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LIBRARY COMPANY OF PHILADELPHIA DISPLAYS A NEW EXHIBITON: *MIRROR OF A CITY: VIEWS OF PHILADELPHIA RECENTLY ACQUIRED FROM THE JAY T. SNIDER COLLECTION*

Philadelphia: May 4, 2009 — On May 4 the Library Company unveiled its new exhibition, *Mirror of a City: Views of Philadelphia Recently Acquired from the Jay T. Snider Collection*. Mr. Snider, a former Library Company Trustee and avid collector of historical items, sold much of his Philadelphia-related material at a November 2008 sale organized by the New York City office of Bloomsbury Auctions. Over the years, Mr. Snider had gathered a very comprehensive collection of the iconography of the growth and development of Philadelphia. From a rare 1684 Dutch edition of Thomas Holme's plan of Philadelphia to astonishingly beautiful mid-19th-century graphics of a bustling, vibrant city, the 375 lots comprising the sale chronicled the city's past. "It is unlikely," wrote auctioneer Jeremy Markowitz, "that such an assemblage of important books, manuscripts, and graphics all relating to



Image: The White Turtle & The Red Crab of Philadelphia (Philadelphia, hand-colored lithograph, ca.1852).

Philadelphia, could be assembled again." Thanks in part to the generous financial assistance of Mr. Snider and the efforts of antiquarian bookseller Clarence Wolf, the Library Company successfully acquired thirty-one of the thirty-six lots on which it bid.

Visitors to the new exhibition, organized by Curator of Prints and Photographs Sarah Weatherwax and Assistant Curator Erika Piola, will be treated to a veritable feast of Philadelphia iconographic riches. Original art work on display includes a rare bucolic Gray's Ferry scene, a view of Center Square delineated decades before the erection of City Hall, William L. Breton's views of Swaim's Bathing Establishment and the old Courthouse of 1707, and John Reuben Smith's depiction of the Fairmount Waterworks as seen from a hotel veranda on the western bank of the Schuylkill River. Breton's and Smith's watercolors both served as the basis of later lithographs. Lithographic and engraved views of Philadelphia are also featured, including rare maps and a print of two competing fire companies racing to a fire scene. Philadelphia's mid-19th-century commercial life is represented in the exhibition by views of factories and businesses such as Jacob Riegel & Co.'s Market Street dry goods store and A. Whitney & Sons' Car Wheel Works, both prints by Philadelphia engraver Samuel Sartain.

These recent acquisitions will be displayed along with complementary material already in the Library Company's holdings, including items from engraver and publisher Cephas G. Childs's *Views in Philadelphia* project, and visual materials documenting the history of Germantown as surveyed by resident teacher William Green, whose ca. 1830 journal was also acquired at the Snider auction. An 1871 ward atlas; the mid-19th- to early-20th-century photographs of Frederick DeBourg Richards, Marriot C. Morris, and John G. Bullock; and a ca. 1870 lithograph from a series of views of "Quaint Old Germantown" document the evolution of this area of the city.

Mirror of a City: Views of Philadelphia Recently Acquired from the Jay T. Snider Collection will be on exhibition through September 4, 2009. The gallery hours are Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. The exhibition is free and open to the public.

Background Information about the Library Company

The Library Company of Philadelphia is an independent research library concentrating on American society and culture from the 17th through 19th centuries. Free and open to the public, the Library Company houses an extensive non-circulating collection of rare books, manuscripts, broadsides, ephemera and works of art. The mission of the Library Company is to preserve, interpret, make available, and augment the valuable materials within our care. We serve a diverse constituency throughout Philadelphia and the nation, offering comprehensive reader services, an internationally renowned fellowship program, an online public access catalog, and regular exhibitions and public programs. Located at 1314 Locust Street, Philadelphia, it is open to the public free of charge from 9:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Library Company can be found online at www.librarycompany.org.

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