

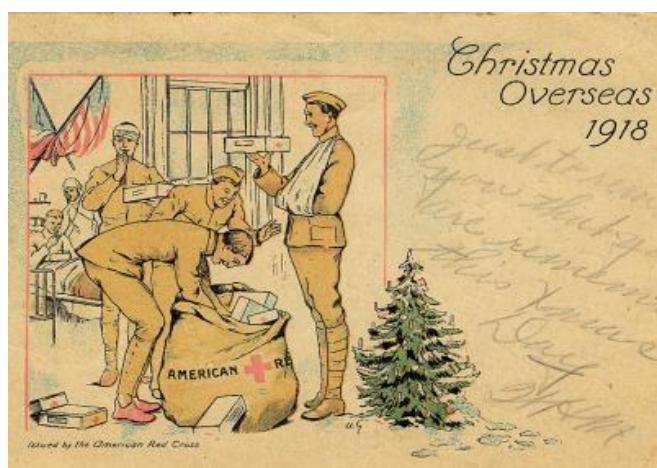
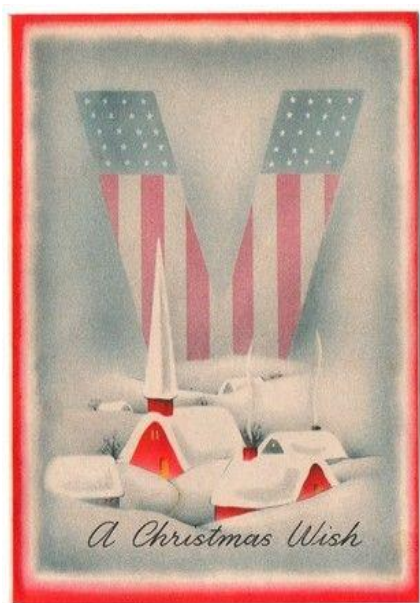
HISTORY BYTES
A Lackawanna Historical Society Publication

Vol. 5 No. 6

November - December 2022

Rick Sedlisky, Editor

Christmas Greetings During Wartime



Top, left to right: *Christmas WWII* (Pinterest); *Christmas, Pusan, Korea* (Julie Esty).
Bottom, left to right: *Christmas WWI* (National Postal Museum); *Christmas WWII* (Raritan Online).

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A Soldier's Letter from Overseas
New Year's Eve 1952
Introduction by Julie Esty

On New Year's Eve 1952, my father was a twenty-two-year-old soldier new to Korea. A few years ago, a letter he penned that day came to me and I read it every New Year's Eve. On the anniversary of this writing, I'm sharing some of it with you.

Soldiers away from home are all the same no matter what war it is. They treasure their photos of home, they can't wait to be back in the States, they let their moms know they're being fed, and tell all of us not to worry about them. So, here's a little time travel from Corporal Robert Snell on December 31, 1952. Happy New Year from Pusan.

December 31, 1952
Pusan, Korea

Dear Mom and Dad,

Well, here is the last letter for this year and here I am at a replacement depot in Pusan Korea. We will stay here about 48 hours before shipping to the 552 Company. It is somewhere here in Pusan, but we haven't seen it yet. By the time you get this letter I will have found it though.

I have so much to write but I don't seem to be able to write. Someday I will write a book and wait until you see the pictures I took. I have about five rolls of film and my camera in my pocket at all times. You will never believe them when you see them. Well here goes the story on how I got to Korea.

They changed their minds about flying us to Seoul because of all the plane crashes they have. Instead, they put us on a train, something like our Laurel Line, and we rode that for three hours to Yokahama (sic). There we boarded the Marine Lynx, a ship which held about 1,500 men. They put us down in the third hold and believe me that is a long way down. The water wasn't bad, and we had a nice trip. It took us 48 hours to go from Yokahama to Pusan and I didn't get seasick. It is a wonder I didn't. The first day out I felt a little funny, but I went down and went to bed. I slept from six o'clock until six the next morning. I got a lot of sleep while on the boat. They fed us very good. Don't worry. I am getting pretty good eats. When I get to my permanent station, I will write you and tell you what too (sic) send me but right now I don't need a thing. Only a plane ticket home.

After we docked in Pusan, they separated us from the Infantry. Those poor guys have a thirty-six-hour train ride up to the front lines. Then they put us on a bus and brought us up to where we are now. The ten of us are still together and we are all ok. Our bathroom is exactly one block from our "suite" and it consists of forty toilets. The only thing missing is the heat. It is a very pretty building. It is all wood with a concrete floor. Not

bad considering some of the buildings here. We haven't been down to the shower room yet, but it is about five blocks away. Maybe they have a little heat there. I hope so.

We were down to eat as soon as we came in and we had hot dogs again. Mom, when I get home, I never want to see a hot dog again. The only place that we will eat is in the PX or the mess hall because over here they don't have fertilizer, so they S___ to fertilize the food. They don't worry about toilets. They just go out in the fields, do their business, and spread it around. They grow some very big things here, but you will never catch me eating it. I will starve before I eat that stuff.

Right now, we are in a pretty two room tent with hardwood floors, wooden boards for the tile that runs halfway up the wall which is a lovely shade of green canvas. We have a very pretty oil stove which throws about as much heat as a match. They have forty-eight men in a tent. It's a good thing I brought those pictures with me because I have them out and that is what is going to keep me here. Those pictures look like a million dollars to me. After seeing the men, women, children, and country over here I will kiss the ground when I get to Frisco next year.

The weather here is like autumn home. I don't think it gets much colder so don't worry about me freezing. They have a football field, baseball field and basketball court so we will have something to do for the next year anyway. They gave us enough clothes to keep warm in case it gets cold. Don't feel bad after you read this letter because it is bad over here, but we are getting along fine. We are doing a lot of joking. The place is as bad as I said but it is better than being on the front lines. We are about 300 miles from the front and very safe so don't worry.

I wish that I was at my permanent station so I could get some mail to read. It seems like a year since I left. The only letters I have written in fifteen days I have been away is home. I still can't get over some of the sights I have seen.

Well, I will sign off for now. Don't worry about me. I am getting along fine. I am better off than some poor fellows. So, don't worry. I still have a bed to sleep on and will keep it.

Come to think of it – it's New Year's Eve ain't it! I will be home next New Years. So long for now. I will write soon. Please don't worry.

Love,

Bob



*Corporal Robert Snell, United States Army
Headquarters Company 552nd Engineer Base
Pusan, Korea
Photo courtesy of Julie Esty*

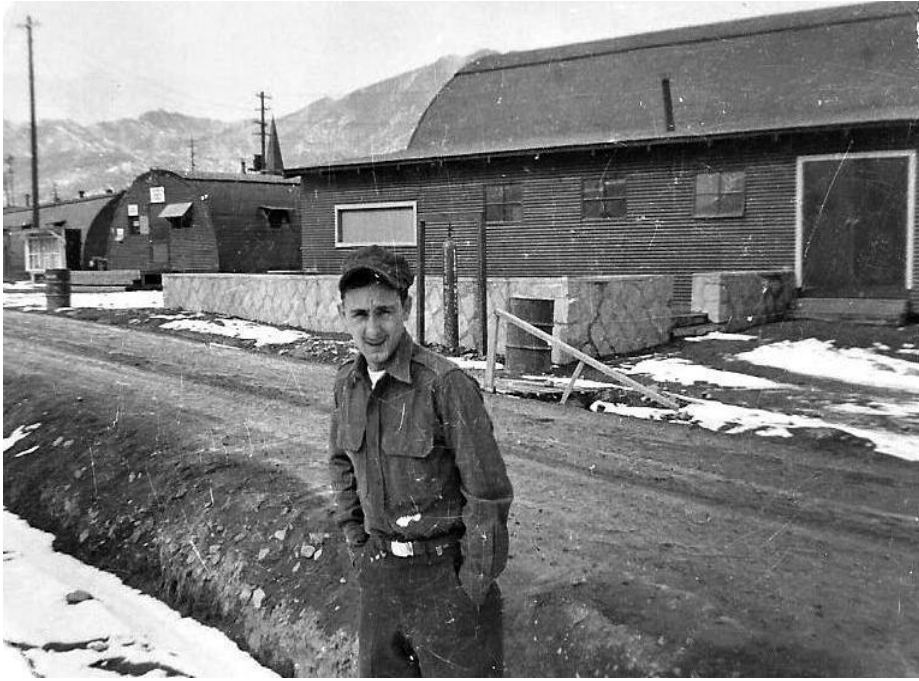
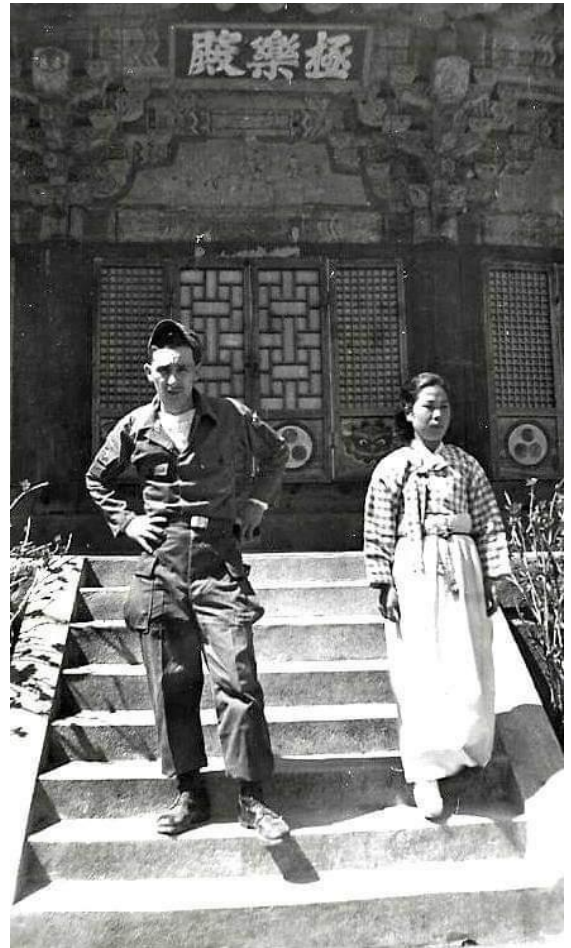


Image source: Clipart Library



*Photo on right taken by an unknown Dunmore man
All photos courtesy of Julie Esty*



Image source Clipart Library

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Christmas Tree Tales

By Richard Fitzsimmons

My childhood recollections of selecting a Christmas tree were more of “getting” a tree than “selecting” a tree. Why? First, we Fitz kiddoes were never taken to a farm to trudge in the snow and cold to find the perfect tree, nor to a neighborhood tree lot. Secondly, what my father did was take the family to Scranton’s “Wholesale Block,” on a Sunday morning, immediately following the “children’s” 9 A.M. Mass at the Cathedral, and that’s where we got our tree. Actually, my dad bought 3, or 6, trees which were tightly bailed and bundled together-- balsams, shipped from Canada.

We never opened the bundle— (as kids we wanted to—but that was not allowed—too hard to get ‘em home!). My father’s ‘logic’ was that out of the bundle, at least ONE of the trees HAS to be “good,” and to hell with the others, -- we’ll cut them up for wreathes, garland, or trim!! He gambled, and won, and consistently did much better than on most of the horse races patronized by him, my mom and my father’s three maiden sisters-- “The Girls,” -- those expeditions to the “track” were really comic relief—each of them could barely pick one horse, let alone two nags for the Daily Double, or three in the Trifecta!

I must say, though, that we always had a super tree—which Santa trimmed after we went to bed. No earlier than Christmas Eve afternoon, us kids just stood the tree in a 3-legged, cast iron, *waterless*, tree stand in the center of a 4 ft. x 8 ft. bare plywood train board and what would become an illuminated Christmas village. What happened next always vexed my mom, but she was over-ruled. My father drove 3 BIG nails—spikes he called them-- through an opening in each leg of the tree stand---right through the oriental carpet and into quarter sawn, solid oak hardwood flooring! “That’ll hold her,” is all he’d say as my mom routinely winced and shook her head. Every year it was the same location of the train board, rug, and flooring—equally maligned! All was then ready for Santa who brought the train, village, strings of lights, ornaments, tinsel, and Santa also did the trimming once us kids were in bed. Thank God the jolly red giant brought gifts, too. We four boys were warned that we had to be extra good for the 12 days of Christmas, for Santa returned just after “Little Christmas,” more commonly known as “Russian Christmas” in northeastern Pennsylvania, due to the high number of coal miners from the Eastern Europe living in Scranton, as well as “up the line,” and “down the line” in anthracite coal patch towns. If we weren’t “good” for the holidays, Santa might take back one or two of our gifts!! The post-WWII psychology of it all before Dr. Spock blows my mind!

It wasn’t until 1974 when I permanently located in Falls, Wyoming County, that I became involved with the Christmas tree business locally and in NYC with my late, dear friend, Bob Barziloski. That’s when going onto the fields to “select” a tree took precedence over just “getting” a tree. And, it’s been a hell of a ride ever since, hustling and muscling Christmas trees in Tunkhannock, selling them on the streets of New York. Hard work, long and cold hours—cutting, butting, and bailing trees, driving loads of

trees in pick-up trucks to "the city," lots of learning, becoming "street-wise," and a cash business. Fun, too. A far cry from Scranton's "Wholesale Block" behind the Delaware & Hudson freight terminal on a Sunday morning.



Image source: Christmas Clipart Vector Art, Icons

LHS 2023 Membership Information

About Membership: Membership privileges include unlimited access to the Society library, 10% discount in our bookstore, advance notice, special discounts and invitations to all Society activities, members-only programs, the quarterly newsletter, and the bi-monthly e-newsletter. Attached is a membership form to renew your membership or give to a friend who is interested in joining. Please return it to: Lackawanna Historical Society, 232 Monroe Ave., Scranton, PA 18510.

Lackawanna Historical Society Membership Form

// Student	\$10	Name _____
// Individual	\$35	
// Family	\$45	Address _____
// Contributing	\$75	_____
// Sustaining	\$150	
// Silver Corporate	\$250	Telephone _____
// Gold Corporate	\$500	Email _____

Following is a link for membership payment:

<http://www.lackawannahistory.org/benefits.html>

lackawannahistory@gmail.com

Lackawanna Past Times

Upcoming Events & Meetings

Our monthly Zoom and In-Person lecture series features famous local sons and early regional history. Email us at lackawannahistory@gmail.com to receive the Zoom link. Catch up on past episodes on our YouTube channel.

On Zoom

Friday, January 27, 2 pm: Sarah Piccini presents “The Vigilante & The Grand Master: The Molly Maguires & Terence Powderly.”

Friday, February 24, 2pm: University of Scranton presents “Scranton’s Story, Our Nation’s Story.”

Friday, March 31, 2pm: Lackawanna Past Times TBA

In Person

Sunday, December 4, 10 am: Holiday Emporium at the Catlin House

Sunday, April 23, 2 pm: Joyce Hatala presents “Recycling.”

Ghostly Gallery Link

<http://www.lackawannahistory.org/aghostlygallery.html>

Dine Lackawanna

Numerous restaurants support LHS through participation in Dine Lackawanna. Enjoy an evening away from the kitchen and help support these establishments and LHS.

Wednesday, January 18: Sidel’s Restaurant, 1202 N. Main Ave., Scranton, (570) 343-6544

Abingtons

Clarks Summit

Camelot
Formosa

The New Cafe
State Street Grill

Chinchilla

Armetta’s Restaurant & Pizza

Upvalley

Carbondale

KOL Steakhouse
Pat’s Pizza & Hoagies

Jermyn

JW’s Bar & Grill

Eynon

Pasquale’s Pizzeria and Family Restaurant
Tiffany’s Tap & Grill

Simpson

Frank’s Place

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Mid Valley

Dickson City

Texas Roundhouse
Colarusso's Coal Fired Pizza

Olyphant

OTown Bar & Grill

Jessup

Café Colarusso

Scranton

Ale Mary's at the Bittenbender
AV Scranton
Back Yard Ale House
Cafe Classico
Carmen's 2.0 Restaurant
Mansour's Market Café & Eatery
POSH at the Scranton Club

Market Street Bar & Grill
Pizza by Pappas
Sidel's Restaurant
Stirna's Restaueant
La Cucina
Villa Maria Lola's Cabana

Downvalley

Old Forge

Cusumano Dooley's Pub & Eatery

Dunmore/North Pocono

Dunmore

3 Jacks Burgers
La Cucina

Moscow

Delish on Main

Springbrook Twp.

Olde Brook Inn

Genealogy Forum (Zoomed)

Wednesday, January 11, 1 pm: Finding Birth, Marriage and Death Records

Wednesday, February 8, 1 pm: Tracing Pennsylvania Birth and Death Records

Wednesday, March 8, 1 pm: Finding Birth and Death Records for Scranton and Lackawanna County

Please call or email LHS to register and to receive the link for forum meeting.

Wyoming Valley Ghost Tours

Saturday, March 11 at 7 pm: **Wyoming Valley Ghost Tours** investigates the Catlin House.

Registration is on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/WyomingValleyGhostTours/>

Watres Armory Tours

Watres Armory Tours are made possible through our partnership with Neo-Expressionist artist, Hunt Slonem, In the words of *Architectural Digest*, "Mr. Slonem has created a "colorful castle," a personal museum of his paintings and collections of antique furniture and other goods, with bright colors and unique wall treatments." Tours will be offered on **Sunday, March 19, April 16 and May 21 at 2 pm**. Cost is \$20 per person. Proceeds benefit LHS. Space is limited, registration is required. To register, please call 570-344-3841.

lackawannahistory@gmail.com

Shady Lane Cemetery Update

By Carol Wilkerson



Image source: Friends of Shady Lane Cemetery Facebook page

The Friends of Shady Lane Cemetery continue to research and publish profiles on Facebook of those buried at Shady Lane. We are also continuing to build our database of burials at the cemetery so we can assist those looking for family graves. We have volunteers who are steadily updating the Find-A-Grave website with burial details, grave photos, and even newspaper obituaries for the Shady Lane residents, and we offer support to folks who contact us looking for grave information.



We are responsible for the new section signs (see photographs on pages 12 and 13). The installation of the section signs has definitely helped visitors find these graves. We paid for all the materials involved, and then one of our volunteers donated his professional services to design, assemble, and install the signs. The new cemetery sign (see above) was designed by the same volunteer but was installed by an Eagle Scout candidate, who also sanded and repainted the existing posts. His twin brother focused on the Soldier section flagpole for his project. He painted the flagpole (with fire department assistance), installed new rope, and procured a new flag.

We paid a professional tree service to remove the three dangerous dead trees. The trees were endangering visitors, volunteers, and monuments, as they were dropping significant chunks of wood. We have many more trees that need to be removed, but these were the most pressing problems. We will assess others and develop a plan for removal as we are able to afford it. Meanwhile, our volunteers are working to remove or prune back many of the unsightly dead shrubs around many older stones.



We held monthly community workdays from April through October and addressed a number of projects. We located buried grave markers, lifted sunken markers, and cleaned stones with biologic detergent. We also had volunteers in the cemetery frequently during the week to address mowing and trimming. We were assisted by the drought, but we were able to keep the 23-acre cemetery in respectable condition throughout the growing season.



The accompanying three pictures (beginning on the left) deal with two graves we unearthed and lifted, just to give you an idea of the challenge involved. We were contacted by a woman in her 80s who wanted to know if we could find the graves of her grandparents. We knew the general area they should be in but were unable to locate them for months. Finally, we uncovered them buried deep under an evergreen tree, which one of our volunteers trimmed back so we could access the area underneath. The first picture shows our volunteers lifting the markers. The second shows the markers several inches below ground level. The third picture shows the markers back at ground level after a bed of gravel was laid beneath them. This will be a continuing project as there are many such buried or sunken markers.



A big challenge we continue to face is the condition of the roads in the cemetery. This year, we had volunteers who performed repairs in certain areas, but there is still much work to do. That will be a significant focus in 2023, as we seek to make sure the cemetery remains accessible. We'll also continue with monthly community workdays during the growing season.



Image source: Friends of Shady Lane Cemetery Facebook page

We're now working to expand our reach to encompass folks who aren't on Facebook, so we'll be launching a quarterly newsletter next month. Anyone interested in subscribing by email or regular mail should contact us at friendsofshadylane@gmail.com.

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Unless noted otherwise, photos courtesy of Carol Wilkerson

Editor's Note: The following article originally appeared in the September – October 2022 issue of History Bytes. We inadvertently omitted one of the co-author's names. Our sincere apologies to Bode Morin for the omission.

An Industrial History Journey to Great Britain

By Bob Wolensky and Bode Morin

After two years of delay because of COVID-19, twelve intrepid travelers from Northeastern PA, Maryland, and Virginia traveled to Scotland, England, and Wales to study Britain's industrial history. The tour took place from June 16 to June 27, 2022, under the sponsorship of *the Anthracite Heritage Museum*, Scranton. Bob Wolensky, Bode Morin, and Beth Landmesser served as the tour's leaders, and they were assisted by professional guides along the way.

The itinerary included sites in Edinburgh and Newtongrange, Scotland; Ashington, Newcastle, Durham, York, Wakefield, and Gloucester, England; and Newport, Merthyr Tydfil, Aberfan, and Cardiff, Wales.



The national coal mining museums of Scotland, England, and Wales were among the highlights (the latter two having deep mine tours). The historic collieries at these sites housed some of the oldest and most significant coal mining shafts, and they were still operating for visitors. The shaft the group entered at the National Mining Museum of England was originally sunk in 1708 and the Welsh mine site (called "The Big Pit") at Blaenavon is now part of a UNESCO world heritage industrial landscape.

A memorable exchange took place 400 feet below ground at the National Mining Museum of England. Our tour guide arrived at the point of the tour when he made a joke about diamonds, asking the group what would happen if we took this bituminous coal and added much more heat, pressure, and time? He expected the tour-goers to say, however erroneously, that you get diamonds, but instead, four people in the group shouted nearly in unison, "You get Anthracite!"

In the midst of experiencing historically significant mining operations, the group also stopped at the sites of two horrific disasters, including the 1862 Hartley Colliery explosion in Northumberland, England, and the 1966 culm bank collapse at Aberfan, Wales, in the Rhondda Valley. The tragedies provided a somber reminder of the human costs associated with mining.

The National Railway Museum in York was another feature as was the National Canal Museum in Gloucester, which included a boat ride on the Gloucester and Sharpness Canal. The group very much appreciated two venues related to community life during

the Industrial Revolution—The Beamish Open Air Museum in Durham (with a slope mine tour), and St. Fagan's National Folk Museum near Cardiff.

Other cultural highlights included outings to the 900-year-old Edinburgh Castle, the 900-year-old Durham Cathedral both world heritage sites, and the 18th Century Harewood House palace in Yorkshire. A final group dinner with entertainment took place at the former Coal Exchange building, now a hotel, in downtown Cardiff (once the world's leading coal export city).

One of the main purposes of the trip was to study and learn about Britain's many successful historical preservation projects and how they have been used to enhance heritage appreciation, domestic and international tourism, and community development. Through the many visits, members established several new relationships with British partners in promoting industrial heritage, some of whom have agreed to participate virtually in a program during Anthracite Mining Heritage Month in January 2023.

Anthracite Ancestry

Anthracite Ancestry covers various aspects of Northeast Pennsylvania's coal legacy, including coal companies, coal barons, labor and labor unions, individuals, families, immigrant groups, disasters, subsidence and railroads.

Does anthracite tie into your family history? Did one or more of your ancestors "work the mines" as they used to say? If your ancestors left behind anthracite stories of any kind, please contact us at lackawannahistory@gmail.com and insert *Anthracite* in the subject matter.

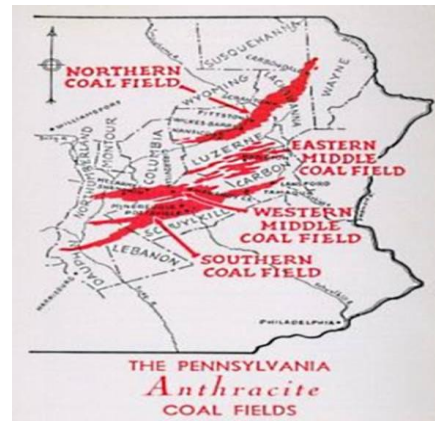


Image source: Pinterest

Anthracite Mining Heritage Month

Anthracite Mining Heritage Month takes place at various locations across Northeast Pennsylvania during January 2023. A full program listing will appear in the January – February 2023 issue of History Bytes.

January 14: Susquehanna Brewing Company, "An Evening of Anthracite Region Music." Musicians: TBA; Venue: SBC Brewery, Pittston; Time: 7:30 p m - 9:30 pm.

January 19: Nanticoke Historical Society, "Mining Anthracite Yesterday and Today." Speakers: TBA; Venue: St. Faustina Hall, Nanticoke; Time: 6:30 pm - 8 pm.

January 23: Anthracite Heritage Museum, Knox Mine Disaster Memorial Program, Mining Preservation in International Perspective, with speakers from England and Wales; Venue: AHM; Time: 2 pm - 4 pm; Moderator: Bode Morin

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January 26: King's College, Annual Msgr. J. J. Curran Lecture: Speaker: Philip Mosley, "Telling of The Anthracite--A Pennsylvania Post History;" Venue: Ally Hall, King's College, Public Square, Wilkes-Barre, Time: 6:30 pm - 8 pm.

January 28: Lackawanna Historical Society Public Program: "Brief Histories of Five Anthracite Coal Companies;" Speakers: Charles Kumpas, Penn Anthracite Coal Company; Tony Brooks, Butler Coal Company; Chester Kulesa, Delaware & Hudson Coal Company; Richard Healey, Delaware & Lackawanna (Glen Alden) Coal Company; and Robert Wolensky, Pennsylvania Coal Company; Moderator: Mary Ann Savakinus; Venues: Albright Memorial Library, Scranton, and Zoom (TBA); Time: 3 pm - 4:30 pm

100th Anniversary of the Olyphant Coal Party

By Joseph Peter Klapatch

Saturday, November 5, 2022, marks the 100th Anniversary of the Olyphant Coal Party in Olyphant, PA.

Up until the 1922-23 school year, the Olyphant School District purchased coal to heat the schools from the Temple Coal Company. There was the Olyphant Junior High School, the Olyphant Senior High School, and the Olyphant Central School which was an elementary school that was adjacent to the senior high school. There were four neighborhood elementary schools: the Columbus School (Smoketown), the Washington School (Fern Hill), the Lincoln School (Grassy), and the Roosevelt School (Tiger Valley in Fern Hill). In addition, there was a three-room school in Underwood, and a one-room schoolhouse in Marshwood. The school district also purchased the coal that was used to heat the synagogue and the churches of the borough.

In 1922, Temple Coal had reduced production, and stopped selling coal to the school district. At the time, Olyphant was a coal mining town, and almost all the mining operations were owned and operated by the Hudson Coal Company. The school district tried to buy coal from the Hudson Coal Company, but they refused to sell. Hudson Coal insisted that the school district should work out arrangements with their former supplier.

In October it was cold and the coal supply in all the schools had been depleted. They were unable to heat the schools and were unable to purchase coal from any supplier. They had to close the schools while they tried to make arrangements to buy coal.

There were approximately 60,000 municipalities throughout the United States and Canada that used anthracite to heat their schools. Even though thousands of tons of anthracite were produced in Olyphant on a daily basis, Olyphant was the only school district in the entire United States and Canada that was unable to purchase anthracite coal. The Hudson Coal Company refused to sell coal to heat the schools that were attended by the children of their miners and laborers, as well as the children whose fathers and brothers were killed or maimed in mining accidents.

The school district sent telegrams to the Governor of Pennsylvania, William Cameron Sproul, and the President of the United States, Warren G. Harding. The governor's secretary, James F. McCoy, referred the matter to the Pennsylvania Fuel Commission. The school district had the

money, and was willing to pay for coal, but the coal companies flat-out refused to sell it to them.

On the evening of Saturday, November 4, 1922, there was a meeting among the Burgess (mayor) of Olyphant, P. B. Dempsey, members of the borough council, the school superintendent, Professor Michael W. Cummings, and members of the school board. They decided that they had no choice, and they had to execute their plan to take coal by force.

On the morning of Sunday, November 5, the fire gongs sounded. That was the signal for the men of the borough to go to the borough building with shovels. From there they walked to a railroad siding near North Valley Avenue, where loaded coal cars that were destined for delivery elsewhere were above an incline.

The Olyphant Police and the volunteer fire companies were in on the plan. The police stood guard to prevent anyone from stopping the men from taking the coal. The volunteer firemen from Excelsior Hose Company No. 1 and Grassy Island Hose Company No. 3 stood ready with their hoses to ward off anyone who would interfere. Olyphant Hose Company No. 2, Eureka Hose Company No. 4, and Crystal Hose Company No. 5 remained ready if there was a fire in the borough.

The men opened three coal cars from the side to allow the coal to fall down the incline and onto the street. They then loaded the coal into trucks and wagons and delivered it to the schools, churches and the synagogue. Father Murphy of Saint Patrick's Church showed up and said, "You did all in your power to avoid this, but when the health of your loved ones is menaced, you must act in their defense." The Hudson Coal Company Police arrived on the scene. They observed what was going on, turned around and left. Burgess Dempsey estimated that approximately 200 tons had been taken, and he intended to pay Hudson Coal Company for all of it.

On November 21, 1922, there was an article on page 7 of the Wall Street Journal, entitled "Sproul Answers Hudson Coal Co." According to the article, W. H. Williams, Vice President of the Hudson Coal Company, was furious about what had happened in Olyphant. He asked Governor Sproul to have the Pennsylvania State Police assist the Hudson Coal Police in any future incidents such as this. Governor Sproul responded that while the action taken by the residents of Olyphant cannot be justified, under the circumstances it was expected. He added that it is the responsibility of the local coal company to sell coal to the local school districts. The amount of coal used by the Olyphant School District was comparatively inconsequential in comparison to the amount of coal mined in the borough.

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Joseph Peter Klapatch is originally from Olyphant, Pennsylvania. He currently resides in the urban forests of Galloway, New Jersey, with his wife, Margi and their five children.

Mr. Klapatch holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from the Pennsylvania State University and a Master of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from Wilkes University. He is currently employed as an Electronics Engineer.

His new book, *Microbreweries, Nanobreweries, and Brewpubs: Histories of 241 American Craft Beer Companies* (ISBN 978-1-4766-9085-8) is currently in the works. To learn about the author's other projects, please visit the following sites:

My beer website: lager57.weebly.com/
Facebook: www.facebook.com/strippens
The Old School thebp.site/57084



Joseph Peter Klapatch

In The Mines
The Daily Diaries of Thomas J. Goblick
By Carl Orechovsky

Thomas J. Goblick worked in the mines as a motorman. A motorman operates an electric or battery-powered mine motorcar to haul trips (trains) of cars, loaded with timbers, rails, explosives and other supplies, into a mine.

Mr. Goblick lived in the Austin Heights section of Old Forge. A friend was removing items from Mr. Goblick's house and came upon his work diaries that cover six years, extending from 1938 to 1944. The owner of the house didn't want the diaries, which are smaller sized, spiral bound notebooks. They were scanned and enlarged, and subsequently donated to the Old Forge Historical Society. Most entries pertain to Old Forge, and I have permission to share the contents.

Volpe Coal Co. No. 6 Colliery No. 11 Shaft. Red Ash Vein
**** (Thomas: O.K. means everything in order, everybody all right.) ****

July 1942

July 1. Rain. New miner in 111 heading. Red Ash Engine down. Full coal. Everything OK. Done 9 pm.

July 2. Warm. 117 not in. Waited for Jack 3 hrs. 3 places, full coal. Done 8 pm.

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July 3. Warm. Vacation Day stayed home.

July 4. Stayed home. Vacation day.

July 5. Sunday Stayed home.

July 6. Rain. Spoke to Gomer about my new job. 4 places. Done 1:30.

July 7. Cool. Wire broke in the swamp. Done 1:30.

July 8. Cool. Coal Inspector Hiram was in Back Branch. J Marley was in early. Done 12:30.

July 9. Cool. 3 places. James was around. NEWS! Gomer is leaving! Done 12:30.

July 10. Rain. New Boss, Bill Clemans. Done 1:30.

July 11. Warm. Waited for Jack Marley. Was to Old Forge. Time 7 & ½.

July 12. Sunday. Was to Edna's.

July 13. Warm. 110 laborer hurt. Took Jack Home. Was to Pittston. Done 9 pm.

July 14. Warm. Ben & Dollie not working. 16 cars coal. Due bills. Done 2:30.

July 15. Cool. Dolly not working. Pay day. 77hrs, \$62.22.

July 16. Warm. Waited for Jack. 120 has new laborer. Done 8:30.

July 17. Rain. 117 pulling last stumps. 105 worked in Pump Road. Far. Joe moved to shaker pump. Done 8 pm.

July 18. Day shift working only.

July 19. Warm. Sunday. Was to Rocky Glen with Nell, Edna, Tom, Dave.

July 20. No sand. 105 worked in the air way. 3 coal. Done 12 am.

July 21. Cool. 105 motor down. Loaded no coal. Filled ration card in office. Done 1:30.

July 22. Warm. J Marley and Snowball signed ration card. 117 working in airway. 3 cars coal. Done 2 pm.

July 23. 101 Miner KILLED, Marley's section Babylon. Done 2 pm.

July 24. Rain. Moved a jalopy. Done 1:30.

July 25. Rain. Waited for Jack Marley. Done 2 pm.

July 26. Rain. Sunday stayed home.

July 27. Rain. Ran motor behind Engine. Waited for 109 miner. Done 9:30.

July 28. Rain. Helen Puzio was sick. Edna was staying with us. Nellie was to Helens. Done 6:30.

July 29. Rain. Helen Puzio born 10 & ¼ baby boy. Everybody OK. Done 8 pm.

July 30. Rain. Was to Old Forge. Bob Muir was around. Was to see the baby. Done 8 pm.

July 31. Warm. Due bills. Everybody OK. Done 9:30. 91 hrs, \$78.26.

Volpe Coal Co. No. 6 Colliery No. 11 Shaft. Babylon Section Sam Monk new Boss

August 1942

- Aug. 1. Warm. Day shift working only. Was to Helen's.
- Aug. 2. Sunday stayed home.
- Aug. 3. Warm. Helen was to town with Ma. Me and Helen to Moses Taylor. Done 12:30.
- Aug. 4. Warm. John Witt not working. Dolly and Elmer not in. Done 1:30.
- Aug. 5. Warm. Gave Eddie \$10. Everybody working. Brought in oil. Done 1:30.
- Aug. 6 Warm. Farmer Joe moved a shaker. Rode with Roman Shefka. = Done 1:30.
- Aug. 7. Warm. Farmer Joe moved a Jalopy. Rode with Roman. = Was to Helen's in evening. Done 12:30.
- Aug. 8. Rain. Motor in Getters to change armature. Rode with Roman. = Done 1 pm.
- Aug. 9. Rain. Sunday stayed home.
- Aug. 10. Rain. Everybody working. Was in A. Pulled a trip of coal to the foot. Done 8:30.
- Aug. 11. Warm. Waited for 107 miner. Was in Alls. Was to Old Forge for gas and electric bill. Done 8:45.
- Aug. 12. Cloudy. Was in Alls, 1 beer. Was to Clarks Summit with Sonny. Done 8:30.
- Aug. 13. Rain. Was to Alls, 2 beers. Was to town for ration card B. Done 8:30.
- Aug. 14. Hot. Due bills. Men short on days. Done 8:30.
- Aug. 15. Warm. Pay day No. 7 on STRIKE. No. 14 on STRIKE. 77 hrs, \$66.22.
- Aug. 16. Rain. Sunday stayed home. Was to see Edna.
- Aug. 17. Dollie & Ben not in. No sand. Victor bought 2 beers. Done 12:30.
- Aug. 18. Warm. Eddie Celmar took my car. Saw Joe Knapp for rides. Done 1:30.
- Aug. 19. 120 4 handed. Bob and Fred in Back Branch. Done 1:45.
- Aug. 20. No. 14 on STRIKE. Signed a petition. Done 1:45. Waited for Knapp till 4:30.
- Aug. 21. Warm. Everybody & everything OK. Bought Tom a Kite and string. Done 1:50.
- Aug. 22. Warm. Home early. Cut grass. Flown Kite. Done 1:30.
- Aug. 23. Sunday stayed at home.
- Aug. 24. Warm. Edna went to Tobyhanna, home 10:30. Got 3 riders. Dolly & Ben quit. Done 8:30 pm.
- Aug. 25. Warm. Dolly & Ben are back. Waited for empties. "Eclipse of the Moon" Done 9 pm. Home 10:30.
- Aug. 26. Warm. Was to town in court, name hearing. Done 8:30.

Aug. 27. Warm. Mailed letter to contest. Everything OK. Done 8:30, home 10:30.
Aug. 28. Cloudy. Camilia was in Ma's. Men short in pay. Done 8:30, home 10:30.
Aug. 29. Pay Day. Day shift only.
Aug. 30. Sunday stayed home. Was to Helens and Jonnies.
Aug. 31. Warm. "Helen Goblick has gone to the Moses Taylor Hospital". 84 hrs, \$72.24.

Volpe Coal Co. No. 6 Colliery No. 11 Shaft Babylon Section

September 1942

Sep. 1. Warm. Joe Volpe was in Back Branch. Out before 2:30. Done 2:30.
Sep. 2. Warm. Was to Taylor. Mrs. Chuppy was for clothes. Done 1:30.
Sep. 3. Warm. 120 Felix gone to South Babylon. Johnny Stove hurt bad on head Done 1:30.
Sep. 4. Warm. Farmer Joe went to No. 5. Bob and Fred was in Back Branch. Done 1:30.
Sep. 5. Warm. Farmer Joe came back. Helen came home from Hospital. Was to movies. Done 2:15.
Sep. 6. Sunday, stayed at home.
Sep. 7. Labor Day. Roosevelt Speech. Taken Helen to Hospital.
Sep. 8. Rain. 104 miner not in. Laborer rode with me. Done 8:30 pm.
Sep. 9. Rain. Empties slow. Got oil slip. Tonghrie went to No. 5 on Motor. Mushrooms cleaned. Done 8:30.
Sep. 10. Warm. Ben Janoski working with 104. Joe had spill on Heading Road. Done 8:30, home 10:30.
Sep. 11. Cloudy. Rope broke on No. 11. Due bills. Done 9 pm.
Sep. 12. Pay Day Colliery Idle. Day shift working only. Helen home.
Sep. 13. Sunday. Nellie, Della, Tom & me took Helen back to Scranton.
Sep. 14. Warm. Joe Knopp in Conn. Quit. Fred Jones in Back Branch. Done 1:30.
Sep. 15. Warm. Got some Gas. Paid Electric bill. Eddie's brother rides with us. Done 1:30. 75 + 2 O.T. hrs. \$67.08
Sep. 16. Warm. Received puzzle papers. New place. Waited for Joe k. Mailed my puzzle. Done 2pm.
Sep. 17. Warm. Dandy shift. Was to town with Nell to see Helen. Done 1 pm.
Sep. 18. Rain. Dolly Squeezed. Waited for S. Mucha. Home 4:30. Done 1 pm.
Sep. 19. Warm. Day shift working only. Done 1:30.
Sep. 20. Sunday stayed home. Bought Rudy's Ford.

Sep. 21. Cool. Tough day all night. Ed & Stan Mucha were day shift. Done 9:30.

Sep. 22. Cool. Dan Conley was in Back Branch, bad shape. Dolly and Babyface cleaning rock. Done 8 pm.

Sep. 23. Cool. Was to Old Forge. Dolly and Babyface cleaning rock. Done 8 pm.

Sep. 24. Cool. 117 went home. Squeeze in place. 101 went to the Pocket. Picked up Joe Ulias's wife in Duryea. 8:10.

Sep. 25. Cold. 3 places in Back Branch. Lggy went home. Due bills. Done 8:30.

Sep. 26. Rain. Helen home from Hospital. Day shift working only. Pay Day.

Sep. 27. Rain. Sunday stayed home. Taken Helen to Taylor Hospital.

Sep. 28. Warm. Easy shift. Me and Tom to Movies, Pearl Harbor. Done 11:30.

Sep. 29. Heavy Frost. Bob & Fred: Back Branch. Men moving shaker Jonnie: Motor. Done 1:30.

Sep. 30. Frost. Cars off. Barber shop. Mailed my puzzles. Was to Helens to fix cradle. Done 2:35. 82 hrs. + 2 hrs. time ½ \$73.10

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Anthracite Research

- [Pennsylvania's Northern Anthracite Coal Field](http://www.northernfield.info/) <http://www.northernfield.info/>

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Founded in 1886 as the Lackawanna Institute of History and Science, the Lackawanna Historical Society provides the community with a record of local history through its museum and library collections, exhibits and programs. In 1942, from the bequest of George H. Catlin, the Society established its permanent home at Catlin's 1912 residence, located at 232 Monroe Avenue in Scranton, Pennsylvania. In 1965, it was designated as the official county historical society by Lackawanna County and continues to serve the county as a center for local history resources. The Society, a 501 ©3 nonprofit organization, is supported in part by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Catlin Memorial Trust, Lackawanna County and memberships.