

Jenkins Journal

LANSDALE, PA

DECEMBER, 2009

Withstanding the test of time

December 8 program to spotlight businesses

There's no question the past year has been a financial challenge for many businesses across the nation.

Whenever the economy turns south, it usually spells disaster for merchants and companies that haven't prepared for difficult times. But many did; they were the survivors and they will be subject of the society's December 8 Community Program.

Staying Power: Businesses That Withstood the Test of Time will focus on the dozens of North Penn area firms that survived for at least half a century. Some are still going strong; others eventually succumbed to financial problems or simply went out of business because their products or services were no longer used by the public.

Our extensive list of businesses that meet the 50-year benchmark was prepared by trustees Clarence Kinsey and Ray Walton in preparation for our walking tour of downtown Lansdale in October. The list is certainly not complete and we will invite those in the audience to advise us of any omissions.

The program will be narrated by Dick Shearer and, as usual, will include a video presentation by Steve Moyer.

The show begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Lansdale Parks and Recreation Building Seventh St. and Lansdale Ave.

There is no admission charge but donations are greatly appreciated.



SHEARER & MOYER LUMBER YARD, NORTH WALES, CIRCA 1867.

Back in Time feature is added to Website lineup

A new feature, *Back in Time*, has debuted at the society's website, www.lansdalehistory.org.

Back in Time will be a series of local history stories, similar to the Memory Lane column that appeared in *The Reporter* for many years.

The series, written by Dick Shearer, will describe some of the people, places and events that made the North Penn region's history unique and interesting. We hope it will shed some light on how earlier generations lived their lives.

The first installment features the Grand Army of the Republic Day parade that drew thousands of people to the streets of Lansdale in May, 1894. It was an event that spurred a tremendous outpouring of patriotism and community pride among citizens of the young town.

New installments of *Back in Time* will be offered on a monthly basis. Because of space considerations, they will only be posted on the website; they will not be included in the *Jenkins Journal*.

TIME TO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2010

Details on Page 3

AMUSEMENT PARKS

Most are long gone, but they will be remembered at our Jan. 12 program

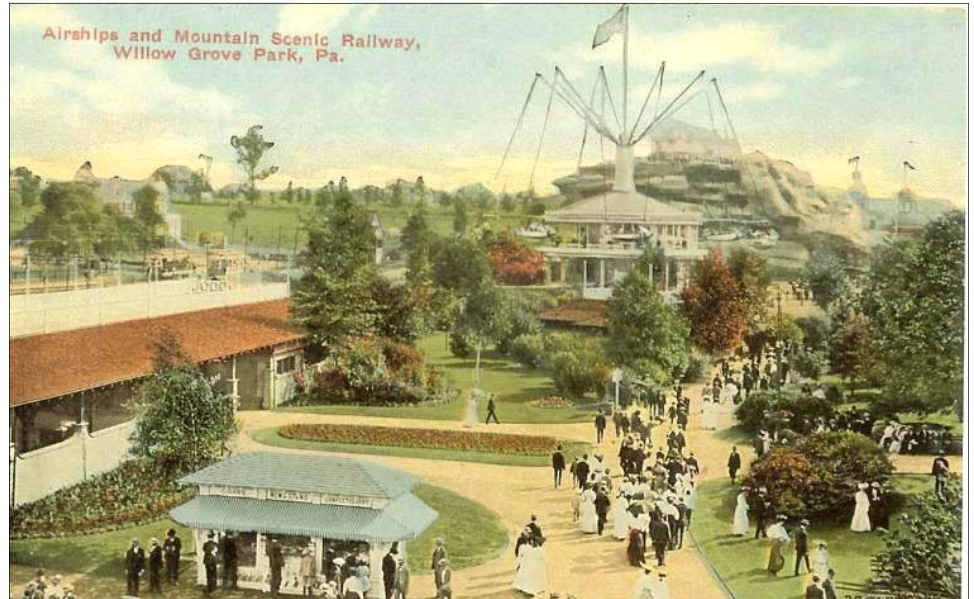
There's no better way to escape the winter blahs than to think back to those lazy, hazy days of summer.

On Tuesday, Jan. 12, we'll try to inspire some warming thoughts with a Community Program entitled *Amusement Parks*. It will feature a trip back in time to the days when folks couldn't retreat to their air-conditioned houses to beat the heat.

Small or large, amusement parks captured the fancy of areas residents for more a century and a half.

Little parks like White's (Edgemont) or West Point (Zieber's) were largely neighborhood respites, but the larger parks like Menlo, Forest, Dorney and Willow Grove provided action-packed entertainment for folks of all ages.

The program begins at 7:30 p.m. at the Lansdale Parks and Recreation Building.



THE JENKINS HOMESTEAD

Jenkins Homestead and Historical Research Center

• 137 Jenkins Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446.

• **Hours:** Wednesdays, Noon to 5 p.m.; Thursdays, Noon to 5 p.m.; Saturdays, 9 a.m. to noon.

• **Telephone:** (215) 855-1872; (215) 393-8919 (fax).

• **E-mail:** info@lansdalehistory.org

• Please send mail correspondence to 137 Jenkins Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446.

• **Website:** www.lansdalehistory.org.

Community Program Schedule

TUESDAY, JAN. 12: AMUSEMENT PARKS. Big or small, these entertainment meccas provided a lifetime of memories.

TUESDAY, FEB. 9: FIREFIGHTERS: Volunteers Who Answered the Call. The history of fire protection in the North Penn Valley.

TUESDAY, MARCH 9: THEN YOU SAW IT, NOW YOU DON'T IV. The fourth edition of this popular series includes still more views of the changing North Penn landscape.

TUESDAY, APRIL 13: THE ANNUAL BANQUET at William Penn Inn

highlighted by the presentation of the Sixth Annual Edwin G. Holl Historic Achievement Award.

TUESDAY, MAY 11: MONTGOMERY TOWNSHIP: Community Crossroads. The third in our annual series featuring the municipalities that surround Lansdale.

ALL PROGRAMS will be held at the Lansdale Parks and Recreation Building, Seventh St. and Lansdale Ave. at 7:30 p.m. In the event of inclement weather, an announcement will be made on WNPV Radio (1440) by 4 p.m.

The Program Committee invites your suggestions for Community Programs that could be presented during the 2010-2011 season. Please e-mail your ideas to us at info@lansdalehistory.org

2010 membership drive under way

By DICK SHEARER

As we prepare to bring down the curtain on 2009, I would like to take a few minutes to reflect on the past year, which has been a time of uncertainty for many historical societies and museums.

For months we have been reading about organizations like ours being forced to make hard decisions in the face of reduced financial support. The impact has been especially severe for groups that rely on state and federal monies to carry out their missions.

Nearby facilities like Hope Lodge and the Daniel Boone Homestead will close for lack of state funding. Even the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission was hit by the loss of more than 80 staff positions.

Fortunately, our society has fared reasonably well, thanks in large part to you, our loyal members, through your annual dues and additional gifting during the year. You have also continued to turn out in record numbers for our Community Programs and special events like our Walking Tour of Historic Downtown Lansdale.

One of the strengths of local historical societies is community involvement. Organizations like ours don't have to rely on Harrisburg or Washington, but we do need the support of the Borough



BEST WISHES for a joyous holiday season and a bountiful New Year.

of Lansdale and members like you.

I wouldn't be telling the entire story if I said the recession hasn't forced us to plan carefully for 2010. While membership remained steady, revenue from 2009 dues and gifts was somewhat less than in 2008, a predictable consequence of an economic downturn.

As a result, we are taking a close look at expenses. It's something we've always done, but this time we're casting a more critical eye on all of our purchases.

We will also be putting more emphasis on use of our website,

www.lansdalehistory.org, to communicate with our members. The website affords us the opportunity to bring you more information on a more frequent basis.

The printed version of the *Jenkins Journal* will continue to be sent to members who prefer to receive it that way, but we encourage those of you who are computer-savvy to choose the on-line option on the renewal form below. The cost-savings just in terms of postage are substantial.

In 2010 we plan to:

*Continue offering quality locally-produced Community Programs on a regular basis;

*Push ahead with efforts to renovate the interior of the Jenkins Homestead;

*Expand our archiving efforts in the research center;

*Deliver community outreach programs to local schools and civic organizations,

*Provide convenient hours for the public to use our facilities.

Your support is essential to our mission. Our membership renewal period runs through Jan. 31, 2010. I thank you for your previous support and encourage you to submit your dues as soon as possible. If possible, consider a higher level of giving. It will move us one step closer to preserving our region's rich history for future generations.

Lansdale Historical Society Membership Renewal

Year _____

Name: _____

PLEASE CHECK:

Individual \$15

Couple \$20

Patron \$35

Sustaining \$50

Business \$100

Lifetime (Single) \$300

Lifetime (Couple) \$500

(Lifetime memberships apply to those 55 and older.)

\$ _____ Additional donation

Address: _____

Town/State/ZIP: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

Make checks payable to: Lansdale Historical Society, 137 Jenkins Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446

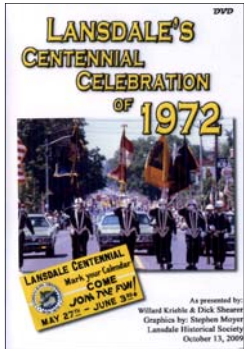
; PLEASE OMIT MAILING THE NEWLETTER TO ME. I WILL READ IT ON-LINE.

Give gifts of history this season

Lansdale Centennial DVD, Walking Tour Booklet Package now on sale

With the holidays just around the corner, the society has two new gift items to consider.

The latest Community Program DVD – *Lansdale's Centennial Celebration of 1972* – is now available.



The show, hosted by former *Reporter* chief photographer Willard Kriebel and Dick Shearer, features 76 minutes of photographs and commentary on the grandest week-long event

in Lansdale's history.

Kriebel and four other members of the newspaper's photo department,

chronicled the parades, pageants and special events that involved almost everyone in town. Shearer was one of the editors who supervised news coverage.

The cost of the DVD is \$18 if purchased at the research center or at our December Community Program. It is also available by mail for \$21.

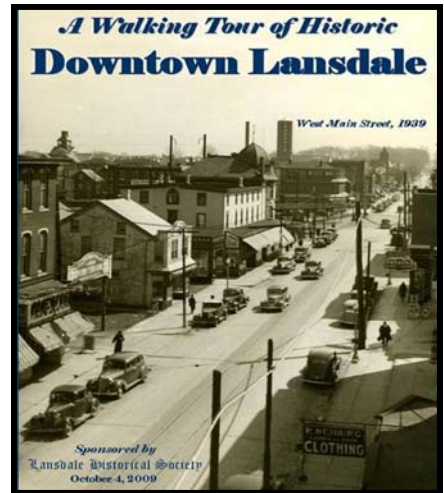
The society is still offering a special package of four DVDs (your choice) for \$55 (\$65 by mail). A complete list of DVD titles can be found on our website.

Another gift possibility is our Walking Tour Package. It includes our 40-page booklet that was distributed to participants of our Oct. 4 Walking Tour of Historic Downtown Lansdale. The booklet includes photos and histories of many of the buildings and historic locations along the walk route.

The package also includes a walking tour map that is keyed to the booklet,

and a collection of poster reproductions that list many of the businesses that occupied the buildings over the years.

The cost of the booklet package is \$15 at the research center, \$17.50 by mail.



Lansdale Historical Society 137 Jenkins Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446



The Jenkins Historic Complex