



# Historic QUAKERTOWN

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## April 2020 Newsletter

### MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

As all of you know, we had a membership meeting scheduled for March 26 which had to be cancelled because of the health concerns that are present. We were all looking forward to the scheduled speaker, Bill Harr, a life-time resident of Quakertown and a member of the family that has owned and operated Sine's 5 & 10 for many, many years. He was going to talk about the downtown business district in the 1950's and 60's. He has agreed to give a presentation at a future meeting once it is scheduled.

We have also gotten a commitment from Dick Helm, a life-time resident of the Quakertown Community, to, at a future meeting, do a presentation on what it was like growing up in the 1940's and 50's.

### QUAKERTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARCHIVES

In the words of our mission statement, the society believes that *“by collecting, preserving, interpreting, and celebrating Quakertown's history, we link the past with the present with the goal of inspiring future generations.*

Over its 46 years in existence, the Society has become the repository of many documents, photographs and artifacts that are related to Quakertown Borough history. They have been identified and recorded and we are now in the process of using these resources to further document the history of Quakertown with a variety of themes. While the collection is large, we can certainly use more.

With that in mind, if you have anything, or know of someone who has anything that relates to the history of Quakertown, whether it be business, manufacturing, sports, education, transportation, religion, government, service clubs etc., please consider making a contribution of those articles/artifacts to the Society. Additionally, if you have a written history of a particular organization in any of those categories, please furnish us with a copy for our archives.

### BURGESS FOULKE HOUSE, LIBERTY HALL & THE MUSEUM TOURS

We are pleased to offer, by appointment, tours to all three sites that are under the auspices of the Historical Society. The tour generally takes about 1 ½ hours and can be self-guided or guided by one of our Board Members. It can be for just a few people or it can be for a group of up to 50. We do ask that a donation be made to the Society in lieu of any charge for the tour.

If you or someone you know, would like to schedule a tour, you can contact us at [quakertownhistoricalsociety@gmail.com](mailto:quakertownhistoricalsociety@gmail.com) or call us at 267-227-3864 and leave a message. We will get back to you quickly and schedule it once current restrictions are lifted.

## **FINANCES**

As you know, the Society does not currently charge an annual membership fee but needs ongoing financial support to meet our operating expenses (heat, internet, insurance, office supplies). At this point, we depend solely on donations, fundraisers and tours. We are a 501 (c) (3) Non-Profit Corporation. None of our officers or Board Members receive any payment whatsoever for the services they perform.

With that in mind, would you please consider making a monetary contribution to the Society and send it to Quakertown Historical Society, P.O. Box 846, Quakertown, PA 18951. Thank you!!!

## **LOOKING BACK**

The following speech was recently found in our archives. As you can see, it was delivered on June 30, 1917 at the point where West Broad Street crosses the railroad tracks and turns into East Broad Street and was, at that time, where the War Memorial Statue (now in Memorial Park) stood. To give historical context to the speech, the United States entered World War I on April 4, 1917.

It has been said that we are in a different kind of war today – Covid-19. Some of the very words that Mr. Grim spoke that day still apply today and can be of encouragement to us.

### **Address by Harry E. Grim, Esq. Delivered at the flag-raising on Railroad Square, Quakertown, Booster Day June 30, 1917**

While I recognize the patriotic impulse which prompted you as a town to fling to the breeze this beautiful emblem of our country's liberty, nevertheless, your town demonstration this afternoon was so magnificent that I cannot help but speak of it and what it represented.

It is indeed fortunate for anyone living in Quakertown or anyone interested in your town to be permitted to witness your "Booster Day" parade of today. It has proven your love for your town. The manner of its celebration, the unanimity in which you have all joined and borne your part, has demonstrated that your affection for Quakertown is deeply rooted in the breasts of all people.

Not only has this day been a source of inspiration for a few of your town, but for all. Your aged, though too feeble to follow the splendid parade, have been made more youthful and vigorous. You, who are blessed with a large share of this world's goods, have marched shoulder to shoulder with your less fortunate neighbors. Those of you bent with years of toil and drudgery, but whose usefulness in life's warfare is not comparable, have stopped toiling for a day to smile a little while.

Even the cooing babe nestling close to its mother's bosom still dreaming of paradise has been enraptured by what it has seen on this day, and so it seems to me that all of you, without class or distinction, have had your affections for your home town strengthened, and your efforts to boost your town have been a grand success.

And why should you not thus advertise your town? Why should you not shower encomiums upon Quakertown? Many of you first saw heaven's daybreak here. Here were your parents born; here they spent their childhood days; here you received the advantages of a liberal education, as furnished by your Borough schools; here have you had the benefit of splendid moral and religious movements under the control of your various church organizations; here have you affiliated with fraternal organizations tending to develop in you a brotherly feeling of your fellowman; here dwells your friends, your neighbors, and all that you hold dearest in life.

Do you imagine that you could receive so much from Quakertown without becoming indebted to her for these and many other blessings? When you attempt to “boost” your town, you are paying only a part of the debt you owe her. I feel that I am safe in saying that all of your neighbors in Bucks County rejoice in your splendid prosperity and as a citizen of one of your sister towns, I bring you our greetings. We recognize your many advantages and wish you a continuance of your good fortune.

Since the days of town slogans, Quakertown has been called “The Hub of the North Penn,” and truly have you named her. If I remember correctly, you were loath to adopt a town slogan. Before you adopted your slogan, Sellersville advertised long for people to stop, locate and dwell there. Your sister town, hiding on the southern exposure of Rockhill Mountain, pointed out the incontrovertible fact that when you found a town in Bucks County that was “Active and Attractive, that’s Perkasio,” but when your old baseball rival, in Doylestown, awakened from her midday dreams and asked you to “Watch Her Forward Drive,” you deemed it advisable to let the people of our county know that in Quakertown there were forces that held intact the upper end of Bucks County, and as the hub of the wheel holds together the spokes which in turn give support to the rim that it may be of use, just so there radiate from Quakertown to the surrounding municipalities forces that contribute to their welfare.

But Quakertown is not only useful – she is, indeed, beautiful. As each morning the great shining harbinger of light, in her daily journey around the world, chasing away the gloom of night and veiling the stars, silently tiptoes over the top of Haycock Mountain, there appears in dim vista, fringed by golden harvest fields, shaded by sylvan forests, and watered by murmuring brook, fair Quakertown.

She is old, and yet young; venerable and yet youthful. Her past is rooted deeply into the early history of our County, and the present reveals her at the zenith of her glory, only to be surpassed by her future. She is extremely happy and fortunate in her parentage, being the offspring of a township, whose very soil smiling at the sight of God’s sunshine, brought forth harvests in such abundance.

Quakertown is unquestionably supreme among all the municipalities in Upper Bucks County. Snugly nestling between Haycock and Rockhill Mountains, a diamond setting among the fertile fields of Richland Township, with her feet bathed by the limpid waters of the Tohickon as she glides by your border singing her sweetest lullabies as she smiles to the sky; with houses well built, with streets well lighted, with schools well taught, with splendid churches, with strong financial institutions with happy homes, brave sons and beautiful daughters, you fear no foes and harbor no ill-feeling toward anyone.

But you are not only people of Quakertown, you are part of the country we all love so well, the Founder’s County. You are a part of the fairest State of the Union, the Keystone of States, and you are a part of the greatest of all the world, America. It would be a sad day for America were our affections today circumscribed by the boundaries of small communities. Everywhere we see signs admonishing us to be true to all America. Woe betide the man whose ardor for America is chilled. We can all appreciate the sentiment of the English poet, when he said:

*Breathes there the man, with soul so dead,  
Who never to himself hath said,  
This is my own, my native land!  
Whose heart hath ne’er within him burn’d,  
As home his footsteps he hath turn’d,  
From wandering on a foreign strand!  
If such there breathe, go, mark him well;  
For him no minstrel raptures swell;  
High though his titles, proud his name,  
Boundless his wealth as wish can claim;  
Despite those titles, power and pelf,  
The wretch, concentrated all in self,  
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,  
And, doubly dying, shall go down  
To the vile dust, from whence he sprung,  
Unwept, unhonour’d and unsung.*

You have not only thought of yourself today. You have looked out beyond the borders of your town; you have thought of all the land from the Atlantic to the Pacific; you have not even stopped there. You have looked across the ocean, but you have not even stopped there. You have surveyed the entire globe. Your eyes have not rested until you have seen every people of every country upon which the sun shines. You have witnessed a gigantic struggle, the like of which has never heretofore been dreamed of. You have seen America hesitate before entering that conflict; you see her today actually a participant in that great struggle, and you have decided to pledge your fidelity anew to the Stars and Stripes.

You have determined to place above the interest of your town, your country. You have determined to give the uttermost farthing for the flag we love, and while you have heretofore had many flags floating, today, and as the last event of your celebration you are unfurling as a town with the town standing back of it, the flag of our country. How inspiring the deed. Oh, folds of white and scarlet! Oh, field of blue with your silver stars! How bright you shine today! What a story your presence reveals. When, during the history of our beloved country, were you unfurled so often. When were you greeted with so many cheers!

Ten million of our brave lads have signed the roll of honor to defend you. Ten million of our wives and daughters stand back of you with their prayers and tears, and altogether one hundred million in America stand back of you ready to do their bit and keep you unsullied. And since the Great God, who holds all nations as if in the hollow of His hand, has decreed that you must leave these peaceful shores and be entwined around the Union Jack of England, of the tricolors of France; since you are destined to give cheer to those who brought cheer to our fathers one hundred and forty years ago; since you are going to save them as they saved us; since you are going to right the wrongs of outraged Belgium; since it has been decreed that American ideals are not only for us, but for humanity everywhere, may you always remain not only our emblem of liberty, but become the hope and inspiration of all the world.

And, let us as a people not be downcast. Let us remember that He who created us, preserved and protected all men and nations, will still be our guide, and that it is He that has imposed upon us this duty which we dare not shirk, and I believe the great Poet saw duty when he wrote:

*“Thou, too, sail on, O Ship of State!  
Sail on, O Union, strong and great!  
Humanity with all its fears,  
With all the hopes of future years  
Is hanging breathless on thy Fate!”*



Pictured is the site where this speech took place. In 1966 the monument was moved to Memorial Park. The oldest survivor of the civil war is seated in front of the monument.