

Newsletter for North Coventry Township

A History of Coventry Woods

In the previous township newsletter, I gave a history of North Coventry Township, which has a varied and interesting history. In this newsletter I will focus on the history that connects our land to the Iron Ore industry of northern Chester County.

As there are no iron forges, furnaces, or known iron ore deposits in our township, it would be easy to overlook our township's connection to the industry; however, in the eighteenth century, speculators bought land in northern Chester County that was forested. (At that time, North Coventry Township was known as 'The Forest.')

Speculators familiar with the iron ore industry knew that these forests provided wood that, when turned into charcoal, would keep iron forges and furnaces operating. In the western portion of our township, the area of Chestnut Hill was owned by men who also had interests in the iron forges and furnaces; the landowners included Branson, Hartley, Nun and Potts. In 1730, a large portion of Chestnut Hill was known as the Chestnut Hill Lands of Coventry Iron Works, owned by Nutt and Branson. Hearths were built into the hill sides of Chestnut Hill so that wood could be stacked for the making of charcoal. This early period of hearth building was the colonial period of the Iron Ore Industry in Chester County.

By the later part of the eighteenth century, Hopewell Furnace was established in Union Township, Berks County. Maps show that Chestnut Hill was owned exclusively by Hopewell Furnace. Hopewell's century of operation into the 1880s required numerous charcoal hearths on Chestnut Hill. Today, trails in Coventry Woods connect to thirty or more of these charcoal hearths. During the years of Hopewell ownership, township residents were employed by Hopewell as colliers, who had the overall responsibility for making charcoal, and in other positions. In 1860 there were ten colliers in the township: John Bachman whose family lived across from Shenkel church; David, Samuel and David, Jr., Shafer. David Shafer began working for Hopewell in 1818 and continued for forty years. He had nine sons, with many following him into the collier business. The ruins of David Shafer's farm can be seen along Hill Camp Road. Later when in retirement, David lived on Sheephill Road north of Cedarville. His sons lived in a farm along Cold Springs Road. Lewis and William McFarland who lived on Coventryville Road were colliers, as well as Peter Good of Fernbrook Lane, Jesse Amole, and two others.

In 1860 Shenkel Road was used by Hopewell to reach the wharfs at Pottstown Landing in order to ship their goods to areas in and around Philadelphia and Reading.

When the hearths became silent with the closing of Hopewell, land in Chestnut Hill was sold off to local farmers who used the lots for their winter supply of wood fuel. A local butcher, Charles Boyer, bought a section of the Hill in 1928 that he farmed and turned into a camp. By 1930 Mr. Boyer decided to build 'Camp Adahi,' which would be used by the Camp Fire Girls. In the depression he created jobs for local unemployed men by building cabins and a camp lodge. In 1946, the camp became known as 'Camp Fernbrook' when Boyer sold the property to the Reformed Church under the supervision of the Shenkel United Church of Christ. At the time Charles Boyer built a house along St. Peter's Road.

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Fall 2011

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The Camp Fernbrook portion of Chestnut Hill was obtained by our township in 2008 using Open Space monies. Fernbrook and the other parts of Chestnut Hill owned by our township contain cart trails and charcoal hearths in this historically sensitive area for hiking and the outdoor enjoyment of our residents as we connect to our iron ore past.

Gladys McGrath, a member of the Township Historical Commission, has mentioned that David Shafer, collier, is written about in Joseph E. Walker's book, 'Hopewell Village.' For anyone who wishes to further their understanding of the Iron Ore Industry of our area, Walker's book is available at the Pottstown Library. Gladys notes that a local resident with a team of horses was someone employable for Hopewell. In 1823 Shafer was under contract with Hopewell to haul wood to make charcoal. During this time he could have his horses shod at Hopewell as needed. Shafer was paid 10 cents a cord, which could run into the hundreds. On average a charcoal hearth consumed 30 cords of wood to produce 1,100 bushels of charcoal. In all, 800 bushels of charcoal were needed to keep a forge or furnace in operation for a day. Further, to make iron three components were needed: charcoal, a supply of iron ore, and a flux, usually limestone.

As mentioned earlier, Chestnut Hill still has numerous hearths; however, the iron ore mines were not located in our township, as they were more likely in Warwick and Union Townships. In July I took a 'Town Tour and Village Walk' of the borough of Elverson. The tour guide stated that wagon loads of iron ore from a mine in Warwick Township were hauled to a local furnace by traveling south on Elverson Road to Ridge Road (Route 23), stopping at a tavern in the village, and continuing onward. For those of our readers unfamiliar with 'Town Tours and Village Walks,' the tours are held on Thursday evenings through out the summer. This year Chester County Parks and Recreation, which is responsible for the towns and villages selected, held all ten tours in the northern Chester County Iron Ore area. Tours are free and fun, and brochures are usually available in the township office in May.

- E. Spencer Claypoole, Chairman, North Coventry Township Historical Commission.

North Coventry Township Police Department

The North Coventry Police Department is comprised of thirteen full-time and two part-time police officers, a part-time Fire Marshal and a full-time Office Manager that provide twenty four hour service and protection to the residents of North Coventry Township. North Coventry Officers respond to almost 6,000 calls a year for police service.



North Coventry Officers have specialized skills in the area of accident investigation/reconstruction, criminal investigation, DARE, commercial motor vehicle enforcement, and firearms instruction, just to name a few. The Police Department also has one officer certified in the installation of child safety seats. To make an appointment for an installation you may call the Police Department Business Office during regular business hours Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm 610-323-8360.

As we approach the winter driving season it is important to double-check your vehicle to make sure it is ready for inclement weather. Items such as windshield wipers and proper tire tread depth are important factors in keeping you safe during winter driving. Take time to clear your car of snow and ice. Not only does this eliminate dangerous situations, it is also a requirement under the Pennsylvania Motor Vehicle Code. As always please make sure you wear your seatbelt as it is the law in Pennsylvania.

Always remember that our officers are on duty twenty four hours a day and can be reached at our Dispatch center through Pottstown Police at 610-323-1212. The 911 system is to be utilized for emergencies only.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you observe suspicious activity in your neighborhood. Also please make sure you lock your vehicles as numerous theft from vehicles can be prevented by locking your cars and keeping valuables out of sight. The police department utilizes a traffic trailer to display vehicle speeds as a reminder of the posted speed limit. If you would like to have the speed trailer deployed on your street, please contact our Police Officer Manager Ann Gery.

Directory

TOWNSHIP OFFICE | 845 S. Hanover Street

Phone: 610-323-1694 Fax: 610-323-7239

The Township building and police administrative offices are open
Monday through Friday, from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Board of Supervisors 2nd & 4th Mondays, 7pm

Andrew J. Paravis, *Chairman*
Harvey Greenawalt, *Vice-Chairman*
E. Kent High
Jim Marks
E. Spencer Claypoole

Planning Commission 3rd Wednesday, 7pm

Jay Kline, *Chairman*
Pat Washburn, *Vice-Chairman*
Dennis Gallino
David Mariano
Phyllis Chambers
James White

Zoning Hearing Board 2nd & 4th Thursdays as needed, 7pm

Albert Wrigley, *Chairman*
Richard Scheler, *Vice-Chairman*
Virginia Lebon
Ed DiCesare
Charles G. Stacks
Glen Hoff-Alt

Parks And Recreation 1st Wednesday, 7:30pm

Jay Erb, *Chairman*
Michael Trahey
Jeremy Dalton
Colleen Skelton
John Ellwanger
David Edleman
Steve Weil

Environmental Advisory Council

3rd Wednesday, 6:30pm
Adam Sager, *Chairman*
Jay Kline
John Werth
Bill Cannon
Kim White

Historical Commission 3rd Thursday, 7pm

Spencer Claypoole, *Chairman*
Isabel Rosewarne
Mary Ann Davidheiser
Joan Cleveland
Pat Smith
Alice Sharp
Gladys McGrath
Cheryl Barr
Louise Griffiths

Open Space Review Board

4th Tuesday, 7pm
Chris Washburn, *Chairman*
Andy Paravis
Susan Deegan-Watson
Phyllis Chambers
Spencer Claypoole
John Ellwanger

Municipal Authority 4th Tuesday, 7:30pm

Jay Meloy, *Chairman*
Dennis Hullmann
Robert W. Barlow
Richard Armstrong
Tim Forester
James D. Scheffey
Solicitor
Steve Dunning, *Manager*

Water Authority 3rd Monday, 7pm

Dennis Hullmann, *Chairman*
Timothy Forester
Barry Boettlin
Mike Gammon
W.E. Wampler
Keith Learn
Ken Bickel
James D. Scheffey
Solicitor
Steve Dunning, *Manager*

Township Manager

Kevin Hennessey
610-323-1694
Financial Officer
Debbie Giordano
610-323-1694

Administrative Assistant

Lois Lucas
610-323-1694

Building Code/Zoning Officer

Deborah Russo
610-323-1694

Road Department

Joe Wood, *Road Master*
Rick Kirk
Steve Shillinger
Dave Bertolet
Howie Wagner
Dave Rishel

Real Estate Tax Collector

Nance Sparks
610-970-0334

Fire Department

Norco Firehouse
610-323-3263
Fire Dept Fax
610-327-0714

Fire Marshal

Ron Comtois
610-323-1694

Fire Chief

Terry Hipple

Emergency Management

Randall Richter
610-323-4663

Police Department For all police, fire and Medical emergencies: dial 911

non-emergencies
call 610-323-8360
Fax: 610-326-2925
Police Chief
Robert Schurr
610-323-8360

Police Administration Manager

Ann Gery
610-323-8360

Pennsylvania Game Commission

610-926-3136

District Justice James DeAngelo 610-469-1910

State Senator 44th District John Rafferty 610-469-8390

State Representative 26th District Tim Hennessey 610-326-2626

Chester County Court House 800-692-1100

OJR School District 610-469-5100



Permits - Building and Zoning

DO I NEED A PERMIT?

In our efforts to promote the general health, safety, and welfare of the citizens of North Coventry Township, the Board of Supervisors adopted the UCC regulation as to what types of alterations and repairs to a dwelling require a permit. Below is a summary of most of the permitting requirements. The types of alterations that are most affected are the installation of new piping, wiring, lighting, heating and cooling.

Zoning Permit Required

- ◊ Sheds
- ◊ Pools where water depth is greater than 24" deep
- ◊ Fences
- ◊ Additions
- ◊ Garages (attached or detached)
- ◊ Decks
- ◊ Driveway (new or extension)
- ◊ New homes
- ◊ Patios
- ◊ Any change of use or occupancy of a commercial building
- ◊ No-impact home-based business
- ◊ Signs
- ◊ Demolition of a structure

Building Permit Required

- ◊ Accessory structures greater than 500SF (sheds, detached garages)
- ◊ Pools where water depth is greater than 24" deep
- ◊ Additions
- ◊ Decks over 30" above grade or supported by a dwelling
- ◊ Commercial repairs, additions, improvements or alterations
- ◊ New dwellings or buildings
- ◊ Roofs or patios
- ◊ New windows or doors in a load bearing wall of a dwelling
- ◊ Any change of occupancy to a commercial building
- ◊ Signs at commercial properties
- ◊ Temporary structures
- ◊ Mechanical additions such as piping, wiring, lighting, heating and cooling
- ◊ Driveway (new, extension, or repaving)

No Permit Required

- ◊ Roof replacement on a residential structure
- ◊ Siding replacement
- ◊ Retaining walls not over 4' high
- ◊ Non-bearing walls in a dwelling
- ◊ Residential swings and playgrounds



- ◊ Pools where water depth is less than 24" deep
- ◊ Gutters and downspouts
- ◊ Appliance replacement
- ◊ Security systems
- ◊ Propane or liquefied petroleum appliances and associated piping
- ◊ Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, countertops, and similar finishing work
- ◊ Replacing a furnace with the same size and same type
- ◊ Replacement Windows

- Deborah Russo,
Building Inspector & Zoning Officer

North Coventry Township Open Burning Ordinance | No Burning Allowed



EXCEPTIONS:

The following four (4) exceptions require a permit issued by the Department of Environmental Protection's Regional Air Quality Program Office prior to acquiring a

Township Permit issued by the Fire Marshal:

1. A fire set to prevent or abate a fire hazard;
2. Any fire set for the purpose of instructing personnel in fire fighting;
3. A fire set for the prevention of and control of disease or pests;
4. A fire set for the purpose of burning clearing and grubbing waste. An air curtain destructor must be used and approved by DEPRAQO.

The following exception does not require a DEP permit, provided that the premises complies with 25PA CODE 129.14. (The property is a working farm producing an agricultural commodity.) A Township Permit issued by the Fire Marshal is required.

5. A fire set in conjunction with the production of agricultural commodities.

The following exceptions do not require a permit, provided the fire is contained within a chimenea, fire pit, fire bowl, fireplace, barbeque grill, or other containment approved by the Fire Marshal. (Note: Bon fires are not included, and require a permit issued by the Fire Marshal.)

6. *A fire set solely for cooking food.*
7. *A fire set solely for recreational or ceremonial purposes.*

- Ron Comtois, Fire Marshal

Leaves, Then Snow The Top Priorities for Road Department



Each year, as we prepare for the approach of autumn and, eventually, the winter months, our thoughts turn to two major undertakings: falling leaves and falling snow. North Coventry Township now has a yard waste recycling program. We pick up branches and yard waste in the spring and fall of the year. To make the roads safer we try to get rid of the leaves before the snow falls. The Township Road Department owns a leaf vacuum, which we use for removing leaves **mainly from the roads and developments that have curbing.** These areas usually have storm inlets that can become clogged with leaves. We use the leaf vacuum in these areas to try to alleviate road flooding. The Road Department has no objections to residents piling their leaves along the road in these areas. However the leaf piles must be free of debris, such as sticks, stones or trash for safety reasons to avoid injury/damage to employees and equipment. If you reside in an area other than a development or curbed area and have leaves to pick up, contact the township office to schedule a pick up date. **Do not bag your leaves. The Township will not pick up bagged leaves.** We will be running the vacuum during the month of November, weather permitting. The last vacuum clean

up will be the week of December 5th. All leaves should be out by December 4th in order to not miss the final pickup. Leaves that are left piled after collection is over will not be picked up, and only serve to create problems in the form of clogged storm inlets and street flooding and ultimately

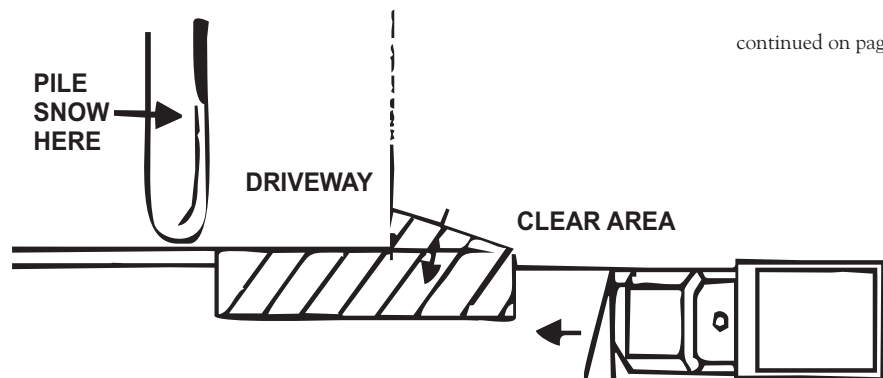
will be plowed back on your property with the next snow storm. The Road Department does not post a collection schedule. However, if you have any questions regarding a possible time frame for collection in your area, you can call the Township office and we will try to provide an approximate time for collection. In the wooded and rural areas the road department uses a leaf blower to blow leaves back into the woods. If you live in these areas **do not rake or blow your leaves out to the street. They will be blown back into your yard.** Remember Arborganic Acres at 901 Cherry Hill Lane will accept leaves from township residents free of charge in bulk or in brown paper bags (NO plastic bags).

Once fall has passed we turn our attention to snow removal. North Coventry Township has long been recognized for its outstanding snow

removal operations, ensuring safe passage through the Township during snow events. The Road Department is grateful to the many residents who have thanked us over the years for a job well done. However, there are areas of concern for which residents should be aware. The first involves residents who live on a cul-de-sac road. These areas provide a snow removal challenge because of the limited areas where plows can pile the snow. We ask that all residents please do not park vehicles in the cul-de-sac to facilitate speedy snow removal. Second, we often receive complaints about driveways being plowed shut.

Plow or shovel your snow to the side of the driveway away from traffic flow, clearing the snow for a distance prior to your driveway allows the plow to “unload” before reaching it. By piling snow away from the direction of oncoming snow plows, the bulk of the snow will not be pushed back onto your driveway. While we regret that this adds additional work to your own snow removal efforts, please it is important to remember that our crews have many miles of roads to clear as quickly as possible to ensure public safety and we do not put snow back onto your driveway intentionally.

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Leaves, Then Snow The Top Priorities for Road Department cont. from page 5

Additionally, Township Code Chapter 312. Article VI makes it illegal for any resident or contractor to deposit snow onto a Township road from any driveway or private road. The reason for this is that snow that is deposited onto a roadway once it has been plowed tends to freeze up overnight, making that snow "rock hard" by the time it is discovered. This snow becomes a traffic hazard and is difficult to remove, many times causing damage to Township equipment attempting to remove the frozen piles.

Residents are responsible for their contractors and are subject to fines for violations.

Finally, we also receive complaints pertaining to mailbox damage. Mailboxes are sometimes knocked

over by snow coming off the face of the snowplow, often as a result of it being insecurely fastened or a post that has deteriorated. Property owners should check their mailboxes and posts to make sure that they are in a healthy and secure condition for the upcoming winter. Pennsylvania law has established that damage to mailboxes resulting from snow or ice coming off of the plow is NOT the responsibility of the Township, but instead falls on the property owner. In the event that a mailbox is directly struck by a plow, the Township will reimburse the property owner only for the cost of a new mailbox. With more and more residents installing decorative mailboxes, if they are damaged by direct contact with the plow, the township only reimburses the cost of a basic

mailbox. Hopefully, this information and some of the included tips will make for a more pleasant autumn and winter experience for all Township residents.

- Joseph Wood, Roadmaster



Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4)



The goal of the MS4 program is to reduce the discharge of pollutants from the township, to protect water quality, and to satisfy requirements of the Clean Water Act. Stormwater runoff is precipitation from rain or snowmelt that flows over the ground. Impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent stormwater from naturally soaking into the ground. As it flows, stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants and deposit them into a storm sewer system or water body. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into the water bodies we use for swimming, fishing and providing drinking water. Polluted stormwater runoff can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals, and people.

So: what can you do to improve stormwater runoff?

To keep the stormwater leaving your home or workplace clean, follow these simple guidelines:

- ◇ Use pesticides and fertilizers sparingly.
- ◇ Repair auto leaks.
- ◇ Dispose of household hazardous waste, used auto fluids (antifreeze, oil, etc.), and batteries at designated collection or recycling locations.
- ◇ Clean up after your pet.
- ◇ Use a commercial car wash or wash your car on a lawn or other unpaved surface.
- ◇ Sweep up yard debris rather than hosing down areas.
- ◇ Compost or recycle yard waste when possible.
- ◇ Maintain your septic tank: have it pumped and inspected on a regular basis.
- ◇ Clean paint brushes in a sink, not outdoors. Properly dispose of excess paints through a household hazardous waste collection program.
- ◇ Never dump anything down a storm drain! Monitor storm water inlets near your property. No one should dump anything into the storm sewer system. If you see someone dumping, please notify the Township at 610-323-1694.

2011 Leaf Waste & Recycling

Trash Haulers in the Township must provide a minimum of three Fall Leaf pickups 2011 schedule

A. J. Blosenski	Chestmont Disposal
October 22	October 22
November 5	November 19
December 17	December 17
Diamond Waste Disposal	D & L Disposal
October 12	October 14
November 2	November 11
December 16	December 9

Waste Management
Up to 5 bags of leaf waste
Each scheduled date

DROP OFF SITE - Remember Arborganic Acres will accept Township resident's leaf and yard waste free of charge. Your leaf waste must be in bulk or brown paper bags.



901 Cherry Hill Road Pottstown, PA 19465 | Open from 7-5 weekdays and 9-5 Saturdays | 484-524-8850

DROP Off Location for paper, glass, metal, caps & lids, cloths and misc.



RECYCLING SERVICES, INC.

A NONPROFIT RECYCLING AND ENERGY CENTER

365 Elm Street Pottstown, PA 19465

Has been servicing Township residents for almost 40 years

Phone: (610)323-8545 Fax: (610)323-3962

Open Hours for Public Collection:

Tuesdays & Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. **Open Saturdays only from Jan 5 to March 16**

E-mail: JimCrater@aol.com

North Coventry Township
845 S. Hanover Street
Pottstown, PA 19465

Phone: 610-323-1694

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Changes in Collection of Earned Income Taxes

KEYSTONE COLLECTIONS GROUP is the new collector for Earned Income Taxes for North Coventry residents and employers. Below is a chart of the various taxes collected in North Coventry and the name of the collector:

Type of Tax	Tax Rate	Tax Collector
Earned Income Tax (Residents)	1 .25%	Keystone Collections Group 1-866-539-1100
Earned Income Tax (Non-Residents)	1%	Keystone Collections Group 1-866-539-1100
Local Services Tax	\$52.00 (If employed in NCT)	Keystone Collections Group 1-866-539-1100
Local Property Tax	1.6 Mills	Nancy Sparks 610-970-0334
School Tax	26.82 Mills	Owen J Roberts School District 610-469-5100
County Property Tax	3.965 Mills	Chester County 610-344-6360

For more information on Keystone Collections Group: www.keystonecollects.com