

# The Rooster Herald

All the news that's fit to crow about!



*Renfrew Museum and Park*

Volume 1, Issue 3

February 2016

## A Special Thank You Edition

*From volunteers' time commitment, to donations, to time served on the board, we're saying Thank You!*

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Phone: 717-762-4723

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

## Limestone Kiln Restoration



*A head-on view of the Limestone Kiln in its current condition*

One of the original structures of the Royer property hiding in the shadows will soon be put in the spotlight this spring.

Earlier in 2015, Renfrew applied to the Franklin County Commissioners Quality of Life Enhancement Grant to restore the Royer Limestone Kiln that sits on the back half of the property.

We were approved for the grant in December for a total of \$47,300.

After a little searching, we were able to find a mason from Lancaster County who has experience in rebuilding limestone kilns. He has agreed to help us with this project.

The restoration process will begin in the spring. It will include landscaping, tree cutting, and grading to widen the current path back to the kiln, as well as adding a path to the top of the kiln.

The kiln itself will be repaired and restructured using the current stones and other stones brought in to fill in holes.

Originally built in 1799, the limestone kiln was one of Daniel Royer's most important businesses and also important for his own operations on the farmstead.

It played an integral part in his tannery business, as lime is one of the most important ingredients in the tanning vats to strip the hides.

Lime powder could also be mixed with horsehair and made into a plaster to use in the home. Another special use for the powder was to sprinkle it across fields to increase crop growth. This was a trick the Pennsylvania Germans learned and shared with other farmers in this region.

Daniel used the kiln for his own farmstead, but also profited by selling limestone powder to other local farmers, housewrights, and tanners.

Many limestone kilns today (primarily found in the eastern part of Pennsylvania) are crumbling away, or are not accessible to visitors like the one here at Renfrew. With this restoration, we will be offering a unique glimpse into an important process of the past.

This is part of our continuing process of restoring the Royer farmstead to its original state, and letting everyone take a "walk back in time."

We will be keeping everyone updated as this project gets underway. Be on the lookout for something in the next newsletter or on our Facebook page in the spring!

### Fun Fact of the Month:

Groundhog Day became popular in the U.S. thanks to the Germans who settled in Pennsylvania!

### RCI Board Members:

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

### REC Board Members:

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Bob Benchoff  
Doug Burkholder  
Bill Conrad  
Connie Huet  
Allison Kohler  
Barb McCracken  
Richard Mohn  
Tom Moore  
Alice Noll  
Virginia Rahn  
Jim Rock  
Rick Shindle

## Reflections of Renfrew: Alice McCleaf



As a child, my family and I visited my mother's Aunt Elizabeth and Uncle Clarence Beaver, who lived in the house and farmed the property we now know as Renfrew. I am also a descendant of Samuel Royer, Daniel Royer's brother. These two things sparked my interest in Renfrew, which continued into my adulthood.

In the seventies, I worked for First National Bank in Wayne Heights and would often eat my lunch at a picnic table in the park. I was a spectator at the placing of the gabions (wire baskets filled with rock to prevent erosion and provide stream bank stabilization), and watched the laying of the

Edmajoda Trail. A very busy Ed Miller directed these projects and managed the property.

After retiring from FNB in 1996, I became the secretary for the newly formed Renfrew Committee, Inc. and Emma Nicodemus' dream began to take shape. Her fine collection of Bell Pottery can be viewed by visitors as well as other collections she cherished. Members of the Waynesboro community and beyond have contributed and loaned valuable artifacts to be displayed in the Museum House and Visitors Center.

Much effort has been made to restore the existing buildings. The barn has been transformed into a Visitors Center containing offices for the museum staff and the Renfrew Institute which offers classes to thousands of school children each year. The students learn how their ancestors lived and the importance of taking care of our earth.

The Fahnestock House and Barn have been restored as well as the smokehouse, milk house, and the wagon

shed. Most recently, the summer kitchen was moved from the rear of the Alexander Hamilton library and rebuilt stone by stone.

It has been my privilege to observe these restorations during my time here. Amazingly, much of the work on these projects has been done by a dedicated group of volunteers sharing their various skills.

My resignation as a member of the RCI board was effective at the end of 2015. I will continue to help with accessioning and inventory as much as possible.

Please pay a visit to the museum and park and consider becoming a member or volunteering if you haven't already done so. Being a part of this historic venue has enriched my life, and I believe it will do the same for yours.

## New Board Member: Doug Burkholder

We would like to welcome Doug Burkholder to the RCI Board and officially introduce him to everyone!

Doug has been with Renfrew for a number of years as a member of the Renfrew Executive Committee (REC). He has also been a part of the finance committee during his time at Renfrew.

He has been involved in accounting for 20 years, and is a Certified Public Accountant and president/owner

of his own firm, Burkholder & Company in Waynesboro.

"I love Renfrew, and I'm excited about this new role and opportunity to help out," said Doug. "I'm really happy with the changes and growth that's happening here and to be a part of it all."



*Doug Burkholder, our newest face on the RCI Board.*

## **Eating With Your Ancestors Program**

The Eating With Your Ancestors program, an early childhood nutrition program funded by a grant from Summit Endowment is under way. Families will be coming to Renfrew to use the Summer Kitchen starting this month.

The program began last fall, with the first section of the program focusing on teaching nutrition and basic cooking skills. Now that the first section is completed, we're moving on to the second section which is cooking in the Summer Kitchen. We will be cooking in the

fireplace and on the hearth.

Many dishes made in the 1800's were one-pot meals, and frequently the ingredients were picked right out of their own gardens. We'll be doing the same thing with this program!

Each family will be receiving a crock pot at the end of the program, allowing them to recreate many of the recipes we'll be showing them in the Summer Kitchen. We'll also be using many ingredients from our own kitchen garden and fresh food donations from the

Gleaning Project. We also will be teaching families to grow a sustainable garden in containers and small spaces.

## **Ed's Corner**

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

*Foreword by Lindsay: I always thought the Edmajoda trail was a cool Native American name or word. Little did I know, it has an even cooler backstory...*

The Renfrew we know today was once a little wilder. While Emma and Edgar Nicodemus lived here, the only parts of the property in use were the farming fields, barn, and the house. That meant most of the 107 acres we know as the park area was untouched. Emma had a deep love of nature, and her property reflected that love with lots of wildlife and natural beauty.

In Emma's will, she gave all of her property to the Borough of Waynesboro and stated it would be turned into a museum and park. Her dream was to keep the history and natural beauty of this place alive for generations.

Emma passed in 1973, but it wasn't until 1974 that we began to change the land per the wishes in her will. She gave the borough 1.5 years to make the grounds into a useable park area.

We didn't quite make the deadline, but within that timeframe of 1.5 years we made massive progress, including three walking trails and the picnic/pavilion area.

Throughout the summer of '74 and the spring of '75, I had the help of a few programs to give me volunteers. CETA and JTPA were programs for school kids to work and get paid over the summer. I also had GreenThumb, a group for senior citizens 65 and up. I do wish I'd been able to keep track of all of the volunteers who helped and how many hours we put into all of the work. It's how we got everything done! Without the thousands of volunteer hours, I don't know that we'd have been able to keep so close to the deadline given in Emma's will.

The first trail created was the Edmajoda trail. Some have thought over the years this was a Native American name. It's actually just the first two letters of the first names of the men that built it: myself, Mark Michels, Joe Rankin, and Dave Seacrest. It was a really neat way to remain part of Renfrew for generations, and to commemorate the hard work we put in to making that trail.

Pronounced Ed-ma-JOE-da, it was originally two small loop trails on either side of the creek. We wanted to keep the land as natural and untouched as possible, so we

made a winding path that followed the curve of the creek. We logged the path to prevent erosion, and built both sides at the same time. It wasn't until years later that an Eagle Scout built the footbridge on the trail as his project. Before that, you had to wade across the creek to walk the whole trail and it wasn't always a pleasant task.

The other two trails we completed were the Old Mill Trail back at the Fahnestock property and the Salty Grimes Trail. Both took about an entire summer of work off and on, with lots of logging and grading to make the paths safe and long lasting.

Our picnic and pavilion area was the last big area we worked on during that time. The entire part of the grounds from where the water fountain stands back to the pavilion area used to be essentially a swamp. That land helped furnish the mill race for the gristmill and barkmill during the Royer's time here. We built the waterway to carry the runoff water so we could use the grounds as a picnic area. Even now, the waterway still does its job and keeps the picnic and pavilion area useable almost year-round.

I was pleasantly surprised to hear we now have 23 walking trails! I think Emma would be very happy to hear how much her property gets enjoyed by many year-round.

I have very fond memories of those two years before we opened. I hope when you next walk through the park, maybe even on one of the original trails, you'll take the whole experience in and appreciate Emma's vision turned reality.

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





## Volunteer Spotlight: Doug Parks



We are recognizing at least one of our volunteers in each newsletter to thank them for the wonderful work they've been doing at Renfrew. We

truly would not be as great as we are without each and every one of you. With that being said, our first Volunteer Spotlight is on Doug Parks!

Doug volunteered with us in the past with his wife, and he recently rejoined us as a volunteer in the fall of 2015. Now retired, he is able to dedicate more of his time to us again!

He expressed an interest in volunteering when he heard about the new Summer Kitchen and bake oven, and we've been lucky to have him on board!

Doug will be bringing his baking experience to Renfrew. He has loved baking since childhood, and has over 15 years of experience in the craft!

If you were at the Summer Kitchen dedication or the Christmas event this past year, you've probably already had a taste of the delicious bread Doug bakes.

"I'm very excited about volunteering at Renfrew," said Doug. "I can devote time and pursue something I genuinely like to do. Helping in the Summer Kitchen will be a learning experience for me, and I'm so happy to have that privilege at a great place like Renfrew."

He will be joining us in the adventure of learning how to use the bake oven for many baked goods, and to eventually start teaching the community to use it as well.

"I see the progress and success that Renfrew has had over the years, and I would like to contribute to that as I can. My wife and I see Renfrew as the crown jewel of Waynesboro, and we're so impressed with the staff and volunteers alike who have done so much to make the museum and park as wonderful as it is. Renfrew has been a big part of our lives for years, and I'm happy that it continues to be so now."

## Calendar of Events

**February 21**-Underground Railroad program, 2:00-4:00pm

**March 12**-Park Cleanup Day (bad weather date **3/19**)

**March 13**-Bell Pottery Lecture, 2:00-4:00pm. (bad weather date **3/20**)

**March 26**-Brothers of the Brush Easter Egg Hunt, 1:00pm

**April 16**-Opening Day/Spring Into History/Art Show Opening

**May 14**-Indian Dash

**June 9**-Summer Concert Series, 7:00pm

**June 16**-Summer Concert Series, 7:00pm

**June 23**-Summer Concert Series, 7:00pm

**June 30**-Summer Concert Series, 7:00pm

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

**July 7**-Summer Concert Series, 7:00pm

**July 14**-Summer Concert Series, 7:00pm

**July 21**-Summer Concert Series, 7:00pm

**July 23**-Bluegrass Festival, 4:00-8:00pm (bad weather WAMS)

**July 28**-Summer Concert Series, 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, 7:00pm

**August 25**-Summer Concert Series, 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

**\*Summer Concert Performers TBD**

## Christmas On The Farm: Thank You!

We'd like to take a moment to look back on the 2015 Christmas On The Farm event and to thank everyone involved!

This was one of our best years to date, with a total of 660 people coming to see the house between Friday and Saturday. It was such a success, we are going to extend the event to include Sunday afternoon next year!

Many thanks to Barb McCracken and her decorating team of Shelley Benchoff, Marjorie Seilhamer, Jane Birt, Twila Flohr, and Dave Hykes. The house was simply magnificent, and we are sure it made many people's holiday seasons all the merrier!

A big thank you also goes out to all of the

volunteers who helped interpret the rooms to make the Museum House come alive, to the helpers in the Visitors Center, the parking crews, the luminaria crews, and to the staff.

We would also like to thank the musicians who shared their talents, and John Shindledecker and his troupe for putting on a wonderful play.

Finally, thank you to everyone who came out to support Renfrew! We wouldn't be here without your continuing support and contributions to the museum and park.



*Above: Barb McCracken and Dade Royer paused for a picture during the event.*

*Below: Another view of the beautiful and delectable display of candies in the dining room!*

## Needs of the Museum and Park

- We are currently looking for sponsors for a coffee station inside the Visitors Center for all who come in. The cost for supplies would be around \$300 for the year.
- To keep printing the newsletter every quarter, we need sponsors for each printing. 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.

- With a new pottery collection coming to us soon (see pg 6) we need to extend the current case and build new cases to house and protect it. The estimated cost of this project is \$18,000.

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.



## 2015 Donations

In keeping with this issue's theme of thank you, we would like to thank all of those who donated to Renfrew this past year.

We are so grateful to the many people that enjoy Renfrew and continually support us.

Thankfully, we have such a long list of donors it's almost impossible to list them all!

It is due to each and every contribution no matter the size, and the dedication of the community to Renfrew that makes us thrive like we do.

This past year was big for us, and we thank everyone for their donations, time, and the overwhelming support we continue to receive.

Thank you!

Take advantage of the many walking trails at Renfrew this winter! Even a short walk will boost your energy and provide other healthy benefits.

## **Bell Pottery Acquisition**

We have some very exciting news to share with you! We will soon receive a large collection of Bell family and Shenandoah Valley pottery to display in the Visitors Center alongside our current collection.

Charles Bell, a Bell family descendant, and his wife Laura contacted Renfrew last December to discuss their collection of pottery.

During his visit the previous year, Charles and Laura were very impressed with our collection of Bell pottery and with everything they observed at Renfrew. They decided it was the perfect place to donate their collection!

The couple met with Dade and the Accessions Committee to discuss details. It was decided Executive Director Dade Royer and two board members, Dave Hykes and Rick Shindle would go to the Bell home and see the collection before making a final decision.

"We were all kind of awestruck when we arrived and saw the entire collection sitting out," said Dade.

The collection is over 100 pieces of Bell family pottery and pottery from men who directly studied under John Bell and branched out in the Strausburg area with their own pottery operations. The pieces range from the beautiful and unique, to casting molds, to the more ordinary.

"I was particularly excited for the molds," said David. "Those same molds produced many of the pieces we have in our current collection, and there they were sitting right in front of me."

Bell described his hope for the collection being at Renfrew: "I want to make sure that this collection is available to the public to see for generations to come."

By adding this new collection, Renfrew will house close to 300 pieces of Bell family and Shenandoah Valley pottery, truly allowing us to "enhance, promote, and interpret the Bell collection" as stated in our mission.

"It is so great how this directly plugs into our mission statement," said Dade. "It was even better that he sought us out because of our reputation and our current collection of Bell pottery."

Dave Hykes is also very excited for the opportunity to further share the history of the Bell family legacy: "This is a crucial step forward in being able to tell the story of the Bell family, and also of Shenandoah Valley pottery." He added, "There's a real sense of pride to be moving in this direction for Renfrew, and to soon be housing and sharing this exhibit with the community."

When all of the formal paperwork is completed, the collection will move into the Visitors Center on permanent display. This will require adding additional cases to properly store the pottery. The estimated cost for the whole project is \$18,000.

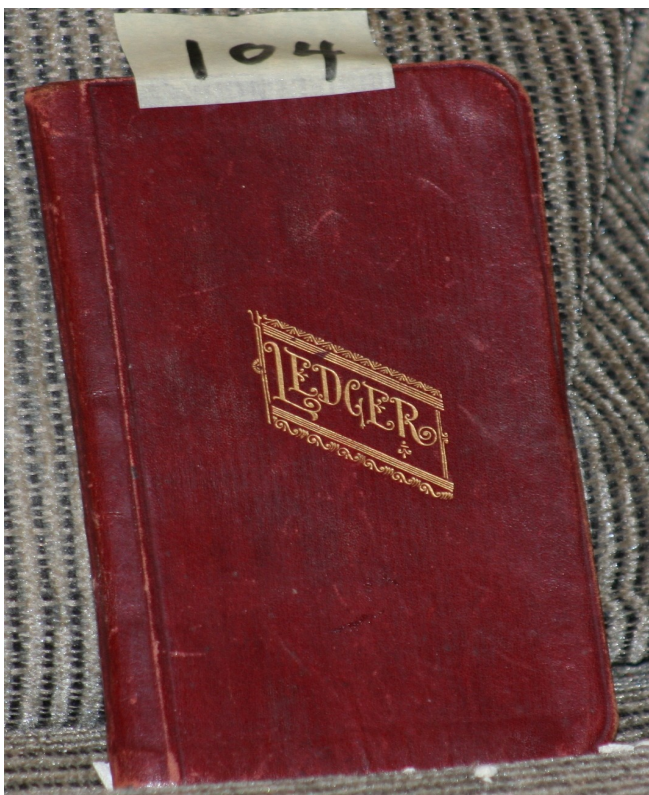
"The new cases will provide protection and longevity of this wonderful gift," said Dade.

To help defray the cost, we are seeking sponsors and donors for the installing of new cases. Please contact Dade if you wish to donate or sponsor part of the cost.

*This printed newsletter was made possible by the sponsorship of:*







*Top left: A beautiful decorative picture frame, one of the rarer items in the collection*

*Top right: The mold for the picture frame*

*Bottom left: The ledger for R. F. Bell's pottery shop in Strausburg, VA*

*Bottom right: A water pitcher and washing basin, another beautiful and unique piece from the collection*

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

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***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.

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***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.***

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