

Paradise Past

THE NEWSLETTER
OF THE



FALL 2014 • Volume 8, Issue 5

President's Letter

Talking about the history of Paradise Township is one thing. It can be interesting, entertaining, and informative. But actually visiting sites — feeling the rough stone, seeing the grave markers of those who went before us, real people who lived, worked and raised families here — that touches a special chord. They built Paradise and handed it on to us. What better way to honor them, than to be good stewards of the stories of their lives?

Articles in this issue of Paradise Past describe visits to these special places. We hope you enjoy them, and ask you to let us know if you have ideas for future programs or field trips.

Jane

Jane Niering, *President*

Celebrating Service: How THE ROOF Came to Be

On Sunday, July 6, 2014 we held the Historical Society's monthly meeting at "The Roof" in Paradise Valley. Rather than a traditional meeting with refreshments, we had a picnic — Ed and Eleanor Burns grilled hotdogs and hamburgers, and members brought side dishes. It was a feast, enjoyed by all. (Ed earned the title Grill Master!)

Betty Williams shared with the group the history of "The Roof" which is a fascinating story of citizens working together to make improvements in the community. The Willing Workers of Paradise saw a need for a community center and set about acquiring the land, drumming up support, asking for volunteers to help with construction, and causing "The Roof" to be built. The Willing Workers made a significant contribution to the construction of the Community Center which was turned over to the citizens of

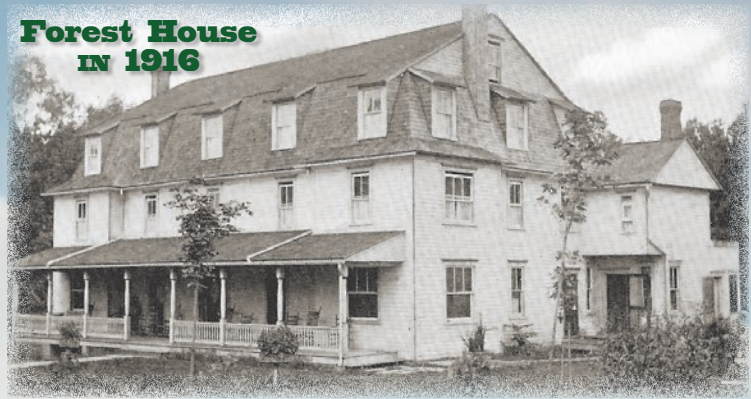
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Fall

COLLECTING, PRESERVING & DISSEMINATING PARADISE HISTORY

Installing THE Historic Marker AT THE Forest House



Our Fall 2013 Newsletter featured recognition of The Forest House as one of the historic structures in Paradise Township that no longer exists. The Forest House was founded by John Hamblin in 1888 and was also operated by Harry Hamblin from 1911 until



1950. To commemorate this place of importance in the history of Paradise Township, a plaque was presented to the Hamblin family documenting the history of the structure. The occasion was the 43rd Hamblin-Bowman Family Reunion in 2013. On June 2, 2014 eleven Hamblin descendants and three spouses (including nine from California) gathered opposite the Swiftwater Post Office, at the site of the hotel which burned in 1968. After clearing brush from the area, the plaque was erected to the right of the original front walk, just off Upper Swiftwater Road.

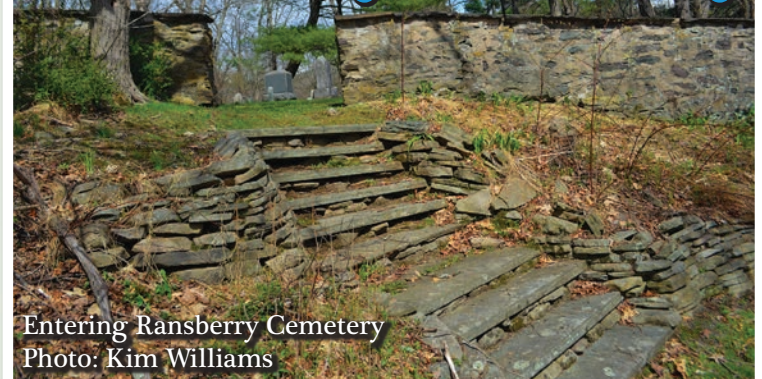
Present at the plaque installation was Lillian Hamblin Davis Nelson who is the daughter of Harry Hamblin and lived in the Forest House as a child.

**June 2, 2014 installation of the
Historic Plaque by the Hamblin Family**

A SPRING FIELD TRIP TO

Paradise Historical Society sponsored a field trip on May 4, 2014 to the Ransberry Cemetery, which is located near the four corners. Where is the four corners? It is where Paradise, Price, Pocono and Stroud Townships meet. This is a private community cemetery with approximately 30 graves of the Ransberrys, Elias Utt and James Henry families. The cemetery is well maintained and only accessible by crossing private property.

Ransberry Cemetery



Entering Ransberry Cemetery
Photo: Kim Williams

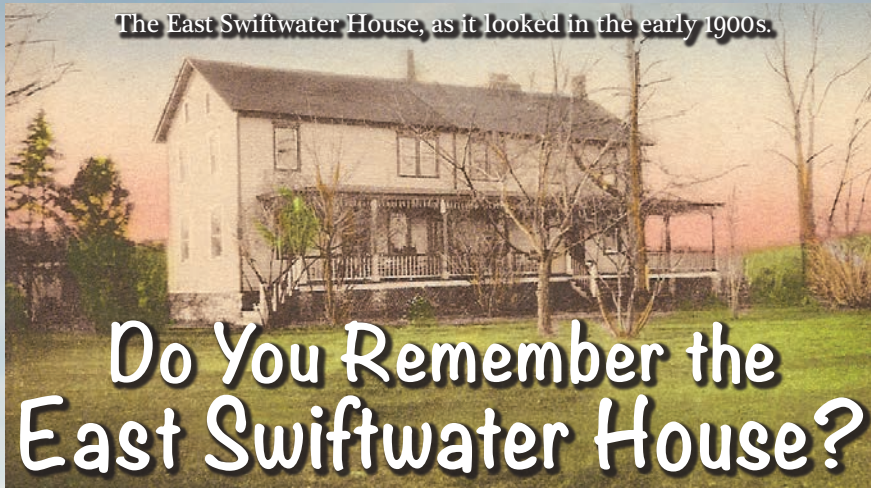


Grave Marker of James and Sarah Henry
Photo: Kim Williams

The cemetery is fascinating since it contains many very old burial sites. There are several interesting facts about the cemetery. Elias Utt, who served in the Revolutionary War, was born in 1749 and died in 1833. He is buried in what may be the earliest grave. Also buried here is a Ransberry who served in the Civil War. Both graves are well maintained and bear flags honoring veterans.

James Henry, who founded the Henryville House in 1842, was born in 1812 and died in 1889 and is buried in the Ransberry Cemetery along with his wife Sarah who died in 1875.

The East Swiftwater House, as it looked in the early 1900s.



Do You Remember the East Swiftwater House?

We need your help! In our continuing effort to preserve the history of Paradise Township we are attempting to reconstruct the history of the Chestnut Grove resort, which is located at the intersection of Upper Swiftwater Road and Carlton Road.

The East Swiftwater House has been known as the Chestnut Grove for more than 70 years. In the last half-century the resort has had many owners. The current owners are interested in learning more about the history of the establishment as is the Paradise Historical Society. It appears that, prior to 1909, the property was owned by the Broas family. In 1909 it seems that Peter Warner and family moved into the Broas house and remained there until 1914. The next owner may have been George Besecker and his wife. We do know that on December 3, 1913, Peter Warner sold his farm located near where the Chestnut Grove is now. On April 2, 1914 Peter Warner moved out of his house and new owners took over.



Warner sold his farm located near where the Chestnut Grove is now. On April 2, 1914 Peter Warner moved out of his house and new owners took over.

If you have stories, information, or even suggestions about who may know more about the history of the Chestnut Grove, we would appreciate your forwarding them to the historical society.

A photograph of the grave marker of Richard M. Broas, located in the St. Paul Cemetery, accompanies this article. Note that the grave marker describes his military service — he was a veteran of the Grand Army of the Republic and participated in the Civil War. We believe he was the owner of the East Swiftwater House.

Field Trip to Paradise Lutheran Presbyterian Cemetery

The Paradise Lutheran Presbyterian Cemetery is at the site of the oldest known church in Paradise Township. The only remains of the church and its congregation are the cemetery where about 30 graves are located.



Photo: Kim Williams

The cemetery is now accessed via private property, and the Historical Society made arrangements with the current land owner prior to the visit to cross their property. Many of the names on the graves markers are familiar to us today and the descendants still reside in Paradise Township. A sign was erected by

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Celebrating Service: How THE ROOF Came to Be

From Page 1

Paradise Township in 1967. A few years later the name was changed to "The Roof." Many members of the community, in addition to the Willing Workers, took part in developing the property, and Betty Williams gave them credit during her recounting of the actual process of building "The Roof."

Today, the picnic pavilion, playground and basketball courts are booked every Saturday and Sunday all summer long — for parties, reunions, and family outings — proving that the Willing Workers knew what they were about!



Photo: Kim Williams

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

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Field Trip to Paradise Lutheran Presbyterian Cemetery

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Paradise Supervisors in the 1980s at the entrance to the cemetery lists some of those buried there.

The cemetery is surrounded by a beautiful dry-laid, low stone wall. Harry Niering showed how to remove a specific stone to reveal a cavity carved into the rock below, suggesting this was where a key to the church would have been kept. The property is fully wooded now, but members of the Society remember when across the forest road from the cemetery, cows grazed in an open field.

Thanks to the Huggards for permission to cross their property to view the cemetery, and to Jane Niering and Betty Williams for delicious tailgate refreshments!



Photo: Kim Williams

The directors and officers of Paradise Historical Society are Ed Burns, Eleanor Burns, LeeAnne Dyson, Dan Hamblin, Carol Hillestad, Aaron Imbt, John Layton, Laura Layton, Harold Metzgar and Jane Niering — and we welcome our new members!

Joseph Battisto and Family	Susan Layton
Jim Borbidge	Barbara Lord
Kevin Heyer	Walter and Glenna Rohrbach
Marilyn Holton	
Andrew Hunter and Family	Pat Scully

YOUR MEMBERSHIP COUNTS! Please help Paradise Historical Society collect, protect & 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:

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