



Whitehall Historical Preservation Society Newsletter

COMING EVENTS

All speaker presentations are held at the Helfrich Springs Grist Mill, 501 Mickley Rd. Whitehall, PA 18052

March 22, 2025—Passport to History—Open Mill and Museum—10 AM to 4 PM

The Whitehall Historical Preservation Society has been a proud member of the Lehigh Valley Passport to History since its inception. Passport to History is your portal to historical sites throughout Lehigh and Northampton County and beyond. It connects you with programs, events, tours, special activities and more. What better way for you to discover, explore, and share your local history. I encourage you to visit <https://lvhistory.org>. By clicking on one (or all) of the historic sites it will provide you with detailed information for that particular organization.



For 2025 the Passport to History's annual program has gone "seasonal". During this event, participating members open their facility to the public FREE of charge, with special activities, tours, and programs for all ages to enjoy. In the past, the month of July was reserved for this historical excursion. Currently the fourth weekend of each of the following months are scheduled: January (winter), March (spring), June (summer) and September (fall). Visit [Lehigh Valley Passport to History Weekends 2025](#) to learn which members are participating and what activities they have to offer. The **Whitehall Historical Preservation Society** will be open **March 22 from 10 AM to 4 PM** for this occasion.

March 26, 2025--Speaker Presentation-Colonel Washington & Me—Jeffrey Finegan-7 PM



It was in 1768 when George Washington purchased a teenage slave named William Lee. This relationship would last over 30 years. They developed a sense of trust and loyalty to one another. Hear how they journeyed through life together. The story to be told is one of freedom and the founding of our nation as seen through the eyes of a slave.

As a collector of George Washington's manuscripts, Mr. Finegan is delighted to share his knowledge and expertise as he returns for the second time to the Helfrich Springs Grist Mill.

April 5, 2025--Historic Walking Tour of Egypt—10 AM

The first settler in Whitehall Township planted his roots in the vicinity of what we now know as Egypt. The fertile soil is what gave this village its name and drew other immigrants to the area. Discover what businesses were established here and which of those continue to remain in operation. Learn of its prominent residents and their participation in the development of Egypt,



along with many more interesting facts. We are able to share this insightful information with you thanks to Karen Gensey for the time and research she provided.

This tour is offered **FREE** to **WHPS MEMBERS**. For all others, we request a \$5.00 donation. Reservations are a MUST. The tour will last approximately 2.5 hours and walking distance is 1.3 miles. Please dress for the weather and wear comfortable walking shoes. Please call 610 776-7280 and leave a message. Further details and instructions will be provided when we return your call.

April 23, 2025—Speaker Presentation—The Road to Valley Forge—The Revolutionary War in the Philadelphia Region—Michael Jesberger—7 PM

We may remember the 1776 crossing of the Delaware and the Valley Forge encampment as events that tested the endurance of the patriot forces, but the continental soldiers triumphed over scores of other hardships at places lesser known. In the fall of 1777, the Continental Army fought two key battles and marched hundreds of miles through all types of terrain and in all sorts of weather. Often deprived of food, sleep, and comfort, the soldiers deserve recognition for what they endured during this campaign for the cause of liberty.



Join historical reenactor, lecturer and tour

guide, Michael Jesberger for this course which will include Images of Philadelphia area historic sites, maps, and eyewitness accounts of the participants which will bring these seldom-celebrated events to life. —Written by Michael Jesberger

May 17, 2025—WHPS Spring Flea Market—8 AM to 1 PM

Can you believe the *Whitehall Historical Preservation Society* has been hosting this Flea Market for the past 14 years? It has been a staple fundraiser for us. The community benefits as well. With prices at an all-time high, finding a bargain these days to most of us is essential. If making a deal, instead of finding one is your objective, give us a call. It will be worth your while. Cost for a reserved 12' x 20' space is only \$15, \$20 on the day of the event. Make the call today: 610 776-7280. Leave a message and someone will get back to you. Location for this event will be held at 506 Mickley Rd. in Whitehall, behind the Peter Grim Homestead. (Rain Date: May 18, 2025). Refreshments will be available including an array of homemade baked goods. Tell a friend. **Hope to see you there.**



Homemade baked goods are needed to sell at our Spring Flea Market. We would appreciate your participation to help make this fundraiser a success. Items can be dropped off Friday between 11 am and 2 pm or Saturday after 7 am.

May 28, 2025—“Fries Rebellion” Film—Jay Searock—7 PM

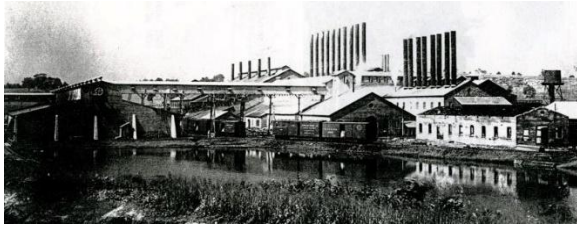
It was in the late 1790's when a group of local citizens from Northampton (and currently Lehigh), eastern Berks, upper Bucks, and upper Montgomery counties protested against a new Federal Tax, enforced by the administration under the jurisdiction of President John Adams. The leader of this insurgence was a Pennsylvania auctioneer named John Fries (pronounced 'freeze') who organized meetings to discuss communal reaction to the tax. This tax was imposed upon all home, land



and slave owners. The assessors were shown no mercy and several were sent fleeing. Many arrests were made.

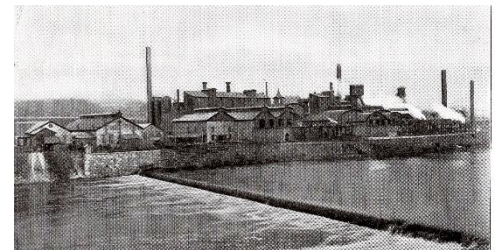
This 32-minute, professionally produced docudrama is sure to entertain and educate an audience of all ages. Written by Sarajane Williams, president of the Lower Macungie Township Historical Society, the film commemorates the upcoming 250th Anniversary of the United States and will become a legacy for generations to come. Scenes in the film feature original sites still in existence. Jay Searock, who will be presenting the film, portrays John Fries. You won't want to miss it.

June 25, 2025 — *Speaker Presentation* — Our Changing Landscape: 19th Century Industry and Transformation — Martha Capwell Fox — 7 PM



CHANGE....Some of us embrace it, for others, it may not be as easy to accept. Theodore Roosevelt said "There can be no life without change, and to be afraid of what is different or unfamiliar is to be afraid of life." For those of us who have lived in the Lehigh Valley all our existence, we

have experienced many changes to our surroundings. The alterations to the Lehigh Valley landscape started in the 19th century when farmland was transformed into an industrialized region later becoming the backbone of the American Industrial Revolution. Learn how this historical imprint continues to shape our terrain.



Martha Capwell Fox, archivist and historian for the D&L National Heritage Corridor and author of several historical related books, will discuss the many factors how this area of Eastern Pennsylvania was responsible for the growth of America as we know it today, focusing on the contributions Whitehall Township has rendered.

July, 26, 2025 — Civil War Encampment — 153rd Regiment PA Volunteer Infantry — 10 AM to 4 PM

The 993 men of the 153rd Regiment were enlisted into service in September 1862. This noble organization consisted primarily of young men whose trade was farming and many others who were mechanics and professionals. A numerous amount of these soldiers were relatives of the patriots of the Revolution. The 153rd was chiefly composed of men from Northampton County.



This volunteer Regiment had partaken in several Campaigns and two major battles, that of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. Their call to duty ended in July of 1863 with a total of 89 fatalities: 69 enlisted — killed or mortally wounded and 20 by disease and accidents. A fellow comrade of the 153rd, Rev. William. R. Kiefer said, "No part of the army engaged in the Nation's defense deserves more of the commendation of their countrymen and to hold a warmer place in the memory of the future generations, than our own Northampton County Regiment".

The reenactors of this honorable troop are among that “future generation” dedicated to preserving the memories and experiences that these men of the 153rd Regiment PA Volunteer Infantry had to endure. Perhaps you could be a descendant of one of these brave men. Learn their stories. Location of the encampment is on the grounds of the Peter Grim Homestead (506 Mickley Rd. Whitehall).

The *Helfrich Springs Grist Mill* and *Peter Grim House* will be open for tours as well.

2025 OPEN Mill, Museum and House Schedule

Calling all WHPS members. When was the last time you visited the Grist Mill? So often our guests



tell us how frequently they pass this beautiful stone structure curious to know what the interior looks like. This historic landmark was built over 200 years ago. It is a community hub for the history of Whitehall Township, offering FREE self-guided tours of our museum, speaker presentations, and special events for your enjoyment. The two-story red brick house across the street was established in 1834 and is also available for tours. We offer several opportunities for anyone to come inside. Our doors

are open from 1-3 pm on: March 16, April 27, May 18, June 22, July 26 (10 am to 4 pm), August 17, September 21, October 19, November 16, December TBD. See our website www.whitehallhistoricalsociety.org for all of our scheduled programs and events. Hope you can find the time to stop by.

MEMBERSHIP

Many thanks to all those that have renewed their 2025 membership with us. Your support is important to the success of this organization. I would like to welcome 8 new members to the Society — Joshua Miller, Daniel Holub, John and Mary Beth Taus, Linda Poccia, Virginia R. Webster, Timothy D. Gamer, and Jeffrey Potylyck. If anyone is interested in becoming an active member to help with the planning and preparing of our activities and events or general maintenance work, contact Stephanie Tashner or Alice Lieberman at 610 776-7280. We will be happy to answer any of your questions.

We made the decision this year not to offer membership cards. Your delivery of this newsletter (via email or snail mail), without the reminder for renewal (as stated below) is your confirmation of membership.

If you have not had the opportunity to renew your membership (as indicated on the address face or SUBJECT heading of this newsletter) please consider mailing your check in today. If you misplaced your application, one can be downloaded from our website (Support/Membership), otherwise your name(s), address, telephone number, email information and membership level on a piece of paper will suffice.

Business Support—We are proud to have the following resources support our Society. Please patronize these local businesses that are members of the Whitehall Historical Preservation Society:

American Fence and Flag
Shari Noctor

Dun Rite Electrical Services

THIS AND THAT

President's Message

Hope everyone is doing well. I'm sure you are looking forward, as am I, to Spring flowers, warmer weather and more daylight hours. For the most part, the winter months for WHPS have been uneventful. We are still in the process of organizing our archives. Anneliese has made great headway, but we still have some work ahead of us. Our Holiday Social in December was a success with more than 50 visitors who stopped in to say hello.

I am excited to tell you, our historian, Karen Gensey is working on composing a new walking tour for the village of Stiles. We hope to be able to offer this excursion to you in the fall. This will be added to the list of our other historical outings including Egypt (scheduled for 4/5/25), Hokendauqua, Fullerton (north & south), Giant in the Parkway, and Fairview Cemetery. These tours are offered FREE to our members.

If you have not done so already, please provide us with your email address. We do not share this information with anyone. It allows us to send reminders for our upcoming events, provide you with updated information about WHPS, and send holiday greetings. It also saves us time and money when sending this newsletter.

I hope to get to see you at one (or all) of our many events happening in 2025.

In Memory of.....



Louise Bolger, a member of WHPS for over 30 years, had passed from this life on March 3, 2025. She was a graduate of Whitehall HS and had a love for local history. Louise joined our Board in 2005 until 2022. She was a significant help to the Society at our annual Flea Market and recommended her granddaughter, Amy, who redesigned our brochures. We could count on Louise to be the first to adjourn our monthly Board meetings. Dear Louise, we will miss you.

Welcome New Board Member

I am happy to announce 1 new member to the Board of the Whitehall Historical Preservation Society.

John DeLeo—John has been volunteering with the historical society for several years. He has been a tremendous help at our Flea Markets and monthly work days. More detailed information about all our current Board members will soon be updated on our website.

There is 1 remaining seat available on our Board if you had the inclination to become a more active member of the Society. Your time and talents are needed.

America250—Semiquincentennial—2026

Has it yet crossed your mind that next year, in 2026, it will be the 250th Anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence? How AMAZING! Let the celebration commence. It's not too early to start. You can begin by telling your story (written, oral or visual). What does it mean for you to be an American? Or perhaps, you feel there is a need to share the story of a special family member or friend, neighbor or community leader for their influence in making this nation a better place to live.



There are several websites and social media platforms providing information and keeping you up to date on all the programs and events scheduled for this festivity. These include america250.org, america250pa.org, america250pa/lehighcounty.org, lehighvalley250.org, and lvhistory.org just to name a few. Let's make 2026 EPIC!

This year, when scheduling our speaker presentations, I tried to find stories that sparked enthusiasm for this upcoming commemoration. I am hoping to inspire folks to reflect upon our Nation's past, the hardships, and accomplishments our forefathers endured, to bring us this far.

Whitehall Historical Preservation Society

P. O. Box 39

Whitehall, Pa. 18052-0039

Visit us at whitehallhistoricalsociety.org

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June 25—Our Changing Landscape—19th Century Industry and Transformation—Martha Capwell Fox—7 PM

July 26—153rd Volunteer Civil War Encampment—10 AM to 4 PM

September 6—Fall Flea Market—8 AM to 1 PM

October 3—CASH BINGO—6:30 PM

Board of Directors

Stephanie Tashner—President,
Newsletter editor

Justin Poccia--Vice President

Alice Lieberman—Secretary

Allen Handwerk—Treasurer

Sharon Solderitch--Fundraising

Terri Monroe--Membership

Howard Lieberman—Grants

Anneliese Warnke—Archivist

Pat Matthews—Event Support

Mike Harakal—Event Support

Ethel Gery—Event Support

John DeLeo—Event Support

Support Personnel

Karen Gensey—Historian

Bobby Miller—Caretaker