



The Historian

A Man's Life – A Nation's History

A Newsletter for Friends of the Sanderson

June 2024 Issue 33

Winner of the Chris Sanderson Essay Contest Announced

Makenzie McGonigle, Administrative Manager

In 2024, museum board member Linda Banks (retired English teacher) proposed that the Sanderson begin an annual high school essay contest in honor of Chris's memory. The contest would both recognize a talented student's work and expose the local young generation to Chris's work and legacy.

This year's topic was *I, Too Am History*. Students from Kennett, Unionville, and West Chester high schools were encouraged to submit their work. The Museum committee unanimously chose the powerful essay of Henderson student, Pari Pyreddy, as the winner.

Arrangements are being made for her to recite her essay and receive her \$250 cash prize at a Museum reception later this month.

A Visitor from Maine

Sally Denk Hoey, Volunteer

On Friday, May 3, the Sanderson Museum hosted two very special guests, Karen Baumgartner, Associate Collection Manager, The Andrew and Betsy Wyeth Collection of the Brandywine Museum of Art and Leith MacDonald, Assistant Collection Manager, Wyeth Study Center Maine of the Farnsworth Museum.



Leith MacDonald and Karen Baumgartner standing with a portrait of Christian Sanderson by Andrew Wyeth (1937) housed in the museum's Battlefield Room.

The Farnsworth Museum, located in the picturesque coastal town of Rockland, Maine was founded in 1948 and, with 20,000 square feet of space, is home to a nationally recognized collection of approximately 15,000 works focusing on American art from the 18th century to the present. The museum has an extensive collection of Maine works by three generations of Wyeths - N.C., Andrew, and Jamie.

According to Baumgartner, even though Leith's home is in Rockland and his physical space is within the Farnsworth, he is by special agreement an official Brandywine employee.

On hand to welcome the visitors were Sanderson's power team - Gary and Mara Sharp and former museum president, Sally Denk Hoey.

Unfortunately, they only had a little more than an hour to spend with the Sanderson's Wyeth collection as MacDonald had to catch an afternoon flight back to Portland.

Baumgartner later e-mailed, "I think he could have spent so much more time there but I'm glad that he was introduced to the Sanderson today." As much information as we were able to give the visitors, Baumgartner had an incredible wealth of knowledge imparting valuable information about originals that we had in our collection.

When asked if she could do a talk for our volunteers she answered, "I'll be happy to give a talk to your volunteers or members. Will Coleman (Curator, The Andrew and Betsy Wyeth Collection) loves the Sanderson as well, and I know that he'll welcome working with the Sanderson Museum."

Undiscovered Chadds Ford

Gene Pisasale, Volunteer

Visitors to the village of Chadds Ford are familiar with spots like the Brandywine River Museum of Art and the Chadds Ford Historical Society, as well as the ever-popular Hank's Place. Yet there are several sites not far from Baltimore Pike (Route 1) that remain largely unknown. This is despite the fact that thousands of

people converge upon the village every year, notably for Chadds Ford Days and The Great Pumpkin Carve. Some drives around the area bring them to light.

You may pass by the Brandywine Baptist Church, but not know that their congregation dates back more than three centuries to 1692, 84 years before the Declaration of Independence. Their website states that the church provides "... a faithful witness to the Delaware & Brandywine Valley and to the United States of America." The structure was built in 1869 from local fieldstone; church members had met in log cabins and other buildings before that time. The impressive Gothic Revival structure is on the right as you drive southward. The adjacent cemetery holds hundreds of gravestones of prominent local citizens, including members of the Atwater, Baldwin, and Darlington families. Flanking the church is a small stone structure known as the Sexton's House, near the familiar sign which greets visitors.

A monument to a forgotten hero stands not far from the church. The blue and gold historical marker honoring Casimir Pulaski reads "Polish volunteer, commanded cavalry detachment covering Washington's retreat from Brandywine Sept. 11, 1777. As brigadier general, served from Sept. 1777- March 1778 as first overall commander of the Continental Army's cavalry. He was mortally wounded at the siege of Savannah, October 9, 1779." Pulaski is one of only eight people granted honorary United States citizenship; he is revered as the "Father of the American Cavalry."

While George Washington's headquarters and the Marquis de Lafayette often get attention when discussing the Battle of the Brandywine, the place where a senior enemy officer stayed is largely unnoticed. The George Gilpin House, now recognized as General William Howe's Headquarters, stands on the west side of Harvey Road a mile north of Baltimore Pike. According to author Phyllis Recca in "Chadds Ford Then and Now," the property was part of a homestead established by Joseph Gilpin in 1690. The house was constructed in 1754 by Joseph's son, George Gilpin. After Howe defeated Washington, he hung around - for five more days - until September 16th. Legend has it that he stayed in the northwest bedroom. Some of the floorboards were stained with the blood of British soldiers who were treated there after the battle. A

subsequent resident, Mary Harvey Burns claimed that local townspeople were outraged when her father insisted on putting new flooring over the bloodstained timbers. A small, grey metallic keystone-shaped plaque stands in front of the home today noting Howe's presence there more than 240 years ago.



Stone wall at Chadds Ford Village & Barn Shops with Ten Pin Cannon Ball

If you've ever shopped at Chadds Ford Village & Barn Shops, you may have walked right by something peculiar embedded in a stone wall near the building. Recca in her book mentions a "Ten Pin

Cannon Ball," which has unique beginnings. During construction of the wall in the 1980s, the local developer and his friend enjoyed a few drinks late one night. On their way home from work they noticed an object near the intersection of Baltimore Pike and Route 202. Stopping to pick it up, they discovered it was a bowling ball - and they knew just what to do with it. They embedded it in the wall, knowing that some people might think it was a cannon ball. The surface of the ball reads "Black Beauty." Today you might call it a 'modern relic' of the Battle of the Brandywine.

Residents of Chadds Ford know the name Pyle; the family dates back centuries in Chester County. Beginning in the early 1800s, the Pyle family owned a large farm near town. It was purchased in 1910 by H.G. Haskell, Sr. and renamed the Hill Girt Farm, initially encompassing roughly 800 acres. It is situated south on Creek Road past the Twin Bridges. In 1925, Haskell built a train depot (called Cossart Station) after the previous one burned down; he subsequently donated the station to the railroad which operates on the Wilmington and Northern tracks. It now houses apartments. In her book, Recca details that the farm had a mill, barn, warehouses, icehouse and a springhouse. Haskell's son

(continued from page 2) Hal later inherited the property, adding approximately 700 acres. Hal was a very successful businessman, former President of Abercrombie and Fitch, a Congressman from Delaware, and Mayor of Wilmington. In 1970, Hal, Bayard Sharp, and George "Frolic" Weymouth each donated \$100,000 to create the Brandywine River Museum. He passed away just last year at the age of 98 after an illustrious career. Today people buy vegetables at Haskell's SIW produce stand. They may not know that the family provides gigantic pumpkins for the Historical Society's Great Pumpkin Carve.

If you've had your car serviced nearby, you may have stopped in at a building dating to the 1890s which has undergone a metamorphosis. Originally the Darlington Creamery along the railroad tracks near Baltimore Pike, its products were picked up by locomotive for shipment. This site just south of the intersection with Creek Road sometime before 1934 became Kipe's Service Station, one of the early automobile repair

shops in the region. The Taylor family purchased it in 1960; today it is known as Taylor's Service Station.



Taylor's Service Area circa 1960's

Pennsbury Township regards the building as "a fine example of an early service station and thus may be

eligible for the National Register..." Dave Taylor runs the shop; his grandfather even posed for N.C. Wyeth in 1911 and made it into one of his paintings.

Despite its low-key atmosphere, Chadds Ford has a vibrant heritage and interesting places to explore. So, as you're heading down Baltimore Pike through southern Chester County, know that you'll pass numerous sites which hold a special place in our history.





Customized solutions tailored to you.

- Fine Arts/Collections
- Home
- Flood Coverage
- Automobile
- Excess Liability
- Cyber/Media Liability
- Jewelry
- Yacht/Watercraft
- Kidnap & Ransom
- Domestic Staff
- Expatriate
- Equine
- And More...

**Every lifestyle is unique. Every need is individual.
Every plan is customized.**

We know that there is no "one size fits all" solution for protecting what you value most. From your home and the valuable artwork, jewelry and antiques in it, to luxury cars, airplanes and yachts, our team specializes in helping to protect the assets and lifestyles of successful individuals. Our Private Client team can help you understand your exposures to loss and customize your insurance portfolio and risk management plan.

Find Your Solution at bbprivateclient.com
(302) 415-9077
Hollie Gorman, Private Client Advisor

Brown & Brown of Delaware, Inc. | 750 Prides Crossing, Suite 301, Newark, DE 19713

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.

You can mail your tax-deductible donation to:

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

Donations can also be made online at sandersonmuseum.org.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

I am enclosing my tax deductible gift of:

\$1,000

\$500

\$200

\$100

\$50

My gift is: _____

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 Saturday & Sunday, 12pm-4pm, March through November.

Sanderson Museum
1755 Creek Road
Chadds Ford, PA 19317

Mailing Address:
P.O. Box 153
Chadds Ford, PA 19317

Phone:
610-388-6545

Website:
sandersonmuseum.org

Email:
info@sandersonmuseum.org

Board Members
Linda Banks
Dean Camp
Diane Camp
Jim Christ
Hollie Gorman
Tom Hoey
Michael Lynch
Charles Ulmann