

**THE FRIENDS OF OLD ST. THOMAS
at Ivy Mills**

Volume 12, No. 1

Spring//Summer 2005

NEWSLETTER

The Steeple

Here is the church, here is the steeple. Open the doors and....

Without a steeple our 1852 chapel would be all but unrecognizable. We faced that prospect earlier this year, when we learned that the steeple required stabilization and major repairs. One option was, indeed, to remove it and live with a stump to remind us of the chapel's former shape. But, all is not yet lost.

When we became aware that the cross atop the steeple was no longer properly anchored, a solution was sought. In addition, we had discovered that lightning protection was lacking.

C. J. Diirner & Sons of Ephrata, PA were chosen to repair the cross and install lightning protection. They began work on May 4, but then discovered that the steeple needed reinforcement before the cross repair could take place. Since structural problems cannot be ignored, Diirner & Sons returned in early June to brace the steeple sides and to complete the cross and lightning protection work. Some repairs are still to be made. The cost for the project thus far has been about \$8500.

The fact remains, however, that our 150 year-old steeple needs a complete overhaul. Preliminary estimates for that project are approximately an additional \$65,000. We have not yet determined how to fund this major project, but are continuing to work for a solution.

As many are aware, the Friends of Old Saint Thomas has the sole financial responsibility for caring and maintaining the 1852 chapel. Consequently, so large an amount will take some doing to accumulate. As plans develop, we will keep you posted. We'll explore alternative sources of funds, but we are acutely aware that many organizations are vying for the same diminishing foundation and grant dollars. As ever, we need your help. Join FOST, participate in the Honor/Memorial program or make a simple donation, but above all, please pray for the mission of FOST. A special prayer to Saint Thomas the Apostle, patron saint of architects, would be very appropriate. Your support is valued and appreciated. (Please see form overleaf.)

Old Treasures Find A New Home

The Victorian-era 1874 rectory is the new home for some wonderful items. We would like to express our appreciation to Lois Jacona for her gift of a Karastan oriental carpet to be used in the front parlor.

Thanks to Jeffrey and Gwen Stonelake for their donations of an antique chair (circa 1890-1900) now in use in the front parlor and a 2' by 3' oil painting titled "Jesus Knocking" (circa 1890-1900). The painting was done by Father Edward P. McAdams who at one time was pastor at Sacred Heart Mission in Reisistertown, Maryland. The painting presently hangs in the former dining room.

If you have period furnishings you no longer want and would like to donate them to FOST, please call Bette

Popiel at 610-358-4835. We are still looking for a 9 x 12 or larger oriental type rug for the first floor.

The Good Old Days!

Are you a long time parishioner (20 years or longer) who would be interested in sharing your memories of the parish? The Friends would like to schedule an informal get-together in the 1874 rectory to reminisce about past times.

The Friends have some old parish pictures we hope will bring back fond memories. We especially want to hear your recollections of the parish and the surrounding community.

If you are interested, please call Kathy McNichol at 610-558-0182 or fill out the form below and either mail it to FOST, PO Box 19, Chester Heights, PA 19017 or put in an envelope marked "FOST" and drop in the collection basket.

We will contact all respondents to determine a mutual time and date. Light refreshments will be served and FOST can arrange for transportation, if needed. We hope to hear from you!

Reminiscing With The Friends of Old St. Thomas

Name.....
Address.....
Phone.....
e-mail.....

Interested?

We always need help. Would any of these tasks suit you? No pay, but a great feeling of satisfaction for helping with a worthy cause! If you are interested in volunteering in any capacity please call Bette Popiel at 610-358-4835.

- Can you spare an hour or so once a month to clean the 1852 chapel?
- Are you interested in doing historical research?
- Can you help or work on educational programs?
- Would you be willing to give an hour or two a month to help with gardening chores?
- Do you have a special skill or talent you would be willing to share with FOST?
- Numerous Scout and community service projects are available.
- Do you have fund raising experience?
- Love weddings? Read on!

Could you be available for weddings that take place in the 1852 chapel? This entails being on site about one hour before the wedding to help with any details or questions

regarding the chapel. After the ceremony make sure windows are closed, lights are off and all wedding items are removed from the church and grounds (wedding booklets, wreaths, signs, balloons, etc.).

URGENT MESSAGE
If you open the windows in the 1852 chapel, PLEASE CLOSE THEM when you leave. No one is available to return to close them. Rain and summer humidity are extremely detrimental to the church interior. Thank you.

**The Friends meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the 1874 Rectory. All are welcome.
 (no meeting scheduled for July, 2005)**

FOST wishes to thank the following for their support from April, 2004 through May, 2005

M/M Charles Anderson
 M/M Robert Archer
 M/M Ernest Atene
 Atlantic Mills, Inc.
 Ms. Sheila V. Barr
 M/M James Becker
 Mrs. Paula Bell
 Mrs. Elizabeth Brooks
 M/M Joseph P. Brooks
 M/M Stephen Brown
 M/M Robert Buhman
 M/M Harold Bunzel
 Mr. George Burke
 Mrs. Dorothy Calderone
 M/M David Campbell
 M/M Charles Carabello
 M/M Mark Carroll
 M/M Joseph Cassidy, III
 M/M James Cavanaugh
 M/M Thomas Clardy
 M/M Robert Clarke
 Mrs. Edna Cochran
 Ms. Rosemary Coffey
 M/M James DeSandro
 M/M Harold DeNenno
 Mr. Joseph DeSantis
 M/M Arthur DiNicola
 Mrs. Anne Docherty
 Dr./M John Doherty, D.O.
 M/M Joseph Dragon

Ms. Maureen Drought
 Dr. John J. Drucker
 Ms. Megan Egan
 Mr. James P. Fawcett
 M/M James J. Fell
 M/M William R. Foster
 M/M Raymond Gekowski
 M/M Alfred Glessner
 Mrs. Joyce Guszka
 Mr. Jack Hanrahan
 M/M Edwin Harbaugh, Sr.
 Mrs. Martha Harris
 Mrs. Blanche R. Hasek
 Ms. Elaine Hills
 M/M Richard Holt
 Mrs. Annette Iacona
 Sister Helen Jacobson, OSF
 Mrs. Lois Iacona
 Johnson & Johnson
 Tom & Eileen Jones
 M/M John Kelly
 M/M Charles Kennedy
 M/M Buddy Kida
 M/M Charles Kramaric
 Ms. Julia Krauss
 M/M Michael Lambert
 M/M Samuel Lewis, III
 Mrs. Dolores Lowrey
 Ms. Anna K. Lutsky
 Mrs. Dorothy Machonis

Dr./M William J. Manella, Jr.
 M/M Angelo Maraldo
 Mr. Michael Marchlik
 Ms. Penny Martin
 M/M Robert Master, Sr.
 Mr. Martin McCormick
 Mrs. Mildred McCue
 Ms. Cheryl A. McDaniel
 Mrs. Margaret McGarvey
 M/M Robert McKinney
 M/M John S. McManus
 Mrs. Faye McManus
 Rev. Michael McNally
 M/M George C. McNichol
 M/M Walter J. Meyers
 M/M Stanley Milowicki
 Mrs. Marie Montella
 Mrs. Helen E. Mulgrave
 M/M Joseph Munnis
 Mr. Alan C. Murphy
 M/M Richard F. Murray, III
 Mrs. Dolores O'Donoghue
 M/M Anthony O'Hara
 Hon. Karl J. Parrish
 Mrs. Helen Partyka
 Mr. Robert J. Pasko
 M/M John Pastore
 M/M Armand Petrillo
 Mrs. Angela Piccoli
 M/M William Pietrangelo

M/M Philip Popiel
 Mr. Edwin Poplawski
 Restaurant Marketing Assoc.
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 M/M Martin Saporosa
 Mrs. Marta Szkudlapski
 M/M Christopher Sever
 M/M Paul Sidlick
 M/M Raymond Smith
 M/M Michael Squyres
 St. Thomas Women's Assoc.
 Ms. Kathryn Stanton
 Mr. John Stephano
 Mrs. Gwen Stonelake
 Mr. Jeffrey Stonelake
 M/M Eugene Strolle
 Mrs. Patricia Sulek
 Mrs. Anna Louisa Sweeney
 Ms. Florence Tate
 Technical Concepts, LLC
 Mrs. Catherine Tereniak
 M/M Thomas C. Valentine
 M/M Ted Varney
 Ms. Karen Jones Walls
 Mr. Samuel Ward
 M/M Lawrence Wiechecki
 M/M Mark Willcox, III
 Mr. Mark Willcox, Esq.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

**The Friends of Old Saint Thomas at Ivy Mills
 PO Box 19, Chester Heights, PA 19017**

Family Membership \$15.00 _____ Individual Membership \$10.00 _____ Donation \$ _____

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Acknowledgement card to _____ Address _____

The donation is IN MEMORY of _____ From _____

The donation is IN HONOR of _____ From _____

This is a gift from _____

Please make checks payable to FOST and mail to the address above. Thank you!

THE FRIENDS OF OLD ST. THOMAS at Ivy Mills

Volume 12, No. 2

Fall/Winter 2005

NEWSLETTER

FOST Members Mass

On Saturday evening, November 5, FOST members gathered for Mass in the 1852 Chapel. Father Williams, our celebrant, spoke about earlier times in the parish and the enduring continuity of the Church. The liturgy was enhanced by the beautiful singing provided by the St. Thomas Choir.

All persons attending the Mass were invited to a reception in the 1874 rectory for refreshments and to socialize. A new exhibit, *In Print...a Retrospective of Our Church, Our Clergy, Our Community* was displayed. Through the years the importance of Ivy Mills has been documented in many periodicals, newspapers and books. Guests were encouraged to browse through the material.

Exhibit Extended

All parishioners are invited to view the *In Print Retrospective* exhibit after Masses on the weekend of December 3rd and 4th. This is also an opportunity to see the restored first floor rooms in the 1874 rectory including recent furnishings and two new mantels that were constructed from walnut trees grown and milled on the Ivy Mills property.

Thanks

The kindness of parishioners and friends who have come forward to aid FOST is very much appreciated. We would like to recognize the following for their gifts of time, talent and treasures.

- Pat and Tom Valentine for donating two caned side chairs and a period upholstered chair for use in the rectory.
- Pat Spangler for refinishing the Queen Anne Sideboard.
- Pat Stefanide for pictures of the church and pertinent memorabilia for our archives.
- Kole Lavelle for help in raking leaves and emptying Grandma's Attic items from the horse shed.

Let's Go On a Hayride

Many people agreed that October 15 was the perfect day for it! The Friends thought this type of ride would be an enjoyable family activity and a wonderful venue for the St. Thomas Harvest Fest

Mark Willcox provided the equipment, drove the tractor and arranged for a very interesting scenic route! Joe Dragon insured a safe journey by providing traffic control. Bette Popiel collected tickets and made sure everyone was safely seated in the wagon.

The hayride garnered many positive comments and FOST was glad to be a part of this fun-filled parish event.

Saint Thomas Heritage Program

In early October the eighth grade students from St. Thomas School visited the Ivy Mills Homestead (the founding site of the parish), the 1852 Chapel and the 1874 Rectory. Led by Ivy Mills/St. Thomas Guides, they saw first hand the settings and artifacts at the heart of our present-day parish. To stand on the ground where St. John Neumann stood in 1852 (our Chapel), where Jesuit missionaries said Mass over 275 years ago and where Benjamin Franklin walked over 200 years ago (Ivy Mills), was an impressive experience that the students wrote about in essays required as part of the program. The program, which will be repeated annually, concluded with Mass in the Chapel, celebrated by Father Paul.

On October 4th students in fourth grade attending St. Thomas School participated in a tour of the Historic District. This tour is also an annual event that serves double-duty: introducing students to our unique parish history, and counting as a visit to one of Delaware County's seventy-eight *Passport to History* sites.

Later in the month the 4th grade Religious Education Students visited the Chapel and also learned to take pride in their unique parish, and earned their *Passport to History* stickers.

Tours and More

Interest in our Parish history and the Ivy Mills Historic District is growing. The Brandywine Valley has become a popular destination for visitors seeking to explore the unique and quaint sites that abound in this area.

Promoting our parish history is one of the goals of the Friends and tours present an excellent opportunity to do this. From April to October on the 4th Sunday of the month from 1 to 4 pm guides will be available at St. Thomas and the Ivy Mills Homestead for tours.

Are you a man or woman who likes history and enjoys speaking with visitors? Perhaps being a guide would interest you. The time commitment is not burdensome. Training is available and no experience is necessary! Call Marianne Squyres at 610-459-8392 to volunteer or if you would like additional information.

Disaster Planning

The title sounds rather ominous, but in fact it is simply having a plan in place to protect important documents, artifacts and memorabilia from disasters such as flood and fire. Potential grantors often require this information. The Friends will address formulating such a plan at our January meeting.

If anyone has experience or expertise in this field, we would really appreciate your input. Please join us at our January 25th meeting at 7:00 pm in the 1874 Rectory and share your knowledge with FOST.

Maintenance Update

Routine maintenance and repairs are on-going, but recently a new roof and flashing were installed on the Chapel vestibule. Now that this work is completed, we can address the problem of interior flaking paint. A future project includes the repair and repainting of the interior walls.

It gets quite cold in the vestibule during the winter months. When the temperature drops significantly the contents of the Holy Water dispenser freeze. The dispenser will be temporarily placed in the sacristy during the winter but is still accessible to those who desire to replenish their Holy Water supply.

A Thought For Christmas

As the Christmas Season approaches, many of us seek a way to remember a special living or deceased relative or friend. May we offer a suggestion? Making a donation to FOST in memory of a loved one will enable us to continue the important work of maintaining and caring for the Chapel. The name of the person you would like to memorialize or honor will be entered in the St. Thomas Memorial Book which is part of our permanent archives and displayed on special occasions.

Did We Forget to Include You?

When compiling the donor list for the Spring Newsletter, some names were inadvertently omitted, including Jack and Betty Cord. We are truly sorry for the oversight. If we neglected to acknowledge your donation, please let us know.

The calendar year for memberships is January through December; however, we print our donor list in the Spring/Summer Newsletter and for that publication, FOST acknowledges donations given during the 12 months from May through April.

Wanted!

If you can help with any of these requests, please call Bette Popiel at 610-358-4835

FOST is always looking for pictures depicting the interior or exterior of any of the buildings that comprise the Historic campus, including the cemetery. Old photographs are most helpful in documenting changes that occurred through the years. We will make copies and return your originals.

Volunteers are always needed and we also have projects for students or scouts who are filling community service requirements.

We are still seeking an oriental type carpet (approximately 9 x 12) for the former rectory dining room.

The Friends meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm in the 1874 Rectory. All are invited to attend meetings.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND CONTRIBUTION MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

Memberships and the Honor and Memorial Programs are the PRIMARY SOURCES OF INCOME for the Friends. The monies derived from these programs enable FOST to continue to care for and maintain the chapel, the 1874 rectory and outbuildings. Why not join FOST today? Fill out the membership form and mail with your check to the address listed on the form. Participating in the Memorial and Honor programs honors or memorializes deceased individuals. For donations of \$10 or more, individuals or groups may enroll the name of a living or deceased person in the Old Saint Thomas Memorial Book, a part of our permanent archives and displayed on special occasions. Recipients are notified by mail and receive a receipt.

**The Friends of Old Saint Thomas at Ivy Mills
PO Box 19, Chester Heights, PA 19017**

Family Membership: \$15.00 _____ Individual Membership: \$10.00 _____ Donation: \$ _____

Name _____ Address _____

Phone _____ e-mail _____

Please check one:

The donation is IN MEMORY of _____ from _____

The donation is IN HONOR of _____ from _____

Acknowledgement card to _____ Address _____

From _____ Address _____

Please make checks payable to FOST and mail to address above