



FALL, 2007

Message From The President:

Happy 325th Anniversary to Lower Merion and Narberth!

As I have said on many occasions, Lower Merion is a special place in which to live, work and raise our families. This fall season is a time for us to celebrate our heritage and to focus on the positive.

We are a community that takes our history seriously and recognizes that it is an asset worth protecting. The local governments and communities of Lower Merion and Narberth are committed to the promotion and preservation of our amazing and rich history. An important initiative is the township's Historic Preservation Ordinance that was passed in March 2000, which identifies and offers protection to many of our historic properties. To best manage these resources, the township has selected a group of professionals who volunteer their time and talent to serve on the Historic Architectural Review Board (HARB) and the Historic Commission.

To support these preservation objectives, both the township and borough have such organizations as The Lower Merion Historical Society and The Lower Merion Conservancy. A variety of local civic associations also actively work to preserve Lower Merion's quality of life.

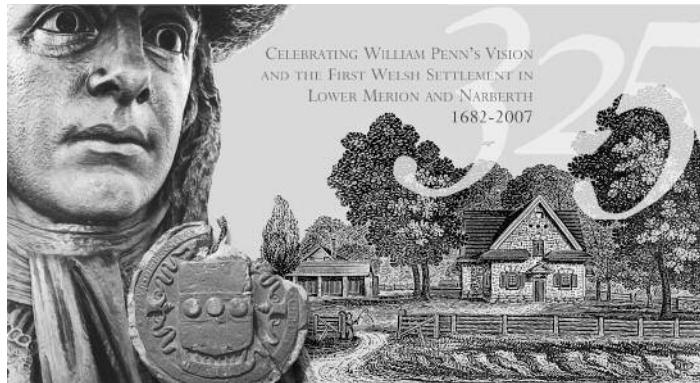
An exciting project is the implementation of the township's newly adopted Open Space Plan (also known as *The Emerald*

Necklace) that will allow the community to re-discover lost and deserted historical sites along the Schuylkill River as well as on a variety of abandoned transportation corridors.

Additionally, the township is currently updating their 1979 Comprehensive Plan, which will define the future development of our community. Because of its broad scope, it has been named the *Comprehensive Preservation, Infill & Redevelopment Plan*. It also includes: "Policies, Programs and Projects to Address Issues and Realize the Community Vision for Land Use, Housing, Transportation & Historic Preservation." (see www.lowermerion.org/planning/compplan.html for further details).

To create this planning document, over the next 3 years the township will actively involve the community by seeking opinions and insights. It will be an opportunity for us to define our future. Therefore, I encourage everyone to get involved, to speak up, and provide input.

As we look back in time to celebrate and reflect on William Penn's vision, we should look forward in time and re-affirm William Penn's dream by including many of his key concepts in our new Comprehensive Plan.



A New Research Tool to Merge the Old and the New

In 1851, John Levering, a local surveyor, set out to map all of Lower Merion.

Levinger used tape measures and a *theodolite* – a telescope-like device – to measure boundary lines. His original hand written map and workbook containing property data and measurements is stored in the Historical Society's Archive Room.

The hand drawn map was turned over to a Philadelphia printer who hand copied the map onto several stone plates. This is the same lithograph process that was used to make Currier and Ives color prints. The finished map is a useful snapshot of the 802 taxable parcels in rural Lower Merion.

A century and a half later, a cooperative effort between a local business, township government, and the Historical Society is revolutionizing map making.

Andy Amsterdam, proprietor of *Franklin Maps* in King of Prussia,

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We Gratefully Accept Donations

Our library holdings continue to grow thanks to the generosity of the local community. During these past six months, the following groups/people have donated items related to Lower Merion history:

Max Buten	Lower Merion Conservancy
Robert Campbell	Lower Merion High School
Chabad Center for Jewish Life at the General Wayne Inn	Lower Merion Synagogue
William T. Gallagher	Main Line Health/ Bryn Mawr Hospital
Alison and Chad Graham	Robert McCormick
The Haverford School Historic Architectural Review Board and the Historic Commission	Merion Meeting Religious Society of Friends
Alice Hoffman	Patrick O'Donnell
Dr. Edward Huth	Judith Pransky
Dr. Douglas F. Klepfer	O'Neill Properties
Leon Levine	John Satterthwaite
Edward Lewis	Township of Lower Merion Wise Preservation Planning

Website Update

Our website continues to grow in popularity and size. Just this year, we had a worldwide audience of over 210,700 visitors from 68 countries. Since the launch of our website in August 2002, we have had a total of more than 716,900 visitors to our virtual library!

As expected, we receive e-mail inquiries from Wales, but also from far away locations, such as Zimbabwe and Tasmania. Here is a sample of reactions from some of our users:

"I am a native of Pennsylvania currently living in Ohio. I have genealogical ties to Narberth and often visit your internet site. It has been most beneficial to my research, and I can't thank you enough for the exceptional resource you have made available."

Ken from Galena, OH

"I also want to commend you on your website. Thanks for putting the cemeteries and other parts searchable. Your history was so interesting and informative in helping me to understand the age in which he [my ancestor] lived"

Linda from Brownstown, IN

"I found your WONDERFUL site in google search. I am grateful for the information I was able to garner from it, its sleek presentation and ease of use. BRAVO!"

Cynthia from Palm Beach, FL

Upcoming Events

A Sampler of 325th Anniversary Events

For a complete listing of events see

www.lowermerionhistory.org/upcomingevents.html

Saturday, October 6th from 10:30am to 2:00pm

There will be a joint tour starting at the Merion Meetinghouse, which will be continued at the nearby Lower Merion Academy. The focus of these tours and presentations is *The Quaker Life: Belief and Education*. They aim to help the general public gain a better understanding of Quaker values and Quaker education. This event is co-sponsored by the Merion Meeting and The Lower Merion Historical Society.



Alice Hoffman, Denise Francis and Ann Bagley standing in front of the display of antique Quaker school desks at the Academy. They are getting ready for their tour and presentation on October 6th.

Sunday, October 14th at 3:00pm

An Interfaith Service celebrating the Great *Holy Experiment* of William Penn and the religious freedom enjoyed in this country, influenced by Penn and the early settlers will take place at the Merion Meetinghouse. This interfaith experience of religious tolerance will be hosted by the Rev. Jonathan A. Malone, pastor of Lower Merion Baptist Church in Bryn Mawr. All are welcome and invited to attend.

Saturday, October 20th

Our three local Quaker Meetinghouses each have an Open House, with each community presenting a perspective of our Quaker heritage. All events are open to the public free of charge.

- 10:00am to 11:30am, meet at the Merion Meetinghouse founded in 1682 and located at 615 Montgomery Avenue in



Some members of the Steering Committee stand before the banner promoting the 325th Anniversary celebration. Left to right: Jerry Francis, Laurie Bachman, Eileen Trainer, Jane Dellheim, Brenda Viola, Joe Manko, Mike Weilbacher, and Bruce Gill.

Merion. Stories about William Penn's witch trial in 1701 and stories about his influence on the creation of the United Nations will be shared. This will be followed by a tour of the Meetinghouse and Burial Grounds. Refreshments will be available in the Activities Building.

- 12:30pm to 2:00pm, meet at the Old Haverford Meetinghouse founded in 1683 and located at 235 East Eagle Road in Havertown. Join a discussion about *The Faith and Practice of Early Friends*, as presented by Patricia Dallmann. This will be followed by a History of Old Haverford Meeting presented by Joseph Tyson, author of *Penn's Luminous City*.
- 3:00pm to 5:00pm, meet at the Radnor Meetinghouse founded in 1693 and located at Conestoga Road & Route 320 in Radnor. Professor Charles Cherry of Villanova University will give a lecture on *William Penn and the Settlement of Pennsylvania*, followed by refreshments and discussion on Quaker social and pacifist values.

On Wednesday, October 24th at 6:00pm

Join your neighbors at the Township Administration Building, 75 E. Lancaster Avenue in Ardmore, for the dedication of the 325th Anniversary Time Capsule. The Capsule will contain historical documents and other items of significance as chosen by residents and Township officials.

A Sampler of Academy Events



Every Spring, Ted Goldsborough guides the 4th grade classes in the School District. Ted's two hour long bus trip, with stops along the way, takes each class to the many historic sites in Lower Merion. Here is the Gladwyne Elementary School class, along with teachers Drew Heinericks and Cheryl Stumm, during their visit to the Academy.



The first floor of the Academy is the home to Cynwyd's Brownie Troop 1083. This picture was taken when they came upstairs for a visit to The History Center. In the back row are: Ted Goldsborough, Joanne Murray (Brownie Leader), Connor Demchick, Brianna Reiferson, Gillian George, Ilana Welsh, and Cheryl Reiferson (Brownie Leader). The front row are: Madison Murray and Brenda Ash. Not pictured is Eleanor Gaddy.

The basement level of the Academy, (the side facing the Cynwyd Elementary School), has had a water problem. The School District, being a good caretaker of this historic building, is doing the needed repairs to solve this problem. This past summer, and into the fall, craftsmen from Mangan Masonry Restoration Company are restoring the stucco finish, doing the masonry work to the patio area, and replacing the windows along the sun porch.



Max Buten working at the Society's new Apple MacMini computer using iPhoto. Max and Ted are compiling a photographic record of structures to be demolished and photos of buildings and events found today in Lower Merion and Narberth. Eventually, these images will be made available on our website. Other volunteers who helped us this past summer are: Tom Auxier, Ann Bagley, Phil Eidelson, Julia Fleekop, Matt Gabalawi, S. Hamill Horne, Farilyn Leopold, Joanne Murray, and Eliza Reiss.



The Academy is getting a face lift from top to bottom. About ten years ago, the building got a new cedar roof, but it was now time to do some preventive maintenance. Over the summer, the School District had the roof power washed and the wood shingles stained and sealed.



The official car of the Historical Society. Ted's 1938 Ford Deluxe is used to run errands to and from the Academy, and to represent the Historical Society at such events as the Ardmore's Memorial Day parade and Bala Cynwyd's July 4th parade.



The Academy is used as a venue by various local organizations for educational purposes. Pictured here are the Posomokin Questors and lecturers, who were here for their day long seminar.

A New Research Tool - continued from page 1

produced a high-resolution computer image of 1851 Levering map. Then the Township of Lower Merion graciously made their Geographical Information System (GIS) maps available to the Historical Society. Having these two geographical data elements available, Historical Society volunteer Leon Levine used GIS computer hardware and software to merge the 1851 map onto the 2007 street map of Lower Merion.

Leon hopes that his overlay map will be useful as a benchmark for the new Township Comprehensive Plan and for historical research. In the coming months, Leon plans to follow up with map merges using other historic property atlases in the Historical Society's archives. This mapping will answer a lot of questions about Lower Merion *then and now*. ☀



Leon Levine standing in front of the collection of Main Line Atlases and pointing to the 1851 Levering map. His research will help us better analyze and understand land use patterns.



The Lower Merion Historical Society

Lower Merion Academy
506 Bryn Mawr Ave., Box 2602
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

LowerMerionHistory.org

Mark Your Calendar

Saturday, September 29, 2007

The Harriton Plantation Fair

Saturday, October 6, 2007

The Quaker Life: Belief and Education

Sunday, October 14, 2007

Interfaith Service Celebrating Penn's Holy Experiment

Saturday, October 20, 2007

Open House at Three Quaker Meetinghouses

Wednesday, October 24, 2007

Dedication of the 325th Anniversary Time Capsule

The Lower Merion Historical Society

Location:

Lower Merion Academy
506 Bryn Mawr Ave., Box 2602
Bala Cynwyd, PA 19004

Contact:

Phone and Fax: 610-664-3216
E-mail: LMHistory@comcast.net

Library Hours:

Wednesday evenings, 7:00 to 9:00 pm
Saturday afternoons, 2:00 to 4:00 pm
Also by appointment

Our Mission:

The Lower Merion Historical Society is an organization dedicated to "Preserving Our Past For The Future." This is accomplished by stewardship of local history, education of the community, preservation of historic resources and outreach to promote awareness of the cultural heritage of the Township of Lower Merion and the Borough of Narberth.



LowerMerionHistory.org

Officers and Directors Effective June 2007

Officers:

President – Gerald A. Francis

Vice President - Ross L. Mitchell

Treasurer – John B. Hagner

Corresponding Secretary - Betty Cannon

Recording Secretary – Barbara McElroy

Immediate Past President - Edmund L. Goldsborough

Directors:

Class of 2008 - Andrew Amsterdam, Denise H. Francis, Bruce D. Reed

Class of 2009 - Dennis Montagna, Joanne Murray, Anna O'Hora

Class of 2010 - Alison Graham, S. Hamill Horne, Leon Levine

The Historical Society is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization serving the community since 1949. For more than 57 years, our volunteers have provided educational programs to the public. Thousands of students, residents and scholars have worked with the Society's extensive resources. The Historical Society is a vital force in preserving the rich history of the Lower Merion community.