



Drake Well Museum and Park

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NEWS RELEASE
FOR RELEASE UPON RECEIPT

“Drake Well Museum and Park to Host Petroleum Program Series”

On Thursday, October 13, Drake Well Museum and Park and Friends of Drake Well, Inc. will host a presentation by Neil McElwee entitled “The Downer Corry Refinery.” This installment of the museum’s annual Petroleum Program Series, formerly the Heritage Lecture Series, will begin at 6:30 p.m. with light refreshments served at 6:00 p.m. Admission to this special event is \$5.00 for adults (12-64 years), \$4.00 for seniors (65+ years) and Free for children and Friends of Drake Well, Inc. members.

Mr. McElwee’s presentation will highlight the work of Samuel Downer. In the early 1860s, Downer was considered the leading refiner in the United States. He established his first refinery in Boston in 1858, refining coal oil initially, and later petroleum. In 1862, Downer built his first all petroleum refinery in Corry, Pennsylvania. The combined refining production in Boston and Corry made Samuel Downer the largest refiner in the country by early 1863. The Downer Corry Refinery was the most modern of its day.

Mr. McElwee, a resident of Oil City, PA, is a lecturer and published writer on early oil history topics and nineteenth century Victorian architecture. He has authored several books, including *Oil City’s Victorian Houses*; *Oil Creek, The Beginning*; *Standard Oil Men in the Earl Oil Region*; and *The National Transit Co., Standard Oil’s Great Pipeline Company*.

Melissa Mann, Museum Site Administrator, stated, “We are very excited to host Mr. McElwee as part of this year’s Petroleum Program Series. Neil’s knowledge of Pennsylvania’s early petroleum history is extensive, and attendees will thoroughly enjoy the passion he brings to the topic.”

Located off Route 8 south of Titusville, Drake Well Museum and Park is open year round. Fall hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 5:00 p.m. Drake Well Museum and Park is administered by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in partnership with Friends of Drake Well, Inc. and is part of the Pennsylvania Trails of History® (www.PATrailsofHistory.com).

Additional information about museum programs and special events is available at www.drakewell.org, by calling (814) 827-2797, or find us on Facebook at Drake Well Museum and Park.

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