



Historical Society
of Pennsylvania

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release
Contact: Lauri Cielo
215-732-6200 ext. 233
lcielo@hsp.org

“India Merchants” Exhibit Traces History of Trade Between Philadelphia and India

Exhibit opens May 19 at Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Philadelphia, PA (May 6, 2009) — After the American Revolution, a brisk trade relationship developed between our newly formed nation and India, with merchants from Philadelphia making the arduous 7,000-mile journey and returning with spices and textiles. But the two countries exchanged more than material goods. It was also a cultural exchange—a way for the two countries to learn about each other and foster mutual understanding.

In the exhibit, **India Merchants: Philadelphia and the Quest for India After the Revolution**, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania examines this story of trade and commerce. Visitors will learn about the tall ships that carried Philadelphia merchants across the Atlantic and the men who made the journey. Guests can examine maps, travel logs, letters, and images of ships and merchants. All the items on display will be reproductions of actual documents in the Historical Society’s collection. Admission to the exhibit is \$1, or free for society members.

The exhibit opens **May 19** and runs through August 21. On the exhibit’s opening night, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania will host a lecture by **Susan S. Bean**, author of *Yankee India: American Commercial and Cultural Encounters with India in the Age of Sail 1784-1860* and curator of South Asian and Korean Art at the Peabody Essex Museum. The lecture begins at 6 p.m. and will be followed by a cocktail reception and an Indian musical performance. Guests will also get a chance to view the India Merchants exhibit. This event is cosponsored by the Council of Indian Organizations in Greater Philadelphia and supported by Southwest Airlines and the South Asia Center at the University of Pennsylvania.

The event is free and open to the public. Guests are asked to R.S.V.P. by May 12 at 215-732-6200 ext. 214 or lproctor@hsp.org.

The attached images can be credited: Courtesy of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. For more information, contact the society’s coordinator of communications, Lauri Cielo, at (215) 732-6200 ext. 233 or lcielo@hsp.org.

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About the Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Founded in 1824 in Philadelphia, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (www.hsp.org) collects and shares the stories of Pennsylvania. It is home to some 600,000 printed items and more than 21 million manuscript and graphic items. Its unparalleled collections encompass more than 300 years of America's history—from its 17th-century origins to the contributions of its most recent immigrants. The society's remarkable holdings together with its educational programming make it one of the nation's most important special collections libraries: a center of historical documentation and study, education, and engagement.

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