

Fall 2026

Historical Journal



LITITZ HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

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

717-627-4636

www.lititzhistoricalfoundation.com

The Walls that Spoke in 1976

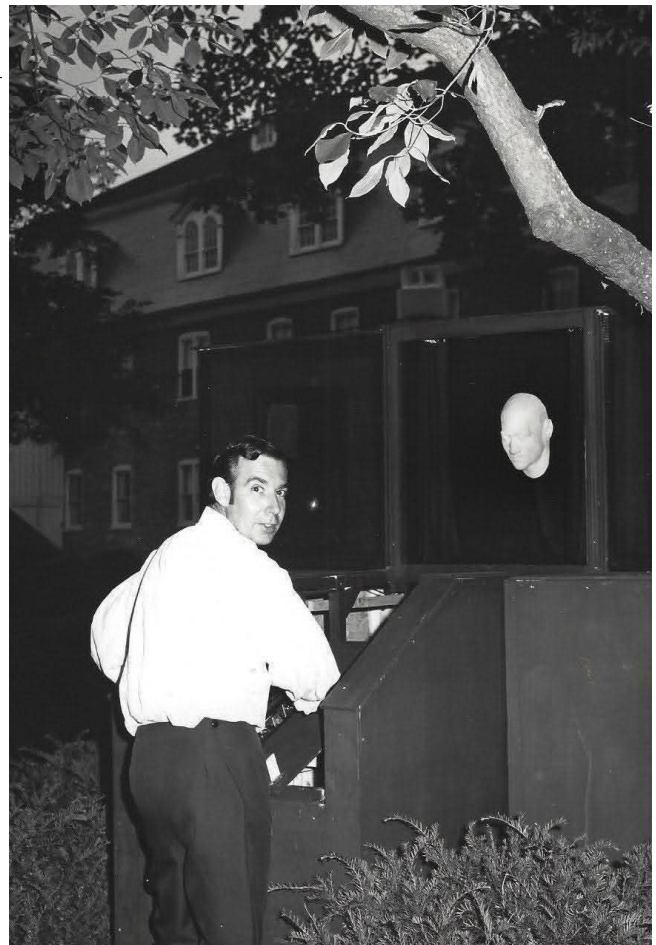
Cory Van Brookhoven

During the time that our nation celebrated its bicentennial in 1976, the town of Lititz also held its own unique patriotic event that residents are still talking about fifty years later.

Led by the Lititz Area Bicentennial Corporation, “If These Walls Could Speak” transformed historic Moravian Church Square into a state-of-the-art production – all without a live actor anywhere in sight. Rather, the story of our formative years was told via lights and voices, with several 18th century Moravian structures serving as the authentic backdrop. Two years in the making from an idea formulated by Robert Derck and Dale Shelley, the entire show was conceived, produced, and executed south of a \$10,000 budget. An immediate hit, it opened on June 2nd with a “modest” two hundred people in attendance and ran each Wednesday and Sunday evening at 9 p.m. through Labor Day weekend.

Clair Brothers Audio of Lititz helped bring this extremely ambitious event to life. Co-owner Roy Clair directed the technical elements with his brother Gene (along with additional help from the company’s team), producing the audio soundtrack on an eight-track tape.

Nearly ten speaker systems were temporarily built, with the necessary cables (all 25,000 feet of it) being buried underground and strung overhead, all to create a special immersive effect long before everyday digital magic entered the town of Hollywood.



Above: Robert Derck working the controls. Story continued inside on page 3

The 2026 Extra Give is November 20th!

On November 20, 2026, the Lititz Historical Foundation is participating in the annual Extraordinary Give - (Lancaster County's Largest Day of giving) And we could use your help this year achieving our goal!

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On that day, for a 24-hour period, online donations can be made to the Lititz Historical Foundation through a special website.

Your gift, no matter how large or small, helps preserve our 18th century buildings and gardens, maintain our priceless archives, and helps keep admission prices as low as possible.

Our goal this year is to raise \$10,000 during this extra special event. With your help, we CAN achieve this goal! On November 20th beginning at 12am, online donations can be made to our special website here: <https://www.extragive.org/organization/Lititz-Historical-Foundation>

Online donations for the Extra Give can be made on November 20, 2026 Only

For your convenience, online donations can also be made at our museum that day. Thank you so much for your generosity, and for your support!

Annual Departed Spirits Tour is October 24th!

Our very popular Lititz Departed Spirits Tour takes place October 24th, 2026!

Guided by a costumed docent, guests will be led around the property of the Lititz Moravian Church's property. There, they will encounter several "departed spirits" of Lititz who will share their tales and fascinating history with them. Just some of the many things you will see and learn about include a haunted, former Revolutionary War hospital a 1786 corpse house, as well as many more interesting places and characters along the way. Be sure to bring your cameras, PKE meters, and video recorders and have them ready!

The first tour begins at 5pm, and groups of up to 25 people will depart every 15 minutes. This is a family friendly event, and a joint fundraiser between the Lititz Historical Foundation and the Lititz Moravian Archives Committee. Be sure not to miss this event as it always sells out! Don't miss out!

Grab your tickets here: <https://historicalhappenings674329098.wordpress.com/2026/07/22/the-2026-lititz-departed-spirits-tour/>

The Walls that Spoke in 1976 Con't:

The lighting scheme was equally impressive. Over thirty fixtures were custom-built for the performance which illuminated the square and was all coordinated with the soundtrack. Effects were so convincing that during a thunderstorm sequence, at least one audience member opened their umbrella, convinced that it was about to rain.

As modern traffic was temporarily halted, the sound of wagons moved up and down the 18th century “streets” of Lititz was heard. Behind the narrator’s voice was none other than Warwick High School speech teacher Scott Garman, whose face was superimposed over an onsite plaster cast as he uttered the introductory words, “If these walls could speak...what whispers would we hear?”



Soon after, the sound of horses’ hooves could be heard from one end of Church Square to the next, which was soon followed by the chattering sounds of the town’s founding fathers discussing business in the Brothers’ House. All of the lights and sounds were perfectly timed to each scene. By the time August arrived, word had spread so far about this wondrous event that an estimated 1,000 spectators were now showing up each night.

Fittingly, “If These Walls Could Speak” ended each 30-minute show with the beloved local hymn, “Sing Hallelujah, Praise the Lord.”

Eleven years later, in 1987, the production was resurrected for the 200th anniversary of the Lititz Moravian Church’s sanctuary. This time, eight performances were held between August 9th and 16th. Once again, the show was a smash success. Moreover, it introduced a new generation of people to this unique, larger-than-life production.

Top: Volunteers Ginny Seaman (left) and Joy Keener (right) helped make the production a success. Left: Georgie Hampshire (left) and Dale Shelley (right) are seen dressed in 18th century Moravian garb for the occasion.

Join us for Pilates in our gardens on September 12th!

Join Our FREE Mommy and Me Pilates Session! Hosted by Pilates Addiction, this special outdoor event is designed for moms and their children! Geared toward school-aged children, it's a fun opportunity to move together, build confidence, and create lasting memories. Our 30-minute beginner-friendly Pilates class combines simple Pilates movements with fun partner activities that encourage teamwork, balance, and movement. No previous Pilates experience is necessary—just come ready to move, laugh, and have fun! While younger children are welcome, please note that the class is designed with school-aged participants in mind.

- What to Expect:
30-minute beginner-friendly Pilates class
Fun partner exercises and movement activities
Snacks and social time following class
Beautiful outdoor garden setting
A welcoming environment for all fitness levels

Recommended Age: This class is best suited for school-aged children, though younger children are welcome to attend with the understanding that some activities may be more challenging for them.

- What to Bring:
Yoga mat
Water bottle
Comfortable clothing
A smile!

We can't wait to spend the morning moving, connecting, and building community with you!
Get your FREE tickets here: https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mommy-and-me-pilates-tickets-1997890418022?aff=oddtcreator&fbclid=IwY2xjawT6wbpwZG9mAWV4dG4DYWVtAjEwAGJyaWQRMVlxTFM4T2lIZ3RoODZTNjhzcRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzcxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeXLSlcBXL3VgAmptbZNHHGEWoxxpjPj726K2NjAhFFrMbmFqS3VMR01eTTPQY_aem_rCMJfXbIybuYb3VWNxbrNg



Get into the Holiday Spirit this December!

Join the Lititz Historical Foundation in conjunction with the Lititz Moravian Archives for their annual Community Christmas Carol Sing Thursday, December 10th at 6:30 PM.

The evening is FREE, but donations are always appreciated! The event will take place at Moravian Church Square. The Moravian Trombone Choir will be on hand and free song sheets will be handed out as you, your friends, neighbors, and family will sing holiday classics.

Afterwards, all are welcome to warm up inside Fellowship Hall where light refreshments will be served. See you there!

Then, during the next two evenings, join us for our Annual Christmas Candlelight tours of the 1792 Johannes Mueller House! Two very merry nights! This popular tradition is always a must do during the holiday season! What better way to get into the holiday spirit than to visit Lititz, Pennsylvania. On December 12th and 13th, 2026, the Lititz Historical Foundation will hold its Annual Christmas Candlelight Tours.

Guests will receive a 40-minute guided tour of the 1792 Johannes Mueller House and will learn the story of Mueller and his family as well as history and customs of the early Moravian community of Lititz during the 18th century.

Tours depart every 15 minutes and run from 5-8pm each evening. While you're there, be sure to visit the Lititz Museum for holiday refreshments and to shop our gift shop for a tremendous selection of items!

For ticket holders, we'll also be offering a 10% discount in our gift shop on both evenings.

Tickets can be purchased here: https://historicalhappenings674329098.wordpress.com/2026/08/10/2026-christmas-candlelight-tours-help-dec-11-12th/?fbclid=IwY2xjawT6xP5wZG9mAWV4dG4DYWVtAjEwAGJyaWQRMVlxTFM4T2l1Z3RoODZTNjhzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzcxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeFWmIHhO1AQ6H00IS1Ai8SUC8_U8DdypavRpcioOY_OETbFIUaK0bMEG6yTI_aem_W4dmiP3MfZGsMpyQzmdllw



DID YOU KNOW...?

Seen on the right is a unique glimpse of the Lititz Moravian Church, circa turn of the century. Note the old wooden fence, stone walkway, and dirt road which lead to the Brothers' House.



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