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APRIL 2016

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The Challenge

PRESERVATION • RESEARCH • EDUCATION

Roles and Lifestyle of an 18th Century Continental Soldier

Presented by Bud Henkels and Les Ford

Thursday, April 21st, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

Bethlehem Pike & East Mill Road in Flourtown, PA

The 11th Pennsylvania Regiment, under General Anthony Wayne, spent the winter of 1776-77 in Valley Forge, where one assignment was to find boats on the Pennsylvania side of the Delaware River in which to travel to the other side. Once there, they walked 16 miles to Trenton.

The regiment went on to fight, among other battles, in the Battle of Germantown on October 4, 1777, where it helped the assault on the center of the British position. It had no opportunity to fight in a skirmish in Whitemarsh in December 1777, but it was present, holding a portion of the first line of center.

Half the regiment were militiamen, who wore olive great coats, and half were soldiers, who were like full-time soldiers. The militiamen, who occasionally outnumbered the soldiers, used French weapons from the French and Indian War. They used muskets that were sometimes 25 or 30 years old.

Bud Henkels and Les Ford, members of a reenactors' group of the 11th Pennsylvania Regiment for 10 years, will present a program on the lifestyles and roles of Continental soldiers and militia.

Henkels, who serves as militiaman in the reenactors' group, will show clothing such as overcoats and waistcoats, discuss expressions such as "flash in the pan" which come from that period and show his fowler, a 50 caliber rifle similar to a musket. He will bring things for the audience to pass around, such as cookware and haversacks in addition to hatchets made by his son Chris, a blacksmith at Colonial Williamsburg, Virginia and a restorer of ironwork at historic jails outside of Washington, D.C.

Ford, who portrays a Continental soldier, owns dress uniforms and will discuss the lifestyle of what was required by soldiers, the difference between soldiers and the militia and will show his military-style musket.



The 11th Pennsylvania Regiment recently did a reenactment at Hope Lodge, a colonial house in Fort Washington, although there were no battles there during the Revolutionary War.

The 11th Pennsylvania Regiment reenactment group is part of the Continental Line, the governing body which was formed 25 years ago. Over the past year, the 11th Pennsylvania Regiment, according to the group's website, www.11thPA.org, has participated in a number of events at sites such as at Fort Mercer in Red Bank, N.J., Hope Lodge in Fort Washington, Battle of Germantown in Germantown, and the Independence Day celebration at the National Constitution Center among others. They have given programs in schools and for the Boy Scouts.

Henkels, proprietor of V.L. Henkels Contractors which does renovation and restoration work, is an Ambler firefighter and an instructor at the Montgomery County Fire Academy in Conshohocken. Ford is a manager at the Philadelphia Water Department. His wife Jobie is active in the 11th Pennsylvania regiment's camp followers group, which portrays the lives and work of women who followed the regiments.

Please join us on April 21 for this program by Bud Henkels and Les Ford on an important part of Pennsylvania – and American history. It is free and open to the public. No reservations are needed.

For more information, call the Historical Society at 215-233-4600.

PLEASE NOTE:

Attendees to the April program are encouraged to bring a canned food item to donate to the First Presbyterian Church's neighborhood food pantry. Please help us to support this important cause.

President's Corner

A few weeks ago, the Historical Society lost two members of our extended family. Board member **Dr. S. Miller "Mickey" Harris Jr.** passed away on February 16th. Mickey joined the STHS Board of Directors in January 2014. He was a graduate of Temple University, and an Internist affiliated with Grand View Hospital in Sellersville. I am glad to have had the opportunity to get to know Mickey a little through his service on the Board.

Phoebe Rosenberry was a charter member of the Historical Society, and a long-time Treasurer. She served on the Board from July 1997-July 2012. Phoebe attended Swarthmore College, and later worked for Rohm and Haas. Phoebe passed away on January 6th. In her Will, Phoebe left the Historical Society a substantial bequest, for which we are very grateful.

To the family and friends of Mickey and Phoebe, I offer my condolences and those of the Board of Directors. They will be missed.

The caretakers of the Flouertown/Erdenheim Veterans Memorial are putting together memorial frames of those killed in action to display on Memorial Day this year. Here is a list (right) of those on the wall and information gathered thus far. Any other information and specifically pictures would be greatly appreciated.

T. Scott Kreilick, President
Springfield Township Historical Society

- WWII** **Baeder, Francis E.** – Petty Officer Second Class Navy
Dec. 18, 1944, #6504897
- WWII** **Farrington, Elwood F.** – SSGT Army Air Forces
Aug. 17, 1944, #6900035, 515th 376th Bg
- WWII** **Neal, William F.** – PFC Army
Oct. 14, 1943, #33316423, 15th Inf. Reg. 3rd Inf. Div.
- WWII** **Nuneviller, William H. III** – 2LT Army Air Forces
Oct. 26, 1943, #0-675940, South Plains A.A.F., Lubbock, Texas.
- WWII** **TAYLOR, JAY W.** – PFC ARMY
Dec. 25, 1944, #33282012, 262nd Inf. Reg. 66th Inf. Div.
- Vietnam** **Hertz, Allen Conrad** – 1LT Marine Corps
Jun. 6, 1965, #087253, III MAF 1st Maw Hm 161
- Vietnam** **Holloway Edwin Newlin III** – PPFC Army
Mar. 14, 1967, #52807190, 4th Inf. Div. 1st Bn. 22nd Inf. HHC
- Vietnam** **Hubler, Edward Lincoln Jr.** – SPC5 Army
Apr. 16, 1970, #?, 20th Eng. Bde. 31st Eng. Bn.
79th Eng. Group, C Co.

FROM THE *Archives*

These views were taken on the grounds of Whitemarsh Hall in 1937.

Warren Robinson
plowing the snow
from the main drive.



Dave Steele shown
raking the fields.

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SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S



History In Motion

Presented At
Flouertown Country Club

Nearly 130 Springfield Township Historical Society Friends and their guests stepped back into the 1920s at the historical society's **THIRD ANNUAL HISTORY IN MOTION** in November. Festivities included a presentation of a 1920s murder mystery by *Without a Cue Productions*, a silent auction offered by Connecticut-based *America's Best Auction*, music by *Katie Eagleson and her band*, wine from *Chaddsford Winery* and beer from *Flouertown Beverage*. Guests were welcomed by board members Cindy Hamilton, Kathy Haight and



Mandy Helwig; in-coming board member Bob Brock and his wife Dorothea served wine. The production company invited guests to do the Charleston and to guess who the murderer was in the play. Christine Smith, STHS webmaster and former board member, was the winner, and was honored with a "mugshot" with the cast.



Springfield's Historic Businesses:

SPOTLIGHT ON

WYNDMOOR SUPPLY COMPANY

Served the Springfield community for more than three generations

Seventh in a series of articles
highlighting historic businesses in
Springfield Township.

Sixty-two years ago, two World War II Veterans, Herman J. Seltzer and Paul Schwartz, decided it was time to realize the dream of owning their own business close to where they lived in the Springfield Township community. They purchased what became Wyndmoor Supply Company in Wyndmoor, Pennsylvania from Bill Geppert who owned a lumber and hardware store in nearby Roslyn, Pennsylvania. For most of that time, Wyndmoor Supply Company was the go-to place for people in Wyndmoor, Erdenheim, Cheltenham, Laverock and parts of northwest Philadelphia to find the right tools to fix an appliance, remodel, repaint or do anything else related to home repair.

"Back then, people would come in and buy packaging tape, rollers, paint, hardware, power and carpentry tools to fix up their homes," recalled Herman Seltzer's son Craig, who had worked in the business since 1978, taking it over in 2014. "Dad would introduce himself and help them in any way he could – people would come back for they knew they could depend on him to get them what they needed or to help them solve a plumbing or electrical problem." Craig also said that his Dad would often go the extra mile, even for people who couldn't figure out how to use or install products they had bought elsewhere. "For Dad, it was never a problem and some of these people came to our store the next time they needed to fix something in their home."

Craig has these and plenty of other fond memories of working at the well-established store, which was a fixture in the community for more than six decades. He recalled growing up alongside his father's business and



Bill Geppert



Herman Seltzer

helping him out at night or after school. "When I was nine years old, Dad asked me to start helping him update the huge store catalogues by taking out the old pages in the three-ring binders and replacing them with new ones," Craig said. "He paid me 25 cents a page and allowed me to do it when I was watching television – now what could be better than that!"

What's more, when school let out early on Tuesdays or during the summer, he'd go with his Dad to downtown Philadelphia to meet with ten to twelve different jobbers to pick up catalogue items or to fill special orders for customers. Back then, online shopping with overnight shipping options didn't exist so some store owners like Herman Seltzer would pick up items themselves to give customers the best possible service. This led to more repeat business and more word-of-mouth referrals with many coming from fellow business owners along Willow Grove Avenue.

"Dad made it a point to reach out to other store owners along Willow Grove Avenue, becoming good friends with many of them," he said, telling how his father had helped owners of the small supermarket that once stood across the street from the hardware store. During a severe

snowstorm, the owners couldn't get in to the supermarket yet Herman Seltzer made it in to his store but not before noticing the milk, cheese and bread piled up outside the supermarket, explained Craig. He brought it into the hardware store, sold it to his customers and gave the money to the food store owners the next day. Then there's the 60-plus years gentlemen's agreement Herman Seltzer initiated with John Fisher, owner of the neighboring gas station. "We owned the driveway behind the gas station and John owned the area in front of it – Dad agreed to give John an additional parking area in exchange for street access – nothing was ever in writing; it was based on a handshake and there was never a problem," Craig said.

From 1970 to 2000, there was also never a real problem with the competition from stores like Sears, Hechinger's and Mr. Goodbuys, all of which sold much of the same home improvement supplies that the Wyndmoor Supply Company sold. During most of that time, "our store was doing a phenomenal business," he said. With the advent of the "big box" stores, however, things changed. These large national chains have taken substantial business away from neighborhood hardware stores like Wyndmoor Supply Company, which led to the store closing in June of 2015. "In the last ten years or so, we had a co-op arrangement with True Value

which helped us stay competitive to some extent," Craig said. But then the financial crisis of 2008 happened along with lifestyle changes in the neighborhood. "Many of the store's best customers downsized, moving into condominiums or senior residences like Cathedral Village or the Hill at Whitmarsh where they no longer needed home improvement supplies," he stated. "And many of the young people coming into the community are used to buying hardware at one of the big box stores or shopping online where they believe they could get better deals."

"All in all, I'm very proud to say we served the community for 61 years," Craig said. "We made annual donations to the Memorial Day Parade, supported local school charities, sponsored a little league team, contributed to "Run for the Hill of It," which helps families with children who have life-threatening illnesses and more. Craig has also served on the Board of the Springfield Township Historical Society and has extensive knowledge of its history. While in that role, he proposed having a community gathering place at the Black Horse Inn on Bethlehem Pike and still would like to see that happen."

Though he said he deeply misses the relationships made through the business, he catches up with some of his former customers at Giant in the Flourtown Shopping Center and now works as a certified massage therapist in the Hand & Stone store located there.

In closing, he mentioned he has plans to stay in the area. "This community has a hometown feel to it," he said, "There's a nice mix of people from diverse backgrounds; we all live in harmony here."

Written by Dorothy C. Nickelson



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The Archives are

OPEN

to the Public

TUESDAYS 7pm – 9pm
WEDNESDAYS 1pm – 5pm
SATURDAYS 9am – 12noon

For more information,
call **215-233-4600**



Spare Some Time?

We need volunteers! If you like history, working with computers and have an hour or two to spare please call the archives at **215-233-4600** or write to archives@springfieldhistory.org.

Archives UPDATE

The archives committee is very grateful for the following recently received donations:

- Large section of rouge royal marble mantel from the reception room of Whitmarsh Hall donated by Patrick Moran.
- Deck of cards with drawing of Harston Hall donated by Dan Helwig.
- Documents, drawing, deeds, and lease of 1518-1520 Bethlehem Pike donated by Popo Flanigan.
- Framed 1867 George Yeakel property deed; copies of property maps; Whitmarsh Hall floor plans and blueprints of Pennsalt renovation blueprints donated by the Free Library of Springfield Township.
- Seven boxes of records, photographs, slides, letters and documents recording the history of the Morris, Bland and Crothers Families donated by Rev. George Bland.
- Roster of the 44th Infantry Division from September 4, 1944 – July 20, 1945 donated by Colleen Robinson.

We would like to welcome our new volunteer, *Tracey Danforth*, who is studying for her Masters in Library Science. Tracey is working on cataloging 7 boxes of the Bland Collection which is keeping her very busy. The volunteers and staff are continuing to digitize the STHS collection of pictures.

Reserve the Date

Thurs., April 21, 2016 – 7:30 p.m.

**Roles & Lifestyle of an 18th Century
Continental Soldier**

Presented by
Bud Henkels & Les Ford



Address Service Requested

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