



NORTHERN YORK COUNTY HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION

40th Anniversary Society

March 2024 Newsletter

**“A people without knowledge of their past history, origin, and culture
is like a tree without roots.” - Marcus Garvey**

Last month, with the help of *Clotz's Battalion of the Flying Camp; a member of the Brigade of the American Revolution*, NYCHAPS did what it does best ... providing a tangible means to personally connect with history. First Friday brought a full house of visitors throughout the Dills Tavern property and the evening was alight with music, games, and fellowship! Our reenacting community has been an important part of NYCHAPS history as well as a vital component of our continuing efforts to fulfill our mission towards education.

As part of our ongoing celebration of NYCHAPS 40th anniversary, this month's newsletter provides an inside look at our historical and current association with the reenacting community (see pages 4-6).

NYCHAPS is seeking a Distillery Manager!

NYCHAPS is excited to announce that the Eichelberger Distillery project is nearing completion and will soon be in need of a Distillery Manager. This will be a full-time, on-site position. The expected schedule is Tuesday through Saturday. Hours will vary and the responsibilities are many and multifaceted.



**For the full scope of requirements and responsibilities
associated with this position and to submit an
application, click here.**



Application consists of a cover letter and resume with two professional references to be submitted by Monday, March 18, 2024.

March Special Events



First Friday at Dills Tavern

March 1st; 7pm-10pm

In need of a cabin fever reliever? We've got you covered and it even involves Irish music with one of our favorites... **Across the Pond!**

We'll have great Irish drinks to sample, chess and checkers in the Wheelwright Shop, and everyone will be dressed to the 9s... in all green to celebrate St. Patrick's Day!



Admission is \$10 at the door for members and \$15 for nonmembers. Light refreshments included with entry. Guests must be 21 or older. BYOB

Hymn Sing

Sunday, March 17 from 2pm - 3pm

at Historic Monaghan Church

15 E. Church St. Dillsburg



Join your friends at NYCHAPS for our March Hymn Sing. In honor of St Patrick's Day, our hymns will be those with an Irish history or association - and that's no blarney! This is a

free event. Singing will be led by Clair Zeiders and historical insights will be provided by Herb Bomberger. You may be surprised at what you learn about some of the old-time hymns.

NYCHAPS 2024 Summer Camps

This year, NYCHAPS is sponsoring 2 summer camps!

- NYCHAPS History Camp is for children entering 4th - 6th grade and will be held at the Dills Tavern property.
- The Archaeology Camp is for children entering 6th - 8th grades and well be held at another location.

Please visit our website by [clicking here](#) for more information and registration!



Looking Ahead to April



First Friday at Dills Tavern **April 5th; from 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm** **with Stone House Breakdown**

Arrr, shiver me timbers! Everyone had so much fun at last year's Pirate Night that we couldn't let our First Friday season end without hosting another one. Come dressed as your favorite pirate and join the fun.

- \$10 members/\$15 non-members
- adults 21+
- BYOB with provision of light refreshments, tunes, and lots of friendly faces!

Sunday Tours Resume!

Sundays; 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

Beginning April 21st

\$5 for individuals

\$10 per family (immediate family only)

Children under 12 are free.

Our knowledgeable docents enjoy sharing the history of Dill's Tavern and can't wait to get started with our tour season! [Use this link for more information about visiting.](#)



Celtic Festival at Dill's Tavern

April 12th; 4:30 pm - 9:00 pm

April 13th; 10:00 am - 6:30 pm

Over 275 years ago, Scots-Irish settlers like the Dill family established homes, farms and businesses in areas west of the Susquehanna River as part of a new American Dream. The community of Dillsburg grew from those humble beginnings when Northern York County was still the frontier.

This legacy is celebrated annually with a 2 day, rain or shine event held at historic Dills Tavern to highlight Celtic history and heritage. Celtic crafters, artisans, vendors of traditional Celtic foods and beverages, musicians, and more will be a part of the festival along with family-friendly activities throughout the weekend.

Tickets are available for purchase online and at the gate for each day for \$15.00 and two-day tickets are available for \$25.00. Children ages 12 and under are free.

Ticket pre-sales end 48 hours before the event.

[On-line Tickets here](#)

[Entertainment Schedule Here](#)



Dara Kane (L) and David Biser (R)

Volunteer Spotlight: David Biser

Background information...

I've been a reenactor for 25 years and a first person interpreter of John Harris Jr. for 15 years now. The reenacting world had opened me to a really wide range of historic sites and experiences. The first person interpretation world has given me the opportunity to take a deep dive into history as it relates to a very real individual.

I learned about Dill's tavern while sitting around the campfire at a reenactment. The topic of historic sites came up and someone mentioned that there was this reconstruction effort happening at a historic location in Dillsburg by a private group of people who were making an attempt to take the building back to its original look. I have had the privilege to be at Dill's Tavern as a reenactor at Market Day's, at First Friday's, at Celtic Day's and historical timeline events. I've also been at Dill's for special events like a memorial service.

Favorite things about NYCHAPS and Dills Tavern...

The wonderful thing about Dill's is the opportunity to travel back in time at a location that is offering a historically accurate site where people can experience what it may have been like to live in the 18th century. I especially love walking into the cold stairwell where you can see your breath from a warm and cozy room. The stark differences in the creature comforts of life that we experience at Dill's allows us to be in touch with a world that is removed from us by 200+ years and that is a gem that is rarely offered to people today. Being able to fully engage in an 18th century atmosphere is such an amazing opportunity. I have brought guests with me to First Friday's and they are so very impressed with the 18th century immersion experience that Dill's Tavern offers. There is an attempt to relate Dill's to places like Colonial Williamsburg but, the difference is that everyone can enter in because there is no barrier to cross or velvet rope keeping people out of the full experience.

What would you like others to know about you ...

I have been a lover of history for a very long time. I honeymooned in one of the historic taverns in Colonial Williamsburg over 40 years ago and always wanted to be involved in colonial period interpretation. When I was invited to do a first person portrayal I found myself so immersed in history that it was all consuming. History is a wonderful journey of discovering very real people who lived back then just like we're living today. They had very real feelings about very real experiences. When we can peel back the romanticized or Disney like images of history and discover the real people - then history comes alive at whole new levels. That's why I wanted to write about John Harris Jr. It was my hope to share the life and times of this guy who lived the ups and downs of life just like all of us do. It's made me see history in a different way...it's become more personal.

NYCHAPS: A Home for “living” History

One of the unique aspects of the Dills Tavern “scene” is that NYCHAPS has always had access to reenactors – those folks who enjoy dressing in the clothes of days past, portraying how our ancestors lived in the 18th, 19th and even early 20th centuries, and educating the public through the visual portrayals about the history of our area and county.

When NYCHAPS was founded in 1984, there was already a small corps of people who dressed in colonial clothing, an extension of the Bicentennial. Even before NYCHAPS became the owners of the Tavern, several ceremonies and vignettes were presented to the public which were enhanced by reenactors. When Maple Shade Barn was dedicated as NYCHAPS property in 1992 the ceremony included colonial reenactors who were dressed in their garb and fired their flintlocks.

In 1998 a play (Recruitment at Dills Tavern) was presented at the Tavern, then owned by Bob Eichelberger, which required the actors to be in colonial clothing. (photo on right)

It seemed that once the Tavern became the property of NYCHAPS in 2001 local reenactors, both 18th and 19th century, found a home; a building that suited their needs to immerse themselves in the era they

portrayed. In fact, other local historical societies will contact NYCHAPS and ask if some of these “Dills Tavern” reenactors can participate in some of their events.



Once Dills Tavern became known as a haven for reenactors, organized groups asked to use the facility and grounds for meetings and events. Not only did groups converge on the Tavern but many individual reenactors became part of the Board and Committee members: George Platts, Steve Pancoe, and Mark Hagenbuch, to name a few. And, those who were founding members and staff of NYCHAPS soon followed by acquiring correct colonial garb.

When new members became part of the volunteer staff or assumed committee positions, they were nudged into “dressing the part”.

NYCHAPS: A Home for “living” History



Over the years many reenactor groups have become regulars at Dills Tavern because of the philosophy of utilizing the building as it would have been during their time period. Candlelight, fireplaces, and the material atmosphere of the Tavern satisfy the needs of reenactors who are interested in immersive history.

Groups who portray the French and Indian War, Revolutionary War (both American and British), Civil War (both Union and Confederate), WWI and WWII utilize the Tavern to educate the public about the history of their era.

There is really no other place like Dills Tavern where reenactors can immerse themselves so completely in their preferred historical portrayals. The Tavern is certainly a unique place that strongly supports the teaching of history through visual and active means.

Article by Mark Hagenbuch



Mark Hagenbuch has been a member of NYCHAPS since 1987. He shares the story of how he became a NYCHAPS fellow...” I became the Northern Elementary principal in 1987. My first day or two on the job I was at the Administration Building in town to meet the Superintendent, John Allison, when out the door came John Hoffman, a Board member of NYCHAPS. He looked at me and said, “So, you’re the new man. Do you like history?” I told him that I did that I had presented a lot of programs to historical groups on different subjects and I was a member of the Northumberland County Historical Society in Sunbury, PA. John told me that I would be joining NYCHAPS! Which I did and the rest is history.”

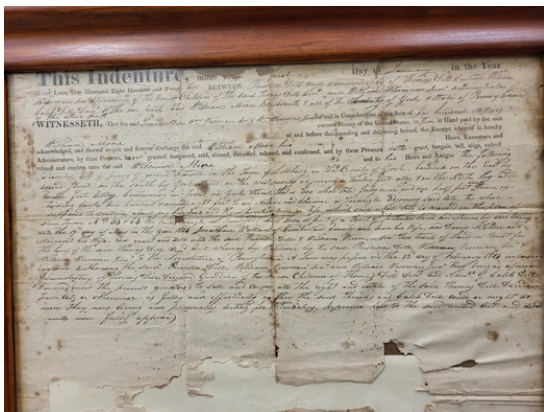
March is Womens History Month

The Story of Priscilla Dill

The town of Dillsburg is named after the Dill Family. A lesser known fact is that the town wasn't laid out until the third generation of Dills.

Priscilla Wierman married Thomas Dill (the grandson of Captain Mathew Dill) in 1775. When Thomas died in 1798, he had not left a will and by that time, the original 504 acre grant had been subdivided. This type of situation was unfortunate for women at the time as they had very few legal rights and owning property was not typical. Even minor children had to have a guardian named to act on their behalf. In regard to Priscilla however, there had been a number of real estate conveyances recorded from Thomas and Priscilla Dill in York County during their marriage. Thus Priscilla (as a widow) and her eldest son, Caleb were granted letters of administration on Thomas Dills estate in 1798.

The town of Dillsburg was laid out after Jonathan Wallace and his wife Anne, together with David McClure and his wife Margaret released two tracts of land (part of Mathew Dills original 504 acres) in 1804 to the estate of Thomas Dill (deceased.) In 1805 Caleb Dill, petitioned for valuation of the real estate and subsequently had a town laid out on part of one of the tracts, the land being unproductive because it lay on sundry public roads. Caleb died in June 1805 before the valuation was made. By a special act of the Pennsylvania Assembly,



approved February 22, 1808, Priscilla, widow of Thomas Dill along with William Wierman, Sr. guardian of the minor children of Thomas Dill were authorized to sell about 80 acres in town lots. There were only six houses in the settlement at the time. Standard lots were sized at 49.5' wide by 198' deep which in surveying terms equals 3 rods by 6 rods and created a 198' x 198' square half-block composed of 4 lots. Over time many lots were subdivided.

Mathew Dill Genealogy

A Study of the Dill Family
of
Dillsburg, York County, Pennsylvania
1698-1935
Part II
By
ROSALIE JONES DILL, A.M., LL.M., D.C.L.
Member New York and Washington Bar
Member of Society of Colonial Governors and Order of Ancestral Bearings
Author of "The American Standard of Living"

Your stories are important too...

This month we invite you to participate in a survey to help NYCHAPS celebrate its 40th Anniversary. Whether you are a member, volunteer, and/or visitor you have an interesting story to tell and it matters to us.

[Click on this link to take the survey!](#)

NORTHERN YORK COUNTY
**HISTORICAL &
PRESERVATION**
40th Anniversary Society



Celebrating 40 Years

We have much to celebrate this year and would appreciate you sharing your experience with NYCHAPS as a member, volunteer, and/or visitor! Your stories are important to us and we would appreciate your help by answering a few questions in the survey below. Thank you!



NYCHAPS 40th Anniversary Giving Challenge

The list below represents **specific “asks”** that will be important in the coming year. Designating where you would like your contribution to go allows you to support NYCHAPS in a way that resonates with you and we want you to be able to tangibly connect to our mission. Donations that are “unspecified” are just as important to our work as the funds support operational expenses. Either way, **we appreciate financial support of any amount... it all adds up!** The list below has progress notes and will be updated each month. Donations may be made using our [website here](#) or mailed to: NYCHAPS, P.O. Box 340, Dillsburg, PA 17019

Below are the opportunities to invest your donation directly to the program you would like to support!

| | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
| Education / Living History | | |
| 1. Student Scholarship(s) for the Children’s History Camp | 58% funded | \$130/260 |
| 2. Supplies to support the Children’s History Camp | | \$500 |
| 3. Guest speaker(s) fees | | \$500 |
| 4. Tavern candles | | \$200 |
| 5. Colonial Garden Supplies | | \$250 |
| Preservation | | |
| 1. Archives room map cabinet | 7% funded | \$1500 |
| 2. Archives room oversize scanner | 60% funded | \$1000 |
| 3. Preservation of antique fiber arts objects in archives | | \$5000 |
| Maintenance | | |
| 1. Replacing Maple Shade Barn gutters | | \$5000 |
| 2. Replace Maple Shade Barn printer | DONE! | \$500 |
| 3. Painting the exterior of the Dills Tavern west side | | \$5500 |
| 4. Painting the Dills Tavern soffits and third floor windows | | \$6500 |
| 5. Painting the Tavern modern kitchen exterior | | \$5000 |
| 6. Repairing/replacing sections of Baltimore Street sidewalk | | \$15000 |
| 7. Repainting, replacing, and repairing Dills Tavern Fencing | | \$3000 |
| 8. Adding new electrical to the Dills Tavern property | | \$3500 |
| Education / Distillery | | |
| 1. Distillery pumps/buckets | | \$200 |
| 2. Distillery totes | | \$300 |
| 3. Distillery Potable Water hose | | \$100 |
| 4. Mash Tun/Copper Kettle | | \$250 |
| 5. Distillery Storage racks | | \$500 |
| 6. Distillery Lab Equipment for Proofing/gauging | DONE! | \$1000 |
| 7. Bottle Filler | | \$375 |
| 8. Distillery scale | | \$1500 |
| 9. Distillery hydrometer | | \$500 |
| 10. Brix Reader (mash) | | \$400 |
| 11. Stainless taps | | \$200 |
| 12. Water storage container | | \$200 |
| 13. Distillery Laptop | | \$500 |
| 14. Mini Digital Projector/Bluetooth speakers for distillery | | \$700 |
| 15. Distillery Handheld Alcohol Gas Detector | | \$500 |

Community Interests

A Successful 1st Distillery Docent Training!

18 enthusiastic trainees warmly ensconced within the Eichelberger Distillery alongside our marvelous Murray Small... what better way to spend a Saturday afternoon in February! These volunteers learned about the history and process of distilling in preparation for becoming a docent.



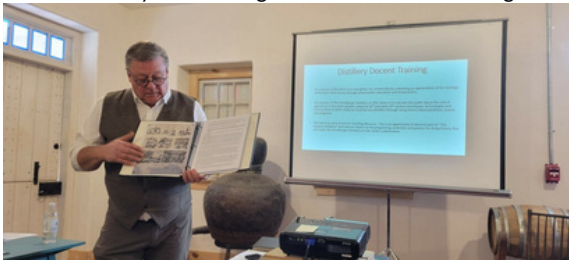
Each participant was provided a manual to study in preparation for the 2nd phase of training.

Murray sharing information about the historic distilleries of York County.



When the next training is scheduled, participants will be able to practice their docent skills!

Murray introducing the content of the training.



Some of the volunteers attending docent training.



Thank You

On behalf of NYCHAPS, we thank Laura Kise for her excellent performance as an intern this summer, as well as Carol Hickey for making the introduction. We would also like to gratefully acknowledge Sam McKinney for donating his time and knowledge to guide and direct her efforts, as well as her advisor at Bucks County Community College, Raymond Tschoepe.

As part of the next generation of preservationists, Laura will be a highly valuable resource for historic sites everywhere. We wish her the best in her future efforts!



Coming Soon!

| | | |
|---|--|----------|
| NYCHAPS 2024 QUILT RAFFLE | | |
| Retrofusion Quilt 85" x 118" | | |
| \$2/Ticket OR 3 for \$5 | | |
| Drawing to be held Saturday, December 14th, 2024 at Christkindmarkt | | |
| NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN | | |
| No. 0001 | Name _____ Phone _____ Email _____ | No. 0001 |

The 2024 Retrofusion Quilt Raffle tickets are ready to go! This award winning quilt has the distinction of receiving 2nd place in the Hand Quilted Quilts category at the 2023 Farmers Fair! It will make its appearance at this year's Celtic Fest. Tickets will be on sale during NYCHAPS events and Saturdays at the Farmers Market up until the drawing which takes place during December's Christkindmarkt.



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Society

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35 Greenbrier Lane Dillsburg, PA 17019
Office Hours: Tues-Fri 11am - 3pm