

Whitesbog Preservation Trust

NEWSLETTER

2nd Quarter

2008

Birthplace of the Highbush Blueberry - Historic Center for Cranberry Innovation

Elizabeth White, as told by June Vail

By Martha Windisch, Naturalist & Whitesbog Volunteer

From 1945 to 1954, Ms. June Vail worked for Joseph J. White, Inc. of Whitesbog, NJ, on a fellowship from Rutgers University, as Elizabeth White's personal assistant. Under the direction of Elizabeth C. White, June worked with blueberries, cranberries, and the American holly, as well as in the Suningive Garden. June is now retired and living at the family cottage in PA. This is where I called her in May of 2006 to request an interview about the nine and a half years she spent with at Whitesbog with Elizabeth White.

MW: How did you become interested in horticulture?

JV: I was brought up with it. My family owned greenhouses and a farm outside of East Stroudsburg, PA. My mother took a greenhouse course at Cornell to get started. Both my grandfather and I had trouble getting around, so since I couldn't run around with my brothers, I would sit on the stool next to my grandfather and help him plant tomato plants. Grandfather taught me many things including how to use tools to make cedar board flats.

MW: Did you study horticulture in school?

JV: Not in high school, but after high school I found out that the State would send me and pay for a two year course at the Ambler School of Horticulture. When attending the school, at first I lived in Ft. Washington and bicycled the three miles to class with a large Boy Scout knapsack on my back. Kids would tease me because I would carry so much in my pack. After my grandfather passed away, I was able to drive his car to class. Because I was not able to climb the apple trees, I was assigned to the school's landscape course. While at the School of Horticulture, I learned about many perennial plants.

MW: How old were you when you started working for Miss White?

JV: I was 24 years old.

MW: How did you come to work for Elizabeth White?

JV: Before I came to work for Miss White, she had a secretary who lived with her and helped her out, but did not do any outside work. She was a Yugoslavian and her name was Miss Yellowneck (*ed.*: almost certainly Jelenic or something similar), but they called her 'Unchie' (*ed.*: Anchy? = a Yugoslavian nickname for Anastasia). Because Miss Yellowneck's engagement to be married meant that she would no longer be working for Miss White, Unchie contacted the School of Horticulture to find someone to replace her (Miss Yellowneck had also been a student at the Horticulture School). I actually found out and was able to obtain the position at Whitesbog due to the School's Little Sister/Big Sister Program which I was involved in. My "Big Sister" had interviewed for the Whitesbog job and had decided that she would rather work in Washington D. C. than the Pine Barrens. My "Little Sister's" cousin

(continued on page 4)



June Vail (left center) sharing a happy moment with Elizabeth White (right center) and various unknown children (ca. 1950).

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\$ 500	_____	Benefactor
\$ 250	_____	Sponsor
\$ 100	_____	Patron
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Renewal: New Membership:

Name: _____

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Please complete and return with your membership check to the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, 120-34 Whitesbog Road, Browns Mills, NJ 08015. Make check payable to Whitesbog Preservation Trust. Memberships are valid from September 1st to August 31st of any given year. Donations are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Thank you for joining the Whitesbog Preservation Trust.

**This newsletter is
available in large print !**

**Contact the
Whitesbog Preservation Trust
120-34 Whitesbog Road
Browns Mills, NJ 08015
Phone: 609 893 4646
Fax: 609 893 8297
WhitesbogPreservationTrust@
comcast.net**

2008 Board of Trustees Meetings

Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. (except as noted).

2008 – May 28, July 23, September 24, October 22, November 19

2009 - January 28, February 25, March 25, April 26 (10:00 a.m.)

Annual Membership Meeting, Sunday, April 26, 12:00 Noon.

Board of Trustees

Mark Ehlenfeldt, Pres.	John Joyce, Vice Pres.
John Kallelis, Treas.	Richard Prickett, Sec.
Chris Bethmann	Tom Darlington
Ted Gordon	Nora Hayes
Bart Amato	Stephanie Schrader
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Staff

Theresa Jacks, Executive Director
Joyce Kuwae, Program Coordinator
Esther Kubiczky, Bookkeeper/Assistant

Newsletter

Mark Ehlenfeldt & Theresa Jacks – Editors

Committees – 2008

Buildings – John Joyce

Events – Joyce Kuwae

Finance – John Kallelis

Fund Development – Theresa Jacks

General Store – Esther Kubiczky

Marketing & Public Relations – Mark Ehlenfeldt
Interpretative Education & Archives - Ted Gordon

Landscape and Garden – Ellen Terry

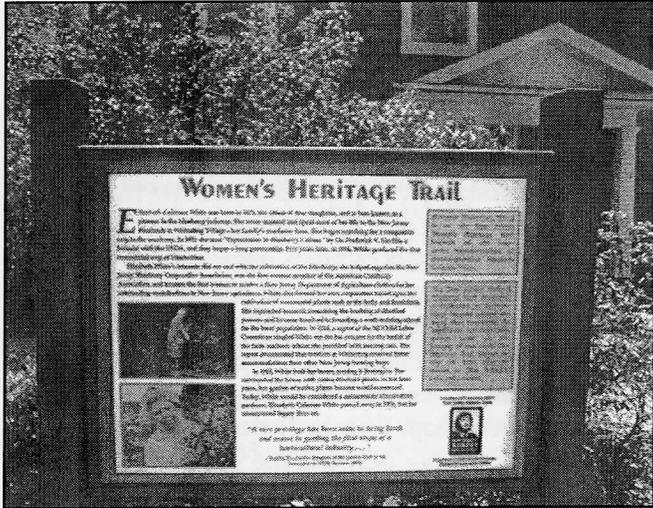
Membership & Nominating - Stephanie Schrader

Personnel – Mark Ehlenfeldt

If you are interested in attending the meeting of any Committee, please call the Trust office for the scheduled meeting time.

The Mission of the Trust is to restore, protect and enhance the land, sites and buildings at Whitesbog and to provide educational and interpretive programs and materials about the history, culture and natural environment of Whitesbog.

Whitesbog Village on the N. J. Women's Heritage Trail

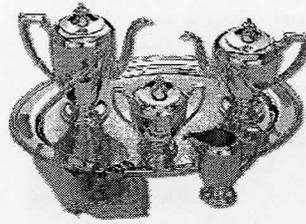


In late April, Jeff and Dan, of the Brendan T. Byrne State Forest's exceptional staff, erected the New Jersey Women's Heritage Trail sign featuring Elizabeth Coleman White in front of Suningive. Historic Whitesbog Village is Site # 4 on the Trail.

This trail was conceived by the Alice Paul Centennial Foundation, the New Jersey Historic Preservation Office and Preservation New Jersey in 1994. Legislation to fund this project was first approved in 1999 – and by 2000, these groups, as well as the Women's Project of New Jersey and others, were busily working on the trail.

As best explained by Historic Preservation Office website, "The New Jersey Women's Heritage Trail will lead you on a journey throughout the state, using historic places to tell the collective story of a few of these famous women, ... who contributed to the agricultural, industrial, labor, and domestic history of the state. Although women always have comprised over half of the state's population, the tales of women's contributions to New Jersey history often have been omitted from our telling of history. The Heritage Trail brings to life the vital role of women in New Jersey's past and present."

The trail covers 20 counties in New Jersey, with seven sites in Burlington County, including Historic Whitesbog Village! The sites have been compiled in an attractive booklet available at the General Store for a mere \$10.00. This guide is meant to be used as a "take it on the road" handbook to encourage all us to discover women's history in New Jersey! ■



Tea with Elizabeth White

April 19, 2008

Tea lovers and history buffs convened at Historic Whitesbog Village on a lovely spring afternoon for a different – and delicious – gathering. Elizabeth White (ECW historical interpreter and board member Stephanie Schrader) led attendees to her home, Suningive, where she introduced her guests to New Jersey food historian and tea expert, Judith Krall-Russo.

With her engaging presence, Judith gave an overview of tea etiquette from the 1920s through the 1940s, and demonstrated how to brew a quality cup of tea. Elizabeth/Stephanie further brought Whitesbog history to life by interacting with attendees, sharing anecdotes about blueberry experimentation and the White family legacy. Several of the guests got into the true spirit of the event and appeared in 1920s-1930s period dress. After the program and lunch, attendees were led on a tour of Suningive, courtesy of Elizabeth White. The tea was also the first official program open to the general public to be held at Elizabeth White's home.

We'd like to thank Judith and Stephanie for making this such a wonderful event, and based upon feedback, we expect this program to return next year! ■



Judith Krall-Russo (standing at left) addresses attendees at the tea.

(from page 1)

also interviewed and declined. Mrs. Bush-Brown, the head of the School, then asked me once she heard that the job involved propagating plants. She knew that I would like a job that involved propagating.

The night before the interview, I had a dream and actually dreamed about exactly what Miss White looked like even though I had never met her, seen a photograph of her, or been told what she looked like.

When I arrived at Whitesbog for the interview, I knew right away that this was what I wanted to do. It was like a dream come true. When I first met Miss White, she was exactly like I had dreamed. I loved her from the start. She had her white hair neatly in a bun and waved with a curling iron. She had pearls around her neck. She made her own clothes and wore a blue dress that reminded me of blueberries. She was beautiful.

During the interview, Miss White drove me on a tour of the bogs and fields in her blue Ford. I was not doing much driving myself at the time and I was worried to death about ever learning to drive on the sugar sand roads that surrounded the bogs.

Part way through the interview, Miss White and her housekeeper had to run to Philadelphia for an appointment, and they left me alone at Suningive. I sat alone and weeded the daylily bed by the road and loved every minute of it. When I found out that I got the job, I moved down to Whitesbog right away.

MW: Where did you stay at Whitesbog?

JV: I lived at 'Suningive' with Miss White. At first I stayed in the room at the top of the steps – on the main floor of the house which was the second floor. When I first arrived we stopped the car at the circular bed area and I had to make it up the steps with my trunk over my shoulder.

After I had been at Whitesbog for six months, Miss White had a stroke. She was in a wheelchair and took quite a while to learn how to talk again. She had various housekeepers that came and went including Miss Kimble from Moorestown, Olive Rossell from Columbus, and Eva Hoffman from Mt. Holly. Miss White also had a cook who was a nurse, but I am the one who helped her most during her six-month rehabilitation. During this time I moved up to the third floor so that my room was across from hers. I learned how to drive Miss White's car so that I could take her to the doctor on Fridays. When she got sick, an elevator was installed so she could get to the second and third floors of Suningive.

MW: What types of work did you do at Whitesbog?

JV: I worked in the greenhouses and outside for many, many hours. When I first started, Miss White wanted me to also keep the books, but due to the horticultural work, I was too tired to do so. Eventually, Miss White hired a bookkeeper. From 9 a.m. to noon, and then after lunch until 4 p.m., I worked with blueberry, holly, bearberry, and ornamental yew cuttings both at Whitesbog and at Holly Haven, located southwest of Whitesbog on Route 70. The plants were grown in benches consisting of turkey wire covered with sphagnum, sand, and peat in the greenhouses. Hundreds of cuttings were planted in a row. Next the cuttings were moved to pots and then outside.

I also worked in Miss White's garden at Suningive daily between 5 a.m. and 8 a.m. I pulled weeds and planted plants requested by Miss White. I would find pink ladies slipper, white snowy orchid, and orange milkwort to plant in the garden. The potting shed was made into my workshop. Elizabeth would sit in her big striped upholstered chair between the upstairs windows and look out on the pond and the bog. She would also sit at a window and tell me what to prune along the brick walkways to the bog.

MW: Did you have a garden of your own at Whitesbog?

JV: Yes, I had a 5-acre vegetable garden. I always hoped for rain because I had no way to water it. On the opposite side of the road from Suningive, I grew Virginia Jumbo and Spanish peanuts. One year I harvested 9 bushels! I also grew peas, spinach, carrots, and radishes. East of the Suningive garden, I grew strawberries, raspberries, and asparagus, and East of the potting shed, I grew broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, lettuce, and Brussels sprouts. All the crops that I grew, we used for food. Miss White particularly enjoyed the peanuts and the peas. There was a large freezer in the garage where we could freeze the food.

MW: Are there other memories about Whitesbog and Elizabeth White that you would like to share with me?

JV: I remember Miss White telling me how she came up with the idea of propagating blueberries. It was because a crop was needed that could be alternated with the cranberries and she had noticed that when they cut the wild blueberry bushes down between the bogs, they would grow back in. So she thought it might be possible to cultivate them. Then she discovered the work of Dr. Coville from the Department of Agriculture who was already working on blueberry cultivation and invited him to Whitesbog to continue and advance his work. Miss White's teamwork was crucial to the work

(continued on page 5)

since it was she who was able to convince the Pine Barrens woodsmen to provide them with the best wild blueberry varieties – she did this by paying them a fair wage and by naming each variety after its discoverer.

The saddest thing that I remember is the day that Miss White passed away, she had had cancer. I was holding her hand at the time.

Note from the author: When June Vail left Whitesbog; she took many pieces of Elizabeth's furniture and personal items with her, and stored them at her Poconos property. She must have known that Elizabeth was going to be an important woman in history. It is because of June's forethought that the Trust has obtained historically valuable pieces that have now been now included in our Suningive exhibit.

After leaving Whitesbog, June worked for Burpee Seed Company, for the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, as a private gardening and horticultural contractor, and as head gardener at Pennsbury Manor, William Penn's summer estate in Bucks County. She is a charter member of the American Holly Society, a life member of the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society, a trustee of Bowman's Hill Wildflower Preserve, and a life member of both the Pocono Forestry Association and the Monroe County Historical Association.

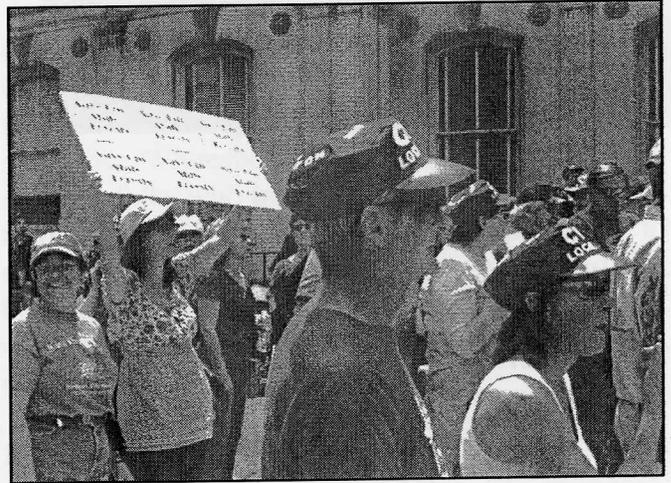
Whitesbog Preservation Trust Notes

At the Annual Membership Meeting on April 27, 2008, Christine Lipsack, Director of the P.I.N.E.S. program was approved as a new Board member. We look forward to working with Christine and P.I.N.E.S. to continue to strengthen and expand programs here at Whitesbog.

Joyce Kuwae, our Events and Membership Coordinator is leaving/has left the WPT. Joyce's husband, a Major in the Army is being transferred to Fort Hood, Texas for training and will be subsequently redeployed for a tour of duty in Iraq. Joyce is "redeploying" to Florida to be closer to friends and family. Joyce, we enjoyed having you here and wish you well in all your future endeavors.

Other big news, Theresa Jacks, our Executive Director is also departing/has departed. Theresa has taken a job with the Council of New Jersey Grant Makers, and has a shiny new job doing event planning and outreach. Theresa was with the Trust for five years and during that period of time, oversaw much of the administrative progress made by the Trust. Theresa, we're grateful for the time you spent with us, and we will miss you for reasons both practical and emotional.

Proposed Budget Cuts Threaten Closure of Nine State Parks (including Whitesbog)!



It was a bright, sunny day. A drive through the country, a short train ride on the River Line, and a nice walk brought Rick Prickett, Jeanne Streiter and Theresa Jacks to the State House in Trenton on April 23, 2008. The purpose – a rally to 'Save Our Parks'.

The rally was organized after Governor Corzine announced the possible closures of 9 State Parks and Forests. WPT members went in support of Historic Whitesbog Village, which is part of Brendon T. Byrne State Forest, the largest area slated to close. For almost 1 hour, members of the Sierra Club, the Boy Scouts, the Communications Workers of America and hiking clubs spoke out against the closings of these facilities. The Parks and Forests belong to the citizens of New Jersey and their closure would hurt, rather than help, the state of New Jersey. It was noted the control of different areas of spending would benefit more than closing the recreational areas of the state. The people of New Jersey enjoy the hiking, fishing, swimming, camping and hunting available in our State Parks and Forests and the rally proved the people care about our natural heritage and beauty.

By Jeanne Streiter

(ed.: As of press time, it appears that the Parks have gotten a reprieve in the State Budget deliberations, but we should all continue to be concerned, and remain vigilant. Let your state representatives know you support the State Parks and Whitesbog). ■

Whitesbog Preservation Trust Event Schedule

Reservations can be left on the main voice-mail at (609) 893-4646 or
WhitesbogPreservationTrust@comcast.net.
Call for more details on any program.

JUNE

- 7 **Volunteer Work Day** – 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
Free, Lunch provided.
- 7 **Whitesbog Village Tour** - 1 p.m., Stroll through, and learn about, the village workers' cottages and buildings that make up the "Whitesbog Story". \$5 per person.
- 14 **Moonlight Walk** - 7 p.m. Strawberry Moon. \$5 per person. R.S.V.P.
- 23 to 27 **Special Volunteer Work Week** – in preparation for the Blueberry Festival

- 28 **The 25th Annual Blueberry Festival** at Whitesbog Village - 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Celebrate all things blueberry at this old-time festival. Great family fun – arts and country crafts, food, blueberry picking, historical tours, music, and more. \$7 per carload.

JULY

- 12 **Volunteer Work Day** – 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- 12 **Whitesbog Village Tour** - 1 p.m. \$5 per person.
- 13 **Pinelands Heritage Tour**, sponsored by the Pinelands Preservation Alliance. Blueberry picking will be part of the fun!
- 19 **Moonlight Walk** - 7 p.m. Buck Moon. \$5 per person. R.S.V.P.

AUGUST

- 2 **Volunteer Work Day** – 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.
- 2 **Whitesbog Village Tour** - 1 p.m. \$5 per person.
- 16 **Moonlight Walk** - 7 p.m. Sturgeon Moon. \$5 per person. R.S.V.P.



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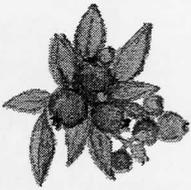
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Contact Marcia Dolin at 609-735-2801 to
take advantage of this offer or visit us at our
booth at The 25th Annual Whitesbog
Blueberry Festival on June 28, 2008!!!

See 'The Mighty Humble Blueberry'
online, for free, until June 30th

Go to www.Independentfeatures.com and
follow the instructions to watch the film. The
Mighty Humble Blueberry is found under the
"documentary" genre. Details can be found
on the blog at www.aboutblueberries.com.



The Blueberry Festival is Coming, and it Needs You, the Festival Volunteers !

Many times guests, visitors and even members don't realize how much the Whitesbog Blueberry Festival is dependent upon the volunteers. Volunteers begin discussing and planning next year's festival – the previous year – usually in August. Volunteers meet and talk about what was great about the festival and what went wrong at every festival. This conversation takes place every year. After this meeting, volunteers on the Event Committee begin to meet regularly to plan the program. Area coordinators are recruited to manage various aspects of the festival. These areas include sales, baked goods, lectures, walking and wagon tours, the General Store, parking, entrance, traffic control, music, vendor relations (such as organizing the crafters, artists and friends).

Then of course after the brave area leaders are identified – they plan the activities for their area from A to Z.

For instance if the area is selling baked goods – the coordinator orders the goods, inventories the supplies, recruits volunteers to help, purchases supplies, cleans up the worker's cottage, sets the prices, sells the baked goods at the festival and after the festival – cleans up! Wow!

Let's say that you are the area coordinator for the walking and wagon tours. This leader must recruit and schedule all the programs, develop the schedule for the program book, meet with the tour guides to discuss their routes and their program, meet with the Wagon Master to discuss the wagon routes, recruit wagon safety volunteers, make sure that each guide has all necessary supplies, manage the program at the festival and after the festival – clean up! Wow!

The festival takes months of planning and every volunteer works very hard in a specific area to make sure that the program is successful. All this planning can often be a thankless job. So just why do people volunteer at the festival?

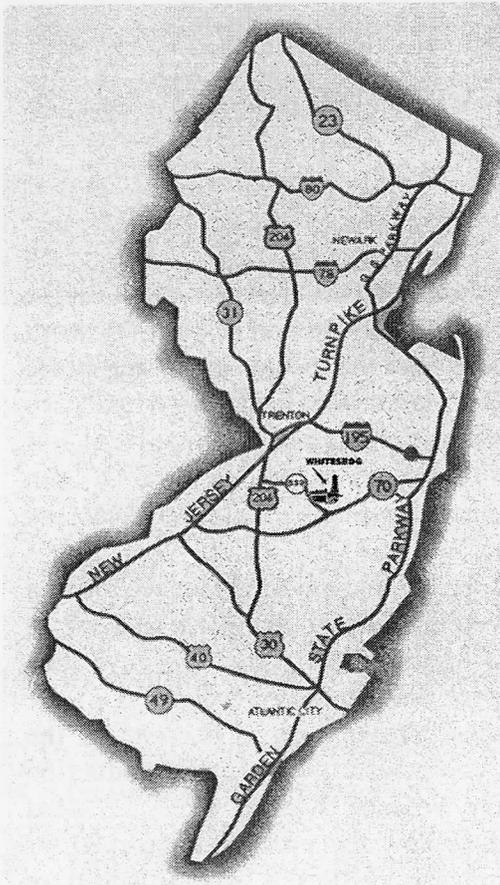
Jane Wiltshire conducts tours of Suningive at the Festival. She says, "I volunteer for the Blueberry Festival because it is (I believe) the major fundraising event for Whitesbog Village, and I love Whitesbog Village and respect the work of other folks who love the village and want to see it preserved. It is also the best opportunity to educate folks about the fascinating history of our beautiful New Jersey Pinelands. It is a fun connection to other like-minded nature and history conservationists."

Over the years, Stephanie Schrader has been a liaison for the vendors, interpreted Elizabeth White and manned the Membership Table. She says that, "There are several reasons why I volunteer at the Blueberry Festival. One reason is because of the attitude of the volunteers!!! My first introduction to the Blueberry Festival was in 1993 ... what impressed me was how the volunteers worked --- they worked tirelessly, selflessly, and in addition, they were supportive of each other. This attitude has not changed. Secondly, I enjoy speaking to the visitors and finding out about their history and why they come to the festival. Thirdly, I feel very proud of the accomplishments in the restoration and progress with education which is the result of the monies from the Blueberry Festival."

The word volunteer is a noun (describing a person that gives of him or herself for a shared cause) and a verb (the action of giving one's time to a worthy cause). The volunteers at the Blueberry Festival are indispensable and greatly appreciated. Their dedication and hard, hard work ensures that the festival is an enjoyable experience for visitors and that the Whitesbog Preservation Trust can continue its ongoing work – preserving Historic Whitesbog Village for you and me. Special invitation to you – consider sharing your time and volunteering at the Festival – (609) 893 – 4646 or WhitesbogPreservationTrust@comcast.net. We need you!

Funding for the Annual Blueberry Festival is made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council for the Arts / Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts through a grant to the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

Driving Directions:



From NJ Turnpike

Take Exit 7 to Rt. 206 South to intersection of Rt. 206, Rt. 38 and Rt. 530. (Landmarks - Vincentown Diner and White Dotte)

Turn East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13. (Landmarks - You will go through the towns of Pemberton & Browns Mills, passing Burlington County College on the right.)

Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot on the left.

From PA Turnpike

Travel to NJ Turnpike North and follow above instructions.

From 206 South

Travel North to circle intersection with Rt. 70.

Travel East on Rt. 70 to Rt. 530. (Rt. 530 is between mile markers 33 & 34.)

Travel West on Rt. 530 for one mile to mile marker 13.

Turn right onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

From 206 North

Travel South to intersection of Rt. 206, Rt. 38 and Rt. 530.

Turn East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13.

Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

From Philadelphia

From Ben Franklin Bridge, take Rt. 38 East, crossing over Rt. 206 and onto Rt. 530 East.

Travel East onto Rt. 530 and follow to mile marker 13.

Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot is on the left.

The General Store is across from parking lot. Trust Offices are approximately 1/8 of a mile down the crossroad to the right (at Suningive).

Visit our website: WWW.WHITESBOG.ORG or call: 609.893.4646

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