



## Message From The President:

## Celebrating 325 Years of William Penn's Vision

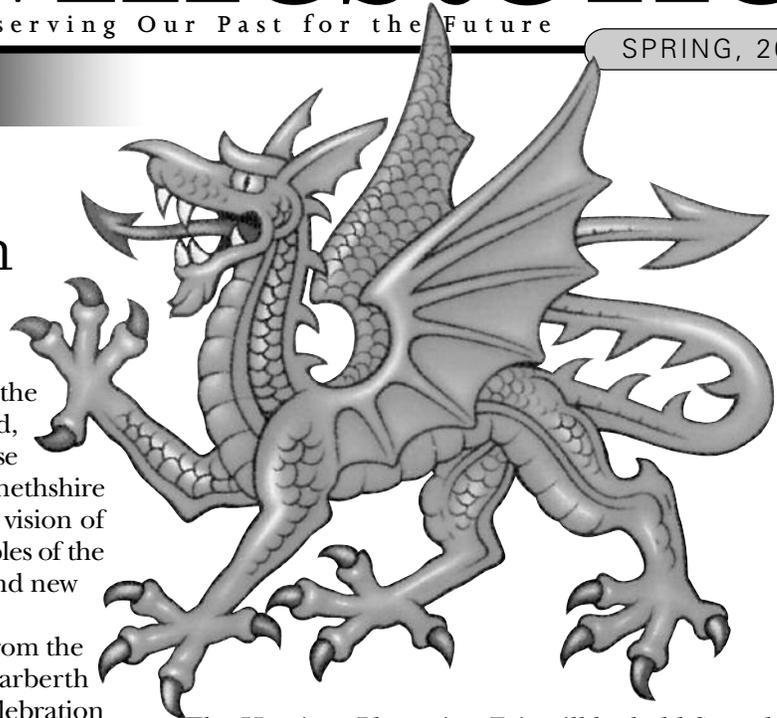
### The First Welsh Settlement in Lower Merion and Narberth • 1682-2007

In August 1682, the Welsh Quakers first arrived to the area. They were seeking a home in the New World, which they had christened "The Welsh Tract." These "Merioneth Adventurers" from the County of Merionethshire in the North of Wales, were part of William Penn's vision of the "Holy Experiment" in which the persecuted peoples of the Old World could find refuge in a land of promise and new beginnings.

A community-wide task force of representatives from the Township of Lower Merion and the Borough of Narberth have been meeting and planning an anniversary celebration honoring William Penn and the Welsh Quakers who came and settled here. This 325th Anniversary Committee is assembling a slate of activities that will be jointly sponsored by many of our local community organizations.

The first of a series of events will be held on, Saturday, June 9th at Harriton House, from 10:00am to 3:30pm. A "Welsh Festival" will be held featuring music, dancing and storytelling, Welsh griddlecakes, and tours of the 1704 Harriton House. This event is open to the public free of charge. The event is co-sponsored by the Harriton Association and the Welsh Society of Philadelphia. Harriton House is located at 500 Harriton Road, Bryn Mawr (for further information please call 610 525-0201).

Soon after Labor Day, Harriton House will host an interactive exhibit, "Keeping Up With the Jones': The Welsh in America." This display, presented by the Welsh Assembly, will be open to the public from September thru November for all to visit and to learn about our Welsh heritage.



The Harriton Plantation Fair will be held Saturday, September 29th from 10:00am to 4:00pm, rain or shine. Plan for an educational, family-oriented day in the park. Carriage rides, sheep herding, crafts, antiques & collectibles, childrens games, Pennsylvania Dutch Food, quilts, music, the Treasures Booth, house tours, and free admission. Due to our anniversary, this years' annual event will be expanded from the previous years.

In addition, Lower Merion and Narberth will be an active participant in the "William Penn's Welcome Week" program that will run from Saturday, October 13th thru Sunday October 21st. This week long series will include special exhibitions, family activities, displays, lectures and programs that will entertain and delight adults and children at each of the collaborating attractions; such as:

- Arch Street Meeting
- Atwater Kent Museum
- Christ Church
- Harriton House
- Historical Society of Pa.
- Lower Merion Academy
- Merion Meeting House
- Pennsbury Manor

Members of the 325th Committee will appear on Channel 7's "Eye On Lower Merion" Program to discuss the various upcoming activities. This Program will be cablecast throughout the month of May every Monday, Wednesday and Friday at 7:00am and 7:00pm, and on Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday at 11:00am and 11:00pm.

Happy Anniversary,



Harriton House

## We Gratefully Accept Donations

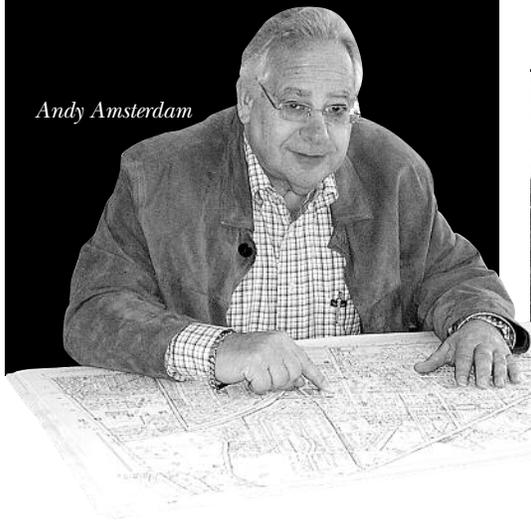
Our library holdings continue to grow thanks to the generosity of the local community. During these past six months, the following groups/people have donated items related to our Lower Merion history:

Andrew Amsterdam  
Robert Campbell  
Daughters of Charity, Emmitsburg, MD  
James Doran  
Dr. Bonnie Dorwart  
Pamela Fox  
Ellen Funk  
Janet Giersch  
Mary Giersch  
Alice Hoffman  
Ernest M.G. Kuhinka  
Pamela McGlone  
Lower Merion Conservancy  
Edward Minshall  
Karen Nagel  
Anna O'Hora  
William Oliver  
Charley Paige  
James Rigby  
Linda Slack  
Margaret Waters  
Veronica Waters

## Collection Highlights

Recently we acquired a copy of a 1948 atlas and we have Andy Amsterdam of Franklin Maps to thank for this generous donation. Since there were no copies available for purchase, Andy scanned the 19 plates from his copy of this rare edition. He then printed each plate using color archival dyes on 34" x 24" linen canvas. The Society now has a complete set of all the years of these important atlases that document the development of our community.

Andy Amsterdam



# At Risk: Two Prices, a Roberts and a Gerhard

The Historical Society's mission is preservation of our rich and amazing history. Over the years, there have been success stories about the safekeeping of our historic buildings, but at the same time, we have experienced disappointments when there was a loss of one of our historic buildings. Here is a sample of four noteworthy buildings that deserve "watching and looking after."

### For Sale!

Clover Hill House (a.k.a. William Penn Inn),  
533 East Lancaster Avenue, Wynnewood.

The William Penn Inn was completed by Joseph Price in 1799 not far from Milestone #6 along the newly constructed Lancaster Pike. Patrons of the inn were mostly "wagoners" carrying goods west from Philadelphia to the frontier town of Lancaster, PA.



### In Need Of Repair!

The Hamper Shop of Lankenau Hospital (a.k.a. Rees Price House),  
714 Montgomery Avenue, Narberth.

Built in 1803-04 by Joseph Price for his first cousin, Rees Price. The Price family was one of the 17 founding families of the Merion Welsh Tract in 1682, and the house was lived in by many generations of the Price family, including Edward R. Price, founder of the town of Elm, now Narberth.



### In Danger of Collapse!

The Cynwyd Train Station,  
375 Conshohocken State Road, Bala Cynwyd.

Built in 1886 by the Pennsylvania Railroad for their Schuylkill Valley Division, this station is an example of a standard design depot constructed in both brick and frame. George Brooke Roberts (of Pencoyd) was President of the Pennsylvania Railroad and was responsible for the construction of this rail line that connected Philadelphia to Reading and Pottsville. See "Message From The Commissioner" for an update to this story.



### Its Future Is On Hold!

The Gerhard Building, Bryn Mawr Hospital,  
135 Bryn Mawr Avenue, Bryn Mawr.

This was the first home of Bryn Mawr Hospital, built in 1892 by the popular architectural firm of Furness, Evans and Company. Named for George S. Gerhard, an Ardmore physician who helped found the hospital, the building is the first Main Line hospital for the general public.



# Preserving Our Past: The Cynwyd Train Station

I'm delighted to announce a major step forward in our efforts to preserve the Cynwyd Train Station. The Lower Merion Historical Society is beginning discussions with SEPTA for a long-term lease of the Station, which, once concluded, will allow the Historical Society to begin work on stabilizing the Station with funds provided by Montgomery County and Lower Merion Township. The long-term objective is to return the Station to constructive use (it has been vacant of any tenant for almost two decades), including serving as a potential trailhead for one of the "Emerald Necklace" of trails which are to run throughout Lower Merion Township.

The Station has been in a state of decline for decades, and has now reached a state of dilapidation which threatens its survival. An examination of the Station by Pennoni Engineering in August, 2005 found a number of problems, the most significant being the deteriorative effect of water intrusion and termites. In order to reverse this situation, and put the Station in a stabilized condition, plans will require the waterproofing of the foundation, replacement of the joists and the entire first floor area. Thereafter, installation of a new dormer on the south side to admit more light to the second floor, and the restoration of fire-damaged portions of the second floor will follow. In anticipation of potential increased public use, as part of the Lower Merion Township and Montgomery County trails network, a new ADA-compliant bathroom will be installed.

It is expected that the cost of this work will be met with two matching grants, each for \$225,000, one coming from Montgomery County, and the other from Lower Merion Township. The driving force on the County level is the Chairman of the Montgomery County Commissioners, Tom Ellis. Mr. Ellis has been a vital ally in the preservation of the R-6 train service in his capacity as one of the



two Montgomery County representatives on the SEPTA Board. He has now taken on the role of shepherding the lease agreement through SEPTA, in addition to championing the County funding.

This is the second time that the Historical Society will be centrally involved in the renovation of a major historical building in Bala Cynwyd. The Historical Society played an identical role in the renovation of the Lower Merion Academy, an 1812 building which it leased from the Lower Merion School District and restored to serve as the Historical Society's headquarters. With regard to the Station, the Historical Society has already obtained the services of an architect and builder who has produced preliminary plans for the stabilization of the Station. Stabilization will arrest the decay of the Station, and allow subsequent tenant improvements to be constructed when a use and tenant are eventually identified. ♣

*Bruce D. Reed*

Bruce D. Reed, President

*Township of Lower Merion Board of Commissioners*

## Upcoming Events for Spring 2007

# Banquet and Annual Meeting at the 'New' Tavern Restaurant

(Members only) on Thursday, April 26th, 2007, 6:00 to 9:30pm

This will be an opportunity for our Membership to come together and share a special meal. In addition, we'll have the election of Officers and Directors, followed by a guest speaker.

Our speaker will be Christopher Leswing, Assistant Director of Building and

Planning Department for the Township of Lower Merion. Chris will inform us about the Township's Comprehensive Plan, and Historic Preservation initiatives. Also, Commissioner Bruce D. Reed will update us on the status of the Cynwyd Station Project.

The 'New' Tavern Restaurant is located

at 261 Montgomery Avenue in Bala Cynwyd. Our genial neighbor and host for this event will be Nick Zarvalas.

The menu and Reservation Form are inserted in this newsletter. We're looking forward to a wonderful evening together with your presence. ♣

## Election of Officers and Directors for 2007/2008

The Lower Merion Historical Society • Report from the Nominating Committee • Ted Goldsborough, Chairperson

### The Committee nominates the following slate of Officers for a two-year term:

President - Gerald A. Francis

Vice President - Ross L. Mitchell

Treasurer - John B. Hagner

Corresponding Secretary - Betty Cannon

Recording Secretary - Barbara McElroy

### The Committee nominates the following Directors for a three-year term to constitute the Class of 2010

Alison Graham

Leon Levine

S. Hamill Horne

### The Committee also nominates the following Director to fill the one-year term of the Class of 2009

Anna O'Hora

Under the Society's By-Laws, additional nominations shall be accepted from the floor during at the Annual Meeting (Article IV,3)

### Continuing Director: Class of 2009

Dennis Montagna

### Continuing Directors: Class of 2008

Andrew Amsterdam Bruce D. Reed

Denise H. Francis



# The Lower Merion Historical Society

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

LowerMerionHistory.org

## Mark Your Calendar

### Thursday, April 26, 2007

Banquet and Annual Meeting (Members only)

### Saturday, June 9, 2007

"Welsh Festival" at Harriton House

### September thru November, 2007

"Keeping Up With the Jones': The Welsh in America."

### Saturday, September 29, 2007

Harriton Plantation Fair

### Saturday, October 13 thru

### Sunday October 21, 2007

"William Penn's Welcome Week"

# 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

## Our Museum Gift Shop

When visiting the Lower Merion Academy, stop to see the items in our Museum Gift Shop.

<b>The First 300: The Amazing and Rich History of Lower Merion</b> (hardbound, 284 Pages, 800+ visuals)	\$44.95
<b>Lower Merion Historical Society Bronze Paperweight</b> (3" Diameter)	\$15.00
<b>Lower Merion Academy Wooden Collectible</b> (5" x 6")	\$20.00
<b>Lower Merion Academy Note Card</b> (Hand Printed)	\$ 2.00
<b>Lower Merion Academy Print</b> (8.5" x 11" Suitable for Framing)	\$ 5.00
<b>John Levering's Map of the Township of Lower Merion, 1851</b> (unframed 23" x 29" reproduction)	\$ 5.00

*Members automatically receive a 10% discount.*