



# THE ARCHWAY

*Newsletter of the Friends of Brandywine Springs*

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*Sandi Ciosek, Editor*

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## **NEW FOBS MEMBER REPRINTS HISTORIC 1909 PROMOTIONAL BOOKLET** by Jason Liller

In the 1980s I used to wander the railroad tracks that ran behind my Brookmeade home. One day after taking a detour into the woods, I discovered ruins hidden among the sticker bushes and skunk cabbages. It was like I had discovered a lost city. What were these foundations doing here? Why was there a mini Stonehenge near the railroad tracks? What was the purpose of the iron railings protruding from the ground? It was all very mysterious and, as a 13-year-old kid, it made a big impression. It was quite a while before I learned about the history of Brandywine Springs, and by that time I was hooked.

In the years that followed, through several relocations and separate careers in the US Air Force and publishing, I was always on the lookout for news and artifacts from Brandywine Springs. My mother-in-law knew that I had this weird obsession with Brandywine Springs. She stole my postcard collection one year, had them mounted in hermetically sealed glass frames, and gave them back to me for my birthday. They're on my office shelves right now where everyone can see them.

I was aware of Friends of Brandywine Springs but didn't join until 2018. I'm ashamed that it took me so long. I was busy, I no longer lived in Delaware, and I guess I wasn't sure what I could contribute. When I revisited the park, I was amazed by the conservation efforts and the interpretive materials that had been assembled. I realized that I couldn't afford *not* to be involved with an organization that was capable of something on this scale. As a way of giving back, I reprinted the 1909 Brandywine Springs Park promotional booklet entitled "*Sight-Seeing Trip from Philadelphia to the Historic Brandywine Springs Park*", with all profits donated to Friends of Brandywine Springs. When I see everything that's been accomplished at the park, I feel like a blister: I showed up *after* the work was done. This book is a small way for me to give back to the organization and make me feel a little less guilty.



Jason Liller

Today Pittsburgh's beloved West View Park is a shopping center. Wilmington's own Shellpot Park has all but vanished. Across the country, scores of early amusement parks have disappeared from living memory with little tangible evidence that they were ever there. Brandywine Springs Park stands as a rare success story of historic preservation done at the grassroots level. Friends of Brandywine Springs has done something remarkable. I hope that other communities across the nation look in their own backyards and use the FOBS experience as an example of how a small group of dedicated, passionate individuals can make local history exciting and accessible to new generations.

The reprinted edition of "*Sight-Seeing Trip from Philadelphia to the Historic Brandywine Springs Park*" is available now with all profits donated to FOBS. To purchase, visit [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) and search for "Brandywine Springs Park."



**NEXT MEETING SUNDAY, JUNE 9, 7:00 P.M. - THE CEDARS METHODIST CHURCH**  
**"CROWN JEWELS"**  
**(Art Deco Soda Bottles Made in the 1920s and 1930s)**  
**BY DAVID DOODY**

## NEW CAROUSEL LOCATION??

by Mark Lawlor

Since the late 1980s I have spent a quarter century believing that the Dentzel Carousel and the Caterpillar ride were in the same location under the same roof. However, recent information may show that to be incorrect. Local researcher **Ray Harrington** found Cranston Heights Fire Company records showing that the roof of the empty Carousel building burned in 1922 after the Carousel had been removed. To quote that fire call: *“March 29, 1922, Phone call — fire at Brandywine Springs merry-go-round, swings and woods. In service 1 hour and 15 minutes, 1 tank and one hand extinguisher used, loss about \$500. Driver J. Greenwood”*. (J. Greenwood was Ray’s great grandfather.)

The Caterpillar ride was installed in the spring of 1923 and may not have been under a roof at all. Round Caterpillar rides have canvas hoods that put the ride in the dark, which would be more effective outdoors. (On the Caterpillar foundation pointing west toward the Chalybeate Spring, words written in the top of the wet concrete were still legible in the late 1980s: *“R. Pearson, May 9, 1923”*. I met an elderly Ray Pearson of The Cedars in the 1990s, and he said he was about 10 years old when he wrote his name in the wet concrete. This piece of concrete was knocked slightly out of place when a County truck ran into it a couple years ago.)

The newly discovered silent movies, “The Lost Motion Pictures of Brandywine Springs Park” (found by **Tom Gears**), show a Baby Day Parade in 1903 with the corner of the Carousel roof on the far right of the movie. In the background a trolley can be seen moving in front of a stationary train car, going past the Entrance Archway (the back of which is on the right of the film view). In order to see this view of a trolley passing to the north of the Entrance Archway, the photographer could not be standing as close to the north hillside as the Caterpillar foundations. The hillside would block the view unless the photographer were to step about 30 to 50 feet to his right, to the south and toward The Cedars neighborhood. Even then, the Carousel is to his south side. Therefore the Carousel had to be, as **Sam Freedman** said in “Sam’s Letter”: “in the center of the area”. So, the bad news is that thousands of my paperback and hardback books, my posters, and FOBS brochures are slightly wrong by 30 to 50 feet regarding the location of the three-row Dentzel Carousel. But, the really good news is that if we look carefully on the south side of the Caterpillar foundations, the Carousel foundations might be there just waiting to be discovered!

So, what would a carousel foundation look like? Starting from the center post of a Dentzel Carousel, the concrete foundations (approximately 1 foot square) would be exactly 6 feet north, south, east, and west of the center support column, with a fifth foundation nearby, off center, for the motor mount. Our archaeology team needs to look carefully for these foundations. This new location also explains why we have no photos looking straight up that section of the park. Sam Freedman said there was gravel from the Movie Theatre to the front of the park. Maybe this gravel layer will help us find the location of the Carousel footers if they are still there.



**Bob D’Onofrio** recently acquired this lovely piece of china. It is an antique Royal Bayreuth trinket dish, made in Germany, and is very rare. It has a head of an eagle with the words “Brandywine Springs” written on the right side of the dish. *(Mike Ciosek Photo)*

### ARCHAEOLOGY DATES

**June 8, July 13, August 10, September 7,  
October 12, November 2**

**Meet in the Brandywine Springs parking lot at 9:00 a.m. or come down at your convenience. Bring work gloves and a lunch. We’ll have water to drink. We’ll work until about 3:00 p.m.**

### COUNTY PROJECTS

**Kendall Sommers**, New Castle County Parks Planner, informs that there is no news on the Council Oak stage as yet. The dam concrete structure repair is scheduled as soon as the weather breaks (this is patching and reinforcing the Spaulding concrete dam). The County is going through the budgetary process now and will have more information on what projects are approved in the next month or so. New Castle County TV will be doing a series on County parks. They will be creating a short video clip for each park that will highlight unique features of the site. Brandywine Springs will be one of the first three parks highlighted. We’ll let you know when we learn the air date.



**ANNUAL RED CLAY VALLEY CLEANUP DAY** was held March 30. We had a good crew of cleaner uppers as shown above: (L-R) **Lonzy Seymour, Angela Evans, Ed Lipka, Alexandra Aviles, Mark Lawlor, Eileen Boyle, Jason Liller, Valeria Liller, Bonnie Kachmar, John Kachmar, Ryan Kachmar**. The park really wasn't in bad shape, but the crew made it better. Our thanks to all who helped! *(Mike Ciosek Photo)*

### AUDIO TOURS OF PARK

Now that the weather is nice, take your phone to the park and do the audio tour that **Leone Cahill-Krout** developed. Go to [izi.travel/en](http://izi.travel/en) and choose "Explore". Type in "Brandywine Springs" and click on "Park Archaeology Tour". Using your phone's GPS system, you can walk through the park and hear details about each site.

### GREETERS NEEDED!

We badly need greeters for our museum in the Red Clay Valley Visitors Center at the **Wilmington & Western Railroad Greenbank Station**. You don't have to be an encyclopedia about Brandywine Springs or WWRR, just be a smiling face and keep an eye on things. You'll meet some of the nicest people and maybe even someone you haven't seen in ages. It only involves a couple hours on Saturday or Sunday when the Railroad is running. If you can help, please contact **Mary Simons** at [mhsimons21@comcast.net](mailto:mhsimons21@comcast.net) or (610) 274-8949.

### ROAD CONSTRUCTION — EXPECT DELAYS!

DELDOT is currently working on the intersection of **Route 41 (Newport Gap Pike)** and **Faulkland Road** to widen and improve the intersection and hopefully decrease the number of traffic accidents at that intersection. The work began recently and is expected to last for about six months. Detours may be necessary to get to Brandywine Springs.

**Don't be stressed about your eyesight failing as you get older. It's nature's way of protecting us from shock as we walk past a mirror. ~Unknown**

**2019 MEETINGS**  
7:00 p.m.  
**The Cedars**  
**Methodist Church**  
Maple & Harrison Avenues

**JUNE 9**  
"Crown Jewels"  
(Art Deco Soda Bottles  
Made in the 1920s & 1930s)  
by **David Doody**

**JULY 14**  
**AUGUST 11**  
**SEPTEMBER 8**  
**OCTOBER 13**  
**NOVEMBER 10**  
**DECEMBER 8**



**Eileen Boyle** gave a very interesting and enlightening talk about "Poisonous Plants" at the May 5 meeting. Here she tells **Bob D'Onofrio** about plants to avoid. It was a very stormy evening which, unfortunately, kept attendance low. If you missed it, you missed a great talk!

### *In Memoriam*

**ROBERT GALFORD**  
February 23, 2019  
Condolences to the  
Galford Family

**REN DI BATTISTA**  
April 27, 2019  
Condolences to  
Carol & Family

**THE COMPUTER ATE MY LIST!!!**

A computer glitch made my FOBS mailing list disappear! I've tried to reconstruct it and think I've been pretty successful. However, if you are not receiving email reminders of our monthly meetings, please let me know at **MikeCiosek@comcast.net** and I'll be sure to get you back on the list. Thanks!!

**This & That...** We are very grateful to **Jason Liller** for reprinting the 1909 Brandywine Springs promotional booklet "Sight-Seeing Trip from Philadelphia to the Historic Brandywine Springs Park" and for donating his profits to FOBS (see Page 1). Jason lives in Mechanicsburg, PA, so he has quite a trek to FOBS activities.... If you haven't already done so, mark your calendar for our annual picnic on **September 28**. As usual, there will be plenty of good food — with fried chicken by **Bob McGhee** — and good friends. Just hope for good weather!... The **Red Clay Valley Visitors Center** was cleaned on March 17. Our thanks to all who participated.... **Mike Ciosek** gave the amusement park slide presentation at the annual meeting of **Friends of White Clay Creek State Park** at Deerfield Country Club on March 18.... **Mark Lawlor** has been clearing new trails in the Red Clay Creek area of Brandywine Springs.... **Ed Lipka** tells us that, unfortunately, **St. Hedwig's Annual Polish Festival** will not be held this year due to major construction at the Riverfront site. Ed and his committee are working with other organizations to come up with an alternative plan so you'll be able to get your kielbasa and kapusta. Watch The News Journal for announcements.... **Richard Gillis** has been helping at the new **Delaware Military Museum**. This is the first museum to showcase Delaware military and has many displays that tell the stories of Delaware's service men and women. It's located just off McKennan's Church Road at 1st Regiment Road (the same site as the Mid-County Senior Center) and is open every Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and the second Saturday of the month from 12:00 noon to 3:00 p.m.... If you haven't paid your 2019 membership dues, they are now overdue. If you owe, a renewal form will be enclosed with this newsletter. Please remit ASAP!.... *Questions, comments, or suggestions, contact Sandi at (302) 994-0536 or MikeCiosek@comcast.net.*

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Sarah Dougherty                Bob D'Onofrio  
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**\*\*FRIENDS\*\*  
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28  
ANNUAL PICNIC  
\*\*FRIED CHICKEN\*\***

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