

Preserving and interpreting the history and culture of the Wyalusing Valley region to educate residents and visitors about our past



Wyalusing Valley
Museum Association

MOVE TO MAIN STREET

Capital Campaign

The Wyalusing Valley Museum has a plan—to own our own building on Main Street in Wyalusing.

Four decades after the creation of Wyalusing's initial museum display, the fundraising has begun for a permanent home in downtown Wyalusing.

Since 1976, museum exhibits have been located at various times in the town hall, the lower level of the library, and most recently on the grounds of the historic Grovedale Farm, but never in a building owned by the museum association.

A Timely Gift

The trigger for a move back into the town of Wyalusing came from the Wyalusing Masons who, in the wake of merging with the Union Masonic Lodge, offered their Lodge Hall on Church Street to the museum. The hall was constructed in the 1870's, and it was the first place the town council met after incorporation in 1887. Over the years it served variously as a firehouse and jewelry store, as well as a meeting place for the Grange, G.A.R. and Oddfellows.

This donation was followed in short order by another generous offer — the option to purchase an historic Main Street building, built in 1897 and owned by Marvin and Maxine Meter since 1977. The combination of 25 Main Street and the Lodge Hall would give the museum 10,000 square feet of space. We look forward to serving our community in a recognizable location as a stable presence on Main Street.

In a community that treasures its history, the Wyalusing Valley Museum will once again rely on the generosity of residents and businesses, to make this dream come true.

*Creating a new
home
for community
memories*



25 Main Street

Steps to a New Museum

- Phase 1—Purchase Building \$150,000
- Phase 2—Interior Renovations, both buildings (estimated \$350,000)
- Phase 3—Façade Renovations, both buildings



Lodge Hall on Church Street



Wyalusing Valley Museum exhibits in our current location

Where We Began

History is generational, and so is the ongoing story of the Wyalusing Valley Museum.

Our nation's bicentennial marked this area's first commitment to a public exhibition of its rich history. Known as the Community Historical Museum, it was situated throughout the summer of 1976 in the meeting room of the Wyalusing Town Hall. It took a tragedy in July of 1979 for the seeds of that effort to grow into the Wyalusing Valley Museum.

An airplane crash, claiming the lives of two members of the Bicentennial Museum Committee— James Eaton, Chairman, whose young son, John, was also killed, and Col. John W. Keeler— would turn out to be the impetus for finding a long-term home for the museum in the Wyalusing Public Library, which, on the heels of a successful fund drive, celebrated its grand opening on Nov. 2, 1980.

The next generation, followed in the footsteps of their fathers, serving on its board over 25 years at the library and almost 15 so far at Grovedale Farm. Ann Eaton Overman and the late Bobbi Keeler Lord (deceased 2008), respective daughters of Eaton and Keeler, have been there to continue and strengthen the mission of the Wyalusing Valley Museum. Ann Overman continues to serve on the museum board today as it looks toward moving into its new home.

A magnanimous offer by Kay Welles Homer allowed the museum to lease space on the grounds of the historic family farm, known as Grovedale. Kay's father, John R. "Jack" Welles was another member of the 1976 Bicentennial Museum Committee. The move allowed the museum to set up more extensive and diverse exhibits, more storage for archival material and additional office space.

Aside from Eaton, Keeler, and Welles, the first Museum Committee that paved the way in 1976 was comprised of David Dibble, who taught history for almost two decades in Wyalusing to both students and adults; Vincent "Bill" Bendinsky, long-time barber and scout leader; and Elizabeth Homet, teacher and local historian. All are deceased. Rounding out that committee were Mark Honchell, architect, and Mike Kilmer, owner of the Kilmer Insurance Group.

Now the museum is ready to take the next step in its growth. The Board of Trustees feels we, as a community, are fortunate to have a Curator as proficient and knowledgeable as Morgan Clinton. "Morgan is the right person to take us to the next level, keeping us abreast of the technology that will make local history come alive," said Mary Skillings, President of the Wyalusing Valley Museum Board.

What do we do?

We are storytellers. Through artifacts, photographs, letters, and manuscripts, our exhibits tell the stories of real people who have lived along the Susquehanna River between Laceyville and Standing Stone, from Native American fishers and farmers to twentieth century soldiers and entrepreneurs.

We also take our show on the road, providing history programs in the classroom and for community meetings.

We are story savers. We preserve the objects in our collection so that they can continue to tell their stories to our grand-children and great-grandchildren. Keeping these artifacts safe and accessible is an important part of our mission.

There is no fee to visit the museum. Funding for the regular operation of the museum comes from donations, memberships, grants and fundraiser events.



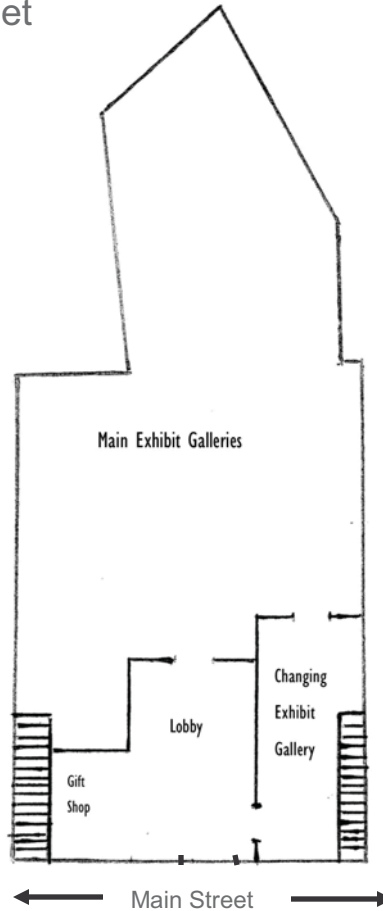
In-school programs for Veterans Day and third grade classes

Exhibit Areas in One Space

Although the building is currently divided into three businesses, 25 Main Street used to be one store with an open floor plan. The flexibility of wall locations provides a lot of scope for designing exhibits that flow.

The square footage of the building means we will be able to fit almost all of our exhibits under one roof. The first floor of the building is already one level, so modifications for handicapped accessibility will be relatively minor. And the back area is built on a cement slab which will allow us to place heavy artifacts like the linotype machine from our local newspaper, the Rocket-Courier.

Phase 1: Purchase 25 Main Street



Phase 2: Renovations

- Handicap accessibility upgrades for the first floor of each building
- HVAC upgrades to each building
- Fire safety upgrades
- Security system
- Interior remodeling and exhibit design for Main Street building

These renovations will allow us to move into the buildings

Historic preservation is an important part of our mission. We look forward to caring for these historic structures over the years. Phase 3 of our campaign will be a longer process to plan the restoration of the facades of these two 19th century buildings.

Floorplan Concept for the first floor of 25 Main Street

What will we do with the new space?

The museum is currently using about 7,500 square feet of space in four different buildings. The Lodge Hall and Main Street building would provide us with approximately 10,000 square feet of space within two adjacent buildings. The majority of the museum's exhibits will be housed on the first floor of the Main Street building, and the second floor will be used for storage for the immediate future. The lowest level of the Lodge Hall will display the carriages and farm equipment in the museum's collection, including the hook and ladder truck that once occupied a garage adjoining the Lodge Hall when the fire company was housed there. Space for meetings, public programs, and classes will be maintained on the main floor, and the upper floor will house the museum's reference library.

We are excited about the programs and activities we will be able to do in these new spaces.



You Can Help!

When you build a log cabin there are different sized logs and different pieces of wood for window frames and doorways. But the chinking between the logs is important too. Creating a new home for the museum is just like that—we will need some big donors, but donations of all sizes are important. We want this to be a full community effort. All donors, whatever their gift level, will be acknowledged in the museum’s newsletter, anonymously if desired. We are working on some creative ideas for acknowledging donors on a recognition wall in the new museum. Pool your money with family members or friends to memorialize a surname or someone you love. Know that we deeply appreciate your support.

Donor Levels

Chinking	up to \$99	Oak	\$5,000
Pine	\$100	Chestnut	\$10,000
Aspen	\$500	Cherry	\$25,000
Maple	\$1,000	Walnut	\$50,000 and up

Donations can be sent to

**Wyalusing Valley
Museum Association**
PO Box 301
Wyalusing, PA 18853

Or contact us with further questions

(570)746-3979

wyalusingmuseum@frontiernet.net

Visit us on the web at
wyalusingmuseum.com

MOVE TO MAIN STREET CAMPAIGN



**Wyalusing Valley
Museum Association**

PO Box 301, Wyalusing, PA 18853

Name: _____

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How would you like your gift to be acknowledged publicly?

Gift of _____ or Anonymous

In memory of _____

Amount of enclosed donation: _____