

Summer 2012

# Historical Journal



**LITITZ HISTORICAL FOUNDATION**

P.O. Box 65 145 E. Main Street, Lititz, PA 17543

717-627-4636

[www.lititzhistoricalfoundation.com](http://www.lititzhistoricalfoundation.com)

Board of Directors:

Randy Weit - President

Kenneth Martin - Vice President

Charles Steifvater - Secretary

Cathy Doremus - Treasurer

Carl Brubaker - Director

Cathy Doremus - Director

Teri Forster - Director

Beverly Maddox - Director

Kenneth Martin - Director

Randy Miller - Director

Tom Oehme - Director

Charles Steifvater - Director

Cory Van Brookhoven - Director

Randy Weit - Director

Henry Paul - Director

Amy Rhoades - Director

Newsletter Editor:  
Cory Van Brookhoven



Find us on Facebook!

## *The Brunnerville Iron Foundry Shines in New Exhibit*

The Lititz Historical Foundation is now open for the season!

To celebrate our opening, a brand new exhibit entitled "Of Iron and Invention: Aaron Wissler and the Brunnerville Iron Foundry" is now open in our main exhibit room.

This interactive exhibit

traces the history of the Brunnerville Iron Foundry to its humble beginnings in 1850 when it was first started by Peter Brunner as a wagon shop. Eventually, Aaron Wissler purchased the Foundry in 1868 and added a machine shop and agricultural works. He then added a working iron foundry. Aaron Wissler was very ahead of his time, and aside from operating the foundry, he was a multi-patent holder for many new and advanced improvements in farming. Some of his inventions included an improved cellar grate, and much more!

Frank Bentz then purchased the Foundry from Wissler in 1905, and continued the art of iron making.



After Bentz's ownership, the Foundry and all

of the equipment was purchased by his grandson Earl Landis. Years later, it was bought out by O.H. Schwanger who saw the historical value in the Foundry, and decided to open an on-site museum.

While it was operating as a museum, items like cricket boot jacks, frog door stops, and other whimsical iron products were added to the inventory.

Upon entering the museum, visitors will pick up a complimentary "new employee brochure" from the Brunnerville Iron Foundry, which explains the history of the foundry and lists ten numbered display stations around the exhibit room. As a "new employee" visitors will follow along and read all about the many items and photos that are on display. They will be able to view many of Wissler's patents, along with various finished iron products that came directly from the Foundry.

Continued on Page 3 inside...

## Happy 4th of July!

*Cory Van Brookhoven*

While going through my grandfather's collection of Lititz memorabilia, I stumbled across this early Lititz 4th of July park program. Little did I know how important this particular booklet was until after I did some research....

As you know, Lititz spends the July 4th holiday like no other. Our town's celebration, dating back to at least 1811, is one of the oldest, continuously celebrated 4th of July traditions in the nation. To the right you will see a copy of the front of the program from 1905. It is the earliest copy of Lititz's 4th of July program known to be in existence. I wanted to take this space to talk about the program, and what's inside. This gives the reader a wonderful idea of the events that took place that day.

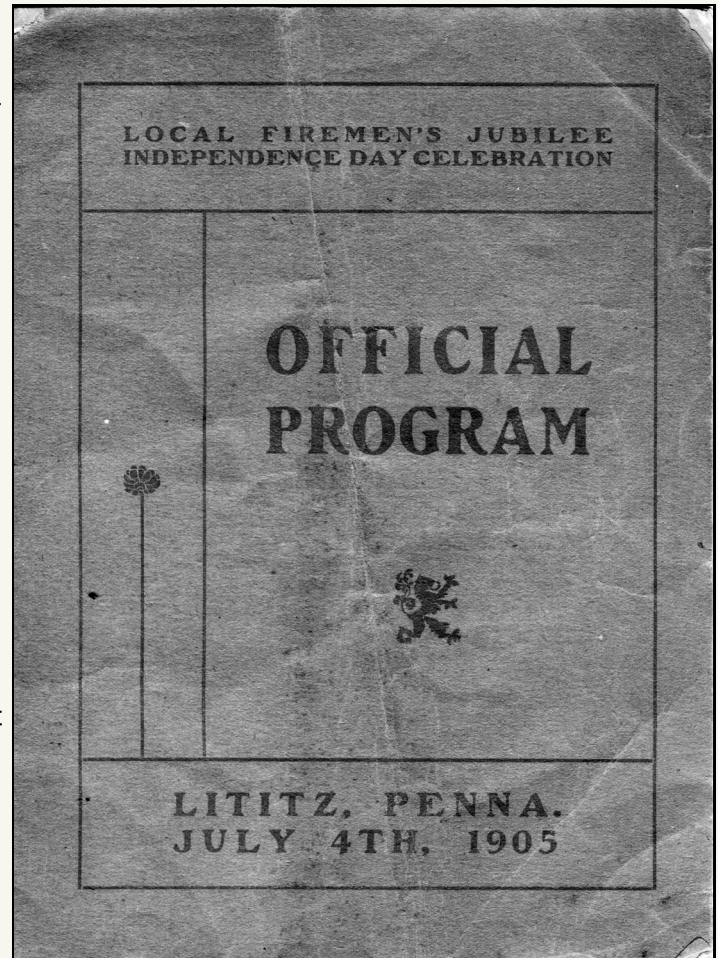
There are many advertisements throughout the publication listing area businesses like Hotel Sturgis, Bollinger's Ice Cream, Hepp Jewelers, and the Ideal Chocolate Company, just to name a few. The program lists that at 9:30 a.m. Lititz will play Ephrata in a baseball game. At 1:00 o'clock the Fireman's Parade formed. Then at 1:30 p.m. the Fireman's Parade moves. At 3:00 p.m. another baseball game was played between Lititz and Ephrata. At 4:00 o'clock, a competitive drill of fire companies took place on North Broad street. At 4:30 p.m. a band contest was held at Fountain Square. Then at 6:00 p.m. the Ephrata Mountain Springs Rifle Club performed a drill in the ball field enclosure.

At the 8 o'clock hour, the Grand Candle Illumination took place on the Springs Grounds. "A rocket near the water signals the beginning of the illumination. Do not leave the Main Park before seeing it from different points" the program states. At 8:40, a fire works display took place on the ball field enclosure. "No extra charges" was printed below this sentence in the program.

The Queen of Candles Pageant did not come along until 1942, so the evening ended after this fireworks display mentioned above. No doubt, there were hundreds-if not thousands of spectators in attendance that day.

We are so fortunate to have access to this program, and a copy has been made and has been given to the Lititz Springs Park Board for their archives.

Our Board of Directors would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a festive and safe 4th of July holiday. What a great tradition!



## Brunnerville Foundry Con't:

At the center of the collection is a wooden time capsule which was recently discovered that was hidden away behind the date stone located in the home that Aaron Wissler built in 1872. Tucked away for 140 years, the contents contained 5 Wissler family photos, two newspapers dated from 1872, a copy of a Wissler patent, a patent book in German, a copy of a Scientific American newspaper, and a notebook written by Aaron Wissler himself that described in detail who built his home, his family, and much more! All of these items inside the time capsule are now in the hands of the Lititz Historical Foundation for all to enjoy!

Visitors will also see many molds and tools that were used at the Foundry to help create the various iron products through the years. This is the first time in Lititz history that a collection this large encompassing the Brunnerville Iron Foundry was ever placed on display.

"Of Iron and Invention: Aaron Wissler and the Brunnerville Iron Foundry" is now open to the public free of charge. Museum hours are Monday through Saturday 10am-4pm.



*Above: The Aaron Wissler house, which was built in 1872.*

*Top Right: Aaron Wissler, Ironmaster of the Brunnerville Iron Foundry.*

*Right: A product brochure during the time that Earl Landis owned the Foundry.*

### Brunnerville Iron Foundry

ESTABLISHED 1850  
F. EARL LANDIS, Proprietor  
Telephone: Lititz 6-2406  
Lititz, R. D. No. 1, Lancaster Co., Penna.

#### Farmers Furnace No. 1

These Furnaces are made of the best casting, are simple in construction, any ordinary kind of brick may be used for the brickwork, and can be put up by any ordinary workman. It is supplied with a piece of cast iron pipe. A galvanized chimney may be used altogether or may be connected with a brick chimney. On one hole a set of rings are supplied to reduce the hole to 10 inches. When it is desirable, a hot fire may be had under one ring, and a slow fire or none at all under the other. It can be used as shown for burning wood or coal, without the register plates and grates for wood only.

Size: 62 inches long; 36 inches wide; 19 inches high.

Price complete for wood or coal as shown in cut - - - -

Price complete for wood only - - - - -

Summer 2012

HISTORICAL JOURNAL

## Local Family History Shared

*Amy Rhoads*

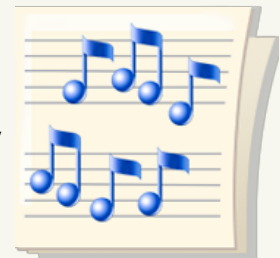
Have you ever considered where you come from? I had been thinking of my family and often wondered about our genealogy. I decided to concentrate on my father's side of the family, because they are local. I have done research and traced the Rhoads' family farm back to the early 1800's, which lies within present day Warwick Township.

Recently, I found out that my grandfather helped to build a small house that presently can be found on the other side of the trailer park which lies north on route 501, near the Hess station. He had to go in 1954 and batten down the shingles due to Hurricane Hazel. I discovered that my grandfather Ephraim Rhoads and my great uncle Peter Rhoads began a roadside food stand on the family farm. Well, during the late 1950's-early 1960's, that roadside food stand was turned into a restaurant.

My great uncle Peter and his family ran the restaurant. The restaurant was pink in color. Several owners had taken over the restaurant throughout the years. Some of the local owners of note were Fink's and the Bailey family. The Fink's got their start at the restaurant and were known for their french fries. Then, The Clint Bailey family owned and operated the restaurant. The special was a "Bailey Burger", which was like a present-day Whopper burger. The restaurant was always crowded and was a popular place to hang out. What once was a restaurant is now a Hess gas station, next to Sechan Electronics. If you happen to go past, you will see two big trees that once marked the lane to go back to the farm house.

*Amy Rhoads has recently joined the Board of the Directors here at the Foundation, and we would like to take this opportunity to welcome her aboard! She will be serving as the Events Coordinator and Tour Guide Manager. Welcome Amy!*

## STRIKE UP THE BAND!



Mark your calendars for Sunday evening August 12<sup>th</sup>, 2012 as the Lititz Community Band will be playing live! The Mary Oehme Gardens located on the grounds of the Lititz Historical Foundation will provide a wonderful backdrop for this local popular band starting at 6:30 p.m. The Lititz Historical Foundation is located at 145 East Main Street, Lititz. Bring your lawn chairs – this is a FREE event!

"This is a free concert, and we look forward to having Lititz's own Community Band this year" stated Cory Van Brookhoven, the Foundation's Programs and Publicity Coordinator. "We always have a great turnout for our evening of music, and it's a wonderful way to spend a FREE summer evening in Lititz with family and friends" Van Brookhoven added. The concert will be sponsored by Luthercare. For more information, please call 717-626-5958.

*Hope to see you there!*

To view many old photos, and keep up with the latest news,  
**FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!**



## Another Wonderful Bus Trip Planned

Our recent bus trip to Odessa Delaware was a complete success! Tickets to that exciting excursion were sold out, and we thank each and every one who attended. We have yet another excursion planned for the early Fall. Details are below. It is **sure** to be another sell out, so please make sure to reserve your seats early!

On Friday, September 14th 2012 after an enjoyable summer, we again leave Lititz for a short trip to Columbia, PA to "make time" at the National Watch and Clock Museum. The Museum maintains the largest collection of mechanical time pieces in the United States. It's horological library is second only to that of the Library of Congress. Please join our group to nearby Columbia for the study of time. After an included buffet lunch at Golden Stories, we will tour the 1738 Wrights Ferry Mansion The mansion houses a wonderful collection of furniture, ceramics, needlework, and metal and glass all made prior to 1750. Cost of this trip will be \$60.00 for non-members; or \$54.00 for members. Members save 10% on the fee!

The motor coach tour leaves from the Lititz Moravian Church parking lot. Please call Marcia Spohn at 717-626-8468 for more information or to obtain a detailed itinerary. **Please make checks payable to the Lititz Historical Foundation**, and send to Marcia Spohn, 114 West Orange Street, Lititz, PA 17543. Please indicate how many reservations you need. Deadline to RSVP for the trip is August 14th, 2012.

### Itinerary for September 14th:

9:15 a.m. - Arrive at Lititz Moravian Church parking lot.

9:30 a.m. - Leave church.

10:00-12:00 noon - Tour National Watch and Clock Museum

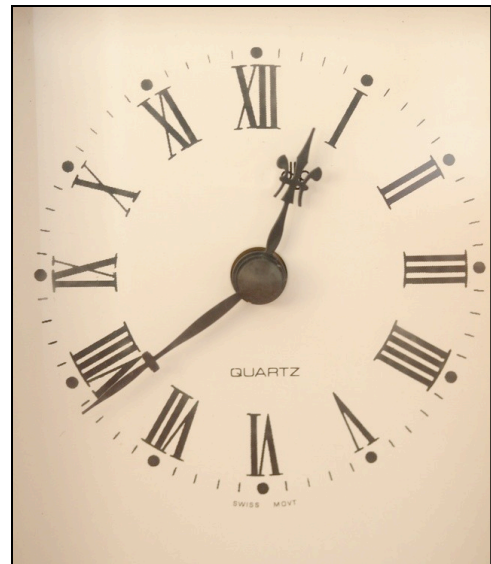
12:15-1:15 p.m. - Buffet lunch at Golden Stories Included). Located at 237 Locust street, Columbia, PA

1:30 –2:30 p.m. - Tour Wright's Ferry Mansion located at 38 S. Second street, Columbia, PA

3:00 p.m. - Return to Lititz Moravian Church

Cost per person: \$60.00 (\$54.00 for members)

Cost Includes: Deluxe motor coach transportation, noon meal, and attractions listed above.



## PICTURE QUIZ



This photo shows employees working in the Simplex Paper Box Company in Lititz. Can you pinpoint the location, and what is the name of the new business that now occupies this space?

*Answer to the Spring's picture Quiz: This was a photo of Mamie Spangler, who lived in one of our buildings for many years right here on Main Street! The current building is home to the Lititz Historical Foundation.*

Non-Profit Org.  
U.S Postage PAID  
Permit #141  
Lititz PA

P.O. Box 65 145 E. Main Street, Lititz, PA 17543  
RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Lititz Historical Foundation's  
*Historical Journal*

