2022 Rebecca Lukens Award Recipient Announced
Our Mission
The National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum is a not-for-profit educational institution whose mission is to promote an understanding of the iron and steel history of Coatesville, Chester County, Southeastern Pennsylvania and the region to audiences of all ages and interests by collecting, preserving, exhibiting and interpreting iron and steel's history and its relationship to the region and nation beyond.

President's Message
Looking out the window of my office, I can see the signs of spring emerging. The purple grape hyacinths and Turkish mountain ground lily Glory of the Snow or “Chionodoxa forbesii” have finally emerged and are carpeting the southwest corner of the Graystone property. The daffodils along S. 1st Ave. provide a nice bright yellow contrast to the late winter gray days. And finally the magnolias are beginning to bud and will be in their pink glory soon. All of this in anticipation of returning to normal for our guests as we resume a full schedule of tours and events.

We are pleased to announce Dr. Lorna Stuart as the 2022 Rebecca Lukens award recipient. She exhibits many of the qualities of Rebecca as she has managed a health clinic in Phoenixville for over 20 years. We look forward to celebrating Dr. Stuart in May with a cocktail reception and award ceremony.

Executive Director’s Report
The museum is open for tours! General admission includes videos and the Labor Exhibit at the Lukens Executive Office building for check-in and orientation, the Visitor Center, and the Motor House. The Visitor Center displays the origins of iron and steel making, exhibits of the furnace and the 206” rolling mill, trains and ships, and space (which is an upcoming exhibit). The motor house exhibits include a test lab, emergency vehicles and a submersible, the Guppy made with Lukens steel. Terracina steel.

Terracina and Graystone Mansions can be visited additionally on a tour. Terracina (1849) is furnished with beautiful period pieces and Graystone (1889) has remarkable architecture.

I wish everyone a great spring and I hope to see you here soon.
The 16th annual Rebecca Lukens Award will be presented to Dr. Lorna Stuart, a community-based physician.

Lorna Stuart, a primary care physician, is the founder of a non-profit medical practice to serve families in need in Phoenixville. Known simply as “The Clinic,” the practice relies on a volunteer staff of physicians that offers quality healthcare to the uninsured. In addition to primary care, the Clinic’s services include laboratory tests and a range of specially care, from gynecology and pediatrics to dietetics and counseling services.

Before opening the Clinic twenty years ago, Lorna ran a private medical practice in Phoenixville that had an all-female medical staff and was known for its family-centric flexible hours and outreach to families. Although retired from administrative duties at the Clinic she still volunteers as a physician.

Lorna earns the award in part because her work at the Clinic has been an inspiration to the community. In addition to her leadership in the nonprofit medical field, Lorna has led a life of service that reflects the kind of qualities Rebecca Lukens had in her lifetime.

The Rebecca Lukens Award was established in 2007 by the Graystone Society, the parent of the National Iron and Steel Heritage Museum (NISHM), to recognize individuals who have dedicated their time, talents, and expertise to their community and who exhibit the compassionate qualities of Rebecca Lukens.

Scott G. Huston, NISHM’s president, applauds this year’s choice for the 2022 award. “Dr. Stuart is a modern day example of the traits that Rebecca Lukens exhibited: leadership, resilience, courage, and strategic outlook.”


The National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum is located on the campus of the Lukens National Historic District, at 50 S. 1st Avenue in Coatesville, PA. Easily accessible in the heart of Coatesville and adjacent to the River Walk, NISHM is open five days a week for tours, lectures and educational programs. It draws international crowds to its facility, which educates the public on the people, places, products, and processes of steel making, as well as the importance of educating students in the STEAM discipline (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math).

The 16th annual Rebecca Lukens Award will be presented at a reception in the Lukens National Historic District in May.
The Renovations Continue!

Yes, it may seem that the *Boilerplate* often features a new project, but upkeep and repairs are always part of the story with historic properties. Fortunately, the roofing of Terracina – all 4,400 square-feet – is complete. Thanks to contractor Bill Dunleavy of Wm. M. Dunleavy & Co. in West Chester, we were able to replace the 30 plus years old roof with beautiful (and historically appropriate) cedar shake shingles. Dunleavy’s roofers worked nearly three months, in all kinds of cold weather, but completed the job without a hitch. They are now at work installing copper downspouts, again appropriate to Terracina’s unique Country Gothic architectural style.

Next up: getting bids to install a new slate roof on the carriage house of Graystone Mansion. This circa 1889 building – a few longtime Coatesville residents may recall – served as the city jail during the years from 1939 to 1992 when the mansion functioned as Coatesville’s City Hall.
Two other projects are still in the planning stages include paving and several window restorations – both that address significant safety issues and visual appeal. The latter project is slated for the 120" mill and will be partly funded by a state grant. Architect Carol Quigley, who specializes in historic building rehabs with the West Chester firm of Patterhn Ives, is shown with a worker on the day they examined the mill's numerous windows and drew up specs. (See the sketches in the photo collage.)

The historic mill was built by the US Navy during World War II to produce 120-inch wide plates used in the manufacture of our nation’s battleships, aircraft carriers, submarines, tanks, and more. Perhaps due to the top-notch building practices of the 1940s era, the wooden mullions of most of the windows were deemed to be in perfect shape. At least 17 of the windows, many from the side of the building facing the railroad tracks, will be recycled, and placed on the side facing the 9/11 memorial. There were fewer windows with broken glass on the railroad side and so the glass will also be re-used whenever possible.

As the photo to the right suggests, the poor condition of the current old asphalt and gravel drive leading to the 120" mill (as well as to the new Visitor Center) is one reason why paving is on the “to-do” list. Aside from creating a safe place for visitors to walk, the new drive will be a welcome addition to all the restoration work underway.
2022 Lecture Series Kicks Off

NISHM’s 2022 lecture series opened in January with a celebration of Rebecca Lukens’ birthday as Susannah Brody presented a living history presentation based on Rebecca’s writings. In February Stacy Jones, Kameen Thompson, and Harry Lewis talked about working in a steel mill for Coatesville Steel: The Black Experience. Rounding out the first half of our 2022 lectures was Coatesville Steel: The Women’s Experience where Nicole McNeil, Deb Kellerher, Joanne Voelcker, Clothilde Ferguson, and Lois Sullivan related stories of working for a steel company from a female’s perspective.

Recordings of all these programs, and more, can be viewed on the videos area of our website www.steelmuseum.org.

Upcoming Events

Volunteer Day
April 23rd
10 am to 3 pm

Rebecca Lukens Award Presentation
The date in May will be announced soon

Town Tours & Village Walks
July 21, 5:30 to 7 pm

Coatesville Remembers 9/11
September 11, 8:30 to 11 am
The collections of The National Iron & Steel Heritage Museum are broad and varied. Part of the Museum’s mission is to “collect, preserve and exhibit” items that are a part of the history of iron and steel, not only in Coatesville and Pennsylvania but throughout the nation. Having such a broad mission inevitably results in a wide variety of collections. We have items as small as a commemorative coin and as big as a two-person deep-sea submersible vessel.

But as varied as our collections are, there may be none more personal or powerful than the ID badge and hard hat of a steel worker. These items served very basic, practical purposes. The one identifies an individual as an employee of a steel mill and the other protects their head. In our collection we have over 750 ID badges. They come from the length and breadth of the nation and throughout the 20th century.

Museum member Ann Fayles acquired and donated 99% of the badges in our collection. The majority of these badges feature a photo of the employee. Each of these badges puts a human face on the history of the steel industry in America.

The hardhats are also very important artifacts. The hardhats, while all relatively similar, can each tell an individual story. We have hats with attached protective glasses, ones with names on them, some are very beaten up and scratched and others seem brand new. Many of the hats are decorated with stickers representing events and organizations important to the hat’s owner. We even have fluorescent pink hardhats and a hat worn by the late Senator John Heinz.

Many of the hardhats and employee badges are currently on display in the Lukens Executive Office Building. Stop in and look into the eyes of the American steel worker.
MEET THE MUSEUM

Cody Orsheky & David Ferguson

The adage, “no day is the same,” is a familiar theme for our building maintenance technicians, Cody Orsheky and David Ferguson. They work part-time, but there’s a lot to do with NISHM’s expansive grounds and historic buildings.

A Coatesville native, Cody has a primary job at the nearby Fairview Cemetery and then arrives at NISHM prepared to do everything from interior maintenance and “curb appeal” improvements to finding new homes for captured groundhogs.

Sharon Tandarich, NISHM’s building systems manager, says two workers are especially needed for all the physical work, such as moving donated items to Terracina. Cody and David also prepare the grounds for events at Graystone and of course, there is the popular Christmas train display to set up.

Their latest project is building shelves for collections storage in the attic of the Lukens office building.

Maura Gilligan

A native of Connecticut, Maura Gilligan recently joined the NISHM staff as a communications associate. She plans to work remotely from her home in Bucks County, but like many WFH (work from home) people these days, she plans to work in person at least one day a week.

Her new job includes promoting our events and exhibits on social media and handling NISHM memberships. Maura brings a diverse background to the job. After earning degree in psychology from York College of Pennsylvania, she worked in counseling and later with nonprofits.

Beginning in 2004, Maura has worked as a medical and dental receptionist.

She has lived the past 25 years in Warrington where she raised her son, now 23 and in the U.S. Coast Guard, and daughter, 24, who is pursuing a career in sports marketing.

In her spare time, Maura volunteers at both an outreach nonprofit and a Labrador rescue group.
Thank You To Our Sponsors

NISHM Communications Outreach

Communications Outreach: YouTube
As of 2/28/2022

Communications Outreach: Facebook
2/3/2022 to 3/2/2022

Reach - Number of people who saw any of your posts at least once.
Engagement - Any action that people take on your Facebook page, the most common are likes, comments and shares.
Thank you to all of our members who joined or renewed from November 1, 2021 to March 18, 2022

New Members
(Bold Denotes 120” Mill Club Member & Above)

Renewing Members
(* Donates 5+ Consecutive Years, Bold Denotes 120” Mill Club Member & Above)

Marsha Enghofer

David Holloway

Fred Nisula

Cheryl Baker
Louis Beccaria*
Norman & Polly Bernard*
John Bertram
Douglas Blount*
Cheryl Boose*
Lewis & Geraldine Branson
Tony Buck*
**Gregory Cary**
Fran Ciarrocchi*
Charles Pennock Collings*
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Giuseppe D’Angelo
**Sherry Deets**
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Kathy Franciscus*
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Chip & Linda Huston
Jean Jones
**Bill & Laurie Keen**
Fred & Becky Kelso
Ross Kershey*
Nancy Kirchgasser
Janet Klein
**Dale & Betsy Krapf**
Harry Krieder*
Ed Lawrence*
Clair & Charlene Leaman*
Jeff & Alice Lohr
Vonie Long
Etha McDowell & Jim Sumner*
David Morris
David Moser*
Barry Mowday*
**Karen Neuhauser**
Albert Nunn*
David Nunn*
Peter & Ruth Nunn*

Steven Nunn*
Bob Oleseski*
Irene Pashesnik*
Peter & Phyllis Patukas*
John Pawlowski*
Dick Pennock*
Joe & Virginia Pitts*
Dana Purvis*
Cynthia Quinn
Sam & Mary Radziviliuk*
Rosetta Rambo
Mary Ann Shumway*
Sam & Joan Slokoms*
**Rich & Patricia Smith**
Bob & Illaria Steele*
**Lewis Thayer**
Donna Trace*
Tom & Mary Jo Tracy
Don Van Horn*
David Weiss
Trudy Wendt*
Melinda & Bob Williams
Bill & Elva Wright*
Howard & Chris Wright*
Ken Wyerman*

WE ARE GREATLY APPRECIATIVE OF ALL OF OUR MEMBERS’ SUPPORT!

WE COULDN’T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!
Over the years, our most celebrated figure, Rebecca Lukens, has been recognized as one of America’s most outstanding early entrepreneurs. During her tenure running the steel mill from 1825 until her retirement in 1847, her innovations earned her the title “America’s first female industrialist. More recently, Rebecca has been recognized by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History – both in an online article and the museum’s blog, “O Say Can You See.” Rebecca is one of eight businesswomen (and the earliest) profiled in the article, “The Only One in the Room: Women Achievers in Business and the Cost of Success.”

Also of interest is the Frick Museum in Pittsburgh. Not to be confused with the Frick Collection in NY, the Frick Museum has a campus similar to NISHM’s in that there are several historic structures to see. The centerpiece is the homestead of Henry Clay Frick. It tells the story of steel industry during the Gilded Age, when Clay joined the “Steel King,” Andrew Carnegie, in an unlikely partnership.