



SPRING 2024

Circa 1794

The Newsletter of Historic Rock Ford

2024 Focus Exhibit Opens in Snyder Gallery

The Snyder Gallery's 2024 Focus Exhibit "A Time to Mourn: Death & Mourning in Pennsylvania 1750-1820" will explore the extensive customs, attire, and decorative arts surrounding mourning from the 18th through the early 19th centuries in Pennsylvania which were grounded both in a firm faith in the afterlife and a reverent desire to commemorate the life of the departed. Such compelling topics will include mourning customs and attire, graphics of primary sources such as obituaries, tombstones, and mourning fashion plates as well as a look at how different people in Lancaster society were laid to rest, including members of the Hand family and enslaved people.



Objects to be exhibited include a circa 1810 young Lancaster County lady's silk needlework mourning scene descended through the Slaymaker family (as shown on right), a Liverpool pitcher commemorating Washington's death, a neoclassical pearlware figurine of Andromache mourning Hector, and an exact reproduction of George Washington's coffin. This exhibit will feature a unique artistic design to enhance its somber theme and is sure to garner widespread interest and attention.

The exhibit will run from April 2 through October 31, 2024 and is included with admission to the Snyder Gallery.

Grant Received for Painting Conservation Project

Historic Rock Ford is delighted to announce that we have been awarded a 2024 Americana Corner Preserving America Grant. The funds from this grant will be used to help cover the cost of conservation work on three late 18th century/early 19th century landscape watercolor paintings given to us from the collection of John J. Snyder, Jr. This conservation project is imperative to the stability of these fragile watercolor paintings and will allow them to be on display in the Snyder Gallery for future generations. The conservation work will be done at the Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts (CCAHA.org) in Philadelphia, PA.

Please contact Executive Director Sam Slaymaker if you are interested in contributing to the second half of this project: the framing. We will provide updates as the project progresses.

Americana Corner



PRESERVING AMERICA
GRANT



2023-24 Membership Appeal

Historic Rock Ford would like to thank the following individuals and organizations who became new members or who renewed their memberships **from October 1, 2023 to March 15, 2024**. This list will be updated in future newsletters.

General Edward Hand Society (\$10000)

Donald and Elizabeth Steckler

Jasper Yeates Society (\$1000)

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Daniel B. Strickler and Ellen B. Strickler
Wohlsen Construction Company

Edward Shippen Society (\$500)

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Erica McBride Photography
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Sally Belle Photography
SDA Media Company
Annie Sharp Photography
Tanya Stewart Photography
Aile Stoltzfus Photography

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Sam Mecum and Debbie Frantz
Joseph and Linda Myers
Dr. Robert and Anna Roschel
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John and Mary Stefan
Stephen and Martha Thomspson
Wayne Strasbaugh
Phil and Beth Wade
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Individual (\$50)

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Margaret Perella
David Price
Ronald A. Ritter
Laura Schramm
Charles Schroeder
Margaret Tassia
Darlene Walker

PHMC Grant Awarded

In December 2023, the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission announced that Historic Rock Ford was awarded a General Operating Support Grant in the amount of \$5,793. The PHMC is a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. These funds will be used to support educational programs and general museum operations. The PHMC awards General Operating Support grants on a competitive basis to eligible museums and historic sites throughout the Commonwealth on an annual basis.



Students Participate in “Trial of Major John André”

By Debbie Smith, Chair, School Programs Committee
Member, Board of Trustees

Although the event occurred 244 years ago, the story of the capture and fate of Major John André was told again in Rock Ford’s Langmuir Education Room. For a few hours on February 23, middle and high school students from Dayspring Christian Academy dramatized the “Trial of Major John André” and learned of General Hand’s role on the Board of General Officers summoned by General George Washington to try Major André who had been accused of spying for the British.

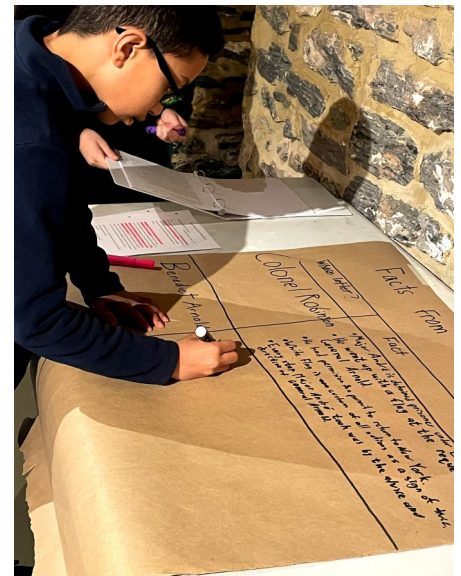
Using customized maps, Sam Slaymaker, Executive Director of Rock Ford, presented students with the context surrounding the capture of André and his involvement with the traitorous acts of Major Benedict Arnold that resulted in André’s trial on September 29, 1780. Sam guided the students to compare the terms “spy” and “traitor” and, through a series of questions, led them to find discrepancies in the accounts generated from the Continental Army and from André’s own testimony to the Board of General Officers. While some of this information could be considered from different points of view, the students persevered through the challenge to follow the facts of the case and the logic involved in interpreting them. Although the Board ultimately concluded that André was a spy who should be hanged for his actions, students, taking their tasks seriously, considered alternate punishments that would have saved his life. At the end of the session, students were able to hear the letter General Hand wrote to Jasper Yeates, Esq., explaining his thoughts about what he saw as the sad necessity having to condemn André to his fate.

Adapted from the book *Proceedings of A Board of General Officers*, published in 1867, this school program was first presented in 2017. I facilitated the program for middle and high school students in which students met PA academic standards such as interpreting concepts and knowledge of historical documents, artifacts and places critical to PA history.

We are pleased to be able to present school programming that aptly demonstrates Rock Ford’s mission. We thank our sponsors, UGI, Fulton Bank, and the Restaurant Store for supporting the students and our efforts.



Debbie Smith monitors a student’s progress.



A student gleans facts from the letters of testimony written on behalf of Major John André

Save the date!

Historic Rock Ford’s Enigmatical Dinner annual fundraiser will be held on Thursday, November 14, 2024. We hope that you will join us for this magical evening of puzzling riddles and 18th century cuisine.



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The Bachman Clock

The Snyder Gallery recently received the gift of a Lancaster County tall case clock from Rock Ford member and long-time supporter and friend, Mary Ellen Bachman. For several years, this lovely clock ticked away the hours in the lobby of Homestead Village Retirement Community where Miss Bachman is a resident. Because of renovations to the lobby, she decided to donate the clock to Rock Ford. The clock had been in her original home in Strasburg and owned by her family for several generations. (Photo on right depicts detail of painted clock dial).



Although both the clock and its case are both unsigned, given the clock's long history in the Bachman family, it is quite possible that the case was made by Lancaster County furniture maker John Bachman II (1746-1829), who is an ancestor of Miss Bachman. The clock case has a castle-top bonnet and the clock itself, although unsigned, has an unusual and intricately painted dial which was most likely painted by the same artisan who painted the (3-58) Martin Shreiner dial depicted on page 127 in *Clockmakers of Lancaster County and their Clocks* by Stacy B.C. Wood, Jr., Stephen Kramer, II and John J. Snyder, Jr. Make sure to visit the Gallery soon to see this delightful clock given by a delightful lady.

Historic Rock Ford acknowledges and thanks our 2024 Season Sponsors for their generous support:

Lead Sponsor: Daniel B. Strickler, Jr. & Ellen B. Strickler

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Historic Rock Ford, an Educational Improvement Organization, sincerely thanks

The Restaurant Store, Fulton Forward,

UGI and John and Susan Garofola for their generous support of our school programming.



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