
LIMERICK TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Monthly meetings take place on the Second Monday at 7:30 p.m. at Limerick Township Building

Limerick Township Historical Society Officers

President: Martin Witte

Vice Pres: Alexandria Sasek

Treasurer: Robert Moses

Secretary: John Perry

Historian: Barbara S. Witwer

LTHS Board Members

Helen Christman

Millie Moses

Anita Rogers

Mattie Ebling

Mary Ann Dailey

Newsletter Editor

Mary Ann Dailey

The Mission of LTHS is to:

1. Preserve the history, lore and historical heritage of Limerick Township
2. Create an interest in Township history and heritage, especially among Township youth.
3. Restore buildings and areas within the Township to original character,
4. Provide a repository for Township memorabilia, and
5. Advise persons, firms, or entities seeking assistance on restoration projects.



A few Witte Comments...

On Monday February 13, the Society held a special meeting to discuss the possible purchase of the William and Mordecai Evans House in Linfield. Last year, Limerick Township bought the property because it included several acres that adjoined the Linfield Sports Park. Then, the Township had the property subdivided to remove the buildings from the rest of the acreage. The Township does not want the responsibility of maintaining the buildings, but they understand their historic significance. Therefore, they offered our Society the chance to purchase the buildings before they were placed on the market.

Portions of the Evans House are the oldest building in Limerick Township. This includes a large stone fireplace in front of which George Washington dried his "breeches" after crossing the Schuylkill River from Parker's Ford on September 19, 1777. Washington stopped, rested, and wrote a letter to Congress about the progress of the Revolutionary War. This was one week after a defeat by the British Army at Brandywine.

The meeting on February 13th was held for members to ask questions and offer comments about the potential purchase of The Evans House. Jack Perry and I made a presentation about the property: where it is located, what it looks like, and why the Society should purchase it....to PRESERVE an historic property. I feel the meeting showed a positive view towards acquiring the property.

When Edgar Grubb died, he left money to our Society and two others. The monetary gift from Edgar was invested and has grown to a point that the Society can pay for the the Evans property and still be financially stable. However, the biggest obstacle to overcome is having people take care of the Evans property and the Hunsberger House. We have a small membership that is aging. For the future viability of our Society, WE NEED TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS, encourage YOUNG MEMBERS to join, and have more members 'step-up and volunteer'!

The Thursday after our meeting, Jack and I met with the Limerick Township Staff at their weekly meeting. We had met in January, reviewed the previously described subdivision plan, and requested a few changes. Those changes have been made and the plan is acceptable to Jack and I.

The Executive Board manages the business of the Society. Potential property buyers always visit a property they are considering buying. Therefore, before the Executive Board votes on the purchase of the property we have asked the Township to let us tour it.... We will have a decision shortly. While the Executive Board manages the business of the Society, we wanted to hear the opinions and questions of members before the purchase will be put to a vote.

*Martin Witte,
LTHS President*



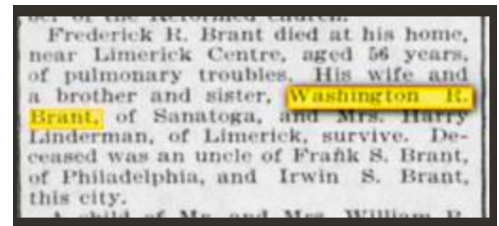
A Bit of History: The Brant Family in Limerick

By Robert Brant

The impetus for this brief article about the Brant Family in Limerick was the photograph of the "FR Brant Limerick PA" butter box that that appeared in the Fall 2021 newsletter (at right). I have an identical one, which was purchased at auction years ago at the Borneman home adjacent to the Church at Ridge Pike and Limerick Center Road.



Frederick Brant (1844 - 1899), son of Samuel (1804-1866) and Salome Rahn Brant (1809 - 1890) and husband of Harriet Bean Brant, had 4 brothers and 7 sisters. He lived on the Brant farm (later the Vernon Rapp farm) on Evergreen Road, then Township Line Road in Limerick. Frederick was an uncle to my grandfather, Lewis Brant (1899 - 1984).



From the 1940's, my grandfather, Lewis B. Brant, and my father, Robert Lewis Brant (1925 - 1979), operated a wholesale/retail butcher shop on Evergreen Road and a weekend stand at the Farmer's Market on Charlotte Street in Pottstown. Lewis and his wife, Lottie (1895 - 1975), lived in a home next to the butcher shop. They had two children: my father and my aunt, Betty Hoffman (1928 -), who is now the family matriarch and living in Douglassville. My

brother, Scott, and I lived with my mother, Elaine, and father across the street on the Lower Pottsgrove side of Evergreen Road. The butcher shop and home were demolished upon construction of the Outlets.

Slaughter day at the butcher shop was Tuesday and I have vivid memories of the sights and smells of that endeavor - sausage, lard



and scrapple making, a smokehouse with hams and bacon - and the meat deliveries to Limerick area restaurants: Milo's, Mary and Georges, and Four Maples. Local customers would wrap their own meats to be frozen in a walk-in freezer in the butcher shop. My grandfather had a Pennsylvania Dutch accent and conversed in that dialect with one of the meat cutters, Noah Heimbach.

Adjacent to the Church at Ridge Pike and Limerick Center Road, the Limerick Church Burial Ground contains the graves of many Brant family members. Some are marked with the oldest headstones in the cemetery, including my ancestor George Jacob Brant (1739 - 1821): "Age 81y 11m 8d" at the time of his death.



George had served as a Revolutionary War soldier under Captain John Missimer's Company - Limerick - 4th Class, 2nd Company, 4th Battalion. He was the father of Benjamin Brant (1766 - 1845), the grandfather of Samuel M. (1804 - 1866), and the great grandfather of the previously mentioned Frederick. The Limerick Census of 1850 finds Samuel M. (1804 - 1866), his wife, Salome (1809 - 1890), and their 8 children - ages 2 to 19; Samuel is listed as a farmer. His mother, Elizabeth, age 76 (widow of Benjamin Brant), resided at the next farm with her widowed daughter, Suzanna Brant Smith, 51, and Suzanna's 3 children.

The DM Hopkins and Company 1871 Atlas of Montgomery County shows the farm on Evergreen Road under the ownership of S.W. Brant; thereafter, the J.L. Smith Montgomery County Atlas of 1893 shows Washington R. Brant as the owner of the farm depicting 92 acres. When he was not farming, Washington, a millwright by trade, helped run several mills in the area. He was the father of Frank S. Brant, who would become president of Chadwick Engineering. Washington was the last of 14 children of Samuel M. Brant.

Although several generations of Bran(d)ts lived in Limerick Township, the first members - from Germany - settled in New Hanover Township. Among the early settlers were Philip Brandt (1696 - 1744), who happened to be in Philadelphia where he met Reverend Henry Melchior Muhlenberg who had just arrived from abroad (1742) to serve the Augustus Lutheran Church. Philip guided Muhlenberg by horseback for 35 miles to New Providence (today Trappe) and New Hanover, crossing the Skippack and Perkiomen Creeks and soaking both men up to their chests. There was no Perkiomen Bridge built at that time. Other Brants in the area included Adam Brant (? - 1804), a prolific clockmaker of tall case grandfather clocks, and Philip Brandt (1757 - 1835), who also served in the Revolutionary War in the militia company from New Hanover, which was part of the 6th battalion of the Philadelphia County militia.

Museum/Library Donations

We offer a special 'thank you' to each of our donors

Ruth Borneman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plastic letter opener: <i>"Fuller Brush Man -U.S.A."</i> • Metal letter opener: <i>"Trans Agra" Transporter of Ag. Commodities.</i> Ruth notes, "Ruth's brother, Bob, operated under that name when he hauled milk from the farms to the dairy 1972 - 1991." • Red rubber grip to open bottles: <i>"Fisher's Wayside Furniture Store, Rt. 422 West, Collegeville, PA."</i> • Black plastic bottle cap: <i>"Stick with Oil - PLOTTS Bros. 462 Main St., Royersford, PA for Total Comfort."</i>
Robert Brant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Brant Family in Limerick • Photos (all pictured in Brant article) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brant's Meats Wholesale & Retail, Est. 1959 (sign) • Aerial view from 1960 of the Brant Family home (Robert's grandparents) and their Butcher Shop. • Lard can that sold at the meat business.
Jacob & Mary Ann Dailey	Monetary gift toward future purchase of computers
Lisa (Miller) & Eric Forsythe	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cradle from the Miller Family • 4 orange helmets - PE Power Plant; 1 yellow helmet - <i>Tour Guide Power Plant</i>
Dr. Greg Gubler	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book: <i>"Gentleman Samurai and Internationalist, The Life and Trials of Ambassador Sato Naotake, 1882- 1971."</i> by Greg Gubler
David Kerns, Pottstown Historical Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All large photo negatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kinsey Distilling Co., 1520 Locust St., Phila., first whiskey barrel coming out of Linfield Plant - July 17, 1936 • Peter Lumber Company building • Lakeside Inn, 2 views (oblique) - Oct 193__. • William Penn Whiskey Advertisement photos

Upcoming Meetings	Program
March 13, 2023	State Representative Joe Ciresi will talk about projects and programs he is working on with other representatives.
April 2023	To be announced
May 2023	To be announced

For years, Doris Callow arranged programs for our monthly member meetings. **We need someone to 'take over' this task.** Please contact Martin, if you have an interest in assisting!

Condolences

Dorothy L. (Oliver) Jones, 91, of Royersford, widow of James L. Jones, passed away on Wednesday December 28, 2022 at Phoenixville Hospital. Dot was a founding member of the Limerick Township Historical Society, where she was president from 1986 until 2012. She served as coordinator of the 1976 Independence Valley Bicentennial Committee, was the representative for Limerick Township in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in New York City, was a worker at the polls for Limerick Twp. for many years, and was also a cub scout den mother. She is survived by a daughter, Lauraine, wife of Eric Lindbloom, Horsham, PA; a sister, Kathleen Carpenter, Pottstown; five grandchildren and six great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by two sons, Robert & William Jones, a daughter, Beverly L. Jones, and three brothers, Linwood, David, Maurice Oliver.....We extend our deepest sympathy to her family.



Virginia "Ginnie" Collins passed away last fall in Florida, where she had moved to be near family. Ginnie was a long time Society member and served as Historian for several years...We offer the family our deepest sympathy.

Thank You, Volunteers

As we approached the December 3rd and 4th Open House Tours, cleaning and decorating the Hunsberger House became a priority. Thanks to our volunteers who gave extra time and talent for the success of the tours! Mattie, Bunny and Barbara removed all the window shades and cleared the window sills in preparation for the much needed window cleaning done by professionals, *I Do Windows*, from Limerick. Thanks Jack for spending most of your day at the House. The next Wednesday Mattie and Bunny washed all the shades and rehung them. Mattie, Bunny and Mary Ann returned to decorate placing greens and holly on each window sill and putting up a tree in the Reception room. Thanks to Alice, Mary Ann, and Mattie for providing the greens and holly. Jack and Sue Perry contributed the ropes of live greens, which Jack hung outside. Doris and her grandson, Patrick, added decorations in the Library and placed seasonal sheet music on the piano in the Museum. Although the decorations were minimal and tasteful, the House was ready to greet the visitors. A special thanks to Jack for replacing the rotten steps at the Cider Press house. Rain was in the forecast for Saturday, but the sun appeared early and our Hostesses and Hosts greeted 22 visitors as well as some LTHS members. Thanks Alice, Mary Ann, Jack, and Allie who hosted on Saturday, and Jay, Holly, Jack, Bryan, and Millie, who hosted on Sunday. A total of twenty-eight (28) people signed our guest book.

A Statement Regarding Elections

There are five officers of our Society elected each year for a one-year term: President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, and Historian. Additionally, there are five Board members with overlapping terms. Each year, one Board Member is elected for a five-year term. The officers and board members constitute the Executive Board.

Our By-Laws provide the procedure to choose and elect officers and board members. At the June meeting of the Executive Board, the president appoints a Nominating Committee. Then, the Committee selects candidates for presentation to the membership at the October meeting. Nominations for additional candidates are invited from members. Finally, the election of officers and board members occurs at the November meeting of the Society. As per the By-Laws, this procedure was followed in 2022. There were no nominees at the October meeting, so it would only be a formality to recognize the board member and officers at the November meeting. Because President Martin Witte and Secretary John Perry could not attend the November 2022 meeting, the recognition was overlooked. Unfortunately, the Nominating Committee did not identify any candidates for the position of Historian or a candidate to replace Bill Miller, who passed away in 2022. Therefore, the Executive Board has the responsibility to fill these positions. After talking to several members, the Executive Board was able to fill these positions at its January 4, 2023 meeting.

The Executive Board selected Mary Ann Dailey to serve the unexpired term of the late William Miller. Since 2016, she has been Newsletter Editor and has made several presentations at our membership meetings. From 1998 to 2004, Mary Ann served as our Pennsylvania State Representative and helped the Society obtain grants. For her help to the Society she was awarded the Hood Lifetime Membership.

For several years Barbara Witwer has been improving our records of donations. Barbara served as a volunteer and never became a member. For her service to the Society, Barbara was presented the Hunsberger Award and received a Hood Lifetime Membership. This past year, volunteers have assisted her with the organization of donations and the inventory of boxes. All of this information will be placed on our computers for a searchable database. Barbara has also rearranged displays including the hanging of paintings and other framed documents. Barbara was chosen to fill the position of Historian.

We welcome Mary Ann and Barbara to the Executive Board.

Martin Witte, President

Farewell

In March, **Alice Lang** will be moving to Tennessee, where she will be living near her daughter. Alice has been a member of the Society for many years and served as Vice-President of the Executive Board. We will miss you, Alice, but wish you happiness in her new home.

