



Volume 52 Numbers 3 & 4

February 2016

\$15

TREDYFFRIN EASTTOWN HISTORY QUARTERLY



Special Double Issue

New Images of the Chester Valley Railroad
The Chester Valley Trail: From Rail to Trail
Perspectives on the Old Covered Wagon Inn
Remembering the Winter of 2013–2014
George Washington Fished Here

From the Editors



The *History Quarterly* is published four times a year by the

Tredyffrin Easttown Historical Society
720 First Avenue
Berwyn, PA 19312

A 501(c)(3) organization

Board of Directors

Officers

J. Michael Morrison, *President & Board Chairman*
John O. Senior, *Vice-President*
Bonnie Haughey, *Secretary*
Tim Lander, *Treasurer*

Marianne Hooper
Loyd Pakradooni
Greg Prichard
Heidi Sproat
Roger Thorne

Editors

John O. Senior
Heidi Sproat
Loyd Pakradooni

Distribution

Cheryl Leibold
Gretchen Kiernan
Bill Keltz

Subscription

A subscription to the *History Quarterly* is included with each membership in the Society. One copy per membership is mailed to the member household address.

Annual Membership Dues

Patron: \$125
Family: \$40
Student: \$24

Please visit our website for membership applications, details on upcoming programs, and other valuable information.

www.tehistory.org

ISSN: 1938-5676

This issue features some long-anticipated contributions from several Society members who have adapted their public meeting presentations into articles for the *Quarterly*. The primary theme is the Chester Valley Rail and Trail. Jim Brazel enlisted the support of Roger Thorne in bringing us new images and information about his beloved Chester Valley branch of the Reading Railroad. This material expands nicely upon his previously published work on the subject. Tim Lander, also president of Friends of the Chester Valley Trail, relates the story of the conversion of the old railway right-of-way into a vital new community recreational resource.

We also are pleased to present two first-hand accounts of the local effects of the dramatic winter of 2013–14. Bill Marshall and Duane Malm both responded to the public invitation we made to document this memorable series of weather events, and following the recent epic snowstorm of January 2016, memories of the travails of two years ago come clearly to mind.

With the recent concern about the fate of the old Covered Wagon Inn building in Strafford, we have received a number of inquiries about the history of the structure, and after some preliminary research have some new perspectives to share. While this report is brief and preliminary, we hope to continue the research and gather more information to support a more in-depth article in the future. We would welcome any contributions from the community that would help to expand our understanding.

For our last feature article in this issue, we present a short piece authored by long-time Society member Dick Kurtz that relates the charming story of George Washington's 1787 fishing trip on Trout Creek, along with some interesting background on the stream itself.

In our *News and Comments* section, we present a variety of short pieces on a variety of subjects of local interest. We are always looking for suggestions and contributions for this section, and if you have something to offer, please let us know.



Matchbook covers from the Old Covered Wagon Inn. Images from eBay.

Trash or Treasure?

It is not uncommon for us to hear from or about people who are in possession of some items that they may be uncertain how to value, but for which they would like to find a new home.

If you (or people you know) have photographs, drawings, maps, letters, documents, books, or other items of possible (or definite) historic interest that might be donated to the Society, please visit the Archives page of our website (<http://www.tehistory.org/archives.html>) and review our Collecting Policy, or contact us directly for more information. Email: archives@tehistory.org

Tredyffrin Easttown History Quarterly

Volume 52, Numbers 3 & 4

February 2016

CONTENTS

FEATURES

- 84 New Images of the Chester Valley Railroad:
The Reading Railroad's Chester Valley Branch in Tredyffrin and Environs
James Brazel and Roger Thorne
- 112 The Chester Valley Trail: From Rail to Trail
Tim Lander
- 120 Perspectives on the Old Covered Wagon Inn
Mike Bertram, John O. Senior, Heidi Sproat
- 124 The Winter of 2013–2014
Bill Marshall
- 127 Record-breaking winter storm of February 2014: A first-person account
Duane Malm
- 130 George Washington Fished Here
Richard E. Kurtz

DEPARTMENTS

- 132 **In Memoriam:** Mary Robertson Ives, Bob Tickner, and John & Ann Hanft
- Notes and Comments:**
- 134 Big Changes in Chesterbrook — *John O. Senior*
- 136 50 Years at Tredyffrin Public Library — *John O. Senior*
- 137 Dedication of Historic Marker for the Devon Horse Show — *John O. Senior*
- 138 Update on Westover Park,
Scene of the 1930 Devon Fireworks Explosion — *Heidi Sproat*
- 139 An Old White Oak — *C. Herbert Fry*
- 139 **Support Recognition**

Cover Descriptions

Front Cover: UPPER LEFT: Photo of Maple Station and siding, taken 7 February 1932. *Courtesy C. Herbert Fry Collection.*
LOWER LEFT: Early trail preparation following railbed removal. *Courtesy Tim Lander.* UPPER RIGHT: Chester Valley Trail, looking east near the Westlakes area. Photo taken 8 March 2016. *Courtesy John O. Senior.*

Back Cover: UPPER: Four 2013 photos of Chester Valley Trail Valley Forge Road bridge installation. *Courtesy John O. Senior.*
LOWER LEFT: January 1971 photo of Chester Valley freight crossing over Valley Forge Road. LOWER RIGHT: 25 June 2013 photo of newly-erected Chester Valley Trail steel bridge structure. *Both photos courtesy James Brazel.*

© 2016 Tredyffrin Easttown Historical Society. Authors retain copyright of their contributions. The Society does not accept responsibility for the accuracy of the information in these articles. The Society retains the right to republish submitted material. Please contact the Society for permission to use any content in this publication.

The Big Lift

Chester Valley Trail

Valley Forge Road Bridge



ABOVE LEFT: 24 June 2013 – The assembled bridge framework, hooked-up and ready for lifting into place. The Liebherr LTM1400-7.1 crane provided by Sautter Crane Rental, capable of lifting 485 tons, is the second-largest in the eastern U.S.
ABOVE RIGHT: 25 June 2013 – The lifting process: slowly and very carefully moving the 60-ton structure into position.

BELOW LEFT: January 1971 – Chester Valley freight headed west crosses steel girder trestle over Valley Forge Road.

BELOW RIGHT: 25 June 2013 – Newly-erected Chester Valley Trail steel bridge structure in place.

