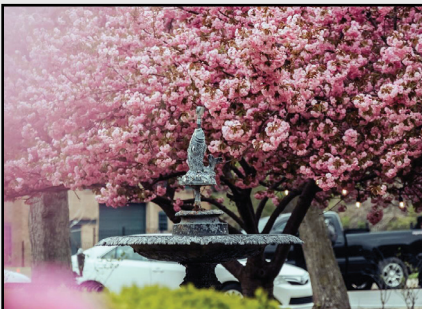
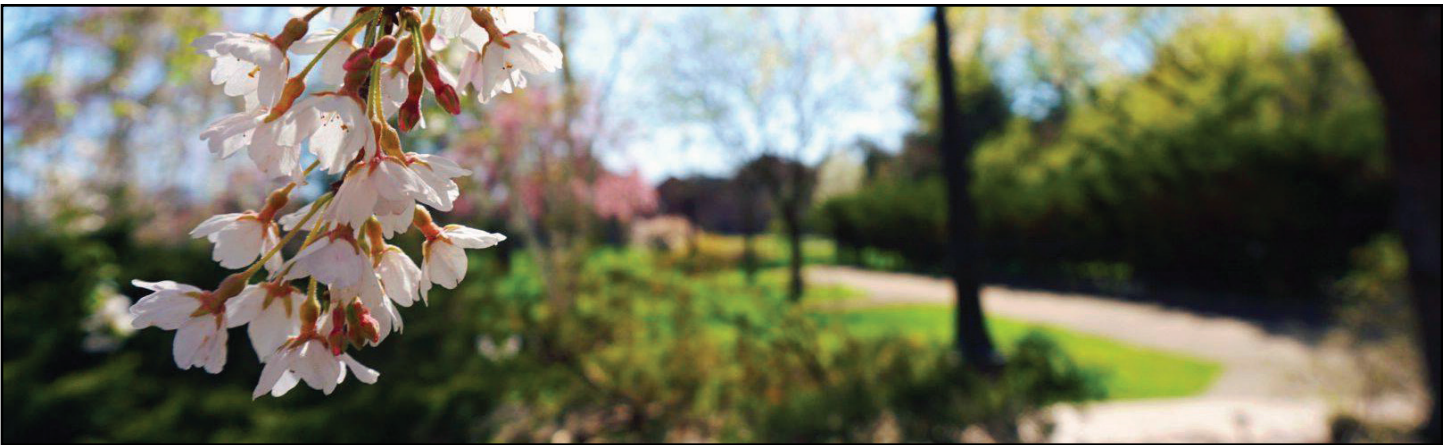

The Bell

~ Spring 2025 ~



A Publication of the Bellefonte Historical and Cultural Association

From the Editor



When one retires from an interesting career unexpectedly, as I did, one can dwell on negative thoughts of life being completely different or one can give herself the time and grace to realize that now she has the time to do all the things she didn't have time for when she worked full-time. It's a conscious choice.

Since moving to Bellefonte in December 2003, I've wanted to know more about this town – its history, culture, and architecture – and meet the people who love this place, too. Last summer, I became a member of the BHCA with the hope that this organization could offer ways for me to do just that. In September, I attended my first meeting and felt welcome and encouraged to engage in the conversation. Those in attendance wanted to know who I was, what skills I had, and what ideas I had to make Bellefonte more interesting. Being only able to answer their first two questions didn't matter. The first thing I learned about BHCA is that if you don't have an idea

or a purpose in mind to make Bellefonte more interesting, they will help you figure it out – and quickly! They shared with me their idea of creating a newsletter and said they needed someone to be the editor.

In starting as editor of The Bell, I've had the privilege of working with BHCA's president, Joseph Griffin, who quickly became a cherished mentor; learning more about how BHCA overlaps with other organizations from Romaine Naylor; and, meeting the very interesting, intelligent, passionate people who wrote the articles in this first edition. The President's Page brings all of us -- members and non-members alike -- together in understanding BHCA's mission, purpose, and vision.

Bellefonte is as fluid as the Spring Creek that flows through it. Over time, storefronts and highly valued Bellefonte residents come and go. You'll read about the new bookstore, The Print Factory, in the invitation written

by Jonathan Eburne, a member of the non-profit's team who dreamed of opening a bookstore since moving here 20 years ago. As The Print Factory gets its feet wet, across the way on Allegheny Street, the Victorian House antique store is closing after 31 years. It's worth a looksee before it's gone this spring. Soon to be available at Talleyrand Park is the David Kurtz Canoe and Kayak Museum, and Dave himself provided us with an enticing description of the Museum and history of boating in Centre County.

Remembrances of Melady Kehm and Steve Heverly written by friends and family and a historic article about Robert Gordan written by W. Charles Young might leave the reader with awe in learning about the people who walked the same hills as you and I and left their stamp on Bellefonte. Melady was a founder of BHCA and served as president, so I felt it only right for her to appear in The Bell's first edition. There are other admirable peo-

ple in Bellefonte who breathe the same air as you and I. Congratulations are in order for Phil Ruth and Renea Nichols who in January were honored with the 2024 John H. Ziegler Historic Preservation Awards by the Centre County Historical Society! Phil's background as a historian is included in this edition. We look forward to learning about Renea's efforts toward the preservation of the St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church in a future edition.

Also in January, Julia Spicher Kasdorf served on the panel of

the "Unmonument" event held at The Print Factory which I found to be an eye-opening presentation of the history of African Americans in Bellefonte and the work being done to uncover those truths. Meanwhile, Julia has also organized the 2025 "Out Loud" series which you'll read promises to be stimulating.

In the three BHCA meetings I have attended so far, it's been a pleasure meeting a dozen or so BHCA members in person, and I look forward to getting to know all of you in good time. If you

are not a BHCA member, I can assure you that whether you have an idea on how to make Bellefonte more interesting or, like me, you are open to taking on something new, you are welcome here and you are needed. All who would like to submit an article, photo, or poem for consideration for a future edition are welcome to send it to me at treez387@gmail.com.

Now, let's ring The Bell!



BHCA Officers:

- Joseph Griffin President
Romaine Naylor Vice-President
David Egler Treasurer
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Sharon Weisser

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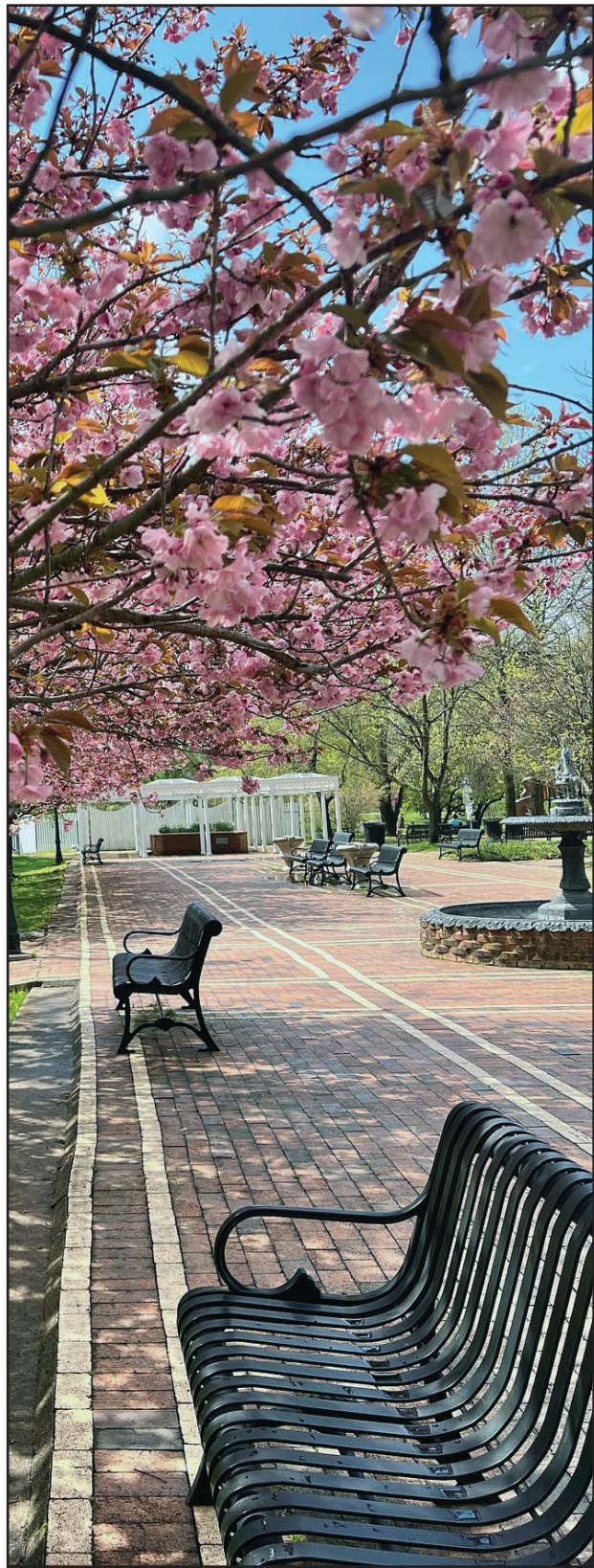
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This is the first *President's Page* in the first issue of *The Bell*, one of BHCA's newest projects. Awash in such freshness and innovation, I will set out along the path of novelty. Accordingly, let me begin with what's new. Last year, BHCA resolved to renovate its structure to help sustain its decades long project of promoting the arts, culture, and history to the residents of Bellefonte. We revised our Bylaws, recruited a few dozen additional members, elected nine new directors to our Board, began expanding programming, and applied for grants we had previously passed over. Consequently, we now have more local residents involved, more income as well as expenses, more programming, and more work to be done than we have experienced in recent years. Consider some of the changes BHCA has made in communication, organization, and programming.

Communication
The Bell is an example of our determination to tell our story along with other stories about Bellefonte. We hope that this journal will become a resource for people who care about things central to our mission: the arts (performing, visual, and literary), local history, and Bellefonte's historic architecture. Besides news and reports of interest to BHCA members, *The Bell* will carry long-form articles unlikely to find a home elsewhere.

With a grant from the Centre Foundation, we are developing a new website. Our original website has served us well for years and is a repository for decades of organizational history. It is written in html and cannot easily be updated to provide the services contemporary websites offer such as email support or the ability to accept contributions and membership dues. All our history will remain available through the new site, and we look forward to improving our ability to communicate with and recruit friends and members. We hope the new site will be functioning by May 2025.

Organization
BHCA's revised Bylaws create a Board that receives, evaluates, and approves or amends the work of several committees. The Programs Committee, the Historical Preservation Committee, and the Promotion and Communications Committee are where most of the work gets done. We have continued our tradition of monthly members' meetings and added enticing food and drink to make them more appealing. Our Board meets just four times a year. If you would like to help make Bellefonte even more interesting, please consider becoming a BHCA member. Surely, the organization's impact on our town will be proportional to the number of its members.

Programming
BHCA is continuing to offer its

signature programs: *Summer Sounds* in Talleyrand Park, the *Sunday Afternoon Chamber Series* at Trinity United Methodist Church, and the *Arts and Crafts Show* during Victorian Christmas. Meanwhile, we are increasing the number and variety of our smaller events. Last year, we introduced the *Bellefonte Busker* program along Allegheny Street, occasional literary talks at the Library, the Jitterbug Contest during the Bellefonte Cruise, and the very successful *Art Walk* at the Library.

In coming months, we will be sponsoring the *Out Loud* poetry series at The Print Factory, more literary talks, another Jitterbug Contest, a public reading of *Animal Farm*, and a series of brave new ventures partially supported by a generous grant from the Happy Valley Adventure Bureau. These include a three-day *Civil War Weekend in Bellefonte* which will incorporate dozens of different activities and an *Easter Parade* on Easter Sunday, held with help from Helen Foxx and Co. We are also working to establish a *Bellefonte Bicycle Day* and a *Barbershop Quartet Contest*. Finally, we are trying to develop youth competitions involving speaking and writing.

Mission
Our mission statement does not roll off the tongue, but it explains exactly what BHCA is striving to accomplish.

The Bellefonte Historical and Cultural Association exists to improve the lives of all Bellefonte residents and their nearby neighbors through opportunities to participate in and enjoy programming that: explores Bellefonte's rich history; promotes appreciation and preservation of our town's historic architecture; enriches the sensibilities of visitors and residents through literary, performing, and visual arts.

Sometimes we compress this statement into a tagline and say that BHCA is just trying to make Bellefonte even more interesting.

Our Hidden Contribution

Naturally, at BHCA, most of our attention is focused on what we are doing. We try to stick to our knitting whether it be inviting people to tarry on the sidewalk listening to a busker, or participate in a dance contest, or meet an author and discuss her work. Nevertheless, I will take this opportunity to mention something potentially more important, a necessary and desirable, albeit indirect, outcome of our efforts.

It's been a quarter of a century

since Robert Putnam published his groundbreaking study, *Bowling alone: The collapse and revival of American community*. Since then, sociologists and political scientists have been defining, discussing, and decrying the decrease in American social capital. Apparently, television, social media, the rising frequency of two-income households, and other factors are eroding our connections to one another. We join fewer clubs, go to fewer dinner parties, and have less to do with our neighbors. This endemic separateness not only weakens communities but reduces the power of individuals, because they are deprived of the help and enrichment formerly available through their social networks. Because we are going it alone, we lack a powerful tool available to earlier generations.

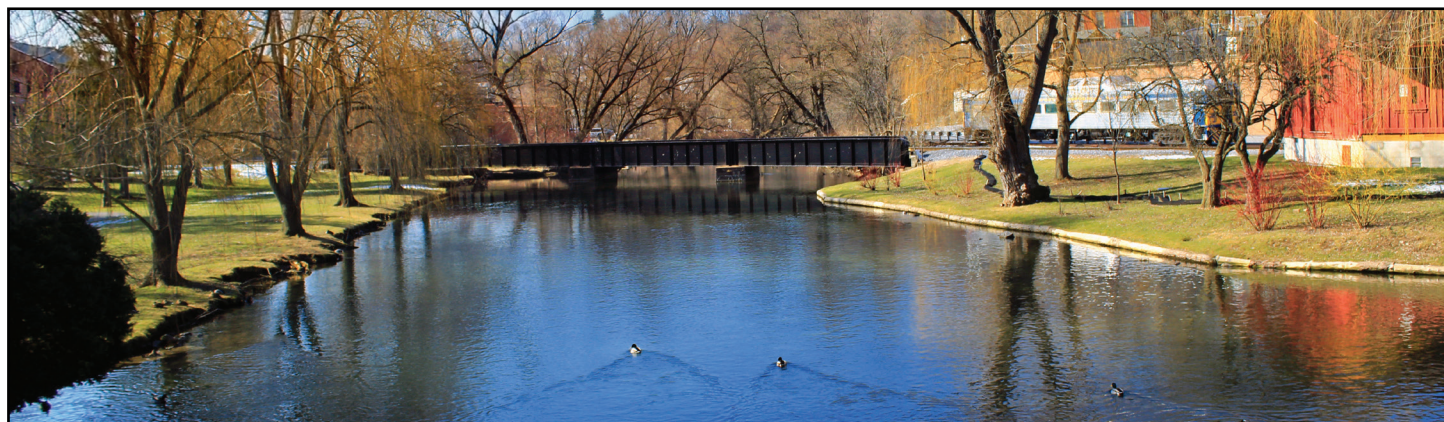
Our events and projects provide reasons for people to congregate and commune. The arts are largely social and BHCA is working to draw people out of their houses and away from their giant televisions. We want them to look up from their phones and watch another human. Just as important is the potential of BHCA to become a social entity itself, a club for like-minded people to join. Since

there are lots of us who appreciate our old buildings, like listening to live music, are curious about local history, and are intrigued by the written and spoken word, shouldn't we get to know one another? Can we not form a cultural commons and enrich one another's lives?

An Invitation to Join

If you like what BHCA is doing, why not help us do more of it and reap the reward of meeting people who feel as you do about our special town, its history, and the pleasures to be found in music, art, history, and literature? As I write, there are about forty members of BHCA, and we're doing a pretty good job. Imagine what we could accomplish around town if there were a hundred of us. I invite you to make common cause with us. If you're interested, the price of admission is \$20. For now, you will have to fill out and mail in the form in this journal until our new website is up and running. As nice as Bellefonte is, by working together we can make it even more interesting.

Joseph Griffin



New In Town: The Print Factory

It's a Sunday evening in mid-winter, and you see a lit storefront on S. Allegheny Street, with a vertical neon sign in the front window that spells out "BOOKS." From the dark, windy street you enter the store, where you are greeted by the smell of brewing coffee and the sounds of The Ionious Monk. To your left, an exposed brick wall; to your right, shelves of books surrounding a cozy, red couch. Toward the back of the store sit a group of people typing on laptop computers or writing long-hand in their journals: this is the weekly Print Factory Writing Group, who meet here every Sunday from 4:00pm-5:30 pm, often followed by an hour or two of quiet reading.

Welcome to The Print Factory, a nonprofit bookstore and culture space that opened its doors on November 15, 2024 after years of planning and behind-the-scenes work. According to its mission, The Print Factory is an antiracist, feminist, and queer-inclusive bookstore and cultural space in Bellefonte, Pennsylvania that supports the artistic and intellectual life of the local community. Offering regular programming (you can view the events calendar on The Print Factory's home page: www.printfactorybellefonte.org), the space is open Thursdays through Sundays, from 12:00pm until 8:00pm, with the aim of providing a "third space" for browsing, reading, conversing, and building community after work and after school.

The Print Factory has been years in the making. We first started making noises about opening a bookstore in Bellefonte over a decade ago—around the time of the "Save the Garman" campaign—and returned to the project in earnest during the COVID pandemic. It's something our team have been thinking about, and dreaming about, for a very long time, and we are brimming



with excitement about giving Bellefonte its first full-time, brick-and-mortar bookstore within living memory.

The Print Factory's mission is to support the artistic and intellectual life of the local community by providing a safe, welcoming environment for creative activity. We are an entirely volunteer-run organization. We stock used and new books, with a focus on small presses, local authors, and poetry. Our stock of used books comes from donations, which enables us to offer them for reasonable prices—and thus to put books in the hands of new readers.

Another important aspect of our mission is that we aim to work in cooperation (rather than competition) with other area booksellers, libraries, schools, and nonprofit community organizations. There's always free coffee and tea available in the back of the shop, and we have a small community room available for use by local groups and organizations.

As the BHCA is well aware, Bellefonte has long been an important site of cultural activity. Dig a little into Bellefonte's history, and the evidence of the town's bookish past begins to accumulate: Sylvia Beach was a frequent visitor to the town during the early years of the twentieth century, where she regularly visited her grandparents before moving to Paris and founding the iconic Shakespeare and Co. bookstore in 1919. The Print Factory is founded on the premise that the most important places for creativity and inventiveness are those that are local, accessible, and near-at-hand. We are excited to make this vision a part of Bellefonte's future.

Our project began in earnest at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, when the need for community—and for safe, welcoming, antiracist and queer-positive cultural spaces—became increasingly urgent. Over the spring and summer of 2020, our team began meeting informally with local teachers, students, and other community members to share ideas about how Bellefonte

would benefit from a new cultural space. These meetings continued through the years that followed, years marked profoundly by the #BlackLivesMatter movement and struggles to defend the rights—and lives—of BIPOC kids and adults (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), as well as queer and trans kids and adults. We wanted to create a space in rural central Pennsylvania that could be open for public use, especially for people who tend to be marginalized in the community, and which could also be maintained and self-organized toward fostering meaningful creative communities and events. We launched The Print Factory officially in April 2023, after signing a 5-year lease for our storefront at 130 S. Allegheny Street. After 18 months of renovations, we are now open to the community.



Since opening our doors in November, we have been delighted by the warmth and enthusiasm of our neighbors, who have expressed their delight at having a bookstore in town, and who

have shared their interest in our mission. We have also heard wonderful stories about the prior iterations of the space we now occupy. Before it was The Print Factory, this space had been a notions and antiques shop called The Black Cat; before that it had been a women's clothing boutique; and, before that, from the 1940s through the 1960s, it was a drugstore.

I am writing this article from a couch positioned near the spot where the magazine rack would have stood back in 1948. This seems fitting, somehow. What better prescription might there be for the year ahead, than to sit down with a book, a cup of coffee, and a new friend?

*By Jonathan Eburne
Team Member of The Print Factory*

The Victorian House
is holding a
Retirement Sale
from now through
April 2025.

With all of the
antique pieces for sale
there, you may find
something for the
Civil War
Weekend, the
Victorian Christmas
weekend, or a
one-of-a-kind gift.



The David Kurtz Canoe and Kayak Museum

Stories within each exhibit at the David Kurtz Canoe and Kayak Museum located in the historic 1869 Freight Warehouse on Talleyrand Park offer the visitor the rich history of boating in Centre County, Pennsylvania which began somewhere in the 1950's. Let me describe some of the history entombed in the boats in this Museum.

The earliest paddling activities in Centre County were carried out by the Penn State University Outing Club under the leadership of Dr. Tom Smyth who was hired by Penn State as a professor of etymology in 1955. Smyth shared the skills he had crafted from having paddled open Grumman aluminum canoes -- boats that were carefully constructed for abusive water activity. In paddling local creeks and rivers, aluminum canoes were intensely abused from hitting rocks. In fact, their air compartments soon became known as "water compartments." One had to frequently open them up and remove the water therein for continued use. You will see what I mean when looking at the aluminum canoe on display in the Museum.

As a graduate student at Penn State, my canoeing activities were developed along with the Boy Scouts of Troop 32 in State College. Within a year, I was qualified to lead the older Scouts (14-20 years old) into the Explorer Post 32, and we commenced the primary activities to be an easy whitewater activity. Without

going into the details here, whitewater skills had to be developed cautiously with lots of practice on easy Class I and II rivers before moving into Class III streams. We discovered slalom activities as a part of the experience

The development of the singles canoe was the next step in our paddling history. Explorer Post 32 planned a canoe slalom on the West Branch of the Susquehanna River in the summer of 1960. As



we were preparing for the weekend at the State College Presbyterian Church, the colorful slalom poles attracted Natan Bernot. The boys soon learned that Bernot was a Slovenian studying nuclear energy at Penn State and turned out to be a paddler of high standing from a world slalom championship event in Europe. As one would expect, the boys invited him to our event!

It was an awkward time for me. Bernot had a reputation as a

brash paddler, and I witnessed that after each white water drop in an open canoe, he had to bail out the water. I was teaching careful paddling to avoid this, but I didn't want to put a stop to the boys' invitation, either. At the event, Bernot paddled doubles with several of the boys. Amazed with the paddling skills of the boys at the end of the event, Bernot announced that we should build a decked canoe that would prevent such water intake. He would draw the lines of a new canoe to be made of that new material, fiberglass resin and cloth.

A couple weeks later, a scroll of said plans arrived in my mail box. The process of getting a canoe took three steps. Step 1 was the construction of a wooden model of the boat to be constructed. Because the boat was symmetrical lengthwise, our model needed to be half a boat lengthwise. On a large 13-foot plank, we mounted cross sections from bow to stern. Then we nailed strips of wood that were 1/4 inch thick by 1 inch across to the cross sections. Wood filler was added to the spaces between strips. Next, sanding took place with sandpaper attached to a flat wood piece. When the surface was sanded down to a relatively smooth surface, we started the painting. The role of the paint was to fill in the surface imperfections. You could easily see the progress as different colors of paint were used and the surfaces being filled in were different colors from the main surface.



Step 2 was the preparation of a half mold of the wooden model. After waxing the surface with many coats of a hard floor wax, a mold release compound was sprayed on. The mold release was to allow a smooth coating of the polyester resin and prevent bubbling up like water bubbles up on a waxed surface. Layers of cloth were rubbed to the mold with resin. When hardened, the mold was “popped” off the model and soon ready to be used to build boats.

Step 3 was to prepare two copies of the mold which, when popped, were rosined together to form a boat. We calculated it took about 100 man hours to prepare a boat from the mold. To keep this article from not becoming a book, I have not included all of the tiny details in the construction of a boat, but there are many!

The Museum has the original model we used to make the singles canoe. One can see the original steps of wood that made up the surface, because storing the model for 50 years in an open garage allowed a certain amount of decay! Next to this model lies the first boat...a C-1 canoe, colored black.

Due to our amateur technique, the first half weighed 50 pounds. I called some friends in Washington, D.C., who had seen the resin process in Europe, and they explained how to avoid making such a heavy half. Our next half was only 32 pounds. Together, the boat now weighed some 80 pounds.

Another interesting exhibit is a singles kayak that the manufacturer designed to have very pointed bow and sterns. The points were so “sharp” (like $\frac{3}{4}$ inch wide) that the boat was a menace in whitewater. If it bumped into another paddler, it could conceivably run right through both a life jacket and even another paddler. This boat became a note to the International Slalom Committee. They decided that the ends of boats had to be a very blunt surface; hence, the design of all boats had to be no sharper than a semicircle of a 4 cm diameter in the horizontal dimension and 2 cm diameter in the vertical dimension. Also available for visitors to see is a more modern kayak that was paddled as a training kayak in two different Olympic Slaloms, 1992 and 1996.

Visitors will be excited to see with their own eyes how a model design is modified through the ages to adapt to different skill levels of paddlers. This is the so-called DK series of kayaks. Initially, we wanted to avoid copying a commercial boat. After all, we could be sued! So, the DK-1 was prepared from the Prijon Special Kayak where we smoothed out the deck and a small part of the stern. The DK-3 was a very smoothed deck, and the boat shown in the Museum was a model boat with lots of fiberglass “repairs” to the deck. The DK-5 contains other smoothing from the DK-3.

Another type of boat is the Wildwater boat. These canoes and kayaks are designed to be very fast in the downriver speed with little turn ability. Our example of the Wildwater canoe is the “Queen Mary”, a doubles canoe that was raced in a World Wildwater event at Leeds, England. Its huge volume was designed to float on top of the water instead of through it. Soon, other Wildwater boats of both singles and doubles models will make their appearance in the Museum.

By David Kurtz



Reflecting on Melady Kehm

Soon after settling in Bellefonte with her first husband, Walter Klausmeier, “Melady became president of the newly formed Bellefonte Historical and Cultural Association (BHCA). With a handful of other civic minded souls, Melady helped shape the cultural renaissance Bellefonte experienced in the 1970’s and 80’s. With [our] friend, Bonnie Leathers, she launched Summer Sounds from the Gazebo, a concert series still going strong in its 44th season.” (Melady Kehm Obituary (1945 - 2024) - Bellefonte, PA - Centre Daily Times)



I met Melady through BHCA shortly after my husband, Bob, and I joined BHCA around 1988. Our friendship grew slowly as we worked on some projects together and would come to find we had mutual friends. In time, our friendship blossomed.

Melady created the first walking tour of Bellefonte and spent a lot of time highlighting the wonderful architecture and history of Bellefonte.

Her writing and editing skills were very good. “She started life in Perry Hall, MD and, as a student, penned the original alma mater of Overlea High School. A talented writer, she studied journalism at Western Maryland College.” (Melady Kehm Obituary (1945 - 2024) - Bellefonte, PA - Centre Daily Times)

She was a bright, interesting, full of fun person and engaged with whomever she met with her wit and charm. Dancing was one of

her passions and hobbies, and it no doubt kept her in good physical health.

We all have our foibles and her peculiarities that made us chuckle were her propensity for tardiness and indecision. We met for about 30 years once a month for lunch with other friends, and we would always tell her to be ready for at least 15 minutes before the arranged departure time!

Her indecision is well known among her friends! I still chuckle when I recall she wanted to select some fabric to have a piece of furniture reupholstered. She had looked at fabric locally but could not find what she thought she wanted. There is a shop in Williamsport that carries a large selection of upholstery fabric, so she asked if I would take her there. We drove for the hour it took. Ample choices were available there, and after reviewing fabric after fabric swatches, we left without purchas-

ing any. She never had the furniture reupholstered!

She had a fondness for cats, and theirs for her is a testament to animals’ sense of goodness in people. Bob and I had a cat named Belle who always became so excited when Melady came into the house. Belle decided Melady’s lap was her personal territory whenever she visited. Laps of other visitors were always left empty.

Like many members of BHCA, she also had a passion for the town of Bellefonte. Keeping it alive and vital was important. One idea she wanted to pursue was creating an art area for Bellefonte that would nurture an artist community and attract visitors and residents to Bellefonte. With this idea in mind, we arranged a tour of the Match Factory by Jay Claster, president of M. L. Claster & Sons who had put the Match Factory on the market. Her proposal for use of the Match Factory did not come to fruition, but her efforts demonstrated how important it was to her to help nurture the idea.

After the loss of her second husband, Rob Gannon, she stayed with us in a small bedroom. She told me she felt so safe in smaller spaces. The apartment she rented in Florida was her escape from the winter cold, and she said the apartment was small and she felt enveloped in safety.

She may have liked small spaces, but her heart was large. We were all fortunate to have known her.

By Candace Dannaker

2025 EVENTS CALENDAR

Feb. 28 – March 30	Art Show by Anne Kenyon, Bellefonte Art Museum
Feb. 28 – April 17	Contemporary Korean Art Exhibit, Bellefonte Art Museum
March 2	First Sunday at the Bellefonte Art Museum
March 4	Ekphrastic Poetry Reading, Bellefonte Art Museum
March 23	Sunday Afternoon Chamber Music (BHCA)
April 3 - 5	Bellefonte High School Musical “Fiddler on the Roof”
April 4	Out Loud at The Print Factory (BHCA)
April 6	First Sunday at the Bellefonte Art Museum
April 13	Sunday Afternoon Chamber Music (BHCA)
April 19	Easter Egg Hunt at Talleyrand Park (HBI & The Moose)
April 20	Easter
April 20	Easter Parade (BHCA)
May 2	Out Loud at The Print Factory (BHCA)
May 4	First Sunday at the Bellefonte Art Museum
May 11	Mother’s Day
May 18	Sunday Afternoon Chamber Music (BHCA)
May 26	Memorial Day
June 1	Summer Sounds (BHCA)
June 6-8	Civil War Weekend (BHCA)
June 8	First Sunday at the Bellefonte Art Museum
June 8	Summer Sounds (BHCA)
June 13-14	The Cruise (HBI)
June 14	Jitterbug Dance Contest (BHCA)
June 15	Father’s Day
June 15	Summer Sounds (BHCA)
June 19	Juneteenth National Independence Day
June 22	Summer Sounds (BHCA)
June 29	Summer Sounds (BHCA)

July 4	Independence Day
July 6	First Sunday at the Bellefonte Art Museum
July 6	Summer Sounds (BHCA)
July 13	Summer Sounds (BHCA)
July 20	Summer Sounds (BHCA)
July 27	Summer Sounds (BHCA)
August 1 – 2	Arts and Crafts Festival (HBI)
August 3	First Sunday at the Bellefonte Art Museum
August 3	Summer Sounds (BHCA)
August 10	Summer Sounds (BHCA)
September 1	Labor Day
September 5	Out Loud at The Print Factory (BHCA)
September 7	First Sunday at the Bellefonte Art Museum
October 3	Out Loud at The Print Factory (BHCA)
October 5	First Sunday at the Bellefonte Art Museum
October 25	Halloween Parade (HBI)
October 31	Halloween
November 2	First Sunday at the Bellefonte Art Museum
November 7	Out Loud at The Print Factory (BHCA)
November 27	Thanksgiving
November 29	Christmas Tree Lighting (DBI)
Nov. 29 – Dec. 21	Santa House (HBI)
December 2	First Sunday at the Bellefonte Art Museum
December 12 – 14	Victorian Christmas (HBI)
December 12 – 14	Arts and Crafts Show (BHCA)
December 13	Winter Market (DBI)
December 14 – 22	Hanukkah
December 25	Christmas
December 26 – Jan. 1	Kwanzaa

Remembering Steve Heverly - Bellefonte's Renaissance Man

Born on January 29, 1937, Steve graduated from Bellefonte Area High School and earned his bachelor's degree in business from Penn State. He enlisted with the United States Air Force following college and served our country honorably and with pride during the Vietnam War Era. Steve worked with the Centre County Employment and Training Agency and the county housing assistance program for many years prior to his retirement.

Throughout all of Steve's life, he displayed an avid interest and considerable talent in many forms of the arts. He was a talented graphic artist, designing posters for the local Bellefonte Arts Festival; pen and ink drawings of anything and everything in Bellefonte; and, special photo tinting and other photo arts, including 3D photos with special glasses. He used his public relations skills to promote his hometown and his heritage.

Steve's talents didn't end with the graphic arts. He was a self-taught ukulele player, as well as a published playwright and author. Steve's plays were performed locally and received considerable kudos. A one-act play he created won a competition and was performed at a theater in Houston, Texas. His short stories ranged from being poignant, to quirky, to humorous, to surprisingly sentimental, all of which he



shared generously with family and friends. On top of all of this, he was a truly funny guy. He was entertaining with a razor-sharp wit that always had friends giggling and smiling. Time spent with Steve was never dull.

As Steve aged, he found his balance benefited from walking with a cane. Steve used this necessity as an opportunity to express his creativity once again! He created seasonal decorations for his canes

or used other themes, such as the beach, which he dearly loved. Steve is pictured with one of his canes at one of many gatherings of former co-workers from his CCE-TA days.

In addition to his talents in the arts, Steve was a "genuinely good guy". His many kindnesses were a common theme expressed among Steve's family and friends who came together after Steve's passing to decide how best to honor his

legacy. For example, he grew a ponytail to give to the Locks of Love to support a family member with cancer. He regularly visited the elderly widowed mother of a childhood friend who no longer lived in Bellefonte just to be sure she was ok. He made a point of stopping every Monday to chat with Joyce Mills at Helen Foxx & Co. in Bellefonte to deliver the fashion section of the New York Times. He drove friends to medical appointments; fed the birds at a bird feeder near his favorite McDonald's; and never failed to plant a garden of flowers around his apartment in the Hastings Mansion.

A Bellefonte native and long-time resident, Steve was a regular attendee of the Talleyrand Park Concert series, as well as a frequent contributor to the local Bellefonte arts scene. To honor Steve's legacy and all that he meant to so many



people, a group of Steve's family and friends raised money to make a \$1,500 donation to the BHCA and contribute to the placement of his memorial bench on Allegheny Street in Bellefonte. The bench was

dedicated in June 2024. Several of the donors to this project are pictured with the bench in the July 3, 2024, Centre County Gazette. Its inscription reads:

*In loving memory,
Stephen R. Heverly,
1937-2024
Artist, Photographer,
Playwright,
Bellefonte Advocate*

*His playful, creative spirit
spread goodwill far and wide.
With ukulele and grins,
he pulled you in and left
you with a smile.*

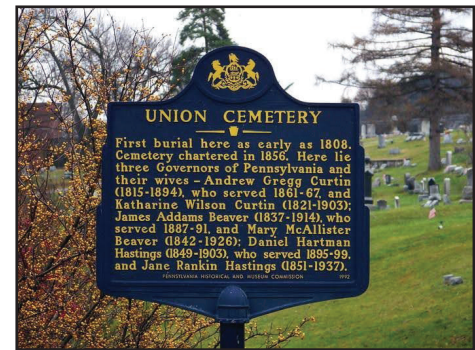
A fitting tribute to our beloved Renaissance Man, Mr. One-Of-A-Kind, Steve Heverly. Gone but never forgotten!

by Susan Morse



The Gatehouse

When the founders of Bellefonte came in 1795, one of the spaces they set aside was for a cemetery and that would be what we now know as the Bellefonte Union Cemetery. The earliest grave I was able to find is from 1806. We have three Pennsylvania governors - [Andrew Gregg Curtin, James Addams Beaver, and Daniel Hartman Hastings]. We also have the first president of Farmers' Highschool of Pennsylvania ["the fledgling institution that, under his leadership, would become Penn State" Evan Pugh - Centre County Encyclopedia of History & Culture]. That would be Evan Pugh. He is buried in my backyard.



When I describe the Gatehouse to people, I say, "You can't miss it, because it has a hole through it." It was built in the 1850s in a style that was popular at the time called Gothic Revival. It's an early Victorian style. So, it's one room on either side of the arch and then several rooms on the second floor.

In 1986, my late husband, Rob Ganon, bought the Gatehouse from the Cemetery Association. It was



in very sorry shape. It had not been used by a family for 12 years and it was used as the Jaycees Haunted House. In fact, I went through the Haunted House when I first got to Bellefonte about 30 years ago [around 1982] and never did I know – it was a great Haunted House – that I would actually be living in it one day.

He put on a two-story edition in the back for a kitchen and above it, the master bedroom. That makes it a little easier to live in. I always say that it's a very romantic notion but a little difficult to live in sometimes. The room on the right, you could never get to that by the interior coming from other parts of the house. You had to go to it from the outside, because that was the cemetery work room. My husband put in



a spiral staircase and fixed it up and that's my guest room.

I love Bellefonte. I wrote an article about living in Bellefonte when I first got here, and I felt like I came home. I still feel that way. It's a wonderful town steeped in history. I feel like I'm a steward. I really need to keep it going, because there will be someone after me. One would hope they will treasure it also.

In Bellefonte, I think many of us here feel that we are only here for a little while. This house has been here for 150 years, and it's my job to make sure it's in good shape to give to someone else.

Spoken by the late Melady Kehm in the WPSU 2012 documentary "Our Town Bellefonte"



Situated on Howard Street, at the main entrance of the Union Cemetery, this building is believed by some historians to have been part of the law office of Andrew Gregg Curtin. It may have been moved from the Crider Exchange Block on North Allegheny Street. The alternative history is that it was built in 1859 as, indeed, a gatehouse to the cemetery and home of the cemetery's superintendent.

Behind the Stone

Behind the Stone will be a telling of some of the stories of the people who lived, worked, and died in Bellefonte. Their stories come from Union Cemetery, Friends Burial Ground, Sunnyside Cemetery, St. Johns Cemetery, and Rodef Sholem Cemetery. In Bellefonte's first century it was the social, economic, and political center of Centre County. Buried here include many persons whose stories resonate around the county.

Robert D. Gordon, a graduate of Jefferson College, signed his 1862 army enlistment papers as residing in Hecla Furnace, his post office address. His father, James Gordon, was a prosperous farmer in Walker Township. The 1860 Census values the farm property at \$60,000 (\$2,281,200 today) and his personal property at \$2,040 (\$77,560.80 today). James, descended from Scottish immigrants, arrived in the area when his father, Robert, bought a Spring Township farm in the early 1800's. The Gordon's were welcome in Bellefonte's society as James married Mary Steele, a granddaughter of James Dunlop. Robert D. Gordon was their first born.

Robert's enlistment was in a unique regiment, the 15th Pennsylvania Cavalry. Civil War volunteers presented to their state for service as a company of 100 men having elected their officers. The state would then bundle ten (infantry) to twelve (cavalry) such companies into a regiment and the Governor would appoint the Colonel, Lieutenant Colonel, and Major(s). The 15th began as a single company, Anderson Troop, with a single

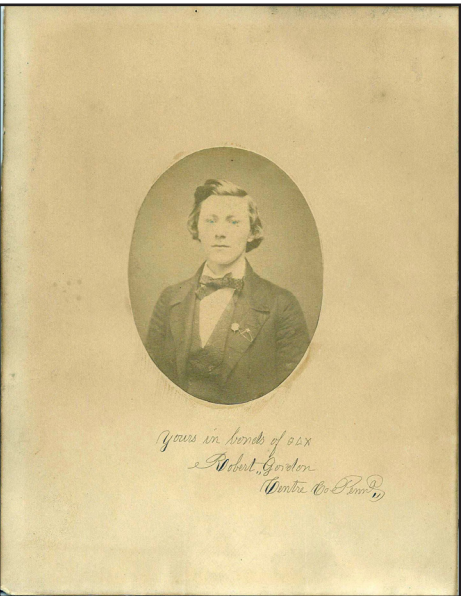
purpose; protect General Robert Anderson. Anderson, the hero of Sumter, was the commander of the Department of the Ohio. By the Pennsylvanians' October arrival in Kentucky, General Don Carlos Buell was in command. However, Buell turned in such a lackadaisical performance during the October 1862 Confederate invasion of Kentucky that the Lincoln Administration relieved Buell and put General William Rosecrans in his place. Rosecrans wanted more cavalry and ordered the Anderson Troop to expand to a full regiment...the 15th. Their recruitment remained state-wide. Robert Gordon, joined as the troop was expanded and landed into Company G.

The 15th saw their first serious fighting at the Battle of Stones River (Murfreesboro) in central Tennessee. As General Rosecrans moved towards Chattanooga, Confederate General Braxton Bragg decided to surprise Rosecrans' army with a dawn attack on December 31, 1862. Confederate cavalry tried to sever the Nashville Turnpike—the Federal supply line. The 15th Pennsylvania was ordered to help repulse the attacks. Private Gordon was participating in a charge on rebel cavalry when he was struck by a spent bullet and knocked from his horse. By all appearances he had been killed. However, he came to, and in the act of getting up, a riderless horse ran him over, injuring him. However, he was back in action the following day, indeed surviving his first combat experience.

Civil War armies tended, until 1864, to fight ferocious battles with

staggering losses then pull apart to rest, reinforce, resupply and refit. Army time has been described during this period as a few days of sheer terror followed by months of camp boredom. Such was the case for Robert Gordon who remained in the Murfreesboro area in what was Camp Gereshe. Unfortunately, Gordon would not leave the camp alive. Sometime in late March he contracted Typhoid Fever.

What we know of the last days of Robert D. Gordon's life was writ-



ten by Bellefonte native Harvey S. Lingle. Lingle was a Sergeant in Gordon's company. Mid-19th century attitudes and expectations regarding death were unlike those of the early 21st century. People were expected to have "a good death" which included being at home, surrounded by family for care and to witness the state of your soul and having your last words recorded. The war placed an emotional strain on the good death. Lingle filled that roll. In a letter to James

Gordon dated April 13, 1863, Lingle wrote:

I was with Robert when he died and evry night while he was sick except two, the nights of the 8th + 9. I was too sick myself to stay up, but got a friend to be with him. On the 31st of March he told me he would like to go to the hospital as he did not feel well enough to stay in the tent. I took him up and had a comfortable bed made for him and got the Dr to see him he said Robt is taking the fever. He would not let me write to you that day I promised I would not but got D. McKinney to do so. On the 1st of April he was worse I went to Col Palmer and succeeded in getting him a furlough, but dated it April 4th+ by that time he was too ill to be moved and kept getting worse all the time. On the 5th was the last he knew me, his mind kept wandering from then untill about 3 o'clock of the morning he died. I was sitting on the side of the bed he looked up + said

Harvey give a drink, after he drank he thought he felt better, he dropt to sleep + dreamed he was at home Spoke of his mother. Saying oh mother I am so sick can't you give me something good, he must have imagined he got what he wanted. I gave him a little gruel he then said he felt better and



went to sleep. At ½ past four he died with out a struggle, just seemed to sink away in heavy slumber. He died happy and scince in this regiment lived as a christian. I have been his messmate for six months, in that time I know of no act of his unbecoming to a gentleman or christian.

(Spelling, capitalization and punctuation in original)

Robert Gordon's body was retrieved by his father and interred in Union Cemetery. More men died of disease than combat wounds in the Civil War. While Gordon provides an example of patriotism and service to country, he also reminds us that war is also suffering on an immense scale.

by W. Charles Young



The People Behind BHCA: Meet Phil Ruth

My preparation for receiving the Centre County Historical Society's 2024 Jacqueline J. Melander Award forced me to review my career in public history to an extent never before warranted. I had, of course, occasionally updated my curriculum vitae. And I had composed brief occupational profiles for program notes over the years. I even launched a website (philpruth.com) around 2010 to showcase products of my work and recreation (but don't bother checking that site anytime soon, as it is stripped down and in desperate need of updating). Those summaries were always occasioned by ongoing or upcoming projects, however, and were thus forward-looking. This recent round of vocational reflection has been unsettlingly different - occurring at a point in my life alarmingly close to what some folks refer to as "over the hill."

Those who live long enough to espy the crest of that hill witness incredible changes. For instance, the way I conduct research today, and my means of sharing results of that research, bear little resemblance to my modus operandi early in my career. January 2025 marked the 39th anniversary of my commission to prepare an illustrated history of Souderton, a borough in southeastern Pennsylvania, for release during the town's centennial celebration in 1987. I had just completed work on a master's degree in fiction writing at the University of New

Hampshire and had not yet found work in the field for which I was freshly credentialed. I figured spending a year creating a coffee-table book of local history would not only tide me over until something more germane and permanent could be arranged but might also provide grist for my fiction mill. Then I was bitten hard by the local history bug. After publishing the Souderton book, I convinced a local supermarket chain with an upcoming 50th anniversary to underwrite my production of an illustrated history of the wider Bucks-Mont region, resulting in my publication of A North Penn Pictorial in 1988. Over the course of the next six years, I produced four more commissioned works of local history and edited and designed several more. I made no attempt to write fiction during that period, nor have I done so since.

In that early "independent contractor" phase of my career, I spent my days tracking down and querying folks by phone; recording interviews with old-timers, using a cassette tape recorder; copying photos and other memorabilia on-site with a pedestal-mounted 35mm camera, superfine-grained film, and lights fitted with polarizing filters; developing copy photos in my darkroom; filling index cards with information about each copy negative and print I created; perusing card catalogues, books, manuscripts, newspapers, deeds, tax ledgers, etc. in histori-

cal society collections, museums, courthouses, and other repositories; composing narratives and captions on my newfangled word processor; and, ultimately printing columns of text with a dot matrix printer, cutting them out, and pasting them alongside photocopier-scaled images on pages for each "dummy" that I presented to the printer for transformation into a book.

Thirty years ago this month (January 1995), I relievedly set aside the demands of lining up income-generating history projects, seeing them through to fruition, and paying rising insurance premiums. I went to work as a historian for Cultural Heritage Research Services, Inc. (CHRS), a cultural resources management firm headquartered in North Wales, Pennsylvania. That has been my day job ever since. (The company has since moved to nearby Lansdale.) Early in the quarantine stage of the recent COVID-19 pandemic, when my CHRS workload flagged, I used some downtime to begin placing virtual pins on a Google Earth layer to mark project sites in Pennsylvania and surrounding states that I had researched and written about for CHRS reports and interpretive products (video documentaries, illustrated histories, wayside panels, exhibits, etc.). After three days, I had pinned 255 project sites. I was then pulled away to more pressing work and have not resumed that GIS inventory. I suspect—

calculating from an average of 40 historic properties and locales that I have researched for CHRS projects in typical years—upwards of 1,000 project sites across the Mid-Atlantic states remain to be pinned.

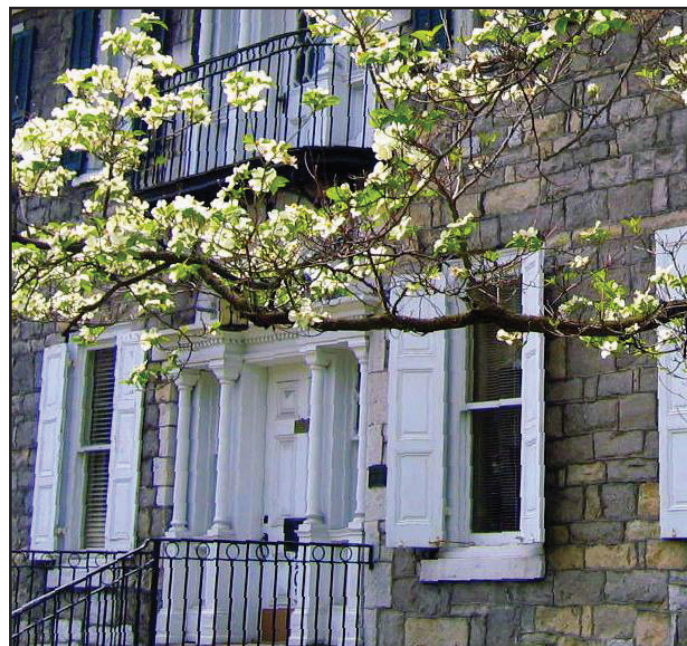
In all of the traveling I did for CHRS projects and privately commissioned work prior to 2010, I had somehow avoided Centre County and thus knew nothing of its illustrious history. That began to change in October 2010, when I rode my motorcycle out to a place called Bellefonte to visit an old college friend, Julia Spicher Kasdorf, now a veteran poet and Penn State professor. On our first date, Julia and I motored over the Seven Mountains to spend a day in Big Valley, home to scores of Julia's Amish and Mennonite relatives. In the fragrant and bustling confines of Belleville's sale barn, we quickly renewed old ties. I returned to Bellefonte two weeks later and soon adopted a schedule of spending every

other weekend visiting Julia in the Centre County seat. Bellefonte became my new home in the fall of 2012, when I moved here and opened a satellite CHRS office in the old hardware store building on the northeast corner of the W. High-Water Street intersection. Julia and I were married on New Year's Day 2013.

Mostly through Julia's agency, I was drawn into activities of the Bellefonte Historical and Cultural Association (BHCA). At first, I mostly observed the work of historic preservation and interpretation in and around Bellefonte. It appeared to be in capable hands, and I had other assignments on my plate. Then, in July 2018, the passing of one of those capable hands—retired architect Mack Mahan—left vacancies on the Roland Curtin Foundation Board and the Bellefonte Historic Architectural Review Board (among others). I agreed to fill one vacancy, then the other. I am still volunteering in those

capacities, as my crash course in Centre County history continues. I became a member of BHCA's Board during the pandemic, and in 2024 was appointed chair of its reconstituted Historic Preservation Committee. The committee's focus in recent months has been the welfare of the St. Paul African Methodist Episcopal Church on St. Paul Street. It has not had a pastor or congregation since 2022, and the building is in desperate need of shoring up and repair. As a locus and representation of Bellefonte's rich African American history, it clearly warrants preservation.

If you want to learn more about that history, you can read some of my contributions to the Black History in Centre County project on the website's blog: <https://blkctrco.psu.edu/2023/08/17/project-blog>. Most recently I posted Part 3 of my history of Bellefonte's A.M.E. congregations and their places of worship.



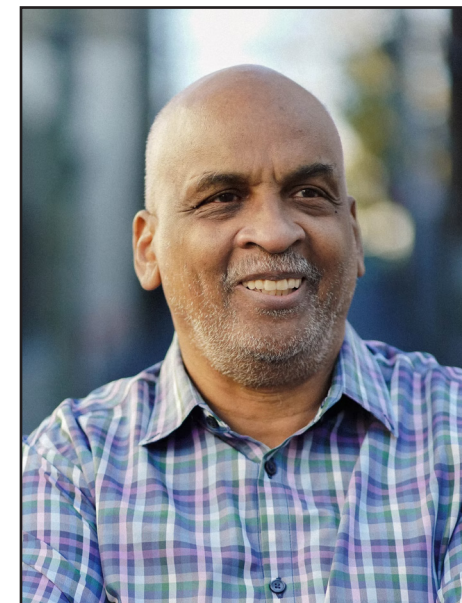
“Out Loud in Bellefonte” is Back!

For almost a decade, the Bellefonte Historical and Cultural Association (BHCA) provided financial support for a lively literary arts performance series. After pandemic-related disruptions, Out Loud in Bellefonte has returned to a new home at The Print Factory on Allegheny Street. Six readings per year will be offered, sponsored by BHCA.

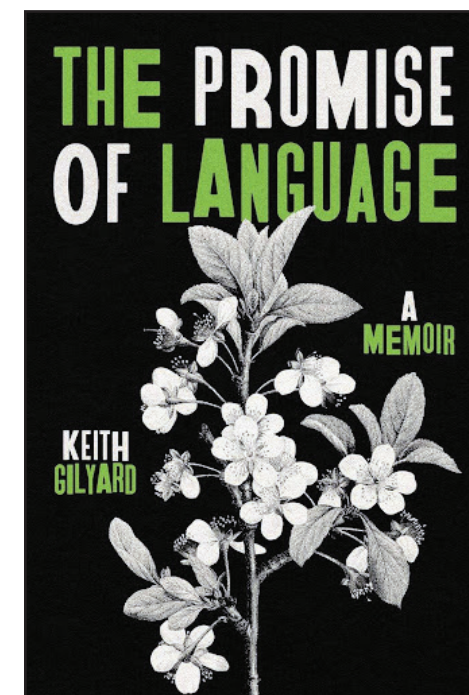
Organized by Julia Spicher Kasdorf, Out Loud in Bellefonte was named for a line attributed to Émile Zola: “If you ask me what I came to do in this world, I, an artist, will answer you: I am here to live out loud.” The project was inspired by Colina (Jordan) Seeley, a local woman who also lived out loud.

At a BHCA meeting during the bitter January of 2013, she demanded, “We must have poetry!” Colina (1928-2017) was a child resister of Nazi occupation in her home in Utrecht, the Netherlands, where her father, an anthropology professor at the University, was targeted by the Nazis. As a young woman, she immigrated to the United States to study social work and went on to become a politically engaged social worker, mother, and wife of a Penn State chemistry professor who was also an immigrant. On the death of her first husband in the 1990s, Colina moved to Bellefonte and joined the BHCA.

From 2013 until 2020, Out Loud in Bellefonte was sponsored by BHCA and hosted by the Bellefonte Art Museum. Teresa Stouffer, Mary Vollero, and Patrick North were among the volunteers who worked with Julia to provide refreshments



and organize the range of events that included literary readings, storytelling, and children's readings. After the pandemic, Out Loud sponsored one poetry festival and one full season of readings hosted by St. John's Episcopal Church with work by Steven Deutsch and Mary Rohrer-Dann.



Out Loud at The Print Factory will resume as a literary series with readings scheduled for the first Fridays of February, April, and May, then September, October, and November. Most readings will feature a single author, often occasioned by the launch or recent publication of a new book, but small groups may also present readings. We have also heard requests for the return of the Bellefonte Moth storytelling sessions.

The first Out Loud in Bellefonte took place on Friday, February 7 at 6 p.m. We are delighted to revive the series by launching a memoir and new collection of poems by distinguished Penn State professor Keith Gilyard.

A two-time American Book Award winner, Gilyard read from *The Promise of Language: A Memoir* as well as forthcoming *On Location: Poems*. His vivid coming-of-age story, set against the rhythms of Black America's vernacular language and music, recalls the Cold War Era, and Civil Rights, Black Power, and Black Arts movements. Always focused on language, Gilyard brings his experiences and realizations to life with memories of barbershops, churches, schools, and his own emergence as an expressive author and professor.

Mark your calendars for 6 pm on April 4 and May 2 and watch for announcements of upcoming Out Loud in Bellefonte events at The Print Factory, which will be announced shortly.

by Julia Spicher Kasdorf



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What other ideas do you have? _____

BHCA is not yet able to accept electronic payments.

Your \$20.00 membership payment accompanied by this form can be mailed to:

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