

PO Box 564
Flourtown, PA 19031
215-233-4600
www.springfieldhistory.org

MARCH 2013

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Marie Kitto Award
- STHS Welcomes New Board Members:
*T. Scott Kreilick,
Anna Coxe Toogood,
and Jack Yeakel*
- From the Archives
- Archives Update

OFFICERS

T. Scott Kreilick
President

Anna Coxe Toogood
Vice President

W. Scott Armington
Treasurer

Katie Worrall
Secretary

DIRECTORS

Alexander B. Bartlett

Vincent Bruner

Barbara Coleman

Dorothy J. Cutler

Sue Duckwitz

Katharine Haight

Cynthia Hamilton

Amanda M. Helwig

Elizabeth Jarvis

Dolores Jordan Cannon

Edward J. Welch

Jack Yeakel

ADVISORY BOARD

Shirley Hanson

Agnes L. Roberts

EDITORS

Cindy Hamilton

Phoebe Rosenberry

Christine Fisher Smith

Katie Worrall

The Challenge

PRESERVATION • RESEARCH • EDUCATION

LAVEROCK FARM – *The Estate of Arthur Emlen Newbold Jr.*

A Presentation by
Ed Zwicker IV and Ed Zwicker III

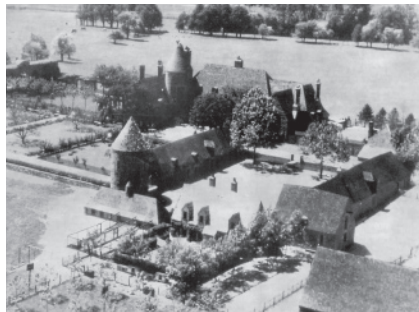
Thursday, March 21st, 2013 – 7:30 p.m.

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

America's Gilded Age was well represented in Springfield Township, with splendid manors built on manicured acres. Prominent Philadelphia families commissioned the leading architects of their day to design grand estates such as "Belcroft," "Guildford," "Laverock Hill," and "Whitemarsh Hall."

The scattered remnants of some of these homes still exist to remind us of their grandeur. But one of the most unique of this age is also one of the least known today, primarily because there are no remaining traces of it. This gem of a property was "Laverock Farm," home of Arthur Emlen Newbold Jr.

Newbold, born in 1888, grew up in his family's home called "Farleigh" on 8 acres, just off Willow Grove Avenue in the Laverock section of the township. The Newbold family would acquire additional adjoining acreage, eventually totaling about 90 acres, including a Colonial style farmhouse. After Arthur Newbold Jr. grew into adulthood and married in 1913, he remodeled and modernized this farmhouse for his new family. Architect Arthur Meigs, of the renowned firm of Mellor, Meigs, and Howe, was employed in 1919 to add some landscaping walls and pavilions parallel to the house. In the succeeding years Meigs would return to add additional elements such as a Sheep Fold and a Pigeon Tower. The final wave of additions included two new wings added



to the main house, and a steep hipped roof replacing the original low gabled one. The Colonial farmhouse was ultimately fully transformed inside and out into a replica French farmhouse complete with livestock that included sheep, geese, chickens, and horses. Arthur Newbold Jr. was an investment banker at Drexel & Company, but his real

love was that of a gentleman farmer spending time with his family. Three years after his untimely death in 1946, the Newbold family would move out of "Laverock Farm" and the property would sit vacant before its eventual demolition in the mid-1950's, to be replaced by tract housing that exists there today.

The last formal event held at "Laverock Farm" was the 1949 wedding of the Newbold's youngest daughter, Margaret Yarnall, to Stephen Pearson. Mrs. Pearson is still a resident of Springfield Township, and has generously contributed stories, home movies, and pictures to help document the history of "Laverock Farm" and the Newbold family. Please join us as STHS welcomes its former President Edward Zwicker IV, and his father Edward III, for a multi-media presentation that tells this wonderful story. 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.

MARIE KITTO AWARD

The Springfield Township Historical Society recently presented its Marie Kitto Award posthumously to Doug Heller in recognition of his broad contributions to the preservation of our community's historic resources, most notably the Black Horse Inn.

The award is given in memory of Kitto, a founder of the historical society, to a person who embodies the tenets of the historical society: research, preservation and education.


In her letter nominating Heller for the award, STHS board member Cindy Hamilton wrote that "When the Flourtown neighbors first began their efforts to save the Black Horse Inn from demolition, Doug was among the core group who recognized the threat and began to advance township-wide discussions of the need to preserve this important vestige from Springfield's stagecoach era."

At the time it was feared that the township might have lost the inn, Heller posted a petition to save the Black Horse Inn on the website www.ushistory.org. Over time, the petition was instrumental in saving the 18th century inn at 1432 Bethlehem Pike in Flourtown that is now owned by Springfield Township. In 2008, he was an organizer of "Heritage Day at the Black Horse Inn," held to celebrate the completion of the exterior renovations to the Black Horse, to thank contributors, and to begin fundraising for the inn's interior restoration.

Heller, who died last May, served a term on the Springfield Township Board of Commissioners, representing Ward 1-2 which includes the inn.

He was able to further promote the need to preserve the Black Horse Inn and was instrumental in securing the township's commitment to the ongoing restoration, the letter nominating him for the award states.

Heller was born in New York City and raised in New Jersey and Long Island. He attended the University of Rochester, where he majored in history and wrote crossword puzzles for the student newspaper. Heller officiated at the



Springfield Township Historical Society past president Ed Zwicker presented the society's Marie Kitto Award to Nancy Parsons, wife of the late Doug Heller.

American Crossword Puzzle Tournament every year from its inception in 1978 until a few months before his death. A computer programmer and Web designer, he also wrote a computer program to create crosswords and developed the website, www.ushistory.org, for the Independence Hall Association in Philadelphia.

Last fall, the Philadelphia Archaeological Forum dedicated an award in Doug's name for the work he did on the President's House as well as for helping the PAF get a website up and running to further their reach. He was also honored with a proclamation from Mayor Nutter for his work with National History Day Philly and received both the Springfield Democrat of the Year award and the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Citizen of the Year award in 2012.

The Archives are OPEN to the Public

Tuesdays 7pm – 9pm
Wednesdays 11 am – 1pm
Saturdays 9am – 12noon

For more information,
call
215-233-4600

STHS Welcomes New Board Members

STHS is delighted to welcome three new board members, two of whom have agreed to serve as officers. These three individuals are exceptionally qualified and are very passionate about local history. We look forward to their contributions to help our organization in our mission to collect, preserve and disseminate the history of Springfield Township.

When our new STHS President **T. SCOTT KREILICK** was first faced with having to make a career choice, "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood, and sorry I could not travel both" (Robert Frost, *The Road Not Taken*).

Over time, however, he did.

"When I first went off to college" he says, "I had to choose between the study of history or engineering. I choose engineering because I believed my income potential would be greater as an engineer." Though Scott had a successful 15-year career at Phelps-Dodge, designing, fabricating and marketing metallic superconducting wire, he often thought about the road not taken and acted upon his desire to see where that path would take him. "I found a way to combine my love of history, metals, travel and working with my hands," he explains. "I went back to school at the University of Pennsylvania and completed my graduate work in Historical Preservation, specializing in Architectural Conservation. Scott also earned a B.A. in the History and Sociology of Science at the University of Pennsylvania and completed an internship at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

All of this led to the founding of his own firm, Kreilick Conservation as a sole proprietorship in 1996. Kreilick Conservation, which became a Limited Liability Company in 2002, provides laboratory and field analysis of materials, condition assessments, emergency response and stabilization, treatment, documentation and maintenance of architectural and historical monuments and artifacts. Clients include local, state and national public, private and non-profits involved in the conservation, restoration and rehabilitation of our cultural heritage.

Scott's love of restoration work has led to board positions where he has championed and contributed to various preservation efforts in several township communities. Scott is a member of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works' (AIC's) Collections Emergency Response Team (CERT). He served on the Board of Directors of the Delaware Valley Chapter of the Association for Preservation Technology International from 1998 to 2004. As a Member of the American Society of Metals (since 1984), Scott served on the Historical Landmarks Award Selection Committee from 1995 until 2005, serving as Chair for nine years. He was a member of Committee E-06 on Performance of Buildings of the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) from 1995 until 2005; and Committee B-01 on Electrical Conductors from 1986-1997.

The road home to Springfield Township

He brings his passion for Springfield Township and historical preservation to his new role as President. "I relocated to Springfield Township 20 years ago," he says. "It was a coming home for my wife, Cynthia, who was born and raised here. My mother-in-law, Charlotte Rafetto, has lived in Northwoods for almost



T. Scott Kreilick, President STHS and President, CEO and Principal Conservator, Kreilick Conservation, LLC in Oreland PA.



Donations Needed



One of the core tenets of STHS is to maintain an archival collection dedicated to the history and development of Springfield Township. Our dedicated archives staff and volunteers work diligently to keep our archives running efficiently. As the archives continues to grow and expand, we have recognized the need for several items that we are hoping our readers might consider donating:

a **Computer** or a **Step Stool** or a **Coat Stand**

sixty years. Our adult children, Alyssa and Ray, are both graduates of Springfield Township High School."

When it comes to advancing the STHS's mission and establishing 2013 goals, Scott has set the bar pretty high. "Our priority for 2013 will be to ensure that STHS has the financial resources to support our mission of preservation, research and education now, and into the foreseeable future. To that end," Scott says, "we will be applying for grants and sponsoring fund-raising events to support near-term and on-going initiatives."

"I consider the preservation of the township's cultural resources as a quality of life issue," he concludes. "I believe the STHS serves as the chief steward of our cultural heritage."

ANNA COXE TOOGOOD (Coxey) an historian with the National Park Service for over 40 years, likes nothing better than hosting white house tours— but only in Philadelphia. In a C-SPAN (Cable-Satellite Public Affairs Network) segment, Coxey gave viewers a tour of the Deshler-Morris House, the oldest surviving presidential residence in the nation.

The piece opens with STHS' new Vice President telling people about how the Yellow Fever epidemic in 1793 drove residents from all over the city to seek refuge in the country. President George Washington fled to Germantown, renting a two-story home from its then owner Colonel Isaac Franks. Washington lived in the "Germantown White House" and he and his cabinet, Thomas Jefferson, Alexander Hamilton, Edmund Randolph and Henry Knox, conducted important business there. At the time, the yellow fever epidemic was one of many troubles plaguing the new nation. The cabinet was faced with having to make decisions over whether to take sides in the war between France and England (Washington said "no"), how to handle Spain's claim on Louisiana (further complicated by French ownership of the territory with no resolution until Jefferson became President) and more. Though Coxey says there are few anecdotes passed down or written records about George and Martha's life in the home, she did say that Martha made several improvements to the garden while living there.



Anna Coxey Toogood, Historian, Independence National Historical Park

But Coxey's work with the Deshler-Morris House is only a small piece of the larger contributions she has made to the National Park Service. "In the last chapter of this long career," she says, I've worked as a park historian preparing some reports, but also worked on planning teams, reviewing and augmenting exhibit text. I've always enjoyed learning about how people interacted and how sites developed."

Setting her sights on preservation efforts throughout the nation

She's travelled and written extensively on historic preservation, earning the 2003 Cultural Resource Award within the NPS Northeast Region for her three-volume history on Independence Mall. While in Washington and Denver, she completed multiple historic structure, resource, grounds and cultural landscape reports for sites across the country. These spots include parks and historic sites as diverse as Golden Gate Park, the Whiskeytown National Recreation areas in California, the John F. Kennedy Birthplace in Boston, and the George Washington Carver Birthplace in Arkansas.

Now the history of Springfield Township is her main focus and passion. Though Coxey lives in the township around the corner from the oldest house in Springfield Township, she says she's wants to learn more and is eager to use her expertise and apply her extensive knowledge of historic preservation right here. "The local history interests me, but I've done little to pursue it until lately," she says. "Ed Welch shared his work on the fire company with me. It turned out to include my family, the **Newbolds** of Laverock. My mother was Arthur Newbold Jr.'s daughter. The only one left from her generation is **Marjorie Pearson**, whom the **Zwickers** are interviewing. I am very impressed by their zeal and wisdom. All of this has brought the township history more vividly to mind!"

In her new STHS leadership role, Coxey seeks to further the goals of the historical society by conducting research, communicating with members and promoting special events. She sees preservation awareness and the sharing of information as two of the society's most important priorities for 2013. She believes that all must not lose sight of the importance of preserving our past.

"We just lost the pool that remained from Laverock," she concludes. "However, the society and township residents saved the Black horse Inn—this is a shining example of how we need to band together to keep landmarks of the past."

For **JACK YEAKEL**, moving to Flouertown in 2001 was like coming home – an ancestral one at that where past generations of Yeakels farmed, owned property and actively participated in helping to turn what was then a largely rural community into a thriving town.

Jack's family had actually never strayed far from the region. Our new Springfield Township Historical Society Board Member grew up in East Falls where he and his family used to visit his grandparents in Lansdale by way of Bethlehem Pike or what his Dad called "the old 309." "I remember my father pointing out the old buildings along the way," he says. The family often stopped in Flouertown to shop, but Jack didn't have much of an interest in the past until he noticed his family name on a sign. "I was fascinated by the street sign with my name on it," he explains. "Dad told me that some of our ancestors owned a farm in Flouertown."



Jack Yeakel pointing out a maker's mark on a tombstone at the Yeakel Cemetery.

The street sign sparked a decades-long search into his family history and a passion for learning more about the history of Springfield Township and finding places where earlier generations of Yeakels might have lived and worked. For starters, Jack interviewed relatives and did research in area libraries. But the real key to unlocking the past didn't come until years later when the clerk at the Springfield Township building gave him the name and phone number of **Marie Kitto**, former executive director of STHS.

"When I called Marie, she was excited to hear from a descendant of an early Springfield Township family," he recalls. "She told me how to find the Yeakel Cemetery and encouraged me to research my family history." Lucky for Jack she did, for it can be tricky to find the Yeakel Cemetery. It is not visible from any roadway and is completely surrounded by private property. Currently the cemetery land is heavily overgrown. It's in the general vicinity of a driveway and parking area near 8833 Stenton Avenue, running parallel to it.

A search for the family burial ground ends in a commitment to a plan

"Since finding the Yeakel Cemetery in the late 1980s, I've visited the site too many times to count," he says. "I was always concerned about how little known and neglected the place was. Last year while visiting the site, I met **Liz Jarvis** and **Jerry Heebner**. They were meeting to discuss upcoming programs and, by coincidence, I was there too. We all agreed to meet again and our chance meeting has turned into a meaningful preservation effort." A committee has been set up and a preservation plan for the cemetery is currently under development as you can see by visiting the website, <http://yeakelcemetery.com/>

Historic preservation of the cemetery is just one of many projects Jack plans to champion in his role as Chair of the Program Committee. "Being on the Board of Directors is an exciting opportunity to preserve and promote the history of Springfield Township," he says. "I'm eager to work with **Charles Zwicker** and my fellow board members to develop programs that tell of important discoveries—programs are a great way to show people that history is not static. New discoveries continue to be made and existing information can be interpreted in different ways."

In Jack's professional life, he supervises projects for a building and construction company and has worked on many historic homes in the region. He brings these skills along with the desire to spread the word about the importance of historical preservation to his new role. "It's very important to work with other historical groups, businesses and schools and to educate young people and promote their interest in history," he concludes. "The history of Springfield Township predates modern geopolitical borders; it is intertwined with Chestnut Hill, Whitmarsh and other neighboring townships."

"When all of us work together, we can tell people the whole story of our past."

FROM THE Archives

Kindergarten class 1947-48, Wyndmoor School (now known as Wyndhill Professional Center, Flouertown Avenue)



Archives UPDATE

VOLUNTEERS

We have two new volunteers **George Silvaney** and **Leslie Morris-Smith**. George has been instrumental in helping with rearranging, labeling and storing the collection.

Leslie is cataloging the new addition to the book collection the Pennsylvania Archives.

We also want to thank our regular volunteers including: **Judy Smith** who is working on the newspaper clippings; **Ray Smith** who is adding the Library of Congress cataloging information for the Free Library of Springfield Township book collection in Past Perfect; **Dulie Gray** who is working on the photo collection, **John Franz** who is working on gathering histories on the churches/synagogues in the area; and **Ed Zwicker III** and **Ed Zwicker IV** who volunteer to keep the archives open on Tuesday evenings from 7-9pm.

COLLECTION

We are in the process of sorting, cataloging and preserving blueprints of the interior of Whitemarsh Hall by the London architectural firm of White & Allom. These may be one of the only set of blueprints still in existence since the White & Allom firm lost all of its blueprints of Whitemarsh Hall in a fire.

Reserve
the Date

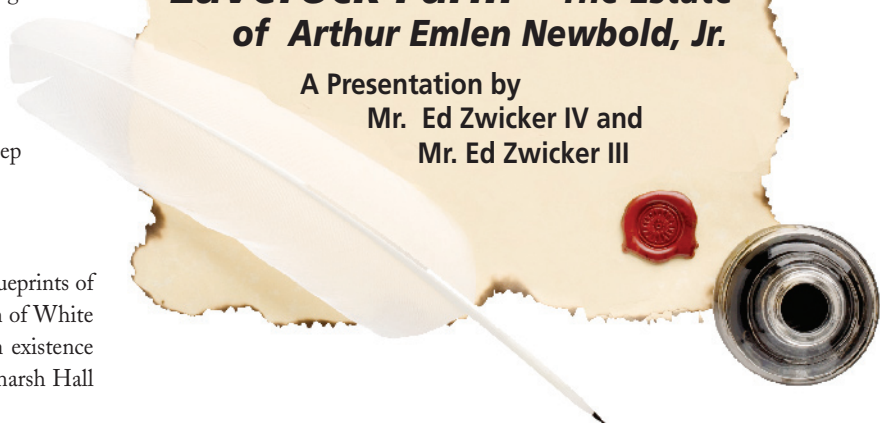
Thurs., March 21, 2013 – 7:30 p.m.

**Laverock Farm – The Estate
of Arthur Emlen Newbold, Jr.**

A Presentation by

Mr. Ed Zwicker IV and

Mr. Ed Zwicker III



Address Service Requested

Springfield Township Historical Society
PO Box 564 • Flourtown, PA 19031

PRESERVATION • RESEARCH • EDUCATION

The Challenge

NON-PROFIT ORG.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Fort Washington, PA
Permit No. 518