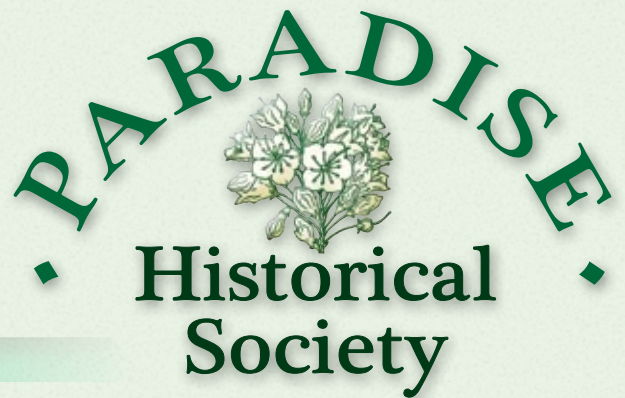


Paradise Past

THE NEWSLETTER
OF THE



SPRING 2014 • Volume 8, Issue 4

President's Letter

Having grown up in Tannersville, and spent most of the rest of my life here in Paradise Valley, I have a strong “sense of place” about this part of the world. I have traveled and enjoyed it — but there is something special about having roots that run deep and knowing a place well. Every back road, building and ghost of a building, every friend and neighbor, their families, their grandparents and their grandchildren are woven into my memories of “life in the Valley.”

Our historical society is doing fine work in protecting and sharing the history of our area, and I look forward to the adventures yet to come!

Jane Niering, *President*

Trinity Episcopal Church Visit

For our March meeting, we took a field trip to the Trinity Episcopal Church, located on the west side of State Route 611. In 1892, a group largely comprised of Episcopalians took up a special collection to start a building fund for a Protestant Episcopal Church. Rev. Loring W. Batten, a summer resident of Paradise Township, was the leader of the group. Rev. Batten was a professor at Philadelphia's Divinity School. Mr. and Mrs. Henry S. Cattell offered a piece of their large property as a building site. Interestingly, the Cattells sold property to the Quakers for the construction of Pocono Manor Inn.

It was not until May of 1896 that ground was broken. Construction must have been faster than today, because on July 12th the first service was held in the completed church. Trinity is described as the first Pocono church built by and for summer residents. An excerpt of their history says:

“When Trinity was a Summer Chapel, folks came from all the hotels and boarding houses to attend. They weren't necessarily Episcopalians, although many were. A few “locals” also attended. Sometimes only a handful worshipped. At other times, the Chapel pews were full as almost 200 worshippers crowded Trinity on an anniversary of its consecration or to hear especially well known or well loved priests' sermons.

“In 1921 and 1922, the first years that attendance records were kept, attendance ranged from 7 to 29. Attendance rose in 1923 and 1934. The smallest congregation consisted of 9, the largest of 87. In 1932, 125 attended a Confirmation service on July 24, and 96



Photo: Kim Williams

celebrated the anniversary of Trinity's Consecration in mid-August. From that point on, attendance averaged from 30 plus to well over 100.”

As the population of the Poconos grew, Trinity became a year-round church in 1961.

The stained glass windows in the church tell the story of the Gospels. The first was installed in 1944, in memory of Elizabeth Morgan Dengler, 1846 – 1941.

We are grateful to Peter Salmon for arranging this field trip and for his informative remarks during the outing.

COLLECTING, PRESERVING &
DISSEMINATING PARADISE HISTORY

Spring

THE MYSTERY OF THE MOUNTAIN REST FARM GUEST HOUSE



On February 11, 2014 a message appeared on the Paradise Historical Society website from Jean Caroline in Oregon trying to find information on her grandparent's 1930s guest house located in Henryville. This inquiry was the start of a concerted effort on the part of many people associated with the PHS to find the Mountain Rest Farm Guest House. Coincidentally, at the PHS February meeting on Feb. 2, 2014, an envelope bearing the return address Otto Succow above the preprinted return address of Mountain Rest Farm Guest House was shown and the question asked "does anyone know where this place was in Henryville?" Also, in our archives, we had a postcard photograph of the Mountain Rest Farm. Hence PHS responded to Jean Caroline that we could use as much information as she could provide to try and locate the guest house. Jean was very forthcoming with the following information:

"The house on the farm was a fourteen room house on eighty acres, some wood, some open range, lots of apple trees, there was a great big barn and a spring for drinking water which was brought to the house by gravity, it ran into a concrete tank and from there to the house. In the summer when the rain was scarce there was a very large concrete tank that collected rain water from the roof which was used for bathrooms, laundry etc. The house had a generator for electricity every day we would change the batteries, and it worked out fine for lighting but we had to be careful we could not have a radio because the output was not high enough.

"The house itself was set on a hill so we had a nice view, it had a large front porch which also ran down one side; originally it had been used as a boarding house, a summer place for vacationers. Inside there was a very large kitchen, a dining room where the help ate with a bedroom close by for the help. There was a very large dining room, a large living room and all the bedrooms were upstairs. There was only one bathroom and it was down stairs, and no running water upstairs. All the furniture in the house was antique, marble tops on the dressers, some of the beds were mahogany and some were brass. The house was painted white with green trim, it was built up against a hill and the road ran in front of it, and like all country roads it was dirt."

Jean also provided us with names of some of the neighbors and we were off to find the guest house. A review of United States Census records revealed that the names of the people Jean provided resided on Henryville Road. It began to look like the location of the guest house was on Rt. 715 and probably in Pocono Township. Meisertown was first considered a possibility. But we did not have any luck in finding people who had lived in that area who knew either the owners or Otto Succow.

As the inquiry continued, more information was obtained from Jean, yet still no identification of the guest house. In late March, a trip to the Monroe County Historical Association and a review of old telephone directories for Stroudsburg led to an Otto J. Succow who in 1952 was "boarding" in Henryville and had the phone number 1411 R-2. We also found in the 1948 phone book Mountain Rest Farm, Henryville RD, phone number 1411 R-2. The telephone numbers further connected the guest house and Otto Succow.

At the April 6 PHS meeting, we discussed the information that had been gathered thus far, and Jane Niering recalled that a Grace Succow had given music lessons in the area where Jean's father's neighbors had lived. This discussion led us to a house on McKay Road near its intersection with Shine Hill Road. Additional newspaper research led us to the January 2, 1951 Pocono Record report of Grace Succow giving a Christmas Musicale in her home for her voice and piano pupils. This left the impression that the house was large enough to host a gathering of many people for a recital.

We also discovered that Otto J. Succow was born in 1896 and died in 1956 and is buried in the Tannersville Union Cemetery which apparently was previously known as the Tannersville Methodist Cemetery. By April 13, 2014, we were able to report back to Jean Caroline that we had found the former Mountain Rest Farm Guest House and visited with the current owners. We provided the postcard picture of the former guest house to the current owners and they reported that the awnings shown on the postcard were found in the attic when they moved there in the 1980s.

So the mystery of the Mountain Rest Farm Guest House and its current location was solved by PHS team work. We are still looking for information about several other properties which may also have Henryville addresses but be located outside of Paradise Township.



Photo: John Layton

Questions Asked & Answered

In previous newsletters and through our website we have asked readers for their help in providing background information on various places. Some of the unknown places have turned out to be not in Paradise Township, but in neighboring townships or Mount Pocono. Information has come from great distances, including France.

We start with Dancing Bears.

The PHS website received an inquiry from Françoise Lewis, who said: *"I am researching French Bear Leaders for the Bear Museum in Ercé, France in the Pyrénées Mountains. From 1870 to 1914, I found 500 of them roaming all around the world with their bears. They almost all come from the same small little village of Ercé in the Pyrénées Mountains, where my grandfather was born. I know they travelled in Pennsylvania. I am wondering if you have some story about them or photos. Thank you!"*



We did have a picture of a bear in the middle of what is now Rt. 940 and Red Rock Road, the location of the former Kintz Store. The bear is with a handler and may be rolling rather than dancing but seemed to fit the bill. Once we responded to Françoise with our picture from the Helen Dietz collection, Françoise sent us numerous



newspaper articles from Pennsylvania detailing some of the exploits of these dancing bears. One article from the July 31, 1894, *Scranton Tribune* recounts a group of students meeting up with "a fine large bear led by two Frenchmen. The bear was from the Pyrenees Mountains and could dance, turn somersaults, shake hands and

finally climbed a telegraph pole almost to the top." Our Paradise Valley bear seems to fit into the category of doing somersaults. In another article a year later a performing bear climbed a pole and pulled down the utility wires. A surprising connection with another part of the world!

In our winter newsletter we asked about the Paradise Farm in Swiftwater. Well, the answer to this question was handled by several PHS members including Harley Collins, the son of the owners. Harley actually lived at the Paradise Farm where his parents began raising silver foxes and later ran a summer guest house. Paradise Farm buildings still exist on Bowman Road near Upper Swiftwater Road. At our April 2014 meeting, Harley shared pictures of the farm and stories of the development of the resort business and building of the structures.



Harley Collins
Photo:
Kim Williams

A question about the legend of Whiskey Man Spring was illuminated by John Bowman, Paradise Township historian and descendent of one of the earliest families in Paradise.

The spring is located west of the railroad crossing on what is now Rt. 940, and was built to water horses making the climb from Paradise Valley to Mount Pocono. It was a long difficult pull up the mountain. According to John Bowman, "After unloading their wagons the teamsters would converge on the local establishments serving spirits. One gentleman over-indulged and stopped at the spring on his way home for a cool drink. He passed out and drowned in the water." At the time a young David W. Bowman, John's grandfather, was responsible for blanketing the horses while the teamsters took on liquid refreshments. It was this David W. Bowman who told this story of how the spring got its name.



Whiskey Man Spring
Photo:
Kim Williams

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Jane Niering Elected PHS President

The election of officers and Board of Directors was held at the Paradise Historical Society April 2014 meeting. Thanks were paid to Carol Hillestad for her outstanding contributions as President since the beginning of PHS. Carol has been a mainstay in the formation of the historical society. She has served as president, cheerleader and unselfish organizer. The historical society members are grateful for Carol's continuing contributions.

The nominating committee presented a slate of officers and board members who were unanimously elected. The officers are as follows:

President: Jane Niering Vice President: John Layton
Treasurer: Eleanor Burns Secretary: Laura Layton

The following compose the board of directors: Aaron Imbt, Edward Burns, Dan Hamblin, Leeanne Dyson, Harold Metzgar, Carol Hillestad.

Recognized for their continued contributions to PHS were: Archivist: Aaron Imbt, Photographer: Kim Williams, Refreshments Chair: Betty Williams, and Newsletter Editor: Carol Hillestad.



John Layton presents outgoing president Carol Hillestad with *PHS: The First Four Years* commemorative book

We welcome our new members!

Nancy Bowman Carlton • Rev. Chris P. Matthy • Sharon Michaels • Newton and Joanne Taylor

YOUR MEMBERSHIP COUNTS! Please help Paradise Historical Society collect, protect, and share the interesting history of our area. Become a member today!

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

