



POSTINGS FROM PRIESTLEY HOUSE

Newsletter of The Friends of Joseph Priestley House

Number 41 Summer 2008

www.josephpriestleyhouse.org

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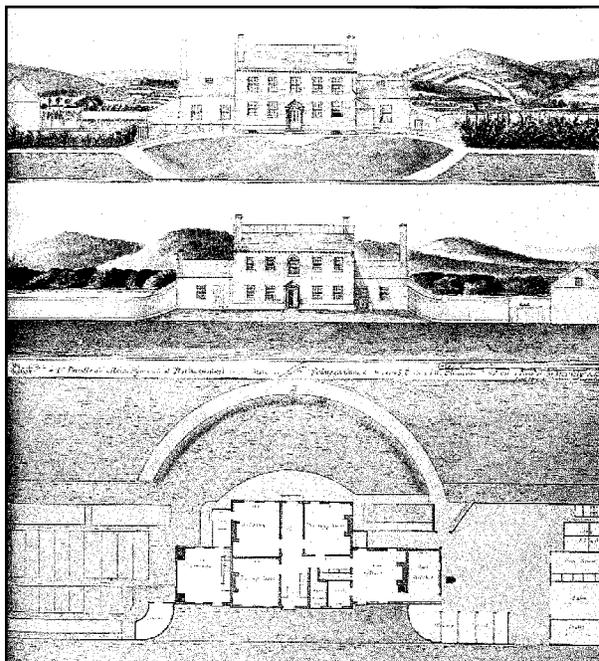
What's in a Name?

In 1983, PHMC researchers found an architectural drawing of the Priestley House in the archives of the Royal Society, London. The drawing (illustrated below) is inscribed *Plan of Dr. Priestley's House & Grounds at Northumberland in the State of Pennsylvania & their S.E. & N.W. Elevations; as also a view of their vicinity, July 1800, plann'd & drawn by T. Lambourne*.

In 1994, consultants working on an interpretation plan for Priestley House asked: Who was the artist? What might that last name be? Could it be Lambourne? Lanbourne? Sanbourne? Sambourne? Deciphering the script proved to be difficult and varied according to the decision of each individual viewer.

In 2007, while transcribing a letter written November 26, 1800 from Northumberland by Joseph Priestley to Reverend Thomas Belsham, Priestley House staff read the words: "This place has many natural advantages, and must, in time, be a very considerable town. I have had some views of it taken ... Some of them, I believe will be engraved, to accompany an Account of this part of the country, and an actual survey of our river as far as it is navigable by Mr. Samburn who is from England, and who proposes to do it by subscription." Well, well - there's that name, again!

Further research led site director Andrea Bashore to visit the Pennsylvania State Archives where M'r. Sambourne's name, as well as M'r. Sanbourne's name, were found transcribed in *Letters from the Commissioners*



Drawing by T. Sambourne

-Part II: Documents relating to the Connecticut Settlement in the Wyoming Valley, edited by William Henry Egle, M.D., Harrisburg, 1893. Research assistance offered by state archivist Jonathan

Sayers located the Deputy Surveyors' Duplicate Commissions and Instructions, 1713-1848. A search of the collection produced

- April 25, 1800 Commission for Thomas Sambourne, Esquire as Deputy Surveyor for Luzerne County by Samuel Cochran, Esquire, Surveyor-general of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Lancaster
- April 25, 1800 Instructions for Thomas Sambourne Esq. of Luzerne County from Samuel Cochran
- June 7, 1800 letter from Thomas Sambourne to Samuel Cochran advising him of Sambourne's intention to keep the Office of the Deputy Surveyor of Luzerne County at Wilkesbarre
- Several Luzerne County surveys drawn up and signed by Sambourne were also located at the archives

So, it seems it was the Deputy Surveyor for Luzerne County, one Mr. Thomas Sambourne, who prepared the plan and elevations of Dr. Priestley's house in Northumberland.

There's a Sambourne Street in Wilkes-Barre- hmmm, where was Thomas' office?

Membership

The Friends of Joseph Priestley House extend a sincere "Thank you" to everyone who renewed their Friends membership for 2008.

Please welcome the following new member:
Bernice Secrest, Sunbury, PA

About Friends membership: Memberships are for one year, renewable each January for the calendar year. New memberships are gratefully accepted at any time.

XXXXXXXXXX PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE XXXXXXXXXXXX

We are at an unprecedented point at the Joseph Priestley House. Pennsylvania's spending on state historic preservation continues to decline, our state's housing market is in a historic slump and our national economy may be headed toward a serious recession.

This situation comes at exactly the same time that The Joseph Priestley House is on a very positive path—the Friends' Board is successfully implementing our three year Strategic Plan and we have just recently finished a highly evocative and fascinating Interpretation Plan for the future of the Joseph Priestley House. In short, the Joseph Priestley House has never been on a better course to share the Joseph Priestley story with the world.

But because of the state's budget decline, the Joseph Priestley House has been forced to cut its budgets repeatedly. The staff has significantly reduced its expenditures, become more efficient and looked for every way possible to deal with reduced state support while still serving our membership and the general public.

The point is that we have never been in such a promising position at the same time the state has never been more economically challenged. Please know that your support as members and donors has made it possible to blunt some of the effects of the state budget reductions.

Although we do not yet know the final level of the budget cuts for 2008-2009, we expect them to be significant and long-lasting. Every economic indicator points to a difficult budget situation at the state level, which will in turn continue to affect our work at the Joseph Priestley House.

We will keep you updated as we get a better handle on these challenging times, but in the meantime, please accept our heartfelt thank you for all you do and don't hesitate to ask us how you can help.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda
Amanda Kessler, President
Friends of Joseph Priestley House

XXXXXXXXXX MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR XXXXXXXXXXXX

In previous articles I have occasionally written about 'change' – not the sort that you carry in your pocket or find hidden under the cushions of your sofa, but the sort of change that people encounter every day of their lives – something that just occurs and alters what people normally expect and experience. The kind of change, in fact, that is 'all that ever lasts' as stated in the familiar headline of a yellowed newspaper article that I keep push-pinned on my office bulletin board. I read and acknowledge this headline every workday.

Some days, people are more ready for change than they might be on other days. Let's face it - adjustment to changing circumstances can be challenging and, very often, quite frustrating for many of us. When faced with any type of changing circumstances, it's probably best not to resist, but to accept the challenge and move ahead to collaborate, strategize, and seek creative outcomes. We need to remember that change can be a good thing.

This summer, PHMC's Bureau of Historic Sites and Museums is undertaking a self-study of its operations and management. The process entails up-close assessments of each historic site and museum on the PA Trails of History® including Joseph Priestley House.

Surveys, meetings and conversations are underway to glean and compile information from staff, the Friends board of directors, and the community regarding the future of the Priestley House. Where the study will lead us precisely is unknown at this point.

I hope you will join me, my staff and our board of directors as advocates for the highest and best use in future for Joseph Priestley House, an historic gem where we interpret the essence of Joseph Priestley's ideas on liberal thought, education, theology and science – concepts that still resonate with the modern visitor – no matter what changes might be headed our way.

Andrea Bashore

FRIENDS OF JOSEPH PRIESTLEY HOUSE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Amanda Kessler, *President*
- Edward Lyon, *Vice- President*
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- Arlene M. Murray, *Treasurer*
- James H. Gold
- Jack Russel Holt II
- Susan Brook
- Cindy Inkrote
- Thomas Martin
- Andrea Bashore, *Ex Officio*
mbashore@state.pa.us

SITE STAFF

- Andrea Bashore, *Site Administrator*
- Brooke Dearman, *Custodial Guide*

Joseph Priestley House is a National Historic Landmark and a National Historic Chemical Landmark

administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission with support from the Friends of Joseph Priestley House, a registered Charitable organization whose official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling within PA 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

VISIT

WWW.JOSEPHPRIESTLEYHOUSE.ORG

or

Call 570-473-9474

for

Priestley House hours of operation
Friends membership information
& application

Individuals who need special assistance or accommodation to visit Joseph Priestley House should call 570-473-9474 in advance to discuss their needs. Pennsylvania TDD relay service is available at (800) 654 -5984.

Friends Fundraiser Continues

The Bradley Shoemaker Gallery, 202 Market Street, Lewisburg, continues to offer colorful, fine art prints of Joseph Priestley House by artist Bradley Shoemaker. Sales of prints to Friends members will result in 50% of the purchase price being donated directly to our organization.



“Joseph Priestley House”

We encourage you to help us support educational programs at the Priestley House historic site by visiting the Shoemaker Gallery to purchase your print. Out-of-town members can speak with either Brad or Tracy at the gallery by calling (570) 524-0423 to arrange print sales and shipping to any location.

Friends from UK visit Priestley House

Dr. Norman and Mrs. Elaine Beale of Devizes, Wiltshire, England joined a group from Calne, England who traveled to Caln Township, Pennsylvania in June to celebrate the ‘Twinned Communities’ of Calne/Caln Township. The Beales extended their trip and visited noted historic sites in Washington DC, and Thomas Jefferson’s home at Monticello. On their next-to-last day in the U.S., they were hosted on a visit to Priestley-related locations in Northumberland including the Joseph Priestley House, Priestley Memorial Chapel, Priestley-Forsyth Library, and the family gravesite at Riverview Cemetery by JPH site administrator, Andrea Bashore.

As former residents of Calne, the town where Joseph Priestley lived with his family while he served as the Earl of Shelburne’s librarian and conducted experiments at Bowood House, Shelburne’s country estate, the Beales have long been interested in Joseph Priestley as well as Dr. Jan Ingen Housz. In 1999, Norman and Elaine published *Who Was Ingen Housz, Anyway?* - a biographical booklet for the Ingen Housz Bicentenary and exhibit at Bowood.

Ingen Housz was born in 1730 in the Netherlands. He was a medical doctor who, after 500 experiments on gases released by plants underwater, wrote a book on photosynthesis which was published in London in 1779. Ingen Housz met Priestley while on a visit to Bowood in summer 1779. They shared acquaintance and scientific interests with Benjamin Franklin – Priestley on the subject of electricity and Ingen Housz on electricity and smallpox.

In 1998, Norman Beale published *Is That the Doctor? A History of the Calne GPs*. He has a new book forthcoming this autumn entitled *Dr. Priestley in Calne*.

Norman and Elaine first met Andrea as participants at the ceremony and reception convened at Bowood House in 2000 by the American Chemical Society and the Royal Society for Chemistry that designated Bowood as an International Chemical Historic Landmark.



Norman and Elaine Beale at Priestley House

WE NEED YOU!

At our July meeting the suggestions was made and unanimously agreed upon that we should solicit a few new board members from you, our loyal bread and butter.

Board members terms are three years and we meet once a month at the Priestley House. Meetings are spirited and cover a broad range of topics, plus there are House activities that appeal to all. In short, I've enjoyed my board service and am hopeful there are a handful or so among you that would like to sign on for a term beginning in January 2009 or 2010. Please contact our President Amanda Kessler at akessler@ptd.net.

All of us at the House wish you the best and we hope to see many of you at our annual meeting on September 18th!

Sincerely,

Ted

Ted Lyon, Vice-President, Friends of JPH

IT'S ELECTION TIME!

Members in good standing are reminded to cast your ballot (enclosed with this newsletter) to elect representatives to the Friends of Priestley House Board of Directors.

PLEASE VOTE!

FRIENDS OF

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY HOUSE



472 Priestley Avenue
Northumberland, PA 17857

2008 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

*Please Note: With the exception of our 'Twelfth Day' winter holiday program on January 6, 2008, Joseph Priestley House will be closed from January 1 to March 9, 2008.

- January 6** Twelfth Day at Priestley House 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.
- March 9** Priestley House re-opens for the season
- March 9** Commonwealth Charter Day 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. FREE admission!
- March 30** Meet Mary Russell & Company 2:00 p.m.
- April 19** Science Saturday 2:00 p.m. Pre-registration required
- May 10** Annual PHMC Associates Forum at Pennsbury Manor, Morrisville, PA
- July 23, 24 & 25** Summer History Camp 9:30 a.m. – 12 Noon Pre-registration required
- September 18** Friends of JP House Annual Meeting – see flyer in this newsletter
- November 2** Heritage Day at Priestley House 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Hours and programs subject to change. Admission is charged for all events excepted as noted above. For further information or to request a detailed calendar of events, please call (570) 473-9474 or visit our website www.josephpriestleyhouse.org



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