

# NEW HOLLAND

## Area Historical Society



Volume 20 Issue 3

Summer 2024

### New Exhibit Celebrates the New Holland Band's Trip to France

Submitted by Mike Ressler

A new exhibit has been opened at the New Holland Area Historical Society's Museum on Main celebrating the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the New Holland Band's trip to France.

Located in the ground floor entry hallway, the exhibit of photos, documents, and a uniform developed just for the journey tells the story of the trip which occurred from July 4 through July 12, 1974. A forty-piece band led by Sam Zimmerman along with twenty-six citizens of New Holland and the area led by New Holland's Mayor Willis Houck traveled to visit New Holland's twin city, Longvic, located near Dijon, southeast of Paris.

The twin city relationship was established in 1966 when a charter was signed by the town's mayors, and it encouraged an exchange of people, ideas, and culture. At the time, Longvic was the location of a Sperry New Holland farm machinery manufacturing plant. Photos taken by New Holland photographer Charlie Rice show the band

performing in Longvic, Paris, and La Chaux-de-Fonds in Switzerland. From its first performance, a solemn memorial ceremony at the Suresnes American Cemetery, the final resting place of Americans killed there during World Wars I and II, to its final concert, performed under the Eiffel Tower six days later, the band thrilled its French audiences with both French and American classics.

Comprised of musicians from age 14 to 73, the band and accompanying citizens represented its community in grand fashion and made lasting friendships with its twin city neighbors. The exhibit is expected to run through the summer.

Please see 2 photos on the next page.

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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.*



Left photo - The Museum on Main entry hall showing some of the photos and documents which tell the story of the New Holland Band's visit to France 50 years ago. The Twin City Charter, at far right, was signed by the mayors of New Holland and Longvic in 1967.

Right photo - Flanked by the flags of the United States and France, a mannequin models the special uniform designed for the band's trip. A bow tie was worn for concerts, and a long, four-in-hand tie for parades and ceremonies.

## A Day at the NHAHS Museum

On a Saturday in June, Easton age 10, couldn't wait to visit the New Holland Area Historical Society Museum with his mother, Ashley Zink. I could hear them coming as they talked about Blue Ball and New Holland pictures lining the lower hallway. Clutched in Easton's hands was an iPad so he could collect pictures of things that caught his eye. Entering the upstairs (there is also an elevator), his eyes lit up at each special artifact and picture. There was the store front of an early 1900s optician with round-lensed glasses and a pocket watch. There were pictures of (Stauffer's) drug store with a soda fountain inside, and a big blue ball suspended from the ceiling. He listened eagerly to the stories our docent (museum guide) shared with him. His mother joined in the conversations about times past vs. present.

A favorite hands-on spot in the next room held desks from an old one room school, books on penmanship, and a video explaining how classes were held with all grades in one room. His mother, Ashley, recalled that his grandparents went to a school like that when they were his age. The New Holland Agriculture exhibit had an unusual picture of 'Petal' – a baby elephant standing in a NH manure spreader! Why? Come and learn the reason... or ask Easton! Final stop on Easton's exploration? The 1800's jail in the basement of the museum. It was a 'holding cell' for rowdy, overnight "guests" in the town! Easton would love to learn more about it, and this might prompt some research.

Easton can't wait to share all his photos and stories with his 'ompah' (grandfather).

Easton is already planning to bring his father to the museum, followed by another visit with his younger brothers. Maybe next time he will see the cobbler's bench or the slide show of old cars



and gas stations. Oh, and if you know the New Holland area, there's a "Then and Now" slide show of local homes and businesses. Summertime / anytime idea: Visit the museum and follow it up with an ice cream treat from Lickity Split!

Photo - Easton, age 10, with docent Carol Buncie. Easton loves old maps. This one is from 1855 and shows the three Earls: East Earl, Earl, and West Earl townships.

## The Town Cannon

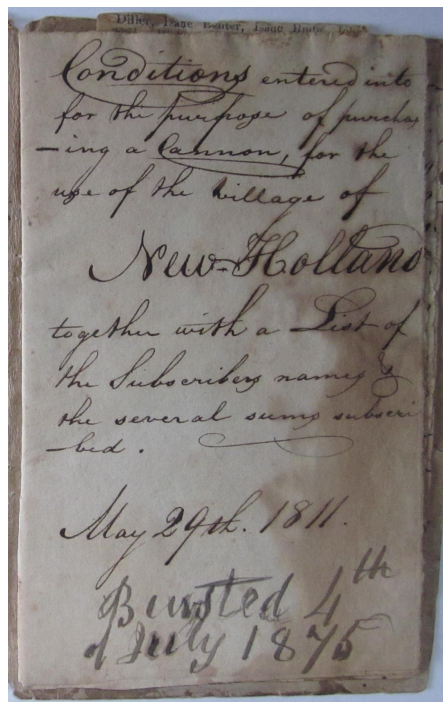
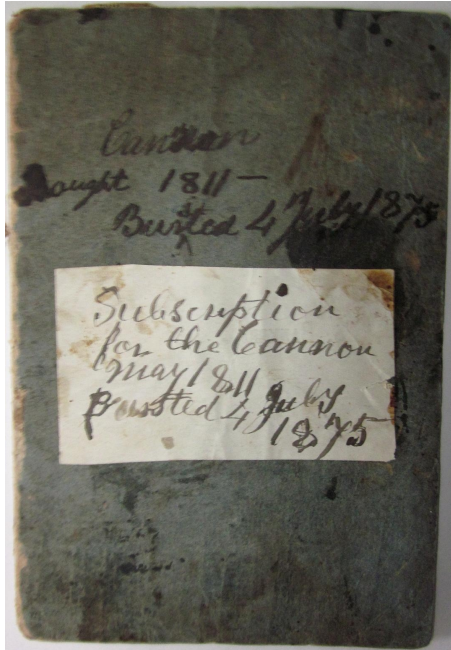
Submitted by Brian Frankhouser

During a summer day in 2022, I stopped in at the museum for a brief visit and noticed what looked like a small piece of cardboard in a plastic holder laying on the docents' desk. After removing it from the plastic, it appeared to be a thin notebook. I carefully opened it, and suddenly realized I was holding a local treasure! This was the subscription book for the town cannon purchased over 200 years ago!

Traditionally, Americans have always celebrated Independence Day loudly, with the help of gunpowder. New Holland was no exception. In the earliest years, guns provided the desired noise. But in 1811, under the direction and care of Col. David Shirk, who was currently serving as a commander in the local militia, the town agreed to purchase a cannon at the old Navy Yard in Philadelphia. The instrument would be of "suitable caliber" to achieve the desired effect for a proper Independence Day celebration. 105 men (a veritable who's who in New Holland) donated between \$0.25 and \$1.00 to raise a total of \$61.77, and ownership would be shared jointly with a provision that "it could be disposed of, at any time, as a majority of us may direct". Any funds raised in excess of the cost of the cannon would be used to purchase ammunition.

The new cannon brought joy to the village, and five of our country's birthdays were enhanced by the additional thunder. Then disaster struck! On July 4, 1816, the artillery discharged prematurely while John Lowry and George Brimmer were loading it. Lowry was killed, and Brimmer lost an eye and an arm. The village of New Holland continued for many years after to celebrate Independence Day by firing the town cannon. However, less attention was paid to its care, and eventually the carriage broke, so the gun was stored on the ground. On July 4, 1875, the town cannon exploded into nine pieces without injuring anyone. There was no paperwork accompanying the 1811 subscription book. I corresponded with all the docents and Board

members, but nobody recalled where it came from. *Who donated this item?* One of the Society’s greatest treasures remains one of its greatest mysteries!



Brother	24	50
John Luther,	1	
Joseph Jones,		50
Henry Michel,		50
Geo. Thompson,	1	
Henry Mackley,		50
Math. Shirk,	1	
Isaac Diller		50
Mich. Silkmitter,		50
Yon Shirk		50
David Stone		50
Benj. Diffenderfer,	1	
David Holl,		50
Jacob Ringwalt	1	
Daniel Holl,	1	
Joseph Ferrel,		50
Geo. Ax		25
Geo. Shefer		50
		<hr/>
		35 75

Photo - Upper left

Shown is the simple, unassuming notebook cover that “appeared” on the docents’ desk. By 1875, the subscription book came into the possession of one of New Holland’s most prominent citizens, Roland Diller, who lived in the dwelling now occupied by Stauffer’s Drug Store. Roland labelled the cover once, but then pasted on another that read “Subscription for the Cannon / May 1811 / Busted 4 July 1875”.

*Photo descriptions continue on page 5.*

Photo - Lower left on page 4

Shown is the first page in the notebook which the following was written in 1811: "Conditions entered into for the purpose of purchasing a Cannon for the use of the village of New Holland together with a List of the Subscribers names & the several sums subscribed. May 29<sup>th</sup>. 1811." Later, Roland Diller added "Busted 4<sup>th</sup> of July 1875".

Photo - Right side on page 4

A typical page in the notebook that carries over the accumulated total from the prior page. The six men listed on this page who donated \$1.00 were: (1) John Luther, patriarch of the family of physicians who lived in the middle of town; (2) George Thompson, the postmaster and close neighbor to Luther; (3) Matthias Shirk, the tanner who donated land to build what's now St. Stephen Church; (4) Benjamin Diffenderfer, a direct descendent of the town's first settler; (5) Jacob Ringwalt, whose home and tavern still survive; and (6) Daniel Holl, whose influential family donated almost 10% of all funds collected for the cannon.

**Do you recognize this place?  
It has a very rich history in New Holland!**



*Continued on the next page*

The property was purchased by two local hardware merchants in 1875, who planned to build two houses on the site. First, they had to raze the building that was already there (it was used as a Methodist meeting house, and later as a school). For economic reasons, they built a duplex. It was used as a two-family residence, apartment house, church, and, most recently, as a real estate business. If you haven't already guessed, it's located on the northeast corner of Main and Hiester (321/323 East Main Street); Hostetter Realty. One of the early occupants was John Wellington Showalter, another hardware merchant. The July 29, 1905 edition of the Clarion announced there was a "park" with quoits and target practice built in Well Showalter's alley (it's now Hiester Avenue).

The New Holland Area Historical Society (NHAHS) is an organization committed to the preservation of the rich history of the greater New Holland area and to finding creative ways to share that story with our community. To continue the legacy upon which this organization was founded, it takes a network of enthusiastic volunteers with a wide variety of skills and experience, as well as the willingness to commit time and energy to the effort. As we continue to grow and expand our efforts, we have varied opportunities for people interested in supporting the organization and its mission. If you have experience or interest in any of the following areas, we welcome the opportunity to discuss how we can partner with you.

- ◆ computer data entry of artifacts into our database program (Past Perfect)
- ◆ social media skills – website, Facebook, Instagram
- ◆ grant writing
- ◆ warehousing donations
- ◆ museum cleaning
- ◆ museum exhibit design and setup
- ◆ newsletter preparation
- ◆ basic property maintenance; electrical, plumbing, general repairs, painting, etc.
- ◆ sale of excess inventory on eBay or local auctions
- ◆ print media liaison
- ◆ public and NHAHS event planning
- ◆ serving as a docent for our museum
- ◆ writing article, essays, or even a book

If you are interested, please send email to [NHAHS@nhhistorical.com](mailto:NHAHS@nhhistorical.com) or call 717-419-1511.

***Thanks for your consideration and support!***



# 2024 ExtraGive

Lancaster County is extraordinary because of YOU! On November 22, join thousands of people across the community to support more than 400 local organizations in our region. Again this year, we'll offer prizes and a STRETCH POOL of at least half MILLION dollars that will be distributed based on an organizations' number of unique donors. Whether you make a \$10 donation or a \$100 donation, your gift will go further for the causes you care about! Thanks to Lancaster County Community Foundation, Presenting Sponsors High Foundation, Murry Foundation, and our other community sponsors, your contribution will make an even bigger impact for our community. Mark your calendars, invite your friends, and get ready to give EXTRA on November 22!

## NHAHS Supporters "What Sustains us"

### HERITAGE PARTNERS [\$1,000 and above]

Don Horning Brian & Ruth Frankhouser R. Douglas & Linda Good  
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 NH Grocery Outlet New Holland HVAC Inc. Winross Collectors Club

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## NEW HOLLAND AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Type of membership requested (please check one)

- Annual Personal/Household (\$20)                       Annual Partner (\$100-\$499)  
 Annual Legacy Partner (\$500-\$999)       Annual Heritage Partner (\$1000 & up)  
 Lifetime membership (\$500) Personal or Household     Other gift \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**"All five memberships"** – Your name will appear in the newsletter for four consecutive editions regardless of when the membership is received. You may remain anonymous.

*These partner categories apply to all donors i.e. individuals, businesses and organizations*

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (    ) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

2024 Membership Dues should be sent by check payable to NHAHS and mailed to  
NHAHS PO Box 464, New Holland PA 17557. If you have any questions regarding payment please  
send an email to [NHAHS@nhhistorical.com](mailto:NHAHS@nhhistorical.com) Thank you for your continued support

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## NHAHS RECEIVES AWARD FROM PENNSYLVANIA FFA

Recently the New Holland Area Historical Society was among numerous persons and organizations honored by the Pennsylvania FFA. The ceremony was held June 12 at the Bryce Jordan Center, Penn State University, State College PA. Following, is the ceremony text as recited by an FFA Student: “This past year the New Holland Area Historical Society built a display in their Museum dedicated to honoring the rich history of Grassland FFA and the agricultural department at Garden Spot High School. Throughout the time the FFA display is up, the NHAHS has hosted events to advocate for Grassland FFA. Representatives from CNH, past PA FFA State Officers, current State Officers and current National Officers have all visited the Historical Society to view this Exhibit. Additionally, many interested community residents have visited as well. Congratulations to NHAHS on receiving this Citation Award and supporting local FFA chapters.” Also receiving an Honorary Degree of Membership was NHAHS Board Member and Brand Communications Manager for New Holland North America, Aimee Culbert. Note: The NHAHS is indebted to Allison Zimmerman, a GSHS FFA Graduate, for her tireless efforts to stage this exhibit!

# This happened July 1, 1967!



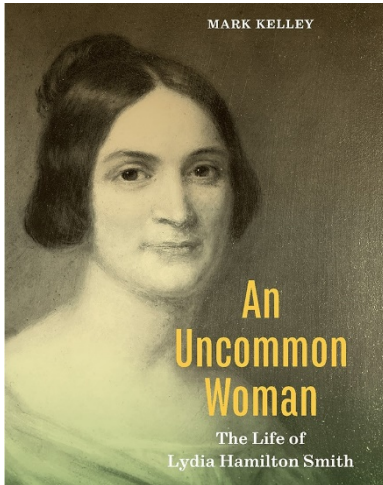
At 9:45 P.M. Jack Rutter was dining at the New Holland House restaurant, also known as “Ducky’s”. Someone ran in the door and said Kauffman's Hardware, which is across the street, is on fire! Jack, a fireman with Liberty Fire Company, now Garden Spot Fire Rescue, ran outside and saw a car at the traffic light. It was driven by Bob Spotts, who is one of our docents in the Museum. He gave Jack a ride to the fire hall 2 blocks to the east, where the fire company members were just wrapping up training that evening. Jack responded with the 1st truck to the fire. Paint cans were exploding and flying through the front show room window. They crawled through the window with fire hoses and quickly extinguished the fire but there was extensive smoke damage throughout the entire building. The cause of the fire was a ballast in a fluorescent light at the very west end of the building, which is now the Edward Jones Financial office, 201 E. Main St. During restoration the front façade of the building was completely changed around as seen in the postcard. Before the fire there were multiple entrances, and after the restoration there was only one. Editor's note: I was 10 years old at the time of the fire. I went with my grandfather, Wayne Ranck, one week after the disaster at the “Store on the Corner”. I will never forget the smell when I walked in!

# NEW HOLLAND

Area Historical Society



PO Box 464 New Holland, PA



## September 19 – “An Uncommon Woman *the Life of Lydia Hamilton Smith*”

Garden Spot Village Chapel 7 PM

*Presented by Mark Kelly Ph.D.*

An Uncommon Woman is a biography of Lydia Hamilton Smith (1813-1884), a prominent mixed-race businesswoman in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and the longtime housekeeper, life companion, and collaborator of congressman and staunch abolitionist Thaddeus Stevens. In his biography of this remarkable woman, Mark Kelley reveals how Smith served the cause of abolition, managed Stevens’ household, acquired property, and crossed racialized social boundaries.

Mark Kelley holds a Ph.D. in journalism from Syracuse University. He worked for twenty-five years as a broadcast journalist and has taught journalism and mass communications at Goshen College, Syracuse University, the University of Maine, and the New England School of Communications. An Uncommon Woman is his fourth book. Kelley currently serves on the Scholarly Advisory Committee for the Thaddeus Stevens & Lydia Hamilton Smith Center for History and Democracy, a museum under development by LancasterHistory. He resides in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, with his wife, Marty.

## October 17 – “DuPont – How the Family Came to America and How the Company Began and Thrived”

Garden Spot Village Chapel 7 PM

*Presented by Lucas Clawson, Historian, Office of the Hagley Museum,  
Wilmington, DE*