



# Hellertown Historical Society

Dedicated to Preserving the History and Heritage of Hellertown and its People

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## Upcoming 2017 Events

16<sup>th</sup> Annual H-LS Community Day  
 August 19 11AM-8PM @ Dimmick Park

45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Hellertown Centennial  
 Display Unveiling  
 Friday August 25 6-9PM @ The Tavern

SV Spirit Parade – "Honoring the Past"  
 Sunday October 22 – 2PM

Holiday Open House  
 Shopping at the Mill  
 Train Display

All coming up in December – Keep Watching!

*Feedback is essential for any publication to improve and grow. We welcome readers to provide their opinions, suggestions and comments about the content featured in our newsletter. Please send your feedback to the Editor at the email address below.*

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## HHS Observes Hellertown's Centennial



Forty-Five years ago, in 1972, Hellertown was celebrating its one hundredth birthday. Hellertown Historical Society will observe this milestone with a new museum section dedicated to the history of this event. The display will feature photos, memorabilia and live discussion from this celebration.

The Society is inviting everyone to share in the unveiling of this unique museum display. This Anniversary Celebration will be held in the Tavern Room in the lower level of the Historic Heller-Wagner Grist Mill on Friday, August 25 beginning at 6PM. Visitors may enjoy complimentary light refreshments as well as other displays in our unique museum. There will also be a limited amount of Centennial memorabilia available for purchase.

Come relive or share the experience of Hellertown's Centennial by attending this free historic event.



*Our Town : Hellertown* is a PBS production from WLVT Channel 39 in Bethlehem that was the brainchild of John Rice and Brandon Long, both Producers with the Station. The program tells the story of Hellertown using actual and former Hellertown residents giving their views, experiences and memories of what the Town meant to them growing up and living in Hellertown. As John Rice explained to the attendees, Penn State University had been doing this exact style of programming in their area for many, many years with great success. It was decided to try this in the Lehigh Valley and Hellertown was chosen to be the first Community to pioneer the challenge.

Through blitz advertising, word of mouth and Facebook connections, word spread that this production was being created and persons were needed to help make it happen. Two meetings were held to gather persons interested in the show and describe what it entailed, first at the Hellertown Historical Society's Tavern Room, then at Hellertown Borough Hall. Finally personal interviews for those wishing to be included and appear on the show were conducted at various locations near and in Hellertown. Many such stories and experiences were shared with residents who spent their entire lives living and growing in Hellertown and some were new residents

*(Continued on Page 5)*

## Submit Articles or Stories

Hellertown Historical Society

Newsletter seeks any stories or news articles pertaining to Hellertown's History and its people. Anyone is encouraged to submit articles, stories or news to the

newsletter Managing Editor for consideration in upcoming editions. Submissions may be edited for content and/or space requirements. Please use the contact information on this page to submit your entry.



## President’s Message:

Dear Members and Friends,

I recently had the day off from work and was looking forward to stopping into the HHS office to visit some of the crew that I don’t get to see very often. When I arrived, there wasn’t one parking space open in our lot. Isn’t it frustrating when you arrive somewhere and there are not any parking spaces left? Well, not in this case! What an awesome feeling to see a packed house full of volunteers all dedicating their time, not only to our organization, but to Hellertown’s heritage and our community. Make sure you check out the new volunteer and intern spotlights in this issue! Let me share with you some of the projects we have been working on:

**Our Town Hellertown-** If you haven’t seen or heard what it’s about: PBS39 partnered with the people of Hellertown and HHS to capture the essence of our town. Local residents served as “storytellers” for this production, sharing their stories, memories, home movies, photographs and memorabilia. Visit <http://ourtown.wlvt.org/> for more information and to purchase the *Our Town Hellertown* DVD.

**45<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Hellertown Centennial in 1972-** We are working on a museum display that celebrates this unique historical event. Join us on August 25<sup>th</sup> for a special night that includes the unveiling of the display.

**Saucon Valley Spirit Parade-** We’re excited about this year’s theme of HONORING HELLERTOWN’S PAST. We have been honoring Hellertown’s past for 36 years and can’t wait to participate. Thank you to David James Heintzelman and other parade organizers for appreciating our community and Hellertown’s history.

**Hellertown’s Historic Jail Restoration-** Due to your support and generous donations, we have met our goal for the matching funds needed for the restoration of the jail. THANK YOU! The restoration is scheduled to start this month. We can’t wait until it’s finished!

Stacie Torkos, President

### ‘Ask the Grump...’

By Dolores DiPaolo

“Ask the Grump” debuted in February this year with a minor offering and seems to generate the most feedback from readers who are compelled to share their stories. Hopefully you will enjoy this column and maybe you too will write a letter to us and comment on the info appearing here...

**Q – Can you give me some details about the History of Wassergass?**

A – Wassergass was originally called Ironville, but was later changed to Wassergass which means “Water Lane”. It was an unincorporated community in Northampton County, PA. Unincorporated meaning it did not have its own government but was part of a larger Township or Borough.

Wassergass had its own Post Office which was established in 1892 and operated until 1904.

Bergstresser’s Store used to be a carpenter shop owned by Jacob Wasser. Although his name was ‘Wasser’, the town was not named after any of the few Wassers in the area.

**Q – How long was Hellertown’s first jail used?**

A – The Hellertown jail was built by Thomas R. Laubach, Chief Burgess in 1872 and was approximately 12 X 24 feet. It was used until 1900. Anyone incarcerated after that time, was placed in a jail in the basement of the Dewey Fire Station on Saucon Street. Later a jail was built in the current Police Station located at Main and Water Streets.

**Q – Can you give some details about the Crossroads Area when it was annexed to Hellertown?**

A – Ordinance #79 to annex this part of Lower Saucon Township, Northampton County, was enacted on May 12, 1919. It was approved by Franklin Sutton, Chief Burgess. Copies of the ordinance were published in the Globe Times newspaper and more than 20 copies were posted in as many conspicuous and public places throughout the Borough of Hellertown and vicinity.

Please Visit Our Website  
[www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)  
 Over 23,200 Visitors Can’t Be Wrong!

### HHS Cryptogram

By Dolores Di Paolo

See if you can solve this “**Hellertown Historical Society-Themed**” Cryptogram. The answer will be published in the next issue of the Newsletter. If you cannot wait for the answer to be published, send your answer to the Editor at the email address below for confirmation...

[editor@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:editor@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)  
 KL K QCO, OCO XJN AJ EJ  
 EUB LKNGJPC EJ TKEGU  
 LGKDX QJYCBL SCQB

“EUB LSJL” ?

(Hint : A=G)

The last cryptogram appears below along with the answer. Congratulations to Polly and Jim who submitted the correct answer to the Editor.

“MGH RPOBM COHBPSHDM  
**“THE FIRST PRESIDENT YR**  
 MGH GHEEHOMYZD  
**OF THE HELLERTOWN**  
 GPBMYOPIJE BYIPHMV ZJB  
**HISTORICAL SOCIETY WAS**  
 BMJDEHV CNYBBHO”  
**STANLEY PROSSER”**

(Hint : O=R)

## WPA and Hellertown

By Dolores Di Paolo

In my last article, "Those Were the Days", about the park and pool, I mentioned that the swimming pool was built by the WPA. Several people have asked me "What was the WPA?" With help from Cathy Hartranft at Borough Hall and Wikipedia, I can give you some interesting details on a wonderful program.

Work Projects Administration (WPA), part of the Emergency Relief Appropriations Act, signed by President Roosevelt, employed millions of people, both men and women, during the great depression. The WPA was started in 1935, shaped by Harry Hopkins, supervisor and close adviser to Roosevelt. In 1935 there were 20 million people on relief in the United States. This work was preferred over public assistance because it gave self-respect, and maintained the work ethic. To be eligible for employment you had to be an American Citizen, and 18 yrs. or older, able-bodied, unemployed and certified as in need by a local public relief agency. Depending on your skill level, you were paid from \$19 per month to \$94 per month.

Almost every community, including Hellertown, had a new park, bridge or school constructed by the agency. The WPA was responsible for our swimming pool, Dimmick Park, including the pavilion and bandstand. There is a plaque on the brick wall where the refreshment stand once stood, now an office, that mentions the Federal Works Project. The local communities provided the land, and often trucks and supplies, but the WPA was responsible for the wages.

This program was ended on June 30, 1943 because the economy was positively re-established with wartime production employment due to World War II. The WPA provided millions of Americans with jobs for eight years.

Although this program has a lot to do with the beauty of Hellertown and its history, I believe this is a part of U.S. history that young and old should know about and remember. The great depression was a terrible time in our history.

## Do You Remember?

By Dolores Di Paolo

I remember sitting on the curb on warm summer evenings with a nickel in my hand waiting for the ice cream Man.

I remember walking to Judd's for penny candy. Do you remember wax lips, mini wax soda bottles, tiny buttons on strips of paper and flying saucers?

We went to the movies on weekends to get scared to death. We watched "War of the Worlds", "The day the Earth Stood still", "The Blob", and "the Fly"

I can remember the Milk Man and frozen milk on very cold winter days. There was a bread man, the Butcher, a Fish Man, the Egg Lady, and I remember a large truck mounded with corn and a man coming door to door selling it for 50 cents a dozen. My Mom always bought 2 dozen. No one else I talked to recalls this. Let's not forget those wonderful peaches from the road side stands.

How about Lariats and pea shooters? I remember my big brother coming into the house out of breath and asking my mom for more ammunition. She gave him some dried peas and told him to be careful.

A man would come to the grade schools in spring selling yoyos and flutes. The flutes drove the family nuts with the noise. Our toys were pretty simple back then.

Carnivals, there were more than one a summer. We ate ice cream sandwiches, played the games and, if you were lucky, you won a stuffed animal. We watched fireworks and flew high on the ride "The Swings" and don't forget the Ferris Wheel.

We walked to High School, on Main Street, no matter what the weather. It was at least a mile, and uphill both ways.

There were dances on Friday nights at the High School. We did the twist, jitter bug, the stroll, the swim, and locomotion and of course, romantic slow dances. Afterward a lot of us ended up at Crossroads for pizza and steak sandwiches.

When the bell rang to go home, we rushed out the school doors to be the first ones at Prossers to get a seat at the soda fountain. Cherry Cokes and Vanilla Cokes were the 'in' thing. My favorite was a chocolate Coke. I remember one kid always ordered a Lime Ricky. I have no idea who he was.

On the way home a lot of us girls stopped at the Post Office to buy an Air Mail Stamp for the letter we wrote to our boyfriends in Viet Nam. The poor mailman always got blamed if we didn't get a letter that day.

Growing up in Hellertown was the best experience a child could have.

### ***New Pieces of Pottery have arrived...***

The Wine Cooler, Bean Pot and Butter Pot are the new pieces that have been added to our collection of pottery. **Westerwald Pottery**, made in western Pennsylvania, is wheel-thrown, brush

decorated, and imprinted with the lettering **"HELLERTOWN."** Because every piece is handmade, no two products are exactly alike. Stop by and visit our gift shop. We are located in the Miller's House and are open Tuesday's, Thursday's and Saturday's from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM. It's not too early to start thinking about shopping for the holidays!



**Top left: Bean Pot \$26**  
**Middle: Butter Pot \$21**  
**Bottom Right: Wine Cooler \$37**

## Letters to the Editor

By Don Mills

Recently we have been receiving letters about the content of our previous newsletters. Particularly, readers are reminded of their experiences living and growing up in Hellertown that compelled them to write and share these with the readers. We encourage others to send their thoughts and comments on the articles appearing in the newsletter. Whenever we receive letters like this, we wish to share them with the readers. Therefore, we have decided to add this section to the newsletter. Please understand that any letters will be reprinted in future issues of the newsletter. If you wish your name and other info withheld from the article, please note so in your response. Otherwise, as long as you do not state so, that info will be published along with your letter.

*Letter From Gary Peters, DDS -*

Dear Don,

In the article about "The Park" Dolores Di Paolo write about the "ditch" near the road. I assume she is talking about the one across the street from the swimming pool. And yes, Ricky Ernst and I crawled though it a number of times. It went under Depot Street (*actually Durham Street – Ed.*) and continued to the end and opening on the other side of the street just west of the shallow end of the swimming pool. It was a drainage pipe. I grew up about a block and a half from the park on Saucon St. At the age 12, we moved to Elm Rd, still only 3 blocks away. I, as well as most of my friends spent so many great days in the park. Unfortunately, Ricky was taken from us far too early in his life. But every time I find myself in the park, I remember him and the times we had as kids and best friends., We climbed trees, jumped in piles of leaves, played baseball and football and went sledding on our Flexible Flyers not only in the park itself but also down Tobias Drive adjacent to the park., When it snowed, that street was routinely blocked off with wooden horses and smudge pot placed under the horses to keep out traffic, which we sometimes encountered anyway. Imagine that being allowed today. I also remember tennis courts above the Little

League field, now a parking lot, When it was cold enough, the Dewey Fire Company used to fill it with water so it could be used for ice skating . There were even lights for night skating. And I have been fortunate; I continue to go to the park frequently as an adult. My children have had many athletic and other events in the park. Attending the Carnival and fireworks is still a yearly event, even though it is not quite the same or held in the same location. And now, I get to do it all over again with my grand children. There is no place in this world that evokes such strong emotions and great memories for me then does the park. And although the trees are larger, I can no longer climb them and there have been some changes over the year, it is still a treasure. I hope it will continue to be so for generations to come.

Gary G Peters DDS.

*If you wish to share your experiences or write about something you have seen here, send your letter and/or feedback to -*  
[editor@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:editor@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)

## Fae Danner Remembered

Fae (Eisenhart) Danner, a longtime volunteer and Life Member of Hellertown Historical Society, passed away on Thursday, June 29, 2017. She was the daughter of the late Floyd A. and Letha (Troy) Eisenhart. Fae was a member of First United Church of Christ in Hellertown and a volunteer at Phoebe Home in Richlandtown. She served as Secretary of the Hellertown Historical Society for many years and was dedicated to the success of the organization. While failing health prompted her resignation as secretary, she continued to be an ardent supporter of the Society's efforts to preserve Hellertown's heritage.

In lieu of flowers, memorials to HHS were received in her memory. Our dedicated volunteer and member Andrea Danner, along with her family, would like to thank all those who made donations in the remembrance of their mother and grandmother. The family feels that these memorial donations allowed Fae to contribute and support our mission and organization one last time.

*Memorials in lieu of flowers dramatically help our Society meet financial obligations associated with our mission to preserve Hellertown's Heritage. Should you have questions concerning such contributions for your loved one or for your own estate planning, please discuss with your funeral director or feel free to contact us. The funds received through memorials are used to maintain and refurbish the Grist Mill site, and to preserve the many artifacts associated with Hellertown's heritage.*

## A Big HHS Thank You

By Bill Frey

The Hellertown Historical Society would like to thank volunteer Matthew Brady for connecting our group to W. Dowd Excavating of Wind Gap. Owner Wayne Dowd, his son and his crew donated all materials, time and labor to install a new drainage box and piping in the Grist Mill Park. This new drain will alleviate the persistent flooding that occurs after heavy rains.



**Try the HHS  
Nick-Name  
Game**

-

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**Our Town : Hellertown**

*(Continued from Page 1)*

who enjoy their new found home and wished to share that experience. Unfortunately, the show itself was a mere hour long and the material gathered far exceeded that time, so some content had to be left out. The Station also conducted their usual fundraising between segments of the show which boosted the running time to nearly two hours. Channel 39 has posted the entire video on their website for Internet surfers to view at any time. It can be found at <http://ourtown.wlvt.org/>. The TV Station has graciously offered a DVD copy of the show to every participant that includes more content than what appeared in the final broadcast. This same DVD is still available from PBS Channel 39 by going to the same website above and pledging a donation of \$50 or more to receive your own copy of the DVD.

Many of the items used and shown on *Our Town : Hellertown* were provided by the same persons who appear in the show and some items were provided by the Hellertown Historical Society's Museum. So you may see items that appear familiar to you.

Hellertown Historical Society was pleased to offer its support in the creation of this program. Many of the people appearing in the show, you may recognize as they are members of the Society, who were pleased to share their stories. The basis of this program was that Hellertown's own residents shared their experiences and memories living in Hellertown. This, according to the Producers, is what gave the show its authentic character and feeling.

Hellertown Historical Society thanks the Producers, John and Brandon, and the entire PBS Channel 39 staff for taking on this wonderful project. The finished product was everything many us hoped it would be. The Program is a legacy of past residents and an introduction for future residents of Hellertown to enjoy.

**Need info about us?**  
**We have an email address for that...**  
[info@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)

**Did You Know?**

*By Bill Frey*

On Monday October 29, 1929, the Hellertown-Lower Saucon Board of Education agreed to the formation of a High School Band. The Board agreed to have Mr. Milton Warmkessel, once the Director of the Hellertown Band organized in April 1905, organize and instruct the new band, he was to receive \$5.00 per week for tutoring the band.



*HELLERTOWN BAND: Milton Warmkessel (left), leader and instructor, received a salary of \$1.50 per meeting night when bandmaster. He displayed much patience in teaching the bandsmen, some of whom could not read music too well. Practices were held on the second floor of the Central Hotel's livery stable barn and later in the Reinhard School. 1920.*

**Above - The Hellertown Band – Directed by Milton Warmkessel (Seen far left side)**  
**Below – The Hellertown Public School Band – Organized/Directed by Milton Warmkessel (Mr. Warmkessel in the dark uniform far right side)**



*(Continued on Page 7)*

## Meet Some of the Hellertown Historical Society Volunteers and Interns



**Earl Hill, Past HHS President, Volunteers Nearly Daily Maintenance and Upkeep of the Buildings and Grounds. With his knowledge of Construction, the Facility is Kept in Top Condition with Numerous Improvements as Funding Allows.**

The photo above shows Earl Hill after putting the finishing touches on a new plexiglass wall, which will enable visitors to the Heller-Wagner Grist Mill to safely observe the turbine wheels which were added to the Mill as a modernization effort in 1875. This modernization consisted of the addition of two horizontal Fritz-Hanover Turbine wheels of 40 and 44 inches in diameter, producing approximately 4 and 6 horsepower respectively. When it was installed in that time period it was considered a significant addition to the 1767 Heller-Wagner Grist Mill.



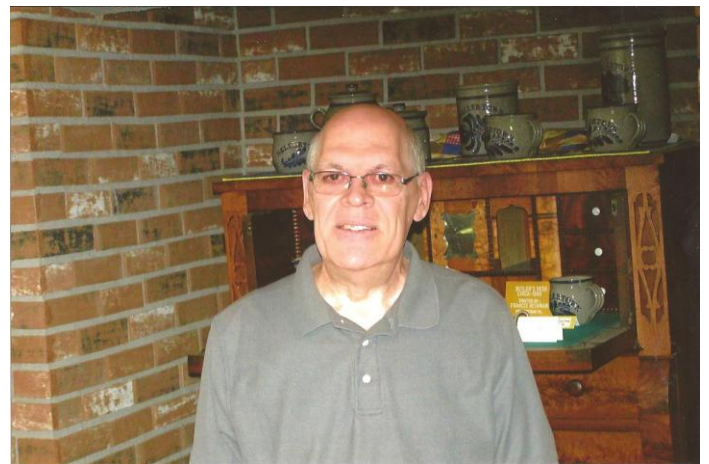
**Allison Mc Causland**

Allison is an HHS intern from Pennsburg, PA and is a DeSales University Student. She is Majoring in History and her minor is in TV film and Journalism. She is a writer and the Editor of her School newspaper called "The Minstrel". Allison works for the Humanities Department and is working on a History film series. She is also a Script supervisor for the TV film Department. While working with HHS, Allison is researching and creating the Hellertown Centennial museum display to be unveiled this month and in charge of promoting this event. Allison started with us in mid-May and will be with us until December.



**Alicia Skeath**

Alicia is an HHS volunteer from Wapwallopen, PA and is a student at Lycoming College in Williamsport. Her major is Art History (with a minor in American History)...and is volunteering with Hellertown Historical Society to gain additional depth and experience in her chosen fields. Alicia has experience in PastPerfect and is sharing her knowledge in set-up and implementation of this very important software that organizes and categorizes archived items and documents. Alicia is in the Student Senate and also Secretary of her class. She works on Campus Archives, and is a member of the Alpha Xi Delta Sorority. She is a Historian, Community Service Chair Foundation Liaison. Alicia is also a volunteer at the Thomas T. Taber Museum/Lycoming Historical Society. She started in June and will be with us until August 18<sup>th</sup>.



**Greg Stauffer to Head-Up PastPerfect Project**

Greg Stauffer, a Hellertown Lower Saucon High School Graduate (1969) and a life-long resident of Hellertown has joined Hellertown Historical Society as volunteer in charge of the demanding and complex PastPerfect software project.

Greg will be responsible for planning, developing, implementing, and managing all facets of this project which will organize and categorize the Society's hundreds and hundreds of archived items and documents. *(Continued Next Page)*

A Lehigh University graduate and a member of the University's Track Team, Greg recently retired from FlowServe (and predecessor companies Ingersol Rand and Ingersol Dresser) after a career in IT and Accounting that spanned a period of 42 years. Greg was Operations Manager of FlowServe's North America Region immediately prior to retirement.



**Bela Silverman**

Bela is an HHS volunteer and student at Saucon Valley Middle School and entering the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. She has been the school's reading Olympics team president for two years running. Bela is first chair percussionist for both the school's concert band and the jazz band. She is a member of the National Junior Honor Society. Bela is also a competitive dancer and now a two time National Champion. Bela wants to attend Brown University and major in child psychology. She also loves animals. Bela has been helping the Society with our archives and other activities.

## HHS Board of Directors

*By Gil Stauffer*



**Larry Sutton**

Larry Sutton, a staunch supporter of Hellertown Historical Society and a valued volunteer and advisor, was elected to the Society's Board of Directors during the July, 2017 meeting. He will be officially installed during the August Board of Directors meeting.

Originally from Western Pennsylvania, Larry, and his wife Kathy, have lived in Hellertown for over three years. Larry retired from his position as a Chief Financial Officer to spend more time with family, while continuing to serve as a business consultant. Currently, he manages a small painting business, and enjoys the freedom to spend more time in the community. They have a son, three daughters, and five grandchildren.

Larry is very pleased to be living in Hellertown, and says it feels like home. Community matters to him, and he feels that preserving history and preserving community are very important.

**See the next issue of the Newsletter for more featured volunteers.**



### Did You Know?...

*(Continued from Page 5)*

After 87 years of continuous service, the award-winning Saucon Valley Marching High School Band still wows spectators at most High School sporting and other special events. You've come a long way!

*(Courtesy Bethlehem Globe-Times)*

**SV High School Band in 2016 SV Spirit Parade**

## HHS Nick-Name Game

*By Andrea Danner*

Back in the day, everyone had a nickname. For those of you who can remember, can you match the nicknames with the person's real name? Good luck!

- |             |                               |
|-------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Boots    | a. Paul Ruch                  |
| 2. Fritz    | b. Harold Eckert              |
| 3. Fritz    | c. Donald Gutshall            |
| 4. Grumpy   | d. George Halfacre            |
| 5. Schnubba | e. Henry Wesolowski           |
| 6. Cookie   | f. Lawrence Achey             |
| 7. Rutser   | g. Al Hoffert                 |
| 8. Mugsy    | h. Al Gross                   |
| 9. Boo Boo  | i. Charles Frey               |
| 10. Monk    | j. Marlene Nauman             |
| 11. Scoops  | k. Mercer Ward                |
| 12. Pint    | l. Dolores, nee Leidich, Ward |
| 13. Popeye  | m. Orville Grube              |
| 14. Dolly   | n. Walter Grigoruk            |
| 15. Breezy  | o. Carl Gerhab                |
| 16. Hick    | p. Harold Ward                |
| 17. Mooner  | q. Bill Szabo                 |
| 18. Henchey | r. Franklin Chunko            |
| 19. Tootsie | s. Kathyne Pfeiffer           |
| 20. Nooky   | t. Fred Moran                 |

**Try your luck  
matching  
these  
nicknames  
with the real  
name of the  
featured  
'Hellertonian'**

**Send your answers for confirmation to the Editor at...**

**[editor@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:editor@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)**

**Answers will be published in the next edition of the newsletter.**