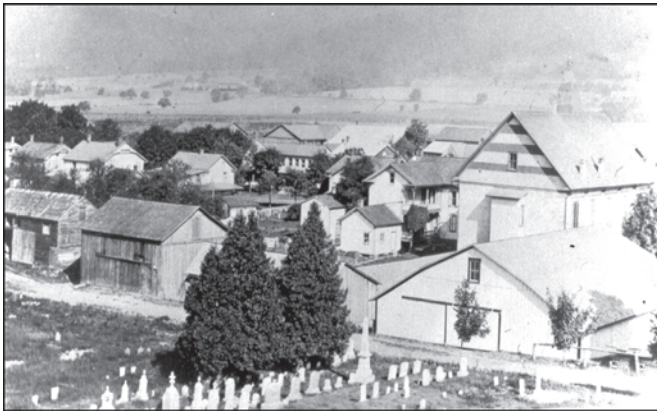


Pioneer Families of Penns & Brush Valleys

by Evonne "Vonnie" Esterline Henninger



Rebersburg streetscape, behind the Lutheran and Reformed churches. Donor: Vonnie Henninger

Early families in this area were Scotch-Irish, and it is believed that about 85,000 Scotch-Irish came into Pennsylvania between 1728 and 1776. They were incredibly tough men and women. They weren't particularly good farmers and were always looking for a reason to sell to the "Dutch" and move on. They would say, "When you can hear the howling of a neighbor's hounds, it is time to move on." These people were verbal, vocal and argumentative, and they made good storekeepers, tavern keepers and traders.

Families would come as a group into the wilderness - each having their own expertise. Families would work together to build their new home near a water source. Furniture was crude and homemade, and your home was what you could make or grow. The village cobbler would make shoes from calfskin. Homes didn't have calendars; children could tell it was Sunday when coffee was served on the breakfast table. Families might have sugar at Christmas time.

Early families strictly observed the Sabbath. Food was prepared in quantity on Friday and Saturday - no fire was lighted on the hearth on the Sabbath. One Scottish woman told her new daughter-in-law, "In this house we observe the Sabbath strictly. It is the Lord's will - and what's more, it's the only rest you will ever get." This religious upbringing was imbedded into families for many generations. Mary Abbott in her Brush Valley history, *Goat in the Belfry* relates to the time a minister and his wife made an unexpected Sun-

day afternoon visit to the Henry Meyer Home in Rebersburg. Mary and her older sister had discreetly started a fire in the cook stove to bake a cake. She spoke of their worry that someone, including her parents, would realize that they were breaking the rules by baking on Sunday.

People found wealth in children. They needed a large family to help with the work and to feel safe in the wilderness. Children learned at an early age to hunt, fish, cook, work in the fields, carry wood into the woodshed for winter, carry water for cooking and bathing and many other chores. Many never traveled further than a few miles from where they lived.

Church and schools were very important in the new settlements. Haines Township saw its first school and church built at Wolf's Chapel in 1789. In Rebersburg, Anthony Bierly built the first church in about 1804. Prior to these churches, homes were used for services.

Our pioneer families lived very much like the Amish with one exception - their neighbors didn't have telephones, cars, trucks and electricity - conveniences that do help the Amish in their daily lives today.

The biggest change in the life for this area came with the railroad from Lewisburg passing through Coburn, Spring Mills and Centre Hall in the 1870s. These railroad stations and the towns where they were located became the hub for the whole community. It was now possible for the farmers and other businesses to find a better market for their goods. There was better access to bring goods into the area. Rail cars were able to bring herds of horses and cattle. Fuel came in barrels. People could travel easier. It was now possible for people to visit their relatives that they hadn't seen in years.

And so it was that these families lived the early pioneer life.

To read this article in its entirety, which is published on the Penns Valley Area Historical Museum's website, please visit: <http://pennsvalleymuseum.com/pioneerfamilies.php>.

Please join us on **Thursday, March 4 at 4:00 p.m.** at the Centre Furnace Mansion for a special presentation on the History of Penns Valley in Pictures by special presenter Vonnie Henninger.

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 Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays 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.

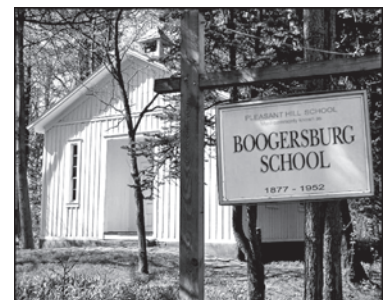
CCHS is headquartered in the Centre Furnace Mansion, a restored and furnished ironmaster's home listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This historic mansion and nearby iron furnace stack represent the 18th century beginnings of the charcoal iron industry in this area, and the 19th century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

- 🎧 **“Susquehanna Signatures:
Insights from a dozen old hotel
registers, 1854-1915”**
Thursday, February 18 at 7:00 p.m.

See page 4 for more information.

March

- 🎧 **“The History of Penns Valley in
Pictures”**
Thursday, March 4 at 4:00 p.m.

Around



March

- 🎧 **Cultural Conversations**
Wednesday-Sunday, March 24-28
Pavilion Theatre (Penn State)

Cultural Conversations is a theatre and dance festival that promotes new works dealing with themes of local and global diversity. For the complete schedule, please visit:

<http://www.culturalconversations.psu.edu>

- 🎧 **Shavers Creek Maple Harvest
Festival**
Saturday & Sunday, March 27-28
Shavers Creek Environmental
Center (Petersburg)

Enjoy a pancake breakfast, learn how to identify and tap sugar maple trees, listen to live music and more. For more information, call (814) 863-2000 or visit: <http://www.shaverscreek.org>

President's Corner



Centre County as a Museum

Highways make it possible for people to travel somewhere else to see the very things that may be left at home.

National Trust for Historic Preservation

Centre County is rich in a wonderful collection of museums. They can be found in Aaronsburg and Bellefonte, Boalsburg and Milesburg, Philipsburg and Snow Shoe, and, of course, the Penn State campus and our own Centre Furnace - and I undoubtedly have missed some. But the County itself could be considered a museum, combining its historic villages, towns, commercial streetscapes and residential neighborhoods; its agricultural landscapes, mountain ridges and cultivated valleys; its tiny runs and fast-moving streams. Recently there has been another set of rediscovered “museums”: the written records and archaeological remains of industrial sites such as those of Philip Benner’s Ironworks at Rock in the Spring Creek Canyon, or forgotten communities such as Erbtown near a Tussey Mountain gap west of Pine Grove Mills in Ferguson Township.

CCHS has focused on some of our county museum resources in our past programming and we will be doing so again this year. During the colder months, these visits may be the armchair variety, such as when Vonnie Henninger shares her *History of Penns Valley in Pictures*, and Dr. Deryck Holdsworth talks about his fascinating look at early area hotels and their guests, and some programs will involve field trips to observe and better understand the built and natural landscape that make up Centre County.

So, pack your bags and get ready to do some Centre County museum hopping this year.

A schedule of events, dates, and times will be coming soon in a separate mailing.

~ 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 10. Preservation Awards Committee members John Ziegler and Bob Hazelton awarded six recipients for their outstanding preservation work in the county. The Historical Society extends its sincerest appreciation for the hard work these individuals and organizations have done to interpret and preserve Centre County's history.

The 2009 Excellence in Historic Preservation Awards were presented to:

- **The Pennsylvania State University Arborists and Landscape Renovation Specialists**, for the evaluation and care of historic properties, specifically on the grounds of the Centre Furnace Mansion and Boogersburg School. As long time supporters and contributors during the United Way Day of Caring and Spring UP Day, a comprehensive program for the maintenance of historic trees, shrubs and plants was expanded in 2009 to include a path for access to the Centre Furnace grounds.

- **The Gatesburg Bicentennial Committee**, for the activities during the bicentennial celebrations on August 7-8, and for publishing *Glimpses of Gatesburg and Surrounding Areas* and the accompanying cookbook. The celebration featured a veterans' memorial dedication, parade, pig roast, charcoal and iron making demonstrations, community yard sale and flea market, live entertainment, children's activities, and Civil and Revolutionary War reenactors.

- **The Centre County Genealogical Society**, for guiding the complete restoration and fencing of the Cedar Creek Cemetery in Harris Township. Reuben Kendall offered to organize the cemetery clean up as his Eagle Scout project, through the assistance and financial support of Galen Dreibelbis.

- **The Miles Township Bicentennial Committee**, for the activities during the bicentennial celebrations in July, and for publishing *Brush Valley: Remembering the Past*. The township's week-long celebration featured the dedication of a veterans' monument, a community church service, a potluck dinner, a history bus tour, an antique car and tractor show, children's games and a chili cook-off.

- **The Pennsylvania State University College of Arts and Architecture**, for the significant renovations to the Borland Laboratory Building. CCHS recognized not only the preservation of the building, but the reuse of the original and expanded space that includes offices, classrooms, studios and exhibit areas.

- **Robert E. Malcom**, for documenting and cataloguing modern architecture in Centre County, as well as presenting the information to the public through exhibits.

The President's Award was received by **Robert Hazelton** for outstanding service to the Centre County Historical Society and for long-term contributions to community outreach, and CCHS Volunteer of the Year awards were given to **Jill Aller**, **Clifford Bastuscheck**, and **Dolores Simpson**.



Bill Kelly of Integrative Arts, Dave Will of the College of Arts and Architecture and John Ziegler.

Susquehanna Signatures: Insights from a dozen old hotel registers, 1854-1915

Thursday, February 18 at 7:00 p.m.

Please join us on **Thursday, February 18 at 7:00 p.m.** at the Centre Furnace Mansion for a special presentation by Dr. Deryck Holdsworth, Penn State professor of geography.

Using old hotel guest registers as a source, historical geographer Deryck Holdsworth has been mapping who, how, and (in some cases) why travelers, entertainers and business people moved about the area in the railroad and horse and buggy era. For places along the Susquehanna or its branches - from Curwensville down through Lock Haven, Trout Run and Williamsport, through to New Bloomfield in Perry Co. north of Harrisburg, to Bedford on the Raystown Branch and from Elk Creek to Penns Creek - the river played a role in some of the mapped patterns and calendaring.

Please put February 18th on your calendar for a night of fascinating armchair traveling, and an opportunity to offer your own views about local early travel.

Centre Furnace Mansion BMW Sweepstakes

ONLY 600 CHANCES SOLD!



Win a brand new 2010 BMW 128i Coupe!
OR \$20,000 in CASH to spend any way you'd like...



**2nd prize — a one week stay at
Hilton Head, SC.**



**3rd prize — a Penn State football
weekend (two tickets and two
nights stay at the Hampton Inn).**



Tickets are \$100 and go on sale SOON!

**Proceeds benefit the Centre County
Historical Society**

[http:// www.centrecountyhistory.org](http://www.centrecountyhistory.org)

Sponsored by:





Penn State Philharmonic

Carnegie Hall

New York City



Dates: March 24-25, 2010 (Wed/Thurs)

Time: Depart Wed. at 6:00 a.m.
(Fullington Bus Terminal)
Return Thurs. approx. 3:00 p.m.

Cost: Member \$168 (double occupancy)
\$246 (single occupancy)
Guest \$178 (double occupancy)
\$256 (single occupancy)

(Cost includes transportation, driver gratuity, hotel accommodations, and the concert ticket)

Come Travel with OLLI...

Join us **Wednesday, March 24 at 8:00 p.m.** for the **Penn State Philharmonic**, performing the **4th Annual President's Concert** at Carnegie Hall in New York City, conducted by Maestro Gerardo Edelstein. Hosted by President Graham Spanier, the program will include *Pines of Rome* by Respighi, *Symphony No. 3* by Rachmaninov, and *Overture to the Creole "Faust"* by Ginastera.

Trip participants will stay at the **Wellington Hotel**, located in the center of it all—a few minutes walk to Central Park, the Theatre District, Rockefeller Center, The Museum of Modern Art, Times Square and Radio City Music Hall.

Upon arrival in New York City, participants will have hours of free time on their own to explore the city before the evening activities.

To register, phone the OLLI Trip Line at 238-6113 and follow the prompts.

A trip representative will call to verify your reservation.

Your ***non-refundable payment*** must be mailed, within 5 days to:
OLLI at Penn State, 1300 N. Atherton St., Suite 2, State College, PA 16803

Non-Members/Guests may register after December 21, 2009

Registration deadline is February 6, 2010



Trip participants will receive a special invitation to two related events:

- ♪ Prior to the trip, Maestro Gerardo Edelstein will give a free one- to two-hour presentation about the concert music and some behind-the-scenes information about Carnegie Hall.
- ♪ Hosted by the Penn State Alumni Association, President Graham Spanier will hold a reception at Carnegie Hall which will be held prior to the performance. There will be a fee for this event payable to the Penn State Alumni Association.

These events are optional. Trip participants will receive further details at a later date.

Development Committee Updates

by Jim Broyles

The members of the Development Committee are fully engaged in planning the Sweepstakes and Lawn Party. This is the first year of a major new fund raising activity for CCHS and we hope that it will become a fun, annual event. The drawing for the new BMW and other great prizes will be held at our summer lawn party on **Sunday, July 18**. Everyone who buys a ticket for the sweepstakes will receive two invitations to the lawn party featuring food, wine, music and much more. Tickets will go on sale in February.

The committee has also worked on some activities that complement existing events at the Mansion. This past December we developed a program guide for the Stocking Stuffer. The guide was supported by local businesses and we distributed nearly 5,000 copies throughout the Centre Region. We believe that the guide was an important part of the significant increase in attendance at the Socking Stuffer.

At the annual Plant & Garden Sale on **Saturday, May 8**, we are planning to offer carry-out meals. We are working with a local business to set up a booth to sell barbecue chicken or pork.

If you would like to volunteer to help with any of these activities, please email jamesbroyles@gmail.com. CCHS can only survive if our friends step forward with their time and talents.

New CCHS Logo

You may have noticed a new CCHS logo on our website and promotional materials. We would like to recognize (and thank profusely!) **Brad Herman of Triple G Design Group** for working diligently with us to create a fresh and eye catching new logo.

Triple G Design Group, located in Belleville, specializes in gift personalization, garment decoration and graphic design. Their in-house custom embroidery and design services allow the freedom to create unique gifts, garments and graphics for both personal and professional use.

Triple G Giftshop at the Hill Store (3849 West Main Street, Belleville, PA 17004) carries a selection of unique gifts that can be personalized for any occasion.

For more information about the gift shop or professional logo and print design, please call (717) 567-3166 or visit <http://www.gggdesigngroup.com>.

Membership Corner

by Jill Aller

Please welcome these new members of the Centre County Historical Society:

Karen Feldbaum & Debra Greenleaf
Phil Hawk & Candace Smith
Lisa S. Kerns
David Lapinski
Gary & Karen Miller
Jen Rygel

As mentioned in our previous newsletter, the new membership brochure along with a letter from our President, Jackie Melander, was mailed to all members in December. If you did not receive the brochure and letter or have questions about your membership, please contact us at (814) 234-4779 or info@centrecountyhistory.org.

Upon renewing your membership, you will receive a Centre County Historical Society membership card. Please remember to renew your membership for 2010, if you have not done so already, as our membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. The year code is printed on your mailing label.

The Membership Committee plans to have CCHS representation at various community events throughout the year, in order to inform the community about the education programs, exhibits and history of Centre County as well as encourage individuals to become part of our organization. You can help by telling your family, friends and neighbors about CCHS. Encourage them to join and volunteer! Brochures are available at the Centre Furnace Mansion and membership applications can be downloaded from the CCHS website.

To our new members and old friends who have renewed their membership and continue to support us in 2010, thank you.



Thursdays in the Gardens

by Mary Sorensen

CFM Garden Coordinator

While it's difficult at this writing to imagine warm days in the garden, the seed and garden equipment professionals have stepped up to remind us with their alluring catalogs that spring is, indeed, not so far away.

I would like to thank Penn State Students **Stoney Van Horn, Joe Merlo, Clay Alviani, Alex Leon, and Mike McNeil** from the **Tau Kappa Epsilon** fraternity who did a great job volunteering to help out in the CFM Gardens one weekend late this fall thanks to a referral from **Jeff Bower**. A few lingering jobs needed to be completed in the gardens and grounds before winter and it was very helpful to have the extra hands.



Early in December, volunteers from the CFM Gardeners graced the Centre Furnace Mansion porch and exterior with wreaths, swags and garlands from greens and materials donated by our gardeners, and a beautifully decorated tree. Garlands of cranberries and popcorn were made for birds to enjoy. All of the trees were generously donated by **John Tait** of **Tait's Tree Farm**.

Thank you to **Katie Frieden, Jan Villastrigo, Jo Merrell, Susan Toby Evans, Marshall Garrett, Vicki Spadaccio, LaDonna Weiler, Chris Igo, Judy Heberling, Beverly Lipski, Pam Calkins, and Bonnie Walter** for helping with this holiday decorating effort!



We will be resuming "Thursdays in the Gardens" (initially in the Hearth Room!); if you are interested in attending any of our garden meetings and subsequent gardening times, please contact me at gardens@centrefurnace.org.

Plans for spring include our annual preparation for the spring Plant & Garden Sale on **Saturday, May 8**. In the coming weeks we will be ordering and planting heirloom seeds to sell and plant in the gardens, dividing and potting perennials when the weather allows and creating labels and signage for sale plants. Many thanks to **Beverly Lipski** for already purchasing many of the seeds that we will be planting.

See you in the gardens!

State Funded General Operating Support

Last February, the Pennsylvania State Budget Proposal eliminated the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's (PHMC) grant program and general operating grants for historic sites, including CCHS. Thanks to the efforts of our members and supporters (and activists from across the commonwealth) the legislature heard our concerns and responded.

In November of 2009 it seemed as though the grant program would be retained at a reduced amount, but as the year closed, conflicting information was released. Just one month later, we are pleased to hear that it is possible that the grant program will survive in 2010. The details however are not yet available.

We thank all of you who have voiced your concern for the survival of Pennsylvania's cultural treasures and urge you to continue following the details of this issue throughout the year. We will continue to update you as information is released.

Stocking Stuffer Antiques, Art & Fine Craft Sale

The 7th Annual Stocking Stuffer Antiques, Art & Fine Craft Sale, the Centre County Historical Society's holiday fundraising event, was a huge success, and we are pleased to announce that the event almost doubled last year's revenue, far exceeding our expectations.

There were over 40 new and returning artisans, antique dealers and decorators, a record attendance, and our Thursday night Dessert and Wine Preview Party featured door prizes and a silent auction.

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

The festive holiday ambience of this premiere event is largely due to the decorators and local businesses who graciously donated their services. We would like to thank **Avánt Garden, Daniel Vaughn Designs, George's Floral Boutique, Riley on Main and Woodring's Floral Gardens** for the interior decorations; **Tait Tree Farm** for donating trees; the **Penn State Master Gardeners of Centre County** for the exterior decorations.

We would like to thank the local restaurants who provided food for the Preview Party: **Cabot Creamery, Delectable Delights by Heather Luse, The Diner, For Heaven Cakes, Harrison's Wine Grill & Catering, Sam's Club, Seven Mountains Wine Cellars, Texas Roadhouse, Zola New World Bistro.**

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, donated desserts and volunteered their time to help create our most successful event to date:

Joyce Adgate, Davies Bahr, Cliff Bastuscheck, Jane Baum, Marie Bianco, Jody Bland, Kristin Bozella, Alex Broyles, Pam Calkins, Michele Chernega, Connie DiNunzio, Edna Dombroski, Bob Donaldson, Elizabeth Dutton, Bob & Pat Hazelton, Cathy Horner, Tina Hyduke, Barb Kasales, Keith and Linda Koch, Silvi Lawrence, Felicia Lewis, Benjamin McNitt, Lauren Milideo, Bill Moyer, Gloria Nieweg, Ann Marie Rehmert, Johanna Sedgwick, Leslie Shelleman, Grant and Sue Sherritt, Dolores Simpson, Dee Stout, Barbara Thwaites, Bonnie Walter, Jeanne Weber, Alan & Marjorie Weisel, Donna Weldon-Shaak, Margaret Welliver.

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



Photo by Sydney Schatz

See all of the Stocking Stuffer photos on our facebook fan page: <http://facebook.com/centrefurnace>

Photos with Santa



Photo by Sydney Schatz

The Centre County Historical Society would like to thank **Howard Rupert** (also known as Santa Claus) for visiting the Centre Furnace Mansion on Saturday, December 12. Children and parents were thrilled to meet Santa at the historic Centre Furnace Mansion.

Thank you to **Sydney Schatz**, who graciously photographed this event, as well as the Stocking Stuffer the weekend before.

Volunteers **Jill Aller, Mary Osborn, Beth Ricker** and **Sharon Shen** helped make the event run smoothly. Your help is much appreciated!

Thank you, also, to **Karen Myford** and **Harrison's Wine Grill & Catering** for the donation of cookies and brownies.



CENTRE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

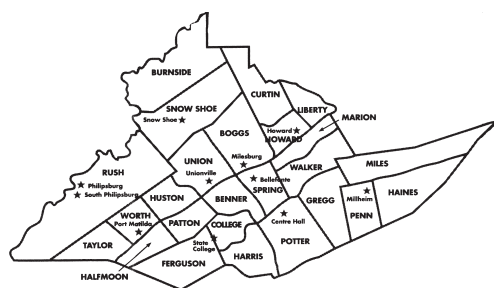
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Membership



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 and send to 1001 E. College Avenue, State College, PA 16801.

Membership year runs January 1 - December 31, 2010

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

_____ Individual	\$35
_____ Household	\$50
_____ Friend	\$100
_____ House & Gardens	\$250
_____ Director's Circle	\$500
_____ Business	\$500
_____ Ironmaster's Circle	\$1500

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