

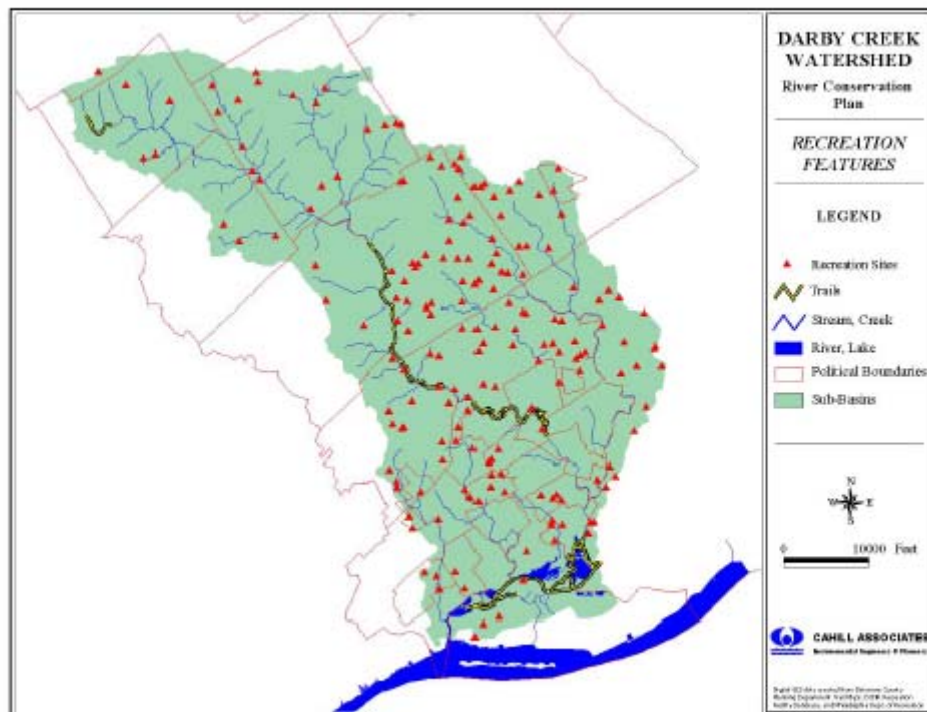


**VI.
RECREATION
& CULTURAL
RESOURCES**



VI. Recreational and Cultural Resources

The Darby Creek Watershed contains an abundance of recreation sites and facilities. Their locations have been mapped using municipal "open space plans" and municipal "environmental and recreation plans" to the extent available (Figure VI-1).



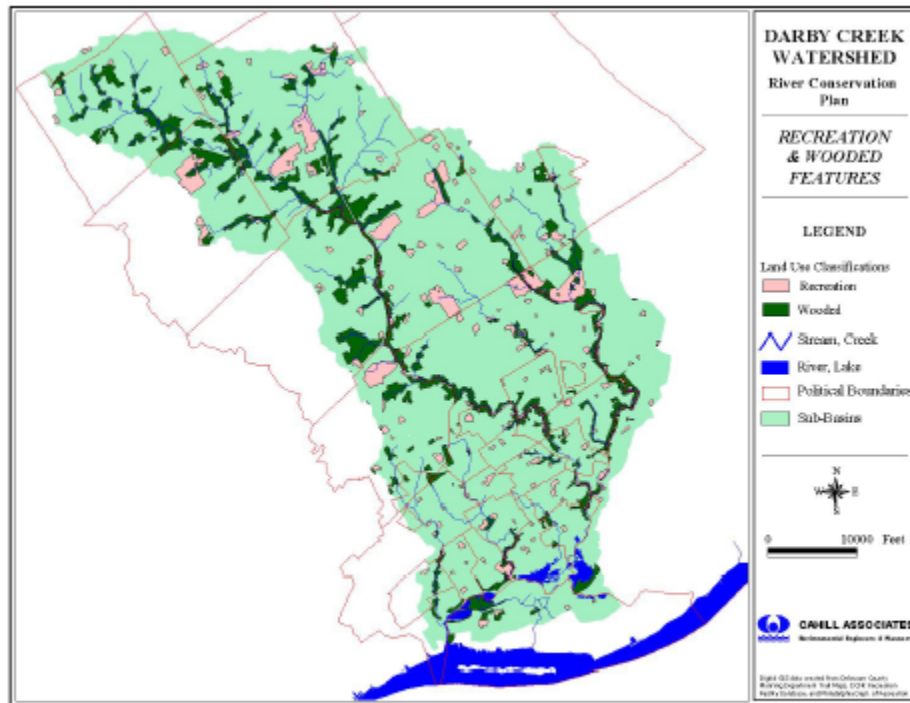


Figure VI-2 Recreation and Wooded Land Use Categories, DVRPC 1995

Walking along Darby Creek on a beautiful spring day, one can find families playing in and around the water (Figure VI-3), fishermen casting their lines (Figure VI-4), and hikers strolling through the cool wooded area (Figure VI-5).

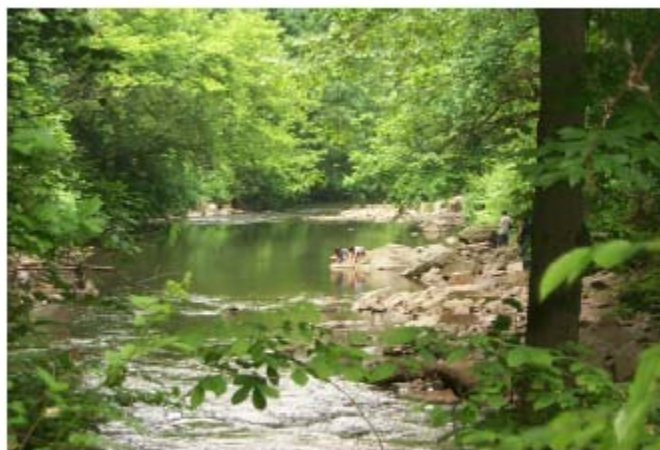


Figure VI-3 The Darby Creek in Upper Darby Township near Creek Avenue



Figure VI-4 A fisherman along the Darby Creek in Upper Darby Township, Creek Avenue



Figure VI-5 A Hiker along Darby Creek in Upper Darby Township, near Creek Avenue

An interesting feature of the Darby Creek Watershed is that although many small to medium sized facilities exist, few large regional or county parks have been created to serve Watershed residents, except for Fairmount Park in Philadelphia and the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge in Tinicum Township. Fairmount Park (<http://www.phila.gov/fairpark>) which spans over 4,000 acres, is America's largest landscaped park.

The last remaining large tract of open space in the Watershed is part of the Haverford State Hospital site ("**HSH**") now owned by Haverford Township. While the final plans for the development of the HSH site have not been finalized, there has been substantial evidence of a consensus in the Haverford and surrounding communities urging that a substantial portion of the HSH site be preserved as open space for both passive and active



recreational use and watershed protection. The HSH site is a key link in the greenway proposed for the main stem of Darby Creek.

Cobbs Creek Park

Cobbs Creek Park (Figure VI-6) drains nearly thirteen miles of stream, approximately 6% of the Cobbs Creek Sub-Basin, and includes Morris Park (created in 1911) and Carroll Park (created in 1929), Cobbs Creek Golf Course, and Karakung Golf Course. The Olde Course at Cobbs Creek Golf Club has been nationally recognized as the sixth best municipal golf course in the U.S. by Golfweek magazine. The historic course and the creek are named after George Cobb, the owner and operator of a gristmill that was once located on the site of the golf course (www.cobbscreek.com/ [<http://www.cobbscreek.com/>](http://www.cobbscreek.com/)).



Figure VI-6 Cobbs Creek Park in Philadelphia

While there are a number of paths in Cobbs Creek Park, there is not a well-defined trail system. Figure VI-7, provided by the Philadelphia Water Department Office of Watersheds, depicts the existing parkland and trails.

Parts of Cobbs Creek Park suffer from safety issues and, as a result, are underutilized by community members for walking, biking, observing nature, or other passive recreation activities. Some areas in the Park have experienced unlawful dumping of trash and stolen cars. Still other portions of the Park have been degraded by abuse from motorcycles and all terrain vehicles (“*ATVs*”), which use the Park as a practice course. Restriction or prohibition of unauthorized vehicle access is necessary to maintain the natural integrity of Cobbs Creek Park and to create an environment more conducive to recreational use appropriate for a watershed.

A trail map for Cobbs Creek Park, a trail master plan, and a community interface map that shows key school, police, transportation, food, parking, gas, lodging, recreation, and public facilities can be accessed at <http://www.regiononline.com/~parktrails/maps.htm>.



Figure VI-7 Parkland and Trails in the Cobbs Creek Park, Philadelphia (PWD, 2001)

Stream Stocking Program

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (“**PFBC**”) undertakes an annual fish-stocking program in various streams throughout the Commonwealth each year. Fish stocking includes trout (3.8 million per year) as well as 100 million fry, fingerling, and adult warmwater fish. In 2000-2001, PFBC maintained a Fall Trout Stocking Program (146,000 legal size trout in 161 waterways), a Winter Trout Stocking program (95,000 adult trout in 61 lakes), and a Late Winter Program (90,000 adult trout in 58 waterways). Subsequently, PFBC designated seven segments in the Darby Creek Watershed for stocking, as outlined below.

DARBY CREEK / STREAM STOCKING 2002

<u>Creek or Tributary</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Location</u>
Darby Creek	4/15/02	From where SR 1006 joins Darby Creek downstream
Darby Creek	4/15/02	From SR 0003; upstream to 804 meters upstream of confluence with Little Darby Creek
Darby Creek	5/6/02	Above location
Darby Creek	4/15/02	Fr SR 1006 (Glendale Rd) downstream to Hilldale Rd

Darby Creek Watershed Conservation Plan



		Bridge
Darby Creek	5/6/02	Above location
Darby Creek	4/29/02	Fr SR 1006 downstream to Hilldale Rd Bridge
Little Darby Creek	5/6/02	From uppermost bridge in Willows Park downstream 0.8 mile to mouth
Ithan Creek	5/6/02	From I-476 downstream to mouth

According to the PFBC, a total of 5,390 brown trout and 4,910 rainbow trout will be stocked in the Darby Creek Watershed at the above locations. The trend has been to stock fewer and fewer stream segments with trout in the Darby Creek Watershed. The State trout-stocking program provides a wonderful recreational opportunity for Watershed residents, and Watershed stakeholders should implement Recommended Actions that would indirectly or directly increase the number of stream segments stocked in the program.

Overview of Trails in the Darby Creek Valley

In spite of over three hundred years of development along Darby Creek, a journey from the headwaters in Chester County to the mouth at the Delaware River still brings the visitor through a range of landscapes -- agricultural, suburban, commercial, industrial, urban, parkland and tidewater. In some places, trails exist, linking communities, historic sites, and even occasional open-space vistas.

Limited planning and ongoing maintenance challenges have resulted in a pattern of fragmented open space, and often impaired opportunities for a fully developed trail system along Darby Creek. However, it is impressive how much of a system is already in place, and how its elements could be connected to each other and to the communities along the creek valley.

Along many parts of the Watershed, there is no “creek road” such as the Wissahickon’s Forbidden Drive, or the Schuylkill River’s Kelly Drive and West River Drive. This lack of access limits the visibility of the Watershed. As a result, there is little awareness in many parts of the Watershed of the presence of Darby Creek. Cobbs Creek Parkway is a notable exception, as it parallels the park’s eastern edge within Philadelphia. The improvement of existing trails, and the linking with new trail sections, and the promotion of a stream-based greenway trail network would help immeasurably to increase the public’s awareness of the Creek and the Watershed. This increased awareness is likely to increase efforts to protect and enhance the Watershed and its many amenities.



A Walk Along the Existing Trails in the Darby Creek Valley -- Envisioning a Greenway

Darby Creek and many of its principal tributaries have their headwaters in Easttown Township in Chester County and in adjacent Radnor Township in Delaware County. The Creek then remains entirely in Delaware County for the rest of its length, except where it forms the boundary with Philadelphia County in the vicinity of the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge.

Lancaster Pike and the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad (Amtrak/SEPTA) follow a ridge separating the Great Valley from the Darby Creek Valley. Trail linkages to key town centers on the Main Line such as Berwyn may need to be limited to sidepaths (or some creative linkages) because of the current pattern of land ownership and development. See Figures VI-8 and VI-9.



Figure VI-8 Waterloo Road in Berwyn



Figure VI-9 Sugertown Road bridge



Figure VI-10 Private estate on Church Road



Figure VI-11 Waterloo Mills Historic District

Owners with large properties that back up to the Creek may be unwilling to grant easements for the development of trails. See Figure VI-10. However, it may be worthwhile to explore this possibility. Even without a trail running along the Creek, in this Piedmont section of the Watershed, there are still attractive back roads suitable for cycling - and often there are interesting historic buildings at the stream crossings, some of which are open to the public. See Figures VI-11 and VI-12.



Figure VI-12 Paper Mill House at St. David's Road

As Darby Creek enters Radnor Township, it encounters a series of township parks and trails including The Willows (Figure VI-13), Skunk Hollow (Figure VI-14) and Saw Mill Park. Following existing township trails along the Little Darby and Darby Creeks, one may enjoy several miles of scenic walks. See Figure VI-15. Even where there are no trails south of the township parks, Darby-Paoli Road parallels the Creek and makes for enjoyable cycling with many rural vistas. See Figures VI-16 and VI-17.

However, land development patterns again bring back yards right up to the Creek, making trail development unlikely in this lower section of Radnor Township. See Figure VI-18.



Figure VI-13 The Willows in Radnor Twp.



Figure VI-14 Skunk Hollow Park in Radnor



Figure VI-15 Old Paper Mill Road



Figure VI-16 Pasture along the Darby Creek



Figure VI-17 One-room Radnor School (1882)



Figure VI-18 Upstream from Bryn Mawr Ave

Along the last portion of the Watershed in Radnor Township and for about two miles in Haverford Township, the former Pennsylvania Railroad (Newtown Square Branch) tracks followed the Creek. The rail line was abandoned in this area many years ago, and it appears that the right-of-way is neither intact nor available to create a “rail-trail.” See Figure VI-19.



Figure VI-19 Old railroad grade removed for new development

Moving further south, nearing Marple Road, much work is under way with plans for the re-use of the grounds of the Haverford State Hospital. Trails are included in this plan, and any trail development along Darby Creek should look for ways to link up to other trail segments. At this point on Marple Road an existing trail, following a sewer right of way begins and can be followed, with few small breaks, all the way to State Road (US Route 1) in Upper Darby Township.



Figure VI-20 Darby Creek Road



Figure VI-21 Existing trail below Marple Road

As the Creek leaves Marple Road, the Valley narrows, and is cut much more into the landscape. See Figures VI-20 and VI-21. At West Chester Pike, there is a good connection to a trail via an apartment complex. See Figure VI-22. However, crossing West Chester Pike and Old West Chester Pike, one must contend with a highly developed commercial area. See Figure VI-23. Amazingly, one soon returns to an isolated streamside trail. If one can block out the noise from the automobile traffic along Interstate 476, it is possible to imagine the ambiance of the Watershed long ago.



Figure VI-22 Trail exit at Robindale Apts.



Figure VI-23 Development at West Chester Pike

As the existing trail follows the Creek it links to existing parks (Figure VI-24) and Burmont Road (Figure VI-25). However, at points along this trail, fences have been installed presumably to discourage dumping and other illegal activities.



Figure VI-24 Parks could be linked by a trail



Figure VI-25 Trail exit at Burmont Road

A Darby Creek Trail system would have excellent connections to public transit. Both the SEPTA trolley lines to Media and Sharon Hill already have stations on or near the Creek. See Figure VI-26.

In Springfield Township, many large developments back onto the deep creek valley, but access is only given to individual residents. Occasionally a right-of-way does link to riparian parkland, such as at Indian Rock Park (Figure VI-27). Of course, good connections are possible at roadway bridges across the Creek, such as at Rosemont Avenue (Figure VI-28).



Figure VI-26 Public transit access



Figure VI-27 Entrance to Indian Rock Park



Figure VI-28 Trail link below Rosemont Ave



Figure VI-29 Restored Lindbergh Bridge

In the entire section of the Watershed between Springfield Township, Clifton Heights Borough and Darby Borough, the Creek is in a deep valley, sometimes with a very attractive trail, but often not. At Clifton Heights, the Lindbergh Bridge spans the valley in a dramatic stretch (Figure VI-29). As the valley approaches Lansdowne Borough, a trail exists, or could be developed, to link small sections of what appear to be public parkland. See Figure VI-30. An easy connection is possible to the center of Lansdowne, and the historic SEPTA Station there. See (Figure VI-31).



Figure VI-30 View at Hilldale Road



Figure VI-31 Historic Lansdowne Station

As the Valley enters Yeadon and Darby Boroughs, there is evidence of an earlier trail behind Fitzgerald Mercy Hospital. See Figure VI-32. There are also sections of beautiful trail along the Creek. See Figure VI-33.



Figure VI-32 Fitzgerald Mercy Hospital



Figure VI-33 A beautiful section of existing trail

Above the Creek in Darby Borough are numerous historic buildings such as the Darby Friends Meeting House (Figure VI-34). However, at the Creek itself, there is often little streamside land available for trail development. See Figure VI-35. Yet, there are stretches of parkland, such as that below 9th St., which appear to be part of an earlier plan to create a continuous linear park.



Figure VI-34 The Darby Friends Meeting House



Figure VI-35 Old trolley bridge in Darby

Parts of Darby Borough have been subject to frequent flooding, and some homes have been removed (Figure VI-36). In these riparian lands, the opportunity to develop a trail should not be missed. As Darby Creek leaves the Piedmont for the Coastal Plain, it joins the Cobbs Creek in Colwyn Borough. Development patterns here give both individual and common access to open areas along the Creek. See Figure VI-37. Trail development linking this area with the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge appears physically possible if a right-of-way could be obtained.



Figure VI-36 Homes to be removed from the flood plain



Figure VI-37 Open space along the Darby Creek

Once 84th Street is reached, the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum Township provides one of the largest areas of public open space in Delaware County, and the largest freshwater marsh in Pennsylvania. Fortunately, existing trails follow an old dike along the east side of the creek with excellent vistas and views of wildlife. See Figures VI-38 and VI-39. Fort Mifflin on the Delaware has undertaken a trail development study in this area, and future crossings of Route 420 and I-95 are being planned to link the Creek trails to the surrounding communities in Prospect Park, Lester and Essington. The Cobbs Creek Trail Master Plan proposes a connection to the Tinicum and Fort Mifflin trails (<http://www.regiononline.com/~parktrails/maps.htm>).



Near the mouth of the creek is Route 291. Delaware County is currently performing an enhancement study along the Route 291/13 here which includes the East Coast Greenway. Thus, the Darby/Cobbs Creek trails will be linked to an important interstate trail here in Tinicum Township.



Figure VI-38 Philadelphia viewed from Tinicum Marsh



Figure VI-39 Historic view at the mouth of Darby Creek

All the above has focused on foot and bicycle routes. However, one should keep in mind that the tidal portion of Darby Creek is navigable by canoe most of the time, and docks already exist in the National Wildlife Refuge. The maze of channels offers several hours of adventure, and a chance to learn to work with the tides. In developing a Darby Creek Greenway, it would make sense to include all of the canoeing and other boating opportunities possible along the lower Darby Creek.

Brief History of the Darby Creek Watershed

The Watershed has had a rich history, both before and after European settlement. It is believed that the Lenni Lenape were the first Native Americans to cultivate the Darby Creek Watershed area. Its fertile floodplains supported abundant crops of maize and tobacco. The Creek and the surrounding land were used for fishing, hunting, and transportation, which facilitated trade.

During this period, the landscape was not virgin, primeval forests. It had been altered to some extent by Native Americans living in the Watershed for many thousands of years. The Lenni Lenape farmed clearings in forests, hunted in the woods, and fished in the streams and rivers. Forests were closed canopy with oaks, maples and other species, often 300 to 400 years old. Forests were interrupted by open areas, sometimes created by burning and then used for farming by Native Americans. Burning was also used to control the forest understory, promoting forage for deer, forest access and open vistas for security and protection. (Source: Fairmount Park System Natural Lands Restoration Master Plan, 1999).



The hunting and trapping of beavers and other fur-bearing animals gave rise to a beaver skin and fur trade business between the Lenni Lenape and the Dutch in the early 17th century. Although the Native Americans sold some of their land in the Watershed to the Dutch before 1635, the Dutch did not make any settlements on Darby Creek. Nonetheless, perhaps because of concern regarding the likelihood of European settlement, in 1655, the Native Americans executed a treaty with the Dutch in order to reserve their hunting and fishing rights.

Swedish settlers were the first to establish a permanent colony in the Watershed during the 1640's. Over time, this pattern of settlement interfered with the Native American way of life. Their fishing, hunting, and agriculture practices were not likely to successfully co-exist with the Swedish farming communities. As a result, Darby Creek no longer provided them with "bounty" off of which they could live -- at least not in the manner that they had been accustomed prior to the arrival of the Europeans. All that remains of the original Lenni Lenape settlements are the names of places such as Tinicum, Muckinipattis Creek (a tributary of Darby Creek) and Indian Rock Park. Remaining physical evidence of the pre-European history includes some trail routes and the occasional re-surfacing of Native American arrowheads.

The first European to arrive in the area was the Dutch explorer Henry Hudson, who first explored the waterways of Delaware County in 1609. The Dutch coexisted with Native Americans while primarily focusing on the fur trade (beaver) business. The Swedes were interested in establishing the first European settlements and creating relatively self-sufficient agrarian communities. They settled and established a treaty with the Native Americans despite the prior claim to the area by the Dutch. The Swedish settlements were located along the flat land bordering Darby Creek and extended less than ten miles inland. Through the 17th century, there was a fair amount of friction between the Swedish and Dutch settlements. The Swedish communities were quite successful and, by the late 17th century, they were able to sell their surplus products of grain, meat, and dairy products to the arriving English colonists. However, ultimately in 1655, the Dutch prevailed, recapturing Fort Casmir (at New Castle, Delaware) and conquering the Swedish settlements at Ft. Christina in Delaware and Fort Gottenburg and Printz Hall in Tinicum. The Dutch subsequently surrendered to the English in 1664 and the Darby Creek area was thereafter primarily settled by the English. Like the Native Americans, the Dutch left little physical evidence of their occupation in the Darby Creek Watershed, with the exception of a few names of places such as the Schuylkill River, Hook Road, and Calcon Hook Road (derived from "*Kalkoen Hoek*"). The Swedes on the other hand, had a greater impact. Physical evidence along the Creek can be noted at the John Morton Cabin, the Morton Mortenson (Morton) Homestead, and the Swedish Cabin.

Overall, this European development had significant consequences for the Watershed:

"By 1720, plantations, the common term for farmsteads, dotted the countryside in and around Philadelphia. As people entered the city, a greater demand was placed on the nearby resources. As forests were cut for the plantation fields, there was a ready market in nearby Philadelphia



for the wood. Houses needed to be built and heated. Local forest wood was needed for shipping crates, furniture, shingles, beams, floor boards, window sashes and doors. Clay was removed from fields, molded into brick and fired. Marshes were drained for agriculture and health reasons... The closer to the city, the more pressures on the local resources, and the less one would see patches of forests. Streams in and around the city were rerouted, covered or drained. Housing expanded westward. The huge appetite for lumber began to exhaust the local supply. The need for food and shelter put huge demands on the natural resources of the area, creating the need to clear more land, and plant more crops for the growing markets of the city.”

As described by noted horticulturist John Bartram: “Indeed most of our curious native plants, shrubs and trees is destroyed for 80, 90, 100 miles back this year. I went up scukil toward ye mountain to gather ye shugar maple seeds were grew a fine grove of them whose fallen tops lay so thick upon ye ground that I took another course 30 miles to gather some particular forest seeds I gathered there but ye trees was cut down and ye land cleared and clouthed with green corn...” (Source: John Bartram 1741 Letter to Peter Collinson, Academy of Natural Sciences Archives).

“The land clearing had tremendous effects on streams and rivers. The change in flow regime with clearing was noticed early. For example, Kalm (a Swedish traveler who spent time in the area; note added) noted the decrease in stream flows following clearing. Clearing also increased erosion, and there was a tremendous amount of sediment entering streams and rivers. This sediment was deposited in the flood plains and in the stream channel raising stream elevations. The soil horizon marking the presettlement soil surface and several feet of post-settlement deposition can be seen in many stream banks in the Piedmont...” (Source: Fairmount Park System Natural Lands Restoration Master Plan, 1999, p. I-39).

Rather than looking to the Creek primarily for sustenance from its stock of native fish, the English settlers focused on using its waters as a source of power for future development and economic well-being. The Welsh Quakers, the earliest English to arrive along Darby Creek, established themselves within Penn’s 40,000-acre grant. This grant tract included the east side of Darby Creek to Newtown Township and easterly to the Schuylkill River. Names still prominent in the Darby Creek area derived from the early settlers such as John Blunston, William Wood, John Bartram, and Henry Lawrence. In 1685, William Wood established the first mills on the Creek, just below the present 1006 Main Street in Darby Borough. The Creek provided power for a variety of mills, including lumber, grist, and textiles. Although many of the mills deteriorated or have been demolished, many present day names of roads originate from the once thriving collection of mills along the Creek, such as Saw Mill Road and Paper Mill Road, and Powder Mill Road along Cobbs Creek. Interestingly, although most of the old mills themselves have crumbled into ruin (or been demolished), some of the tenement



structures that the mill owners commonly provided for their workers still remain. These tenements are still used today as housing. The Cobbs Creek Master Plan summarizes this era of mill development as follows:

“Cobbs Creek was one of the early areas of settlement in the region, with a Swedish mill in 1646. Early estates were developed along the watershed, such as the Grange (built in 1682 with a number of subsequent additions), which is located across from parklands in Delaware County. Over the next several generations, much of the watershed was farmed and a number of industrial mills were built in the valley. A number of textile mills were built in Darby and Cobbs creeks to provide textiles for the War of 1812 (Barrett 1975), including several in the park, such as the Clinton textile mill in Carroll Park. Grist mills, saw mills and gunpowder mills were also located in the valley (Eckfeldt n.d., Barrett 1975). These used local wood for lumber or for fuel and depletion of wood eventually caused closing of some mills (Barrett, 1975). Willows were planted around the gunpowder mills as a source of fuel (Barrett 1975). Mills typically involved construction of a dam and mill race, and creation of an impoundment, generating channel changes which may affect the flood plain and channel long after disappearance of the buildings or dam.” (Source: Fairmount Park System Natural Lands Restoration Master Plan, p. II-8).

During the American Revolution, many people living along Darby Creek took up arms against the British. Guard boats were moored in the Creek and a fort was improvised at the mouth of Darby Creek in 1777. Because armies on both sides of the conflict depended on the countryside for supplies, the Darby Creek Watershed experienced devastating raids conducted by Britain’s General Cornwallis. Once the war was over, Quaker dominance of the area diminished, and more immigrants arrived who earned a living off of the Creek’s mills. Unfortunately, the late 18th and early 19th century floods made the milling livelihood difficult for mill owners and workers to sustain a profitable living. Many bridges, dams, mills, dwellings and lives were swept away as a result of this flooding. In the late 1800’s, the production of engine-driven machinery began to force water-driven mills out of the market. As a result of this technological development, the manufacturing industry moved away from Darby Creek and into the larger industrial centers along the Delaware River. There, these industries flourished and offered new, less expensive power sources such as steam and electrical energy.

In addition to this movement of primary industries away from the Creek, a second major development trend pushed westward, expanding outward from the City of Philadelphia. Although the early development of Philadelphia focused on the lands between the Delaware and Schuylkill Rivers, the rapid development of the Pennsylvania Railroad and the development of several trolley and other fixed rail-related technologies resulted in a tremendous growth of Philadelphia westward. “Suburban” developments rapidly grew around each Pennsylvania Railroad station stop, from the especially large commercial centers in Ardmore (Lower Merion Township, Montgomery County) and Narberth Borough, to locales farther west, such as Wayne (in Radnor Township, Delaware



County), all in the Darby Creek Watershed. Other rail lines were being built, radiating outward from Philadelphia. In a relatively short time, as the trolley system expanded, the famous “streetcar suburbs” of Philadelphia mushroomed across West Philadelphia and extended into the Darby Creek Watershed, out to Cobbs Creek. By the turn of the 19th century, an enormous number of residences had been built out across this part of the Watershed, a testament to the new middle class emerging from rapid post-Civil War industrialization.

By 1935, most of the early mills had left the lower Darby Creek Watershed. Although the industrial base in this area was in decline, it was replaced by the development of housing in these lower portions of the Watershed. Railroads, trolleys, and new roads offered city residents easy access to the Darby countryside. New housing proliferated, starting with the southern and eastern portions of the Watershed. As a result, large portions of the Darby Creek Watershed area are now occupied by dense housing developments, many of which were constructed before the emergence of zoning controls and other environmental and land management methods. As a further result, the natural resources of Darby Creek were negatively impacted by inadequate and polluted stormwater run-off and drainage systems, leaking and inadequate septic tanks, lack of open space and adequate recreation, illegal dumping, and an array of other problems that often arise as a result of high density development.

Residential developments continued, especially in municipalities like Springfield and Haverford Townships after World War II as the industrialized Delaware River waterfront industries (manufacturing, oil refining, etc.) grew ever larger. Auto-oriented suburban development became popular, and upper Watershed municipalities like Marple, Newtown and Radnor Townships began to develop rapidly, though at considerably lower densities.

The preceding paragraphs provide a cursory overview of the history of the Darby Creek Watershed. Given the location of the Watershed and the rich lives of the people who have lived in it, the history of the Watershed obviously warrants more attention than has been given to it in this brief summary. Before moving on to a discussion of how to preserve the historical resources in the Watershed, we would be remiss if we did not mention that DCVA (particularly its Historic Sites Committee) has been very active in researching the history of, and promoting the preservation of, the many resources in the Watershed. One of this region's greatest assets is its rich cultural heritage.

The Commonwealth’s Role in Protecting Historic Resources

The Bureau for Historic Preservation (“**BHP**”) of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (“**PHMC**”) (<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/>) is the official agency in the Commonwealth for the conservation of Pennsylvania’s historic heritage. The Bureau manages the National Register of Historic Places (the “National Register”) for the state through the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Properties listed on the National Register include sites, buildings, structures, objects and districts that are significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture.



Properties considered potentially eligible for the National Register are generally more than 50 years old and must satisfy certain general criteria. These properties:

- are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history;
- are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past;
- embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represent the work of a master, or possess high artistic values, or represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction;
- may be likely to yield or have yielded, information important in prehistory or history.

The process of listing a property on the National Register, although complex and often completed by professional consultants, encourages public participation in the protection of local historic resources. The first step in listing on the National Register is the submission of a Resource Inventory Form (attached, in Appendix H). An individual (or local government, or local historical society) must first submit this Resource Inventory Form to the BHP. The property information is then processed in BHP's database system and then reviewed by a review board composed of professionals in the fields of American history, architectural history, architecture, prehistoric and historic archaeology, and other related disciplines. This Board provides a Determination of Eligibility ("**DOE**") for each resource, assigning a status of "Eligible", "Ineligible", or "Contributing to an historic district". Assuming enough supporting information has been provided for the property, the nomination (only for Eligible or Contributing properties) is then submitted to the National Park Service for the final decision of listing on the National Register. It should be noted that properties that have been submitted to the BHP but do not have a completed Determination of Eligibility are included in the historic property database, but are classified as "Undetermined".

Listing on the National Register does not interfere with a private property owner's right to alter, manage or dispose of property. Listing on the National Register contributes to preserving historic properties in a number of ways:

- It provides recognition that a property is of historic significance to the nation, the state, or the community;
- It requires that the property receive special consideration in any planning for federal or federally assisted projects related to the property;
- It makes the property eligible for certain federal tax benefits; and
- It qualifies the property for federal assistance for historic preservation, when funds are available.



Important Historic Sites in the Darby Creek Watershed

A variety of important historic sites remain within the Darby Creek Watershed area. Some of these sites are documented; many are not. Some are protected; most are not. The challenge of this Plan is both to recognize those historic and archaeological values that have been documented and to work harder to catalog those values that have not yet been adequately inventoried.

Many municipalities have their own historical societies, which provide a means of increased local support and management (Table VI-2). A number of governmental and non-profit organizations in and around the Watershed, including the Delaware County Planning Department, the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation and the Historic Sites Committee of DCVA offer information on historic and archaeological sites and their management. DCVA has paid special attention to the historic structures in the Watershed through the work of its Historic Sites Committee. The Committee is composed of representatives from historical groups in the Watershed and meets quarterly for planning purposes. The greater challenge is to develop management strategies and to increase public awareness and commitment to historic preservation efforts. As has been documented so often with environmental resources, careful management can be a key to economic stimulation, rather than a hindrance.



Table VI-2 Historical Societies in the Watershed

Local Historic Societies and Commissions	Address	ZIP	Phone
Darby Borough Historical & Preservation Society	P.O. Box 108	PA 19023	(610) 583-4386
Glendolen Historical Commission			(610) 585-3305
Greater Lansdowne Civic Association	P.O. Box 366	PA 19050	(610) 622-6643
Haverford Township Historical Society	P.O. Box 825	PA 19083	(610) 446-7988
Lower Merion Historical Society	P.O. Box 51	PA 19003	(610) 353-4967
Marple Newtown Historical Society	P.O. Box 755	PA 19008	(610) 328-3152
Morton Historical Society			(610) 688-2668
Norwood Historical Society	10 West Cleveland Avenue	PA 19074	(610) 521-1333
Radnor Historical Society	113 West Beech Tree Ln	PA 19087	(610) 583-2757
Ridley Park Historical Society			(610) 938-6299
Sharon Hill Historical Society			(610) 521-1698
Springfield Historical Society	P.O. Box 211	PA 19064	(610) 924-0222
Tinicum Township Historical Society			
Upper Darby Historical Society of Pennsylvania			
County Historic Societies and Commissions	Address	ZIP	Phone
Chester County Historical Society	225 N. High St.	PA 19380	(610) 692-4066
Delaware County Historical Society	85 N. Main Rd, Room 208	PA 19008	(610) 359-1148
Historic Commission of Delaware County	322 N. Edgmont Street	PA 19063	(610) 566-2503
Montgomery Co. Dept. of History & Cultural Arts			(610) 278-3553
Philadelphia Historic Societies and Commissions	Address	ZIP	Phone
Historical Society of Pennsylvania	1300 Locust St.	PA 19107	(215) 752-6200
National Trust for Historical Preservation	6401 Germantown Avenue	PA 19144	(215) 848-8033
Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission	400 North St, 2nd Floor	PA 17120	(717) 787-4368

As this Plan was completed, historic sites were not available in GIS format. As an alternative, a watershed map of historic sites was prepared in consultation with PHMC officials. This map includes those sites that are “listed” on the National Register of Historic Places and “eligible” for listing on the National Register. In the Darby Creek Watershed, at least 50 properties are eligible for listing, while 33 are listed on the National Register (Table VI-1 above and Figure VI-40 on the following page). Many other sites and properties are included in the mapping because a resource inventory form has been submitted, but have not been officially designated as eligible or listed on the National Register. These sites have historical importance. Although these



“Undetermined” properties have been inventoried and surveyed, they are not legally protected, and therefore are vulnerable to demolition and redevelopment. “Undetermined” properties are maintained in PHMC’s database, and are mapped here to show the vast historic resources which are threatened in the Watershed. The Philadelphia portion of the Cobbs Creek Watershed has the largest number of vulnerable sites based on the PHMC database.

Table VI-1 National Register Historic Sites, by Municipality

Municipality	Listed	Eligible	Undetermined	Total
Darby Boro	1	2		3
Easttown	1			1
Glenolden		1		1
Haverford	6	3		9
Lansdowne	4	1		5
Lower Merion	1	10		11
Marple	1			1
Narberth		3		3
Newtown	1	5		6
Norwood	1			1
Philadelphia ***	3	1	89	93
Prospect Park	1			1
Radnor	9	10		19
Ridley Park		1		1
Rutledge		1		1
Sharon Hill		1		1
Springfield		1		1
Tinicum	2	1		3
Tredyffrin	1	2		3
Upper Darby Twp.	2	5		7
TOTAL	34	48	89	171

Only sites found within Watershed are shown in table

Information based on data received July 2001, PAHMC

*** Information based on data received January 2002, PAHMC

Specific Historic Sites located in the Darby Creek Watershed

Sites are discussed below in a Watershed sequence, moving upstream (the first two sites listed below are adjacent to the Delaware River and therefore are not technically within the Darby Creek Watershed; they have been included because they are generally considered to be part of the Darby Creek Watershed community). This list does not represent an exhaustive inventory of every individual National Register historic site, but serves as a representative list of watershed cultural resources (in part provided by the DCVA Historic Sites Committee). Additional information on historic sites in the Watershed can be accessed from individual municipalities, historical societies, as well as respective county planning agencies. In addition, this list does not describe every mapped (Figure VI-40) National Register Historic property or district.

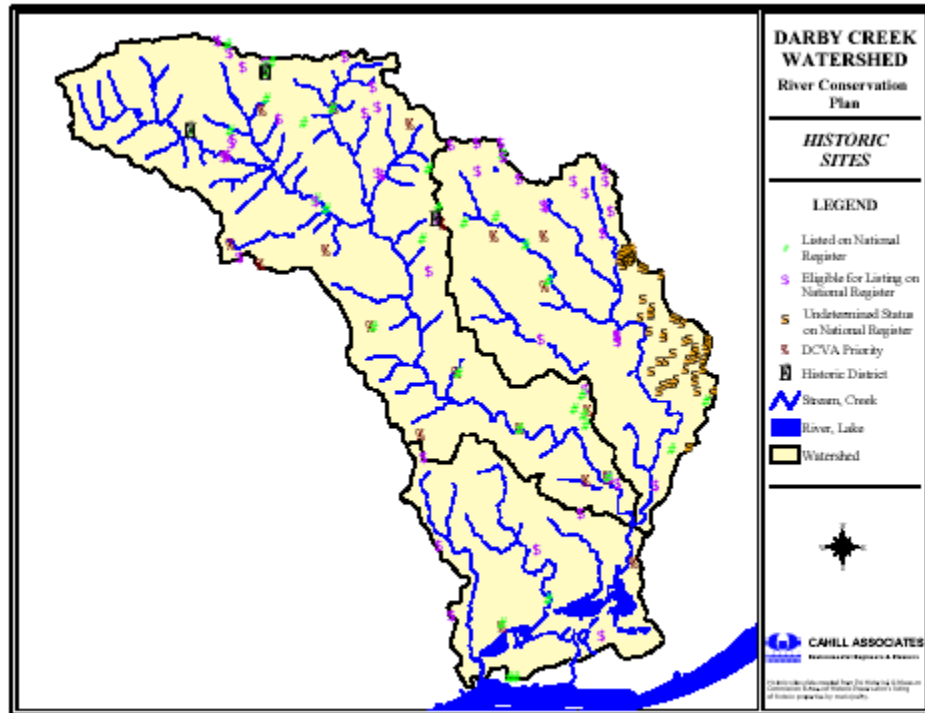


Figure VI-40 National Register Listed and Eligible Sites, and DCVA Priority Sites

Tinicum Township

Lazaretto

On the Delaware River at Essington, PA

The Lazaretto was constructed as a result of people's fear of the Yellow Fever, which was rampant in Philadelphia during the end of the eighteenth century. The original Lazaretto stood behind the Old Fort Mifflin but was relocated to 10 acres of land on Tinicum Island in 1799. Completed in 1800, the Lazaretto served as a quarantine station until 1893 when the quarantine function was relocated to Marcus Hook. At this time, the Tinicum Island Lazaretto became a popular picnic ground for Philadelphia politicians, City employees and councilmen. At the turn of the century, the City leased the Lazaretto to the Orchard Club, a private club, and the area became a lavish pleasure resort. In 1915, it was transformed into the Philadelphia Seaplane base, and was temporarily used as a US Army aviation-training base at the outbreak of World War I. The Lazaretto, Tinicum Township's oldest landmark, is listed on the National Register. Presently, the three-story Georgian administration building and the Physicians House are in danger of demolition by the current owner to make way for an airport parking lot. The buildings are on private property and not open to the public. Efforts are underway to preserve this significant historic complex in Delaware County.



Governor Printz Park

*2nd St. & Wanamaker Ave., Essington, PA
610-583-7221*

<<http://www.biderman.net/parks.htm>>

In 1643, the new governor of New Sweden, Johan Printz moved his capital from Fort Christina to Tinicum Island. At this time, Fort Gottenburg was established in addition to Printz's dwelling and headquarters. Two years later, a fire swept over the newly established settlement. Printzhoff, the governor's home and headquarters, was reconstructed more solidly and lavishly thereafter. This two-story log structure contained lumber sent from Sweden, glass windows, and lavish draperies. In 1653, Governor Printz relinquished his command and returned to Sweden. In 1655 Peter Stuyvesant, governor of New Netherlands, vanquished Printz's successor and gained control of the Swedish colony. Printzhoff is no longer standing, but there are self-guided tours available for visitors to tour the grounds of what is the site of the first European government in Pennsylvania. The location of the Printzhoff had been thought to be where the park is located, but archaeological investigations (1937, 1977-79, and 1991) did not uncover any evidence to confirm this assumption. An electronic resistivity survey was done on the Corinthian Yacht Club property and this located nothing Swedish. Consequently, it is surmised by local historians as well as archaeologists that Printzhoff was possibly located on the Lazaretto property.

John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum

*86th St. & Lindbergh Blvd., Philadelphia, PA
215-365-3118*

Presently host to over 280 species of birds, the Refuge offers an idyllic location for bird watching. Recent sightings have included the Tennessee Warbler, the Immature Bald Eagle or Golden Eagle, the Scarlet Tanager, and the Baltimore Oriole. Along with bird watching, fishing is another recreational activity available to visitors. Fishing is allowed here along the banks of Darby Creek with rewarding catches such as carp, catfish, and large-mouth bass. Another favorite spot is the fishing pier that accesses the lagoon areas of the Refuge. The pier is located near Tinicum and Prospect Park on the west side of PA Route 420. The Refuge does have a catch and release policy effective throughout the entire grounds. Activities such as hiking and biking throughout the Refuge offer hours of peaceful observation of wildlife in its natural habitat. There are six major hiking trails in the Refuge and a direct cycling trail around the perimeter of the Refuge. Bicycles are permitted on only a few of the hiking trails. Canoeing also provides yet another perspective to observe the wildlife, nature and an historic site within the Refuge. There are canoeing maps labeling important habitats and sites to visit available at the Visitors Contact Station and on the Refuge web site at www.heinz.fws.gov.

The 4.5-mile segment of Darby Creek that flows through the Refuge is quite scenic and allows canoeists to see a variety of unique plants and animals. Located on Darby Creek's



northern side is Hermesprota Creek, one of the larger tributaries of Darby Creek. Past the marsh, Darby Creek is bordered by the Refuge to the south and the Boroughs of Folcroft and Norwood to the north. Another large Darby Creek tributary, Muckinipattis Creek, also enters Darby Creek in this segment. On the shores of the confluence of the Darby and Muckinipattis sits the historic Morton Mortonson House in Norwood's Winona Park. There is a canoe launch on the grounds; however, visitors must remember that the Refuge waters are tidal and navigable only within 2 hours before and after high tide.

Prospect Park Borough

Morton Homestead

*100 Lincoln Ave., Prospect Park Borough
610-583-7221*

www.phmc.state.pa.us/bhsm/toh/morton/mortonhomestead

The Morton Homestead is significant for its architecture as a surviving link to the first Swedish settlement and for its association with the politically prominent Morton family of colonial times. Morton Mortonson constructed the Morton Homestead in several stages starting in about 1654. Morton Mortonson was the great grandfather of John Morton, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and he originally owned all of what is now Norwood Borough, south of Chester Pike, a total of about 700 acres. Some type of "blockhouse" or some other type of structure partially below ground was constructed on the banks of Darby Creek in the Borough of Prospect Park; however, this earlier structure was likely demolished after 1666. Later in 1698, a one-story log cabin was constructed for Morton's son, Mathias, and his family, and in the mid-1700s a second structure was built. At this time, the two buildings served as the Darby Creek Ferry House; the ferry across Darby Creek was located nearby. In the late 1790s, these cabins were connected by stone walls and re-roofed, forming a second story. Morton Mortonson's property remained within the family for quite some time. John Morton constructed his home in 1764 in what is now Ridley Park Borough. Currently owned by PHMC, the exterior of the cabin has been restored and the interior has been furnished with period furniture. In 1970, the state nominated the building for inclusion in the National Register. The cabin is located one mile north of Governor Printz Park and is open to the public for guided tours. It is presently surrounded by three acres of parkland, which includes a picnic area. See Figure VI-41.



Figure VI-41 The Morton Homestead in Prospect Park, PA

Norwood Borough

Morton Mortonson House

515-½ Winona Avenue, Norwood Borough

Morton Morton of Ridley, grandson of Morton Mortonson, constructed this two story brick house probably sometime between 1720 and 1760 on the property near Darby and Muckinipattis Creeks about a mile north of what was once known as “Great Tinicum Island.” In 1654, Morton Mortonson, Senior, owned this land, which was included as part of New Sweden, the first European settlement in Pennsylvania. Lydia Boon, the granddaughter of Morton Morton, inherited some 300 acres of her grandfather’s land, and it is on this property that the existing House stands. The House was passed on to family members until the mid to late nineteenth century.

In 1840 the wing, which was originally constructed for Morton Morton’s mother-in-law, was rebuilt and a third floor added. Owned by Norwood Borough since 1954, the Borough restored the Morton Mortonson house to its original construction in 1969. At the time of the restoration, only the chimney and partial foundation of the wing remained standing, while the main portion of the building was severely dilapidated. During the renovations, the third floor was removed, the exterior and interior of the main building were painstakingly rehabilitated, and the wing was completely reconstructed, with the existing fireplace and chimney incorporated into the new structure.

Recently added to the National Register, the Morton Mortonson House is the oldest surviving building in Norwood Borough and one of the oldest buildings in Delaware County. Currently owned by the Borough of Norwood, the Morton Morton House can be opened to the public for scheduled, guided tours. For details contact the Borough office.



Sharon Hill Borough

Sharon Hill Railroad Station

Sharon Ave., Sharon Hill Borough
610-583-2757

Constructed in 1872, this railroad station is an example of a serpentine stone rail station. It is also historically significant because of its influence on the development of the Sharon Hill community. The Philadelphia, Wilmington & Baltimore rail line was developed here in 1873, and as a result spurred development within this moderately settled area, which included the Sharon Hill Academy (later known as Sisters of Holy Child Jesus Catholic Seminary). This modest thirteen-structure community along Chester Pike grew to accommodate industry such as the Knowlton Machine Works, and then a considerable amount of “suburban” residential development in the late 1800’s. This station is being restored by the Sharon Hill Historical Society.

Collingdale Borough

Mount Zion Methodist Meeting House

1400 block of Springfield Road, Collingdale Borough
610-583-4386

The first building on this site was a school built around 1725. It became one of the first “subscription” schools in Pennsylvania. In 1808, the Methodist Meeting House was built. The building later evolved into the Home Protection Society of Darby, which is believed to have held in 1818 the first temperance meeting in Pennsylvania and possibly the United States. Many of the area’s first settlers and original church members were buried in the adjacent cemetery. Additionally, more than 30 Darby area Civil War veterans were buried here. The site has been abandoned for fifty years and is now being restored by the Friends of Darby Methodist Meeting Cemetery.

Darby Borough

Darby Free Library

1001 Main Street, Darby Borough
610-586-7310

Established in 1743, the Darby Free Library is the second_oldest public library in continuous operation in the United States. The present building, erected in 1873, is an example of Romanesque Revival architecture, designed by Benjamin Price. The Library presently houses an open history room with information on local history, books, pictures and artifacts.

Darby Friends Meeting House

1017 Main Street, Darby Borough



215-247-3729

(See Figure VI-34)

Darby Meeting of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers) was established in 1682, and originally met in the homes of its members. The first meeting house was of log construction and was located on land given by John Blunston on the site of the present Burial Ground. In 1786 the meeting purchased the lot on which the present meeting stands. The present building was the third meetinghouse and was erected in 1805. It was used as a hospital during the War of 1812 and was the site of the first school in Darby. The Meeting House is in its original state and is listed on the National Register.

Darby Friends Tenant House

1019 Main Street, Darby Borough

Located in front of the meeting house is a stone dwelling built about 1752 for a tenant farmer and later used as the schoolmaster's residence.

Darby Friends Burial Ground

12th and Main Streets, Darby Borough

Established on land given by John Blunston in 1687, this burial ground on a small hill north of Main Street claims to be the oldest burial ground in Pennsylvania in continuous use. Small, simple markers serve as gravestones. Between 1730 and 1795, no markers were allowed, thereby making a count of the burials difficult. Blunston and noted American botanist John Bartram lie here along with one Revolutionary War veteran and 29 Civil War veterans.

Bunting Friendship Freedom House

1205 Main Street, Darby Borough

Next to the Burial Ground and built circa 1730 most likely on a Penn Plan design, this stucco over stone house is said to have been built by Samuel Bunting who married Martha Fearne (granddaughter of John Blunston and sister of Sarah Fearne, who resided at 1006 Main Street). The building is thought to have been a station on the underground railroad.

Darby Creek Mills Site

Below 1006 Main Street, Darby Borough

It was below 1006 Main Street in Darby Borough that William Wood built the first mills of the area in 1685. Later known as the Darby Mills, these mills changed hands and milling functions many times until the 19th century. A cluster of approximately 15 mills developed upstream of Darby Mills, up to Garrett Road in Upper Darby Township.

Site of John Blunston Homestead

West of 1205 Main Street, Darby Borough



One of the earliest settlers along Darby Creek in the Darby area, John Blunston arrived in 1682, naming Darby after his ancestral home in Derbyshire, England. Blunston's house was located west of 1205 Main Street and his property abutted the Creek. Blunston cleared the forested land for farming and cattle grazing and the millrace was dug through his meadow. He donated the land behind his house for a burial ground, which still exists. His house served as the Quaker meetinghouse until a log meetinghouse was constructed nearby in 1687.

1006 Main Street, Darby Borough

(610) 583-0788

Across from the Meetinghouse and Darby Library and surviving as a reminder of the Blunston family is the house that stands at 1006 Main Street on a lot that backed up to the old millrace. It is believed to have been built for John Blunston's granddaughter, Sarah Fearn in 1734 and is occasionally open on Darby festival days.

Woodburne

Springfield Road, Darby Borough

Designed by renowned architect Horace Trumbauer in Neo-Classical style in 1908, this home sits high above Darby Creek and has been the home to the Daughters of the Divine Redeemer since 1936. Presently it serves as a retirement home for the Sisters of this order.

Darby Trolley Bridge

Ninth and Main, Darby Borough

(See Figure VI-35)

Placed in service in January 1904, the bridge is a Warren Pony-Truss bridge that once carried two trolley lines across Darby Creek. Local citizens hope that the bridge can be rehabilitated for use as a pedestrian bridge connecting Bartram Park and Powell Park while paying tribute to Darby's role as a transportation hub.

Bartram Park/Supplee Dam

Between 12 and 14th Streets, Darby Borough

Named after colonial botanist John Bartram and dedicated during the observance of the 150th Anniversary of Darby's incorporation in May 2003, Bartram Park was created from the place where homes were taken down after Hurricane Floyd (Figure VI-36). On the southern end of the park is Supplee Dam which was the starting point for the mill race which supplied water to many of Darby's mills.

Powell Park

Along Darby Creek behind 8th and Main Streets, Darby Borough

Named after Darby firefighter Powell who died in an accident near the site, Powell Park is a green oasis along the creek and is a staging area for the annual DCVA Darby Creek Clean-up.



Fuller Row

Fuller Street and Mill Street, Darby Borough

Built in the mid 19th century, presumably as housing for mill workers, Fullers Row derives its uniqueness from its compact design and recalls an era before automobiles, when spatial relationships were different than present.

Lansdowne Borough

Lansdowne Court, Lansdowne, PA

Now divided into apartments in Lansdowne Court, Thomas Alexander Scott had this house designed by Frank Furness. Mr. Scott had acquired his wealth from railroads and other interests and purchased land on both sides of Darby Creek in Upper Darby Township and Lansdowne Borough. His Victorian house with its wrap-around porch is situated on property that once extended from Lansdowne Avenue to Darby Creek. In 1907, the development of Lansdowne Court incorporated Mr. Scott's house, at which time Scott's son, Edgar Scott, built the present Woodburne located in Darby Borough.

Kellyville Mill Complex

On Darby Creek at Baltimore Pike, Lansdowne Borough

Charles Kelly arrived in the Darby Creek area in 1822, and worked in a newly established textile mill on the Creek at Baltimore Pike. In 1839, Kelly leased the mill, and by 1845 he owned this mill, the D&C Kelly Cotton Factory, the largest cotton mill in Upper Darby Township. He also leased mills from the Garrett family upstream, and owned 40 tenements. The housing for his managers and laborers developed into the neighborhood of Kellyville, which stretched along the Creek from Baltimore Pike to Garrett Road. His house stood above the mills at the southeast corner of Baltimore Pike and Scottdale Road. Said to be the grandest house with a farm and tannery in Lansdowne Borough, it could be seen for miles. Kelly passed away in 1861 and a department store merchant in Philadelphia purchased the mansion and surrounding 52 acres. By the 1920's a developer surrounded the mansion with housing, and the mansion was used by the local civic association as a meeting place until it was torn down in 1935.

Lansdowne Historic Sycamore Park

47 East LaCrosse Avenue, Lansdowne Borough
610-623-7300

An over 350 year-old American sycamore tree is the centerpiece of this public park, which was created by the Greater Lansdowne Civic Association. Located within a National Register Historical District, the park consists of 3 acres of open space developed as passive parkland. Sycamore Park is one of the Association's many efforts in preserving Lansdowne's rich history.

Other sites in Lansdowne on the National Register include the Lansdowne Theatre and the 20th Century Club.



Clifton Heights Borough

Kent Mill

On Creek at Rockbourne Road, Clifton Heights Borough

Thomas Kent worked in the textile mills of England since his childhood. He continued this trade when he moved to the Upper Darby area. It is believed that Kent worked with his sister's husband, James Wilde, who leased a textile mill from the Garrett family. The Garrett family owned, with the Levis family, 1000 acres along Darby Creek in what is now Upper Darby and Springfield Townships. One year after the flood of 1843, Thomas Kent purchased the Rockbourne Mill from the Thomas Garrett estate. Two years later he purchased the Union Mills across the Creek. Less flamboyant than his neighbor, mill complex owner Charles Kelly, Thomas Kent's mill complex prospered until the 1960's. A four-story fieldstone mill building still stands on Rockbourne Road and is presently home to a furniture warehouse. Vestiges of its steam power plant, which was used for auxiliary power, can still be seen.

Springfield Township

Old Central School

*161 Saxer Avenue, Springfield Township
610-328-5234*

Located some distance from Darby Creek but within the Watershed area, the original Central School was built in 1752. The present building at this site was constructed in 1852. The Springfield Historical Society now uses the building as a community center and for special events.

Maris or Levis House

421 N. State Rd., Springfield Township

This historic home is not listed on the National Register, but locally is extremely important to community members. The main part of the house dates to the early 1860s, and some believe the original portion was built in 1757. The original Quaker owners, the Maris family, may have contributed to the Underground Railroad, evidenced by the presence of an underground room and tunnels. In January 2002, this property was purchased by a private developer. The present status of the property illustrates the need for an historic preservation ordinance in order to protect our historic resources.

Levis House

Hay Lane, Springfield Township

Built in 1693, this two story brick building is a private home on the Pennsylvania State Register. On the fall-line representing the interior limits of the "Cradle of Pennsylvania" the house, built by Samuel Levis, is wonderfully preserved.

Upper Darby Township

Swedish Cabin

Darby Creek Watershed Conservation Plan



*9 Creek Road, Drexel Hill, Upper Darby Township
610-623-1650*

[<http://biderman.net/log.htm>](http://biderman.net/log.htm)

Swedish settlers constructed this one and one-half story log cabin in 1643-53, and it may have been used as an outpost for Native American trade. It is an outstanding example of early log construction by the Swedes and Finns who introduced this style of architecture to the New World. The cabin, one of very few log structures still standing in the area, represents the establishment and strong influence of the Swedes within Delaware County. The Friends of the Swedish Cabin currently maintain this cabin, which is owned by Upper Darby Township. The cabin is open for public tours. See Figure VI-42.



Figure VI-42 The Swedish Log Cabin on Darby Creek in Upper Darby Township

Collen Brook Farm

*Mansion & Marvine, Drexel Hill, Upper Darby Township
610-789-2324*

In the 1690's Ralph Lewis purchased the land on which Collen Brook Farms stands. In 1829 Mary Lewis, the last relative of Ralph, married Dr. George Smith, a physician, educator, and state legislator. The remaining eight acres include a farmhouse, half of which dates back to 1794, a 300-year-old burr oak acknowledged to be a champion in "Big Trees of Pennsylvania", a carriage house and springhouse. The Collen Brook Farm is an excellent example of an early 18th and 19th century farmhouse, and was in the Lewis-Smith Family for almost three centuries. This site is listed on the National Register. The Upper Darby Historical Society is in the process of furnishing the home and running the Farm House Museum, open to the public on Sunday's from 2-4:00 p.m., May through October. Collen Brook Farm is owned by Upper Darby Township.

Sellers Library

*76 S. State Road, Upper Darby Township
(610) 789-4440*



“Hoodland” is the former Sellers family home. The home was built in 1825 and is associated with the history of the Underground Railroad. Since 1935, it has served as part of the Upper Darby Library system.

City of Philadelphia

Overbrook Farms

Overbrook Ave, Philadelphia, PA

(www.overbrookfarms.org<http://www.overbrookfarms.org>>)

Located in the Cobbs Creek sub-basin, Overbrook Farms (Figure VI-43) is an extraordinarily intact example of late 19th and early 20th century planned suburban residential development, resulting from tremendous wealth generated by industrial growth and prosperity in Philadelphia after the Civil War. Roughly bounded by City Line Avenue, 58th Street, Woodbine Avenue, and 64th Street, the tracks of the Pennsylvania main line bisect the 168-acre community. The railroad station, built in 1858, predates Overbrook Farms. Drexel & Co., financiers of the Pennsylvania Railroad, purchased tracts of land surrounding the train station and commissioned architects and planners to design a model commuter suburb.



Figure VI-43 Historic homes within the Overbrook Farms Historic District of Philadelphia

In 1985, Overbrook Farms was placed on the National Register through the effort of the Overbrook Farms Club, the oldest civic association in Philadelphia. Within the Watershed, currently over 30 homes have a National Register Status of “Undetermined” though the individual homes (Figure VI-44) contribute to the listed Historic District. A variety of architectural styles are represented in the Overbrook Farms neighborhood, including Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Gothic Revival, Arts and Crafts, Queen Anne, Italian Villa, and Federal Revival.

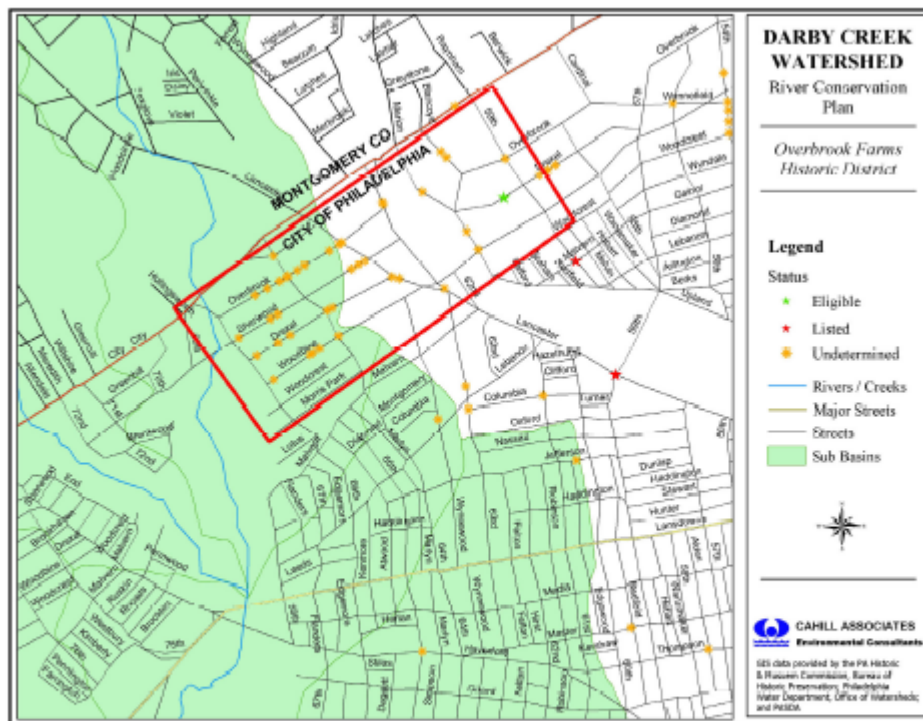


Figure VI-44 Overbrook Farms Historic District in the Cobbs Creek Watershed

La Blanche Apartments

5100 Walnut Street, Philadelphia

(<<http://uchs.net/HistoricDistricts/lablanche.html>>)

The completion of the Market Street Elevated rail line in 1907 spurred a wave of residential construction in West Philadelphia. Built in 1910, the La Blanche Apartment building is one of the first large apartment buildings to come to Philadelphia, filling the need for new middle class housing. Presently, the neighborhood has somewhat deteriorated evidenced by the re-development of La Blanche's spacious apartments to provide cheaper housing.

Haddington Historic District

6000 Blocks of Market, Ludlow, and Chestnut Streets, Philadelphia

The Haddington Historic District is another example of a West Philadelphia community developed out of a functional use of a stop on the Market-Frankford Elevated Line. The developer planned the neighborhood with a direct organizing intent to focus the commercial buildings at the immediate corner of the station, mixed commercial and residential one block down from the station, and finally purely residential two blocks from the station. This logical functional hierarchy shelters residents from the noise and traffic of the commercial area. While other areas of West Philadelphia share the impact of the elevated subway, only the Haddington District is unique in maintaining its original



distinctive architectural character. E. A. Wilson, responsible for much of the building architecture in West Philadelphia, developed the Haddington District between 1909 and 1915 in the then popular colonial and classical revival styles (<http://uchs.net/HistoricDistricts/historicdistricts.html>).

Blue Bell Inn on Cobbs Creek

7303 Woodland Avenue, Philadelphia

Contact: Fairmount Park Commission (215) 685-0047 or
Friends of the Blue Bell (610) 583-0788

Built as a tavern and ordinary (place of light refreshment) on the main stagecoach road between Philadelphia and the southern colonies, the Bell was built by Henry Paschall in 1766 although there are indications of an earlier building. Scene of a battle during the campaign for Fort Mifflin in November 1777, the site is also the location of Printz's mill, the first water driven grist mill in Pennsylvania, built by Swedish Governor Printz in 1646. The Minquas Indian Trail is believed to have passed nearby. Owned by the Fairmount Park Commission, the Bell is undergoing restoration.

Lower Merion Township, Montgomery County

The General Wayne Inn

625 Montgomery Avenue, Merion, Lower Merion Township

Originally called The Wayside Inn at its inception in 1704, the General Wayne Inn -- renamed in 1793 -- has remained a prominent feature of the main line in Lower Merion Township. The Inn was named for General "Mad Anthony" Wayne, a Revolutionary War hero who in 1775 led the 7th Pennsylvania Regiments of the Continental Army. Because of its location, the Inn played host to many American Patriots and British Redcoats. During the 1800's, many Philadelphians vacationed on the Main Line, and enjoyed fine dining at The General Wayne Inn. In addition to being an inn and a restaurant, the building has also been used as a post office, a general store, and a social center for newly arrived Welsh immigrants. Local legend holds that the Inn is haunted by over 17 Revolutionary War period ghosts, including soldiers and barmaids (see <http://www.HauntedHouses.com> for more information).

Haverford Township, Delaware County

Nitre Hall and Lawrence Cabin

Powder Mill Valley, Karakung Road, Haverford Township
610-446-7988

Israel Whelen built Nitre Hall, home of the powder master of Nitre Hall Powder Works, in 1810. The Powder Works was the second largest powder mill in the country during the 19th century. Nitre Hall is the only remaining building of the mill complex in the Powder Mill Valley. The building is on the National Register and is the headquarters of



the Haverford Township Historical Society. The Society's library and archives pertaining to the Township's history is housed here and is open to the public.

Two Lawrence cabins remain in the Watershed. Built in 1710, the Lawrence cabin, next to Nitre Hall, is a one-room log home with a loft and large fireplace. Also known as the Three Generation House, it is typical of the early homes built in this area. The cabin was rebuilt on this site in 1961 and is furnished in a style representative of early settlers. The other cabin belonged to Henry Lawrence who arrived in the area and purchased 209 acres along the Creek, near what is now West Chester Pike and Lawrence Road. According to some sources, a late 17th century cabin already stood on this property and was incorporated into later additions in 1720 and 1823. Henry's house still stands at 1901 Lawrence Road. Along Darby Creek, the Lawrence family built a sawmill, which operated until the late 1980's. The site included a living quarters and a covered bridge. By early 1991 the sawmill had been demolished, arson had destroyed the living quarters, and the covered bridge had been blown over in high winds.

The Grange Estate

Myrtle Avenue at Warwick Road, Haverford Township

Nestled above the hillside sloping down toward Cobbs Creek, the Grange remains a wonderful example of an 18th-19th century gentleman's countryseat. The property was deeded to William Penn in 1682 and then granted to Henry Lewis, a Welsh Quaker who created a compound including a 1700's mansion, carriage house, long barn, springhouses, necessary, formal gardens, and winding trails within acres of hardwood forest. During the Revolutionary War, many influential men of the time were entertained here, including Generals Washington and Lafayette. The total area of the Estate is now 9.9 acres and is owned by Haverford Township. The site is listed on the National Register. The Grange is open to the public on weekends from 1-4 p.m., from April through October.

Old Haverford Friends Meeting

East Eagle Road & St. Denis Lane, Haverford Township
610-789-3340

Located within the Watershed area, the Meeting House was situated on a path, now Haverford Road, leading to Darby. The Haverford Friends Meeting is the oldest home of worship in Delaware County. The stone building was built in 1700 with additions in 1800, 1949, and the 1950's. One-half block further down Eagle Road to the west, and surrounded by a stone wall, there is a burial ground dating as far back as the late 1600's.

1797 Federal School

Darby Road at Coopertown Road, Haverford Township
610-789-5169

Located up Darby Road from the Old Haverford Friends Meeting House, this one room schoolhouse began as a "subscription" school in 1797. In 1849 this stone building became the first public school in Haverford Township. In 1991 restoration was completed and the One Room School Day program was begun. The School is listed on the National Register.



Marple Township

Thomas Massey House

Lawrence & Springhouse Roads, Marple Township
610-353-3644

Thomas Massey, a follower of William Penn and an indentured servant, became a landowner and prominent citizen after settling in the Watershed. His house is one of the oldest English Quaker houses in Pennsylvania. With sections dating to about 1696, 1730 and 1840, the house encompasses three centuries of construction techniques and is on the National Register. The interior features a walk-in fireplace and beehive oven and the grounds include herb and kitchen gardens. Open to the public it is operated by the Friends of the Massey House.

Newtown Township

Newtown Square Friends Meeting House

118 N. Newtown Street Road (Rte 252), Newtown Township
610-356-6669

The Friends Meeting House was built in 1711 and redesigned and rebuilt in 1797 with additions in the 20th century. Adjoining the Meeting House is a burial ground older than the Meeting House. The Meeting House is still active with worship every Sunday.

Octagonal School

3500 West Chester Pike, Newtown Township
610-359-4511

Built in 1798 of fieldstone, it is octagonal in shape and functioned as a school until the 19th century. Dunwoody Village has restored the building back to its original condition. The interior features a pot-bellied stove, schoolmaster's desk, and student benches. The School is one of three existing octagonal schools in its original condition in Delaware County.

Paper Mill House Museum

St. Davids & Paper Mill Roads, Newtown Township
610-975-0290

At Paper Mill Road, a few mills were located along Darby Creek, including the Crossley Woolen Mill, which was constructed here in 1810. This milling community emerged from one of the three original settlements in the area. At the end of the 19th century, the Union Paper Mill took over the site and in 1891 C.C. Harrison used the mill race and water wheel of the Mill to power his hilltop house, until electricity was brought to it in 1900. The Paper Mill House was originally built to house the mill workers and their families. The oldest part, built in 1780, also housed a general store. The four family mill workers flats were added in 1820. The House presently serves as a museum, which includes a general store, tool room, parlor, bedroom and kitchen furnished in the style of the 1840's.



St. David's Episcopal Church

Valley Forge Road, Newtown Township
610-688-7947

Built in 1715, Old St. David's Church retains many of its original features, such as the Queen Anne window and the steeply pitched roof. The Revolutionary War's General Anthony Wayne and many of his relatives are buried in the adjacent cemetery.

The Square Tavern

Goshen Road & N. Newtown Street Road, Newtown Township
610-975-0290

William Penn laid out Old Newtown Square as a Greene Countrie Towne, of which the Square Tavern served as a hub. Built by Francis Elliot in 1742, the brick structure remained a tavern for well over a century. One of the tavern's many proprietors, John West, was the father of America's first internationally known painter, Benjamin West. Benjamin lived at the tavern from 1744 to 1748. In 1981, the ARCO Chemical Research Company completely restored the building. This property is currently owned by SAP, a German software company, which maintains the Square Tavern as part of its campus. This property is listed on the National Register.

Baptist Cemetery

*Newtown Street Road (Rte 252), one block North of intersection with Goshen Rd.,
Newtown Township*

Many of the original settlers who established Old Newtown Square, the settlement at Goshen and Newtown Street Roads, are buried here, including Elizabeth Wayne, mother of General Anthony Wayne of Revolutionary War fame. Owned and maintained by the First Baptist Church of Newtown Township on West Chester Pike, the cemetery is in continuing use.

Radnor Township

The Finley House

113 West Beech Tree Lane, Wayne, Radnor Township
610-688-2668

One of the oldest residences in Main Line Delaware County, the Victorian style Finley House dates back to 1840. The interior features a restored 1789 basement kitchen, an 1840's Victorian bedroom, and a late 1800's front and back parlor. On the site is a wagon house that contains a Conestoga wagon and several other 19th century vehicles. The Finley House is also the headquarters of the Radnor Historical Society. Its reference library contains a collection of maps, photographs, documents, and books on local history, architecture, and decorative arts.

Ardrossan

Acreage on the Creek near Saw Mill Rd., Radnor Township



Originally belonging to Levis Lewis in the early 19th century, a gristmill and a sawmill occupied this Creek area near what is now Saw Mill Road. The gristmill, under Tryon Lewis' ownership, remained in operation until 1880. Just above the Creek, a one-room schoolhouse was built, commonly referred to as the Lewis Mills School. Constructed in 1887, the schoolhouse can still be seen from Darby-Paoli Road near Godfrey Road. In 1912 Robert Montgomery purchased the mills and the surrounding farmland. He had Horace Trumbauer design his estate, Ardrossan, which sits in the middle of rolling farmland along with several early 19th century houses. The gristmill was torn down in 1920 and the millpond was filled in and turned into a cow pasture.

Radnor Friends Meeting House

Conestoga and Sproul Roads, Radnor Township

The site has been used as a worship place since 1693. The present Welsh Tract Friends Meeting House was constructed in 1718 and was used as a hospital and piquet post by the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. The Village of Ithan emerged around the site of this Meeting House. By 1848, the Village consisted of at least five structures that included the Meeting House and a Friends' school. The Village grew to 10 structures, including the Sorrell Horse Hotel, in 1875.

Radnor United Methodist Church

930 Conestoga Road, Rosemont, Radnor Township

610-525-9588

The Church and its cemetery were founded in 1780. The original log church building was replaced in 1833 with a stone structure. It is the oldest Methodist Church in Delaware County and is designated as United Methodist Church Historical site #95. Its interior features the original 1833 seats, as well as historical display cases. Several Methodist Bishops have visited the church over the years.

Tredyffrin Township, Chester County

Old Eagle School

Old Eagle School Road, Wayne, Tredyffrin Township

610-687-2939

The Old Eagle School, a one-room stone schoolhouse, was built in 1788, enlarged in 1842, and restored in 1900. The interior features benches, desks, and a display case of early 19th century schoolbooks, slates, quills, and other school related items. On the school grounds is a cemetery that contains graves of Revolutionary War veterans.

Easttown Township, Chester County

Easttown Township

Cassat Estate

Berwyn-Paoli Rd., Radnor Township

In 1906, Mr. and Mrs. Cassat hired architects Cope and Stewardson to design a house for use as a summer residence. The grounds included a swimming pool, which was fed by



Darby Creek, and a small lake that was large enough for small boats. Although Mrs. Cassat did not enjoy their summer residence, her daughter adored the house. After Mr. Cassat's death in 1926, she moved in full-time with her family. The estate was sold in 1950 and immediately resold to a Catholic order of priests. Later, the YMCA, with the help of the Natural Lands Trust, purchased the estate. The swimming pool is filled-in and overgrown, but the lake remains edged by a walking trail maintained by the Natural Lands Trust. A small bridge that spans the Creek still exists, as well. The barn is now an attractive house. The conservation of the Cassat estate is the beginning of the Natural Lands Trust's vision for creating a green walkway along Darby Creek. By 1960, they had also purchased 15 acres of land adjacent to the Creek downstream from the Estate for conservation.

Waynesborough

*2049 Waynesborough Road, Paoli, Tredyffrin Township
(610) 647-1779*

<<http://www.madanthonywayne.org>>

Though situated *just* outside of the Darby Creek Watershed, the Waynesborough 1745 House is an important piece of history within Easttown Township, and the Darby Creek Watershed as well. Built by Captain Isaac Wayne in 1745, his son General Anthony Wayne inherited the house in 1774. Additions to the original stone cottage were made in 1765, 1810, and 1902. Currently, Easttown Township owns Historic Waynesborough and the Philadelphia Society for the Preservation of Landmarks administers the house museum, which is available for tours, weddings, and parties. (See Figure VI-45).

Archaeological Resources in the Darby Creek Watershed

The Prehistoric Record

In geological terms, the Darby Creek Watershed is predominantly located in the Upland section of the Piedmont Province of southeastern Pennsylvania. The Piedmont separates the Appalachian Mountains from the Atlantic Coastal Plain. This area is dominated by the presence of granite gneiss. The aboriginal land provided a source of quartz, quartzite, and possibly steatite (soapstone), and jasper. The Pleistocene (15000 BP) climate of the area was likely to have encouraged a forest of spruce intermingled with dwarf birch. As the climate became warmer, fir, pine, and alder joined the forest growth. By 8000 BP, hemlock and chestnut had appeared.

In archeological terms, although evidence suggests that the Amerindian populations relating to the Paleo-Indian Period (15000 BC - 6500 BC) and the Archaic Period (6500 BC to 3000 BC) existed within Delaware County, archaeological investigations have not produced any similar evidence within the Watershed area. During the Late Woodland period (1000 BC to 1600 AD), prior to European settlement, the Amerindian populations, like the Lenni Lenape who settled the Watershed area, had cleared the forests for fuel,



lumber, and agricultural purposes, thus beginning the destruction of the existing biotic community. Similarly, the existing animal life including the elk, deer, bear, wolf, fox, rabbit, hare, beaver, turkey, partridge, and other fowl were being exploited; however, their habitats were substantially destroyed by the European settlement, causing severe depletion. It was the settlements along the waterways, like Darby Creek, that increased the quantity of resources that could be exploited. These waterways supplied transportation, which in turn facilitated trade. Also serving the Lenape's agricultural and trade needs, the floodplains within the Watershed area offered fertile fields for the production of crops including maize, beans, squash, and pumpkins.

Following the Late Woodland period, the Contact Period (1600 AD to 1720 AD) marks the period of European contact, which appears in archaeological investigations as an intrusion of European artifacts into the Native American artifacts. The Europeans interacted with the Native American Indians, such as the Lenape, through trade and/or hostilities. The nature of the interaction between these two different cultures ultimately led to the disintegration of the Lenape culture.

Delaware County Archaeological Resource Inventory and Management Plan

The Delaware County Archaeological Resource Inventory and Management Plan, completed in 1991, provides the Delaware County Planning Department with township-based archaeological resource information in the form of Mylar map overlays and a computer database. The inventory classifies endangered and sensitive areas that warrant further investigation, while keeping the location of potential and undisturbed sites confidential to protect them from thieves and pillaging. For this reason, archaeological resources in the Darby Creek Watershed are not mapped in this Plan, though interested parties should contact the Delaware County Planning Department for further discussion.

The majority of executed archaeological investigations in Delaware County have resulted in no data, lost data, or insufficient data that led to an inaccurate study of archaeological resources in the region. Much of the work was executed during the 1970's when archaeological standards were much lower. Fortunately, recent investigations are clarifying some areas of the archaeological resources in Delaware County. Those investigations pertaining to the Watershed area include Printzhoff, the Swedish Cabin, and Morton Homestead sites.

In Marple and Newton Townships, there are a total of three known prehistoric sites. The remaining municipalities either do not show signs of prehistoric settlements, or more likely, not enough investigations have taken place to provide an accurate account of prehistoric settlements. The two sites documented in Marple Township were both found on Langford Run in the late 1940's, one dating to the Late Woodland period and the other from the Contact period. Stone, bone, and ceramic artifacts were excavated from these Lenape Rock Shelters. The Contact Period site contained a burial ground.

As with existing historical sites, unidentified prehistoric sites are continuing to be lost and destroyed within the vast housing developments and unmanaged open space within the Watershed. Given the extent of existing development, this loss already has been



extensive. Without the local protection of the resources which remain, the story of the prehistoric development of Darby Creek and Watershed area will be lost or permanently destroyed. Archaeological investigations should be given a priority when developing the few remaining undeveloped properties. Further archaeological investigations of the Watershed area should be encouraged, especially around rock shelters or possible quarry sites. It should be noted that those areas with extensive disturbance already present, including existing wetlands, and areas with slopes of greater than 15 percent are believed to have no potential, or very low potential of containing prehistoric archaeological sites.

Issues and Opportunities

The Darby Creek Watershed tells the story of how its natural resources continually attracted development, beginning with its first Swedish settlements. In this sense, the Watershed is somewhat different from other watershed park and recreational areas, such as Philadelphia's Fairmount Park which focuses mostly on its Colonial community landscape. The Darby Creek story continues with the channeling of the Creek's power for the development of production mills, needed for the growth and the survival of the emerging nation, and later trade. This era was followed by the mills' demise, as the era of improved power efficiency opportunities in surrounding areas emerged. While some were drawn to the Watershed for industry, others were attracted by its natural beauty. The design and construction of grand estates at different time periods are evidence of this allure. As more and more people gained access to the area with the construction of new roads and rail systems, middle class housing developments proliferated throughout the Watershed. Ironically, as more people sought the amenities of the Watershed landscape, the aggregate impact of such interest led to the destruction of much of its natural beauty.

Presently, a large number of sites, specifically a cluster of historic mill sites (some including the mill owners' estates and/or the mill workers' tenements), surround the Creek in Upper Darby Township and Darby Borough, mostly between the area of Garrett Road and McDade Boulevard. A few of the established parks in this area are linked by informal trails that are not reliably detailed on maps, lack interpretive signage, and lack directions indicating parking and distances between historic structures and/or sites. Although Upper Darby Township and Darby Borough are rich with preserved historical sites and structures, there are many scattered sites and structures throughout the remaining municipalities of the Darby Creek Watershed area as well that are immediately adjacent to or nearby the Creek valley. Many of these sites, like the Bonsall House in Upper Darby Township, Pont Reading in Haverford Township and Lewis House in Springfield Township are privately owned; although they remain unprotected, they could become important additions to future conservation plans in the Watershed.

Many of these numerous sites go unrecognized, "lost" amidst vast housing developments or other development or unmanaged open space. Not only are these individual sites historically important, but as a group, these sites could tell the story of the historical development of the Darby Creek Watershed, which is a microcosm of the story of the development of the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. However, this story is lost amid the other, more dominant components of the Watershed landscape. As such, it is



important to link the remaining elements to help tell their story. This linking can happen in several ways. A program (system) of interpretive signage throughout the Watershed could offer a comprehensive story about the settlement and growth of the Watershed area. With such a interpretive system, those visiting sites as a destination both from afar and from nearby would be welcomed and guided, in most cases pleasantly surprised to realize that their history lesson had just begun. The interpretive system could demonstrate how other historic Watershed sites and structures are accessible on foot, by bike, by car or canoe an historical story route, eventually evolving into a program like that of Boston's urban Liberty Trail.

This linking of historical sites and structures could increase the knowledge of and visitation of isolated sites and thus increase possible donations for the upkeep and maintenance of many of these nonprofit-owned sites. This linking could also lead to increased volunteer support of one or many sites. Although some of the isolated sites located at the northern end of the Watershed such as in Radnor Township may be interrupted from a continuous public right-of-way along the Creek due to privately owned land along the Creek, these sites could be linked with signage along an off-creek trail and thus continue the interconnected history story of the Watershed area. Not only would these connected sites and structures explain the history of the Watershed, but they would also help preserve the future of the Watershed. Where possible, a formal link via a proposed trail could prevent further development of this overdeveloped landscape, increasing the conservation awareness of those living in and outside of the area of the Watershed. In this way, support for the conservation of the Watershed from those not even aware of its existence should increase over time.

Valuable resources, historical and other, will not be saved and preserved unless they are first recognized. Awareness is key. With a system of interpretive signage linking the numerous sites and structures in the Watershed, Watershed visitors, both children and adults, would be able to experience a complete interactive history lesson focusing on this remarkable Watershed.

Municipal Actions for Better Inventorying and Analysis of Cultural Resources

In addition to the visions set forth above, municipalities have available to them a number of different tools which they can use in the Watershed to better identify and manage cultural resources. Although selected Watershed municipalities and counties to some extent have inventoried and evaluated their cultural resources to date, there remains a substantial amount of work to do to more carefully document the resources that remain. Comments received from Delaware County Planning Department and the Pennsylvania Bureau of Historic Preservation list out a process schedule for municipalities to preserve historic resources. The first step recommended is a Historic Preservation Plan, where the municipality identifies a clear set of goals for the preservation of historic resources. Next, DCPD recommends the municipality perform a Historic Resources Inventory, followed by a Historic Resource Survey. Finally, the Township, having identified and organized its historic resources, should enact a Historic Preservation Ordinance to better



manage the preservation efforts. Below is a more detailed discussion of the actions which municipalities can implement to protect and manage their cultural resources.

Historic Resource Surveys

The good news is that the Watershed is rich in history, notwithstanding the fact that a tremendous amount of development has already eliminated many of these historical values. The bad news is that many values remain undocumented or poorly documented. The first step for most municipalities is to develop better inventories of historic resources; in some cases, there are existing databases already compiled, sometimes residing in the Delaware County and Montgomery County Planning Departments' individual municipal files, sometimes in the municipal offices themselves. These existing listings should be reviewed and organized, through preparation of a Historic Resources Survey, including both standing structures as well as archaeological resources. The Survey should be as comprehensive and complete as possible and include: resource descriptions (both written and photographic property descriptions, with a narrative or feature checklist describing the structure from the front facade, circling the structure and addressing major features such as style/period, building materials, building size and shape, roof material and shape with dormers, chimneys, cornices, other decorative features discussed, window treatment, porches/patios, doors and entrances, auxiliary buildings with an adequate photographic record of total facades plus individual details being documented); resource documentation (including written research from local histories, records of local historical societies, oral histories, paintings/etchings, old maps, legal records, interviews with existing and past owners); and archaeological data. Substantial guidance is available through the Brandywine Conservancy, through the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, through the Delaware County Planning Department, through the US Department of the Interior's *Guidelines for Local Surveys*, and other sources. The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission maintains a program of matching grants, available to assist municipalities in this inventorying and evaluation effort (see discussion below).

Surveys require work. A municipality with substantial resources may choose to hire professionals to prepare its Survey. On the other hand, a large budget is not necessary if local labor is volunteered. A subcommittee including interested members of the municipal planning commission, other interested officials and citizens committed to historical resource protection can be formed to undertake the Survey, including the necessary reviews of structures and sites in order to evaluate what is worthy of recognition and protection. The evaluative phase of the Survey process can be reinforced with professional consulting talent to the extent that this is possible.

One goal is often to list historic resources on the National Register, created by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, administered cooperatively by the US Department of the Interior and the respective State Historic Preservation Offices. The listing on the National Register or deemed Eligible for Listing on the National Register guarantees that the historical resource is of value to the nation, state, or local community; that it will be considered when planning any federally-assisted or federally permitted



project or action; that it will be eligible for various federal tax benefits and for other federal assistance when these programs are available. As with all historic resources, types of resources may include individual buildings, historic districts, sites, other structures (canals, bridges, etc.), objects (statues, fountains, monuments, etc.), and multiple “thematic resources” related to an historical person or event or development type and so forth. There are about 3,000 registered sites in Pennsylvania, which is one of the top states in the nation for listings. It is important to note that although the overall significance of gaining National Register status can be great, many structures on the National Register have been destroyed. Listing on the National Register does not guarantee protection. Private owners, and most National Register structures are privately owned, are free to alter, even demolish, their structures unless municipal regulation exists or unless some federal action or authority is involved.

In terms of regulation, the State adopted the Historical Architectural Review Act (Act 167 of 1961 as amended) which authorizes municipalities “...to create historic districts within their geographic boundaries; providing for the appointment of Boards of Historical Architectural Review: empowering governing bodies...to protect the distinctive historical character of these districts and to regulate the erection, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, demolition or razing of buildings within the historic districts.” The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission must certify the historical significance of each historical district designated by a municipality after an ordinance has been put in place. A Board of Historical Architectural Review (five members, including a registered architect, a licensed real estate broker, a building inspector, and two people with interests in historic preservation) must be appointed to advise the governing body. The governing body then has the power to “...certify the appropriateness of the erection, reconstruction, alteration, restoration, demolition or razing of any building, in whole or in part, within the historic district...and shall consider the effect which the proposed change will have upon the general historic and architectural nature of the district.”

The Municipalities Planning Code also authorizes municipalities to enact zoning ordinances which take into account cultural resources and historic preservation standards to accomplish these objectives. An historic resources overlay may be included as an overlay in the zoning ordinance. This overlay may divide historic resources into classes: Class I (resources already on the National Register or Eligible); Class II (resources important historically but which have been already altered); Class III (a broad class often just relating to age, such as anything over 100 years in age). Special ordinance provisions applying to this overlay may include demolition permits, delay of demolition, area and bulk waivers, special buffering requirements, expanded use opportunities and other special provisions. The municipality may establish a Municipal Historical Commission through this ordinance (in contrast to the HARB) to act in concert with its ordinance requirements and act to support its overall historic resource protection program. This Commission, appointed by the governing body, can act as a planning, advisory, and review body for both the local planning commission and governing body for all historic resource issues (beyond any Act 167 jurisdiction, if any). The Commission can manage all Survey work and oversee all ordinance development and actions related to such ordinances (e.g., reviewing all building and demolition permit applications which have



the potential to threaten the municipality's historic resources). The Commission can process Act 167 districting and HARB formation and can oversee National Register nominations and other historic preservation-related activities, such as grant applications. Commissions may rely heavily on a wide variety of published resources to accomplish their work, such as the US Department of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation* and *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*.

Watershed Examples of Historic Ordinances

There exist in the Watershed some good examples of municipal ordinances in the area of historic resource management. For example, Lower Merion Township has one of the most rigorous and advanced programs in the Southeastern Pennsylvania Region (if not the State), where a Historic Resource Overlay District is created in the zoning ordinance, based on a Historic Resource Inventory that identifies Class I and II Historic Resources. Both a Historical Commission and a Board of Historical Architectural Review are created to administer the overall protection program, pursuant to State law requirements. A Historic Resource Impact Study is also established with content and application defined; impacts and mitigation measures are set forth in the ordinance.

Haverford Township also has an historic resources ordinance (Article IV in the Subdivision/Land Development Ordinance) which is considerably more "low profile" in nature. Though not as inclusive and comprehensive as that of Lower Merion, this ordinance allows the Township through the land development process to identify resource values through a set of explicit criteria and then requires the Township to apply specific standards for action. Most of these standards for action provide guidance for the development process, but are nevertheless flexible; however one specific provision ("The distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure or site and its environment shall not be destroyed.") is quite explicit. The point is that although municipal ordinances should be as rigorous as possible, there are many variations on the regulatory theme. Municipalities can start small and take small steps toward better management of their historic resources.

Better Overall Management through Historic Resources Plans

Because there are multiple aspects to historic resource inventorying, evaluation, and management, municipalities in the Watershed should consider unifying all of this work into a local preservation plan, or Historic Resource Preservation Plan, which integrates all of elements discussed above. This plan can be viewed as part of a municipality's Comprehensive Plan. Such a Plan establishes the community's general history and the nature and extent of its cultural resources, as well as consensus on the nature and extent of protection to be achieved. The Plan unifies both public sector and private sector initiatives. On the public sector side, the Plan integrates federal, state, county, and local resources. A critical step in this Plan process is the clear identification of goals, more explicit objectives related to these goals, and finally the implementing actions needed to make the Plan a reality. This framework provides essential guidance and structure as the many different challenges are confronted and surmounted.



Grants and Other Resources Available

Although volunteer support for cultural resources programming on the local level is tremendously important, money grants help, too. There are a surprising number of programs which exist and which may be relevant to a Watershed municipality's program. For example, on the broadest of levels (federal or national), the National Historic Preservation Fund has been created and it funds the Certified Local Government Program, all under the US Department of the Interior, National Park Service. This source is best accessed via the PHMC. The federal government also has a program of Technical Preservation Assistance, as well as the Archaeological Assistance Program. The Community Development Block Grant program also can be used for cultural resource programming. The National Trust for Historic Preservation has a Grant Program as well as a National Preservation Loan Fund, and there are a variety of private programs (Inner-City Ventures Fund, Critical Issues Fund, Preservation Services Fund, Preservation Pennsylvania) and private foundations (Pew Charitable Trust, William Penn Foundation, Stockton Rush Bartol Foundation), all of which have supported cultural resources programming. In sum, it is never easy to get grants, but the programs do exist. Advice can be obtained locally, especially at county planning departments and commissions, and then at the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. The Brandywine Conservancy also has excellent information available; refer to their *Environmental Management Handbook*.