

The Barracks News

There's Always Something Going On At The Smyrna Museum

Duck Creek Historical Society Newsletter

PO Box 335, Smyrna, DE 19977 – DuckCreekHistoricalSociety.org

In This Issue

Pg 2 President's Message

Pg 3 & 4 What's Going On
In The Smyrna Museum

Pg 5 Plank House News

Pg 6 Upcoming Events

Pg 7 What is PastPerfect?

Pg 8 Historical Fun Fact

Pg 9 Membership Form

2021 DCHS Board of Directors

President: Brooks Keen
 1st Vice-President: Missy Vaughn
 2nd Vice-President: Gia Turpin
 Secretary: Jim Wolfe
 Treasurer: Peg Snow
 Director: Skipper Carrow
 Director: Melinda Gregory
 Director: Michael Keen
 Director: Ken McVicker
 Director: Jim Mood
 President Emeritus: Bob Keen
 President Emeritus: Sam Mace



We've been busy at the Museum! Thank you for renewing your membership and there's still time to pay your dues and renew your membership to remain on the Roster. We've got some event ideas and a few things planned, so give us a call and tell us how you can volunteer and contribute your skills to DCHS.

Do you have children or grand-children that are looking for a safe place to volunteer and participate in our community? Give us a call and we can set something up. We could always use helping hands with cleaning, moving things around, etc.

"It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas" at the museum as we prepare for the holidays and a Christmas Open House on December 12th. Come out and see the nutcracker display, say hi and let us know if you'd like to help with events. Read all about it in this Newsletter.

President's Message

We hope everyone is healthy and looking forward to the upcoming holidays. This has definitely been a year to remember. Many of us have all been struggling with issues related to the ongoing Covid Pandemic. With the uncertainties and limited use of indoor venues this past spring, our annual meeting has been postponed to the Spring of 2022. We're planning a large event and more information will be forthcoming.

Our priority project in 2021 was to have the Plank House structurally stabilized, rotten planks replaced, the walls re-chinked and the exterior sealed. This is the first major work that has been done on the building since we relocated the structure to the Museum Complex in 1999. We received a grant from Preservation Delaware to assist with this project and we thank those of you who donated to the cause.

This summer we opened a new exhibit titled "Duck Creek Goes to War". This exhibit showcases the second floor of the Museum and covers our Military and home-front highlighting the American Revolutionary War through World War II. On display are uniforms, artifacts, pictures and memorabilia from those trying times in our history. We've also started a roll call log of local service members that includes service information and pictures of our local military members. If you were a member of our military or know someone locally who served, please stop by and give us your information so we honor as many veterans as possible. This will be an ongoing program that will be kept on display at the Museum.

Please take a moment to stop by and visit the Museum and Plank House this holiday season, as both will be decorated for our Christmas event on December 12th. See the newsletter for more information on the event. Future newsletters will be coming to you via email, so be on the lookout and if you still prefer to receive one mailed just let us know. The winter edition of our newsletter will have a special message so keep an eye out and take advantage of the announcement that will be included.

From the Officers and Directors of the Duck Creek Historical Society, have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!

Brooks

The plank house after restoring planks, chinking, and spraying to preserve the wood. What's next? The roof needs to be replaced in 2022.



There's Always Something Going On At The Smyrna Museum!

The museum had an event on Saturday, Sept 11th to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 tragedies. Michael Megna, Retired Sgt., NY/NJ Port Authority Police Officer, was our guest and shared his stories from that day as he was stationed at the Holland Tunnel. Mike shared two interesting slide shows of 9/11 scenes and of the boat rescues. The boat rescue consisted of private and commercial boats rescuing people off the island of Manhattan, estimated at rescuing 500,000 people and is said to be the largest marine evacuation in history. The front case was set up with 9/11 items from Mike's collection. We had a steady flow of visitors and gave several tours that day. Our visitors enjoyed the famous Connie & Bob Keen chocolates in the shape of Delaware and the US flag, peanut butter balls, and refreshing punch.



There's Always Something Going On At The Smyrna Museum!

Here are some other exciting things that have happened at the museum:

- We had a visitor from New York stop by the museum and she revealed that she was John Bassett Moore's Great Grand-daughter! That info made for some interesting conversation with the lady and her son.
- Homestead Gardens community outreach program helped the museum beautification project by donating planters, shrubs, and fall flowers for the front of the museum. Homestead Gardens community outreach program will be working with us in spring 2022 to revise our museum complex landscape. We'll be adding hydrangea for color and texture, transplanting some flowers around the museum landscape, adding a time-period appropriate herb garden at the back of the plank house and colorful plants to the front of the plank house.



The October Board of Directors – The team is hard at work

The Plank House is Open!



The plank house renovations are now complete, and we had the house washed and scrubbed – we're all ready for visitors! Several decaying boards and the chinking had to be replaced. The plank house was then sprayed with a preserving spray. The interior and interior assets were cleaned, all pieces were inventoried and logged into PastPerfect, and we freshened up the décor a bit.

Next projects: Next, we'll need to replace the roof. The brick pathway is not level in some areas and we could use some volunteers in the spring to pull up the bricks, help with re-leveling and planting the bricks. Keep that in mind and come out and help with the project this spring!

Thank you to those that made donations to the plank house effort!

The Duck Creek Garden Society and Homestead Gardens will be decorating for Christmas, so come out in December and see the plank house dressed for the holidays.



UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out our planned events! There are opportunities for you to volunteer and help with upcoming events at the museum. Reach out to the museum and let us know how you'd like to volunteer, and the Committee Representative will get in touch with you. Call the museum at 302-653-1320 and leave a message or email us at dchs302@.



Christmas and Santa at the Museum, Dec. 12th

We're in the planning stages but mark your calendar for Sunday, December 12th, 11am to 4pm, come out and join the fun! This event will be free and open to the public. We'll have Duck Creek Soaps with scented soaps and skin products and 'Snappin snap jewelry, perfect for gifts and stocking stuffers! Rick Schuman, woodwork demonstrator and vendor will be demonstrating 18th Century woodworking in the plank house yard and at 2pm the First State Symphonic Band Holiday Ensemble will be performing! We're raffling a gift basket with local artisan items and tasty goodies – come to the museum and buy your tickets! We could use some help with publicity to get the word out and we could use some help with the event.

If interested in helping, contact the museum and we'll get back in touch with you! Call the museum at 302-653-1320 and leave a message or email us at dchs302@gmail.com.

June 2022: Smyrna Historical Walking Garden Tour

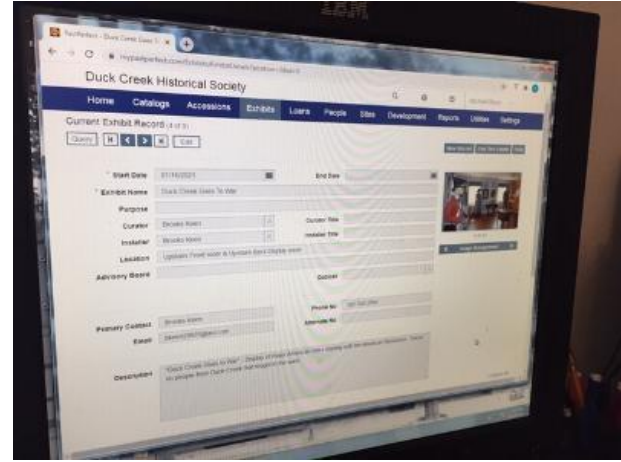
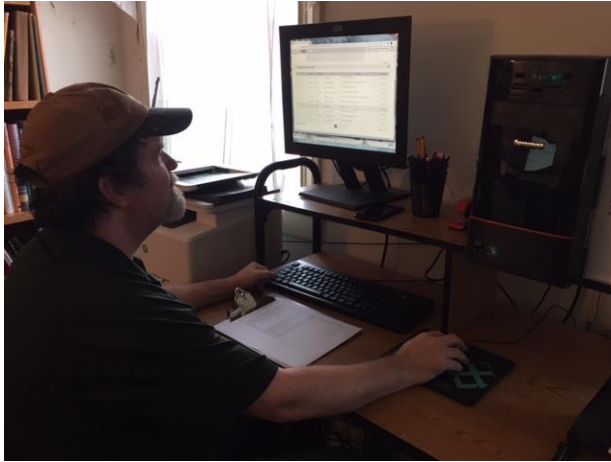
This will be a fundraiser event. We're collaborating with the Duck Creek Garden Society and have plans for a walking garden tour, with plants and herbs for sale by the DC Garden Society and possible light refreshments. We're still collecting ideas to make this a fun afternoon event.

This is a great opportunity to volunteer and help out the Society!

If you're interested in helping with the planning, reaching out to contacts, being a guide, have ideas for this event, can help with refreshments please give us a call and the Committee Representative will call you back.



What Is PastPerfect and How Does It Help the Museum?



Why is asset inventory important?

The DCHS is entrusted with various cultural and historical documents, artifacts, and resources. Asset inventory allows us to know the location and condition of an item. It eliminates loose papers and binders which can be inaccurate and can get lost in the shuffle. We can also track the décor and assets placed in storage, making it easier and more efficient to retrieve items as we need them.

What is PastPerfect and what are the benefits to the museum? PastPerfect is a computer software package that's designed to help catalog artifacts and collections, track museum donations, manage membership and relationships with members and donors, produces reports and forms, and creates communication mailings and sends emails. It does a lot for the museum!

Michael Keen, member and Director, is the Administrator for the museum's PastPerfect subscription. For the past year Michael has been systematically inventorying museum items and exhibit items and taking pictures to add into PastPerfect. This includes scanning documents and photos to enter into the Library section of the application. The application is also used to track membership, volunteer hours, and it emails this newsletter and other correspondence to members and agencies. The work is non-stop since items are coming in and out of inventory at a constant cadence.

Eventually, all items in the museum will be entered into PastPerfect and is then the item is given a catalog number. In the computer we will enter background and information on the item and where the item is currently located inside of the museum. This provides us visibility with the item and makes it manageable for computer searches. PastPerfect acts as a searchable database, so if we want to know about an item, we can perform inquiries and searches on the computer. For example, if we want to see if we have a picture of Abraham Lincoln in the inventory, we can perform a search in PastPerfect and enter "Abraham Lincoln". All items with Abraham Lincoln in the description would appear and we can find the item we want.

Job Aids have been developed so that members can do a search to find items of interest or run reports if needed.

Historical Fun Facts: Did You Know?



Come out and visit the museum to see the early period Apothecary exhibit? It's part of the "Duck Creek Goes to War" exhibit and shows the first Apothecary in the field during the Revolutionary War. On display are Apothecary travel sets with vials of pills and herbs, dating back to the mid-1700's (with original vials) and an inventory of medicine. Stop in to see the other travel sets, a mortar & pestle from the Revolutionary War period, and other interesting items. You'll learn how herbs were used to treat common day ailments.

Colonial apothecaries were what we think of as doctors. They treated patients, made and prescribed medicines, made house calls, and taught apprentices.

General George Washington pressured the Continental Congress into establishing a plan and develop regimental hospitals. "Medicine Chests" were ordered by Congress to carry consistent supplies to regiments. This would be the earliest form of a "First Aid Kit" as we know it today.



Medicine chests carried Spirits (whiskey and rum), soaps, ointments, plasters, various gums, salts, elixirs, botanical root, in addition to bandages, needles, and useful herbs.

Come out and see the Apothecary exhibit!

There's still time to renew your membership so you can remain on our Roster!

Updating Our Membership Files

We need everyone to fill out this form and send it into the museum so that we can update the membership roster. Even if you've been a long-term member, please fill out the form and send it back to us so that we can update our records.

Dues Campaign – Please send in your 2021 membership dues: \$15 Individual membership, Family is \$25, and Lifetime is \$100. Please send your 2021 dues to the Duck Creek Historical Society, PO Box 335, Smyrna, DE 19977 **or renew them fast and easy with a credit card through the secured DCHS website, see the Members page.**

Membership Payment Type: Individual (\$15) Family (\$25)

Lifetime Member (\$100)

Checks should always be made out to the Duck Creek Historical Society.

PLEASE PRINT

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cell Phone: _____

We always need help and there is always something going on at the museum!

I'd be interested in helping with or have the following skills to offer:

Putting Exhibit Together

Organizing an Event

Inventory of Assets

Cleaning on Quarterly Basis

Holiday Decorating

Advertising Committee