



2014 ANNUAL REPORT

 Lancaster**History**.org

OUR MISSION

LancasterHistory.org engages and educates the public about the people, places, and events that shaped Lancaster County within the broader context of the history of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the United States of America. As custodians of a complex past, we collect, preserve, exhibit, and make accessible materials chronicling Lancaster County's heritage as we seek to engage audiences in multi-layered stories of that past.

As a portal into the history of our community we achieve this mission by:

- ★ Sharing the life and legacy of James Buchanan, and preserving and interpreting his home, Wheatland;
- ★ Offering a ten-acre Campus of History featuring the Louise Arnold Tanger Arboretum;
- ★ Providing a Research Library and Archive for exploring Family History, Genealogy, Local History, and Scholarship;
- ★ Sharing the legacy of Thaddeus Stevens and his associate, Lydia Hamilton Smith, and preserving Stevens' home and law office;
- ★ Exploring three centuries of history and art through the Richard C. von Hess Decorative Arts Center, the Heritage Center Decorative Arts and Esprit Quilt Collections, on the Campus of History and in Lancaster City;
- ★ Promoting a wide range of learning opportunities through public history programs, specialty tours, historical exhibitions, and more;
- ★ Supporting the interests of history-oriented organizations in our region to bring into greater focus the extraordinary opportunities for learners of all ages to experience America's past in Lancaster County.

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Editors: Michael Abel, Emily Miller, & Robin Sarratt

Graphic design assistance provided by Moxie House

Cover image: *Five Conestoga wagons at the Landis Valley Farm Museum. From the photographic collections at LancasterHistory.org.*

THREE CHEERS FOR VOLUNTEERS!

Volunteers are the lifeblood of LancasterHistory.org! More than 375 stalwart volunteers give tours, process archival materials, help patrons in the library, plan and execute events, research questions posed by the public, give presentations, oversee our investments, and tend the Louise Arnold Tanger Arboretum.

In the last twelve months our dedicated corps of volunteers has provided 12,358 hours of service with a financial value of \$278,687. LancasterHistory.org would not be able to provide the extensive roster of services it has without these friends. Thank you for giving of your time, heart, and talents!



Harriet Lane reenactors.





*Tom Ryan,
President & CEO*

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME to peruse this annual report for LancasterHistory.org. It offers a “snapshot” of a transformative year in the life of your local history organization. In the following pages you will be reminded what we do, why we do it, and how we get it done. What do we do? We continue a long and proud tradition of “engaging and educating the public about the people, places, and events that have shaped Lancaster County.” How we go about our work is perhaps most interesting; that’s where the proverbial rubber meets the road, and it’s made up of three parts.

First, we are fortunate to have a professional history staff with a combined 200 years of experience, most with advanced degrees in the field, and a support staff with over 100 collective years of customer service. That combination of professional expertise and extraordinary customer service is an institutional hallmark of LancasterHistory.org.

Second, we have over 375 volunteers involved in every aspect of what we do, from board service, to library and archive volunteers, from the Friends of the Tanger Arboretum beautifying the grounds, to guides who greet the public at President Buchanan’s Wheatland.

Third, we enjoy the unparalleled support of hundreds of people from the County, the Commonwealth, from 45 other states in the nation, and several foreign countries, all entrusting their charitable dollars to advance the work of American history right here in Lancaster County. You will meet these people in the following pages, at least by name. I suspect many of you will come across your own name. If we happened to miss you, please forgive us and let us know right away. On behalf of the entire organization I offer you a most heartfelt thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tom Ryan".



*Deborah Martin,
Chair, Board of Directors*

I LOVE LANCASTER COUNTY, and I love its rich history, its vibrant landscape, and its constantly changing culture. Growing up here, I was privileged to be exposed to our local history by a great teacher who was also a great relative—my Uncle Herb Poole. Uncle Herb, and my Aunt Joanne, instilled in my siblings and me an appreciation and respect for the legacy of the people who came before us and made this place we call home so remarkable. So it has been a very personal commitment, and a labor of love, to serve with the board of LancasterHistory.org these last several years.

We have seen such amazing things come to fruition, and I know there are so many more yet to come. Please know that I represent the voices of all the directors at LancasterHistory.org, as well as all the volunteers who put their heart and soul into sharing our county’s treasures with the world, when I say thank you for all that you do for—and with—LancasterHistory.org!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah M. Martin".

A YEAR IN REVIEW

Robin Sarratt, Vice President

OH, WHAT A YEAR IT'S BEEN. Since opening the doors to the new Stauffer Wing on the Lancaster Campus of History in 2013, the Campus has been hopping with visitors to and from around the County eager to step into the past. With the construction of the new and newly-renovated 35,000 square-foot-facility completed, the campaign for its funding successfully finished, Wheatland packed with guests, and the seamless transfer of the nearly 3,000 artifacts from the Heritage Center and Quilt and Textile Museums changing the way we are presenting stories to the public, we are poised for a dynamic future. As we prepare for 2015—here's a quick look back at some of the noteworthy accomplishments of the last year...

President James Buchanan's Wheatland has seen record attendance in the last 12 months, with a 57% increase in visitation from 2012. The monthly Living History series has given local visitors a reason to come back to Wheatland again and again. Yuletide at Wheatland found its stride last December holiday, with "T'was the Night Before Christmas" outperforming the previous two years of tours by 2 to 1! And with all those people visiting, our retail sales in the Museum Store jumped dramatically—86% to be exact! If you haven't visited either of our store locations on the Campus or at 4 West King Street, stop by to see what you've been missing!

Our Library and Archives give our patrons unparalleled access to 16,000 volumes and more than 2,000,000 historic documents that are unique to Lancaster County and its government, inhabitants and businesses, including the papers of President James Buchanan. And it is an ever-growing collection; forty manuscript items and collections have been donated to the archives since January

alone. More than 2,300 patrons visited the library to use these resources in the last year and found a remarkable team at the ready to help them.

The Lancaster Campus of History underwent major transformation during construction, and in 2013-2014, the grounds and headquarters received no fewer than six significant awards in design and green building, including a National Pyramid Award of Excellence in Construction. What's more, the effects of the "green" design elements of our building positively impacted our first year. Thanks to geothermal cooling and heating and solar panels on the sloped roofs, our utility costs were kept in check, and our carbon footprint was reduced dramatically. The solar panels alone generated enough energy to power four homes for one year, and is equal to eliminating 50,438 pounds of carbon annually! And, with a master plan underway for the Louise Arnold Tanger Arboretum and Wheatland Gardens, we look forward to keeping our campus green for generations to come!

The growing collection of **Decorative Arts** at the Campus continues to engage visitors in a deeper understanding of our region's history. That engagement grew by the thousands (or should we say three-thousand!) when the Heritage Center Collections were transferred in 2013 (see page 17). Today, guests to Groff, Stoudt, and Gerhart Galleries, the Richard C. von Hess Decorative Arts Center, or at our showroom at 4 West King Street are greeted not only by items from an incredible assemblage of material culture, but often are greeted by the curators themselves. Wendell Zercher, curator of the Heritage Center Collections, and Barry Rauhauser, Stauffer Curator, spend much of their time providing insights to guests into the lives of the people who owned, made, or used

the nearly 20,000 objects representing 300 years of culture in Lancaster. Those of you who remember our exhibition spaces from before construction can truly appreciate the beauty and breathing space the new facilities provide both guests and exhibition material alike!

Our Public History Programming, long at the heart of our mission, has undergone a revolution in the last couple of years. In the early days, the interpretation of Wheatland and Lancaster County's Historical Society was more about furniture and house history with a modicum of apologist Presidential history. Today visitors learn about James Buchanan, his presidency and his family, about local culture and the Lancaster community, and participate in interpretive programs that are focused on our youth. With living history programs, specialty tours, historical exhibitions, educational workshops, internships, fellowships, lectures and films, today there are options to engage every visitor of all ages.

New generations of history fans are finding their way to the Campus of History through social media and alternative programming. We are offering more tours to youth and school groups, and every child who visits with a paying adult gains free admission. This year, we brought to new audiences programs such as "History on Tap: Heritage Brewing" and "Back to Basics" hands-on workshops for the DIY generation, with future programs like the upcoming "History Triathlon" (historic cycling, hiking, and tubing tours, anyone?) in the works.

There have been so many milestones these last many months, and while it is in our historically-inclined nature to glance behind us, it is truly the future of Lancaster's history that we're excited about. We look forward to seeing you at the Campus of History and around the community in the year ahead!



Top: Schoolchildren enjoy visiting Thaddeus Steven's home and compose original poetry for the "Poetry Paths" project. Center: The Stauffer Wing. Bottom: A new addition to the collection - a painted-glass depiction of Wheatland used to decorate Buchanan's inaugural train car.

2013 - 2014 ANNUAL CAMPAIGN

Supporters of the *Annual Campaign for Lancaster County History* go the extra mile, helping support LancasterHistory.org's annual operations with a gift above and beyond membership. You all make history happen in Lancaster County; thank you!

Noted with an asterisk, 1729 Society members are a distinguished group of individual donors who make a gift to the Annual Campaign of \$1,000 or more. This group gathers several times a year for special behind-the-scenes events. Contact Robin Sarratt at 717.392.4633 ext. 117 for more information.

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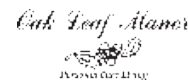
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THE LEGACY OF THADDEUS STEVENS: Q&A WITH HISTORICAL CONSULTANT, RANDY HARRIS

Q: Randy, how did you become involved in the story of Thaddeus Stevens?

A: In 1999, while serving as Executive Director of Historic Preservation Trust of Lancaster County, the board of directors and I faced the daunting issue of the proposed demolition of all the historic buildings in the City of Lancaster that were owned by Thaddeus Stevens (1792-1868) and his confidante Lydia Hamilton Smith (1815-1884). The Trust's concept plan proposed integrating these historic structures into the new convention center rather than tearing them down. We had to perform extensive research on the historic buildings and the lives and times of Stevens, Smith, their associates and political adversaries in order to build the case for why these historical figures and the properties they were associated with were deeply important and should be saved.

Q: You were successful in nominating the Thaddeus Stevens & Lydia Hamilton Smith site as a National Underground Railroad Network to Freedom site through the National Parks Service. What were the most inspiring moments of that process?

A: When we received sufficient evidence to document that formerly enslaved people were actually sheltered at the Lancaster home of Congressman Stevens and Lydia Hamilton Smith. Stephanie Gilbert, the great-great

granddaughter of O.C. Gilbert, called me unexpectedly and offered to share a key piece of evidence documenting that her ancestor and others, in flight for three days from enslavement in Maryland, were directed to the home of Stevens and Smith in 1848 and were given shelter and directions to the next stop on the Underground Railroad.

Q: You've given multiple tours of the site to schoolchildren. What impact do you believe the tours and the legacy of Thaddeus Stevens have on those children?

A: During these tours, we tell the story of how disparate individuals, from socially and economically disadvantaged backgrounds, can work together to achieve great and positive things, both in their own communities and on a national scale. The Thaddeus Stevens & Lydia Hamilton Smith site can inspire young people on many emotional levels.

Q: What are you involved in these days?

A: Both as a community volunteer and as a consulting historian, I continue to research and document sites with authentic connections to the Underground Railroad. I am working with community groups to plan and conduct tours of Underground Railroad sites in Southeastern Pennsylvania, hoping to educate a new generation of historians. Much of this research is being incorporated into a book I plan to publish in 2015.



*Randy Harris at the home of
Thaddeus Stevens*

COLLECTIONS & ACQUISITIONS

As a collections-based institution, few of LancasterHistory.org's programs, exhibitions, tours, or classes would be possible without the object, library, or archival collections we have in our care. Each year we look for ways to grow our collections through purchases and donations. In 2013-2014 we were delighted to welcome several new items to the Campus of History, including a painted-glass panel installed in President Buchanan's private train car that he used to travel to his inauguration (pictured on page 5). Nearly 100% of the items brought into the collection last year—as in years' past—were donated by collectors and patrons of LancasterHistory.org, or were purchased (or in the case of Thaddeus Steven's wig, conserved) through the generous support of friends. We thank each one of you for your thoughtfulness and generosity!



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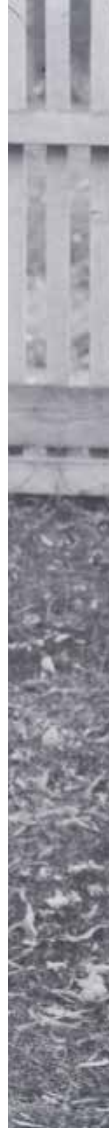
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THE HERITAGE CENTER COLLECTIONS FIND A NEW HOME

Wendell Zercher, Heritage Center Collection Curator

The Heritage Center collections live on! Yes, there definitely was uncertainty as the former Heritage Center Museum entered 2012. Faced with the tasks of closing down a museum and conscientiously deciding what should be kept and what should go, the future of our Lancaster County artifacts remained the ultimate concern. Would the collection end up being sold and dispersed, or could we find an organization within the County that could responsibly take on ownership? The most obvious choice was the Heritage Center's sister history organization, LancasterHistory.org. After much discussion and deliberation, LancasterHistory.org graciously agreed to take on the care and stewardship of the Heritage Center Collections, despite being in the midst of a huge building project and capital campaign. This was a great relief!

Consequently, by January 2013, the entire collection was moved out of a temporary storage facility and moved into the wonderful new facility at 230 North President Avenue. As longtime curator of the Heritage Center collection, I was generously offered the opportunity to continue working with these objects in their new home. Becoming a member of the terrific staff working here at LancasterHistory.org has been a satisfying and enriching experience. I joined Barry Rauhauser, longtime Stauffer Curator, in installing the planned new exhibit, *County, Commonwealth and Country*, which opened four months later. Many of the pieces currently on exhibit are artifacts from the Heritage Center Collection. After so many years of being on exhibit in its downtown location, it is gratifying to see the furniture, fraktur, quilts, folk art and other items used in a totally new setting. With help from interns and volunteers, Barry and I have embarked on a long project of inventorying the combined collections. Progressing shelf by shelf, we are documenting artifacts of all types—describing, determining condition, origin, maker, provenance and their usefulness in helping us tell the stories of Lancaster County history. It is satisfying to make strides in this task.



Wendell Zercher (left) and Tom Ryan (right). Courtesy Marty Heisey, *Intelligencer Journal / Lancaster New Era*, Lancaster, PA.



Judging by the many inquiries we receive, quilts are definitely the biggest area of interest. In an effort to satisfy the demand, we have been offering quilt presentations to groups of about 15-20 people who schedule a time to view up close a selection of quilts laid out on a large table along with commentary by a curator and opportunity for discussion. This activity has proven to be popular particularly with international groups. In addition, we have posted images of quilts from the collection on our web site, with more to come in the future.



Left: A Lehnware decorated seed chest. Made by Joseph Lehn, a 19th-century woodworker from Elizabeth Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. From the Heritage Center Collections.

If anyone wonders about whether a certain object on exhibit might be from the Heritage Center’s collection, there is an easy answer. The words “Heritage Center Collection” always appear on the label. It is rewarding to know these artifacts are appreciated at LancasterHistory.org and that their identity as part of the Heritage Center Collection will travel with them as they continue to link visitors today to Lancaster’s past.

THE CAMPAIGN FOR THE HERITAGE CENTER COLLECTION AT LANCASTERHISTORY.ORG

When LancasterHistory.org accepted the responsibility for the Heritage Center Collections in 2013, we set out to do so in a way that would ensure, in perpetuity, that these remarkable objects remain in our care and our community. And so, with Thomas Hills Cook and Peggy Steinman as campaign chairs, we issued a call to action for the friends and supporters of the Heritage Center Museums and LancasterHistory.org to fund an endowment that would forever maintain the collections and permanently endow a curatorial position to research, display, and care for the collections. Since then, the following friends have supported the campaign with gifts totaling more than \$2 Million in operating and endowment support. As we work toward reaching our \$2.8 Million goal, there is still time to make your mark on this campaign and these Collections. Contact Tom Ryan or Robin Sarratt for further information about how you can support the Campaign for the Heritage Center Collections.



Above: *A birth record, c. 1811, attributed to Samuel Bentz (1792–1850). From the Heritage Center Collections. Acquired through the generosity of the James Hale Steinman Foundation.*

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LancasterHistory.org's members are the heart and soul of the organization. Whether they are taking advantage of the array of benefits members receive, or simply showing their support of LancasterHistory.org, members are invaluable and make our mission possible. More than 2,200 individuals make up LancasterHistory.org's membership, and we are deeply grateful to every single one! Below is a list of members who contribute above and beyond the individual and family level. Those noted with an asterisk are members of the 1729 Society, whose annual support of LancasterHistory.org is \$1,000 and above. To learn more about membership, please contact Cynthia Madara at 717.392.4633, ext. 122. Thank you!

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Top: LancasterHistory.org celebrates opening its Campus of History with a red-ribbon cutting.

Middle Left: David Groff, Bob Groff, and Clark Thompson at the 2014 Valentine's Gala.

Middle Right: James Buchanan reenactors.

Bottom: A First Friday at LancasterHistory.org On the Square in downtown Lancaster.



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*President James Buchanan's
Wheatland in autumn. Photograph
by Joseph L. Peifer.*



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View of Penn Square from North Queen Street in downtown Lancaster.

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