



MANSION NOTES

CENTRE FURNACE MANSION

NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 31, Number 1

Winter 2009

When You're Smiling! *Dedicated to Victor Pifer, Mr. Banjo* *By Sylvia P. Onusic*

It was 1933, the worst year of the Great Depression and the unemployment rate had reached 25.2%. Homes were foreclosed upon and tens-of-thousands of Americans found themselves without a roof or a job. There wasn't much to smile about, except maybe the repeal of prohibition.

But the people of Centre County did smile! They laughed, and the sun did shine, mostly on sultry summer afternoons when they came to town to see the parade which showcased the showmanship of many organizations that marched down Main Street. And one of those bands which was always the talk of the town was the Bellefonte Banjo Marching Band, a unit composed of local girls and boys aged 9 to 20.

The band's origins go back to Victor Pifer of Bellefonte, who had been teaching local children banjo lessons for several years prior. He knocked on doors all over the area and convinced parents that their children should study banjo. Banjo music was the "cat's pajamas" and appealed to the kids and their parents. The kids got their own banjo to practice on and at the end of the lessons it was theirs to keep. His travels took him to Howard, Milroy, Lewistown, Snow Shoe, Tyrone, Philipsburg and even Lock Haven for weekly lessons. Victor opened a music store in Bellefonte in 1938 which remained open until 1968.

As the number of students continued to grow Victor came up with the idea of forming a band which gave its first performance in 1933 at the United Brethren Church in Bellefonte to raise money for the Boy Scouts. Victor

had big plans for the band. By 1938 they raised enough money to buy snazzy West Point uniforms with purple and gold shirts, and pineapple plumes on the helmets and were on the move. He hired a drill sergeant to teach them how to countermarch and perform tricky maneuvers such as the "pretzel".

As a marching band the Bellefonte Banjo Marching Band, the only one of its kind in the country, was something to see with a tall drum major and Norma, the petite five year old miss, out front, leading the band of almost 100 members and playing their theme song, *When You're Smiling*. There was always plenty of hearty applause

from the crowds. Norma Markle looks back fondly to those days and says, "Am I proud to have lived back then? You bet!"

By the time Memorial Day rolled around the band was ready for another exciting season of parades. The parade route in Bellefonte started at Linn Street and headed to the Undine Fire house grounds covering most of the side

streets. Many fire companies had sharp marching units. The Alphas in their black white trim uniforms were hard to beat.

In 1939 the band was invited to perform at the New York World's Fair. The excitement in the community was overwhelming. In 1941 the band won first place at the American Guild of Banjoists, Mandolinists and Guitarists National Competition at Niagara Falls. Eventually the war intervened ending their travels and the group disbanded in 1942, ending an era of many happy memories.



About the Centre County Historical Society

Centre County Historical Society
Centre Furnace Mansion
1001 East College Avenue
State College, PA 16801
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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.

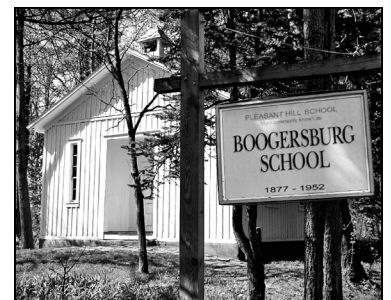
CCHS is headquartered in the Centre Furnace Mansion, a restored and furnished ironmaster's home listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This historic mansion and nearby iron furnace stack represent the 18th century beginnings of the charcoal iron industry in this area, and the 19th century 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.

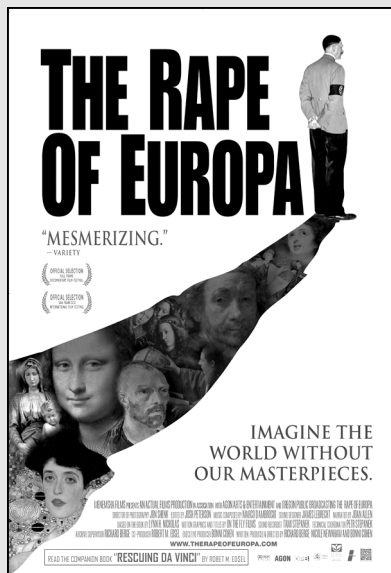
The Centre County Historical Society (CCHS) is a non-profit, tax-exempt organization, under Section 501(c)(3) of the I.R.S. Code. Donations are tax deductible. Official registration and financial information about CCHS may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within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



Upcoming Events

February

🎧 Screening of *The Rape of Europa* T.B.A.



See page 8 for more information.

March

🎧 Taking Care of Your Collections Thursday, March 5 at 7:30 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.

🎧 Thompson Society - Palmer Museum of Art Tour Thursday, March 19 at 1:00 p.m.



See page 8 for more information.

President's Corner

Our Awards Program

Each year, for the last twenty, the Centre County Historical Society has recognized individuals and organizations for their contributions to Centre County history and its preservation. Three different categories of awards have been given over these years.

- In the category of historic preservation, more than 140 awards have been given for projects ranging from the restoration of historic properties to the preservation and protection of landscapes and historic and natural resources, from serving as historical stewards of county records to gathering and sharing the county's stories.

- Another set of awards have recognized more than 100 volunteers who have given their time and energy for special projects or to carry out the monthly, daily, and in some cases almost hourly needs of the Centre Furnace Mansion and Boogersburg School programs and properties.

- A third category, under the heading, The President's Award for Outstanding Service, has honored an individual or a group of individuals who have offered their services and expertise to the Society in an extensive way and over an extended period of time.

This year's preservation and volunteer award winners are recognized on the following page, and with tremendous appreciation, I would like to recognize **Grant Sherritt** as the winner of the President's Award for 2008 and add his name to this twenty year list.

Grant has helped to carry out CCHS goals in a multitude of ways: he has been a long-time member of the Society's Board of Governors; he has served as a regularly scheduled docent sharing the history of Centre Furnace with Mansion visitors, including that sharing with hundreds of school children; and he has been a member of the Publications Committee and chair of the book sales program, a chairmanship that has included distributing and mailing books, keeping the financial and inventory records, and (frequently) carrying large (and heavy) book boxes to various locations. Added to that has been his gracious willingness to be on hand and helpful when other Society or Mansion needs arrive. Grant has been a keen example of an individual who has personally and meaningfully given to the Society well above and beyond the call of duty.

Winners of the President's Award over the last twenty years represent a valuable history of major events and major players in CCHS activities and accomplishments. With our special thanks, we add Grant's name to the list, along with the names of the nineteen other winners since 1989, to serve as a reminder of that history and their significant roles in it.

~ Jackie Melander

Historic Preservation Awards

The Centre County Historical Society held its Annual Meeting and Historic Preservation Awards Ceremony at the Centre Furnace Mansion on Sunday, January 4, 2009. John Ziegler, Bob Gruver and Bob Hazelton, members of the Preservation Awards Committee, awarded five recipients for their outstanding preservation work in the county. The Historical Society extends its sincerest appreciation for the hard work these individuals have done to interpret and preserve Centre County's history.

The 2008 Excellence in Historic Preservation Awards were presented to:

- **The James E. Bryson Family (John Bryson, Marty Jo Fleck and Martha Jane McIntyre)**, for preserving and framing a 1861 topographic map of Centre County that was generously donated to the Centre County Historical Society.

- **Dr. John and Barbara Fisher**, for the restoration of the Fisher Farm along Buffalo Run in Patton Township. The Fishers worked with ClearWater Conservancy and the Heritage Conservancy, of Doylestown, to acquire a conservation easement that will keep their 197-acre property undeveloped and unmined in the future.

- **Jay Herrington**, on behalf of the members of the **Philipsburg Elks Lodge 1173**, for the reproduction of the original 37-foot-tall Bill Adams Santa Claus (originally created in 1962) and its installation at the Cold Stream site.

- **Roger W. Pollok**, for his efforts to preserve Centre County's architectural history through maintenance of his Zion farmstead, where he has preserved nine structures from the 19th century. A professional geologist who digs up his own materials, Pollok has sculpted clay in a two-story log house for about 25 years.

- **Prime Property Group (Robert and Ralph Pileggi)**, for the sensitive replacement and rebuilding of the apartment building located at 700 West College Avenue in State College. A fire destroyed the century-old building in April 2006, and the new building was built to resemble neighboring homes.

CCHS Volunteer of the Year awards were given to **Bill and Honey Jaffe** for their increased assistance with fundraising and planning for the future, and **Beth Rider** of the Centre County Planning and Development Office for her willingness to share CCC camp information, among other things, with the Society.

Volunteer Appreciation Awards were given to **Kristin Bozella** of Folcarelli Supply Company's "The Beautiful Bathroom" and **Benjamin McNitt**, student volunteer and docent.



Award winners (from left): Grant Sherritt, Beth Rider, Barbara Fisher and Dr. John Fisher

Outstanding Service to the Centre County Historical Society ~ President's Award

- 1989 **Everett McLaughlin** - Overall contributions: Mansion restoration and maintenance
- 1990 **Jim Deeslie** - Landscape design, Centre Furnace Mansion grounds
- 1991 **Richard D. Hoy** - Centre Furnace Mansion miniature
- 1992 **Betty Johnson** - Editor, *Story of Scotia*
- 1993 **Jeff Bower** - Overall contributions: Vice president, guidance in legal matters
- 1994 **Bob Gruver** - Overall contributions: Membership, programs, tours, publications
- 1995 **Margery Johnstone** - Overall contributions: Board, Sideboard, gardens
- 1996 **Lois Smith** - MITS organization
- 1997 **Centre Furnace Mansion Docents**
- 1998 **Doug Macneal** - Editor, *Centre County Heritage*
- 1999 **Carolyn Clinefelter Smith** - Overall contributions: Board, docent and coordinator, photographer, miniature mansion
- 2000 **Dick Pencek and American Studies students** - Mansion out buildings restoration work
- 2001 **Beth Ricker** - Overall contributions: Board, docent and coordinator, MITS, Sideboard, programs, education
- 2002 **Beth Sweetow** - Overall contributions: Board, programs, finances
- 2003 **Penn State Master Gardeners**
- 2004 **Centre Furnace Mansion Garden Committee (Mary Sorensen, coordinator)**
- 2005 **Charlotte deLissovoy** - Overall contributions: Board, docent, education committee/chair
- 2006 **Sharon & Eric Childs and the Boogersburg School Docents**
- 2007 **David Lembeck** - Graphic designer: Publications, exhibits
- 2008 **Grant Sherritt** - Overall contributions: Board, docent, publications, book sales chair

A Time to Work Together

The American museum today, more than any other time in the past century, is a place for exchange, encounter, and education...the museum has grown to become a reflection of American democracy itself.

- Marjorie Schwarzer, *Riches, Rivals & Radicals: 100 Years of Museums in America*

As the Centre County Historical Society begins its 105th year of collecting, preserving, and presenting the history of Centre County to the public, we are experiencing significant changes all around us. This has prompted many people to seek information about earlier times, especially the era of the Great Depression, and we are happy to be an organization that serves their interests (our exhibit, *Tough Times and Lasting Legacies: The Great Depression, The New Deal and Centre County* will be on view through June 30).

Exhibits are one of the many ways that we present information for the benefit of the public. However, as Schwarzer explains in *Riches, Rivals & Radicals*, our cultural institutions are a reflection of our country's priorities and needs; when our nation changes, we change, and now is the time to work together to "exchange, encounter, and educate".

This spring, we will collaborate with new friends to provide varied educational opportunities; we will explore new and relevant subjects; and we will invite new contributors to offer fresh perspective in *Mansion Notes*. In this issue, we are happy to welcome two new voices as we look forward to exploring all of the ways that we can work together to make a richer experience for you, our members and supporters.

Taking Care of Your Collections

On Thursday, March 5 at 7:30 p.m., CCHS will partner with the Centre County Genealogical Society to present a program for anyone interesting in caring for their family treasures at home. Karen Dabney, Conservator at Pattee Library and Angela Breeden, Executive Director of CCHS will talk about how to extend the life of your paper, textile, metal, glass and ceramic objects. This event will take place at the Foxdale Village Auditorium, 500 East Marylyn Avenue in State College.

What's in a Name?

By Richard Knupp

Have you ever looked at a name of something and wondered where its name came from? To be honest with you, I have seldom thought about names of places and things until recent years when I became interested in local history. It's not too hard to figure out places like Potters Mills or Boalsburg, since they are named after the founder of the town. Then there are places like Bellefonte where someone developed a story to try to explain the name and it was accepted without question.

Some fifty or so years ago, I spent many summer days fishing in a small mountain stream that flowed along a dirt road in upper Penns Valley called the Synagogue Gap Road. The small native brook trout were not trophy size fish but they were fun to catch and because they were not legal size, I released them.

It wasn't just the trout that drew me there, for I often spent more time sitting on a large boulder in the middle of the stream just absorbing the sounds of nature. All went well for a couple of years until one summer day I fell asleep while entranced with my paradise. Suddenly I was awakened by the sound of a large animal moving through the forest. My eyes caught sight of a black bear, about the same time that the bear saw me. I'm not sure who was more scared - the bear or me - for we both darted in opposite directions. I jumped on my bicycle and didn't stop peddling until I reached my home. That was the last time I was there.

While communicating with Angela Breeden, the executive director of the Centre County Historical Society in December, she informed me that a professor from Albany, NY, Dr. Levy, had contacted her and asked how the Synagogue Gap Road got its name (and something that Dr. Levy doesn't know, is that a nearby town, Aaronsburg, got its name from its founder, Aaron Levy). Angela had searched everything at her disposal but remained puzzled so by chance she asked me.

I started my reply by telling Angela that I had never thought about it and would see if I could find out. I was giving her details of the area and the more I wrote, the closer I came to a conclusion. I remembered something that Reverend Keith Koch, the feature writer for my *Bellefonte Secrets* newsletter, had said about a conversation with Mayor Stanley Goldman of Bellefonte. Keith had asked Stan where the Jewish people worship, when there are too few of them to have their own synagogue. His answer was much like the place that I fished as a youth. Synagogue Gap is a quiet place where you could be lost in nature and meditate and pray in private.

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Day of Caring

The Centre County Historical Society would like to give an enormous thank you to all who participated in the 15th Annual PNC Bank-United Way Day of Caring on October 2, 2008.

Ray Forziat, General Manager of Lowe's Home Improvement Warehouse, served as the Centre County Historical Society's project manager. He oversaw members of the Lady Lions basketball team inside Centre Furnace Mansion, where they put a final coat of red paint on the woodwork in the old kitchen, meticulously did wall repairs and painting in the children's room and painted a high reaching window near the steps in the library. Ray was also instrumental in generously donating a remarkable gift of paint and painting supplies for our paint projects.

Penn State's Office of Physical Plant's **Jeff Dice** arranged for PSU's entire professional landscape and arborist teams to do tree work and several grounds projects - an amazing gift of service and materials.

Centre Furnace Mansion Garden Committee volunteers and PSU Master Gardeners of Centre County put groups to work on every corner of the Mansion property! Clouds and mist gave way to sunshine early as nearly 90 volunteers trickled in.

Katie Frieden, **Deb McManus** and **Deborah Mezaros** led the Young Lawyers' Division of Centre County Bar Association and Optical Image Technology

groups that did a beautiful job staining the tool shed, touched up the trim, painted the cold frame and stained the steps on the Ice House exhibit building. They also got out the old iron ornamental fence sections and had volunteers scrape and wire brush these fences and applied a product that goes on rust to make it paintable. We would like to install the fences and plant roses with them near the entrance to the parking lot next spring.

Bob Leonard and the State College Spikes baseball team neatly organized all of the stone and helped clear the area where the compost and brush were located. They also put together the wooden tree bench on the Copper Beech tree and removed the stone steps that were never used near

Margery and Rae's Garden. They also helped with the mulching and composting effort.

Chris Igo, **Beverly Lipski** and **Ruth Merritt** worked with Leadership Centre County and Centre County United Way Young Leaders in the Wildlife Garden clearing stubborn honeysuckle, weeding out the nastiest of sticker weeds. They planted chokeberry, winterberry and several other bird and butterfly friendly plants.

Suzann Tedesco and **Ruth Merritt** planted Victorian era appropriate bulbs in the Anne Coffin Johnstone Garden and in the Tool Shed Gardens. Bulbs planted included a white Anemone blanda, white fall blooming crocus, magenta pink small allium and a small flowered yellow narcissus.

Susan Evans, **Crystal Copella** and **Bonnie Walter** led the PSU Research and Graduate School group to install mulch rings around a good deal of the trees and then they helped to remove walnuts and mulch Laura's Lilac Bower.

Marshall Garrett, **Jo Merrell** and **Lisa Coggins** with Centre Co. United Way Young Leaders and Penn

State Enrollment Management volunteers to rework and stabilize the stone steps that lead up to the arbor in Margery and Rae's Garden. Marshall donated several flats of wooly thyme from her garden which they planted in between the stones there and in the Front Parlor Garden. Many of the gardens were clipped, pruned, weeded, manured, and composted.

Judy Heberling worked at the sign in table to direct volun-

teers, and she and **Bonnie Walter** coordinated and set up lunch. Afterwards, Judy thoroughly cleaned up everything, which was greatly appreciated.

Pam Calkins took photos all day long, amassing over 800 photos in all! A selection of photographs are on the website:

<http://centrecountyhistory.org/gardens/volunteers/doc.htm>.

There really are not words to adequately express thanks for the contribution of everyone who volunteered, donated materials, brought tools, wheelbarrows, donated food and plants for planting. It is because of all of your help that the dreams and visions for this special place can be realized. Many, many thanks to all of you!



Boogersburg One-Room Schoolhouse & The United Way Day of Caring



We would like to extend a very special thank you to the many volunteers who worked tirelessly at the Boogersburg School on the Day of Caring. From inventorying books to clearing away brush, trimming trees and painting the school's exterior, it was a tremendous effort!

We are extremely grateful to our sponsors of supplies and other services:

**Best Line Rentals • Foxhill Gardens • Kissell
Motorsports • Lowes • Subway**

Sincere thanks go to the Centre County United Way office and to the following people for caring:

CENTRE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Angela Breeden • Eric Childs • Sharon Childs • Bob Gruver • Rhiannon McClintock • Mary Sorensen • Bob Struble • John Ziegler

D&E COMMUNICATIONS:

Troy Knecht

THE HARTMAN GROUP, INC:

Tammy Moyer

HOPE FOR KIDS:

Jessica Kappes • Patti Menges • Angela Nearhoof • Joe Viglione

KISSINGER BIGATEL AND BROWER REALTORS:

Larry Walker

LEADERSHIP CENTRE COUNTY:

Bill James • Curt Sayers

PENN STATE MASTER GARDENERS OF CENTRE COUNTY:

Crystal Copella • Katie Frieden • Marshall Garrett • Judy Heberling • Chris Igo • Deb McManus • Jo Merrell • Deborah Mezaros • Suzann Tedesco • Bonnie Walter

OPTICAL IMAGE TECHNOLOGY:

Mandy Campbell • Dawn Haines

PENN STATE ADMISSIONS:

Anne Rohrbach

PENN STATE COLLEGE OF COMMUNICATIONS:

Steve Sampsell

PENN STATE COLLEGE OF HEALTH & HUMAN DEVELOPMENT:

Stephanie Ebeling

PENN STATE ENROLLMENT MANAGEMENT:

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Allyson Hoover • Tim Kishbach • Pam Long • Chris Shinham

YOUNG LAWYERS DIVISION:

Susan Bardo • Kara Bowser • Kelley Gillette-Walker • Brian Marshall • Justin P. Miller • Laura Robbins • Amanda Seelye • Tony Simon

CCHS and Penn State Department of Integrative Arts Connections

On January 23, 2009 a reception was held at the Centre Furnace Mansion to celebrate the Richard Pencek/Karen Rugh Fund in the Arts and Architecture department at the Pennsylvania State University. The fund promotes the preservation program in the department of Integrative Arts and the reception spotlighted the 2009 recipients. A scholarship was awarded to Mary Sorensen, chair of the Centre Furnace Mansion Garden Committee, to further her education, and she is currently enrolled in the early American decorative arts class offered each spring. Angela Breeden, executive director of CCHS, is teaching a course on the management of historic sites and museums and is using the Centre Furnace Mansion as a case study throughout the course. The connection between CCHS and the department of Integrative Arts is a natural one, and we look forward to the possibilities that lie ahead.



Angela Breeden and Mary Sorensen with Brian Orland, Director of Architecture and Landscape Architecture

What's in a Name?

(continued from page 5)

I do know that there were a couple of Jewish people living in Penns Valley during the 20th century, and the only place I know of that was referred to as a synagogue, was Synagogue Gap.

On December 13, 2008, I returned to the paradise of my youth to see if mankind has destroyed the beauty of nature and I discovered that little has changed - except that some of the area is more wilderness than it was in 1950. It was so overgrown that I could not locate my stone to sit on.

Screening of "The Rape of Europa"

The award-winning documentary, *The Rape of Europa*, tells the story of Europe's great art collections during World War II, much of which was looted or destroyed by the Nazis. Over 60 years later, many of these lost objects have been discovered in museums, private collections, and on the auction block, resulting in heightened interest and several high profile legal battles. The movie features never before seen footage and provides a real perspective on the vast and long-term impact the actions of the Nazis had on world heritage.

In February, CCHS will partner with the Penn State Earth and Mineral Science Mineral Museum and Art Gallery to screen this landmark film. As the war in Iraq continues, the world museum community voices its ongoing concern for looted museums and plundered archeological sites, making the subject matter topical and important. We hope you will join us, at a time to be announced shortly.

For additional information about the film, please visit <http://www.rapeofeuropa.com>.

Thompson Society

Special events for our members will resume in 2009 with a trip to the Palmer Museum of Art on the Penn State campus on **Thursday, March 19 at 1:00 p.m.** Three special exhibits will be on view including *Peter Henry Emerson and American Naturalistic Photography*, making it a perfect time to visit. Dana Carlisle Kletchka, Curator of Education, will be our guide as we get a unique glimpse at the behind the scenes world of a university art museum. There is no charge for this event, but please register in advance by calling (814) 234-4779 or e-mailing info@centrecountyhistory.org. Deadline to register is March 16. For more information about the Palmer Museum, including parking, please visit <http://www.palermuseum.psu.edu>.

Stocking Stuffer Antiques, Art & Fine Craft Sale

The Stocking Stuffer Antiques, Art & Fine Craft Sale has become an important annual holiday fundraising tradition for the Centre County Historical Society, and we are pleased to report that our sale was quite a success, yet again.

We fell just short of our sales and attendance goals this year, but given these uncertain economic times, we are very pleased with the outcome and the generous financial contributions from our members and friends.

This year we brought in more high quality artisans, antique dealers and decorators, and our Thursday night Dessert and Wine Preview Party had a record attendance.

We must thank our committee members for all of their hard work and great ideas: **Angela Breeden, Honey Jaffe, Rhiannon McClintock, Jackie Melander, Mary Osborn, Beth Ricker, and Mary Sorensen.**

The overwhelming success and professionalism of this year's event are largely due to the decorators and local businesses who graciously donated their services. We would like to thank: **Avánt Garden, The Cat's Meow, Daniel Vaughn Designs, Wesley Scott's, and Woodrings Floral Gardens** for the interior decorations; **Kuhns Tree Farm** and **Tait Tree Farm** for donating trees; **The PSU Master Gardeners of Centre County** for the exterior decorations.

We would like to thank the local restaurants who provided food for the Preview Party: **The Atherton Hotel, Cabot Creamery, Delectable Delights by Heather Luse, The Diner, Harrison's Wine Grill & Catering, The Olive Garden, Perkin's Restaurant, Perk's Coffee Service, Red Lobster, Sam's Club, The Tavern Restaurant, Texas Roadhouse.**

The event was sponsored in part by **Nittany Bank.**

Finally, a sincere thank you goes out to all of our members and friends who generously donated their collectibles, those who baked and donated desserts and volunteered their time to help create our most successful event to date: **Joyce Adgate, Jill Aller, Davies Bahr, Joe Banks, Kristin Bozella, Jane Baum, Melissa Carpenter, Pat Clark, John and Martha Cox, Marion and Winnie Deppen, Edna Dombroski, Bob Donaldson, Elizabeth Dutton, Bob Hazelton, Barb Hunziker, Tina Hyde, Bill Jaffe, Silvi Lawrence, Felicia Lewis, Linda Marshall, Ann Moellenbrock, Bill Moyer, Brandy Newell, Ann Marie Rehmert, Dorothy Schumacher, Leslie Shelleman, Grant and Sue Sherritt, Johanna Sedgwick, Ralph and Colina Seeley, Dolores Simpson, Lois Smith, Jeanne Weber, Denise Wood, John Ziegler.**

Thank you to everyone who helped and to those who came out to the event. We hope to see you next year!



Rhiannon McClintock and Johanna Sedgwick at the Stocking Stuffer Dessert & Wine Preview Party

Stocking Stuffer Event Supporters

The contributions from our members and friends are the backbone of support for all CCHS programs and allow us to reach out to all of Centre County and celebrate its rich heritage. The following people generously gave monetary gifts that directly helped contribute to the success of the Stocking Stuffer event:

Martha Adams • Virginia F. Althouse • John E. & Henrietta H. Baylor • Betty Blackadar • Rosalie Bloom-Brooks & Jeff Brooks • Joan & Ralph Brower • Mimi Barash Coppersmith • Mary & Jack Falk • Fiore Fedeli Snyder Corothers, LLP • Joe & Bonnie Flay • Robert & Heather Fleck • Joelle Ferguson • Mr. & Mrs. Lawrence G. Foster • Blake & Linda Gall • Ernest M. Hawk • Lisa Herzog • Lam & Lina Hood • Bryce & Barbara Jordan • Charles & Ashley Kranich • Theresa & Mark Lafer • Col. John W. MacIndoe (USA-Ret) • Hervey & Glenda Manbeck • Roberts R. & Valeria J. Martin • Jane & Louis Moore • Hugh & Janyce Mose • Ernestine N. Noll • Dennis & Mary (Beth) Ricker • Ruth Grier Robinson • Pete & Carol Schempf • Barbara J. Smith • Lois M. Smith • Tom & Carolyn Smith • Walter Swoope, Jr. • Everett & Mary Linn Tiffany • Mr. & Mrs. Irvin P. Thompson, Jr. • Ike and Ellamae • Don & Marcile Tressler • Veronesi Building and Remodeling, Inc. • Bonnie K. Walter • Louise & Thomas Wartik • Ron & Doyle Wilkerson

Special thanks go to **Steven & Janice Livingston.**

The Docents' Diary

by Mary Osborn

December 13, 2009: The first floor front hall is one of the most elegant and welcoming spaces in the Mansion. It is also a place on the Mansion tour where I love to tell visitors about certain Victorian era values and behaviors that were part of the Irvin and Thompson families' daily lives.

"Set on the marble top of the petticoat mirror table is a silver tray that holds memories of long ago Mansion visitors..."

Proper manners and acceptable etiquette were vital to one's social standing in the community, and "calling" or "visiting" was the most important leisure activity for well-to-do ladies and gentlemen in Victorian era America. Proper etiquette dictated the clothing, time of visit and length of stay. Women were the more frequent callers, this being an important ritual of daily life of upper class women. It was simply the job of the woman of the house to keep the family in good social standing in the larger social world. There were strict rules on how a woman was to behave, with men's calling habits showing less strict rules or ceremony.

When "calling" or "visiting" friends, people would leave a calling card at the front door or parlor in a silver urn, basket or "card receiver", even if the person they were visiting was home. The cards were used as a reminder about who had visited recently and deserved a visit in return. Sometimes a loving greeting was added, though the calling card itself was considered a very important message. They served as a mode of communication to receive messages, greetings and announcements of who was in town, births, deaths, sympathy announcements, engagements, and general social events. It was also an exciting day in the social life of a young Victorian era family member to be granted his or her first calling card.

In the book *Decorum*, published in 1877, the following recommendations were made for refined visiting card etiquette: "Visitors should furnish themselves with cards. Gentlemen ought simply to put their cards into their pocket, but ladies may carry them in a small elegant portfolio, called a card-case. This they can hold in their hand and it will contribute essentially (with an elegant handkerchief of embroidered cambric) to give an air of good taste."

While the custom of using calling cards began in Europe in the early 1800s, it quickly spread to England and America, and the intricate courtesies of how and when to leave cards was a facet of Victorian social life and etiquette. Everything about a card carried a meaning, from its design and motifs to a turned-down corner or black border. They

could be colorful or plain, with lovely calligraphy or printing. The design, style, and even color border of a card actually carried a meaning to the receiver. A folded top left corner meant the visitor had come in person; an unfolded card meant a servant was sent. A folded right top corner meant congratulations, and the lower right fold expressed sympathy. Still some had a black band around the edge to signify the carrier was in mourning over the loss of a loved one. The earliest cards have fancy scrollwork and were hand embellished by a professional calligrapher, one card at a time. Cards were often saved and glued into scrapbooks as family mementos. Young people exchanged cards and autograph and scrapbooks to be kept as cherished mementos.

A packet of cards could be bought for a dollar or so, depending on the design. The edge of the card was as decorative as the rest. Edges were gilded, pierced, fancy razor cut, and scalloped.

With the development of penny post cards around the turn-of-the century, visiting became less common, the postcard era began and the calling card became another Victorian era remembrance we now share with 21st century visitors to the Mansion.

Photos With Santa



The Centre County Historical Society would like to give a huge thank you to **Howard Rupert** for taking time out of his extremely busy schedule to visit the Centre Furnace Mansion as Santa Claus on Saturday, December 13, 2008. The children were delighted to meet Santa in such a beautiful setting.

We must also give a big thank you to **Valerie Sanders** for taking professional-quality photos for the event.

Harrison's Wine Grill & Catering graciously donated cookies, thanks to **Karen Myford**.

Thank you to **Mary Osborn** and new volunteer **Sylvia Onusic** for helping out during the event.

A Note from the Gardens

by Mary Sorensen

CFM Garden Coordinator



Winter in the gardens at Centre Furnace Mansion brings images of crystal coated branches, snow blanketing the grounds and plants deeply asleep waiting for the longer and warmer days of spring to come, but the Centre Furnace Mansion Garden Committee is anything but dormant.

In late November, volunteers from the CFM Garden Committee gathered to decorate the Centre Furnace Mansion's back porch and exterior with wreaths, swags and garlands fashioned with greens and natural materials donated by Garden Committee volunteers. Yards of cranberry and popcorn garland were meticulously strung to decorate four trees outside that were donated by Tait's Tree Farm.



Deb McManus puts the finishing touches on the Master Gardener's tree

Seed and garden catalogs, upcoming meetings and plans for the 2009 garden season have already awoken all of us on the CFM Garden Committee from our brief winter's rest. There are just a few short weeks until the

first day of spring when we can begin enjoying the succession of spring blooming bulbs that have been planted over the past several years during the PNC Bank-United Way Day of Caring service days.

Several years ago, students from the Integrative Arts Department at Penn State University, started working on a plant list that was utilized on the Centre County Historical Society's garden website. Since this was done, many, many plants have been added to the gardens and we have thought of more information that we would like to include about each of the plants including how the plant may have historically been used and where it is located in the Centre Furnace Gardens. Garden volunteers are currently researching the descriptions, histories and facts about the many additional plants that live at Centre Furnace Mansion. Once this research is compiled and reformatted to suit our current needs, it will be reintroduced to the website making this a truly remarkable resource complete with plant photos from the Centre Furnace Gardens.

We will soon be starting many more annual seeds this year for the gardens including alyssum, cosmos, calendula, sweet peas, poppies, zinnias, four-o'clocks, nicotiana and morning glories, to name a few. Most of these seeds were donated by Tait Farm, Joe Banks and volunteers from the CFM Garden Committee. The annual plants that we grow will greatly enhance the gardens especially during the later summer months when color in the garden is lacking.



Centre Furnace Mansion Garden Committee

The CFM Garden Committee will kick off the 2009 gardening season with our first meeting on **Thursday, January 29 at 5:30 p.m.** in the Centre Furnace Mansion Hearth Room, beginning with a brief meeting followed by slides from the 2008 year in the gardens. CCHS Members are more than welcome to join us and enjoy a sample of the projects that we are involved in throughout the year.



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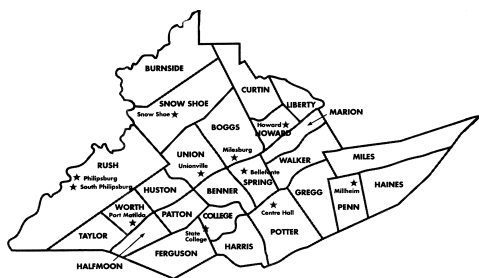
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Membership



Your membership supports all aspects of the Historical Society's operations. Membership benefits include: quarterly issues of *Mansion Notes*, the Society's newsletter; *Centre County Heritage*, the Society's journal; advance notice of programs; and a 10% discount on all Society publications.

Thank you to all of our new and continuing members. We hope you value your membership in the Centre County Historical Society as much as we have valued having your support and participation. We invite you to return your membership renewal, if you have not yet renewed for this year. Make checks payable to CCHS.

Name _____

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_____ Annual (09)	\$35
_____ Friend (F)	\$60
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