

The Dill's Tavern Chronicle

January 2010

www.dillstavern.org



Northern York County Historical and Preservation Society, 35 Greenbrier Lane, Dillsburg, PA 17019 Ph. 717- 502-1440

Purpose: To promote and encourage the study, collection, and preservation of the historical heritage of the Northern York County area.

Update on Progress at Dills Tavern

After 8 years of restoration (and even more at Maple Shade Barn!), we are nearing “substantial completion” on *major* construction. Much more remains to be done, including dormers on the south roof, but the Tavern proper is looking very close to its original appearance and the goal is at hand.

It is now time to ask ourselves, “Where do we go from here?” “What shall we do with these fine properties?” The obvious answer is, “Use them!”

At Maple Shade Barn, we have a Society office, a functional gift shop, a first rate archives, a museum underway, fine display space and more. We have comfortable, all-weather meeting space for events of all types, a functional kitchen, and restroom facilities. Such a facility is the envy of many local historical societies!

At Dills Tavern, we have period correct space for quality historical interpretation, demonstrations, and events. Having that quality modern space in the Barn enabled us to perform a pure restoration in accuracy without undo compromises for amenities.....an ideal circumstance and a nearly unique situation among other similar societies!

Thus the Tavern depicts the period from the era of local settlement through approximately 1835, and the Barn’s depiction begins from mid 19th century onward. The bottom line is that these facilities perfectly complement each other! Blessed with generous donations, plus working very hard, we have almost fully paid for both! What a credit to the folks of this area and the vision we have shared!

It is now time to plan for the long term requirements of both properties plus the Society.....and they are great. There are significant needs for maintenance along with continuing improvement and a limited income baseline. The next questions are “How can we develop a use that will provide for these important issues?” and “What kind of use should we consider?”

Some of us have a vision of a series of high-quality events with predetermined themes that would utilize both buildings in complementary fashion. Such events could be executed to attract the paying public in significant numbers...things such as seminars, workshops, demonstrations, displays, and classes, all on fascinating subjects that appeal to a broad audience of all ages.

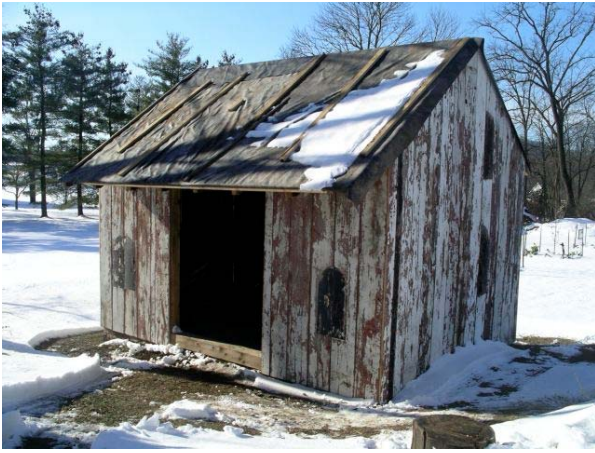
Some of our regular membership meetings have proven such an approach would work, such as the recent speaker on the Civil War in this area. A standing room only crowd demonstrated the level of interest in certain historical subjects that would be able to recur each year with a new emphasis on the topic. We would need to call on the top people in their fields and use a broad spectrum of media, from classroom to outdoor to hands-on, perhaps in concurrent sessions, in order to interest the widest possible audience.

These events would supplement the current Dills Tavern Preservation Workshops being run by Sam for actual training in the trades. Recurring themes might include selected periods or topics for examination, such as the Civil War north of Gettysburg, the French & Indian War period, rural agriculture, 1812 era, rural home life, or more specifically, clothing and textiles, foods and drink, farm labor, farming practices, examination of local trades & professions, etc.

Somewhat similar, though not model events are held at other historical sites including the Landis Valley Museum Summer & Winter Institute, the Carroll Co (MD) Farm Museum, Historic New England programs, Eastfield Village (NY) and many others. Mark Hagenbuch, the chairman of the education committee, is already working on this concept.

We believe, if done in an extremely high quality fashion, these events could provide not only a logical use for what we have jointly accomplished, but a memorable and regionally significant opportunity that keeps both buildings in continuing valuable service AND should provide an income stream for ongoing upkeep and improvement of our properties.

Please share your thoughts on this concept with any Board member at your convenience as we work to make an exciting future at NYCHAPS.



← You're being taken to the Wood Shed

This is a photo of the recently constructed wood shed behind the Tavern. A temporary rubber roof will shield the fire wood from the elements until we can install a wood shingle roof. It will, of course, receive a coat of paint in the Spring.

Dills Tavern

Statement of Operating Principle

Adopted December 15, 2009

Rationale

Since the information currently available on the operation of taverns of this period is limited, general public awareness is low and the public has demonstrated a high level of interest, there is a void which can be filled in the operation of Dills Tavern in this regard.

NYCHAPS is in a favorable position to complete the restoration as currently in progress, to maintain the building for public access and to provide educational opportunities for anyone of interest.

Statement of Operating Principle

Dills Tavern will be restored, maintained and operated as an interpretive and educational facility for the public of all ages and areas. Additional structures and facilities may be developed on the site which serve to further demonstrate the specific activities that are known to have existed on the site or, to a lesser extent, typical of taverns and plantations of the period and area.

Further, NYCHAPS will develop appropriate events and activities which complement the understanding of the period and the enjoyment of the public while promoting general interest which will ensure its continuance for perpetuity.

Examples of events and activities may include historical reenactments, demonstrations of period trades, plantation, farm and tavern activities, seminars and workshops providing period information and trade displays. Experiential opportunities include participatory archaeological activities, re-creations of period events, and similar activities of relevant types. The emphasis will be on hands-on activities for a first-hand experience as opposed to displays for visual effect only.

Additionally, in order to increase understanding of the era, NYCHAPS will promote research into the period and the general dissemination of information as it is acquired and prepared.

This will be accomplished through planning and operating activities consistent with the above intent as approved by the Board of Directors and through the raising of funds for said activities.

The Tavern Committee:

Bob Eichelberger-Chairman, Mervin Ice, Larry Klase, Joanne Klase, Connie Trostle, and Greg Wonders

Web Site www.northernYorkhistorical.org

E-Mail Address nychaps@northernYorkhistorical.org