

Lancaster Heritage Outlook

Thoughts of Yesterday and Tomorrow
from the Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County

VOLUME 9 - NUMBER 7

Fall 2010

A Message from the President



By Nancy C. Bell

A wise individual once stated that the only thing that remains constant in life is change. As long-time friends of the Trust and lovers of historic architecture and preservation, we're probably not the first group of people to embrace that quote. There is always a part of us that is most comfortable with what has gone before... that is why we are devoted to our mission to preserve and protect Lancaster County's rich historic and architectural character. But there are changes that do occur in our world and recently the board of directors received the resignation of our long-time Executive Director, Tim Smedick. Tim has served the Trust well for over 12 years. He began his tenure with us by running the successful Heritage Crossroads Campaign. During his association with the Trust we developed additional historic preservation easements that permanently protect 26 diverse historic properties; completed Phase I of the Stevens Smith Historic Site in 2009 with the exterior restoration of four historic buildings; completed the first ever comprehensive report of Lancaster's famed Central Market in concert with a team of pro-

fessional advisors; partnered with the Lancaster County Planning Commission to develop preservation guidelines for municipalities, and strengthened our professional advisor services that provide consultation on various aspects of historic preservation. These accomplishments showcase the true mission of the Trust. We would like to express our gratitude to Tim for over a decade of service and wish him continued success in his future endeavors.

Our current preservation projects include the exciting adaptive re-use of the Rieber House scheduled to be completed this fall; overseeing critical maintenance repairs on the Bowmansville Roller Mill; garnering community support to preserve and adaptively re-use the Aaron Hess/David Mayer Farmstead in Manheim Township, and the review of eight additional property easements by the preservation action committee. The upcoming fall architectural history tour on October 24th, featuring the buildings of C. Emlen Urban, Lancaster's premier architect, will provide an outstanding venue for opening these unique and historic properties to visitors

along with the added bonus of educating them about the many accomplishments of Urban. Preservation is alive and well in our community as the Trust has received a record number of nominations for our annual preservation awards scheduled for November 10th.

To facilitate the continuity of the many projects the Trust is currently immersed in and to ensure their seamless operation the executive committee has appointed Ron Funk, a former Wyeth executive and historic property owner as interim director while the board conducts an active search for a new executive director. We welcome your input on whom you would like to see lead the Trust into the future.

On that note, we would like to remind our members that we will soon kick off our annual fund drive. We ask you to be as generous as possible in order to continue our fine tradition of preservation and the promotion of architectural integrity that gives Lancaster County its unique combination of historic and modern elements.

I N S I D E

Abraham Herr Homestead

Page 2



Architecture by Urban

Page 4



My Favorite Building

Page 6



Ask the Electrician

Page 8

About Ron Funk

Ron Funk received his B.S. and Master's Degrees in Engineering from the University of Virginia. He has worked at John Deere in Davenport, Iowa; Digital Equipment Corporation in Middletown, PA; and retired as an executive from Wyeth in Collegeville, PA.

Ron is a native of suburban Philadelphia but returned to his family roots in Lancaster County. In 2003, Ron and his wife purchased the Bowmansville Roller Mill in northern Lancaster County from the Trust and became involved with the organization. They also built a home on the property made entirely of reclaimed barn wood.

As interim executive director Ron will help maintain the continuity of the organization by focusing priorities and facilitating communications with businesses and members. His leadership and management skills will ensure a smooth transition into a new era for the Trust.

Photography: PADEN DE LA FUENTE ARCHITECTS



Restored 18th century facade.

The Abraham Herr Homestead

Home Again

By John Metzger



Chevron Dutch entry door.

When Mary and I first saw our old home on Bentley Lane in February of 2000, it was love at first sight. We had been settled nicely in a very comfortable suburban house just west of Lancaster for 13 years, which was a great spot to raise our two boys. We were accustomed to having a house project and Bentley Lane offered a host of opportunities. We knew we would make a move one day but it had to be something remarkable to spark the flame. Any such project or plan also needed to appeal to all of us as the boys were entering different phases of their lives with middle school and high school and we would need to agree on our endeavor and the time available to coordinate the effort.

Family history has always been important to us since we both grew up in families with deep ties to the area. We would constantly remind our boys of their rich Lancaster County roots and how fitting that Abraham Herr, their eleventh generation grandfather built our dream home in 1721. We were sold. The homestead was purchased and now decisions needed to be made.

I was a frequent reader of early Pennsylvania German literature and appropriately, at the time of our big move, became drawn to those architectural materials. Accordingly, I would frequent local bookstores. Kinzey Baker told me of a local architect named Scott Paden who had read every single page of literature on early Pennsylvania German structures. Too excited to contain my enthusiasm, I called Scott that afternoon only to reach him in northern Spain. Thus began a relationship with Paden de la Fuente, which continues to this day, comprised of their consistent engagement in consulting and advising on various renovation projects.

The summer kitchen was our first phase of renovation. After removing the white shag, wall-to-wall carpet, we were delighted to find the original walk-in fireplace still intact behind walls, ducts and closets. The chimney also needed to be reconstructed and one day we hope to reinstall the squirrel tail oven.

Phase two proved to be the most challenging and beautiful. The double attic, which had been left open to the air, nature and the elements, yielded a most tranquil space outlined by the Liegender stuhl truss construction of the home's roof system. The Liegender stuhl truss is a system of medieval joinery first used in the 15th century. It was employed as an active construction component in eastern Pennsylvania through the earliest part of the 18th century.

Needing a bit more room when the boys came home with friends, the 1970s addition on the back of the home was replaced with a balloon frame structure predicated upon a hand hewn, predominantly white oak, two-bay barn frame. The frame was discovered still intact in the Mount Airy region close to Akron, Lancaster County. Many of the barn frames inspected yielded very lean prospects due to their overpowering dimensions. Finally, a suitable frame was selected.

The next project was the restoration and simplification of the kitchen and library. Removal of walls and a staircase and the accompanying replacement and installation of many original members yielded a perfect place we consider to be the heart of our home.

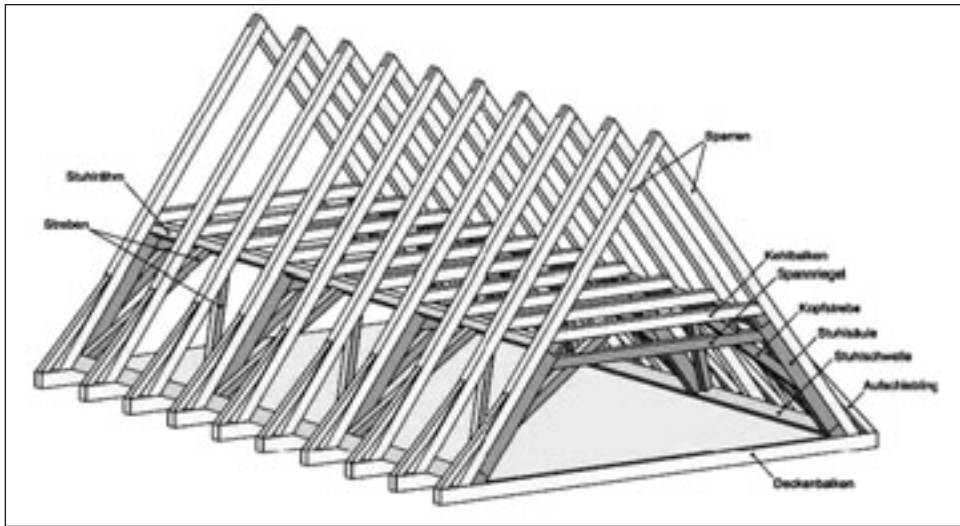
The most current phase has been the restoration of the front facade of the homestead, which presented many more challenges than were apparent. Work on surfaces proved incredibly challenging as did identification and sizing of the various windows and door openings.

Historical accuracy was respected as much as possible so the mid-19th century farmhouse style facade that had been added over the years was stripped away in layers. Demolition and removal of latter surfaces and openings revealed an original fleur kuche style home very similar to those found in Switzerland and the Palatinate region of Germany. The original Swiss pioneers who settled Lancaster County spent two or three generations in the Palatinate between removal from their original Swiss homesteads in the Cantons of Bern and Zurich and reaching their ultimate destination of the Pequea and Conestoga regions of then Chester County, Pennsylvania. In this context, the Abraham Herr Homestead was carefully constructed of the native fieldstone, oak and other woods afforded by the setting.

The construction of the Abraham Herr Homestead by his many family members and neighbors speaks to a pervasive and tremendous spirit of hope and new beginnings. Our family is honored to be part of this history.

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Liegender Stuhl truss diagram.



Erecting the salvaged 19th century timber frame.



Setting the cedar shake roof.



Completed addition from entry court.

2010 SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

LANCASTER

FIRST FRIDAY

Friday, October 1st - 5:00 to 9:00 pm

Gardens of Trust Headquarters

* Book Release Party for "Lancaster Reflections" by Scott Butcher.

Meet the author and photographer.

* Tickets for Lancaster City Architecture by C. Emlen Urban tour available.

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORY TOUR

Lancaster City Architecture by C. Emlen Urban

Sunday, October 24th - Noon to 5:00 pm

\$18 members

\$20 non-members

Pre Tour Reception

Friday, October 22nd - 6:00 to 8:00 pm

\$40 members

\$45 non-members

* This price includes tour ticket.

PRESERVATION AWARDS & ANNUAL MEETING

Wednesday, November 10th - 5:30 to 9:00 pm

Lancaster Country Club

\$65 members and \$75 non-members

Keynote Speaker: Jed Levin, Chief of History Branch

Independence National Historical Park

REGIONAL SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

YORK

DISCOVERING DEMPWOLF APPRENTICES RECEPTION

October 8th - 6:00 to 8:00 pm

York County Heritage Trust

250 East Market Street, York, PA 17403

DISCOVERING DEMPWOLF APPRENTICES HOUSE TOUR

October 10th - Noon to 5:00 pm

Contact Historic York, Inc. for more information or to purchase tickets.

717-843-0320 or info@historicyork.org

HARRISBURG

ELEGANT PROGRESSIONS

Dec 3-4

Black-Tie progressive dinner in cooperation with

the Kidney Foundation of Central PA

CANDLELIGHT HOUSE TOUR

Dec 12th

Contact Historic Harrisburg Association for more information

or to purchase tickets.

717-233-4646 or info@historicharrisburg.org



Countdown to Architectural History Tour

By Amy Gaston

The countdown has begun for the Lancaster City Architecture by C. Emlen Urban Tour. It is scheduled for Sunday, October 24th from Noon to 5:00 pm and includes 18 locations throughout the City of Lancaster. Never before (and probably never again) will there be so many sites on a tour. The cost is \$18 for members and \$20 for non-members. For tickets and more information call the Trust at 717-291-5861 or stop by the office at 123 North Prince Street. Office hours are Monday through Friday from 8:30 – 5:00pm.

The Trust is also hosting a pre-tour reception on Friday, October 22 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the Lancaster Science Factory, which is part of Urban Place. The cost to attend the reception is \$40 for members and \$45 for non-members. (This includes your tour ticket.) Space is limited so call now. Dr. David Schuyler of Franklin & Marshall College will give a brief presentation about Urban and his architecture designed to whet your appetite for Sunday's event. Representatives from all 18 locations will be recognized along with our event sponsors Conestoga View, Franklin & Marshall College and Wohlsen Construction Company. You will also have the opportunity to meet descendants of C. Emlen Urban, explore the Science Factory's cool interactive exhibits and enjoy light refreshments.

The Architectural History Tour only happens once every two years so be sure not to miss it.



930 Buchanan Avenue.

Photography: RICHARD GASTON



The iconic Watt & Shand facade.



Kirk Johnson building.





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My Favorite Building

By Amy Gaston



Central Market in Penn Square.

Sometimes simple questions can be the most difficult to answer. For instance, when I recently polled a group of constituents and asked them to name their favorite building in Lancaster County one person likened it to having to pick their favorite child. That certainly speaks to the emotional connection we feel to the structures around us.

Many of you took the time to explain your choice. These feelings are a testament to the value of preservation and worthy of being shared.

Submitted by Margaret Landis

An article from the Friday, April 5, 1946 edition of the *New Era* said the American Legion Post 34 submitted a proposal to purchase the **Neff/Passmore House** and if accepted planned to tear it down. This prompted my mother to go to Mr. Engle (of what was then Engle and Hambright) the following Monday and purchase it--so that it would not be torn down.



Fulton Opera House in City of Lancaster.

Submitted by Jim Corrigan

This is the toughest question I've been asked in a long time because Lancaster County has hundreds of truly great buildings. I would have hoped to mention some building that most people are unaware of, but I find myself instead drawn to the iconic buildings like the Hans Herr House and Rockford that we all know because they remain intact -- and not subjected to a variety of architectural updates and trendy improvements. So what is my favorite building in Lancaster County? I have two answers, one based on emotion, and one based on aesthetics.

CENTRAL MARKET

This building has it all; striking appearance, context, integrity, and contribution to the community. While Victorian architecture is not my favorite, Central Market has great style, augmented by the dramatic use of structural polychroming. The building is surrounded by beautiful and important buildings that give it historic and visual context. But perhaps most importantly, Central Market has brought pleasure to many generations of Lancasterians. It is a feel-good building. To be there in that splendid environment, surrounded by happy shoppers and vendors, is a joy that I am able to experience over and over.

WRIGHT'S FERRY MANSION

This building is a unique historic and architectural treasure. Lancaster County has hundreds of remarkable Georgian and Federal buildings, large and small, intact and improved, but Wright's Ferry Mansion stands alone as a magnificent example of early 18th century English architecture. The painstaking preservation of the building, exterior and interior, along with the fine furnishings, create a very special experience for visitors. In my opinion, there are only two minor drawbacks to the Wright's Ferry Mansion: the setting has lost much of its context, and I don't get to see it often enough.

Submitted by Nancy Morris

Amy, because I am so city oriented and am proud of Lancaster City, my favorite is the former Watt and Shand Building because it is dead center and introduces the visitor to Lancaster City's fine, diverse architecture. It's also a glowing example of period architecture, which has been made to fit into contemporary living. It's a shining example of the forward thinking that has made Lancaster City one of the most enviable small towns anywhere.

Photography: JON ISEMINGER





Mayer-Hess Farmstead in Manheim Township.

Submitted by Danny Whittle

My favorite building in Lancaster is our home at 622 West Walnut Street. Aside from its 100 year age, it probably has little on its own to merit recognition.

Our house is not unique – a mirror image was built next door at the same time, by the same builder, and probably using stock lumber and trim from the same local millworks as most other houses on the block. It’s one of six on our block of 23 row houses that have 10 foot deep porches elevated about 28 inches above the sidewalk. It’s a three story with barely a pitched flat roof, just like all the others on the block.

Our house is not elegant – although its naturally finished oak and chestnut interior woodwork could not be reproduced now, it was common stock in 1910. The floors are made of common fir attached directly to rough sawn floor joists without benefit of a sub floor. The center of the floors were never finished since they were covered with that new Armstrong linoleum they began to produce in Lancaster, or perhaps a plain wool rug covering all but a 2–3 foot perimeter of each room. Why waste the time and money to shellac the part of the floor that would never be seen.

Our house is not historic – No crisis was ever resolved there but our marriage was stressed during the rehabilitation. It was not designed by a famous architect but the masons and carpenters who built the house from a simple sketch pattern could have built most of the town. No famous or person of historic significance lived or slept there but extraordinarily significant friends and relatives have occupied every bed and have eaten at every table inside and out.

Our block, our extended neighborhood, and our neighbors make our simple house my favorite in Lancaster. Count ‘em – more than 300 trick-or-treaters every October 31. Middle school kids who compliment Nancy on her front porch Christmas tree. A three car length walk from the curb to the front steps includes a half dozen “hellos and nice days,” and extended conversations about flowers, another neighbor’s vacation – “we’d better watch out for their mail and paper,” and “how nice the carillon at the church sounds this evening.”

Amy, I’m sure many people will suggest their favorite buildings - Central Market or the Fulton Opera House or Holy Trinity Lutheran Church; some even will identify the Lancaster County Prison or Franklin & Marshall’s College Row or the Hamilton Club. They will all be right for it is all those and thousands more that make Lancaster the place that allows us to say our home and neighborhood is our favorite place.

Gee whiz we are lucky.

8 VOTES

Central Market

7 VOTES

Fulton Opera House

5 VOTES

Mayer-Hess Farmstead

4 VOTES

Roslyn

3 VOTES

Wright’s Ferry Mansion

2 VOTES EACH

Gonder Mansion

Griest Building

Hans Herr House

Lititz Moravian Church

PA Railroad Station

Sisters House at Ephrata Cloister

Former Watt & Shand

1 VOTE EACH

Armstrong World Industry buildings on Liberty Street

Bethel A.M.E. Church and Cultural Center

Carousel House at Rocky Springs Park

Conestoga House

Charlie Wagner’s Café

Abraham Herr Homestead

Lancaster County Library

Lancaster Marriott at Penn Square

Lancaster Theological Seminary

Mary Dixon Memorial Chapel

Mascot Roller Mill

Neff/Passmore House

Reformed Church in Strasburg

Residences at Stevens School

Rock Ford

Saal (meetinghouse) at Ephrata Cloister

128 N. School Lane

Sehner-Ellicott-von Hess House

Thaddeus Stevens and Lydia Hamilton Smith buildings

St. James Episcopal Church

St. Mary’s Church

Streetscapes in general

10 Sunset Lane

The Umbrella Works

622 W. Walnut Street





Ask the Electrician

By Stephen M. Daniels
Stephen M. Daniels Electrical Contractors, Inc.

The purpose of this column is to inform people who love their older homes and want to know more about the electrical workings that live deep inside the walls, floors and ceilings.

For example, you may have questions about:

- **Knob & tube wiring** – What is it? Why replace it?
- **Fuses and circuit breakers** – What are the differences?
- **Old push button switches and un-grounded receptacles** – Are they safe?
- **Original woodwork and floors** – How do I get safe receptacles to plug in my computer and other modern items?

There are many aspects of the vintage electrical systems that are a mystery. My goal is to share my stories, experiences, and insights from 31 years in the electrical business to help people better understand and respect their aging systems. The National Electrical Codes all have a reason for their implementation, and I have seen first hand many of those reasons.

I welcome your questions and will do my best to address them. Send your inquiries to Amy Gaston at amygaston@hptrust.org.

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“To preserve and protect Lancaster Counties rich historic and architectural character through education, advocacy and direct action.”

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The man encircled within our logo is Andrew Ellicott (1754-1820), renowned astronomer, mathematician, philosopher, cartographer, land planner, civil engineer and surveyor. Appointed Secretary of the Pennsylvania Land Office in 1803, he settled in the Lancaster townhouse at 123 North Prince Street now occupied by the Historic Preservation Trust.

In his lifetime, Ellicott's dedication to observation, and his love of science and culture, directly contributed to the formation and stability of our emerging nation—enduring proof of the impact that one individual can have on shaping a society. Guided by curiosity, inquiry, and knowledge, each of us can today study the past in order to improve our future. We hope the Lancaster Heritage Outlook will serve as a lens as we visualize and shape tomorrow.

