



The Governor's Gossip

May 2025
v. 43, no. 2

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

Summer Institute of Colonial Arts

By Carol Bear

The 2025 Summer Institute of Colonial Arts has a new look! We are spreading out the fun with one class per month. Sign up to learn Blacksmithing Basics on May 27, create a Decorated Letter (Fraktur) on June 21, and fashion a Small Storage Bin Basket on July 19. Each class costs \$45 for GWHS members or \$55 for non-members. The materials fee is paid to the instructor on the day of the class.

Registration Information

Send your name, phone number, email address, class (es) you want to take, and a check (made payable to "GWHS") to Carol Bear, GWHS Summer Institute, 207 W. Northampton St., Bath PA 18014. For more information call Carol at 610-390-0555.

Blacksmithing Basics

Saturday, May 17, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. (rain date May 18)

Instructor Dave Mowen learned blacksmithing at Landis Valley. He will be assisted by other Society members.



Shaping steel with heat and a hammer is fascinating; like one would push around putty or clay. Iron starts out very hard, and with a bit of heat, it becomes plastic, to be flattened or stretched, twisted and bent into something needed. To make the blacksmith's created form useful, just let it cool back down - and you have a very strong tool or

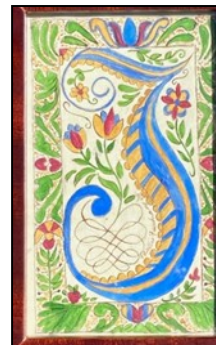
utensil. In this introduction, each participant will try the various processes the blacksmith uses to make things, and then go home with a practical and useful creation. Learn how to make a meat hook, a rat-tail, and maybe a twist on a portable forge, using the basic "pushing metal around" technique and perhaps even "welding". Students are advised to wear a long sleeve shirt, jeans and shoes. Materials fee \$20. Maximum 10 students.

Decorated Letter (Fraktur)

Saturday June 21, 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Instructor Phyllis Facchiano is a well-known Lehigh Valley watercolor and fraktur artist.

We will share our love for art through planning, designing, and decorating an alphabet letter of the student's choice. Upon class completion, the student will have a beautiful and treasured piece of art. Wear a smock, if desired. Students should bring several well-sharpened pencils, soft eraser, scissors, ruler, and paper towels. Materials fee \$20. Maximum 6 students.

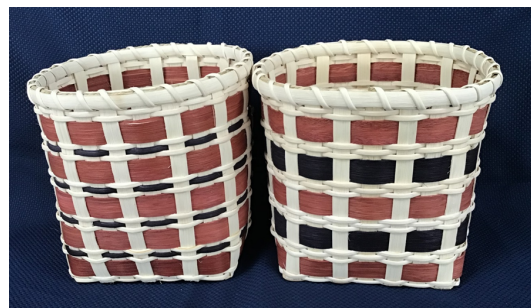


Small Storage Bin Basket

Saturday July 19, 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

Instructor Jane Moyer, weaving since 1996, has taken many professional classes.

Students will weave an entire small basket storage bin (7" x 7" x 9") and take home a finished product. Students have a choice of color arrangement. Some weaving experience is helpful, but not necessary. All tools are supplied, but please bring a small towel. Bring a bag lunch if desired. Materials fee \$15. Maximum 6 students.



Governor Wolf Historical Society

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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 on page 5 or join online at the Society's web page www.govwolf.org

We Want 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 Kathy Wilhelm at 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 or 610-428-3975.

Group Tours

Groups of all kinds — educators, Scouts, 4-H, schools, seniors, historical, crafters, gardeners, families — looking for a fun, informative morning or afternoon outing, please contact us! We have a variety of programs, activities, and presentations about our historic site and gardens to choose from, or we can customize one just for you!

We have entertained and informed groups from other states as well as our local community. This is a site that impacted all of Pennsylvania, since George Wolf, our seventh governor and the Father of Pennsylvania Public Education, spent his formative years as a student and teacher, at the Wolf Academy. Call 610-837-9015 or email gwhs1958@gmail.com to discuss what we can do for you!

Open House Dates – Free Guided Tours

May 17, June 21, July 19, August 16 — 1-3 p.m.

By Linda Kortz

The Governor Wolf full site is open for visitors the third Saturday of each month from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. No reservations are needed!

You are invited! We are inviting you, your family, visiting friends, and groups to an interesting afternoon exploring the Herb and Pleasure Garden, three historic buildings, our museum, and hearing the interesting story of a boy who grew up nearby and became Governor in the 1800s!

We had a couple from Kansas visit us in April. She attended first grade in the Monocacy Building, and wanted to show her husband where she grew up. They were stunned at the work we have accomplished, and wished that they could join us.

If you or your family attended school here or in any early local school, let us know! We are looking for old school photos that we can scan. Gov. Wolf is known as The Father of Public Education in Pennsylvania for every child in the Commonwealth.

On May 17th, June 21st, and July 19th, we are also offering craft classes (see page 1 for details).

Thank You!

- To **Annette Vliet** for the donation of three folding tables
- To the **Longswamp Township Historical Society** for the donation of 12 glass vases

Crafts Social!

Crafters are invited to gather on the first and third Thursday of each month in the meeting room of the Monocacy School. Bring your project, supplies, a drink and perhaps a snack and prepare for good conversation and a productive two hours. No registration is needed. A \$5 donation to the society is requested to defray facility costs.



From Our President

Spring greetings! While we watch in anticipation of our spring blooms and leafed out trees, we think of our gardens and homes and all of the Spring projects we have to complete. At GWHS, we are in the same mode of anticipation for the beautiful Herb and Pleasure Garden at our site. The work planned to renew our garden this year is to replace some plants, trim trees, and work to keep it as beautiful as it was when first constructed in 2004. We are always looking for friends and volunteers to help us in this ongoing project.

See the page 1 information on our upcoming crafts classes, which will be held throughout the coming months, starting with Blacksmithing in May.

Our Annual Dinner on May 16 will feature a great Speaker – horticulturist Kirk Brown. Read all about it on page 6. Deadline is May 12, so let us know as soon as possible if you are interested in attending.

Kathy

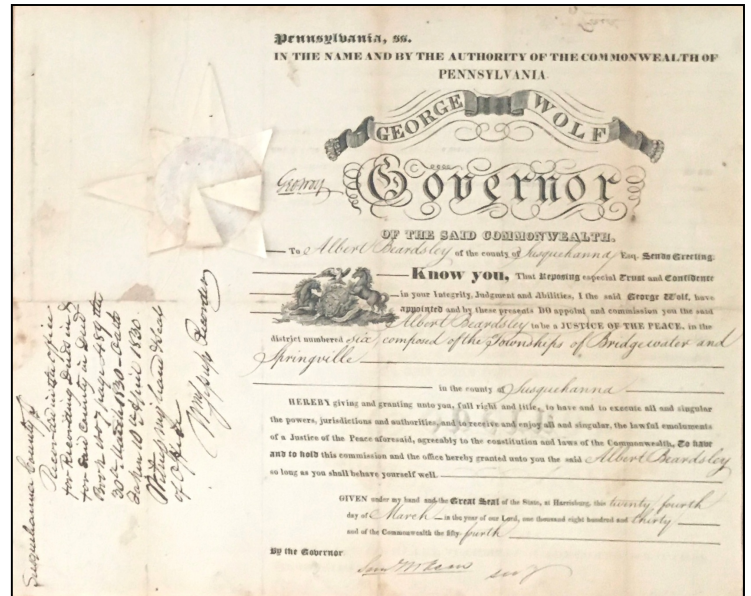
Society Acquires Third Wolf Document

By Linda Kortz

The Society has acquired another official document signed by Governor George Wolf in 1830. It appoints Albert Beardsley as a Justice of the Peace in Susquehanna County "as long as he behaves himself well."

We were called by a family cleaning out a relative's home, asking if we were interested in obtaining the document. This new acquisition will join two other parchment documents that were signed by Governor Wolf while in office.

Our new item is being archivally mounted and framed by member Debra Rice, Friendship Framing, and it will go on display in time for the annual dinner on May 16.



Passport to History Day at GWHS Visit Us on June 28

By Annette Vliet

Governor Wolf Historical Society is participating in the annual Lehigh Valley Passport to History event on Saturday, June 28, 2025, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is a FREE event with FREE snacks. There will be "Make-it-n-Take it" crafts for everyone, demonstrations and a newly designed museum. There will be FREE activities for kids and adults. Bring your grandchildren! Make an herbal wreath. Make a tin punched wall candle sconce. We will take your photo sitting in an 1800's schoolroom! We will have tours of the garden and info on herbs, and have hearth cooking (a smaller version). Mark your calendar and enjoy the fun experience!

Passport to History

Lehigh Valley Passport to History is a partnership of more than 50 historic sites and resources in and around the Lehigh and Northampton counties. Passport's website, <https://lvhistory.org> highlights historical activities, events, tours and exhibitions through the Valley. Website visitors can sign up for Passport's email newsletter covering upcoming events.



Scout Community Service Projects

By Linda Kortz

Scoutmaster Chad Weiner, Troop 40, Kreidersville, contacted us about having scouts volunteer at our site to fulfill different levels of community service needed for rank advancement. Scouts will work on several tasks determined by the Grounds Committee, and supervised by their leaders and our members. Scouts are interested in working at this historical site, learning the value of protecting our history.

The Citizen in the Community Badge is a badge for an older scout, requiring the youth to work eight hours to help a non-profit in the community. One Scout is ready to be our first to work on the site to achieve this requirement.

A second young man, working on his Eagle Rank, has begun the approval process with Minsi Trail Council, to complete the long brick walkway in the front of the Ralston-McKeen House. This is a project that will really benefit the Society and our visitors.

What a fabulous program to help any non-profit! We are pleased to be chosen!



Slate Quarries of East Allen Township

East Allen Township is not located in what is typically known as the Slate Belt region of Northampton County. Nevertheless, entrepreneurs established 10 slate quarries in the township. All but three were small operations, and time and vegetation growth have obliterated most evidence of these quarries. However, with the larger quarries, it is possible to see pits and tailings from nearby roads during the winter months. *All of the sites are on private property.*

The 10 quarries were grouped in two clusters. Seven are strung out along the Catasauqua Creek, from Nor-Bath Blvd. north to Old Carriage Rd. The other three pits are located along the Monocacy Creek in the northeast corner of the township. These quarries produced hard slate, which was mostly used for roofs, with minor uses for grave vaults and fence posts. The last quarry in the township closed over 100 years ago.

Catasauqua Creek Quarries

The southern-most quarry along the Catasauqua Creek, about a mile north of Rt. 329, on the west bank of the stream, was a small operation, with a small hole and waste pile.

Koch Quarry

The next quarry heading north, just north of the junction of Tanglewood and Hillside Roads, was a much more substantial operation. Known as the Koch Quarry, it sits at the junction of two branches of the creek on the east side of Hillside. The pit was 250 by 100 feet, with an estimated depth of about 100 feet. The slag pile is a substantial mound south of the quarry. There are views of the pit from Hillside Rd. as it ascends the hill. This quarry was abandoned before 1880.

Ziegenfuss Quarry

Continuing upstream, the next quarry is the Ziegenfuss Quarry. It is only about 1000 feet northeast from Koch, on the fork of the creek along Hillside Rd. The quarry was about 120 by 120 feet with irregular sides. Depth was about 100 feet. The slate in this quarry was high quality. The pit had an interesting quartz string on the northeast wall. The quarry closed about 1905 due to a shortage of workers, and the machinery was removed.

The fourth and fifth quarries, located on the south bank of the east fork of the creek, are about 1500 feet east of Ziegenfuss. The pits were probably opened by prospectors looking for new sources of slate. The quality or quantity must have been disappointing, and the quarries were abandoned.

Miller Quarry

Heading north, the sixth quarry along the Catasauqua Creek, on the north side of Old Carriage Road south of Sickie Road, was the Miller Quarry, the largest and most profitable in the township. The quarry was a prominent landmark and at a time when local roads were not named, many newspaper notices described East Allen localities by noting their geographical relationship to the quarry.

Nathan Miller

The quarry was opened by Nathan Miller (1811-1885). On Feb. 28, 1867, Miller leased four acres on his farm to George Ziegenfuss

of Doylestown, Bucks County, to operate the quarry. Ziegenfuss paid Miller fifty cents per square for the slate he produced. In December, 1880, Grubb and Medlar, Allentown real estate brokers, advertised the availability of this "very desirable slate property, fully developed." The lease was apparently acquired by the Chester County Slate Company (CCSC).

Chester County Slate Company

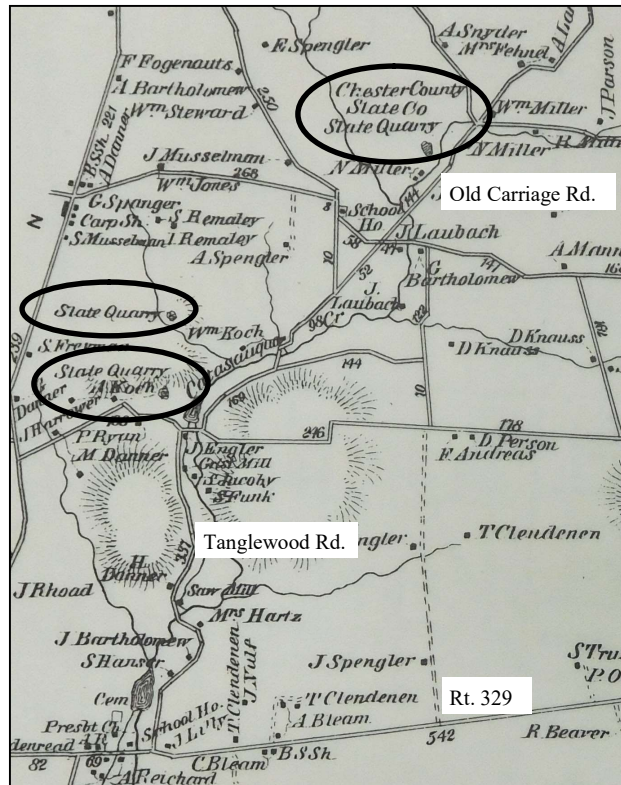
In November, 1881, a "public sale of the valuable slate quarry lease" for Miller's quarry operated by CCSC was advertised in the Allentown Democrat and the New York Times. The lease was for 36 years and the option existed to buy the quarry. The lease included a 40 horsepower engine, two hoists with cables, all necessary machines and tools, steam and fill pumps, blacksmith shop, double frame dwelling, and stable. Interested parties could contact the Crane Iron Co. of Catasauqua or the Phoenix Iron Co. of Phoenixville, who would vouch for the quality of the slate from the quarry. Again, CCSC apparently purchased the lease and continued to operate the quarry.

Chester Slate Company

In 1882, a group of Easton capitalists, including George Ziegenfuss, charted the Chester Slate Company (CSC) and acquired the lease. This company operated the quarry until 1897, when CSC failed. The Easton Trust Company purchased CSC's assets at Sheriff's sale, and then the estate of Nathan Miller purchased those assets, which included 20 years remaining on the original 50 year quarry lease, for \$2,000. In 1901 when Nathan's widow Eliza died, her obituary notes that their son William H. (1842-1917) was superintendent of the quarry. Grandson George (1868-1947) also worked at the quarry as a young man. In 1906, Nathan's heirs advertised the sale of his 112 acre farm which included "one of the oldest and most valuable" quarries." When the farm was resold in 1911, the quarry was described as "abandoned, formerly operated by CSC."

Miller Quarry Description

The Miller quarry is trapezoidal in shape, about 220 by 270 feet. Depth is 70 feet. Charles H. Behre Jr., who examined the pit and dump about 1925, reported that the slate had a good ring with closely



The Catasauqua Creek area of East Allen from the 1874 Beers atlas. It shows the Koch, unnamed Ziegenfuss, and Miller Quarries. Miller No. 2 was opened in 1881.

Slate Quarries... (continued from page 4)

spaced ribbons and a somewhat sandy texture. Among the houses roofed with slate from this quarry was the new home of Secretary of State James G. Blaine in Washington, D.C.

Miller No. 2

The final quarry along Catasauqua Creek is known as Miller No. 2 Quarry. It is located between Sickie and Hilltop Roads, about 300 feet north of their junction. According to the Carbon Advocate, Nathan Miller opened a new quarry on his farm in 1881. The slate was ground up for use in paint. The output was never extensive. The opening is about 30 by 40 feet, with a depth of about 40 feet; there is a small dump. Behre noted that the slate had very good cleavage, but weathered readily and had a papery effect.

Monocacy Creek Quarries**Achenbach Quarry**

Along the Monocacy Creek, the western most of the three township quarries is the Achenbach Quarry. It is located between Rt. 987 and the creek, south of Stone Post Road. When the quarry was in operation from 1914 to 1916, it was described as one mile north of Bath in East Allen; however, with the northward expansion of Bath, it is now just inside the borough line. It was owned by the Achenbach Slate Company, which was incorporated with capital of \$5,000. On August 1, 1914, the Company paid Jacob D. Achenbach and wife Lizzie \$4700 for 9 acres. Jacob reserved the ability to continue to use any unused portions for farming and pasture, retained the water rights, and stipulated that the land would revert back if the Company ceased quarrying.

According to the Morning Call, the company spent three months topping the land and installing up-to-date equipment and a boiler house. The roughly rectangular quarry is 70 by 160 feet, with a depth of 45 feet. There is a dump southwest of the pit. The slate was considered of fair quality and was used for roofing, producing 230 squares in 1914. When abandoned, the machinery was removed.

Roth Quarry

The second quarry, the Roth Quarry, is located about 800 feet east of the one room Union School (now a private residence), The former

school is located at Rt. 248 and Stone Post Road and the quarry is south of Stone Post. Joseph Roth opened the small 40 by 15 foot quarry, which was 25 feet deep. Behre concluded that the quarry probably produced good slate. It closed before 1890.

The final quarry in East Allen was located 600 feet due north of the Roth Quarry. It is in a small valley with a small tributary stream. The unnamed pit is 35 by 35 feet, with a depth of about 25 feet. It yielded roofing slate for local homes and was abandoned by 1890.

Employee Deaths at Miller Quarry

Slate quarry work was physically hard, dirty, and dangerous. Newspapers reported serious injuries and deaths.

In October, 1881, F. Rehpe was hit by a ten pound stone loosened by a derrick. It fell some distance, causing internal injuries which proved fatal several hours later. Rehpe was conscious until his death, and exonerated the Chester County Slate Company of all blame. The company and employees presented a purse to his widow and two children.

In November 1892, David Hoch, age 26 and engaged to be married, attempted to move a slate rock. It slid and fell on him, resulting in almost instantaneous death.

**Become a Member! Use this Form or
Join Online at www.gov.wolf.org**

MEMBERSHIP FORM

You can help preserve our community's rich cultural heritage. Return this form with a check payable to Governor Wolf Historical Society. For a family membership, please include all names. Mail to: Governor Wolf Historical Society, P.O. Box 134, Bath PA 18014. Membership is by the calendar year.

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



The dump site of the Koch Quarry as seen from Hillside Road. Trees and other vegetation are slowly camouflaging the large mound and eventually this reminder of our industrial past will not be recognizable. Photo by Barb Wiemann

NAME _____

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CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____

E-MAIL _____

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

Return Service Requested

More Upcoming Events
Summer Institute of Colonial Arts — page 1
Open House Tours — page 2
Passport to History — page 3

**Annual Dinner Features Lecture on History and Art
of Pennsylvania Gardens and Plants
Reserve Now — Deadline May 12**

The GWHS annual meeting will be held on May 16 in the Wolf Academy, which turns 240 years old this year. The evening will include a buffet dinner and distinguished speaker. Doors will open at 5:30 p.m. and dinner will be served at 6 p.m. Cost is \$35 for members and \$40 for non-members. **Reservation deadline is May 12.**

The Menu

The meal, from Blacina’s Café and Catering, will include salad, Greek lemon chicken, apricot pork tenderloin, roasted baby potatoes, roasted carrots and green beans, bread and seasoned butter, dessert selection, tea and coffee. Bring your own alcoholic beverages if desired. In previous years, this caterer has garnered rave reviews from attendees.

Pennsylvania Gardens

The speaker for the evening will be Kirk Brown from Orefield, PA. He will speak on “Recreating Eden: A Gardener’s Travelogue”. His talk will celebrate Pennsylvania as a historical and geographical focus of horticulture for 340 years. Stroll through a gardener’s highlight of sites that define the art and science of garden design, horticultural and medicinal plant history, and all the people who made the state a garden capital. From indigenous people’s plant wisdom to the recent return to native pollinators, Kirk will highlight changing tastes and fashions in gardens.

Kirk Brown

Kirk is the is a past president of Garden Comm: Garden Communicators International and he volunteers extensively at the state and national level. He has been nationally recognized and awarded for his knowledge and work in horticulture and gardens. Kirk’s garden designs have won outstanding design awards.

Don’t miss an opportunity to hear this recognized expert!



The Society’s Herb and Pleasure Garden and Wolf Academy

GWHS Annual Dinner - May 16, 2025

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Number of reservations: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Members \$35 per person, Non-Members \$40 per person
Make check payable to: “Governor Wolf Historical Society”
Mail form and check to:
Governor Wolf Historical Society, c/o 7514 School Rd., Bath, PA 18014
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