

# Jenkins Journal

LANSDALE, PA

AUGUST, 2014

## Heebner show to open new season

Snow in September? We hope not!

Our first Community Program of the 2014-15 season has been sitting on the shelf for seven months, thanks to Mother Nature's wreath.

Originally scheduled for February, *The Heebners: Titans of Industry* will be presented Tuesday, Sept. 9, 7:30 p.m., at the Lansdale Parks and Recreation Building.

The coming of the railroad turned muddy farmland into the bustling town of Lansdale during the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but it didn't happen without a big assist from a

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## 48-page *Back in Time* booklet goes on sale

*Back in Time*, a 48-page collection of stories and photographs from the North Penn area's past, goes on sale August 23 at the Jenkins Historic Complex and at the information table near the SEPTA rail station as part of Lansdale's Founders Day.

Many of the stories written by society President Dick Shearer, have appeared on our website or in the local media over the years. The booklet brings them together in one publication.

Included are tales about the rise and fall of the Lansdale Theatre, troubled times for the Hotel Tremont, the day the Ku Klux Klan dropped in on a Lansdale church, Christmas greetings from columnist Edgar Williams, the opera that went South (in more ways than one), and many more vignettes exclusive to this area.

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### **BACK IN TIME**

**TALES OF THE  
NORTH PENN VALLEY'S  
HISTORIC PAST**



**A SELECTION OF STORIES FEATURING  
PEOPLE, PLACES AND EVENTS THAT  
HELPED SHAPE OUR COMMUNITIES**

BY DICK SHEARER, Lansdale Historical Society



## Annette Krimm passes away

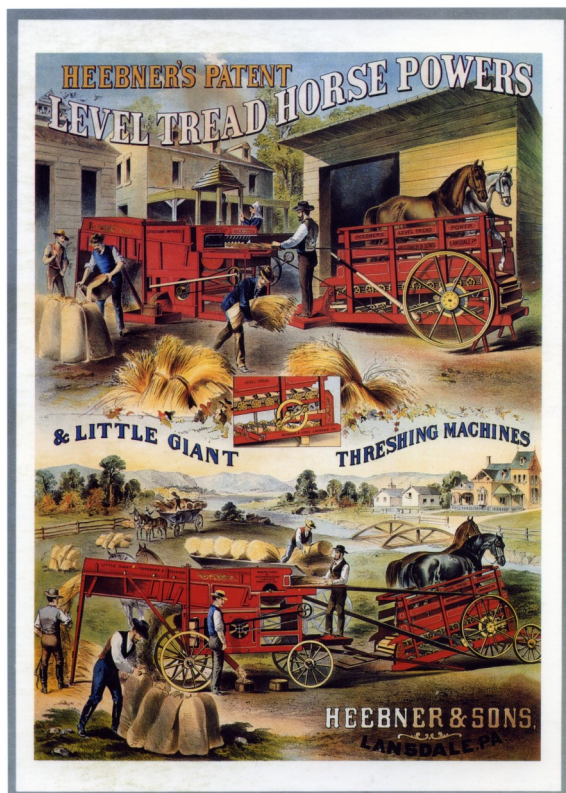
With great sorrow, we report the passing of Annette Krimm, a three-time president of the society, on August 10.

Annette, 76, joined LHS in the 1970s and was an active volunteer and officer until her health deteriorated several years ago. She and her husband, Frank, who is a member of our board of trustees, resided on Mount Vernon Street in Lansdale before moving to Brittany Pointe Estates.

Annette's obituary can be found at [www.legacy.com/obituaries/thereporteronline.com/](http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/thereporteronline.com/).

Her funeral Mass was held August 16. The family has gratefully suggested that in lieu of flowers, donations be made to the society in Annette's name.

All of us at the Lansdale Historical Society extend our deepest condolences to Frank and his family. Annette will be long remembered as one of our most dedicated members.



## Heebner program Sept. 9

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long-gone business that provided hundreds of jobs for new residents of the community.

Heebner and Sons Agricultural Works was not just any old business: It became the world's largest manufacturer of horse-powered farm equipment; it was the John Deere of the pre-tractor age. Heebner's reputation spread far and wide and its products were highly sought after by farmers around the globe.

The story of the Heebners centers around three men – David S. Heebner and his sons William and Isaac – whose impact in Lansdale was both immediate and long-lasting. The elder Heebner developed the horse-power – basically a wagon or wheeled sled that featured a treadmill for horses. As the horses walked the treadmill, power was supplied to operate a variety of farm implements like reapers and threshers.

It eliminated much of the harvesting work that had previously been done by hand, allowing farmers to plant more acreage and realize greater profits.

Heebner's horse-power was the standard of the industry until the gasoline-powered tractor succeeded it early in the 1900s. Even then, horse-powers continued to be sold around the world in areas where gas was not readily available. Finally in 1926, the plant closed down.

In addition to their business venture, all three Heebners were active in other aspects of Lansdale life. David served in a number of elect-

ed offices. William was at one time a member of the state House of Representatives and a big supporter of the cultural arts. Isaac is credited with organizing the borough's public school system.

The program is largely based on the book *Heebner & Sons: Pioneers of Farm Machinery in America*, by the late Frank Blase, former president of the society. It will be narrated by Dick Shearer.

There is no admission charge but donations are appreciated. The parks and recreation building is located at 7<sup>th</sup> St. and Lansdale Ave.

Future programs on tap this fall are:

**--Tuesday, Oct. 14: *A Fireside Chat with Former Fire Chiefs.***

Former Fairmount chief Jay Daveler and former chiefs from several neighboring fire companies will talk candidly about the highs and lows they experienced during their many years at the helm of their volunteer brigades. WNPV's Darryl Berger will moderate the conversation.

**--Tuesday, Nov. 11: *Normandy: 70 Years Later.*** On this Veterans Day, Steve Moyer will present a video show from his recent trip to Normandy and the D-Day landing beaches. Several veterans of the invasion will join us to offer their commentary.

### Lansdale Historical Society



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. (Tuesdays, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. by appointment).

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

•**E-mail:** [info@lansdalehistory.org](mailto:info@lansdalehistory.org)  
•**Please send mail correspondence to:**  
• 137 Jenkins Ave., Lansdale, PA 19446.

•**Website:** [www.lansdalehistory.org](http://www.lansdalehistory.org).

**FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK**

## New booklet goes on sale

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The booklet represents the first time the society has produced a publication of this size. If sales of this first issue are successful, a second collection of *Back in Time* tales will be produced in 2015.

The price is \$10 (\$12.50 by mail)

with the proceeds benefitting the society.

It would make an excellent gift for that special friend or relative who enjoys stories about our old railroad town.



## Saturday seminars resume in September

The society's Saturday Morning Seminar Series will resume Sept 27 with an informal discussion of the North Penn Valley's classic movie houses – how they came to be and what happened to them.

It will feature a video presentation by Dick Shearer with commentary based on a Community Program we presented in 2005.

These Saturday sessions began last winter and were well attended. Start

time is 9:30 a.m. and last an average of 90 minutes including a question-and-answer period. They are held in the keeping room of the Jenkins Homestead.

Because of limited space, pre-registration is required. Call (215) 855-1872 and leave a message with a name and return phone number and the number of persons attending.

It should be pointed out that the purpose of Saturday Seminars is to introduce non-members and recent arrivals in

the area to the history of our community.

Current members are invited to attend but if you do, please make a special effort to bring along a friend or neighbor to join us.

There is no charge. Future Saturday seminars will be announced after Labor Day.

## Kids get a taste of Colonial life at summer camp

The society's first summer history camp took place July 15 at the Jenkins Historic Complex with 14 children pre-registered for the event, just one fewer than the maximum number we would accept.

The kids participated in six hours of activities aimed at giving them a taste of what life was like for farm children in the late 18th century.

The camp was ably planned and organized by Vice President Pat Rieker who recruited a large corps of volunteers to supervise a wide variety of activities for the children.

Those assisting included Ruth Madison, Linda Evans, Sylvia Freed, Al and Barbara Rieck, Marti Drumheller, Ken Rieker, Nicole Groff, Janet White, Lisa Phillips, Cindy Edwards and Walt Madison.

Based on this year's success, another summer camp will be in the offing next in 2015.



# Maestro to be remembered on Founders Day

The late Steve Frederick has been selected as the third recipient of the Lansdale Lifetime Achievement Award announced earlier this month.

The award will be presented posthumously to family members as part of opening ceremonies for Lansdale's Founders Day celebration, Saturday, Aug. 23.

Frederick is best known throughout the community for his many years as an educator in the North Penn School District, director of the North Penn Marching Knights and concertmaster for the Montgomery County Symphony Orchestra in a period spanning more than 40 years.

He was a regular participant in the Mardi Gras Parade, master of ceremonies for many music-related events at Railroad Plaza and was responsible for organizing the annual Tuba Christmas concert in December.

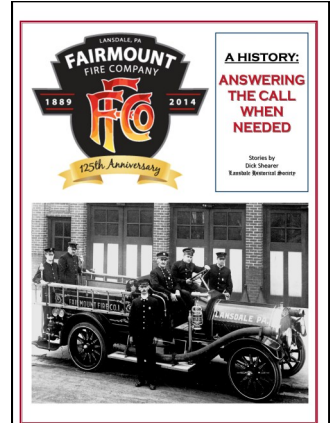


The presentation will kick off a full day of events on the 142<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of Lansdale as a borough. For the third consecutive year there will be narrated rail excursions to Souderton throughout the day. The annual art show in Memorial Park will run from morning through mid-afternoon.

Model train displays and a water battle will take place at the firehouse as part of Fairmount Fire Company's 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The final open house will be held at the present police station. There will be a zip line for the kids, beer-tasting at the Lansdale Public Library (not for the kids), and a health fair among other features.

The society will conduct tours of the Jenkins Homestead and Research Center from 11-3 and will man an information table adjacent to the SEPTA passenger station.

And as always, the evening will be capped off with a fireworks display launched from Memorial Park.



## Fairmount booklet goes on sale Aug. 23

Fairmount Fire Company's 36-page history booklet goes on sale Founders Day at the firehouse, Jenkins Homestead and the LHS information table at the train station. The price is \$10. Proceeds benefit the fire company.

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



The Jenkins Historic Complex