

Worcester Historical Society

2025 Membership Newsletter

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Heebner Tread Power

After years of searching, WHS and the Montgomery County Museum Curator reached an agreement to lend the Society a Heebner Direct-Geared, One-Horsepower, Tread Power. It was manufactured in 1896 by the Worcester family, David Heebner and Sons in their Lansdale factory. The Tread Power was one of many modern agricultural improvements in the post Civil War Period



Heebner Direct-Geared, One Horsepower, Tread Mill at its current home in the Bill Bourne Farm Museum.

patented by Heebner which included threshers, saws, grain crackers, etc. The Tread Power allowed horses to run farm machinery. The machine is now in the "Bill Bourne Farm Museum" at the Farmers Union Hall in Center Point. We thank the county for this addition: "Courtesy of the Peter Wentz Farmstead, County of Montgomery."

To make room for this addition we needed to find a home for our existing Tread Power, manufactured in 1880 by J. Robinson & Sons in Curwensville, PA. We are pleased to announce that the Curwensville Historical Society has been searching for this exact piece for many years. The Tread Power has now been donated and relocated to their museum in Clearfield County.

Frog Hollow School and the American School in Switzerland

The Worcester Historical Society has been approached by the American School in Switzerland, "TASIS", to participate in their 60th anniversary. The school is located near Lugano, Switzerland and has subsidiaries in many other European countries. M. Crist Fleming, founder of the first American School in Switzerland located near Lugano, also created and ran a "country day school" and summer program from 1945 - 1955 in Worcester! Known as Frog Hollow School



"TASIS" students as they embark on their move to Switzerland.

Keeping Worcester's History Alive

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Frog Hollow School and the American School in Switzerland cont.

and Frog Hollow Farm Summer Camp, it attracted local students as well as a great number of foreign students from international families. In 1956 Fleming moved the whole school and many students to her new boarding school in Switzerland.

The American School in Switzerland has asked us to provide archival material concerning the time frame that Frog Hollow School was in operation. Thanks to good record keeping, WHS has a file, several brochures from the period and several clothing items such as tennis sport blazers. A number of these items were incorporated into the *A History of Worcester* book. Equally, if not more important, are archives at the Frog Hollow Tennis Club.

If any of you attended or have memories of the school or camp, WHS would like to hear from you. (610-584-4145).

Spring 2024 Program

Our spring 2024 program highlighted the history of taverns in Worcester from the Revolutionary War to the present in conjunction with a demonstration on the history of brewing, by Michael Carver, a re-enactor and Colonial Brewmaster. Also at this assembly, the WHS officers and the slate of board members were presented and voted in for their new term in office.



Worcester Historical Society Spring Program and Membership Meeting

Sunday, April 21, 2024
2 to 4 PM

Location: Farmers' Union Hall, 2011 S. Valley Forge Rd. Lansdale, PA

"COLONIAL BREWING AND WORCESTER TAVERNS" PRESENTED BY WHS AND MICHAEL CARVER.

ENJOY A FESTIVE AFTERNOON WITH FRIENDS AND SAMPLE COLONIAL BEER.

\$5 DONATION REQUESTED. INCLUDES COLONIAL BEER SAMPLE.

Worcester Elementary Visits the Farmers Union Hall

In the fall, our community outreach continued with a two day visit to our Farmers Union Hall from the fourth grade at Worcester Elementary. There is a rich connection to the school, and over the years, the Hall acted as an extension of the High School, which stood close to where the current Elementary School is located today. The upstairs of the Hall was used as a gymnasium at times early in the 1900s, from 1908 - 1911. The Farmer's Union Hall was also the High School for Worcester, graduating its first class in 1909.

It is always a great opportunity to share Worcester's community history with another group of future graduates. Many thanks go out to the staff at Worcester for their support and continued commitment to these yearly visits. It is a wonderful relationship allowing us to share our knowledge to keep history alive, and for the students who are enthusiastic to hear about their Worcester community.



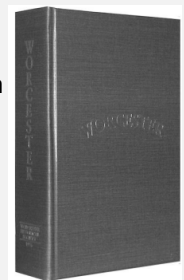
Volunteers from the Worcester Historical Society included Allan Bozorth, Lisa Gregory, Debbie Kavanaugh, Dan Kinnamon, Karen Simeone and Jim Thompson.



Membership

Our members are VIPs! You, our members, are the Society's most important people. Without you we would not be able to open our museum to the public or design and build the new exhibits that are such a great attraction in our museum and library. We want you as a member, so we have some membership gifts for you —

With a **Sustaining Membership** (\$100), visit the museum to pick up a copy of *A History of Worcester Township*, the definitive work on the inns, schools, mills, churches, cemeteries, villages, and historic homes of Worcester.



With a **Lifetime Membership** (\$500), visit the museum to pick up a numbered print of Bill Bourne's iconic painting of Fairview Village at the turn of the 20th century. Do you know about the WW I & II monuments and the soldiers and sailors who died in these



wars? You'll find that, and so much more, in *A History of Worcester Township* which you can also purchase for \$50.

Corporate Sponsors

Our outreach and response by local companies has continued and has brought a wonderful resonance of solidarity. We want to thank these sponsors for their interest in preserving Worcester's historical past and future.

Thank you! to our 2024 Corporate Sponsors

AJR Environmental, Inc
Ambler Savings Bank
Bradford Woodworking
Bustard Christmas Trees
Center Point Pond
Dan Moore Tree Service
David Brothers Bean Rd Nursery
e3 Technical Solutions
Frog Hollow Racquet Club
Meadowood Senior Living
Merrymead Farm
Miller Pump Systems
Nico's Pizza
North Penn Auto Service
O & F Farms
Rischer Van Horn Florist
R.L. Williams Funeral Home, Inc.
The Grand Fromage
Wehrung's Lumber & Home Ctr

WHS Flea Markets

WHS held two Flea Markets in 2024, May 4th and October 5th. There were many treasures available along with hot dogs, BBQ and fresh baked goods. October also had a horse show for added entertainment. Our next market will be Saturday, May 3rd. Come shop or even set up as a vendor. Details will be available in a few weeks on our website.



WHS Flea Market at Fairview Village Community Hall, 2024.

Lester Landes Papers

The Worcester Historical Society has made available the collection of work done by Lester Landes in 1984. Lester was a founding member of the Historical Society and spent four years transcribing the "Montgomery Transcript", the newspaper of the day, which covered Worcester and surrounding towns. The paper was first published in Skippack beginning in 1885, and it was stopped in 1952. Lester reviewed 67 years of newspapers at the Schwenkfelder Library and laboriously typed two documents. The first is the "Lester Landes Legacy" of 400 pages, which chronologically accounts for all the stories of Worcester during this time frame. The second document is the "Lester Landes Special Topics", 190 pages of thematic events. Want to know about the schools of Worcester or the Ku Klux in Worcester? This document will tell you all about them. You can also do a word search on these documents if you have Acrobat installed on your computer. These documents are available on our website under "Local History".

Ancient Trees of Worcester

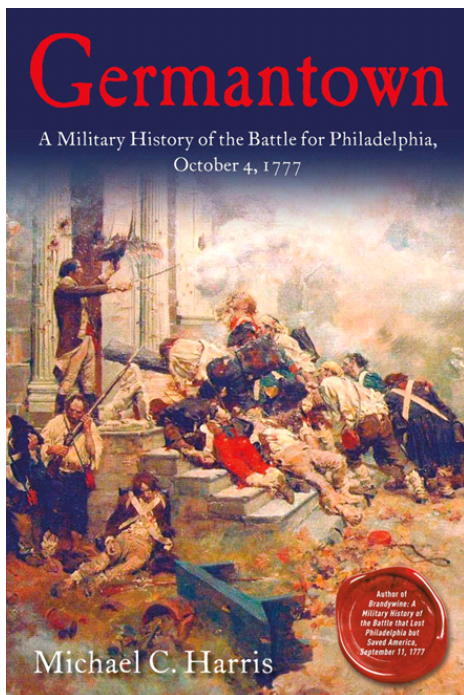
The 1976 Bicentennial celebrated 200 years of nationhood and designated eighteen trees in Worcester as Bicentennial Trees. Today, only three oak trees remain: (7), (8), and (15) in the A History Worcester book. In 2024, two white oaks were lost, one on Mill Road and another at Stump Hall and Valley Forge Roads, the latter being a historical landmark that shaded a trolley stop and Stump Hall School. Below is a photo of the Stump Hall White Oak.



Stump Hall School, on left, with the Wogglebug tracks.

Where it All Began

WHS presents “Where it All Began”, by author Michael C. Harris, on Sunday, March 30th from 2 to 4 pm. He will expand upon his book: Germantown: A Military History of the Battle for Philadelphia. The most recent and comprehensive book of an overlooked large engagement of the Revolutionary War. It all began the evening of October 3, 1777 as a four-column march, the first descending Methacton Hill towards Morris Road, Worcester, in the direction of Germantown. Join us to learn more.



Upcoming Events

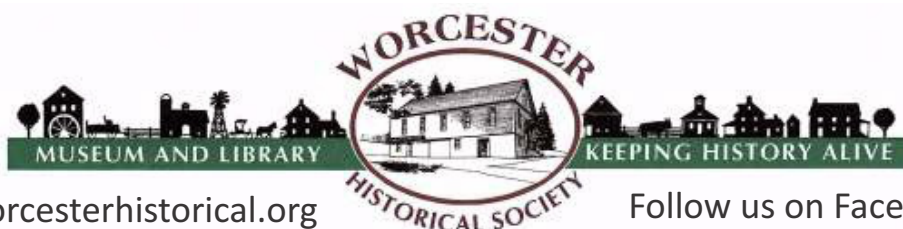
The Museum at the Farmers Union Hall will be open new hours this year; the second and fourth Saturday of each month, from 9 am to noon. Stop by and visit; there is something for all ages.

Annual Antique and Flea Market to be held on May 3rd from 8 am to 2 pm at the Worcester Township Hall in Fairview Village. If you are interested in becoming a vendor, please check our website for further details.


Our Spring Meeting is scheduled for Sunday, March 30th, from 2:00 to 4:00 pm, at the Farmers Union Hall. The title of our program is “**Where it All Began**”. Author Michael C. Harris will share his new book and local military engagement details, followed by questions and answers, and a book signing. Don’t miss it!

Please check our website at www.worcesterhistorical.org for more details or follow us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/WorcesterHistoricalSocietyPA>

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