



Circa 1794

The Newsletter of Historic Rock Ford

SUMMER 2021

What's old is new again!

General Edward Hand's original bedhangings, that were used when the family lived at Rock Ford, are safely in storage at Winterthur Museum in Delaware, having been purchased in 1958 by Henry Francis DuPont. The cotton fabric was printed in England in about 1780. The design consists of large-scale gnarled arborescent branches blooming with large peony-type flowers and leaves, upon which a cock and another type of bird (possibly a hen) are perched.

Several years ago, Susan Andersen, a Rock Ford volunteer, began a discussion with Linda Eaton, former Senior Curator of Textiles at Winterthur, about the possibility of re-creating Edward Hand's bedhangings for use in the master bedchamber at Rock Ford. This project would have never been accomplished without Susan's efforts.

In consultation with Adaptive Textiles in West Chester, PA, Susan was able to have an exact digital reproduction of the original design created and printed on fabric. The design is as beautiful and vibrant as it would have originally been. She then used a rare earth magnet to determine where the matching window curtains also would have been hung in the master bedchamber. With the help of Rock Ford volunteers, the panels were sewn and then installed on the bed canopy and bedroom windows. Finally, Susan made matching slipcovers for the five chairs in the room as well. We are grateful to all the Rock Ford volunteers who helped Susan with this project. The formulation and completion of this project took years to accomplish, and we are ecstatic to be able to showcase its fruition to all our visitors.

This short article hardly does justice to the prodigious conclusion of the bedchamber textile project. You must come over and see for yourself; it is as if you walked through the doorway into a past time.

Sources:

museumcollection.winterthur.org – Object ID: 1958.0073.001 A-K

[Book] Eaton, Linda. *Printed Textiles: British and American Cottons and Linens 1700-1850*

Published 2014: p. 216, C117



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 June 1, 2021**. This list will be updated in future newsletters.

General Edward Hand Society (\$10000)

Anne D. Gardner

Katherine Hand Society (\$5000)

Sarah Slaymaker

Dorothy Mowery Smith

Jasper Yeates Society (\$1000)

Thomas G. Englert

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David and Linda Schwanger

Samuel and Laura Slaymaker

Donald and Libby Steckler

Edward Shippen Society (\$500)

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James and Lisa High

S. Dale and Sadie High

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George Ross Society (\$250)

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Karen Roberts

Gail Rogers

Laura Schramm

Charles Schroeder

Deborah Smith

Margaret Tassia

Nancy Wiker

Rebecca Williams

Jeff Wolgemuth

PHMC grant awarded

Historic Rock Ford is pleased to announce that it was awarded a General Operating Support Grant in the amount of \$4,000 from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. These funds are 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.



Rock Ford loses two friends

Following a difficult 2020, Rock Ford recently said farewell to two more longtime friends and volunteers.

On April 8, 2021, former trustee Dave Schwanger passed away. Dave, who was very active in many Lancaster charitable organizations, served on the Rock Ford board for many years and chaired the Buildings and Grounds Committee. As the President and CEO of Schwanger Brothers, Inc., Dave was able to utilize his knowledge of Rock Ford's grounds and facilities with the ability and willingness to lend a truck, his expertise or simply a helping hand whenever it was needed. Dave could always be counted upon to recruit a big table to attend Rock Ford fundraisers such as Lobster Legacy or the Headless Horseman's Ball. He was an ambassador for Rock Ford in the community as well as an unending source of encouragement and support for its staff and volunteers. He will be greatly missed.

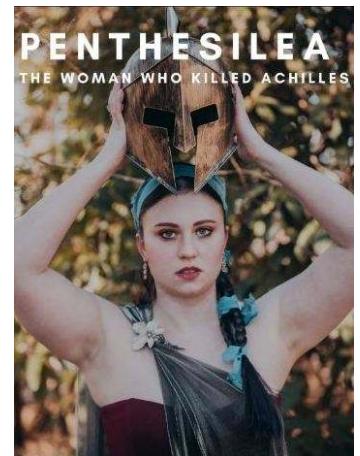


On April 26, 2021, Don Walters, passed away at Willow Valley Retirement Community. Don, a retired professor from Temple University, was a transplant to the Lancaster Community but, as a history lover, he quickly threw himself into Lancaster historical organizations with full-hearted vigor. He was a leading volunteer at Wheatland (for whom he often portrayed President Buchanan), Boehm's Chapel, the Historic Lancaster Walking Tour and Historic Rock Ford. Don soon became one of Rock Ford's foremost guides. He was extremely well-read and conversant on the Revolutionary War and his knowledge infused his excellent tours of the mansion. He provided much useful research into the life and times of Edward Hand which is regularly referred to and, in 2011, served as one of the key researchers on an internal committee designed to develop and initiate the inclusion of an authentic discussion of slavery in Lancaster County during the Edward Hand era.

Don was a gentleman in the truest sense of the word. His eloquence and great knowledge was conveyed in a warm and soft spoken manner which charmed visitors and made him a pleasure to spend time with. He was beloved by both staff and his fellow volunteers and, in 2017, was named Rock Ford's volunteer of the year. His time here will provide an example and an inspiration to all of us who give guided tours of the General Edward Hand Mansion.

Theater of the Seventh Sister and Orpheus Theater Company to perform new play "Penthesilea: The Woman Who Killed Achilles" at Historic Rock Ford in September

In a collaborative effort between Theater of the Seventh Sister, the Orpheus Theater Company and Historic Rock Ford, a new play by award-winning playwright Tyler Joseph Rossi is set to be performed on the beautiful grounds of Historic Rock Ford September 9 through 12, 2021. "Penthesilea: The Woman Who Killed Achilles" is set during the Trojan War and the legendary events surrounding Penthesilea, the Queen of the Amazons, who led an army of Amazons to Troy to fight against the attacking Greeks and their great warrior, Achilles. According to at least one version of the story, Penthesilea killed Achilles, who was brought back to life by Zeus, and then proceeded to kill Penthesilea (*Britannica Online*). How is all of this resolved in Rossi's new play? You will have to come to Rock Ford to see for yourself. Ticketing information will be available through the Theater of the Seventh Sister website (seventhsister.com). Audiences are asked to bring lawn chairs, blankets, beverages and snacks and to dress for the weather. In the event of inclement weather, a virtual performance will be made available to all ticketholders.



Continued on the back page



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Address Service Requested

881 Rockford Road
Lancaster, Pennsylvania 17602

717.392.7223
www.HistoricRockFord.org

HISTORIC ROCK FORD STAFF

Office: 717-392-7223

Rentals: 717-799-8751

Samuel C. Slaymaker
Executive Director
director@HistoricRockFord.org

Sarah Alberico
Curator
curator@HistoricRockFord.org

Nancy E. Bradley
Office Manager
office@HistoricRockFord.org

Amanda Elslager
Rental Coordinator
rentals@HistoricRockFord.org

George Rhoades
Buildings and Grounds Maintenance

Alison Shannon
Gallery Manager
gallery@HistoricRockFord.org

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.

“Penthesilea” (continued from page 3)

Although there may seem to be no connection between Greek mythology and Historic Rock Ford, it is important to bear in mind that an interest in and deep influence of Greek and Roman mythology was prevalent in the early American Republic. The founders, in framing our Constitution, viewed themselves as the successors to the Roman Republic. Ancient Greek and Roman themes were invoked in architecture, in the stoic demeanor of leaders like Washington, and in the simplified, “neo-classical influence” that began to manifest itself in women’s clothing and as well as in the decorative arts. Such neo-classical themes may be found at Historic Rock Ford. A mantelpiece from the Caleb Cope house exhibited in the Snyder Gallery is adorned with nymphs, muses, goddesses and Pan playing his pipes. In the Blue Parlor of the General Edward Hand Mansion may be found Hand’s membership certificate in the Society of the Cincinnati (inspired by the legend of the Roman military hero, Cincinnatus) as well as a contemporary Prattware figurine of Andromache, the faithful wife of Hector, mourning by the ashes of her husband (also killed by Achilles in the Trojan War) and a figurine of Diana. A goddess adorns the fireplace insert in the master bedchamber.

Historic Rock Ford is delighted to continue its longstanding collaboration with Theater of the Seventh Sister in an outdoor setting that uniquely utilizes its lovely and extensive grounds.

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



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

