

Summer 2023

Historical Journal



LITITZ HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

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Elmer Bobst

Charlene Van Brookhoven

In May of 1890 Elmer Holmes Bobst moved with his family from Clear Springs, Maryland to Lititz, due to his father, Rev. Isaac Walton Bobst being hired as the new minister of St. Paul's Lutheran Church.

"We must have presented an unusual sight in the town's mostly Moravian inhabitants as we left the old train depot at Lititz Springs Park and turned up Broad Street, a somberly dressed preacher, his stylishly attractive, almost childlike wife, and three small children, all loaded down with handbags and bundles. From the porches and behind windows, I could see the people peering out to size up the new pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran Church and his family," stated Bobst in his autobiography.

In 1895 a diphtheria epidemic entered Lititz, and Rev. Bobst officiated funerals for thirty small children. As a result, the Bobst family became very aware of eating healthy, concentrating mainly on ascorbic acid, vitamin C (found in citrus fruit), broccoli and tomatoes.

Elmer was exposed to this healthy eating routine at a young age and attributed his strong athletic abilities to his mother's strict no-nonsense cooking. He graduated with the class of 1901 from Lititz High School and enjoyed playing fullback on the school's football team. He was quite good and was recruited to play for Franklin and Marshall Academy in Lancaster. His college days were numbered, however, because his father could not afford to pay his son's tuition on a pastor's salary.

Elmer had no interest in following in his father's footsteps as a minister but chose instead to pursue a career in the pharmaceutical field. He moved to Philadelphia and was accepted as a pharmacist in a hospital where he could receive free tuition. Ironically he would have studied the first American pharmacopoeia that Dr. Brown would have written in Lititz during the Revolutionary War.



Above: Elmer Holmes Bobst. Story continued on page 3 inside.

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Our 60th Annual Antiques Show is June 23—24th!

It's our 60th Year!

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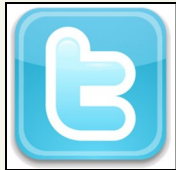
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Lancaster County's oldest show of its kind and always a perennial favorite, this fundraiser will be staged in the Warwick Middle School (104 Maple Street) in Lititz June 23rd and 24th.

Admission is \$10 per person.

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

This two-day event is an "old time country show" a cast of over 50 dealers who 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 hot food for lunch or a snack. Admission charged. Cash and credit cards accepted for entry! This is our biggest fundraiser of the year - See you there!



See You There!

Elmer Bobst Con't:

Mr. Bobst loved salesmanship and found he was very skilled in that field. He took a job with Stearns Co. traveling from Philadelphia to Harrisburg and New Jersey selling over the counter drugs. In 1915, after making a name for himself, he was hired by Wm. R. Warner Co. and convinced Warner to purchase Richard Hudnut Co., the largest cosmetic and toilet water maker in the country. During the outbreak of World War I Elmer began purchasing stocks from large chemical companies throughout the US. This made him a self-made entrepreneur with sales of popular drugs to fight diphtheria, whooping cough, scarlet fever, measles and pneumonia. DuBarry Cosmetics of New York was added to his long list of investments.

In 1953 a merger of two large chemical companies became Warner-Hudnut, with Bobst as Chairman of the Board and CEO. A short time later Warner merged with the Lambert Company of St. Louis (the maker of the bacteria killing antiseptic Listerine) and the name of the firm was changed to Warner-Lambert.

The plant in Morris Plains, NJ was outgrowing its production space. Bobst remembered the work ethic of his Lititz childhood and thought it would be a perfect site for a new production facility. He purchased 150 acres of farmland from Newton Buch on the west side of town. The plant was completed in the summer of 1956 as part of a \$10-million Warner-Lambert expansion program to manufacture Listerine and DuBarry products from the New York plant. Lititz prospered from the addition of Warner-Lambert and soon it became the largest employer in town.

After the celebrations and ribbon cutting of the grand opening, Bobst remained in Lititz a few days and enjoyed the pageantry of the 1956 Bicentennial of the founding of the town. He noticed a dilapidated cigar factory used as a recreation center for the young kids and senior citizens and decided he would pay to remove the old building and build a brand new, modern, brick structure. The new rec center was named the Reverend Isaac Walton Bobst Recreation Center, the man who served the Lititz community for 13 years as their Lutheran minister. He also gave a large amount of money to spruce up The Lititz Springs Park as it had been in his boyhood days growing up in Lititz.

In 2000 The Pfizer Company purchased Warner Lambert and then in December of 2007 Johnson and Johnson Company became the proprietors of the large plant on the west side of town. Their focus is on skin health and beauty and essential health products.

After spending a lifetime in the pharmaceutical business, Elmer Holmes Bobst not only succeeded in the sale of medicinal drugs but also became a philanthropist in education, health care and scholarships for graduates entering pharmacy as a vocation. He retired from Warner Lambert in 1967 and passed away in August of 1978.



Above: Lititz High School Class of 1901. Bobst is pictured top row, second from right.

July Concert to feature Big Mama & The Velvet Martinis

Join us in our Mary Oehme Gardens on Sunday July 16th for Big Mama and the Velvet Martinis! The concert will begin at 6:30pm.

Bring your blankets and chairs and invite your friends, family, and neighbors. Refreshments available for a small fee. This concert is generously sponsored by Moravian Manor. THANK YOU!

This is a pay what you can event. We will be collecting donations that evening to help preserve our gardens and 18th century structures. A gospel trained vocal virtuoso with a powerful performance; Melanie Verdie fronts the Velvet Martini Band. A seasoned Las Vegas Jazz performer, Melanie brings classic jazz favorites to the stage with energy and charisma, mesmerizing her fans with her vocals and fashion.

A vocal volcano of energy, Big Mama brings her extensive Las Vegas performing experience to every show. A former Tina Turner and Whitney Houston Impersonator, she brings her all to entertain, and funk the night away.



See you then! Email info@lititzhistoricalfoundation.com with any questions.

Above: Big Mama & The Velvet Martinis

And The (Lutz Family) Band Played On

Beginning in the early 1900s The Lutz Family Band would perform at churches, schools, and camp meetings.

Their largest crowd was playing in front of 6,000 persons when they performed at a Reverend Stough Campaign meeting in Lancaster. Benjamin Lutz, the father, composed and arranged all of the music. Back row (left to right): John Lutz, Benjamin Lutz, Benny Lutz. Front row (left to right): Henry Lutz, Robert Lutz.



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History Runs In Her Family

An out of town guest recently had a surprise while on a tour of our 1792 Johannes Mueller House.

Her grandmother just so happened to be one of the last people to live in the structure decades ago, during the time it was a private home.

Imagine her unexpected excitement when she saw a portrait of her grandmother hanging in the hallway during the tour! It nearly brought a tear to her eye.

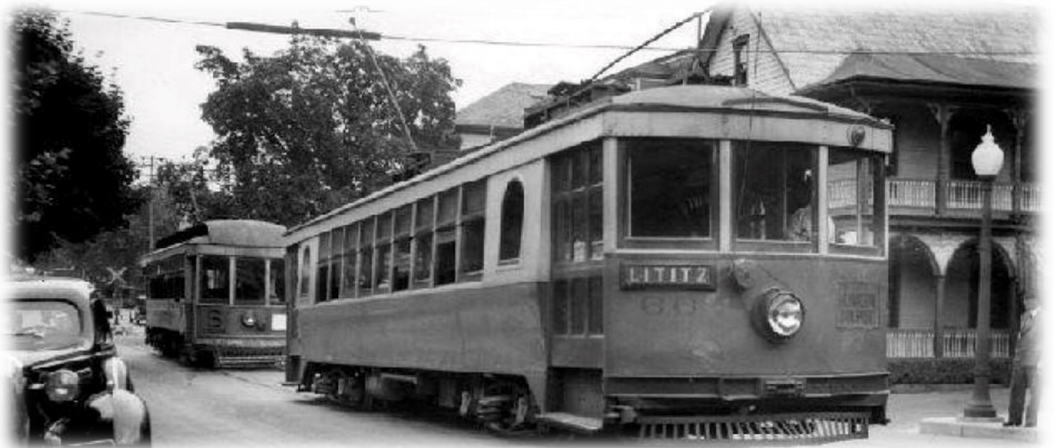


Zoom Program to Focus on Trolley History of Lititz

From 1895 to 1938, the trolley transported Lititz residents all over town and across Lancaster County. Join Lititz Historical Foundation President Cory Van Brookhoven on July 12 at 7pm for this Zoom-only presentation for a journey to the time when this form of transportation served as an important means of travel.

You'll learn about the discussions leading up to the first trip, when the line was extended, the accidents, delays, and mishaps; and what eventually lead to its demise.

Along the way, you'll also get to see many never before published local trolley photos.



To view the program, please make a donation in any amount to the website below. You will then be emailed the link to join the Zoom a day before the presentation. Thank you for your support of Lititz history!

https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/donation-form/37360f2d-cbe4-495f-a192-409abe3b8457?fbclid=IwAR1fmdCa7waNEeFlfqYgdgdq2halbPx38eqGFmP_zsLb93z7x827xbrYgQ

DID YOU KNOW...?

Did you know...The iconic Sturgis Pretzel was dropped to ring in the year 2000?

It was dropped again on December 31, 2005 during "First Night" to ring in our town's 250th anniversary



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