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The Historical Society opened its first museum in this building in 1941.



## *Cover Photo*

The

The Historical Society's present day building,

# JOURNAL

of the

*Lycoming County Historical Society*

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# The Birth of a Historical Society

(Please note: Unless otherwise indicated, all quotations are taken from LCHS Board minutes and other documents in the LCHS Archives.)

**W**HY WOULD A PARADE INSPIRE eleven men to trudge through a foot of snow in temperatures that dipped deep into the teens to attend a meeting on a February evening in 1907 held in the Common Council Chamber of Williamsport City Hall? Who in his right mind would have wanted to venture out well after dark on that bone chilling Tuesday night?

The men, most of them members of the Williamsport Board of Trade, came from points throughout the city to that meeting at 454 Pine Street. Some, like attorney Emerson Collins, who lived at 1062 West Fourth Street, and Williamsport's Mayor Seth Foresman, who lived at 835 West Fourth Street, traveled more than a mile. This was a time when transportation on the brick-paved streets was limited to trolley or carriage. The night before, according to the *Gazette and Bulletin*, "The biggest snow storm of the winter struck." Although trains were delayed by three hours, the trolleys had cleaned their tracks, plowed snow, and kept to their schedule. There were fourteen livery stables in the city then, one right next to city hall, but did they use them? Not only is it likely that the stables were closed under such inclement conditions, but also these rather stalwart gentlemen may not have wanted to risk their horses' well being.

Some, like Hyman Slate, co-owner of George Slate's Sons Leather Belting, or Reverend William Charles Hogg, pastor of First Presbyterian Church, probably walked the few

blocks from their homes east of Market Street, bundled against the northwest wind in long overcoats, mufflers, gloves and hats. That was also likely the case for taxidermist Charles Eldon who lived in a hotel complex on Fourth Street near Hepburn Street, where he also had his studio.<sup>1</sup> It is not likely that any drove an automobile since this emerging transportation mode was more a sporting toy for the wealthy than a practical conveyance. Three years earlier, 23 automobiles were registered to owners in the county, 13 of them in the city, although none of those owners included the prominent citizens identified above.<sup>2</sup>

Four blocks south of their meeting place, the Susquehanna River flowed beneath ice thick enough that a South Side businessman planned to clear snow from three acres of it the coming weekend so he could cut blocks to store in his ice barn for future sales. The frozen river, dimly illuminated by a waning half moon, held the huge timbers of the Susquehanna Boom cribs in its frigid grip, as if it could keep these last vestiges of the prosperous lumbering industry from their disassembly two years later. A short block north of City Hall, trains of the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad (to be merged with the Pennsylvania Railroad later this same year) had clanged and rattled in and out of the city, casting cinders and sparks on the clean white snow as they braked at the Market Street station.

But back to that parade! What was so important about it that it caused these men to meet in the coldest month of the year? It was Williamsport's Centennial Parade, it had occurred on July 4 the previous year, and it had inspired the group to form the Lycoming Historical Society.

Mr. Joseph McMinn, chairman of the Board of Trade Committee on the Organization of a Historical Society, began the meeting by presenting a report about the parade. Reflecting upon the first float of the Historical Division, with a dramatic flair Mr. McMinn described a romanticized depiction of American Indians performing daily tasks while an "old chief in all his trappings standing with an arrow in his hand" used "hieroglyphics . . . that were painted upon buckskin stretched

over a rude easel formed of birch poles" to interpret the tribe's history to a young boy. Mr. McMinn noted that this served as a metaphor for the importance of imparting our history to future generations. He stressed that our local history, however, was too important to leave to "grandfathers' tales" or "even the records of local historians." He said, "The volume and value of our local history has become so great that The Lycoming Historical Society is an absolute necessity, if Williamsport is to maintain her place among intelligent and progressive cities. The entire community realizes this fact and the only reason for failure of previous limited efforts to establish historical and scientific societies in our midst . . . have been the lack of efficient leadership and the acquiring of a permanent home."

After the individuals further deliberated, made several resolutions, formed several committees – by-laws, charter, nominating, and exhibit – and discussed and rejected acquiring or constructing a building, the Lycoming Historical Society was born. Coincidentally, many of the ancestors that they now sought to memorialize, including Williamsport's founder Michael Ross, had been buried at the City Hall site (long before City Hall was built) when the lot was one of Williamsport's first cemeteries. Fifty years earlier, their remains had been removed to a cemetery on Washington Boulevard. The Victorian Romanesque building in which our Historical Society founders now met was constructed in 1894.

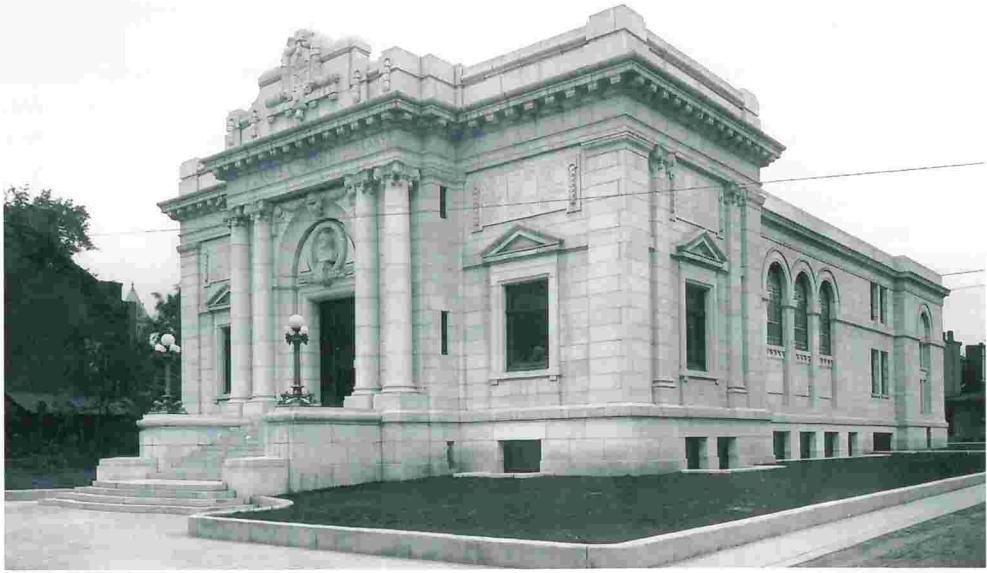
The organization was initially elitist. At a subsequent meeting held February 28 in the Select Council Chamber in City Hall, attendees reviewed the proposed Charter and By-Laws, which included these requirements for membership: applicants must be recommended by two members and voted upon by the Board of Governors; membership shall consist of "reputable persons to whom there attaches contributory fitness by reason of birth, descent, historical or antiquarian predilection, or extended residency in Lycoming County."<sup>3</sup>

Two meetings followed in 1907, one held Friday evening, April 5, in the Clio Club rooms at the Park Hotel, at which it was announced

<sup>1</sup> Our movers and shakers represented a broad spectrum of enterprise. Seth Foresman, obviously adept at multitasking, divided his time among various companies including Bowman, Foresman Company, Inc. (lumber), Milliner Drug Company, and Williamsport Radiator Company. Attorney La Rue Munson was involved with the Savings Institute of the City of Williamsport, E. Keeler Company, Inc., Williamsport Wire Rope, and Williamsport Iron and Nail Company. James Mansel ran a hardwood lumber business; Herbert Russell Laird, a fire insurance and real estate business; Edward Fisher, wholesale coal, coke and pig iron; Joseph McMinn was in the coal and flagstone business; and William Shopbell was treasurer of Shopbell Drygoods Company. The vocations of Emerson Collins, Charles Eldon, Hyman Slate, and Charles Hogg are mentioned in the text.

<sup>2</sup> There were enough aficionados, however, to form the Williamsport Auto Club the very same year our group met.

<sup>3</sup> At this same meeting the following slate of officers was nominated and elected: President, Cyrus La Rue Munson; 1st VP, Seth Thomas Foresman; 2nd VP, James Henry Cochran; 3rd VP, Joseph Henderson McMinn; 4th VP, Joseph Roman Way; Corresponding Secretary, Emerson Collins; Recording Secretary, Henry David Brown; Treasurer, Harry Clay Bubb; Board members for 2 years, James Mansel and John Beecher Emery; Board members for 1 year, Hyman Slate and Seth Thomas McCormick, Esq.



By 1922, the Historical Society exhibited its collections in a room at the James V. Brown Library on East Fourth Street. It held its meetings there from 1919 until 1927. Historical Society business meetings typically concluded with the presentation of a historical program.



This collection of historical papers and books, which belonged to local journalist and historian John F. Meginness, was the first recorded donation to the LCHS collections. It was donated by his son Warren W. Meginness.

president of the Pennsylvania Society. Seventy-five people attended. The Historical Society did not meet again until April 5, 1919.

In the intervening years, the nation had entered and won a world war. Women continued to lobby for suffrage, holding an annual convention in Williamsport in 1916. The Temperance movement was

going strong: six separate temperance organizations were listed in the city directory for that year. And the Spanish Influenza swept across the country in 1918, ultimately taking more than 600,000 lives.

*Before the Historical Society owned and operated a museum, its early activities included publishing papers and programs from its meetings and placing historical markers such as this one erected at the site of Fort Muncy, July 7, 1928.*

that the organization had been granted a charter by the Court of Lycoming County on March 25 and that it had been recorded in the Recorder's office, thus making it officially incorporated as a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization on April 3, 1907. By November, the Historical Society was meeting in the lecture room of the James V. Brown Library, which had opened in June of that year, and it had received its first donation to the collections: a collection of historical papers and photographs belonging to 19th century journalist and historian John F. Meginness. This collection still resides in the Historical Society's archives.

The Historical Society only held three meetings in 1908, one of which included a lecture on "Historiography in Pennsylvania: Past Neglect, Present Duty," presented by the

Pennsylvania's 39,301 influenza deaths included 123 from Williamsport.<sup>4</sup> In the LCHS archives, a 1918 diary by Winifred Maynard, Trinity Episcopal Church Secretary, provides a vivid personal account of the effects of the Spanish flu epidemic as well as a recounting of the local celebration commemorating the end of World War I (see *Maynard Diary* sidebar).

The Historical Society archives contain many local records of the events and trends in our history, including this time period. City directories show the gradual demise of carriage transportation and the proliferation of the automobile (more than forty auto related businesses in 1919, five in 1908; six liveries in 1919, sixteen in 1908). City directories and Sanborn insurance maps illustrate the growth of the movie industry by indicating those theatres that show moving pictures – eight theatres in Williamsport and South Williamsport in 1912; two in the small borough of Muncy in 1916.

When the organization held that April 1919 meeting, the attendees attributed their lack of activity for the past twelve years to the recognition that the James V. Brown Library had become the repository for historical documents because it had a physical presence. The Historical Society lacked a facility to house so much material. The Society recommended working cooperatively with the library to provide scholarly historical research, to turn over to the library its books and manuscripts as well as funds to manage them and make new purchases, and to appoint a paid secretary (\$50 a year) to "keep the society active, to arrange for meetings, to gather material and perform such other duties as shall be assigned to him."

From this meeting onward, the Historical Society continued to meet regularly throughout



<sup>4</sup> These data were provided by the Bureau of Health Statistics and Research, Pennsylvania Department of Health. The Department specifically disclaims responsibility for any analysis, interpretations, or conclusions.

each year, first at the Brown Library, later at the Women's Club and other venues, hosting speakers such as folklorist Henry Shoemaker and other well-known scholars, curators from state museums in Pennsylvania and New York, and noted archaeologists. The programs, many using lantern slides, ranged from local and state history, to curatorial practice, to the findings of archaeological excavations. The Historical Society also continued to receive significant donations to the collections, among them early deeds and indentures, American Indian artifacts, antique furniture, and photographs of the 1889 flood. The organization exhibited in a room at the Brown Library. In 1919, the Historical Society began publishing its proceedings and papers (see *Proceedings and Papers* sidebar on next page), the booklets printed intermittently until 1951.

As the 20s roared toward their ultimate crash and the region reflected changes occurring throughout the nation, such as the beginnings of commercial airplane travel (the Williamsport Lycoming Airport opened in 1929), the Historical Society expanded its activities by erecting historical markers, including one at the site of Fort Muncy, and signage along the Sheshequin Indian Path. In 1928, the Susquehanna Boom's last superintendent, Christ Haist, donated a collection of lumbering tools and implements, representing that significant period of the region's history when the lumber industry reigned.

In the following decade, as the nation struggled with the effects of the Great Depression, the Historical Society moved its collection to a room at Curtin Junior High School on Eldred Street in Williamsport. In 1933, the year the city's trolleys last ran, the Historical Society began opening periodically its exhibitions to the public. Members also gave talks about the artifacts to the school children and invited other schools to visit the exhib-



During the 1932-33 calendar year, the Historical Society moved its collections, "which numbered more than 300 specimens," to a room at Andrew Curtin Junior High School on Eldred Street, where they remained on exhibit until it opened its first museum in 1941.

bitions, thus initiating a long standing educational relationship between the museum and local schools.

One of its meetings during the 30s included an exhibition of murals illustrating Longfellow's poem about the Indian Hiawatha painted by an artist funded by the Works Progress Administration, instituted as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal program. These murals, now in the process of restoration, still reside at Curtin Middle School. Another meeting featured Arctic explorer Capt. Robert A. Bartlett, of Newfoundland, who accompanied Admiral Robert E. Peary on a couple of his treks to the North Pole. Eight hundred people attended his motion picture presentation in the Curtin School auditorium. The March 1936 meeting was cancelled because of the flood, whose icy waters reached as far north as High Street.<sup>5</sup>

In spite of the popularity of the Bartlett presentation, in 1936 the Historical Society had lost members and was "feeble struggling to survive," according to its secretary Katharine Bennet. By 1939, however, it had increased its membership to 500 individuals (from a low of 52 individuals in 1936). Bennet, who had written many articles for the *Williamsport Sun* in her column "Early Days of the West Branch Valley", was a librarian at the Brown Library from its inception in 1907 (later its director) and the first woman president of the Historical Society (1930). She attributed the Historical Society's revival to the leadership of its president Herbert Russell Laird who, in an effort to "make history interesting and entertaining without losing its dignity and authenticity," introduced a novel way of presenting history through sketches, musical skits, and playlets. Interestingly, during these financially strapped times, the organization celebrated Washington's Birthday each year with a costume ball at the Lycoming Hotel, which included minuets, pageants, and marches.

In 1939, the year Hitler's army marched into Poland with the intent of conquering the world, and Williamsport began a Little League baseball program that would connect youngsters throughout the world, the Historical Society "achieved the realization of a long deferred hope." It acquired the J. Roman Way property at 858 West Fourth Street in Williamsport as a site for a museum. In September, the property owner Harry Gibson offered it for the sum of \$5,000 (\$75,000 in today's money). H. Russell Laird approached and received pledges from society members to secure the house. The deed to the property was recorded on November 22, 1939. The County

## Entries from Winifred Maynard's 1918 diary.

Referring to the Spanish Flu Epidemic & the end of WWI

**Friday, Oct. 4:** We had word today that all churches, schools, public buildings, etc. are to be closed until further notice.

**Sunday, Oct. 6:** This was surely a queer Sunday with no church.

**Monday, Oct. 7:** It seems very quiet at Trinity House with no meetings allowed. I had visitors in the afternoon, three of them school teachers who are having enforced vacations. . .

**Thursday, Oct. 10:** Mr. Myers has nothing to do because of church being closed, no rehearsals, etc., and what is more hopeless than a man without anything to do... Rolfe [Winifred's brother] is having a hard time to keep himself amused with no movies, etc. but I am thoroughly enjoying my extra leisure.

**Friday, Oct. 11:** I had no company this afternoon except the Trinity House habitués, Mr. Gateson, Mr. Myers, & George Black. We had choir practice this evening by special permission of the Mayor who was there himself...

**Wednesday, Oct. 30:** There was a meeting at Trinity House, permitted by the health authorities, in connection with the War Work Fund. It seemed good to have something doing there after a month of quietness.

**Friday, Nov. 1:** All Saints Day & no service! It is too bad that the Board of Health closed the churches. I don't believe the disease would have spread any from that source.

**Tuesday, Nov. 5:** When I got down to Trinity House this afternoon, I found great preparations for a nursery going on & before I had been there long, the first children arrived. Mr. Gateson offered Trinity House for a place to keep the children of influenza victims. It is very nice but it is too bad he didn't think of it earlier in the epidemic. The ban is to be lifted tomorrow.

**Wednesday, Nov. 6:** We had church tonight & it is surely good to be able to have public worship again. There were only 4 weak voiced ladies in the choir.

The following entry notes the ending of WWI.

**Monday, Nov. 11:** Such a day! I got awake at 3:15 with every whistle in town blowing. I woke Mother, Father, & Rolfe. R. & I went down for the Halls & we all rushed downtown. Oh, how thrilling. Everyone was out. We formed a huge parade and marched & sang & shouted. There were speeches at the court house. The Mayor proclaimed a holiday & everything closed. People were in the streets all day making a noise. Another huge parade in the afternoon, with more than half the town in it & the rest cheering on the streets. Was there ever such news. The world war over! Thank God.

<sup>5</sup> This flood was known as the "Radio Flood" because a man named Al Glaes kept Williamsport in touch with the world by funneling messages through his ham radio set to WRAK, which was perched above the flood waters on the third floor of the Sun building on West Fourth Street. WRAK had established itself as the county's first radio station in 1930.

## LCHS Proceedings and Papers

No. 1, 1919 "John Franklin Meginness: The Man and his Work" by O. R. Howard Thomson; also includes a brief history of the Historical Society

No. 2, 1920 "The New Eden Settlement on Pine Creek" by Thomas W. Lloyd; "Localisms in Williamsport" by C. La Rue Munson; also has a "Record of the Society, 1919-1920"

No. 3, 1920 "Joseph Henderson McMinn: The Man and Historian" by O. R. Howard Thomson; "Joseph Henderson McMinn: The Collector" by Boyd P. Rothrock

No. 4, 1922 "History of Fort Freeland" by Hon. Frederic A. Godcharles

No. 5, 1925 "French Occupation of the West Branch Valley and the Montours" by Katharine W. Bennet

No. 6, 1928 "Journal of an English Emigrant Farmer" edited by T. Kenneth Wood, M.D.

No. 7, 1929 "Gold Star Men and Women of Lycoming County Pennsylvania; World War, 1914-1918" compiled by Bruce A. Hunt and O. R. Howard Thomson

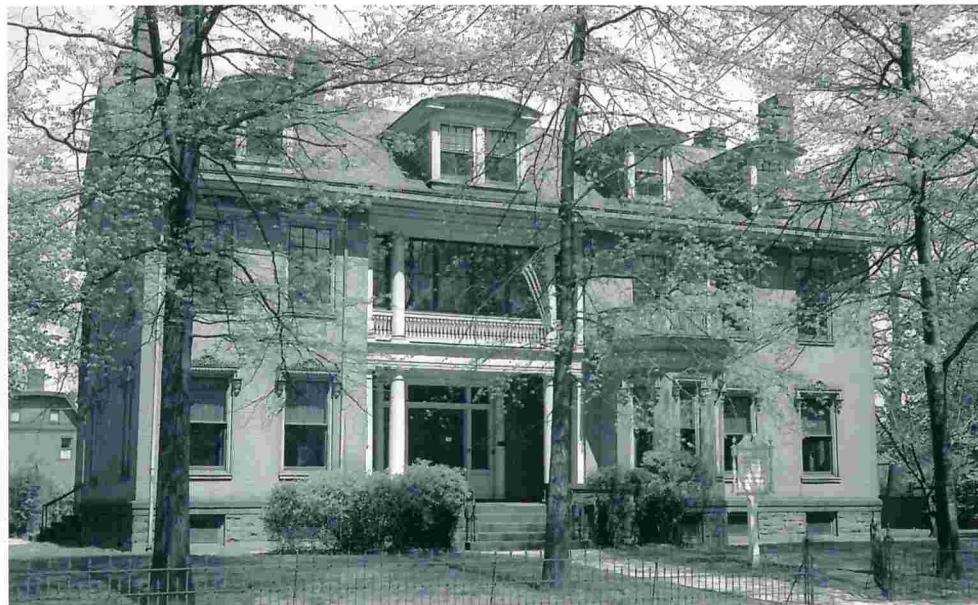
No. 8, 1933 "The Loyalsock" (includes "Rafting Days on the Loyalsock" by Fred M. Rogers; "The Loyalsock, a Trout Stream" by Charles Lose; "The Early English Settlers on the Loyalsock" by Fred M. Rogers)

No. 9, 1951 "Not Quite Forgotten: A Study of the Williamsport Painter, S. Roesen" by Richard B. Stone

**Also printed, but not part of the numbered series:**  
"The Life and Times of the Hon. William Fisher Packer", address by Major William Packer Clarke to the Lycoming Historical Society, Williamsport, Pennsylvania, March 29, 1937

Commissioners agreed to appropriate \$1,000 annually for the museum.

Judge John Wesley Maynard and his family had resided in this historical house in the middle 1800s, when the area was still farmland, before nineteenth century entrepreneur Peter Herdic (Maynard's son-in-law) developed the west end of the city as the place for luxury homes. By 1906, lumber entrepreneur Joseph Roman Way, one of the charter members of the Historical Society, and his wife Emma had acquired it, living there until their deaths in 1935 and 1938 respectively.<sup>6</sup> The acquisition of the property engendered a flurry of activity for



Harry A. Gibson, who owned this property at 858 West Fourth Street in 1939, offered it to the Historical Society for \$5,000, and by November of that year, the Historical Society had purchased it. After improving the building and installing exhibits, the Historical Society opened the museum here in 1941.

the next two years as the Board of Governors prepared the building for its purpose, addressing such issues as lighting, cabinetry, and insurance; cleaning, transferring, accessioning, and cataloging the collections; and installing exhibitions – all done through volunteer efforts.

On February 22, 1941, the Historical Society's 34th anniversary, the Lycoming Historical Museum opened its doors to the public. During its first year, with Capt. H. H. Russell and Ralph M. Gibson volunteering as curator and assistant curator, the museum received 3,870 visitors from 19 states and Canada, even though its operating hours were limited to late afternoon several days a week. Katharine Bennet summed up the year in a

March 1942 report in which she noted the value of the museum as a center for the community's cultural enrichment, described the breadth and condition of the collections, and acknowledged the efforts of volunteers. The last line of her report reads: "I hope that in the insecure and ominous future we can all work together for another victorious year." Her final comment reminds us that the year that had such an auspicious beginning for the Historical Society ended with tragedy for the nation.

As World War II



The Newman School, acquired by the Historical Society in 1955 and leased to the East Lycoming School District in 1983.

<sup>6</sup> The Ways' groom, Lewis Smith, still took care of the property, supported by a trust established for him by Mrs. Way. The Historical Society retained him as the museum's custodian until 1954 when he retired to the Mary Slaughter Home.

to the East Lycoming School District.

The turbulent decade of the 60s – marked by Civil Rights sit-ins and Vietnam War protests, the assassinations of President John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Senator Robert Kennedy, the unraveling of the mystery of DNA, the world's first heart transplant, the Beatles, and astronaut Neil A. Armstrong stepping on the moon – began with disaster for the Historical Society.

At their open meeting on December 8, 1960, Historical Society members had met in the museum's carriage house to celebrate the season with musical entertainment, storytelling, and refreshments. In her minutes, the Board's secretary noted that "The carriage house was decorated beautifully, with old fashioned Christmas trees, beautifully wrapped packages, dolls, doll carriages, sleds . . . They served coffee and oodles of extra rich, delicious Christmas cookies. I think everybody had a good time."

Thirteen days later on the morning of December 21, with the temperature in the 20s, fire broke out in the Lycoming Historical Museum, destroying the building and many irreplaceable artifacts. (After the damages were assessed, however, it was determined that 75% of the collection was saved.) Newspaper accounts indicate that the fire was discovered at 10:49 a.m. and not contained until 1:10 p.m. Images from the *Sun-Gazette* show smoke pouring from the museum as firemen fight their way through snow and ice to bring it under control. Salvage work got underway within days of the conflagration, with a crew from the Williamsport Technical Institute (now Pennsylvania College of Technology) helping to remove artifacts from the museum to the carriage house at the rear of the property, which did not suffer fire damage. Numerous Historical Society members and volunteers continued to clean and catalog the collections over the next several years.

The Society's Board of Governors met one week after the fire at a private home to determine their future course, forming a salvage committee and a committee to look into the possibility of moving. The minutes of that sad meeting begin: "After the fire – Dec. 28 – at the Coryells . . . 1960." By January 5, the Historical Society was back to its regular schedule of presentations, holding its meetings at various community locations, while the Board considered whether to restore the damaged museum or build a new facility. Having decided upon the latter course, the Board considered possible



Fire broke out in the Lycoming Historical Museum on December 21, 1960, destroying the building and damaging the collections.



Freezing temperatures hindered recovery efforts. By May of the following year, ice still lay in the cellar. Thanks to the work of volunteers, many of the artifacts were saved and stored in the Carriage House, which escaped fire because of its distance from the main house.



Historical Society President, Carl Simon, receives a \$200,000 check from the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission for the new building, constructed in 1968. Shown in front from left are Assemblymen Robert C. Wise and Alvin C. Bush, Mr. Simon, Dr. Sylvester K. Stevens of the PHMC and State Senator Z. H. Confair. Wise, Bush, and Confair introduced and supported legislation that made the appropriation possible.

### LCHS Board of Trustees 1964 – 2007 listed chronologically

Ralph R. Cranmer  
Walter F. Heim  
Michael Lagan  
Carl H. Simon  
A. F. Beighley  
John R. Sharpless, Jr.  
Harry H. King  
John L. Bruch, Jr.  
John B. McMurtrie  
Andrew W. Stabler, Jr.  
Richard H. Lundy  
John F. Piper, Jr.  
Nancy Stearns  
William H. Hawkes, III  
Renee Laychur  
Donald Heim  
Shirley Durrwachter

Each president of the Board of Governors served as an ex-officio member of the Board of Trustees.



locations including Ways Garden and the current site, ultimately choosing to remain at 858 West Fourth Street. In 1964 it launched a fundraising drive with a goal of \$250,000. In the same year, the Society formed a Board of Trustees to give impetus to the fundraising campaign and it opened a temporary museum in the Richardson building on West Third Street. It continued exhibiting at this location until 1967 when it moved its exhibits to the Grit building for a short period.

A successful fundraising drive, augmented by a significant grant of \$200,000 from the State via the

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission in 1966, brought the necessary funds for a new building. Still flinching from the disaster of 1960, the Board chose to construct a fireproof brick and concrete block building, which the museum still occupies today. Construction workers broke ground in 1967.<sup>7</sup>

As if it had taken its cue from the expression “When life gives you a fire, toast some marshmallows,” the Historical Society moved ahead with an improved facility, greater professionalism, and a dedicated commitment to its mission. On November 22, 1968, with exhibitions developed by exhibit consultant John Strawbridge, the oversight of volunteers such as archaeologist James Bressler, curator of textiles Jane Ingersoll<sup>8</sup>, and the work of many, many other

The Historical Society exhibited its collections in a room in the Grit Publishing Company, 200-222 West Third Street, from April through December of 1967.



After the fire, the Historical Society opened a temporary museum in the Richardson building at 405 West Third Street in 1964 and exhibited there until 1967.

volunteers, the new museum opened to the public. It featured a re-created Victorian Parlor (designed by Victorian specialist Samuel Dornside), a woodworking shop, a blacksmith shop, and a gristmill (created by Francis Maneval), and exhibits about the lumber industry. The previous January, the organization had changed its name from the Lycoming Historical Society to the Lycoming County Historical Society, expressing its “broadened objectives . . . in conjunction with a new, modern museum and cultural center.” By the summer of 1970, the Historical Society’s museum was open six days a week with regular



On December 21, 1965, the Historical Society Board voted to construct a new building of concrete block and brick at the same site of the original museum.

Completed in July 1968, this museum opened in 1969. Note the inverted pans used as molds for the honeycomb concrete ceiling.



<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that a 1964 newspaper editorial asked how the Historical Society planned for the future maintenance and operation of its proposed new museum and questioned whether it expected to require tax support other than the small contribution already received from the County Commissioners. The Board president addressed these concerns in a written response that outlined plans for voluntary community support and expressed the importance of the organization to the community. To this day, the museum continues to operate on community generated income acquired through memberships, an annual appeal, admissions, contributions to investments, museum store sales, and fundraising events. Only a small percentage (less than 10%) of its annual income comes from government grants from the County, the State via the Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, and the City.

<sup>8</sup> The value of these volunteers (virtual staff members) is incalculable. Jane Ingersoll not only performed curatorial tasks weekly but also presented programs on textiles, served as our textile consultant, helped prepare exhibits, and volunteered for events, including day camp. A registered archaeologist, James Bressler directed county archaeological excavations conducted by members of the North Central Chapter of the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology. All the artifacts discovered were deposited in the museum where Jim catalogued, analyzed, and stored them, following his work with published site reports, and thus creating a significant repository of local American Indian artifacts and an important record of their history in the county. The chapter's findings and Jim's work have not only uncovered the story of American Indians locally but also have contributed to the historical and archaeological knowledge of American Indians in the northeastern United States. Jim also created dioramas and other exhibits in the American Indian gallery.



*Projected growth and the installation of the Shempp Model Train exhibit in the lower level prompted the addition of the community room. The Historical Society broke ground in late 1985 and completed the project by 1986.*

daytime hours, operating for the first time with a paid professional director, John Strawbridge, a part-time secretary, and those wonderful volunteers.

By 1973, it had a new director, Andrew Grugan, and it had received accreditation from the American Association of Museums. The American Association of Museums, which was founded in 1906, had only begun this nationwide movement of accreditation in 1971. It involved museums working together to set standards for excellence and to develop means to measure and recognize them, and as the AAM stated, "Achieving this high honor affirms a museum's excellence in public service and indicates its commitment to continuing institutional improvement and change." The museum received subsequent re-accreditation in 1989 and 2002.

Throughout the 70s, 80s, and 90s, the museum continued to operate full time, receiving significant donations, updating and creating exhibitions, presenting programs, publishing newsletters and Journals, and even suffering the odd mishap: In 1977, an automobile crashed through the glass front doors and exited through the rear ones, knocking down a recently donated portrait of a little girl named Nellie Tallman. Ironically, a century earlier the flesh and blood Nellie had died from a fall to the floor from a high stool, where she sat while her



*Looking north from the main lobby before the community room addition.*



*When constructed in 1968, the museum's brick and concrete block facility joined the pre-existing carriage house (dating from the 1880s). In the 1970s, the Williamsport Area School District rented the carriage house attic and installed a skills shop there for teachers, in use until the 1980s. In the early 1990s, the Historical Society renovated the ground floor of the carriage house to accommodate a local history and genealogy research library, which to this day is staffed by Lycoming County Genealogical Society volunteers.*

father painted her image. Nellie's portrait now resides in the Victorian Parlor, the subject of a ghost story that captivates school children on tour.

The year 1984 saw the arrival of the LaRue Shempp Model Train collection, placed on exhibit in the lower level program room. Local toy train aficionados and Historical Society volunteers had raised funds to house this sizable collection (more than 300 sets), which was purchased from the Shempps by the Williamsport-Lycoming Community Foundation. Although the collection was housed in the museum, it still belonged to the Williamsport-Lycoming Community Foundation until 2004 when the Foundation donated the collection to the Historical Society. To replace the program room, the Historical Society expanded in 1985, adding a community room on the ground floor level.

Inevitable staff changes occurred throughout these years as well. The Historical Society hired Joseph Zebrowski in 1984 to replace Andrew Grugan as director. In 1988, it hired its first educator to coordinate tours and programs. And in 1991, it hired Sara Ann B. Briggs as executive director. Throughout the first half of the 1990s, staff expanded to three full-time positions – executive director, curator of collections, and curator of education – and six part-time

**The Lycoming County Historical  
Society Board Presidents  
1907 – 2007**

Honorary President ad vitam:  
*Herbert Russell Laird*

Cyrus La Rue Munson	1907 – 1922
Max Louis Mitchell	1923 – 1927
Thomas Kenneth Wood	1927 – 1930
Katharine Williams Bennet	1930 – 1933
Bruce A. Hunt	1933 – 1936
Herbert Russell Laird	1936 – 1939
Oliver John Decker	1939 – 1941
Herbert Russell Laird	1941 – 1942
Lewis Edwin Theiss	1943 – 1944
William Butler Beck Wilson	1945 – 1946
Samuel Antes Youngman	1946 – 1948
Russell Henry Rhoads	1948 – 1949
Ferdinand William Coleman	1949 – 1950
Paul G. Gilmore	1950 – 1951
Lewis William Bluemle	1951 – 1952
Lloyd E. Wurster	1952 – 1955
C. Stewart Coryell	1955 – 1957
Gibson Antes	1957 – 1959
Clyde W. Harer	1959 – 1960
Frank W. Brunner	1960 – 1962
James P. Bressler	1962 – 1965
James C. Humes	1965 – 1966
Charles S. Williams	1966 – 1967
Donald M. Carson	1967 – 1971
Andrew Grugan	1971 – 1972
Charles E. Noyes	1972 – 1974
Donald M. Carson	1974 – 1976
Robert D. Smink	1976 – 1979
Kenneth Carl	1979 – 1982
Clarence Mutchler	1982 – 1984
Jane Ingersoll	1984 – 1986
Horace Lowell	1986 – 1987
John E. Person, III	1987 – 1989
John F. Piper, Jr.	1989 – 1992
Joseph Cramer	1992 – 1993
Pamela Shipman	1993 – 1995
Jess Hackenburg, II	1995 – 1998
Bruce C. Buckle	1998 – 2001
Robert E. Kane, Jr.	2001 – 2003
Roger D. Shipley	2003 – 2005
Bernard Strosser	2005 – 2007
James Maule	2007 –



*Because of the 1999 capital campaign, the Historical Society was able to acquire blighted properties to the north of the museum and replace them with landscaped gardens. The parking lot in the distance at the corner of Nichols and Trinity Places was purchased by the Historical Society and Trinity Episcopal Church in the 1980s.*

people. Having recognized that it could not sustain this number of staff, however, the Historical Society restructured, consolidating positions and reducing personnel. In 1994, Sandra B. Rife replaced Sara Briggs, serving as both executive director and curator of education.

Having realized the need for a reliable source of additional income and for more space to accommodate its growing collection, the Board of Governors, under the presidency of Bruce C. Buckle, launched an endowment/capital campaign in 1999 with a goal of \$1,000,000. The 1999 campaign had these objectives: increase the endowment (established by the Board of Trustees in 1986) to provide enough additional income to cover the salary of a curator of col-

lections<sup>9</sup> and expand the museum to accommodate growth and provide additional space for collections storage, exhibitions, exhibition preparation, meetings, and programs.

Another objective had presented itself as an opportunity during the Board's long range planning: incorporate a fine and decorative arts gallery to exhibit not only the LCHS collection but also the artwork owned by the Park Home, in storage at Lycoming College and later lent to the Historical Society. The Park Home, a personal care facility in the former Park Hotel on West Fourth Street in Williamsport, had vacated its property a few years previously.

Ultimately, the Historical Society raised more than \$2,000,000 thanks to a generous \$1,000,000 gift from Thomas T. Taber, III.



*An updated American Indian gallery opened in 2005.*

<sup>9</sup> As long ago as 1989, the American Association of Museums accreditation review committee had stressed the importance of this position for the museum.



In 2001, the Historical Society received the gift of a Victorian house in Williamsport's Historic District from Dr. and Mrs. George Durrwachter, which the Society plans to open as a women's history hands-on house museum. Built in 1891 for Henry and Margaret Johnson, the house is located across the street from the Taber Museum. It has a strong connection to the Historical Society as Mrs. Johnson and her son-in-law Emerson Collins were both charter members, Collins serving on the founding committee.

In recognition of Mr. Taber's gift, the Historical Society passed a resolution on August 15, 2000 to name its museum the Thomas T. Taber Museum of the Lycoming County Historical Society.

The Historical Society stepped into the 21st century with a successful capital campaign behind it and a renovated, improved, and expanded facility. It had realized its goals of incorporating a fine arts gallery and of hiring a full-time curator of collections; it now operates with three full-time professionals and three part-time support positions. And, in the first year of this millennium, it received the gift of a Victorian home in Williamsport's Historic District.

In 2007, the Historical Society celebrated its first 100 years of existence with an exhibition in the community room entitled *A Glance at the Past: LCHS Celebrates Its First Century*. In addition to objects, documents, and ephemera, the exhibition featured more than 100 photographs from the D. Vincent Smith and the Putsee Vannucci photograph collections.

If we could summon our 114 charter members from the grave for a visit, imagine

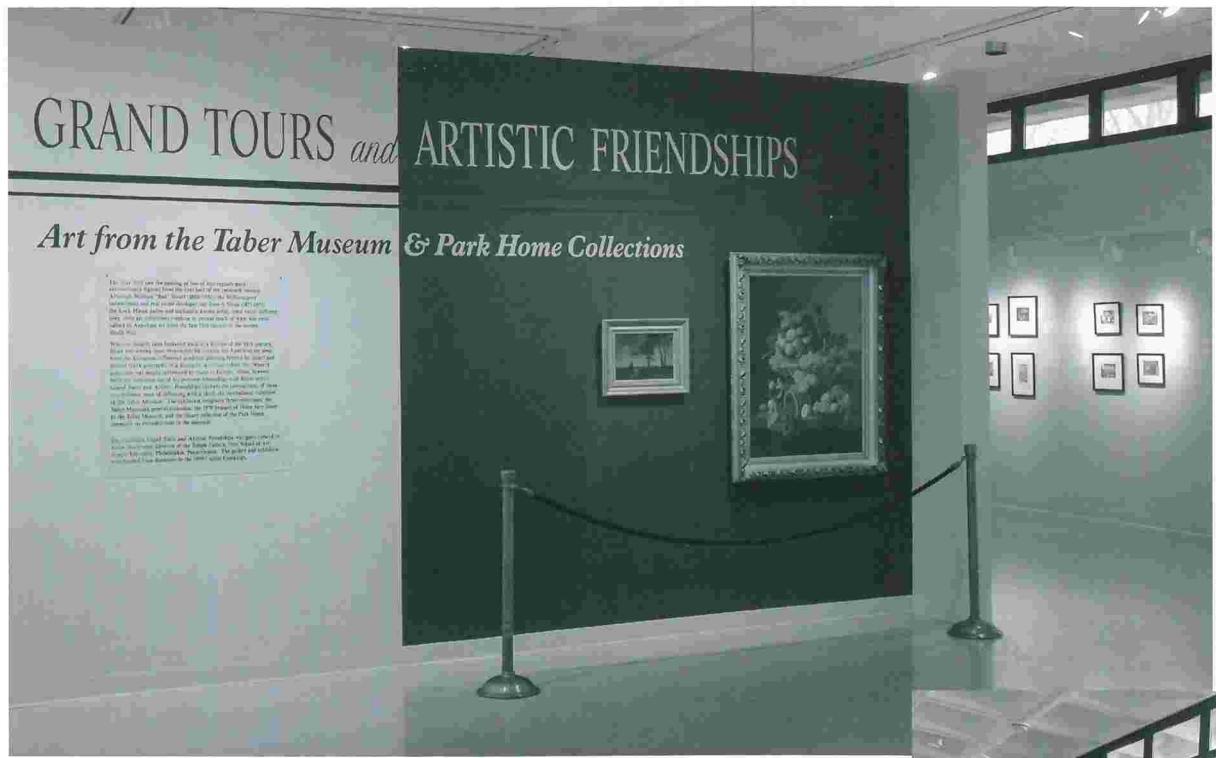
their reactions to their 101 year old progeny. Suffering culture shock from having stepped into a louder, highly outrageous (by their standards) and hastier 21st century with technological advances beyond their wildest imaginings, they find a more familiar world in the museum.

First, they note that their collections have expanded vastly since that initial Meginness donation to include more than 10,000 three dimensional objects, over 5,000 textile items, more than 5,000 archaeological artifacts, and enough archival material to fill 2,000 cubic feet. We take them on a stroll through the museum's 16,500 square feet of exhibitions<sup>10</sup> where J. Roman Way finds his carriage house still intact. We express our regret that his beautiful old home had ignited like a tinder pile but mention that, while renovating the carriage house, we happened upon some old payment receipts tucked behind the lath that belonged to his groom, Lewis Smith, dating from a few years after the Ways' demise, which tells us a little bit about the lives of the not so wealthy as well as how they were cared for in old age. It is difficult to pull Brua Keefer away from the

exhibit on musical heritage since it includes several of the brass instruments he produced. George Luppert exclaims about the fine quality of the decorative wood carving on the bedroom furniture made in one of his companies. In the lumber gallery, Joseph McMinn points out the tin lunch bucket crafted by Charles, his tinsmith brother, and Seth and Henry Foresman comment on the chandelier in the Victorian parlor that originally hung in their brother's home on West Fourth Street.

We head to storage where taxidermist Charles Eldon is delighted to find Lycoming County's last passenger pigeon that he mounted and placed behind glass. In furniture storage, we tell Emerson Collins and his mother-in-law Margaret Johnson about our plans to restore and interpret the Johnsons' Victorian home as a women's history house museum. When we tell her it will include an exhibit of women's undergarments from our large textile collection, she faints upon a nearby settee. Later, as she revives, she comments that it is about time women were recognized in history, and by the way, did they ever get the vote? Dr. Ella Ritter, who did not

<sup>10</sup> The total square footage of the museum is 32,000.



A fine arts gallery opened in October 2001. It showcases a painting by 19th century artist Severin Roesen (donated by the Lamade family in 1984) who lived and painted in Williamsport in the 1860s.

close her medical practice in Williamsport until 1947, reassures her that they did.

In the archives, Nathaniel and Harry Bubb, pioneers in Williamsport's short lived auto manufacturing industry,<sup>11</sup> are astounded at the size of the Keystone Shortway (Interstate Route 80) manuscript collection. Nathaniel notes that even though he was one of the first people to recognize the need for an auto exchange in the city, he could not have imagined the vehicle's predominance. A few aisles over, Dietrick Lamade leafs through bound volumes of *The Grit* newspaper, dating from the late 19th century, which he and his family turned into a nationwide publication. Joseph McMinn wanders to rare books where he fondles the book he wrote about the history of the Dunkards and Bloomingrove.

Our founders discover that the museum's exhibitions also reveal the darker side of our history and include such material as a Ku Klux Klan robe and diary. Additionally, they observe that this 21st century Historical Society has broadened its focus in an attempt to represent all the region's communities and the diversity within them.

This imaginary visit by our founding shades reminds us just how far the

Historical Society has come since its birth on that wintry night in 1907. It has endured the nation's hard times and good times while experiencing its own disaster, and yet it continues to look – and more significantly – to move forward. One year into its second century, the Historical Society still stands solidly at the same site it occupied 67 years ago, not only caring for the material that represents thousands of years of human life in our region, but also discovering the secrets and stories this material holds and passing them on to future generations.

*In 1976, the Historical Society received artwork from the collection of John Sloan, donated by his wife Helen Farr Sloan. John Sloan was a member of the "Ashcan School" of art in the early 20th century, a movement that shook the art world.*



<sup>11</sup>These men served on the board of the Imperial Motor Car Company, which manufactured the Imperial Roadster in 1907 and 1908.

# **MEETING OF APPLICANTS FOR MEMBERSHIP IN PROPOSAL LYCOMING HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

Common Council Chambers, City Hall,  
Williamsport, Pa.  
February 5, 1907

In accordance with call issued by The Board of Trade committee on organization of a Historical Society, a meeting of the applicants for membership was held in Common Council Chamber, City Hall, Williamsport, Pa., Tuesday evening, February 5, 1907 at 8 o'clock.

Present: Hon. Seth Thomas Foresman  
Hon. Emerson Collins  
Joseph Henderson McMinn  
Hon. James Mansel  
Charles Hoffman Eldon  
Herbert Russell Laird  
Cyrus La Rue Munson, Esq.  
Hyman G. Slate  
Rev. William Charles Hogg  
William Cares Shopbell  
Edward Jamison Fisher

The meeting was called to order by Mr. Laird and on his motion, Mr. Munson was elected Chairman.

On motion of Mr. Foresman, Mr. Laird was elected Secretary.

The Secretary read the names of the applicants for membership, seven for Life Memberships, one hundred and seven for Resident Membership, as follows:

## **For Life Membership:**

James Walton Bowman  
Henry David Brown  
Hon. James Henry Cochran  
John Beecher Emery  
Hon. Seth Thomas Foresman  
Mrs. Adolph Niemeyer  
Joseph Roman Way

Clinton Bowman Coleman  
John Coleman  
Hon. Emerson Collins  
John Burrows Coryell  
Harrison Tallman Crawford  
William Ellis Crawford E  
Frank C. Cummings  
Ernest Howell Davis  
Hon. Elias Deemer  
Harry James Donaldson, M.D.  
Nicholas M. Edwards  
Charles Hoffman Eldon  
Frank Otto Emery  
Creon Bolles Farr  
Edward Jamison Fisher  
Lyman Jackson Fisk  
Col. David Reed Foresman  
Henry Melick Foresman  
John Hammond Foresman  
James Jamison Gibson  
Charles Gleim  
Henry Nathan Goldenberg  
Ferdinand Frank Gramlich  
Charles Harman  
Hon. William Washington Hart

Thomas Mason Bacon Hicks  
Rev. William Charles Hogg  
Charles Summer Horton  
Waldo Willard Hull, M.D.  
John Benson Irvin  
Mrs. Henry Johnson  
Charles Leslie Jones  
Mrs. William Newton Jones  
Brua Cameron Keefer  
William Louis King  
James Nourse Kline  
Simon Schmucker Koser, M.D.  
James Barber Krause  
Charles Clement Krouse  
Herbert Russell Laird  
Dietrick Lamade  
Fred Matthews Lamade  
George Luppert  
Isaac Stanley Mabee  
Isaac Barton Maitland  
Bernard Hartwick Mansel, D.D.S.  
Harry Southard Mansel  
Hon. James Mansel  
Charles Matthies, Sr.  
Albert High Metzger  
Harry Small Meyer

## **For Resident Membership:**

Riley Walter Allen  
Rev. Elliott Chidsey Armstrong  
William Parson Beeber  
Alexander Beede  
Mrs. David Bly  
Francis Carlton Bowman  
George B. Breon  
Daniel Emery Brown  
Mrs. Mary Diantha Brown  
Harry Clay Bubb  
Nathaniel Burrows Bubb  
Thomas Domenico Casale  
Jackson W. Christman  
Timothy Smith Clark

John R. Hazelet

Leander I. Meyer	John Kinney Rishel	William Field Thompson
Henry S. Mosser	Ella N. Ritter, M.D.	Frank Burrows Thrall
Cyrus La Rue Munson	John Edward Rothfuss	Hiram Henry Ulman
Mrs. Cyrus La Rue Munson	Boyd Packer Rothrock	Hiram Moses Ulman
Seth Thomas McCormick	John Rosselle Tucker Ryan	Julius Goldenberg Ulman
Walter Ross McKnight	Mrs. Jennie Chatham Schneider	Lemuel Moses Ulman
Joseph Henderson McMinn	William Cares Shopbell	John Hancock Watson
George Dallas Nutt, M.D.	Gustave Eduward Otto Siess	Hon. Samuel Norris Williams
Horace Mundt Otto	Hyman A. Slate	James Dale Wilson
Edmund Brown Piper	James Walton Slate	Albert Franklin Young
John Grandin Reading	Herman Otto David Stuempfle	George Harper Young
John Jay Reardon	John Frederick Stuempfle	John Mumma Young
Regent Lycoming Chapter D.A.R.	Frederick Grant Sweet	Mrs. John Mumma Young
	Miss Caroline Mohr Thompson	Charles Wormar Youngman, M.D.

Mr. McMinn as Chairman of the Board of Trade Committee presented the following report:

*Williamsport, Pa. Feb. 5, 1907*

Those of you who were so fortunate as to see the Centennial Parade on July 4, 1906, will doubtless remember the first float in the Historical Division.

It was designed to represent a domestic scene that may have occurred on this very spot, before the aborigines were displaced with the white race. Under the shade of green hemlocks stood the conical wigwam of poles covered with the tanned skins of wild animals, above which was suspended the totem of the Munseys or Wolf tribe of Delaware Indians.

Little coppery faces peered through the openings, while in front of this primitive American house sat a group of squaws occupied by their various duties, papooses in their bark cradles were suspended from the nearby trees. One squaw was grinding maize between two stones, another deftly forming a pottery vessel, another with bone needle and sinew thread was ornamenting a strip of skin with gay colored porcupine quills, another stringing bone beads for wampum, while still others were pounding and scraping the dry leather into a pliable state or flaking the arrowheads for their weapons.

But the most conspicuous object of all was the large old chief in all his trappings standing with an arrow in his hand, pointing to the strange hieroglyphics before him, that were painted upon buckskin stretched over a rude easel formed of birch poles. He was interpreting the meaning of the characters upon this leather record, to a young lad beside him, who was thus learning the history of his tribe and of its conflicts with the elements and the enemy.

Among the most savage tribes yet discovered have been found traditions of the Noachian deluge and other catastrophes of widespread interest and here we see the method of transmitting these records from one generation to another.

This historical display was an emblem of the society it is proposed to organize this evening. The interest in the past that is implanted within every human heart and is expressed in substantial records by occasional individuals, now demand a more permanent recognition.

The importance of the subject has outgrown the capacity of grandfathers' tales or even the records of local historians. The volume and value of our local history has become so great that The Lycoming Historical Society is an absolute necessity, if Williamsport is to maintain her place among intelligent and progressive cities.

The entire community realizes this fact and the only reason for failure of previous limited efforts to establish historical and scientific societies in our midst, though so much enjoyed by the membership during their existence, has been the lack of efficient leadership and the acquiring of a permanent home.

Since The Board of Trade has become the mainspring in all the prosperous movements for our city's advancement, so it has been assigned the duty of organizing this Historical Society. Its committee has now called together those persons who have expressed a substantial interest in the movement so that a permanent organization may now be effected.

By the selection of official leaders adapted for the work, from among those having social, business, and financial influence, the success of the effort will be promoted without any tedious delay.

Every day makes the endeavor more difficult on account of the accumulating material that common reason demands shall not be allowed to perish, and every day those who have devoted their lives to personal work in preserving these invaluable records are passing away so that their individuality is lost and strange hands must take up the task. So that now, when almost every intelligent community throughout the land is organizing Historical Societies and now that conditions in our midst seem to be most propitious, the opportunity should not be neglected for adding one more proud banner to the "City that does things", our own beautiful and up-to-date Williamsport.

*J. H. McMinn*  
Chairman of The Board of Trade  
Committee on organization of a  
Historical Society

On motion of Mr. Foresman, it was

Resolved: That the report of Mr. McMinn be filed and the newspaper requested to publish it in full.

Mr. Laird submitted a suggested form of Charter and By-Laws, prepared by him and on his motion (Mr. Foresman adding stipulation that Mr. Laird be a member of the committee proposed) it was

Resolved: That a committee of three be appointed to prepare a Charter and By-Laws for the Historical Society.

On motion of Mr. McMinn, it was

Resolved: That this meeting suggests to the Committee on Charter and By-Laws, "The Lycoming Historical Society" as a suitable name for this organization.

The subject of organization generally was discussed by Mr. Munson, Mr. Foresman, Mr. Hogg, Mr. Mansel, Mr. Collins, Mr. McMinn and Mr. Slate.

Mr. Munson suggested the possibility of making arrangements with Reno Post G.A.R. for joint occupancy of the building owned by the Post.

Mr. Foresman suggested appointment of a committee to confer with the officers of Reno Post to ascertain what arrangements could be made in that direction.

Mr. Mansel advocated the organization of the Society with a view to the erection of a building or the purchase of a suitable building which should be the permanent home of the Society, believing that joint occupancy of its building with Reno Post would not be desirable and inquired of Mr. McMinn if he had figured on the probable cost of such a building as would meet the Society's requirements.

Mr. McMinn stated that his committee had not figured on the cost of the building and expressed himself of the belief also that the Reno Post building would not meet the requirements of the Historical Society.

Mr. Collins expressed himself in favor of organizing on modest lines, beginning with a suitable place of meeting, confining the activity of the organization at first to periodical meetings at which historical subjects of interest should be read, the Society publishing such papers and through this work public interest will awaken and increase to such an extent as will enable the Society to secure such a home as will be necessary for the institution of a Historical Museum and place it on such a financial basis as will ensure its permanent maintenance. That his observation convinced him that when a Historical Society was once organized, the greatest difficulty was overcome and when once in operation, public interest invariably increases, and that while the Society should begin along the lines suggested, it should nevertheless have in view the acquirement of a permanent home where exhibits loaned or presented to the Society for exhibition will be absolutely safe from theft or fire.

Mr. Munson suggested the entire probability of the Society being able to secure from the Trustees of the James V. Brown Library, permission for the Society to use the Lecture Room of the library for its literary meetings and also stated that from present indications there will be one large room in the Library which in all probability will not be used for some time to come and that it might be possible to secure the use of this room for the temporary installation of such historical exhibits as the Society can secure as a nucleus for its future Museum.

Mr. Foresman expressed himself as being in favor of organization along the lines suggested by Mr. Collins.

Mr. Hogg suggested his belief that it would be a mistake to lead the people to believe that the Society intends beginning its work on a large scale with attendant large expense, expressing his opinion too, that success will follow organization based on modest lines. He suggested that it might be beneficial and interesting to secure some information regarding the extent of exhibits which could be secured and on his motion it was

Resolved: That a committee of three of which Mr. McMinn shall be chairman be appointed for the purpose of looking over the whole field and ascertaining what can be secured for exhibit purposes.

Mr. McMinn stated that in his opinion there will be no difficulty whatever in securing exhibits if an absolutely secure place is provided for them.

On motion of Mr. Foresman, it was

Resolved: That a committee of three be appointed to nominate permanent officers for the Historical Society.

On motion of Mr. Collins, it was

Resolved: That the chairman of this meeting be and is hereby authorized to name the committees, the appointment of which has been authorized by this meeting and that Mr. Munson be named as the chairman of the Committee on Charter and By-Laws.

The chair appointed as the

Committee on Charter and By-Laws:

Cyrus La Rue Munson

Hon. Emerson Collins

Herbert Russell Laird

Committee on Nominations:

Hon. Seth Thomas Foresman

Hyman A. Slate

Herbert Russell Laird

Committee on Exhibits:

Joseph Henderson McMinn

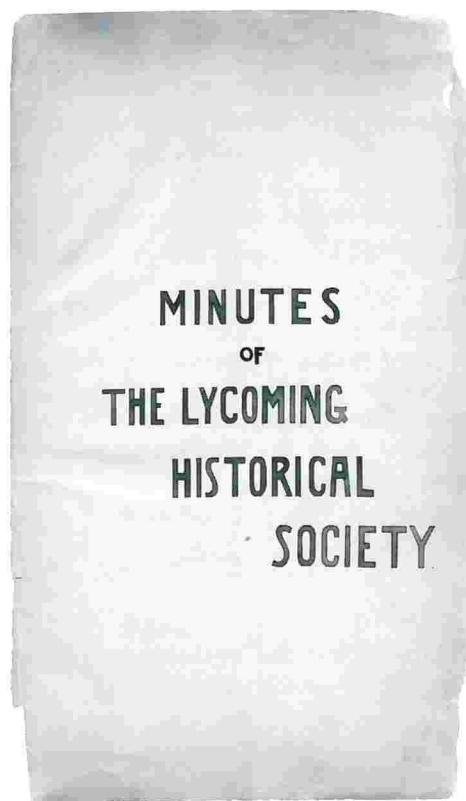
Hon. James Mansel

Charles Hoffman Eldon

On motion of Mr. Laird, it was

Resolved: That this meeting do now adjourn to meet at the call of the Chairman and Secretary.

(Signature of Herbert Russell Laird, Secretary)



Minutes 1907  
49 - year.

**Meeting of Officers**  
for membership in proposed  
Lycoming Historical Society  
(former Society Pauper)  
City Hall  
Williamsport, Pa.  
Wednesday, May 5, 1907

NOTES APPROVED  
Applicants for  
membership

In accordance with order issued by the Board  
of Directors to initiate an organization of a Historical  
Society, a meeting of the officers and members  
was held in Common Council Chamber, City Hall,  
Williamsport, Pa., Wednesday evening February 5, 1907,  
at 8 o'clock.

President: Hon. Dr. Thomas Grossman

Cyrus L. Rice Chairman Board

Rev. Emerson Collins

Hiram A. Estabrook

Joseph Henderson Wickham

Rev. Christian Charles Stoggs

Hon. James Shaward

James C. Coley

Charles Hoffmann Eggers

Edward Tammie Gispen

Harcet Russell Laird

Present

Mr. L. L. Johnson

Mr. F. W. Johnson

Mr. J. C. Johnson

Mr. W. H. Johnson

Officers appointed

Dr. W. H. Johnson

John C. Coley

Edward Tammie Gispen

Harriet Russell Laird

James C. Coley

Charles Hoffmann Eggers

Edward Tammie Gispen

Harriet Russell Laird

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James C. Coley

Charles Hoffmann Eggers

Edward Tammie Gispen



*The Historical Society received a significant donation in 1974: over 10,000 photographs dating from 1893 through 1955 by local photographer D. Vincent Smith. The Smith photographs provide a historical record of the first half of the 20th century and are constantly used by researchers.*



*Putsee Vannucci began donating photographs from his collection in the early 1990s. A local photographer with The Grit newspaper, Vannucci captured scenes throughout the county beginning in the 1940s. The combined photographic collections of both Smith (over 10,000) and Vannucci (over 5,000) provide a visual historical record of the past century.*

# Board of Governors

James Maule, *President*

Bonita Kolb, *1st Vice President*

Martha Huddy, *2nd Vice President*

John Raymond, *3rd Vice President*

Sally E. Hilsher, *Treasurer*

Susan K. Beidler, *Secretary*

Deborah Caulkins

Shirley Knade

John F. Piper, Jr.

Sean Roman

Dorothy Schopfer

William Somers

Bernard Strosser

John Troisi

Gayle Whitesell

## Museum Staff

Sandra B. Rife, *Director*

Scott Sagar, *Curator of Collections*

Kimberly Taylor, *Admin. Assistant/Bookkeeper*

Constance E. Robinson, *Museum Store Manager / Front Desk Reception*

Nancy Lupole and Grace E. Callahan, *Weekend Coverage*

Recardo Strothers, *Custodian*



## Volunteers

Mary Jane Arnold

Nancy Baker

Rudy Bennage, Jr.

Dot Berndt

Carol Bledsoe

James P. Bressler,

*Curator of Archaeology*

Carolyn W. Bullock

Grace Callahan

Adelina Caporaletti

Charlene Cella

John Confer

Robert Conrad

Shirley Crawley

Helen Dapp,

*Docent Coordinator*

Joni Decker

Bunny Ditchfield

Wes Dodge

Dr. Daniel Doyle

Ethel Drier

Erin Durisin

David Everett

Maxine Everett

Alta Feerrar

Bob Feerrar

Grace Fleming

Gary Fogelman

Betty Gardner

Jude Gedroz

Dr. Amy Golahny,

*Art History Consultant*

Roger Goodman

Jim Goss

Sharon Goss

David Grube

Jess Hackenburg

Brad Hall

Brent Hayes-Hand

David Heiney

Bruce Henry

Lucy Henry

Charles Hess

Kyle Hickman

Andree Hilsher

Jay Hilsher

Jayne Hilsher

Steve Huddy

Barbara Hunsinger

John Hunsinger

Lois Hunt

Jane Ingersoll,

*Curator of Costumes &*

*Textiles*

Pat Karge

Larry Keller

Don King

John Koyen

Joseph Kustanbauter

Barbara Lamade

James Lane

Rita Lane

Robert Larson,

*Military History*

*Consultant*

Dr. Ted Larson, Jr.

Charles Luppert

Mary Ellen Lupton

Dorothy Maples

Joy McCracken

Cara McKernan

Tom McLaughlin

Bruce Miller

Mary Moriarity

Bob Morrison,

*Train Exhibit Consultant*

Gail Nuss

Wayne Palmer

Mary Ellen Paulhamus

Robert Paulhamus

Dr. LaRue Pepperman

Eleanor Phillips

Charles Protasio

Stephanie Protasio

Judy Ryder

Roger Shipley

Rita Shoemaker

Mike Singer

Nicole Staron

Getty Stewart

Jason Tempesco

Tiffany Tempesco

Frank Ulman

Bob Ulrich

Rita Ulrich

Robert Wise

**Genealogy Volunteers**

Vern Bair

Ann Benson

Georgie Bower

Harold Bower

Evelyn Bryan

Gary Buck

Vicki Enigk

Cathy Flook

Judy Flook

Cindy Frey

Mary Guinter

Kathy Heilman

Robyn Jackson

David Kiessling

Robin Leidhecker

Nancy Lupole

Kim Minier

Robert Morton

Mary Orwig

Deborah Wallace

### Work Study Students

Reagan Beauchamp

Elisha Davies

Joshua Good

Colleen Jansson

Brian Johnson

Lindsey Radeski

### Intern

Sara Krage