

# HELLERTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

January 2013

[www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)

Issue 1



## Mill Open House Had Something Festive for All

By Dianne Borovics  
*Special to the Valley Voice*

The open house at the Heller-Wagner Grist Mill was a festive evening which found guests enjoying various decorated venues of the Grist Mill complex. Wreaths, candles, pine swags, paths lined with luminaries, lighted trees, and an illuminated Pony Bridge welcomed guests.

Santa's sleigh was parked at the entrance to the Tavern Room. Groups toured the mill museum. In the Miller's House, folks admired the beautiful and intricate Roger Shaffer scale models of Hellertown landmarks. They also visited the train display.

The Tavern Room was the main hub of socializing with guests mingling and catching up with old friends and enjoying refreshments. Others claimed a seat in the Tavern Room to enjoy the music and dance performances of Norris and James and The Gilbert Family, members of Lehigh Valley Idols. Audience members sang along on "White Christmas" and "Silent Night."

Another highlight was a raffle drawing for Joe Sofka's watercolor painting of grist mill buildings and grounds. The winner of this framed painting was Jim Luchetta of Hellertown, and was accepted by his mother-in-law, Pearl Stork. A drawing for prizes for those who were in attendance followed. Catherine Doll of Hellertown was the delighted winner of the first signed and numbered print of Mr. Sofka's watercolor. Charmaine Fegley of Hellertown won a mouse pad featuring a likeness of the painting. Doris Grimes, also of Hellertown, won two tickets offered by the entertainers to one of their shows.

Society President, Earl Hill, and Secretary, Erika Hill, were thanked by Society members for their service. They were presented with number two of the signed and numbered Joe Sofka prints.

*Reprinted with permission of The Valley Voice, Saucon Valley's Weekly Newspaper, December 21, 2012 Edition*

**One of our Fundraisers for 2013 is the sale of matted, signed and numbered prints of Joe Sofka's watercolor painting. They can be purchased for \$60 for the print, or \$99 framed. Mousepads bearing the watercolor print are also available for \$10. Stop by our gift shop any Tuesday, Thursday or Saturday morning from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM or call 610-838-1770 for more information.**

## Something Old and Something New - Train Display and Visits with Santa

The flyer for upcoming 2012 holiday events at HHS declared, "The Trains Are Back!" and "Visits with Santa". After a respite of almost a decade, members William Frey and Fran Hudock set up the 144 sq. ft. model train display in the basement of the Miller's House. The display included some vintage buildings over 100 years old and two of Roger Shaffer's incredible handmade scale models-Hellertown's Reading Train Station and Hellertown's Masonic Lodge. It is estimated over 400 hundred folks of all ages visited the trains and magical miniature village and farm scene. Chief Engineer Bill Frey manned most of the weekend hours between Thanksgiving and Christmas with assistance from Fran Hudock and Dick Eckert. Comments from the younger visitors included: "It was Awesome!" "I liked it all." "I like the train with the candy canes best." Numerous requests for the train display to return again in 2013 will be honored. Several new members are eager to help expand and enhance the display for 2013. Thank you Bill, Fran, and Dick, as well as everyone who helped spread the word.

**Santa and his Sleigh** visited the Mill on Sunday, December 16, 2012. With "elf help" from Cadette Girl Scout Troop 8030 and a cadre of Society members, Santa's visits with over 70 children, several adults, and one photogenic puppy were photographed. Scouts escorted visitors to the Train Display and back again to The Tavern Room for light refreshments. Smiles were the order of the day; it was impossible to find anyone NOT smiling. Our visitors have already expressed hope that "Santa and His Sleigh" will return again next Christmas.

It was a busy holiday season for the Society; just over 900 people visited our site between Thanksgiving and the end of December. Many of these folks had never been inside our buildings before. More than once, we heard, "I never knew all this was here." In addition to the activities, several people stopped to visit after noticing all the holiday decorations and activity. These visits resulted in several bookings for Tavern Room events and also new members.



## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

### DIANNE BOROVIES

When the nominating committee approached me about serving as President, I took several days for thoughtful consideration and conversations with active members before I accepted their nomination. Some members may say, "Who is she?" My husband and I were born and raised here. My maiden name was Cope, and I graduated with my high school sweetheart and now husband, John, from Hellertown Lower Saucon High School. While John went off to Penn State, I went off to nursing school and became an RN. John served in the Army and later became an economist for the USDA in Washington, DC. As a "trailing spouse", I attended four universities and completed undergraduate and graduate degrees and certifications in nursing administration and real estate.

Wherever I travelled and lived, when asked where my hometown was, I always responded, "Hellertown, PA." My interest in history began at Reinhard School, and by adulthood, I was an avid history buff. I particularly enjoyed studying the history of the Heller family, the Pennsylvania Germans, the Lutherans, and the Moravians.

After retiring from careers in nursing administration and teaching as well as owning my own business, a real estate brokerage firm in Virginia, I was delighted to return to our hometown and the farm where my husband was raised. I am now able to pursue my love of local history on a full time volunteer basis. Our two sons are both active duty military--the elder a Marine officer and the younger a Naval officer. But, enough with the personal history.

Today, the members of our organization, Hellertown Historical Society (HHS), are committed to carrying on the work of past members. We are challenged by several current demographic, economic, and legislative issues. A thoughtful study of our membership reveals we are losing members. This might be attributed to aging of the population, to the economic times, or to other issues. The cost of maintaining our buildings and grounds is increasing. Our Trust Fund has decreased in amount due to increased costs of maintenance and repairs in recent years. To say our budget is tight is an understatement.

Pennsylvania Legislation regarding **Small Games of Chance (SGOC)**, **Act 2 and Act 184 of 2012**, has a major impact on how our organization conducts fundraising. After an in depth review and discussion of these laws and attendance at a state conducted seminar on the topic, HHS Board of Directors has made the decision to carry on only **legal** means of fundraising and those which require no background checks, no



special licenses, and, most important, no extensive weekly record keeping and future reporting to the PA Department of Revenue. Our volunteer manpower simply does not allow for this. What does this mean? It means the 2012 Monte Carlo Night, the 2012 Raffle, 2012 50:50's, and the Summer and Winter Lotteries of 2012 were the Society's final SGOC. Your Board of Directors and a Fundraising Committee are hard at work exploring new initiatives to raise funds to carry out the Society's mission. We welcome ideas from all members. Watch for updates in future newsletters.

After much discussion, the Board of Directors unanimously approved a **new dues structure for 2013**, which includes modest increases in dues as well as specific benefits for members. Benefits include discounts on purchases of gift shop items, free Speakers' Nights, a new Annual Membership Meeting, and a complimentary meal at Spring Spruce up Day. Business and Lifetime Members also receive special donation rates for annual use of our Tavern Room. All members are welcome at all meetings and events and will continue to receive quarterly newsletters. The possibility of offering an email version of the newsletter in the future is under consideration. With this in mind, we are beginning to collect members' email addresses.

We have recently updated our mission statement and are thoughtfully developing a **vision statement** for our organization. Your officers have been reaching out to members to seek ideas and input into what you wish to see our organization pursue in upcoming years. I encourage you to share your ideas for the future and also to become actively involved as your time will allow. Our needs are many, and many hands do make light work. There are opportunities for small projects you may work on at home, as well as committee work, or work on site. The year 2014 will be the thirtieth anniversary year for HHS. Thank you in advance for your continued support and help in preserving Hellertown's history and heritage.

#### EXECUTIVE BOARD

President - Dianne Borovies  
Vice-President - Francis Hudock  
Treasurer - Gilbert Stauffer  
Secretary - Gloria Michael

#### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dianne Borovies  
Richard Fluck  
Dorothy Freeman  
Earl Hill  
Francis Hudock  
Linda Fiegel  
Gloria Michael  
Gilbert Stauffer

Pearl Stork  
Betty Tarquin  
Phillip Weber  
Joseph Sofka  
Donald Mills  
Stacie Torkos

#### Emeritus:

Marcella Dimmick  
Stella Pasternak

#### Contact us at:

Hellertown Historical Society  
150 W. Walnut Street  
Hellertown, PA 18055  
Visit us at [www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)  
610-838-1770 (Please leave a message)  
Email: [info@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)

**MEETINGS:** The Board of Directors meets the first Thursday of every month at 7:00 PM in the Tavern Room of the Grist Mill. Meetings are open to the public. A General Membership Meeting is scheduled for March 21, 2013, at 7:00 PM. For more information call 610-838-1770.



## NUT ROLL & POPPYSEED ROLL SALE

Orders for "just like grandma's" homemade nut rolls and poppyseed rolls are being taken for pick up on History Day, Saturday, April 27th at the Miller's House from 9:00 AM to 11:30 AM. The cost is \$12.00 a roll. Deadline for ordering is Monday, April 22nd. To place orders call Gloria Michael at 610-691-1368. We are taking a limited number of orders, so place your order early! We will also have another nut roll and poppyseed roll sale just in time for "Mother's Day!" Pick-up will be Saturday, May 11, with deadline for ordering Monday, May 6th. Mark your calendars!!

## SAUCON VALLEY HISTORY DAY

On Saturday, April 27th, visit the Grist Mill, Heller Homestead, and The Lutz Franklin Schoolhouse for a trip back in time to learn about the early days of Hellertown and Lower Saucon. Each site will be open for tours (both guided and self-guided) from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM. At the Hellertown Historical Society, tour the historic Grist Mill and Museum, Wash House, and Barn. A Yard Sale and Bake Sale and activities for kids will make the Hellertown Historical Society a popular destination. Watch for more details!!

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!

- Thursday, March 21:** General Membership Meeting and First Speaker of 2013 Speakers' Series, Jeff Donat on "Mills in PA"  
**Saturday, April 6:** Spring Spruce up Day at the Mill, All Members Invited to Participate, Lunch Will be Served  
**Saturday, April 27:** Annual Saucon Valley History Day & Yard Sale  
**Tuesday, May 7:** Speakers' Series, Kristen Mills on "Bethlehem's Moravians"  
**Tuesday, June 18:** Speakers' Series, John Weber on "Bethlehem Steel"  
**Saturday, August 17:** Annual Saucon Valley Community Day  
**Tuesday, September 17:** Speakers' Series, Karen Samuels and Ken Ranier on "The Hellers of Hellertown"  
**Sunday, October 6:** Fall Fundraiser, German American Day Celebration in Honor of the Hellers and the Wagners

## Society Wish List

In an all volunteer non-profit organization, the wish list *often* exceeds the budget, so please help us spread the word about our needs. For more details, to make a donation, or to volunteer, please call 610- 838-1770 or email us at: [info@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:info@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)

- Portable Microphone and Speaker System
- Digital Projection System
- Video Camera to Record Events
- Mannequins for Displaying Vintage Clothes
- Picnic Tables and Benches
- Outdoor Garden Benches
- \*Outdoor Directional Signs to Our Buildings
- Gently Used Vacuum Cleaners
- Small Under Counter Refrigerator
- Folding 5' and 6' Long Tables
- \*Bricks or Pavers to Complete Walkways
- Split Rails for Fences
- Volunteers, Volunteers, Volunteers

## Memorials in Lieu of Flowers

We have seen a trend toward families of deceased ones suggesting family and friends send a donation to the Hellertown Historical Society. This is sincerely appreciated by our Society members. Should you have questions concerning "memorials in lieu of flowers" for your loved one, please discuss them with your funeral director. You may also contact the Society at 610-838-1770. The funds received through memorials are used to maintain and refurbish the Grist Mill, Miller's House and surrounding grounds...and to preserve the many artifacts associated with Hellertown's heritage.

## IT'S 2013 AND TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP - Won't you please consider a Lifetime Membership??

Is your membership an individual or a family membership? This year, why not consider a Life Membership? Life memberships provide the foundation on which the structure of the organization is built. Please give serious consideration to a Life Membership in the Hellertown Historical Society. You will be strengthening not only the membership base but also add to the financial health of the organization.

*Please cut out the membership form below and drop off or mail to the office at 150 W. Walnut St., Hellertown, PA 18055*

### HELLERTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

150 W. Walnut St., Hellertown, PA 18055

610-838-1770

[www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)

### MEMBERSHIP YEAR \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City & State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone \_\_\_\_\_

- FULL TIME STUDENT (10% Off Gift Shop Items, Free admission to 4 Speaker Nights).....\$ 10.00
- INDIVIDUAL < 65 (10% Off Gift Shop Items, Free admission to 4 Speaker Nights)..... 25.00
- SENIOR 65 and > (10% Off Gift Shop Items, Free admission to 4 Speaker Nights).....15.00
- FAMILY (10% Off Gift Shop Items, Free admission to 4 Speaker Nights)..... 25.00
- BUSINESS OR ORGANIZATION (10% Off Gift Shop, Free admission to 4 Speaker Nights, 25% Off One Tavern Room Booking Per Year)..... 100.00
- LIFE MEMBERSHIP (10% Off Gift Shop, Free admission to 4 Speaker Nights 50% Off One Tavern Room Booking per Year)..... 250.00
- Donation in Kind.....

Please indicate your membership on your check and make payable to Hellertown Historical Society

## HELLERTOWN HISTORICAL SOCIETY

150 W. Walnut Street  
 Hellertown, PA 18055

*This is to certify that*

*\_\_\_\_\_ is a member in good standing for the year \_\_\_\_\_*



## Pony Bridge Reopened with Ribbon Cutting



The official ribbon cutting ceremony the afternoon of Sunday, November 18, 2012, was highlighted by the announcement of David Heintzelman as the local businessman whose generous donation allowed the Society to purchase materials and hire a contractor to assist members and community volunteers with the 2012 repairs to the Pony Bridge. The sun was shining as a small crowd gathered at the entrance to the Pony Bridge for the celebratory program. Earl Hill welcomed the guests and offered the sincere thanks of the organization and the community to Mr. Heintzelman. Two additional contributions of contractor Mark Repsher and Sam Donato of IESE were also acknowledged.

Dianne Borovies presented a historical timeline of the Pony Bridge from 1860 to the present. She explained the donated funds facilitated the replacement of rotten red oak flooring and support beams with longer lasting white oak. The event concluded with the official ribbon cutting by Mr.'s Heintzelman and Hill. Guests were then invited to stroll across the newly reopened bridge on their way to a social hour in the Tavern Room. Guests viewed pictures and memorabilia of Pony Bridge history and enjoyed light refreshments. Jan Doddy of Doddy Photography donated his services and recorded the events of the day. To read about the history of our special bridge and to view Mr. Doddy's beautiful pictures of the day, visit our website at [www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)

### ***A Big Thank You.....***

We would like to thank the following who have made significant contributions to the Society in 2012.

*Patti Smith, Debbi Pastelyak, Norris & James and the Lehigh Valley Idols, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Lawhorn, Mr. & Mrs. Dean Shaffer, John & Jan Rigo, Sam Donato, Frances Zamiskie, Jan Doddy, David & June Grube, Drew & Kelly Borovies, Carol Anne Savitske, Gretchen Worsley, Lorraine Verba, Stephen Laudenslager, Cheryl Tice, McIntyre Management, Rev. Ronald Hari, Andrew Rosko, Lee Weidner, Mildred & Richard Simpson, Glenn Balliet, Fliszar Family, Richard Whited, Robert Gilman, Clyde Aaron, Gerry Schmill, Pearl Bodor, Richard & Elaine Kantor, James Brown, Baron Chase, Sharon Bender, Jeff Donat, Bud Prosser*

Your support will ensure the Hellertown Historical Society will face the future in a stronger financial position, continue to provide resources that will preserve history, and provide tools for research and education of future generations of Hellertonians.

## Holiday Decorations Draw Folks to the Tavern Room



The holiday decorations and activity from holiday parties drew attention to our Tavern Room. Several families who were driving or walking by stopped to visit and admire our beautiful room. There are events already booked for 2013 as far out as next December! Help spread the word about the availability of this room to your family, friends, and neighbors. If you are interested in booking an event, book early to reserve your first choice date. For tours or information, call 610 838 7937 or email [tavernroomcoordinator@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](mailto:tavernroomcoordinator@hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)

## 2013 SPEAKER'S SERIES

After a successful Speakers' Series in 2012, we are doing it again in 2013! This year starts off on Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>, with our General Membership Meeting and a slide show highlighting events of the Hellertown Historical Society during 2012. Jeff Donat has been generous in his offer to share his knowledge and passion for mills with an aptly titled presentation "Mills in PA" for the second half of the evening. Next up is Tuesday, May 7<sup>th</sup>, when Hellertown's own Kristen Mills presents "Bethlehem's Moravians." Our third speaker will be John Weber, on Tuesday, June 18<sup>th</sup>. This is a must see presentation on Bethlehem Steel. Last in our series for 2013 will be Karen Samuels and Ken Ranier presenting "The Hellertown of Hellertown," on Tuesday, September 17, 2013. All events begin at 7:00 PM, with tours of the Grist Mill at 6:30 PM.

This year, due to the changes in the law regarding Small Games of Chance, we will be emphasizing how appreciative we are of a \$5.00 donation for attending each of these events. While our speakers kindly donate their time, we still must maintain and heat or cool the buildings, which your donation helps us to do. Realizing this is a tough economy, we have decided to waive this donation for any 2013 dues paying member of the Hellertown Historical Society. For your convenience, we will offer memberships at the door. For only \$25.00 reg./\$15.00 senior, the membership almost OR does pay for itself! SO JOIN TODAY and please come out and support The Hellertown Historical Society as we continue to educate the public and preserve the rich history of Hellertown!

## Ticket Sales to Auto Show Community Days Will Help Support Hellertown Historical Society

For every \$10. Community Days Auto Show Ticket sold by members of our organization, the Greater Lehigh Valley Auto Dealers Association (GLVADA) will donate \$5. to HHS. These tickets are good for admission to the Auto Show at Stabler on either Thursday, March 21 or Friday, March 22. Members will have tickets to sell from February 15 through March 17. For tickets, call the office, 610 838 1770, and leave a message. Tickets will be numbered and must be purchased from the supply in our office. We also have the opportunity to have a booth at the Auto Show on Community Days to meet and greet visitors and share information about The Grist Mill and our organization. GLVADA will award the non-profit that sells the most tickets a special media promotional package. Help spread the word about this fundraising opportunity, and let's all sell some tickets! This is something we can all do from the comfort of our home.

This Newsletter is sponsored by:  
**HEINTZELMAN FUNERAL HOME, INC.**  
326 Main Street  
Hellertown, PA 18055  
610-838-0521