



THEN & NOW



Hellertown Post Office Locations: A Historical Timeline



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In April of 1823, the first Post Office was established in Hellertown. Since then, the Post Office location has occupied several different sites in Hellertown until finally settling at its current location. This timeline will define those locations along with visualization, where available, of how they appeared when in service and a visualization of the site as it appears today.

As was common practice, many of these locations shared space within another business. Often the current Postmaster established the location for the Post Office during his term and many of these terms were short, thus it moved often.

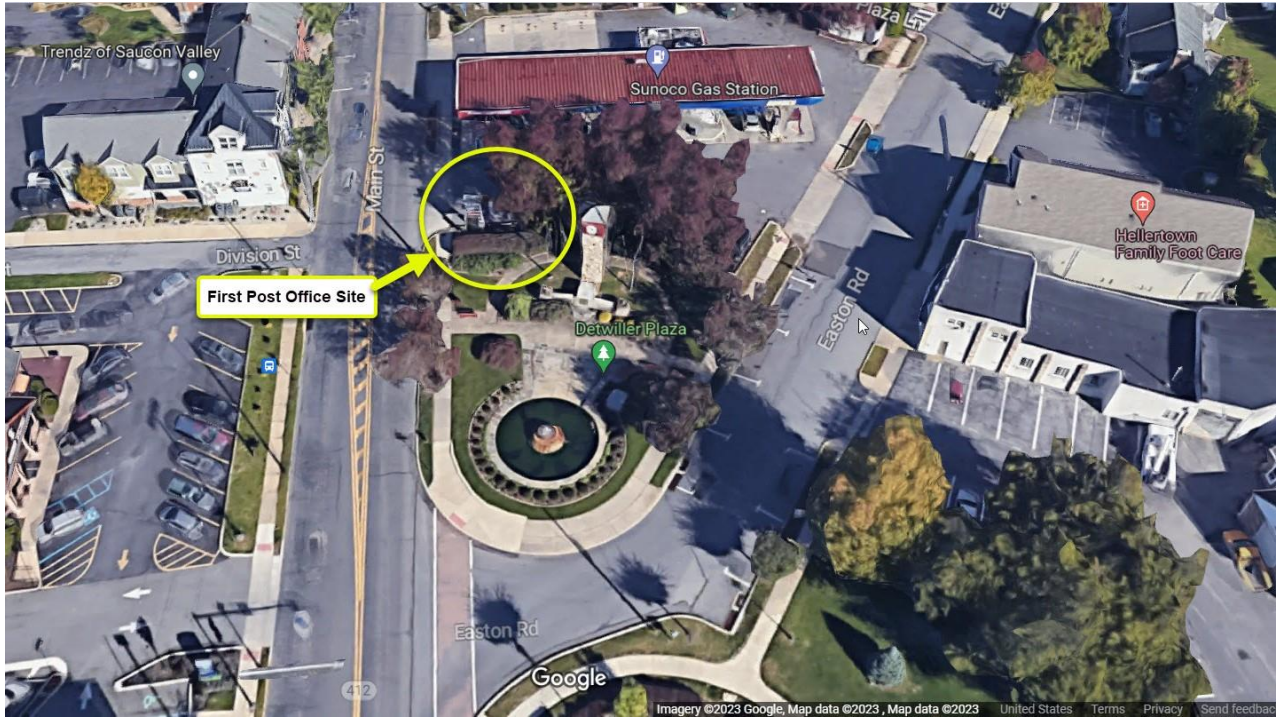
First Post Office Location (1823 – About 1888/89)

Near what is now Detwiller Plaza stood a cigar shop between Main Street and Easton Road. According to a map of 1874, a separate building stood slightly North of the cigar shop and is identified as the Post Office. During this period, thirteen persons served as Postmaster at this location.



**The Building on the Left was the First Hellertown Post Office Location
(circa mid-1920's)**

We believe the Post Office is the separate building (red arrow) that is displayed on the 1874 map below just North of the cigar store that was later owned by David Prosser.



Current View of Detwiler Plaza/First Post Office Site (Google Earth)

Prosser's Cigar Shop Location (1888/89 – About 1897)

David Prosser became Postmaster during this period. David Prosser also owned a cigar and tobacco shop here and likely moved the Post Office here with his business as was often the practice.



This photo has been identified as taken in August 1889 at the then Post Office. The woman on left with the boys is Sally Prosser. The boys are William Prosser and Joseph Prosser. The two persons to the right are unidentified.

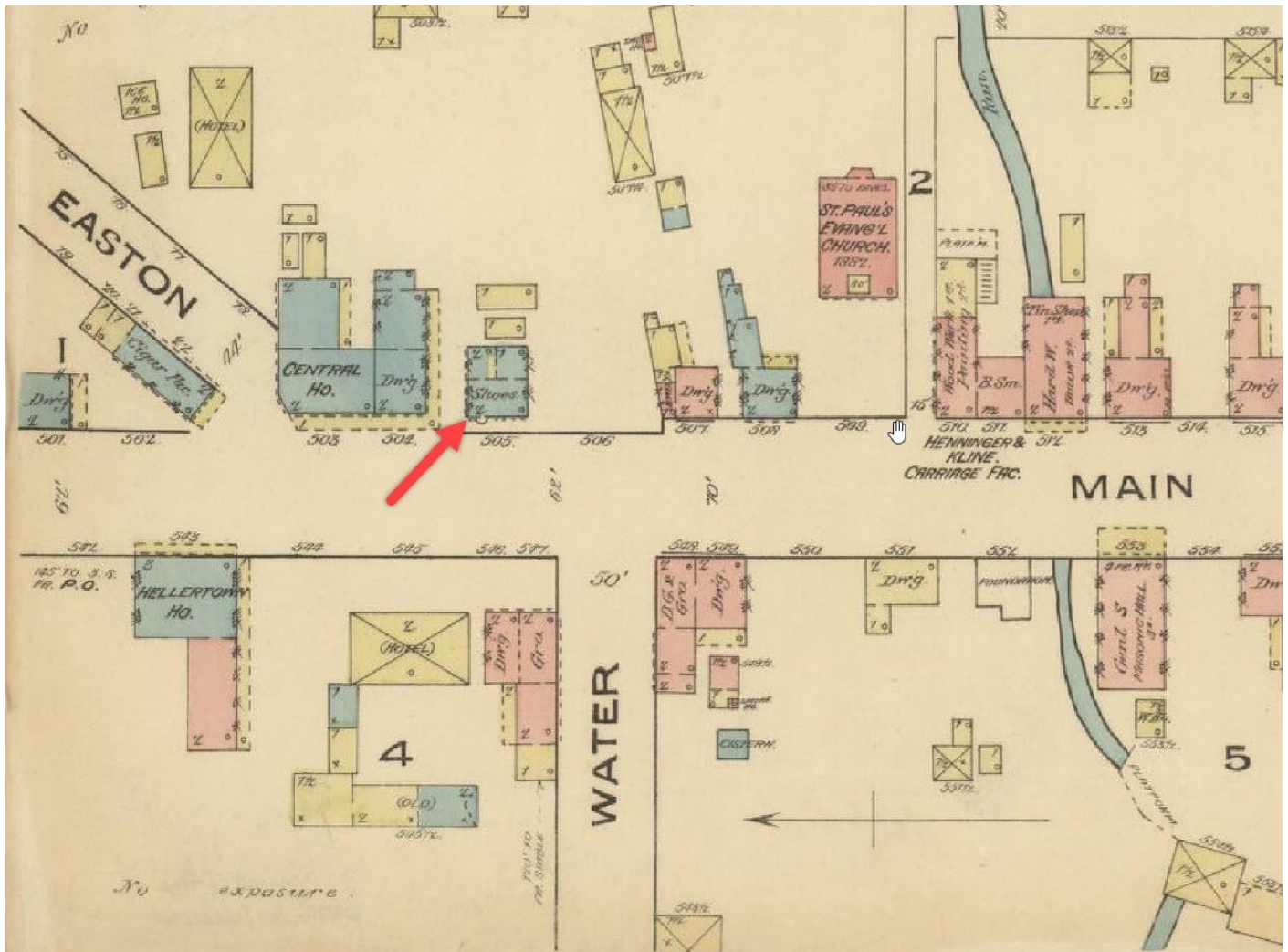


This Mid-1920's Photo of the Same Building on the Easton Road Side Shows the Area Where the Post Office was Located under David Prosser. The Building to the Right with the Two Windows Near the Roofline was the Original Post Office Location from 1823.

Detwiller Cottage Location (About 1897 – Early 1900's up to 1910)

According to maps, Dr. William Detwiller owned a home located on the property just South of the current Borough Hall. Also, at this time, East Water Street did not exist and this property was situated between what is now Borough Hall and the Wells-Fargo Bank.

The Post Office moved to this location by then Postmaster Thomas G. Riegel in June 1897. It remained here for a few more years until the early 1900's perhaps as late as 1910. See the map below as well as a current view on the next page (Courtesy Google Earth) showing it as it appears today...



Map from 1885 Shows Detwiller Cottage Location (Red Arrow)



Current View of Former Detwiller Cottage/Post Office Site (Google Earth)

The next three photos show the Detwiller Cottage when the Post Office was located here. The large covered porch of the Central Hotel, later Hellertown Borough Hall, can be seen in the left side of the first photo.



View Looking East at Detwiller Cottage on Main Street 1908

In April 1904, Rural Free Delivery services began. In the next photo, the rural carriers for these routes can be seen as they appeared with their delivery buggies...





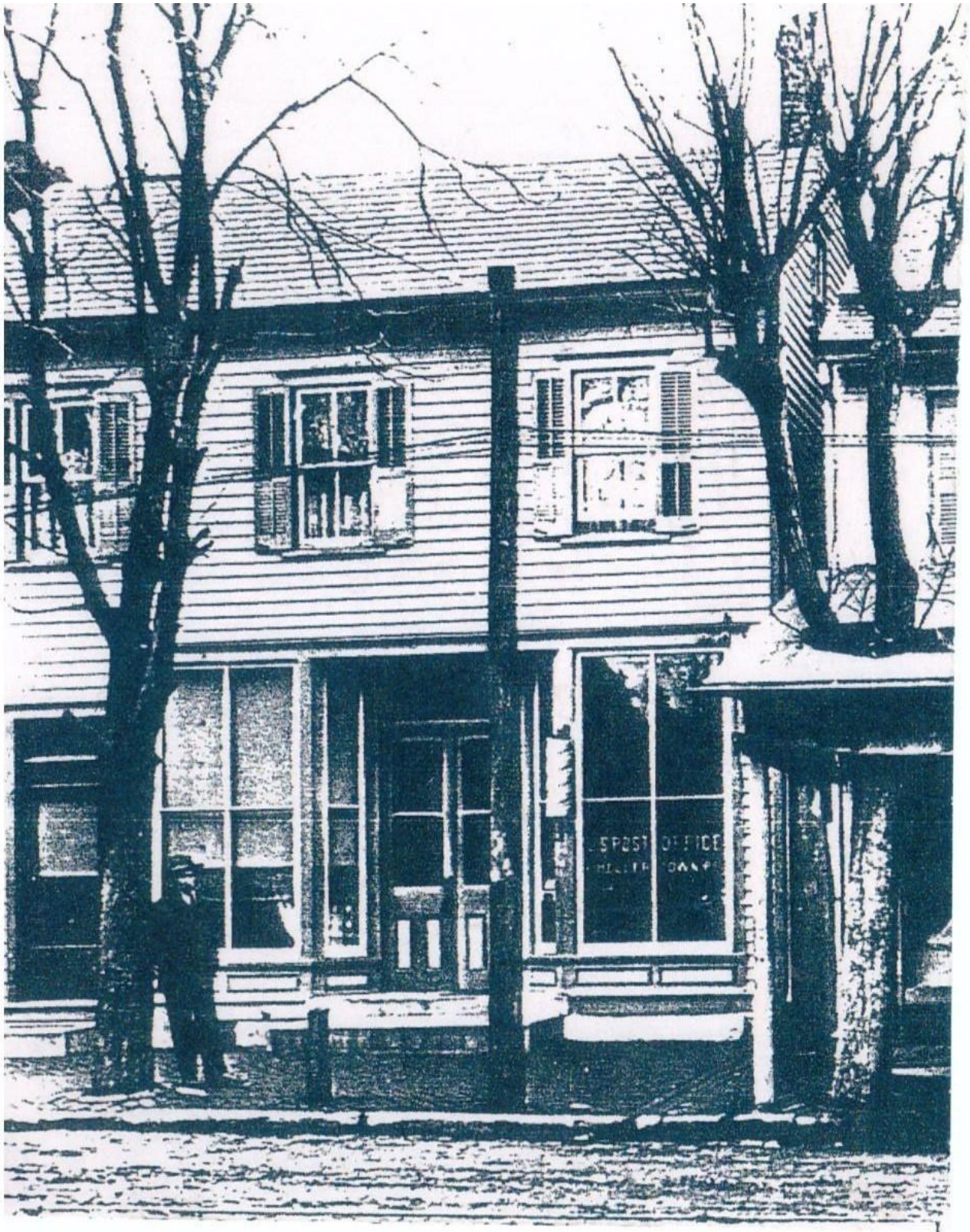
The Post Office, Hellertown, Pa.

Postcard Photo of the Post Office at Detwiller Cottage circa 1905

610 Main Street – Ruch’s Store (Late 1900’s – 1914)

Franklin Sutton was Postmaster in 1904. A photo, on the previous page, at Detwiller Cottage shows rural delivery wagons parked at the Cottage about 1905. The photo of Ruch’s Store on the next page clearly shows Main Street had not yet been paved; that happened in 1923-1925. As the next location describes, the Post Office was moved to 403 Main Street in 1914. Without written records, we can only assume the above dates as being as accurate as possible for the 610 Main Street location.

See the photo of Ruch’s Store on the next page clearly showing “Post Office” displayed on the RH window...



Today this structure has been modified extensively from the original appearance and is now an insurance office as seen in the next photo...



610 Main Street Today

403 Main Street (1914 – 1926)

In 1914, then Postmaster Harry J. Harwi, decided to move the Post Office to 403 Main Street in what was then known as the Dietrich Building. This location is currently a Law Office and resides next to a hair salon at 401 Main Street.

Although undetermined, the photo on the next page is likely of Postmaster Harwi standing at the entrance to this Post Office around 1915-1917...



Unfortunately for Mr. Harwi, he served as Postmaster for slightly less than four years. Mr. Harwi met his demise in January 1918 while enjoying a sparring match with a friend at the local Night Owl Social Club in Hellertown. During the friendly bout, he tripped on a carpet, fell and hit his head on a washboard suffering a concussion on his brain and passing the next morning just under 37 years of age.

Upon his passing, on a recommendation of then Congressman H. J. Steele to then President Woodrow Wilson, Mr. Harwi's widow, Flora Harwi, was named acting Postmaster and later being permanently appointed to the position, one she held for four years when William H. Scholl become Postmaster in 1922.

As with many past Borough dignitaries, a small street or alley, is named for Harwi in Hellertown. It runs one-way South from Division Street to Water Street between Main Street and Front Street.

Go to the next page to see how this former Post Office site appears today...



403 Main Street Today

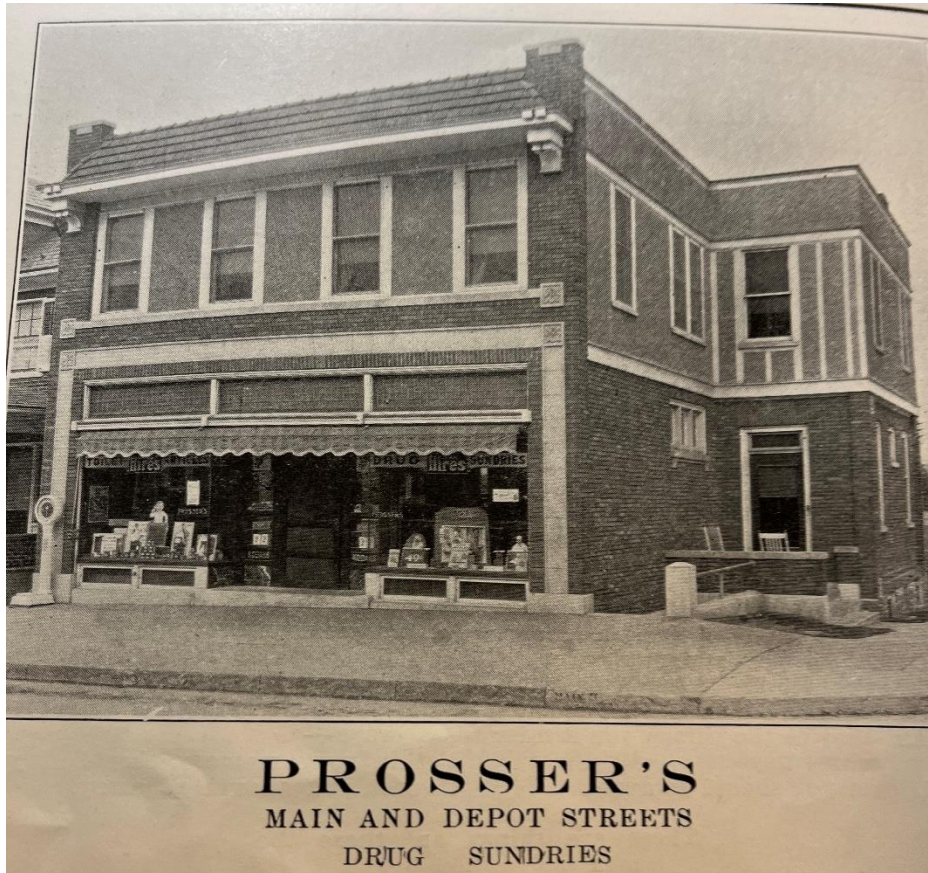
834 Main Street – Prosser’s Drug Store (1926 – About 1933)

On May 1, 1926, the Post Office was moved into a partial space shared by Prosser’s Drug Store. William H. Scholl was Postmaster at the time. The photo on the next page shows Postmaster Scholl at work inside...



William Scholl Served as Postmaster from 1922 – 1934

Photo Showing the Exterior of Prosser's Drug Store circa 1920



Today this Building Serves as an Optician's Business



1000 Main Street (Early 1930's – 1969)

A brick structure was found for the Post Office in the early 1930's when it was moved to this location. This Post Office location was overseen by two Postmasters, each with some of the longest terms over the others. Postmaster Theodore K. Hagey was appointed in 1934 acting Postmaster, then permanently in 1935 serving until Edwin V. Strohl was named acting Postmaster in 1964 and later permanently in 1965.



A Parade Passes the Post Office at this Location – Post Office is in the Left (Nearest) Side of the Building



This Brick Building at 1000 Main Street Served Well Until the Post Office Needed More Space

Even back in history, the Federal Government had strict rules and policies to follow, even if they seemed redundant or ridiculous. The following image is of a form that the local Postmaster must submit to the Post Office Department in Washington when moving a Post Office to a different location. In this case, it was being moved to another section inside this same building. The form below was submitted July 29, 1944 by then Postmaster Theodore K. Hagey.

H.

Post Office Department
FOURTH ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL
Washington

RETURN TO
 DIVISION OF TOPOGRAPHY

Postmaster,
 Hellertown, Penna.

JUL 29 1944

The following information is required in order that your post office may be shown in its proper location on postal maps. Please complete this form immediately and return it without delay with the map or sketch described on the reverse side. A letter of reply is not necessary.

NEW SITE

Walter Myers
 FOURTH ASSISTANT POSTMASTER GENERAL

1. Street address of post office 1000 Main St Hellertown, Pa County Northampton¹¹

2. Township _____ (If location is described by section, township, and range, fill in line 3.)

3. _____ quarter of section _____ Township _____ N. or S. _____ Range _____ E. or W. _____

4. Nearest adjoining county Lehigh How far: Shortest air distance? 2 mi By road? _____

4a. Distance: P.O. from old site same building Direction: P.O. from old site same building

5. Nearest U. S. or State highway 412 Direction from P. O. _____ Distance _____

6. Name of nearest railroad station Hellertown, Pa Name of railroad Phila. & Reading

7. Distance by road to railroad station 624' Direction from post office West

8. Shortest air distance to nearest tracks 624' Direction from post office West

9. Streams or bodies of water nearest to your office:

Name	Direction from post office	Distance
<u>Saveon Creek</u>	<u>West</u>	<u>675'</u>

10. Post offices nearest to your office (one in each general direction):

Name	County	Direction from your office	Distance by road
<u>Bethlehem, Pa</u>	<u>Northampton</u>	<u>North</u>	<u>4 mi</u>
<u>Springtown, Pa</u>	<u>Bucks</u>	<u>South</u>	<u>5 mi</u>

11. How is mail supplied to your office? Railroad From where? Every where
(Railroad, star route, rural route, etc.)

The site of this office is changed only, in so far as it is to be moved from the present room to a room twice as large in the same building.

(Date) July 31, 1944
 (Signed) T. K. Hagey
 Post office Hellertown Pa

POST OFFICE DEPT.
 Form 10-6017 (Location Paper)
 AUG 1 - 1944 (OVER)

Read through the form on the previous page and take note of the emphasis placed on the Post Office location from the nearest railroad. Obviously, during this time, the Railroad was the most effective means of transporting items, and more importantly, the mail from towns and cities to other areas.

Later, after the Post Office was moved out of this building to its current location, the building most recently served as a Thrift Shop for St. Theresa's Church in Hellertown. On March 1, 2007, an electrical fire completely destroyed the building.



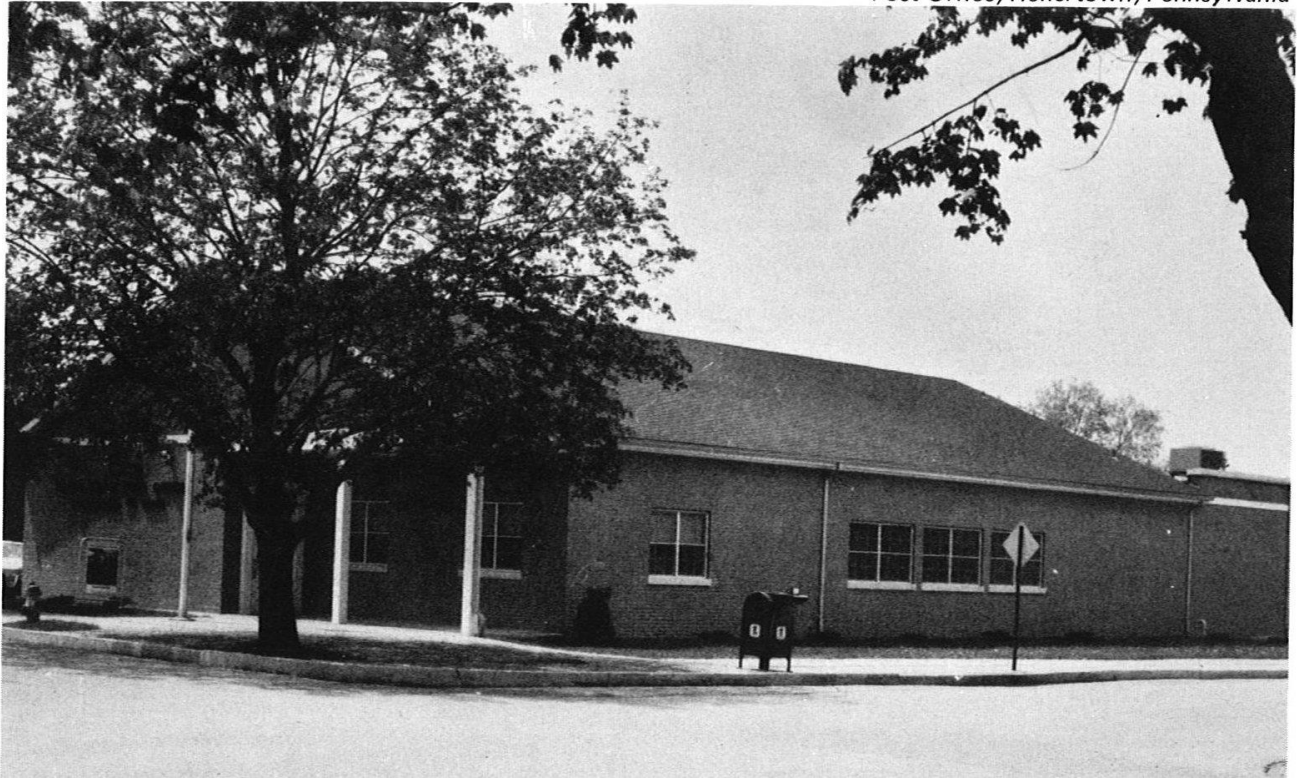
Fire Destroyed the 1000 Main Street Building March 1, 2007

The remnants of the building were razed and the site remains unoccupied today as shown on the following page...



660 Delaware Avenue (1969 – Present)

The Post Office moved to this location under Postmaster Edwin Victor Strohl who served from 1964 – 1982. After his term, this office has been overseen by eleven other Postmasters.



Current Post Office as it Appeared Early 1970's



In 2019 the Post Office Celebrated 50 Years at this Location

The Original 1823 Post Office Sign was Hung Inside for the Celebration



The lease for the current Post Office was set to expire in June 2009. The Post Office recommended building a new facility and moving once again. While finding a suitable site proved difficult and with few choices, land adjacent to the current Hellertown Library on Constitution Avenue was selected and received Borough Council approval. However, when the local residents surrounding this location learned of the decision, they turned out in record numbers to voice their opposition to Borough Council. As the news article on the next page shows, they were successful in changing Council Members' minds.

STILL FREE!

Carter Ronie Present
PAID
U.S. Postage
Hellertown, PA
Permit No. 24

The SAUCON News

BerksMontNews.com

May 22, 2008 • Vol. 9, No. 21

Council rescinds post office vote

By Josh Popichak
Editor

After scores of residents turned out to protest plans to build a post office on land at Constitution Avenue and Juniper Road, Hellertown Borough Council abruptly reversed its position regarding the plan on Monday night.

By a vote of 4 to 3, councilors voted to rescind an earlier vote, which was to support the United States Postal Service's recommendation that the Constitution Avenue site be considered for the new post office.

Postal officials recommended the Constitution Avenue site after reviewing several other locations in Hellertown, including the Reinhard School building and land which is part of Borough Authority Park.

The new post office is scheduled to open in June 2009, when the lease on the current post office building, on Rentzheimer Drive, is scheduled to expire.

Residents who have vocally denounced the plan to build the new post office on Constitution Avenue, across from Dimmick Park, continued to attack that location for its proximity to a predominantly residential neighborhood at the Monday night meeting, at which they presented a petition with more than 200 signatures on it to council members.

"I don't know what more it's going to take before you guys change your mind," resident Sue Komoroski told council members, at the meeting.

Komoroski, who circulated the petition along with resident Jan Albertson, lives in the Mountainview neighborhood adjacent to the land on which the new post office would be built.

"(Residents) are concerned with the increase in traffic to this area as well as the safety of those in the park," Albertson told councilors, who listened to comments from half a dozen others opposed to the plan.

By a show of hands requested by council, residents at the meeting opposed to the Constitution Avenue site appeared to outnumber those who approved of it by approximately four to one.

"When I moved to Hellertown, you people weren't even thought of," council member Richard Staffieri, who supported the Constitution Avenue site, told those in the audience from the Mountainview neighborhood.

However, council member John Bate, who earlier on supported the Mountainview location, appeared to be swayed by the large turnout at the meeting and the signed petition.

"Quite frankly, I appreciate your input," he said. "I think we need to table this and take a look at all our options again."

A subsequent vote, taken after council member Jennifer McKenna made a motion to rescind council's previous vote on the site, proved decisive, with Bate voting in favor of rescinding it, along with McKenna, Council President Gail Nolf and council member Stephanie Kovacs.

Josh Popichak is the editor of The Saucun News. He can be contacted via e-mail at jpopichak@berksmontnews.com



Saucun News file photo

Above, a car travels north on Constitution Avenue in Hellertown, near the proposed site of a new post office. On Monday, Borough Council rescinded an earlier vote authorizing the site for formal consideration, after residents presented them with a petition in opposition to the proposal.

Billboard approved

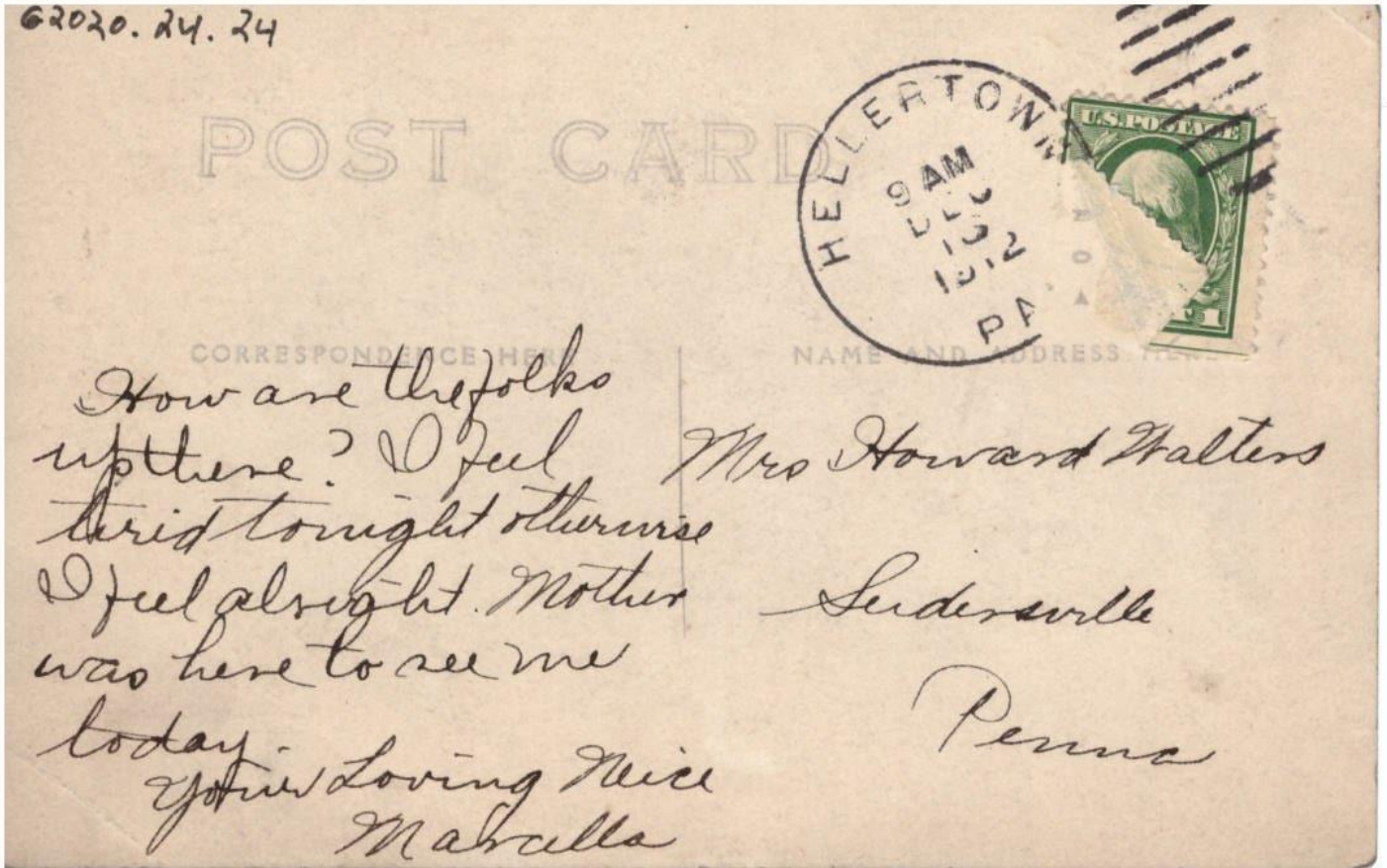
A Gala Opening for Shula's

From our museum artifacts collection, here are featured three of the former uniform hats worn by mail carriers...





**A Postcard with December 1912 Hellertown Postmark
(This would have been at the 610 Main Street location)**



The following chart lists every Postmaster who ever served in that capacity since the Post Office was first opened in Hellertown in 1823 until present...

Hellertown Postmasters 1823 – Present

<u>Name</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Appointed</u>
Isaac McHose	Postmaster	04/26/1823	William H. Scholl	Postmaster	06/05/1922
Daniel C. Freytag	Postmaster	08/16/1824	Theodore K. Hagey	Acting Postmaster	05/15/1934
Jacob Geis(s)inger, Jr.	Postmaster	03/28/1831	Theodore K. Hagey	Postmaster	01/29/1935
Peter Shaffer	Postmaster	04/20/1835	Edwin Victor Strohl	Acting Postmaster	09/30/1964
Wilson Shaffer	Postmaster	04/21/1845	Edwin Victor Strohl	Postmaster	10/02/1965
Christian B. Heller	Postmaster	05/15/1849	Thomas E. Prosser	Officer-In-Charge	06/25/1982
Thomas R. Laubach	Postmaster	05/26/1853	Francis W. Ehret	Postmaster	01/08/1983
Martin A. Leidich	Postmaster	06/20/1854	Alfredo Teles	Officer-In-Charge	12/31/1997
Samuel R. Weber	Postmaster	01/26/1855	Richard T. McHale	Officer-In-Charge	01/30/1998
Jesse Billheimer	Postmaster	05/26/1857	Richard T. McHale, Jr.	Postmaster	06/20/1998
Owen H. Desh	Postmaster	08/21/1862	John Nemet	Officer-In-Charge	06/30/2003
Joseph Riegel	Postmaster	04/30/1864	Richard A. Fluck	Officer-In-Charge	09/04/2003
Joshua Hulshiser	Postmaster	07/17/1885	Richard A. Fluck	Postmaster	12/13/2003
David D. Prosser	Postmaster	05/29/1889	Arlene J. Gontz	Officer-In-Charge	02/27/2009
Ambrose J. Welker	Postmaster	09/09/1893	Joseph Manzo	Officer-In-Charge	03/17/2009
Thomas G. Riegel	Postmaster	06/22/1897	Joseph Manzo	Postmaster	08/29/2009
Franklin Sutton	Postmaster	03/21/1904	Sarah Reph	Officer-In-Charge	10/19/2012
Harry J. Harwi	Postmaster	02/07/1914	Edelin T. Nebbia	Officer-In-Charge	12/21/2012
Flora C. Harwi	Acting Postmaster	01/05/1918	Edelin T. Nebbia	Postmaster	09/21/2013
Flora C. Harwi	Postmaster	04/16/1918	Joseph C. DiRusso	Officer-In-Charge	08/02/2017
William H. Scholl	Acting Postmaster	01/02/1922	Joseph C. DiRusso	Postmaster	11/11/2017