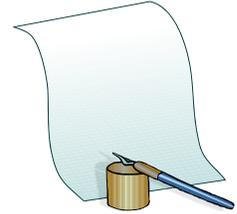




# Longswamp Township Historical Society *Newsletter*

**December 2014-January 2015**

*Preserving and sharing the  
historical past and culture of  
Longswamp Township since 2010*



## ***Purpose of the LTHS***

To discover and preserve educational and illustrative collections of material, structures, and landmarks of the Longswamp Township area.

To maintain a museum and non-circulating historical library of the Longswamp Township area.

To preserve and record the history and culture of the Longswamp Township area.

## ***LTHS Directors***

### **Officers:**

President – Mary Ann Lantz  
Vice President – Marie Maly  
Secretary – Jerri Burket  
Treasurer – Mike Radcliffe

### **Board:**

Bill Anton  
Eloise Long  
Judith Murphy  
Kevin Shoemaker  
Christopher Stress  
Ron Young

Betty Anton, Newsletter editor

***If you have any questions or are interested in becoming a member, please contact us at (484) 504-9149***

***Email:  
[LongswampHistory@gmail.com](mailto:LongswampHistory@gmail.com)***

## ***A Message from our President***

We have much to be thankful for this season. The Society has published two books, Shamrock and Mertztown, designed the 2015 calendar, and sponsored several programs which you will be reading about in this newsletter. We are grateful for our members, our Board, and the community who has supported us throughout the past four and a half years. We hope to continue to serve the community and ask for your support. How can you do this? Share your history, attend our programs, give us suggestions of how we can serve you, attend our Board meetings every 3rd Wednesday held at the Township Building.

We appreciate the opportunity to serve you and we send the very best wishes for a Happy Thanksgiving, a blessed Christmas season, and a healthy, meaningful New Year.

*Mary Ann Lantz*

***Watch for a special edition of this newsletter late in December featuring an article in the continuing series about the barns of Longswamp Township by Greg Huber***

***HAPPY HOLIDAYS!***



## Newspaper Tidbits From Past

Austin Fritch, while plowing on the farm of his father, Frank D. Fritch, at Longswamp, about two miles southeast of Topton, with two mules, the king bolt on the singletree broke, releasing the animals, who made a mad dash for liberty. The breaking of one of the lines compelled Mr. Fritch to release his hold. The animals ran into one of the deep ore mine cuts adjoining the field, and tumbled down an embankment, drowning in 25 feet of water. Mr. Fritch jumped into the stream to rescue the animals, but his efforts were without avail. The animals were valued at \$350.

[The Reading Eagle, Reading, PA, Saturday, August 17, 1912, page 7]

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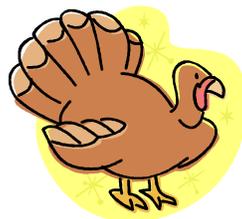
*A few days ago William Buck, of Rittenhouse Gap, purchased a bull from David Leibensperger, of Siesholtzville. As the bull is a very vicious animal, Mr. Buck secured a force of sixteen men to help him drive it home. Chains and ropes were fastened around the bull and, with Wilson Conrad having hold of the tail and Benneville Reinert at the horns, the procession started. Everything went quietly until near Buck's home, when the bull got wild. There was a crash and sixteen men went flying in all directions, with Conrad holding in his hand part of the bull's tail, which had parted company from its owner. Reinert, who had hold of the horns, got his clothing entangled in them and went right along with the bull. The latter jumped a fence, chased the gang in every direction, and then started for home, dragging Reinert along with him. When the bull arrived at his old home, Reinert was released from his unpleasant predicament, suffering only from a few scratches.*

[The Lehigh Register, Allentown, PA, Wednesday, December 4, 1895, page 3]

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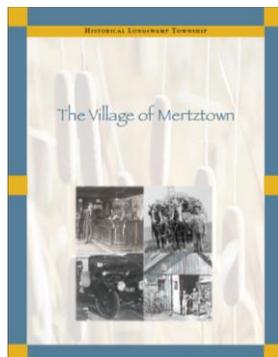
Washington, April 6. --- **"The Jelly Wobble"** is the latest society dance here. It is Oriental in effect and is rapidly displacing the "Turkey Trot" in society's esteem. "The Jelly Wobble" is danced to very slow music. It consists of a series of prolonged trembles or shaking of the body, combined with deep swaying from side to side. A requisite is grace, and it takes long practice to acquire the difficult movement. The smartest young people are working diligently to perfect themselves in it in time for the Easter dances.

[The Reading Eagle, Reading, PA, Saturday, April 6, 1912, page 2]



# UPCOMING EVENTS

All events are free of charge and open to the public.



## **Fri., December 5: Book Launch Event - "The Village of Mertztown"**

**7:00 – 8:30 p.m., Christian Congregation Church**

This event is shaping up to be our best holiday party yet! Enjoy a short presentation about the making of the book (in the Sanctuary). Afterwards, join us in the Fellowship Hall for complimentary refreshments.

*(The first 15 minutes of the event will be dedicated to election of 2015 Historical Society officers and committee chairs.)*



## **Wed., January 21: Discover Longswamp Township's Hidden Treasures**

**7:00 – 8:30 p.m., Longswamp Township Municipal Building**

Join us for an evening of discovery as we showcase some of the items from our permanent collection. We'll tell you what we know about our items ... and maybe you can tell us a thing or two as well.



## **Fri., March 27: A Walk with Conrad Weiser**

**7:00 – 8:30 p.m., The Lutheran Home at Topton, Henry Auditorium**

Take a trip back in time to Pennsylvania's early days as Lynn Otto, a member of the Friends of the Conrad Weiser Homestead Board, talks about Conrad Weiser's travels on the Tulpehocken Trail while serving as an interpreter and negotiator for the Native Americans and the Provincial government.



## **Wed, April 22: The Barns of Longswamp Township**

**7:00 – 8:30 p.m., The Lutheran Home at Topton, Henry Auditorium**

Longswamp Township is blessed with some of the best and truly unique examples of Pennsylvania barn architecture. Join us as Greg Huber of Eastern Barns Consultants takes us on a tour of some of the 106 barns he's discovered and documented in the Township, several of which were built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

## Renew Your Membership for 2015

Please continue to support our efforts to discover, record, and share the past and historical culture of Longswamp Township:

### Annual Membership:

Senior or student: \$5  
Individual: \$10  
Family: \$20  
Business: \$25

### Lifetime Membership:

(Individual or business): \$100

### Why Renew Your Membership?

- Help us advocate for the preservation of our past.
- Receive email copies of our bi-monthly newsletter and notices of upcoming events.
- Evidence of a thriving membership helps non-profit organizations to be awarded grant money.

Lifetime Membership	Annual Memberships				
Business or Individual Membership \$100	Business \$25	Family Membership \$20	Individual Membership \$10	Senior Citizen (62→) \$5	Student (valid student ID required) \$5

This is a new membership  This is a membership renewal  
 Check here if you would also like to make a tax-deductible contribution \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### My information: (please print clearly)

\_\_\_\_\_ Mr. \_\_\_\_\_ Ms. \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_ Miss \_\_\_\_\_ Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ Rev.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Signing up for email updates will enable you to receive more frequently news of upcoming programs, activities and projects. The Longswamp Historical Society will **never** share or sell your email address.

### Make checks payable to the *Longswamp Township Historical Society*

#### Mailing address:

**P. O. Box 610**

**Mertztown, PA 19539**

*The Longswamp Township Historical Society is determined as an IRC 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and an IRC 509(c)(2) Public Charity by the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS). All contributions are considered tax deductible under current IRS regulations.*

## Death Notices and Funeral Notices

*This is part of a series of articles submitted by Jerri Burket on researching family history.*



When you're retrieving obituaries from newspapers about members of your family, don't forget to look for the death notice or funeral notice, usually printed with the classified advertisements, although, depending on the time period of the death, they can be found anywhere in the paper.

In the 1800's, when obituaries were only printed for folks of importance to the community, you might still find a death notice. Death notices of that time generally didn't say much more than the person's name, date of death, and possibly the age at death (in years, months and days). For married females, the name of the husband might also be provided. For young children, at least the name of the father.

Over time, additional information crept into the death notice ... the time and location(s) of the funeral service and the place of interment. As this practice became more prevalent, the death notice was renamed the funeral notice by most newspapers.

Unlike obituaries, which are generally printed only one day, death/funeral notices are quite often printed for several days, usually starting with the day that the obituary was printed and ending on the day of the funeral.

Death/funeral notices also cost less than an obituary. In some instances, you might find the notice but not an obituary.

Some details that I have found in death/funeral notices that were omitted from the obituary include the following:

- the exact day of death, when the obituary was a bit fuzzy on that detail
- the age of the person at death, stated in years, months and days
- a married woman's maiden name, or even her complete name when the obituary referred to her as "Mrs. John Smith"
- where the person was buried, quite often left out of the obituary

\*\*\*\*\*

### **SLATE OF OFFICERS FOR 2015**

*This proposed slate will be voted on at the LTHS annual meeting  
on December 5, 2014*

Mary Ann Lantz, President  
Marie Maly, Vice President  
Jerri Burket, Secretary  
Mike Radcliffe, Treasurer  
Bill Anton  
Ron Young  
Delores (Tootie) Helwig  
Troy Fairchild  
Ellie Long

## Longswamp Founding Fathers

*This series highlights the life and accomplishments of the 26 men who signed a petition presented to the justices of Berks County in 1761 that requested Long Swamp be erected into a township.*



### Ludwig Neitz

Ludwig was born in Germany and arrived in America aboard the ship Nancy on September 27, 1752. Tax records for 1757 and 1768 show he was living in Long Swamp as a non-landowner. We don't know if the Neitz family also examined earlier records, which are not available online.

That a man of no wealth (non-landowner) would be selected to represent Long Swamp is not something we've run into before. So either Ludwig was living in Long Swamp earlier than 1757 and represented early settlers still living in the area, or else there's a great story out there just waiting for us to discover.

Records indicate Ludwig was married, but his wife's name does not appear on any public or family records. A list of his known children follows:

\*Philip (b. 1753 - d. February 7, 1833)

\*Jacob (b. between 1760-1770 – d. after 1830)

\* Catharine (b. between 1760-1774 – d. unknown); married George Markle (Merkle)

William (b. before 1761 – d. before 1791)

Mathias (b. before 1766 – d. before 1790)

*\* Children listed in Ludwig's land grant documents. The other children were identified by family members using tax records and military records.*

Ludwig and his family eventually relocated to today's Snyder County; the first record to indicate his presence there is dated 1778. In 1787, he was taxed for 70 acres and personal property and, in 1789, he was granted a warrant of survey for an additional 100 acres.

Neitz family historians place his death at somewhere between 1790 and 1806.

### Sources:

"The Snyder County Pioneers, Selinsgrove, PA," Dr. Charles A. Fisher, August 22, 1938, page 66-67.

"Proprietary and State Tax Lists of the County of Berks," Pennsylvania Archives, printed under the direction of David Martin, Secretary of the Commonwealth, edited by William Henry Egle, M.D., Vol. XVII, Harrisburg, Wm. Stanley Ray, State Printer, 1897.

"The Neitz and Knights Families of Snyder and Clinton Counties Pennsylvania," Hugh S. and Patricia J. Wayne, July 27, 1995.

Familytreemaker.com file of Kay A. Stahl.

Snyder County Historical Society information.



## Historical Society Events

It has been a busy and exciting couple of months for the Historical Society:

### October, 2014



#### 2015 Calendar Photo Contest Entry Show

With popcorn and punch in hand, attendees settled down to an old-fashioned slide show—all of the entries for the 2015 calendar photo contest. The judges selected entries submitted by Peter Noyes, Janine Sarmir, Bryce Pinkerton, Derek Pinkerton, Leann Sacks, Melinda Tercha, and Eloise Long. The calendar cover photo (left) was submitted by Melinda Tercha. Thanks to all who submitted their photos. Special thanks to judges Sam Fritch, Scott Weldon and Gail Gottlund.

#### Pa. Dutch Buffet Fundraiser

Our Pa. Dutch buffet event was a great success. This year, historian and LTHS member Joshua Fink (pictured) gave a brief presentation about baking as it was once done. He also brought a grape pie, once a commonplace dessert in the homes of the Pennsylvania Germans. The pie, baked by Joshua, became a door prize for oldest attendee, Minerva Anton. Thanks to Scott Gardner, proprietor, Janelle's Restaurant and Catering, for his continuing support of the LTHS; thanks also to all of those who attended.



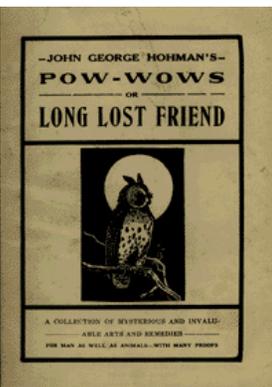
#### Historical Society Featured in *Berks Country Magazine*

The Longswamp Township Historical Society was featured in the October 29<sup>th</sup> edition of *Berks Country*. The article is part of a series intended to showcase historical societies in Berks County. We've since received some inquiries we hope will turn into exciting opportunities. Stay tuned.

### November, 2014

#### 2015 "Beautiful Longswamp Township" Calendar Makes Debut at UCC Bazaar

Copies of our 2015 "Beautiful Longswamp Township" calendar were gobbled up, and we got the chance to catch up with and meet lots of new folks from our local and neighboring communities. While supplies last, calendars will be available at the courtesy desk at Radcliffe's (\$10). Thanks to the Longswamp UCC for the invitation to participate. (Pictured: LTHS member Mary Mabry)



#### Pow-Wow Lecture Draws Large Crowd

"Have you been pow-wowed?" asked Candace Kintzer Perry, guest speaker from the Pennsylvania Humanities Council, an organization supported in part by National Endowment for the Humanities. Following the lecture, audience members who answered affirmatively told stories about their pow-wow experience. Candace's presentation centered on the 1928 pow-wow murder of Nelson Rehmyer of York, Pa., and the media frenzy that ensued. Pow-wow is the folk healing practice brought to the US by German-speaking immigrants.

Longswamp Township Historical Society  
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Mertztown, PA 19539  
Phone: (484) 504-9149  
Email: [LongswampHistory@gmail.com](mailto:LongswampHistory@gmail.com)

We're on the web!

<http://www.co.berks.pa.us/Muni/Longswamp/Pages/HistoricalSociety.aspx>

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discontinue mailing it to you.***



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