

### *Exploring our 1880's Railroad History*

*By Bob Hazelton*

Our area is loaded with history. Scotia and Pennsylvania Furnace are two of the most significant locations to our industrial past. In 2010 a few of us started concentrating on the history of Scotia.

In 2014, we added Pennsylvania Furnace and started to learn how they were linked. Both these sites suffered from the possibility of being lost to the vegetation and from the memories of passing generations. Our aim was to change that using clippers, chain saws, old documents, and maps.

At Pennsylvania Furnace, we have partially exposed the remains of the two iron furnaces. The first, for which we credit John Lyon, started operations in 1813. His success in the iron industry expanded to other areas including Pittsburgh. Meanwhile, in the same city, Andrew Carnegie had risen from poverty through the ranks of the Pennsylvania Railroad and then ventured into the iron business. Carnegie sure feathered his own nest when he named his first mill The Edgar Thompson Steel Works after the man who owned the Pennsylvania Railroad (PRR). The PRR was the biggest customer for his railroad rails and spikes.

One wonders if Lyon and Carnegie might have met since they were both in Pittsburgh with Lyon having sources of iron that Carnegie needed. John Lyon died and was buried in the Pittsburgh area in 1868. In 1873 we find his son George Lyon escorting geologist J. P. Leslie around the various ore pits used in the iron furnaces at Pennsylvania Furnace. Leslie also detailed about 20 ore pits in



*Several deep cuts had to be made in the landscape to keep the railroad bed level.*

the area. In his account he identified the potential of the railway cuts and how the market would open when the rail was completed – the railway being the western leg of the

Lewisburg & Tyrone (L&T) Railroad. The Pennsylvania Railroad had long since connected the Pittsburgh area to Tyrone. The L&T construction started in Tyrone and headed east with the intent of reaching the eastern leg that had gone from Lewisburg to Spring Mills.

A logical choice for the western leg of the L&T was from Tyrone through the ore rich areas along the path to Pennsylvania Furnace. To keep a level grade avoiding hills, the railroad right-of-way followed the rivers and creeks. As it followed Halfmoon Run in western Ferguson Township, the elevated rail path is

still visible along sections of Marengo Road. As it nears the Pennsylvania Furnace area it deviates from Marengo and crosses into Huntingdon County where Halfmoon Run starts a winding path between the hills. In order to keep the level path with only gradual turns, five bridges were built, and several deep cuts had to be made in the landscape. Intrigued by what it might look like today, we went exploring one Sunday (February 9). We were hosted by Karen and John Kite, who have the remains of two bridges on their property, and Scott Bresler, with property nearby, who knows the area well. Also in on our venture were Diane and Mike Albright, John Leslie, and Bryce Boyer.

The stone bridge abutments are the only parts of the old bridges left. For one reason or another, some are better preserved than others. The timber framed trestle that spanned the abutments has long since been rotted or washed out by floods. Of the four bridges we visited, the included photo was the one in the best condition. What is amazing is the craftsmanship that went into the stonework. The stones came from a quarry, possibly locally and hauled by horse and wagon. Alternatively, if the railroad track was in place up to the bridge they might have come from a more distant quarry by rail. Regardless, the stones have been dressed to result in relatively flat walls that fit together with precision. With stones that big, some weighing well over 100 pounds, we have to wonder how they lifted them into place? Such impressive bridge remains are works of art that took back-breaking work to build with little machinery to help. These bridge abutments are tributes to our history.

*Continued on page 8*



*Railroad bridge abutment showing the meticulous stone work.*

# About the Centre County Historical Society

## ☞ Contact Us ☞

Centre County Historical Society  
 Centre Furnace Mansion  
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 State College, PA 16801  
 (814) 234-4779  
 info@centrecountyhistory.org

www.centrehistory.org  
 www.facebook.com/centrefurnace  
 www.twitter.com/centrehistory  
 www.instagram.com/centre.county.history

The Centre Furnace Mansion and CCHS office are closed to the public until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic. When it is safe to open again, our hours are as follows:

Office Hours:  
*Mon.-Fri., 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.*  
 Research Requests & Archives Use:  
*By appointment.*

**Centre Furnace Mansion**  
 Public Tours & Exhibits:  
*Sun./Wed./Fri. 1:00-4:00 p.m.*  
 Group Tours: *By appointment.*

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Founded in 1904, the Centre County Historical Society, the County's official historical society, is an educational organization that promotes appreciation and research of Centre County's historic and natural resources through its properties, collections, programs, publications, and advocacy.

A community and volunteer-based organization, the Society is headquartered in the Centre Furnace Mansion, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This site includes the restored and furnished Iron Master's home, furnace stack, and landscaped grounds and gardens. Centre Furnace was home to the earliest 18th century industry - charcoal iron making. In the 19th century Centre Furnace played an important role in the beginnings of Penn State University. The Society also owns and operates the nearby Boegersburg One-Room School House.

The Centre County Historical Society depends on financial contributions that help support our free public programs and educational opportunities for children, and provide necessary funds for the maintenance and operation of the Society's facilities and collections. Your membership and generosity are sincerely appreciated.

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 and is made possible through the G. Harold Keatley Fund.



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The Centre County Historical Society (CCHS) is a nonprofit, 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.

### Activity Calendar

Please check the CCHS website: [CentreHistory.org](http://CentreHistory.org) for any program updates or cancellations. Programs are held at the Centre Furnace Mansion unless noted.

**SUN/WED/FRI Through May 31, 2020**  
(Pending COVID-19 restriction)

Exhibition: *Up, Up and Away: Sherm Lutz and the State College Air Depot*

**MAY 12, 9:00 A.M. – MAY 13, 9:00 P.M.**  
Centre Gives, donate online at [CentreGives.org](http://CentreGives.org).

**AUGUST 2, 2:00 P.M.**  
*A Stranger Here Below*. Talk and book signing by author Charles Fergus @ the Centre County/Penn State Visitor Center

**AUGUST 9, 10:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.**  
CCC Legacy Day @ Poe Valley State Park

**AUGUST 30, 1:00 - 4:00 P.M.**  
Boogersburg School Open House, located on Fox Hollow Rd.

**SEPTEMBER 13, 4:00 - 6:00 P.M.**  
Music Under the Sycamore with Pure Cane Sugar

**SEPTEMBER 27, 1:00 - 3:30 P.M.**  
Constitution Day @ Tussey Mountain

Visit [CentreHistory.org](http://CentreHistory.org) to check the CCHS event calendar and/or sign up for our e-letter to stay current on upcoming CCHS activities.



*Clivia miniata* in the Mansion dining room. Tended by volunteer gardener Ruth Merritt, all four plants bloomed in unison in early March.

## President's Corner



As we say goodbye to Katie O'Toole in her role as CCHS President, we welcome in the continued leadership of Robert (Bob) Hazelton who has now assumed this role after several years on the Board of Governors and as Vice President. We will hear from Bob going in the President's Corner, but one last farewell column from Katie:

### NOTHING TO POOH-POOH

I was on a family trip to Orlando earlier this year and in one of the myriad tourist shops with knock-off Disney souvenirs, I saw a framed watercolor of a winsome Winnie the Pooh, surrounded by his Hundred Acre Wood's friends. A quote on the painting read, "How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard."

It was too kitschy to buy, but it resonated with me because, at this writing, I had just submitted my letter of resignation from the presidency of the Board of Governors of the Centre County Historical Society (after over-staying my four-year term by six months). The quote conjured up all the friends I've made, the exhibits and events we've worked on, the captivating Centre Countians I've met, and the fascinating bits and pieces of local lore that I've had the pleasure of exploring.

Kitschy or not, the quote was going to lead off to my farewell as CCHS President. But first I needed to find the context in which Pooh uttered that memorable line. So I began searching electronically through collections of A.A. Milne, beginning with the 1928 publication of *The House at Pooh Corner*.

But the quote wasn't there.

Nor was it in any of the subsequent Pooh stories.

Or in anything by A.A. Milne.

I did a Google search of the quote, and it was everywhere. Apparently, it's a popular maxim that makes its way into retirement tributes, farewell speeches, and grave side eulogies—invariably attributed to Pooh Bear.

Then I stumbled upon a blog called *Pooh Misquoted*. Its creator has made a career of debunking "half-baked motivational messages" that sound as if they could have come from the self-described "Bear of Very Little Brain." They typically appear in needlework, on coffee cups, and in sympathy cards. This particular quote, the blogger writes, isn't made up. Rather, it was taken almost verbatim from the 1975 movie, *The Other Side of the Mountain*. The movie is about an 18-year old national champion skier from California who was paralyzed in an accident one year before the 1956 Olympics. No known Pooh connection.

But the point is this: We live in an age of misinformation that travels at the speed of light. Whether it's Russian trolls disrupting our elections or harmless tweeters who don't fact-check their Pooh quotes, most of us are easy marks for fake news.

That's why it's important to have organizations like the Centre County Historical Society. We pride ourselves on meticulous researchers such as Lee Stout, Cathy Horner, Roger Williams, Ford Risley, Bob Hazelton, Ralph Seeley, and Edgar Farmer. They routinely consult original documents and other primary source materials to ensure the factual accuracy of their work, because at the CCHS, facts still matter.

How lucky I am to have been part of an organization with a reverence for getting the story right! And how happy I am to NOT say goodbye but to transition into a new role at the CCHS.

~ Katie O'Toole

## A Special Message

**D**ear Members, Volunteers, Friends and Supporters,  
 You are all on our minds with thoughts of gratitude and concern as communities throughout Centre County and the country face the COVID-19 pandemic, together and separately in the coming months. Our hearts go out to those suffering loss and illness and to those on the front lines of this crisis.

With respect and adherence to rapidly developing state updates, CCHS has continued or implemented the following actions until further notice:

- The Centre Furnace Mansion is closed for tours.
- CCHS programming and on-site volunteer activities are postponed until it is safe to resume.
- The Plant Celebration fundraiser sale has been cancelled. We will update with alternate plans.
- While the CCHS office is closed, Johanna and I are working remotely. If you need to reach us, please contact me at [msorensen@centrefurnace.org](mailto:msorensen@centrefurnace.org).

A rich slate of later summer and fall programming is planned, but we encourage you to check our website for updates or cancellations as time goes on.

We will keep you posted via Facebook and our Constant Contact e-newsletter every week or so. If you are not getting our e-newsletter and would like to, sign-up is easy on our CCHS website at [centrehistory.org](http://centrehistory.org) or Facebook page at [facebook.com/centrefurnace](https://facebook.com/centrefurnace). You do not have to have a Facebook account to see what is happening on our page.

While all of this is said with a heavy heart, as we will sorely miss the steady cadence of loyal and loved volunteers and visitors in the coming weeks, we look forward to the time when we can resume activities and welcome everyone back with open arms (or maybe just elbow bumps...)

Please stay in touch by email or check for updates on our website or Facebook page. Your friendship and support continue to mean everything to us.

We join everyone in looking forward to brighter days. For now, my best wishes for good health and good spirits to you and yours.

With warm appreciation,  
*Mary Sorensen, Executive Director*  
[msorensen@centrefurnace.org](mailto:msorensen@centrefurnace.org)

## Upcoming Programs and Events

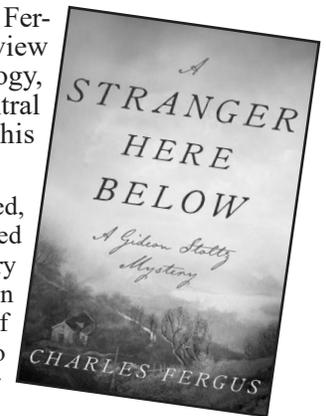
*We plan to keep our August-September programs on the calendar, depending on Covid-19 developments, please remember to check items of interest on our website: [centrehistory.org](http://centrehistory.org) for the most current updates.*

### Henszey Pyle Distinguished Author Series *A Stranger Here Below: A Gideon Stoltz Mystery*

Sunday, August 2, 2:00 p.m. @ the Centre County/Penn State Visitor Center

**T**alk and book signing by author Charles Fergus. Mr. Fergus will provide an overview of the history, social aspects, technology, and major cultural issues early 1800s in central Pennsylvania. He will do readings from his book, *A Stranger Here Below*.

“Deeply imagined and intricately plotted, *A Stranger Here Below* marries richly textured historical fiction with the urgency of a mystery novel. Fergus knows certain things, deep in the bone: horses, hunting, the folkways of rural places, and he weaves this wisdom into a stirring tale.” – Geraldine Brooks, author of *March and People of the Book*



### Legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps:

#### *Company 1333 – Camp S-63, Poe Valley*

Sunday, August 9 @ 10:00-3:00 p.m. at Poe Valley State Park

**T**o continue the tradition of the CCC Legacy Day, the Centre County Historical Society, DCNR, and Bill and Mary Marcum are partnering again to bring a day of talks, music and displays.

This year’s event will feature educator and songwriter Van Wagner. A free lunch featuring real menu items from authentic CCC recipes and menu boards will be served. While lunch is free, we do need your RSVP so that we have an idea of how many to plan for and suggest donations. Please call (814) 234-4779 or visit online at [CentreHistory.org/legacyday](http://CentreHistory.org/legacyday)

### Boogersburg School Open House

Sunday, August 30, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. @ The Boogersburg School, 1021 Fox Hill Rd., State College

**T**his is an event for the whole family! Come when you can, stay as long as you would like! There will be presentations lessons, and recess games throughout the afternoon. Visitors may follow the trail from the schoolhouse to the adjacent field for some recess games as well (weather permitting). Bring your family, and bring a picnic to enjoy. You may even get to ring the bell!

### Music Under the Sycamore

Sunday, September 13, 4:00 - 6:00 p.m. @ the Centre Furnace Mansion

**S**ummer concert on the lawn at the Centre Furnace Mansion Featuring Pure Cane Sugar. For more information at [www.centrehistory.org/music-under-the-sycamore](http://www.centrehistory.org/music-under-the-sycamore).

## Mansion Preservation

The Centre County Historical Society was an all-volunteer organization in 1978 when the small group was tasked with owning, restoring and managing a grand building and grounds in great need of repair. The site of Centre County's pioneering iron furnace settlement, dating from 1791, would have been lost to the 322 Bypass transportation project had it not been for an ambitious community effort to preserve the site. Discussion about planning for future uses of the site and for how its restoration would be funded and executed would feature largely in CCHS Board meetings for years to follow. The Centre Furnace Mansion and surrounding grounds now stand as a testament to two of the most important economic and developmental facets of Centre County history: the 18th century origins of the iron making industry and the 19th century founding of the Pennsylvania State University and has served the community for 37 years. The generosity of members, donors, businesses and organizations have made it possible for the Mansion to remain free and open to the public for year-round research, internships, events, public programs and tours, including thousands of elementary age students.

We now are honored to carry the torch of preserving this historic treasure for future generations. Earlier this month, we applied for a PHMC Keystone Construction Grant to address stabilization needs for the Mansion. Projects include the replacement of the cedar shingle roof and any repairs needed, the removal of a honey bee colony in areas of the eaves, and restoration work for the Mansion's porches and balcony.

We will keep you posted later in the summer when we learn about the status of this grant. In the meantime, we extend our sincere gratitude for the contributions of **Alan Popovich, AP Architects** serving as the restoration architect for the project and to roof consultant **Bill Marcum, Martech Associates, Inc.** for contributing the on-site roof evaluation and drawings, aided by a lift donation from **Sunbelt Rentals**. Our thanks also to **David Horner** for providing a preliminary estimate for the painting components and for letters of support, we thank the **Centre County Government, Happy Valley Adventure Bureau** and the **Bald Eagle Archaeological Society**. We extend special thanks to CCHS Life Member **Joan Brower** for providing a generous lead gift to help us with matching funds for this effort. All efforts were integral to our grant application and we are grateful.

We thought you might find a timeline of the Centre Furnace Mansion during the years of its original restoration efforts of interest:

**1978** CCHS accepts the Mansion as a bequest from David Garver.

**1979** Centre Furnace Mansion and Stack are placed on the National Register of Historic Places.

**1983** CCHS launches a fundraising campaign to restore the Mansion and work commences in phases beginning with the lower level Hearth Room so that public tours and programs can be held.

**1985** Restoration of the Mansion's main level parlors, dining room and period kitchen is completed.

**1986** Restoration of the Mansion's interior period rooms is completed.

**1987** Landscape planning and work begin on the gardens and grounds surrounding the Mansion.

**1988** The Mansion's cedar shingle roof is replaced.

**1989** Porch repairs and restoration and painting of the Mansion's exterior begin. Landscape improvements included installation of brick patio, initial work on the kitchen garden and getting plans underway for the Porter Road parking lot.

**1990** Porch restoration and exterior painting near completion.

**1992** Parking lot, brick circle driveway and paths are completed.

**1993** CCHS acquires and removes gas station in front of property.

**1997** CCHS acquires corner property at East College Avenue/Porter Road; long term lease agreement with Penn State for stack area and strip along Porter Road.

**2000** Centre Furnace Mansion grounds now comprise of nearly nine acres.

**2008** Work to restore the chimneys and major repair to stabilize the Mansion's ell is completed between 2008 and 2010.

**2014** Repair of the front entry balcony is completed.

**2020** Plans are under way for replacing the Mansion's 32 year-old roof and porch restoration.



*The Centre Furnace Mansion 1979-1983 prior to restoration. Left to right: First floor main hall after wood paneling had been removed, rear ell with portion of porch enclosed, 2nd floor (current library) showing where 2nd floor porch windows had been enclosed.*

# Stocking Stuffer Thank You!

2019 Stocking Stuffer Event Sponsors:  
 Scott & Glenda Yocum, Nittany Meadow Farm  
 Mimi Barash Coppersmith

The 17th annual Stocking Stuffer Magical Holiday Market was a great success and a record year due to all of your time, donations, beautiful décor and products, cookies and good cheer! It is your spirit and generosity that have made the Stocking Stuffer a community tradition that gets better with each year. Your critical support helps CCHS to keep local history programming and initiatives alive at the Centre Furnace Mansion, the Boogersburg Schoolhouse and beyond.

Sincere thanks to our sponsors, Scott and Glenda Yocum, Nittany Meadow Farm and to Mimi Barash Coppersmith for their generous, gracious and continued support of this event.

The Stocking Stuffer is supported by local businesses and individuals. Daniel Vaughn Designs, Woodring's Floral Gardens and Avant Garden transform the Stocking Stuffer with their beautiful holiday creations. Local restaurants, wineries and bakers generously donate an array of food and beverages for the Stocking Stuffer Preview Party and sale. 55 artisans, antique dealers and food businesses provide our shoppers with an amazing array of products. Over 60 volunteers contribute 1200+ hours of planning and presenting this festive weekend.

In the past weeks, it quickly became clear that the COVID-19 crisis will have an enduring negative impact on local businesses. Supporting them by ordering take-out or purchasing gift cards is more important than ever. We extend our sincerest gratitude to our donors and participating businesses and wish you our best in weathering this relentless storm.

*Committee Chair: Deb McManus*

*Committee Coordinators: Cathy Horner, Becky Dreese*

*Committee Members: Dana Guyer, Rachel Corp, Beverly Lipski, Jo Merrell, Ruth Merritt, Ann Moellenbrock*

## Thank you to our Volunteers!

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### Floral Designers

Daniel Vaughn Designs  
 Woodring Floral Gardens  
 Avant Garden

### Holiday Décor

Tait Farm Christmas Trees  
 The Knotty Girls  
 Centre Furnace Mansion Gardeners

### Business and Organizational Contributions

David Horner & Associates, Inc.  
 David Lembeck – Graphic Design  
 Harris Township Lions Club  
 Helen Foxx & Co.  
 The Mad Wisk  
 Penn State Office of Physical Plant, Landscaping  
 Three Little Birds Boutique  
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 The Penn Stater Hotel & Conference Center  
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 Seven Mountains Wine Cellars  
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 Centre Furnace Mansion Docents  
 Centre Furnace Mansion Gardeners

### Antiques and Treasures Donations

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## The Maple Sugar Trip

A story by Ralph Seeley

He gave the porter 10 cents for wheeling the blocks of sugar on a handcart to the hotel porch. There he asked the clerk for permission to sell the sugar from a table inside. After a minute the clerk returned saying it was permitted. Now he set up a sign on the porch advertising his sugar for 40 cents a one pound block.

Business was good with the Tyrone matrons who passed by the sign. He had some of his sugar blocks sitting on the table in front of him, and some still on a pile beside him. A young woman approached, carrying a small child on her hip. He noticed that she had a long coil of dark hair wrapped around her head, before she asked “Is it really 40 cents a block?” He said “Well, business has been so good that I am thinking I will ask 50 cents—but it will still be 40 for you.”

He rose and motioned for her to sit and take the baby load off her hip. “How old is the child?” “She is one year old.” “Oh, that is the same age as my boy”—and he lifted a cloth off the face of the little boy asleep on the chair beside him.

She asked in a surprised tone, “How do you travel selling stuff and also with a child?”

He said, “Oh, I have gotten used to caring for him. I can’t leave him alone for long with the older woman who is not his mother. I wanted to take a little trip and so I brought him along. I came on the railroad from Bellefonte.”

“From Bellefonte? I have never been there. Is it far?”

“It’s maybe 25 miles. Actually, I started from a place another 25 miles beyond Bellefonte.”

“Did you make this sugar yourself?”

“Well, I do hire help in the sugaring season. But mostly I farm and run a sugar bush by myself.”

She sat with one hand under her chin, her dark eyes intent on him. “So you have a farm. How big is it?”

“Well, the sugar bush is 100 acres, and the rest of the farm is another 50 acres. I mostly raise wheat on the farm part. And in the winter I take out the sugar trees that have fallen due to age. They make valuable lumber.”

“Who takes care of your child while you farm and sugar?”

“I hire a neighbor lady. She is the same one who wet-nursed my boy after my wife died.”

“What did she die of?” “The doctor said it was consumption.”

She said pensively, “Now it has been a year, and you are traveling with your boy.”

“Yes, I have made a life for myself. Do you have a husband?”

“No, I told him to leave.” “Oh, not a good man?” “Not a good man.”

“It can’t be easy to support yourself alone.” “Well, I live with my mother. She does child care for me, and then I work here in this hotel cleaning rooms.”

“Oh, that reminds me. I have to take a room here. I want one where I sleep alone, not with some other man in the same bed.”

“I will arrange that”—and she went off to the desk.

When she returned he said: “Also, I am a Quaker



Cast iron maple tree sap bucket tap spout, also called spiles; they are tubular and are driven into the tap hole of the sugar maple to collect syrup in a bucket from the open end. Each has bucket hook below embossed text. Donated by Diane McKinnon. 2014.11.10 A, B - A. 1898

and I need directions to the meeting house.” She raised her eyebrows—“I am a Quaker. I will come by tomorrow morning and lead you to the meeting.” She stood there and looked at him steadily. He could see that she was near to leaving. He stood and held out a sugar block to her. Tentatively he said “This has been lucky, meeting you. And interesting to talk with you.”

She gathered up her child. She turned and smiled at him. “I will be here in the lobby at 8:30 tomorrow morning. Will you be ready?”

He smiled at her. “I will be here.”

The next morning they walked side by side to the meeting house, each with a child on a hip. It was a crisp Fall morning. Railroad noises came intermittently. She was a brisk walker. She asked him his name so she could introduce him at the meeting. He said his name was Ezra. Her name was Penelope. He remarked on the melodious sound of the name. She raised her eyebrows. She was dressed in a clinging long cloak. She introduced him as a fellow Quaker named Ezra. She did not feel it necessary to say more about him. He noticed two ladies raising their eyebrows at this new pairing.

Afterward he invited her to take lunch with him at a restaurant of her choice. Now she was more relaxed. He asked her what she wanted to do with her life. She said she wanted to be good to others and have a family with a man she loved. She quizzed him on his life outlook, and nodded at his answers. They looked long at each other.

He was feeling so warm and happy that he blurted out, “I really like you. Would you come to visit me at my farm?” She gasped a little, then said “I need to think about that.” He said, “You could bring your mother with you. I can buy two tickets for you here at the train station, and meet you in Bellefonte. I will rent a carriage in Bellefonte. You know, it is another 25 miles to my farm in Rebersburg.”

She looked away, then turned and put her hand on his. “It sounds so good, like a fairy tale. Oh, it is too sudden. But you are such a good man. I will do it.”

*To be continued in the next issue.*

## Reception with Malcolm Gladwell

Acclaimed author Malcolm Gladwell was the guest of honor at a CCHS reception in January. The author of *Blink*, *Outlier*, *What the Dog Saw*, *The Tipping Point*, and other best-selling books was in town to talk about his newest book, *Talking To Strangers*, which includes a chapter on the Sandusky scandal.

We extend our most sincere thanks to Mr. Gladwell for being willing to spend some time with us at the Centre Furnace Mansion to graciously share a talk, sign books, pose for selfies and answer several questions from our 50 guests!

As the creator of the popular podcast *Revisionist History*, Gladwell is intrigued by the past, and particularly those events that are “overlooked and misunderstood.” Each episode of his podcast—which recently completed its fourth season—begins with an inquiry about a person, event, or idea, and then challenges common assumptions about the topic.

In a question and answer session, Gladwell talked about an interview he did as a staff writer for the *New Yorker* at the time of the Enron collapse in 2001. He said he asked the reporter who had broken the Enron story who his whistleblower was. To Gladwell’s surprise, the reporter said that he had no whistleblower; he had merely used publicly available documents to show that Enron was a “house of cards.” Gladwell said that he vowed then and there to “always be the guy who reads the documents.”

Gladwell shared with the CCHS audience that his upcoming podcast season would touch on the business side of museums. In fact, his swing through central Pennsylvania was enroute to interviews at the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh where he is conducting research for his fifth season of *Revisionist History*.



## Exploring our 1880’s Railroad History continued from front page

Another impressive effort was the cuts in the landscape to keep the rail bed flat. The photo of our group in the railroad cut shows the wall on the left to be about 30 feet high. It was pick and shovel work probably aided by some dynamite. Then probably used horse and wagon to haul out the material, and there were many bridges and many such cuts to get from Tyrone to Pennsylvania Furnace. (And to think for the eastern leg of the L&T near Spring Mills they dug two tunnels.) It is amazing what was accomplished in the late 1800’s with just modest hand tools and horse and wagon. On November 8, 1880, the trains started rolling between Tyrone and Pennsylvania Furnace with two trains running daily over the bridges we saw and earthen cuts we walked.

No doubt Carnegie had some influence on the western leg of this L&T railroad. And in fact the Carnegie Brothers & Company (Andrew and Thomas) leased the Pennsylvania Furnace operation for a few years. Then they moved on and bought the River Hill tract from Moses Thompson and built Scotia. But that’s a story for another time.

## Old House Fair on the Road goes to the Home Expo!

In a new venue for us, were happy to be a part of the 2020 Home Expo with the Old House Fair on the Road. Several visitors stopped by our information booth to peruse maps, books, architecture resources and handouts. Dick Pencek provided a fascinating talk *Nineteenth Century Interiors* informed by decades of teaching two classes at Penn State: *Early Pennsylvania Decorative Arts and Furniture*, and *Nineteenth Century Pennsylvania Architecture and Restoration*. Both were hands-on



courses that instilled an appreciation for historic research, antique artifacts and practical experience in the process of historic restoration and preservation.

We thank the **Builders Association of Central PA**, and especially to Keri O’Shea, executive officer, for the opportunity to participate.

Special thanks to Dick Pencek for his talk and to Old House Fair committee co-chairs Joseph Griffin and Ken Martin for their help.



## Henszey-Pyle Distinguished Author Series

We thank Dr. Kurt Carr for his fascinating program *First Pennsylvanians: The Archaeology of Native Americans in Pennsylvania* held at the Visitor Center in February. It was well attended by nearly 120 guests who were treated to an overview of Pennsylvania’s pre-history as told by its archaeology. We also thank the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission for its support with this lecture.

## Call for Nominations

CCHS is seeking nominations for the 2020 John H. Ziegler Historic Preservation Awards. Join us on January 31 to honor the 2020 award recipients. More information about nomination criteria and a downloadable nomination form may be found at [CentreHistory.org/historic-preservation-awards/](http://CentreHistory.org/historic-preservation-awards/) or by emailing Mary Sorensen at [msorensen@centrefurnace.org](mailto:msorensen@centrefurnace.org).



The Centre Foundation has made a huge difference for many an organization's ability to continue its mission work, including CCHS.

Centre Gives is a unique, online giving event designed to encourage community giving and to support the great work of Centre County non profits. This year, in the shadow of COVID-19, Centre Gives will be more important than ever. Beginning at **9:00 a.m. on Tuesday, May 12 and ending at 9:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 13**, the online giving event will last for 36 hours.

Your contributions through Centre Gives provide critical funds for the many ongoing programs and activities that are held at the Society's historic sites. If you have attended talks or exhibitions, volunteered as a docent or gardened in the Mansions period gardens,

been an intern, helped with collections or data entry projects, volunteered for events, written for a newsletter or publication, then you are familiar CCHS's mission. You probably already know that through these, and other activities, we work collaboratively with local, regional, county and state organizations and individuals to help preserve and promote Centre County's historic, cultural, and natural resources.

There are many items on the daily do list to make the Centre Furnace Mansion, the Boogersburg School and the activities at these sites and beyond available to the public. Your donations help us to accomplish these mission goals. If you're not familiar with CCHS, there's no opportunity like Centre Gives to join us on our great adventure in discovering, preserving, and disseminating the rich and unique story of Centre County

Your donations to the Centre County Historical Society through Centre Gives will not only qualify CCHS for a larger share of Centre Foundation's \$200,000 stretch pool, but for additional prize money during the event as well.

*There will be no open house this year due to COVID-19, but if you would like to make a donation by phone, we can help you! Call us at 234-4779 or on May 12 and 13 during office hours.*

## Boogersburg School

As we think about what the new "home school" experience must be like for elementary students here and around the country during the pandemic, we reflect on what a typical day was like for a child who attended Boogersburg in the late 1800s. Adapted from notes by the late Dr. Frank McKenna who was a professor in the College of Education at Penn State and former Boogersburg docent, whose research included the history of education in the United States.

5:30 a.m. - Arise and begin the day's chores:

Girls: Make the beds, empty family night soil pots, feed small animals, gather eggs, carry water, assist with break - fast, and awaken and dress younger children.

Boys: Milk cows, carry milk, lead cows to pasture, muck the stalls, and carry fire wood to the farmhouse.

6:45 a.m. - Breakfast: Homemade bread and jam, eggs, fresh milk, and berries if in season.

7:15 a.m. - Walk to school: Play with friends unless the teacher has assigned chores, such as to carry

wood or water.

8:00 a.m. - School begins: Greet teacher, Pledge of Allegiance, morning prayer, Bible reading health/cleanliness inspection. Graded lessons in English grammar, spelling, reading, composition, penmanship, writing

10:00 a.m. - Recess. Girls: Red Rover, tag, hopscotch, Graces, jacks, marbles. Boys: Tag, Crack the Whip, ball, hoop and stick, marbles

10:30 a.m. - School continues: Graded lessons in arithmetic (including mental

math).

12:00 p.m. - Lunch (carried from home): Bread chunk, piece of cheese, carrot, apple, milk jug

12:30 p.m. - Graded lessons In history, geography, and moral education

3:00 p.m. - School dismissed (arrive home by 3:30 p.m.)

Girls: minding of siblings, tend small animals and gather eggs, carry water, assist in preparation of evening meal

Boys: general farm work and repairs, collect cows from field, feed cattle, chop and carry firewood

6:00 p.m. - Evening meal: Beef, pork or chicken, vegetables, fresh milk, homemade dessert

6:30 p.m. - Homework

8:30 p.m. - Reading or games - Checkers, mental acuity games, skittles

9:00 p.m. - Bedtime



*Boogersburg Class of 1938-1939:  
Front Row: Kermit Rockey, Trueman Rockey, Dorothy Young, Phylliss Jry, Loise Neff, Katherin Neff, Patricia Neff, Jim Neff, Morris Gardner, Philip Wolford, Nelson Wolford. Middle Row: Paul Johnstonbaugh, Carl Rockey, Mary Young, Betty Johnstonbaugh, Mary Wolford, Beverly Rockey, Sherley Neff, Marcie Johnstonbaugh, Stanley Chamberlain, Eugene Chamberlain. Top row: Bill Spearly, Don Neff, Phylliss Rockey, Lois Krebs and (teacher) Helen Arderly Egler*

**Save the date!**  
**Boogersburg Open House**  
**Sunday, August 30**  
**1:00 - 4:00 p.m.**  
**at the Boogersburg School**

## Behind the Seams: The Wedding Dress of Elizabeth McFarlane Thompson Hamilton

After a lengthy process that benefited from great generosity and assistance, we are thrilled to share the news that Elizabeth McFarlane Thompson Hamilton's wedding dress is again on display at the Centre Furnace Mansion. We will plan a reception and program later this summer [pending restrictions being lifted], to celebrate.



*Painting of Elizabeth with her daughter Ann.*

Elizabeth, or "Lizzie," second daughter of Moses and Mary Irvin Thompson, grew up in what is now the Centre Furnace Mansion. On October 27, 1875, Elizabeth married John Hamilton, professor of agriculture, who worked closely with President James Calder at the

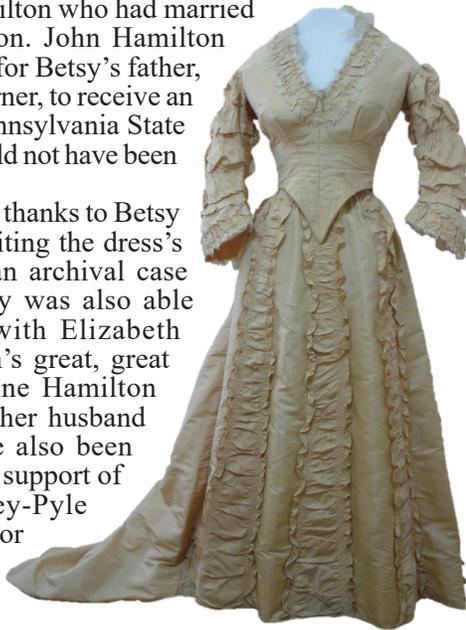
Pennsylvania State College. Her wedding dress was given to the Historical Society in 1989 by Elizabeth's grandson, William Peddle Henszey.

Betsy Taylor joined CCHS as a volunteer docent in 2012 and became involved with collections activities. While she was working on her own family's genealogy she discovered that her father's uncle was the same John Hamilton who had married Elizabeth Thompson. John Hamilton provided the funds for Betsy's father, John Armstrong Turner, to receive an education at the Pennsylvania State College, which would not have been possible otherwise.

We owe special thanks to Betsy Taylor for underwriting the dress's conservation and an archival case to display it. Betsy was also able to connect later with Elizabeth and John Hamilton's great, great granddaughter, Anne Hamilton Henszey Pyle and her husband Kenneth who have also been generous with their support of the CCHS Henszey-Pyle Distinguished Author Series. Betsy has given this generous gift in honor of her

father, John Armstrong Turner in commemoration of the marriage of his aunt and uncle John Hamilton to Elizabeth McFarlane Thompson.

While we do not have a great deal of information about Elizabeth Hamilton, our spring semester intern, Halle Richardson, has been doing some research on her. Halle is a Penn State freshman majoring in Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies and minoring in Anthropology and is finishing her work remotely. She will be putting a portion of Elizabeth's early life in the context of



her education at the Lawrenceville Female Seminary in Lawrenceville, NJ and expanding on women's education in the latter half of the 19th century.

Wedding dress fashion during the period of Elizabeth's dress was a topic delved into in 2017 by Penn State student, Regina Joslin, Theatre Design & Technology major working with the guidance of Laura Robinson in the College of Arts and Architecture. As part of her project, Regina provided sketches of the components of Elizabeth's dress to help describe its construction and background of its style.

We have others to be grateful for, starting with Sue Kellerman and her team at the Penn State Centre for Conservation and Preservation for their guidance with the conservation process and to John McQueary from the State College Framing Company for advice on archival housing.

We salute Nadine Davitt, Scott Wilkinson, Phillip Melnick, and their excellent team from Penn State's Office of Physical Plant for truly coming to the rescue to help us receive, deliver and set up the display case, complexities we could not have navigated without their help.

As you can imagine, there is more to tell. The rest of the story will unfold as the feature of our next Mansion Notes newsletter in June along with excerpts from Halle and Regina's research.

## Get Social

By Cathy Horner



*This undated picture, from the Brower collection, is of the Detwiler Tower on Nittany Mountain between Centre Hall and Pleasant Gap.*

Joan Brower loves Centre County. She loves it so much that she has spent her lifetime collecting postcards, images, and other memorabilia that tell the county's history through pictures. Her collection is mind-boggling and includes thousands of items. Since January, I have been thrilled to be meeting with Joan and scanning just a fraction of her treasure trove. Joan's goal is to put together a coffee-table book that will be a pictorial history of Centre County. From Zion to Pine Grove Mills; Waddle to Stormstown and Rebersburg to Snow Shoe – every inch of our area will be represented.

Be sure to follow Centre County Historical Society on Facebook where I have been posting a sampling of the images that may or not make the final cut into Joan's publication. The comments that followers are making on the pictures add even more interest. We, of course, have had to hit pause with our project as we shelter in place.

## Volunteer Corner

April is Volunteer Appreciation Month and we salute our deserving friends that give generously of their time and talents and look forward to seeing you again after pandemic restrictions are relaxed (not just on Zoom!)

You need only to read this newsletter to see that volunteers play a vital role in the success of CCHS and its many activities and ongoing preservation work. Sometimes it is a special skill or talent, leadership skill or a welcome helping hand with an event or activity that is especially needed. Here are some of the ways that people contribute their time at CCHS at the Mansion and School and with outreach activities:

Gardening • Help Coordinate and Plan Events and Receptions • Leading Visitor and School Tours • Library Work • Exhibition Planning • Speaking • Stocking Stuffer • Plant Celebration • Collections Cleaning and Care • Scanning • Archival Work • Photography • Workshops • Writing • Data Entry • Development Work • Proofreading • Graphic Design • Cataloging Collections • Handy Projects • Internships • Independent Studies • Service Work Days • Program Set-up and Clean-up • Inventory • Program Development • Publications Efforts • Leading a Service Group • Marketing • Staffing Information Tables • Painting • Help with Mailings

We are always looking for people who are interested in volunteering. In addition to the abovementioned activities, there are volunteer needs for other special projects and for people willing to lead during service groups, events or other activities. To find out more about volunteering with CCHS, please contact Mary Sorensen at [msorensen@centrefurnace.org](mailto:msorensen@centrefurnace.org).

We are thankful for all who volunteer. You provide the critical foundation for our mission work at the Historical Society.



*Docent Lynn Royse took CCHS on the road in February to the 2nd grade classrooms at Radio Park Elementary. She shared artifacts from Centre Furnace Mansion connected to the 2nd grade "Then and Now" social studies unit. Lynn is a retired 5th grade teacher from Radio Park.*

## Thank you

Generosity takes many forms whether donating a service or needed item, providing program support, or helping out in any number of ways. We are thankful for the generosity of our members, friends and area businesses and organizations for the support that we receive.

We extend our sincere thanks to the Centre County Airport Authority for their sponsorship of an expanded exhibition about Centre County aviation history at the University Park Airport. The exhibition will feature items from the CCHS Sherm Lutz Collection. We will provide an update about this in our newsletter in June!

For those who have contributed and helped out over the past quarter:

- Mike Clitherow – lending us equipment to work remotely during COVID-19 quarantine
- Doty & Hench, Joseph Geise – donation of a gently used and much needed color copier
- Blake Tietelbaum – technical assistance for CCHS website
- James McElwain – technical assistance for CCHS website
- Doug Moerschbacher - financial contribution to the Sherm Lutz Collection
- Sally Wangsness - financial contribution to the preservation of Elizabeth Thompson's wedding dress

The Centre County Historical Society is grateful for continued grant support through:



The Centre County Government,  
Centre County Board of  
Commissioners



The Pennsylvania Historical and  
Museum Commission  
*A state agency funded by the  
Commonwealth of  
Pennsylvania.*

## Sampler Archive Project

The talented team effort that made the 2017 exhibition "Unraveling the Threads of History: Needlework Samplers from the 19th Century" possible, now has another accomplishment to share! Samplers from this award-winning exhibition are now included in the national Sampler Archive database of American Schoolgirl Samplers. In 2019, CCHS held a sampler documentation event where over 50 American samplers brought into the Centre Furnace Mansion were documented. Samplers from this effort will also be added to this database in the future.

The long-term goal of the Sampler Archive is to create a freely available and easily accessible online searchable database with information and high-resolution images of all known American samplers in public and private collections nationally and internationally.



CENTRE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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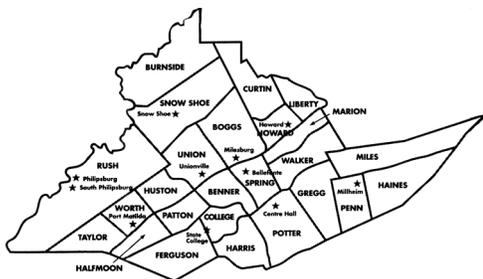
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## Membership

*New members welcome anytime.*



Your membership and gifts support all aspects of the Centre County Historical Society's operations in our mission to "help people understand, experience, appreciate and preserve Centre County's cultural and natural heritage." Membership benefits include: *Mansion Notes* - the Society's quarterly newsletter; advance notice of programs; discounted special event admission rates, and a 10% discount on all CCHS publications. The 10% discount applies online as well with code MEMBERS10.

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 value 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.

**You may also join or donate online at [www.centrehistory.org](http://www.centrehistory.org).**

New Member       Renewal

Gift Membership to: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Email(s) \_\_\_\_\_

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I would like my membership / donation to remain anonymous.