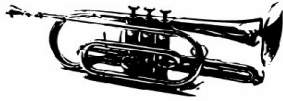


NEW HOLLAND

Area Historical Society



Volume 12 Issue 3

Summer 2016

EARLY HISTORY OF THE TOWN CLOCK

Submitted by Brian Frankhouser and Don Horning

During much of the 19th century New Holland residents often talked about the need for a town clock, but it was mostly talk and nothing else. In the autumn of 1874 construction of the new public school was progressing nicely when the topic was again brought up. Realizing there was precious little time to revise the plans for the school building, a new urgency ensued to buy a clock for the steeple. New Holland Clarion editor, George H. Ranck, and local businessman, Amos Rutter, solicited residents of the town. After six weeks of calculating, maneuvering, and begging, they gathered nearly \$300 in pledges. Confident that the fund raising portion of the project was completed, they soon found out from local clock dealer, Isaac Witwer, that at least \$200 more would be needed based on his recent inquiries. A town meeting was scheduled for December 12 to discuss what to do next, but only six people showed up! Apparently, even though their number was small, they knew how to get things done, and quickly planned a fair to be held in Witwer Hall in January of 1875. Although there was some controversy regarding “chancing” games at the fair, it was a complete success and raised nearly \$450. In February of 1875 the responsibility of buying and putting up the clock was assumed by Isaac Witwer. He purchased the instrument from G. W. Russel of Philadelphia, who was an agent for G. M. Stevens & Co. of Boston (a well known manufacturer). The original cost new was \$600, but was discounted to less than \$400 because the clock was used briefly by another owner who soon replaced it with a larger model. The seller had enough confidence in the quality of the workmanship that a warranty was provided as if it were brand new.

The next step in the process was to procure a bell of like quality. After seeking input from several sources, the committee decided to follow the advice of H. H. Tshudy, who had recently bought a high quality bell for the Academy at Lititz. Fulton Foundry of Pittsburgh was contacted and a 520 pound bell was purchased. It had a “clear, full, deep, rich and sweet tone” that could be heard three miles away when the clock was sounded! After some delays due to bad weather and slow steeple construction, the clock was up and running the first week of June in 1875. The zinc faces were painted a deep blue and the numerals and hands were gold in color. Dare we say the appearance must have been “striking”? Fast forward to 2003 and the impending demolition of the New Holland High School located at 101 E. Main Street.

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MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of the New Holland Area Historical Society is to collect, organize, and preserve information and historical materials that give insight to understanding the life and times of the New Holland area and to share these findings with others through Museum exhibits, lectures, and educational outreach programs.

Local resident and historian Jack Hillard approached District Superintendent Larry Burkhart and inquired as to the fate of the town clock. Over time the school authorities and staff caught Jack Hillard's vision of preservation of this historic treasure of our town. Jack was enlisted to make contacts with Alumni to seek their financial support of this large project. Private funds were raised to partially offset the restoration and re-positioning of the clock for all to see. The four faces and the workings of the clock were removed and restored by the Eastern Lancaster County School District with financial assistance from the New Holland High School Alumni. Eventually the works and two of the faces were artfully placed in the lobby of Garden Spot High School. The third face was placed in the New Holland Elementary School. The fourth face was kept in storage. Don Welsh, Trustee Chairman of the New Holland Area Historical Society, was aware of the stored fourth face. He envisioned it in the New Holland Museum and made numerous contacts with School District officials to that end. The School District was reluctant to release the fourth face as it was valuable in case one of the other three met with some kind of failure. Welsh persevered until early this year when Neal Walsh from the School District informed him of the District's decision to donate it to the New Holland Area Historical Society. This left Historical Society with a task for which they were ill prepared. How to display a clock of this magnitude and significance? While the questions outnumbered the answers, who should walk into the Museum one day, but Jack Hillard. Jack, having been involved with the clock since his first encounter with Larry Burkhart, had the vision and answers for how to properly mount the display. Under Jack's guidance (now known around the Museum as Mr. Town Clock) with assistance from Larry Knepper, Larry Huber, Dave Maclay, two very strong guys from Sensenig's Mill who lifted the clock into place and financial assistance once again from the New Holland High School Alumni, the fourth face is now on permanent display in the New Holland Museum. Stop in and see, up close, our town's historical artifact that has endured 140 years. And by the way, all the faces, including the Museum's are keeping accurate time!

Photo below on the right. Don Welsh looks on as Don Horning presents a description of the clock to Jack Hillard who will frame with wood reclaimed from the New Holland School.



Clock being prepared to be lifted into place



Don Welsh Jack Hillard Don Horning

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If you would like to become a Partner, please contact one of the Trustees. Thank You!

Silvercraft Postcards of New Holland

Submitted by Brian Frankhouser

During the past 11 years all the mass produced New Holland postcard sets published before 1950 have been described in the NHAHS newsletters, except one. Until a fourth card shows up, this last set will be described as three promotional postcards for local businesses. Each of these cards are fairly scarce because they were published during the early 1940's at a time when postcards weren't particularly popular. The set is small enough that a photo of each card is included with this article, and a brief history of each business is summarized.

In 1934 Ivan A. Shirk bought a two story frame dwelling on the northeast corner of Brimmer Avenue and Prospect Street for \$4,000. Shortly after, he opened Shirk's grocery store. An advertisement from 1936 included a sale on Lifebuoy soap (that ends "B.O.") priced at 3 bars for 18 cents. Two small boxes of laundry detergent were sold for 15 cents! Shirk operated the store until the 1950's. The store was later managed by Lewis Taylor and Clarence Weaver.

Diller Kendig ran a service station on West Main Street since the early 1930's. On July 17, 1944, he was test driving John Flora's car on the 300 block of West Main Street when he was hit head on by a 17 year old driver. The teenage driver had crossed the center line and the impact from the collision killed Kendig. After the accident Kendig's wife, Flora Belle, kept the gas station open and expanded inventory to include a gift shop.

In March of 1939, Warren W. Weaver of Gap purchased William H. Dorwart's jewelry business. Dorwart operated out of the theatre building for 14 years, and Weaver had 10 years experience working for a jeweler in Coatesville. Warren moved his jewelry business from the theatre building to 144 East Main Street in 1947, after John H. Sensenig left this location to go to Coatesville. W. W. Weaver retired after serving the New Holland community over 40 years.

Checklist of New Holland Silvercraft Postcards

Description includes what is shown on back of each postcard.

- 25951 – SHIRK'S GROCERY, The Friendly Neighborhood Store, New Holland, Pa., Phone: 866
- 25952 – D. R. Kendig, Atlantic Gas – Oil – Lubrication, 424 West Main Street, New Holland, N.Y.
- 26339 – WARREN W. WEAVER, Jeweler, Theatre Building, New Holland, Pa.

The photos for these postcards were taken by McClellan of Leacock, Pa. (same photographer as New Holland Clarion set as described in Spring 2011 NHAHS newsletter). Silvercraft was a trade name used by Dexter Press (the printer) of Pearl River, N. Y. The Shirk and Kendig postcards were printed at the same time (note state address error on Kendig postcard). The Weaver postcard was printed slightly later, but at the same time as at least one other postcard from Leola.



Shirk's grocery store was located at 211 Brimmer Avenue, on the north corner of Prospect Street. The house shown to the left of Shirk's was also a grocery store many years before (see Winter 2013 NHAHS Newsletter).



Kendig's Service Station was located at 424 West Main Street. Earl Hostetter operated an Atlantic Gas Station after the Kendigs at the site for several years until it was razed in the mid 1960's, and a New Holland Farmers National Bank branch was built. Today it is home to PNC Bank.



School Clock:
Warren Weaver was "keeping New Holland on time" because he was responsible for winding the town clock. One of Weaver's predecessors, John H. Sensenig, made major renovations to the clock during the school reconstruction project of 1924-25.

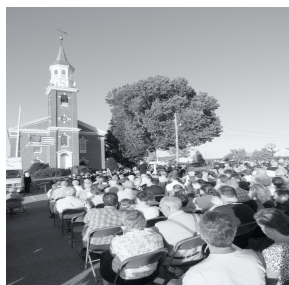


The second round of veteran banners were unveiled on May 28, 2016. Over 200 were sold and hung by a committee led by Allison Cuthie. The first round of banners were dedicated in May of 2013 and just honored veterans. The current crop of banners also includes “first responders”, fire company members, ambulance personnel and police officers. The above right photo shows a sizable crowd assembled on a very warm day to witness the unveiling ceremony.

During the spring of 2015, Steve Loewen and Jeff Miller embarked on a research project to verify that Major Richard Winters of Band of Brothers fame, was born in New Holland. His birthplace was mentioned in Larry Alexander's book written about Dick Winters but was never confirmed. After lengthy investigation by Steve and Jeff it was determined Dick Winters was born in New Holland and resided at 30 N. Custer Avenue for two years. The above left photo shows Larry Alexander and Rebecca Gallagher who spearheaded the Richard Winters Veterans Plaza and Trail in Ephrata. They presented a framed print recognizing that Dick Winters is a New Holland native and lists his lifetime achievements along with three photos. The print now resides in the Museum.

STAY INFORMED! If you are a NHAHS member and DO NOT receive Steve Loewen's periodic E-mail updates, please send your e-mail address to loewen58@yahoo.com. Steve will add you to his list and you will be kept informed about all that's happening at the Historical Society and Museum.

DOCENTS NEEDED – The NHAHS welcomes anyone who is interested in becoming a docent at the museum. The museum is open Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 10:00-2:00. You can do a two hour shift or a four hour shift, once a month, once a week, or once every other month. Connie Greer will train you and stay with you on your first shift. The museum is lovely and interesting, and meeting and greeting people is fun. Call her or email if you are interested. jgreercg@frontiernet.net or 354-0797.



On Sunday June 12, 2016 the renovated steeple dedication ceremony was held at Saint Stephen Reformed Church. A large crowd of community and church members were on hand during a very windy evening. An article will appear in the Fall 2016 newsletter concerning the steeple replacement.

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Area Historical Society



PO Box 464 New Holland PA 17557
www.NhHistorical.com



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Thanks to Superior Walls for sponsoring
the NHAHS summer 2016 newsletter

The New Holland Area Historical Society Museum is available for your class get together, baby shower, wedding shower or other similar event! It is a great venue with lots of ambience in the historic 18th century Kauffman's Hardware building. Contact Wilbur Horning for more information 717-575-3148 or by e-mail whorning118@Comcast.net

SOCIETY MEETINGS - 2016

Historical Society Meetings are held in the Chapel of Garden Spot Village on the **3rd Thursday** of the month at **7:00 p.m.** Here is the list of the upcoming dates:

July – no program

August – no picnic this year

September 15 – program to be announced

October 8 – annual Cemetery tour featuring Civil War soldiers

October 20 – program to be announced

November, December – no program

The Museum is open weekly, Thursday, Friday, Saturday 10 AM-2 PM. 207 E. Main Street. For those who have trouble with stairs, there is an elevator at the rear entrance of the building. There is no regular admission charge for the Museum [donations accepted].