

Window on Woodville



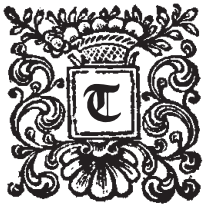
The Newsletter of the

Neville House Associates

Volume VIII, Number I

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A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT..



he era of the house museum is over. Recently, I read a report regarding the demise of the traditional house museum as a practicable venue for historical education and tourism that made this very statement. As I contemplated this premise and how it applied to Woodville, I found that I initially disagreed whole-heartedly.

life to the site by focusing attention on the very element that makes Woodville a living history museum - its residents. I have long said that a static house museum gives visitors no reason to return. This programming, whether your interest lies in chair making, military history, gardening, cooking, or many other topics, will give visitors and members additional reasons to return to the site. Hopefully returning on numerous occasions, throughout the year.

On the surface, Woodville would appear to be the exception to this rule. Particularly during the past two years when attendance increased nearly three fold from approximately 600 people that visited the site in 2005. But as I pondered the statement further and reviewed attendance in the years prior to 2005, I realized that Woodville had been following the very model of decline that was being described in the report, having had a decrease of nearly 20% in each of the previous four years.

Additionally, 2008 will see the introduction of a series of educational programs called "Woodville 101." These classes will be conducted throughout the year, enabling both members and the public to become educated on topics from 18th century cooking techniques to preservation and interior design issues. Again, these classes will bring visitors and members back to the house for something other than a tour of the same house and furnishings that they had seen in previous years.

What then, is the source of Woodville's paradoxical success in the area of attendance? Quite simply, it is expanded, improved and historically accurate programming. In each of the last two years, programming at the site has made noticeable improvements. This year, Woodville's interpreters will continue the development and enhancement of Western Pennsylvania's link to the late 18th century with several new additions to the interpretive offerings at the site.



Woodville Plantation

In March, Woodville introduces the "People of the Plantation" interpretive series. These monthly programs will introduce the visitors to the variety of individuals that lived, worked and visited the Woodville and Bower Hill farms. More importantly, these programs will bring

Finally, in an effort to show the Woodville house to visitors in a new and different setting, we will be conducting behind the scenes tours called "Above Stairs at Woodville." These private tours will be conducted quarterly and will permit small groups of visitors to see an area of the site that has been unavailable for the past 30 years - above stairs in the main house. Guided tours will focus on the architecture, exceptional checkerboard painted floor, structure and use of the two rooms occupied during both the Neville and Cowan eras.

Another change we hope to create in 2008 is the removal of the 1930 door to the passage from the Cowan bedroom and the restoration of this area to its appearance during the Cowan (Continued on page 2)

Table of Contents

Letter From the President.....	page 1	From the Garden to the Table.....	page 8
2008 Programs at Woodville.....	page 2	Comb Back Windsor Chairs.....	page 9
The Overseers at Woodville.....	page 4	Woodville 101/Presley Neville... Non-Graduate?.....	page 10
The Word from Woodville.....	page 6	Neville House Associates Membership.....	page 11
The Word From the Whiskey Rebellion Trail.....	page 7	Upcoming Events.....	page 12

A LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT..

(Continued from page 1) occupation, circa 1815-1820. Using our knowledge of the room from the Cowan inventory, we will change this room from the reception area it currently serves as to a completed historically accurate re-creation of the room occupied by Christopher Cowan and his wife, Eliza, from 1817 until his death.

In addition to these new programs and changes, we will continue with several programs that were attended collectively by over 300 visitors last year. Whiskey Rebellion Day, with the encampment by the soldiers of Wayne's Legion, and the Holidays at the House candlelight tours. If you haven't had a chance to attend either of these events during the past three years, I highly recommend that you visit us this year.

In conclusion, as I reviewed the statement from which I had started, I think that I am now inclined to agree. House museums are a thing of the past. That is why it is more important than ever to expand our programming and work toward making the site the best and most accurately re-created living history house and farm in Western Pennsylvania. It is certainly good that Woodville is no longer simply a house museum. Believe me, if you think that you have seen it all at Woodville, I promise that you haven't.

Rob Windhorst

President, Neville House Associates

2008 PROGRAMS AT WOODVILLE

Step back in time at Woodville Plantation, the home of John and Presley Neville. See how Pittsburgh's wealthiest citizens lived during the period of 1780-1820, the era of the New Republic. Grounds are open for free self-guided tours year round, Thursday - Saturday, from noon until 5 pm. Guided tours of the house are available every Sunday from 1 to 4 pm. Admission to the house is \$5 for adults and \$10 for families. Children under 12 are admitted free. Please visit our website at www.woodvilleplantation.org or telephone us at 412.221.0348 for more information. We look forward to your visit.

Schedule of Events

February 24 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Overseer

Learn about the lives of the men that managed and maintained the farm during the Nevilles' frequent absences.

March 23 - Easter Sunday Site is closed.

March 30 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Cook

Learn about the hectic life of one of the most essential members of the plantation and see how 18th century cooking differs from culinary arts today.

April 20 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Laundress

Discover the unique and interesting practices that are involved in washing the clothing for a large plantation and its inhabitants.

April 26 - Woodville 101: Taste of the 18th Century "Dine With the Nevilles"

Explore the distinctive culinary practices of the Woodville residents as you prepare, serve, cook and eat an 18th century meal, using original "receipts" from 1796. The day will culminate with dinner being served and eaten in the Cowan dining room. This working event will begin at 9 am and will conclude with dinner at the period correct hour of 2 pm. Please wear appropriate clothing for cooking over an open fire. Event is open to 6 people. Fee is \$65 for non-members and \$45 for members. Call 412.221.0348 to participate in this unique event.

May 11 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Native American

Often overlooked members of the rural community, Native Americans were vital, and often violent, neighbors to the Neville families. See a complete native encampment and visit with Ghost in the Head, a native of the local Huron tribe. No admission is charged for families during this special Mother's Day event.

May 18 - Above Stairs: A Behind the Scenes Look at Woodville

Visitors will be treated to a special tour of a rarely seen area of the plantation - above stairs at the main house. Visit the private rooms of the Neville and Cowan families and see the distinctive original painted checkerboard floor in A. Cowan's bedroom. Don't miss this rare look at the private lives of the Woodville residents.

June 1 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Chair Maker

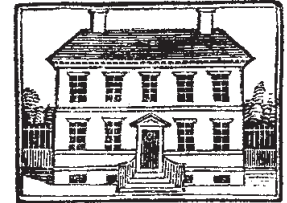
Many of the items that were used and consumed on the plantation were made by skilled artisans that worked on the farm. See a Windsor Chair built "from scratch" by local artisan Dave Burke. Admission to the house and grounds is free.

June 25 - Woodville 101: 18th Century Decorative Arts "Preservation"

Join Jim Galbraith, historic preservation expert, as he covers the basics of preserving and restoring period houses. If your home is a turn-of-the-century Queen Anne or a 200-year-old cabin, Jim's experience will guide you through your preservation efforts and questions. Program begins at 7 pm in the still house visitor center. Fee is \$10 for non-members and \$5 for members.

July 13 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Soldier

Join a soldier from Anthony Wayne's Fourth Sub Legion, one of the soldiers stationed at Fort Fayette in Pittsburgh in 1794. These were the troops sent to defend Bower Hill during the Whiskey Rebellion. Learn about a soldier's life in camp, and experience drilling and marching first-hand.



2008 PROGRAMS AT WOODVILLE (cont.)



July 20 - Whiskey Rebellion Day -and- People of the Plantation: Meet the Cook

Join the troops of Anthony Wayne's Legion as they make camp at Woodville. Experience camp life and participate with the soldiers as they march and drill. Also learn about 18th century cooking techniques as the Woodville cooks prepare dinner for the encamped troops. Woodville also welcomes guest lecturer Dr. Paul Newman from the University of Pittsburgh, an expert on 18th century history. He will discuss "Pennsylvania's Other Rebellion" at 2 pm in the newly opened still house. Site will be open from noon to 5 pm. Admission for this special day is \$2 per person.

July 27 - A Delightful Recreation: Games of the New Republic

Join the people of the Woodville plantation as they enjoy a day of recreation. Learn about and participate in some unique games that have been lost to the ages, such as Nine Man Morris, Quoits, and stool Ball. spend the day and join in the fun.

July 30 - Woodville 101: 18th Century Decorative Arts "Textiles"

Rob Windhorst, a representative from the English fabric company Lee Jofa, instructs students on the correct use of textiles in the period house. Learn about hand blocked fabrics, woven textiles, and historically accurate color schemes for use in historic houses. Program begins at 7 pm in the still house visitor center. Fee is \$10 for non-members and \$5 for members.

August 3 - Rare Breed Chickens at Woodville

Woodville welcomes its newest residents, the dominique chickens. After a 50-year absence from the farm, poultry returns to the plantation. Learn about the most common breed of chicken in the late 18th century, the dominique. These animals were valued for their adaptability and resistance to disease and climate, as far back as the first settlers at Plymouth, Massachusetts.

August 27 - Woodville 101: 18th Century Decorative Arts "Paints"

Woodville welcomes Vicki Burton, expert on 18th century paint finishes and instructor at the Belmont College school of Preservation in Ohio. She will teach students about the correct use of historic paint colors and historic wall coverings. Program begins at 7 pm in the still house visitor center. Fee is \$10 for non-members and \$5 for members

August 31 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Soldier

Join a soldier from Anthony Wayne's Fourth Sub Legion, one of the soldiers stationed at Fort Fayette in Pittsburgh in 1794. These were the troops sent to defend Bower Hill during the Whiskey Rebellion. Learn about a soldier's life in camp, and experience drilling and marching first-hand.

September 7 - Above Stairs: A Behind the Scenes Look at Woodville

Visitors will be treated to a special tour of a rarely seen area of the Woodville Plantation - above stairs in the main house. Visit the private rooms of the Neville and Cowan families and see the distinctive original painted checkerboard floor in A. Cowan's bedroom. Don't miss this rare look into the private lives of the Woodville residents.

September 21 - Harvest Day -and- People of the Plantation: Meet the Gardener

Join the gardeners of the Woodville Plantation as they harvest the crops grown at the site during the summer growing season. Meet the head gardener and learn about 18th century crops, growing techniques, and tools.

September 28 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Soldier

Join a soldier from Anthony Wayne's Fourth Sub Legion, one of the soldiers stationed at Fort Fayette in Pittsburgh in 1794. These were the troops sent to defend Bower Hill during the Whiskey Rebellion. Learn about a soldier's life in camp, and experience drilling and marching first-hand.

October 26 - Woodville 101: Sweetmeats and Coffee "Desserts of 1794"

Learn about 18th century desserts as you prepare, serve, cook and eat a selection of 18th century sweetmeats using original "receipts" from 1794. Participants will make a selection of unique desserts that include lemon creams, raspberry fool, and syllabubs. This working event will begin at noon and will conclude with a sampling of the prepared foods in the still house at 5 pm. Please wear appropriate clothing for cooking over an open fire. Event is open to 6 people. Fee is \$35 for non-members and \$25 for members. Call 412.221.0348 to participate in this unique event.

November 2 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Soldier

Join a soldier from Anthony Wayne's Fourth Sub Legion, one of the soldiers stationed at Fort Fayette in Pittsburgh in 1794. These were the troops sent to defend Bower Hill during the Whiskey Rebellion. Learn about a soldier's life in camp, and experience drilling and marching first-hand.

November 23 - Holidays at the House

Come celebrate the holidays in a "different light" with candlelit tours of the Woodville house. Learn about holiday customs that differ from today's celebrations such as Twelfth Night, Boxing Day, and the firing of the Christmas guns. Admission is \$5 per adult and \$10 per family. The site will be open from noon until 8 pm.

December 7 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Wool Spinstress

Meet the wool spinstress and learn how wool was spun and woven into items to be used by the workers on the plantation.

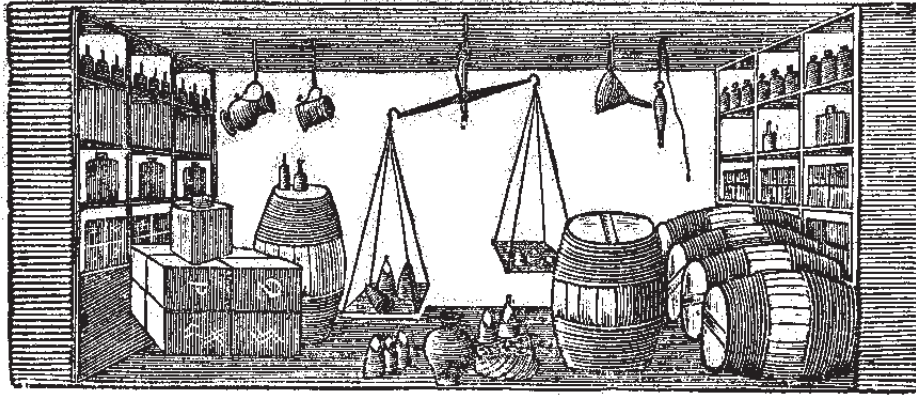
December 14 - Above Stairs: A Behind the Scenes Look at Woodville

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The Woodville site will be closed from December 21, 2008, through January 3, 2009.
Woodville will re-open for tours on January 4, 2009.

Managing "that unfortunate farm..."

THE OVERSEERS AT WOODVILLE PLANTATION



The land surrounding the Woodville historical site has been a valuable agricultural resource for almost 1,000 years. As early as the 11th century, Native Americans of the Monongahela tribes inhabited the flood plain on which the Woodville house is located. These rich bottom lands flooded every spring, bringing fertilized and enriched silt to the plateau, thus ensuring a supportive beginning to a hopefully abundant harvest. Not only was this land productive enough to encourage natives to visit the area on occasion, but they also established a permanent stockaded farming village where the present-day demonstration kitchen garden are now located. After surviving on this site for almost 500 years, these earliest settlers eventually disappeared due to white encroachment, defeats by other native tribes and migration to better hunting lands. Just as they had beckoned the natives a half millennium earlier, the fertility of these lands are initially what brought the young surveyor, John Neville, to his earliest land acquisition in Western Pennsylvania - the 300 acres known as Woodville along the banks of "Shurtees Creek."

An often-repeated question by visitors to Woodville is, "How did the Nevilles manage their farms when they were away so often?" This question is both valid and interesting. If you examine John and Presley Neville's military and political service records, you can clearly see they were away more frequently than they were home. John Neville originally purchased the Woodville property, along with over 10,000 acres, in 1774. From August of 1775 until April 1, 1777 (about the time that construction was begun on the Woodville house), Neville was stationed in Pittsburgh as commandant of Fort Pitt. From 1777 to 1783, during the time while John Neville was away from the site, Woodville was completed. Presumably through the use of slaves registered to the property in 1780. Presley Neville and his new bride, Nancy, occupied Woodville in October of 1782.

Interestingly, using this timeline, it appears that John Neville never actually took residence at Woodville but rather he moved directly to Bower Hill in 1783! Following a nine-month respite in Western PA, Neville was elected to the supreme Executive Council of Pennsylvania. He was away in Philadelphia for all but nine months from November of 1783 until November of 1786. During this time, from all appearances, the farm prospered and continued to provide an income for both John and Presley and their families. So how did he manage to successfully operate one of the largest farms in Western Pennsylvania, without actually being present at the site? The answer can be found by looking at other large farms throughout the Mid-Atlantic region during that period - by using a system of overseers.

Who were the overseers? Henry Laurens, a planter in south Carolina, writes that "merely sauntering about a field for the part of a day was but a very small part of the business." Thus dispelling the commonly held conception of this occupation. In general, these men were semi-skilled individuals hired to supervise the workers and ensure the production of the farm in the absence of the owner of the plantation. Most often, a farm with twenty or more slaves would have at least two men running the operation. A plantation with one or more overseers is also relevant to the social status of the owner since a gentleman in the 18th century was qualified by the fact that he did not work with his hands, but rather he had someone work for him. Depending on the size of the farm and the amount of slaves/workers to be managed, there could be more than one overseer. Generally, the overseers were divided into four categories.

The overseer, or principal overseer, would be the individual in charge of the day-to-day operations of the farm. He would also be the primary contact between the workers/slaves of the farm and the owner. In a letter from Presley Neville (which we will reference later in this article), Presley does not communicate directly to his overseers. Rather he gives instructions to his brother in law, Isaac Craig, who appears to have taken the role of overseeing the Woodville/Bower Hill operations. This is interesting because by taking a working role, Craig would no longer be considered part of the gentry. We know that during this time, Craig was also employed as quartermaster at Fort Fayette in Pittsburgh. Either his close association with the wealthiest family in Western Pennsylvania precluded his being held accountable to the principles of the day, or more likely the rules governing gentrification were a bit more relaxed in the frontier environs of Pittsburgh.

An inferior overseer, or second rate overseer, would work along with the overseer, being primarily responsible for instructing and supervising specific projects in outlying areas on a large farm. On a 10,000-acre farm such as the one owned by John Neville, an inferior overseer would have been a necessity. This individual would not have had the experience or knowledge that the overseer would have. Most likely he would have been in training and would be similar to an apprentice to the principle overseer. As such, this individual would have received significantly less pay than the overseer. Laurens describes this position quite concisely, explaining that a "second rate overseer" should be "a sober well disposed man capable of following the negroes in the field, of marking out their respective tasks and attending to the performance, according to directions which he will receive from the principal manager on the spot."

A third category of plantation administrator was the property manager. This individual would be solely responsible for the agricultural output of the property. George Washington employed numerous property managers at Mt. Vernon during the revolution in an effort to continue the farms productivity during his absence. These men generally tracked the output of the farm, verified productivity of the workers and secured local contracts for the products generated by the farm. They were not usually responsible for the oversight of the workers or the day-to-day activities on the plantation. It appears that Isaac Craig was acting in this capacity for Presley Neville in 1796.

Managing "that unfortunate farm..."

THE OVERSEERS AT WOODVILLE PLANTATION (cont.)

The final and lowest form of manager on the farm was the driver. Drivers were men selected from the slave population and were responsible for maintaining productivity among the slaves and implementing punishment when productivity lapsed. Mistakenly, these tasks are often thought of as the responsibility of the overseer due to incorrect portrayals in Hollywood movies. The unfortunate drivers were often outcasts among their own people, as well as that of the whites. In exchange for their work, they would often be granted extra and superior rations, private or better living quarters and occasionally a small amount of pay. While we know very little about the specific individuals that worked on the Woodville and Bower Hill farms, we do get a glimpse into their lives through the only surviving reference to them - a letter from Presley Neville to his brother in law, Isaac Craig, written in March 1796. The letter instructs Craig:

"I will thank you to inform Harlin that I have made contracts for all the grain there, and if he uses one bushel more than the hundred of corn that I allowed him and what will pay for the threshing, that I shall make him account for the same besides turning him from the big house, the little house, and all the houses on the unfortunate farm. George Fowler uses all one year, Alex the next, Menough, then Harlin; I have heard tell of "two pluck one," but this is even a worse game than any."

From this simple letter, and with a little bit of historical detective work, we can infer quite a bit about the men that made the Woodville and Bower Hill farms a successful agricultural venture for both John and Presley.

The letter mentions four different men that presumably work at the farm, along with approximately twenty to twenty-five slaves registered to the property at that time. Using the United States census of 1790 - two of the men, Menough and George Fowler, can be identified as residents of the local area. Unfortunately, Harlin (the principal offender of the "two pluck one" scheme and focus of Presley's anger) and Alex (a first name that appears no fewer than twenty times in the local census) are unable to be identified positively. The name Harlin appears as a surname in the census for Pennsylvania, but all of the nine residents with this name lived in the Lancaster area. It is possible that the individual who worked for Presley immigrated either from Europe or, more likely, from another state sometime after 1790. Another possibility is Harlin was a first name (a very common one during the period), but again it is not found among the local area residents in the 1790s. Samuel Menough was recorded by the census as living in the "portion of Washington County" where the Neville families are listed. While the exact location of the Menough home is not known, we can identify an approximate location for his residence by the families that were surveyed through the census - immediately preceding and following him. (It can be presumed that he was a tenant farmer who rented from the Nevilles or was provided a home on the farm.) Both Menough and Fowler are listed in the census between the Gillfellen, Reno, and Boyd families. These families all owned farms located in the present-day area of Bridgeville and in the adjacent neighborhoods of Upper St. Clair. If one presumes that the names on the census are listed in the order that they were encountered during the travel of the census taker, you can see the progression of the census worker from the Gillfellen farm (near South Hills Village mall) to the Reno farm (near Mayview state hospital) to the Boyd farms (opposite Chartiers Creek near the present-day Universal Cyclops steel Mill). This would locate both Menough and Fowler in a residence somewhere in the vicinity of present day Bower Hill and Vanadium roads and very close to both the Woodville and Bower Hill houses.

Samuel Menough was listed as the head of a family with three free white males under sixteen and three free white females. He had no servants or slaves. This likely indicates that he and his wife had three boys and two girls, all under the age of sixteen in 1790. Similarly, George Fowler is listed as having one other free white male over sixteen, along with one younger male and two free white females. This indicates that he and his wife had two boys and one girl. The importance of overseers having a family becomes apparent when we begin to examine the qualifications required by many plantation owners that their managers and overseers be married. One source that gives the modern reader insight into the 18th century plantation system, is a collection of letters from Henry Laurens of South Carolina. The letters are regarding management of his various estates in the mid to late 18th century. Nearly 25% of all ads for overseers, including the criteria set forth by Laurens, requires the overseers be married. On the surface, the reason for this requirement is that a married man would be less likely to "become familiar" with the female slaves. Laurens writes this practice "must be extremely offensive to me and very hurtful to my interest, as it must tend to make a good deal of jealousy amongst the negroes." A more practical and economical reason for the requirement of marriage for overseers is that a single man would require the services of a housekeeper, most likely a slave to do the washing and cooking, and this would take a valuable slave out of the work force.

Overseers were generally paid a salary plus benefits. The benefits would include housing. Although it appears that Presley's overseers added this benefit without his consent. Generally on smaller farms, the overseer would live in a cabin or house only slightly better than that of the slaves. Additionally the overseer would be given the use of a slave along with several acres of the plantation, usually near the cabin, that could be farmed. Successfully managed, this could either be worked and the crops sold at market or simply used for subsistence growing.

Most overseers, especially on larger farms, were granted the use of a horse to enable them to travel to outlying areas to view the progress of work being completed in the fields. This most certainly would be a necessity on the Neville farms. Occasionally the managers were given clothing and equipment such as boots, saddles and writing implements, in order to facilitate their management of the plantation. Finally, a common form of payment was to allocate a percentage or fixed portion of the crops that were produced. It appears this was part of the payment agreement for the Neville overseers, since Harlin was taking more than his share of one hundred bushels of corn. A perceived scheme in which Presley felt Harlin was taking one of every three bushels produced, hence Presley's accusation of "two pluck one."

While overseers were far from wealthy, they generally lived better than their counterparts in the area - the local tenant farmer. These individuals and their families were usually part of the working poor farming classes that hoped to improve their lot by working on a larger plantation. They had dreams of joining the small, but occasionally wealthy, "middling class" of artisans, skilled workers and small landowners. Inventories from many of these overseers show that they were able to obtain some of the finer items associated with a better lifestyle - including china, teapots, silverware and better furniture such as dressers and tables.

In addition to the amateur farmer attempting to better his lot in life, the population of overseers could be categorized into three other types of individuals. Sons of planters, interested in owning their own farm in the future, would often work as overseer for a time to learn the basics of managing a farm. It does not appear that Presley followed this route. Professional overseers would barter their services throughout the south, but evidence does not support this in the northern regions because there were relatively few plantations. Finally, there were newly arrived immigrant farmers who had worked for large landholders in Europe. They were interested in making a new start in the burgeoning economy of the young United States. Regardless of the reason for their employment or their perceived productivity, it was the overseer that was responsible for building, managing and producing the products that made the Woodville and Bower Hill farms (along with the Neville men) successful and profitable.

THE WORD FROM WOODVILLE



Welcome... to the newest Neville House Associates board members, Richard Smith and Anne Genter. Neither Anne nor Dick are new to the site, both having served on the Woodville Operating Committee since its inception and on the PHLF Oversight Committee for Woodville prior to that. Anne has over twenty years experience with the Woodville site and has been instrumental, through her association with the Colonial Dames, in furnishing the rooms of the Woodville house. Anne, who has a professional interior design background, will continue to offer her expertise in decorative arts through her guidance on the Decorative Arts Committee.

Dick joins our board after successfully leading the Woodville Operating Committee for the past seven years. He has been involved with Woodville for over twenty years. Working tirelessly behind the scenes, Dick has helped with many tasks such as scrubbing clapboards on the outside of the house, whitewashing the kitchen and installing period-correct box locks in the passage. Not only does Dick have a professional background in interior design, but he also has extensive experience in historic architecture as well. Along with Anne, Dick will serve as a member of the Decorative Arts Committee. We welcome both of them and look forward to serving with them in the years to come.

Goodbye... to Neville House Associates board member Nancy Bishop. Nancy retired from the NHA board in December 2007 after serving for over twenty years. During that time Nancy held many diverse positions from serving on fashion show committees, to scheduling the docents and managing the "traffic" in the house. The apex of her tenure occurred when Nancy served as President of the NHA from 2001 to 2003, guiding the organization through a transitional time in our relationship with PHLF and taking over after the resignation of the previous president due to ill health. Her candid, frank and concise remarks became her trademark and her leadership within the Associates will be truly missed. Nancy will continue to work at the site as a docent. Thank you, Nancy, for all of your efforts. The NHA board will miss you.

Congratulations... to Harriette Apel on winning the NHA Volunteer of the Year Award in November. The silver bowl is awarded each year to the volunteer that exhibits outstanding dedication, hard work and perseverance in relation to the mission of the Neville House Associates. They are a model for all other volunteers in the organization. Harriette is truly deserving of the award, having put in countless unrecognized hours as treasurer of the NHA. While much of Harriette's work is done "behind the scenes," going on without much notice, her tasks are vital to the continuation of the organization. These jobs include paying the utilities, completing all accounting, filing the proper forms with the state and federal government and handling the day-to-day disbursements that keep the Woodville site operational. The Woodville Operating Committee initiated the award in 2004 as a way to recognize and reward volunteers at the site. Previous award winners were Betsy Martin in 2004, Anne Genter in 2005 and Eleanor Fatigati in 2006. The NHA members and board of directors offer their sincere thanks to Harriette for all of her hard work. We couldn't do it without you.



Harriette Apel being awarded the NHA Volunteer of the Year Award.

Thank you... to NHA board member Mardi Jackley and NHA member Paul Day, for their efforts during the first annual Keep Collier Clean Day. Mardi and Paul represented the NHA on September 29, 2007. They picked up trash along Steen Road, about 1/8 mile south of the Woodville site. The day was a huge success and will be held again on April 19, 2008. Both Mardi and Paul will be leading a group from Woodville to work at this year's event. They will meet tentatively at the site at 8:30 AM and travel as a group to the Collier Township municipal building. Anyone interested in helping out this year can contact Collier Township or the Woodville site for further details.

Thank you... to the members of Americorps for assisting with the office move. On January 27, 2008, five members of the Americorps volunteer program worked at moving the contents of the upstairs of the main house to the still house. Americorps is a program administered by the federal government, in which college students can earn money for college by volunteering at non-profit organizations. Their efforts were the first steps in making the still house a useable and integral part of operations at the site. We look forward to having these hardworking volunteers back to the site for several other projects in the next several months - including planting trees, scrubbing the exterior of the house, painting and developing a reproduction of the Washington to Pittsburgh Turnpike at the western boundary of the property.



The dining room table at Woodville set for Twelfth Night.

Huzzah... to Erin Calik and her Woodville cooks for creating a fun, creative and historically accurate new tradition at the Woodville site. On January 6, 2008, for the first time in over 200 years, Woodville Plantation celebrated Twelfth Night. The evening's festivities included a six-course meal, music, story telling, card games, toasts and dancing. The Woodville board celebrated this forgotten 18th century holiday in style, learning a few things along the way. Attended by thirty people, the evening was celebrated in an authentic manner. A delicious dinner was prepared using 18th century receipts that included roasted trout, carrot puffs, steamed freshwater mussels, lemon creams and forced cabbage. We hope to continue this tradition next year and to open it up to all NHA members.

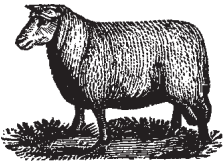
Welcome... to the new editor of "Window on Woodville," Erin Athey. Erin, along with her husband Mike, joined the NHA last year after visiting the house and encampment during Whiskey Rebellion Day. Erin helped maintain the demonstration kitchen garden throughout the summer, spending many hours weeding alongside Erin Calik and her other gardeners. Following the passing of Gary Grabowski in September of last year, Erin agreed to take over the job of editing the NHA newsletter. Her experience in marketing is indispensable and will give us an editor with a professional background that can help us recreate the newsletter into a better, more informative twelve-page publication. In the many months since that time, Erin has endured numerous planning meetings and has created a new and improved, magazine-style newsletter that will be published quarterly. This expanded version of the "Window" will generally have double the amount of content of the previous newsletters. We hope that you will enjoy it and that will join us at welcoming Erin to the Woodville team.

THE WORD FROM THE WHISKEY REBELLION TRAIL

One of the 2008 objectives of Woodville Plantation and Neville House Associates is to not only focus attention on the Neville House - but also to bring attention to our partner sites, other Whiskey Rebellion sites, and sites relating to the time period of 1792-1795 as well.

Other sites to visit include:

The Oliver Miller Homestead



The Miller Homestead will kick off the 2008 season on Sunday May 4th with a special program called "Building Mansfield." Explore the fine history of this house and learn about the architecture and materials used to build the original homestead called Mansfield. On Sunday May 18th, the Miller Homestead will hold its annual "Wool Day." See demonstrations on raising sheep, sheering sheep, carding and spinning wool. Also learn how the wool was processed and dyed. On June 22nd, they will hold a "Frontier Frolic" with games and contests similar to ones held in the late 18th century. On hand will be an herbalist to discuss the culinary uses of herbs in the 18th century. For more information visit their website at www.olivermiller.org.

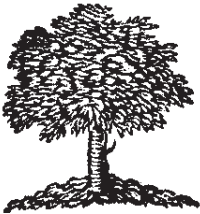
The David Bradford House

The David Bradford house is open May through September on Wednesday, Saturday and Sunday, from 11-4 pm, and on Thursdays from 2 - 7 pm. This year, the Bradford site will begin reconstructing the original kitchen that burned in the 1790s. The kitchen will recreate the original structure that was located at the rear of the yard, behind the house. It will be used to illustrate the differences in the lives of the common working class residents of the area and the lives of the Bradford family. The Bradford House, along with Washington and Jefferson College, will be sponsoring a symposium on October 25th that will discuss life, politics, culture and religion west of the Alleghenies from 1750-1800. For additional information, check out their website at www.bradford-house.org.



Friendship Hill

Friendship Hill is the home of anti-federalist and opposition leader to the whiskey excise tax, Albert Gallatin. Gallatin was a U.S. Representative during the rebellion. The home is owned by the National Park service and is located just south of Uniontown, PA, in Point Merion. On September 27th and 28th, the Gallatin House will hold a Market Fair that will host artisans and craftsmen demonstrating crafts and foods from the late 18th century. The house is open daily from 9-5 pm, April through October. Visit their website at www.nps.gov/frhi/.



Legionville

The soldiers of Anthony Wayne's Legion will visit Woodville again on July 20th for Whiskey Rebellion Day. These men recreate a unit of the Legion of the United States in 1794 that helped defend Neville's Bower Hill House against the whiskey rebels. Currently, the Legionville Historical society is working on halting the development of the site where Anthony Wayne's original fortification, Legionville, was built in 1793. They are fighting to prevent Wright Pontiac from developing the "Birthplace of the U.S. Army" into a car lot. Please visit their website for more information, or if you would like to help, at www.legionville.com.



Other related sites include:

George Washington Distillery

This site, opened to the public last year, is a recreation of George Washington's 1790s distillery. It is part of the American Whiskey Trail, along with Woodville and Oliver Miller, and it recreates the workings of a full capacity distillery for producing whiskey. See whiskey being made exactly as it would have been at the Bower Hill site. For more information visit the website at www.mtvernon.org, or the American Distillers Whiskey Trail site at www.discus.org/trail.



Mingo Creek Cemetery

Burial site for many of the rebels that attacked Bower Hill in 1794 This site is located approximately one mile south of Finleyville on Rt. 88.



FROM THE GARDEN...

"Gardening is the purest form of human pleasure?"

- Francis Bacon



As we wait anxiously for spring, plans for the Woodville kitchen gardens are underway. Very soon, heirloom vegetables with names such as "White Wonder" (cucumbers), "Tennis Ball" (lettuce) and "Savoy Drumhead Perfection" (cabbage) will be planted. Part of what makes a particular plant a heirloom is its individual history. Seeds may have come to this country with immigrants and then cultivated by a group or religious sect with a specific date of introduction. Others have histories that are ancient and found worldwide. The carrot is a great example of the latter.

Carrots - be they white, yellow, purple, or as we know them, orange - have been part of diets and medicinal remedies for a very long time. In fact, the wild flower Queen Anne's Lace is a wild form of carrot believed to have been cultivated by ancient populations for both of these reasons. The very early history of the carrot is difficult to outline due to carrots and parsnips being referred to by the same name. The Romans used *Pastinaca*, while the Greeks referred to these plants by *Daucus*. *Daucus Carota* is the modern genus name derived from Greek and Latin. It is not until the 16th century that substantial recorded information about the carrot begins to appear.

Between the early and mid 1500s, descriptions and illustrations of the red, purple, and yellow varieties are found in dissertations on gardening in France and Germany. The orange carrot, with which we are most familiar, was derived from the yellow variety and cultivated by the Dutch in the 17th century. Later in the same century the orange carrot is introduced to England from Holland and after the middle of the century four varieties were found. These are the Long Orange and three types of "Horn" carrots (shorter, with blunt rather than pointed ends) - the Late Half, Early Half Long and Early Scarlet Horn. The Early Scarlet Horn carrot was grown in the Woodville kitchen garden for several years up until the 2005 season. The seeds became increasingly hard to find and unfortunately are currently listed as "lost to the trade". Carrots came to America (Virginia) with the first colonists.

TO THE TABLE

The crops that were grown were during the growing season and not utilized immediately upon harvesting were generally dried, pickled or buried in a root cellar for preservation and later use. Carrots are an excellent example of a vegetable preserved in the latter manner. As the root crops were stored over the late fall and through the winter, they began to look less appealing for simple cooking and serving. A clever way to serve the carrots, in their less than pristine state, was to make Carrot Puffs. This recipe called for the carrots to be boiled and mashed, mixed with other ingredients, rolled into small balls and fried. When done, they look very much like a meatball. The finished product is a unique presentation for a common vegetable. This recipe has been resurrected from the archives of 18th century cooking and is prepared in an authentic manner at Woodville. For anyone interested in trying to prepare this delicious historical fare, the original recipe from "The Compleat Housewife", E. Smith, 1727, and the modern interpretation are below. Enjoy!

To Make Carrot Puffs

Scrape and boil your carrots tender; then scrape or mash them very fine, add to it a pint of pulp, the crumb of a penny loaf grated, or some stale bisket, if you have it, some eggs, but four whites, a nutmeg grated, some orange-flower water, sugar to your taste, a little sack, and mix it up with thick cream' they must be fried in rendered suet, the liquor very hot when you put them in; put a good spoonful in a place.

- E. Smith, 1750, p. 143.

Ingredients

12 large carrots	6 medium eggs
1 cup grated bread crumbs or 2 cups pulp	2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 cup sack or medium sherry	1/2 grated nutmeg
1 tablespoon orange flower water (optional)	heavy cream as needed
1 pound rendered lard or suet	a little water to test heat of fat

Scrape roots with knife, cut off tips and tops, place in kettle with enough water to cover, and bring to a boil.

Cook roots until very tender, remove them, and mash them in bowl until smooth.

Grate bread crumbs into a bowl; for each 2 cups of mashed roots, add 1 cup of bread crumbs. stir to mix thoroughly.

Crack two eggs into a bowl, separated remaining eggs, adding yolks to bowl and discarding whites (or use in another dish).

Whisk eggs to mix; then stir them into root mixture.

Grate half a nutmeg into root mixture, add sugar, sack or sherry, orange flower water, and stir to mix well.

Add heavy cream, 1 tablespoon at a time, until batter will just drop off tip of spoon.

You will need about 1 inch of melted lard in frying pan.

It is important that the fat is very hot before adding the batter. Test heat of fat by flicking a few drops of water into it; if the water sizzles and spits, the fat is hot enough. If fat is not hot enough, continue heating it for a little while and test again.

When fat is hot enough, drop batter into it by rounded spoonfuls. Don't crowd the pan.

Cook fritters until golden brown on both sides, turning as needed.

Continue frying until all fritters have been cooked, and serve hot.

ORDER FORM FOR COMB BACK WINDSOR CHAIRS

Thank you for your contribution to the Windsor Chair Reproduction Program at Woodville Plantation, the home of John and Presley Neville. The Comb Back Windsor Chair, or "stick chair," that will be built for Woodville by local artisan Dave Burke is a style that was commonly found throughout America from 1790 to 1820. Fittingly named because of the resemblance of the back to a rooster's comb, these functional chairs would have been used for both formal occasions inside as well as for more casual affairs on the verandah and in the garden.

Our reproductions are made using woods such as oak, maple and pine that would have been found near the site at the turn of the 19th century. The seats are a single piece of white pine and will be contoured by hand. Spindles, legs and turnings will be created from hand-shaved maple or oak. The finished chair will be painted in an authentic "verdant green" color using a historic paint "receipt" that is mixed by hand, just as it would have been in 1790. Each chair will take an individual craftsman approximately one month to complete. Finally, each hand-assembled chair will be affixed with an engraved brass plate recording an inscription of the donors choice.

The Windsor Chair will be used exclusively at the site for events, general seating and re-enactments. Woodville Plantation and the Neville House Association Board of Directors thank you for your donation and for supporting our living history programs. We look forward to seeing you enjoy a respite on the verandah of the Woodville estate, on an authentic reproduction that you sponsored.



*An example of the finished
Comb Back Windsor Chair.*

COMB BACK WINDSOR CHAIRS

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Amount Enclosed (Chairs are \$450.00 each =): \$ _____

Inscription to Read:

Make checks payable to: Neville House Associates
Woodville Plantation Windsor Chair Program
1375 Washington Pike, Route 50
Bridgeville, PA 15017



Have you even wondered what it was like to dine with the Neville or Cowan families? Would you like to learn how to make a “forced cabbage?” Have you ever thought about restoring your period home and didn’t know what colors to paint or what fabrics to use? If so, Woodville Plantation has just the classes for you. In 2008, Woodville Plantation begins a new series of educational programming that will instruct visitors and students on various aspects of life in the Era of the New Republic (1780-1820). These programs will include such diverse topics as 18th century cooking to historic preservation. Program sizes are limited and are open to the first students to register. Programs for 2008 include:



April 26- Taste of the 18th Century “Dine with the Nevilles”

Explore the distinctive culinary practices of the Woodville residents as you prepare, cook, serve and eat an 18th century meal, using original “receipts” from 1796. The day will culminate with dinner being served and eaten in the Cowan dining room. This working event will begin at 9 AM and will conclude with dinner at the period correct hour of 2 PM. Please wear appropriate clothing for cooking over an open fire. Event is open to 6 people. Fee is £65 for non-members and £45 for members. Call (412)221-0348 to participate in this unique event.

June 25- 18th Century Decorative Arts “Preservation”

Join Jim Galbraith, a historic preservation expert, as he covers the basics of preserving and restoring period houses. If your home is a turn-of-the-century Queen Anne or a 200 year old cabin, Jim’s experience will guide you through your preservation efforts and questions. Program begins at 7 PM in the still house visitor center. Fee is £10 for non-members and £5 for members.

July 30- 18th Century Decorative Arts “Textiles”

Rob Windhorst, a representative from the English textile company Lee Jofa, instructs students on the correct use of textiles in the period house. Learn about hand-blocked fabrics, woven textiles, and historically accurate color schemes for use in the historic home. Program begins at 7 PM in the still house visitor center. Fee is £10 for non-members and £5 for members.

August 31-18th Century Decorative Arts “Paints”

Woodville welcomes Vicki Burton, an expert on 18th century paint finishes and instructor at the Belmont College school of Preservation in Ohio. she will reach students about the correct use of historic paint colors and historic wall coverings. Program begins at 7 PM in the still house visitor center. Fee is £10 for non-members and £5 for members

October 26- Sweetmeats and Coffee “Desserts of 1794”

Learn about 18th century desserts as you prepare, cook, serve and eat a selection of 18th century sweetmeats using original “receipts” from 1794. Participants will make a selection of unique desserts that include lemon creams, raspberry fool, fruit tarts and syllabubs. This working event will begin at noon and will conclude with a sampling of the prepared foods in the still house at 5 pm. Please wear appropriate clothing for cooking over an open fire. Event is open to 6 people. Fee is £35 for non-members and £25 for members. Call (412) 221-0348 to participate in this unique event.



PRESLEY NEVILLE... NON-GRADUATE?

An often-repeated anecdote throughout the thirty plus years of tours that have been given at Woodville, is the story of Presley Neville being asked to give his valedictorian speech to Congress in 1775. As the story goes, Presley graduated first in his class and immediately joined the army following a successful stint at college. William Henry Egle wrote in his 1886 book, “Pennsylvania Genealogy” that Presley Neville graduated from the University of Pennsylvania “with a distinguished reputation for classical affairs.” Unfortunately, it appears that our beloved Presley did not graduate at all. Recently, the University of Pennsylvania posted all of the graduation records dating back to the 1770’s at www.archives.upenn.edu. The class of 1775 lists a total of ten students. Of these ten, eight received undergraduate degrees (including Benjamin Chew Jr., son of the famous Philadelphia physician and signer of the Declaration of Independence). One received a masters degree and one, Presley Neville, is listed as a “non-graduate.” Unfortunately, our historical research does not always turn up the answers we want to find. Sorry, Presley.



NEVILLE HOUSE ASSOCIATES MEMBERSHIP



Please add the following names to your membership directory:



Mr. & Mrs. John F. Hayes

Richard & Ellen Folke

Suzanne A. Frantz

We welcome Mr. & Mrs. Hayes, Richard & Ellen Folke and Suzanne Frantz to the Neville House Associates - Huzzah!



2008 Membership Drive



Now through March 31st is the best time to renew your membership for 2008! Renewing will help the Neville House Associates' staff with 2008 programming and activities, as well as newsletter and postage costs. Please note - if you paid recently in November, that was for 2007. Let's step up for 2008 so that the paid membership goal reached 100% by March 31st!

Donation Levels

Student/Senior.....	\$20.00	Basic.....	\$35.00
Mary Fauset.....	\$75.00	Wrenshall.....	\$100.00
Christopher Cowan	\$250.00	Presley Neville.....	\$500.00
John Neville.....	\$1,000.00 (Lifetime Member)		

All memberships include free family admission to Woodville Plantation for regular hours of operation, gift shop discounts, invitation to "members only" events and the quarterly newsletter. Your gift will support the continuing preservation, restoration and interpretation of this historic site and is tax deductible.



2008 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Amount Enclosed \$ _____

Make checks payable to: Neville House Associates, Inc.
 c/o 854 MacArthur Drive
 Pittsburgh, PA 15228
Fuliana Haag, Membership



Upcoming Events

April 20 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Laundress

Discover the unique and interesting practices that are involved in washing the clothing for a large plantation and its inhabitants.

April 26 - Woodville 101: Taste of the 18th Century "Dine With the Nevilles"

Explore the distinctive culinary practices of the Woodville residents as you prepare, serve, cook and eat an 18th century meal, using original "receipts" from 1796. The day will culminate with dinner being served and eaten in the Cowan dining room. This working event will begin at 9 am and will conclude with dinner at the period correct hour of 2 pm. Please wear appropriate clothing for cooking over an open fire. Event is open to 6 people. Fee is \$65 for non-members and \$45 for members. Call 412.221.0348 to participate in this unique event.



May 11 - People of the Plantation: Meet the Native American

Often overlooked members of the rural community, Native Americans were vital, and often violent, neighbors to the Neville families. See a complete native encampment and visit with Ghost in the Head, a native of the local Huron tribe. No admission is charged for families during this special Mother's Day event.

May 18 - Above Stairs: A Behind the Scenes Look at Woodville

Visitors will be treated to a special tour of a rarely seen area of the plantation - above stairs at the main house. Visit the private rooms of the Neville and Cowan families and see the distinctive original painted checkerboard floor in A. Cowan's bedroom. Don't miss this rare look at the private lives of the Woodville residents.



Window on Woodville

Neville House Associates

1375 Washington Pike

Bridgeville, PA 15017-2821

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED