



# Circa 1794

*The Newsletter of Historic Rock Ford*

## Yuletide Returns to Historic Rock Ford—And to the Year 1795

The celebration of Yuletide is returning to Historic Rock Ford for 2021 on December 26 and 27. After a 2020 hiatus due to Covid issues and with an eye to lingering Covid concerns, Yuletide 2021, “Voices of Yuletide Past,” will be offered with several new and creative twists. Rather than following the “Holiday Open House” model of past Yuletides at Historic Rock Ford dominated by large numbers of visitors, this year’s guests may anticipate a more intimate experience as they arrive at the General Edward Hand Mansion on the evening of January 6, 1795—“Twelfth Night.” As the residents of the house prepare for a Yuletide Ball, the presence of Hand family members, their friends and servants will be felt, but they will not be seen. As groups of guests are escorted from room to candle-lit and holly-bedecked room, they will see the sights and hear the sometimes-frenetic sounds of a household about to welcome many guests to the first Yuletide Ball to be held in the new mansion. They will also be greeted by the voices of Katherine Hand, Edward Hand, Jasper Yeates, Sarah Yeates, Dorothy Hand, young Jasper and Edward Hand as well as by that of a female servant desperately trying to get the younger children ready for bed amid all of the excitement.



Historic Rock Ford’s 2021 celebration of Yuletide represents a collaborative effort with both the Theater of the Seventh Sister—whose actors will offer dramatic recorded readings of character scripts written by Rock Ford Board Member Pamela Stoner and Executive Director Sam Slaymaker—and with Dr. Barry Atticks, Associate Professor of Music Business Technology at Millersville University. Dr. Atticks will be providing the recording studio for use by the actors while his students will be creating and editing the voices and sound effects related to the imminent Twelfth Night Ball as well as strategically positioning the necessary sound equipment in the mansion. The Millersville students will receive academic credit for their work and expertise dedicated to this project. This year’s Yuletide will thus provide a unique blending of the eighteenth and the twenty-first centuries in the realms of history, theater and technology.

At the turn of the eighteenth century, many Lancaster families of English extraction like the Hands and the Yeates celebrated the Old English traditions of Yuletide which consisted of the “Twelve Days of Christmas.” The period of Yuletide started on December 25 which was primarily a day of religious observance of the birth of Christ. However, shortly thereafter, celebrations in the form of dinners, card parties and balls including New Year’s Eve, New Year’s Day and culminating in the celebration of Twelfth Night, commemorating the Magi’s adoration of the baby Jesus, on the evening of January 6. In contrast to today, Christmas Day was only the beginning of Yuletide, not its primary focus. Gifts, when given at all, tended to be little more than trinkets and tokens. Yuletide was about family, friends and fun, not about the giving and receiving of gifts.

In addition to the mansion tour, guests will be able to join in Christmas Carols as they gather around a fire pit outside of the mansion and conclude with a visit to the Snyder Gallery where they will be able to enjoy the holiday fiddle music of Tom Knapp of the Celtic band “Fire in the Glen” in the lobby. They will then enter the Snyder Gallery to explore for clues and information relating to Yuletides past. Children will be invited to participate in an activity based upon the familiar eighteenth-century rhyme “Hickory, Dickory, Dock” and other themed activities.

Because of Covid precautions, guests, regardless of vaccination status, will be required to wear face coverings while inside the mansion and the Gallery, and groups will be limited to 10 people each both as a Covid precaution and to provide them with a more intimate experience during their visit. Tickets may be purchased online at [rockford.yapsody.com](http://rockford.yapsody.com) at the cost of \$20 per adult, \$15 for youth ages 6-17 and free for children 5 and younger. Timed entry tours of the mansion will be held on the half hour with the first at 4:00 pm and the last at 7:30 pm. Reservations are required. Proceeds will benefit educational programs at Historic Rock Ford.



**Thank you to all of the donors to the Campaign for the John J. Snyder, Jr. Gallery of Early Lancaster County Decorative Arts at Historic Rock Ford.**

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**“Emma, The Matchmaker” Makes a Triumphant Return**

Historic Rock Ford’s production of “Emma, The Matchmaker” once again received an enthusiastic response from our guests. The show times for the production were sold out prior to the start of the second week of performances. This production was presented by Rock Ford in collaboration with Theater of the Seventh Sister and featured 12 total performances. Due to Covid-19 precautions, audience capacity was reduced to 15 guests per performance with face coverings being required.

The production was first performed at Rock Ford in November 2019 to sold-out audiences. The script was adapted by Rock Ford Director Samuel Slaymaker from the first volume of “Emma” written by Jane Austen.

Pictured in the photo are Cynthia Charles as The Author/Narrator (left) and Rachel Faust as Emma Woodhouse (right). The production also featured Jessa Casner as Harriet Smith, Sam Shea as Mr. Knightly, Addison Rymar as Mr. Elton, and Thomas G. Englert as Mr. Woodhouse. The candlelit rooms of the General Edward Hand Mansion played the role of Emma’s home of Hartfield.

### Dr. Clarissa Dillon Teaches Warm Hearth Committee Members

By Karen Lyter, Warm Hearth Committee Coordinator

Dr. Clarissa Dillon, a noted authority, historian and teacher on sixteenth through eighteenth English and Colonial American cooking and household industries met with seven members of Rock Ford's Warm Hearth Committee recently at the Rock Ford hearth to teach the group about different types of puddings: chilled, baked and boiled.

One of the WHC yearly goals is to bring in noted speakers to introduce the Rock Ford hearth cooks to unfamiliar ingredients and cooking methods. The group focuses on using seasonal ingredients and receipts (recipes) most likely served in a wealthy household such as the Edward Hand family spanning the time they resided at Rock Ford, from 1794-1810. A formal main meal was served about 2 pm and could last several hours if there were guests at the table. Meals times focused on discussions about the daily happenings and events around Lancaster and beyond.

Warm Hearth Cooks meet to cook at the hearth on the third Sunday of the months April-October when the house is open for tours. They also participate in special events at Historic Rock Ford during the year.

Dr. Dillon entertained us throughout the 5-hour class with stories about her life and some of the many housewifery skills she has learned, such as gardening, cooking and spinning. Warm Hearth members, dressed in period appropriate clothing, participated in the preparation and cooking of French Flummery, Chestnut Pudding, and Duke of Cumberland's Pudding. We enjoyed tasting all the puddings when they were complete. The boiled Duke of Cumberland with wine sauce was similar to a plum pudding and was the favorite of the day. Chilled French Flummery presented like lightly flavored cream cheese. The Chestnut pudding in a crust was on the egg custard spectrum.

None of us had ever used isinglass (dried fish air bladder used like gelatin) nor made a pudding with a crust. We enjoyed being together and learning about new techniques, ingredients and kitchen tools.

### Examining Rock Ford's Aging Orchard

By Debbie Smith, President, Rock Ford Foundation Board of Trustees

The Building and Grounds Committee chaired by Rock Ford Foundation Board member Beth Cardwell has examined and photographed the aging trees at Rock Ford and has deemed many of them to be ready for removal and replacement. Cardwell's report to the Board included a drone shot and photos of those trees that are affected. She considered financial and aesthetic criteria as well as the advice from Cindy Trussell, also on the Board, about the best practices in maintaining the trees and suggested future actions as recommended by the Penn State Extension Master Gardener program. It is evident that the rotting and damaged trees will not survive much longer. Cardwell and Trussell encouraged the Board to take control and be proactive, before insects, bacteria, viruses and weather put the health of other trees at risk and cause safety issues for our visitors. The Board accepted the recommendation, and the work to remove the trees will begin in the new year.

The beautiful grounds at Rock Ford attract many visitors and are one of our greatest assets. We welcome you to become involved in the planning and funding of the Rock Ford Tree Project and invite you to join us in this opportunity. You may contact the Rock Ford office at 717-392-7223 to let them know you are interested in helping.



Clarissa Dillon seasoning the Chestnut pudding with rose water before pouring into the puff pastry crust to be baked.





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

**2022 Decorative Arts Trust Failey Grant Awarded to Historic Rock Ford**

Historic Rock Ford is delighted to announce that it is a recipient of a grant from the Decorative Arts Trust's Failey Grant program. This program supports noteworthy research, exhibition, publication and conservation projects through the Dean F. Failey Fund, named in honor of the Trust's late governor. Preference is given to projects that employ or are led by emerging professionals in the museum field. The two other recipients selected by the review committee were author Caitlin Meehye Beach and the New-York Historical Society.

Historic Rock Ford will use the grant funding for further research and interpretation of the over 200 objects in the John J. Snyder, Jr. Gallery of Early Lancaster County Decorative Arts. Our goal is to uncover more about the shops, apprentices, and laborers—indentured, enslaved, and free—who contributed to the Gallery's collection of furniture, silver, clocks, and paintings from the mid-1700s to the early 1800s. Emerging professional Bethany J. McGlynn, who is a PhD student and Jefferson Scholars Foundation Fellow with the Corcoran History Department at the University of Virginia, will be assisting with this project.



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