

# Jenkins Journal

*Newsletter of the Lansdale Historical Society*

Preserving the past for future generations to enjoy and appreciate.

lansdalehistory.org

April - June 2022

Lansdale, Pennsylvania

## 2022 and Moving Forward

### BILL HENNING

As 2022 moves forward we continue to see our daily lives slowly get back to normal after a couple years of careful uncertainty. Here at the Historical Society things are similar.



The Homestead and Research Center are getting more active with volunteers and visitors and we are now looking forward to the return of in-person community programs. For starters there is a program that honors the 150th anniversary of the Lansdale United Methodist Church (see the story to the right).

Also, to aid in kicking off our return of programs, on July 12 we will present "A Town Is Born" to help celebrate the Lansdale Borough's 150th anniversary. Then, for some real fun, on August 9th we will take a look back with "The Centennial Remembered". We will visit the fun times they had in 1972 during the Borough's 100th anniversary.

I would like to give a big THANK YOU to Pat Reiker for accepting the position of First Vice President and Linda Evans for taking on the new position of Office Administrator. In a short time they have been doing a lot in helping the Board & I to get this great organization back on track after a tricky couple of years.

And I'd also like to welcome two new Members to the Board of Trustees, Bonnie Williams and Helen Schwartz. They both have so much to offer the society, I look forward to working with them.

Best I can say is, stay tuned as we are just getting moving with 2022.

## History Program to Highlight 150th Anniversary of LUMC

Lansdale Historical Society and Lansdale United Methodist Church will collaborate to present a historical program on Sunday, May 22. The program, presented by Pat Rieker of the historical society, honors the 150th anniversary of the founding of LUMC, which closely parallels the founding of Lansdale as a borough.

and construction began on Lansdale Methodist Episcopal Church. The first service in the new church was held on July 14, 1872.

Though the church was actually founded in 1871, the 150th celebration was postponed due to the pandemic. On Sunday morning, May 22, worship at LUMC will begin at 9 AM followed

by brunch in Springer Auditorium at about 10:30. The historical presentation will follow the brunch.

The community is invited to attend worship, brunch and/or the program. Those who wish to attend the brunch should call the church before May 13. There is no cost for the brunch or program. Donations are appreciated.

Questions?

Phone LHS 215-855-1872 or [info@lansdalehistory.org](mailto:info@lansdalehistory.org)

Phone LUMC 215-855-8364 or [office@lansdaleumc.org](mailto:office@lansdaleumc.org)



**Lansdale United Methodist Church  
3rd & Walnut Street, 1872**

In 1871, the little railway junction town which had been Lansdale was rapidly developing into a busy and productive commercial hub along the North Penn Railroad. The growth of industry along the railroad attracted workers and their families, and suddenly there was a need for services. Hotels, livery stables, and mercantiles sprang up, but by 1871, there were no churches in Lansdale.

And then along came Dr. John Jacobs, one of the town fathers who owned much of the land east of the railroad. Dr. Jacobs donated a parcel of land at 3rd and Walnut Streets for the construction of a church. In a short time, money was raised

### *A Snippet of the Past*

#### Lansdale High School June 19, 1902

The 15th annual commencement of the Lansdale High School took place in Music Hall last evening. The graduates were Sam Conver, Harry Krause, Alvin Moyer, Winfield Moyer, Thomas Herman, Kate Place, Edna Addison, Abigail Jenkins, Mary Geller, Will Swartley, Warren Jenkins, Bertha Hughes and Florence Martin.

## AMERICA'S PASTIME, LANSDALE'S HISTORY



### Lansdale baseball at the turn of the century

Old-Time Baseball Weekend, Friday & Saturday May 13-14. The Lansdale 150 Old Time Baseball events will explore the history of Lansdale and Baseball!



First, for those enthusiasts interested in the intertwined heritage of our Borough and America's pastime, join us Friday evening May 13 at 7 p.m. at Well Crafted Beer Company (310 Madison Street) for Baseball and Beer: A Discussion of Baseball's Impact on Lansdale. Enjoy your favorite brew and some delicious dining as we present a panel discussion with experts in the field, exploring how baseball helped shaped our Borough from its earliest days.

Then, Saturday afternoon at Weaver Field in Memorial Park will begin with a varsity matchup between the North Penn Knights and the Hatboro Horsham Hatters.

Then the Brandywine Base Ball Club will play two against the Elizabeth Resolutes, following the "1864 Rules." In between, enjoy a Q&A education session on vintage baseball.

Bring the family, bring your friends, and bring your appetite too: There will be plenty of food and refreshments to help make this an exciting and fun baseball weekend for everyone in Lansdale.



### The final lineup:

- **12:30 PM** — North Penn High School Baseball Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony
- **1:00 PM** — North Penn High School Knights vs. Hatboro Horsham Hatters Varsity Baseball Game
- **3:45** — Brandywine Base Ball Club vs Elizabeth Resolutes Vintage Baseball Game # 1
- **Following Game 1** — Intermission, Q&A Session and on-the-field Brandywine Club display
- **6:30 PM** — Brandywine vs. Elizabeth Resolutes twilight Vintage Baseball Game #2

## Attic Treasures

From time to time we will feature some of the artifacts from our collection.

Recently we received the marriage certificate in this photo as a donation. The document chronicles the 1885 marriage of George L. Wright and Margaret A. McLoughlin, which took place at St. Ann's Church in the Port Richmond section of Philadelphia. At first glance, our Accessions Team did not see a connection to Lansdale. However, with a little research, the rest of the story of this bridal couple was revealed.



George and Margaret Wright were teenagers when they married. George was an iron moulder, and the couple moved to Lansdale when he found employment at Abram Cox Stove Works. Here they raised their six children and became members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. George died in 1918, a victim of the influenza epidemic. Margaret lived with one of her daughters in Lansdale until 1943. George and Margaret Wright are interred at Lansdale Cemetery.

Our dedicated Accessions Team meets weekly to review and catalog the many varied artifacts in our collection. New volunteers are always welcome. Contact our office if you are interested.

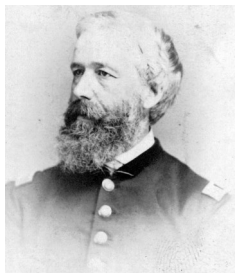


# Philip Lansdale Fox's Grave Uncovered at Cemetery

By DICK SHEARER

**AS LANSDALE** celebrates its Sesquicentennial, it is fitting that the grave of the man for whom the town is named, Philip Lansdale Fox, has finally been uncovered.

Lansdale owes its existence to the coming of the North Pennsylvania Railroad in 1856. A few years prior to this, railroad surveyor Philip Lansdale Fox searched for a location to put in a junction - where one line would continue on to Doylestown and the other would split off to Bethlehem.



He came to a sparsely inhabited area a few miles from North Wales and determined that this would be the right place. The middle name of the surveyor was chosen as the name of the new junction. Lansdale grew rapidly as the trains came through regularly, and was finally incorporated in 1872.

## Overgrown Philly cemetery yields Fox grave

**IN 2015**, Lansdale Historical Society board member Linda Evans began looking into the life of Philip Lansdale Fox, as little was known about him.

"Bit by bit, I began to uncover pieces of his story," Evans said. One of the first pieces of information she discovered was a transcription of his death certificate. Fox died in Philadelphia in 1895 at the age of 78 and was buried in the city's Mt. Vernon Cemetery.

The cemetery, located at Ridge and Lehigh Aves., has been in existence since 1856. Although smaller in size, it was comparable to Laurel Hill Cemetery, located across the street, with many large and beautiful monuments. Several members of the Drew and Barrymore families rest here.

Somehow, over many years, the cemetery came into one man's ownership. As he was aging and living out of state, it became increasingly difficult to get permission to enter the locked cemetery. As the result of a lack of grounds maintenance, most of the gravestones and monuments were covered with layers of thick brush.

Through phone calls to the owner, Evans was able to obtain the location of the grave, including the fact that Fox was buried alone and was issued a military headstone for his service in the Civil War. However, she was never permitted to enter the cemetery "I was despairing of ever being able to get in," she said "I even pursued Fox's descendants to enlist their help."



**WITH THE SUPPORT** of the Lansdale Historical Society, Evans and two other board members, Pat Rieker and Ruth Madison, took a trip to Mt. Vernon three years ago, but were only able to walk along the perimeter fence and peer into the overgrown lot.

More recently, a group of people in Philadelphia were able to go through the courts and form a conservatorship to take control of the cemetery. The Mount Vernon Cemetery Conservation Company Inc. was formed. Since

last fall, slowly but surely, the incredible overgrowth of trees, bushes, and vines is being stripped away. Last Saturday an open house was announced to allow access to potential volunteers and interested parties.

"My husband Joe and I emailed our intention to visit," Evans said. "Several of the people in charge knew of our search. When we got there, a tour on the main path around the cemetery showed areas of clearing, but many sections are still in dire need of attention."



"Fortunately, the section where Fox's grave is located had been cleared enough that my hopes were high. We were assured that the grave of Philip Lansdale Fox could be found. I was hopeful that the stone would still be there, upright and legible," she said.

"After a few minutes of crawling around in the underbrush, someone shouted that they had found him. As two men cleared the area around the stone, it was evident that the final resting place of Philip Lansdale Fox had been found."

**The Mt. Vernon Cemetery Conservation Company Inc. is in need of funds and volunteers to continue their work to restore the cemetery. For more information:**  
[www.mountvernoncemetery.org/](http://www.mountvernoncemetery.org/)

### Lansdale Historical Society

is a 501c3 registered non-profit organization.

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**Phone:** (215) 855-1872

**Email:** info@lansdalehistory.org

**Website:** www.lansdalehistory.org

**Facebook:** Facebook/Lansdale Historical Society



### The Jenkins Homestead and Historical Research Center

are open to the public  
Wednesdays-Thursdays 11 am–3 pm  
Saturdays 9:30 am-noon.  
Masks Optional

There is no charge for tours of the 1770 home-  
stead. Charges may apply for research projects.

## A Discussion of Baseball's Impact on Lansdale

Come grab a beer  
and learn about  
Lansdale Base-  
ball!!

Are you excited to  
see vintage baseball  
in Lansdale? We

are and before you get your peanuts and cracker jack on May 14 join our Lansdale ex-  
perts, past and present, as they discuss all things Lansdale Baseball on Friday May 13 at  
7:00pm. Well Crafted Beer Co.'s full beer and food line up will be available for specta-  
tors throughout the entire night. Seating is limited so be sure to get there before the first  
pitch!



### A Snippet of the Past

#### Church Built in 1719 Has First Wedding July 6, 1916

Rev.E.R.Clemmens, pastor of the  
Montgomery Baptist Church in Mont-  
gomeryville performed the first wed-  
ding ever held in the church, which is  
now 197 yrs old, Thursday night,  
when Miss Elsie Sigafos, of Colmar  
and John K.Lockwood of Philadelph-  
ia, were married. 400 attended the  
event.



### Lansdale Historical Society

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