

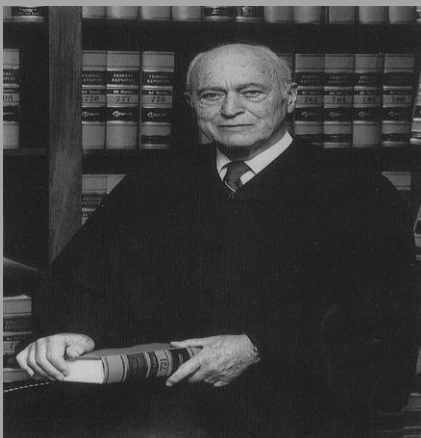
# FORECAST

## Stars of the Valley Dinner Planned

The Luzerne County Historical Society will hold its fifth annual Stars of the Valley Dinner on Wednesday, March 11 at the Woodlands Inn and Resort in Plains Township. This year's program will honor Judge Max Rosenn who established one of Wyoming Valley's first law firms, Rosenn, Jenkins and Greenwald. He was known nationally and the legal community still remembers him as one of the most respected and highly cited federal judges. Judge Rosenn was also recognized for his role in the recovery of the area following the devastation caused by Hurricane Agnes in 1972.

Attorney Gene Roth, who was Judge Rosenn's law partner, and Ann Smith, a personal biographer, are the scheduled speakers for the dinner lecture. Ms. Smith, the owner of Life Stories Remembered, LCC, chronicled the Judge's personal story through a series of extensive interviews and she will play segments of those audiotapes with Judge Rosenn sharing his memories and personal stories.

The cocktail hour will begin at 5:30 pm and tickets for LCHS members are \$50. Tickets for nonmembers are available for \$55. Sponsorships are also available for the event. For more information and to order tickets or sponsorships, call 570-823-6244 or email [reservations@luzernehistory.org](mailto:reservations@luzernehistory.org).



Judge Max Rosenn

## In the Stacks

With Amanda C. Fontenova  
Director of Library and Archives

Many genealogists visit our Research Library in search of Luzerne County vital records – births, deaths and marriages. While births and deaths are sometimes not found due to the fact that recording a birth or death on a government level was not *mandatory* until 1906, when the PA Department of Health took over the keeping of the records, marriages are generally more straightforward. Starting in 1885, all Pennsylvania marriage licenses were recorded at each county court house.

However, there are times when a marriage record cannot be found, even if you know your ancestors lived in one county their entire lives. What could be the possible reason? Most researchers don't realize that in Pennsylvania, even to this day, you can apply for and receive a marriage license from any county in the state - there is no law stating that you must apply for your license in the county where you live!

I recently came across a newspaper article in the *Times Leader* from Dec. 31, 1909 about a young couple, Miss Octa Fraunfelter and Mr. Percy S. Seamans, who eloped because they had trouble getting a marriage license due to the fact that the bride was underage. The Scranton couple traveled to three different courthouses over the course of three days – in Scranton, Wilkes-Barre, and Binghamton – only to have the clerk refuse to grant them a license without consent of the parents when he found out the bride was only 19.

You will smile to hear that the couple did eventually have a happy ending, seemingly without even any hard feelings on the part of the parents:

*“Tuesday night somebody told Mr. Seamans that the marriage license clerk in a certain county nearly always forgot to ask the age of the bride, and early Wednesday morning the couple went thither and the clerk did forget to ask the applicants the age question. They got the license and then decided to go to a Montrose minister to have the knot tied.”*

*“The marriage was announced yesterday and they have been given the usual parental blessing.”*

So the next time you are unable to find a marriage record in a county in Pennsylvania, you may also want to check with the surrounding counties – just in case!

## President's Message

Happy New Year! The Luzerne County Historical Society has a great deal going on in this first quarter of 2015. Most recently, as part of Mining History Week, Mr. Bob Wolensky gave a very enlightening lecture on January 22 relative to the different influences on the local mining industry that led up to the tragic Knox Mine Disaster. This was the first of a series of free lectures that LCHS will be hosting seasonally at the First Presbyterian Church in Wyoming.

Moving right along, LCHS will be hosting its Fifth Annual Stars of the Valley program at the Woodlands Inn and Resort on Wednesday March 11, 2015. The program will honor the legacy of the legendary Judge Max Rosenn. Ms. Ann Smith will lead the program and talk about her extensive interviews with Judge Rosenn, which will shed light on both Mr. Rosenn – the man, as well as the Judge. Additionally, those in attendance will also hear excerpts of Ms. Smith's interviews with Judge Rosenn. Judge Rosenn, appointed as a federal judge by President Nixon, served for ten years, and his legal opinions continue to remain the most cited. He not only serves as one of the greatest legal minds to have ever emerged from Luzerne County, but a great example of a human being.

On April 14, 2015, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the President Lincoln's Assassination, our own Dr. William Lewis will be hosting a book signing at our Museum. His book will profile Lincoln's political ties to Luzerne County – and how important they were to him politically.

On Friday, April 17, LCHS will hold its Annual Dinner at the Westmoreland Club where Dr. Lewis will offer an informative presentation on President Lincoln's political friends and foes of Luzerne County, who apparently kept Lincoln very focused on Luzerne County. You will likely see the reenactors of the 143<sup>rd</sup> PA Regiment in full uniform and the atmosphere will make you feel as though you have stepped back into 1865.

Also, thanks to a helpful grant from the Luzerne Foundation, we will be completely revamping our website over the next several months, which upon its completion, will serve as the hub of historic preservation and promotion within our county. This long-overdue initiative promises expanded capabilities for our members, resources for our area educators, and offer a way to promote the good efforts of the many local historical groups and societies within the county.

Finally, May will offer our Fifth Annual Classic Car Show on the grounds of the Swetland Homestead, and will offer a trip to an LCHS-lead trip to historic Gettysburg. We look forward to seeing you in 2015!

Regards,  
Carl Rosencrance  
LCHS President

### Brief Biography of Ann Smith

Ann is from Manhattan and Washington, D.C. but, she had the good fortune to have married Marvin Smith and it was that marriage that brought her to the Wyoming Valley 32 years ago. She has Master's degrees in Education and Social Work and a background in special education, hospital social work, and social service agency work. For the past 20 years she has maintained a successful private psychotherapy practice in Kingston. She also has three children, four grandsons and one great-grandson in her life!

Ann will share the wonderful story about how she was able to interview Judge Max Rosenn, Judge of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Circuit Federal Court, for whom our Federal Court Building on Main Street in Wilkes-Barre is named. That life-changing experience started her on the path of a career as a personal historian and in 2008 her business, *Life Stories Remembered, LLC* was created.

As a personal historian, she has been featured in a number of articles in the Times Leader and the Citizens Voice. Most recently, Ann was interviewed for a podcast by Jackie Peterson of Portland Oregon, an author, lecturer and coach in the field of entrepreneurship. If you would like to listen to this interview online, Ann will be happy to direct you to the website.

## Thank you for your support

Our Annual Christmas events were another great success thanks to you, our members. For the first time in many years, both events were blessed by great weather throughout, which aided attendance. The all new Civil War Christmas at the Swetland Homestead was attended by 162 patrons over its four days of running. Afternoons of Colonial Hospitality at the Nathan Denison House saw 130 patrons pass through the 1790 home over the course of two days. Many thanks to our sponsors, all of our great volunteers, the 143<sup>rd</sup> PA Regiment, and especially to you, our members for your continued support and patronage. Below are some photos from the events.



**Save the Date!** On Saturday, May 16, members and friends of the Historical Society are invited to join Stephen & Estella Killian on a bus trip to the Gettysburg Battle Field. A licensed guide will join us as we trace the steps of a local regiment, the 143<sup>rd</sup> Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry.

There will be plenty of time to visit the new Visitor's Center, museum, and restored cyclorama. As a member of the Gettysburg Foundation and frequent visitor of the battle sites, Steve will offer background information and be available to answer questions throughout the day. Details will follow.

## Luzerne County Historical Society Annual Dinner

The Luzerne County Historical Society will hold its 157<sup>th</sup> Annual Dinner and Meeting at the Westmoreland Club in Wilkes-Barre on Friday April 17, 2015. The topic will be Abraham Lincoln's Luzerne County Connections and the speaker will be PHMC Commissioner and LCHS Board Member Dr. William V. Lewis, Jr. Tickets will cost \$65 for LCHS Members, \$75 for nonmembers. For more info call 570-823-6244 ext. 3.



### Calendar of Events

**February 1** – Bishop Memorial Library and Museum are closed for the winter recess

**March 3<sup>rd</sup>** – Bishop Memorial Library reopens to the Public

**March 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup>** – 143<sup>rd</sup> Regiment Re-enactors at Swetland

**March 11<sup>th</sup>** – 5<sup>th</sup> annual Stars of the Valley Dinner honoring Judge Max Rosenn at the Woodlands Inn and Resort.

**April 24<sup>th</sup>** – 157<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting and Dinner at the Westmoreland Club

**May 3<sup>rd</sup>** – 5<sup>th</sup> Annual LCHS Classic Car Show at the Swetland Homestead.

**May 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>** – 143<sup>rd</sup> Regiment Re-enactors at Swetland

**May 16<sup>th</sup>** – LCHS Bus Trip to Gettysburg

**July 4<sup>th</sup>** – 137<sup>th</sup> Commemoration of the Battle of Wyoming at the Wyoming Monument

**July 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>** – 143<sup>rd</sup> Regiment Re-enactors at Swetland

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## Luzerne County Historical Society

49 South Franklin Street  
Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701

Phone: 570-823-6244  
Fax: 570-823-9011  
www.luzernehistory.org

### Give the Past a Future

Bishop Memorial Library  
Luzerne County Museum  
Swetland Homestead  
Denison House

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*The mission of the Luzerne County Historical Society is to preserve and promote the collective history and heritage of Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.*