



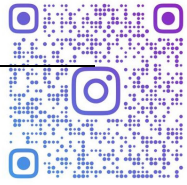
June 2023

HULMEVILLE BOROUGH

WWW.HULMEVILLE-PA.GOV



Quarterly Newsletter



HULMEVILLE.BOROUGH

*Featured Article on the history of the Praul/ Bunting/ Black Family house and farm is within this season's newsletter!*

**Hulmeville Borough Police Department - From Chief John Baran**

-As a reminder, ATV riding is only permitted on designated trails in Pennsylvania state forests. **There are no such areas in Hulmeville.** State forest roads, state parks, and state game lands are not open to ATV riding.



**Hulmeville Police  
215-757-1700  
County Dispatch  
215-328-8519**



-Now that 2023 is in full swing, Chief John Baran and the Hulmeville Borough Police Department would like to warn residents of door to door “salesman” that tend to show up during the spring and summer months.

Residents are asked to use caution when these “salesman” come knocking at your door. Most are legitimate companies, who are doing work in the area, and are trying to drum up more business in the surrounding communities. Others are not and residents should be very vigilant when it comes to dealing with these people at your front door. Before giving out personal information, or allowing someone into your home, residents should verify that the person at the door does in fact work for a legitimate company. This could be done by asking the person if they have a borough permit for solicitation and for them to show it. You can also ask for their work identification and verify with their employer that they are working in the area. And don’t just call a phone number that the person provides to you, since that could be another person who is assisting with the “scam.” If needed, use the internet to look up the company and their contact information. Larger companies like Verizon and Comcast do have teams that do door to door sales however their employees should be wearing proper company attire and have an ID badge with their name and picture on it. Again, verify all information before allowing someone into your home.

These “salesman” will regularly offer special pricing for a product or service that is only good for a limited time. They will claim they are working in the area and got several of your neighbors to already agree to the offer. **USE CAUTION !!** These people are trying to pressure you into giving them your personal information or allowing them access to your home. This is more than likely a scam.

Over the past week, the Borough had received numerous complaints regarding people knocking on doors, trying to sell them products or services. These people were not authorized to go door to door in Hulmeville Borough, and when confronted by the police, showed a soliciting permit from another municipality. Other surrounding municipalities have handled similar complaints over the past several weeks.

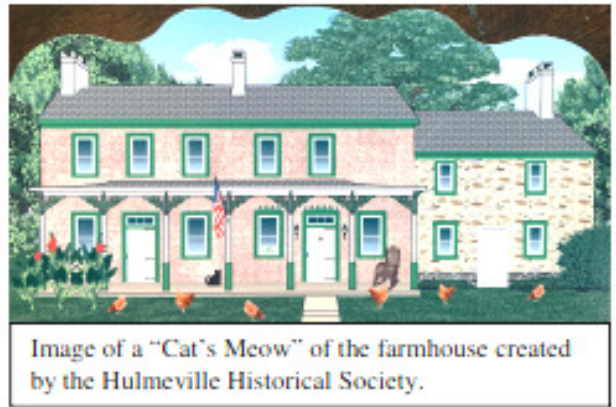
If you are suspicious of anyone who knocks on your door, do not answer the door or let the person into your home. Instead, call 911 and provide the dispatcher with your name, address and a description of the person at your door. Officers will respond and verify who the person is and why are they in the neighborhood. If you should have any questions, or need additional information, please contact the Hulmeville Borough Police Department at (215)757-1700, by email at [police@hulmeville-pa.gov](mailto:police@hulmeville-pa.gov) or non-emergency dispatch at (215)328-8501.



## The Praul/Bunting/Black House and Farm

by: Joe Coleman

This farmhouse at the top of the hill in Hulmeville is roughly between 250 and 300 years old. It has been expanded over time, but the first section was built by Johannes (John) Praul sometime between 1720 and 1770, probably closer to the 1720 date making it likely that the original portion is one of the oldest buildings in the borough. The Praul family has been said to be second in preeminence to the Hulme's in the development of Hulmeville.



Johannes Praul was born in 1696 in Staten Island, New York. Sometime around 1720 he moved to Bucks County. This was part of a pattern in which Dutch families and members of the Dutch Reformed Church from Staten Island New York moved to Bucks County to start a Dutch colony. The Praul's were joined in this migration by the Vansants, Vandergrifts, and other Dutch families. Johannes must have come with some wealth as he began purchasing and leasing hundreds of acres of land and established his home on a 200-acre farm in Middletown Township right from the start.<sup>1</sup> He also purchased a 1/6 share of ownership in the mills on the Neshaminy Creek that were built at the site where travelers used a ford to cross the creek. Because of the presence of the ford and the mills, this place in Middletown Township became known as Milford Mills.

Johannes Praul and his wife Jane became members of the Dutch Reformed Church in Southampton in 1721. They had four children; Peter, John, Mary, and Jane. Johannes (John) continued to buy and sell property as he farmed the land at his home in Middletown. He was appointed to serve as an overseer of the poor in the township in 1742. He was doing all of this while engaging the forced labor of enslaved people. In his will, which was written in 1771, he left an enslaved woman named Hagar to his wife Jane, and an enslaved man named Cato to his son Peter. His will also shows him leaving a farm in Southampton to Peter and his house and farm of 200 acres in Middletown to his son John. However, Johannes' wife Jane was given the best upper and lower rooms in this house. This reference in the will is the earliest known documented record of the farmhouse on the hill. The house was probably built before 1771 since Praul was 75 years old at the time that he wrote the will and had purchased the property in the 1720s. So, it's likely that the house is close to 300 years old.



1784 Document in which John Dickinson names John Praul Justice of the Peace

John Praul who came to own the house and farm in Middletown was born in 1728. He married Catherine "Charity" Vandergrift. He was 48 in 1776 when the American Revolution started. There was a John Praul who was a Sergeant in the American army during the war. It seems likely that he is the same John Praul from Middletown because in a 1916 century genealogical publication John Praul from Middletown is referred to as a "Prominent Patriot" during the Revolution. It's clear that by the 1780s Johannes and Jane's son John was living in Middletown and possibly was being rewarded for his service in the war. He was named Justice of the Peace for Middletown and Falls Township by founding-father John Dickinson. From this point on Praul is referenced as John Praul Esquire on tax forms. Later, in 1787 Benjamin Franklin named John Praul to serve as a judge on the Pennsylvania

Court of Common Pleas. John and Catherine had four children: John, Sarah, Mary and Elizabeth. John was also active in real estate investment and sales. He came to own most of the land in what is now Hulmeville.

Like his father, John Praul Esq. engaged in the practice of enslaving people. In 1782, Pennsylvania began a gradual process of ending slavery and required all slave owners to register their enslaved people. John Praul Esq.



The graves of Catherine(1803) and John Praul Esq.(1793) in the Dutch Reformed Cemetery on Street Rd.



registered seven enslaved people at that time. Also like his father, John left an enslaved woman to his wife in his will that was written in 1790 but it's unclear what happened to the other enslaved people. When he wrote his will in 1790, John Praul Esq. left the "new" east portion of the family house on the hill to his wife Catherine. However, he left the farm and the rest of the house to his son John who was born in 1768.

The third John Praul, born in 1768, married Mary Vansant in 1792 and they had five children, John, James, Joseph, William, Catherine. He lived in the family home at the top of the hill until his death in 1850. During his life he became a very wealthy man. He witnessed and played a role in the transformation of Milford into the village of Hulmeville. He sold the Hulme family many of the properties that they developed in the new village. The Hulmes moved to Milford with several adult children, and they quickly turned this place into a bustling village. Praul was a member of the Dutch Reformed church and the Hulmes were devout Quakers, but the families seemed to work hand in hand to build the community. Praul worked with John Hulme to establish the Farmers Bank of Bucks County. In 1831 he sold the land that was used to build and establish Grace Episcopal Church. He also owned the home at the intersection of Green Street and Trenton Road that was used as a village Sunday School and schoolhouse before the public school was built. In his will he left 140 acres of his homestead farm to his son John Praul Jr. who was born in 1803. However, the family had by this point come to own a second 122-acre farm further up Trenton Road which John left to another son, William Praul. Aside from the farms he owned several tenement houses in Hulmeville, land in Bensalem and held stock and mortgages. This additional wealth was spread among his children.

John Praul Jr., born in 1803, took up ownership of the farm on the hill upon his father's death. He sold a small portion of his land to Middletown Township so that a public school could be built in 1855. He was active in the early years of the William Penn Fire Company. He married Ruth Cabe and they had a son named Elisha. Eventually, John Praul Jr. came to own the large stone house that had belonged to William Hulme at the corner of Neshaminy and Praul Streets. (Praul Street has since been renamed Sgt. James E. Boorman Avenue). He moved to the house on Praul Street and left the farm to his son Elisha. Elisha was a successful farmer until he retired from that work in the 1890s. However, he continued to own the farm leasing it out to different farmers until just before his death in 1921. Elisha Praul served on Hulmeville Borough Council, and for a time was President of the William Penn Fire Company. For a fee of \$1 he gave the borough land on which the first Hulmeville Borough Hall was built in 1896.

Just before his death, Elisha sold the family farm to John S. Bunting of Croydon. For the first time in 200 years this property did not belong to the Praul family. However, much of it did stay in the Bunting/Black family for the next 100 years. Mr. Bunting was born in Hulmeville in 1860 but had become a successful farmer in Croydon by the 1920s. Initially his son Albert lived and worked on the farm in Hulmeville but when John Bunting died in 1925, his other son, Fred Bunting, purchased the farm. Fred Bunting had been living in the farmhouse across Trenton Road with his wife Emma and children, Harriet, John, and Marion. Fred Bunting farmed this property until 1953. He also started a sawmill on the property in 1945. In 1953 he decided to retire from farming and sold his livestock and machinery. Shortly afterward a fire destroyed a frame structure of the barn, but the stone portion of the barn was saved thanks to quick work by the William Penn Fire Company. This stone portion of the barn may be as old as the house. Fred's daughter Harriet married Edward Black and for some time general farming continued on the property. In 1960 John Bunting sold 60 acres of the farm to the Neshaminy School District. In 1986, the Bunting estate sold 14 acres to Langhorne Wood Products.

During the second half of the twentieth century most people in Hulmeville referred to this house and property as the Black farm. Harriet Black was known to everyone in town as she was a fixture in borough government having served as the Borough Secretary for 58 years. In 2019, a few years after Harriet's death, her children sold their portion of the farm to Eugene Lorenzetti of Superior Holdings LLC who is planning to build a housing development on the property.

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<sup>1</sup> (This land in Middletown became Praul's home and is the site of the farmhouse. The land was originally given by William Penn to William Carter. The neighboring parcel of land was given to Henry Paxson. The line between these two properties became Trenton Road.)



## Code Enforcement

-The Fire Marshal is responsible for the Borough fire code, fire inspections and code enforcement. You can contact Bill Wheeler at [fire\\_marshall@hulmeville-pa.gov](mailto:fire_marshall@hulmeville-pa.gov) to get your needed permits.

-Do you have a fire pit? Anyone with a fire pit needs a yearly permit: Contact the Fire Marshall to acquire the permit

## Zoning Information

The borough web site links allow you to view, save and/or print, the entire zoning ordinance section by section. Do you know if you need a permit to do a project? Visit the web site

[www.hulmeville-pa.gov](http://www.hulmeville-pa.gov) for more information.

## Water Authority

### ★ **Meter Replacement Notice**

Hulmeville Borough Water Authority is working with a contractor to have water meters replaced. Please give them the permission to enter your home/business and replace your meter, for free, when they reach out to you to schedule the work.

### **Pay your bill on-line**

To access the Hulmeville Authority bill pay web site, go to <https://hulmevillepa.com/water-payment/>

**Water or Sewer Bill Questions?** If you pay your bill to Bucks County Water and Sewer, call 1-800-222-2068. If you pay your bill to Hulmeville Water Authority, call 215-757-6531

## William Penn Fire Company - Station 7 - Hulmeville

### **-Volunteers are needed!**

-Visit [www.wmpennfire.com](http://www.wmpennfire.com) for more information on getting involved!

-Contact [join@wmpennfire.com](mailto:join@wmpennfire.com) or call 215-752-7740.

-Hall Rental information, contact Cheryl Chamberlain at 267-567-1404 or send an email to

[PFChallrental@gmail.com](mailto:PFChallrental@gmail.com)

## Trash & Recycling

-Place your trash and recycling on your curb Tuesday evenings, the night before collection.

★ -During the holiday weeks of 4th of July, Labor Day, Christmas, & New Year's, trash pick up will be on Thursday's (not the normal day of Wednesday).

## Tax Collector

-Hours are printed on your tax bill and will be posted on the borough website. Information requests can be made by contacting: Valerie Myers [tax@hulmeville-pa.gov](mailto:tax@hulmeville-pa.gov) or call 215-757-6531.

## Stormwater Management

- Gilmore & Associates are managing stormwater and floodplain concerns for the borough. All concerns can still be made through the borough at 215-757-6531 ext. 5



Hulmeville Borough Council Meetings are held on the first Monday of the month at 7:30 pm

Work Session Meetings are on the third Tuesday of the month at 7:30 pm

*Meeting Agendas are posted the week before each meeting.*

**Hulmeville Borough Council Conditional Use Meeting continuation for Superior Holdings, LLC Conditional Use Application submission is Thursday, June 29, 2023, 7:PM at William Penn Fire Hall**



## Community News & Events

**Hulmeville Historical Society:** [www.hulmevillehistorical.org](http://www.hulmevillehistorical.org)

- If you are not getting the Town Crier, contact Marce Heald at 215-629-6201 to get signed up
- Keep an eye out for their Town Crier newsletter, or visit their website, or their Face Book page for all updates.

**Hulmeville Garden Club:** [www.hulmevillegardenclub.org](http://www.hulmevillegardenclub.org)

- Get their meeting schedule and events published on their website

The Hulmeville Historical Society  
HB150  
Johnson Hall Coffee House  
join to present

# Hulmeville History Night

Saturday, July 15, 2023  
6:30 - 9:30 PM  
At  
Johnson Hall Coffee House  
3 Hulme Ave, Hulmeville, PA 19047

**Books for sale**  
Hardback \$40.00  
Softcover \$25.00

**Hulmeville Borough  
A History at 150**

Hulmeville Historical Society t-shirts & Cat's Meow items will also be sold.

**6:30 - 7:30  
SHOW & TELL**

Share the Hulmeville History that you have in your attic, in your photo albums; bring photos, documents and artifacts that you may have at home and would be willing to share the story of the item with the community.

**7:30 - 8:30  
HISTORY PRESENTATION AND Q&A  
PART I - 1720- 1850**

Joe Coleman will present images and information from Hulmeville - A History at 150 from the construction of the first mills through the developments in the village in the 1840s.

**8:30 - 9:30  
HULMEVILLE HISTORY BINGO**

Test your knowledge and win prizes!

Admission is free but seating is limited, reserve your spot today at:

[HTTPS://hulmeville-150th.ticketleap.com/book/](https://hulmeville-150th.ticketleap.com/book/)



*Beverages and selected snacks will be available for purchase*



*The Hulmeville Historical Society and the HB150 (formerly Hulmeville Borough 150th Committee), thank Tim James for welcoming the community to Johnson Hall Coffee House for this event*

HULMEVILLE BORO POLICE DEPARTMENT & HB150 PRESENT



# Family Fun Day

FREE ADMISSION!



Hamburgers  
& Hotdogs



Food tickets will be sold next to the pavilion

**WATER  
SLIDE**



*Ice  
Cream*  
1 free cone per person,  
with ticket

**Activities for kids of all ages  
Bring your chairs!**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 5, 2023**

**12:NOON - 4:PM**

**RECREATION FIELD**

**321 MAIN STREET, HULMEVILLE, PA 19047**





## Historic Hulmeville

Watch a short film then follow a lantern led walking tour through downtown historic Hulmeville exploring over 151 years of haunted history!

**Location:** Hulmeville Borough Hall, 321 Main Street

**Dates:** October 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>

**Times:** 7pm, 8pm & 9pm on each evening



### Special Guest Appearances

Karen Hluchan, Spirit Medium, will be guiding the 7pm & 9pm tours!

Tickets are Limited

**Advanced Tickets:** 8pm original tour - \$10.00 each

7pm & 9pm medium tours - \$20.00 each

*under 18 must be accompanied by an adult*

**Purchase:** [www.hulmeville150.org](http://www.hulmeville150.org)

*Sale starts August 1, 2023*

No refunds - Rain or shine event

More Information will be posted: [www.hulmeville150.org](http://www.hulmeville150.org)

*Proceeds benefit the HB150: continuing to support history & community involvement in our town*



Hulmeville's 2nd

Halloween  
Decorating  
Contest!

Be ready by  
October 5th

*In time for the  
Ghost Tours!*

All decorated  
houses  
will be judged  
by the  
HB150

5K

9 am start  
*Hulmeville*  
**RUN  
WHILE  
YOU  
CAN**  
5K

and  
1 mile  
walk



*Saturday*

*October*

*7th*

**\$25.00 pre-registration  
go to RunSignUP or scan this code...**



**STARTING LINE:**

Neshaminy Shore Picnic Park  
13 Beaver Street  
Hulmeville, PA 19047



**PRIZES:**

Medals awarded to each  
age group for men & women

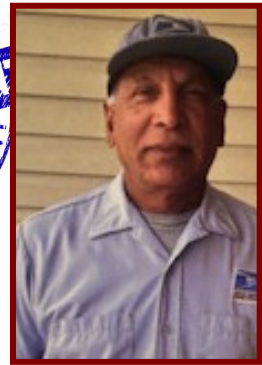
Sponsored by the HB150 & Neshaminy Shore Picnic Park



Hulmeville Borough  
321 Main Street  
Hulmeville, PA 19047  
**NEWSLETTER**



LET'S SAY THANK YOU TO OUR MAIL CARRIER  
**SEBASTIAN KOODATHIL**  
FOR THE DECADES OF SERVICE HE GAVE TO  
OUR COMMUNITY! BE SURE TO LEAVE HIM A NOTE  
IN YOUR MAILBOX BEFORE HIS RETIREMENT OF  
JUNE 30, 2023!



*Congratulations to all of the 2023 High School Graduates!  
We wish you much success with your future plans!*

