

Worcester Erier



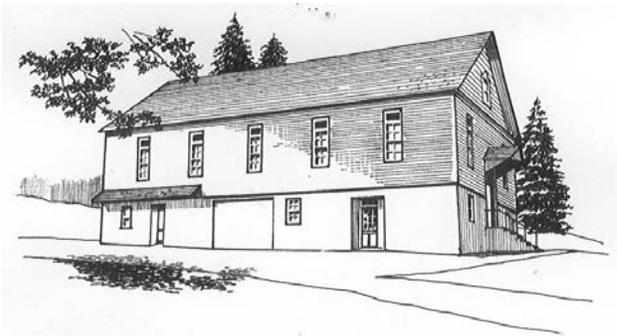
Worcester Historical Society Gears Up for Busy Year

Maybe you have driven by Farmers Union Hall recently and noticed the new coat of paint or the new sign out front, which was designed and constructed by local artist Bill Bourne. This summer, the township arranged to have the building painted and also

household items, clothing, and tools that local farming families used almost 100 years ago. Tours were led by members of the Historical Society, who were eager to learn more about the collection themselves and to share it with the children. Students learned about

50 to 100 years ago. Some of the Society's members can recall seeing those articles being used, in barns or farmhouses, when they were growing up in Worcester.

In the 1970s, in preparation for the Bicentennial celebration, the Society began actively researching and archiving the history of Worcester. The Society will spend the winter performing an assessment of its collection and working on updating its displays and interpretation of the pieces. The goal is to present a vivid picture of various aspects of life in Worcester in the late 1800s and early 1900s. Whether our families have roots in Worcester or elsewhere, a glimpse into the recent past makes a fascinating comparison with our daily life and affords us a chance to imagine, however briefly, what life might have been like in our ancestor's time.



provided a public water hookup. The Worcester Historical Society has also been busy this year, expanding its programs and working with its collection to increase its visibility and involvement in the township.

Earlier this year, at the request of the township Board of Supervisors, the Society formed a task force, chaired by Oliver Smith, to formulate a plan for using the Hall for the benefit of all township residents. Their final report outlined a program that included hosting a lecture series on the early Pennsylvania German culture, sponsored by the nearby Peter Wentz Farmstead. In the spring, Worcester Elementary classes visited the Hall to see the collection of

cutting and storing ice for the summer, admired a horse-drawn sleigh, and turned the handle on a machine to shell corn for animal feed.

This fall, the Society held an Open House to showcase its collection for the community. Included were tours of the museum and demonstrations of vintage pieces of household and farm equipment, such as a clothes wringer, a cider press, and a corn sheller.

Even though our region boasts many historical museums, the Historical Society's collection is unique because every item is known to have been used in Worcester. Most of the items date from the mid-1800s through the mid-1900s, providing a snapshot of life in Worcester

The Society is fortunate to have the use of the Hall as a museum to house its collection. The Hall was built in 1895 by members of the Farmers Union, an independent organization of farmers in the Worcester area which began in 1890. Membership in the Farmers Union quickly grew to around 600 farmers, who used the building for their weekly meetings as well as for community social events. The Hall is a fine local example of late Victorian architecture and has served as a meeting space for the township for generations. With its white clapboards rising above a stone foundation, the building is a simple design accented with a few elegant architectural details, such as the palladian window in the front gable, and transoms above the doors and windows at the front entrance.

When the Farmers Union outgrew the building in the early 1900s, it served as Worcester's high school. In the 1960s, the Worcester Post Office occupied the lower level. The postmaster's window still stands in the entrance to that part of the building, which now serves as the Historical Society's library.



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Radio City Christmas Spectacular - December 6, 2004

Orchestra Seats and Luxury Coach Transportation to New York City

Join us for America's most beloved holiday theatrical, The Radio City Christmas Spectacular, starring the world-famous Rockettes. Worcester Township is offering orchestra seating and luxury coach transportation to the December 6, 2004 11am performance.

The coach will depart the Worcester Township Building at 7:30am on Monday, December 6. We have seats reserved in the orchestra section. Free-time will be available after the show for lunch and shopping. We will depart New York City at 4pm.

Cost - \$65 per person (orchestra seat and bus transportation).



Space is LIMITED. Please contact the Township Building at 610-584-1410 to sign up today.

Discounted ski lift tickets available this winter

Worcester Township will once again offer discounted winter ski lift tickets for a variety of ski resorts in the area, including, but not limited to Camelback, Big Boulder/Jack Frost Mountain, Bear



Creek and Elk Mountain. Tickets will be available in late November/early December and can be purchased at the Township Building. A full menu of available resorts and prices will be available on our web site later this fall.

Stay on top of Township News & Events

Sign up today to receive the Worcester Township e-newsletter. There is no better way to stay informed of township events, happenings and news. Send an email to jlanzillo@worcestertwp.com requesting to have your name added to the mailing list.

Peter Wentz Farmstead Fall/Winter Events

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Saturday October 16—10am-3pm

A hands-on colonial crafts fair with craft demonstration, house tours and open-hearth cooking.

Annual Meeting & Covered Dish Dinner

Wednesday October 20—6pm

Butchering in the 18th & 19th Centuries

Thursday October 28—7pm

Colonial Pretzel Making

Saturday October 30—10am-3pm

Mincemeat for the Season

Saturday November 20—10am-3pm

Open hearth cooking demonstration

Candle Light Tour

Saturday December 3—3pm-9pm

Encounter the Farmstead by the soft glow of candlelight and learn how the 19th century inhabitants of the Farmstead celebrated the winter holiday season.

For further details on all events, please call 610-584-5104

Another Worcester Farm Protected

Earlier this year, another Worcester farm received permanent protection under the state farmland preservation program. The state, county and township worked together to purchase the development rights to 50 acres of the Scarlett horse farm on Shearer Road. Under this program, the farm owners continue to own the property and operate it as a farm, but the land can never be sold for development.

This is the third farm in Worcester to be protected under the state program. Several more Worcester farms are currently applicants to the program, which now has a waiting list. The program has now preserved 133,700 acres of farmland statewide. Montgomery County has almost 40,000 acres of farmland with 4,080 permanently preserved under the program.

The farmland preservation program helps slow the conversion of productive farmland to other uses, enabling farmers to be paid for the development value of their land while providing them with working capital and allowing them to continue farming. Farmland preservation also contributes by providing beautiful vistas, creating jobs, providing sources of fresh, local produce and holding down property taxes. Farmland preservation enables Worcester to preserve its rural heritage by maintaining farming as a viable way of life in our township.

Farm owners in Worcester interested in learning more about the program are invited to contact Susan Caughlan at 610-584-5619.

Road Reconstruction

As a part of Worcester's ongoing road maintenance program, nine roads have been selected for major rebuilding this year. Due to the intensity of use our roads see each year, those with poor foundations commonly suffer the most damage. The first five roads on the list are in the Fairview Village area where sewer and water service has recently been installed.

The roads will be cold-mill recycled, a process by which the road surface is

removed by heavy machinery, mixed with asphalt and additional gravel, and then laid back down and later topped with another layer of pavement. The roads will receive storm water management improvements, undergo incremental widening, and have any necessary culvert repair done. The road improvements will be completed by early fall and additional road repairs will be done as needed.

1. Adair Drive (East & West)
2. Methacton Avenue
3. Plumlyn Avenue
4. Ethel Avenue & Artmar Road
5. Markley Avenue
6. Defford Road (Clyston Road to Valley Forge Road)
7. Old Orchard Road
8. Landis Road (Skipack Pike to Defford Road)
9. Shearer Road

Worcester Township Honors Open Space Hero Peter Schlotterer

This summer, Worcester Township honored long-time resident Peter Schlotterer for his contributions to open space preservation in the township. On Wednesday evening, July 21, 2004, Chairman Frank Davey presented Peter with an engraved plaque in recognition of his dedication to open space preservation.

Peter served on the township Planning Commission from 1990-1998. Seeing farm after farm fall to development, he realized the importance of preserving Worcester's rural character. In 1996, Peter began working with the Montgomery County Lands Trust to preserve the 32.5-acre Gerstemeier farm, adja-

cent to Peter's own property as well as Merrymead Farm. This ambitious project, which was not completed until 2001, would not have succeeded without Peter's dedication and generous financial support.

In 2004, Peter donated a conservation easement on his own 17 acres, which he has been restoring to its native forest state. He has planted hundreds of native oak, hickory and cherry seedlings in order to create a diverse natural habitat that will support native wildlife. This parcel is permanently protected by a conservation easement that prohibits development and insures that it will remain as open space.

PA Uniform Construction Code becomes law

The Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code (UCC) was passed in July, 2004. The UCC was adopted as a means to ensure that all local governments adhere to the same statewide building standards. Any builder, contractor or developer working in Worcester Township must adhere to the UCC standards. The following is a sample of its impact on Worcester residences:

1. A building permit will not be required for structures under 1,000 square feet accessory to a single-family detached home. This includes sheds, greenhouses, carports and detached garages. A permit still needs to be submitted to meet zoning requirements.
2. A building permit is no longer required for a deck as long as the structure is no more than 30 inches above grade at its highest point. A deck permit still needs to be submitted for zoning requirements and set back regulations.

3. A permit is now required when more than 25 percent of a roof is replaced within one year. This is a new requirement in Worcester Township.
4. The code requires that all inhabitable space have a means of exit. If a basement is unfinished or used for storage only then small windows are acceptable. If the area is designed or used as living space, then there must be an emergency exit. This can be a door or a new egress window. Egress windows shall have a minimum sill height of 44 inches, a minimum width of 20 inches and a minimum height of 24 inches. The egress window opening shall not be less than 5.7 square feet when fully open. If the finished area contains a sleeping room, the means of egress must be located therein.

For complete details, please visit the state's web site at www.dli.state.pa.us/codes.

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**TOWNSHIP MONTHLY
MEETING TIMES**

Board of Supervisors

3rd Wednesday at 7:30pm

BOS Work Sessions

November 1 at 8:00am
December 6 at 8:00am

Planning Commission

Every 1st and 4th Thursday at 7:30pm

Zoning Hearing Board

4th Tuesday at 6:30pm

Joint Meeting of BOS/PC

9:30am
December 6

*All Public Meetings are held in the
Worcester Township Community Hall*

Open Space Plan Seeks Public Input

The Open Space committee would like to invite all township residents to a public meeting to hear how the township plans to protect open space and ask for residents' help with this project. On Tuesday, November 9, from 7-9pm at Worcester Township Community Hall in Fairview Village, residents will be asked to help identify places that are

important to preserve, including farms, historic structures, old mill foundations, woods, stream valleys, or any other area important to the rural character of Worcester Township. Residents interested in the township Open Space plan are invited to attend committee meetings, the schedule for which is posted on the township website.

Voting Information

With the upcoming general election on November 2, please be aware of some important dates and information. The last day for absentee ballot applications is October 26. The last day for completed absentee ballots is October 29 at 5:00pm.

If you have questions about where to vote or whether or not you are registered to vote, please call the county voter registration office at (610) 278-3280.

Worcester Township Polling Places

Worcester East—1

Bethel Hill United Methodist Church
(2000 Bethel Road)

Worcester East—2

Variety Club Camp (Valley Forge &
Potshop Roads)

Worcester East—3

Central Schwenkfelder Church
(Valley Forge Road)

Worcester—West

Worcester Township Community Hall
(Route 363, Fairview Village)