

Winter 2023

Historical Journal



LITITZ HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

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

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Historic Preservation and Lititz

Charlene Van Brookhoven

“The times they are a changin’ ” wrote Bob Dylan, one of the greatest American songwriters ever, in 1964. His timeless lyrics “If your time to you is worth savin’ and you better start swimmin’ or you’ll sink like a stone” are words that could apply to the “coolest small town in America” named by Budget Travel in 2013. In 2022 Lititz’s downtown district was named “one of the eight most charming Main Streets in the United States” by Fodor’s, a prestigious travel guide. The small Moravian hamlet, settled in 1756 by a German religious reformer with the intention of establishing a “free Moravian movement”, grew into the modern town of Lititz, Pennsylvania.

The original settlement was self-sustaining with every resident assigned an occupation and freely shared their trades and products within the confines of the new town. Many events occurred to hinder this self-contained community. In 1777-78 soldiers wounded in the Revolutionary War Battle of Brandywine were sent to the Lititz Moravian community for healing. The soldiers brought with them diseases, unruly behavior, drunkenness and a lifestyle which the pious town’s people had never witnessed.

These actions had an adverse effect on their religious teachings; however, it introduced the members to a life outside their own boundaries. Several tradesmen began sending their goods (chip hats, men’s linen stockings, baskets, etc.) by wagon trains up and down the colonies and received other goods in return. These transactions increased when the rail system and depot station arrived in Lititz in 1863. The trains became an endless economic boost for the townspeople.



Above: Undated map of the original town boundaries of Lititz. Story continued on page 3 inside.

*Winter 2023**HISTORICAL JOURNAL*

Thanks For Your Generosity!

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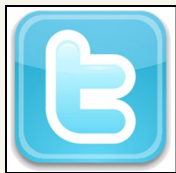
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WOW! Lititz Historical Foundation earned \$8,410 from 59 donors during this year's Extra Give on November 17th. We can't thank you enough for helping to support our mission! THANK YOU!!



Winter 2024 Hours

We are excited to announce that we will be open Monday through Fridays from 9am until 5pm during January, February, and March! Saturdays and Sundays are by reservation during those months listed above.

Visit our museum and gift and see what's new! Would you like to schedule a guided tour of the 1792 Johannes Mueller House? Please give us a call at 717-627-4636 or email us at info@lititzhistoricalfoundation.com to book.

In December, we are open Monday through Fridays, from 9am to 5pm. Saturdays we are open 11am until 5pm. Come in today for a great selection of local books, Moravian stars, holiday and home décor, and so much more! Remember, as a member of LHF in good standing you will receive 10% off purchases in the gift shop. Shop early for the best selection.

Winter 2023

HISTORICAL JOURNAL

Historic Preservation and Lititz Con't:

In 1888 Lititz became a borough and quickly grew into one of the most prosperous towns in the state of Pennsylvania. This came about because of the honest, hardworking German forefathers brought here by the Moravians. In 1901 a Board of Trade was organized to oversee the new businesses being established as well as several commercial banks.

As a result, Lititz grew quickly as new houses were built, commercial businesses were established, new jobs were created, and neighborhood grocery and retail stores were opening to accommodate the needs of the residents.

During the 1970's a Lititz retailer and businessman realized the town was changing rapidly and gaining much attention from surrounding investors. He became quite concerned the historic aspect and architecture of the 19th century buildings would change as new and more modern ideas were introduced.

He gathered several local businessmen who agreed to invest in the future of the downtown area. This group of investors made an immense impact on what has become The Lititz Moravian Historic District and has guided the decisions made to preserve the facades of every structure within the outlined boundaries.

Without the foresight of this group of investors, it's possible Lititz would not have been named "the coolest small town in America" and the Historic Moravian District would gradually fall into the oppressed conditions of so many other small towns.



Above: Several street scenes of Lititz from decades gone by.

Winter 2023

HISTORICAL JOURNAL

Book Signing and Lecture Slated for January 13th

Join us January 13th for a program and book signing with local historian Jim Polczynski. The presentation will begin at 1:30pm.

“Souls of Iron: A Remarkable Story of an Industrial Family Dynasty Spanning over 150 Years”

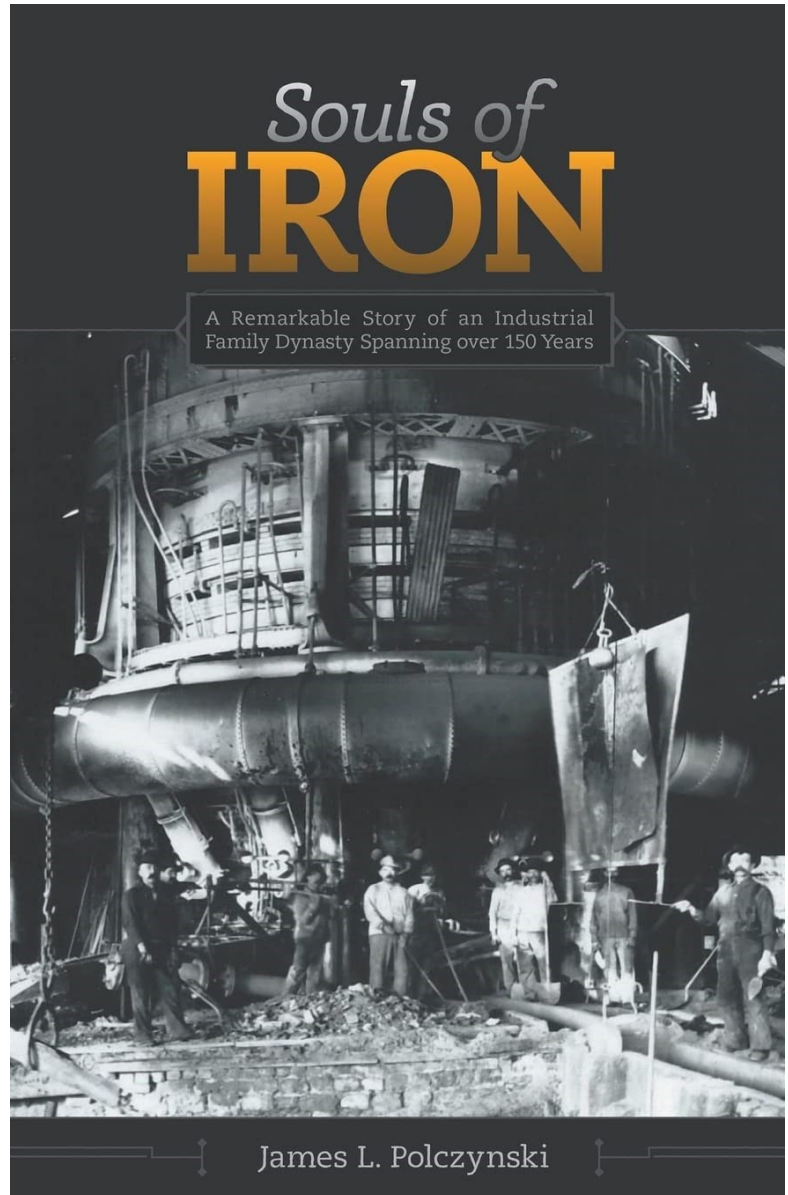
Souls of Iron tells the remarkable story of a multi-generational iron mining and iron manufacturing family dynasty in Central Pennsylvania which began before the Revolutionary War and lasted until shortly after WWI. At the age of sixteen Robert Coleman immigrated from Ireland, arriving in Philadelphia with two months worker wages in his pocket. By the time of his death in 1825 he was one of the wealthiest iron masters in Pennsylvania.

He owned the majority in the Cornwall Iron Ore Mines, three iron furnaces and multiple forges and ironworks. Through the next four generations his descendants splintered into separate businesses all of which were purchased by Bethlehem Steel for tens of millions of dollars.

The family weathered multiple scandals, recessions, one great depression, five wars, and radical changes in technology. It is a tale of ambition and sacrifice, of family division and close-knit bonds of love and devotion, of industrial growth and catastrophic loss, of great joys and unbearable pain.

Jim Polczynski has worked as a consulting Knowledge Engineer for various steel companies, including Bethlehem Steel, Lukens Steel, Dofasco Steel and Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel. He developed an interest in the iron and steel industry in Lebanon and Cornwall while renovating and restoring the Cornwall Company Store, now known as the Cornwall Inn. Jim also is currently President of the Friends of the Cornwall Iron Furnace.

****Signups for this free program begin December 30th at 9am****



Beginning on the day and time stated above, call the Lititz Library at 717-626-2255 to reserve your seat.
See you there!

Winter 2023

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Two New Local History Books Now Available!

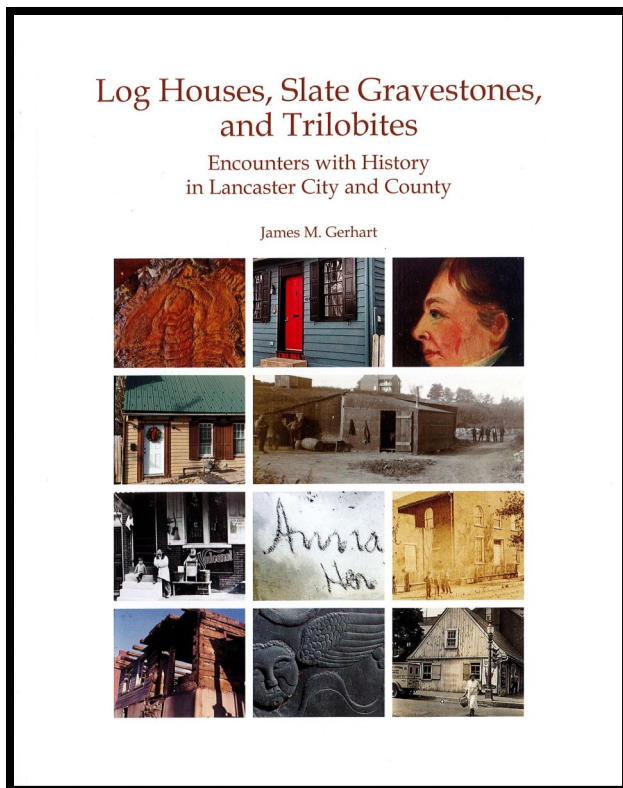
Just in time for Christmas! Two new history books sure to make great gifts this holiday season.

"Lancaster County Barn Tour" which highlights 51 barns across Lancaster County, including many right here in Lititz! It features historic and current photos as well as a detailed description of each structure and its significance to our area's history. Softcover, 71 pages. Priced at \$35 per copy while they last.

Next, we also have copies of "Log Houses, Slate Gravestones, and Trilobites: Encounters with History in Lancaster City and County" by James M. Gerhart.

This collection brings to life the stories of lesser-known places, events, and people around Lancaster County. Each book is autographed by the author. Softcover, color and black and white photos, as well as maps and diagrams. 161 pages. \$30.

Stop into our gift shop today to purchase these wonderful local history books! We accept cash and credit cards.



In addition to these books, did you know we have several other local history books in our gift shop? Check out our selection today! We have subjects including Lititz history, Lancaster County covered bridges, early toys and games, early American recipes, hex signs, tracing your roots, herbs, and so much more!

DID YOU KNOW...?



Zum Anker Alley is seen in this photo circa 1971. At that time, businesses included Lancaster Farming, Lititz Record Express, Fife & Drum Music Shop, The Candy Jar, and The Backporch Candle Shop.

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