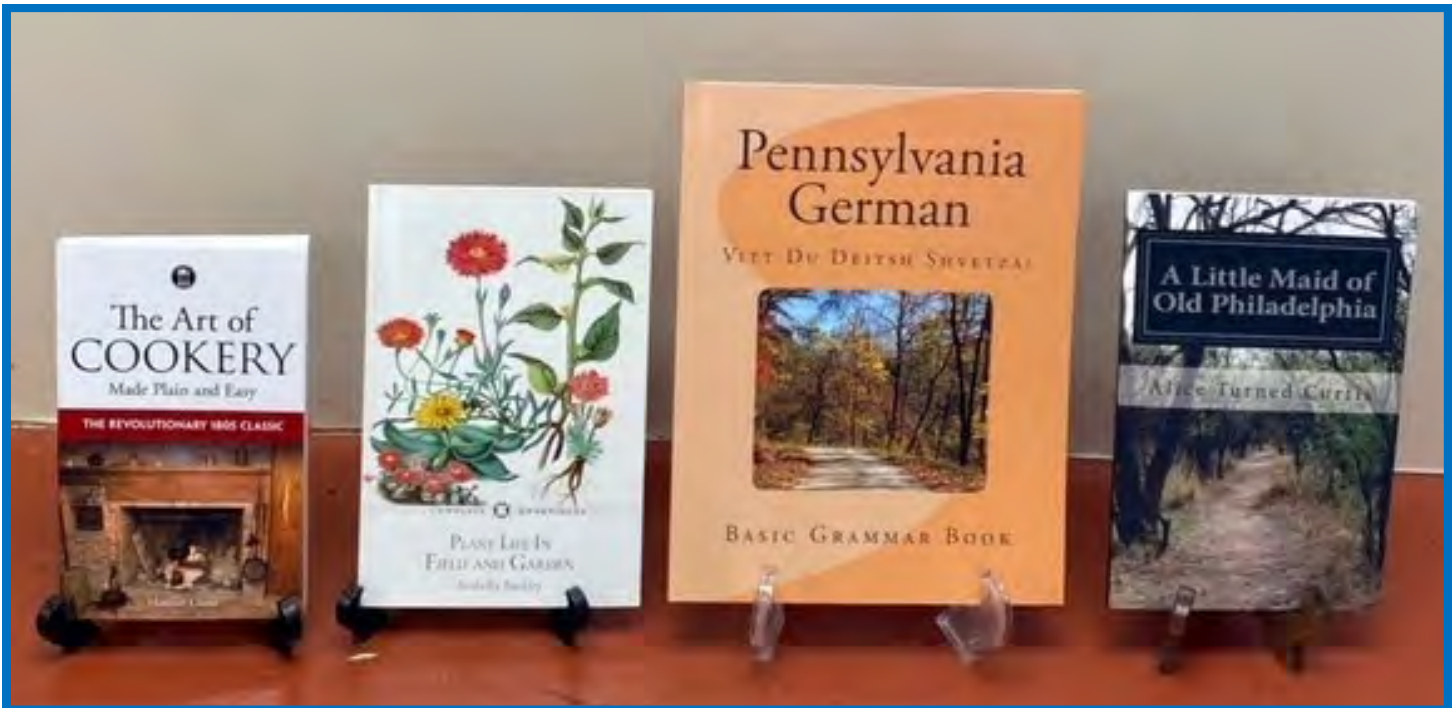


Wentz Post

A Publication of the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society

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Winter/Spring 2024



WANT TO TURN OVER A NEW LEAF?

MUSEUM SHOP

by Amy Dinkel

Books delight, teach, and entertain us. They have the power to take us into the past and across cultures and continents. Because PWF is a site of significant historical importance in the birth of the US, we at the PWF Museum Shop offer books that inform on 18th-century life, dress, art, customs, and even language.

New for 2024, we have *Pennsylvania German: Vitt Du Deitsh Shvetza?*, which is a workbook that makes it easy to learn basic Pennsylvania Dutch. Also new to our shop, *THE SEASONS OF AMERICA PAST*, by Eric Sloan, offers the reader an enjoyable trip through a year of life in early America, touching on maple sugaring, spring plowing, fall harvest, and many other points in the year.

OUR VANISHING LANDSCAPE, also by Eric Sloan, charmingly explores water wheels, plank roads, stone fences, and many other aspects of the colonial American landscape that are now largely just stories passed down through

We're excited by the addition of the children's book series by Arabella Bradley on nature, complete with beautiful illustrations. These include *PLANT LIFE IN THE FIELD* and *LIFE IN FIELD AND GARDEN*, *BIRDS OF THE AIR*, *INSECT LIFE*, *WILD LIFE IN THE WOODS AND FIELDS*, *BY POND AND RIVER*, and *TREES AND SHRUBS*.

Another favorite children's book series is by Alice Turned Curtis: the Little Maid series. The book that is local to our area is entitled *THE LITTLE MAID OF OLD PHILADELPHIA*. It tells of two young girls who lived in Philadelphia during the British occupation of the city.

Because we often have colonial cooking demonstrations at our PWF events, we have included some colonial cook-

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.

PETER WENTZ FARMSTEAD SOCIETY

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Finance-Open
Garden-Lori Curtis
IT-Andrew Rothenberger
Membership-Amy Dinkel
Museum Shop-Carla Beckwith-Chagaris, Amy Dinkel,
Joy Dolan
New Structures-All Members
Nominating-Kathy Yost
Scholarships-Carol Allen, Amy Dolan, Terri Gentile,
Kathy Yost
WENTZ POST-Donna Armstrong

WENTZ POST

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PETER WENTZ FARMSTEAD IS OPEN.

The Farmstead is open to the public Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM; Sunday hours are from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Tours are given each hour, beginning at 10:00 AM, and the last tour begins at 3:00 PM.

Reservations are requested for groups larger than six people.

To make a reservation, or for additional information, please call the Farmstead office at 610 584-5104.

GREETINGS TO ALL SOCIETY MEMBERS

by Carrol Allen, Society President

As the new President of The Peter Wentz Farmstead Society I am very pleased to work with our many dedicated volunteers as well as a committed staff lead by Site Director, Meg Bleecker Blades. The teams are looking forward to a wonderful 2024 at The Farmstead!

I shall begin with some very sad news. The Society lost two dear Board Members last year. Long time member and Past President, Sally Graybill passed away in August, 2023. Sally served as President for many years and continued to support the Society in recent times. Sally instituted the Colonial Camp to instill the history of the Farmstead while teaching colonial crafts for local children. Volunteers worked with the children for a week each summer. Many of the camp graduates went on to become Peter Wentz student volunteers working with The Farmstead Educator. Several received the coveted Wentz Scholarship for students who completed a required number of volunteer hours. These students went on to the college of their choice with financial assistance from the PWFS ranging from \$500.00 in early years to \$1000.00 in recent years. Sally dearly loved her tenure as President and also as the Camp Director. We shall miss her guiding spirit.

We also lost long time member, Wayne "Duffy" Grove. Duffy was an eighth generation Wentz descendant. Duffy and his wife, Bea, volunteered for many activities at the Farmstead in addition to serving on the Board for fourteen years.

Duffy served our country as a commissioned officer after graduation from Bucknell University. He served in Korea for several years active duty. In addition, Duffy worked for Bell of Pennsylvania, later Bell Atlantic, holding numerous positions of importance. He received several awards for his work with consumers in various positions for the phone company. Duffy loved volunteering at Peter Wentz, sailing and driving his beautiful Corvette.

Both members will be very much missed. The Society has talked with Duffy's family regarding planting trees in his memory at the Farmstead - a passion of Duffy's over the years. The PWFS Board will discuss proper areas and types of trees to honor both Sally and Duffy with Meg and her staff in the weeks to come.

Now, on to the good news! Meg and her colleagues planned and executed some wonderful programs this last year! Most recently, the rescheduled Candlelight Tour was very well attended! Although, chilly and windy, the visitors arrived undeterred! Once again, the Society volunteers were amazed at the number of local visitors who had never heard of our wonderful Farmstead. We met some great new friends!

Meg, Carly, Jim, Scott, Jay and others have assisted Gift Shop Managers, Joy, Amy and Carla prior to Farmstead events. This collaboration has helped in stocking the shop with items relevant to planned activities. This has been received very well by our visitors. The items pertaining to weekend activities often sell out. A nice situation for both buyers and our shop keepers. Rolling stock is always more interesting!

In addition to events at the Farmstead, The Society hosted a meal with a Colonial Guest at Bella Rosa, Hotel Fiesole in Skippack. The luncheon was very well received - the food was delicious and our guest provided a wonderful history lesson for members. Dave is working on another speaker for our spring event. Watch for fliers with date and times!

Many thanks for your continued support of our Society! See you at our next event.



PASSING THE BATON

by Linda Snyder

Carol Berardelli has been involved in various volunteer positions with the Peter Wentz Farmstead since the site opened in 1976. She has also been a member of the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society since its inception. It all began as a docent, all of whom were required to dress in costume for guided tours. Docents were sent to the Souder Store for their dress material, got it approved, sewed their own period clothing, and waited for visitors on your scheduled day and time! The early days of the Farmstead were fun and exciting as the site was being discovered in the area.

1983 saw Carol return to teaching and volunteering was put on hold until around 2002/2003. Becoming involved again with the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society saw Carol wear several hats. She was a board member for many years, served as its secretary, and worked on a new Society brochure in 2017, among other responsibilities.

In December 2012, June Morse, Membership Chair, passed that baton to Carol. From 2013 until the present, she has ably kept our membership records in order and managed the dues and donations correspondence monthly. Carol has assisted in the ongoing process of advancing our means of communication with our members and has now passed that baton to Amy Dinkel, another board member.

We appreciate all your hard work over these many years. Carol has felt that it has been an honor to serve the Farmstead and can still continue to do so.



MUSEUM SHOP, continued

books in our museum shop offerings. One of these, THE ART OF COOKERY MADE PLAIN AND EASY, by Hannah Glasse, has been a bestselling cookbook in England and the US for more than 100 years.

These books are only a small portion of the over 100 books we have in the Museum Shop. There truly is something for everyone.

FAREWELL*by Linda Snyder*

Jean Bonniman McElroy Schmid born on 2 May 1935 passed away on 18 October 2023 at Normandy Farms Estate. Graduating from Cheltenham High School and the Pennsylvania State University, she worked for the Abington School District. Here she met her future husband, Norman W. Schmid, whom she married in 1959.

Some of her many activities included: Girl Scout troop leader, classroom volunteer, and guide at the Peter Wentz Farmstead. Jean was certified as a travel agent in the '70's and for the next forty years enjoyed countless trips with family and friends. In the course of these travels, she explored six of the seven continents. As exciting as this was, Ocean City, New Jersey was her beloved special place. She was usually the last one to leave the beach. She also enjoyed bridge and gardening, having a large garden when she lived in Broad Axe.

A much-loved wife, mother, and Nana, she is survived by daughters, Jeanne Schmid and Nancy Calkins and two grandchildren.

**OFF-SITE PRESENTATIONS***by LeAnne Sykes*

Did you know that the Peter Wentz Farmstead offers a variety of presentations to off-site locations? While these have been offered for a while, within the last year the Farmstead has increased its outreach efforts by creating new programs about interesting topics. These programs can be scheduled at places and occasions such as senior living communities, churches, schools, business luncheons, historical society meetings, and more. Interested in scheduling a program? Reach out today!

The Peter Wentz Farmstead currently offers the following presentation topics:

- Peter Wentz Farmstead Presentation – learn about the historic site, its past history and present offerings, and how to visit.
- History of Pennsylvania to 1800 – learn about Pennsylvania's rich and exiting history from the Native American era to the early United States.
- Life in Eighteenth Century Pennsylvania – explore how colonial Pennsylvanians lived during the 1700s, including social class, the role of women, clothing, cooking, and more. The presentation comes with a traveling trunk of reproduction objects.
- Slavery in Pennsylvania – honor Black History with this presentation about the history of the institution of slavery in Pennsylvania, from the arrival of the first enslaved individuals to the Civil War.

More topics are to come later this year! Have a topic not on this list? We may be able to present on it!

Individuals interested in scheduling a presentation for their group should contact LeAnne Sykes, Museum Assistant, at leanne.sykes@montgomerycountypa.gov or 610-584-5104.

**Welcome Newcomers!***by Meg Bleecker Blades*

Two energetic and athletic boys, Shorthorn steers named Conner and Max, have joined Sam our long-term resident cow in the pasture at the Farmstead.

Youngsters, the two boys still have a bit of growing to do. It is estimated that they will gain an additional six inches or so in height, and will each top the scales at about 2,000 pounds at maturity in the next year or so.

Already trained to the yoke, these fellows were born in New Hampshire, and have quite a bit of experience travelling to 4H shows and County Fairs with their first family. They absolutely enjoy meeting new people! Be careful if you approach their pasture fence—they are very happy to greet new friends by licking hands, arms and unsuspecting faces. As with most growing boys, they are enthusiastic eaters and in addition to their daily helpings of grain, each will devour a 40 -50 pound bale of hay at breakfast and again at dinner.

Stop by to meet the latest additions to the Peter Wentz Farmstead family, but remember, please don't feed the animals! They are all on carefully measured and monitored food programs.

**WASHINGTON ALSO DINED HERE!***by Scott Houting, Curator*

All WENTZ POST readers know that General George Washington and his staff occupied the Wentz house with Peter and his family in October of 1777. What we often overlook is the fact that he also dined at the Wentz household. This forgotten side of the story is about to change.

The Peter Wentz Farmstead, administered by the County of Montgomery, has been awarded a second grant by the Springhouse Questers to build a *reproduction* of Washington's famed Dining Mess Kit. The original mess kit, assembled for General Washington in 1776, is maintained by the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C. The dining kit was most certainly with Washington during his days at the Wentz Farmstead.

WASHINGTON ALSO DINED HERE!, continued

Working with the Farmstead's talented volunteer, Randy Gilbert, the curator, Scott Houting, will be building the black-leather covered pine chest, lined with green baize fabric, to display in the main kitchen during the fall of each year. Mr. Houting is currently working with a Pennsylvania tinsmith to complete the mess kit with tin boilers, dining plates, platters, and other wares which fit inside the chest. The kit is expected to be completed by October of this year.

**PETER WENTZ FARMSTEAD****COLONIAL KITCHEN GARDEN**

by Lori Curtis

As I write this, it is late winter and the kitchen garden is waiting for warmer weather when dormant plants will emerge and a new crop of seeds will be planted. But what was the Wentz family eating during the cold months, as nothing was growing to be harvested?

Since there was no refrigeration as we have today, the family depended on various methods of long-term food storage. An abundance of crops from the growing season was grown so some could be stored for the winter. These techniques included drying, pickling, sugaring, salting and cold storage. Meats were eaten fresh, smoked, salted or kept for short times in cold conditions.

Drying was used for fruit, vegetables and herbs, such as apples, peaches, beans and berries. Vegetables such as cabbage, cucumbers and even flowers were put into crocks and pickled using vinegar. Some fruits were preserved using a technique called sugaring, and fruits packed in heavy syrup could last for months. Vegetables such as onions, potatoes and carrots, and items such as eggs, butter, cheese and fruits were kept in cold storage. On the Wentz Farmstead, there is a root cellar with red doors that is close to the house and garden.

Starting in early Spring, crops began to be planted and the Wentz Weeders – the group of volunteers who tend the Wentz kitchen garden - will get started at that time. Crops to start early include chard, lettuce, cabbage, beets, carrots, parsnips and turnips.

This year, the Wentz Weeders plan to work more closely with the kitchen volunteers so our crops can be used in educational programs that demonstrate food preparation. We are also hoping to hold several public tours to acquaint community members with what is grown and how it is used in an 18th century Pennsylvania German garden.

**PWFS SPRING DINNER AND MEETING**

May 1st at 6:00 pm

Bay Pony Inn

508 Old Skippack Road

Lederach, PA 19450.

RSVPs go to Amy Dinkel

at (610) 416-5934 or

mail@peterwentzfarmsteadsociety1.org.

Please RSVP by April 17th.

Our speaker will be Mark Turdo,
former PWF staff member.

The program will be
**CIDER: PENNSYLVANIA'S ONCE
(AND FUTURE?) FAVORITE.**

Mark will touch on everything from William Penn to Prohibition. This overview looks at how cider was historically made, its presence and importance in Pennsylvania, and where it's heading today.



CALENDAR OF EVENTS AT THE FARMSTEAD

Saturday, April 20th from 10:00 am to 3:30 pm ---Sheep Shearing Day

Experience springtime on a colonial farm! Watch our farmers shear our sheep to get them ready for the warm weather. Then, follow the "wool to wardrobe" process as our living historians demonstrate spinning, weaving, and other textile crafts. Hear about all the various activities that went into running an 18th century farm as you tour the historic house. Check out the sights and smells of an open-hearth cooking demonstration in the Summer Kitchen. Stop by our demonstrators' stalls to learn about important crafts like woodworking, basket-weaving, candle-dipping, and more. Kids will delight in a performance by Tuckers' Tales Puppet Theatre. We can't wait to see "ewe" there! All ages; free.

Thursday, April 25th at 11:00 am or 1:00 pm Homeschool --- In a Pickle

The first home refrigerators went on the market in 1913. So how did people keep their food from going bad in the centuries before that? Visit the Farmstead to find out how 18th century families preserved their food. Then, learn how to pickle food yourself! Bring whatever veggies or herbs you want to try pickling. We'll provide the jars and vinegar. Limited space, email rebecca.blacketter@montgomerycountypa.gov to register. Two time slots available 11am or 1pm. Please include your preferred time slot in the registration. Ages 7-16 with adult; \$5 supply fee per family.

Saturday, May 18th and Sunday, May 19th from 10:00 am to 3:30 pm ---

Great Central Sanitary Fair of 2024

Celebrate the 160th anniversary of the Great Central Sanitary Fair of Philadelphia, an event organized by the US Sanitary Commission to raise funds for soldiers' aid during the Civil War! To mark the occasion, the Peter Wentz Farmstead is putting together a modern interpretation of the fair. Stop by our vendors to do some shopping and learn about how the Sanitary Commission assisted in the war effort. Meet some Union soldiers and watch infantry and artillery demonstrations. Join us for this unique event where past and present collide! All ages; free.

Thursday, May 30th at 11:00 am and 1:00 pm Homeschool --- Grass Roots

Grass is just grass, right? Wrong! In fact, there are dozens of different types of grass in the world, each with its own unique features! Join us to learn about the uses for different varieties of grass and how our farmers use it to make hay for our animals. See how many different grasses you can find and identify at the Farmstead, then make a grass craft to take home! Limited space, email rebecca.blacketter@montgomerycountypa.gov to register. Two time slots available 11am or 1pm. Please include your preferred time slot in the registration. Ages 7-16 with adult; free.

Monday, July 8th thru Friday, July 12th from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm --- Colonial Camp

Have you ever dreamed of traveling into the past? Well, we may not have a time machine, but we've got the next best thing. Join us this summer for the Peter Wentz Farmstead's Colonial Camp, where you can step back into the eighteenth century and live like a colonial farmer for a week! This year's Colonial Camp will run from Monday, July 8th to Friday, July 12th from 9:30 am to 2:30 pm. Each day, our living historians will lead campers through hands-on demonstrations of historical crafts. Past campers have learned quill-and-ink calligraphy, weaving, woodworking, and more. You don't have to be a history buff to have a good time! We'll be covering a wide range of topics like art, nature, agriculture, and technology. Colonial Camp is for kids going into 4th-6th grade. The cost for the week is \$100 per child.



KIDS' FUN PAGE

MIND YOUR MANNERS

by Pat McDonnell

PLEASE, THANK YOU, EXCUSE ME, I'M SORRY are words we learned early in life. They seem to come automatically to us when they need to be said. These are words of good manners. This was not always the case. Some hundred years ago, children who lived in what were then our colonies had to learn and practice very different manners than those we use today. Let's take a look at a few of these manners or rules as we may call them, and while we are reading, notice differences in the speech and spellings.

"Eat not too fast or with Greedy Behavior. Eat not vastly but moderately. Make not a noise with thy Tongue, Mouth, Lips, or Breath, in thy Eating and Drinking.

Smell not of thy Meat; nor put it to thy Nose: turn it not the other side upward on Thy plate.

Spit not, cough not, nor blow thy Nose at Table if it may be avoided. Lean not thy Elbow on the Table, or on the back of thy Chair.

Stuff not thy mouth as to as to fill thy Cheeks; be content with smaller Mouthfuls

When any speak to thee, stand up. Say not I have heard it before. Never endeavor to help him out if he tell it not right. Snigger not; never question the Truth of it.

Run not Hastily in the street, nor go too Slowly. Wag not to and fro, nor use any Antik Postures either of thy Head, Hands Feet or Body. Throw not aught on the Street, as Dirt or Stones. If thou meetest scholars of any other School jeer not, nor affront them but show them love and respect and quietly let them pass along."

Did you have a hard time understanding these rules/manners of long ago? Could you rewrite them using the language of today? Who were/are the best mannered, colonial children or you, the children of today?

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