

# der Wetterhahn

The Weathervane



Volume XVI, Issue I I The Newsletter of Renfrew Museum & Park

Summer 2008

## A Summer Serenade...Navy Style

June 21st is the longest day of the year. It is also a very special day for Renfrew Museum and Park.

Thanks to a sponsorship from the Franklin County Visitors Bureau, Renfrew Museum and Park will host a performance by the Navy Cruisers.

Part of the groups which are under the banner of the Navy Band, the Navy Cruisers are versatile and in much demand. They have delighted audiences worldwide, including the Norwegian Military Tattoo in 2004.

The band is in constant demand for military and government officials, as well as organizations from all over the country.



Playing a variety of music, this 8-piece ensemble, under the direction of Senior Chief Musician John L. Fisher, will have your toes tapping, and perhaps singing along to the familiar tunes. Whether your musical preference is 50's, 60's, Motown, rhythm and blues, or today's top 40 hits, the Cruisers will fill your musical desires.

Also to add to this special evening, Antietam Dairy (a business member of Renfrew Museum and Park) will serve ice cream. This "treat" is also because of the generosity of the Franklin County Visitors Bureau.

Mark your calendars for this **FREE** event. Saturday, June 21 from 7:00p.m. until 8:15pm. Join us in back of the Museum house.

### **DON'T FORGET YOUR LAWN CHAIRS!**

Note: In case of rain, the concert will be held in the auditorium of Waynesboro Middle School.

Many thanks to the Waynesboro Fire Department for their valuable assistance with parking for this performance.

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### Reflections on Bell Family Pottery

On March 19th, 2008 there was a very special lecture on John Bell Family pottery by Dr. Eugene Comstock, a recognized expert on not only Bell pottery, but, Shenandoah pottery.

The Bell family( Beall original spelling) lived in Hagerstown, Maryland when John was born in 1800. His father, Peter Bell was a well-to-do potter in the area. Unfortunately, the elder Bell was not a good businessman. He did not collect on debts owed, and eventually had to go to Winchester, Virginia and open a new business. The Bell potters, along with other local potters in Hagerstown used tin in the glazing process, the earliest dated use in the United States to do so.

John Bell was a master potter at the age of 13 years. By the age of 14 he was making the 2-day trip from Hagerstown to Winchester and back by himself to deliver pottery.

John Bell worked for a time in Chambersburg. Under the guidance of Jacob Hart, John Bell learned the English techniques he needed to help compete. Until that time Bell had learned only the German techniques. The skills learned from Hart would help Bell create molded pieces he had not experimented with previously.

In the permanent exhibit of Bell pottery in the Visitor Center at Renfrew is the water cooler which John Bell made. The cooler was made from the actual mold created by Charles Conson, a British immigrant, and the most celebrated potter in America in the 1800's- that time, Conson was working for the re-nowned Bennett Brothers in Baltimore.

In 1833 John Bell opened his shop in Waynesboro, PA and worked there until his death in 1880. A prolific artist, Bell was inventive, and a good citizen of the community.

In Dr. Comstock's opinion, John Bell was the most outstanding American potter of his time. He compared Bell's work to that of Josiah Wedgwood, the famous British potter. What an interesting and exciting thought!

**No nation was ever ruined by trade.**  
**Benjamin Franklin**  
**"Thoughts on Commercial Subjects"**

### Bell Family Trivia

1. In what year did John Bell marry?
2. What was the name of John Bell's wife?
3. What were the names of the John Bell children?
4. What were the names of Bell's brothers who were potters?
5. Which John Bell son worked for his uncles in Strausburg?
6. What year was John Bell confirmed?
7. In what church did Bell's confirmation take place?
8. Which of John Bell's children carried on the pottery after his death in 1880?
9. What happened to the pottery in 1899?
10. What technique did Bell teach his brother from from Strausburg?
11. What story prevails today about a give-a-way from John Bell?
12. What "mold" does Renfrew have in the permanent collection?
13. In what year did John Bell start producing stoneware?
14. When precisely did John Bell die?
15. Where is John Bell buried?
16. What rare piece of pottery can be found in the permanent collection of Bell pottery at Renfrew?
17. What pottery piece found in the Renfrew collection is known by a different name?
18. What color, not used by others, was being used by John Bell in glazes?



**Renfrew Museum and Park  
Wish List-2008**

Large cooler  
Flint drinking glasses for dining room(pre-1840)  
Period items for children's bedroom  
Counter-top revolving post card stands  
Pewter or wood plates for kitchen  
Pre-1840 drinking glasses for kitchen  
Quilt racks or drying racks  
Local history books

If you have any of the above-mentioned items or would like to help us purchase one of them, please call the museum— 717-762-4723 and ask to speak with Bonnie Iseminger, the Administrator.  
If you need assistance with a pick up of items, we will be happy to arrange a time.

If you have any item, dated prior to 1840, you would like to donate, we would love to talk with you!

**Update on Renfrew  
Memberships**

**Life Membership**

Barbara Kercheval  
Betty Thompson

**Individual Membership**

Bonnie Barlup  
Cheryl M. Bomar

**Donor Membership**

Charlene Balistrere  
Grace M. Baylor  
Carolyn Boyer  
Ruth W. Pflager  
Anita Pfeuffer  
Helen Shelley

**Family Membership**

Lou and Jackie Barlup  
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Shook  
Betty and Bob Waring

**Standard Business Membership**

Johnson Controls

**A Memorable  
Occasion**

Saturday, April 5th was a special day at Renfrew. We had a visit from the Members of the Friends of Royer Mansion from Williamsburg, PA. Two members, George Dempsie and Patty Hatch, gave a power point presentation on the Royer Mansion to our "experienced" docents.

Much was learned about the Royer Mansion and the connection to the Royer farmstead here in Waynesboro.

Daniel Royer and his brother John (who was from Centre County) built Cove Forge on the Juniata River. The year was 1811 and the industrious brothers would not stop there. In 1815 they bought part of Springfield Farm on Piney Creek and established Springfield Furnace.

The Royer farmstead history states that Daniel built his house in 1812 and added the kitchen in 1815.

About 1820, the brothers Royer purchased more land, including the stone house that would become the Royer Mansion in Williamsburg. Then, in 1821, Daniel's son Samuel moved into the house with his first wife Sarah. That union produced 6 children and unfortunately Sarah passed away in 1832.

Samuel remarried a woman named Martha in 1835 and had 4 more children. He passed away during the Civil War years (1864) and the house remained in family hands until 1965.

The house was sold to the PA Fish Commission, which planned to use it as a fish hatchery. The project languished, and in 1984 the Blair County Historical Society purchased the site for \$1.00. (This is thanks to a motivating force, George Dempsie, who persevered in saving the mansion.)

Today, the Friends of Royer Mansion maintain loving care of the house and property. It is a lovely experience to visit the site.

We so enjoyed having Patty Hatch, George Dempsie, Don Dietz, Susan Tremmel, and Betsy Domitrovich visit on this very memorable occasion.

Note: Please see pictures on page 4.



# “What is so rare as



*the rest of the story, by George Dempsie*



*enthralled audience*



*lovely botanical imprinting*



*making shaker boxes*



*glass bead treasures*



# a day in June''

James Russell Lowell



*driveway with a view*



*the colors of spring*



*forsythia's springtime bloom*



*water pump "before"*



*water pump "after"*



### A Season of Changes

Things never stay the same, and change is inevitable!

Just as spring is turning into summer, there are changes occurring here at Renfrew Museum and Park.

Sue Smith, the Supervisor of Visitors Services has taken a position as a Director of Community Life and Volunteer Services at Quincy Village. This is a challenging and rewarding opportunity for her.

During Sue's time here she, as Emeril LaGasse would say, "kicked up our programming a notch". For that we are grateful and wish her all the best in any and all endeavors in her new position and life.

Another change after many years of serving on the Park Committee, both George Buckey (President) and Willard Rahn (Committee member) have both announced they are retiring from the group. They have been very instrumental in forming and maintaining the facility we call Renfrew Museum and Park. It is with the deepest gratitude that we acknowledge all they have done to make this a haven for all to enjoy. Well done, George and Willard, and thank you!

### Have you Seen?...

Have you seen our new "old" water pump in front of the milk house?

We installed the water pump this spring as another interpretation of the milk house and the pump. Because the milk house did not have a spring underneath, water would have to be transported to the trough in the lower portion of the milk house for the dairy items which were kept there.

The pump will add to a more complete history of the Royer family farmstead.

Note: Please see a before and after picture of the milk house area on page 5.

### Bell Family Trivia- Answers

1. John Bell married in 1825 in Winchester, VA
2. Bells' wife was Elizabeth Fry.
3. John W., Mary Elizabeth, Edward, Henrietta, Matilda, Charles, Upton, Victor and Margaret.
4. His brothers were Solomon and Samuel.
5. Bell's son Edward worked for his uncles.
6. Bell was confirmed in the year 1820.
7. The church Bell was confirmed in was St. John's Evangelical Lutheran in Hagerstown.
8. Bell's sons John W., Charles, Victor and Upton carried on the pottery business.
9. The pottery business was severely damaged by Fire on December 19, 1899.
10. Bell taught Solomon the technique of making figurines of earthenware painted to look like plaster-of-Paris (chalkware).
11. A barrel of little ornaments were handed out to children when they visited the pottery.
12. A "bird" mold created by Charles Cronson- a mentor of Bell.
13. Bell began producing "faux" stoneware in 1850.
14. Bell died on January 21, 1880.
15. Bell is buried in Green Hill Cemetery.
16. The rare piece of pottery is the picture frame.
17. The "Whippet" is the pottery piece. Whippets were not bred until after Bell's time. They were really greyhound.
18. Cobalt was the color used in the glazes.

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Summer 2008**



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

Presentation on Royer Mansion- George Dempsie and Patti Hatch  
Donations to the Steck-Graham Collection- Steve Graham  
Rug brochure development- David Hykes  
Dog Registrations at Yard Sale- Helen Shelley  
David Hykes and Richard Mohn for operating table-Yard Sale  
"Opening Day Volunteers" who made the day a success-Virginia Rahn, Ellie Miller, Gretchen Potocheny, and Peggy Wright  
Wheelbarrow donation-Mr. and Mrs. Philip Hammond  
Copper cap on wooden well pump-Mr. Robert North  
Watercolor print-Wheat Harvest- Mr. Charles Brown  
Joe Shoemaker, Ed Beard, Sharon Magee, Anita Pfeuffer, Becky Dietrich and Charles Brown-for participating in Opening Day for the 33rd season at Renfrew Museum and Park-see pictures page 4  
Many hours dedicated to inventory- Richard "Red" Mohn and Alice McCleaf  
Proof reading skills- Carole Rau

**Renfrew Museum and Park  
Docents -2008**

Bonnie Barlup	Virginia Rahn
Anna Harford	Carole E. Rau
Lauren Hood (Smith)	Sara Sebold
Mia Hoover	Helen Shelley
Carolyn Krouse	Roy Struble
Phyllis King	Betty Waring
Eleanor (Ellie) Miller	Louise West
Margaret Neibeiger	Peggy Wright
Anita Pfeuffer	
Gretchen Potocheny	

**Interested in becoming a volunteer?  
Give us a call! We have many  
opportunities!**

**717-762-4723.**

**Renfrew Committee, Inc.  
Members-2008**

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

**Renfrew Executive Committee  
Members-2008**

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

**Renfrew Museum and Park  
Staff-2008**

Bonnie Iseminger-Administrator  
John Frantz-Supervisor of Buildings and  
Grounds  
Ron Harbaugh-Building and Grounds  
Personnel

**Renfrew Museum and Park  
Garden Volunteers-2008**

Phyllis Croson  
Bob Waring  
Judy Welterlen



**Renfrew's  
Gift Showcase**

Gift Shop hours are: Tuesday through Friday noon until 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday hours are 1:00p.m. until 4p.m. Gift Shop is closed on Mondays.

There are quite a number of new items offered. Just a few are: kitchen towels, new pottery by Jannine Davis, a variety of rooster items, and new jewelry pieces. Now available, a book on Shenandoah and Cumberland Valley Pottery by Dr. George and Connie Manger.

There are also fraktur by Patti Rutman from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Contributors to "der Wetterhahn"  
Bonnie Iseminger—Editor  
Photos- Bonnie Iseminger

**Renfrew  
Upcoming Events**

**Mark your calendars for these events:**

June 21– 7:30pm until 9:00pm—A Summer Serenade with the Navy Cruisers— see full story page 1.

August 8,9,10 –Annual Civil War Encampment at Renfrew—many special activities.

September 13th– 10am until 5 pm– Fourth Annual Cumberland Valley Pottery Fest at Renfrew– Members of the Cumberland Valley Craft Guild and Mont Alto Pottery Cooperative– a joint event with the Nicodemus Center.

October 18—11am-4pm– Annual family event!

Check our website for information on these events and much more, [www.renfrewmuseum.org](http://www.renfrewmuseum.org).

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**Wetterhahn**

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

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