

Save the Date!
Festive Traditions

Saturday & Sunday, December 1-2, 2018—2 to 5 p.m.
 Learn about NEPA holiday customs, see hearth cooking, share local history



\$8 members; \$12 non-members; Kids 5 through 17 are \$5!

Swetland Homestead
885 Wyoming Avenue, Wyoming

Give the Past a Future
 Bishop Memorial Library
 Luzerne County Museum
 Denison House
 Swetland Homestead

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Luzerne County Historical Society
 49 South Franklin Street
 Wilkes-Barre, PA 18701
 570-823-6244
 info@luzernehistory.org
 www.luzernehistory.org

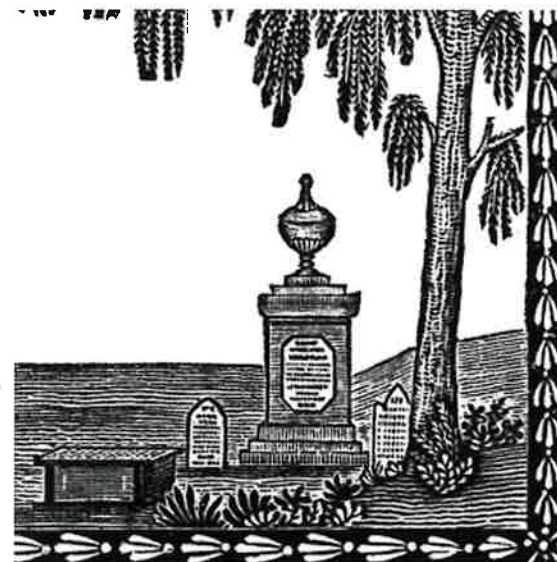
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Luzerne County Historical Society
FORECAST
 September 2018

Haunted History:
Colonial Superstitions and Folklore

Friday & Saturday, October 26-27, 2018—6-9 p.m.
 Denison House, 35 Denison Street, Forty Fort



Turn back time and join us on a tour through the Denison House as our costumed guides tell stories about early American superstitions and spooky folklore! Feel a shiver down your spine as you learn about the death coach and memories from survivors of the Battle of Wyoming. Have your palm read to see what might be in store for you!

Tickets are \$8 for members, \$12 for non-members and \$5 for all kids (ages 5 through 17). For more information or to purchase tickets, email reservations@luzernehistory.org, call 570-823-6244 ext. 3, or visit <https://luzernehistory.eventbrite.com/>.

New Program—Dining with Friends
Have a wonderful meal and help raise funds for LCHS
Wednesday, October 24, 2018—Kevin's

This fall, LCHS is launching an exciting new program—Dining with Friends! In each newsletter, we will feature a local restaurant that has agreed to donate 10% of their proceeds on a designated night as a contribution to the Society's operating expenses. LCHS members and the general public are encouraged to "Dine with Friends" on that evening.

We are delighted to announce that Rob Friedman, owner of the Beaumont Inn, Cork, Grico's, the Jazz Club and Kevin's, has generously agreed to participate by offering his restaurants in turn. Many thanks to Rob!

The first "Dining with Friends" night is scheduled for Wednesday, October 24, 2018, at the newly-remodeled Kevin's, 247 Wyoming Avenue, Kingston, <http://kevinsrestaurant.us/>. Please call 570-285-3071 to make dinner reservations directly with the restaurant, and mention that you are with LCHS. We hope you will join us in supporting LCHS through this unique opportunity. Bon Appetit!



LCHS Forecast
Vol. 15 No. 3
September 2018

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 Mature Worker Program

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

Message from the Executive Director

Happy Fall! I want to extend a very big thank you to all of our members and supporters. We appreciate your interest in the Society and your many kind compliments on our summer programs. As we head into fall, we are working on bringing you quality programs that help us to learn more about and to share our local history.

We are also starting to work on making more of our fantastic collection of documents and objects accessible to our members and visitors. In our last issue you read about our first online exhibit, which shares some of our photos of the devastating results of Hurricane Agnes in 1972. Recently, we were able to make our digitized newspapers available to on-site patrons at the Bishop Library—read on to learn more about this!

Don't miss our line-up of fall programs including a lecture on the Yankee-Pennamite Wars (related to our new exhibition on the 1778 Battle of Wyoming), our popular Downtown Wilkes-Barre Ghost Walks and our program, Haunted History: Colonial Superstitions and Folklore at the Denison House! Details can be found inside.

Thank you for your support of the Luzerne County Historical Society—I hope to see you soon!

Aimee E. Newell, Ph.D.



LCHS President's Corner

As the newly-elected president of the LCHS Board of Directors, I feel honored and privileged to serve this 160-year-old organization. We have an extremely capable executive director in Dr. Aimee Newell as well as a dedicated, enthusiastic and creative staff. Those same adjectives accurately describe our Board of Directors. It is a great time to serve as president!

We anticipate many changes over the next few years. The Swetland Homestead, described by one preservation expert as a "treasure" and a "gem," will be getting a much-needed facelift. We are increasing our educational programming to reach our changing demographic, and we are implementing a strategic plan. The end result of the proposed plan will position LCCHS as a stronger, more vibrant organization well into the 21st century. Does the plan include finding a more appropriate, efficient, and modern space? YES!

Of course, all of our initiatives require sound financial planning. We are working diligently to grow our Annual Appeal. This past fiscal year we doubled our contributions and significantly increased the number of corporate contributions. We are ramping up our grant writing efforts, both public and private. And, stay tuned for some unique fundraising events that you won't want to miss!

Lastly, we are reinvigorating our estate planning program. The Society has been blessed to have several donors designate it in their wills. The Board of Directors feels an obligation to safeguard those monies and to grow the endowment to ensure a vibrant Luzerne County Historical Society for generations to come.

I hope to see you at our programs and events in the coming months. Please know your interest and investment in the Society is truly appreciated!

Tish McCarthy Last



Calendar of Events—September through December 2018

September 15-16—Saturday & Sunday

Battle of Wyoming Walking Tours by Stephen Killian. 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. on Sept. 15, 1 p.m. on Sept. 16. \$7 members, \$10 non-members. Please note that this is a two-mile, two-hour walk. **Reservations are required.**

September 20—Thursday

Lecture—"Heynabonics": How we talk in NEPA by Will Butkiewicz. At the Osterhout Library, Third-Floor Meeting Room, 6:30 p.m. FREE for members; \$5 for non-members.

September 23—Sunday

Demonstration—Early American Fiber Arts: spinning, dyeing, weaving and more. 1-4 p.m. at the Denison House, 35 Denison Street, Forty Fort. FREE for members; \$5 for non-members, \$3 for non-member kids.

September 27—Thursday

Lecture—The Yankee-Pennamite War—A Brief Overview by Bob Mischak, Museum. 6:30 p.m. FREE for members; \$5 for non-members.



September 30—Sunday

Last day of the season for tours of the Denison House. 1-4 p.m. FREE for members; \$5 for non-members (\$3 for kids).

October 7—Sunday

Harvest Festival, Denison House, 35 Denison Street, Forty Fort. 1-5 p.m. \$5 for members (\$3 for kids); \$7 for non-members (\$5 for kids). Enjoy demonstrations of period crafts.

October 19-20—Friday and Saturday

Downtown Wilkes-Barre Ghost Walks. 6:30, 6:45 and 7 p.m. on both days. Learn about ghosts, murders and hidden graveyards on this two-hour walking tour in the Diamond City. \$7 for members; \$10 for non-members. **PREPAID RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED.**

October 26-27—Friday and Saturday

Haunted History: Colonial Superstitions and Folklore at the Denison House, 35 Denison Street, Forty Fort. 6-9 p.m. each day. \$8 for members; \$12 for non-members; \$5 for all kids 5-17.



November 1—Thursday

The Life and Death of Abraham Lincoln: Lincoln's Luzerne County Friends and Foes and the Grand Funeral of Lincoln by Dr. William V. Lewis Jr. and Brian Leffler. Kniffen O'Malley Leffler Funeral and Cremation Services, 465 South Main Street, Wilkes-Barre. 6:30 p.m. FREE for members; \$5 for non-members.

November 10—Saturday

Gallery Talk, "The Battle of Wyoming at 240: Revolution on the Homefront," by Mark J. Riccetti Jr., LCCHS Director of Operations and Programs. 12 p.m. at the Museum. FREE for members, \$5 for non-members (\$3 for kids).

November 22-24—Thursday, Friday & Saturday

LCCHS Museum and Bishop Library closed in observance of Thanksgiving.

December 1-2—Saturday and Sunday

Festive Traditions at the Swetland Homestead, 885 Wyoming Avenue, Wyoming. 2-5 p.m. each day. \$8 for members; \$12 for non-members; \$5 for all kids 5-17.

December 23 through January 1

LCCHS Museum and Bishop Library closed in observance of Christmas and New Year's Day. Regular hours resume on Wednesday, January 2.



To make a reservation for any event, or for more information, call 570-823-6244, ext. 3 or email reservations@luzernehistory.org.

Buy a Book! Help the Bishop Library

We would like to add these books to our library collection. If the book listed has a price, it is currently available and we would love to have you purchase it for us. If the book listed does NOT have a price, it is out of print—do you have a copy that you would be willing to donate? **Please call us at 570-823-6244 ext. 2 or email library@luzernehistory.org to claim a book.**



Vital Records of Dallas Methodist Church, from the Northeast Pennsylvania Genealogical Society—\$10.00

History of Hazleton Part 2 and Part 3 by Norm Drasher, Closson Press—\$21.00

Tombstone Inscriptions: St. John's Lutheran & Reformed Cemetery, Luzerne County by Norm and Peggy Drasher, 1993—\$25

Rocky Glen Roller Coasters by John and Joann Rygiel—\$20

Seeing Underground: Maps, Models and Mining Engineering in America by Eric C. Nystrom—\$39.95

The History and Genealogy of the Drum Family by Laura Helman, 1927.

Anthracite's Demise and the Post Coal Economy of NEPA by Tom and Jacqueline Keil.

A Report with Honor by J.M. Keating (Nanticoke).

Two Hundred Years of Progress: Butler Twp, 1784-1984 by Drums Lions Club, Butler Twp.

Wyoming Valley: Proud People, Proud History by Tom Mooney, 2000 (can find used on Amazon.com).

WWII Hometown Heroes ed. By Allison Walzer (Times Leader), 2001 (can find on Amazon.com).

Anthracite Reds (1920s) and *Anthracite Reds Vol. 2* (Great Depression era) by Walter T. Howard (can find on Amazon.com).

THANK YOU to Marshall and Anne Rumbaugh and to Lynne Jarick for helping us to acquire two of the books on our list in the June 2018 newsletter!

Did you miss our programming on the 1972 Agnes Flood? Visit <https://vimeo.com/luzernehistory>!

Thanks to the Luzerne Foundation, we were able to record two Community Conversations and a panel discussion related to our 2017-2018 exhibition on the 45th anniversary of Hurricane Agnes and the flood in the Wyoming Valley. We invited community members to attend the conversations and share their memories and family stories from the 1972 flood. We appreciate all who shared. We also held a panel discussion about the question, "Could it happen again?" We have put a copy of the recordings into our library and archives collection so that they will be available to future researchers. And, now we have made the recordings available online for members and interested audiences to view as they please. Visit the link above and you can watch these videos. We hope to add more videos over the coming years.



In the Stacks Searching Our Local Newspapers...

by Amanda C. Fontenova, Director of Library and Archives

Did you know? Our newspaper holdings on microfilm have been digitized through Newspapers.com. And, we are pleased to announce that you can search and view those digitized newspapers on your own web-enabled device at LCHS's Bishop Library **without** a Newspapers.com account! Our holdings cover the years from the early 1800s up to 1949. Please be aware—the dates we have available vary with each title and some years may not be complete. Through Newspapers.com, searching is made much easier with the ability to enter a keyword without having to know an exact date or location. Looking for information about a specific person or an event? Come on in and we can show you how to search through decades of newspapers at the touch of a button.

Our holdings include:

- *Wilkes-Barre Record* – June 6, 1872 - Dec 31, 1949
- *Luzerne Union/Union Leader* – Jan 19, 1853 - June 28, 1907
- *Mountain Echo* (Shickshinny) – May 5, 1882 - March 16, 1883 and April 16, 1937 - May 26, 1966
- *Pittston Gazette* – Aug 2, 1850 - Sept 30, 1921
- *Hazleton Plain Speaker* – Jan 2, 1888 - Dec 31, 1907
- *Wilkes-Barre Leader* – July 19, 1877 - Nov. 30, 1907



Bring your laptop, tablet, or smartphone to be able to access our wifi to use the Newspapers.com website. We do not have computer terminals for patron use at this time. Our newspaper holdings are also still available on microfilm, and we are anticipating the delivery of a new microfilm machine as this newsletter goes to press! Access to the Bishop Library is free for LCHS members. Admission to the Library is \$5 per day for non-members. If you have questions about our newspaper holdings or other library and archives materials, please call 570-823-6244 x 2 or email library@luzernehistory.org.

2017-2018 LCHS Annual Appeal

A huge thank you to all who donated to the LCHS 2017-2018 annual appeal! These donations are essential to our operating funds and allow us to bring you the programs listed in our calendar of events. Our fiscal year ended June 30, 2018, with donations from 224 donors totaling a record-breaking \$35,319! Here, we recognize gifts received since our June 2018 newsletter went out. Keep an eye out for our 2018-2019 appeal this fall—we can't do it without you!

\$500-\$999

Marla Hoskins

\$100-\$249

Anzalone Law Offices, LLC
Chris and Karen Borton
Colours, Inc.
Ann Lewis and Andrew Augustine
Luzerne County Convention and Visitors Bureau
Michael Ward

\$99 and under

Edmund and Frances Grace
Frank Griglonis
Thomas and Ann Grimes
Janet Gunther
Mike and Tina MacDowell
Norman and Marion Newell

Thank you to our Business Members!

Please help us to thank them by patronizing them. To join, visit www.luzernehistory.org or call 570-823-6244 ext. 1.

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Coach, Kopko, Shorts & Reid LLP
Community Bank NA
Corcoran Printing
Edward Jones
FNCB Bank
Golden Business Machines, Inc.

Guyette Communication
Highmark Blue Cross Blue Shield
Hoegen and Associates, PC
Masonry Preservation Services, Inc.
Mericle Commercial Real Estate Services
Nahas and Donahue Orthodontics

Navient
Trion Industries, Inc.
UGI Utilities, Inc.
Westmoreland Club
Wet Paint Printing and Design
The Woodlands Inn & Resort

We Welcome Our NEW Members!

Baaqiah Bey-Williams
Lisa Brand
Jane Durkin
Matthew J. Gaydos
Maribeth Girton
Lana Heck
Milton M. Honeywell
Zoe Klinq
Linda Milne-Tyte
Bob Nardone
Judith and Tom Ocauiany
Charles and Tonia Prula
Patricia D. Varzaly
Ashley Zingaretti

New to the LCHS Collection!

Joe Palooka #1: A Grail with Deep Local Roots

by Mark J. Riccetti Jr., Director of Operations & Programs

Are you asking, "what is a grail?" Every hobby has its own lingo. Comic book collecting is no different; its most common bit of jargon may be "grail." Collectors will often ask each other, "What's your grail?" Or an excited collector will exclaim, "I finally found my grail!" In comic book terms, a grail is a rare, expensive issue that will become the centerpiece of a collection. The term comes from the Holy Grail, a vessel with mystical powers to provide sustenance, happiness or eternal youth, and the never-ending unsuccessful quests to find it. Common comic book grails include: *The Amazing Spider-Man* #300, *New Mutants* #87, and *The Sandman* #4. However, Wilkes-Barre has its own comic book grail—*Joe Palooka* #1.

Written by Wilkes-Barre's Ham Fisher (1900-1955), Joe Palooka began life as a newspaper comic strip. Fisher created Palooka in 1921 after meeting real life boxer Pete Latzo (1902-1968), but the strip did not appear regularly in papers until 1933. At its peak, *Joe Palooka* ran in over 900 newspapers in the United States and more than 120 abroad. Joe Palooka also appeared in the 1934 movie *Palooka*, and then became a comic book series. The strip ran until 1984.

While there were earlier comics under the Joe Palooka name, they were merely compilations of newspaper strips. The issue shown here, published in 1945, was the first in a series of monthly original Palooka stories. In this issue, a wounded Palooka entertains his fellow soldiers on a transport ship with the story of his accidental World Heavyweight Title win. Joe enlisted to serve his nation despite being champ, fought the Nazis and encouraged readers to buy war bonds and plant victory gardens.

Joe Palooka is not just a product of his time, but of his place of origin as well. In this issue, he uses local slang such as "deeze" and "dem." He mentions many notable locals such as Herman Mankiewicz. Other characters are based on real Wilkes-Barre residents, such as "Little Max," inspired by future jeweler Max Bartikowsky, who later received an eponymous comic book from Harvey Comics in 1949. With such a deep embrace of its local ties, is it any surprise that the community embraced Joe back, with such local landmarks as the now-defunct Joe Palooka Diner, and by renaming Wilkes-Barre Mountain, "Joe Palooka Mountain"? We are pleased to add this piece of history to our collection for future research and exhibition.

