

Spring 2026

Historical Journal



LITITZ HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

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

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A Lititz-Made Carpenter Violin Comes Home

Charlene Van Brookhoven

Visitors from all over the world come to the Lititz Historical Foundation Museum to learn how the historic town of Lititz was founded in 1756 by a group of Moravians. As they are greeted at the door by a friendly desk volunteer, the inlaid, parquet clocks made by Lititz resident Rudolph Carpenter are two artifacts in the collection mentioned as the most interesting and remarkable and not to be missed.

In September of 2025 a private resident donated a violin to LHF. Inside the body of the violin was the name of the maker of the instrument.

No 17 "maid" by
Abraham S. Carpenter
1906 Lititz Pa.

Abraham was Rudolph's older brother.

The first step in evaluating the violin was to have it professionally examined by Dodson Violins in Reading, Pennsylvania. Richard Dodson gave the following information:

"This violin appears to be a genuine example of this maker's work. It also appears to be in original condition with the likely exception of the ebony fittings. This instrument has some characteristics of being made by a professional violin maker, as well as some characteristics that are amateur in nature. The instrument reflects a maker with good knowledge of violin construction. This violin is currently in good playing condition and responds well to the bow."

Abraham Carpenter was born nearby Lititz in Brunnerville in 1853 and lived there until he became a widower in 1924.

Story continued on page 3 inside. Right: The #17 Carpenter violin



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HISTORICAL JOURNAL

3 Hour Tour returns to kick off Summer Concert Series

In 2026, It's America's 250th, Lititz's 270th, Lititz Historical Foundation's 65th, and our Mary Oehme Gardens turn 30. So let's celebrate!

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Join us in our Mary Oehme Gardens on Sunday, May 17th for 3 Hour Tour, an outstanding Yacht Rock and Soul group based in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. This is the first of FIVE outstanding live concerts we will be bringing you in 2026. This group played our gardens several years ago to a tremendous crowd, so let's bring them back for another performance. It's the perfect way to kick off summer!

They'll be playing hit after memorable hit of yacht rock and soul! The concert will begin at 6:30pm. Bring your chairs, blankets, and dancing shoes and invite your friends, family, and neighbors. We thank Nadine and Gaylord Poling for making this concert possible. Thank You!

Refreshments available by donation. This is a pay what you can event. We will be collecting donations that evening to help preserve our gardens and 18th century structures.



Congrats, Sheryl!

Lititz Historical Foundation is thrilled to announce that Sheryl Williams, who serves as one of our tour guides, has been selected as a finalist for the first annual Discover Lancaster Host Awards in the category of Best Tour Guide/Interpreter!

This award recognizes front-line tourism and hospitality professionals who go above and beyond in creating extraordinary, memorable experiences for visitors to Lancaster County.

The winners will be revealed on March 2nd during an awards ceremony at American Music Theatre. Congratulations, Sheryl!



Spring 2026

HISTORICAL JOURNAL

Pennsylvania Women On The Homefront program slated for April 18th

Join us at the Lititz Public Library on April 18th, 2026 for our next historical program! We'll be welcoming Dominish Marie Miller, who will discuss "Pennsylvania's Women on the Home Front: Their Contributions and Impact."

When we talk about World War II, we often think about the battles overseas, but the home front was just as vital—and across the Commonwealth, Pennsylvania women were the engine driving the "Arsenal of Democracy." The industrial might of the state, and the American war effort as a whole, would not have been possible without their contributions. From the steel mills of Pittsburgh to the shipyards of Philadelphia and the factories of York and Lancaster, Pennsylvania women stepped up to fill the void left by millions of men serving overseas.

Miller is the Third Circuit Court of Appeals Librarian for the Middle District of Pennsylvania, the founder of Preserving the History of Newberrytown, runs the Lewisberry Area History Lovers group and is a founding board member of the Newberrytown Special Events Committee. She serves as Librarian and VIS Chair for the Harrisburg Chapter, NSDAR. She is also a reenactor with the 87th Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry, Company C where she portrays a Second Corporal. She is the author of two cookbooks and two local history books.

This program is free and open to the public. Signups begin at 9am on April 4th. After that day and time, call the library to register at 717-626-2255. Seating is limited to 100 people.

Carpenter Violin Con't:

He moved in with his brother Rudolph at 131 N. Cedar Street in Lititz where the two brothers shared a wood-working shop. Both stonemasons by trade, their skills with wood seemed to be their true interest as the patience and skills they acquired are indicative to master craftsmen.

The Carpenter violin still has the rich, dark brown finish and beautiful patina that highlights its 120 year-old age and character. It displays four strings stretching over a black, polished fingerboard, elegantly curved f-holes on either side of the bridge and a glossy black chin rest. This particular instrument is only one of three known to exist today by this maker.

The brothers worked side by side creating the most amazing and creative masterpieces during a time when only hand tools were available. The mechanical minds of the Carpenter brothers in honing their intricate skills is truly astonishing.

The 1906 Abraham S. Carpenter violin is an important addition to LHF's collection of Lititz history and its residents' individual abilities and contributions to the 270 years since the founding of the town.

Get Back to Nature on March 14th

Join us on Saturday, March 14th at 1:30pm at the Lititz Public Library for the very special program “Living With Nature on Small Properties” featuring Bethe Gettle from Middle Creek Wildlife Management area. The program will explore how every homeowner, whether they steward a quarter-acre yard or a small suburban lot, can create habitats that support birds, pollinators, amphibians, and the quiet, wild lives that depend on our landscapes.

Gettle completed the Penn State Extension, Master Watershed Steward program and she is currently finishing up the Lancaster Clean Water Partners, Lancaster Watershed Leadership Academy. She is also a volunteer at Middle Creek Wildlife Management’s Visitor Center and Conservation Heritage Museum, volunteers for Wildlife in Need PA, Lancaster County’s Animal Response Team, and is a transporter for the National Brittany Rescue.

The lecture is free and open to the public. The library is located at 651 Kissel Hill Road, Lititz. Reservations begin at 9am on February 28th. Beginning on that date and time, call the library at 717-626-2255 to register.

Annual Plant Exchange is April 29th

The Lititz Historical Foundation in conjunction with the Lititz Garden Club will hold its Annual Plant Exchange on Sunday, April 26th 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. Rain or shine!

The plants to exchange must be perennials and must have identification tags. 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. Questions? Email info@lititzhistoricalfoundation.com. See you there!



Spring 2026

HISTORICAL JOURNAL

63rd Annual Antiques Show is June 26 and 27

Our 63rd year! This year is extra special as we celebrate America's 250th, Lititz's 270th, and the Lititz Historical Foundation turns 65!

Lancaster County's oldest show of its kind and always a perennial favorite, our biggest fundraiser of the year will be staged at the Warwick Middle School (401 Maple Street) in Lititz June 26th and 27th 2026.

Admission is \$10 per person. \$9 in advance by visiting the ticket link below. 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 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. This is our biggest fundraiser



of the year – See you there! Reserve your ticket today and save a dollar in admission at the door: [https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/63rd-annual-antiques-show?](https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/63rd-annual-antiques-show?fbclid=IwY2xjawQAJ1dleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETJhc2MzT0hOdWxzME1vRHJSc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODIwMDg5MgABHtBsow2lRzq8Um4En2UPN53feSnShYS6flWdmbT6l40DB5yE6V3IobaH7oGt_aem_VhU8436S1w23rSDoVju_ow)

[fbclid=IwY2xjawQAJ1dleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETJhc2MzT0hOdWxzME1vRHJSc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODIwMDg5MgABHtBsow2lRzq8Um4En2UPN53feSnShYS6flWdmbT6l40DB5yE6V3IobaH7oGt_aem_VhU8436S1w23rSDoVju_ow](https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/63rd-annual-antiques-show?fbclid=IwY2xjawQAJ1dleHRuA2FlbQIxMABicmlkETJhc2MzT0hOdWxzME1vRHJSc3J0YwZhcHBfaWQQMjlyMDM5MTc4ODIwMDg5MgABHtBsow2lRzq8Um4En2UPN53feSnShYS6flWdmbT6l40DB5yE6V3IobaH7oGt_aem_VhU8436S1w23rSDoVju_ow)

Weekend of History is June 12 - 14

A BIG weekend of history is coming! All events are free (donations happily accepted), and take place in our Mary Oehme Gardens.

Join us for Founder's Day on Friday June 12th from 5:30pm to 7pm. We'll have speeches by local dignitaries, a flag folding ceremony by local scouts, music, refreshments, and more! This day celebrates the day Lititz was founded 270 years ago on June 12th, 1756.

The next day (June 13th) be sure to join us for our History Festival! Local historical societies will be on hand as well as artisans, reenactors, and even Benjamin Franklin! Several guided tours will also be available that day. Time of the festival is 11am to 5pm.

Then, Sunday June 14th, celebrate with us on Flag Day for a Patriotic Salute to America featuring The Lititz Community Band! This concert is sponsored by Nadine and Gaylord Poling, and begins at 6:30pm. Wear your red, white, and blue! Refreshments will be available for donations will be collected to help preserve and maintain our gardens. Follow our Facebook event pages for all of the latest updates! In 2026, America celebrates 250 years, Lititz marks 270, The Lititz Historical Foundations turns 65, and our Mary Oehme Gardens is 30! We can't wait to celebrate with you during these events as well as other

DID YOU KNOW...?

Photo Day! Seen here are students from the Warwick Township High School, who posed together on an autumn day to have their picture taken.

Opened in 1910, this institution housed grades one through twelve. This school would eventually cease when it merged with Lititz High School in 1956.



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