

# Digging history

## Excavation in Butler gives look into past

By Dana DiFilippo

**BUTLER** — Three years ago, Dave Wolf found a priceless treasure in several pieces of eggshell

The Sarver resident scooped them up, took them home and dusted them carefully, realizing he had stumbled upon an 164-year-old clue to the everyday lives of the people who lived in Butler in the 19th century

As one of three people excavating the Shaw House since 1989, Wolf has been searching the house and property for clues about the habits and behavior of its dwellers. The Butler County Historical Society aims to restore the house, add period furniture and give guided tours

The eggshell, Wolf speculated, was the remainder of a construction worker's lunch and was dumped along with other trash under the house's floorboards as workers built the house in 1828. It joined several other artifacts found in or around the house, including toys, marbles, jars, gunflint, tools and a dessicated cat that died under the floorboards just inside the front door

Meridian resident Ed Dlutowski, who is leading the excavation, predicted that the dig will take years, but said he looked forward to the work

"Most old places, we tend to tear down. Here, we have a fine opportunity to preserve some of our past," Dlutowski said. "There's a lot that can be learned from what you find in the ground. You read about politicians, you read about wars, but how much do you really know about everyday life, and where are you going to find out? It's not in written records."

Dlutowski, Wolf and New Castle resident Amanda Valko hope to find the size, location and exact

Turn to DIG, A2



DANA DIFILIPPO staff

**Meridian resident Ed Dlutowski digs at the site of a wash house, unearthing artifacts, including flowerpot pieces, several nails and a jagged slice of white ceramic. Dlutowski, who is leading the excavation effort at Butler's "Shaw House," says the project probably will take years to complete.**

### How you can help

The Butler County Historical Society is seeking donations to fund the renovation and excavation of the Shaw House in Butler. To contribute, call the society at 283

8116 or write P.O. Box 414  
Butler Pa 16003

Anyone interested in helping to excavate the grounds can call Ed Dlutowski at 482 2105