



knee-deep in history

The Scribe

January 2021

Palmerton Area Historical Society
www.palmertonhistorical.org

Heritage Center Completes Renovation *Celebrating 15 Years of Bringing Palmerton to the Public*

The year was 2004 and the Historical Society was seeking a home in which to display its collection of Palmerton memorabilia and to fulfill its mission of educating the public to the unique history of Palmerton. It happened that the former home of Tommie's, Palmerton's celebrated soda fountain, was available for rent

and in October of that year the Society entered into a lease agreement with the owners.

Shortly after the Society completed the improvements necessary to make the property suitable for the intended displays,

the owner decided to put the building up for sale. After whirlwind negotiations with the seller, and with the help of our local bank, the Society obtained a \$126,400 mortgage and on October 13, 2005 exercised its option to acquire the property.

Six years of rent from the second floor apartment combined with the generous support of members and friends enabled the Society to satisfy the mortgage. The Heritage Center is now unencumbered by debt and thanks go to all who helped make it so.



A stunning new look greets Heritage Center visitors.

This brings us to the present – and to the challenges of 2020. The year started with a plan – a total “refreshing” of the public area to make it more attractive and informative to visitors. This required a fresh coat of paint and

new displays and it was anticipated it would be completed by April. Unfortunately, the virus interfered and it was not until the end of October that appropriate protocols were in place to permit a “soft opening” for several hours each week.

Palmerton Area Historical Society

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Little White Church Goes High Tech

Days after completion of the planned repairs and repainting of the window frames in the Little White Church, the Society was approached by a local family. They asked if the church could be used for a small, private memorial service for a recently departed relative – a service that could readily comply with any protocols imposed by the corona virus pandemic.

The Society was pleased to make the property available until the family inquired as to whether the sanctuary was WiFi equipped. They wished to share the memorial with distant relatives and although a new electrical service had recently been installed, no plans had been made to bring 175-year old church into the digital age! A creative, young member of the family came up with a solution and demonstrated how easy it is with today’s technology to link the Little White Church with the internet! Relatives 3,000 miles away were able to participate and the Historical Society was able to provide the venue for an appropriate send-off to their loved one.



Heritage Center Completes Renovation

- continued from front page -

A call went out earlier to members and friends who were willing to lend one or more of their cherished paintings for the re-opening of the Center. Those that were submitted reflect a wide range of subject matter and technique and will be on display until Spring - a time when there is the prospect of greater relief from the pandemic.

In the interim, the Center has been hosting visitors on a limited basis to comply with guidelines and directives put forth by the Commonwealth. The Society is taking reasonable steps to limit the number of visitors



Smaller examples fit perfectly here.

at any one time and have them follow social distancing while in the Center.

The impressive display of oils and watercolors by local artists provides a fitting complement to the Center's new look and confirms the widely held opinion that the community is home to a plethora of talent. To focus on a single work would not do justice to the enjoyment experienced by each artist. The Society is proud of each and every one. Members

and guests are encouraged to visit the displays and to judge for themselves their favorites.



Vinita Horinko provided a quaint look ...



... that complemented the variety of paintings.

“Sense of Touch” *Reflections of Myra Brookmyer*

One year ago, a Priority Mail package arrived at the Historical Society from Carol Vorosmarti of Rockville, Maryland. In her accompanying note, Carol explained the contents as being a collection of poems that Myra Brookmyer had composed during her years as Public Health Nurse for The New Jersey Zinc Company.

Myra was born in 1889 and became a Registered Nurse in 1915 after completing her training at Lankenau Hospital in Philadelphia. For the next four decades she worked solely in Palmerton for NJZ and brought care and compassion to many families that had immigrated here to build a new life. She was reportedly a voracious reader and exhibited her skill in language as a talented amateur poet. Upon retirement, Myra spent the last 26 years of her life in her home town of Lititz where she passed away in August 1980.

The challenging year of 2020 has come to a close, and the editors of *The Scribe* believe it is appropriate to print one of her simple early works - one that expresses the good that she found in the communities she served.

“Faith is the Substance.....”

*A woman shopping in the A & P;
Selecting items of necessity;
Stops for a moment, fumbles in her purse,
And finding insufficient means to pay,
Returns some goods to shelf, settling for less –
A check expected, probably delayed;
With pension grant the family’s bills are paid.
A kindly manager, noting her plight,
Makes quick survey of contents of the cart,
Then offers her two dollars of his own;
She graciously accepts it as a loan.
To one who, unobserved, appraised this scene,
Faith proved the substance – Faith the Master Tool --
Enriching lives, lived by the Golden Rule.*

Edith Roeder Celebrates Her 100th Birthday *Presents Unique Gift to the Society*

When an individual reaches the age of 100, it is often remarked that too few of her contemporaries are still around to celebrate the occasion with her. In the case of Edie Roeder, her age belies the youthfulness of her approach to life and as such she continually reaches back to bring a younger generation into her sphere. Who else at her age would accept the invitation to join Le Cercle Francais of the Lehigh Valley to broaden her horizons, learn more about French culture, and make new friends.

Thanks to her new found friends in Le Cercle, a socially distanced, two-hour long drive-by party was held at her Allentown home on October 4th and a formal proclamation from the Mayor was read designating the occasion as Edith Roeder Appreciation Day.

Many Palmertonians are only familiar with Edie's talent as an artist – a talent that was honed late in life after she raised four children while her chemist husband, Sam, headed the Technical Department of New Jersey Zinc. Once her children had grown, Edie earned a degree in Elementary Education at what is now East Stroudsburg University and went on to teach for many years in Slatington.

As she and Sam reached retirement – a time when most individuals “power down” – Edie went into overdrive. Golf, bridge, travel – and eventually the rudiments of painting in oils. Despite the pains that accompanied life's eventual losses, Edie's artistic skills grew stronger and they can be seen in the wonderful painting she donated to the Society. Although it shows a scene from an early Palmerton Hospital Festival, it was completed only six years ago.



Edie's gift portrays the Palmerton Hospital Festival

Edie has had several solo shows of her work at the Baum Art School, she enjoys visiting performances of the Allentown Symphony Orchestra, and she constantly explores new ways to express herself artistically

The Society congratulates Edie on a long and successful career and expresses its appreciation for her gift. She continues to live her life according to one of her favorite lessons from St. Paul –

“Whatever is truth, whatever is pure, whatever is just, if anything be beautiful, if anything be gracious, think on these things.”

2021 Monthly Program Schedule

*all programs held in the Knight's Gallery of the Palmerton Library at 7pm unless otherwise noted
handicap accessibility*

January, February & March
No Meeting

April 12

***How the Ice Age Impacted the
Lehigh Gap and Stoney Ridge***
Dr. Dru Germanowski, Geologist

May 10

The History of the Lehigh River
Louise Bugbee

June 14

Beekeeping & Honey Production
Chris Maxwell
at Little White Church

July 12

***Human powered toys
including the "Slinky"***
*Pennsylvania's official toy that is
manufactured in Hollidaysburg, PA*
Bob Swaim
at the Borough Park

August 9 (5pm)

Annual Society Picnic
Holczman Farm
hosted by Bert Holczman

September

No Meeting
Palmerton Community Festival

October 11

PA German Gravestones
Michael Emery
PA Historical Museum Commission
at Little White Church

November 9

Pennsylvania Tour Photos
Lynn Shupp

December 6

***Ecumenical Service &
Christmas Party***
3pm at Little White Church
Dinner Following at Bert's Steakhouse

Have Your Renewed Your Membership for 2021?
Check Your Label for a "Red Dot"

We don't want to lose you! Please check the mailing label for a RED dot. If it is there it signifies we haven't heard from you. Of course, that could be our mistake – if so let us know.

Stay in touch and stay healthy!

A Gift From Mary Anne Shafer

Visitors to the area have often inquired about the abandoned church on the road to Forest Inn in the Village of Aquashicola. Despite being in ill repair, it is a favorite of both local photographers and passers-by. Lehighon artist, Mary Anne Shafer, has now captured the church in a beautifully executed and framed work that she donated to the Society. The Society expresses its appreciation to Mary Anne for her thoughtful gift



Lighting Committee Comes Through Again *Trestle Decoration Scores a Hit!*

Success after success! What will the Holiday Lighting Committee come up with next?

More than 150 Christmas trees representing local organizations grace the Borough Park each year; uniquely lighted snowflakes bracket both sides the entire length of Delaware Avenue; and now an attractively lighted “train” makes its way across the trestle in the heart of town! What will the committee do for an encore?

It is little wonder that Palmerton continues to set the bar higher for other towns to emulate. These achievements are examples of why this community is worthy of the National Historic District designation it was accorded three years ago. On behalf of its members - both near and far - the Historical Society expresses its appreciation to the volunteers of the Holiday Lighting Committee and to those whose contributions help make Palmerton more beautiful for the Holidays.





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PO Box 267
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**Palmerton Area
Historical Society
Heritage Center**

410 Delaware Avenue
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**Until Further Notice
Hours By
Special Schedule**

