



SCHUYLKILL HERITAGE

A Newsletter of the Historical Society of Schuylkill County



Volume 6, Issue 5

"to discover, procure, and preserve..."

September - October 2011

Hurricanes are no stranger to Schuylkill County

Schuylkill County has a long history of hurricane encounters. Just in our recent past we can remember the names of those that deluged heavy rainfalls and high winds upon us. To name a few lets start with Hazel in 1954 and Helene in 1958. Then followed by Agnes of 1972 that created tremendous damage throughout the Anthracite region primarily up in Wilkes Barre and Scranton but felt throughout eastern Pennsylvania.

By the early 1800's two storage dams were built up in the Tumbling Run valley by the Silver Creek Water Co. to supply water power to local sawmills and other water needs for the area.

By 1825 the Schuylkill Canal was completed providing economical and efficient transportation for transporting coal and other products to markets in Philadelphia and elsewhere. The

dams became a major source of water supply for the canal.

On Sunday, September 1, 1850 heavy rains came down in torrents and continued all day and through the night. Many of the streams and dams in the county were filled and reaching the point of overflowing. (Whether this was a hurricane or not we do not know. Our research found that they did not start recording hurricanes until 1851, one year later.)

By Monday morning it became evident that the two dams were about to overflow and perhaps burst. By nine o'clock the water spilled over the breast of the lower dam breaching it in seconds sending a wall of water 50 feet high according to witnesses gathering in Mount Carbon.

Eight houses in Mount Carbon were washed away along with sections of the Schuylkill Canal and tracks of the Schuylkill Valley Railroad.

Homes below the Mt. Carbon Hotel were flooded with water reaching up to the second floor. Bridges were washed away.

The canal embankments were damaged down to the Seven Stars Hotel. The Reading Company bridge in Schuylkill Haven was destroyed along with the Schuylkill Navigation Co.'s railroad bridge to Dundas Landing.



Hurricane Irene 2011

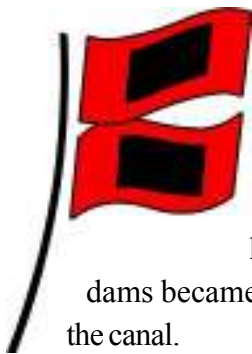
Other damage throughout the region was severe. The entire lower part of Port Carbon was flooded. Wintersteen's foundry and machine shop were damaged to the extent of \$5,000. Sillyman's machine shop and factory were carried away with all of their machinery. The lock house at Young's Landing was carried away when a boat was passing through. Many canal boats were washed away and were damaged or destroyed as were canal embankments.

The Tumbling Run dam remained broken until 1852 when the canal company undertook repairs of the dam.

Excavating the bottom of the breach required removing the accumulation of the sand until a solid foundation was established in the bedrock. The dam required 35,000 yards of dirt and stone to repair the breach. The dam was made two feet higher than its previous elevation. Other improvements were made to improve the security and safety of the dam and the waterways below it.

It should be noted that during Hurricane Agnes in 1972, the Borough of Schuylkill Haven, who were then the owners of the reservoirs at Tumbling Run, ordered all businesses and homes be evacuated below present day Mt. Carbon for fear of the dams breaching again.

Since then the dams have been reinforced once again.



Death of Dollie Slocum Dr. D.W. Bland's War Horse *August 3, 1883*

By Stu Richards

The old gray mare, the property of Dr. Bland, was found dead in her stall on the farm of James Kilpatrick, near Schuylkill Haven, Thursday morning.

She was about thirty years old. The Doctor purchased her in October 1861, previous to entering the Army of the Potomac.

This mare had an eventful career. She never lost a day of duty during the three years of active service in the field. She was present at all the general battles of the Army of the Potomac; also in numerous skirmishes and reconnaissance's of the old Sixth Corps.

When the army was sent to the Peninsula in '62 she, in company with

a number of other horses, stood on board of a schooner for twenty-five days and was then hoisted from the deck and thrown into the water to swim ashore. She was with the Doctor at the second battle of Fredericksburg, at Salem Church. At Gettysburg she was a conspicuous target for a rebel sharpshooter positioned near round top who fired into the 96th's position along the wheat field road. The Doctor used her through the Wilderness and Spotsylvania campaigns, down to Petersburg, then back to Washington, down the Shenandoah Valley to Winchester, Fishers Hill and back to Harpers Ferry.



For the past six months she has been leading a retired life on the above mentioned farm. She was very much admired by different officers in the army among whom may be mentioned, Generals Slocum, Franklin, Sedgwick, Wright, Bartlett and others.

The doctor had her properly buried on the farm where she lived. Peace to the ashes of "Dollie Slocum".

Doctor Bland was the surgeon for the 96th Volunteer Infantry and served for 4 years during the Civil War. I wish I knew where she was actually buried and if we only had a photo of her. She certainly was a veteran of the Civil War.

Schuylkill County Major League Baseball History October 28th, 29th & 30th

I would think that if you asked most people in the county about how many county baseball players played in the major leagues, most would never guess 40.

We are putting together what looks like a very interesting program about Schuylkill County baseball history.

Starting on Friday night at 7:00 PM at the Historical Society of Schuylkill County we will have Bob McDonald who will speak about all the county men who went beyond the county level and into the baseball major leagues. It should be a great program.

Then on **Saturday at 7:00 PM at the Majestic Theater** we will have a reenactment of an old time radio show interview with several Schuylkill County baseball players. Following this there will be an interactive discussion on Schuylkill County players and the major league teams they played with. There is a \$5.00 admission for adults for this event. Students are free.

On **Sunday afternoon at 2:00 PM** we will have an old time vintage baseball game featuring the



"Mechanicsburg Nine" of the Vintage Baseball League vs the **"Schuylkill Pick Nine"** from the coal region. The players will be dressed in vintage baseball uniforms and will play by the 19th Century rules.

The game will be played at the field adjacent to the Teener League field in Orwigsburg behind their Memorial building. There are no bleachers so you are encouraged to bring your own lawn chair.

Boscov's Friends Helping Friends

Each year **Boscov's** offers a "shopping pass" that entitles the customer to a 25% discount on most items in their stores. This is a **"Win, Win event for both you and the Historical Society."**

Here is how it works. We, the Historical Society, sell you a "shopping pass" from Boscov's for \$5.00. We keep the \$5.00. You have the shopping pass that entitles you to a 25% discount at Boscov's on many items.

Then on Tuesday, October 4th, from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM you take the "shopping pass" and go to any of Boscov's 40 locations and do your shopping.

You will receive a 25% discount on all designer apparel. You will get a 15% discount on cosmetics and fragrances, small appliances, fine & fashion jewelry &

watches. 10% discounts apply to grills, small appliances and mattresses.

The "shopping pass" is only good for that one day, Tuesday, October 4th, from 9:00 AM to 9:00 PM.

You can't go wrong. **You save much more than the \$5.00 that you spent for the "shopping pass".** It is a great opportunity for everyone who purchases a **"shopping pass"** as well as **the Historical Society of Schuylkill County.**

You can get your "shopping pass" by mailing us a check for \$5.00 and we will mail you the coupon or stop in at the Historical Society. Our board members will also be selling the shopping passes.

Please help us to raise some of the vitally needed funds we need to sustain our operations.



Haunted Halloween Road Rally

**Sunday, October 23rd
1:00 PM to 4:00 PM**

The rally starts at the Historical Society
301 North Centre St, Pottsville

Cost \$25.00 per car

Phone: 570-622-7540

E-mail: sch.hist@comcast.net

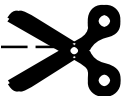
Facebook: Historical Society of Schuylkill County

What is a road rally?

A road rally is a time-limited driving tour on public roads, where teams of people compete with one another in a fun and casual outing for points to win prizes. As each team leaves the Historical Society building, they will receive a **"Rally Packet"**, which includes clues and tour questions. The clues will lead to the correct answers for the questions. The team who submits the highest number of correct answers with the best overall time wins the rally! All winning team members will receive prizes. **This road rally is in no way, shape, or form a RACE!** The Rally is family-oriented **with no alcohol permitted.**



Deadline to register is October 20th



Name of Driver _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Drivers License # _____

Insurance Carrier _____

Phone (_____) - _____ - _____

E-mail: _____

Number of team members _____

Please make checks payable to:

Historical Society of Schuylkill County

Barrister/Lundstrom Glass Door Book Cases Are For Sale

We have replaced the Barrister/Lundstrom bookcases that have been in our library with modern steel book shelves.

The Barrister/Lundstrom book cases are much sought after book cases for those who enjoy the upscale look of art deco, etc.

They are made of beautiful oak with a lacquer finish and are stackable. You can stack them two to five or six high. They also have a folding glass door which keeps your books or collectibles dust free.

The price is \$100.00 per shelf unit. What a great gift for someone for Christmas.



Barbie & Me Tea Party Sunday, September 18th, 1:00 PM to 3:00 PM

Historical Society of Schuylkill County invites you to a unique tea party with Barbie and her friends.

Enjoy our Barbie & WYSO Blossoms Exhibits while you sip tea and socialize with other guests. Bring your "One Favorite Doll" with you to share her story with all who attend. "Present your favorite doll" starts at 2:00 PM in our meeting room.

Tickets \$10.00 / person (\$5.00) will be donated to the Schuylkill County Cancer Society in Honor of Ruth

Handler, Barbie inventor and breast cancer survivor. Please call 622-7540 for tickets or stop by the Historical Society as seating will be limited. Reservations suggested.

Hosts Schuylkill County Cancer Society, Karen Durkin, Ellen Micka, Jill Salmon and Kris Miller Siple.



Early Fall Foliage County History Bus Tour Saturday, October 8th

We are having a Fall Foliage & County History Tour on Saturday, October 8th. The focus of the tour will be many of the earliest settlements of the county. We will visit many of the first churches that were established and stop along the way to relate stories of the first settlers and early towns. The stops will also focus on the locations of the graves of the Revolutionary War Soldiers who settled in the county.

We will begin at 9:00 AM and end at Martz Hall in Pottsville and our travels will take us through West Penn, East

Brunswick, West Brunswick, South Manheim, Wayne, Pine Grove, and Branch Townships.

We will stop for lunch at Heisler's Dairy, Lewistown Valley. Lunch is not included in the cost of the tour. You may also bring your own lunch as well.

The cost of the tour is \$15.00 / person. You may make reservations by calling the Historical Society at 570-622-7540 or sending a check to the Historical Society of Schuylkill County, 305 North Centre St. Pottsville, PA 17901.

Hoss's Night Out Tuesday, September 20th

Hoss's Steak and Seahouse, 206 Pottsville Street, Cressona partners with community organizations to help them raise money. They want to be our "Cash Cow".

Here's how it works. Enclosed in this newsletter is a ticket. On **Tuesday, September 20th** take this ticket and go to Hoss's Steak and Seahouse in Cressona from 11 AM to 9 PM for lunch or dinner. Present the ticket when you check out. Hoss's will contribute 25% of your total meal cost to the Historical Society of Schuylkill County.

What a great way to raise money. What a great way to treat your wife and your family to a great meal and also support our Historical Society. Contact us for additional tickets for your friends and neighbors.

Icon Raffle Winner

We are happy to announce the winner of the Icon that was donated by Kim Fritzges. The winner is... (drum roll) ... George Sinkovich of Pottsville.

Congratulations George and thank you Kim for the icon which is valued at \$350.00. Kim lives in Mount Carmel and participated in our Block of Art event this past May. We appreciate her generosity and all those who participated in the raffle which allowed us to raise some much needed money for the Society.

Upcoming Programs



Schuylkill & Susquehanna Railroad

Wednesday, September 28th 7:00 PM

Brandy M. Watts will give a presentation entitled "A Trip Through Time" on the Schuylkill & Susquehanna Railroad.

Schuylkill County Bicentennial Celebration

Sunday, October 2nd

On October 2, 2011 there will be an Open House/ Time Capsule Sinking at the Court House along with a groundbreaking ceremony of the Commons at 2 – 3 p.m.

The Courthouse will be open and there will be tours from 3- 5 PM.

The Historical Society will also be open for tours of the County Gallery, the Civil War and General Joulwan Exhibits from 3- 6 PM.

A cocktail party will take place between 4 – 6 PM at the Greystone Restaurant, 315 N. Centre Street, Pottsville. \$30 per person. Includes: 2 beers or house wines, Shrimp Tempura, Mini Cordon Blu, Sesame Chicken, Italian Meatballs, Fruit & Cheese.

Civil War Roundtable

Wednesday, September 21st at 7:00 PM

Location: Historical Society.

Topic: First Battle of Bull Run. Free admission! Public welcome.

2nd Annual Holiday Market

Saturday, November 5th

The Second Annual Holiday Marketplace will start at 10 AM to 4 PM. Get a Jump start on your holiday shopping at the HSSC! We will also have a display of Czech trains from the collection of Dusan Neuman and he will also be on hand to talk about his trains. We will also be selling those delicious hot dogs! Don't forget to mark your calendar and keep an eye out for more information in our next newsletter.

WELCOME

New Members

We welcome the following new members to our Society.

Teresa Gilbert	Sean McCarroll
Tracy Haper	Jean Minarick
Stephanie John	Elizabeth Pally
John Kalbfleisch	Andrew Prock
Catherine Kemple	Mary S. Smith
James & Barbara Lindenmuth	Angela Yotko

Graffiti of War

On Friday, November 11th, Veteran's Day, Block of Art will host the inaugural showing of the Graffiti of War Project. This collection of hundreds of photographs of graffiti created by the United States Military during their deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan is the record of their struggles and their heroism. The Historical Society of Schuylkill County will be one of the principle venues for this exhibition. Join us for a truly memorable event.

The exhibition will be open to the public at the Historical Society:

Friday Nov. 11th at 4:00 PM to 8:00 PM

Saturday Nov. 12th from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Sunday Nov. 13th 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Wednesday Nov. 16th 1:30 PM to 6 PM

Thursday Nov. 17th 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Friday Nov. 18th 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Saturday Nov. 19th 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Sunday Nov. 20th 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

The exhibit is free and open to the public.

Train Exhibit

November-December - 2011

Dusan Neumann of Pottsville will exhibit his Czech train collection during November and December.



The Historical Society
Of Schuylkill County
P.O. Box 1356
Pottsville, PA 17901

Non-profit org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Pottsville, PA 17901
Permit # 485

Historical Society of Schuylkill County



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

**305 North Centre Street,
Pottsville, Pennsylvania
(570) 622-7540**

President
David Derbes
Vice-President
Leo F. Haley

Secretary
Mary Ann Lubinsky

Treasurer
Ronald M. Rozansky, CPA

Board of Directors Directors

Pam Delenick	John "Stu" Richards
Tom Dempsey	Kris Miller Siple
Mark T. Major	Bill Van Stone
Howard Merrick	Richard Tomko
Richard Nagle	Jay Zane
Deborah Reed	

Director
Peter Yasenchak, Ph.D.

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

Society Hours
Wednesday 1:30 - 6 p.m.
Thursday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Friday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m. - 1 p.m.

The Purpose of the Historical Society of Schuylkill County 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.