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TREDYFFRIN EASTTOWN HISTORY QUARTERLY



Ruth Esherick Bascom: The Extraordinary Life and Times of an Artist's Daughter

Wharton Esherick's Studio: The House of Wows

Mr. Boswell Goes to Corsica

Groundbreaking at Paoli Train Station



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From the Editors

If you were wondering, the thread that connects the pieces together in this issue is Paoli.

The Society was very pleased to have the opportunity to collaborate with Bob Bascom and the Wharton Esherick Museum staff in the preparation of his wonderful article that celebrates the life of a truly remarkable woman, and shares some of the stories from her lifelong relationships with her beloved husband, their family, and the community. Bob also wrote the brief overview article that follows about the remarkable Wharton Esherick. Special thanks to Roger Thorne for his role in the creation of the article, and for his photos.

We recognize and treasure the unique and important role that the extended Esherick family has played, and continues to play, in the ever-evolving cultural history of our area. Some reflections of these connections may be found in our publications over the years, and in particular you might be interested in reading former editor Bob Goshorn's article "When Wharton Esherick Had His Studio in Paoli" originally published in the *Tredyffrin Easttown History Club Quarterly* Vol. 18 No. 1, (January 1980) pp. 15–20, and now available in digital form on our website at www.tehistory.org/hqda/html/v18/v18n1p015.html. More recently, former Wharton Esherick Museum executive director Paul Eisenhauer made a very informative and well-received presentation at the Society's October 2009 public meeting. We strongly recommend a visit to the Museum on Valley Forge Mountain in Paoli to learn more and experience direct contact with the artist's home and work.

We are also pleased to be able to present Princeton University historian David Bell's vivid and compelling article about how James Boswell's encounter with the charismatic leader Pasquale Paoli in Corsica led to the publication of a book that was instrumental in dramatically popularizing Paoli during the latter part of the 18th century, and resulting in the naming of a local tavern and eventually a familiar town in his honor. The article in the *Princeton Alumni Weekly* fortuitously made its way to Roger Thorne, who was then able to make arrangements with the author, artist, and publisher so that we could reprint it here in the *Quarterly*.

Lastly, the report on the groundbreaking ceremony for important accessibility improvements at the train station reflects yet again the ongoing influence that the railroad and transportation systems exert on our community, particularly in Paoli.

History or Mystery?

The Case of the Missing Videotape

In July 1996, Herb Fry published a *History Quarterly* article about the June 1952 celebration of Berwyn's 75th Anniversary. Herb described a videotape (which was itself produced from the original movie film) that recorded the Sunday parade down Lancaster Avenue. It would be nice to think that the videotape has survived in the TEHS archives. Alas, it has not yet made it there, and the mystery of its whereabouts remains unsolved. Does anyone have a copy of the video, or know where it might be obtained? The Society would be eager to transfer it to a digital medium, and also provide a copy to the owner or donor. Please contact us with any information that might help us locate this historic movie. Email: archives@tehistory.org

Trash or Treasure?

It is not uncommon for us to hear from or about people who are in possession of some items that they may be uncertain how to value, but for which they would like to find a new home.

If you (or people you know) have photographs, drawings, maps, letters, documents, books, or other items of possible (or definite) historic interest that might be donated to the Society, please visit the Archives page of our website (<http://www.tehistory.org/archives.html>) and review our Collecting Policy, or contact us directly for more information. Email: archives@tehistory.org

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Cover Descriptions

- Front Cover: LEFT: View from the kitchen of the living-dining room in the Workshop building, including many infrequently seen pieces of Wharton Esherick's furnishings and sculpture. *Photograph by Roger D. Thorne.*
RIGHT: Ruth Esherick Bascom, in a photograph taken by her husband Bob, c. 1989. *Courtesy of Mansfield Bascom.*
- Back Cover: UPPER: The Wharton Esherick Studio, viewed from the northeast. *Courtesy of the Wharton Esherick Museum.*
LOWER: *Cherokee Chess Set*, 1932. Wharton made this boxwood-and-padouk chess set in celebration of Hedgerow Theater's world premiere of Lynn Rigg's *The Cherokee Night*. *Courtesy of the Wharton Esherick Museum.*

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ABOVE: The original Chester County farmhouse (c. 1839) purchased in 1913 by Wharton Esherick and his wife Letty, and named "Sunekrest" (pronounced "sunny crest"). Wharton said that he bought the cherry tree, and they threw in the house. *Courtesy of the Wharton Esherick Museum.*
BELOW: "Sunekrest" — now back in the care the Wharton Esherick Museum — as seen in December 2016. *Courtesy of Roger D. Thorne*





ABOVE: The Wharton Esherick Studio, viewed from the northeast.
BELOW: *Cherokee Chess Set*, Wharton Esherick, 1932.