



# SCHUYLKILL HERITAGE

*A Newsletter of the Historical Society of Schuylkill County*



Volume 4, Issue 3

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

May - June, 2009

## Indian Petroglyph returns to Schuylkill County

On May 10, 1968, Francis E. Burke, an avid and highly esteemed amateur archeologist living in Marlin, discovered an Indian petroglyph carving in a large stone located on the West-West Mountain of Schuylkill County. A petroglyph is an image created in rock or stone by prehistoric people throughout the world.

In this case the sandstone petroglyph is believed to have been carved by the Lenape Indians that were known to inhabit areas of Schuylkill County. It represents Mesingw (Me-Sing) or "living solid face" and was carved in 1700 A.D.

Mesingw was an important Lenape Spirit being who rode through the forest on the back of a large deer to make sure that all the animals were healthy and fed. Lenape hunts were likely to be more successful if Mesingw was remembered. His image was often carved in living trees or stone.

Francis reported his discovery to the State Museum of Pennsylvania, Section of Archeology. They sent a team of archeologists and workers out to the site and using hammers and star gauge drills and chisels removed the petroglyph from the larger stone formation which it was a part of. It weighed easily 400 to 500 pounds and was carried by hand out of the woods and to the nearest road. It took the better part of a day to accomplish this task. They took it to Harrisburg where it became part of their large collection of Indian artifacts. It has been on display in the state museum several times over the 40 some years and remains in their archives along with other archival treasures. Of all the petroglyphs that the state has this is considered the best of them all.

Last October we wrote the museum requesting permission to make a copy of the petroglyph so that we could have it here for our collection. In March that became a reality with the assistance of David Fillmore, an undergraduate research assistant archaeology student at Kutztown University. Dave has done extensive research and is familiar with casting in situations like this. With the support of Dr. Ed Simpson, Department of Physical Sci-



**Francis Burke, an amateur archeologist from Marlin, discovered this petroglyph which was carved by the Lenape Indians in 1700 A.D.**

ence at Kutztown University, Dave was able to make a mold of the petroglyph and then produce an exact duplicate of it. When we saw the final cast it is amazing the detail that was captured. It would be difficult to tell the original from the reproduction except that the thickness of the original is greater. We want to thank Dave Fillmore and Dr. Ed Simpson and Kutztown University for supporting this project.

Francis' wife, Barbara has added her talents to the project by painting seven water color pictures of the petroglyph and the surrounding area showing what it may have looked like with the Lenape Indians in the area. It will make for a wonderful exhibit that we hope to have in place sometime this summer.

## Volunteer of the Month

Dot Loy came to us a little over a year ago interested in helping out in any way that she could. She started out helping arrange our photo collection which was needed. When that was completed we asked if she would take the four photo books that we have published and start pulling those photos that have been published. This was a task more daunting than what meets the eye initially. Dot worked on it steadily a couple of hours at a time one or two days a week.

She just finished and our photo collection is in the best condition it has been in many years. The photos that have not been published will be able to be used for new books. We certainly appreciate what Dot has done. It wasn't easy but at the same time she said it was interesting.

Thanks, Dot.



Dot Loy - Volunteer of the Month

## Directors needed

Our By-Laws were recently amended and one of the issues that changed was the number of members on our Board of Directors. We increased the number of Directors to not more than fifteen from nine. The Board is the governing body that manages the operation of the Society.

The Board meets every month on the second Wednesday of the month at 6 p.m. The term of office is three years.

Please call Dave Derbes at 622-7540 if you would be interested in serving on the Board of Directors.

## Don't forget to share your old photos

Last month we asked that you share your old photos with us. Well, we are happy to say we did receive some new "old" photos since we published that article last month.

So if you are going through the attic and come across some old photos of family or community events or happenings we would love to have them or be able to scan them and preserve them with our collection of photographs.



## Help Wanted

We continue to look for volunteers. Last month we listed **Activity Chairperson** and a **Gift Shop Manager**. No takers at this point.

We would like to publish another photo book similar to the ones we have done in the past. In order to do that we need help going through our photo files and selecting photos. If you have an interest in doing this we would appreciate hearing from you. Call 570-622-7540 and ask for Dave Derbes.



## Becky

### Happy 100th Birthday

On behalf of the Historical Society of Schuylkill County, we wish to extend a very, very **Happy Birthday** to our lifetime member Mrs. Rebecca Stoffler who will celebrate her 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday on June 19<sup>th</sup>.

"Becky", as she likes to be called, and her husband Fritz have been strong supporters of our Society for many years. Fritz served on our Board of Directors.



**Happy  
100th Birthday,  
Becky!!!**

## Coming Events

### May 27, 2009, Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. The Story of the Danville - Pottsville Railroad

Historian Tom Dempsey will speak on the Danville Pottsville Railroad which was the first railroad in our area. The railroad ran from St. Clair to Girardville between the years of 1828 to 1838 era. A very interesting story of local county history and how the railroad scaled the mountains of the area. The program is free and open to the public.

### June 24, 2009, Wednesday, 7:00 p.m. Schuylkill County and the Battle of the Little Big Horn

Stu Richards, local military historian, past Civil War re-enactor and member of the infamous "Breaker Boys" will talk on the roles played by several Schuylkill County Cavalry men who served under Lieutenant Colonel George Armstrong Custer as they fought the Sioux Indians on June 26, 1876 at the Little Big Horn.

**Cancelled due to  
lack of interest**   
*Bus Trip to Antietam Battlefield*

### Receive your newsletter via email ...

We started e-mailing newsletters in September. I believe those responding to our request are satisfied with the service. With the price of postage going up again in the near term we are going to make another appeal to see if we can send more out via the e-mail route.

If you will send us your e-mail address and your regular mailing address we will be more than happy to switch you over on the next newsletter.

It will not only save us money, paper and time as it takes our volunteers a couple of days to print, fold and label the entire 500 plus newsletters.

## Area Events

### *Friends of St. Kieran's Events*

The Friends of St. Kieran's are having several events in Heckscherville in the coming months.

May 20th a spaghetti dinner will be held at the Clover Fire Co. between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m.

June 7th, Heritage Day walk through "the Valley" from Noon to 6 p.m.

For more information on these events call 544-4929 or 874-1166. Go to: [www.friendsofstkierans.com](http://www.friendsofstkierans.com)

### No. 9 Mine Museum Memorial Day Picnic, May 24th

### 2nd Shenandoah Annual Kielbasa Festival, May 30th

### Mahanoy City Ethnic Day June 6th

## Schuylkill County Bi-centennial, 2011

Schuylkill County will be celebrating our Bicentennial in 2011. Plans are underway for the celebration and we look forward to having a wonderful time.

There will be four signature events being planned.

1. March, 2011- Flag Ceremony with high school bands and county-wide bell ringing.
2. Spring, 2011- Dedication of "Courthouse Commons"- an area in front of the Court House with bricks and a time capsule.
3. July 4, 2011- Fireworks over Sweet Arrow Lake.
4. Late Fall/Early Winter - Bicentennial Ball at Lakeside Ballroom.



## New Members

We welcome the following new members.

Thank you for your support.

Thomas J. Slane  
Thomas A. Robison  
Elaine Gaskins  
Henrietta Erdman  
Dawn Morris-Bicht  
Dave Hardy

Michael McCord  
Gerald J. McHale  
Robert Trombey  
Judy Lynn Weaver  
Janice Schreffler  
Linda Heiser Fetterolf

# Historical Society of Schuylkill County



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

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

## Board of Directors

<b>President</b> <i>David Derbes</i>	<b>Directors</b> Robert T. Fallan
<b>Vice-President</b> <i>Leo F. Haley</i>	Mark T. Major
<b>Secretary</b> <i>Jean A. Dellock</i>	Howard Merrick
<b>Treasurer</b> <i>James R. O'Brien</i>	Jay Zane 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.

The Historical Society  
Of Schuylkill County  
P.O. Box 1356  
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