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MAY 2021

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The Challenge

PRESERVATION • RESEARCH • EDUCATION

TTF Watershed Partnership

Presented by Julie Slavet

Executive Director of Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Watershed Partnership Inc.

Thursday, May 6 (on Zoom) ■ 7:30 PM

TTF Watershed Partnership was launched in 2000 by the Philadelphia Water Department in an effort to connect diverse stakeholders such as neighbors and stewards of the watershed. The partnership was integral in developing the TTF Integrated Watershed Management Plan, a blueprint for restoring this urban stream into a community asset while addressing the mandated requirements of the federal Clean Water Act and Stormwater Permit Program (MS4). Today, they work with their upstream Montgomery County partners – Abington, Cheltenham, Jenkintown, Rockledge, and Springfield – to improve local waterways through education, stewardship, restoration, and advocacy. Slavet will discuss Springfield's membership in the TTF Watershed Partnership, and how the township can learn from this partnership to foster opportunities in its other watersheds.



**Tookany / Tacony-Frankford
Watershed Partnership, Inc.**

The words *Tookany* and *Tacony* come from the native Lenape word *tèkēne*, meaning *woods* or *wilderness*. The creek begins in Montgomery County, where the main stem is called the Tookany. When the creek passes into Philadelphia the name changes to Tacony. The Tacony Creek becomes the Frankford Creek in Juniata Park, and meets the Delaware River south of the Betsy Ross bridge. Frankford Creek was named for the village of Frankford, which was established by the Quakers in about 1682 and became part of the city of Philadelphia in 1854. The founders of TTF wanted

to make sure that all residents of the watershed identified with the organization no matter where they lived within its 30 miles.

Slavet, who has worked for TTF since 2011, previously served as the senior district staff member for Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz, leading constituent services and outreach efforts in a district of 650,000 people in Montgomery County and Northeast Philadelphia. Julie has worked at city and state levels of government and for a range of non-profit organizations.



Julie Slavet

Pre-registration is required so that the Zoom link can be sent to interested guests.
Deadline to register is Tuesday, May 4.

To sign up, please send your name and email address to Katie Worrall, secretary of the Springfield Township Historical Society board of directors, at worrallkatie@aol.com. chers.

President's Corner

It appears that spring has arrived in Springfield Township. Trees are leafing out, flowers are blooming, and the grass needs to be cut already. It's a time of renewal and remembrance. I've been taking a moment each day to think about those who have lost loved ones or friends, and those who had to face many challenges over this last year.

I hope this note finds you and your families well. We have missed seeing you in person at our programs. Thank you to all those who joined us virtually for our programs on *Woodmere Art Museum*, the *Mining Industries of Eastern Montgomery County*, and *Enfield Elementary School*. Also, thank you to those who joined us, also virtually, for our *7th History in Motion* fundraiser in January, a presentation by Nancy Moses on her most recent book *Fakes, Forgeries and Frauds*. Each of these programs is available on our new YouTube channel.

I would like to acknowledge our sponsors who, along with your generous contributions, allow your Historical Society to present programs of interest, staff the Archives, and pay the rent. Our Sponsors include: Michael DeLaurentis for Concrete Work, BQ Basement Systems, Compass Real Estate, Mara Restoration, Russell Roofing & Exteriors, Dan Helwig Inc. Realtors, Kreilick Conservation, John F. Murray Funeral Home, Katie Worrall, Al Comly, and Coxey Toogood.

The Board of Directors is actively seeking new members of the Board and volunteers to assist in the activities of the Society. If you are passionate about history, particularly the history of Springfield Township, we want to hear from you!

T. Scott Kreilick
President
Springfield Township Historical Society

At the Springfield Township Historical Commission



— GOVERNMENT —
HISTORICAL
COMMISSION

The Springfield Township Historical Commission was created by the new Township Historic Resources Ordinance, with members appointed in early 2020, with our first official meeting held on May 5, 2020. Our Liaison to the Commissioners is Baird Standish, our staff liaison in Mark Penecale, Director of Planning and Zoning for the Township. We hold public meetings on the first Tuesday of each month from 6 to 7 PM. Due to the restrictions associated with COVID, our meetings are on ZOOM format, following the format which the township established for all other township related meetings. Our group has yet to meet in person, but we have pushed forward with implementing the ordinance.

The Commission has been focused on implementing the "Historic Resources Inventory" that forms the basis of the township ordinance. There are over 1600 structures in the Township that were built in or before 1920. While the ordinance establishes a zoning overlay for the whole township, the current focus is to get property owners to embrace the additional zoning benefits offered in the ordinance by placing their property on the inventory list. The Commission has done two presentations intended to encourage owners of 27 historically significant structures listed in

the Township's 2014 Comprehensive Plan to participate. Mailings were sent to each property owner summarizing the ordinance and its purpose. These presentations were done using ZOOM format and open to the public, but generated little interest. The Commission, with the support of the township, continues to seek ways to encourage interest and participation in the process. Information distributed to

the property owners was included in the most recent township newsletter. A recent Chestnut Hill Local article outlines the benefits to participation in this process. The Power-Point presentation prepared for the property owners' meetings is also available for group viewing. *Contact person for the Historical Commission is Mark Penecale, Director of Planning and Zoning at the Township.*

FROM THE
Archives



The Flourtown Fair Grounds were located on the land currently occupied by the Flourtown Swim Club. The Fair operated as a fundraiser for the local fire company from the mid-1930s to 1950.

(SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION)

The President Stops in for Tea

While most publications document the formal opening of Whitemarsh Hall to society as occurring on October 8, 1921, at a major event with as many as 1,000 invited guests (and honoring newlyweds James H.R. Cromwell and his wife, the former Delphine Ione Dodge, the daughter of Horace Dodge of the motorcar fame), the first social visitors of consequence arrived months earlier.

On June 5, 1921, Mr. and Mrs. Stotesbury played host to President Warren G. Harding and his wife Florence, who arrived by motorcar from Valley Forge, in the late afternoon, for tea.

The President had addressed a crowd of more than 2,000 people, who were gathered in front of the Valley Forge Memorial Chapel, speaking on the theme of America's desire to play a leading part in the post-war reconstruction of the world. The President and his wife had been staying for the weekend at the home of Senator Philander C. Knox, in Valley Forge. Returning to the Knox home after the speech, they were joined by Senator Penrose, and Governor and Mrs. Sproul,

where the party was served a luncheon, reappearing on the porch at about 4:00PM, when it was announced that the group would "take tea with Mr. and Mrs. E. T. Stotesbury, at their home at Whitemarsh."

The visitors must not have stayed long with the Stotesburys, as they returned to the Knox house, and retired early, in preparation for the 110-mile motor ride the next morning back to Washington, where they planned to arrive by early afternoon.

Sadly, we have not yet been able to find any photographs taken at Whitemarsh Hall with the Hardings,



President-elect Warren G. Harding and Mrs. Florence Harding wave to crowds from a Packard Twin 6, on March 4, 1921.
IMAGE CREDIT: LIBRARY OF CONGRESS.

contemporaneous newspaper coverage implies that such photographs were likely taken, at least in Valley Forge.

AUTHOR CONTACT INFORMATION:	Richard R. Billig Email: rrbillig@gmail.com Administrator, "Fans of Whitemarsh Hall" group on Facebook http://www.facebook.com/groups/WhitemarshHall/
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Archives UPDATE

At the start of the pandemic last spring, we asked for your help on the COVID-19 Community History Documentation Project, while in the fall we introduced you to the Springfield Township Scavenger Hunts. In October, we participated in the *Chestnut Hill Conservancy Night of Lights*. As things slowed down during the fall and winter, we used the time to update catalog records and answer requests for researchers.

We are extremely thankful for all our dedicated volunteers who have helped us over these long months. While several of our long-term and dedicated volunteers have remained at home while the Society is closed for general operating hours, a few

have come in to work independently or have found projects to do remotely.

Ray Smith began working again at the Society independently on Saturday mornings. He has spent his time scanning slides from the Marie Kitto and Aubrey Williams Collections, as well as digitally preserving the VHS collection, which includes video tapes of past STHS programs.

Andrew Birkelbach is working remotely to index the property atlases in the collection. These railroad company publications show the property owners in and around Springfield Township. Andrew's work will help us to more easily research property records in the collection.

Although we've been working remotely throughout the pandemic with a few limited in-person hours over the last

year, Springfield Township Historical Society has continued to receive donations from various community members. These gifts received from January 2020 until April 2021 include:

PHOTOGRAPHS

- **Oak Run** (digital images) shared with Liz Jarvis at the Chestnut Hill Conservancy Historical Society, who then shared with STHS.
- 35mm slides taken by Dr. Charles Ingman of Springfield Township in the 1970s, donated by Dr. Charles Ingman's daughter to the Free Library of Springfield Township, who subsequently transferred them to STHS.
- Joseph and Mary Nash family (digital image) circa 1907 was emailed to the Society by Joe Myers along with genealogy details of the Yeakle and Nash families.

Continued on next page

Archives Update *continued*

- 50 images of Whitemarsh Hall, deaccessioned from the Old York Road Historical Society Collection and transferred to STHS.
- Digital photographs pertaining to the Rosengartens and the Westminster Theological Seminary, shared by Brandon Peterson of Christian Counseling & Education Foundation.
- Snapshots of teachers and students at various activities along with class photographs at Erdenheim Elementary and Enfield Middle Schools circa 1970s-1991, donated by Linda Bolanos.
- Two photographs from the 1950s, including one of Drs. McCloskey, Ullom, and Schumann at an event recognizing them for 50 years of medical service, from Jerry Coleman.

MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION

- Papers with material pertaining to STHS Board activities, from Liz Jarvis.
- Papers with material pertaining to STHS Board activities, from Christine Smith.
- Papers from the Stotesburys and Whitemarsh Hall, deaccessioned from the Old York Road Historical Society Collection and transferred to STHS.

- Five 1961 issues of "The Chronicle" (the Springfield Township High School newsletter) along with other area local clippings and obituaries, donated by Virginia Bergey.
- Program from the Wyndmoor Bantams, mailed to the Society anonymously.
- Community History Documentation submission, completed by Leslie Agans Bilotta

OBJECT COLLECTION

- Objects found at the property *Oak Run* (117 East Mill Road) including sunglasses, brought in by Susan Hadden, donated by Rena Harris.
- Penn Oak tree slab sold by Springfield Township and accompanying paperwork (invoice and "History of the Penn Oak" narrative), donated by Carol Johnson.
- Arrowhead found on childhood property (Church Road) of donor while her father was planting a dogwood tree, donated by Carol Johnson.
- Exterior thermometer, Black Horse Inn, Flourtown, PA found attached to a post during demolition of a house on Wissahickon Avenue, donated by Joe Melnick and Paul Ryder.
- Issues of the *Chestnut Hill Local* (January 2 - February 6, 2020), and an issue of *The Enterprise* (January 2020), donated by Katie Worrall.

- Student desk and chair originally used at Erdenheim Elementary School, donated by Ed Zwicker IV.

EPHEMERA

- Whitemarsh Hall-related ephemera, deaccessioned from the Old York Road Historical Society Collection and transferred to STHS.
- Screenshots and images of ads and newspaper articles, captured by Cindy Hamilton on various topics pertaining to the area's history.

LIBRARY

- Historical narratives compiled and written by Aubrey William on Springfield Township donated by Ronald Mutchnik.
- A first edition of *The Tennis House at Crab Tree Farm*, donated by Tom Gleason.

If you are interested in volunteering, researching a topic, or have items you wish to donate to the Society, please email us at archives@springfieldhistory.org.

We are still developing remote projects for those interested in volunteering. If you have previously contacted the Society about a remote project, please be patient as we are still working on limited hours and the archivist will get back to you soon.

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