

# IN MEMORIAM

Robert E. Schofield, Priestley biographer, died at his residence in New Jersey on December 30, 2011. Born on June 1, 1923 in Milford, NE. He received an A.B. in Physics from Princeton in 1944, and an M.S. in Physics in 1948 from the University of Minnesota. He was a graduate student and Teaching Fellow in the History of Science and Learning Department at Harvard University from 1951 until earning a Ph.D. in the History of Science in 1955. Concurrently, he was a Fulbright Fellow at University College, London from 1953 to 1954.

Author of some 35 papers in history journals, he also wrote articles, chapters in books, the biography of John Priestley for the New Dictionary of National Biography (England). Robert also wrote *The Lunar Society of Birmingham* in 1963 for which he won the Pfizer Prize for a History of Science Society book, *A Scientific Autobiography of Joseph Priestley, 1733-1804*; selected scientific correspondence (1966) *Mechanism and Materialism* (1970), *Stephen Hales: Scientist and Philanthropist* (with D.G.C. Allan), *Man and the Frame of Nature* (1989), *The Enlightenment of Joseph Priestley* (1997) and *The Enlightened Joseph Priestley* (2004), for which he won the Roy G. Neville Prize from the Chemical Heritage Foundation in 2006.

Priestley House is honored to receive the gift of Robert Schofield's research papers which are kept in the research library. The papers include copies of Priestley's correspondence and articles about and by Priestley. These papers are available to visiting scholars by appointment.

## FRIENDS OF JOSEPH PRIESTLEY HOUSE



P.O. Box 346  
Lewisburg, PA. 17837



Robert Schofield (1923-2011)

Courtesy of Chemical Heritage Foundation,  
Photograph by Douglas A. Lockard



# POSTINGS FROM PRIESTLEY HOUSE

## Newsletter of The Friends of Joseph Priestley House

Number 53 Summer 2012

www.josephpriestleyhouse.org

570-473-9474

### 2012 SEASON

Open weekends from 1-4 pm  
from mid-March thru November  
with tours at 1, 2 and 3 pm.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

Wed July 25 to  
Friday July 27, 2012  
**History Camp at Priestley House**  
Morning day camp for elementary  
age children. To register, call  
Northumberland County  
Historical Society 570-286-4083

Sunday, August 5, 2012.

#### Oxygen Day

Open from 1 to 4 PM  
Tour on your own and talk to  
costumed docents in each room,  
Dr Priestley demos at 1:30 and  
3, followed by respiratory health  
talk by staff from Geisinger  
Medical Center, Danville. Free  
Admission.

Tuesday, September 18, 2012  
**Annual Meeting** of the  
Friends of Joseph Priestley House  
At the Pond Building

6 pm social hour, 6:30 Supper  
Guest Speaker: Carla Mulford on  
the scientific relationship between  
Ben Franklin and Joseph Priestley

Sunday, November 4, 2012  
**Heritage Day**  
Open from 1 to 4 PM  
Dr. Priestley's demos at 1:30 and  
2:30 Regular Admission fees

Sunday, January 6, 2013  
**Twelfth Day**  
Open from 1 to 4 PM  
Dr. Priestley's demos at 1:30 and  
2:30 Regular Admission fees

### JPH FRIENDS BOARD HOSTS VOLUNTEERS

Friends of Joseph Priestley House board celebrated our loyal and enthusiastic volunteers at an informal Sunday supper May 20 at Townside Garden Café in Northumberland. The annual spring gathering has become a mini-tradition. As always we were pleased to see our regular crew of Visitors Center greeters, tour guides, and summer history camp staff. This time, our numbers were swelled by folks who



Clockwise from left, Ruth Eleanor McCorkill, Joe Metz, Cheryl Snyder, and Seth Rohrbach

stepped up to help when the house was threatened by the flooding of the Susquehanna River in 2011.

We were happy to recognize the extra efforts of Barb and Bruce Johnson, our Volunteers of the Year, who were honored by Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission at a Harrisburg luncheon, along with other Volunteers of the Year from sites statewide. Bruce gave our site a facelift last summer

by removing some aging and ailing hemlock trees free of charge. Barb is an active and animated tour guide, and is always looking for ways to keep Priestley House in the public eye. Both were key helpers during the flooding because they live nearby and were able to reach the house when the flood cut others off. We are so grateful to everyone who pitches in to keep Priestley House thriving.



Bruce and Barbara Johnson receive Volunteer of the Year Award from PHMC Board Chairman Andy Masich (left) and Jim Vaughan PHMC Executive Director in ceremony at the State Museum in Harrisburg.

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The Friends of Joseph Priestley House offered a free show, in which Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble actors dramatized the life and times of William Penn, Pennsylvania's founding father, Sunday, May 20. Free tickets were offered first to Northumberland residents through an article in the borough's newsletter, which is mailed to all households, and by co-sponsorship with the nearby Priestley-Forstyth Library.



Left to right, Bloomsburg Theatre Ensemble performers Katti Mayk, Dan Ford and Richard Cannaday in costume for "Penns Pals" show at Joseph Priestley House's Pond Building.

A small, but enthralled audience watched the lively show, which tells the story through colonial and contemporary song, children's games, and audience participation.

The innovative production, written and directed by BTE member Andrew Hubatsek, has been offered in schools and libraries throughout the state this past spring. Our local showing was the 76<sup>th</sup> time the play had been presented.

We suffered a bit from first-time presenter jitters, not knowing what size audience to expect for our 50-seat venue. Fearing an overflow crowd, we probably under-advertised, and had just a small turnout. Nonetheless, it was a big step forward en route to offering diverse programs and fully using our Pond Building space for the public good.

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE FRIENDS OF JOSEPH PRIESTLEY HOUSE**

The annual meeting of the Friends of Joseph Priestley House will be held September 18, 2012. A social time begins at 6:00 pm followed by a catered meal. A short meeting follows the meal. Carla Mulford, Associate Professor of English at Penn State will be our featured speaker. Her research interests include the history of the first British Empire, postcolonial theory, and the history of books and reading. Her most recent book, *Benjamin Franklin and the Ends of Empire*, traces Benjamin Franklin's attitudes about trade and populations in the context of the growing number of debates about what it meant to be both liberal and British during the eighteenth century. She will talk about the friendship of Benjamin Franklin and Joseph Priestley as scientists interested in uncovering ways to publicize their findings to the world and the research on her new book, *Benjamin Franklin and the Art of Science*.



Carla Mulford

Dr. Mulford is the Founding President, Society of Early Americanists and currently serves on the Council for Pa Historical Association.

Among many honors Dr. Mulford has recently been awarded the 2012 **Bibliographical Society of America's William L. Mitchell Prize**, for scholarship in early British periodicals. The prize was awarded for the essay, "Benjamin Franklin's Savage Eloquence: Hoaxes from the Press at Passy, 1782," published in *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, (Dec. 2008).

**BOARD ELECTION**

Three members of the board of the Friends of Joseph Priestley House are elected each year on a rotating basis for 3 year terms. The nominees for this year are: Mike Kuhns for Treasurer, Bill Simpson for Secretary and Sam Geise for director.

Mike is currently the Treasurer of the Board. Bill is the current Secretary: they are each ending their current terms. Sam is a Northumberland resident and volunteer at Priestley House. He is self employed as a consulting engineer focusing on the ski and snow board industry.

**FRIENDS OF JOSEPH PRIESTLEY HOUSE**

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

- Tom Bresenhan, President
- Susan Brook, Vice-President
- William Simpson, Secretary
- Mike Kuhns, Treasurer
- Geneive Henry
- Cindy Inkrote
- Donald Mencer
- Scott Onsager
- Dave Richard

**Volunteer Coordinator**

JoAnn Long

**Newsletter Editor**

Cheryl Snyder

**JOSEPH PRIESTLEY HOUSE**  
473 PRIESTLEY AVE.  
NORTHUMBERLAND, PA 17857

**2012 HOURS OF OPERATION**

**March thru November**

Every Weekend

Except Easter Sunday

**Visitors Center**

Open 1-4 p.m.

Tours Given at 1, 2 and 3 p.m.

**Special Tours**

Can be arranged by calling **570-473-9474** or by e-mail at **info@josephpriestleyhouse.org**

**Special Assistance**

Individuals who need special assistance or accommodation to visit The Joseph Priestley House should contact us in advance to discuss their needs.

To join the Friends of Priestley House

Call 570-473-9474 or visit [www.josephpriestleyhouse.org](http://www.josephpriestleyhouse.org)

**OXYGEN DAY AT PRIESTLEY HOUSE**

On Sunday, August 5, 2012 The Friends of Joseph Priestley House in partnership with the Respiratory Care Department at Geisinger Medical Center, Danville present a program on the discovery of oxygen, its use in medicine and maintaining respiratory health. The program will be conducted twice: at 1:30 and 3 pm in the Pond Building. The Friends are very excited to partner with Geisinger to present this program. Priestley say into the future when he

wrote in 1775, "pure dephlogisticated air (oxygen in modern terms) might be very useful as a medicine". Ronald Blatchley, as Joseph Priestley, will re-enact the scientist's chemistry experiments in the Pond Building at 1:30 and 3:00 p.m. Blatchley will be followed by Geisinger Respiratory Care staff who will discuss the function of the lungs, using a model of a preserved pig's lung and respiratory health. In addition they will test blood

oxygen levels and pulse rate for those interested. Priestley House will be open from 1-4 p.m. with free admission. In addition to this special program at 1:30 and 3 pm, visitors may tour the museum at their own pace, with guides in vintage costume to greet them and answer questions.

**PRIESTLEY ELEMENTARY VISIT**

Have we seen the restart of an old tradition? At one time not so long ago, perhaps just one generation, an entire grade from Priestley Elementary school would visit Priestley House as a group. Parents still talk about their trip when they were school kids. Unfortunately this practice was discontinued. But this spring, at school year end, it happened again, when the entire 6th grade class, all 60 pupils, visited Priestley house under the sponsorship of the Priestley Elementary PTA. Visiting in 2 groups of 30 each they were greeted by docents Becky Hollenbach, Barb Johnson and Jo Ann Long, divided into groups of 10 to tour the house and lab. One can only hope that this becomes a tradition again, so instead of waiting an entire generation, this group of pupils will be followed by their brothers and sisters to gain an understanding and appreciation of the historic treasure at their doorstep.

