

THE CARD - Vol. 15. No. 2. Issue 170. February 2004

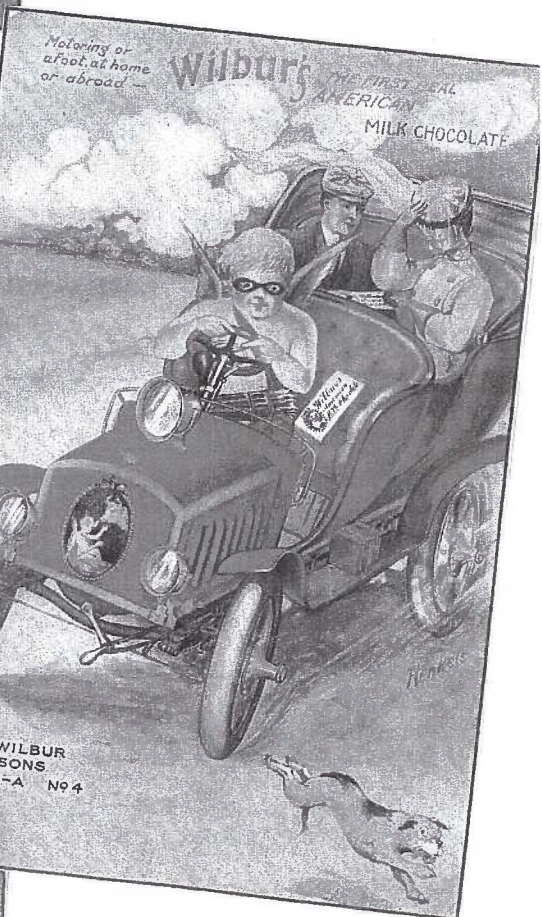
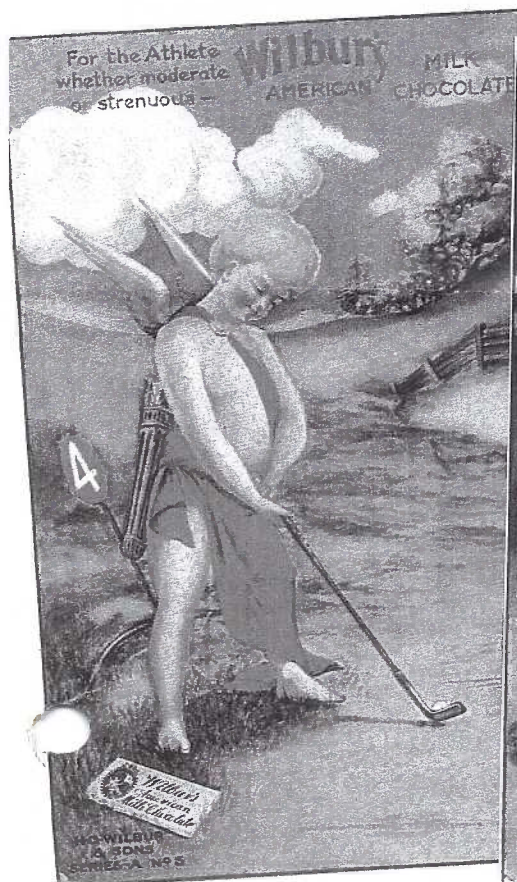
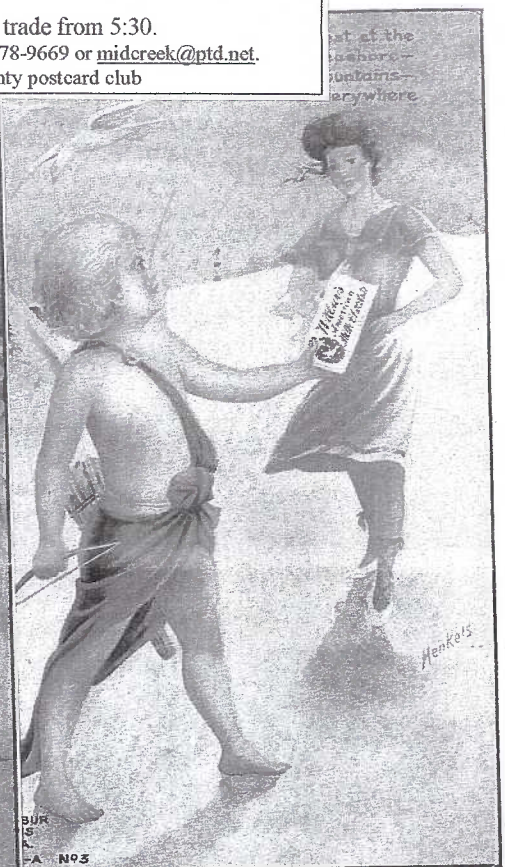
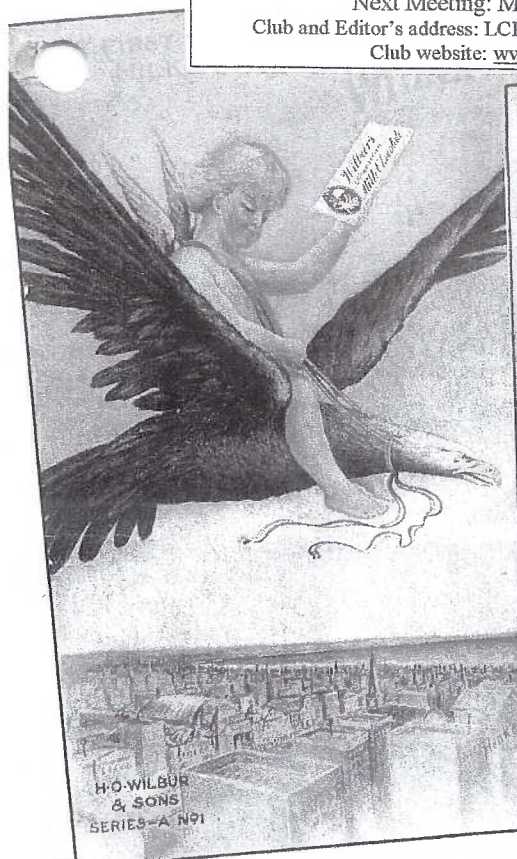
Monthly Publication of the Lancaster County Postcard Club, Lancaster, PA.

Enjoying postcards through education and entertainment.

Next Meeting: Mon., Feb. 16, 2004. Farm & Home Center. But, sell and trade from 5:30.

Club and Editor's address: LCPC c/o Jim Ward, 1795 Kleinfeltersville Rd., Stevens, PA. 17578-9669 or midcreek@ptd.net.

Club website: www.playle.com/clubs/lancaster or Google search: lancaster county postcard club

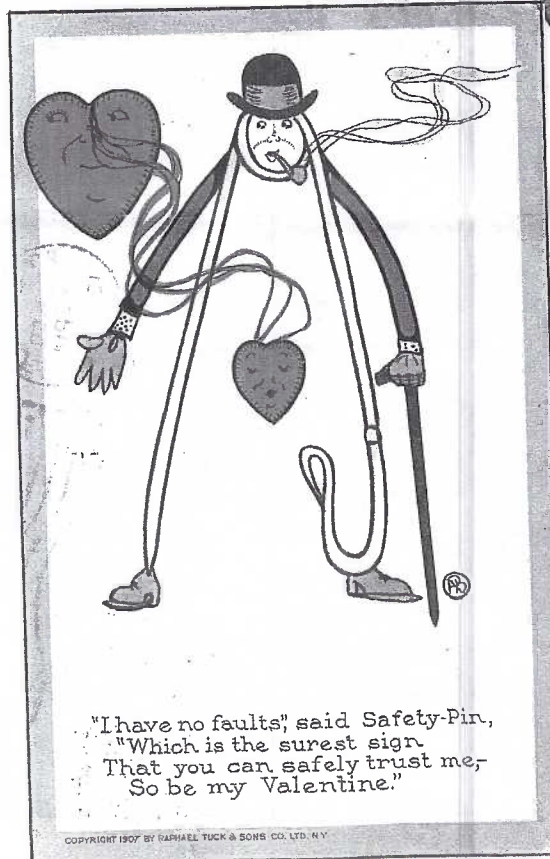
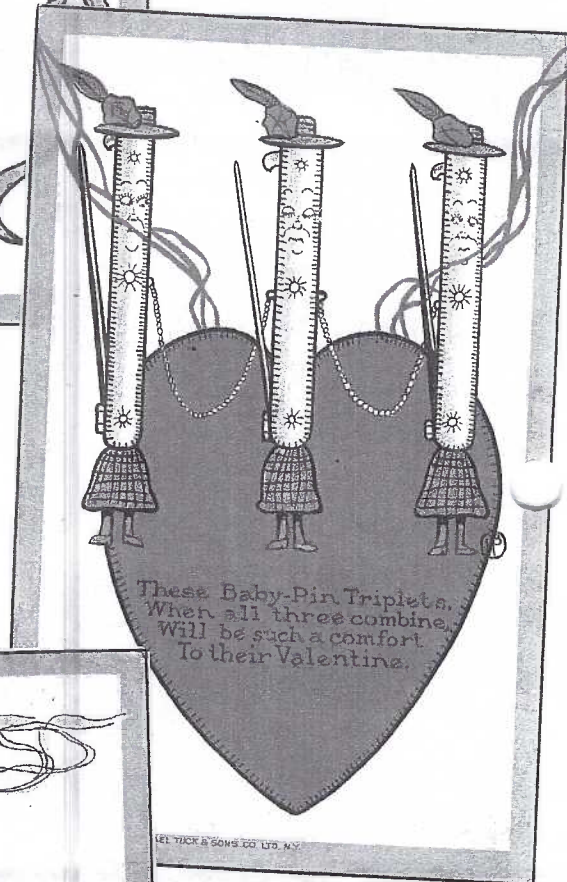
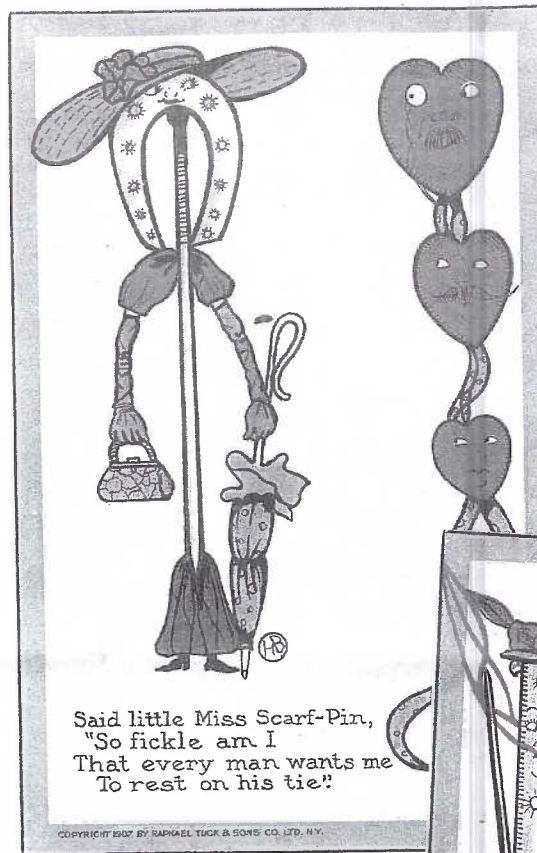
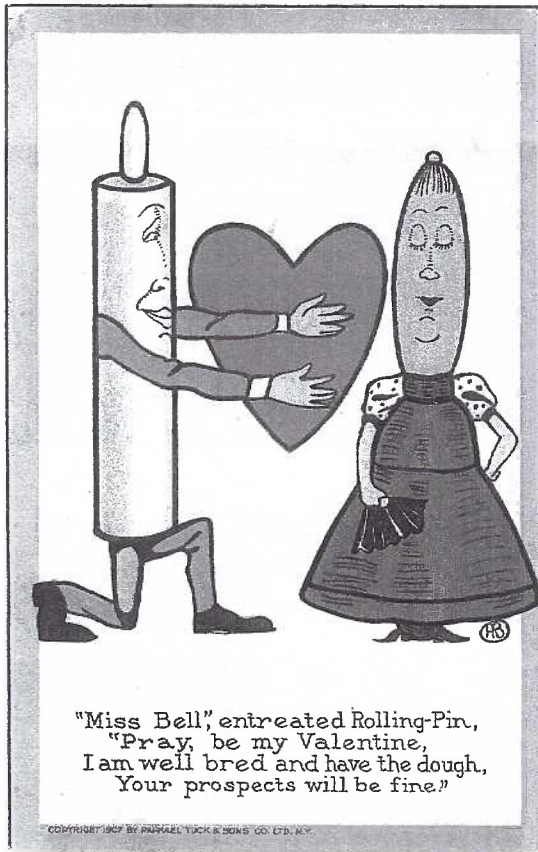


Fantasy Valentines

Coupling Pins and More from Raphael Tuck

All of us know the British house of Tuck and Sons were pioneers in postcard publishing. By the time their *Valentine Series #4 Coupling Pins* was published in 1907, hardly a topic had been missed by Tuck or any of the other major publishers in Europe and the US.

Many postcard subjects have spanned the gap of generations from the days of Edwardian England to the 21st century. Quite a few have not. The fantasy valentines in our article include some subjects that are alien to today's generation – and perhaps, even to its parents.



Top – Do ladies still wear **Scarf Pins**?

Left center – **Rolling Pins** still show up in a few kitchens but most have found their way to a wall display of antique kitchen tools.

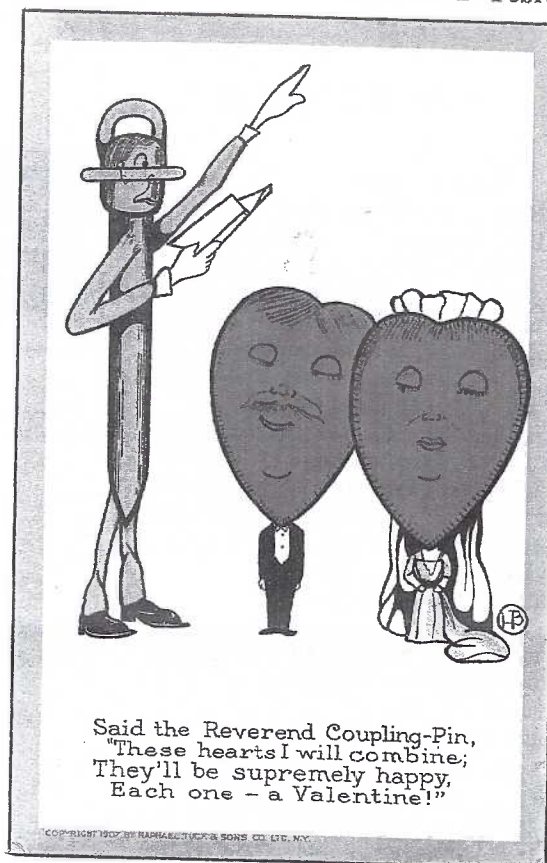
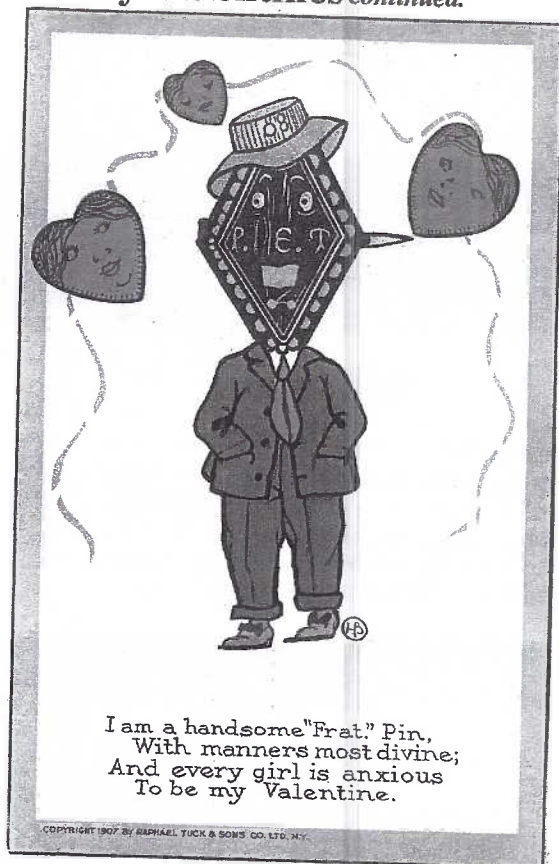
Right center and bottom – **Baby Pins** and **Safety Pins** have been relegated to the back of a bureau drawer since Velcro came on the scene.

Next page, top left – Are **Frat Pins** still in vogue? Not likely, if the demise of college fraternities is any indication.

Next page, top right – and finally, the title of our Tuck set, the **Coupling Pin**. It's not likely many readers under 60 years old will know these giants in our pin collection. They were used to connect railroad cars before the locomotive pulled the train down the track.

Generation gap or not, these valentines with animated objects have found their niche as a special genre of *fantasy postcards* collected by many.

Continued on next page.



We know of a seventh card - a clothes pin and his amour, the paring knife. Contact the editor if you've seen more Tuck pins.

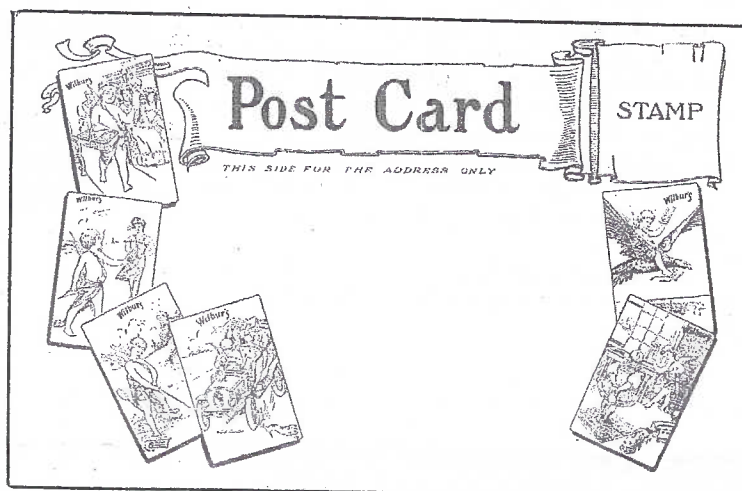
Cover Cards - Cupids are not just Found on Valentines.

No one questions Cupid's annual appearance on Valentine's Day. The messenger of love is the most recognized image for the holiday...aside from the heart. Before ladies were conscious of weight, candy was, first and foremost, the gift of choice from beau to friend. Today, flowers are taking a big share of the Valentine gift market.

All of this leads us to the series of six numbered postcards on our February cover. H. O. Wilbur & Sons, first in Philadelphia and then in Lititz, PA, published the cards before 1907 (see illustration). The reverse repeats, with b/w miniatures, all six cards in the series, enticing the collector to look for those needed to complete the series.

On each postcard, Cupid plays a different role. **Top left** - On #1 he flies across the city astride an eagle. Who deserves his box of chocolates? **Top center** - On card #2 he strides down the aisle of a first class railroad car (fancy chair and window curtains) and appears to be selling his Wilbur wares. **Top right** - Card #3 finds him on the beach (lighthouse on the horizon) offering chocolates to a bathing beauty.

Bottom left - Ah, Cupid, you've taken reprieve in a leisurely game of golf. Your lone chocolate box lies on the turf on postcard #5. **Bottom center** - Cupid is cajoling the little girl on card #6. Will he talk her into trading his chocolates for the doll she holds behind her back? **Bottom right** - Armed with road goggles, Cupid is a chauffeur on card #6 speeding his lovers to their destination. Is this an elopement? They share a box of Wilbur chocolates. Cupid has another box by his side, and the artist has painted on the radiator an advert - a Wilbur Cupid and cow.



The series (it might easily be called a set, except that it's labeled "series") is very difficult to complete. Notice the competing collectors' markets for the cards: hometown Lititz collectors, as well as those who like postmen, lighthouses, old autos, trains and especially, golf. It's no wonder those of us who've found all six cards can vouch for how difficult they were to find!

Windows to Our Past, Vol. 2

Do you have a copy of your own? Have you done your part to sell extra copies of our club's book? Compared to many local histories, they're a bargain at \$30 incl. PA sales tax. You can now get copies on consignment by calling Ray Dennis at 290-7948. Members with retail outlets - we'll loan you a "counter copy" for your customers to scan. Remember, when more copies are sold we'll see color again in *The Card*.

Lancaster's Stehli Silk Mill

By
Bryan Benner

The Stehli Silk Mill isn't a building you can miss when driving through the Rossmere neighborhood. It takes up nearly an entire block along Martha Ave. It is also distinctive on at least half a dozen Lancaster postcards. These cards show different stages of development of the factory complex and include captions claiming it to be the largest silk mill in the United States, and even in the world.

Besides the Lancaster mill, the largest and oldest in this country, there was also a Stehli silk weaving mill in Manheim, PA. It was later used as the H. C. Burgard Elementary School (no longer standing). Stehli also had plants in High Point, NC, Harrisonburg, VA and Waynesboro, VA.

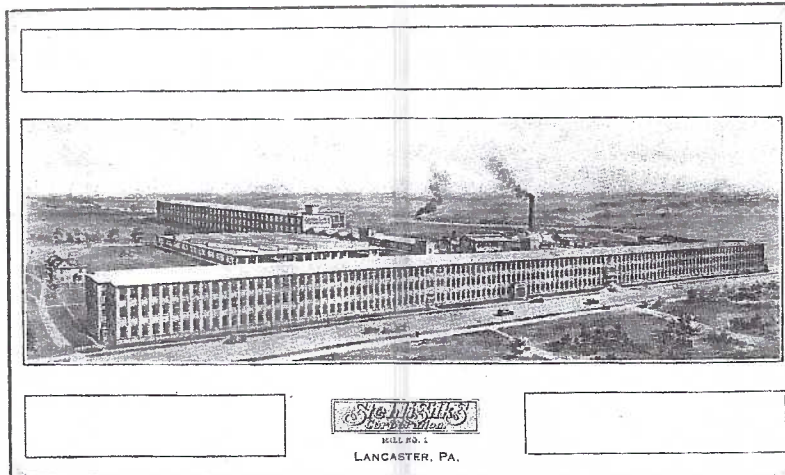
A Booklet of Stehli History

The best description of Stehli's operation is an excerpt from the Stehli Silks Corporation's booklet describing its facilities. The Conestoga Publishing Co. of Lancaster, Pa. published the well-illustrated booklet that has no print date; however, the text and photographs suggest the late 1920s or early 1930s. The following (*in quotes*) is text for the Lancaster Plant:

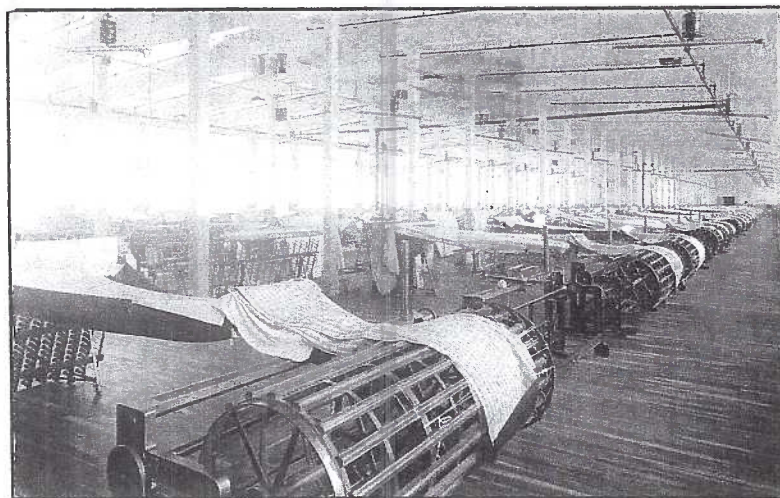
"In the spring of 1898 the Stehli Silks Corporation – a firm established in 1837 in Obfelden, Switzerland – began the manufacture of silk merchandise in the United States.

"A mill was erected in Rossmere, a suburb of Lancaster, PA. The site was named in honor of George Ross, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, whose country home was nearby. Building operations were commenced in the fall of 1897, and when completed in May of the following year, the building measured 45 by 307 feet. Later, the structure was enlarged several times – the last unit was completed in 1925.

"The main building, 900 ft. in length, is said to the longest structure in the United States devoted to the manufacture of broad silks.



An undivided back (pre-1907) black and white drawing shows the expanse of the Stehli Silks Corp. The building fronts on Martha Avenue in Rossmere. The home (far left behind the mill) was the superintendent's residence. It was razed in 2003.



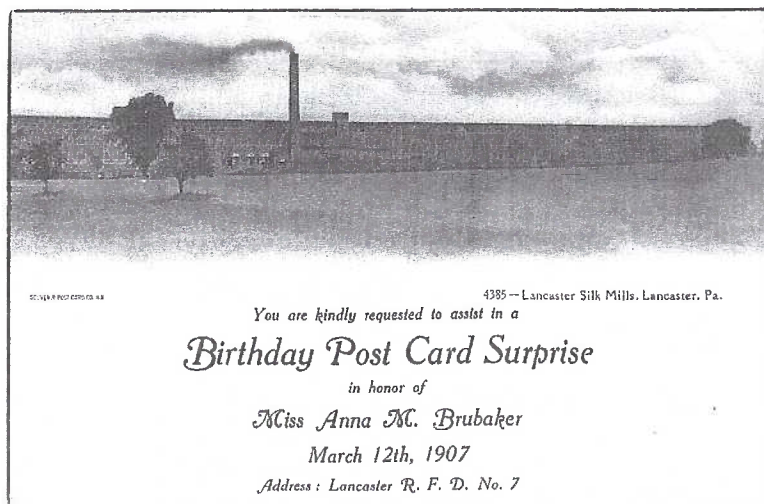
This real photo view of the winding room gives an indication of the immense length of the silk mill. A sprinkler system lines the ceiling.

Floral Gardens

"This is one of the most up-to-date plants of its kind in America, or elsewhere, and is admirably equipped with modern machinery which is kept to the very highest standard. A spacious lawn adjoins the building which, with a profusion of multicolored flowers and well-trimmed shrubbery, forms an unusually attractive setting. Its picturesque surroundings are said to be superior to those of any other textile establishment in the world.

"Stehli Silks are well known to merchants everywhere as the standard of perfection. The greatest care and precision are exercised by skilled operators in all manufacturing departments."

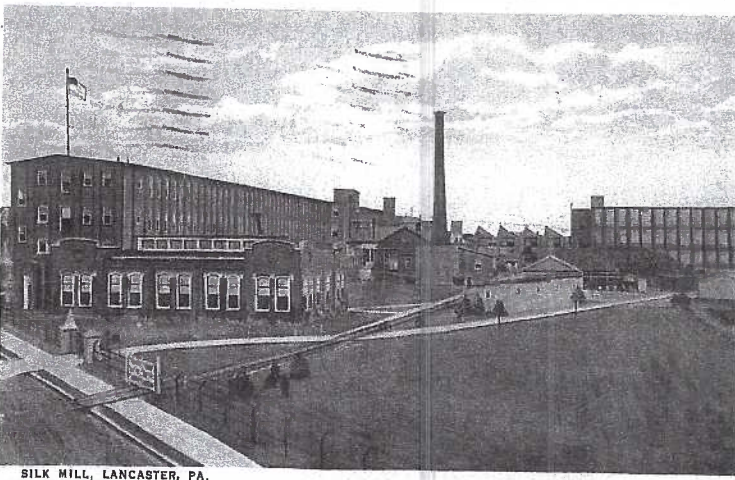
In addition to the text above, the booklet's photographs of the Lancaster mill and its gardens show a rose pergola, two different fish ponds, potted plants, an apple orchard, many trees, shrubs and flower beds. Interestingly, none of these are apparent on the postcards we've seen of the mill. Some landscaping is visible on what is probably the most recently published card, Curt Tech's white border #A-91113 published in 1922, but nothing as elaborate as the booklet photographs.



This Souvenir Post Card Co. has an u/d back. Its message space on the front was over-printed, in two cases, with birthday PC surprise announcements for local girls. Were Misses Brubaker and Weaver workers at Stehli's mill?

The Final Chapter

The company produced fine silk at the Lancaster plant until it closed in 1955 when, with the advent of synthetic materials, much of the silk industry was declining. The building was then used by RCA (Radio Corporation of America) for use in color television tube production. The 106-year old building is currently a warehouse operated by the Conestoga Warehouse Corporation.



Curt Teich printed this color view, #A-9113, in 1922. It looks northeast from the PRR overhead bridge and shows the one-story women's dining room addition on the left. The green lawn in the foreground became an extensive floral garden. One of the three small evergreens near the pavement still stands, now 80 ft. tall.

The Garden Legacy

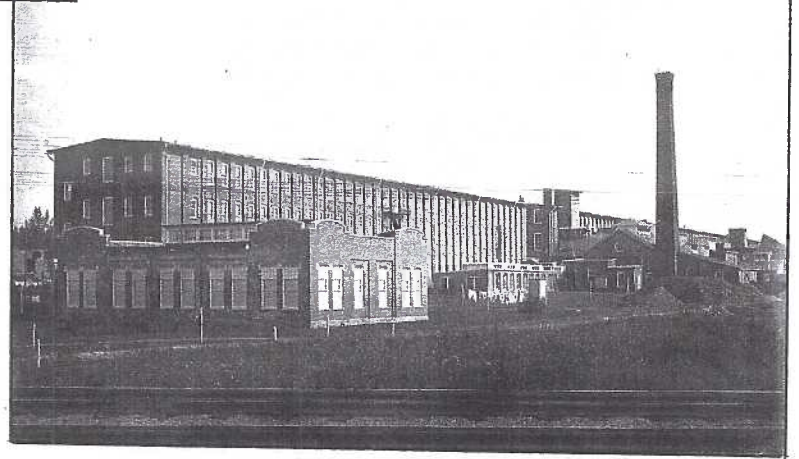
The gardens (about 2 ½ acres) whose plantings were directed by plant superintendent Alfred Schneebeli, must have been planted after the PC views were printed. Little remains of the gardens today. Two river rock raised flowerbeds are among weeds at the front of the building. The gardens, on both sides of Martha Avenue, are only indicated by two trees remaining of a row that lined the opposite side of the street (behind the Occupational Development Center building). Both trees have seen better days and Hurricane Isabel was not kind to them. It also appears that a number of trees behind the complex are still from the original gardens.

As is apparent on the Stehli postcards, new buildings were added on a regular basis. The buildings by the tall smokestack were the factory's coal fueled power plant. The one-story structure at the southwest end of the main building was the ladies' dining room. The house at the north end of the main building (on the b/w artist drawing) might have been the superintendent's home. The house was razed last summer to allow more space for tractor-trailers to maneuver at the Firestone Warehouse, north of the old mill buildings.

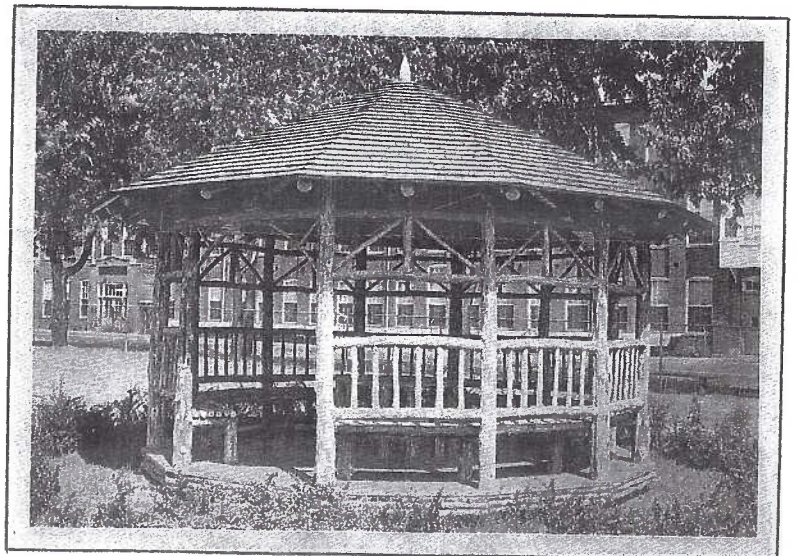
Local Wobblies

One interesting chapter of the mill's history took place in 1907 when about half of the 800 workers at the plant went on strike. They were members of the Industrial Workers of the World, a labor union known in those days as "the Wobblies." An agreement was reached with no violence or radical stands by either labor or company. This was often not the case at a time when workers in the textile industry often had to fight for fair wages.

Editor's note: Bryan has written several articles for *The Card*, each of them most welcomed. As many of our members know, Bryan's background is in horticulture, ergo his unique approach to this postcard history of Lancaster's Stehli silk mill.



A similar view shows the women's dining room and the huge square-sided brick smokestack next to the power plant. Tracks in the foreground were for the Rossmere trolley that traveled along Marshall Ave. through a tunnel under the Pennsylvania Railroad.



The Stehli Silks Corp. booklet included many views of its floral gardens. This one shows the rustic pavilion. The gardens were near the dining room and also included fish ponds and rose pergolas.

LCPC dues are accepted now. Our fiscal year ends March 2004. Your dues for April 2004 through March 2005 may be paid now - \$10 for one member and \$5 for each additional member at the same address. **Make your check payable to LCPC.** Send it to our Membership Chair, Betty Beck at 11 Cinder Hill Dr., Lititz, PA 17543. Thank you.

January Meeting

Ugh! What a night! Icy remnants of Sunday's snow and bitter cold kept all but the stalwarts (or kooks?) indoors. Just 39 members showed up but they had their own little party. Our 14th anniversary cake (courtesy of Oregon Dairy and Betty Beck) had a colorful children's snow scene in keeping with the competition theme - Winter Sports and Activities.

Monthly postcard competition -

Ruth Frankhouser FIRST Downhill Thrills

Walter Mowrer SECOND Fun in the Snow

Sandra Shaub THIRD Children at Wintertime Play

Honorable Mention

Jim Ward Fun on Snow and Ice

February's theme is Valentines on a board.

We all missed Ruth Moyer's participation on the monthly card discussions. She's keeping Harold company and he's doing just fine. Both will be with us next month.

Set Up and Selling - Dick Bishop, Jim Ward, Mike Middletown, Al Shaub, Jere Greider, Gary Hawbecker and Leighton Stover.

Presidential Announcements - President Doug Milliken announced his committee chairs. Current reports are included.

Membership and Roster - Betty Beck. Dues may be sent immediately. *See notice at the top of this page*

Club Table - Betty Kreider. LCPC PCs always on sale

50/50 Sales - Sharon Gromis

Publicity - Tom Beck. Over 2200 website visitors.

Future Postcard Shows - Dede Schaeffer

Monthly Postcard Competition - Ruth Moyer

Newsletter, The Card - Jim Ward, Betty Beck, Dot

Fry, Gwyn Fulmer, Ruth and Harold Moyer

Property - Harold Moyer and Jim Ward

National Postcard Week - Brian Frankhouser

Historian - Mary Darrenkamp and Jim Ward

Social - Sharon Gromis and Ruth Moyer

Windows to Our Past Sales - Ray Dennis. Local members may take a few copies of Vol. II on consignment. *See page 3, lower right box for details.*

Annual Expo - Jere Greider. Our club's show will be August 21 (always the 3rd Sat. in Aug.) Local LCPC members, *only*, have the privilege of sharing a booth and should contact Jere now concerning their plans.

Library Coordinator - Carol Giona

Local Views - Doug Milliken

Other Views - Teresa Jumper

General Interest (w/prices) - Brian Frankhouser

General Interest (no prices) - Dale Shaub

Specialty Subjects - Ray Dennis

Other Topics - Bryan Benner

Ten Cent Box* - Keith Gromis

*This is a new facet of LCPC's meetings. It resulted from cards donated by Shirley Peterson from the Lanc. Stamp Club along with cards from Bill Seigford and Jim Ward. Members with unwanted PCs should bring them to the meeting and give them to Keith. Any member may buy from the box @ 10¢ each. Keith will be in charge of the account. Keith is Sharon Gromis' son. He tallied up \$4 in sales during the first meeting!!

January Program

Member participation is always great fun. As usual, we delighted in a variety of subjects. The common denominator was the number 4.

4 year old's birthday (RP) Jim Ward

4 men and trumpets (RP) Jere Greider

4-leaf clover (local hand-drawn PC) Bryan Benner

4th of July Clapsaddle PC Sandra Shaub

4 dogs - "Letter openers" Dick Pendergrast

4 RP children celebrate New Years Walter Mowrer

4 Easter rabbits playing music Jessica Shaub-Meyer

4 horses and riders on redwood stump Newlin Groff

4 black babies, "chocolate drops" Gene Sowers

4 weighty dames in their dressing room Tom Beck

4 coins (1 a Lincoln 1¢) in Tivoli fountain Al Shaub

Rebus PC - My heart pants for you Betty Beck

4 pretty little girls Betty Sowers

4 hearts showing two cupids Doug Milliken

4 babies in man's pockets (a T. Roosevelt endorsement) Carol Giona

Thanks to all, for their contributions!

February Program - X.

Jim Ward is in charge. His closest friends will tell you it may be Valentine month, but this X doesn't stand for a kiss. His projected cards will have a deeper (and sometimes higher) meaning.



Seasonal Humor from artist Charles Twelvetees