

Whitesbog Preservation Trust

NEWSLETTER

1st Quarter

www.whitesbog.org

2010

Birthplace of the Highbush Blueberry - Historic Center for Cranberry Innovation

Who Was James A. Fenwick?

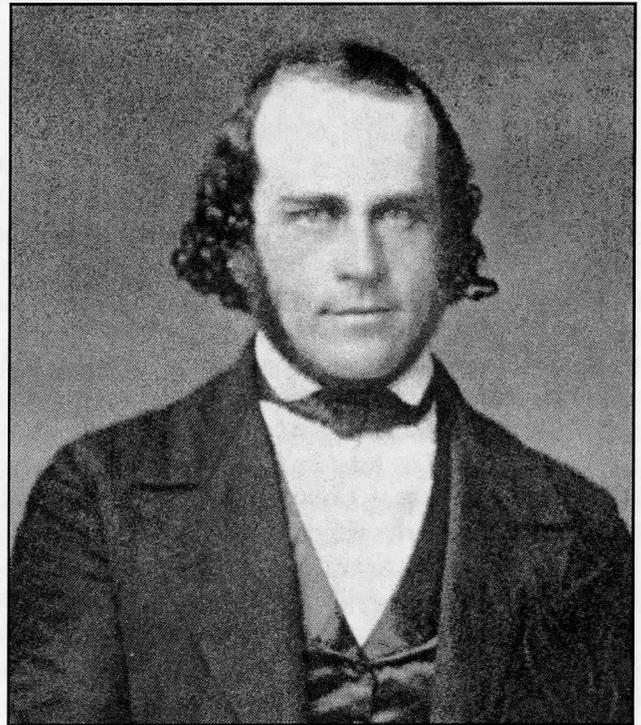
For those primarily familiar with the 20th Century history of Whitesbog, Fenwick is recognized as the founder of the line, but to most, his life story is still largely unknown

by Linda Reno
Southern Maryland Historian

The place we know as Whitesbog can trace its history back five generations to the person of James A. Fenwick. Fenwick was by all accounts the first person to successfully cultivate cranberries in southern New Jersey. Nonetheless, even to those familiar with the twentieth century history of Whitesbog, Fenwick is merely a name; a one dimensional character in Whitesbog's tale. Utilizing newly acquired information, we can begin to round out our picture of James Fenwick. In the coming year we will offer several articles that give a better picture of Fenwick, the man. The first of these is reprinted (with permission) from the June 4, 2009 edition of The County Times Newspaper of St. Mary's County, Md. and originally ran in the column "A Journey Through Time - The TIMES Chronicle".

Lt. Col. Athanasius Fenwick, the only child of Capt. James Fenwick and Catherine Ford, was born in St. Mary's County, Md. in 1780. The family was wealthy, prominent and had good political connections. Athanasius was sent to Europe to be educated. Upon his return, he studied law, but it appears that he was more interested in agriculture, writing, and lecturing on such things as the effects of saltwater "which prevent the operation of plaster of Paris on soil."

To Correspondents. The Address of Col. Athanasius Fenwick to the Agricultural Society of St. Mary's County, communicated by said society for publication in the "American Farmer", will receive early and respectful attention, as it highly, deserves. We should have inserted it in this number, but that we wished to conclude the publication of the learned, philosophical, and, as it relates to the latter part of it, we may say, practical Address of Mr. Madison (American Farmer, September 3, 1819).



On October 30, 1817, at the age of 37, Athanasius married Susanna "Susan" Howell in Philadelphia and brought her to his home "Cherry Fields" in St. Mary's County. The following year their first child, James Athanasius Fenwick (called Thane) was born (*ed.: This is the James A. Fenwick whom we recognize as the start of the Whitesbog line*). The couple then had two daughters, Margaretta (born 1820) and Susanna Emeline (born 1822).

On August 7, 1824, Susan (Howell) Fenwick died in Philadelphia. Why she was in Philadelphia and why she died we will probably never know. It certainly begs the question as to the cause of death of Athanasius Fenwick in St. Mary's County just less than two months later on September 29.

The children, now aged 7, 4, and 2, were placed under the guardianship of (*their uncle*) Benjamin Jones¹ (husband of Susan's sister, Mary Howell) of Philadelphia where they went to live. Walter Moore Jones, son of this Benjamin Jones lived in St. Mary's County at least from

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April 1, 1818, when he married Ann Maria Catherine Holton, daughter of William and Mary Holton of "Mulberry Fields", until his death in 1823.

About 1843, shortly before his marriage to Mary Cashell, Thane Fenwick bought extensive acreage in Burlington County, N.J., naming his property "Fenwick Manor." He became a very successful farmer (*ed.: see footnote 2, below*). Then in 1857, he expanded his horizons and bought an additional 490 acres of property along a run and began cultivating cranberries. In this he was very successful and began, a "cranberry boom." The land surrounding his, previously thought to be worthless, was found capable of producing large quantities of the cranberries, much in demand in the U.S. and Europe.

Thane had two children James Athanasius Fenwick Jr. (born 1844) and Mary Anne Fenwick (born 1847). In 1869, Mary Anne Fenwick married Joseph Josiah White. Joseph White and Thane Fenwick would join forces in the cranberry business, and Mr. White would later become the founding father of what we know today as the Ocean Spray Cranberry Cooperative (*ed.: this is incorrect*).

Thane had never forgotten his father even though he was only seven when he lost him. In 1874 he decided to remove his father's remains to New Jersey so that at his death (which occurred in 1882) he would be with him again, if not in life, at least in death. They lie together at St. Andrew's Episcopal Church in Mt. Holly, N.J. The tombstone of Athanasius Fenwick reads:

*Col. Athanasius Fenwick, A Soldier of the War of 1812, Born in Saint Mary's County, Md. A.D. 1780. Died A.D. 1824. These remains were removed from Cherryfields, St. Mary's Co., Md., their original burial place, by his surviving children. A.D. 1874.*³

Around the turn of the century, Elizabeth White (daughter of Joseph White and Mary Anne Fenwick) became interested in the possibility of cultivating blueberries, previously thought impossible. Blueberries then grew wild and only in North America. In 1911, Elizabeth convinced her father to support the research of Dr. Frederick Coville in blueberry cultivation. By 1916, they had achieved their goal and would soon have over 90 acres of blueberries under cultivation. In 1927, Elizabeth helped organize the New Jersey Blueberry Cooperative Association (*ed.: the Tru-Blue Blueberry Cooperative*). She was also the first woman to become a member of the American Cranberry Association. She died in 1954.

While the manor house at Fenwick Manor is now used as the administrative offices of the New Jersey Pinelands Commission, the surrounding property has been retained by Thane Fenwick's descendants. Katherine Darlington Thompson, a great-grand-daughter, is the owner and manager of Fenwick Manor Farm where they now raise alpacas. ■

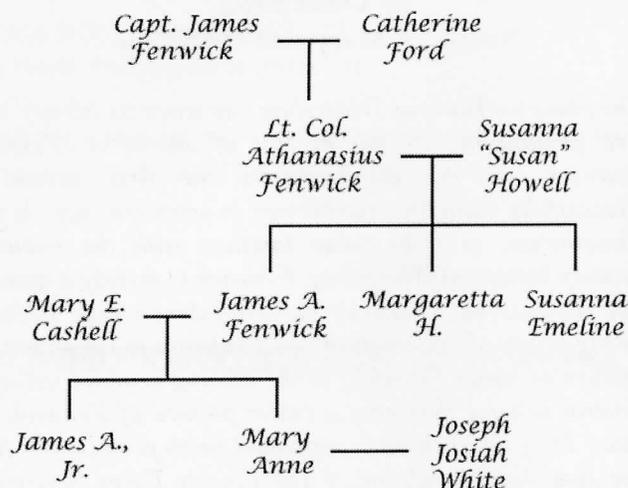
Editor's notes:

¹ Benjamin Jones was, among other things, a Pinelands Commissioner who had control over more than 100,000 acres in the New Jersey Pine Barrens, and owned and operated the Hanover Furnace.

² As will be seen in a future article, Fenwick considered himself to be a less-than-successful farmer.

³ In many previous articles, James A. Fenwick was called a Colonel. This article definitively clarifies that such was never the case. Much of the confusion derived from the use of similar surnames across generations.

Linda Reno is an historian and genealogist specializing in Southern Maryland history. Ms. Reno is a member of the St. Mary's County Historical Society, the St. Mary's County Genealogical Society, the Charles County Genealogical Society, the Maryland Historical Society, and the Maryland Genealogical Society. She has authored many books and articles on the local history of southern Maryland.



2010 Board of Trustees Meetings

Meetings are Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m. except as noted
March 24, April 25 (Sun. 10 a.m.), May 26, July 28,
Aug. 25, Sept. 22, Oct. 27
Annual Membership Meeting, Sun. April 25 12 noon.

Board of Trustees

Richard Prickett (President)
Stephanie Schrader (Vice-president)
John Joyce (2nd Vice-president)
Mark Ehlenfeldt (Treasurer)
Christine Lipsack (Secretary)
Ted Gordon, Bart Amato, Joseph Darlington,
Diane Kelly, Jeffery Macechak

Staff

Susan B. Phillips, Exec. Dir., Jennifer Rubeo, Bookkeeper

Newsletter

Mark Ehlenfeldt & Susan Phillips – Editors

The Whitesbog Preservation Trust

Director's Report - 2009

It is again my privilege, as Executive Director, to report on the achievements of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust during the past year. 2009 was a challenging year, with plans and pending accomplishments tested by the economic downturn, a reduction in State funding and perhaps the worst wet weather in a generation. Despite these road blocks, we had a wonderful year, thanks to the Trust's very supportive Board of Trustees, Whitesbog's devoted membership, our donors and dedicated volunteers.

Volunteers, Members and Donors

Last year, 152 volunteers donated over 6040 hours of their time, talents and expertise to ensure that our programs, projects and visitor services all ran smoothly. The Trust's memberships exceeded 2008 levels, with contributions and gifts topping the 2007 all-time high of \$21,000. I was personally pleased to see many past members returning, and a new group of fresh faces swelling the ranks. Thank you all so much for your generous contributions and continuing support!

Board Leadership

2009 marked the end of Mark Ehlenfeldt's tenure as Board President, with the Trust welcoming Richard Prickett to the President's seat in April. The Trust also welcomed Dianne Kelly, CPA and Jeff Macechak to the Board last spring, and (sadly) celebrated Chris Bethmann's retirement as Superintendent of the Brendan T. Byrne State Forest in September. It was a busy year for the Board of Trustees and staff at Whitesbog. We:

- 1.) Honored the memory and contributions of Tom Darlington and recognized the dedicated service of Whitesbog's most devoted volunteers at the Annual Meeting.
- 2.) Re-visited our mission statement to acknowledge our audience: *The Mission of Whitesbog Preservation Trust is to restore, protect and enhance the land, historic sites and structures at Whitesbog and to provide educational materials and interpretive programs that engage visitors in the history, culture and natural environment of Whitesbog.*
- 3.) And, approved a new 2010-2015 Strategic Plan in October that will help guide the organization in the years to come.

Historic Restoration & Repair

Last year, the Trust invested nearly \$144,500 into the restoration of Whitesbog Village that included: a complete renovation of the Barrel Factory's walls and ceilings; repairs to Suningive's front entrance walkway and the path



leading back to the bogs; new windows, window frames and trim paint for all four worker's cottages; new gutters and down spouts on worker's cottages 10, 11 and 12; and re-shingling of the 2 Worker's Bungalows (adjacent to the School House and Cranberry Substation) along with the replacement of 14 sashes, 7 windows, woodwork repairs, and a fresh coat of trim paint throughout. A six-month extension from the New Jersey Historic Trust, granted in December, will allow the Trust to complete the critical restoration work that was delayed due to the unusually wet weather.

Repairs and maintenance around the village totaled \$29,400 and included plumbing/septic work at Suningive and the Boarding house, a new radiator and repairs to the front steps of the Superintendent's House, new gutters and down spouts on the Boarding House, chimney top repairs at the School House and Worker's Cottage 12, and a set of shiny new mailboxes for the Trust and village residents.

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Archives & Interpretive Exhibits

With support from the New Jersey Cultural Trust, Archive Committee members completed a year-long training plan with the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts that improved Whitesbog's ability to manage and preserve the Trust's collections. The grant also helped the Trust to purchase of a new scanner/copier that has been installed, and networked to our computers to digitize the collection – enabling us to share these resources and protect the collection for future generations. In the months to come, we hope to have archive policies and procedures in place, an archival library for public research and study, as well as, initial internet access.

The Interpretive exhibits at the Cranberry Substation make it a must see for all Whitesbog visitors. The Substation is presented as a 1920s window into the scientific efforts during the infancy of the modern cranberry and blueberry industry. Whether touring the Substation with a guide or just looking through the “window exhibits” visitors can get a sense of how the scientific knowledge of the day was used to deal with the many unknowns challenging the berry industry at that time.



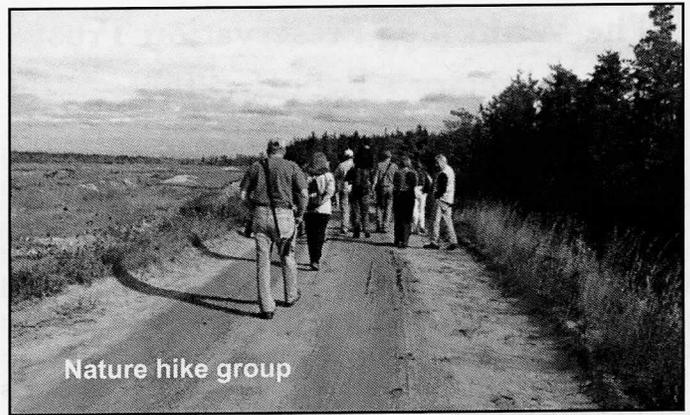
Education and Events

The Education and Events committees welcomed hundreds of visitors to 9 Moonlight Walks, 5 garden/nature walks, 2 Tundra Swan tours, 4 Cranberry Harvest tours, 3 Quarterly Lectures and a cadre of programs that included a tea with Elizabeth White, a bog gardening workshop, blueberry tasting and our popular village tours.

The Pinelands Institute for Natural & Environmental Studies, an outreach program of Burlington County College and our Village partner, welcomed 5,581 children & adult participants to 180 programs at Whitesbog during 2009.

Special Events & Outreach Activities

The 2009 Blueberry Festival was a fabulous success - with record attendance (cars filled the airstrip, both sides of Rt. 530 and most of our neighbor's yards), with only a few minor complaints, and revenues that topped \$40,000.



I think we would have broken all the records, but for the economy and the loss and reduction of a few of our sponsorships. Thank you all for a fantastic day! Here's hoping for another beautiful day in 2010.

The Trust also hosted the Pinelands Discovery Festival, a meeting of the Tri-State Coalition of Historic Properties, and tours by Historic Bartram's Gardens, Rick Darke and the University of Delaware, the South Jersey Writers Association, Pemberton Township Seniors, Piney Power and many others. Whitesbog Board members, volunteers and staff participated in more than a dozen community festivals and outreach events in support of Smithville, the Pinelands Preservation Alliance, Burlington County College, Pemberton Township, the Willingboro Environmental Council, Lines in the Pines, Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs, and RSVP.

Landscape Restoration

Whitesbog's Landscape Committee has been hard at work in Elizabeth White's garden, resetting the bricks in the circular garden, pruning shrubs, replanting beds, battling lace bugs and removing dodder from the rhododendrons and laurels. The wet spring and summer interrupted much of our trail work. With the boardwalk flooded in spots and the pond filled to capacity our planned improvements had to be postponed. Fortunately, Whitesbog's new chipper is up and running – a godsend following the ravages of the past winter. Many thanks go to everyone who braved the snow and cold weather to help with the removal of downed trees and fallen branches.

The General Store

Last but certainly not least, our little store broke the record this year, delivering more than \$17,000 in gross revenues to the Trust – an all time record. Our credit card machine helped, but all of the real credit goes to our fantastic General Store shopkeepers who greeted visitors, interpreted the village's history and maintained that special “Welcome to Whitesbog” atmosphere.

Thank you all for a wonderful and rewarding year!

- Susan B. Phillips -



Coming soon:
**The 27TH ANNUAL
BLUEBERRY
FESTIVAL**

Saturday June 26, 10am – 4pm

*Celebrate all things blueberry.
Great family fun – blueberry picking,
historical presentations and tours,
arts and country crafts, music, food,
and lots more.*

Load up the car. \$8 / carload.

Volunteers needed and welcomed.

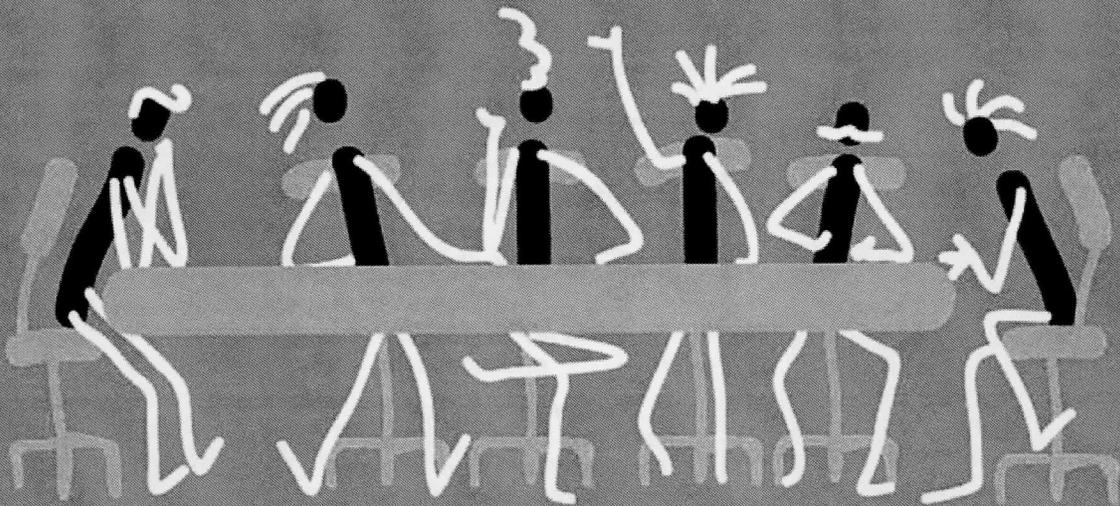
Whole day and ½ day schedules.

Call 609-893-4646 or e-mail:

WhitesbogPreservationTrust@comcast.net

Sunday, April 25, 2010

Annual Membership Meeting - 12 Noon



Volunteer Recognition Barbecue to follow

R.S.V.P. requested

Watch for the opening of
**Whitesbog's new
 Welcome Center**



This spring, the Trust will open Worker's Cottage #12 (next to the General Store) as Whitesbog Village's Welcome Center. The cottage will provide important visitor services, a place for volunteers to gather and work, and a central location for many of our administrative activities. As various office functions are relocated there, Suningive's office will be repurposed for archival activities such as scanning and preserving documents, and cataloguing the collection.

The Welcome Center will be open daily to greet village visitors and serve as a convenient hub for Whitesbog activities and information. If you'd like to become more involved at Whitesbog, this is your opportunity. We need lots of help with set-up, casual staffing and the zillion projects that await the center's opening. Call Sue Phillips at (609) 893-4646 for more details. ■

Our Mission: To restore, protect and enhance the land, historic sites and structures at Whitesbog and to provide educational materials and interpretive programs that engage visitors in the history, culture and natural environment of Whitesbog.



April 4 at 10 a.m.

*Emerging
 Plants Nature
 Walk*

with Mark Szutarski

Explore Suningive's gardens, the nearby bogs, and Pineland areas to discover and identify native plants as they begin their springtime display.

\$5 per person
 reservations requested



**Quarterly Lecture Series
 Sunday May 16 at 1 p.m.**

*Whitesbog and
 the World Beyond*

Speaker – Rick Prickett

A bird's-eye presentation that travels by road and rail to see the sites that were familiar to J.J. White and Elizabeth White, seasonal workers, and others who put Whitesbog on the map.

\$5 members, \$7 non-members
 reservations requested

Saturday, May 22 at 10 a.m.

*Suningive's
 Gardens*

Experience Suningive's gardens in bloom. Learn about Elizabeth White's plant collection and efforts to preserve her gardens and conserve her unique plant collection.

\$5 donation/person
 reservations requested



Calendar of Events

April

3 Volunteer Workday - 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. Have fun with friends, working in the gardens, repairing trails, restocking the General Store and working around the Village. Lunch provided.

3 Whitesbog Village Tour - 1 p.m. \$5/person. Stroll the Historic Village, learn about Whitesbog's role in history and visit Suningive, Elizabeth White's historic home, the worker's cottages and other buildings that speak to Whitesbog's heritage.

4 Emerging Plants Nature Walk - 10 a.m. \$5/person, reservations requested. Explore Suningive's gardens, the nearby bogs and Pineland areas with Mark Szutarski to identify native plants as they begin their springtime display.

24 Moonlight Walk - 7 p.m. \$5/person, reservations required. Fish Moon. Listen to the night sounds of the Pines, learn about Whitesbog and experience the seasonal changes of the Pinelands. All walks are 3-5 miles in length, weather and led by experienced leaders.

25 Whitesbog Preservation Trust Annual Members Meeting and Volunteer Recognition Barbecue 12 Noon.

May

1 Volunteer Workday - 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (see April).

1 Whitesbog Village Tour - 1 p.m. (see April).

16 Quarterly Lecture Series - 1 p.m. \$5 members, \$7 non-members, by reservation. "Whitesbog and the World Beyond," with presenter Richard Prickett. This bird's-eye presentation travels by road and rail to see the sites familiar to J.J. White and Elizabeth White, seasonal workers, and others who put Whitesbog on the map.

22 Moonlight Walk - 7 p.m. \$5 donation per person, reservations requested. (see April). Flower Moon.

22 Suningive's Gardens - 10 a.m. \$5 per person, reservations requested. Experience Suningive's gardens in bloom. Learn about Elizabeth White's plant collection and efforts to preserve her gardens and restore her unique plant collection.

June

5 Volunteer Workday - 10 a.m. - 3 p.m. (see April).

5 Whitesbog Village Tour - 1 p.m. (see April).

26 Moonlight Walk - 7 p.m. \$5/person, reservations requested. Strawberry Moon. (see April).

26 The 27th Annual Blueberry Festival - 10 a.m. - 4 p.m. \$8/carload. Celebrate all things blueberry at this old-fashioned festival. Great family fun – blueberry picking, historical presentations and tours, arts and country crafts, music, food and lots more.

We are continually adding new programs and events. Check with us often at (609) 893-4646 or on the web at www.whitesbog.org. ■

Giving the Past A Future

The restoration of Whitesbog Village continues. Each completed project allows us to better envision the aspirations of past generations and imagine the life of bygone time.

Thank you for renewing your membership!! To those of you who have upgraded your membership level - THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU. With dedicated members like you we can continue to grow as an organization and continue to educate the public about the "Company town" that was Whitesbog.

I invite you all to come to my next Membership Committee meeting on Monday April 12th at 6 p.m. (food provided) and bring your ideas for further enhancing membership.

- Stephanie Schrader -

Join the Trust !

Membership Levels:

\$1,000 & up _____	Partner
\$ 500 _____	Benefactor
\$ 250 _____	Sponsor
\$ 100 _____	Patron
\$ 50 _____	Supporter
\$ 35 _____	Family
\$ 25 _____	Individual

Renewal:

New Membership:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

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.



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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