

Wrightstown Township Historical Commission

Minutes

6 November 2025

Call to Order: Chair Betty Davis called the meeting to order at 1:10 p.m.

Present: Chair Betty Davis, Mary Lee Johnson, and Karl Niederer. Absent Jane DelBianco and Beverly Wilson. Guests: Jane Magne, Township Supervisor; and Lisa Loeffler Fee, volunteer (presentation following adjournment at 2:50 p.m.).

Agenda: Additions and Changes - None.

Approval of Minutes: 2 October 2025 meeting. APPROVED with one correction to Old Business, item #4, Placing Prints in Township Building. It should read “Mary Lee will adjust location of one print in the Administrative office.”

Treasurer's Report: No report presented.

Old Business:

1. **Quaker History Exhibit** — Karl reported he will work with David Dutko to create the expanded virtual display of items from the *Quakers in Wrightstown* exhibition in the Township's web site.
2. **Octagonal School** —
 - **Open Houses** —
 - **Sunday, 19 October** — Betty announced 51 visitors attended the season's final Open House and its featured *Tunes of the Times* musical program. Cash donations of \$41 were received. Letters of thanks to musicians Marti and Bob Stevens, and Nancy and Forest Deal, and \$100 honorariums to both couples will be sent this week in gratitude for their participation (ATTACHMENT A).
 - **Sunday, 21 September** — A letter of thanks to County Recorder of Deeds Dan McPhillips has been prepared, to be sent enclosing a check for over \$300 in cash donations received from visitors attending the featured program *In Word and Deed* at the Open House (ATTACHMENT B).
 - **Franklinia tree** — No report on the tree's status.
 - **Parking solution** — Jane Magne reported that Twining Construction is committed to install a permeable parking area in the field accessed via Swamp Road adjacent to the Octagonal School per designs and plans from Township Engineer, Cindy Van Hise. Jane will loop the Commission in with Cindy to review the plans and location of the parking area before Twining proceeds with the project.
 - **Fall cleanout** — Betty, Mary Lee, and Karl agreed to clean out the Octagonal School contents on Wednesday, 12 November, at 1:00 p.m.
 - **Security alarm system control device upgrade** - Mary Lee will look into replacement or alternative devices for controlling the school alarm system, since the current ones are unreliable.
 - **Special programs for 2026** — The Commission members agreed to try offering a featured or special program at each of the six (6) scheduled Open Houses next year, since such programs seem to attract media interest and greater public attendance.

Ideas for featured programs included:

- *Tunes of the Times*, an encore musical performance
 - *In Word and Deed*, an encore display of Bucks County deeds by the County Recorder's Office
 - **Penmanship and calligraphy of the 19th century**, with Robert Hurford
 - **Octagonal School adult art show**, featuring professional-quality artwork of artists such as Joanna Krasnansky and others
 - **Octagonal School student art show**, encouraging interested students from Wrightstown Elementary School to produce individual artworks of the Octagonal School for display at the May 2026 Open House. It will require engaging the art teachers at the school as early in 2026 as possible so students have time to prepare their artwork before May.
3. **Commission Report to Township Supervisors** — Karl reported to the Supervisors on 20 October, highlighting record attendance at the Octagonal School Open Houses in August, September, and October, improved Open House parking, and the successful launch of the Wrightstown Historical Information Scanning Project (WHISP) in August.
 4. **Placing Prints in Township Building** — Mary Lee will adjust the location of a print in the Administrative office immediately after the meeting.
 5. **Mega Way Development History** — Jane Magne plans to resume work on this project during the winter in 2026.
 6. **Wrightstown Historical Information Scanning Project** — Karl reported that Jeffrey Marshall has agreed to volunteer as an advisor to the project to guide efforts to make its products as useful to researchers as possible. The Commission members agreed to join WHISP volunteer Lisa Loeffler Fee at her workstation across the hall following the meeting so she can demonstrate her progress and challenges to date.

New Business:

1. **2026 Commission Meeting Dates:** The Commission agreed to hold its regular meetings next year on the first Thursdays of each month at 1:00 p.m., except for the January meeting: on the 8th instead of the 1st. Karl will provide the list to Ms. Sadovy for publication as soon as possible (see ATTACHMENT C).
2. **Commission Report to Township Supervisors:** Karl will present a report of activities at the Supervisors meeting on 17 November.
3. **Special Program or Event to Commemorate the Nation's 250th:** The Commission will discuss whether to plan a special observance of the 250th during 2026, possibly one of the featured events at an Octagonal School Open House.

Next Meeting: Thursday, 4 December 2025

Adjournment: 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


—Karl J. Niederer, Secretary



WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL COMMISSION

2203 SECOND STREET PIKE, WRIGHTSTOWN, PA 18940

6 November 2025

Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Stevens
20 Nottingham Drive
Fallsington, PA 19054

Dear Marti and Bob,

What greater blessing could you bring to our October Open House at the Octagonal School than the gift of music? Our second autumn *Tunes of the Times* program was a remarkable success—very popular with our visitors and staff alike—and we are truly grateful to you as well as Nancy and Forest Deal for sharing your musical talents and enthusiasm for history with us.

More than fifty guests attended *Tunes of the Times* this year, and it was clear that they enjoyed the special music that transported them back to the cultural sensibilities of the period of the Octagonal School's operation, 1802-1850. Many of them stayed quite a while just to listen and sing along. They appreciated as did we staff members that your music was much more than just a performance—it was an expression from your hearts, harking back to the early years of the Republic when the American people were finding their way as a newly independent nation.

On behalf of a grateful Board of Supervisors and our Historical Commission, please accept our sincere thanks for joining us again this year and making the final Open House of the 2025 season a most enjoyable and memorable one for all. As a token of our appreciation for your time, talents, and enthusiasm, we would like to present you with the enclosed honorarium.

We hope that circumstances and your willingness may combine so that you can join us again at an Octagonal School Open House next year!

With gratitude, and every good wish for your continued health and happiness during the coming holiday season and into the new year, we are

Yours, cordially

Wrightstown Township
Historical Commission
Betty Davis, *Chair*

Enclosure



WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL COMMISSION

2203 SECOND STREET PIKE, WRIGHTSTOWN, PA 18940

6 November 2025

Dr. and Mrs. Forest Deal
15 Trimmer Avenue
Titusville, NJ 08560

Dear Nancy and Forest,

What greater blessing could you bring to our October Open House at the Octagonal School than the gift of music? Our second autumn *Tunes of the Times* program was a remarkable success—very popular with our visitors and staff alike—and we are truly grateful to you as well as Marti and Bob Stevens for sharing your musical talents and enthusiasm for history with us.

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WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL COMMISSION

2203 SECOND STREET PIKE, WRIGHTSTOWN, PA 18940

6 November 2025

Daniel J. McPhillips, Recorder of Deeds
Bucks County Recorder of Deeds Office
55 East Court Street, 6th Floor
Doylestown, PA 18901

Dear Mr. McPhillips:

The Wrightstown Township Historical Commission thanks you most sincerely for being our special guest and speaker at the Octagonal School Open House on Sunday, 21 September 2025. The participation of your staff and you, bringing a fascinating display of original deed books from the Recorder's Office, combined to make our September Open House the most successful and best-attended event ever! More than 120 visitors experienced the exhibition *In Word and Deed*.

It was a privilege for our Commission to showcase your office's *Adopt-A-Book* program at the Open House. Your remarks about the program and the exhibition of actual deed books given conservation treatment raised public awareness of the importance of caring for Bucks County's rich historic resources, and as an immediate result our visitors donated over \$300 to support the *Adopt-A-Book* program. Please find enclosed a check from the township transmitting the total of these donations to your office.

The partnership of the Bucks County Recorder of Deeds Office with our Commission since 2019 has been successful and mutually beneficial one. We are grateful for your office's continued willingness to join us in promoting public awareness of Bucks County history, and showing interested citizens ways that they can support preservation and improved access to our shared heritage.

With sincere gratitude and every good wish, we are

Yours, cordially

Wrightstown Township
Historical Commission
Betty Davis, *Chair*

Enclosure



WRIGHTSTOWN TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL COMMISSION

2203 SECOND STREET PIKE, WRIGHTSTOWN, PA 18940

MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2026

All regular meetings at 1:00 p.m. on the first Thursday of each month except as noted.

Board Room, Township Building
2203 Second Street Pike, Wrightstown, PA 18940

Thursday, 8 January 2026
(note change to 2nd Thursday)

5 February 2026

5 March 2026

2 April 2026

7 May 2026

4 June 2026

2 July 2026

6 August 2026

3 September 2026

1 October 2026

5 November 2026

3 December 2026