

FULTON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWS

Fall 2018

Spanish Flu Pandemic of 1918 to be Topic of Fall Membership Meeting

The Fulton County Historical Society (FCHS) is pleased to announce this great educational opportunity! On Thursday evening, October 18, 2018, at 6:30 p.m., Dr. Thomas Soltis from Westmoreland County Community College will do a presentation on the impact of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Western Pennsylvania at the Fulton County Courthouse. While the presentation will focus on all of Western Pennsylvania, there will be sections covering the impact of the epidemic on Fulton County.

The 1918 Influenza Pandemic, possibly the deadliest in history, affected the entire world. It is estimated that one third of the planet's population was infected. While the true number of deaths is unknowable, most commonly accepted estimates are between 20-40 million victims. This presentation will summarize the arrival, spread, and impact of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Western Pennsylvania. Beginning with the spring of 1918 there were some local soldiers dying at military bases around the U.S. and by the autumn of 1918 the disease arrived in Pennsylvania with a vengeance. There were over 500,000 Pennsylvanians infected by the disease and over 50,000 deaths in Pennsylvania alone.

At the time, there were no effective drugs or vaccines to treat this killer flu strain. Citizens were ordered to wear masks; schools, theaters and businesses were shuttered; and bodies piled up in makeshift morgues before the virus ended its deadly global march.



Dr. Thomas Soltis

Dr. Soltis, who teaches Sociology and Anthropology, is also seeking any personal stories from local residents regarding the impact of the epidemic on local families. If you remember hearing your relatives talking about the 1918 Influenza and wish to share their stories, please contact Dr. Thomas Soltis (WCCC) at 724-925-4239 or via email at solist@westmoreland.edu. You may also contact WCCC Librarian Raeanna Paterson at 724-925-4102 or at paterson@westmoreland.edu.

The plan is to collect and preserve these local memories in a commemorative publication on the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Western PA. Through Westmoreland County Community College, and in cooperation with Community Partners Excelsa Health, the Westmoreland County Historical Society, and the Westmoreland County Federated Library System, Dr. Soltis has designed a yearlong series of events commemorating the impact of the 1918 Influenza Pandemic in Westmoreland County and surrounding areas. Over the past year, Tom has presented this topic to numerous schools, social clubs, community groups, libraries, historical societies, and civic groups.

This meeting is open to the public.

Society Museums Open Fall Festival Weekend

The Historical Society Museum is featuring an Overly-Raker Retrospective, depicting the creative business journey of Helen Overly and Freda Raker from a small in-house gift



An emergency hospital at Camp Funston, Kansas, 1918.

Photographs Collection / Otis historical Archives / National Museum of Health and Medicine

shop to a multimillion dollar soft sculpture industry known throughout the nation and beyond. The display includes examples of wooden and soft sculpture decorative items manufactured by the Overly-Raker Company along with dolls hand-made by Freda Raker. One of the soft sculptures on display is an example of what was used to decorate the White House for Christmas in 1986.

Fulton County Historical Society Museum Annex will have the official opening of the first three "Main Street" Permanent Displays: the Fulton Democrat, Stoner Tin Shop, and Stoner Furniture Shop. These exhibits will be furnished with a broad collection of type and other printing items from the Fulton Democrat, Stoner Tin Shop tools and samples of tin work, and vintage Fulton County woodworking tools and locally made chairs. Temporary displays include an expanded Black History in Fulton County, Fulton County Grist Mills, expanded Fulton County Courthouse display, Fulton County Transportation, and a map of the Southern Pennsylvania Rail Road in and around Fulton County.

New Acquisitions on Display: a Luther Black inlaid occasional table, a Cutter sleigh made by the Waterloo Carriage Co. circa 1900, Comerer's Freight Wagon circa 1890s, a washing machine circa 1920, chairs made by Alexander Mellott, and high chairs circa 1900.

The museums will be open Friday, Oct. 19, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Sat., Oct. 20, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.; & Sun., Oct. 21, 12 noon - 4 p.m.

Barn Quilt Tours Set for Folk Festival

Fulton County Historical Society (FCHS) Fall Frontier Barn Quilt Bus Tour, being held Friday, Oct. 19, 2018, includes a tour of nearly 40 new and unique barn quilts in beautiful western Fulton County and a visit to the Akersville Fall Festival. The bus will leave the McConnellsburg Giant parking lot at 10:00 a.m. and arrive at Akersville for 1½ hours of shopping at over 50 vendors of crafts, apparel, antiques; vintage farm equipment and more; display watching and

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lunch. After lunch, the tour will head south from Akersville through some of the most beautiful rural countryside in the Appalachian Mountains, and return to the Giant parking lot around 3:30 p.m.

More information and tickets are available by contacting Mike Crampton, 717-830-5953, or email, info@frontierbarnquilttrail.com. Cost is \$35 per person. Make checks payable to Fulton County Historical Society, include names and phone number on the check, and send to Mike Crampton, 107 South 7th Street, McConnellsburg, PA 17233

New Life Member Welcomed

Our latest life member joining July 3, 2018 (#283) is **Karen Portzer** from Seattle, Washington.

The Life Membership Endowment of the society, now with 283 members, totals \$43,150.

Thank You for Museum Donations:

•The family of James A. Hartman donated a framed print of Hunter Mills. His great-great-grandfather, John Bechtel, worked at the mill. The print is on display at the Museum Annex.

•Life member Thomas R. Glenn donated a beautifully framed portrait of his great-grandfather, Ephraim Houck.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL:

___ \$20 Individual/Family

___ \$250 Individual Life

Please check your renewal date on the front of this mailing's envelope.

Send your name, address, e-mail, and family interest names to the Society address along with your check.

Payment may also be made through the society website.

It hangs in the Fulton House. He also donated three notebooks of genealogy to the Historical Society Library. They are painstakingly done, complete with photos of these families: Andrew Glenn Sr.; Martin Bechtel; Wilson Bowman; Kirk Hemmes; Peter Fager; Thomas Sedwick; and allied families.

•Members Richard and Cheryl Alloway recently donated several items from the former Dublin Mills Store and Post Office including the store counter and antique coffee grinder.

•Andy Washabaugh and the Duffey family donated several items from the Duffy Mill in Webster's Mill including the old desk that William Duffy used for the bookkeeping at the mill circa 1890. This desk is on display in the Museum Annex. The museum committee is looking for other mill related items from around the county.

•Antique wood working tools have been donated by Ruth Reeder, and will be on display in the Museum Annex for FFFF.

Society sets Fall Auction Date

The FCHS is hosting their Annual Dinner/ Auction on Saturday, November 10, 2018, at the Needmore Bible Church, Needmore, PA. A Silent Auction will begin at 4:00-5:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 6:00, with a traditional auction beginning at 6:30 p.m. Proceeds from both auctions will be used to help fund a badly needed new roof on the Historical Society Museum Annex building (formerly the G.C. Murphy building).

FCHS is still soliciting donations for both the silent and traditional auctions. Auction items may be antique, collectibles, new or gently used, but must be in excellent shape. A list of donors will be included in the program, and as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, all donations are tax deductible, and a receipt for tax records will be provided.

For additional information or to donate items to either auction, you may call Carolyn at 717-573-2805 or Bonnie at 717-372-0061. Ticket prices are: Adults

- \$15, Children 6-12 yrs -- \$7.50 and children under 5 are free. Tickets can be obtained by calling Carolyn at 717-573-2805, Bonnie at 717-485-3412, Monica at 717-485-4454, or Mike at 717-485-5999 or contacting anyone on the FCHS Board of Directors.

Minutes for FCHS Summer Membership Meeting held on June 30, 2018

The Fulton County Historical Society held its annual summer membership meeting in the auction room of the Murphy Building Museum Annex on Saturday, June 30, 2018. Society President Mark Sheffield called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed guests.

Sheffield called attention to a table covered with old photographs from the Fulton County Historical Society collection displayed by Ruth Reeder. He asked that anyone who was able to identify people in the photos to please let Ruth know who they were.

Sheffield also referred to a topographic map of Dublin, Taylor and Wells townships on display in the back of the meeting room. The map showed the precise locations of James Burd's military supply road for British General Edward Braddock through northern Fulton County in 1755 and the Forbes Road of 1758 (both for the French and Indian War to oust the French from Fort Duquesne), Chambersburg - Bedford Turnpike of 1814, South Penn Railroad of 1884 and the Pennsylvania Turnpike of 1939 and 1968. The routes were drawn from research compiled by Ken Keebaugh during the past year.

Sheffield turned the floor over to Ken Keebaugh, who introduced the evening's guest lecturer, Russell Love, leading expert on the South Penn Railroad. Love presented a Power Point program on the location of the never completed railroad location between Burnt Cabins and Rays Hill Tunnel in 1884.

Respectfully submitted,
Ken Keebaugh, Secretary

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