



NORTHERN YORK COUNTY HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION

Society

October 2026 Newsletter

“We are fighting, we have fought, for our liberties.” ~ Abraham Clark

250 years ago...

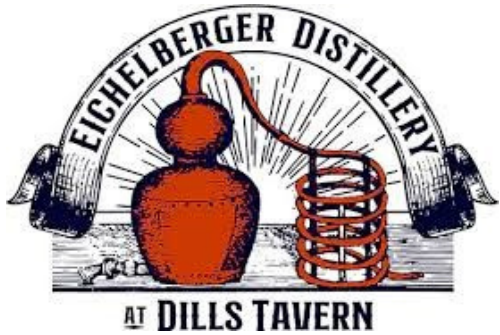
Several significant Revolutionary War events occurred in October 1776, especially around New York and Lake Champlain. The battles brought serious American setbacks, but successful delaying actions at Valcour Island and Pell's Point preserved American forces and disrupted British plans.

- October 11–13 — Battle of Valcour Island: Benedict Arnold's small American fleet fought a stronger British fleet on Lake Champlain. Although most American vessels were lost, the resistance delayed the British advance from Canada until 1777—giving the Americans valuable time to prepare for the Saratoga campaign.
- October 12 — British landing at Throgs Neck: General William Howe attempted to outflank George Washington's army by landing troops north of Manhattan. American resistance and difficult terrain slowed the advance.
- October 18 — Battle of Pell's Point: Colonel John Glover and a small American force used stone walls and delaying tactics to slow a much larger British column. This helped Washington move his army safely toward White Plains.
- October 28 — Battle of White Plains: British and Hessian troops attacked Washington's army, capturing Chatterton Hill. The Americans withdrew in good order, and Washington avoided being surrounded or destroyed.
- October 31 — Washington withdrew northward: Washington moved his main army from White Plains to stronger defensive ground at North Castle, frustrating Howe's attempt to trap it.

Impact on Colonists: Trade, farming, and travel were interrupted. New York City and nearby areas became increasingly crowded and unstable as soldiers, refugees, and prisoners moved through the region. Civilians faced military requisitions, raids, theft, and violence from armed groups of both sides in need of food, horses, firewood, shelter, and transportation.

October Regular Happenings

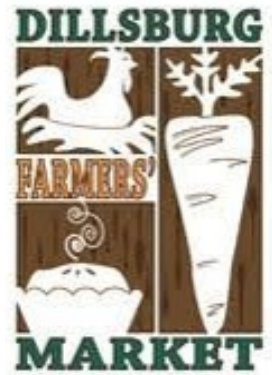
Saturdays at Dills Tavern



Distillery Tours Every Saturday
Noon to 3 pm on the hour
\$10



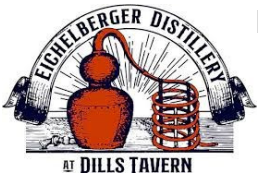
1st Saturday of the Month



Farmers Market
Every Saturday
8:00 am - noon
[Vendor List Here](#)



Sundays at Dills Tavern



Distillery Tours Every Sunday
1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
on the hour
\$10



Spinning Demonstration
October 11th
during Tavern tours



Tavern Tours - Every Sunday
2:00 pm & 3:00 pm
\$5 adult / \$10 immediate family

October Special Events

1st
FRIDAY

October 2nd

at Dill's Tavern

7-10 pm

Please join us for the start of our 1st Friday season! The evening's musical guests will be **Across the Pond**. This event is exclusive to the 21+ crowd and advanced ticket sales are

not available. Simply pay at the door when you arrive. Admission is \$10/members and \$15 for non-members. You are welcome to BYOB as well as bring your own dinner, snacks, etc.

Tavernkeeper Murray Small will be in the Eichelberger Distillery offering a special tasting program called "Drinks and Drams from Across the Pond" - inspired by his European vacation - for an additional \$10. [Reserve your seat at a tasting here!](#)



As a 1st Friday reminder...

TAVERN KEEPERS RULES OF COURTESY

1. The property is smoke free. Smoke breaks should be taken on the front sidewalk.
2. Clay pipes and Dills cigars may only be lit after 10 pm in the taproom, or in the wheelwright shop.
3. Fires and candles will only be maintained by the tavern keepers.
4. Guests are invited to use all of the rooms in the tavern and wheelwright shop to socialize, however, the tavern keeper has reserved the ballroom for those wishing to listen to the musicians. As a courtesy to our talented performers, please refrain from loud talking in this room.
5. Drink responsibly, or we will confiscate your horse!!
6. Please treat this historic property gently and leave it tidy at evening's end.
7. We hope you enjoy your time with us!

October Special Events



Celebrating Our Agricultural Heritage at Dill's Tavern October 17th 9:00am - 3:00pm

NYCHAPS is happy to be part of the Dillsburg community's Farmers Fair each year. Come enjoy activities for the entire family. Here you'll find apple pressing, sauerkraut making, corn shelling, colonial baking, fiber arts, smokehouse demo, sheep & farm demo, longhorn steer display, gunsmithing, woodworking, coopering, blacksmith demo, candle dipping, reenactors and a military timeline. Apple butter and apple cider will be for sale and the gift shop will be open. Enjoy a casual walk about the tavern and take in all there is to do and see. Add in a distillery tour (just \$10, 21+) and you have the perfect family addition to your Farmers' Fair week.

Come to the Tavern Gift Shop to get your copy of our Dillsburg Scavenger Hunt and discover more hidden gems within your community! This event will be held rain or shine.

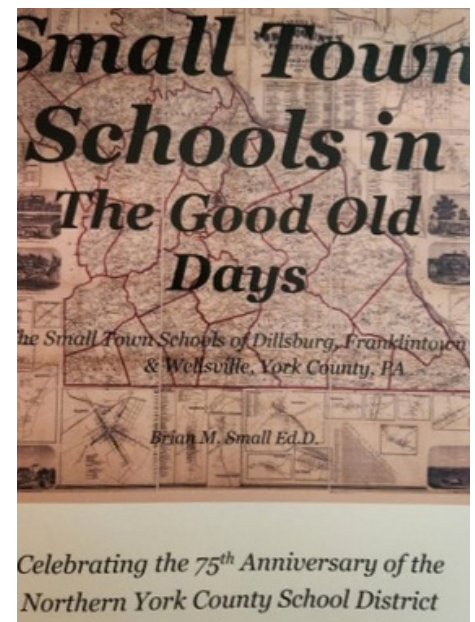


Book Signing at Maple Shade Barn Sunday, October 25th 1:00 - 4:00pm

Dr. Brian M. Small - some of you may recognize the name - was the Superintendent of the Northern York County School District from 1995-2009. He will give a presentation about his new book, facilitate a discussion, and invite questions and input from the audience before hosting his book signing.

This event is free and open to the public so invite your friends and learn about local history from a new perspective.

[Read more about the event here.](#)



Looking Ahead...

Women & Whiskey at Eichelberger Distillery November 4th 6:00-8:00pm



Take time out of busy lives and spend an evening sharing a historical meal together and making a decoration for the holiday season. Our spotlight spirit will be a Hot Toddy and there will be door prizes!

Get your program tickets here!



**1st
FRIDAY**

**November 6th
at Dill's Tavern
7-10 pm**



We will welcome Chuck Darwin and the Knuckledraggers performing Americana, Country, bluegrass, blues, and swing: acoustic boot-stomping music, as our musical guests. As always, Murray will have an educational spirits program available for those interested. More information about the evening and tasting tickets may be found on the link below.

Read more about the event here.

The Impractical Distillers: Vol 2.7

The First Two Years

Eichelberger Distillery opened Sep 7, 2024. We're on an amazing journey traveling back in time in our quest to recreate early Pennsylvania spirits. One of the characters we met on our sojourn was Samuel McHarry. We didn't sit down over a whiskey to converse because his book "The Practical Distiller" containing advice for early distillers was published in 1809. But his voice, personality, and knowledge come alive through the pages.

He states in the preface "when I first entered the business of distilling, I was totally unacquainted with it. I was ever so ignorant of the process as not to know that fermentation was necessary in producing spirits from grain." He continued, "and was certain the whole art and mystery could be learned in two or three weeks." Years later he had gained enough knowledge to write his manual.



Architectural research, books on distilling, visits to other sites and Moonshine University provided the basic knowledge to set up the Eichelberger Distillery. But operating a recreation of an early Pennsylvania distillery took McHarry! His pages contain detailed information gained by practice and discussion with fellow distillers who crafted spirits from grains and fruits found in Central Pennsylvania. Even with his insights and recommendations we face many challenges. He speaks "18th century"! Some of his terminology considered common knowledge then, is not that common in the 21st century. For example, "like grains of a timothy seed" or "until milk warm". Huh?

One of the first challenges to learn was building and maintaining proper fires under the boilers and stills. Firewood needs to be dried and split into suitable sizes. The fireboxes are four feet deep. Fires are started at the entrance and pushed into position with a poker. Lying on our stomachs, we toss logs onto the growing fire. The stripping still needs a robust fire. But too robust and flames shoot out the iron door into the distiller's face. The spirits still needs a smaller, steady fire. These skills took months (and a few lost eyebrows) to master.

The First Two Years continued...



McHarry provides specific directions for the masonry enclosure of the stripping still. His clever design keeps fire from touching the copper at the bottom of the still. His process routes hot gases around the sides of the still preventing scorching of the mash and a ruined batch. Initially we filled the still half full and ran her. This caused unwanted compounds to accumulate on the interior still walls. Though unstated, the still was designed to run filled with mash. Increasing from 25 to 50 gallons, not only improves the low wines but keeps the interior of the still cleaner and free of charred elements which affect the distillate.

These are just some of the many challenges we face on our journey to understand the art and science of distilling in the early 1800's. You can visit The Eichelberger Distillery and follow "The Impractical Distillers" as we share documentary evidence, period technology and repeated trials in our experimental history of early Pennsylvania Whiskey.

The Impractical Distillers: *Sam and Murray*



Wood Processing Volunteer Opportunity

While our current firewood consumption pales in comparison to the quantities documented in the historical Dills/Eichelberger ledgers, we still require a substantial supply, typically between 25 and 30 cords per year. This wood supply covers not only the distilling process but also warms the Tavern, Wheelwright Shop, Cooperage, and grounds during winter events.

NYCHAPS is currently cutting, stacking, and staging firewood on a property near Pinchot Park, and we are looking for additional help—even if you can only commit to a single day. You do not need a chainsaw to assist; we have plenty of work for those willing to help run the wood splitter or stack the firewood. If you are interested in helping, please email rconley@northernnyorkhistorical.org with your phone number and your general availability.

NYCHAPS Revolutionary War Project

Vol 1.9 The Local Militia

In the summer of 2026, the Northern York County Historical and Preservation Society (NYCHAPS) installed a Patriot display board on the side of the barn adjacent to its tavern. The board contained a list of over 700 names of men from northern York County (modern day Carroll, Franklin, Monaghan, Warrington and Washington Townships along with their associated boroughs) that provided support to the Patriot cause.



The names with a blue background represented men that were part of Washington's Continental Army, possibly initially as Associators. Others served as representatives of their townships on various York County committees formed to govern during a

time of war, or as County officials carrying out orders of the state and county committees. The remaining vast majority of men were part of the Pennsylvania militia.

A standing militia, given Pennsylvania's colonial government's Quaker leanings, did not exist at the start of the American Revolution. While there were volunteer organizations of Associators that had fought in the French and Indian War and provided for the defense of the colony, it wasn't until March of 1777 that Pennsylvania enacted legislation creating a militia. Prior to that time, men from the ranks of the Associators marched to Boston and to Washington's Flying Camp.

When the Militia Act was passed in March of 1777, all able-bodied men between the ages of 18 and 53, with certain exceptions, were required to serve in the militia, obligated to muster for active duty and attend stipulated exercise days. These men were subject to being called up to serve and assist Washington's Army as well as to assist in the defense of the frontier; the period of active duty was, however, typically limited to 60 days. Those who refused to serve were subject to fines and double taxation, or they could hire a substitute to serve in their stead. The use of substitutes was not uncommon – a younger son might substitute for a father needed on the family farm, an unmarried brother might substitute for a brother with a family, a servant might be sent instead of a master, a man who could afford to pay another to take his place was allowed to do so. But if no one showed up, a fine was levied.

[Read the rest of the article here!](#)

From the Garden Shed Vol 1.10

Garden Clean-up and Prep for 2027

by Gary A. Reneker, Head Gardener

It's already time to get ready for next year's garden.

Even if you don't do anything else, at least do these five things.



1. Garden Clean Up

Clean out and trash all plants that were diseased or had insect infestations. If you try to compost them any disease or eggs of unwanted insects are likely to survive composting. They will be everywhere in your garden that you use that compost next year.

Clean up any fallen "seedy" fruit, such as peppers, squash, and tomatoes. Often their seeds will present you with volunteers next season, and they may not be where you want them. If they are hybrids you don't really know what you'll get from them.

Remove unproductive plants and those whose fruit won't mature before our expected first frost of October 25th. Don't just pull the plants out. Cut them off at the ground, letting the roots rot over the winter. Mycorrhizal fungus will continue to feed your soil around the roots. When the roots finally decay their absence leaves channels for water and air to permeate the soil..

2. Plant Garlic

It's time to get next year's garlic in the ground. No, you don't have to buy expensive "seed garlic" from the garden centers. You can use the garlic from the grocery store. An even better idea would be to buy from one of our vendors at our Farmer's Market, because it is less likely that it has been treated. Only use the large, outer cloves. Just peel them off and plug them into the ground 3" to 3 1/2" deep. Plant it by our first expected frost date of October 25th, but not more than a week before that. What type of garlic? There are two types:

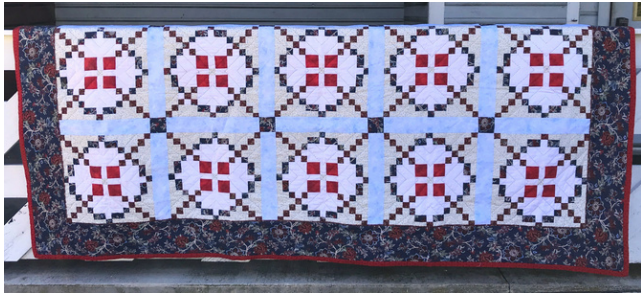


the soft core with a white center stem, and the hard core with a purple center stem. The hard core, or purple stem, is the best to plant in our region. The soft core is for southern gardeners. If you plan on storing it after harvest next year, the purple stem will last longer in a proper cool and dry storage area.

[Read the rest of the article here!](#)

Community Interests

The Burgoyne Surrounded Quilt Auction



The Burgoyne Surrounded quilt pattern is a traditional American patchwork design named for British General John Burgoyne's surrender after the Battles of Saratoga in 1777, a major turning point in the American Revolution. In the usual interpretation of the design:

- The large central squares represent Burgoyne and his British troops.
- The smaller squares and chains surrounding them represent the American forces that encircled the British army.
- The repeating arrangement across the quilt reinforces the visual idea of an army being surrounded.

Despite its Revolutionary War name, the design is nineteenth-century or earlier in form. One of the best documented is an 1852 quilt by Martha A. Page, now in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Historians credit the Revolutionary War interpretation of this quilt as a nostalgic/patriotic name given during the Colonial Revival of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The Maple Shade Quilters of Northern York Historical and Preservation Society (NYCHAPS) began work on this quilt to celebrate America's 250th. Designed by member, Winni Flynn, the Maple Shade Quilters spent more than a year designing, cutting, assembling and hand quilting this fascinating quilt. 30 blocks each containing 97 small pieces, plus sashing, corner blocks, borders, and binding. This totals over 3200 pieces in the making of this quilt. Additionally, the time devoted to creating this masterpiece was 890 hours by the time it was finished.

This special queen-sized quilt will be auctioned using a Blind Bid system. Participants may submit a confidential bid by filling out an on-line or paper form. Bids will be collected throughout the auction period. Once the deadline passes, all bids will be reviewed and the highest bidder notified. The proceeds from this auction will be donated to NYCHAPS for continuation of their mission: to strengthen our community by cultivating an appreciation of the heritage of Northern York County through preservation, education and living history.

The Burgoyne Surrounded Quilt may be viewed during Farmers Market Saturdays and Sunday tours at Dills Tavern. **Bids may be placed between October 1st through November 8th. The starting bid will begin at \$1,200. Please contact knellis@northernryorkhistorical.org if you have any questions.**

[Bids may be placed by clicking here!](#)

Community Interests



Wellsville Frontier Days HERITAGE PARADE

"A 65th Anniversary parade celebrating the SPIRIT of the Western Frontier"

Celebrating

65

Years

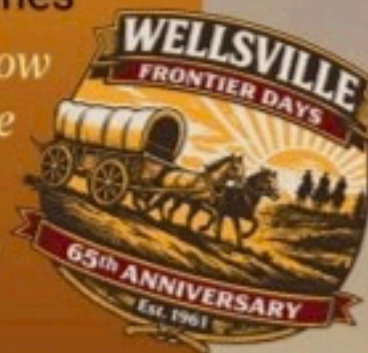
in
The Saddle

- | | |
|----------|----------------------|
| Floats | Horses / Riders |
| Wagons | Carriages |
| Tractors | Antique Fire Engines |

*We kindly ask that all entries follow
the "pioneer and western" theme*

★ (NO cars, please) ★

- AWARDS for Best:
- themed mounted (individual or group)
 - themed on foot (individual or group)
 - themed float or display
 - horse-drawn vehicle



Saturday, OCT 3rd

*Join the parade or just come to watch: entries open to the public
4-H clubs, fire departments, scout troops, community members, etc*

Parade route: Main St, Wellsville
parade to begin at NOON
at the Frontier Days
grounds 1621 Lisburn Rd.



Pre-registration required
(scan the link)

Contact Paula for more
info: (717) 554-7612



Community Interests

Balderdash and Cherry Bounce Winners!

On Saturday, September 12th, we celebrated Balderdash & Cherry Bounce with a great crowd, plenty to taste, and some friendly competition. After the casting of ballots, the winners were revealed! Thanks to contestants and visitors for participating and making our day fun!

Brews



1st Place Winners!
Jesse, Jeremy, & Erin
"Midnight Rye"

2nd Place Winners!
Justin Gesford &
Zach Grant
"Frankenstein's Märzen"



3rd Place Winner!
John Holf
"Helles Beer"

Cherry Bounce



1st Place Winners!
Tony & Carol Shahan

2nd Place Ties!
Greg Wonders
AJ & Stephanie Portmann



Thank you to Ms. Sue & Dillsburg Public Library

NYCHAPS and Dillsburg Farmers Market have really appreciated Ms. Sue's summer story times at Dills Tavern. It was so fun to see children gather to be read to and Ms. Sue makes every story engaging! Thanks for sharing your time with us!



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