

2017 Year in Review
Lambertville Historical Society / James Wilson Marshall House Museum
Suzanne Gitomer, President

The Marshall House Museum was open and staffed from late April through October, Saturdays and Sundays, 1-4pm. This 1816 facility is maintained solely with LHS funds and all proper documents, bills and tax accounts were filed.

The Museum was also open for extended hours for Shadfest Weekend in April and Winterfest Weekend in January, and by special request.

2017 Museum attendance (counted) was approximately 1,351 visitors.

For 2017 the Lambertville Historical Society, a non-profit, had four officers and ten trustees for 14 total voting. An Advisory Board (non-voting) had six members. We have a full slate of Trustees and Officers for the 2018 Board for election at our next Annual Membership Meeting on January 21, 2018.

Paid memberships total approximately 203. Since many memberships are couples, and some are family memberships, the actual count of total members is about 305 people.

We continue to look at ADA accessibility issues regarding the Marshall House Museum. Our public lectures, receptions and events are currently held at accessible sites. We have made professional connections for signing interpretation as needed. Studies continued for a possible ramp to improve access to the museum's first floor.

Significant work was completed on the Marshall House, including improvements to the bathroom and to the outdoor landscape and drainage. The office and hallways were repainted in current House colors.

For 2017, LHS received a re-grant of \$6,313.00 from New Jersey Historical Commission CHPP GOS grant for general operating support of the Museum.

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS and SERVICES:

Our 2017 Annual Membership Meeting on January 15 featured a presentation "Magic on Music Mountain – The Story of the Lambertville Music Circus" by Gary Cohen. Attendance was about 90 people. Free and handicap accessible.

In April we presented a program "Land of Refuge, Land of Opportunity" on immigration by Dr. Carl Lindskoog of Raritan Valley Community College with an audience of approximately 30 guests. In September we presented Scott Hengst who talked on 150 years of baseball in Lambertville with an audience of approximately 25 guests.

The LHS Narducci Awards for preservation or restoration of the exterior of a town structure were presented in March at a special ceremony at which Mary Freedman presented background on the three decades of awards and its namesake, preservationist Alice Narducci. The 2017 awards went to Irene Rudolph for 90 Clinton Street and to Woodrose Properties for 37 N. Union Street.

Guided historical town tours were available first Sundays, April through November, and for Shadfest and Winterfest. Several additional custom town tours were given. Five tour leaders participated in the year's tours. Special tours included a Halloween-themed town tour and a children's tour. For Shadfest, we operated a booth with historical information and games and provided town tours.

On February 11 a silent Plein Air Plus art auction and reception was held at the Rago Arts and Auction Center with paintings done live during the 2016 House Tour by 29 local artists. Proceeds after expenses benefit the Lambertville Historical Society. Approximately 250 people were in attendance.

Our late spring LHS Membership Social Hour/Members Walking Tour was held on June 4 with about 35 members attending.

LHS sponsored a 6th Annual Holiday Music CD with many original songs from musicians of the community. CD-release parties were held at the Elks Lodge, the Birdhouse Center for the Arts and Havana's Restaurant in New Hope. Sales were excellent with proceeds to LHS.

Our 35th Annual Historic Lambertville House Tour on October 15 included seven historic homes, the Marshall House Museum, the Centenary United Methodist Church and the Lambertville Free Public Library. Ticket sales were strong at 600 paid. Approximately 140 volunteers and homeowners were involved and also toured. An informative program book with researched house histories was prepared. This event was a financial success with much local news coverage and great participation by local businesses as sponsors and purchasers of tour book ads. The library site also included a new and popular exhibit of historic local images, prepared by local artist Scott MacNeill.

The next *Plein Air Plus* silent art auction, associated with the 2017 House Tour sites and local scenes, benefits the Lambertville Historical Society and is scheduled for March 10, 2018, at the Rago Art & Auction Center, which continues to donate the use of its space for this fundraiser.

Our 2016 House Tour booklet won the Kevin H. Hale Award from the League of Historical Societies of New Jersey for best publication.

LHS continued a friendly, web-posted competition for best photos of local scenes to draw interest to historical sites. The series honors John A. Anderson (1829-1917), Lambertville businessman and skilled, early photographer.

Approximately 60 private requests were made for historical information or images. Topics included:

- multiple inquiries for information on the history and family of James Marshall.
- many requests for information on local homes or businesses and on local families.
- historic images of Lambertville were supplied to help decorate the Delaware River Towns Chamber of Commerce office.
- images of City Hall were supplied to support their grant proposal to recreate their entire front porch.
- images and information on Goat Hill were supplied to a writer.
- information on the history of a local African-American family was provided.
- information and images of local rock quarries were provided to an author.

Significant improvements were also made on the archival database. General records of the last 20 years of the Museum and Historical Society were sorted and organized. LHS upgraded its collection management technology, still using Past Perfect.

Four historic registry plaques were requested from LHS for town residents for their homes; dozens of historical registry sheets on homes were given to requesters.

We continue to be active on Facebook and Twitter and our website features an interactive map, an active calendar and historical and membership information.

For 2017, four editions of the LHS newsletter were published and sent to members and friends with stories of local history, items regarding James Wilson Marshall and news of member events.