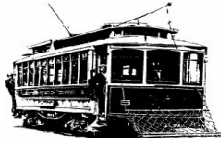


NEW HOLLAND

Area Historical Society



Volume 14 Issue 2

Spring 2018

NEW DISPLAY DEBUTS AT MUSEUM

“WHEN TOBACCO WAS KING OF CROPS”

Submitted by Don Horning

More than a year ago the idea of creating an exhibit on tobacco farming in our area was being considered, not just to celebrate the culture of farming this labor-intensive product, but to recognize that tobacco was an important driver of the economy of eastern Lancaster County. Slowly the ideas and contacts materialized into what is now an interesting and informative look at this era. For instance, the centerpiece of the exhibit is a vintage Minnich Tobacco Press otherwise known on the farm as a “Bale Box”. This box, originally manufactured by Minnich Machine Works in Landisville, is on loan from the Caernarvon Historical Society. Other tools of the trade are on display including shears, lath, spears, sizing box and a number of cigar making tools. For our non-farmers there are two lath of tobacco hanging as they would in a tobacco drying shed. Research and discussions with some tobacco farmers and experts from our area have revealed some unexpected knowledge. First is the surprising amount of acreage of tobacco grown at the peak during the early half of the last century. Totals topped out between 35 and 40 thousand acres under cultivation in Lancaster County! The second surprise was the amount of people employed in the cigar-making industry which at the time was all done by hand. For instance, Terre Hill saw over 500 persons so employed and many other small towns had similar stories. On Grant Street in New Holland, Stauffer Brothers had a cigar factory. Several SB molds and advertising signs are found in the exhibit. At a gathering of farmers and others who raised tobacco, much discussion centered on the hard work, the value of families working together and the community spirit from shared labor. Also pointed out was that farming “on-the-half” provided cash for young couple’s home mortgages, provided operating expenses for groups like the Boy Scouts and even paid for medical school in one case. While the economic gains are widely understood, also present in the discussion was the dilemma of societal effect. It was pointed out by farmers and others knowledgeable about tobacco that while its use/misuse can be harmful to one’s health, the growing of tobacco is a character building process. The value of hard-work, family working side by side for 8 months of the year and the farming community working together builds individual character and community togetherness. Tobacco

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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.

was “King of Crops” in more ways than cash only. When you visit, make sure you search out the “black binder” full of information including some great “can’t miss stories” near the back. The exhibit will remain in place until mid-November.

New Holland Y. M. C. A.

Submitted by Brian Frankhouser

Now that the New Holland Rec Center has become the Y. M. C. A. of New Holland, the question is why did it take New Holland so long to get a Y. M. C. A.? The answer is “it didn’t”.

In January of 1912 citizens of New Holland met in Hess Hall for the purpose of starting a permanent organization of the New Holland Y. M. C. A. A Board of Directors was elected and local mail carrier, George Bair, was the first president. Meetings were held in the Council Chambers and membership was open to all young men who reached the age of 16. By the end of the first year two new groups were formed and younger boys were invited to join. Highlights in 1912 included a track meet, entertainment at the United Brethren Church, and a wide general support from the community. In 1913 more progress was made. Baseball and basketball teams were formed. The organization was meeting every week and special events were planned throughout the year. This included sporting contests, recitals, and even a spelling bee. A unique opportunity arose when the I. O. O. F. moved their home from the third floor of the Showalter building to the new Brubaker building (109/111 East Main Street). Within a few short months, the new home for the Y. M. C. A. was the entire top floor of the Showalter building. There were two small rooms and a large one. The large room was converted into a gymnasium. The gymnasium was used for various events, including basketball!

The Clarion never reported when the Y. M. C. A. disbanded in New Holland, but by 1916 it was clear that interest had waned. The New Holland Athletic Association provided opportunities for the boys to be involved in sports at that time. Two men who were very active in overseeing events for the Y. M. C. A. boys were George S. Townsley and Isaac Cauller. Their leadership continued in the following years with the local Boy Scouts.



The Y. M. C. A. was organized in Hess Hall, which was located on the second floor of the building shown on right. This meeting place was used for entertainment, civic organizations,

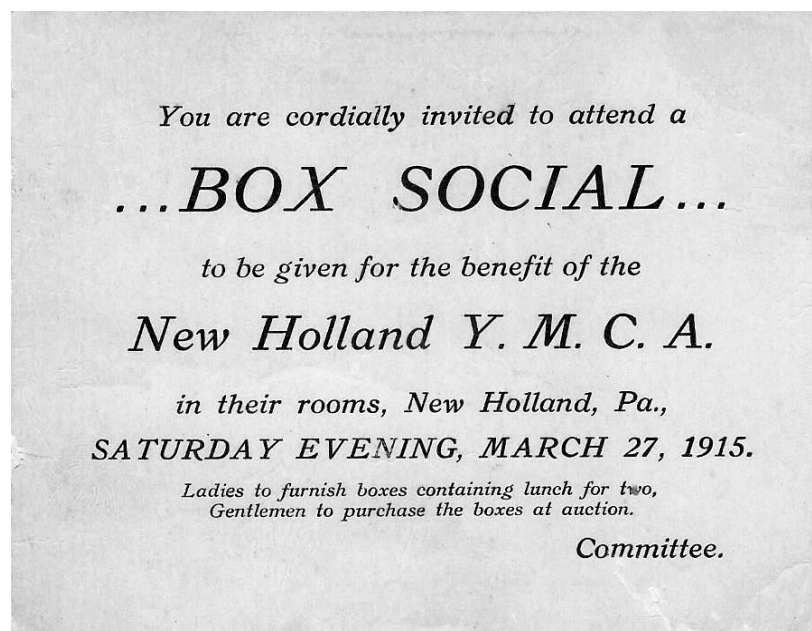
and to show silent movies. By 1914, Eli Hess expanded his store into this space, so it was no longer available. The Trimmers bought this store on the southwest corner of Railroad Avenue and Main Street in 1927.



The Y. M. C. A. held regular meetings in Council Chambers on the second floor of the Showalter building during their first year. Later, they occupied the top floor and built a gymnasium there. This landmark dates back to 1868 when Isaac Witwer, director of the New Holland Band during the Civil War, financed construction with lottery winnings. The building is now home to Lickity Split Restaurant, Hick's Clock Shop, and apartments.

Box lunch invitation

This was a popular way to raise money in the early 20th century. Young ladies would decorate a box and fill it with two lunches. Young men would bid at auction on the anonymous boxes and eat lunch with whoever packed it. Of course, the young ladies would often give hints to the young man they hoped would purchase their lunchbox.



NHAHS BUSINESS PARTNERS ALLIANCE

HERITAGE PARTNER **CASE NEW HOLLAND – M & T Bank – Garden Spot Village**

Ranck Family Heritage Society – New Holland American Legion Post 662

Chester County Solid Waste Authority

BUSINESS PARTNER **Goodville Mutual Casualty Company**

BENEFACTORS **Gene and Mary Lowry, Charles and Jane Zimmerman**

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

Cut here and return to address below.

NEW HOLLAND AREA HISTORICAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Type of membership requested (please check one)

Lifetime Membership (\$500) Annual Corporate Membership (\$100)

Annual Individual/Household Membership (\$20) Other Gift

(Please print clearly)

First Name: _____ Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Zip Code: _____ Phone (area code): _____ E-mail: _____

ALL DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE. Please send your check or money order made payable to NHAHS—New Holland Area Historical Society with this application to:

New Holland Area Historical Society, PO Box 464, New Holland PA 17557

When New Holland had an Airport and the Conestoga Aero Club

Submitted by Wilbur Horning

There was a time when New Holland was the home of an airport and the Conestoga Aero Club. This club was formed in 1947 with the purpose of opening an airport and to purchase aircraft for the purpose of recreational flying.

On September 5, 1947, the *New Holland Clarion* reported that construction had started on the Conestoga Valley Airport located on twenty-eight acres south of New Holland on land owned by Ross Esbenshade. A Marine pilot, Maj. Charles N. Butler, JR was in charge of the operation of the facility that included two grass runways. The October 24 edition of the *Clarion* reported work on the improvement of the Conestoga Valley Airport was progressing rapidly and fuel pumps were being installed. It was the newest in the County. On March 19, 1948, the Conestoga Valley Airport received its Air Agency Certificate and was now a qualified government school of aeronautics for both private and commercial pilot courses.

Financial difficulties caused the field to close after a little more than a year but Mr. Esbenshade then took action to reopen as The New Holland Airport, with Ernie Cedergren as the new manager and flight instructor, and Roy Peris was added as a mechanic because there were now thirteen planes based at New Holland.

Alfred W. Stover then took over operation of the field from 1953 until his death in 1971. His son Fred then managed the operation until the final closing in 1976. Many local folks took their first airplane ride at the New Holland Airport.

On display in our museum are numerous pictures and other items such as former Mayor Bill Houck's Pilot Flight Record and Log Book.



Most residents of the New Holland area have very fond memories of going “south of town” to watch air planes take off and land with family and friends.

NEW HOLLAND

Area Historical Society



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



This is some of the tobacco display currently in the museum

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 - 2018

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

April 19 "History of Shady Maple" Presented by Marvin Weaver, founder of Shady Maple Market

May 17 program "Nineteenth and Twentieth Century Architect" C. Emlen Urban redefined the architectural landscape of Lancaster city. The program will be presented by Gregory J. Scott FAIA -RLPS Architects. The New Holland Area Historical Society won the award that is named after him from Lancaster County Historic Preservation Trust in 2015.

June, July, August – **no program**

September 20 – program to be announced

The Museum is open weekly, Thursday, Friday, Saturday 10 AM-2 PM. 207 E. Main St.