



MANSION NOTES

CENTRE FURNACE MANSION

NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 30, Number 4

Fall 2008

Tough Times and Lasting Legacies: The Great Depression, the New Deal and Centre County *by Angela Breeden*

Pennsylvania's history as an industrial leader allowed it to be especially vulnerable to the economic breakdown that epitomized the 1930s and the Great Depression. Within four years of the stock market crash of 1929, national unemployment reached 25%, but in Pennsylvania it was a staggering 37%, pushing 1.4 million people into joblessness and poverty.

Centre County was nearly a microcosm of the Commonwealth, as its diverse geographical regions supported 102 businesses and industries including coal, lumber, brick, stone, and textile production. In 1928 they provided \$3.5 million in wages to Centre County workers, but by 1932 that value fell by half when 30% of the workforce was unemployed.

The competition for jobs increased and the pressure endured by businesses, especially small business that provided "luxuries", often resulted in bankruptcy. By the end of the Great Depression, Centre County lost a quarter of all its business establishments including four of its five laundries, its only sporting goods manufacturer, and six ice cream parlors.

Scholars continue to study and debate the factors that led to the worst economic event of the 20th century, but the federal and state response to it is an even more complex topic. Herbert Hoover was defeated in the presidential election of 1932 on the basis that he did not acknowledge or respond quickly enough to the spiraling economy or the widespread suffering it caused. Franklin Delano Roosevelt evicted him from the White House in a landslide victory and took office in March 1933 under his pledge to create "...a new deal for the American people."

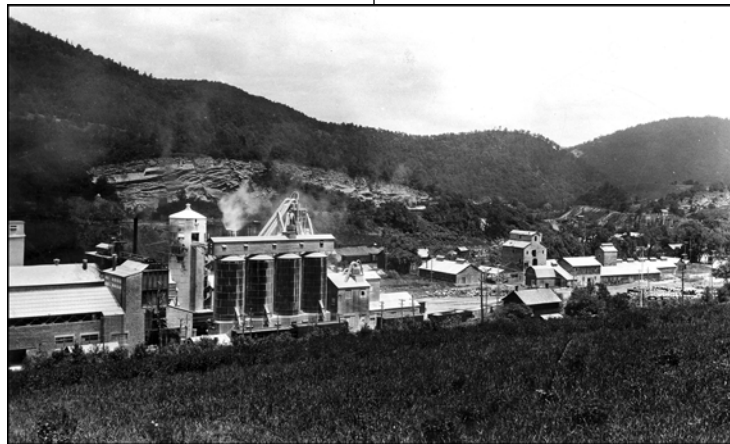
It seemed everyone, including Congress, wanted a change and within 100 days of taking office, Roosevelt won 15 major legislative approvals. Some of the New Deal's experimental programs failed but the legacy of others continues to surround us. The Civilian Conservation Corps, Public Works Administration, Works Progress Administration, and the Federal Emergency Relief Administration provided government financed programs that created buildings, roads, landscapes and direct employment locally. State assistance through the General Spending Authority

also granted the Pennsylvania State University the funds to build nine new buildings in 1937, priming it to become the second largest college in Pennsylvania by 1939. Its expansion resulted in a measure of economic stability to State College and with it, the growth that would for the first time surpass Bellefonte as a population center of the county.

The Centre County Historical Society celebrates

the 75th anniversary of the New Deal with a look at the Great Depression and its effect on Centre County residents. Throughout this exhibit we explore local business and industry and the general climate in which they operated, providing a greater understanding of Centre County as we know it today.

On **Thursday, October 30** Penn State University Professor of American History, William Pencak will address this topic while providing insights into current events. This special presentation will mark the opening of the exhibit and will take place at the Centre Furnace Mansion at **7:00 p.m.**



American Lime & Stone, Bellefonte, 1940s

About the Centre County Historical Society

Centre County Historical Society
Centre Furnace Mansion
1001 East College Avenue
State College, PA 16801
814.234.4779
info@centrecountyhistory.org
http://www.centrecountyhistory.org

The Centre County Historical Society operates the Centre Furnace Mansion as an historic house museum. The Mansion is open to the public for tours and library use on Sundays, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. and by appointment. The Society's hours of operation are Mondays through Fridays from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

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Founded in 1904, the Centre County Historical Society (CCHS) is the oldest and largest history organization in the county, serving as the official historical society of Centre County. It is a community and volunteer based non-profit educational organization that works collaboratively with local, regional, county, and state organizations in helping to preserve and promote the area's historic, cultural, and natural resources.

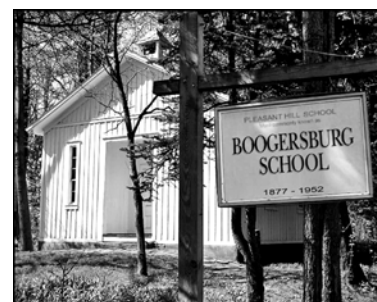
CCHS is headquartered in the Centre Furnace Mansion, a restored and furnished ironmaster's home listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This historic mansion and nearby iron furnace stack represent the 18th century beginnings of the charcoal iron industry in this area, and the 19th century beginnings of Penn State University, originally located on furnace lands. The site offers more than eight acres of landscaped grounds and gardens.

CCHS disseminates historical information about Centre County; offers programs and exhibits of historical and cultural interest for children and adults; marks and helps preserve and protect the Centre Furnace Mansion property and grounds, our newly acquired Boogersburg School, and other historical sites and landscapes in Centre County; maintains a collection of artifacts, books, manuscripts, maps and photographs; and publishes and promotes interest in historically significant publications relating to Centre County.

Society members and others in the community are invited to support these activities by contributing to the Centre County Historical Society Endowment Fund, managed by the Centre County Community Foundation.

Mansion Notes is published as a benefit of membership in the Centre County Historical Society, which is made possible through the Keatley Fund.

The Centre County Historical Society (CCHS) is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, under Section 501(c)(3) of the I.R.S. Code. Donations are tax deductible. Official registration and financial information about CCHS may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



Upcoming Events

October

🔊 Thompson Society - HUB Gallery Tour

Wednesday, October 8 at 5:30 p.m.

See page 9 for more information.

🔊 "Centre County During the Great Depression" Exhibit Opening Reception

Thursday, October 30 at 7:00 p.m.

Special presentation by Dr. William Pencak, Professor of American History, PSU. Celebrate the exhibit opening reception of "Tough Time, Lasting Legacies: The Great Depression, The New Deal, and Centre County" which will run until June 30, 2009.

November

🔊 "Centre County and the Civilian Conservation Corps Camps"

Thursday, November 13 at 7:00 p.m.

Join the Centre County Historical Society and the Centre County Genealogical Society for this special presentation at Foxdale Village Auditorium. See page 5 for more information.

December

🔊 Stocking Stuffer Antiques, Art & Fine Craft Sale

December 4 to 6

See page 6 for more information.

🔊 Photos with Santa

Saturday, December 13 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

See page 7 for more information.

President's Corner

CCHS Receives Award of Merit

As these Mansion Notes suggest, the Centre County Historical Society is actively engaged in a full plate of initiatives - from providing educational opportunities to children and adults at our historic buildings and gardens to gathering, caring for, and sharing county-related historical materials with the community and its researchers. We offer a rich selection of free programs and exhibits in a broad range of subjects each year. And we work collaboratively with other local organizations, municipalities, and government agencies, particularly in issues related to the identification and preservation of historic sites and landscapes.

Our activities, however, often extend beyond the county's boundaries, to link with programs having a statewide theme as well. Our last year's exhibit, *Centre County and the Civil War*, accompanying programs, and *Centre County Heritage* publication, is an example. It was part of a Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Pennsylvania Humanities Council, and Penn State University effort to begin to look at the tragic story of the War county-by-county across the Commonwealth in order to show how those stories relate to a larger national story that will be reflected in the upcoming Civil War's anniversary commemoration in 2011.

We are pleased to announce that the Centre County Historical Society was just notified that it has received an Award of Merit from the Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations for its offering, *Centre County and the Civil War*. CCHS is one of only four museum and history organizations across Pennsylvania to receive this highly competitive and highly coveted 2008 Award of Merit.

Enthusiastic congratulations are due to the many people who were involved in this project, but very special thanks go to the outstanding professional efforts of **Angela Breeden**, **Dave Lembeck**, and **Doug Macneal** for this noteworthy achievement.

And there is more to come with our new exhibit, *Tough Times and Lasting Legacies*, opening October 30, 2008.

~ Jackie Melander

Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations invites you to recognize the outstanding achievements of Pennsylvania's museum community.

Luncheon Reception and Awards Ceremony Tuesday, October 28, 2008 at 12:30 p.m.

Antique Automobile Club of America Museum
161 Museum Drive
Hershey, Pennsylvania 17033

For more information, contact the PFMHO by calling (717) 909-3995 or visit <http://www.pamuseums.org>.



The Docents' Diary

by Mary Osborn

July 13, 2008: This afternoon I was startled to see a man and woman outside peering in through the Mansion's Hearth Room windows. "We're geo-caching," the woman mouthed. I didn't understand, so I gestured for them to come inside. During the next hour, this fascinating couple from Port Allegheny, PA introduced greeter Ilene Glenn and me to their new hobby of Geocaching.

Geocaching is a new, high-tech treasure hunting game using global positioning system (GPS) devices. The game is played by locating special hidden containers, called geocaches, which usually contain trinkets and log books placed by other geocachers. Once a cache has been found and the log book signed, the finder trades a goodie of his or her own for a pick of the contents and rehides the cache for the next player. Later the cache is logged online where it is recorded for all to see. Often, the finder is asked specific questions which can only be answered at the geocache site.

There are more than 650,000 active geocaches around the world. According to <http://www.geocaching.com>, The Official Global GPS Cache Hunt Site, this sport is enjoyed by people of all age groups who share a strong sense of community and support for the environment. The website provides an organized source of coordinates where the caches are located, and lists guidelines that keep the game fun for everyone. It is also the site where geocachers record their visits and sometimes post photos. When I checked out the site, I discovered many entries from geocachers who visited Centre Furnace and the Mansion and was tickled by their comments. You will be too when you sign on to <http://www.geocaching.com>, enter zip code 16801, and search for Centre Iron Furnace. Can you determine why the July 13 geocachers exclaimed "Small World!"?

Interns and Volunteers

Where are they Now?



On August 19 a group from Penn State and CCHS traveled to Delaware to visit the Winterthur Museum and County Estate. Nicole Belolan, a PSU grad in American Studies (2007) is a graduate student in the prestigious American Material Culture program and gra-

ciously guided the group through one of the finest collections of American antiques in the country.

Ms. Belolan was introduced to the field by PSU Emeritus Teaching Scholar, Richard Pencek when she was a student in his Pennsylvania decorative arts class. Although she always had a fondness for decorative arts, she did not consider a career in museums until Mr. Pencek suggested it to her in her junior year. As a result, she sought local internship opportunities that would expose her to museum work, and she spent two semesters at the Centre County Historical Society conducting research. In part, her work on our exhibit "Folk and Fancy: A Comparison in Furniture and Decorative Arts" has lead to her current internship working with Winterthur curators for an upcoming exhibit on Southeastern Pennsylvania furniture.

In her final year at Winterthur, she is looking forward to pursuing her interests in textiles, paper, books and furniture, and she hopes to secure a position as a museum curator or research assistant after graduation. Ms. Belolan's accomplishments as a student give us great faith in her abilities, and we are certain that she has a great career ahead of her.

Welcoming...

This semester, CCHS is working with three Penn State students to give them a similar experience.

Matt Devine is an undergraduate student studying history and is conducting research related to 19th century culinary experiences. His findings will be utilized by the Centre Furnace Mansion docents during their tours for visitors and school children.

Justin McIntyre is an undergraduate student in archeological science with a specific interest in the Civil War. His research is centered on soldier's letters in the Special Collections Library at Pattee and the CCHS archival collections and he hopes to attend graduate school next year.

Benjamin McNitt, also a history major, began volunteering with CCHS over the summer months as a docent and is expanding his role by working as a research assistant for the upcoming exhibit.

Kristin Bozella recently graduated from Penn State with a degree in Marketing. She is the showroom manager for The Beautiful Bath by Folcarelli Supply Company, and is interested in event planning at Centre Furnace Mansion.

A Central Pennsylvania Nutcracker



For many families, seeing *The Nutcracker* around the holidays has become a tradition as common and important as decorating a Christmas tree and hanging stockings by the fireplace.

This holiday season, Centre County residents will have a chance to see the infamous ballet in a unique way. After an incredible world premiere last November, the Ballet Theatre of Central Pennsylvania (BTCP) will again perform *A Central Pennsylvania Nutcracker*, telling the story of the history of Centre County, on **Tuesday and Wednesday, December 3 and 4** at Eisenhower Auditorium on the Penn State campus.

The original ballet which premiered in St. Petersburg, Russia in 1892, revolves around a family named Stahlbaum, their daughter Marie (or Clara), and her Godpapa Drosselmeyer.

In *A Central Pennsylvania Nutcracker*, the setting has changed to a home and family in Centre County - the Centre Furnace Mansion, home of Moses and Mary Thompson and their children.

In addition to the Thompson family, guests at the party include the Boal family, Governor Andrew Gregg Curtin of Bellefonte and his wife and children, and Evan Pugh, first president of Penn State.

Alex Hill, music director and managing director of BTCP, said he came up with the concept while he was touring the Mansion. "I discovered a little bit about the Thompson family who owned the Mansion," he said. "I saw they had six children of which only one didn't marry. This daughter, Anna Eliza, in 1863 would have been around the age of the main character Marie, or Clara in the Nutcracker. I decided to take the story of the Nutcracker and weave it around the Thompson family and Centre County history."

Performances on **Tuesday and Wednesday, December 3 and 4, begin at 7:00 p.m.**, and will feature the Ballet Theatre, guest artists, local ballet students, and a live professional orchestra and children's chorus.

For more information, please call the BTCP / Arts Conservatory at (814) 234-4961. Tickets will be \$22 for Adults, \$17 for Seniors/Students, and \$12 for Children 12 and under, and will be available shortly at the Eisenhower Arts Ticket center.

The Centre County Historical Society will again reserve a block of seats at a special group rate. If interested in taking advantage of this special group rate and to enjoy an evening of live music and dance with fellow CCHS friends, call us (814) 234-4779.

Centre County and the Civilian Conservation Corps Camps



Please join the Centre County Historical Society and the Centre County Genealogical Society at the Foxdale Village Auditorium, 500 East Marylyn Avenue in State College, on **Thursday, November 13 at 7:00 p.m.** for a special presentation on the Civilian Conservation Corps in Centre County by Beth A. Rider, Environmental Planner, Centre County Planning & Community Development Office.

The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) had one of the largest roles in rebuilding and repairing the state's forests during the depression. When President Franklin D. Roosevelt created the CCC in 1933, the intent was to employ strong young men to rebuild the nation's forests, perform flood control, and work on beautification projects. However, the CCC far surpassed its defined mission, with teams of men establishing recreation areas, fire towers, tree plantations, roads, bridges, trails, dams, and flood control structures. From its inception in 1933 to its dissolution, the CCC's contribution to forest conservation and history within the Lumber Heritage Region remains visible today.

Stocking Stuffer Antiques, Art & Fine Craft Sale

The holidays are a time to shop, wrap and decorate. It is festive and joyous, but what if, like Charlie Brown, you have the sneaking suspicion that the holidays are getting just a little too commercial? How do you ease the big box-store-induced guilt and still manage not to look like Scrooge? Fortunately, Centre County has hung on to many of the traditions of its Victorian past, and an afternoon spent shopping can easily become a fun history lesson.

Please join us **Friday, December 5 and Saturday, December 6 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.** for the Centre County Historical Society's Stocking Stuffer Antiques, Art & Fine Craft Sale and holiday showcase fundraiser at the Centre Furnace Mansion.

Going strong in its sixth year, the Stocking Stuffer Antiques, Art & Fine Craft Sale has established itself as one of the area's premiere holiday events, helping to promote the unique work of local artisans and featuring some of the finest antiques, all in the decorated splendor within the historic Centre Furnace Mansion.

Visitors of all ages will be delighted by the elegant Victorian Mansion's holiday decorations, designed by the area's top decorators and florists. Guests responded with overwhelming support and enthusiasm over last year's professional decorations, and we are pleased to announce even more vendors this year.

We invite you to browse the handmade crafts, fine arts and antiques, enjoy the music and keep warm with the hot beverages and delicious desserts from local restaurants. If you haven't been to the Centre Furnace Mansion lately, this is a wonderful time to visit this historic house museum, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Whether your interests are jewelry, exquisitely designed wooden bowls, herbal scents, fine paper arts, candles, ceramics, hand woven baskets, fine china and glassware, original and antique furniture, holiday greens, linens or vintage collectibles, we have an extensive variety of items for sale. Find a truly special gift for everyone on your list this season.

General admission to the Stocking Stuffer Antiques, Art & Fine Craft Sale is only \$5.00, which includes hot beverages and desserts.

For those who wish to get the exclusive first peek, while enjoying hors d'oeuvres, desserts and wine from the area's top restaurants, you are invited to attend the Preview Party held on **Thursday, December 4 at 6:30 p.m.** Party attendees will be able to purchase items before the event is open to the general public. Admission is \$20.00 for CCHS members and \$25.00 for non-members. Invitations will be mailed shortly, but make sure to mark your calendar now. It is an event not to be missed! Proceeds from this annual fundraiser go towards preserving, enhancing, and sharing the Centre Furnace Mansion as a community resource.



Stocking Stuffer Volunteer Needs

The success of the Mansion's previous Stocking Stuffer Sales were due in no small part to all of the volunteers who donated items, food, and their time. Being a Stocking Stuffer volunteer is a fun way to spend a few hours watching over items, conversing with guests, collecting admission or helping with checkout in a beautiful setting, while providing much needed assistance to committee members. Working even one shift would make the weekend run much smoother:

Volunteer Shifts

FRIDAY:	SATURDAY:
9:30 a.m. to 12 noon	9:30 a.m. to 12 noon
12 noon to 2 p.m.	12 noon to 2 p.m.
2 p.m. to 4 p.m.	2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Please let us know if you can work a shift (or 2 or 3!). We also need interested individuals to help out the week before the event, by helping to greet antique dealers and crafts people at check in.

Another important aspect of the weekend is food! We are also seeking donations of cookies, cake, and other goodies. Please let Rhiannon know if you will be bringing something.

If you can help us with any of our volunteer needs, please call (814) 234-4779 or email rhiannon@centrefurnace.org.

Photos with Santa

Here comes Santa Claus, here comes Santa Claus, right down...College Avenue to Centre Furnace Mansion?! That's right, Santa is coming to the historic Centre Furnace Mansion to help raise money for the Centre County Historical Society!

Santa has decided to make a stop at the Mansion on **Saturday, December 13 from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.** to sit with all the good little boys and girls in Centre County.

The Mansion will be handsomely decorated for the holidays and the grand Hearth Room is the perfect setting for a truly unique holiday photograph. Why take your children and grandchildren to the mall when you can take them to a beautiful historic site, all while helping to raise money for a good cause? More information will be available shortly, but please save the date, for a date with Santa!

Gettysburg's Schmucker Hall in Peace and War

Please join the Centre County Historical Society and the Central Pennsylvania Civil War Roundtable at the Centre Furnace Mansion on **Monday, December 8 at 7:00 p.m.** for a special presentation on Gettysburg's Schmucker Hall by Wayne E. Motts, executive director of the Adams County Historical Society.

Built in 1832, Schmucker Hall on the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg witnessed the terrible fighting right outside its doors on July 1, 1863 between elements of the First Union Army Corps and the Southern Forces under the command of General A.P. Hill. The structure was used as an observation post by Union Cavalry General John Buford and later served as the largest field hospital in Gettysburg holding 600 wounded men of both sides from July to September in 1863. Placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973, Schmucker Hall is today the home of the Adams County Historical Society (<http://www.achs-pa.org>).

Wayne Motts graduated from The Ohio State University with a B.A. in history in 1989 and earned a Masters Degree in American history from the Shippensburg University of Pennsylvania in 1994. He has spoken to a wide range of historical bodies and groups on topics related to the American Civil War including the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC. In addition to his speaking engagements, Wayne has published several pieces related to the American Civil War in a variety of publications. In 2005 he was named executive director of the Adams County Historical Society. Wayne is the chairman of the Alliance of Pennsylvania County Historical Societies (APACHS), which promotes collaboration and best practices among the Commonwealth's 67 county historical societies. As chairman of APACHS he sits on the board of the Pennsylvania Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations (PFMHO).



A Note from the Gardens

by Mary Sorensen

CFM Garden Coordinator

Late summer and autumn here in Centre County brought with it weeks of balmy weather, perfect for planting or transplanting perennials and many other gardening chores. It has also been a nice time to take a few moments out of our busy lives to smell the roses that have decided to grace us with a late season bloom or two and enjoy the colors of autumn that all seem somehow more rich and beautiful in the sublime light of this time of year. The Centre Furnace Mansion gardens continue to feature the whites, pinks and purples of Garden Phlox, Purple Cone Flowers, Asters and Sedums, the golden yellows of Black Eyed Susans and Tansy and the bright red berries of Viburnums to name a few.

The 2008 growing season has been full of activity here for the Centre Furnace Mansion Garden Committee starting with the Plant Celebration plant sale in May and followed by continued weekly gardening evenings to maintain and improve the gardens. Centre Furnace was also host this summer to on-site presentations about the gardens to organizations including OLLI, the Ferguson Township Garden Club and the PSU Garden Club. Also, the Penn State Master Gardeners of Centre County held their annual picnic at Centre Furnace Mansion during which "The Gardener's Garden", first established with a gift from Paul Harner in honor of the McLaughlin family, was rededicated in honor of all of the volunteer gardeners who have made the renovation of the gardens and grounds at Centre Furnace Mansion possible over the years.

Spring and autumn hands-on workshops facilitated by several PSU Master Gardeners focused on perennial division where participants learned to divide large clumps of Siberian Iris along with, Hosta, Bearded Iris, Yarrow, Lilies, Chrysanthemums, and Liriope to name a few. The garden season finished at Centre Furnace with the PNC Bank-United Way Day of Caring when we hosted over 90 volunteers from organizations including PSU Office of Physical Plant, PSU Arborists, Optical Image Technology, Leadership Centre County, Young Lawyers' Division of Centre County Bar Association, Penn State Enrollment Management, Centre County United Way Young Leaders, PSU Research & Graduate School, State College Spikes, and Lady Lions Basketball to complete many gardening and painting projects outside and in the Centre Furnace Mansion.

To add to the beauty of the gardens, Victorian era iron planting urns and a circular iron tree bench now grace the property, a gift from the Plant Celebration plant

sale. Several wonderful books on our wish list, focusing primarily on historic garden subjects, were graciously donated to the Centre County Historical Society's library this summer by several volunteers from the Centre Furnace Mansion Garden Committee.

2008 has been a remarkable year here in the Centre Furnace Mansion gardens, that are now beginning to realize the beauty of a Victorian landscape thanks to the help of all who give their time to this project.



Garden Reflections

by Judy Heberling

CFM Garden Committee Volunteer

In 1978 when the Centre County Historical Society acquired the Centre Furnace Mansion tract, the property did not reflect its past significance, but rather that of a student rental property with even some vestiges of a once hoped for amusement park - recreational facility. The site's shabby appearance masked its historical importance. The stately trees surrounding the large 19th century house remained, of course, but the colorful gardens and sweeping lawn visitors see today are the result of ten years of vision, planning, and tireless volunteer effort.

Unfortunately we know very little about the original layout and planting plans for the property, but we have some evidence that Moses and Mary Irvin Thompson, who lived in the house for fifty years (1842-1891), were influenced by Victorian domestic landscape design, particularly the wildly popular principles of Andrew Jackson Downing, the Martha Stewart of his day. When the Thompsons converted their home from a simple Georgian structure to a more stylish Victorian, they probably changed the landscape features as well.

Our limited knowledge of the location of Mary Thompson's gardens and the types of plants she liked and used comes from a few historic 1890s photographs and from letters and reminiscences by the family and their visitors. We know that the Thompsons maintained beds in the vicinity of what we now call "Margery and Rae's Garden" (the

upper bed), as well as a kitchen garden in the same place we plant today. We can also make educated guesses about the appearance of the site based on historical information we have about gardens and gardening practices of other 19th-century Centre County residents.

Rather than focusing narrowly on replicating a specific garden or time period, the CCHS has taken a broader approach to landscaping the Centre Furnace Mansion grounds. As a result, today's Victorian gardens complement the existing architecture, location, and current uses of the property while suggesting what a 19th century visitor might have seen. Virtually all of the plants found on the property today were available to Mary Irvin Thompson. While the Centre Furnace Mansion gardens reflect the Victorian spirit, they also incorporate special - yet appropriate - plants from our own period, including many from the extraordinary State College gardens of the late Rae Dickson Chambers - rosarian, perennial gardener, and dedicated CCHS volunteer. The eras and plants blend seamlessly to create a landscape that connects past and present at Centre Furnace Mansion.



CCHS Receives IMLS Grant

Treasured objects and artifacts held by the Centre County Historical Society will be preserved for future generations with help from the IMLS Connecting to Collections Bookshelf, a core set of conservation books, DVDs, and online resources donated by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

CCHS was one of 776 museums, libraries and archives selected to receive the IMLS Connecting to Collections Bookshelf. The IMLS Connecting to Collections Bookshelf is part of a multi-year, multifaceted IMLS national initiative to raise public awareness and inspire action to care for the collections held in public trust by libraries and museums throughout the United States. To learn more about the Institute, please visit <http://www.imls.gov>.

Thompson Society

Our next Thompson Society event will be a tour of the HUB-Robeson Galleries on **Wednesday, October 8 at 5:30 p.m.** on the Penn State campus. We will visit the exhibit *Something To Look Forward To* which pays homage to the exceptional talent, unique vision, and courageous persistence of particular mature artists who have created dynamic abstract images and objects during extended and successful careers. We will also see *Response to Machiavelli*. Machiavelli proposed in his book, *The Prince*, that power, in and of itself, was the ultimate goal of the public square. This series of paintings responds to that premise, offering a moral perspective on political issues. The works are based on the words of some of history's greatest social and political philosophers, including Nelson Mandela, Gandhi, Mencius, Meister Eckhart, Baal Shem Tov, the Sufi masters of Islam, Martin Luther King, Jr. and many others.

If you would like to attend this event, please register by calling (814) 234-4779 or emailing info@centrecountyhistory.org. There is metered parking at the HUB Parking Deck, but if you do not wish to park on campus, please let us know and we will make arrangements to carpool from the Centre Furnace Mansion.

Thank You

The Centre County Historical Society would like to thank the following people for their help in ensuring that CCHS programs are relative, informative and fun! Special thanks to **Anne Quinn Corr** for her fascinating presentation at the blueberry picnic held on July 17.

We would also like to thank **Lou Prato** and Executive Director **Ken Hickman** from the Penn State All-Sports Museum for their presentation and tour of the museum and stadium for the inaugural Thompson Society event on August 13.

Thank you to **Ron and Sue Smith** for their informative tour of the historic John I. Thompson Grain Elevator and Coal Sheds in Lemont on September 25. The Lemont Village Association has spent many years restoring and preserving the granary, and it shows!

Thank you to **Julianne Snider**, exhibition designer at the Penn State Earth and Mineral Sciences Museum & Art Gallery for the Thompson Society tour of the Center for Education, Research, and Collections on September 30.

And finally, thanks to our friends and members who come out to support these events!

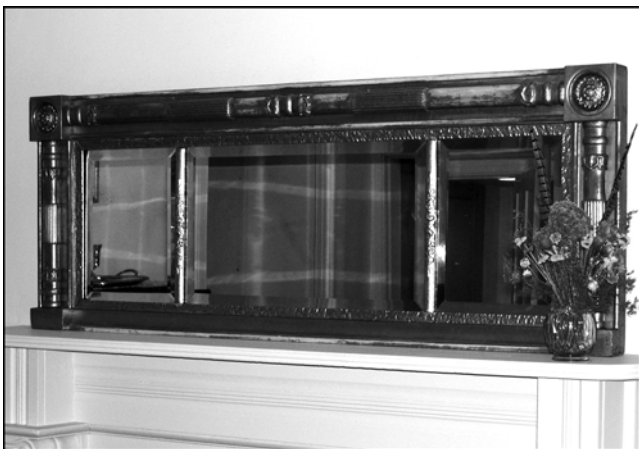
Recent Acquisitions

Over the past few months, the Centre County Historical Society has received a number of important gifts for the museum collection, all of which are now on view.

Most recently, our friends and neighbors at **W.E. Esber Imported Rugs** made a significant contribution to CCHS through a donation of a collection of rugs.



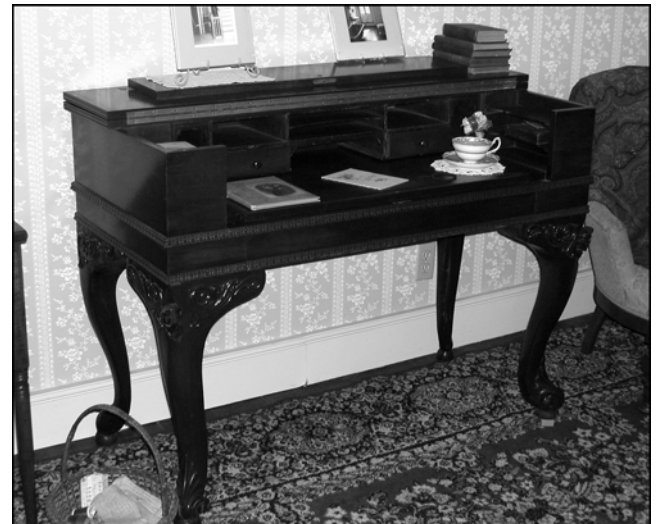
This exquisite Joshegan piece is one of six Persian and Indian rugs located in the Mansion's entryway, library, master bedroom, gallery and second floor landing. This major gift adds to the interpretive interest of the Mansion and helps to create a more accurate representation of the time period. For more information on Esber's Rugs, please visit them online at <http://www.esberrugs.com> or call (814) 238-2732.



This gold leafed mantle mirror was given to CCHS for display in the dining room of the Mansion by long-time Society friend, **Lois Smith**. The mirror descended through her husband's family and makes a welcomed addition to the dining room collection.



This Eastlake bedroom suite was donated to CCHS over the summer months in memory of **David L. and Anna L. Porter and Hal L. Porter**. It consists of a bed, dresser with mirror and washstand and is an example of southern furniture that is otherwise not represented in our collection. (This image also shows the Tabriz run, which was one of the pieces in the Esber gift.)



The donation of a spinet desk also changed the appearance of the sitting room, where it helps to create a more intimate atmosphere in the private living space of the Thompson family. It was donated in memory of **Doris M. Seward**.

Continuing Education . . .

Bob Struble's Restoration Story

Having lived beside the Boegersburg School for many years, I became quite taken by its story. I knew that when my dear friend and sculptress, Sybil Grucci, decided to sell the school, her sculpting studio of over 50 years, mine would be the first offer.

That opportunity came in 2001. My plan was to restore Boegersburg to its original state and that restoration became my passion. Fortunately, Sybil had done very little to the integrity of the building, so my charge, while challenging, was certainly not impossible.

I began with the exterior and in particular, the tin roof. After consultation with a local contractor, we decided that the quality of the tin was such that it was better to repair the roof than replace it. Next, using early photos and "trails" in the attic worn by old ropes and guides, I determined where the original bell tower had been located. A reconstructed tower now houses an antique bell that rings once again as children arrive at Boegersburg.

Very near to the bell tower was a three-ton brick and mortar chimney in disrepair from non-use. The next challenge was to complete substantial repairs and reinforcements so that I could remove the Buffalo forced air furnace and replace it with the school's original heat source, a cast-iron wood stove. With all of the roof structures ready to go, I moved on to the walls of the schoolhouse.

The school's wooden exterior quickly came back to life with a good pressure cleaning and a new coat of whitewash. After replacing the front door with a solid wooden door and the modern panes of window glass with hand-blown panes - no easy task, I might add - the schoolhouse finally resembled photos of its earlier self.

Yet a few important exterior items were missing - a woodshed and two outhouses. Just off the front porch was an ash pile, evidence that a woodshed had been located nearby. I found an old two-seater outhouse in a farm field and dragged the weathered structure down Fox Hill Road to the school. After settling it beside the ash pile, I converted the inside to a coal bin and wood storage area, which now holds ample fuel to heat the schoolhouse during the winter months. I situated a single outhouse from another local field off the back corner of the school and built a second structure to resemble it. That small wooden building houses a composting toilet, a modern amenity that provides a little more comfort for visitors.

With the outside complete, I turned my attention to the inside. I experienced one memorable moment after another as I searched everything from antique shops to eBay for the many artifacts that would change the shell of the old building into a living museum.

I found several sizes of old wooden desks in attics and under tarps. After much deliberation on how to lay out the rows, I bolted each of the 32 desks to the aged oak floor facing the front of the school. Only one piece of the original chalkboard remained on the front wall of the schoolhouse. I was able to salvage slate from the renovation of Penn State's Hammond Engineering Building, which I carefully mounted above the old chalk tray to cover the rest of the front wall.

Boegersburg was now almost ready for guests and needed just a few finishing touches. Those details included eBay purchases of an 1890s American flag and pull-down wall maps from the 1940s, my own 7th grade copy of the United States Constitution, and a turn-of-the-century teacher's desk which belonged to a close friend.

From the crawlspace underneath the school, I discovered a framed pen and ink sketch of Abraham Lincoln, a very exciting find. I knew that George Washington's portrait usually hung beside Lincoln's, and I found the perfect picture in an old biography of Washington. I took the worn page to a copy center, had a duplicate made on inexpensive paper, and steeped it briefly in iced tea. That little trick made George, like Abe, look as if he had spent the last 40 years or so underneath the schoolhouse.

That same crawlspace provided another treasure, the broken arm of an iron wall sconce, one of four that had been mounted on the window frames. Just before discovering the damaged sconce, I had purchased a set of four iron sconces in a local antique shop. When I compared the damaged sconce with the others, I was thrilled to find that they were identical. I quickly hung the sconces and placed an oil lamp on each.

Throughout the process, I was in constant communication with Helen Egler, former teacher at Boegersburg School, and Gwen Bunnell, a good friend and learning specialist with the State College Area School District. In 2002, Boegersburg was ready to re-open its doors to the public.

For the next two years, the number of visitors continued to grow, and in 2004, we decided to gift the schoolhouse to the Centre County Historical Society. I continue to stay closely involved with the school and, among other things, keep the coal bin filled for the winter programs. Restoring the old schoolhouse is perhaps one of the most far-reaching things I have done and certainly one that I treasure deeply.



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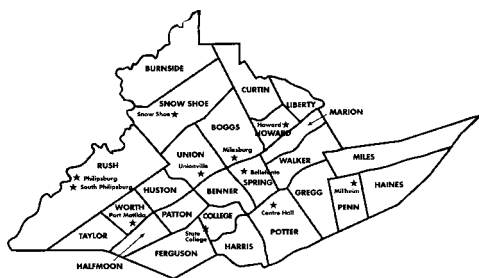
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