



Warrington

Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2010

The Mission of the Society:

- Locate, acquire, preserve and exhibit any and all articles, documents, photographs, papers, artifacts and other items of historic, cultural, educational value, which pertain to Warrington Township.
- Develop educational materials for use with schools/public and promote recognition of the history and development of Warrington Township.
- Restore and maintain 10 Folly Road/County Line Road School House for use as headquarters/museum/storage of Society.

The Warrington Historical Society is a 501(c)(3) qualified entity under the Internal Revenue Code. Contributions may be deducted for Federal Income Tax purposes.

P.O. BOX 706
Warrington PA, 18976
WarringtonHistoricalSociety@gmail.com

2009 Officers:

Mary Doyle Roth, *President*
Kenneth Samen, *Vice-President*
Joseph Wright, *Treasurer*

General Meeting Monday April 12, 2010

To be held at 7 pm in the large conference room at the Township Building, 852 Easton Rd. Please plan on attending so you can meet the other members. We will hold elections for president and vice president. You can also view our 1963 pictures of Street road between 611 and Brinkworth Ave prior to its straightening and widening. We also have the state construction drawings showing the old road and the existing road.

Membership

For annual members who joined before 2009, please send the payment for your 2010 membership dues to PO Box 706, Warrington, PA 18976. Annual rates are: \$20.00 individual, \$15.00 Individual Senior (60+), \$15.00 Individual Student, \$35.00 Family, \$50.00 Organizations and \$100.00 Businesses

Our new members are: Bonnie Martin from Pittsford, NY; Charles Titus from Vancouver, WA and Donna Semowski from Warrington, PA.

Please let us know if you are able to help us in any area. We are open to all suggestions and help with anything that may interest you. The society can't grow without help from our members.

Newsletter

This will be the last newsletter for those that have not renewed their membership. We are mailing this one

but would like to go back to emailing them to save time and money. Please let us know by sending an email to warringtonhistoricalsociety@gmail.com if you agree to receive future newsletters by email.

Schoolhouse at 10 Folly Road

As many of you know, there has been some progress with the demolition needed towards turning the 2 story residence into its original state of a 1 room school house. The dry-wall was removed on the second floor as an Eagle Scout project. This uncovered the inside of the cedar shake roof which is intact below the metal roof. It revealed that a fire occurred probably around 1900 in the area where the center stove pipe went through the roof. Ken Samen has been doing research but hasn't found any articles about the fire. Now that there are more hours of daylight we thought we would organize a tour of the schoolhouse. Please call Ken Samen (215-997-6327) or Mary Roth (215-343-9239) or sign up at the general meeting and let us know if you are interested and what dates and time work best for you.

Historic Warrington houses that will be lost to road projects

The 1876 Phelps house on Stump Rd at County Line Rd will be razed as part of the Route 202 parkway project. Although not in the direct path, it is where there will be an exit ramp. It is an interesting house although it doesn't look as old as it really is. It has

always been owned by the Phelps family.

The 1840 house at the Warrington corner of County Line and Upper State roads that has served as the office for St. John Newman's cemetery will be demolished. The good news is the beautiful brown stone house across the street in Montgomery County will be saved.

County Line Road is scheduled to be widened from 2 to 5 lanes plus bike/hiking trails from Butler Pike (existing Route 202) to Easton Road (Route 611). So far plans have been made through Kulp Road which is just east of Lower State Road. The 1820 McKinstry house owned by the Henderson's will be saved, although it will lose some road frontage. As the project progresses towards 611 there are more historic houses in danger. The 10 Folly Road school house will lose more property but should be far enough back from the road to be saved.

We'll keep you updated as we hear more.

In Memory

Paul Keene, artist and educator, died at his Warrington home on November 26, 2009. His family moved to Warrington in 1927 when he was 7. During World War II he served with the Tuskegee Air Men in the 322nd Fighter Group achieving the rank of Lieutenant. After the war he received his MBA from the Tyler School of Art and then traveled to Paris and Haiti to study, teach and paint. In 1957 Paul and his wife Laura established their own residence in Warrington. His work is exhibited at the James Michener Art Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and many other museums.

Reminiscing Frog Hollow

Former Warrington resident Charles Titus shares his memories of growing up in Warrington. The family farm was once accessed by what is now Titus Avenue.

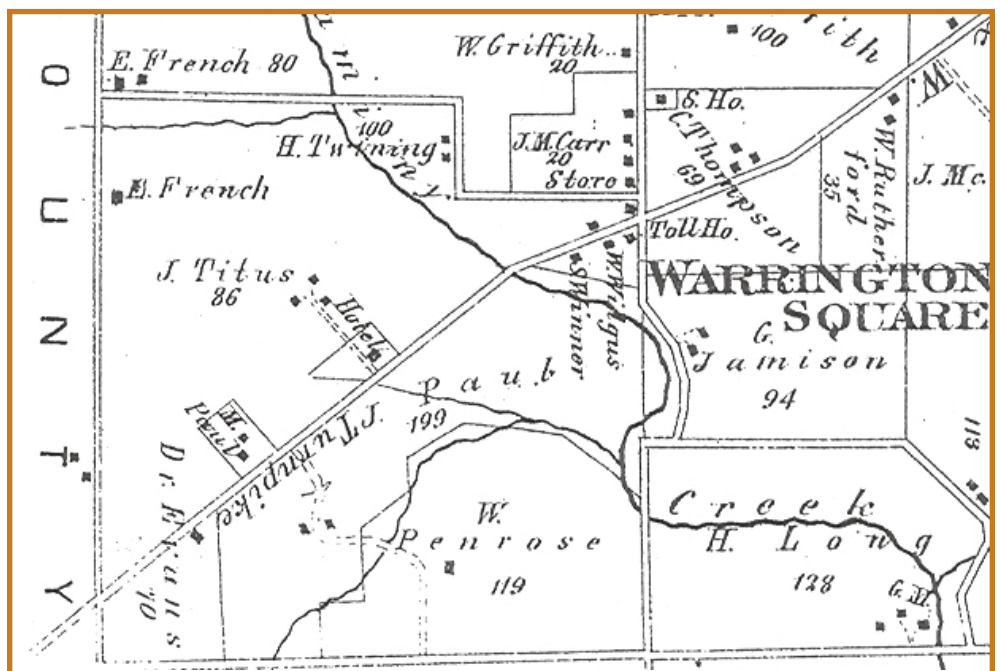
I was born in Doylestown Hospital, March 31, 1929. My parents, grandparents and sister lived on an 86 acre farm "behind" the Neshaminy Hotel on route 611, about 1 1/2 miles south of Street Road. We always knew we resided in Frog Hollow.

My sister and I attended the two room Neshaminy Grade School—converted from a creamery—located 1/2 mile south of route 611 on Street Road. It was replete with outside toilets, one for girls and one for boys, and a pump that often required priming. In the wintertime, the older boys carried scuttles of coal from a ground floor coal bin area to stoke the big black stoves, one in each classroom. Ironically, the coal was stored in one of two ground floor rooms that at one time had served as bathrooms and apparently no longer functioned in an acceptable manner—hence, the outdoor toilets.

The F. D. Titus Elementary School in Warrington was named after our Grandmother.

As a lad I literally learned to swim under the Neshaminy Creek bridge by clinging to the ledges that were part of the bridge support base. Later, as confidence built, I and other lads would jump from the top of the bridge which was a four foot high arched wall at the edge of the roadway. We were not mindful of the warnings that told of the dangers lurking beneath the water. The bridge was a stone throw away from the Power House that was an essential part of the old trolley system that ran between Willow Grove and Doylestown.

The Power House lay vacant for many years. At one point in time a German gentleman operated a cabinet manufacturing shop in the facility. It was there that I worked after school, for a time, to earn spending money to buy ice cream from the Tea Room restaurant located less than a mile to the South or to buy a soda pop from the Sunoco gas station an equal direction to the North.



Map showing location of the Titus farm. "Turnpike" is present-day Route 611 and County Line Road is at the left.



Swimming at the Neshaminy Creek bridge.

The bookkeeper for the cabinet shop was a very attractive girl who also earned spending money by working part time after school. Perhaps it was the fact that she was four years my senior that made it impossible for her to see eye to eye with me and my almost honorable intentions.

The Power House, as was said in your reply to me, was part of the Philadelphia Rapid Transit system. This company name found its way into a math class taught in one of the two classrooms of the grade school located one mile to the East of the bridge. The teacher implanted in my mind forever a basic mathematical interest formula by referring to the president of the transit company and what it was he could say, "I = PRT."

Progress for the area meant pulling up the old trolley rails which allowed the addition of a third lane

to Route 611. The added black topped roadway joined the existing two lane cement highway and brought with it enough safety that my parents let me ride my bike to school.

The two wheeled mode of transportation gave me a great sense of relief. I no longer was driven to school in the old model T with its black curtain flaps that only partially shielded me from the embarrassment I felt. The old car was bad enough, but to have my Mother drive me to school was not considered cool.

Progress also meant the construction of a swimming pool in nearby Warrington. It was clearly an upgrade from the swimming hole in the Neshaminy Creek at the bridge.

I often rode my bike to the new swimming pool. Shortly after my six-

teenth birthday I visited the pool in a rented Piper Cub and swooped low, dipped a wing, and at tree top level circled the pool. The up turned faces in the pool acknowledged my presence as did the occupants in the ladies dressing room—for there was not a roof to shield them. I then swung North and landed at the Doylestown Airport where I resumed gassing and polishing planes in another part time job. It was a temptation to tell the airport owner, Bill Hughes, of my most recent adventure. I didn't though and savored the thought that I knew something that others didn't.

The Power House, the pool and Route 611 bring back many fond memories of the farming community of Frog Hollow. Thanks for allowing me to reminisce.

Feature History

Written by Ken Samen

John Barclay (1749b-1824d) was the son of James and Margaret (daughter of Daniel Craig) Barclay. In 1775, John Barclay enlisted in the Continental Army. He was commissioned in Captain John Lacey's company on Jan. 8, 1776, and later promoted to the rank of lieutenant. He retired from the Army as a Captain on Jan. 1, 1781. After the Revolutionary War, he was commissioned as a Country Justice of the Peace (Dec. 13, 1782) and rose to become the President Judge of the Courts of Bucks County (appointed Jun. 27, 1789). He became a member of the Constitutional Convention of 1790. (Note... there was a John Barclay that was mayor of Philadelphia from April 1790 to 1791. There is no clear documentation that indicates that this is the John Barclay that lived in Warrington as previously stated in past township literature.) In April 1790, John Barclay bought property, located four miles below Doylestown at the Northeast corner of Easton and Bristol Roads, from Gideon and Elizabeth Pryor. He lived in Eureka Village from 1793 to 1799, while the dwelling (The Barclay House) on Easton Rd was being constructed. In 1803, only a few years after moving into the house John Barclay's wife, Margaret died.

On Aug. 10, 1804 John Barclay sold Benjamin



Barclay house in 1900.

Hough "a certain tract of land" amounting in 24.5 acres and 19 perches. The property was not the Barclay house; it was property on the south side of Bristol Rd. Across Bristol Rd from the farm there was a small triangular piece of land, whereon the Houghs would later erect a store and conduct a mercantile business. (This would be the location of the Cornell, Holbert, and Mayer General Store.)

On May 7, 1805, John Barclay conveyed to his son, James Barclay, "three tracks of land on which is erected a large two-story stone dwelling (the Barclay House)." William C. Rogers bought the house from Rachel Barclay, widow of James Barclay (who died in 1806), and son of John Barclay on Apr. 7, 1807.

Later on Mar 25, 1833, Benjamin Hough bought the house and tracts of land from John Craven. This homestead had become somewhat famous as Ulysses S. Grant, while a cadet at West Point, spent his vacation in it. The Houghs were cousins of young Grant through Hannah Simpson, niece of Benjamin Hough's wife, whom Jesse Grant married. Benjamin Hough and wife both died, 1848, his will being executed August 11, 1847, and probated May 29, 1848.



View of the house in 1920.



Photo from 1905 when the house was owned by the Radcliff family, shows the large white pine tree.

In 1855, the property was bought by Robert Radcliff and then conveyed by him in 1864 to his son Elias H. Radcliff. The house originally had a porch that ran along the front of the house. Later this was removed and replaced with a pediment above the front door.

There was a tall White Pine tree on the lawn of the Barclay House. It was nearly three times as tall as the mansion and a conspicuous landmark. The tree was damaged by lightning in 1910 and was taken down five years later.

The house remained in the Radcliff family until 1963, when the building became the Warrington branch of the Hatboro Federal Savings Bank.



Barclay House in 1963 when it was sold to Hatboro Federal Savings Bank.



Barclay House in 2009 – Hatboro Federal Savings Bank.

Any member of the Warrington Historical Society can submit work to be published in the Newsletter. Personal stories, pictures, or history of the township should be submitted to our email address at: warringtonhistorical-society@gmail.com, or mailed to the society at P.O. BOX 706, Warrington PA, 18976. It is the society's goal to produce this newsletter quarterly. But we can only do this with everyone's input.

This issue's publisher is Kathy Newcomb.