

LANCASTER MEDICAL HERITAGE MUSEUM

Preserving the Medical History of Lancaster County

Fall 2020 e-newsletter

From the President:

The Edward Hand Medical Heritage Foundation (Museum) was founded in 1982 with a mission to “preserve and make accessible the rich heritage of the healing arts, with special attention given to Lancaster County.” Although our collection has grown to over 14,000 items, our ability to make this history accessible to the public has been limited by a relatively small space in a remote warehouse location. All this is about to change! Sometime around March of 2021, we plan to move into Penn Medicine LGH Health Flory Building at 410 North Lime Street in the city of Lancaster PA. Relocating our museum will give us 3 times the space and 6 times the display area, and will allow our museum to fulfill the second part of our mission statement, which is “to make accessible” our rich history.

In preparation for our move, we recognize the need to rebrand our organization, beginning with our name. Although our namesake, Edward Hand, was a Lancaster physician, a general in George Washington’s army, a politician and a landowner, not even one item of our collection belonged to him. Outside of Lancaster, his name and our museum are not well known.



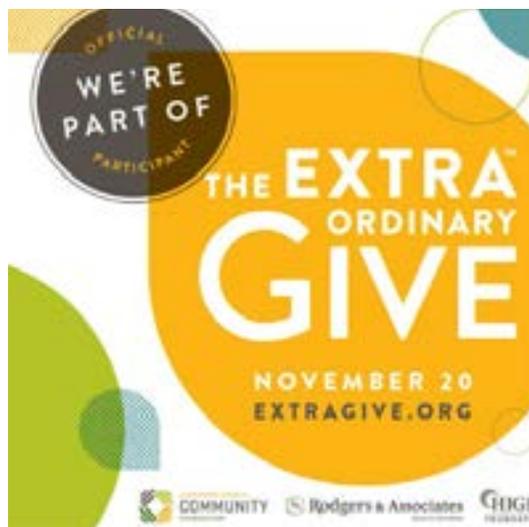
Our new home: The Flory Building

We plan to rename our organization **Lancaster Medical Heritage Museum** to better reflect who we are and what we collect. Likewise, we have learned that the term “the healing arts” has changed over the past 40 years. At one time, the term “healing arts” referred to “the art of medicine”. Today, “healing arts” scarcely relates to medicine. Accordingly, we plan to change our mission to “...to preserve and make accessible the rich medical history of Lancaster County”.

Our move represents huge opportunities. We plan on developing hands-on educational displays for children and providing opportunities for community medical education. We want to be both a repository to preserve history and a resource to educate our community.

We also face challenges. But our community has met challenges before, including the 1918 pandemic. In addition to the logistics of moving our collection and displaying over 14,000 items, there are significant costs that accompany this opportunity. It is our hope that with support from our community, we will add an important resource to the already great city of Lancaster.

Barton L Halpern, MD FACS
President



From the Executive Director: Hannah Lerew

Like the rest of the Lancaster community, nation and world, the Edward Hand Medical Museum has been adjusting to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. We have had to close our doors to the public for the majority of the year, impacting the way we were able to engage with, and support Lancaster County.

Fortunately, this time has given our team a chance to reevaluate our mission, procedures and outreach, so that we can better serve the Lancaster community when we are able to reopen. We were lucky enough to have been accepted into the American Alliance of Museum's Museum Assessment Program (MAP), which has involved a thorough year-long evaluation of our museum organization. We had the pleasure of working with Erin Richardson to assess our organization's structure, priorities and leadership. As a result, we are learning how we can continue to grow and improve the way we serve all of you. I am looking forward to the changes and improvements that we have coming with our new museum in the new year!

In order to carry out these changes, we are looking for support from our museum's community, through this year's Extraordinary Give. Like the past two years, we will be participating, alongside almost 500 other non-profits, in Lancaster's largest virtual day-of-giving, to be held on November 20th, 2020. Check out the website below to keep an eye out for videos and updates throughout the day.

<https://www.extragive.org/organizations/edward-hand-medical-museum>



From our Intern: Brooke Worrall

My name is Brooke Worrall, and I am a junior majoring in cultural anthropology at Millersville University. As an intern with the museum over this summer, I have had the opportunity to pursue some of the most interesting hands-on research of my college career. I began a project to document the effects of the novel coronavirus pandemic on Lancaster County. Knowing that this would be an ever-expanding project, we narrowed the field of research down to an anthropological look into the medical personnel involved.

I was able to interview some of the hard-working doctors, health center directors, and other medical personnel whose work on both the front lines and behind the scenes is helping to steer Lancaster County through the pandemic. Being able to document their daily trials in an unprecedented pandemic gave me insight into the health industry and the constant battle to insure health and safety of the County. Here is a sample:

Lancaster did not see its first case until March 18, when Lancaster General Hospital confirmed they had been treating a case in the city. The statewide number of confirmed cases was 133, a third of which were in southeastern Pennsylvania. Lancaster General also stated that they had cancelled all elective surgeries for two weeks as suggested by federal guidelines. A second case was reported the following day, a health care worker. A third the next day, a Turkey Hill employee, prompting the convenience store to temporarily shut down. The county's first death was reported on March 26, 2020. During this time, Governor Wolf ordered all "non-life-sustaining" businesses to close by 8 p.m. on March 19.

Decisions being made and regulations being put in place seemed to be rather short term. As mentioned earlier, schools were ordered to close for 10 days. Elective surgeries were only pushed back two weeks. Then, we began to hear phrases that have become part of this pandemic – practice social distancing, stand six feet apart, flatten the curve.

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Millersville University student anthropologists at work during the pandemic.

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Jeff Hawkes, a prominent writer for LNP's "Always Lancaster," published a rather illuminating article on March 22 titled "Shortages, closings, wariness of COVID- 19: Lancaster County gets through a week no one will forget."

Yes, the first week of COVID-19 brought worry and concern to the county. There were toilet paper shortages, empty streets, store closures. However, his article also shed light on the health of the community – stories of average citizens shopping for the elderly and others making

food for blocks of neighbors. Some things became very apparent in mid-March. These were unprecedented times, but a community coming together to support one other can lessen the blow.

While I am currently writing a report of my work, I am constantly open to new stories and articles that may be passed my way. If you have a personal story, a local article, or even pictures from around Lancaster County during the months of the pandemic that you would like to share, please send them to me at baworral@millersville.edu.--Brooke

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