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MARCH 2018

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The Challenge

PRESERVATION • RESEARCH • EDUCATION

A GRAVE SITUATION: The First Baptist Cemetery and the Future of Philadelphia's Historical Burials

Presented by Anna Dhody

Curator of the Mütter Museum and Director of the Mütter Research Institute in Philadelphia

Thursday, March 1, 2018 – 7:30 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church – Bethlehem Pike & East Mill Road in Flourtown, PA

What do you do when one box of bones turns into an entire cemetery? How do you manage when no government agency will intervene or help you? Anna Dhody, the Curator of the Mütter Museum and Director of the Mütter Research Institute, will tell the tale of the First Baptist Church Cemetery, and how a group of volunteers joined forces to save an historic burial ground. She will also discuss the work that the team is doing and how they are trying to help rewrite the laws to protect our history.

As curator of the Mütter Museum of The College of Physicians of Philadelphia, Anna Dhody, an experienced forensic anthropologist, oversees the Mütter Museum's collection of anatomical specimens, models, and medical instruments, and works to provide a unique, informative experience for its 175,000-plus annual visitors. During her tenure at the Mütter museum, Dhody has curated many exhibits and has collaborated with scholars from around the world to conduct research on the Mütter's collection.

She is currently working with teams from Quinnipiac University, McMaster Universities, the University of Pennsylvania, and the CDC. One of her main goals is to show that a 19th century collection can have 21st century relevance, academically,



Anna Dhody, curator of the Mütter Museum and Director of the Mütter Research Institute in Philadelphia, who will speak at the Springfield Township Historical Society program on Thursday, March 1.

medically and artistically. Dhody has lectured extensively in the United States and abroad. She is the author of "The Underground Crime Scene: The Use of Archaeological Excavation Techniques in the Recovery of Buried Crime Scene Evidence," a manual currently used by law enforcement agencies in several countries. Dhody is a local resident who lives in Oreland.

The public is invited to attend, and there is no charge for admission. Reservations are not required. Light refreshments will be served. For more information call 215-233-4600.

PLEASE NOTE:

Attendees to the March 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

Happy New Year! I'm optimistic that 2018 is going to be a great year. Before we leave 2017 behind completely, I'd like to acknowledge those that made the year a success. What we accomplish each year cannot happen without the dedication of our volunteers. To those who serve on the Board of Directors and to those who work in the Archives, thank you. We succeed because of your efforts. In particular, I would like to thank Board members Barbara Coleman and Jack Yeakel, who are both leaving the Board. I'm looking forward to working with Tom Keels, Judy Smith, and Laura Reich as they join the Board of Directors this year.

Our Archives volunteers donated 470 hours of their time in 2017. Under the direction of Archivist Stephanie Walsh, these volunteers have continued the task of cataloging the archival collection and uploading photographs and library records to the Society's redesigned website (www.springfieldhistory.org). The Archives received 58 gifts in 2017, the highlight being a tall case clock by Joseph H. Jackson. Three informative programs were organized and presented in February, April, and October, respectively. To cap off the year, the Society held its fourth History in Motion fundraiser. The November 2nd event, The People of Whitemarsh Hall, was researched and presented by Ed Zwicker III,

Ed Zwicker IV, and Andy Logan. The multi-media presentation was a wonderful success, with an immediate call for an encore performance.

I would also like to thank the Friends of the Historical Society. As you know, the Historical Society is a donations-based organization. Our operating budget is funded by your contributions, both in the form of your annual Friends renewal and your attendance at the annual fundraiser. The Society's expenses include the salary of our Archivist, the rent paid to the Township for our Archives space in the Black Horse Inn, costs associated with printing and postage, and costs associated with programs and events, among others.

I encourage you to consider additional forms of support. The new website has a Donate button for contributions over and above your Friends renewal. We are always seeking additional Sponsors of our History in Motion fundraiser. Finally, please consider a bequest to the Society in your Will. Your support allows the Society to continue to preserve and share the history of our Township. Thank you.

T. Scott Kreilick
President, Springfield Township Historical Society

STHS ANNUAL HISTORY IN MOTION

Springfield Township Historical Society board member, Amanda Helwig, who leads the historical society events committee, with board member Bob Brock, is pictured with Andy Logan, who portrayed Edward T. Stotesbury, owner of Whitemarsh Hall, one of the most famous estates in Springfield Township after the November presentation of "The People of Whitemarsh Hall." An encore performance of the presentation in April has sold out.

The presentation tells of the building of Whitemarsh Hall in the early 20th century and about the people who worked there. Joining Logan in the performance are reenactors Edward Zwicker III and Edward Zwicker IV, pictured in costume, who will portray architect Horace Trumbauer and Sir Joseph Duveen, an art and antiques dealer, in telling how the mansion was built and furnished. They also portray footman Hugh Smith and head gardener Maurice Deschamps in telling how the mansion and its grounds were run.



Mandy Helwig of the HIM Events Committee and Andy Logan portraying Edward T. Stotesbury



Edward Zwicker III and Edward Zwicker IV portraying Horace Trumbauer and Sir Joseph Duveen

FROM THE Archives



Photograph of the Wyndmoor School 5th grade class in 1937. It was one of two photographs recently donated to the archives by Janet Lightcap Wells. (Springfield Township Historical Society Collection 2017.52.1)

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The Historical Society is on Facebook; find us at **Springfield Township Historical Society**.

The Archives are
OPEN
to the Public

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

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

House Guests of the Gilded Age

In the 1920s and 1930s, the best overnight accommodations in the Chestnut Hill area were not found at a hotel – instead, one sought an invitation to stay at the Stotesburs' home.

Whitemarsh Hall had seven suites reserved for guests in the central section of the second floor – these complemented the even-more-elegant private accommodations in the west and east wings for the extended family.

The seven guest suites (named Adam, Blue, Apricot, Lacquer, Chintz, Portico, and Queen Anne) each had an ensuite bath with both tub and shower and gold-plated plumbing. Some of the rooms could be connected when needed (Apricot and Blue shared a common vestibule, providing a private path between them, and Chintz and Portico had a hidden communicating door).

What was it like to be an overnight guest at Whitemarsh Hall? Marjorie Merriweather Post, a good friend of the Stotesburs, and the creator of the Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach much in the news lately, recalled in a 1966 letter:

"There never was a more meticulous housekeeper than Mrs. Stotesbury. She was very aware of all the comforts that the human being enjoys, and she certainly created them in any house that she lived in. One of the many details, for example, when guests were taken to their rooms, they would find a few current magazines and the latest books. Also, on the night table would be a black night shade for over the eyes, and a little card giving the name of the chauffeur who was at your disposal. There was also a little card you were supposed to fill in to say what time you cared to be called in the morning and what you wished for breakfast."

When a house guest arrived, they were escorted upstairs to their assigned room, which already had the guest's name card on the door. A footman delivered the luggage, and a chambermaid or the seamstress assisted in unpacking, if desired. On a bedside table, besides the eyeshade, was a clock, a flashlight, a jar of crackers, and a thermos bottle with two glasses on a silver tray. On the room's desk, an elegant organizer held Whitemarsh Hall stationery for the guest's use. Service could be summoned either by telephone or by servant call buttons. In addition, one could select between four different pre-tuned radio stations, from the mansion's central audio distribution system.



Northwest corner of the Portico Room; the hidden connecting door to the Chintz Room is visible in the wall to the left of the fireplace. Photo by Mattie Edwards Hewitt, 1926



Northeast corner of the Portico Room; the window was directly over the front door, under the portico (hence the room name). The private bath was off the right edge of this photo, opposite the window; the door to the bath can be seen in the reflection in the mirror of the wardrobe on the left. Photo by Mattie Edwards Hewitt, 1926

Guests were always served breakfast in their rooms, but for other meals would journey downstairs. Breakfast was delivered on a silver tray; each guest room had its own dishes, color-coordinated to the room, and female guests also received flowers matching the room's décor in a silver bud vase.

Three chambermaids on the second floor provided continuous service during the daytime hours, freshening the rooms and baths as soon as the guests would step out; this would sometimes lead to confusion, as the maids were instructed to put away any personal items in the furniture or closets, posing a challenge for the guest when they returned.

All of this made for a very pleasant experience – or, as Henry Ford himself remarked to a newspaper reporter: "It's nice to see how the rich live."

Even the Stotesburs had the problem of the occasional guest who seemingly did not want to leave. Eva had a solution: After the third day of a guest's stay, he or she would find an engraved card on their breakfast tray, which read:

"Are you planning to leave by car or by train? The secretary will be glad to book reservations, if going by train, or make any other arrangements you may wish to facilitate your departure."

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<http://www.facebook.com/groups/WhitemarshHall/>

CALL FOR ARCHIVES VOLUNTEERS

Our dedicated group of volunteers, including Barbara Coleman, Tracey Danforth, Dulie Gray, and Ray Smith are continuing to catalogue our collection. Our volunteers provide a valuable service to the historical society and are vital to carrying out our mission. If you like history and working with computers and have an hour or two to spare each week please contact the archives at archives@springfieldhistory.org or 215-233-4600.

Become a Friend of
S T H S

FOR DETAILS PLEASE VISIT:
www.springfieldhistory.org

Spotlight on Springfield

Anderson Welding

Written by Katie Worrall

Rick Anderson entered the army in 1964, where he obtained experience in welding. After the service he came to Oreland in 1967, purchased a truck and started a welding business, known as Anderson Welding.

"My first shop was on Montgomery Avenue in Oreland and I bought this property [at 100 Ehrenport Rd.], in Oreland in 1976," Rick said. Initially, he worked with trash trucks, doing repairs to the trucks and to dumpsters as well as building tanks. "For a while, I ran two shops, one on Montgomery Ave. and one here. I built this shop up with these boys," said Rick, referring to his sons Clint and Rob, and their brother, Pat, who lives in Daytona Beach, Fla. "They all grew up here, and my daughter Kelly, who has nothing to do with the business," said Rick.

Rick grew up in Chestnut Hill and Oreland, went to school in Springfield Township, and worked for a company on Montgomery Avenue after he got out of the army. He retired when he sold the company to his sons in 2006. Anderson Welding & Sons, LLC, was formed following the sale to his sons. Rob started Anderson Ironworks and they legally trade under that name.



Anderson Welding founder Rick Anderson (center), with his sons Rob (left) and Clint, holds a framed picture of some of the projects completed since the company's founding in 1967.

Clint primarily works on structural projects, which Rick referred to as "red iron" things that go out "in red primer". Structural and miscellaneous metal products for commercial, institutional, residential, historical and public works projects are completed for fit outs and light structure, in addition to stairs and other fabrications to meet their client's needs.

Rob's focus is ornamental design on projects such as railings and gates where he sometimes works with architects and sometimes directly with homeowners.

"In the summer months we are particularly busy, but we follow construction trends," said Rob, as Clint added that light structural steel projects must follow code and the designer must

know the code. The firm works with architects for these projects.

Rob said that he and his brother have seen a lot on their firm's works such as different types of metal fabrication from small railings and stairs, to larger industrial tanks and fabrications. They have also seen the shop grow from a two-car garage to what it is today.

Clint, who was 13 years old when he started with the company, began doing a lot of grinding and painting and some welding. Rob, who was 14 or 15 when he started with the company, worked in the summers doing shop clean up, painting, and helping with some residential installations.

Clint said that safety rules and regulations have changed, but they will continue into the future because they have a good system. Rob said that they will probably not expand into new products but will expand the products they currently produce.

With a team of 12 or 13 employees, the ornamental work keeps it interesting as they do different things every day, Rob said. Among the employees is Ray McLearnan, the lead welder, who has been with the firm for 44 years.

PUNCTUALITY: Donation of Tall Case Clock

The Black Horse Inn once again has a Tall Case Clock with a state-of-the-art (for 1810) pendulum regulated movement. A long-time Flourtown family, the Lesseigs, donated the clock to the Historical Society, after having the movement and the case refurbished by experts in the field.

This clock was built by Joseph H. Jackson, a resident and clockmaker in Flourtown from 1805 to 1810. He came from Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, England in 1801. First settling in Germantown, he trained there and then moved to Springfield Township to set up his own business. We only know of three of his clocks, ours being the only one currently running and on display. In 1810, Mr. Jackson married and moved to Pumpkintown, a section of Chestnut Hill near Bells Mill Road. He moved to Delaware, in 1817, taking up farming and clock repair, having been forced out of clock making by stiff competition.

From a picture we found in our archives, we know that the Black Horse Inn previously had another Tall Case Clock, located in the parlor.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

Ghosts on My Property

(Tracing Property Ownership – Part 2)

Written by Ray Smith

Montgomery County has two property records databases. One of them contains records going back to the mid 1970's and the other one contains records from the mid 1970's back to when the county split away from Philadelphia County in 1794. Property records in the older database can't be accessed from your home computer. The post 1970's data is available to you on the county website, but researching earlier records will require a trip into Norristown. The Recorder of Deeds office is located at One Montgomery Plaza, 425 Swede Street, across the street from the county courthouse. The office, in room 303, is open during normal business hours, but you may find it easiest to get a computer terminal in the early afternoon, when the commercial users are mostly done for the day.

As you get off the elevator, on the third floor, you will see the entrance to room 303. In there, a receptionist is to your right, and the public access computers are to your left, in a corral, just past the end of the service counter. Take a seat at any open workstation and you are ready to begin. Keep in mind that if you get stuck or confused, the workers there are used to helping visitors. It is their job and you aren't imposing on them. Make sure that you bring a notepad and some pens or pencils. The office rules forbid your taking pictures of the computer screens, but you may take notes and use the office printer at 50 cents per page.

There are two programs that you can start from the Windows desktop. "Property Info" gets you to the newer records, and "image sync" gets you to the older records. For both programs, you will use a "guest" login and key in your name, which will be used just to identify any pages that you print.

You'll probably want to start with "property info", going to "Search Public Records" and pick "Deeds" then use "address" as your search type. Enter the street number and name in the search field, e.g. "123 Main". When you find the current record for your address, make note of the "Book" and "Page", the record type and the names of the grantor and grantee. Scan through the record, looking for a reference to the prior "Book" and "Page" which is a link to the prior transaction. After you get the initial record, all searches back in time will be by "Book" and "Page". When your link takes you to a book and page that can't be found, it will be time to go to the "image sync" program, to get pre-1970's records.

Similarly to what you have just done, you will search by "Book" and "Page" going backwards. This program just has scanned images of pages from the Deed books. The more recent ones are typed but the earlier ones are hand written and may be difficult to read.

Here are a few things to look for and how to handle them:

- Some Deeds say "Deed" others say "Indenture," look for a description of the transaction and the property being conveyed.
 - All of our properties have gone through divisions and combinations, passed through probate and other legal hurdles that can make your search difficult. If you come to a roadblock, look for an alternate path to get what you want. This may mean looking for other types of records, such as subdivision plans.
- If the initial search by address doesn't get your record, try searching by name, e.g. "John Smith."
- Be careful in what you print. Both programs allow you to print multiple pages at a time.
- The "Property Info" program groups the pages into a queue which you will print when you are done with the program, the "Image Sync" program lets you specify the beginning and ending page numbers for grouping. Make sure you specify exactly what you want, to avoid missing data or running up an excessive charge.
 - When you are done for the day, logoff and go to the counter to pick up and pay for your printed pages. Check them before you leave to avoid having to make another trip back.

If you don't want to drive into Norristown, many SEPTA busses pass by on Swede Street, or terminate at the Norristown Transportation Center, two blocks down the hill.

If you have any questions, please stop by the archives and we'll try to get them answered.

PUNCTUALITY... *CONTINUED*

Please let us know if you remember it or know what happened to it.

The donors, are descendants of the Haas and Lesseig families. Fredrick Haus first appears in the Springfield tax records in 1803, shortly before Mr. Jackson, in 1805. It took a bit of work to trace these and subsequent records, because of variations in spelling names in public records. Haas, Hause, Hawes and Haws are variations for the same person. The earlier records of Mr. Jackson are spelled "Gackson".

In order to protect the clock from sunlight, the Lesseig clock is situated in our library. Please stop by during our regular hours to check it out and set your own timepiece to "Flourtown" time.



Clock Works



From left to right: Board member Jack Yeakel, Archivist Stephanie Walsh, Horologist Frank Hartwell, Clock Winder Ray Smith, Board member Bob Wilmot, case restorer Bill Niblick. Photos by Katie Worrall

Archives UPDATE

In 2017, 58 gifts of personal papers, photographs, ephemera, and objects were donated to the Springfield Township Historical Society.

In the last few months, the Archivist and Volunteer accomplishments have included the following,

- Continuation of cataloging Library Catalog
- Continuation of sorting through and organizing STHS records
- A small portion of photographs and library records were uploaded to the STHS website. Archivist and Volunteers continue to add more each week.

RECENT NEW ACQUISITIONS:

- Tall Case Clock by Joseph H. Jackson
- Wyndmoor School Class Photographs
- Round Wooden Plaque with Springfield Township High School logo
- Seka's Driving Range - Free Game Card
- Enfield Junior High/Middle School yearbooks and other memorabilia

We are extremely thankful for all of our dedicated volunteers, without whom these projects would not be accomplished! They provided a total of 470 hours of service in 2017!

If you are interested in volunteering, please email us at archives@springfieldhistory.org.

Reserve the Date

Thursday, March 1, 2018 – 7:30 p.m.

A Grave Situation:

The First Baptist Cemetery & The Future of Philadelphia's Historical Burials

Presented by Anna Dhody

*First Presbyterian Church
in Springfield*



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Springfield Township Historical Society

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The Challenge

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