

# Heritage Commission of Delaware County

45<sup>th</sup> Annual Preservation Awards

May 6, 2023



Huston Homestead, Upper Chichester Township  
Site Preservation- Residential Rehabilitation



- The Huston Homestead is a two-story fieldstone house built on a ridge with the gable end overlooking Bethel Road, an early main road, in Upper Chichester Township. The rear addition is frame, two story, with an interior brick chimney at the southwest gable. The house may be mid-18th century construction, but isn't recorded until 1790. It is on the Upper Chichester Historic Resource Survey (#33).
- John Mullen purchased the Huston Homestead in October 2021 after flipping house contractors had walked away from it. Others had described the house as “disgusting” and in “tear-down” condition, but John was attracted by the location and size of the property and went ahead with plans to renovate the house. During the demolition phase, original historical architectural features were revealed, prompting him to investigate the home's history and construction. When he discovered the historical significance of the house, John developed plans for a renovation that would be sensitive to the historic nature of the building.
- Rehabilitation of the Huston Homestead emphasized the retention and repair of historic materials. As a result, the house will be returned to its original use as a residence with modern amenities, while preserving many features of the house that are significant to its history and architecture.
- **John A. Mullen, Lindsey V. Mullen, Caramanico Brothers, BMK Concrete, Interiors by Tanyell**



# North elevation

**Before rehabilitation**



**After stucco removal and stone repointing**





# West Elevation

Rear addition with ca. 1960 porch



Siding on addition, new porch added



# Kitchen

**Before rehabilitation**



**Kitchen fireplace replaced with gas,  
new kitchen**







**Sharpless House, Concord Township**  
Site Preservation- Residential Rehabilitation



- Mike Gaugler and Sharon Leonhard purchased this property in July 2020 when it was significantly run-down. Over the course of 2021-2022 both the interior and exterior have been lovingly restored.
- This property is not only one of Concord's prized historic homes (#108 on Concord Historic Resource Survey), but was near the site of the P&W railroad and the occupants were responsible for developing what is now known today as "Philadelphia Brand Cream Cheese".
- The Queen Anne-style mansion was built by Pennock E. Sharpless in 1890 near the Sharpless farm which shipped their soft cheese to Philadelphia.
- Exterior work included: stucco repair and repaint; new roof/gutters; rear (addition) windows replaced; original windows restored
- Interior work included: reconditioned radiators; repaired/repainted doors; repointed foundation walls; Kitchen: chimney restored, remodeled; Dining room: repaired structural issues, refinished floors, repaired woodwork; Living room: fireplace restored, floor refinished; new wiring and plumbing
- **Mr. Mike Gaugler and Ms. Sharon Leonhard**



# Exterior

Stucco repair and repaint; new roof/ gutters; rear (addition) windows replaced;  
original windows restored

**Before**



**After**



# Dining Room

Repaired structural issues, refinished floors, repaired woodwork

**Before**



**After**





# Kitchen

Restored chimney, remodeled kitchen

**Before**



**After**







Restoration to Village Green Schoolhouse, Aston Township  
Site Preservation- Restoration





- The Village Green Schoolhouse is on the Aston Township Historic Resource Survey (#47) and was built in 1802 to replace an earlier schoolhouse. It is used by the Aston Township Historical Society for tours and educational events.
- The shutters on the front and rear needed replacement, and woodwork and the stucco needed to be repainted. The interior floor had suffered from some water damage and was sanded and refinished.
- The Williamson College of the Trades chose this as one of their sites for their 2022 Service Week, and did much of the painting along with other volunteers. Funding for the project was provided by an Ethel Sergeant Clark Memorial Fund grant.
- **Dave Kelso, Carol Cannon, Williamson College of the Trades, Aston Public Works, Mike Archer, Steve King, Keith Flikinger**

# Front elevation

Before- 2019



During- Unpainted new shutters,  
painted portico





# Before and after photographs

**Rear**



**Side**

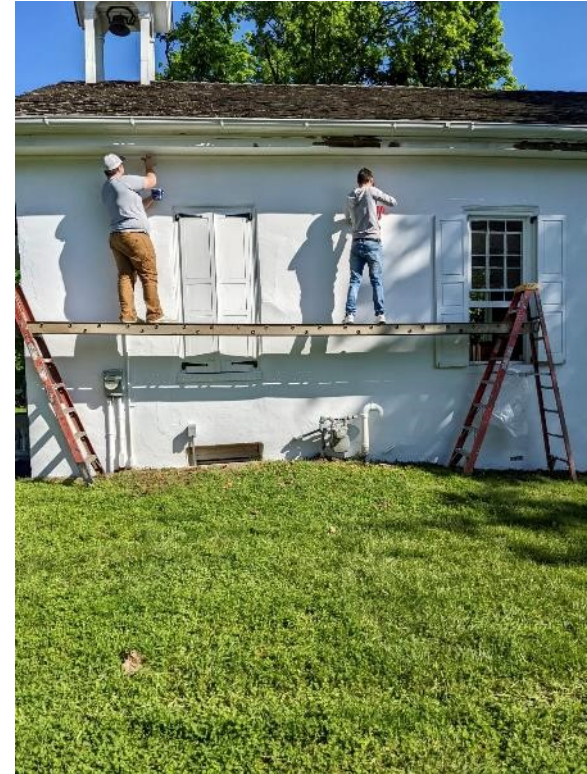


# Williamson College of the Trades

**Williamson group**



**Painting south elevation**







Restoration and Furnishing the 1739 Trimble House Kitchen and Pantry, Concord Township  
Site Preservation- Restoration

- The Trimble House Kitchen and Pantry were built in 1739 by William Trimble overlooking both Nathaniel Newlin's 1704 Grist Mill and his own adjacent mill properties.
- The project included painstaking architectural analysis, archaeological investigation, historical research, experimental archaeology, careful restorations, and collaborations with tradespeople and artisans skilled in historic trades.
- The project removed later additions, rebuilt the interior masonry floors, fireplace and chimney, fabricated leaded glass windows, acquired period appropriate pottery, pewter and cooperage, adapted the design of an 18th C. pantry cabinet which was then built and installed, hewed and installed a beam to replace a modern I beam and installed hand-hewn massive post and beam overlays to preclude necessary 21st Century mechanicals intruding on the visitor experience.
- The restored space has been the setting for public history events, particularly centered around 18th C. foodways, home brewing, and methods of fabric care, all provided to school groups, tours, special events open to the public and the Grist Mill's on-line audience.
- **Newlin Grist Mill, The Winterthur Summer Institute, and Victorian Heritage, Inc.**



# Hearth and Floor

**Before**



**After restoration**



# Traditional skills used

**NGM Blacksmiths Forging Lug Pole**



**Hand hewing beam**





**New Beam, Door Frame and Floor**



**Pantry Cabinet In Use**



# Learning Our History, Celebrating Our Future



*THE COUNTY OF DELAWARE'S BLACK HISTORY MONTH CELEBRATION 2023*

Learning our History, Celebrating our Future  
Publication



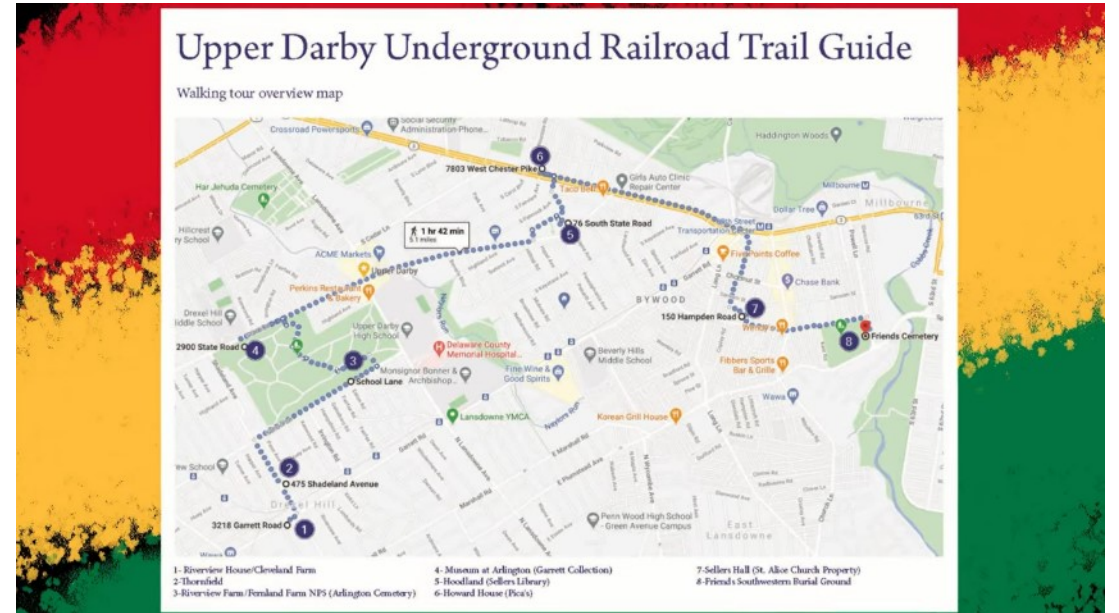
- This documentary looks at the history of African Americans living and working in Delaware County from its founding to today. The film was informed by the professional knowledge of local experts on the early days of African Americans in the County.
- It specifically focuses on how African Americans freed themselves and some of the struggles after that action.
- The video also explores what efforts the community and County Government are currently making to improve the lives of its all residents across the county.
- It is available for viewing on YouTube- <https://youtu.be/HdYWswg4xYE>
- **Shawn Rush, Dr. Monica Taylor, Councilman Richard Womack, Marc Woolley, Lauren Footman**

# Underground Railroad in Delaware County

## Darby Meeting House



## Upper Darby UGRR Trail Guide





# Features of the video

Videos of events and places



Interviews with residents, County Council and experts



# Ridley Creek State Park



50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE OPENING  
OF THE PARK TO VISITORS

*Ridley Creek State Park 50th Anniversary of the Opening of the Park to Visitors August 1972*  
Publication

By Keith Lockhart



- A 50th Anniversary booklet commemorating the founding of Ridley Creek State Park. The park was to be officially opened and dedicated on June 24, 1972. This was cancelled due to Hurricane Agnes. The park was opened without fanfare August 3, 1972.
- The booklet reviews the acquisition of surrounding farms noting the Riddle/Jeffords connection. It reprints historic articles that mention happenings in the area before it became a park noting the rise and fall of the Sycamore Mills. It spends a good deal of space on the creation of the Colonial Plantation and its mission. There are maps and a key to the historic houses that are within the park boundaries with many "then" and "now" photos.
- The booklets are available to purchase for \$10 at the RCSP office, Colonial Plantation gift shop, Den of Antiquity, and Edgmont Township office.
- **Keith Lockhart and The Friends of Ridley Creek State Park**

# Features in the booklet

## History of early parts of the park

### The Sycamore Mills



The 200 block of Bishop Hollow Rd. today.  
The library is 285 Bishop Hollow Rd.

The Sycamore Mills complex was the largest mill in Edgmont Township and it is in today's Ridley Creek State Park. The original grist mill was erected by John Edge, Jr., his brother Jacob, and a business associate, Henry Miller. Erected c.1718 the mill was originally known as the "Providence Mill". The mill passed through several owners until Thomas Bishop Sr. bought the property in 1781. Bishop Sr. died in 1785 and the mill went to his son, Thomas Bishop Jr., and in 1816 to his son, Amor Bishop. During this time it was known as "Bishop Mills", and the mill property expanded with worker cottages, library, plaster mill, rolling and splitting mills, nail factory, and blacksmith and wheelwright shops. During the flood of 1843 much of this was destroyed. On March 21, 1862 Washington Bishop, the great grandson of Thomas Bishop Sr., sold the property of 52 acres "and mills" to Joseph Velotte of Philadelphia for \$9,000.00. At this time only the grist and saw mills were in operation. In January 1868 the mills were sold to William F. Lewis who changed the name of the mill to "Sycamore Mills". The mills burned to the ground on August 31, 1901.



The original Sycamore Mill about 1900. It stood in 200 block of Bishop Hollow Road.

## Old and current photo comparison



An ideal spot for Craftsmen.  
Address Sycamore Mills, Via Media, Pa.  
The above home stands at 571 Sycamore Mills Rd. next to the Barren Rd. parking lot. This was another home for mill workers. Below is the same view today.





# Features in the booklet

## Samuel Riddle information

### Sam Riddle starts to purchase property which becomes the basis of Ridley Creek State Park.

Samuel D. Riddle (1861-1951) was a native of Delaware Co. His father, Samuel Riddle was born in Ireland and came to the United States in 1825. He began operating a woolen mill in Middletown Township and the area became known as Glen Riddle, named after the Riddle Family. Sam Riddle attended college at Pennsylvania Military College in Chester and graduated in 1879. At age 21 he entered the family textile business and later became president. Riddle was an avid hunter and owned 1000's of acres on which he hunted. He was also President of the Rose Tree Hunt Club for many years. His main interest was thoroughbred horses and he won his first race in 1916. In 1918 he purchased Man o' War for \$5,000.00. In 1919 and 1920 he had won 20 of 21 races that Man o' War was entered in. Beginning in early November of 1911 Samuel D. Riddle began buying property in what is now Ridley Creek State Park. His first purchase was from Edgar Howard of Media, two tracts of land totaling 112 acres.



Samuel D. Riddle - business man, horse breeder and sportsman.

**CHESTER TIMES - November 14, 1911**

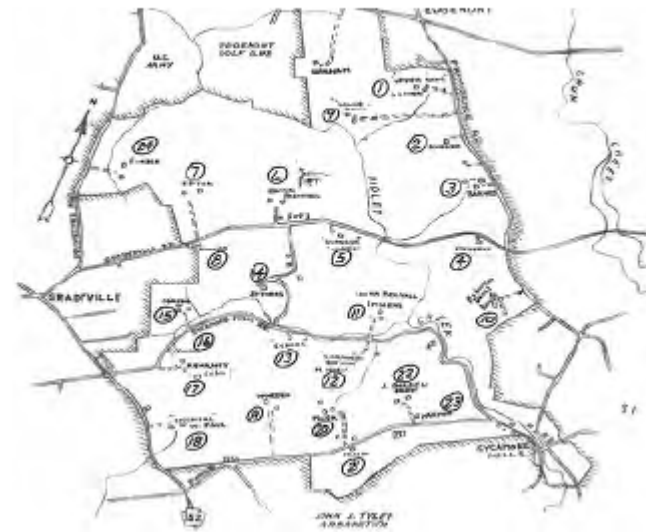
### LARGE REAL ESTATE SALE IN THE COUNTY - Three Large Farms in Edgmont Township Disposed of to Samuel Riddle

One of the largest sales of real estate to one individual buyer that has been recorded in Delaware County in years, took place when George T. Butler, representing Samuel Riddle of Glen Riddle, purchased three farms, 430 acres in all, in Edgmont Township. Benjamin T. Levis of Media, acted as broker in the sale.

The three farms, which are located on the highest point in Delaware County, commanding sweeping views in all directions, were owned by the following: James Patchel estate, 147 acres; Edgar C. Howard, 112 acres; William J. Neal, 170 acres. The consideration is withheld with the exception of that on the Patchel property, which sold for \$11,019. The new owner will transform his new holdings into a spacious estate, on which

## Map of homesteads

### Ridley Creek State Park Homesteads And Buildings





Metal Detecting at the Thomas Leiper Estate, Nether Providence Township  
Special Project






- The metal detecting project was conducted by Kevin Connell, Delaware County retired resident, public historian, and former Quality Insurance Field Manager for Wawa. He maintains a website and YouTube channel for Scouting for History-  
<https://www.youtube.com/@scoutingforhistory4584/videos>
- Kevin collaborates with a network of national metal detectors to set practices, identify findings, and publish his work for public access.
- Kevin hosted a public workshop at the Thomas Leiper House in December of 2022, to share knowledge about metal detecting in general, engage in conversation about unearthing objects found on site, and suggest how to interpret the artifacts.
- Kevin cleaned, inventoried, and housed the artifacts found at the Thomas Leiper House and Estate in an exhibition case that he then permanently gifted to the house collection.
- **Kevin Connell**

# Scouting For History

## Scouting for History website


Scouting for History

Home Reunited **Leiper House** Colonial Artifacts 1800's Artifacts 1900's Artifacts Helpful Links Bio FAQ



### Silver Clog Fastener

A very unusual find, clogs were usually worn by workers, and so the fasteners were mostly made of iron or brass. This fastener is made of silver and has hand engraved initials "MI". On the reverse is the makers mark, the initial "PL" with a star between the letters. Possibly Peter Leret, a silversmith from Baltimore Maryland.




### Iron Skeleton Key


This key was likely hidden in the 1800's under a rock by the side door and forgotten. Over time the rock (and the key under it) slowly settled into the ground and the grass grew over it. Most keys were made out of brass starting in the early 1800's, so this key could be original to the 1785 house.

## Scouting for History YouTube channel


HOME VIDEOS SHORTS PLAYLISTS COMMUNITY CHANNELS ABOUT




Hunting Silver in a 1940's yard  
202 views • 6 months ago




First hunt with the legend  
201 views • 10 months ago




Time for some relics!  
198 views • 5 months ago




Detecting at the 1785 estate - Part 2  
197 views • 5 months ago




An Amazing Do-Over Day of Detecting!  
195 views • 5 months ago



A fistful of silvers  
190 views • 1 year ago



Barnyard Detecting Adventure  
190 views • 9 months ago



Final Detecting Adventure at the 1785 Estate  
186 views • 4 months ago



# Artifacts

## Display of found artifacts



## Descriptions of some items

- 5. Button - Post Office uniform button, late 1800s
- 10. US Large Cent - Draped Bust design (1796-1807), no date visible
- 22. Iron skeleton key - Early 1800s - found under a rock near the side door, apparently hidden 200 years ago and forgotten
- 25. Minie Ball - invented by Claude Minie in 1846, these were a huge improvement over musket balls and became very common during the Civil War. This one was never fired.
- 30. Small clock - late 1800s, no manufacturer information
- 32. Barrel Tap - late 1800s brass, used for dispensing liquids from kegs and barrels.
- 36. Clog buckle - late 1700s, silver. Hand engraved with the initials MI
- 43. Model T ignition timing device - early 1900s - these broke easily and were discarded when replaced.



ATHS Historic Art Collection Display, Aston Township  
Special Project



- The Aston Township Historical Society (ATHS) was asked to create a display for the temporary home of the Municipal Building. It was decided a collection of all the art works that people have donated to ATHS would be an excellent historic collection for this opportunity.
- It includes works of art illustrating churches and buildings throughout the township, in various mediums, sizes and styles. Each of the 30 works has information on the history of the building and artist it was created by, including the donor, if known.
- The Historical Society worked with the Township Manager, Bill Defeo, and Public Works Crew to hang the paintings in the foyer, halls and rooms for the employees and public to enjoy. The artists are professionals, amateurs and well known local art teachers. Brass plate labels were commissioned for the paintings by ATHS.
- Agnes Bakow was the inspiration for this special project, a working member of ATHS, and a brilliant water colorist, she has lived in Aston all her life.
- **Agnes Bakow, John MacFarland, Rick Kirkwood, Sheila Withelder, Aston Public Works**

# Artwork with explanatory text





# Artists and Works of Art

- Agnes Bakow: “Churches of Aston”, 13 watercolors
- Arla Alexander: Fisher Hall House
- Pat Sehein: OLA Pump House
- R.E. Smart: Mount Road Houses
- Marie Kirkwood: Maletsky Tree
- Judy Antonelli: “Under the Spreading Chestnut Tree”
- Willie Thomas: Calvary Episcopal Church
- Unknown: St. Joseph’s Roman Catholic Church
- Louis Boughner: Crozerville Methodist Church
- D.W. Weller: Village Green School House
- S.M. Phillimy: Village Green School House
- Judy Antonelli: Village Green School House
- Ricky Eroh: Haday Farm
- 5 Points Then and Now: 2 aerials
- Championship Team photograph 1955



Larry Fischer  
Individual Achievement



- Larry has been a member of the Newtown Square Historical Society for over 15 years. He is a volunteer and each year works tirelessly to fundraise in our community business district. The funds he raises have allowed our society to increase community outreach via special free events, art lessons, history programs, elementary school tours, community history tours, repairs to our historic sites and landscapes. All are offered free to the public.
- He also helps create our yearly program book which is a compilation of work the society is doing and community history articles funded entirely by his fundraising. He created an entire photographic history of transportation in Newtown Square for display at our Annual historic day event entitled "Traveling Through History in Newtown Square", a theme he came up with and followed through on. Without his tireless efforts our society would not have grown as much as it has nor become as active and influential in our community via our new historic ordinance and historic commission.
- He works behind the scenes supporting all events by obtaining needed insurances, historic information for events, website ads, website updates, signage, advertising and memberships, and communicates with all of our board regularly. He even finds time to portray historical characters of the revolutionary period for our special themed history events. He is always available to ask questions and attends township meetings regularly to keep us informed, up to date and relevant. Because Larry is a quiet gentleman, and working behind the scenes, his huge contribution and impact may go unnoticed, but the historical society's growth and resurgence has been helped tremendously by his efforts, and could not have happened without him.

# Helping the Historical Society

Sawing wood

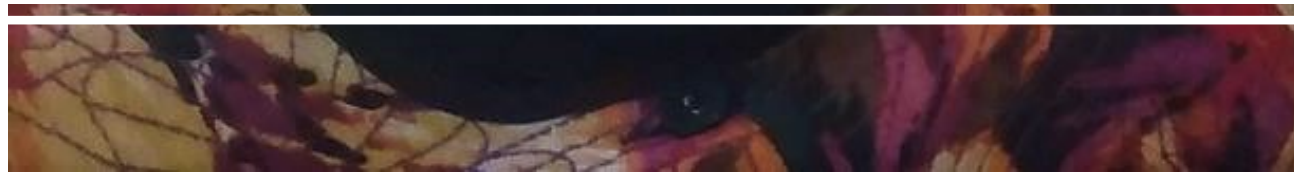


At NSHS booth





**Pat Smith**  
Individual Achievement





- Larry has been a member of the Newtown Square Historical Society for over 15 years. He is a volunteer and each year works tirelessly to fundraise in our community business district. The funds he raises have allowed our society to increase community outreach via special free events, art lessons, history programs, elementary school tours, community history tours, repairs to our historic sites and landscapes. All are offered free to the public.
- He also helps create our yearly program book which is a compilation of work the society is doing and community history articles funded entirely by his fundraising. He created an entire photographic history of transportation in Newtown Square for display at our Annual historic day event entitled "Traveling Through History in Newtown Square", a theme he came up with and followed through on. Without his tireless efforts our society would not have grown as much as it has nor become as active and influential in our community via our new historic ordinance and historic commission.
- He works behind the scenes supporting all events by obtaining needed insurances, historic information for events, website ads, website updates, signage, advertising and memberships, and communicates with all of our board regularly. He even finds time to portray historical characters of the revolutionary period for our special themed history events. He is always available to ask questions and attends township meetings regularly to keep us informed, up to date and relevant. Because Larry is a quiet gentleman, and working behind the scenes, his huge contribution and impact may go unnoticed, but the historical society's growth and resurgence has been helped tremendously by his efforts, and could not have happened without him.

# Award winning projects

**2018- Chester Heights Camp Meeting**



**2021- Aston Twp Historical Society**



# Chester Heights Camp Meeting

**Victorian Tea**



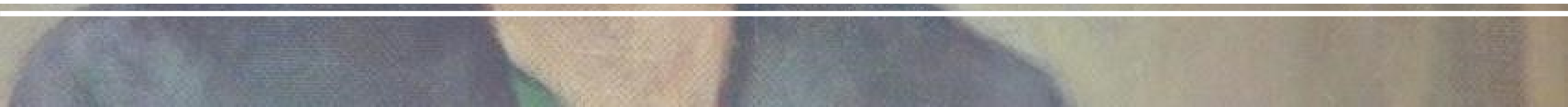
**Legacy Award- 150 years**







**Chester's Ruth L. Bennett, Chester City  
Leedom B. Morrison Heritage Award**



- This digital site fully explores the work of Ruth L. Bennett, her impressive achievements against all odds in the era of Jim Crow racism, and her legacy of inspiration for women involved in Chester's betterment since her passing and up to the present day. The site contributes to a much-needed focus on the role of Delaware County women in racial justice efforts in the 20th century. The project is available at:  
<http://chesterdigital.sunycreate.cloud/rlbennett/>
- The website is separated into different sections: No Small Feat: Black Women's Activism in Early 20th Century America; Race, Gender & The Great Migration; Bennett Home for Colored Women & Girls; Bennett's Influence Beyond Chester; Bennett's Legacy of Everyday Activism.
- There are a variety of videos, newspaper articles, books, and photos to illustrate and build upon the text which is well-researched.
- **Twyla Simpkins (YES Center); Christopher Mele**

# Features

## Newspaper articles, photos, information about Ruth L. Bennett



The Bennett Home remained empty and unused until 2013, when the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation repaired the exterior and restored the interior for possible use as a museum or repository for historic artifacts.



Ruth L. Bennett Home for Women & Girls prior to renovation



Ruth L. Bennett Home for Women & Girls after renovation

## Causes of Great Migration, lasting legacy of Ruth L. Bennett

### Bennett's Legacy of Everyday Activism

Ruth Bennett's contributions to the wellbeing of Chester's Black community proved lasting. Many of today's social services are rooted in the work she accomplished, including her programs that served homeless women, the unemployed and working mothers, after-school programs, kindergarten, and nursery care — all funded by donations and the 'sweat equity' of local Black women club members.

But Ruth Bennett's legacy in Chester is far more robust than her founding of many social services we take for granted today. The practical work of employment skills training and improving educational outcomes brought tangible results to Chester and other cities. Of equal importance was a philosophy of advocacy and







Griffith Funeral Chapel, Norwood Borough  
Legacy Award- 125 Years



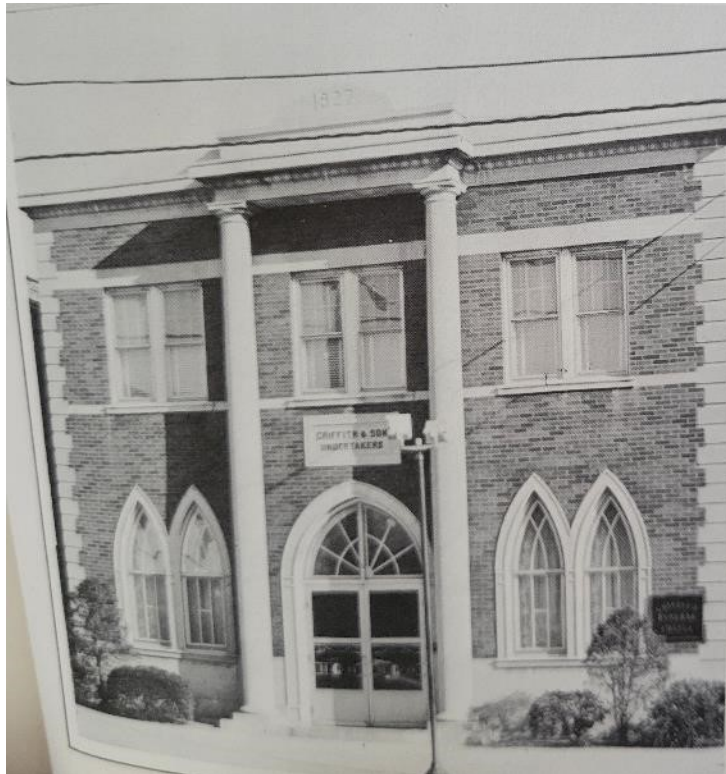
- Of all the original businesses established in Norwood, Griffith's is the oldest business that is still in existence today.
- The Griffith Funeral Establishment was started November 1, 1898 in Lenni, Pennsylvania by Horace S. Griffith and his son Horace B. As mill owners, making tapestries and cabinetry, the family began providing caskets for their and nearby factory workers.
- This was one of the first buildings constructed as a funeral home in Pennsylvania. It was very unusual because most funeral homes were still in actual homes like the existing house next door.
- Horace B. "Hank" Griffith III is the fourth- generation proprietor of the business, which has been located in Norwood since 1906 when an existing funeral home was purchased from Clarence R. Black.
- In approximately 1925 the building façade was added along with a non-denominational chapel with cathedral-style window and pipe organ which still exists today.
- Over the front door the original signage remains:

GRIFFITH & SON  
UNDERTAKERS
- The firm upholds the highest standards and are members of the by-invitation-only Selected Independent Funeral Homes.



# Photos from Norwood's Diamond Jubilee, 1968

Building in 1968



Original cars used by Griffith Funeral Chapel







Hedgerow Theatre, Rose Valley Borough  
Legacy Award- 100 Years





- April 2023 marks the centenary celebration of a treasured Delaware County institution, the Hedgerow Theatre Company. Nestled in the heart of Rose Valley, Hedgerow has been a beacon for theatre artists ranging from Richard Basehart, Bertolt Brecht, Ann Harding, Austin Pendleton, Lynn Riggs, Susan Glaspell, Keanu Reeves, and countless aspiring and professional artists in its 100 years of operations.
- Hedgerow is a resident repertory theater dedicated to providing cultural enrichment, engaging entertainment, and training in theater arts and management.
- Hedgerow strives to fulfill its mission by:
  - Producing high-quality professional productions that promote dialogue and human understanding
  - Connecting and enriching the lives of patrons, artists, and community through the shared experience of the theatrical art form.
  - Performing wide-ranging titles from classical to contemporary and dramatic to humorous plays to serve the community.
  - Offering extensive educational programs through theater school, outreach, and touring programs.
  - Providing performance, technical training, and theater management opportunities for Resident Fellows in a close-knit and mutually supportive environment.
- Hedgerow is an intentionally inclusive and welcoming space for all. We are fortunate to have a professional theatre of Hedgerow's impressive caliber and epic past here in Delaware County and look forward to the next 100 years of arts education and high quality, intimate theatre for all.
- <https://www.hedgerowtheatre.org/>

# Early photos of theatre

**Jasper Deeter and Ann Harding,  
film star of 30s, on steps of theatre**



**Deeter and Harding on stage in  
1932**





# Celebrating the Future

Photos of previous productions



**100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala- April 29,  
2023**

**100TH ANNIVERSARY GALA**  
Legacy of Light

LEARN MORE

PURCHASE  
TICKETS



**Bev Rorer**

Rich Paul Lifetime Achievement Award



- Beverly's father was a History Professor and she swore as a child that she would not be a teacher or take up any interest in history. She did just the opposite. She was a teacher with the Upper Darby School District from 1952-1986 and has served on numerous historical society boards and historical commissions.
- Her involvement with history started when she was recruited in the early 1970s to serve on the newly established Upper Darby Township Historic Commission. In 1974 she also started petitions to stop the auction of the Grange Estate in Haverford Township. She setup the Honeybees program at The Grange in 1975 and it is still ongoing today.
- In the early 1980s she was a cofounder of the Upper Darby Historical Society (UDHS). They met in the basement of a local church and was elected as their first president. She was involved with protests and petitions to raise awareness of the pending demolition of the historic Enge house near the Lukens Inn on Lansdowne Ave. Unfortunately, that property was demolished and she then took up the cause to save Collenbrook Farm in Drexel Hill, which the township purchased in 1984 and has been the current home of the UDHS since 1985.
- For the UDHS she has been the coordinator for the UD School District's 3rd grade class tours. Organizing the visit of close to 1,000 students each spring for a 5 week period of time. She is also organizer for the Spring Farm Days and the October Fall Fest events.
- There was also the Archeological dig at the Swedish Cabin around 1987. She jumped right in to dig for and cleanup artifacts at the site. In 2009, she became a board member for the Friends of Sellers Hall (FOSH) and still serves on the board today.
- In 2012 she got involved with the Haverford Historical Society as a Colonial Living Guide working both at Nitre Hall and the Lawrence Cabin. In the Spring she helps them as a docent for their Federal School program and at their Heritage Festival.



# Upper Darby Historical Society

**Making candles at Collenbrook for school tours**



**In front of Collenbrook**



# Variety of projects

## Beekeeping



## Images of America- Upper Darby

