



Historically Speaking

Publication of the Upper Darby Historical Society

Phone: 610-924-0222 Spring 2008 – Vol. 23 – No. 3

www.delcohistory.org/udhs Email: Info@udhistory.org

Katharine Hepburn “Kate’s secret Philadelphia story”

by Susan Mansfield

Katharine Hepburn was married to Ludlow Ogden Smith, descendant of the Smiths of Collen Brook. Following is Part I of a II Part Article

Few stars shone like Katharine Hepburn. The First Lady of Cinema enjoyed a movie career that spanned seven decades, and she remains the only person to hold four Best Actress Oscars. From screen goddess to grande dame, she remained glamorous and strong-minded, carrying with her a charm and dignity wrought in Hollywood’s golden years.



Her life was everything a biographer could dream of. In 1942, she fell in love with co-star Spencer Tracy on the set of *Woman of the Year*. The unofficial First Couple of Hollywood, they were together for 25 years until Tracy’s death in 1967.

However, there was another great love story in Hepburn’s life, a story that is only beginning to be told. This is her lifelong relationship with Ludlow Ogden Smith, the “boy next door” she married when she was 21. Most of her biographers have glossed over her marriage as an impulsive mistake that quickly ended. In fact, her relationship with Ludlow was one of the most enduring of her life.

Following her death in June of 2003, Ludlow’s family decided to set the record straight about the couple they had known as Luddy and Kate. Although they divorced in the early 1930’s, and for many years Katharine denied the marriage had even taken place, they never lost touch; and after Tracy’s death and that of Ludlow’s second wife, they resumed their relationship, remaining close until Ludlow’s death.

Eleanor Smith Morris, Ludlow’s niece and goddaughter, a professor in urban design and environmental planning at the University of Edinburgh says: “I want to dispel some of the myths that have grown up about Kate and Ludlow. He was a decent, successful, proper Philadelphian who remained devoted to Kate all his life. He was, in a way, like Denis Thatcher, the steadfast rock of her life. It was one of the most important relationships she had.”

Sitting in a shaft of sunlight in her New Town home, Morris explains that in the 1920’s in Philadelphia, Katharine and Ludlow were part of the same social circle of affluent young people, Katharine the daughter of a prominent doctor, Ludlow the son of a leading barrister. Kate had lodged with Ludlow’s aunt, Helen Smith Brinton, in her early years at the Ivy League ladies college Bryn Mawr.

Photo: Katharine Hepburn and Ludlow Ogden Smith from her autobiography “Me.”

(Continued on Page 2)

Katharine Hepburn *(Continued from Page 1)*

They enjoyed the kind of social life one might read about in an F. Scott Fitzgerald novel, as the grandeur of the Edwardian age met the comparative freedom of the 20th century. “They look like something straight out of *The Great Gatsby*,” says Morris, lifting a photograph of Ludlow and her father, Lawrence Meredith Clemson Smith, in their twenties, sitting on a pair of matching motorcycles. “My father still has his dancing pumps on.”

“Both Ludlow and my father were very good looking, very tall. Luddy had enormous self-confidence, he was a very funny man.”

In Hepburn’s autobiography, “*Me: Stories of My Life*,” published in 1991, she describes Ludlow as “tall and skinny and fascinating-looking ... He was an odd-looking man – dark hair, dark eyes far apart. He was foreign looking. Pink cheeks, an odd nose, long with a hump in it ... He was a fine musician, and could pick up any language in a few days.”

In “*Me*” Hepburn also describes, rather offhandedly, how she lost her virginity to Ludlow in a friend’s apartment. “Luddy and I were alone in the apartment and there was a bed and there didn’t seem to be any reason not to ... And that was the end of my virtue. He was my beau from then on. But – and that’s the biggest but you’ve ever heard – he was my friend.”

There, says Morris, lies the heart of the relationship between Hepburn and Ludlow, the close companionship of people who understood each other. “It was a comfortable relationship. If you marry the boy next door there are a lot of things you don’t have to explain. People say there was no passion in it, but it was an enduring relationship, it lasted for 50 years.”

Their personalities completed one another perfectly. “She was very hyper-kinetic always on the move. It all washed over him. Emotionally they were a perfect match. It was what she needed.”

In December 1928, Hepburn quit her job as an understudy on Broadway to marry Ludlow at her family home in Hartford, Connecticut. She wore a dress of crushed white velvet with antique gold embroidery. She was 21. Ludlow was 29 and

working as a stockbroker. They honeymooned in Bermuda.

Afterwards, they began to look for a house in Stafford, Pennsylvania. It seems that, for a brief time, Hepburn considered becoming what her society expected of her – an upper-class wife and mother. However, this lasted, by her own admission, “about two weeks.” Soon, she had her old job back, and the couple were beginning their life together at Ludlow’s apartment in New York – he later bought the townhouse on East 49th Street which she kept most of her life.



“So,” she writes, “it was December 1928, I was married. I quit. I went to live in Pennsylvania. I came back to New York and got my job back. Poor Luddy. A proper wife for two weeks. Oh, Luddy! Look out.”

Ludlow, she says, was “an angel of understanding.” Certainly, when Hepburn decided that the surname Smith was not glamorous enough for a show business career and wanted to be known as Katharine Ludlow, he simply changed his own name to Ludlow Ogden Ludlow, which he kept all his life. His mother, powerful society hostess Gertrude Gouveneur Clemson Smith, was less understanding “She was furious,” says Morris.

Eleanor Smith Morris is the delegated representative of the Smith family to the Historical Society concerning Collen Brook.

*Photo: from Hepburn’s book “Me”
(Article continued in the Fall 2008 Newsletter.)*

Upper Darby History

This article is taken from Thomas DiFilippo's book "The History and Development of Upper Darby Township." The book is available at Sellers Library and through the Upper Darby Historical Society for \$10.00.

Wilderness to Industrial Development 1800-1850

(Continued from Winter of 2008 Newsletter)

1826

"Elias Hicks, prominent minister of New York Yearly Meeting, founder of the Hicksite branch of the Friends, spoke in the Darby meeting, explaining his doctrine. Hicks preached that individuals should become master of their religious destinies, allowing them to act much as they want. His views were contrary to orthodox Friends who considered the doctrine unsound....This made his friends and followers unhappy and caused a separation among the members of the Darby Meeting. The Hicksite followers prevented the other Friends from having their monthly meeting during the meeting of September 25, 1827, so they decided to meet elsewhere. This separation caused the founding of the Upper Darby Friends, now the Lansdowne Friends. When the people opposed to Hicks were prevented from meeting in the Darby Meeting, they left and met in the house of Nathaniel Newlin, on Chester Pike. In 1828, they met in an old wheelwright building on the corner of Darby Road and Baltimore Pike....They built what is now the Lansdowne Friends in 1831, built on ground purchased from Mary Owen for \$400. Their first meeting in the new building occurred in 1832. Samuel Rhoads was its head minister and Thomas Garrett was an elder. Many generations of the Garrett, Sellers, Richards, Pennock, Longstreth, and Jackson families attended and held important positions in this Meeting. The present building was enlarged and modified in 1857. When Lansdowne left the Township in 1893, it became the Lansdowne Meeting.

1828

Members of the Swedenborgian religion opened a cemetery on ground that was formerly a farm owned by Edward Levis, today near the corner of Marshall Road and Sherbrook Drive. The religion was founded in England by Emmanul Swedenborgian. They believed that there is life hereafter and one spends eternity doing the things one did most often and happily here on earth. Their Upper Darby church, the First New Jerusalem was built in 1833 in the cemetery. The church was

established by James Robinson a manufacturer, then operating the Clifton Mills...He had been a preacher in the Swedenborgian Church in England and began this congregation by holding services in his mill. Other sponsors and participants in this church included Charles and Samuel Sellers, David Snyder, Edward Levis, etc.The church was not formally incorporated until 1861 when the court granted a charter to the New Jerusalem Society of Edenfield, Delaware County. By 1880 the congregation had dwindled and services were only occasionally held. The church was razed in 1913, after becoming a haven for tramps. Burials continued until about 1941. In 1977, the New Jerusalem Church on Chestnut Street in Philadelphia arranged the removal of the buried remains to a mass grave at Mt Zion Cemetery in Darby Township.

1830

By 1831, the population of the United States was 12,866,020. Twenty-four states had joined the Union. Andrew Jackson was the President. The first railroad steam engine was in operation. Steam powered boats were traveling the Mississippi River. The Erie Canal was completed in 1825, opening the path to the West through the Great Lakes.

In Upper Darby the Abolitionist Society, formed in 1830, was very active and growing. Its purpose was to petition and lobby for the elimination of slavery. Members of the society included George, Samuel Jr., Nathan, and John Sellers, Powell, Ash, Morgan, Bunting, Rhodes, and Watkin.

Farms in the township were selling for approximately \$82/acre, cows for \$25.00, shad from the Delaware River was \$6.00 per 100, and a ton of coal sold for about \$6.00.

Between 1800 and 1831, Upper Darby's industry grew, attracting many new people. Before 1830, the spinning of yarn and the weaving of cloth was mostly performed domestically by the housewife and primarily to fulfill the needs of her family. About 1830, some old gristmills were converted to spin yarn, and sold to individuals who wove their own crude cloth. About 1840, the mills became "integrated," meaning they spun the yarn from raw material, then wove, finished and dyed the cloth. This was the beginning of a large textile industry that flourished in Upper Darby Township and lasted into the early part of the 1900s.

(To be continued in the Fall 2008 Newsletter.)

The Fall-Line the Anti-Cline and Two Wagers

by Tom Smith

When I lived in Darby Creek Valley, the stretch of the stream divided into three zones: The Headwaters, Little Darby and Ithan, the fast water (former “mill”) zone, and the tidal water zone. *Since my leaving Upper Darby, I bet the lay of the land has not changed.*

Seriously, in Delaware County, in brief overview, the fall-line figures great in terms of stream flow because it comprises the hilly chain that divided the headwaters with the fast current zone. From the headwaters flows the source of the watershed’s fast water. The fronting headwaters gather strength by consumption of one stream run upon another; and once meeting with the crisscrossing fall-line the gathered waters gain gravitational power, which power long generated famous mills. In 1698, an early promoter of Pennsylvania wrote of the “famous Darby River” (made famous by its mills).

Resuming personally: Now a resident of Tioga County, a denizen beside the Tioga River, I find a new term of importance: the Anti-Cline (as opposed to Delaware County’s Fall-Line). Incidentally, I like to say, New Yorkers share the border with Pennsylvania and Tioga County. In situation, Tioga County is midway between Lake Erie and the Delaware River. That boasted: What is an Anti-Cline?

As a land form, an anti-cline is a “V” shaped layer of land. It can in fact be ‘upright’ or inverted. Mansfield, my current home, is brush-crossed by the Tioga River, which by the way flows north. Millions of years ago, the place where Mansfield sits was higher than the tops of the surrounding mountains. So the anti-cline in which Mansfield sets is “V” shaped.

I do not wish to get beyond my ken of relevancy or beyond my ability to instruct. I can say with impunity to falsehood that the landform-kin related to anti-clines comprise curious fellows. The inbred relationship gets complicated by such relatives as “anti-forms.” Anti-forms mimic anti-clines and for practical mapping purposes they exist—but *do not exist*. Got it?

I opened saying: When I lived in Darby Creek Valley, the stretch of stream valley divided into three zones: The headwaters, the fast water zone, and the tidal water zone. *Since my leaving they still do. Unless great upheaval occurs, the Valley and Upper Darby, shall remain so. I lay bet on it.*

Annual Meeting/Spring Tour

April 13, 2008, at 2:00 P.M.

The annual meeting and election of officers and board members will be combined this year with our spring tour. It will take place on Sunday, April 13, 2008, and will be held at the Thomas Massey House in Broomall. .

If you know of anyone who would like to serve on the board, please contact Bill McDevitt, Chairman of our Nominating Committee, at 610-660-1634 or call Bev Rorer at 610-789-2324. Nominations may also be made from the floor at our April meeting. After the meeting we will tour the Thomas Massey House.

Acquisitions

The following items were recently donated: **Eleanor Smith Morris** donated several items one of which was a book written by her cousin about the Houston Family. (Eleanor is a descendant of the Collen Brook Smiths. Also **Mary Minor Smith**, Eleanor’s sister, submitted much appreciated additional documentation on the decorative trunk located at Collen Brook in the master bedroom.

Bob Seeley (a Garrett family descendant) donated three Power Point CDs containing approximately 150 slides on Thomas Garrett and family and the Underground Railroad, plus his book on the subject.

Many thanks to **Eleanor, Mary and Bob** for their generous donations.

Restoration Award

May is designated as Preservation Month in Upper Darby. Anyone may be nominated for restoring or renovating an old home. It may be for private use or one that has been adapted for business use. If you know of someone who you would like to nominate, call the Society at 610-924-0222 for a nomination form. The nominations may be forwarded to the township or the Upper Darby Historical Society.

Tour Guides Needed

We are in need of volunteers to give tours of Collen Brook. Tours are given from May through October on Sundays from 2:00 to 4:00 P.M. and at our two special events, which are held in spring and fall. If you would be interested in volunteering some of your time and learning more about the history of the township, please call the Society at 610-924-0222.

Early Days Event at Collen Brook: Life on the Farm

Be sure to mark your calendar for our special event to be held on Saturday, June 7, 2008, 1:00 to 4:00 P.M (rain date Sunday, June 8, 2008).

You will experience life on a farm in the 19th century in Upper Darby. We will have sheep shearing, blacksmithing, beekeeping with a live exhibit, demonstrations of farm tools and early Indian tools, and much more. Christine Scott will have her beautiful horse Max here and will demonstrate the bridling and care of a horse. There will be 18th century games for the children to play, and they may dress in colonial garb and have their pictures taken. There will be entertainment and refreshments.

Tours of Collen Brook house and grounds will also be featured and you may find Dr. George Smith (portrayed by one of our members) at home to explain the family's life in the early 19th century. When touring the grounds, you will find some additional trails through the woods and will see our 350-year-old Bur Oak tree, which is on the Pennsylvania Register of Historic Trees, and view the 1782 springhouse across the brook. Admission is free.

2008 Historical Society Calendars

Don't miss out on getting your 2008 Historical Society Calendar. They may be purchased at Sellers' Library or by calling the Society at 610-924-0222. The cost is \$5.00 and; if you are local, we will deliver it to your home.

Send in your Email Address

The Society is collecting members' email addresses so we can notify you of upcoming events and also of an event cancellation due to inclement weather or the like. Email your address to us at info@udhistory.org. Your address will be kept in confidence and not shared with a third party.

Historic House for Rent

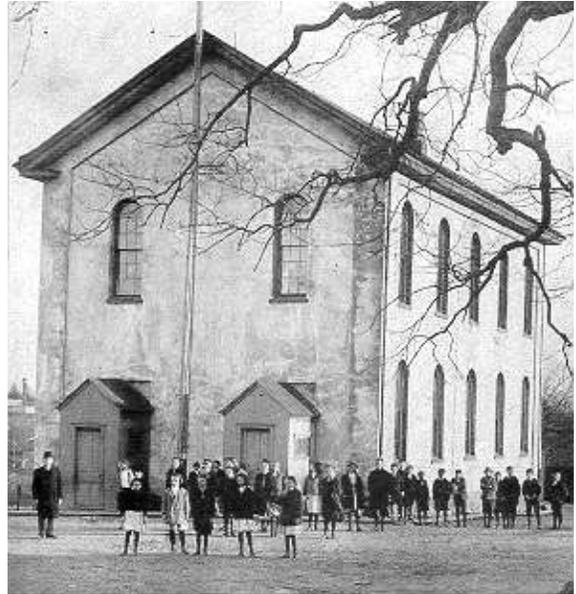
A 19th century historic house, five bedrooms, two baths, located in Drexel Hill is for rent. If you are interested, call the Society at 610-924-0222.

Photo in right hand column: Saint Charles Borromeo School built in 1869

President's Quill

Saint Charles Borromeo School

In 1869, in the heart of Kellyville, at a time when the country was still recuperating from the Civil War, the



first formal parochial school in Delaware County opened its doors. The school consisted of a two-story, rough stone building with two classrooms and a large hall. A faculty of two lay teachers, Mary Allen and Mary Gough, embarked on the mission of providing a Catholic education to the parish children. In 1879-80 the school was completely renovated, creating four classrooms. Changes in the faculty replaced the lay teachers with Mother Mary Waliburga and the Sisters of the Holy Child in Sharon Hill. From 1892 until its recent closure, the sisters, Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, have worked along with lay teachers. In 1910, the original school was replaced with a new larger building. In 1969, a fire caused significant damage to the school. Repairs were made to the existing building and an annex, known as the "the lower school," was built, doubling the number of classrooms. On June 15, 2007, this 138-year mission of Catholic education ended with the closing of the "oldest formal Catholic elementary school in Delaware County." The building was appropriately renamed the Charles Kelley School and is now part of the Upper Darby school system. Note: Saint Charles Parish is the oldest Catholic parish in Upper Darby; in Delaware County, second after St. Denis in Havertown, the original worship site of the Kellyville Catholics.

Margaret Johnson, President

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

by the Upper Darby Historical Society and other local historical organizations

SPECIAL EVENTS

Early Days at Collen Brook: Life on the Farm

Saturday, June 7, 2008, 1:00 to 4:00 P.M.

Rain Date Sunday, June 8, 2008

Collen Brook Farm, Marvine Road and Mansion Avenue, Drexel Hill

*Sheep Shearing - apple butter making - blacksmithing - beekeeping with a live exhibit - demonstrations of farm tools and early Indian tools - 18th century games for children to play – children's picture taking in colonial dress – **Max the horse** - items to buy – refreshments – tours of Collen Brook house and grounds*

Spring Tour and the Annual Meeting

Sunday, April 13, 2008 at 2:00 P.M.

To be held at

The Historic 1696 Thomas Massey House

Lawrence Road at Springhouse Road, in Broomall

The Annual Meeting and the Spring Tour will be combined and held at the Thomas Massey House

There will be a brief meeting and the election of officers followed by a tour of the Thomas Massey House and refreshments.

Directions: Go out Sproul Road (Rt 320) toward Lawrence Park Shopping Center. Take a right onto Lawrence Road (which is the first traffic light past the shopping center), drive three tenths of a mile on Lawrence Road and the Massey house is on your right. To car pool, meet at the Incarnation Holy Sacrament Episcopal Church parking lot, 3000 Garrett Road (corner Garrett and Riverview, Drexel Hill at 12:15 P.M.

Darby Creek Clean-Up

Saturday, April 26, 2008

Sponsored by the Darby Creek Valley Association

Volunteers are invited to join us along the Darby Creek Watershed to remove shopping carts, tires and other debris from the streams and tributaries we all share. Clean-up locations include Lansdowne, Darby, Yeadon, Radnor, Havertown, Upper Darby, Morton, Secane, Springfield, etc.

For information call Jan Haigis 610-583-0788

Collen Brook Sunday Tours

Tours of Collen Brook House and Grounds, at Marvine and Mansion Avenues, Drexel Hill, every Sunday, May through October from 2:00 to 4:00 P.M.

Executive Board

President – Margaret Johnson
Vice President – Barbara Marinelli
Recording Secretary – Anne Livingston
Corresponding Secretary – Beverly Rorer
Treasurer – Mary Ellen Scott

Solicitor

William McDevitt

Historical Preservation Consultants

Amy and Daniel Scanlon

Archivist

Barbara Marinelli

School District Facilitator

Elizabeth McDonald

Grants

Ellen Cronin

Newsletter Editor

Anne Livingston

Editorial Staff

Mary Ellen Scott



Board of Directors

2005-2008

Elizabeth Colozzo

Kathleen Clarke

Robert Clarke

2006-2009

Thomas DiFilippo

Daniel Scanlon

James Manley

2007-2010

Margaret Johnson

Thomas Smith

William Hill

Tours of Collen Brook Farm, Marvine and
Mansion Avenues, Drexel Hill, every
Sunday, May through October, 2 to 4 P.M.



Upper Darby Historical Society
P.O.Box 2935 Upper Darby, PA
19082-7935

Dated Material

