



# MAKING HISTORY

# A VISION FOR THE NEW MERCER MUSEUM

*Volume II, Spring 2010*

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



*Pictured from left to right: C. Jameson Bradley, portraying Henry Mercer, Della, portraying Henry's dog, Rollo, BCHS Board of Trustees Chair Brian McLeod, County Commissioner Charles Martin, and State Senator Charles McIlhinney*

## ***CONSTRUCTION BEGINS AT THE MERCER MUSEUM***

This past winter season, the Mercer Museum held a ceremony signifying the groundbreaking of the construction of its new exhibit and education wing not in the usual way by turning over earth with a shovel, but by mixing concrete and making handprints in molds. "Because this is no ordinary museum," Doug Dolan, Bucks County Historical Society Executive Director stated, "we could have no ordinary groundbreaking." What Dolan is referring to, is keeping in theme with the extraordinary concrete castle that houses only a portion of Henry Mercer's vast collection of artifacts, textiles and documents.

Since 2006, when the "Making History" campaign began, museum staff, trustees and volunteers have been working diligently to raise the funds for this long awaited expansion project. To date, \$9.7 million has been raised toward the \$12 million goal. At the groundbreaking, Pennsylvania Senator Chuck McIlhinney, speaking for himself and Governor Ed Rendell, who was unable to attend the ceremony, praised the expansion project for which the state provided 4 million.



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

Enjoying the significance of this celebration were longtime Museum friends, volunteers, and donors who have provided their financial commitment, time and leadership to make this vision a reality. An expanded Mercer Museum will feature much of Henry Mercer's collection, which has never before been exhibited for the public. The opportunity to pull back the curtains and display astonishing artifacts that will amaze and surprise Museum visitors has been a shared dream for all who attended the ceremony.

A few short weeks later, construction began, and the museum is well on its way to transforming into the image that so many have envisioned and supported. The Gemmill pavilion, built in the 1970's has been torn down, and our temporary entrance and museum shop is now open on the Pine Street side of the building.

*Leave your legacy with a gift today-  
Call our campaign staff at the numbers below for more information.*

## *Pulling Back the Curtains*

Imagine walking into an exhibit where artifacts abound...where certain items trigger a special memory...where an antique road sign takes you back to a unique moment in time. The much anticipated new gallery of the Mercer Museum will open in 2011 with its inaugural exhibit titled... "A World of Things: Mercer A to Z."

The goal of this experiential exhibit will be to provide a fresh look at a sampling of the Museum's core collections, suggesting and experimenting with ways to make them more relevant to contemporary audiences. We have assembled a planning team that is developing new, highly creative, imaginative and even whimsical exhibit concepts. The exhibit plan will include, for example, a playful element that inspires visitors to innovate and invent, fanciful element that gives personalities and voices to objects, and a reflective element that encourages visitors to consider the objects of greatest importance in their own lives and times.

"We want to inspire visitors (of all ages) to participate, reflect, learn, imagine, create, have fun, gain perspective, and share their own ideas and experiences about the interplay of history, objects and contemporary life," stated Cory Amsler, Mercer Museum's Vice President of Collections.

The exhibit will build a bridge from the traditional, largely static interpretation of the collections - still driven by Henry Mercer's founding vision - to more creative, diverse, interactive, and multi-disciplinary interpretations. While some of the objects to be utilized are presently exhibited (in typological fashion) in the original 1913-1916 Museum, the majority of exhibit objects are, and have been for a very long time, in storage due to facility constraints. Thus, the proposed exhibit will not only offer new forms of interpretation and education, but will also provide access to these treasures and stories not normally on view.



A rendering of a sample of "A World of Things: Mercer A to Z."

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**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](http://www.mercermuseum.org).**

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