

# The Barracks News

## *There's Always Something Going On At The Smyrna Museum*

Duck Creek Historical Society Newsletter

PO Box 335, Smyrna, DE 19977 – DuckCreekHistoricalSociety.org

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### President's Message

Welcome to 2021 and the first Newsletter issue! The Barracks will go out quarterly to bring members general information, exhibits, upcoming events, and news on the museum complex. The Covid pandemic brought many challenges to the organization and we're working hard with various initiatives. We used the "down time" to get better organized, do some spring cleaning, painted rooms, and focused on necessary repairs to the plank house. We've experienced the expected decrease in foot-traffic, but it's allowed us downtime to better maintain and build new exhibits, afforded the time to work on the asset inventory and log it into PastPerfect, and make enhancements in our internal processes.

The plank house required immediate repairs and some tender loving care to eradicate wood beetles. The work is almost completed on the plank house but then we have some other minor work that needs to be completed as well.

How can you help as a member of the Society? We need to update our membership records and we're activating a membership dues campaign, so please fill out the enclosed membership form and send it in with your Society dues. Let us know how you'd like to volunteer with putting exhibits together, advertising, stuffing and mailing newsletters, breaking exhibits down, learning to guide tours, or help plan and participate in our next "big event". There's always something going on at the museum and we'd love to have you get involved! Give me a call, email us, reach out to us through Facebook and tell us how you can best volunteer your time as a member. Use the Feedback form on our new and improved website and tell us how your can help. Stay tuned, we're planning the Annual Membership Meeting for this fall!

Stop in and check out the exhibits!

Stay safe,  
Brooks

### 2021 DCHS Board of Directors

President: Brooks Keen  
 1<sup>st</sup> Vice-President: Missy Vaughn  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice-President: Gia Turpin  
 Secretary: Jim Wolfe  
 Treasurer: Peg Snow  
 Director: Skipper Carrow  
 Director: Melinda Gregory  
 Director: Michael Keen  
 Director: Ken McVicker  
 Director: Jim Mood  
 President Emeritus: Bob Keen  
 President Emeritus: Sam Mace

# There's Always Something Going On At The Smyrna Museum!

We had three volunteers from the Church of Latter-day Saints doing various jobs at the museum for a month. They helped with yard work, they knocked out a lot of scraping and painting, learned how to detail clean, and moved show cases for us. They were fun to work with and it seems like they had fun doing the work. We appreciate the help!



We've been busy setting up the Duck Creek Goes to War exhibit, which opened July 4<sup>th</sup>. Members have been intaking war memorabilia from the public, getting it inventoried and then entered into the PastPerfect application, doing research, setting up show cases, cleaning, assembling and dressing mannequins. We've got uniforms and memorabilia from different wars. We hope to have VFW lodges and groups come in for tours. Come in and check it out!





## Exciting News!



### DCHS New and Improved Website!

**Go to: [duckcreekhistoricalsociety.org](http://duckcreekhistoricalsociety.org) or do a web search for Duck Creek Historical Society on the Web to find us!**

Check out the new website! Social media is an important way to communicate with the community, establish our brand, and communicate with our members. When people are looking for something to do or looking for info on Smyrna, we want them to check out the website.

The website should attract new readers as we added the color, green, to pages and freshened the material (see the screen shot below). The organization's Mission is provided as well as a brief history of Smyrna. The Contact Us page is live to accept questions and feedback and the Membership page is active for those who are interested in being a new member. The exhibit pictures will change quarterly to keep a fresh and interesting presence on the site.

**You can renew your DCHS Membership and make tax-deductible donations with your credit card on our secure website! Just go to the Membership page and click "DCHS Membership" to pay your dues or click on "Donation" to make a donation to DCHS. It's just a few clicks to help support your organization!**

### Screenshot of the new Home page for our web site.





## Updating Our Membership Files

We need everyone to fill out this form and send it into the museum so that we can update the membership roster. Even if you've been a long-term member, please fill out the form and send it back to us so that we can update our records.

**Dues Campaign** – Please send in your 2021 membership dues: \$15 Individual membership, Family is \$25, and Lifetime is \$100. Please send your 2021 dues to the Duck Creek Historical Society, PO Box 335, Smyrna, DE 19977 **or renew them fast and easy with a credit card through the secured DCHS website, see the Members page.**

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Membership Payment Type:  Individual (\$15)  Family (\$25)

Lifetime Member (\$100)

Checks should always be made out to the Duck Creek Historical Society.

PLEASE PRINT

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

We always need help and there is always something going on at the museum!

I'd be interested in helping with or have the following skills to offer:

Putting Exhibit Together

Organizing an Event

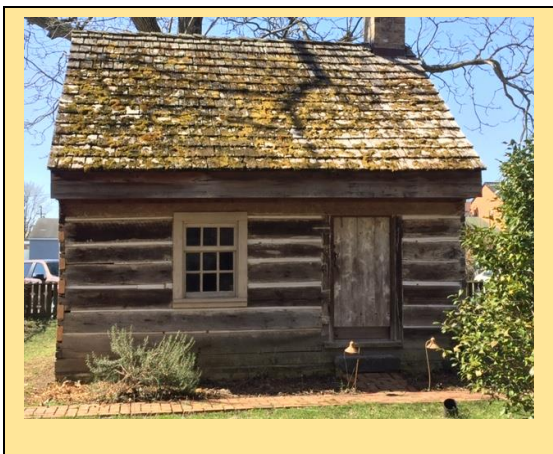
Inventory of Assets

Cleaning on Quarterly Basis

Holiday Decorating

Advertising Committee

## Plank House Repairs, Maintenance, and Funding



The plank house is one of only three examples of Swede architecture in the State of Delaware, and we intend to keep it standing for years to come! Currently closed for repairs and spraying, the cabin remains to be one of the main attractions for the museum complex. Needed maintenance and repairs to preserve this historic plank house will cost a little over \$14,000 and the work is well underway. Special lumber was shipped in to keep the logs looking consistent with existing logs. We've researched and applied for several financial grants to help offset the cost and we're finding that Covid has impacted grant funding with a trickle-down effect to 501c3 organizations. To date, we've secured a \$4,000 grant to help with expenses. The roof is also in need of repair.

If you'd like to contribute to the plank house restoration fund, please send your check marked "plank house" and send it to the DCHS or you can donate through the DCHS Membership page on our website. Your contribution is tax-deductible and will help restore the cabin for years of touring and community pride.

## "Remembering Woodland Beach" Exhibit

We've put a nice exhibit together to remember Woodland Beach when it was booming, during the late 1870's to the early 1900's. The exhibit includes interesting pieces including Steller's soda bottles, etched souvenir glass, info boards, and the stuffed muskrat adds a nice touch. This is a great display of local history and it's drummed up interest on our Facebook page. Do you have something to contribute to the exhibit? Let us know and bring it in!





### Historical Fun Fact:

Puttees were part of the US Army uniform.



This World War II soldier is wearing “puttees”. Puttees are thick strips of woolen cloth resembling a large bandage and became part of the uniform to keep sand and dirt out of the soldier’s shoes and to keep the soldier’s pant legs secured while in trenches. The cloth was wound tightly in a spiral and covered the lower leg from the knee to the ankle. Puttees were used by the United States soldiers, the British, German, Italian, French armies, and the Canadian Infantry. Puttees were ceased to be used after WWII for a few reasons; It took time to put them on and it was difficult to keep them neat and clean. The wrapping was identified as cutting off blood flow and causing medical issues.

Come out and see more interesting items in the Duck Creek Goes to War exhibit.



### A Sure Sign of Summer

Echinacea or better known as “purple coneflower” are decorating the landscape at the back door of the plank house.