

Elizabethtown College 125th Anniversary
National Historic Preservation Trust This Place Matters Campaign & Campus Historic Building Survey
Based on the National Parks Service Historic American Building Survey
2024 Summer Creative Arts and Research Program SCARP
Ava Barton Class of 2027
Jean-Paul Benowitz, Director of Prestigious Scholarships and Fellowships and Public Heritage Studies



John F. Steinman (1884 – 1980)

Shirley W. Steinman (1897 – 1979)

John Frederick Steinman was a graduate of the Yeates School, the Hotchkiss Schools, and Yale University. He was the publisher and chairman of the board of Lancaster Newspapers Incorporated. The Chairman of the board of the Intelligencer Printing Company. Co-founder of WGAL, Inc., and WGAL Television, Inc. He was a trustee for the Lancaster General Hospital and through the John Frederick Steinman Foundation he was the benefactor of Franklin and Marshall College. He also supported the Lancaster County Association for the Blind, Lancaster Country Day School, Young Women's Christian Association of Elizabethtown College, St. Joseph's Hospital, Lancaster Osteopathic Hospital, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Mental Health Association in Lancaster County, the Fulton Opera House Foundation, and the Lancaster Cleft Palate Clinic.¹ John Frederick Steinman was born in 1884 and died in 1980 at age 96. He is buried at the Woodward Hill Cemetery in Lancaster County Pennsylvania. His parents were Andrew Jackson Steinman (1836-1917) and Caroline Morgan (Hale) Steinman (1855-1946).²

Shirley (Watkins) Steinman was born on June 11, 1897 in New York. She died in 1979 at age 81 and is buried at the Woodward Hill Cemetery in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. Her parents are Benjamin Franklin Watkins (1855-1943) and Shirley (Chenault) Watkins (1871-1912). She had an older and younger brother, Franklin Chenault Watkins (1894-1972) and Edmund Nash Watkins (1901-1965). Shirley and John Steinman were married in 1933.³

¹ "John Frederick Steinman, Ph. B., LL. D. Historical Marker," HMDB, accessed June 13, 2024.
<https://www.hmdb.org/m.asp?m=5162>.

² "John Frederick Steinman," Find a Grave, accessed June 24, 2024.
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/35880407/john-frederick-steinman>.

³ "Shirley Watkins Steinman," Find a Grave, accessed June 24, 2024.
<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/35880432/shirley-steinman>.

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The Steinman Foundation was considered a friend to Elizabethtown College through generous donations over the years. Below is an excerpt from Chet Williamson's "Uniting Work and Spirit" on the generosity of the Steinman Foundation:

"The fall semester of 1978 saw the announcement of a major gift to the College. Drs. John F. and Shirley W. Steinman presented Elizabethtown College with \$550,000 to renovate the Gible Science Hall and make it the Steinman Center for Art and Communications. It was at that time, the largest single gift ever received by the College. (The center was not dedicated until September 7, 1985. Those unable to be seated in the packed Brinser Lecture Hall viewed the proceedings on closed circuit television operated by communications students.) The Steinman Foundation would prove to be a good friend to the College in the future, making a 1997 pledge of \$500,000 to the endowment campaign to update the Department of Communications and its curriculum."⁴

The John Frederick Steinman and James Hale Steinman Foundations were both established in 1951 and were merged to form The Steinman Foundation in 2014.⁵ John Frederick Steinman and James Hale Steinman were brothers and successful Lancaster County businessmen. They both seeded the foundations with funds from businesses the Steinman family owned. "LNP MEDIA GROUP, Inc. and Intelligencer have made sizable annual contributions. These funds, along with prudent investments, enabled the foundations to increasingly support the needs of Lancaster County and will continue to allow The Steinman Foundation to do so in the future. The Steinman Foundation's grant-making activities reflect the desire of the founders to help improve the quality of people's lives through support for organizations with clear statements of purpose, well-defined programs and strong and competent leadership."⁶



⁴ Chet Williamson, *Uniting Work and Spirit: A Centennial History of Elizabethtown College* (Elizabethtown, PA, Elizabethtown College Press, 2001), 273.; Jean-Paul Benowitz, and Peter J DePuydt, *Elizabethtown College*. (Charleston, South Carolina: Arcadia Publishing, 2014), 20.

⁵ "The Steinman Foundation," Steinman Communications, accessed June 13, 2024.
<https://steinmancommunications.com/the-steinman-foundation/>.

⁶ Ibid.

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Drumore Estate was founded by John F. Steinman in 1938 as a private hilltop retreat in Lancaster County. It's a 16,000 square foot mansion built in the Georgian style. The home is located on the second highest peak in the county with "a view of his newspaper building in downtown Lancaster." The building of the home was built with entertaining in mind with patios, porches, pools, and balconies along with a formal garden. The mansion now serves as a wedding venue. Below is a history of the Steinman Family from the Drumore Estates website:

Christian Frederick Steinman, a Moravian immigrant from Dresden Germany, arrived in the colonies around 1750. Christian was the great-great grandfather of the builder of Drumore. Steinman and his wife, Anna Regina, settled in Bethlehem, where they had a son, John Frederick Steinman – the great grandfather of the builder of Drumore. Soon after his birth, the family moved to Lititz, where Christian Frederick died in 1760. Anna Regina remarried a man named Johann Christian Heyne. Heyne moved the family to Lancaster where he purchased John Miller's "Iron House" on West King Street. This would become the Steinman Hardware store and the beginning of the Steinman empire. In 1777, John Frederick married Sybilla Margaretha Mayer. Among their seven children was John Frederick Jr. – the owner's grandfather — who would take over his father's hardware business in 1811 and become one of Lancaster's most prominent citizens. He helped incorporate the Conestoga Navigation Company in 1825 — the company responsible for building the Slackwater Canal along the Conestoga River from Lancaster to Safe Harbor, connecting the city with river- and ocean-going traffic. John Frederick Jr. married twice: first, in 1811, to Maria Gill, who died shortly after the birth of their daughter Mary Gill Steinman; and second, in 1824, to Mary Smith Fahnestock. It would be their youngest child, Andrew Jackson Steinman – the owner's father — who would bring the family into their most notable business – the newspapers. Andrew Jackson Steinman was born in 1836. He was educated in Lancaster public schools and later graduated from Yale. He was a staunch Democrat and member of the Lancaster City Democratic Committee. He also practiced law. In 1866, he became an editor and publisher of the *Lancaster Intelligencer*, a

newspaper that had served the community since 1794. He worked at the paper until his death in 1917. In 1882, Andrew Jackson Steinman married Caroline Morgan Hale. Their two sons, James Hale (born in 1886) and John Frederick (born in 1884), would eventually take over the business in 1915 and expand it into Lancaster Newspapers, Inc. It would be this John Frederick – the great-great grandson of Christian Steinman, who would come to build Drumore. In 1923, the brothers began publishing the *Sunday News* and in 1928 they bought the *Lancaster New Era*. They also, for a time, tried their hand radio and television, owning WGAL from 1929 to 1979, until anti-trust laws forced them to sell. James Hale married Louise McClure Tinsley in 1922 and had three daughters – Louise, Caroline and Margaret (Peggy). James Hale died on December 30, 1962, leaving the media empire in the capable hands of his brother, John Frederick. John Frederick attended the Yeates School, the Hotchkiss School and graduated from Yale in 1906. Although he was rather shy, he was active in the community. He served on the board of Lancaster General Hospital and founded the John Frederick Steinman Fellowship that provided for the training of qualified persons in advanced study of psychiatry, psychology and social work. The Fellowship was part of the John Frederick Steinman Foundation. A lifelong, avid hunter, he was also a member of the Groundhogs, an affiliation he felt was necessary since he lived in the southern end of the county. The Steinmans did lots of entertaining. The Eisenhowers were guests. And, it is rumored that Bobby Kennedy spent the night here.”⁷

John F. Steinman owned an 835 acre farm in the Drumore Township. It was selected as the winner of the Maurice K. Goddard Forestry Award. The Lancaster County Conservation District reported that the farm has one of the largest wooded areas on private county farmland. John F. Steinman signed a cooperating agreement with the Lancaster County Conservation District during the late 1930s.⁸ “The Steinman farm was commended for practicing good forest management



⁷ Megan Witmer, “Steinman History,” Drumore Estate, March 10, 2019. <https://drumoreestate.com/steinman-history/>.

⁸ “Steinman Farm Wins Forestry Award,” *Lancaster Farming*, June 2, 1979. <https://panewsarchive.psu.edu/lccn/sn78001178/1979-06-02/ed-1/seq-14/#words=John+Steinman>

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as recommended by the Bureau of Forestry and for utilizing forest resources rather than preserving them.⁹”

The Steinman family not only left their mark on the College but on the community as well.

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⁹ "Kauffman," *Lancaster Farming*, March 22, 1980. <https://panewsarchive.psu.edu/lccn/sn78001178/1980-03-22/ed-1/seq-39/#words=John+Steinman>

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