

Summer 2016

Historical Journal



LITITZ HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

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

717-627-4636

www.lititzhistoricalfoundation.com

John Wenger Art Sale Raises Over \$5,000 for LHF

Earlier this month, the Lititz Historical Foundation was the place to be for original pieces of artwork.

The exclusive sale of a collection of paintings by late Lititz artist, John Andrew Wenger took place on June 2nd and 3rd, and provided a rare opportunity to own one of Wenger's distinctive ink and watercolor paintings of rural scenes, historical farms, mills, and small towns located throughout Lancaster and surrounding counties.

A special members-only preview and sale took place June 2nd; while the regular sale opening took place at the museum on June 3, from 5 pm until 9 pm. The latter coincided with the Taste of Lititz event, providing a festive atmosphere in downtown Lititz, with Main Street closed to traffic and activities for everyone.

In the spirit of an art opening, the Museum provided refreshments to guests who wished to browse and buy paintings.

John Andrew Wenger was born in Lancaster in 1917 and graduated from Penn State University in 1939. He grew up drawing and dabbling in all art mediums, especially water colors. He worked for Andes Advertising Agency and later bought the Lititz company.

John and his wife Jane were active members of the Lititz community. Wenger loved creating scenes of his beloved home town, as well as taking excursions to other historic towns, along back roads so he could sketch. John was a member of The Village Art Association, now known as The Lititz Art Association, from its inception in 1966.



John Wenger Art Sale committee members (left to right): Janet Smedley; Anne Wentzel; Sandra Roland; Charlene Van Brookhoven; Donna Olah; Henry Paul.

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President's Message

We Are Open For the Season!

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And as usual, things are very busy here at the LHF! Our gardens are in full bloom. Our 1792 Johannes Mueller House is busy with guided tours for both visitors and school children alike. And our new exhibit "Bottoms Up! The History of Beer, Whiskey, and Soda in Lititz" is now open, and so much more!

I want to thank each and every board member, volunteer, and tour guide for working very hard, ensuring that every last detail was in place before we opened in early May. But this is all just the beginning. Later this month, we will hold our 54th Annual Antiques Show at the Warwick Middle School. A few weeks ago, we also held our John Wenger art fundraiser, selling over 100 original pieces from this late beloved Lititz talent. A BIG THANKS to many of you for attending and purchasing paintings—your efforts help us continue our mission.

Coming later this summer, Sunday August 4th to be exact, we will present our annual FREE Evening of Music in our Mary Oehme Gardens. This year, we are excited to be hosting the Lititz Community Band. The event is sponsored by Luther Care. Bring your lawn chairs as well as your friends, neighbors, and family for what promises to be a great night.

Speaking of our gardens, did you know that June 2016 marks its 20th anniversary? Over the years, it has been the location of countless weddings and special events. We are proud and honored to be the good stewards of this space, and look forward to several events in the future. In this issue you will meet Karen Genevish and Lee Anne Martin who work very hard to help keep it the beautiful gem that it is.

Also, be sure to stop into our gift shop to see all of the many great items for sale. From local history books to Moravian stars to original art to home décor, you're sure to find that special gift right here. Remember, your membership entitles you to 10% off gift shop items and free tours of our Mueller House for you and your party.

I wanted to wrap this up by thanking you, or valued members, who continue to support us. Come visit us today to discover all that is new here on our campus. It's going to be a another busy season for us, and we couldn't do any of this without you. THANK YOU!

We hope to see you soon!

Cory Van Brookhoven
President
Lititz Historical Foundation

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John Wenger Art Sale Results Con't:

He was often seen at his easel in downtown Lititz, and showed his work at the popular Lititz Art Show.

Wenger became an active member of The Lititz Historical Foundation in 1982. He gave his time and talent to create "Walk Down Main Street," a brochure handed to interested tourists visiting Lititz. His legacy to the Historical Foundation are the Time Line panels in the front room of the Lititz Museum. This large project was begun in January of 1992 with John providing the texts and art work. Although Wenger did not live to see the finished panels, his contribution continues to be enjoyed by locals and tourists alike. Wenger passed away in August of 1992.



This original scene of North Broad street was sold during the sale, by the means of a Chinese auction. A VERY GENEROUS person who wishes to remain anonymous scored the highest bid of \$1,500. THANK YOU!



Over the course of the two days, almost 100 paintings were sold, netting over \$5,000 in sales. All of the proceeds received will go back right into museum efforts and outreach.

The art committee, led by board member Donna Olah, did an outstanding job promoting the show, as well as setting up for this very special event. A VERY special thanks to each and every one of you who made this fundraising effort a TREMENDOUS success!

Note: Many pieces still remain, and will continue to be sold in our gift shop over the next several months...while they last!

Left: Just some of the many original pieces of artwork which were for sale during the 2-day event.

An Appreciation that Inspires

Charlene Van Brookhoven

Take a stroll through the Mary Oehme Gardens behind the Lititz Historical Foundation. You will be pleasantly surprised at the beauty that will inspire an appreciation for not only the plantings but also the time consuming hours involved in maintaining this lovely area. Our history tells us that 20 years ago this month, these gardens were first dedicated.

Karen Genevish, a member of the board, has spent countless hours volunteering her time and talent to transform the gardens into a showpiece of summer's colors. For the past several years, she has rebuilt the heart-shaped pond into an ecologically self sustaining pond filled with goldfish, frogs, pink water lilies and sometimes unwanted mallards.

Karen has been elbow deep in muck and mire draining sediment from the previous winter's pond water. She is also responsible for the beautiful urns overflowing with colorful annuals that are so welcoming to our visitors. The Mary Oehme Gardens is available for weddings, bridal and baby showers, birthday parties and receptions throughout the summer months. Karen's labor of love and dedication has made our gardens a place of serenity as well as a very personal spot to celebrate life's special occasions.



Entering the gardens from Main Street, you are welcomed by several German style gardens filled with herbs that would have been used by Johannes Mueller, the town dyer, who with his family lived in the 1792 Mueller House.

The foundation is also fortunate to have Lee Ann Martin (a newcomer to Lititz and an herbal expert) share her professional talents in the herb gardens.

“In life you have to find your passion” says Lee Ann, and obviously herbs have become hers. She and her husband moved to Lititz from Fort Worth, Texas where she was president of the Greater Fort Worth Herb Society. While living in Texas, she surrounded herself with her own herb gardens, as well as chaired workshops and lectures presented to garden clubs on the culinary and medicinal uses of herbs.

Enjoy the artistry of these two lovely, passionate gardeners by admiring the beauty of their dedication to The Mary Oehme Gardens at The Lititz Historical Foundation.

Above (left to right): Karen Genevish and Lee Ann Martin

Historical Tidbits

The below email came into our inbox recently.

We wanted to share it with our readers, in the hopes of shedding some light onto just one of the countless laborers who helped shape Lititz during the turn of the century.

Hello,

I'm a trivet collector and have this piece in my collection. If you have any information on this trivet, or on Harrison Ditzler, I'd appreciate hearing from you.

Regards,

Lynn R.

Winter Springs, Florida

Below is some information that was researched and emailed back to the inquisitive reader:

Harrison Ditzler was born on February 7th, 1859 in Hopeland, Pennsylvania. Eventually, he made his way to Lititz and entered into the concrete and curb business.

In 1902, we find this excerpt from the Lititz Record Express newspaper:

"Harrison Ditzler, who executes excellent cement work of all kinds, has made a long cement curbing along the street of Dr. Roebuck's dwellings and lot on West Lemon street. Mr. Ditzler is open for jobs in this line, guaranteeing first-class work. See his card elsewhere in the RECORD."

In that same issue, there was found this advertisement:

HARRISON DITZLER

Makes Cement Pavements, Walks, Steps, Coping, Curbs and Floors, and all other kinds of CONCRETE WORK at short notice, guaranteeing satisfaction in all work. Give him a trial. FRONT ST., LITITZ.

Ditzler would pass away in March of 1906.

If you look closely, you may just spot a few remaining cement markers still embedded in some sidewalks downtown—a lasting tribute to a hard working man of Lititz.



Above: An advertising trivet representing Harrison Ditzler & Co., Lititz, PA

DID YOU KNOW...?

In 1956, Giselle MacKenzie (left) and Snooky Lanson (right), who were stars of the NBC television show “Your Hit Parade” visited Warwick High School as guests to sing at a banquet that evening. Along with signing autographs, they also posed for pictures and played around with a few musical instruments before hitting the stage.

“Man, they didn't have schools like this when I was kid” stated MacKenzie. “It's the latest!” she added. Their visit was a big deal at the time, attracting both the media and fans alike.

Do any of you remember their visit?



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