

Summer 2019

# Historical Journal



**LITITZ HISTORICAL FOUNDATION**

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

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

## Discovery 55 Years Ago Yields Interesting Find in Mueller House

*By Cory Van Brookhoven*

By March of 1964 the Mueller House property was in the possession of the Lititz Historical Foundation. While it was and indeed remains a very important historic structure in Lititz, at the time it was purchased it needed a lot of tender loving care to restore it back to its former glory.

During the restoration, a rare find was discovered by Chester Mowrer, a local stone mason by trade, who found a packet of letters from 1869 that had been tucked away into a window frame in the Mueller House. The letters were from a "Millie" to Mollie Zitzman, who occupied the home at the time with her parents Frederick and Susanna. Mollie was also the granddaughter of Johannes Mueller who built the home in 1792.

The huge, noteworthy event of July 1869 was a balloon ascension, when a Professor Light sailed from York to Lancaster in 45 minutes.

Millie writes:

*"On last Saturday there was a grand balloon ascension here at Market Square. Professor Light went up in it and he promised to take Mr. Dale with him. Well just a little time before he started, he told Mr. Dale he could not take him for he was afraid the balloon would not hold him. Professor Light landed in Lancaster about 45 minutes after he started from here. He came to York on Saturday evening and told the folks all about it. He has been up 93 times and he said he is determined to go up 100 times. He did look beautiful after he got up about several hundred yards from the ground. He took some paper and other things along with him which he threw out after he got away up in the air.*

*Above: The Mollie Zitzman letters found tucked away in the Mueller House in 1964 during a renovation. Story Con't on page 3 inside.*



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## Our 57th Annual Antiques Show is June 28-29!

Lancaster County's oldest show of its kind and always a perennial favorite, this fundraiser will be staged in the Warwick Middle School (104 Maple Street) in Lititz Friday, June 28th and Saturday, June 29th.

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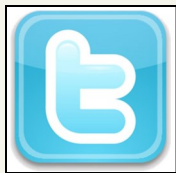
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Hours are Friday 10am-5pm; and Saturday 9am-2pm.

Admission is \$10.00 or \$9.00 with card or ad.

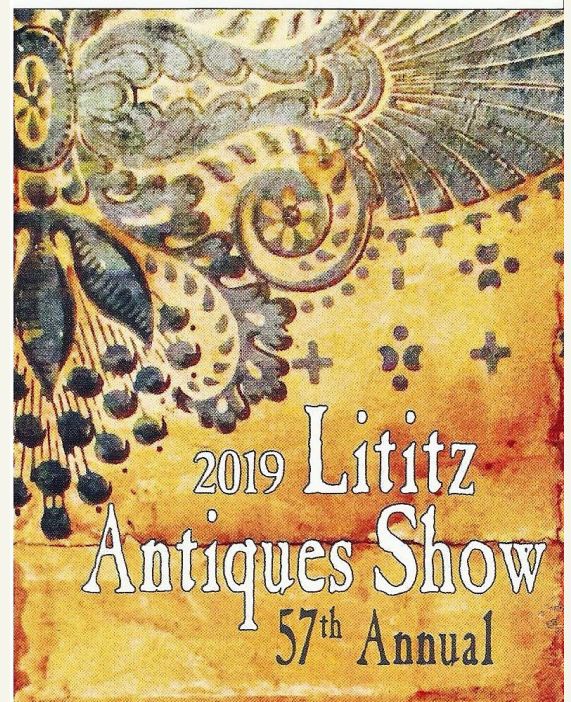
Promoted as an "old time country show" a cast of nearly 50 dealers will present a wide range of interesting, reasonably priced country wares and dry goods.

Shoppers can expect to find farm items, stoneware, kitchen goods, textiles, early lighting, transfer ware, doll items, coin silver, holiday items, Pennsylvania folk art, and more!

Hungry shoppers will have an opportunity onsite to purchase a delicious variety of freshly prepared food, And those with a sweet tooth can indulge in fresh, homemade baked goods created by experts from the foundation's bakers group.

Visit [www.lititzantiquesshow.org](http://www.lititzantiquesshow.org)

or call 717-575-4006 for more info.



Warwick Middle School

401 Maple Street  
Lititz, PA 17543

— Dates —

Friday June 28th  
Saturday June 29th

— Times —

Friday 10 - 5  
Saturday 9 - 2

Over 45 Dealers • Primarily Country



**Discovery 55 years ago yields interesting find in Mueller House Con't:**

*The name of the balloon is the Albion. He is going up in Columbia on Friday so I was told. There were over three thousand country folks who came to town to witness the ascension."*

Zitzman's pen pal also writes of several ginger cakes that were eaten that day, and how she flirted with a couple of "sports" from Baltimore. She also said that she was looking forward to the Festival at the York Fairgrounds. However in the next letter to Zitzman, she mentions parental interference, and writes that nobody attended the fair but "hired girls," and she was forbidden to go. She also sent her love to Millie Bender and a Mr. Peters, and suggested that Peters be given a glass of "mead" for her.

Millie also regretted not being able to attend the "hops" at the Lititz Hotel (now the General Sutter Hotel). While these letters may seem trivial between two friends, now, 150 years later, they shed some very interesting light on the happenings of the time.

Interestingly enough, Mollie's father, Frederick Zitzman, served as Lititz's second postmaster. He held this position from 1830 to 1849.

*\*Dr. James A. Dale was a wealthy druggist based in York during the time this letter was written. Fascinated with the hobby, he would take many balloon flights between 1869 and 1886.*

**New Accessions**

***The below items have been recently donated to our collections. Thank you!***

- A 1788 Bible based on Martin Luther's German translation. The item comes through families of Jacob Rister and Joseph Lehn. Donation by Rich Eichholz.
- John Stoner Hess's 1903 diploma from Lititz High School. Donated by his granddaughter Lois Martin.
- Seven deeds relating to property located at 8 Spruce Street. Time frame 1882-1987. Donated by Heather Auman.
- Seven candles handmade in Lititz by Barney Braun; An 1888 map of Lititz Borough; A 1985 Lancaster Airport poster; an entrance of Lititz poster; two Lititz Bicentennial plates from 1956; a framed map of Lititz. Items donated by Elaine Gibble.
- Assorted pewter mugs and other tableware; an 1867 Pennsylvania calendar; a black cloak. Items donated by Yvonne Bomberger Gingrich.

If you are interested in donating a Lititz-related item to our collection, give us a call at 717-627-4636, or email us at [lhf@dejazzd.com](mailto:lhf@dejazzd.com). One of our archivists will promptly get back to you to schedule an appointment.

***Thank you for considering a future donation to the Lititz Historical Foundation!***

## *Get Up And Dance!*

This summer, we've booked two outstanding musical acts that are sure to be a hit. Full details are below. Both concerts are free to the public, and will be held in our Mary Oehme Gardens. See you there!

### *August 11th - Annual Evening of Music with the Susquehanna Travellers*

Susquehanna Travellers plays traditional American folk music. The band's focus is the music of the American Civil War, but its repertoire includes traditional Irish and Appalachian music as well as original tunes.

They have performed at venues including Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial, Wheatland, Harpers Ferry, Antietam, Gettysburg National Military Parks, The National Congressional Cemetery, The National Civil War Museum and the Congressional Medal of Honor Society National Convention.

Susquehanna Travellers has been performing throughout the Mid-Atlantic States for more than 15 years. The band has performed seven times at the Smithsonian Institution including the Lincoln 2.0 Inaugural Ball in 2009. In 2012, the band received a Humanitarian Award for organizing a benefit concert to aid victims of Hurricane Irene. The concert is sponsored by Moravian Manor. Bring your lawn chairs and blankets and invite your friends, family, and neighbors. The concert begins at 6:30pm.

### *Our Annual Ice Cream Social is Sept. 1st!*

The Lititz Historical Foundation is proud to present Pennsylvania's premiere Beatles tribute band The Cavern Club as featured performer for our annual Ice Cream Social on Sunday, September 1st. This free concert, which is open to the public, is made possible through the generosity of Sauder's Eggs. The special evening will take place from 6:30-8pm. Ice cream will be graciously donated by Greco's of Lititz.

Bring your lawn chairs and enjoy a fantastic evening! Free ice cream, courtesy of Greco's of Lititz, will also be served.



*Above: The Cavern Club. Right: The Susquehanna Travellers.*

*Summer 2019*

*HISTORICAL JOURNAL*

## ***Blaze Destroys Lititz Building 80 Years Ago This Year***

In June, 1931, it was decided that offices of The Walton Corporation would relocate to Lititz from New York. The printing arm of the business would also be moved to Lititz.

On Friday, May 12, 1939 at 3:45 p.m., a terrible fire broke out along North Water Street at the structure.

According to reports, the fire began by a spark that was thrown from a train switch. Before the blaze could be contained, it spread to one end of the third floor of the building. During the crisis, approximately 35 employees of the local business; but luckily, they all escaped to safety. Everything inside was lost except a few pages of company records, several typewriters, and other pieces of office equipment. The loss was estimated at \$100,000.

At the time of the blaze, there was 100 tons of paper inside the structure. It was actually the second time the building caught on fire —the first incident occurred in 1908, and was totally rebuilt afterwards.

Originally erected in 1902, the building first served as the headquarters of the Animal Trap Company of America. Originally, Mr. J.M. Mast decided to locate his trap manufacturing company there, and approval was granted with much enthusiasm from the community.

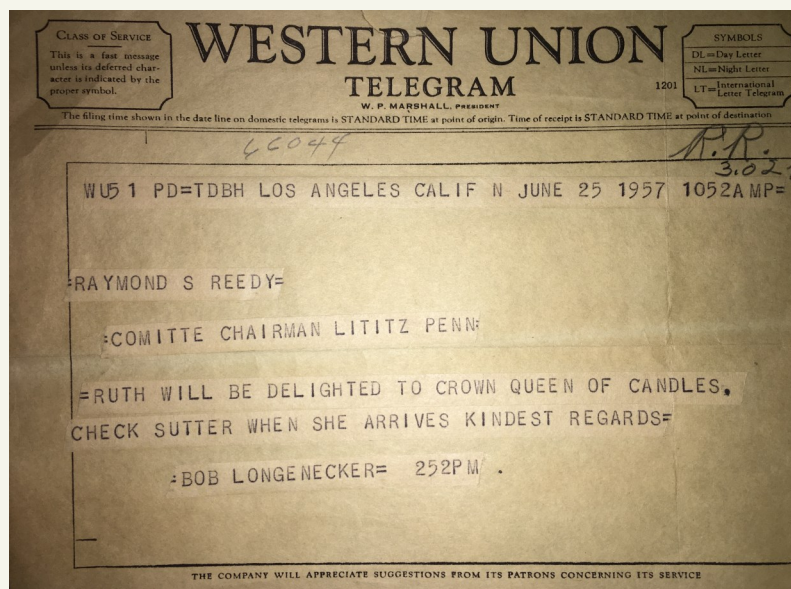


*Friday, May 12, 1939 was a memorable day for the town of Lititz.*

*At 3:45 p.m., a large fire broke out along North Water Street at the Walton Corporation building as seen in these photos on this page.*



## DID YOU KNOW...?



In 1957 this telegram arrived to Lititz from Los Angeles. It was from Lititz native Bob Longenecker, who was a Hollywood as a talent agent and radio executive. Longenecker was married to Hollywood star Ruth Hussey, who was featured in such major motion pictures such as “The Philadelphia Story,” “Flight Command,” and many more. That year, Hussey would be the special guest during Lititz’s annual 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration, and would crown the Queen of Candles.

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