



# Fulton House News

Derry Area Historical Society

Spring 2015

## Celebrating our History of 20 Years!

**Special 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Issue inside**

### Mini-Grant award for new roof

The Derry Area Historical Society has been awarded a \$5,400.00 mini-grant by the Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor (LHHC) with funding originating with the PA Dept of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation, through the intercession of PA legislators, and administered by the Lincoln

Highway Heritage Corridor towards the removal of existing roofs, and replacement of a new roof on the Fulton House. The grant is subject to a 1:1 cash match and the project must be completed by May 1, 2016. Contractors are currently being solicited for proposals to remove the existing roof(s) and replace them with a long-life, metal roof.

### VFW RECORDS SAVED



DAHS Archivist John Matviya and President Pat Showalter (center) accept a photo album of area WWII veterans from Dawn Hennessey and Joyce Sterling of Faith Forward Pa. of Derry, part of a collection of materials abandoned when the Derry VFW dissolved. The community group acquired the Ligonier Street building that was formerly the VFW Post and found the records among debris destined for the dumpster. DAHS member Ralph Zitterbart (far right) suggested the donation to the society's research center at the New Alexandria Library which took place Nov 22, 2014. Ralph and his wife Edra, further volunteered their time at the library to index and catalog the historic documents and have continued working for the Family History center ever since.

Volunteers are welcomed at our family research center. Work can include anything from genealogy and historical research to keeping our files in order. Please stop in for a visit or call us at 724-668-7747.

#### OUR 2015 Officers

Pat Showalter, President  
Tony Penich,  
Vice President  
Kristi Beyschau, Secretary  
John Matviya, Treasurer

#### Board of Directors!

Julie Anderson  
Melissa Brooks  
Dennis Dablock  
Donna Showalter  
William Snyder II  
Dolly Stiffler  
Joanne Vicini  
Alfred Young

## HOME OPENER AT THE FULTON HOUSE

This year's *Home Opener* at the Fulton House is also a covered dish social. On Sunday May 3 at 1:00 the residents of the greater Derry Area are invited to share their favorite picnic food with each other on the grounds of the Fulton House in New Derry. Bring whatever you can and hope that there will be a great variety to choose from. The afternoon will also include games for the kids, tours of the Inn and previews of coming events as part of New Derry's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Bottled water and surprises will be provided.

GET YOUR NEWSLETTER FASTER, IN COLOR AND SAVE PAPER AND POSTAGE TOO!!

Send your email address to us at: [research@derryhistory.hypermart.net](mailto:research@derryhistory.hypermart.net)

### DAY OF REMEMBRANCE – DERRY AREA'S ONE-ROOM SCHOOL HOUSE

Susanna Calvo has scheduled the annual Day of Remembrance for Wednesday, April 29, 2015 at 7PM. Held in the century old and beautifully restored One Room School House on the school campus, this gathering honors the memory of Derry Area High School teachers who passed away during their service to the district.

As always, the details of murder victim Emma Austraw will be covered. Many newspaper accounts of the day are available for review in the School House collection. Teachers William Ebersole, who served from 1975-1990, and Sophia Buckey (1971-1973) will be featured this year, along with Rebecca Stahl.

This has become a valued tradition in our community. We must never forget those who have served us well. Trees are planted on the Derry Area Campus for each teacher so honored. Previously honored by the program: Wilma Shannon, Greg Dorn, Michael Shumaker, Rebecca Stahl, Edward "Tim" Deglau, Gary Manges and Ned Cecchini.

We mourn the recent passing of two friends of our history. On March 30, **Brian Lloyd**, 61, died; society member, author, and donator of much historical literature to the DAHS and the New Alexandria Library. "The Cliffs of New Alex", a publication written with his wife Judy, is an item obtainable at the library or the Fulton House, is registered at the Library of Congress.

**Robert J. "Pappy" Reintgen** died on April 5. "Pappy", the father of Bob Reintgen, served many years as an Innkeeper.

**DAHS Story on the air** -- IUP-TV has a standing offer to non-profit organizations to submit for broadcast videos, slideshows, or on-camera footage promoting their group's activities. These spots are 3-5 minutes in duration and run in the late evening in a random fashion for as long as a year. This offers exposure that groups like ours could never afford in the open market. Broadcast radius covers 5 counties. The station has accepted our initial offering - a slideshow promoting New Derry's Bicentennial Celebration on July 11-12, 2015. It will be to our advantage to develop a relationship with IUP and we thank them for the opportunity. Digital: Cable 6 (Comcast) and Cable 20 (IUP Cable)



Take advantage of our **DAHS Facebook Page** if you have not done so already. Membership there currently stands at 379. We have much in the way of photos, articles, and discussions archived there. There is a search box in the upper right corner. Enter a topic of your choice to study what others have contributed and add more info yourself.

A member of our Facebook Page would know that:

**Joseph Ziegler** celebrated his 104<sup>th</sup> birthday on April 2, 2015! Ziegler of Derry is the oldest member of St. Joseph's Church and a graduate of Derry High School, Class of 1931. The Ziegler family bakery was a landmark in Derry for many years. Happy Birthday Joe!

# Derry Area Historical Society's - - 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

## Our First 20 Years

### THE FOUNDING OF THE SOCIETY

The Derry Area Historical Society had its beginnings on a school bus 20 years ago this month. In April, 1995, historically minded members of the Derry community rode around the township visiting the places where old schools, forts and pioneer homes once stood, in an effort to raise funds for the Derry Area School District's "One-Room Schoolhouse" project. The day included a lunch break at the renovated Barr Cabin on Lee Valley Road, preserved and owned by Edward and Joanne Lamolinara. Most of the people on the trip bought box lunches made by the school cafeteria workers. Enjoying their lunch while admiring some of Ed's collection of old tools, guns and other artifacts made them yearn for more. Near the end of the trip someone said, "Wouldn't it be nice if we had an historical society of our own," and according to Phyllis Humphreys, Bob Reintgen stood up and announced, "The first meeting of the Derry Area Historical Society will be on Monday." The society was born.

One of the founding members, Richard Rupert, recalled the follow up meeting held at Lamolinara's cabin where Ed "put up \$300 to get it (the DAHS) off the ground." A "lifetime" membership of \$20 was suggested and Rupert and Reintgen were the first two to sign up. On August 28, 1995 Reintgen was elected the society's first President, with Ed Lamolinara, Vice-President; Paula Richards, Secretary and Becky Weiner, Treasurer.

This ambitious group had big plans. The new society's first undertaking was forming a committee to create a map of the historic sites visited on their inaugural bus trip. By the following spring the historical Derry Area map was completed and went on sale to the public. The popular map, still available for sale, features the locations of the 51 early schools plus five Revolutionary-era forts, old cemeteries and homes of the area's pioneers. Other committees tackled even bigger projects. Although initial plans to rehabilitate the #39 "Ethel Springs" school were not fulfilled, the Society was barely a year old when they provided the volunteer labor to rehabilitate the century old Simpson's Voting House near the Keystone Raceway Park. That face-lift kept the voting house "alive" for another ten years when the more mature organization would have to step in again to preserve the important historic structure. In that first year the historical society sponsored "Genealogy Night", "Oral History Night", tours, community auctions and its first "Old-Fashioned Hymn Sing" at the very historic, Old Salem Church, a tradition that has continued at Christmas ever since.

## Our First 20 Years

**Not so-trivial Question:** What was the single largest donation to the D.A.H.S.?

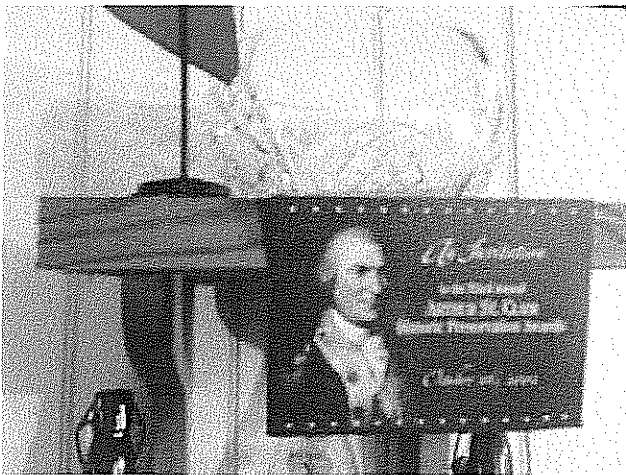
Who was the donor and what did we do with the money? (Find answer on page 6)

Our First 20 Years

**ARTHUR ST. CLAIR AWARD FOR HISTORICAL COMMUNITY EXCELLENCE**

The founders proudest accomplishment was realized on May 23, 1999 with the dedication of the restored "Fulton House" in New Derry, home base of the historical society ever since. Our hard working members and their accomplishments were recognized by the Westmoreland County Historical Society with the Arthur St. Clair Award for Historical Community Excellence on October 16, 2002. At the awards meeting, then President Tom Vallana recognized some of the people who were responsible for the successes of the fledgling organization:

Richard Rupert for researching the area's history, featured in a four-page article in the *Blairsville Dispatch*



Thelma Ometz, the archivist and genealogist, responsible for publishing the *Civil War Diary* while that year handling research requests and visitors to the area from nine states and from as far away as the Netherlands

Dolores Horrell for efficiently organizing and managing the gift shop, offering "unique items not available elsewhere"

Peggy Clawson who designed and managed our memorial brick walkway, along with producing the Historic Sites map and the "Derry Schools" book

**"DERRY & LATROBE STUDENTS WERE ESSENTIAL TO RESTORATION OF THE FULTON HOUSE INN, BARN & BLACKSMITH SHOP. THEY WERE PROUD OF THEIR 10 HOURS OF COMMUNITY SERVICE AND TREASURE THE MEMORIES."** Bob Reintgen

Our First 20 Years

**MEETINGS AND EVENTS**

Our second decade was marked with a continuation of "old" traditions like the Old Salem Church Christmas Sing-Along while adding new events such as the Lammas Day Festival, beginning in 2006, championed by Bill Snyder II. This celebration of the first corn harvest in August is now one of our most popular events. Monthly meetings with interesting guest speakers were held throughout the first years of the society. However, as the audience grew older fewer and fewer attended and "monthly" gave way to "occasional" and generally replaced by events: Lammas Day, the Mid-Summer Night's Ice Cream Social, the Home Opener and the Old Fashioned Christmas Party.

## Our First 20 Years

### CARRYING OUT OUR MISSION



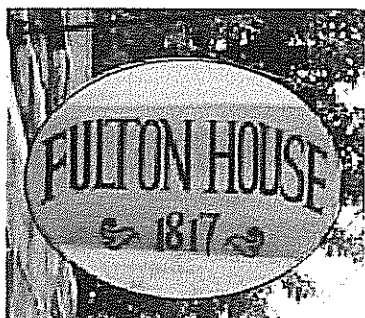
Following our mission to “preserve local history, genealogy and historic architecture” has been the common goal of our society throughout its twenty years. Past President Bob Reintgen was the leader in saving and reconstructing dozens of log and stone structures including the barn and blacksmith shop at the Fulton House and several structures purchased by other historical societies and friends of history, donating his time and “finder’s fee” to the society.

In 2009 we relocated our **Family History Research Center** to the New Alexandria Public Library, providing a climate controlled reading room serving our members and researchers from the area and across the country. John Matviya serves as our genealogist assisting those interested in researching their Derry ancestors, in person or through email correspondence. Visitors from as far away as Wyoming and California have found their pioneer families in our center which specializes in local records, including pre-1800 tax lists, patent maps and binders of information on our early schools. Several lifetime and charter members of the society volunteered at the center in many capacities, keeping the center open 5 days each week.

## Our First 20 Years

### INNKEEPERS PROGRAM

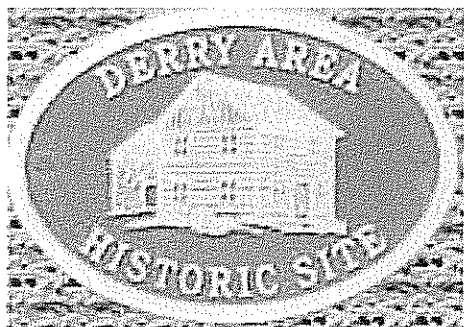
Established by Bob Reintgen in 2005, the Innkeepers Program has allowed us to “keep the lights on” by funding our general operating expenses, primarily our utilities: gas, electric, sewerage and water. Our “Innkeepers” are a generous group of local people and businesses who have each donated \$175 to cover the costs of keeping the Fulton House open during the year. This allows our dues money and other donations to go directly into outreach and educational activities in our community. Little wonder that we enjoy thanking our Innkeepers with the annual Innkeepers Dinner at the Fulton House. The Inn is beautifully decorated and the plates are filled with delicious food prepared by our own chefs, Will and Missy Snyder. If you would like to be an Innkeeper in 2016, whether for the first time or as a charter member, please call the FultonHouse, 724-694-8808; email [research@derryhistory.hypermart.net](mailto:research@derryhistory.hypermart.net) or ask any board member about joining the program.



Our First 20 Years

**HISTORIC SITES PLAQUE PROGRAM**

Begun in 2000, the Historic Sites Plaque Program has recognized 30 of the area's best preserved or restored houses, churches and other sites. In order to qualify to mount the beautiful bronze plaque, depicting the Fulton House surrounded by the words *Derry Area Historic Site*, the structure or site must be deemed to be over a century old and at least 85% intact to its original condition. Evelyn Baker-Ruffing oversees the program and makes certain that the history is well researched before presenting the owners with the plaque.



Winners of the John Pomeroy Award

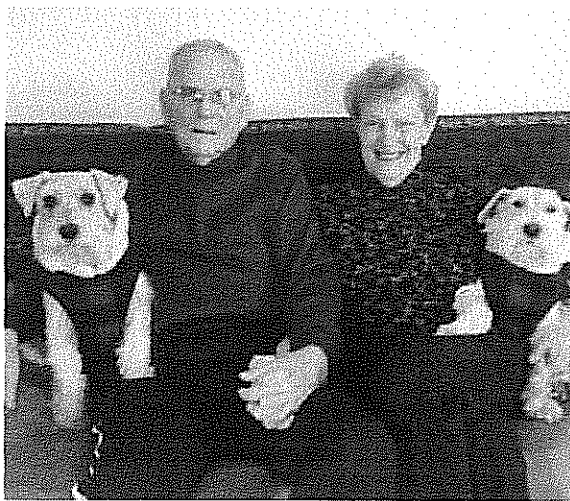
- 2007 – Peggy Clawson; Dolores Horrell; Phyllis Humphreys; Ed Lamolinara; Mechesneytown Cemetery Association
- 2008 – Brenizer Historical Society; Eleanor Thomas; Mary Alice Kern
- 2009 – Robert S. Reintgen; Evelyn Baker-Ruffing
- 2010 – Gary Lamolinara; D A School District
- 2011- Olie Merlin; Thelma Ometz
- 2012 – James Humphreys; Raymond Schott
- 2013 – Todd Clewell; Barbara Pickford; William L. Snyder, II
- 2014 – Raymond Washlaski

The "largest" donation we ever received in our first 20 years was a house! This late 19<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse in Bradenville was a gift to the Derry Area Historical Society by Mr. and Mrs. Edward M. Stroz of New York City. Contemporaneously with the acceptance of the donation, the Society sold the house to the adjacent property owners for \$22,500 – also the "largest" donation. With our acquisition liquidated, the Society paid off in full the bank promissory note it had taken for the barn and blacksmith shop at the Fulton House. Many thanks for Mr. and Mrs. Edward Stroz.

Our First 20 Years

**THE HALL OF PRESIDENTS**

- Robert S. Reintgen (Founding, 2005)
- Myla Shestik (2000, 2001, 2004)
- Thomas Vallana (2002, 2003)
- William L. Snyder, II (2006, 2007)
- Michael Muchnock (2008)
- John Matviya (2009, 2010, 2013)
- Patrick Showalter (2011, 2012, 2015)
- William L. Snyder, III (2014)



**Happy 70<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary to Jim and Phyllis Humphreys!**

OUR OPERATING EXPENSES ARE ALREADY PAID THANKS TO OUR GREAT  
**2015 INNKEEPERS. We thank you!!!!**

Geano & Rosemarie Agostino

Melissa W. Brooks

Eric Ecker

Dr. Alan & Elaine Christianson

Richard Hansen, D.M.D.

Kathleen Sistek Kelly

Edward & JoAnna Lamolinara

Gary & Dana Lamolinara



John D. McCabe

James & Gretchen Prah

Dr. Nick & Mary Senuta

Judge Henry E. Shaw, Jr. (ret.)

Dr. Frank E. & Suzanne Skacel

Edward Torba, D. M. D.

Robert & JoAnne Vicini

**Annual Membership Dues**

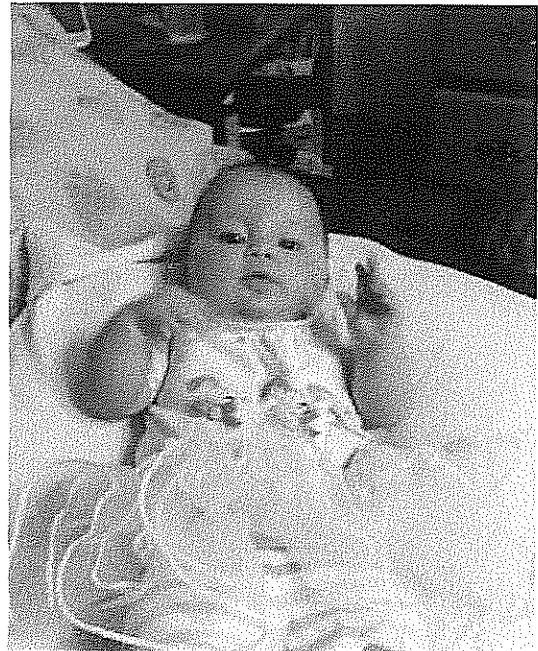
**Couples-\$15.00; Individual-\$10.00;  
Student-\$5.00; Business - \$25.00**

**Lifetime Memberships**

**Individual \$100.00;  
Couples \$150.00.**

**If you have an annual membership,  
Please renew with your dues now!**

**Derry Area Historical Society  
P.O. Box 64  
New Derry, PA 15671**



Peyton Anna Snyder born Dec 11, 2014 to Will and Missy Snyder. Peyton was early but waited until after our board elections so her parents could devote all of their time to her. She will be in training a few years before joining the team who create the great Innkeepers Dinner. Congratulations!

**Happy 80<sup>th</sup> Birthday to Edward Lamolinara**



Derry Area Historical Society  
P.O. Box 64  
New Derry Area, PA 15671  
<http://www.derryhistory.org>

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### Upcoming Events

- Apr 20 – Board Meeting – Fulton House
- May 2 – Innkeepers Dinner
- May 3– Home Opener – Covered Dish Social – Fulton House
- May 18 & June 15 – Board Meetings – Fulton House
- June 22 – Midsummer Night’s Ice Cream - Fulton House
- July 11-12 – New Derry Bicentennial Weekend
- July 13-18 – Derry Ag Fair
- Aug 9 – Lammas Day Festival – Fulton House

See our website: [www.derryhistory.org](http://www.derryhistory.org)

“Like Us” on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/dahsfultonhouse> or search “DAHS Page”.