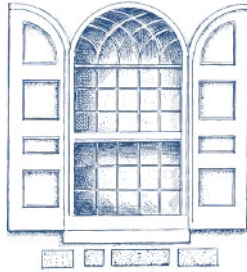


William H. Bates
Awards Program



**BATES AWARDS
&
48th ANNUAL
PRESERVATION AWARDS**

Saturday, May 2nd, 2026

Presented by
**Delaware County Council
Delaware County Planning Department
Delaware County Planning Commission
Heritage Commission of Delaware County**



Delaware County Council

Richard Womack, Chair

Christine A. Reuther, Vice Chair

Dr. Monica Taylor

Elaine Paul Schaefer

Joanne Phillips

Delaware County Executive Director

Barbara O'Malley

Delaware County Planning Department

Gina Burritt, Director

Michael Leventry, Environmental
Manager

Rebecca Ross, Planning Services Manager

Lou Hufnagle, Infrastructure Manager

Heritage Commission of Delaware County

Samuel A. Pickard, Chair

Karen Micka, Vice Chair

Elizabeth McCarrick, Secretary

Kelli Wilson Cave

Robin Craren

Emma Leuschner

Maura O'Brien

Joshua Phillips

Twyla Simpkins

Rev. Alexis Washington

Carla Welsh

Delaware County Planning Commission

John Gillespie, P.E., Chair

David Petrucci, P.E., Vice Chair

Claudia Cueto, Secretary

Charles Ferguson

MJ Frumin

Brian Razzi

Peter Rykard

William Smith

David Walker

The Heritage Commission is a volunteer body appointed by County Council with a mission to encourage historical and cultural awareness and preservation within the County. It has been recognizing worthy preservation projects and individuals throughout Delaware County for over forty-eight years.

The Delaware County Planning Commission works with Planning Department staff to oversee development throughout the County.



WILLIAM H. BATES AWARDS

The Bates Awards Program honors excellence in site planning, development practices, and the innovative use of land resources.

The William H. Bates Awards Program was established in 1980 by the Delaware County Planning Commission with the goal “to encourage developers and municipalities to cooperate in providing a more efficient use of land and public services for County residents.”

The Planning Commission presents Bates Awards to projects which employ innovative techniques and practices in accordance with modern and evolving principles of site planning, design, and development.

There are three categories through which entities can be recognized: Innovative Land Development, Adaptive Reuse, and Municipal Innovation & Investment.

INNOVATIVE LAND DEVELOPMENT

The Caswell at Runnymede Farms— Edgmont Township

GMH Communities

The Caswell at Runnymede is situated on land with a rich history dating back to the late 1970s. The Caswell holds a unique story behind its development, adding to its charm and appeal. The Caswell at Runnymede sits on land that has been in the GMH family since the late 1970s. Esteemed builder Caswell Holloway, Jr.—grandfather of current GMH CEO—had big plans for the plot. Over the years, Caswell Holloway, Jr., and the Holloway Corporation built numerous projects around Runnymede Farms, but one plot was left undeveloped until Caswell's namesake project opened in 2024.

A project ahead of its time, Caswell Holloway had a vision for a high-rise multifamily community in an otherwise suburban single family home area. Though it initially faced community resistance, the developers worked with local representatives and stakeholders to build a unique property that fits the needs of Edgmont Township.

GMH Communities funded numerous offsite improvements, including stormwater management upgrades and road improvements through the Providence Road corridor in Edgmont Township and Upper Providence Township, which improved local traffic flow. Overall, The Caswell was developed with thoughtful design, attention to detail and a commitment to creating an exceptional living environment for a variety of household types. The project's design includes two four-story buildings with underground parking and 249 units from one to three bedrooms.



INNOVATIVE LAND DEVELOPMENT

WSFS Bank Sportsplex– Chester City

**WSFS Bank, Philadelphia Union, BPGS Construction,
City of Chester, Riverfront Alliance of Delaware County,
OSPORTS, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania,
Delaware County Council**

WSFS Bank Sportsplex is a transformative 32-acre, 170,000-square-foot sports and recreation campus on Chester’s Delaware River waterfront, strategically located between Subaru Park and the Union Power Plant. The project exemplifies Innovative Land Development by converting underutilized and environmentally challenged waterfront land into a high-impact, year-round destination serving professional athletes, local residents, and regional visitors.

The site was planned to maximize land efficiency, operational flexibility, and long-term community benefit. The Sportsplex includes a 100,000-square-foot indoor multi-sport facility designed for community programming, alongside a 70,000-square-foot professional training and operations building supporting the Philadelphia Union Academy and Union II. The outdoor campus features seven multi-sport fields utilizing both natural grass and synthetic turf to increase play capacity, extend seasonal use, and support tournaments and large-scale events. A championship natural-grass field with spectator seating further enhances the site’s ability to host premier competition while remaining accessible for broader community use.

By combining environmental stewardship, efficient site planning, and multi-use design, the Sportsplex sets a new regional standard for redevelopment that delivers lasting value for Chester and Delaware County.



MUNICIPAL INNOVATION AND INVESTMENT

Sunset Hill Preserve Trail Plan— Chadds Ford Township

Chadds Ford Township- Board of Supervisors, Open Space Committee, and Township Administration; Brandywine Conservancy; Pennsylvania DCNR

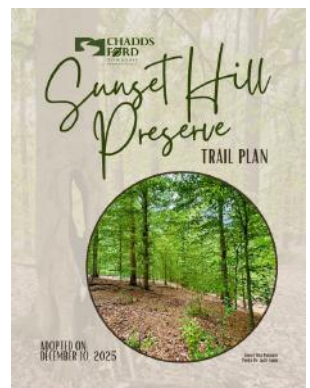
The Sunset Hill Preserve Trail Plan was developed by Chadds Ford Township to guide how a Township-owned open space property should be developed and managed for public use. The Preserve is an important part of the Township's landscape, and the Board of Supervisors and Open Space Committee recognized early on that any public access needed to be carefully planned to avoid unintended impacts.

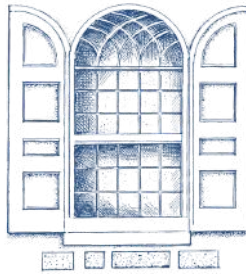
Rather than moving forward with piecemeal improvements or informal trail use, the Township chose to invest in a formal planning process. The Trail Plan evaluates the site's natural features, existing conditions, and opportunities for public access, and it identifies where trails may be appropriate and where areas should remain undisturbed. The plan emphasizes low-impact design, long-term maintenance considerations, and opportunities for future improvements beyond the initial trailhead parking and trail system.

Public input was a cornerstone of the planning process to ensure the plan reflects community values while protecting the Preserve's character. Particular attention was given to input from neighboring property owners so that trail alignments and access points were thoughtfully designed. The result is a clear, practical document that allows the Township to manage public use without compromising the land itself.

This project represents municipal innovation by using planning as a tool to guide investment in public land consistent with its intended use at the time of dedication and as outlined in the Township's Comprehensive Plan and Open Space Plan. The Sunset Hill Preserve Trail Plan helps ensure that public funds are spent wisely, access is thoughtfully managed, and the Preserve remains protected for future generations while still providing meaningful public benefit. The plan is available to the public at

www.chaddsfordpa.gov/media/6331





48th ANNUAL PRESERVATION AWARDS

The Heritage Commission has been presenting these awards with County Council since 1978 to highlight National Preservation Month in May.

The Commission selects the award recipients from nominations submitted by residents and organizations throughout the County. They are selected for outstanding contributions to the preservation of our County's heritage in the following categories: Site Preservation, Publications, Special Programs/Projects, Individual Achievement, Historic Preservation Planning, Youth, the Leedom B. Morrison Heritage Award, Legacy Business and Lifetime Achievement.

SITE PRESERVATION

Nominations can include exterior and interior restoration, preservation, or rehabilitation of an historical structure and/or landscape in a manner that preserves the building or site's historical, cultural, and/or architectural significance. Projects are divided into the following sub-categories:

Non-Residential Rehabilitation

This includes projects that rehabilitate a building for the same non-residential purpose that the building was originally intended.

Adaptive Reuse

This includes preservation efforts that have adapted a structure designed for one use into an appropriate alternative use, thus reinventing the use of a space while preserving the architectural integrity.

Cemeteries

This recognizes efforts to preserve cemeteries in Delaware County older than 100 years by maintenance projects, headstone repairs, or creating grave listings.

PUBLICATIONS

Publications may include books, articles, magazines, videos, calendars, websites, etc. that present the heritage of Delaware County.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Examples may be in education, research, archival activities, or any other creative process used to preserve Delaware County's heritage. These submissions can be ongoing or on a one-time basis.

INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT

Individual Achievement recognizes a single person who has made a significant contribution by his or her support of and involvement in preservation projects or activities.

SITE PRESERVATION

Non-residential Rehabilitation

Lansdowne Theater, Lansdowne Borough

**Historic Lansdowne Theater Corporation, Atkin Olshin
Schade Architects, Columbus Construction, JNA Capital,
Fattah Capital Advisors**

The Lansdowne Theater is a historic motion picture theater in Lansdowne. Designed by William H. Lee, Philadelphia's premier theater architect of the 1920s, the Spanish Colonial Revival-style building was completed in 1927. Like many of Lee's theaters, the interiors were decorated in sumptuous style by Harry Brodsky, who was notable in his own right for his contributions to theater design during this period.

The Lansdowne continued to function as a movie theater with few major alterations until 1987, when it closed down following an electrical fire. Although the building was listed in the National Register of Historic Places that year, it never reopened on a permanent basis.

From 2007-2025, the Historic Lansdowne Theater Corporation restored the building to its historic 1927 appearance- it has received awards for its previous exterior restoration projects.

The newly refurbished building has a new box office, restrooms, roof, restored finishes, and an expanded stage and an addition on the rear to allow for touring musical acts. It reopened in August 2025.



SITE PRESERVATION

Non-residential Rehabilitation

Bush Hill Farm Barn, Concord Township

Concord Township

The Bush Hill Farm Barn Restoration was undertaken by Concord Township, via outside contractors to stabilize and preserve one of the last remaining agricultural structures associated with the historic Joseph Palmer Homestead.

The barn required significant structural intervention. Concord Township identified several qualified organizations capable of completing historically appropriate barn restorations and ultimately selected an experienced Amish restoration group from Lancaster County known for their craftsmanship and traditional timber-frame expertise.

The project included the careful removal of deteriorated roofing and exterior walls, stabilization of the original structural frame, installation of a historically consistent wooden exterior, and application of a historically appropriate paint color selected in consultation with the Concord Township Historical Society.

The restored barn now stands as both a preserved historic structure and an active agricultural facility which houses Concord Township's goats, known as "Pepper's Promise," complete with a dedicated goatherd.

Further enhancing the interpretive value of the site, a local Boy Scout working toward his Eagle Scout rank partnered with the Historical Society to install three educational storyboard panels near the barn and surrounding pond area.



SITE PRESERVATION

Adaptive Reuse

Chester Heights Campmeeting Vintage Ice Cream Shop, Chester Heights Borough

**Chester Heights Campmeeting Assn., Maria Spagnuolo,
The Salerno Family, Williamson College of the Trades,
The Phillips Family**

Chester Heights Campmeeting has adaptively reused an original cottage and turned it into a charming, vintage Victorian Ice Cream Shop with screened-in wrap around porch that has a huge sandbox for young children, a large square picnic table, rockers for parents and guests to enjoy, and tables and chairs. This replaces their original Snack Shop cottage that was next to the Tabernacle in the circle. Both buildings were lost in the first arson fire Oct 2011.

This cottage was bought by the CHCM Association from its past owner by a very generous donation from Maria Spagnuolo, Kansas City Chief's defensive coordinator's wife. The area between it and our Museum is turning into an additional outside seating/ gathering area. A donation of pea gravel makes the area usable.

Many volunteer hours were put into this wonderful project from churches, Individuals, schools, interested groups, and more.

Rehabilitation work included- repairing tree damage, constructing a new porch addition, removing asphalt siding, repainting interior and exterior, and adding new railings.



SITE PRESERVATION

Cemeteries

Rockdale Parade/Graves Division, County-wide

Dave Kelso, John Coleman, Lori Kelso, Mike Archer

As part of the Rockdale Parade's civic responsibility, volunteers began a stone cleaning/ restoration project for Civil War veterans in Chester Rural, Calvary, Upland and Media Cemetery.

This was begun with the full cooperation of the above cemeteries and their Board/staff. Once they began, they also began focusing on not just Civil War, but all veterans, and even started including local notables such as the Brintons and Crozers.

They conceived and executed a restoration project within this project at Chester Rural cemetery to include Soldiers Circle restoration. This project was completed in January of 2026 having cleaned, straightened, over 300+ graves just at Soldiers Circle.

Partial financing for this project has come from the Rockdale Parade but the majority had been funded by Dave Kelso and John Coleman. Each cemetery has contributed at some level also.

Dave Kelso & John Coleman have been the primary participants, with Lori Kelso uploading and updating Find A Grave, and Mike Archer providing support via heavy equipment when needed.

The group is now Stone Songs Tombstone & Monument Restoration and has a Facebook page with photos and project updates.



PUBLICATION

Locksley: The Original Black Families of Folsom

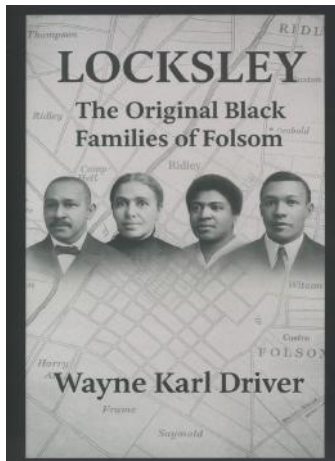
Wayne Karl Driver

This work not only chronicles the earliest Black families of Ridley Township through meticulous genealogical and historical research, but it also brings to life the powerful stories of their courage, endurance, and unwavering resilience.

Driver's narrative preserves the voices of families who shaped Folsom, offering a vital account of their contributions during a pivotal era. What sets this book apart is its deep exploration of how Folsom's economic, cultural, demographic, and social landscape influenced —and was influenced by — these remarkable families. It reveals where they began, how they were shaped by their community, and how their legacy continues to flourish today.

In addition to its historical depth, "Locksley" provides primary-source material that greatly enhances the resources available to genealogists, scholars, educators, and cultural institutions. Through census analysis, property records, church documents, oral histories, and photographic archives, the book creates a substantial new foundation for future preservation and research. It also humanizes the historical record, weaving lived experiences into broader narratives of struggle, identity, community-building, and generational transformation.

Copies of the book are available on Amazon at [a.co/d/06Ns2j mj](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B09N2JMJ) and at Ridley Township Library.



PUBLICATION

Delco YouTube Videos

Craig Spedden

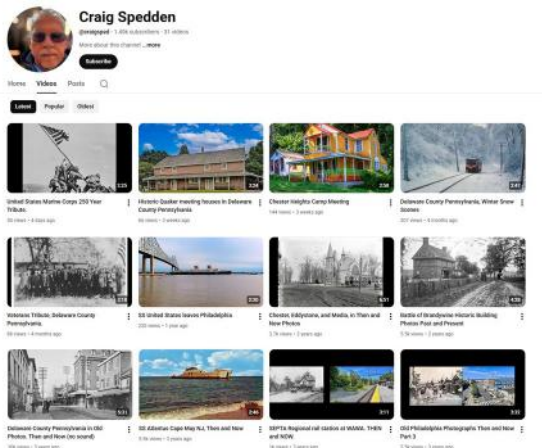
Craig Spedden has curated collections of historical images from various sources and created a series of YouTube videos featuring Delaware County related themes. These videos provide glimpses into Delaware County's past in an appealing, fun-to-watch format.

This group of videos provide glimpses into Delaware County's past in an appealing visual format. One of his first videos, from 9 years ago, was Delaware County Trolley Scenes, but most of his Delco videos were all created in the past four years. He also includes Philadelphia and Lancaster Counties in some videos.

The topics include military (US Marine Corps & Veterans Tribute); Then and Now (juxtaposing historic and modern photographs); Modern photos of historic buildings and objects; Railroads (trolleys, railways, stations); and nature (trout stocking)

In each of the videos the images are clearly captioned with relevant identifying information, according to the video's theme. Craig cites the sources for the images at the end of the videos.

They are available for free at www.youtube.com/@craigsped/videos



PUBLICATION

Seasons of Wildflowers: Local Wildflowers and Historic Buildings of Chadds Ford and Concord Townships in Pennsylvania

Joyce Wilson

Joyce Wilson published the completed version of the project Seasons of Wildflowers: Local Wildflowers and Historic Buildings of Chadds Ford and Concord Townships in Pennsylvania on the KaolinRoads.org website on July 20, 2025. KaolinRoad.Org is a public website dedicated to Wilson family records in both Pennsylvania and Massachusetts, and includes other projects such as “Brandywine River Museum Walks,” “Spring Valley AME Church Restoration,” and genealogical research.

Joyce’s father, Dr. Armine Taylor Wilson, photographed the surrounding landscape within a five to seven-mile radius of his home in Chadds Ford, Pennsylvania, between 1959 and 1960 using Rolleiflex cameras and Ektachrome film. Dr. Wilson presented his collection of photographs to audiences in public schools, historical societies, and botanical organizations to “impress upon them the richness of the area in which they lived.” The photographs are complemented with identifying captions for each picture and a narrative introduction by Dr. Taylor’s children, Joyce Wilson, Sylvia Wilson, and Marcia Neshkes.

While an earlier version of Seasons of Wildflowers was uploaded to KaolinRoads.org in 2011, Joyce Wilson formally completed the project in July 2025 by adding a linked Table of Contents for each of the project’s six sections and fixing navigation and organizational issues.

The project is accessible to the public through the following link: www.kaolinroads.org/new_webopen_wildflowers25.html

Photographs by Dr. Armine Taylor Wilson

Seasons of Wildflowers

*Local Wildflowers and Historic Buildings
of Chadds Ford and Concord Townships in Pennsylvania*



Debbelo Barn on Kaolin Road at the corner of Hayburn Road
taken from our first book
on May 20, 1959, by Dr. A.T. Wilson, Pentanon Ektachrome Slide.

PUBLICATION

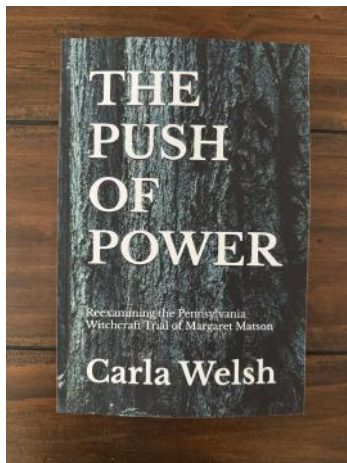
The Push of Power

Carla Welsh

One of the more interesting, but often misinterpreted, stories of early Chester (later Delaware) County is the story of Margaret Matson and the only witch trial in the county. On its surface, it appeared to be a result of neighbor conflict, misunderstanding, and superstitions of the day (just 10 years before the Salem witch trials). However, Carla Welsh discovered it was more rooted in the conflicts between the Swedish and Finnish settlers in the area and the newer English arrivals and a power grab of the land they had long held. Carla thoroughly researched the families involved with the dispute, and the jurors and other officials who influenced the outcome of Margaret's trial as well as other land grabs in the area.

The book is well-researched and a compelling read. Carla presented her book at Haverford Township Historical Society's October talk at the Haverford Township Free Library.

Copies are in the Delco Library system or available to purchase on Amazon- [a.co/d/0cLRibyp](https://www.amazon.com/dp/B08L8R1BYP)



PUBLICATION

History, Mystery

Keith Lockhart and Keith Mayer

Keith's "History, Mystery" column has been an ongoing feature in the Delco Times Newspaper every Sunday. In January of 2024 Keith contacted Keith Mayer, managing editor of the newspaper about putting pictures aka postcards in the paper. The reason for this was to properly identify the unknown locations of his many postcards of Delco.

One hundred plus years ago postcards were a fad and postcards were made of streets, buildings etc. Many of the views have changed drastically in the past 100 years. Asking Delco residents to help with a proper location, street, proper address, block etc. has been a big help in getting the collection in proper order. It also engages the community to see history right in their own back yards.

It has been used to start a dialogue about a certain location and then the memories of those people who remember the actual location is recorded in their comments about the picture.

KEITH LOCKHART'S HISTORY MYSTERY

Owen Avenue in Wayne



Owen Avenue in Wayne, but where exactly? Email Keith. COURTESY OF KEITH LOCKHART

SPECIAL PROGRAM/PROJECT

History Under the Stars- Media Borough

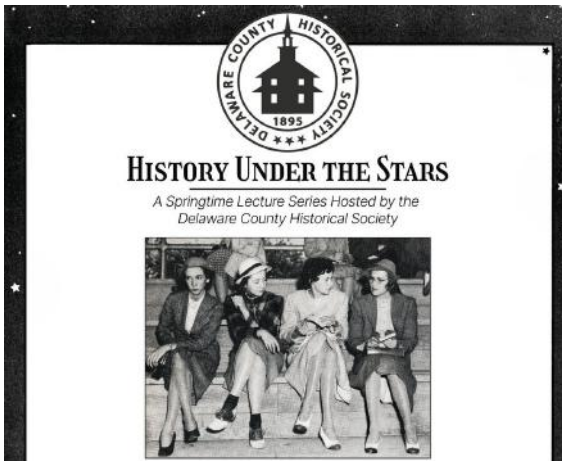
Delaware County Historical Society

The Delaware County Historical Society launched a free public lecture series at the Delaware County Research Center and Library (W. Front Street, Media, PA 19063) in 2025. Lectures were primarily held outdoors in the evening but were moved indoors on occasion due to inclement weather.

This lecture series is significant to preserving Delaware County history because it broadened public access to high-quality, place-based scholarship while actively documenting and sharing local narratives that might otherwise remain overlooked. The Delaware County Historical Society supported a wide range of perspectives on Delaware County's social, cultural, and institutional developments, including Black and immigrant history, and included a variety of scholars and experts from diverse institutions.

Providing the lecture series free of charge made the program accessible to the public. By uploading a selection of lectures through the “History Under the Stars Lecture Series” on YouTube, the program further extended its impact, creating a lasting digital record that ensures Delaware County’s history remains accessible to current and future audiences.

The series has continued this spring with lectures scheduled through June. Past lectures can be accessed at the following link: www.youtube.com/@delcohistorypa.



INDIVIDUAL ACHIEVEMENT

Professor Edward Wordeck

Professor Wordeck is Professor Emeritus of Art and Art History at Goucher College, specializing in photography, and brings extensive expertise in historic preservation documentation. He began photographing and documenting the architectural features of Painter’s Folly in 2024 and was appointed Township liaison in August 2024. His research also extended to the life of the home’s former owner, Helen Murray Sipala—longtime steward of Painter’s Folly and model for Andrew Wyeth. Following his investigative work, Wordeck initiated public outreach to explore productive, community-supported uses for the currently vacant building.

In July 2025, Wordeck founded the Painter’s Folly Preservation Alliance to mobilize public support for the site and highlight its importance to both Chadds Ford and the nation’s artistic heritage. The Alliance launched a public website to share the property’s history, media coverage, and Wordeck’s ongoing photographic documentation. To advocate for transparent communication about the building’s future, he helped organize a public letter petition in September 2025, which has since garnered more than 600 signatures.

In August 2025, Wordeck commissioned historian Thomas Wood to record an extensive set of oral histories with Helen Murray Sipala, which covers her 40+ years of residence at Painter’s Folly. These recordings are now permanently housed at the University of Kentucky’s Louie B. Nunn Center for Oral History, where they remain accessible to researchers. Further supporting the preservation of local artistic legacy, Wordeck also facilitated the Delaware Art Museum’s November 2025 acquisition of Sipala’s diary and photo albums documenting her decades-long friendship with Andrew Wyeth at Painter’s Folly.

Professor Wordeck also offers his photography skills to other historic buildings around the county.



GROUP ACHIEVEMENT

Group Achievement recognizes a group who has formed for the purpose of history or preservation, such as a 'Friends of' group or Historical Society, and their general contributions to Delaware County, not just for a specific project.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLANNING

This category recognizes efforts in planning to preserve Delaware County's heritage, including preserving buildings, complexes, archaeological sites, and community character. Examples include surveys, ordinances, creating historical commissions, design guidelines, National Register nominations, and municipal stewardship.

THE LEEDOM B. MORRISON HERITAGE AWARD

This Award recognizes preservation projects in the City of Chester that involve restoration, rehabilitation, or adaptive reuse of an historical structure or any other type of project that preserves the heritage of Chester City.

A. RICHARD PAUL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Named after longtime Heritage Commission chair and historian, this recognizes an individual that has spent many years contributing their time to the heritage of Delaware County. It is only nominated by Heritage Commission members.

SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL AWARD

This Award recognizes projects, events or programs completed in honor of the U.S. Semiquincentennial in 2025-2027. Examples may be in events, education programs, publications, archival activities, exhibitions, performances, blogs, site preservation, or any other creative process used to ignite imaginations, elevate diverse stories, inspire service, and highlight the American founding and 250 years of American history through Delco's unique lens.

GROUP ACHIEVEMENT

Edgmont Township Historical Society

The Edgmont Township Historical Society is a newly formed, community-based nonprofit organization dedicated to the preservation, education, and protection of Edgmont Township's historic resources, landscapes, structures, and cultural traditions.

Edgmont Township, one of Delaware County's most historically significant rural communities, traces its origins to early Welsh settlers under the land grants of William Penn in the late 17th century. The township's agricultural heritage, early stone farmsteads, mills, Indigenous Lenape presence, and Revolutionary-era connections represent an irreplaceable chapter of southeastern Pennsylvania history.

Its mission is to preserve and protect Edgmont Township's historic resources while fostering public education and civic pride through research, archival collection, public programming, and advocacy.

In one year, it has established its structure, provided public events, created partnerships, raised community awareness, and more. Its structure is one that other new historical organizations can follow.

edgmonthistoricalsociety.org

www.facebook.com/EdgmontHistoricalSociety



PRESERVATION PLANNING

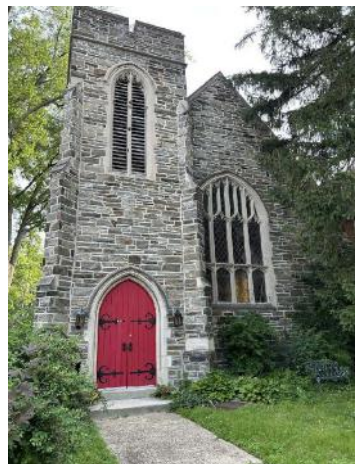
Campbell AME Church Preservation Prioritization Plan

Campbell AME Church; Nate Gotcher, Architect, Union Studio Architecture & Community Design; Becky Zeller, Zeller Preservation; sbk + Partners, LLC

The Campbell AME Church Historic Preservation Planning Project represents a comprehensive effort to steward one of Delaware County's most historically and culturally significant Black religious institutions. This planning initiative was undertaken to assess the long-term preservation, stabilization, and adaptive future of the church building while honoring its architectural integrity, spiritual legacy, and role in the civic life of Media Borough. The project brought together a team with a preservation architect, historic preservation consultants, and church leadership to develop a thoughtful preservation roadmap. Planning activities included historical research, architectural assessment, evaluation of existing conditions, development of phased preservation strategies, and a nomination for historic designation on the National Register. This intentional planning approach ensures that future restoration efforts will be historically appropriate, financially responsible, and aligned with best practices in preservation stewardship.

Preservation architects and consultants conducted a comprehensive conditions assessment of the building's exterior envelope, structural systems, and significant architectural features. This evaluation identified areas of deterioration, prioritized urgent stabilization needs, and documented character-defining elements that must be protected in future work. The team developed a phased preservation strategy outlining recommended treatments, sequencing of work, and preservation-sensitive approaches.

This preservation planning effort ensures that the oldest Black church in Delaware County is not only protected architecturally, but sustained as a living center of faith, history, and community life. By combining national preservation support with local stewardship, the project secures a future for this landmark that honors its past while strengthening Delaware County's cultural landscape for generations to come.



PRESERVATION PLANNING

Archie's Corner Preservation Assessment

Chadds Ford Township

The Archie's Corner Preservation Assessment is a comprehensive planning initiative undertaken by Chadds Ford Township to document existing conditions, evaluate historical and archaeological resources, and guide the long-term preservation of the Archie's Corner site. Rather than responding to immediate deterioration or external pressure, the Township initiated this assessment proactively to ensure that future decisions are informed by professional analysis, accurate documentation, and preservation best practices.

This preservation planning effort was supported in part by grant funding through the Certified Local Government (CLG) program, which enabled the Township to undertake professional historical, architectural, archaeological, and site documentation in accordance with established preservation standards.

The assessment establishes clear preservation priorities and provides a practical framework to guide future stabilization, conservation, interpretation, and potential adaptive use. Emphasis was placed on documentation, site integrity, and long-term stewardship prior to any physical intervention, reinforcing planning as the foundation of responsible preservation.

The full Archie's Corner Preservation Assessment, including supporting documentation and professional findings, is publicly available on the Chadds Ford Township website and may be reviewed at: www.chaddsfordpa.gov/media/5641



LEEDOM B. MORRISON HERITAGE AWARD

‘Proof of Truth’ Mobile Museum

**Twyla Simpkins, Maxine Johnson, YES Center, CAAT
Center Art Unframed Gallery**

An extensive compilation of multifaceted items originating from Chester, PA residents and their achievements throughout the years comprise the exhibits within the ‘Proof of Truth’ Museum. From one of seven donated trunks (from a former student) of Chester High School all-sports memorabilia dating back 50+ years to more recent entries like that of the World Kickboxing Champion Fredia Gibbs autographed statue picture and book to the actual wheelchair of Mrs. Ruth L. Bennett, the namesake of the largest housing complex within Chester City and a founder and 1st president of Chester, PA's NAACP. A collection of books written by authors born and raised in Chester and artifacts from the well-documented tenure of Dr. Martin Luther King during his residency in Chester are but a few of the highlights of the museum.

The sharing of the many accomplishments of African American citizens of Chester, PA have now been successfully documented as a matter of historical record through the ‘Proof of Truth’ museum exhibit which premiered at the Chester CAAT Center throughout February 2026 in acknowledgement of Black History Month.

One attendee, a blogger who was dropping off her son for a CAAT Ctr program, visited the museum and was so inspired that she dedicated a recent blog post in tribute to curator Ms. T (Twyla Simpkins) and the ‘Truth’ exhibit:

www.brokentobreatless.com/2026/02/midweek-connecting-dots.html



A. RICHARD PAUL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Thomas R. Smith

Tom has contributed to educating the public at numerous events over many decades. He most often portrays William Penn. He has for numerous years participated in the "Celebration of William Penn's Landing" held in Chester PA.

He wrote the book "Life in Addingham and Garrettford" which are hamlets in Upper Darby Township. He served as Librarian/Archivist at Sellers Library until health issues caused him to retire. He has written articles for the Delaware County Times newspaper titled "The Ghosts of William Penn".

He currently volunteers at the Delaware County Institute of Science and has extensive knowledge of Dr. George Smith who wrote the History of Delaware County (1862) His knowledge of the history of Upper Darby Township and Delaware County is second to none.



A. RICHARD PAUL LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Helen Murray Sipala

Helen Murray Sipala has played a vital role in preserving Delaware County's cultural and artistic heritage through decades of stewardship, documentation, and public engagement.

When the Sipalas initially purchased the home, it was in a derelict condition and in need of repairs, including façade and roof repair, and the removal of abandoned vehicles in the yard. Through the years, the Sipalas restored the home.

In 1989, Helen Murray Sipala met Chadds Ford artist Andrew Wyeth when he visited Painter's Folly to paint. From that point, Helen became a model, close friend, and confidante to the internationally recognized artist, who notably used the home's widow's walk and a room on the third floor as his studio and workspaces throughout his 20-year friendship with Helen Sipala. Helen modeled for Wyeth paintings as well.

Ms. Sipala recorded her daily interactions with Andrew Wyeth in an approximate 445-page diary from 1989 to Andrew's death in 2009. Ms. Sipala donated her complete diary and a collection of ten photograph and document albums containing photographs, letters, and ephemera from Ms. Sipala's relationship with Andrew Wyeth to the Delaware Art Museum on November 12th, 2025. These items are now part of the Museum's permanent archive and will be made accessible for further research pending the museum's ongoing processing of materials.

She has also published portions of her diary in two books and recorded an oral history (at kentuckyorallhistory.org) and a documentary (at zk1.20d.myftpupload.com/painters-folly-2).



SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL AWARD

John Morton Monument Experience - America250 Restoration

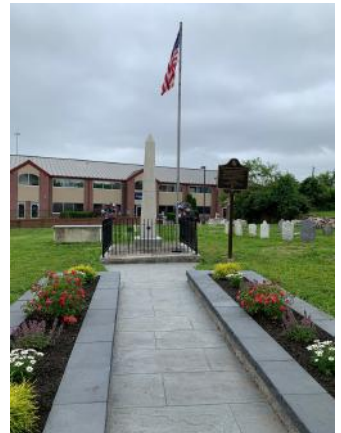
Pennsylvania State Society Daughters of the American Revolution- Marguerite Fritsch, PSSDAR Delaware County Chapter- Barbara Shaw, Friends of Old St. Paul's & Swedish Burial Ground- Christie & Paul Logan

In preparation for the United States Semiquincentennial (2025–2027), the Pennsylvania State Society Daughters of the American Revolution (PSSDAR) completed a comprehensive preservation and interpretive enhancement initiative at Old St. Paul's & Swedish Burial Ground in the City of Chester. Founded ca. 1643, this burial ground is the oldest in Pennsylvania and the resting place of John Morton, signer of the Declaration of Independence and the only signer buried in Delaware County.

Entrance Reconstruction included construction of new masonry columns using reclaimed historic brick sourced from the burial ground site; replacement of a long missing entrance gate via restoration and installation of a vintage wrought iron gate; replacement of a deteriorated decades-old sidewalk with a new patterned walkway compatible with the historic setting; and installation of two raised stone planters flanking the entrance.

Monument Conservation included updating the Morton monument enclosure and Historical Marker. Headstone Conservation included resetting & cleaning stones, stabilizing & reassembling broken stones, and improving grading to prevent future deterioration. GPR identified unmarked graves, now marked with orange flags.

In May 2025, a permanent America250 bronze interpretive plaque was installed at Morton's monument, recognizing the eleven Revolutionary War Patriots interred at Old St. Paul's & Swedish Burial Ground. Progress can be seen at oldswedishburialground.org





Delaware County Planning Department

The Mission of the Delaware County Planning Department is to elevate quality of life, prosperity, and pride of place in Delaware County through innovative, sustainable, and equitable planning, and meaningful collaboration with communities, governments, and organizations.

The Planning Department strives to achieve this mission by providing the following services:

Municipal Support: helping municipalities think about their future and figure out how to achieve it.




Historic Preservation Support: help protect and preserve historic places across Delaware County.

Trails and Parks Planning: finding ways to make it easier for residents to access parks, trails, and green space.

Environmental Planning: providing guidance and support to municipalities on sustainable development and work to address stormwater and air quality issues in municipalities.

Transportation and Infrastructure Planning: coordinating with and support municipalities to improve how people get around and partner with PennDOT and SEPTA to improve our transportation network.

Connect with the Planning Department

 delcopa.gov/planning  Planning_Department@co.delaware.pa.us  610-891-5200