

Bucks County Historical Society Fact Sheet

Purpose

The Bucks County Historical Society (BCHS), a private nonprofit organization, is a unique cultural and educational institution that operates the Mercer Museum & Library and Fonthill Museum. As the County Historical Society, it is charged with collecting, preserving and interpreting the rich history and culture of Bucks County and the Delaware Valley region. As the primary inheritor of the material and intellectual legacy of Henry C. Mercer, the BCHS is custodian of a regionally and nationally significant collection of tools and artifacts that illuminate the history of pre-industrial America to c. 1850.

Facts and Figures

- The BCHS was founded in 1880 by General William Watts Hart Davis with several friends, including the 23-year-old Henry C. Mercer.
- In 1903, a site was purchased for the Historical Society and in 1904, the Elkins Building was erected. The organization remains housed in the Elkins Building that is now directly adjacent to the Mercer Museum.
- Activities such as family hands-on workshops, special exhibits, children's summer camps, lectures and other special events are offered to a diverse audience to educate and entertain.
- Annual programs and fund-raising events include *Fonthill Castle's Old-Fashioned Fourth of July Celebration* with fun for the whole family; *Cocktails at the Castle* where guests sample fine cuisine from area restaurants while touring the Mercer Museum and *Fonthill Castle Beer Fest*, a summer beer sampling event in the spectacular outdoor setting of the castle.
- The Bucks County Historical Society is supported by 40 full and part-time staff members, and more than 200 volunteers. Membership is open to individuals, families, organizations and businesses.
- The Bucks County Historical Society is governed by a Board of Trustees made up of 30 men and women from Bucks County and beyond.