

Summer 2020

# Historical Journal



**LITITZ HISTORICAL FOUNDATION**

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

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## History of Wilbur Chocolate Spotlight of New Exhibit

*By Cory Van Brookhoven*

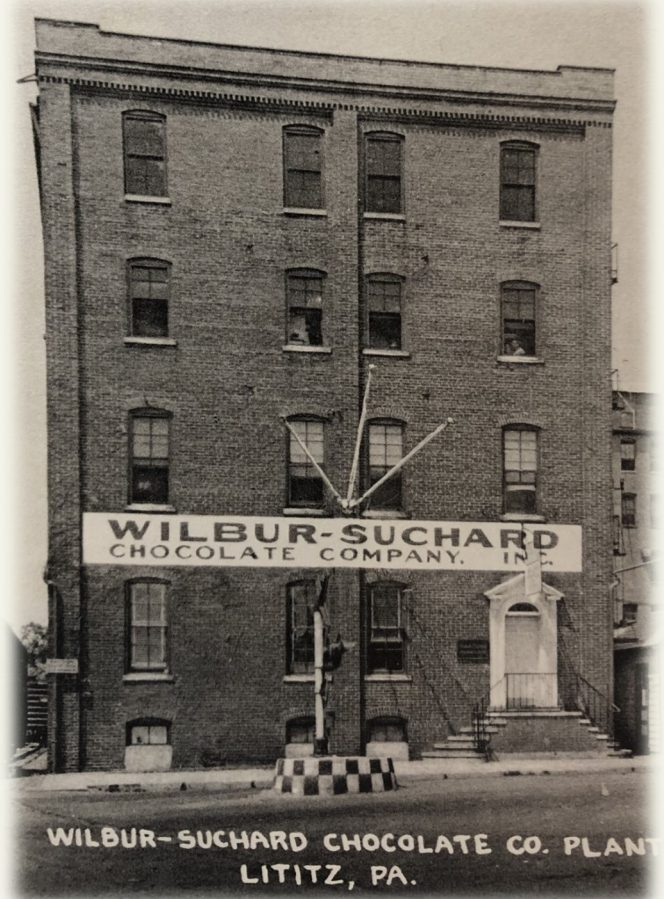
We are very proud to introduce visitors to our latest exhibit – the history of the Wilbur Chocolate company! Visitors from all over the world come to Lititz to get a taste of their signature product, the Wilbur Bud, and we're very excited to share the company's fascinating history with our guests!

In 1864 H.O. Wilbur was operating a hardware store and stove business in New Jersey. A few years later, he went into business with Samuel Croft, and began making molasses and hard candies in Philadelphia. The business grew, and soon they were also producing cocoa and chocolate. Then, in 1884, Wilbur branched off and formed a new family business, H.O. Wilbur & Sons.

In 1902, the Ideal Cocoa and Chocolate Company began construction on a large factory at 48 North Broad

Street in Lititz. By 1915, the building was enlarged to five stories, and a boiler room and smokestack were added. It would be the largest construction project

Lititz had ever seen at the time. In 1927, Ideal merged with the Brewster Sons' Company, which changed the business name to the Brewster Ideal Chocolate Company. In 1928, H.O. Wilbur & Sons purchased rights to sell Suchard chocolate, and changed its name to the Wilbur-Suchard Chocolate Company.



*Con't on page 3 inside.....*

## Bring on the Music This Summer!

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Join us for our annual Evening of Music in our Mary Oehme Gardens August 9th featuring Swing Street!

Swing Street (seen on right) will bring fun renditions of mainstream jazz standards and jazz adaptations of popular tunes. The concert will begin at 6:30 pm. The event is free, but donations to further maintain our gardens are always welcome. To learn more about Swing

Street, check out their website here: <https://www.swingstreetpa.com/>



### Our Annual Ice Cream Social is September 6

The energetic band Dutchyfunk (seen below) will take center stage on Sept. 6th during our annual Ice Cream Social!

Dutchyfunk is a New Orleans style brass band from Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Bring your lawn chairs or blankets and invite your friends, family, and neighbors. This concert is free and open to the public. The free concert will take place in our The Mary Oehme Gardens, which are located directly behind the Lititz Historical Foundation at 137 East Main Street, Lititz.

Learn more about Dutchyfunk here: <https://www.facebook.com/dutchyfunk/>

The gardens are situated in the rear of the Lititz Historical Foundation, which is located at 137-145 East Main Street, Lititz. Plenty of free parking along Main Street is available. Bring your lawn chairs and blankets, and invite your friends, family, and neighbors!



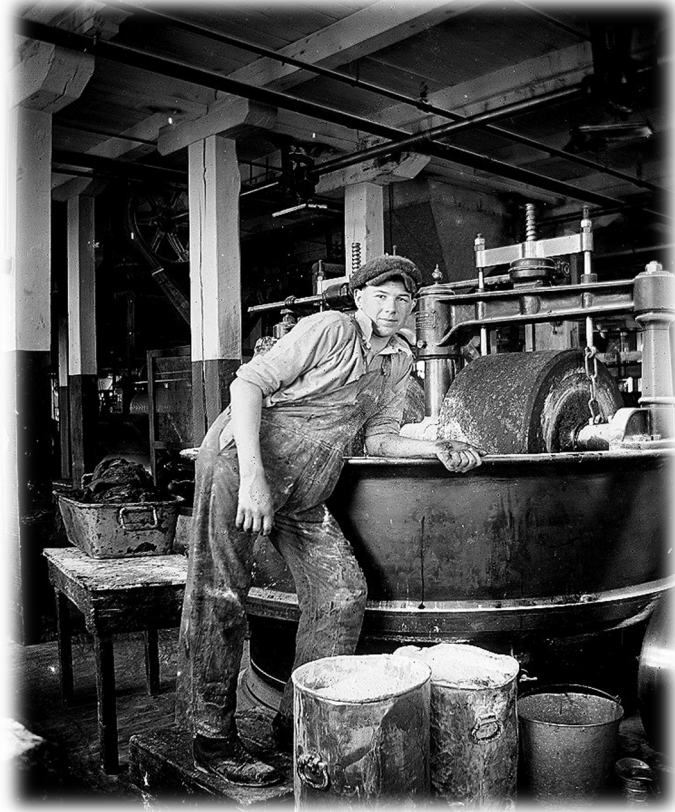
## Wilbur Chocolate Con't:

A few years later, this entity joined with Lititz's Brewster Ideal Chocolate Company. It was via this merger that operations were relocated to Lititz in August, 1930. The move was fully completed in 1933. Then, in late 1958, the name was changed again to the Wilbur Chocolate Company.

### *Did You Know...*

-During the early years of chocolate production, cocoa beans were roasted, cleaned, and cracked on the fifth floor. Beans were then transported to the grinders on the fourth floor. The chocolate then flowed to the third floor where it was mixed before the product passed to the second floor molding room, to the icebox to cool, and then packaged and shipped out.

- While excavating for a major expansion in 1913, the Ideal Cocoa & Chocolate Company set off 500 blasts from 850 pounds of dynamite in order to remove 5,000 tons of rock from the property.



- During the 1940s, "Sue Shard" was the spokesperson for the Wilbur-Suchard Chocolate Company. In 1946, a search to find a local Sue Shard began, with the winner serving as the company's local ambassador. Maureen McEvoy of Lancaster (right) won the contest and became an instant local celebrity. In 1947, McEvoy starred in the WLAN radio program "Uncle Ben, Sue, and Judy" which explored local historical sites.

Our exhibit, which includes photographs, artifacts, and so much more is now open and awaiting guests once we open. We can't wait to share it with you.

See you soon!





## Sarah Jenkins—Lititz's First Community Nurse

*Cory Van Brookhoven*

Many have no doubt heard of the 1918 flu – or The Spanish Influenza – which was an especially deadly pandemic that swept its way across the world infecting approximately 500 million people. In October of that year, one story in a local newspaper reported that there was approximately 200 cases of this flu in Lititz alone. Eventually, a quarantine order closed schools, factories, and churches all around the borough. The Lititz trolley service also greatly reduced their operations, and ran only one trip per day.

Because the village of Rothsville was not hit very hard with this crisis, school resumed there by late October. However, any student that showed flu symptoms were sent home immediately.

Just like with the 2020 coronavirus pandemic, many people helped where they could, providing donated food, medical supplies, and masks to those who needed them most. In 1918, Lititz residents also participated in a "Linen shower," which was held by the area chapter of the Red Cross. By the time this effort was complete, over 105 handkerchiefs, 100 bath towels, and 175 other smaller linens were donated towards the cause for needy area communities.



Locally, one caregiver went above and beyond the call of duty many times throughout the duration of the Spanish Influenza, and helped save many lives along the way. She was Sarah Jenkins, and she was Lititz's very first community nurse.

Born in Adams County, Pennsylvania, Jenkins studied at The Women's Hospital in Philadelphia, and later served during the Spanish-American War. In mid October of 1918, she could often be seen at Linden Hall Girl's School, caring for the international students who were sick. While on campus, she had the job of administering injections as well as building a healthy diet for each person. Using her bicycle, she also made her way around town, taking care of countless others who were sick throughout the community. Affectionately known throughout her nursing career as "Auntie Jenkins" due to her kind and caring demeanor, she was also referred to as "The friend of the poor people," for helping to heal countless patients, even if they didn't have the money to pay.

It was through her skill, bravery, and determination that she helped heal the sick during one of the darkest periods throughout the community. And while modern medicine has come a long way since 1918, we can't help but think of all of the sacrifices Sarah Jenkins faced every day while serving as Lititz's very first community nurse during a tragic time in our history.

*Above: Jenkins and her husband. This photo was taken in front of their home at the corner of N. Broad and Front Streets in Lititz.*

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## HISTORICAL JOURNAL

### *Annual Plant Exchange Moved to October 4*

The Lititz Historical Foundation in conjunction with the Lititz Garden Club will hold its Annual Plant Exchange on Sunday, October 4th at 1:30 pm. The event will be held in the Mary Oehme Gardens, behind the museum buildings at 137-145 East Main Street in Lititz. The event is rain or shine.

The plants to exchange must be perennials and must have identification tags for each plant. Each plant must be placed in a container for transportation.

Upon arrival, a ticket will be handed out for each plant.

The plants must be placed in categories including: Sun, Shade, Exotic, Bulbs, Herbs and Ground Cover. These tickets can be redeemed for another plant after all plants are placed in the categories and the attendees have some time to explore the categories.

## 2020 Antiques Show Canceled

For the safety and health of all of our guests, shoppers, and vendors, we have made the difficult decision to cancel this year's Antiques Show scheduled for June 26 and 27. Please rest assured that the show will return next year.

### Make a Donation

How can you help? Look for a letter soon in the mail from us. As in past years, the annual show is our largest fundraiser of the year, so please consider making a monetary donation via the enclosed envelope you will find with the letter. Thank You!



## An island in Lititz?



Often referred to as "The Fern Bed," "Fern Island," or "Fern Bed Springs" due to live ferns being grown there many generations ago, this particular spot in Lititz Springs Park was originally developed and landscaped in late 1861. It was town resident J.B. Tscudy who made the very first improvements to this spot during that era, when he rerouted the stream and planted flowers there. Eventually, ferns replaced the flowers, which made for a very lovely backdrop for photographs during the early 1900s. While the ferns are no longer present, this serene spot in one of the town's most beautiful areas still continues today.

## DID YOU KNOW...?

Pictured far right is Lynn Reidenbaugh, who was named the 1956 Lititz Bicentennial Queen.

Seen crowning Reidenbaugh is Hollywood character actor Edward Everett Horton, who shared the screen with such icons as Lucille Ball, Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, Cary Grant, Tony Curtis, and Henry Fonda.

Fun fact: Horton also served as the narrator for the "Fractured Fairytale" segments on the Rocky and Bullwinkle animated television show.



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