



Circa 1794

The Newsletter of Historic Rock Ford

“Emma, The Matchmaker” Returns in November

Historic Rock Ford, in collaboration with Theater of the Seventh Sister, is pleased to once again present “Emma, The Matchmaker: A Tale Drawn from Jane Austen.” This one-act play, adapted from the classic novel by Historic Rock Ford Director Sam Slaymaker, will be presented in the candlelit rooms of the General Edward Hand Mansion on November 4, 5, 11, 12, 18 and 19. Tickets are \$20 and are available at rockford.yapsody.com. Each performance will run approximately 50 minutes with scenes taking place in each of the four parlors on the main floor and in the central hallway of the circa 1794 mansion. The play was originally performed at Rock Ford to sold-out audiences in 2019.



The 2019 cast of “Emma: The Matchmaker”

“Having worked with the talented performers from Theater of the Seventh Sister on several different productions over the years, we came to realize that history, literature and live theater can blend together to create a unique experience which has the ability to transport visitors to another time and place. We also found that there is no better place for performers to work their magic than within the historic rooms of Rock Ford,” states Slaymaker. “Since we were unable to accommodate everyone who wanted to see the play in 2019, we are pleased to be able to offer it once again.”

There is a rationale for presenting a play based on the work of Jane Austen at Rock Ford. Although it is, of course, set in England, “Emma” takes place circa 1800 – Edward Hand’s era. Furthermore, Hand came from an Anglo-Irish background and lived in a Georgian country mansion. The life and customs of the English country gentry at the turn of the nineteenth century would have felt familiar to him and to his family.

Because “Emma” is a novel of over 400 pages, Slaymaker realized from the outset that it would only be possible to present a small part of it at Rock Ford. “Fortunately, Austen divided ‘Emma’ into three ‘Volumes’ – a format that allowed us to adapt a section of the novel in a way that still allowed us to tell a complete story,” explains Slaymaker. “I decided to focus on the first volume, which tells the story of how Emma chooses to act as a ‘matchmaker’ between her friend Harriet Smith and Mr. Elton, the village vicar. Things do not turn out at all as Emma intends, she learns some lessons and the stage is set for the rest of the novel. By focusing on Volume One, we are able to provide our guests with a healthy sampling of some of Jane Austen’s great dialogue, humor and sharp wit while foreshadowing things that will happen later in the story. We were also able to incorporate some wonderful period music and dancing (with assistance from Rock Ford’s group of period dancers led by Glenda Jardel) as part of Emma’s efforts to bring Miss Smith and Mr. Elton together.”

To comply with Covid-19 precautions and to allow the play to be performed within the house, tickets are limited to 15 per performance and audience members will be required to wear face coverings. Early reservations are encouraged to avoid disappointment. Please note that this production is not handicapped accessible. Guests will be standing during the performance and following the characters from room to room on the first floor of the mansion.

Historic Rock Ford acknowledges and thanks our 2021 Season Sponsors for their generous support:

Lead Sponsors: Thomas G. Englert and The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

Supporting Sponsor: Rhoads Energy

Historic Rock Ford, an Educational Improvement Organization, sincerely thanks Fulton Forward and UGI for their generous support of our school programming.



2020-21 Membership Appeal

Historic Rock Ford would like to thank the following individuals and organizations who became new members or who renewed their memberships **from November 1, 2020 to September 1, 2021**. Our 2021-22 Annual Membership Appeal starts in November.

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Coming 2022!

The planning phase has been underway for months for our upcoming special exhibit in the Snyder Gallery, "Long Rifles of the American Revolution: How Lancaster Craftsmen Helped Win the War." This exhibit will run from June 1 to October 30, 2022. We are excited to welcome guest curator John Kolar on this very special project. John was previously the guest curator alongside Patrick Hornberger at Landis Valley Village & Farm Museum for the Lancaster Long Rifle exhibit in the spring of 2012 and co-wrote the accompanying book to the exhibit.

The rifles featured in the exhibit are being loaned by museums from across the nation and will be used to describe the pivotal role played by the long rifle in winning American independence. Visitors will be able to compare and contrast different rifles while also engaging in the story of the war by highlighting their use in several key battles including the siege of Boston, the battle of New York, Trenton, Saratoga, Kings Mountain and the Miller Block House as well as on the Frontier.

Historic Rock Ford is honored to have the opportunity to showcase what promises to be an outstanding exhibit which we currently anticipate will showcase approximately 30 rifles.

Long Rifles of the American Revolution: How Lancaster Craftsmen Helped Win the War



June 1 to October 30, 2022



HRF Dancers (clockwise from left) Madeline Brubaker, Ron Black, Nancy Koch, Barbara Brown, Lori Black and Glenda Jardel dance *The Indian Queen*. (Not pictured: Dancers providing tech support, Pam Stoner and Mark Jardel.)

HRF Volunteers Perform at White Chimneys 300th Anniversary Gala

By Glenda Jardel

The Historic Rock Ford Dancers and Rock Ford's Warm Hearth Cooking Club joined other local living history organizations to help celebrate the White Chimneys Estate's 300th Anniversary at a community gala on Saturday, July 3. These two Rock Ford volunteer groups were invited to participate in this event due to the special connections both Rock Ford and White Chimneys have to our Executive Director, Sam Slaymaker, and to the Slaymaker family.

Originally begun between 1710 and 1720 as the Francis Jones Tavern, White Chimneys was the residence of the Slaymaker family between 1779 and the early 2000s. The mansion and its 110-acre farm and surrounding tenant houses were once known as the Slaymakertown. As the home of Revolutionary War veteran and U.S. Congressman Amos Slaymaker and due to its location directly on the Lancaster to Philadelphia Turnpike, White Chimneys was deemed a suitable stop on the visit of the Marquis de Lafayette to the United States in 1825.

The Historic Rock Ford Dancers presented a variety of 18th and early 19th-century country dances danced to tunes that may be familiar to many: the playful *Indian Queen*, the familiar hornpipe tune *Jacky Tar*, a rousing Irish jig *Jack's Health*, and the gentle drive of *Easter Thursday*. Country dances were the most popular of the social dances done by all ages and all classes of society in America during Historic Rock Ford's period of interpretation.

The Warm Hearth Club brought the White Chimney's 18th-century kitchen to life by preparing period "receipts" including fried chicken, Mr. Jefferson's macaroni and cheese, "sallett" with beets, greens, and dried currants, and sour cherry pie. The cooks demonstrated open hearth cooking techniques while answering questions from the visitors touring the White Chimneys mansion.

If you are a Rock Ford volunteer and are interested in joining the Historic Rock Ford Dancers or the Warm Hearth Cooking Club, please contact Sarah Alberico, Rock Ford's Volunteer Coordinator, at curator@HistoricRockFord.org for more information.



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The Rock Ford Foundation is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit tax-exempt corporation incorporated within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on May 22, 1958.

The Foundation is supported by admissions, gifts, grants, earned income from barn rentals, museum memberships, fundraising events, and bequests.

Historic Rock Ford, an Educational Improvement Organization, Receives Approval for Two Programs

By Debbie Smith

“The Trial of Major John André” and “Reconstruct and Deconstruct” have recently received approval from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development so that they can be added to the list of programs that we offer to school students.

In “The Trial of Major John André” students learn the historical context of the 1780 trial of Major John André, the British Officer who was caught while trying to pass along information to aid the British army in their quest to capture the fort at West Point. Students dramatize the letters and testimony presented in the Proceedings of the Board of General Officers, of which Edward Hand was a member. After students determine whether they think André was guilty or innocent of being a spy for the British army, they compare their verdict with the one reached by the Board of General Officers.

In “Reconstruct and Deconstruct” students are presented with parts of a deconstructed replica of furniture that would have been available during the time the Hands lived in the house. After they work together to reconstruct it, students discuss how the furniture was made, how it functioned, and with guidance they talk about the ecological, political and economic systems that allowed its production and distribution. This procedure is particularly important as it leads students to understand how furniture constructed from mahogany, in particular, helped to perpetuate the trans-Atlantic slave trade. Following their discussion, students then deconstruct the furniture for another group of students to repeat the process.

Rock Ford educators and researchers strive to add programs that meet its mission. This involves stories that are complex and indicative of the conflict that was present around the time period of the Revolutionary War. We welcome volunteers to be a part of these programs and support our local students.



Reconstructing a rotating tea table required teamwork.