

## DURHAM HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

It is my honor to report that the State of the Society is strong here at the end of 2018. We have increased our presence in the community and have worked on, moved forward with and completed many projects during the year.

Thanks to Jeff Heehs, we have made significant progress on the website – enabling it to take payments through PayPal, uploading a huge amount of pictures and articles concerning the history of the area, and in general constructing a site that is both pleasing to the eye and mind.

We received our findings concerning the search for Captain Heinline’s grave. The professor from Lehigh University reported that there was significant evidence that there was something at the site which looked like graves but we wouldn’t be able to verify until another study was performed (hopefully with better weather conditions.)

We, in partnership with the Cooks Creek Watershed received a \$2000.00 grant to clean the tail race of the mill. We engaged the services of a professional arborist who cut down 17 full grown Norway Maples (an invasive species that was taking over the area). In addition, this offered the opportunity to work with the local Boy Scout troop and some local citizens who volunteered to truly make this a community project.

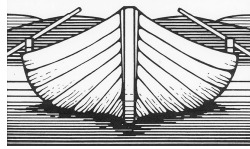
The Society wrote a letter to the Delaware River Basin Commission stating our opposition to fracking and drilling in the Delaware River Basin.

We have started to work with the Township to plan events to mark three important anniversaries: The 200th anniversary of the mill (2020), the 250th anniversary of the founding of the Township (2025), and the 300th anniversary of the Durham Furnace (2027). Hopefully, we will have various stages of the mill renovations completed at each of these anniversaries.

We continued our search for the grave of Mr. Stevens by engaging the services of three metal detectorists. Unfortunately, the amount of iron ore and scrap metal in the area of the supposed grave is of such a quantity that the metal detectors proved useless. We still persist in the search engaging the memory of some local residents who claim to remember the approximate site.

During the year, we took on the project of cleaning the large planter outside the post office, removing the shrubs that had been planted there. It was decided to plant grains that would have been processed at the mill during the years of its operation. The first crop to be planted was oats and despite the awful weather, a few shocks were produced and displayed. The next crop (currently planted) was winter wheat. A cute box with information concerning the grain and the purpose of the planting was constructed by a local resident (George Mason).

The Society was proud to sponsor four interesting presentations this year. Dr. Ned Heindel was engaged to make two presentations – The first was on the Buckwampum Society and his second concerned the Great Grasshopper War that took place (maybe?) here in Durham. Martha Caswell-Fox, the archivist at the Canal Museum presented an interesting program on



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the Industrial Revolution and the significant role that the Durham area played in it. In addition, we also had two of the local residents who grew up in the area present a discussion on what growing up in Durham during the 60's and 70's was like. The audience was regaled with anecdotes about swimming in the mill race and also the social demarcations between the folks living in town versus those living in the suburbs (on Red Bridge Road).

Members of the Society made themselves available to do some private tours of the mill and make some short presentations to several groups of people. Carl LaVo (a local reporter) and his family and some friends made up one of these groups and this led to an interesting article that appeared in the Intelligencer. We also hosted a large group of supporters of the Friends of the Delaware Canal and successfully chaperoned two groups of 25 people in each for a tour of the mill and the village green. One of the members was so taken with the tour that she requested and we supplied another tour to some of her friends who were visiting from NYC.

Understanding the importance of publicity, we engaged the services of a local professional photographer, Miana Jun, to take some pictures of the interior of the mill. She graciously donated her time to the project and the outcome was superb with some photos being made into postcards and one being turned into a jigsaw puzzle. The postcards and puzzle are now being offered for sale in order to raise some necessary funds.

The Society co-sponsored Durham Day with the Township and despite weather that was not the best, the day turned out to be a success.

Speaking of the Township, we applied for a PHMC grant through the Township and are awaiting a response to our application.

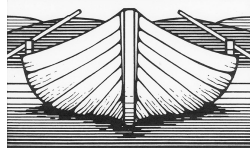
Tragically, the historic Oscar Martin Bridge at the intersection of Rtes. 212 and 611 was totally destroyed during a road renovation. Knowing the Society's interest in the bridge, the Township Roadmaster prevailed upon the state to salvage the section of the bridge containing the original plaque and the two-ton section was presented to the Township and the Society for display on the Township green.

For the second year in a row, the Society coordinated efforts with the school district to engage the volunteer services of some teachers during their "Day of Service" to clean the mill. A superlative job was performed and the teachers were amazed by the structure and started thinking about incorporating a visit to the mill as part of classroom activities.

We ordered and received a supply of coffee mugs with a copy of a local artist's rendering of the mill embossed upon them. These mugs are on sale in an effort to both raise money and to spread the word about the mill.

We continue to solicit bids to perform some necessary work on the windows of the mill. Hopefully, the third and final bid will be forthcoming.

In conjunction with our reaching out to the community, we have arranged with the Palisades High School to have a display of Durham historical artifacts in the high school early next year



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The Society completed two roadside cleanups in accordance with our 20 + year agreement with the state and we also took on a leading role in sponsoring a hike during the annual Penn's Woods activities (this year held at the Mariton Preserve.

All in all, this was a busy and productive year for a small group of volunteers and my thanks goes out to all of you who made this year a successful one.

Thank you.

David Oleksa, President