

Paradise Past

THE NEWSLETTER
OF THE

PARADISE
Historical
Society

VOLUME 34 • Spring 2024




PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Interested in history? Come to a meeting!

If you are one of the many people who enjoy this newsletter but have never come to a PHS meeting, please consider this as your personal, heart-felt invitation!

All are welcome — you don't have to be a member, our programs will give you new insights into life in Paradise, we're a very friendly bunch, and home-baked refreshments cap every meeting.

Meetings are generally held the first Sunday of the month, from 2:00 p.m. until about 3:30, at the Paradise Township Municipal Building, 5912 Paradise Valley Road. Interested in genealogy? Old buildings or fishing? Local beauty spots? Trains or antiques? Stories of days gone by? Let us know! Check out the meetings coming up listed in this newsletter. And mark your calendar. Hope to see you soon!  Jane Niering, *President*

Show & Tell

APRIL 2024 MEETING

Show and Tell is always a favorite! A roomful of members and friends of the Paradise Historical Society enjoyed tales from attics, cellars, and the dark and dusty depths of closets. Here is a sampling. (Thanks to Laura Layton for keeping track!)

John Layton showed us what he believes is one of the first electric drills, the design of which has clearly made great progress over the years.

Suzie Fretz McCool shared an old horse show program with pictures of horse shows at the Airport Inn. She also talked about a school art project — and shared an old jug she had painted.

Shirley Lansdowne brought a promotional rolling pin from the R.C. Cramer Lumber Co., once located along Fork Street in Mount Pocono. At the time, it also sold general merchandise and household goods.

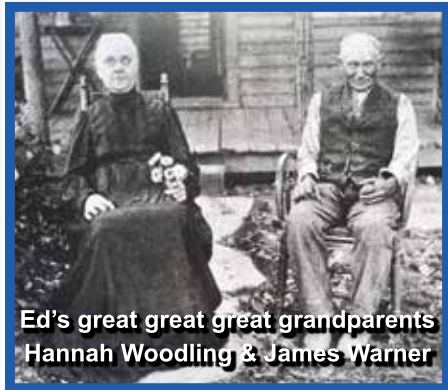
Cathy Watto found a beautiful wooden rolling pin waiting for her in a kitchen cabinet when they bought their house and moved in. She has used it over the years and shared it with the group.



spring
COLLECTING, PRESERVING, AND
DISSEMINATING PARADISE HISTORY

Show & Tell

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Ed's great great great grandparents Hannah Woodling & James Warner

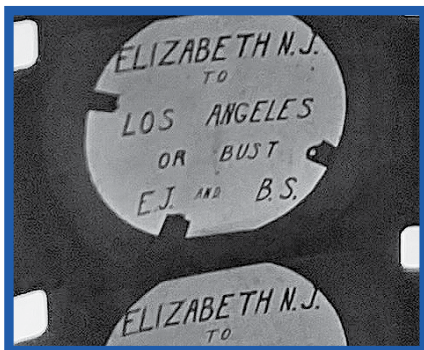
Ed Westcott shared old family photos in front of Jake Knauf's house and the Paradise Church in 1910 at Keokee Chapel.

Suzanne Smith's father was a cook at Pocono Manor, and she has lots of

pictures of parties, menus and related items. Her parents lived in a one-room apartment at the Manor. Later, he worked at Buck Hill and Mt. Airy.

Aaron Imbt

discussed two filmstrips in our archives that we're looking for ways to preserve and view, and passed around some images he captured from the films. One seems to document a road trip. Once more images can be safely captured, we will publish a selection in the newsletter in hopes of identifying the people and places.



Chris Matthy was excited to share a potential acquisition of former camp land by Paradise Falls Lutheran Association, where he lives. See the opposite page for all the details Chris shared with us at the May PHS meeting.



Linford Werkheiser

brought an eclectic mix of items, including a pair of very old high button shoes, an old glass canning jar with rubber gasket; a gold mesh purse known as a bridal bag or flapper bag; a wooden plane; an 1887 cook book; a carpenter's logbook for computing measurements;

and a charming half-figure ladies pincushion, an essential element of any early 1900 boudoir. Lin also shared that his father was a bellhop at Pocono Manor in about 1916.



Peter Gonze

shared an early postcard showing Red Rock Falls, once a well-known tourist



destination on the Paradise Creek. For perspective, he also showed us his own, recent photo from approximately the same vantage point.

Laura Layton displayed 17 remarkable railroad pocket watches from her father's collection. In the early days of railroads, the companies required that employees had to use railroad-approved pocket watches, which had to be inspected for accuracy every 6 months. Laura's father was an approved railroad pocket watch inspector in New Mexico.

Jane Niering brought a 1941 self-published book of poems by Hattie M. Keating, "The Call of The Poconos." This charming collection invites tourists to "Sojourn with us in the Poconos and learn the secret of a real vacation."

Jack Hamblin

displayed personal artifacts illuminating how important local baseball clubs were in Paradise in the early 20th century (as they were elsewhere in the U.S.). First up was a hand-painted sign of the local athletic club, called the "Swiftwater A.C." which Jack dates to 1924. Then he held up a Paradise baseball club woolen uniform, complete with two caps. It looked like a good fit.



PHS

Lin Werkheiser donated the ladies pincushion to the Society's archives. Jack Hamblin donated his 1924 baseball sign and complete wool baseball uniform with two caps for the archives.

And, In May...

On May 5, Chris Matthy, a member and one of the historians of Paradise Falls Lutheran Association (PFLA), discussed the history of the association since its founding in 1922.

(Please note that PFLA today is a private community whose roads and amenities are open only to members and their families.)

Clean Air, Pure Water

In the early 20th century, people were flocking to the Poconos for the clean air and pure water. Memberships of small lots, just large enough to build one structure, could be had for \$20. At one time comprising 700 acres, land had been sold off during the Depression, and until very recently the total acreage stood at about 425 acres. Membership is capped at 87 families, with homes located around the private, 8-acre Lake Crawford (created by building a dam in the 1930s), Paradise Falls, and Paradise Creek, as well as on the east side of Route 191. It is a friendly, thriving, year-round community, with about 30 percent of the membership in residence full time.

A History of Innovation

Over the years PFLA has hosted an inn and dining hall offering “rustic dining” open to the public; a shop selling souvenirs, food and sundries; a post office, gas station, and tea room; and a “carriage” house which housed not carriages, but cars of visitors. Movie nights sometimes featured thrillers such as “The Fly” and “The Birds,” making for scary walks home through the dark woods. A toll booth at the top of the falls allowed tourists to see the sight for a nickel, and a girls camp with cabins along the creek was operated for 20 years. Some of the more high-flying proposals — a large hotel, 9-hole golf course, and “casino” entertainment center — never got beyond the drawing board.

Dedication to Land Conservation & Protection

Chris had exciting news about an expansion of this important piece of the history of Paradise Township to a total of 680 acres, one of the largest landholdings in the Township.

In April, PFLA purchased approximately 160 adjoining acres of land — formerly the subject of what some called “the quarry fight.”

In the 1990s, the mining company Haines and Kibblehouse, based in Reading, purchased

the land with the intention of extracting materials for roadbuilding and other purposes. Hundreds of millions of tons of rock were involved.

When citizens of the Township learned about the extensive, disruptive nature of the operations, a group banded together to oppose the project.

Several members of PFLA, in particular Paul and Kitty Reisch, were key figures in opposition, establishing an advocacy organization called Pro Paradise. Among the many Township residents who were members were Lynn Kuchinski, Bill Lord, Ernie Camlet, Ellen Gandt and Theresa Merli. ProParadise raised money with yard sales, held public meetings, hired experts, and challenged the board of supervisors. Bob Dunlop and Bruce Dunlop, owners of Crescent Lodge, along with several fishing clubs, particularly Henryville Conservation Club and Brodhead Forest and Stream Association, were also leaders in the fight.

The group was successful in getting the project put on hold — where it remained for nearly 20 years. Now, Chris said, PFLA’s intention is to protect the land in its natural state once and for all.

Two footnotes: the newly-acquired land was once the location of Jo-Ha-He children’s camp, and one of the buildings survives. And, the records of Pro Paradise are in the archives of Paradise Historical Society. [PHS](#)



Paradise Historical Society
P.O. Box 94
Henryville, PA 18332

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Meetings *Coming Up*

- July 14** **Henryville Fly Fishers Program**
- August 4** **Visit to Parkside Chapel**
Learn how this jewel was protected and continues to host services every summer.
- September 8** **No PHS meeting**
We encourage everyone to attend the Township Community Day!
- October 6** **Pocono People's College**
Researcher Frank Eccher explains how Pocono People's College fits in the national and international "People's College" movement.
- November** ***Weekday* Tour of Weiler Brush**
(Members only - details coming soon)
- December 8** **Holiday Party at the Ace Store**
(Members only - membership available at the door)

Notice: Do you know of a newcomer to Paradise Township who would enjoy this newsletter?
Please let us know their name & address!
Email ParadiseHistorical@gmail.com

**PHS WELCOMES
THESE NEW MEMBERS:**

Franklin Eccher Mary & Eugene Fritz
Ralph Grauso Jeff Martens
Mr. & Mrs Mark Poggio & Family
Paul & Bernadette Sanborn
Joan Scarpa Carole Stumph
James & Judith Trombetta
Angela Tullo Thomas & Christine Wilkins
W. Steven & Nanciann Woodward



YOUR MEMBERSHIP COUNTS!

Please help Paradise Historical Society collect, protect & share the interesting history of our area.

- Student or Senior (65+) - \$8.00
- Individual - \$10.00
- Couple - \$20.00
- Family - \$25.00
- Corporate - \$50.00
- Sustaining - \$100.00

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Please send the completed form and check (no cash) to:
Paradise Historical Society,
P.O. Box 94, Henryville, PA 18332



Spring 2024

The Directors & Officers of Paradise Historical Society are:

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Bruce Estell Treasurer
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Aaron Imbt Archivist & Designer
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Laura Layton
Harold Metzgar
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