

Oct. 16, 2019

## TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY'S MUSEUM . . . while dusting

This week we're going to give a bit of our own history: that of the Sullivan County Historical Society's history. On March 11, 1997, the museum in conjunction with the County acquired what has become known as "the Baldwin property". This came to encompass the yard and



gardens and eventually the Barn and the Shed at the rear of the property. On the 1872 map and the insert on it of the survey for Michael Meylert, the Baldwin property is Lot #1. And at the time of Mr. Meylert's gifting of the land for the Sullivan County Courthouse Square (which settled the question of where the county seat was to be located), he brought to our county a Mr. Franchier from Susquehanna County and his family. Mr. Franchier was a carpenter and he built many of the homes in and around Laporte starting in 1850.

Now we'll jump up to more modern history for excerpts from the May 1997 Society minutes: Ann Street submitted a written report on the proposed landscaping at the Baldwin property. The initial idea was to keep plantings in a reflection of 1850-1880 plants. Initially much repair was needed from the soil improvement to the tree tops and everything in between. Many volunteers came forward to accomplish the work needed. The "wren hole" fence with a wren house atop the Muncy Street gate was erected and painted white. Pruning was done, sweet peas were planted on the white chimney, stone patio pieces rearranged and the list goes on and on. Over time, the outhouse was brought in from Bob and Joan Moore of Forks Twp. and many new plantings were added. With the direction of Ann and Henry Street, trees were planted, groomed and occasionally removed. One thing that has fascinated guests has been the large pots on the patio off the kitchen of medicinal weeds with their uses accompanying identity. It can be simply amazing what ailment can be treated with what we all call a weed!

Anyway, the point of this article is to first give a big thank you to Ann and Henry Street who for 22 years of care for the gardens at the Society's Baldwin property. At this month's Society regular meeting they have resigned/retired from caretaking of the gardens. Their contribution of time and effort is so much appreciated. But now, to fill their shoes! We, the Society, are asking those of you in Sullivan County with a green thumb, a little time and a desire to volunteer to please contact the museum. Mike and Becky Hedgecock have agreed to continue to mow the lawn as they have done for the past few years so this request is more for the garden areas of the property. One suggestion that has come in is that a group of people, either

working together or working on one or more subject plantings, contribute towards the total upkeep of the gardens. This in fact was a suggestion back in 1997 for such things as vegetable garden bramble planting, wildflowers, rose maintenance or small fruit trees, bushes or plants. And also, that work could be done on weekdays, evenings or weekends – whatever works.

So, what do you think folks? We realize that it's October and that this work need not start until next spring but we're wondering if you'd consider making this a project in your plans for next summer. If so, please contact the museum by phoning 570-946-5020 or emailing [museum@scpahistory.com](mailto:museum@scpahistory.com) or just stop in if you see the 'open' sign in the window. Any and all help in this or even with museum projects would be appreciated.