

Lancaster Farming *Antiques Center*

'Hershey' Means More Than Chocolate

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HERSHEY (Dauphin Co.) — The words "Hershey's" and "chocolate" are synonymous to chocolate lovers everywhere. But

those words confer an additional sweet meaning if you are a collector.

Hershey's tins, advertising pieces, candy wrappers, and memorabilia create a whole new interest in the story of chocolate,

and of Milton Hershey, who founded the Hershey Chocolate Company in 1894. If you're lucky, you can even find some items from 1876, when Hershey began to manufacture caramels in Philadelphia.

Hershey apprenticed in Lancaster and manufactured candy in Lancaster and Philadelphia before his huge success in Dauphin County, where he founded the town of Hershey.

One of the best places to learn about the Hershey Chocolate Company and its founder is the Hershey Museum, 170 W. Hersheypark Drive, Hershey.

Pieces on display tell the story of Hershey Chocolate. Some little-known events can aid those who are interested in collecting Hershey-related items. For example, did you know that at one time, the company manufactured cocoa butter, toilet soap, soap granules, tar soap, and other soaps?

The reason behind the soap venture is that cocoa butter is a liquid essence of the cocoa bean. The excess cocoa butter was extracted from the beans. Since cocoa butter is a moisturizer often used in soap, it seemed natural to manufacture products using it. Evidently, the venture was not highly successful, as the company only made it for a short time.

The Hershey Company even manufactured gum — but not chocolate flavored. Instead, Hershey sought to compete with Wrigley and offered mint-flavored gum from 1915-1924. But they ceased production because it wasn't profitable.

Of interest to farmers is that Hershey started a Lebanon milk processing plant in 1914, which closed in 1938. In 1929, Hershey opened their own dairy, which they sold to Lenherbrook Farms in 1971.

The Hershey Confectionery Shop Kitchen has been recreated to show what Hershey used to experiment with candy making in Philadelphia. Gas lights, plaster molds, crocks, scales, and other items from that era will also be of interest to collectors.

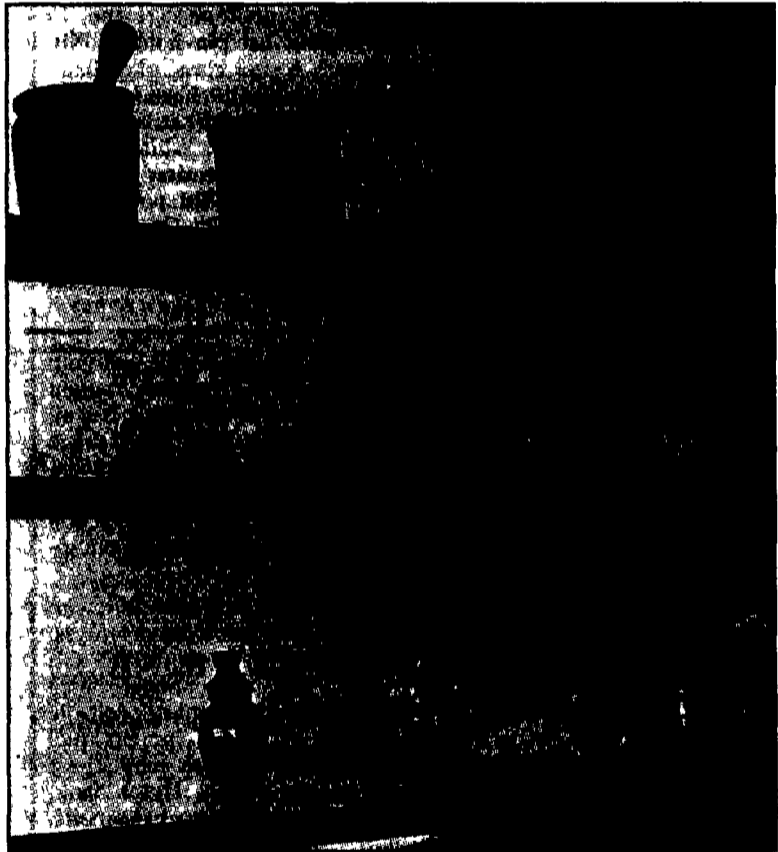
Each item and section of the museum are clearly marked so that visitors can tour the museum independently.

In addition to tracing the fascinating story of Milton Hershey and chocolate, the museum also follows the lives of chocolate factory workers from 1894 until 1994, Hershey's link to Cuba, displays of Pennsylvania German pieces, and American Indian artifacts collected by Hershey.

For more information on the museum, call (717) 534-3439.



Hershey's kitchen where he experimented making candy is recreated at the museum.



The glazed stoneware crocks held ingredients for chocolate making. The other items were also used to hold flavors, colors, and extracts during the early days of Hershey's candy making venture.



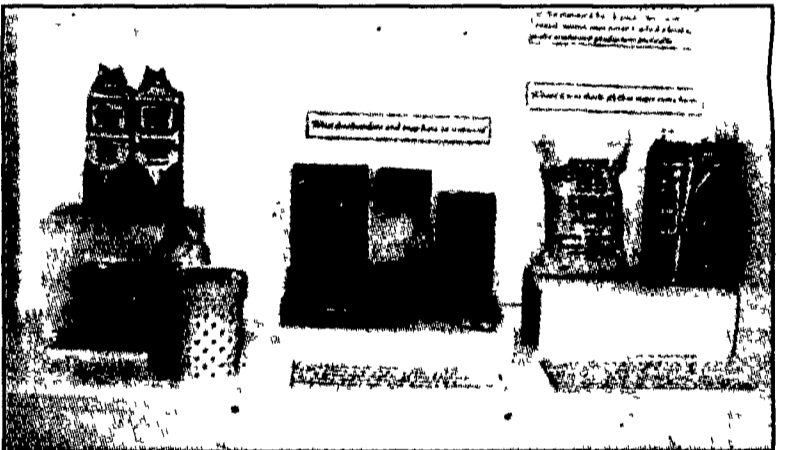
Some of the products Hershey introduced lasted only a few years, which makes containers such as this Hershey chocolate tin, container for hot chocolate drink, and even "Bis Crisp" to go with the hot chocolate.



These heavy plaster molds were used to create marshmallow bunnies and birds to be dipped in chocolate.



This is a rare example of Hershey's turn-of-the-century promotional art (circa 1900), used when Hershey was still making cocoa and milk chocolate in Lancaster.



Did you know that Hershey's at one time experimented with making toilet soap, soap granules, shave soap, tar soap, and selling sugar?



This display case at Hershey Museum shows items used by Pennsylvania German families, including Hershey's. The top shelves hold imported English earthenware. The bottom shelf contains a wooden butter print, cast iron trivet, pewter candlesticks, teapot, tin coffee pots and creamer.