



HISTORIA

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 2

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MAY, 1994

SOCIETY TO TOUR HOMES IN MAY

THREE HOMES WILL BE OPENED FOR SOCIETY MEMBERS ONLY



The Yelle's home at 600 Second Street Pike, just South of Richboro was originally a grant to D. Clement and T. Dungan, 1699, consisting of 1000 acres, bordered by Second Street, Almshouse, Jacksonville, and Bristol Roads. In 1791, a portion of the land was granted to Issac Edwards. In 1813, Issac Edwards and his wife, Sarah, gave 2 lots of ground to son Issac Edwards and wife, Rebecca.

The house was probably built about that time. In 1821, Issac and Rebecca Edwards deeded to James Wright, two separate lots- one with house and barn and 45 acres and another of woodland of 15 acres. In 1827, the sheriff sold the property to William Wetherill, 2 tracts equaling 60 acres and buildings for \$1997. The property stayed in the Wetherill family until it was sold by Joseph Wetherill to Alfred Buckman in 1855. Alfred Buckman is shown as the owner on a map of Northampton, dated 1859. John Finney purchased the property at a sheriff sale sometime before 1875. Roof rafters recently exposed show a date of 1869 in most recent addition.

The house has six bedrooms, one with sitting room, laundry/mud room, four full bathrooms, two half baths, living room, dining room, family room, and a kitchen. The house is built of stone and covered with plaster. A front portico was added in the late 1970's. Numerous changes and additions have been made over the years. Windows, wainscoting, and bullseye moldings in the living room and dining room are probably original. Other buildings on the grounds were added after 1900.



The Smith home is located off of Bristol Road in Churchville. Ruth Smith relates the following:

In 1966 and 1967, research into the past of our Old House became a real Paper Chase in reverse. The previous owner had done some preliminary research which happily pointed me in the right direction. The next step was the Records room in the courthouse in Doylestown, and countless hours spent lifting down the massive old deed books.

Fortunately for me, and, I'm sure, unfortunately for those precious old books, there was unlimited access and no restrictions on anyone using them. I'm sure the entire system has now been changed. One merely had to keep going back in time, reversing from the 1900's to the 1800's to the 1700's, etc. The beautiful old copperplate script, with "f's" instead of "s's" was a bit of a challenge, to say nothing of deeds describing property as bounded by so many "perches" from a certain white oak tree. But probably the most difficult part was lugging those weighty tomes to the copy machine to make copies of the pertinent deeds (those copies are now cherished possessions).

Delving into newspapers and periodicals of those times also unearthed some interesting items. For instance, Phineas Paxon, circa 1773, must have been a British Loyalist, and even at one time fled to Canada. Also, in one journal there was a notice from

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MAY WE INTRODUCE

CHRIS FLUEHR

In 1976, Chris and Joe Fluehr built their home and business in Richboro. Northampton Township holds a very intricate part of Chris's youth for this is where she spent her summers from 1948 until her marriage to Joe in 1969. They have 2 daughters, Tina and Trisha and a son Joe IV.

Chris's interest in Northampton Township Historical Society started even before moving to the Township. Judge Henry Winkoop, Member of Second Continental Congress, President Judge of Bucks County Court, Judge of High Court of Errors and Appeals, Member of First United States House of Representatives and Member of State Convention for Ratification of the Constitution of the United States, was born in the house that was on the corner prior to the Fluehr's building their home. The Fluehr's erected a flag pole on the property to commemorate Judge Henry Winkoop's birthplace.

The Fluehr's were very proud to be part of the Bicentennial Celebration and being involved with Judge Henry Winkoop's portrait presentation was something Chris & Joe would not have missed.

Chris is the immediate past president of the Northampton Township Historical Society. She has been a member of Nominating Committee, Living Tree Award Committee and also the former secretary of the Society. In 1993 she was the recipient of the Living Tree Award.

Chris is very much a part of her husband's Funeral Business and they work well together. Her other involvement's are with her Church, St. Bede the Venerable as a Eucharistic Minister, and member of the Finance Committee. Other Community Organizations Chris is involved with are: Bucks County Community College Tyler Restoration Committee and Tyler Tasting Committee, St. Mary Hospital Foundation Board Member, Member and past president of the Soroptimist International of Indian Rock and immediate past member of Bucks County Community College Foundation.

In her spare time, Chris plays golf, tennis and of course shops.

SINCE THIS WILL BE OUT LAST ISSUE UNTIL AFTER LABOR DAY WE WISH EVERYONE A WONDERFUL AND SAFE SUMMER AND HOPE TO SEE YOU AT OUR FALL METTINGS!

PRESIDENTS LETTER

Dear Members,

I am so delighted to announce to you that we again will have a house tour for our May meeting. Members Courtney and Eloise Yelle, and Bill and Ruth Smith are opening their Revolutionary War period homes to us as well as Jean and Bob Allen, members of the Newtown Historical Association.

Information about these homes is included in this issue of HISTORIA.

Our meeting date has been changed from May 25 to MAY 26, (THURSDAY) and the time has been changed from 7:30 to 6 :45 p.m. We will meet at the Cultural Center at 6:45PM and board the school bus upon arrival. The bus will leave on schedule at 7:00 P.M. and drive us to the three homes. We will be divided into two groups. GROUP A: will be those people whose last names begin with A to G. GROUP B: will be those people whose last names begin with H to Z.

Members only are invited on this house tour. All members must show their 1994 membership card to the bus driver. Doug Crompton will be group leader for group A and Joanne Kerridge will be group leader for group B

At the end of our tour we will have tailgate refreshments.

As I stated at our last meeting, I have appointed a steering committee. Doug Crompton is chairperson and Fred Stewart is vice chairperson. The purpose of this committee will be to help us locate a home for the Northampton Twp, Historical Society, and for the acquisition of this home. WE still miss the loss of the Weir Home.

WE appreciate the comments and the suggestions that have been written on your membership applications. Thank you for your support.

Remember to return your reservation for the bus before May 18, 1994. I need to know how many buses that we will need.

Sincerely,

Jean P. Gallagher

HOUSE TOUR from page 1

James Vansant offering a reward for a runaway indentured servant, and another seeking information about the horsethief who had made off with one of his animals.

Interesting, too, to note that in three instances the property passed on through purchase or inheritance of the wife, beginning with Susannah Shaw Paxon inheriting from her father.

Of course, it's a cliché, but anyone who lives in an old house often wishes "if only the walls could talk".



TITLE HISTORY OF A NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP FARMHOUSE

1965, November 23

William A. and Ruth J. Smith from Milton E. and Janice S. Williams from Land Development Company, Inc. from

1955, August 10

Nathaniel V. Leedom from

1880, April 1

Joseph Hoagland (Hogeland) farmer, wife Eueline, son, Abraham: 101 acres (104 perches) \$11,333.97 from

1859, March 24

Garret V. Carver Estate, wife Elizabeth Krusen Carver Executing: 101 acres, "messages or tenements and plantation" for \$3,035 from

1828, March 15

Garrett V. Carver, wife Elizabeth Krusen Carver: 101 acres for \$3,000 (plus considerations) from

1824, March 4

Derrick Krusen (Kroesen), wife Elizabeth Vansant Krusen: 100 acres more or less, and buildings and appurtenances from

1802, March 6

James Vansant Estate, Harman Vansant and Charity Carver Executing from

1798, November 2

James Vansant for 1,847 pounds, 13 shillings, and 7 pence from

1773, April 5

Phineas Paxon et ux Susannah Shaw Paxon: 164 acres and "a certain message, tenement, plantation, and tract of land" for 1000 pounds from

1735, April 24

Joseph Shaw (by deed of partition): to other with the buildings, messages, tenements, and other appurtenances from Joseph and John Shaw from

1724, May 18

John Shaw, wife Susannah from

1697, July 7

William Buckman from

1686 August 1

Robert Turner and James Claypole, Proprietors of William Penn



ASHLAND MILL was built in the middle 18th. Century to run as a Grist Mill, producing flour for the local area.

It was the first of eight Mills along Core Creek that flowed into the Neshaminy Creek, There are none remaining.

It was burned in 1899, and was rebuilt to run as a Mill until the late thirties. It was then converted for two tenant farmers for the Ashland Farm across the street. They had outhouses, and wood burning stoves for heat. At one time, the fourth floor was used for Quaker Meetings and Grange Meetings.

In 1960, the Allens purchased the Mill from an Indian widow's estate, Mrs. James Metoxen, He used to be called "Indian Jim" by the locals, and was a famous football player with Jim Thorp.

The Allens have been the architects, contractors, and laborers with the help of a mason and carpenter in the later construction.

The tour will begin at 6:45PM May 26th from the Northampton Cultural Center. Note that this is a Thursday and not our normal Wednesday meeting date. You must be a member of the Society in order to participate. Bus transportation will be provided to all of the homes and will return you to the Cultural Center. If you plan to attend please fill out and return the bus reservation form from the bottom of page 7 in this Historia. As always if you would like to attend but cannot because you are unable to drive please contact one of the board members to arrange transportation to the Cultural Center.

WEIR FEEDBACK

I want to thank everyone for their support and kind words regarding the Weir farm articles in the March Historia. We printed almost 300 copies of that issue! I was not aware when I got involved with the Weir property of just how many Weir's there were in the area and around the US. They have reunions every year. The Weir's were very much a part of Richboro's history. If and when we do have a permanent place to display our historical belongings, I would very much like to have a "Weir" display.

Here is a letter I received from Donna Basinger, a Weir descendant, in Anchorage, Alaska. The Historia travels far! I also received notes from Janet Weir Null, in Raleigh, NC, and Florence Weir, who resides in Southampton Estates.

In her letter Donna mentions that it would be nice to have a road with the Weir name. I decided to pursue this and as this goes to print in looks like that will be a reality. The details are being worked out and we will have more on this in our next Historia.

Dear Mr. Crompton,

This week I read an issue of HISTORIA for the first time. I felt sadness at the destruction of Harold Weir's farm and the loss of a good home for the Society. On the other hand I am delighted to know that your society exists and am grateful for the reproduction of the pictures of the farm provided by Doris Weir Ladd.

We attended many Weir family reunions at Uncle Harold's farm. It would have been a splendid treat to take my own children on a tour of the farm and house, site of family gatherings for their mother, grandmother, great grandparents, etc. and talk about farm life during the first half of this century...very different than life in Anchorage (or Bucks County) in the '90's.

My mother, Janet Weir Null, was born in 1921 in an old farm house on New Road in Northampton Township. She roomed with your mother at West Chester. Your mother was kind enough to send her a copy of HISTORIA. My mother's father, Wilmer Weir, was an older cousin of Harold Weir and bought his farm house shortly after WWI.

I am enclosing a picture of the house taken in 1937. My aunt has a wonderful scrapbook of pictures of life on the farm in the 20's and 30's. Bob Weir sold the farm and the house (in truly poor condition) was torn down in

1987. The Weir farm probably is most recently remembered for its hayrides. It is now a neighborhood. Wilmer built two other homes close to the road and they are standing next to the old school house (now a house) on New Road.



The center room of the old farm house was built in the 1700's. The end that is exposed in the photo was built in the early 1800's. Wilmer added a two story addition, kitchen and upstairs bedroom and bath. I spent two weeks every summer in the house and imagined what life was like in the house over the years. My interest in history began in that house. Maybe some of the families in the neighborhood would like to know what existed on their land before their houses and streets were built. I would love to know who built the first house in the 1700's and from whom did my grandfather purchase the farm. I am disappointed that none of the streets in the neighborhood carry the Weir name. Maybe a Weir Road will pop up on Harold's property some day.

There were six children in my mother's family. My mother's older sister, Doris, met her future husband at Uncle Harold's. She was only 13 and Herschel was much older and working for Uncle Harold. They eventually married and Herschel recently wrote down some of the things he remembered about Harold and the farm. I am enclosing a copy. Doris died less than a month ago. Herschel is living in Texas. He is a source of much information!

I am looking forward to your next issue and will send memberships to my aunts and uncles.

I would very much appreciate the addresses of the Historical Society's in New Britain and Warrington Townships if you have them.

Sincerely,

Donna Basinger

REMINISCES OF THE WEIR'S IN RICHBORO

This is a document sent to me by Donna Basinger. Herschel McDonald, who wrote these remberances, was a farm worker who came from Tennessee to work on the Weir farm in Richboro. He later met and married Doris Weir. Doris's father was Wilmer Weir the brother of Robert, Harold's father. Herschel is now living in Arlington, TX. His wife Doris died just a month ago.

This is a belated tribute to Harold and the Weir Clan family reunion, because at the reunion everyone was too widely scattered to try to say anything without a P.A. system and a network of speakers.

We had planned to stay home this year to rest for a change but our darling baby daughter, Ruth, and family, moved from Canada to Charlottesville, VA, so we had to come East to see their new home. We heard that Harold had sold his farm to someone to grow houses on it and it would be the last time we would have a chance to see the Weir reunion and the farm all together. We could not drive so far and not go alittle further for the reunion.

We have been through thick and thin, up and down, around and around, where we may roam, but this place of Harold's is more than the Weir clan reunion, it has many precious memories. This is the homecoming for both of us. This is where it all started and everytime we hear the word "Harold" it brings back fond memories of H-O-M-E.

I started to work for Harold on March 28th, 1928 and have been "Weiry" ever since. He was a young entrepreneur. For those who don't know the origin of that word, this is a name given an enterprising old French farmer who discovered that he could grow more corn by spreading more organic fertilizer. Farming is a year around job from before sun up to far after sun down. One man can do only so much and "Pop" Stachous had let his farm run down, grow up in weeds, trash, etc. Whereas, Harold's father had a small place and kept everything ship shape, with a place for everything and everything in it's place. So Harold with a little bit of help from me and a few years, had one of the best kept farms around. I grew up on a farm and although in different parts of the country, with different slang, we were on the same wavelength and developed a lot of camaraderie. Harold took some farm magazines but had little time to read them, so I tried to read everything I could get my hands on and pass it to Harold.

About the first high point was when they gave me a surprise 21st birthday party. Harold wanted to get a new car and the model "A" Fords had just come out, so he asked me to go to Southampton to look at them. We spent about an hour, came back, walked through the house to the parlor and Harold said, "turn on the lights". The room was full of people and they all hollered "surprise" and started singing happy birthday. My mother died on my 15th birthday and I never wanted to remember it again. So this was the first happy birthday I had since. In the middle of the floor was a 2 foot square box alternately wrapped in paper, 21 times. Inside was a pearl handled stainless steel pocket knife, unusual for back then, and a gold pocket watch. I still have and cherish both and will pass them onto my grandsons.

Another thing that I remember was that Harold had a Fordson tractor with the old model "T" flywheel magneto. It had to spin about 100 rpm with a strong arm starter to get it started in mild weather. We had to fire up the big wash kettle in the truck house to heat the water to fill the radiator and cover it with a horse blanket and let it sit for about a half hour. Then pour hot water over the carburetor and manifold after which we took turns winding it up. If it didn't start we drained it and repeated the process again. If this failed we threatened to build a fire under it and that usually got it started. In those days before rubber tired tractors, they had big wide cleated steel wheels and if the ground was a little too damp it left a big hard track that lasted all summer. Oliver, Hart, Parr came out with a row crop model having high wheels and a perpendicular rim with alternate lugs bolted to each side to cut through the soft top soil and "tip toe" on the hard bottom. It was not only more efficient but left no tracks. It also had an impulse magneto that usually got it started in a few turns. Harold needed a new truck for his market route, so I wrote the Ford Motor Co. For a spec sheet and drawings on their 1935 1 1/2 ton chassis. Then I designed a body to suit his needs and made drawings which he took to J.L. Rush and sons in Willow Grove to build it for him. It is the only one of it's kind, looks like new, and is a collectors item.

Harold always had stop in customers for chickens, eggs, corn, tomatoes, etc. They often wanted to see the barn, animals, chickens, etc., especially if they had children. Harold was asked "you must make a lot of money to have such a big place and much equipment", Harold replied, "yes, but I haven't made enough to pay myself yet". So he has finally cashed in the farm to pay himself.

No big jobs were planned for Thursday or Friday because it took all day Thursday to pick corn, prepare chickens, gather

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WEIR REMINISCES from page 5

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 tables, wash bunch, load the truck, etc., to go on Friday. Harold left early and did not get back home until late Friday night. I stayed home to do the chores and whatever most needed to be done. He would give enough jobs to last until the next Friday and repeat them about six times, then say, "don't work too hard but do all you can". I would reply, "I'll hurry up and take my time". Harold's mother (Aunt Zella) told a story about his affinity for work since he was a school boy. His father (Uncle Rob) was a carpenter. He had an old stone house with a couple of acres of ground on West Moreland Ave., about a mile West of Hatboro.. He always had some chickens, guinea pigs, rabbits, a cow, horse, garden, etc. Harold being the oldest always had a lot of chores to do after school before his father got home from work. On one day, he had just finished shelling corn, for feeding the animals, using a hand cranked Sheller, when he saw his father come up the driveway, he quickly dumped out the baskets of cobs and started to pick them up and put them back in to impress his father of his dedication to work.

Harold's brother, Leon had a daughter, Doris. She was thirteen years old when I started to work for Harold and had just transferred from Pleasant Plains grade school to Richboro high. After a hockey practice it would be too late for the bus and she would often stop in to stay over night at Harold's. She would help Esther with her chores and after supper would wash the dishes for Esther and if I had time, I would help her clear the table, dry the dishes and put them away. I grew up helping my mother do her chores as well as care for my younger brothers and sister. So over the years I not only grew to be a part of the Weir family but Doris kind of became a little sister to watch out for and I always tried to help her as such. Never in my wildest dreams did I ever expect her to be my wife or how such an innocent little girl, who helped with the dishes could become the "power steering unit" for my life by leading me down the aisle to say "I do" with Harold as best man, Peggy Joan as flower girl, Leon as usher, Evelyn as bridesmaid, and tie the knot that has grown together for over a half century.

UPCOMING EVENTS

SPONSORED BY THE BUCKS COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OR THE HERITAGE CONSERVANCY

MAY

TOWER TOUR FOR FAMILIES

May 7th, 10:30 and 11:30 a.m. Tour of Fonthill from basement to tower, children must be over 5 and able to climb steep stairs. Regular museum admission.

COLONIAL STONE HOUSES OF BUCKS COUNTY

May 11th 7:30 p.m. Aldie Mansion. Learn how to tell if a house really dates from the 18th century by using both architectural and documentary evidence. Admission \$10.

MERCER MUSEUM FOLK FEST

May 14 15th at Mercer Museum grounds. Crafts, timberframing, puppet shows, quilters, artisans, skills and trades of early America exhibited. Adults \$7, children 9-15 \$5, under 8 free.

HISTORIC NEEDLEWORK REPRODUCTION COURSE

May 17 and 24th at Mercer Museum. Instructor will teach stitches from a historic sampler reproduced from Mercer collection. Fee \$30, \$15 20 materials cost.

ARCHITECTURAL TRY IT

May 21st 2:00 4:00. Study architecture of Fonthill then build your own house from recycled materials. For families with children age 4-12. Regular museum admission.

POETRY READING

May 22nd, 2:00. Poetry as folk art. Original and classic poetry read by Judith and Philip Toy. Regular museum admission .

YESTERYEAR IN PENNSYLVANIA

May 23rd 12:30. Mercer Museum. Join the Friends of the BCHS and hear John Dale discuss his wood carvings depicting Penna. folklife. Refreshments at 12:30, program follows a short business meeting at 1:00. Guest welcome.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE LECTURE AND SLIDE SHOW

May 24th 7:00. Ceramic sculptor Steven Waterman show his work influenced by the Moravian Pottery and Tile Works. Lecture is free; admission to museum not included, enter Elkins Gallery of Mercer Museum at Pine Street door.

JUNE

TOWER TOUR FOR FAMILIES

June 4th (See May 7th information)

GONE FISHIN' AT MERCER MUSEUM

June 4th 11:00 4:00. Cosponsored by Trout Unlimited. Fly tying and casting demonstrations and lessons, slide show and more. Regular museum admission.

BENSALEM FOUNDER'S DAY FAIR

June 5th. Growden Mansion. Learn about the history of Growden Mansion and the Growden family. Kite flying contest in the field alongside mansion. Refreshments available; raffle held. Admission free.

150 YEARS OF DOYLESTOWN

June 7th 7:30 at Mercer Museum. Milt Rutherford's slide show of Doylestown past and present. Admission \$5

MAKE A RAG DOLL

June 11th Ongoing from 2:00 to 4:00. Informal family craft project; museum provides basic materials and instruction. Regular museum admission.

WEAVING DEMONSTRATION

June 25th Ongoing from 2:00 to 4:00. Mercer Museum. An Early American craft demonstration of the weaver's tools and techniques. Regular museum admission.

HATMAKING DEMONSTRATION

May 28th Ongoing from noon to 4:00. Mercer Museum. See the stages a flat piece of felt goes through to become a hat. Early American hats on display. Regular museum admission.

JULY

TOWER TOUR FOR FAMILIES

July 2nd (See May 7th information)

FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION

July 4th Noon to 5:00. Fonthill grounds. Oldtime July 4th celebration complete with traditional music, food, craft activities, games, antique bicycles and more. Admission is \$3 per car. Fonthill Museum will be open for a nominal charge.

UNDER THE STARS

Outdoor film series, bring lawn chairs and blankets, Mercer Museum quadrangle, gates open 6:30, movies start at 8:30. Rain location in Elkins Gallery. Admission \$2.50 adults, \$1.00 children under 12.

July 5 "The Man in the White Suit"

July 12 "On the Waterfront"

July 19 "Pal Joey"

July 26 "An Affair to Remember"

August 2 "Pink Panther"

**NORTHAMPTON HISTORICAL SOCIETY HOUSE TOUR
MAY 26, 1994 - THURSDAY - 6:45PM
BUS RESERVATION**

NAME _____
PHONE _____
NUMBER OF PEOPLE _____

BRING YOUR 1994 MEMBERSHIP CARD - MAIL BEFORE MAY 18, 1994 TO:

JEAN GALLAGHER
469 TWINING FORD ROAD
RICHBORO, PA 18954

NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY

55 Township Road, Richboro, Pennsylvania 18954

1994 OFFICIERS AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President	Jean Gallagher	357-7833
Vice President	Doug Crompton	355-5307
Recording Secretary	Eileen Zolotorofe	598-3065
Treasurer	Florence Leedom	357-3121
Corresponding Sec.	Eleanor Ewing	860-5288
	Joanne Kerridge	355-2193
Director	Bill Blumhardt	357-3260
Director	Chris Fleuhr	355-8712
Social Committee	Dorris D'Ardene	968-5507
	Eileen McAdams	364-6924
Historia Editor	Doug Crompton	355-5307
Send articles to:	1269 2nd St Pike	
	Richboro, PA 18954	

Historia is published quarterly by the Northampton Township Historical Society. The Society meets four times each year at the Northampton Township Cultural Center, Upper Holland Road, Richboro. Anyone is welcomed at our meetings, which start at **7:30 P.M.** with refreshments, general meeting, and a featured speaker.

Meeting Dates for 1994

May 26 THURSDAY - House Tour - 6:45PM
 September 28 General Meeting - 7:30PM
 November 16 Dinner meeting - 6PM
 December 4 Living Tree Award - 3PM

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND RENEWAL CLASSIFICATIONS

PATRON:	Extra support for the society	\$25.00
FAMILY:	All members of one family	\$10.00
SINGLE:	Adult individual membership	\$5.00
SENIOR CITIZEN:	Age 65 years or older	\$2.00

This will be your membership for the calendar year of 1994 (January 1994 to December 1994)

Note - Applications received after October 31 will be credited for the following year.

This application is sent with all editions of the Historia. Please check your records to make sure that you have not already paid for the current year. Normal renewal time is in the first quarter of the year or when the March historia is received. If your membership is current please pass this application onto others who may be interested in our society.

A GREEN sticker on the address page indicates that your membership is paid for the current year.

Please consider a contribution of more than the minimum membership to help defray increasing society costs.

Send to : **Northampton Township Historical Society**
469 Twining Ford Road
Richboro, PA 18954

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ DUES ENCLOSED: \$ _____

May we count on you to serve on one of our committees ? : Y ___ N ___ MAYBE ___

Please give us your ideas for speakers at future meetings : _____

Your comments and suggestions are welcomed : _____