

Notes and Comments

CBS 3 SummerFest visits Devon

On Friday 2 June 2017, as part of their ongoing SummerFest series, local television network affiliate CBS 3 (KYW) spent much of the day at the Devon Horse Show & Country Fair, with a video crew and several on-screen personalities, exploring various aspects of the event. A combination of pre-recorded and live segments appeared during the Eyewitness News broadcasts at 5, 6, and 11 p.m.

Earlier in the week, Society president John O. Senior and former president Michael Morrision were interviewed by producer Aubrey Clerkin about the historical background

of the Devon community. The Society provided several historic photos that were included in the program, along with short segments from the interviews. The first portion of the program, focusing more on history and including this content, was originally shown on Friday just after 5 pm, and is may be seen on our website at <http://www.tehistory.org/news.html#cbs3>. The complete story, as it appears on the CBS 3 website may be viewed at <http://philadelphia.cbslocal.com/2017/06/02/devon-horse-show-2017/>. — JOS

Devon Inn Project

For three decades, from 1882 to 1913, many wealthy and socially prominent families from Philadelphia and elsewhere spent their summers at the well-known Devon Inn. The majestic hotel was situated on a knoll about 300 yards south of the railroad station, overlooking well-kept lawns, trees, and gardens. A shaded boardwalk led from the station to the Inn, and carriages and omnibuses met all trains. The Devon Inn was a culture unto itself, attracting visitors not only to stay in style, but also to enjoy the many events and activities that took place on the expansive lawns. The first building was destroyed by fire in 1883, and was immediately replaced with a larger, grander structure that became a highly-regarded resort destination and the original location of the Devon Horse Show in 1896. As its success as a hotel gradually declined in the early 1900s, it served various other roles, and was the first home of the Valley Forge Military Academy until 1929 when the the grand old building was finally lost to fire.

Michael Morrison (president of King of Prussia Historical Society, former president and current board member of TEHS, and an experienced historian) has recently led an ongoing and very productive research project focused on the Devon Inn. The amount of material that has been discovered is remarkable, and we hope to publish a substantial article on the subject in the *Quarterly* later this year.

Michael made his first presentation on this project at Jenkins Arboretum on 25 May 2017, on behalf of the Tredyffrin Historic Preservation Trust and their fundraising campaign to complete the restoration of the Jones Log Barn alongside the existing 18th-century Federal Barn on the Duportail House property in Chesterbrook, and create an historic enclave for the community to be called the “Living History Center at Duportail.”



UPPER: The Devon Inn, view from the northwest, c. 1899
 LOWER: The elegant dining room of the Devon Inn, c. 1899
Photos courtesy of Chester County Historical Society

Michael will make the presentation again at 2 p.m. on Sunday 19 November 2017, as the featured speaker at the Society's public meeting at Tredyffrin Public Library in Strafford, Pa. — JOS & JMM