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The Challenge

PRESERVATION • RESEARCH • EDUCATION

A History of the George Emlen House

A Presentation by Mr. Charles Zwicker and Mr. Edward Zwicker

DECEMBER 2011

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Thursday, December 1st, 2011 – 7:30 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

Bethlehem Pike & East Mill Road in Flourtown, PA

In 1745, a Philadelphia Quaker merchant, named George Emlen built a summer home near the junction of the Skippack and Bethlehem roads. Thirty-two years later, in November 1777, the home gained lasting fame when it was used as the headquarters of General George Washington during the Whitemarsh encampment (November 2nd to December 11th). Since that time, there have been many families that have called this historic residence home, including famous local names such as the Fitzwaters, the Chestons, and the Piszeks. Over the years, the Emlen House has entertained generals, political, religious, and historical figures. The story of this house, and its owners, is woven into the history of this area. Today it is in danger of becoming another casualty of urban sprawl as development encroaches on the grounds of this historic home.

Please join us, on December 1, as STHS welcomes fellow Board members Charles and Edward Zwicker. They will present the history of the Emlen House. It is the stories of those who called it home, of those who graced its halls and grounds, and of those who cared for this historic landmark.

Charles and Edward Zwicker serve proudly on the Springfield Township Historical Society Board



as Vice President and President respectively. The Zwicker brothers have actively researched Springfield Township's rich history. They conduct presentations on various topics including Whitemarsh Hall and the White City Amusement Park. Their publications include Springfield

Township, Montgomery County and Whitemarsh Hall: The Estate of Edward T. Stotesbury (Arcadia Press, 2002 and 2004).

Please join us for this timely presentation on the Emlen House. Its rich history, coupled with its vanishing landscape, will prove to be an enlightening and moving presentation.

The public is invited to attend. There is no charge for admission, and reservations are not required. Light refreshments will be served.

For more information call
215-233-4600

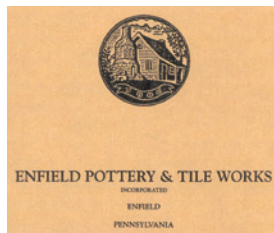
President's Corner

Springfield Township is a community made up of several distinct areas, including the better-known ones of Erdenheim, Flourtown, Oreland and Wyndmoor. Within these, there are smaller neighborhoods, some of which retained their original development name, including Chesney Downs, Flourtown Gardens, Northwoods, and Whitmarsh Village. And then there are other former villages within Springfield whose names have disappeared into history, save for a few reminders of them, if you know where to look. Enfield is one of these, and this is its story.

The intersection at Paper Mill, Church, and Oreland Mill Roads was once known as Five Points, and this name shows up on early township maps. The main landmarks at Five Points included a school, which was bordered by Church and Oreland Mill Roads, and the stone farmhouse of Charles Yeakel at the corner of Paper Mill and Church Roads. Just up Paper Mill Road, west of the Five Points intersection, was Enfield Farm, owned by the Allen family.

Francis Allen, whose family was prominent in Philadelphia, established his country homestead of Enfield Farm and named it after the family's previous home location in Enfield, Connecticut. Their ancestral roots were established in Enfield, England, so it carried a double meaning. When Francis passed away, his youngest son, Joseph H. Dulles Allen, inherited Enfield Farm. In 1906 Joseph was injured in a polo match, and while he was convalescing he filled the time by experimenting with mixtures of sand and clays found on his property. This would signal the origin of his creating different potteries, and his building of a simple kiln and studio in the spring of 1907. He filled small orders for mainly local clients, but then came his big break, a large order for the Pan American Union Building being built in Washington, D.C. The filling of this order brought new exposure for his work, and he built a second, larger kiln and facility to handle the newfound demand. When Charles Yeakel passed away in 1907, Allen purchased his stone farmhouse and made it his company headquarters.

An early company brochure of the *Enfield Pottery and Tile Works* indicated that it had sales agents in 17 cities across the United States, from Atlanta to Boston, Los Angeles to Philadelphia, and in outposts such as San Antonio, New Orleans, and Denver. The company would officially be organized in 1913 with Allen as president, Otto Mallory as Vice President, and Samuel Palmer as Secretary. In its heyday it presented serious competition to Henry Mercer of Doylestown. Enfield tile was used in buildings throughout the country, including the Detroit Institute of the Arts, Penn Athletic Club's Grill Room, the estate of Mr. Pierre S. DuPont at Longwood (the fountain pools in the Italian Garden and the Electric Water Garden, and the fountains in the Open Air Theatre), Carson Valley School, the tiles in the Delaware River Bridge depicting the history of transportation in America, and many other commercial and residential buildings.



Enfield Tile & Pottery

In the early years, the closest post office to the company was in Laverock, but with the company's success and resulting heavy mail load, it necessitated the building of a new post office at Five Points. Allen successfully petitioned to name it Enfield, thus effectively renaming the Five Points village area. The company's success also led to the addition of a new station stop, named Enfield, on the Pennsylvania Railroad line. This simple wooden structure, comprised of a baggage room, ticket office and waiting area, was located on Paper Mill Road near the present day township high school.

The Enfield Pottery and Tile Works' success would eventually wane, eclipsed by the more enduring Mercer



Enfield Elementary 1948

operation to the north. Business diminished to the point of it finally closing in the mid 1930s. As a result the Enfield post office was closed too, and mail service for the area moved to Oreland. In the early 1950s the Pennsylvania Railroad line was shutdown and its tracks replaced by the Route 309 highway, thus ending the need for the Enfield station stop. The Enfield name however was not forgotten, and was used in the creation of the post World War II home development, *Enfield Homes*. This new neighborhood of homes was bordered by Oreland Mill and Paper Mill Roads, and its roads included the still present Crest, Drayton, Kingston, and Enfield Roads. The home prices started at \$5,990, and boasted an annual tax bill of \$63.

The original Five Points school was gone by 1947 when the township spent \$327,000 to purchase 9.23 acres at the corner of Paper Mill and Church Roads and build and furnish the new *Enfield Elementary School*. It opened in September of 1948 with an enrollment of 297 students. Anna Ward was the principal and at times also served as a third grade teacher and lunchroom cashier. The school has undergone multiple expansions throughout the years but still retains its original appearance from the front of the building on Church Road. The Enfield name is carved in stone over the main entranceway.

The Allen family's Enfield Farm property would eventually be developed as the Enfield Junior High School and campus, now known as the Springfield Middle School. The original family home on the property currently serves as the administration building, just up the hill behind the school. Other homes that were part of the farm property still exist as private residences.

The stone farmhouse at the corner of Church and Paper Mill Roads, formerly the home of Charles Yeakel and then headquarters for the Enfield Pottery and Tile Works, is the current residence and business of dentist, Dr. Thomas A. Davis.

As you drive through the Five Points intersection today, remember the village of Enfield that was once one of the neighborhoods that made up Springfield Township. Some of it still remains today. You just need to know where to look.

Keeping the past in the present,
Ed Zwicker



NOTICE OF ELECTIONS

At the December 1st program, we will ask our members to vote on the slate of officers and directors with terms beginning January 1, 2012.

The Slate, prepared by the Nomination Committee, follows. Additional nominations may be made by any Friend of the Historical Society, in writing signed by 10 additional Friends, and filed with the nominating committee at least 15 days prior to the Annual Meeting (by November 16, 2011). No nominations will be accepted from the floor. Address nominating petitions to the Nominating Committee, Springfield Township Historical Society, PO Box 564, Flourtown, PA 19031.

SLATE

Directors also Serving as Officers – 2-year Terms

President..... Edward C. Zwicker, IV
Vice President..... Charles Zwicker
Treasurer Scott Armington

DIRECTORS

Terms take effect on January 1, 2012

Board Members for Re-Election 2012-2015

Scott Armington Kathy Haight
Alex Bartlett Dolores Jordan
Dorothy J. Cutler Katie Worrall

Board Member Candidates 2012-2015

Chris DeVore Amanda Helwig
Sue Duckwitz

Board Members Serving 4-Year Terms 2010-2013

(elected December 3, 2009)

Vincent Bruner Phoebe Rosenberry
Barbara K. Coleman Ed Welch
Cindy Hamilton Edward C. Zwicker, IV
Elizabeth Jarvis

WILLIAM MEBANE to receive STHS's Marie Kitto Award

The Springfield Township Historical Society will present its Marie Kitto Award to William Mebane, M.D., vice chairman of the Black Horse Inn Advisory Committee, at its program on Thursday, December 1, at 7:30 p.m. at the First Presbyterian Church in Springfield, Bethlehem Pike and E. Mill Rd., Flourtown. The award is given in memory of Kitto, a founder of the historical society, to a person who embodies of the tenets of the historical society, research, preservation and education.

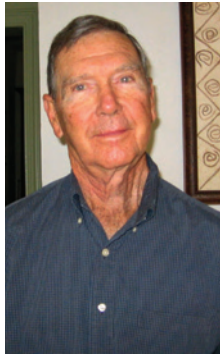
"For the past seven years, Dr. Mebane has given countless hours of time and expertise to the efforts to restore the [Black Horse] Inn," STHS representative to the advisory committee Cindy Hamilton said in her letter to the committee nominating Mebane for the award. "In his role as vice chairman of the Black Horse Inn Advisory Committee, he has been instrumental in the grassroots effort to raise awareness of the community in the importance of preserving the Inn and he has been a lead participant in overseeing its restoration."

A retired pediatrician and family doctor who has lived in Wyndmoor for over 50 years, Mebane said that he was invited to be a community representative on the advisory committee when it was founded in 2005. He helped with the refurbishment of the bar at the inn — 90 percent of which has been done by Dick Meyer and Andrew Glendinning, he said — and was involved in an advisory capacity in building code and architectural issues. He also salutes other volunteers and members of the committee which planned the recent Fall Feast fundraiser for the inn.

In her letter to the committee, Hamilton said that when Mebane agreed to assist with the refinishing the Victorian era bar, he tackled any task with a warm smile that lifted spirits of the volunteers and he welcomed passersby to see the ongoing efforts much like former innkeepers might have greeted weary travelers in times past.

"I'd like to see lights on at the inn, with good commercial tenants in addition to the Historical Society. Other spaces should be rented by tenants who can pay the rent so we can maintain the building," Mebane said when asked what he'd like to see at the Black Horse Inn.

When he is not helping with the Black Horse Inn Advisory Committee, Mebane serves as a community representative to the patient safety committee at Chestnut Hill Hospital, where he was on the medical staff, and teaches an introduction to clinical medicine course to first-year medical students at Jefferson Medical College. He and his wife, Marianne, tutor children at the Houston School in Mt. Airy.



130 GUESTS ATTEND BENEFIT FOR BLACK HORSE INN

Over 130 guests attended the Fall Feast and Auction on September 30 to benefit the restoration of the Black Horse Inn. A combined effort of the Friends of Historic Bethlehem Pike, the Black Horse Inn Advisory Committee and the Springfield Township Historical Society, the event included tours of the inn in Flourtown as well as silent and live auctions and dinner at the Flourtown Country Club. Proceeds raised funds toward completing the interior core improvements of the inn at 1432 Bethlehem Pike, a project that has been underway for eight years.

Accompanied by live music by Boyz to Manouche, guests enjoyed refreshments and dinner while looking over several tables of items donated for silent and live auction by over 75 individuals, organizations and businesses including the historical society and the historical society board of directors. Barbara Coleman, an STHS board member who is the historical society's representative to the Friends of Historic Bethlehem Pike, put together three baskets for the auction; two held note cards, tiles and other STHS gift items, and the other was a basket of cheer with donations from board members. Sam Clover, a radio personality, emceed the live auction. Preceding the festivities at the country club, guests had an opportunity to visit the inn, where they visited the STHS archives and spaces in the building that have not yet been restored.

Sponsors of the Fall Fest and Auction included Tague Lumber; Friedman Schuman attorneys at law, Glendinning Contractors, Cherokee Construction Co., Elfant Wissahickon Realtors, Halligan's Pub, Rittenhouse Lumber Co., and Seiler + Drury Architects, P.C. Additional contributions were made by Mary Anne Griffin's family and friends, who provided desserts; John and Maryellen Alviti, Scott W. Armington, John Dulik, Shirley Hanson, Patricia Manley, James and Christina Mascaro, Susan and Bob Peck, Phoebe Rosenberry, Robert Schneck and Lawrence and Linda Wargo. Members of the event committee were Andrew Glendinning, chairman; Anthe, Barbara Coleman, Joan Dessureau, Jennifer French, Mary Anne Griffin, Ellen Manning, Dick Meyer, Jane Roberts and Robert Ryan.

The original structure of the Black Horse Inn is reported to have been built in the mid eighteenth century. The first section served farmer, lime-carrier, and traveler, and later, stagecoach passengers. With the growth of trade and travel, the inn was expanded in the early nineteenth century. Prior to 1840 it was known as the Sampson and the Lion. The McCloskey family owned the inn from 1880 through 1990, for three generations. It was a stop for farmers, when grain was taken to the local flour mills in Flourtown, and later used for meetings of the Society for the Apprehension of Horse Thieves, township commissioners, voting and horse trading. Until about 1980, cattle grazed on the lawn next door, part of the inn's property.



Cindy Hamilton, a historical society board member and the STHS representative to the Black Horse Inn Advisory Committee, welcomes State Rep. Lawrence Curry to the historical society archives at the inn during an open house on the evening of the Fall Fest and Auction. Hamilton and Curry are standing next to a photograph of Whitmarsh Hall, the Wyndmoor residence of Mr. and Mrs. Edward Stotesbury. Unsuccessful efforts to save the mansion were an impetus to the founding of the historical society in 1985.



Richard J. Meyer, Sr., a retired general contractor who is involved in efforts to restore the inn, describes plans for continued restoration to visitors to the inn before the Fall Feast and Auction.

FROM THE Archives

We recently received two donations which will be of interest to genealogists. Penny Brodie gave us a collection of deeds and wills dating from the mid 18th century into the 20th century. The deeds document land transfers in the region; families mentioned include Gilbert, Burton, Humphrey, Campbell, Slifer and Aimon.

In addition, Pauline Hornberger donated a collection of obituaries, clipped from local newspapers over the last three decades. These obituaries tell the life stories of those whose funerals were held at Zion Lutheran church and are a rich source of information about the deceased. Along with this marvelous addition to the archives, Mrs. Hornberger also gave us a list of all those buried in the Zion Lutheran cemetery including historical detail about some of the more notable interred.

Please call us at 215 233-4600 if you would like to come in to examine these documents or any of the other treasures in our archives.

STHS *Archives* Expands Evening Hours

Hours: Tuesday 11am-1pm, 7pm-9pm
Thursday 10am-noon

We are pleased to report that the archives will be open on the last Thursday of each month from 6pm-8pm beginning in November. Our thanks to volunteer **Dulie Gray** for offering to open the archives to accommodate additional evening researchers.



In September, STHS welcomed Captain Jack Lieberman, USNR (Retired), and his wife Carol Lieberman. Jack portrayed Captain Percival Drayton while his wife portrayed Sarah Josepha Hale, the first female editor of Godeys Book which was the Vogue magazine of its time. Seen here is STHS president Ed Zwicker with Captain Jack Lieberman and Carol Lieberman.



Unknown man in front of the Wheel Pump Inn on Bethlehem Pike, c. 1900.

Reserve the Date

Thurs., Dec. 1, 2011 – 7:30 p.m.

A HISTORY OF THE **George Emlen House**

A Presentation by
Mr. Charles Zwicker and
Mr. Edward Zwicker



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