



Hellertown Historical Society

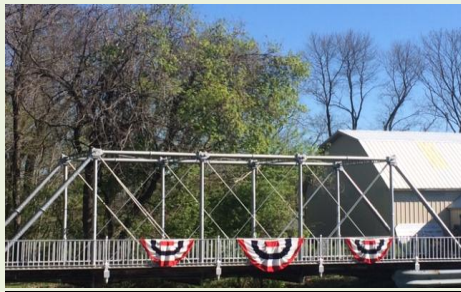
Dedicated to Preserving the History and Heritage of Hellertown and its People

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Upcoming 2019 Events

- Saucon Valley Easter Egg Hunt – Apr. 20
 Community Day – Aug. 17
 Hellertown Heritage Day – T.B.D.
Keep Watch for Additional Events



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 Holiday Open House Attracts Standing Room Only Crowd

There's no question about it, our Holiday Open House, held annually just before the Christmas Holiday, draws the crowd. The event held on December 7 last year, brought a standing room only crowd to witness Christmas-themed live entertainment with singing, dancing and a few...let's say, meager jokes. Whether you were lucky enough to get a seat in the room with the entertainment or had to stand in the adjacent room to listen as best you could, every person had a wonderful time enjoying the spirit of the upcoming Holiday season.

The Tavern Room was decorated with Christmas décor and there were plenty of complimentary light snacks and drinks for all to enjoy.



Brielle with Norris & James and the Lehigh Valley Idols Lead Everyone in Carols

The faux fireplace housed inside the actual stone hearth of the historic Heller-Wagner Grist Mill provided the backdrop for an inviting Christmas card-like atmosphere where live entertainment, offered by Norris and James and the Lehigh Valley Idols, presented their songs and dance numbers. On occasion the entertainers coaxed the crowd to sing along with a few of the popular Christmas songs.

The Holiday Open House is an annual event usually held the first Friday in December. Members, their guests and visitors are all welcome to join us as we provide tours of the Grist Mill, our toy train display and so much more.

We encourage everyone to mark their calendars now for this event at the end of this year. You don't want to be one of those without a seat this time!

(More Open House Photos on the Next Page)

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,

We experienced exciting growth in 2018 due to your enthusiastic support to preserve Hellertown's heritage. THANK YOU!

This is the time of year when we remind you, our members and friends, to join or renew your membership with the Society. As you may know, the Society is comprised only of volunteers and your dues and support keep this organization's doors open for students, researchers, and the public. We cannot do this without you, and your support is appreciated.

Make sure that you follow us on Facebook and check back on our website for upcoming events and fundraising efforts. As we close the door on 2018, I wish you and yours a

very happy New Year and, as always, thank you for supporting your Historical Society!

Stacie Torkos, President

Holiday Open House Shopping At The Mill and Santa's Visit



Preserving “The Heller Helper” Genealogy

By Joan and Art Antonioni

“The Heller Helper” by Betty G. Massman, a sixth great granddaughter of Christopher Heller, also referred to as Johann Christoph Heller, is a compilation of the Heller family and their descendants. There are eighteen volumes, 4 issues per year, beginning in Spring 1983 and ending in Winter/Spring 2002 that include pedigree charts, family group sheets, church and Bible records, county history book accounts, land records, wills, military records, pictures, burial sites, and personal newspaper articles of interest to Heller researchers.

Volume 1 annotates that among a list of Palatinates who emigrated from Germany to England arrived on June 11, 1709 with the Reverend Joshua von Kocherthal in the name of “Wolf Heller.” The group of Germans left London in January 1710 and arrived 6 months later at the Port of New York. Wolf was a survivor after a miserable journey where more than 600 out of 3000 emigrants died either in shipwrecks or disease. He was one of the early settlers of the Schoharie and Mohawk Valleys in New York. There are no additional records about Wolf Heller in the Kocherthal records. Johann Christoph Heller’s wife, Veronica Lavall, died in Krbes-Budesheim, Pfaltz, Germany in 1738 and never emigrated to America. Johann Christoph Heller, age 50, emigrated from Pfeddersheim, Germany landing at the Port of Philadelphia on the ship, “Winter Galley”, on September 5, 1738 along with his sons, Simon, aged 17, and a younger son, Daniel, age unknown. Passengers under 16 years of age, were not shown on the manifest. Johann Michael Heller, known all his life as “Alt Vater Mike” came to America on the ship,

“Phoenix”, on September 15, 1749. Johann Christoph settled and remained in the Lower Saucon Valley of Northampton County, Pennsylvania.

Remaining volumes will detail more family names through births and marriages, and will interest life-long Hellertown residents to familiar names that exist today. “The Heller Helper” has been computerized this past fall, preserving it for future generations. There is a hard copy, also, at the Hellertown Library.

Editor’s Note: Hellertown Historical Society offers our gratitude to Joan and Art Antonioni for volunteering their time to digitize these important historical documents so that they may be added to our other artifacts and shared for all to review.

Cemeteries of Centuries Past - Part 1 of 3

By Dolores Stauffer Di Paolo

Did you ever drive by a cemetery and wonder how old it is and who is buried there? I did, and decided to do some research and see for myself what these cemeteries are all about.

There are three cemeteries in our area that piqued my interest. Lower Saucon Church Cemetery located near Hellertown on Easton Road, Lime Kiln Cemetery is on Creek Road near Lehigh University, and Union Cemetery in Hellertown.

I delved through mounds of papers in our files and this is what I came up with. The following paragraphs are excerpts taken from an article written by Jeremiah S. Hess in 1877. He talks not only about Lower Saucon Church Cemetery, but also about abandoned cemeteries. Read on:

“There were several cemeteries in existence before the three mentioned above, but were abandoned before 1747. One of those abandoned, located on the South side of the Lehigh, was a burial place for the Moravians of Saucon and, according to tradition, the remains of Revolutionary soldiers who died at Bethlehem are also interred there. It was

said that E.P. Wilbur’s hot-house then occupied the burial spots.

There was a grave yard near Shimersville in which the John Currie Family was buried and several other people. No one paid attention to it and about 20 years later the land was then tilled and there is scarcely anything left to mark the spot. There is one flat stone that is believed to be a grave marker.

There was also another grave yard on Daniel Beidleman’s farm, said to be over 100 years old that was also abandoned.



Lower Saucon Church Cemetery

The cemetery at the Lower Saucon Church is a very old one. The weather over time has worn away the dates on the tombstones, so it is difficult to say how old it is. It is enclosed by an old stone wall. There was a log church there before a stone church was built in 1751 on the East side of the road. In 1873 a new church was built on the West side of the road. It is said that the Germans are buried on the East side of the road and the English are buried behind the church.”

As I was writing this, it occurred to me that Mr. Hess wrote this in 1877. That was 100 years after all the abandoned grave yards he mentioned!

My question is, was the farm and the hot-house mentioned above, erected over the graves? Since their markers were swept away by progress 100 yrs. later, it is sad that we will never know who these people were. I don’t think we will ever know exactly where they were laid to rest.

The next newsletter will feature the Lime Kiln Cemetery.

HHS Cryptogram

By Dolores Stauffer Di Paolo

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

editor@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org

Where Oh Where?

CZPENVS AZPENVS
ANPE TCN CQW GCX
EXS GN GCX NOA
UQZO'W ONPE ?

Answer: G C X

E X S W G N H X E N J .

Hint : G=T

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

Merry Christmas

AGE'D PONG OI BAL

LET'S HAVE AN OLD

VODPSBIGL

FASHIONED

RXXSDEJOD QSEP

CHRISTMAS WITH

UBURBXI OIL

POPCORN AND

RXOIMGXXSGD

CRANBERRIES

DEXCIZ BI EPG

STRUNG ON THE

XGOA EXGG.

REAL TREE.

HINT: D=S

HHS Word Scramble

THEME: Name the Mayors

ENCBKE

LMILIWAS

CZTILMSUH

KUCLF

PEFIMZR

EZNHMTIEALN

Unscramble the above names.

Answers will appear in the next issue of the newsletter.

Answers to the last word scramble. Congratulations to all who submitted the correct answers to the Editor:

THEME: Happy Holidays

HCTSEUNTS

CHESTNUTS

BACRESERNIR

CRANBERRIES

ZTPU

PUTZ

RGUSA MSLPU

SUGAR PLUMS

EGROSNA

ORANGES

OKOSEIC

COOKIES

Volunteer Spotlight

Hellertown Historical Society welcomes all persons who have the desire to volunteer time and manpower to help our organization complete the mission of preserving Hellertown's history. Here we introduce our newest volunteers:

Joanne Holum has been with the Hellertown Historical Society for about one month. She was born in Allentown at the former Sacred Heart Hospital and raised in Catasauqua. Since 1986, Joanne has lived with her husband Jerry in Lower Saucon Township.

Joanne worked at the Billing Division of Bethlehem Steel Corp. retiring in 2001 after 35 years of service.

Currently Joanne is serving as our Office Administrative Assistant preparing documents, emails and other items to assist and organize our documentation and communication and says she joined HHS because she likes helping the community and learning more of Hellertown's history.

Joanne also volunteers for Lehigh Valley Health Network Hospice and was a past volunteer for American Cancer Society Daffodil Days for many years until the program was discontinued.

In her free time, Joanne enjoys knitting, shopping and being with family and friends.

~

Sandy (Neiser) Malone was born in Bethlehem, and has lived in Hellertown since 1948.

Gerry Malone was born in Reading, PA, and didn't know that Hellertown existed until he met Sandy in 1961.

Sandy and Gerry married, moved into a home in Hellertown in 1966 and have lived here ever since.

Sandy retired from Lehigh Valley Health Network in early 2018. She worked in Payroll/Accounting for 21 years; prior to that she worked for UPS in the same capacity for 10 years.

Gerry retired as Product Engineering Manager from ALP Lighting in 2005 after spending approximately 30 years in the electrical industry; he then worked for AAA East Central for 11 years, retiring again in late 2017.

Gerry and Sandy joined HHS in 2018. Sandy has been helping out wherever needed; Gerry is helping with maintenance and with Tavern Room functions.

Sandy enjoys learning about the history and details of Hellertown. Gerry also enjoys learning the history and legacy of Hellertown.

(Continued on the Next Page)

Save The Date
Saucon Valley Easter Egg Hunt
At Dimmick Park
Hellertown
April 20 – 10AM SHARP!!
(Be sure to get there early and
visit with the Easter Bunny)

Both Sandy and Gerry have previously volunteered in Hellertown. Sandy has been active in the Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Little League, Dewey Fire Company, Women's Club, Centennial Celebration, Jaycee Wives, Alumni Association, and Beta Sigma Phi sorority.

Gerry has volunteered with the Cub Scouts, Boy Scouts, Little League, Jaycees and Dewey Fire Company. He also served as Borough Fire Chief and Borough Fire Marshall, and currently serves as an election official for Hellertown.

Both now retired, they enjoy traveling (an upcoming Mississippi River Cruise in April) and chauffeuring two college-age grandkids to Temple and Kutztown Universities, watching another grandson play lacrosse and enjoying the company of three other grandchildren.

Let's all welcome Joanne, Sandy and Gerry to our growing HHS group of volunteers.

A Compelling Museum Artifact

Long-time Hellertown resident and one of the original founders of Hellertown Historical Society, Marcella Dimmick, recently donated a very special artifact to our museum. Marcella's parents presented her with the gift of a bracelet upon her graduation from high school in 1930. She added her 1930 class ring to the bracelet and wore both continuously until removing it this past year to donate to the Hellertown Historical Society Grist Mill Museum. A display case has been created to provide visitors a glimpse of this very compelling item.

Marcella, in her own words, provided an interview about how she received the bracelet; it appears here...

"In the year 1930, the Hellertown High School held a graduation ceremony for a class of about 30 students who had completed the 11 school years of study that were required by the state of PA for a high school diploma for a fourth class school district (the town's population was under 6,000 residents). Students who needed a four year diploma transferred their 11 years of credit to Liberty High School in Bethlehem and then graduated in 1931 with the Liberty class.

However, Hellertown had begun growing a few years prior and a new High School was already starting to be built on Main Street near the corner of town on property owned by the district. The new census proved to be enough to raise our standing to a third class school district with a requirement of four years of high school for a diploma.

I attended Liberty High School for a 12th grade diploma. I asked my parents if this new graduation would get me another gift? So they bought this bracelet – which I wore along with my class ring from 1930."



HHS President Stacie Torkos (r) Presents Marcella with a Joe Sofka Autographed Grist Mill Painting for her 100th Birthday in 2014

In 2014, Marcella celebrated her 100th birthday. This special milestone was featured in the HHS Newsletter in November that year. Among the many accolades, Marcella received proclamations honoring her 100th birthday from both the Commonwealth of PA and the US Congress. Marcella also received a special 100th birthday card from the White House signed by then President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama. Marcella is now 104 years young. HHS thanks her for her generous contribution to our museum.

Marcella's Bracelet Display in the HHS Grist Mill Museum



Did You Know

By Bill Frey

Later this year, the American Legion Organization will celebrate its 100th anniversary. Local Posts across the Country will be planning special events for this honorable achievement.

With this milestone upcoming, it only seemed fitting to provide a little history about our Hellertown American Legion Post 397.



The plaque dedication was in memory of Howard Strohl and Edward Ackerman, who lost their lives during World War I. Notice the young boys, Howard R. Strohl (L) and Russell Ackerman (R). They were son and nephew respectively of the lost soldiers.

This historic photo taken at the corner of Chestnut and Main Streets on June 21, 1924 shows the presentation of a memorial fountain to the Hellertown Legion Post by the Betsy Ross Club honoring the seven Hellertown area war veterans who died during World War I. Unveiling the memorial are two young local boys. On the left is Howard R. Strohl; his father, Lt. Howard L. Stroh, was killed in action. On the right is Russell F. Ackerman whose uncle, Edward H. Ackerman, was the first soldier from Hellertown killed during the war and for whom the Hellertown American Legion Post is named.

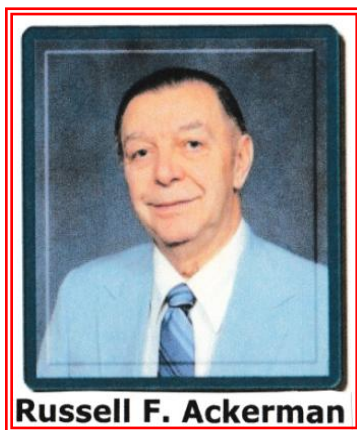
Howard R. Strohl later served as Mayor of Hellertown from 1962-1966. Russell Ackerman was a well known soccer player competing on many Hellertown Soccer Teams in the 1930's and a lifetime resident.

Today the memorial fountain stands at the current entrance to the Hellertown American Legion Post 397.



Howard R. Strohl
1962-1966

Howard R. Strohl later served as Mayor of Hellertown from 1962-1966



Russell F. Ackerman

Russell Ackerman was a well-known soccer player competing on many Hellerton Soccer Teams in the 1930's and a lifetime resident.



The local post plans a 100th Anniversary Celebration at the Legion for March 23, details yet to be announced.

Hellertown Post Office Recognizes 50 Years

By Don Mills

On April 17th this year, the current Hellertown Post Office will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary since the facility opened its doors at Delaware Avenue and Water Street.

To mark this milestone, the Post Office underwent a transformation by displaying some historic artifacts pertaining to the US Mail borrowed from Hellertown Historical Society. These artifacts date back to the beginning of US Mail service in Hellertown, about 150 years of history, according to Hellertown Postmaster, Joe DiRusso.

The celebration on April 17, 4:30PM-6:30PM will include a ribbon-cutting ceremony, an open house and light refreshments. More details will be announced later.

The Hellertown Historical Society wishes to thank Postmaster Joe DiRusso and Saucon Source for the photos and information used in this article.

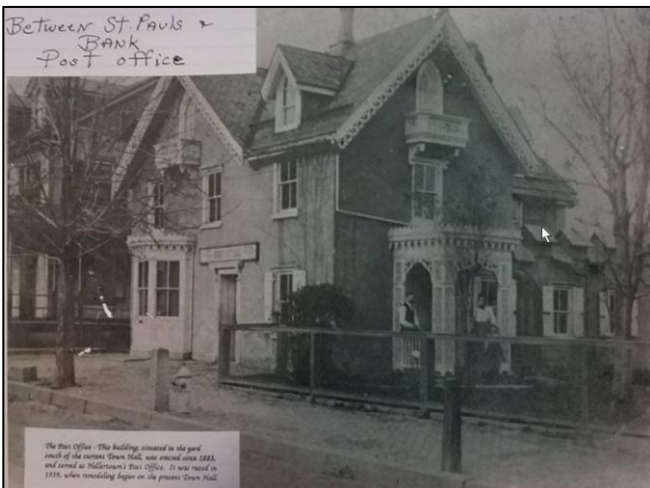
Save The Date
Hellertown Post Office
50th Anniversary
Celebration
April 17 – 4:30-6:30PM



HHS Volunteer Bill Frey (r) helps Hellertown Postmaster Joe DiRusso hang an antique sign borrowed from the Historical Society. This sign was from the historic building shown in a photo at the bottom of this page.



Various photos, documents and other items borrowed from the Historical Society are hung in the Post Office Lobby for viewing during the 50th Celebration.



This photo of the old post office building was taken about 1900. The building was located just South of the current Borough Hall where there is a grassy area today. It was built in 1883 and remained in service until it was razed in 1939 to make room for renovations being made to the Town Hall building. Note the old wooden sign, described in the top photo, over the doorway.

History of the TM & RM Ruch Store

By Dolores Stauffer Di Paolo

After the death of his mother when he was just 16 days old, Titus Ruch was raised by his uncle, Edward Knauss, a farmer. He taught Titus how to farm and also sent him to school.

However, Titus wanted to be in business and began his career working as a clerk in the E. & D. Moll general store in Hellertown. After two years, he went to work for Hess Brothers who dealt in coal and lumber. He worked for an undertaker for one year as well as working at the Bethlehem Steel Company.

In 1901, he took over the millinery and furnishing store formerly operated by his mother-in-law, Mrs. Reihman. Mrs. Reihman acquired the store through her father, Peter Moll, who built the store in 1832. Titus renamed the store, T. M. and M. W. Ruch Store, using his and wife Mary's initials.

The location of the Ruch Store was 610 Main Street in Hellertown.

To recognize the history of this establishment, HHS volunteer Jeanette Boos set out to create a display reminiscent of the store in the Hellertown Historical Society's Grist Mill Museum. Photos below and at right show the impressive result. Thank you Jeanette for such a wonderful addition to our museum.



Ruch Storefront – (L-R) Titus Ruch, Mary Ruch and Lottie Ruch Trumbower (Undated Photo)



Be sure to see this and other displays in our Grist Mill Museum on your next visit.

