



Chester County Ledger

The Newsletter of the Chester County Historic Preservation Network

Volume 11, Number 3

October 2008

Chester County: A Showcase of 19th-Century Bridge Technology

Of the many types of cultural resources within Chester County, historic bridges hold a particular interest for me. Not that it came by virtue of my education since I am not a bridge engineer by profession. The interest came more or less by chance when I became the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's District Environmental Manager for the five-county Philadelphia region in 1982.

When most people think of environmental impacts, the first thing that normally comes to mind is the quality of the air, water, and land that surrounds them.

However, with the passage of various state and federal environmental laws beginning in the 1960s, cultural resources became one of the areas that is now included under the general 'umbrella' of environmental issues. Two of the most significant pieces of legislation affecting the construction of highways and bridges were the passage of the United States Department of Transportation Act and the National Environmental Policy Act. After the passage of these laws, PennDOT was required to evaluate a highway project's

impacts to a wide variety of environmental issues, including cultural resources.

During the early 1980s PennDOT instituted a statewide program to replace structurally deficient bridges. This program was generally referred to as the "Billion



The Route 113 bridge over the Schuylkill River linking Phoenixville and Upper Providence Township in Montgomery County.

The Chester County Historic Preservation Network is an affiliation of local organizations and individuals dedicated to promoting, protecting, and preserving Chester County's historic resources and landscapes through education, facilitation, and public and private advocacy.

Dollar Bridge Program." Of course, most structurally deficient bridges were those bridges that were over 50 years old, the generally accepted minimum age for cultural resources to be considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Since impacts to cultural resources had become a significant issue with infrastructure repair, a program on the scale of the Billion Dollar Bridge Program would require extensive coordination with the state agency responsible for the protection of cultural

resources in the state: the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Up until the Billion Dollar Bridge Program coordination with the PHMC was generally done on a bridge-by-bridge basis to determine if a bridge was eligible for National Register listing. If a bridge was determined eligible it was afforded special protection under the law, and measures had to be developed to mitigate the potential effects that would occur when the bridge was rehabilitated or replaced. These could involve rehabilitating it in such a manner as to maintain its historic significance, adaptively reusing the bridge at another location, or in the case where the bridge would ultimately be demolished, completing a photographic and documentary recordation.

At that time PennDOT had the responsibility for the maintaining approximately 25,000 bridges statewide. Even the restoration or replacement of a small percentage of that number would require a tremendous coordination effort between PennDOT and PHMC to determine which bridges were National Register eligible if done on a bridge-by-bridge basis. It was therefore determined that a statewide survey of all PennDOT bridge should be completed. This survey would ultimately determine which of these thousands of bridges were culturally significant and worthy of preservation. In order to limit the number of bridges that would be evaluated, the survey was confined to six types of structures: stone arch, covered, suspension, metal arch, and concrete bridges. In 1985, after a three-year survey period, 180 bridges statewide were determined eligible for the National Register and placed upon the list of resources to be protected. Of these 180 bridges, 25 were located within Chester County or

on its border with an adjacent county. This represents approximately 14% of all the bridges in the state, the most for any county in the Commonwealth.

Those of us who have an abiding interest in historic preservation are truly fortunate to live in a county such as Chester. Not only have we been blessed with a great number of extant resources, we have also been blessed with a county government that has realized how important preserving those resources is in maintaining the cultural resource environment that we who live here, and those who visit here, so much appreciate. Within the county government two people deserve special recognition for their historic preservation efforts: Jane Davidson, the former Chester County Historic Preservation Officer, and Rick Craig, the former county bridge engineer. Due in no small part to the dedication of these two individuals, Chester County is truly a showcase of 19th century bridge technology.

- Jeff Amerine
Czop/Specter, Inc.

About Jeff Amerine, the Presenter for the Fall 2008 Program

Retired from PennDOT following 25 years of service, Jeff Amerine now serves as Vice President of Czop/Specter, Inc., a civil engineering firm in Worcester, Montgomery County. He serves on the board of directors of the Schuylkill River Heritage Center at Phoenixville, and previously he served on the Schuylkill Township Environmental Advisory Council for 14 years. He was also past vice president and board member of the Historical Society of the Phoenixville Area and a past board member of the Schuylkill Canal Advisory Committee.

The Chester County Ledger

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Published by:
The Chester County Historic Preservation Network

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Printed on recycled paper.



Fall 2008 Presentation Historic Bridges of Chester County

- ✓ With PennDOT's fervent interest in widening and strengthening the 347 bridges in Chester County, our historic bridges are getting a lot of attention these days, with much of it unwanted from a preservation standpoint. Our speaker, **Jeff Amerine**, will acquaint you with the types historic bridges we have in the county, including a discussion of the evolution in forms and materials over time.
- ✓ Plus, PennDOT's review and public comment process will be introduced to you. The ins and outs of the process are too lengthy to discuss in one evening, so look for a future presentation that will go into greater depth on how you can get involved to help ensure that your historic bridge is preserved.
- ✓ Our host, **Downingtown Borough Historical and Parks Commission**, will lead tours of their historic bridge, Downingtown Log House (1711), and the nearby paper mill and provide refreshments.
- ✓ Please come out and join us!

Directions: The Downingtown Municipal Building is located to the west of downtown next to the Brandywine Creek.

- From the west, take Route 30 to Route 322 South (Manor Avenue), and then take a left onto Lancaster Avenue and an immediate right in the parking lot.
- From the east on Route 30, take Route 113 south, take a right onto Lancaster Avenue, cross the Brandywine, and take an immediate left into the parking lot.
- From the south, take Route 322 north through downtown, and turn left into the parking lot before Route 322 turns to the right to head out of town.

October 16, 2006, Thursday

6:00 to 7:00pm Historical Tour

7:00 to 7:30pm Refreshments

7:30 to 9:00pm "Historic Bridges of
Chester County"

Downingtown Municipal Building
10 West Lancaster Avenue
Downingtown

All are welcome!



A Good Time Was Had By All At 2008 Volunteer Recognition Celebration

What a wonderful time we had at the June Volunteer Recognition Celebration at Springton Manor Farm! More than 90 people attended, representing more than 25 municipalities and organizations. The county entertained and informed us with their re-enactors and tours of the farm complex, the food was excellent, and several local and state luminaries attended. Senator Andy Dinniman, always a supporter of historic preservation, told some anecdotes about when the farm was turned over to the county. County Commissioner Kathi Cozzone expressed her pleasure in seeing the dedication of the county's network of preservationists and pledged her support for the preservation efforts of the county. And as a special treat, Barbara Franco, the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, attended and thanked the network for our efforts, saying that we were a model for preservation in Pennsylvania.

Next, we conducted a "roll call," asking the attending municipalities to talk about their successes



Bruce Knapp (left) with Kathi Cozzone (center) presenting the Municipality Preservation Award to East Brandywine Township with John Black and Scott Piersol accepting.

and activities over the past year. We shared each other joys and triumphs and commiserated over the losses and struggles. A synopsis of the roll call is provided on the next page.

Karen Marshall, John Mikowychok, Pierce Eichelberger, and Mark Mattie presented certificates for completed Municipal Historic Resource Atlases to East Goshen and East Coventry Townships.

The CCHPN Preservation Awards were presented to East Brandywine Township for their hard



Karen Marshall, as a Springton Manor Farm resident re-enactor, tells tour participants about the history of the farm.

work, and to Virginia L. (Ginny) Pierce for her long-term and continuing efforts with the Downingtown Historical and Parks Commission. Both award recipients were also given commendations from the state, presented by Senator Dinniman, and from the county, presented by Kathi Cozzone.

In a new category this year, we awarded the Wallace Township Historical Commission and East Coventry Township special "Grace Under Fire" awards for those municipalities that are struggling under particularly heavy loads.

An important goal of the evening was to bring together folks from across the county; people came from North Coventry Township and Oxford Borough and from East Goshen and Sadsbury Townships. New friendships were forged through conversations about preservation issues, the struggles of local historical commissions, and the price of gas!

This is the Chester County Preservation Network at its finest: bringing people together in support of historic preservation across the county. Thanks to all who attended, and we look forward to seeing you all in June 2009!

- Matthew Roberson

"Roll Call" Wrap-Up from the 2008 Volunteer Recognition Celebration

At the 2008 Volunteer Recognition Celebration, each municipality in attendance was given the opportunity to stand up and present their preservation successes, activities, or struggles they were involved with in the previous year.

Downingtown Borough: Fundraising for the Downingtown Log House, saved 60% of Roger Hunt Mill complex from complete demolition.

East Brandywine Township: New Historic Preservation Ordinance passed.

East Coventry Township: Completed their Historic Resource Atlas and working on the preservation of Fricks Lock National Register District.

East Fallowfield Township: Very successful Mortonville Town Tour in 2007.

East Goshen Township: Four major events including Chester County Day, a 2007 Town Tour, and an updated website.

East Nantmeal Township: Exhibit on School Houses for East Nantmeal Days.

East Pikeland Township: Preservation efforts for Snyder's Mill, \$93,000 raised.

East Vincent Township: Preservation of Pennhurst Hospital and almost completed Historic Resource Atlas.

Elverson Borough: Reorganized Historical Commission.

Kennett Township: Reorganization of current commission with four new members and starting Historic Resource Atlas.

Kennett Square Borough: 2007 and 2008 Town Tours, historic architecture lecture series.

Londonderry Township: Planning for 275th anniversary celebration in 2009.

Malvern Borough: New History Resource Room in township building, 2008 Town Tour, completed Historic Resource Atlas.

North Coventry Township: Research of three villages for a catalogue.

Paoli Battlefield: Signage for the battlefield, National Historic Landmark Status application.

Pennsbury Township: Historic Resource Atlas, comprehensive historic resource survey and new preservation ordinance underway.

Pocopson Township: Restoration of their one room schoolhouse.

Sadsbury Township: Joined the CCHPN, celebration of Lenape Indians Heritage Day.



Kathryn Yarbaes, CCHPN Board Member (second from right), leads the group in a round of applause for their work over the last year.

Schuylkill Township: Founders Day celebration, outstanding citizens and history projects, new preservation ordinance.

Uwchlan Township: Completing Historic Resource Atlas.

Wallace Township: Indiantown Schoolhouse preservation.

West Nantmeal Township: Completion of DVD featuring historic sites and scenes in their township.

West Caln Township: Open House for the new Historic Commissions building and the completion of the Historic Resource Atlas.

- Karen Marshall

The Landscapes2.org Consultation Portal: Your Opinion Is Important!

Since Chester County's Policy Plan, 'Landscapes', was adopted in 1996, Chester County had the greatest population growth of any county in Pennsylvania—increasing by nearly 70,000 people in the last ten years. The demographic, economic, environmental, and infrastructural impact of this growth has been enormous—and confirms the need to revisit 'Landscapes' to keep Chester County in a proactive role for effectively managing change. The updated plan, entitled 'Landscapes2', reflects the changing needs of our County. It builds on past efforts, addresses newly emerging concerns, and makes use of current technology to achieve an up-to-date vision for the County's future, one that brings together both growth and preservation strategies.

'Landscapes2' has now entered the second public input phase. As proposed policies are drafted, the County is seeking opinions and feedback from the entire Chester County community. The 'Landscapes2' website (www.Landscape2.org) lets you participate in the 'Landscapes2' project in the following ways:

- Read and comment on draft documents
- Read other people's comments on the documents
- Take surveys and participate in bulletin boards

- Keep up with other means of participating in this project, such as attending public meetings

Materials available for comment are found on the '*consultation portal*' section of the 'Landscapes2' website, which can be accessed via links on the website's homepage. You are invited to review and provide comment on any or all of the draft materials. For some information you will be asked to register or log in before participating. This information will remain confidential and will not be shared with the public.

The draft **Historic Resources** policies will be highlighted on the Landscapes2 public comment website through September 15. The policy document will remain available for direct comment online through the end of December 2008. To register on the online '*consultation portal*', please click on the '*Register*' link within the '*Login*' section. Written comments may also be sent by direct email to Landscapes2@chesco.org.

To receive email updates about the Landscapes2 update process, visit www.Landscapes2.org and click on the button labeled: '*Sign up for email updates!*'

- Kathy McCarthy, Community Planner
Chester County Planning Commission

Individual Memberships: An Inexpensive Way To Help Our Bottom Line

Do you know that our much-visited website costs more than \$1,000 a year for hosting and maintenance? Do you know that our newsletter, the *Chester County Ledger*, costs almost \$3,000 per year for printing and mailing?

With our other expenses, our annual budget is about \$5,000 per year.

This is not a lot of money considering all that we do, but we need to raise that much every year, and we depend on paid memberships as our primary source of revenue. As we continue to expand our services, and thus our costs, we must ask for your continued help.

THANK YOU to those of you who have paid for individual memberships in the Network! And THANK YOU to all of the municipalities who have paid at that level. We need support at all membership levels, but right now we want to make a special plea for individual memberships.

Individual memberships are just \$20. They ensure that all correspondence from the Network will be mailed directly to you. This is important if you leave your Historical Commission or HARB, at which time your name is usually dropped from the mailing list. Plus, you get discounts to most of our events. Membership fees and any donations on top of the membership are tax deductible since the Network is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization. Matching corporate gifts, for any donations, can also be accepted.

Please help us by sending in your check for an individual membership to the **Chester County Historic Preservation Network, P.O. Box 174, West Chester, PA 19381**. Thank you very much for your help.

Chester County Honored for Historic Resource Atlas Project

Each year, the National Association of Counties (NACo) reviews projects from all over the country to recognize a county's hard work to promote quality, efficiency and responsive county government management and administration. Applicants must describe and state the need for their county-wide project, including the use of technology, costs, and its successes and worthiness. We are proud to announce that the Chester County Historic Resource Atlas Project was awarded a 2008 NACo Achievement Award, which was highlighted at the Awards Ceremony on Sunday, July 13, at the 12th Annual NACo Conference in Kansas City, Missouri.

This project involves distributing updated Geographic Information System (GIS) atlases of the county's parcels, produced for the Chester County Bureau of Land Records, to the municipalities' Historical Commissions. Through voluntary efforts and the invaluable knowledge base of these Commissions, field checks are made of the historic resources inventory while cross-referencing with the new tax parcel maps. Historic resource identification numbers are updated and assigned to universal parcel identification numbers accordingly. The volunteers note any structures that have been destroyed, and add buildings, sites and structures that have matured into the 50-year category since the original survey.

Working with each volunteer group, the GIS staff and the Heritage Preservation Coordinator (HPC) create a personalized resource atlas that meets the planning needs of each community, while maintaining consistent standards for the database. After developing the original database, the HPC assists the volunteers with categorizing the resources into one of three historic classification (Class) levels. The GIS data is joined to the County parcel layer, creating an historic resource parcel layer for that municipality. The historic resource layer is then added to a master key-map and divided by a grid index into individual map pages to show appropriate detail.

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On both the key-map and the individual map pages, the historic resource layer is color-coded by Class. Class I parcels (purple) are on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; Class II parcels

(rose) are deemed significant by the municipality, and Class III parcels (yellow) are those 50 years or older. On the individual atlas pages, the historic resource layer is a transparent film on 2005 color aerial ortho-photography with its parcels labeled by address. All other parcel lines are light grey and local roads are labeled. At the rear of each atlas, the parcels containing identified historic resources are indexed by address, with HRID (Historic Resource Identification), UPI (Universal Parcel Identification) and

Class listed for each entry. Data is also superimposed on a digitized 1883 Breous map of the same municipality, which is presented opposite the key-map for comparison of past and current property lines.

Once the atlas is completed, each municipality is encouraged to finalize the documentation of Class I and II resources, including digital photography when possible, and to keep all information on file. The Heritage Preservation Coordinator will continue to work closely with each historical commission, utilizing the atlas to meet its preservation planning goals and focusing on developing municipality preservation ordinances and procedures that will provide local protection for important resources.

- Karen Marshall,
Heritage Preservation Coordinator



*Mark Mattie, Mary Marks, and
Karen Marshall*

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Period-Accurate Carpentry
For Historic Structures

For Technical Information on Historic Preservation and Contacts to help you with your historic house or with your preservation efforts, please visit:

www.CCHPN.org



Chester County Historic Preservation Network

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PLEASE FORWARD

Please come
join us for our

Fall 2008 Program
Historic Bridges of
Chester County

October 16, 2008
Downtown Municipal
Building

Details Inside!