



## July/August 2019

### ELVERSON DAY IN THE PARK

*Katie Estes*



Speaking from experience, this town is a wonderful place to grow up, and Elverson Day in the Park highlights this fact for my family, as my husband and I are now raising our own kids in the Borough. They look forward to the free children's activities all year long, excited for pony rides, the barrel train and climbing on big trucks brought by local businesses. This year they particularly enjoyed the petting zoo, where they fed chickens, snuggled puppies and held a python (Mom may have stepped away for that one...) and they spent a considerable amount of both time and energy bouncing in the inflatable castles. The kids weren't the only ones enjoying the evening, though – my husband and I always look forward to the Gourmand food truck's cheesesteak fries as we catch up with friends and neighbors, and the local musicians add to the fun.

Although thunderstorms threatened the evening and prevented hot air balloon rides, they ended up taking the edge off of hot temperatures and even provided one of Elverson Day's most memorable conclusions: Lightning required condensing the event schedule a bit, which resulted in sunset fireworks accompanied by patriotic songs from the Chester County Band – a picturesque small town celebration! Our family walked home exhausted and content, the kids decked out in face paint and the Elverson t-shirts they decorated. We're grateful to the generous sponsors and dedicated planners who made this day such a special one, and love living in a community where events like Elverson Day take place!



*More Elverson Day pictures on page 6.*



## SOMETHING'S DIFFERENT AT THE CORNER OF PARK AND MAIN

*Donna Mountz*

**W**ith all the Main Street construction going on this spring, you may not have noticed that one of Elverson's very historic homes, that had been vacant for too many years, is now owned and loved by a young family with Elverson roots. The large Victorian home at the corner of Park Avenue and Main, across from Elverson Supply, was purchased in late February by Aaron and Janice Prosser. Aaron's mother, Esther, is a daughter of Ammon (1928-1994) and Barbara Stoltzfus, whose Elverson chicken farm spanned several decades until its acres became Summerfield in the 1990's. Janice Burdett Prosser grew up just south of the borough in her family's historic house on Goodfellow Road.

Despite the many years of this couple's personal connection to Elverson, the history of their newly acquired house outstrips them by many decades.

Chester County records indicate that this home was built in 1880 by a 19<sup>th</sup> century entrepreneur named Henry Zook. This enterprising gentleman saw promising business opportunities in Elverson (then called Springfield), since the railroad had come to town a few years earlier. He established a prosperous business selling farm machinery, horse-drawn buggies, surreys and sleighs to this rural community and well beyond. (See photo of Zook's business to the right). He built his business establishment directly behind the Victorian home he provided for his family, both situated on Park Avenue. His company later began selling the new "horseless carriages" otherwise called automobiles, but it was eventually sold to Harvey T. Witwer in the 1920's. Witwer and his son Stanley made structural modifications to Zook's building, including a glassed-in, first floor car

showroom which all became Witwer Motors. It was a thriving car dealership until the 1970's, when mega-dealerships began to appear. The business property sat vacant for a few decades until, as many in our town will remember, the original BB's Grocery Outlet was established there in the old car showroom, from 2003 until 2008 when they moved their business to the old Farmer Brown's grocery building in Morgantown. Most recently the old Zook structure was home to two businesses, Chester County Hearth & Home and Fisher Automotive in the lower level, but both of those establishments are gone now, and the building remains vacant again. But there are hopeful whispers of a new business relocating there soon.

Returning to the family house that Zook built and the Prossers now own, one can see in the two photos below

that several structural changes were made by the Witwers, who obtained both the business and the residence in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The turret at the south-west corner of the house had its pointed, circular roof removed, and the large Main Street front porch and smaller Park Avenue porch were enclosed. Henry Zook's picket fence was torn down, but Aaron Prosser made that one of his first priorities to restore. The Park Avenue entry door has been painted a charming red, and festive strings of

little white lights hanging from the ceiling of the front porch seem to welcome evening passers-by and announce that once again family life happily fills this dwelling. Do make an effort to welcome this couple and their two small children to our fine town, and may they grow and prosper here for many years.



# FOX ROOM SOUTH ANTIQUES

Leslie Leary

I am the proprietor of the Fox Room South Antiques located at **25 East Main Street in Elverson**. The store has a wonderful array of fine antique country primitives and equestrian appointments. We specialize in 19th century furniture, stoneware and corner cupboards with a wide selection of antique equestrian sporting art. In the 5200 square foot store I have arranged each room downstairs beautifully featuring room settings. The dealers occupy the second level of this lovely 19th century Gothic Victorian home which originally belonged to Mr. & Mrs. Amos Ranck. In the 1940's it housed the PA State Police in the west side and the Chester Pennock family in the east side. Roger & Susan Linton bought it in the 1980's and raised their two sons there. After the boys graduated they moved and sold the house to Stoltzfus Enterprises Ltd who eventually sold it to Todd & Mary Jane Stell. They operated their business, Stell Environmental, there until they put it up for sale, once again. My husband and I decided to purchase it last year and agreed that I would operate my antique business from this property. It hosts many great features: ample parking, handicap accessible, and a large garage out back filled with treasures from the past. Jeff Lipton, a wonderful man, occupies two bays of the garage. He makes beautiful handmade slab tables and will repair your furniture for a nominal fee.

I started collecting antiques at the early age of eight. My grandmother took me to my first auction in Swathmore, Pa. I remember her purchasing a very old sewing basket for two dollars. Later that day, when we arrived home, she opened the sewing basket and in it was a very small Steiff teddy bear, mohair with orange glass eyes. A treasure to me to this day, it reminds me of that very first auction. I will cherish it forever.

My family comes from a long line of antique dealers, one being my great-great uncle, Nathaniel Bentley. He was a member of the English Parliament in Paris, France. Nathaniel owned a spectacular mansion along the outskirts of Paris. The mansion was filled with fine 17th and 18th century antiques and housed antiques from all over Europe. Nathaniel is one of the famous people in the 18th century book, "The World's Greatest Eccentric Characters." There is an excerpt in the book about Mr. Nathaniel Bentley, along with excerpts about Napoleon and Katherine the Great.

The Fox Room South's name comes from a dear friend of mine, Peggy Winchell, who owned The Fox Room. For many years Peggy was one of the main attractions at the Devon Horse Show in Devon PA. She had the most exquisite equestrian jewelry, antique sporting art and bronze animal statues. Peggy had the very best antiques and people came from near and far every year to purchase that one special item.



Featured dealers at the Fox Room South have a passion for finding wonderful antiques from the past. Carol's items include stoneware crocks, 19th century furniture and early ephemera. Most of her items for sale are from her native state of Maine. Charles Brehm, a local antique dealer, deals only in 19th century primitives, stoneware, antique dry sinks, curiosities and folk art. His girlfriend Kimberly also helps him. Barbara Walters and

Jane Witten's upstairs room has plenty of sporting accessories and 19th century children's toys. Sue Trofa (Frog Hill Antiques) has primitives, vintage items and garden items. Also with a room upstairs is Susan Styer, a local Chester County artist, best known for her evocative and captivating landscapes. She has won many awards for her artwork. Another local Chester County artist, Debby Hadden, is well known for her beautiful foxhunting paintings, featuring horses and hounds from local foxhunting clubs here in Chester County. She will paint your horse or pet per request.

The Fox Room South has been in the antique business for seventeen years and counting. You will find that most items have come from an estate or an on-site auction. If you are looking for something different, please visit us. Road work on main street should be done soon, but in the meantime, main street is open westbound.

Anyone wishing to liquidate their estate, please do not hesitate to call me, **Leslie Leary 610-425-1968**. And stop by anytime—**store hours are Wednesday and Thursday 10am to 5pm, Friday 10am to 3pm, Saturday 10am to 5pm and Sunday 11am to 4pm.**

# Pace Car — WAIT

Merle Stoltzfus

Someone once said, “80% of traffic accidents happen within 2 miles of home.” That’s likely a true statistic for several reasons. Firstly, when we get too familiar, we tend to pay less attention. Call it over confidence or carelessness; both are likely causes for accidents. Secondly, we probably drive within 2 miles of home at least 80 percent of the time. The law of averages would therefore declare 80% of our mishaps happen within those same places.

A dream for racing fans would be to drive the pace car (Corvette) at the Indy 500. Since the newly constructed portion of Main Street is now finished except for the top coat, the Indy seems to have come here. Much of Elverson’s traffic appears to be drivers attempting to recover the time lost from previous waiting. Let’s say, the race seems to be on.

So, let’s “get in this together” in a new way. Since the large majority of our travel is local, join us in fulfilling the dream to be a pace car in this Elverson race. If all of us travel the speed limit (currently 25 mph), we can set the pace whenever we are on the

track. You’ll likely have other drivers, especially thru traffic, on your rear bumper BUT, this can effectively slow down traffic in our community. Road rage is unlikely if you simply mind your business and drive the speed limit, not reacting to obnoxious behavior).

WAIT (we’re all in together) presents a continuing opportunity to make Elverson a safer place. It takes 2.4 minutes to drive through Elverson at the current speed limit. It takes a minute less to do so at 45. So, if we are able to slow thru traffic to spend just an extra 60 seconds with us, maybe they will recognize the special places we have in this greatest square mile. And, we may even prevent an accident or even save a life.

When this road is brand new, finished and smooth from end to end, WAIT is going to be more important than ever. We may not be driving a Corvette at the Indy 500, but let’s pretend. Join us in calming the race.

## Main Street Construction Schedule

Phase 3A	Berks County Line to North Chestnut Street	Westbound	June 17 to July 20
Phase 3B	Berks County Line to South Chestnut Street	Westbound	July 21 to October 11
Phase 4	Berks County Line to Elverson Borough/ West Nantmeal Township Line	Entire	October

## Municipal Authority of the Borough of Elverson

### Help Keep Elverson Clean

The Municipal Authority recently had to unclog a manhole that had overflowed onto the pretty new sidewalks on East Main St. The clog was caused by a “rag ball,” a collection of wipes that were flushed. Once in the pipes, wipes get stuck together until the mass can no longer move through the pipes, causing the flow to back up. The mess is all cleaned up and there is no evidence that it occurred, but MABE needs your help to prevent this from occurring in the future. Regardless of what the packaging says, wipes of any kind should NOT be flushed. The cost of this adventure for afterhours rooter service to locate and loosen the clog, disposal service to pump out the pump station to remove the wipes, operator time and site cleanup adds up. Please help us Keep Elverson Clean. No Wipes in the Pipes!

### Sewer Plumbing Inspection Progress Report

Thank you to the property owners in the first round of inspections for scheduling and completing your Sewer Plumbing Inspections and making corrections where necessary. We are pleased to report that many sources of storm water have been redirected and removed from the sanitary sewer since the program started on April 1st. These efforts will help reduce the cost of chemicals and prevent unnecessary wear and tear as well as preserving system capacity. 2018 was a record year for rain and high groundwater. This program is a necessary component to preserving YOUR sewer system. If you received a letter and have not yet scheduled your inspection, we ask that you do so by June 30<sup>th</sup>. If you have any questions about the program, please contact the MABE office at **610-286-8876**.





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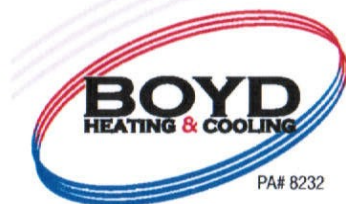
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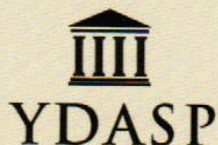
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*Send your Elverson news and stories to our editor at [brenda@stoltzfus.com](mailto:brenda@stoltzfus.com) by August 15 or call her at 610.286.5115. Newsletters can be found on [elversonboro.org](http://elversonboro.org).*

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*Photos compliments of Brittany Colmery Photography.*