



The Historian

A Man's Life – A Nation's History

A Newsletter for Friends of the Sanderson

May 2019 Issue 21

NEWS FROM THE MUSEUM

Welcome to the 2019 Season at the Christian C. Sanderson Museum. This year is going to feature a wonderful exhibit focusing on Chris and his career as an educator.

Our exhibit “The Schoolmaster” will open in August and will focus on Chris and the many schools he taught in. It should come as no surprise that Chris collected many artifacts during his tenure as a teacher and principal. We will have his roll books, school reports and many other interesting items on display...several of which have never been displayed before!



Chris started his formal teaching career in 1901, in a one-room school house at Garwood, Montgomery County. For the next 28 years, he taught at 10 different schools, mostly in Chester and Delaware

Counties, Pennsylvania. Many of them were one-room schools where he held simultaneously the positions of principal, teacher, and janitor. His teaching career ended in 1929, following his tenure as Principal of the Oak Grove School in Elsmere, Delaware. Chris never stayed very long at any one

school. He was a firm taskmaster, but his students loved him, because he made school work interesting, rewarding, and fun. His teaching methods were unorthodox; he was a firm believer in having study mixed with play.

As part of our exhibit, we are looking for people who may have had first-hand experience of Chris as a teacher. If you or a member of your family, a friend or neighbor was taught by Chris, please let us know. You can call the museum at 610-388-6545 or email us at info@sandersonmuseum.org. We would love to hear from you!

Also, please join us for a special event at Brandywine Prime on June 3. See page 3 for more details!!

ASK TO SEE

Chuck Ulmann, Curator

Chris Sanderson and the Old Fiddlers' Picnics, Part 3

The first Saturday in August was Old Fiddlers Picnic at Lenape Park and 1939 was no exception. Such was not the case for the Parkesburg event as it had moved to the 3rd Saturday of the month. This was the year that Dr. Anderson and John Gibney asked Chris to help with the advertising and he continued to handle this function for many years. The Pocopson Valley Boys (PVB) had their reunion there and continued to do so for many years.

According to clippings in the files at the Chester

Please see *Ask to See* page 2

Ask to See from page 1

County Historical Society, 1940 had a good crowd but the years during World War II had smaller crowds. In 1943, George Hensel, the Quarryville resident who was responsible for starting the picnics in Chester County, passed away in 1943 at his home. In 1944 Chris attended an event to honor George. "Many fiddles and their owners made appearances. Christian Sanderson was there with the violin that belonged to Ole Bull, famed soloist." This was from an article that appeared in the Daily Local News.

In 1945 Chris participated in another Old Fiddler's Picnic at Brandywine Park near Coatesville. This also marked the year when Chris started broadcasting again, this time at WCOJ in Coatesville. The PVB did play on the broadcasts at times.

Chris missed his first Old Fiddlers Picnic held at Lenape Park in 1949 due to a serious illness that landed him in Chester County Hospital in West Chester for a number of weeks.

During this time, Warren Mercer started to share the Master of Ceremonies duties with Chris. In 1956 with a crowd of around 12,000 present Warren filled in for Chris as he was in Chester County Hospital again. According to clippings from the Daily Local News, Chris and Warren shared the duties in 1957, 1959, and 1961. 1965 turned out to be the last Picnic at Chris attended at Lenape Park. In November, 1966 Chris passed away at Bryn Mawr Hospital. His last broadcast on WCOJ was on tape and played the weekend after he died.

His many years participating in The Old Fiddler's Picnic was an eventful 40+ years. Many will remember them as well as his radio broadcasts. He always closed events he participated in with this saying that many who knew or hear Chris remember to this day.

"May the God above bless you/ the devil of temptation miss you / and the angels kiss you in your dream."

My thanks to Tom Thompson, our late and founding Sanderson Museum curator who performed all the research that I have used for these 3 articles about the picnics.

So next time you visit the Sanderson Museum, "Ask To See" the files and clippings on The Old Fiddlers Picnics held in Chester County.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Sanderson Museum is run by volunteers just like you! We are people who are interested in history, delight in talking to other people, have a bit of the "pack rat" in them, and want to touch a moment in time.

We offer great benefits:

- Volunteer training
- Invitations to museum events
- Volunteer appreciation activities
- 10% discount in museum gift shop

If you are interested in volunteering your time and/or talents, email Mary Hewes at executivedirector@sandersonmuseum.org or call 610-388-6545 or to join our volunteer family.



PLEASE JOIN US!!

A Man, a Fiddle & the Old Fiddlers Picnic



Join us at Brandywine Prime
& the Sanderson Museum!
Monday, June 3rd
5:30pm – 8:30pm
\$25 donation, includes heavy
awesome hors d'oeuvres
Cash bar available



Please join us for awesome hor d'oeuvres under the stars at the Brandywine Prime patio and then visit the Sanderson Museum across the parking lot for the short presentation. The presentation will focus on Chris Sanderson's involvement with the two Old Fiddlers picnics in Chester County. The presentation will be held twice during the evening at 6:30pm and 7:30pm. You may start at either location.

Have a wonderful time and start off your summer right at Brandywine Prime and the Sanderson Museum!

SUPPORT THE MUSEUM!

The Sanderson Museum is a private, non-profit 501(c)3 organization founded in 1967. Please consider making a contribution to keep this unique museum open for the enjoyment of future generations. To donate by check, complete the form below and mail to Sanderson Museum, P.O. Box 153, Chadds Ford, PA 19317. To donate by credit card, visit <http://sandersonmuseum.org/support-museum/>

Name: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____ Phone: _____

I am enclosing my tax deductible gift of:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 | <input type="checkbox"/> My gift is: _____ |

I would like to join the Sanderson Museum:

- | |
|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Individual \$20 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Family \$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Patron \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor \$500 |

WE APPRECIATE YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

Christian C. Sanderson Museum
P.O. Box 153
Chadds Ford, PA 19317



Go Green and receive The Historian via email. Send your email address to executivedirector@sandersonmuseum.org. Thank you!



The Christian C. Sanderson Museum - A Man's Life, A Nation's History. An eclectic array of art, military memorabilia, presidential artifacts, local history and collectibles. History like you've never seen it before! Open March through November, Saturday and Sunday, 12pm to 4pm or by appointment.

Sanderson Museum
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Chadds Ford, PA 19317

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