



HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF BENSALEM TWP

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MAR. AND APR. NEWSLETTER 2020

On Jan. 5th we learned about the first intentionally integrated housing community in the U.S. from two residents, Joyce Hadley and Karen Swartzbeck. The original developer was Morris Milgram who in 1954 purchased for \$100,000, a tract of 50 acres in the Trevoise section of Bensalem Township. He named it Concord Park and built 135 ranch style homes that sold for between \$12 and \$14,000. These homes had 3-4 bedrooms and radiant heat. At the opening of the samples about 25,000 people came and 50 black families and 10 white families put down deposits.

Mr. Milgram then went on to build 19 homes in a section of Northeast Philadelphia near Nazareth Hospital called Green Belt Knoll. In later years he went on to develop homes in several other areas.

The Concord Community has many clubs, activities and a local newsletter to keep everyone informed. Many Thanks to Joyce and Karen for sharing their memories of growing up in Concord Park.

(NOTE: One local artist, Henry Bozeman Jones, also lived there).

Our February meeting was a teaching one, as we learned from member Jim Davis how to clean and repair old tombstones. If you have ever tried to read an old stone, while tracing your family history, you would have learned all the environmentally safe ways to accomplish this tedious task. It is amazing what can be done to bring

a stone back to being legible. If you missed the meeting and are interested in learning, just call Jim at Tidy Tombstones 215-378-8943. Thanks Jim, it was very informative.

NEW MEMBERS

Jeanne Quinn

Barbara Miller

Will Walker Family

James Gindele Family

ADDITIONS TO OUR COLLECTIONS

Dennis Lautenbacker donated a CD & flash drive with pictures of old **Bensalem and Buehl Field.**

Diane Wilson donated 7books about trolleys, trucks, railroads etc.

James Deskiewicz donated items and yearbooks from **Bensalem High School** in 1979 & 1980.

Jeanne Jarvis Quinn donated many items from her Mother **Fran Jarvis** including things from the high school, **Mother Katherines'**, the **Bell Telephone office** and much more.

DID YOU KNOW ???

On Feb. 5th members **Jim Davis** and **Sally Sondesky** were invited to speak at the **Williamson College of the Trades** in Media. Here is the info....**DID YOU KNOW...**That a man named **Isaiah VanSant Williamson** was born in **Bensalem** in 1803 and his parents **Mahlon** and **Charity VanSant Williamson** are buried in the **Williamson Johnson Cemetery** in **Glen Ashton**? Between both families **Isaiah** learned the value of education and hard work. The family moved in 1807 to **Fallsington** where **Isaiah** spent his youth as an apprentice at the **Gillingham Dry Goods Store**. When that finished he opened his own business, in **Philadelphia**, with help from his father. He invested in railroad and iron works stock and made his fortune. Quietly, **Isaiah** began donating money to every hospital, school, asylum, and orphanage in **Philadelphia**. Also realizing the need to educate young men so they could get a job, he began plans for a school to teach trades such as masonry, carpentry, horticulture, machine shop and pattern making.

Isaiah died before the buildings were finished. Since 1889 all the students who have attended Williamson College have no college debts, as it is still totally free of any charges including room and board. Isaiah Van Sant Williamson in the 1880's was the richest man in America, worth \$18 million dollars, but he continued to live quietly on \$2000 a year.

Check our files for more about this Bensalem born philanthropist.

UPCOMING EVENT

On May 9th (Raindate the 16th) we will hold our Annual Spring Flea Market so start collecting items to donate to our table or gather things for your own table. Bring donations to the office on Wed. or Sat.

STILL SEARCHING FOR

Pictures of the old Bee Hive restaurant on Bristol Pike.

Pictures of Kate's Bar at Bristol Pike and Street Road.

Any old photos that you would like to share.....We can scan them and you can keep the original.

IN MEMORY OF

On Feb. 9th our Society lost a longtime member with the death of David Oettinger. David's service at Tomlinsons was held on the 13th, a rainy cold day, but that didn't stop the people of Bensalem from attending. The line wrapped around the building and took an extra hour for everyone to pay their respects to the family. What a wonderful tribute to Dave, Kathy and their family. We will all miss Dave and his help at our events.

REMINDERS

To those members that have a sticker (Last Newsletter Unless Dues Are Paid) on page 1, please send in your dues before the end of March.

Also remember that in April we are back to meeting on the first Thursday evening at 7 pm.

DUES ARE DUE FOR 2020

SINGLE \$15 FAMILY \$20 BUSINESS \$75

CALENDAR FOR MARCH AND APRIL

Mar. 1st	"Washington Crossing the Delaware and the Battle of Trenton" by Mike Jesberger	2:00 pm
Mar. 11th	Hosting BBA	6:30 pm
Mar. 19th	Board Meeting	7:00 pm
Apr. 2nd	To be announced	7:00 pm
Apr. 16th	Board Meeting	7:00 pm

"If we did all the things we are capable of doing, we would literally astound ourselves" Quote from Thomas Edison

The Board