THE BULLETIN

of

RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME 1 SPRING 1950 No. 1

INCORPORATED APRIL 30, 1948

Headquarters and Museum

THE FINLEY HOUSE

BEECH TREE LANE AND BELLEVUE AVENUE

WAYNE, PENNSYLVANIA

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IN THE COURT OF COMMON PLEAS OF DELAWARE COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF : MARCH TERM, 1948
RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY : NO. 526
CHARTER :

Order and Decree of Incorporation

AND NOW, TO WIT, this 30th day of April, A. D. 1948, the incorporators of a proposed non-profit corporation, to be known as RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY, having presented their application for a Charter to this Court, and it appearing by examination of the record as of the Term and Number above set forth, that the Articles of Incorporation are in proper form, the purposes of the proposed Corporation as set forth therein being lawful and not injurious to the community and not in conflict with the Non-profit Corporation Law approved the 5th day of May, 1933, P. L. 289, as amended, and that the said Articles, together with a Certificate of the Department of State approving and registering the corporate name, and proofs of advertisement having been duly filed in the Office of the Prothonotary, as required by law.

THEREFORE, on motion of HAROLD D. GREENWELL and H. LELAND SMALTZ, ESQUIRES, Solicitors for the incorporators, *IT IS HEREBY ORDERED AND DECREED* that the aforesaid Articles of Incorporation are approved and that upon the recording of the same, together with this Order and Decree, in the Office of the Recorder of Deeds in and for the County of Delaware, the said Corporation shall come into existence for the purposes set forth therein.

BY THE COURT:

/s/ HAROLD L. ERVIN
President Judge

/s/ HENRY G. SWENEY
Judge

/s/ WM. R. TOAL
Judge

Statement by the President

Early in the Autumn of 1947 a group of persons interested in Historical events in general and Radnor Township in particular, met together to discuss the organization of a Society for the preservation of property and documentary evidence of all kinds possessing Historical or Genealogical interest and significance to the citizens of the Township.

Plans were formulated and such interest was manifested that in a short time application was made to the Court of Common Pleas of Delaware County for a Charter of an intended Non-profit Corporation to be called "RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY." This application was acted upon favorably by the Court and on the 30th day of April 1948 the Charter was granted together with a Certificate of the Department of State approving and registering the corporate name.

Since this time the Society has made much progress, particularly in securing for its headquarters a part of the old Finley House on Beech Tree Lane, North Wayne, where our material is housed and exhibited. There has been a very gratifying response from the citizens of the Township to our program as outlined above and the Society looks forward to a larger membership to help continue and enlarge our activities—material and research.

There is much of historical worth in the Township that is still untouched and it is our hope that this publication, the first of a series, will be instrumental in bringing to our ranks many persons who are interested in the fascinating study of the History of Radnor Township and its adjacent areas.

We aim to attract the children of our Schools to our Museum and Library. It is planned further to stimulate their interest in local historical research by sponsoring prize competitions for essays on such topics.

Join . . . and help us grow!!!

HERBERT S. CASEY.

The Secretary Reports on Meetings

MAY 28, 1947

Mrs. Malcolm G. Sausser, Miss Josephine Wood Scott, Mr. R. Norris Williams II, Mr. Francis James Dallett Jr., and Dr. Henry Pleasants met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Howard S. Pleasants, Wayne to discuss a plan to establish a local historical society to function in Radnor Township.

NOVEMBER 17, 1947

A plan for the organization and incorporation of "RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY" was presented to a gathering of over forty people at the Radnor High School. The preliminary charter and by-laws were approved, membership dues were paid, and a steering committee of Mrs. Malcolm G. Sausser, Miss Josephine Wood Scott, Miss Margaret Howson, Mr. R. Norris Williams II, Mr. Herbert S. Casey, and Mr. Herman P. Lengel, was elected.

MAY 12, 1948

The first official meeting of the RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY was held at the Radnor High School, and was attended by forty-one persons. Presentation was made of the fact of incorporation, the granting of a charter, and the work of the steering committee in establishing the Society. Directors were elected: for one year Miss Margaret Howson, Mr. Francis James Dallett Jr., and Rev. Daniel P. Falvey, O.S.A.; for two years Mrs. Malcolm G. Sausser, Mr. Herbert S. Casey, and Mr. George L. Harrison; for three years Miss Josephine Wood Scott, Mr. Herman P. Lengel, and Mr. R. Norris Williams II. Mr. Casey was elected president, Miss Scott, vice-president, Mrs. Sausser, treasurer, and Mr. Dallett, secretary.

The summer of '48 saw work done on the headquarters room with restoration of the original fireplace and Dutch oven, and the exposing of the old oak beams made possible through the generosity of the Lengel family. The Society became affiliated with the Pennsylvania Federation of Historical Societies. Many donations were made to the collections in the headquarters room which opened to the public November 2, 1948.

NOVEMBER 19, 1948

Dr. Henry Pleasants Jr., of West Chester, spoke on military episodes in the life of Anthony Wayne, centering his remarks on nearby Chester County points which were the background for most of Wayne's brilliant exploits.

JANUARY 27, 1949

The history of old Radnor Meeting was the topic of Dr. Frederick B. Tolles and Miss Dorothy G. Harris, dressed in Quaker garb, both of the Friends Historical Library, Swarthmore College at a session in the Meetinghouse. Slides were shown of the Radnorshire country in Wales from which came the Welsh Friends who established Radnor Meeting in 1686.

MARCH 29, 1949

Nathan P. Pechin, member of a family which settled in Radnor in the early 1700's, and Herman P. Lengel, life long resident of Wayne, spoke informally on "People, Places and Events in Wayne in Its Day." Mr. Lengel traced the history of the Radnor school system, dating back to 1686. Mr. Pechin told the story of Morgan's Corner, now Radnor, and related tales of old, many of them handed down in his family from before the Revolution.

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Historical Radnor Township

Radnor Township is a subdivision of Delaware County in the State of Pennsylvania. It is bounded on the Northeast by Montgomery County, on the Southeast by Haverford and Marple Townships, on the Southwest by Newtown Township and on the Northwest by Chester County.

Geology counts our rock foundation as among the earliest formations known. The terrain is a succession of hills which are 300 feet above sea level at the southwest corner of the Township and rise to 500 feet at the northwest corner. The streams which course among these hills such as Valley Run, Meadow Brook, Miles and Camp Runs flow mostly towards the South by way of Ithan and Little Darby Creeks, into Darby Creek and finally into the Delaware River. But the Northeast section is drained by the Gulf Creek and small runs which enter Mill Creek; and thus flow into the Schuylkill River.

In prehistoric days the Mastodon, the Sabre-tooth tiger, bears larger than the grizzly, roamed these hills. The evidence was uncovered less than four miles from the Township boundary in the Port Kennedy Cave, where the remains of forty-one extinct species of mammals were preserved.

The earliest humans to live in this section were the Lenni Lenape Indians, regarded by other Indian tribes as "The Grandfathers" or the original people. Our Museum has an Indian ax which was dug up on the Pechin Farm in Radnor. Indian arrowheads were found when excavation was made for Radnor High School Gymnasium. Others were imbedded in trees on the William Wood property in Wayne.

White men came to Radnor at the time of William Penn. These early settlers were mostly Welsh, the first of them arriving here in April 1682. Welsh Quakers had bought 5000 acres from the Proprietor in England and ultimately acquired about 40,000 acres. This tract was often called The Welsh Barony. It lay on the west side of Schuylkill River north of Philadelphia. Gabriel Thomas' *Account of Pennsylvania* in 1698 referred to this Township as Radnor in Cambry.

Thomas Sion Evan seems to be the earliest land owner whose name has come down to us. His farm of 300 acres was in the southern part of the Township, with Ithan Creek flowing through the eastern part and Darby Creek the western.

The Holmes' map begun in 1681 marks "Radnor Township of 40 settlements."

The oldest building from that era, Radnor Meeting House, has been selected as the blazon of RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

The first road was made to connect Radnor Meeting with that at Merion in 1683; shortly after another was laid out to the Philadelphia Ferry.

The Welsh Episcopal Church built of logs is mentioned as early as 1708 when fifty families were counted nearby.

With the settlers increasing in numbers mills were erected on the Creeks and the first taverns were opened to care for travelers. Ithan Mills and the Sorrel Horse Inn were among the earliest in these categories.

During the Revolutionary War Radnor lay between Washington's forces at Valley Forge and General Howe's English troops in Philadelphia. The Lancaster Waggon Road bisected the Township. Radnor Meeting House was made into the headquarters of an American outpost with General Potter in command. A battery was set up at Five Points. Soldiers cleared seven acres of heavy timber in the middle of a large tract of woodland which, when later cultivated, was always called "The Camp Field." This was not half a mile distant from the Meeting House. A cannon ball found buried near there has been presented to our Museum.

The Philadelphia and Lancaster Turnpike, the earliest built in this country, was started in 1792 and finished two years later. It was built by private capital and cost $465,000.

The turnpikes served until the coming of the railroads. "The first act passed in America authorizing a company to make a railroad for public use was that of March 31, 1823, granting permission to Mr. Stevens and others to make a railway from Philadelphia to the Susquehanna River at Columbia, a distance of 84½ miles. That Company did not commence the work and the State has since nearly completed a like road between these points . . . in practice . . . it will be found that a locomotive engine with twenty tons of lading will travel the whole distance from Columbia to Philadelphia in a day of ten hours . . . a good Pennsylvania waggon horse will on this railway convey ten tons a distance of twenty-seven miles per day with ease." This quotation from Gordon's *Gazetteer of Pennsylvania* published in Philadelphia in 1832 graphically describes the lowly origin of our Main Line, famed in song and story (and *Holiday*).

The same book states that Radnor then had three houses for public worship and a post office at the Spread Eagle Tavern, at Littersville, 14 miles from Philadelphia on the Lancaster Turnpike, a settlement containing 8 or 10 dwellings and a store. The Postmaster was Edward Siter.

It was about this time that a system of Free Schools was set up in accordance with the law passed by the Commonwealth in 1836.

In 1842 Villanova College was opened with a faculty of seven and a student body of 30. The Chapel there served as the parish church for all the Catholics in the Township until St. Katharine's in Wayne took over a part of the territory. The College was chartered by the Legislature in 1848.

The Civil War found many of the men from Radnor enrolled in the Union forces. The main building at Villanova was used for sometime as a hospital by the Army.

The History of the Pennsylvania Railroad published in 1875 tells of the Quarries hereabouts: "fine building stone . . . the beautiful green serpentine so extensively used in ornamental architecture, coming from this region."

Therein too are listed four stations within the limits of Radnor Township, viz.: Villanova, Upton, Radnor and Wayne. Of this last it says—"Churches, public halls, public and private schools, and industries of various kind exist here. The locality is a beautiful one and is advancing rapidly in improvement, quite a town called Louella having sprung up around the station."

Louella developed into modern Wayne after A. J. Drexel and George W. Childs completed their plans to build a model suburban community.

The Wayne *Times*, which started in 1885, and later became the *Suburban and Times*, preserve in their files the story of town and township since then.

This outline sketch of three centuries seeks to demonstrate the wealth of historic material that awaits the labors of local research. Essays on our families, homes, roads, churches, etc. are invited from members of the Society. It is hoped that this initial BULLETIN *may become a quarterly publication, made up of such contributions. This Spring 1950 number has been made possible by the kindly interest of a member who prefers to remain anonymous.*

Thomas F. Roland 1918.

The Secretary Reports — Continued from Page Three

MAY 23, 1949

At the second annual meeting Brigadier General Norman Randolph, executive secretary of the Valley Forge Park Commission spoke on "Valley Forge Park, Its Development and Restoration." He described the commission, its work and the long range restoration program of 30 projects it developed. Slides shown illustrated the reconstruction of Forts John Moore and Mordecai Moore, two original redoubts in the form of a trapezium, which were revealed by aerial photography.

At this meeting Miss Caroline Robbins, Rev. Thomas F. Roland, O.S.A. and Mr. Francis James Dallett Jr. were elected Directors for three years, and the Officers of the Society were re-elected.

During Pennsylvania Week (October 17-24) the Historical Society held "Open House" at the headquarters. The resignation of Mr. George L. Harrison as director was received with deep regret, and Mr. James K. Heilner was named to fill the unexpired term. Mr. Thornton Oakley received the thanks of the Board for his beautiful design of the seal of the Society.

NOVEMBER 3, 1949

Antiquarian interests came to the fore with Mrs. Joseph Carson's topic, "Amateur Collecting of Relics and Records." Her sprightly remarks on the joys and methods of collecting were of great interest to all who love old things.

DECEMBER 8, 1949

Mr. Albert K. Ritner, of Oakmont, a former Pennsylvania Railroad employee, spoke on "The Old Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad," predecessor of the "Pennsy." Mr. Ritner, who had made a long study of railroad history, told of the trip of the first "Paoli Local" in September, 1832. Word of Mr. Ritner's death has been received with profound regret.

JANUARY 19, 1950

Miss Caroline Robbins, of Ithan, was hostess to members of the Society at an "Old Silver Tea." Mrs. Alfred Coxe Prime, of Paoli, noted authority on antique silver, spoke informally and identified many old pieces of silver brought to the meeting.

MARCH 23, 1950

Mr. Martin P. Snyder, Philadelphia lawyer, told the Society of the history of "Early Philadelphia Views," with special emphasis on the work of William Birch, an English engraver, who flourished in the city about 1800. Mr. Snyder illustrated his remarks with a rare private collection of old prints and Birchiana.

MAY 11, 1950

Villanova College welcomes us tonight in its new Library with a presentation of the history of the college, the oldest in Radnor Township, by one of the Augustinian Fathers.

F. JAMES DALLETT JR.

MEMBERS

April - 1950

Miss Mary C. Allen
Bart Anderson
Mrs. Kenneth B. Anderson
Miss Marie Atlee
Major Frank Ankenbrand
General Milton G. Baker
A. Vernon Beatty
Mrs. A. Vernon Beatty
Mrs. Helen L. Breining
Miss Mary DeHaven Bright
Miss M. H. Brooke
Miss Ida Brooke
Theodore B. Brooks
Mrs. Edith H. Brown
George F. Brown
Mrs. George F. Brown
Harry W. Bryan
Mrs. Herbert S. Casey
Herbert S. Casey
Mrs. Benjamin Chew*
Mrs. Dewitt Clement
E. Osborne Coates
Mrs. Elizabeth A. Conkle
Mrs. F. J. Dallett
F. James Dallett Jr.
Joseph Birdsall Dallett
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Mrs. R. M. Decker
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Mrs. George Diffenback
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Mrs. Albert Driesbach
Rev. John R. Dunne, O.S.A.
Mrs. A. M. Ehart
Dr. Robert P. Elmer
John D. Erskine
Rev. D. P. Falvey, O.S.A.
John Fenton
Miss E. Dorothy Finley
D. Knight Finley
Mrs. John P. Frank
Mrs. Harold A. Freeman
J. Stuart Freeman
Mrs. J. Stuart Freeman
J. Stuart Freeman Jr.
Andrew L. Fritz
Colonel Clyffard Game
Mrs. Clyffard Game
Mrs. H. P. Gant
P. Exton Guckes
Mrs. P. Exton Guckes
William Hacker
Dr. H. C. Hadley
J. H. Hallman
George L. Harrison
Mrs. E. Reeves Hart
Mrs. J. F. Hartley
Mrs. James T. Haviland
James T. Haviland
James K. Heilner
Mrs. Margaret Hess
Mrs. Charles Howson
Charles Howson
Miss Margaret Howson
Mrs. Oliver H. Jackson
Oliver H. Jackson
Mrs. Frederick J. Jiggens
Mrs. John F. Joline Jr.
Mrs. Frederick T. Jones
Rev. William J. Jones
Miss Virginia D. Keeney
Mrs. E. S. Kennedy
Miss Dorothy B. Lapp
Miss Helen Lienhardt
Mrs. J. D. Lengel
Herman P. Lengel
Mrs. William B. Linn
Miss May Loughrey
Mrs. Sue Loughrey
Montague Lycett
Charles Martin
Mrs. Charles Martin
Mrs. Charles Mather
Charles Mather
Mrs. E. Henry Molthan
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Mrs. Theodore H. Morris
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Dr. Archibald Morrison
Mrs. Archibald Morrison
Mrs. Robert Morrison
Robert Morrison
Rev. Crosswell McBee
Joseph B. McCall Jr.
Mrs. Joseph B. McCall Jr.
Mrs. Alvin P. McCarter
Alvin P. McCarter
Mrs. F. Allen McCurdy
Miss Marion A. McKnight
Mrs. Lewis Neilson
Mrs. Thornton Oakley
Thornton Oakley
Mrs. Alexander O'Neal
George Park Jr.
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Nathan Pechin
Boies Penrose
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Miss Grace Roberts
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Mrs. William H. Roberts Jr.
Mrs. Esther D. Robinson
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Mrs. Richard C. Russell
Rev. Robert P. Russell, O.S.A.
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Malcolm G. Sausser
Mrs. Malcolm G. Sausser
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Miss Josephine W. Scott
Mrs. William A. Scott
Mrs. D. Miller Schaffer
H. Harrison Smith
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Dr. Cyrus Truxal
Mrs. Cyrus Truxal
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Hamilton Vodges
Mrs. Hamilton Vodges
Dr. Norman A. Wack
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Mrs. G. Wellcome
Miss Roseta Wellcome
Douglas C. Wendell
Clayton S. Wetzell
Mrs. Clayton S. Wetzell
Mrs. Henry R. Wharton Jr.
Mrs. William Wiedersheim
Mrs. Edward Williams
Richard Norris Williams 2nd
O. Howard Wolf
Mrs. Robert W. A. Wood
Mrs. Thomas A. Wood
Thomas A. Wood
Thomas A. Wood Jr.

* Deceased.