



THE ARCHWAY

Newsletter of the Friends of Brandywine Springs

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Mary Lou Lawlor & Angela Evans, Editors

Spring 2025

FOBS First Public Event of 2025



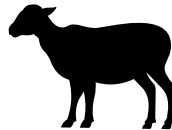
FOBS members Mary Lou Lawlor and Robert Cottrill greet the public at our booth.

FOBS made an appearance at the Greenbank Mills and Phillips Farm Sheep Shearing and Plant Sale on April 27th. We set up our park information display to share our park history preservation work and inform the public about our Walking Trail Improvement Project that is coming soon. The public was very supportive of our group's work in the park. Some people are still learning that the park has a very unique history and plan to visit to walk the trails to see our photo signs and the foundations at the sites. We hope that our interaction with the public may attract new members and encourage the public to attend our meetings. A special thank you to our hosts and the staff at Greenbank Mill who were ready and willing to lend a hand during the event. Special thanks to the FOBS public relations team of the day:

Mary Lou Lawlor, Angela Evans, Robert Cottrill, Don Richard, Klaus and Brenda Abele. FOBS will look for other public event opportunities this year. Please consider helping out—it is fun to socialize with our members and get the public excited about what we are doing! We will let you know when we have a schedule.



FOBS and Greenbank Mill have many members in common. Don Richard (in his straw hat) is a member of both groups and assists with holding a sheep during shearing.



Friends of Brandywine Springs 2025 Meeting Dates

March 9	April 13
May 4	June 8
July 13	August 10
September 14	October 12
November 9	December 7

Meetings are held at
The Cedars Methodist Church
Maple & Harrison Avenues
7:00pm



Annual Red Clay Valley Clean Up 2025
FOBS members - Mark Lawlor, Ed Lipka, Don Richard, and Robert Cottrill participated in this years event.

1886 Lease of Brandywine Springs Hotel - Between William Jenks Fell and Richard W. Crook

By Mark Lawlor

Once again, Jonathan Hunt (of the Fell family) has found some great, new information in the family files. This time it is his great-great grandfathers' 1886 lease of the "second" hotel. This 8 page long handwritten lease tells us many new details of the building and grounds. It is dated "third day of February, AD1886", between William Jenks Fell and Richard W. Crook. The first paragraph describes the land boundaries, basically the same land as the present park. It then reserves for Mr. Fell the use of the room in the hotel heretofore used as a Chapel, and full and free access to all "wagon, carriage, and farm roads" within the leased premises.

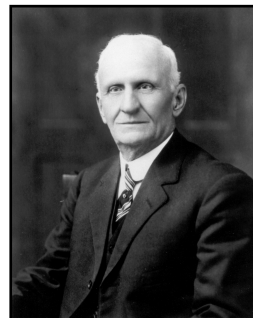
The following long quote from the lease gives us new information about the hotel. Remember that the second hotel was originally built by Matthew Newkirk in 1839, as homes for himself and his two daughters, so the building is 47 years old in 1886.

"Wm. Jenks Fell, trustee, agrees as follows - to have the front porch of the hotel building repaired by straightening it up, repairing railings and replacing balusters, to have the outside walls next to the road of said building (excluding frame annex) washed with China Calsomine [a whitewash paint], to have outside woodwork of the same building touched up and painted, to repair or if necessary to rebuild one flight of steps leading to the mineral spring, to repair the three gates at the carriage road entrances to the grounds, to pay for one half of the labor that may be necessary for restoring carriage roads on the grounds, to place the pumps and pipes at the pump house in good repair, to replace the hydrant near the stable, to furnish all the lumber and nails necessary for a pavilion to be erected on the site of the burnt hotel, to replace window glass where now broken, to have touched up and then painted all the inside woodwork of the first and second stories of the hotel building excluding that in the frame annex, to paper with wallpaper costing not over fifteen cents per piece, the walls of the following rooms - ladies parlor, gentleman's parlor, school room - hall and stairway to the third story, long hall in the second story from the east end to doorway leading into frame annex, and ceilings of the rooms above named, and of rooms 20,21,27,26 and 28, to repair plastering in basement dining room, rooms 10,11,12,13,25,26,28 and 33 and east end of Annex hall, to repair stairway balusters, to remove screen in first story hall, to remove large furnace in basement, to repair door in room 27, to hang door in room 28, to take down board partition in second story hall and replace door at entrance to annex, to touch up Calsomine in rooms 10,11,12,13, and 28, to put all locks and bolts in good order, to repair leak from roof into school room, to pay for all material needs for repair of and reupholstering of furniture and mattresses, to furnish shades for all windows in all windows in first and second story, and if level of water from basin will permit, to place bath tub in room near stairway first floor of frame annex with pipes for carrying hot and cold water to it with necessary stop cocks. Also "to clear the site of the burnt hotel, so placing the building stone that it can easily be hauled away when wanted, cleaning up the said site with grass and erecting thereon a pavilion". It was also agreed to abstain from keeping a bar or from "selling or disposing of liquors in any way" that would involve getting a state license."

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William Jenks Fell



Richard W. Crook

Walking Trail Improvement Project Update

FOBS leadership is working on communication with the Parks Department Project Team. We are confirming details to reach agreement on the trail layout, bridge design, and FOBS representatives being onsite observing the construction process. Stay tuned for more FOBS information via email and in the next newsletter. The County has a dedicated project website to follow at <https://www.newcastlede.gov/2553/Brandywine-Springs-Park>

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We did not know before this that there was a school room, mens and ladies lounges, at least 33 rooms, a basement dining room, and a door separating the west addition “annex” from the rest of the hotel. It seems very unusual that the rubble of the first “burnt hotel” still needs to be cleared, considering the fact that the first hotel burned down in Dec. of 1853 – 33 years prior!

With some money going towards the above mentioned repairs, Richard Crook agreed to pay \$300 for the first year, and \$50 a month in the second year. In the third year [1888], the “option of a continuance of this lease” would be \$75 a month. ~



Photo of the Second Hotel - C. 1910, from the Jabez Banks Collection



FOBS member Patricia Goodman donated her Brandywine Springs postcard collection to our group. Her card collection of 129 postcards, expertly housed in photo sleeves and a binder are a treasure and tell a story of the life and times of the park era. It is very interesting to see the array of post mark dates and postal locations along with the messages written in English and other foreign languages. Pat also donated 2 porcelain park souvenirs. Thank you very much for this precious gift and your years of support that you have given to FOBS. This collection will stay intact as the core of our new FOBS postcard collection, to which others may add to in the future.

Welcome New Members - Robert Cottrill and Michael Baroski !!

This & That...Amy Sonders of Vero Beach Florida sent us a copy of the 1909 People's Railway Company photobooklet : "Sightseeing Trip from Philadelphia to the Historic Brandywine Springs Park" This book is so rare, we have only seen 4 or 5 copies of it. Thank you very much Amy! Thank you Mary Lou Lawlor for becoming the Administrator of our Facebook Page! Thank you to Greenbank Mill for supporting FOBS at the Sheep Shearing Event!

FOBS will be holding public outreach events this year. Please consider helping staff the information booth to tell about the history of the park and our group. Questions, comments, ideas, Please contact Mary Lou Lawlor email : mlawlor@verizon.net or 302-994-8929.

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Vice President : Mark Lawlor
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Klaus Abele
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Jonathan Hunt

Website: www.fobsde.org

2025 Membership Renewal form Enclosed

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