Preserving Pennsylvania

The Newsletter Dedicated to Preserving Pennsylvania’s Historic Places

DESTINATION 2014 Pennsylvania

Then

When

Now

LEGACY BUSINESS EDITION
Destination Pennsylvania

Local businesses, which are often housed in traditional core communities, provide jobs for over half of the nation's private workforce. They occupy and maintain historic buildings, and keep our local economies strong. While many of the people who own and operate small businesses don't consider themselves to be historic preservationists, by doing what they do, they are preserving the cultural landscape that is so important to Pennsylvanians.

In this issue of Destination Pennsylvania, Preservation Pennsylvania will highlight legacy businesses across the commonwealth. These businesses, which vary widely in size and type, are impressive institutions that started locally and have operated for decades, often owned by members of the same family. We believe that businesses such as these are extremely valuable, and hope that you will join us in getting out and supporting them.

Beginning in the 19th century and continuing today, Pennsylvania is the center of American pretzel production for both hard and soft pretzels. At one time, there were 127 pretzel makers in Pennsylvania. Today, the number is closer to 60, but Pennsylvania still produces 80% of the nation’s pretzels.

In June of 2013, Preservation Pennsylvania introduced the Pretzels of Preservation Pennsylvania: Pearl, Pierre, Poindexter and Preston. This year, we are pleased to introduce Penny, our new preservation pretzel. As mascots that reflect the history and culture of the commonwealth, these salty characters now travel with Preservation Pennsylvania’s staff, helping to liven up our road trips and photographs.

- **Preston** dreams of bringing back America’s gilded age, when houses, fashion and parties were all grand. This dapper dandy believes that when it comes to historic architecture, more is better.
- **Poindexter** is an engineer at heart, and loves historic engineering works such as bridges and tall buildings. You’ll find him trying to figure out how they work.
- **Pearl** is a girl who loves architecture of the automobile age, such as that found along the Lincoln Highway and other Pennsylvania byways.
- **Pierre** is a preservation connoisseur with diverse interests. You’ll see him all across the commonwealth lending his expert opinion to a wide range of projects.
- **Penny** loves nothing more than to put on her tool belt, roll up her sleeves, and get to work. She understands that sometimes preservation is a labor of love, but that with a little elbow grease, Pennsylvania’s historic buildings can sparkle and shine.
Next time you are in Erie, stop at Kraus Department Store. You might be overwhelmed, but you won’t be disappointed. If you have a window that needs to be repaired, a lamp that needs a new globe or shade, or an appliance that needs a replacement part, then take it with you. Kraus’ is the place to find the item that you need, whatever it may be.

Kraus Department Store began in 1886 as Edward Kraus’ 5 & 10 cent store. Kraus, who was a pioneer in department store merchandising, quickly became one of the most successful businessmen in the area. In 1890, he built this three-story brick building to house his expanding department store. Thanks to their strong connections in the community and the resulting patronage of their loyal customers, Kraus Department Store survived the Depression and both World Wars, and continues to provide a wide variety of products and services. In 1954, the original one-story store that had become the Kraus family residence was replaced by the one-story wing that exists today, and an off-street parking lot and elevator were added. The upper story was closed to the public in 1980 and is now used only for storage.

Today, the store sells hardware, housewares (including what was once a novelty: electric lamps), clothing for men, women and children, and much more. Customers can rent tools including everything from heavy equipment to drain snakes, and can pay bills or utilize the in-store post office, as well. Custom hats are no longer made at Kraus, but you can still buy gifts, candy, fabric, yarn, and just about anything else you might need. They are known as the place to go when you’re looking for hard-to-find items, like cooking utensils or repair parts. Family members can still hand paint lamp globes, repair small appliances, and fix window sashes and screens. Staffed by members of the third, fourth and fifth generation of the Kraus family, Kraus Department Store continues to provide free and friendly advice and service. You truly have to see it to believe it.
Buff’s Old-Fashioned Ice Cream & Candy
1 Mabon Street • Brookville

Buff’s Old-Fashioned Ice Cream & Candy is a local landmark. The business was established in 1946, when Dan Smith began selling ice cream on his front porch. Smith constructed this building to serve as an ice cream factory and retail store for his expanding business in 1952. He began making candy in 1953, and in 1964, he opened a larger candy factory elsewhere in town. In 1973, Dan Smith sold his ice cream factory and store, which continued to operate in this building, in order to devote his full attention to the candy business.

Cliff “Buff” Buffington and his family acquired the ice cream factory in 1985, and have continued the business ever since, making both ice cream and candy. Buff’s goodies are so popular locally that he does not advertise and does not sell his products online. If you want to try his homemade ice cream or candies, or taste a fountain soda out of his vintage root beer barrel, you really need to make the trip to Brookville!

Buff’s daughter-in-law, Gina, who was working behind the counter and agreed to let Pierre help her for the afternoon, hopes that her son will take over the business when Buff retires. Buff, who could only talk for a couple of minutes so that he didn’t ruin the batch of vanilla cream centers he was working on, also sells candy-making and cake decorating supplies.

Many people make a tradition of stopping by on their way to and from their vacation camps and homes in Pennsylvania’s great northwest.

DeMans Gifts & Sporting Goods
295 Main Street • Brookville
www.demans.com

DeMans News and Gifts opened in 1961 in the building known as Henderson’s Tin Shop, which is the only building on the block to survive the 1876 fire. In addition to selling stationary, gifts, tobacco products and lottery tickets, the unique gable-front, Greek Revival-style building also contains a large sporting goods store that is an anchor downtown. The business has been operated by the same family for two generations.
Wooly Willy was born in Smethport, Pa. in 1955. Well, maybe not born, exactly, but invented. The Wooly Willy magnetic drawing toy was created by James Herzog, who worked for Smethport Specialty, a company that designed and manufactured toys for children. Smethport Specialty Company was established in 1932. The company made a number of toys — many of which utilized magnets — that were produced and sold to low-priced chain stores such as G.C. Murphy and F.W. Woolworth, among others.

Smethport Specialty occupied the fireproof building at 304 North Fulton Street that had been constructed in 1912 to serve as the print shop for Boys Own Magazine. During World War II, toy production ceased, and the facility employed between 80 and 120 local women in production for the war effort. After the war, toy production resumed.

In 1955, James Herzog found that dust from magnet grinding could be used for magnetic drawing, so he patented the first Wooly Willy Magnetic Drawing set. Local artist Leonard Mackowski designed the now classic display card. Toy buyers were originally skeptical of the Wooly Willy toy concept, and were reluctant to buy it. However, a buyer at G.C. Murphy agreed to purchase six dozen Wooly Willys, despite his doubt that they would sell. Much to his surprise, all 72 Wooly Willys sold in just days. He then ordered 12,000 more, which sold out in a few weeks. Wooly Willy suddenly became the toy that everyone wanted, and went on to become one of the 40 most popular toys produced between 1950 and 1980. Despite attempts to copy it, Wooly Willy’s quality features, including special magnetite powder, a sturdy anti-static plastic dome, a thick display card and a strong drawing magnet, allowed Wooly Willy to remain successful. This simple, inexpensive toy has produced a tremendous amount of entertainment since its introduction in 1955.

With the success of Wooly Willy and other products, Smethport Specialty outgrew their Fulton Street facility and moved to a large, modern facility at 51 Magnetic Avenue in 1965. Smethport Specialty was acquired by Patch Industries in 2008. Sadly, they are in the process of closing the Smethport facility. Wooly Willy will live on, but will no longer be manufactured in Smethport.

Zippo

33 Barbour Street • Bradford

www.zippo.com

After watching a friend struggle with his lighter on the gold course one day in 1932, George Blaisdell decided to create a durable lighter that worked with one hand and was resistant to the weather. He fabricated a lighter with a rectangular case that had the top attached with a hinge, and used a chimney design to protect the flame under adverse weather conditions. Naming his company Zippo, Blaisdell began to produce and sell these lighters in 1933.

During World War II, Zippo produced lighters exclusively for the U.S. military, which enabled them to remain financially strong through the war. In future years, the company continued to refine its lighters and diversify its product line.

Following his death in 1978, Mr. Blaisdell's grandson, George Duke, is the sole owner and chairman of the board. Despite its large size and international success, Zippo/Case is still a family-owned business.

Ever since the first lighters were sold in 1933, Zippo has provided an unconditional lifetime guarantee on its lighters. Any true preservationist must appreciate Zippo's commitment to quality and durability. In an age where most products are disposable or of limited quality, Zippo continues to back its products with its famous lifetime guarantee. “It works or we fix it free.”
Known as the home of Penn State and the Nittany Lions, State College, Pa. is famous for many things: Joe Paterno, Beaver Stadium, the Penn State Creamery, and The Diner’s grilled stickies, to name just a few. The Hotel State College is one of these highly recognizable landmarks.

The Hotel State College began in 1855, when James Jack of Philadelphia established Jack’s Road House to provide food and lodging for travelers to the community that was growing around The Farmer’s High School (now Penn State). In 1864, the establishment was registered as the Agricultural College Hotel, and by 1880, John Stewart was operating it as The College Hotel. The hotel was known as the Nittany Lion Inn from about 1906 through 1922, during which time the two-story frame hotel was enlarged and encased in brick, and the signature corner porch (now enclosed as the Allen Street Grill) was added. The Corner Room opened in 1926. In 1937, a new owner named it The Hotel State College, and continued to operate The Corner Room. The current owners acquired the property in 1986, but continue to carry on the well-established legacy of The Corner Room and the Hotel State College.

The Corner Room is an icon: for years it has been common to say “Meet me at the Corner.” In addition to its Old English ambience, what makes it such a gem is the fact that everyone is welcome. The Corner Room’s menu of quality, everyday American food, can be enjoyed by students, faculty and locals (“townies”), as well as visitors. Children even get their menu on the back of an Etch A Sketch! The foundation of success for this long-standing business is a healthy balance of patronage by numerous regulars as well as visitors.

This building was constructed in 1925 to house Smith’s Barber Shop, after his frame barber shop was destroyed by fire in 1924. The barber worked with State College architect P. Boyd Kapp to give his new shop the details that he admired, including the Romanesque arched storefront flanked by twisted columns and a roof covered in curved green tiles. The result was a unique building in the downtown. While he worked downstairs, Smith’s wife, Frieda, operated Smith’s Powder Puff Beauty Shop upstairs. Smith sold his business to employee Dick Di Rinaldo in 1953. Rinaldo maintained Smith’s 1919 barber chairs and original sinks, mirrors, cabinets and black and white tile floor, as did the current owner.

Appointments are not required, so stop in for a shave and a haircut next time you are in State College. You will enjoy the old-time ambience of Rinaldo’s Barber Shop, including the feeling of hot shaving cream on your neck. They only accept cash, so please plan accordingly.

Custom Shoe Repair was opened in 1966 by Angelo Card, an old-fashioned cobbler. His grandson, Angelo II, began helping him with sewing and patching at age 12, and by 16, he had learned the trade of a cobbler. Angelo Card II took over the family business in 1995 and continues to work as the businesses’ sole employee today. Card finds that when the economy is down, his business is up since people are being more careful with their money, and are less inclined to dispose of shoes that can be repaired. As a result, he currently repairs 40-50 pairs of shoes each day.

Shoe repair is a lot like historic preservation. If we invest in quality products up front, and spend the time and money to maintain and repair them, shoes can last for a long time. By doing so, we are not only being eco-friendly, but keeping an important business alive. Mr. Card takes his time to ensure quality work, so be sure to drop your shoes or boots off to be repaired a couple of weeks before you need them. You will find that the quality work of Custom Shoe Repair is well worth the wait!
Callie’s Candy Kitchen opened in 1952, making a wide variety of candy for visitors to the Pocono Mountains. Twenty-eight years ago, they expanded their business and established a pretzel factory in a historic building. Callie’s production line is contained in a large room attached to the rear of a historic house. Visitors can watch the pretzel-making process through a wall of screen windows, and see pretzels move (slowly) from where they are twisted, along the conveyor as they proof, are showered in a solution that gives them their characteristic brown skin, are seasoned with salt and/or other flavorings, and then move through the baking oven. Children can also try their hand at rolling and twisting a pretzel. In the front of the building there are three rooms filled with snacks, including bags of hard pretzels and other snack foods, a tempting display case of soft pretzels, and a room where fresh popcorn and caramel corn are made. You may want to stop at Callie’s Pretzel Factory early in your trip to the Poconos to get snacks to fuel your adventures in the mountains, or at the end of your trip for treats to take home. Either way, you will be glad you stopped. Callie’s Pretzel Factory comes highly recommended by the Pretzels of Preservation Pennsylvania.

Paradise Brook Trout Company
123 Hatchery Drive • Cresco (Henryville for GPS)
www.paradisetrout.com
Established in 1902, the Paradise Brook Trout Company is the first licensed fish hatchery in Pennsylvania. Paradise used to ship live fish in milk cans to various places in Pennsylvania and New York, and was a pioneer in selling fish eggs throughout the United States and internationally. The hatchery has been family owned and operated for over 75 years, and currently raises brook, brown and rainbow trout in their hatch house and system of hatchery ponds. Visitors are not allowed inside the hatch house, but can walk the grounds of the historic property. Fish food is available for $0.50.

Located on the grounds of the Paradise Brook Trout Company since 1968, the Paradise Fishing Preserve offers fishing in its stocked ponds. Admission is $3 per adult, and children are free. You can rent poles and buy bait on site, and simply pay by the pound for the fish that you catch. For just $0.25, they will even gut the fish for you, and for $0.50, you can have them filleted. It is a beautiful setting, and a great way to spend a day in the Poconos with friends and family. If you’re feeling optimistic, bring a cooler and plastic bags to take home your bounty of fresh fish for dinner!

The Inn at Pocono Manor
1 Manor Drive • Pocono Manor • www.poconomanor.com
Pocono Manor, which was established in 1902 as a vacation resort by a group of Quaker businessmen from Philadelphia and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, is an example of a resort community that used to be quite common in the Poconos. It is anchored by the Inn, which provides food, lodging and recreation as well as opportunities for special events. But its 3,000-acre grounds also include many private “cottages,” a rod and gun club, a tennis and racquet club, two golf courses (one of which is historic), miles of hiking trails, and much more. The Inn at Pocono Manor is the oldest continuously running resort in the Poconos.
Open the door and step back in time as you enter this 1902 drugstore. Have a seat at the restored 1920s soda fountain and order an ice cream sundae. While you’re waiting, browse the cabinets featuring vintage medicines—all original to the store and discovered hidden away upstairs. The inscription in an old textbook hints at the personality of May Bright, a store namesake, who received her pharmacy degree in 1918 and installed the soda fountain in 1929. “May Bright, 431 Island St., Hamburg, Penna., United States of North America, of the Western Hemisphere, of the planet Earth.” Today, there’s still a woman filling prescriptions and proffering advice, as owner Loralee Heckman, Pharm.D., carries on the tradition. She has been with Adams & Bright since 2004, and became sole owner in 2010.

Dietrich’s Men’s Shop
320 State Street • Hamburg

Located on State Street, Dietrich’s Men’s Shop has been in business since 1936. Founder Warren Dietrich modernized his building facade using pigmented structural glass in celadon and black. Increasingly rare, this is a wonderfully preserved example. Over the years, the building was extended toward the rear, and the showroom for the excellent array of Boy Scout uniform items is built on top of the old stable foundation. (Les Werley, who has owned Dietrich’s for 30 years, will proudly point out the stunning tin ceiling and walls.) Dietrich’s offers men’s dress, sports and casual wear, shoes for men and women, Scout items and tuxedo rentals.
Shane Confectionery
110 Market Street • Philadelphia • shanecandies.com

There has been a candy store on this site since 1863 — and three generations of the Shane family have operated that store for 99 years. When brothers Eric and Ryan Berley took over, they named their business Shane Confectionery. Their award-winning restoration lets visitors feel as if they’ve stepped back in time. As you pass the gently curved shop windows, you enter a sanctuary of sweets, with a tin ceiling, marble counters, filigreed display shelving, and an old cash register. Upstairs, candy is still made by hand, using time-tested recipes and fresh, local ingredients.

John Stortz & Son, Inc.
Hardware
210 Vine Street • Philadelphia

This fifth-generation family company manufactures high-quality hand tools for the building trades. German immigrant John Stortz established the company in 1853 on the site of an existing cutlery and tool business. Old Stortz catalogues feature by-gone tools such as ice-tongs, loom shears for the textile industry, and paving hammers for cobblestones. The company continues its tradition of collaborating with master craftsmen to develop fine tools.

Sherman Brothers
Shoes for Men
1520 Sansom Street • Philadelphia

Herbert and Edwin Sherman founded Sherman Brothers, Inc. in 1953 with a $5,000.00 loan from their father, Benjamin. The brothers began buying excess inventory from New England shoe factories, often in odd widths and sizes. These became a specialty, and Sherman Brothers became the place to go for men with hard-to-fit feet. By the late 1960s, success meant a move to Sansom Street. Sherman Brothers became Philadelphia’s finest men’s shoe store with a clientele that included mayors, councilmen, state representatives, athletes and entertainers. The store continues to serve customers, in several locations as well as online.
The Famous Hot Weiner is a tradition that began in 1923 when Nicholas Mavros opened Hanover’s first fast food restaurant. By 1928, the original Famous Hot Weiner was operating at its present location on the corner of York Street and Broadway. In 1957, Nicholas’ son and daughter-in-law, Tim and Georgia Mavros, acquired the business and operated it for the next 38 years. As the town of Hanover and the surrounding communities grew, the opportunity for the third generation to open a second location. In January 1973, grandson Nicholas Mavros and son-in-law Pete Keriazes began operation of Famous Hot Weiner North at the corner of Dart Drive and Eichelberger Street. They continued that operation for 25 years and also acquired the downtown location in 1995. In January 1999, great-grandsons George Keriazes and Timothy Keriazes acquired both businesses and became the fourth generation to operate the restaurants. In April 2011, they opened a third location in Spring Grove.

Eating at The Famous (as the locals call it) is also a multi-generational tradition. Often three generations come in together and order without even a glance at the menu. The Famous Special includes two hot dogs “with everything” and an order of fresh cut French fries. “With everything” means mustard, Famous chili sauce, a recipe that has been passed from family member to family member through the generations, and raw onions diced very small. The “everything” can be added to just about anything including egg sandwiches at breakfast. Freshly made milkshakes so thick you need a spoon are also a good choice. The Famous is a landmark in Hanover and a yummy destination if you’re in the area.

In 1921, William and Salie Utz started producing Hanover Home Brand potato chips in their summer kitchen. By 1930, they built a plant at the rear of their home on McAlister Street in Hanover. In 1938, William and Salie’s daughter Arlene Utz married F.X. Rice, and the family built a new 13,000-square-foot manufacturing facility. By 1949, the business moved to its current location on Carlisle Street and has expanded multiple times since then. Today, Mike Rice (third generation) is chairman of the board, and his son-in-law, Dylan Lissette (fourth generation) is president and CEO.

Today, Utz is the largest independent privately held snack brand in the U.S., producing over one million pounds of potato chips a week and about nine hundred thousand pounds of pretzels. But as their name and distribution has expanded across the country, Utz still feels like a small family-owned local company. Generations of Hanoverians are employed there, and almost everyone in town has a family member or a friend who is an Utz employee.

The company (and its leadership) is very active and supportive of the community, giving away many charitable gifts each year. From sponsoring ball teams, donating snacks to many events, giving $90,000 in charitable gifts to area nonprofits to mark their 90th anniversary in 2001, the company continues to support the community where they are located.
In 1927, Jimmie Stoughton and his sister, Louise Maust, opened a roadside sandwich stand, which soon came to be known for its chicken salad sandwiches and angel food cake. The business and building that housed it continued to grow over time, expanding room by room and clearly reflecting Jimmie's creativity, artistic talents and dreams. The one-of-a-kind historic building utilizes a unique array of building materials, including massive trees that once marked the corners of the farm, timbers and stones salvaged from barns in the area that were slated for demolition, handmade copper lanterns, and many others. The restaurant and banquet hall are situated just off the Lincoln Highway on a beautiful piece of land with a wonderful setting. In addition to a stream running by, there are many works of art to enjoy while you dine.

When you visit Green Gables, make sure you also see the Mountain Playhouse, which was erected on the property by Jimmie Stoughton. Founded in 1939 in a moved and restored 1805 gristmill, the Mountain Playhouse is Pennsylvania’s oldest professional summer stock theater and one of only 12 professional summer stock theaters remaining in the U.S. today. During the summer season, the Playhouse produces a variety of shows, each running two weeks with weekday and weekend evening and matinee performances. Please check their website for this season’s schedule and to plan your visit.

Built by the Benedictine monks, the Saint Vincent Archabbey Gristmill opened in 1854 and has remained in continuous use for 160 years. Now powered by electricity rather than steam, the equipment used today and the process by which the grains are cleaned, ground, sifted and packaged have changed very little. Visitors can stand and watch as two large mill stones cut the grains, which are sorted and sifted by a series of machines driven by leather belts and relying heavily on gravity in a vertical process. All of the products made at this gristmill, which currently include cracked wheat, wheat bran, whole wheat and unbleached white flour, buckwheat flour, corn meal and grits, are made from grains grown at Saint Vincent by local farmers. They sell these products, as well as an assortment of breads and other food and gift items, in a store at the gristmill.

After arriving home from World War II, where he served as a cook for the Navy and made cinnamon rolls from the rations supplied on his battleship, Melvin Columbus opened The Pie Shoppe with his mother in 1947. Mildred Columbus gained her baking expertise running a boarding house nearby, where she made a variety of homemade pies, breads and rolls to feed her guests – many of whom were employed in building the Pennsylvania Turnpike. Together, this mother and son team ran a successful business, which Melvin’s youngest son, Tom, took over in 1970.

Tom Columbus opened several other Pie Shoppes in the surrounding area, and added a fundraising component to the business. He later sold his interests in the other Pie Shoppes, and sold the retail bakery in 2003 to focus on the fundraising business. However, in 2012, Tom Columbus reacquired the original bakery, which is now identified as The Original Pie Shoppe, and still makes the same delicious pies and cinnamon rolls, among other treats, after 67 years.

An Original! The Tuscany Room uses local trees for the pillars and roof and local stones as decorative wall coverings.

...and the Mountain Playhouse
Legacy businesses, which were started by an individual with an idea and/or an entrepreneurial spirit, are an important part of the character and economy of Pennsylvania. By operating a sustainable business for decades in a historic building, the owners of these businesses are preserving the places we care about, and keeping our economy strong. Let’s do our part and support these businesses and others like them.

**MAKE YOUR OWN Pretzel Mascot**

Cut out these features or have fun and create your own!

**WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

Please cut out and customize your pretzel, and take him or her on the road with you when you visit legacy businesses. We would love to know if you visit any of the businesses highlighted in *Destination Pennsylvania*, or if you identify other legacy businesses in your community or in your summer travels. Please email your photos to Erin Hammerstedt at ehammerstedt@preservationpa.org so that they can be shared with our Facebook fans and members. If you post your photos to social media, use the hashtag #PresPAPretzel.
Mission Statement: Preservation Pennsylvania – through creative partnerships, targeted educational and advocacy programs, advisory assistance, and special projects – assists Pennsylvania communities to protect and utilize the historic resources they want to preserve for the future.