

Winter 2025

Historical Journal



LITITZ HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

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Froebel Stars

Charlene Van Brookhoven

A Froebel star is a decorative, three-dimensional star made from folded and woven paper strips most commonly used as Christmas ornaments.

Friedrich Froebel was born in Germany in 1782 and became an early childhood educator. His view on education for young children was to emphasize learning with play rather than being seated in a classroom hour after hour. Froebel's thinking was to teach young children how to appreciate their youth rather than guide them into an adult world. He used wooden blocks and different sizes of paper and objects found in nature to bring out creativity to stress each child's unique developmental skills.

Froebel opened the first kindergarten (German translation “garden of children”) in Blankenberg, Germany in 1837. His description came from the thought that children were like plants who had to be nurtured and cared for. He taught both boys and girls how to work with their hands using origami (paper folding) as a means to not only teach hand/eye coordination but also mathematical principles. He developed a star that needed no glue or tape to hold its shape which would have been quite easy for small hands.

Through the years the original Froebel Star became known as an Advent star in Germany as well as the Nordic countries; however in the US it is referred to as a Danish, German or Christmas star. In Moravian communities this small paper star is not to be confused with the traditional 26-point Advent star which is hung the first Sunday in Advent until Epiphany (January 6). This star symbolizes the star of Bethlehem and the anticipation of the coming of Christ or “Jesus the Light of the world.”



The three-dimensional Froebel star can be made in about forty steps. The proper sized paper strips and folding instructions are available at The Lititz Historical Foundation's gift shop as well as already assembled stars in three different sizes.

Above: Examples of Froebel stars made from paper strips

2025 Extra Give Raises \$5,730 for LHF

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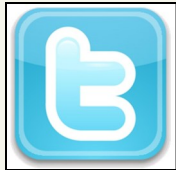
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We wanted to take this opportunity to send a heartfelt THANK YOU to everyone who donated to us during the 2025 Extra Give on November 21st. Through your generosity, we were able to raise \$5,730. These funds go directly towards upkeep of our gardens and buildings, helps maintain our archives, and continues to keep our prices as low as possible.



We wish you a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year! Thank you so much for your continued support in 2025!

*Winter 2025**HISTORICAL JOURNAL*

Guest speakers announced for 2026

We are once again thrilled to partner with the Lititz Public Library in 2026 to host four guest speakers. Please save the dates below. Signups begin two weeks prior to each date. We hope to see you there! These lectures are always free and open to the public, and begin at 1:30pm.

January 17th - Darlene Colon will present on the Christiana Resistance

February 21st - Jim Wolfe and Ethan Smith with “The Legacy of local distilling.”

March 14th - Bethe Gettle will present “Keeping space with Nature”

April 18th - Dominish Miller will discuss “Pennsylvania women of World War 2”

Kid’s Day returns February 16th!

Join us on for a special Kid’s Day at the Museum on February 16th, 2026!

It will be President’s Day, so stop in and see an authentic fan used by the wife of President Abraham Lincoln!

There’s also lots more cool stuff to see and do throughout the museum including a scavenger hunt (with prizes!) and even more surprises!

Parents and guardians: Why not take a tour of the 1792 Johannes Mueller House? Kids and adults alike love learning about how a typical Moravian lived right here in Lititz during the 1700s. It’s both fun and educational!

It’s all happening at the Lititz Historical Foundation February 16th from 11am-5pm.



Tour tickets can be purchased below. The Lititz Museum is open by donation.

Also be sure to visit our gift shop for a great selection of local books, Moravian stars, and more! We’ve got some INCREDIBLE deals that whole week during Fire & Ice!

See you then!

Founder's Day to kickoff Lititz History Weekend in June

There's a lot to celebrate in 2026! Not only is it the 250th anniversary of our nation's independence, but Lititz also turns 270, the Lititz Historical Foundation will be 65, and our Mary Oehme Gardens marks 30 years!

We have several special events planned for next year, including one to mark the 270th anniversary of the naming of Lititz. On Friday, June 12th, join us in our Mary Oehme Gardens at 5:30pm for Founder's Day! It was on that day in 1756 that the official naming of the town of Lititz took place. Come help us mark the anniversary of this event with a flag ceremony, guest speakers, refreshments, and more! The gardens are located behind 137 East Main Street in Lititz. The event is free to attend. We hope to see you there!

History Festival is June 13th

Join us Saturday, June 13th, 2026 from 11am to 5pm for a great day of history, fun, and lasting memories for the entire family. We'll have reenactors, guided tours, demonstrators, artisans, a food truck, and so much more! The festival is free to attend. It's all happening at the Lititz Historical Foundation located 145 East Main Street, Lititz. All are welcome to join us!



Music Sunday is June 14th

The weekend concludes on Sunday, June 14th with a special day of historic music! Plans are still in the works, but we will have a special musical event at the Lititz Moravian Church that afternoon. Then, at 6:30pm, join us in our Mary Oehme Gardens as the Lititz Community Band performs patriotic music!

Above: Our History Festival is just one of many special event planned for the weekend of June 12-14

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Our 2026 Membership Drive is Underway!

Inside this newsletter is your 2026 renewal letter. Please consider rejoining the Lititz Historical Foundation. Reminder that members receive a 10% discount in our gift shop, this quarterly newsletter, and unlimited tours of the 1792 Johannes Mueller House. Best part? You're helping to preserve Lititz history one dollar at a time. We thank you for your continued support!

**Become a Member
of LHF!**



Street Stars Still Shine Bright After Nearly 90 Years

One can't help but notice the beautiful stars which adorn the downtown streets lamps each Christmas season. In 1937, the Lititz Chamber of Commerce decided that these "stars of lights" would be placed on top of three lights at the square as well as on seven fixtures nearby.

That year on Christmas Eve, a special community carol sing took place at the square at 10:30pm. It was on that evening that the community gazed upon the stars for the very first time. More stars were added, and by 1940 Lititz boasted twenty-two more.

Due to this increase, the placement was extended — they would be lined along Broad Street from Orange to Lincoln Avenue; and from Main to Cedar.

By 1945, the count was up to thirty-eight stars; and since 2022, 45 shine throughout the downtown.



Above: A circa 1930s view of the square in Lititz adorned with stars and decorations for the season

DID YOU KNOW...?

Beginning in the 1940s, Henry Tennis operated a very successful coal business in Lexington, a hamlet which is just north of Lititz



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