



# SCHUYLKILL HERITAGE

*A Newsletter of the Schuylkill County Historical Society*



Volume 11, Issue 3

*“to discover, procure, and preserve...”*

May - June 2016

***S.C.H.S. Presents:***

## **Rubens Peale: American Artist and Museum Director**

*Wednesday, May 25<sup>th</sup>, 7 PM*

*S.C.H.S. Museum – 305 North Centre Street, Pottsville, PA*

**Rubens Peale** (May 4, 1784 – July 17, 1865) was an American artist and museum director. Born in Philadelphia, he was the fourth son of artist-naturalist, Charles Willson Peale.

Rubens had weak eyes and, unlike most of his siblings, did not set out to be an artist. He traveled with the family in 1802 to Britain, but was unable to travel on the continent with the outbreak of war. In 1803 he attended classes at the University of Pennsylvania. He

See Rubens Peale on page 2



**Rubens Peale**

***181 Years Later...***

## **Recent Visitor to the S.C.H.S. Finds Family Treasure**

On a recent trip through Pottsville in early March I stopped by the Pottsville Presbyterian Cemetery to visit the gravesite of my great, great uncle Pvt. John Madison, company A, 96th regiment Pa vol.

John had marched with the Army of the Potomac during the advance on Richmond in the summer of 1862. Having learned much of my family history through the Schuylkill County Historical Society in the past I decided to stop and see what other treasures I could learn concerning the Madison family. I was warmly greeted by a very kind and helpful gentleman Thomas Drogalis, who I learned was the executive



**Mr. Carl Madison**

director of the Society. Tom spent a lot of time assisting me with searching through more history on John Madison and we actually

found his obituary in the Miners Journal July 1862.

While I looked through other records, Tom had pulled a file and handed me a small ledger book, “Lemon pie, rice waffles, ginger snaps and lemon custard.” I gaze upon these recipes, hand written in the back pages of the ledger book...but this is no ordinary book! It’s 181 years old and the entries are that of my great, great, great, great grandmother Jane Madison.

The book is that of her husband Miles Maddison. The writing on the book’s cover reads “Miles Maddison and son”. All the monetary entries are in British pounds as my family emigrated from Stanhope, England in 1830. They opened a coal mine in the region and the son, John Maddison was a well known

See Family Treasure on page 2

## Schuylkill County Historical Society



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Sch.hist@comcast.net  
www.schuylkillhistory.org  
305 North Centre Street,  
Pottsville, Pennsylvania  
(570) 622-7540

### Society Hours

Wednesday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Thursday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Friday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.  
Saturday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

*Tourists, Historical  
Researchers, Scholars  
and Genealogists are  
welcome*

The Purpose of the Schuylkill County Historical Society is to discover, procure, and preserve the records of the history of Schuylkill County and any data or materials which may establish or illustrate that history.

## Rubens Peale continued from page 1

became Director of his father's museum in Philadelphia from 1810 to 1821, and then of the Peale Museum in Baltimore, which he ran with his brother, Rembrandt Peale. To promote the museum, he installed gas lighting illumination in the museum.

He opened his own museum in New York on October 26, 1825, (along with the opening of the Erie Canal). By 1840 Peale would change the name to the New York Museum of Natural History and Science. The

Panic of 1837 sent his museum into debt. It competed with the American Museum of P.T. Barnum. Rubens had to sell his entire collection to Barnum in 1843. He moved to Pottstown, Pennsylvania. In 1837 he retired to his father-in-law, George Patterson's estate near Schuylkill Haven, Pennsylvania and lived as a country gentleman at *Woodland Farm*. He experimented with mesmerism and wrote to his brother Rembrandt about it.

In October 1855, he began keeping a journal, and he turned to still life painting as an extension of his interest in natural history. In 1864, he returned to Philadelphia, and studied landscape painting with Edward Moran. In the last ten years of his life, he produced 130 paintings.



**Landscape with quail cock hen and chickens by Rubens Peale, date unknown**

## Family Treasure continued from page 1

mining inspector in the Pottsville and St Clair region. John Maddison was also a minister and preached in the old log church that was on the site that later became the North Center Street school. Much to my delight I was told by Tom Drogalis that the Historical Society building is that site!

Fast forward two generations to 1862, Miles Maddison's great grandson, Pvt. John Madison Co. A 96 reg. pa vol. (note that one "d" was dropped from the name in this generation). I was fortunate to inherit from my father all the original letters that John had written home to his family during the Civil War. I have donated a copy of the originals as well as typescript copies to the Historical Society and a copy of a photograph of John Madison.

Tom next took me to some files of Civil War era photos in hopes that I may find more photos of John. While I did not find any of John I did locate a photo of the Pottsville Cadets, dated 1898 I believe, and amongst those in the line up as listed, is my great grandfather Alexander Madison. Tom was kind in making a photo copy of this for me which I will greatly treasure.

As usual I thoroughly enjoyed my visit to the Historical Society and as such have become a member. It is a treasure to have all my family history at my disposal there. I greatly appreciate the dedication and hard work of Thomas, staff and fellow members in their dedication to the preservation of such valued history.

## Ms. Mareen Costello Portrays Clara Barton



Clara Barton

A wonderful program was presented in April by Ms. Mareen Costello who treated an enthusiastic audience to her telling of the life story of Clara Barton.

*Clara Barton – Mini Biography.* Clara Barton's many jobs included teaching, working at the U.S. Patent Office, and caring for

soldiers during the Civil War. She is best remembered as the founder of the American Red Cross.

Clara Barton was born on December 25, 1821, in Oxford, Massachusetts. While visiting Europe, she worked with a relief organization known as the International Red Cross, and lobbied for an American branch when she returned home. The American Red

Cross was founded in 1881, and Barton served as its first president.



She was said to be a shy child. She first found her calling when she tended to her brother David after an accident. Barton later found another outlet for her desire to be helpful as a teenager. She became a teacher at age 15 and later opened a free public school in New Jersey. She moved to Washington, D.C. to work in the U.S. Patent Office as clerk in the mid-1850's.

During the Civil War Clara Barton sought to help the soldiers in any way she could. At the beginning she collected and distributed supplies for the Union



Ms. Mareen Costello

Army. Not content sitting on the sidelines, Barton served as an independent nurse and first saw combat in Fredericksburg, Virginia in 1862. She also cared for soldiers wounded at Antietam. Barton was nicknamed, "the angel of the battlefield" for her work. After the war ended in 1865, Clara Barton worked for the War Department, helping to either reunite missing soldiers and their families or find out more about those who were missing. She also became a lecturer and crowds of people came to hear her talk about her war experiences.

## "All Aboard"...



Jim Eisenhart Jr. presents Pennsylvania Railroads to Schuylkill County Historical Society Members and Guests.

## Only Known Paleo Occupational Site Discovered in Schuylkill County



Mr. Jim Wosochlo

Jim Wosochlo - (Former President of State Society for Pennsylvania Archeology, current treasurer of Hamburg's Hawk Mountain Archeology Society, Hamburg, Pa.), presented a lecture on 36-SC-81 Wosochlo Farm Site. This multi-component

site is the only known Paleo occupational site at this time discovered in Schuylkill County.

Though paleo points such as Cumberland and Clovis have been found in Schuylkill County, this is the only known occupation site, due to the small end scraping tools found along with Crowfield style type point. This is the only known point type of its kind found in South Schuylkill Co.

Crowfield type spear points are a late paleo point dating 12,000B.P. to 10,000B.P. The beginning of the presentation is a walk back in history of the Deer Lake area pre-historical times as he explains the changes in point styles through time and following up with ice age excavations with

Temple University grad students.

Jim Wosochlo has been collecting at this site since the age of 10 years old. His grandfather, John Wosochlo, farmed this land just north of Deer Lake, Pa since he was a young man in the 1930's.

At the start of WWII this land was the airport used to train cadets. One hanger from this time still remains. Young Jim Wosochlo began finding artifacts in the plow zone on this farm and noticed that the points in the plow zone were 9,000B.P. to 500B.P.

This lead to further investigation later in the years to dig and discover older ice age artifacts below that plow zone. This presentation has been given throughout Pennsylvania and the State Society Meeting in Washington Co., PA.

## S.C.H.S. Presents After School Programs for Schuylkill County School Districts

As a result of a presentation made to the Schuylkill County School Districts Superintendents last fall, students for five county school districts are scheduled to visit the Schuylkill County Historical Society for after school learning experiences.

A special thanks to S.C.H.S. Board Member, Mr. John Walsh, for his excellent work in both preparing and presenting these wonder learning programs. Here's just some of the feedback the programs have received:

### Lindsey Semar, Pine Grove Area School District

"I thought the field trip was an excellent experience for the kids. The Historical Society did an excellent job planning and using the time they had to give the kids the best experience possible. I really appreciated how they had multiple activities for the kids that gave them an opportunity to explore the building and learn a little bit of the history in an interactive way with the scavenger hunt.

The scavenger hunt was also nicely organized to prevent kids from running all over the building. We did the ghost stories and the whole setup was incredible. They created the setting of a campfire that the kids loved and they also told the stories and then took them back to mini lessons for the kids. This was the best experience we have had yet from an outside source for the program."

### Ms. Lisa Broomell, Mahanoy Area School District

"Mahanoy Area M.S. Schuylkill Achieve students visited the Pottsville Historical Society on Tuesday, April 19, 2016. **A Taste of the Skook** was presented by John Walsh.

See School Programs on page 5

## *Thanks* Recent Acquisitions

- 1811 History of Schuylkill County and Schuylkill County Genealogy Vol I and II dated 1916. Donated by Joseph Brady, Minersville, PA
- Samuel Kepner Cigar Box 1915 - 1917, Post Cards of Tumbling Run, Pottsville, Gettysburg, and the Anthracite Region. Donated by Joel Frantz, Leesport, PA
- Books on Mahanoy City History. Donated by Joanna Schuster, Pottsville, PA
- Lapp/Bubeck Family memorabilia. Letters, deeds, licenses, and post cards. Donated by Carol Holloway, Coatsville, PA
- Collage of images PHS Centennial Class of 1876 to include the program from 1876, PHS Graduation Program dated 1901. Donated by Kit and David Adcock, Bald Head Island, North Carolina.
- General Joulwan Testimonial Diner Card, buttons, bonnets and glasses. Donated by Douglas Mullin, Pottsville, PA
- Picture of Philips Van Heusen Corporation employees 1961. Donated by Debbie Dehner, Pottsville, PA
- Photo of Edward Trout of Orwigsburg with Purple Heart Medal, school books and associated school work books, post cards, advertising and personal cards. Donated by George Aregood, Orwigsburg, PA
- Advertisement poster of Ronald Reagan wearing a Van Huesen shirt. Donated by Theresa Steininger, Pottsville, PA
- Navy blue dress shirt, men's one piece wool swimsuit, canvas Navy duffle bag. Donated by Lenna Roberts Bensinger, Fuquay Varina, North Carolina.
- Photo of Georgetown, Schuylkill County circa, 1940, as homes were removed to Wadesville. Donated by Theodore D. Thorn III, St. Clair, PA
- DVD scrapbooks of New Philadelphia, post cards, 1891 handbook of Christian Religion, Pennsylvania School of Journalism Magazines, Federal Text Book of Citizenship, American Red Cross Certificate, Lyric Theater logo ruler- New Philadelphia. Donated by Helen Smeltz, New Philadelphia, PA
- Nativity Button, Boys of Liberty Book, 1918 Wedding Invitation, pictures, movie pass, Pollack Fur post card, popcorn bags. Donated by Samara Heffecker, Pottsville, PA
- New Ringgold Team Softball jersey, Pottsville Business College text, Zions German Bible from Orwigsburg Red Church, Quartets for Men Hymn Book containing Negro Spirituals used at St. John's Church of Auburn. Donated by Todd Graybill, Auburn, PA
- Copy of Charter of King Charles II of England to William Penn on March 3, 1681. Donated by Theodore D. Thorn III, St. Clair, PA
- George Bretz photo, post cards, Miners National Bank coin counter bank, Peoples Safe Deposit Bank St. Clair car bank. Donated by Barbara Bensinger, Welsh Burke, Virginia
- The Carbonite 1929 Port Carbon High School Yearbook. Donated by Cindy Rodenbough, Nazareth, PA

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### School Programs continued from page 4

Our students were thoroughly engaged as soon as they walked in the door. John Walsh gave an informative introduction and then sent the students on an adventurous scavenger hunt. The students curiously roamed hallways and rooms looking for the answers to the questions. They were very intrigued at all of the artifacts and information in the museum.

Mr. Walsh then presented information on family owned and operated businesses in Schuylkill County. He gave a brief history on approximately 5 different businesses and then had a sample for each student to try.

Our Mahanoy Area MS Schuylkill Achieve students thoroughly enjoyed their trip to the Schuylkill County Historical Society. Many of the students, as well as the teachers, said that they would be doing a return visit!"

## Letters Home: Major William W. Clemens, First Defender & Pottsville Native



Major William W. Clemens

Please join us as Historian Stu Richards shares his insight into the contributions of Major William W. Clemens to the battle that captured Fort Fisher.

You'll hear about one of Schuylkill County's native son's service alongside Rear Admiral Porter and President Lincoln while they occupied Confederate Jefferson Davis's Mansion.

*Presented by Historian, Stu Richards*

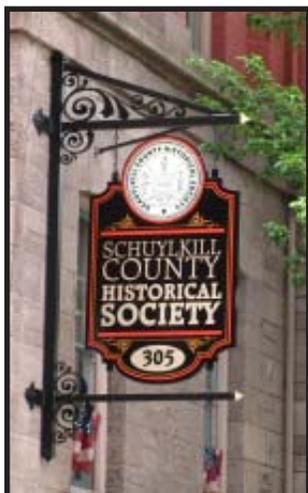
**Wednesday, June 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016 @ 7PM  
Schuylkill County Historical Society  
305 North Centre Street, Pottsville**

The Schuylkill County Historical Society was very fortunate to have been gifted a copy of all the letters that Major Clemens had written to his family while in service from 1861-1870. These letters contain the passion and insight of a soldier's life during the entire length of the Civil War.

Major Clemens joined the 25<sup>th</sup> Pennsylvania Infantry Regiment as a private in Company H. After the muster out of the 25<sup>th</sup> on 7/23/61, Clemens enlisted in the 129<sup>th</sup>, a nine-month regiment under the

command of Colonel Jacob Frick on July 21, 1862. He enlisted as the First Lieutenant of Company A formed in Minersville under Captain George J. Lawrence. The 129<sup>th</sup> in its short career fought in two hard battles, Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville.

An evening filled with intrigue and action packed stories is bound to inform even the savviest Civil War buff.



**The Schuylkill County Historical Society welcomes the following new members:**

# WELCOME

Polly J. Smith  
Diane Mazur  
Ann Wood  
Carolyn Mukai  
Aaron G. Noll  
Maria Ragus  
Justin Bush  
Betty O'Neil  
Theresa Dreyer  
Cynthia Kofskie  
Richard Stanislavs  
Dave Edwards  
Jack Nagel

Kelly Muldowney  
John O'Reilly  
James Loew  
Carl Madison  
Jonathan Reed  
Leonard Zukus  
James Delacruz  
Kerry Barket  
Barbara Bellack  
Sarah McDonald  
Michael J. Silvestrini  
George E. Williams

Frank and Donna Rice  
Thomas McAndrew  
Ron and Marge Sadusky  
John and Jeanette Sobotka  
Michael and Linda Mostardi  
Michael and Joyce Wallacavage

*Thank You!*

# Building Sustainability Projects Underway



Above, the pad being prepared for the concrete base and below the new unit on the pad.



Thanks to the support of many members and several very generous community leaders, our Building Sustainability Projects are underway. Soon our Environmental Control system will be operational and we are hoping to have work started on the roof repairs in the very near future.



**WE NEED  
YOUR  
HELP!!!**

As you can imagine, with any project of this magnitude, there are unforeseen expenses that were not part of the original estimates. With that in mind, we **KINDLY ASK FOR YOUR CONTINUED FINANCIAL SUPPORT** to bring these much needed projects to a close without the need to take the Society's very modest financial resources to all-time lows.

**PLEASE** visit our website or mail to us directly a contribution **TODAY**. You can make a contribution via our webpage today by using the **DONATE** button on the home page. All contributions, no matter how big or small are greatly appreciated and will go a long way to help keep the Schuylkill County Historical Society an asset for generations to come!

Come Visit Us At



Sch.hist@comcast.net  
www.schuylkillhistory.org

Help Us Save Money



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The Historical Society  
Of Schuylkill County  
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Pottsville, PA 17901

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Or current resident

# GIFT SHOP specials for May & June



**\$10.00**

each plus shipping and handling



“ARE YOUR ROOTS  
IN SCHUYLKILL COUNTY”



Coal Miner's Grand Daughter