



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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BCHS and Stony Hill Archaeological Research Sponsor Dig at Newtown Building Robbed by Doan Gang

DOYLESTOWN, PA – The foundation of an eighteenth-century building involved in a famous robbery by Bucks County’s Doan Gang during the American Revolution has been discovered by archaeologists in Newtown, PA.

The Bucks County Treasury was robbed by the infamous "Doan Gang," a network of Loyalists in Bucks County who supported Great Britain during the American Revolutionary War. The Gang robbed tax collectors, militia members, and other citizens who supported the Revolutionary cause. 244 years ago to the day, on October 22, 1781, the Gang made off with twelve hundred Spanish silver dollars, four hundred French crowns, and a large amount of cash – tax money that was meant to fund the Revolution.

Phase I archaeological testing was conducted on the site of the former Bucks County Treasury in Newtown in May 2025, part of a project sponsored by the Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle, operated by the Bucks County Historical Society (BCHS), as part of research for the museum’s ongoing major exhibition *The Doan Gang: Outlaws of the Revolution*.

Working with Matt Bielecki of Stony Hill Archaeological Research, BCHS staff and members of the community excavated four test pits on the site of the former Treasury. Many members of the public witnessed the excavations and even had a chance to learn archaeological methods from Bielecki and his staff. The archaeologists found parts of the original foundation as well as many different kinds of artifacts, including an English pistol gunflint.

BCHS Senior Director of Collections, Exhibitions, & Historical Properties Cory Amsler notes, "We are very grateful to Matt Bielecki for coordinating this preliminary excavation, as well as to the property owners and members of the Newtown Historic Association who helped make the excavation possible. We anticipate that the artifacts recovered in the dig will eventually enter the collections of the Historical Society's Mercer Museum - some to be placed on view in conjunction with our ongoing Doan Gang exhibition."

The original Treasury building, which was once part of a complex that also included a prison and

courthouse, was demolished in 1873. For decades it was unclear whether anything remained of the original structure. The recent archaeological testing put that mystery to rest.

“It was so exciting when we actually hit rock and lime mortar in the test pits, exactly where historic maps of the old building told us we should,” said BCHS Exhibit Specialist Clint Flack, who participated in the excavations and co-curated the Doan Gang exhibition at the Mercer Museum. “To think there’s still something left of the building that the Doan Gang encountered on that night in 1781 really makes the history of that time period come alive.”

The artifacts found during the excavations will be analyzed in Bielecki’s laboratory, and a full report on the project will be completed. BCHS and Bielecki hope to conduct further Phase III testing on the site in Spring 2026, where more of the original foundation and other artifacts from the Doan Gang’s time may be discovered.

The Doan Gang: Outlaws of the Revolution exhibition is sponsored by Cascade Foundation, Philadelphia Funder Collaborative for the Semiquincentennial, Susan E. Kane, Jim & Kathy Morrison, Connelly Foundation, The Morel Family Foundation, Bucks County Tourism Grant Program, Doan Distillery, The Argus Fund, Penn Color, Janet Schimek, Molly Lowell & Rich Duvall, Brian & Louise McLeod, Bob & Alice Vernon, Bucks County Foundation, The First National Bank & Trust Co. of Newtown, Linda B. Hodgdon, The London Purchase Farm, Dynasty Advisors, and Fulton Bank.

Entry to this special exhibition is included with general Mercer Museum admission. The Mercer Museum is open Tuesdays – Sundays from 10 A.M. – 5 P.M.

Schedule, ticket, and program information, along with an exhibition trailer, is available at doangang.org.

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About the Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle

Located in Doylestown, Bucks County, PA, the Mercer Museum and Fonthill Castle are historic castles celebrating the legacy of Henry Chapman Mercer (1856-1930), American archaeologist, anthropologist, ceramicist and scholar. Both sites are operated by the Bucks County Historical Society (BCHS).

The Mercer Museum, one of Bucks County's premier cultural attractions and a Smithsonian affiliate, features both local and national seasonal exhibits as well as a core museum collection of over 17,000 pre-Industrial tools. This permanent collection offers visitors a unique window into pre-Industrial America through sixty different crafts and trades and is one of the world's most comprehensive portraits of American material culture. The museum also features a research library that is a center for local history related to Bucks County and the surrounding region, with its roots dating back to the founding of the Bucks County Historical Society in 1880. Fonthill Castle was built between 1908-1912 and was the home of Henry Chapman Mercer.

Mercer built Fonthill Castle as his residence and showplace for his collection of tiles and prints. The castle serves as an early example of reinforced concrete and features forty-four rooms, over two hundred windows, and eighteen fireplaces. Fonthill Castle's interior features Mercer's renowned, hand-crafted ceramic tiles designed at the height of the Arts and Crafts movement. The Mercer Museum is located at 84 South Pine Street, Doylestown, PA, 18901. Fonthill Castle is located at 525 East Court Street in Doylestown, PA, 18901.

The Mercer Museum & Fonthill Castle are open Tuesdays – Sundays from 10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. For up-to-date ticket and schedule information, please visit mercermuseum.org.

About Mercer Museum *The Doan Gang: Outlaws of the Revolution* Exhibition

The Doan Gang: Outlaws of the Revolution explores the history and intrigue of a group of Revolutionary War-era Loyalists whose legend lives on today. Some called them villains; others hailed them as heroes. Guests will discover the untold stories of the Doan Gang and journey through a world of espionage, legendary robberies, and mythical lost treasure in the heart of Revolutionary Bucks County.

The Doan Gang: Outlaws of the Revolution investigates the extraordinary tales of the Gang's criminal exploits throughout the region and explores the conflicts that arose among neighbors, friends, and families in Bucks County who were forced to choose sides during a time of great political and social unrest.

This exhibition offers audiences an opportunity to “step into” historical sets and imagine life in Revolutionary Bucks County. This major exhibition features over 300 artifacts, documents, and images from a variety of private collections and institutions, including the Bucks County Historical Society, the Library of Congress, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Newtown Historic Association, the Plumstead Historical Society, and many others.

Never before displayed together, a few legendary highlights of the exhibition include the original desk from the infamous Bucks County Treasury robbery in Newtown in 1781, the flintlock pistol found at the site of the Halsey's Cabin shoot-out in 1783, and the grave marker of Moses Doan placed by Henry Mercer in Plumstead Township in 1888.

This exhibition explores the conflicted loyalties of everyday people in Bucks County at the heart of the American Revolution. It coincides with the United States of America Semiquincentennial, the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States in 1776. The commemoration is a national, multi-year initiative culminating on July 4, 2026, and officially concluding in 2027.

For additional information, please contact:

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