Vol.XXII No. 58 Summer 2004

# Wentz Host

A Periodic Publication Of The Peter Wentz Farmstead Society Featuring News, Views And Activities...

# Thanks to the Gaudy Dutch Questers -We have Chairs!

By Dianne M. Cram

The Gaudy Dutch Questers, Chapter 270 responded last winter to our appeal for donations to purchase reproduction chairs. The members of the chapter generously decided to give the Farmstead \$325 towards the purchase of six lovely bow back Windsor chairs. Shortly after the chairs arrived, Donna Armstrong, Grant Chairperson for the Gaudy Dutch Questers called with the wonderful news that their chapter had applied for and received a matching grant from the Pennsylvania State Questers. Another six chairs have been ordered and are on the way! Fran Kriebel, Grace Schultz, Co-Presidents of Gaudy Dutch chapter and Donna Armstrong presented the check from the State Questers to Dianne Cram, Administrator on June 8<sup>th</sup>. The Windsor chairs will be used inside and outside for craftspeople demonstrating during special events and will replace the inappropriate and ugly folding chairs. A grand THANK YOU goes to the ladies of

(Continued on page 5)

Gaudy Dutch for their wonderful gift and for pursuing the state grant



Grace Schultz, Donna Armstrong, Dianne Cram and Fran Kriebel admire the Windsor chairs



Anne Condon, Vice President, Harleysville National Bank presents the bank's donation check to Dick Anderl, PWFS President and Rich Poole, PWFS Trustee

# **Harleysville National Bank Donation**

By Dick Anderl

The Harleysville National Bank has made a very generous donation of \$1,500.00 to the Albert T. and Elizabeth R. Gamon Scholarship Fund. Our sincere appreciation to Anne Condon, PWFS Vice President and also Vice President of Harleysville National Bank, and to Deb Takes, President of Harleysville National Bank for their support of the Society and the Farmstead.

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#### Wentz Post

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#### Peter Wentz Farmstead Hours of Operation

Tuesday - Saturday 10:00-4:00 PM Sunday 1:00-4:00 PM Last Tour 3:30 PM

Closed Mondays and major holidays. Reservations required for group tours.

Admission: FREE!

The Farmstead is located on Shearer Road in Worcester, PA, near the intersection of Routes 73 and 363 in Montgomery County.

# Welcome New PWFS Members

Betty Cromer Robert Reese Mary Gehman Vivian Hartman

Nancy and Robert Golden Family Rebecca and Jeffrey Shadle Family Paula and James Law Family Colleen and Kevin Hopkins Family Frances and Willis Kriebel Family

Alane and Rick Rey Family
Jacquelyn and Daniel Sattler Family
Susan and David Matour Family
Patricia and Stephen Benz Family
Winifred and Robert Hayes Family
Kathryn and James O'Mara Family
Tara and Glenn Harrington Family
Nancy and Peter Layton Family

#### **New Business Sponsors**

Eastern Environmental Contractors, Inc. The Garis Agency

## **Building Connections**

By Rich Poole

"The preservation and study of the 18<sup>th</sup> century way of life of the Peter Wentz Farmstead ...in preserving and restoring the land and buildings...in an authentic historical setting..." – Articles of Incorporation, Peter Wentz Farmstead Society, 1977

What can we, the members of the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society, do toward meeting the lofty goals set forth by our founders 27 years ago? Part of the answer came with sever-

al meetings of the Farmstead staff and representatives of the Society's Board beginning almost 16 months ago. All agreed that our house and collections interpretations are on track. Likewise, our historic agriculture programs are well established. What are missing are the **connections**, the blending of farm and home. Agriculture provided both financial gain and

(Continued on page 3) sustenance for the occupants of an 18<sup>th</sup> century farm. The farm

#### **New In the Collection**

By Morgan McMillan

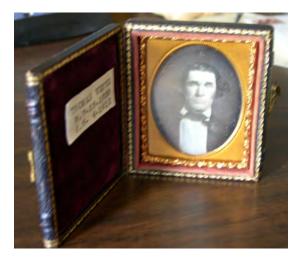
Our featured item this issue is a daguerreotype of Thomas Wentz, a great-grandson of Peter and Rosanna Wentz. A daguerreotype is the earliest type of photograph, taken on a silvered copper plate. They were frequently mounted in small cases to protect the surface from being scratched. This daguerreotype of Thomas Wentz is in excellent condition because of the protection provided by its case. It is about 150 years old, dating from the mid-1800s. thanks to Rich and Jayne Poole for the donation of this wonderful photographic piece of Wentz family history.

We are equally grateful for the following recent donations:

- A glass compote from the Schultz family, donated by Mary Hitchner
- Copy photos of members of the Schultz and Bobb families, donated by Suzanne Bobb
- Family and Domestic Life of Pennsylvania Germans in the Eighteenth Century and

Fraktur: Art and Artifact, given to the library by their author, Lisa Minardi

- *Cider Hard and Sweet*, given to the library by Dianne Cram
- The Best Poor Man's Country; Material Culture, Spring 1994; and Wentz's Collection of Homemade Recipes, given to the library by Mary Porter
- Restoring American Gardens, given to the library by Rich and Jayne Poole
- *The Compleat Housewife*, given to the library by Liz Allen



A photo of the Thomas Wentz daguerreotype

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#### Building Connections (Continued from page 1)

did not exist because of the house, but rather the house existed because of the farm. What were the daily tasks of an 18<sup>th</sup> century farmer and his family, and where were these labors performed? In identifying these functions, a list of support structures, or outbuildings, was formed that would lend themselves to interpreting these missing **connections**.

This year, three of these buildings, a necessary, woodshed, and smokehouse, will become a part of our expanding interpretation. While the need for a necessary in the 18<sup>th</sup> century is apparent, many visitors, especially younger ones, have never seen one. The woodshed was used on a daily basis, storing the firewood needed for preparing three meals a day, heating the home, candle-making, soapmaking, laundry operations, etc. Also stored in a woodshed would be things like spare roof shingles, lumber and supports for the garden, and the tools needed for cutting and splitting wood. The smokehouse will be reconstructed on its original site discovered in last year's archeological excavations. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the smokehouse was one of the most valuable support structures on a farm. Meats and fish preserved by smoking in the late fall of the year saw the family through the winter into the following spring. Surplus smoked meats could be safely transported for sale or barter. Adding a smokehouse to our interpretations will provide opportunities for expanding our food ways programs.

Beginning in July, construction, funded by the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society, commenced



Master stone mason Keith Childs building the foundation for the woodshed

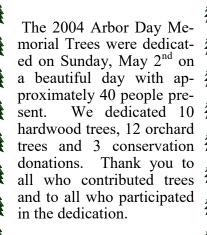
on these buildings. Many months of planning and meetings with county officials went into the development of this project. A proposal for the endeavor was prepared and approved by the Montgomery County Commissioners. (Many thanks to county officials, Howard Gross and Steve Nelson, for moving the project up the ladder.)

Acting as general contractor for the project will be Norman T. Glass. Norm is a well-respected expert in the field of historic restoration and reconstruction. His accomplishments are too numerous to list here. He was also of indispensable help during the design process.

Three small buildings - each with a large potential impact on the visitor experience. In the future, we hope to build other structures to connect farm and home and, thereby, build **connections** to the past.

He who calls what has vanished back into being, enjoys a bliss like that of creating.

Barthold Niebuhr





#### **Calendar of Events**

Apr.-Oct. Millbrook Society Archeological Digs

at PWF. 10:00-4:00 on the following Saturdays: 7/31, 8/14, 8/28, 9/11,

9/25, 10/16

July-Dec. Farmstead Exhibit: From Moo to

Ewe -Meat Preparation & Preservation

in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

Sept. 13-17 Trip to Boston Massachusetts Area

Sept. 17 Volunteer Picnic, 6:30-9:00.

Oct. 16 Laerenswaert Colonial Crafts Festival

10:00-4:00.

Oct. 20 Fall Dinner Meeting at Schwenkfelder

Church, 6:00 p.m.

Oct. 30 Colonial Pretzel Making, 10:00-3:00.

Nov. Day Trip to Wheaton Village, NJ.

Details to be announced.

Nov. 20 Mincemeat for the Season,

10:00-3:00.

Dec. 4 Candlelight Tour.

All events are at the Farmstead unless otherwise noted.

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## President's Letter

By Dick Anderl

We have received many positive comments about the new "colorized" Wentz Post from our members. Thanks to Dianne Cram and to Howard Gross for arranging for us to have it done by the County Print Shop.

I would like to thank Dave Correale for his efforts as editor of the Wentz Post since January of 2002. He helped make the Post an excellent newsletter. Dave has asked that he be relieved of his duties as editor due to constraints on his available time.

We have been fortunate enough to obtain the assistance of two fine Ursinus College students who will be taking over the editor position. Whitney Roper is an English major, with a Communications minor, entering her senior year. Maureen McCarthy is an English major entering her sophomore year. I am confident they will continue the tradition Dave has established and that we will be seeing a continually and creatively enhanced Wentz Post.

Dave Correale also created our website at <a href="https://www.PeterWentzFarmsteadSociety.org">www.PeterWentzFarmsteadSociety.org</a>,. Again, Dave has requested we find a replacement for him. Anyone with web related skills who would like to assist us should contact me at 610 584-1465.

## THEY'RE GETTING HITCHED!

Our own bauer boy farmer Jay Ryan has popped the question to his lovely sweetheart, Robin Forbes and now they are planning their wedding for next May here at the Farmstead. This is truly a match made on the farm... Both Jay and Robin began their association with Peter Wentz Farmstead as children in Colonial Craft Camp. Jay came back to the farm to work after college. Robin was a part of our Apprentice Program throughout her high school years and continued as a volunteer during college. She has just graduated from Juniata College this past spring. Their lovely romance began two years ago while Robin was helping us out during her summer vacation. The staff, Society and Annabel are all delighted with the good news.



Robin Forbes and Jay Ryan

Congratulations and best wishes to Robin and Jay!

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# **Scholarships Awarded**

By Carol Berardelli

The Peter Wentz Farmstead Society and its Scholarship Committee happily presented awards at Market Fair Day to five qualified and talented students. The Albert T. and Elizabeth R. Gamon Scholarship Fund made awards available to two students whose intended courses of study include the mandatory American History and related majors. They are Amanda Mace, a graduate of Perkiomen Valley High School, who will attend Millersville University as a history major and Miranda Vargas, graduate of Methacton High School, who will study archaeology/anthropology at the University of Maryland.

Through the Gamon Fund three additional awards were made to students who also qualified academically and have volunteered at the Farmstead. They include Lisa Minardi, a graduate of Ursinus College, who will be doing post graduate work in the Winterthur Museum Program in Early American Culture, Lauren Clauser, Perkiomen Valley High School, who will attend Rider College majoring in communications and Monica Wentz, Souderton High School who will attend the University of Delaware as an art and music The scholarship committee was very pleased to honor all of these students for their accomplishments and make available to them awards in amounts ranging from \$500.00 to \$1000.00. We were also pleased to be able to recognize those who gave of their time and talents to the Farmstead and look forward to all scholarship opportunities through our program in 2005.



Carol Berardelli, Scholarship Committee Chair and recipients Lisa Minardi, Miranda Vargas, Lauren Clauser, Monica Wentz and Amanda Mace

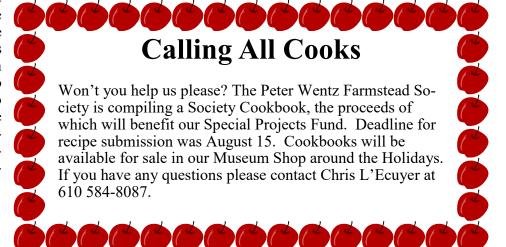
# Thanks to the Gaudy Dutch Questers

(continued from page 1)

on behalf of the Farmstead.

The Questers are an international organization founded in 1944 to further the knowledge and collection of antiques and to encourage the preservation and restoration of historic landmarks. There are 109 chapters in Pennsylvania.

A THANK YOU also goes out to King's Furniture on West Schuylkill Road, Pottstown for allowing a 10% discount on the price of the chairs.



Summer Fun at the Farmstead-Colonial Day Camp 2004

By Kimberly D. Praria

As the morning sun began to rise, I felt pangs of anxiety over my first day as the director of Colonial Day Camp 2004. I, along with many others, had worked strenuously for six months to make this year's camp a great experience. The hard work would be tested when the children arrived.

This year the campers learned about a variety of topics from the seventeen craftspeople commissioned throughout the week. They mastered cooking on the open-hearth and eagerly awaited Friday when they could taste the fruits of the week's labors. They studied various textile-related crafts and tried their hands at weaving on the large loom in the house. The campers learned some elementary German, wrote using a quill pen, hammered nails into their personal miniature blanket chest, and produced redware mugs. They learned about apprenticeships and the lives of colonists and Native peoples during the colonial period.

Later in the week they rehearsed skits using shadow puppets they created, tried their feet at country dancing, and learned how to braid rye straw. Most had no trouble with a scavenger hunt inside the house, except for some of the veteran campers who thought it too easy, only to find they had noted the incorrect answers. Eleanor Bittle arrived on Friday with lap tape looms warped and ready for each camper to create a length of woven tape. To prepare for the historical foods banquet on Friday, the kids produced butter and learned about the historical uses of herbs. The highlight of the week was Friday afternoon when each child received ten replica colonial dollars to bid on stuffed animals, pottery, collectible pieces, and various other items.

As the last child left the tent Friday afternoon, I felt sure that everyone had a good time. I also know that I could not have survived without the skill of the craftspeople and the previous camp experience of the fifteen Apprentices who made it such a wonderful week. Thank all of you so very much!



Colonial interpreter John Gras shows the campers how to produce items using period-style tools.

If you are off to Philadelphia this morning And wish to prove the truth of what I say, I pledge my word you will find The pleasant land behind Unaltered since Red Jacket rode that way.

Still the pine woods scent the noon,
Still the catbird sings his tune,
Still autumn sets the maple forest blazing,
Still the grapevine through the dusk
Flings her soul compelling musk,
Still the fireflies in the corn make night amazing!

They are there, there, there with earth immortal, citizens I give you friendly warning, The things that truly last when men and times have passed They are all in Pennsylvania this morning.

Rudyard Kipling

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## What Makes a Chair a Windsor?

By Dianne M. Cram

When the First Continental Congress met in Philadelphia in 1774, Windsor armchairs were the furnishings on which the delegates sat in Carpenters' Hall. Thomas Jefferson is said to have sat in a Philadelphia Windsor he penned the first draft of the Declaration of Independence. A bit later, in 1796, George Washington purchased, from a Philadelphia chair maker, twenty-seven bow back Windsor side chairs for use at Mount Vernon. Windsor furniture including chairs, settees, stools, tables and stands was widely popular throughout the colonies at the time of the American Revolution. It was versatile, designed to accommodate adults and children, to be used indoors and out, found in modest country homes as well as in the grand houses in cities and used in public buildings and private residences. Although this furniture style traces its roots back to England it is quintessentially American, perhaps the most popular style of furniture to be produced from the mid-eighteenth century on.

The question of where Windsor chairs originated is often answered with a story about King George II of England. While on a foxhunt the King took shelter from the weather in a simple home, where by a blazing hearth fire he sat upon a wooden chair with a single plank of wood for a seat and spoke like sticks that were set into holes drilled into the seat to support the back. The king was so amazed with such a humble but comfortable piece of furniture that he ordered several made from the same pattern to be used at Windsor Castle. The royal origins of the Windsor chair may be only legendary, however, we know that in the 1720s and 1730s

Windsor chairs became extremely fashionable. Details from prints made during that time show Windsor style chairs being used both indoors and as garden furniture. As the production of such chairs increased due to demand, many chairs were being made in London, hence the name may derive from the fact that these were chairs that could be bought at Windsor.

In the American colonies during the first half of the 18 1h century London was setting the style. Those who could afford it looked to London for all the latest fashions from clothing to wallpaper. Green painted Windsor chairs were so popular in London as garden furniture that colonists, who could afford to, would have the same in their gardens. Early inventories show Windsor chairs being shipped to Philadelphia in the 1720s and 1730s. American craftsmen soon began imitating the style using a variety of native wood and the painted Windsor chairs became affordable to most people. The earliest known advertisement for a Windsor chair maker in Philadelphia was in the Pennsylvania Gazette in 1748 stating that David Chambers of Plumb Street was making Windsor chairs. By the 1760s Windsor style was so popular that it became economically feasible for craftsmen to make Windsor chairs exclusively.

Windsor chairs come in a variety of styles mostly described by the shape of the back: Combback, sack-back, fan-back, bowback, rod-back, continuous-arm chairs, and writing-arm chairs. Turnings on the legs, arm posts and back spindles vary as does the decorative carving or lack of such on the crest rails and handholds. But what denotes the chair as a



A Windsor Chair

Windsor is the form - a single plank seat with the legs, arm posts and back spindles set into the seat in drilled holes. Green paint was favored on 18th century chairs.

Red, gray, yellow, and black became popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and many old chairs were painted over to give them a new look. Later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century it became fashionable to strip the paint and varnish the exposed wood. Finding a chair with early paint intact is rare and truly valuable.

We are fortunate to have a variety of early Windsor chairs in the collection at the Farmstead. Come by for a closer look and learn more about the simple beauty and practicality of these fine American chairs. And the Farmstead library has a number of good reference books on Windsor style.

Information for this article was gathered from: Santore, Charles, *The Windsor Style in America, volumes I and II*, (Philadelphia, Courage Books, 1997).

## Administrator's Letter

By Dianne Cram

It's summertime again - my favorite time of year at the Farmstead. There are so many wonderful moments of summer to treasure: The soft air full of sweet scents; cool, green shady spots that lure us out and away from our tasks; Queen Anne's Lace and Chicory gracing the fencerows; the feel of dew wet grass on bare feet; the camaraderie of everyone working together to help bring in the hay crop, the rolling distant thunder that promises to cool down a hot afternoon... Undoubtedly those who cared for this farm before us, the Wentz and Schultz families, savored the very same.

Preserving and recreating the history and life of this farm and all its treasures is our commitment. Therefore, I am so pleased to announce that the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society is making it possible for us to further recreate the historic scene of this farm. We have just begun reconstruction of three very essential buildings that would have supported farm life activities - a smokehouse, woodshed and the very "necessary" privy. Not only will these structures become an integral part

of the Farmstead's landscape, they give us the opportunity to more accurately interpret the life of this farm. This is a great step forward for the Farmstead. During its long history this farm was constantly active and undergoing changes, now, with the wonderful cooperation and support from the PWFS we are able to bring new life to the site. We should see completion of this first phase of reconstruction in early fall, and will then move ahead with our future plans that will continue to help us portray the life this Pennsylvania German farm.

We were so pleased with the wonderful attendance we had for the Shultz Family reception that was held on June 27th. Over forty descendants of Melchior and Salome Schultz gathered to share memories and information about their family. We have resolved to bring the history of the Schultz family's 175 years at this farm into focus, their long contribution towards the preservation of this farm cannot be overlooked.

Thank you to all who work so hard to support this wonderful site. It is apparent that the treasures of this farm are very important to so many.

#### The Peter Wentz Kitchen Garden

By Janet Riemer

The next time you are at the Farmstead I hope you take the time to walk through the garden. We have 8 dedicated volunteers that come out every Wednesday night, 6 – 8 PM, to work in the garden. The job of preparing the beds, planting flowers, herbs and seeds is not a chore when you have many hands working. There has been enough rain this year, so every thing in the garden looks great. Many thanks to our dedicated garden crew members: Donna Armstrong, Fred and Mary Bookheimer, Steve Botta, Melanie Kilgannon, Paul Menard, Janet Riemer, and Annette Willinger

The kitchen garden in full bloom

# **PWFS Business Sponsorships**

The Peter Wentz Farmstead Society has developed a new membership program for business firms to participate in helping us fulfill our mission statement goals of education and preservation. The business membership levels are:

•	Business Friend	\$100
•	Business Sponsorship	\$250
•	Corporate Sponsorship	\$1,000
•	Presidential Sponsorship	\$2,000
•	Executive Sponsorship	\$5,000

We welcome our first two new Business Sponsorship

members:

Eastern Environmental Contractors, Inc. The Garis Agency

Our thanks to Anne Condon, Chris L'Ecuyer and Fred Reim for developing this new program and membership brochure, and to Janice Muller for obtaining our first two members.

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#### **Familiar** Faces

By Sally Graybill

Dessa Clauser has been a Peter Wentz volunteer since 1977 and has given over 1800 hours of her time to the Farmstead. Always cheerful and conscientious, she serves as an interpreter on alternating Wednesday mornings. Dessa especially likes meeting visitors and talking with them about her favorite subject, history. She enjoys reading and traveling in her spare time. Dessa and her husband, Dick, are regular participants in PWFS trips where they have made good friends. Granddaughters, Lauren, Stephanie, and Michelle have all participated in Wentz Summer Camp and currently serve as Farmstead Apprentices. Dessa fondly remembers the slide show that was shown to Farm-



Dessa Clauser

stead visitors and would like to have an updated version available for current use.

The Society is fortunate to have the Clauser family as members. Thank you so much for your generous gifts of time and talent.

#### Peter Wentz Farmstead Society Board

President Vice President Treasurer Recording Sec. Corresp. Sec. Financial Sec.

Dick Anderl Anne Condon Ruth Guimond Christine L'Ecuyer Darlene Bentley Jerry McAndrew

#### Trustees

Bill Ditter Janice Muller Richard Poole Peter Roman Connie Walsh Michael Wentz

#### Committee Chairs

Building Capital Campaign Paul Bartle Camp Decorative Arts Events Finance Membership Museum Shop Scholarship Ways & Means

Dick Clauser Sally Graybill Elizabeth Gamon Richard Poole Jerry McAndrew Donna Armstrong Phyllis Yergey Carol Berardelli Elizabeth Gamon

#### Mission Statement

The mission of the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society is to preserve and interpret the 18th century Pennsylvania German farmstead established by the Wentz and Schultz families, which is now on the National Register of Historic Places. The Society's goal is to stimulate public interest and support the site's heritage through educational programs and public events focusing on the architecture, crafts, customs, and furnishings of the period.

# **Schultz Reception A Success**

By Morgan McMillan

On a sunny, breezy Sunday in June the Peter Wentz Farmstead hosted a reception for Schultz descendents in conjunction with the exhibit of Schultz family artifacts in our visitor's center. The Schultz family lived at the Farmstead and farmed the land for 175 years. Over forty Schultz descendents came to see the exhibit and enjoy each others' company. In addition to viewing the exhibits and swapping stories, guests at the reception looked through old family photographs and helped fill in a large family tree. An exhibit panel will be in the visitor's center which depicts the Schultz and Wentz genealogies. Tours of the house provided a great opportunity for us to learn more about the house from people who had lived there before Montgomery County acquired the property.

Thank you to all who attended the reception for sharing your memories with us. We look forward to having similar events in the future.



Shultz descendants enjoying the reception



#### Membership in the Peter Wentz Farmstead Society

Our Society continues to grow, and if you are not already a member, please join us. There are two meetings a year which feature speakers and/or slides and movies on subjects of historical interest. Your membership fee entitles you to discounts on our day trips and overnight excursions to historical sites, discounts on selected museum shop purchases, and a subscription to our newsletter. Join us in the worthwhile project of preserving the 18th century way of life at the Farmstead. The PWFS is registered as a 501(c)(3), not for profit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

Please Print:	Date				
Name		Phone			
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Address		E-mail			
(Street)	(Town and State) (Z	ip)			
Check if: ☐ Wentz descendant ☐ Schultz descendant					
Check one: ☐ New member ☐ Please renew my membership					
Check one:       \$10.00       Apply my additional donation to the fund checked below:         ☐ Individual					
Additional donation:  Total amount enclosed:  Please contact me concerning volunteer a	Please make chec Peter Wentz Fari P.O. Bo Worcester, Pa.	mstead Society x 240			

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