



The Oracle

WINTER 2011

Number 91

Newsletter of the Historical Society of Dauphin County

Coming up at HSDC:

- Tuesday, February 15 — Third Tuesday, the *History of Market Square Church* with Reverend James D. Brown, 7:00–8:30pm.
- Fri, February 18 — Dauphin County Civil War 150 Commemoration Weekend. Re-enactment of Abraham Lincoln's pre-inaugural visit to Harrisburg at 11:00am at Market Square Presbyterian Church, followed by "Lunch with Mr. Lincoln" at 12:30pm at the Harris-Cameron Mansion, with remarks by James Hayney and Howard Holzer. 11:00am program free of charge. 12:30pm lunch, \$25 pp. Call 233-3462 to register.
- Sat, February 19 — Dauphin County Civil War 150 Commemoration Weekend. Free admission all day to The National Civil War Museum.
- Tuesday, March 15 — Third Tuesday, Women's History Month, The Pennsylvania Female College, Harris-Cameron Mansion years 1853-1861, 7:00-8:30pm.
- Tuesday, April 19—Third Tuesday, the ever popular History Day Project Presentations by local middle and high school students, 7:00-8:30pm.
- Tuesday, May 17th—Civil War Battle Flags of Pennsylvania and the stories of those who carried the flags, 7:00-8:30pm.

Parking for evening events at the Mansion is available on-site and in the Pinnacle Health physicians' lot off River Street behind the Mansion.

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Deck the Halls a Success

With the generosity of all of the sponsors and patrons listed in our previous issue of *The Oracle*, as well as those listed below, the 16th annual Deck the Halls and Harris Award ceremony was a great success.



Calobe Jackson, Jr. being presented with the Harris Award. Also pictured are (from left to right) Reverend David Biser as John Harris, Valerie Pritchett, Emcee for the evening, and Thomas P. Gacki, HSDC President.

Additional DTH Sponsorships received in December:

Harris Sponsors

Mack Gerberich & Assoc., P.C.

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The sponsors, patrons, and attendees helped to raise over \$30,000 for HSDC operations and programs and helped us salute Calobe Jackson Jr. with presentation of the 2010 Harris Award for contributions to the community. Mr. Jackson's speech, a portion quoted below, drew rave reviews.

"...Cell phones and Facebook are now leading social interaction, yet tonight we pause and assemble in a mansion built in 1766. We wine, dine, and Deck the Halls, as people did in olden times. Several weeks ago we honored the memory of the PA USCT Grand Review of 1865 on the steps of this Mansion, and finally tonight I am honored in this mansion. It is written in the Old Testament: 'Those who honor me, I will honor.' I thank God that you have honored me tonight."

We thank all of the caterers, listed below, for the assortment of fabulously prepared dishes leaving all those in attendance with satisfied palates and stomachs. The Mansion was splendidly decorated thanks to the following volunteers on the decorating committee who worked feverishly to make the 2010 Deck the Halls what everyone touted as, "one of the best ever."

Caterers

Cathy Lotwick

Char's Bella Mundo

Dayton's Coffee

Expressly Yours Catering

Flinchy's Regional & Global Cuisine

Uncle George's Country Kitchen

Harrisburg Hilton & Towers

Pennsylvania Bakery

Passage to India

Patty Armbrust Catering

Pizza Grill

Premier Caterers

Simply Turkey & More

Sir D's

Stocks on Second

Troegs Brewing Company

Wendel's Catering

Decorating Committee

Marion Alexander

Joan Dorko

Marcia Gobrecht

Louise Kunkel

Linda Lefever

Sandra Prahl

Jayne Shipman

Scott Tryon

Anne Yellot

The Garden Path

Please mark your calendars for **Deck the Halls 2011** on **Thursday, December 1st**, and be sure to join us.

New Hours for Mansion and Library Effective February 1, 2011

The hours of operation for the Harris Mansion~Cameron House and the Alexander Family Research Library at the HSDC will move to Monday through Thursday from 1pm to 4pm effective February 1st. This will allow visitors to find us open on Mondays when few other tourist or research facilities in the Harrisburg area are open. Mansion tours will continue to be offered at 1, 2 or 3 pm each day, only the days of the week are changing.

End of the Year Grants

The Historical Society of Dauphin County thanks the **McCormick Foundation** for a curatorial services grant, the **Hunter/Meyer/Redus Foundation** for a grant for general purposes and **John B. Warden, III of Warden Asphalt Company** for a grant to our Mansion endowment fund at the Foundation for Enhancing Communities, all received in December 2010. These generous grants from local foundations help us maintain the Mansion and continue our ever growing list of activities in Dauphin County.

Historical Society of Dauphin County

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.

Board of Trustees:

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**And a dedicated and growing
group of Volunteers**

**All staff are part-time.
Hours are arranged so that
someone will answer the
phone Monday thru Thurs-
day, 10 am—4 pm. If the
person you need to speak
with is not on duty, he or she
will return your call at the
first opportunity.**

Renovations to the Mansion's Front Porch

In November, Shawn Connor of Connor Artistry began the HSDC's latest Mansion renovation project, replacing the flooring, foundation, and pillars on the northwest half of the front porch. Shawn removed the old floor and rotten joists and built a new foundation. He then added new joists, floor boards, and pillars. Everything was completed, except for the final coat of paint on the new pillars, in time for Deck the Halls.

This is the second major restoration undertaking in the Mansion for Connor Artistry and the third project to date for the HSDC. Shawn and his assistant Jared reinforced the support structure of the first floor of the Mansion in January 2009 and put the finishing touches on the temporary walls in the 2010 History Center. They were instrumental in assuring that the walls for the 2010 History Center were worthy of their setting. Next year, pending funding, Connor Artistry will restore the other half of the front porch.



Who Do You Think You Are?

On Thursday, January 13th, the library of the Harris Mansion-Cameron House was the location for filming an episode of NBC's *Who Do You Think You Are? Season 2* Television show featuring Steve Buscemi, veteran actor and recent winner of a Golden Globe for best actor in a television series drama, *Boardwalk Empire*. We are told that the episode will be aired in March 2011.

Who Do You Think You Are? follows celebrities on their search for more information about their family tree. The show not only takes viewers on a tour of a specific celebrity's past, but also provides historical information about different time periods in history and how our past impacts the present. *Who Do You Think You Are?* is adapted from the award-winning hit British television documentary series from Wall to Wall Productions. The executive producers for *Who Do You Think You Are?* are Alex Graham, Lisa Kudrow, Dan Bucatinsky, Jennifer O'Connell, and Al Edgington in conjunction with their production company, Is or Isn't Entertainment, and Shed Media U.S.

The coming season of the show will kick off on February 4th at 8:00pm. Keep your eyes peeled in March for views of the Historical Society of Dauphin County.

Gallery Walk

HSDC is planning a juried exhibit with the theme "Dauphin County on the Eve of the Civil War" for the Art Association of Harrisburg's annual Gallery Walk in early September. Look for more information in our next issue.

Thank You Bob Knupp

Robert Knupp, Esquire, one of the most committed and productive members of the Historical Society Board of Directors recently retired from the board. Bob's retirement ended a board membership that covered a record eighteen of the past twenty-one years. He has promised to remain involved with the work of the Society in the years ahead, and highly recommends HSDC board service to others as a fulfilling and meaningful way to give back to the community.

Blast From The Past

Stay tuned for an invitation to HSDC's 3rd annual *Blast from the Past*, tentatively planned for late March or early April. As with previous "Blasts," expect another casual and quirky celebration of a point in time in the past of Dauphin County.

Lunch with Mr. Lincoln

HSDC will host "Lunch with Mr. Lincoln" in the Mansion on Friday, February 18th at 12:30pm. Howard Holzer, the author of *Lincoln and New York*, will be the keynote speaker and there will be remarks from James Hayney, the nationally known Lincoln presenter. Tickets are \$25.00 per person.

HSDC Third Tuesday Programs for the Winter & Spring Months

On February 15th, Reverend James D. Brown will speak about the history of the Market Square Presbyterian Church in celebration of the church's 150th year on the square.

On March 15th, a presentation on the Pennsylvania Female College which was located in the Harris-Cameron Mansion from 1853 to 1861.

On April 19th, our ever popular History Day Project presentation by local students.

On May 17th, Jason Wilson from the Pennsylvania Capital Preservation Committee will bring Pennsylvania Civil War flags and speak about the roles, responsibilities, and honors earned by the bearers.

All programs begin at 7:00 pm in the Harris-Cameron Mansion, 219 S. Front Street, Harrisburg, and are free and open to the public. Light refreshments provided by the Friends of the Harris Cameron Mansion are served at 6:30 pm prior to the programs in the Jean E. Pugh Dining Room.

In case of inclement weather, call 233-3462 for cancellation information.

HSDC Recognized for Nonprofit Innovation

The Historical Society of Dauphin County has been named a finalist in the Central Penn Business Journal's 2011 Nonprofit Innovation Awards for our major collaborative project, The 2010 History Center. HSDC and other nominees will be honored on February 23, 2011 at the Lancaster County Convention Center. If our finalist status changes to winner status, look for a photograph of HSDC president, Tom Gacki accepting the award in the next issue of *The Oracle*.

At Your Request...

The following poem by Jackson Taylor was recited to the public for the first time at the beginning of the "Blue Orchard Evening" at the Midtown Scholar on November 11, 2010. Many of those in attendance asked for a copy of the poem and he was kind enough to provide it to us for publication.

Inherent Appetite

I come from a family of good cooks.
Men and women who stand to braise in watch,
Or roll and crimp, grease cakepans side by side,
Plaid dishtowels flung o'er shoulders with joy.
Though their backs grow tired, sure hands warm their work,
And I'm too young to know one day we'll long,

Yes, long for food, those oak tables stretched long.
Those home-grown childhood meals--who cares who cooks?
They want to provide--youth expects such work:
Kitchen horseplay, licking battered spoons, mindful in watch,
Blowing and biting hot flaked treats of joy,
Apple dumplings browned in bake side by side,

Raspberry pie--black juice running plateside,
Roast rabbit spiked with dry rosemary, long-
Grain wild rice, that sauce piqued with pepper's joy,
Such pleasures of the palate. Such good cooks;
Testing it all, eyes minding each timed watch,
Garden to oven. We eat and take seconds of their work.

Their work--well eaten! Oh, such handiwork!
Children blanketed and warm side by side,
Napping through clean-up, scoured pots, the swatch
Of rag mopping the floor, those days grown long
With ever daily duty--worn-out cooks--
Practiced, seasoned, storing leftover's joy.

I guess they were joyous? Meals of joy?
Spry elders happy in their daily work?
But as they age we must replace these cooks,
Learn ourselves to baste, whip, cut through boneside,
Dress pheasants, pour gravy--our nights stretched long;
Is this the last meal we've all blessed in watch?

Lives grow busier, meals go skipped, whose to watch?
Keep track of time? Crush the old sage with joy?
Death steals some recipes, blue-cursive long-
Hand fades, gardens go begging, race to work,
Eat on the run, pass the graves side by side:
Here lies a family of once good cooks.

And who knew all these tasks would fall to you?
The preservation of the fruit, longing now for youth,
And those free meals served by cooks,
Who stood in watch at tableside as we devoured their dreams.

This poem by Jackson Taylor was first publicly read before the Dauphin County Historical Society in the City of Harrisburg, at an event co-sponsored by the Dauphin County Medical Society held at the Midtown Scholars Bookstore, November 11, 2010.

USCT Grand Review Weekend Revisited

Two Pictures Are Worth 2000 Words



The Generals salute the troops as they pass the Historical Society's 2010 History Center.



General Cameron speaks to the troops and dignitaries from the front of his home.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF DAUPHIN COUNTY

HSDC



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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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There are many times that we could communicate with you more quickly and less expensively by using email. Please send an email to office@dauphincountyhistory.org. Mark the subject EMAIL ADDRESS, give us both your name and email in the body of the message. Please also tell us whether you prefer to receive your newsletter by email or regular mail.

Welcome recent new HSDC members

Individual

Bill Brown
Becky Cotich
Jens Damgaard
Natalie Lubold
Ellen M. Lyon
Eric Papenfuse
Bruce Quigley
Richard A. Richardson
Georg R. Sheets
Dian Tedesco
Anne A. Verplanck
Kenneth C. Wolensky

Family

Dennis and Cheryl Bobb
Timothy and Christine Finnegan
Joseph and Denise Lahr
John and Darlene Waters

Heritage

Warren and Michele Persak

Haldeman

Bill and Phyllis Coup
David W. Volkman

We're always thrilled to add new members to our rolls. Please help the HSDC grow its member base by sharing the form on the right with a friend or neighbor.

**Thank you for
your support!**

Membership Form—Please Join Today

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