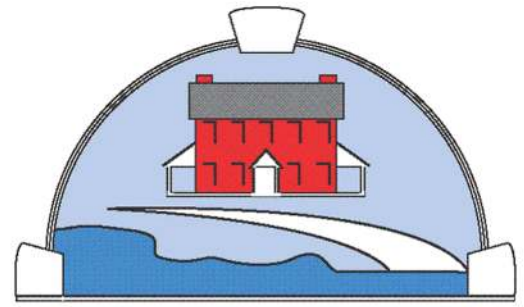


Circa 1794



The Newsletter of Rock Ford Plantation

SUMMER 2018

General Hand Puppet Theatre delights audiences



Following its warmly received inaugural performance at this year's May Fair, the General Hand Puppet Theatre offered two performances on Sunday, June 24. Carefully staged in the festively decorated Rock Ford Barn, the expanded show resulted from the continuing collaboration between Rock Ford and The Lancaster Marionette Theatre. Under the direction of master puppeteer Robert Brock, the show used word and song from puppet versions of General Hand, Kitty Hand, George and Martha Washington, several Hand farm animals and "Mad King George" to charmingly recount the story of America's struggle for independence. The expertly crafted puppets were under the control of four Rock Ford volunteers (with musical accompaniment by Ron Peters) and followed a warm and witty script provided by Brock. Although this was a volunteer effort, the performance exhibited a high level of professionalism that was a testament to the talents of Robert Brock and to the many hours of rehearsal given by Rock Ford volunteers under his exacting tutelage. "Working with Rob was a blast," said one of the volunteers, "but he is a perfectionist and takes his craft very seriously. At times, it could get a bit like puppet boot camp."

The performance also included a brief demonstration by Brock of his beautifully made marionettes from his show about the Lancaster-born John Durang, Early America's first professional actor and dancer. It concluded with a special treat: a doll house replica of the Rock Ford mansion, painstakingly constructed 43 years ago and not seen by the public for many years, was rolled out before the audience. The side of the house was removed, and docent Debbie Smith offered the audience a "mini tour" of its fully furnished "mini rooms."

"We are very excited about this collaboration," said Executive Director Sam Slaymaker. "Lancaster has so many unique and special places like Rock Ford and the Marionette Theatre that many of us who live here have grown to take them for granted. Collaborative efforts like this allow us to experience these places in new and innovative ways which build upon their individual strengths while refocusing the collective attention of our community to their ongoing missions. They also prove something that we have known at Rock Ford for quite a while: history and the arts are a good mix and, when they come together in the right way, you should expect magic."

A future show is in the planning stages. Stay tuned!

Calendar of Upcoming Special Events

July:

1: Meet the Gardener, 10 am - 3 pm (weather permitting)

3, 10, 17, 24 and 31: Stories on the Porch, 10 am

26: Lecture: "My Dear General: The Extraordinary Relationship between George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette," 5:30 pm in the barn

August:

5: Meet the Gardener, 10 am - 3 pm (weather permitting)

7: Stories on the Porch, 10 am

11: Lobster Picnic Annual Fundraising Event

Mark your calendar for Rock Ford's Annual Fundraiser!

The Lobster Picnic on Saturday, August 11

Details will be posted on the Rock Ford website and Facebook page in the near future.

Look for your invitation in the mail soon!

We would like to thank Clermont Wealth Strategies, Fulton Financial Advisors and Brubaker Connaughton Goss & Lucarelli, LLC for their support of this event.



Rock Ford acknowledges and thanks our 2018 Season Sponsors for their generous support:

Lead Sponsors: Thomas G. Englert, Willis and Elsie Shenk Foundation and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

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2017-18 Membership Appeal

The 2017-18 Membership Appeal began on November 1, 2017. We would like to thank the following individuals and organizations who became new members or who renewed their memberships **from November 1, 2017 to June 30, 2018**. This list will be updated in future newsletters.

Individual: \$50

Marguerite S.V. Adams
Sarah Alberico
Donna Arment
Jeannette Arment
Stewart Axtell
Thomas Bowen, Jr.
Susan Broomell
Corey Craver
Barbara Douglas
Dr. S. Kendrick Eshleman, III
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George May
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Harriet Robbins
Gail Rogers
Laura Schramm
Kenneth Shaffer
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Dr. Samuel Stayer
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Ann Taylor
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Family: \$75

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Peter & Millicent Christie
Rosemary Coverly & Kent Strickler
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Richard & Charlotte Drennen
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Philip & Luann Scribani
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Tom & Delight Snyder

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Audrey Trussell
Micke Trussell
Willem & Thea Van Huystee
Ronald & Beverly Walton
Joel & Kristin Young

Business/Photographer: \$85

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Beth Cardwell Photography
Fannie Lynn Esh
Eye Journey Photographic Art
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Regina Gutierrez Photography
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Jasper Yeates Society: \$1000

Thomas Englert
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Donald & Elizabeth Steckler
John & Pamela Stoner

Katharine Hand Society: \$5000

Dorothy M. Smith



Rock Ford's annual May Fair celebration continues to grow



Rock Ford held its annual May Fair on Sunday, May 20. While the prior week's rain-soaked weather forced the cancellation of several outdoor activities, the day of the event was mostly sunny and warm. Many people took open-house tours of the mansion that were offered at a special rate. The event also featured outdoor vendors such as Liberty Bakehaus (bottom left), games of charades, 18th century dancing, living history re-enactors such as Ken Spotts (top left), Warm Hearth Club cooking demonstrations and the premiere of the General Hand Puppet Theatre (top right). The all-volunteer puppet theatre held its initial performance outside, but a rain shower forced the production to move inside the mansion. The show had hand puppets depicting Edward and Kitty Hand, George and Martha Washington, King George III as well as several farm animals.



Rock Ford offers new experiences for students

By Debbie Smith

We are looking anew at our resources here at Rock Ford to develop more opportunities for children who visit on field trips. Of course, touring the mansion will always be our first and foremost asset. However, new this year is a visit to our four-square garden to learn about herbs, their characteristics and their medicinal powers—lots of different scents and textures of the herbs hold the children's fascination. The third activity we offer is a study of the architecture of the house. Following a short introduction, children sketch their favorite detail, pattern or feature. Our goal is to continue to create a variety of programs for young visitors. We are fortunate to have such a beautiful site that enriches educational experiences and gives us a continual source of ideas.



Photos: Third grade students explore the medicinal uses of herbs in the 18th century by touring the Kitchen Garden (top); docent Glenda Jardel explains open hearth cooking to students in the kitchen (bottom); and students work on architectural sketches (right).

Thank you to Thomas G. Englert for his support of our school tour programming.



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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.

July Lecture to focus on the Marquis de Lafayette and George Washington

George Washington was many things to many people; a celebrated war hero... the first president of our nation... a surrogate father... In his young reader's book, "My Dear General – The Extraordinary Relationship between George Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette," author Jeffrey E. Finegan brings this last aspect to life through richly detailed descriptions and research using primary sources.



On Thursday, July 26, Finegan will present a lecture delving into the father-son relationship forged between Washington and the young French aristocrat who traveled from France to fight at his side during the American Revolution. The lecture will begin promptly at 5:30 pm in the Rock Ford Barn. Reservations are not required. Admission is free for members of the Rock Ford Foundation and \$5 for non-members.

Original shutters reinstalled after repair and restoration work



Earlier this year, the original shutters on the weather-exposed front of the Rock Ford mansion were removed and taken to the workshop of Restore N' More, Inc. in Manheim, Pennsylvania. The shutters were stripped of layers of accumulated paint and spots of dry-rotted wood were replaced with period-appropriate Spanish Cedar Wood. These repairs were performed while retaining as much of the original fabric as possible without compromising structural integrity. These repairs were made possible by a \$10,188 grant from Lancaster County Community Foundation from the John J. Snyder, Jr. Fund. The shutters were reinstalled in early April at the start of our tour season. The grant also allowed for some minor repairs to wood exterior elements on the mansion and replacement of some broken roof slates.