



# The Governor's Gossip

February 2023  
v. 41, no. 1

**Newsletter of the Governor Wolf Historical Society,  
Owner of the Wolf Academy Historic Site, East Allen Township**

## Two Shows, Two Historic Sites, Too Good To Miss! 14th Annual Antiques Show — March 4 and 5

by Carol Bear

Mark March 4 and 5 on your calendar for two great primitive country shows you won't want to miss. Only a stones throw apart, the Governor Wolf Historical Society celebrates its 14<sup>th</sup> show and the Chestnut Street Show its 8<sup>th</sup> show. As Helen Bryan, one of the veteran dealers at the GWHS Show, puts it, "We ... are looking forward to it! (And it has) the nicest people."



### Ralston-McKeen House

The unique feature about the Governor Wolf Historical Society show is the period room settings that the dealers create in the restored 1795 Ralston-McKeen House. A cut-stone, center hall home, the Ralston McKeen House, with six corner fireplaces, is the perfect backdrop for 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century antiques.

### Hearth Cooking Demonstrations

An added bonus is the hearth cooking demonstrations. They are done with antique hearth cooking implements by GWHS members in the large walk-in fireplace. Not sure what certain antique kitchen tools were meant for? This is the place to ask and see them in action. The ladies have also compiled a small booklet of their favorite colonial recipes.

### Academy and School

On the GWHS site, there are two other historic buildings that will be filled with antiques dealers – the 1785 Wolf Academy, birthplace of public education for all boys and girls in Pennsylvania, and the

Monocacy Schoolhouse, which also contains the society's new museum highlighting the accomplishments of the seventh governor of Pennsylvania, Gov. George Wolf.

### Monocacy School Cafe

In the Monocacy Schoolhouse, lunch, including homemade soups, loaded sandwiches, fresh baked cookies, and more, will be available from the Daily Grind, Bath.

### Appraisal Clinic

On Sunday, the GWHS show will feature the popular appraisal clinic from 12-2 p.m. Attendees to the show may bring in a maximum of two items at a cost of \$5 each to have them verbally appraised by a veteran antiques dealer.

### Hours and Admission

The hours of the GWHS show are Saturday, March 4, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, March 5, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission is \$6 (\$5 with an ad, a card, or a printout of one from [www.govwolf.org](http://www.govwolf.org) or Facebook, or a stamp from the Chestnut Street Show). Parking is free. For additional information, email [ckbh@ptd.net](mailto:ckbh@ptd.net) or call 610-390-0555.

Don't miss out on this historic weekend of antique excitement! Mark your calendar now!

### Chestnut Street Show

Just one and a half miles to the north is the Chestnut Street Show. The show is located in one of the earliest churches in historic Bath, Christ Church, built in 1876. The main room of the show is Fellowship Hall, which has a tall, arched wooden ceiling. Homemade soup, BBQ, and fresh baked goodies will be offered by the ladies of the church in the Garden of Feedin' Café. Every building on historic South Chestnut Street dates between 1799 and 1899. An added bonus are the three antiques shops on the block within walking distance.

The Chestnut Street Antiques Show is SATURDAY ONLY, March 4, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. With this being a one-day show and the dealers setting up Saturday morning, you will be sure to find bargains here! Cost of admission is \$5 (\$4 with a card, or a printout of one from Facebook, or a wrist band from the Governor Wolf Show). Parking is free. For additional information email [ddh1@ptd.net](mailto:ddh1@ptd.net) or call 610-390-3276.

**Governor Wolf Historical Society**

6600 Jacksonville Road  
East Allen Township  
Mail address: P.O. Box 134  
Bath, PA 18014  
Phone: 610-837-9015  
Email: [gwhs1958@gmail.com](mailto:gwhs1958@gmail.com)  
Website: [www.govwolf.org](http://www.govwolf.org)

**OFFICERS**

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**Vice-President:** Vacant  
**Recording Secretary:** Abby Spencer  
**Treasurer:** Kathy Wilhelm  
**Corresponding Secretary:** Annette Vliet

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**EDITOR**

Barbara Wiemann  
610-262-6977  
[blwiemann@gmail.com](mailto:blwiemann@gmail.com)

This newsletter is published four times a year (February, May, August and November) as a service to its members and the public by the Governor Wolf Historical Society. Contributions are encouraged and may be sent to the editor before the 1st of the publication month. However the Society reserves the right to select and edit all content.

*Monthly Meetings*

The Society holds monthly meetings at 6:30 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month in the Monocacy School, located at our historic site, 6600 Jacksonville Road, Bath, PA 18014. All members and interested individuals are invited to attend.

*Membership*

The Governor Wolf Historical Society is an all volunteer organization dedicated to preserving local history. If you are not a member, we invite you to become a member and support our activities. A membership form is found on page 5 of this newsletter.

*We Need Your Email Address!*

Our full color electronic newsletter is available in your inbox before the printed black and white version is mailed. Updates about our events and activities are emailed between newsletters. To be added to our email distribution list, please send your email address to Treasurer Kathy Wilhelm at [gwhs1958@gmail.com](mailto:gwhs1958@gmail.com). If you supplied the Society with your email, and you are not getting emails about upcoming activities and events, contact Kathy at the same email.

*Historic Site Rentals*

The Governor Wolf Historical Society is fully open and ready to rent out our buildings and 3 1/2 acre grounds to host your next birthday party, baby shower, meeting, or even a small wedding. We currently rent out the historic Wolf Academy and Monocacy School and the beautiful surrounding gardens. There is plenty of parking in the adjacent grassy meadow. For more information about rental opportunities, please contact Abby Spencer at [spencerabby@yahoo.com](mailto:spencerabby@yahoo.com) or 610-428-3975.

*Free Historic Site Tours*

The Society offers free tours of our three historic buildings, grounds, and new museum on the third Saturday of each month, April through November, from 1-3 p.m. No reservations are needed.

Knowledgeable guides will discuss the history of each building, Gov. George Wolf, and provide details about items in the museum.

The Society is always willing to provide tours to individuals, families, school classes, youth groups, and social organizations at other times. To schedule a tour, call 610-837-9015 or email [gwhs1958@gmail.com](mailto:gwhs1958@gmail.com)

**Thank You**

- **Brian Sayago** for the donation of a Staples gift certificate used to help print the November newsletter
- **Lucienne Hosford** for the donation of a large wall mirror for the Ralston-McKeen House

**JoAnn E. Yocum**

JoAnn Yocum, 93, of Bath, died Jan. 17, 2023. JoAnn was a long time active member and supporter of the Gov. Wolf Historical Society before her final illness. The Society extends our condolences to her family.

**Garden Volunteers Needed**



Although it is still winter, now is the time to organize our garden volunteers for this year. These volunteers plant, water, weed, and mulch the plantings in our gardens. No special skills are needed; we will teach you and provide tools. Volunteers can set their own schedules as tasks arise. To be added to the gardening list, contact Trish at [trmowen@gmail.com](mailto:trmowen@gmail.com)

GWHS has other episodic volunteer opportunities. To be added to the list, email [gwhs1958@gmail.com](mailto:gwhs1958@gmail.com)

**Northampton County Awards  
GWHS Hotel Tax Gant**

GWHS was recently notified that we have been awarded a \$10,000 Hotel Tax for Tourism Grant.

Fundraising events are a major source of capital for the Society's restoration projects. The money spent for speakers, instructors, and entertainers, as well as the dollars spent on advertising, must be deducted from an event's gross profit. This grant defrays 75% of these costs, up to \$10,000, allowing for a substantial increase in our net profit.

In other words, more money for restoration!

Many thanks to Northampton County for its generous support.

## From Our President



What a wonderful year 2022 was for GWHS! After two years of cancelled events and lost opportunities, 2022 was a year of renewal. The Summer Institute, the dedication of the Ann Power Historical Education Center, the celebration of the Society's 75th anniversary, the Antiques Show, the 40th Annual Christmas House Tour – all these and more were back in action. It was wonderful to hear again the sounds of members and visitors enjoying themselves while appreciating our piece of colonial America.

The work of preservation and restoration continued as well. New stucco for the Monocacy School, tung oil for the floors in the Wolf Academy and the Schoolhouse meeting room, sealant for the stone walls of two historic buildings – the GWHS campus never looked better.

The new year promises to be just as exciting. In 2023 favorite events will continue, like the popular tea and the Antiques Show in March. Some new activities will also be offered, so be on the lookout for announcements in future editions of *The Governor's Gossip*.

More renovations are also in the planning stages for 2023 – upgraded electricity and cabinetry in the Ralston-McKeen House, a new web site, improvements to the interior of the original 1867 school room of the Monocacy School. With hard work and successful fund raising, all of these plans can become reality.

We invite you to join us. Whatever your talents, you can put them to use at GWHS, and you'll have fun and make friends while you're at it. The Society's meetings are free (!) and so are the refreshments (!!). Come to the Monocacy School on the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. to see for yourself. Hope to see you there.

Terri Sayago

## GWHS Board Reorganizes for 2023-2024 Terri Sayago Elected President

GWHS has a new President! **Terri Sayago** was elected to a two year term in December. She succeeds **Carol Bear**, who successfully guided the Society through two difficult COVID years. Officers re-elected for one year terms are Recording Secretary **Abby Spencer**, Corresponding Secretary **Annette Vliet**, and Treasurer **Kathy Wilhelm**.

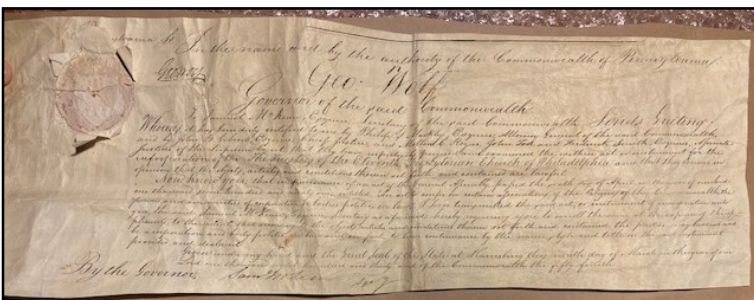
At the same meeting, the Board of Directors welcomed six new members, **Robert Bysher**, **Jovita Heist**, **Jean Nye**, **Kathy Silfies**, **Jacqueline Sellers**, and **Stacy Zellner**. The Board term is one year. We look forward to the enthusiasm and ideas they will bring to the Society.

Along with our new Board members, thirteen Board members were re-elected for another year (see page 2 for complete list). **Helene Mery**, a four year Board member, has retired. We thank her for her contributions and hope to see her at future activities.



Outgoing President Carol Bear (right rear) congratulates the new officers: Kathy Wilhelm, Abby Spencer (front row) and Annette Vliet and Terri Sayago (rear). Photo by Barb Wiemann.

## Museum Update — Society Acquires Gov Wolf Document



by Linda Kortz

Our museum has acquired an original 1830 document signed by George Wolf while he was Governor of Pennsylvania. **Bob Bysher**, a new Board member who created our museum video about Wolf, is completing our soon to launch new website, and had his home selected for the House Tour last December, discovered the document for sale on Ebay and alerted us to its availability. This new Board member certainly has become totally immersed in GWHS!

The Society was the successful high bidder and the document is now being archivally framed by **Friendship Framing** on Airport Road.

More details will appear in our next issue. Look for this exciting new acquisition to be on exhibit in our Museum soon.

## The Weaversville Academy: An East Allen Township Classical School

In 1855, public elementary (grades 1-8) education was readily available in Northampton County. But for parents and students who wanted an education beyond the eighth grade, there were few local options. To meet this need, interested citizens near Weaversville established a private classical school in that East Allen village.

### Origins

The subscribers or stockholders met on Sept. 4, 1855 and elected a Board of Trustees to oversee their Weaversville Academy. John Laubach was selected to build a three story brick building, 60 by 38 feet, on a one acre lot (mostly in East Allen Township) that the Trustees purchased for \$200 from David and Samuel Weaver. The school opened in the spring of 1856 with Hiram F. Savage of Connecticut as principal.



The Weaversville Academy building at 6945 Weaversville Road in East Allen Township. The first floor contained classrooms, while the upper floors offered rooms for boarding students. Photo by Barb Wiemann

### Students and Courses

The Academy offered both day and boarding options. Boarders lived on the upper floors. By 1858, the school had 137 students, including 38 females. While most lived locally, students hailed from such diverse locations as Northumberland County, Tamaqua, French Town, NJ, and Fordham, NY.

Offerings included English, mathematics, history, geography, science, surveying, and bookkeeping, as well as Latin, Greek, and French. The cost for board and tuition was \$37.50 for an 11 week quarter. For an extra fee, students could add music lessons (instrumental or vocal), drawing, painting, and needlework.

### Teacher Training

Ironically, one of the Academy's greatest contributions was to public education. The Academy offered a Normal course of study, designed to prepare elementary graduates to become teachers in the common (grade 1-8 public) schools. The Northampton County Superintendent of Schools, in his report for the 1871/72 school year, noted that he had examined quite a number of applicants fresh from the Weaversville Academy and the results proved that these young teachers had been in good hands.

After Savage resigned in 1863, other principals were Ralph Pendleton, R. L. Buehrle, and Abraham F. Kindt. Kindt is notable since he became principal after serving as County Superintendent of Schools from 1860/61-1865/6.

### Financial Difficulties

The Academy was only five years old when the Civil War began. Apparently, the Trustees suffered some financial difficulties and took out a \$5,000 note in 1864. When the Trustees could not make a loan payment of \$2,735, in 1868 Absolom Reichard, the note holder, placed a lien on the Academy. The one acre lot, building, kitchen, stable, and personal property (maps, blackboards, desks, chairs, and books) were sold at Sheriff Sale to Reichard, the highest bidder, for \$3,500 in November.

### Principal Bender

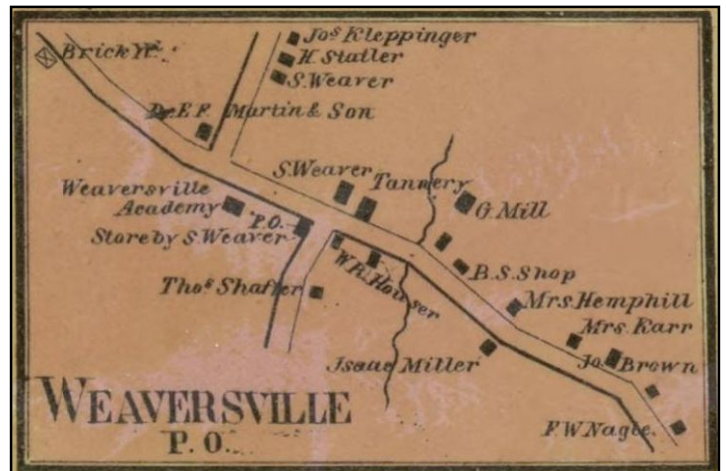
This sale did not close the Academy, but seems to have placed the school under the control of its principals instead of the Trustees. The first was Franklin P. Bender, a Lehigh County native born in 1848, who became principal about 1869. In April 1871, Reichard sold the Academy to Bender for \$5,000. In his 1869/70 report, the County Superintendent praised Prof. Bender for a flourishing academy for both sexes. The *Pennsylvania School Journal*, Feb. 1872, wrote that the "Weaversville Academy, in charge of F. P. Bender is doing notable work preparing young men and women for teaching. The principal is assisted by Messrs. Andres and Henninger, both State Normal School graduates. The Weaversville Academy is finely located and furnished for boarding school purposes and is richly deserving of liberal patronage."

### Final Years

When Bender moved to Philadelphia to pursue a divinity career, he sold the Academy to Prof. C. Edward Kummer of Bethlehem for \$6,000 in April 1875. Kummer owned the Academy and served as principal until November 1880, when he sold the Academy to Absolom Reichard for \$5,947.20.

While we do not have any definitive information about when the Academy closed, it was probably soon after Reichard acquired it. Thus ended this classical Academy in East Allen.

After it ceased to house a school, the building was used as a store and then turned into apartments.



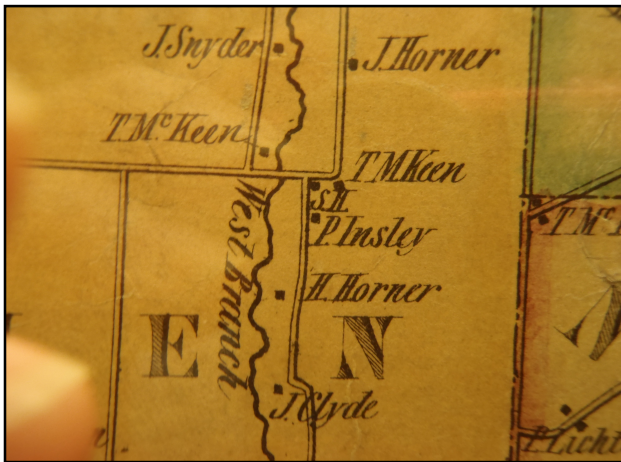
1860 map of Weaversville from Hopkins' Map of Northampton Co., PA

## Annual Dinner Set for May 5

The Society's annual dinner will be held Friday, May 5, in the historic Wolf Academy. Back by popular acclaim, **Get Fed Catering** will provide the buffet style meal. They offer a delightful selection for every taste. Attendees may bring alcoholic beverages.

After the meal, **Joel Hoffner**, local historian and author, will present an illustrated lecture titled "**Northampton County Maps — A Powerful Research Tool.**" Joel used patent surveys to map the location of early landowners in 12 county townships and has published the results in four books. He is also active with the Lehigh Valley Historical Maps Consortium, of which the Society is a partner. Many maps have been digitized and over 800 maps are listed. Google the consortium to see the available maps. Joel's latest venture is documenting the more than 200 one room school houses in the county.

Doors will open at 5:30 p.m., with the meal at 6 p.m. Registration is required and will be available after March 20. Call 610-428-3975 or email [spencerabby@yahoo.com](mailto:spencerabby@yahoo.com).



A close up from the 1855 Map of Easton & 12 Miles Around showing the school house and McKean House.

## Open House Dates

April 15 and May 20 - 1 to 3 p.m.

Free guided tours of the Society's  
3 historic buildings and museum

No reservations needed



### Searching For Old School Photos

Local historian and researcher Joel Hoffner is compiling a book about the one room schools of Northampton County. There are approximately 200 of them and one page will be devoted to each school. Joel is searching for vintage photos of each building and information about the buildings. If you have any old photos or details that you could share, please contact Barb Wiemann at [bwiemann@gmail.com](mailto:bwiemann@gmail.com) or 610-262-6977.



### East Allen Township School District—100 Years Ago

During the 1922/1923 school year the district spent \$4,964 to add a third room to the Monocacy School (the present Meeting Room). This included a basement. Other expenses were \$241 for textbooks, \$403 for fuel to heat five schoolhouses, and \$145 for water and lights. Salaries for seven teachers totaled \$6,343; the principal of the Monocacy School was paid an extra \$198.

**Membership in the Governor Wolf Historical Society is by the calendar year!**

**We are an all volunteer Society and need your support.**

**Now is the time to join for 2023!**

### GOVERNOR WOLF HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

You can help preserve our community's rich cultural heritage by becoming a member of the Governor Wolf Historical Society! Please return this application with a check payable to Governor Wolf Historical Society. If family, please include all names. Mail to: Governor Wolf Historical Society, P.O. Box 134, Bath PA 18014.

Individual \$25.00; Family \$40.00; Student \$10.00  
Restoration \$75.00; Monocacy \$100.00  
Governor's Guild \$200.00  
Individual Lifetime \$500.00  
Senior Lifetime (62+years) \$250.00

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ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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# The Governor's Gossip

GOVERNOR WOLF HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
P. O. BOX 134  
BATH, PA 18014

Return Service Requested

## More Upcoming Events on Pages 1 and 5

### Register for our Celtic Tea on March 19!



Our Celtic Tea will be held in the 1785 Wolf Academy. The Academy was built by the Scots-Irish and Pennsylvania Germans settlers who wanted a school of higher learning for their sons. Among the first students was George Wolf, Jr., the seventh Governor of Pennsylvania who is known as The Father of Public Education in Pennsylvania.

We will be celebrating the Scots-Irish who made this possible with another great program, music, prizes, and lots of laughter. **Ha'Penny Bridge** will be playing, singing and telling Scot-Irish stories. Their name comes from a bridge in Ireland that cost a half penny to cross! A huge tea buffet table will contain scones, tea sandwiches, pastries, scotch shortbread cookies, fruits and more with lovely teas!

For reservations or questions, please send an email to [ljkortz@gmail.com](mailto:ljkortz@gmail.com) with your name, and the names of those in your group. Cost is \$20 per person.

### Summer Institute of Colonial Arts Set for June 8 and 9 Learn a New Skill and Have Fun

Institute classes are all “make-and-take” and students will go home with a completed Colonial treasure! In previous years classes have included floorcloths, split oak baskets, herbs in colonial cooking, grain painting, bench with wood dovetails, landscape painting, and more – all arts practiced in the 1700s and 1800s.

Classes are held in the Society’s three historic buildings. The full schedule and registration information will be published in the May newsletter, on the Society’s website, and Facebook. Save the dates and learn a new skill!

**MARCH 19<sup>TH</sup>, 2:00 PM – 4:00PM**  
\$20. each – Reservations- 610-837-9015

The Governor Wolf Historical Society  
6600 Jacksonville Road, Bath, PA