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*November 2013*

### **The Lower Merion Academy Signature Quilt**



In the mid-1800's, Victorian quilters began a popular tradition of making *signature quilts*, signed and quilted remembrances, to honor family members or friends. At a time when many loved ones moved away and seldom, if ever, returned home to see their families again, these quilts served as precious remembrances for those families who had only occasional letters to connect them with friends and relatives back home. In its simplest form, a *signature quilt* is one that is constructed using a single pattern block with signatures of family or friends inked or

embroidered on each block. Since those early days, *signature quilts* have been given as gifts by families and friends for special occasions, such as, birthdays, graduation, and anniversaries.

In 1988, in celebration of the 175<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first day of school in the Lower Merion Academy, Bonnie Atwood and Jo-Ann Dooley, members of *The Friends of the Lower Merion Academy*, designed and sewed a *signature quilt* (48" x 77"). Attendees of this anniversary event were given the opportunity to sign the memento quilt. Again, in 2012, in celebration of the Lower Merion Academy's 200<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, *The Lower Merion Historical Society* had the quilt on display and had it signed by the attendees at the Bicentennial celebration. Now the keepsake quilt has more than 300 signatures! Stop by the Lower Merion Academy and see our *signature quilt* on display in the General Reference Room.

## New Website is in Development - Pre-Beta Version

Our current website was launched in November 2001 and to date, we have had over 1.7 million visits. While we are very impressed with that success, it is time to update our page. We are adding more functionality in response to suggestions from our membership survey. In the

new version look for improved search capabilities, videos, the addition of more searchable resources and the ability to pay for your membership online. Our web development team is comprised of Richard Cardona, Amit V. Shah, Max Buten, Joanne Murray and Patrick Doyle who have all been volunteering their services. If you would like to volunteer to help create and edit web videos for a possible Lower Merion Historical Society *You Tube* channel, please contact Joanne Murray at [lmhistory@comcast.net](mailto:lmhistory@comcast.net)



### W. Robert Swartz Collection



One of the greatest strengths of The Lower Merion Historical Society is its photography collection. The W. Robert Swartz Collection is the reason we have thousands of historic images, which are now safely preserved at the Lower Merion Academy. In addition to being our photographer, Bob ran a well frequented - with the feel of a country store - *The Ardmore Camera Shop* on Lancaster Avenue in Ardmore.

The Swartz family donated Bob's collection of negatives that he produced or collected over the years. This collection is comprised of about 6,600 negatives in various formats from large glass plates down to 35mm negatives. During the past 2 years, thanks to Max Buten and Bob McCormick who are pictured here, this collection has been classified and organized into an Excel spreadsheet that is currently available for use at the Academy. When our new website is available, this will be one of the new collections that will be available online for our patrons to search.

If you would like to volunteer and help organize and catalog other collections, please contact Max Buten at [lmhistory@comcast.net](mailto:lmhistory@comcast.net)

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## Building Photographs- Preserving Today for Tomorrow's History

This photograph from [our Buildings web](#) is part of our ever-changing history.



QUAKER LODGE MOTOR HOTEL, ARDMORE, PA.

As late as the 1948 atlas, this Motor Lodge was listed as N. Darwin Gallup's house, but in the October 1940 *Tourist Court Journal*, Gallup stated, "We have five cabins at present all with running hot and cold water, and we expect to install three more before spring. We have 22 rooms in our lodge house . . . and accommodations for 100 trailers with electricity and running water to each." -- from *Lincoln Highway*, by Brian Butko, page 53.

In the post-war housing shortage, veterans were allowed to stay at the Gallup trailer park from November 1946 until June 1, 1947. Fifteen of the 25 trailer camp residents are war veterans. New trailer camper stays will be limited to 30 days. --from Kathy O'Laughlin's column in *The Main Line Times*, 1996-11-28

Were beach umbrellas common on the highways? Why did the Motor Lodge use Ardmores as the address, when it wasn't in Ardmores? Answers to these questions would be welcome at [LMHistory@comcast.net](mailto:LMHistory@comcast.net).

The photo shows a postcard from Jerry Francis' collection. The W. Robert Swartz collection also includes a photo of the card.

The back of the postcard refers to The Lincoln Highway across America, which was dedicated on Halloween, exactly a century ago. We know it as Lancaster Ave, a toll road which the state bought from the Pennsylvania Railroad in 1917.

The sales message from Mr. Gallup is cute!

Today it's still an auto-related building, but nothing is the same except the address, which still isn't Ardmore. See the [photographs of old and new](#) here.

***MISSION STATEMENT OF THE LOWER MERION HISTORICAL SOCIETY***

The Lower Merion Historical Society is an organization dedicated to *Preserving Our Past For The Future*. This is accomplished by stewardship of local history, education of the community, preservation of historic resources and outreach to promote awareness of the cultural heritage of the Township of Lower Merion and the Borough of Narberth.

