



Welcome to a Walk Through Time.....

Places of Worship

William Penn arrived aboard 'The Welcome' in 1682. And while many other faiths eventually were part of Chester County, its origins are firmly based in the Quaker faith. William Penn wanted to start a colony where Quakers could live in peace. He called the colonies a "holy experiment" because he offered complete religious freedom to all who came there. Quaker's have meeting houses not churches. A meeting may begin when 2 or more come together to pray. The pursuit of religion grew as the population of settlers expanded and in 1763 a Meeting House appeared in Uwchlan, Nantmeal, and Pikeland Townships. Each ethnic group that came over to the new colonies were able to establish churches and meeting houses to practice their faith freely.

The Scotch-Irish Presbyterians built and established their first meeting house at Brandywine Manor in 1735. Some of their members broke off and established Honey Brook Presbyterian in Honey Brook Township in 1835. In 1839 West Nantmeal Presbyterian Church (Fairview) was built in our township, it was established prior to Wallace Township being created and now part of Wallace Township. A Baptist church was built in East Nantmeal in 1741 shortly after East and West Nantmeal was split into 2 townships.

Good Will Methodist was established in 1832 on ground donated by Reverend Thomas Milliard for a church and cemetery.

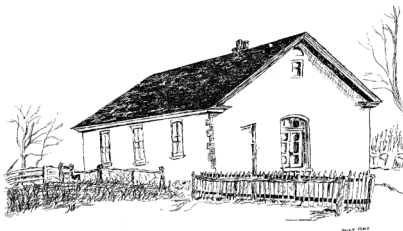
St. Mark's Episcopal Church on Chestnut Tree Road was founded by Levi Bull in 1835. Reverend Bull was an Englishman and founded the church for his countrymen who emigrated here from England to work in the mines.

St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church was es-

tablished in 1963 with a church and rectory on North Manor Road. There was also a chapel located at St. Mary's of Providence.

Wyebrooke Baptist Church was established in 1966. They began by having prayer meetings in homes. As their congregation grew, they rented Franklin School until they acquired ground on New Road and built their church.

As you can see William Penn afforded religious freedom for anybody who believed in God. English, Welsh, German and Dutch flocked to the colony, so a healthy diversity of religions was established.



The Original Good Will Methodist Church



St. Peter's Roman Catholic Church

Tidbits (answers on second page)

1. Levi Bull, founder of St. Mark's Episcopal Church was related to what famous person?
2. The Titus Beam farm was deeded from John, Richard, and Thomas to the Clews in 1740. What was the last name of John, Richard, and Thomas?



Early Landowners of West Nantmeal Township

Settlement of West Nantmeal Township began between 1700 and 1710, consisting mainly of Welsh and Scots Irish farmers. The Welsh were principally Quakers and the Scots Irish, Presbyterians.

The name Nantmeal derives from the phrase, “brook of honey,” an attractive selling point for any farmer. As populations increased, it was divided up into the four townships presently known as East Nantmeal, West Nantmeal, Honey Brook, and Wallace townships.

It can be difficult for a researcher to pinpoint where, in current boundaries, an early deed lies. But modern software makes it relatively easy, using the longitude and latitude described in these deeds.

The sons of William Penn, Thomas, Richard and John, were the conveyers of these early land grants, typically consisting of from two hundred to a thousand acres. By the middle 1700’s, one sees an influx of Pennsylvania Germans to the area. Surnames like Ranck, Beam, Stoltzfus and Bollinger are among them.

One of the more notable figures in West Nantmeal history, by virtue of one of his descendants, is Mordecai Lincoln, great-grandfather of Abraham Lincoln. Mordecai’s daughter was Hannah Lincoln Millard and the Millard surname is widespread in the area to this day.

Tidbit answers.....

1. George Washington

2. Sons of William Penn

Mysteries and Marvels

DID YOU KNOW?

Knickerbocker Ice Company cut huge chunks of ice from Isabella Lake, mules hauled it off the lake with ropes, it was loaded on railroad cars and taken to the Philadelphia Hotels

DID YOU KNOW?

A skeleton with shackles and a bullet hole in the skull was unearthed in the 1960's.

DID YOU KNOW?

A world renowned stained glass artist grandson lived here and he invented the Swingomatic© for Graco.

DID YOU KNOW?

A movie was written and partially filmed in the township.

DID YOU KNOW?

You could stand on St. Mary's front porch and see all the way to Glenmoore.

These are just some of the interesting things discovered by the West Nantmeal Historic Commission. We hope you would be interested in joining our commission. We meet once a month and sometimes more depending on events, workshops or trips.

An open house to learn more will be held on June 5th at 2 PM at the Blast House at Isabella Furnace, 261 Bollinger Road. Please RSVP to 610-286-9722 ext. 12.

We look forward to meeting and greeting you.

We have much more to be discovered and researched. Come and enjoy the hunt of new/old discoveries!

*****Correction**

In the October 2020 issue the Kinzua Viaduct was incorrectly identified as the Kinzers Viaduct. Thank you to one of our readers for spotting the error!