

TIME TRAVELER'S PASSPORT PROGRAM SUMMER 2016

Priestley House participated in The 2016 Time Traveler's Passport Program as one of twelve heritage sites in the Susquehanna River Valley where visitors learn about the region's history. Visitors who get the passport stamped at five of the sites will be entered to win an overnight stay in Gettysburg and complimentary tours of the Civil War Museum and breath-taking Cyclorama.

Passports are available at these participating sites
 Dale/Engle/Walker "1793" House
 The Hotel Edison
 Elias Church/Elias Center for the Performing Arts
 Fort Augusta and Hunter House Museum
 Joseph Priestley House
 Mifflinburg Buggy Museum
 Milton Historic Downtown Walking Tour
 Muncy Historical Society
 Packwood House Museum
 Slifer House Museum
 World of Little League® Museum and Official Store
 Post Office Artwork & Sculpture from the New Deal *
 Lewisburg Post Office
 Mifflinburg Post Office
 Milton Post Office
 Muncy Post Office
 Northumberland Post Office
 Selinsgrove Post Office

FRIENDS OF JOSEPH PRIESTLEY HOUSE



P.O. Box 226
 Northumberland, PA. 17857

ACQUISITION – THE FIRST EDITION OF JOSEPH PRIESTLEY'S NOTES ON ALL BOOKS OF SCRIPTURE

The first edition four volume set of Joseph Priestley's *Notes on All Books of Scripture for the use of the Pulpit and Private Families* were recently received from a used bookseller in Liverpool, England. Printed in Northumberland in 1803-04, the books were probably part of the 100 sets shipped to London bookseller Joseph Johnson after Priestley's death. Priestley began this multi-volume project in Birmingham, England and completed the task in Priestley House just before he died in 1804. The set was acquired by the Friends of Joseph Priestley House and will be added to the museum's research library collection.



Tom Bresenhan, Hope Webster Kopf, and Dee Casteel display the first edition four volume set of the of Joseph Priestley's *Notes on All Books of Scripture*



POSTINGS FROM PRIESTLEY HOUSE

Newsletter of
 The Friends of Joseph Priestley House

Number 65 Summer 2016

www.josephpriestleyhouse.org

570-473-9474

HISTORY CAMP 2016

The Priestley House annual history camp was held on July 27-29 from 9:00-12:00. There were 17 campers in attendance. During the three days campers heard from speakers, played colonial games, enjoyed crafts, and snacks. Our speakers were:



Robert Roush as Rev. James Kay and Campers in Priestley chapel

Games included playing marbles, using the whirligig, flip tops, cup and ball, game of graces, and hoop with stick. On Friday, we

2016 SEASON

Visitor Center open 1 to 4 p.m.,
 Saturday & Sunday
 Except Easter &
 Mother's Day
 March 13 through Nov. 20
 Tours at 1, 2 and 3 p.m.

SPECIAL EVENTS

September – 21
 Annual Meeting
 The Friends of
 Joseph Priestley House
 at Townside Too,
 253 Front Street,
 Northumberland, PA
 Social at 6:00 pm,
 Dinner 6:30.
 The meal is \$20 per person
 reservation requested.
 A short meeting follows
 Program will be
 Laurie Mc Cants
 on development of the play,
 "Gunpowder Joe"
 by Bloomsburg
 Theater Ensemble

Sunday, November 6
 Heritage Day
 Open from 1 to 4pm.
 Dr. Priestley's demonstrations
 at 1:30 & 2:30pm
 Free Admission

Sunday, January 8, 2017
 Twelfth Night
 Open from 4 to 7pm.
 Dr. Priestley's demonstrations
 at 4:30 & 6pm.
 Free Admission



John Moore as Susquehanna Jack

(as Susquehanna Jack) talking about a child's life in the late 1790's; Ronald Blatchley (as Dr. Priestley) demonstrating some of Dr. Priestley's experiments; and Robert Roush (as Rev. James Kay) showing us the Priestley Chapel and what life was like for his 9 children in the early 1800's. Crafts included: making clay marbles, learning to write with a quill pen and ink, making whirligigs, and decotropes.

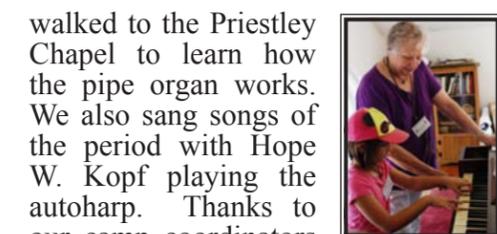
OXYGEN DAY 2016: CAPACITY CROWD AT OXYGEN DAY

The highlight for most people attending special events at Priestley House are the two chemistry demonstration sessions



Alan Hackenberg greets visitors at Priestley House

conducted by Ronald Blatchley as Joseph Priestley. Usually days before Blatchley transforms enough copper pennies to gold (not really, just a shinny brass patina) in order to give one to each child in the audience expected to attend the two sessions. Something extraordinary happened on Oxygen Day this year. Blatchley ran out of his prepared supply at the 1:30pm session and had to make more during the break to have enough for the 3pm session. And he ran out of transformed coins again!



Hope W Kopf and camper at John Wind Organ in Priestley Chapel

walked to the Priestley Chapel to learn how the pipe organ works. We also sang songs of the period with Hope W. Kopf playing the autoharp. Thanks to our camp coordinators Jo Ann Long and Hope W. Kopf for planning such a fun filled and educational experience. We also had wonderful helpers with Seth Rohrbach, Dixie Gavason, Daniel Lehman, Brittney Lahr, and Alexa Spaventa (also our photographer).



Children on carpet squares watch chemistry demonstrations

Over 160 people attended the annual event, twice the number expected based on previous years. Children were seated on carpet squares to better see the chemistry demonstrations. And there was standing room only for adults in both demonstrations. Good weather and a free event must have contributed to



Ronald Blatchley as Joseph Priestley

the crowd. Many families brought Time Traveler's passports to be stamped. As docents in each room talked with families they learned that many seem to home schooling, so that may account for the increase in children.

IN MEMORIAM

Priestley House volunteer and retired chemistry teacher Cheryl Snyder died suddenly in August. She will be remembered at a Sunday mass to be held Oct. 16 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Matthew's Episcopal Church, 32 North Front St., Sunbury. A luncheon will be held following the service.

She is survived by her husband, Joe Metz, with whom she retired to her hometown. The couple always had enthusiastic dogs in their household two or three at a time.



Cheryl Snyder

Cheryl was a graduate of Temple University where she earned her bachelor's degree and a MA degree in Education. While in college, she collaborated with her chemistry professor to generate the synthetic gemstone malachite which was featured in a cover story in Chemistry magazine.

In her 35-year career she taught high school chemistry in Philadelphia, Las Vegas and New York.

MICHAEL KUHNS, VOLUNTEER OF YEAR 2015

Michael Kuhns served on the Board of Directors of the Joseph Priestley House as its Treasurer from 2010 through 2015. His dedication and commitment have helped ensure the financial health of the site and its operations. Mike also attends special events and serves in various capacities

as needed, including stepping in at the last minute to replace the speaker at our annual dinner, saving us all embarrassment and chagrin.

Throughout her career and in retirement, she encouraged students to aim high. She established a scholarship honoring her father, the late Jack Snyder, who was a local archaeologist. The first recipient was Emily Dietrich, of Northumberland, now a graduate student in archeology. Cheryl's enthusiastic recommendation helped Lev Sviridov, a Russian émigré, to a full scholarship at New York University, and then to a prestigious Rhodes Scholarship for doctoral studies at Oxford University, England.

At Priestley House, Cheryl devoted her considerable intelligence and energy to editing the Friends of Joseph Priestley House newsletter and serving as Visitors Center receptionist. Always eager to help, she advised on how to fold the U.S. flag and fielded many chemistry questions when others were stumped. She was named Volunteer of the Year in 2012.

Mike has used his knowledge of machinery to repair and extend the life of equipment and tools used around the site. His love of history and curiosity of the why and when and who of events expressed as questions to our docents has improved their skill and the experience of visitors. For his faithful service and willingness to help wherever needed, we are truly grateful and are pleased to honor Mike as Volunteer of the Year.



Mike Kuhns at the Volunteer of the Year awards ceremony held at the State Museum in Harrisburg. With Mike (center) is PHMC Commissioner Fredrick C. Powell (left) and Commission Director James Vaughn (right).

FRIENDS OF JOSEPH PRIESTLEY HOUSE

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JOSEPH PRIESTLEY HOUSE
473 PRIESTLEY AVE.
NORTHUMBERLAND, PA 17857

2016 HOURS OF OPERATION

March 13 ~ November 20

Except Easter &
Mother's Day

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

DISCOVERY OF NITROUS OXIDE VIDEO RELEASED

The third video in the series, Discoveries of Joseph Priestley: Nitrous Oxide has been posted on the Priestley House website. <http://www.josephpriestleyhouse.org/learn/discoveries-of-joseph-priestley-nitrous-oxide/>

Priestley discovered nitrous oxide while experimenting with his earlier discover of nitric oxide. Priestley found a new gas when he added nitric oxide in a vessel containing iron nails floating on mercury. Unlike nitrous oxide the new gas burned.



This gas was later called laughing gas by Humphrey Davy who noticed its potential to reduce pain in surgery. Dr. Mary Ellen Bowden wrote the script, Dr. Dee Casteel performed the experiment in a modern laboratory at Bucknell and Mark Lawrence, of WKOK News, narrated the video. Production of the video was supported by a gift from the Department of Anesthesiology, Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center. Viewers are asked to complete a short survey after looking at the video.

REPAIRS AT PRIESTLEY

Repairs are underway at Priestley House. Construction safety barriers have been set up and work on the Priestley Avenue side of Priestley House started early this summer. PHMC carpentry crews have replaced pieces of the sill plate above the foundation stone and large structural supports with Douglas fir. This required lifting the front of the house about 1/1/2 inches and removing damaged or deteriorated wood. In addition a new handicapped access will be installed to the Priestley Avenue door. Work is expected to be completed by September - October. Next summer the fence and outbuildings will be replaced and the visitor center painted to match the house.



Photo--Repairs at Priestley House 2016

IT'S HISTORY! AT PRIESTLEY HOUSE

Pennsylvania Cable Network (PCN) video crews visited Priestley House in February 2016 for a segment of *It's History!* Tom Bresenhan discussed the individual panels of the Joseph Priestley Timeline Exhibit in the Pond Building, Jo Ann Long described domestic life as shown in the foyer, dining room and bedroom; Susan Brook discussed recognition of Priestley's intellectual contributions in the drawing room and library and in the laboratory Ronald Blatchley described Priestley's scientific interests. The video was broadcast on July 17 at 8pm.

It's History! - is a weekly program produced by PCN that provides a guided tour through the preservation efforts of local historical societies and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

UTOPIAN DREAMS

By John LaLoggia and Laura Lujan of Bucknell University

The Documentary Series *Stories of the Susquehanna* is a public history project in which Bucknell University students discover and unfold the stories of Susquehanna River Valley communities in a 26-minute documentary film. Student video crews from Bucknell visited Priestley House several times over two years and interviewed Ronald Blatchley, Mary Ellen Bowden, Ted Lyons and Tom Bresenhan. The first documentary in the series, *Utopian Dreams*, was broadcast by public television station, WVIA on Sunday April 17 at 7pm. The video is now available for streaming from WVIA at <http://on-demand.wvia.org/video/2365723970/>

"Utopian Dreams" focuses on the aspirations of two separate communities to create their ideal societies. Joseph Priestley founded a society in the Northumberland County region that emphasized scientific and technological progress.

The other community was founded by French Aristocrats, who were fleeing the French Revolution. Their perfect society was based in egalitarian thoughts and the idea that human kind should re-engage with nature. This documentary is beneficial not only for the students who created it but also for the community; they have both worked together in order to showcase the narratives that surrounded the Susquehanna River.

WATCH FOR BALLOT

MEMBERS ARE ALERTED TO WATCH FOR
YOUR BALLOT TO ELECT FOR
BOARD OF DIRECTORS.