



# Hellertown Historical Society

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

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**Upcoming 2017 Events**

**Hellertown’s Historic Jail Fundraiser  
Beer Pairing and Dinner @ The HHS Tavern  
W. Walnut Street  
June 9 – 6PM-9PM**

## HHS Continues Egg Hunt Tradition



**Members from Hellertown Historical Society, Lehigh Valley AMBUCS and Relay For Life Gather to Set Up the 2017 Saucon Valley Egg Hunt**

*By Don Mills*

Fifty-three years ago, a Saucon Valley tradition was born when Hellertown’s Bud Prosser, charter President of the Jaycees Organization at the time, had the vision of holding an Easter Egg Hunt in the Borough’s Dimmick Park for all the local children. The tradition has continued every year since, organized mainly by the Saucon Valley Jaycees and again two years ago, when they organized their members into a newly formed charter group named the Lehigh Valley Area AMBUCS. Sadly though, due to the lack of volunteers and helpers, the LV Area AMBUCS disbanded in January this year. Among the many events this organization offered to the Community, the Annual Egg Hunt was in jeopardy and needed a new organizing group to step up and continue this long tradition. At a recent Board of Directors meeting, Hellertown Historical Society President Stacie Torkos presented the idea of the Society handling this event to the Directors. The Board overwhelmingly approved the idea and thanks to some quick and very necessary donations to be mentioned later in this article, the tradition lives on.

This year’s Egg Hunt was held Saturday April 15<sup>th</sup> at 10AM, the Saturday before Easter Sunday, as it always has. Volunteers from the Historical Society gathered at 8AM that day with volunteers from the former AMBUCS and Relay For Life groups, along with other interested guests and friends who also wished to donate

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*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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**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,

The change of season this time of year is always refreshing. I have been enjoying the wonderful fragrance of the blooming lilacs near the entrance to the Grist Mill. One of my favorite things about our site is the flowing sounds of the mill race waterfall. We sure are lucky to have such a charming and peaceful place in our community. Stop by anytime to say hello or bring a lunch and sit at one of our picnic benches.

HHS recently had the pleasure of working with two wonderful groups in our community while organizing the Saucon Valley Easter Egg Hunt that took place on April 15<sup>th</sup>. We partnered with the Relay for Life and former LV AMBUCS (Jaycees) volunteer groups. We can't thank Lori Waldspurger Jardel

enough for all of the expertise, guidance, & tips that were offered, along with helping at the event. We also received sponsorship support from various local businesses, Hellertown Borough, Lower Saucon Township, Jerry Medaris and generous monetary donations the day of the egg hunt. THANK YOU!

We are thankful that we were able to help support this holiday event and are looking forward to working together with everyone again next year. In addition to carrying on the tradition of the egg hunt, and partnering with some fantastic volunteers, we also were given the opportunity to introduce our selves to more families in our community. I continue to be overjoyed by the people who have embraced HHS and support us in our dedicated efforts preserving and sharing Hellertown's Heritage- *your heritage*.  
Happy Spring!

Stacie Torkos, President

## Proposed Changes to By-Laws of Hellertown Historical Society

During the April 6, 2017 meeting of the Board of Directors of the Hellertown Historical Society, two changes were proposed and discussed that directly affect the society's By-Laws:

### Proposal #1

The day of each monthly Board of Directors' Meeting will be held on the second Thursday of each month instead of the first Thursday of each month.

### Proposal #2

The starting time of each meeting will be changed to 6:00 p.m. (18:00 hours) from the previous start time of 7:00 p.m. (19:00 hours).

In order to change the By-Laws, the following process must take place in a timely manner:

Each change must be read at two consecutive Board of Directors meetings, and time must be allocated during each meeting for discussion. Those readings are anticipated to occur during the May and June (2017) Board meetings.

A vote by the Board members approving or rejecting the proposed changes will occur during the July (2017) meeting. A simple majority is required for passage (or rejection).

The Board, in its quest to attract new members and retain existing

members, has found the first week of each month to be the busiest for those individuals still in the work-a-day world (not retired). By changing meetings to the second week of each month, the Board anticipates initiatives to recruit (and retain) Board members will meet with greater success.

Copies of the Hellertown Historical Society's By-Laws may be obtained by visiting the Society's office in the Miller's House during regular business hours: Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

## Readers Respond with Letters for 'Ask the Grump...'

*By Don Mills - Editor*

*"Ask the Grump" debuted in February with a minor offering of what was yet to come. After only the first appearance of this unique column, it has already generated letters from readers to write back and comment on the stories. With the permission of the letter writers, they are published here unedited and complete. Hopefully you will enjoy these as we did and maybe you too will write a letter to us and comment on the stories appearing in this column or to the letters listed here...*

### **Letter from Gary Metzger -**

"On page 6 of the February newsletter there was a question concerning another bowling alley in

Hellertown. Some of the information wasn't correct.

The bowling lanes were called the Plaza Lanes. It was owned by Carl Kagel and his son in law Bill Scheidler. It had **6 NOT 8** lanes. One of the lanes could be used for Duck Pins.

I set up pins there in 1958, 1959 and 1960. And, yes it was a little dangerous although there was a certain way that you sat that was fairly safe. There were two shifts during the week (7 and 9). The teams had 5 bowlers each and bowled 3 games per night. We were paid 10 cents per game plus a 50 cent tip (15 games, 3x5 = \$1.50 plus .50 tip equaled \$2.00 per shift) and earned \$4.00 nightly for 4 hours work.

The boro league bowled there during the week. The league had 3 divisions of 6 teams each (A, B and C) with the A division being the best.

My name is Gary Metzger. I'm 73 years old and graduated from Hellertown Lower Saucon High School in 1961. We lived at 884 New Jersey Avenue. My mother was a member of the society for a number of years until she went to assisted living in 2006. Her name was Pauline and she passed away in March of 2014 three weeks shy of her 97th birthday. My dad was Llewellyn. He was the mail man for Hellertown RD 1 for about 20 years. He passed away in 1983 at the age of 70.

*(Continued on Page 3)*

## 'Ask the Grump...'

*(Continued from Page 2)*

I've been a member of the society for a number of years (my mom got me to join). I appreciate the newsletters and their content. It's important to preserve history. As a society we have no idea of where we're going if we don't know where we've been.

THANKS."

**Editor** - *After my response to Gary, he penned some more info in a second letter here...*

"Don,

Feel free to publish it with my name. I don't think it was really an error, just a shortcoming in someone's recollection. PMP lanes had 8 lanes and Plaza 6.

I really enjoy the publications and actually have them saved in a notebook. I've been at various activities at the mill over the years including the Christmas festivities for a number of years in a row. You've done a fantastic job.

I do remember when the Grist Mill was still lived in. The Parsons family resided there and their son, Larry was a year behind me in school (he graduated in 1962). I can also remember when the road that goes past the Mill and up the hill was a dirt road. In fact the road took us out to "White Acres" pond where we ice skated. White Acres was a pond that was located behind what used to be the old Hiawatha swimming pool.

I don't know if you are related to anyone from the former Potts Jones Mills Insurance Agency but I have had my auto insurance there for 57 years. Bill Potts wrote my first Erie policy.

I was a student at Reinhard Elementary School when the first new edition was built. At that time we had 4 rooms each on the first and second floors with the principal's office on the second floor between the two classrooms on the west side.. The basement was then converted to the Kindergarten classroom.

I was born and raised in Hellertown and would not have wanted to have been raised anywhere else. We had everything within walking distance

and there was always something to do. It was a wonderful place to grow up.

If you ever need anything else I'd be happy to help out or even write something for the paper (I spent 35 years in the newspaper business).

Gary K. Metzger"

### Letter from Wayne Finkbeiner –

"Hi!

I enjoy reading your Newsletter because it brings back many fond memories of growing up in Hellertown. I appreciate Grump's willingness to answer questions about the history of Hellertown. We called the bowling alley Keggel's (the spelling is probably incorrect) but it was run by Carl Keggel.

There are some "Pin Boys" still living in Hellertown and they were paid 10 cents a game. So if four people played three games the Pin Boy made \$1.20. There was a bowling program for kids on Saturday mornings during the winter.

As far as the jail as mischievous "bad" kids we played in there many times and when chased by the police (Coughlin) when "Tic Tacking" we would escape by going under Carson's and the Old Yeager's building where the Silver Creek runs. They fenced it off much later which I think enhanced the severe flooding because the water could not flow through because the fenced caught the debris. But in our adventures we saw cells in a basement of a house on Main Street which we think were active at one time, but maybe it was just a kids' fantasy. If you so decide you can ask around if anybody else was aware of those cells if they existed.

As far as the Civil Defense Center or sometimes referred to as an Air Raid Shelter as far as my observations it was very well equipped with supplies.

I was in there a few times as I started to work in the Parks Department at the age of 14 thanks to Leon Brown. I still have some of my pay stubs from working in the park/pool; promoted to the garbage truck and finally being Recreational Director.

Thank Grumpy for rekindling many fond memories of Hellertown which I often discuss in my work today. That free day at Dorney Park,

blocking off the streets to go sledding, the morning recreation sites at the elementary schools in the summer, the carnivals (Legion/Dewey), the circus and the parades.

I feel very blessed to have grown up in Hellertown. Respectfully,  
Wayne J. Finkbeiner"

**Editor** - *After my response to Wayne, he penned a second letter here...*

"Don!

Thanks for the reply. I have no problem with you printing the letter and signing my name, but I am concerned about the spelling of Keggels. I do not want to offend any of his relatives. Someone told me that Carl lived over a hundred years.

I do not know the correct spelling but maybe someone at the Historical Society might be able to clarify the spelling.

Respectfully,  
Wayne J, Finkbeiner"

### Editor –

*Thanks to both Gary and Wayne for taking time to write to us about what they have read in our past newsletters. If anyone can comment further on what they or Grumpy have provided in our newest column, or if you wish simply to write and tell us how we are doing, we surely would appreciate hearing from you. Writing to us does not mean your letter will be automatically published. As Editor, I will first ask your permission to do so and if you do give permission, I'll also ask if you wish your name used. You are free to refuse if you wish, however we encourage this feedback as we all will learn from the information offered. And above all, we want to hear from you to provide feedback about how we are doing as an organization.*

Please Visit Our Website  
[www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.hellertownhistoricalsociety.org)  
Over 22,000 Visitors Can't Be Wrong!



## SATM

(In case you are unaware, this acronym means "Shopping At The Mill")

By Gloria Michael

### Another Successful "Shopping at The Mill" and Santa's Visit



Due to suffering a broken ankle on Friday, December the 9th, I was not able to be as active as I usually am at Christmas Shopping at the Mill and Santa Claus's Visit. However, on Sunday December 11<sup>th</sup>, I did "hobble" in about 1 o'clock and everything was going full swing. Santa Claus was happily greeting all the kids (and pets too) and handing out tangerines.

I went into the Tavern Room and observed a lot of busy shoppers and very happy vendors. We had nine vendors selling make-up, accessories, chocolates, candles, natural oils, etc. We also had a new vendor selling his clay figurines and he can't wait to do our next show.

I talked to each vendor and they all commented that their sales were doing very well. That is always a good thing to hear because that means "they made their table" and anything above that is profit. Because of a conflict in scheduling, there will NOT be a "Spring Shopping at The Mill" this year. We will have Christmas Shopping and Santa's Visit again on December 10<sup>th</sup>. Mark your calendars and **"Save The Date"**.

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

## Egg Hunt Tradition Continues...

(Continued from Page 1)

time and manpower to this event. Lori Waldspurger Jardel, former President of the Jaycees/AMBUCS and Egg Hunt expert, gave everyone instruction to set up the event. Everyone then took off in separate directions, with their oversized garbage bags filled with eggs and prizes, toward the different fields where the age groups would be assembled for their mad dash. Thanks to the number of volunteers, distributing plastic eggs filled with goodies, assorted prizes and candy treats in the fields, the work was completed in about an hour.



**Prizes Awaiting the Lucky Holders of the Prize Eggs from Each Field**



**Lori Gives Last Minute Instructions to the Groups**



**Hellertown Historical Society President Stacie Torkos (L.) and Lehigh Valley Jaycees/AMBUCS President Lori Waldspurger Jardel**

As families with their children started to arrive, volunteers set off to their assigned positions as monitors in each field to keep watch over the groups. About 9:45AM the Easter Bunny arrived on a fire truck to greet children before and after the hunt.



**The "Mad Dash" was Over in a Matter of Seconds**

At 10AM sharp, a siren sounded the signal to "GO" and off they ran like a hungry swarm of locusts attacking crops, the eggs and prizes were gathered into their buckets, baskets, bags and even pockets, leaving nothing behind. In 30 seconds it was over. Thanks to the dashing children, there was nothing left to clean up, making our jobs even easier. A few lucky children were awarded prizes for some of the eggs distributed in the fields. This writer's opinion is that every child and family enjoyed this event, even though it is over in a matter of seconds. Per Lori's instructions, extra eggs were retained for those children who may have been unlucky to get any during the 'mad dash' – no one goes home empty-handed.

The Hellertown Historical Society would like to offer thanks to Lori and her group of former AMBUCS, the Relay For Life Team and the friends who gathered to guide us and help with set up. And all of us wish to acknowledge the generosity of those who contributed cash or items to help sponsor this event - **The Borough of Hellertown, Lower Saucon Township, Crayola, Giant Food Stores, Hellertown McDonalds, Jerry Medaris, Just Born, Lehigh Valley AMBUCS, Lost River Caverns and Reilly Chiropractic.**

We would also like to thank **Dewey Fire Company** and Borough Resident **Ron Smith** for the use of their fire trucks to escort and chauffeur the Easter Bunny to the Park.

*See More Egg Hunt Photos on the Next Page*



The Easter Bunny Greets Children After the Egg Hunt



Children and Parents Pick Up the Last Few Remnants of the 2017 Egg Hunt

**\*\*WANTED\*\***

**Artifacts, Photos and Experiences from the 1972 HELLERTOWN CENTENNIAL**

We are creating a museum display to celebrate this one of a kind event.

Please contact us to contribute to this project by donating or loaning items.

Thank you for your support!



**Did You Know?**

*By Bill Frey*

Jacob Wagner (b. May 15, 1785-d. September 8, 1841) was the second generation Wagner Family member to own the Heller-Wagner Grist Mill. He is buried at the Lower Saucon Lutheran Church, on Easton Road in Lower Saucon Township, with his two wives. Jacob's first wife was Maria Catharina Rentzheimer Wagner (b. March 24, 1788-d. August 17, 1827). His second wife was Susanna Wagner (b. September 28, 1784-d. July 6, 1846)

Jacob was deeded the Mill in 1806 from his Grandfather, Christopher Stoffel Wagner, who bought the property on October 20, 1772.

**HHS Welcomes 2017 Business Members**

Hellertown Historical Society would like to recognize our Business Members for 2017 –

Silver Level Members

**Dr. Pamela Meyer**  
32 Kichline Avenue  
Hellertown PA 18055  
484-851-3000

**Falk Funeral Homes and Crematory**  
1418 Main Street  
Hellertown PA 18055  
610-838-9191

**Lost River Caverns**  
726 Durham Street  
PO Box M  
Hellertown PA 18055  
610-838-8767

Gold Level Members

**Law Offices of Mark P. Albright**  
403 Main Street  
Hellertown PA 18055  
610-597-2160

**Weiss Schantz Agency, Inc.**  
1631 Main Street  
PO Box L  
Hellertown PA 18055  
610-838-7801

*Please support these businesses' goods and services as they support our Organization. To obtain a Business Membership, download the Application from our website and submit it along with the appropriate fee for Gold or Silver Level Membership.*

**Hellertown's Historic Jail Beer Pairing Fundraiser Dinner**

**Friday June 9 6-9PM \$60 per person**

**Enjoy 5 courses with beer pairings, raffle items and local history!**



*Seating is limited. Tickets available at HHS and Lost Tavern Brewing during normal business hours.*



## Those Were The Days - The Park

*By Dolores Di Paolo*

Back in the day, it wasn't called Dimmick Park, it was just the park. When we kids were bored, someone would always say "let's go down the park!" There was so much to do down there I'm not sure where to begin.

Remember the "Ditch?" it was down near the road and had a large opening, big enough for a kid to fit in. I think almost every kid started into the tunnel, but never got too far. I always wondered if anyone had the nerve to go all the way through and where it ended up.

Every summer there were carnivals. In the field next to the fire house there were fantastic rides! I remember the Whip, Swings, Ferris Wheel, and I think the Mouse one year. Little kids and babies had their rides too. When the "carnies" came to town the boys were there bright and early the next day to watch them put the rides together. They always hoped to get a free ride.

The food at the carnival was good. There were always long lines for the home made French fries. When you got to the front of the tent you saw one man peeling and slicing the potatoes, and another putting them in the fryer.

Another tent had the wheel. You put your dime on the number you wanted and hoped the wheel stopped on your number. We can't forget pitching pennies, the baseball toss, and fishing in the tub of water. Each game had a toy for the winner.

In the middle of the grounds was a brand new car to be chanced off on the last night of the carnival. People had all kinds of strategies as to how and when you buy your ticket. Most people thought if you bought it right before the drawing, you had a better chance of winning. Tickets were also sold for a fruit basket drawing every night. That fruit always looked so good.

Big names, or so we thought, came to entertain. One year it was Sally Starr, and another time Oscar Mayer and his truck came to town. The last night of the carnival ended with Fireworks.

People would go down early and put their blankets on the bank at the big ball park with the bleachers. We sat with anticipation for the first one to go up and the big BOOM after each one. There were also elaborate low fireworks as well as the high ones. It was a half hour full of wonder.

The Circus came to town more than once. The day they arrived, the boys and girls would wander down the park to watch them put up the huge tent and set up the side shows and game tents. Seeing the animals was a thrill.

I also want to mention "The Road Angels". These were young adults that formed a group to help stranded motorists. One year they had a show in the park. One thing I remember was the cars having to drive in and out through cones without touching them. Are there any former Road Angels out there? Did I get the purpose of your club correct? I was just a kid at the time, but I admired these people. Some of whom I once knew.

There is so much more for me to reminisce about. I'm wondering if the kids of today will have so many memories of Hellertown and all the things to do that cost little or no money.

## Those Were The Days - The Pool

*By Dolores Di Paolo*

Ah, the swimming pool. Our Hellertown swimming pool was built in 1939 by the WPA and I can't imagine what we would have done without it. Living in Mountainview we could walk to the pool and walk we did, every day. Usually we carried way too much stuff. We had a blanket, inner tube, deck of cards, and most of the girls wore bathing caps. I believe we were 6 or 7 and allowed to go on our own. Times were so different then. Our Mothers would tell us not to go past the ropes and we obeyed!

The refreshment stand was on the level of the ticket booth. It had two counters in it. One had penny candy and some more expensive candy. The counter on the other side had frozen things like ice cream, popsicles, and my favorite, frozen Milky Ways.

After you had your ticket punched the girls went down the left stairway to the girl's locker room and the boys down the right stairway to the boy's locker room. You were given a basket to put your clothing in and an elastic band with a round brass check with a number on it to correspond with the number on the basket. On the way out of the locker room there was a basin with water that we were to step in before entering the pool area.

It seemed that the areas for sitting by the pool were divided by the patrons themselves. The women with kids sat in one section, the big kids (High Schoolers) sat in another and we sat in yet another area. When the 5:00 siren rang (every night) all kids knew to get right home for supper. The pool cleared out fast, but on very hot days it was open for night swimming.

Monthly tickets were \$2 each and a season ticket was \$4.

Every year the Red Cross came to give swimming lessons. Our Mothers signed us up and out the door we went at 9:00 in the morning. We dreaded it. Not because of the lessons, but because of the very cold water. When we graduated to Jr. Lessons, they were at night in warmer water.

Every summer until I was 17 was spent at the pool. At age 16 and 17 I worked there selling tickets.

There are such wonderful childhood memories of the park and the pool.

## 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)

"MGH RPOBM COHBP SHDM  
YR MGH GHEEHOMY ZD  
GPBMYOPIJE BYIPHMV ZJB  
BMJDEHV CNYBBHO"

(Hint : O=R)