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CELEBRATING OUR 36TH YEAR!

Wetterhahn



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Summer 2011

The Dower Chests at Renfrew

Renfrew is fortunate to have two distinctive eighteenth century chests, sometimes referred to as Dower chests, in its collection. Both are significant pieces in telling the story of the Pennsylvania Germans.

In the country bedroom on the second floor under the window, sits a stunning blanket or "Gaudy" chest. Originally painted in a dark blue-green, now slightly faded, this charming trunk is considered the premier example of its type in the state and will be featured in an article to be published in American Furniture in January 2012.



In the second floor passage is another, often called a "hope" chest, bearing the name of Elisabetda Brandt in 1775. This chest is known as sulfur-inlaid for the manner in which the letters were incised into the wood. It will appear in a later issue of the American Furniture.



The Gaudy chest was originally owned by Mrs. Emma Nicodemus, the last private owner of Renfrew, and included in her bequest of Renfrew, its contents, and grounds to the Borough of Waynesboro.

This lift-top chest dates from approximately 1792 according to the inscription which reads Dannes Lauter/Milch/1792. Images of birds, hearts, tulips, and compasses adorn the outside with applied edge molding around the top and base and on the front and both sides. Inside to the left, there are two drawers in what is known as the till where money, jewelry, or other small valuables were kept. The dimensions of the chest are 19 1/4 inches high, 45 5/8 inches wide, and 22 and 3/4 inches deep.

The Brandt chest, of a rich mahogany, by contrast, is very simple with only the name of the young woman who owned it. Although the author of "The Pennsylvania-German Decorated Chest", Monroe H. Fabian, maintains that the term "hope chest" was not used either in German or English, he did quote one author, Theodore W. Jentsch, as saying that some time between the ages of fifteen and seventeen "every girl receives a hope chest from her parents" in which she placed the quilts given to her by her mother and other female relatives.

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It is thought that the first chests came to America with the arrival of German immigrants who used them to transport their belongings. Just about everything was stuffed into the chests, from food and medicine, to clothing and linens.

Chests were considered individual personal property, with both young men and women provided with one when they came-of-age.

“From the time of the earliest arrival of the German immigrants until about the end of the eighteenth century, the chest with a lift-top remained the most important item of storage furniture in the rural homes of southeastern Pennsylvania, according to Fabian.



Not only were the colorful designs on the chests of beauty, but also the ironwork as represented in hinges and handles. “Fine wrought iron is one of the great glories of Pennsylvania-German decorative art,” said Fabian. Many were very elaborate, depicting flowers or other shapes. Renfrew’s Gaudy chest has simple iron-forged hinges, with the upper half attached to the lid, and the lower half of the hinge to the inside of the chest. The Brandt chest has carrying handles of iron which are C- shaped and end in what look like prongs.

The wood used in the Gaudy chest is not easily identifiable as it is painted over, but the most common woods were either tulip poplar or eastern black walnut. The four corners of the chest were joined with dovetailing. “The boards are cut so that the fishtail or birdtail configuration of each dovetail lies on the front and back surfaces of the chest,” noted Fabian.

The decorative keyhole plate on a chest was not uncommon. Some are very simple, others, like the Gaudy chest, are more elaborate. It is not known if the keys were made in this country or brought from Europe, but most likely simpler keys were produced here.



The Brandt chest has three drawers on the lower part ,two of equal length and one smaller, “a common arrangement,” according to Fabian. The type of chest was said to have “two bottoms,” the base of the upper chest and that of the drawers. The molding between the two side dowels hold the two pieces together and extends around the sides.

The feet of the chest which raise it above the ground, are turned, as was common at that time.

“Since the first painted chests went into the collection of major American museums, their value as exemplary examples of American furniture has risen considerably,” said Fabian. “There can be no question but that they are one of the great glories of the decorative arts in rural America.” And the same can be extended to include the workmanship seen in the Brandt chest.

Photographing the Chests

On a hot, steamy Friday afternoon, Gavin Ashworth, photographer, accompanied by Lisa Minardi of Winterthur, arrived at Renfrew for a photo shoot of our two trunks on the second floor.

They positioned themselves in the upstairs passageway and arrangements were made to place the trunks in the best light. The photographer set up his camera in the passageway to get the angle he wanted so the sulfur-inlaid letters for the trunk bearing the name of Elisabetha Brandt would show up well. After the position for best photo was decided, a cloth was placed over the fraktur and Minardi held a sheet of paper behind the trunk to provide a good background.

Finished with the Elisabetha chest, the Gaudy or dower chest was positioned. Ashworth also took a shot of the end of the chest whose details demonstrate its early origins.

The photos taken were transmitted from camera to computer and Ashworth used the Photo Shop program to bring the photos to the optimum clarity.

Minardi, co-author of “Paint, Pattern & People: The Furniture of Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1725-1850”, is now the Assistant curator of furniture for the Southeastern Pennsylvania Furniture Project.

Ashworth, a native of England, specializes in fine and decorative arts for museums and private collectors. His commissions for photographic exhibits, to name a few, have included the National Gallery of Art and the Smithsonian. He has produced 45 books based on museum collections from the Metropolitan Museum to the White House.



RCI President—Allison “Allie” Kohler

Allison “Allie” Kohler, the new President of Renfrew Committee, Inc. (RCI), has dedicated his life to service both in his professional life and in retirement.

The Waynesboro native graduated from Waynesboro High School and attended Lebanon Valley College where he received a Bachelor’s Degree in Science with a major in biology.

He began his teaching career at Pequea Valley School in southern Lancaster County and returned to Waynesboro in 1964 to continue his teaching career at East Junior High School. “I liked to teach”, said Kohler. “I especially enjoyed the interaction with the students.” He also served as athletic director at East Junior High School and later at Waynesboro Middle School.

Kohler was a certified Judge for the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA) in football and girls’ gymnastic competitions. “I was the first male judge for the PIAA girls”, noted Kohler, and also judged the Pennsylvania State Gymnastics Championships.

He served as the Department Chair for K-12 Sciences in the school district, yearbook advisor at the Middle School, and Director in Adult Education for about a dozen years.

Retired from the school system in 1992, Kohler has been no less active in serving the community at large. “I thought it was time to give back to the community,” he said.

And he has certainly fulfilled his intentions. He is currently Chairman of the Board of Quincy Village and Home, a division of Presbyterian Senior Living, Volunteer for the Make-a-Wish Foundation, Treasurer of the Waynesboro Historical Society and in charge of the historic Harbaugh Church, Treasurer of the Waynesboro Area Gala Cancer Auction, Co-Chair of the Waynesboro-Chambersburg Hospital Auxiliary Golf Tournament, Chair of the Courier Service at Waynesboro Hospital, and a Board Member of Waynesboro Fest.



As the President of the RCI he plans to focus on its financial health. Renfrew, operates under a trust, providing profits for use by Renfrew. “but it can limit our ability to have what we actually need for operating expenses.” said Kohler.

“We get no money from the borough, so we have to find ways to save money.”

Kohler also plans to review memberships, endowments, and programming.

“My greatest satisfaction is to provide the community with educational programming, historical events, and service to others,” said Kohler.

WASHS Photographs

For the second year, the students in Art III at the Waynesboro High School have roamed the grounds of Renfrew with cameras in hand taking photographs, bringing an amazing perspective to what they find.

The photographs, on display until the end of May, were taken by 15 students, each represented by two photographs. They were assisted by National Geographic photographer, Raymond Gehman.

The unique vision of these young people ranges from the traditional to the esoteric. There are stunning photos of the Museum porch in a blaze of flowering red glory and an expansive view from beyond the stone fence to the back of the house.

Others include a butterfly delicately balanced on a flower, an insect with its antenna barely touching a droplet of water, and seeming abstract designs which turn out to be a rusted chain or water fountain.



The students are in the class of Karen Papoushack at the high school, who noted that “their work shows an amazing maturity and gift of observation.

So impressed was Renfrew volunteer Marilyn Bender, that she purchased two photographs from last year’s class with images of the park, had them framed, and donated them to the Museum for which we were very appreciative.

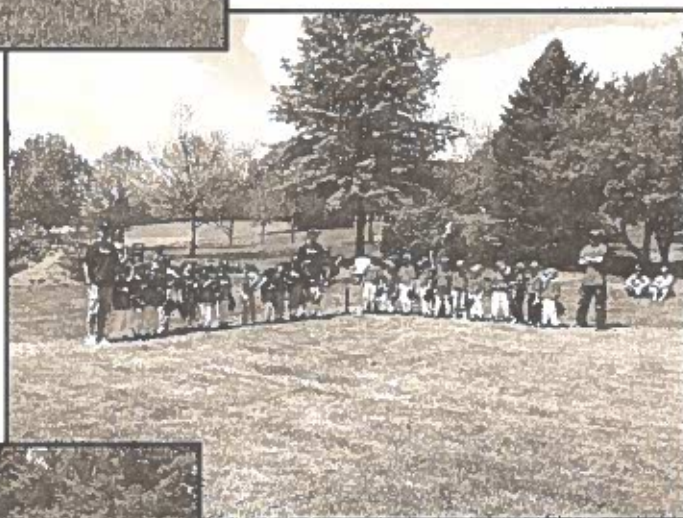


Opening Day



Opening Day
T-Ball game
Dodgers vs. Orioles

Teams
Line up



Future stars of
baseball



Opening Day

Paul Applebee signs autographs for fans



Mrs. Nellie Fox choosing a winner in the baseball raffle-Red Mohn is the assistant

Hagerstown Suns players
L-Fred Graham
R-Paul Applebee
chat with Rep. Todd Rock
after the game





**Individual Members
2011**

C. Robert Brezler, Jr.
Debra E. Flinchbaugh
Judith E. Kelsey
Mrs. Mary Unger

**Family Members
2011**

Dr. and Mrs. Joseph Stewart
Mrs. Doris E. Welty

Renfrew Wish List

Flint drinking glasses
Large butchering kettles
Pewter or wood plates
Outdoor speaker system!!
Pre-1840's drinking glasses
Large ice chests
Sponsors for events in 2011 and 2012
Volunteers in all areas for 2011 and 2012
Local history books
Perennial (non-invasive) plants for the Museum yard
Auction items for Oktoberfest Dinner in September
Brass trivet for dining room fireplace
Used 6-inch or longer candles, or long-burning votives
for Christmas Open House luminaries

Listed above are a few items that would enhance our programs and facilities. All contributions to Renfrew Museum and Park are deductible, as allowed by law. If you need assistance with a pick up of items, please call 717-762-4723, and we would be happy to arrange a time. Thank you for your continued support!

In Remembrance

We remember the passing of Dr. Joseph Miller who was a well respected physician in Waynesboro, and long-time member of Renfrew Museum.

**Life Members
2011**

Daniel W. Arthur
John and Mary Bell
Leonara R. Bernheisel
Mr. & Mrs. James Bowersox
Dr. and Mrs. Max Creager
Mr. and Mrs. Paul E. Dunlap, Jr.
Mrs. David E. Eddy
Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Fleagle
Janet Pollard- Franklin County V.B.
Mr. and Mrs. William George
Philip & Gail Hammond
Mr. and Mrs. Dwight F. Hastings
Mr. Thomas Heefner
Mrs. Barbara Kercheval
Ms. Doris R. Large
Mrs. Frances Levick
Ms. Marilyn K. McCarney
Mrs. Margaret L. McCleary
Mrs. Josephine McCleary
Mrs. Betsy Payette
Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd M. Savage
Ms. Nancy E. Smith
Mrs. Eunice G. Statler
Ms. Betty D. Thompson
Dr. S. Annette Warrenfeltz



Virginia Rahn with grandchildren Anna and Elliott Swink took a break from planting flowers in the courtyard at the Visitors Center for a photo.



**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
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 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

In Remembrance

It is with regret we report the death of
Dr. William Lehman Guyton on May 23.
Dr. Guyton, a long-time friend and former RCI
board member will long be remembered for his
service and contributions to Renfrew.

**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 Koska	Mary Unger
Carolyn Krouse	Craig and Judy Welterlen

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

Participating in our Opening Day-Cal Ripken Little League T-ball
teams (Dodgers and Orioles) John Steiger- Coordinator, Hagers-
town Suns Players-Fred Graham and Paul Applebee; Hagerstown
Suns Marketing Director Sara Grasmon; Dade Royer, Peggy Etter,
Rick Shindle, Red Mohn, Terry Barkdoll, Anita Pfeuffer, Gretchen
Potochney, Carol Thornburg, Chris Koska, David Hykes, and of
course, Mrs. Nellie Fox and daughter Bonnie
Development of Navy Cruisers brochure- Andrea Struble
Flower plantings at Museum House -Barbara/Dick McCracken
Volunteers for planting flowers at Museum House-Barbara
McCracken, Bonnie Damazo, Emmie Matthews and Shelley
Benchoff
Garden volunteers-Phyllis Croson and Peggy Etter
Flower plantings at Visitors Center-Virginia Rahn, Elliott and
Anna Swink
Historic information-Ann Hull- Franklin Co. Historical Society
Donations to Snow Hill Room- David Thomas
Donations to the Steck/Graham Collection-Steve Graham
Sponsorship of free ice cream at Cruisers Concert-RCI/REC
Members and PA Senator Rich Alloway
Memorial gifts for Dr. Guyton and Dr. Miller- Steve Graham
Donation - Mr. and Mrs. Larry Smith
Contribution from Mountain Valley Real Estate---\$1000
Waynesboro Memorabilia items- Jeff and Polly Funk
Volunteers for Navy Cruisers and food sales- Jim and Judy Diller,
Richard "Red" Mohn, Barbara McCracken (and family members),
Dade Royer, Terry Barkdoll, Allie Kohler, Wayne Martz, Peggy
Etter
Donation from the estate of Dr. William Guyton
Permanent loan of a drawing of Andrew Fahnestock- Waynesboro
Historical Society



Renfrew's Gift Showcase

Gift shop hours during open season– same as museum hours: Tuesday-Friday-noon-4:00 p.m.
Saturday and Sunday 1:00-4:00p.m.
Closed on Mondays

Visit us to see the array of items by local artisans, and our “new” old-fashioned candy treats. Remember clear toy candy, ginger drops, vanilla sticks and taffy? We now have those for your sweet tooth.

Bonnie Iseminger-Editor
Contributors: Cheryl Keyser, Bonnie Iseminger
Photos: Bonnie Iseminger

Renfrew Upcoming Events

Sunday, August 7th– A presentation and book signing with Bob Savitt, author of the book about the Blue Ridge Baseball League– 2pm in Visitors Center. FREE

Saturday and Sunday, August 13 and 14– Civil War Encampment– Battle of Monterey Pass re-enactment at 7:00 pm Saturday. Battle on Sunday at 1:00pm. FREE

Friday, September 16-Oktoberfest-Fund-raiser for Renfrew Museum and Park. Cocktails at 6:30pm, dinner at 7:00pm, and live auction at 7:30 pm. Location: Savoy Catering.

Saturday, September 17– Annual Cumberland Valley Pottery Fest 10am-4:00 pm. Free admission.

Coming in Oct.– Pumpkin Fest Oct. 16 11-4pm and Ghost Tales-Oct. 22nd at dusk.

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Website: www.renfrewmuseum.org
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