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Wetterhahn

The Weathervane



Volume XIV, Issue III The Newsletter of Renfrew Museum & Park

Autumn 2007

Frank Feather- Itinerant Artisan



Visit the Frank Feather Exhibit in the Changing Gallery until October 23, 2007.

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Frank Feather was born on April 20, 1877 to Joseph and Mary Feather. The eighth of ten children, Frank would soon enter the family trade in the looming mills when the family immigrated to the United States. Although he was only 8 years of age, Frank worked to help support the family as many immigrant children did.

Somewhere in his formative years Frank learned to carve. This skill would be an intricate part of a life that was nomadic and turbulent.

With a small pouch that carried his tools in a coat-pocket, Frank would travel in the southern Pennsylvania and Maryland regions for the next fifty years.

For a place in the barn and food Frank Feather would create exquisite carvings from pieces of wood. Mostly with patriotic and religious themes or slogans, these "everyday" items became works of art. The spoons, canes and even gun stocks became family heirlooms. He was even adept at using wooden "left-over" pieces and transforming them into ornate objects. An example of this, a pool cue was converted into a beautifully carved cane.

Frank died at age 74 on April 30, 1951 at a Frederick, Maryland hospital, where his body was donated to medical research. After cremation he was buried with many other indigents in a common grave on the grounds of the Springfield State Hospital near Sykesville.

What remains today is the legacy of the mysterious itinerant artisan and the "treasures" he created.

Sources: Frank Feather: A Carver's Colorful Life by William Feather– 1939
Carved in Wood-The Legacy of Frank Feather by: Angela Commito—Catoctin History Magazine– Fall/Winter 2005



**A Gardener
"Extraordinaire"**

When you find someone in a pink hat, down on her knees, and very enthusiastically pruning bushes or pulling weeds, you are in the presence of Phyllis Croson engaged in her favorite activity.

A long-time member and accomplished gardener, Phyllis loves to be outdoors and tending the plant life that is so much a part of Renfrew's landscape. She contends that gardening isn't work, but a way to achieve peace and tranquility.

With a long family heritage in the Keystone state, the devoted "native" never tires of spreading the good word about Waynesboro and family. Her father worked at Landis Machine Company for 55 years, a fact repeated in passing by a very proud daughter.

Phyllis had her own very successful career as a secretary, retiring from Letterkenny Army Depot. She also is the mother of six children.

Even though Phyllis moved a few years ago to Germantown, Maryland, her heart is still in Waynesboro and visits often.



Each flower is a soul opening out to nature.
Gerard De Nerval

**Volunteering
"It's a Healthy Thing"**

To volunteer means to enter into service of one's free will. This takes many forms, including military or civic. Without volunteers an organization, especially a non-profit would struggle to maintain itself.

A Bureau of Labor Statistics finding from last year discovered that 63 million people participated in some form of volunteerism. The average time dedicated was 52 hours, with the largest group made up of individuals between the ages of 35-44 years.

In recent studies it has been suggested it is not only important to society to volunteer, but it can be beneficial to your health. A lessening of pain, a sense of well-being, social development and reduction of depression could be attributed to volunteering.

Some preliminary studies have shown that specified beneficial hormones can be produced by those engaged in involved activities. The Adrenocorticotrophic hormone (ACTH) can activate a sense of happiness and productivity for extended periods of time. Another hormone, oxytocin, can increase energy. Even the immune function could improve, all without prescription drugs by just volunteering.

To obtain a "natural" high and make a difference in your community, volunteer. Twenty-eight percent of the population who are giving by volunteering are finding their health improving. Give it a try!

I expect to pass through life but once, if therefore there be any kindness I can show, or any good I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now, and not deter or neglect it, as I shall not pass this way again.

William Penn

Answer: The name of the ship Francis Scott Key was held prisoner on -H.M.S. Surprise.



**Conflict...
The War of 1812**

During the War of 1812 there were many occurrences that had an impact on the young American nation. These were unfolding while Daniel Royer was building a "new" home in Waynesburg, PA.

In September of 1814 British troops burned the White House and Capitol. They failed to capture Baltimore during a siege on September 13th and 14th. During that bombardment a young attorney, Francis Scott Key, wrote "The Star Spangled Banner", which became the U.S. national anthem. Do you remember which ship Key was held prisoner on while composing the anthem? (Answer is on page 2.)

After long negotiations that began in 1813, on December 24, 1814 a peace treaty was signed in Ghent, Belgium with no clear "victor". The U. S. Senate finally ratified the agreement on February 16, 1815.

The last battle fought on January 8, 1815 involved the British and an American force led by General Andrew Jackson., who defeated the redcoats at New Orleans.

Jackson, who would later become the seventh President of the U.S., with a rag-tag group caused losses amounting to more than 2600 dead, wounded or captured enemy forces. Jackson's troops suffered only the loss of 8 and thirteen wounded.

One acknowledgment of Jackson's triumph came in a ballad where the composer portrayed the 2000 Kentucky riflemen, using Pennsylvania long rifles, as Kentucky rifles. Thus began the myth of the Kentucky rifle.

Have you seen the John H. Johnston Pennsylvania long-rifle in the Back Parlor of the Museum? It is well worth a look!

Sources: Early American Life Magazines
Funk and Wagnall Encyclopedia

There never was a good war or a bad peace.
Benjamin Franklin

**The Ballad
That Changed History**

After the "routing" of the British in 1815 by General Andrew Jackson, a ballad emerged that changed the history of the long rifle. This "misconception" in history prevails, even today.

"But Jackson he was wide awake and wasn't scar'd at trifles,

For well he knew what aim we take with our Kentucky rifles;

So led us down to Cypress Swamp, the ground was low and mucky,

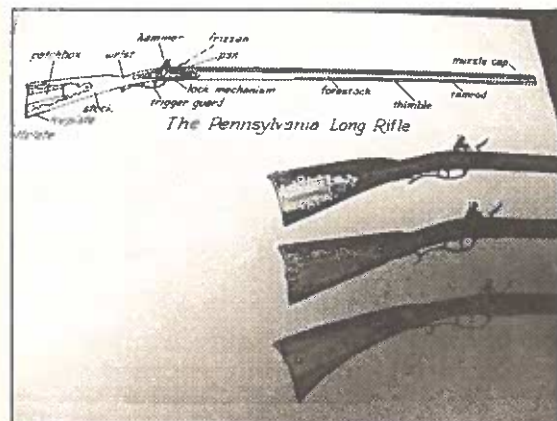
There stood John Bull in martial pomp but here was old Kentucky".

Thus began the theory that the long rifle was created in Kentucky.

Actually somewhere between the Revolution and the end of the eighteenth century, the first long rifle was produced in eastern Pennsylvania by an unknown craftsman. The reloading could be done in twenty to thirty seconds, more rapidly than the cumbersome and clumsy European rifles.

The long rifle continued to be used with great popularity until the mid-century, roughly 1850. By the time of the Civil War very few were being produced.

The workmanship and outward beauty of the Pennsylvania (Kentucky) long rifle make it a highly collectible firearm, even now!



Source: Early American Life Magazine



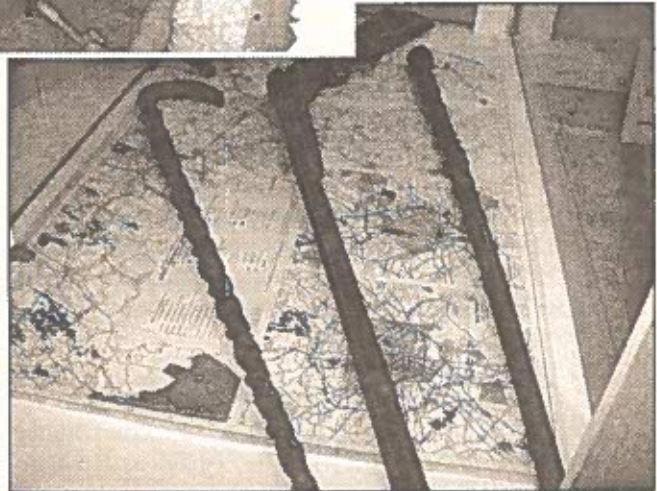
“In a summer season



Heading quote by: William Langland from
“The Vision of Piers the Plowman”



when soft was the sun”.



Gentleman in yellow tee shirt is a Royer descendent who visited this summer.



Spotlight on Visitors Services

Renfrew Museum and Park maintains five miles of trails that accommodate plenty of two and four-footed visitors throughout the seasons. The park is open from dawn to dusk three hundred and sixty-five days a year. We are especially busy in the spring and fall when thousands of school children attend Renfrew Institute's cultural and environmental studies programs.

To maintain the safety and cleanliness of the park, Renfrew will be instituting a new pet policy in October. With the assistance from local pet lovers who walk their dogs in the park on a regular basis, we have created what will be a successful program. We will be posting signs at the lower parking lot and at major trailheads listing Pennsylvania's dog laws along with Renfrew Museum and Park rules:

1. Bring a waste disposal bag with you to clean up after your pet. You are also required to take the waste with you when you leave the park.
2. Keep your pet on a leash at all times.
3. Register your pet in our ParkPals program. This requires signing a pledge stating that the pet parent will clean up after their pets, keep their pets leashed at all times, help Renfrew enforce it's pet policy by informing other pet parents about the policy and paying a lifetime dues of \$5 per pet. (This fee will be used to purchase brightly colored tags to be affixed to the dogs' leashes for identification as ParkPals).

The staff of Renfrew Museum and Park greatly appreciate everyone's input and assistance into the creation and implementation of this policy. Special thanks to George Buckey and Wayne Bartholow.

If you need further information about the new Pet Policy please contact either Sue Smith or Bonnie Iseminger at 717-762-4723 or email us at Renfrew@innernet.net.

Fall - "A Time of Preparation"

It's fall again and visitors to Renfrew can enjoy a portrait of beauty with bright and vivid colors in nature. The crisp morning air hints at what the future holds. The call of geese and the sight of the V-shaped feathered line, remind us not just of their journey but their future return on a spring-like day. Fall provides a golden opportunity to prepare for the next spring. It will return just as the geese will.

At Renfrew, as well as at your home, we are preparing for the winter rest and spring renewal.

To prepare your flower beds for the winter season, remove the old stems after they have dried or a killing frost. Leave your foliage on as long as possible, to give roots systems energy for another season. Tubers, such as Dahlias can be raised soon after a killing frost. Stems should be cut several inches above the tuber. The tubers must then air dry and be packed in a dry sand or peat moss. Store in a cool dry place.

It is a good idea to put mulch around plants remaining in the ground. This will assist with conserving water, and lessen the heaving of the soil as it freezes and thaws during the winter. Compost, pine needles, straw and leaves are a few natural mulches.

Fall is a time to divide your perennial plants. Remove about 1/3 of the plant to be divided by taking a sharp shovel quickly through the plant. When transplanting, leave plenty of space between the plants. It may look a little sparse the first year, but it will allow for good air movement. A few examples of perennials good for dividing are: day lilies, purple coneflower and rudbeckias.

Spring flowering bulbs need to be planted in the fall. These bulbs include tulips, daffodils, and crocus. When selecting bulbs be sure to get good quality bulbs with a nice size. Follow the planting guide that comes with your bulbs for correct depth, but to avoid future crowding, plant further apart than recommended.

During the fall, when thinking of the harvest and the bounty of the soil, also look to the future and begin to prepare for the coming spring.



**Recognition of Individuals and Business
Organizations for Recent Contributions to
Renfrew Museum and Park
THANK YOU!**

Donation for Traveling Trunk program in honor of Virginia Steck-Graham (mother) by her son, Steve Graham
Antique undergarment from her family-Eleanor Miller
Photography- Jamie Saunders from Pictures Plus
Development of CD with Renfrew pictures- Randy Kuhn
Volunteer Recognition plate from 1982 given by Richard "Red" Mohn
Grain Cradle-Mrs. Betty Karper of Chambersburg
Books on Pennsylvania Germans -Steve Graham
Contribution- Mrs. Yvonne (Jakes) Bullock-Great-niece of Edgar Nicodemus
Autumnal figures-Becky Dietrich
Inventory and accessions-Richard Mohn and Alice McCleaf
Contribution in honor of the birthday of Mary S. Michaels-Don and Alice McCleaf
Early American Life magazines-Charles and Undine Warner
\$1000 from Wal Mart for Christmas Open House Program
RCA 20" TV with DVD player- Cumberland Valley Chapter #27 of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, Inc.
Repair of lower park water fountain- David Hykes
Master Plan development- Allie Kohler
Tree planting proposal- Phil Wert and Jim Hale

**Renfrew New Members
2007/2008**

Individual member-Jeff Rhodes
Family membership-Karen Petras/Bill Schmitt-winners of the "What is it contest?"
Answer: a buttress- for applying horse shoes
Family membership: Dade Royer Family
Family membership: M/M Weldon Eshelman
Family membership: M/M Ken Duncan
Family membership:M/M Andrew Yoder

**Renfrew Museum and Park
Docents -2007**

Bonnie Barlup	Virginia Rahn
Anna Harford	Sara Seabold
Lauren Hood (Smith)	Helen Shelley
Mia Hoover	Roy Struble
Carolyn Krouse	Louise West
Phyllis King	Peggy Wright
Barbara Kulusik	
Eleanor (Ellie) Miller	
Rev. Clay Moyer	
Anita Pfeuffer	

**Renfrew Committee, Inc.
Members-2007**

John W. Keller, President
Douglas Tengler, 2nd Vice President
David Hykes-Director
George Buckey-Director
Allison "Allie" Kohler-Director
Brenda Kline, 1st Secretary
Alice McCleaf, Assistant Secretary
Charles Strausbaugh, Treasurer

**Renfrew Executive Committee
Members-2007**

David Hykes, Chairman
George Buckey
Sue Smith, Acting Secretary
Richard "Red" Mohn
Thomas Moore
Allison "Allie" Kohler
Virginia Rahn
Charles Strausbaugh, Treasurer

**Renfrew Museum and Park
Staff-2007**

Bonnie Iseminger-Administrator
John Frantz-Supervisor of Buildings and Grounds
Susan Smith-Supervisor of Visitor Services
Ron Harbaugh-Building and Grounds Personnel

**Renfrew Museum and Park
Garden Volunteers**

Phyllis Croson
Dr. David Blahna
Dr. Doris Goldman
Sherry Hesse
Barbara Kulusik

**In Remembrance of
J. Martin Benchoff and Elaine Larson**

Mr. Benchoff Life Member of Renfrew Museum & Park passed away in July 2007.
Member Elaine Larson-passed away Aug. 26, 2007

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**Renfrew's
Gift Showcase**

With the falling leaves we all look forward to the many memories that come with every fall and holiday season.

Do stop by the Renfrew Museum Gift Showcase. We have been choosing gifts for everyone on your shopping list.

Our hours are until October 31st.
Tuesday through Friday noon until 4 pm.
Saturday and Sunday 1-4pm. Closed on Monday.
After Oct. 31-Monday through Friday noon-4 p.m.

Contributors to "der Wetterhahn"
Sue Smith-Spotlight on Visitors Services
John Frantz- Article of Fall "A Time of Preparation"
Bonnie Iseminger—Editor
Photos—Sue Smith and Bonnie Iseminger

**Renfrew
Upcoming Events**

Sat. Oct. 13-Pumpkin Fest- 11am until 4 pm

Tues. Oct. 23- Presentation by Shawn Meyers noted authority on Frank Feather—7p.m. Visitors Center

Fri. Nov. 9th- German Heritage Dinner-7pm.

Sat. Nov. 17 and Sat.-Paper ornament making 10:00a.m.-noon. Also, "Create a Critter" ornament 1:00-3:00pm

Sat. Dec. 1- Paper ornament making- 10:00am- noon. Also, "Make a Holiday Wreath-1:00pm-3:00pm

Fri. Dec-7 and Sat. Dec. 8- Christmas Open House- Hours: 6-8p.m. each evening, and 2-4p.m. on Dec. 8th.

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