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Wetterhahn

Celebrating our 36th year!



Volume IX Issue 7 The Newsletter of Renfrew Museum & Park

Fall 2011

## Reverse Painting Art...The History

In the first-floor hallway of the Renfrew Museum, hanging on the wall, between the main parlor and the small office, is a grouping of four reverse paintings on glass and another on the wall next to the door of the small office. And another of George Washington hangs in the kitchen over the fireplace.

Mrs. Nicodemus enjoyed collecting many things from chalkware to hooked rugs and antique furniture and some 20 examples of reverse paintings on glass, a number of which have been in storage and will soon be displayed in the Museum House.



George Washington

Unfortunately, we have no provenance for these and cannot offer much specific information. We can determine, however, that most are of French origin as the names describing the individuals are written in French; others represent saints, such as St. Joseph and St. Barbara, allegorical images of the seasons, and oddities such as a Turk with an orange turban and a green coat.

The origins of reverse painting on glass are unknown, but it has been an art form for centuries. The best known were icons of the Byzantine Church, not uncommon during the Middle Ages. It is thought that from there the method spread to Italy, which adapted the images to those popular during the Renaissance.

Sometime in the mid 18th century reverse glass painting became popular in China, as documented in the writing of Jesuit missionaries.

The art form was practiced about the same time in the Middle East and West Africa in areas where Islam was the predominant faith. Many of these depict scenes from the Old Testament and quotations from the Koran.

In the early to mid 19th century, clock faces were also decorated with this reverse technique. Reverse paintings continued to be popular until around World War I and then fell out of favor until about the 1990's. Pieces as recent as the 1930's have sold for upwards of \$350.00.



Reverse painting clock

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The paintings can depict a realistic image or can be abstract, although these are less common. They can be a challenge to paint as unlike the normal painting, where the background is done first, in a reverse painting, the foreground is painted first and the background added. Look closely at the four in the Museum House and you will see that some letters in the titles are backwards.



One source attributes that to at least two of the works- L'Amérique and G. Washington-to either the Alsatian-Black Forest or Pennsylvania. The latter seems doubtful, as the same source continues that there is little evidence of glass painting in early Pennsylvania, although one family of painters is known to have immigrated to the state.

More probable is that the Washington portrait may have been done in Germany and exported to America. The one entitled, L'Amérique, does not seem to have been done in Germany as it is titled in French, as are the others in this grouping.



We don't know what attracted Mrs. Nicodemus to this art, where she bought them, or even what some depict. But, her ability to identify and collect them has insured the memory of this little-known, yet charming craft.



## Royers of Renfrew... the book

It was spring 1812, the start of the war of the same name. Nine-year old Susan Royer was busy with her chores on the family farmstead where she lived with her parents and nine siblings. Life was not easy, everything from food to clothing had to be grown. There were few trips to the town of Waynesboro, and those only to buy necessities such as crocks or barrels.



This view of early Pennsylvania German life comes from a new publication, "The Royers of Renfrew: A Family Tapestry", by Marie Lanser Beck and Maxine Beck.

This charming tale, told from the point-of-view of Susan, brings to life the daily activities of a typical farm family of that time, describing everything from how the food was grown and prepared, the clothing made, the leather tanning process and hog butchering, religious beliefs, and relationships among family members.

Young Susan lives through a near tragedy, and as the next spring comes, the family prepares to move into their new stone house.

There is also a glossary of terms, and recipes for dishes mentioned in the text.

Co-author, Marie Lanser Beck, a former journalist and historian, has written two volumes of veteran's stories and worked with former Senator Edward Brooke on his memoirs. She has been a member of the Board of Directors of Renfrew Museum and Park and the Renfrew Institute.



Maxine Beck, holds a Bachelor's Degree in Education and a Master's Degree in English. She taught advanced English and writing in high school for 17 years. She is currently the President of Renfrew Institute's Board of Directors.

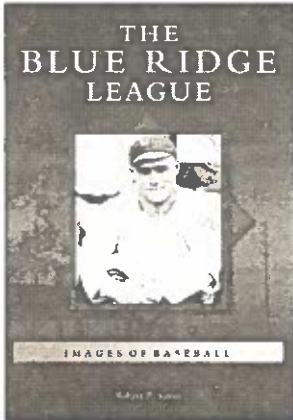
Copies of the book are available at the Renfrew Museum Gift Shop in the Visitors Center for \$14.95. Part of the proceeds will go to Renfrew Museum and Renfrew Institute.



## Blue Ridge Baseball

On February 16, 1915, the Blue Ridge League was founded with a meeting of prominent businessmen at the Hagerstown Country Club. This laid the groundwork for the formation of a Class D professional baseball league. The initial teams involved were drawn from Chambersburg, Frederick, Gettysburg, Hagerstown, Hanover, and Martinsburg. Only in 1920 did Waynesboro join the league when Gettysburg dropped out. The team operated as the "Red Birds" (1920), then the "Villagers" (1921-1927), and then as the "Red Birds" again (1928-1930).

So Bob Savitt, author of the "Blue Ridge League", told a full-house at the Visitors Center. Savitt worked on this book for over 15 years; and reinforcing his love of the game, since 1981 he has visited Hagerstown with his family to see the Suns play.



John Boyer of Hagerstown was the driving force behind the league, supported by another founder, J. B. Jamison of Jamison Cold Storage Door, Co. (now Jamison Door Company) and Ken Potter, who was president of the League for many years.

A number of Hall of Famers came out of the League, and Branch Rickey, founder of the minor league farm system, took a strong interest in Waynesboro. In 1928, the Waynesboro franchise was acquired by the St. Louis Cardinals.



## Trey and the Shard

He gave the small object to his mother, Melissa Foreman, who checked the information on John Bell posted on the information board near the Renfrew Pavilion. It was in turn passed on to a staff member of Renfrew Institute and then the Museum staff.

Foreman has been coming to Renfrew since kindergarten. He is a member of Boy Scout Troop #97 which attends various programs to the Park and he has taken a number of Summer camp programs sponsored by the institute, including leatherworking, basketry and archeology. "I like history", said Foreman, "I like to know what people used to do and how they did it".



The shard is on exhibit in the Visitor Center, encased in a shadow-box where the name of Bell can easily be seen and it is labeled with the name of the young man who found a prized possession which he donated to Renfrew.



Bell shard



Thomas O. Moore, Jr.  
Partner  
Extension 7

**CFP & M**  
*Craig, Friedly, Potter, & Moore*  
INSURANCE AGENCY

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Waynesboro, PA 17268  
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E-Mail: tom@cfpandm.com



# Oktoberfest Dinner



**Bob Benchoff and crew  
at work**



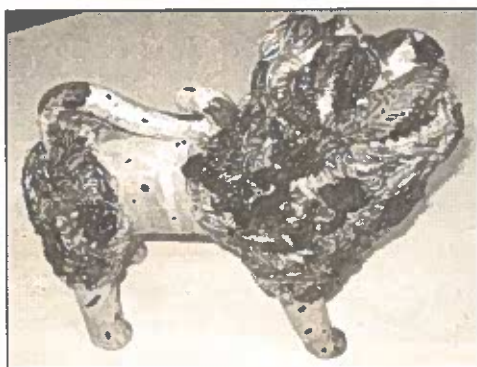
**Craig Welteren  
wows the crowd**

Over 100 people attended Renfrew's Oktoberfest Dinner. It was an enjoyable occasion with friends meeting friends over a classic German menu of sauerbraten (beef), roast pork, red cabbage, potato salad, green beans, pumpernickel rolls, and for dessert apple custard cake.

Speaking to the group on German Heritage was Professor Eddy Arana, who illustrated his talk on "Who is German", with a slide show. His request for a show of hands of those at the dinner of German descent received an amazing response.

In addition a live auction, led by Bob Benchoff, produced a lively close to the evening with bidders vying for their favorite items. A number of people bought more than one item.

Our thanks to all those who attended and made this a successful fund-raising event for Renfrew. From the staff and board members, Vielen Danke.



**Auction item: Lion by:  
Christine Tosten-Souders**



**Waynesboro High School  
German Students**



# Decorating Committee



On September 28th a special meeting was held at Renfrew's Visitor Center to plan for the Christmas event. Members of the Blue Ridge Garden Club and the Waynesboro Garden Club (formerly the Toll Gate Garden Club) met for a presentation by Victorian ornament expert, John Hykes, to inspire the decorators.

This year the Christmas decorations will reflect the Victorian /Civil War era as a remembrance of all those from Franklin County who served in the war and those who supported them back home.





## Trimming the Tree with John Hykes

This year Renfrew is pleased to be part of the kick-off celebrations for the 150th anniversary of the Civil War. And for the occasion, the Christmas decorations in the Mansion House will reflect that time period and honor the men and, yes, women, who served either in the military or in the Women's Aide Service.

To prepare for the December event, a workshop was held for the Blue Ridge Summit and Waynesboro (formerly Toll Gate) Garden Clubs who will decorate the house this year, featuring John Hykes, whose personal collection of Christmas memorabilia has been displayed at Renfrew. He addressed the group on the decorations common to the Victorian Era, from 1838, the year Daniel Royer died, to 1901.

"The generation from the turn of the century, had lived through tough economic times, so by the 1920s people made sure they had a Christmas tree in their home, because they may not have had one when they were young", explained Hykes, accounting for the increased interest in this symbol of the holidays.

Germany is the source of most Christmas tree traditions. The song, "O Tannenbaum", reflects the strong German emphasis on the tree for the holidays. In 1521 in Alsace, then part of Germany and now within France, Christmas trees were sold in the market in Strasbourg, and a diary entry by an anonymous writer from 1605 noted that fir trees were set up with paper roses (the rose represented the Virgin Mary), apples, wafers, and sugar-encrusted candies. In fact, in some parts of both Germany and Austria, the trees were hung upside down and then decorated.



Through the years, trees have been adorned in various fashions, many of them with edible fruits and notes, and others inedible, such as gold-leaf covered apples, lighted candles, and everything from dolls to musical instruments and toys.

By the time Kaiser Wilhelm (1797-1888) the German royals were displaying numerous trees in various sizes in their palaces.

The first known use of the Christmas tree in America was in 1747 at a German Moravian church in Bethlehem, Pa. Another reference is in 1819 or 1820 drawing of a Christmas tree by a Philadelphia artist. As the use of the tree caught on, it became the focus of fundraisers, decorating them to gather money for charitable uses. One of the first of these occurred in 1830 in York, Pa.



Although there was some resistance to the idea of the Christmas tree as a "pagan" custom, the idea caught on and spread throughout the country. By 1860, the first glass ornaments arrived in the belongings of German immigrants; these took time to catch on, but a decade later these began to come in different varieties. And from there came the promotions for ornaments which continues to this day.

The earliest ornaments were usually some sort of food item from fruits and nuts to cookies, gingerbread and other sweets. One source notes that in the home of a German man, then living in Boston, the cooks would carefully break eggshells for weeks, and these halves were then gilded and filled with candies.

The Germans made several different kinds of edibles for the tree: matzenbaum or cakes made of almond paste, sugar, and egg whites, pressed into charming molds, marzipan, also made of almond paste, springerle, and anise-flavored dough, and pretzels. Hand-made cornucopias, made of netting, cardboard, paper, and other materials were stuffed with all kinds of goodies, and even candy boxes in distinctive shapes, some looking like early images of St. Nicholas, were hung on the tree.



According to "The Christmas Tree Book" of Phillip V. Snyder, from where most of this information is drawn, the first commercially-made ornaments were made of tin, and later of wax, cardboard, and fancy paper. Then came glass-blown ornaments, fragile but beautiful. One of the first entrepreneurs who saw the advantage of the glass medium was F. W. Woolworth, who in one year alone, bought more than two hundred thousand of them.

And also one of everyone's favorite trimming item-icicles. Based on a French design for military uniforms, these thin strips of silver foil were first made in Nuremberg in 1878. Another item, "angel's hair" also came from Germany about 1880. The crowning glory on every tree then and now was a star or angel. Although both were originally made of tin, the angel usually had a wax head.



**Renfrew Committee, Inc.  
Members -2011**

Allison (Allie) Kohler, Director  
David Hykes, Vice President/Director  
George Buckey-Treasurer and Director  
A.J. Benchoff-Director  
Judge John W. Keller-Director  
Barbara Gaydick- Director and Secretary  
Alice McCleaf Director and Assistant Secretary

**Renfrew Executive Committee  
Members -2011**

David Hykes-Chairman  
George Buckey-Treasurer  
Allie Kohler  
Terry Barkdoll  
Robert Benchoff  
Doug Burkholder  
Steve Graham  
Wayne Martz  
Barb McCracken  
Richard "Red" Mohn  
Tom Moore  
Virginia Rahn  
Dade Royer  
Rick Shindle

**Renfrew Membership  
2012**

| <b>Renfrew Society</b>                         | <b>Individual</b>                  |
|--|------------------------------------|
| G.P. Royer, Ph.D.                              | Michael Albert<br>Pamela J. Wagner |
| <b>Family</b>                                  | Ned Brown                          |
| Matt Hurley Family<br>Terry and Linda Barkdoll |                                    |

**Renfrew Museum and Park  
Employees -2011**

Bonnie Iseminger-Administrator  
John Frantz-Supervisor of Buildings and  
Grounds  
Bob North-Traveling Trunk Outreach  
Cheryl Keyser-Visitor Services Personnel  
Judy Elden-Visitors Services Personnel  
Jim Diller-Maintenance Personnel

**Renfrew Museum and Park  
Volunteers-2011**

|                  |                          |
|------------------|--------------------------|
| Bonnie Barlup    | Carol Mac Dougall        |
| Cookie Beck      | Eugene Martin            |
| Marilyn Bender   | Eleanor Miller           |
| Linda Blubaugh   | Alice Noll               |
| Dan Carbaugh     | Gretchen Potochney       |
| Phyllis Croson   | Virginia Rahn            |
| Teena D'Annibale | Bernadette Ramondi       |
| Karen Day        | Helen Shelley            |
| Peggy Etter      | Roy Struble              |
| Phyllis King     | Carol Thornburg          |
| Chris Kostka     | Mary Unger               |
| Carolyn Krouse   | Craig and Judy Welterlen |

**Recognition of Individuals and Business  
Organizations for Recent Contributions to  
Renfrew Museum and Park. Thank you!**

Assistance with Civil War research- John Miller  
Development of Power Point photo presentation- Dan Carbaugh-  
Charitable Day Sponsor- Macy's Department Store  
Donation- NC 2nd Infantry- Civil War participants  
Additions to the Steck/Graham Collection-Steve Graham  
Candles to use for luminaries-Steve Graham & Rick Shindle  
Donations to the Oktoberfest dinner- Senator Rich Alloway,  
Red and Wendy Mohn, Barbara McCracken, Terry Barkdoll,  
Steve Graham, Christine Toasten-Souders, George Buckey,  
Larry Smith, Anne Conrad, Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Funk  
Auctioneer for Oktoberfest Dinner- Bob Benchoff  
Mat for Visitor Center- Martz Plumbing  
Christmas book and Victorian tree presentation-John Hykes  
Carved birds-Stanley Grube  
Donation for Christmas event-Franklin County Visitors Bureau  
Monetary donation- Mr. and Mrs. Don Bollinger  
Donation of note cards- Grace Baylor  
Sponsor of LL Trolley- Christmas Stone House Tour-Tower Bank  
Donation of time and talents to all RCI and REC members and  
Volunteers at the annual Pumpkin Fest  
Sponsorship and Volunteers for Pumpkin Fest-M&T Bank  
Donation of time and talents of Renfrew "Docent Volunteers"  
Donation of expertise for Traveling Trunk Program-Alice Noll,  
Cookie Beck and Anne Conrad  
Guest Ghost Tellers-Athena Varounis, and Michael Albert  
Volunteers for Ghost Tales- Dade Royer, Tom Moore, Barb and  
Dick McCracken, Shannon Royer and Alice Noll  
Cookie baker for Ghost Tales- Linda Blubaugh



**Renfrew's  
Gift Showcase**

Gift shop hours—off season—Monday thru Friday  
Noon-4:00pm

With fall upon us, it is time to brighten up our homes. A flower arrangement or any of our artists works will make your home ready for the season ahead.

Come and see what we have to offer. We also have a new selection of adorable kitchen items and ceramic birds.

Bonnie Iseminger-Editor

Contributors: Cheryl Keyser, Bonnie Iseminger

Photos: Bonnie Iseminger

**Renfrew  
Upcoming Events**

Friday, December 2 5:30-8:30 pm, and again on Saturday, December 3 1-4 and again from 5:30-8:30 pm experience the Stone House Tour, plus an added bonus the Oller House with trolley transportation. Tickets on sale at Renfrew Museum and Park with Gift Shop hours. Ticket prices are \$10-adults only please.

Looking ahead...

The year of 2012 will be the 200th anniversary of the Renfrew Museum. Many events are planned for this very special year. More information will be forthcoming.

Glückliche Herbst Jeder (mann) (Happy Autumn everyone)!



der  
**Wetterhahn**

Renfrew Museum and Park  
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(717)762-4723 Email: renfrew@innernet.net  
Website: www.renfrewmuseum.org

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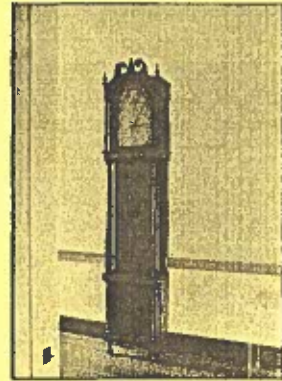


**Renfrew Museum Presents...**

**The  
Clocks  
of  
Waynesboro  
Exhibit  
and  
Talk**



**Jacob Wolf**



**WATERS, JEWELRY, & CO.**  
H<sup>A</sup>VING just returned from the City, the subscriber is now exhibiting a splendid assortment of the most Fashionable *JEWELRY*, to which he invites the attention of the Ladies and Gentlemen of Waynesboro' and the public generally. His stock embraces among other articles, Gold bracelets, finger rings, ear-rings, gold pencils, bracelets, medallions, cuff pins, silver and other trinkets, gold guard keys, chains, &c.  
Clocks and watches carefully repaired at the old stand, and warranted to perform or no charge. An assortment of the best watches always on hand.  
June 29, 1854 J. JACOB WOLF.

**with  
Rick Shindle**  
**FREE!**      **When: Sunday**  
**Nov. 6 2:00 pm**  
**Visitor Center**

**Featuring examples of Waynesboro  
clockmakers—Landis, Newcomer  
and Frick**

Renfrew Museum and Park presents:

## Stone House Tour and More



**Damazo House and Barn**



**McCracken House**



**Renfrew Museum**

**A Fund-  
raiser  
For  
Renfrew  
Museum**



**Oller House**

**Visit Renfrew Museum, McCracken house  
Damazo house/barn and the Oller House!**

**Dates: December 2 5:30-8:30pm**

**December 3 1:00-4:00pm**

**5:30-8:30pm**

**Inclement weather make-up date**

**December 10 1:00-4:00pm**

**Call 717-7620-4723**

**or**

**Check website:**

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

**Sponsor: Franklin Co. visitors Bureau**



**Price of \$10 includes: 4  
houses & transportation  
to/from Oller House  
via L L Trolley**

**Ticket purchase at Renfrew Visitor Center**

**Trolley Sponsor: Tower Bank**

