



THE HISTORIAN

A Newsletter for Friends and Members of the
Sanderson Museum

History Like You've Never Seen It Before!
Summer 2026 Issue 35

ASK TO SEE

Chuck Ulmann, Curator

(Editor's Note: I'm sure those of you who don't know our amazing curator Chuck Ulmann, picture him dabbing at shelves with a feather duster or entering data into the Past Perfect program about the minutia of the collection. Read on.)

Normally I describe some artifact, document, letter, etc. that I come across in our collection that was a bit different or unusual. I'm going to shift gears this time and tell you something that is a bit different and unusual about the building itself and the grounds around it.

2026 was a miserable winter. The worst part was the ice sitting on top of the snow. During the time when we're closed in December, January and February, I make it a point to stop down every week to make sure all is well. Old buildings, like the 1842 Sanderson Museum building, don't like to be left unattended. If I couldn't do it, several other volunteers help me out (Thank you **Ed Worteck** and **Gary Sharp**) on this.

This time, though, I knew I needed to check what was going on as the ice on the snow around my home was



The Country Schoolmaster
Andrew Wyeth 1939

horrible and I could hardly move around the yard. I parked near the back walk but couldn't get to it. A LARGE pile of ice and snow was blocking the walk. I do not climb 4-foot piles of ice and snow! I then walked around to the front walk which had been plowed shut by the township plows.

I then went over to the Brandywine Prime restaurant (we share the parking lot in the back) and spoke with owner **Michael Majewski**. As soon as I explained what had happened, he helped us out. He got in touch with the company that clears the parking lot, had them come over and move the mountain! As an added bonus, the entire walk was cleared! **Thank you, Michael!**



Winter 2026 Construction Parking Lot

Later in the Winter I noticed that our parking lot in the front had turned into a construction site. The work was ongoing for the "Walkable Chadds Ford" project and machinery, materials, tools and the like were being staged in that area. I contacted the project manager and was told by her that everything would be cleared out by the first weekend in March. Another telephone call was needed right before the weekend and that was taken care of.

I then spoke with the foreman of the work crew to see how the parking area was going to be finished if at all. We chatted and he was able to put some parking barriers along



Walkable Chadds Ford and The Sanderson

the edge of the area so one would know how far to pull into a parking slot. He found some scraps of pressure treated wood that would work, cut them to length and put them in place with large spikes to keep them from moving. The best part is that it didn't cost the museum anything.

Events seem to come in threes. I noticed that two of the four posts that were put in place for the front porch about ten years ago were starting to rot out at the bottom. I brought in a recommended contractor who had worked for one of our volunteers. At the last moment, the contractor wasn't able to get the posts that were planned for the job. A work around was devised. The posts we ended up using were pressure treated rather than untreated. We'll paint them next spring.

So next time you visit the museum, "Ask to See" the new porch posts, the updated front parking area and hopefully no more winters like 2026!

From the Editor's Desk

Names in the News

Sally Denk Hoey

Has it really been a year? 2026 has been an active year for the Sanderson and 2027 promises to be just as good.



So Happy Semi-quincentennial from the Sanderson!

Not to be left out on this momentous occasion, we curated an exhibit of 32 artifacts from our collection dating to circa 1776.

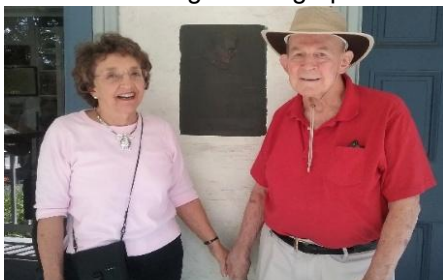
Heading the exhibit was this writer with invaluable support from Curator **Chuck Ulmann**, and board members **Jim Christ** and **Linda Banks**.



Sally Denk Hoey

Some because of size or condition have been left in place, while others are in a special glass exhibit case. Feature stories by this writer have been published in Chadds Ford Live, Chadds Ford Neighbors and West Chester Neighbors.

Sadly, The Sanderson lost a true friend. **Judge Lawrence Wood** passed on August 21, 2025 (age 89) It was Judge Wood, who as a young West Chester attorney, wrote Chris's will. His legal writing opened the way for the creation of the museum.



Renny and Judge Lawrence Wood

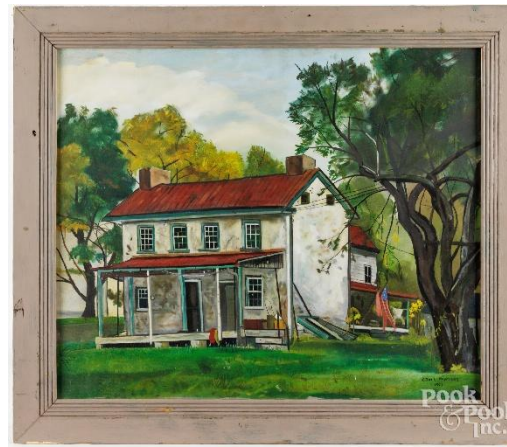
And if our country's semi-quincentennial weren't big enough, this November 19 marks the 60th anniversary of Chris Sanderson's death at the age of 84. If you live in Chester or Montgomery Counties You may want to visit his grave at the Morris Cemetery in Phoenixville right on Rte. 23 that week

Sanderson Marker at Morris Cemetery: Enter the stone gates on Rte. 23, make an immediate left, then right and proceed a very short distance until you see the **Wall** family markers on the right. Pull off and park on the narrow road. The Sanderson family is a half dozen markers in back of the Wall markers. The tall, handsome obelisk for Cpt. Carmack is a short walk up the hill.

And then, just 6 weeks later on January 1, we celebrate the 60th anniversary of the founding of the Sanderson Museum by **Andrew Wyeth**, **Thomas R. Thompson**, **Dr. Frank V. Rich**, **Arthur J. Beard** and **William A. Hoffman**.

What would you like to do?

And our Chadds Ford native and art connoisseur now in Florida, **Arthur "Casey" Cleveland III**, continues to find artwork on line. This time he sent me a picture of a piece of art called "*Chris Slept Here.*" A 29 3/4" X 34 3/4", oil on canvas by Carol Fahrney (1929-2011) being auctioned by Pook and Pook. Carol's father was **Delmer S. Fahrney, Rear Admiral, USN.** (1898- 1984) Admiral Fahrney is credited with inventing and naming the first drone during WWII. In addition, one of the things Admiral Fahrney did in his retirement at his estate, "Roundelay" in Chadds Ford was to work with Boy Scout Troop 31 and to create **Camp Sanderson** named for Chris!



But the remarkable thing about the painting done in **1953** is in the detail. If you look at the side porch in the back of the house, there is the

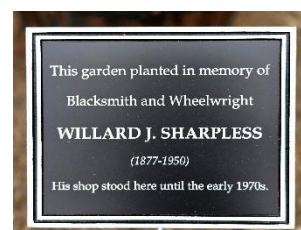
flag and Chris's shirt. Every day the Sanderson is open, we put the flag out in the same flag holder and hang a shirt out on the line. Ten years later, Andrew Wyeth painted a picture of the shirt naming it "The Bachelor."

Don't look for the painting. It's been sold.

And I would be terribly remiss if I didn't mention the on-going work on the Willard Sharpless Memorial Garden with **Mary Ann Ulmann** as our sage consultant. First and foremost, when we made the memorial sign for the garden, based on the museum's oral tradition of Chris moving his collection into the front of the house, I had placed Mr. Sharpless's death at 1959.

Thanks to historian and master sleuth, **Phyllis Recca** we corrected that date to **1950**. Her skills in research are second to none.

And lastly, we want to thank **Fred Daddario Mowing and Lawn Care** from Avondale whose team did a tremendous amount of weeding and clearing the area for the garden, as well as to **Froio's Landscaping in West Chester** for expanding the area and putting in the finishing touches. Thanks to both companies for acknowledging our non-profit status.



SANDERSON 2026 ESSAY CONTEST

Linda Banks - Board Member

Spring came to promise a flurry of excitement for the Sanderson Museum with the buzz surrounding our annual essay contest. 2026 showed that our circle of responses is widening. This year Unionville High School participated for the first time. And West Chester continued to sustain



Chuck Ulmann, Shannon Evans, Linda Banks, Diane Masur

enthusiastic support.

This year's topic:

A museum visit can make time pause.

The depth and range of reflection in our submissions continues to affirm that public

education is alive and well in Chester County. Winners were recognized at an intimate museum reception on May 17.

First Place: **Shannon Evans** (grade 11) student of Ms. Janet Holguin at Unionville High School

Second Place: **Zhuohao (Aaron) Yu** (grade 9) student of Mr. Charles Clay at B. Reed Henderson High School

Editor's Note: This link will take you to Shannon's beautifully written essay. It is worthy of someone way beyond her years and education. It is also on our web page.

<https://sandersonmuseum.org/2026-essay-contest-winner/>

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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, want to touch a moment in time, **dig in the garden**, help maintain **the collection** or be a **handyman**. We need many friends with many talents. If you are interested in volunteering your time and/or talents, email **Richard Salvucci** at executivedirector@sandersonmuseum.org or call 610-388-6545.

Come join our volunteer family!



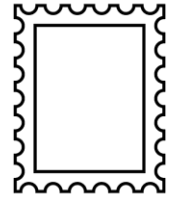
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SUPPORT THE MUSEUM

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 our 60th Anniversary** and 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.

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*Charles Ulmann, **Curator***