

Chester County Day's 85th Tour *of* Tours



Long Drive Manor

The United States is celebrating 250 years, *County Lines* Magazine marks 50 years, and the beloved local tradition of the Chester County Day house tour hits its 85th year milestone. Once again on the first Saturday of October, historic homes and iconic houses are open to the public, this year highlighting the northwest quadrant of the county.

Mark your calendar for October 3 to support this fundraiser for Chester County Hospital, made possible by generous homeowners and many volunteers. For more information about hours, tickets, lunch and the fox hunt, visit ChesterCountyDay.com.

Long Drive Manor, 681 Fairview Road, *Glenmoore*

Few properties capture the rich heritage of Chester County quite like Long Drive Manor (see the prior two pages). Its story begins in 1752 when James Moore Sr., Esq., established a 164-acre Penn Grant along the Brandywine Creek, building a sawmill and gristmill that supplied flour to Washington’s Continental Army during the Revolutionary War.

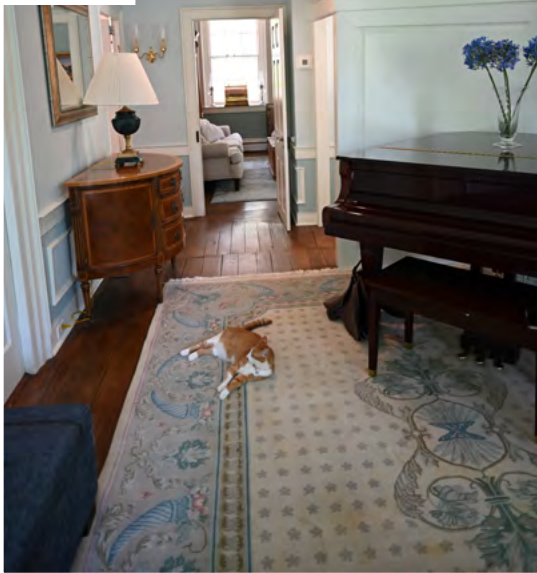
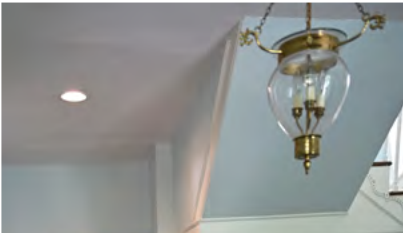
After Moore’s original home was lost to fire in 1795, he built the stately stone mansion that overlooks the site of the former mills and the village that became Glenmoore. The stone dam and remnants of the mill foundations are visible at the end of the lower drive.

The estate remained in the Moore family until the latter half of the century, when it became Brae Head Farm under the Howson family. Originally an eight-room residence, the home was expanded in the late 1880s with a six-room addition, followed by a farmhouse in 1908. During the 1980s, the historic mansion and its remaining 19 acres — including outbuildings and barn ruins — were preserved. The greenhouse and sheep barn were transformed into a charming guest cottage.

Inside, Long Drive Manor showcases the craftsmanship found in fine historic homes. Soaring ceilings, deep-silled windows with original glass and six fireplaces create an atmosphere of timeless elegance. The massive hearth of the original kitchen now anchors the dining room, while double doors and an antique mantel reflect the home’s Victorian-era history. Look for an example of an unusual style door found in our area — a reinforced interior shutter with sliding wood panel to protect the glass from storms.

Since 2017, Ann and Robert Davis have thoughtfully restored the property, adding a new barn, pool house, modern addition and gardens. Rich history, architectural charm and a beautiful restoration make Long Drive Manor a quintessential Chester County Day stop.

PHOTO CREDIT: PHOTOS HERE AND OPENING SPREAD, JOANNA FRANKLIN





VIP HOUSE: Bleeker Hall

221 West Virginia Avenue, *West Chester*

Welcome to one of the serpentine-stone “Four Sisters” houses lining the north side of West Virginia Avenue. Designed in 1872 by Quaker architect Addison Hutton, this Second Empire home was built for local attorney William B. Waddell, who served as a judge, mayor and in the state assembly. The home was later purchased by John Bleeker, a street railway engineer, and became known as Bleeker Hall.

Later divided into two residences, it was purchased in 2013 by the Murrys, who began the extensive work needed to bring it back to its former glory. Among the many restoration projects, the most recent was an interior overhaul by Miggy Mason of Holley Alley Interiors, who reimaged the layout to reincorporate it into a single-family home.

Enter through the arched front door with stained-glass half-moon window to see tall windows, deep sills, original woodwork and 12-foot ceilings. The foyer features brass star lanterns, Lewis and Wood wallpaper, and a 25-foot antique Persian runner.

The family room has modern furnishings and artwork that contrast with the arched Victorian bay windows and coal-burning fireplace. An adjacent room contains a large bar with stained-glass-windowed cabinets. Cross the hall to the long, formal parlor, centered by a carved marble fireplace and chandelier.

Down the hall, pass the impressive stairway with carved baluster and spool-turned spindles. Then enter the dining room through original pocket doors. A rolling ladder provides access to high cabinets and bookcases. A custom dining table fills the room’s center along with statement lighting fixtures. Original features include a fireplace and stained-glass window.

Pass the mudroom with storage cubbies to the new kitchen, featuring soapstone counters, fireclay farmhouse sink, subway tile and brass fixtures. The statement induction range and hood take center stage.

As you leave, take in the bluestone outdoor space with seating areas, hot tub, outdoor kitchen and firepit.

PHOTO CREDIT: KIRSTEN FRANCIS



VIP HOUSE: The Dower House
100 Goshen Road, West Chester

As we celebrate America 250, the Dower House had already been standing for 60 years when the Declaration of Independence was signed in 1776. The original dwelling on 150 acres on old Goshen Road dates from 1715, according to historic records. And to attest to its heritage, it is tax parcel 01-01-01 in Chester County, making it the first tax parcel on record.

The Wall family were the first residents in the log-to-stone cottage, which was added on to over the years. In the 1920s, the property was bought by Joseph and Dorothy Hergesheimer, who commissioned a complete renovation by well-known restoration architect R. Brognard Okie. Mr. Hergesheimer was a prolific writer of that time, and one of his books, “From an Old House,” detailed the restoration process season by season.

In 2013, the house was purchased by Lisa and Tait Norden. After living with the history of the property for 10 years, the couple added a period-appropriate addition in the style of the Okie restoration, this time undertaken by Archer & Buchanan Architecture and Rittenhouse Builders. The legacy of the home was honored along with updating it for use by a modern family.

Furnished with family treasures from the period of the house, the new addition shows how today colonial charm can be mixed with modern amenities to create a comfortable and welcoming home to enjoy. The Nordens are enjoying their new addition and treat it as a special present to their “Old House.”

For more on the oldest, continuously occupied home in Chester County, see *County Lines Magazine’s* February 2024 issue.

PHOTO CREDIT: JEFFREY TOTARO





Warwick Furnace Farm

810 Warwick Furnace Road, *Glenmoore*

Warwick Furnace Farm is located in the heart of the French Creek Valley, adjacent to the historic Warwick Furnace, one of the oldest iron furnaces in America, built by Anna Nutt & Co. in 1737. The furnace produced the first Franklin stove, furnished armaments for Washington's Continental Army, and manufactured components for the first metal-clad ship during the Civil War. Warwick Furnace's manufacturing role declined after the Civil War, leading to the property's transition to farming.

The farm is comprised of more than a dozen stone buildings, some dating to pre-revolutionary America, including the stone Ironmaster's House (c. 1738). In the late 1920s, the house was renovated by R. Brognard Okie in the Colonial Revival style for which he is known, and remains an excellent example of his work.

The property includes a formal tiered garden designed by noted landscape architect Thomas Sears. The farm's 63 acres are surrounded by preserved natural land with the pristine French Creek flowing through it, providing a transportive pastoral setting.

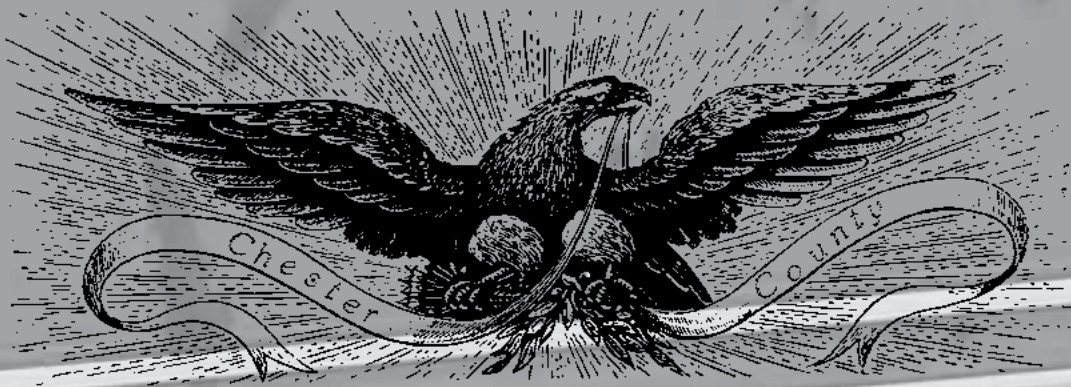
The Rosen family purchased the farm in 2017. The property continues to undergo careful restoration to revive its many historic structures under the direction of noted historic architect John Milner and overseen by restoration project manager Bill Schumacher.

The family operates the property as a lavender farm, with lavender distilled onsite to produce an all-natural line of small-batch, handcrafted home and body products.

A section of the Ironmaster's House, gardens and select accessory structures, including the art gallery and farm store, will be open to tour. Guests can also visit the ruins of the historic Warwick Furnace in the Thomas P. Bentley Nature Preserve. ♦

PHOTO CREDIT: CLAIRE ROSEN PHOTOGRAPHY

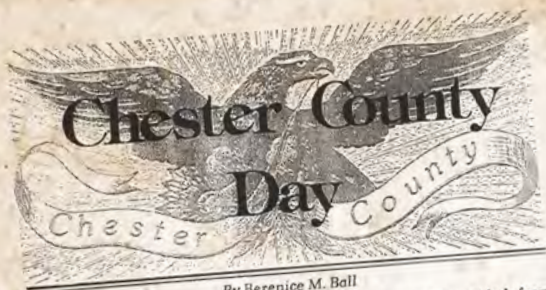




CHESTER COUNTY DAY

in County Lines

1978 September issue



By Berenice M. Ball

ANOTHER year, another first Saturday in October, another Chester County Day.

Ever since 1936, people, who appreciate fine old houses with treasured antiques, historic landmarks, beautiful countryside, rocky streams, old covered bridges, the start of a traditional Fox Hunt, and country food served alfresco, have come from almost everywhere to share Chester County's now famous Day. Last year license plates from thirty-eight states were reported.

However, even though the Day is now widely known, the bottom line is that this totally volunteer project has netted over a half-million dollars for the Chester County Hospital in West Chester. There seems to be a certain charisma about this Day and every one concerned — homeowners, guests, and Committee personnel alike — can echo Rupert Brooks, "This land is all that we have loved, and found, and known."

When the Day began in 1936, a dozen or so houses in the West Chester area were open for visitors. High tea was served at the beautiful serpentine country home of the first chairman, the late Mrs. William A. Limberger.

Year by year news of this "fabulous Day" spread until 1942 when World War II prevented the celebration for four years. From 1946 until the present however, the Day

has grown amazingly, aided from 1947 on by the annual publication of a newspaper sent free to all the previous year's guests or to interested new friends. Circulation has grown from four hundred to thirty-thousand copies. The paper that began with four pages now has twenty.

Even after thirty issues there is still much to show and tell about one of William Penn's first-named counties. There is no other publication like it anywhere, due, perhaps, to the fact there is but one Chester County.

Guests have always planned their own itineraries around special interests. Tours start at the chief information center, the Y.M.C.A., in West Chester. This year, however, there are four additional places where tours may begin:

1. The start of a hunt with Mr. Stewart's Cheshire Foxhounds, Unionville.
2. Coffee and a tour of the Red Rose Inn, plus a souvenir rose from Star Rose Gardens.
3. The Bayard Taylor Memorial Library, Kennett Square, where a special Bayard Taylor Exhibit will feature his memorabilia.
4. Opening of the Annual Clothesline Art Show at the Chester County Art Association.

All these special events, except the Hunt, can be visited during the Day. Promptly at 10 a.m., guests may

Promptly at 10 a.m., guests may begin to visit the homes of their choice by following the red directional arrows that mark the entire route. Because pre-planning insures a happy Day, it's wise to send for, or pick-up, tickets at the "Y" as early as possible.

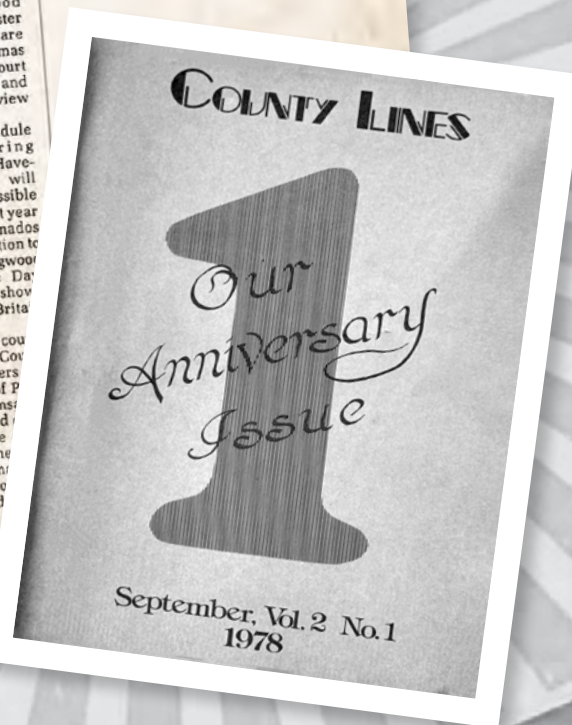
As always, there will be a limited number of Chartered Bus Tour tickets available for those who prefer to travel with a guide on a pre-planned schedule. Buses depart from the "Y" from 8:15 on, with the early ones headed for the Hunt. For Bus Tickets write at once.

The Day's Friday evening Preview Parties, begun in 1957, are color slide shows and commentaries scheduled for 7, 8, and 9 p.m. in the Conservatory Ballroom at Longwood Gardens the night before Chester County Day. Identical lectures are also given in Courtroom I of Thomas U. Walter's 1846 Creek Revival Court House in West Chester at 7:30 and 8:30 p.m. Tickets for either Preview will be on sale at the gate.

Many organizations now schedule a Day slide lecture during September each year and the Have-Slides-Will-Travel Committee will honor as many requests as possible for these private previews. Last year this hardy group of Day aficionados gave fifty such lectures in addition to the official Previews at Longwood and Courtroom I. After the Day slides travel to England to be shown at the American Museum in Britain at the Claverton Manor, near Bath.

No matter which part of the county is being featured in a Chester County Day, each visitor soon discovers time has granted this piece of Pennsylvania very special dispensation. Twilight may have descended early upon its rural Golden Age but few areas anywhere retain so many charming remnants of the rich, yet simple, well-satisfying life that was lived in the past.

If you were a tourist last year, the 20-page paper will arrive in your mailbox long before Labor Day; if not, please send a card request to the address below and a copy will be on its way. Tour tickets are \$7.50 each. Chartered Bus reservations are \$12.50 per person in advance. All tickets include program, map, preview party, and touring on the Day. Main Advance Ticket Office is the Y.M.C.A. in West Chester. Please address all communications to: Chester County Day, Box 1, West Chester, Pennsylvania 19380. It looks like another great one. Do come!



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