

2005

Looking Backward Moving Forward: The Role of Heritage Organizations in the Changing. Cultural and Economic Landscape of the Lehigh Valley

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Looking Backward Moving Forward:

**The Role of Heritage Organizations in the Changing
Cultural and Economic Landscape of the Lehigh Valley**

**By
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of

**Master of Arts in Museum Professions
Seton Hall University**

June 2005

Abstract

Heritage organization such as history museums, historic sites, archives, and historical societies, although not always museums in the strictest sense, make up a significant portion of America's cultural institutions. As the caretakers of the nation's history and material culture, heritage organizations are an important element in the countries' cultural landscape. With the emergence and continued growth of cultural and heritage tourism many heritage organizations are having an impact on the economic landscape and many communities are "cashing in" on heritage.

This thesis will examine the Lehigh Valley region of Eastern Pennsylvania and the role of heritage organizations in its changing cultural and economic landscape. In a little under three centuries, the region has been transformed from virgin woodlands to pastoral farmland to industrial powerhouse. During the latter half of the twentieth century the Lehigh Valley gradually abdicated its throne as an industrial epicenter, resulting in several new directions and emerging identities for the region.

While this thesis explores the impact of heritage tourism and the role of a number of Lehigh Valley heritage organizations, the central issue that is touched on throughout the thesis is the continuing effort to preserve and redevelop the Bethlehem Steel Plant. In the 1940's the plant employed over 30,000 people, but by the 1990's what was once the nation's number two steelmaker had gone bankrupt. Bethlehem Steel's demise left the city of Bethlehem with a proud (although sometimes bitterly recalled) legacy of steelmaking and over 1000 acres of abandoned industrial plant. Whether this important piece of the Lehigh Valley's, as well as America's heritage will be preserved for future generations, left to rot, or demolished like so many other plants still remains to be seen.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to the following museum professionals, Steve Donches, Charlene Donches-Mowers, Steve Humphrey, Lance Metz, Barbara Schaefer, Meg Sharp-Walton, and John Zolomij, each of whom set some of their valuable time aside to help me during the course of my research. I would also like to thank my thesis advisor Dr. Jürgen Heinrichs for his guidance through the thesis writing process. Last, but not least, I would like to thank my parents Edward and Patricia Mooney and my beloved wife Dana for their endless love and support.

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Introduction

The Lehigh Valley needs to abandon the 1960's mindset of urban renewal by demolition. Many American Communities learned by the 1980's that their long-term vitality is best secured by enhancing the qualities that make them unique. We must apply this lesson to the structures of the Bethlehem Steel site.

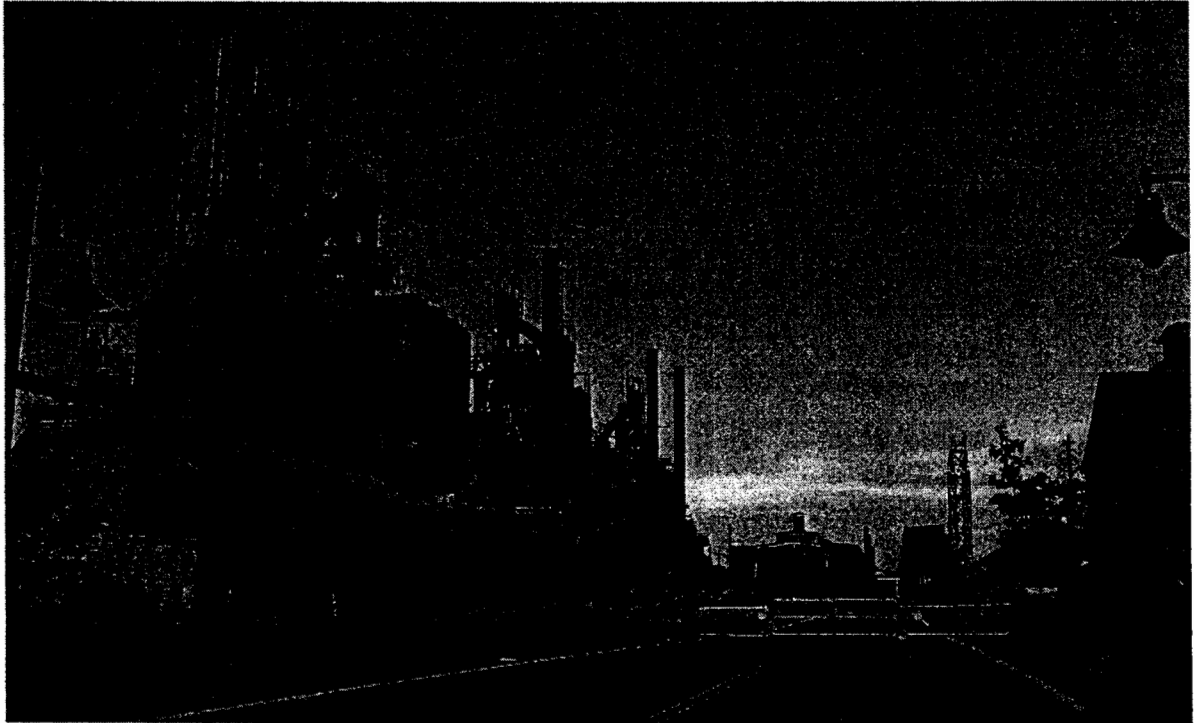
Micheal Kramer
Allentown Morning Call
Letter to the Editor
Sept. 28, 2003

The simple truth is that there is no desire for an industrial history museum here. The former Bethlehem Steel land where the museum is proposed would be better developed as a mix of retail and other attractions, perhaps even a baseball stadium. But an industrial museum? Sorry, there's no interest. If there was we'd be able to visit "Exposition Hall" this weekend. Instead we're lamenting the loss of seven years of wasted efforts.

Robert M. Masci
Allentown Morning Call,
Letter to the Editor
April 1, 2004

The vast Bethlehem Steel plant grounds lie beside the Lehigh River like a sleeping giant. The plant that once produced munitions for two world wars and cast steel for the construction of the Golden Gate Bridge and the Chrysler Building closed its doors for good in 1995--marking the end of an era long in decline in the Lehigh Valley. Since that time a development effort has struggled to realize a vision that would see a 136-acre portion of the plant grounds redeveloped as an entertainment and retail complex anchored by the National Museum of Industrial History. The plan, at the time of this writing, still unmaterialized, promises to revitalize the ex steel-town, but its slow progress has, for some, cast doubt as to the feasibility and merit of the effort. In contrast to those who are tired of waiting for the plant to bear fruit, the last few years have seen a growing grass roots movement to save elements of the site and see it developed in a way that is sensitive to the city's and the region's history, most notably the towering blast furnaces that are

synonymous with the city. One thing is certain, almost a decade after its machinery fell silent, the Bethlehem Steel plant sits at an important crossroads, poised between the region's past and the promise of its future.



2005: Bethlehem Steel's iconic blast furnaces, as of yet unrestored and surrounded by a fence to keep out trespassers. The small peaked roof building in the left foreground is the original stockhouse, built in 1863, it is the oldest building on the site.

In addition to the massive steel plant, the spectre of the Lehigh Valley's past can also be found in the many other remnants that adorn the region. The remains of the industrial era, the blast furnaces, cement kilns, towpath canals and factories are interspersed with the German-style barns and farmhouses that defined the region in the years before the industrial revolution. Looking at a map of the Lehigh Valley reveals evidence of the far older presence of native peoples expressed in names like Monocacy, Catasqua, Hockendaqua and even the name Lehigh itself are all derivatives of Lenape words.¹

This is not to say that the Lehigh Valley is wholly consumed in its past, merely enriched in a way that is inseparable from any identity that it may possess. Good, bad or indifferent the Lehigh Valley, like any community, is in many ways defined by the lives of those who have come before, those who have shaped its landscape and given it a name.

Today the Lehigh Valley is undergoing yet another transformation. The expansive wilderness, rugged frontiers, agrarian communities and monolithic industries are gone and in its place is a new postindustrial Lehigh Valley. The very term “postindustrial” often evokes images of abandoned mills, closed down factories, lost jobs and withering communities, but the reality is that the post industrial landscape of the Lehigh Valley is far from static. Hospital networks, smaller high tech industries, service providers, suburban developers and tourism are all players in this new reality. At the center of this shifting region are the cities of Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton, all struggling to recapture (or perhaps more appropriately reinvent) former glory, while the population of the surrounding areas continues to skyrocket with each new suburban development that is built.

One of the tools being utilized to secure the future of the region, as evidenced by Bethlehem Works, is its rich history. The Lehigh Valley is home to numerous heritage institutions and many of the communities in the region have founded historic districts in an effort to attract heritage tourists and erect barriers against undesirable development, while promoting economic growth. An added benefit of this trend is the establishment of a sense of place, an identity that sets the region apart from the increasingly homogenized American landscape. This sense of place is something that promoters of tourism and economic development groups draw attention to when competing against other regions for tourist dollars and new businesses. This is not to say that everyone agrees that historic preservation and heritage tourism are a sure road to economic redevelopment. Even amongst those who see preservation as a priority there is often disagreement over who should hold the reigns and which sacrifices are justified.

My thesis will examine the role of heritage institutions in the economic and cultural transformation of the Lehigh Valley. In economic terms the last 50 years have witnessed the Lehigh Valley moving away from its reliance on heavy industries and this decline is concomitant with changes across the state and nation. By contrast, the service industry has experienced dramatic growth in the Lehigh Valley, Pennsylvania and beyond.² A large part of this service industry is tourism and a major component of tourism is heritage tourism. Historic preservation and heritage tourism go hand in glove, the latter cannot exist without some level of the former and an increase in tourism is seen as one of the tangible economic benefits of preservation. Before we can examine the recent economic and cultural trends impacting the Lehigh Valley it is important to first recount its past so that we might better understand how those trends have been shaped.

Chapter One will encompass a brief history of the Lehigh Valley that will serve to define the region in historical, economic and geographical terms. In an effort to ascertain the dollars and cents impact of heritage tourism in the Lehigh Valley, chapter two of this thesis will examine the tourism industry in Pennsylvania as a whole and draw analogies based on the landmark study on the economic impact of historic preservation conducted by the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University under the oversight of the New Jersey Historic Trust. While the study focuses exclusively on the state of New Jersey its findings cannot be ignored and I feel are readily applicable to other states and regions especially those that lay, “just across the river.” Chapter two will also draw upon the Rutgers study to examine the direct and induced economic impacts of preservation over new development and the presence of heritage institutions. Chapter three will explore the history of a number of Lehigh Valley heritage organizations and examine some of their strategies for surviving and prospering. The ongoing efforts by numerous parties to preserve, reinterpret, and redevelop the Bethlehem Steel plant will be the subject of chapter four. At the time of this writing the final fate of the Bethlehem Steel plant is still somewhat uncertain. In many ways the steel plant functions as the epicenter

for the issues explored in my thesis and each chapter will begin as this one, with a brief letter of opinion gleaned from the Allentown Morning Call from members of the community who are hopeful and sometimes dismayed over continued developments at the historic site.

¹. Donehoo, George Patterson. *Indian Villages and Place Names in Pennsylvania*. Baltimore: Gateway Press Inc., 1977. 89.

². Abler, Ronald F. "Services" *A Geography of Pennsylvania*. Ed. E. Willard Miller. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995. 301.

Chapter 1

A Brief History of the Lehigh Valley: Its Growth and Transformation

I'm sure I am not the only one who believes Bethlehem Steel, or what's left of it, should be turned into an industrial museum. It is a significant part of our nation's heritage and our effort to win World War II.

Joanne Marley Hoffert
Allentown Morning Call
Letter to the Editor
August 23, 2003

If people need a cause, how about us poor slobs who got nothing—no pensions, no benefits, no insurance. You want to cry? Cry for us and our families. You want to fight? Fight for our pensions! Write some letters and make some calls to politicians. You want a legacy? Well, so do I: the one I worked for. That place no more deserves to be a museum than Chrin Landfill.

Joseph A. Long
Allentown Morning Call
Letter to the Editor
October 1, 2003

The Lehigh Valley is but a small part of the far larger Appalachian Great Valley that extends from Quebec to Alabama. The long Kittatiny or Blue Mountain ridge forms the northern border of the Lehigh Valley while a rough collection of hills and mountains borders it to the south. The Lehigh River enters the region from the north, passing through the Lehigh Water Gap and continuing south before turning east to join with the Delaware River, which forms the eastern border of the region. For the most part this area encompasses what is today much of Northampton and Lehigh Counties for a total area of approximately 700 square miles.

For many thousands of years, lush woodlands that were home to countless generations of Native American peoples covered the Lehigh Valley. The last native group

to inhabit South Eastern Pennsylvania was the Lenape, who had dealt with William Penn on relatively friendly terms and were offered fair prices for the land they ceded to him.¹ Penn's business dealings with the Lenape occurred amidst widespread conflict between native tribes and with European colonists who placed ever-increasing pressure on the native population through economic and physical expansion.²

William Penn's two sons, who were not so fair in their dealings, opened the Lehigh Valley to organized settlement in 1737. Thomas and John Penn produced an incomplete draft of a contract that would grant Pennsylvania lands north of Neshaminy Creek in Bucks County as far as a man could walk in a day and a half. This refutable document coupled with the Penn's dealings with the powerful Iroquois Confederacy by whom the Lenape were dominated, led to what is commonly called "The Walking Purchase." On September 19th 1737, three "walkers" all experienced frontiersmen, began their day and a half journey near Wrightstown in Bucks County. By the time the trek was complete a remarkable 60 miles had been covered and the Lenape lost some 750,000 acres of land including the Lehigh Valley.³ The walking purchase opened the Lehigh valley to European settlement and secured long lasting resentment from the Lenapes that were forced to vacate the region. Conflicts with the displaced natives would turn bloody during the period of the French and Indian War when the Lehigh Valley became a focal point for frontier warfare and diplomacy.⁴

Even before the walking purchase the Lehigh Valley was open to European fur traders. When German and Scotch Irish settlers sought land beyond the largely Quaker controlled Delaware Valley they followed the trail blazed by the early traders. These

settlers would carve out vast areas of farmland from the surrounding wilderness and use the wood to build and heat their homes and run their industries.



Along with six others that tell the story of early Bethlehem, this romantic depiction of the walking purchase by muralist George Gray has been displayed in the Hotel Bethlehem since 1937.

One immigrant group that merits special attention are the Moravians who settled the areas of present-day Nazareth in 1740 and Bethlehem in 1741. The Moravians are a protestant sect that faced centuries of persecution in Europe before taking sanctuary on the estate of Count Ludwig Nicholas Von Zinzendorf in Saxony. From there, the Moravians were able to establish missionary colonies in many parts of the world including the Americas. The Moravians that settled the Lehigh Valley began first in Georgia, a settlement that would prove unsuccessful for them. Next, they moved to the land of George Whitefield at the site of present day Nazareth, where they stayed for only a short while before religious differences between the Moravians and Whitefield forced them to move.

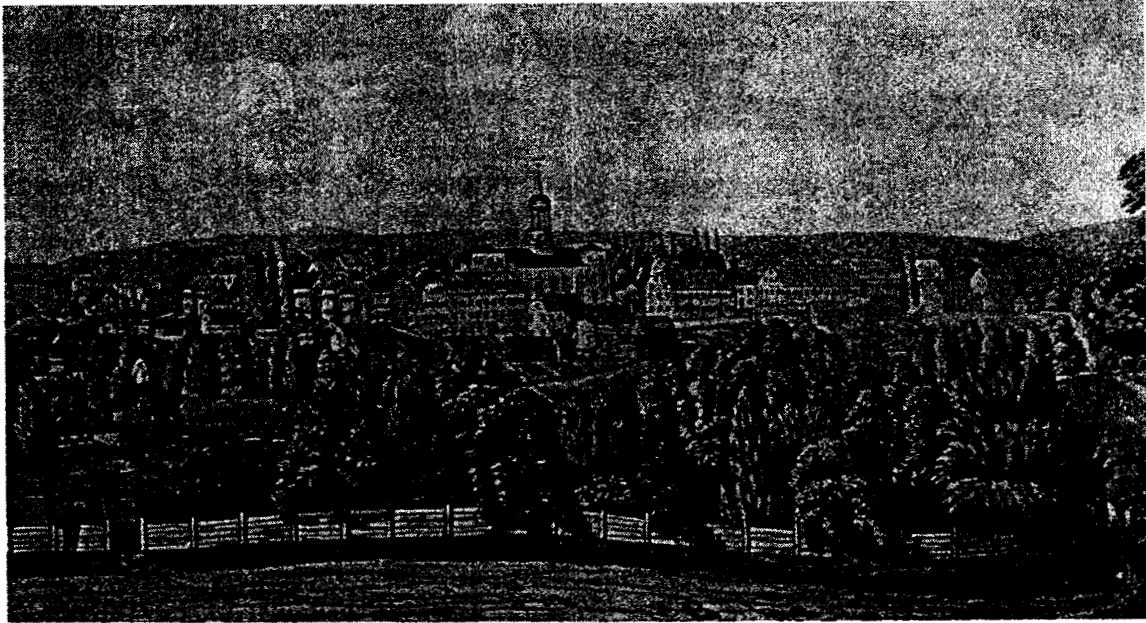
The third area they settled was at the forks of the Lehigh River and the Monocacy Creek, a settlement they chose to call Bethlehem. Count Zinzendorf himself dedicated the

settlement during a religious service held in a small log dwelling shared by a little over a dozen settlers and their livestock on Christmas Eve in 1741. This small settlement would quickly grow into the colonial metropolis of the Lehigh Valley, supporting nearly 500 people by the 1780's.⁵

Religion and daily life were completely inseparable for the early Moravian settlers.⁶ They lived under a "general economy" system by which the Moravian Church held all property and each member of the congregation worked for and was in turn cared for by the other members. Much of this system would be abandoned before the turn of the century although the church held tight control over real estate until the mid 19th century when it sold off many of its holdings.⁷

Another aspect of early Moravian life was the choir system, which divided members of the community into groups called "choirs" based on gender, age and marital status. Members of the same choir lived together as an extended family of peers. There was a separate choir for children, single men, single ladies, married, men, married ladies, widows and widowers. Lasting only a short period, the choir system was largely abandoned in Bethlehem by the 1760's.⁸

Although Bethlehem remained a very insular community into the early 19th century, it became an important center for trade and industry in the region and was the launching point for westward missionary activity by the Moravians. By the mid 1800's land on the south side of the Lehigh River was being settled by many non-Moravians. Although the old Moravian center of Bethlehem remained important, the growth of "Southside" Bethlehem would usher the settlement through the 19th and into the 20th century as a major industrial center.



Print of Bethlehem looking north across the Lehigh River C. 1806-1815. It is important to note the pastoral landscape and the central position of the then newly completed Central Moravian Church.

While the settlement of Bethlehem was founded with religious purposes firmly in mind; the settlements of Allentown and Easton would owe their origins to far more economic and political goals. The settlement that would become Easton began as a ferry station at the forks of the Lehigh and Delaware River started by Trenton entrepreneur David Martin. At the time the area was still part of Bucks County. The Proprietary party of Pennsylvania's colonial government, often at odds with the Quakers and their German supporters sought to create a new county in an effort to win political favor. The new county of Northampton was created overnight, along with Easton as its county seat. Easton's location at the forks of the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers made it an early transportation hub and its proximity to cosmopolitan Philadelphia set it apart from its far more Germanic neighbors.⁹ By 1763, Easton included 63 houses including eight taverns.¹⁰

William Allen was a respected Philadelphia Judge who purchased the land that would eventually bear his name in 1732. Allentown, like Philadelphia and Easton was a meticulously planned settlement. When the settlement, to be called Northampton Town, and informally known as Allen's Town, was drawn up in 1762 it featured 42 blocks and over 750 building lots ready for sale.¹¹ By 1763 Allentown was home to 56 families.¹² It would remain a part of Northampton County until the formation of Lehigh County (of which it is the county seat) in 1812. In 1838 Northampton Town changed its name to Allentown.

Despite the presence of gristmills, sawmills, tanneries, smithies, cobblers and a multitude of other colonial industries the population of the Lehigh Valley remained overwhelmingly agrarian. By 1800 the Lehigh Valley was home to over 25,000 people and less than 2,000 of them lived in its three largest towns.¹³ This period did much to establish the rural character of Pennsylvania that is still extant in some parts of the Lehigh Valley. Although regions such as Lancaster to the southwest are far more widely known, the Lehigh Valley is still to this day littered with "Pennsylvania Style" bank barns built by Pennsylvania Dutch (a corruption of *Deutsch* = German) farmers.

While the revolutionary war would leave the Lehigh Valley untouched by battle, many people of the Lehigh Valley were ardent supporters of the revolutionary cause. In 1777 while the British army held control of Philadelphia, the liberty bell was kept hidden in the Zion's Reformed Church in Allentown. Easton served as a detaining point for British war prisoners and all three of the region's major towns played host to wounded continental soldiers. The Lehigh Valley also furnished provisions and provided soldiers to the continental army. A notable exception were the Moravians of Bethlehem, who as

pacifists, refused to take up arms against the British, although they rendered material aid and converted one of the town's largest communal structures, the Single Brethren's house, into a hospital.

The 19th century would be driven by the material industries provided by the Lehigh Valley landscape as much as the fertile soil of the region had done for farming in the 18th century. Two resources, the Lehigh River and the vast anthracite deposits buried just north of the region would provide a catalyst for what historians have referred to as the very birth of the American industrial revolution.¹⁴

Anthracite, or stone coal, is a hard form of coal that is difficult to mine and difficult to ignite, but produces an intense steady heat. Early experiments utilizing anthracite to process iron ore met with failure. Most furnaces in the area were consuming dwindling charcoal, often at a rate of 1 acre of timber a day.¹⁵ An alternative fuel, coke, processed from bituminous coal was not readily available at the time and American iron masters found it increasingly difficult to compete with British iron imports.¹⁶

Entrepreneurs Erskine Hazard and Josiah White, after successfully igniting Anthracite at their wire mill on the banks of the Schuylkill River saw the potential of the hard mineral. White and Hazard formed the Lehigh Coal Company and the Lehigh Navigation Company as two separate companies that would quickly merge into the Lehigh Coal and Navigation Company. The purpose of the company was to exploit the anthracite fields and to transport it to urban markets by improving navigation on the treacherous Lehigh River. Initially the river was partially tamed by creating a series of artificial floods and slackwater pools. The second effort by White and Hazard, a system of canals and slackwater pools, called the Lehigh Navigation became one of the most

successful and enduring transportation systems in American history, remaining in operation until 1932.¹⁷ In Easton, the Lehigh Navigation connected to the Delaware and Morris Canals, which enabled coal to be shipped to Philadelphia and to New York. These three waterways made Easton an important crossroads for eastern cargo traffic throughout the 19th century.



The Lehigh Canal as it ran through Easton in 1875.

Following a series of unsuccessful efforts on both sides of the Atlantic, Welsh iron works owner George Crane and his superintendent Dave Thomas finally succeeded in utilizing anthracite as a sole blast furnace fuel and patented their method in 1836. White and Hazard were quick to enter into a partnership with Crane, forming the Lehigh Crane Iron Company in 1839. As part of the deal, Dave Thomas and his family relocated to America where he set up the first technologically and commercially successful anthracite blast furnace in America, located in the area that is now the Borough of Catasauqua, north of Allentown.¹⁸

By 1873 Pennsylvania produced 49% of the nation's iron and the Lehigh Valley led the state with 47 furnaces producing 389,967 tons of iron.¹⁹ The anthracite iron

industry and the canal that fueled it were responsible for the rapid industrial growth of the area. All three of the Valley's cities and many of the surrounding boroughs (Catasauqua, Coplay, Emmaus, Macungie, Glendon, Hellertown) prospered because of the blast furnaces, rolling mills and other subsidiary industries that followed.²⁰ Many of these industries utilized waterpower provided by the Lehigh Canal, adding further wealth to the company coffers. The need for skilled ironworkers opened the valley to immigration from the British Isles, the first of many population influxes that would drive the growing industries of the Lehigh Valley.²¹

The canal era was followed by the railroad era, an era with a ravenous appetite for iron rails. In 1860 Pennsylvania had 2,598 miles of railroads, just 15 years later the mileage had increased to 8,960 and by the end of the century the state boasted around 25,000 miles of track.²² The anthracite region to the north of the Lehigh Valley developed one of the densest networks of railroads. In 1900, Pennsylvania's railroads transported 478,684,683 tons of freight, more than half of this tonnage was anthracite from the anthracite region and bituminous coal from western Pennsylvania.²³

In addition to the anthracite iron industry a number of other important industries developed in the Lehigh Valley region. The cement industry in the region grew out of the need for hydraulic cement needed to build the Lehigh and Delaware Canals. In the 1860's and 70's David O Saylor became the driving force behind the Lehigh Valley's cement industry when he founded the Coplay Cement Company in Coplay near Allentown, becoming the first U.S. manufacturer of Portland cement. Within two decades of Saylor's success, the Lehigh Valley was the greatest cement-producing region in the world, responsible for 74% of the cement produced in America in 1900.²⁴

Slate, quarried in the Lehigh Valley was utilized throughout the second half the 19th and early 20th centuries for roofing shingles, blackboards, electrical insulation panels and billiard tables. The slate industry of the Lehigh Valley began near what is today the borough of Slatington when Welsh immigrants, William Roberts and Nelson Lubar, opened a quarry in 1845. Like the other industries of the Lehigh Valley slate quarrying and processing grew rapidly during its early years. By 1910 Slatington and its surrounding communities of Emerald and Slatesdale contained 25 slate quarries and 10 slate finishing factories together employing 1,400 workers.²⁵ In 1912 the Lehigh Valley was responsible for almost half of all the slate produced in the United States.²⁶

In addition to those industries that relied on the Lehigh Valley's abundant natural resources the area also successfully courted many silk manufacturers to open mills in the region in the latter half of the 19th century. These mills were based largely in the urban centers of Allentown although the communities of Lehigh, Emmaus, Vera Cruz, Stockertown and Lehigh possessed mills by 1900.²⁷ In 1909 the Lehigh Valley had become one of the nation's largest silk manufacturers, second only to Paterson, New Jersey.²⁸

Bethlehem Steel, perhaps the region's most recognizable industrial producer, grew out of the Lehigh Valley Railroad started by Asa Packer in 1853. The Lehigh Valley Railroad, which began service in 1855, was an immediate success, hauling passengers and anthracite. In 1857 it connected with the North Pennsylvania Railroad, which granted access to markets of Philadelphia. This connection was made on the south side of Bethlehem, a community that had fallen somewhat behind the blooming industries of Allentown and Easton.²⁹ Bethlehem had a number of specialized factories that

produced pianos, carriages, barrels and farm implements as well as flourmills and saw mills. The Lehigh Valley Zinc Company, a major producer of zinc oxide for paint was based in South Bethlehem, but it was the Bethlehem Iron Company that would herald a drastic change in the small community.



A view of Bethlehem Iron in 1893, looking south across the Lehigh River with South Mountain rising in the background.

The Bethlehem Iron Company grew out of the Lehigh Railroad's need for inexpensive high quality iron rails; it was the reorganization of two earlier firms, the Saucona Iron Company, and the Bethlehem Rolling Mill and Iron Company. The first iron rails were produced in South Bethlehem in 1863. Bethlehem Iron was at the forefront of industry technology; utilizing John Fritz's revolutionary three-high mill to produce high quality iron rails at a fraction of the cost of previously relied upon British imports. Continuing the trend towards advancement, Bethlehem Iron wasted no time building a plant to utilize Henry Bessemer's new steelmaking process in 1868, a move that would carry the company into the next century.

In 1887, Bethlehem became the birthplace of the modern defense industry when Bethlehem Iron entered into a 4 million dollar contract with the United States Government to produce armor plating for the Navy.³⁰ In 1891 the company contracted with the army to produce large caliber guns, a contract worth another 4 million dollars.³¹

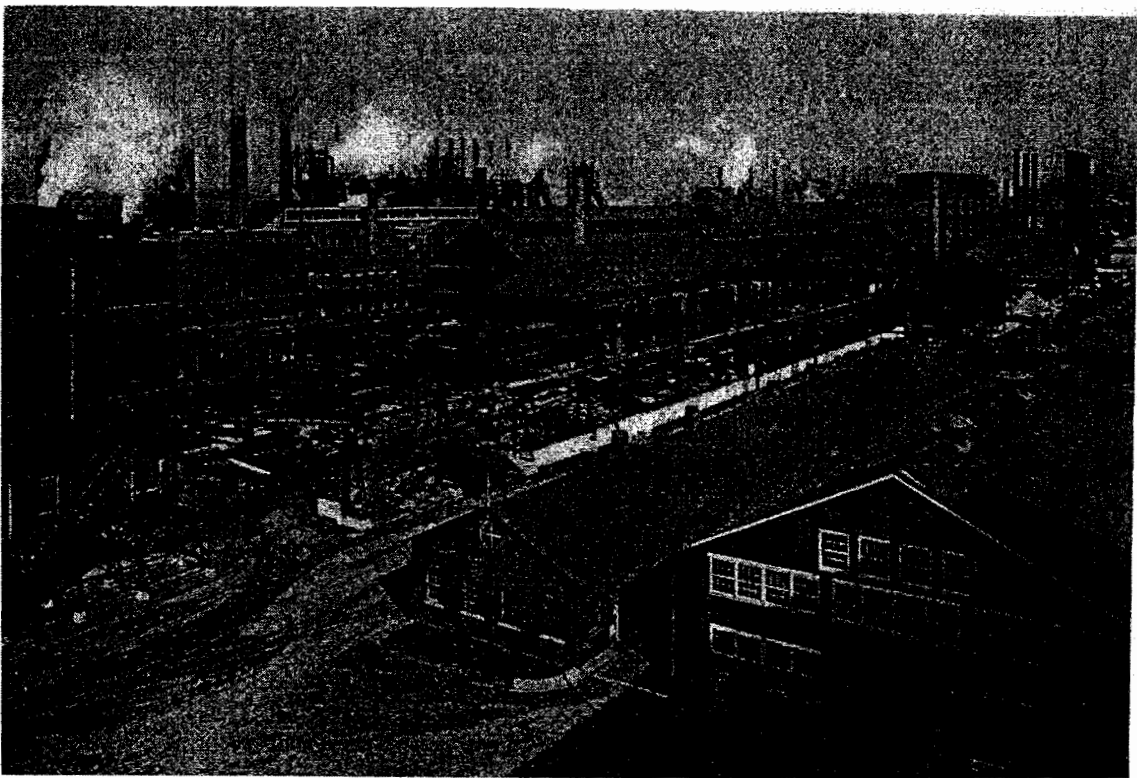
In 1892, Bethlehem Steel made what was then the largest forged piece of steel in history, a forty-five and a half foot long axle for a giant ferris wheel featured at the Columbian Exposition in Chicago.³¹

In 1899 Bethlehem Steel was created as a holding company with the highly successful Bethlehem Iron as its only asset. Over the next few years the company would change hands a number of times as part of the business machinations of U.S. Steel President Co. President Charles Schwab. Schwab, a protégé of Andrew Carnegie, bought and sold the company twice between 1901 and 1904 resulting in a scandal that alleged he was furthering Bethlehem Steel interests over its short-lived parent company U.S. Shipbuilding in an effort to gobble up assets. The matter ended with Schwab resigning as U.S. Steel president and retaining Bethlehem Steel. In December of 1904 Schwab created Bethlehem Steel Corp. a holding company that included the South Bethlehem plant, shipyards on both coasts and an iron ore mine in Cuba.

For much of the twentieth century Bethlehem Steel would experience an awe-inspiring rise to prominence as one of the nation's top steel producers. Its success during the first half of the century would result in a perception of invincibility for the company that would make its downfall all the more poignant. In 1908 Bethlehem Steel began producing English Inventor Henry Grey's wide flange beam that made the building of skyscrapers possible. The company's exclusive rights to the invention made it the principal supplier to New York and other growing metropoli across the country.

During World War I Bethlehem was a major supplier of ships, armor, ordnance and guns to France, Russia, England and Italy. Bethlehem Steel would later become the nation's No. 2 steel maker, just behind U.S. Steel with facilities and holdings in several

states and with Bethlehem Steel being used to construct the George Washington and Golden Gate bridges, The Waldorf Astoria, Rockefeller Plaza and the U.S. Supreme Court.³² The New York skyline, along with many others, was built by and large, with Bethlehem Steel. From railroads to skyscrapers, the companies' products literally permeated the fabric of the growing nation, and continue to support many of its most recognizable icons.



A view of the Bethlehem Steel Plant in 1927.

In 1943, while World War II raged across two fronts, Bethlehem Steel was at the height of employment. 283,765 people worked for the company, many of them women working in wartime positions.³³ 31,523 workers were employed at the Bethlehem plant.³⁴

Bethlehem Steel was the nation's top military contractor during the war, turning out more than a ship a day in 1943.³⁵

It is important to realize that Bethlehem Steel's success during the first half of the twentieth century occurred amidst a struggle for workers' rights that turned violent on several occasions. The rapid growth of the Bethlehem plant brought successive waves of immigrants to the Lehigh Valley, many from Eastern Europe, and subjected them to long hours, little pay and dangerous conditions. From 1905 to the day the plant closed 91 years later, 650 workers perished in work related accidents.³⁶ Charles Schwab, captain of industry, was also ardently against organized labor, as was his successor Eugene B. Grace. Even though Bethlehem had a company union that was supposed to represent workers' issues since 1918, it would take almost another 30 years for outside organized labor to begin consistently winning in disputes against company management.

The second half of the twentieth century, while entered with optimism, would witness the U.S. steel industry's gradual abdication of its throne. Germany and Japan, both heavily damaged by the war, were able to rebuild a steel industry based on modern innovation, free of the large capital investments that weighed down monolithic steel giants like Bethlehem Steel. By 1965 Steel imports exceeded 10 million tons and only 10 years later Japanese steelmakers would surpass America's in productivity.³⁷ Smaller domestic "mini mills" were also in a better position to take advantage of advances and the once innovative Bethlehem Steel Corp became increasingly antiquated. Pressures from foreign steelmakers and leaner operating mini mills forced the Bethlehem giant to cut production costs, which placed them at odds with a union that had grown increasingly strong since the end of the war. Good wages, benefits and pensions that separated the

modern steel worker from their lower class predecessors were hard won and encroachments on them were difficult to swallow. Finally, in the 1970's, demand for steel hit a plateau, further cutting into Bethlehem's share of the industry as plastics and aluminum became more widely used by staple business suppliers like the auto industry.

In the end, this confluence of factors brought an end to Bethlehem Steel. By the 1970's the layoffs had begun. 3,800 in the Johnstown plant, 3,500 at the Lackawanna plant followed by 2,500 white collar workers, members of the administrative working class birthed by corporate entities like Bethlehem Steel were all let go in 1977– others would follow.³⁸ In 1979 the Bethlehem plant still employed 11,795 workers, by 1985 only 5,661 workers remained employed.³⁹

While other plant activities were able to hold on a short while longer, Steelmaking ceased in Bethlehem on November 18th, 1995, ending almost a century of continuous production in the Lehigh Valley. The following year the company began exploring options to preserve, interpret and redevelop portions of the plant grounds, the efforts of which are covered in chapter four. In 2001 Bethlehem Steel Corp. filed for bankruptcy, and after lengthy negotiations sold its remaining assets to International Steel Group (ISG). A final 4,000 jobs from the remaining 12,000 that were employed by the Bethlehem Steel were cut when ISG took over the companies remaining facilities.⁴⁰ The demise of the company left almost 100,000 retirees without healthcare and some 7,000 with reduced pensions.⁴¹

Following Bethlehem Steel's gradual decline to the exclusion of all else offers a myopic view of the Lehigh Valley. True, a massive company that had molded the region and employed a substantial percentage of its workforce had faded away but the Lehigh

Valley has been growing in other ways since the 1950's. As the Lehigh Valley's reliance on the numerous aforementioned nineteenth-century industries has decreased new types of industries and employers have, in part, replaced them.

A major catalyst for change in the Lehigh Valley has been the construction of Route 22, which connects Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton and serves as a transportation spine for the region. In 1953 the trip from Allentown to Easton took over two-hours, when the highway was completed the following year, the trip was shortened to 20 minutes. Since that time the highway has accommodated over 1 billion motorists.⁴² The highway that once cut through farmland now straddles a region of sprawling office and industrial parks, housing developments, shopping malls and restaurant chains. While some celebrate the development that Route 22 has brought to the region, others blame it for the stunted growth of the region's three cities.

Highway development and the growth of America's commuter lifestyle has led to a housing boom, again mostly outside of the region's urban centers. New residents migrating from New Jersey and New York make up a large portion of this growth. During the 1990's the area experienced a net growth of more than 40,000 people, mostly due to an influx of people migrating from out of state.⁴³

Like much of the state and the country as a whole, the Lehigh Valley has seen a shift from a labor force focused on manufacturing industries to service industries. Pennsylvania as a whole has experienced service industry growth that has outpaced overall employment growth since 1940.⁴⁴ While manufacturing in the Lehigh Valley region has decreased 47% since 1970, non-manufacturing employment has increased 122%.⁴⁵

A large part of this shift is due to the growth of health services in the Lehigh Valley. Of the top 25 employers in the region in 2003, six are healthcare related, including number 1 employer Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network and number 3 St. Luke's Hospital.⁴⁶ Combined, they employed just over 10,000 people in 2003.

A comprehensive history of the Lehigh Valley could easily take a thousand pages to tell and still come up short. This brief retelling has been an effort to convey a sense of a region that has been shaped by natural forces and people who contested with them and each other to build better lives for themselves. Its history, like that of any region, is tied up with the efforts, successes and failures of its inhabitants, as is its future. An important point to make is that the history of the Lehigh Valley is far more than the account of a small region of Pennsylvania. In many ways the Lehigh Valley's tale is the tale of America, from its early years, following its outstanding growth and its continuing transformation.

In 2003, The Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation, a not-for profit organization who's mission is to develop, coordinate and promote the image of the region put forth a list of development goals.⁴⁸ One of the primary goals was the attraction of new technology-driven industries that would recast the Lehigh Valley into an industrial center for the future. Another goal of the Corporation is to renew economic development in Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton in order to make the cities competitive with development sites in rural and suburban areas. Part of this goal will be the conversion and reuse of older industrial sites and urban properties into job producing and tax generating properties. Finally, an objective of the Corporation that draws special attention is to, "Use cultural entertainment, tourism and non profit assets as vital elements in urban

renewal.”⁴⁹ These three goals combined with others from the comprehensive development strategy recognize the vital physical assets of the region as well as the area’s rich historical legacy.

¹ Hall, Karyl Lee Kiber & Hall, Peter Dobkin. *The Lehigh Valley an Illustrated History*. Woodland Hills, California: Windsor Publications, 1982, 19.

² Ibid. 11-14.

³ Klepp, Susan E. “Encounter and Experiment: The Colonial Period,” in Miller, R. M. & Pencack, W., eds. *Pennsylvania: History of the Commonwealth*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press and Harrisburg, PA: The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 2002, 77.

⁴ Alderfer, Gordon E. *Northampton Heritage: The Story of an American County*. Easton, PA: The Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society, 1953, 113-131.

⁵ Hall., 28.

⁶ Alderfer., 113-131.

⁷ Hall., 29.

⁸ Ibid., 29.

⁹ Ibid., 53.

¹⁰ Ibid., 27.

¹¹ Bloom, Ken & Wolbers, Marian. *Allentown, A Pictorial History*. Virginia Beach. VA: The Donning Company, 1984, 12-13.

¹² Hall., 27.

¹³ Ibid., 30.

¹⁴ Bartholomew, Craig L & Metz, Lance E. *The Anthracite Iron Industry of the Lehigh Valley*. Easton, Pennsylvania: Center for Canal History and Technology, Hugh Moore Historical Park and Museums, 1988, 3.

¹⁵ Ibid., 6.

¹⁶ Ibid., 8.

¹⁷ Ibid., 11.

¹⁸ Ibid., 43.

¹⁹ Ibid., 42.

²⁰ Ibid., 43.

²¹ Ibid., 43-44.

²² Miller, E. Willard. “Transportation: *A Geography of Pennsylvania*,” ed. E. Willard Miller. University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995, 239.

²³ Ibid., 239.

²⁴ *Delaware and Lehigh Canal National Heritage Corridor and State Park: Historic Resources Study*. Ed. Ann S. Bartholomew. Unpublished study prepared by Hugh Moore Park and Museums. Easton, Pennsylvania: 1992, 306.

²⁵ Ibid., 309.

²⁶ Ibid., 309.

²⁷ Ibid., 322.

²⁸ Ibid., 323.

²⁹ *Forging America: The Story of Bethlehem Steel*. Ed. David Venditta. Allentown, Pennsylvania: The Morning Call, 2003, 13.

³⁰ Ibid., 112.

³¹ Ibid., 112.

³¹ Ibid., 112.

³² Ibid., 113.

³³ Ibid., 114.

³⁴ Ibid., 114.

³⁵ Ibid., 115.

³⁶ Ibid., 65.

³⁷ Ibid., 114.

³⁸ Ibid., 114.

³⁹ Ibid., 115.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 110.

⁴¹ Ibid., 110.

⁴² Assad, Matt "Route 22 Fifty Years, One Billion Cars". *The Morning Call*. Sept. 19, 2004, B. 1.

⁴³ *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Lehigh and Northampton Counties*. Unpublished report prepared by the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation. Available at <http://www.lehighvalley.org/> . 2003, 14.

⁴⁴ Abler, Ronald F. "Services" *A Geography of Pennsylvania*. Ed. E. Willard Miller. University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995, 296,

⁴⁵ CEDS., 15.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 17.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 37.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 37.

⁴⁹ *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Lehigh and Northampton Counties*. Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporation. unpublished report Available at <http://www.lehighvalley.org/> . 2003, 33.

Chapter 2

Making a Case for Heritage: Dollars and Cents

The August 14th article about tearing down the Bethlehem Steel Landmark left me wondering if State Rep. T. J. Rooney has lost his mind. Does he not realize that the No. 2 Machine Shop, in the middle of the property would serve as the perfect anchor with the name Smithsonian Institution attached to it?

If he were truly interested in the economic development of the South Side, he would be working hard to make the National Museum of Industrial History a reality in the NO. 2 Machine Shop building.

Nancy I. Safko

“Allentown Morning Call”

Letter to the Editor

August 20, 2003

Does tourism “Fuel the Economy”? I would answer with a resounding “no,” because of the things tourists bring to the area. They bring their vehicles, which contribute to pollution, wear and tear on the roads and traffic congestion. Tourism also brings litter and garbage which gets scattered about the area. If you doubt this, I suggest you take a walk along the river in Jim Thorpe and count the empty plastic water bottles.

Nick Butrie

“Allentown Morning Call”

Letter to the Editor

April 20, 2004

Lehigh Valley museums and other heritage organizations are caught up in the rapid transformation sweeping the region. At the same time they are being buffeted by the winds of change within the museum field itself as well as the evolving nature of the non-profit sector. As the number of museums increase and their operating costs continue to rise, museums are under ever-increasing pressure to justify themselves to government funding sources and a public constituency that is larger and more diverse than ever before. This justification takes many forms; from educational benefits to civic pride as

well as the broader economic benefits that such institutions bring to their surrounding communities.

As the museum field has professionalized itself over the last few decades, volumes have been written in regards to the educational and civic obligations of museums. Author Steven Weil in his book, *Making Museums Matter* neatly encapsulates the shift in museum thinking,

“Over three decades, what the museum might be envisioned as offering the public has grown from mere refreshment (the museum as carbonated beverage) to education (the museum as a site of informal learning) to nothing short of communal empowerment (the museum as an instrument of social change).”¹

Weil later states that,

“Recast in blunter terms, the museum is being told that, to earn its keep, it must be something more important than just an orderly warehouse or popular soda fountain.”²

While public commitment can be considered one of the benchmarks for institutional worth, there is another yardstick by which we can measure the benefit of museums, that of economic impact. Traditionally economics has been approached in reference to museums from the standpoint of feasibility. The traditional question has been, “can such activities be supported?” and “does the public good that an institution offers offset its financial burden?” In part this stems from the perception of museums as a form of charitable cause, which is certainly not incorrect. Simply put, museums are worthy of selfless financial giving from private individuals, and governmental sources because of the good they bring to the community. Perceived as an end point, museums can be seen to consume funds in exchange for public benefit, but a more holistic view

shows that museums are a link in a financial chain that reallocates funds within the community rather than gobbling them up never to be seen again.

A landmark study conducted by the Center for Urban Policy Research at Rutgers University in 1997 called *Economic Impacts of Historic Preservation* explored the role heritage tourism, the rehabilitation of historic structures, and the operation of historic sites and organizations in the economy of the state of New Jersey. The study concluded that,

“... historic preservation in New Jersey is not just important culturally and aesthetically, but also fosters significant economic activity and benefits in its own right.”³

To reach this conclusion the study researched the direct and multiplier effects of all three aspects of historic preservation. Direct effects are defined as labor and material purchases made specifically for preservation activity. Multiplier effects are divided into indirect and induced effects. Indirect effects are defined as spending on goods and services by industries that produce the items purchased for historic preservation activity while induced effects reflect the expenditures of the employees involved in either direct or indirect spending. To illustrate an example: A museum spends money on new interactive exhibits, resulting in a direct benefit to the exhibit designer who must purchase materials and services from an exhibit fabricator resulting in an indirect benefit. The expenditures made by the designer, fabricator and the museum staff would constitute an induced benefit of historic preservation. Considered in this fashion every one dollar “pebble” tossed into the economic “pond” in the name of historic preservation creates considerable ripples, hence a multiplier effect.

Annually, in New Jersey the direct economic effects include \$123 million from the rehabilitation of historic structures, \$432 million in heritage tourism spending and \$25 million in net spending by historic sites and organizations. The results of this spending include 21,575 jobs, \$572 million dollars in income, and \$415 million in taxes. Roughly half of these benefits are in-state benefits with the remainder spilling over into other states and the national economy as a whole.⁴

The study is quick to point out that these benefits do not loom large when compared to the overall economic picture of the State, but that this is no indicator of historic preservation's real strength as no individual economic component appears significant when compared to the total. Example: The 650,000 lawyers in America represent only .5% of the nation's total workforce and yet are considered nationally to be a large, economically and politically significant group.⁵

A more relative yardstick is offered in the form of "linked" economic activity. While preservation is not considered to be a major New Jersey employer, it does contribute to the travel industry, which ranks third in New Jersey's economy. Another frame of reference in preservation's favor is when its activities are considered on a local scale. The study uses the city of Trenton as an example of the greater economic yield that is felt on a local scale vs. a statewide scale. Heritage tourism comprised a much larger portion of Trenton's economy than it does across the state as a whole, thus its effects, especially in light of the economic slump experienced by many older American cities, are far more profoundly felt on a local scale.⁶ This is certainly something to keep in mind when we think about the impact of historic preservation on Lehigh Valley cities of Easton, Bethlehem and Allentown.

The benefit generated by museums and historic organizations made up the smallest contribution to the overall picture, but it is difficult to imagine any of the three study components standing alone. Heritage tourism, an industry that offers experiences as its marketable product, would be lost without a means to produce those authentic experiences. Museums, historic sites and historic areas provide those means. Furthermore, one can infer that heritage begets heritage, that an area rich with historic sites, districts and museums and that draws a sizable profit from heritage tourism is an area that will want to invest further in its own historic qualities, either through private rehabilitation or residential buildings or the adaptive reuse of business and industrial structures and sites.

While the subject of the Rutgers' study was New Jersey, I do not feel that it would be inaccurate to assume a similar network of benefits in Pennsylvania. The State of Pennsylvania boasts over 1,800 places on the Register of National Historic Places and 107 National Historic Landmarks.⁷ Visitation to the top three sites, those administered by the National Park Service, including, Independence National Historic Park, Gettysburg National Military Park and National Cemetery, and Valley Forge totaled 19.2 million people back in 1985.⁸ To compare, New Jersey as a whole hosted 163 million adult trips in 1995.⁹

A study of heritage tourism in Pennsylvania stated that in 1997, Pennsylvania hosted 83.4 million leisure travelers, and that approximately one in four (21.9 million) participated in heritage tourism activities generating \$4.87 billion dollars.¹⁰ A quick comparison between the 19.2 million people who visited the top three sites in Pennsylvania in 1985 and the estimated 21.9 million heritage tourists who visited the

state as a whole in 1997 illustrates that many of the visitors to Pennsylvania historic sites come from within Pennsylvania itself.

Pennsylvania draws a higher percentage of its leisure travel from this market segment than any of its adjoining states including (surprisingly) New York and the Washington D.C. area.¹¹ On average heritage tourists also spend more money while visiting than other types of visitors.¹² The strength of heritage tourism as a share of the tourist market and the buying power displayed by individual heritage tourists makes heritage tourism a particularly profitable venture for the Pennsylvania economy.

Heritage tourism in Pennsylvania encompasses a broad range of activities that includes historic attractions such as battlefields and monuments, traditional museum settings, historic houses and various outdoor activities. Through the blend of activities Pennsylvania's history and landscape are combined into a rich package of potential experience. One can visit the town of Jim Thorpe and see the mansion of Asa Packer, followed by the jail where the alleged Molly Maguires were hung and then canoe, or hike or ride a steam locomotive through a historic landscape once dominated by the coal industry.

In an effort to promote the integrated stewardship and appreciation for the State's historic and natural resources, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) began a program that today encompasses 12 Heritage Parks, the first of which was designated in 1992. Unlike most traditional parks, Pennsylvania's heritage parks do not have enclosed boundaries or specific entry or exit points. Heritage parks are instead large geographic regions spanning two or more counties that contain a vast array of cultural, historic, natural and scenic resources of state and national significance that

exemplify the State's industrial heritage.¹³

DCNR's *Heritage Parks Program Manual* eloquently sums up the initiative as follows,

*The essence of the initiative is to provide a catalyst for diverse groups within a region to join together to develop a unified strategy for protecting, preserving, developing and promoting the heritage, particularly the unique industrial heritage, of the region.*¹⁴

One of the primary benefits of being designated a State Heritage park is access to Pennsylvania Heritage Park Program Grants (PHPP grants). These grants are awarded on a competitive basis to Heritage Parks for planning (both the initial feasibility of the park as well as the later action planning), implementation and management that covers ongoing operation expenses. In the last ten years Pennsylvania has appropriated over \$25 million dollars toward the program.¹⁵

The Pennsylvania Heritage Park Program is not the only state initiative that rewards historic preservation and development. The Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission awards over 350 grants totaling nearly \$7 million dollars to heritage organizations across the State.¹⁶ A number of these grants were awarded for general operating support, an area of grant funding that is notoriously difficult to come by.

What does this all mean for heritage institutions in the Lehigh Valley? In the first chapter I gave a brief recounting of the area's history to elucidate the richness of Lehigh Valley history and its significant place in state, national and world history. The research conducted by Rutgers University shows that historic preservation can be a powerful economic force especially when multiplier effects are taken into account. In fact, the

study concluded that one aspect of historic preservation, the rehabilitation of historic structures, has a higher economic return than infrastructure investment or new housing construction.¹⁷ Essentially, Pennsylvania sits well poised for what is proven to be a sound and economically rewarding undertaking.

Pennsylvania, while lacking scenic ocean resorts or Disney-scale theme parks hosts a sizable tourist community every year, almost half of which engages in a heritage-oriented activity. The Lehigh Valley sits at the center of one of the most well known of Pennsylvania Heritage Parks, the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, which has the additional distinction of being recognized by Congress as a National Heritage Area. Within and surrounding the Lehigh Valley portion of the corridor are over 80 National Historic register sites. The Lehigh Valley hosts just over 2.5 million visitors generating over 800 million in economic impact for the region.¹⁸ As part of their Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy the Lehigh Valley Center for Economic Development and Support listed tourism, hospitality, travel and entertainment as one of its 10 target industries. The CEDS committee also listed the use of cultural, entertainment, tourism and non-profit assets as vital elements in its number one goal of urban revitalization and development.¹⁹

One could be led to believe that heritage organizations in the Lehigh Valley have it easy. After all, the region boasts a rich history with real national significance to draw upon and a wide collection of historic sites littering a region located within two hours' drive from the New York and Philadelphia Metropolitan areas. The region has a seemingly robust tourist trade and an increasing awareness of that industry's importance in its local economy. Combine all of this with state support and a nationally recognized

historic area and you may think that success is assured.

Think again, while historic preservation is proven to be a viable and productive crop and the soil of the Lehigh Valley fertile for planting, there is still a great deal of work to be done and droughts are more common than not. While there are numerous programs and grants available, these funding sources come nowhere close to covering the actual costs of running a historic organization. Despite the pressure that is relieved by state funding sources museums make many hard choices and are forced to explore numerous other funding options. The next chapter will delve into the history of several Lehigh Valley heritage institutions and examine a number of strategies that have enabled their survival and in some cases growth. Other issues that will be explored are some of the trade-offs associated with these survival strategies.

¹ Weil, Stephen E. *Making Museums Matter*. Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002, 34.

² Ibid., 40.

³ *Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation*. New Brunswick NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1997, 11.

⁴ Ibid., 11-12.

⁵ Ibid., 192.

⁶ Ibid., 195.

⁷ Zelinsky, Wilbur. "Recreation and Tourism," *A Geography of Pennsylvania*. Ed. E. Willard Miller. University Park, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1995, 175.

⁸ Ibid., 175-176.

⁹ *Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation*. New Brunswick NJ: Center for Urban Policy Research, Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, 1997, 59.

¹⁰ *Pennsylvania Heritage Tourism Study*. Prepared by D.K. Shifflet & Associates, Ltd on behalf of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in partnership with Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development, the Pennsylvania Historic and Museum Commission, Preservation Pennsylvania and the Federation of Museums and Historical Organizations. McLean, VA: 1999, 7-10.

¹¹ Ibid., 19.

¹² Ibid., 10.

¹³ *Pennsylvania Heritage Parks Program Manual*. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, 2005, 19.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 2

¹⁶ Pennsylvania and Historic Commission website,
<http://www.artsnet.org/phmc/awards.htm>

¹⁷ *Economic Benefits of Historic Preservation*, 15.

¹⁸ "Tourism Week Showcases the Importance of Tourism to the Lehigh Valley's Economy". Lehigh Valley Convention and visitors Bureau, May 13, 2003, available at, <http://www.lehighvalleypa.org/default.aspx?pageid=98>.

¹⁹ *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy: Lehigh and Northampton Counties*, 33.

Chapter 3

Surviving and Prospering: Emerging Lehigh Valley Institutions

All one has to do is let his or her imagination look forward to the existence of the National Museum of Industrial History to understand what it will do for the community. It will be a constant reminder to all who visit what the spirit of Bethlehem has been and will continue to be.

Richard J. Fisher
"Allentown Morning Call"
Letter to the Editor
August 29, 2003

It's often museums that draw people into Boston and New York as well as smaller cities. Interesting cities are alternatives to endless shopping sprawls. Not having such resources and resorting to Las Vegas-styled glitz will not enhance life in this town, materially or otherwise.

David Ross
"Allentown Morning Call"
Letter to the Editor
December 21, 2004

Heritage Organizations in the Lehigh Valley are being swept up in the changes affecting the region as well as those impacting the museum field itself. Growth of populations and changing demographics force new pressures on museums and place those institutions in new roles. Furthermore, fluctuations in support and funding force museums to make tough decisions in regards to collections, administration and new initiatives.

Museums that wish to remain relevant and solvent in the face of such drastic demographic and economic changes are caught between the new realities of the changing world before them and the institutional legacies that lay behind them. In 1995, Stephen E. Weil made note of this in his book, *A Cabinet of Curiosities: Inquires into Museums and their Prospects*,

“There is an unresolved struggle between those who believe that museums must be essentially “mission driven” and those who believe that they must be “market driven.” Whereas almost everybody understands that the museum that wholly ignores market considerations may lose the means to survive, it ought to be equally well understood that the museum that turns completely away from considerations of mission may no longer have any reason to survive. Market and Mission are two ends of the spectrum. Every Museum that hopes to sustain itself as both a meaningful and viable institution will have to find that point on the spectrum where it can most comfortably accommodate both.”¹

This chapter will examine a sampling of Lehigh Valley institutions in an effort to draw attention to the ways in which museums can adapt themselves for survival while fulfilling a greater role in their surrounding communities. The first two institutions, The Historic Bethlehem Partnership and Hugh Moore Park and Museums have developed highly successful partnerships that have been greatly beneficial to the institutions and their respective home cities of Bethlehem and Easton. A third institution, The Lehigh County Historical Society is currently in the process of reinventing itself as a historical and cultural center for the Lehigh Valley. In all three cases the institutions are thinking beyond physical, intellectual, and disciplinary boundaries to serve their missions as well as their markets.

Historic Bethlehem Partnership

The Historic Bethlehem Partnership was formed with the help of the Bethlehem Area Chamber of Commerce Association in 1993. Its original membership consisted of Burnside Plantation, Kemmerer Museum of Decorative Arts and Historic Bethlehem Incorporated. A fourth institution, The Moravian Museum joined the partnership in 1999.

The Historic Bethlehem Partnership (HBP) is perhaps best described as a service organization that provides the curatorial, administrative, educational and promotional needs of four separate historic institutions. Each of the four member institutions is autonomous and yet closely linked. Member institutions retain their own governing boards, collections, property, leases and endowments, but professional staffing is provided by the partnership. In addition there is a governing board that provides oversight of the partnership as a whole.

The oldest of HBP's member organizations is the Moravian Museum, housed in the 1741 Gemeinhaus, located in the heart of the old Moravian settlement of Bethlehem. The building, essentially a four-story log structure was one of the first built by the early Moravian settlers. Today it is surrounded by one of the finest ensembles of Colonial era, Germanic architecture in America. Many of the surrounding buildings that also date from the 18th century are still used as residences or by the Bethlehem Area Moravian Church or Moravian College. The Bethlehem Area Moravian Church founded the Moravian Museum in 1939 for the purpose of collecting, preserving, and interpreting the history of the Moravian Church and the city's early Moravian roots.

One of the earliest services offered was a walking tour of the historic Moravian buildings by women in distinctive 18th-century Moravian garb. This was during a time

when a massive influx of immigrants to Southside Bethlehem had already considerably altered the character of the once sleepy town. This was also around the time that Bethlehem began promoting itself as “Christmas City” by mounting a monumental (for the time) street-lighting display. The over 80-foot tall fully-lit star of Bethlehem still resides on South Mountain where it can be seen for miles to the north of the city.

Bethlehem Steel built the star and the company was also one of the major forces behind the early lighting displays. One can clearly see the Moravian Museum, which was run by the church until becoming a separate institution in 1992, as an effort to preserve elements of the old Bethlehem that were becoming overshadowed by the emergence of its new twentieth-century identity.



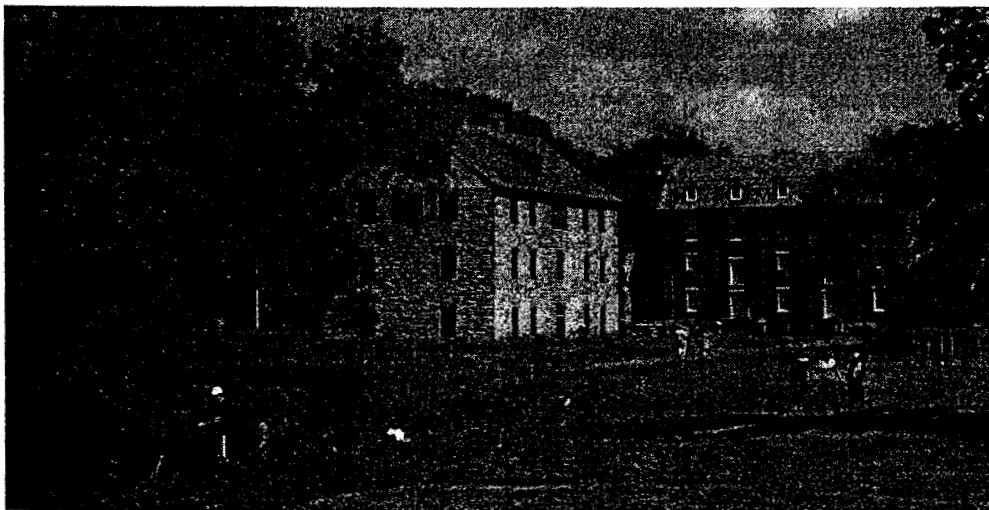
The Moravian Museum today, nestled in Bethlehem’s historic district. Clapboard siding conceals the timber construction beneath.

The Kemmerer Museum of Decorative Arts began as many museums do. In 1954, longtime Bethlehem resident Annie Kemmerer bequeathed her collection of 19th- and early 20th-century decorative arts that would become the core of the museum’s collection.

The Kemmerer's collection has since grown to include regional paintings, textiles, toys, drawings, prints and other collectibles.

Formed as an outgrowth of the Kemmerer Museum in 1957, Historic Bethlehem Incorporated (HBI) encompasses several buildings in what is today called the Colonial Industrial Quarter of Bethlehem. Industrial quarter buildings include the 1761 Tannery, 1869 Luckenbach Mill, and the 1762 Waterworks that was the first municipal waterworks in the country and is today, a National Historic Landmark.

The entire complex, which once included several industries housed in buildings that are no longer extant, is situated on the bank of the Monocacy Creek that feeds the Lehigh River. This small stream of water was used to power many of the early industries and the remnants of water raceways can still be seen. By the 1950's the area had become a scrap yard and required considerable cleanup before it could be put to public use. Today the area is a historic park that plays host to hundreds of thousands of visitors who flock to the city for summer festivals like the two week-long Musicfest music festival and the week-long Celtic Classic highland games and heritage festival.



The Colonial Industrial Quarter today, just a few short blocks from the Moravian Museum. On the right is the 1761 Tannery. On the left is the 1869 Luckenbach Mill, which replaced an older Colonial-era mill after it burned to the ground.

HBI has expanded its holdings to include the 1810 home of John Sebastian Goundie that overlooks the Colonial Industrial Quarter along Main Street. The museum housed in this federal style building (a notable distinction from earlier Germanic structures) interprets early 19th-century life in Bethlehem, a period of transition as the outside influences of the new nation were already at work. The building was targeted for demolition in the 1960's but was spared the wrecking ball and taken over by HBI in 1968.

Burnside plantation was founded in 1986 to preserve and interpret the home and plantation that once belonged to James Burnside. The plantation was the first privately owned land in the Bethlehem area. Located along the Monocacy Creek, just upstream from the Colonial Industrial quarter, the plantation was once on the outskirts of the early settlement but its 6.5 acres now lie firmly within city limits.

From the start the partnership was dedicated to increasing the level of service that it members provide to the public at large. In 1993, Gerald R. Bastoni, former Executive Director of the Kemmerer Museum and at that time newly appointed Executive Director of the Historic Bethlehem partnership stated that prior to the three organizations' consolidation,

“We all struggled to forge ahead to administer budgets, taxes and programs and personnel. We were just duplicating a lot of effort. It is no secret all organizations experienced trouble meeting operating goals. We are in the business of producing programs and service for people. Streamlining the organization is heading toward that.”²

The first steps toward building the partnership were a consolidation of corporate fundraising and membership drives. By combining these initial efforts, a great deal of the perceived redundancy between the three (later four) historic sites, that are located within close proximity of each other, was largely eliminated. In addition, donors were able to contribute to a more generalized effort that was not tied to a particular site but to an entire area of the city.

In the years since the initial consolidation and later incorporation of the Moravian Museum, HBI has streamlined staffing between its members. All four organizations share a single executive director, developer, education department, exhibits curator/collections manager and archivist. Several other support staffers and volunteers are shared by the members as well.

HBI's relatively small education department has built a successful and highly engaging collection of educational programs aimed at Bethlehem area schools. Once per year during grades 3-5, students visit one of three original partnership sites for a 2-3 hour docent-facilitated field trip that focuses on many of the everyday components of life in early Bethlehem. Students explore methods of food preparation, barn construction and methods of processing raw materials such as flax at Burnside Plantation and about early Moravian industries such as woodworking, pottery and leather working at The Colonial Industrial Quarter. At the Kemmerer Museum they learn about Bethlehem folk and decorative arts. Separately, none of the member institutions would have had the resources to offer the comprehensive array of programs that HBI now provides.

In addition, HBI hosts numerous lectures, seasonal festivals at Burnside Plantation, musical programs at the Moravian Museum and changing exhibits. HBI also provides

staff training and coordination for the holiday season tours that host tens of thousands of visitors each holiday season. In addition to bus tours through the city's festively lit historic areas and neighborhoods are the immensely popular candlelight walking tours of Bethlehem's downtown area by guides in 18th-century Moravian garb. The Moravian Museum serves as the starting point for these candlelight tours and is a center for tourist activity during the holiday season.

In recent years, HBI has mounted a number of exhibits that have sought to reach out to the surrounding community by embracing history as a form of collective memory. In 2002 an exhibit called, *The Eyes Have It! Community Members Look at The Past* was installed in galleries at the Kemmerer Museum of Decorative Arts and the Moravian Museum. For the exhibit, HBI turned the curatorial reigns over to a collection of community members who were asked to select objects from the Partnership's collections. Each of the guest curators expressed very personal meanings about their chosen objects in an essay that accompanied their artifact in the exhibit along with a photograph of themselves.

The twenty-eight curators were chosen from among Lehigh Valley notables and include political, religious, cultural and business figures. A decision was made early on to include only curators who were not donors or HBI board members and an effort was made to include as diverse a body of people as possible. Leaders from several churches, community organizations and learning institutions were chosen as curators.

Reflections by curators ranged from the nostalgic to the poetic. Centenarian Fritz W. Ihle chose a collection of photographs of a bridge that once crossed the Lehigh River because it conjured memories of his distant childhood. Ester M. Lee, President of The

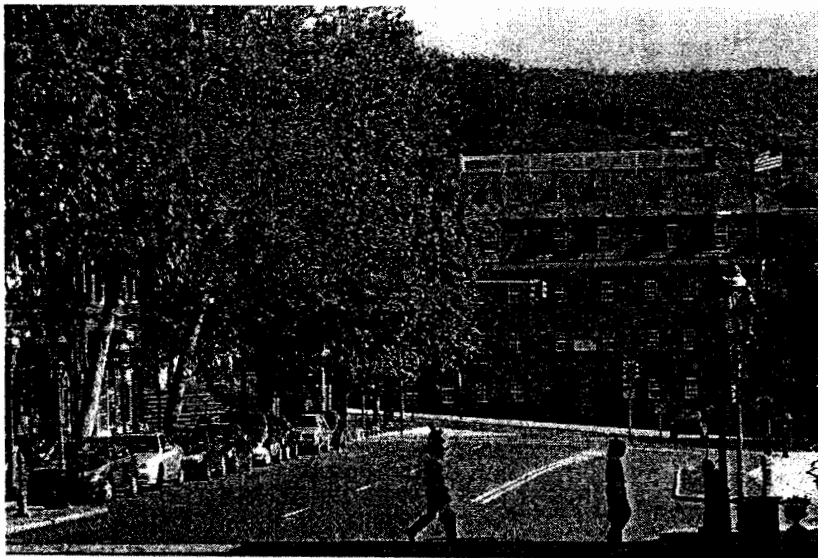
Bethlehem branch of the NAACP, chose a collection of women's hats and fondly recollected the importance of such hats in ladies' church dress in the 1930's, 40's and 50's. Margaret Anne Bugaighis, Ph.D. from the Muslim Association of the Lehigh Valley chose three objects, an early 20th-century washboard, a 19th-century wooden spoon and a mortar and pestle also from the 19th century. Bugaighis interpreted these objects as universal tools, symbols of human action that transcend culture and wrote a poem about each object.

It is important to appreciate and recognize the free reign given to the curators in interpreting their objects as evidenced in the direction given to each participant,

"I would like you to consider how you connect with the past. History is a part of everyday life and connecting to the past is very personal. It may be an heirloom passed down to you, the neighborhood you live in or memories evoked at holiday gatherings. The past may have helped you decide upon a career, provided passion when facing an obstacle, transformed you into an incurable collector, or brought a smile to your face when a certain song plays on the radio. There is no right or wrong way to look at the past."³

Just over a year after the deinstallation of *The Eyes Have It*, I had the opportunity to serve as a guest curator for HBI as part of a graduate internship. The exhibit that I helped produce is called *From Near and Far: Moravian Traditions in Bethlehem*, and is on permanent exhibition at the Moravian Museum. The focus of the exhibit was a collection of specific traditional practices associated with the Moravian community of Bethlehem that were selected by Moravian Museum docents, many of whom have been

representing the Moravian community for more than two decades. Inspired by *The Eyes Have It*, I did not want the exhibit to be a mere recounting of each tradition's origins and practical details, but rather a look at a living breathing collection of practices that is shaped by every generation they are passed on to. With the guidance of HBI's permanent staff I went about consulting with a number of local people from the Moravian community to get a sense of each tradition and how they were made unique to the area while stressing the common threads that unite Moravians worldwide. I felt that this approach was particularly important, as I was not a Moravian, nor even a longtime resident of the area. Facts I could provide, but for authenticity, I needed the local communities' involvement, and it was this involvement that made the exhibit a success. By engaging the community in the exhibition process, that community was able to take a greater ownership in the exhibit, than I as an outsider could have ever dictated.



A view of Main Street Bethlehem looking south towards the Single Brethren's House, which now belongs to Moravian College. Central Moravian Church is obscured by the trees on the left. The Moravian Museum and Colonial Industrial Quarter are less than a block away to the west and the east.

The community of downtown Bethlehem is one of the things the HBI has had in its favor from the beginning. While the downtown area has gone through sleepy periods, it had never lapsed into outright depression. The effects of Bethlehem Steel's long demise did not affect the area of the city anywhere near as profoundly as it did on the south side of the Lehigh River.

Today the downtown area is bustling with shops and restaurants, thanks in no small part to the historic atmosphere that is preserved in several of the downtown buildings. The large, stone Single Brethren's House, built in the 18th century, sits at the end of Main Street. Once it served as a hospital for the soldiers of Washington's Continental Army, today it belongs to Moravian College. Across from the Brethren's House sits the massive Central Moravian Church, completed in 1806. To this day the Bethlehem Trombone Choir (now 250 years old) announces the passing of local congregation members by playing the same Chorales they played in the 1700's from the belfry of the church. The Hotel Bethlehem, built in 1922 on the original spot of the first house built in Bethlehem and bearing a plaque commemorating the tiny log cabin towers over Main Street's newest historic feature, the rebuilt blacksmith's shop, an 11 million dollar project completed by HBI, in 2004. Just a few blocks north, The Sun Inn, currently managed by Sun Inn Preservation Association, an organization that has chosen to remain independent of HBI, is run as a museum, restaurant, and gift shop.



Bethlehem today, as seen from the Hill to Hill Bridge crossing the Lehigh River. The Hotel Bethlehem can be seen on the left, while the peaked roof and belfry of Central Moravian Church can be seen on the right.

In November of 2004, Bethlehem hosted the Moravian Heritage Network Second International Conference. The conference is part of an initiative that began in Christiansfeld, Denmark to recognize and promote Moravian heritage worldwide. One of the issues explored at the conference is the quest for World Heritage Status for historic Moravian communities across the globe. If accepted, Bethlehem, along with other Moravian settlements in North America, Europe and Africa would be on the same heritage list as The Great Wall of China, the Pyramids at Giza, the Acropolis and Masada.

Hugh Moore Historical Park and Museums and Two Rivers Landing

In the early 90's a collaboration between Binney and Smith Inc. (makers of Crayola crayons), The Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Hugh Moore Historic Park and Museums and the City of Easton resulted in Two Rivers Landing (TRL). TRL is an over 30,000 square foot attraction that encompasses two different institutions and a welcome center for a third. The Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor has garnered significant exposure for itself from its involvement in TRL, while Hugh Moore Park and Museums has used TRL as a launch pad for institutional growth.

The primary catalysts for TRL were the City of Easton, in desperate need of something to revitalize its downtown, and Binney and Smith, a corporation with specific needs of its own.

Binney and Smith Inc. began in 1885, when Edwin Binney and cousin C. Harold Smith formed a company to produce a number of products including red oxide pigment for barns and carbon black for tires. By 1900 Binney and Smith were producing slate school pencils in Easton. Two years later they produced a dustless school chalk that won a gold medal at the St. Louis World Exposition.⁴

In 1903 the company produced its first “Crayola” crayons. By 1996 the company had produced a reported 100 billion of them, selling Crayola crayons in both U.S. and European markets. In 1998 the familiar 64-box of Crayola crayons became part of the Smithsonian Institute’s permanent collection and was featured on a U.S. postage stamp. The company, now owned by Hallmark Cards Inc. continues to produce 500 million in sales.

For all of its worldwide success in many ways Binney and Smith remains a local company. Its corporate headquarters is still in Easton, Pennsylvania, where they moved to from New York City in 1976. Binney’s (as many call it) major manufacturing centers are located in Forks Township (just north of Easton) and in Bethlehem. While its presence is nowhere near as monolithic as Bethlehem Steel’s once was, it is an important part of Lehigh Valley industry and has been for many years.

By the 1990’s a chance to take the extremely popular tour of the Binney and Smith factory floor meant putting your name on two-year waiting list. Tours were limited to visitors over the age of six for insurance reasons. In 1992 the factory could only handle

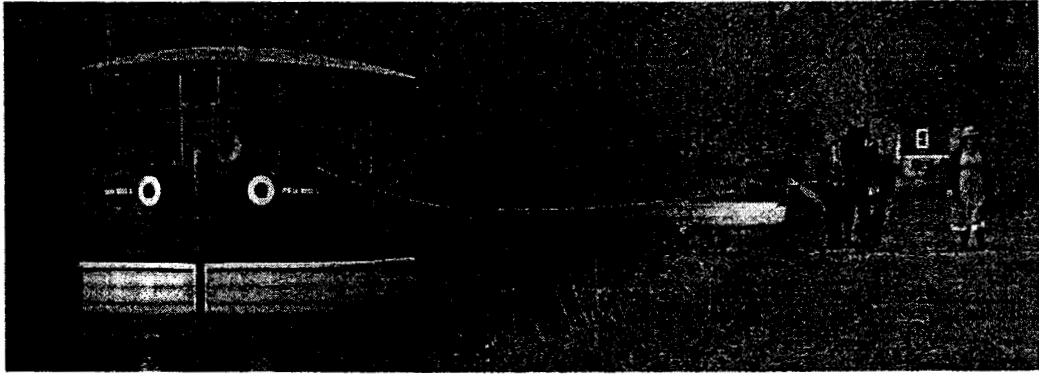
20,000 of the 50,000 tour requests.⁵ The following year, Binney and Smith announced that they would open a visitor center in downtown Easton, an area in desperate need of revitalization.⁶

The visitor's center was planned to be housed in the shell of an empty department store and neighboring shoe store, both once prosperous, but now symbolic of downtown Easton's slide into economic depression. At the time vacant buildings seemed to outnumber the occupied ones.⁷ The planned visitor's center would eventually evolve into Two Rivers Landing. A building that would house not only The Crayola Factory--Binney and Smith's art and activity center complete with a demonstration of how crayons are made, the new enterprise would also house a welcome center for the new Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, and a space dedicated to the history of America's canals, appropriately named The National Canal Museum.

The National Canal Museum is a continuation of an older museum that is part of a larger organization called Hugh Moore Historic Park and Museums (HMHPM). Hugh Moore Park began as a venture by the city of Easton that was spurred on by Hugh Moore in 1962. Hugh Moore was founder and longtime president of the Dixie Cup Company, (yet another iconic American product manufactured in the Lehigh Valley). Moore, who was involved in a number of philanthropic and political causes, provided \$25,000 of the \$45,000 that Easton needed to purchase a 260-acre strip of land along the Lehigh Canal. This area of land contains section 8 of the Lehigh Canal (the last section before the canal and the Lehigh River connect with the Delaware River and canal) as well as the archaeological remains of a vast array of 19th- and early 20th-century industries that sprang up along the canal during its heyday.

In 1966, Hugh Moore was one of the founding incorporators of the Pennsylvania Canal Society. The society was born out of a meeting between members of the New York Canal Society that were visiting the Lehigh Valley on a field trip and Harry Rinker, who was then a graduate student involved with Historic Bethlehem. Rinker was asked to show the society around even though he knew nothing of canals, being primarily interested in Moravian History.⁸ After a day of touring the New York group, Rinker retired to the Hotel Bethlehem for cocktails. The New Yorkers thought it was a “disgrace” that Pennsylvanians had such a rich canal history and had to go to New York to find out about them.⁹ After much discussion, the group resolved to form the Pennsylvania Canal Society. Harry Rinker became its first president. In 1970, thanks in no small part to Hugh Moore’s patronage, The Pennsylvania Canal Society, which up until that point had been storing its growing collection in Bethlehem, opened a museum in a renovated canal era building that provided about 1200 square feet of space. The same park commission that ran Hugh Moore Park, which was named after Moore when he died in 1972, ran the museum. In 1976 the Friends of Hugh Moore Park was formed as a nonprofit organization to manage both the park and the museum. The Friends of Hugh Moore Park was reorganized in 1984 as Hugh Moore Historical Park and Museums

One of the early efforts by the organization was the rehabilitation of section 8 of the Lehigh Canal, its lock gates, towpath and locktender’s house. It would take the organization seven years to restore the canal. In 1977 the Josiah White, a mule drawn canal boat began taking visitors out onto the Lehigh Canal. Today, the larger Josiah White II continues to host almost over 25,000 people a year, offering rides daily as well as for dinners and special events.



The Josiah White II on the restored Section 8 of the Lehigh Navigation in Hugh Moore Park.

By 1985 the museum had purchased a separate archives building to house its rapidly expanding collection, which had grown to encompass not just canals, but railroads and other industries that were born from and/or impacted by their presence. It was around this time that the organization began planning what it called “The Museum of the Industrial Revolution.” This planned museum (in a somewhat different form) would take another two decades to get off the ground and by the early 90’s the TRL project would take precedence over all others and thrust the Canal Museum into the limelight.



Guard Lock # 8 of the Lehigh Navigation and the Locktender's House before restoration.



Guard Lock # 8 of the Lehigh Navigation and the Locktender's House after restoration.

Two Rivers Landing saw Easton's small Canal Museum re-envisioned as the National Canal Museum (NCM). NCM was the first museum to focus on the history of America's canals on a national level. In addition to this broadened focus, HMHPM would also continue to collect and exhibit materials related to local industries such as iron, steel, textiles etc. that grew up in the region thanks to the initial spark provided by the early canals.

The museum's permanent exhibits included audio interactives that told the story of the birth of the Erie Canal, oral histories collected by the museum from surviving "canawlers" and other exhibits that placed the growth of America's canals in the context of rapid national growth in 19th century. The museum also featured an introductory video called "A Horse, A Rope, and a Muddy Strip of Water" that drew upon the institution's considerable film and photo archive and gave voice to the men and women who built and worked on the canals. Finally the exhibits included water-filled interactives (that were

later added to) demonstrating the operation of a canal lock and incline plane. In total the move to Two Rivers Landing increased the museum's exhibit space almost 10 fold.

Even before the doors opened, people were expecting big things from Two Rivers Landing. The plan would convert a collection of vacant buildings into a four-story attraction to draw visitors to downtown Easton. Early estimates stated that Two Rivers landing would draw 600,000 people by its fourth year along with 17 million in spending to Easton.¹⁰

The institution that eventually opened its doors in 1996 included a welcome center for the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor and a McDonalds Restaurant. The large second floor of the building was dedicated to The Crayola Factory, which featured a number of art activity stations and a crayon making demonstration. The National Canal Museum took up the third and (after an expansion) fourth floors of the building.



Two Rivers Landing in 2005.

Funding for the project came from a number of government and private sources, including a 1.75 million dollar state grant for the National Canal Museum, a 1.1 million dollar grant for the L&D Heritage Corridor Welcome Center, 2 million from Binney and Smith, and a 1 million loan taken out by the City of Easton. In total, it took the efforts of all project partners to garner enough funds to realize the project.

Two Rivers Landing was an immediate success beyond anyone's imagining. The building, expected to draw 300,000 visitors by its third year, accomplished this goal in only a single year.¹¹ By 1999 Two Rivers Landing had welcomed its 1 millionth visitor and was being applauded as a dramatic success story for downtown Easton. While attendance numbers have decreased in recent years, given a troubled post 9/11 economy and its maturation as an area attraction, Two Rivers landing continues to draw over 200,000 visitors a year.

The effects of Two Rivers Landing on downtown Easton have been remarkable, including the creation of new businesses in the area around the attraction and a renewed faith in the downtown area. Revenues from visitor parking in a city-owned parking garage were up from \$130,000 in 1993 to \$209,000 a year after Two Rivers Landing opened.¹² That same year, it was estimated that Two Rivers Landing fueled 14 million in regional spending since its 1996 opening.¹³ One can safely assume that by 2005 that number is somewhere beyond 50 million.

One fact that has become readily apparent to me since becoming Curator of Exhibits for HMHPM is that many people do not recognize the name National Canal Museum or Two Rivers Landing for that matter. What they do recognize is the Crayola Factory. Crayola is a household name with nearly a century of marketing behind it, while

the 19th-century canal era, although vitally important to the development of the country, is a relatively obscure subject. While TRL has provided this era in history unimaginable exposure, the Crayola factory remains the main visitor attraction. Consequently many people think of TRL simply as the “Crayola Factory.” While overshadowed to an extent at TRL by its more publicized partner, HMHPM is quite highly regarded amongst other audiences.

By the 1990’s the Canal Museum had built itself a strong following in the scholarly and historical community. For over 20 years the museum has sponsored the Canal History and Technology Symposium, held at Easton-based Lafayette University. The symposium has produced some of the leading scholarly writings on canals and Lehigh Valley industry including the history of Bethlehem Steel. Today the museum’s archives hold a vast collection of industry and Bethlehem Steel related materials. In fact when Bethlehem Steel decided that it could no longer support its vast engineering library, complete with films, technical drawing and other materials, a substantial portion of the library went to HMHPM. Lance Metz, historian for the institution since 1980, and Commonwealth Speaker for the Pennsylvania Humanities Council is one of the most widely regarded industrial historians in America, and was one of the earliest historians in the Lehigh Valley to advocate preservation of Bethlehem Steel’s legacy.¹⁴

It is the opinion of Steve Humphrey, HMHPM Executive Director from 1976 to 2004, that without the move to TRL, the Canal Museum would have died a natural death.¹⁵ While there is a certain amount of overlap between railroad, technology, steam engine, and canal enthusiasts, and a vast number of societies dedicated to them, when compared to the immense family audience that Two Rivers Landing has drawn they are

but a small (but particularly dedicated) portion of the National Canal Museum's visitors. According to Humphrey, this small audience, combined with the limited space and growth potential of the old site would have had a difficult time securing the future for the institution.¹⁵ This was not a challenge unique to the Canal Museum, as it is one faced by smaller, more specialized museums and historic houses across the country.

The Two Rivers Landing partnership has given the museum a shot in the arm by placing it at the center of a much-applauded urban development initiative. What TRL has gotten from NCM is a dose of cultural capital that museums are well known for providing. Museums are more than just attractions, they are cultural institutions, and regardless of size, they offer a certain legitimacy in the eyes of the public. This perceived legitimacy offered by museums is one of the primary reasons for their existence. From the formation of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York (America's Louvre) to Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia and organizations like the Daughters of the American Revolution, cultural legitimacy whether in the eyes of new immigrant populations, European rivals or as a form of self-image has been a primary fuel for the American museum movement since its inception.¹⁶

Since the Crayola Factory is the main visitor attraction at Two Rivers Landing and because the Crayola Factory overwhelmingly attracts families with young children, NCM has been forced to reevaluate its primary audience. By and large the NCM exhibits that were installed at Two Rivers Landing in 1996 are intended for an older audience, more akin to the visitors that were drawn to the original Canal Museum. Currently NCM's biggest attractions are both "kid friendly" additions that were made in the years

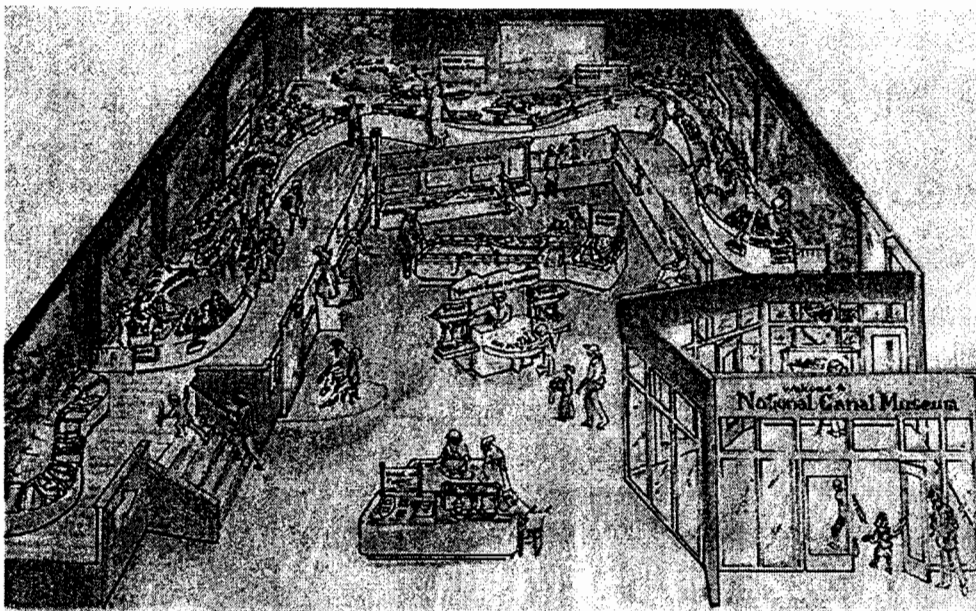
after 1996 including a model train display and a water exhibit that allows visitors to build miniature dams and canals.

Recently, NCM has embarked on a project that will completely re-envision its gallery spaces for this younger audience. The new NCM galleries will more closely resemble those one might find in a children's museum or science center than one would expect in a history museum. This new and completely interactive approach to NCM's exhibits is being funded in part by a 1.6 million dollar grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF). Funding from NSF for history exhibits is largely unheard of. What has allowed NCM to be awarded this grant, aside from fortuitous timing and the hiring of a very skilled grant writer with a proven track record in regards to NSF, is the interdisciplinary approach that NCM is taking by tackling the task of educating visitors about scientific concepts in a historical context.

The project called "The Science and Technology of Inland Waterways" will focus on the scientific principles of buoyancy, friction that makes canals work, as well as the science behind the simple machines that were used by canal builders and workers. NCM contracted with the Science Museum of Minnesota, one of the leading science centers in the country, to design and build a host of interactive exhibits including a 90-foot long water-filled model canal system. The enormous exhibit will take up an entire gallery at TRL and will feature a number of locks and other features that visitors can operate. In addition to the main exhibit there will also be interactives that explore how cargo is moved with pulleys, how boats are steered with tillers and how gears transfer force. As part of a national dissemination effort, there will also be a collection of traveling activity benches that highlight the engineering and building of canals. The benches will enable

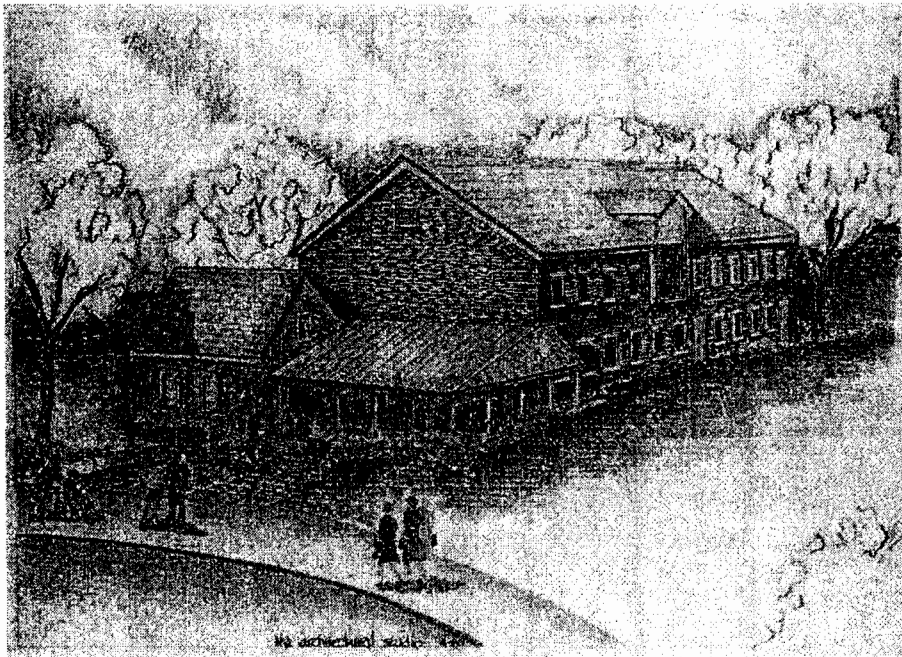
visitors to build locks, aqueducts, and entire canal systems. These exhibits are scheduled to begin traveling to host institutions around the country in 2007. Overall this collection of exhibits will enable NCM to draw more attention to itself and better serve an audience that could not have been imagined a decade earlier.

A large part of this service will be realized through expanded school visitation programs at TRL. While the HMHPM has had considerable success with its annual “Immersion Days” education programs at Hugh Moore Park, it has been unable to implement such programming at TRL. Part of this is due to the combined admission cost that charges a flat fee for entering both institutions. This fee structure will need to be altered if NCM is to attract teachers interested in science and history programming who are not necessarily interested in taking their classes to the Crayola Factory for art activities.



Conceptual rendering of NCM's proposed 90 foot-long interactive canal system gallery.

Just as this new projects is taking shape at TRL, another project is gaining momentum at Hugh Moore Park. Now after two decades, HMHPM is ready to begin construction on a museum of industrial history. The 14,000 square foot building will be called the Elaine and Peter Emrick Center for Technology, named after Elaine Emrick and her late husband who became overnight millionaires when highway development cut through their family farm, and who contributed \$1.2 million towards the museum building's construction. This new museum will provide a solid anchor for Hugh Moore Park, which currently offers boat rides and has a gift shop, picnic pavilions and a historic locktender's house.



Conceptual rendering of the Elaine and Peter Emrick Center of Technology. Even though the center will consist of entirely new construction, the style of its architectural appearance evokes the 19th century industrial period.

The Emrick Center will feature exhibits that focus on the many industries that grew along the Lehigh Canal, particularly in the area that is now Hugh Moore Park. Area industries once included a wire rope mill, a foundry, a textile mill and Glendon Iron, the iron maker from which Easton's neighbor, the Borough of Glendon draws its name. The museum will also include exhibits that explore the evolving postindustrial environment of Hugh Moore Park as well as the history of the Buehler Furniture Factory, once located in Allentown, the Dixie Cup Company, and early Lehigh Valley electronics pioneers Agere Systems Incorporated. The museum is scheduled to open its doors in 2006.

Hugh Moore Historic Park and Museums has grown by leaps and bounds since its inception. A large part of its success can be traced to its ability and willingness to remain fluid, by entering into partnerships and being willing to grow with them and to look outside its current boundaries by collecting an expanding array of technological artifacts and embracing new disciplines. Finally, the institution has been able to apply a steady forward momentum towards its goals as evidenced by the final fruition of the Emrick Center.

Lehigh County Historical Society and the Lehigh Valley Heritage Center

In nearby Allentown, the Lehigh County Historical Society (LCHS) is nearing completion of its 30,000 square foot Lehigh Valley Heritage Center. The opening of the center will start a new chapter for the 101-year-old institution by providing greatly expanded exhibit space in the middle of a three-acre park. Executive Director John Zolomij is looking forward to the day when the Heritage Center will be able to host heritage days in the park and broaden its audience through exhibits focusing on the varied ethnicities of Allentown and the surrounding Lehigh Valley.¹⁶ The first exhibit planned

for the center is an exhibit about the Jewish community in the Lehigh Valley to coincide with the celebration of the 350th anniversary of the arrival of Jews in North America.

For a large portion of its existence, the LCHS has been dedicated largely to the preservation of the history of the region's early Germanic population. The societies' founders sought to preserve their heritage in the face of a massive immigrant influx to the area that occurred during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. After World War II the society collected a number of historic properties in the Lehigh Valley, a practice that has proven financially unsustainable. Some of the properties have been retained while others have been shed to other organizations and uses. One such property, the Frank Buchman house was converted back to residential use, while the house of Ann Elberson was demolished to make way for the Lehigh Valley Heritage Center.



The Lehigh Valley Heritage Center in 2005

Both of these acts drew scathing criticism from preservationists including former LVHS Executive Director and founder of the Allentown Preservation League, Mathew Brown.¹⁹ The Frank Buchman House was the boyhood home of Frank Buchman, worldwide political and social figure and founder of the Moral Re-Armament Movement. The Anne Elberson House was home to Elberson's father, noted Allentown Mayor and later Congressman Fred Lewis. Zolomij argues that neither property is of enough historic significance to warrant the considerable cost and effort it would take to preserve them and the benefits of shedding both sites (even demolishing the Elberson House to make way for the new center) far outweigh the costs of preservation.²⁰

The LCHS was further criticized for the naming of its new center because some feel it dilutes the society's primary mission of collecting and interpreting Lehigh County History.²¹ Zolomij counters,

"Local History does not stop at the county's borders. People from all over the world shaped it. For a long time the country's past was seen through one important but very narrow window. The heritage center will offer different points of view and allow unheard voices a chance to be heard."²²

The three institutions included in this chapter were chosen because they embody many of the issues faced by heritage organizations in the Lehigh Valley, of which there are too many to even briefly review. Suffice it to say that those institutions exist because their founders felt that something of value needed to be preserved, that something dear to them was in danger, and/or that there was a public need that should be honored. Whether it be the most basic of museum functions, preserving, collecting and interpreting or the forging of bold new partnerships and initiatives, Lehigh Valley Heritage Institutions are

often less about the past and more about the present (Who are we? What is worth saving?) and the future (Where are we going? What do we give our children?). No institution in the Lehigh Valley has been more at the center of this collision between past, present and future than The National Museum of Industrial History. The fourth chapter of this thesis will focus on the ongoing efforts to preserve the Bethlehem Steel site and how that preservation impacts the future of the city of Bethlehem.

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³ Schaefer, Barbara, Curator of Exhibits/ Collections Manager, The Historic Bethlehem Partnership, unpublished letter to guest curators, Oct 2002.

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⁵ "A Promising Mix Cooking in Easton," *The Allentown Morning Call*. August 29, 1993, A 20.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Mathias, Madeline. "Easton: Will Downtown Revitalization be a Boom or Bust? Cityscapes Looks at the Changes, Problems and Successes of the Lehigh Valley's Cities as 1995 Nears," *The Allentown Morning Call*, December 4, 1994, B 1.

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⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Mathias, Madeline. "Two Rivers Landing to Bring Dramatic Change to Easton", *The Allentown Morning Call*, December 5th, 1993.

¹¹ Mathias, Madeline. "Easton Visitors Center Draws Crowd After Crowd: More See Two Rivers Landing in 1 Year Than Were Expected in 3", *Allentown Morning Call*, September 3, 1997.

¹² Mathias, Madeline. "Downtown Easton Enjoying Quick Success", *Allentown Morning Call*, August 6, 1998.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Whelan, Frank. "Every Museum has a History: It Started with a Gathering of Papers on Valley's Iron and Steel," *Allentown Morning Call*, April 7, 1997, B 1.

¹⁵ Interview with Steve Humphrey conducted by author, February 15, 2005.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Wallace Mike. *Mickey Mouse History: and Other Essays on American Memory*. Philadelphia PA: Temple University Press. 1996, 3-32.

¹⁸ Interview with John Zolomij, conducted by author, March 3, 2005.

¹⁹ Brown, Mathew. "Home of Popular City Mayor is Worth Preserving". *Allentown Morning Call*. September 12, 2002, A 23.

²⁰ Zolimij Interview.

²¹ Whelan, Frank. "Lehigh Valley Heritage Center to Shed New Light on What's Old" *Allentown Morning Call*. March 27, 2005.

²² Ibid.

Chapter 4
Forging a Brighter Future:
The Continuing Efforts to Preserve and
Redevelop the Bethlehem Steel Plant

A Community with self-pride finds respectable, if sacrificial, ways to meet its obligations. Gambling reduces a community to the lowest level of money grabbing. The Moravians who founded Bethlehem knew how to build an ethical community. Bethlehem Steel, and later, the developers of surrounding industrial parks and businesses, knew how to grow our community and create economic progress. Let's take our lessons from them.

Rev. Willard R. Harstine
 Letter to the Editor
 "Allentown Morning Call"
 February 11, 2005

Regarding the slot parlors that will eventually be springing up in the Lehigh Valley, the moral alarmists tell us how the opening of these gambling establishments will turn our tranquil and beautiful Lehigh Valley into the modern day Sodom and Gomorrah. I'd like to point out that gambling is already here. Just look into your church basements and you'll find the popular and thriving bingo nights.

Mike Mangold
 Letter to the Editor
 "Allentown Morning Call"
 February 3, 2005

Ralph Grayson Schwartz began his career at Bethlehem Steel in 1948, after graduating from Lehigh University with a degree in mechanical engineering. Over the next 13 years that Grayson worked for Bethlehem Steel, he would be involved in the planning and expansion of numerous expansion projects for the company at sites across the country. Grayson would also become enamored with Bethlehem's history, earning a Masters degree in history from Lehigh University and being charged with the creation and management of Bethlehem Steel's vast archive.¹

Being an executive at Bethlehem steel during those years meant being totally entrenched in a community that revolved around the company. Bethlehem Steel and the town were inseparable. Lives inside and outside of work were intertwined; your co-workers were your neighbors, fellow parish members, and golf buddies.²

The integration of the company into the fabric of the city led to a great deal of community involvement by Bethlehem Steel executives. This involvement is seen as a primary factor in the corporation's support of the preservation and redevelopment of the Bethlehem Steel plant when it would have been simple enough to level the site as other steel producers had done to their defunct plants.³ Perhaps the most notorious example was the demolition of Homestead plant just outside of Pittsburgh by U.S. Steel in 2000, a move that tore open the wounds of a community already injured by the plant's closing.

Before leaving Bethlehem in 1961 to work on numerous development projects around the country, Ralph Schwartz had been one of the primary movers behind the restoration of the Colonial Industrial Quarter.⁴ When he returned to Bethlehem on a part-time basis in 1992 the once mighty Bethlehem Steel was floundering, jobs were being eliminated and facilities shutdown. While the Bethlehem plant would produce steel until 1995 and the coke works would remain in operation for another two years after that, plans for demolishing portions of the site were already being considered.

Schwartz, who was assisting the company with the archives that he helped create, was concerned that some of the most historically significant areas of the plant would be lost. In 1994, Schwartz met with Curtis "Hank" Barnette, Bethlehem Steel's chairman, Steve Donches, the corporation's vice-president of public affairs and company treasurer Andy Weller to discuss plans for redeveloping the western (and most historically

significant) portion of the Bethlehem plant.⁵ From the very beginning, plans for the redevelopment were envisioned on a massive scale that was in many ways dictated by the scale of the site itself. In order to generate enough capital to support the redevelopment they needed to think beyond a traditional museum/preservation approach.⁶

What Schwartz envisioned was a 40-acre iron and steel “experience”: a combination of “high tech theme park technology” and “-high quality, serious, industrial history museology.”⁶ Surrounding this core would be another 100 or so acres of retail and entertainment space that would be fueled by visitors to the iron and steel attraction. The leadership of Bethlehem Steel supported the idea and gave Schwartz the go ahead to pursue his vision. This development effort would come to be known as *Bethlehem Works*.

The most logical candidate to supply the capital for this kind of development was Walt Disney Inc., a name synonymous with big, flashy attractions. At the time Disney was still recovering from a battle with historians, environmentalists and community members over its proposed *Disney's America* theme park to be located just 35 miles west of Washington, D.C. and 5 miles from Manassas National Battlefield Park. Historians balked at what was expected to be a sentimentalized and idealized story of American history. Environmentalists and community advocates had won numerous battles to protect the area surrounding the battlefield from development and did not hesitate to battle with Disney. In September of 1994, Disney announced that it was abandoning the project.

After much review, Disney would also decline involvement with the Bethlehem project, but the project would gain two important individuals who had left Disney following the tumult of *Disney's America*. Bob Weis, former vice president of Disney

Imagineering and designer Jeanette Dunlap had formed a firm called Design Island.⁷ After reviewing the situation and touring the site, Design Island was retained by Bethlehem Steel to formulate a conceptual design plan for the project.⁷

Design Island's initial plan for the museum focused on the development of iron and steel making and its contribution to America's development. *Building America: The Great American Steel Exhibition* would borrow heavily from Disney's toolbox of special effects and themed-experience design. Surrounding the attraction would be a collection of adaptive re-use developments including hotels, theatres and retail spaces. A market research group hired by Bethlehem Steel concluded that the site as envisioned in Design Island's plan could draw 3.8 million people annually.⁸

While Disney chose to pass, another nationally recognized name, also just emerging from some public difficulties became involved with the project. The Smithsonian Institution was, in 1994, still recovering from the publicity debacle stemming from its proposed Enola Gay exhibit and was under increasing pressure to take its mission and collections beyond Washington, D.C. In 1996, the Smithsonian responded to this pressure by mounting the *America's Smithsonian* traveling exhibit which took a number of the Smithsonian's most cherished and iconic objects on a tour of the country.

Initially, the Smithsonian was interested in the possibility of a storage area and conservation center for large industrial artifacts. Steven Lubar, Chairman and Curator of the Division of the History and Technology at the National Museum of American History was dispatched to Bethlehem to see the site. Lubar was impressed with the scale of the buildings and of the project as a whole, especially Bethlehem Steel's commitment. He recommended against the conservation and storage labs, but instead encouraged a far

greater involvement in the site, recommending that NMAH work towards founding a museum of industrial history in Bethlehem.⁹

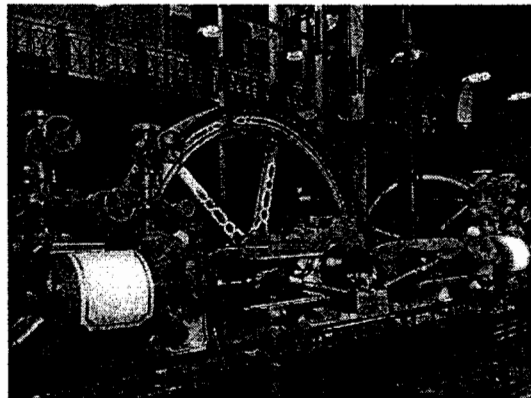
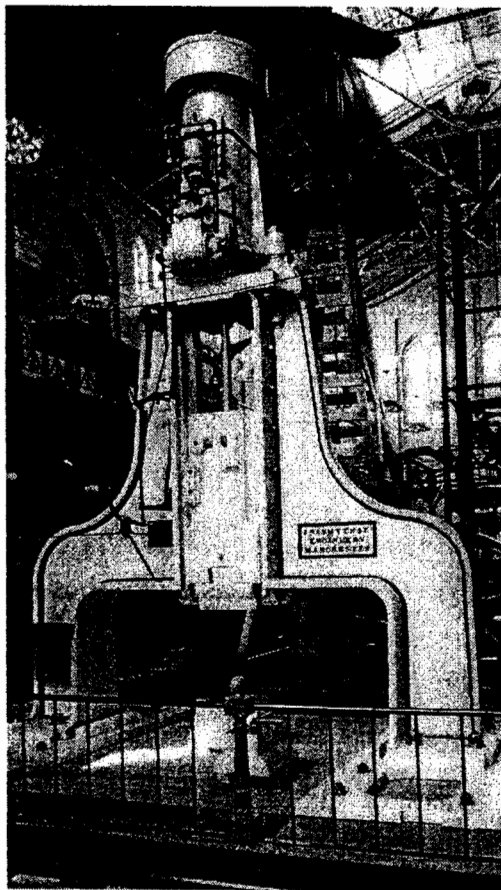
What instead occurred, driven largely by the success of *America's Smithsonian*, was the formation of the Smithsonian Affiliates Program in 1996. Smithsonian Affiliates benefit from being able to use the Smithsonian name and logo. Furthermore they are able to borrow from the Smithsonian's vast collections, as well as benefit from involvement in various other Smithsonian programs, yet still retain complete institutional autonomy. In return, the Affiliates Program allows the Smithsonian to extend its presence beyond Washington DC. Today, the Affiliates Program encompasses over 130 organizations across the country and continues to grow.

The involvement of the Smithsonian shifted the focus of the project from an interactive theme park style attraction about iron and steel to a broadly focused museum of American industry. The National Museum of Industrial History (NMIH) was born and became the Smithsonian Institution's first affiliate organization. The new museum, an entity that existed on paper only, became an institution separate from Bethlehem Steel and retained the services of Steven Lubar and Peter Liebhold from the Smithsonian as consultants along with Jeannette Dunlap as consulting designer. Steven Donches became the chief executive officer of NMIH and president of the Bethlehem Development Corporation, a subsidiary of Bethlehem Steel responsible for overseeing Bethlehem Works.

NMIH's development would be two fold, due in part, to the massive scale envisioned for the museum. Phase 1 would consist of a Preview Center to be located in the 37,000 square foot former Bethlehem Steel electrical shop. The preview center would

serve as a quickly realized fundraising draw that would provide NMIH with an important physical presence on the site and serve as a catalyst for the surrounding development.

The preview center would also house a collection of Smithsonian large industrial artifacts originally displayed at the 1876 Centennial Exposition not exhibited by the Smithsonian since 1976. NMIH, which without a staff, relied heavily on outside consultants and contracted with Historic Bethlehem Incorporated to manage the care of the Smithsonian collection, which remains in storage in Bethlehem to this day.



Nasmyth Steam Hammer, 1851 and Linde-Wolf Ammonia Compressor 1884, Smithsonian Collection



Conceptual Rendering of the 1913 Electrical Shop converted into Exposition Hall.

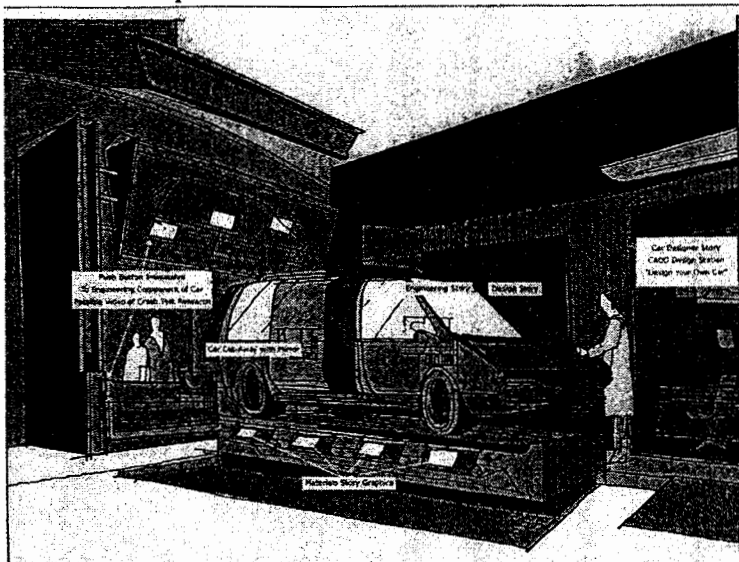
The main museum, NMIH proper, would reside in the Number 2 Machine Shop, a cavernous, over 300,000 square foot, nineteenth-century industrial building that was once one of the largest factory floors in the world. With the preview center, called Exposition Hall included, the two buildings together encompass floor space nearly half the size of the 750,000 square-foot National Museum of American History. Early figures placed the cost of Exposition Hall at 8.25 million, while NMIH would cost nearly ten times that amount.¹⁰

The plans for Exposition Hall included the 1876 collection, an Imax theatre and six kiosks focused on the areas of manufacturing, agriculture, communication, power, and consumer products and an upstairs “Factory Floor.” The Factory Floor would encompass exhibit areas funded by various companies that would show how their products are made. In a setting very similar to Easton’s Crayola Factory crayon making

demonstration, visitors could see firsthand the processing of raw materials into finished products.



Conceptual Rendering of Steel Making and Products and Automobile Design and Engineering exhibits to be located in Exposition Hall.



Funding for the Preview Center would be the first initiative, and its opening was planned for December of 1998. It was hoped that the opening of the preview center would fuel a second phase of fundraising that would allow NMIH to open by 2002. To

attract the large numbers of visitors that would be required to keep NMIH afloat, the museum would also include an interactive theme-park style “Iron and Steel Experience,” which was an outgrowth of the initial *Building America* attraction.

Unfortunately, the project did not gain the momentum that it needed for the 1998 opening of Exposition Hall. Fundraising for the project was slow and it was not until December of 1999 that then Governor Tom Ridge bestowed a long awaited check for 4.5 million dollars in state support for Exposition Hall. By that time the cost of the \$8.25 million preview center had ballooned to near \$11 million, while the cost of NMIH had increased to \$100 million.¹¹

The dawn of the 21st century would bring what Steve Donches calls, “the perfect storm.”¹² The storm that Donches refers to was made up of three parts that had a devastating economic impact on the Bethlehem Works project. The first two were the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001, which amid doubt and fear curtailed a great deal of non-profit giving and sent all levels of government into a frenzy of activity which further exacerbated the second component, cited by Donches as an already sluggish economy. The third and perhaps most devastating blow to the project was the bankruptcy of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation in October of 2001.

Five months prior to the bankruptcy Bethlehem Steel announced it was cutting back its support of Bethlehem Works, which by that time was to be a \$450 million development effort encompassing 160 acres. Even with Exposition Hall still unopened and the start of work on NMIH nowhere in sight, Donches remained confident that the project would materialize.¹³ Despite Bethlehem Steel’s cutbacks, in August of 2001, the project received a \$450,000 grant from the National Propane Gas Foundation. The grant

consisted of \$350,000 for a propane gas exhibit in Exposition Hall and another \$100,000 in unrestricted support. The foundation also pledged \$10,000 in annual support for the exhibit. The first phase of Bethlehem Works, to include a 12-screen cineplex, family entertainment facility, three skating rinks and a plethora of retail shops along with the Exposition Hall (now priced at \$13 million) was to open in 2002. Full of enthusiasm over the renewed energy behind NMIH, Donches remarked, "Make no small plans, the way it's looking the building may not be big enough."¹⁴

"The Perfect Storm" would bring the project's development to a near complete halt. 2002 came and went and by 2003 the cost of Exposition Hall alone had risen to \$15.5 million.¹⁵ In May of 2003 International Steel Group of Pittsburg (ISG) purchased Bethlehem Steel's remaining assets including the Bethlehem plant. ISG quickly entered negotiations to sell the 160-acre Bethlehem Works tract to Delaware Valley Real Estate Investment Trust Fund, a Philadelphia based investment group.

The announcement of ISG's acquisition and its negotiations with Delaware Valley placed the entire Bethlehem Works project in jeopardy and even threatened the continued existence of the Bethlehem plant's historic structures. The once mighty steel giant that had supported the project, even while reporting record losses, was gone, replaced by a new owner who had no ties to the Lehigh Valley and no sentimental feelings about Bethlehem's historic legacy. Donches' remarks in 2003 were of a much different tone than those made just two years earlier, "The bankruptcy of Bethlehem Steel changed everything. If we don't move quickly the story of building Industrial America will be lost forever. Time is our enemy."¹⁶

During the summer of 2003 it was reported that Delaware Valley Real Estate would probably not preserve the No. 2 Machine shop, opting instead to demolish it to make way for new construction unless Donches could show more support for the project. Even State Representative T.J. Rooney, openly criticized the project asking, “How long should the taxpayers of Bethlehem be expected to wait for this site to start producing jobs and tax revenues?” and stating that not demolishing the No. 2 Machine Shop would, “irreparably hinder the ability to redevelop that property.”¹⁷

During what is certain to be remembered as one of the darkest and most uncertain periods for the preservation of Bethlehem Steel’s historic structures, there was a groundswell of support from numerous sources both local and abroad. Amy Senape whose father worked in the No. 2 Machine Shop for more than three decades, and her husband Mike Kramer, whose grandfather shuttled steel workers in and out of the plant during WWII, formed Save Our Steel (SOS). SOS is a grassroots effort to draw attention to the site and to encourage concerned citizens to contact their representatives in support of its preservation. SOS’ website, www.saveoursteel.org remains one of the best sources of information about continuing developments regarding the plant.

Another organization to grow out of an interest in and concern over Bethlehem Steel’s legacy is the Steelworkers’ Archives Formed in 2001, by producer/videographer Billie Nickell Smith and photographer/videographer Bruce Ward. The Steelworkers’ Archives began as an effort to record the first-hand accounts of Bethlehem Steel workers, a group with understandably mixed feelings about their former employer. The eventual goal of the Steelworkers’ Archives is the creation of a permanent community center in Southside Bethlehem that will house the recordings and related artifacts.

The Southside Historical Society was founded in 1985, years before the Bethlehem Works project was conceived. Founder Joan Campion was dismayed at the lack of attention paid to the history of Southside Bethlehem. Campion remarks that a fellow volunteer at a northside historical organization once commented, “nothing historical ever happened (in Southside) there.”¹⁸ Ironically, it is this once overlooked history that is seen as one of the region’s most important preservation efforts, and has become an important key to Bethlehem’s future.

In addition to support for Bethlehem Steel’s preservation from individuals and organizations within Bethlehem, both south and northside, there has been strong support from outside of Bethlehem. Among others, Hugh Moore Park and Museum Historian Lance Metz has made considerable effort to have the site recognized as a National Historic Landmark. Two advocacy groups, Preservation Pennsylvania and The National Trust for Historic Preservation included the Bethlehem plant in their listings of “most endangered” historic places of 2004.

Another important organization to support the preservation of the plant is the Mid-Atlantic Regional Center for Humanities (MARCH). The Rutgers University-based organization was formed to develop strategies for civic revitalization through collaboration between various scholarly, community and government entities.¹⁹ MARCH provides teaching and training opportunities at Rutgers University’s Camden campus and serves as a communications link between various individuals and organizations across the Mid-Atlantic region via its website.²⁰ Visitors to MARCH’s website can access, news, case studies, lesson plans and forums related to the humanities in the region.

In March of 2004 a meeting was convened at the Kemmerer Museum of Decorative Arts in Bethlehem to discuss the uncertain fate of the Bethlehem plant and to formulate a plan of action to secure its future. In attendance were meeting organizers from MARCH and HBI as well as representatives from; South Bethlehem Historical Society, Save Our Steel, the Steelworkers Archive, The Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Bethlehem Mayor, John Callahan's office, the South Street Seaport Museum in New York City, Sloss Furnaces in Birmingham, Alabama, various community organizations and Steve Donches, representing NMIH. The meeting possessed an almost palpable sense of urgency, bordering on desperation as various individuals expressed their concerns and visions for the site. While the most immediate concern was how to get a commitment from ISG that it would not endanger the five iconic blast furnaces and not seek to raze other historically important structures, Donches was quick to point out that the Bethlehem Works plan remained a sound one and that it should not be abandoned even though it had so far, failed to bear fruit.

One of the important results of the meeting was a 7-page vision statement for the Bethlehem plant called, Vision and Vitality: Bethlehem After the Steel. The statement, described as a "vision of community development based on adaptive re-use" includes aesthetic, economic, civic and historic interest into a single encompassing effort detailed as follows,

"The renewal of the plant is a celebration of this community's future, built upon the honoring of its past. Bethlehem can continue to build a sustainable economy and offer satisfying lives to its citizens through

rational, future oriented embrace of adaptive re-use. Adaptive re-use has proven itself over and over, and we can demonstrate its effectiveness with peculiar power in Bethlehem's high visibility setting. By embracing the centrality of industrial history to the city and the region and adopting a strategic approach to adaptive re-use of the site, Bethlehem can multiply its sources of economic and cultural enterprise, strengthen its schools and neighborhoods, embrace its diverse population and preserve its unique identity."²¹

The MARCH vision also announced the creation of a coalition of concerned organizations and community members who would advocate the vision to state and federal legislators (hopefully enlisting their aid), developers, the media and public at large. The coalition would also work towards increasing the public's role in deciding the future to ensure that the re-use of the site meets Bethlehem's community development goals. Beyond advocacy and community involvement centered on the Bethlehem site, the vision called for shared involvement and partnership building on a regional level that would pursue the organizing principles of, "...Building on the authenticity of place, including regional and national interpretive content, developing socially oriented education at all levels, and promoting pervasive community involvement."²²

Over the spring and summer of 2004 numerous events were held to promote the preservation effort, including community forums, and a Historic and Cultural Festival that included bus tours of the plant, opening it up to the public for the first time since its closing. The primary purpose of the festival was to raise awareness for the Steelworkers

Archive, which co-sponsored the festival along with the Pennsylvania Federation of Injured Workers.

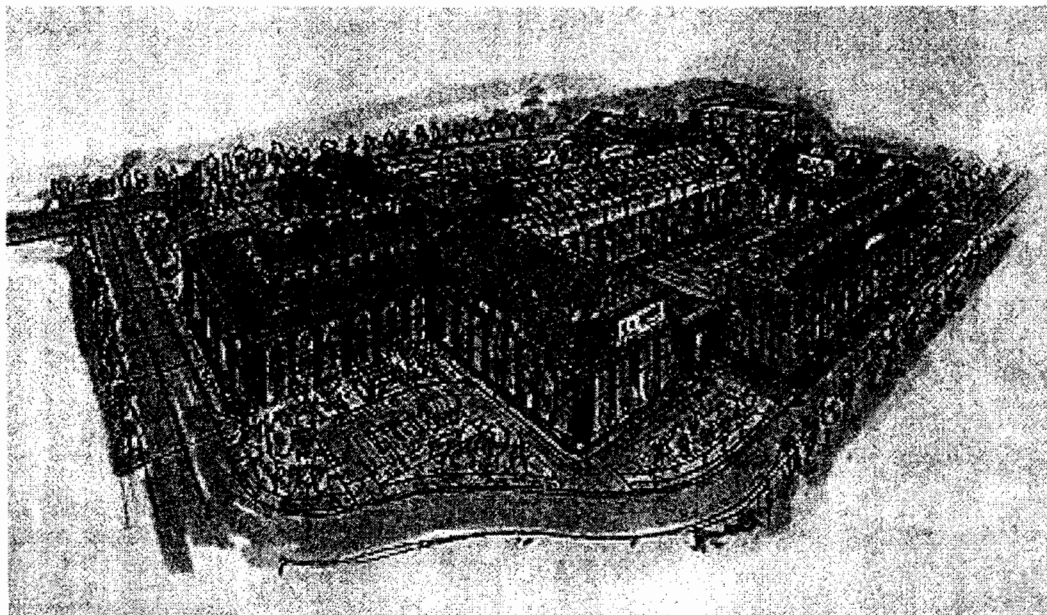
In addition to the plant tours, the festival also marked the opening of Stanley Franz's one man show called The 28 Inch Mill, written by his father, 30 year Bethlehem Steel veteran, Robert Franz. In the play, Stanley Franz played Karl Yoder, a composite of many individuals that his father met during his 30-year tenure, who, in his later years reminisces about his earlier days at the plant. Despite positive reviews from audiences many of the dates scheduled for the show were canceled due to lack of ticket sales.

Late 2004 the cavalry arrived, bringing renewed hope and a fair share of controversy. A group calling itself BethWorks Now purchased 140 acres of the Bethlehem plant from ISG, paying just over \$3 million. At that time, partners in BethWorks Now included New Jersey attorney Michael Perrucci and New York attorney Richard Fischbein along with Jeff Gural, Barry Gosin and James Kuhn, principals of Newmark and Co. Real Estate of New York City, one of the largest independent real estate companies in the country with over 9 million square feet of property in New York City. While plans for the purchase were publicly known six months prior, the September announcement of the purchase filled many with renewed optimism, especially considering that BethWorks Now partner Richard Fischbein stated that the group was interested in following significant parts of the original Bethlehem Works development blueprint for the site. At a press conference to announce the purchase, State Representative T. J. Rooney and city council president Michael Schweder stated that they had been assured by BethWorks Now that preservation of many of the historic structures including the No. 2 Machine Shop were top priority.²³

It seemed that Bethlehem would finally get its due, that the blast furnaces and other important structures would be preserved, that commercial redevelopment would reawaken the sleeping giant, that a museum honoring the men and women who helped build America would finally come to fruition. While Bethlehem Works established a commitment to all of these goals, it brought another development goal to the table that was not part of the original Bethlehem Works plan. Included in the mix of new commercial space, adaptive reuse buildings, and preserved structures would be a \$350 dollar slot machine parlor.

In 2004 Pennsylvania's legislature passed Act 71, a law that allows for the placement of 61,000 slot machines at 14 facilities statewide. Money generated from a 34 percent tax on the parlor's gross revenues would be used to relieve property taxes. Seven of the 14 gambling licenses granted will go to racetracks; five will go to non-track parlors with the final two going to resorts. Of the five non-track parlors, two are mandated for Philadelphia and one for Pittsburgh. While BethWorks Now has yet to be awarded one of the two remaining licenses, many consider it a strong candidate to receive one because of the proposed development to surround it and its close proximity to New York and northern New Jersey, which are expected to be prominent sources of out of state income. In December of 2004, it was announced that Las Vegas Sands Inc. paid BethWorks Now \$2.25 million to be involved in the development, promising another \$2 million if the site is awarded one of the licenses. If the license is awarded for a slots parlor in Bethlehem, the operator of the parlor will be obligated to pay a \$10 million in annual host fee to the City of Bethlehem and another \$10 million to Northampton County.

In late January of 2005, Michael Perrucci revealed his group's plan for the \$879.4 million dollar redevelopment of the Bethlehem Steel plant. The plan included a hotel with 500-1,000 rooms, a 10 to 12 screen cinema, 400-600,000 square feet of retail space, 1,200 apartments, a 5,000 seat concert hall, a 77 million dollar arts park and a 300,000 square foot slots parlor that would attract 3.7 million gamblers spending \$230 million annually.²⁴ Bethlehem's iconic blast furnaces would be painted and dramatically lit. Also included in the plan was a verbal commitment to provide space for NMIH, which currently owns only the proposed Exposition Hall. Space for the museum is planned for the Number 2 Machine Shop, but the massive structure will also feature apartments and retail space. All of the new structures that are built will be evocative of the architectural character of the historic structures that are preserved, giving the entire area a unified feel that harkens back to the days of Bethlehem Steel (albeit far more manicured).

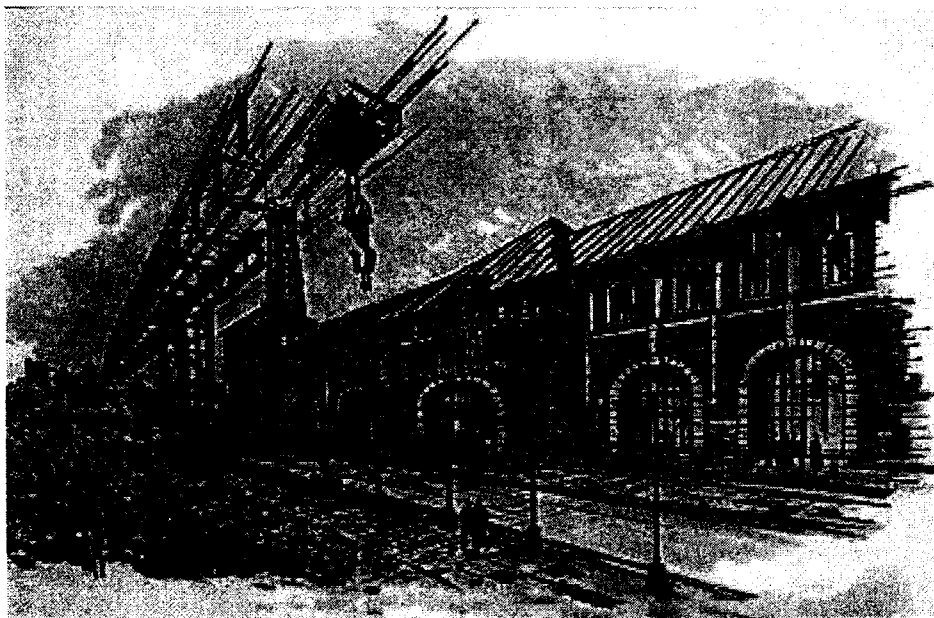


Conceptual rendering of the 19th century Bessemer building converted into a community marketplace.

At the meeting Perrucci stressed the importance of the slots parlor as a catalyst for the entire project stating,

“I couldn’t care less about gambling. But what I do care about is the gaming piece here would basically drive a five-year build-out of everything you see here. In order to subsidize ArtsQuest Piece (Arts park)...the museum... and not knock down some very beautiful buildings, we need to justify the economic model so it works.”²⁵

Perrucci also stressed that without the gambling component the project could take four to five times as long to realize.



Conceptual Rendering of Bethlehem Slot Machine Parlor underneath the massive ore yard crane.

Stating that BethWorks wanted feedback from the community on its plan, Perrucci repeated his presentation for more than 200 people at the Cathedral Church of the Nativity in south Bethlehem a week later. Northampton County District Attorney John M. Morganelli cited statistical evidence about increased crime rates due to gambling

and asked Perrucci to address his (shared with many others) concerns. Perrucci responded by stating that one of the reasons that Las Vegas Sands Inc. was chosen to develop the parlor is the company's track record of keeping crime rates low in communities in which they operate casinos. Perrucci also pledged to create a job-training program so that many of the 9,600 jobs to be created by the development can go to local residents.

Since Perrucci's initial unveiling of the plan, numerous editorials and op ed columns appeared in local papers, arguing both for and against gambling in Bethlehem. Some are concerned that gambling will ruin their "Christmas City" and that while gambling can offer quick money, it can not foster long-term community development. The proximity of a number of colleges and financially troubled areas is cited as another concern, as members of these communities that can least afford gambling may become its most frequent patrons. Others see the good that can be accomplished with gambling dollars and argue that missing out on this opportunity (especially if the parlors ended up somewhere else in the Lehigh Valley) would be a tragic mistake.

Since its initial meeting in 2004, the coalition to preserve the Bethlehem Steel plant has evolved into an organization called Friends of the Steel and counts the South Bethlehem Historical Society, Steelworkers Archive, MARCH, Battle of Homestead Foundation, PA Labor History Society, Northampton Community College, Muhlenberg College History Department, Sloss Furnace, Friends of the Highline, Concordia Lutheran Church, St. Anne's Parish of Bethlehem and numerous private individuals as members. The group continues to advocate the public's role in the redevelopment plans of the site and in late 2004 the group organized a series of public forums, in which citizens could voice their opinions on the developments and have those opinions documented. The final

report from the six forums was shared with members of the community, developers and local government and is available online.²⁶ The report included a list of eight principal concerns and overall responses distilled from the raw data collected in the forums.

Those concerns were:

1. *Preserving the structures to maintain the look and feel of the sight:*

The redevelopment should honor workers' accomplishments by maintaining the individual look and feel of the site through the rehabilitation of existing structures for new uses.

2. *Integrating the redeveloped areas with the community.*

The development process and final outcome must be compatible with and integrated into the existing community.

3. *Creating mixed uses so the site is populated night and day.*

The redevelopment should incorporate mixed uses that will support daytime and nighttime activity.

4. *Making room for open space, recreation and pedestrian access.*

Any redevelopment plan should include open space, outdoor recreation activities and be welcoming to all including pedestrian access.

5. *Creating a means to learn from the site.*

Plans and methods for visitors to learn from the site should be included.

6. *Providing innovative transportation facilities.*

The site contains the key to an innovative transportation hub for the Lehigh Valley.

7. *Welcoming sustained community involvement.*

The community wants to continue to be involved in the redevelopment process through all its steps and beyond.

8. *Determining the role of gambling in the environment.*

The reaction to the possibility of gambling is mixed, with strong opinions "for" and "against" it.²⁷

Assuming that Bethlehem receives one of the two gambling licenses that are up for grabs, BethWorks Now will have a hard time convincing those who are opposed to gambling that the road to community enhancing prosperity is paved with slot tokens. The traditional two-way argument between preservationists and developers has broadened into a multifaceted discussion over what is best for the community of Bethlehem, what are its wants and needs, what are its terms for achieving those wants and needs and who really benefits and in what way?

The effects that the introduction of Gambling will have on the city of Bethlehem and the surrounding area are both somewhat predictable and yet still uncertain. In 1997, prompted by a substantial increase in the number of states legalizing some form of gambling activity, Congress voted to create the National Gambling Impact Study Commission and charged it to conduct a comprehensive study of the social and economic impacts of gambling. The Commission's study focused on these impacts on local, state and federal levels as well as Native American tribal areas and considered gambling in many forms, including casinos, internet sites, racetracks, and state lotteries. Over the course of two years testimony was received from hundreds of individuals and two research studies were conducted, one by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC)

and another one by the National Research Council (NRC). NORC conducted a national survey of gambling behavior while NRC undertook a thorough review of the available literature on problem and pathological gambling.

Drawing from these two bodies of research the Commission concluded that between 1.2 and 1.5 percent of the population meet the criteria to be considered lifetime pathological gamblers, while between 1.5 and 3.9 percent qualify as problem gamblers.²⁸ If we assume that the Lehigh Valley follows these percentages, then the Lehigh Valley can expect approximately 21,000 of its more than 500,000 residents to fall into one of these two groups. This total falls short of the number of problem and pathological gamblers that would be attracted to Bethlehem as part of the 3.7 million visitors that Micheal Perrucci estimates will flock to the city each year.

When examining the financial and personal difficulties faced by problem and pathological gamblers, NRC's report cited divorce, domestic violence, child abuse, neglect in addition to criminal activity, loss of employment and bankruptcy.²⁹ The ripple effects that are felt by the Friends and Family of Problem and Pathological Gamblers are easily imagined, but there are financial costs that society incurs from these problems as well. These costs take the form of job losses, unemployment benefits, welfare benefits, poor physical and mental health, and gambling treatment. NORC estimated these costs to society at \$1,200 annually for each pathological gambler and \$715 per year for each problem gambler, nationally these costs total 5 billion annually.³⁰

Testimonies heard by the commission varied considerably. Indiana State Senator Earline Rogers described the city of Gary's efforts to recover from its defunct steel industry that left 70,000 unemployed, stating that after casinos arrived, the city began to

“turn itself around.”³¹ Adding to the testimony was the account of Calvin Chandler, who moved from job to job in the struggling steel town until being hired as a bartender at the local casino which enabled him to support his daughter and complete college.³² The commission concluded that the introduction of casino operations into economically depressed area can create many badly needed full-time entry-level jobs, but there is a flipside to this benefit. Many small business owners testified to a loss of their businesses when casinos opened in their area.

This is especially apparent in the case of Atlantic City, which legalized casinos in 1976. One person testified that in 1978, Atlantic City boasted over 300 taverns, while in 1997 only 66 remained.³³ In 1998, Atlantic City boasted an unemployment rate of 12.7 percent, significantly above the rest of the nation despite two decades of gambling.³⁴ Conversely, The New Jersey Casino Control Board Commission testified that the casino industry had generated in \$717 million for redevelopment projects in Atlantic City, including, among other things historic restorations.³⁵

The redevelopment of the Bethlehem Steel Plant, driven by the introduction of gambling, will no doubt draw visitors and much needed dollars to the city, but at what cost? One prediction, based on Atlantic City’s development history, is that the massive development will concentrate economic growth within the plant area and exclude many of the privately owned businesses of the surrounding areas from reaping much of the benefits. The restaurants, cafes and shops of northside Bethlehem, and in recent years, emerging businesses on the southside, have experienced a measure of “post-steel” success. One can expect that the retail shops and eateries that will be found in the redeveloped steel plant will be corporate entities drawn by the promise of large crowds.

The question is can businesses like the privately operated Bethlehem Brew Works restaurant and Moravian Book shop (now at the epicenter of Bethlehem's tourist area) flourish in an environment that will no doubt draw considerable attention away from the downtown area? One can expect that southside Bethlehem's arts, culture and retail scene, which is less well established than its northside counterpart, will be even more sensitive to this shift despite its close proximity to the new development.

Residents of Bethlehem remain divided. Though the BethWorks Now project will certainly bring jobs to Bethlehem, some southside residents are concerned that they will be pushed out (likely into nearby Allentown) by the influx of new residents moving into the over 1,200 residences planned for the site.³⁶ Others are concerned over the fact that as of May 2005, Las Vegas Sands Inc. became the controlling partner of BethWorks Now, placing the fate of the plant once again in the hands of outsiders with considerable shareholder obligations and no personal connection to the city's heritage.³⁷ A survey of 414 Lehigh Valley residents conducted in the spring of 2005 found that 48% percent of those surveyed support having gambling in Bethlehem while 47% oppose it.

While debates over gambling continue in Bethlehem and the state's capital, with a challenge to Act 71 before the Supreme Court, NMIH is forging ahead with renewed vigor. On March 25 a press conference was held to announce the start of construction on the museum. Over the last eight years, the museum has been reinvisioned considerably. Exposition Hall, once slated as a welcome center for the museum is now planned as the museum itself. There is a hope, and at least a verbal commitment, by BethWorks Now, that the museum will be afforded additional space as it is needed, but plans for a \$250 million museum are off the table. According to Steve Donches, NMIH will have a

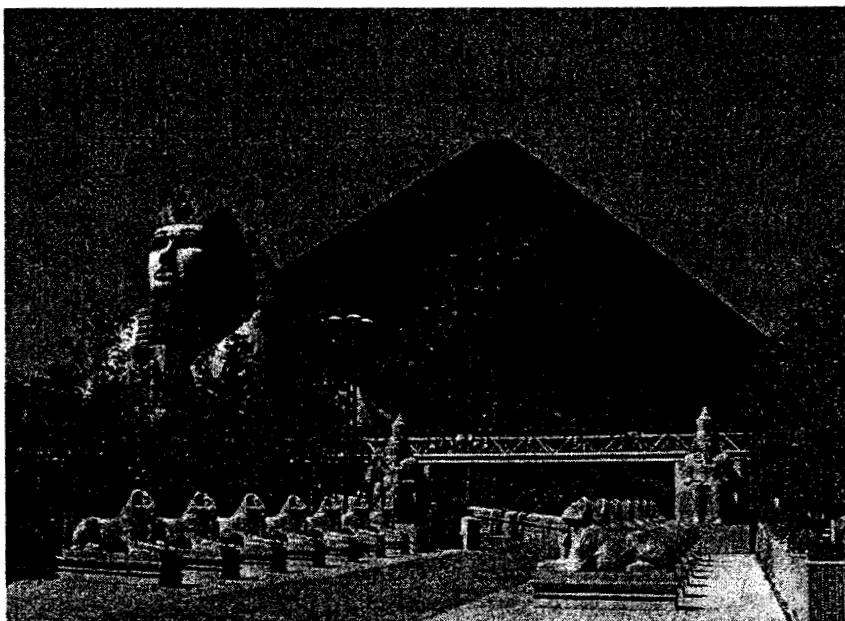
continuing role in the interpretation of the site and will work with BethWorks Now to build an authentic sense of place that will reach beyond the museum's front doors.

Whether or not Las Vegas Sands will honor the verbal commitments that were made prior to their obtaining majority control of BethWorks Now remains unknown.

It bears mentioning that this is not the first time that Las Vegas Sands Inc. has been involved with a project linking gambling and museum operations. Las Vegas Sands opened the Venetian Hotel in 1999, which became home to both the Guggenheim Las Vegas and the Guggenheim Hermitage. While the Guggenheim Las Vegas closed only after only 15 months of operation, the Guggenheim Hermitage remains open and continues to host so called "block buster" exhibitions drawn from some of the finest and largest collections in the world. Both satellite museums were part of the Venetians' and Las Vegas' efforts to create visitor diversity by drawing cultural tourists in addition to gamblers.³⁸

Two factors in the comparison between Las Vegas Sand's Bethlehem plans and Las Vegas plans are "spectacle" and "location." Las Vegas is largely built on spectacle. Where else can one go to see the great architectural icons of the world lit with brilliant intensity on a 24-hour basis? Arguably a large part of the allure of a "blockbuster" art exhibition is also spectacle. While archaeological scholarship and the authenticity of its artifacts may separate the Guggenheim Hermitage's latest exhibit, "Quest for Immortality: Treasures of Ancient Egypt", from its Las Vegas neighbor, the 30 story, pyramid-shaped Luxor Las Vegas Resort Hotel and Casino, they are arguably appealing to similar craving for "awe" on the part of the visitor. The factor of "location" is worth noting because both Las Vegas museums were located within the resort itself as a means

to attract visitors to the resort complex. One can argue that “full service” resorts casinos are in the business of not only attracting visitors, but keeping them within the resort, where they can dine, be entertained and gamble.



The Luxor Hotel and Resort Casino (above) and one of the 2600 year-old artifacts featured in the *Quest for Immortality* exhibit (below)



The pertinent questions are: Will an audience that is drawn by gambling have an interest in visiting NMIH and will an establishment that is paying millions of dollars in location fees encourage visitors to go outside its own doors? Will the spectacle provided by NMIH be able to compete with the one offered by the resort venues or will it be enough for visitors to be surrounded by the adapted architectural trappings of the former

plant and read about the blast furnaces in the hotel brochure as they view them from their hotel window? How will NMIH stand out now that it is no longer the focal point of the development and will it have the marketing dollars to compete with its neighbor? The answers will no doubt be played out as the relationship between NMIH and BethWorks Now continues to develop.

NMIH is coming out of 2004 with \$1.5 million in fundraising and the start of construction on the building releases more than 1 million in donations tied to construction. By the time the \$500,000 roof is complete, another 1 million will need to be raised to replace the building's windows. Another 3 million in fundraising would be required to complete the interior of the museum and release the \$4.5 million in state money awarded by Governor Tom Ridge back in 1999. Steve Donches is preparing to take fundraising for NMIH to a national level in order to make up the funds still needed. Given the ups and downs of the project over the last eight years, and the funds still needed to be raised, it is understandable that he is not willing to set a date for when NMIH will finally open its doors.

Interpretively, NMIH has a vast and complex subject to try and effectively encapsulate within its walls. With its emphasis on the industries that, as its development brochure says, "built America" it would logically be important to place Bethlehem Steel's growth and decline in the larger national context of American industrial history. Additionally, the story of American industry may seem somewhat incomplete without placing it in an even larger global context, in which America rests in many people's eyes as a largely "postindustrial" nation.

In an essay titled “Industrial Museums and the History of Deindustrialization”, Mike Wallace expresses his objection to terms like “deindustrialization” and “postindustrial”,

“The movement from “pre” to “post” has no subject, it just happens, presumably the result of imminent tendencies working themselves out”.³⁹

Later adding that,

“..as historic development is imminent so is it ineluctable. To some this inevitability is sad, A Spenglerian saga of decline. To others it is a source of Spencerian satisfaction: Despite the anguish and cost, it is all a manifestation of “progress.”

Finally Wallace states that.

“Industry, after all, has not been surpassed, it has just moved. Why not reconceptualize our subject not as deindustrialization but as capital flight—the story of how corporations have sidestepped organized labor, and pressures to pay their share of social costs, by moving to more quiescent pastures, first to the southern -United States and then abroad in a restless search for areas willing to provide tax breaks, cheap land, or the muscle needed to repress the economic and political organization of labor. What has emerged—seen in a planetary perspective is not a deindustrialization of society, but a global re-division of labor.”⁴⁰

While Wallace is quite ardent in his indictment of American industry, he illuminates the fact that how NMIH deals with human agency will be a complex issue. The museum will need to delve into some fairly dark subject matter to

make the story complete. In addition to celebrating the inventors and inventions that, “[made] America’s quality of life better than any other in the world”,⁴¹ NMIH will need to tackle labor exploitation and the long (often bloody) battle for workers rights. In discussing America’s contemporary landscape NMIH will need to deal with job loss to overseas markets and contemporary trade and labor issues. Finally, perhaps the most sensitive issue on a local scale, NMIH will need to address the reasons why Bethlehem Steel is no more.

Many plant workers and their descendants will no doubt look at the plant with the same powerful emotions that others view Gettysburg or Ellis Island. The use of the Bethlehem Steel plant as a sort of memorial has been one of the driving forces behind the grass roots effort to save the site. Save our Steel’s website posts a list of the names of the over 650 people who died in the plant and asks, “Do they not deserve more than a shopping mall on the site where they worked and died?”⁴²

In the end, the industrial history of America may be as contentious as war, slavery, or westward expansion. At times, NMIH will no doubt find itself on the defensive while walking a tightrope between social historians who may balk at an optimistically celebratory interpretation and others who will be offended by any condemnation of America’s industrial past. At the very least, the presence of a “get rich quick” slot machine parlor on the same site as a shrine to American ingenuity and diligence will complicate both the questions posed by visitors and the answers furnished by NMIH’s curators.

The ongoing story of NMIH and the other institutions featured in the thesis provide a glimpse into the complex relationship of social, economic, and political actions

and consequences associated with museums and their surrounding communities. In attempting to untangle and understand this multi-tiered network it is useful to draw upon the work of sociologist Volker Kirchberg, who presents what he calls, “a taxonomy of functions, or roles of museums in urban settings.”⁴³ He separates these functions into manifest and latent functions and further divides them into functions of firstspace, secondspace, and thirdspace.⁴⁴ Firstspace, refers to museums in the sense of urban architectural planning via physical means, (i.e. their ability to organize urban spaces), while secondspace refers to the mental environment of a city, through very symbolic means (i.e. museums as urban icons). Thirdspace refers to a political context, one of government institutions, regulations and appropriations. Museums function in all of these spaces while producing, as Kirchberg puts it, “complex social consequences.”⁴⁵

Considering some of the institutions included in this thesis, it is easy to see how the historic structures of HBI provide a “historic nucleus” for northside Bethlehem or how Two Rivers Landing provides a prominent cornerstone to Center Square, Easton, as each institution organizes the physical space around them. One of the latent effects of museums in the firstspace is the creation of exclusionary spaces where certain elements of the public feel more or less welcome than others. This exclusiveness is a common obstacle for museums to overcome in their efforts to serve their public. One of the main concerns over the redevelopment of the Bethlehem Steel plant is the creation of an environment that will exclude members of the Bethlehem community that once worked there if for instance, admission costs were too high or if not enough public spaces.

The symbolic context of second space, is where the museum, via the manifest function of city marketing becomes a sign of the legendary “phoenix,” rising from the

“ashes” of urban economic deterioration.⁴⁶ All of the Lehigh Valley museums covered in this thesis have at one time or another been cast in this role of this latent function.

Furthermore it is in this space that museums provide as Kirchberg puts it, “a dose of seniority for urban entertainment projects, “high culture” seriousness that helps convince potential investors, municipal agencies and skeptical consumers of an entertainment district project.”⁴⁷

One can certainly see the National Canal Museum’s role in the TRL development as an example of this function. BethWorks Now’s assurance that additional space for NMIH will be provided and its dedication to adaptive reuse no doubt makes the prospect of a slots parlor somewhat more palatable in what is the biggest “phoenix” the Lehigh Valley has ever been promised. Kirchberg also puts forth, that in the second space museums become symbols for economic vitality that serve to attract “qualified professionals and future-oriented companies.”⁴⁸ Kirchberg’s assertion is supported by efforts of the Lehigh Valley Economic Development Corporations to attract new business and to utilize the region’s heritage attractions as tools for urban development.

In the third space museums are centers of political activity and power negotiation. Hugh Moore Park, a public park owned by the city of Easton, also acts as a partner in Two Rivers Landing. It is an example of a museum (like many others) that is thoroughly entrenched in the thirdspace. As a latent function of the thirdspace, museums often become meeting points for social and political elites and both fuel and become consequences of the politics of urban growth. Once again, the Bethlehem plant stands out in this regard as place where considerable political muscle is being flexed, especially in light of state gambling legislation. Kirchberg also draws attention to the “new

museology” functioning in thirdspace to make museums “political institutions for the emancipation of a formerly neglected population to become the new core audience of the museums.”⁴⁹ A shift in ideology by the Lehigh County Historical Society to access underserved audiences in Allentown and public access and interpretive issues relating to the Bethlehem Steel plant raised by MARCH and later Friends of the Steel are examples of the “new museology” in action.

Kirchbergs article provides a valuable framework to understand the intricate web of activities, exchanges and pressures that revolve around museums. This line of reasoning can easily be expanded beyond the limits of the Lehigh Valley’s cities to encompass the region as a whole. On a regional scale we can think of the Lehigh Valley’s pathways (bike trails, canals, rivers, highways), markers (highway signs, historic markers), and destinations (museums and historic sites), as a regional organizational functioning of the firstspace. The region’s rich history tied to its tourist industry become symbols within secondspace, while reliance on a shared state political structure as well as that of two counties, and reliance on many of the same funding sources can be seen to take place in the political realm of thirdspace.

Applying Kirchberg’s taxonomy to the Bethlehem Steel plant again, the manifest and latent function of NMIH that have an impact on the surrounding plant redevelopment and city overall can be extended (although intermingled with other forces) to include the physical changes to Bethlehem and the region via new roadway development, traffic pattern and the creation of a prominent new destination where currently there is none. The Bethlehem Steel plant as the “phoenix” of the region has already been mentioned as a powerful symbol of secondspace, and NMIH (although no longer central to the

redevelopment) will no doubt be a large part of that symbol's power. Finally, the plant's redevelopment will have far reaching political and economic impacts reaching beyond Bethlehem into neighboring communities.

¹ Walton, Margaret Sharp. *Museum in the Making: Creating the National Museum of Industrial History*. unpublished MA thesis, Philadelphia: PA: Temple University. 2000, 18.

² Ibid., 12..

³ Ibid., 16.

⁴ Ibid., 19.

⁵ Ibid., 19.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid., 20.

⁸ Ibid., 24.

⁹ Ibid., 32.

¹⁰ Ibid., 48.

¹¹ Ibid., 69.

¹² Interview with Steve Donches conducted by author. February 10, 2005.

¹³ Assad, Matt. "Steel Forced to Cut Back Extras: Beth Works Museum on Back Burner". *The Allentown Morning Call*. June 8, 2001, A 1.

¹⁴ Assad, Matt. "Propane Foundation Gives to Bethlehem Works Museum". *The Allentown Morning Call*. August, 2001, B 7.

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¹⁶ Assad, Matt. "Preservation of Steel's Past a Race Against Time". *The Allentown Morning Call*. August 10, 2003, A 1.

¹⁷ Assad, Matt. "Steel Landmark, Museum Site May Fall". *The Allentown Morning Call*. August 14, 2003, A 1.

¹⁸ Campion, Joan. *The Southside Irregulars: The Story of the South Bethlehem Historical Society*. unpublished essay available at www.southbethlehemhistorical.society.org.

¹⁹ www.march.rutgers.edu/

²⁰ <http://www.march.rutgers.edu/>

²¹ *Vision and Vitality: Bethlehem after the Steel: A vision of community development based on adoptive of historic portions of Bethlehem Steel Corporation's industrial plant*. unpublished essay available at www.march.rutgers.edu.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ayers, Chuck. "Incredible Step for Bethlehem Works". *The Allentown Morning Call*. September 15, 2004, A 1.

²⁴ Assad, Matt & Josh Drobnik. "BethWorks Now Boss Details \$879.4 Million Design". *The Allentown Morning Call*. January 26, 2005, A 1.

²⁵ Ibid.

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- ²⁶ www.friendsofthesteel.org
- ²⁷ *Community Visions for the Redevelopment of the Former Bethlehem Steel Site*, unpublished survey available at www.friendsofthesteel.org, 2-6.
- ²⁸ *National Gambling Impact Study Commission Report*, unpublished report available at <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/ngisc/index.html>, Washington, DC. 1999. 4-5.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 4-13.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 4-14.
- ³¹ Ibid., 7-6.
- ³² Ibid., 7-7.
- ³³ Ibid., 7-5.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 7-11.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 7-17.
- ³⁶ Drobnik, Josh. "South Side Slots Favored by Region". *The Allentown Morning Call*. May 12, 2005.
- ³⁷ Bresswein, Kurt. "Vegas Player Raises Stakes in Steel Plan" *The Express Times*. May 4, 2005.
- ³⁸ Brasile, Jeanne, *The Thomas Krens Effect: The Guggenheim in Bilbao and Las Vegas*. unpublished MA thesis. South Orange, NJ. Seton Hall University, 2004, 34.
- ³⁹ Wallace Mike. *Mickey Mouse History: and Other Essays on American Memory*. Philadelphia PA: Temple University Press, 1996, 92.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid., 93.
- ⁴¹ Donches, Stephen. NMIH development brochure.
- ⁴² www.saveoursteel.org
- ⁴³ Kirchberg, Volker. "Categorizing Urban Tasks: Functions of Museums in a Post Industrial City". *Curator*. Altamira Press Lanham, MD. Vol: 46, No. 1, 60.
- ⁴⁴ Ibid., 63-64.
- ⁴⁵ Ibid., 60.
- ⁴⁶ Ibid., 68.
- ⁴⁷ Ibid., 68.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid., 68.
- ⁴⁹ Ibid., 71-72.

Conclusion

While it looks old, heritage is actually something new. Heritage is a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past. Heritage thus defined depends on display to give dying economies and dead sites a second life as exhibitions of themselves.

Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett
Destination Culture: Tourism
Museums, and Heritage.

Given the choice, we'd rather make steel at a profit, and let you see the real thing. But, that having passed then the next best option is preserve what you can, and tell it in a story fashion.

Steve Donches
Interview with Author
February 10, 2005

Despite an overall focus on days past, heritage organizations are important players in the events of the present and the outcomes of the future. That is not to say that this importance equates to control. Financial burdens, responsibilities to collections and constituencies, and larger private and government initiatives all effect the way organizations function. This relationship is reciprocal, as museums have both deliberate and inadvertent effects on their surrounding communities.

If there is one overriding theme that I have tried to stress, whether it be the region's history, the economic impact of historic preservation and the tourism industry, or new development it is an overarching interconnectedness between a complex network of elements. Heritage organizations (while rarely if ever in a position of complete control) are closely tied to many phenomenon (physical, social, economic and political) occurring in the region. In short, heritage organizations (like all museums) serve many masters (willingly, unwillingly and occasionally unknowingly). The most successful organizations will be the ones that can negotiate with many different forces while

fostering a dedication to inclusive public service. This public constituency includes both members of the community and visitors from abroad who feed into the heritage tourism industry. While tourism can provide much needed income to an organization, I do not believe that being a tourist attraction is one of the fundamental indicators of success. Rather, I would reason that an institution that is demonstrably effective at serving its local constituency can be considered a valuable success, while an institution that is solely a tourist draw is missing out on one of its most vital missions, to serve its surrounding community.

As the Lehigh Valley continues to grow, the farmlands that once separated the region's cities and smaller boroughs and townships, (Northampton, Bath, Nazareth, Bushkill) continue to shrink with each new development that is built. The population of the Lehigh Valley (as mentioned in chapter 1) is skyrocketing. Like the arrival of European settlers and the later emergence of heavy industries, these developments are irrevocably altering the character of the region. This presents a radical change for the region's heritage organizations as well, not only by contributing to Lehigh Valley's ongoing story but by introducing a large segment of the population who perceive little or no direct connection to the region's past. In addition to the new constituency there are segments of the region's three cities that remain underserved.

I do not propose to indoctrinate the masses, but rather I urge heritage organizations to invite both audiences to engage with the region's history and to take ownership of it. Heritage organizations in the Lehigh Valley that wish to remain relevant to changing audiences will need to build exhibits and programs upon a foundation of similarities between historical periods and peoples rather than differences. Furthermore

the stories that are told should be tied into the context of the larger American story, if not a global narrative. Author Robert R. Archibald describes this hope for history,

“Perhaps public history can offer a source of identity for people and their places, a wellspring of community and an incubator of democracy, a consciousness of connection and responsibility to those who came before and those who will follow.”¹

This somewhat utopian idea may not be as far fetched as it sounds. Quite frankly, it is this dedication to a better community that separates museums from commercial theme parks, movie theatres, casinos and other popular attractions. Lehigh Valley organizations need to build upon this dedication as well as the experiences that they can provide through their collections, exhibitions and programming.

The obvious first step calls for awareness (i.e. getting people in the door) as many smaller institutions remain “off the beaten path.” Like many other things this is an issue that comes back to money. While increased promotional efforts can be expensive, organizations can reach a broader audience through collaboration. Teachers can (and have) been reached via multi-organizational open houses, while families can be targeted by heritage days and festivals that showcase the rich history of the region. Any of the organizations mentioned in chapter three have sufficient outdoor open space to host such an event and could easily involve several surrounding organizations of varying size and scope. Another step towards greater regional collaboration would be the creation (even informally) of a Lehigh Valley Heritage Association, via which institutions could exchange information and develop stronger partnerships with each other.

As American society continues to transform itself at an ever increasing pace, and as the world grows seemingly smaller in an era of globalization, the value of the local culture becomes all the more important, as does the power of heritage. Heritage, as Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett's quote at the beginning of this chapter suggests, is different, yet related, separate, yet intertwined with its close relative history.² One of the ways in which we relate to history, to places and to each other is through our heritage. While heritage very often becomes a political and economic marketing tool, there is no denying that it possesses a very real power on a personal and societal level. People shape their relationship with the world and to other people through their heritage. Where are you from? What did you eat growing up? Where did your father work? Where did you go to school? All of these questions (some seemingly trivial) are tied to heritage and in answering them we define ourselves and others, through differences and more importantly, similarities and common truths.

Locality, as sense of place, becomes ever more critical as the American landscape becomes increasingly homogenized. This sense of place also becomes a tool for tourism, marketing and development, sometimes to the detriment of its own foundation. But, like heritage, locality is a potent tool for placing oneself in the surrounding world.

Heritage and locality are not entirely in the control of museums and organizations featured in this thesis. Rather these and other organizations like them serve as ambassadors of the past and advocates of identity. If the heritage institutions of the Lehigh Valley are to remain true to their roles as ambassadors and advocates they will need to remain dedicated and at the same time fluid in the face of an ever changing social, economic, and political landscape.

¹ Archibald, Robert R. The New Town Square: Museums and Communities in Transition. Lanham, MD. Altamira Press. 2004. 11.

² Kirchenblatt, Gimblett, Barbara. Destination Culture: Tourism, Museums, and Heritage. Berkeley and Los Angeles, CA. University of California Press. 1998. 7.

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