at [richjroller@aol.com](mailto:richjroller@aol.com), or call 215-699-7687.



Save the Date!

### Annual Holiday Open House at Knapp Farm

Sunday, December 8, 2013  
1pm to 4pm

Tours, Refreshments & Holiday Cheer

Open to the Public  
R.S.V.P.s Encouraged  
215-361-1801



### In Loving Memory - Kathleen H. Sands



On August 24, 2013, the Montgomery Township Historical Society lost a founder, devoted board member and a dear friend. Kathleen "Kathy" Sands of Colmar passed away in Lansdale Hospital after a brief illness.

Kathy's association with MTHS dates back to 1987 when several township residents, concerned that so many historic properties were being threatened by development, held a meeting to discuss forming a group to advocate for the preservation of local history. Kathy was part of the group that later drew up the original by-laws, and was involved ever since. She served several terms as MTHS

President and Vice President, and most recently was responsible for the society's archives and collections. Kathy was a trained genealogist and dedicated researcher who earned a certificate in Historic Preservation from Bucks County Community College. In addition to MTHS, she was a member of the Lansdale, Hatfield and Montgomery County Historical Societies. Every group in our area benefited from her wisdom and expertise.

Kathy is survived by her husband of 44 years, Richard; daughters Kate and Lindamarie, son, Rich; and two grandchildren, Johanna and Adam. Memorial donations in Kathy's name may be made to The Oblates of St. Francis de Sales, 2200 Kentmere Pkwy, Wilmington, DE., 19806 or Montgomery Twp. Historical Society, P.O. Box 678, Montgomeryville, PA 18936.

## In Memoriam



MTHS joins the Heckler family in celebrating the life of lifelong township resident Preston W.

Heckler, who died June 12, 2013 at the age of 88.

Preston was preceded in death by his wife, Jene Tweed Heckler. Born in Montgomeryville, he was the son of Issac and Dorothy Weber Heckler. Preston lived his entire life in the same historic homestead. In 1960 he founded Preston Heckler Liquid Disposal in North Wales, and was actively engaged in running the business until his passing.

Preston was an avid sportsman and devoted family man with a lively interest in local history. He is survived by four children: Susan H. Siminovich (Peter) of North Wales, John P. Heckler (Susan) of Perkasie, Karen J. Knapp of Honeybrook, and Clayton T. Heckler (Laura) of Sellersville. Preston is also survived by eight grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Members of the MTHS board of directors would like to express our deep appreciation to the Heckler family for designating memorial gifts for their father to our society.

### REMINDER

Membership dues for 2014 will be due in January. Please watch your mail for the renewal form and support our efforts to preserve the history of Montgomery Township.

## What Year Was It?



*This is an aerial photo of the 5 points intersection taken in the lifetime of most of our board members. Look at all the open farm land! Can you guess the year?*

The answer will be posted on our website: [www.knappfarm.org](http://www.knappfarm.org).

If you aren't web savvy, you can find out at our Holiday Open House!

## Knapp Farm to Host 2014 County History Fair

Planning has begun for the 2014 Montgomery County History Fair. To help commemorate our township's 300th birthday celebration, the event will be held at Knapp Farm on Saturday, Sept. 13 *next* year.

The County History Fair is organized by the Winfield Scott Hancock Society, and is held every other year. According to Karin Stocking, founder of the Hancock Society, the organizing committee invites "...every local historical society of any worth to come out and display what is important about their section of Montgomery County, to show artifacts and so forth."

In the past, the event has included participation from a number of county historical societies, demonstrations by crafters of old methods of manufacturing, lectures by authorities on historic topics, re-enactors and an encampment," explains MTHS president, Rich Roller.

**Many volunteers will be needed to make this event a success.** If you are interested in getting involved, please e-mail Rich Roller at [richjroller@aol.com](mailto:richjroller@aol.com).

## Along the Horsham Border

In the mid-19th century, Montgomery Township contained four distinct villages: Montgomery Square, Montgomeryville, Eureka and Carriontown, all of which had grown up along the main roadways and served as the hubs for commercial and civic activity within the township.

The smallest of the villages, Carriontown, extended along Bethlehem Pike from the Horsham Township line to Hartman Road. According to James Williams, author of *An Erudite Little Township*, "Carriontown had a wild and unsavory reputation in its day... it consisted of only a few homes and a tavern known as the 'Rainbow.' The {unlicensed} tavern had an infamous reputation, known for the highwaymen who preyed upon travelers who stopped for liquid refreshments.

"Due to its sordid reputation and the declining traffic along the turnpike, Carriontown never did develop beyond a few homes. The tavern probably closed several years before the Civil War."

Today, nothing remains of Carriontown, but MTHS member and lifelong township resident, Ruth Snavely (1932 -2009) recreated an inventory of 20 houses that stood in and around the Carriontown area well into the 20th century.

*Here are some of the more significant structures on Ms. Snavely's list. None exist today.*

**Roman House** (Horsham Township, former Pfander House) Large stone farm house and large stone barn. Demolished to build the original English Village Shopping Center.

**Alcott House** Frame house demolished to make way for a Hudson gas station in 1960. Gas station was demolished in 1996 for proposed MacDonalds.

**Benjamin Wallace House** also on northbound 309 opposite the former 309 Drive-in theater. A frame bungalow, garages, etc. demolished to make way for Mastrieni furniture store.

**Morton House** - Stone house that sat on the edge of the present Gill Quarry.

**Kraus Farm** - located on southbound Rt. 309 opposite the present Public Storage warehouses. It contained a two-story stone farmhouse and the walls of a stone bank barn that had been destroyed by fire much earlier. Torn down during development of the Welsh Valley Industrial Park.

**Stokes Estate** - actually in Lower Gwynedd Twp. south of 309 and 63 intersection. Large stone house, tenant house, large barn and beautiful grounds.

## Congratulations, Dr. Levin

We are proud to note that MTHS board member, David Levin, DO, was elected President of the Bucks County Medical Society for 2013. David, a radiologist on staff at Grand View Hospital in Sellersville, is also the historical society's webmaster extraordinaire, and keeps our Facebook site refreshed, as well.

David lives with his wife, Stephanie, and sons Max and Jesse in an historic home in Montgomery Township.

### MTHS 2013-14 Board of Directors

Rich Roller, President

Lisa Knapp Siegel, V.P.

Joan Hurd, Treasurer

David Levin, DO, Secretary

Debbie Cummins

Joseph Freas

Susan Gordon

Jesse Hurd

Roy Rodriguez

Srinivas Srikoti

Montgomery Township  
Historical Society  
P.O. Box 678  
Montgomeryville PA, 18936  
Voice Mailbox: 215-361-1801  
[info@knappfarm.org](mailto:info@knappfarm.org)

[www.knappfarm.org](http://www.knappfarm.org)



Like us on **Facebook** and keep up with the latest news and information from MTHS. Just log on to [www.Facebook.com/knappfarmMTHS](http://www.Facebook.com/knappfarmMTHS) and click "Like"