



Whitesbog Preservation Trust

NEWSLETTER

4th Quarter

2005

Feature Article

Families on the Bogs

Part Four: Migrant Education and the End of an Era

by David Orleans, Past President, Whitesbog Preservation Trust

A History of South Jersey's Cranberry Harvest & the Italian Immigrant Experience at Whitesbog Village, Burlington County

EDUCATION OF MIGRANT CHILDREN

A major point in the controversy between child labor activists and the cranberry industry dealt with the inescapable fact that the fall cranberry harvest fell during the first month or two of the Philadelphia school year, which started in early September. This practice, alleged the NCLC (National Child Labor Committee), was causing the children to become retarded in their educational development due to their missing those important first few weeks of school. A century earlier, this issue probably would not have been raised. In the 1800s, the country was geared to a rural economy and lifestyle, and schooling in South Jersey did not commence until November, after the cranberry harvest was over. However, the more standardized school calendar had grown up in the emerging urban settings of cities like Philadelphia. Rural districts, too, eventually began to follow this calendar, and conflicts between the agricultural cycle and the educational cycle grew more frequent.

By 1907, Whitesbog had its own schoolhouse as part of the new Pemberton Township public school district. This one-room school accommodated the children of the year-round Whitesbog workers, children from nearby Hanover Furnace, and a small number of children from the Italian families who



were at Whitesbog for the harvest. In 1917, when Whitesbog School was merged with other rural schools into a more centralized location in Browns Mills, some Italian children were still in attendance. However, the overwhelming majority of Italian families stayed together on the bogs to work.

Whitesbog continued to be the most progressive of the cranberry plantations throughout the 1920s and 1930s, and Elizabeth White became well-known for her concerns about the education of migrant children. In 1930 and 1931, the Women's Home mission of New York City was enlisted to conduct a day nursery program for younger children of cranberry and blueberry pickers while the older family members did their work. After the workday they planned organized recreational activities for the older children as well. Miss White hoped to develop a style of informal education out of the recreation and entertainment already enjoyed by the Italian youth:

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Message from the President

Volunteers Doing Good Work !

Over the last month or two, the Whitebog Preservation Trust has acquired several pieces of original furniture that were once part of Suningive. These are items that had been given to June Vail (Elizabeth C. White's assistant and protégé) after ECW's death in 1954. In recent years they had been stored in a barn on Miss Vail's property. Recently, June began paring down her possessions, and through the efforts of Ellen Terry and a few other great volunteers (John Joyce, Chris Bethmann, Glen Huey) we have reacquired these items. These items will go a long way toward the eventual restoration of ECW's house as it was in her lifetime. Ms. Terry has acquired other treasures as well, some of ECW's clothing, a haywagon, and photos from ECW's trip abroad in 1904. I encourage you to check out Ellen's article elsewhere in this newsletter.

Calling All Computers !

Every quarter when I sit down to write a few lines for the newsletter, I try to write about how Whitesbog and the Trust are getting better or could be better. Recently, I've come to recognize we are in **real need** of more and better computers, and I think we could easily use 3-5 **newer** models. What would we use these for? A couple could replace the antiquated and aging units we use for office, bookkeeping, and newsletter work; one could be set up with a good quality scanner for our new document and photograph archiving initiative; a couple others could be used for PowerPoint presentations (e.g. slideshows) in the Barrel Factory and elsewhere. The Trust is working on grants to acquire computers, but in this day and age some people upgrade their computers pretty regularly, and maybe someone out there is looking to trade up. If you have a computer you'd like to donate, call the Trust. **Donations are tax deductible!** We could use computers that have: Pentium 4 or better processors, 10-20 GB hard drives or better, CD burners, and 17" monitors.

- *Mark Ehlenfeldt* -

2006 Board of Trustees Spring Quarter

Meeting Dates

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

Jan 25, February 22, March 22,

Sunday, April 23 - 10:00 a.m.

Sunday, April 23 - 12:00 Noon - Annual Meeting

Board of Trustees

Mark Ehlenfeldt, Pres.
John Kallelis, Treas.
Bart Amato
Michael Colby
Ted Gordon
Richard Prickett

John Joyce, Vice Pres.
Ellen Terry, Secretary
Chris Bethmann
Tom Darlington
Nora Hayes
Stephanie Schrader

Staff

Theresa Earley, Executive Director
Esther Kubiczky, Bookkeeper/Assistant
Jeanne Streiter, Database coordinator

Newsletter

Mark Ehlenfeldt & Theresa Earley - Editors
Michelle McBride & Salena Garced - Layout/Graphics

Committee Information 2005 - 2006

- Buildings Committee** - John Joyce, chair - Meets bimonthly - contact WPT office for schedule
Events Committee - Theresa Earley, chair - 1st Tuesdays at 6:30 pm - New members welcome
Finance Committee - John Kallelis, chair
Fund Development Committee - Mark Ehlenfeldt, chair - contact WPT office for schedule
General Store Committee - Esther Kubiczky, chair - contact WPT office for schedule
Interpretative Education/Archives Committee - Ted Gordon, chair - 3rd Wednesdays at 6:30 pm - New members welcome
Landscape and Garden Committee - Ellen Terry, chair - 2nd Wednesdays of Jan, Apr, July, Oct at 6:30 pm
Marketing/Public Relations/Newsletter Committee - Mark Ehlenfeldt, chair - contact WPT office for schedule - New members welcome
Membership/Nominating Committee - Stephanie Schrader, chair - 1st Tuesdays at 5:30 pm - New members welcome
Personnel Committee - Mark Ehlenfeldt, chair - closed membership - Meets as needed

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.

*A Message from the Whitesbog
Preservation Trust Board of Trustees*

Dearest Whitesbog Friends,

*During this winter season, the
Staff and Board of Trustees wish
you a joyous and peaceful new year.
Thank you for your dedication to
Whitesbog and continued support
throughout the year. The Whitesbog
community grows stronger because
of you and your commitment. Best
wishes for the New Year!*

**P.I.N.E.S. Programs for May & June -
2006**

May 23, 2006 - Pine Barrens Ecology - Car

Caravan Tour – Take a guided tour featuring swamps, pine & oak forests, cedar water, mudflats & more. Along the way, your feet will stay dry as the “Nature in a Bag” kits bring the Pine Barrens right to your vehicle. Light refreshments will be served in the General Store following the presentation. 2-4 p.m., \$7/person. Must call to pre-register 609-893-1765. Pinelands Institute for Natural & Environmental Studies – Burlington County College.

June 6, 2006 - Wetlands Excursion – The Pine Barrens of New Jersey has many beautiful, diverse wetlands. Take a driving tour to see swamps, meadows, streams, ponds, and abandoned cranberry bogs along the sandy roads surrounding Whitesbog. Stops along the way provide opportunities for photography and discussion of natural history. 10 am-12 noon, \$7/person. Must call to pre-register 609-893-1765. Pinelands Institute for Natural & Environmental Studies – Burlington County College. ■

Events & Programs at Whitesbog

January

7th - Volunteer Work Day – 10 AM – 3 PM.

Free. Lunch is provided.

14th - Moonlight Walk – 5 PM. \$5 per person.

Reservations are necessary for winter walks.

February

4th - Volunteer Work Day - See January.

4th - General Store Opens for year - Weekends from 10 AM – 4 PM. February – December.

4th and 5th - Tundra Swan Tours – 10 AM and 2 PM. Reservations are necessary. \$8 per person. Guided tour to the winter home of the tundra swan at Whitesbog.

11th - Moonlight Walk - See January.

March

4th - Volunteer Work Day - See January.

11th - Celebrate National Women's History

Month with a special presentation about the amazing life of Elizabeth White. 1PM.

Reservations are necessary. \$7 per person.

11th - Moonlight Walk – 7 PM. \$5 per person.

Reservations are necessary.

April

1st - Volunteer Work Day - See January.

15th - Moonlight Walk - See March.

Invitation to the 2006 Annual Meeting for Whitesbog Preservation Trust Members

You are invited to the **Annual Meeting on Sunday, April 23, 2006 at 12:00 Noon. Luncheon will be served. Please RSVP by Tuesday, April 18, 2005 – (609) 893-4646 or whitesbog@hotmail.com.** The following items will be on the agenda for review by the General Membership:

- Approval of the 2005 Annual Meeting Minutes
- Election of new Treasurer – John Kallelis
- Election of new Trustees – Bart Amato and Stephanie Schrader
- Approval of changes to the By-Laws.
Recommended changes will be outlined in the 1st Quarter 2006 Newsletter.
- Approval of the Trust's operating budget
- Introduction of Committee Chairs

Hope to see you there!

The Whitesbog Preservation Trust Annual Membership Drive has begun. Thank you for renewing your membership or becoming a member this year. Your valuable membership ensures the ongoing programs and preservation of Historic Whitesbog Village and the Whitesbog Preservation Trust. Thank you for your support!
(Memberships as of December 11, 2005)

Benefactors:

Jo Ann & Bob Cubberly
 Nora Hayes

Sponsors:

Louis C. Harris, Jr.
 Emily J. Kingsbury
 Dr. George E. Staehle

Patrons:

Debra K. Aniano
 Patricia Blinn
 Jan & Patricia Conover
 John W. & Eileen R. Dobil
 Mark & Jean Ehlenfeldt
 Michael & Caroline Huber
 Judith Norcross
 Pinelands Preservation Alliance
 Lisa A. Post
 Stephanie Schrader
 Mark A. Szutarski
 Nan & Richard Walnut
 Denis Waters
 Lewis Williams

Supporters:

James & June Auch
 Arthur & Utta Covello
 Robert Dahl & Barbara Fordyce
 Armon Diedrich, Jr.
 Peter & Mariana DuBrul
 Janet DeMauro
 Barbara Eskilson
 Joan W. Fillippone
 Henrietta C. Forcanser
 Beth Gensel
 Marge Howley
 Marke & Karen Jendrezjewski
 S. David Harrison
 Carolyn & Dick Heuser
 Guy Johnson
 Will & Mary Leland
 David Littlehale
 Jos Mallace
 William Miller
 Rhonda D. Morrisroe
 Lois Morris
 George E. & Theresa A. Morris

David A. Sheehan
 (Halprint/Minuteman Press)
 Sarah L. & Joseph Moritko, Jr.
 Henry & Jeane Papit
 Jerome S. Renner
 Leon M. Roseuson
 Margaret Spallone
 Roland P. Stratton, M.D.
 Jeanne L. Streiter
 Ellen Terry
 William J. & Helen L. Wachter
 Martha Windisch

Contributors:

M. Violet Allaire
 Candace M. Ashmun
 Leonid Assur
 Craig Aumack
 Jeffrey W. Behm
 Dr. Walter Bien
 Mark Blasko
 John Bornholdt
 Michael Borovicka
 Patricia Browne
 Nancy Buchanan
 Walter T & Kathleen Byram
 Robert Cabanas
 Frances Carter
 Cherokee H. S. Envir. Club
 (Daniel Procida)
 Robert J. Chervy
 Donald Cooper
 Cynthia L. Coritz
 Elyse Cramer
 Lester Sager & Helen Dotson
 Bill Ebell
 Alice Eilers
 Nancy Engle
 Laurel E. Errington
 George L. & Leona Z. Fluck
 Baird & Margo Foster
 Eugene Friedman
 Deborah Frost
 Grace Gambino
 Ted Gordon
 Ellie Greco
 Thomas Haines
 Catherine & David Hughes

Dawn Hullings
 Robert Hutton
 George & Jean Hvozda
 Bernice Jacob
 Gail Kauffman
 Milton Kennedy
 Don Knezick
 Griffin Littell
 George & Jean Lustig
 Glenn Malsbury
 Susan D. McChesney
 Janet B. McCrosson
 Roger & Barbara Miller
 Millicent Moore
 Nicholas Waln Morgan
 Miriam S. Moss
 Linda M. Mottin
 Janet Nallinger
 Stan Nazimek
 Marie Ortner
 Samantha & Cheyanne Patterson
 Lynn Pitts
 Dr. Anthony Picaro
 Richard Pieper
 Joan G. Poole
 Mildred K. Robbins
 S. Coles Roberts
 Carolyn Royce
 Murray Rothstein
 Frank J. & Rachel Ryan
 Nancy Sanson
 Albertine Senske
 Elizabeth Seth
 Carolyn Shaw
 Caroline Hoffman Smith
 Alice M. Surico (Spring Lake
 Properties)
 Barbara L. Smatusek
 Jerry A. Smith
 Carol T. Wasniewski
 Lee Welsher
 Anita Wergin
 Jane Wiltshire
 Jeanne Woodford
 E.G. Wurzburg, III

Donation

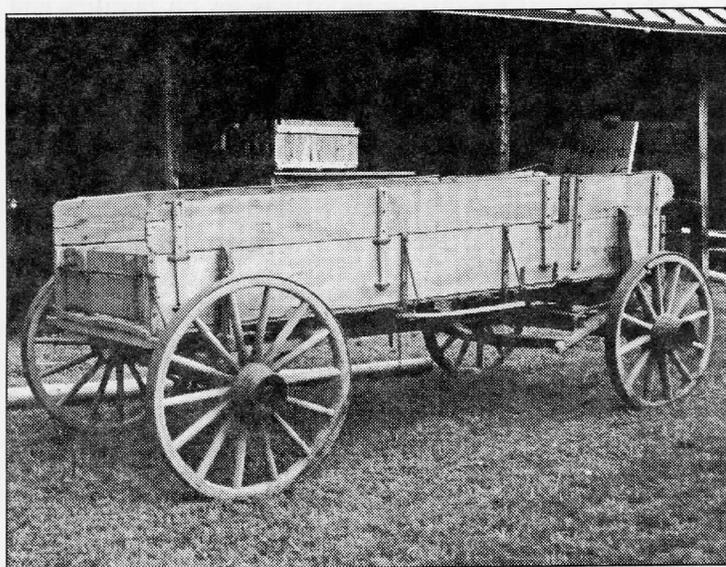
Marilyn Beard

Visiting June

Not many of us have the vision to know which friends or acquaintances will become historic figures. June Vail, formerly of Whitesbog and Elizabeth White's intern, appears to have that gift. Now living in Pennsylvania, Miss Vail carefully stored the remnants of Elizabeth White's estate that weren't claimed by family members. Chris Bethmann, Bill Bolger, Glenn Huey, John Joyce, Jeanne Strieter, and I have made several trips to retrieve these now precious possessions. Our long trip-days were in deepest winter cold, in lovely sunny autumn weather, and on one horrendous 93 degree plus July day with intermittent thunderstorms.

June donated to the Trust, furniture from Suningive including Miss White's bedroom furniture and blanket chest, another bedroom set, living room and kitchen furniture, lamps, and all kinds of old farm implements that were used here. She also donated a beautiful antique haywagon from her family farm, (pictured). This haywagon is reminiscent of haywagons that were used at Whitesbog. It has iron wheels and a buckboard. On a special volunteer work day, many volunteers came out to clean the old wagon shed to make a new home for this vintage wagon. After the hard work, volunteers could hardly wait to climb on and enjoy a pretend ride.

One of the other treasures uncovered in June Vail's barn was a dusty trunk with photos from a steamship cruise the extended White family took to Europe in 1904. These pictures, along with ones possessed by



Chris Bethmann (superintendent of the Brendan T. Byrne State Forest) document the White's travels to Egypt, Crete, and other far-flung locales.

We are so grateful to have these items "back home". We thank Miss June Vail for her generosity and we applaud her foresight.

- Ellen Terry -



Some of the volunteer wagon movers (top to bottom, left to right): Ellen Terry, Miranda Picirilli, Griffin Littel, Ryan Murphy, Beth Gensel, and Glen Huey.

Gift Memberships

Don't know what to give the person who has everything? Give the special gift of a Whitesbog Preservation Trust Membership. Basic memberships begin at \$25.00 and include Whitesbog Preservation Trust Quarterly Newsletter, Membership Card, Window Decal, Name in Newsletter and Members Only Holiday Party in December! Give the gift of preservation and ensure Historic Whitesbog Village for future generations. ■

(continued from page 1)

*"For future years we could prepare stories for the children, explaining why we use the water for flooding; the life history of the fireworm, the girdle worm, the cranberry leaf hopper. These stories could be as interesting as fairy tales. I have tried telling them to some of the Italian children who stay over for the less hectic seasons. They are always intensely interested."*³²

END OF AN ERA

By this time, most bog owners were turning to the cranberry "scoop" as a solution to the problem of family labor in the cranberry harvest. The scoop was a wooden shovel-like instrument with slots, or kerfs, cut in it lengthwise, arranged like the tines of a fork. The hand-held scoop was inserted at the base of the cranberry vine and pulled forward, stripping off the berries, which were caught in the closed bottom of the implement. Harvesting a bog in this fashion could be accomplished much quicker and with much less manpower. However, the work was much too strenuous for either women or children to perform, therefore many Italians stopped coming to the bogs with their families for the cranberry season. However, some continued to come for the summer blueberry harvest, which still relied heavily on handpicking.

Scooping had an injurious effect on the vines, however, and some owners, including the Whites, continued to use some handpicking on especially sensitive bogs until the 1940s and 1950s, when even more efficient mechanical harvesting devices were introduced, eventually making even the cranberry scoop obsolete. By the time Cornelius Weygandt wrote about the cranberry harvest in 1940, the traditions of the handpicked cranberry outings, as well as the problems, were rapidly becoming things of the past, soon to be replaced by a more scientific approach to the harvest. His words had more the ring of reminiscence than of simple description:

"It is in the picking season of September and October that the cranberry country takes on gaiety and color. Then the cranberry pickers, come down from Philadelphia, are spread out all over the drained flats, busy harvesting the berries. The Italians are a lively lot, many of whom sing at their work. At night back in their camps, on the higher pine lands above the bogs, there is a more persistent singing, choruses of 'O Sole Mio' and the like to so many guitars you can describe the effect only by saying there is a battery of guitars. As someone throws a log on the fire before the tents, sparks fly off like hundreds of fireflies through the October

*night and flames shoot up illuminating the tranced faces of the singers."*³³

Today, modern harvesting techniques have made the red seas of cranberries a traditional part of the fall spectacle in the New Jersey Pinelands, and the industry continues to be a healthy part of the region's economy. But those same technological advances which have enabled a handful of men to do the work of six hundred hand-laborers has also led to the demise of agricultural company towns like Whitesbog, and the unique sense of community which pervaded them.

Now owned by the State of New Jersey, as part of Brendan T. Byrne State Forest, Whitesbog represents a virtually intact example of such a company town. Through the efforts of many dedicated individuals and organizations, foremost among them the Whitesbog Preservation Trust and Pinelands Institute for Environmental Studies, it is anticipated that Whitesbog will continue to serve as a living link to our agricultural past.

References cited: Part Four

32. White, Elizabeth C. "Presidential Address", Proceedings of 60th Annual Meeting of Cranberry Growers Association, January 25, 1930. p. 8.
33. Weygandt, Cornelius. "Of Cranberries, A Cranberry Classic and the Untamable", Down Jersey, D. Appleton-Century Company, N.Y., 1940. p. 311.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

David Orleans (now living in Portland, Oregon) is the former President of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, a former Camden County park naturalist, and a former resident of Whitesbog. His interest in the history of community life during the village's heyday, as well as to his 25-year-involvement with the Trust and the Interpretive Education Committee, led to the writing of this article.

The material for this series of articles on families and the cranberry harvest was gleaned from many primary written sources in the archives of the J.J. White, Inc. cranberry and blueberry company, without whose invaluable assistance this article could not have been written. (NOTE: Since this original article was written, many of the materials have been donated by J.J. White to the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, for which the Trust is truly grateful.)

The liberal use of quotations has been an attempt to tell the story of the cranberry harvest in the words of those who were intimately involved in the process, and in the community itself. Much remains to be discovered, and other aspects of the cranberry story can be expected to emerge from oral histories and interviews with former cranberry and blueberry pickers (Italian and American) and other full-time workers at Whitesbog. ■

If you would like to see any of these informative articles in large print, they are available upon request. Please contact the Trust via phone, fax, or e-mail.

Whitesbog Preservation Trust

Contact Info:

120-13 Whitesbog Road

Browns Mills, NJ 08015

Phone: 609 893 4646

Fax: 609 893 8297

E-mail: Whitesbog@hotmail.com

Website: www.whitesbog.org



FEATURED ITEMS AT THE GENERAL STORE:

Whitesbog Preserves, Toppings and Marmalade - Choose from Blueberry Preserves, Blueberry Topping, Black & Blueberry Spread, or Cranberry - Orange Marmalade. These delicious spreads have been specially labeled for the Whitesbog Preservation Trust. Pure, home recipes with no preservatives. The perfect hostess gift or addition to winter-time breakfasts! \$6.00 each plus \$3.00 per item for postage & handling.

Name: _____

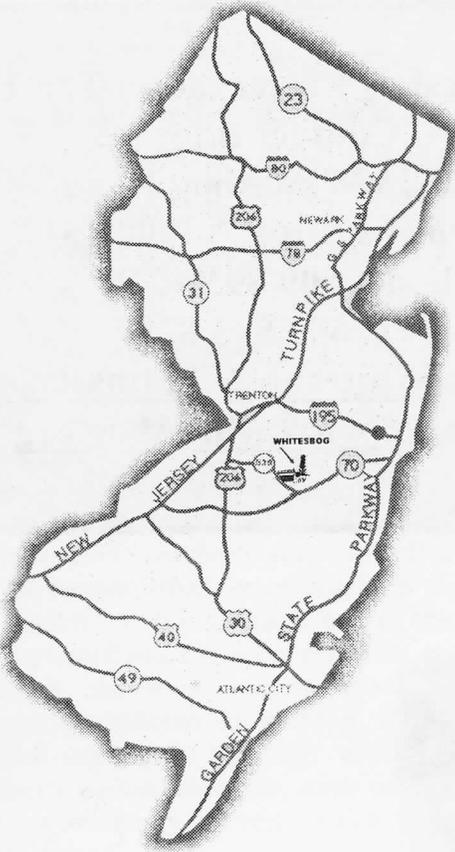
Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Blueberry Preserves	\$6.00 x _____	\$ _____
Blueberry Topping	\$6.00 x _____	\$ _____
Black & Blueberry Spread	\$6.00 x _____	\$ _____
Cranberry - Orange Marmalade	\$6.00 x _____	\$ _____
Add \$3.00 Postage & Handling per item	\$3.00 x _____	\$ _____
Total Amount Enclosed		\$ _____

Please make check payable to **Whitesbog Preservation Trust**
 Mail to: Whitesbog Preservation Trust, 120-13 Whitesbog Village, Browns Mills, NJ 08015

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 market 13. (Landmarks - Will go through the towns of Pemberton & Browns Mills, passing Burlington County College on right.)
Turn left onto Whitesbog Road. Parking lot on the left. General Store and Trust office (upstairs) is across from parking lot.

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 and 34.)
Travel West on Rt 530 for one mile to mile marker 13.
Turn right onto Whitesbog Road.
Parking lot is on the left. General Store and Trust office (upstairs) is across from parking lot.

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. General Store and Trust office (upstairs) is across from parking lot.

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. General Store and Trust office (upstairs) is across from parking lot.

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

Whitesbog Preservation Trust
120-13 Whitesbog Road
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