



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

The Challenge

PRESERVATION • RESEARCH • EDUCATION

THE HISTORY OF YEAKEL CEMETERY

Presented by Mr. Jack Yeakel

Thursday, September 18th, 2014 – 7:30 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

Bethlehem Pike & East Mill Road in Flourtown, PA

SEPTEMBER 2014

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Upcoming Events:
 - Bloomfield Farm,
 - History in Motion
- Spotlight on Springfield's Historic Businesses:
 - Craft Funeral Home*
- From the Archives
- Help STHS Document Bethesda Children's Home and Ft. Washington Branch of PA RR
- 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

EDITORS

Cindy Hamilton

Phoebe Rosenberry

Christine Fisher Smith

Katie Worrall

The Yeakel Cemetery is the final resting place of some of Chestnut Hill and Springfield Township's earliest inhabitants. The burial ground is located in a wooded area behind a rehabilitation center in the Wyndmoor section of the township. Its elusive location has kept it out of public view for nearly a century.

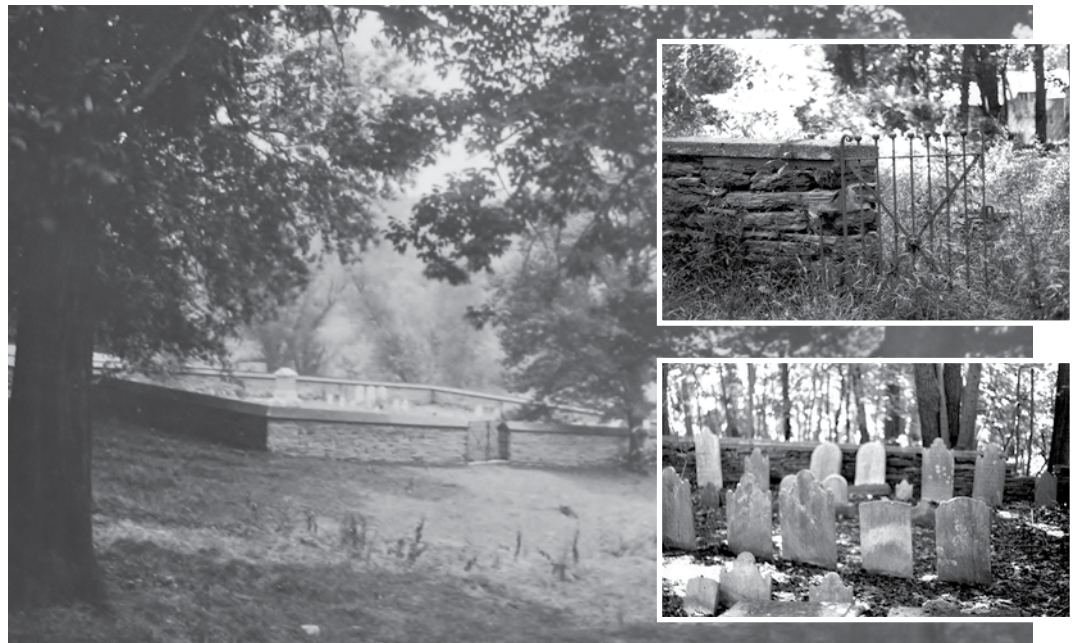
The Yeakel Cemetery was once owned by the Mack family of Germantown and was used as a place of interment prior to 1753. Many buried here are descendants of the Schwenkfelders who came to Philadelphia seeking religious freedom in 1734. Tradition states that Revolutionary war casualties are buried here in unmarked graves. Four men, buried here, are listed as members of the Pennsylvania militia. Christopher Yeakel, whose house was ransacked by British troops in 1777, purchased the property in

1802. There are 53 known burials in the cemetery. The last one was Matilda Heydrick who died in 1902.

Flourtown resident and Springfield Township Historic Society board member Jack Yeakel is a ninth generation descendant of those early settlers. Over many years, Jack has researched the history of the site and is currently leading an effort to preserve it. His presentation will explore the history of the cemetery and the remarkable connections it has to many local landmarks we see today.

Please join us on September 18th to discover more about this 260 year old historic landmark. 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 September 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

Our Historical Society has made tremendous progress this summer toward our goal of digitizing the irreplaceable resources in our archival collection. The proceeds of our fund-raising efforts over the last year have allowed us to purchase and install the equipment we will need to begin the digitizing process. It is anticipated that the actual process of digitizing the collection will take a couple of years to complete. Actually, it will be an unending effort as new materials are added to the collection. I can't wait to see the results!

Major donations to this effort were received from the Rotary Club of Springfield Township, District 7430 of Rotary International, Chaddsford Winery, Richard Snowden, Sal Peone Jr., Janney Montgomery Scott, Dan Helwig Realtors, Coyle Group, Rex & Sons, Inc., and Enterprise Newspapers. While all of the STHS Board of Directors participated, I

would especially like to acknowledge Mandy Helwig for leading the fund-raising efforts, and Alex Bartlett and Scott Armington for coordinating the procurement and installation of the new equipment.

As you read this, summer will be coming to a close. The wonderful weather this summer has been a welcome relief after the never-ending winter. Most likely, you are reading this because you have an affinity for history and the places that make Springfield Township and the Philadelphia region special. I encourage each of you to take a child or a grandchild to your favorite historic site before the summer ends. Be sure to tell them why it's your favorite site. It may help inspire a life-long love and interest in history. Our children are the future.

T. Scott Kreilick – *President, Springfield Township Historical Society*

"IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT, AT ITS BEST, PRESERVATION ENGAGES THE PAST IN A CONVERSATION WITH THE PRESENT, OVER A MUTUAL CONCERN FOR THE FUTURE."

– *William J. Murtagh, First Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places*

STHS to Participate in Bloomfield Farm Day

Bloomfield Farm Day is scheduled for Sunday, October 19th from 12 to 3 p.m. Present the coupon included in this newsletter, and on our website, and visitors will receive \$5.00 off regular admission! Visitors are invited to celebrate farming life, past and present at Bloomfield Farm Day. Tour the Arboretum's oldest building, the recently renovated Springfield Mill which dates back to 1760. Learn about time-honored farming professions by educational instructors Jim Bobb, the Bee Keeper, Jack the Cooper, a traditional woodworker, and Quilter, Patti Stone. Explore goat farming and products made from goat milk with Shady Apple Goats who will be on site with two baby goats, Buckwheat and Clover. Weaver's Way will also be in attendance with live chickens to discuss backyard chicken keeping. Enjoy blue grass music by a local band and look for our table, which will have children's games and crafts. Take advantage of this rare opportunity to glimpse a different time with a short trip to Bloomfield Farm, located across the street from the Arboretum's main entrance on Northwestern Avenue.

Join STHS for 2nd Annual HISTORY IN MOTION Film Event

STHS and Chaddsford Winery will present "History in Motion Film Event" at the Phil-Mont Christian Academy in Erdenheim, on Friday evening, November 7. Festivities will begin at 6:30 p.m. with a complimentary wine tasting by our signature sponsor Chaddsford Winery with light appetizers, live music, and a silent auction of items donated by local businesses and residents.

The reception will be followed by a screening of *Stealing Home*, starring Jodie Foster, Marc Harmon and Harold Ramis. Scenes from the film were shot in Springfield Township, Chestnut Hill and Roxborough.

Proceeds will benefit the Springfield Township Historical Society.

Tickets to the event are \$25 per person and may be purchased online at www.HistoryInMotion2.Eventbrite.com or by sending a check payable to the Springfield Township Historical Society to the STHS at:

PO Box 564, Flourtown, PA 19031.
Information is available on the historical society website, www.springfieldhistory.org.

Forms for Silent Auction and Food Donations and Sponsors are also available on our website.



BLOOMFIELD FARM DAY
**\$5.00 OFF
ADMISSION**

Come Join Us
Sun, October 19th
12pm to 3pm

100 E. Northwestern Ave
Philadelphia, PA.

SPECIAL DISCOUNT ADMISSION!

Present this coupon for \$5 OFF regular admission for each member of your party

Note: admission includes access to BOTH the farm and the gardens
Redeemed for ___ Adults ___ Seniors ___ Children



The Archives are
OPEN
to the Public

TUESDAYS 7pm – 9pm

WEDNESDAYS 11am – 1pm

SATURDAYS 9am – 12noon

For more information,
call 215-233-4600

Springfield's Historic Businesses:

SPOTLIGHT ON

CRAFT FUNERAL HOME

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

Most people's career dreams change multiple times as they grow up until they find the vocation that truly fulfills their dreams. For Licensed Funeral Director David Peake, Jr., co-owner of Craft Funeral Home, the choices were always out there, but none seemed better than going into the family business. "I loved the relationships our family had with the community when I was growing up," David said. "These ties allowed me to experience working with people and families and led me to doing what I do."

David and his mother, Janice Mannal whose father started the Robert L. Mannal Funeral home in Mayfair in 1935, own Craft Funeral Home, located at 814 Bethlehem Pike in Erdenheim, Pa. For 121 years, the firm was owned and operated by members of the Craft Family. Herbert U. Craft, Jr., and his daughter Joanna Craft Matthew sold the business to David and Janice in April 2012.

"Joanna and I have known each other since we were students at Springfield Township High School," David explains. "Joanna called to say that Herb was retiring and asked if we were interested in buying the business." "We saw this as a great opportunity to continue the Craft family legacy and expand the work and our relationships in a community that we've called home for more than 20 years."

David's trademark enthusiasm for working in a community-based business was particularly sparked by his mother whose long and successful career began at the Robert L. Mannal Funeral home, which the family still owns, and continues at Craft, where she lives and works. David advanced in his career with help from Janice, who was one of only a handful of licensed women morticians in the area and who Governor Tom Ridge appointed to the State Board of Funeral Directors, serving as the first woman Chairperson. "My mother didn't give me formal instructions; I learned a lot by osmosis," he says. "I

learned how to serve a wide range of clients with various needs and most importantly, how to conduct myself around a grieving family." David brought these lessons to his formal training as a student at the Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Sciences, which he attended following Kutztown College. David took the national board exam, becoming a licensed funeral director in the state of Pennsylvania in 1999. Maintaining the license while staying abreast of regulatory requirements is an ongoing process. For example, to maintain a license in Pennsylvania requires you to complete six continuing education credits every two years.

Funerals have changed over the past decade. "Funerals are no longer the big elephant in the room that nobody wants to talk about," he explains. "People are more engaged and want customized service—video tributes, music that is personally meaningful and a time for sharing personal remembrances. He also sees more of a trend toward cremation where the family member's ashes are usually placed in an urn and kept by the family or interred. "We offer options on disposition as most funeral homes do," he explains, "where the family decides whether they want a memorial service to take place before or after the cremation." Other trends include a big expansion of pre-arrangements where people plan how they want their funeral and memorial service to be conducted in advance of their passing.

One custom, however, has stayed the same for centuries. "Nine out of 10 people want clergy present or leading a service," he says. "At a difficult time like this for families, it's better to have clergy present."

There's also structural changes going on that are affecting the business itself with "Mom and Pop" or family-owned firms being purchased by large corporations. David points to StoneMor, which has on its website that it owns 278 cemeteries and 90 funeral homes in 28 states and Puerto Rico. On May 28, 2014,

StoneMor and the Archdiocese of Philadelphia closed a long-term lease and outsourcing arrangement for 13 Catholic cemeteries. Other consolidations will likely take place in the future and it's difficult to predict outcomes.

What's certain is that families can expect the professionals at Craft to help them with every aspect of their family member's death. From helping them obtain insurance and social security benefits to providing information on will probate, David and his family are there and look forward to serving the community for many years to come. David currently serves as Vice President of the Philadelphia Funeral Director's Association and District Governor of the Pennsylvania Funeral Directors Association. Each group is dedicated to protecting and keeping the integrity of the funeral business and offering quality educational programs that advance the profession, such as licensing preparation courses and mentoring.

Though David's responsibilities include being available 24/7 and a commitment to try to respond to a call from families within five to ten minutes, he finds time to volunteer in the Springfield Township community. Two years ago, he helped found the Spartan Football Alumni Association, which consists of team mates who played football for Springfield High School. "We held our second annual golf outing this year and were able to award a \$2,500 scholarship to a senior football player at Springfield High School." David's mother Janice is also active in the Springfield Township Rotary. What's more, the family is a proud sponsor of the Oreland Wyndmoor and Flourtown Erdenheim Little Leagues.

"The community is very special," concludes David. "People are friendly and everyone looks out for everyone else—it has the feel of a small town." Over the past few decades, the community has changed very little – some say it reminds them of Mayberry."

Written by Dorothy C. Nickelson

CRAFT CONTINUES MORE THAN 100-YEARS OF CARING



This image is from a postcard in our Robert Harper Collection. The caption indicates that this United States flag, the largest in the World (65'x135'), flew over White City Amusement Park on July 4th circa 1906.

Help STHS Document History of Bethesda Children's Home and Fort Washington Branch of PA RR

The Springfield Township Historical Society is searching for anyone who was a resident or worker at The Bethesda Children's Home, formerly located on Stenton Avenue in Wyndmoor, or who travelled on the Fort Washington branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The historical society would like to hear recollections of life at the Bethesda Children's Home and travels on the Fort Washington branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad and document them for future generations.

The railroad line ran from Allens Lane station in Mt. Airy, along the Cresheim Creek and Ivy Hill Road, through Laverock, and the present route of the 309 expressway.

Individuals with photos, documents or stories relating to the home or to the railroad are encouraged to contact the historical society. The historical society would like to retain copies of any photos or documents for the archives for the benefit of future generations.

For more information, please contact the historical society at 215-233-4600; by e-mail at Archives@SpringfieldHistory.org, by mail: STHS, P.O. Box 564, Flourtown, PA 19031 or stop in at the historical society archives at the Black Horse Inn, 1432 Bethlehem Pike, Flourtown,

Tuesdays, 7 to 9 p.m.; Wednesdays 11a.m. to 1 p.m., or Saturdays, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon.

Archives UPDATE

We are happy and excited to report that the Archives now has state-of-the-art technology. Due to the efforts of the STHS Board fundraising committee who worked tirelessly to raise the necessary funds, the Archives now has new computers, printer, and a flatbed scanner. These will be used to digitize the collection so that it can be placed on Past Perfect 5, our online catalog. The catalog will then be placed on our website which will allow patrons to search our holdings from home. This is a big project so we will need computer savvy volunteers to help inventory and then digitize the collection. If you are interested in volunteering please email us at archives@springfieldhistory.org.

Nicholas Van Meter (left), a graduating senior at Springfield Township High School, was presented with the Springfield Township Historical Society's scholarship award by historical society president **T. Scott Kreilick** at the high school's Senior Awards Assembly. The award is given to a senior who will pursue an undergraduate degree in history, political science or related fields. Van Meter, who plans to attend Temple University, won several other awards including the President's Award for Educational Excellence given to seniors who have grade point averages above 3.5; the Dramatics Thespan Society Troupe 1154 Award and the William A. Fricke Memorial Award. He was a member of the school's Concert Choir.



Reserve
the Date

Thurs., Sept. 18, 2014 – 7:30 p.m.

THE HISTORY OF YEAKEL CEMETERY

A Presentation by
Mr. Jack Yeakel



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