



Pottstown Historical Society

NEWSLETTER

568 High Street

Pottstown, PA

Officers: President, David Kerns, Vice President, Robert Evans, Treasurer, Barbara Toroney, Assistant Treasurer, Marie Kelly, Recording Secretary, Laura Groth, Corresponding Secretary, Jean Sweeney

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May Meeting – Monday May 15th, 7pm

The May 15, 2017 Historical Society program will be **“Pottstown and Early Autos: the Manufacturers, Dealers, Drivers, and Garages.”**, presented by Mike Yanness, life-long Pottstown resident and local car-historian expert. Mike is host of the PCTV show “CAR STORIES”, a locally produced TV show sponsored by Eastwood in Pottstown. Mike, who operates Wheels-in-Motion in Pottstown, has restored cars dating back as far as 1900.

Autos have always been a vibrant part of Pottstown, from the days of Pottstown steel and newer alloys used in their manufacture, to the many new- and used-car dealerships over the years, to the neighborhood garages, service stations and backyard mechanics.

Bring your car stories to share, and there will be prizes for the oldest car ever purchased by a Historical Society member, as well as the oldest car now owned by a Historical Society member.

Please join us for a very well timed discussion and learn about this long-standing characteristic of American democracy.

Library Hours

May 2017: 14th & 28th 1-4pm

June 2017: 11th & 25rd 1-4pm

Looking for Relatives of MIA WWII Soldier

The Historical Society recently provided a photo of SSGT Carl M. Shaffer to aid in identification of his remains. SSGT Shaffer served in WWII and was listed as MIA at the battle of Tarawa Island in the Pacific, on January 21, 1944. He was born in 1921 to Herbert Donnell Shaffer and Katherine K. Shaffer. He married Helen E. Fox, of Pottstown and had two brothers, Paul and Vernon, and a sister, Ruth, wife of Milton Detwiler. A non-profit foundation in Texas is using photos of MIA servicemen from the battle of Tarawa to match to the unknown remains of soldiers from the battle of Tarawa using forensic software.

In addition to photos of the servicemen, they would like to be put in touch with any relatives of SSGT Carl M. Shaffer. If you know of any living relative of Carl M. Shaffer, please contact Laura Groth at 610-724-2232 or email: lgroth22@comcast.net. We will be able to put them in contact with the Chief Rick Stone & Family Charity Foundation.

Society Events

Congratulations to Society member, Shannon Lefebvre, for recently releasing a new book, **“Directory of Iron Industry and Related Workers, 1700-1810.”** The Society has copies for sale to add to your libraries!

2017 Walking Tour- Mark your calendars for the 2017 Walking Tour, it's June 22, 2017 at 6pm. Scott Bentley has approved use of the parking area behind 212 High St. (Video Ray). Enter Queen Street from Charlotte Street. The registration table will be setup in the empty Hippodrome lot on High Street. The tour will encompass the 200 block of High St. between Hanover St. and Penn St. Bring your imagination and memories, as we take a walk back in time! Light refreshments will be provided!

Edleman's Corner

In the mid-1830s a shoemaker named, Isaac Edleman, left New Hanover township and came to Pottstown. He probably bought the property of James Rees, spinning wheelmaker, on the NE corner of High St. and Charlotte St. Isaac setup a shoe store on that corner and eventually purchased additional frontage. He ran his business at 305 High St. until his death in 1867.

This corner was known to locals as "Edleman's Corner".

Over the years, many local businesses leased space at Edleman's Corner. In 1856, he leased space to the Montgomery Ledger and the Daily Ledger newspapers until they moved across High St. in the late 1880s.

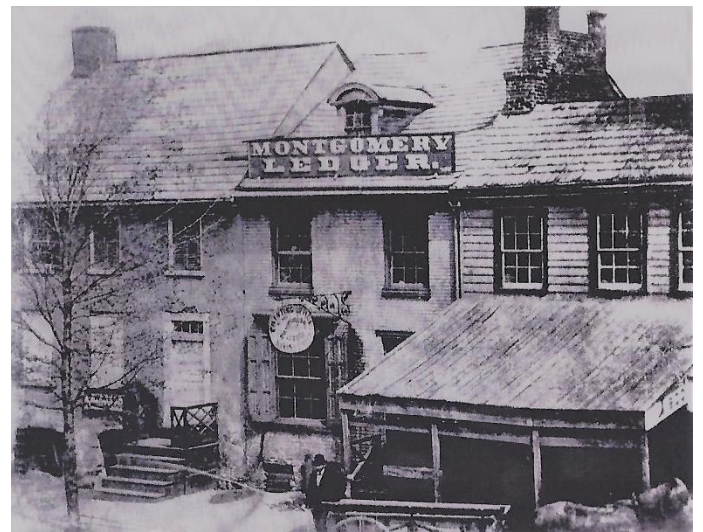
Edleman's son, William, took over the business in 1867 and leased out three buildings to various businessmen.

He also modernized these three buildings around 1890. When William died in 1920 the properties went in to an estate for his wife, Amelia.

When the Hoffmans moved to Pottstown in 1921 they leased this corner for their NY Cut-Price Store, the forerunner of the NY Store. The estate of Amelia Edleman sold the property to The Pottstown Theatres, Inc. in 1923. The plan was to build a palace movie theater on the site once Hoffman's, Boston Clothing and apartment tenants vacated the premises. After an investment of \$350,000, opening night had finally arrived on February 8, 1926. Believe it or not, the "Star Spangled Banner" was played before the movie, with

everyone standing with their hands over their hearts. The first movie was "Old Clothes" starring Jackie Coogan, who later starred in "The Addams Family" as Uncle Fester.

Many of us still remember attending movies at The Strand Theater and how beautiful the interior was. Unfortunately, when it was sold to a developer for JC Penney and was torn down to make way for their new store that opened in 1961. When JC Penney closed in the 1980s, it was purchased by Lastick Furniture for their carpet and flooring line of business which is still located there today.



Edleman's Corner circa 1860s



The Strand Theater at Edleman's Corner