



The Herald

Holidays
2011

Hark the happenings of the Historic Langhorne Association

160 West Maple Avenue, Langhorne, PA 19047

215.757.1888

<http://www.historiclanghorne.org>



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Santa's Visit and Caroling

Santa Claus will make his annual appearance at the Anna Mary Williamson Library on **Sunday, December 11, 2011**. We have it on good authority that he will arrive at **1:00 pm** and will stay until 3:00. There is also an unconfirmed rumor that he will be accompanied by two of his faithful elves. Please join us for what is always a very enjoyable event.

Then at **7:00 pm** that same night, bring the family for an hour of caroling at the Library. We will sing the traditional carols accompanied by Carol Deaver and her guitar and listen to the annual reading of *Twas the Night Before Christmas*.

Both events are free and open to the public so please mention this to your friends and neighbors. Refreshments will be served and the **Gift Shop** will be open. There will also be raffle tickets available for a \$50 gift certificate to the Build-a-Bear Workshop with the drawing to be held during the carol sing.

Holiday House Tour 2011 - "A Beary Christmas" by Lynda Johnson



On Thursday, November 17, Historic Langhorne Association was turned into "A Beary Christmas", as part of the Four Lanes End Garden Club Holiday House Tour.

Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Winnie-the Pooh and a Beehive, too, police, fire, EMT bears, military bears, known and unknown bears, some handmade or dressed in their native costumes, almost came to life in the beautiful displays done by the HLA volunteer elves. Our tree, mantle and wreaths were decorated with hand-crafted decorations made by our volunteers who became painters, bakers, beehive and honey-pot makers. The foyer was decorated with a beautiful "custom home", complete with a picket fence, for The Three Bears. Ice skaters and winter bears all had their own space, too. And, a Teddy Bear's Picnic was displayed. There were bear tunes, bear books, photographs and newspaper articles of the history of bears and even an antique bear. We hope you were able to enjoy this display and pick your favorite bear.

We are grateful to our many members and non-members who loaned their precious bears to make our successful display. It was a truly wonderful day!

Many thanks to our team of talented and willing workers:

Jean Noble
Lorraine Wysor

Lynda Johnson
Suzanne Everitt

Janet Maher
Lisa Duemig

Sally Marrington
Sandi Kaiser

To our talented house builder: **Jim Maier**

To other important workers who put up outside decorations, moved partition and anything else we asked: **Larry Langhans and Jim Maiier**

To the extra helpers on the day of the tour: **Jack Fulton Marty McDonald Evelyn Aicher Elsie Knight**

A special thank you to our **Chairperson, Jean Noble**, who guided and encouraged all the volunteers, even when she couldn't be there. It was a thrill for all of us to see her at HLA the morning of the tour.

Our headquarters is located in The Anna Mary Williamson Library & Museum

2011 Fall Ghost Tours Report by Jim Maier

Historic Langhorne Association held its annual fall Ghost Tours on Friday and Saturday evenings during October. Those attending were told of the many tales of haunting that have taken place in Langhorne Borough over the years. While the tours take visitors along Maple and Bellevue Avenues, other local hauntings are also discussed by the tour guides.

This year our tour guides were Jen Deeny, Beth Connolly, Kate Transue and Judy and Julie Beck. Donna Thomas kindly opened Will Travel Agency for the tours and discussed Joseph Watson, the resident ghost of the building. Mike Jesberger and his son Erik were in Revolutionary War uniform at the Cemetery to discuss the history and happenings there. Tickets were sold by Donna Thomas, Kari Thomas, Kami Miller and Deborah Schaffer, the staff at Will Travel, Inc.

A few years ago I had purchased a K-II EMF Meter and a digital recorder. Both of these are sent out on the tours. Having some of the same equipment on our tours that is used by the professional ghost hunting groups has had very positive feedback.

The digital recorder is used for capturing EVP's which are known as electronic voice phenomenon. Thomas Edison was known to be working on an EVP device; however, the credit for discovering EVPs was given to a man named Fredrich Jurgenson when he was recording bird songs in the Swedish countryside. When he played back the recording he distinctly heard the voice of a man discussing nocturnal bird songs in Norwegian. Other voices were heard as well, some giving him instructions on how to record more voices. Nothing else was heard during the recording. We use the digital recorder for the same purpose, capturing EVP's from haunted sites in our area. From this unit they can be transferred to a computer to be analyzed.

The KII Meter is used to measure EMF's or, Electro-magnetic Fields. EMF's are emitted by electrical devices of all types. Everything from appliances, cell phones, household wiring, lights and even the human body will emit electro-magnetic fields. The EMF Meter is used to measure these fields and identify those appliances or wiring that produces high level emissions. Exposure to EMF's should be limited. EMF fluctuations have also been associated with locations where unexplained phenomena have been reported, including alleged haunting. Any EMF fluctuation or high readings in areas that have no electrical sources nearby are believed to be caused by ghosts.

These Ghost Tours have been a successful fundraising event for Historic Langhorne Association for a number of years now. Our team of hard working volunteers puts in many hours throughout the month of October for the tours. Usually our only concern on scheduled tour nights has been the threat of heavy rain. This year we were surprised with a snow storm on a tour day which necessitated our first-ever rescheduling of that night's tours due to snow. Hopefully the weather will cooperate for next year's tours. Please follow our website for information on 2012 tours. Please contact me if you have an interest in becoming a tour guide for future tours.

2011 Fall Ghost Tours Notes from Donna Thomas, at Will Travel

Our ghost tours were a wonderful success this year and they were highlighted by new technology and many interesting experiences by the participants on tour. In the Will Travel building, our resident ghost made quite a few appearances. He was captured by our new K-II meter and amused and surprised tour participants. He was especially negative when we tried to take photographs and would make the meter do energetic shadows. Unfortunately for many, our ghost does not like to be photographed, so all of their pictures were blank. Sadly, this also happened to both professional and amateur photographers. We had two professional ghost hunters on an early tour in October and the ghost definitely made appearances for them.

For future reference, I encourage you to consider taking the tour in the early part of October when they are typically less crowded and you seem to have a greater interaction with the ghost than during the more crowded tours at the end of the month. The tours closer to Halloween also tend to sell out and many people were disappointed at not being able to buy tickets.

Our Last Keystone by Jim Maier

Ever since 1992, motorists entering Langhorne Borough from the west on Maple Avenue have been greeted by a Keystone Marker on the corner of Hill and Maple Avenues. This marker is the lone survivor of a group of three that once proudly stood alongside the roads in Langhorne.

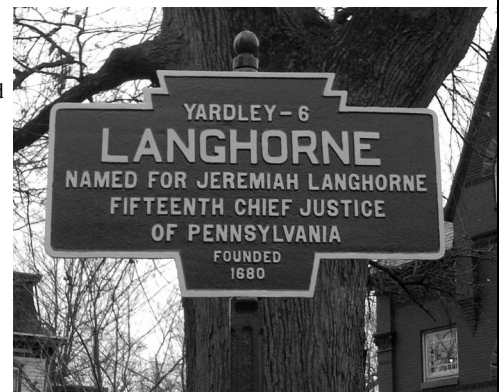
The Keystone Markers were first installed in the 1920s by the State Department of Highways, the predecessor of our Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT). These Keystone signs appear to have been installed as late as the 1940s. The purpose of the signs was to mark the limits of boroughs and show the distance to the next town. In addition, brief facts are shown such as the origin of the town name and the date that the community was founded.

Many of these historic signs have survived in various conditions. Some are still mounted on their original posts while others have been installed on modern posts. Current sign regulations call for the mounting posts to be of the breakaway design for safety reasons. The original posts that these signs were mounted on do not meet the current standards. Some signs were removed for this reason while others were removed due to road widening and construction. Auto accidents also claimed some of these signs.

Langhorne had three of these Keystone Markers at one time according to a 1992 article that appeared in the Philadelphia Inquirer. The article mentions that PennDOT had removed the other two Langhorne signs because they were deemed to be road hazards. They were eventually sold for scrap metal. The last surviving Langhorne sign was found in the borough garage. It was damaged from being knocked down several years earlier. The Langhorne Borough Business and Professional Association paid to have the sign restored before it was placed in the front corner of Historic Langhorne Association's property. It may have originally stood somewhere along Langhorne Yardley Road since this one states that Yardley is the next town, 6 miles away.

After nineteen years on our property, the sign had weathered and rust began to bubble through. One fall afternoon recently, my father, Bill Maier, and I sanded the sign down to remove the flaking paint and rust. After a coat of primer, the blue top coat was applied before the lettering was repainted. This should help preserve the sign for many more years to come.

When you travel the roads of Pennsylvania, keep an eye out for these historic road markers of the past. You will be surprised how many have survived the test of time. There are a few websites with listings of surviving signs, their location and also current condition. I have also found a company that is reproducing the signs to meet modern safety standards. Hopefully some of these signs will begin reappearing alongside our roads.



Recent Donations to HLA Archives by Larry Langhans

The archives collection at HLA continues to grow thanks to our members and friends. Following are some of the new additions:

Donna Thomas recently donated a postcard from 1907 of the old Foulke & Long Institute building in Langhorne Manor. The building, formerly located on the site of the present day Philadelphia Biblical University, served as a girls' school. The building opened as a summer hotel in 1889, but the business failed in 1894 and was sold to Foulke & Long in 1895. In 1911 the institute moved to Philadelphia and the following year the Marist Fathers purchased the property calling it St. Mary's Manor, a Catholic college and seminary. By 1973 there was a graduating class of 30 – 35 students and the old building had been torn down. Philadelphia Bible College, now Philadelphia Biblical University, moved to the site in 1979.



HLA President, **Jim Maier** contributed a "Sixtieth Anniversary Bulletin, 1888 – 1948" from the Langhorne Presbyterian Church. He found it on E-Bay. **Nan and Bill Kent** donated copies of ten photographs of the Feasterville area taken between 1900 and 1950 that had been given to them by the Freed family of Feasterville.

Bill Strickler III, whose grandfather was the founder of the Langhorne Speedway, sent a copy of a photograph of the cabins and television and radio repair shop his parents owned from around 1950 – 1960 on Route 1 across from the Speedway. Bill told us that he had attended the old Pine Street and Cherry Street schools in Langhorne. He now lives in Florida.



Finally, in helping HLA record today's events for posterity, **Kari Thomas** donated digital copies of photographs she had taken during this year's Veterans' Day Ceremonies in Langhorne. During the event, a large group of residents walked to six locations around town honoring those who had served our country and ending at the new Peace Pole at the Mayors' Playground.

Library Entrance Receives Much-Needed Facelift

Our thanks go to Larry Langhans for underwriting the cost of repainting the front entrance of the Anna Mary Williamson Library in advance of the Holiday House Tour. The work was performed by B.D. Winters Home Improvements.

Historic Langhorne Association's Website

For the last two years, Historic Langhorne Association has had its own domain name of historiclanshorne.org. At the time we applied for it, we chose to continue running our old website located at <http://hla.buxcom.net/>

At this time, we will be discontinuing use of our old website. If you have this site bookmarked, please update the bookmark to www.historiclanshorne.org.

In the coming days our website will be moved to a new host. At this time it will receive some new updates. Be sure to stop by often to see our listing of upcoming events and programs.

News you may have missed

From the Daily Intelligencer, 11/19/1898: "Turkeys Funeral March" - Five hundred fat, proud, but short-sighted Thanksgiving turkeys strutted down the main street of Langhorne Saturday, on their way to a public sale and subsequent execution. They lined up 20 to 25 abreast, and gave the drivers very little trouble on the march. The novel sight brought out all the people of the town.

From the Bucks County Gazette, 7/5/1912: "Langhorne Locals" - Langhorne now has four ice cream parlors and a soda fountain almost within a radius of one block so the entire community could be readily supplied at a short notice. The new ice cream parlor and restaurant was opened by Taylor Praul on Saturday, in the William B. Parry building; Mrs. Sara P. Gillingham, the store of the late Carl Hibbs, Frank Thomas and Pryor's soda fountain are the three other places where "warm humanity" will be refreshed this summer.

**Historic Langhorne Association's
2011 Officers & Committee Chairs**

President: Jim Maier
 Vice President: Larry Langhans
 Treasurer: Jack Fulton
 Recording Sec'y: Evelyn Aicher
 Corresponding Sec'y: Lynda Johnson
 Technology: Charlie Lauble & Jim Maier
 Artifacts: Evelyn Aicher
 Publicity: Jean Noble
 Hostess: Sandi Kaiser
 Archives: Larry Langhans & Jim Maier
 Gift Shop: Evelyn Aicher & Judy Sloan
 Finance: Jack Fulton
 Genealogy: Sandi Kaiser
 Holiday House: Jean Noble
 Library: Jean Noble
 Membership: Jack Fulton
 Newsletter: Jack Fulton
Oral History: Open
Programs: Open
 Property: Charles Lauble
 Social Media: Donna Thomas
 Ways and Means: Jean Noble
 Grant Advisor: Kathy Horwatt
 House Plaques: Judy Sloan
 Spring Tea: Lynda Johnson

Picture your name here and volunteer!

*Coming Attractions at
Historic Langhorne Association*

Monday, March 26th, 2012, 7:30 pm

General meeting: Guest Speaker to be announced on our website and in our next newsletter.

Sunday, April 29th, 2012—SAVE THE DATE

Afternoon Tea: Wild Violets Tea Garden, Hulmeville, Pa. - Annual event featuring a wonderful selection of tea sandwiches, scones with lemon curd, jam and clotted cream, and delicious desserts. Special guest(s) and other details to be announced in our next newsletter.

HLA has three email addresses for communicating with us at our headquarters.

General email-

HistoricLanghorne1@verizon.net

Archive email-

hlaarchives@verizon.net

Research email-

hlaresearch@verizon.net

OPEN HOURS

Wednesdays 10am - 12pm & 7 - 9pm

Saturdays 10am - 12pm

...Or by appointment

Admission is Free & Gift Shop Available

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**Preserving our PAST
 To enlighten the PRESENT
 And provide for the FUTURE**