



BETHEL PRESERVATION SOCIETY JOURNAL

**NEWSLETTER OF THE BETHEL TOWNSHIP
PRESERVATION SOCIETY**

**VOLUME IV ISSUE 2
FEBRUARY 2001**

NEXT MEETING: FEBRUARY 27

The next meeting of the Preservation Society is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, February 27, at the John L. Myers, Jr. Memorial Township Building, 1082 Bethel Road.

In an effort to better organize our activities, we will be proposing the formation of new committees for our Society at this month's meeting. We've got lots of great projects that we want to pursue, and we'd like to ask each of our members to commit their energies to working with one or more of these groups:

- Membership and meetings
- Community outreach
- Founders Day and other fundraising
- Signs for historic sites
- Oral History
- Historic Resources Survey
- Township meetings
- Documentation
- Advocacy

UPCOMING PENNDOT MEETING

Details are not yet final, but PennDot is planning a meeting on March 6th at the Bethel Hose Co. with township residents regarding the proposed Foulk Road widening. We're not sure of the time yet, so please be alert to further notices of this important meeting. We should know more by the end of the month, but watch the local papers and your mailbox for more details.

ONGOING FUNDRAISERS

Save your Genuardi's receipts! For each receipt collected by our Society, we will receive one percent of the total order as a contribution from Genuardi's. It doesn't matter which store you visit — just bring your receipts to a Society meeting, or mail them to Patti Sykes, who has volunteered to collect and send in our receipts.

Bethel Township T-Shirts are still on sale for \$10 each. They have the outline of Bethel Township on the

front, and on the back there's the famous 1892 quote by Judge Clayton: "The men were robust and sturdy, the women were handsome, strong and motherly, and the girls were noted for their beauty in form and feature." Please call Judy McCleary (610-497-2254), or come to the next meeting.

Herb vinegars are also available at \$6 a bottle and can be purchased at Society meetings, or call Fran Nicholson to order.

Just a few hand-thrown "Bethel PA" stoneware vases from Backlog Pottery in Maryland are left. If you would like to purchase one (\$14 each) come to our next meeting. Additional orders will also be taken for delivery later this spring.

HISTORIC HOMEOWNERSHIP BILL PASSES PA HOUSE

The Pennsylvania House of Representative passed HB90 by a vote of 198-0 on February 7th. This bill is intended to promote the rehabilitation and preservation of historic homes and neighborhoods in Pennsylvania through a system of tax incentives. The goals of the bill are to:

- C Expand home ownership opportunities;
- C Encourage owner occupancy of residential property in older neighborhoods;
- C Stimulate the revival of declining, older neighborhoods and communities; and
- C Enlarge and stabilize the tax base of cities and small towns.

Owners of historic home sites who agree to use the historic home site as their primary residence for at least five years:

- C Qualify to receive a 20% credit on personal income tax for the rehabilitation costs as long as those costs exceed \$1,000. The cumulative credit shall not exceed \$6,000 regardless of the number of years over which the qualifying expenditures take place.
- C Qualify for an exemption from sales and use tax if the rehabilitation costs for the project exceed \$1,000.

An owner who sells a historic homesite to a purchaser who agrees to use the property as their primary residence for at least five years will qualify for the following provisions:

- C Exemption from the state's portion of the realty transfer tax.
- C Exemption from capital gains tax.

The bill has now moved to the PA Senate, where it has been referred to the Finance Committee.

We'll keep you informed on the bill's progress, but you can certainly contact our Senator, Clarence Bell, to urge his support when the bill comes up for final approval. He can be reached at: 717-787-4712, or at: cbell@pasen.gov

Thanks to Pa. Rep. Steve Barrar for keeping us posted on this important legislation!

As for the federal version of this bill, which has been before Congress for several years, there is some optimism, as reported by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (www.nthp.org):

"The sheer size of the Bush tax cut could provide one of the best opportunities in recent memory to include a historic homeownership tax credit as part of the larger tax package. ... Another potential factor working in favor of the homeownership tax credit is President Bush's own homeownership tax credit proposal, which he made public during the presidential campaign last summer. Bush's proposal would provide \$1.7 billion over the next five years in investor-based tax credits to encourage the rehabilitation of housing or the construction of new affordable housing in distressed communities. In light of the Bush proposal for a system of investor-based credits, the National Trust is also exploring the possibility of expanding the historic homeownership tax credit proposal so that **developers could use it under certain circumstances.**

"Efforts are also underway to get the homeownership tax credit bill introduced in both chambers. In the House, Rep. Clay Shaw (R-FL) is expected to reintroduce the "Historic Homeownership Assistance Act" the week of February 19. Shaw and Rep. John Lewis (D-GA) have circulated a "Dear Colleague" letter urging all Members to "support the historic homeownership tax credit and work for its passage." In the Senate, Senator John Breaux (D-LA) has been asked to play a larger role in winning enactment of the historic homeownership tax credit. However, there is no target date as yet for introduction of the bill in the Senate.

One key feature of the bill is:

* ALLOWABLE CREDIT: 20% federal income tax credit to homeowners who rehabilitate or buy a qualified historic house, up to a maximum credit of \$40,000 for a principal residence. Expenditures must be at least \$5,000 or the adjusted basis (total value of the property, minus value of the land), whichever is higher. Advocates should contact their Members of Congress through the U.S. Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 and ask them to cosponsor the Historic Homeownership Assistance Act."

WILL OF ROBERT PYLE

Society members, headed up by Dr. Shaffer, have been collecting information about Robert Pyle, one of our Township's first settlers. On a recent trip to the Friends' Library in Swarthmore, Dr. Shaffer found a copy of Robert Pyle's will.

I Robert Pyle of Bethel township in County of Chester & province of pensilvania Yoman being in health & sound in mind & memory thanks be unto the Lord & considering y^e uncertainty of this Life being appointed for all men once to Dye and for the better settling and disposing of such Temporal Estates as it hath pleased Lord in mercy to Bestow upon me do make this my Last will and Testament in manner and form following first I will that all such Debts I owe in Right or Conscience to any person Together with my funerall Expenses be payd as soon as conveniently may be after My Decease by my Executors hereafter named 2dly I give and bequeath to my beloved wife Susannah Pyle the sum of one hundred pounds Lawfull mony of pensilvania to be payd by my Executors hereafter named at the expiration of six months after my Decease together with the one half of all my household Goods and one riding horse with her saddle 3ly I give and Bequeath unto my son William Pyles children ye sum of Fifty pounds Lawful mony as aforesaid 4thly I give and Bequeath unto my son William Pyles children y^e sum of Fifty pounds Lawfull mony as aforesaid to be Equally to be Divided share and share alike those that now be living as they shall arive to the age of Twenty one years or marriage to be delivered into the hands of their Father in six months after my Decease for them 5ly I give Devise & Bequeath unto my son John Pyle all my right title Interest and Demands whatsoever which I have of in and u pon all that two hundred acres of Land situate in y^e Township of Marlborough in the said County & which I Lately leas to one Holt of London Grove upon condition that my son John pay to his son Moses Pyle Thirty Pounds mony of this province when he arrives to the age of Twenty One years and likewise pays to his daughter Sarah Pyle the sum

of Twenty pounds when she arrives at the age of Twenty one years or Day of marriage which first Shall happen and upon performance of this condition as afores'd I will that my said son John hold the said two hundred acres of Land to him his heirs and assigns forever 6ly I give & Bequeath unto my son Joseph Pyle the sum of Thirty pounds Lawfull mony as aforesaid. 7ly I give devise and Bequeath unto my Grandson Rob^t Pyle son of Joseph Pyle all my Tract of Land situate in y^e Township of Marlborough Containing Two hundred Twenty Four acres to hold to him the said Rob^t his heirs and assigns forever 8ly I give and Bequeath unto my son Daniell Pyle seventy pounds upon this condition paying to his Daughters Susannah & Mary his Daughters Each fifteen pounds at the age of Twenty one years or day of Marriage which shall happen first if they live so long 9ly I give and Bequeath unto my Daughter Mary Moore the sum of Fifty pounds Lawfull mony as aboves^d and two silver spoons upon this condition to apy Each of her children five pounds at the day of Marriage or the age of Twenty & one 10ly I give to my Grandson Aaron Vernon Fifteen pounds Lawfull mony as aboves^d in six months after my Decease 11ly I give to my Grandaughter Rachel Green Fifteen pounds Lawfull mony of this province. 12ly I give to my son William Pile my Largest plate Buttons and to my son John Pyle my next largest plate Buttons My will is that the Remaining part of my wearing Apparell be Equally Divided between my four sons 13ly I give and Bequeath unto George, James & Dorothy Turner my now wives children four pounds to Each of them of Lawfull mony as abovesaid 14ly It is my will that my son Daniell shall have my Cloaks & Cupboard after six months is Expired after my Decease Lastly I give to my Grandchildren Sam^l Pyle and the three Daughters of my son Rob^t each ten shillings my will is that all my Legacies might be paid in six months after my Decease or if can be conveniently done Last I do hereby Constitute nominate ordain and appoint my Beloved wife Susannah Pyle Together with my two sons Wm Pyle & Joseph Pyle to be whole & sole Exc^{rs} of this my Last Will and Testament to whom I give the Remaining part of my Estate whether Real or person of kind or nature soever y^e same may be & not herein before given & Bequeathed & that the same Equally Divided amongst them share and share alike and I do hereby revoke and make void all former wills by me heretofore made Either by word or writing and doth allow of this & no other to be my Last Will and Testament in witness I have hereunto set my hand and seal the second day of the first month in the year seventeen hundred Twenty and nine (Ten) 1729-30
Robert Pyle [Seal]

Signed Sealed published pronounced and Declared by sd Robt Pyle to be his Last Will and Testament in the presence of us Subscribers
John Hopton Rachel Hopton Joseph Walford

DCHS HOUSTON LECTURE TO FOCUS ON HAVERFORD TOWNSHIP

The History of Haverford Township will be the focus of the next Delaware County Historical Society Houston Lecture, scheduled for 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 14 at Haverford College. This program will be hosted by the Haverford Township Historical Society. Admission is free and all are welcome. DCHS Historian Nancy Webster is the moderator for this year's lecture series.

The Houston Lecture Series is underwritten by The HBE Foundation of Devon, Pa., in grateful memory of Mr. Howard Hathaway Houston, Mayor of Chester City from 1902-1906. For more information, call the Delaware County Historical Society at (610) 359-1148 or visit on the Internet at www.delcohistory.org/dchs

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Please call Fran and Rick Nicholson (610) 558-2996 for Journal information or to make address corrections.

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Visit the Preservation Society on the Internet at: www.delcohistory.org/bethel for Society information, as well as extensive information about Bethel's history!

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IMPORTANT DATES
Preservation Society Monthly Meeting
2/27, 3/27 7:30 p.m.
(Board meets at 7 p.m.)
Township Planning Commission
3/7, 7 p.m.
Township Board of Supervisors
3/13, 8 p.m.
Society Research Committee
3/8, 7:30 p.m.