On February 22, 2018, the Trust lost one of its valued members, due to an unforeseen illness. Albertine Senske began working with the Trust in the early 2000s, and ultimately, she became the public face of the Whitesbog archives. Although she served in many roles at Whitesbog, especially representing Whitesbog through presentations at schools and public libraries, her real love was Whitesbog history and the organization of the archives. Her two great goals were writing a biography of Elizabeth White, and the posting of the archives online. The first of these was realized in a book soon to be published; the other is a project still in progress, but not yet fully completed.

In recognition of Albertine’s unflagging commitment to the archives, the Whitesbog Board of Trustees formally dedicated the archive facility at Suningive as the Albertine Senske Memorial Archive Room.

Similarly, we dedicate this issue of the Newsletter to Albertine as a tribute to her dedication. The following contributions are reminiscences from fellow Trust members.

The sudden death of my good friend Albertine Senske, archivist of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust, has left a void in my heart. It was a privilege to have worked with her for more than fifteen years on several Whitesbog projects, especially those pertaining to the cranberry and blueberry industries, the people of Whitesbog, and the description of museum artifacts. Her dedication and sincerity to the Trust were unsurpassed. Her willingness to assist me in my own research was unfailing.

More than two years ago at Albertine’s request, I reviewed a draft of her forthcoming biography, ‘With Eager Hands: The Life of Elizabeth Coleman White’. Fortunately, I succeeded in finding her a publisher as well. Just a few days before her passing, I promised Albertine that I would give my utmost effort to assist Professor Tom Kinsella of Stockton University in bringing to fruition the publication of her valuable portrait of Elizabeth White, one of the most significant women in New Jersey history. “Elizabeth C. White’s Garden,” the title of a chapter from her book containing twelve of my floral images appeared in SoJourn (Winter 2017/18), a Stockton journal devoted to the history, culture, and geography of South Jersey. Albertine was delighted to see her fine article in print.

You will be dearly missed, my friend.

- Ted Gordon, Chair, Museum Committee -

How do we count the gifts she gave to Whitesbog as a whole, and to all the individuals who came to know her.

She volunteered at many positions while at Whitesbog. To name a few she was a General Store Clerk, a Village Tour guide, a Presenter at Whitesbog programs, and as a guest speaker for many Community Groups. She worked at Whitesbog’s Library collection for many years helping gather and develop reports that helped document Whitesbog as a State and National Historic Site.

She was intent on learning the facts of Whitesbog history. She collected, interviewed, organized, and filed all the information currently available – both hard copies and in the computer database. She shared that information with all those who asked. She fiercely protected that data. Being the Archivist at Whitesbog may have been her last “job” but it (continued on page 2)
was as important to her as any of her “jobs”.
And she was also a friend. She had a strong sense of self and respected and encouraged others in their own personal growth. She was always eager to teach others who were willing to learn.
She will be missed.

- Sharon Goodman, Archives Committee -

With the passing of Albertine Senske, the Whitesbog Preservation Trust has lost one of the best volunteers who ever set foot in Whitesbog Village. Albertine was in charge of the archives, and she took her responsibilities very seriously. She often worked multiple days during the week, tirelessly cobbled together the infinite number of informational tidbits that have been collected over the years and building it into a cohesive, usable database that will help guide future researchers at Whitesbog. She was very meticulous, giving freely of her own time to travel to Trenton to wade through countless New Jersey state archives in search of additional information on the agricultural history of the New Jersey Pinelands. Albertine also traveled to Philadelphia, where she explored church archives and other private institutional records at places that had an historical connection to the people who lived and worked at Whitesbog Village.

Dedicated volunteers are not easy to come by, but Albertine was the epitome of what we in the volunteer world are always hoping to find - that rare person who just dives into their subject matter and educates themselves to a point where they become a prominent expert in the field. If one ever had the pleasure of hearing Albertine’s radio interview from a couple of years back at WOBM in Toms River, this was Albertine at her best. She was sharp, informative, and showed complete command of her subject matter, expressing it in measured tones while showing a perfect sense of comfort, warmth and humor toward her interviewer. I can also remember giving a village tour and misstating some information to the group, but Albertine was there to gently correct me and clarify the facts for our visitors. I learned quickly that if she was watching your presentation/tour, you better bring your “A-Game”!

It is always difficult to say good-bye to people who have made such a positive impression on all of those around them, but we at the Trust will always be thankful that this wonderful woman chose to donate so much of her free time over the years toward helping to assemble and catalog the fascinating history of Whitesbog Village. We don’t like to say or admit that some folks are irreplaceable, but I can honestly say that Albertine will be one of those special people whose shoes will be virtually impossible to fill. She was one in a million and those of us who have worked at Whitesbog for so many years will always remember Albertine as an incredible volunteer who almost single-handedly developed and organized the Whitesbog archives into an organized historical record that will benefit the Trust and future researchers for decades to come. Albertine has left us, but her legacy at Whitesbog Village will live on and stand testament to her character, dedication and love for uncovering the intricacies of village history and her eagerness to share it with others.

- John Joyce, Chair, Buildings & Restoration Committee -

Albertine was a woman of many talents, highly intelligent, very independent, deeply religious, charitable. In spite of her infirmities, she found ways to overcome her handicaps, like using a screwdriver to crack the vacuum in jars (a trick I learned to use to open jars that would not untwist); using just her index fingers and thumbs, she managed to type and copy/paste/trim images into her presentations and into PastPerfect.

Her tenacity in organizing the various documents found at Suningive into archival catalogs that record a series of historic events of the Fenwick-White family, cranberry and blueberry associations, progression of the bogs, etc. was astounding. She understood that many researchers would benefit from seeing some online images of documents and photos, and she led the way to making that possible by linking the images to the Whitesbog website.

She loved to speak to audiences and share her love of Whitesbog history. Her concern that the agricultural history of Whitesbog might not be readily available led her to create the flip posters of cranberries and blueberries found in the General Store. Her goal was to present an overview of Whitesbog history. She was “Sgt. Joe Friday” with the “facts and only the facts” attitude when researching any material.
Her devotion to research probably stems from her previous profession as a programmer and mathematics teacher where logical reasoning was pivotal in producing accurate results.

As a programmer, she spent time in India to oversee projects. When she was back in the States, one of her tasks was to run tests on the modifications after the close of business, and with the time differences, she was often working overnight.

She loved to travel. On her way home from India, she’d stop in Germany and explore on her own. When she was in New Orleans, she’d visit the bistros to listen to jazz music. Celtic music was also a favorite in recent years.

She made time to transport and shop for those who no longer could drive or get out of their homes by being a valued member of the Helping Hands group in Whiting. She was one of her church’s laity who helped with mass and read passages to the congregation. She would attend mass regularly during the week.

- Janet Felt, Archives Committee -

My first memories of Albertine were that of a highly dedicated woman perched continuously behind her computer in the Suningive office. She was a serious, soft-spoken woman, who, at first, seemed a bit stern and intimidating. It took me too long to realize that she had a gentle side, a side which I would have loved to explore to this day.

I learned quickly that Albertine was “the authority” in all things related to Elizabeth White. It became commonplace for the words, “I’m not sure … let’s ask Albertine” to pop out of my mouth. I always trusted Albertine’s answer, because I saw the care and precise manner in which she chose her reply. I started to accept that I would not always be keen on her answer, but I should acknowledge it for being as correct as possible.

Albertine had a myriad of talents, one being an exceptional speaker. I was completely amazed when I attended a presentation she gave, at Suningive, on the White family. The information, and accompanying photos on screen, were delivered in an educated, but thoughtful way, so that the audience would be interested and engaged throughout the evening. I was also a bit surprised to see her tender, loving side, especially when interacting with children.

I mourn Albertine. I mourn the great loss to Whitesbog. I am sorry that I did not take the time to sit with her sooner, and discuss her life, and not solely Elizabeth’s. I would have liked to hear about her childhood, her deeply religious beliefs. Thankfully, we became a bit closer during the last few years we were together, especially during her time in therapy, after her fall, but this was not nearly enough. In my mind’s eye, I see this brilliant woman, this faithful servant of God, holding an in-depth, but pleasant conversation with another brilliant lady. I can hear Albertine questioning Elizabeth on all the uncertainties she must have formulated throughout her years of research, requesting the answers that she was never sure she had correct. And I smile when I think of Elizabeth gently taking Albertine’s hand, and replying, “My dear, you probably comprehend my family with greater clarity than I ever did! You have made the White family members the esteemed legends they are today.”

- Terri Chiddenton, Living History Committee -

Albertine was a unique and proud woman whose persona required and commanded a presence.

Although Albertine had rheumatoid arthritis, that never stopped her from performing her duties as an archivist. Her perseverance, her motivation was second to none. She diligently volunteered almost five days a week for many years, in wind, rain, snow and through the muddy roads to Suningive.

I envision her as the Guardian of the Whitesbog Archives! She painstakingly went to Drexel University to perform research about Elizabeth, took a PastPerfect course, lectured, and gave appropriate direction to those who would ask. Whitesbog will miss her and I will miss my friend.

- Stephanie Schrader, WPT Past President -

Albertine teaching a local elementary class about blueberries and Elizabeth White.

(continued on page 4)
We did not know Albertine for very long, less than 3 years. During that time she quickly earned our respect for her dedication to preserving the history of Whitesbog and the legacy of Elizabeth White. Always weighing her words carefully, she impressed us with her honesty and frankness. She had a sparkle in her eye as she talked of Elizabeth and the people on the farm. It made it so easy to listen. We are grateful for the opportunity to have known Albertine, and to have had the conversations we did about Whitesbog and Elizabeth’s life and work. Albertine was a great teacher.

- Brett and Lise Mainor* -
- *President Whitesbog Preservation Trust -

When I think about Albertine, and her legacy with Whitesbog, I have two enduring thoughts. First, for a number of years, I scheduled the presentations given at the Barrel Factory during the Blueberry Festival. In this, I usually tried to schedule a talk about Elizabeth White either just before or just after the lunch hour, or often at both times, and Albertine because of her depth of knowledge about Elizabeth White was always one of my top possible choices. Our Executive Director during that period, Susan Philips, always cautioned me to be careful with such bookings, as the Barrel Factory could get quite toasty by noontime, and she was appropriately concerned about Albertine’s stamina and ability to hold up. I fully concurred and took this concern to heart, and accordingly always had several large fans blowing, and a seat available so Albertine could sit while she spoke. She usually started her talks much as anyone would, but before long, it was clear to me, she wasn’t just lecturing, she was testifying. She would be leaning forward, gesturing, poking at the air, and robustly raising her voice for emphasis. She was fired up, and she clearly made the story of Elizabeth White come vibrantly to life for the people that came to hear her.

Secondly, as Ted Gordon noted earlier, within the last year Albertine completed a full-length biography of Elizabeth White, entitled ‘With Eager Hands: The Life of Elizabeth Coleman White’ due to be published in October by the Pinelands Cultural Heritage Center operated by Stockton University. We should consider ourselves deeply fortunate that someone like Albertine took on this task (or labor of love, as it indeed seems to have been), rather than someone outside the sphere of Whitesbog. Albertine, through her archival work and interests, certainly knew more about Elizabeth White than any soul currently living, and was a fierce advocate of archival research and the proper verification of facts. We can comfort ourselves that Elizabeth White’s biography will be as true to the currently known facts as can be determined by any research, and that Albertine’s name will be inextricably linked to the legacy of Elizabeth White and to that of Whitesbog.

- Mark Ehlenfeldt, Co-editor WPT Newsletter -

The Lost Blueberries of Whitesbog
Part 3
by Mark Ehlenfeldt, USDA-ARS

It’s funny how life can surprise you. Sometimes being casually attuned to a particular goal or topic can set you up to discover something totally unexpected. This is such a tale. But, enough cryptic lead-in; on to the story.

When first arriving in New Jersey many years ago, I determined that a wise thing to do would be to try and locate old blueberry varieties before they went out of existence. The USDA holds many such varieties in the National Clonal Germplasm Repository in Corvallis, Oregon, and I dutifully acquired a number of old cultivars from there for my own research collection. A few also came from my USDA-ARS colleague at the time, pathologist Dr. Alan Stretch. A few were still in the ground at Whitesbog, but despite all of these sources there were still gaps in the assemblage.

In talking to several local growers, and asking about old varieties, one said he knew of a family (I can’t remember what family though) that still had a planting of ‘Sam’. I pestered my grower friend every so often to inquire about the planting. On about the third such asking, he returned to me several days later and said “they’re gone”. The plot, which was of no particular interest to anyone in contemporary New Jersey had been plowed under. There went any hope as far as I was concerned of ever acquiring ‘Sam’. Now ‘Sam’ was not anything particularly special, except that Elizabeth White in one of her early sales brochures, noted that its fruit was produced in “immense clusters”, and she gushed a bit over the beauty of its foliage, “veiled with a delicate bloom which gives it a bluish cast”.

(continued on next page)
Fast forward to 2018. One day while browsing the internet searching for an exotic blueberry relative, the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University popped up in a search. Although they did not have what I was initially searching for, a scan of their Vaccinium holdings showed they had a number of blueberry cultivars growing in-ground. Of particular interest were ‘Pioneer’, ‘Katherine’, ‘Dunfee’, … and ‘Sam’. Each originating from J.J. White, Inc., New Jersey in either 1922 or 1929 depending upon the specific clone! God Bless the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University for keeping the flame alive all these years! And God Bless the internet for making these things so easy to search. With a bit of paperwork, the AA@HU was happy to send abundant dormant hardwood cuttings of all four cultivars. From this material, some was prepped for rooting here in New Jersey, and an equal portion subsequently disbursed to the USDA National Clonal Germplasm Repository in Corvallis. In a few more years, these cuttings should produce plants of suitable size to plant in Elizabeth White’s garden, and with that, one of the lost blueberry varieties of Whitesbog … will have returned home.

“Are we interested in this? Middlesex wants to deaccession it from their collection. It is from the Kruger collection, from Earl Haines, donated 1965.” Attached were several, as yet unopened photos. I opened the first and stared in awe. Then wrote:

“Absolutely YES!! It is a 90% complete and presumably functional White sorter.”

The message had come from Mark Nonestied, the Division Head of the Middlesex County Office of Arts and History in Piscataway, NJ. He noted it was located in a storage garage in Perth Amboy.

Avid newsletter readers may recall that the Trust has been on the trail of a White cranberry sorter for a number of years1,2,3. In 2016, the Trust acquired the parts of one or two disassembled sorters from the estate of MaryAnn Thompson, but efforts at assembly have been on a time-available basis, and many questions exist regarding how it all fits together. The offer of a completely assembled sorter was a serendipitous coup.

Ted Gordon, chair of the Cranberry-Blueberry Museum committee, rightly suggested that we not waste time in picking up this treasure, since the Trust had on one past occasion lost an offered piece of equipment when the potential donor had second thoughts on his offer and sold the piece elsewhere. Ted recruited Joe Darlington, Rich Watson, Scott Carrasquillo, and Carlin Lynch, and on August 10 they trekked with one of Joe’s large pick-up trucks to Perth Amboy.

The sorter is not all that heavy, but not exactly light either. It was made with plenty of steel and iron parts, and overall, is a robust machine. With some muscle and sweat, the sorter was loaded in Perth Amboy and sent on its way to Whitesbog. On this end it was unloaded a bit more easily with the use of a front-end loader. And, today the sorter resides in the nascent Cranberry-Blueberry Museum. We look forward to the day in the near future that we can dedicate it as one of the centerpieces of our cranberry exhibit.

Footnotes

For those interested in a further perspective on the White Cranberry Sorter, reporter Kevin Riordan of the Philadelphia Inquirer wrote an article that can be found in the Philadelphia Inquirer archives of December 13, 2015.

Saga of the White Cranberry Sorter: Part 2
by Mark Ehlenfeldt, USDA-ARS

Just a few weeks ago, an email from Allison Pierson, Whitesbog’s Executive Director, came across several of our screens.
**September**

1. **WPT Volunteer Workday** 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
   Come out and join our volunteers in outdoor or indoor projects in the village. You can choose from helping to clear trails and garden paths or helping to organize our office cottage supplies for events! Both get you lunch in the General Store classroom and time to enjoy the beautiful natural surroundings!

1. **Village Walking Tour** 1 p.m.
   Stroll the Historic Village, learn about Whitesbog’s role in history and visit Suningive, the worker’s cottage and other museums & buildings that speak to Whitesbog's heritage. $5 donation/person, advance reservations requested but not required - 609-893-4646.

7. **Movie Night with Pemberton Recreation: Bug’s Life** 8 p.m.
   Join us in the Picnic Grove for a wonderful summer evening screening. You are welcome to sit on the picnic benches or bring a seat, popcorn will be provided by the recreation department. Free.

8. **Harvest Time and Cranberries (Gallery Opening)** 12 noon - 4 p.m.
   Share our exhibit of brilliant fall colors and the jeweled tones of cranberry season. Exhibit will run through October 28. Drop offs must be received by August 25.

8. **Fall Paint Party!** 3 - 6 p.m.
   Create your own piece of Pine Barrens inspired art in the Barrel Factory. Advance reservations are preferred, Cost is $35/person and includes a glass of wine and hors d’oeuvres. E-mail Whitesbogevents@gmail.com or check the Facebook Page for The Gallery at Whitesbog.

22. **Rock, Wood and Bog: Art and Illustration Tour** 2 p.m.
   With an artist as your guide together we will explore Whitesbog’s nature trails and historic buildings. No prior art experience needed. Meet at the General Store a little before 2 p.m. Bring your journal or pick one up at the General Store.

22. **Harvest Moon Walk** 7 p.m.
   Listen to the night sounds of the Pines, learn about Whitesbog and experience the seasonal changes of the Pinelands. All walks are 3-5 miles in length, weather permitting and led by experienced leaders. $5/person donation, reservations requested 609-893-4646.

30. **Cranberry Tea & Social** (SOLD OUT)

A High Tea in Elizabeth White’s beautiful living room in Suningive as well as a house tour. Cranberry teas, scones, finger sandwiches and more are served at your table. Come out for the tea and to stroll the gardens, historic village and visit the General Store. $20/person, 2 for $30.

**October**

**Harvest Highlight Tours: October 1st – 17th,**
Check Facebook for details as the Harvest Season begins!

6. **WPT Volunteer Workday** 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
   (See Sept. 1 for details).

6. **Village Walking Tour** 1 p.m.
   (See Sept. 1 for details).

6. **Saturday Art Class** 1 p.m.
   Lesson 1: Come to the Gallery Activity Room, learn and create all paint techniques artists use in one convenient reference chart. For those who have taken the Easter and Summer Art Class, bring in your photos and/or ideas and paint whatever you would like. With an artist to guide you; I will answer any of your questions.

7. **Cranberry Living History Tour** 1- 4 p.m.
   Visit the village’s interpreted museums and historic landscapes, pick cranberries, take a wagon ride and more. The Village will come alive with workers and residents from the 1920’s. Visit Suningive, the home of the “Blueberry Queen” and share some cake for Elizabeth’s Birthday! Call 609-893-4646 for additional details and reservations. $8/adult, $5/ages 4-11, kids under 3 free. Family rate $25.

13. **Saturday Art Class** 1 p.m.
   Lesson 2: Come to the Gallery Activity Room, learn all about color mixing, the impressionist style.

13. **Farm to Fork Fondo Bicycle Ride Kickoff Expo and Farm Dinner** 5 - 9 p.m.
The mission of the Whitesbog Preservation Trust is to protect and enhance historic Whitesbog Village, to interpret the White family legacy and to inspire audiences of all ages to experience the past innovations, present circumstances and future possibilities of cranberry and blueberry culture.
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Newsletter
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Whitesbog is administered by the State of New Jersey, Department of Environmental Protection, Division of Parks and Forestry as part of the Brendan T. Byrne State Forest.

The Whitesbog Preservation Trust has received a General Operating Support Grant for the fiscal year 2017 from the New Jersey Historical Commission, a division of the Department of State.

Funding is made possible in part by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts through a grant to the Burlington County Board of Chosen Freeholders.

The Whitesbog Preservation Trust has received a New Jersey Council for the Humanities Grant for FY 2018 for "Harvesting Stories" and oral history video interview project.

The 1772 Foundation, in cooperation with the New Jersey Historic Trust, has provided Whitesbog Preservation Trust with a Capital Preservation Grant for the repair and restoration of a worker's cottage.