

THE BULLETIN
of
RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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INCORPORATED APRIL 30, 1948

Headquarters and Museum

THE FINLEY HOUSE
BEECH TREE LANE AND BELLEVUE AVENUE
WAYNE, PENNSYLVANIA

Board of Directors

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R. NORRIS WILLIAMS II

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RICHARD W. BARRINGER, *Secretary*

Report of the Chairman, Program Committee

The Radnor Historical Society program for 1950-51 started with a very successful celebration of Pennsylvania Week, October 16-21. Dr. J. K. Stevens, secretary of the Pennsylvania Federation of Historical Societies and President of the American Association for State and Local History, spoke in Radnor High School on Tuesday on the importance of work like our own. Exhibitions of much interest were displayed in local stores — Ansley's, Firestone, Halligan's, Litchenfeld's, Park's, Kay's Gown, Wack's, Wayne Hardware, and attracted many visitors. From both within and without the township the following colonial homes received enthusiastic and numerous visitors on Saturday afternoon — The Ithan Store (c1683); Kinterra (c1718); Rockland (eighteenth cent.); Pemberton House (c1717); the Pugh House (1775); the Tatum house in Radnor (c1750); the Homestead (1789) our headquarters; the Berthnuth home and collection of American antiques. The Society is most grateful to the owners of these homes, the Curleys, the Morrises, Miss Watson, the Ringlers, the Tatums, Miss Finley and Miss L. von Bernuth for their generosity in making their treasures available for general enjoyment on that day. The Society also owes much to the work of Mrs. Joline and Jimmy Dallett for making many of the arrangements for this interesting event.

On 8 December the Valley Forge Military Academy entertained the Society most kindly and Major General Milton G. Baker spoke on "Universal Military Service for Americans, A Twentieth Century Necessity."

On 30 January 1951 the Society was entertained at a lovely party by the Saturday Club of Wayne. After introductory remarks welcoming guests to their most hospitable doors, the President of the club turned the meeting over to Mrs. T. Magill Patterson, well-known to all readers of the *Suburban* for her interesting column, and gifted commentator on local antiquities. Mrs. Patterson was followed by Mr. Herbert Casey, our President, who spoke on the Society, and gave some most amusing anecdotes of local interest out of his own experiences as antiquarian and collector. Many others subsequently reminisced about Wayne and old times they recalled or had heard about. An enjoyable time was had by everyone and delicious refreshments were provided by the Saturday Club.

The Society celebrated the Golden anniversary of Radnor as a first class township on 13 March at St. Mary's Parish House and heard significant and timely talks about its history from Joseph M. Fronefield, Rocco A. Odorisio, Mrs. E. Chapman Smith and Mr. Richard Barringer. Members must turn to the files of the *Suburban* for some report of these able speeches. Mr. Barringer's paper has been printed in full in the "Township Commissioner" and will repay study. We should like to reproduce each talk here in full but space forbids.

At the last meeting of the year on 2 May Amy and Thornton Oakley, author and illustrator of "Our Pennsylvania" commented upon "Creative Adventures in History"; Mrs. Oakley concentrated rather on her own discovery of the state and its seven wonders, amongst them forest areas of great beauty and antiquity; Mr. Oakley, on his philosophy of art and life. At this meeting prizes were awarded to three students, two firsts and a second winner of the competition entered by twenty-three girls and boys of the township and sponsored by the Society. Mary Anita Butler, of Radnor High; Edna Hobson, of St. Katharine's, and Anne Maguire, also of St. Katharine's, received books for their excellent essays on local history. Indeed the Society would have liked to reward all contestants, standards being unusually high.

THIS BULLETIN IS AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED

TO THE MEMORY OF

MRS. LOUISE M. LENGEL

BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS, OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF

RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Summary of the Minutes of Meetings of Board of Directors

1950 . . . June 1

Meeting of Directors had for its main business the election of Officers for the coming year. Mr. Herbert Casey was unanimously re-elected President. Mr. Richard W. Barringer was chosen to fill out the unexpired term as Director of Mr. James Dallett, who resigned in preparation to leave the country for service in the State Department. Then Mr. Barringer was elected Secretary of the Society. Miss Caroline Robbins was elected Vice-President, replacing Miss Josephine Wood Scott, resigned. Mrs. Malcolm G. Sausser was unanimously re-elected Treasurer. Other business was the assigning to the Harrison Fund a donation received from Mrs. Emory McMichael; spreading on the Minutes the appreciation of the Board for the services of the departing Secretary, Mr. Dallett; and a discussion of plans made for the Open House arranged for June 4.

1950 . . . September 22

The Board arranged to celebrate Pennsylvania Week, and Mr. Dallett told of preliminary work done on this project to date; Miss Robbins assumed responsibility for the publicity needed to insure community cooperation. A delegate was appointed to meet with a group from other Main Line historical societies with the view of jointly publishing a periodical. The President, Mr. Casey reported to the Board the recent death of a member, Miss Josephine W. Scott. A letter was written in the name of the Society, addressed to Miss Scott's sister, Mrs. Charles Stewart, expressing appreciation of the deceased Director's efforts in its successful inauguration.

1950 . . . October 13

The first business before the meeting was a report on the start made to launch The Main Line Patriot as a cooperative venture in publishing by the four historical societies of the vicinity. Our Delegate presented the contract proposed, and outlined the proceedings of the delegates at their recent meeting in Ardmore. On advice of counsel the Board voted not to associate our Society with the new venture, to inform the others of our decision, and to express to them our best wishes for their success in the venture. The next item of business was the election of Mrs. John Forsyth Joline, Jr., as a Director of this Society, to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Miss Scott. The Board then voted to insure up to one thousand dollars the exhibits entrusted to our care for the exhibitions planned for Pennsylvania Week. Next it was voted to award a prize for an essay on local history, to be open to the pupils of the Wayne High Schools. The appreciation of the Society was voted to Mr. Theodore Brooks, of Wayne, for his gift to the Society's Museum of a lock of George Washington's hair, with the documentary evidence that it had been in the Brooks family since 1795.

1951 . . . February 6

The Board heard a report on the joint meeting held with the Saturday Club on January 30 devoted to discussion of Radnor Township history. Next two

members were assigned as judges in the High School Essay award. Plans were made to have the March meeting of the Society mark in some special manner the Fiftieth Anniversary of the establishment of Radnor as a First Class Township.

1951 . . . April 13

The Board first acted on an invitation from the Federation of Historical Societies of Pennsylvania, assigned a member to be our Delegate at the Harrisburg Convention, and voted to meet his expenses for the trip. Next, a Nominating Committee was appointed, composed of Mr. Charles Martin, Chairman; Mrs. Francis J. Dallett, Mr. James K. Heilner, who were to consider candidates to fill the coming vacancies on the Board of Directors. Further discussion was had on the subject of the Essay Contest. It was decided to add another prize, in view of the number of entrants, and to invite all the contestants to attend the meeting at which the prizes should be awarded. The final business of the meeting was to hear a letter from the President, Mr. Herbert Casey, read by the Secretary, in which Mr. Casey tendered his resignation from office, effective at the end of the current season. Pressure of business and personal matters were the reasons given for the resignation, and he expressed his deep appreciation for the cooperation received filling the duties of his office. The Board in turn expressed its regrets at this turn of events, and voted to defer action.

1951 . . . May 2

The Board heard the report of its delegate to the Harrisburg Convention of the Federation of Historical Societies of Pennsylvania. Next it received the recommendation of the Committee on Nominations that the Directors whose terms were about to end be re-elected. On motion made and seconded Mr. Herman P. Lengel, Mr. R. Norris Williams II and Mrs. John Forsyth Joline, Jr., were unanimously elected to fill three-year terms as Directors of the Society.

1951 . . . June 8

The Board heard the report read by the Treasurer. It showed all bills paid to date, a balance in the checking account of \$152.62, in the Special Funds account \$150.00. On motion, the report was accepted as read. Plans were discussed for the Society's sponsored visits to historical homes, and arrangements made to approach the owners for necessary permissions. Next the President appointed Mrs. Joline to be Chairman of the Committee of Hostesses; Mr. Heilner to be Curator of the Society's Museum and Library collections; Mr. Charles Martin to be Chairman of the Membership Committee, and Mrs. J. K. Heilner to be Chairman of the Entertainment committee. On motion, the resignation of Mr. Casey from his office of President, which was before the meeting, was accepted. The Vice President took the Chair. The Society's Directors gave voice to their appreciation of Mr. Casey's untiring efforts in establishing the Society, and his wise guidance of its affairs since his inauguration as its first President. On motion, it was voted unanimously to make Mr. Herbert S. Casey our President Emeritus.

Our Museum

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania owns a magnificent building on Locust Street in Philadelphia, which houses its great library, provides quarters for its famous museum displays, and contains rooms for holding its meetings and social gatherings. This society is one hundred and twenty-seven years old. The American Catholic Historical Society owns the old Nicholas Biddle residence on Spruce Street, where its lectures and meetings are held. In addition, it has at its disposal a huge room for its library treasures and other smaller rooms for its archives and museum pieces in the Archdiocesan Seminary of St. Charles at Overbrook. This society was established in 1885. The Chester County Historical Society owns its beautiful headquarters in West Chester, containing Library, Museum, and chambers adapted to its cultural and social activities. This society is now fifty-eight years old.

What can be said in similar vein for our own Radnor Historical Society? It is now four years old — an infant in comparison with those just cited. It has its own headquarters, its museum and its library on a small scale, it is true, but the important thing is that the beginning has been made. It might be well to mark this progress in order to bring to the attention of our members the success with which the Society is meeting the aims proclaimed in its organization meeting . . . "to encourage and foster interest in local history, and to collect and preserve historical data and material pertaining to the history of Radnor Township and environs . . ."

Our Society headquarters are small but, appropriately enough, are historical. The oldest part of the Finley House is set apart for our use, and dates back to 1789. The masonry is fieldstone with plaster cover, a style which marks the earliest structures of Delaware County. A single, almost square room, about 12' x 10', with a low ceiling of exposed oak beams, forms the interior. The original fireplace with its Dutch oven forms one end. Walls and ceiling are whitewashed, and the floor is covered with old style boards. In such an atmosphere does the Board of Directors meet. Here are the bookcases that hold our Library and the other cases preserving our Museum items. All very modest, it must be admitted, but, even now small as it is, our Museum exhibits illustrate the more important epochs of Radnor history. Here is a stone ax, made by the first race of men to dwell within the confines of the township, the Indians, and found on the old Pechin farm. Nearby is a land grant, signed by James Logan, agent for William Penn; this document reaches us from the days of the first white men to settle here. There are photostats of the earliest plans which show the holdings of the settlers of the part Welsh Tract that is situated within our present township limits. A small cannonball from the heroic days of the Revolution helps us to realize that on our Radnor roads and fields were frequent skirmishes between American and British pickets at the time when General Washington suffered with his troops at Valley Forge and English officers danced with Philadelphia belles at the never-to-be-forgotten Meschianza. Another of our prized possessions is a specimen of the Star Spangled Banner, whose thirty-four stars prove that it waved during the dark days of the Civil War. Other items on display are pieces of furniture, old chairs, old maps; plans of Louella, which grew up and became Wayne; pictures of the old homes and farms of the neighborhood; Rules for the Public Schools of Radnor, from the 1880's. A watchman's rattle and a horn used by the volunteer firemen remind us of days when police and firemen were not so close by as in our own era. Programs from the 1890's — one of the

Field Games of Wayne Athletic Association and another of the *Mikado* produced at the Wayne Opera House — summon up visions of social life that must bear a nostalgic glow for some of us. Such are the items we preserve for future Radnorites.

Our Library also is small, still in possession of less than a hundred volumes. But these cover very competently the history of the nation, the state, the county, and the neighborhood. There are nineteen volumes given to the Radnor Historical Society by the Pennsylvania Federation of Historical Societies, all on historical themes. Such books as Beck's *Constitution of the U.S.A.*, Brice's *American Commonwealth*, and one with the text of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution give the reader a historic perspective on our country. *The Guide to Published Pennsylvania Archives I-IX*, and a *Bibliography of Pennsylvania Historical Writings*, which are to be found on our shelves, help the student through the mazes of our state history. *The Welsh Settlement of Pennsylvania*, Ashmead's *History of Delaware County*, of which we have the edition of 1862 and that of 1884, the histories of our neighboring counties — Chester, Montgomery and Berks — and Watson's interesting *Annals of Philadelphia* in three volumes, give competent coverage to the events of the nearly three centuries of local recorded history. Five volumes of *The Civil War Through the Camera* picture that great struggle as a whole. *The Eighth Penna. Cavalry at Chancellorsville* and the *History of the Third Penna. Cavalry* offer more detailed accounts of smaller groups in action. Local interests can find entertainment and knowledge in such topical volumes as *The History of Old Eagel School, Radnor Old Welsh Church, St. David's Church, The Old Main Line*, and a *Historical Sketch of The Railroad Stations on the Main Line*. Among the items found here are *The Roll Book For Sunday Schools* (1867), an atlas of 1827, *Medals in the Phila. Mint* (1861), *Adams Musical Dictionary* (1865), and the rather alarming indictment of some of our former neighbors, entitled *The Constitution and By-Laws of the Radnor and Haverford Society for the Detection and Prosecution of Horse Thieves* (1884). Biographies of Ben Franklin, Dr. Pawling, and Daniel Webster, historical excursions such as Jackson's *Market Street*, Chris Morley's *Travels in Philadelphia*, and *Pennsylvania Place Names* might tempt the casual reader to take them from our cases and absorb some history in homeopathic dosage. This rather rambling sampling of the Library is intended chiefly to call our members' attention to the start that has been made by the Society in its short years.

Though small, the Library and Cabinet already warrant the appointment of a custodian by the Society. One of the last things done by our First President, Mr. Herbert Casey, was to make Mr. James K. Heilner, of the Board of Directors, Curator of the nascent Museum. There are already at hand filing cases and cards ready to serve as the Catalogue, which will keep books and other items in order, and make easy the search for any needed. It is the wish of the Society that our members feel free to make full use of the facilities we have, learn the treasures in our keeping, and read the books on the shelves. And further, since now we can show that care will be given to things entrusted to our keeping it is the hope of the Board that members and others of the vicinity will place with us the many historic things in their possession, when the time comes for a permanent disposition to be made of such things. The Society invites such donations, and is now ready to give proper attention to their preservation and display — thus fulfilling its function in the Community.

Thomas J. Roland 1918.

Fifty Years of Local Government

Commissioners of Radnor Township

Compiled by Richard W. Barringer

- 1901 W. Henry Sayen, President
Rudolph Ellis
Frederick W. Kimball. Died July, 1903.
F. H. Treat. Died 9/25/17.
John P. Wood
H. C. Hunter, Secretary
- 1902 F. A. Canizares, succeeding Secretary Hunter
C. F. Da Casta, Solicitor. Died 10/21/23
W. S. Ellis, Counsel
- 1903 H. L. Geyelin, succeeding Kimball
- 1905 R. L. Hart, succeeding John P. Wood
Charles H. Stewart, Secretary, succeeding F. A. Canizares
- 1909 Edward L. Maguire, succeeding R. L. Hart
- 1911 Henry P. Conner, succeeding E. L. Maguire
John Kent Kane, succeeding H. L. Geyelin
- 1916 Thomas M. Chalfant, Secretary, succeeding Charles H. Stewart, resigned 5/1/16.
- 1917 10/10/17 William T. Wright, succeeding F. H. Treat
- 1918 1/10/18 W. S. Ellis elected President; John Kent Kane elected Vice-President
- 1919 Thomas W. Hulme, succeeding W. Henry Sayen 1/27/19
- 1920 Frederick F. Hollowell, succeeding Thomas W. Hulme 1/8/20
Frederick R. Wallace, Secretary, succeeding Thomas M. Chalfant 4/1/20
- 1921 Margaret K. Rugg, succeeding Frederick R. Wallace 4/28/21
- 1923 Charles H. Stewart appointed Secretary pro tem 4/19/23
9/11/23 M. K. Rugg back as Secretary
- 1924 1/7/24 William S. Ellis, President; John Kent Kane, Vice-President
1/7/24 Frederick T. Jones, succeeding F. F. Hollowell
1/7/24 Charles H. Stewart, succeeding M. K. Rugg
1/7/24 Humbert B. Powell, Solicitor
- 1926 Reginald H. Morris, succeeding John Kent Kane 1/11/26
William S. Ellis, President; F. T. Jones, Vice-President 1/11/26
Margaret K. Rugg, Secretary, succeeding Charles H. Stewart 1/11/26
June, 1926, Miss Rugg married—now M. R. McGovern
- 1927 9/1/27 M. R. McGovern resigned
9/1/27 Mrs. L. W. Hummel, succeeding Mrs. McGovern
- 1928 Thomas W. Hulme, succeeding Wm. T. Wright 1/2/28
T. W. Hulme, President; Fred T. Jones, Vice-President 1/2/28
- 1930 1/6/30 Thomas W. Hulme, President; Fred T. Jones, Vice-President
1/6/30 Benjamin F. James, succeeding R. H. Morris
1/6/30 Frank Paul Kane, succeeding Henry P. Conner
- 1931 Thomas W. Hulme, resigned 4/28/31
Frederick T. Jones, President; Benjamin F. James, Vice-President 4/28/31
William P. Cochrane, succeeding Thomas W. Hulme
- 1932 Joseph M. Fronefield, succeeding William P. Cochrane 1/4/32
Andrew J. Martin, succeeding Fred T. Jones 1/4/32
Aubrey R. Keirse, succeeding William S. Ellis 1/4/32
Joseph M. Fronefield, President; A. R. Keirse, Vice-President 1/4/32
E. H. P. Fronefield, Solicitor, 1/4/32
- 1934 Edgar Scott, succeeding Benjamin F. James 1/1/34
O. Howard Wolfe, succeeding Frank Paul Kane 1/1/34
Joseph M. Fronefield, President; A. R. Keirse, Vice-President 1/1/34
- 1936 Benjamin F. James, succeeding Andrew J. Martin 1/6/36
John F. Christie, succeeding Aubrey R. Keirse 1/6/36
Joseph M. Fronefield, President; O. Howard Wolfe, Vice-President 1/6/36
- 1937 Benjamin F. James—resigned 1/4/37
C. Laurence Warwick, succeeding Benjamin F. James 1/13/37
- 1938 Joseph F. Fronefield, President; O. Howard Wolfe, Vice-President 1/3/38
- 1940 Charles A. McClure, succeeding J. M. Fronefield 1/1/40
O. Howard Wolfe, President; Edgar Scott, Vice-President 1/1/40
- 1942 O. Howard Wolfe, President; Edgar Scott, Vice-President 1/5/42
- 1944 O. Howard Wolfe, President; Edgar Scott, Vice-President 1/3/44
- 1946 Edgar Scott, President; C. L. Warwick, Vice-President 1/7/46
- 1948 E. H. Molthan, succeeding Charles A. McClure 1/5/48
C. L. Warwick, President; John F. Christie, Vice-President 1/5/48
Edgar Scott—resigned 5/3/48
C. Clark Zantinger, Jr., succeeding Edgar Scott 5/3/48
- 1949 L. W. Hummel, Secretary—resigned 9/1/49
Richard W. Barringer, Secretary; L. W. Hummel, Assistant Secretary 9/1/49
- 1950 William Plummer, Jr., succeeding O. Howard Wolfe 1/2/50
C. L. Warwick, President; John F. Christie, Vice-President 1/2/50
Rocco A. Odorisio, new Commissioner 6th Ward, 2/14/50
Frank W. Weightman, new Commissioner 7th Ward 2/14/50

RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

List of Members who joined May, 1950 - July, 1951

Professor Henry L. Rofinot	P. A. Edwards
Richard W. Barringer	Miss Helen Johnson
George W. Schultz	Mrs. W. E. Boeyer
Robert L. Headly	J. Russell Hogeland
Miss Lecian Von Bernuth	James R. Wilds
Charles E. Alexander	Mrs. Joseph K. Shoemaker, Jr.
Miss Harriett Weed	Miss M. Gertrude Neher
Woodburn Potter	Mrs. Donald F. Bixler
Miss Agnes Watson (Dec'd)	Mr. Donald F. Bixler
Miss Elizabeth Watson	Miss Janet P. Russell
Henry H. Loomis	Mrs. Thomas E. Walton
Mrs. E. W. Westhead	Mr. Thomas E. Walton
Mrs. Paul Stull	Mr. and Mrs. William Ringler
Henry R. Pemberton	T. Griffiths Roberts
Charles M. Tatum	Mrs. Marie Good Hunt

Notes on Radnor History

John Jerman, Jr., first white child born in Radnor, November 12, 1684, lived near the Radnor Meeting house at Ithan and was one of the first astronomers in Colonial Pennsylvania. John Jerman lived all his life in Radnor.

In December, 1777, General Potter of the Continental Army and his men were encamped in Radnor to protect the countryside from the deprecation of the British.

Stephen Evan's daughter Sarah, born May 25, 1686, was the first female child of European parents.

In 1832 there was a public exhibition of the telegraph in Eagle School House.

John Evans, 1790-1862, a miller on Ithan Creek, had the finest gardens and botanical collection ever seen in this latitude.

The town of Wayne has been known at various times as Cleaver's Gate, Cleaver's Landing, Louella, Anthony Wayne, and Wayne.

Wayne in its time had an opera house, a cricket club, and the Wayne Natorium, largest inland swimming pool in America, in operation 1895-1905 (site of present Willow Avenue).

The first city resident to establish a home in Radnor was Dr. Edward Peace (1811-1879), a celebrated Philadelphia physician of the University of Pennsylvania and University Hospital. The first surgeon in the United States to make a success in tying a deep-seated artery, who in 1853 purchased "Annasdale" in Radnor township as a country seat.

Dr. Pleasants says that his grandfather purchased "Rockland" in Radnor (the present Galloway C. Morris place on West Wayne Avenue) as a country residence in 1848.

Some Pre-Revolutionary dwellings still standing are the Pugh-Jones farm house (Ringler residence, corner Lancaster Avenue and Farm Road) and the John Henry farm house (incorporated into St. Exley house in Colonial Village).

Miss Josephine Wood Scott, instrumental in the founding of the Radnor Historical Society, was the daughter of the late William A. Scott and Adelaide Coltart. She was born in Mine La Motte, Missouri. Much of her girlhood was spent in travel, through this country and Europe. It was in 1892 that she came to Wayne, and she made her home here until her death in August, 1950. During the First World War, Miss Scott was a farmerette, active in the Red Cross, in volunteer nursing service and in rehabilitation groups. More recently, she allied herself more closely to local efforts; the Neighborhood League, and the activities of the Wayne Presbyterian Church, of which she was an active member.

Hers was a brilliant, seeking mind, tuned to beauty and tradition. Throughout her years here she sought out facts of Wayne and its past, and through her friendships with many of its early families, she supplemented much of its early history. It was right and fitting that Miss Scott should be an inspirational part of the founding of our Radnor Historical Society, for through her efforts and its medium she lived to see the past merged into the present as an inspiration for the future. It is good to know that her name will be honored in the archives of the Society which she helped to found, and which she lived to enjoy as a cultural part of our community.

Dr. Robert Potter Elmer, a charter member of Radnor Historical Society, died March 4, 1951. A graduate of Princeton University and University of Pennsylvania Medical School, he had practiced medicine in Wayne for nearly half a century. He was internationally known in archery circles, vice-president of the Royal Toxopholyte of London, and President of United Bowmen of Philadelphia. He wrote the article on Archery in the Encyclopedia Britannica. His book, *Archery*, is called by the New York Times "the bible of his fellow sportsmen." Dr. Elmer was a member of St. Andrews Society, the Colonial Society of Pennsylvania, and the Founders and Patriots of America. From the beginning of Radnor Historical Society he took a very active interest in all its affairs, and led the discussions which followed after the lectures and talks delivered at the Society's general meetings. The Board of Directors and the Officers feel keenly the passing of a valued colleague.

Miss Agnes Watson, of our Society, died June 25, 1951, at her home, Kinterra. She was the daughter of the late Richard H. and Katherine M. R. Watson, pioneer residents of Wayne, and members of old Philadelphia families. Her gardens and her home with its many pieces of vertu were hospitably made available to our Society for its annual program of visits to local points of historical interest. Her memory is inscribed in our records as a gracious hostess and one devoted to the aims of the Society.

The Directors of the Society owe many thanks to all who have helped in the programs of the past year. They very much hope that more members will come forward next year with talks prepared by themselves on topics of interest and that projects collective and individual will be undertaken to preserve the traditions, antiquities and modern amenities of Radnor Township.