



The Acorn

The Quarterly Newsletter of the Historical Society of Montgomery County, PA

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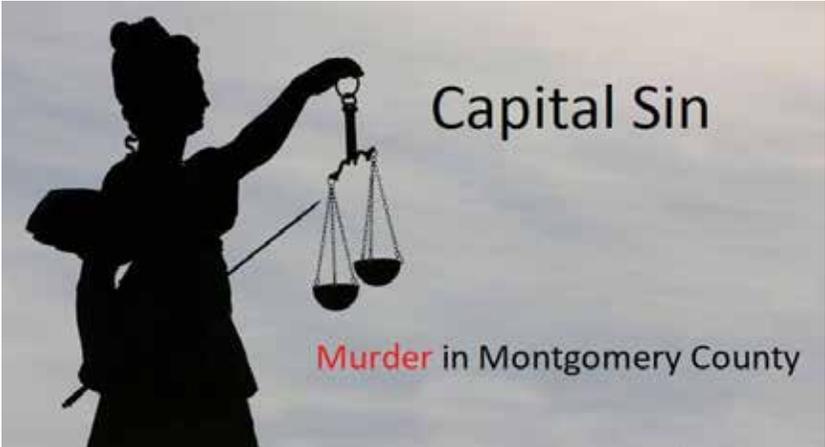
Capital Sin

Presentation by Charles Kelly

Thursday, October 24, 2019 - 7:00 pm

Join us for a presentation in our **Making History Greater Series** when Charles Kelly presents *Capital Sin: Murder in Montgomery County*. Mr. Kelly will review select murder cases and the trial outcomes that took place between 1877 and 1962 in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania. Among the cases are:

- a still unsolved murder that took place in West Norriton Township
- a murder-kidnapping that took place in Plymouth Township which predates but is very similar to the Lindbergh kidnapping of 1932
- a murder for hire in Upper Merion Township which sent one man to the gallows
- a West Pottsgrove Township murder of a wife by her husband
- an Abington Township case that sent shock waves through that community because of the ages of the victim and perpetrator
- a high society murder in Lower Merion Township
- a presentation and review of the 1959 Maryann Mitchell killing in Whitmarsh Township which led to the execution of Elmo Smith.



The talk will focus on the persons, places and things that make up the means, motive and in some cases the unexpected verdicts of these cases which have long faded from the minds and memories of today’s residents. The **Making History Greater Series** features scholars, authors, and historians who are currently working on telling new stories about the complexity of our region’s history. *Capital Sin: Murder in Montgomery County* will take place on Thursday, October 24, 2019. The evening will begin at 6:30 with a social gathering and light refreshments. The presentation will begin at 7:00 pm and last for about an hour with time for questions at the end. This program is free and open to the public.

The Historical Society of Montgomery County

Visit Us

Research Library - Archives
Books & Gifts - Galleries

1654 DeKalb Street
Norristown, PA 19401

Monday and Thursday, 10am - 5pm
Tuesday and Wednesday, 1pm - 8pm

First Saturday of Each Month or by
Appointment, 10am - 2pm

Historic Montgomery
Cemetery

Located at the end of
Hartranft Avenue in
West Norriton Township, PA

Open from dawn to dusk.

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Upcoming Events

AUGUST

Monday, August 12, 2019

7:00 pm - 10:30 pm

Cemetery Tour and Falling Star Watch

Thursday, August 22, 2019

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Washington's Flying Camps

Presented by Rebecca Price Janney

SEPTEMBER

Monday, September 2, 2019

CLOSED

Labor Day Holiday

Saturday, September 21, 2019

5:00 pm - 6:30 pm

Cemetery Tour

The Culture of Death in America

OCTOBER

Monday, October 14, 2019

CLOSED

Columbus Day Holiday

Tuesday, October 15, 2019

6:30 pm - 8:00 pm

Genealogy Workshop

17th and 18th Century Research

Presented by Sydney Dixon

Thursday, October 24, 2019

7:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Capital Sin:

Murder in Montgomery County

Presented by Charles Kelly

NOVEMBER

Saturday, November 9, 2019

Noon - 2:30 pm

Annual Luncheon

Our Mission

The Historical Society of Montgomery County engages with the public to collect, preserve, and interpret the documents, artifacts, and stories that reflect the evolving mosaic that is our county.

New Exhibit: Montgomery County Hospitals

Our newest exhibition at the Historical Society of Montgomery County looks at hospitals and health-care in Montgomery County. Hospitals are a common site throughout Montgomery County, but that was not always the case. From local doctors, to Almshouses, and nonprofit organizations, the way we treat the sick and injured has changed drastically since the founding of the county. In this exhibit, we explore how hospitals and medical treatments have evolved and impacted the community.

The exhibit is located at our site at 1654 DeKalb Street in Norristown, PA and runs through February, 2020.

Save the Date!

This year's Annual Luncheon
will be held on
Saturday, November 9, 2019
at Noon!

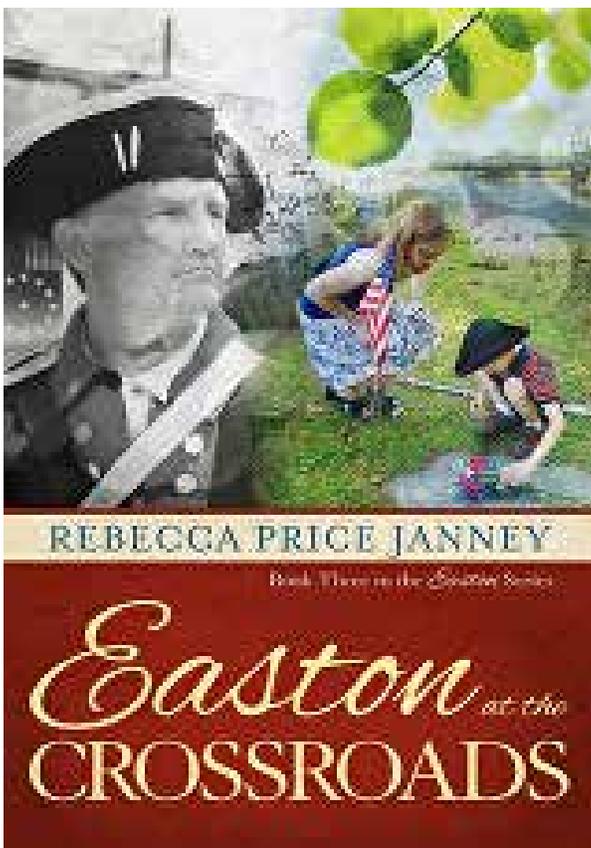
Washington's Flying Camps

Presentation by Rebecca Price Janney
Thursday, August 22, 2019, 7:00 pm - 8:30 pm

Join us in August when Rebecca Price Janney presents "Washington's Flying Camps".

Rebecca Price Janney's newest books, a series of novels (3 now) about two people who live 250+ years apart, are joined by common experiences and a hometown. These are a result of her own family research about 10 years ago in which she uncovered layers of ancestors and their stories, including a fascinating figure—a Revolutionary War colonel and Pennsylvania "big wig." Janney will tell the harrowing story of Colonel Peter Kichline and the Northampton County Flying Camp battalion that traveled north to fight in the Battle of Long Island with General George Washington. She will also discuss how her research inspired these books along with the importance of knowing our own family stories.

Rebecca Price Janney is the award-winning author of twenty-two books, including her beloved Easton Series. A member of the Daughters of the American Revolution, she earned degrees



in history from Lafayette College, Princeton Seminary, and Biblical Seminary. She's a popular speaker at civic and patriotic organizations, historical societies, schools, libraries, churches, and synagogues, and appears regularly on radio. Her weekly podcast, "Great Stories in American History," has been gaining a steady following. Rebecca resides with her husband, son, and a slightly spoiled spaniel in Pennsylvania's Lehigh Valley.

The is event will take place on Thursday, August 22, 2019, at the Historical Society Headquarters, 1654 DeKalb Street, Norristown, PA. The evening will begin at 6:30 pm with a social gathering and light refreshments. The presentation will begin at 7:00 pm and last for about an hour with time for questions and book signing at the end. This program is free and open to the public.

World War II in Europe: The Second Front

Special 6-part Class

Wednesdays, October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, November 6, 2019 6:00 - 8:00 PM

The Historical Society of Montgomery County announces a new series of classes on the history of World War II in Europe.

On the night of June 5/6 the Allied invasion of France began when more than 17,000 Allied airborne troops parachuted behind the German lines in Normandy officially opening a bid to establish a second front on the European continent in World War II. Before the day ended over 156,000 Allied soldiers came ashore along a fifty mile stretch of beaches on the Norman coast. This was only the beginning of what would be eleven months of hard fighting that on May 7, 1945 caused Germany's surrender and ended World War II in Europe.



Taught by historian Michael Snyder and using lecture supplemented by power point and handouts, this course will cover Overlord (the planning and execution of D-Day), the fighting in hedge rows of Normandy and the breakout, the Falaise Pocket and the pursuit to West Wall, Operation Market Garden, the Battle of the Bulge, the crossing of the Rhine, and the German surrender. The emphasis will be on the military and political operations but will also look at life on the home front in the Schuylkill Valley.

Where: Classes will be held at 1654 DeKalb Street, Norristown, PA, in the Meeting Room of the Historical Society of Montgomery County.

When: Wednesdays, October 2, 9, 16, 23, 30, November 6, 2019, 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Cost: Cost to attend this series is \$80 for members of the Historical Society of Montgomery County and \$100.00 for non-members.

Contact us at 610-272-0297 or checkout our website at hsmcpa.org for more information or to register for the class.

Montgomery County's First Female Physician

From Our Blogs

By Karen Ploch, Curator

Margaret Phillips Richardson was born in Radnor Township (Delaware County) on October 27, 1816. She married Abraham Richardson on September 12, 1839 and lived with him in Juniata County for several years. Abraham died on August 6, 1841 and Margaret remained in the county with their son, John P. Richardson, until she decided to obtain a career in medicine.

Ten years later, in 1851, Margaret started studying medicine at the Pennsylvania Female College in Philadelphia. Part of the second class to graduate from this college, Dr. Richardson received her degree in 1853. She then moved back to Juniata County for four years to practice medicine. In 1857, she moved to Norristown.



Dr. Richardson was the first female physician in both Montgomery and Juniata Counties. She was known for her success in curing fevers and was often asked to consult other medical professionals when they were treating a patient. She also aided county courts by providing her medical expertise as needed.

Dr. Richardson stayed in Norristown until her death on May 15, 1909. She died of bronchitis at 92 years old and is buried at Plymouth Meeting Friends Cemetery. In our current exhibit, *Montgomery County Hospitals*, we display one of Dr. Richardson's advertisements for medical treatment. The exhibit runs through February, 2020 and is free and open to the public.

17th and 18th Century Research

Genealogy Workshop

Sydney F. Cruice Dixon

Tuesday, October 15, 2019 6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

The Historical Society of Montgomery County announces a new special topic genealogy class for this fall.

Montgomery County was formed out of Philadelphia County in 1784. But frequently researchers are looking much deeper into our region's past to find the histories of their houses, their communities and their families. This workshop will help those who are tracking down the stories of the 17th and 18th Centuries within the area we now know as Montgomery County, PA.

Sydney F. Cruice Dixon is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists. She has been actively researching family genealogies since 1995. In addition to conducting research and providing genealogical coaching, Dixon currently teaches both beginner and intermediate level genealogy courses. She also lectures regularly throughout the tri-state area. She is also a member of the planning committee for the Main Line Genealogy Club in the Philadelphia area.

The program is \$10 for members of the Historical Society of Montgomery County and just \$20 for non-members. Please contact the Historical Society at (610) 272-0297 to reserve your spot!

Cemetery Tour and Falling Star Watch

Walking Tour of Historic Montgomery Cemetery

Monday, August 12, 2019 7:00 PM - 10:30 PM

The Historical Society of Montgomery County announces a special event on Monday, August 12, 2019, that combines a tour of Historic Montgomery Cemetery with some time at the end of the tour to star watch!

With almost 6,000 known burials, Historic Montgomery Cemetery holds the remains of some of the most prominent citizens, veterans and reformers in the county and nation. From five Civil War generals to many captains of industry, it tells the story of the nation through the lives it represents.

August 12, 2019 marks the peak of the Perseid Meteor Shower. So, why not hang around for the aftershow? Bring a lawn chair or a blanket and stay with us a bit longer to see if you can spot a meteor or two. The moon will be nearly full, so the shower won't bring as many visible meteors as it does on some years, but we hope to catch a few falling stars before the evening ends at 10:30 PM.

The entrance to Montgomery Cemetery is at the end of Hartranft Avenue, off of West Main Street, Norristown. The event is weather dependent. Please check our website for any cancellations. Parking during the event will be made available inside the Cemetery gates.

Cost for this event is \$10.00. To purchase tickets and/or RSVP contact us at 610-272-0297 or email: contact@hsmcpa.org.



New Additions to Our Collections

Property Maps – Gift of Dan Miller

Photograph, “C.R. Hoser Pigeon Photos, R.D. 4 Norristown, PA” – Gift of David Doss

Various Archival Materials – Gift of Harry Roach

Book, *The Mines and Minerals of Montgomery Co., PA* by Ronald A. Sloto – Gift of Ronald A. Sloto

Comic Fest 2019 Posters – Gift of Norristown Public Library

Book, *Making Marathon: a History of Early Wyncote* – Purchase

Various Photographs – Gift of Anonymous

Marriage Certificate, Harrison and Gardner – Gift of Elizabeth Vargo

Map of Montgomery County c. 1969 – Gift of Sandra L. Biddle

Various Letters – Gift of Barbara Cook

Book, *Whispers of the Past: Tales of North Wales, PA* – Gift of Phyllis B. Bryne

Book, *History of Pottstown*– Gift of Dan Graham

License Plate – Gift of Charles Kelly

Genuardi Uniform – Gift of Faye Hoffman

Whiskey Bottle, Radnor Whiskey, John M. Peters, Norristown, PA – Gift of Kathleen Coughy

Cemetery Tour: The Culture of Death in America

Walking Tour of Historic Montgomery Cemetery

Saturday, September 21, 2019 5:00 PM - 6:30 PM

The Historical Society of Montgomery County will present a walking tour and presentation that examines the changing cultural beliefs in America surrounding death and dying.

Nothing is certain except death and taxes. Culturally, however, the American way of death is anything but certain. Over time, popular funeral and burial rituals of have changed dramatically as we have shifted our attitudes towards death.

This special tour of Historic Montgomery Cemetery on September 21, 2019, from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm, includes a walking tour of the cemetery followed by refreshments and a presentation in the Gatehouse that will examine how America’s attitudes towards death have changed since early European settlement. The Historical Society’s Executive Director, Barry Rauhauser, will illustrate how global patterns in culture affect the way we view aging and death and look at how some of America’s historical events helped to create a unique American view on death and dying.

With almost 6,000 known burials, Historic Montgomery Cemetery holds the remains of some of the most prominent citizens, veterans, and reformers in the county and nation. From five Civil War generals to many captains of industry, it tells the story of the nation through the lives it represents. The entrance to Montgomery Cemetery is at the end of Hartranft Avenue, off of West Main Street, Norristown. Parking during the event will be made available inside the Cemetery gates.

Tickets for the event are \$15 and include the walking tour, refreshments and presentation. Tickets are limited so call 610-272-0297 to purchase tickets for this event.

The Historical Society of Montgomery County
1654 DeKalb Street
Norristown, PA 19401-5415

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The Historical Society of Montgomery County

Founded in 1881