

The Governor's Gossip

November 2024
v. 42, no. 4

**Newsletter of the Governor Wolf Historical Society,
Owner of the Wolf Academy Historic Site, East Allen Township**

Two Great Events in One Weekend!

42nd Annual House Tour — December 7

The 42nd edition of our famous Christmas House Tour will be held on December 7. Owners of nine outstanding and unique homes and buildings will throw open their doors to welcome visitors.

Our theme this year is "Olde Saint Nick" Immerse yourself in the spirit of the season and bring back memories of Christmas past as you look for the variety of depictions of the jolly fellow. Florists and garden clubs will again provide Christmas decorations in seven of the buildings.

Advance Ticket Purchase Outlets

As a courtesy to our venders, please pay with exact cash or check.

Bath Drug Pharmacy, 310 S. Walnut St., Bath, PA 18014
S Seem Antiques & Artisans, 100 S. Chestnut St., Bath, PA 18014
Snow Goose Gallery, 470 Main St., Bethlehem, PA 18018
Mycalyn Florals, 30 S. Main St., Nazareth, PA 18064
Miller Supply ACE Hardware, Rt. 329 & Savage Rd., Northampton, PA 18067

Advance purchase tickets go on sale on Saturday, November 16, at five local merchants; price is \$25 in advance or \$30 at the Monocacy School on tour day. As a bonus, the House Tour ticket includes admission to the Holiday History Fest.

Houses on the Tour

All of the homes on the tour are at least 125 years old -- and a couple of the buildings date from the 18th century. They represent various construction styles and materials, and have been lovingly restored and maintained by dedicated owners. Sketches and thumbnail descriptions are on page 4.

Friday evening Patron Tour information on page 4

Monocacy School Café

The Society will be selling delicious food and beverages in our historic 1922 school room on Saturday and Sunday. Lunch and snack options will be available.

Holiday History Fest — December 7 & 8

Our Holiday History Fest showcases incredible juried artisans and craftsmen who will demonstrate their various crafts and offer wonderful items for your holidays. The Fest is located in the three historic buildings at the Wolf Academy Historic Site. Hours are 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on December 7 and 8.

Wood artists will display handmade furniture, wooden toys, boxes, plant stands, walking sticks, and more.

Fiber artists will demonstrate spinning and weaving (including using a circular loom). Learn bobbin lace-making. Meet members of the Lehigh Valley Embroidery Society. Dyed fibers and yarns and felted items will be available for purchase.

Watch artists work, with paintings for sale.

Our early firearms expert will be exhibiting museum quality items and answering your questions.

Speak to a Civil War collector about the 153rd PA Regiment, which was recruited from this area, and his period items that tell the story of the soldiers and their camp life.

Talk to our hearth cooking team and sample the traditional dishes that they cook over an open fire.

Shop for a variety of handcrafted holiday décor and gifts such as delicious jams and jellies, smoked meats and cheeses, and gluten free breads.



Lace-making demonstration

....Continued on page 3

Our events are funded in part with funding from the Hotel Tax Grant Program through the County of Northampton Department of Community & Economic Development.



Governor Wolf Historical Society

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This newsletter is published four times a year (February, May, August and November) as a service to its members and the public by the Governor Wolf Historical Society. Contributions are encouraged and may be sent to the editor before the 1st of the publication month. However the Society reserves the right to select and edit all content.

Steven Hilberg

Steven Hilberg, 80, a long time member of the Society, died September 28. Steve found great joy in learning about local history and the Pennsylvania Dutch culture. He freely shared this knowledge and passion for his community with the Society.

Thank You!!

- To the Crail-Johnson Foundation, San Pedro, CA, for a monetary donation to support our local history education efforts
- To A.A. Lapp & Associates, Inc., Nazareth, for a monetary donation. Lapp has been our insurance agent and Society supporter since 1959.

Monthly Meetings

The Society holds monthly meetings at 6:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month in the Monocacy School, located at our historic site, 6600 Jacksonville Road, Bath, PA 18014. All members and interested individuals are invited to attend.

Membership

The Governor Wolf Historical Society is an all volunteer organization dedicated to preserving local history. If you are not a member, we invite you to become a member and support our activities. A membership form is on page 5 or join online at the Society's web page www.govwolf.org

We Want Your Email Address!

Our full color electronic newsletter is available in your inbox before the printed black and white version is mailed. Updates about our events and activities are emailed between newsletters. To be added to our email distribution list, please send your email address to Kathy Wilhelm at gwhs1958@gmail.com. If you supplied the Society with your email, and you are not getting emails about upcoming activities and events, contact Kathy at the same email.

Historic Site Rentals

The Governor Wolf Historical Society is fully open and ready to rent out our buildings and 3 1/2 acre grounds to host your next birthday party, baby shower, meeting, or even a small wedding. We currently rent out the historic Wolf Academy and Monocacy School and the beautiful surrounding gardens. There is plenty of parking in the adjacent grassy meadow. For more information about rental opportunities, please contact Abby Spencer at spencerabby@yahoo.com or 610-428-3975.

History Mystery — What Is This?a pencil sharpener!

By Bob Bysher

Manufactured in Leominster, Massachusetts, the Gem Pencil Sharpener was made of solid cast iron with a wooden handle cover on the crank. It measures 7.5 inches wide x 7.75 inches high x 7.5 inches long and weighs over 5 pounds.

The Gem Pencil Sharpener was patented on May 25, 1886 by Charles Gould and Frank Cook of Leominster, Massachusetts which is all marked in raised letters at the base. The sharpener was first advertised in 1887 and the last reference found is from 1914.

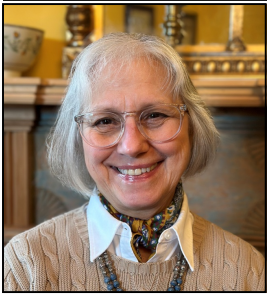
The Gem uses a rotating sandpaper disk 5.75 inches in diameter attached to the wheel to sharpen your pencil. When you turn the crank, both the sandpaper disk and the pencil rotate. The machine operated by taking the lead or slate pencil to be sharpened and pushing it through the chuck until the end is over the sandpaper. The chuck is put in position so as to force the pencil against the sandpaper, the wheel is revolved and after a few turns the pencil is pointed.

While the Gem was marketed towards

businesses, its main success was its sales to schools where "many thousands" were sold. It was also exported to Europe, India, and China.



Photo by Bob Bysher



From Our President

Greetings friends,

As preparations begin for the busiest season of events at GWHS, we look forward to sharing our site with you during the holiday season. This issue contains information on our 42nd Christmas House Tour. See sketches and information on each home on this year's tour. In addition, read about the Wreath Making Classes, Holiday History Fest and the Candlelight Concert.

All income from these events goes toward the maintenance and restoration of our buildings and site.

Please check out our website (www.govwolf.org) and Facebook page for information and updates.

Happy Holidays!

Kathy

New Arts and Crafts Gathering



Would you like to get together with others who create with their hands? Share ideas with like minded people?

Craftspeople are invited to meet in the Monocacy School on the first and third Thursdays from 10 a.m. to noon. Participants

should bring their craft/art projects to work on. There is no formal instruction. No registration is needed. A donation of \$5 per person is requested.

Questions? Contact Phyllis Facchiano at 610-217-2017.

Open House

November 18 — 1 to 3 p.m.

**Free guided tours of the Society's
3 historic buildings and museum**

No reservations needed

The Society is always willing to provide tours to individuals, families, school classes, youth groups, and social organizations at other times. To schedule a tour, call 610-837-9015 or email gwhs1958@gmail.com

2025 Save The Dates

**15th Annual Antiques Show
March 1 & 2**

**Summer Institute of Colonial Crafts
June dates TBD**

East Allen School Memories

We are always delighted when former students of the East Allen Township School District visit the Society and share their memories of attending our small rural schools. Such was the case when two charming women toured our historic site this fall.

The ladies first met each other in September 1948, when they enrolled in first grade at the Monocacy School. They have been best friends for 76 years! But this friendship almost did not happen. One of the girls lived in Hanover Township; families at her location had always walked to the recently closed Steinmetz School because the nearest Hanover Township school was too far away. When Steinmetz closed, her older brother was already in East Allen schools and the family attendance in East Allen (and later Northampton) was grandfathered in.



While the girls spoke fondly of teacher Omegene Fehnel, that sentiment did not hold true for the physical conditions they encountered. To their 6-year-old dismay, the school lacked indoor bathrooms. Neither child had ever had to deal with an outhouse, and they found the smell challenging in warm weather and the dash outside unappealing in cold weather (not to mention the frigid seat!).

Inside the classroom, the room was heated by a potbelly stove. They were either too hot or too cold, depending on the location of their desks.

After two years at the Monocacy School, the girls attended the Knauss School for third and fourth grades. When they returned to the Monocacy School in September 1952, a very happy surprise awaited them. The school district had added bathrooms and central heat!

The ladies also graciously helped to identify students in our collection of class photographs.



Holiday History Fest *continued from page 1*

Children and adults can create free make and take crafts.

House Tour admission includes the Holiday History Fest; present your tour booklet. For those not taking the Tour, admission is \$6 for nonmembers, \$5 for members. Children 12 and under are free.

2024 House Tour Homes



This 1800s brick home, located on a three-acre property, is nestled in a hollow at the end of a curved lane. The living room features an open staircase. Brick fireplaces enhance the living room and kitchen.

The basement has been renovated into a "man cave" to display model airplanes and the smokehouse is being repurposed into an

outdoor living area. Look for the cast iron reproduction of an 1840 hitching post.

This Eastlake style home was built in the late 1800s. Restoration included opening the staircase and installing the restored railing. Features include original brass light fixtures, molding, doors, and rim lock door knobs, horse hair plaster, circa 1915 Bradley Hubbard wall sconces, a center parlor table made in 1840, and a John George Hoff Sr. tall case clock from the late 1700s. The slate lined cistern is being converted into a wine cellar.



This late 1750s home was expanded in the early 1800s with a rear addition that enclosed the springhouse and gave the Georgian field-stone house its distinctive saltbox appearance. The home was burned during a Native American raid in the French and Indian War. By

1798 the building served as a hotel tavern, a usage that continued throughout the 19th century. On display will be a section of original wattle and daub plaster and dozens of artifacts, including coins and bottles, dug up in and around the house.



This mid-18th century farmhouse was the centerpiece of a large farm. The owners removed the cement which covered the exterior stone and removed interior paneling, ceiling tile, and indoor-outdoor carpeting to restore the home. These renovations

exposed the original pine floors, interior stone walls, and the stone corner fireplace in the living room. A two story addition and various antique collections enhance the historic nature of the original home.

This Queen Anne home was built before 1885. The large bay windows on the front façade admit beautiful daylight. The home features both a living room staircase and servants' stairs in the kitchen. The large kitchen fireplace is original, but no longer functional. Future plans include restoring it



Patron Tickets For Friday Night Tour

The Friday, December 1, candlelight patron tour begins at 5:30 p.m. in the Society's Ralston-McKeen House. From there, tour participants caravan to the five open homes, following a pre-arranged schedule to visit each home. After touring the homes, everyone returns to the Ralston-McKeen House to enjoy refreshments.

The cost of the patron tour is \$45 for members and \$55 for non-members. Reservations are required. Send your name, phone number, email address, number of patron tickets, and a check made payable to "Gov. Wolf Historical Society" to Carol Bear, Candlelight Tour, 207 W. Northampton St., Bath PA 18014.

House Tour Sponsors

Platinum Sponsor

Stofanak Custom Cabinetry
176 Nazareth Pike, Bethlehem, PA 18020
610-759-9311

Silver Sponsors

Horwith Trucks Inc.
PO Box 7, Rt. 329, Northampton, PA 18067
610-261-2220

Terraform Engineering
One E. Broad St., Suite 330, Bethlehem, PA 18018
484-895-4632

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A. A. Lapp & Associates, Inc.
16 S. Broad St., Nazareth, PA 18064
610-759-6858

Bronze Sponsors

Filbert Bed & Breakfast
3740 Filbert Dr., Danielsville, PA 18038
610-428-3300

S. Seem Antiques and Artisans
100 S. Chestnut St., Bath, PA 18014
610-390-0403

Sold Out Fall Tea

Once again, we completely filled the Wolf Academy with old and new friends during our fall tea. Jennie Hackett entertained with songs about friends. The date for our spring tea will be announced in the February newsletter. Plan to join the fun!



Attendees at "The Apples of Your Eye" tea in October smile as they select delectable treats from the dessert buffet.

Become a member! Use this form or join online at www.govwolf.org

Individual \$25.00; Family \$40.00; Student \$10.00
 Restoration \$75.00; Monocacy \$100.00
 Governor's Guild \$200.00
 Individual Lifetime \$500.00
 Senior Lifetime (62+years) \$250.00

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

Annual Wreath Workshop Party

Saturday, November 30 — #1. 9:00 a.m. — Noon.

— #2. 1:00 p.m. — 4:00 p.m.

Sunday, December 1 — #3. 1:00 p.m. — 4:00 p.m.

All supplies provided to make a 22-inch wreath: wreath form, mixed greens, pine cones, and your choice of a large florist bow. Bring clippers, glue gun, and any other décor you want to add to your wreath. Wine, snacks optional. Coffee and tea provided. Please arrive on time. We start promptly.

\$40
per person

Groups—Please list all names and pay with one check for group.

Name: _____ Phone _____

Email: _____ t _____ Number Attending _____

Address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Class date and time _____ Amount _____

Make check payable to GWHS. Add "Wreath Class" on memo line. Space reserved with receipt of check.

Information at www.govwolf.org

Call or text 610-905-0007 and leave phone number, name, class choice, and number in group.

Deadline to register is November 21.

Make check payable to: GWHS. Mail to: Linda Kortz, 1091 Copella Rd., Bath, PA 18014

GOVERNOR WOLF HISTORICAL SOCIETY
P. O. BOX 134
BATH, PA 18014

Return Service Requested

Annual Candlelight Concert

***Celtic and Seasonal Music by
Piper's Request — Dec. 15***



Piper's Request: Terry Hartzell, Rick Weaver, Fred Gilmartin.

Local band Piper's Request will present an evening of Celtic and seasonal music in the candlelit Wolf Academy on Sunday, Dec. 15 at 7 p.m. The group offers lively traditional music from Ireland and Scotland that focuses on life, love, sorrow, and laughter. Traditional instruments include uilleann pipes, Irish flutes, mandolin, banjo, fiddle, and bodhran.

The evening includes a fabulous dessert buffet and light refreshments.

Seating is limited and advance purchase is recommended. Purchase tickets at the Society during the Holiday History Fest on December 7 and 8, or reserve tickets by email gwhs1958@gmail.com or by phone 610-737-3000.

If not sold out, tickets will be available at the door. Doors open at 6:30 p.m.

Price is \$15 for Society members and \$20 for non-members.

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Delighted participants display their handmade wreaths after attending one of the Society's workshops. No special skills are needed to craft your one-of-a-kind fresh wreath for this holiday season. Photo by Linda Kortz.