



# The Greater Dover Historical Society Inc.



March 2008

## 2008 Regular Meeting

### Dates

March 20

April 17

May 15

June 17— 6pm annual historical walk - meet at blacksmith shop

June 19

July 17 - picnic

August 21

September 18

October 16

November 20

All meetings are being held at the Calvary Lutheran Church on the square in Dover @ 7:00pm. Please come and show your support for preserving our Dover history!

## **GDHS Officers and Board of Directors for 2008**

At our regular meeting held on February 21, the Greater Dover Historical Society installed the new officers and board of directors for 2008. The oath of office was administered to the members listed below:

### OFFICERS

President - Madelyn Shermeyer

Vice President—Kay Stitley

Secretary—Lori Koch

Treasurer—Joyce Law

Historian—Cindy Snyder

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Gayle Heagy

Ron Botterbusch (absent)

Jeff Koch

Melanie Green

Kay Stitley



Front row: Cindy Snyder, Gayle Heagy, Lori Koch, Madelyn Shermeyer, Kay Stitley. Back row: Jeff Koch, Melanie Green, Joyce Law.

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION CORNER**

The GDHS is in need of a storage area or barn enclosure to store some large timbers currently housed in the archive storage shed at Ketterman Park. If anyone has such a space available, please contact President Madelyn Shermeyer at 292-2018.

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March meeting speaker — the GDHS is proud to announce our guest speaker for the March 20 meeting will be Mr. Ron Botterbusch who will speak on Civil Defense during World War II. We encourage all members to attend this meeting to hear this informative presentation by Mr. Botterbusch.

**ADOPT A HIGHWAY LITTER PICKUP**

Saturday, March 8, 10:00 a. m.

Meeting place is at GDS Controls, 5301 Carlisle Road (intersection of Temple School Rd.)

Approximate collection time is 2 hrs.

Please contact Lucia Hrinyak at 717-308-2158 or at [loosh45@comcast.net](mailto:loosh45@comcast.net) to participate in this worthwhile community event.

April litter pickup date has yet to be determined.

**BLACKSMITH SHOP — OPEN HOURS**

Beginning on April 12, 2008 the blacksmith shop in Ketterman Park will be open with (Ted) the “smithy” at his forge. The shop will be open from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm on the second Saturday of each month from April through October. It is suggested that attendees try to be at the shop at the starting hour of 10:00 am. Ted’s aim is to work on one item at a time, demonstrating the steps necessary to forge that specific item. Photos will be posted showing the necessary steps from firing the forge to heating the anvil. Leaflets explaining each photo will be available for the visitors. We encourage everyone to visit the shop during these open hours and please invite your friends and neighbors to visit our blacksmith shop in Ketterman Park on Butter Road in Dover Borough.

**President's Column**

**By Madelyn Shermeyer**

With the arrival of the New Year, the GDHS has two new members elected to the Board of Directors - a warm welcome to Melanie Green and Jeff Koch. The Officers and Appointees have remained the same.

As much was accomplished in 2007, the Society can look back and feel proud of these accomplishments. The Open House and the Dedication of the Blacksmith Shop in 2007 will not be surpassed by any event in 2008. In moving forward with the planned events for 2008, I'm sure we as a Society can continue to build on the strong foundation that has been laid by the many volunteers in the preceding years.

The GDHS has discussed having an Old Tyme Dover Day (this title could change) at the Blacksmith Shop. We would have some of the old time crafts represented such as broom making, candle dipping, woodworking and of course, blacksmithing. We would advertise for home crafters to set up stands to sell their crafts.

Mr. Botterbusch and I will begin work on the Bloodroot project. Our goal is to complete the first issue so that it will be available for sale at the Dover Fireman's Fair in September.

The Society wants a site where it can both house archives and stage displays from its collection. Locating one is not an easy task. I find myself continually having to tell myself "patience"; it will happen but then again those that know me will probably tell you patience is something that I haven't learned to embrace.

I believe I can speak for the Officers and the Board of Directors when I say " THANK YOU" to all our members for all our accomplishments in 2007.

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**A Garden At Rest**

**By Lucia Hrinyak**

At the end of the year, nature's gift to gardeners is a well earned rest from our busy lives of planting, fertilizing, weeding, and pruning and time to prepare for next year's show. As the growing season of 2007 drew to an end, the GDHS gardeners tucked their garden into bed and accepted the gift.

June Kinsey, Judy and Randy Worley, Charles Drawbaugh and Lucia Hrinyak gathered at the GDHS storage shed one bright, warm, late October morning . Collectively, we deadheaded, weeded, pruned, turned over the mulch and reset several paving stones. We shared thoughts, ideas and stories; laughed; and delighted in our task.

This year had been one to watch the maturing of the flowers, shrubs and bushes that we had planted the previous year. The clumps of pampas grass thrived. Red twig dogwoods, exuberant in their growth, demanded to be trimmed. Hostas cried out to be divided. Early spring daffodils and hyacinth, bee balm, lilies, and late blooming mums called out, "Look at me!" The brick paths that were laid in September had contentedly settled in.

The end of the season is the time to look back at the past year's successes and failures and to plan for the year ahead. And so we did. Some of the plants will be moving while others will find that they have new neighbors.

Pampas grass and hosta will be divided and replanted. Perhaps we'll add more bulbs to bloom in spring, summer and fall. As always, we will be looking for Society members who will help care for the garden and for the chestnut tree newly planted close to the blacksmith shop.

"When the sun rises, I go to work.

When the sun goes down,

I take my rest."

Chinese Proverb

**FROM ROSSVILLE TO LANGHORNE**  
**AN UNUSUAL AND CIRCUITOUS PATH INTO HISTORY**

**By Jo Ott**

Part I of this story, published in the September 2007 issue of The Greater Dover Historical Society newsletter, describes how I came upon publications on the history of Dover Borough and Dover Township in the office of a Ross-ville printer, and how this discovery led me to The Greater Dover Historical Society. It also details my involvement in researching Dover's Daron family and its connection to a friend, Barbara George. Barbara, you will recall in the story, had the unnerving habit of feeding me information on the Daron family in dribs and drabs. Her last bit of news caused me to place the Daron research in the Save mode on the computer and head to the turnpike.

What was this all-important and momentous announcement?

**PART TWO**

A friend of Anna Daron is alive and well, and lives in Langhorne, PA!

Barbara arranged for our visit with the friend who was amenable to seeing us and being interviewed by me. In earlier years, Barbara, Anna's stepdaughter, and her husband Spurgeon would drive Anna to Langhorne to visit with her old friend up until Anna was no longer able to make the trip. Anna Daron Zepp, who lived with Barbara and her husband, passed away in 1996.

Janet Myers Schwalm is 88 years old, legally blind and with only little vision remaining. She was educated in Dover schools and is a 1936 graduate of Dover High School. Her post-secondary education was at Shippensburg, Millersville and finally at Penn State where she began work on her Ph.D., but was unable to complete the degree due to an illness in her family and her work obligations. She is a retired educator and school administrator. Both of Janet's parents were teachers and taught in Dover schools.

One of her father's students was Anna Daron.

Attempting to capture many of the details of events in the 88 years of someone's historical existence requires the commitment of considerable time and effort. The interviews conducted with Janet, for instance, necessitated two trips to Langhorne and several telephone calls between us until the writing of her history was completed.

Instilling trust with an interview subject is always an important issue with any genealogist and is a necessary first to accomplish. Equally important is for the interviewee to feel comfortable with telling it all, often to a stranger, to understand the purpose of the interview, how the information given will be used, and the historical significance of the history to researchers and to future generations.

Our first visit with Janet was to establish this trust by explaining myself and my mission to her—a very brief account of my own history, if you will, the organization I represented (GDHS), exactly how all the information she was willing to share with us would be used, and who would be the custodian of it. Janet was totally surprised and was elated to learn that Dover has a historical society and, upon learning this, that trusting relationship between interviewer and interviewee was immediately formed.

The first visit to Janet's home in Langhorne also was a get-acquainted session and lasted less than three hours. Although Barbara and Janet have kept in touch with one another in the years following Anna's death, there was still some reacquainting to accomplish since they had not seen each other for a few years. I willingly took a back seat for this to happen. Returning to York County after my long absence, I fully understood the importance of reconnecting

with an old friend.

At the time of this visit, Janet was living in a sprawling, two-story rambler in a beautiful, heavily treed and older Langhorne neighborhood. Many of the homes we drove past were reminiscent of the English Manor, though on a less grand scale. Following many years living in the Washington, D. C. area with all of its suburbia of new and newer homes, I fell in love with the classic architecture of these older homes.

No matter the reason for being in Janet's home, my comfort level was immediately high for she was a gracious host. Over cups of tea we continued to get to know one another by exchanging stories of our lives and our families. At the first hour's end, we were no longer strangers.

Janet offered Barbara and me a tour of her large home. We moved from the living room, its bare walls indicative of an upcoming change in Janet's life, and began with the library. Floor-to-ceiling shelves lined two walls of the large room, filled with hundreds of books, much like one might expect to see in any life-long educator's home. The next room was a large and wonderful sunroom filled with white wicker furniture, so alluring I found a cozy seat and did not want to leave. The tour continued throughout the first floor, then up the stairs to the second floor.

Standing in one of the bedrooms, my attention immediately gravitated to the old, the *very* old, and the beautifully framed photos and pictures hanging on the walls. Some of the large, oval frames, with convex glass to protect their cherished contents, held photos of Janet's maternal ancestors from the small and rural farming community of Kralltown, Washington Township, in York County. This is significant to the Dover area because children from the Kralltown area attend Dover Township schools. In addition, both of Janet's parents were teachers and taught in the Dover schools.

Janet's mother, Kate Gross Myers, was born and raised in Kralltown. Harvey Gross, one of her brothers, and an uncle to Janet, was a well-known York County District Attorney, and frequently was referred to as "The Bulldog" when a young attorney. He was the defense attorney for Wilbert G. Hess, one of the three killers of Nelson Rehmeyer, in what locally is referred to as the hex trial. The murder of Nelson Rehmeyer has been in the news again recently. Harvey Gross went on to establish and serve as the first judge on the county's Orphan's Court.

I asked Janet to identify the individuals in the photos, which she proudly did. There were other, smaller photos sitting on various pieces of furniture around the room, all meticulously cared for. When she completed explaining to us who each and every one was, she then made an announcement that nearly put my pacemaker into overdrive. "I don't know what I'll do with them when I move because there is not room in my new place for them," she stated. "I guess I'll have to throw them away." Gasping, I thought I cannot allow this to happen and asked if she would consider donating them to a historical society.

This is the point that a relationship developed between Janet Myers Schwalm and the Greater Dover Historical Society. Asked if she knew that Dover has a historical society and it might be interested in having all the photos that would have to be disposed of, she smiled, asking, "Dover has a historical society?" At that moment there was no question what the disposition of some of those photos would be.

"I like Dover. It was my home," she said.

My last trip to Langhorne was made on August 1, 2007, for the purpose of collecting items Janet set aside to donate to the GDHS while she packed, then unpacked, her belongings. In April of this year, Janet moved into the Attleboro Retirement Village in Langhorne after selling her home in January.



## Considering Adoption? We Did!

By Lucia Hrinyak

A highway adoption program which originated in Texas in 1985 and is now active in 49 states and abroad attracted the attention and interest of GDHS members well over a year ago. The Society completed the necessary adoption paperwork in April 2006 and shortly thereafter became custodian of a two mile stretch of Rt. 74 just north of the Borough of Dover. Just like a child who keeps an untidy room, this GDHS adoptee is constantly in need of parental oversight.

The Society recently completed its first full year with over twelve Society volunteers who regularly participated in the program. As responsible parents, four times each year volunteers gather litter scattered along the highway. In 2007, they filled 57 trash bags and collected miscellaneous items such as automobile parts, CDs, silverware, and even a large barbecue. Without these efforts, discarded items would remain along our highway to pollute the environment.

The Adopt A Highway program has logged over twenty years of success. The idea germinated when James Evans, a Texas Department of Transportation engineer, noted debris blowing out of the bed of a pickup. Since municipal litter cleanup was expensive, Evans reached out to local groups to aid in the litter collection. Unfortunately, no one responded to his plea for assistance until Billy Black, Public Information Officer for TxDot's Tyler District, picked up the baton and aided in the program development. Following the Tyler Civitan Club's adoption of a two mile stretch of road, word quickly spread and before long, over fifty groups in the region had joined the program. Currently this successful public-private adoption partnership counts more than 90,000 groups in the U.S. and abroad.

Are you an advocate for civic responsibility and a cleaner environment? The GDHS sponsorship of its two mile section of Rt. 74 will be considered for renewal in the coming year. Support this program through your **active** participation; make a pledge to join forces with the orange vested GDHS Adopt A Highway participants in 2008. We need only a few hours of your time during the year in order to make a difference!



**GREATER DOVER HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

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Website: [www.gdhspa.org](http://www.gdhspa.org)

Email: [doverhistory@gdhspa.org](mailto:doverhistory@gdhspa.org)

**PRESERVING OUR HISTORY FOR OUR FUTURE GENERATIONS**

**WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS FOR 2008**

**DUANE HULL**

**RANDY HOLTZAPPLE**

**PENNY GENTZLER**



If any member has a new email address, please forward that information to the GDHS secretary so our records can be updated. This information is kept confidential and only used for GDHS contact purposes. Please email your information to [jkoch8@verizon.net](mailto:jkoch8@verizon.net). Thank you!