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of
RADNOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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Headquarters and Museum:

THE FINLEY HOUSE
113 West Beech Tree Lane
Wayne, Pennsylvania 19087

Telephone: (610) 688-2668

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The President's Letter

This year I have become increasingly aware of the value and significance of the Society's collection. This has come about partly through my attendance at various meetings and workshops on historical topics, and partly through increasing my own familiarity with what we have here "at home." We must not assume, because we are not large or wealthy, that our holdings are less important than those of other institutions, or less deserving of our respect and care.

We are currently in the process of cataloguing and housing our collection of photographs and documents, thanks to grants we have received from the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts and the Philadelphia Historic Preservation Corporation. We have an intern from the University of Pennsylvania working on this project now, and we shall have an intern from Cabrini College this summer and fall. Look for a full report on this project later in the year.

We are also refining and documenting the furnishings of our two "interpreted rooms": the 1789 kitchen and the 1840's "Victorian" bedroom. We are extremely fortunate to have, in the bedroom, a complete set of "cottage" furniture, made in Philadelphia in 1840 and still in good original condition; this furniture is exactly consistent with the architectural style of the room, which was remodeled in 1843.

In the broader picture, we have been asked to assist in the centennial celebration of the Delaware County Historical Society. We are the designated representatives of Radnor Township, which means that we shall be providing a list of historic sites in the Township which will be open on 4 November for a County-wide Centennial Tour. The Finley House, of course, will be open on that day. We hope our cooperation with other organizations will help us to expand our horizons as well, and that we will learn from each other.

There is a lot to look forward to in the next few years, as we gear up for our half-century celebration in 1997-98. And again, we are grateful for the generous support of our members, without which we would be able to do nothing at all.

J. Bennett Hill, Jr.
April, 1995

Native Resources: The Radnor Historical Society and the Lancaster Pike

by Julia Shipley

It began with the simple question, “Where do you come from?” asked with an Australian twang. I was surrounded by eucalyptus trees and bungalows and lorries roaring around on the opposite side of the road. Traveling through new territory challenged me to be observant, awake, sharp. I asked myself, “Which road am I on? Who is around me? What are they doing?” I gathered information on local slang, town histories, life stories. I learned how the town “Wagga-Wagga” earned its name. But when asked the details of Strafford, PA, I was empty-mouthed, ignorant. I had never considered my home worth probing, exploring like a foreigner. I had no substantial answer to that question, “Where do you come from?” But now I was provoked to wonder.

One July morning, eight months later, outside Pittsburgh, I straddled my bike and began pedaling the first mile of the 400 it would take to reach Philadelphia. As the day progressed, I cursed up the hills, coasted down, and I found myself on Route 30. Hey! I know Route 30! We call it “The Pike” or “Lancaster Pike.” You mean, if I stayed on this road, I would eventually pass Fritz's Lumber and the Farmers' Market? The same one! I chugged along past cornfields, barns painted with tobacco ads, and Mennonite churches imagining that just 399 miles up ahead, this same road was conveying my mother to the Acme. As I pedaled east out of the country, through the suburbs and back to the city, I discovered how this road, like a black thread, sews disparate landscapes and communities together. “Where do you come from?” An answer was beginning to form on my tongue.

One year after that episode, in a Gettysburg youth hostel, I found a thick book called *The History of Pennsylvania*. I was captured by a chapter titled “The Lancaster Pike: America's First Toll Road.” What! You mean our Pike was a toll road? That it carried covered wagons! Wow! How did we go from Conestoga wagons and wayside taverns to Jeep Wagoners and Wawa markets? Now I understood, not only was the road fluent in lateral, mappable miles, but it extended like a root, a path back to the past.

Researching and investigating resembles visiting another country. I felt like a time-tourist, penetrating the centuries, sightseeing for panoramas of understanding. How did the Lancaster Pike evolve and affect the community

beside it? Every Tuesday I'd emigrate to the Radnor Historical Society to discover new sounds, sights, facts—probe unfamiliar ways of dressing, speaking and acting out everyday life, except this time I wasn't surrounded by Kangaroos and Koalas. I was home! I started to look at local houses, trying to determine by the architecture when they were built and what might have preceded them in the neighborhood: an estate, a dairy farm, a forest? I examined how the roads lay. Were they making strange juts and bends to obey old property lines? Did they have names that indicated their age or origination—such as Farm Road or Old Lancaster?

I scrutinized remnants—an old turnpike ticket, ancient photos, the 1901 local telephone book. After hours spent immersed in tidbits of bygone eras, I'd pack up my notes and leave the Finley House. On my way home, suddenly things I had seen in a short-sighted way all my life leapt up at me with meaning. Bellevue Road! Of course—named for the site of the Bellevue Hotel. Spread Eagle Village! Named after the famous tavern. Strafford, named in honor of landowner James Wentworth, descendent of the Earl of Strafford. So this is where I come from! Beneath every mundane activity, taking the train to Bryn Mawr or driving to Paoli, there is a wealth of stories of how it came to be which enhances my appreciation and strengthens my wonder for the world I take for granted.



Julia Shipley Reviewing Materials in Findley House Archives

Every foreign journey has pretty vistas, but it also has dyspeptic moments. On my expedition to understand the origins of a road and the evolution of a community, I discovered the less savory results of change. I had imagined towns like Wayne-Strafford-Devon just popping up on the map, becoming comfy places to live because that was the natural settlement plan. Through research I learned it was a business venture. Many prominent doctors, lawyers and business men settled in the same area because the Railroad promoters enticed them. They renamed towns to sound more aristocratically appropriate. Humphreysville became Bryn Mawr; Louella was transformed to Wayne. They specifically built and priced houses for an elite clientele. What had been farmers' pastures became a crafted suburb for the rich so they could enjoy the amenities of the city without having to dwell within its unpleasantness. I wondered what the farmers thought of new houses cropping up, fields sprouting into neighborhoods, orchards blooming into street side shops. As the concept of planned suburban communities encroached on my romantic rural notions, I realized that a road is first and foremost a pathway for change. It is a chute for all kinds of gems and germs to stream through, a place for all possibilities, scenic and tragic.

While I reviewed my notes and sketches, translating my investigation into a story book, *The Toll Taker's Tale*, I wondered whether or not the colonial German, Welsh, and Scotch-Irish settlers relished the life they had. Did they realize what goodness was around them? I wonder if I realize to the fullest extent the value of this place I now know.

In 1792, even if you left Lancaster early Friday morning with weather in your favor, you still would not reach Philadelphia till Monday. Today we can fuel up our Wagoners, drive through the rain and park on Market Street in Lancaster in under two hours. With life and change occurring at this accelerated pace, it is easy to lose a sense of who you are and where you are. As I reflect on my time travels, I have come to know and touch the lives of my predecessors and in that touching have informed myself more clearly of from where I come. I am indebted to the Radnor Historical Society and the people dedicated to preserving remnants of the past. For those of us provoked to wonder, who find value in probing and glancing back, here we may string together small understandings to carry with us as we proceed to new countries and wander down new roads.

From the *Weekly Wayne Gazette*, Saturday, August 19, 1871:

“Wine drinkers and dealers wonder if 1871 is to be a grape year. Probably not, since this year is the current year.”

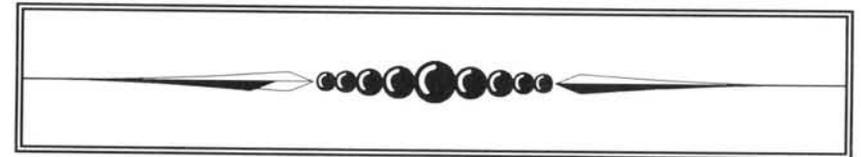
The History of Radnor Township's Parks: Continuing the Dialogue

One of the great values of the *Bulletin* is the opportunity it gives each of us to share our understandings of Radnor's history. Collectively, we gain even greater insights and develop a more accurate picture of the history of this area. This past summer, your editor received a letter from Mr. Daniel N. Ehart in conjunction with our article, “The History of Some Radnor Parks” in last year's *Bulletin*. He has given us additional information in respect to Radnor Township's parks which we have shared below. We apologize for misspelling Mr. Egbert's name.

In respect to **South Devon Parks**, Mr. Ehart says, “I do not believe that [it] was originally purchased by the School District. However, I may be wrong on this. If so, it was subsequently re-purchased by the Township Commissioners.” Mr. Ehart goes on to say that the Park came about as the result of negotiations between the Township and a developer interested in building apartments on Morris Road. The park was named after “Peck” Fillipone following his death.

Mr. Ehart suggests that there may be some confusion between Odorisio Park on West Wayne Avenue and the South Devon Park. He says, “That piece of land [where Odorisio Park is now located] was originally two parcels, with the wooded portion along Maplewood Ave. being purchased by the School District for an elementary school, while the rest was purchased by the Township for parkland.” According to Mr. Ehart, the School Board later decided not to build the school on that site. They sold the land to the Commissioners, and selected a new site for the school.

Mr. Ehart also points out that the namesake of the **North Wayne Park** is Seneca Egbert. We appreciate the correction and additional information that Mr. Ehart has given us on this subject.



A Remembrance: Virginia Drysdale Keeney

by Jean Erickson Kadyk

Virginia Drysdale Keeney was born on February 13, 1890 at 108 North 16th Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the younger of two daughters born to William Reynolds and Mary Anna (Jones) Keeney. In 1915, the family moved to 318 East Lancaster Avenue, St. Davids.

Virginia was graduated from Friends Central School in 1907 where she was President of her class. She received a B.A. from Swarthmore College in 1910. She substituted as teacher in almost every subject at Girls High School. She also taught at the Lower School at the Baldwin School, Bryn Mawr, until 1930 when she retired.

Virginia, her sister Susan Dorothea, and their parents travelled all over the world. Upon returning home, their experiences would be shared with their friends through the showing of beautiful kodachrome slides.

The family, upon moving to St. Davids, became members of Valley Friends Meeting, Old Eagle School Road, Strafford in 1929, where they were all faithful and supportive by regular attendance. Virginia became superintendent of the First-day School. She, along with other members, completely revised the course of study. A removable stage was built for the plays she wrote and which the First-day School children performed. She was the author of *Centuries Ago* (about the Old Testament), and this book, which received rave reviews, was used by several schools in this area.

Virginia enjoyed many other activities. She was a member of the Wayne Branch of the Needlework Guild, of which she served as President for four years. She was on the Board of Directors of the Saturday Club, and also served as Secretary of the Trowellers Garden Club, founded by her sister and others. Membership in the Female Association of Philadelphia and serving as its Secretary was enjoyed; Virginia carried forward a tradition of membership in this Association to which her family had belonged for five generations.

I came to know Virginia, her mother and her sister (her father, William Keeney died in 1931) through the membership in Valley Meeting of my parents, Charles John and Winona Cadwallader Erickson. Always beautifully attired in suits and dresses with matching hats, Virginia also wore a fur piece over her shoulders. During Meeting for Worship, as my mother and I sat behind



Virginia Drysdale Keeney

Virginia, I have a clear picture of that fur, so soft and glistening around the fox's head and two beady eyes blankly staring at me as it hung down Virginia's back. On one occasion, I stroked the area between the fox's pert ears, and needless to say, my hand was quietly, but firmly, subdued by my watchful, loving mother!

Virginia's sister, Sue Dorothy, as she was known, spoke every week during the Meeting for Worship. When she finished giving her message, Virginia would visibly nod her approval as Sue Dorothy sat down. As a child, I thought this was hilarious and another member and I exchanged quiet smiles. Now all these years later, I see this gesture as love in action.

I loved going to the Keeney's home in St. Davids. The occasions were usually for a delicious dinner preceded by a stroll through their lovely gardens, and followed by good fellowship and showing of colored slides of one of their fabulous trips abroad. Virginia and Sue Dorothy coordinated the presentation and it was beautiful, informative and altogether fascinating. On a table nearby, they placed items brought from that particular part of the world. Occasionally, Virginia would wear a sari or a kimono or perhaps a pair of golden slippers as she gave her commentary, with Sue Dorothy operating the projector.

Their dinner parties were beautifully appointed—a long table for twelve set with shining silver and fine china and crystal. The centerpiece was, more often than not, a turquoise table three-tier fountain, which actually worked by recycling the water. The hoses and such were underneath the table, hidden from sight by a long gleaming white tablecloth. The water made a quiet trickling sound as it cascaded down over small glass bubbles bobbing about in the water. I was always placed at the table between my parents so I could enjoy this lovely arrangement, which was usually circled by flowers from their garden. Above the table hung a magnificent Victorian crystal chandelier, which lent additional magic to this friendly gathering. I remember so clearly the beauty, the warmth of loving voices raised in pleasant laughter and conversation. I felt that happiness and security of belonging every child is entitled to—and does not always receive.

Virginia and her sister and their mother made dresses for one another every Christmas. They added their own embroidery of choice. When it became my sad duty to assist Virginia in going through Sue Dorothy's clothing and personal effects at the time of her death in 1963, I saw the full wardrobe of these creations, and marvelled.

In the plays that Virginia wrote for the children of the First-day School, I was usually in the role of one of the shepherd children trudging to Bethlehem. Virginia taught us how to trudge "theatrically," leaving nothing to chance when

it came to show-time! I remember also being a member of the "heavenly host praising God." I wore a royal blue crepe paper cape on which silver stars had been glued, and a crown covered in silver paper and edged with silver tinsel, all made by Virginia and Sue Dorothy. I was so thrilled to wear such a beautiful costume, I could not speak my one line. Virginia gently prompted me, and I suppose I did speak those beautiful words of the angels from the Bible.

Virginia Keeney was one of my dearest friends, and from her I learned much wisdom which is now part of the basis of my own Quaker faith. She cared for others tenderly and thoughtfully. To Sue Dorothy, she was a very special strength in her times of need. Virginia possessed a rare ability to combine the old with the new. Her willingness to move ahead with current trends won her the love and gratitude of any who knew this remarkable woman.

Virginia died in May of 1976, weary and longing to be reunited with her beloved parents and sister. I stood by the family grave in Laurel Hill Cemetery and watched this last daughter of five generations of Jones-Keeney Family laid to rest. I read those words by John Greenleaf Whittier, which Virginia had requested of me. They reflect, then as now, the basis of her deep and abiding faith in the goodness of God:

"....I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in the air.
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

The Finley House is Open to the Public
Tuesday and Saturday Afternoons
(except national holidays)
from two until five
and by appointment

The Electrification of the "Paoli Local"

by Robert Goshorn

Did you know that much of the experimental work on the electrification of the Paoli Local was conducted in Radnor Township?

With the growth of the suburban population around Philadelphia and the increase in the number of suburban commuters and commuter trains in the early 1900's—there were more than sixty trains daily on the "Main Line" alone—the problem of handling the passenger traffic in and out of the Broad Street station became acute. Although the approaches to the station had been enlarged by widening the bridge across the Schuylkill River and the construction of additional tracks, by 1910 it was apparent that even more drastic steps were needed to relieve the congestion.

Accordingly, a Board of Engineers was appointed to study and review "plans and suggestions for the improvement of the passengers' terminal facilities and all information bearing on the subject." Following this study, in which it was found that further enlargement of the terminal was not a practical solution, in March 1913 the Board of Directors of the Pennsylvania Railroad announced plans to electrify the "Main Line" service between Philadelphia and Paoli. The company also let it be known that if this experience proved to be as successful and as economical and efficient as it was hoped it would be, the electrification of the Chestnut Hill division, and later of the New York division, would follow.

The improvements were expected to be completed in the following year, and it was estimated that they would involve an expenditure of about \$4,000,000—a considerable investment and sum of money in 1913!

At the same time, it was announced that the engineers on the suburban line would be retrained and retained on their present runs notwithstanding the change in motive power, and that the change would "in no way" affect the through trains, which would continue to be drawn by steam locomotive. No changes in the bridges or stations, except at Broad Street station, were anticipated, it was also announced.

As a byproduct of the change, it was also pointed out that the running time between Paoli and Philadelphia would be reduced by as much as five minutes.

The Pennsylvania Railroad was not without experience with the use of electric power on its lines. Its first experiment with the use of electric traction, in fact, had been conducted before the turn of the century.

In 1895 the seven-mile long Burlington and Mount Holly line in New Jersey had been electrified, using a "third rail" system. The experiment, according to George H. Burgess and Miles C. Kennedy, in their *Centennial History of the Pennsylvania Railroad*, was "successful enough," but when the power plant burned down in 1901 it was not rebuilt, and the company reverted to the use of steam power on the line.

Four years later, in 1905, the Rockaway Beach line of the Long Island Railroad and the lines to Belmont Park and Valley Stream in New York were electrified, and in the following year the Camden-Atlantic City line was also electrified. A second track was added at the same time, and the electric operation on the line was begun on September 18, 1906. Again, "third rail" was used to supply the 600-volt direct current used to power the train. Its 59-mile length made it the longest railroad line that had been changed from steam to electric power at that time.

And when the new Pennsylvania Station and tunnels under the Hudson and East rivers, and the classification yards at Sunnyside in New York were built in 1910, an electric motive power system was used. Upon leaving the Hudson River tunnel, the electric locomotives were replaced by the traditional steam power at Manhattan Transfer, a few miles west of the tunnel exit, and trains going into New York were similarly changed from steam to electric locomotives at the same place.



St. David's Station Before Electrification of the Railroad

Despite all this experience with the use of electric motive power, however, there were a number of questions that still needed to be answered. In June an unnamed official of the company was quoted in the Philadelphia *Ledger* as acknowledging, "We are [still] in the beginning of this [electrification] problem. We do not know whether we will use direct or alternating current, while so rapid are the developments in the field of electricity that plant equipment that will be modern today may be antiquated a year or so hence." He also observed, "We all must come to the use of electricity for operating trains, and therefore it is not a question of rivalry [with other railroad companies], but of what is best and at the same time most economical," also noting that "whatever system is adopted, the expenditures will be very great."

This same official also added that the change to electric power would also mean those suburban residents "living near [the Main Line of] the Pennsylvania Railroad will get considerable relief from the smoke of passing engines, with at least sixty trains . . . electrically operated," and that "all of the new steel cars being made for the Pennsylvania Railroad are simultaneously being constructed for easy adjustment of electric motors and are already fitted with dynamos for electric lighting."

In the meantime, after the proposed electrification of the "Main Line" had been announced, there were some who advocated relocation of the western terminus from Paoli to Frazer. In a letter to the *Daily Local News* in West Chester on May 19, 1913, for example, John M. Lewis suggested the extension of the electrification to Frazer, commenting that Frazer was the "natural terminus" and that the area beyond Frazer was [in 1913] "ripe for development"; that it was the point where both the Phoenixville and West Chester branches of the railroad intersected the Main Line and that traffic on these branches, especially the West Chester branch, would likely increase if Frazer were made the terminus; that Malvern was also increasing in importance in both freight and passenger service; and that the company already owned considerable ground in that area, suitable of sidings and large enough to hold 100 trains.

John M. Lewis also pointed out that the policy of the company had "always been to be in advance of the demands of the public" and that Malvern and Frazer were "really beyond the possibilities of daily automobile traffic with Philadelphia" at that time, and that therefore the people living in these communities were dependent upon the railroad to get to and from the city.

Despite these arguments, however, Paoli remained the terminus for the "accommodation" trains, and of the electrification project. By late December of 1913 the railroad announced that agreement had been reached with the Philadelphia Electric Company to furnish the electric power to operate the trains on the Main Line after the electrification work was completed (and also on the Chestnut Hill division when it too was changed over to electric operation). The contract with the electric company was for a five year period.

But at the same time it was also reported in the *West Chester Star*, "At the offices of the railroad company nothing definite was to be learned of any decision which the company may have made between the third rail and overhead systems of current supply, though this is a point which has been widely discussed by the railroad men and the residents in the affected districts." It was, however, noted that the experience with the third rail operation on the Camden-Atlantic City division had been "unsatisfactory" and that it could be considered a "potential menace in the regions as thickly populated as those traversed by the Pennsy's suburban lines."

Should the electric power be direct current or alternating current? How should the current be carried and supplied to the trains? Should a third rail system or an overhead wire system be used? Should there be a motor in each car? To find answers to these and similar questions, the company used the services of Gib & Hill as consulting engineers. At its suggestion, a section of trackage over a mile long west of St. David's, between St. David's and Wayne, was used to carry out a number of tests during the summer of 1913 "to determine not simply what was best for the immediate work to be undertaken in the matter of electrification, but what system would prove best for the longer and more comprehensive system of electrification . . . in the future."

Joseph Jackson later reported in the Philadelphia *Public Ledger*, "The tests carried out showed [that] what is known as the single-phase alternating current system would prove more efficient than any other. This system of operating consequently was adopted. . . ." He also said that:

While the new trains on the electrified lines to Paoli will be drawn by motors introduced on each car, and the single-phase system also admits of the use of split-phase locomotives, or any of the types of single-phase motors, which also is something of any experiment, and will be used on the newly electrified lines for the first time. There are also other technical reasons for the adoption

of the system which has been decided upon for the new line, the third-rail system being rejected from the beginning of the consideration of the subject, owing to the danger to freight crews operating in the congested yard that might follow the adoption.

The method of construction of the overhead lines is an entirely new one, in this country at least, and it has been adopted after a long test. The niceties of this form of construction may not be apparent to the laymen, . . . employing [a] series of miniature 'wire bridges' which are supported from wire cables, which in turn are held in place from steel tubular poles. . . .

With a regard to a supply of current to the cars, he noted:

On other electrified steam lines in other parts of the country it has been the rule to carry the power wires from structural steel bridges at regular intervals. In considering the subject for the Pennsylvania line the engineers decided to abandon that form of construction because it was believed that the presence of bridges at close intervals would obscure the line and the signals for part of the distance to the motorman operating the train. But it required some time and a long period of tests to firmly determine what should take the place of this steel bridge. For a time there was tried on the experimental section beyond St. David's a catenary bridge or lighter construction, but this, in turn, was abandoned for the present type of wire catenaries, which exposes the largest amount of the line in front of the train that can be devised.

Each car was to be equipped with two 225-horsepower single-phase commutator-type motors, both mounted on one truck. The trains were also to be furnished with multiple-unit control, so that the load of the train would not fall upon the leading car; instead, the motor in each car would be in operation at the same time, each car propelling itself, all synchronously controlled by the motorman at the front of the train.

The current was to be and is carried from the overhead wire to each car by a pantograph, with a broad contact service that cannot "jump the track" as the trolley pole on a trolley car could (and frequently did).



1920 Train Wreck at Radnor Station—
Note Men Working in the Wire Catenary.

In February 1915, while the work on the project was still in progress, in the *Philadelphia Record*, Lawrence Flick Jr., described the work.

It will be several weeks more, in all probability, before it is actually ready to carry passengers. . . . They [the men who have done the work] have been on a difficult and dangerous job for upwards of a year. They form the crews of five 'wire trains.' . . . The fact that in a year's time there have been only four fatal accidents speaks well for the skill and discipline of the men and the care taken of them by their bosses. One of the remarkable things about it is that they were all "green" to this particular kind of job when they came. They are trolley linemen—picked men, sturdy, stocky, nervy. When they are strung out in the network of cables, riding them as nonchalantly as an acrobat would tread a slack wire in a circus, they look like a swarm of human spiders spinning a web of metal. From the platform of their improvised 'tower cars' they start off on aerial excursions that would shatter the nerves of a deep-water sailor. They can shoot their platform of beams out over the adjoining track, and then they work unperturbed while express trains shriek beneath their feet. They are a jolly, hardworking, philosophic crew, who take the risks of the job as part of the day's work.

In the months they have been engaged on the Main Line electrification job they have strung several thousand miles of wires. Every mile has been put up at imminent risk to life and limb. Yet the accidents that have occurred have been on the ground instead of in the air. The dangers have increased quite naturally, by the fact that the work had to be done while the tracks were constantly in use for steam traffic. The few men who have lost their lives stepped in front of passing trains. In the air, the men seem to bear charmed lives. Of course, they must take every possible precaution. Every man wears a heavy leather belt, with a strap and swivel attached, by means of which he can hook himself to the wire on which he is working. But it isn't hard to slip when you are climbing about overhead from a platform high in the air to a slender wooden ladder hooked to a swaying, vibrating cable high above the tracks and passing trains. The men are wonders at finding handholds and footholds where the laymen can see nothing but thin air.

While some practice runs were made as early as April of 1915, it was not until September of that year that the service with electric motive power was opened for passengers, some nine months later than the original expectation.

A by-product of the electrification was the installation of a series of electric block signals along the line. Instead of employing the semaphore arms formerly used for signaling, rows of electric lights flash automatically, indicating whether a train is in the next block ahead.

The improvements reduced the congestion at Broad Street station in Philadelphia by as much as 16%. Formerly, there were a number of separate movements necessary in the handling of each train: after the train had pulled into the Broad Street Station and was unloaded, the empty cars were then drawn

out, the locomotive following; taken to the yards in West Philadelphia; coupled to a steam locomotive, and then pushed, backwards, back into the trainshed to form a new outward-bound train. With the use of electricity as the motive power, each car, with its own motor, was virtually a locomotive. Instead of drawing the train of cars out to the yards, as soon as it had delivered its load to

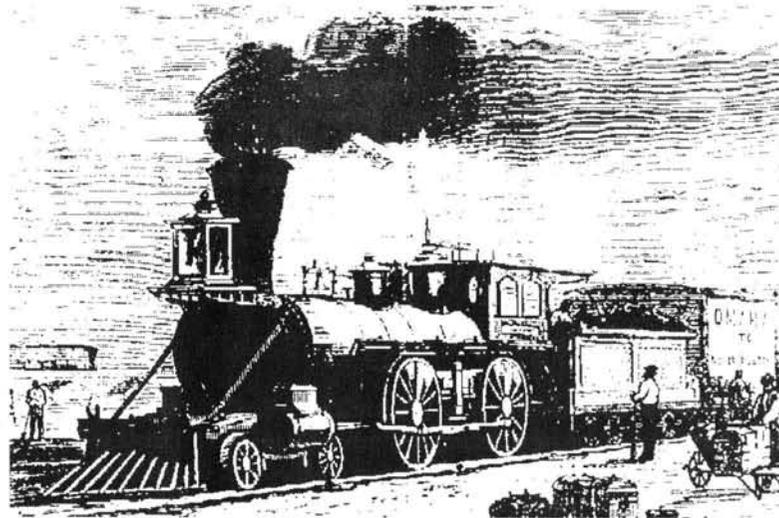
the station, all that was necessary was to change the signals on the train and it was ready to start out as a new train on the same track.

In fact, so successful was the system that in 1918 the Chestnut Hill division was electrified, followed by the West Chester division ten years later, and the Norristown division in 1930. The Philadelphia-Washington line was also electrified in 1928, and the service between Philadelphia and New York, in 1935.

They all used the system that had been developed in the test work done on the tracks west of St. David's, in Radnor Township.

We can better appreciate the rapid growth of train traffic in this area from a note in the October 22, 1871 issue of the *Weekly Wayne Gazette*:

"The Paoli train No. 1 West, on Monday, October 16, under the charge of Peter Stine, Conductor, carried 135 passengers on the early morning trip west. Five years ago that would have covered the whole number of passengers all day between Philadelphia and Paoli."



Jesse Brooke's 'Cello

by J. Bennett Hill, Jr.

In June of 1958 the Radnor Historical Society was given a 'cello, once owned by Jesse Brooke (1793-1868), farmer and landowner in Radnor Township. Jesse Brooke owned twenty-three acres of land along the Ithan Creek (near Clyde Road and Mid-County Expressway), where he lived with his wife, Catherine, until after the Civil War. (See Cummin, lot 50.)

Jesse Brooke was also a Vestryman and Warden of St. David's Episcopal Church, Radnor, from 1836 to 1866, and used his 'cello in services at the Church until it was replaced by a melodeon (date unknown). Probably it was used to accompany or support congregational singing.

As part of the Historical Society's collection the 'cello could not be maintained and cared for as a musical instrument should be, nor could it be properly displayed. Several years ago, therefore, it was suggested that the 'cello be returned to St. David's Church, in the hope that it might be restored and used there, occasionally, as it had been more than a century before.

Approaches were then made to the appropriate persons at St. David's, and eventually, through the interest of the Reverend Rudolph Moore, Senior Associate Rector, the 'cello was taken to a violin maker for appraisal of its condition and an estimate of the cost of repairing it. The 'cello now appears to be an instrument unusual by today's standards, designed and built to support or accompany other instruments (or voices) rather than as a solo instrument. It has been described as a "baroque 'cello," unlike those intended for the richer tones of the later nineteenth century orchestra.

The 'cello was formally offered to St. David's Church in December, and was enthusiastically accepted. Plans are now underway for its restoration, which should be completed in time for it to be used at a service of Evening Prayer to be held at the Old Eagle School on the third Sunday in May, a service designed to commemorate the connection between St. David's Church and the Old Eagle School through much of the last century.

It is an exciting prospect that the Church, the School, and the Historical Society should be able to collaborate in this venture recognizing Radnor's godly roots.



"The Village Choir Rehearses the Christmas Anthem" with permission from *The Victorian Christmas Book* by Antony & Peter Miall, J.M.Dent, Publishers. Jesse Brooke's 'cello was similar to the one in this picture.

Notes: Jesse Brooke, son of Jesse, appears to have been also a member of the Radnor Library Company and a founder and trustee of Radnor School House #1, on the corner of Roberts and Mill Roads (Cummin, lot 106).

Material for this article was drawn from Katharine Hewitt Cummin, *A Rare and Pleasing Thing*; from Henry Pleasants, *The History of Old St. David's Church, at Radnor, Pennsylvania*; and from documents given with the 'cello.

Finley House Visitors:

December 1, 1994

Dear Mr. Lord,

Thank you for showing us the Conestoga Wagons. I had never seen a Conestoga Wagon, I had always thought they were like every other wagon, but now I know that isn't true. I like how big they are. I would really like some day to ride in a Conestoga Wagon.

Thanks again!

Sincerely
Chris Lopping

On these pages we share with you a few of the many letters we received this past year from a special group of visitors to the Finley House.



Caesar

12/6/94

Dear Mrs. Lord,

Thank you for giving us the tour of downstairs we really appreciate it. Thanks for letting us see the old spout from back then when we children weren't there to see them. Tell Caesar I said hi. Thanks again!

Sincerely,
W Sean Barr

Dear Mrs. Pitt,

Thanks for showing us the main floor of the Historical Society. I liked the arrow heads. I also liked the far pot and the cricket bat. They were interesting. There was a lot to see. Was every thing real?

Sincerely,
Lee
for Miss
Schradet's
third graders

Dear Mrs. Pitt, Nov. 20

I had a great time at the historical Society. Thank you for letting us come. I liked seeing the kitchen because there were things that they used in the olden days like the butter churn. I liked the first floor because there were lots of things to see. also I liked the Victorian bedroom and the wagon house. Thank you! I had a terrific time.

Sincerely,

Tamara

from Miss Schradet's
class



History of the Origins of Waterloo Gardens

by Susan LeBoutillier

George LeBoutillier was born in 1783 on the Isle of Jersey in the English Channel. He moved to the Island of Guernsey in 1804, where he was married to Elizabeth Lemaitre and had seven children—four sons and three daughters. His fifth daughter, Elizabeth, wrote this about her Great-grandfather's exploits:

In the time of Louis 14th, the children of Protestants were taken and placed in convents to be brought up Catholics. An uncle took the father of my grandmother and his four sisters to Jersey where they were brought up and married. When grown up the father of my grandmother went to France and recovered a part of the money that had been buried in a stable.

Elizabeth LeBoutillier, born 1809

George was quite instrumental in reorganizing and rechartering Elizabeth College in the 1820's, where his four sons were all educated. George's most ambitious endeavor was designing and attempting to build a Commercial Arcade. He removed thousands of tons from the side of Mount Gibel, building an arcade with four entrances and a glass roof. Although this endeavor was not completed or financially successful, the area did become a pedestrian shopping district.

George and Elizabeth LeBoutillier emigrated to America with three sons and two daughters in 1844. George and his sons, Charles, James, and Thomas, created LeBoutillier Brothers, a very successful dry goods and importing business. There were three locations, one on 14th Street in New York City, the second on 5th Street in Philadelphia and the third in Cincinnati.

Charles, the second oldest son, married Charlotte Roberts and had six children. They lived on Washington Lane in Germantown where Charles was involved in the Christ Protestant Episcopal Church. In 1882, Charles turned 71 and retired from the family business. The business was passed to his sons, Roberts and Edward.

Roberts, the fifth child of Charles and Charlotte, was born in 1850. He married Jenny Wayne Howell in Paris in 1875, and they moved back to Germantown to work in the family business. Jenny died in 1886, and seven years later he married Jenny's best friend, Minnie Caldwell Woods.



LeBoutillier Home, *Panhurst*, on North Wayne Avenue

Roberts LeBoutillier retired from the family business at the age of 52. Roberts and Minnie had two children, Henry and Charles. In 1904, during the earliest suburbanization of the Main Line, he moved to Wayne. He bought 104 acres and had a dutch style house built with gate house, stable, apartment above the garage, barn, and chicken coop and named it *Panhurst*. Soon after moving they began construction of a series of greenhouses, one of which housed his grapevines. An extensive cold frame, 100 feet long and large enough to walk through was also built. An amphitheater was built where performances and functions were held. Formal gardens were installed and Japanese landscape architects were hired to design and install the Japanese style garden across North Wayne Avenue. The gardens were open to the public until problems with theft forced Roberts to fence off the Japanese Garden.

Roberts was extremely interested in horticulture and botany. He was a member of the Botanical Society of Pennsylvania which would meet every year in the amphitheater at *Panhurst*. After the meeting the group would meander up to the main house and enjoy sandwiches, punch and tea on the porch.



Roberts LeBoutillier around 1906

The many photographs of the property and family are a result of Roberts' interest in photography and his dark room found in his garage.

Roberts' son, Henry graduated from Drexel University as a chemical engineer. He married Dorothy Whetstone in 1922. He and Mr. Hess were the founders of the Selas Corporation of America. During the Depression the family began farming at Panhurst and on their 1700 acre farm in Honeybrook. Dorothy and Henry sold farm products, milk, corn and vegetables. Dorothy managed the estate until her death in 1947. Their six children grew up working the farm. Roberts, my father, was the only son of Henry and Dorothy LeBoutillier. My father had five sisters, Dorothy, Miriam, Edith, Susan and Henrietta.

The Paolini Family

My maternal grandfather, James Paolini was born in Windgap, PA in 1906. At 6 years of age his parents separated. James' father took the three oldest children back to Italy. James was the oldest of these three children. World War I started and James' father was inducted, leaving all three children with family

members. My grandfather was sent to live with an uncle and was treated as one of the household servants. James was lonely and frightened, for he could not speak Italian.

Uncle John's daughter was married to a Count shortly after my grandfather arrived. She took my grandfather with her to her new home. Her husband was a landscape architect. My grandfather describes his experiences in the article from the Main Line Community Magazine in December 1988:

So she got married and took me with her. Oh, I was in my glory, watering the plants, watering the flowers. In the meantime, I go to school half a day. I couldn't understand them. I couldn't understand my aunt either. She had to repeat things four and five times. I spoke very little Italian. My tongue was very poor and I couldn't understand them. I finished one year in the first grade and I didn't pass. One half a day I go to school and then I go back home and change my pants to go water the plants and pull the weeds. The next year I started doing some nursery work. About that time I was seven.

My aunt says, 'Would you rather go to school or work?' I'm going to work. You know what kids do. No more school. Okay. That was the end of my education. I learned the business thoroughly with these people. I loved the work and I worked hard, very hard. They were supposed to buy me clothes and so on. And I was ragged.

When Jimmy was 10, the Count was shot and his vision was impaired. The Count decided that Jimmy would become his eyes. Traveling around the country, Jimmy assisted the Count, selecting plants, and working with him on the gardens he was designing.

James left his aunt's house at the age of 17 with the rags he had on and went to work with a nursery salesman. They rode from town to town with a wagon drawn by two horses and sold plants at the markets. After learning the business, Jimmy started his own. My grandfather learned skills that would later become very essential.

Jimmy's sister was planning to return to America in 1926 and he returned with her. He came to Pennsylvania, at twenty years old, and lived with his aunt and uncle. He worked in a cement mill before getting a job with Fairmount Park as a plant propagator. While living with his aunt and uncle, Frances and

Louis Manone, he became very close to his cousin, Adalgisa. They fell in love. Of course, as first cousins, they were not permitted to marry. Jimmy's aunt and uncle were very worried about Adalgisa's relationship with Jimmy and decided that she should join the convent. Adalgisa was dropped off at St. Lucy Filipini convent by her parents one day, believing she would be picked up in a couple of days. She stayed with the order, went to college, received a Masters in education, eventually becoming a School Principal and Mother Superior. She is still with the order, 85 years old [February, 1994], retired but still teaching.

Jimmy married Anna Sgorbati, (the family changed their name to Batty). She was born in 1907 in the Frankford section of Philadelphia. The Sgorbati family owned a lot of businesses: Batty Coal, Batty Beer Garden, a laundry, a junk yard, a small grocery store, and a fish market. Anna learned at an early age to work hard and do all the bookkeeping. She and her mother, Assunta worked hard in all the businesses. They did the wash in the laundry and worked in the tap room. Anna would walk down to the docks for fresh goods for the grocery store. When she was 14 she dropped out of school because of the demands of family business.

Jimmy and Anna were married in 1930. After they were married, Jimmy worked on the Audenreid Estate for 6 years and the Estate of William I. Mirkil for several years. Zelinda, their only child, was born on the Audenreid Estate. Anna raised chickens and vegetables on the Mirkil Estate. She provided the estate with chickens, tomatoes, and lima beans in exchange for the use of the garden and the chicken coop. Anna had a delivery route for her chickens. Jimmy brought the vegetables to a specialty market in Ardmore. Jimmy and Anna grew Harold Martin lima beans, a very special and sweet bean, from then on.



Anna Paolini and Zelinda

With the additional income Anna made they were able to purchase the property on S. Waterloo Road in 1942. They intended to start a retail operation, but zoning prohibited retail for the site. They sold the mansion on the corner (the present insurance building) to raise money, never

giving up on their dream to have a nursery. They believed that the Main Line would be an ideal location to sell high quality, rare and unusual plants.

In 1942 they rented a small greenhouse from Mr. Greinberg (who was 90 years old) on the current site of the Wayne Farmers Market and sold plants.



An Early View of Waterloo Gardens

A property was purchased in 1946 on route 30 where the present day operation exists. A greenhouse from the Lee Estate was disassembled and moved to Waterloo Gardens, named by my Grandmother because of their original location on Waterloo Road. In 1951, the Police barracks sold the back section of their property, the area behind the present day Devereaux building, to Jimmy and Anna. Anna, with such good business sense and willing to do whatever it took to make it work, teamed with Jimmy, cultivating and propagating rare and unusual plants, and sowed the seed of what Waterloo was to become.

Zelinda, their only child, married Roberts (Bo) LeBoutillier in 1951. Bo was their first full time employee. In 1959 Jimmy wanted to expand his operation and start growing for the Devon operation. He bought the Exton farm

property. His daughter and son-in-law moved out to Exton and built a house. Exton's population increased, and changed from rural to suburban and a second garden center was opened in 1970 on Whitford Road.

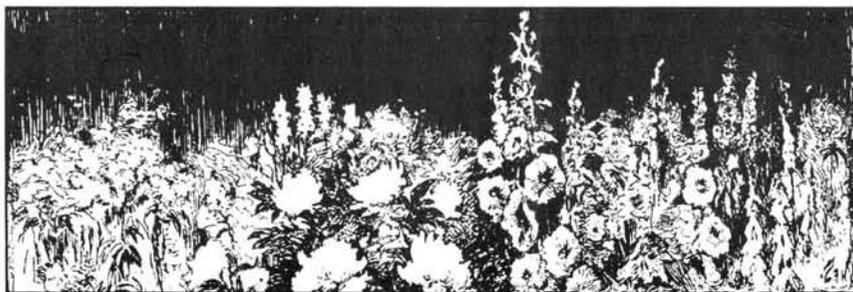
Jimmy and Anna retired from the retail business in 1972. Jimmy continued to do what he loved best, working in his personal greenhouses on Waterloo Road where they lived. He won many awards at the Philadelphia Flower Show with his cultivated standards and bonsai. Waterloo could never have become what it is today without their efforts, knowledge, and perseverance. Anna died in 1984 and Jimmy died in 1990.

Waterloo has continued to grow, now grossing 35 times what it did in 1972, 22 years since Bo and Linda took over the business. It continues to expand because of vision and hard work, qualities that Waterloo Gardens originated with 52 years ago.

In the 1970's, Bo made the decision to diversify from just a nursery. Zelinda began working in the business, first doing the bookkeeping for the Exton store and later developing the non-horticultural departments.

Four of Bo and Linda's children are involved in the business. We grew up in the business, my grandmother taught the girls at an early age to type, run the cash register, count change, and help customers. Bobby, my brother, learned about the nursery, and later was involved in every aspect of the company's construction and many renovations.

Waterloo Gardens is now one of the top ten garden centers in the USA. Is is respected and visited by national, as well as international, tours. When Bo renovated Devon in 1992, he installed the decorative iron gates to signify the uniqueness of Waterloo Gardens. He continues to strive with his family and employees to make it a very special place.



Radnor Historical Society 1994 Programs

Throughout the 1994 calendar year, members and their guests enjoyed a variety of informative programs. A brief summary of these programs follows.

February 8

Tuesday, 8:00 p.m. at the Finley House

Susan LeBoutillier told the story of her family's horticultural involvement from great, great-grandfather, Roberts Le Boutillier to James Paolini, founder of Waterloo Gardens. See the article, "**History of the Origins of Waterloo Gardens**" on page 24 of this *Bulletin*.

March 8

Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., at the Historic Dilworthtown Inn

on Old Wilmington Pike we held the Society's annual Olde Inns Dinner. **Mr. John Groff**, Executive Director of Wyck in Germantown spoke on "**Mansions and Estates of the Main Line.**" He illustrated the talk with slides.

April 19

Tuesday, 8:00 p.m. at the Finley House

Rita Balbus, noted Colonial authority, spoke on "**Women and the Revolution.**" In her presentation she focused on a few of the more than 20,000 women who actively participated in the Revolution.

May 8

Sunday, 3:00 p.m., Annual Meeting

The Society held its 1994 Annual Meeting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Siple at 250 Radnor Street Road in Wayne. Following the Annual Business Meeting, **Al Besse** spoke and showed slides of his **antique toy collection**. Members and guests were invited to follow with a stop at Al's home to see his collection first hand.

October 11

Tuesday, 8:00 p.m., at the Finley House

Mrs. E. Mortimer Newlin spoke on "**The Newlin Mill.**" She spoke of the mill's founding in 1704 and how it was restored to working condition.

October 15

Saturday, 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

The Society held a Flea Market, Book Sale, and Bake Sale at the Finley House. The Society realized a profit of \$667.32 from this event, thanks to the efforts of the many people involved in arranging, working, and attending the event.

October 29

Sunday, 1:00 p.m., Rockwood, DE

Rockwood estate, built by merchant banker Joseph Shipley, includes a lush landscape in the Gardenesque design, a Victorian manor house, and a remarkable Conservatory filled with period flora. The museum, in the manor house, holds a remarkable collection of English, Continental, and American decorative arts reflecting a succession of family members who lived at Rockwood.

November 8

Tuesday, 8:00 p.m., at the Finley House

Mr. P. Timothy Phelps spoke on "**Restoring the Peter Wentz Farmstead,**" which some Society members and guests visited in October 1993. Mr. Phelps illustrated his talk with slides.

December 18

Sunday, 5:00 p.m., at the Finley House

Many members and guests enjoyed our annual Christmas Open House, following the North Wayne carol sing. The house was trimmed for the season, and guests were offered refreshments.

For a list of current year programs:
Call the Historical Society at (610) 688-2668
or
visit the Finley House Tuesday or Saturday
afternoon, 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.

Radnor Historical Society Gifts to the Society in 1994

The Radnor Historical Society accepts items donated either for the collections or for the general use of the Society. Items for the collections are accepted subject to the approval of the Collections Committee of the Board; all items are accepted with the understanding that they become the sole property of the Society, to be used, displayed, or otherwise disposed of as the Collections Committee or the Board sees fit.

Ms. Beverlee Barnes

Photocopy of 1875 map of Radnor Township

Mr. Clifford M. Carey

Carey Family History, Clifford M. Carey, 1994

Miss Carol Creutzburg

Scrapbook of articles and sketches by Lecien Von Bernuth, from the *Suburban and Wayne Times*

Patricia J. Henry

Photography, film, and prints to support application for historic certification for the Finley House

Mr. and Mrs. J. Bennett Hill, Jr.

Three pot-hooks for kitchen crane; child's high chair, late 18th century (for kitchen); portable lap desk, late 19th century; glass pedestal oil lamp (for back parlor); pair of candlesticks, brass, with glass pendants (for front parlor mantel)

Mr. William P. Hutton

The Normal Written Arithmetic, 1863, used at Radnor School #3 in 1881; three ledgers, Charles Williams, painter

Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Ledieu

Victorian Iron gate, for Bellevue Avenue frontage

Ms. Mary T. McGinn and Mr. Lawrence Smith

New sign, "Radnor Historical Society," for Bellevue Avenue frontage, and installation of sign

Mrs. Tish Montgomery

Assorted kitchen items

Mr. Joseph Paul Morris

Enlarged photograph of the Morris family at Villa Nova, 1916

Mr. Ralph D. Reynolds

John Hobbs, 16??-1731, A genealogy of the Hobbs Family of Ohio; Ralph D. Reynolds, M.D. 1994

Harry Spiess, Esq.

Envelope of old deeds; photograph of dwelling, Walnut Avenue

Mr. L. Wilbur Zimmerman

Photocopies of pages on John Evans from *The Botanists of Philadelphia and their Works*, 1899



Victorian Iron Gate donated to the Radnor Historical Society
by Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Ledieu

Radnor Historical Society 1994 Membership Reports

Beginning with this year's *Bulletin*, Society Membership reports will reflect membership status as of March 30 of the current year. Therefore, these reports include changes that occurred January through March 1995 in addition to changes that occurred during the 1994 calendar year. When individuals were Sustaining members in 1994 or 1995 and a Patron in the other year, we show them in the list of Sustaining Members and in the list of Patrons. This will occur only this year when we are reporting changes occurring over a period of fifteen months. In future years, we will be presenting changes over the twelve-month period April through March. The result will more accurately reflect Society Membership when the *Bulletin* is printed and received.

Necrology of Members

It is with sadness that we report the death of the following members:

Mrs. John J. Berg
Mrs. Elizabeth Goshorn
Mrs. Herbert Henderson
Mr. F. N. Hoffman
Mrs. M. G. James

New Members

Mr. John D. Borne	Mr. & Mrs. Dennis V. Brenan
Ms. Susan Campbell	Ms. Margaret M. Fuchs
Mr. Max Gambescia	Mr. & Mrs. William T. Gardiner
Mr. & Mrs. William T. Gardiner	Mr. & Mrs. John Hebden
Mr. & Mrs. James Lee	Ms. Elizabeth P. Lohmann
Ms. Grace Lutton	Mr. & Mrs. Carson McClain
Mr. & Mrs. T. Taylor Shannon	Ms. Beverlee S. Barnes
Mr. Andrew Olsen	Mr. Jeffery Pearsall

Patrons

Mr. George R. Atterbury
Mr. Stephen W. Bajus
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce M. Brown
Mr. E.J. DeJoseph
Mr. Richard W. Foster
Mr. Robert Goshorn
Patricia J. Henry
Mr. & Mrs. J. Bennett Hill
Mr. Arthur H. Moss
Mrs. Robert H. Nixon
Commander & Mrs. Charles E. Reilly
Dr. & Mrs. Emanuel Schwartz
Mr. & Mrs. George Smith
Mr. & Mrs. Russell Wood
North Wayne Protective Association

Sustaining Members

Mr. Stephen W. Bajus	Mr. & Mrs. Peter Benoliel
Mr. David Burket	Mrs. John A. Colgan, Jr.
Mr. & Mrs. Peter H. Craig	Mrs. William M. Fletcher
Mr. & Mrs. William T. Gardiner	Mr. & Mrs. Robert Goshorn
Mr. Benjamin Harris	Mr. & Mrs. William P. Hutton
Dr. & Mrs. Michael W. Kearning	Mr. Arthur H. Moss
Mr. & Mrs. John Ryan	Dr. & Mrs. Emanuel Schwartz
Mr. & Mrs. Edward S. Sharpless, Jr.	Mr. & Mrs. William G. Siple
Mr. & Mrs. F. Harry Spiess	Mr. & Mrs. Todd Stewart
Mrs. Harrison Therman	Mr. & Mrs. John Toebe
Mr. George Vaux	Mr. & Mrs. Russell Wood

To apply for membership in the Radnor Historical Society

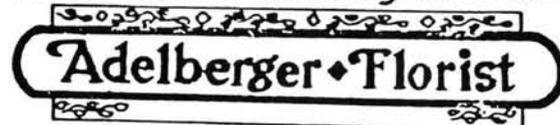
visit or write the Society at

The Finley House,
113 West Beech Tree Lane
Wayne, Pennsylvania 19087

or call
(610) 688-2668

Student: \$5.00 Individual: \$15.00 Family: \$25.00
Sustaining: \$50.00 Patron: \$100.00

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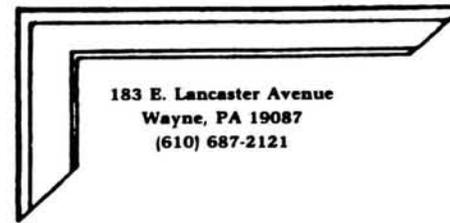
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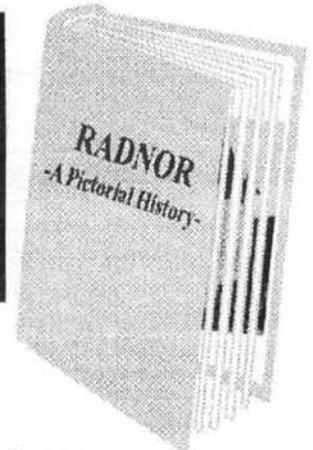
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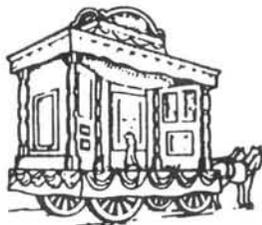
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