

Worcester Historical Society

2017 Membership Newsletter

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One-Room Schoolhouse Exhibit

For our fall program, we welcomed local historian Bob Wood, who gave a fascinating presentation on education before the advent of public schools in the 1840s. We also showcased our latest exhibit, "Worcester Schools 1849-1915," which traces the history of Worcester's one-room schoolhouses.

The exhibit includes the bell from the cupola of the Water Street School, a teacher's desk that was recovered from the 1896 fire that destroyed the first Fairview School, and an original 1860 color map of Philadelphia and the surrounding counties.

Once, the 1860 map might have hung on the wall of a one-room schoolhouse, but it was in such poor shape that it was impossible for us to display. Fortunately, the Tedyuscung Questers toured the museum last spring and learned of the problems with the map. They offered to contribute to the cost of the repair. Even better, they matched their grant with one from the Pennsylvania Questers.



Standing in front of the new schoolhouse exhibit, from left to right: Andrew Cook, Martha Berger, Elaine Waddell, Nicole Berger, Pauline Holt of the Tedyuscung Questers, and John Gower.

The rest of the cost came from the Sarah Cook Memorial Fund, which was established by Sarah's family in her memory. WHS board member John Gower purchased the plexiglass to protect the map. We thank all of these contributors for their generous support in making this exhibit possible.



Repaired 1860 wall map in the One-Room Schoolhouse exhibit, along with a cut-out of schoolmaster Samuel Grob standing next to his desk.

The exhibit also includes a set of reproduction school desks where visitors are invited to sit and try their hand at writing on slate tablets. School books from the mid to late 1800s include orthography (spelling), reading, handwriting, music, algebra, geography, and Pennsylvania history. Copy books from the collection illustrate how students learned cursive writing — by copying out a famous quotation, over and over again.

Keeping Worcester's History Alive

Worcester Historical Society P.O. Box 112 Worcester, PA 19490

On the web at worcesterhistorical.org

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Thank You to Our 2016 Donors!

Last year the Society was fortunate to have many donations come our way, to expand our interpretation of life during Worcester's past.

Board member **Jim Thompson** brought us several kitchen items from the William G. Markley family, including a donut cutter that allows the cook to roll out up to a dozen donuts at a time. Look for this to be displayed in our vintage kitchen, along with Grandmother Annie Place's hand-written donut recipe and a 5# can of lard for frying!



A donut cutter and lard — two necessities for home-made donuts.

Sarah Cook's family donated a potato slicer and an iron baking peel, as well as the 1754 date stone from the William Rittenhouse farm.

Ellis Kratz donated his entire collection of tractor books, and several tools from his farming days.

Mr. and Mrs. Richard and Kalkbrenner donated a 1920 Singer treadle sewing machine and cabinet, a claw-foot piano stool, and a cane-seat chair.

Mike Szilagyi donated a Pennsylvania Department of Highways road sign that he salvaged years ago. Where is Belfry, you ask? Come check out our map display and find out!



Join us for these events in 2017!

OPEN HOUSE AT FARMERS' UNION HALL 2011 Valley Forge Road, Saturdays 9 to noon, starting April 1.

SPRING PROGRAM Check the website in the spring for the date and topic. Farmers' Union Hall. Free to members; light refreshments served.

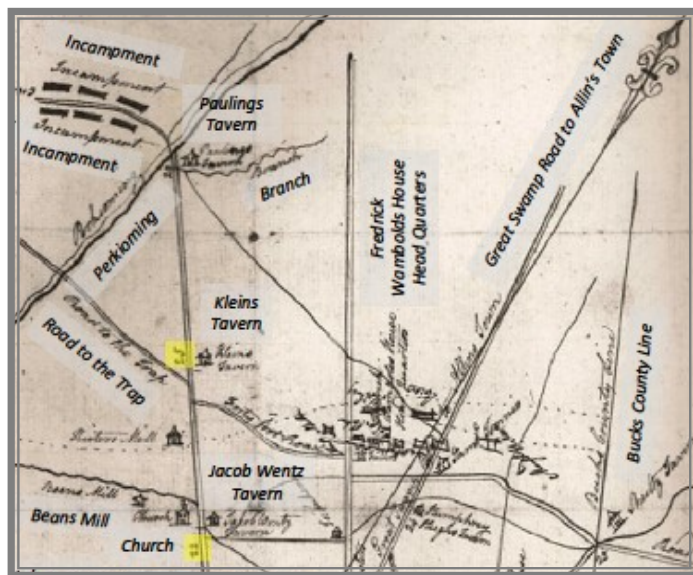
WHS ANNUAL ANTIQUE & COLLECTIBLES MARKET
Saturday, May 6, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m., Worcester Township Community Hall, Fairview Village. For early reservations and vendor info, call 610-613-3878.

Washington's Troop Encampment Map

In the fall of 1777, the Continental Army marched up and down Skippack Pike as General Washington tried to prevent the British Army from taking control of Philadelphia. This year, the Society was able to interpret and display a fascinating hand-drawn map of the Army's various encampments and troop movements during October and November of 1777.

The map is not drawn to scale, so it's a challenge to orient yourself using landmarks like the Wentz Church and Peter Wentz's farm. Road names are a window into colonial American geography — the "Road to Sweed's Ford" is now Route 202, and the "Great Swamp Road to Allin's Town" is Swamp Pike, or Route 29.

With the help of local Revolutionary War reenactor Dan Kinnamon, we were able to add contemporary details that bring the Army's march to life. Surgeon Albigeance Waldo of the Connecticut Line wrote in his diary on January 8th: "*Unexpectedly got a Furlow. Set out for home. The very worst of riding — Mud & Mire.*" He stopped for breakfast at the Widow Weaver's Tavern, shown on the map at the corner of Bethlehem Road and the Road to Butler's Mill. Breakfast cost him 5 shillings.



Visit the museum starting April 1 to see this map of the various encampments and headquarters used by George Washington's Army in the fall of 1777. Copies are available for purchase.

Wish List

- Wooden 19th-century ice box for the kitchen exhibit
- Children's shoes, 19th & early 20th century
- Men's and women's shoes, 19th & early 20th century
- Slate pencils and pencil boxes
- School lunch pails or lunchboxes
- Life-size child or baby dolls, in good condition

WHS Antique & Collectibles Market

In 2017 the Society will return to our roots with the Antique and Collectibles Market you remember from years ago. The focus will be on bringing in better, vetted antique dealers. You will also have the opportunity to bring your own items for appraisal by a professional.

Enjoy old-fashioned barbecue and hot dogs under the tent, along with the music of the Route 30 Xpress Band. As in years past, we will have home-made pies, fresh rhubarb, and baked items for sale.

Half spaces are available for nonprofits and fundraisers. For vendor information and early reservations, please call 610-613-3878.

New this year will be an antique car and tractor display! Members, please contact us at 610-584-8844 or info@worcesterhistorical.org if you are interested in displaying your antique car or tractor.

WHS Antique & Collectibles Market
Saturday, May 6, 2017, 8 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Worcester Township Community Hall
Fairview Village

Memorial Funds

Recently WHS has been the recipient of several memorial funds established by the families of long-time volunteers and board members of the Society. We deeply appreciate the generosity of these families in designating the Society as the recipient of memorial funds.

The Board of Directors uses these funds for an exhibit or project that was of particular significance to the person being remembered. Exhibits that have been created with these funds include the map display in the library, the one-room schoolhouse exhibit, and the Worcester school photo collection.

www.worcesterhistorical.org

WHS's website will be off-line for reconstruction during the winter. Look for our redesigned website in the spring! Some new features will include dedicated pages for family photos and school class photos, as well as an updated page of cemetery records.

Worcester Class of 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967, 1972, 1977, 1982, 1987...

If you have a **class reunion** coming up, why not include a visit to Farmers' Union Hall as part of your day? Let us know the date and time, and we will have a board member available to provide a guided tour of the museum. You will be amazed at how wonderful the old place looks!

We have many class photos in our collection, from the late 1800s through the 1980s. Visitors are welcome to look through them any time.

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.

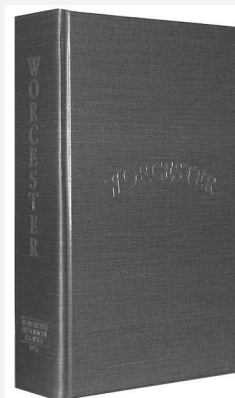
We want you as a member, so we have some membership gifts for you—

- ♦ With a **Supporting Membership** (\$35), visit the museum to pick up a box of 8 vintage Worcester note cards containing two of each of Bill Bourne's turn-of-the-century views of Center Point, Cedars, Fairview Village, and Peter Wentz Farmstead.



- ♦ With a **Sustaining Membership** (\$75), visit the museum to pick up a copy of *A History of Worcester Township*, the definitive work on the inns, schools, mills, churches, and villages of Worcester from the time of William Penn to the Bicentennial.

Did you know that Worcester had seven one room school houses until 1912 ---and all of them are still in use? Find out where they are located, which ones burned and were rebuilt, and what they looked like over 100 years ago. You'll find that, and so much more, in *A History of Worcester Township*, free with your 2017 Sustaining Membership! Join today!



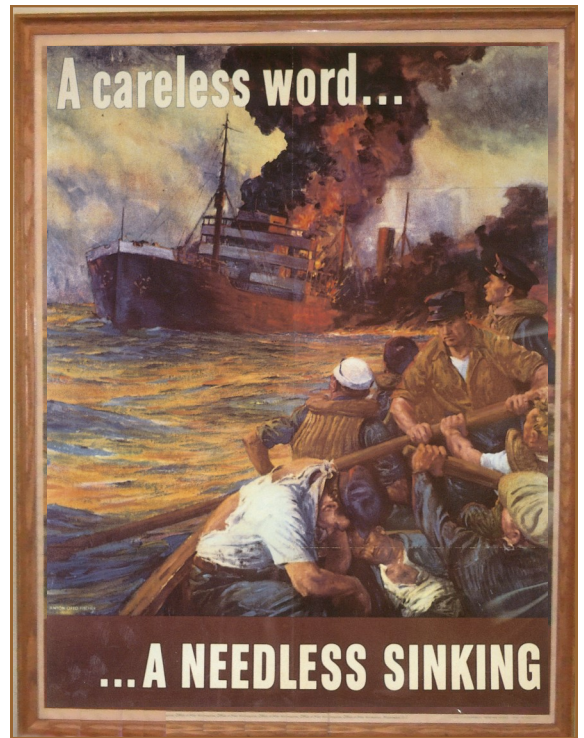
What's on Track for 2017?

Worcester was front and center during the Revolutionary War. General Washington stayed at Peter Wentz's farm while planning the Battle of Germantown in 1777. Several Worcester churches served as field hospitals after battles.

Since then, wars have had a different kind of impact on our community. A Girl Scout and former Worcester resident will be creating an exhibit on "The Impact of War on Worcester" for her Silver Award project. She is working with our librarian to gather the items in our collection which pertain to various wars, including:

- A Continental Army troop encampment map from the fall of 1777
- An 1865 draft notice and transcriptions from a Civil War soldier's diary
- A tiny sewing kit hand-made for a soldier in the Mexican-American War (1898) by his mother
- World War I Liberty Bond pledge cards
- A World War II ration book and ration stamps

Visit the museum in 2017 to see the progress of this exhibit and learn how these wars affected Worcester.




A World War II poster warning civilians not to talk about troop movements for fear of enemy spies.



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