

## News from the Franklin Township Historical Commission and HARB

### History lesson #1-

#### Ben Franklin's connection

In July of 1852, when the southern and eastern part of what was then New London Township split to form a new township, a group of local businessmen gathered at the Kemblesville Inn in the village of Kemblesville (the building still stands at the intersection of Appleton Road and Route 896). It was decided to name this new township in honor of Ben Franklin, who owned property in the township and frequented the Inn.

Research shows that The Chester County Tax List had taxed Ben Franklin for 160 acres in 1767. A crossed out entry indicated he was taxed for 160 acres again in 1770 and in 1771 for 184 acres.

One letter found at the Chester County Historical Society indicated that Franklin bought land adjacent to the Kemblesville Inn from its owner, George McCleave. Another letter from George Read (signer of the Declaration of Independence) to Deborah Franklin, Franklin's wife, mentions "Your land bought of George McCleave lying 20 miles from me..."

Wendy Toman, chairperson of the Historical Commission, thinks part of this land that is mentioned in these and other letters is the old "Dr. West plantation," which includes the blue house at the intersection of Appleton Road and Route 896 and the land where the township buildings now stand.

#### Bus trip to Philadelphia

In recognition of the township namesake's 300th birthday, the Historical Commission organized a bus trip to the National Constitution Center's Ben Franklin exhibit and guided walking tour to learn about Ben Franklin's life in Philadelphia.

#### Photo show a great success

"Then and Now: Our Changing Landscape" was the theme of the second

Franklin Township photography exhibition, contest, and sale.

Many residents entered photographs in one of three categories: Then, Then and Now, and Now. As judge, Mimi Pawliczek, from London Grove's Historical Commission awarded first



This photograph of "the bend" in Kemblesville appeared in the Sunday Local News in April 1987, less than 20 years ago.

place to Joel Schwartz's "Now" photograph (see front page). Of note Shannon Kidder won the "Then and Now" category with a black and white hand-tinted photograph of her 1930 house and a photograph now from the same angle. John Lawrence, Jr. won in the "Then" category with four postcards of the village of Kemblesville taken in the early 1900s by Newark, Delaware, photographer Ed Herbener.

The event raised approximately \$500 for the township's historical commission and the Kemblesville Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB). The money was placed in a fund to be used to purchase welcome signs for the

Kemblesville Historic District.

#### What is the Kemblesville Historic District?

In the fall of 2003, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission granted a Determination of Eligibility (DOE) for the National Register of

Historic Places to 33 tax parcels within the Village of Kemblesville partially covering Walker Road, Appleton Road and Route 896 near the bend.

The Historic District Ordinance, which created the HARB, was passed in the fall of 2003 and gives protection to the historic resources within the historic district.

#### First Design

##### Guidelines complete

The Kemblesville HARB reviews applications for proposed changes to the exterior of structures that can be seen from a public right-of-way within the Kemblesville Historic District.

To help those residents that live within the historic district determine appropriate alterations, a series of "Design Guidelines" is being written by HARB. "Volume 1: General Information for Applicants" is completed and available. The series will continue with guidelines for New Construction and Additions, Alterations and Renovations, Repair and Replacement, Signs and Awnings.

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