



# CHRIS, Inc.

CULTURAL HERITAGE RESEARCH SERVICES, INC.

ARCHAEOLOGY, RESEARCH & HISTORIC PRESERVATION

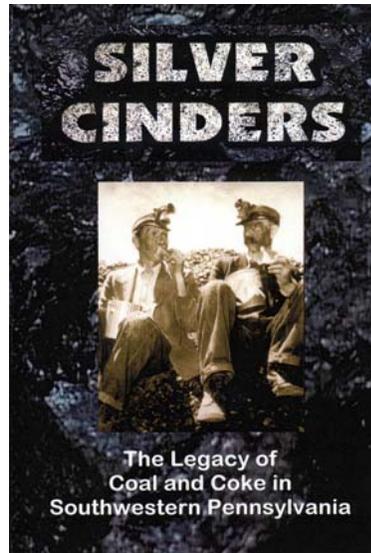
*“Termining the program ‘excellent,’ the PHMC has recommended it be distributed ‘as widely as possible.’”*

# HORIZONS

## Silver Cinders: The Legacy of Coal & Coke in Southwestern Pennsylvania

CHRIS, Inc. is pleased to announce the February 2000 release of the video documentary *Silver Cinders: The Legacy of Coal and Coke in Southwestern Pennsylvania*. This hour-long program tells the dramatic story of two famously married industries—bituminous coal mining and coke production—which dominated southwestern Pennsylvania’s economic and cultural landscape for a remarkable century beginning in the mid-1800s. CHRIS and Branch Valley Video Productions created the video documentary in cooperation with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC) to satisfy mitigation requirements under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. Production of the video was made possible through funding from the United States Department of the Interior, Office of Surface Mining Reclamation and Enforcement (OSM) through the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection’s Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation.

The program weaves together historic still and motion picture photography, maps, illustrations, first-person accounts, contemporary footage, expert witnesses, and regional commentators to describe and illustrate the extraordinary rise and decline of coal mining and coke produc-



tion in and around the famed Connellsville Coking District of Fayette and Westmoreland Counties. In telling this story, the program touches upon such topics as the advent of beehive coking, the expansion of the region’s steel industry, the turn-of-the-century deluge of eastern and southern European immigrants, patch town life, labor struggles, advances in mining and coke production technology, environmental devastation, and modern reclamation efforts.

In addition to providing information about the historical importance of the coal and coke industries, *Silver Cinders* demon-

strates how creative mitigation efforts, when well planned, can result in a product with high appeal to the local community. In this case, challenges involved coming up with a product or products that would incorporate (not duplicate) earlier research efforts and also be of interest to the area’s residents. Individual histories had already been written for many of the region’s mines and mining communities, thus making individual histories or even a compilation of them redundant. To satisfy the mitigation requirements of the project, CHRIS recommended a video documentary which would look at the overall industry and its impact to the region, using informa-

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## President's Corner

Comments from Ken Basalik



**Serendipity:** n. [fr. its possession by the heroes of the Per fairy tale *The Three Princes of Serendip*] the gift of finding valuable or agreeable things not sought for.

In May 1981, several archaeologists and I were told to find something else to do “for a couple of months” until new work would start. Seeing the lay-off as an opportunity, two of those archaeologists had big plans, to follow their dreams and start a cultural resource management company. Unfortunately, they didn’t want to do it together—they each wanted to start a company with me. Against my better judgment, I reluctantly agreed to be a shareholder in a new firm with them. My only rationale for this move at the time was that I believed that the firm wasn’t likely to last long, but it might keep me employed while I returned to graduate school to complete my doctoral degree.

Nineteen years later, I am amazed. Cultural Heritage Research Services, Inc. which posted less than \$30 thousand in revenue during 1981, surpassed the \$1.5 million dollar mark in 1999. Originally a company consisting of three archaeologists, CHRS has grown to include 28 full time employees including fourteen archaeologists, six preservation specialists, three historians, two editors, a graphic artist and office staff. Originally only providing Phase I and Phase II Archaeological Surveys, we now perform Phase I, II and III Archaeological Surveys, Historic Resources Surveys, and we prepare historic and architectural contexts, Determination of Effect Reports, Section 4(f) documents and

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## PennDOT Contract a Milestone For CHRS

After nearly two decades worth of experience working as a subconsultant with various engineering firms holding contracts with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), CHRS, Inc. is pleased to announce its first direct contract with PennDOT. CHRS has been a prime contractor for numerous clients in the past, but never for PennDOT. Awarded in December 1999, the contract is a five year, \$1,000,000.00, open-end agreement. The open-end agreement is for cultural resources work within District 4-0, which encompasses the northeastern corner of Pennsylvania.

As part of the agreement CHRS will provide all necessary professional historic and archaeological services, work material and equipment necessary to collect, analyze and organize data, prepare reports and develop mitigation plans as needed for the District. Reports and other written and graphic materials to be prepared are anticipated to include: Phase I, II, and III Archaeological Surveys, Phase II and III Work Plans, Historic Resources Surveys, Determination of Effect Reports, Eligibility Reports, Section 4(f) Reports, 2002 Reports, MOAs, HABS/HAER documentation, Preliminary Cultural Resource Review Forms (PCRRFs), Geomorphology Reports, Mitigation Plans and mitigation documents.

We are eager to show our capabilities as a prime contractor. We feel highly qualified for the work for which we were chosen. In addition to nearly 20 years of experience in cultural resources work, we are widely experienced in indefinite delivery contracts. CHRS has participated in open-end contracts in each of PennDOT’s 11 Engineering Districts as well as in statewide agreements for PennDOT, the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission, the Pennsylvania

Historical and Museum Commission, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, and PECO Energy. We have participated in at least one PennDOT open-end contract each year since the first open-end was awarded in 1985 and we have performed archaeological projects in each county within District 4-0. The largest projects have included the Lackawanna Valley Industrial Highway (LVIH), and the Hallstead/Great Bend Bridge Replacement Project.

Because cultural resources is our livelihood, rather than a small part of a larger organization, we take great care to be up-to-date on all cultural resources issues. We hope that this commitment, along with our experience with a wide array of cultural resources types and situations, our dedication to our work and our 19 years of experience will ensure that this, our “first” PennDOT agreement, is just the first of many.

*CHRS comprises  
three integrated  
divisions:*

*Archaeology,  
Preservation, and  
Research.*

# CREW NEWS

- **CHRS** is pleased to announce the additions of **Jennifer Fyke** (assistant editor), **Sarah Goode** (historic structures), and **Mary Alfson** (historic structures) to our staff.
- **Mary Alfson** recently finished her M.S. thesis, "Point Betsie: the Future of the Great Lakes Lighthouse" and graduated from the University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Fine Arts. **Sarah Goode** received her M.A. in Historic Preservation Planning from Cornell University in January; her thesis title reflected her Ohio upbringing: "A Most Fortunate Agricultural Revolution: the Silo and Dairy Farming in Ohio." **Jennifer Fyke** just earned her BA in English, with a minor in French from Ursinus College.
- **Ken Basalik** and **Anna Andrzejewski** attended the 79th annual Transportation Research Board meeting in Washington, D.C. Ken, who has presented at the last three annual meetings, took a break from presenting.

In addition to highway projects highlighted during the sessions, Anna and Ken picked up pointers on Cultural Resources work approaches to railroads and airports. Ken will again present at TRB's Summer Session in Pittsburgh.

**PAULA MILLER**

- Ice hockey being such a manly sport, **Paula Miller** decided she had to try it. She is now the goalie for a local hockey league and she is looking forward to her first fight on ice.
- **Anna Andrzejewski** and **Nancy Holst** have returned to the classroom, but this time as instructors; both have recently finished teaching at the University of Delaware.
- **Paula Miller** and **Anna Andrzejewski** went to the ACRA (American Cultural Resource Association) conference in Cherry Hill in the fall. There they met



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*"Eminent coal-and-coke authority John Aubrey Enman has called the work 'a fascinating documentary that well and succinctly explains the development and decline of beehive coking.'"*



## Silver Cinders Continued from front page

tion on individual resources as evidence for a larger story. CHRS staff also made use of probably the most valuable resource in the region: its residents. Numerous individuals who had direct and indirect contact with the mining industry were interviewed; their stories, as told on the video, enliven the photographic and documentary evidence and help viewers get an idea what this industry meant historically to the region's occupants.

In the months since its release, *Silver Cinders* has been enthusiastically received by coal-and-coke experts and laypersons alike.

Termining the program "excellent," the PHMC has recommended it be distributed "as widely as possible." Eminent coal-and-coke authority John Aubrey Enman has called the work "a fascinating documentary that well and succinctly explains the development and decline of beehive coking." Representatives of the Coal and Coke Heritage Center on Penn State's Fayette campus, characterizing the program as "beautiful" and "wonderful," have already organized a series of public showings, and they are awaiting the opportunity to distribute retail copies of the program in VHS format. The sponsoring Department of Environmental Protection has made the video available to the public by streaming it

over the Greenworkschannel website at [http://www.greenworkschannel.org/individual\\_family/silver\\_cinders.htm](http://www.greenworkschannel.org/individual_family/silver_cinders.htm).

### Greenworks Channel Web Page

The screenshot shows the GreenWorks Channel website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Home', 'About Us', 'FAQ', 'Contact Us', and 'Search'. Below that, a search bar and a 'Search the Site' button are visible. The main content area features a sidebar with categories like 'Individual/Family', 'Kids', 'Students', 'Educators', 'Farmers', 'Environmental Orgs', 'Business & Industry', and 'Government'. The main content area displays the video 'Silver Cinders: The Legacy of Coal and Coke in Southwestern Pennsylvania'. It includes a 'Play Video' button, a description of the video's content, and contact information for the Coal and Coke Heritage Center. A 'Learn More' section provides additional details about the video's production and availability.

## President's Corner

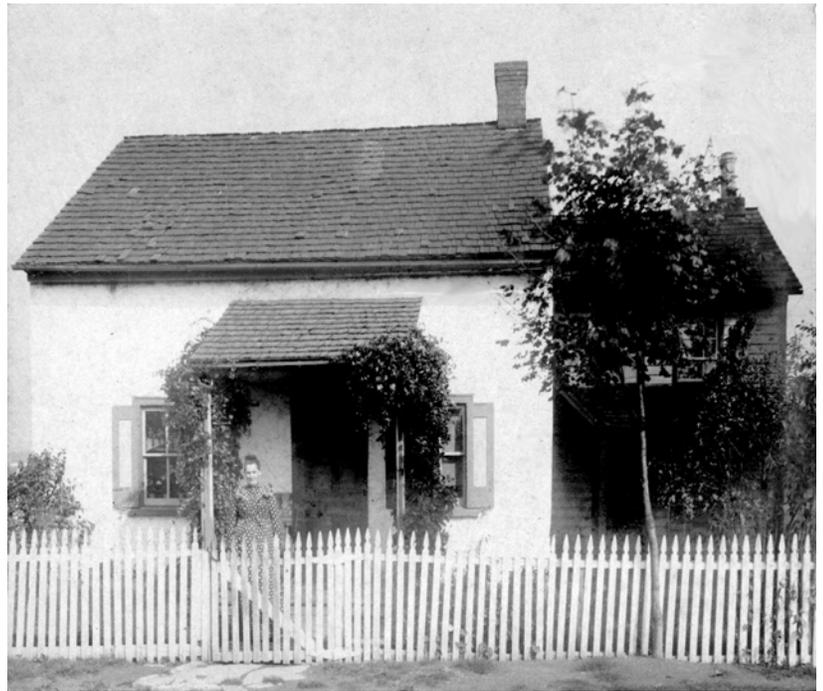
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HABS/HAER documentation. We also now write books, prepare pamphlets, design exhibits, and produce videos.

On the buildings side of the work we have studied numerous bridges, houses, factories, mines, and other buildings and structures. Some were mundane, but others were interesting or even bizarre. On the interesting side have been our studies of resources relating to anthracite and bituminous coal mining, our recordation of a portion of Philadelphia's Market Street Elevated Train (the "El"), and the recordation of the Standard Distiller's building in Baltimore's Inner Harbor. On the bizarre side, the Neo-Egyptian/Neo-Assyrian Temple-style residential house (painted in hot pink) in New Castle County, Delaware has to be at the top of the list.

The archaeologists have also seen a wide variety of projects. Most have been pretty simple, straightforward jobs digging holes at set intervals. Others, like the Great Bend Bridge Replacement Project in Susquehanna County, Pennsylvania or the Barbadoes Island Project in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania have taxed our logistical abilities as we successfully sought to excavate deeply buried prehistoric sites in the floodplains of the Susquehanna and Schuylkill Rivers. Some jobs had extremely interesting components, such as the Contact Period deposits at the Cross Roads Bridge Project in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania; the early nineteenth-century component of the Allen House Site in Christiana, Delaware; and most of the privies excavated in the Fells Point, the Lexington Market, and Inner Harbor portions of Baltimore.

Over the last 19 years we have amassed more equipment and reference material than I could have envisioned when the company was founded. The CHRS library has more than 1800 volumes. We have eighteen networked computers with various software packages in use, and continuous internet access. And, we have the outstanding abilities of our staff which all help to keep CHRS on the "cutting edge" of cultural resources management. While over the years the staff has changed as people pursue different interests or follow different dreams, CHRS is still *organized around a core staff of professionals with extensive experience and broad backgrounds who provide high quality historic preservation services for a wide range of clients*. This statement, which appears in most of our promotional literature, is my dream and is intended to convey the firm's determination to provide high quality work on each project we undertake. The hard work and determination of the CHRS staff help make my dream a reality—that and a little serendipity.



Rachel Sue Keen, daughter of Mary Keen, standing in her front yard, ca. 1898, before her mother "raised the roof."

## The Roof is on Fire

Nancy Holst, of the CHRS staff, presented a paper entitled, "She Raised the Roof": Retrieving the Untold History of an Ordinary House" at the Third National Conference on Women and Historic Preservation held in Washington, D.C., on May 19-21, 2000. Nancy's paper drew on architectural and artifactual evidence as well as oral history and other documentary research compiled by CHRS for a PennDOT sponsored Phase III archaeological study of a nineteenth-century village property in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania: *Leaman Place Bridge Replacement Project, S.R.0030, Section B-16, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, Phase III Archaeological Survey, Good Site (36La1154)* (Basalik, Pickett, Ruth and Holst 2000).

The evidence best illuminated the period from 1898 to 1930, when the property was owned by a woman named Mary Keen. Widowed in 1897, Mary moved into the village dwelling with several adult children from an adjacent tenant farmstead she had shared with her late husband for nearly 25 years. Shortly after she acquired the village property, Mary altered the small house significantly, raising its height from one-and-one-half stories to a full two stories.

These modifications not only provided necessary living space but represented a statement about homeownership and social appearances in a village context. Through her alteration of the house, care of the exterior yards, and maintenance of socially coded interior spaces, Mary actively pursued a material expression of middle-class gentility and respectability while retaining certain farm practices. A mature woman of modest means, Mary also fashioned her own identity as dynamic matriarch of a laboring family. Despite her ordinary circumstances, Mary acted not just as homemaker, but also as homeowner and architect, challenging some of our assumptions about gender norms and gendered spaces.

**NEWS**

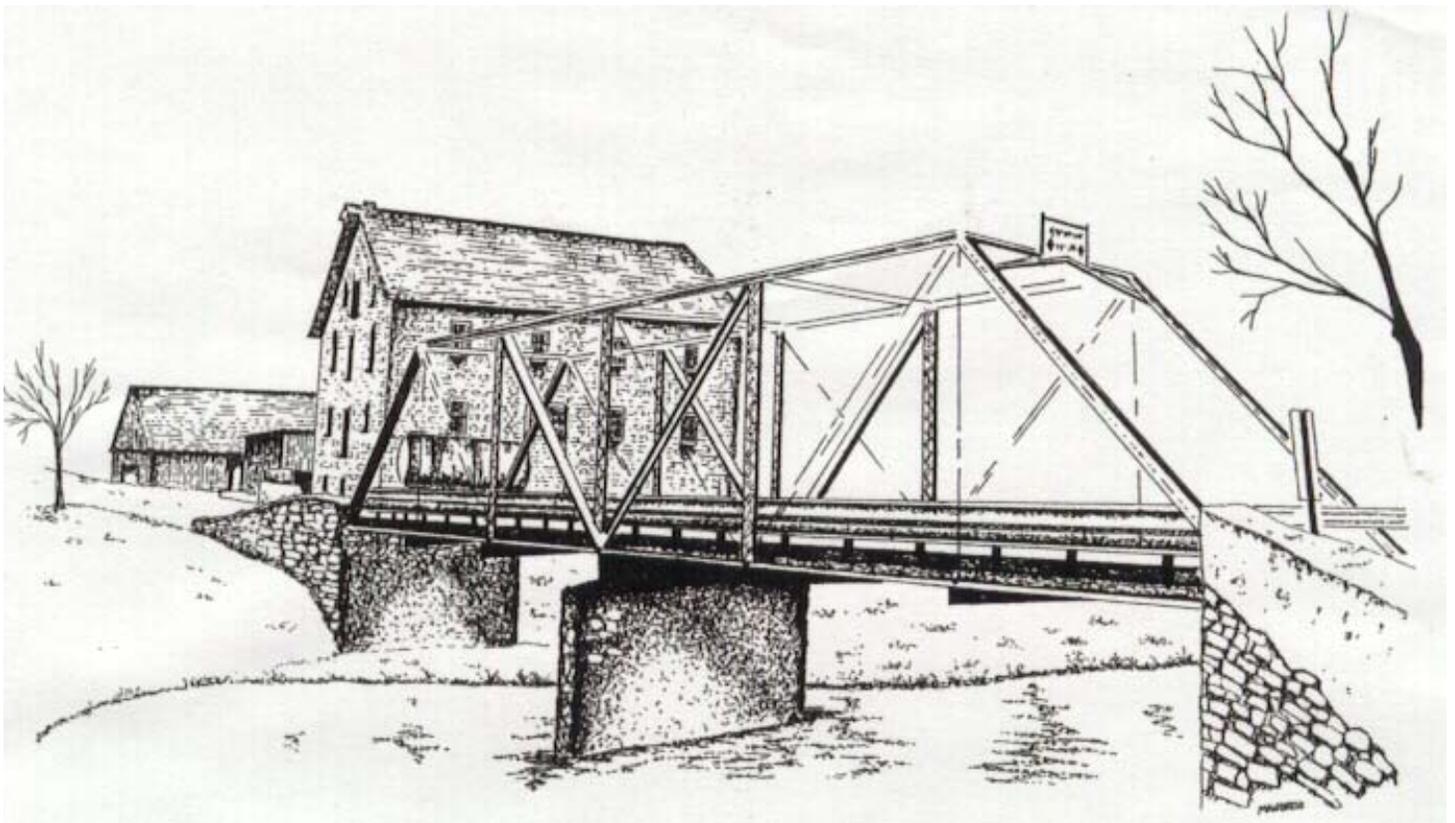
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with cultural resource professionals from around the country and heard presentations about how different people deal with Section 106 & Section 4(f) legislation.

- **Ken Basalik** presented a paper “Settlement and Subsistence in the Contact Period: A Work in Progress Viewed from the Mountains of Dauphin County, Pennsylvania” for the Pennsylvania Archaeological Council Meeting in conjunction with the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology Annual Meeting, in Williamsport, PA on May 5, 2000.
- **Ken Basalik, Nancy Holst, and Mary Alfson** went to a conference at Indiana University, “Byways to the Past: the First Annual Conference on Historic and Archaeological Investigations in Pennsylvania Transportation Projects.” Ken presented a paper with Jamie McIntyre of District 4-0 entitled: “The Lackawanna Valley Industrial Highway: A View from the Anthracite Fields”

- **Paula Miller** presented a paper at the recent MAAC Conference. Her paper, titled, “‘Grandmother Keen was the Ruler of the House’ Gender, Community and Identity in Early Twentieth Century Lancaster County” was the second she’s given in as many years. The conference was also attended by staff archaeologists **Jamie Festante, Alain Kender, Mike Conrow, Sam Trachtenberg, Christy Groben, and Christine Civello**. This same group, along with **Carrie Kelley**, also attended the Society for American Archaeology Conference in Philadelphia.
- **Carrie Kelley and Paula Miller** also recently attended a Military Landscapes Conference, and, indulging in one of her favorite interests, Carrie Kelley went to a forensic pathology conference.

*CHRS has worked in 61 of Pennsylvania's 67 counties, and also in the states of New Jersey, Maryland, Delaware, New York, West Virginia, North Carolina and Virginia*



Drawing of County Bridge #193, by **Joanne Manduzio** of the CHRS Staff. Created for the County Bridge 193 Replacement Project. CHRS, Inc. recently finished a state level recordation of this bridge, prepared by **Laura Black**.



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Mailing Address Line 4  
Mailing Address Line 5



#### **‘Net Value: Web sites of interest**

- [www.chrsinc.com](http://www.chrsinc.com)
- [www.greenworkschannel.org/individual\\_family/silver\\_cinders.htm](http://www.greenworkschannel.org/individual_family/silver_cinders.htm)
- [www.phmc.state.pa.us](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us)
- [www.dot.state.pa.us](http://www.dot.state.pa.us)

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## **CHRS, INC. STAFF PROFILE:**

### **Philip Ruth**

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An employee since 1995, CHRS Director of Research Philip Ruth is also the author of a dozen books on local history, and he is the creative force behind a number of video documentaries, including the one featured on the front page of this newsletter, “Silver Cinders: The Legacy of Coal and Coke in Southwestern Pennsylvania.” Phil enjoys his work: “Knowing why things are the way they are makes a richer life, I think.”

Phil is the father of three children between the ages of 14 and 8, and he lives with them on a Montgomery County farm that has been in his family for nine generations. The quiet setting helps while he researches and writes, and it also provides inspiration for another of his passions—music. Though he has been singing and playing guitar and mountain dulcimer since the age of 13 (and boy, is he tired!), it is only in recent years that he has been performing in public. His next solo performance is scheduled at a

local concerts-in-the-park venue, for an audience expected to number two-to-three thousand persons. “I’m going to try to relax and enjoy it,” he says, “but I suspect I’ll be anything but relaxed. I get nervous enough when there’s only two or three *dozen* people in the audience.”

Always taking care to get the facts right and to find a human story in his writing, Phil likes to create something worthwhile. “I like stories basically, and because they’re about something that already happened, dealing with stories means dealing with history.”



**Philip Ruth**