

# HALE BYRNES NEWSLETTER

Winter 2014-2015



Board member Chris Mlynarczyk and a colleague presented an outstanding public program entitled "The Story of the 1<sup>st</sup> Delaware Regiment" on Sunday afternoon, November 2, 2014.

My name is Nancy Parker, and it is my privilege to take over the duties of Board President. I will do my best to carry on the tradition of protecting, preserving and promoting the buildings and grounds of this 18th century Quaker farmhouse and its Revolutionary War heritage. I welcome your ideas and comments any time. You can reach me by e-mail at [halebyrneshouse@aol.com](mailto:halebyrneshouse@aol.com)

It's almost time for our annual Open House, and we sure don't want you to miss it. Take a break from your holiday shopping and stop by and see us **Saturday, December 6th**, any time between 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Have some warm cider and cookies, check out our colonial craft exhibits, talk to our expert craftsmen and women and listen to some spirited folk music provided by Board member Michael McDowell and his talented wife, Libby. 'Tis the season to be jolly!

Incidentally, there are still two more programs on this year's calendar. Please join us the evening of Saturday, December 6, at 7:00 p.m., to hear Gerald J. Kauffman's talk, "The British Invasion of Delaware, August-September 1777." Then, on Sunday afternoon, December 14, at 3:00 p.m., join us for "Quaker Meeting Houses of Western Quarter," presented by Ruth S. Thompson and the London Grove Tour Committee. Admission for each program is \$5 at the door and includes coffee and dessert.

It's hard to believe we're coming to the end of another eventful year. Speakers in 2014 included Barbara Clark Smith of the Smithsonian; John Nagy, author of four books on Revolutionary War Spies; and Bob Selig, historian for the National Park Service's Washington-Rochambeau National Historic Trail. We were exceptionally privileged to host Sustaining Places' led by our own Board member, Nicole Belolan. The workshop was very well-received and provided a real service to area libraries and museums. Be sure to check out the "Events" page of our website, for our growing list of 2015 programs

The house will close for the winter, reopening on Saturday evening, March 28 at 7:30 with a special program entitled "The Revolution's Last Men: The Soldiers behind the Photographs" by nationally-recognized historian, Don Hagist. Well-behaved children always welcomed.

We love having visitors at the Hale Byrnes House, and the programs highlighted above are just some of the events held here. This past spring we again participated in the annual Christina River Clean-up. New Board member (and avid fisherman!) Rodney Hammond headed up the 2014 cleanup at our site. Next year's Clean-up will be held Saturday morning, April 18. Mark your calendars now! We also took part again in the White Clay Creek's annual Creekfest the first Saturday in May. In addition,

every spring, teacher Julie Dooley brings her young students here to stock the White Clay with microscopic shad fry they have nursed from infancy in their classroom!

Two *En Plein Air Artists* groups, one from Osher in Wilmington and one from downstate, visited us to sketch the house and grounds. What fun for them and for us! We hope share to the results of their creativity this coming spring at a proposed art exhibit featuring their interpretation of various historic sites at the Kirkwood Highway Library

Perhaps the biggest and best news this year is that we are in the process of repairing the steps and the walkways from our parking lot to our front entrance. Last year's snow, ice, heavy rain storms and memorable hurricanes undermined the mortar between the bricks to the extent that we have barricaded the area until repairs are complete. Safety is a top priority around here. We hope the repairs will be complete before our Open House, but if not, there is plenty of parking space along the road in front of the house.

There are other repairs that need to be made to the house as funds become available. We were blessed by a sizable donation from a friend towards the repair of the steps, and we certainly welcome your tax-deductible contributions any time. Another way you can support us is by becoming a member, and a membership form is also available on our website. Click here for Membership Information: <http://www.halebyrnes.org/membership.html>

We are grateful for all our friends who volunteer their services. There are too many to mention by name, but they are invaluable. We are always looking for new volunteers to serve as docents when we are open the first Wednesday of the month; to help as hosts or hostesses at various functions, and also to help weed the garden patches around the house! Again, if you would like to join us, contact Kim Burdick at halebyrneshouse at aol.com.

This summer three of our Board members rotated off the Board after many years of faithful service. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Barbara Miller and Virginia and Brian Bussey for all they have done for us. Three very talented new Board members have joined our team: Nicole Belolan, Rodney Hammond and Mary Torbey. We invite you to read more about them on our website. We thank Immediate Past President, Marco Boyce, for his good work and are happy to report that he will remain on the Board for another three-year term. His knowledge of the house and the landscaping is invaluable. Our list of "thank yous" wouldn't be complete without thanking Kim and Ralph Burdick for taking such loving care of the Hale Byrnes House. We cannot thank them enough for all they do. I also wish to thank our faithful volunteers Beth and Cathy Gray, and all of our Board members for their consistently good work.

I promised to keep this newsletter "short," and so will wind up by wishing you all the joys of the season and a Happy 2015! I hope to meet you in person one of these days! I plan to attend as many programs as I can. There's something for everybody, and "well behaved" children are always welcome, so bring the whole family when you come! See you soon!

Nancy Parker, Board President