



# HVERFORD TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY



P.O. Box 825                      Havertown, PA 19083                      610-446-7988                      Spring 1997

## Fourth Graders Try School 19th c Style

For the seventh season, HTHS has sponsored the one-room school house experience for Haverford School District fourth graders. Eighteen classes participated in a full day of learning at the Haverford Seminary #1 in Coopertown, as it was known in 1849.

In the spirit of the times, some students came dressed in 19th century-style clothing and carried their lunches in baskets or milk buckets. At the Federal School, the fourth graders practice penmanship with nib pens, cipher on slates, read from McGuffey readers, recite from Poor Richard's Almanac, and take part in an old-fashioned spelling bee.

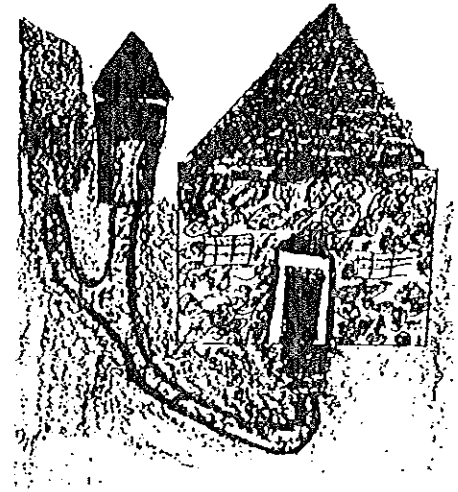
The children are impressed with the wood stove and the dunce cap and are fascinated by the "necessary," which was built by the HTHS in 1991 to

accommodate a full day school trip.

Recess, every Federal School scholar's favorite subject, rings with laughter over games of tag, jump rope, horse shoes, Jacob's Ladder, and pick-up-sticks.

At the end of the day, students leave with copy books and "Rewards of Merit" and a better understanding of life in Haverford Township in the 1850s. They will return to another HTHS program, Colonial Living, in September as very grown-up fifth graders. Some will even remember the first twelve presidents of the United States. Can you name them? *The answers are on Page 2.*

Many children wrote of their favorite experiences in their thank you letters. A few are included. Some even provided illustrations. That's the "necessary" behind the Federal School in the accompanying picture (upper right) by Julianne Faris.



*Dear Mistress Sue and Mistress Mary,  
Thanks for having us. I enjoyed writing with the quill pen. I most enjoyed the horn book writing. It was fun. It's neat to have two recesses.*

*Your 1850 student,  
JULIANNE FARIS*

*Dear Mistress Sue and Mistress Mary,  
Thank you for all the hard work you put into teaching us. I liked all of the subjects. My favorite part was memorizing the first 12 presidents' last names. The recess was fun and also the toys.*

*Your Friend,  
LUKE*

*(Continued on page 2)*

## Federal School's 200th Birthday

To commemorate the Federal School's 200th birthday, Sue Kratzinger and Mary Courtney will work with high school students to create a float for Haverford Township Day, October 5. Also, souvenir lintel houses representing the Federal School will be sold as a fund raiser.

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## History Fair Attracts Student- Competitors

Ursinus College was the place to be for young history buffs on Saturday, March 22.

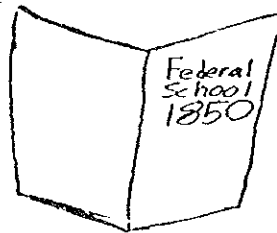
HTHS Board President Carole Joseph and Recording Secretary Mary Courtney were among the judges of the event that included over a hundred student participants. Capitalizing on the effectiveness and popularity of school science fairs, the Bucks and Montgomery county historical societies sponsor this annual event. The program encourages students to study history, and to develop research, critical thinking, and communications skills. The overall quality of the work done by the students impressed our judges.

In response to the theme "Triumph and Tragedy in History", students from grades 6-12 explored topics such as The Great Depression, the Holocaust, the San Francisco earthquake, Islamic culture, slavery, and the Battle of Gettysburg. Future historians, and perhaps historical society leaders, created interpretive displays, exhibits, plays, speeches, and papers. Prizes were awarded in middle school and high school categories. ☺

(Continued from page 1)

Dear Mistress Sue and  
Mistress Mary,  
I enjoyed learning about the  
presidents and writing with quill  
pens. It was neat learning  
how school was in eighteen  
fifty. I like nineteen ninety-  
seven better... See you next  
year when we make soap.

Sincerely,  
DANIELLE HATHAWAY



### Nitre Hall Is Dressed for Spring

Market baskets, gardening baskets, small baskets, large baskets, old ones and not so very old ones adorn Nitre Hall for Spring. Come see how many you can identify.

While you're there, take time to admire the bright new interior. Thanks to the township, the walls and woodwork have been cleaned, patched, and repainted.

Nitre Hall is open Tuesdays 10-12, the first Sunday of each month, and by appointment.

## Historic Gardens Subject of April General Meeting

Elizabeth McLean, an historian and gardening educator at the Barnes Arboretum energized the gardeners among us at the April meeting. Using beautiful slides of historic gardens in or near our area (and a few from afar), Mrs. McLean took attendees on a colorful tour through three centuries of gardens. Did you know that in the 17th century, aristocrats and commoners alike, planted apple trees?

Program Chair, Millicent Phillips, has done an outstanding job this year arranging three excellent, historical programs for the general membership meetings.

In October, Lorette Treese, historian, author, and archivist at Bryn Mawr College, presented a slide/lecture on the descendents of William Penn and their impact on our area during the American Revolution.

In February, we were treated to the history of radio and Haverford Township's role in its development and evolution by Lloyd B. Roach, a veteran of broadcasting. Mr. Roach's father, "Ike" Roach, and Bill Christman participated, as teenagers, in the 1921 shortwave transatlantic tests sponsored by the American Radio Relay League. ☺

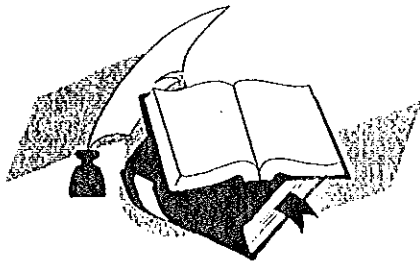
### Ben Kapustan's Collection Left to Township

Township Commissioner and long-time friend of the Historical Society Throughout his career, Ben Kapustan collected political memorabilia. His extensive collection will be available for the community to enjoy as soon as an appropriate location is determined.

The first twelve presidents are:  
Washington, J. Adams, Jefferson,  
Madison, Monroe, J. Q. Adams,  
Jackson, VanBuren, Harrison, Tyler,  
Polk, Taylor.

## Remembering David Robb

David B. Robb, a former Vice President of the Historical Society, died February 25, 1997. Dave was director and treasurer of the Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks.



He was largely responsible for that organization giving the ground and Nitre Hall to Haverford Township for \$1.00 and the assurance in the deed "to hold in trust this land for the health and enjoyment of the public in perpetuity...(and) to assure the preservation of natural beauties, especially guarding the stream and trees as much as possible from pollution, destruction, and abuse."

For a number of years, David and his wife Sarah owned Pont Reading on Haverford Road near Hathaway. Sarah Robb is a direct descendant of Joshua Humphries, one of the first settlers from Haverford West in Wales to settle in this area.

Gifts from the Robb family grace Nitre Hall. They include the carpet, Philadelphia writing table, and chest of drawers in the parlor and the table in the library where visitors register.

Many children in the area have benefited from the generosity of Sarah Robb, as well. It was Sarah's demonstration of candle making (using her own antique candle dip-

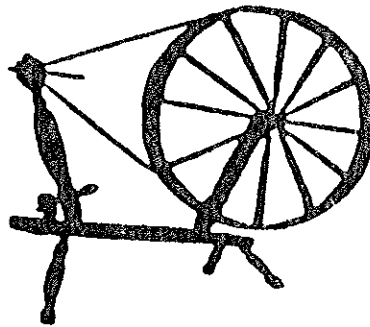
ping wheel) that inspired the Colonial Living Program so popular with the area's fifth graders. You can see the original wheel on the third floor at Nitre Hall.

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"TO HOLD IN TRUST THIS LAND FOR THE HEALTH AND ENJOYMENT OF THE PUBLIC IN PERPETUITY..."

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A fund to preserve the furnishings of Nitre Hall has been established in Dave's memory. Contributions are welcome, and can be made by contacting HTHS at the number on the cover. ⌘



## Is There a Spinning Wheel in Your Attic?

Would you like to learn more about your grandmother's spinning wheel? How about helping researchers discover and protect the textile history of our area? You can even get advice on repairing your treasure and a certificate of registry...for free!

The Pennsylvania Spinning Wheel Registry is gathering information on historic Pennsylvania spinning wheels and their makers. Textile tools, such as blockers, carders, looms, shuttles, are also candidates for the Registry.

Julia Murphy is working with the Mercer Museum of Doylestown to document the location, style, date, and maker of spinning wheels in the seven southeastern counties of Bucks, Berks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Northampton, and Philadelphia. According to Ms. Murphy, even incomplete wheels can be registered. Contact Julia Murphy at (610) 664-3495 or Rena Goldhahn at (215) 364-4110. ⌘

### Board Members Elected

At the April 17th General Membership Meeting, the Haverford Township Historical Society elected the following members to the Board of Directors for a two-year term.

#### Officers

Carol Joseph, *President*  
Sue Kratzinger, *First Vice President*  
Mary Courtney, *Second Vice-President*  
and *Recording Secretary*  
Kenneth Tiss, *Treasurer*  
Margaret Johnston, *Curator*  
Betty Stafford, *Corresponding Secretary*

#### At Large Members

Sally Boyer  
Irene Coffey  
Randy Klein  
Charlotte Prichard  
Betty Stellar

At-large members continuing their two-year terms until 1998 are Elaine Halberstadt, Millicent Phillips, Cathy Siegl, and Dick Walker.

## Dates to Remember

- ⇒ **Federal School Open: First Sundays**  
In conjunction with the 200th anniversary, the Federal School at Darby and Coopertown Rds will be open the first Sunday of each month throughout the Summer.
- ⇒ **Haverford Township Day: Saturday, October 5, 1997**  
Watch for the Federal School float by the senior high school students.
- ⇒ **Fall General Meeting: Thursday, October 16, 1997,**  
At 8:00 at our new meeting location, Llanerch Presbyterian Church,  
Park Road and Lansdowne Avenue.

### *Thank You, Edith Cannon...*

For many years of service to HTHS and the community guiding visitors through our historic buildings and for training and scheduling guides throughout the year so that others may enjoy the Society's treasures.



## Wanted: Guides for HTHS Buildings

No experience necessary. Will train. Many benefits. Short hours. Flexible schedule. Interest in local history a plus.

If you think this description fits you and you have a couple of hours a month to share, you and HTHS may be perfect for each other. Guides provide historic information and tours of the Federal School, Nitre Hall, and the Log Cabin.

To find out more, or to volunteer, please call Elaine Halberstadt. at (610) 446-0872 or leave a message on the HTHS phone at (610) 446-7988.

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Historical Society  
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