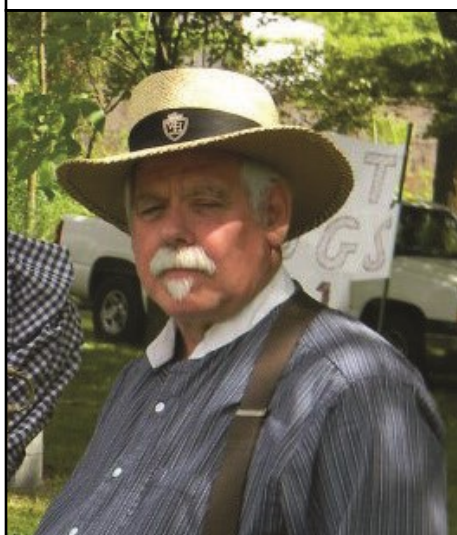


In Memorium
Rich Paul
1943-2020



Will be missed, but know many people gathered to welcome him at the gate ... some are the early families in Marple that Rich shared with us.

—Robert Seeley



I am so sorry to learn of Rich Paul's death. My son, John Lyons; is autistic and was given an internship at the Massey House when he was in high school. Rich and John meshed perfectly. Rich was wonderful to John, spending a lot of time talking about history. After the internship ended, John continued to volunteer at the Massey House, scanning slides for Rich to create a digital library. I also enjoyed talking to Rich. He was such a kind man. —Dawn Lyons

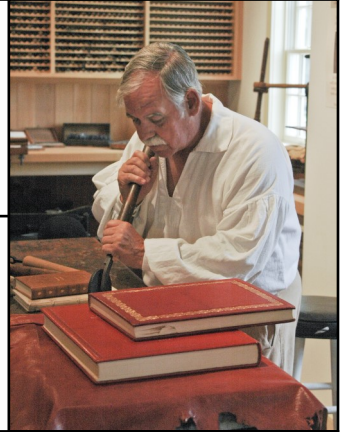
Taken from us too soon, at a time when we cherish all human connections, Rich was my new friend who I looked forward to getting to know better and someday— seeing without his mask. It was June, 2020, when I was first introduced to Rich by Clarissa F. Dillon inside 1696 Thomas Massey House. Because Rich was supportive of our new web series, One Cool Colonial, I was thrilled to be invited into the House when I knew it was closed to visitors because of the Pandemic. My dear neighbor Clarissa said that Rich would open the door and be there for us when we would be filming inside Massey House. I instantly made a connection that day when my longtime friend Beverlee Barnes was at his side in the kitchen and as Rich “introduced” us to one another, though I saw only his twinkling eyes, I felt that “history hug” that Sam described for us. A few weeks later, on a very hot summer day, Rich opened the door to Massey House again— this time dressed in period clothing. Yes, that wool vest. Clarissa and Rich gave a tour of the Massey House while I filmed it for the web series. In early December when Clarissa and I were in the kitchen filming, Rich was with us tending to the fire, talking about his family, his days in the Navy, and of course— more about the people with whom he shared his love of history. Rich also handed me an envelope to give to Radnor Historical Society. To Rich's wife, Pat, his children and their families, I offer my deepest condolences and share in your sadness as you remember your dear Rich, a most charming and loveable man, and our local historian.

—Pamela J. Sedor

Before even meeting Rich, I already knew of him and his work in Delaware County, and of course the Thomas Massey House. And when I finally met him at Historic Sugartown, I discovered what everyone had been talking about! Rich Paul was so deeply committed to historic preservation and interpretation - he was a jack of all trades, interpreter, volunteer coordinator, board leader and site manager. With that twinkle in his eye, Rich could get the most disinterested visitor to get excited about a historic site's story. He knew the value of collaborating with others, and did so with humor. And he was a one-man tourism marketing machine - he had the ability to share news from various historical organizations faster than the local tourism bureaus and community calendars could! Rich was such a kind, fun-loving and gentle man, whose love and commitment to historic preservation will be dearly missed.

—Heather Reiffer, Executive Director of Historic Sugartown

It's been a privilege to know and work with Rich and I am all the better for it. He will be greatly missed by many. We are all in his debt for all he gave to history.—Karen Micka



My uncle Rich was a great man and a history buff he always talked about the Massey house and the history behind it I will miss him greatly.—John Destefanis

I met Rich as he was volunteering with Bethel Township Preservation Society. Whether it was our Log House Open House in May or Founder's Day in October, Rich could be found with a table demonstrating Colonial light fixtures. He graciously accepted me when I became a member of the Heritage Commission and I appreciated his leadership. He will be greatly missed by BTPS and all our members.—Elizabeth McCarrick

In Memoriam: Rich Paul, 1943-2020

By Sam Pickard

This is not the post I had planned to write next, but now it is the post I need—and want—to write. On December 29th A. Richard “Rich” Paul, the “History Hugger” of Marple Township, passed away. His death is a loss to not only Marple, but all of Delaware County. I have only known Rich for about four years and I am far from the most qualified eulogist, but I want to pause and share a few words about a man who always had time for me, and someone I was glad to call a friend. While I pride myself on my research and citations, this post is going to focus on the man I got to know through the stories he told—if I’ve misunderstood or misremembered anything, I will happily make corrections.

Rich had moved to Marple Township with his family when he was nine years old. He would have seen an area transitioning from a rural, agrarian community to “modern” suburbia. One of the anecdotes Rich would tell about his childhood was how he would play near the old Massey barn—land now occupied by the split-level houses of Lawrence Park. Later he attended Marple Newtown High School, where he was memorialized in his senior yearbook as “the last of the mad bombers”¹—a nickname he earned when he and some older friends were caught by an off-duty police officer at the bottom of Greenhill Road after they threw a firecracker at the driveway of a girl they knew. Rich was possibly with those same friends when he rode in the last car down West Chester Pike before it was closed off for then-Senator John F. Kennedy’s motorcade.

Rich entered the US Navy after graduating high school and served four years, attaining the rank of petty officer. After leaving the navy, he studied at St. Joseph’s University and married his wife Pat, with whom he had three children: two daughters and a son.

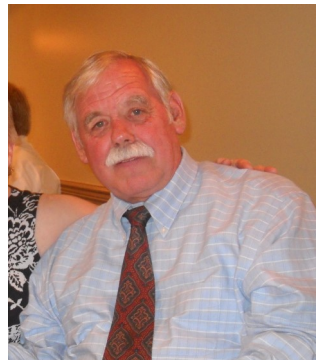
Though he made a living working for Xerox, Rich’s real interest was local history. To my knowledge he never had any formal training, but instead, a gift and a passion for not only learning the local lore, but making it accessible and tangible for others. Rich had become president of what is now the Marple Historical Society by 1992, and over subsequent years became chairman of the Marple Historical

Commission and the Delaware County Heritage Commission. The role he seemed (to me, at least) to relish the most was Vice President of Property at the 1696 Thomas Massey House. Wearing an 18th century farmers costume that included a floppy brown hat and woolen vest, Rich would lead tours of the house on Sundays throughout the summer. He always seemed to be striving to better understand the house and Pennsylvania life in the 1700s, paying particular attention to lighting technology. Sometimes he was so immersed in the past that he could “gossip” about the affair he’d discovered between a Marple farmer and his neighbor’s wife... 250 years ago.

While the 18th century and the Massey House were Rich’s special interests, in recent years he put substantial work into obtaining protections for Hayti Cemetery—a 19th century burial ground used by members of the local African American community into the 1930s. Working with community members and state legislators like Jenn O’Mara, Rich was able to bring attention to the cemetery and help organize cleanups and flag plantings to honor veterans interred there.

Finally, from a personal perspective, Rich was someone who I could “talk history” with. Twice during the past year we met at the Massey House—windows open, socially distanced, and masks on—to just chat. When I started this blog he was extremely supportive and encouraging, placing his knowledge, connections, and materials at my disposal. Rich made me feel like family at the Massey House. Whenever it is that things are “back to normal” and we once again gather around the wooden “kitchen table” at the Massey House, it won’t be entirely the same. I’ll miss Rich’s faux-serious greeting when I walk through the threshold, his black portfolio folder and legal pad, his jokes, and his wink. At risk of sounding too dramatic, I echo Edwin Stanton in saying that now Rich belongs to the ages, joining not only local historians like Hilda Lucas and Clarissa Smith, but the whole pantheon of individuals in Marple’s history.

Marple History, January 2021,
<https://marplehistory.com/rich-paul/>



My father called me daily to talk about all of you! Though I never shared his love of history it was really the community that he found with the people with that passion that he really truly felt enriched his life. I am thankful that he had so many of you in his life to share it with and still made me feel included with all the stories I heard about his friends and colleagues. To say I will miss him is an understatement, but I know that because of the man he was all that knew him will feel the loss of this amazing man. —Katie-daughter of Rich



Will miss his mentoring to find solutions for historic preservation programs and projects. RIP my friend —Anthony L. Selletti

I met Rich went I started working at The Massey House. He was a good friend and a great boss. I'm going to miss you Rich, my friend; R.I.P.

—John Lyons



I worked as a fifth grade teacher in the Haverford School District for many years. It was a thrill to take the students to Lawrence Cabin and Nitre Hall where Rich and other volunteers taught the students about colonial and federal living. He was patient, kind, and always willing to share his stories. Every autumn, for twenty years, I loved that field trip and I knew my students were getting the best education. When my own children were born, I took them to the Thomas Massey house for the colonial living day. Rich had so many stories to tell. My favorite was the mystery behind the female bones suspected to be Native American behind the old Pathmark. So many stories. Last winter, before Covid hit, I found some old bullets that needed to be identified. Who did I contact? Rich. A love of history is a love of people and their stories. Rich shared his love with the community. Very sorry to hear of his passing. My condolences to his family. There is a large legacy to uphold in Marple. May we rise to the challenge.—Kim Kennedy

It has been more than 10 years since I worked with Rich Paul on the Public History Project for Delaware County but he is fondly remembered. It was wonderful to work with someone who wanted to see historic buildings and relationships between history organizations nurtured, developed and sustained. One of the major outgrowths of the public history project was the development of the DCHPN, which we hoped that would be a useful communication tool for all the 80 history organizations in the county. And through that list serve over the last 10 years, I have seen how he and others have continued the good fight for Delaware County history. I will miss Rich Paul.—Donna Ann Harris



Rich helped me start the Collingdale Historical Society back in 2013. His encouragement and advice will be greatly missed. He was a strong advocate of local history, and was always willing to talk about events. He was an active member of the Collingdale Historical Society. He will be greatly missed by all of us at the Collingdale Historical Society.

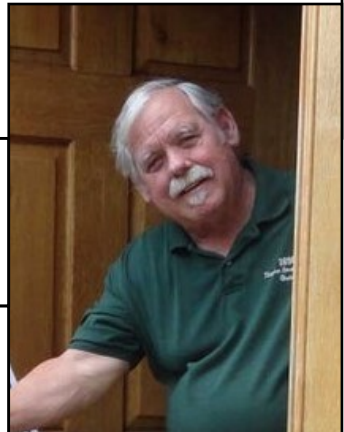
—Elizabeth MacGuire

I have known Rich for a long time. He was always there when needed, and helpful in so many ways. I will miss him greatly.

—Deborah Peterson

Thank you Rich for the gifts of friendship and history so lovingly and abundantly given.

—Jan and John Haigis



I knew Rich as he was one of the original volunteer site guides at Sugartown. He always regaled me with all the activities going on at the Thomas Massey House in Broomall. He was such a great source of local Delaware County history. I used to be on his e-mail blast lists regarding different events and he continued to promote Sugartown even after he focused the majority of his time with the Massey House. He was a great supporter of Sugartown and I shall remember the good times we had together exploring the newly restored village.—David Tidman, Volunteer & Guide at Historic Sugartown

Honoring Rich Paul

By Doug Humes

There was a Disturbance in the Force on December 29, 2020. Millions of voices of local history, past and present, were suddenly silenced. Something terrible happened. Rich Paul passed away.

If you had ever been to a history event in Delaware County in the last 50 years, then you likely crossed paths with Rich. He was everywhere in the Delaware County history community. Though his home base was his beloved home town of Marple, his interest and energy and life reached into every corner of the county, and back into every moment of its history.

He held offices with the Marple Historical Society, as chairman of the Marple Historical Commission, Chairman of the Delaware County Heritage Commission, president and then treasurer of the Delaware County Historical Society as well as the Property Director and Vice President of the 1696 Thomas Massey House. He was a costumed waiter at the wonderful period dinners held at the Massey House. He ran a mailing list that helped all history organizations in the County to promote their programs and events, and was a presence at most of them. He gave slideshows on local history to community groups throughout the county; in fact he had just completed a new program that focused on the role of Delaware County in the development of America that he was to give in December, until canceled by the shutdown. He had a long list of projects still to be done – including the work of preserving the Hayti Cemetery that had long been neglected until he began working to have people of good faith begin the process of honoring these forgotten dead by taking responsibility for the abandoned cemetery in Marple.

I first met Rich when I moved in to a historic home in Marple. He showed up at my door, introduced himself and his interest in history, and asked if I could show him around. I hesitantly agreed, but an hour later, we were fast friends. He pointed out unique items – handmade hooks in the basement where the old farmers would have hung meat, a home-made “smokehouse” in a 3rd floor closet – where the farmer had simply cut a hole in the chimney to let smoke fill the closet. He

knew his history, and his enthusiasm was infectious. We talked like we had known each other for years. And we stayed in touch. He brought me on to several of his boards. The last time I saw him, in early December, we sat at the Massey House with a long-time Marple resident and did oral history – looking at a stack of recently donated old photos and trying to identify the people and places and events they showed. Rich’s memory and recall were vast. He stood on the shoulders of those who had come before him, such as Hilda Lucas, and so if an event had ever happened in Marple, he knew something about it, and/or where to find it. We had big plans for 2021 to do these sessions on a regular basis and work on the entire photo archives.

His loss to the larger community is huge. His knowledge, energy, time, and leadership, all delivered with humor and warmth and kindness, made his community a far better place by virtue of his living in it. That is of course a great legacy in itself. For his friends in history, those of us who share his passion, hopefully we will pick up those unfinished projects, and will move them forward, and honor his memory by working to complete the work he had started.

And for the thousands of Delaware County residents who have visited the Massey House, all of the school children who have toured there with Rich, all of the people who appreciate the local history that Rich worked to preserve, you can honor his legacy as well. There are so many ways to give back to a community, and so while you may not have the same passion for history, you can volunteer, in children’s sports, at the library, at the firehouse, in the annual Darby Creek cleanout, in serving on a township committee, or in dozens of other ways that contributes to the good of the community where you live. Rather than cursing the darkness of his loss, you can light a candle to his memory, by bringing your light to your community.

The greatest legacy to Rich Paul would be to have hundreds of others, inspired by his life, stand up and step forward and volunteer to fill the vacuum in the community left by his loss, called to action by virtue of his example.

Marple Friends & Neighbors Magazine, February 2020,
<https://www.marplemag.com/magazines/february-2021/>

Although I only knew Rich a few years, he made me feel as though I knew him my whole life. We would talk about history and preservation and just life. I am so grateful for the time that I got to spend with him as chair of the Heritage Commission and as an integral member of the Massey House and Marple Historical Society. It's hard to imagine any of them without him. He lived and breathed Delaware County history and I hope that we can honor his legacy by continuing to promote our shared heritage. He was a fantastic mentor, friend and history hugger. I will miss him dearly.—Kate Clifford



Spent many hours at the Massey House. Thank you Rich for sharing your knowledge and stories of the Massey House. If it wasn't for you, I would never have learned that Armond Spitz was married and lived there. Thank you for letting George Sibley finish his documentary on William Herschel at the Massey House. You live on as one of the members of the cast. Thank you for all the memories.—K. Lynn King



ALLEN RICHARD PAUL
Academic
Richie . . . the last of the mad bombers . . . girl troubles . . . clown of Llangollen with a sweat shirt.
Football 1; Swimming 3,4; H-Y 3,4; Prom Committee 1,2.

Videos of Rich at the Thomas Massey House with Clarissa Dillon:
<https://inwinsr.wordpress.com/tag/one-cool-colonial/>



Rich Paul was a long-time guide at Historic Sugartown who took great pride in being a part of the site. He brought a high level of both enthusiasm and passion for local Pennsylvania history to his tours of the village. He was a very willing volunteer and was involved in many events at Sugartown over the years. He was a graduate of Marple-Newtown High School where he was a classmate of my father's younger brother Ron Nagy. He will be sorely missed in both Delaware and Chester County history circles.

—John C. Nagy, Jr., Board President of Historic Sugartown

My late husband, Bob Klinger, and I bought a 1750 farmhouse in Marple in 1989. We went to tour the Massey House and met Rich. That was the beginning of a long and wonderful friendship that inspired Bob, a chemist, to become a blacksmith and demonstrate the craft at several historic locations. Rich and Pat have been wonderful friends, generous with their time and their endless knowledge of history. Rich will be greatly missed. He was a gem.
—Elizabeth K Clark

Rich and I grew up in the same neighborhood and reminisced about eating at Fischer's restaurant (currently the Country Squire Diner), going to the Powell Lumber yard and the train station behind it. Rich told me about his project of moving the train station structure to the Drexel Lodge property to preserve that bit of history. Rich was always a source of information about old ruins I ran across exploring the Marple Newtown area. My wife and I enjoyed dinners at the Massey house with Pat, Rich and friends. He will be missed and fondly remembered.—Mike Smith



Kevin Madden's comments at January 6th County Council Meeting:
<https://player.vimeo.com/video/497677962>. His comment starts at 3:02:40

Rich Paul was a delightful gentleman and a pillar in the local history world. He was so well informed about local history happenings and truly helped the entire local history community stay connected. I started at Sugartown after his main years of involvement, but I encountered him at other events with Bethel Township and the Heritage Commission. Rich was always wonderful to talk to and very interested in what was going on at Sugartown. His passing is quite a loss to the local history community and he will be truly missed.
—Faith McCarrick, Director of Programs at Historic Sugartown

Allen Richard Paul

1943 - 2020

(Dec. 11, 1943 ~ Dec. 29, 2020) Allen Richard (Rich) Paul, age 77, left this world the morning of December 29th and went to join family members and friends in the great beyond. Rich graduated from Marple Newtown Senior High and lived in Marple Township for the last 65 years. He was a US Navy veteran with active service in the Vietnam War. He loved his community and the history it held and has been involved with historic preservation in Delaware County for the last 27 years. He is survived by his wife Patricia Anne Paul, his children John and Janine Paul, Kate and Brian Batzel, and Elizabeth Paul, Grandchildren Ben and Reid Batzel and Ami and Kara Paul, 2 sisters Janet Mauer and Dorothy Jessup and countless other relatives that only Rich was able to stay connected with over the years. Due to the limitations pertaining to COVID-19, the family will be having a Celebration of Life in at a later date when all family and friends will be able to attend. The family respectfully requests that anyone who wishes to express their condolences at this time, do so by sending a donation to the 1696 Thomas Massey House at Thomas Massey House, P.O. Box 18, Broomall, PA 19008.

Delaware County Daily & Sunday Times

