

# GOING DOWN IN HISTORY:

## LANCASTER 1956

*Compiled and Edited by M. Luther Heisey*

Jan. 1. With the Byrd Expedition to McMurdo Sound in the Antarctic are two Lancaster sailors—Russell H. Rineer and Roland M. Campbell.

Jan. 4. A loan of \$7,670,000 was secured by the City of Lancaster Authority to be used in the expansion of the water system.

Jan. 6. George L. Heiges was elected to his eighth term as president of the Historical Society. M. Luther Heisey resigned as editor after a service of twenty years.

Jan. 8. George F. K. Erisman, now ninety-two years old, with one hundred other former members, attended a reunion of choir members of St. James' Episcopal Church.

Jan. 11. B. Snavely Garber received a Master Farmer medal awarded by the "Pennsylvania Farmer," in recognition of achievement "in agriculture and citizenship."

Jan. 13. Riding high as usual, Lancaster County farmers captured 39 championship and 466 ribbon awards at the Pennsylvania Farm Show at Harrisburg.

Jan. 13. The Borough of Ephrata was awarded a citation from the National Safety Council for the best traffic safety record of any community its size in the United States, having no traffic fatality for nine years.

Jan. 13. Lancaster County reported a population increase for the first nine months of 1955 of 2,850 persons or an increase of 4.2 per cent, the largest gain numerically and percentage-wise of the five south-central Pennsylvania counties.

Feb. 4. R. P. Howry, a butcher of Lancaster, R. D. 7, paid a new high price for a double stand at the Central Market House, with a bid of \$4,025.

Feb. 4. Bound newspaper volumes for the years 1900 through 1937, formerly on loan to the Historical Society by Lancaster Newspapers, Inc., were recalled and placed in the basement stacks of the Lancaster Free Public Library.

Mar. 7. Pennsylvania's three per cent sales tax became effective today.

Mar. 13. Death claimed three members of the Hager family this month—Mrs. William H. Hager; her son, Edward T. Hager; and Mrs. Betty R. Hager, wife of another son, John C. Hager III; on the first, second and thirteenth of the month, respectively.

Mar. 13. Carl W. Drepperd, resident director of the Pennsylvania Farm Museum at Landis Valley, died, aged sixty-four years.

Mar. 15. Winners in the essay contest conducted by Donegal Chapter of the D.A.R., were given awards at the assembly session in McCaskey High School. The theme was "Schools, the Bulwark of Democracy." Jack W. W. Loose, secretary of

the local Historical Society, prothonotary, and state historian for the Society of the War of 1812, spoke on the theme, "Education—the Bulwark of the Republic."

Mar. 19. Fred Y. Oren, deputy prothonotary, received the Good Government Award of the Lancaster Junior Chamber of Commerce for personal interest in candidates for citizenship by teaching them "the meaning of democratic government so that many of them take their democratic rights more seriously than many of us do."

Mar. 20. Lancaster's RCA plant is the only commercial color TV tube-producing plant in the world.

Apr. 20. Reports showed that employment in Lancaster County for the month of March reached a total of 107,500 persons.

Apr. 23. The earnings of the Armstrong Cork Company for the first quarter of this year, after taxes, were \$3,698,000.

Apr. 23. John H. McGinnis died, aged eighty-five years. He set a record for consecutive employment for one firm, the E. T. Fraim Lock Company, for seventy-one years.

Apr. 27. According to reports, building permits for construction to cost an estimated \$5,970,503 were issued in February by the city and twelve townships and boroughs; this included the Lambert-Hudnut plant in construction at Lititz.

May 12. Again the Lancaster County Historical Society had the largest Society delegation at the annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Federation of Historical Societies. Our president, George L. Heiges, was elected to the executive committee, succeeding the late C. H. Martin.

May 28. Effective July 2, the school tax in Lancaster will be set at 18.5 mills, an increase of 2.5 mills.

June 1. The 141-year-old Sandstone School, the oldest school building in continuous use in Pennsylvania, closed its door to students. Late in the year, the building was sold to private parties.

June 1. An admission fee of twenty-five cents is now charged to enter the Pennsylvania Farm Museum at Landis Valley. The fee at the Ephrata Cloisters has been reduced to that amount.

June 10. Hailstones, actually as big as tennis balls, fell on the city.

Aug. 11. The Lancaster Girls team won the Pennsylvania Women's State Soft Ball Championship. Later in the year they gave a good account of themselves in the National Playoff at St. Petersburg, Florida.

Aug. 17. It was reported that for the first three months of this year the birth rate of Lancaster County was 25.1 per 1,000, while that of the state was 21.1. Our county's rate was the highest in the state.

Sept. 17. Jack W. W. Loose was elected secretary general of the General Society of the War of 1812 of the United States. He also holds the post of historian in the state organization.

Sept. 17. An all-time high record of registration in this county was set when 115,541 persons qualified to vote at the presidential election.

Sept. 21. Sandra Rutt, of R. D. 1, Stevens, Pa., won top honors with her prize heifer at the Pennsylvania Black and White Show in the Farm Show Building, at Harrisburg.

Oct. 25. J. Collins McSparran, son of John A. McSparran, of Drumore, was elected master of the Pennsylvania State Grange, at the convention held in Erie.

Nov. 11. Mrs. Mary B. Myers, dean of girls at McCaskey High School, received an award from American Legion Post 34 as "Lancaster's Outstanding Citizen of 1956," for her life-long dedication to youth.

Nov. 14. A general alarm fire wrecked the lower portions of 32-34 N. Queen Street, causing scores of firemen to be treated for smoke inhalation; the historic building once housed "The Grape" tavern.

Nov. 15. Another general alarm fire ruined a first floor store in the St. George Hotel building at 35 West King Street. This structure formerly was William Cooper's "Red Lion" hotel, built in 1812. On this same date a ten-level pigeon-hole parking facility erected by Hager & Bro. at the rear of their department store, at Grant and Market streets, was dedicated. The structure is the largest of its kind in this section of the nation.

Nov. 17. "White Chimneys" was visited by one hundred members of the Historical Society as the guests of Samuel R. Slaymaker II, who addressed the group on the history of the home and family.

Nov. 19. Workmen started to remove the bridge spanning South Prince Street between the buildings of the former cotton mills.

Nov. 25. The Hamilton motion picture theater closed permanently. Its lobby will become part of the "new" Hotel Wheatland.

Dec. 10. This year to date the Lancaster post office showed receipts of over \$2,000,000, for the first time in its history.

Dec. 23. Two venerable citizens of Lancaster, Mrs. Mame Smith and George F. K. Erisman who witnessed the dedication of the soldiers and sailors monument in Penn Square in 1874, pressed the button which turned on the new brilliant illumination of the monument at special exercises this evening.

Dec. 27. Gen. John H. Michaelis was promoted to the rank of major general. The State Bureau of Internal Affairs reported for 1955 that Lancaster had 191 plants employing 20,478 persons with wages of \$82,995,700. Capital of \$89,914,500, production value \$283,389,400, value added by manufacture \$150,211,200.

Dec. 31. For 1956 the hospitals of Lancaster County set a new record by the delivery of 6,361 babies.