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October 2025

Jeff Mulkern



Jeff getting a feel for the replica long rifle.

Hi. I'm Jeff Mulkern, a SHHS member. Nearly 30 years ago my eyesight faded completely away due to a degenerative retinal eye disease. Since then, my visits to museums have often been frustrating. Either the exhibits are under glass, or a docent keeps repeating, "don't touch." So, when Tony and Helen asked if my wife Joyce and I would like to tour the Neill Log House, my first question was—Can I touch?

On September 18th, all of us along with Park Ranger Emily met up for a hands-on tour. The Neill Log House affirms—simple and sturdy is often best. Feeling the ends of the logs revealed some of the timbers are quite old and others were inserted as part of the latest renovation.

For the best of country living, the house has two stone hearths—a large open one for cooking and a smaller one for heating. I have no doubt the hearths, along with the sandstone foundation, go back to the original 18th century structure.

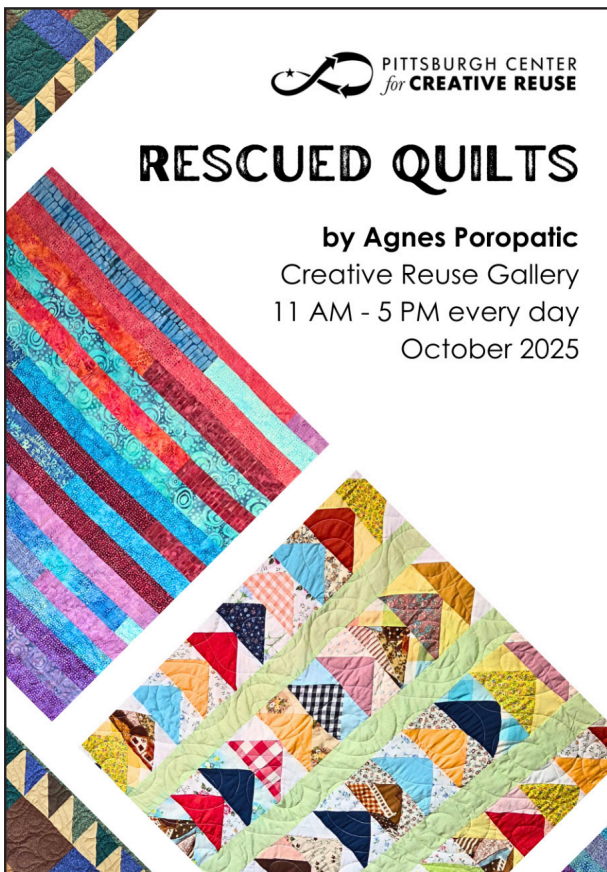
Time did not allow for me to try napping on the rope bed. Maybe on the next tour. The inclusion of a handmade quilt is a very nice touch.

I also got to check out the replica muzzle loader that is one of the artifacts brought to the house to display when it's open. I'm still impressed that anyone could hit a target more than 20 feet away with one of these.

Ranger Emily provided a detailed explanation of the spinning wheel, though I'm not ready to try spinning wool or flax. We then checked out the recent plantings of fruit-bearing trees and shrubs around the house. We must be patient, however. Emily says the pawpaw tree will not start bearing fruit for another five years.

Meanwhile I'm looking forward to the November 9th celebration. Hope to talk to lots of you then.

Rescued Quilt Show at the Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse



In the April 2025 SHHS Newsletter, we featured an article about the quilt and mattress donated to the Neill Log House by SHHS member Agnes Poropatic (*right, with Tony Indovina*).

During the month of October, the Pittsburgh Center for Creative Reuse is presenting **Rescued Quilts**, a show of quilts found, revived, and completed by Agnes, a long-time quilter and Creative Reuse volunteer. A lifelong sewer, Agnes saves and then completes unfinished quilt projects from Creative Reuse, thrift stores, and yard sales. She says, "Sometimes it requires just getting the quilts quilted, while other times it requires taking things apart and sewing them back together. All of the quilts in this show are rescued quilts and are for sale, with the proceeds going to Creative Reuse. If you donated an unfinished quilt, quilt top, or quilt blocks to Creative Reuse, you might see them finished here!"



The majority of the quilts were longarm quilted by Mary Bruinsma. Agnes will be in the gallery answering questions and providing guidance on unfinished quilt projects you may have. Stop by to see her, 11 AM - 2 PM, on the following dates: Wednesdays, October 1, 8, 22, 29. Saturdays, October 11 and 18.