Quaker Hill Quill

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Pacem in Terris Speaker John Bonifaz Makes Case Against Citizens United Ruling and for a 28th Amendment to U.S. Constitution

by Terence Maguire; *photo by Tim Bayard*

John Bonifaz, Wilmington Friends School class of 1984, is a tireless and resourceful leader in the fight against the influence of big money in politics. He spoke to a crowded room at Westminster Presbyterian Church on May 30, 2017, one of the special guest speakers for Delaware *Pacem in Terris*, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary as an organization.

Born in Wilmington, John has spent his adult life in New England, leaving Friends early in 1983 to attend Brown University. After Brown, he graduated from Harvard Law School and settled into the Boston area until about seven years ago, when he, his wife Lissa, and their daughter Marisol moved to Amherst, Mass. He is able to do a great deal of his work from homes, though he still travels extensively.

His topic that night was "We the People: The Movement to Reclaim our Democracy and Defend our Constitution." He discussed the organization he recently co-founded, Free Speech for People, one of the primary aims of which is to overturn the 2010 Citizens United decision of the Supreme Court.

John indicated that the history of the United States was one in which voter enfranchisement has been gradually--often grudgingly--expanded. Starting with only white, propertied men, voting rights expanded to a broader base of white men, then all adult men (in theory, at least), and then to women in 1920 with the 19th Amendment.

Bonifaz also outlined the many ways over the decades that voting rights have been infringed upon or impaired.

• What he called "White primary processes," by which primary candidates were selected by groups that deliberately excluded African-American men; or poll taxes, charging a fee for the right to vote, both eventually overturned by Supreme Court decisions.

• What John calls the "Wealth Primary Process" then began. After the scandals of Watergate, Congress passed laws to limit financial contributions to candidates. These, however, were overturned by Buckley v. Valeo, the thrust of which is that contributions are a form of free speech, which cannot be curtailed. The Citizens United case expanded the "Wealth Primary Process" by ruling that corporations have the same right of free speech and therefore unlimited capacity to donate money to support candidates.

He also pointed out that, because corporations can now be regarded as persons, some have even begun to resist government investigations into possible wrong-doing by claiming the right against self-incrimination. Citizens United has also allowed, through "corporate citizenship," foreign influence on American politics.

Bonifaz sees a proposed 28th amendment to the Constitution as an answer to the seemingly unlimited influence of big money on American politics. A great majority of Americans favor overturning the Citizens United decision, and 19 states and a great many smaller government entities have endorsed the proposal. He emphasized in his talk that his organization is non-partisan, favoring options not necessarily supported by Democrats. In his talk and in Q & A afterward, John also discussed issues such as gerrymandering, eliminating the electoral college system, and the impeachment of President

Continued on p. 5

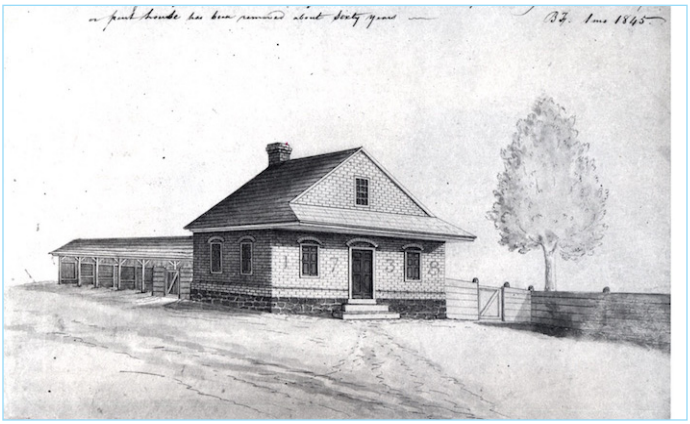
Also in this issue:

Emma Worrell, in 1917, Recreates Quaker Hill of 1817 and Earlier: "The Meeting House and Some of Its People," Part II

During this year 2017 the Wilmington Monthly Meeting will be celebrating the 200th anniversary of the completion of the third house at this location. Below are selections from a lengthy lecture given by one the meeting's most distinguished persons, Emma Worrell, on the occasion of the Meeting House's first centennial. Worrell was the head of Friends School and an active supporter of abolition, women's suffrage, and womens education.

Worrell's original lecture covers ten typed pages. The March Quill contained the introduction and some other passages. This section deal with some meeting members and the building of all three meeting houses. As indicated in the last issue, I have taken the liberty of inserting some paragraph breaks.
copied by J. Edgar Rhoads, 2/19/37; recopied by T. Maguire, 2/25/2014

And now having seen how we looked outside a hundred years ago, let us enter our new meetinghouse collectively and realize if we can in the first hour of worship what it has meant in the lives of its builders and what it will mean to those who will follow in the long years to come. We enter strictly at different doors (we have not yet thought of men and women sitting together) and a partition of some height from the floor prevents a passage from one side to the other except at one opening. In silence we all file in, men to the right, women to the left and seem by instinct to know the appropriate places. There stately and dignified sits the patriarch Samuel Canby at the head of the meeting on the men's side. Near him are Caleb Seal, nearly 93 years old; Thomas Lee, Cyrus Newlin, William Poole, and Dr. William Gibbons. Edward Brookes is one who is oftenest the "mouthpiece of the Spirit" and he sits in the second gallery where he may be heard by all. The saintly, modest William Canby is also there. Of him it was said in *Niles' Register* of Baltimore "If it is even possible to suppose



that any one man was more separated from worldly affairs, more willing to perform deeds of charity and benevolence, less guilty of bad thoughts or capable of a bad action than any of the rest of his kind, we should have fixed upon William Canby." This was the grandfather of the Ferris sisters and brothers of Lucy, William, Lindley, and Clement B. Smyth, evidently an ancestor worthy to hold in honored memory.

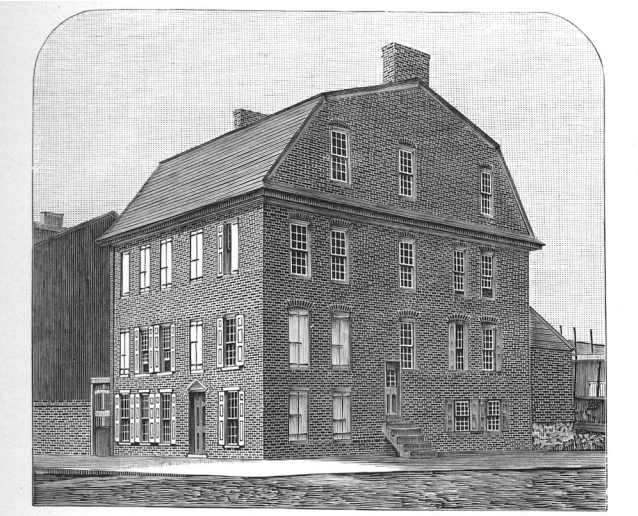
On the women's side are the venerable Sarah Ferris, Ann Richardson, and Mary Seal. There is quite a distinct line between young an old, or rather between the plain and the gay. They do not mingle. Mothers and daughters separate on entering the meeting house. A straw or velvet bonnet would be quite out of place among the silk stiff pleats, and casings of the gallery and the front seats of the house. The decorous young men and women sit politely back and let their parents and elders take the more prominent front seats.

On one of the back rows however sits a plain bonneted, neatly dressed colored woman. She is Amelia Shadd, a member of meeting, of irreproachable character, good sense, and quiet, self-respecting bearing. She goes to Yearly Meeting in Philadelphia and is entertained among the white people in a polite and kind manner. Her husband, Abraham Shadd, has a large market-garden in which he raises excellent vegetables for sale. This family is among those who contributed to the building fund for the new house.

That new house is one in which we meet today to celebrate its hundredth anniversary. It is the third structure erected by our forefathers in Wilmington for the purpose of Friendly worship. That there have been so many as three and that this latest one is much the largest of them all shows that the Society of Friends was a growing body that had greatly increased in numbers in the seventy-nine years of its existence up to 1817. That this house was built purposely to accommodate this increase is attested not only by the meeting records of that time but by the fact that the

one it superseded was only sixty-nine years old and was in perfectly good condition when it was removed.

The modest meeting house which first sufficed the Friends was built in 1738 and was the first place of worship of any denomination within the limits of the little settlement called Willingtown.... It was closely followed by the old



OLD SHIPLEY MANSION.

Presbyterian church which dates from 1740,-- still standing though removed from its original spot. Of course we do not compete in age with the Old Swede's Church of 1698, which is the oldest church in the United States, --still used as a house of worship, but it was not until long after—after 1833, in fact—when Wilmington was granted a city charter that the district around Old Swedes was included within the city limits. So our little meeting house, which stood across the street from here in a broad open space, now entirely occupied by different buildings of Wilmington Friends School, has the honor of being the first building in the early settlement devoted to public worship. It was built of old fashioned brick, red and black alternately, was 24 feet square and one story high, facing the south with a deep roof-like projection running the whole length of the front which sheltered the door and the two broad flat stones forming the entrance steps. There was a window on each side of the door, and in the blank spaces of the wall between them were inserted the figures 1-7-3-8 in black glazed bricks to perpetuate the year of building. Over the projection was a window in the gable, and above it, under the peak of the roof (according to an old account), was a sun dial which remained there sixty years to show the time of the day. Why a sun dial should be placed where it is so difficult to see what is recorded, I cannot imagine. A portion of the ancient wall of this original building is probably that part of the front wall of the school house which we see set like a bit of mosaic in the board expanse of red brick and which is evidently of much earlier origin than that which surrounds it. That this first meeting house was used as a place of worship for only ten years and was then taken for a school, proves that our ancestors placed a due estimate on education, and in the quaint language of the time, they desired that it should be "under the guarded care of the Meeting."

This taking over of the Meeting House for a school in 1748 was probably the beginning of meeting oversight of education in Wilmington and the founding of the institution known as Wilmington Friends School, which has had an uninterrupted history ever since and has become an important intellectual factor in the community. Thus in 1748 a new meeting house became a necessity and again attention must be called to the fact that we were growing, for they built the second house just four times the size of the old one—forty-eight feet square—with more doors and windows, two stories high and with galleries inside extending over half the ground floor. From the drawings and descriptions it must have been a beautiful and unusual looking structure, with its cupola a counterpart in miniature of the building beneath it. [see p. 5]

It stood just below this house in the corner near Fourth Street, and was used during the building of this one, upon the completion of which it was taken down, and the materials sold for $300.00. A quaint stone wall enclosed three sides of the square, which, in time, gave place to one of brick and later to the iron fence which now protects the graveyard. This fence was the gift of Hannah Shipley and sister. The magnificent elm tree that we cherish with love and reverence, and which is the pride of the whole town, was planted by Benjamin Ferris on the site of the old house probably the next year after it was removed. Three other fine trees also graced the front of out yard of which two have died, much to our regret.

That there was no public meeting house until 1738 does not argue that our fathers had no worship in all the years between that date and the time of their first coming. No person of Elizabeth Shipley's strong religious conviction and warm social impulses ..., could have been content to spend many days in her new home without gathering her neighbors together in public acknowledgement of the blessing received and of a desire for Divine guidance and support. How much these meetings must have meant to them, hard workers in a strange land struggling with all the inconveniences of a new colony! That in a year or two they met formally in a religious capacity, we are assured by the record which says "that in 1737 permission was granted by Chester Quarterly Meeting to Friends living in and near Wilmington to hold meetings for worship on every First and Fifth days till further orders." This first indulged meeting was held in the one-story brick house of William

Continued on p. 4

Shipley.

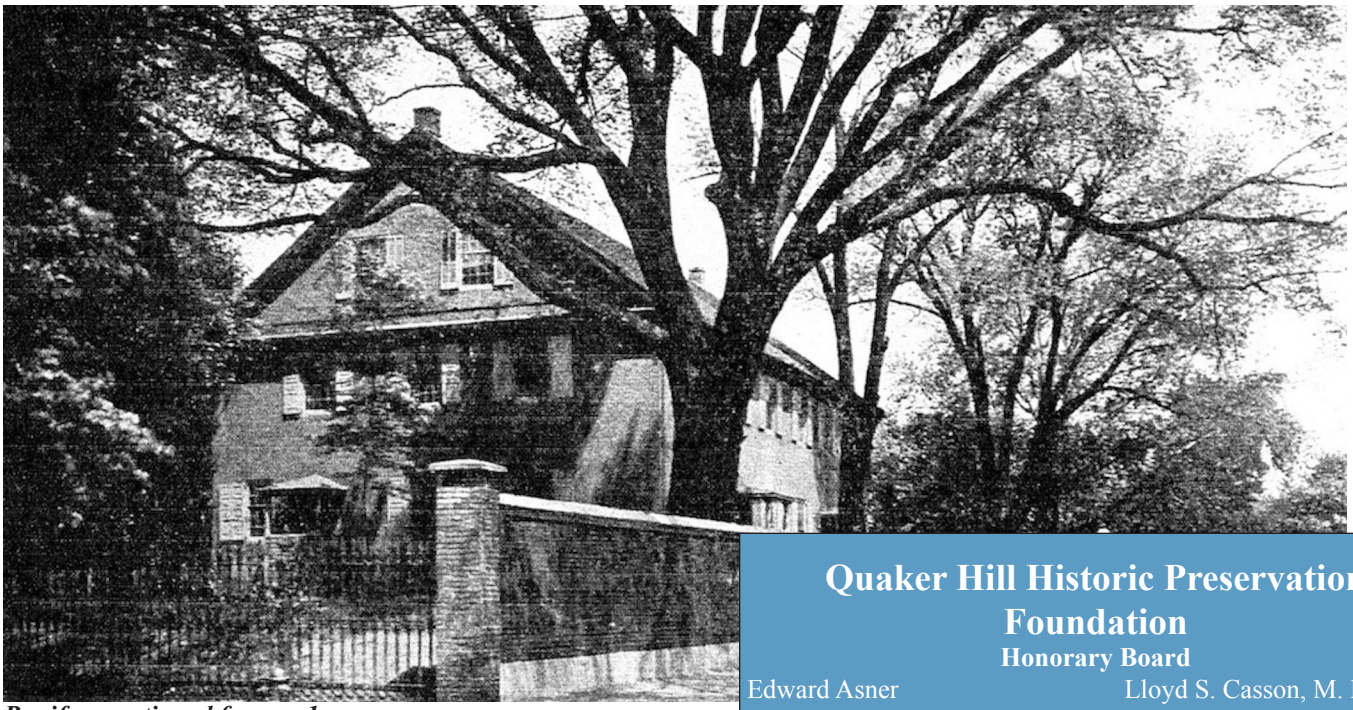
Later meetings were held in William Shipley's new house [see p. 3] at the southwest corner of Fourth and Shipley Street (now displaced by the Gawthrop Building), and meetings continued to be held there until the Fall of 1738 when the first meeting house was completed. And when it was completed what pride they must have felt in its ownership! What loyalty was theirs to this first community offering! No later building, however stately or costly, could ever have the charm or give the close satisfaction of this first longed-for possession!

The history says "Within ten years after this meeting was established the membership had become quite large. Many friends from New Castle and New Wark Meetings came here regularly to worship and those Meetings declined." But it was not until twelve years after this, 1750,—14th of the 3rd month, --that permission was granted by the Quarterly Meeting of Concord to form a monthly meeting for discipline out of the two preparative meetings of New Castle and Wilmington. Previous to that time both of these Meetings had been branches of New Wark Monthly Meeting, situated in Shellpot Creek of the Brandywine Hundred and which had been established as a monthly Meeting ever since 1687. Of late years the monthly meetings had been held alternately at Kennett and Centre, though still preserving the original name "New Wark." In 1754 this meeting, New Wark, was given up, and the Friends who were left attended either Centre or Wilmington Meeting.... Wilmington agreed to hold monthly meetings on the second Fifth day of each month, and appointed John Perry clerk of said meeting "until further orders." So at this date our records begin.

During 1815 a subject of interests arose. It appeared that the Meeting had outgrown its accommodations so that it was uncomfortably crowded on First Day mornings, and some of our religiously disposed neighbors were restrained from sitting with us for fear of incommoding us. Also when Friends who were traveling on a religious concern desired the company of our neighbors at meeting and prepared a general notification for the purpose, Friends were much tried with the view of inviting persons to a house not large enough to afford them a seat. "After due deliberation a committee was appointed to report some eligible way to remedy the inconveniences." A committee of 15 Friends was appointed and they unanimously agreed that a new meeting house was necessary, that the lot on which the old house stood was the most suitable place and a building of 75 feet front by 50 feet in depth, and costing about $12,000.00 would probably meet the demands. William Poole, Jacob Alrichs and Benjamin Ferris were appointed in a sub-committee to prepare plans. This they did with suggestions to change the proportions to 76 feet long to 48 feet wide, as dividing better for partitions, the plan of raising and lowering these to be modeled after Green Street Meeting, Philadelphia. The report was accepted by the Monthly Meeting and the committee continued in order to proceed immediately with the work. Benjamin Ferris was made clerk and Jon Jones treasurer of the committee. Jesse Betts was appointed to oversee and be responsible for the carpenter work and Thomas Spackman for the bricklaying and the stonework. It may be interesting compared with present prices to know that the laying of stone cost 90 cents a perch [5.5 yards] and the laying of bricks $3.00 a thousand, that "good merchantable lime" was 48 cents a bushel and that a thousand bushels were engaged for the use of the building. A large committee was appointed to collect money and to take subscriptions for the building. In the meeting records I find "a list of the names of contributors to the fund for the building of a new meeting house and a true copy of the obligations prefixed to the subscription book." There are 37 names of persons whose aggregate subscriptions amounted to $9475.00, in sums ranging from $750.00 to $100.00 each. The total cost of the entire building and the outside appurtenances was $12,847.19. The deficit of $3372.00 was raised in smaller sums than $100.00 down to $10.00 each, the whole amount subscribed providing sufficient not only for this sum but giving a balance of $372.62 which added to the $300.00 received for the old building made a fund to call upon in the future. The names of those who man-

Continued on p. 5

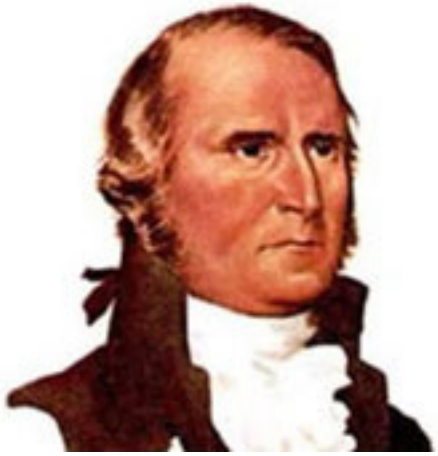
aged, contributed to, and did the work of the building of the meeting house makes a large number and must be almost a complete list of the membership. The committee continued with diligence its attentions to the business for which it was appointed until the house was ready for use. And meetings held there. The first time it was used as a place of worship was on the 25th. of Ninth month, 1817. [*Below, the "new" meeting house in the early 20th C. Drawings of the 1st and 2nd meeting houses by Benjamin Ferriss, 1846*]



Bonifaz, continued from p. 1

Donald Trump for violations of the emoluments clauses of the Constitution. On that last point, he stressed that the grounds for impeachment exist already, regardless of the outcome of investigations into Russian meddling in the 2016 election.

Bonifaz stated that he looks forward to returning to Delaware, to visit Friends School and to talk with Delaware's elected officials. He was also delighted to learn that the state's new "first lady" was Tracey Quillen Carney, with whom he co-starred in the 1980 Friends production of *Auntie Mame*.



artwork by Lyle Tayson, 1978

Jacob Broome, signer of the Constitution of the United Sates, and benefactor of the Female Benevolent Society--see p. 9

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Letters by Thomas Garrett to the *Blue Hen's Chicken*, Part IV--*edited by Dr. Peter Dalleo*

Courtesy, Historical Society of Delaware

*As was stated in earlier issues of the **Quill**, for a number of years Dr. Peter Dalleo pored over the Historical Society of Delaware's collection of a 19th C. Delaware newspaper called the **Blue Hen's Chicken**, known for its advocacy of liberal causes and sympathy with the state's African-American population.*

Dr. Dalleo discovered a number of letters to the newspaper by Thomas Garrett, the eminent stationmaster of the Underground Railroad and champion of rights for African-Americans. That Garrett wrote so often (and so boldly) was unusual for agents of the Underground Railroad, who tended to work in anonymity; however, though he was non-violent, Garrett was not a shy man.

In these letters Garrett, as he often did, attacked laws and those who executed those laws against African-Americans, laws that seem to have had no other purpose but to deprive African-Americans of the small amount of honest wages that they could earn.

Letter no. 6, **BHC, August 31, 1849**

Wilmington 8Mo. 27th '49

Esteemed Friends.—Jeandell & Vincent—Fourth day, night 22d instant the house of a colored man, named Thomas Mitchell near Taggert's X Roads, Chester County Pa., was broken open and Mitchell, by violence dragged out of his bed, put into a carriage and carried off to Elkton by Timothy McCreary, of some notoriety in acts of this kind, and report says that the cane of a prominent police officer of this city was left on the ground with a loaded pistol and a new lantern… What further acts will be taken in this case by our Chester County friends, time will determine. I will only add that they are considered quite persevering in any business that they undertake. I send you a statement from the Baltimore Daily Argus of the evening of the 25th of the trial and discharge of George Martin taking up for having hired the alleged runaway for two years.

THOMAS GARRETT

Letter no. 7, **BHC September 21, 1849**

Wilmington, 9th mo. 17, 1849

Believing that the laws of Maryland respecting the non-resident coloured persons entering the state, are not generally understood, in consequence of which many respectable coloured persons entering that State on business suffer great cruelty and injustice, both in person and property, I think it may be of use to publish the following, that may be relied on as correct. In the year 1831 an act was passed by the Legislature authorizing the arrest of coloured non-residents if they remained ten days in the State. In 1839 that law was repealed, and an act was passed making any coloured person from outside the State liable as soon as he entered to a fine of $20 for the first offense, and $500 for the second and in default of payment to be sold into slavery. I have been informed by an Attorney in whom I have implicit confidence, that he has not been able to find any exception to the Law made in favor of sailors or class whatever. While said inhuman laws disgrace the statute books of Maryland, there will always be willing tools found for the sake of the fine in such men as Fords and McCrearys to put them in execution.

Yours for the oppressed,

THOMAS GARRETT

Letter no. 8, **BHC July 30, 1852**

Wilmington 7th mo. 22nd 1852

As several colored men employed at the Delaware and Chesapeake Canal were arrested last week for daring to go over the Maryland line to work at Chesapeake City contrary to their laws, Sherriff Janney of Cecil county, and a constable named Rozzell, and by them taken before a magistrate named Lambert Nowlan, who, without authority, as I am credibly informed, fined them $20 each (the law imposing the fine requires a hearing before a judge, and not a magistrate but to the credit of the employer's [sic] of those colored men, be it known that they promptly paid the fine, and they were set at liberty, and by so doing saved them from going to Jail—and most likely from being sold

into slavery. Sherriff Janney is reported as being a very respectable humane man and when called in to arrest those men, not charged with a crime, declined, until threatened with the law for not performing his duty.

About the same time I heard a colored man who drove the wagon of his employer, McClelland who was with him at the time, was arrested for going into the town of Elkton from Delaware, by constable Rozzell, and taken before a magistrate but his employer, McClelland insisted that the hearing should be before the Judge of Orphan's Court that was then sitting, who would, I have been informed, have discharged the colored man promptly on account of his employer being with him, had not Rozzell insisted on his being fined for having been there at other times on business for McClelland when he was not with him. As this was a new case, the Judge, who is a humane and excellent citizen, deferred judgment until the next court will sit on the 10th.

It is but right that all citizens of Pennsylvania and Delaware should know that said law—infamous and cruel as it is—is not a dead letter, while a set of lazy harpies are hanging about, too lazy and worthless to get their living by any honest industry or any respectable calling.

Wildcat Manor: Home of the Abolitionist Hunn Family

by Justin Wilson

Introduction

My first article dealt with the historical life of John Hunn, noted Delaware abolitionist and philanthropist. My second article discussed a small African American community named Hunn Town, a refugee for freedom seekers who wanted to make a new life after the terrible trial of slavery. This final article of the Hunn family history delves into the home of the Hunns, Wildcat Manor. Many historians believe this home was link from slavery to freedom, as the home was a station for the Underground Railroad. The home captured many memories of this extraordinary family and played a major part not only in Delaware history but American history as well.

Before the Hunns

Before the Hunns came to this piece of land, it was occupied by a group of Lenape Indians. They work, lived and tilled the land for over 200 years before the colonists came to settle. They called this land *Pay-see-wa* or *Pay-see-tone*, which means "wildcat," and once these creatures prowled the land. Mrs. Shirley L. Hunn, the last living matriarch of home, told me this story during an interview. Another story was about the Lenape chief who ran around nearby Tidbury crick looking for his teeth.

In recent times, ancient artifacts have been excavated by a team led by Delaware Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs archeologist Craig Lukezic. The team unearthed an Indian burial ground, stone projectile points, axes and bones. Native American artifacts were scattered in most sections of the area. A roughly-shaped **focus** (or place of interest), measuring 350 feet north to south and 300 feet east to west, was observed on the slight ridge as the Wildcat Manor house remnants of history that had been long forgotten.

Description of Wildcat Manor

"A house and its contents, when maintained as a museum, teach how the original occupants lived, their habits and tastes. The objects, fixtures and furnishings are connections to history." (Lukezic, p. 6)

Wildcat Manor is a two-story frame house with an attic, built before the Revolutionary War. The kitchen wing, located on the north side of the house, is thought to be the oldest section. Its foundation is brick. Renovations have changed some of the original structure: sides were covered with vinyl siding; fireplaces were refaced and the winding stairs were removed. The east room and hall has a south frontage. The open stairs have three sections. To the west, there are four bays that adjoin at the hall with a large fireplace in the corner. These rooms have original chair railings and quarter round trim detailing. Two centuries of change and use have affected the original house. A variety of porches and bay windows have altered the original exterior.

The Hunns and Wildcat Manor

The Hunns, Nathaniel Hunn III and his newly married wife Mary Walker, came to Delaware in the early 1700s. Their two children who survived to adulthood, Jonathan and Rynear, purchased Wildcat farm and Forest Landing form Robert Wilcox in 1758. These were parts of two greater tracts of land known as the Tract Reserve and Great Geneva. They lay along Jones River at the Forest Landing between two of the river's tributaries, Tidbury Branch and Isaac's Branch. These three parcels of land became "Wildcat Manor." They built a dam and sawmill. In 1765, the Hunn Brothers requested a survey on three pieces of *cripple*, or marshland, adjoining his tract of Great Geneva, and bounded by Tidbury Branch and the St. Jones River. A house stood near Wildcat Cripple before 1748, when it appeared on the original survey of the marsh. The source for information about how the Wildcat property was used by the family comes from family letters. One example comes from a series of nineteen letters written

Continued on p. 8

Continued from p. 7

to Lydia Hunn by her son Ezekiel from the period May 3, 1887 to June 25, 1887. The letters also contain his narration of trips to "Wildcat," which included details of how the children would play by the water wells that Jonathan and Rynear created, the fun they would have near the docks of the Tidbury Creek, and how the children would turn off the lights of the house to see if the ghost of Lydia Hunn would appear. The letters also include details of the rescue efforts in the Johnstown flood, the sinking of the ocean liner *Britannic*, and several humorous anecdotes about President Cleveland. These letters reveal the life of his family, as well as his own Quaker sensibilities, and are filled with details and wit. Two were written from "Wildcat," and the remainder from his home in Philadelphia. Alan wrote of spending summers at Wildcat at the early age of 5.

Ghost of Aunt Lydia

One of the most entertaining stories of the Hunn Family and the Hunn House is that of Aunt Lydia, who lived at Wildcat Manor sometime in the early 1800's. According to the story, she was coming down the stairs one night in long night gown, carrying a kerosene lamp. Something blew out the lamp and she panicked. At that moment Aunt Lydia fell and broke her neck. As the story goes, she spends her afterlife seeking companionship by blowing out every candle or lamp you may carry into the stair way of the Hunn House; she's lonely and she'll blow the lamp out, hoping someone will fall and join her.

Wildcat After World War II

According to his youngest sister and family historian, Katherine Hunn Krasner, in her book, *Wildcat and the Hunn Family*, William Roland Hunn, (1882-1943) consolidated the ownership of Wildcat by buying out the other family owners and left the property to his wife, Mary Barnard Cooper Hunn upon his death. After World War II, their son Alan Hunn obtained the farm from his mother, and he brought his bride, Shirley Johnson, to live at Wildcat in 1946. The caretakers of the farm were Martha Patton, who served as housekeeper and cook, and by Gus Wharton, caretaker and handyman. It is not known precisely when Martha Patton and Gus Wharton came to work at Wildcat, but they and their families had been residents on the property for a long time. By the time Alan and Shirley Hunn came to Wildcat, Martha was well over fifty years old and blind. Gus Wharton was Martha's father-in-law, and was 90 years old.

The house needed extensive modernization. In order to raise money to make renovations, an old walnut tree was cut down and sold for lumber, and the part of the property along Tidbury Branch, which was the site of the old mill, was sold. Electricity, indoor plumbing, telephone, and closets were all installed to make living more comfortable.

In 1962 Alan Hunn turned 84 acres of Wildcat Marsh into a landfill. It handled trash from residents of the city of Dover and Dover Air Force Base. It was closed in 1973 when environmental concerns were raised. By 1990 the landfill had been cleaned up. The last residents of Wildcat Manor were Alan and Shirley Hunn. They resided together at Wildcat from 1946 to 1986, the year of Alan's death. Shirley Hunn remained at Wildcat Manor until 2005 when she relocated to Maryland with her daughter Alana Hunn Turner. The property was sold to Kent County in 2006.

Nine generations of Hunns had lived, worked, and played on this historic property.

Conclusion

My main goal was to find out if this home was used for the Underground Railroad, and recent discoveries of journal logs and letters reveal that John Hunn's father and uncle were strongly involved in the abolition cause during the early 19th C. With further investigation I will try to discover the dates of the use of Wildcat Manor as an Underground Railroad station and approximately how many passengers were accommodated,

This historic family and Wildcat Manor were pillars in the history of the state of Delaware, and in the heritage of the African American experience in Delaware.

A recent Hunn family gathering

The Female Benevolent Society of Wilmington Friends Meeting: Doing Good for Over 200 Years

by Mary Starkweather-White

In 1800 a group of women, members of the Wilmington Friends Meeting, met in the home of Rebecca Martin in order to form the Female Benevolent Society. They were Rebecca Martin, Ann Ferris, Hannah Martin, Ann White, Gertrude Gilpin, Orpha Hewes, Rachel Wood, Mary Jones, Ann Spackman, Ann Sipple, Rachel Hayes, Margaret Canby, Fanny Canby, Mary Canby, Edith Ferris, and Deborah Bringhurst. They dedicated themselves to relieving local poverty.

A note of a bequest was made in 1812: " Committee appointed last meeting regarding Jacob Broom's [see p. 5] donations reported the extract of his will:

'Give to Overseers of Friends Meeting at Wilmington and their successors $500 for the use of the Female Benevolent Society there and $500 for the use of the school for the instruction of blacks under their care.'

Joseph Tatnall reported this 1/18/1812, and this note was dated 2/6/1812.

To the state of Delaware 15 women represented:

That this society, having in view the employment of those who suffer from poverty, indisposition and infirmities of age, have been embodied for those purposes 18 years, during which they have continually exerted themselves to achieve the work objects of their association. But for the want of the powers of the corporate body, they have not only not sufficiently much income on the management of their small funds but have, as they believe, been prevented from receiving such an addition from as benevolent individuals as were disposed to make and would have made, had their association existed in law and been invested with legislative sanctions. They therefore respectfully petition this legislature to pass an act by virtue of which they may declare a corporate body in law with such powers as may be deemed sufficient for the purposes of their association.

The law was passed 1/30/1819.

The Constitution of Female Benevolent Society states:

A number of women who believe from the observations they have made that they may render some assistance to their fellow beings who suffer the afflictions of poverty, indisposition or the infirmities of age are induced to enter into an association for their relief and their endeavor so far as their association may extend to mitigate their distress.

They stated that the Son of the Almighty asked people to visit the sick, feed the hungry, and clothe the naked. Twenty-one women signed this on 2/10/1800.

The Female Benevolent Society in its inception provided not just charity but also the opportunity for employment. Flax was purchased, hackled and prepared for spinning. Then it was weighed and distributed to the spinners. When it was returned by them, the yarn was sorted, counted, and valued and paid for in produce. Then it was sold and manufactured into linen.

A committee appealed to the community for subscriptions and donations, and various merchants rose to the occasion: Adams & Bro., John Alden, J.D. Allmond, W.H. Kennard Co., William B. Sharp Dry Goods, Thomas Sheward, Charles Warner & Co., Granville Worrell, and various railroads.

One record from 1809 records the following:

Balance 3/30/1867 --	$18.15
Income	$566.00
Subscrip & donation	$30.73
Exp for food,fuel,etc.	$339.05
Bal. 3/28/1868	$17.19

When the era of hand spinning and weaving had passed, the Society purchased material in quantity and paid worthy poor women to sew them, then distributed to those in need. Orders from hospitals were filled for cash.

Besides this work, the Society also participated in organized charity with district visitors seeking out those in need. Later as the city grew, the Society just contributed to larger charitable organizations and discontinued its other efforts.

Today the Society gives small grants for basic needs to various nonprofit organizations and tries in this way to live up to the lofty ideals of local Quaker women of over 200 years ago.

Support Quaker Hill by Supporting QHHPF

Become a member—As a member of QHHPF, you will receive many benefits, including invitations to lectures, workshops, and social; events; and you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you are helping QHHPF be a strong voice for preservation as a means of enhancing the economic and cultural health of the city. For more information, go to **wwwquakerhillhistoric.org** and click "become a member."

Make a donation—send a check made out to QHHPF to
Quaker Hill Historic Preservation Foundation
521 N. West Street
Wilmington, DE 19801

Children of Friends School admiring the latest in bicycle fashion, 1888

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127 pages brimming with pictures and illustrations of the Quaker Hill area, (such as the one above) from its earliest days to the present.
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