Chatham

Chatham, the oldest settlement in London Grove Township, has a history deeply rooted in commerce and transportation. The village began as a rest stop on the Gap-Newport Turnpike for men and horse teams transporting Lancaster County wheat to Wilmington flour mills. In 1741, the second oldest inn in Pennsylvania, the “Half Way House,” was established and still stands today. The community flourished between the 1830’s and 1860’s, supporting one of the county’s first post offices and various businesses. Information: 869-3837

Marlborough Village

Formerly known as Hopi’s Tavern in the eighteenth century, the rehabilitated Oxford Hotel has been the center of the borough’s historic preservation activity today. Nearby stands the majestic Town Tours & Village Walks...

Oxford

Slaves-Dickey House, c. 1840
Oxford Presbyterian Church, the business district with Italianate architecture, the railroad station converted into a town hall, and the brick bay and grain building. All of these resources were the result of Oxford’s location on the Philadelphia and Baltimore stagecoach line and the export of bricks, timber and tobacco. Information: 932-2500

Chester County, one of Pennsylvania’s three original counties, was named by William Penn in 1682. Although the northern and western boundaries were not specific, it is known it encompassed present Chester, Delaware and Lancaster Counties. English, Welsh and Irish Quakers came through the Port of Philadelphia to settle eastern, southeastern and middle Chester County, followed shortly thereafter by the Swiss and Swiss-German people. Most of the Scots and Scots-Irish opted to disembark at New Castle, Delaware during the 1730’s and 1740’s and settled the County’s present western and northern regions.

Although 90% of the people farmed the land, rapid immigration and population density gave reason for the County government to subdivide municipalities and create new ones. Neighbor banded with neighbor to lay out new roads “to mill, to meeting, to market”. Hamlets evolved around water, corn or grist mills, sawmills and fulling mills. Quaker, Presbyterian and Baptist meeting houses, plus one-room subscription schools dotted the countryside.

Two centuries later, Chester County citizens can still enjoy a wonderful historical landscape created by our forefathers. To this extent dozens of volunteers have been researching their respective municipality’s heritage for the past two decades. They have uncovered numerous interesting stories and local folklore which has been conveyed to the public through publications, festivals, heritage days and walking tours.

This year a partnership to organize a summer “Town Tours and Village Walks” program was created between the County Parks and Recreation Department and the Chester County Tourist Bureau. Participants include some of the municipal Historic Commissions in the Chester County Historic Preservation Network, the Historical Society of the Phoenixville Area, and West Chester’s Historic Architectural Review Board.

Celebrate a Chester County Summer!
Join us for the first annual
Town Tours & Village Walks . . .

Twelve delightfully evening walking tours of
twelve charming
Chester County
Towns and Villages.

June 7 through August 30, 1995
Join the Pilkeland's Historical Society for a twilight walk through the streets of Kimberton and be transported back in time to 1787 as you travel from Centennial Lutheran Church past the French Creek Seminary for Females, Christian's Great Mill, and The Sign of the Bear—then past the Grange to the one room Schoolhouse of the late 1800's, back past the shops which will be open for browsing, to the elegant 1796 Kimberson Inn where you can rest, relax and enjoy a special ($25) Prix Fixe dinner. Make reservations: 932-8148. Information: 923-8000.

The walking tour of West Chester will highlight several styles of 19th Century residential architecture. Among those represented will be Federal, Greek Revival, Victorian, Gothic, Italianate, Greek Revival, Second Empire and Queen Ann. Included will be several buildings attributed to Thomas U. Walter, architect of the dome and wings of the U.S. Capitol. The tour will depart from the Lincoln Building, 28 West Market Street. Information: 431-7010

Join us in a celebration of American culture—Avondale style. Featured on the walking tour of our turn-of-the-century rural village will be a variety of Victorian styles, early civic and commercial buildings, and an antique steam locomotive. On this Flag Day we'll also be celebrating our patriotic heritage with a visit from "Uncle Sam.” Information: 268-0394

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