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KING OF PRUSSIA NEWS

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THESE OLD HOUSES

The following is an excerpt from the Summer 2017 issue of the *King of Prussia Gazette's* article, **These Old Houses**. The *Gazette* is the quarterly publication of the *King of Prussia Historical Society*. All members receive a copy via post. Please support us by becoming a member.

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**KING OF PRUSSIA
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

*Preserving Upper Merion's Past
To Enlighten Its Future*



KEEBLER ROAD HOUSES

To the left is one of the three Keebler Road homes built by landowner George Allen at the turn of the 20th century. It was originally part of a 250 acre farm with the house being used as a summer residence until Allen's death in 1921. One of the three was passed down to Howard David Pancoast and Kathleen Allen Pancoast Abell around 1930, upon her marriage to husband Charles Maurice Abel, who occupied the home with their children.

LOG HOUSE OF OLD VALLEY FORGE RD

To the right is the home built by Melinda Mason's grandfather. "Mr. Mason built the house in the 50's and all the logs were brought down from Canada. My parents owned the house for 25 years and the original name was Twenty Oaks because it had twenty oak trees on the property. The horse stable next door belonged to the neighbors, and they sold that land to the guy who build the house on Allendale Road behind it. My dad took out the "fallout shelter" which was just a room made out of concrete blocks in the basement so he could have a workshop. The best things about the house were the double Dutch doors, the huge Mercer tile fireplace and the wood floors. Worst things? Leaves, lots of leaves, mice, carpenter bees and woodpeckers....My father actually passed away there and my siblings sold the home in 2013 right before my mother passed from complications from stroke."



HANSENS COTTAGE

Back before King of Prussia became King of Prussia, there were the Hansens, whose nursery was almost as well known locally as the inn that gave the community its name. Their Valley Forge Nurseries was an extensive operation; the property extended all the way from Gulph Rd. to Henderson Rd., a distance of more than a mile.

Like any good farmers, the Hansens lived on their property. They were also good stewards of a legacy: they bought the nursery from its founder, Henry Frorer, who established it on the eve of the Great Depression. The cottage he built in 1929 at its entrance served as the nursery office and became a local landmark. Over the years, the Hansens expanded it and turned it into their home, photo to the right.



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