



The Mansion may be closed, but MCHA staff busier than ever

By Amy Leiser
Executive Director

When staff and volunteers completed gathering the content for this edition of *The Fanlight*, it was early March. Needless to say, much has changed over the past few weeks. The team has had to revisit the Spring newsletter several times in order to provide the most accurate update about the MCHA to our membership.

The Stroud Mansion closed to the public on March 13 to help support the effort to contain the spread of the COVID-19 virus. We do not know when the building will reopen; however, closing the Mansion and postponing upcoming events do not mean that MCHA's role in our community has diminished.

As the decision to close the Mansion was made, the staff came together to formulate a plan to navigate during this surreal time. You can feel confident that the Monroe County Historical Association staff continues to work to keep moving the organization forward. From cleaning the Stroud Mansion and working on new exhibitions to shifting operations into our respective homes in order to design new promotional materials and research funding sources, the staff remains very busy.

All of us at the MCHA are looking forward to the day when residents and visitors can once again tour the museum, research in the library, and attend the events that help preserve Monroe County's rich history.

Please follow us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter to stay connected to Monroe County's past and to receive up-to-date information on our events, workshops, programs, and fundraisers. Staff has been posting wonderful photographs and interesting articles daily that we know you'll find entertaining.

Until then, please stay home, stay safe, and stay healthy. As always, thank you for your support.



The Stroud Mansion, by Andrei Protsouk

Happy Bicenquingagenary, Stroud Mansion!

By Julia Burns
Administrative Assistant

This year marks a very special year for the Stroud Mansion – its 225th anniversary! That's right, 225 years – Jacob Stroud built the Stroud Mansion in 1795. There's even a special word for this type of anniversary – the Bicenquingagenary!

Jacob built the Stroud Mansion at the corner of Main and 9th streets, intending for his eldest son, John, to live and conduct business there. The building was meant to be an impressive home and was built in the Georgian style, modeled after homes in Philadelphia.

John Stroud only lived in the Mansion for a few years. Seeking quiet away from the "bustle" of Main Street, he moved just outside of Stroudsburg to become a farmer. John's brother, Daniel, and his wife, Elizabeth, then moved into the Stroud Mansion. Daniel and Elizabeth had 12 children (eight survived) and raised their family in the Mansion until Daniel moved to a smaller home across the street in 1836.

Story continues, Page 3

MCHA Calendar



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2020 Meetings

The MCHA Board of Directors meets the fourth Tuesday of most months at 7 p.m. at the Stroud Mansion.

April 28

May 26

June 23

No meeting in July

August 25

September 22

October 27

November 24

No meeting in December

The Monroe County Historical Association is a cultural and learning center that assists our diverse community of residents and visitors in connecting the county's past with the present.

Thursday, May 21 Third Thursday Lecture Series Topic: A. Mitchell Palmer

7 p.m., Stroud Mansion

Join us for the beginning of our Third Thursday Lecture Series. Jeffrey L. Wright will give a presentation on the life of A. Mitchell Palmer.

Thursday, June 18 Third Thursday Lecture Series Topic: The Leni Lenape

7 p.m., Stroud Mansion

Susan Bacher, archeologist for the Delaware Tribe Historical Preservation Office, will give a presentation on the history of our area's native population.

Saturday, June 20 Hiking Into History

10 a.m.-noon, meeting place TBA

The MCHA and the Pocono Heritage Land Trust host a guided hike through the woods, sharing the history of Fieldstone Farm. Register through the Pocono Heritage Land Trust.

Thursday, July 16 Third Thursday Traveling Exhibit Reception

7 p.m., Stroud Mansion

Join us for a free reception to honor the opening of a traveling exhibition, "Field to Front: Nittany Lions at War, 1917-1919." The exhibit traces Penn State's history during World War I through the eyes of athletes who served in France and Italy.

Thursday, September 10 Raise Your Glass & Support the Past

6-9 p.m., The Lodge at Mountain Springs Lake, Reeders

Annual wine-pairing dinner and auction. Our major fundraising event of the year.

Thursday, September 17 Third Thursday Lecture Series Topic: Women's Suffrage

7 p.m., Stroud Mansion

ESU professor Dr. Shannon Frystak presents a program on the beginning of the female activism.

Eagle Scout projects benefit the Bell School

Connor Kearns and Brandon Burchartz of Boy Scout Troop 300 completed their service project at the Bell School to obtain the rank of Eagle Scout, and were honored at an Eagle Scout Court of Honor on January 19.

Connor painted the window frames and the front door, repaired the shutters and soffits, and removed the old school desks to give the floor a much-needed cleaning and waxing.

Brandon created a large sign to help identify the old schoolhouse, cleaned up the grounds from overgrown brush, and planted attractive flowers.

The boys raised money for their projects with spaghetti dinners, pancake breakfasts, and a plant sale. Both demonstrated leadership, responsibility, and compassion, and we thank them for their dedication to our community.



From left: Connor Kearns, Amy Leiser, and Brandon Burchartz at the Eagle Scout Court of Honor in January.



Bicenquingenary

Continued from Page 1

The building's history since then is a tapestry woven in many colors by many inhabitants. From families and tenants to social clubs and nonprofits, many called the Stroud Mansion home. If only those walls could talk!

After Daniel Stroud's family moved out, the building was leased to Joseph Snyder who opened the "Mansion House Tavern." This business likely drew a raucous crowd, and perhaps because Daniel Stroud lived a devout Quaker life and had shunned alcohol in his home, the lease for the tavern did not last long.

After two years, John and Charles Malvin leased the building as the "Temperance House," where "bucketfuls of lemonade were provided." The next known occupant was the widow Mrs. Margaret Eagles, who opened the "Mansion House Inn" and welcomed weary travelers.

Family members occupied the Mansion again when brothers James H. and George Stroud moved in with their half-sister Martha Stroud Shotwell in 1858. They divided the building into three parts with "a line drawn through the front door of the house." The siblings remained in the house until 1878, when the last one died.

The next occupants were the family of Theophilus Heilig, who lived there from 1880-1889. Theophilus was a Lutheran minister in Middle Smithfield Township. He devoted much attention to the building, and modernized it with gaslighting. When President James Garfield was assassinated, Theophilus draped the Mansion in black. He

also maintained the building after an 1883 fire. After his family left the home, it remained vacant for three years.

By 1892 there were several rental units in the building, and it was sold to Timothy and Josephine Everitt for \$8,500. But the building's condition worsened, and in 1919, it went on the market with an asking price of \$15,000. The Mansion had fallen into total disrepair and risked destruction. The Civic Club of Stroudsburg decided that such a historic icon could not be lost, and rallied the community to save it. In 1920, they raised \$20,430.50, the equivalent of over \$265,000 today.

In the years that followed, the Stroud Mansion hosted the Civic Club, the public library, the Women's Club, the Junior Women's Club, the Red Cross, the Girl Scouts, Daughters of the American Revolution, and the Monroe County Historical Society.

Parts of the building continued to be rented as apartments as late as the 1950s. In the 1990s, the Monroe County Historical Association assumed full control of the Stroud Mansion, and this decade saw several renovations to restore the building to its original design.

While the use of the building has changed over the years, the structure remains a jewel in the county. The Stroud Mansion is extremely visible and is an important landmark showcasing the heritage of the area. A beautiful historic home, telling the history of the area, it is a source of not only for Monroe County citizens, but for visitors as well.

Here's to another 225 years!

Valiant Women of the Vote

On March 4 the Monroe County Commissioners and the Monroe County Women's Commission recognized four people in celebration of Women's History Month.

Recognizing the theme of "Valiant Women of the Vote, Champions for Women's Rights," this year's recipients were Martha Stout, judge of elections in Chestnuthill Township for 23 years; Sara May-Silfee, Monroe County's director of elections and voter registration; Barbara Keiser, president of the League of Women Voters of Monroe County.

Honored posthumously was Althea Staples, chair of the Women's Suffrage Society of Monroe County beginning in 1915. MCHA Executive Director Amy Leiser, who had nominated Staples as the leader of the local women's suffrage movement, accepted the award on her behalf, noting her hard work for women's equality and community service throughout the first half of the 20th century.



From left: Sara May-Silfee, Martha Stout, Barbara Keiser, and Amy Leiser.



PEP AWARDS: Preserve, Enhance, Promote

The Monroe County Historical Association honored owners of historic buildings who have shown their dedication to preserving, enhancing, and promoting Monroe County's wealth of historic structures at its Annual Meeting and Awards Luncheon on February 23 at the Shawnee Inn and Golf Resort, Shawnee-on-Delaware.

RESIDENTIAL AWARD

Abeloff-Lambert House

This mid-century modern Stroud Township home was built in 1960 by Lester and Clementine Abeloff. It is believed that well-known architect John Michael of the Lehigh Valley designed this house in what is now called the contemporary style of architecture, a design movement which became popular from 1945-1970.

The structure has only had two owners in its history: the Abeloffs and the current owners, the Pearse and Lindsey Lambert family.

COMMERCIAL AWARD

E.A. Bell Insurance Co. Building

This 1880 commercial building at 616 Main Street, Stroudsburg, was home to the Edwin A. Bell Insurance Company for over 70 years. It shows the Second Empire style detailing popular after the Civil War.

The building is owned by Greg Katz, who credits his parents for saving the structure from modification. It is currently occupied by Rowan Asher Winery (R.A.W.) and Hard Cidery, and Mackey Photo & Video.

NONPROFIT AWARD

Fenner, Snyder & Robacker Homestead

This two-story stone manor house was the centerpiece of 120 acres of farmland owned by the Fenner family of Hamilton Township.

Constructed in 1805 for John Heinrich Fenner, the house was inhabited by generations of Fenner and Snyder family members through the 19th and 20th centuries.

The homestead remained an active farmhouse into the 20th century. In the mid-20th century, antique collectors Earl F. and Ada Robacker purchased the estate, furnishing the home with their celebrated collection of Pennsylvania antiques. When Ada Robacker died in 1988, she willed the home and remaining five acres to Hamilton Township with the stipulation that it be used for cultural, educational, or historical purposes.

HERITAGE RESOURCE AWARD

The Old Mill

This has been a significant mill site on McMichaels Creek since early in our country's history. The original mill on this site of log construction was known as Brinker's Mill and was operational by 1764.

Do you know of a Monroe County property that deserves recognition? Please contact the office with the address and any information about the property, and the P.E.P. Award Committee will follow-up.

Endowment Trust Report 2019-2020

Many thanks go to these generous donors. The Endowment Trust provides the essential financial stability needed to assure the future success of the Monroe County Historical Association. During the 2019-2020 campaign, contributions totaled \$3,435. We offer our sincere appreciation to our supporters for their generosity.

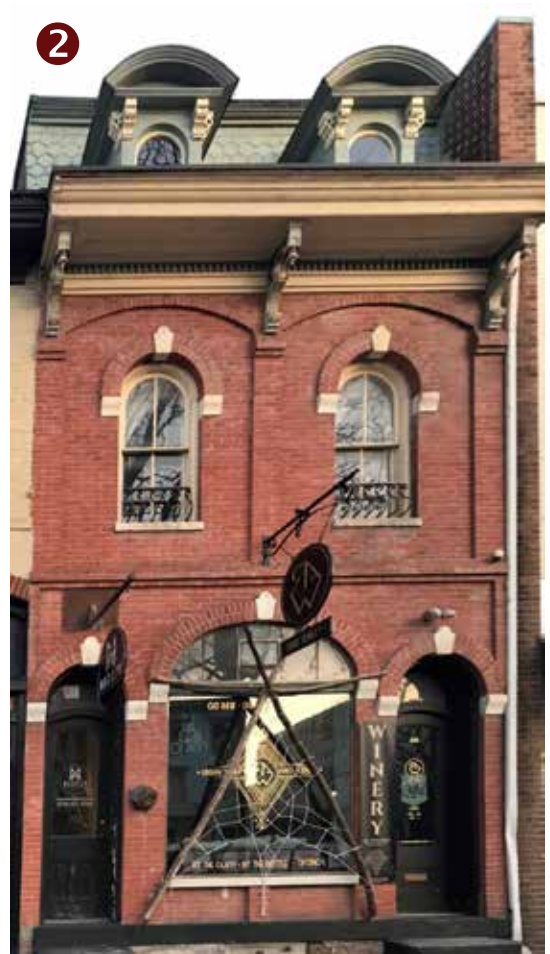
Please remember that your contributions and memorial donations are welcome throughout the year!

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**Monroe County Historical Association
15th ANNUAL
PRESERVE • ENHANCE • PROMOTE AWARD WINNERS**

- 1 Residential Property** –
Abeloff-Lambert House, owned by Pearse and Lindsey Lambert,
Stroud Township
- 2 Commercial Property** –
E.A. Bell Insurance Co. Building, 616 Main St., Stroudsburg.
- 3 Nonprofit**–
Fenner, Snyder & Robacker Homestead, Hamilton Road East, Sciota
- 4 Heritage Resource** –
The Old Mill, 5818 Hamilton Road East, Sciota





Monroe County
Historical Association

Welcome, New Members

- | | |
|---|------------------------------------|
| Russell and Jayne Albert | Joyce E. Larson |
| Peter and Karen Alejnikov | Mary A. Lear |
| Belinda Basnight | William H. Lear, Jr. |
| Norman and Jane Belcher | Sean Lobel |
| Matt Bentzoni/
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and Susan Ruskin |
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| E. David Christine, Jr. | Norma Miller |
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| Thomas J. Conklin | Wayne and Connie Ordille |
| Darell Covington | Mike Polashenski
and Lori Kuehn |
| Cori Staples Croteau | Richard and Loretta Porvaznik |
| Ilene Eckhart | Robert Renner |
| Dale and Susan Faraday | Jeffery Schroer |
| John and Josephine Ferro | Linda Schwartz |
| Theresa Flynn | Albert and Leslie Short |
| Anthony Giordano | Michelle Siri-Beyzak |
| Tammey Hahn | Marianne
and Terrence Snyder |
| R. David and Rachael Heath | Dana Valley |
| Andrea Higgins | Robert and Bettyann
Van Metter |
| Robert Holm | Jeff and Audrey Weber |
| Bruce Johnson | Herbert Weigand |
| Mark Kasper | James Westlake |
| Christina Kauffman | Eliza Wolfe |
| Robert Kautz | Danny Younger |
| Halle Kemp | |
| Barbara J. Lantz | |

Benefits of Membership

- Pride in preserving the history of Monroe County
- Free admission to all MCHA sites
- 10% Gift Shop discount
- *The Fanlight* newsletter
- Volunteer opportunities
- Discount research assistance
- Genealogy assistance
- MCHA event discounts
- Advanced notice of all MCHA events, programs

Meet our interns

MEGAN HANEY

MCHA Intern



I graduated from Pleasant Valley High School in 2014, and attend Moravian College in Bethlehem. I am majoring in History with a concentration in Early American History. I love learning about early medicines and medical equipment, especially in the Antebellum Era. My career goals are to work with the National Park Service in historic and battlefield preservation. I enjoy traveling to different museums, hiking, and reading, and my favorite places to visit are Gettysburg, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C.

While interning at the Stroud Mansion, I have learned so many different aspects to my community that I have never known before. I love that the museum showcases everything from genealogical research to local artists. I enjoy meeting people who have come to research their families. My favorite part about interning is learning the behind-the-scenes work that goes into a museum. Because of this hard work, we are able to broaden and strengthen our ties to our community for future generations.

DANIEL PUTNICK

MCHA Intern



I am an intern for the Spring semester, and am at the Stroud Mansion once or twice a week.

I am in my junior year at East Stroudsburg University, and am a History major with a special interest in the Revolutionary War. At ESU, I have made the Dean's List multiple times and helped revive the school's History Club. Outside of work and studies, I am an avid reader and a film buff.

While interning at the MCHA, I am assisting in the creation of an exhibit celebrating East Stroudsburg's 150th anniversary. In addition to my weekly journal, I am writing a detailed research paper about A. Mitchell Palmer, the 50th U.S. attorney general, who served in Woodrow Wilson's administration and played a large part in the first Red Scare.

I look forward to helping the MCHA in any way that I can and I hope to continue working in the history field.



A Special Month in More Ways than One!

As my regular readers already know, I just love to scamper throughout my home, the Stroud Mansion, as often as possible and especially in the dark. That's when I can make as much noise as I want, eat what's left on the kitchen counter, and find out all types of interesting facts and opinions by using a computer, reading books, browsing newspapers, and searching through town and county records for as long as I want —until the sun begins to rise.

Well, it just so happens that March was Women's History Month, and lately I have overheard a lot of human talk about women, suffrage, amendments to the Constitution, and equal rights. I found out that this year is the 100th anniversary celebration of the Constitution's 19th Amendment, which was passed by Congress on June 4, 1919, and ratified August 18, 1920.

It granted women the right to vote! Before that, only men could vote — on laws, electing a president, and electing politicians such as congressmen (Get it? *Congressmen*) who made important decisions for the good of the country. They determined the fate of the American people, our beautiful land and the animals who live in it.

Here was something new for me to research! Achieving this milestone required a long and difficult struggle, including women parading wearing sashes, carrying big signs, and sometimes getting arrested by the police! That's not fair! And why did it take so long? I had to find out more.

My rule for research is to start with uncovering the "big picture." How long was the fight for the right to vote? Where did it happen and when did it start? Who was involved?

I found a website with a "Woman Suffrage Timeline." ("Suffrage" means



the right to vote). Women throughout the country started organizing around 1840, arranging conventions and creating an agenda of activism which continues to the present day. Lucretia Mott, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth (a former slave), and Alice Paul, to name a few, were banned from men's meetings. A group called the National Women's Party focused on more radical, militant tactics — hunger strikes and White House pickets — aimed at winning dramatic publicity for their cause.

My mouse family has been living in the Mansion since the 1790s, so I was especially interested in finding out if this type of activism and protest happen in Monroe County.

Climbing into the file cabinets at night, I found that in 1915, Althea Staples formed the Women's Suffrage Society of Monroe County. Under her leadership, the local suffragettes became active and established committees to report on social issues of the day. Althea organized gatherings in Courthouse Square to report on any and all legislative bills that might impact the cause. She arranged for the suffrage movie "Your Girl and Mine" to be screened in town. When yellow became the color of the suffrage

movement, Althea encouraged local businesses to decorate their store fronts with yellow ribbons. Althea enlisted many loyal workers to promote suffrage gardens containing yellow flowers. According to the 1915 *Monroe Democrat*, the Monroe County suffragettes were selling seed packs containing the seeds of six flowers that would be a continuous bloom of yellow. Althea and her fellow suffragettes had energy!

The Stroudsburg Women's Club, of which Althea Staples was a charter member, planted trees throughout Stroudsburg, organized regular trash removal, encouraged the school board to create a "homemaking department" in the high school, and supported the anti-tuberculosis campaign. The group established a well-baby clinic and created the public library. Althea personally raised funds to save the Stroud Mansion from being torn down and was instrumental in having the building serve as a community house. I'm so thankful for their efforts and that I have a roof over my head!

Now the piles of red, white, and blue political buttons, the campaign signs stacked on the work table, and the yards of purple suffrage ribbon in our curator Bret's office make sense. He is working on an exhibit highlighting the history of Monroe County women in politics and how far women have come over the past 100 years. I saw in his notes that the exhibition is titled, "From Suffrage to Service, Monroe County Women in Politics."

I am proud of the accomplishments women have made. I come from a long line of strong female mice. I know women still have far to go when it comes to equality, but they've got what it takes to get there.



**MONROE COUNTY
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

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STROUD MANSION

900 Main Street, Stroudsburg

**Stroud Mansion is closed to the public
until further notice.
Staff remains on duty by phone or email.**

Has your address changed?

If you have a new mailing address
or email address, please let us know.

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