

# Wentz Post

A Periodic Publication Of The Peter Wentz Farmstead Society In Conjunction With The Farmstead Staff Featuring News, Views And Activities...

## New Equipment at the Farmstead *By John Schilling*

Haymaking is a little bit easier these days at the Farmstead thanks to the addition of two new very much needed pieces of farm equipment. A John Deere 338 hay baler and a John Deere 525 haybine mower have put smiles on the faces of our farmers, Jim and Jay and have made their jobs less troublesome. The old equipment would constantly break down and cause undue production delays. These new implements work smoothly and efficiently.

We also appreciate the labors of Rich Poole and Robin Ryan for helping Jim and Jay with the baling this season, thank you for your hard work. The barn is full of hay and the animals are happy, life is calm at the Farmstead.



*John Deere 525 haybine mower*



*John Deere 338 hay baler*

## President's Report *by Sally Graybill*

The Society's fall meeting will be held October 18<sup>th</sup> in the Central Schwenkfelder Church. A covered dish dinner, beginning at 6 pm, will precede the business meeting and guest speaker, William Bourne. A Power Point presentation of *Mills on the Zacharias* will be presented by Bill, a local artist and Peter Wentz Farmstead Society member. This should be of particular interest since the Zacharias creek runs through the Farmstead property.

Items to be addressed in the business meeting will include nomination and election of several officers and Board members, revision of the Society By-laws and an amendment to the Articles of Incorporation. Formal notice of the fall meeting will be mailed in early September.

A special thank you is in order for the commitment and dedication of the Society Board of Directors. They provide expertise and guidance in many areas that are not always obvious, spending countless hours in meetings and working behind the scenes. Sherwood Yergey continues to provide expert legal counsel for the Society while Jim Karcher keeps the computer in tune for us. Thank you so much!

Get well wishes are in order for the Peter Wentz Society Family. Bob Berardelli, Jerry McAndrew, Dick Anderl, and Janice Muller and to all the others under the weather, we wish you a speedy recovery.

## Wentz Post

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### Peter Wentz Farmstead Hours of Operation

Tuesday - Saturday 10:00 AM-4:00 PM  
Sunday 1:00-4:00 PM  
Last Tour 3:30 PM

Closed Mondays and holidays.

Reservations required for group tours.

Admission: FREE!

The Farmstead is located on Shearer Road  
in Worcester, PA, near the intersection of  
Routes 73 and 363 in Montgomery County.

### Welcome New Members:

by Donna Armstrong

John Alessi Family  
Charles Carleton Family  
Jonathon Carson Family  
Augustus Cipollini Family  
Edward Crenshaw Family  
Joseph Ferraro Family  
Fred Fitzgerald Family  
Houston Hayward Family  
Robert Kimber Family  
Murray Monastero  
Carlos Moreno Family  
Jerry Nagle Family  
Louis Primavera Family  
Robert Raquet Family  
Beverly Reichenbach  
Hank Russell Family  
Alfred Schempp Family  
Louis Smith Family  
Tom Strohle Family  
Daniel Wagner Family

## LETTER FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

By Dianne Cram

The sweet scent of fresh mown hay hangs in the warm summer air. And the barn is once again bursting with hay bales as another season of summer activities at the Farmstead rolls along.

We enjoyed a delightful celebration of the Farmstead's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Old friends, volunteers, staff of present and past gathered to recount the efforts of the past and to look forward to the future. All the staff had to do that day was provide the space for all to come together and it took off from there. Everyone had special memories to share, a chance to reacquaint and remember. What a special marker in the Farmstead's history.

Colonial Camp started off with a "splash" and ended with a rainbow. While the staff was working feverously to adjust to weather conditions and deal with floods, the children all seemed to be totally unaffected and enjoying it all. The weather really doesn't matter (we are getting good at managing rain events) what matters is that those children went home with smiles and memories of a great time. And that will make them want to return. That's what it is all about.

Thank you to all our volunteers for never failing to be there for us, during all seasons, we sure appreciate you.

## A SPRING DAY IN THE BRANDYWINE RIVER VALLEY

By Frank Luther

Although the weather prediction for Tuesday, May 9 was foreboding, once again the forecasters were wrong. Twenty-eight Society members and guests were welcomed to the Brandywine River Museum by the sounds of the birds and the water, the colors of the wildflower, and the sunny sky overhead. All of these natural offerings could be appreciated as we waited for the museum to open and to welcome us. Being a part of a group proved advantageous. The Museum provided us with four docents and the one-hour guided tour in groups of seven allowed a personal interaction between guide and guests. Following the tour, we had time to browse, sip a drink, or gaze out onto the river and the wooded setting.

Lunch was enjoyed at the Terrace Restaurant at Longwood Gardens. Some members of the group preferred full service dining, others lunch in the cafeteria, and still, others, dining al fresco on the patio since it was such a gorgeous spring day. What a way to chase away the winter blahs! At 2:00, four guides met us outside the Terrace Restaurant. Again, the small group tours of the behind-the-scene ninety-minute tours provided a real insight into what makes Longwood the outstanding site that it is. With time available after the tours, we were able to stroll on our own or to relax in some attractive area. The benches in the annual garden proved to be a wonderful respite!

Dinner was enjoyed in the Greathouse of the Loch Nairn Country Club in Avondale. The ride from Longwood to the country club was an enjoyable experience as we drove through the rolling hills of Chester County. In the Greathouse, the meal and the surrounding outside scene provided a pleasurable repast. What a breathtaking way to top off a fantastic day!

## Hooray for the Past 30 Years! *By Diane Cram*

The Farmstead passed another milestone in its history on June 3<sup>rd</sup> with the celebration of 30 years since the doors of Peter Wentz's house were officially open to the public on June 5<sup>th</sup>, 1976. And what a grand celebration it was with so many people returning - volunteers, staff and restoration specialists - all who contributed so much to the Farmstead in the last thirty years.

The day started out as usual for so many of our events with a light rain falling that caused the staff to quickly rearrange the seating from outdoors into the shelter of the barn. The program began with a welcome by the Administrator followed by a lovely invocation delivered by David Willauer, a long time volunteer at the Farmstead and principal of Royersford Elementary School and pastor at Parker Ford Church of the Brethren. David gave thanks "...for the initiative and foresight you gave individuals to preserve this place for more than 30 years." And quoted, very fittingly, from the psalmist: "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; yea, I have a goodly heritage."

In 1976 Montgomery County Commissioner Russell Parkhouse participated in the dedication of the Farmstead. This year we were honored to have Chairman of Commissioners Thomas Jay Ellis present an opening address as guest speaker and extend to all his support of our efforts.

Everyone was delighted to see Elizabeth Gamon, former Administrator, back again to the Farmstead. Elizabeth, along with her husband Albert, worked from the very beginning to research the property and served on the Montgomery County Historical Advisory Board that led the County towards acquiring the Farmstead. Elizabeth coordinated efforts during the restoration, organized and trained volunteers and worked to acquire the furnishings and decorative arts for the site. She established the Colonial Camp for children and the Apprentice Program, both which are still going strong. All that was accomplished before she became Administrator in 1988, a post she held until her retirement in 2000. Following her address, the audience responded with a well deserved standing ovation.

There were many volunteers present who had also taken part in the 1976 dedication and one of those was Veronica "Ronnie" Backenstoe. From the very beginning Ronnie was on board as a volunteer interpreter and crafts-person demonstrating her art of beautiful fraktur drawings and helped organize the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society. Ronnie gave the audience a wonderful recounting of the "early days" and talk about "...the great camaraderie of this group ...all who worked together towards a common goal - the success of the Peter Wentz Farmstead."

During the 1970s the National Heritage Corporation, a firm run by John Milner, Architect was engaged to survey the site, conduct archaeological investigations, make recommendations for restoration and to oversee the project. John Milner's reputation as an architect in historic restoration is widely known in this region and beyond and we were honored to have him return again to be a part of the program.

The Farmstead was fortunate during the early years to have the services of another renowned specialist in the field of historic restoration - Frank Welsh of Welsh Color and Conservation, Inc. As rather bizarre paint colors and wall decoration were uncovered during the restoration, Frank was brought in to analyze colors and patterns and then to painstakingly restore the paint in each room. Frank gave us a lively account of his efforts to accurately reproduce the paint throughout the house. He said "...people have often asked me what has been my most favorite and memorable project. I always answer that it was the Peter Wentz house."

The program was rounded off with a short address from Sally Graybill, President of Peter Wentz Farmstead Society, and Jay Ryan, Assistant Farm Manager read the dedication of memorial trees planted this year. The First Continental Regiment of Foot reenacted a presentation of arms to draw to a close what was a very memorable program of the re-dedication of the Farmstead. Old friends gathered for refreshments and reaffirmation of the good times the Farmstead has enjoyed in the past 30 years.

## Peter Wentz Garden *by Janet Riemer*

This summer has been a challenging time to work in the garden. We got the seeds planted, then it was very dry. As the plants were coming up we had more rain than was needed. We work in the evening but the heat and humidity made it very uncomfortable. Now it seems the one weed, purslane, is taking over. In spite of all this we have eight faithful workers. Please stop in to see the garden and the rewards of our hard work.

# PETER WENTZ FARMSTEAD SOCIETY TRIP PLANNING COMMITTEE

*By Frank Luther*

For almost thirty years, the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society has been sponsoring one-day, three-day and five-day trips. Most were great successes and provided a profit which supported the Farmstead. The philosophy of the Trip Planning Committee has been to focus on trips that are educational in nature and allow participants a chance to socialize and enjoy some whimsical sites as well, providing for a variety of interests.

The Committee has been meeting regularly to plan future trips. Some trips have been more popular than others and we have had to cancel some also. One we cancelled is the annual dinner/theater trip. Inflation has put a higher price tag on trips that may be out of reach for some. The cost of the meal and transportation for a one night event became prohibitive. These prices will be facing us in the future and we must place a minimum on the number of participants to break even on cost. On the plus side, the rate for a group is usually more cost efficient considering the cost of fuel, meals, admissions and accommodations. Another advantage is the camaraderie among participants. The camaraderie that I experienced on my first trip is what has brought me back time and again.

Unfortunately, the September trip to Cooperstown and New Paltz will not be a go. Even with a smaller coach we cannot support the trip with only fourteen participants. Margaret Schweitzer, a member of the Committee spent many hours working with personnel in New York to try to make this trip worthwhile

The Committee works hard searching for sites to visit. Thanks to veteran members who are knowledgeable about past trips, we are able to schedule new sites that have not been recently visited. We realize now that one-day trips prove to be more popular than the longer ones. Is this an indication for us to do more one-day trips? We are discussing a one-day trip to Bethlehem, PA in late November or early December. In the spring we hope to sponsor a commemorative trip to mark the 30th anniversary of the PWFS. We would like to return to Cliveden, Stenton and Trexler-Morris House in Germantown. We also discussed a visit to Eastern State Penitentiary and Bartram Gardens in Philadelphia next July 14th for the celebration of Bastille Day. For September 2007 we have arranged a five-day trip to Wilmington, Vermont with a stay at the Horizon Inn. Members of the Upper Merion Senior Center have nothing but rave reviews of their stay there. We are also considering the State of Delaware as well as Bucks County region and also a recommendation to visit Red Mill Museum in Clinton, New Jersey. We will attempt to combine historical interest with something whimsical, hopefully appealing to everyone's interests.

Where do we go from here? The Committee is always open to suggestions. A year ago we conducted a survey, however, we received very few responses and the general feeling was to continue to let the Committee do the planning. We don't mind, but when we contact over a dozen establishments it becomes frustrating when a trip is not a success. Let's not allow the tradition of PWFS trips to become history. Each trip provides a true learning experience and a great opportunity to socialize with others.

We want to hear from you! I can be contacted by mail at 612 General Scott Road, King of Prussia, PA 19406, by phone at 610-265-4309 or at either e-mail address: [fxluther@msn.com](mailto:fxluther@msn.com) or [fxluther@verizon.net](mailto:fxluther@verizon.net).

## PWFS Scholarship Award

Stephanie Carstens was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship during the June 3<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary celebration. Stephanie participated three years in Colonial Camp and continued serving as an apprentice at the Farmstead throughout her high school years. She will attend West Chester University and plans to study psychology. Best wishes to Stephanie as she continues her studies.

## Colonial Camp 2006 By Thea Berthoff

Rain nor mud nor a lack of a proper cook could faze our campers this year at Colonial Camp 2006. The activities ranged from the famous Tuckers' Tales Puppeteers leading shadow puppets to basket making to a colonial dancing workshop. For a week long day camp it has always been remarkable for its range of engaging activities, but this year stands apart due to of the plethora of unexpected surprises.

This year's camp was certainly an experience not to be missed. Instead of our much loved cook, Karen Dougherty, who was unable to attend, we had some of the counselors fill in for the production of griddle scones, squash cakes, and pot pie. Also new this year was the miserable weather, though all donned rain gear and continued coming despite the mud. Campers each did tin punching, made a set of three colonial dollars, a redware bowl and enjoyed knitting, paper making, and many other interesting activities. The children had great fun guessing the identity of "mystery objects" for which a correct answer meant another colonial dollar to be spent at the vendue on Friday, led by auctioneer Phil Wesel. Luckily the sun came out just in time for our banquet on the final day of camp.

Thanks to the wonderful organizational work of our own Kim Praria, the patience of our craftspeople, and the help of our counselors Colonial Camp 2006 was a great success. We are all looking forward to next year!

*Thea Berthoff (center front) is a 6-year veteran of the Apprentice program and joined after attending one year of camp the summer before sixth grade. She has assisted staff with special collections projects and provides tours to visitors and demonstrates various crafts during special events.*



## FINDING OUT ABOUT THE PAST By Dianne Cram

I received a call a few days before the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration from a gentleman who introduced himself as Dennis Boyles, the stone mason who had worked on the Peter Wentz house during the restoration. He said he saw an announcement in the local paper about our planned celebration and wanted to know if he would be welcome to come out. Well, he sure was welcome! Through the years details of the restoration have come down to us in a somewhat vague manner. And although we had heard of Mr. Boyles we had no contact with him previous to this call. As it turns out Mr. Boyles did indeed come to the anniversary program and began to give us great bits of information that had not been previously known. We invited him to return again so we could take careful notes of all he had to tell us. And so he did come out and spent the better part of a day with Morgan and me going through the house inside and out, top to bottom.

Mr. Boyles knew the house even before it was purchased by Montgomery County. He is the fourth generation of stone masons and worked with his father William Boyles. He and his father did all the re-pointing of the stone, not once, but twice. They had been hired by Albert Bobb to re-point the stone work, although Mr. Bobb was informed that his requested method was not accurate for the age of the house, Mr. Bobb wanted to "dress it up". Ironically, Dennis was hired during the restoration and then re-pointed again using historically accurate methods and color.

Dennis is the one who reconstructed the bake oven and the chimneys. He also laid the brick floor in the breezeway and summer kitchen. The enchanting story he told was how the reproduced bricks slid into the indentations in the plaster wall left behind when the original brick was removed (sometime in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century). This left Dennis with no doubt about just how the floor had been originally placed. He also relayed to us that Mr. Bobb told him that the house blessing stone once was in place on the rear wall of the house to the left of the hall door, very likely its first location.

Mr. Boyles has given us a copy of his extensive notes that shed so much light on the restoration, what was found, what was changed, what was reconstructed. We will be very happy to have Dennis back again and again, he is truly part of the history of the Farmstead. We will happily share his notes with any who are interested.

**Peter Wentz Farmstead Society Board  
Officers Trustees**

President	Sally Graybill	Carol V. Allen
Vice President	Anne Condon	Richard Clauser
Treasurer	Ruth Guimond	J. William Ditter III
Recording Sec.	Carol Berardelli	Christine L'Ecuyer
Corresp. Sec.	Darlene Bentley	Frank Luther
Financial Sec.	Jerry McAndrew	Janice Muller

**PWFS Committees**

Executive Committee:	Anne Condon, Ruth Guimond, Christine L'Ecuyer
Bylaws.....	.....Anne Condon
Decorative Arts/Acquisitions.....	.....Elizabeth Gamon
Development.....	.....Janice Muller
Finance.....	.....Jerry McAndrew
Garden.....	.....Janet Riemer
Membership.....	.....Donna Armstrong
Museum Shop.....	.....Phyllis Yergey .....Charlotte Herman
New Structures.....	.....Dick Clauser
Nominating.....	.....Christine L'Ecuyer
Publicity.....	.....Christine L'Ecuyer
Scholarship.....	.....Carol Berardelli
Trip Planning.....	.....Frank Luther
Wentz Post, IT.....	.....Dick Anderl

**Mission Statement**

The mission of the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society is to preserve and interpret the 18th century Pennsylvania German farmstead established by the Wentz and Schultz families, which is now on the National Register of Historic Places. The Society's goal is to stimulate public interest and support the site's heritage through educational programs and public events focusing on the architecture, crafts, customs, and furnishings of the period.

Kimberly wrote this article as the abstract requirement for the fulfillment of her masters' degree in History-Museum studies from the Cooperstown Graduate Program in 2003.

*Dress,  
c.1840-1860*



## VISIONS OF OTHERS: CHANGES IN SHAKER DOCTRINE AS VIEWED THROUGH THE ACCEPTANCE OR DENIAL OF POPULAR WORLDLY FASHION

*By Kimberly Praria*

Scholars have researched various aspects of Shaker material culture over the last few decades, focusing mainly on furniture created in the popular Shaker style. Shaker costume, more specifically women's costume, has not received the attention of many scholars, yet it remains a vital part of the Shaker communal way of life. The continued study of this order's costume offers a chance to further understand its doctrine in relation to more worldly matters, in particular the sometimes open acceptance of various components of women's worldly fashion from approximately 1840-1900. The research provided will prove that interaction with the "world's people" not only affected the theology of the sect but also the clothing of its female members. This thesis will place Shaker dresses in a general chronological order as determined by primary source material and show how the style of Shaker women's clothing changed over time.

Such characteristics as the placement of the waistline, the number of plaits, and the cut of the sleeve provide visual evidence of the transformation of Shaker women's dresses from 1800 to 1900. Dresses dated to approximately 1800 to 1840 show similarities in general construction technique and style, including a waist located just under the bust-line, tight sleeves that extended the full length of the arm, and minimal plaiting around the waist. During the "Era of Manifestations," in the 1830s and 1840s, many members received "gifts," or visions, that mentioned specifics about the dress of Believers, male and female, and which resulted in stricter dress codes. From 1840 to 1860, however, Shaker women's dresses continued to change slightly as evidenced by the slightly lower waistline and some increase in the number of plaits at the waist.

Many believe that an increased association and dependence on the world's people during the second half of the nineteenth century caused a greater outside influence on Shaker material culture, including women's clothing. The dresses studied that dated to 1860 to 1900 have similar characteristics and show the slow, but continued transition of earlier styles. Such evidence includes waistlines that began to drop to the natural waist and a greater emphasis on the female waist with an increased number of plaits. Also, some Shaker women wore the popular shirt-waist and skirt ensemble that gained popularity among middle and lower class American women during the 1890s. By 1900, Shaker women's clothing, which had once distinguished Shaker sisters from their worldly neighbors, bore a striking resemblance to contemporary fashion.

**Calendar of Events**  
SUMMER-WINTER

EXHIBIT

***“You Don’t Know Jack: Slavery & Servitude in 18<sup>th</sup> Century Pennsylvania”***

Runaway advertisements and other records provide information about slaves and servants owned by the Wentzes and other Worcester families.

**Archaeology - Ongoing Saturdays, May through October**

Come and observe the volunteers of the Millbrook Society as they dig into the past at the Farmstead.  
September 2 & 30, October 14

**Pretzel Making in the Colonies**

Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup> from 10am-3pm

Visit the Summer Kitchen to learn about and then try to make your own historic version of a pretzel.

**Laerenswaert**

Saturday, October 14<sup>th</sup> from 10am-3:30pm

A hands-on colonial crafts fair with demonstrations that are ‘worth learning.’ Also includes house tours by costumed interpreters, military camp life, and open-hearth cooking.

**Peter Wentz Farmstead Society Annual Fall Meeting**

Wednesday, October 18<sup>th</sup> at 7pm

William Bourne, local artist and historian will present a program on “Mills on the Zacharias”.  
Program held at the Central Schwenkfelder Church (Rt.363/Valley Forge Road).

**Mincemeat for the Season**

Saturday, October 28<sup>th</sup> from 10am-3pm

Visit the Summer Kitchen to learn about this period dish that allowed for the use of meat throughout the winter season.

**Mills of Colonial America**

**Guest Speaker: Dabbs Woodfin**

Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup> at 7pm

Learn about the operation and prevalence of mills in southeastern PA during his program by Dabbs Woodfin, director of the Newlin Grist Mill (Delaware County, PA).

Program held at the Farmer’s Union Hall of the Worcester Township Historical Society  
(Rt.363/Valley Forge Rd.).

**Candle Light Tour**

Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> from 2-8pm

Visit the Farmstead by the soft-glow of candle light to experience. A traditional PA German holiday celebration, including a visit from Belsnickel, St. Nicholas in furs.

Candles lit at dusk; last tour begins at 7:30.

# Membership in the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society

Our Society continues to grow, and if you are not already a member, please join us. There are two meetings a year which feature speakers and/or slides and movies on subjects of historical interest. Your membership fee entitles you to discounts on our day trips and overnight excursions to historical sites, discounts on selected museum shop purchases, and a subscription to our newsletter. Join us in the worthwhile project of preserving the 18th century way of life at the Farmstead. The PWFS is registered as a 501(c)(3), not for profit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

**Please Print:**

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

(Company, if applicable)

Address \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

(Street)

(Town and State)

(Zip)

Check if:  Wentz descendant  Schultz descendant

Check one:  New member  Please renew my membership

Check one:

- Student ..... \$10.00
- Individual ..... \$20.00
- Senior Family (both over 65) . \$25.00
- Family Membership ..... \$30.00
- Life Member..... \$500.00
- Business Sponsorship.....Contact us for details

Additional donation: ..... \_\_\_\_\_

Total amount enclosed:..... \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact me concerning volunteer activities

Mail to:

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WENTZ POST

Peter Wentz Farmstead Society

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