



APPLEFORD

Appleford  
770 Mt. Moro Rd.  
Villanova, PA 19085

Save *the* Date!

*Summer Solstice*  
at Appleford



Wednesday, June 18, 2025  
6:00 pm to 9:00 pm



APPLEFORD

# The Apple Seed

APPLEFORD'S NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2025

**T**he Rose Garden at Appleford has undergone a thoughtful transformation, with the goal of revitalizing this cherished space while preserving its historic charm. The new design embraces the original character and scale of the garden, blending historic sensitivity with modern functionality for its role as a public garden.

In keeping with the spirit of the original design, the renovation retains the layout of the rose beds and the placement of the central water feature. Elements such as brick paths, stone walls, treads, capstones, and updated lighting preserve the garden's timeless aesthetic. A new, elegant single flight of steps has replaced the



previously narrow and awkward sets, creating a graceful setting perfect for gatherings and photographs. The water from the historic rill is now highlighted with blue flagstone set within the brick paving, adding a touch of elegance and continuity.

To enhance accessibility and public use, the degraded lawn paths have been reconstructed with brick, and ramps have been introduced to ensure easy circulation within the Rose Garden and between the Rose Garden and the walled Perennial Garden, which connects to the mansion. All materials were carefully sourced to match existing conditions and reflect the design precedents established



by Thomas Sears. The new plantings restore the essence of an English Rose Garden, a hallmark of Main Line estate gardens at the

turn of the 20th century. Herbaceous plants complement the roses, many of which were carefully lifted, stored, and are now ready to be replanted. The new selections honor the legacy of Mrs. Parsons and her original vision for the garden. This rejuvenated Rose Garden is a harmonious blend of history and modernity, ensuring its enduring beauty for generations to come.

*Written by Allan Summers/RAS, Inc.*

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# A Message from the President



Greetings,

Yes, I'm back!

First, heartfelt gratitude goes to Lyn Marinchak from the entire Appleford Committee for her presidency over the past two years. Lyn oversaw some

important changes at Appleford; the start of the garden Master Plan implementation, the updating of our bylaws, along with the constant care and supervision that makes Appleford such a gem. Thank you, Lyn.

You have followed our journey with the Master Plan for the landscape at Appleford for several years now. It is a joy to share that our first project, the renovation of the historic Rose Garden, is complete. The construction schedule of November to April (the non-wedding season) was at odds with a major landscape project, but we did it! Our design firm, Robinson Anderson Summers Landscape Architects, Inc. brought their experience and expertise from inception to completion. Green Weaver Landscape Contractors have been exemplary to work with and their quality of construction is noteworthy. Throughout the many bitter cold days this year, their team was working,

including Saturdays. The Appleford Committee is proud to share the new Rose Garden, now with handicap accessibility, safe lighting and handrails, new irrigation, a new fountain, and beautiful brick walkways throughout. You will note that the historic elements were all integrated, such as statues, benches, the rill head, and the charming bronze fountain centerpiece. All the rose bushes survived their winter holding place and will no doubt thrive in the new sun-filled garden. I think we will see this new garden becoming a desirable space for many events. We will “officially” open the Rose Garden at our Spring Open House on May 7th. Also, please save the date for the Appleford Committee’s best party – Summer Solstice at Appleford - on June 18th.

Now is the time of year when we ask for your generosity in support of Appleford, which relies heavily on community support. It matters to Lower Merion Township that we are community supported; the Township provided a generous grant towards our handicap walkways in the Rose Garden. It also matters for our non-profit status that we are a community organization. Please see information about our revised giving levels and corresponding benefits elsewhere in this issue.

Enjoy our most beautiful season ahead at Appleford!

Warm regards,  
Bruce Long

## New Giving Levels for 2025

The Appleford Committee is introducing new levels of giving and corresponding benefits for 2025. We hope that you will continue your generous support of our efforts to preserve and maintain our beautiful local treasure using the QR code below, which will take you to our website, or by sending a gift to: The Appleford Committee – 770 Mt. Moro Road – Villanova, PA 19085.



**Benefactor** - \$2,500 or more

Weeknight event, 4 tickets to Summer Solstice Party & Appleford Holiday Party

**Patron** - \$1,000 - \$2,499

Weeknight event, 2 tickets to Summer Solstice Party & Appleford Holiday Party

**Supporter** - \$500 - \$999 – 2 tickets to Appleford Holiday Party

**Friend** - \$250 - \$499 – 2 tickets to Appleford Holiday Party

**Donor** - \$100-\$199

Benefactors and Patrons are entitled to the use of Appleford for an event of up to 50 people on a Monday – Wednesday (excluding catering). Valid for 1 year from the date of gift.

The Summer Solstice Party - an annual fundraiser – is a festive June cocktail party with live music and dinner stations under the tent and in the gardens at Appleford.

The Appleford Holiday Party is a cocktail reception held in the house at Appleford each December as a “thank you” for donors during the same calendar year.

### The Appleford Committee

**Bruce N. Long, President**

Bruce Belzak  
Becky Best

Betsy Hastings Block  
Susan P. Bloom

Nancy Bruechert  
Carol M. Bryan

Wynrhys E. Coghlan  
Patricia R. Cosgrave

Lorraine Y. DeSimone  
Howard Donahue

Samantha Wolfe Ehlinger  
Pamela S. Fish

Marion Laffey Fox  
Judi Garst

Bruce A. Gillespie  
Bernadette W. Holroyde

Christine V. Kanter  
William J. Kenny

Patricia Kolff  
Christine Kuhinka

Anja Levitties  
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Jordan Marinchak  
Lyn Marinchak

Binney McCague  
Colleen Holt McCauley

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Carroll McConnell Shields  
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Margot Sullivan  
Alicia Templeton

Mary Vaira

**Sustaining Members**

Cathy Decker  
Lori M. Fell

Beth C. Hare  
Kristin Hays

Libby Hill  
Marylyn S. Jeffers

Lee McIlvaine Manonian  
Daniel Brainard Slack

Helen Weary  
Julie Williams

Geraldine Zipf

**Lisa McBride** - Director  
of Marketing and Events

**Sofia & John McGinty**  
Resident Managers

# The Man Behind the Camera



The man behind the camera at our events is often Todd Zimmerman of Pictures by Todd. Todd was taken by the magic that is Appleford

over 20 years ago. He was intrigued by the long driveway, the solitude and the magnificent property that opens up before you. He appreciates the beauty, the serenity and a peacefulness unmatched in the area.

Todd's budding talent in photography was recognized and encouraged by a teacher as far back as his middle school years. The seed was planted. He went on to take photography classes interspersed with Environmental Sciences in college, at first wanting to be a photo-journalist telling stories with his camera. He was reluctant when first asked by a friend to photograph a wedding, but he ultimately agreed. What surprised him was the complexity and mix of emotions surrounding wedding photography.

Todd has a passion for capturing authentic moments - those most meaningful to people - helping them to relive the happiest occasions in life.

Along with weddings, Todd does portrait work, corporate head shots, events and content marketing for social media. He delves into what makes a company unique.

Portraits are challenging. There is psychology in bringing out the best in someone, reaching their soul and finding the best version of themselves in front of the camera. His aim is to encourage the best of smiles and inner expression.

Todd is truly a talent. He says that when a photo is right it is the coming together of artistry, technology, psychology, timing and



*Photo of Appleford by: Pictures by Todd*

logistics. We are most fortunate to benefit from Todd's expertise and love of Appleford.

*(written by Christine Kanter)*

## Appleford Receives 75 Trees and Shrubs from Keystone 10 Million Trees for PA Project

**W**e are excited to announce that Appleford has received a generous gift of 75 trees and shrubs from the Keystone 10 Million Trees for PA project. The donation includes: 50 silver maple trees (*Acer saccharinum*) and 25 buttonwood shrubs (*Conocarpus erectus*)

These species native to North America were selected to help expand our local tree canopy and provide a valuable habitat for wildlife. The silver maples will grow to be large, stately trees, while the buttonwood shrubs will add beautiful greenery and texture to our arboretum.

"We are thrilled to receive this donation and contribute to the important goal of planting 10 million trees across Pennsylvania," said Lyn Marinchak, past president of the Appleford Committee. "These trees and



Keystone  
**10 MILLION TREES**  
PARTNERSHIP

shrubs will enhance the natural beauty of Appleford's landscape and create a more sustainable environment for our community."

The Keystone 10 Million Trees for PA project is an initiative led by the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to plant 10 million trees in Pennsylvania by 2025. The project aims to improve water quality, provide wildlife habitat, and combat climate change by increasing the state's tree cover.

The Appleford Committee is grateful to be a part of this impactful project. We look forward to caring for the new trees and shrubs and watching them grow to benefit our community for many years to come.

# Reflections on Appleford: A Legacy of Historical and Environmental Stewardship

Appleford is more than just a historic estate; it is a testament to an enduring legacy of historical and environmental stewardship. For those who cherish Appleford, it serves as a living, breathing connection to community and conservation. My memories of Appleford extend back to my childhood in the late 1960s and early 1970s when Mrs. Anabel C. Banks Parsons called it home. Supported by her devoted staff, including her housekeeper, Bridget Cavanaugh, and her gardener, Jim Wilson—Mrs. Parsons embodied the warmth and spirit that have come to define this remarkable place.

Living on a neighboring property, our family cherished Appleford for its historical significance and natural beauty. One summer, Mrs. Parsons graciously invited my grandmother, who was visiting from out of state, to join her for high tea—a gracious gesture of hospitality I still remember.

As a child, Appleford felt like stepping into a magical fairytale where every corner held a new adventure. I would wander through the meticulously manicured boxwood and rose gardens adorned with marble statues and explore the meandering streams that fed the tranquil pond filled with koi. The chicken coop bustled with clucking hens while roosters heralded the dawn with bold and resonant cries. Looking through the greenhouse glass, exotic, tropical plants always seemed to be blooming. In later years, majestic peacocks roamed freely, their shimmering feathers catching the dappled sunlight, creating a

magical tableau that left an indelible mark on my childhood.

Appleford's journey from a humble stone farmhouse, part of a land grant from William Penn, to one of the Main Line's most exquisite estates is equally captivating. In the late 1920s, Mrs. Parsons and her husband, Lewis, sought the talents of architect Richardson Brognard Okie and landscape architect Thomas Sears. Together, they transformed the property, blending timeless elegance with natural beauty. Even today, the meticulously restored home and lush formal gardens continue to enchant visitors throughout the seasons.

Mrs. Parsons' deep love for Appleford was evident in her attention to detail and willingness to embrace adaptive technology. Perhaps her most telling act was the installation of an elevator connecting her bedroom to the living room below, ensuring she could always reach her beloved gardens with ease.

Determined to share Appleford's beauty with future generations, Mrs. Parsons entrusted the estate to Lower Merion Township upon her passing in 1973. Recognizing the specialized attention and unique care required to preserve and maintain Appleford, the township's Board of Commissioners endorsed the establishment of the Appleford Committee, a group of dedicated volunteers responsible for its stewardship.

The Appleford Committee has worked tirelessly for more than five decades to honor Mrs. Parsons' legacy. This devoted team preserves and sustains the estate and hosts

community celebrations, seasonal events, and private gatherings, including weddings. Beyond maintaining the property's historical significance, the Committee has embraced its role as an environmental steward. As both an arboretum and a bird sanctuary, Appleford serves as a haven for native plants and wildlife, blending historic preservation principles with ecological stewardship.

Yet Appleford is not merely a place to maintain—it is a place to celebrate. Each generation adds its own chapter to its story, weaving together shared memories, ongoing care, and a deep commitment to history and the natural world. Whether wandering its gardens, attending an event, or simply reflecting on its beauty, Appleford offers a space where the past is honored, the present is cherished, and the future is nurtured.

After reading this article, I invite you to explore Appleford, contribute to its preservation, and consider joining the Committee to ensure its legacy continues to flourish. My involvement with Appleford stems from a deep appreciation for its historical and environmental significance. By supporting Appleford, I am helping to safeguard a place that holds cherished memories and offers a unique blend of natural beauty and historic preservation. Appleford is not just a place to maintain; it is a place to celebrate and nurture for future generations. Together, we can ensure that this special place continues to inspire and enchant all who visit.

*(written by Christine Kuhinka)*

## Spring Open House at Appleford

The Appleford Committee invites you to a Spring Open House! Come raise a glass to celebrate spring in the beautiful historic house and gardens. This will be the first public event in the newly restored Rose Garden!

**Wednesday, May 7th from 5 – 8 pm.**

Light refreshments will be provided, along with house and garden tours.

Please reply with your name(s) and guest count to [rsvpapplefordcommittee@gmail.com](mailto:rsvpapplefordcommittee@gmail.com).

# Calendar of Events 2025

*The Appleford Committee hopes to see you at the following friend-raising and fundraising events this year.*

MAY  
7

5:00 - 8:00 pm  
**Spring Open House**

SEP  
28

6:00 - 9:00 pm  
**Wine & Roses Party**

JUN  
18

6:00 - 9:00 pm  
**Summer Solstice Party**

DEC  
5

6:30 - 9:00 pm  
**Appleford Holiday Party**

**Please save the dates!**

Stay tuned for more details by invitation, in the Apple Seed newsletters, and at [www.applefordestate.com](http://www.applefordestate.com) throughout the year.

## Thank you for your generous support!

The Appleford Committee extends its gratitude to the following individuals and families who made a contribution to Appleford between January 1, 2024 and December 31, 2024. Each gift helps

support our mission to maintain the historic house and its beautiful gardens and to continue the preservation of open space in Lower Merion Township.

### **Benefactors** (\$1,000 and above)

Mr. and Mrs. S. M. V. Hamilton, Jr.  
Mr. David Humphrey  
Mr. Bruce Long and Mr. Mark Todaro  
Dr. and Mrs. Roger Marinchak  
Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Miller  
Mr. and Mrs. Chad R. Punchard  
Mr. and Mrs. Carlton Smith

### **Patrons** (\$500-\$999)

Anonymous  
Mr. Bruce C. Belzak  
Mr. and Mrs. Charles J. Bloom  
Mr. and Mrs.\* John Donaldson  
Dr. and Mrs. James E. Fish  
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Heintz  
Mrs. Christine V. Kanter  
Ms. Christine Kuhinka  
Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Levitties  
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Madeja  
Mr. David Silverstein  
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Brainard Slack  
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Thompson  
Mrs. Helen S. Weary  
Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Wiber  
Mrs. Thomas A. Williams  
Mr. and Mrs. George Yatrakis

### **Supporters** (\$300-\$499)

Mr. Fred L. Bissinger, Jr.  
Dr. and Mrs. Michael Cohen  
Mrs. Patricia R. Cosgrave  
Mr. and Mrs. Frank DeSimone  
Mrs. Edwin C. Donaghy, Jr.  
Ms. Alicia Templeton  
and Mr. Howard Donahue  
Ms. Judi Garst  
Mr. and Mrs. James Gately  
Mr. and Mrs. Larry Jeffers  
Ms. Nadia Cuckler & Mr. Timothy Jordan  
Mr. and Mrs. William J. Kenny  
Mrs. Jacob Kolff  
Mr. and Mrs. Leonard F. Magargee, Jr.  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Myer II  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Powell  
Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Sandifer  
Mrs. Philip A. Sullivan

### **Friends** (\$150-\$299)

Mr. and Mrs. William Annesley  
Ms. Becky Best  
Mr. and Mrs. Luke Block  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bruechert  
Ms. Carol M. Bryan  
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bryan  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Carr  
Ms. Linda Childs  
Mrs. Wynrhys E. Coghlan  
Mr. and Mrs. James L. Crowell

Mr. and Mrs. Richard Decker  
Mr. and Mrs. John Ehlinger  
Mr. Herbert Engelbert  
& Ms. Deborah Hamilton  
Mr. and Mrs. Bruce Gillespie  
Ms. Virginia Funk & Mr. John Goodman  
Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery Harris  
Mrs. Kristin Hays  
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& Mr. Michael Homans  
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Mr. and Mrs. Jeffrey Shaver  
Mr. and Mrs. David Shields  
Dr. and Mrs. David H. Spence  
Mr. and Mrs. William D. Sprague  
Ms. Lorraine Sterling  
Ms. Harriet Sullivan  
Mr. and Mrs. Joel Wagman  
Ms. Catherine Ward  
Ms. Sandra Whitman  
Dr. and Mrs. Sankey Williams  
Ms. Leslie Anne Miller  
& Mr. Richard Worley

### **Donors** (up to \$149)

Mr. and Mrs. John Carty  
Mr. Charles P. Collings  
Mrs. Craig Cullen  
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Kulujian  
Ms. Watsuki Harrington  
& Mr. Tim Lobach  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Peterson  
Mrs. Mary M. Tattersfield  
Dr. Janice Gault & Mr. Jim Vander  
Ms. Jean K. Wolf

\* Deceased