
Fulton House News

Summer 2025



Derry Area Historical Society is Celebrating Its 30th Birthday This Year!

The Derry Area Historical Society got its start on a school bus in April of 1995 when a group of community members took a historic bus tour of the sites of Derry's former schools, forts, & early pioneer homes. The tour ended at Ed & Joanne Lamolinara's preserved historic Barr cabin where someone was heard stating that it would be nice if Derry had its own historical society. In response, Bob Reintgen stood up & announced, "The first meeting of the Derry Area Historical Society will be this Monday" and Derry Area Historical Society was born.

The follow-up meeting took place back at the Lamolinara's cabin where Ed put down \$300 "startup money." Bob Reintgen was elected the first president with Ed Lamolinara as vice president, Paula Richards as secretary, and Becky Weiner as treasurer. The group's first project began- a map of Derry's historic locations, which was completed & made available for sale the following Spring. The group hosted multiple other tours, genealogy nights, presentations, and began planning for larger projects.

The following are just some of the major milestones of the society in the last thirty years:

- On May 23, 1999, The New Derry Fulton House was dedicated after being restored by society members & student volunteers, under the director of Bob Reintgen.
- Evelyn Baker-Ruffing established the historic plaque program in 2000, identifying & recognizing over 30 local historic homes.
- In 2005 the barn that now stands on the Fulton House property was erected with logs from a Mount Pleasant structure slated for demolition. The barn became home to the society's newly acquired Conestoga Wagon.
- In 2007, the society erected its working blacksmith shop next to the new barn.
- In 2010, Evelyn Baker-Ruffing facilitated the move & restoration of the Simpson Voting House in New Alex, leading to its reopening as a polling place & "Keystone of Democracy in 2013.
- In 2014, Fred Milani, Dean Eade, Pat Showlater & society volunteers completed their 3-year endeavor of installing a fully-functional fireplace and 3-story chimney in the Fulton House.

Cheers to 30 Years! Come Have Cake & Ice Cream With Us At The Fulton House on June 23rd!

Our annual ice cream social will take place on Monday, June 23rd, 6:30 pm on the Fulton House lawn. Rain or shine! It will, once again, be generously sponsored by Barkley's Dairy King. Bring the whole family to the Fulton House for a free scoop of Barkley's ice cream & some cake.

Upcoming Events:

*All Meetings
Third Monday of
Each Month, 6:30 pm

Ice Cream Social:
June 23, 6:30 pm
Fulton House

Derry Township 250th
Parade: July 12th 2:00 pm

Look for the DAHS booth
at Derry Ag Fair: July 14-18

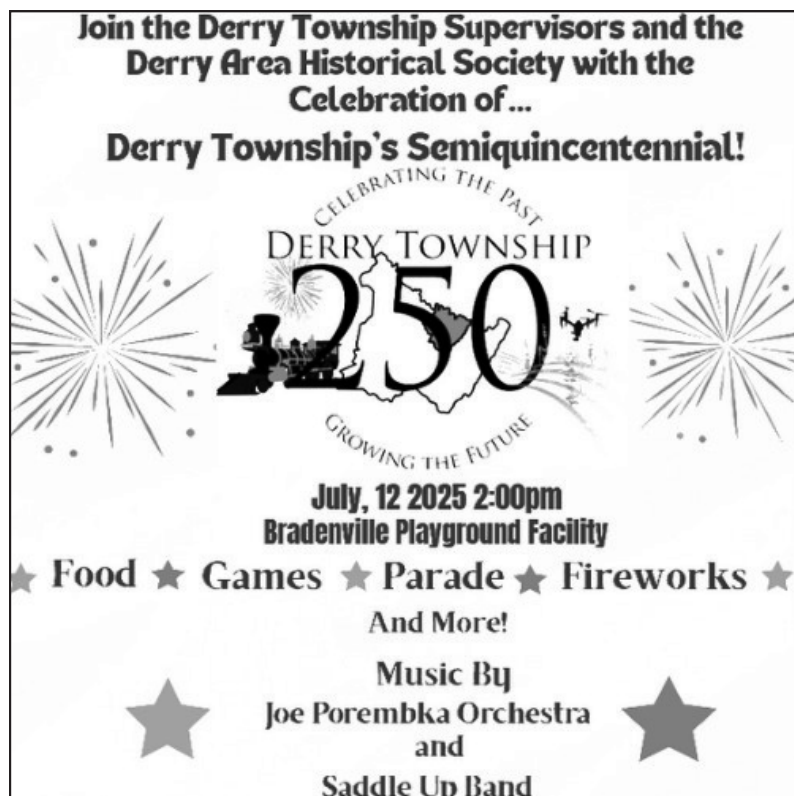
Lammas Day
at the Fulton House:
August 10th, 1-4

Bites and Brews:
September 13th, 1-3
Fulton House
Tickets Required

Look for the DAHS booth at
Railroad Days: September
20 & 21

Watch for DAHS in the Fort
Ligonier Days Parade:
October 11th

More events to come! Follow us on Facebook at "Derry Area Historical Society Official" so you don't miss out!



Derry Township's 250th: Come celebrate this once in a lifetime historic celebration!

The Derry Township 250th celebration parade will depart from the Derry Township Municipal building at 2 pm and end at the Bradenville playground where a festival will be held, followed by fireworks at dusk. To learn how to participate in the parade or festival, visit www.derryhistory.org

Brief History of Bradenville, McChesneytown, & Snyderstown

The first white man who settled in this neighborhood was David Cleckhorn who in 1758 took a tomahawk possession at a spring near the present location of St. Rose Church. He built a cabin about 10 ft by 12 ft with one door and one small window. He was taken by the Indians and was gone seven years during which time other settlers had come. After he came back he sold his claim to William McDowl in 1766 or 1767 and left for other parts. It is not known what became of him. At that time he was an old man. It is supposed he died somewhere in the wilderness father west. McDowl afterward had the land patented and a warrantee Deed from the state or province of Pennsylvania. This land remained in the hands of the McDowls until 1829 when it was sold to Philip and George Armel who came in 1780.

Phillip purchased the western end which included what is McChesneytown; George purchased the eastern part including the Cleckhorn Cabin. This was a large tract of land being about two miles long, extending from the present Kingston cutoff road to the present Latrobe borough line on the west and including the present town of Bradenville. George sold part of his land to Peter Knight which is now known as the Piper farm. His son John Knight lived on this farm for many years and sold to John H. Page of Pittsburgh. Peter Rough of Somerset County purchased the part on which the Cleckhorn cabin stood. He built the largest brick house in the neighborhood. At the Cleckhorn spring the smokehouse was built of bricks in a room over the kitchen. The barn was of frame about 60 by 100 feet in size. It burned down a few years ago. The house is still standing, a relic of bygone days. The farm was afterward sold to Henry Snyder.

After his death his executor, Philip Dougherty, laid out what is now known as Snyderstown on which now stand two churches, St. Rose Roman Catholic Church and St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church. In 1835 George Armel sold 50 acres to John Noel part of which still remains in the hands of several of his heirs. The same year he sold another 50 acres to Rev. Daniel Pershing on which Bradenville now stands (which was formerly known as St. Clair). In Rev. Pershing's will he bequeathed one acre of land to the public for a burying ground that has since enlarged and is incorporated as the Pershing Cemetery. In this Cemetery are buried three soldiers who served in the war of 1812: Thomas Wadsworth, John Moor and a man by the name of Hughes. John Moor was the father of a family who lived on Chestnut Ridge. They were coopers to trade and were renowned for their great strength. They were eight brothers, seven of whom served in the war of 1861 to 1865. There is quite a number of Civil War soldiers also buried in this Cemetery.

The above excerpt is from **"Derry Area Historical Sketches" by Edward J. Braden (1934)** which was transcribed and reformatted by Derry Area Historical Society, with permission from Mr. John Braden, grandson of the author in 2010 & never before released to the public.

If you would like to purchase a copy of this newly-printed 127 page book, they will be available at future events for \$20. To order one by mail, please include \$5 extra for shipping & send a check made out to Derry Area Historical Society & write "Braden Book" in the memo line.

DAHS Welcomes New President: Denise Frisko Wood



Our newly-elected president is lifelong New Derry resident, Denise Frisko Wood. Denise has been a member of DAHS since around 2003, previously serving several terms as a board member and board secretary. Denise, who specializes in digital marketing, has been responsible for much of the behind-the-scenes work at DAHS, including the web site, social media, advertising, & event photography. Denise is passionate about history & helping the Derry community. Meet Denise at the next DAHS event!

DAHS To Begin Fundraising for Building Renovation Fund

Over the last several years, we have begun to notice things that are in need of maintenance and repair on the Fulton House property. We began listing some of these things in a newsletter that was sent out around December of 2024. By March of this year, we realized the gift shop floor needed moved to the top of our list & we began addressing an immediate need for floor repairs in that room.

As every homeowner does, we are beginning to experience surprise expenses and are now thinking about how to stay ahead of them. Looking ahead, we are concerned about the eventual need for replacing the roof of our barn behind the Fulton House. The current asphalt shingles are rapidly approaching their life limitations and should be replaced with a metal roof, similar in style to the cedar shake look metal roof that we installed on the Fulton House a few years ago.

Of course there are many other things required for the upkeep, maintenance, & improvement of our historical buildings. This past year, we have been working on applying for grants to help with these projects. But due to the competitive nature of grants, these are never a guarantee.

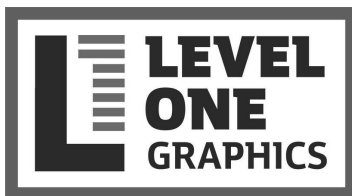
As a small & local non-profit, we receive no state or federal funding. Everything we do is accomplished through fundraising and generous donations from our members, friends, and community. This includes all maintenance and repairs. To begin addressing current issues and stay ahead of future ones, we will be holding a building renovation drive to establish a Building Renovation Fund. If you are interested in contributing to the cause with a donation of any amount, you can make a check out to Derry Area Historical Society with the words "Building Renovation" in the memo line.

**SUPPORT THE BUSINESSES &
ORGANIZATIONS WHO HELP MAKE
THIS NEWSLETTER POSSIBLE**



**SAINT JOSEPH'S
SOCIAL CLUB**

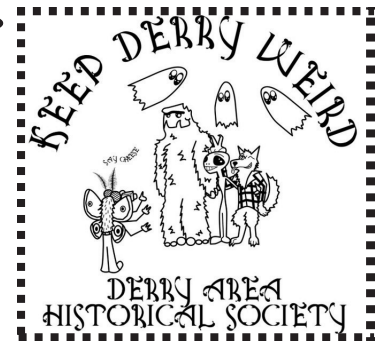
**BOHEMIAN CITIZENS BENEFICIAL
SOCIETY OF DERRY TOWNSHIP**



**DERRY
ROD & GUN
CLUB**

New T-Shirts Available Small - 2X

"Keep Derry Weird" t-shirts (black with white text), designed by Molly Snyder & "Derry Township: Older Than America" t-shirts (navy blue with white text), designed by Donna Showalter can be purchased at our upcoming events for \$20 each or by mail. To order by mail, please add an additional \$5 for shipping. Send us a check along with a note specifying which shirt(s) and what size(s).



Derry Township

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1775**

OLDER THAN AMERICA

DERRY AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PO BOX 64

NEW DERRY, PA 15671

Our web site has a new look! Visit us at www.derryhistory.org

Board of Directors: Denise Frisko Wood (President), Judy Johnston (Vice President) Peter Wood (Treasurer), Rachel Ruffing (Secretary),
Joanne Vicini, Donna Showalter, William Snyder II, Rebecca Gamble, Lidia Gamble, Fran Campbell

Newsletter designed & edited by Denise Frisko Wood

HAVE YOU JOINED US OR RENEWED YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2025 YET?

*NEW MEMBERS JOINING AFTER SEPTEMBER 1ST WILL HAVE THEIR DUES COVERED FOR THE FOLLOWING CALENDAR YEAR.

NAME: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL: _____

ADDRESS: _____

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL (CHECK ONE)

YEARLY DUES: INDIVIDUAL (\$10)_____ COUPLE (\$15)_____ BUSINESS (\$25)_____

LIFETIME DUES: INDIVIDUAL (\$100)_____ COUPLE (\$150)_____ BUSINESS* (\$250) _____

*LIFETIME BUSINESS MEMBERSHIPS INCLUDE ONE FREE ADVERTISEMENT IN THE NEXT NEWSLETTER AS A GOLD LEVEL SPONSOR. BE SURE TO EMAIL YOUR BUSINESS LOGO.

Checks may be made payable to: Derry Area Historical Society PO Box 64 New Derry, PA 15671

2025 INNKEEPERS APPEAL

_____ I WANT TO HELP “KEEP THE LIGHTS ON” AT THE FULTON HOUSE AS A 2025 INNKEEPER.
ENCLOSED IS MY CHECK FOR \$175 MADE OUT TO THE DERRY AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY.