

# The Nugget

Lambertville Historical Society's  
Quarterly Newsletter

James Wilson Marshall House Museum

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[www.LambertvilleHistoricalSociety.org](http://www.LambertvilleHistoricalSociety.org)



LHS awarded our 2021 \$500 scholarship to Paige Sirak, a South Hunterdon Regional High School senior (pictured left with President Michael Menche in front of the Marshall House). For the scholarship application, a student interviews a longtime local resident about his/her first job, and compares the experience with today's employment. After reading Paige's outstanding article (below), we were delighted to learn that she will study crop sciences at Michigan State University, making her match with Roger Heinemann quite appropriate.

## Fresh Fruit and First Jobs *Paige Sirak*

Picture this: It's the summer of 1962, and you're up before the sun is. Grabbing your trusty bicycle, you leave your house early and bike half a mile in the growing morning light. It isn't too hot yet, but it will be soon. You finally arrive at your destination at around 6:00 am,

greet your friends, grab your bucket, and begin work at your first job. In this case, it's picking raspberries at Vi Budbright's patch. For about two weeks in July, 15-year-old Roger Heinemann harvested fresh raspberries every morning. It was difficult work, but it ultimately taught him the valuable skill of responsibility while still having some fun on the side.

Roger first heard about this job from one of his best friends, Henry Rodkin. He and Henry often spent their days together, hanging out in town or trying to find little ways to make money. This included walking along the road and picking up empty soda bottles to redeem for a few cents. Henry and his two sisters, Prudence and Rosemary, had been offered the opportunity to earn some money picking raspberries at a local farm, and naturally, he invited Roger to join them. The raspberries they picked at Vi Budbright's patch would be brought down to sell at the corner stores in town later in the day. This, and the summer heat, required the "labor force," as Roger fondly called them, to arrive early in the morning. Because Roger was not a morning person, this was not an easy task, but he still managed to be there on time. Picking raspberries came with a few other challenges besides the early wake-up call. The bushes were full of prickly thorns, and it was easy to miss the berries hiding under the leaves. Prudence and Rosemary were the best at spotting and picking berries, and they made sure to follow behind Roger and collect the ones he had missed. This was mortifying to him, and he often brought in the least amount of berries of the workers. Even though it wasn't always easy, Roger still found ways to make the surprisingly taxing job enjoyable. The group often spoke of the critters that could be hiding in the bushes: foxes, raccoons, and especially snakes. One morning, after a particularly jarring conversation about copperheads, Roger decided to pull a prank on Henry. He picked up a sizable branch, attached some raspberries for eyes, and threw it at Henry, yelling "SNAKE!", which gave Henry quite a fright. Although Vi seemed to find it the least amusing, everyone laughed at his little joke. It could be difficult, but Roger learned the importance of being thorough in his work, and how sometimes he should focus a little more on the task than on having fun.

Roger's first job has similarities to those that high schoolers today often participate in, but there are some significant differences as well. One example is, of course, the pay. Roger earned about 7 cents per pint. Today, that'd be equivalent to 61 cents. He would be lucky if he brought in five pints in a morning, earning him about 35 to 40 cents per day. Compared to the \$1.50 that Prudence and Rosemary each earned, this wasn't much. With the short harvest season, Roger only made around \$5.20 total. In New Jersey in 2021, the minimum wage is \$12.00 per hour. High schoolers today often work longer hours and for longer periods of time, and, depending on the job, can earn around \$300 in the same two weeks that Roger worked. While the pay certainly differed, some similarities included the lessons learned at first jobs and how they're introduced. It's still very common for students to get a job through their friends or family, just as Roger did with Henry. Additionally, the purpose of a first job remains the same: to gain experience in the workforce. This experience teaches you many life skills, such as hard work and responsibility. After bringing in the least amount of pints, Roger learned to discipline himself and become a valuable employee in the future. Lessons like this one are a vital part of first jobs that prepare newcomers for what lies ahead.

Roger's experience picking raspberries with his friends in Vi Budbright's patch allowed him to earn a little money while having fun and learning lessons along the way. The takeaways of his first job can be found in early employment even today. I, for one, can particularly relate to his experience, as my first job was on a local farm as well! Instead of picking raspberries, I was scouting insects, but his stories felt very familiar, as I'd been through similar situations many years later. This proves that while some factors of employment change, such as the pay, there are always lessons to be learned and stories to be shared.

## Presentation to MARAC

On June 8 LHS president Michael Menche participated in the Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference (MARAC) NJ Caucus Innovative Archives Award Committee for their special program titled "Successes Achieved/Adapting to Change in the Pandemic."

He spoke about "Upholding the Mission During the Pandemic" and used numerous visuals to demonstrate how LHS, although closed during COVID, maintained its mission through a variety of virtual programs including the Autumn House Tour, walking tours among several others as well as the popular outdoor Then and Now Exhibit on the streets of Lambertville (now online).

Other speakers at the event included Sheridan Sayles - Seton Hall University; Melissa Ziobro - Q&A with Preservation New Jersey; Kathleen C. Wyatt and Harry Bellangy - Greater Cape May Historical Society; and Deb Schiff - The College of New Jersey who spoke about MARAC's first virtual meeting.

## Live Walking Tours Return

Beginning on July 4, the LHS First Sunday of the Month walking tour returns. Attendance will be limited to 12 people and it will be announced on the LHS Facebook page with signup through Eventbrite (free). The first 12 to sign up will be informed of the starting location each month.

[www.facebook.com/LambertvilleHistory](http://www.facebook.com/LambertvilleHistory)



Attendees at a previous walking tour.

## Oil Tank Removed

In the winter issue of *The Nugget* we reported that the LHS Board of Trustees and Officers had decided to replace our outdated oil-heating system with cleaner gas which took place in December.

In late June the old oil tank was finally removed. Thank you Karen Taylor-Ogren for coordinating the project.



Out with the old and ...



... in with the new.

### Welcome New Members

Audrey & Kevin Byrnes

Bonnie Colletti & Family

Roger Heinemann

Janelle Storesund

### Thank You for the Donations

We thank our generous Centurions and all of our members for their continued support. We recognize those below for making a donation beyond their membership dues during the last quarter (we apologize if we missed anyone). It is always sincerely appreciated.

Kate & Jim Breuning

Tony Lockwood

Join, renew membership, or donate to LHS at  
[www.LambertvilleHistoricalSociety.org/membership](http://www.LambertvilleHistoricalSociety.org/membership)

## Reviewing Lambertville History With LPS Students

- Michael Menche

On May 12 and 13 I had the great pleasure to conduct an interactive presentation with the First Grade and Third Grade students at Lambertville Public School. Via screen share, we walked through “A Very Brief History of Lambertville,” looking at pictures and considering transformations of our area.

We began by noting that humans have lived here for around 10,000 years and that the area was agreeable to settlers because of the river. We discussed the Lenni Lenape: their hunting, fishing and gardening; their itinerant lifestyle; and their habitation in wigwams. Students asked, “Why didn’t the Lenni Lenape’s wigwams blow away?” and “What happened to the wigwams after they moved?”

We talked about the first house built by colonists in our area—Holcombe House, or Washington’s Headquarters—just a short distance from LPS, where many of the students went sledding this snowy winter. Then we discussed Coryell’s Ferry, made obsolete by the construction of the bridge, which was covered. Nearby, Captain John Lambert built a hotel, established a post office on the premises, and renamed the town, “Lambertville.” A student asked, “How did he get the power to change the name?”

Naturally, we discussed the construction of Marshall House shortly after the bridge was opened, and its famous resident, James Wilson Marshall. Did he get rich from discovering gold? No! But he has a museum in Lambertville and a tall statue in California in his honor.

Photos of mules towing a barge in the canal, and the railroad next to the canal, followed. Then we looked at two John A. Anderson photos from 1899 and 1905 of factories, the former image showing N. Union Street next to the Lambertville Spoke Works as a tree-lined dirt road traveled by horse-drawn carriages. A student asked, “How did people know which horse was theirs?”



Looking south on N. Union St. from just above Elm Street.

We then examined another Anderson photo from 1898 of a shad haul on Lewis Island, and compared it to a contemporary photo from the same spot. A question, “What happened to the big building on the left?” [At the time it was a mill, years later the River’s Edge restaurant, which burned down in 1975.] We discussed that the same family still fishes for shad, but they don’t catch nearly as many as they did 120 years ago, and shad isn’t exactly an enticing food fish for modern consumers. If they don’t fish for shad to make money, why do they do it? “Family tradition,” a student answered. They include the community in that tradition, we added.



Looking south from the foot of Lewis Island toward the bridge (1898 above; contemporary view below).



In closing, we looked at an aerial photo of Lambertville and discussed how our city has such a high percentage of old houses and buildings, making it special and different from most other towns in New Jersey and the United States. Once, the river drew settlers here and now history itself does, attracting residents and lots of shoppers and tourists—especially on sunny weekends. Several students asked, “How do people hear about Lambertville and know they should visit?”

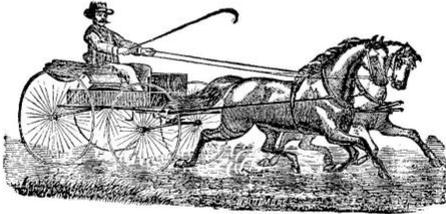
Wonderful to engage with our young neighbors!

## Fill 'Er Up - A Look Back at Gas/Service Stations in Lambertville c. 1980

At the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, most local transportation was provided by horse-drawn vehicles on unpaved streets. Both horse and carriage required care (see ad below). Automobiles were a rarity as were businesses to provide support services. That would soon change.

### JOHN E. SCHENCK, Livery and Boarding Stables,

REAR LAMBERTVILLE HOUSE.



Double and Single rigs to let at all hours with or without competent drivers. Parties taken to all points at reasonable rates. Closed Coaches for Weddings or Funerals.

Bridge Street near the Depot, LAMBERTVILLE, N. J.

Lambertville was home to seven active gas and service stations during the period of the D&R Canal Historic Structures Survey in 1979-80 and the photos below are from that publication. That number may have been a function of both Lambertville being a gateway community and that until a few years ago New Jersey boasted among the lowest gas taxes in the nation which was reflected in low prices.

Three stations were at the intersection of Bridge and Main Streets and four others were little more than a block away. While only three remain, all of the buildings still exist although some have been repurposed and expanded and, apparently, some addresses were adjusted.



30 N. Franklin Street (Route 179) - Texaco  
TODAY: A.C.H. Electric, 26 N. Franklin St.



Abandoned Phillips 66 station described in the Survey as Spanish/Mediterranean style at NE corner of N. Main and York Streets.  
TODAY: Lambertville Animal Hospital



26 N. Franklin Street (Route 179) - Getty.  
TODAY: Garefino Funeral Home, 12 N. Franklin St.



5 Route 165 at Swan Creek - Gulf  
TODAY: Parts Bikes & Rides, Auto & Motorcycle Repair & Maintenance



North side of Bridge at N. Main St.  
TODAY: Still a Sunoco station



Quarry Street at S. Franklin.  
TODAY: Still an independent gas station.



Northwest corner of Bridge and N. Main Streets – Amoco.  
TODAY: Lambertville Food & Flower Market

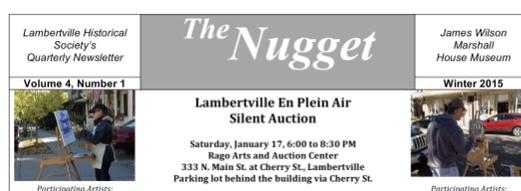
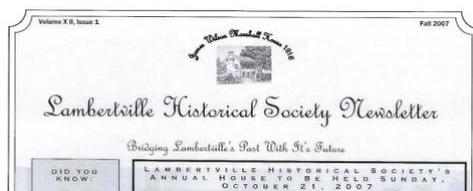


South side of Bridge at S. Main Street – Atlantic-Richfield.  
TODAY: Exxon station

### All LHS Newsletters Now Available Online



Do you enjoy a stroll down memory lane? Or would you like to learn about a lane where you never strolled? Now you have the opportunity to review all of the LHS newsletters that we have on file. Check out previous events, officers, house tours and whatever might grab your interest. There are a handful from the 1980s and all since the newsletter restarted in 1995 after a hiatus. More than 70 issues are available at <https://lambertvillehistoricalsociety.org/past-lhs-nugget-newsletters>



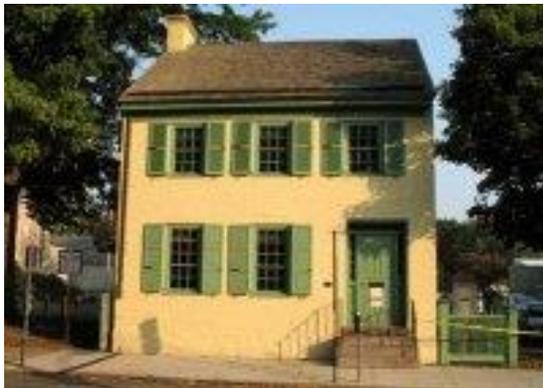
**LHS Calendar** – will return when we are again able to have live events. Check this issue, the LHS website or our Facebook page (linked URLs for both below) for virtual events and updates.

LHS would still like to send *The Nugget* to members by email where they can read the full-color pdf version and have one less item to recycle. **More than a third of LHS members have signed up.** Why not join them? If you are interested, please write to [info@LambertvilleHistoricalSociety.org](mailto:info@LambertvilleHistoricalSociety.org).



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**Our Mission**

The Lambertville Historical Society promotes the preservation and appreciation of Lambertville's architecture and history through education and community involvement, as well as operates and maintains the James Wilson Marshall Museum.

In normal times, the Marshall House is open from 1:00 to 4:00 PM on weekends between Shad Fest (usually the last weekend in April) and the end of October. Free admission. Unfortunately, it is currently closed.

**Officers**

<b>President</b>	Michael Menche
<b>Vice President</b>	Deborah Galen
<b>Treasurer</b>	Laurie Weinstein
<b>Secretary</b>	Liz Riegel

**Trustees**

Jeff Campbell	Suzanne Gitomer
Nancy Campbell	Jeff McVey
Fred Eisinger	Lou Toboz
	Mark Weinstein

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**Contributor:** Michael Menche

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