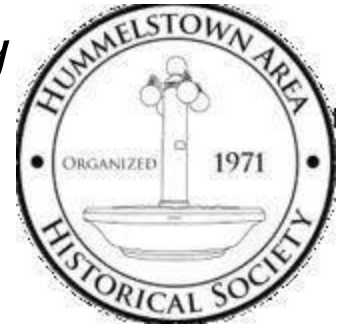


Hummelstown Area Historical Society

News & Views



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President's Message

James Alexander Norris

On behalf of the HAHS board I want to wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. It is hard to believe that we are wrapping up 2023 and entering 2024. I am excited for some positive changes that are coming to the Society; the most exciting being the grand re-re-opening of the Parish House Museum. We have so many amazing pieces of Hummelstown's rich history, and we want to be able to display them better for people's viewing pleasure. Please read the article on page __ for more information.

I want to give a warm welcome back to the board...Laynie Z. Laynie is a familiar face to the Society because she is a past president and has come back to share her many gifts and energy to help make the Society the best it can be. Laynie was very active in the refurbishing of the first-floor meeting space, and is willing to volunteer her, and her husband's, talents to help give the Parish House a fresh look.

We have some very exciting speakers coming up in the new year, so be sure to mark your calendars! This information may be found on the last page of the newsletter. Also, make sure to watch our website, Instagram, and Facebook for new and improved content.

If anyone has any suggestions for exhibits, speakers, events, etc. please do not hesitate to reach out to myself, or any of the Board Members. My cell phone number is 717-805-5754, and my email is norrisja1321@gmail.com.



Still Bored?

Then I have the perfect solution for you!

The HAHS is a non-profit group, which means that we rely on volunteer power. The Society has a longstanding history of having a dedicated volunteer base. The HAHS is looking for eager, enthusiastic volunteers to join the team! There are endless ways that you can volunteer. Below is a brief description of some of the areas.

In the museum, we are always looking for people to help tidy things up, give tours to guests, and to assist the collections committee in creating displays and exhibits. Over the next few years, we would like to see more items get labeled with a brief historical blurb, and the pertinence it bears to Hummelstown.

The Deimler Garden will soon be in full bloom! Do not be afraid if you have never gardened in your life. We have an experienced lawn taskforce that is always looking for volunteers to help mow. You do not need a green thumb to pull weeds, but if you are interested in learning more about horticulture, we can help you out! (continued on page 2)

We maintain the Historic Zion Lutheran Church Cemetery. Our lawn task force mows and weed whacks around the headstones to keep the cemetery beautiful.

General participation in planning events and being out in the community. The HAHS participates in many local functions to promote the Society. We always can use volunteers to speak with the public and sit at our booth.

If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to our office at 717-566-6314 or hahs@hummelstownhistoricalsociety.org.



March Speaker Series

“Split Rail Fences – How they were made, used, and their influence on Civil War

Many of us are impressed by the historical look of a split rail fence. But why were there different styles, how were they used, and what does it take to build them? Some people even refer to them as “Civil War fences”. How did they affect the outcome of many Civil War Battles? As an experienced split rail fence builder, Mike Espenshade will use photographs to show how to make split rail fences. As a historian, Mike will explain their use and cite their influence on the outcome of multiple Civil War combat situations.



It’s All Bologna

November Speaker Series

On November 21, 2023, Seltzer’s Bologna gave a presentation on their history. The presentation began in 1902, when Seltzer’s began their bologna production, and ran through their operations today. What many people were fascinated to learn was that Seltzer’s has the only federally inspected wooden smokehouses in the country. Their wooden smokehouses are a large component in giving their bologna their signature taste.

Not only did the presentation feature many historic photos, videos, and a tremendous amount of information, but they also brought trays of free samples for everyone to enjoy. Everyone went home with a bag full of Seltzer’s bologna, and there wasn’t a free sample left.



Thank You Lynn Anderson

Donation of the EUB Pew & Bank Chair

In a previous newsletter, I welcomed several donations, but never explained the provenance of these unique items. These included the bank president's chair, and a pew from the former EUB church. I realized that I also never properly thanked Lynn Anderson, a tremendous advocate of Hummelstown's history, for her generous donation.

The pew was the last pew in the balcony of the EUB church before the interior renovation in the 1960s. It was removed from the church more than 50 years ago and sold to George Sandel (Lynn's father) because he knew she liked to sit there. (As did all the teens!)

The chair, according to Lynn's mother, Kay Sandel, was the bank president's chair when her father (Frank Witmer) was president in the 1920s. Kay inherited the chair when her father died in the late 60s and was given to Lynn in the 70s.

Both of these items have found their permanent home in our Parish House Museum. Thank you Lynn for thinking of us!



April's Speaker Series

The First 50 years of the Society

The talk at the monthly meeting of the Society on April 15, 2024, is based on a new publication by Society member, Wade Seibert, about the history of the Historical Society. Members, activities, and accessions during its first 50 years are highlighted. Special attention is devoted to the original planning and organization of the Society. Did you know what the Society's biggest money raiser was in the 1970s? Who was Silas Hummel? When was the Society gifted the native American artifacts by Richard and Margaretta Hartwell? How was the Parish House used prior to being the home of the Society? All this and more will be addressed by Wade Seibert to honor the commitment and work of past members, as well as the energy and activities of current members.

Hummelstown Memorial Cemetery

Girl Scout Silver Award Project—Updating Find A Grave

Girl Scouts: Alexis Kusters, Brynn Woodall, and Lily Kratz. Leader: Jacki Kratz

HAHS Consultants: Mike Espenshade and Alicia Cerankowski

The Silver Award is the second most respected award that is given to Girl Scouts. It is awarded to girls in 6th, 7th, and 8th grade who find a problem in their area and create a solution that will have a lasting effect in the community. This project needs teamwork and initiative and is usually completed with a small group of girls. To complete this project, you must choose a goal that is more difficult than anything you have previously worked on.

What did we do? Our original plan was to work with the Hummelstown Area Historical Society to clean via solution various headstones in the Hummelstown Memorial Graveyard. However, when we received guidance and knowledge from HAHS historian Mr. Mike Espenshade, we limited our scope to include only the (24) Revolutionary War Veteran headstones which were previously photographed, although illegible, in Noah Schofield's 2013 Eagle Scout Project. We also realized that the brownstone grave markers are far too fragile for scrubbing with a solution. We also learned that scrubbing the sandstone lettering would cause it to break down even more and the grave marker would become even more illegible. So instead, we were guided to use shaving cream to further outline the words on the stone. We used plain shaving cream (no scents or add-ins), and a squeegee to help us with our work. After photographing each much-more-legible stone, we then (to make this project sustainable) digitally uploaded the pictures to the website Find a Grave – with help from Alicia Cerankowski. We also added the veteran's service information from Schofield's project to Find a Grave. We did this so that anyone can easily find these soldiers' grave markers and service summary online anytime. This idea turned out to meet the perfect criteria for the Silver Award.

What We Found (accuracies and inaccuracies)

For this project, we cleaned all the Revolutionary War veterans buried in the graveyard. Along the way, we found some errors in the information that was previously written, some grave markers were documented to be in the wrong location, two graves were mistakenly identified as soldier graves, and several Revolutionary War veteran flag holder plates were correctly relocated.

Why Did We Choose to Do This Project?

When we chose our project, we wanted to do something sustainable and impactful in this community. We thought about ways we could help in our area that would be necessary and meaningful and came up with our plan to cream these gravestones. We wanted to do the Revolutionary War soldiers because of their great service to our country in the 1700s. For the three of us, this project means more than just going through the motions. We gave the public easy access to the information of their relatives and friends, as well.

We want to bring these heroes to the light, which is why we uploaded the photos and information to the website Find a Grave. This project is a way of honoring the soldiers who fought to make our country the way it is today. It's a way of tying the Hummelstown Community to their history.

Link to Find a Grave

<https://www.findagrave.com/cemetery/2238750/hummelstown-memorial-cemetery/>

Right: An example of a before and after creaming the stones



Repainting has Begun!

James Alexander Norris

On January 21, 2024, a small group of volunteers met up to begin the painting of the Parish House Museum's second floor. The painting is the first stage in our mission to reopen the museum. After a few hours, there was a very noticeable improvement in the aesthetics and the lighting of the second floor. The prior color that was selected years ago was called "lemonade" (as we found cans still left in the basement). The collection committee decided that white would be a better color to lighten the space and to give the room a clean appearance.

I want to give special thanks to Wade Seibert and Michael Espenshade for volunteering to help get the painting done. It was a fun time, and we accomplished a lot in just a few hours.

Please keep an eye on your email for the next scheduled painting session. After the painting is completed, we will begin reorganizing and redesigning the space to make it guest friendly.



Before



After



Above: Mike & Wade working on completing the edging and trim work

Left: Before & after photos

Below: A panoramic view of the first coat of paint on the back sanctuary wall



Quilts, Quilts, and More Quilts

Piecemakers Quilt Guild Community Service Sewing Days

Second Saturdays (except March and May, 2023) from 10am until 3pm

PieceMakers Quilt Guild works on projects to support many community service efforts in this area: Comfort Caps for cancer patients, Pillowcases for hospitalized children, Duffle Bags for children being placed in foster care, colorful quilted Placemats for Meals on Wheels recipients, and Lap Robes for adults in care homes. As part of this effort, we get together to sew as a group every month. At these sessions, group leaders direct the sewing activity and collect completed projects for distribution. We are always happy to welcome members of the public who would like to help with whatever project we are working on. Even if you



Quilting Bees with PieceMakers Quilt

Saturdays 10am-3pm, 4/29/2023, 5/27/2023, 7/1/2023, 7/29/2023, 8/26/2023, 9/30/2023, and 10/28/2023

Our quilt guild has been around over 20 years and has lots of talented teachers as members. They will donate their services one day each month to provide instruction about an aspect of quilting. Would you like to learn about: English Paper Piecing, Crazy Quilting and Embellishment, Basic Piecing and Applique Stitches, or something else? Just send us a note and let us know you'd like to participate. You don't need to bring any materials, but it helps if we have an idea how many people will be attending - all are welcome! Contact info@piecemakersquiltguild.org

Quilt Evaluations to Benefit Hummelstown Area Historical

Do you have an old quilt that you wonder about? Is it a valuable piece of history or a potential dog bed? For \$20 per quilt, a quilt expert will evaluate and describe your quilt. The proceeds will go directly to the Historical Society to help with their preservation efforts. You will come away with a written description of your quilt and some idea of its value (although, the purpose of this event is not to produce formal appraisals). You must make a reservation for your quilt to be evaluated, but you may arrive at any time to watch the other evaluations. The expert will expect to spend about 15-20 minutes telling you about your quilt while you or someone else takes notes on the form that will be provided. It would be helpful, for your own benefit, to try to learn some family history of the quilt ahead of time so that you can more thoroughly document this quilt for yourself. Contact ann@annholtequilting.com to reserve a space.



Upcoming Speakers

Join us at 7:00pm in the Parish House

- March 18, 2024 – “Split Rail fences: how they were made, used, and their influence on Civil War Battles” by Michael Espenshade
- April 15, 2024 – The first 50 years of the Society – a collection of local anecdotes by Wade Seibert
- May 20, 2024 – Hummelstown Police Department 100th Anniversary Presentation



Are There Speakers you Want to Hear?

Contact the office at 717-566-6314

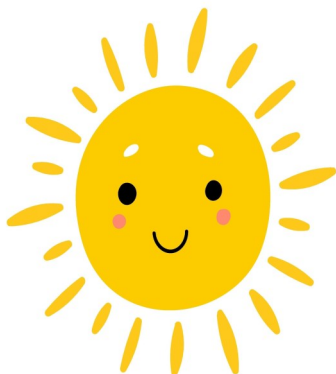
The HAHS is always looking for speakers or ideas for future presentation. We try to find interesting programs that people want to come to, so if you have any ideas or thoughts, we encourage you to reach out to us and let us know.

Want to Submit an Article?

Share your Hummelstown knowledge!

We would love to have more members participating in creating our newsletter. If anyone would like to write an article on a historical topic relating to Hummelstown, please let us know. Whether it's an old home you live in, a piece of history you are passionate about, a story that you remember from growing up, or just talking about Hummelstown's history in general, you are welcome to do so.

Please submit any articles to: norrisja1321@gmail.com



Got Ideas?

Fundraising Ideas Are Needed?

The HAHS needs fundraising ideas! Unfortunately, the last few years were expensive years for the Society with the multitude of repairs that needed to be done. If anyone has any fundraising suggestions, or is willing to assist in developing a fundraiser, please reach out to our office.