



DATED — N. Clair Clawser of Lititz has parlayed his hobbies of running and historical markers into a book, "A Guide Of Pennsylvania Towns," and a calendar showing the most photogenic of the state's Keystone Markers. Duncannon's marker graces April in the current version of Clawser's calendar.

Keystone Markers inspire booklet and calendars

◆ By WADE FOWLER
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N. Clair Clawser of Lititz has parlayed an avocation into a hobby, or vice versa.

At age 65, he still works part time in his longtime vocation as a printer in the old-fashioned sense of the word — hand-set type and letter press.

But his hobbies of running and historical markers have fed each other over the years in this fashion. As a boy taking trips with his family, Clawser developed an interest in the colorful cast iron markers the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation

began installing in the 1920s and '30s to tell motorists they had happened upon this town or that creek or stream.

A nonprofit group called the Keystone Marker Trust was incorporated recently to see to the preservation of the markers damaged by the elements and by years of neglect.

Jack Graham of Elliottsburg is a member of the board of the organization and his efforts to restore signs in Duncannon, Loysville, Landisburg and Ickesburg have been documented in these pages.

In this, the causes of Graham and Clawser intersect.

Clawser's early interest was fueled by his second consuming hobby, running, which he took up in earnest at age 33. As he traveled across the state to various running venues, he made sure to go the long way around so he could pass through as many small communities as possible. He took pictures and recorded the information cast into the Keystone Markers when he encountered them.

The result was his book "A Guide of Pennsylvania Towns," which he has updated and reprinted six or seven times since 1965.

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Keystone Markers —

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The book lists by county all of the Keystone Markers he has encountered over the course of his lifetime.

That first edition in 1965 comprised just 28 pages. It numbers 74 pages in its current incarnation.

Clawser hand set the type and printed the book himself in his own shop with a Chandler and Price letter press.

The book lists signs (and the attendant verbiage) for Perry County communities:

Blain — Named for James Blaine. Founded 1778. (Cast iron sign.) Blain — 1763 settled by James Blaine of Londonderry, Ireland. 1822 Douglass Mill; 1858 Mullicaulisville; 1877 Incorporated as the Borough of Blain. (Large wooden sign.)

Duncannon — Formerly Petersburg, renamed for Duncannon family. Founded 1844.

Ickesburg — Named for Nicholas Ickes. Founded 1818.

Landisburg — Named for Abram Landis. Founded 1793.

Loysville — Named for Michael Loy. Founded 1830.

Marysville — Named after railroad station. Founded 1870.

Millerstown — Named for David Miller, pioneer settler. Founded 1790.

New Bloomfield — Named for one of the early Penn Manors. Founded 1823.

New Buffalo — Named for Bison which formerly crossed river here. Founded 1823.

New Germantown — Named for Germantown near Philadelphia. Founded 1820.

In addition to his book, Clawser produces a calendar featuring the most photogenic of the signs he has encountered in his travels. The picture for April in the current calendar shows a Keystone Marker for Duncannon.

For information about the book and the calendars, readers may contact Clawser at Box 113, Campbeltown 17010.