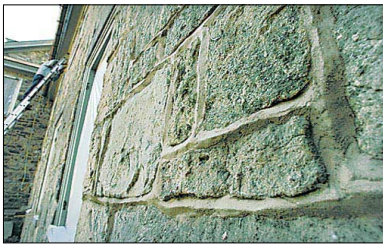


LANCASTER NEW ERA

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Now nine months into a 15-month renovation project, Speedwell Forge Mansion is getting a new lease on life by owners Dawn Darlington and Gregg Hesling. "I love this place; it's as simple as that," says Darlington, who for as long as she can remember has planned to return to the Elizabeth Township homestead where she played as a child.



Dawning of a dream

Couple forge ahead on restoration of 1760 mansion

By **SUSAN JURGELSKI**
New Era Staff Writer

BUILDING PERMITS: \$25,000.
Slate roof: \$50,000.
Realizing a dream?
Priceless.

When Gregg Hesling, a computer consultant, met paralegal Dawn Darlington in Los Angeles 14 years ago, he realized that to love Darlington meant devotion to her dream.

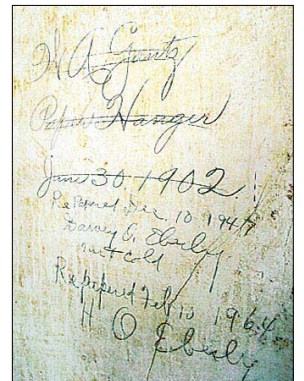
Knee-deep in the challenging restoration of her grandparents' 1760 Speedwell Forge mansion, Hesling has had plenty of chances to become cynical over the past two years, weathering everything from unyielding building codes and

ordinances to escalating costs.

But he still believes in preserving Darlington's dream — no matter the toll it takes on their savings and their souls.

"I love this place; it's as simple as that," says Darlington, who for as long as she can remember has planned to return to the Elizabeth Township homestead where she played as a child. Her mother, Barbara, lives across from the mansion.

In 2003, after years of squirreling away every spare dime, the California couple began laying the groundwork — long-distance — for transforming the family treasure into a B&B. Two years later, Darlington moved to the homestead — where she is now living in a greenhouse — to oversee the mansion



The owners could see the handwriting on the wall.

— continued on next page

PHOTOS BY MARTY HEISEY / NEW ERA