



MAKING HISTORY

A VISION FOR THE NEW MERCER MUSEUM

Volume I, Summer 2008

A NEWSLETTER INFORMING THE SPECIAL FRIENDS AND LEADERS OF THE MERCER MUSEUM'S CAPITAL CAMPAIGN EXPANSION PROJECT

One man's reason: "The Why"

Call him a local celebrity. He's been featured in TIME magazine, interviewed for his expertise on national and local news stations and quoted in newspapers. His company, MATCOR, Inc., has won awards and accolades around the globe for its outstanding work. He is a community leader, a philanthropist, and one of the Bucks County Historical Society's most fervent supporters.

Bill Schutt, a BCHS trustee and President of MATCOR, Inc., based in Doylestown, has generously given to our "Making History" campaign. He recognizes the need for the expansion, stating "I am giving because the museum has so much more to offer than we can show in our present configuration and I believe in supporting and giving back to the community." Bill knows that the Mercer Museum's potential has been untapped, waiting for "new life," the *Plus Ultra*, or "more beyond" that Henry Mercer was always talking about.



William R. Schutt, President & Founder of MATCOR, Inc.

In our last issue, we told you about the plans for our expansion, the anticipated costs and the projected timeframe. We emphasized the Where...When... and How. Now we want you to know the Why...to achieve the *Plus Ultra* and reach "more beyond."



Neptune Hose Company No. 6 Hose Carriage
Philadelphia, 1851- one of the 35,000 acquisitions in storage, rarely seen by the public.

As our members and volunteers know, the Mercer Museum's collection is unparalleled. The Museum has one of the most highly recognized buildings and collections in the country. Major museums across the United States regularly borrow objects from the Mercer's renowned collections for their important and high-profile exhibits including Philadelphia Museum of Art, Denver Art Museum, National Museum of Natural History, Academy of Natural Sciences, National Gallery of Art, and the Smithsonian Institution to name a few. These museum destinations display our objects and artwork **but we cannot** because of our lack of museum-quality gallery space. Of the more than 50,000 artifacts in our comprehensive collection, only one-third is on display. Over 35,000 objects lay in storage awaiting their chance for public presentation and the opportunity to showcase history, wonder, exploration, and education. An even more stunning reality are the over 250,000 items in the Spruance Library's archives that are stored out of view because the Mercer Museum lacks a proper climate controlled display environment.

Mercer Museum, Bucks County Historical Society, 84 S. Pine St., Doylestown, PA 18901

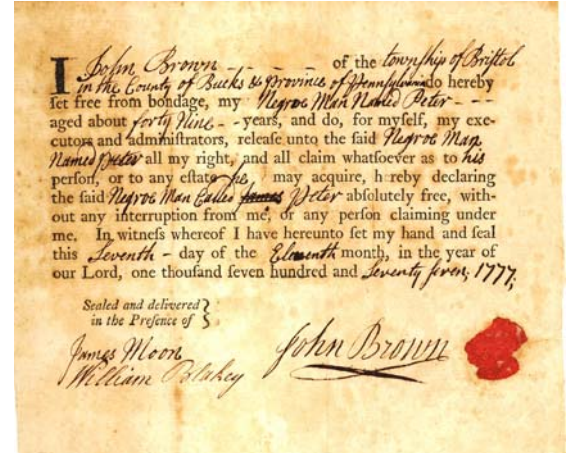
What do these historical artifacts have in common? *You have never seen them!*

Artifacts and documents in the Mercer Museum collection such as these cannot be displayed safely under current museum conditions, which lack the necessary museum quality environmental and security conditions for the preservation and exhibition of sensitive historical objects and documents.



"Flower Children Rocking Chair"
Needlepoint embroidered upholstery
by Marie Loncoske Davis
Doylestown, PA 1972 (chair dates to c. 1900)

Jacket, acquired by Henry Mercer in Egypt, 1882



This original 1777 document tells of a slave named Peter, who was owned by John Brown of Bristol Township. The Society of Friends, or Quakers, had moved to eliminate slavery among its members in the 1750's.

Why not here?

When the Missouri History Museum organized the *Lewis and Clark National Bicentennial Exhibition*, they contacted the Mercer Museum to provide objects for the exhibit, which traveled to the National Museum of Natural History, Denver Museum of Nature and Science, and the Academy of Natural Sciences. Similarly, the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation called upon the Mercer Museum when it organized the *Kingdoms of Edward Hicks* exhibit, which traveled to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Denver Art Museum, and DeYoung Museum in San Francisco.

Mercer Museum Curator Cory Amsler recalls his conversations with peer curators and an overwhelming feeling of pride in knowing that the Mercer Museum was a major contributor to such historically significant exhibits. "It's very flattering to have some of America's greatest museums knocking on your door, knowing you hold the very things they need to tell an important story, or bring new appreciation to an artist," says Amsler. "In fact, it validates what you believe – that the Mercer holds an astounding array of important historical and artistic treasures. But then it occurs to you: Why is it that people in Denver or St. Louis get to experience these stories and treasures, while folks here in Doylestown and the Delaware Valley don't?"

These pictures are just a few of the extraordinary objects of the Mercer Museum's collection. Our goal is to showcase them and many others in **our own history-making exhibits** right here in Doylestown's treasured Mercer Museum. We can achieve this through the completion of our "Making History" Campaign. With the Mercer Museum's expansion, not only will we be able to exhibit and enhance our own collection, we will join other leading museums dedicated to acquiring traveling exhibitions and drawing even greater crowds to experience *the wonder of the Mercer Museum, the quality of the Doylestown community, and the importance of preserving history.*

To learn more about Mercer Museum's "Making History" Campaign, please call the Mercer Museum at 215-345-0210 to speak with Executive Director Doug Dolan (ext 134), Campaign Coordinator Susan DeLuca (ext 129) or Campaign Consultant Laura Biersmith (ext 142). You may also visit us on the web at www.mercermuseum.org.

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