



# Freehold Township Heritage Society

Summer 2012

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FREEHOLD

## STORY BOARDS INSTALLED AT FARMHOUSE

The STORY BOARDS telling the hidden architectural history of the Oakley Farmhouse are now finished and hanging in the house.

*Houses are like living things: they change over time.* Actually, the houses are made more suitable to their lives by the people who live in them.

*If walls could talk...In our case they do and we listen.* On the surface, the house is a 1911-1920 "Colonial Revival". Walter Oakley adapted the house to his family's needs. The installation of central heat eliminated the necessity for heating fireplaces, electricity eliminated the necessity for candles and oil lamps, running water eliminated the necessity of the well for water and the out house and a wood or coal burning stove eliminated the necessity for large cooking fireplaces.

We have "unearthed" the accurate physical history of the house through documents and physical observation learning how the house grew and physically changed over 218 years from an 8'X10' cabin to the structure you see today, reflecting the needs and wishes of the owners.

We have also "unearthed" all 11 owners of the property along with their contributions to the area. The more we learn the more they have come alive.

One extremely interesting family who lived in the Oakley Farmhouse for three generations are the Walkers—they were Patriots during the Revolutionary War. George Walker II and his two sons and three nephews were in the Battle of Monmouth—two were wounded, one was a surgeon.

George and Priscilla Walker (the third George) had 9 children as did Elijah and Rebeckah Combs who built the house to its present

footprint.

Come visit us and learn all about these fascinating people as you peruse the new story boards, admire the repainted interior circa 1812 and see the structural 'secrets' that were hidden in the walls, cellar and attic. You will be amazed!

The story boards were a collaborative effort. Thanks to Michael Berman for his superb photographic skills, Karl Franklin for his knowledge of the house's history and help in preparing the National Register of Historic Places nomination, Cheryl Cook for her technical skills and Dorothy Petricek for titles and text.

## HOLIDAY FUNDRAISER AT OAKLEY FARM

**Mark your calendars for SAT, DEC. 8, 2012--5-9PM**

Last April's program was so successful that FTHS is reprising the event in December. Grace McMillan, Cheryl Cook and Dorothy Petricek have agreed to head this fundraiser at the Farm but it cannot be done without your input and assistance. Opportunities are available for all stages of support from addressing envelopes to serving at the event and everything in between. Contact FTHS if you are interested in being part of this true HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA!!

## UPCOMING VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AT FT HERITAGE SOCIETY

SUMMER OPEN HOUSES AT OAKLEY FARM, WEST FREEHOLD AND GEORGIA RD. SCHOOL-HOUSES  
SUMMER SUNDAYS from 1:00 -3:00 PM

JUNE 17, JULY 15, AUGUST 19 AND SEPT. 16, 2012

Volunteers are needed to staff each site. (August will be the popular ice cream social—extra volunteers are needed for that day at the farm) Just a reminder docent tours are fun and easy to master; visitors are given basics and allowed to continue the tour themselves. The need is for at least 2 people at each schoolhouse and 3-4 people at Oakley Farm. This is a great way for teens to learn about local history and meet community service requirements for school, scouts or faith community. Please contact us by email [ftheritage1686@yahoo.com](mailto:ftheritage1686@yahoo.com) or phone 732-577-9766 to let us know when you can help and where you would like to be assigned. The summer schedule will be made as soon as possible so you can plan ahead.

Volunteers are also needed for the Holiday Extravaganza. (See article at left)

## 2012 MEETING DATES 2012----!!!!

### IMPORTANT!!!

## OUR MEETING TIMES HAVE CHANGED

MAY THRU SEPT  
MEETINGS - 7 PM

JUNE 6, 2012

JULY 11, 2012\*

AUG. 1, 2012

SEPT 5, 2012

OCT THRU DEC  
MEETINGS -1 PM

OCT 3 2012

NOV 7 2012

NO DEC MTG

### MARION OAKLEY AND THE OAKLEY FOUNDATION SUPPORT FTTHS SHUTTERS

FTTHS has received very generous donations of \$1,000.00 each from the Oakley Foundation and Marion Oakley. These funds will go towards the replacement and restoration of some of the shutters on the Oakley Farmhouse. Six pair of shutters were found to have been compromised when the farmhouse was being prepped for exterior painting this Fall. As many pair of original shutters as possible will be retained and in keeping with recent research the solid paneled shutters will be hung on the first floor while the second story will be louvered. This is the opposite of the cur-

rent placement. The shutter hardware, which is believed to be original, will be retained on all of the shutters and as many originals as possible will be retained. Using the recent research, members of the Freehold Township Historic Preservation Commission and the FTTHS board are collaborating on shutter design and color.

FTTHS appreciates the generosity of Marion Oakley and The Oakley Foundation and is very grateful for their continued support.

Dolores Gibson

### FIRST ARTISAN FESTIVAL TO BE HELD AT FARMHOUSE ON OCTOBER 13, 2012

The Oakley Farmstead Museum is pleased to unveil a new and exciting project. We are showcasing an artisan festival in October 13, 2012 from 10 AM -4 PM. This will be a yearly event and in the future will include a year round opportunity to display artist's work to our visitors and members. Currently, we are looking for talented artists interested in joining us on the ground floor of this new endeavor.

A variety of media and genres are encouraged. If you are interested in finding out more, please send an email to [ftheritage1686@yahoo.com](mailto:ftheritage1686@yahoo.com). Registrations will be

accepted through 5 PM on 10/3/12; exhibition space will be assigned as applications are received. We expect this venture to grow exponentially. Come be a part of the ground floor of this project!

#### FARM HOUSE PRINT AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE

The portrait of the farm which is now the background for most of the FTTHS web pages is a print that is available for sale at the farm. It was done by local artist Mary Caruso-Albert and the price for this beautiful print is \$125.00. Please drop us a line or call 732-577-9766 if you are interested in purchasing one of these prints.

### ARTIFACT OF THE SEASON

This newsletter's Tool of the Season is an Acme Brand rotary hand corn planter. This one (image at right) was made by the Potato Implement Co. in Traverse City Michigan.

Patents for the earliest hand-held units date back to the 1850s. The Acme Co. was among the first to manufacture the planters.

Before the planters of the 1850s, farmers carried a sack of seed corn on their shoulder and used a stick to poke a hole in the soil where they then dropped seed. Hand-held planters evolved rapidly during the roughly 60-year period before large mechanical planters became commonplace. The hollow stick used by early farmers gave way to a one-hand unit with a trigger-release hopper. Next came units with two hoppers on the handle: one for seed and the other for fertilizer (some even planted corn and pumpkin seeds in one pass). Ultimately, the hand-held unit was relegated to garden use or to "fill in" gaps in fields.

An "automatic" model was patented in about 1891. The operator walked along while pushing the tip into the ground. As he moved forward, a lever assembly on the bottom of the unit

touched the ground and caused a seed to be dropped. Apparently four acres a day could be planted using the automatic model. All of these enabled the farmer to plant his field without bending over to plant each seed.

Pat Eisemann

