



The Oracle

Winter 2008

Newsletter of the Historical Society of Dauphin County

Upcoming Events at the HSDC:

- **"Mondays at the Mansion"**
March 17, 2008: *History Day Presentations*, student history projects, a can't miss evening! Combined with the Society's Annual Members Meeting.
- **"Mondays at the Mansion"**
May 12, 2008: *Restoration Stories*, Nancy Cladel, Hummelstown stone farmhouse ca 1772 and Philip Walsh, Upper Allen 1803 log and brick farmhouse.
- **Friday, April 11, 2008:**
A celebration of the 75th anniversary of the Repeal of Prohibition. (page 6)
- **2nd Sunday Mansion Open Homes:** **April 13th**, New Deal in Dauphin County Exhibit opens;
May 11th, Tea & cookies for Mothers' Day tea;
June 8th, Steelton Exhibit opens, Steelton book signing by Dr. Michael Barton & Dr. Simon Bronner, authors.
- **Annual John Harris Golf Open**, May 21st, dedicated to the memory of Dick Parsons. (page 7)
- **Fall Bus Trip, Oct. 14th & 15th** Autumn along the Hudson. (page 4)



From the Director's Desk

The winter months are always an interesting time at the Society. I think of it as our patch up and plan time. Perhaps, "work and in-the-works" time is a better description. Whichever, it is certainly a period of behind the scenes activity and creative thinking; this year with surprising results.

The "work" is our annual winter refurbishing efforts in the mansion. Last year it was the second floor. This year it is the first floor, with a focus on the parlor and the solarium. With knowledge gained from an historic paint analysis, we set about repairing and painting the cornice trim and ceiling in the parlor in the original colors. We planned to take additional samples, do the same with the parlor wainscot and make repairs to what we thought was Simon Cameron's original wallpaper. **BUT, LO and BEHOLD...**our history detectives from Albert Michaels Conservations uncovered sections of what we believe is the original ca. 1860's wallpaper (possibly French in manufacture, like that in the solarium) underneath the existing paper and behind one of the pier mirrors. The paper behind the mirror runs to the baseboard, adding further credence to other evidence that the wainscot was a turn of the century addition. **SO...**we consulted with the Bureau of Historic Preservation of the PHMC for advice and formulated a new and very different plan. We will finish the parlor ceiling, touch up the trim a bit to make it presentable for the coming year, and go to work on further research and fundraising to restore the parlor to the way it looked when Simon Cameron moved into his newly renovated mansion. Needless to say, we are excited about, and daunted by the potential project. We'll keep you informed of our progress in the months ahead.

The "in-the-works" is the full round of HSDC activities in the coming year, many tied to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission's 2008 focus on the 75th anniversary of the New Deal.

The activities kick off with what we hope will be an annual celebration of a landmark event in history. In this case, in keeping with events of 75 years ago, it will be a toast to the 75th anniversary of the repeal of prohibition on April 7th, 1933. Our celebration is Friday evening, April 11th, from 7:30 – 11:30 p.m. at Troegs Brewery. The tab is just \$25.00 per person in advance; \$40 at the door, and includes admission, food and live music. A signature brew and "*bathtub gin*" beer will be on tap at a cash bar. Thanks to Chris and John Troegner and their staff for their help with the event and for the generous donation of the perfect location and the perfect libation. Proceeds will benefit our programs and exhibits, especially those related to the New Deal theme.

Sunday, April 13th, from 1:00 to 4:00pm, our spring exhibit "The New Deal in Dauphin County" will open during our April Second Sunday Mansion Open Home. Our May "Second Sunday" will fall on Mother's day, May 11th, and we will offer Mother's Day tea, circa 1933, in the dining room. Special activities in May also include a Mondays at the Mansion program on May 12th presenting case histories of restoring two old homes, and the 13th annual HSDC golf outing, The John Harris Open, on Wednesday, May 21st at Blue Ridge Country Club (see page 3). On Second Sunday, June 8th, we will open an exhibit on Steelton in conjunction with publication of a book on the history of Steelton by Penn State American Studies Program professors Drs. Michael Barton and Simon Bronner. The authors will be on hand and the book will be available for purchase.

We hope you will join us for every event and activity that fits your schedule. We look forward to sharing historic moments with you in the coming months.

Kathryn W. McCorkle

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It's History Day Again . . .

Annual Members Meeting March 17, 2008

The HSDC Annual Membership Meeting will convene at 7:00 p.m. Monday, March 17, 2008 in the parlor of the John Harris-Simon Cameron Mansion. After a brief business meeting, where we will elect officers of the Board and accept both resignations and new members of the Board, we will enjoy one of the most intriguing of our Mondays at the Mansion series ~ the annual History Day Presentations by students of local schools. Following the presentations, refreshments will be served in the dining room of the Mansion.

Plan on joining us for this important event, approve our Board changes and enjoy the impressive projects of our young historians. Last year, our first History Day program won rave reviews; we expect this year's to be even better.

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Mission Statement:

The Mission of The Historical Society of Dauphin County is to collect, preserve, exhibit, publish, and promote interest in the history of Dauphin County for the education, enjoyment and benefit of the public.

Deck The Halls 2007

Thanks to our sponsors and attendees, the 2007 Deck The Halls was a fantastic success! This was a bittersweet event for us, as we were honoring, posthumously, Carroll F. (Dan) Purdy, Esq. Dan was a long-time member of the Harrisburg legal profession and the Harrisburg community. Although Dan's activities had been limited in recent years by illness, his impact was felt in the courts, in education, and in legal circles, through his past Presidency of the Dauphin County Bar Association. He also served the Society well, portraying Simon Cameron each year as host at the annual Deck The Halls event.

Fundraising events such as Deck The Halls are more important than ever to the success of the Society's mission, as we work to replace funding no longer provided by the former Allied Arts Fund. Thank you to the following sponsors for their generous support:

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Uncle George's Kitchen
What If Café

**We also thank the Dauphin County Commissioners and the
PA Historical & Museum Commission for their annual operating support.**

Curator's Corner

The past few months have been a busy time for everyone involved in the care of the collections housed at the HSDC. The November 19th Mondays at the Mansion program marked the completion of the Allied Pix Pilot Project. It was one of our most attended "Mondays" events ever. Seeing audience participants connect with the images and hearing first-hand from the photographers gave great meaning to the work thus far completed and continues to inspire all of us to make sure the outcome of the larger project is a success. All 3000 negatives dating before the 1972 Flood have been re-housed in archival safe materials and many have been digitized with preservation objectives in mind. Deserving of special thanks is American Studies Masters graduate Jennifer Bisht who carried out the project.



***Hugh Scott and
George Leader Debate for
U.S. Senate seat, 1958***

care for, the goal of this project is to ensure we preserve not only the objects in our collections but the histories that unlock their value. As always, we can use more volunteers to join the ranks of our research and cataloging teams.



Charles C. Rawn

In the library, patrons have embraced a new aid to their investigating efforts. Thanks to a generous donation, we now have a computer that visitors can use to conduct their research. Cemetery and church records as well as descriptions of our photograph and manuscript collections are now more accessible to researchers than ever before.

Finally, stay tuned for the official launch of the Rawn Journal website, the latest product of a long-standing and recently expanded partnership with the Penn State Harrisburg American Studies Program. For 35 years, Harrisburg attorney Charles C. Rawn faithfully kept a journal of his legal, financial, and day-to-day activities. So far, over 2800 of his entries have been readied for uploading. This unusually detailed account of one man's life in antebellum Harrisburg, and the lives of his family, friends, and numerous associates, will soon make its way out of the boxes of the archives and into the digital world for all to explore.



***Allied Pix Founder
Thomas Leask***



***Jennifer Bisht
Scans Allied Pix Photos***

Library Corner



There have been many recent developments in the Alexander Family Library. Thanks to a stalwart volunteer (and family) many of our church records and cemetery records have been scanned into a newly donated computer and indexed to find your ancestors quickly.

Herre Consulting LLC heard of our need for a microfilm reader-printer and offered us a deal we couldn't refuse. Now our file of microfilm is again accessible to the public, and we are ordering additional newspapers on microfilm to expand our resources.

Historic Harrisburg Association has made a long-term loan to us of their library of books and architectural magazines in order to make them more available to the public for research.

Work is progressing on publication of HSDC Librarian Ken Frew's book, *Building Harrisburg*. Ken has spent years doing research for the book, a definitive study of the Architects who built Harrisburg and the Architecture they built. See excerpt on Henry Schuddemage on page 5, and stay tuned for further developments.

HSDC JOURNEYS TO THE PAST: THE HUDSON VALLEY IN OCTOBER – AUTUMN SPLENDOR

Our Fall 2008 Overnight Bus Trip is set for October 14 and 15th and we hope you will join us as we tour this beautiful area during the glorious & colorful Autumn season. To celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the New Deal, we will travel to Hyde Park, New York with an historian on board to give an overview of those years as the country recovered from the Depression. Upon arrival at Hyde Park, we will have lunch at the Visitors Center at the Franklin D. Roosevelt Library and Museum, with Jeffrey Urbin, Education Specialist at the FDR Library. Following lunch, we will tour the nation's first Presidential Library and "Springwood," the 35 room home of the Roosevelt Family. The home has many surprises – including an early television set! The Library and Museum is full of exhibits of the great accomplishments and life story of the late President and his wife.

After enjoying the FDR Historic Site, we board the bus for a drive along the Hudson River to the Doubletree Hotel in Tarrytown, where we will spend the night. Dinner that evening will be at the Sunset Cove Restaurant – with a great view of the lighted Tappan Zee Bridge at night.

The next morning, we will visit famed Kykuit, the Rockefeller Family estate. Kykuit is a distinctive home with art galleries and gardens that you will never forget! Lunch will be at the Mint Cafe on the grounds. Our final stop will be Sleepy Hollow: charming Sunnyside, home of the 19th Century author Washington Irving. Irving was the pre-eminent writer of his day – remember "The Headless Horseman" and "Rip Van Winkle?"

Cost: for members of the Society; \$359 per person double occupancy, \$455 single;
for non-members, \$399 per person double occupancy, \$495 single.
Please note, Annual Membership is just \$30.

**Reservation Deadline with deposit is August 31, 2008 to guarantee a place.
Balance due by September 12, 2008. Call 233-3462 to make reservations.**

This bus trip is one that you will love – personally planned for history and fellowship.

To register for the trip complete the form below and return it with your \$50 deposit, or call the office at 717-233-3462.

Name: _____ Address: _____
City: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____ Member ____ (Y) ____ (N)
Guest Name: _____ Address: _____
City: _____ ST: _____ ZIP: _____ Member ____ (Y) ____ (N)
Deposit \$50 per person () Check Enclosed made out to HSDC, OR
() Please Charge \$50 to my VISA/MC # _____
Exp. ____/____ In name of _____



An Excerpt from "Building Harrisburg" The Soon to be Published History of Harrisburg Architecture by Ken Frew

Henry Schuddamage

A requirement for building permits in Harrisburg was in place by 1884 when they were issued by the city engineer's office. The need for such a system was apparent by the late 1870's when newspapers were still relying on reporters to canvass the city for building sites. The public, in general, was becoming more interested in the city's growth. While crude, this early system was easily more about tracking construction than enforcing building regulations of which there were none to speak of. A single permit could be used to erect multiple buildings at different locations.

When in January 1895, under the administration of Mayor Maurice C. Eby, the first ordinance creating an office of building inspector was established, a call went out to house carpenters, bricklayers and architects alike, anyone having at least seven years experience in construction to apply. After interviewing a number of qualified candidates, the job went to long-time city builder Henry Schuddamage (1844 - 1922), who won the post with the support of his fellow German tradesmen.

The new position was to be accompanied by a tough set of building regulations. The power of local tradesmen had been unquestioned for nearly 100 years and in particular the construction of wood frame houses was of concern. New precautions were to be taken in the construction of hot-air flues~ the defectiveness of which was seen as the cause of over half the fires in Harrisburg ~ with the use of iron or wire instead of wooden lath next to the flue and joists placed at least four inches away. Unfortunately, except for this major item, most of the 1895 ordinance, reportedly modeled on New York City's, never made it out of City Council where it died on the floor.

In the end, Schuddamage devised his own seven-part set of regulations council, the mayor, and his fellow contractors could live with. The new office only monitored new construction up until it was under roof; there were no provisions for re-inspections. The fine after 36 hours was \$25 dollars a day for failure to respect a notice served on a builder.

Born in Hanover, Germany, Schuddamage had come to the U.S. in 1865 as a 21 - year-old timber cutter. In a day when Pennsylvania's forest still dominated the marketplace the arrival of the log booms of white pine and hemlock each spring was cause for great celebration. Riding the rafts down from Williamsport, he eventually took up permanent residence and started his own lumber mill at Front and Pepper streets which led him into construction itself. By 1883, building in the future 10th Ward above Maclay Street, his "Shuddamageville" village of wooden houses helped stimulate some of the first interest in annexing the up-town area.

Paid an annual salary of \$1200 dollars, Schuddamage was restricted from his own business while holding office. Notorious for his disdain for being told how to build, the Harrisburg Telegraph was not alone when it noted his countenance's famous "I-am-right" expression on occasion. As inspector he had no qualms about asserting his newly-appointed authority over fellow contractors and even tried to gain some leverage over architects, suggesting to a joint building committee of Select and Common councils that a complete set of plans and specifications be filed when applying for permits, along with a standard in estimating values of materials. On these points, at least, he didn't get very far. In 1897 when he tried to get reappointed, nobody wanted him.

* * *

Covered in sawdust, Harrisburg's first building inspector may have been a less than diplomatic son-of-a-gun but the construction scene clamored for such an individual. There was finally someone to watch over the contractors and trades people. All that remained now was someone to watch over the architects.

2007 Grants and Gifts Received

The Society gratefully acknowledges all contributions of \$100 or more received in 2007 and not tied to special events. Special Event donations are acknowledged in articles about the events.

Auchincloss Family Fund of
The Foundation for
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Michael Barton
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Thomas Wood
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Wachovia Foundation

* * *

In addition, a memorial gift in memory of Peter C. Wambach was received from the Second Anonymous In and Out Fund of The Foundation for Enhancing Communities on behalf of Mr. & Mrs. Conrad M. Siegel.

#

April 11, 2008 Blast From The Past...

The HSDC invites celebrants near and far to the first of what we hope will become a new tradition for the Society, an annual *Blas* to celebrate the anniversary of a *Past* event in local, state and national history.

Our first *Blast from the Past* is tied to our 2008 PHMC inspired focus on the year 1933 and the 75th anniversary of the New Deal. It's a casual gathering to celebrate another milestone anniversary of that year, the repeal of prohibition, effective 12:00 a.m., April 7th, 1933.

Troeg's brewery at 800 Paxton Street in Harrisburg has donated the perfect location and the perfect libation for the event. The doors open at 7:30 pm and remain open until the 11:30 pm closing. The menu for the evening includes a presentation on the history of brewing in Pennsylvania by author and beer historian Lew Bryson (after all, history is our mission), a display of historic local brewery bottles and items from the collection of Dale Ibberson, and a **live band**.

Admission includes food from the “bar menu” and is \$25.00 per person in advance and \$40 per person at the door. A specialty signature brew and “bathtub gin”ger beer on tap for the evening will be available for purchase. Patron/sponsor tickets are \$75 per couple and include recognition at the event and a complimentary brew.

Funds raised at the party will help to fund our exhibits and programs in the coming year. For that reason, we hope for a great crowd; maybe not the thousands who jammed the streets outside of Graupner's, the only operating city brewery, just before midnight, waiting to make their purchase, but a couple hundred revelers would suit us, and our budget, just fine. Please join us for our very first party out of the past. It should be a **BLAST**.

To register: complete and mail the form below or call the office at 233-3462 to add your name to the list. You may also register on-line at www.dauphincountyhistory.org, or, beginning March 1st, at www.Troegs.com.

Yes. Add me to the list of attendees at the *Blast from the Past*

Name	Phone #
------	---------

Address _____
 Street/PO Box _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Attending on my ticket:

Names of other Attendees:

Check Enclosed OR: Please charge my VISA/MC Account as follows;

Account # _____ EXP _____ / _____

Cardholder Signature: _____



13th Annual HSDC Golf Outing the John Harris Open Dedicated to the Memory of Founder Dick Parsons

The 2008 Golf Outing will be dedicated in memory of Richard D. Parsons, who was a member of the Society's Board of Trustees for 12 years and served two terms as president of the Board. Dick initiated the first golf outing in 1996, his first year on our Board, and served as committee chairman for most of the following golf outings. Much of Dick's service to the Historical Society came following his retirement from Gannett Fleming, Inc., where he was an architect/project manager for 26 years. Robert Dietz, President of Gannett Fleming, has confirmed the company's prime sponsorship for the outing in honor of Dick. The outing will be held at the Blue Ridge Country Club on Wednesday, May 21, 2008. Registration, pre-round activities and lunch begin at 11:30 a.m. The post-round celebration will feature a tribute to Dick at 6:00 p.m.



*Dick Parsons as a
young boy*



*Dick Parsons when
President of the Society*

We hope to see maximum turnout at the event. Specific details will follow in a special mailing. If you have not joined in our Golf outing before, but would like more information, call our office at 233-3462 to be added to the mailing list. An early reservation form follows for your ease in letting us know you will be joining us May 21st at Blue Ridge.

Yes, I want to participate in the 13th Annual John Harris Open golf outing, May 21, 2008 at Blue Ridge Country Club. Please register me for :

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Entry at \$150.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Hole Sponsor at \$200.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Foursome Entry at \$500.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Harris Sponsor at \$1,000.00 (includes Foursome + Sponsorship)
<input type="checkbox"/> Reception /Tribute at \$50.00	<input type="checkbox"/> Cameron Sponsor (includes Reception attendance for four + Sponsorship—no golf)

Name _____ Company _____

Street or PO Box # _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Telephone _____ FAX _____

☐ Check payable to HSDC Enclosed ☐ This is a pledge, please bill me

☐ Charge to my VISA or MasterCard # _____

Exp. Date _____ Signature _____

HSDC Welcomes New Members

HSDC thanks the following new members for joining in our efforts to preserve our Dauphin County history:

Haldeman Circle

Ms. Holly Leggett

Heritage Circle

Heath & Eleanor Allen
Susan E. Keefer
Denis & Kristen Milke
Greg Sutliff

Family & Individual

Janis Aiken
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Tony Meadows
Matta M. Miller
Richard K. Hartman
Katherine Wech
Diana Wells

***We also welcome back
those lapsed members
who renewed their asso-
ciation with us.***

Judith Chronister &
Thomas Lupkic
Nikki Quinn
John & Roni Trogner

**The Society Acknowl-
edges Memorial Gifts
Received in memory of
Dick Parsons from the
following:**

Cheryl A. Capitani
Donna Nichols
Gary D. Smith
Warden Asphalt

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DAUPHIN COUNTY

HSDC



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office@dauphincountyhistory.org

The official registration & financial information of The Historical Society of Dauphin County may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

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Individual	\$30
Family	\$40

Please complete the information below & we will send an acknowledgement of your gift to the recipient:

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Make checks payable to "The Historical Society of Dauphin County" or call (717) 233-3462 to pay using your Visa or MasterCard.

Return this form with payment to:

The Historical Society of Dauphin County
219 South Front Street
Harrisburg, PA 17104

Speaking of Historic Moments ...

The Historical Society will feature distinctive historic crafts during Gallery Walk, September 7, 2008.

If you are a craftsperson specializing in historic crafts, please contact us at 233-3462 to discuss participation details.

Share those Moments with us ...

The Society seeks people willing to share their memories of the depression and the *New Deal* era via personal interviews. Our archives are lacking in eyewitness accounts of 20th century events, and what better way to fill this gap than by recording memories of those who lived through them.

If you or a loved one is willing to participate, please call the Society office at 717-233-3462. Interviews and discussion groups will then be scheduled.

and Your Descendants ...

Kim Pearson of Primary Book Sources sent the HSDC library a copy of *Making History*, a book which explains how to document the memories of your life for future generations. This is an excellent book to help fit your memories into the social fabric and historical context of your time. We recommend this book if you are considering writing your or a loved one's history.

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