



The Historical Society of Trappe Pennsylvania

*For the preservation of the history, ancient buildings and land marks
of the Trappe area.*

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THE TRAPPE CHRONICLE

SPRING 1987

FROM THE PRESIDENT:

1987 - It doesn't seem that it's been 11 years since we celebrated our Country's Bi-Centennial. Like our country, we have seen growth, expansion and we've had our own share of disappointments and tragedies. We've made new friends and bid old ones a peaceful farewell. But, like time itself, we have survived. We may not be the biggest, wealthiest or youngest Historical Society in Montgomery County but we have a group of people who count.

As we enter a new year, let us remember our goals. We are here to preserve local history and do what we can to promote increased interest in local History.

From me to all of you. Have a safe and prosperous 1987.

THE QUILTERS:

Yes they are alive and doing well. We owe a great deal to these ladies let's not forget what they have done for the Society. Anne Schrack deserves a great deal of credit and thanks for all she and her ladies have accomplished.

THANKS

PROPERTY:

It's nice to report that the building itself is in good condition. The roof on other hand will need repairs or replacement in the next couple years. With the support of the members and community I'm sure that we will be able to accomplish the goals we have set up without any difficulty. We have what it takes to be productive -- we have PEOPLE POWER.

Fred Conard

MEMBERSHIP:

This year we are attempting to do something that we have not done before. This year we are asking that you send in your membership dues to the Society Headquarters at 305 Main Street. We are keeping a main log in the Museum of all members and this way we will be able to look up instantly when you come to visit to see if indeed you have renewed for 1987. REMEMBER - send your due to the Headquarters.

Executive Committee

HISTORIANS REPORT:

The following notice appeared in the Norristown Times-Herald on Tuesday, February 17, 1987, under the column NEWS OF YESTERYEAR (Walter Sauer brought it to my attention)

75 YEARS AGO

At Beckman's Hotel in Trappe, Frank Peterman, as auctioneer, sold for Jonas P. Fisher 20 head of horses at an average price of \$287. A pacer brought \$260.

Mr. Beckman owned the present day Trappe Inn, having purchased the property from Abraham Ashenfelter. He called the hotel "The Fountain Hotel", and was its owner and operator until his death in December 1928. The name was a derivative of the earliest name which has been verified to date, which was used by Joseph Vanderslice who purchased the property in May 1807 - "The Sign of the Fox and Fountain". This name appeared in an advertisement for the property to be sold in October 1807. Mr. Vanderslice evidently rented the inn and ran the business before his purchase. In January 1806 an ad appeared in the Norristown Herald and Weekly Register as follows:

TO SPORTSMEN --- A LARGE RED FOX

To be let out on Friday of this instance at 1 o'clock in the afternoon at the house of Joseph Vanderslice, Innkeeper at the Trap.

Evidently the chase never happened, because the following February 10th another ad appeared for a fox chase with the note "it positively will be started, it (the fox) being on the ground".

In November 1811 he again advertised the inn for sale at a public vendue and called it "The Sign of the Wagon and Horses". He sold the property in March 1813 to Samuel Ely, who, in turn, sold in March 1818 to Frederick Koons of Limerick. Mr. Koons added a distillery to the hotel business. In September 1819 he also advertised the property for sale, calling it "The Trap Fountain Inn and Farm", selling in April 1821 to Joseph Goodwin, Innkeeper. Mr. Goodwin also advertised the property for sale in October 1823, using both "The Trap Fountain Inn" and "The Sign of the Wagon and Horses", in his ad. He also stated "... the yard besides being warm is large, level and capable of giving room sufficient to hold 75 wagons, stabling (including the barn) sufficient for 150 horses ...". Mr. Koons in his ads had stated stabling for 200 horses. As can be seen, this inn was a drovers inn from earliest times and on up to this century. Claude Crist, who was born in 1893 on Mennonite Road near Yerkes, told me several years ago (before his recent death) that he could remember as a boy going to Beckman's and buying horses and then driving them home.

A great deal more could be written about this old inn, perhaps another time.

Esther O. Keller
Historian
Historical Society of Trappe
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