2019

PENNSYLVANIA AT RISK

preservation PENNSYLVANIA

Pennsylvania At Risk puts statewide focus on a building's plight, promotes local action, and rallies statewide support for historic preservation.

Volume 32 | Issue 01 | Winter 2019

www.preservationpa.org

2019 PENNSYLVANIA AT RISK

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Photographs by Preservation Pennsylvania unless otherwise indicated. Many thanks to Darryl Moran Photography, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Woodburne) and the Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania for their gracious permission to use their images.

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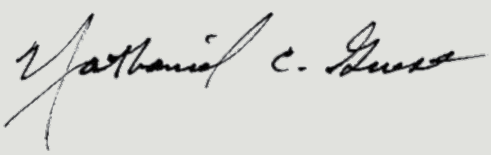
From the Chair

Preservation Pennsylvania is the commonwealth's historic preservation advocacy organization. The *At Risk* list we create each year is part of that advocacy. While the resources on the list are updated from year to year, our role in supporting our fellow Pennsylvanians in saving places important to them has remained constant for decades.

Preservation Pennsylvania is increasingly looked to as the only statewide voice for Pennsylvania's heritage. Our continuing task is to educate Pennsylvania's leaders, community planners, and its citizens about the need to protect our heritage as part of a sound future that is economically strong, environmentally sustainable, and socially just.

In a place like Pennsylvania, the superlatives of that heritage are matched only by the forces of economic change that threaten it. The beautifully-planned downtowns, manicured farms, and architecturally-stunning cities we have inherited from an earlier time have and will continue to prove to be our strongest assets in the face of industrial decline, sprawl, and disinvestment. Our historic assets are essential for building a new economy with good jobs, a clean environment, and vibrant, human-scaled places to live, work and play. They are the places where the next big idea will find its creation, where our future leaders will grow up, where they will come to learn the value of investing in the places we call home. Our best future will come from our past.

We are working toward that best future. As you review this list of resources that need your help, I hope you will consider making a contribution to our efforts to bring that best future to pass. Thank you!



Nathaniel Guest, Esq.

From the Executive Director

A farmhouse. A mill. A mansion. A mid-century masterpiece. And a landscape that once challenged girls to muster confidence and courage. While each of the places on this year's *At Risk* has seemingly outlasted the era in which it was relevant, why should its time be up?

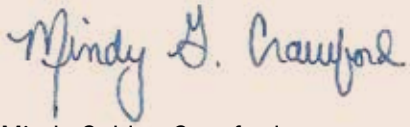
Each has a complicated story to tell. Each has the potential to transform into something new and relevant once again. Each has the support of a community that finds real value in the tangible connection to history, industry and art.

How can we, as preservation-minded history lovers, encourage others to take the long view? How do we demonstrate the embodied potential of a place, even if the process of re-visioning and renewal might take years to accomplish?

We added the Star Barn to our very first *Pennsylvania At Risk* list. Iconic and beloved, it was a barnyard of buildings that served no purpose after a highway choked it off from its farming landscape. Our investment of time, energy and money paid off more than 25 years later, when we presented the Chairman's Award to Tierney and David Abel who purchased the buildings and moved them to a new location and a new future.

The places on this year's list are now on that cusp between past and future. Preservation Pennsylvania commits to trying to change the outcome for each of these sites and will work with local advocates to prevent demolition, deterioration and degradation.

We hope you will join us in the effort with a donation to our intervention fund that will directly benefit these places or by becoming a member.



Mindy Gulden Crawford

About THE *PENNSYLVANIA AT RISK* PROGRAM

For more than 25 years, Preservation Pennsylvania's annual listing of endangered historic properties has raised awareness about preservation issues and rallied statewide support. In this time, several key factors have emerged as consistent threats.

For instance, in areas where real estate markets are strong, DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE often threatens to compromise the setting or result in the demolition of important historic properties. Conversely, a WEAK LOCAL ECONOMY, vacancy and/or abandonment often lead to deferred maintenance, which can result in physical deterioration or demolition.

Even in cases where buildings aren't vacant, if their owner does not have the FINANCIAL CAPACITY to maintain the building, physical deterioration or demolition may occur.

Another common threat is CONTROL CONCERNS. Where there is a LACK OF LOCAL TOOLS to encourage or require maintenance and/or preservation, or where zoning or other ordinances do not support preservation goals, there is often little that can be done to address these control concerns.

FUNCTIONAL OBSOLESCENCE can also put historic properties at risk. When their original intended function is no longer needed in the community, a new way of doing business exists, or users prefer a different type or style of space, buildings can be threatened with inappropriate alterations, physical deterioration, or demolition.

The action(s) needed to protect historic properties from the threats of inappropriate alterations, compromised setting, physical deterioration, or demolition will vary, depending on the contributing factors. Preservation Pennsylvania is in the process of working with property owners and other interested parties to formulate an action plan that will help to protect each of the historic buildings included in this 2019 *Pennsylvania At Risk* list.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY
Carlisle Indian School Farmhouse
Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle
Threat: Physical Deterioration/Demolition

DELAWARE COUNTY
Woodburne Mansion
1215 Springfield Road, Darby
Threat: Demolition/Physical Deterioration/Financial Capacity

LEBANON COUNTY
Colebrook Grist Mill
5389 Elizabethtown Road, Palmyra
Threat: Physical Deterioration/Demolition

MONTGOMERY COUNTY
Weiss House
2935 N Whitehall Road, Eagleville
Threat: Demolition/Physical Deterioration/Development Pressure

SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY
Camp Archbald
100 Camp Archbald Road, Kingsley
Threat: Financial Capacity, Environmental Degradation, Development

Fonthill Castle, 2016

Get Involved

In February, take part in heart-bombing and show some love for your favorite local landmarks. Share pictures and stories with us by emailing ssmith@preservationpa.org or use #PAlandmarklove on social media. The National Trust for Historic Preservation will be using #Iheartsavingplaces

(Heart-bombing should respect private property laws and should be reversible, without causing harm to the historic structure.)

Check area preservation organizations, historic sites, and historical societies for local heart-bombing events or plan your own!

Follow us on Facebook for updates, news about hands-on workdays, advocacy alerts, and other preservation events. Search #PAatRisk on social media.

Sign up for our monthly e-news at our website, preservationpa.org.

Donate to Preservation Pennsylvania or become a member to benefit our 2019 work with these *At Risk* sites. Your contributions will help provide direct intervention grant funding and technical assistance. Your membership support demonstrates support for preservation policies.

Connect with local preservation organizations, historic sites, and historical societies for local events or plan your own!

The 2019 *At Risk* profiles suggest ways that you can get involved.

Attend the Pennsylvania Statewide Conference on Heritage in June 2019 in Chambersburg where you'll learn about the latest in preservation practices and have the opportunity to network with fellow preservationists.

PENNSYLVANIA AT RISK UPDATES

CAMBRIA COUNTY

Glosser Brothers Department Store (1994 PA *At Risk*) Built in 1905 opposite Johnstown's Central Park, and originally known as the Franklin Building, this was the oldest and one of the largest department stores in Johnstown. Vacant since the late 1980s, it has been redeveloped as the Central Park Complex and houses PRESS Bistro, the Area Agency on Aging, Behavioral Health, and Children and Youth Services.

CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Mount Tabor AME Church (2018 PA *At Risk*) is rich in love and support from the community. In the past year, volunteers have performed some emergency stabilization, fenced the cemetery and sourced professional evaluation of the site and structure, performed historic research and a study using ground penetrating radar. Church supporters are now charting a course for the site's future while further research is completed at the site.

Mount Tabor AME Church

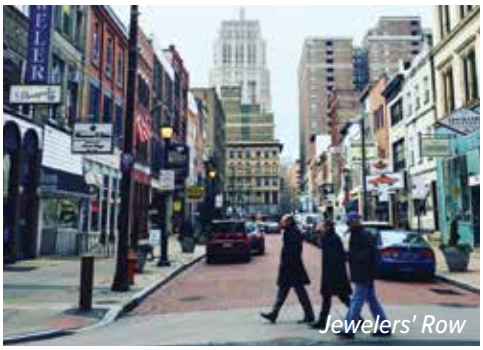
Progress! The vegetation around the church has been cleared, tarps added to the roof to prevent leaks, and some structural stabilization was completed.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

The Friends of Abolition Hall (2017 PA *At Risk*) continue their fight to protect and preserve a nationally-significant Underground Railroad and anti-slavery village. While a developing situation, as we go to press, the FAH had filed an appeal to the Whitemarsh Township decision to approve the developer's conditional use application. Additionally, the roadway along which the development will be constructed is closed due to a sinkhole. For updates, check our website and follow their Facebook page Plymouth Meeting Abolition Hall.

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY

Jewelers' Row (2017 PA *At Risk*) is the oldest jewelry district in the country, but threatened with a high-rise tower. On February 13, 2019, the Jewelers' Row Historic District nomination goes before the Philadelphia Historical Commission. Supporters are encouraged to attend the meeting at 9:30 a.m., 1515 Arch St., Philadelphia.



Jewelers' Row

YORK COUNTY

Mifflin House (2017 PA *At Risk*) After months of negotiation with the site developer, Kinsley Properties, an agreement has been reached that would give Preservation Pennsylvania, Susquehanna Heritage, and other partners the opportunity to purchase the historic Mifflin House, associated buildings and 62 acres. Kinsley has agreed not to develop this section of the property for 24 months to give the preservation groups the needed time to raise funds and determine an end use. Preservation Pennsylvania appreciates the willingness of the developer to work toward a positive solution.

Mifflin House

LOST IN CHESTER COUNTY

Roger Hunt Mill (1997 PA *At Risk*) The historic grist mill in Downingtown was built in 1759. While some stabilization efforts were made by the Borough of Downingtown, the roof collapsed in 2011, and the mill is now in ruins.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Preservation Pennsylvania, through creative partnerships, targeted educational and advocacy programs, advisory assistance, and special projects, assists Pennsylvania communities to protect and utilize the historic resources they want to preserve for the future.

ABOUT US

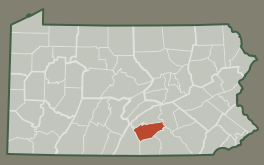
Preservation Pennsylvania is the commonwealth's only statewide, private, nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the protection of historically and architecturally significant properties. The organization was created in 1982 as the Preservation Fund of Pennsylvania to operate a revolving fund that would assist in the acquisition and rehabilitation of historic properties. Since its incorporation, the organization has evolved and now organizes the Statewide Conference on Heritage, hosts the Pennsylvania Historic Preservation Awards, and publishes an annual list of endangered properties in *Pennsylvania At Risk*, in addition to managing a revolving fund and intervention fund. Preservation Pennsylvania also participates in educational programs and advocacy initiatives, conducts special projects, and offers technical assistance to people throughout the commonwealth.

Carlisle Indian School Farmhouse

Exterior of the farmhouse. Photo by C. Tolman, 2011

THREAT: Physical Deterioration/Demolition

CARLISLE BARRACKS
CARLISLE
CUMBERLAND COUNTY



A coalition of Tribal representatives and local organizations seek to preserve a farmhouse that was part of the Carlisle Indian School. They hope to transform it into a place of healing and education. Time is of the essence.

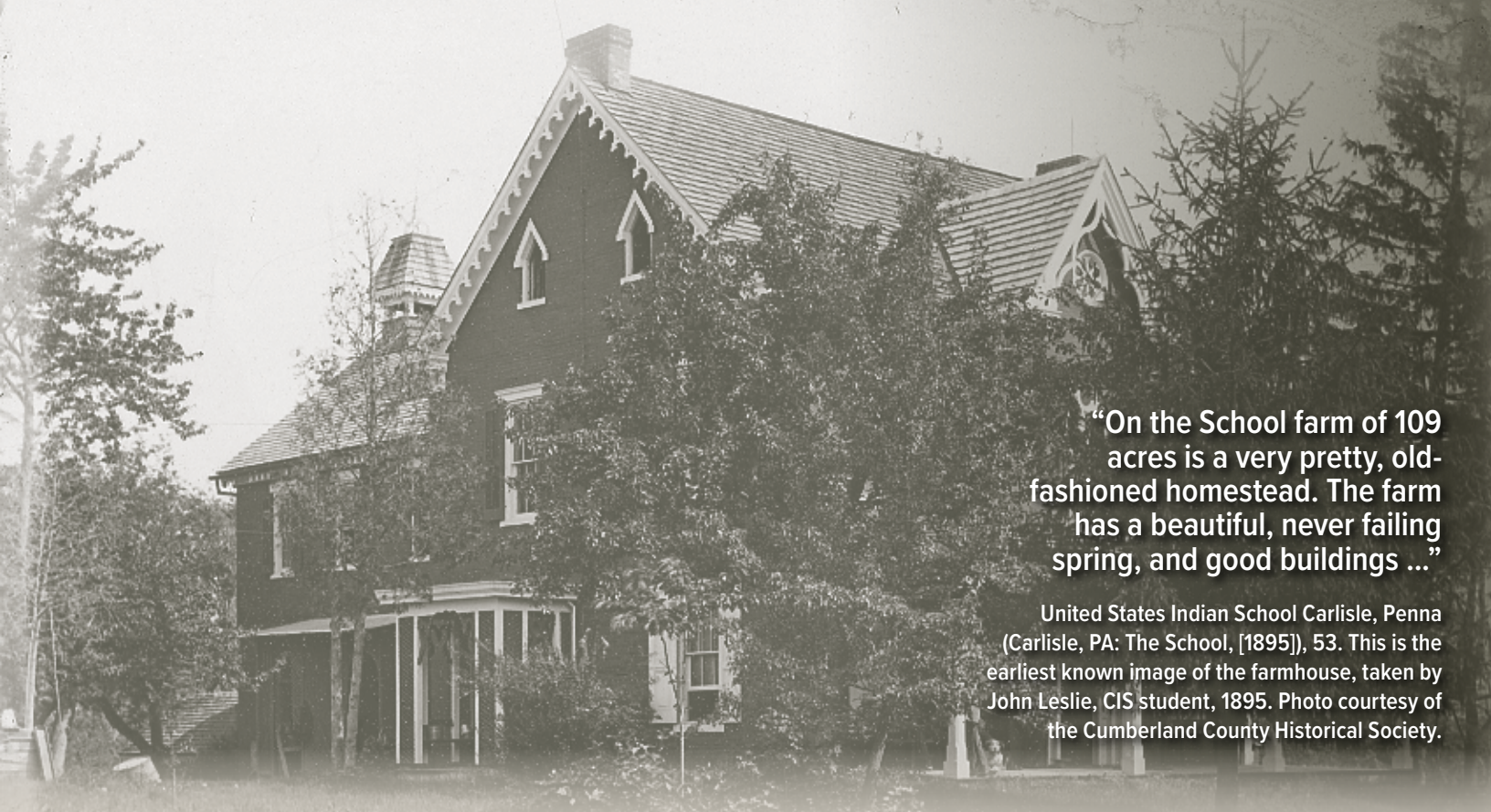
History

In 1879, a man named Richard H. Pratt conceived of a school for "civilizing the Indian." He established the Carlisle Indian School (CIS) on the grounds of an old army barracks. It would become a model for similar institutions all across the country as part of a national experiment to assimilate Indigenous children into mainstream White American society while eradicating their cultures, identities and languages. From 1879 until 1918, approximately 8,000 Native American children from 140 tribes attended the school in Carlisle. In the century following the school's closure, the stories of the students, their families, and the long shadow cast by their experiences at Carlisle have been largely missing from the official history of the school.

The school farm played an integral role in the education and experiences of Carlisle's Indian students. The farmhouse not only housed the head farmer and his family, but also provided an agricultural classroom, sleeping quarters, and a dining hall for the student farm laborers.

The farmhouse was originally a civilian home located outside of garrison boundaries. The original, front portion of the house was built between 1853-1856, with an addition constructed

Second floor stairway. Photo by L. White



"On the School farm of 109 acres is a very pretty, old-fashioned homestead. The farm has a beautiful, never failing spring, and good buildings ..."

United States Indian School Carlisle, Penna (Carlisle, PA: The School, [1895]), 53. This is the earliest known image of the farmhouse, taken by John Leslie, CIS student, 1895. Photo courtesy of the Cumberland County Historical Society.

between 1880-1883. When the CIS closed, nearly four decades after its founding, a detachment of African-American soldiers were assigned to work on the farm, and likely used the farmhouse as a segregated living space and social club during the 1920s and early 1930s. The farmland was eventually built up with modern Army garrison buildings. The farmhouse served as a residence for officers' families from the U.S. Army War College, which has operated on the post since 1951.

Threat

In a 2012 roundtable discussion with the Carlisle Barracks Deputy Garrison Commander, Public Affairs Officer, and Coalition members, an announcement was made that the farmhouse would not be demolished. Since that time, the Carlisle Barracks has been waiting for a formal request from an interested party to start the process of securing a lease agreement. However, the Commandant and Garrison Commander positions rotate approximately every two years with no guarantee that incoming leadership will continue to support the Coalition's vision and wait until it has the capacity to take on the building and initiate their reuse project.

Change

The Carlisle Indian Industrial School Farmhouse Coalition (currently a small group of descendants and advocates) envisions a positive, productive reuse for the farmhouse focused on healing and creating a safe space where descendants can remember, honor and commemorate their loved ones. The need for healing has become more evident with recent efforts to repatriate loved ones buried at the CIS cemetery. The Coalition would also like to educate and raise awareness of the history and legacy of the CIS and the broader legacy of Indian boarding schools. To make this dream a reality, the Farmhouse Coalition needs financial resources, legal guidance, expertise in fundraising, non-profit management and strategic planning, and expertise in historic building renovation, museum and interpretive planning. Initial funding will be needed for planning meetings for descendant board of directors and advisory board.

Exterior of side porch. Photo by L. White, 2012

Rear apartment stairway. Photo by D. Lajimodiere

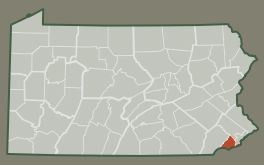
The *Pennsylvania At Risk* listing will help raise awareness of the history and modern relevance of the CIS and support the ongoing efforts of the Coalition to achieve their vision for the farmhouse.

Woodburne Mansion

THREAT: Demolition, Physical Deterioration, Financial Capacity

This empty mansion designed by architect Horace Trumbauer for a noted family offers vast potential. It's surrounded by a historic natural landscape that's poised to become a valuable recreational resource that would benefit the residents of several nearby townships.

1215 SPRINGFIELD ROAD
DARBY
DELAWARE COUNTY



History

Nestled in the county's proposed Little Flower Park, overlooking Darby Creek, is the palatial Woodburne Mansion. The site is said to have once been part of the Great Minquas Indian Path, connecting the Susquehannock region with Dutch fur trading posts along the Delaware River, and later was part of a Penn land grant to the family of famed botanist John Bartram.

By 1850, the land was owned by George McHenry, president of the Philadelphia Board of Trade and a Confederate sympathizer. Sold at a sheriff's sale in 1862, the land then came under the ownership of Thomas A. Scott, who rose from station agent to president of the Pennsylvania Railroad and was appointed by Abraham Lincoln as the Assistant Secretary of War for Transportation. His son, Edgar Thompson Scott, hired noted architect Horace Trumbauer to build a fine residence on the land in 1906. (Trumbauer also designed the 110-room Lynnewood Hall for Peter A. B. Widener, listed on the 1992 PA *At Risk* list). Though Scott died in 1918, the 55-room house remained in the Scott family until the 1930s at which time it transferred into institutional ownership. Delaware County purchased the property in 2016. In 2018, "Friends of Woodburne" was organized to work with county officials toward the goal of preservation and reuse of the building.

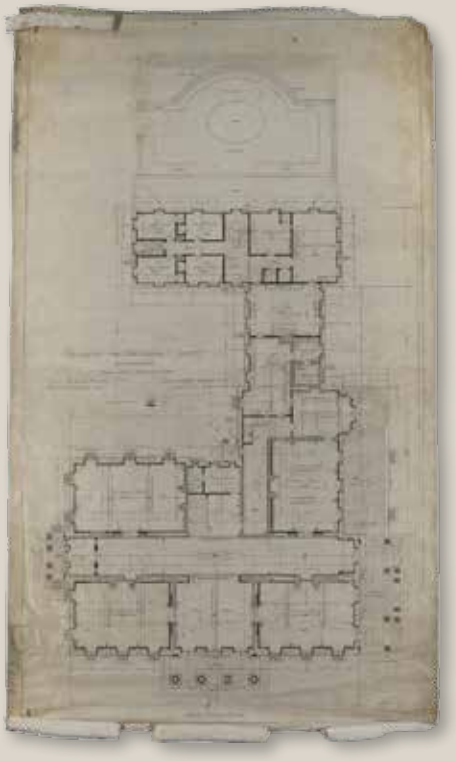
Interior photographs date from 2016. Photos by Darryl Moran Photography (Facebook: Subject Matters Photography)

Threat

The neglected building, vacant since 2005, is surrounded by a chain-link fence with no public access. Invisible from the road, the building is vulnerable to vandalism. Scrappers have stolen copper piping from the interior and flashing and roofing from 10 chimneys and 18 dormers. Water infiltration has led to significant damage both inside and out. Current interior conditions are unknown since the building is sealed. The kitchen wing, not pierced by dormers, has been less damaged. The elegant building will require millions to restore it to its original glory. Advocates are looking at a variety of possibilities for long-range reuse, from wedding venue or trade school to preservation as a "folly" where the exterior appearance is given the higher priority.

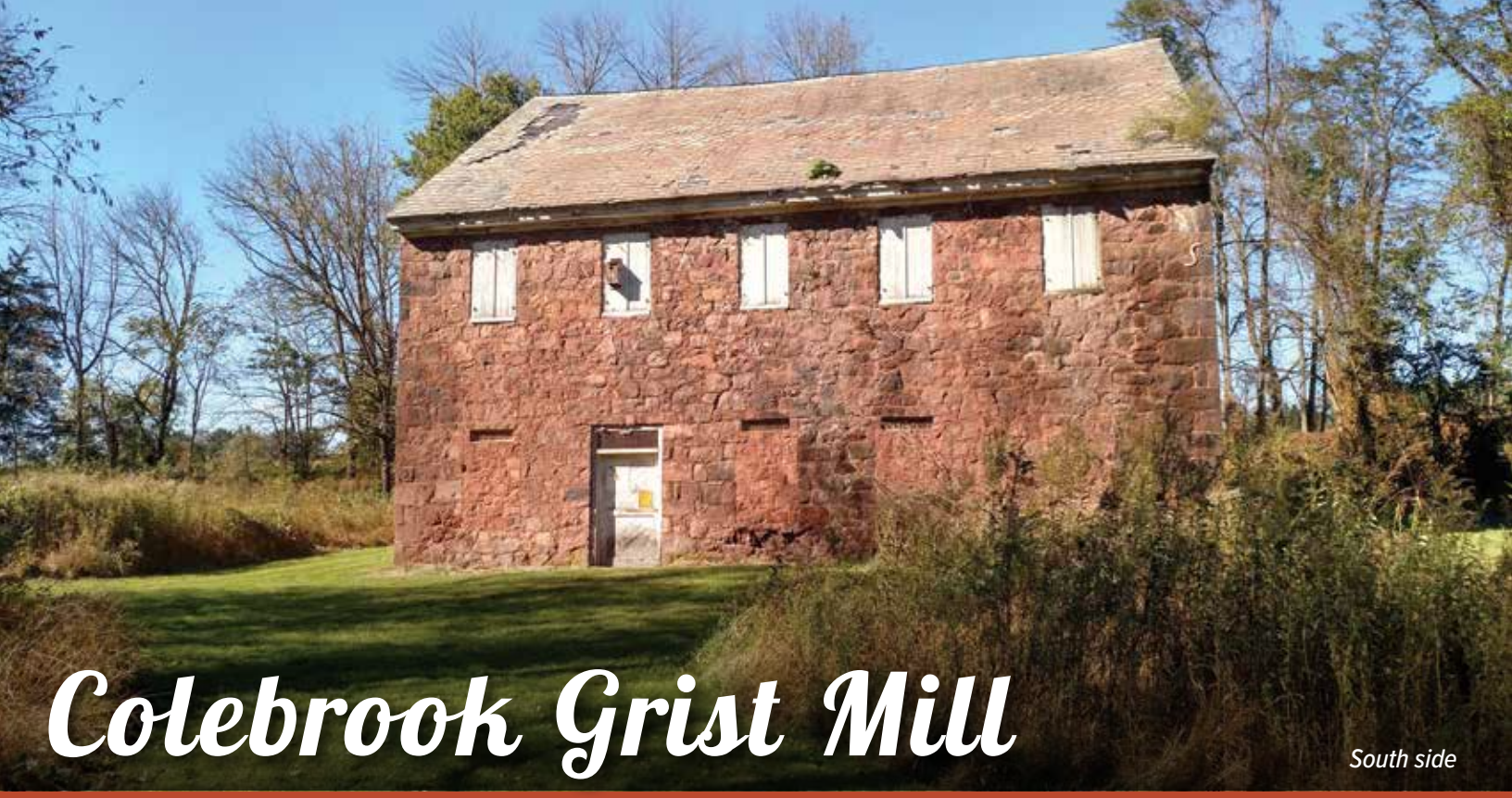
Change

A top short-term priority for the Friends of Woodburne is to collaborate with the county to resolve the water infiltration and get the roof repaired and secured. Preservation Pennsylvania will offer to help identify potential partnership and grant opportunities, as well as assist with planning options for long-term use.



First floor, Horace Trumbauer architectural plans for the Edgar T. Scott residence 1906-1907, (14695), courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. Additional drawings in the collection include the Roof, Basement, Sub-Basement, Sections AA and BB, the Power House, and finish details of the Main Hall, Living Room, Library, Gallery Hall, Dining Room, Breakfast Room, and Drawing Room.

Vulnerable to vandals, the mansion is secured with a chain-link fence and some boarded-up windows, but has clearly been breached. Once fine details are deteriorating. The elements are taking a toll inside and out. These exterior images show the conditions when Preservation Pennsylvania was invited to a site visit in December 2018.



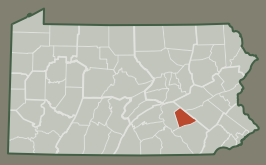
Colebrook Grist Mill

South side

THREAT: Physical Deterioration, Demolition

Local advocates hope to save, restore and find a new use for the long-vacant landmark.

5389 ELIZABETHTOWN ROAD
PALMYRA
LEBANON COUNTY



History

The Colebrook Grist Mill represents the intersection of two industries – iron and agriculture – that were the foundation of Pennsylvania's history and economy. The grist mill was established in 1793 and operated until the early 20th century as a local business and community gathering place. Later, it played a role in the early years of the Pennsylvania National Guard.

Initially, the mill operated as part of the Colebrook Iron Plantation, milling grain to support the workers at the Colebrook Furnace and earn extra income from surrounding farms. The plantation was built by Robert Coleman. The mill and the nearby Colebrook Iron Master's House (listed on the National Register), and two worker houses are all constructed out of the same type of red sandstone. Together, they make up all that is left of this industrial site. The iron furnace once stood nearby, but is long gone, replaced by the sight of cattle grazing in a field.

After the furnace closed, the mill continued to serve the local agricultural community for most of another century, until the internal combustion engine made the water-driven system obsolete. After several changes of ownership, the Pennsylvania National Guard used it from 1910-1920.

The iconic old mill structure still features the stone, thick wood beams, and original steel overshot waterwheel.

East side

Threat

The immediate threat to the mill building is physical deterioration that could lead to demolition. The property is owned by the Pennsylvania Game Commission, which does not maintain the building since historic properties do not fall under its mission.

The slate roof has holes that allow water infiltration, and a small portion of the rear stone foundation by the former mill race entrance has collapsed. The interior is dry to damp on the first floor, and the wood is in reasonable condition. The second floor is stable at this time. The third floor is taking in rain and snow. The planking is thick and as such holds a lot of moisture very well, but it will not last forever. The building's windows are gone, although some frames remain. The original doors are in place on all of the floors in the front and in the back of the building at a wagon height level for out-loading grain sacks and barrels. The sturdily-constructed building is holding its own to date, but each season of extreme weather takes a toll.

To the local community, this building is an important local landmark. The building has not been publicly accessible for several decades. The area has been recognized by the township for its recreation potential and rustic rural scenic landscape.

Change

The building's proximity to State Route 241 and recreational resources formed by the juncture of game lands, the Conewago Creek, the Horse-Shoe Trail, and the Lebanon Valley Rail Trail offer great potential for future use.

Preservation Pennsylvania will work with the South Londonderry Township Area Historical Society and the South Londonderry Township Historical Commission to negotiate a way forward with the Pennsylvania Game Commission. We can assist with prioritizing the emergency stabilization and help formulate long-term maintenance and care solutions.

Exterior photos: James V. Bennett

Interior photo: Pat Rhen

North side

West side

Interior view of the mill

The Morton and Lenore Weiss House. Photographed by Rollin LaFrance, April 1958, Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission.

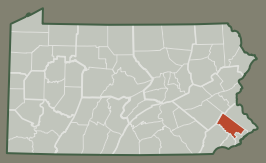
Inset below: Louis Kahn and Anne Tyng visited the site regularly, enjoying picnics with the Weisses. Anne Griswold Tyng Collection, Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania

Weiss House

THREAT: Demolition, Physical Deterioration, Development Pressure

A mid-century residence designed by one of the world's greatest 20th century architects is threatened with demolition by neglect and development.

2935 N. WHITEHALL ROAD
EAGLEVILLE
MONTGOMERY COUNTY



History

Not long after the end of the Second World War, Morton and Lenore Weiss dreamed of building a house on a hill. They chose a five-acre site outside Norristown and engaged architect Louis Kahn to design them "a house that is contemporary but does not break away from tradition" (in Kahn's words).

While Louis Kahn may best be remembered for large-scale masterworks such as the Salk Institute, the Kimbell Art Museum, and the Yale University Art Gallery, his residential work allowed him to experiment with light and form in ways that would shape those monumental designs. Only nine of Kahn's residential designs were constructed, between 1940 and 1973. Each of these was inspired by the clients and the site and is an expression of the ideas at play in Kahn's head. The Weiss House took shape from 1947-1950 and represents an early example of Kahn's domestic design work. (For an inspiring survey of Louis Kahn's residential architecture, read "The Houses of Louis Kahn," by George H. Marcus and William Whitaker, Yale University Press, 2013.)

Kahn and collaborator Anne Tyng visited the East Norriton site frequently and would picnic with the Weisses as the house took shape. The design called for locally-quarried stone and heavy timbers, and was clad in vertical cypress boards – all reminiscent of the Pennsylvania German barns and farmsteads once common

Lenore and Morton "Bubby" Weiss in their living room, 1991. (Photo by Lewis Tanner) After the mural was completed by Kahn and Tyng, the Weisses asked that their dalmation be included. A black and white representation was added in the lower right-hand corner.

to the area. The house stayed in the Weiss family for decades and remains true to Kahn's original design.

The front of the house features large double-hung windows with one plywood sash in each window that can be adjusted to accommodate changes in sunlight. The roof is a butterfly design, with the crevice of the roof draining rainwater into specially-designed triangular downspouts.

On the interior of the house, the most striking space is the living room with sunken inglenook, built-in bench, and rare wall mural created by Kahn and Tyng in 1950 after the house was completed. The black and white geometric shapes represent the views that once surrounded the house. The inglenook is dominated by a large and heavy double-sided stone fireplace (that also serves the dining room) with thick stone lintel and wood storage area. Above the fireplace is a substantial timber beam that passes through the center of the house and is very reminiscent of a massive cooking hearth and "summer beam" found in Pennsylvania German farmsteads in the region.

Threat

Not everyone sees the charms of an unaltered mid-century home designed by a world-class architect. When the house sold after the Weisses passed away, instead of gaining new owners who appreciated Kahn's vision untouched or the Weisses' belief in the value of open space, a developer envisioned a subdivision on the large lot surrounding the house.

In 2016, East Norriton Township and local concerned citizens rallied to save the Weiss House from a plan to construct high-rise senior housing on the property. The plan was rejected by the township, and the house was placed on the local landmark list by the East Norriton Historical Advisory Committee. As a local landmark, the Advisory Committee and the Planning Commission must review and approve demolition permits before they are granted. The local ordinance may also provide some protection to the house should any exterior alterations be proposed. While these are very important protections, they cannot save the house from neglect.

While the property is periodically listed for sale, the asking price seems based on development profit potential. This is a classic preservation challenge when the land has more development value than the structure on it, no matter how historic or significant.

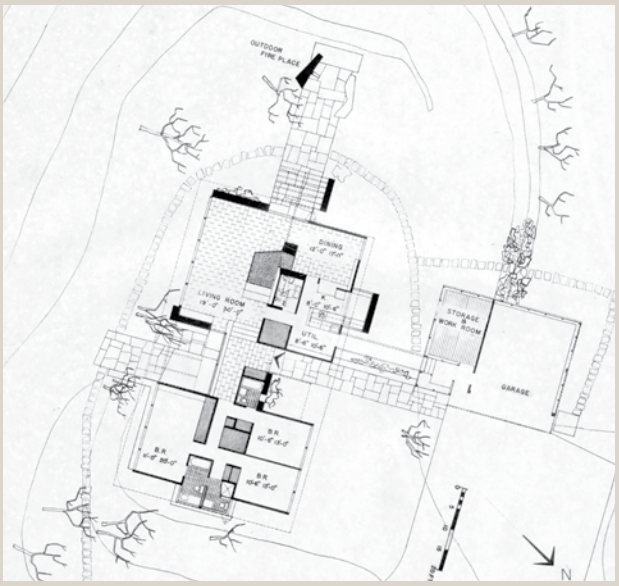
The developer has leased the property since it was purchased, and deferred maintenance is taking a toll on the structure. As of January 2018, the heat in the building was not working and the tenants were forced to rely on space heaters and the fireplace. The extreme temperature changes were causing condensation to develop on the interior of the windows. There was also an untreated leak in the dining room ceiling.

Change

Preservation Pennsylvania will promote the property on its website and work with partners to explore other options for preservation or compromise.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Spread the word and help us find a new steward. Kahn's one-of-a-kind Margaret Esherick House found wonderful new owners who celebrate the building's distinctive design features and recognize their responsibility to architectural legacy. The Weiss House needs the same kind of enthusiastic preservationists.

The dwelling is laid out in a very functional design, with public and common spaces (living room, dining room, and kitchen) occupying the western side of the house and private spaces (the bedrooms and bathrooms) to the east, with each wing connected by a shared entrance hallway. The design was honored with the American Institute of Architects Gold Medal in 1950. Site plan, 1950. Louis I. Kahn Collection, University of Pennsylvania and Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission.



Above: Lenore Weiss, Louis Kahn, and Anne Tyng at the house under construction. (Anne Griswold Tyng Collection, Architectural Archives, University of Pennsylvania) Below: The living room with rental tenants.

Camp Archbald

Panoramic of Ely Lake from Teachout's dock. Photo by Dave Teachout

THREAT: Financial Capacity, Environmental Degradation, Development

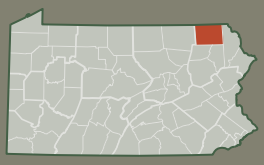
Local Girl Scout councils across the country, with approval from national leadership, have put up for sale more than 200 camps in 30 states. Camp Archbald, one of the oldest camps in the country, is one of these.

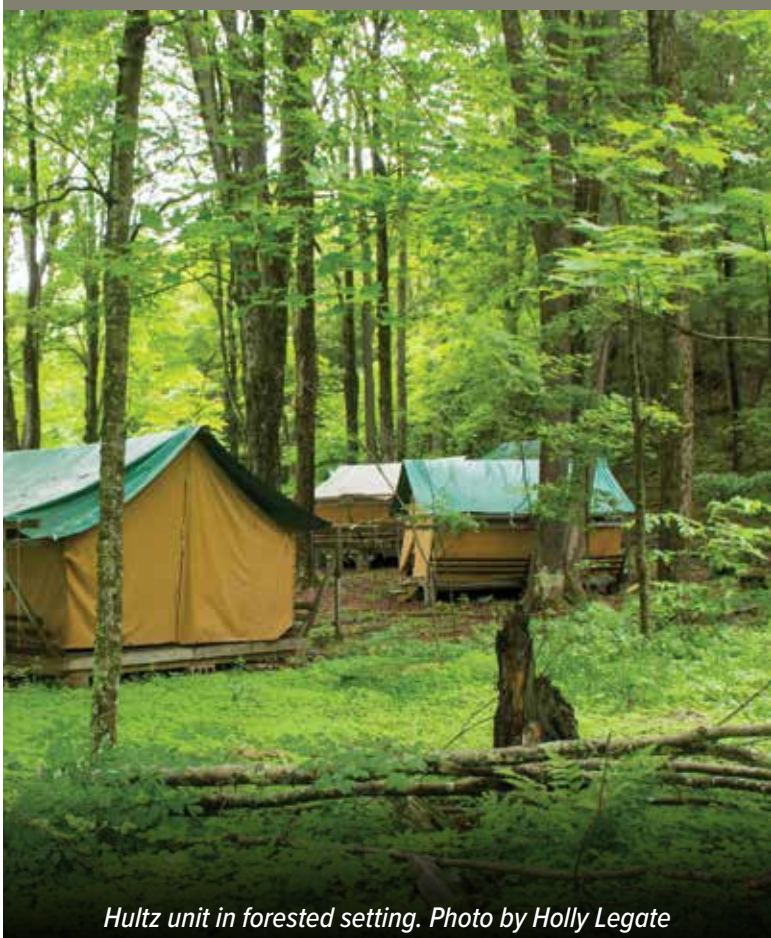
History

Juliette Gordon Low founded the Girl Scouts in 1912, with the ideal that experience in the great outdoors would help girls build confidence, courage and character. Camp Archbald, which claims to be the second oldest continuously operating Girl Scout camp in the United States, has been open since 1921 to give girls "the advantage of pure, fresh water and every reasonable camp experience." (Scranton Republican 6/17/1922)

The historic camp is situated on a secluded and pristine kettle lake ringed by dense, sloping hardwood hemlock forest. Accessible only by dirt roads, its 168 acres include woods, meadows, waterfront, a houseboat, cabins and other historic buildings. Original structures, one built of stone from a quarry located on camp property, have withstood the test of time and are still in use today. More than 9,000 trees have been planted on the site since the first land purchase. Camp Archbald is a place like no other – a time capsule of America's 20th-century ideal of youth summer camps as places to be "physically and morally invigorated by fresh mountain air, simple food, daily swimming and group living." (Leslie Paris, author of "Children's Nature").

100 CAMP ARCHBALD ROAD
KINGSLEY
SUSQUEHANNA COUNTY





Hultz unit in forested setting. Photo by Holly Legate

Threat

The 21st century has seen a rise in interest in STEM-related pursuits and a shift in Girl Scout programming away from engagement with the natural world. All across the country, Girl Scout camps are being sold off – with accusations by some that the national organization is underestimating the desire of girls to be outside and that profits from real estate sales are being used to pay high administration costs rather than benefiting youth.

Camp Archbald was placed under review last year for potential closure by regional council Girl Scouts in the Heart of Pennsylvania. GSHPA recently applied for a permit for Cabot Oil & Gas to build a fracking well pad on camp property. The camp is still operating year-round, open only to Girl Scout events and groups. It just completed year one of the three-year review period.

At a time when parents worry about too much screen time, and medical experts recommend being outdoors to help reduce anxiety and depression, camping getaways are an old idea worth saving!

Meadows unit cabins, Camp Archbald. Photo by Holly Legate

Trail around lake in summer (at right). Photo by Dave Teachout

Change

While there is already broad local support for preservation of Camp Archbald, the more voices the better! So far, 10,000 Archbald camp alumnae signed a petition to stop the sale of the camp and demolition of half of the buildings.

Follow the Supporters of Camp Archbald (SoCA) on Facebook for updates. (Their page name is supportersofcamparchbald) Preservation Pennsylvania will help negotiate the intersection of environmental concerns, open space conservation, and historic preservation.

HOW YOU CAN HELP: Can you refer us to free legal resources if needed? Help negotiate a proposal for Cabot Oil & Gas to place a conservation easement on the camp property? (Cabot already generously supports local charities including land conservancies). Can you help us find partners to map the biodiversity at Ely Lake (aquatic plants, wetland plants and birds, woodland animals and birds, meadowlands species, warblers/owls/bats/lake fowl, turtles/fish/lizards/snakes) for the Pennsylvania Natural Heritage Index? (See their website at naturalheritage.state.pa.us) Or help us find scientists to come do a BioBlitz in the spring when the lake comes to life after winter?

1966 view of Girl Scouts canoeing on Ely Lake. Photo by Frank T. Ely

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