

The Rooster Herald

All the news that's fit to crow about!



Renfrew Museum and Park

Volume 1, Issue 4

May 2016

Threshing and Binding Day: Farmstead Traditions



Workers gathering bundles into shocks while the binder cuts the wheat on Binding Day 1997

At its core, the Renfrew property has always been a farmstead. While Daniel Royer ran his three businesses on this property in the early 1800s, he was still operating a farmstead as well.

Grains like wheat were a staple on many small farms. Their methods of harvesting the wheat were labor intensive, requiring many hands to do the work. Armed with sickles and flails, the binding and threshing process was slow. Even by the 1830's, there were only minimal improvements to the tools used to make the job easier.

It wasn't until the around 1870 the harvesting process for wheat became easier due to the invention of binding and threshing machines. While still labor intensive, some parts of the operation became more manageable. Even with these new machines, the job still required many hands. It also required a machine to run the thresher. Steam engines were the

most common machine for the job.

The entire process works like a well-oiled machine. Each person has a specific placement and duty to make the harvesting go smoothly. Binding is always first, which is the cutting and bundling of the wheat. Once the wheat is bundled, bundles are then set in shocks (10 bundles) to dry out. Once the shocks are dry, the threshing can begin.

Threshing the wheat breaks apart the wheat into all of its useable parts. The heads of the wheat, which store the grain, are cut off and shaken down to later be loaded and carted off to bagging. The straw is separated and blown out into a pile to later be bailed.

Today, we still do demonstrations of this traditional process to preserve a unique piece of agricultural history and to show people just how much work went in to harvesting long ago. Run by John Frantz, Renfrew has had Threshing Day at least three times before. This year, we will be using a traditional threshing machine powered by a 1916 Frick Eclipse coal-fed steam engine. The thresher is also made by Frick, and is the only one that never left Waynesboro. There will also be a Frick 1903 wooden thresher on display on Threshing Day.

As already mentioned, this job requires many hands to work. This year's Binding Day is on June 25, and Threshing Day is on July 2 at our first Farmstead Day. Both days are open to anyone interested in participating, and we highly encourage everyone to come out to help and to see the process. We absolutely need your to get the work done.

If you wish to participate, please wear long pants, long sleeve shirts, and bring gloves.

Continued on Page 2

Renfrew Museum and Park
1010 E. Main Street
Waynesboro, PA 17268

Phone: 717-762-4723

www.renfrewmuseum.org

Fun Fact of the Month:

THE MUSEUM OFFICIALLY
OPENED TO THE PUBLIC
ON MAY 15TH, 1975.

READ MORE ABOUT IT ON
PAGE 2!

RCI Board Members:

Allison Kohler, President
David Hykes, Vice President
George Buckley, Treasurer
Connie Huet, Secretary
AJ Benchoff
Doug Burkholder
Greg White
Dade Royer, Staff

REC Members:

David Hykes, REC Chairman
Terry Barkdoll
Bob Benchoff
Doug Burkholder
Bill Conrad
Connie Huet
Allison Kohler
Barb McCracken
Richard Mohn
Tom Moore
Alice Noll
Virginia Rahn
Jim Rock
Rick Shindle

Renfrew's First Opening Day 1975

Many of our members know Emma Nicodemus, the last private owner of this property requested it become a museum and park for the public when she passed. While the museum officially opened on April 3, 1975, most people don't know it closed the very next day.

In her will, Emma gave the Borough 18 months to open a museum and two years to open the park. Not wanting to miss her deadline, the original board of Renfrew finished enough of the work to open the house by the deadline. However, it was by invitation only. Since there was more to be done to turn it into what Emma wished, they did not open it up to the public that day.

Bus Tours To Visit Renfrew

Cindy Fink and Lindsay Dukes recently represented Renfrew at the Pennsylvania and Maryland Bus Exposition in Manheim, PA at the end of March.

The Bus Expo is an event where dozens of bus companies who book tours for groups come to see hundreds of vendors promoting their sites as future destinations for bus tours.

Renfrew paired up with the Franklin County Visitors Bureau to promote new tour options to bring visitors down to Waynesboro and the surrounding area.

Last year, we hosted 6 bus tours, and we are hoping to increase this number for this summer! We've already had one group book a tour through the Visitors Bureau and visit us already this season.

To create a more complete picture of what they believed Emma wanted, a little more time was needed. The entire month was dedicated to finishing touches, and the museum opened to the public on May 15th, 1975.

The park, having a longer timeframe, opened to the public on July 5, 1976.

Over the years, both the park and museum saw improvements and transformations to create the property we know and love today.

The origins of the museum and park are just one piece of the rich history the property has to offer. If anyone would like to read a comprehensive overview of the creation of Renfrew Museum and Park, a binder created

by Marilyn McCauley and Betsey Payette is available in the Visitors Center upon request.

Threshing & Binding (Continued)

We will provide water and a picnic lunch after Binding Day for the workers. There will also be food at the July 2nd Farmstead Day and water provided.

We do have to acknowledge we are at the mercy of Mother Nature, as weather will be an important factor for these events to happen.

If the wheat isn't ready to harvest by these dates, we won't be able to demonstrate. If we have bad weather on those days, we won't be able to demonstrate. We are hoping for good weather over the next two months to make this happen!

John will be giving a talk at the Waynesboro Industrial Museum on June 14 at 7pm. It will be a comprehensive talk about the entire process from the plowing to harvesting. There will be photos of the process to give you a glimpse into the work that will need to be done on our event days!

Please keep an eye out on our Facebook page and the website's homepage for information! Otherwise, you can show up on June 25 and July 2 ready to work, and John will show you what you can do to help.

Spring Art Show

Renfrew's annual Spring Art Show is on display in the Wagon Shed Room.

The theme, "Back In The Good Old Days," focuses on structures like smokehouses, blacksmith shops, summer kitchens, and more.

Becky Dietrich, who organizes the show, said inspiration for the theme came from seeing many of these types of buildings around the local area.

She was also inspired by a triptych

painting of millstones she did a number of years ago that normally is on display in the library. The triptych is part of the art display, and will go back to library after the show.

There was a small reception for the artists on Opening Day, which kicked off the open season for the museum.

The show, featuring 16 local artists, will be displayed in the Wagon Shed Room through June 25.



The triptych of millstones done by Becky Dietrich

Ed's Corner

All stories are told by Ed Miller from his perspective to Lindsay Dukes.

Back in 1942, when Edgar and Emma bought the property we know as Renfrew, there were still people living in the Fahnestock House. When it was under the Bell-Strickler estate, the property was rented out. Rather than removing the tenants when they bought the land, Edgar and Emma let them stay.

Keep in mind at this time, the brick addition was still a part of the Fahnestock house, so it was a larger living space. It was torn down in either the late 1980's or early 1990's.

The couple that lived there was Rachel Green and Ephraim Young. They were never married, but had lived together for many years and had a daughter. They were a little unusual, but very loveable characters. I always enjoyed going back to visit them.

Rachel and Ephraim were very primitive in their living habits; they had no electricity, no car, and lived off of the land as much as they possibly could.

They had their own hogs and chickens, grew plants and herbs, and would get their milk delivered to a box nailed to one of the trees by their house. Ephraim would shoot groundhogs and they'd eat the meat.

In the spring, they would always gather dandelion weeds to bring to me and to Emma and Edgar for dandelion salads. The key is to get them before the yellow flower appears or else they're too bitter to eat.

Emma would always take time to visit with Rachel when she came down to the house. Rachel would stay for hours sharing stories. Even though they were simpler people, Emma always treated her and Ephraim with respect. That was one of the many great things about her.

I have so many stories to tell about Rachel and Ephraim so it's hard to just choose one, but this story always gives me a laugh: One day Ephraim came up to the back of the house crying and told us to call Grove (the funeral home) to come get Rachel. I called Walter Grove, and he sent out Barney Barnhart and Francey Cole. I had to go back out to the house with them to open and close gates since we were running steer on the property. We had the hearse with us, and when I opened the door, Rachel is on the couch and says, "hi Mr. Miller!" I jumped a little and said to

Ephraim, "I thought you said she was dead." He replied, "she's close enough to it!" After that brief exchange, the boys said they'd go back and get the ambulance since they couldn't take her to the hospital in a hearse. At this time, funeral homes actually drove the ambulances, there weren't squads yet. They took her to the hospital. After a little time there she was moved to Franklin Farms, an old folks home in the area.

This was about 1945, so they were only living back on the property for a few years before moving away during the Nicodemus' time here. However, Ephraim made a deal with another family to rent out the house when he moved to Franklin Farm to be with Rachel. This was the Sherar family, and they only lived in the house for a few years. I can't remember the exact year, but they were gone by the early 50's. After they moved out, the house sat empty until it was restored to become a piece of the museum.

I was a little sad to see the brick portion of the house go, because it was an important part of the house. Having been built by the Fahnestocks, we know it was part of their history, and we lost that by getting rid of it. However, I think its restoration was done well, and it is a great part of the property that preserves a lot of the 1800's history.

*Name correction for the February Newsletter story: The name should be Dave Siegrist rather than Dave Seacrest.

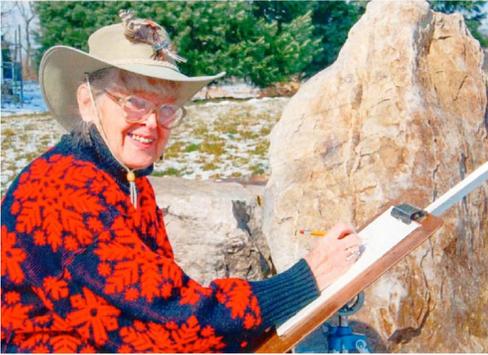
Ed Miller shares stories of his experiences with the Nicodemus family for Ed's Corner.



The Rooster Herald

All the news that's fit to crow about!

Spotlight: Becky Dietrich



She was very excited to see a museum was going to become part of the local community, and the rich history of Renfrew was going to be preserved.

"I was just so happy to see a museum developing," said Becky. "I actually applied for the curator position when they first opened, but I didn't have any experience in that field."

We are recognizing at least one of our volunteers in each newsletter to thank them for the wonderful work they do at Renfrew. We truly would not be as great as we are without each and every one of you. With that being said, this spotlight is on Becky Dietrich!

Becky has been a part of Renfrew since its inception as a museum and park.

She did work as the historian up at Fort Richie for a number of years, but decided to focus on her art studio and her art and "retired" from her position there.

Over the years, Becky has been an active part of Renfrew. At one point, she developed and ran the gift shop for the museum, and ran a column in the Record Herald from around 2002-2009. The name of the column, "Something To Crow

About" helped inspire us for our Rooster Herald tagline. Becky also helped write the old newsletter, Der Wetterhan.

Currently, Becky is in charge of the annual Spring Art Show, which is in its third year at Renfrew. She is still very involved in the community arts programs, and will often bring groups to the property to paint on-site.

"I have so many happy memories of Renfrew," said Becky. "From all of the great programs over the years to the wonderful things happening now, I'm so happy to see how important it is to the area. It's truly the crown jewel of Waynesboro."

Photo by Janie Moltrup.

Calendar of Events

May 14-Indian Dash

June 9-Summer Concert Series, On Tap 7:00pm

June 16-Summer Concert Series, Mateo Monk 7:00pm

June 23-Summer Concert Series, Navy Cruisers 7:00pm

June 30-Summer Concert Series, Slackwater 4 7:00pm

July 2-Royer Farmstead Tour & Threshing Demonstration/Greg Mauer Photo display & Reception.

July 7-Summer Concert Series, Tresa Paul 7:00pm

July 14-Summer Concert Series, Wayne Band 7:00pm

July 21-Summer Concert Series, Lucky Punk 7:00pm

July 23-Bluegrass Festival, 4:00-8:00pm

July 28-Summer Concert Series, Center of Gravity 7:00pm

August 4-Summer Concert Series, 7:00pm

August 11-Summer Concert Series, 7:00pm

August 12-14-Civil War Encampment

August 13-Royer Farmstead Tour

August 18-Summer Concert Series, New Horizon 7:00pm

August 25-Summer Concert Series, Rohrsersville Band 7:00pm

September 10-Royer Farmstead Tour

October 15-Pumpkin Festival

December 2-Christmas On The Farm, 5:00-8:00pm

December 3-Christmas On The Farm, 2:00-8:00pm

December 4-Christmas On The Farm, 1:00-5:00pm

The printing of this newsletter was made possible by the generosity of:

Bill and Anne Conrad

Project Updates

Lime Kiln: After looking around the local area for extra limestone, a large amount of stone was donated in loving memory of SFC Georg R Scott (SFGA), Richard M (Tuck) Scott, and Robert S Scott by Rick and Wendy (Scott) Beeler, Seth Scott and Emily (Scott) Schuit and families.

David George of D.L. George & Sons donated the transportation of the stone to Renfrew's property in April, and John Frantz cut a path to the top of the kiln for the mason.

The mason is expected to start work in June.

Pottery Case: Brad Royer built the bulkhead to bring the ceiling down for the cases in March.

Hagerstown Paint & Glass began work on building the cases last month. There will be a dedication sometime this summer once the project is completed.



The bulkhead, frame, and doors for the new pottery case are built and awaiting the rest of its pieces!

Needs of the Museum and Park

- Small fireplace bellows for the Summer Kitchen to easily start the fire: \$450
- Textile boxes for proper storage of quilts and coverlets: \$475. We have 28 quilts and 14 hand-woven coverlets that need this special type of box to prevent deterioration.
- Buffered and unbuffered tissue paper for proper separation of the quilts and coverlets inside the boxes: \$225

- Newsletter Sponsors: The total cost per printing is \$450. The newsletter would feature your business card or simply a "sponsored by" section with your name if you do not have a business to represent.

If you are interested in sponsoring any of these endeavors, you do not have to give the full amount! Any amount is welcome and appreciated.

Please contact Dade Royer or Lindsay Dukes if you would like to be a sponsor.

The printing of this newsletter was made possible by the generosity of:

Re/MAX

Darwyn Benedict
BROKER, REALTOR®
GRI, ABR, CDPE

RE/MAX
Associates Realty Group

Cell: 717-977-8100
Fax: 717-762-1333
darwynbenedict@remax.net
Office: 717-762-8100 Extension 102
47 West Main Street, Waynesboro, PA 17268

Each Office is Independently Owned & Operated

Questers

The Iron Forge Questers Chapter #1462 out of Penn National generously gave Renfrew a grant of \$2000 to purchase a new bed and furnishings for the children's bedroom in the Fahnestock House.

The grant is a matching grant, with \$1000 coming from the state group of Pennsylvania Questers and \$1000 coming from the local Iron Forge chapter.

After approaching Renfrew with the potential grant offer, some of the ladies from the local chapter came to a Farmstead Tour last summer to see where Renfrew could best use the funds.

Cindy Fink spoke with the group while they were here. After discussing options with the Accessions Committee, they awarded the grant in December of 2015 to get the bed for the Fahnestock House. Renfrew was presented with the checks at the end of last month.

Renfrew has one year under the agreement to find and purchase the bed and furnishings. The Accessions Committee is hopeful they will find a bed in time for the first Farmstead Tour, on July 2.



Members of the Iron Forge Questers Chapter #1462 presenting Dade with the checks. From left to right: Sharon Forsythe, Dade Royer, Sue Rollins, Carla Christiansen.

Renfrew Museum and Park
1010 East Main Street
Waynesboro, PA 17268

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Waynesboro, PA
17268
Permit No. 405

RENFREW STAFF:

Dade Royer

Executive Director
droyer@renfrewmuseum.org

Judy Elden

Visitor Services
judy@renfrewmuseum.org

Lindsay Dukes

Volunteer Coordinator/PR
ldukes@renfrewmuseum.org

Cynthia Lawrence-Fink

Grants Administrator
cfink@renfrewmuseum.org

John Frantz

Supervisor of Buildings and
Grounds

Leslie Burkholder

Maintenance

John Curfman

Maintenance

Gene Kelley

Maintenance

Our Mission— *Our mission is to preserve, enhance, promote, and interpret the Royer family Pennsylvania German farmstead, the Nicodemus and Bell collections, and the surrounding Park.*

Our Vision— *Our vision is to be a welcoming and memorable destination where everyone can walk back in time.*

Our Values—

Integrity—*With honesty and truth, we will adhere to the highest moral and ethical standards in all our endeavors.*

Authenticity—*We will interpret with historical accuracy all of our exhibits, collections, programs, and events.*

Excellence—*We will be exceptional in everything we do.*

To renew your membership or to become a member, please contact Judy Elden or visit our website and go to the “Join” tab for more information.

Follow Us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram!



@Renfrewmuspark



Renfrew Museum and Park



@Renfrewmuseumpark