



PENNSYLVANIA  
HERITAGE  
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# NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2022

PAHERITAGE.ORG

## Curators from Cornwall Iron Furnace and Landis Valley Highlight Objects from Collections

To showcase PHMC collections and the people who acquire, catalog, interpret and exhibit the objects that represent Pennsylvania's heritage, PHF has asked curators at the Pennsylvania Trails of History museums and historic sites to pick a significant object and write about it. In this issue, we highlight curators who have selected from the collections of Cornwall Iron Furnace and Landis Valley Village & Farm Museum.



Photo, PHMC

### Rachel Yerger on Sugar Tongs from Cornwall Iron Furnace

My position as a museum curator is a little different from others at the Pennsylvania Trails of History sites. I get to work with multiple museum collections scattered throughout the state—from Erie Maritime Museum in the northwest to Brandywine Battlefield Park in the southeast. Curators become experts in their collections, but since my collections vary in theme and period, I find I am a jack of all trades but master of none. The tradeoff is I get to see a lot of cool stuff, and I am constantly learning new things.

One of my favorite collection pieces comes from Cornwall Iron Furnace in Lebanon County. We recently acquired sugar tongs owned by Robert and Anne Coleman, the first of several Coleman generations to own the iron furnace. The sugar tongs were made by Thomas Shields (1743–1819), a prominent silversmith who worked in Philadelphia from 1765 to 1791.

This is all important information, but what I truly enjoy is how we can use these sugar tongs to discuss more than just the Coleman family or silversmithing in Philadelphia. If we think more broadly about these sugar tongs, we can perhaps tell a more complex story. What if we ask, “Who would have cleaned these tongs?” or, “Who harvested the sugar held by the tongs?” or, “Did everyone have silver

The Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation is the nonprofit partner of the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission. Governed by a volunteer board, PHF helps preserve the commonwealth's rich heritage through charitable funding, membership, grant management, and community engagement.

## Trails of History Sites and Museums

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sugar tongs? Why or why not?” Such questions can lead to important discussions about individuals, such as domestic workers, laborers and enslaved people, who have been underrepresented in past histories. I like how a seemingly simple object can allow us to ask deeper questions that tell a broader story than simply that of a wealthy family.



## Jennifer Royer on the Undertaker's Sleigh at Landis Valley

I have been the museum curator at Landis Valley Village & Farm Museum in Lancaster for 11 years and a museum professional for 20 years. What I love about working with the Landis Valley collection is its variety, size and collecting mission. The collection has more than 75,000 farm, craft and household objects from the 1740s to the mid-20th century. The goal of the museum founders, Henry and George Landis, was to preserve Pennsylvania German history and culture. We continue to do that today, allowing me to work with almost any type of artifact imaginable on any given day.

One of my favorite artifacts is a light-duty, two-horse undertaker's sleigh that came to Landis Valley in 2017. The original owner, Jacob Swayne of Delta, York County, was an undertaker and cabinet-maker from 1857 to 1872. Swayne used the sleigh in the winter for transporting corpses from their place of death to his funerary establishment and then from there to the cemetery.

Soon after starting his business, Swayne ordered the sleigh with a sleigh box from a local buggy maker. He then constructed an arched cowl, which is similar to the coffins he built, to sit on top of the sleigh box. The full-length cowl covered the corpse and had a back gate that opened. The driver sat on a seat mounted directly on top of the cowl. The sleigh's bed



Photos, PHMC

sits on two bobs with wrought iron runners that terminate in the front as griffin heads and were probably specially ordered by Swayne. The mythological griffin, with the head and wings of an eagle and the body of a lion, has incredible strength and unfailing protective instincts.

In 1872 Swayne gave up his business on account of poor vision. The family moved to Maryland, where he took up fruit growing.

## New Board Members

The Pennsylvania Heritage Foundation is pleased to welcome Cynthia Pritchard and Tucker R. Hull to its Board of Directors.

**Cynthia Pritchard**, CFRE, CSR, is president and CEO of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Foundation and has more than 30 years' experience in executive planning, administration and communications in the nonprofit and private sectors. She has served as the president of Philanthropy Delaware and the United Way of Greater Augusta and has been a board member and leader of multiple local, state and national nonprofit organizations in health care, arts and culture, historic preservation, youth development, and aging. Pritchard has implemented fund development programs and community impact models and provided strategic and operational direction for multiple organizations. She is a frequently sought-out speaker at professional conferences and has taught coursework and seminars on leadership development, grant writing, fundraising, outcome measurement, collaboration, collective impact, employee onboarding, board development, systems change, customer service and conflict resolution.

**Tucker R. Hull**, Esq., is the founder and managing member of the Law Office of Tucker R. Hull LLC, which is a multi-attorney, full-service civil law firm serving central Pennsylvania. Prior to opening the firm in 2017, Hull worked for the Philadelphia-based Pepper Hamilton LLP and, prior to that, the Harrisburg-based McNees Wallace & Nurick LLC. He has spent most of his career in business litigation but today handles a variety of matters, including estate planning and probate, corporate formation, real estate and land use issues, and municipal law. He is admitted to practice before all the state and federal courts in Pennsylvania, as well as the U.S. Supreme Court. Hull received his law degree from the Wake Forest School of Law and his B.A. in public policy and government from The College of William and Mary in Virginia. Much of his appreciation for the preservation of history stems from his time spent in Williamsburg. He currently serves on the Board of Trustees for the Lebanon County Historical Society and the Board of Directors for the Annville Cleona Youth Soccer Club. Hull also coaches youth soccer and baseball. He is originally from Carlisle and, after meeting his wife Kandice, moved to Annville, where the couple resides today with their four children.



Cynthia Pritchard



Tucker R. Hull

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## Looking to Meet New People

Volunteers play an essential role at the historic sites and museums on the Pennsylvania Trails of History. Dedicated volunteers of all ages contribute their time and talents in a wide variety of ways.

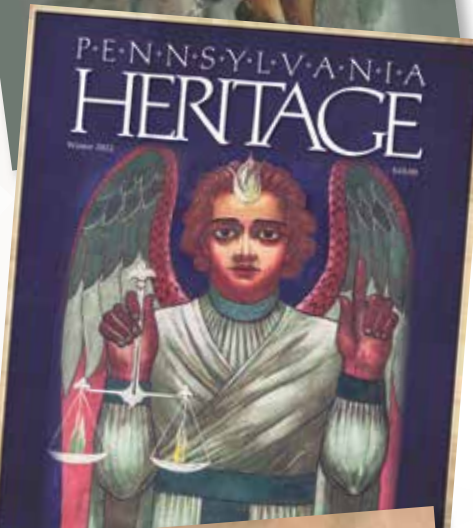
Sites are always seeking eager and willing individuals to help keep history alive. Needs range from office and gift shop help, animal care, gardening, assisting school-children, leading tours, working the front desk, and coordinating social media.

If you are looking to meet new people and experience new adventures while bringing history to life, visit PHF's volunteer link at [paheritage.org](http://paheritage.org)



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*\*Some special events and tours at PHMC sites require an additional fee*



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