



NORTHERN YORK COUNTY HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION

Society

November 2025 Newsletter

**“It does not take a majority to prevail... but rather an irate, tireless minority
keen to set brush fires in people’s minds.” ~ Samuel Adams**

250 years ago...

The events of November 1775 reflected the growing intensity and scope of the American Revolution. From military campaigns in Canada to significant proclamations in Virginia, the month was marked by strategic maneuvers and decisions that shaped the course of the conflict and the future of the colonies.

Of note:

- **On November 7th**, Lord Dunmore, the royal governor of Virginia, issued a proclamation offering freedom to enslaved people who would join the British forces against the American rebels. This move intensified the conflict in Virginia and had significant social repercussions, encouraging many enslaved individuals to seek freedom and, further polarizing the colony.
- **On November 10th**, the United States Marine Corps is founded at Tun Tavern in Philadelphia by Samuel Nicholas.
- **On November 13th**, American forces led by General Richard Montgomery continued their campaign in Canada, capturing Montreal. This victory was a major milestone in the invasion of Canada, intended to bring Canadians into the revolutionary cause and deny British forces a base of operations.
- **Ongoing**, Benedict Arnold’s expedition, though suffering significant hardships and losses, pressed onward toward Quebec City. Arnold’s men reached the outskirts of Quebec in November, preparing for a winter assault against British defenders.
- **Ongoing**, numerous smaller skirmishes and military actions occurred throughout the colonies in November 1775, including engagements in Virginia, South Carolina, and Massachusetts, as both sides sought to control strategic locations and resources.

November Special Events



1st Friday

November 7th

at Dills Tavern & Eichelberger Distillery

7 pm - 10 pm

At First Fridays, you can expect loads of fun with live music, snacks, BYOB, and more! This month, we're thrilled to have **Charlie Zahm & Tad Marks**, performing Celtic, Maritime &

Traditional American music, as our guests. So grab your friends, dress in garb, and prepare for a wonderful evening spent by candlelight at Dills Tavern.

This event is exclusive to the 21+ crowd and advanced ticket sales are not available. Simply pay at the door when you arrive – \$10 for members and \$15 for nonmembers. You are welcome to BYOB as well as bring your own dinner, snacks, etc.

Tavernkeeper Murray Small has created a tasting program that focuses on a "**Tribute to Veterans**", with libations from the Revolutionary War, Civil War, Navy, Marines, and a special cocktail to honor Vets from all eras. This program will be at the Eichelberger Distillery for an additional \$10.

[Tasting tickets may be bought in advance here.](#)



Hymn Sing

Sunday, November 23rd

2:00 pm.



Join Clair Zeiders in a hymn sing along. You will enjoy the music as well as learn the stories behind the hymns. This is a free family-friendly event in partnership with the Dillsburg Arts Council at the **historic Monaghan Church** in Dillsburg.

The historic Monaghan Church is located behind the Dillsburg Post Office at
15 E. Church Street, Dillsburg, PA.

1st
FRIDAY

December Events

December 5th; 7pm-10pm

Theme: Celebration of the Holidays



At First Friday, you can expect loads of fun with live music, snacks, tastings, BYOB (legally procured in PA) , and more! This month, we're excited to have **Seasons**, as our musical guest. While the instrumentation of the band remains centered around the Celtic harp and hammered dulcimer, over the years the band has added violin, mandolin, guitar, bodhran, penny whistle, and piano. They will be featuring music from both their Christmas albums, *Eventide Lullabye* and *Joy on High*, as well as some rollicking Irish tunes for a true Celtic Christmas feel. So grab your friends, dress in garb, and prepare for a wonderful evening spent by candlelight at Dills Tavern.

This event is exclusive to the 21+ crowd and advanced ticket sales are not available. Simply pay at the door when you arrive - \$10 for members and \$15 for nonmembers.



This evening's tasting program: "Hot Drinks Roasting On An Open Fire."

Tavern Keeper, Murray Small, will be sharing hot libations in the Eichelberger Distillery for an additional \$10. Sign up for this tasting on-line or at the door.

[Reserve a spot here!](#)

December Events

Annual Members Meeting and Potluck

December 4th - Maple Shade Barn - 6:00pm



We invite everyone to share in food and fellowship at our annual Membership Potluck. The night's events will provide a brief update on NYCHAPS happenings, followed by a relaxed meal. We ask that all attendees bring a potluck dish to be shared.

**Plates, utensils, and beverages will be provided.
Hope to see you there!**

Maple Shade Barn: 35 Greenbrier Lane, Dillsburg, PA 17019

Christkindlmarkt at Dills Tavern

December 12th; 4-9 pm

December 13th; 9-4 pm

Christkindlmarkt is a traditional German Christmas Market that takes place in the evening during the Advent season. [Details on our website here!](#)



Colonial Candlelight Christmas Service at Monaghan Church

Saturday December 20th at 6:00 pm



Have you ever wondered what a church service was like back in colonial times? This service will include music, readings, and candlelight. Following the service, a candlelight procession will lead to Dills Tavern, where light refreshments will be served.

The historic Monaghan Church is located behind the Dillsburg Post Office at 15 E. Church Street, Dillsburg, PA.

The Impractical Distillers: Vol 1.9

Uisce Bethea, The Water of Life: Water and its Uses in an Early Distillery

Uisce Beatha from the Latin term *aqua vitae* or water of life was first used by Irish monks and pronounced “ish-ka-ba-ha”. The shortened expression was anglicized to whiskey and became an important part of Gaelic culture brought to the New World by Scots Irish immigrants.

Obviously, water is a critical component in several steps of the distilling process. Equipment like barrels and tools can be sanitized with boiling water. During mashing, water at different temperatures converts the starches in grain to sugars. Yeast added to the mix of water and grain initiates fermentation which produces alcohol. Fermented mash is heated in a still creating vapor which passes through a tube immersed in a tub or condenser of cool water. The vapor condenses back to liquid and collected as “low wines”. The low wines are further refined in an additional pass through a smaller still to separate the components of the distillate. Finally, a small amount of water is added to adjust the final proof of the spirit.

Proximity to water was a key factor in choosing a site to build a distillery. Bucketing water was inefficient. Pumps, wooden troughs, and pipes used gravity to move water for various distillery operations. In a newspaper ad from 1815, the Eichelbergers described their distillery as “a still house with water overhead”. This implies water ran downhill to the facility. A site plan from 1833 shows the location to be on Campground Road along Dogwood Creek.



In today's Eichelberger Distillery we use wooden pipes to bring in cool water for the condensers from a hand dug, pre-Civil War well.

The Impractical Distillers cont.

Modern disinfecting chemicals were unavailable in the 18th century. Boiling water and fire cleansed barrels of contamination. We use 130-gallon, wood fired boilers to heat water. Fermenters are scrubbed and scalded with boiling water to eliminate microorganisms and bacteria hiding in crevices between the wooden staves. Mineral content, pH (acid or base) and other water properties varied significantly from one distillery to another. The distillers' experience (and luck) made up for many of the water quality factors monitored in modern distilleries.



Sanitized or “sweetened” barrels were used for mashing and fermentation. Mashing is steeping grain in hot water. Hot water and enzymes from the grain break down long- chain starches to short-chain sugars. After several hours of repeated stirring and additional hot water, the mixture is cooled (overnight) and yeast added to initiate fermentation. In 3-5 days, fermentation is completed at about 8% alcohol. Next, the mash is transferred to a stripping still and heated. As the mash heats steam is produced. Alcohol has a lower boiling point than water so the percentage of alcohol in the head increases. Pressure builds propelling the vapor down the lyne arm to a copper worm tube immersed in cool water. This causes the vapor to condense back into a liquid. The distillate from the first run called “low wines” and is generally about 20 to 25% alcohol. An additional second pass through a smaller spirits still concentrates and refines

the distillate. At this stage, heads, hearts and tails are collected and separated. Heads are more solventy, harsher alcohols while tails are heavier alcohols and watery. They are discarded or added to future runs. Collected hearts are mainly ethanol at 50-70% alcohol by volume (abv) which is 100-140 proof.

In a final but important role, a small amount of water is added to adjust or “proof down” the distillate from high proof (i.e. 120) to a more drinkable 100 proof spirit. The final spirit was consumed unaged in the 18th and early 19th centuries. Later whiskey was aged in barrels to further refine and develop typical whiskey flavors.

Mark Twain said “too much whiskey is barely enough”. A common opinion among distillers searching for an ideal distillery site was “never enough water”. Visit the Eichelberger Distillery to see the many ways the Impractical Distillers use water in their 18th century distilling process.

The Impractical Distillers: *Sam and Murray*

Community Interests



Last month's newsletter article, **Celebration of Barns** needed a clarification in its description of the **current** barn in existence at 35 Greenbriar Lane.

The original 1857 barn at Maple Shade Farm ("dwelling, barn and tenement") burned down in early 1900 and was rebuilt by Annie Mumper's second husband, George Koch (or Hoch) using a standing stone wall from the original barn. [You can learn more about the history of this building on our website.](#)



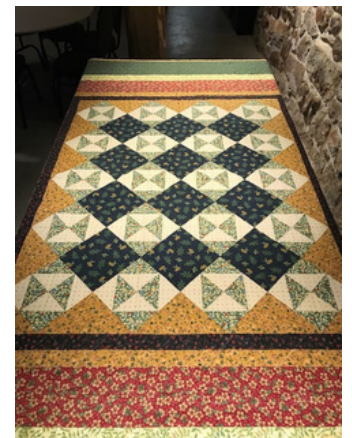
Thank You to our Volunteers!

October was the last month of public Tavern Tours for the year. We really appreciated the work of our docents and gift shop volunteers. While showing up on Sundays as well as 1st Saturday tours throughout the season, they never failed to share their enthusiasm for the history embedded within the Dills Tavern property and the families that lived there.



Another thank you to all our amazing volunteers who helped make NYCHAPS' Ag Day possible! Your enthusiasm and hard work ensured everything ran smoothly, and we couldn't have done it without you. There were over 850 visitors to our historic site on Saturday and 50 volunteers sharing their talents, crafts, skills and demonstrations! Again, thank you all!

Another Ag Day celebration goes to our Maple Shade Quilters! This year the 2026 raffle quilt, **Indian Summer**, was debuted and received best of show and a second place. At Dills Tavern, children enjoyed quilting on the demonstration quilt. Adult visitors read the educational display on how to make wool and linen fabric.



Community Interests

Cookie Baking Appreciated!

We plan to bake cookies again to sell during Christkindlmarkt. Some recipes may be baked ahead of time and others must be done closer to the selling date. The 2 dates for baking at Maple Shade Barn are **December 1st and December 8th starting at 10am.**

Baking may also be done at home! Please contact: knellis@northernnyorkhistorical.org if you are willing to help out. She will provide details and recipes.



Holiday Decorating at Dills Tavern November 22nd; 10am-1pm



Calling all holiday lovers! Do the sights and sounds of Christmas bring you joy? Do you look forward to Christmas decorating? Then you are exactly who we're looking for!

We would love for you to join us in bringing Christmas cheer to the Dills Tavern property on Saturday, Nov 22nd from 10am-1pm. You don't have to be a member to participate, you just have to love Christmas.

Assembling and hanging wreaths, wrapping light poles, and setting up festive photo spots are on the agenda. If you'd like to join in the festivities, please call the office 717-502-1440 or email admin@northernnyorkhistorical.org and we will gladly include you in the fun.



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Society

www.northernnyorkhistorical.org
admin@northernnyorkhistorical.org
Maple Shade Barn Office 717-502-1440
35 Greenbriar Lane Dillsburg, PA 17019
Office Hours: Tues-Fri 11am - 3pm