

# **LMHS.02: Lower Merion Historical Society oral history collection**

**02**

**Finding aid prepared by Celia Caust-Ellenbogen and Michael  
Gubicza through the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden  
Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories.**

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Last updated on November 09, 2012.

Lower Merion Historical Society

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	Lower Merion Historical Society
<b>Creator</b>	Lower Merion Historical Society.
<b>Title</b>	LMHS.02: Lower Merion Historical Society oral history collection
<b>Call number</b>	02
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1976-1999
<b>Extent</b>	2.2 linear feet
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Abstract</b>	<p>There are approximately 65 oral history cassette tapes in the Lower Merion Historical Society oral history collection, 1976-1999. The township of Lower Merion in Montgomery County, Pennsylvania was first settled by Welsh Quakers in 1682. It is part of the "Main Line," a collection of affluent Philadelphia suburbs located alongside the Pennsylvania Railroad line that was built between Philadelphia and Harrisburg in the mid-19th century.</p>

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## Biography/History

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In August of 1682, Welsh Quakers from the County of Merionethshire landed in Pennsylvania. These "Merioneth Adventurers" were bound for the "Welsh Tract," granted to them by William Penn. Today, the area is Lower Merion township and Narberth borough, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania.

Lower Merion township has become known for two industrial giants, the Pencoyd Iron Works and the Autocar Company. The Pencoyd Ironworks was started by the Roberts family in 1852. The company became a major bridge and structural steel supplier. The Autocar company moved to Ardmore from Pittsburgh in 1900. Autocar was a manufacturer of commercial vehicles. The company moved to Exton, Pennsylvania in 1953.

In the mid-19th century, the Main Line of the Pennsylvania Railroad was constructed, running from Philadelphia to Harrisburg and Pittsburgh. The route passed through Lower Merion, and like other "Main Line" towns, the area developed into an affluent suburban community due to its convenient location.

### **Bibliography:**

Francis, Gerald A. "Celebrating William Penn's Vision and the First Welsh Settlement in Lower Merion and Narberth: 1682-2007." The Lower Merion Historical Society, 2007.

Lower Merion Historical Society. "Business and Industry." Accessed November 7, 2011. [http://www.lowermerionhistory.org/texts/first200/business\\_5.html](http://www.lowermerionhistory.org/texts/first200/business_5.html).

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## **Scope and Contents**

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There are approximately 65 oral history cassette tapes in this collection, dated from 1976 to 1999. They are recordings of residents of Lower Merion township and most are labeled with the name, date of interview, and, occasionally, address. Some of the histories have been transcribed and can be found in the Lower Merion vertical files.

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## **Administrative Information**

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Lower Merion Historical Society

Finding aid prepared by Celia Caust-Ellenbogen and Michael Gubicza through the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories.

### **Sponsor**

This preliminary finding aid was created as part of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania's Hidden Collections Initiative for Pennsylvania Small Archival Repositories. The HCI-PSAR project was made possible by a grant from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

## **Access Restrictions**

Contact Lower Merion Historical Society for information about accessing this collection.

## **Immediate Source of Acquisition Note**

Unknown.

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## **Controlled Access Headings**

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### **Geographic Name(s)**

- Lower Merion (Pa. : Township)
- Main Line (Pa.)
- Montgomery County (Pa.)

### **Subject(s)**

- Oral history