

Butler County Historical Society

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Butler County *Historian*

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Music Bingo

BYOB!



“Not Your Grandma’s Bingo”



**Identify Tunes Spun by DJ Craig to Fill In
Your Bingo Cards!**

**Friday, April 28, 2023 | Doors open at 6:30 PM, Bingo starts at 7 PM
Highfield Community Center, 229 Highfield Road, Butler**

RAFFLE BASKETS | 50/50 | CASH PRIZES

**Tickets: \$15 Pre-sale, \$20 at the door
To purchase tickets call 724-283-8116
or visit butlerhistory.com**



Echoes From Our Past *2023 Cemetery Walk*

Echoes From Our Past brings history to life as costumed actors portray citizens from Butler County's past on the beautiful grounds of North Side Cemetery.

Saturday, May 20th 2023

There will be two tour times, one at 11am, the other at 2:30pm

Tickets available beginning March 29th

Order online at butlerhistory.com, by calling 724-283-8116, or in person at the Lowrie House 11am to 3pm Wednesdays through Fridays.

Tickets are LIMITED for this event and always sell quickly!

This year's characters include

Major George Washington Reed

Clarence & Rosetti Fry

Josephine Hammond Marshall

David C. Black

Paul Bobek



Butler County History Day

So popular last year that the Tourism Bureau is bringing it back!



~SATURDAY~MAY 13th~

Historical sites around Butler will host free open houses.

Everyone is encouraged to visit as many as they can!

BCHS will present a program at the Little Red Schoolhouse and host representatives from Washington's Trail at the Senator Walter Lowrie House.

Details are still in the works, but watch our Facebook page and Butler County Tourism Bureau's website for times and event updates!

Gettysburg, Here We Come!

June 9-11, 2023



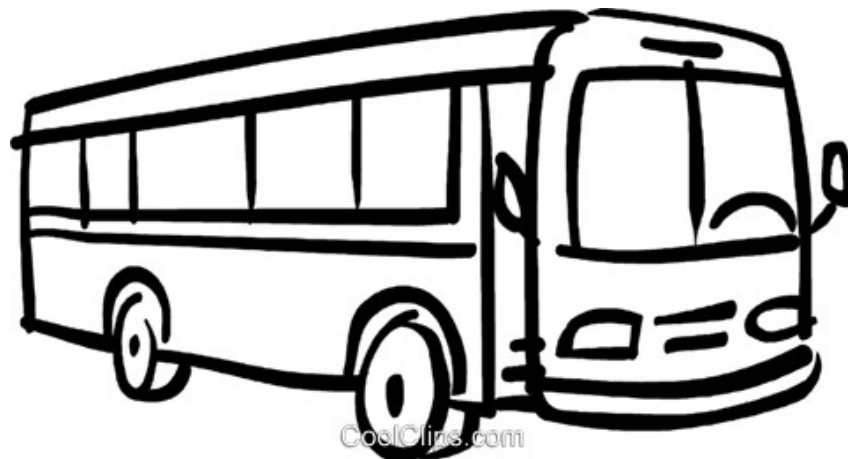
JOIN US for the return of our popular **Civil War Bus Trip** with award-winning historian **Brad Pflugh**. Brad authored a best-selling book on Butler soldiers in the Civil War, and is a gifted speaker with the rare ability to make history come to life!



Cost: \$175 for Historical Society members / \$185 non-members

(Does not include hotel & meals.)

For more information about the trip or to reserve tickets,
please call BCHS at 724-283-8116 or visit
www.butlerhistory.com



CostClips.com

Inside The Archives

~ Savoring The Past ~

Outreach Coordinator Mackenzie Herold shares her thoughts about three special objects from our Sullivan-Shaw Collection. The Sullivans owned the Senator Walter Lowrie House from 1839 to 1986.

Growing up, cooking always held a bit of magic for me. My family crammed themselves into my grandmother's kitchen and spent hours talking, laughing, and singing as we prepared dinner or got ready for the holidays. The kids would fetch ingredients, darting underfoot as they took flour or sugar from one workplace and delivered it to another. My aunt and mother hovered over the stove, stirring saucepans as they chatted about how school was going or what the preacher had to say. My father, grandfather, and uncle would sit at the table debating the best way to prepare the main course for the night. And in the middle of it all stood my grandmother, watching the frenzy as she peeled and chopped vegetables at a pace no one could ever dream of matching.

This background is what inspired my fascination with the Sullivan family cookbooks. Three generations of Sullivan women kept handwritten journals of recipes, paper clippings, and little comments about moments in their lives. The intimacy of these books drew me in as I carefully turned page after page. Illegible in some places and achingly precise in others, these books offer a trove of information about the family that came to reside in the Senator Walter Lowrie House.



The oldest of the three cookbooks belonged to Susan Sullivan. The wife of Charles Craven Sullivan and mother of five children, Susan's cookbook is a testament to her large and affluent family. Many of her recipes could have fed a small army, with measurements in quarts and pints rather than cups. Others reveal the family's access to ingredients that less affluent Butler citizens would not have had the privilege of using. Oysters, for example, would have been an expensive commodity in the 1860s and 70s due to Butler's distance from the coast.

Susan's recipe book is well-worn. Many of the recipes have faded over the years and pages have been cut or torn out. Susan had a habit of pasting or pinning newer recipes over the tops of pages that were already filled. She sometimes asked friends to write their own recipes in her book; other



recipes she clipped out of books or newspapers, like a muffin recipe that was pinned above one that she had already written. My favorite part of Susan's cookbook was a delightfully colorful image of meat, fish, and poultry dishes pasted into the back section of the book. A bit of research, revealed that the image was from *Beeton's every-day cookery and housekeeping*. [sic] Originally published in 1861 and again in 1877, *Beeton's* was filled with detailed advice on everything from how to properly receive callers and choose friends to the duties of house staff.

Out of the three cookbooks, my personal favorite belonged to Susan's daughter, Louisa. "Louise" began the cookbook in 1912 and used it for more than recording recipes and cooking tips.

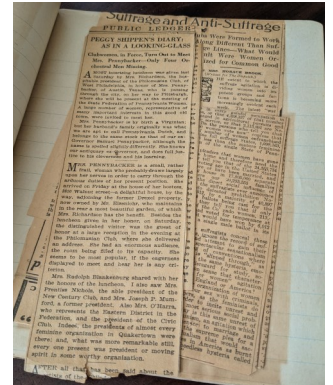
Between her book's pages, Louise tucked newspaper clippings about World War I and the fight for women's suffrage. One newspaper article detailed the volunteer-organized drive to knit socks for soldiers, while another focused on how to stay mentally healthy while reading news about the war (which is still quite relevant today).

Inside the Archives, cont'd

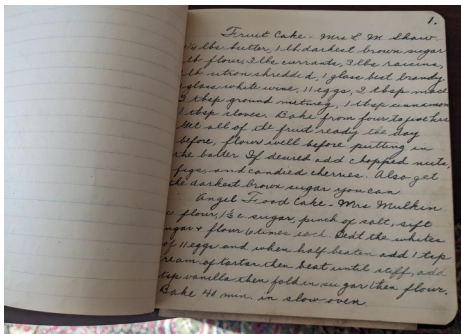
My favorite World War I article that Louise pinned to her cookbook was about a French prophetess named Madame De Thebes, who proclaimed that she had read a plaster cast of Kaiser Wilhelm II's palm and saw that he would die while suffering from insanity.

Along with the newspaper articles in her cookbook, Louise tucked a small Red Cross poster, several journal entries, and lists of friends who had called at the house. Interestingly, many of the recipes that she did include were attributed to the same friends who called. Louise also had a propensity for commenting on the recipes that she wrote down. For instance, a black chocolate cake recipe was deemed "excellent" and a molasses cookie recipe was given a "Tried (good)".

The last of the family cookbooks belonged to Louise's daughter-in-law, Mary Iola Shaw. Mary's recipe book contains a number of differences from the previous two. She tried to keep an



index, though it didn't quite work out. Large gaps of pages were left blank, presumably to be filled at a later date. For most of her recipes, "Iola" wrote down whom she got them from. Many of the recipes in the first few pages were Louise's, who in turn got them from Susan. And, nestled into the blank pages were little scraps of paper that had smaller recipes and doodles on them.



The most interesting fact about this cookbook is that it is the only one of the three that included in-depth oven instructions. The recipes in both Louisa's and Susan's cookbooks often omitted the oven heat or

time. Iola's recipes not only gave more precise times, but also included how the oven needed heated. It is important to note that oven temperatures as we know them did not start to be used until the 1940s. Before then, most recipes would call for a quick, slow, hot, or moderate oven (which makes for a fun guessing game when you try to recreate them).

From a historian's point of view, these cookbooks are filled with information about the socio-economic status of the Sullivan-Shaw family and the world that surrounded them. But to only observe these books through an analytical lens would diminish their humanity. When you focus on one family for so long, your field of view narrows and it can be easy to forget that these people did not live in isolation. They had friends and neighbors. They were members of clubs and churches. They had lives that we will never fully know.

When I tried my hand at making a few of these recipes, I couldn't stop thinking of the women who wrote them down. Did Susan guide Louise's hands as she formed the cookie dough? Did Iola write down her mother-in-law's recipes while sipping tea? How many mistakes were made and laughed at? How many times did they forget an ingredient? These are the moments that we'll never truly know about, but would have possibly meant everything to these women.



Think of your own lives. What will you leave behind and what will slip through the cracks? Cherish the little things, like half-filled notebooks. You never know who will be grateful for them in the future.

-Mackenzie Herold

Message from the Executive Director

It Takes A BIG Village

We're rushing headlong into another packed event season and once again I wonder what I was *thinking* when I made the schedule?! Short answer: I've grown to have absolute confidence that our members, Board, volunteers, and sponsors will step up and somehow make everything happen. We're only able to produce so many great events because we have *your* support.

Community involvement isn't a given; I know how lucky we are to have all of you. Events like Cemetery Walk, Hair-Raising History, and the full-contact sport known as Christmas Cookie Walk generate income that enables us to protect and preserve Butler's historical buildings, objects, photos, and documents. So *thank you all* for your support. You make all the difference! A few special thank you notes:

>The porch deck and pillars at the **Lowrie House** are in sad shape, but thanks to a **\$3,000** anonymous donation, Jason and the crew at Arris Construction will soon repair, paint, and get us looking respectable again!

>The same anonymous hero is also donating labor and funds to install a working bathroom at the **Little Red Schoolhouse**. (Cue cheers from staff & visitors alike.)

>As his Eagle Scout Service Project, **Jeremy J. Dawson** will install new **Cooper Cabin** signs next month. Now the Cabin will have signs that drivers can actually see on Rt. 356 and Cooper Road!

>The **Jeep Heritage Festival** gave us a grant to convert a section of our storage garage into a **Bantam Jeep** research library! And I can't mention our Bantams without a shout-out to **Bill Ringeisen**. Bill maintains our Bantam BRC factory truck and drives it to local events. Thanks to him, everyone can see and appreciate this wonderful artifact from Butler's history.

>The Powerhouse Threesome of **Deb Dixon, Carol Sexton, and Helen Staiger** baked over 70 dozen excellent Christmas Cookies between them, adding significantly to our 300 dozen total. (I personally tested all the cookies and they were *good!!*)

Happy Spring, everyone!

-Jen

2022-2023

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Office/Tour Hours

The BCCHS Office and Research Library at the Senator Walter Lowrie House (123 W. Diamond Street) are open to the public Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. or by appointment.

Membership Updates

If your name is highlighted on the address label, it's time to renew your membership! Please renew online at butlerhistory.com or by sending a check to our office with your renewal information.

THANK YOU SO MUCH for your continued support. Every membership is important; each one enables us to preserve Butler County's past for future generations!

And a warm welcome to our newest members:

Tracy Huselton
Tashi & Jennifer Lewis
Keith W. Lowe
Kathleen Norante

Paul Vensel & John
Revelli
Deborah Sacco
Wayne Smith

Our Mission

*The Mission of the
Butler County
Historical Society is to
collect, preserve,
maintain, and interpret
the historical
documents and sites of
Butler County's rich
history.*

Butler County Historical Society

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