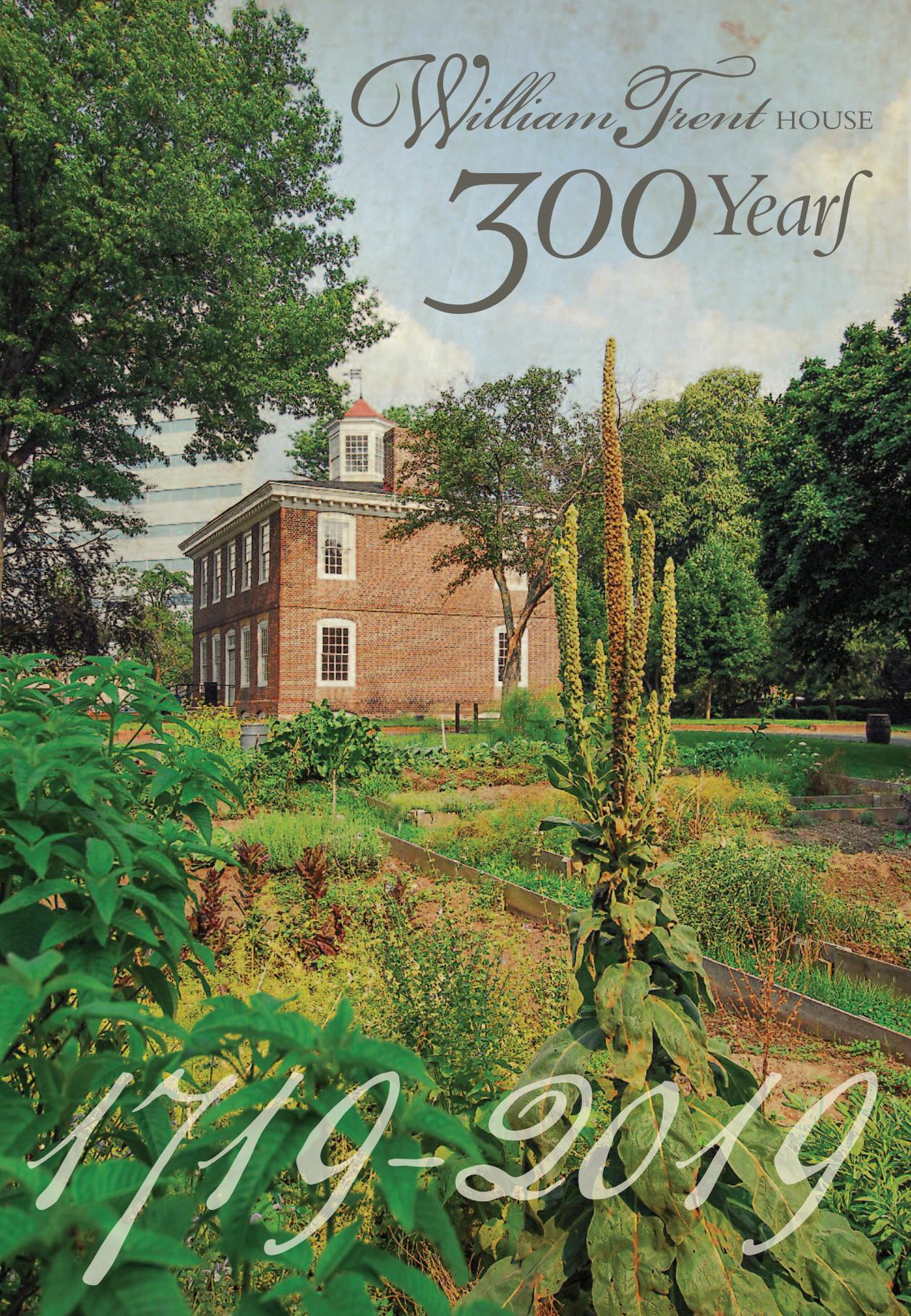


William Trent HOUSE

300 Years



1719-2019

WILLIAM TRENT HOUSE

Letter from the President,
The William Trent House
Spring 2019



At the 1719 William Trent House Museum, we don't just preserve history; we don't just interpret history. We uncover history.

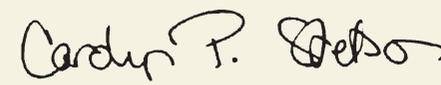
We are in the forefront with other local institutions of expanding research and interpretation on slavery in the northern colonies. As a founding member of the Sankofa Collaborative, and working with members of the community, we are researching and sharing ways to learn, present, and disseminate information about this and other difficult topics in American history.

In another exciting development, we believe that Ground Penetrating Radar has discovered the foundation of Mahlon Stacy's house. Stacy, along with a few other Quakers, was the first European to settle at "Ye ffalles of ye De La Warr," the Falls of the Delaware, in 1679. This summer we are working with Hunter Research and Monmouth University to host an archeological dig to investigate this possibility.

We are honored that the House has been given a 2019 Preservation Award by the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia. In collaboration with the City of Trenton, we are active in efforts to preserve this historic house and have recently received a grant from the 1772 Foundation through the New Jersey Historic Trust to undertake additional restoration projects.

We are grateful to our members and donors for their ongoing support of the Museum and the Trent House Association. We look forward to continuing our celebration of the 300th anniversary of the House's construction and hope that you will join us at our upcoming programs and events.

With all best wishes,


Carolyn Stetson, President

THE WILLIAM TRENT HOUSE

William Trent and his household

The son of William Trent of Inverness, William Trent's date of birth is uncertain. Some sources indicate that he was born about 1653-1655 in the Scottish Highlands; others attribute the date of his birth to 1666 when he was baptized at South Leith in southeast Scotland. Exactly when he emigrated to the American colonies is also unknown. Based on Philadelphia tax rolls in 1693, we know that he had followed his brother James to that city.



William Trent became a very successful and wealthy merchant in Philadelphia, trading with Great Britain and the English colonies on the mainland and in the West Indies. At one time he owned an interest in over forty ships, exporting such products as tobacco, flour, and furs, while importing wine, rum, molasses, and dry goods. He also imported African and West Indian people as slaves as well as indentured servants from the British Isles.

While a resident of the New Jersey colony, Trent was elected to the Assembly, commissioned a colonel in one of the militia regiments, and in 1723 became New Jersey's first resident Chief Justice.

On Christmas Day 1724 William Trent died suddenly from a "fit of apoplexy," or what we might call today a stroke. At the time of his death, Trent was between the ages of 58 and 69. His widow was in her early 30s, and her son, William, was 9. The probate inventory, completed in 1726, listed the furnishings of the

House as well as other items on the plantation. Included on the inventory was an "Account of Negroes" that included eleven enslaved people – six men, one woman, two boys, one girl, and one male child.

In March of 1737, three enslaved African men were arrested in Trenton for poisoning and among the possible victims was William Trent.

They were found guilty and hanged. It is not known if Trent was actually murdered, or if his sudden death was later used by these men as "proof" of the efficacy of their poison.



The Trent House Association

When the House was opened as a museum in 1936, a Trent House Commission was formed to establish, maintain, and manage the House Museum. A furnishings committee or "Women's Committee" oversaw the furnishing of the House in the 1930s, using the 1726 probate inventory as a guide, while the Garden Club of Trenton accepted the responsibility of restoring the Trent House gardens. In 1957 the Trent House Association was formed, gaining its status as a non-profit organization in 1975.

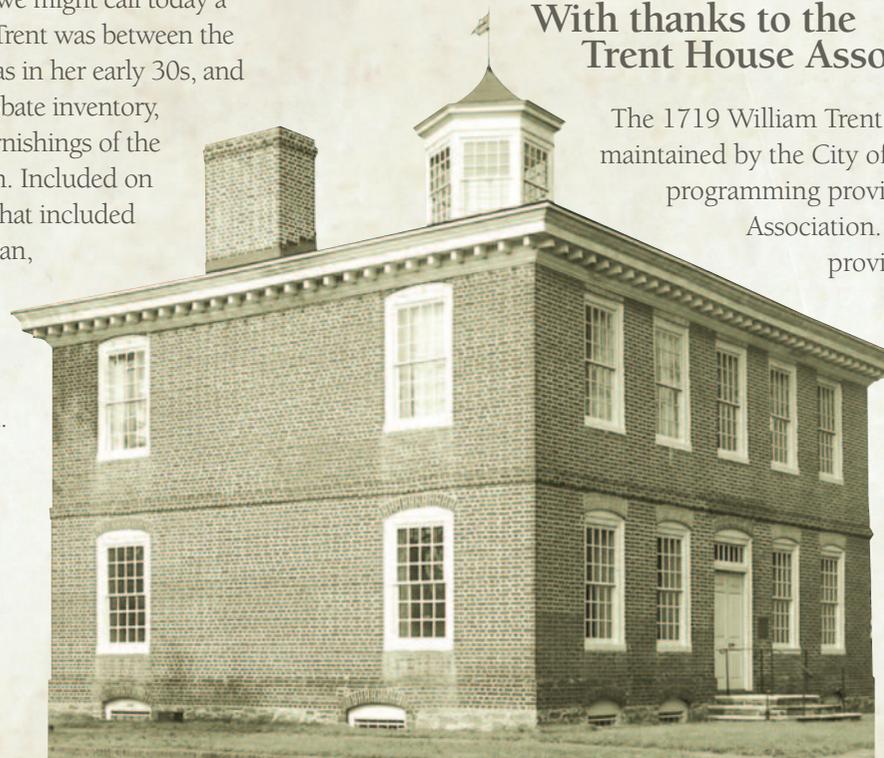
The mission of the Trent House Association is to work in cooperation with the City of Trenton to enhance the historical integrity and interpretation of the William Trent House through stewardship of the site, research, and public programming.

For many years the Association was primarily responsible for acquiring and preserving the furnishings in the historic house, with full-time professional staff employed by the City who provided overall management and conducted programming. In recent years the Association has taken on increasing responsibility for both managing the site and providing programming. In addition, the Association has taken the lead in acquiring funding for research and public history projects and for building strong relationships with other local cultural and educational institutions as well as with the City administration. The Association is governed by a board of fifteen trustees and holds an annual membership meeting in May.

With thanks to the Trent House Association Supporters

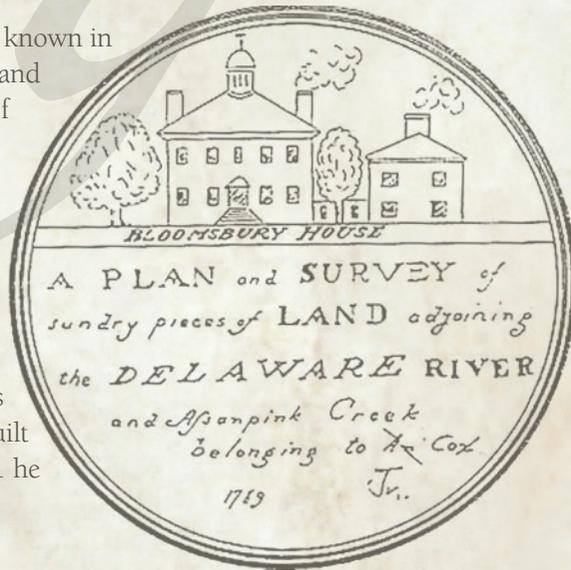
The 1719 William Trent House Museum is owned and maintained by the City of Trenton with operations and programming provided by the Trent House Association. Funding support is provided by the Trent House

Association's members and donors and, in part, by NJM Insurance Group, the New Jersey Council for the Humanities, and the Mercer County Cultural and Heritage Commission through funding from the New Jersey Historical Commission and the Mercer County Board of Chosen Freeholders.



The History, Architecture and Furnishings

The William Trent House is located at what was known in early colonial times as the Falls of the Delaware and prior to English colonization had been the site of Leni Lenape settlements for thousands of years. The first European colonist in the area was Mahlon Stacy, a Quaker immigrant from England, who built a home on the site circa 1680. After his death, Stacy's son sold 800 acres to William Trent, a wealthy shipping merchant based in Philadelphia, in 1714. Trent added property to include virtually all of what is now the city of Trenton. The House itself was built circa 1719 by Trent as a summer home. By 1721 he and his family made the House their full-time residence until his death in 1724.



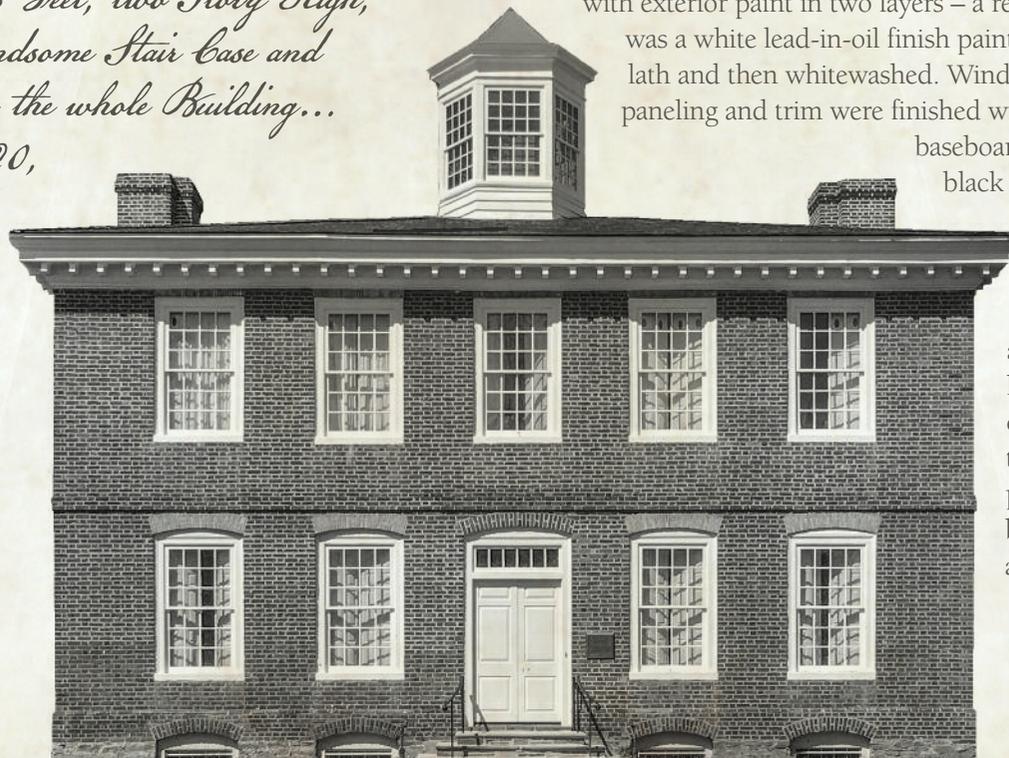
In 1742 a separate kitchen wing was added, and in an advertisement placed in the Pennsylvania Journal on July 12, 1759, the plantation was called "Kingsbury" and was described as:

...containing 200 acres of Land, of which there is about 80 acres cleared, the rest Wood Land. It is accommodated with a Large well Built Brick Dwelling House 38 by 48 Feet, two Story High, four Rooms on a Floor, with a Large Handsome Stair Case and Entrys thro' the House, with Cellars under the whole Building... with a Large Brick Kitchen, 30 feet by 20, with a Handsome pav'd Gangway between the House and Kitchen, 14 Feet by 20 Long, the Kitchen two Story High, with a Well in it, and Four handsome Apartments above for Servants, with a Fireplace in one room...

The House is an excellent example of an early Georgian house. This architectural style is based on classical forms of the Italian Renaissance period and was the first architect-inspired style built in America, reflecting a period of growth and prosperity and a desire for more formally designed buildings. Construction followed building manuals called "pattern books" that began arriving in the colonies around 1700. Common features of Georgian style buildings include: a symmetrical form and window placement; multi-paned sliding sash windows; five bays with center doors and hall; hipped or side-gabled roof with dentilated or modillioned cornices; brick or stone walls with a water table and/or belt course; and a transomed window over a paneled front door. These features are all found on the Trent House.

Analysis of building materials used in the Trent House indicates that the exterior walls are made of locally produced brick conforming to 1683 regulations on a foundation of fieldstone. The dentiled roof is crowned by a hexagonal cupola with weathervane. Segmental arches over the main windows are of imported Dutch brick and pointing was sand and lime mortar. Structural and trim woodwork, both interior and exterior, is of oak and pine, with exterior paint in two layers – a reddish brown primer with high oil content on which was a white lead-in-oil finish paint. The interior walls were plastered over oak plank and lath and then whitewashed. Window sashes and most hardware were imported. Wood paneling and trim were finished with a yellow/white semi-gloss oil, with baseboards and baseboard height accents on trim and doors painted in gloss black made of lamp black and linseed oil.

The interior has a central floor plan, with a large entry and staircase and four rooms on each floor, and is little altered, retaining its the original stairway and floorboards. The nine fireplaces and cellar kitchen hearth are all in good condition, with one fireplace on the second floor surrounded by its original Delft tiles. The interior of the House is furnished with period appropriate antique and reproduction items, based on the probate inventory conducted in 1726 after Trent's death.

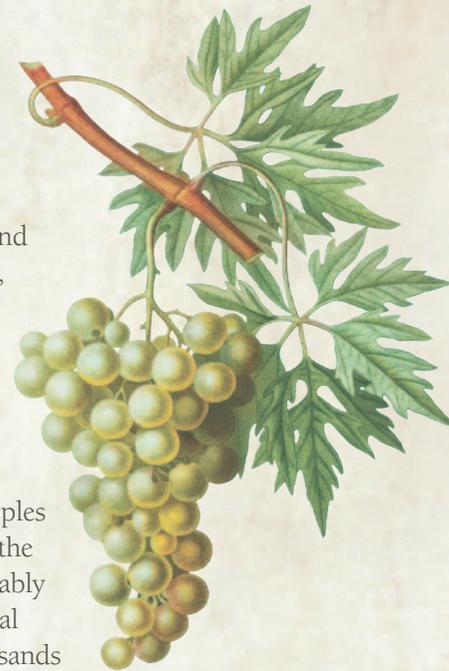


The Kitchen Garden and Orchard

An advertisement to sell or lease the House in 1759 described

... "an Orchard of about 350 Apple-trees, whereof about 150 are old bearing Trees, the others just beginning to Bore and are of the best Grafted Fruit, there is also a fine Collection of other Fruit, to wit, Peaches, Damsons, Cherrys of several Sorts, Squinces, English Walnuts, Grapes, Raspberys, and a handsome large Kitchen Garden." The Pennsylvania Journal, no. 866, 12 July 1759, reprinted in Nelson, Newspaper Extracts, first Series, Vol XX, page 365.

Managed by historical horticulturist Charles Thomforde with the assistance of Rutgers Mercer County Master Gardeners, the four-parterre garden grows examples of vegetables and herbs that Trent's garden probably contained. Many are still recognizable today: shell peas, cabbage, kale, asparagus, carrots, cucumbers, turnips, radishes, Irish and sweet potatoes, garlic, onions, as well as chives, spearmint, and lemon balm. Other may be less known to modern gardeners, such as borage (for the flowers), Good King Henry and Sorrel (pot herbs), gooseberry and currants, citron melons (for pickling), radish pods, and elecampane (for medicine). The garden hosts an award-winning Master Gardener program for Trenton campers each summer.



Our cultivated apples are not native to the New World, probably originating in Central Asia. Grown for thousands of years in Asia and Europe, they were introduced to North America by European colonists. From the beginning, European arrivals in New Jersey grew apples for cider. They also grew apples for eating fresh, for drying, and for cooking. The Trent estate would have included an orchard sufficient to yield 1,000 gallons of cider per year.



Today there is a miniature orchard of heirloom varieties likely grown in the region in the 1700s, researched by Charles Thomforde and designed and planted as the Eagle Scout project of Sidhant Swami of Troop 43, Princeton, with the help of members of the Rutgers Master Gardeners of Mercer County and other volunteers.



1934 Restoration and Updates

The WPA Restoration 1934 - 1936

In 1929 the last private owner of the House deeded it to the City of Trenton with the stipulation that it be restored to its original (colonial) appearance. The restoration was financed by the federal government through the Civil Works, Emergency Relief, and Public Works Administration (WPA). Planning and selective demolition began in 1933 under the direction of the Trustees of the Trenton Free Public Library.

The architectural team in charge included J. Osborne Hunt, supervising architect; Samuel Mountford, researching architect; and J. Harmon Harvey and Leon Slack, with Howard Hughes, City Librarian, providing historical research. After Hunt's death in 1935, Mountford assumed the role of supervising architect and completed the restoration.

The WPA workforce consisted of 80 to 100 men, most unskilled or with minimal training, over the two-year restoration period. The Carriage House restoration was undertaken very early in the project, likely as a training exercise for the workmen in the procedures and methods before attempting work on the House itself. Unfortunately, there is no written account documenting the restoration process, and as typical of the period, all information used during the restoration was contained on rough field sketches.

The restoration operated under the philosophies typical of the Colonial Revival Period. The historical significance and value of later non-colonial periods represented in the House were entirely discounted and all later elements were removed. Remarkably the floor plan had remained virtually intact from the original construction, so restoration focused primarily on recreating missing features. These included reconstruction of the window seats based on a single surviving example; the replication of surviving interior shutters; the construction of new six-panel doors based on the surviving original closet door under the stair; the replication of floorboards based on surviving originals; and the replication of the stair to the recreated cupola based on wall scarring.

The WPA restoration finished ahead of schedule and on October 14, 1936, the Trent House was formally dedicated as a museum by the Trenton Free Public Library Board.



Later Renovation Projects

During the first decade of the 21st century, with funding from the New Jersey Historic Trust and based on new research and specific analysis of the Trent House, additional changes were made to the House and its furnishings. These included repairing exterior doors and windows, repointing masonry walls and steps, repairing interior doors and plaster, and restoring the interior eighteenth century color scheme. At the same time, all furnishings in the House were assessed as to whether they were items listed on the probate inventory and were of materials, construction, and style of the early 1700s. Items that did not meet these criteria were deaccessioned and appropriate antique or reproduction items were purchased. Furnishing plans for the kitchen and for the interpretation of slavery were commissioned to aid in these decisions. In addition to these improvements on the House, the Carriage House was repurposed as a visitor center with staff offices and stone paths and courtyard were installed on the grounds.

In 2018 the City of Trenton allocated funds from a federal Community Development Block Grant to repair the House roof and to repair and repaint all the exterior wood features of the House, including doors, windows, cornices, and the cupola.

Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia 2019 Grand Jury Award

Each year the Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia presents the Preservation Achievement Awards to a select group of individuals, organizations and businesses for projects from throughout the region that exemplify outstanding achievement in the field of historic preservation. These projects involve the preservation or protection of historic resources including the restoration, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of historic properties; sympathetic new additions to historic buildings; or education, documentation and advocacy work on behalf of preservation of our heritage. The William Trent House is the recipient of a 2019 award.



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for greater philadelphia



UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

MAY ~ DECEMBER
2019

SIGNATURE EVENTS

Reception with Philadelphia Chapter of the Institute of Classical Architecture and Art

We are cohosting this reception on the grounds of the Museum to introduce Delaware Valley ICAA members and others from the region interested in architecture and historic preservation to the Trent House and encourage them to continue to learn more. At this event on June 1st, we will also announce our receipt of a 2019 Preservation Alliance for Greater Philadelphia award for restoration of the House completed last spring.

Sculpture Exhibit on the Grounds of the Trent House – Opening Reception

As part of the 300th anniversary of the House and to help us shine a light on its whole story, the Trent House Association has invited local and regional sculptors to display works that evoke the immigrant experience during the 300+ year history of the William Trent House and surrounding area. The exhibit opens on June 22.

The Life and Times of Captain William Trent: Lecture and Encampment

On the weekend of July 20-21, the Trent House grounds will be the site of an encampment re-enacting military life on the colonial frontier during the French and Indian War. During the weekend the author of a recent book on Captain William Trent – Trent's youngest son – who established a fort near what is now Pittsburgh during the War will give a lecture and book signing.

**Saturday, May 18
2 pm**

Illustrated talk: “Mahlon Stacy – Colonial Pioneer at the Falls of the Delaware”

Saturday, June 1

Open House & Reception with the Institute of Classical Art and Architecture, Philadelphia chapter – announcing the 2019 Preservation Award to the Trent House from the Preservation Alliance of Greater Philadelphia

Saturday, June 22

Opening Reception for Outdoor Sculpture Exhibition: “The Immigrant Experience”

**Saturdays,
June 8, 15, 22, 29
and July 6
1 to 3 pm**

Public viewing of archaeological dig – further exploration of the 1742 kitchen wing and investigation of possible foundation of Mahlon Stacy's 1680s house

**Saturday, July 20
Noon to 4 pm**

Colonial Military Encampment and Ice Cream Social

**Sunday, July 21
2 pm**

Lecture and book signing: “Pittsburgh's Lost Outpost: Captain Trent's Fort”

**Saturday, September 21
1 pm**

Teas of the Boston Tea Party-Presentation and Tasting

**Saturday, October 5
1 to 3 pm**

Colonial Harvest Festival

**Saturday, October 12
4 pm**

Talk by Chef Walter Staib from Philadelphia's City Tavern and host of PBS' “A Taste of History”

**Saturday, October 12
6 pm**

Cocktails and colonial-style dinner

**Sunday November 3
2 pm**

Lecture “Preserving the Higbee School: Legacy of School Segregation in Trenton”

**Saturday December 7
Noon – 5 pm**

Open House and Greens Sale

**Saturday, December 28
1 pm - Sale Saturday**

Hogmanay-A Scottish Celebration of the New Year

**Sunday, December 29
2 pm**

Music of Trent's Scotland on recorder and harpsichord

History in the Tasting: Talk and Colonial Dinner

On October 12, Chef Walter Staib of Philadelphia's City Tavern and PBS' Taste of History program will talk on colonial foodways. A cocktail reception and dinner will follow.

Music from Trent's Native Land: Scottish Music in the Trent House

On December 29 the Trent House will again resound with music that William Trent and his family and guests might have heard. Performed on harpsichord and recorder, the Practitioners of Musick will present instrumental music composed in Scotland, Trent's country of birth.



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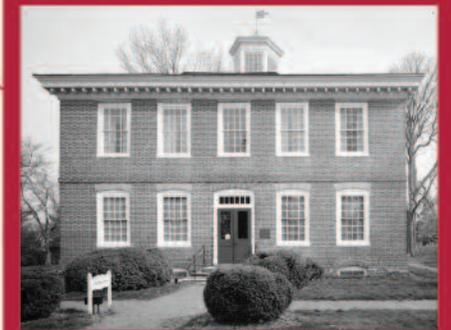


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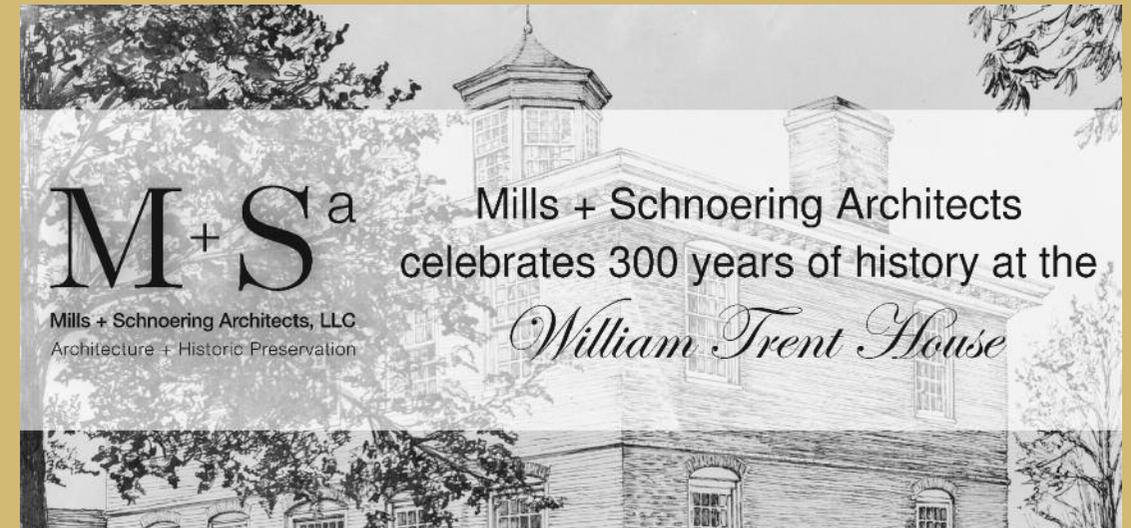
We are proud to Sponsor and Congratulate the William Trent House Museum on their 300th Anniversary!

FVHD is proud of our long history of design excellence in the Trenton area, starting with our founding Firm of PL Fowler Company in 1918. We look forward to continuing our tradition of design for all of our clients and we are grateful to all who have made our Firm what it is today.

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The PL Fowler Company planned the restoration, which would begin in 1934. The restoration was completed under the guidance of Trenton architects J. Osborne Hunt and Samuel Mounford (a founding Partner of FVHD Architects).



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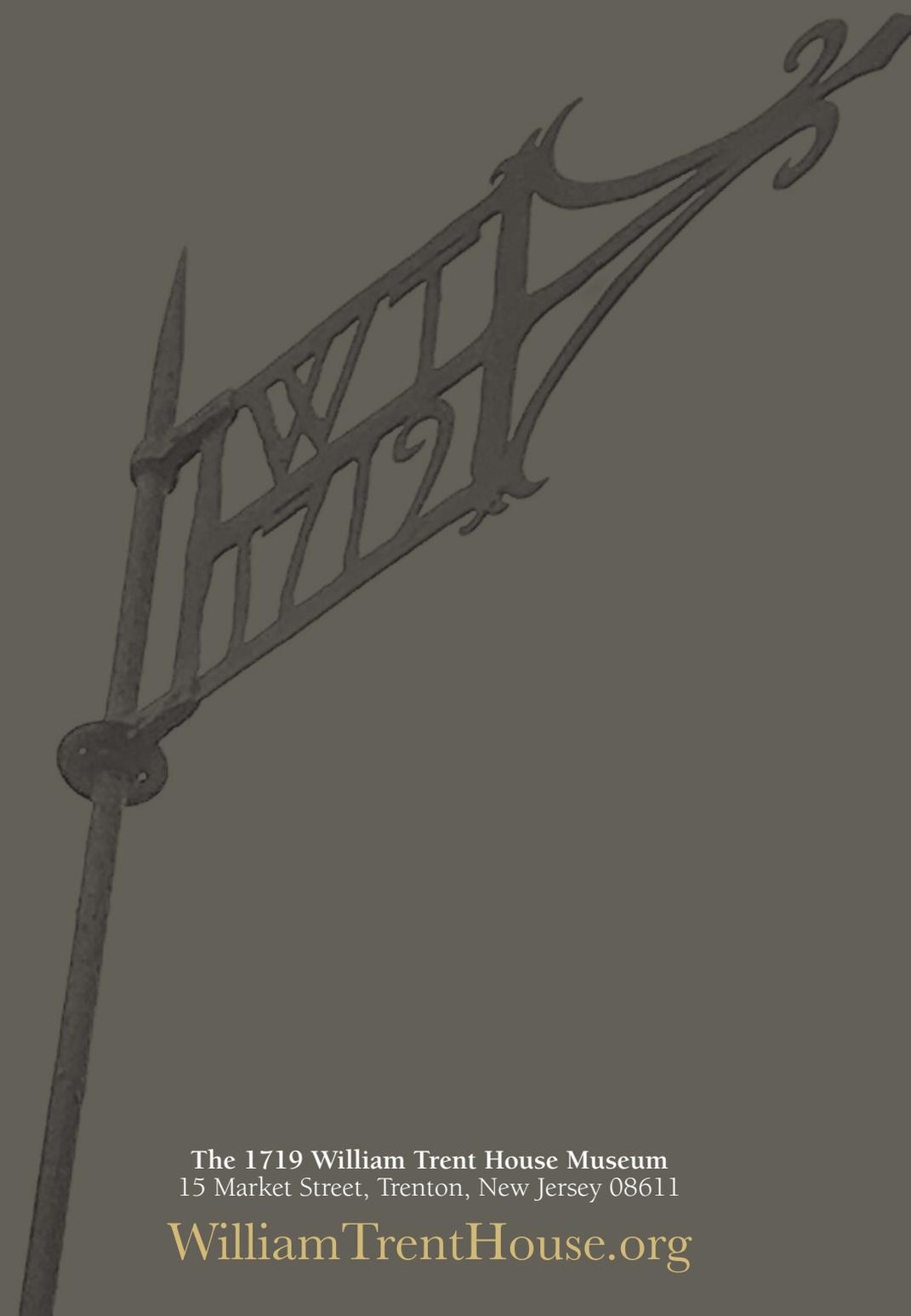
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The 1719 William Trent House Museum
15 Market Street, Trenton, New Jersey 08611

A decorative wrought-iron flagpole with a lattice-patterned flag. The flagpole is a simple, dark metal rod. At the top, it is attached to a circular metal ring. From this ring, a decorative lattice structure extends upwards and to the right. The lattice is made of dark metal rods forming a series of interconnected diamond and rectangular shapes. The top of the lattice structure is highly ornate, with several curved, scroll-like elements. The entire flagpole and lattice structure are set against a plain, light-colored background.

The 1719 William Trent House Museum
15 Market Street, Trenton, New Jersey 08611

WilliamTrentHouse.org