

Paradise Past

THE NEWSLETTER
OF THE



VOLUME 10, WINTER 2016

President's Letter

You'll see that this issue of our newsletter is a little different. Thanks to Chris Matthy of Paradise Falls Lutheran Association, we have the first installment of an in-depth history of the "Nestledown" — now his home, and once a barn and then guest house in the early days of Paradise Township. And, thanks to research by John Layton, this issue offers more clues — as well as more questions! — about the Henryville House "Memory Stick."

We also ask you to have some fun by getting behind the scenes and lending a hand. It's as easy as providing cookies or another treat for one of our meetings...or helping with a newsletter mailing...or helping to organize a visit to an interesting local site. Call Jane at 570 269-4169.

Jane
Jane Niering, President

THE PLOT THICKENS: The Case of the Mystery Henryville Memory Stick

In the last PHS newsletter we reported on the arrival of a carved stick with names written on it. Since we were uncertain as to the purpose of the stick or the names on it, we called it a Memory Stick. Research has continued on this Memory Stick as to who were the signers and what was the occasion that is represented by the signatures. Hence the fun has just begun!

The research has taken many interesting turns and gone down some apparent dead ends. The inscription nearest the hilt on the Memory Stick is "Charles N. Graves, Henryville, Pa Aug. 26, 1904" followed by "Henryville House". In looking for information about Charles Graves we found the August 10, 1902 *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* which includes: "Brooklyn is represented at the Henryville House by the following, who have recently arrived for an extended stay: Mr. and Mrs. E. E. Washburn and son, Mrs. L. D. Washburn and Mrs. M. Coomb, mother of Mrs. Sherman Esselstyn. Charles N. Graves and E. W. Gould of New York are sojourning here." This is the first reference to Mr. Graves. Next we find a New York Times story of August 12, 1906 concerning fishing in the Poconos. "The season

has been a good one — in fact the best for several years. Charles N. Graves of New York is the champion again this year, having caught the largest trout on a fly. It measured 20 1/4 inches and weighed 2 pounds 11 ounces."

These two references appear to establish that our Charles N. Graves was a fisherman and stayed at the Henryville House on at least one occasion. We have not been able to confirm the age of Mr. Graves. The Memory Stick has the name Dick Esselslyn. Further study of the Memory Stick supports the conclusion the last name is actually Esselstyn. The 1902 *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* has a Mrs. Sherman Esselstyn staying at the Henryville House. The April 1, 1906 *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* lists folks attending the Baron Cotillions to include "Dick Esselstyn, son of Mr. and Mrs. Sherman Esselstyn". Later on in 1911 we learn also from the same paper, with a Henryville byline, that Dick Esselstyn "... was the right tackle on the football team and also captain of the strong lacrosse twelve. Esselstyn has been working as a trestle-builder, which necessitated ax-swinging and carrying of logs all day. He has established a

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Winter

COLLECTING, PRESERVING & DISSEMINATING PARADISE HISTORY

MY HOUSE: “NESTLEDOWN”

A BRIEF HISTORY
Based on Documents,
Archives,
Photos, Remembrances
& Best Guesses!

by Chris P. Matthy

Part 1 of 2

The Early Days: The Farm and the Barn

The original 300+ acres of land which became the beginnings of Paradise Falls Lutheran Association (PFLA) included parts of several farms. The farmhouse and barn of Harvey Dietrich became Gate Lodge and Social Hall. And the barn of Harvey's father, Dimmick Detrick, was chosen to become the Community House named Nestledown.

Dimmick Detrick was at least a third-generation farmer. His grandfather, Elias Detrick, was born in Northumberland County, Pennsylvania, in 1784, and died in Lower Smithfield in 1862. He and his wife Eva (Nicholas) are buried very prominently by the front door of the old church at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Lower Smithfield, originally the Lutheran and Reformed union congregation. There are several Detrick farms in the Smithfield/Shawnee area on period maps. He is listed as a trustee



Photo: Kim Williams

of the congregation between 1807 and 1814, and communion records show he was continually active.

Dimmick's father Jesse was born in 1819 and confirmed at the Lower Smithfield church in 1841. The 1860 census of the Analomink area records Jesse and his wife Catherine (Kirkendall) had moved west and were a farming family. Jesse and Catherine are buried in the cemetery of the Analomink Methodist church. The fourth of their seven children, Dimmick Milo Detrick (called Milo in the 1860 census) was born in 1848 and, like his father before him, continued the western movement of this farming family by purchasing a farm in Paradise Valley from the Smith family. This had to happen sometime before 1870, when a Paradise Township map shows the Dimmick Detrick farm. He and his wife Elnora (Davis) are listed in several census documents, but the 1920 census seems to indicate that they may have given up farming and were renting or leasing the farm. Dimmick and Nora also are buried

in the Analomink Methodist Church cemetery. One existing PFLA map suggests the Detrick farm included 150 acres from current Rt. 191 to the Cranberry Creek and on both sides of current Cranberry Creek Road.

This, then, also suggests an “at least” age for the barn. The exact age for the barn is unknown; we do not know if Dimmick Detrick purchased a farm with a house and barn or whether he built them. It is the wooden beams throughout the two lower levels that have suggested dates as early as 1840. Those same beams became part of the “quaint” and “rustic” appeal of the lower level dining hall in future publicity.

Rustic Beginnings: The First Guests

A July, 1924, publication introducing the “Paradise Valley Lutheran Association” mentioned plans to construct a Community House, to be ready by August of that year. Plans included: “nineteen bedrooms 9x12 ft. large, screened casement windows, a launging (sic) hall 15x30 ft., two large porches, a cold storage room for food 8x30 ft., a common dining room 19x33 ft., and a kitchen 16x28 ft. which will be divided into kitchenettes; and two garages with a capacity for four cars.”

Rentals would be \$5 per room for two weeks or \$1 per day, which included kitchen privileges, a set of dishes and free parking. Milk would be available for ten cents a quart and a butcher, baker and huckster would visit the House 3-6 times a week. Ten rooms were planned to be opened by August, 1924, in “The Nestledown.”

The guest register for 1924-1928 contains an August 18, 1924 hand-written account by Association Secretary Clifford Hays of the original “alterations” to the barn. According



Some of Nestledown's earliest guests

to his account, on July 7, 1924 Mr. Harry S. Hulbert and Mr. J. Pensyl began the alterations. When it was realized that the original plan was impossible to complete in time, the first building phase was limited to one porch, seven bedrooms, the lounge, the kitchen and the dining room – still quite a feat for one month's work!

The first official guests at Nestledown, the Rev. and Mrs. W. F. Dilbert of Birdsboro, Pa., arrived on the evening of August 11 (though two weeks before, the Rev. Robert Peterman and his wife and son from Hicksville, Long Island stayed in the house, sleeping in "improvised beds.") Between forty-five and fifty guests (some signed as families) enjoyed the first "season" at Nestledown August 15 – September 30, 1924,

with another 30+ people attending a Rally Day on October 13, 1924. There were seven bedrooms and two bathrooms but no dining or meal service that first year; instead, there were several two-burner stoves available for families to make their own meals and then eat them in the common dining room. Early pictures and remembrances of one of the first private owners suggest that the finished rooms were probably the ground floor (from the front) rooms, four of which were on the top floor (from the back) of the then-existing barn extension. An early picture shows guests seated on the porch with barn board siding behind them and the second floor still unfinished barn (with boards missing!). The first lighting was by oil lamps.

Look for Part Two of Chris's story of Nestledown in our Spring Newsletter!

Many PFLA people have shared their remembrances: Bob and Dottie Bauers (Dottie ate in the girl's camp dining hall), Jacquie Bond (waitress/hostess 1946-1951), Luther Dittmer (kitchen worker), Ruth Mitchell (first private owner), Carolyn Pohl (who still has a girl's camp uniform), Ruth Schaffner (waitress), and Ginny Warburton (waitress). Special thanks to Frieda Ammon Miltner, our PFLA archivist, whose sharing of her personal knowledge, as well as the collections of materials from her father, George Ammon, and others, filled in many details.

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reputation for strength." It goes on to say that he was hoping for an appointment to Annapolis. Therefore it would appear that in 1904, Dick would have been approximately 10 years old when he signed the Memory Stick.

Another signer of the Memory Stick was Geo. W. Brewster, who actually drew a rectangle around his name. (In our previous newsletter the middle initial was omitted). Unfortunately there are many George Brewsters who lived in the New York area. Kevin Young wrote to us and noted that George Brewster was a developer of Hemlock Farms and the road from state route 402 to Hemlock Farms is named Brewster Farm Road. Further research indicates that George M. Brewster was a paving contractor and involved with the Hemlock Farm community. It would appear that George W. Brewster still needs to be identified.

Also on the Memory Stick are Robert Kilduffe M. D., Louis Kilduffe and Robert Kilduffe 3rd. The 1900 US Census for Philadelphia shows Robert Kilduffe, M.D. age 46, son Robert A. Kilduffe age 16 and Louis Kilduffe age 12. It appears these boys would have been 20 and 16 years old in 1904 at the time they signed the Memory Stick. Dr. Kilduffe was a bacteriologist and did considerable public speaking, including on "the six stages of drunkenness."

The Neils are our next family. The Memory Stick has Paul Neil, Elsie Neil and J. E. Neil. The 1900 US Census has the B. Neil family living in Easton, Pennsylvania — the father, B. Neil a clergyman, son Paul age 17, daughter Elsie age 16 and son James E. Neil age 15. These children would have been 21, 20 and 19 in 1904 when the stick was signed.

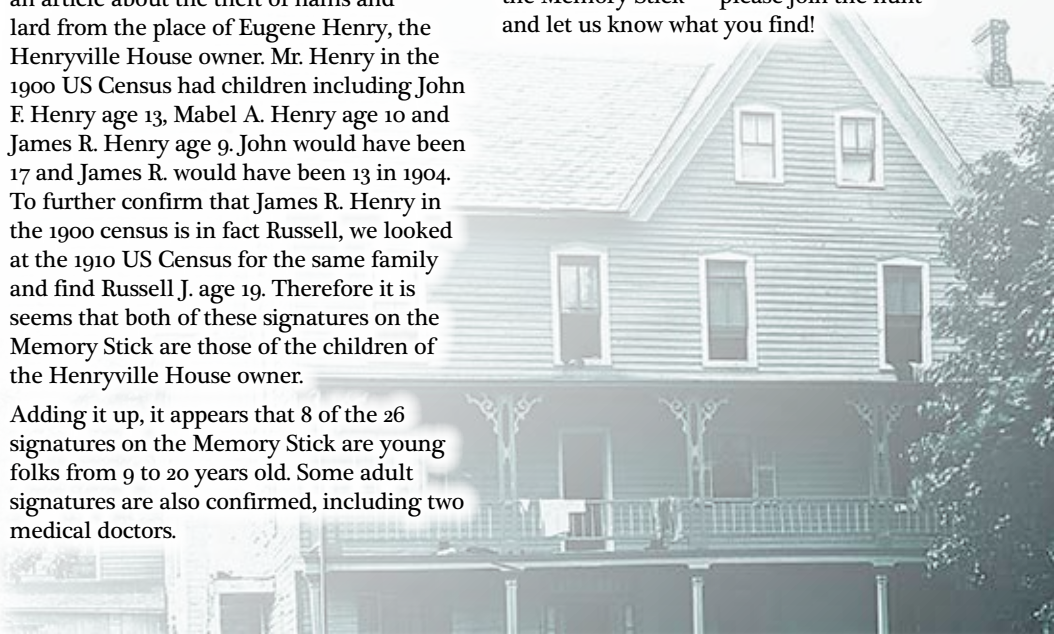
Henry Fisher, M.D., Sallie S. Fisher and Anna M. Day appear to have signed the Memory Stick in that order. The previous newsletter listed Anna as Irma, but upon further study, it appears that Anna is correct. The 1900 US Census for Philadelphia Pennsylvania Ward 31 shows Henry Fisher, Physician, single and head of the household, age 43; Sallie Fisher, niece, age 35; and Anna Day, cousin age 29; all living in the same house. The same is true for 1920 and Anna M. Day is shown as the cousin. Henry Fisher, M.D. in May 17, 1896, is shown as on the Board of Directors of the Thirty-first ward, in *The Times*, of Philadelphia. This board of directors involved public schools.

Two additional signers of the Memory Stick are Russell Henry and John Henry. The 1900 US Census shows Eugene R. Henry age 39 as a farmer with a wife Sara F. Henry age 38. The 1903 and 1906 *Brooklyn Eagle* newspapers show E. R. Henry as the operator of the Henryville House. The *Scranton Republican* dated March 11, 1919, contains an article about the theft of hams and lard from the place of Eugene Henry, the Henryville House owner. Mr. Henry in the 1900 US Census had children including John F. Henry age 13, Mabel A. Henry age 10 and James R. Henry age 9. John would have been 17 and James R. would have been 13 in 1904. To further confirm that James R. Henry in the 1900 census is in fact Russell, we looked at the 1910 US Census for the same family and find Russell J. age 19. Therefore it is seems that both of these signatures on the Memory Stick are those of the children of the Henryville House owner.

Adding it up, it appears that 8 of the 26 signatures on the Memory Stick are young folks from 9 to 20 years old. Some adult signatures are also confirmed, including two medical doctors.

The mystery of the Memory Stick continues! The presence of Charles N. Graves' signature on the stick seems to validate the fishing connection and that the stick may be fishing related. The stick is 24 inches long and carved to a narrow blunt end. The other end is shaped as a knob, where multiple branches that have been cut off and sanded smooth. Builder and woodworker Allen Gross studied the stick and listened to the history and made an interesting observation. He suggested that the stick looked like a large fish hook disgorged. An internet search found a Berkley fish hook disgorged that is 6 ¼ inches long. Although only about a third of the size of the Memory Stick, the shape is very similar.

Can you contribute a fact, or a guess, or a suggestion about the Memory Stick? What was its purpose? Why was it signed? Who are the people who signed it? Who were its keepers since 1904 until it surfaced in 2015? The historical society is looking for any information we can find to further explain the Memory Stick — please join the hunt and let us know what you find!



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

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A Query Via ParadiseHistorical.org

Do you have any information on Killian Zeh? A request from Ken Sherer was received via paradisehistorical.org, in particular seeking information about where in Germany he was born.

Leeanne Dyson shared this information:

"Killian Zeh born 22 Feb. 1803 Germany, died 27 Sep. 1876 Cochoton, Steuben Co., NY - bur. Zion Luth. Cem. Steuben Co., NY. Naturalized 20 Nov. 1866 - Marr. Anna Maria Rummel b. c/a 1814- Census 1860-1870-1875 res. Cohocton, Steuben Co., NY. Children Fred'k. b. 1840 of Kalamazoo, Mich.; Melcher b. Feb. 1847 d.; John b. 1846; Louis b. 1852 d. 1893; Killian b. 1854 d. 1916."

Please pass along any thoughts you have! Call 570 629-2727 or email jimhill@ptd.net

Programs for 2016

In addition to our annual Picnic and Antique Car Show on July 10 and holiday party on December 4, lots of informative programs are in the works for this year, including...

- Field trips to Toy Soldier Museum, the Koerner School (Famularo's), a gorgeous local waterfall, & more!
- Talks about the original Landowners of Paradise, Beekeeping, the history of the White House in Washington, D.C., & more!



Programs are also being scheduled for 2017! And we could use your help getting the schedule organized — please call John Layton at 570 839-5702 or Carol Hillestad at 570 692-2727 for more information. This doesn't mean you must give a program — just help arrange them.

The directors and officers of Paradise Historical Society are Ed Burns, LeeAnne Dyson, Bruce Estell, Dan Hamblin, Carol Hillestad, Aaron Imbt, John Layton, Laura Layton, Harold Metzgar and Jane Niering.

And We Welcome Our New Members:

Beverly Abel David and Lynn Lansdowne Betty and Joe Rine, Sr.
Ronald and Jenette Sarajian Tom and Helen Sharpe Donald and Lucy Zyry

YOUR MEMBERSHIP COUNTS!

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

- 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: _____

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



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