APPLEFORD

Appleford
770 Mt. Moro Rd.
Villanova, PA 19085



Save *the* Date!

for the Appleford Committee's
annual summer garden party and fundraiser

Summer Solstice at Appleford

Featuring live music from MainLine Duo throughout the evening, open bar, and delicious food stations generously provided by our preferred caterers. Festive garden party attire is requested.

Thursday, June 18, 2026

6:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Invitation to follow.



APPLEFORD

The Apple Seed

APPLEFORD'S NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2026

Photo by: Joyful Moments by Victoria

Appleford's stone farmhouse was already nearly fifty years old when the Declaration of Independence was signed in Philadelphia in 1776. Built in 1728 on a land grant from William Penn, the farmhouse predates the nation by nearly half a century. As the United States prepares to celebrate its Semiquincentennial on July 4, 2026, Appleford's story, which spans more than three centuries, offers a rare window into America's founding era.

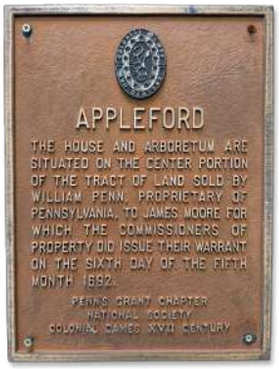
William Penn's Land Grant and Founding Vision

That story began with William Penn's warrant of 100 acres along Gulph Road to James Moore, a Welsh blacksmith, in 1692. Penn's vision for Pennsylvania was rooted in Quaker principles that helped lay the foundation of the American republic: the fair and responsible use of land, the dignity of the individual, and a community governed by conscience rather than coercion. Appleford has always been part of that legacy.

By 1728, the land had passed through several hands, and a stone farmhouse had been built: a two-story structure with a large walk-in fireplace preserved to this day. When the Revolutionary War broke out less than fifty years later, Pennsylvania was at its center. During the conflict, Washington's army endured a harsh winter at Valley Forge just a few miles away, while this farmhouse, already half a century old, stood as independence was declared and the war was won.

1926: A Sesquicentennial Act of Stewardship

A defining chapter in Appleford's architectural history unfolded in 1926, the very year America marked its 150th anniversary. That year, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis H. Parsons purchased the estate and, inspired by the spirit of the sesquicentennial and a renewed reverence for the nation's colonial past, commissioned the acclaimed Philadelphia architect Richardson Brognard Okie to restore and enlarge the historic farmhouse.



Okie was among the foremost practitioners of Colonial Revival restoration in America, a man who believed the nation's architectural heritage was worth preserving with scholarly precision and artistic sensitivity. At Appleford, Okie reconstructed the house according to historic precedent, preserved its original stonework, and integrated hand-carved mantels, hand-painted dining room murals, and wrought iron hardware. The landscape architect Thomas W. Sears completed the vision, creating the formal gardens, waterfalls, streams, and ponds that remain among the estate's most cherished features.

This year, the nation will celebrate its 250th anniversary, one hundred years after Okie's restoration of Appleford. The coincidence feels entirely fitting for an estate with roots reaching back to the republic's earliest days.

continued on next page...

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

A Message from the President

Featuring... Carreen Wright

Holiday Party Recap

Calendar of Events 2026

Thank You to our Generous Supporters

Save the Date!

A Message from the President



Happy Spring, friends and neighbors of Appleford!

After a particularly harsh winter, our clean-up and preparations for the new event season are underway throughout the property.

As we enjoy the one-year anniversary of the restored Rose Garden, I am happy to share that the adjacent walled perennial garden received a minor makeover this winter. All the brick walkways were enlarged and re-laid to better accommodate visitors. The perimeter flower beds were increased in size and the wood cap on the stone walls was replaced. I anticipate no one noticing these subtle changes, since it all looks like it always has!

The winter "off season" is a busy one at Appleford as it the only time that we can undertake larger maintenance and repair projects. None of this work could happen without our dedicated committee volunteers and staff. The Appleford Committee started over 50 years ago and we have been thoughtful and responsible guardians and caretakers of the historic house and gardens of Appleford. Like all volunteer organizations, we are in constant need of new members who bring new experiences, new ideas, and new enthusiasm. The spirit of volunteerism is meaningful and rewarding. I urge all of you to consider joining the Appleford Committee; we're a fun group and we love being a part of Appleford's legacy. The Appleford Committee has several sub-committees that might pique your interests: Special Events, House, Grounds and Arboretum, Membership, Finance, Public Relations, and Newsletter.

As always, I am grateful to our wonderful staff and all of our volunteers for their efforts to make Appleford the gem that it is.

Respectfully,

Bruce

---

continued from cover:

Anabel Parsons: An American Original

No account of Appleford is complete without mentioning Anabel (Connelly) Banks Parsons, whose singular character shaped the estate for more than five decades. Born in 1883, she was independent, unconventional, and deeply rooted in the land. Her devotion to the gardens was absolute, and each year Lewis marked her birthday by adding a new garden to the estate. Returning once from Europe with cuttings she was determined to bring home, she tucked them in her hair, put on a hat, and walked through customs unnoticed. Lewis refused to accompany her. The plants thrived.

Yet Anabel's most consequential act was one of stewardship. When Lewis died in 1945, and later when she lost her son Clayton, Anabel faced a stark reality — without heirs, Appleford's fate was uncertain. She was determined that this land, with its farmhouse, its gardens, and its 300 years of history, would not be subdivided and lost to development. Upon her death in 1973, she entrusted Appleford and its 22 acres to Lower Merion Township, ensuring that what she had loved and tended would endure for generations to come. She got her wish.

A Living Legacy

The Appleford Committee has honored Mrs. Parsons' legacy for more than five decades, tending the estate as a historic property, an arboretum, and a bird sanctuary. The historic Rose Garden has been restored with the same fidelity to the original design that Thomas Sears imparted to the gardens a century ago. New brick walkways, restored plantings, and improved accessibility ensure that the garden endures not only as a historic site, but also as a place of active, living beauty.

As America turns 250, Appleford stands as a lasting testament to the values that have sustained this nation at its best: reverence for history, care for the land, and the belief — embodied most fully by Anabel Parsons herself — that what is beautiful belongs not to any one person, but to all. The farmhouse on Mt. Moro Road was here before the Revolution. It was here for the sesquicentennial. It is here now, on the eve of the Semiquincentennial, as enduring and as relevant as ever.

Written by Christine Kuhinka

The Appleford Committee

Bruce N. Long, ***President***
Heather Adler
Bruce Belzak
Betsy Hastings Block
Susan P. Bloom
Nancy Bruechert
Carol M. Bryan
Wynrhys E. Coghlan
Lorraine Y. DeSimone
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
Killeen Kelly Loynd
Leonard F. Magargee, Jr.
Jordan Marinchak
Lyn Marinchak
Colleen Holt McCauley
Mary Kate Miller
Chad Punchard
John H. Rice
Eileen Kelly Sandifer
Carroll McConnell Shields
Michele C. Spence
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
Margot Sullivan
Helen Weary
Julie Williams
Geraldine Zipf

Lisa McBride - *Director of Marketing and Events*
Sofia & John McGinty
Resident Managers

Calendar of Events 2026

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

JUN 18 — 6:00 - 9:00 pm
Summer Solstice Party

OCT 7 — 5:00 - 8:00 pm
Fall Open House

DEC 3 — 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 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, 2025 and December 31, 2025. 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 ($2,500 and above)
Mr. Bruce Long and Mr. Mark Todaro
Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Miller
Mr. and Mrs. Chad R. Punchard

Patron ($1,000-$2,499)
Mr. Bruce C. Belzak
Mr. Fred L. Bissinger, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Charles J. Bloom
Lynne Chapman
Mr. and Mrs. S. M. V. Hamilton, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Simon Manonian
Dr. and Mrs. Roger Marinchak
Mr. and Mrs. Michael A. McCann
Mrs. Philip A. Sullivan

Supporter ($500-$999)
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. and Mrs. Andrew Sandifer
Mrs. Helen S. Weary
Mr. and Mrs. Gregory Wiber

Friend ($200-$499)
Heather and Jon Adler
Mr. and Mrs. Luke Block
Elizabeth Gardiner and Mark Bronzina
Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Bruechert
Dr. and Mrs. Michael Cohen
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Bryan
Mrs. Wynrhys E. Coghlan
Mrs. Patricia R. Cosgrave *
Mr. and Mrs. James L. Crowell
Mr. and Mrs. John D. Cunningham
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Decker
Mr. and Mrs Frank. DeSimone
Mrs. Edwin C. Donaghy, Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. John Ehlinger
Mr. and Mrs. Gary S. Fink
Ms. Alicia Templeton and Howard Donahue
Ms. Judi Garst
Mr. and Mrs. James Gately
Virginia Funk & John Goodman
Ms. Beth C. Hare
Mrs. Kristin Hays
Mrs. Libby Hill
Dr. and Mrs. Judd Hollander
Dr. and Mrs. Christopher Holroyde
Mr. and Mrs. Larry Jeffers
Mrs. William Justice
Mrs. D. Scott Kelley
Mr. William J. Kenny
Livia Klaus
Mrs. Jacob Kolff
Mr. and Mrs. Judson Laverell
Mr. Steven Lindner
Killeen and Joseph Loynd
Mr. and Mrs. Leonard F. Magargee, Jr.
Dr. and Mrs. Paul Marchetto
Ms. Jordan Marinchak
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Martin
Lisa and Brian McBride
Mr. and Mrs. Anthony McCague
Mr. and Mrs. Paul M. Mecray III
Mrs. Amanda Barnes Muckle
Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Myer II
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Powell
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Rice
Barbara Richardson
Amy Rubinoff
Mr. and Mrs. David Shields
Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Brainard Slack
Dr. and Mrs. David H. Spence
Ms. Harriet Sullivan
Mr. and Mrs. Peter Vaira
Mrs. Thomas A. Williams
Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence R. Zipf

Donors ($100-$199)
Mr. and Mrs. Jason Bloom
Mr. Charles P. Collings
Mrs. Robert M. Fisher
Dr. and Mrs. Greg Harper
Katherine and John Karamatsoukas
Patrisha and Patrick Kelly
Mr. and Mrs. Norman Kulujian
Dr. and Mrs. Kenneth Margulies
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Peterson
Mrs. Lucian B. Platt
Dr. and Mrs. Marshall Schwartz
Anne and John Solis-Cohen
Mr. and Mrs. Stewart Spahr
Ms. Jean K. Wolf
Leslie Miller and Richard Worley

Under $100
Mr. and Mrs. Alan Wood

The Benefits of Giving to Appleford

Benefactors receive 4 tickets to Summer Solstice and the Holiday Party
Patrons receive 2 tickets to Summer Solstice and the Holiday Party
Supporters and Friends receive 2 tickets to the Holiday Party

In addition, Benefactors and Patrons are entitled to the use of Appleford for an event of up to 50 people on Monday through Wednesday (excludes catering). Valid for 1 year from date of gift.

Featuring…Carreen Wright

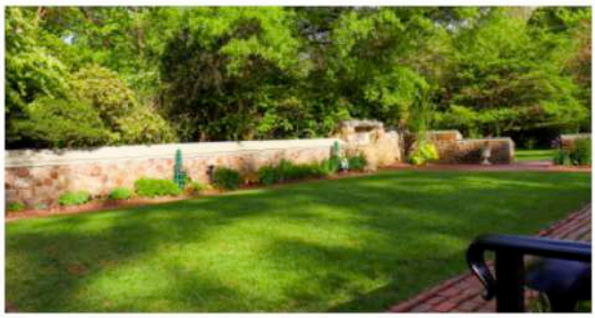
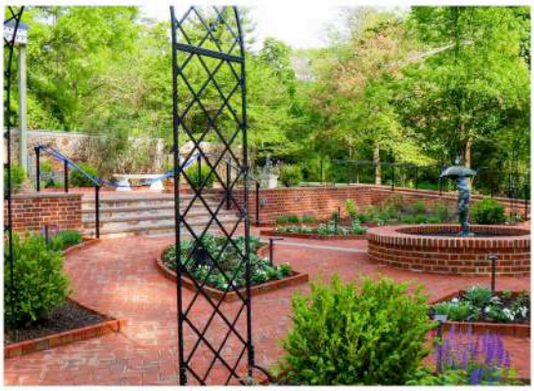
Did you ever think…Wow, who creates these lovely Appleford gardens? Well, it's not by chance that Carreen Wright is that talented lady.

For thirteen years, Carreen has designed, planted and maintained Appleford's beautiful flower gardens and seasonal planters, and her story is one not to miss. After attaining a B.A. at Vassar College, an M.B.A. from the Wharton School in Healthcare Management and a twenty-year career pursuing her major, it just wasn't enough. Something was missing. It was her grandmother who said to her "you are only smiling when you speak of your garden." That was it!

Carreen set new goals, first completing the renowned three-year Barnes Horticulture and Design Program, then she was off to Longwood Gardens for Horticultural Certificates 1 and 2, as well as a Garden Design Certificate. She is a member of the Association of Professional Landscape Designers and the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Aren't we the lucky ones? Carreen pours her talents into Appleford and many notable residential gardens. Her artistry shines through. She designs and maintains gardens and is also a lecturer. On a personal note, she is married and has a grown son. Her business is located in Berwyn, www.cgardensdesign.com.

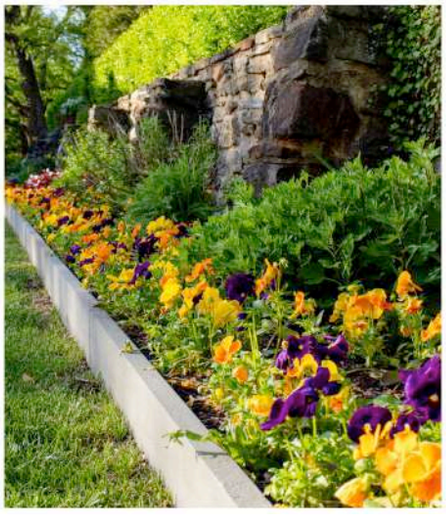
Whenever you visit Appleford and admire the gardens and beautiful potted containers, you can thank Carreen.

Written by Chris Kanter and Pat Kolff






Photos by: Joyful Moments by Victoria

Holiday Party Recap

The annual **Appleford Holiday Party** was held on December 4, 2025. Friends of Appleford and committee members were in attendance enjoying the holiday décor and the wonderful food generously proffered by Perfect Setting Catering, and desserts provided by members of the Appleford Committee. Additional entertainment for the evening was provided by pianist Craig Satchell and the ever-popular silent auction. We hope that you will support annual giving in 2026 and join us for this year's party in December.



Photos by: Tobey Schwartz Photography