

Jenkins Journal

LANSDALE, PA

AUGUST, 2016

Rail history show set for Aug. 11 Public to get first look inside freight station

In a departure from previous years, the society will kick off its 2016-17 Community Program on Thursday, Aug. 11 with “A History of the North Penn Railroad” presented by Dale Woodland of the Reading Railroad Heritage Museum in Hamburg.

The show will be held in council chambers at Lansdale Borough Hall beginning at 7:30 p.m. Prior to the program, the doors to the former Lansdale freight station, recently acquired by

the non-profit Discover Lansdale, will be open to the public for the first time, giving the public a look at the vast space inside.

Society Vice President Dick Shearer will be on hand to answer questions about the depot’s history and to explain Discover Lansdale’s plans for a first phase of restoration. The doors will be open from 6:30 to 7:15 p.m. with the railroad program to follow across the street. (Continued on Page 2)

Freight depot is bought for restoration

One of Lansdale’s historic but endangered buildings has been given new life.

The old freight station, located at the Broad Street railroad crossing, was purchased in late May by the nonprofit Discover Lansdale in a three-way deal that involved the previous private owner, the Lansdale Parking Authority and Discover Lansdale.

The parking authority bought the tract and depot from previous owner Nick Falcone for \$590,000 then, in turn, sold the building to Discover Lansdale for \$60,000 along with a 99-year lease on the land it sits on. The parking authority plans to turn the remaining land into additional parking space for Borough Hall and for other downtown events.

Plans for use of the station will be determined later. Discover Lansdale hopes to locate its offices and a welcome center there. Other possible uses for the 35 by 130-foot building include a combination rail/community museum sponsored by our

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LANSDALE’S venerable freight station, built in 1902, has been purchased by the nonprofit Discover Lansdale. The building will be restored but its eventual use will not be determined for some time.

Lansdale Cemetery Tour To Be Society’s September 13th Program

For a hundred years, the Lansdale Mausoleum and Cemetery have provided the final resting place for many of Lansdale’s famous—and not-so-famous—citizens. Regardless of their notoriety, each has a story to tell, and we plan to share some of those stories at our September meeting. The

hour-long program, including a walk through the mausoleum and adjoining cemetery, will be a walk through Lansdale’s history as told through the life events of those who lived here more than a century ago. We hope you’ll join us to discover the wealth of historical

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DICK SHEARER WITH RESEARCH CENTER SIGN

The Lansdale Historical Society honored Dick Shearer for his fourteen years as president in April at our annual Awards Banquet. Although he has been instrumental in most if not all of the progress of the Society over his years of service, his most lasting and arguably most important accomplishment was the establishment of our research center. We have renamed it the Richard Shearer Research Center and Library in his honor as shown in the accompanying photograph.

Discover Lansdale Buys Freight Station

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society. The nonprofit's immediate goal is to make necessary repairs to

both the interior and exterior of the station in advance of winter. The building has been vacant for more than three decades and lacks any utility services. A fund-raising campaign is anticipated as work progresses.

Built in 1902 the freight station served as the shipping terminal for many local industries, including the Heebner Agricultural Works, Cox Stove Works, American Olean Tile Co., Lansdale Tube Co., and several local hosiery mills, and acted as a transfer station for freight heading to or from Norristown or Doylestown.

"We are thrilled to contribute to the preservation of this piece of Lansdale's history," said Mary Fuller, president of Discover Lansdale.

"Just as the railroad began our town's development as a center of commerce, the

freight station played a key role as the departure point for Lansdale-made goods and products that were shipped around the world," she said.

The society has advocated preservation of the depot as far back as the 1990s. Two of our members, Vice President Dick Shearer and Board Member Bill Henning are on Discover Lansdale's Board of Directors and are members of the freight station steering committee.

Lansdale Cemetery Tour

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information that may be found in a cemetery. The program is scheduled to take place **Tuesday, September 13** at a special early time of **6:30-7:30 PM**.



THE JENKINS HOMESTEAD

Jenkins Homestead and Historical Research Center

•137 Jenkins Ave.
Lansdale, PA 19446.

•**Hours:**
Wednesdays: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Thursdays: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Saturdays: 9 a.m. to noon.

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

•**E-mail:**
info@lansdalehistory.org

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

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

Rail history show August 11

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Woodland's talk and video presentation will focus on the North Penn Railroad's birth in the 1850s through the various mergers and name changes that followed.

A resident of Souderton and a former social studies teacher in the Pennridge School District, Woodland has been active in the Reading Railroad Museum where he is director of museum operations.

Considered an expert on the history of the Reading, he has amassed an extensive collection of railroad photographs and has penned four books in addition to making numerous public presentations on the museum and its contents.



Society Museum Annex Will Be Open At Borough Hall



A new display of photographs featuring the work of Lansdale architect Milton B. Bean can be seen at the society's museum annex at Lansdale Borough Hall.

The collection of approximately 30 photographs, many of them in color, show the wide range of designs Bean created for homes, commercial buildings, schools and churches throughout Pennsylvania during his prime working years (1880-1920).

The display also includes descriptive material about Bean as well as society member Leopoldo Montoya, who has spent close to 20 years chronicling the architect's work.

Other exhibits currently on display at the annex feature the railroad's importance in Lansdale's development and a retrospective on the beloved Hotel Tremont.

The annex is open during regular business hours at borough Hall (8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.) and whenever meetings are taking place in council chambers.

Facebook Update

The society's hugely successful Facebook page established a milestone on July 1 by publishing a different vintage photograph seven days a week for one year.

Now in its 14th month, the page has been visited one million times or close to 2,600 times each day. Comments from our Facebook followers have been overwhelmingly positive.

The most popular posting by far was a photograph showing the entrance to West Point Park which attracted 114,000 hits and dozens of comments that recounted memories of the park.

We plan to continue posting a new photo a day as long as possible, usually between 7:30 and 8:30 a.m. If you haven't joined us yet, simply Google "Facebook, Lansdale Historical Society".

Founders Day Activities

Lansdale Founders Day will be celebrated on Saturday, Aug. 27 this year as the borough marks the 144th anniversary of its incorporation.

A varied list of activities is scheduled throughout the day at Memorial Park, the Jenkins Homestead and at several downtown sites. The homestead will again be open for tours from 11 to 3 p.m..

The day will begin with the annual Day in the Park art show at Memorial Park from morning into mid-afternoon. The borough's Lifetime Achievement Award will be presented outdoors at Borough Hall at 10:30 a.m. with tours of the borough police station and the society's museum annex following from 11 to 3 p.m.

At various times during the day there will be a health fair, street concert, model train display, firefighters' water battle, rides for the kids, food trucks and a beerfest.

Also from 11 to 3 p.m., the Lansdale Freight Depot, recently bought for restoration by nonprofit Discover Lansdale will be open for the public to view the interior.

As usual, fireworks launched from Memorial Park will conclude the day at dusk.

One staple of Founders Day – an excursion train ride – will not be running this year.

Up-to-date information about the events, locations and times can be found at the Discover Lansdale website, www.DiscoverLansdale.org.

Lansdale Historical Society Saturday Seminars to Begin September 24th

The society's series of Saturday History Seminars will resume Saturday, Sept. 24, at 9:30 a.m. at the Wissahickon Park Building, E. Main St. and Lakeview Dr.

These seminars are informal presentations that highlight the North Penn Valley's past. Most include video presentations in which the audience is invited to participate. They are an excellent opportunity for newcomers to the community to join in and ask questions about the region's history.

The subject of the first seminar will be announced by September 1. Please check our website (www.lansdalehistory.org) or give us a call at (215) 855-1872. And yes, we're open to topic suggestions.

WEST POINT PARK MEMORIES TO BE PRESENTED IN OCTOBER

West Point Park will be the subject of our Tuesday Night Program on October 11, 2016. The program will be held at the Lansdale Parks and Recreation Building at 7th Street & Lansdale Avenue and will start at 7:30 PM.

We are seeking past employees of the park to participate in the show to describe their experiences while working there. If you are interested in telling about your times either working or just attending the park, please contact Clarence Kinsey at the research center at 215-855-1872 for more information.

The park was "THE PLACE" to hold your group picnics and family get-togethers for many years. We are also trying to get the last owner of the park to tell us his interesting recollections and goings-on at the park over the years. We have a large collection of photographs from the park and also some pho-



tos from the old days when it was still Zieber's Park back in the early 1900s. A portion of these pictures will be shown in our presentation. They include many of the amusement rides, the picnic areas and the pavilions, etc.

There is no admission charge but donations are appreciated.

Lansdale Historical Society

2016-17 COMMUNITY PROGRAM SCHEDULE

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| August 11, 2016 | "A History of the North Penn Railroad" presented by Dale Woodland at the Lansdale Borough Hall council chambers at 7:30 PM. The Lansdale Freight Station can be viewed prior to the program Between 6:30 PM and 7:15 PM. Please note this is a THURSDAY EVENING program. |
| September 13, 2016 | Lansdale Cemetery Tour S. Broad St. & White's Rd. 6:30-7:30 PM presented by Pat Rieker
NOTE TIME CHANGE |
| October 11, 2016 | West Point Park Program at the Lansdale Parks & Recreation Building |
| November 15, 2016 | "Honor our Veterans" program at the Lansdale Parks & Recreation Building presented by Anne Scheuring and Marcia Althouse |
| December 3, 2016 | Holiday Open House at the Homestead and Research Center 137 Jenkins Avenue and history displays at the Lansdale Borough Hall Museum Room - 11 AM to 3 PM |
| January 10, 2017 | A Walking Tour of Lansdale at the Lansdale Parks & Recreation Building. This is a digital redo of a slide program given by Inez Lincoln in 1982 about the changes in Lansdale up until that date. |
| February 14, 2017 | To be announced – watch for details |
| March 14, 2017 | Lansdale Area Trivia Night at the Lansdale Parks & Recreation Building presented by Dick Shearer |
| April 11, 2017 | Annual Awards Banquet at the William Penn Inn 6 PM Cocktails (Cash Bar) 7 PM Dinner |
| May 2017 | We are planning a field trip on a Saturday afternoon in lieu of our usual Tuesday evening Program. Watch for details. |

Tuesday evening programs are held at 7:30 PM at the Lansdale Parks and Recreation Building at Lansdale Ave. & 7th St in Lansdale

Society Seeking New Members

One of the most important aspects of an organization like ours is to have a steady membership base.

Our membership has been holding steady for many years but we would be more effective with more people. These new people would have the opportunity to learn more about Lansdale and the surrounding communities through our programs, seminars, the Jenkins Journal newsletter and our participation at community events such as Founders Day.

While our present volunteers are really great, we have a variety of programs that would get a boost from more people working on them. These include our efforts to photograph our extensive newspaper collection on our Atiz digitizing processor and setting the results up with optical recognition software.

We are also in the process of installing a Past Perfect museum software system for our collection of local area artifacts. This involves data entry of the individual items in our extensive inventory.

We could use two people on the Atiz project and two on Past Perfect. One additional computer savvy individual is needed to help with the optical recognition program on the newspapers.

If anyone, new member or old, would like to volunteer two or three hours a week, please contact Clarence Kinsey at 215 855-1872.

If you have any friends who might be interested in joining our Society, please pick up one of our information brochures at the Tuesday evening programs, at the research center or at the Borough Hall Museum Annex.

Redner's Markets Rewards Program

Redner's Warehouse Markets has a Pump Perks/1% Save-A-Tape program that not only benefits their cardholders with discounts on store specials and a savings on gasoline but also benefits non-profit organizations like our Historical Society.

Getting set up is easy. We give you a card to register at Redner's then have it scanned for all your purchases. You build up credits for gasoline purchases for yourself and by turning your register tapes into us, we benefit from a one percent contribution from them on every dollar you spend on groceries.

The cards are available from us at the research center and at our monthly programs. If you already shop at Redner's help yourself to better food and gas prices and help us at the same time. If you already have the card, please remember to turn in your cash register tapes to us.

It's a win-win situation for us both.

November Program Honor Our Veterans

Our Tuesday evening program for November will feature two new presenters. Anne Scheuring, our Treasurer and Marcia Althouse who has been doing research for us for approximately the last two years will join together and present our program. It is titled "Honor Our Veterans" on November 15 and will be held at the Lansdale Parks and Recreation Building at 7th St. and Lansdale Avenue in Lansdale at 7:30 PM.

Anne's part of the program will feature interesting information about some of the veterans whose pictures appear on the banners along Main and Broad Streets in Lansdale. Marcia will have information on some of the servicemen who did not survive their wars and are honored on the monuments in Memorial Park.

If you have any interesting stories about the veterans on the banners that are now lining the streets of Lansdale, please call Anne at 215 855-1743. She may be able to add them to the stories she is now gathering. Please note that the 15th is the **THIRD** Tuesday of the month.

Third Annual Farmstead Day a Huge Success



The front lawn of the Jenkins Homestead was transformed into a beehive of activity on July 12 for the 3rd Annual Summer History Camp for Kids. Fourteen children of elementary school age learned about local history by playing games, creating colonial crafts, and preparing food. The campers learned how to milk a cow, churn butter, and make a meal over an open fire. They also had fun eating watermelon and competing in sack races. Throughout the day, they learned about prominent people and places in Lansdale history. A tour of the Jenkins Homestead was also included in the program. Thanks to more than a dozen volunteers who planned and supervised the day's events.



MOO!!

Did you ever milk a cow??

A look at the two pictures will show one of the props used for the activities at our annual kids' camp last month.

Don't worry Mom!! The cow is made of wood but it works just like a real one. The kids had a grand time with the milking and many were surprisingly good at it. It was fun watching as one or two of the adults tried it too.



Lansdale Historical Society 137 Jenkins Ave., Lansdale, PA



The Jenkins Historic Complex