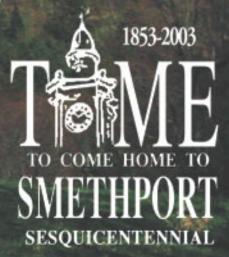
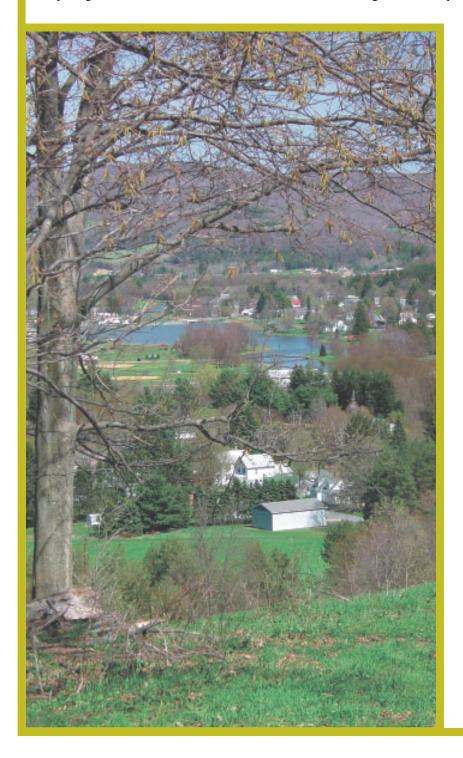
TIMELESS HOME SMETHPORT, PENNSYLVANIA



ON THE COVER

rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:

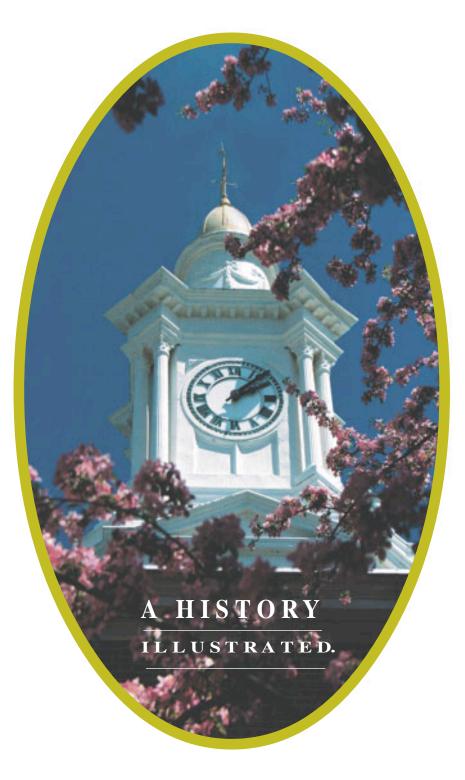
Go with me in imagination to the summit of the rise of ground west of the Borough, stand by the roadside and look down the valley, and beyond the village toward the valley of the Nun-un-dah (Potato Creek), and the hill range beyond, take in the whole panoramic view at a glance, and then view the outlines more at leisure. First look at the hill range at your right, a long range extending for many miles along the south of Marvin Creek valley, and terminating before you in the valley at first very gradually and forms a gentle slope. On this slope are cultivated fields and houses, interspersed with patches of forest trees and shrubs. Higher up it rises faster and the grade is steeper, all forest now; then another steeper grade still and you gain the summit, and are six hundred feet above the level of Marvin; the summit is narrow in the main, only little more than room for a wagon road. Sometimes, however, it may be found widened and forms a plateau; when you pass the summit to the other side, it descends the same as it rises on this side, but both sides are very irregular in their formation, no two alike, a constant change of outline, presenting bold projections, or slight undulations,



ever varying, the projections casting their shadows along the hillside, changing the apparent color of the forest foliage and making an agreeable illusion. You may imagine it a giant's shadow in the distance. These hill ranges are peculiar and unique. No other country I ever saw produces such hills. They are more miniature mountains than hills; to coin a word, they are mountaineers, often in long continuous ranges of many miles, then a narrow valley, then a stream of water, and then another range of hills, and so on for all the surrounding country to a great distance on all sides: probably a hundred miles in length by sixty miles in breadth. If one could get into a balloon and start from one of their summits, and go up a few hundred feet towards the clouds and look around him, he would see spread beneath and around what would look like a sea of forests, the hilltops representing the combs of the waves, and the valleys the troughs of the billows. Only think, an ocean of forest, which you take in by the eye at a glance, seen in all the grandeur and sublimely of nature's own creative power. As you look around, the eye tries in vain to see where the view terminates; as you look around hill range rises after hill range, intervening valley after intervening valley, as waves rise up and roll on, one wave after another, until all is mingled and blended into one interminable ocean of wilderness; except that you would now and then see in the valley of one of the side hills a cultivated farm and its tenements, looking like small islands dotted about in the ocean of endless foliage, spread out before you."

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TIMELESS HOME SMETHPORT, PENNSYLVANIA



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The Smethport Sesquicentennial Committee and Ross Porter, Editor; James Herzog; David Johnson; Les Jordan Jr.; Mary Pierotti.

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PREFACE

Smethport is a unique place to live. It is a village of congenial citizens, nestled in an emerald valley, that seems to have come out of the mist and into the sun. In a way Smethport is a metaphor for the old-time values of faith, family, school, service, hardwork, community and country, which were cherished by our ancestors and by those who reside here today. It is important to support these values if we are to continue to enjoy the freedom to pursue life, liberty and happiness that our forefathers so eloquently stated in the Declaration of Independence. Smethport's Sesquicentennial is a good time to celebrate these values. That is why we have selected the theme for the Sesquicentennial Celebration to be: Time to Come Home to Smethport.

-Wayne Pearson, Smethport Sesquicentennial Chairman

PUBLISHED IN HONOR OF THE SMETHPORT SESQUICENTENNIAL

ROSS PORTER, EDITOR JAMES HERZOG DAVID JOHNSON LES JORDAN JR. MARY PIEROTTI



THE WHITE HOUSE WASHINGTON

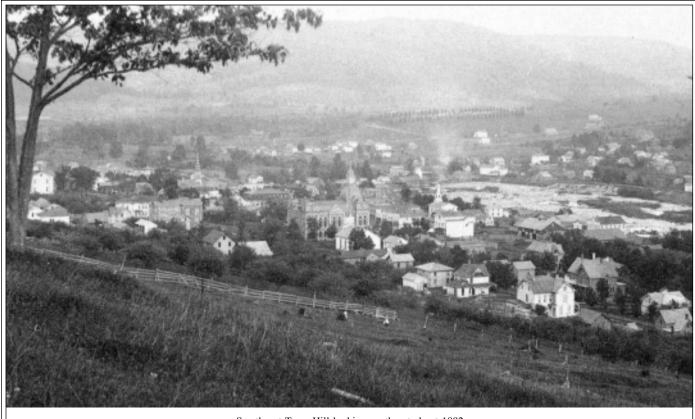
March 11, 2003

I am pleased to send greetings and congratulations to the residents of Smethport, Pennsylvania, as you mark its 150th anniversary.

America's towns, cities, and communities provide the foundation for our Nation's strength and prosperity. These are the places where young couples go to raise families, where immigrants arrive to build a better life, and where entrepreneurs pursue their dreams of starting a business and creating wealth. I commend local residents for your contributions to the development of Smethport and for adding to its rich history and heritage. Your love for your community inspires other adults, as well as children, to help shape America's future.

Laura joins me in sending best wishes on this special occasion.

me mis



Smethport Town Hill looking southeast about 1892. R.C. Gleason Collection

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COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR HARRISBURG

THE GOVERNOR

GREETINGS:

It is with great pleasure that I congratulate the people of Smethport as you celebrate 150 years of rich history and strong community.

Smethport stands as a town where the hopes and aspirations of its residents from over a century ago are carried on and continue to inspire a love of life, family, and community. The efforts made by the people of this unique town to maintain tradition and preserve history are to be admired. You exemplify the spirit of a vibrant Commonwealth, a spirit that is essential for us all to thrive and to ensure continued success in Smethport and throughout Pennsylvania.

On this, the Smethport Sesquicentennial Celebration, I congratulate you for your preservation of a great past and offer my best wishes for an even greater future. I hope you will enjoy these festivities and I join with you in celebrating a glorious 150 years of Smethport.



Edend G. Randall

EDWARD G. RENDELL Governor June 21, 2003

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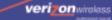
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> CONGRATULATIONS SMETHPORT SESQUICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY! 2003

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Smethport Chamber of Commerce—Smethport Area Jaycees—Smethport Area Jaycee Wives		
Social and Hobby Organizations		
Smethport Country Club—Smethport Senior Center and Elderberries Club—Smethport Garden and Crafts Club		
YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS		
Boy Scouting Started in Smethport 1910—Girl Scouts—1952 Little League—Little Bigger League—Smethport Memorial Recreation		
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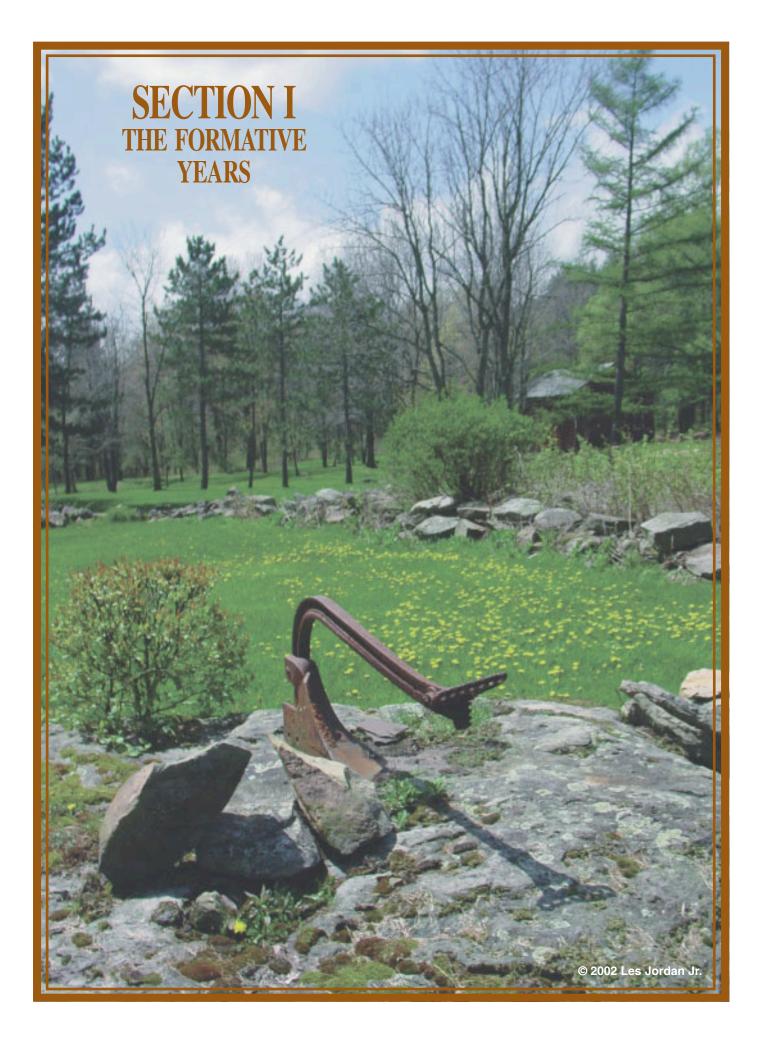
SALUTE TO OUR VETERANS

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MEET O.J. ON HIS 200TH BIRTHDAY

hroughout the course of this book you will discover many excerpts of rare commentary penned by Smethport pioneer, Orlo James (Jay) Hamlin. In 1826, not quite twenty-three years old, Orlo walked

into Smethport on the rutted, wild East-West Road on his way to start his legal practice in Warren. He spent the night in Smethport in a rented room at a rather wild tavern and he was anxious to move on down the road to a more civilized place. But his intelligence and charisma attracted the attention of Smethport businessmen and he was offered a retainer to remain in Smethport. That fateful decision to remain in Smethport would define our history.

A descriptive and eloquent writer, Orlo chronicled early Smethport and McKean County events, as well as observations of nature, personal experiences, and political views in his hand written journals. He wrote in a clever, humorous style which is both personable and delightfully entertaining. In 1914, thirtyfour years after his death, the extensive collection of his efforts was privately published in *The Life and Works of Orlo Jay Hamlin*, but never before offered to the public until 2003, his 200th birthday.

Read each excerpt carefully and savor the truly authentic flavor of his observations. They are a rare and direct connection to our past and a common treasure of our community.



Orlo James Hamlin 1803-1880 His friends called him "OJ"

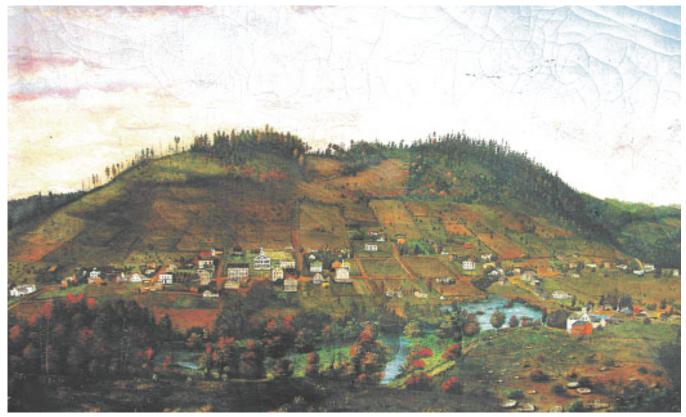
Ross E. Porter - Editor

TIMELESS HOME, SMETHPORT, PENNSYLVANIA 2003

ORLO DESCRIBES TOWN HILL FROM DEVIL'S DEN

rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:

"...it is an as productive a valley as there is in all the country around...looking toward the east, we see Marvin Creek in the basin of the valley with its silvery sheet of water winding its way towards its junction with the Nunundah. First, to the left of it comes narrow flat lowland, then the first bench, or more properly first slow rise of upland, as it gradually rises toward the hill at our left, half a mile or more wide and mile or more in length; on this first grade is stationed the village, its white houses with their roofs, steeples, and cupolas of the churches, and public buildings shimmering in the flickering sunshine; back of the village the hillside of cleared fields takes a second and steeper rise, then again a third and still steeper grade until the fields reach near the summit of the hill, save that the highest grade is mostly woodland, as it approaches the summit; that summit being mainly covered with tall evergreen trees, interspersed by patches only covered by underwood. This hill next to the village forms a central curve scooped out in the form of an amphitheater, covering three-fourths of the hillside. At the right hand extremity of the summit of this hill at its highest elevation and more than six hundred feet above the sea level of the valley, stands a clump of about a dozen tall pines, looming up and raising their pointed tops a hundred and fifty feet above the hilltop.....Beyond those tall trees, the hilltop begins to descend: first slowly, then rapidly and steeper and steeper until it reaches down nearly to the waters of the Nunundah, at a place called the Dug-way or Narrows. Those tall pines stand among their neighboring trees as Napoleon the first was said to stand among men, alone, "grand, gloomy, solitary and peculiar." They have lived while twenty generations of human beings have been born, lived, passed over their stages of human existence, and gone to the spirit land. When Columbus discovered this continent, those trees were seedlings just starting from the earth on their journey of life..."



Smethport "Town Hill" circa 1866 by Helen Cowles Crocker: Sitting on the hillside above Brennan's farm Helen captured the time and beauty as no camera could. Like the words of Orlo Hamlin, Helen Cowles Crocker's painting is a Smethport historical treasure that gives us a window into our past and therefore a better understanding of our present and future. McKean County Historical Society Collection Original oil on display at the McKean County Historical Society Museum

CHAPTER I THE HUB OF MCKEAN COUNTY

POTATO CREEK, SMETHPORT'S FIRST HIGHWAY— SMETHPORT NAME HAS ORIGINS WITH FRENCH REVOLUTION—FIRST CABIN FOR SMETHPORT

Potato Creek: Smethport's First Highway

estled in the valleys of McKean County lies the beautiful and scenic historic village of Smethport, Pennsylvania. Search for Smethport on a map of McKean County, and you'll quickly discover that it lies in the near geographic center with the roads and rivers reaching inward resembling spokes of a wheel. It was more than coincidence which led to Smethport being settled where it was.

In creating McKean County from Lycoming County, the Pennsylvania Assembly mandated the county seat be no more than seven miles from the geographic center of the proposed county. An act of legislation isn't the sole reason Smethport can proudly call itself the hub of the county.

In August 1807, Francis King, representing landowner John Keating, arrived at the valley where Potato and Marvin Creeks converge, and surveyed the proposed town which would become Smethport. Fifteen years later an Act of Assembly allowed the county commissioners to clear a 30-acre tract, and in five years later famed Solomon Sartwell began construction on McKean County's first courthouse.

Smethport's location on the once-navigable Potato Creek with its access to the Allegheny River, made it an important port at a time when roads were little more than trails cut through the wilderness and waterways were given highway status. In 1815 Jonathan Colegrove came with his wife and children by canoe from Olean Point to Keating Township down the Allegheny River to Larabee then and on Potato Creek into Smethport. Soon barges of wood from surrounding hillsides, as well as coal from Instanter, left Smethport on Potato Creek heading for Pittsburgh via the Allegheny.

Smethport Name Has Origins With French Revolution

he de Smeth family owned a giant banking institution in Amsterdam, Netherlands dating back to 1736. The de Smeth family bank had deep financial investments in the Ceres Land Company. The Ceres Land Company invested in about 300,000 acres of forest land in northwestern Pennsylvania which included McKean and Potter Counties.

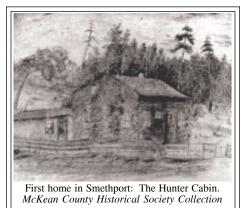
In 1792, Capt. John Keating was hired by the Ceres Land Company and sent to Smethport to manage the lands. John Keating, a renowned soldier in the French army, had political ties to the former French (but beheaded) monarchy. Most of the capital of the Ceres Land Company



came from exiled Frenchmen of the upper class who had fled France because of the French Revolution. These French aristocracy had shifted huge amounts of money out of the de Smeth banking firm to the Ceres Land Company.

In 1807, John Keating requested that the new townsite for the future county seat of McKean County be named "Smethport" in honor of the de Smeth banking firm. Perhaps Captain Keating's motive was to encourage continued de Smeth investments in the Ceres Land Company.

Norwich Township was settled by pioneers from Connecticut. Among the first settlers were Jonathan Colegrove and Nathaniel Gallup, who arrived in Norwich in 1815. Court records of 1816 indicate David Comes and Jonathan Colegrove were appointed bridge traffic supervisors for the critical bridges over Potato Creek on a road leading from Smethport to Instanter. The Smethport to Instanter road probably followed the course of today's "back road to Crosby" to Red Mill Brook. Comes likely supervised the bridge at Galico Crossing, also a favorite fishing and picnicking area, whereas Colegrove was responsible for the





Cabin dating to circa 1818 on the Gallup Homestead. © Les Jordan Jr.

bridge just south of Crosby (Spearsburg).

First Cabin For Smethport

According to 1817 McKean County court records Nathaniel Gallup was appointed traffic supervisor for a road from Arnold Hunter's house on the East-West Road which connected with the Instanter Road. Captain Hunter's cabin, built of log in 1811, was the first residence in Smethport. The1908 *McKean County Miner* located the Hunter cabin at the "mouth of Marvin Creek". A second home was built in 1812, but both were abandoned in 1814. Dr. Eastman constructed the first permanent log house and Solomon Sartwell, Jr., brother of Asa Sartwell, built the second large log house after he came to Smethport in 1820. Solomon would become the famous architect-builder of the original Smethport construction phase.

From the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin: Smethport, Pennsylvania, circa 1830 "...No permanent settlement was commenced until 1822. About this time the first county commissioners were elected and held their office in a small building erected by Doctor Eastman at the lower part of the town plot. The first commissioners were Rensselaer Wright and Jonathan Colegrove for McKean, and John Taggart, for Potter County -- Joseph Otto, treasurer. This county was organized for judicial purposes in 1826; and the first county court was held in September of that year. The Court House, situated in the center of the town -- a respectably made brick building--was erected this year."

CHAPTER II THE EARLY TOWN

THE FIRST ROAD THROUGH SMETHPORT—ORLO WALKS TO SMETHPORT ON THE EAST-WEST ROAD— ORLO JAY HAMLIN'S ARRIVAL MILESBURG-SMETHPORT TURNPIKE

The First Road Through Smethport

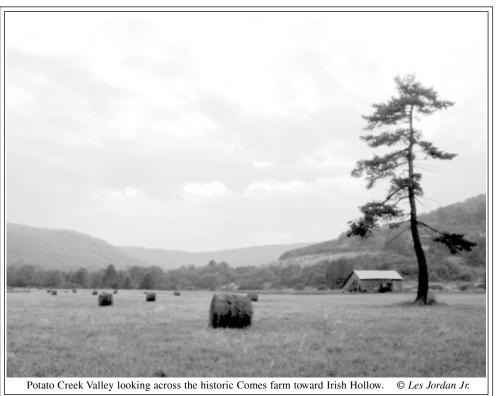
s the migration west proceeded, roads were improved. One of the most important in the westward migration was the East-West Road, which entered McKean County near Burtville, passed Canoe Place (Port Allegany) and entered Smethport before continuing across the Big Plateau to Lafayette and eventually to the Indian territory. ORLO WALKS INTO SMETHPORT

AND SPENDS THE NIGHT AT THE "RED TAVERN"

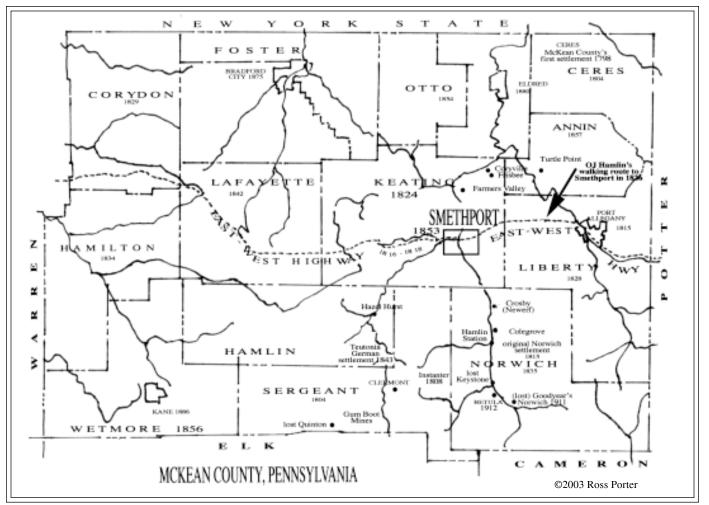
rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo J. Hamlin:

Smethport, 1826 " At the Canoe Place (now Port Allegany) we fell in with Moses Hana who regularly carried the mail from Smethport to Jersey Shore once in two weeks. We came over the hill, or rather

mountain, I should call it, one of the most gloomy, lonesome and disagreeable roads I ever traveled: all woods, the trees large and numerous, and the road being quite narrow shut out the sight of the sun, - if it had shone in December, which it rarely does in our latitude and climate, forming over us a complete canopy of dark, gloomy evergreens. The road was rocky in places, and stony nearly all, with innumerable roots of the trees interlaced in the bed of the road for the horses to get over as best they could, at the risk of breaking a leg at every step, mud often knee deep, and the more wet or swampy places ornamented



for crossing with an execrable corduroy or pole bridge.



We slowly groped our way for nine long and seemingly endless miles to the foot of the hill east of Smethport; then for near half a mile we found another of those most intolerable of all bridges, made of logs and poles. Then crossing Potato or Nunundah Creek, arrived at the Red Tavern, kept by the Widow Williard in Smethport. Mrs. Williard was not a widow, but as her husband had lately gone to the South, and left her to take care of herself and child, she became landlady and kept up the tavern as a means of support.

It being long after dark when we arrived the barroom was pretty well filled with men, who just then had nothing else to do. After supper we rejoined the men in the barroom who were quite civil and neighborly, one of them who seemed a leading man among them, after inquiring whence we came and what we came for and learning of our proposed settling as a lawyer, asked me what spelling books were in use now. I felt my dignity as a lawyer put to the test, and was rather mortified that I should be asked such an undignified question, and replied under the infliction of a little mortified pride, that it was so long since I had been in the elementary school that I hardly knew what spellers were now in use, but I believed "Dillworth's" were going out and "Webster's" coming into use. Had he asked me some grave question of law, I should have felt much more elevated, at least in my own estimation.

A ROUGH NIGHT AT THE TAVERN

On retiring for the night I passed through a small dining-room, which was adjoining the kitchen, from that to my bedroom which was adjoining the barroom. It so happened that a married man and woman were then occupying a room immediately back of the dining-room, and at about ten o'clock at night the woman was in her accouchment, and I was kept awake by neighboring women passing through the dining-room to the sick woman's room every few minutes, back and forward to the kitchen. In the barroom the men kept up a continual cross-fire of conversation with an occasional outburst of laughter, so to me sleep was impossible. About twelve I heard apparently the sound of one person, then another falling on the barroom floor, accompanied by a sound of laughter. This I inferred resulted from one man pushing another off his chair and landing him on the floor. This to me intolerable nuisance was kept up until nearly morning, when the denizens of the barroom dispersed.

I rose in the morning feverish, nervous and excitable, fully determined to return to Towanda and take my chance there, rather than to settle in so outlandish a place as Smethport; but destiny had ordained it otherwise."

In 1826, the same year as Orlo James Hamlin's arrival, McKean County's first courthouse was completed. Because Smethport was chosen to be the seat of government for McKean County a courthouse was needed. With only 211 taxable citizens in the county as late as 1821, records were kept in Williamsport and later Bellefonte.

Celebrated Smethport architect-contractor Solomon Sartwell, Jr. received \$3,000 to build the first courthouse. It was constructed of brick, having a center building and two wings. The first floor of the main building contained two rooms for the sheriff's residence and two cells for prisoners; one as a debtors jail, and one as a dungeon for criminals. The second story contained a court room, and the wings were used for county commissioners, prothonotary, and other offices. It was torn down in 1850 and a new courthouse, also built by Solomon Sartwell, was completed in 1851.

In September of that year, Judge Edward Herrick travelled four days by horseback from Towanda to initiate the court. Of his first eleven cases, six were timber theft and three slander. By that December two lawyers were admitted to practice in the county, one being Orlo James Hamlin.

Although it would not become an official borough until the important year of 1853, Smethport was developing into a solid organized community by 1830. By then there were already about thirty homes as well as a gristmill, sawmill, carding machine, clothing works, tannery, and early mechanics trade (today referred to as blacksmiths.) Also in 1830 Hiram Payne had established the first Smethport newspaper, *The Forester & Smethport Register*. Smethport's evolution as a community was further established by regular mail delivery. It was evolving into a real community with metropolitan services.

OJ TALKS ABOUT MAIL SERVICE, STAGE COACHES AND THE

IMPORTANCE OF GOOD ROADS

→ of Orlo James Hamlin:

Smethport, Pennsylvania: A weekly mail arrives here from the north, the east, the southeast, the south and the west. On the route from the east, a stage commenced running this spring and will continue. It leads from this place to Coudersport, thence either to Jersey Shore, Harrisburg and Philadelphia; or to Wellsborough, where stages go in different directions. A stage route, once or twice a week, will probably be in operation some time this summer, connecting with the Angelica and Rochester stages at Olean Point, New York. Smethport may now be called a pleasant county hamlet. Whenever the Milesburgh and Smethport Turnpike is completed (which there is good reason to believe will be soon) and a regular line of stages are established, leading from Rochester, Buffalo and the Lakes via Olean and Smethport to Harrisburg, Philadelphia and Washington -- and the state road becomes improved, this will, in all probability, become a bustling place of business."



Much of Route 6 and Route 59 follows the old East-West State Road. Bradford Landmark Society Collection

The Milesburg-Smethport Turnpike snaked from Montmorenci into southern McKean County, and dropped down from Instanter and Bunker Hill to Smethport. The Milesburg-Smethport Turnpike connected Smethport to central Pennsylvania and ensured the continued growth of Smethport.

CHAPTER III CELEBRATION OF INDEPENDENCE DAY 1830

Smethport's First Town-wide Celebration

Illustrating Smethport's evolution from wilderness settlement to established community was the very first town-wide, formal celebration of Independence Day, 1830.

rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:

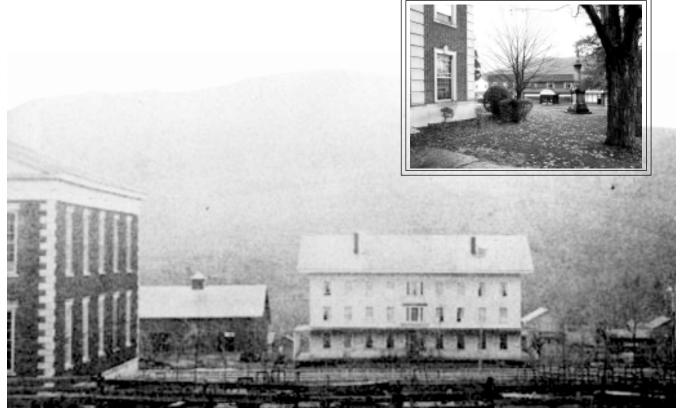
We have a Fourth of July Celebration. I believe the first celebration of our Nation's birthday of its Independence occurred in 1829 or '30. Ample preparations had been made to commemorate this, the most memorable and distinguished anniversary in the history of our country.

The arrangements were consummated by erecting a splendid hickory liberty pole on the public square opposite what is now the Bennett House and hoisting to its top a flag of the Stars and Stripes, the emblem of the nation's freedom. A long table made of newly sawed pine boards, resting on temporary support ranging east and west along the Court House square, shaded by boughs of fresh green-leafed trees as a roofing, resting on short poles driven into the ground with cross poles to support the roofing, with pine boards for seats or



"SPEAKER OF THE DAY" O.J. HAMLIN

benches on each side of the table; the whole intending to serve as a banqueting pavilion. The company was to assemble, or to use a military term, rendezvous, at the lower tavern, then owned by Mr. William Williams and kept by a man I have now



"Arrangements were consummated by erecting a splendid hickory liberty pole on the public square opposite what is now the Bennet(sic) House and hoisting to its top a flag of the Stars and Stripes, the emblem of the nation's freedom." This view shown circa 1858. McKean County Historical Society Collection Inset photo ©Les Jordan Jr.

forgotten, there to form a procession and march to the Court House to hear the oration and thence to the dinner table.

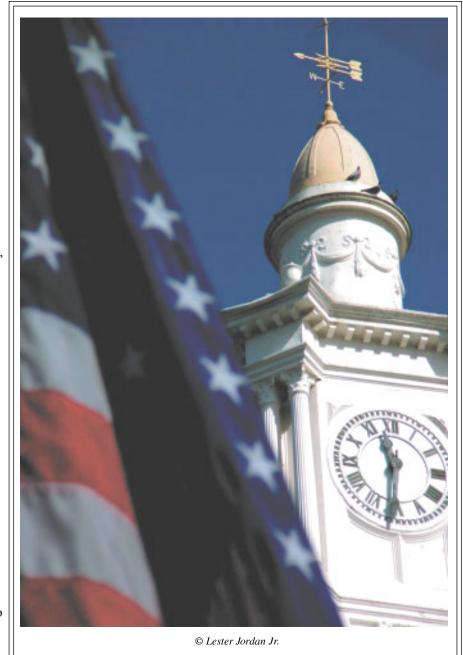
Jonathan Colegrove, Esq., was appointed marshal of the day, two or three clergymen were selected, one of whom was to act as chaplain, a drummer and fifer were obtained, and the writer of this sketch was selected as the orator for the occasion. The day was fair and propitious, a pretty large concourse of people in proportion to our then population assembled at the appointed time, 10:00 o'clock A.M., and under the guidance of the marshal formed into procession in front of the lower tavern, each gentleman walking by the side of his lady partner. The marshal had been a military man as lieutenant in the War of 1812,

accoutered in full military costume, but only wore a sword belt and carried his sword. He was a man of sterling good qualities, and inherited all the firmness, courage and indomitable energy that belonged to the character of his Puritan ancestors, the men of the Mayflower memory. As a faithful historian, I am obliged to say that but one little accident distracted, in my judgment, somewhat from his military appearance. He wore a silk stove-pipe hat considerably dented on one side, in about that part of the hat where the cockade should have been worn, if it had one. This little fault in the marshal's equipment struck me as being entirely objectionable and unmilitary. It was not as would be said in modern times "a shocking bad hat," but to use a French word was decidedly outre.

Our fifer was Isaac Burlingame, the drummer's name I have forgotten; but this I know, that they seemed by their playing of stirring music to be animated by patriotic ardor, to the fullest enthusiasm, as they sung out their shrill and booming music of marshal clangor and awakened the echoes of our quiet village by sounds before unknown.

The marshal had selected thirteen picked men, each carrying either a rifle or a musket, to act as a military escort, and to symbolize the thirteen united independent original colonies. The concourse of

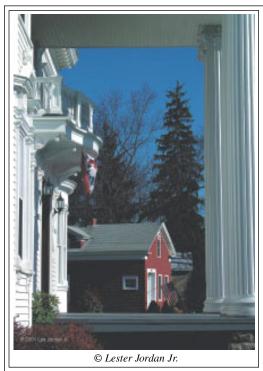
people who formed the procession were all



dressed in their best holiday clothes and made a highly creditable display as a civic procession. The orator was dressed, for the fashion of the times, in a faultless suit of black broadcloth, with a silk velvet vest and a gold wire, narrow, band-shaped, watch-guard chain dangling down the sides of the front side of the vest, with a gold watch in the fob. He, with the chaplains and committee of arrangement, headed the civic cavalcade. The military escort, headed by the music, took the van, the Court House bell was ringing, and the marshal, marching at the front by their side, with drawn sword, the point being held towards the zenith, and keeping military step with the music and his military bearing faultless as a soldier, the command "march" was given, the music began and the procession moved up Main Street. When it arrived at the direct west line of the street, and first view of the

Stars and Stripes floating in the breeze as it streamed from the top of the liberty pole, the patriotic energy and enthusiasm of the whole cavalcade seemed redoubled by seeing the emblem of their country's freedom and national grandeur displayed on that momentous occasion. The procession marched onward with zeal and alacrity until it arrived at the liberty pole, when the order was given to "wheel to the right," and the march continued to the front of the old Court House steps and then, required to "halt." The escort divided, six men on one side of the walk and seven on the other, and at a sign from the marshal fired a grand national salute of thirteen guns (composed of flint-locked rifles and muskets) as nearly as they could be fired at the same time by the men, sounding more like a dozen fire crackers fired in an empty flour barrel than a salute of artillery. The procession marched in through between the files of soldiery, the men with uncovered heads (all but the orator of the day, who was so much elevated by the dignity of his station as orator of the day, that he barely touched the rim of his beaver with the tips of his fingers), and marched on with head erect, and up the stairs to the court room, where the people were met by Asa Sartwell who appeared from the upper room of the west wing of the Court House, weirdly and wildly with his eyes protruding from their sockets with the effort of blowing and excitement of the occasion, vigorously playing on his clarinet, the old march "Fresh and Strong." The excited manner of the player and the screaming sound of the instrument vividly brought to mind the old Scottish wandering harpers, and the bagpipe players in the ancient times of the feudal wars so relentlessly waged between the chiefs of the Clans of the Campbells and McGregors among the highland chiefs of Scotland of days of "lang syne," reminding one of the song "The Campbells are coming, hurrah! hurrah!" and the more recent wild cry of "Dinna ye hear the slogan" by the Scottish soldier's wife while battling in India.

Presently the clarinet subsided, the audience came to order, the Declaration of Independence was read, I believe by Ozhea R. Bennett (but it may have been by John E. Niles), and the oration began. The room was densely crowded, the day was sweltering hot, and the oration, though thoughtfully prepared, was delivered entirely extempore and was doubtless a very prosy affair, occupying a full hour and a half in its delivery, and I have no doubt the audience was exceedingly gratified



when it was ended, and so

ended, and so was the orator, when he perceived to his mortification and disappointment that his speech had produced no more enthusiasm or apparent sensational effect upon the audience than had the bare reading of the Declaration of



"He gave a spring up into the air as high as he could jump and shouted "hurrah for George Washington!"

Independence by the reader.

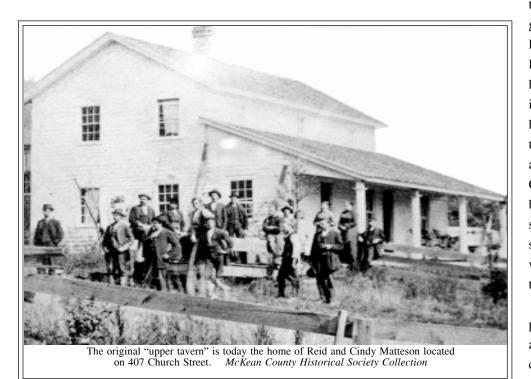
The people descended the stairs and the order was given again to form in procession. The procession then headed by the music, the marshal and the military marched after the music of the fife and the drum to the

leaf-covered bower prepared for the banqueting hall, and marching up on each side of the table the ladies and gentlemen were seated on opposite sides. Grace having been said by the chaplain, a good dinner which had been prepared by Mr. Allan Rice (who then kept the upper tavern, then belonging to Esquire Crow) was partaken of by the guests. As I leisurely cast my eye up and down the rustic pavilion I enjoyed the scene; every one seemed pleased. The bower was not artistically festooned with

evergreens, nor was the clean tablecloth and glittering porcelain decorated with vases of flowers, --that idea is one outgrowth of modern good taste and refinement, --but it looked sylvan, shady and to us who had seen it for the first time, with the long lines of cheerful, well dressed people in the long vista, the scene as a whole was quite unique and attractive.

Hiram Payne was chosen toastmaster and read the standing toasts from the head of the table; the military with the marshal were ranged on one side of the table, and as each toast was read, the marshal by a signal made by flashing his sword in the sunlighted air indicated to the military simultaneously to fire a salute, which was well accomplished considering the number of the caliber of the ordinance extemporized for the occasion. Often the salute followed the cheers, one, two, three, according to order, which was always given in full chorus, and given with a will, until the men became hoarse from the effect of the oft repeated hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!

Among the outsiders, not seated at the table, was an old man, Mr. G---(Mr. Garey, -editor), who claimed to have been, but I believe was not, a Revolutionary soldier. He was a little short man of eighty summers, and very active for his age, but on this day of general glorification had imbibed a little too much. When the cheering went on and the venerated name of George Washington was alluded to in one of the standing toasts, the old gentleman joined in the cheering and each time he cried hurrah! He gave a spring up into the air as high as he could jump and shouted "hurrah for George Washington!" This was repeated over once, twice, but the third time he had become so patriotic and the good liquor had made him so boozy, the effort of jumping was too much for him and he fell prone to the ground and lay prostrate upon his back, which brought down a general roar of laughter from the bystanders. Some kind friends of his helped him into the tavern across the way and we saw no more of him that day. After the regular toasts were through with a good many volunteer speeches were given; the only pledge used was the cold water beverage and they were all responded to with a patriotic vim and abundant good humor. Honorable mention must be made of



the fact that the assemblage was graced by the presence of Deacon Edward Corwin, a soldier of the Revolutionary War of '76, who had given seven long years spent in the toils of war in the service of his country; and in this connection I barely mention the name of another of our worthy citizens, Col. Elihu Chadwick, who was a brave officer and did valuable service to our country in the struggle for national freedom, who I believe was not present on this occasion.

The day had been spent pleasantly by most persons who attended, but I was tired and was chagrined by the recollection of the personal vanity I had dis-

played in wearing the gold guard chain so freely displayed, when no other person present wore one, which seemed to me a violation of the rule of republican simplicity which I always cherished and which now mortified me that I had not vigorously observed it on this occasion. I gave the chain to my wife and never displayed it again in this county for my own personal adornment. Thus was begun and thus was ended the first gala day at Smethport. The only complaint I heard was from the marshal, who said to me that "he couldn't make his men keep step with the music." I may add that this celebration occurred more than forty years ago, since which time our citizens have witnessed the advent of the circus, the menagerie, and more recently the Smethport Dramatic Society. So that our first gala day is now thrown entirely into the shade and is remembered and talked of only by the oldest inhabitants of the town as a notable event of the olden times, when they repeat with a sigh "thus passes away the glory of the world."

CHAPTER IV OVIATT DIARY 1840S

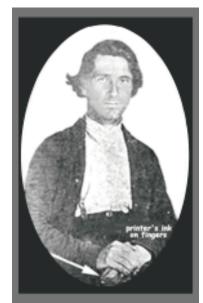
DIARY OF JOSEPH BEAMAN OVIATT 1840S-PIONEER LIFE NEAR THE NUNUNDAH

WINTER OF 1847-1848, SMETHPORT, KEATING TOWNSHIP, MCKEAN COUNTY, PA.

methport, 11th mo. 23d 1847: Tuesday.-Rained this morning. Cut some wood. Mr. Mauts brot some corn, which was very poor. Told him I would not give him but \$.50 per bushel. He took it over to the mill and promised to give him up his note (\$2) for 2 1/4 bushels by weight & \$.38 in cash. Two bushels and 3 pecks only weighed 2 1/4

JOSEPH BEAMAN OVIATT: SMETHPORT'S LONG-TIME EDITOR

ong time editor and publisher for several of Smethport's early newspapers kept a detailed diary of events during the winter of 1847-1848. It appears that J.B. was not editing a newspaper that winter. His diary carefully records the pioneer, day-to-day austere lifestyle of early Smethport during the 1840s. Many of the individuals

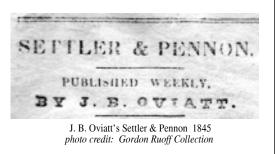


Early tintype of J. B. Oviatt about 1855. Note printer's ink on his hands! photo credit: Beverly Oviatt Schonewolf Collection

mentioned in his diary were prominent citizens at the time. In 1845 he purchased his brother's Smethport newpaper, *Settler & Pennon*, which he published for about two years and in 1858 began publishing the McKean County Democrat which he published until his sudden death in 1865. J.B. died abruptly in 1865 at the early age of 42 leaving his wife and ten children.

His 1865 obituary was published in the (Republican Party based) McKean County Miner and stated: "As every man who has ever had any experience in the business knows, to depend upon that business alone in a place like Smethport is to

lead a life of poverty. Although an honest man, and the possessor of more than ordinary ability, he struggled in vain to better his fortunes in the publication of a democratic journal in McKean County. As a politician he was an earnest and devoted member



of the Democratic party, and for the past ten years he has given more vitality to that sinking organization than any five men in the county."

bushels. Took my saw over to have George Chapin file it for me. Took a file from home and lost it. Went back & found it. George and G.N. Smith have bot an instrument for taking pictures & intend to spend the winter in that business. Came home by the creek and waded. Rained all day.

Smethport, 11 mo. 25th 1847: Thursday.- Rained all night. The water is high this morning, but not as high as before. Maria found the Dr's. pigs in the office & was driving them out when one got his head fast in a gate & could not get out & made a dreadful noise until I got dressed & Arthur came over when we got him out. I thought the Dr. was offended at it. Chopped some wood after breakfast & went up to the Court House to hear a Thanksgiving discourse by Rev. J.L. Smith which was very appropriate. Took dinner at Geo. S. Came home & chopped wood for (illegible). He talks as tho he would not like to (illegible) back in the event of my getting an office. Snowed this evening.

Smethport Nov. 26th: Friday.- Cold & snowing this morning. Chopped some wood & then went over & got the corn from the mill that I got of Mauts. Miller & Hiram were here. Cleaned out the hog pen & put in new straw. Helped Wm dip candles this afternoon & evening. Brot over 13 candles. Eat supper at Wms. Patrick Lynch & (Aryesvelle?) were at Wms. Patrick says that

Azro's wife is going home again to leave Azro. Belinda was very good, but could not refrain from backbiting & making insulting remarks.

Smethport Nov. 30th: Tuesday. Attended the funeral at 2 o'clock this afternoon. Did not get there in season to go to the grave. Mr. Smith preached the Sermon & was pretty severe I thought. Ormond's connexions & friends are all Universalists. He said that the deceased met with a change of heart before he died. There were a great many at the funeral. The Methodist church was nearly full. Came home & Arthur took the Dr's team & went with me & got a load of wood off of the hill.

Smethport, Dec. 2d 1847: Thursday.- Rainy this morning. Went up on the old State Road with Wm Howard & cut Hoop poles Hickory &c. In the afternoon made an axe helve. Howard put on eight Hoops on the Dr's meat barrel for which he charged \$1. Arthur came up with the horses & drew our timber down. Hiram Payne loaned a bushel of oats to me - said I should have them when I called for them.

Dec. 5th 1847: Sunday.- Snowed this morning. Washed & shaved before breakfast. Went to meeting at the Court House. Mr. Smith preached. Was in at the P.O. but the mail had not got in. Met it when I was coming down. The Roads are very bad the mails are all delayed on that account. Sylvester while holding the lamp for me broke it. accidentally. Gave the mare some boiled oats, but she did not eat them very well.

Smethport Dec. 6th 1847: Monday.- Clear & cold. Worked on the stable. Made a door & manger. Chopped some wood & helped Wm make a hound for his sleigh. Got a pound of tobacco at Dr's & had it charged; While over there a crazy man came along. Jane Darling was here today & Sarah York came in to see (illegible). This is the first time she has been in the house. She was quite familiar before I was married; but since then she has been cool. Jane was here to dinner. She is a good girl.

Smethport - 12th mo. 7th 1847: Tuesday. - Clear & cold in morning. The boys harnessed the horses & carried some oats to the mill for Wm to feed cows. I put on the rest of my corn and went up to the Taylor's shop. Dave Spencer has come back & is at work for John. He says he has no iron suitable for horse shoes. He expects some Friday. Went from there up st. Had a talk with Brad about the pr. business. He says if he was a candidate for office again and they charged him so much for tickets he wud send



Went to meeting at the Court House. Mr. Smith preached. Was in at the P.O. but the mail had not got in. Met it when I was coming down. The roads are very bad the mails are all delayed on that account." *Photo McKean County Historical Society Collection*

off and get them done. It is rather mean of him to talk so as he has the best office in the county; but it shows the breed. Went from there to Steele's store & bot a pound of tea at \$1. & a (illegible) shovel for \$1.25. Came home & Arthur helped me get a load of wood with the Dr's horses off the hill. Made a window for my stable, done my chores &c. It has been very warm & pleasant today.

Smethport - Dec 8th: Wednesday. - Cold thro the night. built fire & prepared to kill my hog went up with the

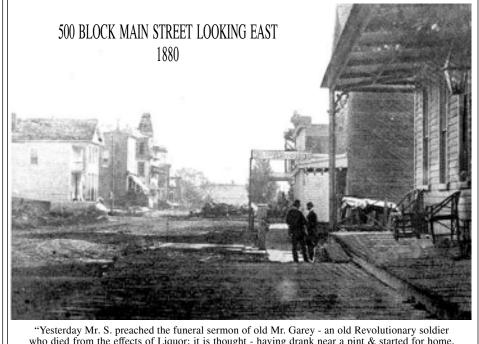
buggy to Howards & got Wm's barrel to scald in. Got ready to kill him about noon. I eat dinner at Wm's. Had a good scald. He weighed, when dressed, 284 lb. Wm intends to butcher tomorrow if the weather is suitable. Wrote a letter to Wilson & Co. N.Y. ordering 10 copies of the double Jonathan & sent \$1. for Jacob Stickles. The Dr. loaned one of my (illegible) to H. Payne & when sent for today it was not got. It has been very warm & pleasant today & is raining a little this evening.

Smethport, 12th mo., 9th 1847: Thursday. - Rained during the night-. H. Payne, Dr. McCoy & Wm were in here this morning. Mr. Payne took an axe helve, but did not pay for it. I cut up my pork & weighed one half of it which weighed 149 1/ 4 lb. When weighed last night he was not clear. He probably weighed as near 300 lbs as may be. It rained nearly all day & I done nothing but make a feed box for the mare. Benjamin took the letter I wrote yesterday for Jacob & money to pay the postage. Azro was here this ev. he says he has bot Alex Gifford's share of the hay in the Bay. I was in the Dr's office this ev. W. F. Ormsby settled with the Dr. who owed him \$1.67. It is growing colder & the wind is blowing. Eat dinner at Wm's.

Smethport, Dec. 10th, 1847: Friday - Rainy thro' the night. Helped Wm butcher hogs today. Horace King & Mr. Tracy helped. Got thro. about noon. A.D. Hamlin shot one of them twice before he killed it. The heaviest weighed 320 lbs - the next 272. Got 25 lbs of salt of dr. & Wm salted my meat for me. Did not use it all. Maria was whipping Frank all the time they were here to make him mind. Did not whip him very hard & could not make him give up. I set out 5 apple trees on my (illegible). The trees were brot from Dr's nursery by Wm. Eat dinner at Wm's. He was over before we were up & got some meat - for breakfast. Arth. was over here & took supper. It has been clear all day & warm; but is raining now. The ground has all broke up & is very muddy.

Smethport, 12th mo. 11th 1847: Saturday. - Clear this morning & rather colder. Maria cleaned house today. I did not do much, helped about the house - shaved out a single tree put a few boards overhead in the house, nailed some boards on the barn &c. Arthur was in this evening & played cards with me. The sun shone almost as warm as summer at times. It did not rain any of consequence today. The water is over the road & the little bridge by Chapin's is out.

Smethport, Dec. 12th: Sunday.. Rainy this morning. Saw Mr. Bush go up with the Wellsboro mail this morning & rode the mare up to the P.O. expecting a letter from Holcomb but was disappointed. I got the Col. Mag. The (illegible) Journal & G. Benj. Smith's Herald from N.Y. & the Philad. Sat Cour. from Philad. Stopped in at bro. S. & left their Bap. Reg. & brot. down Wm's Reg. & a shop letter from R. Chadwick for him. Read thro. the day & did not go to church. It has been a cold



who died from the effects of Liquor; it is thought - having drank near a pint & started for home. He was found dead in the road lying on his face." McKean County Historical Society Photo

rainy day. The roads are nearly impassable.

Smethport, 12th mo., 13th 1847: Monday. - Rained nearly all night. Chopped wood & then found the head to the Pork barrell & put it in & put on some new hoops but it still leaks. Got a chopping knife & bowl from Belinda & Maria chopped her sausage meat. Had some sage of Belinda. Rained nearly all day. The water is high again. The water has been high enough in the river for six weeks, nearly all the time to run rafts. It is said by some one who has been to the trouble to ascertain that more rain has fallen within 3 months than is normal for 12 mos.

Smethport - Dec 14th:

Tuesday.- Rained, hailed & snowed during the night. Went at work on my meat barrell again put on 11 new hoops, but it still leaked. Went up in the woods & chopped some. Fred. Payne was after me to draw some hay could not go Hiram brot up Mrs. Brown's sausage gun & some sage & we made up our meat. I rode the mare up to the P.O. but got nothing. Arth. was over & played cards this ev. also Sat ev. The water is still over the road. Hiram had supper & stayed all night with us. Did not rain much today.

Smethport, 12th mo. 15th 1847: Wednesday.- Cold & rainy- drizzling. Chopped down a large soft maple tree above the road & chopped up the top for wood. Hiram was here for breakfast. Rode the mare up to Mr. S. to see if Benj. had been to the P.O. No letter yet from Holcomb. Wm was shoemaking. was over there a short time. It has been a cold rainy day.

I understood that Azro has taken the school in that neighborhood & is to commence next Monday, at \$14. per month & board himself. Got 15 lbs salt of dr. & a barrell & packed my pork over & put brine on it.

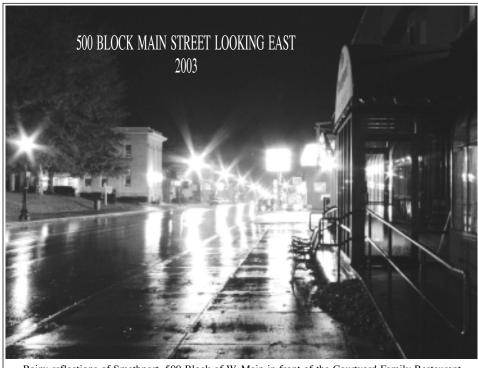
Smethport, Dec. 16th 1847: Thursday.- Cold last night & clear - froze up the roads but there was so much water on the ground that it is not solid. Maria washed today, & I helped bring water &c. Put a latch on the stable door & worked at whipple trees. Was over at Wm's. They got Mrs. Brown's sausage gun from her & were making their sausages this ev. Arthur was over here & played a few hands of cards. It has been a cold day & clear except a few flurries of snow, coarse (illegible)

Smethport, - Dec 18th 1847: Saturday. Clear & cool. After breakfast I took my mare & one of Wms & went with up to the barn after a load of hay. The Dr. & Arthur also went up for a load. Azro is to let the Dr. have 2 tons & 2 (illegible) of hay to pay up his old Dr. bill. We loaded up his load first & he started out with it, when his horse balked. I then hitch on ours, & they could not draw it. Azro came down with a yoke of oxen & drew it out & broke off the end of the tongue. We came home without any further adverse time. After I came home I chopped my Sunday wood.

Smethport - 12th mo., 19th 1847: Sunday.- Did not go to ch. Read some & shovelled roads through the snow. Miller Stickles brot a Godey's Lady's book for January today. After I had washed & shaved I went over to Wms borrowed some meal, & Belinda urged me to take some flour, which I did - a part of a panful, & Maria made some fried cakes. In the ev. I went up to the P.O. - no letter yet from Holcomb. The Belfonte mail has not got in yet. My Sat. Cour. has got mislaid.

Smethport, Dec. 20th, 1847: Monday.- Mr. Payne was in before breakfast & wanted to rig a team to chain wood &c. he said he had an old harness that could be fixed. He afterwards got Wm to draw a load of hay for him. I went up to the P. O. this morning & up to Taylor's Store. I am back & got 3 yds broad cloth at \$4. per yard at Dis. & took it up to Smith's (12) & then went to Steels' & got 3 yds of fall cloth at \$1.5 3/4 sheeting at 1/ - 1 1/2 (illegible). 1/6 B silk at 5 & 4 lb sugar at 1/ - 4.50 \$16.50; Stopped at bro. S. as I came down. F. gave me a piece of cheese. came home & helped Maria cut my pants. Bel - mail

not in. H. Pay has got my Cour. Smethport - 12th mo. 21st, 1847: Tuesday. - Clear & cold. After breakfast, rigged up Wm's cutter & went, with the mare, up to Dea. Taylor's & got a double harness & whipple trees. Stopped a Smith & Bards' & got my overcoat, which was cut out. D/off Ned at bro. S.'s & took dinner. Benj. O. boards there. He brot down Mr. S's mare, & I took Wms harness & sleigh & drew a load of wood for M S. from Job Gifford's, with them. Mr. G was not at home when I went there & I told Henry G. my errand. He said his "father had no wood & perhaps he intended to take some of his but he'd be damd if he took any of it for a minister who was as well able to cut it as he." After I came



Rainy reflections of Smethport. 500 Block of W. Main in front of the Courtyard Family Restaurant *photo* © *Lester Jordan Jr.*

back I got some corn from Wm & shelled.

Smethport, 12 mo. 23d, 1847: Thursday.- Snowed some to-day & towards ev. pretty brisk. Maria washed today brot. water for her & shoveled the snow off of the roof, which leaks pretty bad half after 12 took the horses & took my corn to mill & drew two loads of wood & went to mill after. Used my mare to draw the last load, because Wm's black mare is not fit to work. cut some wood had some bread & milk at Wm's. Brot over a pan of meal. can have my grist in the morning -

Smethport, Dec 24th 1847: Friday. Got up pretty early had breakfast by candle light - And started after a load of wood.

By the time I got to Wm. Gifford's it snowed very fast, & the wind blew so that I could scarsely see. I asked W. Gifford for the bushel of B. W. which Azro said he had bot. of him & he said he wod not let me have it. I drew 4 loads of wood, making 3 cords. Jordan does not make honest cords.

Smethport 12th mo. 25th, 1847: Saturday. Got up very early had the horses harnessed 7 was ready to start after wood before daylight. I drew Three cords today. Eat dinner at Wms. Mr. Smith was down & brot Christmas presents to Maria he brot a baby dress. To me a pin cushion. Eat supper at Wms. had a pot pie. In the ev. braided a cracker on the whip used a skein of silk of Wms & one of our own. Went up to the P.O. Smith had sent the papers by Benj. I called at Smith's & got there, a Cour. for me a (illegible) paper a Pres. Message from Thomp. for W. No letter yet from Holcomb.

Smethport. Dec 26th 1847: Sunday.- Did not go to church Miller & Hiram were up town. Lydia came with them & stayed here nearly all day. Chopped some wood, & read. Borrowed Belinda's sieve this afternoon. Yesterday Belinda got up a Christmas dinner & invited in her neighbors, except Maria, to eat it although she was over, while it was on the table, after a pail of water; and Belinda saw her. It reminds me that poor folks, when they arrive at a competency, except thro. their own industry, are generally very aristocratic without the good sense or tact to appear even respectable, which at least is the case in this instance.

Smethport, 12th mo, 27th, 1847: Monday.- cold & clear. Good sleighing. Court this week. Chopped in the forenoon &

went up street in the afternoon. The Pres. Judge has not yet come. The side judges had the G Jury sworn & charged & sent them out engaged with W. A. Williams to fill his place in the Commissioner's as clerk, this week. Wm drew wood.

Smethport, Dec. 28, 1847: Tuesday. Went up to the Commissioner's office. Harnessed up the mare & Maria & Jane Darling went up to Jas. Taylor's. I rode with them as far as the turn. Was in the Comm. office all day. The Pres. Judge came in this afternoon. Several orders were drawn the new com. Mr. Martin was there - he is a pretty shrewd fellow &, I doubt-not will make a much better Com. than Eastey, whose successor he is.

Smethport, 12 mo. 29th 1847: Wednesday. Went up to the Comm. office. was there all day. The snow begins to fall it rains some & the roads are getting soft. The Court tried that boy for (burglarizing) a house & acquitted him, after we had shut up this evening I went up with Mr. Martin & took a drink of liquor at D.R. Bennett's. Asa Cory made an oyster supper & invited the board of Comm's & clerk & myself. His object is to ...clerkship to himself the coming year, but Ira H. Curtis will probably be the successful applicant. Bot a (illegible) of flour at Hamlin's Store & paid \$7.50. A. J. Otis & myself had some oysters at (illegible) I paid for them.

Smethport. 12 mo. 31st 1847: Friday. - In the commissioner's office all day. Have been making an effort yesterday & today to get the appoint-

37 Smethpat; 12 mo, 2.9th eduesday, Ment-4. weed O he anow higun all day fait it rains some + the augetting soft. The Court That be y for be * acquitted him , after had shut up This warning east up with Mr. Martin h of Ligur at At Benaits to Gory made an ayste supper wited The board of Con clerk & myself. His diject clarkship to hundrelf the A Soo H. Guetis a - Arra \$ 50. J. B. Oviatt diary during 1847. Diary provided by and transcribed by Beverly Oviatt Schonewolf

ment of clerk for the ensuing year have but little hopes this ev. Darling said that Curtis had got the promise of it from each of them & would commence tomorrow. I would rather see someone else there; but to the victor belong the spoils. Darling, Williams & Hawkins & myself had some good brandy & afterwards Williams & myself went behind the door & took another swig. Went up in the Court House. Williams began to feel queer & thought he had better go home. I went & took him home in a cutter & went back & got William.

Smethport, Jan 21st, 1848: Friday - Was on the road as soon as it was light. Fed at Millgrove...flour was worth \$6.50 in bus. & \$6. in bags. Went up to Hinsdale. Oats were worth 31 cts pr bushel. Staid all night at M. Ree's had supper. There was a ball at this house tonight & I did not retire till late.

Hinsdale, N.Y. Jan 22d 1848: Saturday. - Was up a little after four o'clock, had my horses fed & harnessed & my breakfast eat & ready to start as soon as day. Went up to Franklinville & (illegible) M. George's oats were worth 28 in the village & none for sale. Sold my coal for 25cts per bu & got the money for it. It fell short 2 1/2 bushels. Went on a mile to a farmer's & got 3 bushels of oats & left my bags till I returned from Buffalo. Went to Machias & staid all night.

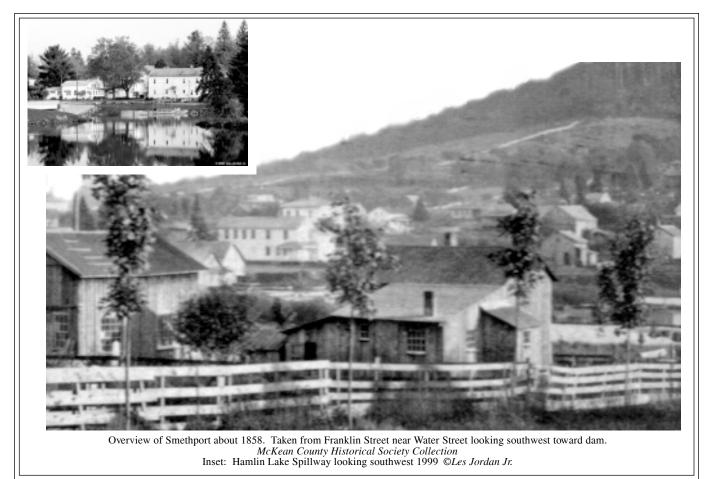
Machias N. Y. Jan 23d, 1848: Sunday. Had breakfast & was on the road before light. Went as far as Blakley's at Protection & fed. Went from there to Jackson's, 10 miles short of Buffalo. Jackson used to live in our county & pilot down the Allegany. Had supper.

Reservation near Buffalo Jan 24th 1848: Monday. - was on the road before day went in to Buffalo put up at the Buffalo Hotel. Bot 4 bus flour at \$5. & 2 at \$4. 1 bu salt \$1.50 7 1 bu whiskey \$8.24 of Smith & Carpenter, & paid \$32. & gave my note for the balance - \$5.80 Came back as far as Jackson's that ev. Did not pay my bill at the Hotel in Buffalo. A man by the name of Rich of Franklinville lost his horses this ev.

Reservation 10 miles from Buffalo, Jan 25, 1848: Tuesday - Was on the road again, before day. went as far as Holland fed at Morey's had dinner. In the room where we eat was a sick child which they thought wod live but a short time. It had the Scarlet fever. Came to Machias & staid all night. Got in late at night. Sold my whiskey. Got 3 bushels of oats & the rest in cash.

Machias Jan. 26 1848: Wednesday. - Came off early without breakfast or feeding. Came where I left my bags & fed & got breakfast Got 15 bushels of oats at 25 cts per bushel. Came to Franklinville & got some blacksmith work done & traded to the amt. of \$2.95 cts. Com raining about ten o'clock & kept on nearly all day Came as far as Hinsdale & fed & got dinner with M'. Ree. Came on from there to Olean. The roads were getting pretty bad. Today was the first rain or unpleasant weather I had since I started. I put up at Comstock's in Olean.

Olean Jan 27th 1848: Thursday.- Was on the road about daylight.- It had rained some during the night & the roads were very bad. Got to Millgrove about half past 11 o'clock Threw off 3 bus of flour & 1 of salt. Fed & had dinner. Came from there home. Got home about eleven o'clock in the evening & unloaded in the office.

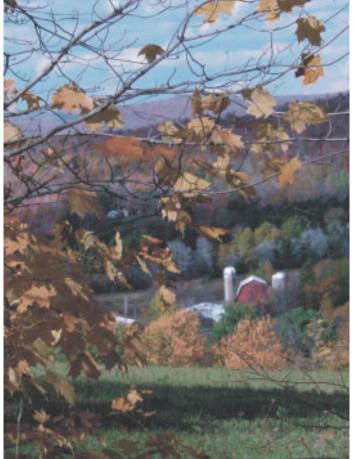


Smethport, - Jan 31st 1848: Monday. - Rained & snowed some. Filed my saw. Elder Evans was over at Wms today. - was over there a short time the Elder is a sound old man has read a good deal & thinks more. Yesterday Mr. S. preached the funeral sermon of old Mr. Garey - an old Revolutionary soldier who died from the effects of Liquor; it is thought - having drank near a pint & started for home He was found dead in the road lying on his face. (See Orlo James Hamlin 4th of July, 1830 essay, p. 18.)



Below Left: The hills are ablaze with the vibrant colors of Fall. A view from the top of the mountain reveals a red barn nestled in the valley below. Looking down on at Open Brook Road. 2002

Below Right: The "Candlelight House" sits on a slight rise on the historic Smith Farm currently owned by Wayne and Mary Lee Pearson. The home is located on the back road to Farmers Valley. 2002

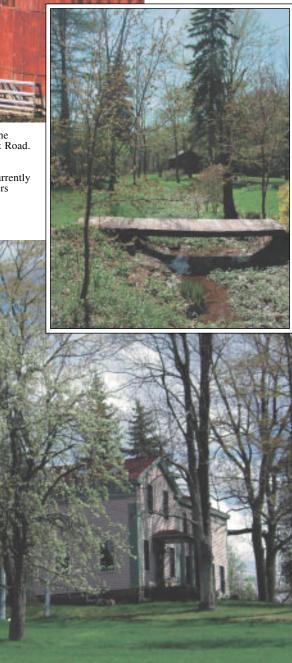


Above: Smoke curls up from a white farm house on a sunny but crisp spring morning as bright red barns shine in the sun. The farm, is located along Gifford Hollow Road. 2002

Opposite Page in the top left corner: A farm wagon stands idle on the Comes Farm waiting for the next harvest. The farm is located at the Galico Crossroads on the back road to Crosby. 1994

Below: A bridge leading over calm waters tempts foot travelers to continue on the path. The bridge is found on the Bush Farm on Jane Ware Road. This was located along the Old Route 6. 2002

All photos on pages 28 and 29 © Les Jordan Jr.





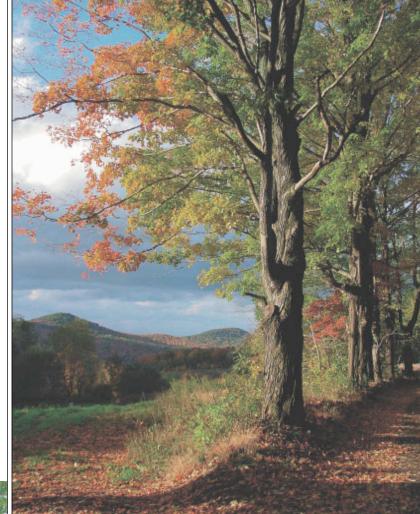
Bottom Left Corner: Bush Farm barn located on Jane Ware Road. This is found along a path that was the original East-West Highway. 2002

Left Side Middle of the Page: Apple trees are in full blossoms on a beautiful Spring day. A wagon wheel lays against an old stone fence on a road that leads to the Ross Farm. 2001

Directly Below: Autumn leaves start to fall from the trees revealing a beautiful vista from the Baker Road. 2002

Below Right Corner: In this view, the historic Medbury house looks almost like it did when it was first constructed. This residence is believed to have been part of the Underground Railroad. Located in the 600 block of East Main Street. 2003









CHAPTER V 1853: BIRTH OF THE BOROUGH

SMETHPORT FOUNDING FATHERS—SMETHPORT'S FIRST MUNICIPAL ELECTION 1856 - 1857 SMETHPORT BOROUGH RESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS—PAINTING OF HELEN COWLES CROCKER OLD SMETHPORT POEM BY HELEN COWLES CROCKER

Trom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:

Smethport, Pennsylvania, 1850s "Smethport, the county seat of this county, was laid out under the superintendent of John Bell, Thomas Smith and John C. Brevost, of this county, A. D. 1807, into eighty-nine squares, of one acre and three fifths each, and each subdivided into eight lots of four rods front and eight deep. A street sixty-six feet wide is laid on each side between all the squares. The streets in the center for seven squares are east and west, north and south. Those at the extremities are at an angle of sixty-nine degrees from the main street,



In 1851 a new Federalist style courthouse was built on the Public Square. Just as with the 1826 courthouse, the new courthouse was also built by Smethport architect-builder Solomon Sartwell. The courthouse grounds were surrounded by a wooden fence to keep livestock. A turn-style gate allowed entrance or exit and kept the fencing secure. *McKean County Historical Society Collection*

forming in the whole, a kind of crescent or half moon. It is situated on the north bank, at the junction of Marvin with Potato Creek -- on the East and West State Road, a little east of the center of the county. It is laid out and built on the second bank of land from the streams, on a gentle slope, or ground ascends towards the north; consequently it has the full benefit of the sun, from the east and south hills are to be seen on all sides, at a distance; as also the valleys of Potato and Marvin creeks -- so that in time the scenery will be highly romantic."

methport, already the county seat, continued to grow and thrive as the principal village of Keating Township. But it wasn't until 1853, that Smethport officially

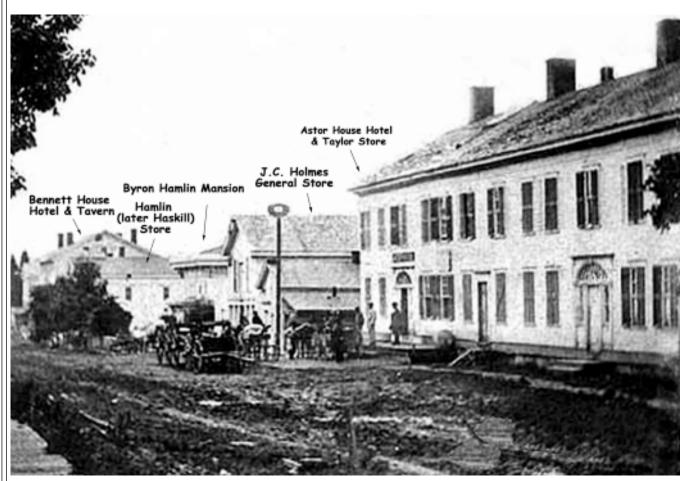
was incorporated as a borough. Prior to this, Smethport was simply a settlement surrounding the county courthouse.

In 1851 a new Federalist style courthouse was built in the Public Square. The dimensions of the new building were 50 feet wide and 75 feet deep with a cost of \$16,000.

Just as with the 1826 courthouse, the new courthouse was also built by the gifted Solomon Sartwell. A few years following the structure's completion, a small, dark, damp brick vault was constructed for the storage of official documents.



The Astor House Hotel was located at 711-713 W. Main Street. Location shown 2002 looking southeast. ©Les Jordan Jr.



The Astor House Hotel was Smethport's giant Greek Revival style hotel. It greeted patrons traveling the old East-West Highway. Located at 711-713 W. Main Street, it was destroyed by fire in 1868. Dona Fizzell Cooper Collection

1853 Smethport Founding Fathers

methport was a village of about 80 taxpayers in 1853. Ten percent of the households were headed by attorneys, while the remainder comprised a mixture reflecting the needs of a growing community. When 23 of these taxpayers signed a petition to incorporate Smethport, they were not idly dreaming. These were men of foresight, imagination, and confidence whose vision guided Smethport into the community that we celebrate today. Many of these petitioners became elected officials at the local, county, and even state level.

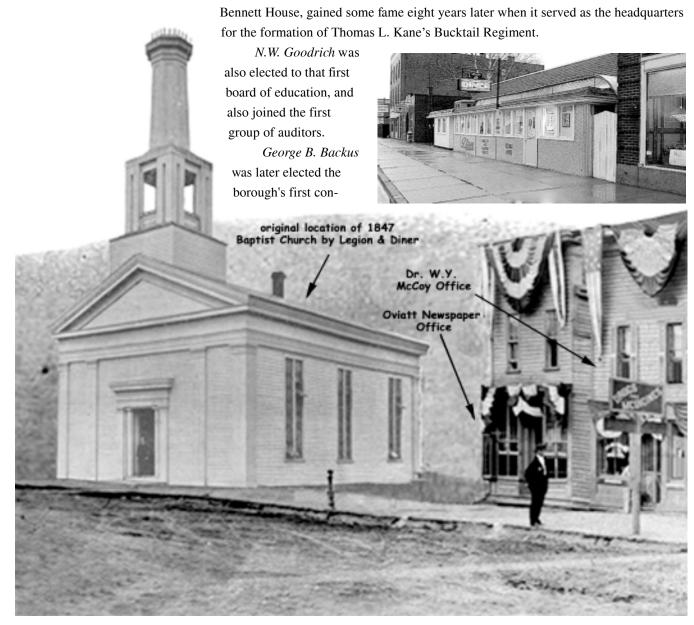
These following men signed the petition that led to the creation of the Borough of Smethport in 1853:

Merchant *Philetus Ford* would later hold public office, as a justice of the peace, a burgess, a judge of elections, and postmaster. His general store was located on the west side of the public square just south to the Methodist Church which he assisted Solomon Sartwell in construction.

Lumberman Arthur F. Burlingame became a postmaster.

Charles B. Curtis would be elected to the first school board, and also became one of the borough's first auditors. Curtis later became an attorney and judge in Erie.

Hotelkeeper O.R. Bennett was also elected to that first school board, and was the first borough assessor. His hotel, the



In 1847 the first Baptist Church in Smethport was completed in the 400 block of Main Street. This graphically recreated scene illustrates the church in that original location. In 1879 it was moved to 202 Fulton Street, the location of the present day Cottage House Restaurant. It was destroyed by fire at its new location in December, 1898. *Graphic work by David Keppel and Phil Herzog*

stable, and also became a justice of the peace.

Thirty-six year-old Jeremiah Chadwick became justice of the peace two years after Smethport's incorporation.

David Crow was a person of means, owning 20 acres and 30 lots in the village. The Massachusetts native was willing to put his considerable investment on Smethport's future.

*Brewster Freema*n, one of the senior citizens of the signees at the age of 57, was another Massachusetts native. He and his wife Anne remained in the borough where they raised their nine children.

Two of the most noteworthy attorneys in Smethport's history also penned their names to that petition.

Orlo James Hamlin, one of the most eloquent and educated men in McKean County, was an accidental resident. He was enroute to Warren County when he was persuaded to stay. In spite of the muddy roads and the turmoil of his first night in Mrs. Williard's inn, Orlo was to eventually become a state legislator and never ceased his fight for the common good.

Equally community-minded was Orlo's brother *Byron Delano Hamlin*. Byron recognized the importance of railroading and industry to enhance our economy and had the leadership skills neces-

sary to accomplish his vision. Byron also carried his leadership to Harrisburg as a state legislator for one term.

Dr. William Y. McCoy was also a man of some means, and was one of the most respected men in the community. Dr. McCoy owned 12 lots and seven acres in Smethport. The father of seven would be elected burgess 24 years later.

Merchant C. Steele, who co-owned "Steele and Johnson Harnesses," also operated one of the five general stores in the early years of Smethport.

William K. King was the county's surveyor. His office in the court house was utilized to map the growth of the new borough. King later became post master and borough secretary. He too held considerable wealth in property, owning 21 lots and 6 3/4 acres.

Paul E. Scull came to this area in 1821 as the agent of Jacob Ridgway. Scull cleared the Bunker Hill Farm in Sergeant Township, and operated "Scull and Lee", an inn at the stagecoach stop there along the Milesburg-Smethport Turnpike. Scull was one of the first trustees to the Smethport Academy after he moved to Keating Township.



Dr. W. Y. McCoy resided at 617 E. Main just west of today's Simm's Gulf Station. His doctor's office was in the 400 block of Main Street just southeast of the Public Square. Ernie & Pat Long Collection

Attorney *Hiram Payne* was also active in community affairs. He and his wife Mary had five children. From 1830 until 1834 he edited and published the *Forester & Smethport Register*. Hiram also served as a state legislator following Orlo James Hamlin.

Samuel Smith was a tailor and co-owner of "Smith and Bard's Tailor Shop". The 48-year-old signer fathered six children with his wife Catherine.

Smethport's gifted architect-builder, *Solomon Sartwell*, was also in the lumber business. Later he held the posts of county treasurer and sheriff, associate judge and postmaster.

Other signers were Samuel P. Smith, M. N. Smith and joiner Amos Chandler.

These initial petitioners worked for the growth and improvement of Smethport, and helped in its transition from a village to an incorporated borough of wealth, beauty and importance.

Smethport's First Municipal Election

The first municipal election was held during February 1853. Attorney William A Williams was elected burgess with 43 votes. Elected to Borough Council were Doctor W.Y. McCoy, Postmaster Solomon Sartwell, future Postmaster William K. King, merchant (and future Hamlin Bank founder) Henry Hamlin and Smethport mill pond owner Ghordis Corwin. Also taking office were school directors Nelson Medbury, N.W. Goodrich, Charles B. Curtis, Jeremiah Chadwick, and Paul E. Scull. Byron Hamlin and Jeremiah Chadwick were elected Poormasters, and Hiram Payne, Justice.

1856-1857 SMETHPORT BOROUGH RESIDENT PROPERTY OWNERS



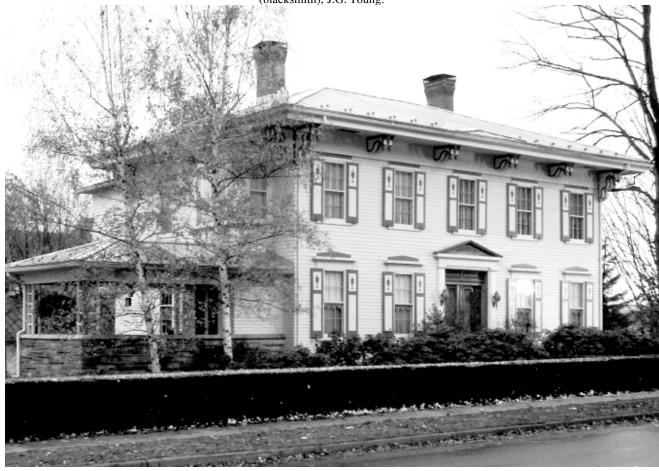
Rare, early photo of Byron Hamlin Residence taken from the roof of the Byron and Henry Hamlin General Store (later the Haskill Store) Dona Fizzell Cooper Collection

N.W. Abbey (joiner), F.A. Allen (printer), Almon Allen,
H.W. Annis , J.C. Backus (attorney), G.B. Backus, S.A.
Backus (representative), John Baker, G. Barrett, J.L.
Beckwith (blacksmith), Stanton & Beckwith, William
Bell, D.R. Bennett, O.R. Bennett (hotel-keeper), E.W.
Bingham, J. Chadwick, R. Chadwick, Amor Chandler
(joiner), J.C. Chandler (printer), G.C. Chapin (joiner),
G. Corwin, Warren Cowles (attorney), David Crow, Dr.
George Darling (physician), Jebediah Darling (judge),
L.H. DeAubigny, G.C. DeGolier (joiner), John Doyle,

J.E. Eaton, E.B. Eldred (attorney), Philetus Ford (merchant), B. Freeman, B.H. Freeman, S.D. Freeman (physician), O.W. Gallup, Job Gifford Jr., S.S. Hackett (shoemaker), A.D. Hamlin, B.D. Hamlin (attorney), J.C. Hamlin (merchant), Henry Hamlin (merchant), O.J. Hamlin (attorney), B. Harris, (cooper), Mary Holmes, Edward Hupey (mason), G. Irons, B.F. Jackson, Patrick King, Robert King (draftsman), W.K. King, John K.

Lamphier, John Long, E.B. Mason (tinner), Dr. W.Y.

McCoy (physician), C.J. Medbury, Nelson Medbury, J.M. Miller, Widow Milligan, Joe Morse, W.F. Ormsby (blacksmith), W.S. Oviatt, T.P.W. Palmer (watchmaker), Hiram Payne (attorney), E.F. Richmond, W.H. Richmond, Christian Ritzan (cabinet-maker), B. Sartwell, C.K. Sartwell, G.W. Sartwell, R. Sartwell, S. Sartwell, Solomon Sartwell, W.H. Sartwell, P.E. Scull, J.L. Smith, G.M. Smith (joiner), A.N. Taylor (shop keeper), J.B. Taylor (blacksmith), William A. Williams (attorney), Dr. L.R. Wisner, Aug. Wolters, Ernest Wolters (blacksmith), J.G. Young.



One of the most important architectural structures in Smethport is the early, magnificent Byron Hamlin Mansion located at 619 W. Main Street owned by Ernie & Pat Long © Les Jordan Jr.

MEET HELEN COWLES CROCKER: SMETHPORT'S 19TH CENTURY ARTIST & POET



Elen Cowles Crocker grew up in Smethport during the mid 1800s.

She is the artist of our earliest image of Smethport which she painted from the knoll west of our present high school. Each day for weeks Helen carried her easel and canvas across town, hiked the hill and sat and painted, and therefore recorded with an artist's eye early Smethport. The year she painted this work has been the subject of much recent debate but the town depicted appears to be Smethport about 1866. The detail that she incorporates in the painting is phenomenal. Buildings peak out from behind buildings. Landscaping and architectural details are precisely recorded. Each building is precision in its detail. Note the original 4 small steeples on the Methodist Church, the Astor House Hotel on W. Main, the Brownell Store (Pink Elephant 420 W. Main) just barely showing behind the Baptist Church in its original location on Main Street. Helen was not only an artist of oils but also an artist of words. In the adjoining poem, she paints still another painting, a visual of Smethport created in words. Combined with her painting, the poem weaves a rich tapestry for us to wrap ourselves into. The author lived in the "little brown house on the hill," at the northeast corner of West King and Franklin Sreets. The orchard which occupied all the rest of the block is gone and the brook also has long since disappeared as a result of extensive grading. "Mullin" was pioneer blacksmith and the "darling doctor" was Dr. George Darling, McKean County's first physician.

Welcome to Helen Cowles Crocker.

OLD SMETHPORT

There's many a picture in my heart of young days long ago, At thought of them the quick tears start— Do tears mean joy or woe?

A quaint brown house upon the hill, A quiet orchard nook, Within the home you hear the trill Of birds and song of brook.

Two children through the tall gate Peep, And watch the world without, Or scamper through the clover deep With merry laugh or shout.

They loiter by the deep, cool well (Its pent house mossy grown) Or hear the school's insistent bell Above the pine tree's moan.

The old time busy village life! Good Mullin down the street, (He bravely toiled for child or wife) Big friend your strength I greet!

Along the quiet grassy lane Our Darling Doctor rides Nor would you guess as he draws Reign, That agony abides.

The laughing children gather near, All know his kindly face And have no lurking thought of fear For love has saving grace.

Far past the school they race with Him, But hear the school bell call They climb the stile by strength of Limb, And laugh through jump or fall.

A sacred pause – (the portal past) She stands the guide we seek No reckless small one runs too fast She rules five days a week.

'Tis noble rule and mother-wise Though no child is her own— We do our sums and fix our eyes On God, and good alone.

Dear Mistress Holmes-thy flock Seemed wild Yet each one loved thee well, One eager, grateful listening child, Loves yet her love to tell.

A child who did her task with will Might take "Aunt Mary's" hand And walking with her up the hill Arrive at fairy land.

No garden ever grew so fair! No flowers bright to cull! As those in that wee garden there Of dear Grandmother Scull.

And even naughty ones would creep Near her (you wonder why?) She'd smooth a frown however deep With sweet turn-over pie. You'd sit by "Grandpa" watching Her And rub a cheek near his While with a stately movement- Whirr! The spinning wheel went – whiz!

Oh, gentle folk! Now long ago, Passed from our earthly sight, You helped to make an impulse Grow For service, love and right.

The Court House- a majestic pile— A green with fence about, The turn-gate whirls as you go in, And whirls as you go out.

Squire Ford, with humor quick and Keen For Peace this Justice Sat; *His stately wife, of gentle men* Is village autocrat.

And "Bennett's Tavern" down the Way Behold the Solons Clan! Tip-tilted back each sunny day They talk as man to man.

In Hamlin's store, if you should call For shoes, or ham, or lace, You'd surely find them – one and all In that protean place.

Ah, we have passed them idly by Quaint homes of former years Old memories bring a smiling sigh Or loving, kindly tears.

One is so dear we'll pause awhile High steps lead to its door Twas here we learned the latest Style In hats or bookish lore.

Who ever saw a milliner So deft for old or young— And with such kindly wit in her, Quick eyes and quicker tongue.

The Astor House – then Taylor's Store And just across the street – Twas pleasant to go in the door Tall Clinton Young to greet.

Then winds the road on through The wood O'er hills and far away— There comes the stage! And it was good When mail came twice a day.

Far down the street we often go To Smethport's other end The home of one we all must know Dr. McCoy – our friend!

On horse, with saddle bags he passed, Benignant, kind and wise, A knight in armor strong quirased To loving childish eyes.

Now gently meet two valley ways, One through the covered bridge, And one, to win an artist's gaze, Winds high over Marvin ridge.

Oh hills, dear hills! I see above A mist of falling tears, Friends reunited all in love Grown wise through earthly years.

CHAPTER VI THE HAMLIN LAKE MILL POND

THE HEARTBEAT OF SMETHPORT—HISTORY OF THE MILL POND

______rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:

Smethport, Pennsylvania, 1826 "The Kinzua and Marvin creeks are good millstreams -- but not sufficiently large for navigation. The streams generally in this county are well calculated for mills, and to propel machinery for manufactories of almost every description. One thing remarkable, and common to all the streams, is that, since they are fed and supported by springs, and that in great numbers, they hold out a good supply of water, generally the whole season."

HISTORY OF THE MILL POND

ny visitor to Smethport is immediately struck by the stunning beauty of picturesque Hamlin Lake set in the center of the borough and framed by her scenic hillsides. According to records in the McKean County Recorder of Deeds Office a sawmill was constructed by John Applebee in 1822 following construction of a dam on the west side of Mechanic Street. A contract agreement with John Keating also required Mr. Applebee to construct a gristmill at the same location in 1824. According to the recorded deed, Ghordis Corwin purchased 64 acres including the mill pond in 1837 from John Keating & two of his business partners. Some sources have indicated a 1844 construction date but court house documents indicate the Applebee 1822 saw mill and 1824 grist mill as the original development of the mill pond. Perhaps the dam was improved or rebuilt during the 1844 date.



"RAT DAY" AT THE GRISTMILL

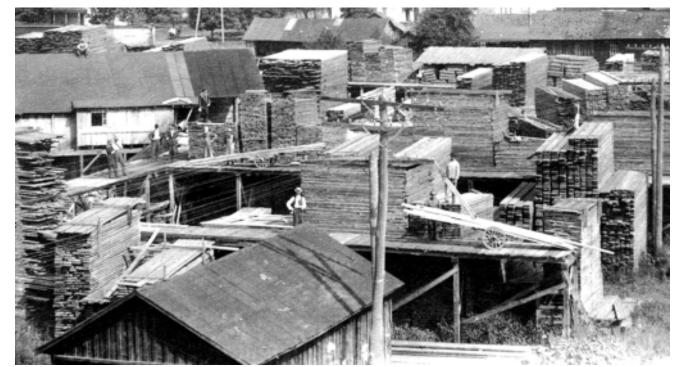


"The eaves of the mill were so constructed as to form a most excellent rat harbor" Charles Latham Collection original Applebee Gristmill 1895

rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin: Smethport, Pennsylvania, 1829: "Mr. Applebee owned a gristmill in what is now called Mechanicsburg (Mechanicsburg was the name of the section of town south of Marvin Creek -ed.) The eaves of the mill were so constructed as to form a most excellent rat harbor, and has long been the general rendezvous or headquarters for that sort of vermin. It contained scores and probably hundreds of those little delectable animals, which are said to make an excellent fricassee, or soup, so much relished by our brethren, the celestial Chinamen. On the first of April, 1827 (All Fools' Day), Howe and Asa Sartwell went over to the mill, got one very long, slim pole and two smaller, shorter ones, got a man to take the long pole and punch it in among the rats at one end of the eaves, while they each seized a short pole. The rats being routed ran down the sides of the mill on the post casings to the ground on the lower side, and ran inland to escape for their lives. Howe and Sartwell gave chase with the short poles, hallowing and screaming to the

fullest extent of their voices, both of which were keyed by nature like the eavies bass of an organ pipe, their screaming and yelling was distinctly heard all over the village and much resembled the cries of a band of Comanche Indians on a rampage of the warpath; the day's sport netted over a hundred rats slain on the field. This day we called RAT DAY."

APPLEBEE'S GRISTMILL AREA WOULD EVENTUALLY GROW INTO A GIANT LUMBER MILL mechanic street was originally mechanicsburg street



Seth J. Gifford built a new mill in the 1890s, and entered into a contract with H.F. Goodyear, and in three years sawed 16,000,000 feet of lumber for him. R.C. Gleason Collection 1901 taken from the roof of the gristmill looking north toward Water Street.

he grist mill was purchased by Christian Herzog about 1885; it was destroyed by fire about 1900. Another gristmill was purchased at Farmers Valley and taken down and moved to the location in Smethport.

In the winter the pond served still another function. When the ice was thick enough, men cut cakes of ice with a cross cut saw and loaded the cakes on sleighs drawn by horses standing on the ice. The cakes were placed in a pile in a shed, lined and covered with saw dust, and they remained available



The mill pond has historically served a dual purpose of industrial and recreational uses. *R. G. Gleason Collection 1895*

for public purchase until late summer thus providing early refrigeration for the town.

The main island property was purchased by Christian Herzog about 1888 and used as a cow pasture for years.

Seth J. Gifford built a new mill in the 1890s, and entered into a contract with H.F. Goodyear, and in three years sawed 16,000,000 feet of lumber for him. Later Mr. Gifford contracted with Allegheny Lumber Company, sawing from twelve to fifteen million feet annually for them. Holmes and Gilfillan built a steam powered saw mill on a lot along the north bank of the spillway and used the pond to float and to clean logs.



R.C. Gleason Collection 1895

Hamlin Descendants Give Ten thousand Dollars to Transform Herzog Island Into Beautiful Park - "Hamlin Park" McKean County Miner Thursday, May 9, 1929 "AS A MEMORIAL TO MR. BYRON D. HAMLIN AND TO MR. HENRY HAMLIN"

The park is to be named Hamlin Park, and will be a perpetual memorial to this old and honored name. The park and lake will be in close proximity to McCoy Field, the previous gift of Paul D. Hamlin, and will, when

Completed, add a beauty spot to the town, a delightful shady park, where a small lake will furnish swimming and boating facilities, and will add immeasurably to the pleasure of life in Smethport, and also prove a great attraction to outsiders.

We desire that...the dams shall be built at once and also that titles to land and water-right, having in mind possible power development projects, shall be perpetually held by said Borough of Smethport. We wish that the Borough would build a footbridge over to the island and also one thence over to the lands, on opposite bank of creek belonging to McCoy Field. Birds, game, trees, shrubs



R. C. Gleason Collection

and flowers are to be carefully guarded, or shall any building be erected, improvement or change be made in Hamlin Park, its land or water, only on consent of the proper Committee...We desire...to publically thank the Park Planning Committee of the Bucktail Post, particularly Guy McCoy, J. Edwin Lindholm, Clinton L. Lorah and E. Gurdon Potter, members of the committee, for their unselfish and intelligent efforts in making Hamlin Park possible for this town of Smethport and the donors are happy in the thought that Hamlin Park may very soon become an actuality and in the hope that coming generations of young people will find much pleasure in Hamlin Park- a pleasant daydream of our childhood now come true." *Laena Hamlin Rose, Eugenia Hamlin Merrell, Orlo J. Hamlin, Jenette Hamlin Hammer, Paul D. Hamlin*



photo ©Les Jordan Jr.

1978: REDEVELOPMENT OF HAMLIN LAKE PARK: SMETHPORT'S CROWN JEWEL



Artist's conception of the 1975-1978 redevelopment of Smethport's magnificent Hamlin Lake Park. Warren Semmell Collection

Allegheny Mountain hillsides lies scenic Hamlin Lake. As early as 1822 Marvin Creek was dammed and an economically and socially important mill pond was created. Originally intended to power a saw mill and grist mill, as well as to serve as a holding area for logs, the initial function of the mill pond faded. Although remaining a recreational area, the lake gradually slid into an overgrown and swampy marsh.

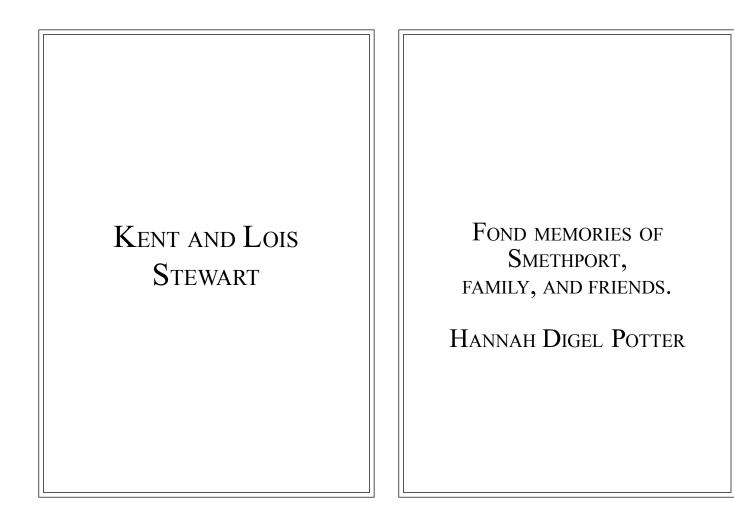
Hamlin Lake and Smethport were transformed beginning in 1975, when work commenced to convert the neglected shores and inlets of the lake into the scenic 32 acre community and recreational center. The Hamlin Lake Authority was created as an entity of the McKean County Redevelopment Authority, with Edward R. Husted serving

as the Authority's dedicated and creative Executive Director. In addition to Mr. Husted, much of the credit for the execution and success of the Hamlin Lake Project was given to Joe Gigliotti, Assistant Director of the Redevelopment and to James Duffy, owner of Delta Timber Company, "who always produced the right equipment at the right time". Taylor & Armstrong Contractors were also hired for the construction of sanitary facilities, picnic shelters, foot bridge, pavement, and parking facilities. The project was



Hamlin Lake through the eyes of Les Jordan Jr. @~2002

dedicated August 18, 1978, in a ceremony organized by Smethport Jaycees Warren Semmel and Karl Fitzsimmons.



RAPHAEL WORTH SMITH, MARY LEE SMITH HAMILTON PEARSON, DALE SOUTHWORTH SMITH AND KENT KASPER SMITH, THE GREAT GRANDCHILDREN OF CASPER SMITH (1829-1904), CONGRATULATE SMETHPORT UPON ITS ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY AND LOOK FORWARD TO THE BI-CENTENNIAL.

Casper Smith Arrived in Clermont in 1856 by way of Pittsburgh, having left Saxe-Meiningen Germany in 1849. He and his wife, Anna Dehn Smith, purchased 110 Acres on what is now 1628 East Valley Road in Farmers Valley in 1874, where he built and operated a three stone run mill. He served as Justice of the Peace in 1869 and County Commissioner in 1877. Casper's son, August Smith (1863-1947), purchased an additional 100 Acres and farmed the 210 Acres. Casper's grandson, Worth Waldo Smith (1895-1987), farmed the 210 Acres until he opened the Worth W. Smith Surplus Company in 1929.

BARRON KENNY SMITH, DEHN HALL SMITH, NATHANIEL DALE SMITH, MARJI KAITLIN SMITH, WILLIAM PERRY SMITH, KENT WORTH SMITH, CHRISTIE 'WALT' SMITH DAVENPORT, DAVID JOHN HAMILTON, JOHN SOUTHWORTH HAMILTON; GREAT, GREAT GRANDCHILDREN OF CASPER SMITH; AND JOSHUA ZANE SMITH, DAKOTA KAITLIN SMITH, MERRITT GLADYS SMITH, ZANE NATHANIEL SMITH, JULIANNE DANIELLE HAMILTON, ALYSSA CLAIBORNE HAMILTON, SOUTHWORTH WELLS HAMILTON, ELIZABETH CATHARINE HAMILTON; LIV DANA DAVENPORT; GREAT, GREAT, GREAT GRANDCHILDREN OF CASPER SMITH, ALSO CONGRATULATE SMETHPORT ON ITS SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION.

MARY LEE AND WAYNE PEARSON, OF CANDLELIGHT HOUSE, AND THEIR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN, WISH TO CONGRATU-LATE THE BOROUGH OF SMETHPORT ON THEIR SESOUICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY. CHILDREN: STEVEN WAYNE PEARSON, M.D., ERIC ALAN PEARSON, CAROL JAYNE SCHADELBAUER, DAVID JOHN HAMILTON, JOHN SOUTHWORTH HAMILTON. GRAND-CHILDREN: BRIAN JOHN PEARSON. LYNDSAY JOYCE PEARSON, KARA MICHELLE PEARSON AND CHRISTINE JOYCE PEARSON: JULIANNE DANIELLE HAMILTON. SOUTHWORTH WELLS HAMILTON, ALYSSA CLAIBORNE HAMILTON AND ELIZABETH CATHARINE HAMILTON: ALEC WAYNE SCHADELBAUER AND EVAN HARRIS SCHADELBAUER. IT IS TIME TO COME HOME TO THE OLD-TIME VALUES THAT SMETHPORT REPRESENTS AND TO ENJOY THE BRIGADOON SPIRIT THAT RESIDES HERE.



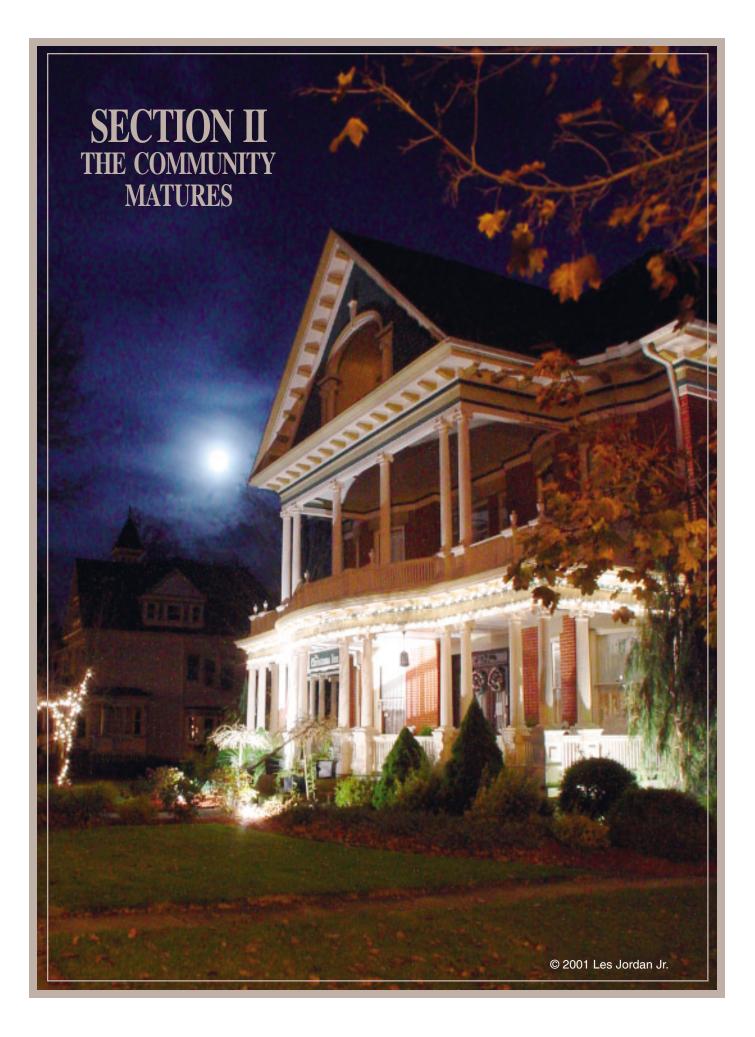
SPIRIT THAT RESIDES HERE.

Smethport Area Ambulance

HONORING ALL OF THOSE WHO GAVE OF THEIR TIME AND TALENT TO SERVE THE SMETHPORT COMMUNITY.







CHAPTER VII 1861: FAMED BUCKTAILS GATHER IN SMETHPORT



In April 1861 men from throughout the region congregated in Smethport to answer the call of Thomas K. Kane to join a militia. The Bennett House Hotel was his recruiting headquarters. *McKean County Historical Society Collection*

G rigadier General Thomas Leiper Kane was a visionary. He taught the Bucktails what would become known as skirmisher tactics'-to scatter under fire, to make use of whatever cover the ground offered, to press continually forward along advantageous ground, and fire only when they could see their target. In complete contradiction of the military thinking of the day, Kane stressed individual responsibility in his

soldiers. He held target practice, which was also an innovative idea at the time. He stressed long-range firing, and developed his men into fine sharpshooters."

"The Pennsylvanians met the attack with 'an unswerving line of deadly fire', wrote a member of the 109th, 'a smothering fire', exclaimed another Bucktail. At one point Colonel Cobhan, forgetting he was a brigadelevel officer, borrowed a rifle from a soldier and shot a Confederate hiding in a rock pile through the head. Kane's-Cobhan's Pennsylvanians fought well, and the Confederates were pushed off the hill (Culp's) by 11:00 that morning in fighting that killed and wounded 98 men of the brigade."

from *The Generals of Gettysburg* by Larry Tagg ©1998 DaCapo Press



The Bennett House was located on the site of today's Courtyard Family Restaurant. The Bennett House was destroyed by fire in 1882. © Les Jordan Jr.

KANE HEADQUARTERS AT BENNETT HOUSE

n April 1861, an important and proud chapter in U.S. Civil War was written in Smethport. Within days of the bombardment of Fort Sumpter in 1861, the news reached the McKean County community.

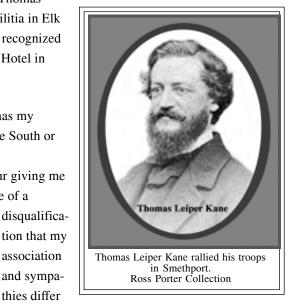
Immediately McKean County landowner and Philadelphian Thomas Leiper Kane wrote Pennsylvania Governor Curtin, offering to raise a militia in Elk and McKean Counties. Perhaps it was the same pioneering spirit Kane recognized in Smethport's founders that inspired him to choose the Bennett House Hotel in Smethport as his recruiting headquarters.

"Dear Sir,

Taking what I hear in connection with your proclamation which has my approval-I presume you will soon call out the militia, neither against the South or against the North, but for Pennsylvania.

Should this be your purpose, I will feel personally obliged by your giving me an opportunity to serve. In the present exigency it should be the reverse of a





from your own. If desired by you I can raise a Company of McKean and Elk Counties. Very respectfully and truly Your obedient Servant Thomas L. Kane"

While Kane had hoped to raise a company of mounted riflemen, he was notified that infantry were needed instead. He left Philadelphia and returned to the "Wildcat District", seeking volunteers.

VOLUNTEER RIFLES MARKSMEN WANTED

By Authority of Governor Curtin, a company will be formed this week of citizens of McKean and Elk Counties, who are prepared to take up arms immediately, to support the Constitution of the United States and defend the commonwealth of Pennsylvania. I am authorized to accept at once for service, any man who will bring with him to my Headquarters a rifle which he knows how to use.

Come forward Americans, who are not degenerate from the spirit of 1776. Come forward in time to save the city of Washington from capture-in time to save the flag of the Union there from being humbled as it has been at Fort Sumpter.

> Thomas L. Kane Smethport, April 17, 1861 Headquarters at the Bennett House, Smethport

CAPTAIN ASA HOWE CORY RECRUITS TROOPS FOUNDER OF CORYVILLE, NEWSPAPER EDITOR & PUBLISHER

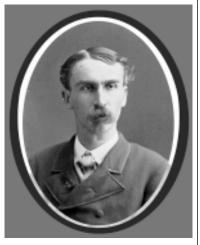
Like Thomas Kane, in 1861 Asa Cory organized a regiment for the Civil War, Co. H, Fifty-eighth Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers. Unfortunately he was forced to return to McKean County during 1862 following a severe case of frostbite. He served as the postmaster of Coryville, Pennsylvania, a small settlement in McKean County, which still bears his name.

association

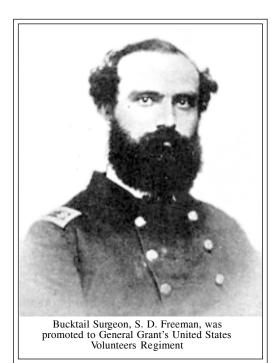
thies differ

Asa Cory was earlier the editor and publisher of the Beacon and McKean County Journal. In 1839 he sold the press to William S. Oviatt

Pat & Ernie Long Collection



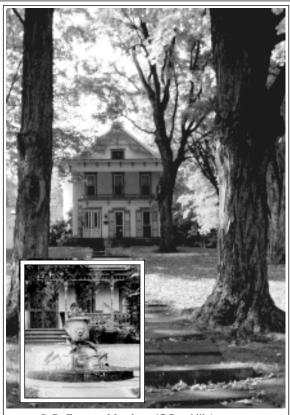
FAMED CIVL WAR SURGEON FROM SMETHPORT -- U.S. SURGEON FOR U.S. GRANT



r. S.D. Freeman: Dr. Freeman was born in Potter County, Pennsylvania in 1829 and moved to McKean County with his parents in 1832. He graduated from the University of Buffalo in 1856 and began practicing medicine in Smethport. In May 1861, he was appointed medical surgeon for the Pennsylvania Bucktail Regiment. During October 1862, he was promoted to surgeon of the United States

Volunteers and retained that post until the end of the war. Following the war, in addition to various military assignments, he built and operated a medical sanitarium located on East King Street. His

mansion is located at 17 Rosehill Avenue, and is owned by Anthony and Michele Alfieri.



S. D. Freeman Mansion, 17 Rosehill Avenue, currently owned by Anthony and Michele Alfieri. *insert R. C. Gleason Collection photo* © *Les Jordan Jr.*



Following completion of his military duty Dr. Freeman developed a distinguished practice in Smethport operating a medical sanitarium on King Street. McKean County Democrat John Petruzzi Collection



S. D. Freeman Sanitarium 110 E. King Street is owned by Bert and Ray Kleisath. McKean County Democrat John Petruzzi Collection

SMETHPORT: BIRTHPLACE OF THE BUCKTAILS

seemingly innocent act by recruit James Landregan would propel the unit into history. Across from the courthouse in Smethport Landregan saw a deer hanging at the butcher shop just east of the Bennett House, and with penknife cut off its tail and affixed it to his hat. Others followed suit, cutting strips of fur and adding

them to their caps. Kane approved, calling the men "the Bucktails". Thus the First Pennsylvania Rifles, 42nd Volunteers, gained a nickname which would follow them in battle.

Men, mostly lumbermen, came clad in red flannel shirts and bearing their trusty rifles. Kane recruited approximately 700 men, enough to fill seven companies. Companies "A" and "E" came from Tioga County, "B" from Perry County, "C" from Cameron County, "D" from Warren County, "F" from Carbon County, "G" from Elk, "H" from Chester, "I" from McKean, and "K" from Clearfield.

Thomas Kane was elected Colonel and Charles Biddle Lieutenant Colonel. In deference to Biddle's military expertise, Kane resigned his commission and Biddle led the group. The McKean volunteers marched to Cameron County, where they met the volunteers from there and Elk County.

The men built four large rafts with lumber they purchased, with their own money. The patriotic fervor had not reached the

flickean County filiner Smethport, Pennsylvania SMETHPORT INFANTRY.

May 28,1861

This company has recently been formed for the protection of our Borough. It is formed of boys from the ages of five to fourteen years and are under the command of Captain Henry McCoy, who acts as Captain, Colonel and we believe all other important officers. They meet at the Academy every evening at the ringing of the bell, and are drilled one hour, and then march through our principal streets, where they attract no small degree of attention. Each member has a bucktail pinned to his hat, and they are to have red shirts and otherwise uniformed. Their weapons are wooden guns, whistle and tambourine. Such is our home guard, and in their hands our town is safe.

pockets of the lumber sellers, so the crafts did not come cheap, but the men were able to float down the Sinnemahoning and



Major John A. Wolfe, Captain Ernest Wright, Lieutenant Daniel Blett: Across from the courthouse in Smethport Landregan saw a deer hanging at the butcher shop just east of the Bennett House, and with penknife cut off its tail and affixed it to his hat. Others followed suit, cutting strips of fur and adding it to their caps. Richard Miller Collection

the Susquehanna River to Williamsport. From Williamsport they took a train to Camp Curtin in Harrisburg.

The Bucktails were originally Pennsylvania Reserves, but were attached to the Army of the Potomac and sent to Maryland to assist General Lew Wallace near Cumberland.

The Bucktails would distinguish themselves in battle, including Dranesville, the Seven Days Battles of Mechanicsville, Gaines Mill, New Market Crossroads and Malvern Hill, Second Bull Run, South Mountain, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Gettysburg, the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and Bethesda Church.

The unit completed service May 31, 1864. Some mustered out, others reenlisted in the 190th Pennsylvania. Many never returned home. Of the original 82 men from McKean County, 22 died in service and another 28 were wounded.

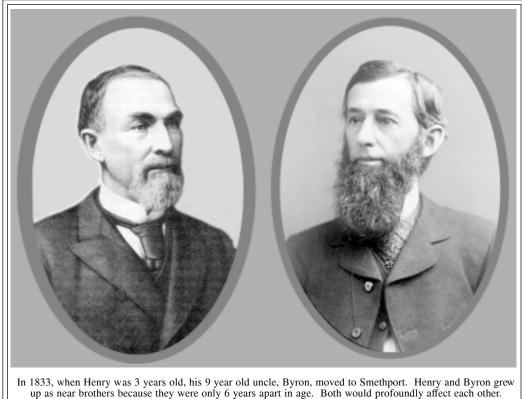
The unit as a whole suffered large losses. At Antietam the regiment lost its colonel, a lieutenant and 28 men. Sixty-five were wounded. In just two days 110 men and officers were either killed, wounded or missing. Originally, using their own hunting rifles instead of government issued firearms, they became famous as skirmishers and sharpshooters.

Following the war most returned to McKean County. Some gained prominence, while others returned to farming or employment with the new railroads which were starting to make inroads in northern Pennsylvania. The highway from Williamsport to Kane was named "The Bucktail Trail" in their honor.

CHAPTER VIII HAMLIN VENTURES ALTER SMETHPORT HISTORY

MORE HAMLINS IN SMETHPORT—HAMLINS AND MCCOYS—HENRY HAMLIN STARTS A BANK 1874 A PIVOTAL YEAR—CURRENT BANK BUILDING COMPLETED 1887— ONLY SIX PRESIDENTS HAVE SERVED HAMLIN BANK-GRANGE NATIONAL BANK

n July 4th, 1830, Orlo Hamlin delivered the keynote address for Smethport's very first public celebration (See Section I Chapter III Independence Day 1830 Smethport's First Town-wide Celebration). It was a perfect July day. In the crowd gathered around the liberty pole in the front of the courthouse that 4th of July, was Orlo's



bride of two years, Orra Cogswell Hamlin. Orra had reason to be proud. Her uncle, Jonathon Colegrove, was Marshal of the Day, and her handsome husband, Orlo James Hamlin, was speaker of the day. In her arms was their son, Henry, having been born just a few months earlier. It would be Orlo Hamlin's son, Henry, who would begin an amazing banking tradition in 1863.

In 1833, when Henry was 3 years old, his 9-year old

up as near brothers because they were only 6 years apart in age. Both would profoundly affect each other. Byron Hamlin Photo Henry Cogwell Hamlin Collection Henry Hamlin Photo Pat & Ernie Long Collection

uncle, Byron, moved to Smethport with Henry's grandfather, Dr. Asa Hamlin. Asa had relocated to Smethport and brought his family to be near his oldest son, Orlo. Henry and Byron grew up as near brothers because they were only 6 years apart in age. Both would profoundly affect each other.

Henry grew up in Orlo's small home with his younger siblings in the 800 block of West Main Street, on the same East-West Highway that Orlo walked upon in 1826 to arrive in Smethport. Henry, like his father, was keenly bright, and under his parents guidance, well read and well educated.

It is not certain where Byron grew up. Following the death of his father, Asa, in 1835 Byron had to support his mother and his sister, Jenette. Accounts of his early childhood show the hardships that he overcame. His first job, at only age eleven, was peeling hemlock bark for a local merchant who then sold it for cooking fuel and kindling at \$1 per cord. In return, Byron received store credit for his family.

At age thirteen he began carrying mail by mule between Smethport and Olean, N.Y., making two round trips a week for 75 cents a trip. At age sixteen he began teaching in the Kasson area of Marvin Creek for \$10 a month and "board around." The term lasted three months, and from the proceeds he was able to purchase a suit of clothes and few books.

Byron always had a lifelong dream of a college education and on two occasions moved in with his sister and her college professor husband, Moses Crow, to attend college. Unfortunately, a series of events blocked that endeavor, including the untimely death of his sister from typhoid fever. During 1843 and 1844 he became a student of law at his brother Orlo's office in Smethport. In 1846 he was admitted to the bar of McKean County.

In November, 1848 Byron's nephew, Henry, also began the study of law under his father but he quickly decided against that occupation.

At age nineteen, in 1849, he instead began as a clerk at the small general store principally operated by his uncle Byron Delano Hamlin and also co-owned by Henry's father, Orlo James.

Hamlins and McCoys

The Hamlin family was attracted to the daughters of Doctor William Y. McCoy (*See Chapter V*) and his wife, Claudite. Dr. W.Y. McCoy was the well liked doctor from the east end of Main Street. The McCoys lived in a large, Greek Revival home whose construction has been attributed to Smethport architect-builder Solomon Sartwell. (The home, at one point known as the Lindquist Store, still stands today immediately west of the Simms Gulf Station at 617 E. Main St.). He and Claudite raised four daughters and the Hamlin family were frequent guests. Three of the McCoy's daughters married into the clever and hard working Hamlin family. Dr. McCoy's eldest daughter, Hannah, married Henry Hamlin in 1854. Hannah's sister, Charlotte, married Henry's brother, John, in 1857 and in 1871, her sister, Alice, married Delano R. Hamlin, Byron's son. The McCoy's oldest son, Dr. Henry L. McCoy, like his father, would become a well loved Smethport physician. McCoy Stadium would later bear his name.

Henry Hamlin Starts A Bank

While a Smethport merchant with his uncle Byron, Henry began loaning money from his store in 1853. In response to the National Banking Act in 1863, he decided to institutionalize his practices by establishing the "Exchange Office of Henry Hamlin".

1874 A Pivotal Year

1874 was a turning point for the Hamlin family and the entire history of Smethport. It was that year that Byron and Henry sold their interest in their store and concentrated on their other financial interests. Byron became deeply entwined with the establishment of the McKean & Buffalo Railroad; a principal investor, he was appointed that year as its president. That railroad would become the initial locomotive of the economic engines of Smethport and the region, providing the initial transportation system for the vast natural resources of the county. Byron's importance in

the history of Smethport was cemented.

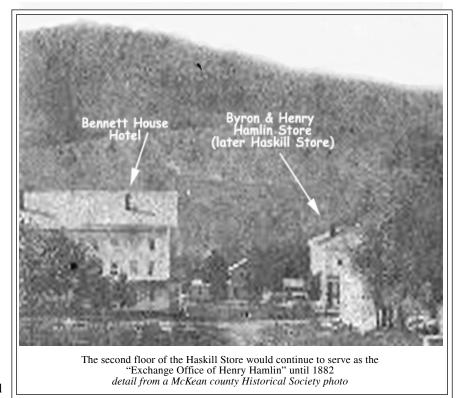
1874 was pivotal for Henry also. It was that year that he concentrated his efforts fully into developing

8

B. R.

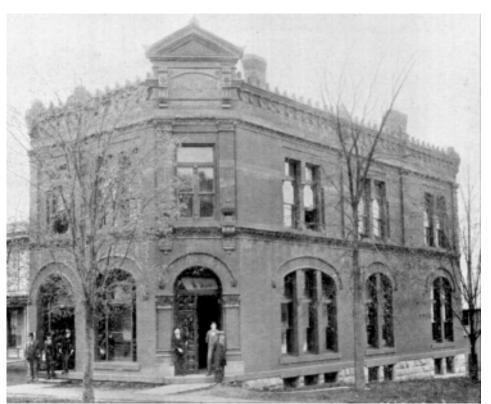
In 1874 Byron Hamlin became deeply entwined with the establishment of the McKean & Buffalo Railroad both as principal investor and its president. The McKean & Buffalo Railroad, with its depot in East Smethport, would become the initial locomotive of the economic engines of Smethport and the region, providing the initial transportation system for the vast natural resources of the county. Byron's importance in the history of Smethport was cemented. *McKean County Historical Society Collection* his banking interests. No longer would banking be a part-time endeavor. The Hamlin's vision of 1874 would transform the future of Smethport.

In 1874 the Hamlin store, located at the southwest corner of Church and Main Streets in Smethport, was sold to William Haskill. Henry totally retired from the mercantile trade and concentrated on banking. The second floor of the Haskill Store would continue to serve as the "Exchange Office of Henry Hamlin" until 1882 when a giant fire destroyed the Bennett House Hotel. At the same time the Haskill Store, which contained Hamlin's banking office on the second floor, was also destroyed. Following the disaster Henry used the law office of his uncle, Byron, to temporarily conduct his business until a new bank could be constructed. This office was located on the west side of the former Haskill site at



607 W. Main (2003's James P. Miller law office). That office still contains a giant safe that Henry used for his banking needs.

Current Bank Building Completed 1887



In 1887 Henry completed his new brick bank building on the southeast corner of Fulton and Main Streets. Famed Buffalo architect Milton Earl Beebe was hired to design the magnificent 32x76 two story structure. John G. Coleman Collection

n 1887 Henry completed his new brick bank building on the southeast corner of Fulton and Main Streets, the same building which continues to house that institution today. According to the October 25, 1887, Elmira, New York Daily Gazette & Free Press, famed Buffalo architect Milton Earl Beebe was hired to design the magnificent 32x76 two story structure. The bank proper was finely finished with carved cherry and the exterior was completed with Philadelphia pressed brick with stone and terra-cotta trimmings. Architect Beebe had earlier been hired to design the 1881 McKean County Courthouse and Henry had been so impressed with his work that he retained him for the bank project. The cost was \$15,000, a huge investment at that time.

Henry's only son, Orlo James, (named in honor of Henry's pioneer

father) joined the business, and in 1897 the bank became the "Banking Office of Henry Hamlin and Son". In 1902 the firm incorporated as "Hamlin Bank and Trust Company". For over 100 years, the bank has continued to operate with this same name.

Only Six Presidents Have Served Hamlin Bank

Henry served as president of the Hamlin Bank and Trust an amazing 55 years until 1918. His only son, Orlo, became president of the bank in 1918, and remained at that position until 1960. O. Albert Johnson served as president from 1960 until 1969. At that point, Orlo's sonin-law, Robert A. Digel, Sr., became president until 1985. Richard G. Brown served as president until 2001. It was then that today's current president, Henry's great great-grandson, Martin Digel, took over that position.

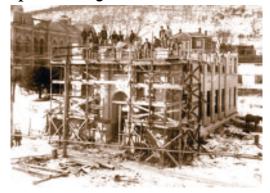
Henry Hamlin was lauded for the improvements he made to Smethport, including the municipal water system, the bank, massive community contributions, the financing and construction of St. Luke's Episcopal Church and multiple mansions on West Main Street.

In 1962, 99 years after its beginning, the bank had its first merger, acquiring Mount Jewett National Bank. Mergers continued in 1963 with Kane Bank and Trust Company, and in 1984 with Eldred National Bank. In 1996 a branch was opened in Bradford.

Birth of the Smethport Grange National Bank

he Grange National Bank was founded in 1907 by A.B. (Alvin Backus) Armstrong and Dewitt Clinton Young. A.B. Armstrong also served as vice president of the bank.

The bank offered an



affordable banking rate to the average person and farmer. It was not associated with the Patrons of Husbandry.



Above: Construction of Grange National Bank during winter of 1906. photo credit: McKean County Historical Society Collection

Left: The original Grange National Bank has evolved into today's Northwest Savings Bank. photo credit: John G. Coleman Collection

banks could issue their own currency. This is a Smethport Grange National Bank \$20 bill, issued shortly after the bank opened.



Smethport's pioneer spirit played a major role in the borough's financial development. That spirit produced McKean County's oldest continuously operated bank. Equally significant, the independent operation of that bank has been led by the same family since its inception.

> Henry Hamlin, who had initially joined the mercantile trade with his uncle, Byron Hamlin, became the pioneer banker of McKean County.

Byron Hamlin, who arrived in 1833, at age 9, to live near his brother, Smethport pioneer Orlo, was principal in developing the McKean and Buffalo RR which helped to fuel the amazing economic growth of the 1880s.

Hamlin Bank continues to be a major economic factor in the future of Smethport. Photo © Les Jordan Jr.

CHAPTER IX SMETHPORT'S GILDED AGE BEGINS IN 1880S

TRAINS BRING ECONOMIC EXPLOSION—MCKEAN COUNTY'S LUMBER BUILT EARLY PITTSBURGH MCKEAN COUNTY COAL FUELS DEVELOPMENT—RAILROADS AND TANNERIES BRING REBIRTH TO LUMBER—OIL WEALTH IGNITES SMETHPORT GROWTH—MCKEAN COUNTY INTERESTS DEFEAT POWERFUL STANDARD OIL MONOPOLY—MCKEAN COUNTY NUCLEUS OF NATION'S WOOD CHEMICAL INDUSTRY—GIANT GLASS INDUSTRY FLOURISHED MCKEAN COUNTY NATIONAL LEADER IN WINDOW GLASS MANUFACTURING

Trains Bring Economic Explosion

he coming of the trains, coupled with the exploitation of vast natural resources, led to a rapid growth of cash income and sudden wealth in the county. This growth ignited Smethport's Gilded Era.

The economic explosion had been building for several years. The amazing natural resources that abounded in the area would prime the growth. 1875, however, was the initial pivotal year. With the completion of the McKean and Buffalo RR through East Smethport, the door to growth swung open. Success leads to success. Economic boom leads to economic boom.



Architects, stone masons, contractors, and builders flocked into Smethport to design and create mansions, public buildings, hotels and churches. Andrew Reilly built the stately Grand Central Hotel. Two fires struck the Grand Central. In 1899 the mansard roof was destroyed and on Thanksgiving, 1996, the remaining building met destruction. *R.C. Gleason Collection 1895*

In 1881 railroad lightning truly struck. With the completion of the BB&K RR, passing through the heart of Smethport and then connecting in East Smethport to the McKean & Buffalo RR, the economic engines of Smethport's true potential were fired up. Business boomed. Construction boomed. Residents had money in their pockets and spent it within the local economy fueling continued economic development. In 1881 S. J. Rockwell built the Rockwell House Hotel which would later become the Chautauqua, and still later, the Imperial. Andrew Reilly built the stately Grand Central Hotel and C. F. Kittredge built the amazingly handsome Opera House. The new Court House was dedicated. Oil money and legal work from Bradford's oil bonanza also poured into Smethport, further firing the now roaring economic engines. In 1886 Henry Hamlin completed his fine new brick banking establishment fueled by the exploding wealth. Excitement, confidence, and success were thick in the air. New clothes were purchased. New gold watches and new carriages were common. Mechanic Street was filled with the constant

whine of saw mills, the humming of carriage makers, and the pounding of blacksmith shops. Log sleds arriving from all directions jammed the streets.

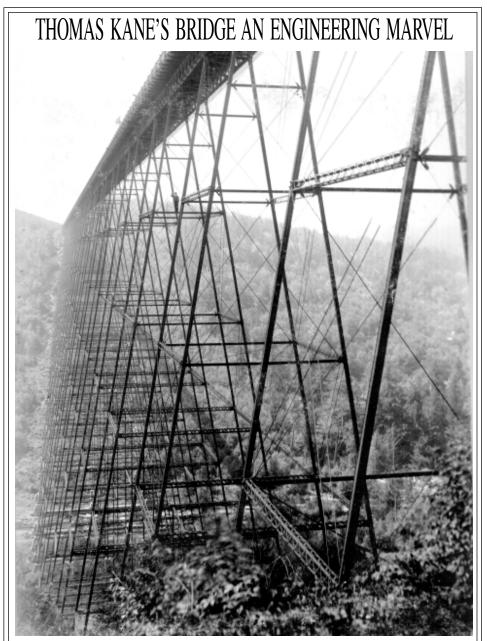
Smethport was also amidst an architectural boom. Architects, stone masons, contractors, and builders flocked into Smethport to design and create mansions, public buildings, hotels, and churches that would create the elegant and unique facade characteristic of Smethport's streets even today.

Smethport was on a roll that would continue well into the 20th century. Even during the national depression of the 1930s, much of Smethport's afterglow continued. While the rest of the nation suffered in economic hardship, Smethport's businesses and industries, for the most part, continued and its banks remained solid and successful.

John W. Baker Interview

ooking back into his childhood, former Smethport resident John W. Baker recalled those years in a letter to the residents of Smethport during the 1930s. At the time he was living in Skaneateles, New York, but his vivid memories of Smethport never left our valley.

"...I shall always remember the old town as I knew it some fifty-odd years ago. This of course, was long before Smethport had gone modern.

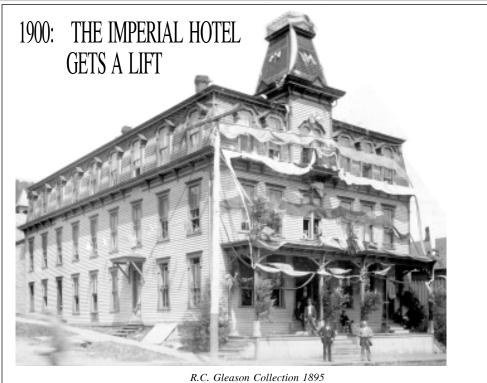


he New York, Lake Erie, and Western Railroad and Coal Company president General Thomas Kane, recognized the profits to be gained by transporting coal across the Kinzua

▲ Valley instead of taking the six mile route around the Kinzua Valley to waiting markets in Buffalo. Kane and brilliant civil engineer, Octave Chanute, together faced the challenge of the Kinzua Valley. Chanute awarded the bid to The Phoenix Bridge Works Company. Erection of the ironwork began on April 10, 1882.

In May of 1900, after only eighteen years of use, it was necessary to rebuild the entire structure to accommodate more weight of more modern trains. The last girder was up in place on September 6, 1900.

The Kinzua Viaduct is believed to be the second highest viaduct on the North American continent. To this day the Kinzua viaduct remains both an engineering marvel of its time and a major tourist attraction to thousands of people a year. *R.C. Gleason Collection*



escribed as an "absolutely marvelous palace" by the newspapers at the time of construction, the Rockwell House Hotel, formerly located at 326 W. Main Street, was constructed between 1880-81 by S. J. Rockwell. He remained the proprietor for only a few months. In 1886 the hotel was renamed the Chautauqua House. During the summer of 1900, a fourth floor was added by



McKean County Historical Society Collection

actually lifting the entire building and constructing a new foundation. The building was slowly jacked up a few inches at a time. Railroad ties were placed under it, and then jacked again until it was a full 15 feet higher than when it was constructed in 1881. When the building was elevated, the name changed from the Chautauqua House to the Imperial Hotel.

The hotel burned to the ground in Smethport's most horrific fire on January 20, 1933.

Then, there were no paved streets; just everyday dirt roads, messy in Spring and Fall and dusty in Summer. Indeed, there was little call for hard roads, for "Doc" Pierce had not yet brought out his "high wheel". No electric lights, no telephones. Of course there were no automobiles, airplanes, radios and such contraptions, although even at that time an old fellow up Potato Creek was working on what he termed a "flying machine". Every one thought the old fellow (I forget his name) crazy when he attempted to fly off the roof of his barn in a curious looking thing which he had constructed. The 'flight' ended in a crash, of course, but the experience did not quench the fire of his imagination for this dreamer continued to experiment with the principles of flying as long as he lived. I guess after all the old fellow wasn't nearly as crazy as some of his critics. We got water from springs or wells, for the water works system was not yet under way. We took our weekly baths in the family wash tub or the old



somewhat on the season. Sounds rather primitive to you youngsters brought up under modern civilization,

doesn't it? Well, those were primitive days. And yet I am sure there was more life and action in Smethport then than is today with all the frills of modernity. With numerous

swimming hole, depending

John G. Coleman Collection



lumbering jobs going on in the nearby forests and the vast amount of teaming in hauling logs in winter and bark in summer, the two saw mills, the extract works, not forgetting the Douglass grist mill (which in season also was a cider mill and how old Charlie did guard that cider!), there was no unemployment problems then to contend with. No, Sir. The problem was to get men enough for the jobs.

Then came the boom period, starting in 1880 with the building of the Court House, Grand Central, Pickard House, Rockwell House and other buildings, including the Kittredge Opera House. The water system was put through that year, I think, serving portions of Main and Water Streets. Later the system was extended to cover the hill streets down to McCoy's corner, and to "Brooklyn". The following years the B. B & K narrow gauge railroad was completed and for several years excellent service, passenger and freight, was maintained between Bradford and Smethport with two round trips daily for passenger trains from each end of the line. Running out of Smethport, Frank Richmond was conductor and "Snappy Tyler" was at the throttle of the



diminutive locomotive, which was about the size of a 10-ton truck. "Billie" Walsh was the station master, ticket agent and telegraph operator. In his spare moments "Billie" did some hunting and fishing.

Bradford, Duke Center, Rixford, Coleville were "boom" towns, and each boasted for a brief time, thousands of inhabitants. There was great activity throughout the oil regions of the county and that meant much legal work which brought

many people to the County Seat. The Court House (and I might add, the jail too when Ross Sartwell was sheriff) was a hive of life and activity. On court weeks when civil and criminal cases were on the docket it was frequently necessary to run special trains to accommodate the vast throngs of people who came to Smethport to attend the sessions. Many people came out of sheer curiosity or the joy of listening in on a battle between the legal lights, especially if a murder case was on, which was not infrequently."

The economic miracle that



would evolve in the 1880s and 1890s that Mr. Baker wrote about actually had its roots much earlier. It began with the plentiful and vast lumber in the primal forests of McKean County. These resources, coupled with eager immigrant labor, sparked the economic explosion.

McKean County's Lumber Built Early Pittsburgh

he availability of inexpensive land and promotion by the Holland Land Company and the Ceres Land Company led to the permanent settlement of the Smethport area. Initially the settlers saw the dense timber as a nuisance in the process of clearing farmland. However, soon the economic value of the timber was recognized by early settlers. The very streams that had led them to Smethport also took their product to market. With relatively easy access to the Allegheny River or one of its tributaries, the wood was cut, fashioned into rafts, and floated downstream for sale in Pittsburgh and other down-river ports. After this long rafting journey,

the pioneer would return to McKean County from Pittsburgh by foot with needed cash in his pocket.

> In the more inland areas, such as Instanter, and later Bunker Hill, the wood was piled and burned. In fact the fire was so hot at Bunker Hill that today, 120 years later, the landscape is still essentially barren.

> Eventually saw mills, and later shingle mills, popped up. The primitive log cabins were replaced by beams and planks and shingles. Surplus cut wood was also hauled by teams to Buffalo, especially in the winter.

According to Merle Dickinson in Tracks in the Snow, lumber "was sawed in 'up-and-down mills run

in Pittsburgh and other down-river ports. McKean County Democrat June 18, 1953 by water power, and freighted by ox team to Buffalo-a round trip of 320 miles. One of the first up-and-down mills stood near

Norwich Corners." In Smethport, the first saw mill was built in 1822.

RARE EARLY PHOTO: With relatively easy access to the Allegheny River or one of

its tributaries, the wood was cut, fashioned into rafts, and floated downstream for sale

Writing in his Smethport-My Home Town, Francis Quirk added, "the development of cities down river created an urgent need for lumber in the form of boards, planks and squared timber, that in those days took the place of the iron and steel in



"The Johnson Bros. Ormsby, PA" The early woodcutters work long hard days to conquer the forest and make a living. The Johnson Family were Swedish immigrants. *Betsy Abbey Eggler Collection*

ORMSBY, PA

modern construction.

"In the Spring and Fall such large quantities of these great pine trees were put afloat on the river in rafts that the perils of navigation were great, as the rafts were compelled to run both day and night to get to market before a summer drought or winter freeze tied them up for the remainder of the season".

McKean County Coal Fuels Development HEART OF COAL MINING IS IN CLERMONT

Equally important in the economic development of McKean County was the mining industry. While many inhabitants fled Instanter in 1812, fearing pro-British Indians and the lack of a militia, many stayed behind in the fledgling community atop the plateau. In 1815 a surveying crew led by

Jonathan Colegrove discovered coal in the roots of a wind-blown tree in that area. Soon coal was hauled to Smethport for use by local blacksmiths.

> **From the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:** "Several banks of stone coal, of the bituminous kind, have been found, and ascertained to be of a superior quality; it is used by most of the smiths here and has even been transported in sleighs to the State of New York. It is found in layers, and increases in the thickness of the strata or vein as it extends into the earth - mining it is as yet only experimental. The bank from



Entrance from Soldier Mine to Clermont Clay Products. Both and coal and clay were mined and utilized. *Photo courtesy of 2000 Clermont Reunion*

which it is now taken is about three feet deep and grows deeper the more it is opened. This bank is about ten miles from the Turnpike, on lands now or formerly owned by Mr. Ridgeway of Philadelphia. It is believed that there are extensive beds of coal in that vicinity."

Ransom Beckwith, Jr. also gave an account on the early discovery of coal when he wrote, "My father discovered coal on his farm near Bunker Hill". "He was the first person in McKean County to use it in his blacksmith shop."

Coal was found in the Lyman Mines, the Catherine Swamp area, and Bunker Hill. It was brought to Smethport and sent by boat down Potato Creek to the Allegheny River, and by team to towns in Cattaraugus and Allegheny Counties in New York, in return for poultry, pork and staples. As Smethport was the 'port of entry' for Instanter, the port was improved at East Smethport near the confluence of the Potato and Marvin Creek.

at Byron D.Hamlin & Son. clano R Hamlin Smellport Penn. Meh 3 1877. my to the orderal Wow Dille Bolles -57Dollars

Byron D. Hamlin of Smethport was a stockholder in the Buffalo Coal Company as well as President of the Buffalo & McKean Railroad. *Ross Porter Collection*

Coal was also discovered on Marvin Creek west of Smethport. Marvin Creek received its name from early settler Seth Marvin who resettled in that area after leaving the Instanter settlement. In 1855 the Marvin Creek Coal Company was formed with an investment of \$25,000.

Near Crosby a mill was constructed to extract oil directly from coal mined at Clermont. A ton of this high grade coal produced 80 gallons of benzole, 40 gallons of fluid, 20 gallons of lubricating oil and 15 pounds of tallow and was therefore very lucrative.

BUFFALO COAL COMPANY'S GUM BOOT MINES, SOUTH OF CLERMONT

Tithout the coal mines, there probably would not have been a Clermont. While lumbering and clay products created jobs and revenue, coal was King. And, of the many mines in the Clermont area, none were more productive than the Gum Boot Mines of the Buffalo

Coal Company. In the spring and summer of 1874 Professor John MacFarlane, a mining engineer and geologist, explored and tested the coal outcropping in the Clermont area at the expense of General George J. Magee. The Buffalo Coal Company was formed with Magee as President.

With a capital of one million dollars and a railroad company called the McKean and Buffalo Railroad working in tandem with the mining operation, the coal company had a strong foundation. The railroad company began operations in October 1874, and was ready to carry freight by the next Spring.

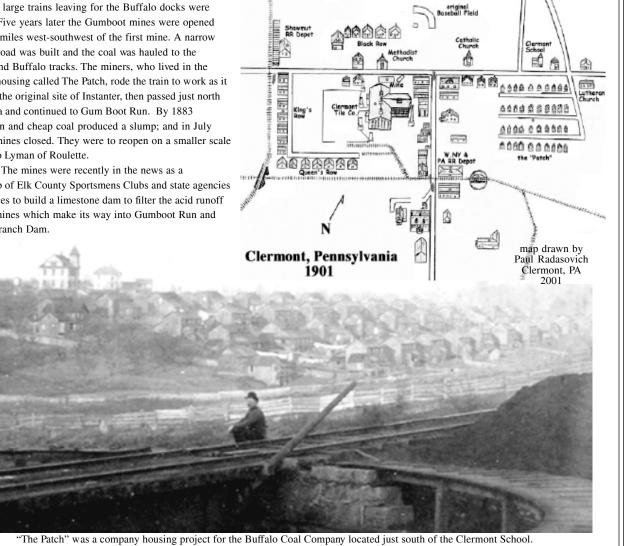
With the railroad came changes. Except for Instanter in 1809 and Teutonia in 1843, the area was generally known as Bunker Hill (although the Bunker Hill Farm was a couple miles east-northeast of the mines). Jacob Ridgway's Claremont Farm gave rise to the name Clermontville, which eventually was shortened to Clermont.

The first Buffalo Coal Company mine was located near the McKean and Buffalo Railroad station and opened in 1874. This was the largest and most profitable mine worked in McKean County . Within a short time it was averaging 500 tons daily; large trains leaving for the Buffalo docks were common. Five years later the Gumboot mines were opened about two miles west-southwest of the first mine. A narrow gauge railroad was built and the coal was hauled to the McKean and Buffalo tracks. The miners, who lived in the company housing called The Patch, rode the train to work as it cut across the original site of Instanter, then passed just north of Teutonia and continued to Gum Boot Run. By 1883 competition and cheap coal produced a slump; and in July 1885 the mines closed. They were to reopen on a smaller scale under Milo Lyman of Roulette.

partnership of Elk County Sportsmens Clubs and state agencies joined forces to build a limestone dam to filter the acid runoff from the mines which make its way into Gumboot Run and the East Branch Dam.



Five years later the Gum Boot mines were opened about two miles west-southwest of the first mine. A narrow gauge railroad was built and the coal was hauled to the McKean & Buffalo tracks. Photo courtesy of 2000 Clermont Reunion



Most of the residents worked in the Gum Boot Mines. photo credit: Clermont Reunion 2000

In the 1850s, Col. A.I. Wilcox, Col. Lucius Rogers, Capt. John C. Backus, Seth A. Backus, John R. Chadwick and others were prospecting for coal in the Clermont area, and tried to bring a railroad to the region. Over 1,000 tons of coal had passed through the county seat in 1849 alone, and there was a need for a more profitable transportation method. With coal prices increasing three-fold during the Civil War, a rail transportation system was imperative.

ORLO HAMLIN ALSO RECOGNIZED THE NECESSITY OF A RAILROAD

¬ rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:

Smethport, Pennsylvania, 1840s "Should a railroad be constructed through the southern tier of counties in New York State, via Olean, New York, there is nothing to prevent a railroad from the coal banks in this county, via Smethport, to intersect the New York railroad at Olean; the route being a complete inclined plane, descending from the coal banks. This may yet be an object worthy of the attention of capitalists."

The need for more economical transportation culminated in 1874. Gen. George J. Magee, mining in the Antrim and Fall Brook areas of Tioga County, paid for the exploration of the coal lands near present-day Clermont. By September of that year the Buffalo Coal Company was organized with Magee president and Smethport residents, Byron D. Hamlin and his nephew Henry Hamlin, as stockholders.

Gen. Magee, Byron and Henry Hamlin were also instrumental in organizing the McKean and Buffalo Railroad that same year, so Clermont coal could then be brought north to Buffalo and shipped from there. Byron Hamlin was named the railroad's president and his son, Delano R. Hamlin, a local director.

Cheaper coal from other regions led to the demise of coal mining in McKean County, although smaller operations lingered until World War Two. Unlike timber, coal isn't renewable, and was no longer profitable, so the miners moved on to more profitable coal fields in Indiana and Jefferson Counties.

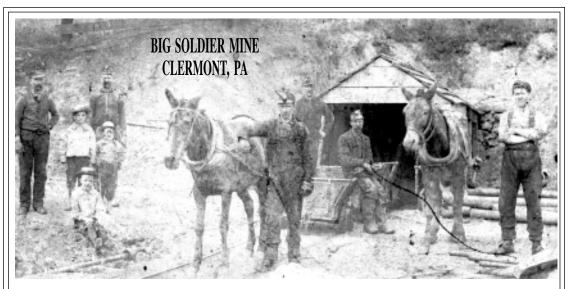
Limestone And Fire Clay Also Mined

hile coal was a major industry and attracted many immigrants, it wasn't the sole mineral to be extracted from McKean County's veins. In *Before the Colors Fade*, John Wendell Anderson notes the presence of a lime-stone mine on his family farm, the old Col. A.I. Wilcox farm on Red Mill Brook Road.

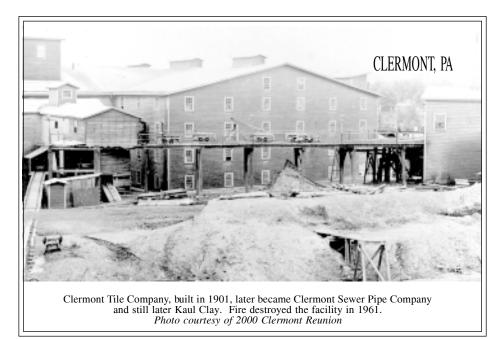
Limestone had many uses in industry and agriculture, from the making of concrete, road stones and steel, to the neutralization of acidic soil. In fact, it was the availability of limestone that made land in the Mount Jewett area attractive and valuable.

Another fairly common resource to be mined was fire clay. In the Bradford area, Hanley Brick mined the hills above High Street. In Hutchins, clay was mined, and in the valley town of Kushequa, below Mount Jewett, a large brick factory thrived.

In Clermont, the Clermont Sewer Pipe Company used the Big Soldier Mine to extract



Rare early Big Soldier Mine Photo: In Clermont the Clermont Sewer Pipe Company used the Big Soldier Mine to extract both the fire clay and the coal needed to fuel the boiler. Because the two minerals are found together, every fifth car exiting the mine carried coal. *Photo courtesy of 2000 Clermont Reunion*



both the fire clay and the coal needed to fuel the boiler. Because the two minerals are found together, every fifth car exiting the mine carried coal. When Kaul Clay Products took over the operation in 1948 they turned to massive strip mining to extract the clay used in both tile conduits and 'hot-top' refractories for the steel industry.

Railroads & Tanneries Bring Rebirth to Lumber

With the coming of the railroads after the Civil War, a second

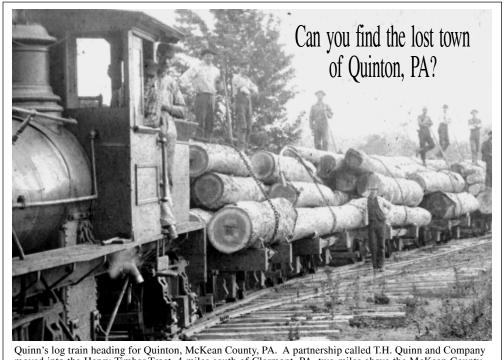
era of lumbering flourished in McKean County. It was now possible to saw the logs locally and ship them to market by branch and main line railroads.

In 1880 alone McKean County yielded over 225 million board feet of hemlock lumber. The hemlock had been bypassed earlier, and huge forests of it still remained. The tannin found in bark of the hemlock was the primary ingredient necessary in the tanning process. As the tanning industry grew nationally, hemlock bark was in great demand. An abundance of tanneries sprang up throughout McKean County. For instance, peeling was done from May to August while the bark was loose. The bark peelers made about \$1.50 a day, with room and board, working 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. The bark was hauled to the railroads by teams, beginning in early July. The teamsters worked 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. and made about \$4.00 a day.

Small producers became victims of leather production consolidation. Between 1890 and 1900 more than one-third of the tanneries in Pennsylvania folded. The largest tanneries continued to grow, and the overall employment in the industry climbed. This consolidation put most of the local small tanneries out of business.

Sawmills Cut Lumber for a Growing County and Nation

The need for construction lumber continued to expand, and sawmills enjoyed a rebirth. Locally, Seth Gifford had two



Quint's log train heading for Quinton, McKean County, PA. A partnership called T.H. Quinn and Company moved into the Henry Timber Tract, 4 miles south of Clermont, PA, two miles above the McKean County-Elk County line at the mouth of Gum Boot and Buck Runs. The new town had its own Post Office which operated from April 15, 1891 until April 30, 1895. Quinton has since totally vanished. Jeanne Quinn Williams Collection

mills operating in the Mechanic Street region of Smethport. There was also G.H. Moore in Clermont, who built the Clermont and Marvin Creek Railroad to bring his wood to the Marvin Creek Valley. Others included B.F. Hazelton in Hazel Hurst,

Nicholas Heinemann in Crosby as well as Colegrove, and many smaller operations in most towns.

There was still room for specialization. The Pennsylvania Stave Company was constructed in Betula in 1912 and manu-

factured wooden barrel staves. Staves are narrow wooden strips formed with a radius that assembled into the sides of a wooden barrel and secured by metal bands.

Palmersville, near Marvindale, had the Delmage Shingle Mill, and Norwich had a kindling wood mill.

 COLEGROVE, PA

 COLEGROVE, PA

 COLEGROVE, PA

 Farly Nicholas W. Heinemann saw mill near Potato Creek, Colegrove, PA. McKean County Historical Collection

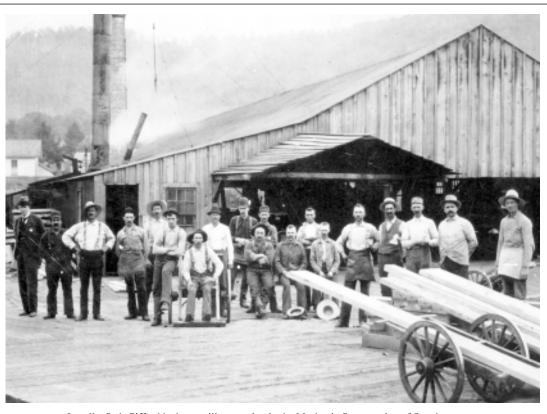
In addition to the kindling mill at

Norwich, The Goodyear Lumber Company built a giant lumber saw mill in 1910.

The Goodyear operation lasted a period of about ten years and cut over 400,000,000 feet of lumber from 26,000 acres. This giant expanse of virgin timber stood at the head of Potato Creek and was the largest remaining virgin timber forest in Pennsylvania. The Goodyear Norwich operation also supplied about 90,000,000 feet of hardwood for staves and heading, cut

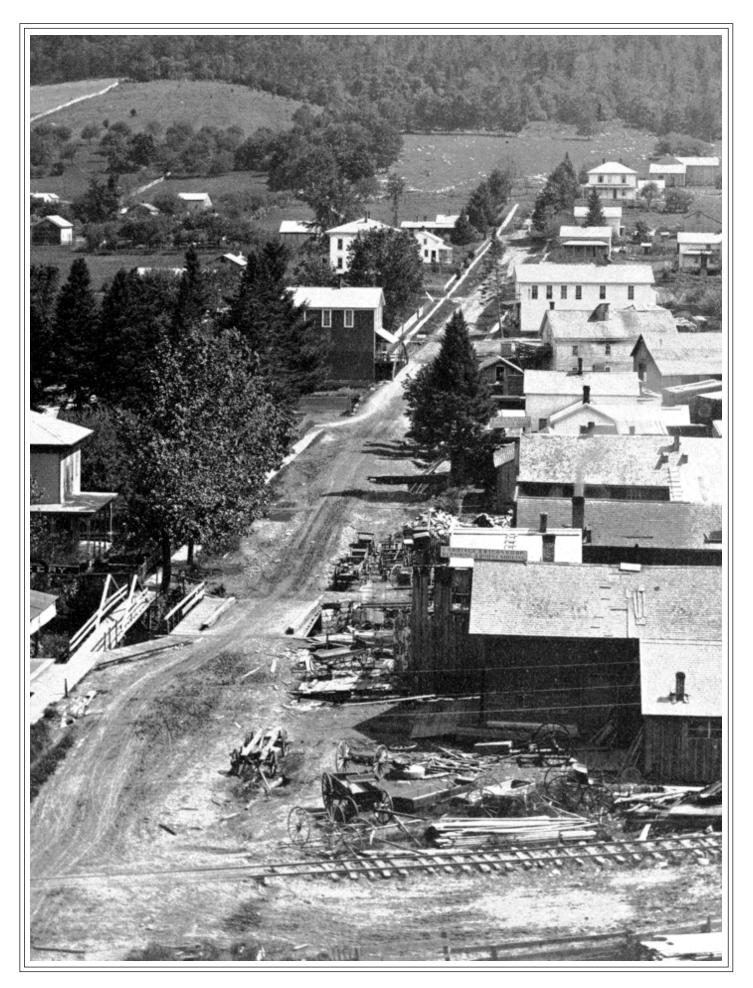
and delivered to the Pennsylvania Stave Company at Betula, as well as many thousands of cords of chemical wood to the Keystone Chemical plant at Keystone. The Goodyear Mill in Norwich, as well as the Betula and Keystone operations, were served by the Goodyear's Potato Creek Railroad. While in operation from 1910-1920, the Goodyear Mill in Norwich was the largest saw mill in Pennsylvania.

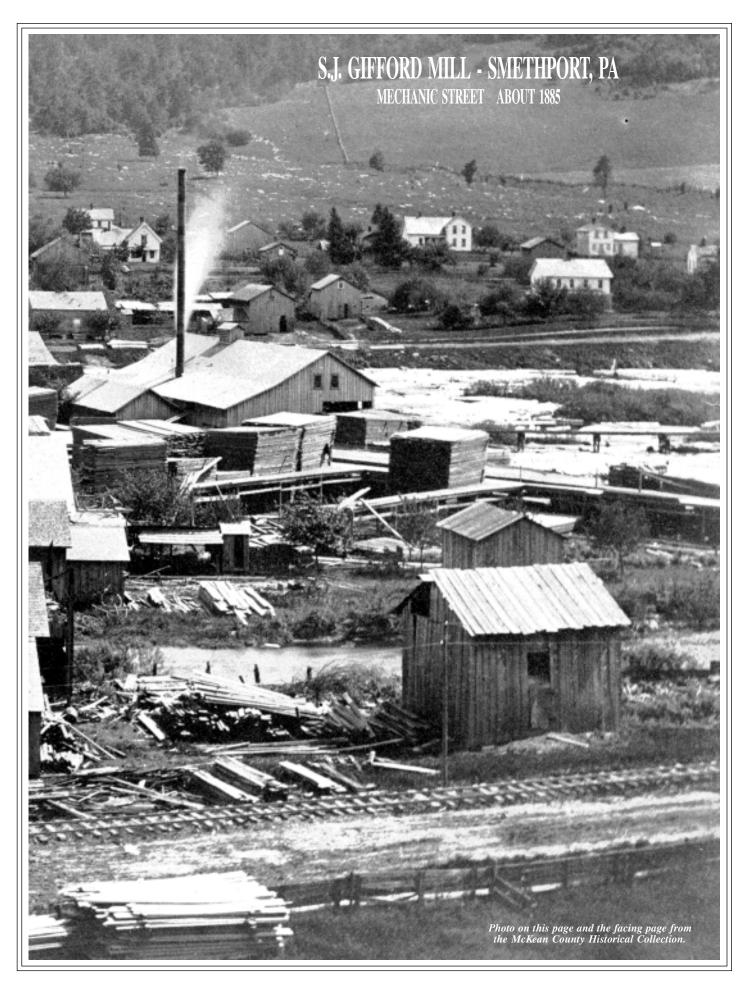
Today the area still supports the wood



Locally, Seth Gifford had two mills operating in the Mechanic Street region of Smethport. McKean County Historical Society Collection

industry, be it pallets in Crosby, wood chips near Lantz Corners, as well as large saw mill operations in Bradford, Kane, and Mount Jewett.



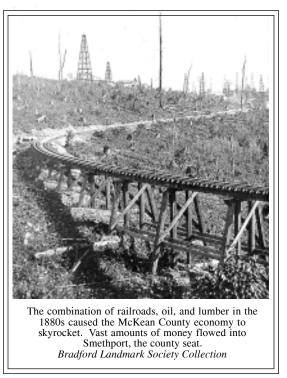


Bradford Oil Wealth Ignites Smethport Growth

hile timber, coal, and clay were all important resources, it was petroleum that put McKean County on the world map. Col. Drake's well and the resulting boom at Titusville and Pit Hole exploded the prospecting of oil throughout the entire northwest Pennsylvania region. The Bradford Oil Rush began in 1868 when Job Moses struck oil near Limestone, New York, in large enough quantities to indicate a potentially lucrative field. This opened up a floodgate of exploration rivalling the Yukon Gold Rush. The rush peaked in 1881, with an average of 100,000 barrels produced daily, which was nearly 83 percent of the crude oil supplied to the United States.

Bradford's population soared from 600 to 6,000 in 1878. By 1880 there were 65,000 barrels produced daily from 7,000 wells, which dotted the hillside as far as one could see. Bradford, with a population of 11,000, ultimately became the third largest post office in Pennsylvania due to the flood of oil-related communications.

The boom growth madness spread through the Bradford oil fields and so did the one-industry towns linked by small railroads. Grading began on the BB&K in 1880 to serve oil interests in the Bordell area near Rew. The Bordell area oil wells abounded in incredible wealth. As soon

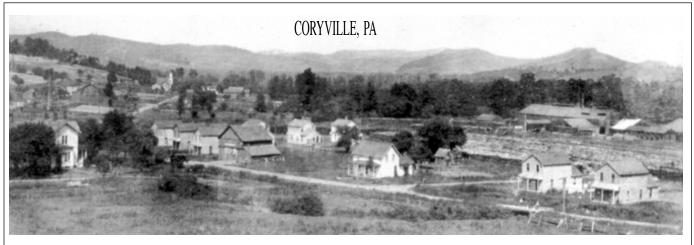


as the railroad was completed to Rew, construction was begun on an extension to Smethport. Oil leases covered the top half of the county. Purcell, Simpson, Davis and Ormsby, Bear Town, Coleville and Bordell, Rew and Guffey all became a network of jacks and rod lines. Although Smethport had only a few oil wells within its borders, much of the oil wealth also flowed into Smethport.

McKean County Interests Defeat Powerful Standard Oil Monopoly -Coryville Makes History

Standard Oil Company, the tool of oil mogul John D. Rockefeller, had a monopoly for transporting oil over its extensive rail lines. To bypass his monopoly, the Tidewater Pipe Company was formed in 1878.

The Tidewater Pipe Company changed the method in which oil was delivered. Oil previously was pumped in three-inch diameter pipes over relatively short distances and across level terrain. Tidewater, however, was the first to build over mountain-



Tiny Coryville was the northern terminal of the Tidewater Pipe Company. In 1878 Tidewater began pumping oil overland from Coryville to Williamsport successfully destroying Standard Oil Company's monopoly on oil transportation. Coryville Chemical Works is located on the right. Photo by Edward A. Guenter. John G. Coleman Collection ous terrain. Working secretly, Tidewater craftily bought right-of-ways to cut a 109 mile pipeline swath to Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Six-inch pipe was laid on the ground surface in the dead of winter. As soon as the summer sun hit the exposed black pipe, it buckled and expanded but remarkably, the oil line never broke. Crews later buried the pipe under ground to prevent any further problems due to exposure of the pipe to the elements. The construction of the pipeline ranks as one of the all-time great achievements in the annals of oil exploration.

On May 28 1879, the 80-horsepower pumps located in Coryville sent an oil flow of 250 barrels an hour across the

MCKEAN COUNTY REFINERY BUILT IN 1923

The McKean County Refinery was constructed in 1923 to produce gasoline, kerosene, and naptha. In 1929, Quaker State Corporation purchased the refinery and operated until its sale in 1990 to Petrowax. In 1995, following Chapter 11 filing, the refinery was sold to Astor Corporation. Astor Wax Company was started in Belgium in 1898. In 1995 the Aurora Group combined with Petrowax Refineries to form Astor Corporation. Prior to 1995, Astor

purchased waxes from various oil companies to blend with other additives for sale to the tire, vinyl, packaging, and candle industries. Astor was highly regarded in the tire industry for its expertise, consistency, and reliability. After 1995 with the addition of the refineries, Astor manufactured its own

sold to Allied Signal which is now Honeywell, Industrial Wax business segment. The facilities include blend plants in Titusville, Pennsylvania; Marshall, Texas; Eupen, Belgium; and Suzhou, China. The refinery is located in Farmers Valley, Pennsylvania. The Research and Development Laboratory is located in Morristown, New Jersey. There is also a candle applications lab in Duluth, Georgia. The sales office is located in Duluth, Georgia. The customer service office is

located in Morristown.

Mc Kean County

Although partially hidden by additions,

the original gasoline station remains

today and can be identified upon

careful inspection. Olive Eckstrom

Refinir

In 1997 Astor Corporation was

wax.

<image>

Olive Eckstrom Collection

FARMERS VALLEY PLANT HISTORY

- 1923: McKean County Refining Company constructed.
 - 4 Batch Stills, Boiler House, Rerun Unit, Gasoline, Kerosene, Naphtha
- 1929: Quaker State purchased McKean Refinery
- 1954: Platformer Start Up: Higher Octane, better yield. 1982: Constructed Packaging Plant (current Maintenance Building)
 - Unifiner installed at Platformer.
- 1990: Petrowax purchases refineries from Quaker State.
- 1991: Discontinued Penn Grade Crude Feedstock. Shutdown Platformer.
- 1992: Dismantled Extract Plant Chapter 11 Bankruptcy.
- 1995: Emergence from Chapter 11. Merge with ABI to from Astor Corporation
- 1997: Acquired by Allied Signal

mountains and ultimately into Williamsport. The first oil trickled into Williamsport on June 4th. A week later the Reading Railroad was formed, and oil deliveries by rail became common to the New York City area markets. The Tidewater Pipe Company successfully destroyed the Standard Oil Company's monopoly on oil transportation.

Locally, the oil boom prompted the large tank farm in Coleville, and the Quaker State refinery in Farmers Valley. Probably the single largest industrial employer in the Smethport area, the refinery has since become Honeywell, and specializes in the extraction of wax from petroleum.

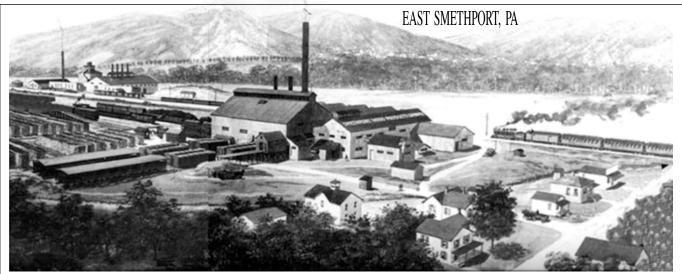
The oil fields produced jobs for drillers, roustabouts, teamsters, pumpers, contractors and laborers. Supporting industries like Bovaird and Seyfang, and Dressers in Bradford, thrived as well.



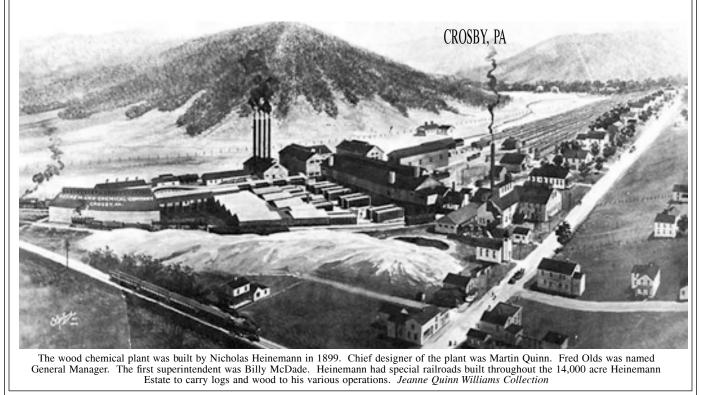
McKean County Nucleus of Nation's Wood Chemical Industry

B ecause of the abundance of natural gas, there were over 70 wood chemical plants in the northern tier, with McKean County being the center of the industry nationally. These factories converted wood into charcoal, wood alcohol, and acetate of lime.

The most noteworthy operation was Martin F. Quinn's Keystone, Pennsylvania, factory located a mile north of Betula.



The East Smethport Wood chemical plant was originally constructed in 1877 by L.J. Backer. The plant was eventually purchased and reconstructed by the Quinn family. It was located just south of Route 6. *William Pierotti Family Collection*



Quinn's invention of the jumbo retort allowed the plant size to rapidly rise to 70 and eventually 140 cords a day capacity. The retort was similar to a pressure cooker and Quinn's design was the largest and most efficient for the day. The steel cars were loaded with wood, rolled into the retort, and then into the cooling chamber, eliminating half the labor previously needed.

The typical output for a cord of wood was 10 gallons of methanol, 200 pounds of acetate of lime, 50 bushels of charcoal, and 100 pounds of acetic acid. The Quinn operation at Keystone even surpassed this output.

Hard maple and beech were preferred. Oak created higher charcoal output, but yielded less of the more valuable methanol. The plentifulness of hardwood and the abundance of cheap natural gas resulted in an astounding 41 wood chemical plants in Elk and McKean Counties.

Other nearby operations included Berkalew and Bayless in Hazel Hurst, Bradford Wood Products in Marvindale, Nicholas Heinemann's Norwich Chemical Company in Crosby (designed by Martin Quinn), and Quinn's Smethport Wood Chemical Production Company located near the railroad tracks in East Smethport. The last remaining wood chemical plant in McKean County was the Susquehanna Wood

Chemical plant in Custer City.

Giant Glass Industry Flourished

The unusual availability of huge amounts natural gas and silica sand led to a boom in glass-making in McKean County. There were glass manufacturing enterprises throughout McKean County, including Port Allegany which still supports (and is supported by) two glass factories.

The Camp Glass Company, Hilton Glass Company, and the Smethport Bottling Works (later Haines Flint) plant were all located adjacent to the Bradford, Bordell and Kinzua Railroad.

The silica sand used to manufacture the local glass was mined from the Sandy Point quarry between Smethport and Ormsby and brought to town by the BB&K RR.

The Hazel Hurst Window Glass Company was built in 1899 but was headquartered in Bradford. It was served by a spur of the Pittsburg, Shawmut and Northern Railroad. The factory was reorganized in 1904 as the Healy Window Glass Company, and operated until it burned in 1912.

In that same village, in 1900,

the Bond Glass Company built a

HAZEL HURST, PA 1900'S BOOM TOWN

Boom town Hazel Hurst sprang up after Benjamin Hazelton constructed two sawmills and a railroad. Hotels and boarding houses filled Main Street. Note "Belgium Town" area in the upper left of the photo. Belgian glass blowers immigrated to Hazel Hurst. John G. Coleman Collection

Azel Hurst was established by lumberman Benjamin F. Hazelton. During 1891, Hazelton purchased a 58 acre tract of land along Marvin Creek in Hamlin Township. During the next two years he built two sawmills, a hardwood mill and a hemlock bark mill to supply tanneries with tannin. In 1892 Hazelton chartered the town of Hazel Hurst.

Also in 1892, to give his wood products access to a national market, he started the Mt. Jewett and Smethport Railroad. The railroad was constructed from Hazel Hurst to Mt. Jewett where it joined the Buffalo, Rochester and Pittsburgh railroad. In 1895, the line was extended to Marvindale to connect to the wood chemical plant there. The Mt. Jewett and Smethport Railroad was a confusing name because the railroad did not connect to Smethport from Mt. Jewett until 1899 with the construction of the Pittsburg, Shawmut and Northern Railroad.

Hazelton died in 1898 and his lumber mills closed in 1899. In 1899 the Mt. Jewett and Smethport Railroad was absorbed by the Pittsburg, Shawmut and Northern Railroad.

Hazel Hurst historian Michael Arthurs notes, "the tracks from Marvindale were extended to Smethport, allowing the transport of raw material and finished window and bottle glass from the glass plants that were being built in Hazel Hurst. If not for the introduction of these glass plants, Hazel Hurst would have become a ghost town after only a few years of prosperity. These plants gave the town and the Pittsburg, Shawmut and Northern Railroad a new lease on life for the next 30 years."

Arthurs continues, "Five glass companies located at three separate locations continued to manufacture glass until 1929. High grade silica rock was available at four locations continued to manufacture glass until 1929. High grade silica rock was available at four locations convenient to the plants. The Pittsburgh, Shawmut and Northern Railroad was vital to the glass industry for the entire period of it's existence. It also provided freight services for the G.W. Berkalew and F.J. Bayless Chemical Works (later named the Hazel Hurst Chemical Works), three glass factory locations and the John D Westcott handle factory)."

"The Berney Bond glass plant closed on December 18, 1929. The tracks from Hazel Hurst to Marvindale were removed in 1947. The railroad grade is still easily followed for its entire distance from Hazel Hurst to Smethport."

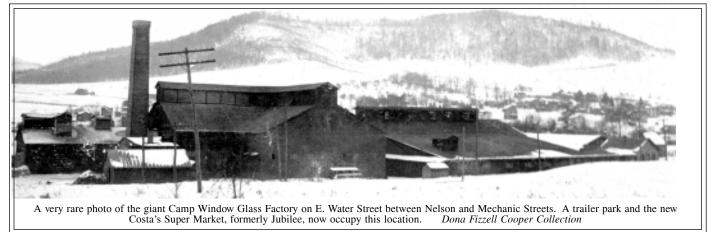
bottle-making plant. In a few years they merged with the Berney Glass Company of Bradford, forming the large Berney Bond Glass Bottle Company, which had plants in Bradford, Smethport, Hazel Hurst, Clarion and Knox. It lasted until 1929, the last two years seeing Pierce Glass of Port Allegany leasing the Hazel Hurst facility.

In 1904 the Keystone Glass Company also built a plant in Hazel Hurst. Eight years later they changed their process from hand-blown to machine-blown glass. Shortly thereafter Interstate Glass Company built a window glass plant beside the Keystone plant, and later bought the Keystone factory and operated both as one unit.

McKean County National Leader in Window Glass Manufacturing

According to Smethport historians, McKean County ranked first in the U.S. in the manufacture of window glass at the turn of the century. By 1905 there were an amazing 13 window glass factories in the county with a combined capacity of ninety million square feet of window glass production. One of the early factories was the located in Smethport.

The Hilton Glass Company was built in 1895 in the Hilton Avenue section popularly called "Dog Town". The Hiltons left



Smethport in 1901 to start the Allegany Window Glass Company in Port Allegany. In 1920, a tornado severely damaged the plant, but it was rebuilt and produced until 1925, when it was dismantled and sold for salvage. Interestingly, the Allegany Window Glass Company was almost built in Smethport. Both Smethport and Port Allegany were competing for the factory. While the Citizens Gas Company of Port Allegany had many wells close to Smethport, its president and most of the directors lived in Port Allegany. Citizens Gas Company company gave the firm a great five-year deal on natural gas.

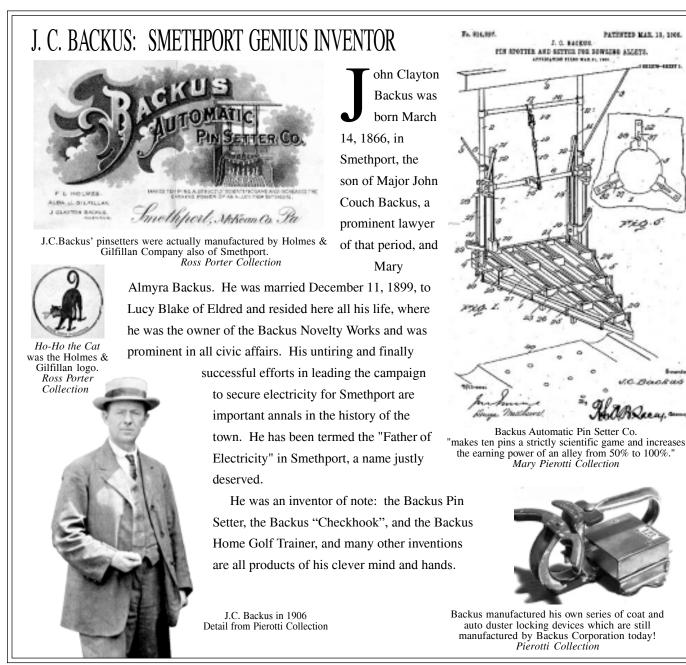
Thomas Camp purchased the Hilton glass operation in 1901. The Camp family had earlier built the giant Camp Glass Factory on East Water Street between Nelson Street, Mechanic Street and Marvin Creek.

Just east of the Camp Glass Factory was the Smethport Bottling Works which was located behind what is now Costa's True Value Hardware. Haines-Flint Glass Company purchased the bottling works, and in 1910 it was sold again to the Berney Bond Glass Company. It was destroyed by fire on May 2, 1918.

The Smethport Cut Glass Company was situated above the BB&K tracks on West Water Street. Its glass, however, was actually manufactured in Vineland, New Jersey, and only the finishing was completed at the Smethport factory. The factory opened in 1907 and employed about 30 workers at its peak. It only lasted three years, a victim of lower cost Belgium cut glass imports. The plant, located at the present location of Backus Company/Chef Specialties, was sold at sheriff's sale and Backus Novelty Company bought the three-story building.



Rare photo of the former cut glass factory (right) shortly after purchase by J.C. Backus for Backus Company. The building on the left was one of Smethport's first automotive repair garages. The block building on the left and the foundation of the large cutglass factory today have been combined into one facility for Backus Corporation. *Gauin H. & Vivienne C. McCoy Collection*



CHAPTER X GROWING INDUSTRY BRINGS RAILROAD TO TOWN

SMETHPORT SERVED BY FOUR RAILROADS— MCKEAN AND BUFFALO RAILROAD—BRADFORD, BORDELL AND KINZUA R.R.— A NEW CENTURY BRINGS THE COMPETITION OF TWO NEW RAILROADS SMETHPORT KUSHEQUA R.R.—THE PITTSBURG, SHAWMUT AND NORTHERN R.R

Smethport Served by Four Railroads

he advent of railroading led to Smethport becoming a railroad hub. In those days being a railroad hub insured economic growth in the community. For Smethport, the pivotal economic change came during 1874 with the construction of the McKean & Buffalo and its opening in 1875.

No fewer than four railroads were serving the county seat at the turn of the century. Each held its own special flavor and character. Each played a role in changing the face of Smethport into the town that we know today.

Smethport's First Railroad - The McKean & Buffalo - East Smethport Depot

he McKean & Buffalo Railroad was launched by Byron Delano Hamlin. While it never entered the town proper, it traveled through East Smethport. Passenger and freight service for Smethport residents was only a mile away. Its presence would alter Smethport's future.

The railroad began operating in 1875 to serve the interests of coal miners in the Clermont area who needed to transport coal to city markets in upper New York State. The line was 23 miles long. It began at Larabee Junction, PA, where it connected with the Western New York & Philadelphia R.R., then ran southward through East Smethport, up the Potato Creek Valley to Red Mill Brook, and on to Clermont. Later, the line was extended through the industrial towns of Quinton, Instanter, Straight, and on to Johnsonburg as a result of an agreement with the Johnsonburg & Clermont Railroad, which connected with the McKean & Buffalo at Clermont.

The line was bought by the Western New York and Pennsylvania R.R. in 1881, then leased by the Pennsylvania Railroad (Pennsy) around 1900 before being purchased by that huge system in 1911. The line was torn up south of East Smethport in the 1950s. An occasional train served the Louisville Slugger baseball bat factory in East Smethport until 1972. Only a small section of the original rail line exists today between Larabee and Coryville. In Coryville the track today connects to the remaining Pittsburg, Shawmut & Northern right-of-way to serve the refinery in Farmers Valley.

The largest impact the railroad had on Smethport was the geographic distribution of new construction. Before the railroad came near Smethport, most buildings were clustered near the courthouse. Once the railroad was in place, however, the town began to spread out more evenly, as new construction was built more toward East Smethport. This would all change as the next railroad to serve Smethport entered the picture.



The McKean & Buffalo Railroad began operating in 1875 to serve the interests of coal miners in the Clermont area who needed to transport coal to city markets in upper New York State. *Ross Porter Collection*

Bradford, Bordell & Kinzua R.R. (Bradford, DeGolia & Smethport R.R.)

THE NARROW GAUGE TRAIN MADE ITS FIRST RUN TO THE BOROUGH OF SMETHPORT FROM BRADFORD t noon on December 16, 1880, a Bradford, Bordell & Kinzua R.R. engine pulled the shiny, red coaches of a narrow gauge train into the Borough of Smethport. The railroad, centered in Bradford, was part of a giant network of narrow gauge railroads built to serve the needs of the oil boom. These railroads delivered oil field



Bradford, Bordell & Kinzua R.R. (Bradford, DeGolia & Smethport R.R. located below 515 W. Water Street). In December, 1880, the narrow gauge train made its first run to the Borough of Smethport from Bradford. The railroad was part of a giant network of narrow gauge railroads built to serve the needs of the oil boom. Most of the timber sawed in the large Smethport mills was delivered over the BB&K into Bradford, then into the oil fields or over mainline railroads that shipped Smethport lumber to a growing nation. *R.C. Gleason Collection*

supplies, machinery, and timber to build oil derricks, homes, and businesses. Small towns sprung up along the railroads in the same style as produced by the gold rush in the western United States. Most of the timber sawed in the large Smethport mills was delivered over the BB&K into Bradford, then into the oil fields or over mainline railroads that shipped Smethport lumber to a growing nation.

Business in Smethport increased greatly as the result of the railroad's presence in town. The oil boom was running at high tide, and gave rise to a building boom in the borough that paralleled the rash of new construction happening in Bradford. The 1880s saw many new hotels and businesses constructed in the county seat. Special excursions were run over the line during the peak of the oil boom days. These excursions brought Smethport shoppers to Bradford's elite shops and opera house in "The High-Grade Oil Metropolis of the World", as the city was referred to in its daily newspaper, *The Bradford Era*. Citizens of Bradford would visit Smethport to observe court sessions, or to conduct business at the county offices. Travel time between the two communities was only two hours. Prior to the railroad presence in town, however, it required a day's journey over indirect routes to visit either community. The railroad even held popular excursions to the Kinzua Viaduct and Niagara Falls.

In addition to hauling lumber and transporting passengers, the railroad shipped much silica rock to glass factories located in town. The rock, which came from the Sandy Point quarry between Smethport and Ormsby, was loaded into hopper cars and then unloaded directly into rock crushers at the factories. On October 22, 1882, the BB&K hauled an unusual freight to the county seat. The railroad sent a fire engine and crew to Smethport in a neighborly effort to help save the Smethport Extract Company, located in East Smethport, from burning to the ground. It made the trip up the hill from Bradford, then across the Big Level, and down the Marvin Creek Valley hill into Smethport in a record time of one hour and 13 minutes. Unfortunately, although it was too late to save the factory, the engine and crew saved the remaining valuable ricks of bark.

The oil boom was over by the 1890s. Many of the narrow gauge railroads built during those days slowly died, as did many of the hastily constructed boomtowns built along the railroads. The BB&K would outlive all of them. An oil strike in the Ormsby area in 1894 produced a minor oil boom, but the effects were short lived and hard times were soon ahead for the narrow gauge line.

A New Century Brings the Competition of Two New Railroads

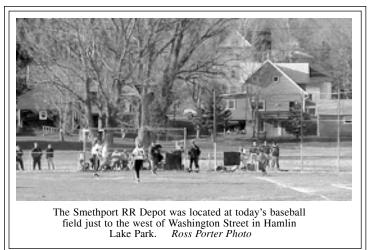
Around the turn of the century, two other railroads entered Smethport and gave competition to the narrow gauge line. Up to then, the BB&K held exclusive service in the county seat. Local industrialist Elisha Kent Kane entered the railroad picture in Smethport. In 1905, the owner of the BB&K was outmaneuvered by Kane. Kane's Kushequa Railroad, as it was popularly referred to, gained control of the Bradford, Bordell & Smethport branch of the BB&K from Ormsby Junction to Smethport. Service to Smethport ended. By September 2, 1906, the entire railroad passed into history.



Smethport Railroad Depot: In March of 1899, Elisha Kent Kane incorporated the Smethport Railroad as a way to connect his Kushequa system to the Pennsylvania R.R. at East Smethport. The Smethport Railroad was actually an extension of the Kushequa R.R. John G. Coleman Collection

Two new railroads would serve Smethport: the Pittsburg, Shawmut & Northern Railroad and the Kushequa Railroad. Neither, however, would have the same impact on Smethport's growth and stature as had been sparked by the BB&K.

In 1899 the Shawmut and the Kushequa both laid track into Smethport at about the same time. In order to get to the planned destination beyond Smethport, they had to cross the existing BB&K rails just below where Lake Side Garage is today. This need to cross the BB&K would lead to a series of on-going disagreements between the two new railroads.



March of 1899, Elisha Kent Kane incorporated the

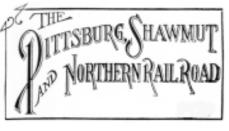
Smethport Railroad as a way to connect his Kushequa system to the Pennsylvania R.R. at East Smethport. The Smethport

Railroad was actually an extension of the Kushequa R.R., which Kane built from the Kushequa area up Kinzua Creek. It also went into the Ormsby area in order to tap the timber supplies that were needed to feed Kane's huge saw mill in Kushequa. After crossing the McKean Brothers saw mill at McKeans, just a mile north of Ormsby, the railroad split into two sections. One section went down into Cole Creek and headed toward Farmers Valley. The other section went through Ormsby, then paralleled the old East-West Highway (today's PA State Route 59) down Ormsby hill, around a horseshoe loop on the hillside behind the

Smethport Specialty toy fac-Avenue, and into Smethport. The *McKean County Miner*, on October 12, 1899, described the railroad as "a snake path in the grass," more than it resembled a railroad. The line began service on February 26, 1900. The depot was located just below

701 Water Street (Garvin Dille's house) on the west of the entrance to Hamlin Lake Park. The BB&K depot was only a block east below Church Street. The BB&K tracks blocked extension of the Kushequa any further toward East Smethport at that point.

The Pittsburg, Shawmut & Northern R.R. arrived in Smethport at about the same time. The Shawmut, as it was called, showed little interest in building northward past the BB&K until it heard that the Kushequa had received permission by the Borough Council to lay track along Water Street. The Shawmut quickly learned of its competitor's plans and sent an agent to Smethport. He brought with him a large amount of cash. He visited each property owner along the proposed Water Street route and bought the property for the railroad as he went. The Shawmut then made an agreement with BB&K railroad officials, who came to Smethport on a special train, to cross the narrow gauge railroad. A track gang installed the crossing and the Kushequa Railroad was blocked from accessing East



tory, then alongside the golf course, across Hilton

The Shawmut Station is the only remaining depot building in Smethport. It served as headquarters for the 2003 Smethport Sesquicentennial Celebration. *Richard Tanner Collection*

Smethport for several more years. The Kushequa filed court action, but it was not resolved for three decades. Several more years passed before the Kushequa could get across the BB&K.

Another confrontation between the two railroads occurred a year after the Keating and Smethport Railroad made a deal with the owner of the BB&K to have control of the railroad from Ormsby into Smethport. The K&S operated between the Pennsylvania RR in East Smethport and the Shawmut in Smethport. The railroad, part of the Kushequa system, served the Keating Extract Co. in East Smethport to the BB&K crossing, a total trackage of about a mile. The deal discarded the BB&K's Smethport branch from Ormsby into Smethport and to East Smethport where the BB&K connected with the Pennsylvania R.R. All freight and passengers coming to Smethport over the BB&K were forced to change trains at McKeans and take Kushequa trains into town. This was in January 1905.

The Kushequa started to change the BB&K's 3 foot narrow gauge into standard gauge so that it could finally cross the Shawmut. The Shawmut disagreed with the legality of the move and took the matter to court. It wasn't until 1913 that the court decreed that E. Kent Kane's railroad could cross the Shawmut.

While Kane awaited the court decision, he found a way for his railroad to enter East Smethport. His plan was unique in design. He piggy-backed his standard gauge cars on to a narrow gauge flatcar pulled by a BB&K engine. The Kushequa cars were pulled over the crossing one at a time, then unloaded on the other side. This was in the vicinity of the rear of Costa's new supermarket near the trailer court. They were then assembled into a unified train and taken over the now standardized rails of the BB&K to East Smethport. After the court gave permission to cross the Shawmut in 1913, most all of the original BB&K line that had been standardized was scrapped and the Kushequa relocated along the north edge of the mill pond, then up the valley and into East Smethport.

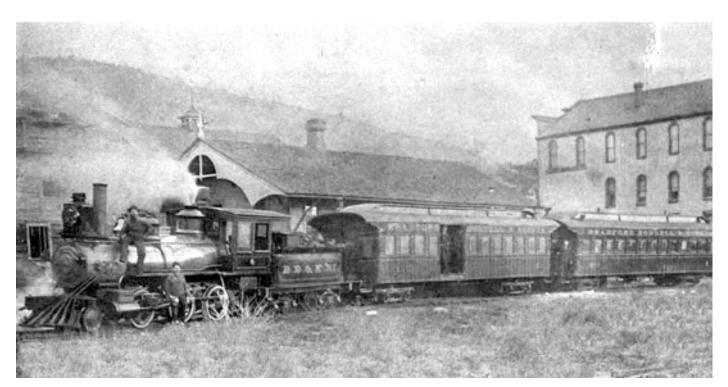
Passenger service on the Kushequa into Smethport ended in 1917. All train service stopped in 1927. The Shawmut's life was 20 years longer. Oddly, the Smethport Board of Trade sponsored an excursion over the Shawmut to Mount Jewett in the early days of its existence. The reason for the trip was to advance industrial development in Smethport, Marvindale, Hazel Hurst, and Mount Jewett. The glass or wood chemical industries were well established in those towns. Yet, by the time the Shawmut Railroad ran its last train through Smethport on April 1, 1947, most of the industries were gone.

All that exists today of these old railroads are the grades that traveled along the creek or up the steep hillside. Once they were used to transport passengers and freight from a busy town. Now they serve snowmobiles, hikers, and fishermen.

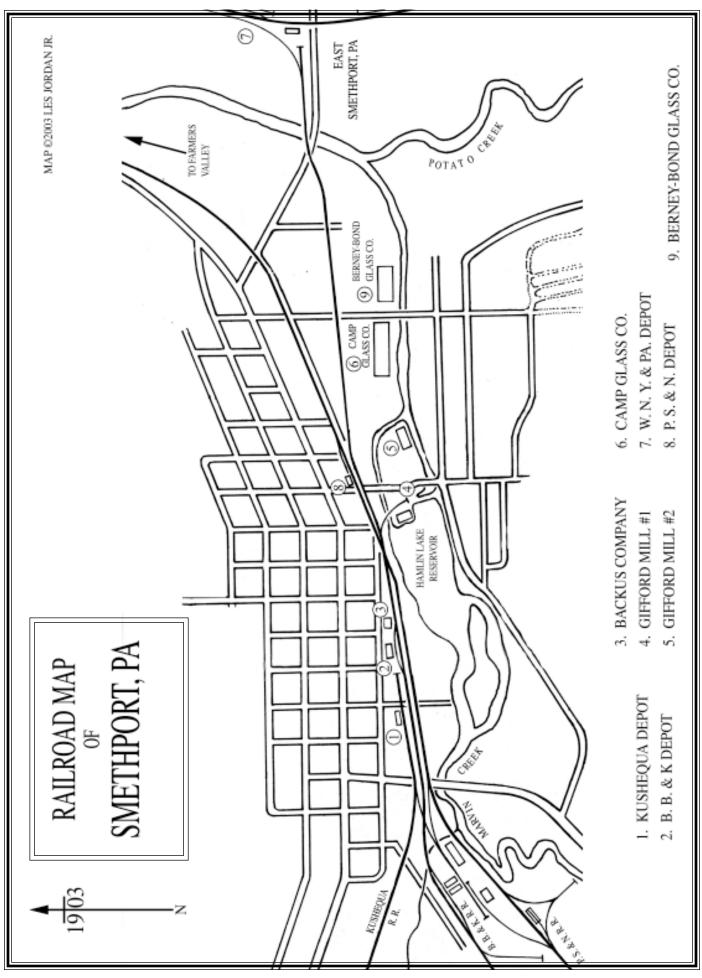
These industries weren't the only reason Smethport shared in this growth. Its position as county seat capitalized on the need for legal transactions and the subsequent growth of county government.

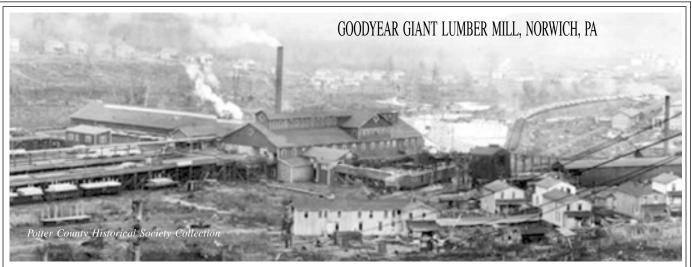
The Smethport community grew as a result. Hamlin's bank, and later the Grange Bank, prospered. Merchants thrived. The community infrastructure modernized, bringing water, gas lights, and eventually electricity to Smethport. Roads improved, railroad traffic increased, schools grew, churches increased.

While today finds a less than perfect economic climate, with many local graduates fleeing the area, there has also been a return to Smethport by many, bringing answers other than the heavy industry of the past 150 years. But without that history of industry, Smethport would still be a quaint town nestled in the valley, between two streams.



This image shows the BB& K Smethport Depot in relation to the Pierce House Hotel. The Pierce House Hotel was the location of the organizational meeting of the Smethport Hose Company. Image from *Bradford*, *Bordell and Kinzua by Thomas Barber and James Woods* The Elma Press ©1971, p. 16.

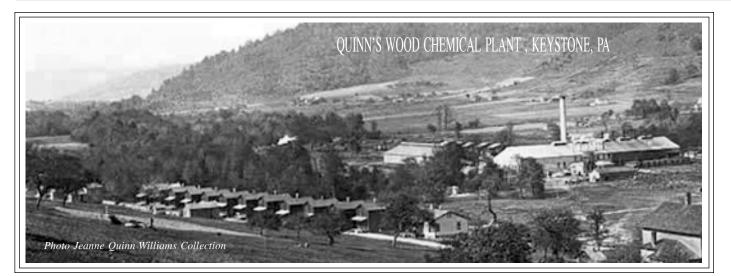




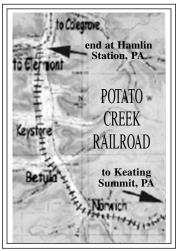
The new town of Norwich was constructed during 1910 and the giant mill went into operation during 1911. The Norwich mill, owned by the Goodyears, operated for period of about ten years from 1910-1920. The logging cut over 26,000 acres of virgin timber and something over 400,000,000 feet of lumber was sawn. In its prime at Norwich, the Goodyear Company built a water plant, laying water pipes in all parts of the town supplied from a dam built on one of the nearby brooks. Besides the large lumber mill, a kindling factory and railroad shops were also constructed.



Pictured above is the Betula Stave Mill. The Norwich mill, two miles south on the Potato Creek Railroad, delivered about 90,000,000 feet of hardwood to the Pennsylvania Stave Company at Betula for the manufacturing into barrel slats or "staves." In addition, many thousands of cords of chemical wood were delivered to the Keystone Chemical plant at Keystone, about a mile north of Betula. Scott Thomas Collection



THE VANISHED MCKEAN COUNTY TOWNS OF THE POTATO CREEK RAILROAD



The Potato Creek Railroad carried lumber (and passengers) between Hamlin Station through Keystone, Betula, Norwich and over to Keating Summit. Potato Creek RR employees: Gerald Wilcox (very front on left), Grandpa Grinolds (holding the dog), Teddy (dog), Milford Grinolds, Mooney (Grinolds), Don Grinolds, Mart Grinoldsengineer. Lorine Rounsville

Collection





Betula, PA, Pennsylvania Stave Company Plant Maker of Tightly Fit Precision, Wooden Barrels At Betula, two miles above Norwich, the Pennsylvania Stave Company built a mill in 1912. It replaced their Cross Fork operation that closed in the same year. The hemlock lumber was sawn in Norwich and moved to Betula for barrel staves. They went to the stave mills where they were cut up into bolts-short logs. They were split up, cut into the thickness of barrel staves, and put in the shed and dried.

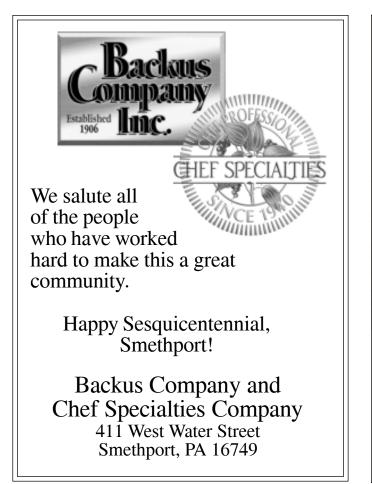
eystone, Pennsylvania, was a mile north of Betula. This view looks northeast. The building at the left was a warehouse where charcoal and acetate was stored. The wood yard stretched for close to a mile to the right of the picture. The company homes in the foreground are no longer existent and there are few traces of the chemical company left. The Keystone plant of the Quinns was the last new chemical plant built in Pennsylvania, and the most efficient . Along the northern border of Pennsylvania between the 1800s and 1950s, there was more than 70 wood chemical plants. McKean County was the center of the industry. It was centered here because of the cheap natural gas. These factories converted logs into charcoal, methanol (wood alcohol), and acetate of lime or acetic acid. They took the smaller hardwood that lumber mills wouldn't use. The subsequent development and history of the industry was revolutionized by Martin F. Quinn, who invented the jumbo retort. The jumbo allowed plant size to rapidly rise to seventy and ultimately to 140 cord capacity.

Keystone, Betula, and Norwich were all serviced by the Potato Creek Railroad. When the Norwich operation closed during 1920 the railroad as well as the remaining plants were doomed.

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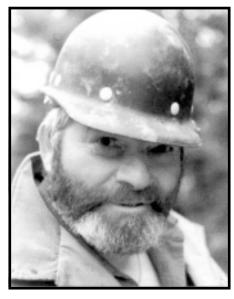
Happy Birthday Smethport! from your friends at Northwest Savings Bank Liea Caldwell Theres Hezelep Dorna Jaylon Bury Walter Judy Whight Suy Walter BANK Serving Smethport Since 1906





Backus Company Employees 2003 Top left to right: Tracy Pecoraro, Susan Keech, Randy Horton, Joyce Slade, Brenda Field, Jason Campogiana, Tim Wright Middle left to right: Shelly Sitler, Crystal Stuck, Janis Wilcox, Maggie Rounsville, Faye Hauber, Dawn Peangatelli, Lori Austin, Linda Lewis Bottom left to right: Denise Frontino, Susan Gorrell, Amy Pierotti, Jamie Pierotti, Jack Pierotti, Mary Pierotti, Jeff Wolfe

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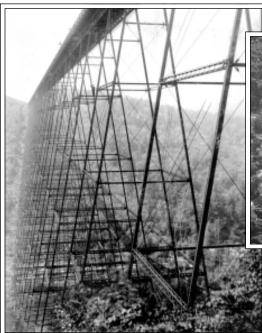
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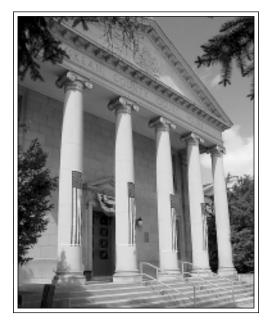


A railroad tankcar waiting to be loaded at the Quaker State Refinery in Farmers Valley in the 1970s. *Les Jordan Jr. Collection*

As much a part of $McKean\ County\ as$. . .



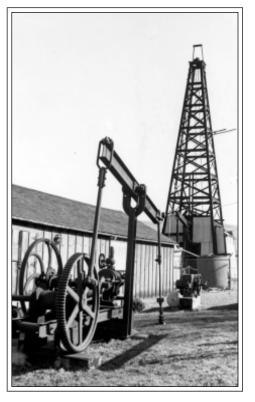
Kinzua Viaduct R.G. Gleason Collection



McKean County Courthouse © Les Jordan Jr. 2003

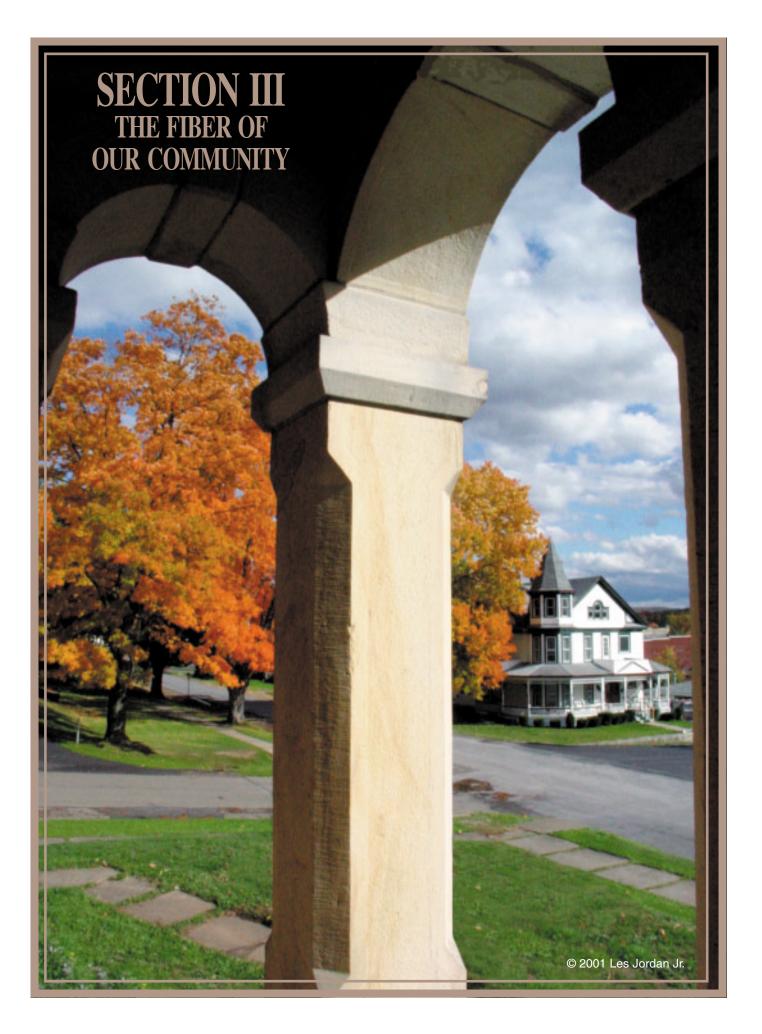


Hamlin Lake © Greg "Skyking" Nelson

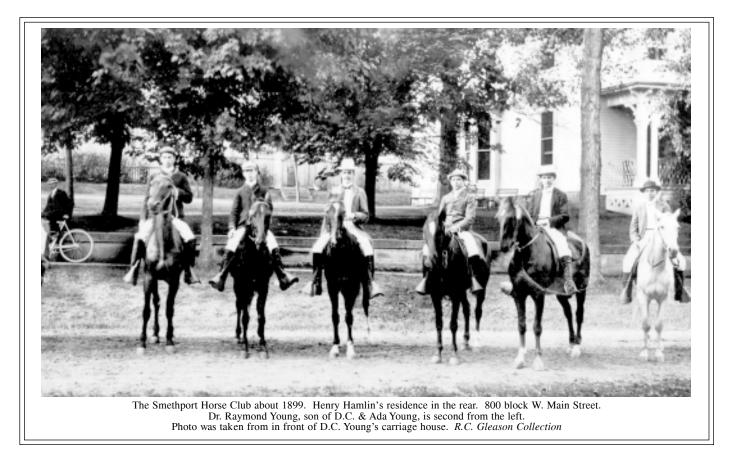


Derrick at the Oil Museum © Les Jordan Jr.

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CHAPTER XI COMMUNITY DIVERSIONS & PASTIMES.



methport residents have historically taken the time to play as a reprieve from their daily endeavors. Outdoor sports have always been a natural extension of the unique Smethport lifestyle. From its earliest days the Smethport citizens took to sleigh riding in the winter or hiking the scenic hills in the summer to gaze at the magnificent vistas or to walk the local streams fishing for native trout or picnicking. Many Sunday afternoon gatherings were centered around a vigorous climb to Devil's Den or Prospect Hill and a leisurely snack with one's sweetheart. Just a few moments out the door and, even today, one is instantly whisked back in time to the exact vistas that charmed the earliest visitor to the area.

rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:

Smethport, Pennsylvania, 1830s: "Soon after the wedding-party ride, the same party from the village and others, among whom was my wife, then a girl, were invited to an evening's gathering of young folks up in Sleepy Hollow at Deacon Taylor's, about a mile west of the village. As our former liveryman had left, we engaged my friend Elick, who owned a slow yoke of oxen and a large commodious ox sled, to take us to the gathering. Bundles of straw were strewn over the bottom boards of the sled, the girls packed into it, the young men either sitting on the sled raves with their feet dangling, or standing up on the sled runners and holding on by the stakes. We made a slow trip but had a comfortable, safe and pleasant ride to this party.

We found a good sized room in the log house, warmed by a huge, old-fashioned, open fireplace, with a backlog a foot and half over, and not less than a quarter of a cord of wood blazing and burning in front. The evening was spent as at other parties in those times, in playing Button Snap, and Catch 'Em, and other plays of that sort...

The party broke up at a reasonable hour and we all prepared for our ride home and we were arranged in the order in which we had proceeded in going to the party. The night was unusually clear and brilliant, the crescent moon was up and equally balancing her two silvery horns, the skies had lit their thousand starry lamps, the galaxy of

the milky way was mildly shedding its soft ethereal light while unbroken silence reigned throughout the valley. When the party was seated, Elick began belaboring his team with his ox goad and set in such a loud gee up! gee up! gee up! on! on! that the night owl must have been frightened from his perch on a limb of an old tree on the hill top, and the timid hawk skulked to his hiding place in the brushwood. The voice of the ox driver could have been heard nearly as far as the sound of our court house bell, making the hillsides reverberate with its echoes. So we were



Sledding meant something different in 1895 than today. R.C. Gleason Collection

moved a little faster towards home, as we gradually rose toward the summit of the divide, which separates Sleepy Hollow from the village. When at the top of the hill Elick gave a yell to his oxen that made us think for the moment that the Indians were upon us, he walloped the team with his goad, impelled the oxen to a full gallop and down the hill we swiftly glided, the girls singing "Auld Lang Syne," the men keeping time with their feet to keep them warm. We all merrily enjoyed ourselves and had as much fun as if we were riding in a grand pleasure sleigh, wrapped in fur robes and drawn by four spirited, prancing horses, or riding in

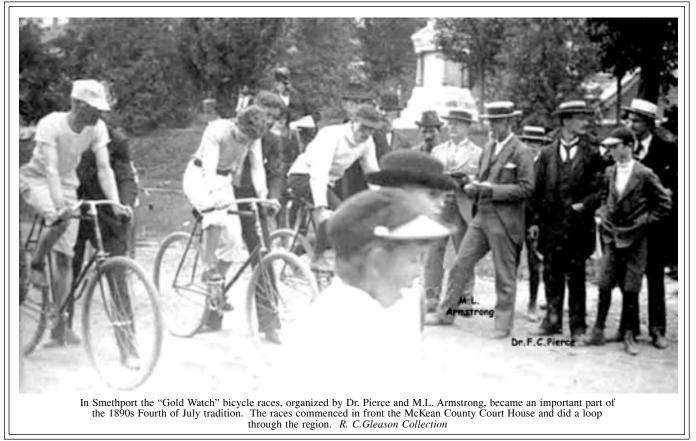
Cinderella's pumpkin-shell coach with mice transformed into horses and metamorphosed rat for a coachman. Arriving at home all right- three cheers for Elick and the ride was done; the evening's entertainment over, and the curtain fell."

Driving a Carriage

"Driving" into the country, was the terminology used for taking a horse and buggy through the unpaved roads to admire the spectacular countryside. The horse drawn carriage was not only a cherished method of transportation but also a leisurely pastime. Stables were located throughout the borough and many homes had their own barns. Many of these original "carriage houses" are still in existence to be appreciated by those with a keen eye and a depth of understanding.



BICYCLING SWEEPS SMETHPORT



he coming of the bicycle produced a transportation and recreation craze throughout Smethport. The bicycle's popularity was a phenomenon during the 1890s. In 1883 Dr. F.C. Pierce, the popular local dentist, brought the very first high wheeler to Smethport. Crowds formed to see

the unusual machine being peddled down Main Street from his home on East Main to his

1895 ° SIOO. GRACEFUL, DURABLE. BEAUTIFUL TED WITH "G & J" TIRES WHICH GIVE NO TROUBLE. Handsome Gatalogue Free at F. G. Pierce's. Gormally & Jeffery Manufacturing Company, ago, Boston, Washington, New York, Brooklyt olt, Coventry England An Illustrated Souvenir of Smethport 1895 Donna Fizzell Cooper Collection

office on the corner of Union Street and Main Street. Dr. Pierce soon set up a secondary business marketing the quality "Rambler" brand of bicycle. His bicycle dealership was operated from his second story dental office in the D. C. Young General Store with his display area in Mr. Young's store. His



The coveted prize for the seven mile first place winner was an engraved gold pocket watch. *Charles L. McKeirnan Collection*

devotion to and advocacy for his bicycling hobby helped expand the popularity of the new machines. Then, in 1893, the high quality Rambler "Safety Bicycle" arrived with a radical new design quite similar to today's mountain bicycle (but with only one speed), and the Smethport bicycling hysteria was launched.

The cycling craze hit Smethport broadside. Everyone from student to 50 year old citizen who could afford one of the machines purchased a bicycle. Purchases were announced in the *McKean County Miner*. M. L. Armstrong, another well respected Smethport businessman, fireman and coach also opened a bicycle dealership. Mr. Armstrong sold the high quality Columbia wheel from his jewelry store and telegraph office in the portion of Main Street known as the "Old Stand" just southeast of the courthouse in the 400 block where

today's State Liquor Store is located. The "Old Stand" was devastated in the tragic 1933 Smethport fire. In 1894 the Smethport Bicycle Club was formed with its first meeting held at the offices of Holmes and Gilfillan on Mechanic Street. Officers were: W.G. Holden, President; T.H.Purtle, Vice President;



F.L. Holmes, Secretary and Treasurer; F.C. Pierce, Captain.

Cycling became a favored pastime of the community. Lady friends would "wheel" to Olean for shopping and take the train back to East Smethport, then ride home. Couples would join together and wheel to Eldred or Port Allegany for dinner. Groups would follow the Smethport baseball team by riding to Kane or even Coudersport to see the game.

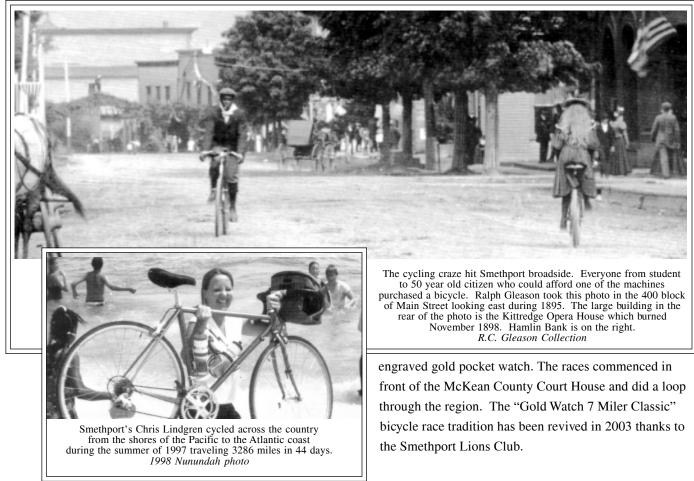
During July 1895 Dr. Pierce rode his Rambler to Des Moines, Iowa in ten days. His trip was announced in the Miner. Mrs. Pierce, a wheeling fan herself, rode the train to Iowa and the two returned by train to Smethport. Bicycle journeys and day trips were frequent topics in the Smethport newspapers. Trips reported were made to

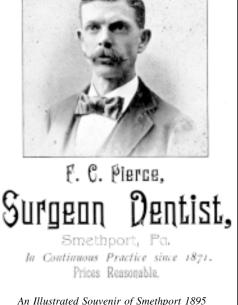
Olean, Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and the surrounding regions.

Bicycle racing also became vogue during this period. The Buffalo

In Continuous Practice since 1871. Prices Reasonable. An Illustrated Souvenir of Smethport 1895 Dona Fizzell Cooper Collection

region was especially involved with bike racing. Young Smethport racers would ride their bikes to a far-flung location to compete in an important race. In Smethport the "Gold Watch" bicycle races, organized by Dr. Pierce and M.L. Armstrong, became an important part of the 1890s Fourth of July tradition. The coveted prize for the seven mile first place winner was an





THE AUTOMOBILE ARRIVES IN SMETHPORT

he bicycle was quickly forgotten, however, when the automobile arrived in Smethport. The town had a proportionally higher number of horseless carriages just after the turn-of-the century and the love of the automobile led a growing national trend. Perhaps it was the flow of money into Smethport from the combined wealth of oil and lumber that led to Smethport's inordinate number of automobiles per capita. This phenomenon was even reported in the 1904 Buffalo Express.

Smethport Ahead of Nation in Automobile Ownership

Buffalo Express 1904:

methport is certainly a very wealthy town, and no one who spends a day here during pleasant weather needs be told that more automobiles of the high grade and costly order are owned here than in any town of its size in the State. We all have to admit this without being told so by the Buffalo Express. This is what the correspondent says:

I lately spent several days at Smethport, the county seat of McKean county, Pa., finding it in its isolated situation very interesting. It is not quite so badly off as the town Artemus Ward wrote of which had only a plank road running into it twice a week, but a fellow who wants to get into or out of Smethport on Sunday will find his way beset with difficulties. He can, however, hire a rig, walk or buy an automobile. Most residents do the latter. I am told it is one of the wealthiest towns of its class in the country and I believe it, as the people



R.E Burdick's horseless carriage about 1902 R.C. Gleason Collection



Hull's 1911 Cadillac used to bring lady customers to Hull's Department Store in Norwich Potter County Historical Society Collection



Ralph E. Burdick Mansion with his chauffeur R.C. Gleason Collection

can't get out to spend their money, but they do spend a lot on automobiles; almost every man in Smethport has one and pedestrians have to step lively. All makes are there from big steamers to little runabouts. The big machines predominate and it is novel to see the uses they are put to. I was walking one evening when a big auto drew up to the curb and the driver asked us to ride as he was going up to the house. It was the owner of a grocery and bakery and my companion sat with the driver while I rode in the rear seats with green onions, sacks of salt and sugar, bunches of pie plant and assorted breakfast foods.



McCandless' chauffeur with Buffalo made Pierce-Arrow about 1909 Ross Porter Collection

McKean County Miner Sept. 1905: Cleveland To Smethport A De-Lightful Ride in a White Steamer Touring Car



Orlo Hamlin's White Steamer with Win Avery, Chauffeur. R.C. Gleason Collection

t isn't very often that the editor gets a chance to go on an automobiling tour so when Orlo J. Hamlin (grandson of pioneer Orlo James Hamlin) invited us to go to Cleveland and return with him in his new White Steamer we could not refuse. Leaving here at 4:04 (on the F. H. REED, W NY & P RR) Friday afternoon we went to Buffalo where the party





er, Ca Elk. ies, on and after Jacuatry 2st, will have a first-class repair sliop ped for all kinds of general repair maintainence of Steam and other indexne splicited.

Clermont, Pa

James Herzog Collection

took the boat, *City of Buffalo* for Cleveland, arriving at 7 a.m. Eastern time. It was a clear moonlight night and the trip was most eniovable.

After breakfast the party, which was composed of Messrs. Sherman, agent for the White car, Win Avery, chauffeur, Orlo J. Hamlin, Howard E. Merrill and Harry L. Backus, visited the White garage...

At 1 p.m...we started on the 200-mile run to Buffalo. The car seemed anxious to go and started off at a lively clip. Out on Euclid Avenue, where the asphalt pavement is smooth, Chauffeur Avery turned out to pass a slower car and just as he started to make the turn back on the right side of the trolley lines the car struck a place that had been sprinkled and turned completely around without as much as a jar to the occupants, but he quickly turned around and was off in an instant, passing the other car again in a short distance.

Out of the city limits without any delays, Mr. Sherman said we should reach Erie at 6 p.m., a distance of a little over 100 miles, and told Mr. Avery to hit her up for a 25 mile average and at 3 o'clock we were at Painesville and at 4 we were in Ashtabula and just at 6 p.m., Eastern time, we drove into Erie. Here both men and car fed and at 7:30 we were on the road again and although we could not drive as fast after dark with the numerous rigs which are on the road in the grape country on a Sunday evening at this time of year we reached Buffalo, at 12:30, averaging about 20 miles an hour from Erie. After one has driven 200 miles it is not a hard matter for even a wide-awake editor to sleep, and therefore the start from Buffalo was not early... The start was made at 1 p.m. and at 6 we pulled into Olean. Lunch was had and at 6:20 the car steamed out of Olean and finally into Smethport at 10 p.m.

The drive from Cleveland to Buffalo is a most delightful one and must be taken to be appreciated. Farming seems to be almost the only industry but it certainly is profitable for the houses, lawns, barns, etc., point to thrifty and comfortable lives. Between Erie and Buffalo is the grapebelt and the odor of ripe grapes as one passes- along is most pleasing and in the moonlight the large vineyards could be seen nearly as well as in daylight.

A White Steam Touring car is undoubtedly the pleasantest mode of travel yet known to the person who enjoys scenery and pure air. If you wish you can travel practically as fast as by rail, and where the roads are good there is practically no more jar. As a rule the roads were good, much better than are to be found in this section, they have their rough places, nevertheless. When we came to the rough places our speed would be cut down to twelve or fifteen miles an hour, but when a piece of macadam road was reached Win would open her up and away we went at a 35 or 40 mile clip as smoothly as though we were standing still. Aside from the writer receiving a beautiful black eye for not being sufficiently polite to bow low in recognition to the King of the Forest, the trip was devoid of accident or unpleasing incident and even though we were thus punished we can truthfully say that it was one of the most heartily enjoyed outings of our life.



1890s: Baseball Becomes the Town's First Spectator Sport

B aseball also became wildly popular in Smethport during the 1890s. The teams originally were not connected with the school but rather were community based. Teams sprung up in the entire region and the Smethport team had a heavy following at these community games. The original Smethport athletic grounds were known as Kane Field



The Famous 1895 Smethport Baseball Team: Members included : M.L. Armstrong (center), Will Fuller (in front of Coach Armstrong), Herman Tull (left of Coach), Dr. Clark-umpire (rear upper right), N.H. Knapp, Sam Bell, Tom Morrison, A.H. Pierce, Tom Young, Niff Sasse, Waldo Sasse. The top players gained notoriety and had an almost professional status. The very best players could be lured to other towns to play for their team in a big game. The 1895 Smethport team, coached by beloved M.L. Armstrong, gained prominence in western Pennsylvania and New York State. *R.C. Gleason Collection*

and located just north of Marvin Creek near Route 6. Today, over one hundred years later, a baseball field still exists in this same location called Chet Burt Field. Hundreds of spectators would regularly follow the team from game to game. For away games spectators would either "drive" (take a horse drawn carriage) or "wheel" (ride a bicycle) in groups to such rivals as Port Allegany, Clermont, Kane, and Bradford. At very distant games, such as Austin or Punxsutawney, the players and the spectators would take the train. As a team became famous other important regional teams would issue challenges. Each game was widely attended and carefully documented in the local newspapers.

The top players gained notoriety and had an almost professional status. The very best players could be lured to other towns to play for their team in a big game. The 1895 Smethport team, coached by beloved M.L. Armstrong, gained prominence in western Pennsylvania and New York State.





Ice Skating at the Mill Pond

riginally there was unrestricted ice skating on the mill pond. In winter people used the pond for ice skating and informal ice games, including one called "Ducky on a Rock." It was a pleasure to be able to skate all the way around the island. Later, because of dangerous ice conditions, skating was restricted to designated safe areas

of the mill pond. Ice would be tested by Glenn Mencer, Sr. and should it be determined that the ice was secure, unrestricted skating would commence. During the late 1950s the Lions Club built a skating site at Water Street at the former Camp Glass site (later Market Basket -Jubilee). During the 1980s the current site was constructed by the borough in Hamlin Lake Park.



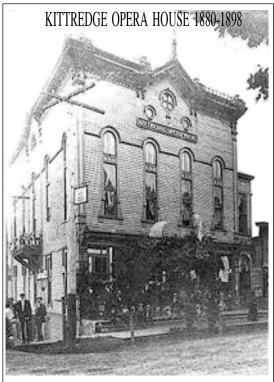


Picnics and Row Boat Rentals

The island at the center of the pond was always a popular gathering spot for church picnics, center for dating and other social events. About 1905 Charles Gleason, an agent for the Kushequa Railroad, rented the main island and built a dance pavilion and picnic tables for the public. He offered rental boats for excursions around the dam and island.

Smethport's Kittredge Opera House

n 1880 C.F. Kittredge moved to Smethport and built the exceptional Kittredge Opera House on the southwest corner of Main and Mechanic Streets at the location of today's America's First Christmas Store. The Kittredge Opera House became the cultural center of the town. Stage talent



The Kittredge Opera House became the cultural center of the town. Stage talent came from all over the east coast to perform at the new hall. *McKean County Historical Society Collection*

DANDY THE HERO DOG Mr. Kittredge died in 1892 and his wife continued to operate the opera house until its demise in a tragic fire in December, 1898. Her hero dog, Dandy, saved Mrs. Kittredge's life by coming into her bedroom and awakening her. Dandy later died from his burns. *R.C. Gleason Collection*

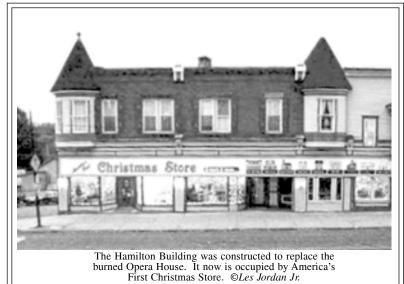


came from all over the East Coast to perform at the new hall. Bradford, Port Allegany, and



Hamlin Lake has always been a center for recreation. Note steeple of the orignal Catholic church which burned 1905. R.C. Gleason Collection

Clermont also had opera houses for the groups to perform. Plays featuring travelling troupes drew huge local crowds. Other plays were produced and performed exclusively by local talent and were equally popular. Concerts, balls, dances, socials and even graduations were also held at the opera house. Mr. Kittredge died in 1892 and his wife continued to operate the opera house until its demise in a tragic fire in December 1898. Her hero dog, Dandy, saved Mrs. Kittredge's life by coming into her bedroom and awakening her. Dandy later died from his burns.



1880s Roller Skating Phenomenon

uring the 1880s a roller skating craze grabbed Smethport. Former Smethport resident John W. Baker described it in a letter to the *McKean County Democrat* during the 1930s: "Smethport, like every other

town, has had its portion of 'fads'. It may be news to some of the readers of the *Democrat* to know that when the roller skating fad struck the country back there in the early 1880s that the good folks of this staid old town got the jitters and virtually lost their heads over this thing which had suddenly come upon the town. Yes sir, roller skating was the thing! That's why 3 rinks flourished here for a season or two.

One rink built especially for the purpose, was located on or near the corner of Main, Church and Water streets and occupied three-quarters of the block in depth. The floor space was about 100 x 300 feet, probably the biggest and finest floor in the county. The rink was conducted by Frank Brooks.

Another rink was conducted by "Chet" King, who dismantled his billiard room in what was known later as the Hamlin building to make way for the more popular pastime, roller skating.

And C. F. Kittredge, not to be outdone in popular fancy, converted the Opera House into a rink. It was here that the older set, the more sedate and cautious ones, took their



Nick Nannen demonstrates the fine art of roller blading on the Hamlin Lake Skate Park facility constructed by the Smethport Rotary in conjunction with the Borough of Smethport. © Les Jordan Jr.

first lessons and also their first bumps, in the fine art of rollerskating. But as it was one of the period of modified hoop skirts and bustles, there were no fatalities. On occasion the faces did get red when there was a 'spill' that exposed legs and flounces not so common to the public eye then as now, you see."



Jim Reed on his BMX at the park. ©Les Jordan Jr.



Skate boarders, in-line skaters & BMX Bikers: 1) Nick Nannen, 2) Jason Raszmann, 3) Carin Adams, 4) Anthony Kremer, 5) Nazerene Kremer, 6) John Burford, 7) Bill Elliott, 8) James Reed photo ©Les Jordan Jr.

The Lyceum at King and Mechanic Streets





occasionally be performed in other communities. The Smethport American Legion purchased the Lyceum from James Quirk during 1924 for \$2500, and the facility was immediately refurbished by Fred Herriman, a local contractor, free of charge.

In addition to the concerts and plays the Lyceum served as the high school basketball gymnasium. It served this purpose until the construction of the gymnasium at Collowing the destruction of the opera house Smethport had no theater. That was to change with the construction of the giant, barn-like Lyceum Theater in 1902. The Lyceum was situated on the southwest corner of King and Mechanic Streets immediately behind the Charles McKean mansion (Colonial Apartments). The barn roof portion in the rear of the Lyceum contained the elaborate sets and curtains as well as the mechanisms to raise and lower them. The Lyceum served a very similar function as the Kittredge Opera House. Locally produced plays, however, grew in importance. The productions were so professional that they would

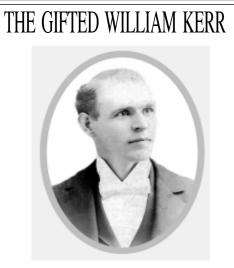


The Lyceum became the cultural center after the Opera House burned. Stage performances drew huge crowds. R.C. Gleason Collection

the high school on King Street during the 1930s New Deal era. Playing basketball in the Lyceum was an adventure. The floor was slanted so that the audience could have a good view of the stage during a play. The basketball gym floor was 98



The Lyceum also served as the high school basketball gymnasium until a new one was constructed at the high school on King Street during the 1930s. The floor was slanted for a view of the stage so players had to run, dribble and shoot on the angled floor. *R.C. Gleason Collection*



Willam James Kerr opened a moving picture house on Main Street in 1906. From 1923 through 1932 he was a partner in the Marvel Specialty Co. Smethport's toy comapany that would eventually evolve into Smethport Specialty. *William Halpenny Collection*



For a brief period during the 1930s, William Kerr used the Lyceum for the manufacturing of toys, probably under the name "Unicorn Toy Company." *Steve Putnam Collection*

the same slanted floor so players had to run, dribble and shoot on the slanted floor. This certainly would give the hometown Smethport team an advantage when playing teams not used to such a slant on the game. Heat





The first of the week the writer visited our new opera house and found that work is progressing rapidly and from present indications it will be finished in about two weeks. When finished it will be one of the most modern and convenient of play houses in this section.

The scenery has arrived and has been placed in position. The drop curtain is a beautiful fishing scene and the others are equally artistic and have all the modern appliances for handling.

all the modern appliances for handling. The seating capacity will be about 700 with something over 400 in the auditorium and the balcony is on a rather steep incline, so a good view of the stage can be had from any seat in the house--if the ladies will realize that it is the proper thing now to remove their hats. Two boxes also adorn the auditorium. The orchestra pit is well arranged and has two entrances from under the stage.

From behind the scenes you will see a large, well-appointed stage. Off the green room, which is under the stage, are six dressing rooms, a store room and two toilet rooms. The green room can be converted into a spacious kitchen when the occasion demands.

The building is heated with hot air and lighted with gas. The gas plumbing is so arranged that the lights in any part of the building can be raised or lowered from one location without affecting those in other places.

was provided by a coal stove that frequently filled the building with fumes and dust.

In 1906 William James Kerr opened the "Theaterium" at 221 W. Main

Street. Originally Mr. Kerr presented stage shows and silent movies to fill in the slack following the closure of the Lyceum. A piano player provided the music to the movies. Later the theater was purchased by Blatt Brothers of Pittsburgh. They operated it as the "Star Theater" until it closed in the early

William Kerr Opened Smethport's Theater



The Smethport Revival Center purchased the theater and converted it to a church in 1964. *William Halpenny Collection*

1960s. The Smethport Revival Center purchased the building and converted it to a church in 1964.

Hunting in McKean County



Oviatt Hunters: Oviatts of Betula were famed hunters. Pictured about 1900 are Frank Oviatt (far left), J. B. Oviatt, 3 dead deer, Milo Oviatt, two unidentified hunters on the right. *R.C. Gleason Collection*

rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:

Smethport, Pennsylvania, 1840s: "When the settlers arrived in this area in the early 1800s, wildcats, panthers and wolves were plentiful, and seen as a nuisance. Bounties for wolf and panther heads were paid at the Lycoming County court house. Tales of encounters with panthers were fairly commonplace with the early settlers, including attacks near or within the primitive homes. As the *Port Allegany Post Reporter* noted on April 15, 1887 in an obituary, "one could hear the wolves howling at night, bears and panthers would closely approach the settlers homes."

It was said C. W. Dickinson of Norwich Township killed over 300 deer, 9 bears, 18 wolves and about 20 wildcats. Smethport's Andrew Reilly noted that "bears and wolves were so ravenous that the sheep had to be housed at night; at one time 16 in my flock were being killed by animals in the night." According to Merle Dickinson, his father had killed over 100 wolves, and had also taken the last den of wolves in Pennsylvania in 1872 near Clermont.

rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:

Smethport, Pennsylvania, 1840s: "At an early period of the settlement of this county bears were not uncommon to be met with by the hunters. Samuel Beckwith, Sen., met with one, and fired his rifle at it. Seeing he had wounded it but that it was likely to get away and thinking he would not have time to reload his rifle, he ran to it with nothing but his hunting knife for a weapon. The bear stood on the defensive, raised on his hind feet and when the hunter reached him, received him in his strong bony arms and gave him a passionate but unfriendly hug. The encounter was a fierce one; the bear hugged and scratched and tore and bit and came near gaining the field of conquest. But the hunter by great strength and dexterity finally succeeded in giving Bruin a fatal thrust with his hunting knife. The hunter was severely scratched and torn by the sharp, powerful claws of the brute; one scar mark left by Bruin on the hunter's face was very conspicuous the remainder of his life, and he carried with him to the grave the indubitable evidence of his fight with the bear.

While exploring the turnpike route, with Beckwith for our packhorse man, as he followed our party at some distance behind us, and was guiding his horse along an old abandoned road leading down North Creek, he started up a wolf that had been sleeping in the path. He came upon his wolfship so suddenly that the animal, in his fright in seeking to escape, instead of jumping over a big log that lay at the lower side of the path, attempted to spring under it, but found the opening between the log and the ground too small to admit his passage and got his head and fore shoulders fast under the log. Beckwith sprang upon him and seized him by the one hind leg with one hand, took his



This is probably a fitting time to introduce our beloved 1890s photographer Ralph C. Gleason. R.C operated a photography studio in the 400 block of Smethport. He was a visionary in his humanistic approach to photography



R.C. Gleason's friends go "coon" hunting during the summer of 1895. R.C. Gleason Collection

jackknife from his pocket with the other hand, opened the blade with his teeth and cut off the hamstrings of the wolf. Thus being totally disabled for travel the animal became an easy prey to the huntsman, and at dinner our packman brought in the skin and the scalp of the wolf as trophies of the morning's hunting experience. Few men would have had the courage to have seized and held so ferocious an animal, by so uncertain a tenure.

A few years after William Lewis of Shippen, then in this county, tracked a wolf to her den among the rocks, but could not see her from the mouth of the cave. He got another man to join him and they together went to the cave. Lewis made a pitch pine torch, lighted it and armed with only his hunting knife entered the mouth of the cave. Telling his companion (who I believe was Benj. Freeman, armed with a loaded rifle), to shoot the old wolf the minute she appeared at the mouth of the den, Lewis crawled along into the cave and after a while saw the old wolf, her eyes glaring with rage, snapping, snarling and growling and showing her long white teeth and fiery red tongue, but the hunter kept fearlessly on. Anon the wolf rushed past him with the fury of the whirlwind, nearly crushing him in the narrow passage; and the wolf, on reaching the cave's mouth, was instantly shot and killed by Lewis' friend. Lewis still pressed onward and seizing the wolf's two whelps by the napes of their necks, one in each hand, carried them out of the den in safety.

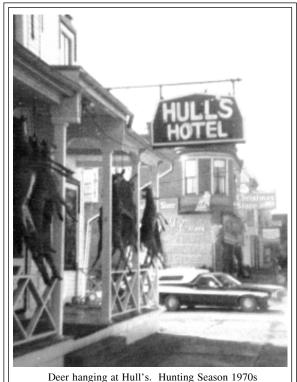
Freeman was a large, strong man, but Lewis was a spare, slender man, very muscular and wiry, with dark hair and jet black expressive eyes, the very impersonation of dauntless courage.

Many years ago, when the salt works on the Portage Marsh in the southeast part of this county were in operation, a Mr. McGee, a large, strong, rough, hardy lumberman, went to a deer lick a mile or more from the works one night to watch for a deer. Looking from his blind in the early part of the evening he saw the eyes of some animal gleaming through the lower branches of a large tree not far distant. He thought it was a wildcat, and steadily taking his aim fired at its eyes. The night being clear he saw the animal as it fell from the tree, disclosing the form of a huge panther, and knowing their ferocity when wounded and not being sure that he had killed it, he ran with all his speed without stopping until he reached the house at the works, declaring that he would never watch a deer lick again alone. On looking for the panther next morning, with a man who had accompanied him, they found it dead, and the largest one ever killed in this part of the state. I may add that a panther had rarely, if ever, been seen in this county for very many years past. Poor Mac must have been badly scared.

Nathan (Dennis), after settling while a young man at Eldred, was annoyed by some wild animal occasionally victimizing one of his hogs or sheep. He got a Mr. E. Larabee, one of his neighbors, to go with him. They searched the woods and tracked a large bear into a swamp by the aid of their dogs. On coming to the edge of the swamp they heard the dogs barking furiously at something in the thicket. They prepared their guns and walked cautiously toward the dogs until they could see what was going on. They then saw a large bear sitting up on its haunches, defending itself against the dogs. As one



dog approached on one side of old Bruin, he would strike the dog with one paw and knock that dog ten or a dozen feet sprawling on the ground to that side, and then the other dog came and was struck with the other paw and



Deer hanging at Hull's. Hunting Season 1970s Marcia Hull Collection

knocked to the other side. The hunters stood still and Dennis said to Larabee in a whisper, "We'll both shoot together. When I say 'now' you shoot." They both drew up their rifles, Dennis said "now" and shot, and hearing but one report of a gun said to Larabee, "Why don't you shoot?" Larabee replied, "I have shot." They reloaded their rifles, walked slowly up to the bear and found it dead and examining it they found but one ballhole. However, on dressing the animal, they found two bullets in its body, and concluded that each of the men had shot his own bullet through the same hole. I write this story as I remember it as told to me."

In Orlo's era, a successful hunt was depended upon to survive, while today, although hunting provides needed food, it has evolved into a trophy sport as well. Interestingly, of the top 25 antlered bucks taken in Pennsylvania, four came from McKean County. Of those four, three had Smethport connections.

The grandfather of McKean County trophies was taken by Arthur Young, father of D.C. Young of Smethport, in 1830. His great-grandson C.R. Studholme had it measured, and it came in at 175-4 on the Boone and Crockett Club score chart.

Arthur had a reputation of being the best hunter in the area. It

was said he had killed a greater number of deer, bear, panthers and wildcats than any other individual in the county.

Anyone who has ventured into the Cyclone Post Office has seen the tremendous rack taken in 1933 by then-Postmaster Milton Littlefield. He saw the buck in an orchard while he was enroute to Smethport. It was still there upon his return, so he ventured with his rifle and downed the 11-point, which measured 170-4 in the Boone and Crockett system. Three years earlier Craig Dunn took a trophy in the Smethport area, which later measured 172-4.

"Deer, bear and turkey are doing well; deer numbers have levelled off from the over-abundant level that was in the county from the 1930's to the 1990's", John Dzemyan, Land Management Officer for the Pennsylvania Game Commission in McKean and Elk Counties concluded. But, they still are in McKean County in numbers that supply plenty of deer for harvest in the first three years of this new century."

While the panthers and wolves are gone, bobcats have made a comeback and are now hunted. Coyotes were once rare, but hundreds are killed annually now. Elk have been restored to nearby Elk and Cameron Counties, and they too have a hunting season of their own, with 88 taken in two years Both the bald eagle and osprey have made a recovery in McKean County, and the once rare Canada Goose is now common, especially right here on the shores of Hamlin Lake.

Hunting in Smethport, and the surrounding towns like Clermont, Crosby, and Betula is a carefully nurtured social and cultural phenomenon dating back to the very roots of our pioneer heritage.

On the first Friday after Thanksgiving a major, annual, social transformation begins. The streets and highways suddenly become a crowded mass of automobiles and pickups streaming in from the southern flatlands. The parking lot at Costa's Hardware becomes filled as enthusiastic hunters line up for their last minute hunting licenses and supplies. Orange hats, gloves, ammunition, and boots are headed out the door by enthralled hunters. The "Hub" convenience store and Costa's Supermarket

are empty of bread and basic staples. J&B Distributor is overwhelmed providing other basic supplies.

Throughout town "welcome hunter" signs have sprung up. "No vacancy" signs on motels and Bed and Breakfasts appear quickly. A sea of blaze orange is in constant flux in motion toward organization-sponsored dinners, restaurants, local bars and video shops.

Throughout the weekend one can see smoke pouring out of formerly quiet hunting camps throughout the entire county.

Sunday morning the churches are filled to capacity. As Sunday progresses more people pour into Smethport. The tempo increases to an even higher pitch with anticipation of the commencement of the big hunt. Nearly at the moment of daybreak on Monday



the sound of gunfire rings across the ridges and echoes in the valleys surrounding Smethport.

Of course school in Smethport is always cancelled for the opening days of deer season. School cannot compete with the social importance and tradition of the hunting experience.

In the days that follow, deer are seen hanging from porches and camps and strapped to the roofs or trunks of vehicles in proud display. The local newspapers are filled with hunting stories and "Big Buck" contest results . Throughout hunting season all other topics are forgotten. The eternal question throughout the community remains, "Did you get your buck?"

But hunting is far more than just the hunt. It is the entire ritualistic bonding experience of the hunting camp. It's the smell of bacon mixed with wood smoke. It's cousins and siblings, and friends all intermixed into a common annual custom. It's card playing, laughter, hunting stories swapped in the glow of kerosene lamp and the warmth of the wood stove. This combined hunting camp experience is what connects us directly to our earliest pioneer conscientiousness.



The fourth McKean County Court House was dedicated Flag Day, June 14, 1942. ©Lester Jordan Jr.

CHAPTER XII SMETHPORT: THE COUNTY SEAT

FOUR COURTHOUSES IN ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-SEVEN YEARS AN OVERVIEW OF MCKEAN COUNTY'S JUDGES



1881: Third Courthouse for McKean County. It was completed in 1881 at a cost of \$80,000. Buffalo architect Milton Earl Beebe was hired to design the project. Beebe had considerable experience and fame, and the retaining of such a noted architect indicated the new found importance and wealth of the county. It was destroyed by fire February 1940. Bradford Landmark Society Collection

Judge John Cleland observed in his 2002 address to the McKean County Historical Society that the new courthouse, the fourth and present one, was dedicated on Flag Day, June 14th, 1942. Built at a cost of \$385,000, it was paid for by the time it was completed. The commissioners were Orvel S. Scott from Kane, Albert Cleveland from Smethport, and Edward R. Benson from Mt. Jewett. They applied \$135,000 from insurance proceeds and then added another \$150,000. They could easily afford to do it. According to the 1939 audited financial statement, the county collected about \$323,000 in tax revenue, and had a cash surplus of nearly twice that, \$617,000. By comparison, this year's budgeted tax revenue is approximately \$6.6 million.

And what a magnificent building it is. The old parts and new parts of the building blend together so beautifully that you have to look closely to identify its distinct parts. Remember the east wing was added in 1914, the west wing in 1938, and the front and connecting section beginning in 1940.

The new, and fourth, courthouse is built of "tapestry" brick manufactured in McKean County. In shades

from black to dull red, the brick contrasts with the lighter Indiana limestone trim.

The grounds were originally landscaped by experts from what was then Pennsylvania State Collage who supervised the planting of over 900 shrubs. A wide flight of stone steps leads up from Main Street to a large plaza and flagpole. Six stone columns support a portico that is topped by a four-faced clock tower.

The courthouse is designed with four entrances. One each on Church and State Streets, and one in the back of the building off King Street designed to give access to the document offices - Recorder of Deeds, Register of Wills and Clerk of Orphans' Court and Prothonotary and Clerk of Courts.

It is the main entrance, however, that is spectacular. Inside the double bronze doors is a small vestibule with bronze tablets recalling the history of the county's courthouses, and the marble tablet rescued from the debris of the 1940 fire. Walnut doors lead to the marbled circular main lobby that is illuminated by a huge circular light. The floors in all the public areas of the building are made of patterns of terrazzo, containing highly polished marble in small pieces in a variety of attractive colors.

rom the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin:

Smethport, Pennsylvania, 1826 "In the course of the morning Mr. Paul E. Scull...and Judge Sartwell called me and invited me to walk with them to the new brick courthouse, which was then being finished. The road in what we now call Main Street was a quagmire of mud from beginning to end, and from ankle to knee deep in reddish, brown clayey mortar. We had to pick our way by the fences to avoid miring in the mud. The courthouse looked quite imposing, as it stood almost alone on what was designed as the Public Square, with not more than a dozen houses in what was to be the county town. On the way up to the courthouse Mr. Sartwell and Scull offered me a retaining fee of fifty dollars as their counsel, they being the owners of the only store then in Smethport. The sun shone that day for me and the birch and maple trees along Marvin Creek appeared more pleasant and inviting than the dark and gloomy hemlocks along the old state road over the hill. I recovered my spirits and cheered up a little, thought the near future looked brighter and decided to stay in Smethport."

Four Courthouses in 177 Years

The first McKean County Courthouse, completed in 1826 and the 1851 courthouse were designed and built by Smethport creative genius Solomon Sartwell. Both were brick and of a Federalist architectural style. A few years following the 1851 structure's completion, a small, dark, damp brick vault was constructed. It served its purpose until the boom in the Bradford oil fields swelled the county's population. In the years between 1874 and 1881 the county's population climbed from less than 10,000 to over 45,000.

The need for better safekeeping of documents led to a new courthouse. It was completed in 1881 at a cost of \$80,000.

Buffalo architect Milton Earl Beebe was hired to design the project. Beebe had considerable experience and fame, and the retaining of such a noted architect indicated the new found importance and wealth of the county. In addition to the McKean County Courthouse in Smethport, Beebe also built the courthouses for Warren, Cambria, Elk and Huntingdon Counties in Pennsylvania as well as dozens of important structures in the Buffalo area.

February 12, 1940 found the magnificent building a smoldering waste, as flames leaped 130 feet in the sky, defying the efforts of firemen from Smethport, Kane, Mt. Jewett, Eldred and Port Allegany. A new courthouse was dedicated June 14, 1942 on that site.

Judge John Cleland continued: "Smethport, the county seat of McKean County, lies in the geographical center of the county, not by accident but by design. And the McKean County Courthouse lies in the center of Smethport, again not by accident, but by design. The Courthouse stands between Main Street to the south and King Street to the north. Symbolically separating the traditions of democracy, where power resides in the hands of the people, from the traditions of authoritarian power, where the important decisions of every day life are made by those far removed. The Courthouse stands between State Street to the east and Church Street to the west symbolically separating church and state, one of the keystones of our democratic traditions and constitutional democracy."

An Overview of McKean County's Judges

udge Herrick, from Bradford County, was a colonel in an Ohio regiment during the War of 1812, and was later a member of the Ohio legislature. In 1818 he was appointed President Judge by Governor Findlay, of the judicial district comprised of the counties of Bradford, Susquehanna, Tioga, Potter and McKean.

Herrick was succeeded by Nathaniel B. Eldred, who took office May 26,1831. From Crawford County originally, he was recognized as "having a large amount of common sense and a thorough knowledge of human nature".

Judge John S. McCalmont took office in 1841. He was from Jefferson County, and had practiced law in Clarion.

In 1849 Judge John Horace Williston became the county judge, and in his first year presided over McKean County's first murder trial. Uzza Robbins was charged with fatally poisoning his wife. Because the courthouse was considered unsafe, the trial was held in the meeting room of Smethport's Methodist Church. Robbins was found guilty and hung August 30, 1850. Williston, incidentally, fathered two note-worthy sons. Horace became a general in the U.S. Army. and L.P. followed his father's judicial footsteps in becoming a judge.



Judge Thomas Morrison was county judge during the 1890's

In 1852 Robert G. White donned the judicial robes on the county bench, followed by John Galbreath in 1858 and Judge Holmes of Bradford Township during the Civil War.

Judge Nelson Peabody, formerly a merchant in Ceres, rose from the ranks of Justice of the Peace to succeed Judge Holmes, and in 1865 Henry Williams took his seat on the bench. Williams presided over the murder of Mary Reilly who was

JUDGE MENCER HONORED WITH PRESTIGIOUS "DISTINGUISHED PENNSYLVANIAN" SELECTION

methport's popular Judge Glenn Mencer was honored in 1986 by Gannon University as a member of the very short list of Distinguished Pennsylvanians. Over the years others also honored with the award included Thomas J. Ridge, H. John Heinz, William Scranton III, Richard Thornburgh and Andrew Wyeth. Born May 18, 1925 in Smethport to Ruth L. Rice Mencer and Glenn H. Mencer, Judge Mencer graduated from Smethport High School in 1943. He entered the U.S. Army in 1943 during

WWII and served in France, Germany and Austria. He is a 1949 graduate of University of



Smethport's Judge Glenn Mencer was honored by Gannon University as a member of the very short list of Disinguished Pennsylvanians during 1981-1995. Hannah Mencer Collection

Michigan and received a J.D. Degree in 1952. He developed a successful law practice in Eldred during the 1950s and 1960s and served as McKean



County District Attorney from 1956 until 1964. In November 1964, at the age of 38, he was elected President Judge of the 48th Judicial district (McKean County) and served in that position until 1970 when he was appointed by Governor Raymond Shafer as an original member of the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania. In 1982 he was appointed by President Ronald Reagan as United States District Judge for the Western District of Pennsylvania and continued as US District Judge until his retirement in 1994.

On June 24, 1950 he married Hannah J. Freyer. They have three children: Ruth Ann, Cora Jane and Glenn John.

murdered in Smethport in the 600 block of West Main Street. On December 4, 1879 the gallows were constructed in the county jail and Andrew Tracy of Smethport was hung. That trial brought some of the greatest legal minds to Smethport. Ironically Tracy, an attorney himself, pled guilty.

Judge Williams was followed by Judge Stephen F. Wilson, and still later by long-time attorney Thomas A. Morrison.

The successful prosecution of the infamous Crossmire case boosted District Attorney Joseph Bouton's career, and in 1902 he was elected county judge.

In 1934 Charles G. Hubbard began a 30-year stay on the bench, to be followed by Glenn Everett Mencer in 1964. The Smethport native, an army veteran and local attorney, had a private practice in Eldred. He enjoyed a six-year term in the county courthouse until he was elevated to a seat on the Commonwealth Court of Pennsylvania in 1970. He held that position 12 years. In 1982 President Ronald Reagan nominated Mencer to the U.S. District Court in Western Pennsylvania. He was confirmed by the

JUDGE POTTER ALLEGHENY COLLEGE BASKETBALL STAR

udge William F. Potter was born Dec 15, 1925, in Bradford, son of Ernest Gurdon and Marion Gallup Potter. He graduated from Smethport High School in 1942. He enlisted in the U.S.

Army from 1943-1946 serving in the South Pacific during WWII. He was recalled into the U.S. Air force from 1951-1953 as a lieutenant and financial officer. He attended Staunton Military Academy and graduated in 1950 from Allegheny College where he was center and captain of the basketball team, setting a four-year scoring record. He graduated from Dickinson School of Law at Carlisle, Pennsylvania in 1955 and practiced law in McKean County. He was elected District



William F. Potter and father, Ernest Gurdon Potter, a well known member of the McKean County Bar Association. *Anne Potter Collection*

Attorney of McKean County and appointed by the



William F. Potter Anne Potter Collection

governor as President Judge of Pennsylvania in July, 1970. He was then elected as President Judge of the 48th Judicial district in 1971.

In 1951 he married Anne Digel Potter. They have six children: William Scott, Susan, Carol, Harriet, Amanda, and Martha

U.S. Senate March 19, 1982 and assumed senior status April 18, 1994. He has since retired to Smethport, where he and his wife can be seen on their daily walks, at Smethport Hubber football games, and throughout the communities.

William Potter, also of Smethport, replaced Mencer as county judge. The son of former district attorney E.G. (Gurd) Potter, Judge Potter was a veteran of both the army and air force, and had entered his father's law firm. He also followed Mencer as District Attorney. He, too, retired to Smethport until his death in January 1995.

Richard Brandow became judge in 1982, but died in office only two years later. Kane attorney John Cleland was selected by Governor Thornburgh to replace Brandow. Two years later he was victorious in the ensuing election, and was re-elected in 1995.

Several Smethport citizens went on to gain prominence on a national level. Two were to become members of the U.S. House of Representatives, and a third served on the U.S. District Court.

William Wallace Brown, a graduate of the Smethport Academy gained national prominence during the 1870s and 1880s. He went on to graduate from Alfred University and then entered the Civil War. In 1864 he was McKean County Recorder of Deeds, and County Superintendent of Schools two years later. He studied law, and was admitted to the bar in 1866 and elected McKean County District Attorney the same year. He moved to Corry in 1869, and was city attorney there for three years. In 1872 he was elected to the Pennsylvania General Assembly. He then served two terms in the U.S. House of Representatives, suffering defeat in his re-election bid in 1887. President Theodore Roosevelt appointed him an assistant U.S. Attorney General from 1907 to 1910. Brown retired to Bradford, where he died November 4, 1926.

Representative Arthur Cornforth was born in Smethport in 1861. He later travelled to Kansas, then Colorado, eventually becoming an express agent for the Denver and Rio Grande Railway until 1889. He resumed his law practice in Durango, serving as county attorney. Moving to Colorado Springs he specialized in mining and estate cases. He served in the Colorado State Senate from 1903 to 1905, and 1911 to 1915. He became a U.S. District Judge in 1921, and presided over the 4th Judicial

District when he died in 1938.

This year McKean County will see a marked change at the courthouse, as Harrisburg has allowed the county to elect a second judge.

Smethport has provided more than its share of judges and other county officials; thus, more than the edifice known as

HONORABLE JOSEPH P. WILLSON: FROM ROSE BOWL TO FEDERAL JUDGE

oseph P. Willson, the son of The Rev. William and Wilhelmine Putnam Willson of Smethport, was a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School. A football scholarship paid for his schooling at Penn and in 1925 the tackle was named captain of the varsity squad. He played in the Rose Bowl and faced "the Galloping Ghost," Red Grange. He earned money for law school at the University of Buffalo and Temple University playing professional football with the Buffalo Rangers (the Bills' predecessor team) driving to the games in an old Ford, and collecting \$100 a time for his efforts. Judge Willson moved to Smethport in 1933 and practiced law locally. He became a founding member of the Smethport Rotary



Captains Joe Willson and "Red" Grange exchanging greetings at the start of the 1925 Rose Bowl Game between University of Pennsylvania and University of Illinois Deborah Willson Babcox Collection

Club and was the sole surviving member of that initial group when he died in



Law Office built by Joseph Willson 422 W. Main Now offices of Dr. Christian Howard Deborah Willson Babcox Collection

August 1998. His law practice was interrupted by World War Two, and in 1941 he joined the U.S. Navy, serving in Dakar, West Africa. While there he helped make the arrange-



Judge Joseph and Leonora Willson Deborah Willson Babcox Collection

ments for a crucial conference between Winston Churchill and President Roosevelt. Discharged as a Lieutenant Commander in 1945, he resumed his Smethport legal practice and became chairman of the McKean County Republican Party. In 1953 he was appointed by President

Eisenhower to serve on the U.S. District Court for Western Pennsylvania. He presided over most of the condemnation cases, paving the way for the construction of the Kinzua Dam. Judge Willson became a Senior Judge in 1968, but continued to work until he was 89 years old, serving as a Special Master for the U.S.Supreme Court to resolve a boundary dispute between Nebraska and Iowa, hearing maritime cases in Tampa, and handling a number of Indian land cases in South Carolina.

CHAPTER XIII THE EARLY PUBLISHING INDUSTRIES

methport has a long and rich history of journalism and publishing dating back to its earliest pioneer days. Original copies of these papers are rare and highly collectible. These publishers, while existing in near poverty, left a documentation of life and events of Smethport that are priceless artifacts to historians today.

Forester & Smethport Register: 1830-1834

Hiram Payne was editor and publisher. This was McKean County's very first newspaper and was printed on one of the few printing presses throughout the entire northern Pennsylvania wilderness region. The printing press was wooden in construction and manufactured by Adam Ramage of Philadelphia.

McKean County Journal: 1834-1837

Richard Chadwick edited and published this paper. Mr. Chadwick was also Smethport's first school teacher, opening a school in 1828, as well as serving as McKean County Prothonotary for many years. He continued to publish the *Journal* until 1837 when he sold his interests to Asa Howe Cory.

BEACON AND MCKEAN COUNTY JOURNAL: 1837-1839

Asa Howe Cory was the editor and publisher. He changed the McKean County Journal to the *Beacon and McKean County Journal*. In 1839 he sold the press to William S. Oviatt who established the famous *Settler and Pennon*. In 1861 Asa became a captain when he organized Co. H, Fifty-eighth Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers. Unfortuanately, he was forced to return to McKean County during 1862, following a severe case of frostbite. He served as the Postmaster of Coryville, Pennsylvania, a small settlement in McKean County, which still bears his name.

Settler and Pennon: 1839 -1846

In 1845 original editor and publisher William B. Oviatt sold the paper to his brother, Joseph Beaman Oviatt. Joseph continued with the paper until 1846. The Oviatts' parents, Benjamin Franklin Oviatt and Frances Sweet Oviatt, moved to McKean County about 1830 and records indicate Benjamin was a Baptist preacher. The site of the original settlement later became Betula. Joseph died in 1865, at age 42, leaving 11 young children.

Tomahawk and Scalping Knife: 1840-1841

The *Tomahawk and Scalping Knife* was edited and published by Dwight Holcomb until it was declared a nuisance by a grand jury in February 1841.

MCKEAN YEOMAN AND ELK COUNTY ADVERTISER: 1846-1849

As Cory returned to the newspaper business and edited the *McKean Yeoman and Elk County Advertiser* featuring viewpoints of the Democratic Party. It was published by both he and B.F. Cory. The paper also carried Elk County ads and political news.

McKean Orbit: 1849-1851

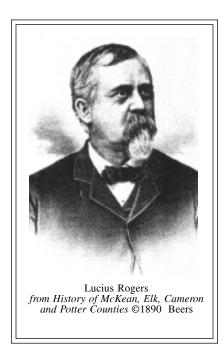
Little is known about this newspaper edited by N. W. Goodrich and Joseph B. Oviatt and published by J.B. Oviatt.

McKean News: 1851-1853

The original *McKean News* was a journal focused on Whig Party politics edited by George B. Backus. Backus sold the publication to Fordyce Almon Allen in 1853. Fordyce changed the name of the paper to the *Citizen*, which was neutral in its politics.

CITIZEN: 1853-1860

In 1853 Professor Fordyce Almon Allen began publishing the *Citizen* while also serving as principal of the Smethport Academy. In 1854 Professor Allen was elected the very first McKean County Superintendent of Schools. However, he was defeated for reelection in 1857, and left Smethport to continue an illustrious career in early teacher education. In 1864 he became a principal of the State Normal School in Mansfield, Pennsylvania, a position he held on two separate occasions. Following the sale of the *Citizen* in 1858, Lucius Rogers continued the paper in Smethport until 1860. Rogers then moved the paper to Shippen, later renamed Emporium. This followed the creation of Cameron County from a portion of McKean County. In 1861 Captain Rogers shut down the paper and began recruiting Company F, of the Fifty-eighth Regiment Pennsylvania



Volunteers.

McKean County Democrat: 1858–1865

There have been two totally separate, unrelated newspapers named *McKean County Democrat*. The original paper, which espoused minority Democratic party values. It was printed by veteran Smethport editor Joseph Beaman Oviatt from March, 1858 until his unexpected death in 1865 at age 42. As a result of Joseph's death the paper was terminated and the office closed.

McKean County Miner: 1860-1968

The *McKean County Miner* in its initial issue on 9/8/1860 states "It is generally understood that the *McKean Miner* is but a continuation of the *Bradford Miner* and will

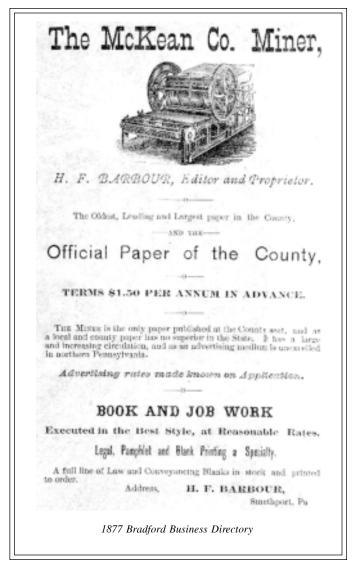
be an advocate of the mining and other kindred enterprises...along with being a replacement for the *McKean Citizen*, a Republican

paper." The *Miner* was in continuous publication from 1863 until its Smethport office closed in 1968.

The paper was first published in Smethport by Lucius Rogers who also led a colorful political and entrepreneurial life. One of his many accomplishments was the establishment of the first steam-powered sawmill in the Potato Creek Valley. The paper briefly stopped publication for a year and a half until Captain Rogers returned from U.S. Civil War duty. Started again on June 6, 1863, it has been published continuously in Smethport until 1968 when it was purchased by Bradford interests and the Smethport office closed. It continues today in its 163rd year of publication absorbed as the *Bradford Journal/Miner* with Grant Nichols as publisher.

McKean County Democrat: 1879-1971

In 1879, fourteen years after the original *McKean County Democrat* ceased publication, another paper, using the same mast appeared. The new paper was edited and published by Clark Wilson. Prior to his moving to Smethport and reestablishing the *Democrat*, Mr. Wilson edited newspapers throughout Pennsylvania, including Brookville, Punxsutawney,



Clearfield, Indiana, Butler, Ebensburg, and Parker's Landing Pennsylvania. The *Democrat* was in continuous publication in Smethport until July 15, 1971.

Seneca Press Suburban Pennysaver

During the 1960s, Arthur H. Hertlein was the managing editor of the *Seneca Press News, Suburban Pennysaver*. The weekly publication was similar to the current *Moneysaver*, and also carried historical articles of interest. The paper had an office in Bradford and Smethport. The Smethport office was located in the former offices of Holmes and Gilfillan on the corner of Water and Mechanic Street. It ceased publication in the late 1960s.

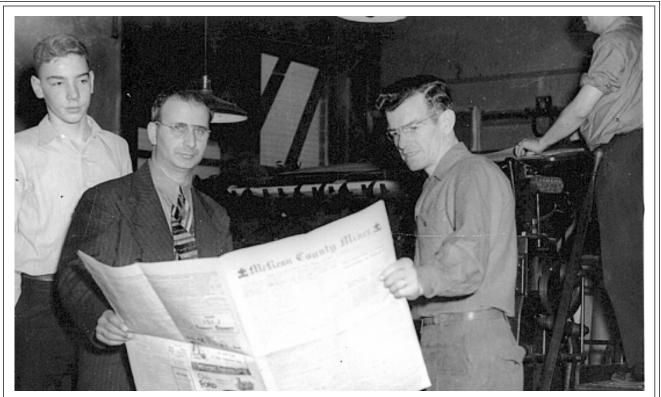
Smethport Reporter

First published in 1998, the weekly published *Smethport Reporter* is an extension of the *Port Allegany Reporter Argus*. Its parent publisher is Tioga Publishing Co., Inc. Pam Fischer is the Office Manager; Donald Gililand, Managing Editor; Teri McDowell, News Editor; and Fran DeLancy, Smethport Correspondent.

The Boys' Magazine 1910-1921 (See Insert at page 113.)

BOY'S OWN MAGAZINE: 1926-1930s

After *The Boys' Magazine* filed for bankruptcy in 1925, a group of private Smethport investors reorganized the publication under the new name of *Boy's Own Magazine*. This group of investors was led by former *The Boys' Magazine* Advisory Editor, Mr. Herbert Hungerford. When he heard of the breakup of the magazine he traveled to Smethport with the hopes of forming a new magazine. At the Sheriff's sale, Mr. Hungerford bought the former equipment, furniture, and files. He later purchased the buildings that housed the former magazine and on November 6, 1925, a company was organized and incorporated. The company used two offices and the original printing presses. The first of the offices was based in Smethport, where the presses and buildings were located. The other office was the editorial and advertising office located just a few blocks from Broadway in New York City. The company had seven directors from the Smethport area. They included Sanford L. Fry, William F. Specht, Chloe M. Lyle, O. J. Hamlin, E. G. Potter, H. H. Redfield and, of course, President of Hungerford Publications, Mr. Herbert Hungerford. The publication continued until the hard economic times of the Great Depression forced the publication out of business.



The first run of the *McKean County Miner* from their new Goss-Duplex Press following in 1947. This was the first press built by this company following World War II. Left to right: *Dick Burleson; John Dragoone, Sr.; Dinty Moore; and Ray Petruzzi at the press. McKean County Miner*

The Boys' Magazine:

1910-1921 o history of publishing in Smethport would be complete without mention of Scott F. Redfield's national magazine. Each month

from 1910 to 1921, the Scott F.



The Boys' Magazine was published one year prior to its competitor Boy's Life Magazine which was begun in 1911. Ross Porter Collection

Redfield Co. of Smethport, Pennsylvania, published *The Boys' Magazine*. This magazine featured adventure and suspense fiction along with moral-related juvenile literature.



Scott Redfield at an early age. Ross Porter Collection

The Boys' Magazine sought to guide young men in character development, physical fitness, as well as hobby interests. Mr. Redfield began publishing various magazines and newsletters in Smethport during the early1900s. He edited and published the magazine from its inception until 1921, except during 1911-1915 when Walter Camp served as editor. The magazine initially sold

for a dime a copy or \$1 for an annual subscription and at its height had a broad distribution throughout the United States. *The Boys' Magazine* predated *Boy's Life Magazine* (originally named *Boys' and Boy Scouts Magazine*) but was never able to connect successfully with the Boy Scouts of America movement which continues to drive *Boy's Life*.

During the early 1900s Mr. Redfield published

BOYS' MAGAZINE



EDITED BY WALTER CAMP

Redfield's Stamp Weekly. He continued to publish articles on stamp collecting throughout his career which included a regular stamp column in *The Boys' Magazine*.



The Boys' Magazine had a large format copied by Boy's Life Magazine Ross Porter Collection

Realized PLACENCE	CONTRACT DESCRIPTION	EG-SATIFORT, Ph
4.5.5.4 187	EIFWEL PR. DAM AND 4-10	42 #4-6-76-28
na star Na star Na star	THE DESCRIPTION OF THE DESCRIPTI	NOW READY SUITS CAMPOR For 1911
49th SALE		British Colonials
We Buy Stamps	and the second design and the second desi	Have You a Copy

During the early 1900s Mr. Redfield published Redfield's Stamp Weekly. Ross Porter Collection

NATION'S EARLY CABLE HISTORY LEADS RIGHT TO SMETHPORT INNOVATORS SCENIC HILLS BLOCKED TELEVISION RECEPTION

Some of the very earliest roots of the massive cable television industry reach right back into Smethport history. In the early to mid 1950s, broadcast television was starting to reach a significant audience in the major metropolitan areas. However, television signals were not strong enough to reach the valleys of rural Pennsylvania. As an increasing number of families acquired this new technology, several groups formed to construct common antenna systems on the tops of the Smethport hills. This was the birth of CATV (Community Antenna Television) systems.

Smethport was the home base of at least five such systems. The Russ Norman Cable System served a small number of families in the general area of the 700 block at the west end of town. Bob Palmer and Elaine Davis Palmer, owners of Palmer Electric Co, served the central section of town, while Hill Street TV handled the area around Hill Street. In 1953 the South Side TV Cable Company was started by William Pierotti, Jr., Paul Connors, Herbert Swanson, Alice Whelan, Viola Larson, Carl Berg, Glen Raifsnyder, Cecil Grinolds, Mabel Swanson, and Carl Parker, all neighbors of Pierotti who signed as shareholders in the company with an initial investment of \$100.00. The investment provided capital to run a cable from Rosehill Avenue to South Hill. In the same year Charles Megivern started Marvin Street TV, (Principal owners were Charles Megivern, Fred Biever, Merval Dunn, Don Gallup, Kenny Chase, Harry Abplanalp, Claude Bullers, John Apple, Merle Hauck, Tom Lemon, Kenneth McCord, John Saulpaugh, and Harold Kohn).

Television sales boomed in the mid to late fifties, and both Palmer Electric and the South Side CATV systems continued to grow. South Side TV was incorporated by its group of owners. During this period of time, monthly rates for the Palmer Electric system were \$3.50 or \$4.95 depending on the amount of installation fee that was paid. For that price, you received State College, Johnstown, Altoona and three Buffalo channels. Bob Palmer expanded the Palmer Electric TV system into adjacent towns, ultimately serving Smethport, Duke Center, Roulette, and Shinglehouse.

Early on, the Hill Street TV group decided that it might be better to sell their interests to Palmer Electric. Russ Norman's system remained privately owned by a handful of families well into the 1960s and was then absorbed by Marvin Street TV. A windstorm in 1973 destroyed the Marvin Street TV Company antenna, diminishing their customer base from 165 to 12 customers, all located in the area of Charles Megivern's house on North Street. The customers lost to Marvin Street TV were picked up by the recently reorganized Smethport Cable System, operated by Edward "Speedy" Dunn who in 1966 bought the Palmer Systems and continued operations in Smethport, Rixford, and Duke Center from towers located at Prospect Hill and in Mt Jewett and Hazelhurst from towers located at Mt Jewett. On January 10, 1979, Terry Palmer purchased the Smethport Cable Company and changed the name to Davis Cablevision.

These private systems required much maintenance necessitating many trips up the hill to the TV tower, sometimes on foot, sometimes by snowshoe, and sometimes via 4-wheel drive. Jamie Pierotti, son of Bill Pierotti, Jr., remembers "trips up the hill when conditions required chains on all four wheels of our Land Rover, just to replace a blown tube. There was a small cabin with a woodstove right below the tower. There were times when the cable system would be down because a tree would fall over the line, or a tube in the electronics at the head end would go bad, causing a particular channel to go out."

In the late 1970s the cable television business was changing. Large commercial satellite dishes were being installed. First, large cities and areas that were close enough to broadcast television stations were seeing national cable systems built. These larger cable system were able to offer programming such as HBO, ESPN, CNN not available "off air" and thus, to attract subscribers that in the past did not need or want cable. In the rural areas, this meant the availability of consistent high quality signals along with the varied programming. These changes would ultimately lead to government regulations that considered Cable TV very similar to utilities. The regulations and other changes required franchise fees to be paid to local governments, copyright fees paid to program owners, and service fees paid to programming suppliers. All of this led to the consolidation of cable TV providers. In the early 1980s, basic cable TV cost about \$10 per month and a premium movie channel was about the same.

In July of 1979, Davis Cablevision acquired South Side TV, Inc. and combined the systems. Davis Cablevision continued to expand, building extensions into areas such as Coryville, acquiring additional smaller systems, adding programming and building the customer base. In the mid 1980s consolidation in the cable TV industry was becoming more pronounced. Small operators were finding it increasingly difficult to finance an ever increasing capital demand to build, rebuild and upgrade their systems. Federal, state, and local regulations were creating burdens that demanded constant attention. Major cable TV systems were looking to add customers to reach levels of efficiency and economies of scale. On May 7, 1984, after discussion with a few regional cable TV systems (including John Rigas' locally owned Adelphia Communications), Davis Cablevision was sold to Tele-Media Company. Within about a year, in a game of bigger and bigger fish acquiring smaller fish, Tele-Media was acquired by Tele-Communications, Inc. (TCI) and Marvin Street TV was turned over to TCI as well. AT&T Broadband subsequently acquired TCI and most recently AT&T Broadband was acquired by Adelphia Communications. During this time the head end for Smethport (towers, antennas, and satellite dishes) was moved to Columbia Hill between Rixford and Wrights Corners. Mt Jewett and Hazelhurst were connected to the head end in Kane. New fiber optic cable was installed with plans to improve signal quality and to add channels and services; but as of May, 2003, the electronics have not been installed to use this new technology.

-Contributors Terry Palmer and Jamie Pierotti

History of Radio in Smethport, PA

he Smethport Centennial Celebration in 1953 was the first "special event" covered by WFRM, the new radio station in Coudersport just constructed by the Farm & Home Broadcasting Company. Broadcast lines were installed and temporary broadcast facilities were put in place in Smethport to cover many of the Centennial activities.

Pete and Bill, the stars of the Morning Show, were photographed in the derby hats that everyone in Smethport was wearing as part of the celebration. That photo is still on the wall at WFRM. It would take nearly 40 years before WFRM would get a sister station, WQRM, which is located in Smethport.

In 1953 the McKean County Fair finally resumed operation after the war. Radio was a big part of that event also. Gert Curley, who was widely known as "Betty Bradford," brought her popular interview show to the fairgrounds and WFRM also came to the Fair. A large tent along the midway was filled with country music entertainers from McKean, Potter and surrounding counties. Crowds loved it.

Encouraged by the enthusiastic reception from folks in Smethport, WFRM decided to put a local office and studio in Smethport. It was located on the second floor of the Auto Parts store on W. Main Street. Bob and Lois Johnson became the nucleus of the staff

THE LOCAL EARTH DIGEST Your L CAL E ARTH Digest Your Local Earth Digest: 1980-1981 nly a few issues of this digest were published during the early 1980s by Smethport area residents Ronald Packard and Larry Johnson. It was billed as "A Complete Catalogue Of Self Sufficiency, Outdoor Living & Local History In McKean, Potter, Forest, Cameron, Elk, Warren & Cattaraugus Counties". The magazine featured articles on such diverse topics as outdoor living, alternative energy, local history, gardening, hunting, fishing, camping and folklore. The publication was incorporated as Earth-Pro Unlimited, Inc and was printed by Leader Enterprise of Coudersport.

in Smethport and an effort was made to expand the service to this part of the WFRM coverage area. Russ Wells was the announcer, and Bob Morrison was the engineer. An hour each day was broadcast over the radio from this studio. These daily broadcasts continued for about three years. Meanwhile, the Johnson's had relocated to Kane, and joined the staff that was building the new radio station there.

A few years later, Hamlin Redfield of Smethport applied to the FCC for a station to operate on 910KHz with 1,000 watts and located in Smethport. This station was never built.

In 1990, the FCC granted a channel 106.3 for an FM station to be licensed to Smethport, and Farm & Home applied for and was granted a permit to build. The longtime cable tower atop Prospect Mountain was selected as the place for the antenna for the station that would be known as WQRM "Star FM". This same tower would also be used by WHKS, Port Allegany, which was being built at the time.

A site in downtown Smethport was chosen for the studio and office in a basement at Fulton and Main Streets. However, the disastrous Thanksgiving fire of 1996 destroyed the building and forced the relocation of WQRM to a new office at 211 W. Main Street. In Bradford, a special "translator" allows the station to rebroadcast over channel 99.3 to overcome the interference caused by mountainous terrain.

Rosalie Bishop has been the local manager of the station for many years and is responsible for programming, news coverag, special events, and soliciting radio advertising. In addition to the regular music programming, there are many special events and programs.

Broadcasts from local and area churches are eagerly awaited by listeners, as well as local news and events from the Fairgrounds. Smethport Hubbers' football and basketball games have always been popular with WQRM's listeners, and in addition, some of the Otto-Eldred games are carried on the station. Sportscasters include Bill Lord, Dave Ezzolo, Ron Deibler, and sometimes Erik Taylor (especially for wrestling).

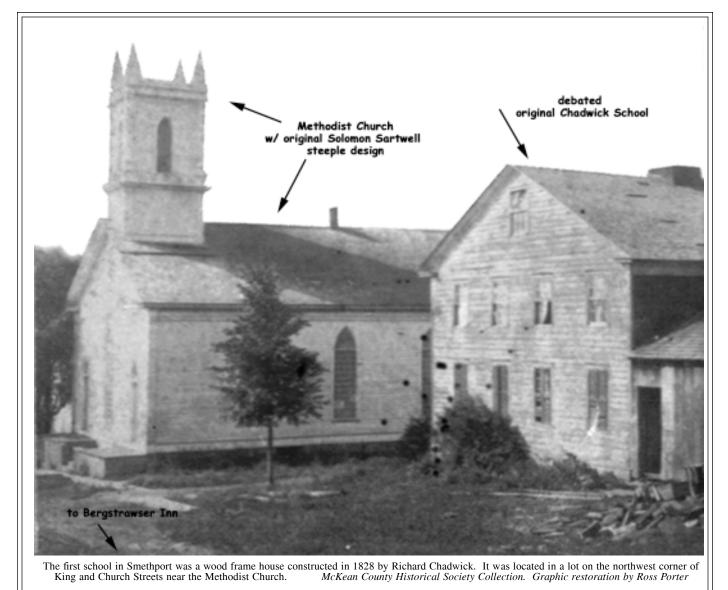
At the present time, Carl (Bud) Rosenswie, a teacher, is a part-time staff member of WQRM, doing special broadcasts and contacting advertisers. Others on the staff include Chelse App, Ty Bishop, Denise Windsor and Allison Lawrence. The station's website, www.wqrm.net is popular with Internetters who try to answer Q4U history questions and guess the Mystery Photos." Some of the winners are former residents who live in places such as Seattle, suburban DC, Florida, Arizona and some "flat-landers" who used to live here and now live downstate.

Sadly, none of the broadcasters who came to Smethport fifty years ago to do radio coverage are alive to return this year. But, the WQRM staff members will be doing much of the same type of broadcasts as in 1953 – describing the parades and other events, and interviewing local people and visitors. And, the "new crew" will be just as excited as the earlier generation of broadcasters. —*WQRM*

CHAPTER XIV SCHOOL DAYS

Early Schools

rom Smethport's earliest beginnings schools have always been an integral part of its community spirit. When the New Englanders filtered into McKean County, they brought with them a strong work ethic and a strong desire to educate their young. This community philosophy intertwined with new Pennsylvania legislation to set the course



of public education in Smethport.

The first school in Smethport was a wood frame house constructed in 1828 by Richard Chadwick. It was located in a lot on the northwest corner of King and Church Streets near the Methodist Church. Chadwick was not only a teacher but also a scholar. He wrote and published his own math textbook which was used in his classes for many years. Chadwick would later serve as McKean County prothonotary and publish the *McKean County Journal* from 1834 until 1837.

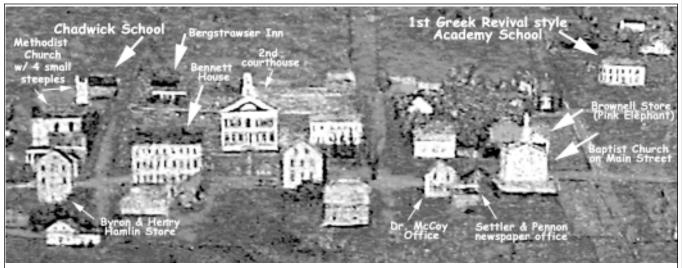
The March 19, 1908 *McKean County Miner* reprinted a history initially recorded in 1888 which identifies another location of an early school built in Smethport. "The first house built in that place was erected by a Dr. Eastman. It stood on the corner west of Mrs. Medbury's residence, and in the basement Ira H. Curtis taught a school in the winter of 1823..." This

location is today 518 E. Main Street on the northwest corner of Main and Nelson Streets.

The Mechanicsburg section of Smethport also appears to have had a school. The 1890 *J.H. Beers History of the Counties of McKean, Elk, Cameron and Potter* records the existence of a red school house constructed in 1834 on the lot where Dr. S.D. Freeman later built his mansion. That residence is currently the home of Anthony and Michele Alfieri, 17 Rosehill Avenue.

The Original Smethport Academy

On January 19, 1829 the Smethport Academy was established by an Act of Assembly.



The Smethport Academy opened in 1837 with Luther Humphrey as first principal. As a zealous Baptist, school education was also oriented towards religion as was the custom at that time. Note 1st Academy building in upper right corner of detail of Crocker painting. Detail from Helen Cowles Crocker painting McKean County Historical Society.

Form the Eyes and Pen of Orlo James Hamlin: Smethport, Pennsylvania, 1830s: "By a recent act of the Legislature an appropriation of \$2000 was made for an academy at Smethport. Several years ago John Keating, Esquire, gave \$500 and one hundred fifty acres of land adjoining the village, as a donation towards such an institution, when it shall be established; and individuals of McKean County have subscribed, raising of \$500, for that purpose. These amounts of money have been for three years vested in productive funds paying an interest of six percent per annum, and it is understood that the accumulated interest on these funds will, in three years more, be sufficient to defray the expenses of erecting a suitable building for an Academy; when it is confidently hoped it will go into successful operation."

Town leaders Jonathan Colegrove, Solomon Sartwell, Jr., George Darling, James Taylor, Joseph Otto, Paul E. Scull and William Williams served as initial trustees. Lot #40 between Fulton and Franklin Streets, north of King was purchased at a sheriff's sale for \$60.00. Date of this transaction was May 1829, although the deed was not recorded until April 27, 1847.

Old maps of Smethport show two other locations for an Academy, one on Green Street and a large amount of acreage west of Smethport. No records found have confirmed that buildings were ever constructed on these locations for the purposes of holding school.

The Smethport Academy opened in 1837 with Luther Humphrey as first principal. As a zealous Baptist, school education was also oriented towards religion as was the custom at that time. Methodist church members challenged this Baptist influence and by subscribing for shares at \$3 each, changed the leadership. Other principals were Mr. Atkins of Allegheny College in 1840, Glenn Schofield (1841), Byron D. Hamlin (1844), F. A. Allen (1849), Columbus Cornforth (1863), W. W. Brown (1864), W. J. Milliken and W. H. Curtis. As the years passed, the directors of the school represented a mixture of religions and community occupations.

Early 1800s education was largely for children whose families could pay for it. In 1834 the Free School Act was adopted by the State Legislature. The school system was to be supported

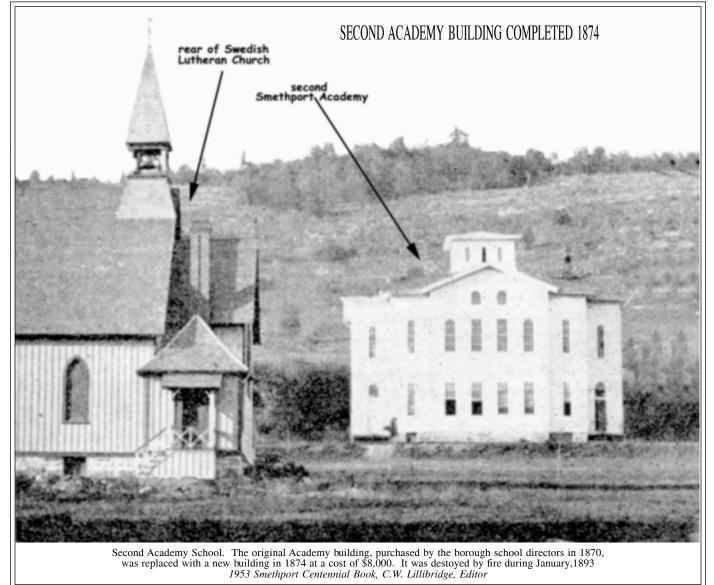
by local taxes supplemented by state support. To say the least, the act was very controversial and attempts were made to appeal



it the following year. Passionate pleas by two adversaries, Governor George Wolfe and Thaddeus Stevens, not only saved the act but strengthened it.

Local deed records show that directors of Common School of Keating Township District purchased lot #5, square #44, northeast corner of Hill and King Streets at a cost of \$50 in July 1850. A small school was constructed and operated at the same time as the Academy. However in the late 1850s a "letter to the editors column" in the *Miner*, records the closing of the school as a result of a \$20 repair to the substandard building. The students were sent to the Academy.

A newspaper ad published in 1858 for the Academy offered the following tuition rate for a term: geography and arithmetic \$2; grammar, history \$3; algebra \$3; higher math and English \$4; Latin, French and German \$5; drawing \$1; monochromatics \$1, mezzotint (engraving on copper or steel) \$2, Oriental glass painting \$2, Grecian oil painting \$4, ornamental leather work \$4. School terms at this time were much shorter than today, sometimes only four to six months as students were



expected to work at home the remainder of the year.

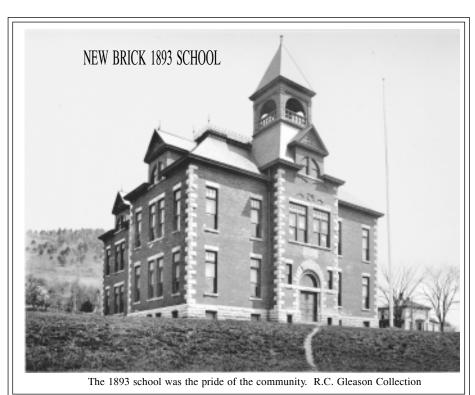
Perhaps the most renown graduate of the Academy was Sarah Amelia Scull, daughter of trustee Paul E. Scull. The Sculls located at Bunker Hill in the early 1820s to oversee Jacob Ridgway's farm and operated an inn (Scull and Lee) on the Milesburg-Smethport Turnpike at Bunker Hill. Miss Scull became a Greek scholar of international fame and made a profound study of Greek mythology. She taught in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and had Greek studios in Washington and Athens.

By 1870 free publically-supported schools had become politically popular. The change in the philosophy was a shift from the private to the public sector and property taxes were required to pay for education. Private schools faded into the background.

The original Academy building, purchased by the borough school directors in 1870, was replaced with a new building in 1874 at a cost of \$8,000. An additional wing was added in 1888 at a cost of \$2,000. Even though the school was a tax-supported borough institution, the Smethport newspapers still referred to it as "The Academy". This complex was completely destroyed by fire in January 1893.

NEW BRICK 1893 SCHOOL DESTROYED 1898

The same year a contract was awarded to W. D. Moore of Olean to erect a more modern structure at a cost of \$20,000.

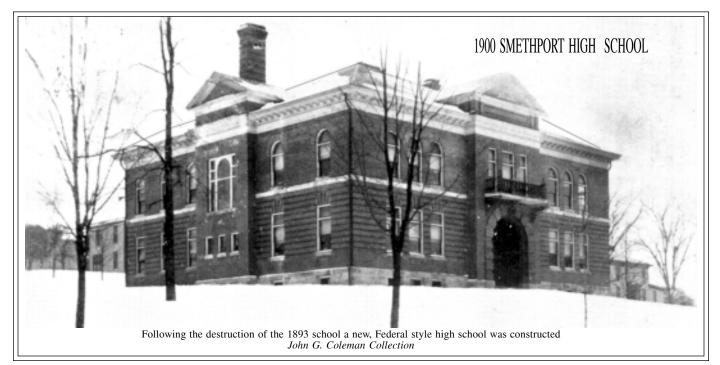


At that time George Kirland was principal, Judge Morrison headed the school board and G. R. Mayo, John Forrest, L. W. Dunn, D. C. Young and D. M. Brasted joined Morrison on that body. The new architecturally imposing school was a grand additon to the community until it was ravaged by flames in 1898, a year of tragic fires. These fire losses of some of Smethport's finest buildings resulted in tremendous public grieving.

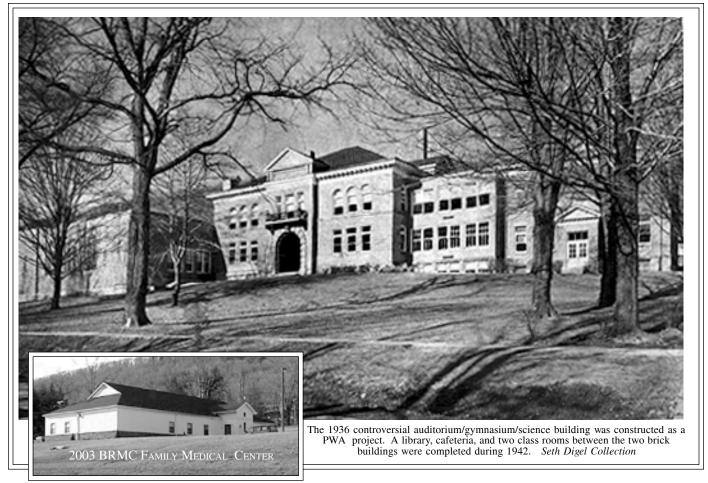
THE 1900 SCHOOL

In 1900 a new Federal style brick school was constructed. School Directors at that time were F. D. Gallup, Mrs. J. N. Forsythe, G. R. Mayo, John Apple and Mrs. Emma

Gifford. The 1900s saw a change in the strong emphasis on reading writing, and arithmetic. With the 1911 requirement that school attendance be mandatory, the schools also began to offer more diverse subjects. At the same time many of the students



were outstanding, as evidenced by inter-community high school debates that were held in the Lyceum constructed in 1902. The building had seating for 700, but debates often drew 1,000 with large supportive attendance from the competing schools. By



1935 the student growth and the shift to more diverse activities, including more participation by girls, required the construction of an auditorium/gym/science building. School directors gave this project great support. They included A. R. Livermore, Helen VanDyke, C. C. Choate, R. W. Herzog, and J. L. Morrison. Smethport's civicly active Conopus Club helped push this project despite opposition from many citizens opposed to a recreational building.

CHARLES W. PARTCHEY BRINGS INSTRUMENTAL CHANGES TO MUSIC PROGRAM

n 1940 C. H. Partchey was hired by the school district as Supervisor of Instrumental Music. In May 1941 Partchey and choir director Margaret McFeeley organized the 1st annual spring music festival featuring 150 students from thirteen county schools. It was Partchey who also brought marching band uniforms to the music program as well as the street marching band.

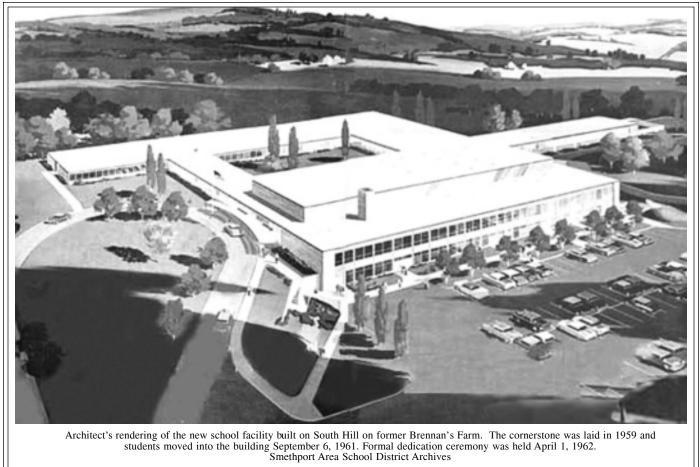


As John W. Baker saw it: "School Days: Wonder what Prof. Farmer would say if he were to come back to earth and walk in the present High School building with the proposed modern improvements and equipment, its spacious auditorium and gymnasium soon to be undertaken? He'd let out an awful 'woof', I'll bet."

Because the project was undertaken during the Great Depression funding sources were limited. Orlo J. Hamlin and his sister, Eugenia H. Merrill, assisted financially allowing the work to proceed under the auspices of the Public Works Administration.

Six years later the Board of Education voted to connect the two buildings by adding a library, cafeteria and two classrooms. About that time George Larson, domestic science and manual training, Nellie Johnson, home economics teacher, and Charley Partchey, instrumental music director, joined the school staff. In May 1941 Partchey and choir director Margaret McFeeley organized the 1st annual spring music festival featuring 150 students from thirteen county schools.

1961: MECHANIC STREET HIGH SCHOOL BRINGS CONSOLIDATIONS



By the late 1950s the Borough school could no longer be modified to meet all of the needs of the Smethport area. In

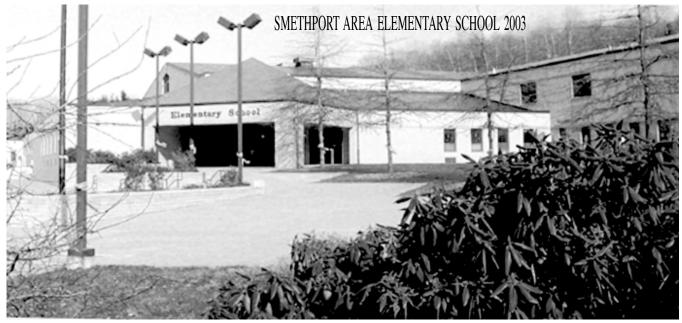
1959, the corner stone was laid for a new Smethport Area High School at the south end of Mechanic Street on the location of the historic John W. Brennan farm. The new enlarged facility enabled more subjects to be offered to students, and the school is constantly updating its curriculum based on modern needs.

1970: Bernie Reap Introduces Swingin' 70s

Broadway arrived at Smethport Area Junior-Senior High School when Mrs. Bernie Reap became the vocal music teacher in 1970. While some formal vocal presentations remained, the shows altered their format to a Ziegfeld Follies style featuring songs, dances, and skits from popular musical shows. The students, parents, and audience quickly fell in love with the new style of entertainment. Surrounding schools promptly copied the successful program. The Swingin' 70s group often presented shows in other schools and at industrial seminars. In 1974 the Swingin' 70s had the honor of being selected under the Ambassadors for Freedom program for a three-week tour of Communist controlled Poland. A group of 75 students and 10 advisors wowed the Polish citizens with a refreshing style of music that was just becoming popular in their country.

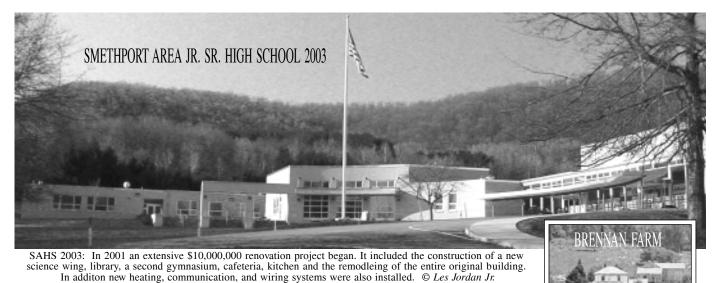


High School students such as the charismatic Tina Kline wowed the crowds at a "Swingin' 70s performance directed by the creative Bernie Reap. L to R: Jeff Black, Steve Worthington, Tina Kline, Joe Elliott and Pat Hergenrother. Kline Collection



The new Smethport Area Elementary School consolidated the outlying schools into one centralized complex. ©Les Jordan Jr.

Grade school consolidations required the construction of a new elementary school also at the Mechanic Street site in 1986. This consolidation united several outlying grade schools into one centrally located building in Smethport, annexed to the high school complex, which created a district campus.



Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit 9 of Education

U-9 is part of Pennsylvania's educational system. Established July 1, 1971, it replaced the County Offices of

Education. By legislation, all school districts in Pennsylvania belong to one of twenty-nine Intermediate Units. In 2003 the Seneca Highlands Intermediate Unit 9, encompassing four counties (Cameron, Elk, McKean, and Potter) serves 16,079 students in 14 public school districts and 1,853 students in 9 non-public schools. It covers an area of 3,300 square miles with a population of 105,102.

The primary purpose of the Unit is to provide an organization through which school districts can work cooperatively to furnish services they cannot afford or prefer not supply individually. It provides special education. pupil personnel, instructional media, management, curriculum development and instructional improvement, vocational-technical, preschool and federal programs services.

From 1971 to 1978, the Unit used space in the McKean County Courthouse in Smethport, rented a house at 325 West Main Street for central administration, and rented space from Producers Banks and the law firm of Angell, Angell and Kahle. It also maintained satellite offices in Coudersport and Ridgway. In 1975, with the cooperation of the school districts, a main office building was constructed at 119 Mechanic Street in Smethport. Satellite offices are in East Smethport (former Creative Center), Coudersport and Ridgway. The Unit operates the Seneca Highlands Area Vocational-Technical School in Port Allegany for nine of the fourteen school districts within its geographic boundaries. Combined Unit 9 budgets for 2002-2003 total \$20,606,339 with 260 full-time and 96 part-time employees. M. Dan Wetzel is executive director; Robert G. Bailey, management director, and Donald Raydo, vocational-technical supervisor.

CHAPTER XIV A LONG HISTORY OF CHAMPIONS

he recent gridiron successes of the Smethport Hubbers put our town on the state map, but it is only the latest chapter in a long, proud history of sports in the county seat. In the 1920s local dentist and Coach Alvie Livermore pumped up local interest in both football and track and field to a fevered pitch.

LIVERMORE IGNITES SMETHPORT HIGH SCHOOL FOOTBALL TRADITION



uring the 1920s, Dr. Alvie Livermore, and associate coaches, E.A. Studholme and C.C. Choate, extended a deep personal and financial commitment to the newly formed Smethport High School football program. Their dedication ran so deep that they forfeited their coaching pay to allow the program to thrive. To further reduce expenses, their wives even volunteered to repair team uniforms. It was this kind of commitment which laid the foundation for Smethport's phenomenal football euphoria.

BRADFORD LOSES

TO STRONG "DOC"

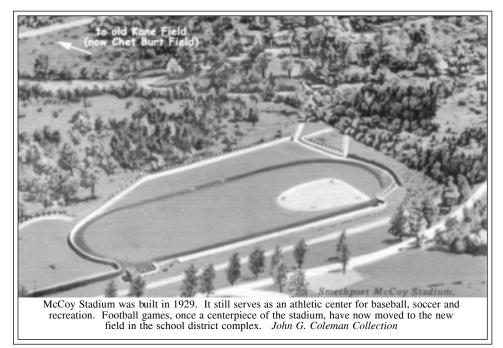
LIVERMORE LADS

But, if money was scarce, the talent was certainly abundant. Shorty Petruzzi, who went on to play under General Bob Neyland at the University of Tennessee, was the first of that family to star. The Petruzzi brothers

Smethport's Dr. Alvie Livermore Jimmy, Ted, Chuck and Fred followed Shorty's footsteps as

gridiron standouts in a handsome new facility to be named McCoy Stadium.

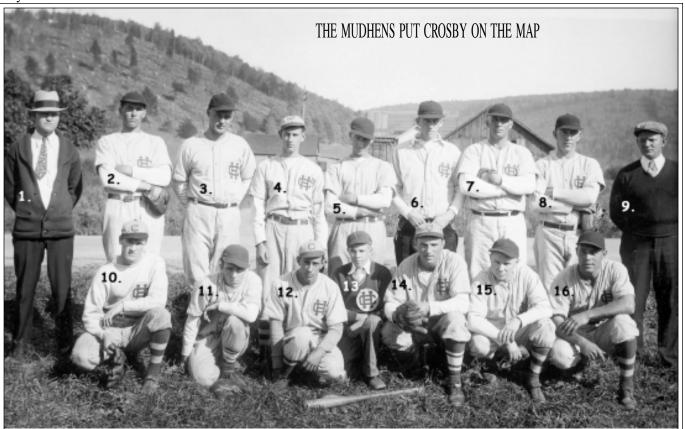




Birth of McCoy Stadium he first visible sign of townwide fervor with football & track was symbolized by the construction of McCoy Stadium which replaced old Kane Field. In 1929 Paul D. Hamlin, son of Delano R. Hamlin and Eugenia McCoy Hamlin, financed the construction of an outstanding stadium and named it "McCoy Stadium" to create a permanent memorial to uncle Dr. H. L. McCoy. Dr. McCoy helped raise his nephew following the early death of Paul's father during his childhood. The

doctor attended nearly every baseball game at the new stadium named in his honor and was an ardent fan of the Smethport team. McCoy Stadium also became the center of the early Smethport High School football program until the construction of the current football stadium in 1985. In 2002 light towers were constructed at the field allowing night baseball games to be played. A stone memorial is located at the southwest entrance of the stadium that commemorates Paul's gift to his uncle.

The 1930s and 1940s brought Paul Hergenrother, Paul Griffin, Johnny Jones, Dobie Studholme, and Art McDermott. Rivalry with arch-enemy Port Allegany was fierce. These intense rivalries date back to the 1890s and continue just as strong today.



Famous Crosby Mudhens: 1. Thad Corbet- Manager 2. Creed Strandburg 3. Francis Benson 4. Keith Corwin 5. Cecil Grinolds 6. Lloyd Mulvihill 7. Ed Strandburg 8. Scott Thomas-Coach 9. Paul Gingrich 10. Lyle Cook
11. John McKeirnan 12. Andy Weidert 13. Bill McKeirnan 14. Bino Faes 15. Orville Burdick 16. Bill Hendrickson Jim Thomas Collection

Baseball Heroes

ut, as illustrious as Smethport football was in yesteryear, it took a back seat to baseball. From the early 1890s

B every town had a team, and later, every factory had one as well. In fact one's prowess with a glove was often a determining factor in employment. In the 1920s and 1930s the nearby Crosby Mudhens fielded a team second to none. Playing on the Timmerman and McDade farms, they were the team to beat. Bino Faes anchored the mound with batterymate Scott Thomas. Lloyd Mulvihill was at first, Albert Bond at second, Orville Burdick roamed shortstop and Rusty Carlson was at the hot corner. The outfielders were Creed Strandburg, Keith Corwin and Bill McKeirnan.

This paralleled the golden age of baseball in Bradford, where the Pennsylvania, Ontario and New York (PONY) League had an entry. Two local players in the PONY League, Jim Owens of Gifford and Don Hoak of Roulette, would eventually make the majors. Owens pitched for the Philadelphia Phillies while Don Hoak played for the Pittsburgh Pirates. In fact he was the Pirates' star third baseman when they defeated the New York Yankee in the last game of the 1960 World Series.

But the county seaters didn't have to take the train to Bradford to see quality baseball. The 1940 Crosby Mudhen team manhandled Ceres 22-9 behind Faes' fastball. Two years

BASKETBALL COACH VESPER

No discussion of Smethport coaching greatness is complete without the inclusion of Coach Ted Vesper and his total dedication to both the basketball program and the students of Smethport Area High School. Ted Vesper led the basketball team during the 1950s and 1960s with an infectious enthusiasm that influenced each student he coached and taught.



earlier Smethport dismantled the Olean Nationals in Bradner Stadium 27-4. Vic Transki, with a 11-2 record, struck out 14 consecutive batters.



Of the many locals who have excelled on the baseball diamond, probably none have dominated the sport like local teacher Jim Thomas.





All-Star Mudhen Jim Thomas

named to the Western New York Baseball Hall of Fame, the strong-armed pitcher was six-time league MVP. He tossed three no-hitters, and is the only pitcher in the Western New York Suburban League (of which Alle-Catt is a part) to pitch a nineinning no-hitter. Equally capable at the plate, Thomas helped the Mudhens compile a record of 163-23 while he was in the line-up. His abilities earned him the honor of being named 'Player of the Second Half of the Twentieth Century' by the Suburban League.



Fred Larson

SMETHPORT'S 1950S TRACK STARS

Methport was also second to none in track during the 1920s and 1950s. During the 1950s and early 1960s the track program excelled under the leadership of Head Coach Jim Donovan and Assistant Coach Curtis Stone. Stone, a three time Olympic distance runner, paced the track team during practices. In 1953 Ronnie Johnson took State Gold with a long jump of 22 feet. Also in 1953 Bill Youkers took Gold for the 180 yard low hurdles. In 1954 Richard Shirey placed 3rd in the state half-mile. He

went on to be a four-time First Place Pennsylvania State Colleges champ in cross country while at Slippery Rock University. Fred Larson was Smethport's boys only double Gold winner, taking first at State in both 1957 and 1958. In 1957 Bob Lathrop took 3rd at State in the pole vault and in 1958 Bill Cunningham tied for 3rd at State. Jim Acker, however receives special mention. As

a freshman in the spring of 1957, Jim set a National high school record for freshmen runners with 201.9 for the half-mile. Jim also is Smethport's boys only quad medal winner. In 1957 he earned third place, in 1958 and 1959 he earned Silver and in 1960 he earned the Gold. He ran his 1960 Gold Medal effort wearing Coach Stone's Olympic track shoes on his feet.



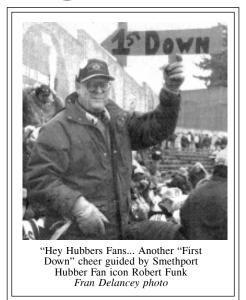
Jim Acker: Won Gold wearing Coach Stone's Olympic spikes.



Crowds ring the field and overflow the stands. Radio announcers project details of the game to listeners both inside and outside the stadium. The glimmering lights of downtown Smethport can be seen in the valley below the stadium high on the hill. Virtually every resident, however, is crowded in the stadium in anxious anticipation awaiting the shrill whistle that feeds the town's football hunger. ©Les Jordan Jr.

FOOTBALL HYSTERIA: FRIDAY NIGHT FOOTBALL RITUAL

ome to Smethport Area Stadium on a crisp autumn Friday night, and you will experience the excitement and intensity of the Smethport football tradition thick in the air. By late Friday afternoon hyped fans have
 already laid territorial claim on favored locations to watch the game later that night by placing blankets at



their own special spot in the stadium. A few hours later hundreds of automobiles crowd the parking lot and thousands of spectators unite to root the Smethport Hubbers on to victory. Crowds ring the field and overflow the stands. Radio announcers project details of the game to listeners both inside and outside the stadium. The rhythm and tempo of Tom Schaller's band echoes

across the hills contributing to the pageantry of the great event. The crowd mingles together in the common experience. The glimmering lights of downtown Smethport can be seen in the valley below the stadium high on the hill. Virtually every resident, however, is crowded in the stadium in anxious anticipa-



Another Hubber Touchdown: the roar of the crowd, the boom of the cannon, the e-c-h-o off the hills. *SAHS Nunundah photo 1996*

tion awaiting the shrill whistle that feeds the town's football hunger.

Such was the aura during the great 1990s Smethport dynasty.

LEGACY: DEFILIPPI TEAMS MAKE FOOTBALL HISTORY



1992 PIAA District 9 Committee Chairman Jack Hedlund presents another Class A championship trophy to the Smethport Hubbers following their 14-7 win over Clarion-Limestone at Saint Marys. The Hubbers won their third consecutive district title. Accepting the trophy is Senior Jeff Defilippi (14), with Jason Woodruff (shown directly behind trophy), Matt Baun (16), Scott Shelander (46). In foreground Marty Alter (left) and Mike Defilippi (right). Smethport went on to become PIAA (Class A) Runner-up. Fran Delancey Photo

Inder the leadership of head coach Carl Defilippi and assistant coaches Dennis Maynard, Ward Baun, Rick Woodring, and James McGuire the Hubbers set state and national records. It was also an era in which the Hubbers dominated the Allegheny Mountain League and won 11 straight division titles, seven league titles, posted 10 regular undefeated seasons, and set several state offensive and defensive records. In nine years Defilippi's team won an astonishing six District 9 championships. During that era the Hubbers made the state semifinals four times and went to the state championship game in 1992, losing to private school powerhouse Scotland Cadets.

RECORD BOOK WINNING STREAK

During the Defilippi era the Hubbers claimed an amazing 67 regular season winning streak outscoring the opposition 2,130-310. This win streak spanned the years of 1989 to 1998. This was a state record and also ranks high in the national record books.

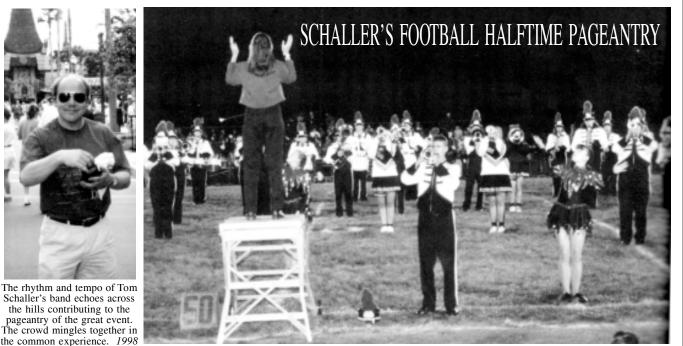
Communities throughout the state gained respect for the Smethport Hubber football tradition. Coach Livermore would be proud.

1998: BIG 30 COACH OF THE YEAR PLAYER OF THE YEAR AWARDS



Smethport High School coach Carl Defilippi (left) and his son, Mike, were the top two award winners at the 51st Annual 1998 Times Herald Big 30 Football Testimonial Dinner at the St. Bonaventure Clubhouse. Carl Defilippi was named Coach of the Year (his 3rd such award) and his son, Michael, Player of the Year. Mike's brother, Jeff, was 1992 Player of the Year.

Tara LaFredo Photo - Olean Times Herald



Smethport Jen Lyon's leadership displayed a natural chemistry 1998 Nunudah

WOODRING NURTURES TRACK CHAMPIONS GOLD MEDALISTS & 1ST EVER TEAM STATE CHAMPIONSHIP IN ANY SPORT

nder the Guidance of head coach Richard Woodring and assistants Bill Stephen, Tony Valenti and Max Simms the Smethport track team flourished during the 1980s and 1990s. Individual state champions included: Brandy Colley (5 gold, 12 total); Stephanie Bango (3 gold, 8 total). These established new

career gold medal totals. Bango went on to establish nine school records at Bucknell University and was voted the most outstanding female athelete for her career. Other gold medalists included: Ashley

COACH WOODRING

SAHS Nunundah photo



Lifetime sports: Coach Woodring training by example.

Colley (1 gold, 4 total), Shannon Murphy, and Nicole Windsor. Many other Hubbers medaled at the PIAA State Championships including: Mary Deegan (2), Jason Woodruff, Mike Dodge (2), Cory Cochran, Andy Tessena, Mike Mitchell (2), Matt Bango, Cody Roberts, and Dan Mitchell.

The 1997 girls-team won the PIAA State Championship. This is the only team title in school history in any varsity sport (B. Colley, Bango, Murphy, Windsor). The girls' team won Norther Tier League titles in 1991 and 1993.

The boys' teams won Northern Tier League titles in 1990, 1991, 1993, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002. They also won the District IX Team Track Championship in 2002. During one span the Hubbers were 67-0-1 in dual meets. GOLD MEDALISTS DISPLAY STATE GIRLS TRACK & FIELD TEAM 1ST PLACE CHAMPIONSHIP TROPHY



L to R: Gold Medalists Shannon Murphy, Brandy Colley, Stephanie Bango, and Nicole Windor at 1997 PIAA State Championships. Smethport walked away with State 1st Place for team. *Olean Times Herald*

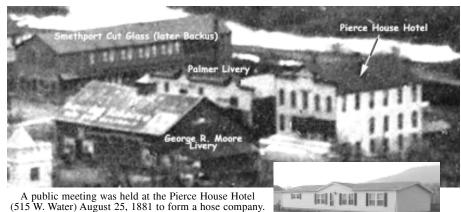
CHAPTER XVI OUR SELFLESS HEROES

SMETHPORT FIRE DEPARTMENT—CLERMONT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT—HAMLIN TOWNSHIP NO. 1 VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT—HILLTOP VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT—NORWICH TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT—TRI-COUNTY FIRE SCHOOL—SMETHPORT AREA AMBULANCE SERVICE

SMETHPORT FIRE DEPARTMENT'S FORMATIVE ERA

public meeting was held at the Pierce House Hotel (515 W. Water) August 25, 1881, to form a hose company. The interest generated by that meeting resulted in the formation of the Bucktail Hose Company Number 1 on November 1, 1881. The new organization had eighteen active members. The first

election of officers was held at the Grand Central Hotel on December 8, 1881. The officers elected were: Sheridan Gorton, president; W. P. Specht, vice president; George L. Brownell, secretary; M.L.Armstrong, treasurer; W.P. Walsh, foreman; H.L. Wilson, first assistant foreman; John Russ, second assistant foreman. The company did not elect a fire chief during its early history. Instead, there was a foreman and assistant foreman elected. The membership included



A public meeting was held at the Pierce House Hotel (515 W. Water) August 25, 1881 to form a hose company The hose company's first fire was on February 23, 1882. This was at the office of George R. Moore's livery. R. C. Gleason photo detail inset photo: Ross Porter

"nearly all the business and professional men of the borough", noted the March 3, 1908, *McKean County Miner*. Although the company had no equipment at that time, the Borough Council agreed to allow them to use the borough



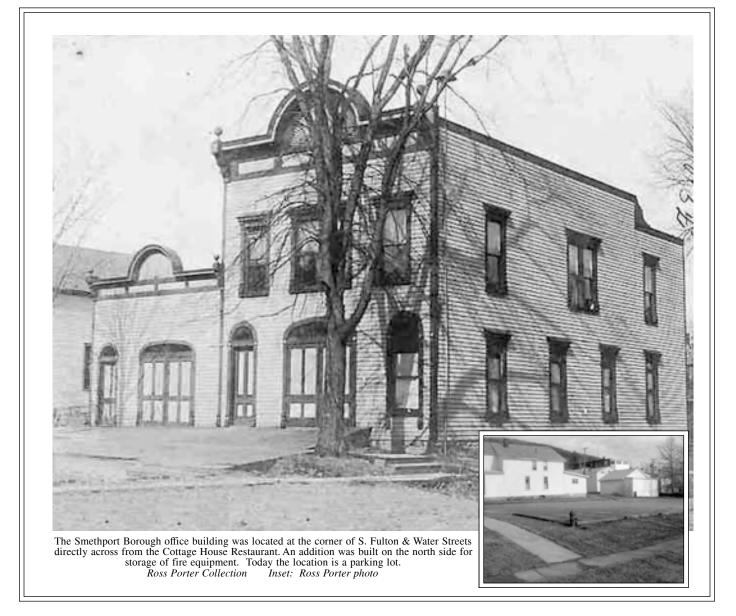
Bucktail Hose Company in front of Smethport borough building and Fire Hall: The first piece of equipment purchased for the company was a two-wheel, hand drawn hose cart that carried five hundred feet of hose wrapped on a reel. Smethport Fire Department Archives

building on the corner of Water and Fulton Street to hold their monthly meeting. Meetings were held on the second floor, while the first floor was used for entertainment, because it contained a dance floor and a stage for a band.

According to the March 5, 1908, *McKean County Miner*, the hose company's first fire was on February 23, 1882. This was at the office of George R. Moore's livery stable near the Bennett House barn below the Courthouse. The fire was controlled quickly by the new company.

The second fire the hose company responded to was more difficult to combat, however. The *Miner* described the event, which occurred on April 11, 1882: "The hose boys were enjoying a dance at the opera house, when the alarm of fire sounded, about 1:30 a.m. In less than a minute there was no one left at the dance. The hotel known as the Bennett House was in flames. The fire was not conquered until about 6 a.m." The *Miner* then further notes the landmark, which was built in 1851, was set on fire again later the same year and was burned to the ground. Two other landmarks were also destroyed across the street west from the Bennett House during the same fire. This was William Haskill's General Store, which housed Henry Hamlin's bank and the law office of Sterrett and Rose.

The first piece of equipment purchased for the company was a two-wheel, hand drawn hose cart that carried five



hundred feet of hose wrapped on a reel. It was housed in the borough building and first saw service in 1882 to extinguish a fire at the Jacob Winsor residence on Water Street. The borough later bought a second hose cart that carried one thousand feet of hose, and a hook and ladder cart was also added. It required eight strong men to maneuver this cart because the ladders were heavy and had to be stacked in perfect balance. Until 1910, all borough streets were dirt, which made movement of hand drawn fire equipment very difficult. To help ease this condition, the borough purchased two chemical wagons that were narrow enough to be pulled across four-foot wide sidewalks.

A few months later, on October 22, the cart made a quick, but useless trip to the Smethport Extract Works in East

Smethport. The October 22, 1882, *Era* reports the details. "An alarm was turned on and the hose company responded promptly and in a few moments was on the ground, fully a mile and a quarter from their house. There being no water main within the reach of their hose, the company of course could do nothing. Bucket brigades were organized and by this means, adjoining buildings and bark ricks were saved, but the main building along with all the machinery and some hundreds of cords of bark were totally destroyed."

In addition to fighting fires, the hose company actively marched in parades throughout the region. Uniforms were purchased in 1882 for all members from money raised through donations and dances. On September 25 of that same year,

the company won first prize marching in the State Fireman's Convention in Bradford. Less than a year later, on August 23, 1883, the smartly uniformed Fire Company, this time complete with the Smethport Band, honorably led the Bradford parade once again.

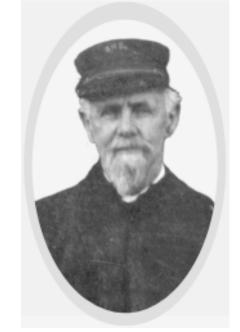
Shortly before a fireman's convention in Meadville on August 28, 1886, the company purchased a fancy parade cart with revolving mirrors. They took the new cart to the convention, where it drew much attention. This cart is still owned by the department. It was restored by the Junior Fire Department in 1976 and can again be seen appearing in parades.

A variety of alarms have been used over the years to alert the fireman to duty. A huge whistle mounted high on the borough building was used in 1889. The whistle was activated from a high-pressure gas line that ran south of the building. A continuous series of short blasts signaled a fire, while four long blasts indicated that the fire was under control. The whistle was also sounded to summon members for the monthly meeting held on the first Thursday of each month, a schedule that remains unchanged even today.

The hose company came to within one vote of disbanding at its monthly meeting in April 1894. This was the result of attempts to revise its constitution. But the organization survived and entered the new century once again proud and strong.

In 1908 the *McKean County Miner* paid tribute to the "Smethport Hose Company", as the newspaper called it. "In looking back over the history of this company the fact is brought home that it is an excellent organization which has done much for the welfare of Smethport. It has always maintained a high degree of efficiency, and although upon various occasions having to labor under difficulties caused by inadequate equipment, low water pressure or disabled hydrants, it has always given a very good account of itself when in active service.

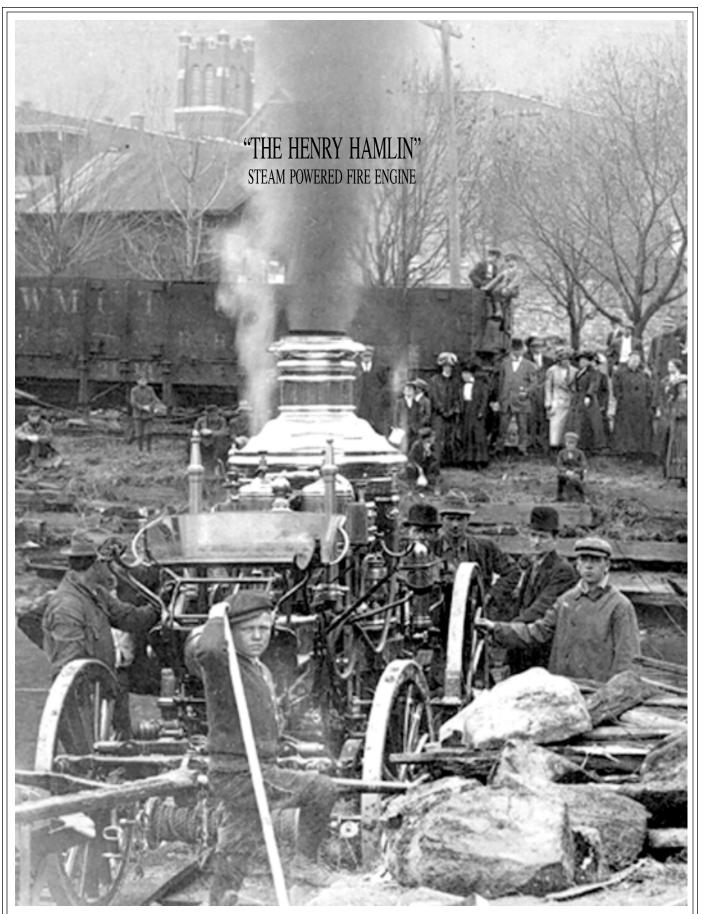
MARTIN L. ARMSTRONG MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN SO MANY LIVES



M.L. Armstrong: Business Leader, Coach, Fire Department Member & Inspiration served as a role model to hundreds of Smethport youth. "No mention of Smethport Hose company is complete without particular mention of M.L. Armstrong. Ever since the organization of the company Mr. Armstrong has held the office of Treasurer. For twenty-seven consecutive terms he has been selected to this position, which is the highest proof of the esteem in which he is held by the members. It is safe to say that during Mr. Armstrong's life-and we hope it will be a long one- Smethport Hose company will have no other Treasurer." McKean County Miner March 5, 1908

Some of its performances can be pointed to with pride. One in particular that has often been favorably mentioned was the fire that gutted the wooden building on Main street on the site now occupied by the Rubin building. That a great conflagration did not result at that time is truly remarkable, and due entirely to the fact that the fireman were promptly on the scene and made a skillful and tireless fight. These same words will apply to the fires, which at different times threat-ened to destroy the buildings occupied by G.A. Denning and J.F. Rooney. In all three cases these fires were in wooden buildings adjoining other structures of similar material and in every case the fire was confined to the building in which it started."

The *Miner* then goes on to cite the company's excellent service at several area fires. These included the Bennett House, Catholic and Baptist churches, Grand Central Hotel, Kittredge Opera House, extract works, and saw mill fires. The



The steam engine, named "Henry Hamlin" in honor of its chief benefactor, greatly increased the efficiency of the company to fight fire. Townspeople turned out to see the fire company's demonstrations using the new, high quality piece of apparatus. It was the pride of the department and Henry Hamlin was the the pride of the town. John G. Coleman Collection newspaper gives special commendation to the company for the job it did in containing a fire at the Will Taylor building (Holmes and Gilfillan site) that threatened a dozen other structures. This was done during a raging sleet storm that also contained gale force winds. Many of these destructive fires occurred around the turn of the new century. The decades ahead would see even worse fires. But first, the hose company would see many changes in its equipment and organization.

The Department Gets Its First Fire Engine

badly needed steam powered fire engine arrived for the hose company in 1909. The engine was heavily decorated with brass and nickel-plated trim and became the pride of the department. It was the generous gift of Henry Hamlin and other borough citizens. Later that year, the engine was credited with "what saved Smethport" when fire destroyed the wood frame D.C. Young general store on the corner of Main and Union Street April 27, 1909. But the fire was stopped there and did not spread to the rest of the town. The building was replaced with a sturdy brick structure that became Quirk's and later Rugh's Ford dealership. During the 1980s the brick structure was heavily renovated to become a professional building by Terry Palmer.

The steam engine, named "Henry Hamlin" in honor of its chief benefactor, greatly increased the efficiency of the company to fight fire. Before the engine arrived, water supply to combat the fire was limited directly to a charged borough water hydrant through hose unloaded from the handcarts. Water pressure came directly from whatever pressure was available in the hydrant. There was no way to increase the pressure or draft water from a creek or the large lake in the center of town. That required an engine that could pump on its own.

The company was alerted to fires in a different way beginning in 1910. Although the huge whistle was used to call the volunteers to duty, compressed air supplied by the nearby Backus Novelty Works replaced the natural gas used since 1889.

Bucktail Hose Company Reorganized as the Smethport Fire Department

1910 was the last year that the fire company would be known as the Bucktail Hose Company No. 1. On January 6, 1911, the Smethport Fire Department became the new name of the organization. The internal structure of the organization also changed. There now was a fire chief and an assistant chief that were elected each year. There were five assistant firemen who served under five assistant foremen in charge of five individual fire companies. Each company was composed of 16 members. These were organized into functional groups of two hose companies, a chemical company, a hook and ladder company, and the Henry Hamlin engine company. Records indicate that John Waite was the first fire chief, a post he held for several years before relocating from the area.

The newly reorganized fire department received great thanks from the Borough of Austin for the volunteer aid that was selflessly sent to that town after the disastrous flood there swept away lives and property in 1911.

The way the fire department was alerted for service changed again in 1912. Henry Hamlin donated a huge bell to replace the whistle. The department erected a bell tower and the new alarm began service on March 13, 1913. A code was developed to indicate the general direction of a fire. One ring located the fire west of the hose house. Two rings was for fires east of the hose house, 3 rings meant the south side of town across the Mechanic Street Bridge. Four rings indicated a fire in East Smethport, and fires out of town were announced with five rings. Whistles were still used at the two other fire stations, however, operated in the borough. One of these was at McCoy Corner (present day McCoy Stadium), and the other at the Sasse home on the south side of town. This was located at Mechanic Street and Rosehill Ave., where in addition to the gas whistle, the station contained a chemical cart, a heating stove, and a cart with 300 feet of hose.

In October a committee was appointed to investigate the purchase of a motorized fire apparatus. Nothing was decided. But three years later members designed and built a new hose cart.

The telephone company began reporting fires in the East Smethport area in 1916. This greatly enhanced the department's response time in serving that community.

The next year brought World War I to the forefront. The department received a communication from President Woodrow Wilson on May 5, 1917, in appreciation for its support of America's place in World War I. The department had several members that were enlisted in military service. During the absence of these men, the department presented their families with Christmas gifts.

The Department Purchases First Motorized Equipment



The equipment was motorized in the 1920s with the purchase of three Model T Ford chassis. Tanks from the old chemical wagons were mounted on two of the chassis, and a hose bed was built on the third Model T by the Holmes and Gilfillan Company in 1927. This truck has been restored by the department and still exists today. In 1929 they added a Packard and Stewart (the Stewart also has been restored) to the roster each equipped with a 500 GPM Hale pump. These two engines would soon see a great disaster in the little town they served.

1933: Downtown Changed Forever

On the morning of January 18, 1933, residents of the eastern United States awoke to newspaper and radio reports of a major fire that swept out of control through the downtown section of a small Pennsylvania town. The reports told of a heroic battle by several fire companies to control the menacing conflagration and divert a general evacuation of that small town. The battle raged throughout the night and into the next morning. It was fought against the fury of a raging 60 mile-per-hour gale that swept flames rapidly eastward down the main business section and across other areas of the town. That small Pennsylvania town was Smethport.

The January 27, 1933 *McKean County Democrat* said that veteran fire fighters labeled the conflagration as the worst seen in our region of the country. The newspaper described the dismal scene in Smethport that dark night: "The terrifying roar of the conflagration ...could be heard for a long distance. Pillars of flames leaped hundreds of feet in the air and at times were forced to the tops of other buildings for a two-block distance, making the position of firemen working on roofs most precarious at times. A dense hail of blazing embers and sparks showered over the eastern part of town and hundreds of inhabitants were prepared to flee from their homes at one time with no thought of saving any worldly possessions except what clothing they could carry".

The archives of the department contain the account of the experience of a Smethport fireman who battled the flames that night. He is sitting with his wife waiting for his coffee to cool when he heard the faint sound of a bell ringing in the distance. "As I run out the door, grabbing my coat and hat, Maggy yells to me to be careful. There is no need for her to ask where I am going, because she heard the faint ding-dong too, it was the fire bell. Somewhere in town there was a fire, where, who knows. When I got outside I could smell tar smoke and see a slight glow in the sky over across the marsh about where Hays Meat Market is."

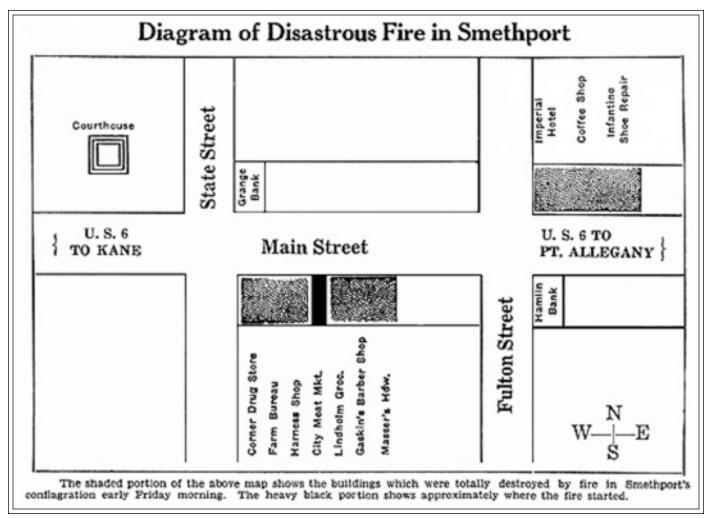
He continues the story. "...The Meat Market and the Harness Shop were on fire. The air was filled with flying sparks and embers from the chilly winds...Two buildings are fully engulfed, sparks are landing on roofs and catching them on fire. Chief Pierotti was getting the townspeople formed into lookout crews to patrol the town, spot them, and extinguish the smaller smoldering fires. We didn't waste any time at all getting water on the fire but soon found out that the fire is too large for us to cope with successfully.

We needed manpower and equipment. I heard in the distance, I knew what was next, mutual aid. Who were they going to call? I don't care, just as long as they get someone here real soon.

Chase and I have been manning this two and a half inch line for the last twenty minutes. My arms feel like they are going to fall right off at my shoulders, but I can beat the tiredness. Things are still not getting any better, we just can't keep up with this damn fire. Every time you blink your eye the fire jumps higher and further down the street. I would like to know if they ever got across to any of the other fire departments. No sooner do I open my mouth than in rolls Mt. Jewett. Their pumper went down to the marsh to draft for us. What! It's the first time I've taken my eyes off of what I was doing to find out that down at the corner of Fulton and Main the roof on the Imperial Hotel was on fire and going good. We're going to lose this town if this keeps up. I know that I wasn't the only one that had that thought in their mind.

Ell and Daniel came to relieve me and Chase. Ell said that they had reports of sparks and embers flying all the way down to Farmers Valley. I just hope that Maggy is alright. People are packing up and getting ready to leave their homes, which is really scary to see happening. God, if everyone who is worried about their family and homes leaves, this street will be abandoned.

Port Allegany and Eldred just arrived and are down taking care of the Imperial Hotel. Bradford, Kane, Olean, Duke Center and Coudersport are all rolling in at the same time now. Hey, this is more like it, you couldn't ask for more, everybody and their brother is here. Ha, you've got to give the chief credit. He didn't waste any time thinking about who he was going to call."



The writer then notes how the Catholic Church, Mum's, the Cottage House, and The Star Restaurant were all providing food and hot coffee for the firefighters and how he finally was going to get the cup of coffee that he started to enjoy with his wife hours ago. "It's about 3:00 a.m., the fire has done its worst damage now. The winds have finally died down, but it's still as cold as it was, let alone I feel like a drowned rat. Everyone is moving back into their homes, now that the fear is over, but the work has just begun."

He finally describes Chief Pierotti giving endless thanks to the mutual aid fire companies who helped stop the conflagration. The Olean fire department did an especially heroic job.

Olean's Captain John O'Hara Plays Pivotal Role

The *McKean County Democrat* credits neighboring fire departments with saving Smethport. The newspaper wrote: "Had it not been for the timely arrival of help from nearby towns it is safe to say that 200 buildings in the eastern part of Smethport would have been destroyed." According to the *Democrat*, Olean's Captain John O'Hara played a heroic part in the battle. He directed the fight to stop the fire from extending eastward down the north side of Main Street toward the Catholic Church. When his Olean forces arrived, the large Imperial Hotel on the corner of Main and Fulton Streets was completely in flames, while Infantino's and the Spinning Wheel Restaurant were beginning to burn rapidly. He noted a small break between buildings just east of the restaurant. He said "I'll stop the fire right there," as an old Smethport newsman liked to recount. He kept his word and then moved up the street to the Fry Company block (current Take-Two Video), where ten streams of water from the combined efforts of several different fire departments brought the stubborn flames under control.

By 4:00 Friday morning residents of the borough no longer feared a general evacuation of the town. But not before the worse fire in the borough's history had changed the face of Smethport forever. The January 26, 1933, *McKean County Miner* reported that the 13 destroyed buildings, along with the many others that were damaged, exceeded a loss of \$300,000.

The face of Smethport continued to change on February 12, 1940, when fire destroyed the magnificent Victorian style courthouse that had served McKean County since 1881. According to an account written by Waldo Pettenati in the July 16, 1987, *Bradford Era* in an interview with George Brown: "...It was on a snowy Monday morning, Feb. 12, 1940, when George Brown and his buddy, Tom Pomeroy, heard the first blast of the siren. The county's seat of government was on fire and already in death throes.

Not long after the first alarms were sounded, fire companies from Kane, Mount Jewett, Eldred and Port Allegany arrived on the scene. Flames, leaping 130 feet into the frigid sky, had already engulfed the central tower of the building which held the clock and above it, the statue of justice holding the sword in her left hand, and scales in her right. By the time most of the fire equipment was in place, the center tower collapsed and plunged inward and down onto the main floor, taking with it the clock,



The year was not all-bleak, however. 1940 also saw the department organize and sponsor its own drum and bugle corps. The member purchased their own uniforms and marched in area parades as well as in Central District Fireman Conventions. *SFD Archives*

the tower and the statue that had looked out over Smethport for 59 years.

"It wasn't until the remains of the courthouse were smouldering ruins that investigators determined the blaze had originated in the bailing room in the basement below the prothonotary's office. Once established, the fire spread quickly through ventilators ducts to the central tower, which acted like a funnel."

"After the inferno had destroyed the tower and the central structure had collapsed inward, ruins and ashes covered that whole courthouse square. A day later trucks and wagons appeared to begin removing debris to a nearby dumping center."

The year was not all bleak, however. 1940 also saw the department organize and sponsor its own drum and bugle corps. The members purchased their own uniforms and marched in area parades as well as in Central District Fireman Conventions. Although the unit was sponsored by the fire department, members of the corps were exempt from having to hold fire department membership. The drum and bugle corps had a large town-wide following.

1958: An Era of Profound Growth Begins



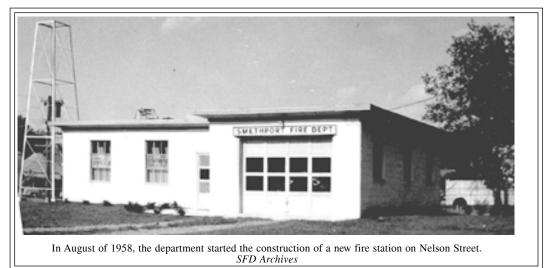
Original 1940 SFD Drum and Bugle Corps Officers: (L to R) William Pierotti, Sr., Secretary, Fire Chief Leroy O'Laughlin and President Fred Biever SFD Archives

In August of 1958, the department started the construction of a new fire station on Nelson Street. The members did most of the construction work themselves. The department became incorporated in October of 1960, in part to gain legal protection for the new building. It wasn't until 1968, however, that the fire department began holding their monthly organizational meeting at the new station for the first time.

The department sponsored several carnivals at the Nelson Street fire station to help pay for the new building. Members

were additionally active in fireman competitions around the area and its traditional food booth at the McKean County Fair. The fun would soon end.

Two days before Thanksgiving 1961, many Smethport residents noticed an ominous red glare illuminating the southern sky. As the late evening faded into twilight, the town fire siren shrilled its call to



service, and Smethport firemen raced to Clermont on a mutual aid call. They worked through the night to save the Kaul Clay Tile Co. factory but were defeated by the already raging fire.

In 1965, former Smethport Fire Chief, Don Farrell, became one of the cofounders of the Tri-County Fire School. The first class was held in October. Thirteen firefighters from Smethport attended the classes held at the fire station on Forest Avenue. The impact these schools produced held a profound impact on the future direction the department would take. The information learned at the school has led to an ever-increasing focus placed by the department on fire training skills and organizational

leadership.

The 911 emergency communication system went into effect in 1973. This changed the way the department received its



alerts for service. Before the new system arrived, alarms were activated directly by wire from the jail to the fire siren. Four long, up-and-down cycles indicated a structure fire. The new system activated the siren using radio tones, which were sent over the airwave to trigger a receptor in the main fire radio at the borough electric company. Eventually, the entire county would use the system, and all codes used by individual fire stations would be unified under the authority of McKean County Fire Control centered at the county jail.

At 4:18 p.m. on Saturday July 28, 1973, two opposing weather systems collided over Smethport and sent tornado-strength



winds and large hail smashing into the town. Damage was extensive and estimated to be over a million dollars by borough officials. Volunteer help poured into the town from every walk of life from the surrounding communities, all coordinated by the

Smethport Fire Department.

The old fire station on Fulton Street was demolished in June and the bell tower moved to the new Nelson Street location. Weekly bingo games were started in October, and a Junior Fire Department formed in November. On January 4 the following year, the Constitution and By-Laws of the newly formed Ladies Auxiliary were approved at the regular monthly meeting of the department.

The decade of the 1980s saw many changes alter the organizational and physical appearance of the department. On the evening of September 17, 1980, the department would join all other departments in the county to battle one of the most destructive fires ever recorded in our area. A Chessie train derailed near Custer City and several oil tank cars were on fire. Flames were towering three hundred feet into the night sky as most of Custer City was being evacuated. Arriving at the summit of Ormsby Hill, Smethport volunteers could see a bright red glow looming ahead. They knew a rough time stood ahead.

At the scene of the inferno, Smethport's veteran 1971 Chevrolet 750 GPM pumper went to work. It laid hose from a nearby creek to supply water to the fire scene where another team from Smethport manned the hose line. The department was on line for 22 hours straight until all the danger of the fire exploding was over. The only rest the hose teams had that night were brief moments laying in the cold autumn air on a frosty blacktop road with their hard helmets as their pillows, or for a few anxious minutes at the food shelter set up by the American Red Cross. There were hundreds of firefighters there from all over



the county, all doing the same thing, all working together as one common family. When all was done, Smethport's fire engine had pumped a million gallons of water.

The year 1981 started with a disaster. Smethport lost another treasured landmark. Hull's Hotel was destroyed by fire on January 4. Mutual aide was provided by several area fire departments, including Kane, who sent their aerial ladder truck, which helped to prevent another 1933-style fire.

The following summer the Smethport Fire Department celebrated its Centennial with a giant parade and other activities. It boasted a roll of 150 members, which also allowed members from Keating Township. The department continued the tradition of a summer celebration in 1982. That year, members began offering chicken barbecues for the first time, a tradition which they still continue. These celebrations ultimately became the Hamlin Lake Festival.

The department initiated a Public Fire Prevention Education program in 1983. The program, which taught fire safety to

families, schools, and Senior Centers, was well received in the community. The Central District Fireman's Association recognized the department for the success of the program toward reducing structure fires. During the decade, members of the department won many trophies from participating in many firemen's competitions that were held throughout the county.

In 1984 the department purchased several hundred feet of large 4-inch diameter hose. This was an exciting movement forward toward efficient water supply for the needs of the downtown section, which required large volumes of water in the event of a fire. A large truck room was added on to the building that same year. The addition gave the department needed space to store its equipment, especially for the larger modern pumpers that were needed. The same year they purchased the department's first tanker. Members rebuilt the Ford chassis and then sent the truck out to a manufacturer to have a 3,500-gallon stainless steel tank installed.

On May 31, 1985, firefighters stood in the new truck room on a Friday evening. McKean County Fire Control mobilized all county stations to stand by. The gray storm pounded down everywhere. The fire radio sent out its feared message. A tornado had touched down in Kane. Smethport was needed. The department traveled the 27 miles to Kane through heavy rain and wind, dangerous lightening, and near invisible conditions. They arrived to a scene of absolute devastation. Immediately they were assigned to East Kane, the most damaged section of the town where they worked endlessly through the night and into morning.

A unique organizational change occurred during 1990. A significant change in the department's Constitution was allowed when Brenda Young became the first woman regular firefighting member in the history of the organization. By the end of the decade, the laws governing membership would again change. Social members were allowed to join the department to do nonfirefighting activities, but without voting privileges.

On November 28, 1996, Thanksgiving Day, Smethport again lost one of its treasured landmarks. The historic Grand Central Hotel burned to the ground. Over 200 firefighters from Pennsylvania and New York state battled the flames all afternoon and into the evening. Thoughts of another 1933 Main Street style fire quickly returned. The old landmark had survived two fires within its walls during the last century, then escaped injury during the catastrophic 1933 conflagration, only to succumb nearly a century later from the third fire to touch its walls.

Also during the 1990s the department purchased modern fire apparatus including the first 1,000 GPM engine ever used by the department. An efficient rescue truck and a giant 1,500 GPM International mid-ship style pumper were also bought. The two pumpers allowed the department to provide adequate supplies of water needed for a fire in the downtown section, an event all too familiar with residents of Smethport.

The story of the department has been a story of steady evolvement into a modern, efficient, fire fighting and social organization that continues to serve Smethport with pride and dedication.

In 2003 the officers are: Chief, Steve Nelson; 1st Assistant, Pat Mitchell, 2nd Assistant, Scott Thomas, Lieutenant, Mike Raszmann, 1st Captain, Brandon Young, 2nd Captain, Rich McDowell; President, Greg Rounsville; Vice President, Melvin Johnson; Secretary, Charles Jones; Treasurer, Scott Herzog; Trustees, Walt Wilcox, Vern Ritts, and Floyd Bell.

CLERMONT VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Clermont, one of the most isolated communities in McKean County, had an informal volunteer fire department during the coal mine boom era. The *McKean County Miner* tells of numerous fires in Clermont. As the town died the sole fire department was the hose cart and fire brigade of the Kaul Clay Tile Company.

That changed in November 1952 when a volunteer fire department was officially organized and a fire hydrant system was added to the town water supply. The next year a 1932 Dodge was purchased used from the Ischua, New York Fire Department and training began in earnest.

Chief Don Simonds and assistants Layton Lawrence, Ken "Red" Moore and Jim Schnepp each had a three-man team under him and held competitive pumper practices. Since the department didn't have a fire hall the firetruck was stored in the Amend family's barn. Early active members included Iroe and Bob Dibler, Dale and Norm Howard, Wells Snyder, Smokey Champion, John Himes, Dick Rifle, Matt Erlandson, Blair Snyder, Bill Himes and Jack Aloi.

Fearing an influx of people from Buffalo or Pittsburgh in the event of a nuclear war, in 1956 McKean County equipped the department with a radio. That same year a joint venture with the Clermont Sportsmen's Club led to the renovation of the

basement of the former Grandview Inn, which had been destroyed by fire.

Benefits such as a corn supper, firemen's picnics, bingo, turkey shoots and coin cards, as well as the \$12 annually from the American Sunday School Union (which held church in the firehall), helped pave the way for the 1979 construction of the new firehall adjacent to the site of the former Methodist Church.

The department, a member of Tri-County Volunteer Firemen's Association, has become the hub of Clermont.

HAMLIN TOWNSHIP NO. 1 VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

CAMP OWNERS SPARK FIRE PROTECTION FOR HAMLIN TOWNSHIP

It the fall of 1974 a Hamlin Township house was lost to fire due to a lack of local fire protection. This problem was being discussed by local residents Joe Keesler, Dick Keesler and Fred Nunn with camp owners Jim Fink and George Bishop from the Greensburg area. These two men, both volunteer firefighters in their home area, offered to purchase a fire engine for Hamlin Township if township residents would form their own fire department. A department was organized and the two men, in conjunction with Larry Miller, another camp owner from the Greensburg area, purchased a truck from Hempfield No.2 Volunteer Fire Department near Greensburg. They made the necessary repairs as well as arranged for equipment to be supplied for the engine. Verona, Luxor and High Park fire companies donated fire suits and breathing apparatus.

On May 25, 1975 the three men delivered the fire engine and equipment to the Hamlin Township No.1 Volunteer Fire Department. Members in the coming years constructed a 30 x 80 foot three stall garage/firehall for their equipment. Bingo was started during the 1980s to help raise funds. In the fall of 1999, a 40 x 80 foot addition was made for a social hall to hold fundraising events.

The department currently has three pieces of apparatus. In 1987 a used 1978 gasoline tanker was converted to a 4,300 gallon water tanker with a 1,000 GPM pump. This is the largest tanker in the Tri-County area. In 1996, the department purchased a 1977 American LaFrance engine/pumper from the Port Allegany Borough and Star Hose Company to replace a 1954 American LaFrance.

The department has also converted a 1980 Ford ambulance to a rescue truck.

In its 28 year existence, Hamlin Volunteer Fire Department has had four chiefs. Les Himes was the first chief. His sons, Gene and Randy, served as chiefs in the years following their father. In 1996 Tom Kreiner was elected chief and has held that office since then.

HILLTOP VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

At the Cyclone School, Pithole Road on April 10, 1950, thirty-nine men from Gifford, Cyclone, Ormsby, and Mt. Alton met to organize the Hilltop Volunteer Fire Department. Serving as first chief was C. W. Stilson with Floyd Irons as president. Funds were raised through public donations permitting a fully equipment truck mounted on a Ford chassis to be operational by December of that year. A Ladies Auxiliary was formed in September 1950.

A firehouse and signal system had not yet been built so equipment was stored at the Township School garage with members taking duty turns to receive fire reports for several years. A siren tower with a sound range of four miles was installed in 1953. Daily staffing was no longer necessary. Eventually radio pagers became available and are now standard for most fire departments.

Ambulance equipment was added to the operation over the next several years. By 1955, a firehouse, located in Cyclone, was completed on land obtained from the Tidewater Oil Company. The department now operates with modern equipment including a tanker and a fire-rescue truck under the direction of Richard Beckman, President, and Phillip Graves, Jr., Fire Chief. Chairperson of the Ladies Auxiliary is Marilyn Miller.

NORWICH TOWNSHIP FIRE DEPARTMENT

The department, located in the village of Crosby, was started in 1951. The first offices were: Carl Anderson, President; Herbert Pettenati, Treasurer: Benny Benson, Secretary; and Harry Larson, Chief. The department had a 1938 International fire truck with an open cab that was housed in Benson's store (no longer in existence). The department was formally chartered in 1954.

In December 1965 a GMC fire truck with a 700 gallon capacity tank was purchased. In 1971 a Ford tanker with a 1,200

gallon tank and 750 GPM pump was added and is still in use today. In 2001 they added a 1998 Chevy utility truck with a 125 gallon capacity tank. This carries the rescue equipment along with other fire gear, and in 2002 they purchased a Freightliner 1,000 gallon tank 3man cab fire engine. In 2003 they will be adding a Kawasaki mule with trailer with funds donated by the Smethport Ambulance Service.

The department holds several fund raisers throughout the year: bingo every week on Thursday evenings, chicken barbecues, hoagie sales, a trail ride event and our main fund raiser the annual Memorial Day dice run which continues to have increased participation. Current officers are; Wayne Corbett, President; Brian Lathrop, First Fire Chief; Orvella Luce, President Ladies Auxiliary.

TRI-COUNTY VOLUNTEER FIREMEN'S ASSOCIATION, INC. Fire School

Concerned with the need for mutual aid and standardized hose couplings, an organizational meeting was held by volunteer firemen in 1938. The first officers were Howard Gardner of Shinglehouse, president; W.G. Potter of Coudersport, first vice-president; K.P. Slavin of Eldred, second vice-president; E. E. Burgoon of Emporium, third vice-president; Lee Wright of Port Allegany, secretary; William Grimes of Galeton, treasurer. Executive Committee was formed and members were Brady Starks of Smethport, R. M. Greene of Shinglehouse and L. E. Howell of Eldred.

Initially there were eight fire companies in the association including Shinglehouse, Eldred, Coudersport, Port Allegany, Emporium, Smethport and two companies from Galeton. These companies represented the tri-county region of McKean, Cameron, and Potter. Today it has grown into an organization of 42 member companies from four counties that hold monthly meetings. The association is best known for conducting Tri-County Fire School, held in Smethport

DON FARRELL INSTRUMENTAL LEADER IN TRI-COUNTY FIRE SCHOOL



In 1965, former Smethport Fire Chief, Don Farrell, became one of the cofounders of Tri-County Fire School. The first class was held in October. Thirteen firefighters from Smethport attended the classes held at the fire station on Forest Avenue. SFD Archives

each year in May. In fact, it is one of only two regional schools that can grant a state certificate in advanced fire studies. The first fire school was held August 28-29, 1965 with 181 firefighters and 13 state-certified instructors. The first building ignited for a controlled practice burn was a donated chicken coop. It wasn't until 1969 that a permanent structure was constructed on the grounds. This was a three-story cement block tower constructed by volunteers using donations. In addition to the original tower, a burn building, administration building, oil fire pit and storage tanks have been added to the Forest Avenue grounds. Advanced classes such as hydraulics, fire prevention, tanker operations and department organization have been held at the high school.

The training offered by Tri-County Fire School has produced highly skilled and efficient firefighters from the Tri-County area and across western Pennsylvania.

SMETHPORT AREA AMBULANCE SERVICE

Prior to the creation of the Smethport Area Ambulance Service, Fry's Funeral Home was the round-the-clock emergency transportation with funeral director, Hugh Fry, answering most of the calls. In 1975 new state legislation required that trained personnel handle emergency calls. Under encouragement from the Borough Council, a group of local citizens formed the Smethport Area Ambulance Association. First volunteers included George Apaliski, Theo Carlson, Florence Carter, Sonja Covert, Dan Marshall, Pat Mayer, Ralph Mayer, Charles McKeirnan, Sue Stone, Larry Trulick, Larry Warner and Duke Worthington.

With no building for an ambulance garage, equipment was stored at the Smethport Garage, corner of Church and Main Streets and in borough buildings. Stones Manor on W. Willow Street dispatched the emergency personnel using a paging system until the present 911 system was developed.

When the service outgrew its temporary locations, a permanent home was constructed on Route 46N near the junction of Route 6. A building with a three-stall garage and meeting room was constructed with the help of donations, a low interest government loan, and committed volunteer help from area residents and association members.

Revised, more stringent state requirements, coupled with excessive demands on service, made it impossible to continue with an all volunteer organization. It was decided by the Board of Directors to have Priority Care, a commercial service, provide emergency ambulance coverage to the Smethport area.

Board of Directors Charles McKeirnan, president; Scott Thomas, vice president; Pat Mayer, secretary; Florence Carter, treasurer; Sue Gage, Becky Erickson, Chuck Claycomb, Ron Claycomb distributed the assets to the organizations listed below:

List of recipients: Building donated to 911 service (EMS-EMA) classrooms and training, Smethport Area High School Scholarship Fund, Smethport Elementary School Library, Smethport PTO, Smethport Fire Department, Norwich Township Fire Department, Chamber of Commerce, Memorial Recreation Center, McKean County Historical Society, Smethport Senior Center, Smethport Family Center, Christian Community Services, Coryville Food Bank, West Spring Pines Memorial Fund (Sena-Kean Alzheimers), Sena-Kean Patient's activity fund, Lake View patient activity fund. Boy Scouts (Elk Lick Properties fund), Girl Scouts (Resting Waters Camp), Daisy Scouts, Hamlin Memorial Library, Smethport Legionettes, Coryville God's Promise Drill Team, Smethport Rotary Club, Smethport Lions Club, Smethport Women's Club, Keating Sportsmen's Club, Smethport Garden Club, American Legion #138, American Legion Auxiliary #138, John Berg Post #976, John Berg Auxiliary #976, Veterans of Foreign Wars #2497, VFS Auxiliary #2497, McKean Lodge #388, Phoenix Chapter #15 Order of the Eastern Star, Odd Fellows, Smethport Fire Department Auxiliary, American Red Cross, McKean Co. SPCA, McKean County 4-H, Big "30". Smethport and area churches, Smethport Junior Wrestling, Smethport Area Youth Soccer, Big Brothers, and Big Sisters, Shriner's Transportation Fund, Sesquicentennial Committee, eighteen ball teams, Pee Wee, Little League and Babe Ruth from Smethport, East Smethport and Crosby.

In 2003, after 28 years of dedicated 24-hour service, the Smethport Area Volunteer Ambulance Service was discontinued. Although the Smethport Area Ambulance Service no longer exists, every area citizen and volunteer is exceptionally proud of the outstanding service that organization provided.

CHAPTER XVII A HOME OF FAITH

WILLIAM PENN'S HOLY EXPERIMENT—UNITED METHODIST CHURCH—SMETHPORT BAPTIST CHURCH ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH—SAINT LUKE'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH— TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH—FREE CHRISTIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE CHURCH—EAST SMETHPORT UNITED CHRISTIAN CHURCH—OTHER COMMUNITY CHURCHES—SMETHPORT AREA MINISTERIUM—CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

n interesting story tells of one family in the Methodist congregation, the Crow family, owners of a hotel in the county seat. Back in the 1830s Moses Crow and his father were chopping trees in the bottom lands near today's IU-9 on Mechanic Street. Progress was good until a dry elm was encountered. Father and son attacked it with vigor, but had little success. The sultry day and arduous activity had the duo perspiring profusely. Looking around at the sea of trees, and feeling increasingly tired, the son proclaimed, "I think I am called to preach." A few years later, the family patriarch was asked to financially support the church. He replied that he had donated two sons to the ministry – quite enough for any one man.

William Penn's Holy Experiment

"1 do hereby grant and declare, That no Persons...who shall confess and acknowledge One Almighty God, the Creator, Upholder and Ruler of the World shall be in any Case molested or prejudiced, in his or their Person or Estate, because of his or their consciencious Persuasion or Practice." The Charter of Privileges, 1701, William Penn

Wanting Something better for the colonists of Pennsylvania, he offered total religious freedom for any belief. In the late 1600s this truly was a Holy Experiment for such a privilege was seldom granted by any ruling body. Thanks to Penn's wisdom, we now take this privilege as normal. Smethport with seven churches, East Smethport with one, and the surrounding area with twelve more exemplifies the attraction of Penn's religious freedom. William Penn would be proud that his Holy Experiment has succeeded so admirably in Smethport.

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Summethy of the court of the courthouse (1825), services were held there and also in Richard Chadwick's first school house located on the north side of the corner of Church and King Street. But it wasn't until 1832 that the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized in Smethyort. Early financial supporters included Asa Sartwell, Brewster Freeman, A. M. Stanton, Nathan White, Richard Chadwick, and Nathan Burlingame. The Methodist trustees were Samuel Smith, Cephas Scott, Willis Barrett, Daniel Rifle, and Gardner Barrett. Funds were collected in 1836 for a wood frame building to serve as the church. In 1837 a lot was purchased from the county commissioners and a church was completed in 1838. Famed Smethport architect and contractor Solomon Sartwell, the builder of the first courthouse, and Philetus Ford, constructed the church at an expense of \$3000. In 1847 Richard Chadwick's schoolhouse was moved to the rear of the church for a parsonage. It was replaced in 1859 with the present parsonage.

Rev W. B. Wagoner, in 1878, became the first full-time pastor. Other notable pastors were Rev. Thomas Carlton, who later worked at the Methodist Publishing House; Rev. L. A. Stevens and Rev. John Wentworth Sanborn, both who became noted authors; Rev. E. Ellsworth Holmes, D.D. (1891) who later served the largest church in America in Los Angeles. Rev. E. J. Burton is noted for having served the longest from 1941-1951.

Improvements were made in 1918 by adding a base- ment, a brick educational wing in 1960, and a completely redecorated modern and bright sanctuary in 1972. A new elec- tronic organ was purchased in 2001.

The congregation today, under the leadership of Rev. Bob George, excels with its music ministries including the Chancel and Joyful Ringers Bell Choirs, directed by Carol Ball and accompanied by Janet Jaksetic. Sunday school classes are available for all ages. Methodist Sewers produce sewn items for missional use in hospitals and nursing homes.

1880S

METHODIST

CHURCH

THE 3 STEEPLES OF SOLOMON SARTWELL'S METHODIST CHURCH

Over the years the United Methodist Church has had a series of steeples constructed atop the original Sartwell edifice. The view at the far left shows the original 4 mini-steeples as designed by Mr. Sartwell. During the 1880s the first steeples were removed and a giant, single steeple was constructed. Architectural changes had to be made to the building to structurally accommodate the new, heavy design. During the 1970s structural problems developed with the 1880s steeple and it was removed in favor of an easier to maintain model.

1972-

METHODIST

CHURCH

1838

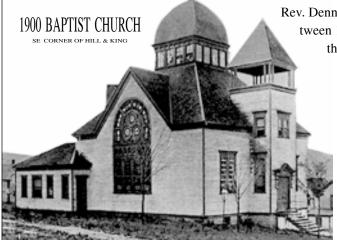
METHODIST

CHURCH

SMETHPORT BAPTIST CHURCH

The Smethport Baptist Church had its origins in Norwich Township in 1820. It wasn't until 1836 that the congregation was formed in Smethport. In 1850 The Regular Baptist Church was chartered in McKean County.

That year, a Mr. Ketchum came to Farmer's Valley to convert the non-believers. Coincidentally, a baby had died in Smethport, and there was no one to say a prayer at its burial. Mrs. As Sartwell told the missionary of the incident, and he opened a church in the courthouse.



In 1899 the cornerstone for a new church was laid at the southeast corner of Hill and King Streets. John G. Coleman Collection

alternately in the McKean County Courthouse, the Academy, and private homes.

In 1847 the church house was erected with architectural and construction work probably done by Solomon Sartwell. The original church was built in the location of the American Legion and left side of today's Route 6 Diner directly across from the Brownell Store (now Pink Elephant). In 1850, The Regular Baptist Church was officially chartered in McKean County. The first trustees were Ghordis Corwin, William Williams, Wheeler Gallup, James Taylor, Benjamin Corwin, and J. L. Smith. By 1873, the congregation had built a parsonage with an adjacent cemetery on the south side of Water Street (411-413 W. Water). In 1879, the Main Street church was moved to a new location on the corner of Fulton and Water (location of today's Cottage House). Before 1885 all of the church baptisms took place in a nearby stream. In that year a baptismal for immersion was put in the church.

The original church in its new location was dechurch was laid at the southeast corner of Hill and paid.

Seventy years later (April 1969) ground was

Street Extension. Various members helped Pastor William Stroup with construction. The first service was held in April 1970, and in 1974 another Academy, Smethport Calvary, was established for grades K - 12. Many faithful men have led RBC over the years. Presently Pastor Dana LaPage is the pastor and also the Academy's principal. In Mr. Ketchum's absence, while he was preaching the circuit, the Rev. Denning of the Methodist Church would conduct baptisms. Between 1820 and 1836, the Smethport believers shared a pastor with the Norwich Church. In 1836 Rev. Benjamin Oviatt began only

serving the Smethport branch and in 1840 a Baptist Society was formed, including the families of William Williams, James Taylor, William and Benjamin Oviatt, Abner Lull, George Griswold, Job Gifford, Nelson Medbery, and Ghordis and Benjamin Corwin.

The church opened an Academy in 1837 which was turned over to the Smethport School District in 1870. From 1836 until 1847, the congregation met

1847 BAPTIST CHURCH MOVED FROM MAIN STREET TO SW CORNER OF FULTON & WATER

The original church was built in the location of the American Legion and left side of today's Route 6

American Legion and left side of today's Route 6 Diner directly across from the Brownell Store (now Pink Elephant). In 1879 the Main Street church was moved to a new location on the corner of Fulton and Water (location of today's Cottage House). It was destroyed by a tragic fire in 1898. Souvenir of Smethport 1895 JW. Sanborn

stroyed by a tragic fire in 1898. In 1899 the cornerstone for a new King Streets, and by 1913, the \$3,300 church mortgage was entirely

broken for the present church building located on the East Water



Seventy years later (April 1969) ground was broken for the present church building located on the East Water Street Extension. The first service was held in April 1970 Smethport Baptist Church Archives

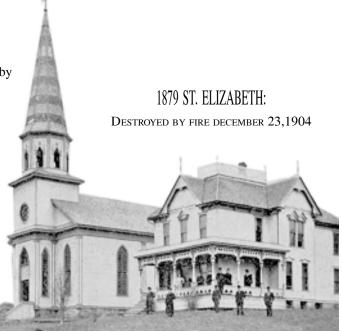
ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

he Catholic Church of Smethport was a continuation of the old mission of Instanter in Sergeant Township. Facts concerning the early church are not well established, but information indicates the first building was erected on

Potato Creek near Walter Daly's farm.

St. Elizabeth's Church was founded February 15, 1868. Through the generous donation of land at the corner of Main and Fulton Streets by John Keating and a subscription fund of \$4,642 by B. D. Hamlin and Henry Hamlin and many others permitted completion of a church and parsonage in 1876. The first pastor was Father Peter Joseph Patterson followed by Father J. J. Galligan, one of the more colorful priests to serve the church. Born in Ireland in 1848 Father Galligan entered Allegany Seminary (now St. Bonaventure) in 1872 and was ordained in July 1877. After assignments in Erie and Titusville, he moved to Smethport in 1880.

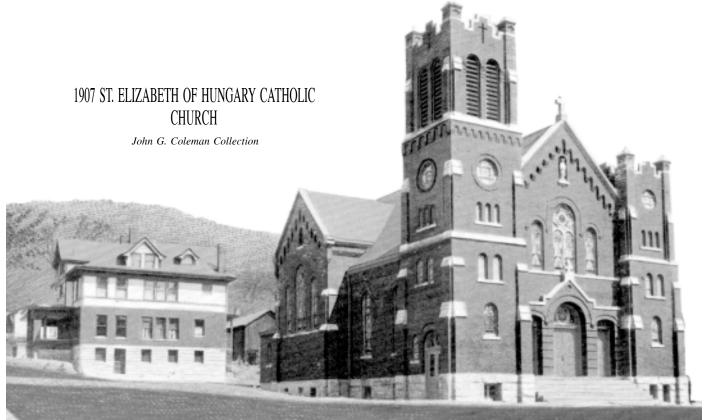
On December 23, 1904, disaster struck. An overheated furnace set the church ablaze. The fire company was unable to save the church so they turned their attention to saving the parsonage. The church steeple fell towards it and the wooden church was lost except chalice, vestments, linens, and candle sticks. The Mass on Christmas Day was celebrated at 10:30 a.m. in the newly constructed Lyceum Theater at the corner of

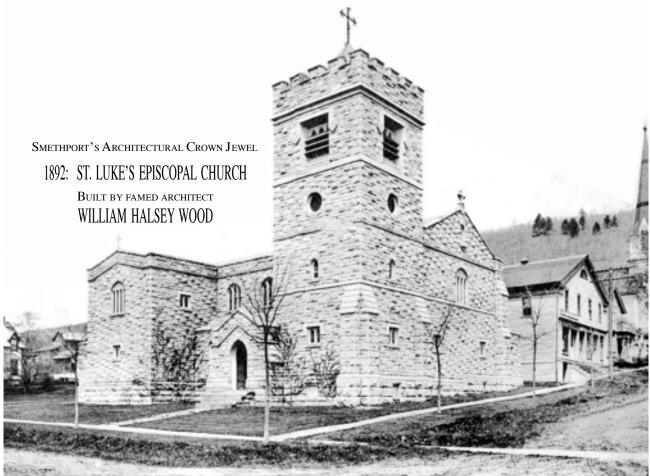


The original frame church and parsonage were completed in1876. The church stood on the same location as today's St. Elizabeth's. The parsonage was to the right of the church. Souvenir of Smethport 1895 J.W. Sanborn

King and Mechanic Streets. Under the direction of Father J. F. Dugan a series of many fund raisers permitted completion of a new brick church in 1907. A catechetical and social center was built in 1955 in the basement of the church.

The long service of the Rev. Msgr. Thomas C. Geddes brought a period of growth, peace, and renewal to its parishioners. The parish, now under the guidance of Reverend Theodore B. Marconi, looks forward to many fruitful years.





Ground was broken for a new stone structure located at Church Street on Main in May, 1891 and consecrated in September, 1892. The new church, designed by famed architect William Halsey Wood, was funded almost entirely by Henry Hamlin. *St. Lukes Archives*

irst Services of the Episcopal Church of Smethport were held in 1842 with only three members. Irregular services were held until 1872, when Bishop Kerfoot established a mission, with an executive committee of John C. Hamlin, Philetus Ford, J. C. Backus, and D.C. Young. There were 24 initial communicants.

In 1867 Mrs. John C. Hamlin and Mrs. Henry Hamlin organized the first community Sunday School to be held in Smethport. More than 100 attended these ecumenical classes which continued until various churches started their own.

In 1879 a parish named Saint Luke's was established and incorporated. The Rev. Hugh Q. Miller retired in 1880, to be followed by the Rev. John Huber McCandless. The first church was erected and consecrated August 21, 1881 and was located on N. Fulton Street. That structure serves as the Lutheran Church today. In 1885 Rev. McCandless married Henry Hamlin's second daughter, Emma Marion of Smethport.

By 1890 the church had grown to 60 families, 160 communicants and 300 members by baptism. Ground was broken for a new stone structure located at Church Street on Main in May, 1891 and consecrated in September, 1892. The new church, designed by famed architect William Halsey Wood, was funded almost entirely by Henry Hamlin. The Parish Hall was built in 1901-1902 and was opened for use on Easter Day, 1902.



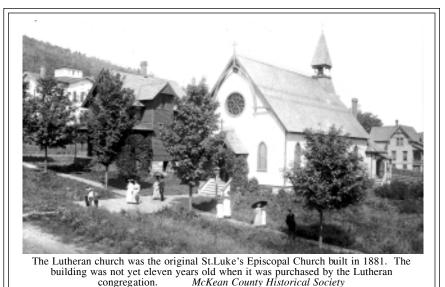
The structure remains virtually unchanged since its consecration in 1892. It is one of the best preserved examples of Mr. Wood's work. St. Lukes Archives

The current Rector is Father Stephen Shuart who serves as a full time rector by splitting his duties between St. John's Episcopal in Kane and St. Luke's Episcopal in Smethport.

TRINITY EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

he Ansgarius Evangelical Lutheran Church of Smethport was organized October 1, 1891, by a group of Swedish Lutherans residing in Smethport and vicinity. The church took its original name from Saint Ansgarius, a Swedish Saint who brought the Gospel to Scandinavia in the 9th century.

As early as 1884, services had been held in private homes and in the Methodist Church but no definite organization had existed. Present at the organizational meeting were the Rev. E. S. Ternberg and the Rev. M.A. Nordstrom. Deacons and trustees



elected were Otto Anderson, John Hector, Pete Johnson, C.W. Lilgendahl, Charles Johnson, John Ottoson and John Swanson.

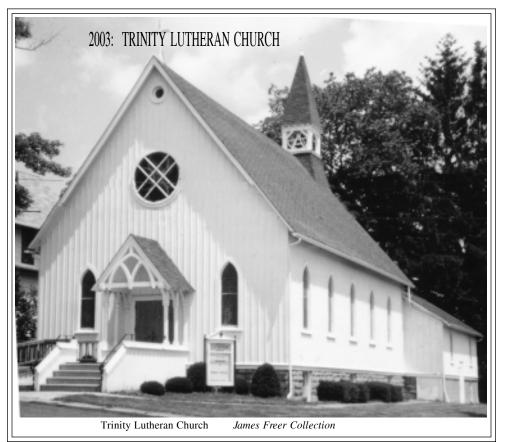
The first regular congregational meeting was held January 2, 1892 at the Ottoson home and on June 15 of that year a special meeting was called to consider the purchase of a house of worship. The congregation purchased the church used by the Episcopalians who were moving into their brand new stone church on Main Street. The St. Luke's Episcopal Fulton Street Church was purchased in 1892 for \$500 down and \$100 yearly payments.

The first class of catechumens was confirmed in July 1892. Pastors serving the

church through the years included the Rev. H. E. Isaacson, the Rev. A. G. Anderson, the Rev. F. E. Sard, the Rev. P. S. Miller, and the Rev. P. E. Norgrove.

During these early years, a weekday school was conducted during the summer with Charles Johnson, the first elected

superintendent. After the Rev. Nordgren left the church, the congregation was united with Bethany Lutheran Church of Olean. During this time, the last of the church debt was wiped off the books. The Rev. C. J. Beckman of Olean served as vice pastor of the church until his untimely death in June 1907. During the ensuing three years the pulpit was filled by several pastors and students. The altar and the pulpit were purchased in 1911 with the altar and hangings presented by the Young Ladies Society. During the pastorate of C. Russell Lundgren, many new organizations were promoted including the Lutheran Brotherhood, the Woman's Missionary Society and the Luther League. In 1935 the Brotherhood received



permission to sponsor the building of a basement under the church. This improvement was soon followed by a new heating system, furnishings for the dining room and kitchen, the purchase of a Hammond organ and the installation of a baptismal font. 148

During this spring of 1953, the sanctuary was redecorated, a new altar cross installed and a new lighting system was approved and installed.

Services were held in the mother tongue of Swedish until 1944. This change was made by many immigrant churches to show solidarity for the American cause in WWII. German-speaking Lutheran churches did the same. In the late 1950s, the church name was changed to Trinity.

Trinity's sanctuary tells a theological story. It has a classic structure including a narthex, knave, sanctuary, a pew area with a cathedral ceiling. The structure as a whole resembles an overturned boat, symbolizing the Church as refuge against the stormy sea of life. The center aisle and bisecting aisle symbolize the cross. The elevated altar is set upon the fifth step upward, symbolizing the five wounds of Christ. The three paneled wooden screen reredos symbolize the Holy Trinity. An elevated pulpit is a classic German medieval design, symbolizing the importance of the lifting up of God's word.

As of 2003, the Church has been a yoked parish with Gethsemane Lutheran in Port Allegany. Trinity is in the Northwest Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The church's Bishop is Ralph E. Jones, and head of the denomination, called the Presiding Bishop, is Bishop Mark Hanson. The main headquarters of the ELCA is located in Chicago. Pastor Diana L. Britten is the church's new Pastor beginning her call August 1 and was ordained August 11, 2002.

Every congregation consists of dedicated people. In Trinity's sacristy, where the vestment for the altar and elements are

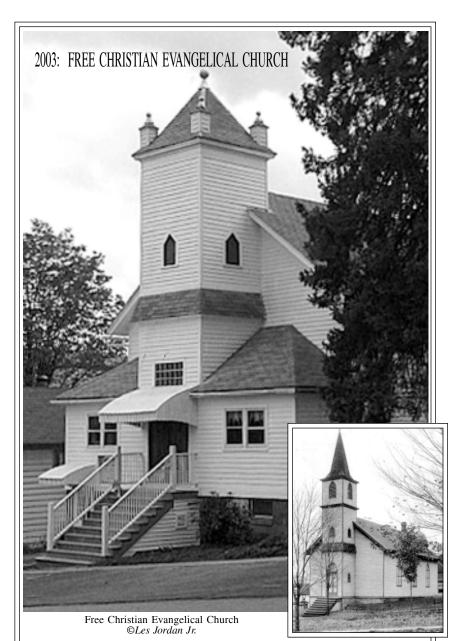
kept for communion, you will find a picture of Emma Miller. She is Trinity's own "Saint Emma." She was a pivotal person in the church's history, whose dedication influenced the church for many years.

FREE CHRISTIAN EVANGELICAL CHURCH

he Swedish Free Christian Evangelical Church has its origins in the "The Great Awakening," a revival which swept Sweden in the late 1850s.

In the early 1890s, devotional meetings were held by Swedish settlers in the Smethport home of Mr. and Mrs. John Carlson. On February 12, 1891, a legal incorporation was granted to Mr. Carlson and 18 founding members of the church under the name, "The Swedish Free Evangelical Church of Smethport, PA." The charter members included: Mr. and Mrs. John Carlson, Mr. and Mrs. R. A. Dolkie, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Norman, Mr. and Mrs. John Hallstrom, Ida Johnson, Olivia Peterson, Anna Swenson, Ida Engstrom, Arvid Carlson, Sam Bloomberg, P.J. Lundgren, Victor Engstrom, Rubin Johnson, and Henning Anderson.

Later, the church became known as the Swedish Mission Church in order to distinguish it from the Lutheran Church, also Swedish speaking, and to emphasize its inception as a Mission Society. On March 14, 1894, a decision was made to purchase a



lot on the corner of Pine and King Streets and erect a church building. The church was completed that year and dedicated September 21-23, 1894, with Pastor C. A. Widing presiding. In the summer of 1902, plans for a parsonage were made and the house was completed in the fall with Rev. K. A. Anderson and family as the first occupants. Other pastors were Thomas Burkholder, Richard Walker, Glenn Moore, Wayne Shimko, Nicholas Tancordo, Herman Pickels, Arthur Begley, Kenneth Weldon and James Owens. For many years the Swedish language was used in all services. About 1930 the Sunday School changed to the English language, and about 1940 the church services were changed.

The church celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1943 with four charter members still in the congregation. They were Mrs. Ida Engstrom Bloomberg, Mr. Victor Engstrom, Mr. John Hallstrom and Mr. Henning Anderson.

The church still stands on Pine Street with much of the original architecture and charm, serving the Smethport area as an Evangelical faith based church. Services are held Sunday mornings under the direction of Pastor Jim Owens.

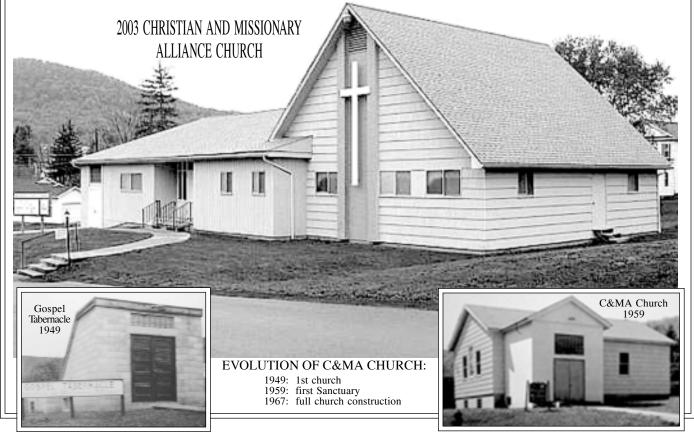
CHRISTIAN AND MISSIONARY ALLIANCE CHURCH

he Christian and Missionary Alliance Church (C&MA) was founded in 1944 as the Gospel Tabernacle on Main Street. The Emporium C&MA sponsored the new church as an extension church. In 1947, the Gospel Tabernacle was officially recognized and organized as a stand-alone church by the national office of the C&MA. In 1959 it changed its name to the Smethport C&MA Church to better reflect that status.

Rev. Harry Gerty became the first pastor and reported a membership of 19 people. Eighteen different pastors have served over its short 58 year history.

In 1949 the church purchased land at the corner of Water and Pine Streets where the church has remained. The current building was built in several stages. In 1949 a basement was constructed and used as a multipurpose room where worship services and Sunday school classes met. Construction of a sanctuary on top of the basement was started in 1956 and the first service was held in the new sanctuary on January 1, 1959. The final addition of offices and classrooms was completed in 1967. A parking lot and handicap access was added in 2002. The church's parsonage is located across the street from the church.

The Smethport C&MA is affiliated with the Christian and Missionary Alliance worldwide denomination.



EAST SMETHPORT UNITED CHRISTIAN CHURCH

he Evangelical United Brethren Church of East Smethport started as a community church on Feb 23, 1891, when Judge Thomas Morrison granted the church a charter. The charter members were Mrs. Emma Oviatt Allen, Mrs. Lillian T. Capehater, Mrs. Clara King, Mrs. Carrie H. Stickles, Mrs. Anna Gifford, Mrs. Robert M. Bloodworth, George W. King and Clarence Backer. A group called the Union Aid Society felt a church was needed for the general community and its needs, and so initiated a building project. Ministers from different denominations supplied the pulpit but over time the United Brethren did the most. Thus, the church was eventually deeded to them.

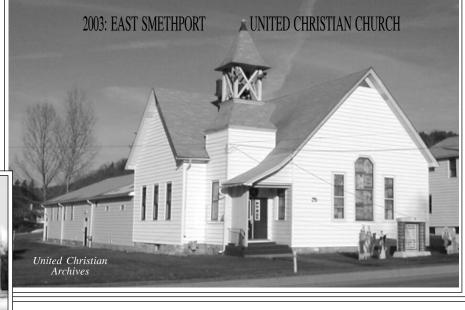
The church belonged to the Evangelical United Brethren until the early 1960s. After the dissolution of the EUB, it joined a denomination of former EUB churches called the Evangelical Church of North America. Also, at this time the congregation adopted its present church name. But when sensitivities over church property ownership could not be resolved, the church withdrew along with other area EUB churches, and in 1982 they formed their own organization for fellowship in camps, and retreats and incorporated as The Association of Evangelical Churches. The East Smethport church has been a charter member since then.

The church has undergone some modifications over the years, but the original structure is still in use. In the 1960s, a kitchen was added in the rear. In addition, the church purchased the old Thornton residence next door and expanded its size considerably. Then in 1994 it broke ground on a 5000 square foot, two floor addition for Sunday School rooms, Youth Hall, Fellowship Hall, coatroom and new restrooms. The "save and build" project was finally finished in 1997 and completely paid for. At a special ceremony a plaque was permanently affixed giving all the glory to God. The church is

currently planning to add a lighted steeple to the original structure.

Many ministers have faithfully served the church since 1891. The present pastor, Rev. Allen Young and his family came to the church in October 1986.





OTHER SMETHPORT AREA CHURCHES

Christian Gospel Church, Coleville: Pastor Tom Dunkerton Coryville Church of Faith, Coryville: Pastor Kent Hill Coryville Strait-Way Holiness Church, Coryville: Pastor E. L. Durphy Crosby United Methodist Church, Crosby: Pastor Randall Headly Free Methodist Church, Cyclone: Pastor Glenn Hamilton Grace Chapel Full Gospel Church, Farmers Valley: Pastor Frank Eppley Hazel Hurst United Methodist, Hazel Hurst: Rev. W. Craig Smith Hilltop Baptist Church, Gifford: Pastor Max Simms Kushequa Union Church, Kushequa: Rev. Richard Pytcher New Life Fellowship World Outreach Center, Cyclone: Pastor Stanton R. Higley Overcomers Church of Faith, Aiken: Pastor Frank P. Hill Trinity Memorial Church, Gifford, Rev. Freda Pytcher Union Church of Colegrove: Pastors by invitation for four yearly services Valley Worship Center, Farmers Valley: Pastor Keith Larson (Valley Worship Center, formerly the Smethport Revival Center, was originally located in Kraft's Market in East Smethport from June 20,1962 to April 1964. It then moved to 223 W. Main (Star Theater location) Smethport in April 1964 remaining there until March 2000. It then moved to Farmers Valley and became Valley Worship Center.)

SMETHPORT AREA MINISTERIUM

An ecumenical group of Smethport area churches was recently formed with the following members: Crosby United Methodist Church, St. Elizabeth of Hungary Catholic Church, St. Luke's Episcopal Church, Christian Alliance Church, United Methodist Church of Smethport, Trinity Lutheran Church, and United Christian. The 2003 officers are: Rev. Shope, president; Rev. George, secretary: and Rev. Marconi, treasurer. A county-wide ministerium group existed in the 1930s.

The goal of the group is to "bring unity within our diversity." Sponsored events throughout the year are: Ecumenical Sunday, Lenten services, Good Friday service, Youth Hangout, National Day of Prayer, Baccalaureate, Vespers at the McKean County Fair, and Thanksgiving Eve services.

CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY SERVICES

The organization was founded by members and pastors of the Lutheran, Methodist, and Episcopal churches in 1979. The primary purpose was to offer services to state-defined eligible residents of McKean County as a food bank, clothes closet, and hot line referral. Other services available are clothing, housing and meals for transients, utility help on a one-time basis and a Christmas food program.

Office and storage space has been provided in the basement of the Hamlin Bank Building since 1982. Funding now comes from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, United States Department of Agriculture and local organizations.

For 2003 the officers are: President, Rev. Robert George; Treasurer, Ann Morgan; Secretary, Theresa Dreihaup; and Program Director, John McElroy. Other volunteers are Lois Anderson, Shirley Haynes, Doris Gustafson, Ralph Gustafson, Hanna Mencer, Florence Carter, Harold Sonny Carter, Doris Nourse, Jane Magee, Ruth Covert, Alan Covert, and Phillis Barnhart.

CHAPTER XVIII COMMUNITY OF CAREGIVERS

EARLY DOCTORS—MODERN DOCTORS—DENTISTS—BOWMAN HEALTH CENTER SMETHPORT FAMILY PRACTICE—JAMES B. KANE, D.M.D DENTAL OFFICE ALLEGHENY EYE CARE —SENA-KEAN MANOR—LAKEVIEW

Early Doctors

In the early 1800s the training of medical doctors was different than today. A man first apprenticed himself to a practicing doctor doing any assigned task from holding patients down during operations, mixing and making "drugs" from the bark of trees or other herbs, to walking ahead of the doctor's carriage with a light for night calls. Once the apprentice was sufficiently trained, he would then go away for traditional medical studies. After a period of study he would register as a medical man. Even then, physician duties might only be on a part time basis, as they frequently had other business activities. Doctor's fees were small and it was difficult to have sufficient earnings to support a family. By 1850 medical knowledge expanded considerably offering improved treatment. But without effective drugs, the local cemetery records show the early deaths of numerous children and adults. One Clermont family lost five children in as many months, probably due to diphtheria. Often the only treatment available was to quarantine a family, signs being posted on the house until the occupants were well.

Sarsaparilla was frequently advertised in the 1860 local papers as the perfect cure for eruptions, ulcers, tumors, scald head, syphilis, dropsy, dyspepsia, and the foul humors that fester in the blood at springtime. Local crude oil was often promoted for many body ills both external and internal. One local physician said "I am credited for many cures I can not explain." Regardless, one can tell from the many newspaper articles that doctors were extremely important members of the community. With no convenient hospitals and poor transportation, the health of the community rested on their shoulders.

From the earliest pioneer days Smethport has been blessed with the presence of excellent physicians. Our first doctor

appears to be Dr. Eastman. He resided at the east end of Smethport just west of the Medbury residence, which also contained an early school in its basement. His practice was probably conducted in a small office he built near the confluence of the Marvin Creek into the Potato Creek. Dr. George Darling, the first full-time physician of the county settled at Smethport in 1827. Dr. Asa Hamlin came from a Connecticut family of twenty-one children. He moved here in 1833, and died in 1835. Another doctor, R. B. Graves, was both a school teacher and physician. Dr. Salmon M. Rose is listed as a Keating Township resident in 1836. Dr. W. Y. McCoy came shortly after and married Dr. Darling's daughter. Dr. W. Y. McCoy practiced in the 1850s, followed by his son Henry in 1868. Henry continued to practice until 1930, and also had many business interests. William Printup, a native Oneida Indian, offered both shamanic and limited traditional treatment. Other early doctors are Jedediah Darling, Joshua Baxom, and Silvanus D. Freeman. Dr. Freeman earned national recognition for being the surgeon for the famed Bucktail regiment.

Smethport has been fortunate to have many other fine doctors during the 20th century including Robert Hamilton, Burg Chadwick (local historian), Fritz E. Guenter, E. G. Brown, Charles Brown, W. A. Ostrander, George Zink, Ralph Hockenberry, Ralph Minerd, Phillip Hickey, William Murray, Raymond Uscinski, Gary Smith, and more recently Richard Freeman, Gemma Sarigan, Jason Tronetti, Douglas Bowman and Ferdinand Magno. Dr. Gloria Zibilich lives in Smethport and practices at the Charles Cole Eldred Health Center. Rear Admiral David Paul Osborne, retired from the navy in the 1990s to Irish Hollow, has served as an advisor to the Bradford Regional Medical Center. During his Navy career, he assisted at the autopsy of President Kennedy, led the surgical team that operated on President Lyndon Johnson, and received the Navy Commendation Medal for service during the 1944 invasion of Normandy Beach, France.

Dentists that have practiced in Smethport are Doctors Alvie. R. Livermore, Conrad Michaelson, Clyde R. Long, Dr. Walter Rhinehart, and William Bero. Currently Dr. James Kane practices at his new office on Willow Street.

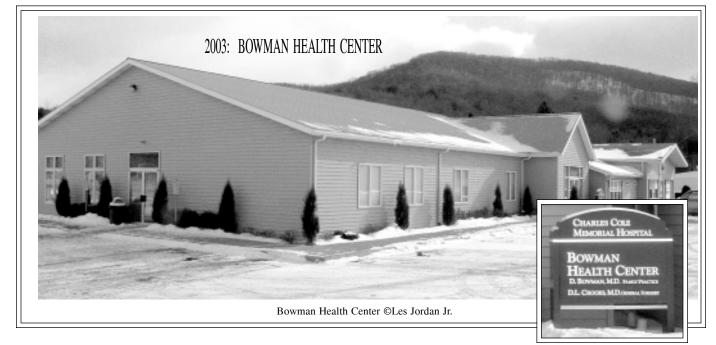
Present Health Care Professionals MEDICAL FACILITIES

BOWMAN HEALTH CENTER

In 1979 Dr. Douglas F. Bowman was assigned at Misty Valley Community Health Center in the old county home for two years of service as a lieutenant in the U.S. National Health Service Corps. When he completed his tour of duty, Dr. Bowman was well established in the community and devoted to his patients.

In 1981, he purchased the former Alpine Music Barn. After extensive renovation, the facility was transformed into a physician's office. Dr. Bowman, one nurse, and a receptionist were the original employees.

In 1995, Dr. Bowman's practice converted to Bowman Health Center to provide additional services. A large addition was added to the building. Physician Assistants were trained and hired to help accommodate patients. One doctor, two Physician



Assistants, two nurses and two office staff were employed.

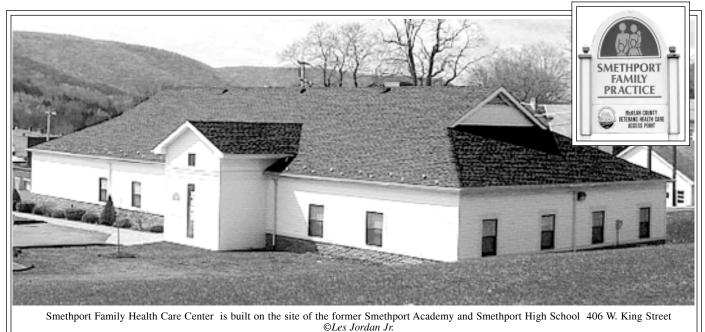
On December 31, 1997, the property and medical practice were sold to Charles Cole Memorial Hospital to provide more medical facilities to the community. Another large addition was added to the original building housing Smethport Wellness Center, Physical Therapy, and additional doctors' offices. Richard Freeman, M.D., Gemma Sarigan, M.D. and Jason Tronetti, D.O. have also provided family practice services at Bowman Health Center.

Presently Dr. Bowman is the primary physician at Charles Cole Memorial Hospital Bowman Health Center. There is one physician assistant, Frank L. Zitnik, PA-C, three nurses: Amy Costa RN, Gretchen Simms RN, and Cathy Larson LPN, and three office staff: Marcia Alter, Karen Parker, and Barbara Bowman.

SMETHPORT FAMILY PRACTICE

Initially located in 1986 in the Masonic Temple building on West Main Street as the Smethport Family Health Care Center, it was operated as a satellite of the Bradford Regional Hospital and staffed by a nurse practitioner. Later, doctors from the Bradford Regional Medical Center were added to the group.

Recognizing the need for a more modern facility, an entirely new building was constructed on the vacant lot at 406 West King St. This site had for many years been the location of the Smethport High School until moving to the new location on the south side of Smethport. In addition to serving the general population, the Center also operates as the McKean County Veterans Administration Clinic which is convenient for the local veterans. The staff doctor is the well respected Ferdinand Magno.



DENTIST JAMES B. KANE, D.M.D.

Dr. James Kane has been providing Smethport residents and the surrounding area with family dentistry since 1984. As of 2003 the practice has grown to include 3114 patients.

The initial office was located at 201 West Main Street affectionately known to many locals as "the old Ford garage." In May of 1995 the practice was moved to its present location on E. Willow Street. The lots were purchased from Esther Herriman and Paul Connors. It currently has three staff members: Lorri Kane, business manager; Joanne (Higley) Baker, Dental Assistant; and Crystal (Shaffer) Raymond, Dental Hygienist.

DR. CHRISTIAN J. HOWARD-OPTOMETRIST

Dr. Christian J. Howard purchased the optometric practice of Dr. E. L. Hill in Kane and Smethport on December 15, 1978. Since then Allegheny Eye Care has grown to five offices staffed with three doctors, Christian Howard, Mary T. DaCanal and Andrew C. Kartesz.

GERIATRIC SERVICES

SENA-KEAN MANOR

n 1883 a petition was signed establishing the McKean County Poor Farm. In 1884 the 345 acre Wilcox farm on Marvin Creek was purchased for \$15,000. Contractors, Davitt, O'Brien and Hart under the supervision of architect S. A. Bishop built four brick buildings for a cost of \$30,000. Gradually the McKean County Poor Farm evolved into a



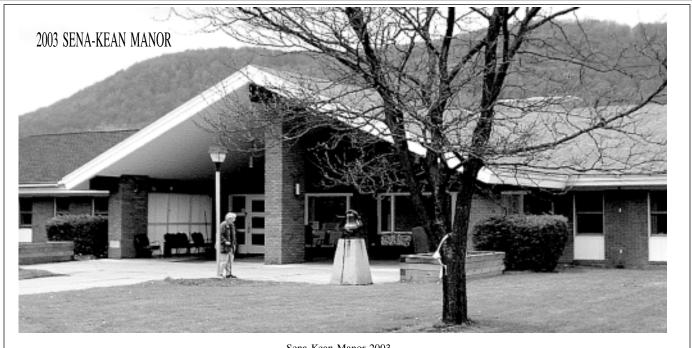
full service facility for the aged.

There have been 17 men who served as Superintendent since the Poor Farm was completed in 1885: E. F. Richmond, D. H. Burnham, John R. Chadwick, C. S. King, T. H. Ryan, Jonathan Colegrove, J. C. Brenneman, C. O. Taylor, William Taylor, William Hungerford, E. H. Lopus, Virgil Strang, N.H.A., Edgar Alexander N.H.A., Dennis Hazlak

McKean County Poor Farm

N.H.A., J. Scott Parisella N.H A., Terry D. Lopus N.H. A, James Neely N.H.A., Terry Lopus N.H.A. (again), Joan McAndrew N.H.A., and at present is Troy A. Smith N.H.A. Especially noteworthy were Ed and Audrey Lopus whose dedicated management served the home for 31 years. They met the needs of needy, poor, aged and infirmed with sincere efforts.

During the late 1960s state regulations required the construction of a new home. Through the efforts of Francis Quirk, Jr., and the Smethport Lions Club and Commissioners Ray Curtis, Russell Weston and Loretta Harrington, a superb all new 150 bed facility was completed in 1973 for a cost of \$2,500,000. Capably staffed in an ideal location and renamed to Sena-Kean, the facility is one of the gems of McKean County.



Sena-Kean Manor 2003

LAKEVIEW SENIOR CARE AND LIVING CENTER

Overlooking beautiful Hamlin Lake, Lakeview Senior Care and Living Center is the latest facility to address the needs of our community's seniors. The original facility, developed by the Wells family, was a nursing home until the 1960s. Charles and Kathryn (Sue) Stone purchased the home and expanded and renovated it into a modern 34-bed facility with two

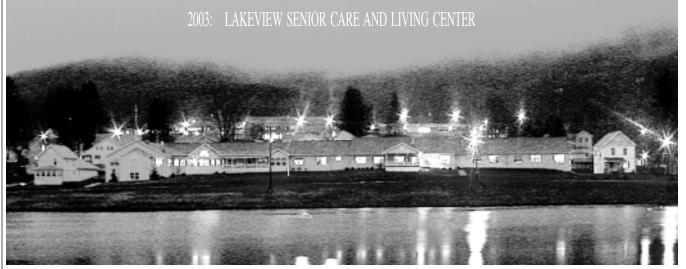


Photo ©2003 Les Jordan

new wings. Sue administered the facility following her husband's death until 1995. Guardian Elder Care, headquartered in Brockway, bought the facility, and made immense improvements, including the addition of a 20-bed personal care home. With its restaurant-style dining room and home-cooked meals, and individual, personal attention Lakeview provides a unique, hometown warmth.

CHAPTER XIX A TRIBUTE TO OUR ORGANIZATIONS

VETERANS ORGANIZATIONS

SMETHPORT AMERICAN LEGION BUCKTAIL POST #138 In 1919 a committee was formed by a group of Veterans in Smethport to begin the groundwork for the foundation of an American Legion Post. E. G. Potter was elected as the Founding Chairman Commander of the committee.

Bucktail Post #138 was officially chartered in 1920 with 98 members with Dr. William Ostrander serving as the first Post Commander. The newly formed Legion held its meetings in the Smethport Lyceum located on the corner of Mechanic and W. King Streets. The Lyceum was



Bucktail Post #138, 417 W. Main Street was dedicated in 1940. Photo ©2003 Les Jordan Jr.

purchased by the Legion in 1924 and sold in 1940 when the Legion moved into its newly constructed Post building at 417 W. Main Street. The new structure was a gift from Orlo J. Hamlin and Eugenia Merrell, both of Smethport.

The Legion has remained very active in the community from the time of its inception. It sponsors organizations such as the Legion Baseball Team, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, and Legionettes. It is involved annually in the Memorial Day Program and Parade, the Veterans Day Program, the Children's Christmas Program and holds an annual Christmas Party for all members. The Legion Memorial Honor Team performs military funerals for area veterans. The Legion "family" consists of the Legion Post, the Legion Bucktail Club, the Women's Auxiliary, the Sons of American Legion and the Post Social Members. The Post's 678 members work together to form a solid organization that has a very strong and important impact on the surrounding communities.

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS POST NO. 2497

Chartered in 1932, the first meeting of the Veterans of Foreign Wars Post No. 2497 was held in the Grand Jury Room of the Courthouse. The second meeting was held in Quirk's Hall, above Quirk's Ford garage (corner of Main and Union Streets). There were 58 charter members and six honorary members. James McCabe was elected the First and Third Commander. Jim later served many years as Smethport Chief of Police. Cecil "Zeke" Reynolds, the town mailman, was elected the Second Commander. Norman C. Hull, Sr. proprietor of the Wright House, was elected Fourth Commander. These men were WWI veterans.

Over an interval of years, the Post has changed quarters many times. It has headquartered at American Legion Lyceum, Wm. Monheimer's Clothing Building on the corner of Main and Fulton Streets (later destroyed by fire), and an unidentified two-room dwelling on Water Street (until it also was destroyed by fire). Starting in 1940 and continuing until it moved to its permanent home on Water Street. The Post also held meetings at the Wright House Hotel, corner of Main and Mechanic Streets. In 1946 the Wright House became Hull's Hotel (which was destroyed by fire on January 5, 1981).

In 1950 the Post rented two rooms, previously occupied by the Railway Express Company, in the basement of Hull's Hotel for clubrooms. Renovations were made, and a small bar installed. The club rooms and bar were open on weekends for members only, operating on the honor system. In 1952 the Post was issued a club license by the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board in the name of The McKean County Veterans Club, Inc. This license allowed the Post to accept social memberships into the club which continues today. Norman C. Hull, Sr. was elected the First President of the McKean County Veterans Club.

During 1954 the Post voted to purchase the Ed Stregal property on E. Water Street and started a campaign to raise funds to build the Post Home. In 1955 Fred Herriman and Son, a local contractor, was hired to design and start construction of the Post Home. In August 1955 the interior was completed by volunteer members and the facility was dedicated in September.

Additional Post Highlights

- 1932: six honorary members listed on the Post Charter were comprised of Oscar L. Chase, Homer N. Choate, James Sibert and Frank H. Wilson, living Civil War veterans, and Edward A Studholme and William Van Dyke as prominent WWI veterans.
- 1942: Theodore Petruzzi, US Marine Corp., home on leave from service in Iceland, was the first WWII veteran to be accepted. In April 1946 Israel Starsky became the first WWII veteran to be installed as Post Commander.
- 1952: a Post committee was appointed to work with the War Memorial Committee in the planning and construction of the Memorial Recreation Center swimming pool.
- 1959: an addition on the east and rear created a large meeting room and kitchen.
- 1985: the Ladies Auxiliary received its charter.
- 1997: a perpetual Post charter was awarded in recognition of attaining 25 life members.

Service Organizations

Smethport Area United Way

Recognizing a need to consolidate giving from borough area residents, the United Way had its beginning as the Community Chest in 1938 when O. J. Hamlin, president, and Raphael Kessler III, vice president, accepted the leadership. The initial goal was \$3,700, increasing in 1956 to \$8,300. On July 1, 1990, the all-volunteer organization was changed to the Smethport Area United Way with a goal of more than \$30,000.

Groups supported in the Smethport Area School District are: American Red Cross, Hamlin Memorial Library, The

Family Center, Senior Volunteer Programs, County Visiting Nurses Association, County Emergency Medical Services, Boy Scouts Troop 501 and Cub Scouts Pack 501, Keystone Tall Tree Girl Scouts, Smethport/Mt. Jewett Baseball-Softball Teams, Memorial Recreation Center Pool, McKean County Historical Society, County C.A.R.E. for Children, YWCA Victims' Resource Center, Futures Rehabilitation Center, Smethport Fire Department, Smethport Soccer Teams, and Christian Community Food Bank. Since 1990 the SAUW has collected over \$380,000. Barbara Thomas Maynard, current president, has served in this office for more than five years.

CONOPUS CLUB

Organized in 1919 at the Imperial Hotel with a group of 50 business representatives desiring to "better Smethport industrially and civicly" the club became involved in almost every activity of the borough for eighteen years. Their success in bringing electricity to Smethport in 1922 created one of the few municipal operated electric systems in the state. When many borough citizens were satisfied with gas lighting and against electrifying the town, they canvassed every single voter convincing them of the need for the system. They helped bring in the Marvel Toy Company and the McKean County Oil Refinery. Their efforts encouraged the 1936 construction of the King St. high school gymnasium when, during the depression, it seemed hopeless that it could ever be built. Many of the members helped organize the Smethport County Club. In sum, they may have been one of the most productive community minded groups that ever existed in Smethport. While their community efforts were successful, the national organization of Conopus Clubs never expanded to a sufficient number to sustain operation, and in 1938 Conopus Club became the Rotary Club.

SMETHPORT ROTARY CLUB

he Smethport Rotary Club was founded in 1938 by members of a "civic improvement club" known as the Conopus Club, founded in 1919 as one of thirty clubs in the Buffalo, NY area. 1938-1939 Club founding officers,

directors and members were: President, Charles W. Lillibridge; Vice President, Robert A. Digel, Sr.; Secretary, William Barnum; Treasurer, O. Albert Johnson; and Sergeant-at-Arms, William A. Ross. The first Directors were Antone M. Anderson, Chester Burt, Raphael Kessler, E. Gurdon Potter, and William H. Rockman.

Original Members: John J. Allison, Robert B. Apple, Bernard Ball, Stanley Bright, C. C. Choate, J. Albert Cleveland, Edward J. Conwell, Stanford L. Fry, Fred Gallup, Ralph W. Herzog, Phillip H. Hickey, Charles G. Hubbard, Leonard B. Johnson, J. Alfred Johnson, Edward R. Kohn, Herbert C. Larson, Russell Lindsley, John V. McAlpin, L. E. Munn, Francis J. Quirk, Harry S. Rubin, Claude W. Shattuck., W. E. Van Dyke, Joseph P. Willson.

Two Rotarians from the Port Allegany club, James Isherwood and Howard Herger, persuaded the Conopus members to form a Rotary Club, and the charter was presented on May 25, 1938, to thirty-five members at a celebration in the basement of the Methodist Church. Local businessmen and professionals were attracted by the international character of the Rotary Clubs and the "service above self" motto.

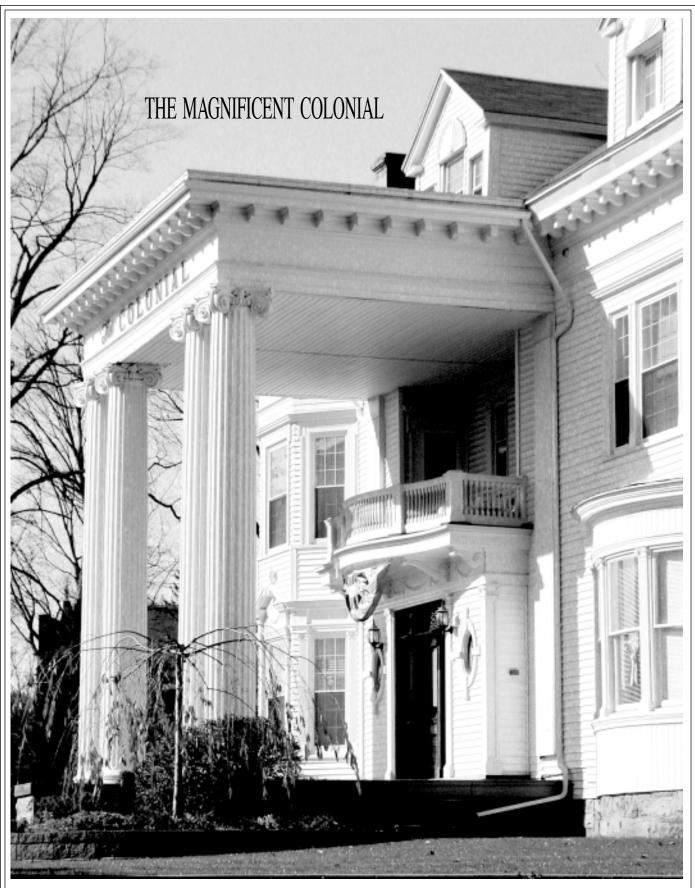
At first, the Rotary Club met for weekly dinners at the Colonial Hotel. After a few years, the meetings were moved to lunchtime, and featured informative programs at each



session on topics of local, state or national interest. At periodic picnics and dinners, "Rotary Anns", the wives of members, were invited to participate. In May 1991, however, following the example of International Rotary, the local club welcomed three women members: Deborah Lundin, Marcia Shuman, and Deborah Willson Babcox, the daughter of one of the 1938 founders. Women have continued to participate and Marcia Shuman is the current president.

Over the years the Rotary Club members have been active supporters of the Community Chest, the precursor of United Way. The club members have also always supported the McKean County Society for Crippled Children (now McKean County CARE). In the early days this organization aided many children affected by polio, and the local Rotary Club has continued to raise money through the years to support the international club's PolioPlus program to eradicate polio via inoculation. The club still has an active association with CARE sponsoring a local Christmas party for CARE children.

One of the first purely local projects the club sponsored was the establishment of a ice skating rink at a location near the present location of Smethport Collision (Mechanic Street) in December 1938. In 1941, members began work to bring an airport

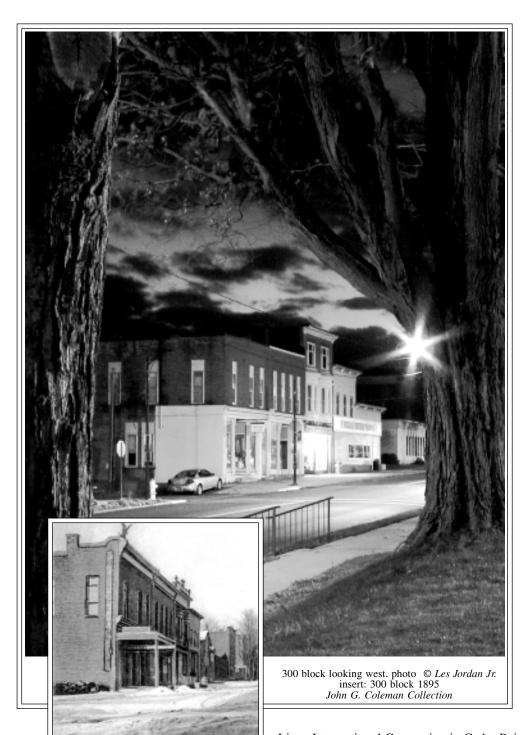


The Rotary Club originally met at the Colonial Hotel. Built in 1904 by Charles McKean as a private residence, the mansion was converted to a hotel in 1931. In 1986, Thomas Kolivoski purchased the Colonial and converted it into a luxury apartment complex. Brian Gustafson purchased the Colonial in 2000. Photo © Les Jordan Jr.

to the area and worked throughout World War II on blood and clothing drives. The club paid for buses to transport local children twice a week to Port Allegany's pool from 1945 to 1952, when a committee began working to raise money for the Memorial Recreation Swimming Pool.

Over the years the club has sponsored many dinners, concerts, fund raising events, Smethport Community Days, scholarships for study abroad and exchange students. Recently Rotary has operated a recycling program, sponsored a wholesale food cooperative, organized summer basketball tournaments for area youth, and sponsored events during the Hamlin Lake Festival. During 2002 the club constructed a skateboarding rink in Hamlin Lake Park.

2002-2003 officers are President Marcia Shuman; Vice President, Troy Herzog; Secretary, Joy Ammerman; Treasurer, Richard Burt.



SMETHPORT LIONS CLUB rganized Sept. 25, 1951, the Smethport Lions Club had 29 charter members. Hugh Fry served as the club's first President.

Meetings were the first and third Mondays at 6:30 p.m. in the Travelers Club building on State Street.

Charter Members included: William L. Barton; Lawrence F. Bruner; Samuel D. Costa; Barkley B. Daugherty; Kenneth Daugherty; Everett Engstrom; Holger A. Engstrom; Hugh C. Fry; Robert Glarner; Woodrow W. Gosney; Fritz E. Guenter, M.D.; W. Hall; Donald M. Herzog; William G. Hungiville; Charles A. Johnson; W. E. Kerr; Harold L. Lindquist; Keith H. Loucks; Alexander H. McKay; Lauren F. Mix; Carl Alof Peterson; Lawrence C. Robey Jr.; Anthony D. Ross; George B. Sharro; Theodore Vesper; Russell G. Wells; Howard A. Wright; Norman A. Zwald.

The International Association of Lions Clubs began as the dream of Chicago businessman Melvin Jones in 1917. In 1925, Helen Keller addressed the

Lions International Convention in Cedar Point, Ohio, USA. She challenged Lions to become "knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness." Since that time, Lions Clubs have been actively involved in service to the blind and visually impaired.

Broadening its global role, Lions Clubs International helped the United Nations form the Non-Governmental Organizations sections in 1945 and continues to hold consultative status with the U.N. In 1990, Lions launched its most aggressive sight preservation effort, SightFirst. The US \$143.5 million program strives to rid the world of preventable and reversible blindness by supporting desperately needed health care services.

In addition to sight programs, Lions Clubs International is committed to support diabetes education, conduct hearing programs and, through their foundation, provide disaster relief around the world. Clubs International has grown to include 1.4 million men and women in 44,600 chapters located in 190 countries and geographic areas.

Locally, the Smethport Lions Club sponsors vision programs for the needy, as well as a variety of committee projects. 2002-2003 officers for the Smethport Lions Club include Ross Porter, President; Scott Dickerson, Secretary; and C.

Russell Johnson, Treasurer.

SMETHPORT AREA WOMEN'S CLUB

he club was established in 1987 with the vision to "promote the interest of women and encourage volunteer services to the community." The club was not to be affiliated with any political party or for-profit organization.

Paula Trulick served as the first president and Elaine Peterson as treasurer. Other founding members were Ruth Meade, Doris Shelander and Stella Billitier.

The Club's annual focus is a scholarship that is awarded to an individual pursuing higher education. The scholarship began as a \$300 cash gift and has grown to \$1,000 in 2003. Two scholarships are occasionally distributed. The original scholarship went to a graduate of the Smethport Area High School, but in recent years the bank of applicants has expanded to include the Otto-Eldred Area High School. The recipient must exemplify the vision of the Club with emphasis on community service, academics and financial need. The Club is known for its



many donations through the years to various organizations throughout McKean County. They range from the McKean County Special Olympics, Hamlin Memorial Library, Memorial Recreation Center Pool Fund, Children and Youth Christmas Fund, to other donations for private individuals in need.

2003 officers are President Linda Huntington, Vice President Barb Peterson, Secretary Sharon Snyder and Treasurer Jan Knight.

SMETHPORT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE HELPS LEAD RENAISSANCE

uring the 1950s the Smethport Chamber of Commerce worked diligently in attempting to encourage industry to locate in the community. Especially active were Mrs. J. Alfred Johnson and Mrs. Ora Palmer. In the late 1960s Jaguar Manufacturing, maker of men's clothing, was brought to Smethport. This was through the efforts of four individuals: Hugh Fry, Emil Johnson, Charlie Crockett and Elmer Quirk. Jaguar Manufacturing remained in Smethport until the



The Smethport Chamber of Commerce organized the SesquicentennialSteering Committee to plan an historic Smethport 150th Birthday extravaganza.

late 1980s.

About 1982 Francis Quirk contacted Robert and Connie Lovell, owners of America's First Christmas Store, seeking their assistance in reorganizing the Chamber of Commerce, which had been dormant for several years. Through the efforts of the Lovells, 40 businesses were represented at the reorganization meeting. In addition to the Lovells, other leaders were Terry Palmer, Harold Lindgren and Judy Wright.

New sidewalks and new street lights were the Chamber's first priorities. Penny Eddy, Director of McKean County Redevelopment and Housing Authority, assisted in acquiring grant monies to offset a portion of the expenses of the project. During Harold Lindgren's

(Lindgren's Variety Store) tenure as president in the late 1980s, the new sidewalks were installed in the business district along



with new benches, refuse cans, and Christmas lights were purchased for Main Street.

Other activities introduced during this period included the annual Easter Egg Hunt, and the Community Light-up Night. The most important community promotion activity during this period was the Hamlin Lake Festival, which expanded the Smethport Fire Department's Community Celebration. The most recent Hamlin Lake Festival was held during June 2000.

During 1990 Bob Berne (Berne's Beauty Shop) became president and continued most of the programs initiated during the 1980s. The Chamber also sponsored recognition events for championship Hubber football teams. The Chamber members even chaperoned the after prom parties for the high school.

Other presidents included Paul Hite, Superintendent of the Smethport Area School District; John Keith, owner of the Smethport Diner, and Debbie Linnan. During Debbie's presidency, Phillis Barnhart initiated and chaired the Hometown



Phillis Barnhart initiated and chaired the Hometown Holidays tradition for the Smethport Chamber of Commerce. Photo © Les Jordan Jr.

Holidays tradition. This celebration has included an adult community choral concert, historic home visitations, a parade, breakfast with Santa Claus for the little ones, community dance, as well as Light-up Night activities.

The Chamber's current president, Patty Peterson Witchen, began serving during 2002. Under Patty's leadership the Chamber expanded the Hometown Holidays celebration, increased its organizational visibility and became a key member of the Allegheny National Forest Vacation Bureau led by the dynamic Linda Devlin.

Through the initiative of the Smethport Chamber of Commerce, the Sesquicentennial Steering Committee was organized during 2002 to plan an historic Smethport 150th Birthday extravaganza.



The Chamber of Commerce has enhanced its community role under President Patty Peterson Witchen's dynamic leadership. ©Les Jordan Jr.

JAYCEES CREATED LONG-TERM COMMUNITY IMPACT

SMETHPORT AREA JAYCEES

rganized in 1970, the Jaycees consisted of men 18-35 years of age with a spirit of genuine Americanism and civic interest. The group's first project was community beautification. Twenty-six benches were placed throughout the town, swinging bridges at Hamlin Lake Park were repaired, and flowering crabapple trees were planted along Main Street.

The Jaycees lived up to the statement in their creed "service to humanity is the best work of life." Some of their yearly projects included the Halloween parade, volunteer work and the pizza booth at the McKean County Fair, highway litter cleanup, food baskets, March of Dimes campaign, drug abuse programs, Fairview Cemetery cleanup, Easter Egg Hunt, Special Olympics, Hamlin Lake Park dedication ceremony and movie nights at the elementary school.

The Jaycees made a significant impact on the area with the following being awarded lifetime memberships as Pennsylvania Jaycee Senators: Dale Elliott, Warren Semmel, Robert Dunn, and Karl Fitzsimmons. The well respected group received many state awards and were known as a group willing to make things happen.

SMETHPORT AREA JAYCEE WIVES

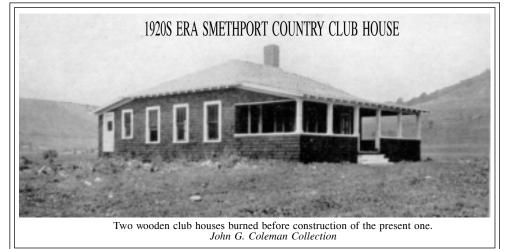
In 1971 a small group of women met to organize an auxiliary of the Smethport Area Jaycees with a charter being issued during February 1972. Members attended the Pennsylvania State Convention in 1973 where the group received the Outstanding First Year Award for the entire state. This was just the beginning of a long list of awards.

During the first year, nine projects were completed with another 60 following later. Diverse projects included: Sena-Kean Manor and playing bingo with the residents, delivering Christmas and Easter baskets for elderly and needy, sponsoring Brownie and Girl Scout troops, helping at McKean County Fair, conducting the Adopt a Grandfather program at local nursing homes, initiating Mr. Yuk poison information program, TOT Finders fire safety program, and many others.

SOCIAL & HOBBY ORGANIZATIONS

SMETHPORT COUNTRY CLUB

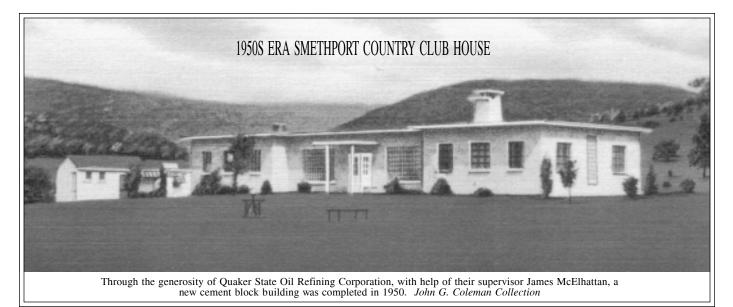
n January 1921, the *McKean County Miner* announced, "A golf club is being organized by local men there being about 75 who have declared themselves favorable to membership. E. E. Drake, who is an ardent golf enthusiast is one of the organizers." The 165 acre Brennan farm just west of Smethport, formerly used to graze carloads of western cattle during the summer for fall sale, was purchased. Through the warm months twenty men and seven teams



constructed the first six holes with local boys being employed at 10 cents an hour to remove stones from the fairways. Fifty dollars bought a membership and one share of stock. Members were expected to work. In 1922 when a "volunteer work day" produced only one person Judge Bouton, club president, issued a writ compelling every member to appear on the grounds. A bottle of liniment

was offered as a prize for the best worker but it is said that Judge Bouton used most of it.

Harry Rubin is reported to have scored the first hole-in-one. E. A. Studholme, president of the Grange Bank, was the first golf casualty, when he was struck above the right eye by his guest's golf ball. Some of the names of the first members



are Allison, Apple, Brownell, Ball, Brasted, Digel, Hungerford, Redfield, Guncheon, Kessler, Lindholm, McCoy, Quirk, and strangely the Catholic Church.

Two wooden club houses burned before construction of the present one. Through the generosity of Quaker State Oil Refining Corporation, with help of their supervisor James McElhattan, a new cement block building was completed in 1950. Richard "Pitt" Raymond became the pro and club manager at that time.

In 1989 a fire in the golf cart storage barn destroyed all the carts and the entire building. A new cart storage barn was built the following year.

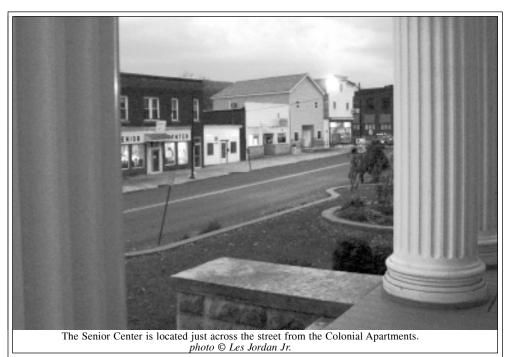
The nine fairway course with alternate tees making it an eighteen hole course enjoys considerable play. Social days, frequent tournaments, scrambles, couple's club activities, and use by Smethport Area and Otto-Eldred High School golf teams, make it a major community attraction.

SMETHPORT SENIOR CENTER & ELDER-BERRIES CLUB

The center is the hub of activities for seniors. The Senior Center at 119 W. Main St. first opened in 1973 and at

that time housed offices of Late Start and RSVP. On November 30, 1973 the Elder-Berries Club was organized with 149 members and incorporated in 1978. Leo Remington was the first president and officers were installed by Mayor C. Russell Johnson. The first open house was held in March 1974 and a nutritional meals program was started during April 1974.

Some of the services provided at the center include: nutritional meals, transportation for shopping and doctor appointments with ATA buses, blood



pressure checks, education in nutrition and health, income tax assistance, as well as tax and rent rebate assistance.

Historically the center was utilized as a distribution point for surplus foods, and continues to offer community projects,

most recently SHARE foods. There is on-going craft activities with the items made offered for sale at the center. Sale of these items helps support the continuation of center activities. In addition to craft activities, computer training is offered to the members.

A Memorial Fund is in place for donations for loved ones you wish to remember.

During the 2003 Smethport Sesquicentennial, the Senior Center is organizing a series of fun time activities especially for that week. These activities include a "Skit-a-Day", music from the Senior Center Kitchen Band, and ice cream sundaes at the "Original Sweet Shop" counter.

Smethport Garden & Crafts Club

uring 1978 the first meeting of the AARP Garden Club met in the Senior Center. The following temporary officers were elected: Myra Catania, President; Vera Heron, Vice President; Dora Fox, Secretary; Ruth Huntzinger, Treasurer. That same year a constitution and by-laws were written, and the group was officially chartered. Meetings are usually held in member's homes or in local churches. The first elected president was Ruth Huntzinger. The AARP was dropped from the Club name in 1979 and became simply the Smethport Garden Club.

The Club participates in a number of projects to help enhance the beauty and activities of Smethport. Present day officers are Phillis Barnhart, President; Pat Long, Vice President; Debbie Tufts, Secretary; Margaret Berkwater, Treasurer; and Marilyn Bethel, Sunshine Secretary.

Youth Organizations SMETHPORT: HOME OF ONE OF THE NATION'S VERY FIRST SCOUT TROOPS



1911 Members of this pioneeer troop of Smethport Boy Scouts were: Hamlin Burdick, Gerald Denning, Carlton Kohn, Milton Green, Lamont Means, John Malcom, Noel Green, Raymond Baine, Lloyd Kohn, Ralph Norman and Raphael Kessler. *Troop 501 Archives*

methport was one of the nation's very first Scouting towns. In February 1910 millionaire Chicago publisher William Dickson Boyce chartered the Boy Scouts of America in Washington DC. The following year, 1911, Dr. J. V. McAlpin began the first Boy Scout troop in Smethport. The scouts met in the basement of the McKean County Jail. The original troop consisted of twelve boys and Scoutmaster McAlpin.

It was not until October 14, 1913, that Troop 1 of Smethport was officially registered with the national Boy Scouts of America headquarters. Only three boys from the original troop, Raphael Kessler, John Malcolm, and Hamlin Burdick continued in scouting and registered with this new troop. Rev. O. Greg Hutchinson, Regular Baptist Church pastor from 1913-1915 served as the new Scoutmaster. Meetings were held in the basement of the Baptist Church located on the southeast corner of Hill and King Streets. Twenty-nine boys joined Smethport's first nationally registered troop in 1913.

Members of Troop 1 included: Joe Amster, Reginald Bruner, Ronald Bruner, Roy Burch, Hamlin Burdick, Dwight Butzer, Leonard Carlson, Lawrence Dunbar, Kenneth Foot, Orville Halpenny, Earl Herzog, Harold Howard, Raphael Kessler, Harold Lemmler, Edwin Lindholm, John Malcolm, Glade Mencer, Glenn Mencer Sr., Herbert Monheimer, Donald Provin, Frank Reeves, Ralph Rice, Tom Ryan, William Taylor, Lloyd Thorton, Leroy Waite, Edward Welch, John L. Welch and Craig Workley.

The advisory committee behind the troop consisted of Edgar W. Strong, William F. Specht and C.W. Lillibridge.

During 1924 Smethport chartered a second Boy Scout Troop named Troop 2. Troop 2 was sponsored by the United Methodist Church and C. W. Lillibridge served as Scoutmaster.

The Boy Scout Camp was moved from Brocton, New York in 1924-25 to Camp Dekanawida, 2 miles east of Colegrove on the Heinemann estate. The camp name was chosen by a list submitted by the Honorable Rufus Stone and was taken from the Seneca Indian language meaning "the junction of two mountain streams". A large mess hall and kitchen were erected, and a parade ground cleared. Tents were pitched and an old-fashioned swimming hole located nearby. Fifty-two boys attended the first term of camp that year. In 1926 the facility was moved to Camp Shinnawanna, near Port Allegany.

In 1948 the 1500 acre Memorial Scout Reservation, Farmers Valley, PA, was purchased by the Allegany Highlands Council from the H. H. Green estate at a cost of over \$28,000. The Central Lodge was built in 1952. Later, the reservation was renamed Elk Lick Scout Reserve. Instrumental in the purchase of the Memorial Scout Reservation and subsequent development was Orlo J. Hamlin, son of Henry. Orlo entered scouting in 1925 and served on the area council as well as the council administrator.

SMETHPORT SCOUTMASTERS

Records indicate the following Scoutmasters serving the troops over the years are as follows:

1911-1912 - Dr. J. V. McAlpin 1913-1914 - Rev. O. Greg Hutchinson 1915-1917 - Louis Sterrett 1918-1921-Dr. Alvie R. Livermore 1922-1923 - Paul Hallstrom 1924-1925 - Harry Hellman 1926-1927 E.G. Potter 1928-1930 - Harry Hellman, William Nellis, Raphael Kessler 1933-1939 - Dr. Jack H. Clarke 1943 - Fred Hallstrom 1948 - Fred H. Muhitch 1956-1958 - Donald Peterson 1959-1960 - Kenneth E. Johnson 1960-1961 - Theodore Hart; Explorer Post #1

1959-1961 - Leonard Johnson Advisor 1961-1963 - William Barton 1963-1965 - Dan Ness 1966-1967 - Robert E. Miller, Sr. 1968-1969 - William Covert Jr. 1970-1971 Seth R. Digel 1971-1972 - Bob Patton 1975-1977 - Edward Coyle 1977-1979 - Wally Speedy 1980-1982 - Reid Matteson 1982-1986 - Bill Ford 1986-1989 - Warren E. Semmel 1990 - J. Harold Anglovich 1990-1991 - Robert Roberts 1991-2003 - Scott Dickerson

Following a period of dormancy during the war years of the 1940s the troop was revived in 1956 by Donald Peterson and has been in continual existence since that time.

GIRL SCOUTS

Girl Scouting in Smethport began about 1918, but early records are no longer in existence.

The McCamPo (McKean Cameron Potter) Girl Scout Council office was relocated to 605 W. Main St., Smethport (the present Angell law office) beginning 1961-1962. Secretary of the council office was Mary McKay of Smethport. There was a Brownie Troop, a Junior Troop (also called Intermediates) and a Senior Troop.

From 1955-1977 the Girl Scout Council operated two properties located near the Bradford Regional Airport. These were Camp Kil-O-Qua and Duffy Lodge. The Council was restructured to consolidate services with Keystone Tall Tree Girl Scout Council in 1974. A new program property was built in Hutchins named "Resting Waters".

In 1963 the Senior Troop went to New York City "Worlds Fair" and in 1967 the Senior Troop went to Expo '67 in Canada. Following the sale of the McCamPo headquarters office about 1969, the Council moved to the second floor of the Hamlin Bank building. They were there a year and a half until Council consolidation closed the office.

Former McCamPo directors were Margaret Hileman, Ruth "Jo" Lundgren, Sylvia Herzog and Robert Apple. Former directors from Smethport to Keystone Tall Tree Girl Scouts Council are Jack and Mary Pierotti and Julie Lovell. Lovell was among the first girl members elected to the Board of Directors.



1952: BIRTH OF SMETHPORT LITTLE LEAGUE

1952: FIRST YEAR TEAM; Members of the first Smethport Little League team: Front Row: L to R: Galen "Spike" Mitchell, Cory Guenter, Joss Megivern, Joel Warfle, Sam Costa, Art Yeager, Back Row: Tom Abbey, Walter "Bucky" Russell, Edward Jennings, Frederick "Bunny" O'Connor, Gary Hayes, Frank Faes, Wilford Cunningham

Smethport Little League as well as the Babe Ruth baseball program both had their starts in 1952. Smethport joined with three other teams to form a league: Smethport, Otto-Eldred, Coryville, and East Smethport. The Smethport team was called the "Cubs" and managed by Shine Russell and Ed Warfle. Otto-Eldred's manager was Bob Fuss and East Smethport's managers 168

were Stuck Abbey and John McGavisk. The head of the entire league was Howard O'Connor. All of the games were scheduled to play on the west end of McCoy Stadium.

In 1953, the second year of the league, Bill McGavisk served as Smethport's new manager. In the following year the manager was changed again to Harold Lynch. During this time Smethport–Mount Jewett team was formed. By the end of 1954, Smethport, East Smethport, Smethport–Mount Jewett, Cyclone, Rew, Coryville, and Otto-Eldred were all playing for the love of the game.

Little Bigger League, organized baseball for boys ages 13-15, also began in 1952. The first coach was Ernie Conn. All of the Smethport area players were called the Community of Smethport Team.

In 1955 Margaret and Earl Iddings from Crosby chartered the McKean Potter Babe Ruth League. Teams included Smethport, Crosby, Otto Township, Eldred, Rew, and Coryville. The league won the district championships in 1957, 1962, and 1968. The Pennsylvania State Babe Ruth Tournament was held at McCoy Stadium in Smethport during the summer of 1980.

Babe Ruth baseball, for ages 13-15, became Senior Little League Baseball in 1994 for five years and in 1999 returned back to the McKean Potter Babe Ruth League. That league continues today and includes the following teams: Smethport, East Smethport, Mount Jewett, Port Allegany, Roulette, Coudersport, Austin, and Shinglehouse.

SMETHPORT MEMORIAL RECREATION CENTER

uring early 1953 citizens of Smethport circulated a petition which garnered 692 signatures in support of the construction of a public pool. On July 27, 1953 the Smethport Borough gave deed to the Smethport Memorial Recreation Center. In August 1953 just above McCoy Stadium on W. Willow Street a bulldozer donated by the Heinemann Estate and operated by Andy Rifle, broke ground for the War Memorial Swimming Pool. The \$37,000 pool was originally a living memorial to the heroic dead from the Smethport area who fought in all of our wars. Chester Burt was the first President; Mary Digel, Vice President; Virgil Herriman, Treasurer; Hugh Fry, Secretary. The pool officially opened on

Memorial Day in 1955.

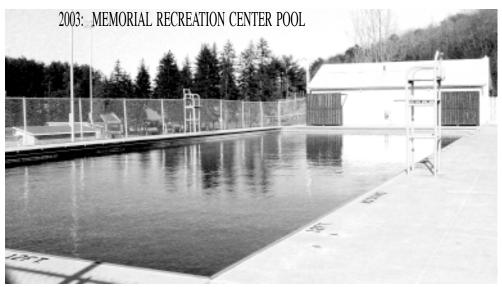
In 1985 the pool was closed for three years while extensive renovations were completed. With local funding of \$125,000 and a matching state grant, the original steel pool was removed and a new gunite one installed. The baby pool located in the southeast corner was eliminated permitting the entire pool area to be used for swimming meets. The concrete surrounding the



1955 Dedication Ribbon Cutting: The dedication ceremony for the Memorial Recreation Swimming Pool was not held until 1955. Present at the cermony (Left to Right) Rev. Cecil Ross, Elaine Palmer, Pat Hileman, Mary Digel, Chief Burgess John Lindholm, Hugh Fry, Betty Thomas, Virgil Herriman, Ronabell Mix, Father Joseph Grode, Charles Lillibridge, far rear right: Judy Thomas (now Wright). Judy Thomas Wright Collection

pool was raised above the street level which stopped street water from draining into the pool. All this was completed under the direction of president Gene Trip and vice president Linda Lake.

In 2003 the officers of the Memorial Recreation Center are: President, Anthony Alfieri; Treasurer, Tom Ball; Secretary,



©Lester Jordan Jr.



2002 SMETHPORT LEGIONETTES DRILL TEAM Vicky Dunkle Collection

Karen Scott; Directors, Bernie Reap, Gloria Zibilich, Brenda Young, Linda Lake, and Joncine Willis.

A plague commemorating the pool reads: In grateful remembrance of Smethport area residents who answered their country's call in time of war. As we enjoy blessings their valor won we will not forge.

> Smethport American Legion

Post 138, the team was formed in 1998 by Vicky Dunkle, drill team leader.

Uniform colors are red, white and blue to represent our country. In

parade competition, they have won eight first place, six second place, and four third place awards. The group has



Shaina Dunkle 1990-2001

grown from 16 members to over 40. The group consists of flags, rifles, hoop twirlers, and a group of pom pomettes. The ages range from four years to sixteen years old.

SMETHPORT AREA YOUTH SOCCER ASSOCIATION

he group was organized in 2000 to introduce the sport of soccer and provide an outdoor activity for local youth during the fall season. The program initially began with 140 children, ages 4 thru 11, on 13 teams and has

200 children on 16 teams, ages 4 thru 14.

grown to serve

Children ages 4 thru 9 practice and play their games on the two small soccer fields in McCoy Stadium. Games are scheduled on Saturday mornings during September and October. The 10 thru 14 age groups practice and play



their games on the soccer field across from Regular Baptist Church on Saturday afternoons during September and October.

Current board members include Jean Stratton, Gay Hughes, Laura Lord, Judy Healy, Scott Ambler, Dave Stratton, Bruce

Nelson and Tim Hofferber. The association has a long-term goal of purchasing land to build a soccer complex that will centralize all activities.

Public Organizations

HAMLIN MEMORIAL LIBRARY

The public library was founded in 1892 and operated out of the borough school on King Street under the name Hamlin Library. Many people still remember the devoted Miss Carrie Day and Miss Martha Colegrove, who served as librarians for many years. In 1967 the library moved to the basement of the Masonic Building located at the corner of Church and Main Streets under the direction of Librarian Dorothy Feit. With the move the library became an entity of the Borough and changed its name to "Smethport Public Library".



Architectural design for the Hamlin Memorial Library was completed by talented Smethport native Jeffrey Brown and contractor of the new facility was William G. Jarrett. Jarrett, a high quality Smethport builder, was also contractor for the new Mechanic Street Bridge. photo © Les Jordan Jr.

In 1985 the library moved to 111 West Main Street with Donna Puller as librarian. At that time circulation and the number of patrons greatly increased. When the lease expired in 1991, the Library Board decided that a new permanent home should be constructed. Land was



Inside Hamlin Library © Les Jordan Jr.

purchased at 123 S. Mechanic Street. A new \$225,000 Hamlin Memorial Library building was constructed by Smethport contractor Bill Jarrett. With the increased space and the addition of six computers for Internet and personal use, the library again



vastly increased its public use. Lorine Rounsville is the current librarian assisted by Nancy Swort and volunteers. Harriet Rockefeller who has served the library 1968, continues to provide her expert assistance.

MCKEAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY & MUSEUM; RICH HISTORY & HUGE MOVE

The county's first historical society was organized in 1901, largely through the efforts of Bradford attorney, historian and author Rufus B. Stone. The group received its charter in 1902. At that time it was located in the
 Carnegie Library, in Bradford, and while officially entitled McKean County Historical Society, it was generally

known as the "Bradford Society" with a purpose of collecting memorabilia and historical documents from Bradford's past. Within the county, from 1902 to 1939 other historical societies were organized. Two of these were the Canoe Place Historical Society of Port Allegany and the Governor Thomas McKean Historical Society organized in Smethport in 1938. On April 23, 1940, the Canoe Place Historical Society merged with the Governor Thomas McKean Historical Society. The initial officers elected were Russell B. Lindsley, President; Mrs. Bertha Hall Helmer, Vice-President; C.W. Lillibridge, Recording Secretary; Mrs. Belle Lauer, Corresponding Secretary; MCKEAN COUNTY JAIL 1895 R. B. Stone in 1890 History of McKean, Potter & Elk Counties Beers ©1890 ACCESSOR. Bradford Landmark Society Collection

and Mrs. Belle Stull Tanner, Treasurer. The newly-merged organization was named the Governor Thomas McKean Historical Society, with curators Richard Shattuck of Smethport, James Helmer of Port Allegany and Mrs. Ethel Baker of Eldred. The society agreed to hold quarterly meetings annually. James Helmer, Richard Shattuck and L.W. Barton drafted the constitution and by-laws.

On April 15, 1941, the one year old Governor Thomas McKean Historical Society merged with Bradford's society to form the "McKean County Historical Society." This merger took place at a meeting held at the Smethport Methodist Church. To support this union the county commissioners allocated space in the courthouse basement that would be large enough to house the united historical groups. It was felt a central location in the county better served its goal as a county-wide organization. Russell Lindsley was elected as the merged organizations' first president. Following the death of President Lindsley, Mr. Helmer assumed the position. The elections in January saw J. E. Henretta of Kane chosen President, Ed Guenter of Coryville First Vice-President; L.W. Barton of Smethport, Recording Secretary; C. W. Lillibridge, Corresponding Secretary, and Mrs. Bertha Hall Helmer of Port Allegany, Historian. The three curators were all re-elected. The society moved into the former offices of the McKean County Sheriff and built display cases for its newly merged collections.

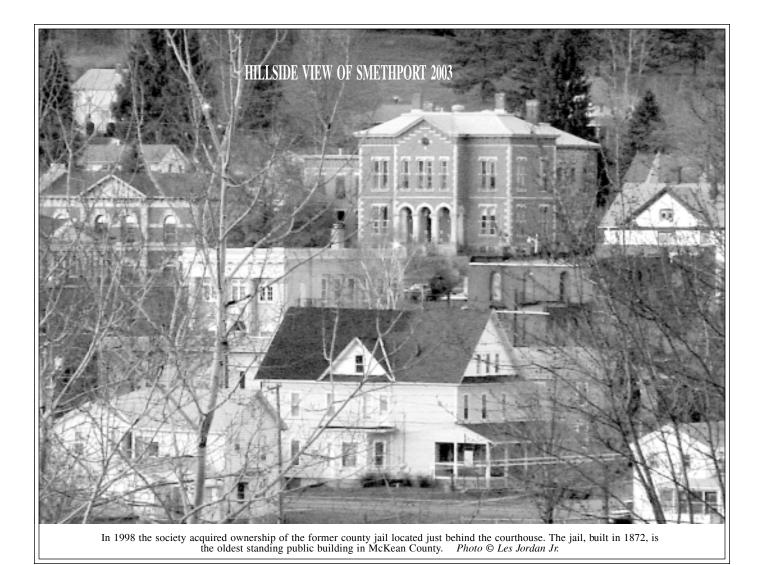
According to McKean County Historical Society Historian, Bertha Helmer, "Judge F. P. Schoonmaker, the last living

member, now on the present Board of Trustees, gave power of attorney to Capt. O.W. Koester to turn over all the effects of the Bradford Society to the new organization upon their given promise to care for the same and to preserve the objects and traditions of the early County Society. This presentation included their name, their constitution and by-laws, and charter."

In 1976, in order to honor our country's Bicentennial, the organization built a new display area in the basement of the courthouse. The displays were transformed from a disorganized warehouse crammed with items collected for 75 years, to an award-winning museum with exhibits emphasizing the history of glass, oil, lumbering and railroading in the county.

McKean County Commissioner and Historical Society President Russell Weston appointed a committee of volunteers to renovate the museum. Smethport Elementary art teacher, Martha Nelson, designed the displays and sketched most of the exhibits. Mrs. Donald Herzog publicized the museum work and secured donations. The major donation was \$1000 from the Smethport Lions Club, which aided in the construction of three of the major exhibits.

Tom Barber spent months photographing and cataloging each item for reference and security, and did research for



authenticity. He also built the railroad and early tool exhibits. Margaret Wright did most of the work on the early kitchen exhibit. Almost every item in that exhibit predates 1850. Former librarian Martha Colegrove organized the museum's books with Museum Curator Marian McKean adding her expertise on the significance of the items and their historical importance.

James Sample assisted in the organization and indexing of thousands of documents. Others instrumental in 1976 renovation were Sally Ryan (Costik), present Curator of the Bradford Landmark Society, Anne Schueltz, Herbert and Norma Pettenati, Joe Sayers, Florence Wright, Chuck Bennett, Joe Bruner, and Gerald Nelson. The wildlife exhibit was prepared by the Crosby 4-H with Bob Murphy and David Comes, and an 1883 diorama of the Mechanicsburg area of Smethport by Lester Jordan Jr. These exhibits won the Albert Corey and S. K. Stevens Awards for imagination and ingenuity. Later a library was made available for patrons doing historical and genealogical work.

In 1998 the society acquired ownership of the former county jail located just behind the courthouse. The jail, built in 1872, is the oldest standing public building in McKean County. This giant task that required enormous effort and coordination to accomplish. By 2002 the renovations had reached the stage that allowed the museum and genealogy library to be relocated in



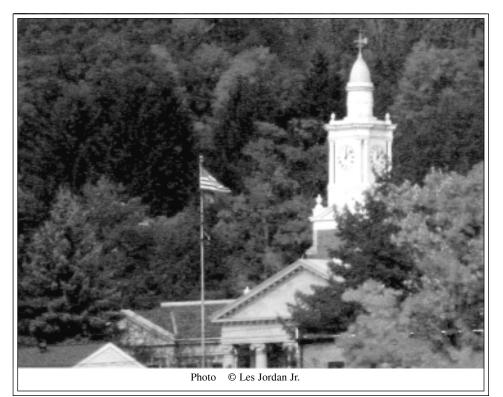
the new facility. Renovations are scheduled to be completed during 2003. Committee Chairpersons for the Old Jail Renovation and Relocation of the McKean County Museum are as follows: Building Reconstruction, Connie and Larry Eaton; Dismantle Civil War Display, American Legion Post 138; Dismantle General Store and Country Kitchen displays, Crosby Grange; Dismantle Glass Display, Jerry and Marty Einloth; Dismantle Oil Display, Robert and Pat Rogge; Dismantle School and Victorian Displays, Retired Teachers; Feature Rooms Setup, Flo and Sonny Carter; General Move, Cork Hull and Jim McKean; Grants and Aids, Eileen McKean; Gun Display Setup, Bernie Hammond; Liason with the County Officers, Larry Stratton; Library Move, Mary Elizabeth Dibble and Betty Ostrander; Library Setup, Ron and Jo Anne Tyson; Main Museum and Lumber Setup, Ruth and Al Covert; Railroad Room Setup, Dick and Elsie Robertson; Relocation of Archive Material, Edward Dunn; Sewing Needs, Ann Leffler; Town Picture Displays, Bruce Washburn; Weaving Room Setup, Jim Baker; and Wildlife Setup,

Crown Mortgage Services, Inc. Many others provided help and service.

The mission of the McKean County Historical Society is to provide a visual, educational and genealogical history of McKean County and to provide the services and assistance needed to further explore and understand its place in history. To date the society's collection has more than 7,500 items documenting our communities, industries, schools, government, military involvement, wildlife and other aspects of our culture. The continuation of the society's mission and ideals are achieved across generations through the dedication of many volunteers who believe in the value and support of historical preservation.

2003 MCKEAN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS & BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

George Berkwater, President; Connie Eaton, Vice President; Stella Billitier, Secretary; Carolyn Baker, Treasurer; Larry Eaton, Director; Jim Baker, Director; Larry Stratton, Director; Eileen McKean, Director; Betty Ostrander, Director; Dick Robertson, Director; Elsie Robertson, Director; Rita Ebert, Director; Charles Dach, Director; John Marconi, Director.



SMETHPORT HISTORY ORGANIZATION (SMETHPORTHISTORY.ORG)

n 1998 Smethport Area High School teacher Ross Porter and a group of his students attended the McKean County Historical Society Annual Dinner. They sought the support of the historical society to assist the high school and the Greater Smethport community to construct a giant, on-line "virtual historical geography" website. The project became a combined effort which joined students, community members and former Smethport residents into an evolving historical project. Hundreds of donors offered their personal photo collections to be scanned by the school organization. The



McKean County Historical Society has been a key contributor of many historically significant photographs included in the project. Contributions are acknowledged under each photo as well as on a special Contributor's Page. The phenomenal interest in the "Planet Smethport" project propelled the website http://www.smethporthistory.org into rapid growth.

Students involved during the first year of the project included: Sara Bartas, Ryan Benjamin, Rob Blair, Mark Burlingame, James Conley, Adam Costa, Nettie Digel, Daniel

Edgar, Buffy Fitzsimmons, Shane Gleason, Jason Goble, Randy Klaiber, David Kohler, Patricia Lawrence, Amanda Leet, Jennifer Lyon, Kristin Miller, Angel Powers, Kelly Tessena, Zach Williams and Dianna Wineberg.

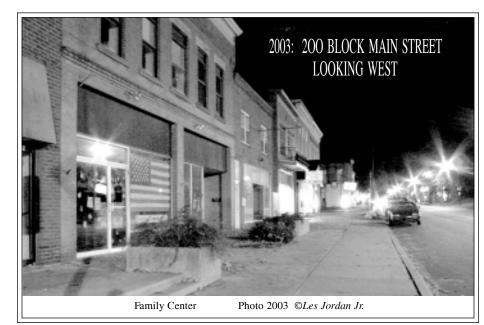
The project has continued to grow thanks to broad community involvement. Not only is the website a community project, it also is an academic course at Smethport Area High School. Beginning in 2001 students registered for the class were able to earn three college credits in History 188 through an agreement with California University of Pennsylvania while attending Smethport Area High School. Dozens of other students also participate in the project on a regular basis. The project has received awards through the National Council of Geographic Education, Pennsylvania Geographic Alliance, as well as commendations from Netscape.com, and Macromedia Software. During 2001 the project was awarded a Pennsylvania Digital Grass Roots Grant. Ross Porter, Smethport, Pennsylvania, was awarded a Citation of Special Merit for Geography Excellence in Media at the National Council of Geographic Educations 87th Annual Meeting in Philadelphia in October 2002. He was honored for his pioneering research and work in virtual, interactive historical geography and the Planet Smethport project at Smethport Area High School. He teaches world history, geography, and local history at Smethport Area High School and coordinates the high school program with California University of PA.

In 2001, he received the NCGEs Distinguished Teaching Achievement Award at the Annual Meeting in Vancouver, Canada. The NCGE was established in 1915 and has worked closely with the National Geographic Society since its inception. NCGE membership consists of geographers throughout Canada and the United States.

-Carthaginian Alumni News Carthage College, Kenosha, Wisconsin Spring 2003

SMETHPORT FAMILY CENTER

he Smethport Family Center opened at 209 W. Main Street on March 10, 1997. Funding was provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare through the Family Service System Reform Grant. The goals of the Center are to promote healthy development during childhood, stable families, healthy youth development and



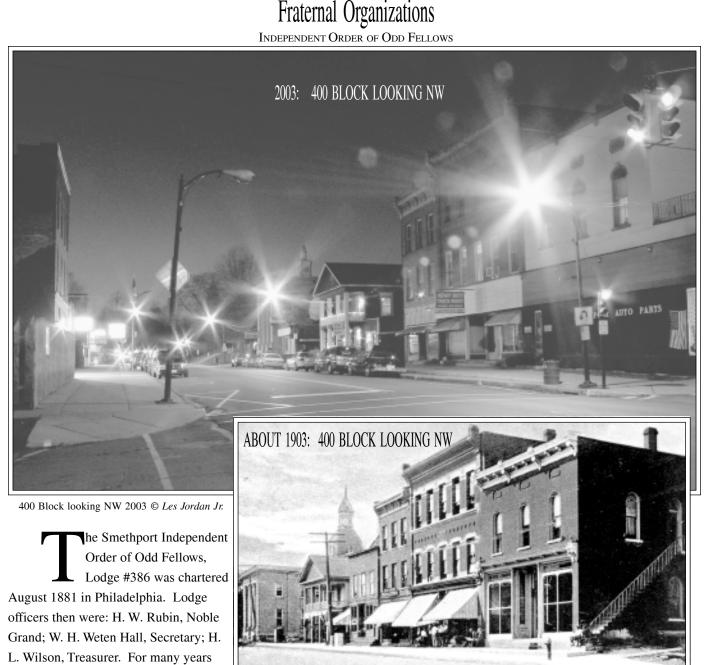
community collaboration. Three staff members were hired to provide parent workshops, lead after-school groups, lead Super Cupboard workshops, and perform home visits for parents of children birth to five years old through the Parents As Teachers program. All services are free to all county residents. The Smethport Family Center acts as a resource for family services in the area. Currently there are three staff members leading preschool playgroups, after-school groups, parent workshops, Parents As Teachers (PAT) home visits and special family activities.

PENN STATE COOPERATIVE EXTENSION OF MCKEAN COUNTY

Originally organized in March 1916 as the McKean County Farm Bureau, and later named Penn State Cooperative Extension of McKean County, two of the first board members were C. W. Lillibridge and James McKean. The first County Agent was P.S. Crossmen.

Penn State Cooperative Extension is an education network that gives all of Pennsylvanians and businesses access to Penn State's resources and expertise. It is funded by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, state, and county governments. Its broad range of programs offer help in community leadership, employment opportunities, managing water, soil, and forest resources, improving nutrition, diet and health, 4-H youth programs, strengthening individual and family management skills, and increasing agriculture profitability.

The service is located in the old Sena-Kean buildings west of Smethport. President of the board of directors is Joe Comes. Sam Crossley is the extension director. Extension staff are: Jim Clark, Agriculture; Robin Kuleck, Family Living; Tim Pierson, Forest Resources; Don Tanner, 4-H Youth and Community Development; Jody Groshek and Ann Dunkerton, 4-H program assistants; Ginny Eppley, staff assistant; Shirley Birch, administrative assistant.



400 Block looking NW about 1905 John G. Coleman Collection

the membership exceeded 100. Today's

lodge officers are John Szarowicz, Noble Grand; Edward Shelander, Vice Grand; Arthur Paulson, Recording Secretary; W. B. Johnson, Financial Secretary. Meetings are conducted twice a month at the lodge building in the 400 block of W. Main Street. Three of the present thirty members have belonged in excess of fifty years.

At one time there were lodges in Clermont, Hazel Hurst, Mt. Jewett, Kane, Bradford, Eldred, Ludlow, Ceres, and Port Allegany in addition to the two, Smethport and Rew, that now remain. The organization began in England about 1750 to serve the financial and employment needs of labor, men and mechanics. The organization was known as the Manchester Unity of Odd Fellows.

The American branch of the order was self-constituted in Baltimore, MD, August 1819 by five Englishmen with Thomas Wildey at the head. The order spread through all the states and many other countries in the world.

PHOENIX CHAPTER #15, ORDER OF THE EASTERN STAR

he Order of the Eastern Star is the largest fraternal organization in the world for both men and women. Its teachings are scriptural and its purpose is beneficent. To become a member one must be related to a member of the Masonic fraternity. Phoenix Chapter was constituted in Smethport on May 15, 1900 with 24 members. Alice Boardman was elected the first Worthy Matron and William A. Andover, Worthy Patron. Meetings were held twice a month at the Odd Fellows Hall.

In 1944 Phoenix Chapter was honored with the election of Maude T. German as Worthy Grand Matron of the Grand Chapter of Pennsylvania. Margaret Hileman, Doris Daugherty and Jennie Hyatt were also Grand Officers.

From 1961 to 1968 Phoenix Chapter also supported a Rainbow Girls organization with Barbara King and Donna Barton as Mother Advisors.

In 1971 the Chapter moved to its current location in the Masonic Lodge Rooms, where it meets the first Thursday of each month, except July and August.

The Chapter has been

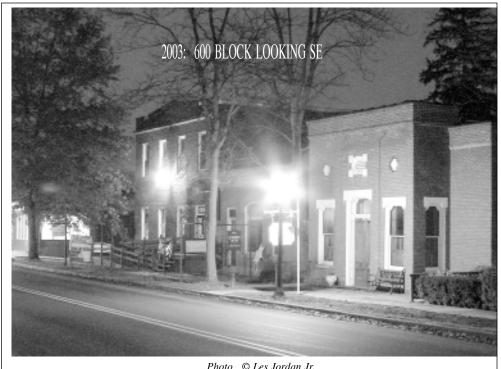


Photo © Les Jordan Jr.

generous in supporting the Heart Fund, American Cancer Society, Multiple Sclerosis Society, rehabilitation through the two Erie VA hospitals and homes, Christian Community Services, various youth groups, three nursing homes in Pennsylvania, scholarship funds and chapter membership needs.

Officers for 2003-2004 are: Judy Wright, Worthy Matron; Harold Carter, Worthy Patron; Betty Tanner, Associate Matron; Bernard Little, Associate Patron; Phyllis Gallup, Secretary; Florence Carter, Treasurer; and Judy Fitzsimmons, Conductress.

MCKEAN LODGE 388 FREE AND ACCEPTED MASONS

he Lodge was warranted March 29,1867, upon the recommendation of Union Lodge 334 at Bradford, PA. Fourteen Brother Master Masons, former members of neighboring lodges, were the charter members. Copies of correspondence in the Grand Secretary's office reveal that the movement for a Lodge began as early as 1863. Most of these members were Civil War veterans, and most were demitted from Lodge 251 at Olean, NY.

In 1922 the Lodge erected a temple to Freemasonry at the corner of Main and Church Streets, a lot that had been vacant

for forty years. The corner was formerly the business center of Smethport and location of the large William Haskill store.

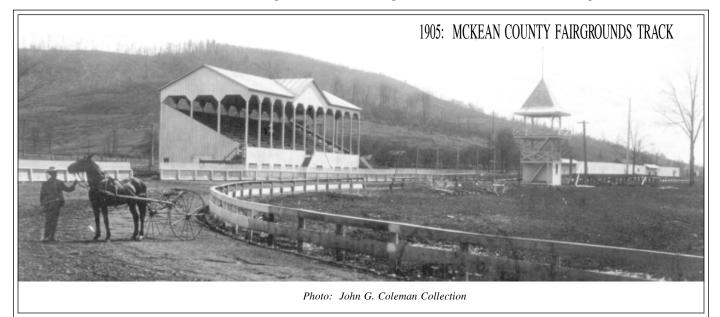
The temple's main floor had a social and club room, the upper floor served as a meeting room, and the basement was available for public social functions. Since 1922 the basement level has been used for dance instruction, doctor's offices, and the public library. For many years the main floor housed Dr. Fritz E. Guenter's office. It has also served as a satellite office for the Bradford Hospital, a store, and currently an office for McKean County E-sales.

Officers for the year 2003 are: Troy M. Herzog, Worshipful Master; W. Graham Nannen, Senior Warden; William R. Miller P.M. Junior Warden; Donald R. Johnson P.M., Treasurer; Jay E. Chapman, Secretary.

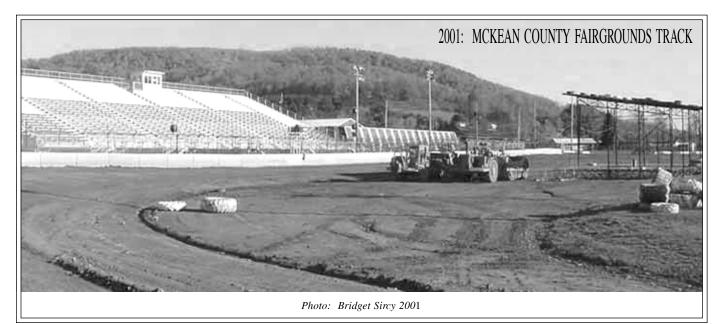
Associations

MCKEAN COUNTY FAIR

Il trains led to the newly opened fair in October, 1905. They came from St. Marys, Hornellsville, and Bradford. Special trains were run for the premiere event. Baseball games, trotter races, stock exhibits, midway entertain ment, farm equipment, Miss Irene La Tour and her dog ZaZa, and a ten car automobile parade from the courthouse attracted thousands. The rush for the fair grounds was at its height at noon with buses, trains, carriages and automobiles



arriving. Livery stables were full. As luck would have it, opening was delayed one day due to heavy rains but the remainder of week was perfect. Friday's attendance was more than 5,000.



That evening on the streets everybody was talking fair with words of praise for it and the officers: R. W. Hilton, President; F. D. Gallup, B. T. Garlick, Secretaries; F. L. Sherburne, General Superintendent; James A. McKean, Treasurer. R. W. Hilton was given special credit for the First Annual Fair and Races of the McKean County Fair Association.

About \$6,000 worth of stock had been sold. A grandstand seating 1,000, a bandstand, stables, racetrack and ball field were built on the Hilton and Nourse farms. Airplanes were featured after 1910 and in 1919 airplane passengers were flown by Lt. W. H. Emery, Jr. of Bradford. Exhibits were expanded with the prime purpose being education. Boys and girls had the opportunity to display the corn, potato and pig club work. The big event of the week was a farmers' stock parade. The 1916 fair was canceled due to a state quarantine for infantile paralysis. Electricity from Smethport's 1922 municipal system was extended to the fair in 1925. Radio broadcasts gave baseball and horse race results. The 1936 year saw the county take over the fair land. More buildings were constructed and attendance increased to 15,000. World War II closed the fair and it wasn't reopened until 1953 mainly through the efforts of Russell J. Weston.

In 2003 the fairgrounds boast a one-third mile racing track for cars, a new aluminum grandstand seating thousands, new exhibition buildings, improved parking and improved utilities.

Current McKean County Fair Officers and Directors are: John Berne, President; Joe Irons, Vice President; Larry Ackley, Secretary; Robert Okerlund, Treasurer. Executive Board Members include: Herman Bisnett, Nancy Dart, Charles Irons, Charles McKeirnan, Roger Okerlund.

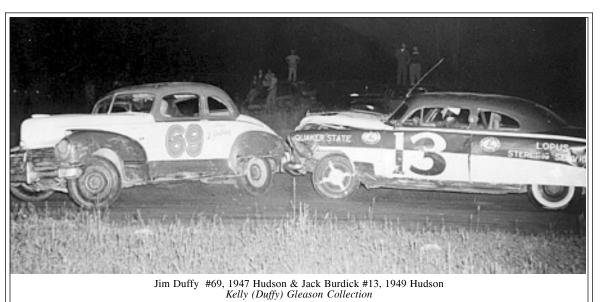
MCKEAN COUNTY RACEWAY

tock car racing has become the number one spectator sport in the United States. A trip to the McKean County Speedway on a summer Saturday night brings that point home. Over 100 cars are in the pits, the pay-off for the winner in one race is \$7,000, the new grandstand is filled, and drivers represent several states.

From the days of the Roman Empire, when one gladiator challenged another to a chariot race, the need for speed has been a part of our culture. Fifty years ago, when stock car racing was in its infancy, the Smethport fairgrounds was one of several tracks to host up-and-coming hot shot drivers.

In 1954 the track was graded and a quarter-mile "bull-ring" opened a year later. The new track lured drivers who were also plying their talents at Roulette, Bradford, Olean, Cuba Lake, Warren, Angelica and countless other dirt speedways.

In those days you'd take a regular car you drove on the street, put in roll bars and a parachute strap, maybe tweak the engine, and haul it behind the family sedan to the track. The cars were usually flattowed, the only modification



besides the roll bars being wheel reinforcements to keep the lug nuts from pulling out. It was a relatively inexpensive sport in the 1950s. There was a shortage of new cars in the post-war era, and the feeling was the fans wouldn't stand for a new car being beat up on a race track while they drove a pre-war rattletrap automobile.

In 1952 the Grand National (the fore-runner of today's NASCAR) ran nine makes: Buick, Cadillac, Chrysler, Hudson, Kaiser, Ford, Lincoln, Mercury and Oldsmobile. Locally a few drivers added a Studebaker to that list.

Interestingly, the Grand National included nearby Bradford Speedway on its tour in 1958, with a 150-lapper. Junior

Johnson took the lead from Lee Petty on Lap 100 to take the win. This would be the equivalent of Jeff Gordon and Dale Earnhardt Jr. showing up at the local track next Saturday night. In fact three local drivers joined the Grand National Circuit, with Wellsville, New York's Dean Layfield finishing 50th.

"We paid \$60 for a 1947 Ford," Clermont's Ken Johnson recalled. "The son of Bradford Police Chief Edmunds did the welding for the sponsorship, and we put a 32-gallon beer keg in the back seat for a radiator. We won \$80 the first night."

That car, K-112, was the entry of the Bradford National Guard, and was driven by Chuck Goddings, who still calls Bradford home. Goddings remembers wearing a football helmet until he won a racing helmet in a dash race.

"I was a real hot-shot at the Roulette track," Goddings reminisced. "We also ran at Smethport, Bradford, Olean, Warren and Wellsville."

The fore-mentioned Dean Layfield was a crowd favorite in his Number 47, before his tragic death at Perry Speedway in 1961. Other leadfoots included Smethport's Chuck McKeirnan in his Number 3 Hudson, Gus Nelson's Oldsmobile 6 7/8, and the cars of Bud Bennett, Jack Burdick, Dick Hackett, Bob Zetwick and Dick Armstrong.

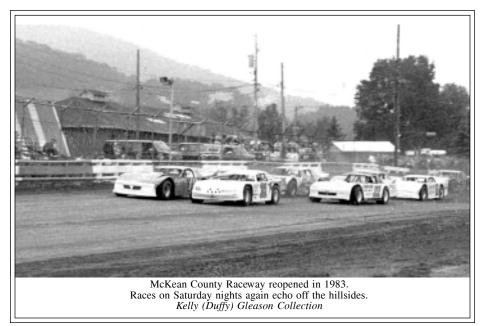
Emory Mahan would bring his 8-Ball in from Warren, and Squirt Johns would make the long tow from Brockway. In all there'd be about 20 cars, with most of the drivers making the rounds at the other tracks as well.

 Smethport Racing Great Jim Duffy (L) with son Mike.

 Bill Vandervort Photo

"We had a lot of fun, and it was good clean fun," Goddings said. "If you needed a part and the guy parked next to you had it, he'd let you use it. There was just one class; we called them jalopies."

With starter Whitey Gorsuch running between the cars, leaping with the starting flag, excitement filled the air. While the speeds rarely topped 60 miles per hour, the competition was keen. But, most of the tracks folded by the early 1960s, Bradford being the exception (and it relocated across the road). Smethport closed in 1957. It reopened in 1965 but that effort ended three years later.



In 1983 the McKean County Fair Board approached Smethport's Jim Duffy. They sought a return of dirt track racing, and Duffy obliged with a onethird, low-banked clay and dirt oval. The first Quaker State Invitational was held in the Fall of 1983. The next year brought the first full series at the McKean County Fair Raceway, attracting many of the top drivers in the Northeast.

On opening night in 1989, Jim Duffy suffered a fatal heart attack while driving in a heat race. But the oval he created has grown, and the turnout of sprints as well as the five regular classes

run at the track proves that need for speed is alive and well. And when many of the top drivers on the East Coast show up for an invitational, there is no less excitement than when those drivers in loafers, tee shirts and football helmets crawled into their jalopies fifty years ago.



SMETHPORT AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Smethport Area Chamber of Commerce would like to thank all the liaisons, chairpersons, committee members and those who dedicated themselves to Smethport's Sesquicentennial celebration. Your dedication made this an event that will be remembered for years to come.

ADP Rental, America's First Christmas Store, Bernie's Appliance & Radio Shack, Bill Lake Real Estate, Bowman Health Center, Burns & Burns Associates, C. L. McKeirnan, Chef Specialties Company, Costa's True Value, Cottage House, Crown Mortgage Services Inc., DeMott's Pharmacy, Gallup Electric, H & S Animal Hospital, James Kane, D.M.D., Kibbles, Lakeview Senior Care and Living Center, Linda Lake, Lindgren's Variety Store, Mattie & Alfieri, McKean Abstracting Co., McKean County Historical Society, McKean County Redevelopment & Housing Authority, Northwest Savings Bank, Rocking Horse Realty, Route 6 Diner, Sample Wellness - Herbalife Ind. Distributor, Sciarrino TeWinkle & Miller, Smethport Area School District, Smethport Country Club, Smethport Specialty, Smethport Women's Club, Strikers Alley, The Hub, Trinity Lutheran Church, Veterans of Foreign Wars Auxiliary, Zaleski Vinyl Outlet

Below Left: Memories of our area's Civil War sacrifices are kept alive by members of the 13th P.R.V.C. Bucktail Reenactment Group shown here at their 2002 Reunion in Smethport. These men and women honor the memory of their ancestors with a living history tribute.

Other Images: The community continues to honor and support those currently in service to their country in the Persian Gulf and elsewhere as evidenced by this rally held on April 23, 2003. The event was organized by Joanne Petruzzi.

Photos ©2003 Les Jordan Jr.





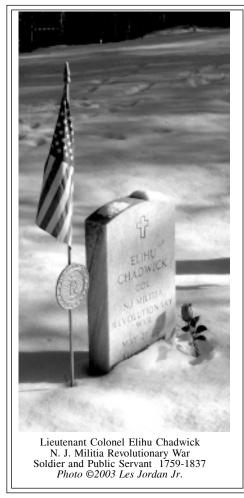
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CHAPTER XXIII HOMETOWN HEROES

SALUTE TO OUR VETERANS

On Memorial Day flags all over America will fly at half-mast, parades will march through town streets, and people will gather in cemeteries to lay flowers on the graves of our defenders. But it is not just on Memorial Day that we should remember and pay tribute to those brave men and women. Every day we should recall their legacy to our current and future generations—our freedom.

Over the course of our American history, more than one million servicemen and women have died in battle. They have fought for our independence from the time of the American Revolution to the current conflicts in the Persian Gulf. These



defenders were our fellow citizens, husbands and wives, sons and daughters, brothers and sisters, mothers and fathers. They gave up their futures so that we might have ours. When they went to battle, they left behind families, loved ones, dreams, plans, and careers. We now have these things only because of those who sacrificed their lives to make it possible. Without their willingness to fight for freedom and democracy, our lives as we know them would not exist.

Elihu Chadwick was typical of the hardy individuals who came to this area after the American Revolution. Born on May 27, 1759 in Shrewsbury Township, Monmouth County, New Jersey, Chadwick first enlisted in the service of his new country in June 1775. He fought in various units rising to the rank of Lieutenant. In 1781, he served in a company commanded by his brother, Captain Thomas Chadwick.

Lieutenant Chadwick participated in the engagements at Trenton, Princeton, Germantown, Monmouth, Tinton Falls, and Middleton. He was wounded in action on June 11, 1779; the same day on which his brother, Jeremiah, was killed. After the Revolutionary War, he continued to serve his new country rising to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel by 1791.

Like so many veterans of the Revolution, Chadwick headed west after the war. From 1811 until 1816, he resided in Lycoming County, Pennsylvania. From Lycoming, he moved to Shippen Township, McKean County, Pennsylvania, where he was Postmaster in 1828. Chadwick served as Treasurer of McK-ean County in 1829. He died on August 30, 1837 in

Smethport, and is buried in the veteran's section of Rosehill Cemetery. At the time of the death of Elihu Chadwick,

his son, Richard, of Smethport, Pennsylvania, was register of the probate of wills for McKean County. Another son, Elihu Jr. of Venango County, ran a station on the underground railroad during the Civil War. Descendants of Chadwick have resided in the Smethport area since 1816.

Like the men who served in the American Revolution, most of those who fought in the War of 1812 came into McKean County following their service. These men, like their predecessors in the Revolution, broke away from their homes and farms to defend their lands as the need presented itself. While there was a small regular army, most of the men assembled into militia groups.

When the War of the Rebellion broke out, Colonel Kane's Bucktail unit, the Forty-Second Regiment, was not the only group to answer the call for men Other units with companies that raised men from McKean County



An unidentified Bucktail Image from Ebay

WORLD WAR I

Killed in Action DBNR=Dead Body Never Recovered

> BURDICK, Ralph L. Norwich 12/10/18

CLEVELAND, William Robert Norwich 6/11/18

DISPASQUALE, Alfonso Norwich 6/10/18

> GIFFORD, John R. Norwich 12/1/18

JOHNSON, Walter P. Hamlin Twp 8/15/18

MARKS, Arthur Hamlin Twp 8/15/18

RICHARDSEN, Ernest Norwich 9/22/16

THOMAS, Collins D. Smethport 7/25/18

UBER, James L. Hamlin Twp. 10/1917

WORLD WAR I

Died of Wounds

CARR, John F. Smethport 12/16/18

HOADLEY, Charles E. no record, no record

JOY, William J. Hazelhurst 10/25/18

LINGENFELSHER, Fredrick no record, no record

WORLD WAR II

Killed In Action

ANDERSON, Wallace K. Clermont 11/27/44

> BAILEY, John C. no record 7/4/46

VETERAN'S ROLL CALL

WORLD WAR II

Killed In Action continued

BRUNGARD, Winfield F. Smethport 9/18/44

COLDREN, Clyde L. Smethport 3/8/44

CONNELLY, Edward M. no record, no record

*CONNORS, Leo M. Smethport 5/26/43

*COREY, Robert Mt. Jewett 7/23/44

CULVER, Dale no record, 3/12/42

DALY, John R. no record, no record

DUNHAM, Clarence L. Smethport 7/4/46

*ERICKSON, Carl R. Smethport 6/14/45

FRANCIS, Ned R. Gifford 4/8/43

HARTBURG, Merle Clermont 11/27/42

HAUCK, William E. Colegrove 6/17/44

HIMES, Albert Hazelhurst 1/25/44

JONES, George Smethport 1/5/45

KEEFLER, George G. no record 7/4/46

KELLAR, Lloyd D. no record 7/4/46

*LAWTON, Clyde M. Smethport 6/19/42

LECKER, Quinten A. Mt. Alton 12/17/43

WORLD WAR II

Killed In Action continued

LEIGEY, Joseph A. no record, no record

LONG, Homer Coleville 4/6/45

*MALONE, Paul H. Mt. Jewett 9/7/43

McKENDRICK, Ralph A. Smethport 4/5/44

MICHAELS, Patrick L. no record 7/4/46

MORGAN, Jerome Cyclone10/26/44

MUISINER, Homer L. no record, no record

NELSON, Carl Smethport 2/23/45

*NELSON, Maurice V. Mt. Jewett 5/12/44

ORDWAY, Cecil D. no record 9/10/48

OYLER, Keith D. no record, no record

*PEASLEY, Neil W. Smethport 5/13/50

*PEASLEY, Kermit R. Smethport no record

*PENN, Bennett F. Smethport 12/5/42

PLUBELL, Leroy G. no record 7/4/46

POLIO, James V. Hazelhurst 11/29/44

RADER, Paul L. Cyclone, 4/15/45

RAUGHT, Gayle E. East Smethport 11/18/44

WORLD WAR II

Killed In Action continued

ROBINSON, Darl T. no record, no record

ROUNSVILLE, Vernie W. Smethport 8/9/44

SCHOONMAKER, George B. Smethport 11/8/45

> SEBRING, Robert J. Farmers Valley 7/26/44

*STARSKY, Lewis A. Smethport 12/14/43

STOKES, Harry Gifford 9/24/43 (DBNR)

THOMPSON, George F. Cyclone 11/29/44

> *WEIDERT, Joseph Crosby 5/4/41

WORLD WAR II

Killed In Action continued

YANISH, William G. Smethport 9/15/44

ZAUNICK, Edward P. no record 6/9/47

WORLD WAR II

Died of Wounds

CLUTTER, Fred V. Smethport 3/19/45

CONNOR, Paul Smethport 8/2/44

FEURA, Robert E. Smethport 4/7/45

WORLD WAR II

Died of Wounds continued

ISIDORI, Angelo J. Smethport 3/15/45

McDERMOTT, George P. Smethport 7/28/44

> MIX, Richard F. Mt. Jewett 10/5/44

SHONTS, Friend S. Cyclone 10/6/44

VIETNAM WAR

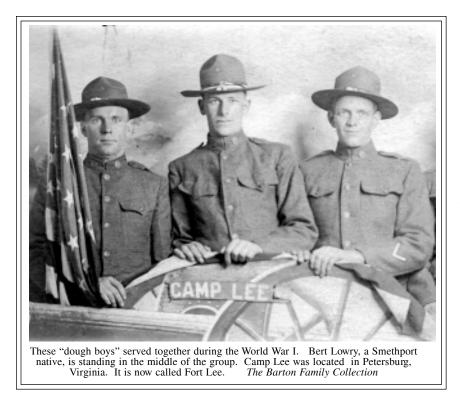
FEIT, Christian F., III Smethport 1/25/68 US Navy

GREGORY, Charles L. Ormsby 1/31/68 USMC

KEESLER, Stephen L. Hazel Hurst 5/12/70 US Army



Veterans lead a Memorial Day Parade down the Main Street in Smethport about 1949. It is the custom for local Veterans to lead all parades in the town. *McKean County Miner Photo from the Betty Kline Collection*



included the Fifty-Eighth Reg. P. V. I., the Eighty-Third Reg. P. V. I., the One Hundred and Fiftieth Reg. P. V. I., the One Hundred and Seventy-Second Reg. P. V. I., and the Two Hundred and Eleventh Regiment P. V. I.

At the beginning of the Civil War, the soldiers who joined the service envisioned a short conflict like that of the War of 1812. These men expected that the hostilities would be over at the end of their three month enlistment terms.

Many of the men enlisted to "see the elephant." This term meant that they wanted to leave their farms or city jobs for the "excitement" of the service. Others enlisted for higher purposes. All who enlisted learned that the war would not be over quickly. Brother fought against brother, and sons against their fathers. At the end of the conflict

more men would have been wounded or killed than in all of the rest of the conflicts combined.

The guns of war had been silent only a year when, in 1919, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11th to be "Armistice Day." This was the anniversary of the day on which the fighting had ended. On this day each year, the nation would honor the 116,000 Americans who so recently had



L. W. Barton poses with the medals that he earned during his time in the service. Barton was in the Spanish American War. He served as McKean County sheriff in the 1920's. *William "Bart" Barton Collection*



Three Huffman brothers from Smethport served in World War ÍI. First Lieutenant James

Cooper Huffman was the youngest of the boys. He worked at Backus Company until he was old enough to join the service. Being extremely nervous, Huffman failed the eye test and was not permitted to enlist as a Naval Aviator. He went to the Army recruiting center the next day, and passed the test.

Huffman was shot down on his first mission on June 6, 1944.

It was D-Day, but he was not on the beaches of

Normandy.

Huffman was targeting oil refineries in Romania. Hit by flack, his B24 Liberator sustained extensive damage. The crew had to bail out over Italy.

On another occasion, he had to make an emergency landing in Rome. The plane was riddled with 110 flack holes, had engine trouble, and a punctured tire. The crew made a landing without nose landing gear, but with a full bomb load!

James Cooper Huffman went on to complete 37 sorties (51 missions) over nine nations. At the age of twenty years old, he had an Air Medal, three oak leaf clusters, and the Distinguished Flying Cross. Bernard Roland Huffman, left, also flew a B-24 Liberator during the war. Leonard Riley, is shown at the top of the page to the left. The boys grew up on East Water Street across from the

creamery.

Lt. J. Huffman Awarded DFC

First Lieut. James C. Huffman, 19. co-pilot of a B-24 stationed in Italy with the 15th AAF, has been awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for extraordinary achievement and heroism while participating in aerial flight against the enemy.

His plane ripped and torn by jagged pieces of flak, with the right rudder gone, was attacked by enemy fighters. While Huffman and the pilot struggled to keep the bomber straight and level, the gunners knocked out three of the enemy and drove the others off. "The control surfaces were just about gone," Huffman said, "but somehow they held until we hit the runway. Then we skidded, bounced, and finally nosed over."

The son of J. R. Huffman, 209 East Water street, Smethport, Lieut. Huffman, is a graduate of the Smethport High school. He has been on active duty in Italy since July, and was recently awarded the Air Medal.

James Cooper Huffman Bernna Huffman Collection

Bernna Huffman Collection

Above: Leonard

Riley Huffman

sacrificed their lives on the battlefields of Europe. Now, each year on Veterans Day, we continue to honor our "doughboys" of the First World War who made the supreme sacrifice.

We also honor all of our veterans, living and dead, who have served in every war and conflictfrom the American Revolution to our current operations abroad.

We honor our veterans from all periods of peace as well, for they have safeguarded the liberty our combat veterans fought and died to keep.

And we honor American soldiers of today-our veterans of tomorrow. They carry the torch of liberty as they defend the ramparts of freedom throughout the world.

Right: "Landing on the coast of France under heavy Nazi machine gun fire are these American soldiers, shown just as they left the ramp of a Coast Guard landing boat. Photo: Robert F. Sargent, June 6, 1944. National Archive Image Collection, Washington, D. C.

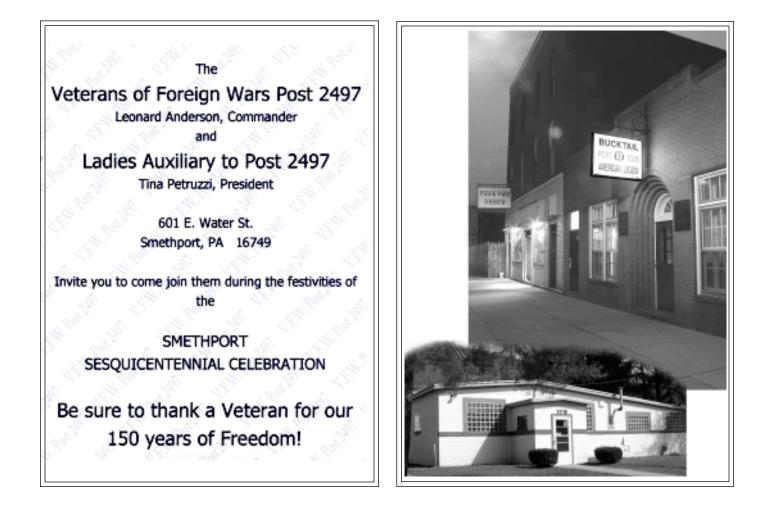


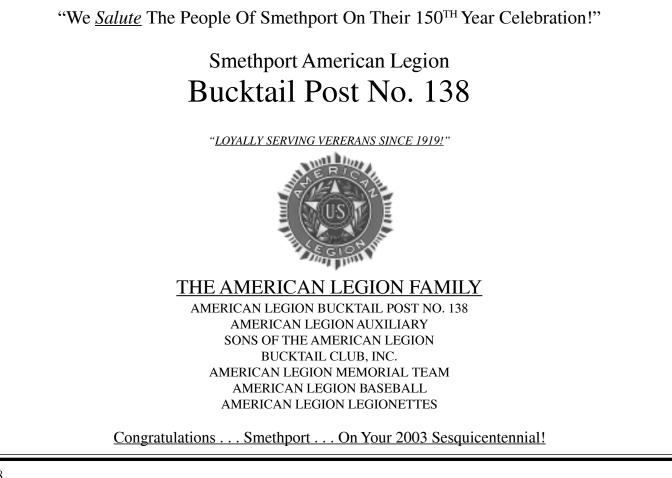
Above: "Flag Raising on Iwo Jima." Joe Rosenthal, Associated Press, February 23, 1945. 80-G-413988 National Archive Image Collection, Washington, D. C.

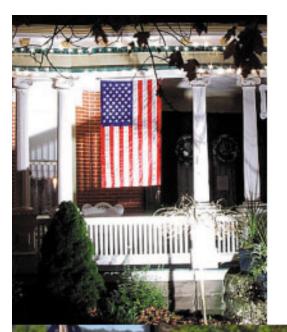
Left: Jack Pennington, Former Smethport Area High School Principal, was among several Smethport natives who witnessed the raising of the flag on Iwo Jima.



SSgt. Mark Orlandi 1st Signal Corps, 1st Inf. Div. WW II D-Day Normandy, Omaha Beach H-hour +40, 2nd Wave Orlandi Family Collection







Clockwise: 1. Bucktails carry the colors in their 2002 encampment. 2 The ideal of "God and Country" is captured in this image of St. Elizabeth's Church. The church is reflected in a door across the street. 3. A house dressed up for Memorial Day. 4. The monument to our Civil War dead on the Courthouse lawn. 5. A wreath is placed in tribute to those who died during Vietnam War at the Mall in Washington, D. C. 6. Flags fly in the wind in the business district after September 11, 2001. We remember the first victims of our new war on Terrorism. The Stars and Stripes hang from a stately porch at the Christmas Inn on West Main Street.

Vietnam Veterans Memorial National Archive Image Collection, others © 2003 Les Jordan Jr.







Lakeview Senior Center 15 Willow Street Smethport, PA

February 2, 2002

I have no idea who owns or operates the nursing facility, or who owns the residence and property, or if there is still a house on the property. I was born and brought up in Smethport. I was the second born child of Edna and Guy McCoy. When I was little, myself and my sister and two brothers had scarlet fever. My bout culminated in slow recovery.

Ralph "Ike" and Harriet "Hat" Gleason lived in the residence and were very close friends of my parents. They took me in their home to recuperate while my parents continued caring for my siblings. That must have been around 1912 or so, as I am now in my 95th year. I thought whoever now owned the property might be interested to know that early in the house's existence, sick people were cared for there.

Sincerely, Mary McCoy McKay

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THE PROVIDENCE FOR M We have been providing the people of Smethport area with family dentistry since Sept. 27, 1984. Our first patients that day were Annette, Debi, and Nadine Oknefski of Mount Jewett. Since then our practice has grown to include 3,114 wonderful people.

Originally our office was located at 201 West Main Street, affectionately known to many locals as "the old Ford garage." In May of 1995 we moved our practice to its present location on East Willow Street. The lots were purchased from Esther Herriman and Paul Connors.

Currently we have three staff members. My wife, Lorri, is our business manager who also manages to be a great mother to our daughters, Sarah and Mallory. Joanne (Higley) Baker, my number one assistant, has been a cornerstone of our practice since May of 1985; and Crystal (Shaffer) Raymond, our hygienist, who joined us in 1996.

Some of the other former employees, who I am proud to say were members of our staff include, Joan (Crandall) App, Heidi (Detrick) Jones, Becky (Burdick) Funk, Carol Potter-Johnson, Dixie McGavisk, and Rita Williams.

One behalf of everyone we would like to wish Smethport...... Happy Birthday! And many more.



Buchanan Brothers' Pharmacy, Inc.

Buchanan Brothers' Pharmacy, Inc. has operated as a family owned pharmacy since 1958. The late Charles Buchanan started working as a pharmacist at Smith's Drug Store in Coudersport in 1931. Upon the death of owner Jack Smith in 1958, Mr. Buchanan assumed ownership. Over the years his three sons, John, Dick, and Greg joined the business. They assumed ownership in 1976 and changed the name to Buchanan Brothers' Pharmacy. The business is now owned by the third generation of Buchanan's: Joe Marzo, Julie McCusker and Christie Keglovits. The business has expanded to four locations with pharmacies in Coudersport, Smethport, Westfield, and Elkland. The business employs about forty employees and ten pharmacists.

The Smethport store was formerly owned and operated by Larry O'Laughlin as Larry's Pharmacy. Buchanan Brothers' assumed ownership of Larry's Pharmacy in December of 1991.

Our business is staffed by courteous professional pharmacists. We offer full prescription service at competitive prices. We honor most prescription plans and offer a 10% senior citizen discount on prescriptions. Our pharmacists are always available to answer any questions you may have about your prescriptions or over the counter medications.





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SMETHPORT, PA 16749

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All are cordially invited to the Sesquicentennial Events at Bowman Health Center Charles Cole Memorial Hospital

> **June 23 through June 27** Free height, weight, and blood pressure

June 24 Noon Lecture Mr. Frank Zitnik, PA-C "Testicular Cancer" June 25 Noon Lecture Walk with Doc Bowman General Medical Questions Discussed June 24 Adult Tetanus Shot Clinic Minimal Fee Appointment Suggested

Don Morey McKean County Sherrif	Happy to be living in the same house in which I was born, and proud to be a resident of this wonderful community, and to fondly call myself a Hubber. I love this town. GLENN E. MENCER
Pete Rizzotti Smethport is a great hometown.	Debbie Babcox
The United Alethodist Church of Smethport REV. BOB GEORGE Worship service 11 a.m. Summer 10 a.m. Sunday School 9:45 SeptMay 601 West King St., Smethport, PA 16749	IN ALL TIMES A WONDERFUL TOWN BEST WISHES JUDGE & MRS. CLELAND
HARRIJANE HANNON, REGISTER OF WILLS AND CLERK OF ORPHANS COURT ANNE BOSWORTH, RECORDER OF DEEDS BONNIE MOORE, PROTHONOTARY & CLERK OF COURTS	Congratulations on your 150th! We are honored to be part of this small, caring community. —George & Sandy Romanowski
IN LOVING MEMORY OF MY FATHER, Floyd Carter and in tribute to my mother, Dorothy Carter Nancy Evans McKean County Treasurer	Ron & Joncine Willis



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Happy Birthday, Smethport.

from

Dameon and Misty Hidalgo



West Main Development 201-215 West Main Street

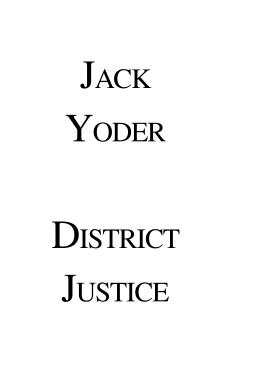
Terry and Mary Palmer

FAX: 814-887-4107 ESTATES REAL ESTATE DOMESTIC RELATIONS

GENERAL PRACTICE OF LAW NEGLIGENCE LITIGATION

JAMES K. ANGELL ATTORNEY AT LAW

Р. О. ВОХ 3395 Smethport, Pa 16749 605 W. MAIN STREET SMETHPORT, PA 16749 814-887-5625

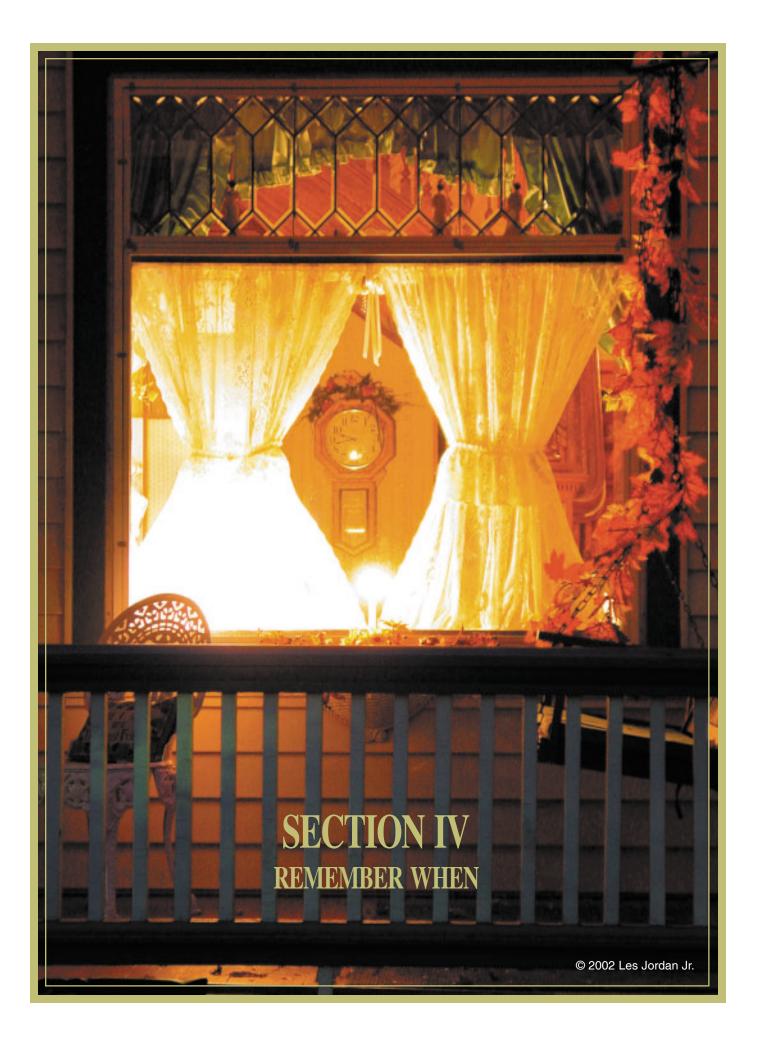


Smethport Area Women's Club wishes to congratulate Smethport on 150 years.

Burns and Burns Associates

Todd and Patricia Witchen

ANTHONY AND MICHELE ALFIERI





Axel Peterson (L) and an unidentified employee show off the new service station at E. Main & Route 6 during 1930s Daniel Marshall Collection

ccording to the website, www.discoveringthe6.com, hosted by Brian and Joanne Churchill, the first marked sections of Rt. 6 were in place by 1928. The highway eventually became the longest paved road in the United States. Its construction took several years and ultimately connected Provincetown, Massachusetts with Long Beach, California in 1937. The highway has seen several realignments and improvements over the years.

Chester P. Bailey, in his History of U.S. Rt. 6, notes that there were efforts led in 1966 by Smethport's U.S. Congressman Albert W. Johnson and his brother, Leonard Brynolf Johnson (founder of America's First Christmas Store), to turn Rt. 6 into an interstate highway by 1984, but the project never gained legislative support. The highway, instead, has remained "one of America's most scenic drives" as the *National Geographic Magazine* observed.

The route has a grand history. It connects all the county seats across Pennsylvania's scenic northern tier. The route followed the Revolutionary Road used by the Continental Army in the Provincetown area, and was built on old Indian paths combined with sections of the East-West State Road in Pennsylvania. In 1936, an association of Union veterans of the Civil War succeeded in having the highway named "Grand Army of the Republic Highway". The 20-mule wagon team of the Borax Company made famous by 1950s era television commercials traveled the road in the 1920s. The great wagon train that rumbled from coast to coast in commemoration of America's Bicentennial used Route 6, passing through Smethport in June, 1976.



Today U.S. Route 6 is nationally recognized as a Scenic Highway and is continually being improved.

It is those moments etched in our minds that paint a picture of Smethport of yesteryear. It is those seemingly inconsequential, often very personal, moments which anchor us to a different era, to a different place, to a different mindset.

For some, it was family, to others it was school. Still others remember friends and shared adventures, perhaps an interaction with Nature. But, whatever moments we hold and cherish, to that person they are golden and special when shared.

REMEMBER WHEN—SCHOOL DAYS

Because school consumed a dozen of our formative years, it is only natural many would think back to those seven-hour days of learning, of friends and teachers, of buildings and ideas.

Ken Johnson attended Smethport High School in 1938. He remembers the names of his teachers: Daisy Day, Martha Colegrove, Dick Shattuck, Herbert Morrison and Wayne Cummings. He remembers the layout of the building, of Miss Fleming's typing and bookkeeping classes under the stairwell, of Principal Stanley Bright. But, it was the more mundane that caught his fancy.

"You could sit in study hall and get your feet bouncing, and pretty soon you'd clear a shelf of encyclopedias", he remem-

bered. He also remembered eating his brown-bag lunch in the classroom, because he bussed from Cyclone. And he remembered having no choice in

class selection, which ultimately prompted him to finish school in Bradford.

-Ken Johnson

Charlotte Johnson went to Smethport in the following decade. Being a Hilltopper, she remembered meeting the students from Farmers Valley, East Smethport, Cyclone, and the borough.

"We could go downtown at noon," she recalled. "We'd go up the clock tower of the court house. If anyone asked we'd say we were doing an assignment."

no choice in Wartha Colegrove *Ipsp Nunundah* P she recalled. burt house. If

1938 SHS Faculty: 1st Row: (L to R) Mrs. McCoy, Miss Fleming, Miss Colegrove, Miss O'Laughlin, Miss Carrie Day 2nd Row: (L to R) Mr. Heller, Mr. Morrison, Mr. Bright, Mr. Cummings, Mr. Shattuck 1938 Nunundah

She also remembered record dances in the gym

at noon, and hanging her coat on a hook in the hall because there weren't lockers. She also remembered the religious instruction they had to attend at the Lutheran Church, usually the last class period. They also started each day with the Pledge of Allegiance and a reading from the Bible.

-Charlotte Johnson

I was part of that class of 1967 which was the first class to go through the new high school. I recall being a seventh grader was double jeopardy, as you were not only on the bottom of the pecking order, but no one else could help you either.

"Who can forget trips across the New York State line, to Casey's, MBI, Coral Lanes, when New York's drinking age was 18" Dave asked? "I remember one night at Coral Lanes in Olean, drinking on someone else's ID card because I was only 17, tripping over the biggest set of feet I had ever seen. It was St. Bonaventure's Bob Lanier."

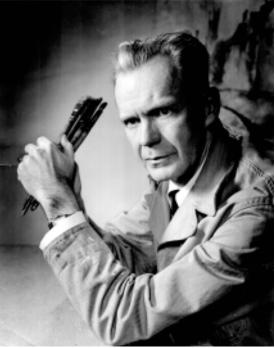
HERBERT W. JOHNSON: SMETHPORT'S CHRISTMAS DISPLAY DESIGNER

n 1950, Herb came to Smethport as the commercial artist for America's First Christmas Store, where he designed and created the world's finest outdoor Christmas

displays for 30 years until his retirement in 1980. Herb and a staff of local artists hand-painted the displays that were sold throughout the world. The Christmas displays were world renowned and are highly sought after even today by collectors.

Herbert William Johnson was born in Kane, Pennsylvania, on February 9, 1901. He was the son of Edwin and Anna Engstrom Johnson. On May 25, 1939, in Kane, he married Doris Erickson Johnson, who resides today in Smethport, Pennsylvania.

A 1919 graduate of Kane High School, Mr. Johnson graduated from Penn State University in 1925 with a degree in architectural engineering. He was the art editor of the Penn State Froth Newspaper for two years and a charter member of the Phi Kappa Tau Fraternity. He was also involved in designing and finishing the main gate at Main Hall on the Penn Sate Campus. He received a fellowship to the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts. He graduated from that institution and traveled throughout Europe on a fellowship with Frank Gaspero...who years later became a Chief Designer for the U.S. Philadelphia Mint.



Herbert Johnson designed and created the world's finest outdoor Christmas display. Marilyn Johnson Rosenswie Collection Bill Barton Studio Photo

Herbert and Doris Johnson have three daughters: Marcia L. Johnson of Savannah, Georgia; Marilyn A. Rosenswie of Smethport,

Pennsylvania; and Marjorie R. Arnett of Bradford, Pennsylvania. Herbert William Johnson died on Friday, April 24, 1992 in Smethport, Pennsylvania, at the age of 92.



Herbert W. Johnson (right) with Christmas Store founder Leonard Brynolf Johnson. Ross Porter Collection

LEONARD BRYNOLF JOHNSON CHRISTMAS DISPLAY INNOVATOR

In 1932 Leonard Brynolf Johnson returned to his hometown of Smethport and opened the Johnson Pharmacy in the Hamilton Building. During the mid 1930s he began designing custom-made Christmas lawn displays for his family and friends, which soon developed into a nation-



1959 Leonard B. Johnson Christmas Display Catalog Ross Porter Collection

ally advertised enterprise in Better Homes and Gardens.

Initially all displays were designed and created by Leonard. In 1940, to keep pace with orders for his unique decorations, he hired Clifford Gurnsey to paint the displays. After first painting and assembling the units in the basement of the pharmacy he moved his production operation to the second floor of Quirk's Ford Garage building (213-215 W. Main). Business was so successful that in 1949 it was necessary to charter a United Airlines flight to meet delivery deadlines. Leonard hired trained artist Herbert Johnson (no relation) to further raise the quality and oversee the production facility.

With the infusion of Herbert Johnson's artistic abilities and Leonard Johnson's marketing skills the Smethport outdoor displays became nationally known and the Christmas Store a major American tourist attraction. Displays adorned Ozzie and Harriet Nelson's home, Frank Sinatra's home, NATO Headquarters in Naples, Italy, and even President's Park near the White House. Smethport's location on US Route 6 and a national advertising campaign brought both Smethport and the Christmas Store to national attention.





Smethport's America's First Christmas Store John G. Coleman Collection



1976: U.S. Congressman Albert W. Johnson with President Gerald Ford Ross Porter Collection

SMETHPORT'S U.S. CONGRESSMAN JOHNSON GAINED NATIONAL PROMINENCE

he most recent person with Smethport roots to gain national attention was

Albert W. Johnson. He was born in Smethport in 1906, and graduated from Smethport High School, the University of Pennsylvania Wharton School, and John B. Stetson School of Law. In 1946 he was elected to the Pennsylvania General Assembly, serving until 1963. This included positions as Minority Leader in 1959 and 1961, and Majority Leader in 1953, 1957 and 1963. In 1963 he was elected to represent Pennsylvania's 23rd Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. He retired to Smethport and died in 1998.



In 1963 Albert Johnson was elected to represent Pennsylvania's 23d Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. *Ross Porter Collection*



1973: U.S. Congressman Albert W. Johnson with Secretary of State Henry Kissinger *Ross Porter Collection*



409 Franklin Street: Former residence of U.S. Congressman Albert W. Johnson currently owned by Mark and Claudia Caminite. *Ross Porter Collection*

There were the cold Friday nights at McCoy Stadium, sitting on colder cement bleachers, watching Coach Donovan pace the sideline. There were Homecoming parades down Marvin Street, past the White Spot, trying to keep pace with your favorite majorette before she disappeared into the stadium. There was the new Public Speaking Club, reading to seniors at the



Pauline Hergenrother Nunundah

county home and to grade-schoolers across town. Debate Club, with Pooh Burlingame (Joey Feit Yoder tying my tie on debate days). Who can forget Pauline Hergenrother and Shakespeare, or Ted Vesper's science football game. "For 15 yards, what are the four qualities of an acid?" —Dave Johnson

Lisa Chapman shared very different memories of the 60s at SHS, from the perspective of a musical environment.

"I suspect there is a long-standing brother/sisterhood of former band members created from the fertile medium of frozen football fields, spit valves, cracked reeds, and practice rooms associated with the music programs of Smethport Area High School. My years of initiation started during the Charles Partchey era and concluded with Anthony Brzenski's tenure. My younger siblings enjoyed similar musical molding under later distinguished teachers. I take lessons and practice to this day, nearly 40 years later, because I know there is still more to learn and it will still bring me profound satisfaction. Mr. Partchey taught me that music was a demanding and serious study requiring discipline and commitment. He

loved steering students to ever higher levels of performance. The band under Mr. Partchey's baton did not just blow horns—it

performed. Mr. Brzenski worked equally as hard sharing his love of music, introducing us to an infinite variety of styles, and brought a lot of fun to the experience. Being far removed from these experiences now, I can very much appreciate the well-rounded education I received from a school system that was dedicated to broadening the horizons of its students."

-Lisa Chapman



Anthony E. Brzenski SAHS Music Instructor in 1967 Nunundah

The flats were known for flooding almost every spring, and often in the winter as well. When the flood would come during a January thaw, the water would leave behind a layer of ice as it receded back into its original course across from the Tastee-Freez. The layer of fresh ice became a battleground for countless games of hockey played in the night with light from an old tire that we started ablaze. In the early 1960s, there weren't the environmental laws that we have today, and no one seemed to mind the acrid, black smoke lofting into the frigid air.

—Les Jordan Jr.

Slumber parties were all the rage in those years, and one that stands out in my memory is the summer night we girls all stayed at Patty Harmon's trailer behind the Tastee Freez on Marvin Street, which her parents owned at the time. Carol Ferman



was Patty's best friend, and I remember her being there. In the middle of the night when everything was very quiet, we all went into the Tastee Freeze building itself and got spoons and ate the peanut butter fudge topping right out of the container!

-Gail Guenter Hanson, SAHS 1960

One of my first jobs was working at the Tastee Freez with my friend, Pat Harmon, whose dad built it. They had the

best Peanut Butter Fudge Sundaes.....and I could eat my mistakes. Funny — I seemed to make the most mistakes making a Peanut Butter Fudge Sundae...which by the way cost only 25¢. Even today, I don't make a trip to Smethport in the summer without stopping there.



Tastee Freeze celebrated its 50th Anniversary in 2003. It is currently owned by Gary and Marian Bush. Les Jordan Jr. Collection

-Carol Ferman Cordner of Troy, PA

REMEMBER WHEN-SMETHPORT WEATHER

Smethport is a borough where you can enjoy the beauty of all four seasons—sometimes in a single day! If you live in Smethport, you learn to love or live with the weather. In the afternoon, it might be 80 degrees Fahrenheit. By the evening, it may snow.

Before my marriage, I had been a "city girl" who never ventured into the outdoors. In Smethport, I learned to love the natural beauty of the forest to be found behind my house. I lived on the last street in the borough.

When I was a newlywed in the 1970s, I would go cross country skiing with friends every New Year's Day. One year it



1946 Flood. Water crosses East Street. McKean County Miner Archives

was a frigid –30 degrees, and my gas lines froze. The next year it was a sunny 65 degrees without a trace of snow. We hiked to the hilltop instead of skiing.

Smethport holds two official extreme weather records. According to NOAA (the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) on the evening of January 5, 1904, bitterly cold air gripped the northeast United States. A Pennsylvania State record low of –41 degrees Fahrenheit was recorded. In 2003, this record still remains the lowest temperature ever reported in state.

Our second official record is less well known, but even more amazing. This time a state and

world record rainfall was recorded. James A. Smith of Princeton University describes the event in his textbook *Orographic Thunderstorms and Extreme Floods Along the Western Margin of the Central Appalachians states* "The 18 July 1942 Smethport, Pennsylvania flood produced the world record rainfall accumulation at 4 hour time scale." That's an average of 6.84 inches of rain per hour!

- Mary Pierotti

The night of the record rainfall was nearly as bright as daytime. For a number of hours as the storm hovered in one place, the lightning flashed continuously as if there were thousands of miniature suns streaking across the heavens. It was easy to read a newspaper just as if it had been in the daylight. There was little interest in reading as the booming thunders and the torrential rains were far more exciting. The thoughts that night, for Smethport residents, "this was a highly unusual rainstorm, but certainly not a record." Awaking the next morning with the waters flooding over Hamlin Lake and the low lying valley, few realized how fortunate Smethport had been. The dam was washed away. Electric department personnel, Seth Norman and Glenn Mencer, had tried to remove the splashboards, but the terrific flow of water prevented this. Port Allegany, Eldred and other surrounding towns were divested with huge walls of water rushing through the normally dry streets. Smethport luckily avoided serious damage. The valley had previously flooded so frequently that businesses and homes avoided construction in the area. Still the rushing waters flooded many basements and created havoc with storm drains and the street. The water level reached the railroad tracks on Water Street, an all-time record high



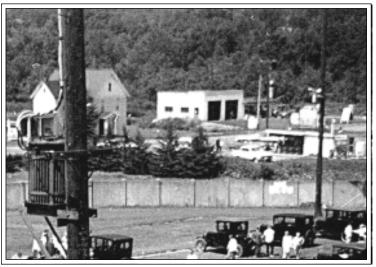
Christmas Eve snowfall of 1978. Nearly three feet of snow fell that night. Les Jordan Jr. Collection

level, but still only a minor inconvenience compared to the four to twenty feet of water on the streets of Port Allegany.

The winter of 1944/45 was one of the nearly record snows for Smethport. By March, one hundred eleven inches of snow had fallen. Little had melted from the first snowfall and as it accumulated, the streets became so narrowed that bulldozers were plowing the street not parallel, but perpendicular. On some days the high school boys, instead of attending class, spent the



day shoveling sidewalks and street intersections. Snow piles were as high as the second stories on buildings from



A view from the McCoy Stadium during Old Home Week 1964 looking towards the flat. White Spot is visible in the right center of the photo. *Les Jordan Jr. Collection*

which the kids gleefully jumped without any danger of injury.

—Jim Herzog

Jim Herzog

I recall a flood a few years earlier when I was still in grade school that left giant chunks of ice on the little league baseball field. A friend and I took quick advantage of the situation to set our imaginations into another Huck Finn type adventure. The large pieces of ice became glaciers that we climbed upon as scouts in search of unseen lands. It was a wonderful expedition that kept us out of the house for the entire afternoon.

Childhood was a great expedition, part Lewis and Clark, and part Tom Sawyer. Adventure was everywhere simply for the price of discovery. And it was all safe, all secure, all guarded underneath the unique umbrella of a friendly, trusting small town. —Les Jordan Jr.

REMEMBER WHEN—NATURAL BEAUTY AND THE OUTDOORS

As 1960 became history, I reached the age where I could go with friends on hikes to the hills on either side of Smethport. These were great adventures. With a can of beans in a nap sack on my shoulder, I would gather with my school friends for the start of the day's expedition. Our favorite destination at first was the stone quarry on the North hill that was situated on the eastern end of town. We would often sleep out there, once we got older. My friend always brought his Collie

dog with him. I remember his courageous stand against a scrappy coon in the middle of a particular dark night that awoke us all from a quiet slumber and into a sudden terror as we scattered to our feet in chaos.

—Les Jordan Jr.

When I married Jamie in 1979 and moved to Smethport, one of my most vivid memories was



Aerial view of Hamlin Lake, the swampsn and the island in 1950.

Nunundah



experiencing my first hunting season. The traffic increased and it was hard to buy a loaf of bread or other necessities as hunters moved into their camps. I will never forget walking by Hulls Hotel and hanging along their beautiful porch were about five gutted deer. Hunters brought in their trophies to show off their hunting prowess. Hulls Hotel was a gathering spot for hunters in the area.

—Amelia Pierotti

My father, Edward Rosenswie, enjoyed deer hunting, grouse hunting with his English setters, and trout fishing. But, most of all, he enjoyed fox trapping. He was considered one of the area's best minnow fisherman and he was the sole inventor of the sliding minnow rig back in the mid-forties.

-Jack Rosenswie

The swampy areas that surrounded Hamlin Lake were another favorite spot for adventure. Swinging bridges were built above the channels on either side of the island. We loved to get the girls on the bridge and swing it as hard as we could. They would always scream with great shrieks of utter terror. Of course, we boys would pretend not being able to understand what all the fuss was about. The swinging bridges over the Marvin Creek channel were all part of the great adventure.

-Les Jordan Jr.

I was driving down Main Street the other day thinking about the canopy of tree limbs that covered the residential parts of the street. It was very beautiful and it was also very cool on a hot summer day.

-Bart Barton

Very often, on a hot summer day, my brothers, sisters and I could talk Dad into taking some time off from work and he would take us down to Crossmire's to the old swimming hole. Later on when the family grew, he built a pond and many friends and neighbors would come to swim in it. The pond was spring-fed so was really cold but when one is young you don't seem to mind.

-Carol Ferman Cordner of Troy, PA

REMEMBER WHEN—FRIENDLY PEOPLE

My mother worked at the bank on the corner across from the courthouse. We lived on Main Street in the Cummins

house. On days when it would rain and my mom was walking to work, O. J. Hamlin would have his driver ask my mom if she wanted a ride. They would drop her off at her bank and then go on to the Hamlin Bank down the street.

- Gini Gosney Newell

I was born in a house in East Smethport, in 1934, and was raised in Smethport. When I was in my late 20s, my wife, Claudia Rittberg, my three small children, Jay, Bill, and Debbie, and I moved to Palm Springs, California. I had an uncle who lived there. He had been badly injured and needed me to run his business. We lived there for 11 years. It was a turbulent time in our nation's history. Our children were bussed across town to school. Claudia and I worried about our children's safety and tired of the California glitter. We moved back to the hills of Pennsylvania.

Shortly after coming back to Smethport, I was employed by Hamlin Bank and Trust Company where I continued to work for 30 years. Although I had been away from the area for eleven years, I would see young people walking on Main Street and I'd know who they were! I had never seen them before, but I'd know that they were a Duffy or a Cunningham! They would look just like their dad or their granddad! After having lived in the urban area for so long, it was a comforting feeling. Claudia and I were always glad that we brought our kids back home to Smethport for a wholesome life.

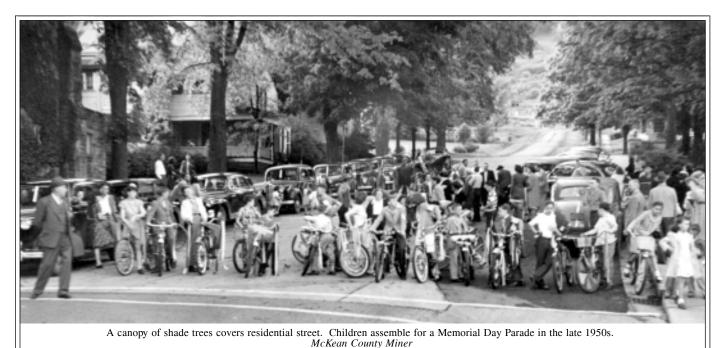




Barbara Robey Shackett 1958 Nunundah

I was born and raised in Smethport. Well, to be exact, since there was no hospital in town, I was born in Kane! After graduating from Smethport High, I went off to college and then lived for the next 30 years or so away from my home area. I became used to urban living. After the death of my husband (Frank Shackett, a Smethport boy), I came back home to live near my mother, Trudy Robey.

One day, shortly after coming back home, I developed car trouble. I left my car with Jerry Mix, since he had a fine reputation in town for auto repair. I said he could give me a call when the work was completed. A few hours later, there was a knock at my front door. There stood Jerry Mix! And there stood my repaired car in my driveway! Jerry said, in his casual, matter-of-





Jay Stickles 1951 Nunundah

fact manner, "Your car's done."

I was flabbergasted! I said, "Jerry, they certainly don't deliver cars in the cities!!"

He casually replied, as he stepped off the porch, "Oh, no problem. I was going to pick up Hank Reap's car, so I figured I'd drop yours off to you."

After thanking him profusely, I called after him, "Would you like a check?"

Jerry drawled, "Naw, I'll send ya a bill."

As he walked up toward Reap's house, I thought to myself, "Boy, it SURE is good to be back in Smethport!!"

-Barbara Robey Shackett

We would go trick or treating every night for a week, it would take that long to go door to door because people would actually take the time to guess who we were before they would give us a treat. Each class in the grade school would have a window to paint at Halloween, Gail was the one in our class who planned the window design and we would leave the building and walk down the hill to town (during school hours) to work on the window.

- Gini Gosney Newell

Some vivid memories that I have was helping my father operate his dairy farm. There wasn't much time for extracurricular activities as they interfered with the chores on the farm such as getting the fields ready for planting, milking, etc.



1951 Nunundah

However, I did run the time clock for the basketball games for 4 years which didn't require me to be away from the farm for very long.

My father delivered milk to all his customers in Smethport on a daily basis. That included going in the kitchens of homes and putting the milk away and rinsing the dirty bottles before returning to the truck. He delivered milk and cream to the Corner Restaurant and not only put it away but would fill up a tray full of the little creamer bottles they used in those days. No wonder it took us so long to do the route. We normally got home around 1:30 each day. After taking care of the milk, cream, butter, eggs and cottage cheese that we didn't sell that day, we had to take care of the livestock. It was a busy day and at evening milking time, my sisters and I, depending on who was home at the time, had to wash the milk bottles.

In the last few years, my father decided to split the route in half, delivering one half one day and the other half the next day. It worked GREAT! We STILL got home at the same time because he had more time to visit with the customers!!! -John G. (Gerry) Coleman

One evening in 1955, the five of us "girls" were babysitting Terry Hickey's younger brother when her parents were away. My mother (Marion Fizzell) periodically popped in on us, right up through 2 AM that night, at which time we convinced

her that we were sleepy and ready for bed (and were already in our pajamas). Ann Megivern was sound asleep on the sofa, so we designated her the babysitter. Then Terry, Ginny Hileman, Barb Robey and I tiptoed into the garage and climbed into Terry's mother's car for a tour around town! Terry did NOT have a driver's license — she was only 15. Headed up King Street, I told Terry to go faster. She said "I can't because the speed limit is 25 mph, and I'd be committing a sin if I disobeyed the sign" (yes, we were taught by the nuns!). After a brief tour and not seeing one person or another moving vehicle, we headed home but ran out of gas on Water Street directly behind the Quaker State station (now>known as The Hub). Well, as naive as we were back then, Barb said, since we had no money, that we could charge the gas to her father and he would never find out! Credit cards did NOT exist back then! Barb trotted up to the station in her pajamas, told Bunny O'Connor (our classmate) to charge \$1.00 worth of gas to her father (no signature needed because everyone knew everyone), and Bunny got us on the road again with



almost a full tank. We went straight home! Only Larry Robey learned of the adventure — when he inquired about the \$1.00 gasoline charge!

-Dona (Teep) Fizzell Cooper





A wagon train travels down Route 6 during the 1976 United States Bicentennial Celebration. Les Jordan Jr. Collection





Track & Football Coach, Jim Donovon in the 1954 Nunundah

Assistant Track Coach, Curtis Stone in the 1954 Nunundah

The teachers at Smethport had a tremendous influence on our lives. For me, the strongest impressions were made by Anita Dickerson, Eugene Rhodes, and Pauline Hergenrother. Anita started teaching the same year our gang started 7th grade, and she was younger and prettier than all the other women teachers, and we identified with her, seeking her out as an "older sister" figure. She was wonderful to us; we could tell or ask her anything. Gene taught math and this was my favorite subject. I remember that of his own

volition he gave classes during the weekday evenings without any additional pay, just to be sure that some of us who were overachievers were challenged and really ready for college with a solid knowledge of set theory and Boolean algebra. I remember Tom Abbey, Dave Rumsey, Johnny Hummel, Berna Jeanne Fay, Courtney Gustafson and Jack Combs being in those evening classes with me.

-Gail Guenter Hanson, SAHS 1960

The Family of Stillman Wells prepares to ride in style in the 1953 Centennial Parade. The 1910 International is parked in front of the Smethport Auto Parts store that the family owned and operated for many years. Les Jordan Sr. Collection

My dad also drove a race car, #39. I can still see him today with the checkered flag in hand. He was a crowd favorite at the Smethport Race Track — which is still running today....and with some of the same families having cars in the races. I remember the theme songs at the races back in the 50's, beginning with Bill Haley's "Rock Around the Clock" and ending with the Platters' "Twilight Time". Dad even had a race track behind our house which is where I and many of my friends learned to drive.

-Carol Ferman Cordner of Troy, PA



David Yoder, James Kane, David Johnson, Ralph Peasley, Carl Rosenswie, Mr. Gates, Advisor. The truth is out. The reason the History Club existed is because it met in the auditorium, and gave its members a "jump" on the lunch rush. 1967 Nunundah



Dr. Fritz Guenter Physican and Member of the School Board Nunundah

As the oldest of the six "Guenter kids", I have wonderful memories of growing up in our family. My dad, Dr. Fritz E. "Doc" Guenter, was one of the few doctors in the area, and back in those days, he was a true country doctor, readily making "home calls", i.e. visits to the homes of the infirmed to provide medical services.

Each of us kids got to ride along in turn with Dad as he made weekend homecalls, and this was a cherished time. When I was about six, Dad and I were traveling up Bloomster Hollow in the Spring, and he suddenly stopped the car, and said "Gail, don't move; be very still..." A huge black bear came out of the woods and stopped right in front of the car and stood up on its

—Jim Freer, SAHS 1957

hind legs and looked at us. Neither of us moved. He then stood down, and continued to the other side of the rode, his vision embedded in my memory.

-Gail Guenter Hanson, SAHS 1960

Nunundah I grew up on Bank Street Extension. We moved from the farm in Crosby when I was in 3rd grade. Almost every weekend we would go up Christian Hollow to my uncle Earl Larson's camp. We'd play horseshoes and picnic. Coffee was made from the creek water. We could go anywhere on our bikes. Sometimes we'd go up to the old dump just off of Bank Street Extension and shoot rats. We used to build our own go carts and race down the hill on the road just to the north of the cemetery. We'd go fishing on Marvin Creek almost



Jim "RC" Freer 1958 Nunundah

Remember when there were three grocery stores on Main Street (John Lindholm's, Hull's, and Kohn's) that delivered your groceries and allowed them to be charged? Remember when Main Street had two hardware stores (J. Alfred Johnson's and Masser Hardware)? Remember when

every day. We'd just snag suckers and carp and get sunburned.

Smethport had a movie theater where Saturday matinees cost seventeen cents? Remember the two billiard parlors? Remember when Smethport had two newspapers: The *McKean County Democrat* and the *McKean County Miner*? Remember when the post office was in the Auto Parts building? Remember Davey Crockett hats, hula hoops, and the slinky? Remember Top Value and S&H trading stamps. Remember Principal Stanley Bright's special paddle? Students who were sent to the office found out he used it often! Remember Joe Ferrino's tailor shop? Remember five cent candy bars (and the more expensive ten cent bars like Mounds and Mars bars)? Remember catching suckers in Marvin Creek and placing them on the railroad

rails of the Shawmut line and waiting for the train to flatten them? We used to put pennies on the rails too. Remember when the fire hall was on Water Street behind the Hamlin Bank? The



"Remember when the post office was in the Auto Parts building? Remember McCoy's Drug Store" —Harold Lindgren

upstairs of the firehall was used for meetings. The borough office was attached to the side of the fire hall, and the jail, which had two cells, was in the back. Curious boys often looked into the cells at the prisoners held there. Remember when Mr. Erickson delivered ice for ice boxes in his old Model T? He would saw cubes of ice from a pond at the end of Hamlin Street and store it under sawdust in the adjacent barn. When passing the elementary school playground, he would often share chips of ice with some lucky students. Remember when freight arrived by rail? Mr. Kelly, who lived in the white house next to Backus, would pick up the rail freight in East Smethport at the railroad depot and deliver it to Smethport Merchants. Remember



Harold Lindgren "Remember catching suckers in Marvin Creek and placing them on the railroad rails of the Shawmut line and waiting for the train to flatten them?" 1952 Nunundah

that car tires had tubes which enjoyed a good second life as slingshots and rubber guns? —Harold Lindgren Some of my most vivid memories of growing up in Smethport involve playing around the West King Street neighborhood with Penny Robey and Jeanne O'Connor, probably in the mid to late forties. I am sure we were really very good little girls as a rule, but as I recall, we had no concept of private property at all and for example, thought nothing at all of climbing trees in other people's yards and sitting there eating the apples, or picking rhubarb out of some else's garden to munch. We would also pick the neighbors' tulips and daffodils for May Baskets (you rolled up wallpaper sample pages, filled them with flowers and candy on May 1st, hung them on the neighbors' doors and rang the bell, then ran away).

We would also explore what seemed to us deserted houses. One such house was in a little woodsy area on the north side of town. We were sure it was haunted. We would push through the creaking door and tiptoe around corners trying to catch the ghosts—scaring ourselves when the wind blew the hanging shutters. One summer day we had exhausted that



From left to right: Successful Smethport football coaching staff Denny Maynard, Carl Defilippi, and Ward Baun. 1983 Nunundah

Debbie Willson Babcox 1956 Nunundah

build a bonfire across the road. This is near where the Hagg's log cabin house now stands. The fire got away from us and began to burn up the hillside, though we tried desperately to put it out, beating it with our jackets. Finally it got so big that we got scared and ran away standing about down the road several blocks to see what would happen. The fire alarms went off and we saw people running. We decided that no one would suspect us if we went to watch, saying criminals always return to the scene of a crime. Nobody would think we were that dumb, so no one will think we had anything to do with it. Of course nobody knew, and it took quite a while for the firemen to put the fire out.

activity and decided to

— Deborah Willson Babcox

It was exploring the woods as a child that I fell in love with the natural beauty of Smethport. The small streets and local smiles always felt warm and safe. My friends and I built forts, swam in any river hole that we could get into, and rode our bicycles over every inch that our wheels would take us to.

Anxiously we awaited the change of every season and the new games that came with it. Every August I would take a

deep breath, look at the Technicolor hillsides, and say, "it smells like football."

Even after all the good times I've had in this town, it wasn't until I left Smethport that I truly realized what a jewel it is. Now, I have traveled throughout much of the world and seen lifestyles of every extreme. What I have taken away from all of these experiences is that Smethport, Pennsylvania is quite simply a great place to live. Unparalleled is the combination of charm and beauty that our borough has to offer. No matter where the citizens of this town venture, it will always be, time to come home to Smethport.



1997-1998 SAHS Student Council Officers: (L to R) Amy Thomas, Treasurer.; Izach Porter, President; Ryan Fay, Lori Sander, Secretary; Dawn Raszmann, Vice President 1998 Nunundah

-Izach Seminara Porter, SAHS 1998



1940 Dedication of the American Legion Building The American Legion Collection



n 1941, Governor Artnur H. James of Pennsylvania appointed Edward M. Rosenswie to serve as Justice of the Peace for the Smethport area. Edward served in this capacity for 28 years. He was then elected as the first Smethport Area District Magistrate and served in that capacity for 12 years retiring in 1981. He was also employed by Pennzoil for 35 years retiring in 1969.

Mr. Edward M. (Knocky) Rosenswie died in Smethport, Pennsylvania, on Saturday, June 9, 1989 at the age of 77. He served on the bench for 40 years, and will always be remembered as a fair and honest justice with a high respect for the common man.

Rosenswie Collection

Another idea we girls came up with around 1955 - when we were all wearing saddle shoes - was to put food coloring in white shoe polish (usually pink, blue or green) and dye the white parts of our saddle shoes different colors to match the long sleeve cardigans we were wearing backwards each day. The cardigans were worn above full cotton, printed skirts with several heavily-starched crinolines underneath. In Home Economics class, Kathy Beckstrom and a bunch of us all bought the same brown material and made matching skirts, which advertised our friendships. —Gail Guenter Hanson, SAHS 1960



Smethport Diner about 1948: The famous Smethport Diner was featured during the 1990s on a PBS television special highlighting classic Pennsylvania diners.

Betty Kline Collection Photo reconstruction by Ross McElhattan 2003

"GERMAN SEEDS GERMINATE" H.G. GERMAN SEEDS GROWS NATIONAL

G. German Seed Company was sprouted in 1925 by Harry Grim German. Mr. German served as Chief Chemist and General Manager at the Heinemann Chemical Company owned by N.W. Heinemann in Crosby.



Smethport's Ronnie German created a national seed company. *Flossie German Collection*

H.O. OFRMAN Souds, INC.

o Price List 1783

As a hobby he germinated, developed, and refined seed stock. He supplied flower seeds to commercial greenhouses.

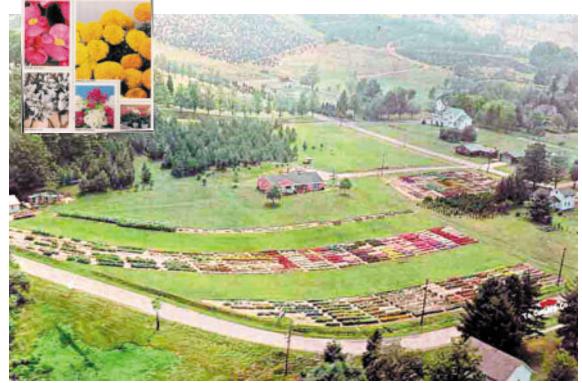
In 1949 Ronald German took charge of his father's business and turned it into a nationally recognized seed company based in his hometown of Smethport. Giant, well manicured trial gardens were picturesque icons of the German estate on E. Bank Street. From these test gardens Ron and his staff were able to determine the characteristics of all varieties of their seeds. H.G. German Seed Company, under Ron's guidance, nutured nearly 3000 plants.

In 1984 Gary Grimes purchased H.G. German Seeds, Inc. At the time the business was sold the company had 8 employees and had \$1 million dollars in annual sales. In 1989 the company was



H.G. German Carolyn Bausinger Collection

renamed Grimes Seeds, Inc. Eventually the company left Smethport and relocated in Concord, Ohio. Original seed stock developed by the German's can still be purchased today through Grimes Seeds, Inc. Their website in 2003 is *www.grimesseeds.com*.



Ronald German's H. G. German Trial Gardens on E. Bank Street in Smethport, PA during the 1950s. John G. Coleman Collection

SMETHPORT, PA TOY TOWN HOME OF SMETHPORT SPECIALTY

A HISTORY OF SMETHPORT SPECIALTY CO.

Smethport Specialty Co. (Marvel Specialty Co. from 1923 to 1932), a toy manufacturer, was founded in 1923 by Ralph Herzog and William Kerr. Production began in a barn located in an alley behind the Grand Central Hotel, later known as the Fry Building. The

first product was a magnet set consisting of a cast horseshoe-shaped high carbon steel magnet painted red and silver with various stamped metal figures stitched to a display card. William Kerr supplied the magnet idea and Ralph Herzog the engineering and manufacturing experience from his years with Winchester Arms in New Haven, CT.

F. W. Woolworth Company, with many stores located throughout the country, had pioneered a mass selling low priced concept. They became a major customer demanding at times all of the production from the fledgling toy company.

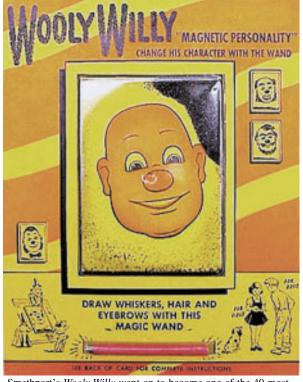


Once the magnet set was established as an excellent seller, Twin Racing Tops, plastic pinwheels, and a very popular Flicker Top were produced and sold to an expanding group of low priced chain stores such as

Kresge, Green, Grant, and Murphy all of whom competed with F. W. Woolworth.

The depression hit the toy business in 1929 and lasted for nearly a

decade but



Smethport's *Wooly Willy* went on to become one of the 40 most popular toys produced during the 1950 to 1980 period. It was frequently copied around the world. *smethporthistory.org*

smethporthistory.org

the Magnet Set and Flicker Top remained good sellers. Expanding production required larger facilities. In 1931, a building at 304 Fulton Street that had formerly housed the *Boys' Own Magazine*, successor to Scott Redfield's *The Boys' Magazine*, was purchased. In 1932 Ralph Herzog became the sole owner and changed the name to Smethport Specialty Co. William Kerr briefly manufactured toys at the Backus Company and Lyceum Theater before starting an Oldsmobile auto

agency at the east end of Water Street.

With the advent of World War II, all toy production ceased as materials were available for war use only. Smethport Specialty became R. W. Herzog, a subcontractor for Sylvania Co., Emporium PA, supplying mica

Flicker Top smethporthistory.org

Emporium PA, supplying mica insulators for radio tubes used in proximity fuses. This device controlled the height at which



a bomb would explode. The fuse was considered as one of the war's three most important weapons due to the devastation it could cause. Millions of insulators were produced on two shifts operating 48 hours per week. Eighty to 120 local women were employed for this important war effort.

After the war, mica insulator production continued for civilian use and, as material became available, limited toy production returned. Eventually transistors replaced radio tubes and insulator production ceased in the mid 50s.

Donald and James Herzog joined the firm in the early 50s, mainly working on Smethport Specialty's toy business. The Flicker Top was again produced and magnet production was expanded. In 1955 James Herzog found that dust from the

magnet grinding could be used for magnetic drawing and patented the first workable Wooly Willy Magnetic Drawing set. About the same time, the United States Army needed a three dimensional map which was produced by vacuum forming heated plastic. Donald Herzog suggested this process could be used to form a clear plastic to contain the magnetic drawing powder. Leonard Mackowski, a very talented Bradford artist, designed the display card. He often hid his name in the art and you will still find it on the back of the original set that has been delighting youngsters for more than 45 years.

u will still find it on ghting youngsters for Vooly Willy as most ly a very cautious Ralph W. and Mrs. Emogene McG

Initially no toy buyer would purchase Wooly Willy as most thought it a very poor toy concept. Eventually a very cautious buyer at G.C. Murphy chain, McKeesport, PA, said he would try

Ralph W. and Mrs. Emogene McGowan Herzog 1922 James Herzog Collection

six dozen in his Indianapolis store mainly to prove that it wouldn't sell. Fortunately he was wrong. The first six dozen sold in a couple of days. His next order for that store was for 12,000 sets which sold out in a few weeks. Suddenly Wooly Willy, the toy no buyer wanted, became the toy that all wanted. Wooly Willy went on to become one of the 40 most popular toys produced during the 1950 to 1980 period. It was frequently copied around the world. One set made in Japan even had "Made in Smethport, Japan." Fortunately the copiers were never willing or able to make the engineering effort to duplicate Willy's quality features----special magnetite powder, a sturdy antistatic plastic dome, thick display card, and a strong drawing magnet. Smethport Specialty continued to expand their product base that included a variety of toys.

In 1965, the firm moved to Magnetic Avenue on Route 59, west of Smethport, where it continues today.









1953 CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION Farewell to First, Welcome to Second Century

SMETHPORT SET FOR CENTENNIAL

methport- (Special) Bradford Era: Beginning June 14,

a week from Sunday, a large portion of the Smethport populace will be "all dressed up," but it is doubtful if there will be anyone with "no place to go."

For on that day, the long-heralded Smethport Centennial Celebration gets underway, with clamor and excitement designed to echo throughout the surrounding counties.

The gala week of fun and fanfare marks the 100th anniversary of the borough's incorporation. The residents are determined not to let the centennial go by without leaving behind a memory of the greatest show ever to hit Smethport, the seat of McKean County.

The opening day, Sunday, has been proclaimed "Freedom





of Religions Day," when morning centennial services will be conducted in all borough churches, of all faiths.



Bill and Eleanor Pierotti pose for the camera prior to the "Costume Parade". The authentic 1850s period attire was on loan from Carrie Oviatt. *Pierotti Family Collection*

At 8 p.m. a county-wide outdoor service is scheduled at McCoy Stadium, with Dr. William W. Edel, Dickinson College president, set to speak. An all-county choir and chorus, backed up by the Smethport High School band, will provide a musical background for the service.

The next day, Monday, the "Smethport Centennorama" spectacle will open with more than 350 persons depicting on a 175-foot stage the history of Smethport and McKean County. The pageant will be presented nightly, at 9:30 p.m. through Saturday, June 20.

CARNIVAL COMING

he largest carnival ever to camp in the borough will open a six-day stint at the carnival grounds at 7 p.m., also Monday, and an "Industrial Parade" will move up Main Street at 7:30 p.m. Following the pageant, a brilliant fireworks display is planned at McCoy Stadium.

Tuesday has been designated "Government Day," when at 10 a.m. the

McKean County Court House historical rooms will be opened to the public, as will the county offices. Lt. Gov. Lloyd H. Wood will speak from the Court House steps at 7:30 p.m., followed by a battery of entertainers: the Smethport High School band,

several barbershop quartets, a 40-accordion band from Olean, N.Y. and an exhibition drill team.

Wednesday's major event will be a "parade of high school bands," beginning at 7:30 p.m. with a host of musical marchers competing for prizes.

At 2:30 p.m. the Little League baseball teams of the county-seat area will stage an exhibition game at the East Smethport field. And another fireworks display is scheduled for 10:30 p.m., after the Centennorama.

"Costume Parade" night will be Thursday, when "Brothers of the Brush' and "Sisters of the Swish" will join many others in presentlyfantastic get-ups in a little Mardi Gras. Participating will be 40 costumed horsemen. The fantasy-costume promenade will begin at 7:30 p.m., open to all ages...

On Friday, at 7:30 p.m., the purported "greatest firemen's parade ever staged in this area" will take place, with \$850 offered in prizes.

The noted Pennsylvania State Police Rodeo will open at 2 p.m. Saturday with an exhibition of precision marching by the equally-noted "White Indians" Drum and Bugle Corps of the Salamanca, N.Y., Veterans of Foreign Wars post. An estimated 4,000 persons will be on hand for the rodeo in McCoy Stadium.

Saturday will be "Fraternal Day" with a district convention of IOOF lodges and a "Fraternal Parade" at 7:30 p.m., when the "White Indians" will again march. Another feature of the day will be a Little League doubleheader in East Smethport.

The third and final fireworks display at 10:30 p.m. Saturday, the centennial celebration's closing day, will climax the week-long festivities, as the 100- year-old Borough of Smethport opens the door to its second century.



Bill, Donna, and Bonnie Barton in Costume Parade Thursday, June 18 William L. Barton Collection





Winners of the "Brothers of the Brush" Beard, Sideburns, & Goatee Contest Saturday night, June 20, 1953: Rear, (L-R) Clarence McKalip, Gerald Connors, Vern Ruby, Art Swanson, Gene Very, Bunny Austin, Ted Petruzzi, Carlton Kohn Front (L-R) David Petruzzi, Gordon Ruoff) Gordon Ruoff via Chuck McKeirnan Collection Photo by Bill Barton Studio



Carlton Kohn (L) and photographer Bill Barton, Centennial 1953 Carol Cummings Ball Collection Barton Studio photo



Comely Candidate: Eldred supplied one of the top candidates for the role of queen of the Smethport Centennial, Carol Cummings. Carol was interviewed on WESB by Betty Bradford on one of her afternoon (1:15 p.m.) programs and acquitted herself very creditably. Incidently, Smethport is currently in the midst of its Centennial Celebration and the good wishes of everyone in the area go to the Smethport folks as they observe their 100th birthday!

The grand Centennial parade held more booms that live vivid

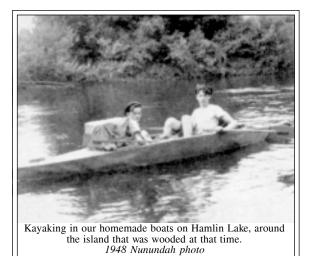


Miss Smethport Centennial Queen 1953 Penny Robey, age 15, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Robey (above)Carol Cummings Ball Collection (right) Penny Robey Williams Collection in my memory. People were thick on the sidewalk. Many were in costumes that were peculiar to me. A merchant was selling Centennial plates as souvenirs. The parade just kept rolling by. I hardly recall any of the events, except for the oddly shaped American Legion parade truck. It was shaped to look like a steam engine with bells and whistles. I stood watching curiously as it approached where I was standing. Boom! I jumped into the air. But, this time it wasn't fireworks that made the loud, terrifying boom. It was from a cannon built on the back of the truck. I wanted to run and hide again, just like with the fireworks. But, at the same time, it was like magic as all the sounds

and sights mingled together into the curious mind of a young child. I stood my ground and looked on at the endless parade flowing eastward down Main Street. —Les Jordan Jr.

Smethport, PA. June 20 Bradford Era The queen of Smethport's Centennial and her court have been appearing in all parades in connection with the anniversary celebration this week. The queen, Miss Penny Robey, is seated at top left. With her are Miss Virgina Hokeson, "Miss McKean County" and these princesses, Betty Westendorf, Carol Cummings, Kay Boswick, Carol Comes, Donna Eckstrom, Helena Hervatin, Betty McAnallen (behind fountain), Janet Denning, Sue Jones, Frances Zawaki Carol Cummings Ball Collection





Duane Bickford - Quarterback

Milton Lopus - End Walter Siegel - Guard Eddie Smith - End John Gustafson - Guard Morris Oviatt - Halfback John Dreihaup - Guard Don Burford - End Jim Swanson - Fullback Rudy Kohn - Quarterback Bill O'Brien - Halfback Dick Weaver - Halfback Bill Halpenny - Center Jack Bishop - End Jerry Nelson - Tackle Jim Moore - Tackle Bob Martin - Center Barry Johnson - Fullback Charles McKiernan -Tackle Harold Lynch- Halfback

1947 Nunundah

"Just a few of so many:"

Kayaking in our homemade boats on Hamlin Lake, around the

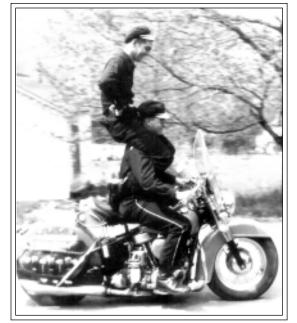
island that was wooded at that time and down Potato Creek to Farmers Valley to the Dairy Bar for a banana split. Hiking on South Hill to Devil's Den and swimming in the many swimming holes in the area. Riding our bikes everywhere; playing on the undefeated football team of 1948 and growing up with kids who would remain lifelong friends. Just enjoyed all of nature's bounties in this great little town. —Bill Halpenny SHS 1949



Bill Halpenny 1949 Nunundah

1947 UNDEFEATED HUBBERS





Chuck McKeirnan shoulders the responsibility with Gordy Ruoff along for the ride. Good parade stunt until neighbors called the family. *Gordon Ruoff via Chuck McKeirnan Collection*



Senior Class Officers Class of 1950: (L to R) Chuck McKeirnan, Secretary; Judy Duffy, Vice President; Bob Digel, Jr., Treasurer; Dave Hallstrom, President, (standing) 1950 Nunundah

SAM COSTA, SR. SUPERMARKET PIONEER

hen Sam Costa's grocery store in Roulette burned to the ground in February 1950, he could have easily thrown in the towel and turned to another endeavor. But that spring he discovered Kahn's Grocery Store on the 100 block of West Main Street in Smethport was for sale. Thus began 53 years of retail service and innovation in the county seat.

No stranger to new ideas, Mr. Costa had already operated the first

We determine the same of the people of Beneficient that we have persignal Exclusive Greenery and Meek Medicat, taking over its operations as of Rey A 1990. In will be our aim in server peop with a modern store and the most up to date ather to ever a second of the localizat. To have been measured with the most and groomy business for the part former word free will spatialize the serve peop. In the people we have operated with the most and have built and have dough this is for the prior. We share the serve peop. The serve people we have operated we the serve peop. The serve to convert the serve has a such basis and have dough this is next people by former. It would us to pass in to our successors the most people by form. The serve to convert the serve has a modern and serves matters, easing the formet of people to convert the serve has a modern and get asgundated SAMUEL D. COSTA

Original 1950 Self-Service Grocery Ad in McKean County Miner Ross Porter Collection self-service grocery store in the area, the forementioned Roulette store. He had started in the grocery business at the age of 12 as a clerk at Gilroy's Grocery Store. His introduction to the grocery business included sweeping, delivering orders, and refilling the large pickle barrel.

Mr. Costa plied his expertise at the Main Street location for ten years and saw the need to expand. With the help of the Olean Whole-

sale Co-Operative he built a supermarket on a marshy lot on East Water Street. In 1960 most businesses closed at 5 p.m., and didn't open on Sundays or holidays. Mr. Costa changed that, becoming the first store in the area to be opened seven days a week, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. (However, he



Smethport Costa Main Street grocery Paul Costa Collection



Sam Costa, Sr. in original Smethport Costa Main Street grocery Paul Costa Collection

always held Easter and Christmas sacred, and to this day the store closes on those two days.)

In 1969 Sam saw the need for a local hardware store, and with the efforts of True Value built a building adjacent to his grocery store. Twenty-three years later, in 1992, he added a 7,200 square foot addition, allowing room for seasonal displays and additional merchandise.

This year the grocery store leased the building formerly occupied by Jubilee and Market Basket. Following extensive

modernization Costa's held its grand opening this March, with over 500 new items on the shelves. As a tribute to Mr. Costa, who died March 23, 1997 at the age of 89, the "Red Potato Cafe" has become an integral part of that new location.

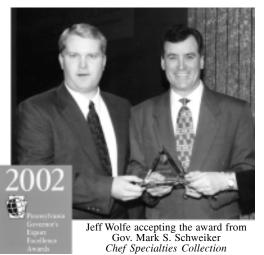
While the Costa family had been at the forefront with innovation, they still leave one amenity untouched: your groceries are still carried to your car. Sam Costa wouldn't have it any other way, and that tradition continues through sons Samuel Jr., Paul, and Paul's son, Josh.

CHEF SPECIALITES HONORED WITH GOVERNOR'S EXPORT EXCELLENCE AWARD

hef Specialties Company of Smethport, PA, America's oldest continuous manufacturer of pepper mills, was selected a winner of the 2002 Pennsylvania Governor's Export Excellence Awards in the Special Category Division.

Jeff Wolfe, Assistant Sales Manager, accepted the award for the company from Governor Mark S. Schweiker. Also attending the event was Susan Keech, Export Specialist for the Chef Specialties Company.

The company was established in 1940 and moved to its current location in Smethport in 1974. Parts for the pepper mills have been manufactured by the Backus Company of Smethport since the 1950s. Principal owners are Jack and James Pierotti. Chef Specialties distributes its pepper mill products worldwide.



VISITORS FLCOME

Mechanical Santa greets visitors to the Christmas Store. 1970 Nunundah

When I look back somewhat nostalgically at the Smethport I grew up in, it appears both idealistic and magical. This is not only because of the beautiful town nestled in the hills which encouraged playing outside in the fresh air, but especially because of the wonderful individuals who made up the community at that point in time.

I remember before kindergarten was a requirement that many children went to "Richie's," (Eleanor Richardson's house) where among other things she played the piano and introduced us to children's songs like "Thumbkin" and "Bingo."

I remember my first grade teacher, Mrs. Doris Daugherty who has a special day for every day of the alphabet. (On "P" day, we ate pudding!) She later became the principal. I remember my orange sash, badge, and flag which I used as an elementary school crossing guard to help students cross King Street safely.

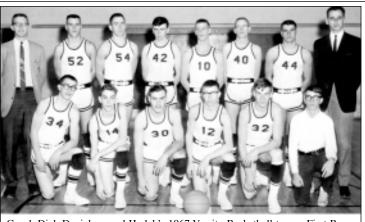
I remember walking to Lindgren's, my father's store, after school. Dimes and quarters were not all filled with copper; some were still made of silver.

I remember shaking hands with the life size mechanical Santa outside the Christmas Store owned by Mr. Leonard Brynoff Johnson. I remember another Leonard Johnson, also known as the "gum man" by the children who attended Gethsemane Lutheran Church. He was famous for giving every child who went to church that day a stick of gum after the service.

-Christine Lindgren

I remember Leonard Johnson's Christmas displays. I remember

he took my father and me into his office behind the soda fountain in Johnson's Pharmacy to show us his first prototype. It was a reindeer made out of cardboard colored with colored chalk. He sold his displays from his first Christmas Store, which was located on the corner of Franklin and Main Streets. Herb Johnson, a commercial artist, designed most of the displays. After they were designed, Bill Daniels would cut them from Masonite, and they were painted by local artists, Sara Maynard and Maria McKean. Mr. Brooks, who previously worked for General Motors pin striping cars, was hired to paint the stripes on the candy canes. The art work was done above Quirk's garage. Finished items were stored in the basement of the Fry Building. —Harold Lindgren



Coach Dick Danielson and Hudak's 1967 Varsity Basketball team. First Row: David Eley, Peter Hergenrother, Tim Hess, John Olson, Milton Wright, Larry Hall, Manager Second Row: Mr. Danielson, Gary Shott, Robert Clark, James Kane, Leonard Anderson, Gary Hjelm, Bradley Ferman, and Coach Hudak 1967 Nunundah

Left: The concrete bridge spanning Marvin Creek. This structure was replaced in 1984 Les Jordan Jr. Collection

Right: The inside of the the Colonial Restaurant before the structure was converted to residential apartments. Les Jordan Jr. Collection



I remember all of the wonderful times attending the Fireman's Conventions and Parades. -Eleanor Pierotti

George Brown and Chuck Megivern returning home from a Fireman's Convention Parade in Tyrone.

'Tyrone or

Bust!"

SFD Archives



SMETHPORT AREA HIGH SCHOOL BEGINS INNOVATIVE UNIVERSITY WITHIN THE HIGH SCHOOL



Bradford Era

Principal Warren Semmel.

In 1981 Stan Austin brought his hometown

national attention with his country hit, 'Smethport U.S.A.' Ross Porter Collection

STAN AUSTIN

SMETHPORT

U.S.A.

BRADFORD ERA JANUARY 23, 2002

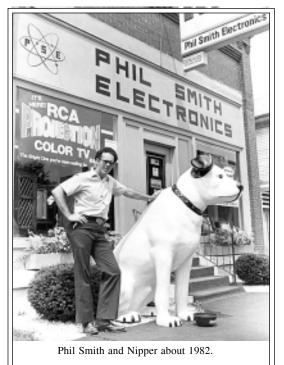
eginning with the 2002-03 academic year, senior high students at Smethport Area Junior-Senior High School will have the opportunity to get an early start on their college education.

Last week the Smethport school board, acting upon the recommendation of Superintendent George Romanowski, approved an agreement with California University of Pennsylvania to participate in California University in the High School, which permits sophomores, juniors, and seniors to earn up to 12 college credits in courses taken on site and taught by their high school teachers. This program is designed for college bound students who have demonstrated strong academic performance.

Credits earned can be transferred to any universities in the state system and many private colleges in Pennsylvania and out of the state. Initial course offerings include Trigonometry, Calculus, Modern World History 111, Local History 188, Chemistry 100, Accounting 100, and French 101-102.

Students enrolled in CU courses earn both local and college credit. The program gives Smethport Area High School students a jump-start on college while simultaneously raising Smethport's academic standards.

CU approves course content and textbooks. Teachers who have had course syllabuses approved by CU are classified Adjunct Professors. History teacher, Ross Porter, who teaches two CU courses, is the liaison between CU and Smethport Area School District. Other teachers approved to teach in this innovative program include Barry Shea, Karen Moses, Richard Woodring, and Don Liebrum.



I remember watching Mr. Abbey Southwick, the town policeman, walk down Main Street and check the doors of all the businesses to see that they were properly locked.

I remember walking home from school and picking up acorns from the slate sidewalks in front of the Victorian style homes on Main Streets.

I remember meeting my first "movie stars" at the annual Lion's Club chicken barbecue. The Millers, from the Buffalo television show "Meet the Millers" were the yearly guests.

I remember ice skating at the skating rink (now Costa's Market and the trailer court) at the rink in the park and on the tennis courts which were "flooded" for this purpose.

I remember summer dances at the tennis courts where the Lion's Club charged a dollar for teenagers to dance to a live band. One of the favorite bands was The Inner Depths.

I remember crossing the two swinging bridges, Lenten breakfasts, summer Bible School, stop-

ping at the White Spot for a frosted mug of root beer.

I also remember Gerry Coleman's boat shop which is now Dr. Bowman's office. I remember performing in Swinging 70s, in the annual community talent show, in the water shows at the pool, in the church choir and in piano concerts, all due to the influence of Bernie Reap.



Rose Dragoone Jordan on Main Street about 1940. Les Jordan Sr. Collection

-Christine Lindgren

I am proud to have been able to have served in the Girl Scout organization in Smethport. I was able to befriend many outstanding young women during my many years as a Cadette/Senior Leader. Shirley Gallup, Jane, and Laura Minard were three such individuals. They were among a small group of girls nationwide who were able to gain both the Gold and First Class awards. Although they were very "goal oriented" Scouts, they always had time for fun and food! —Mary Pierotti





Girls from the 4-H Club get a lesson in outdoor cooking. The 4-H Motto: To Make the Best Better, I pledge: My Head to clearer thinking, My Heart to greater loyalty, My Hands to larger service, and My Health to better living, For my club, my community, my country, and my world. Les Jordan Sr. Collection

Left to Right: Shirley Gallup, Jane Strang, Laura Minard are recognized for finishing their Gold Award Project. Also shown is Carol Minard, Senior Leader and Neighborhood Chairman. Olean Times Herald



Left: Girl Scouts in uniform march in a parade in the early 60s. Both the Camp Fire and Girl Scout organizations have served young women in the community from very early dates. In the late seventies and eighties, one out of every three girls in town was a registered Scout.



The Apple House in May of 1999. © 1999 Les Jordan Jr.

A Christmas Story in Smethport:

In 1890 John Nevin Apple, an attorney in Smethport, became engaged to Sarah McNulty, a beautiful and talented young school teacher. In anticipation of their marriage he purchased a home at 802 West King Street. John and Sarah were soon married and spent their honeymoon in Philadelphia. While there they selected furniture for the parlor in their new home.

They returned to Smethport and began their life in their residence on King Street. Time passed, but the parlor furniture did not arrive. The young bride, anxious to show her new home and especially the elegant parlor to new friends and neighbors, became increasingly impatient at the delay. "Where is the parlor furniture? Oh, I'm sure it's lost; the store has forgotten about the

order. What ever are we going to do?" These were remarks made continually to her puzzled and upset husband. Time passed, the Christ-



The Apple House as it appeared when built in 1872. *Romine Collection*

mas season arrived and still no sign of the much desired furniture. She was in despair; her husband distressed. December 24 was a beautiful



The furniture that was delivered on Christmas Eve 1891 still decorates the parlor of the home. *Romine Collection*

winter day with new snow slowly and gently falling. In the dusk of early evening there

door. There stood a man who obviously had been in the snow for some time.

Looking further into the street in the dim light, Sarah saw a large horsedrawn canvas covered delivery wagon bearing the words: "John Wanamaker and Company, Philadelphia." And so on Christmas Eve 1891, Sarah and John arranged the furniture in their parlor, where it survived their seven children, four grandchildren, three great grandchildren and today a great great grandson.

(John Nevin Apple House, Circa 1872. The house has remained in the Apple Family from 1891 to the present, 2003.)



was a knock on the

Jack Pierotti at Devil's Den in early Spring of 1979. Members of the South Side TV Company would hike up to the towers in winter to maintain the lines. *Pierotti Collection*







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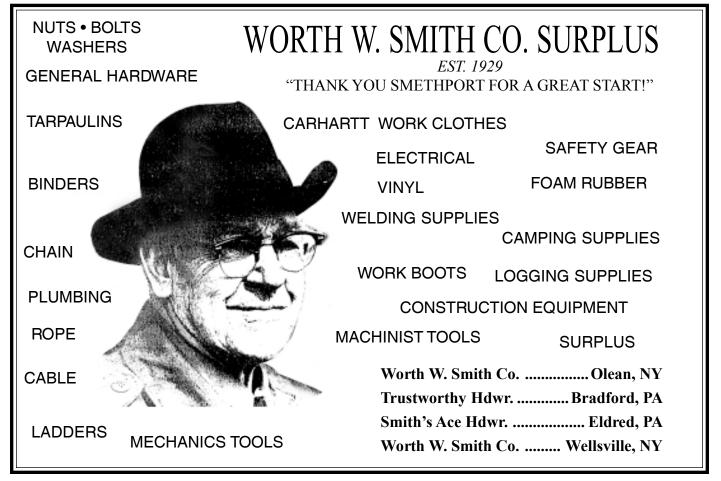
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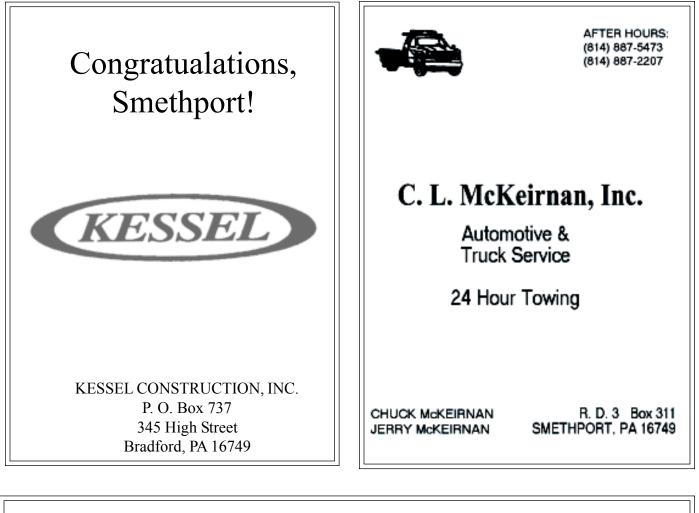
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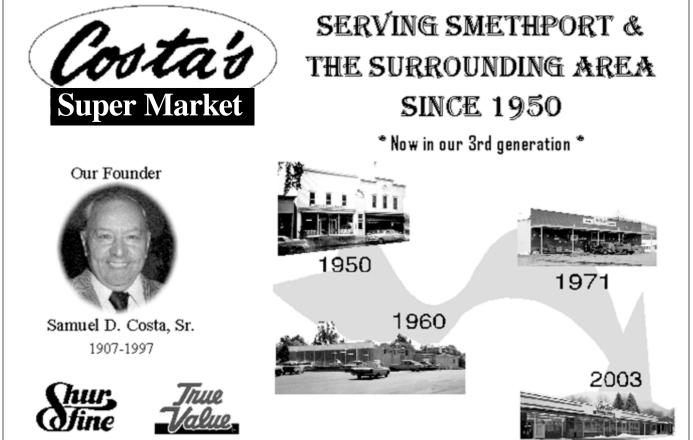
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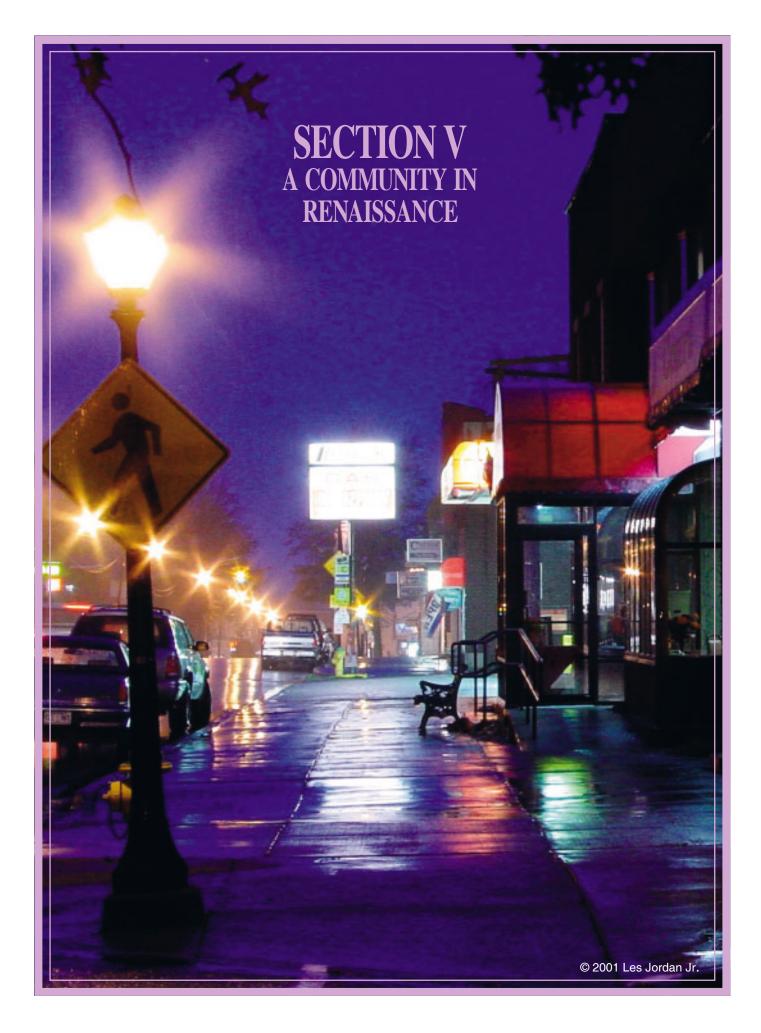


THE ROBERT L. HERZOG FAMILY

	1	Connie	Greg
			Brett
		Dave	
		Eva Troy	Ryan
Leo	A10.28	Cheryl	Julia
	1	Incon	urie
	-	Brian	Ladd Doug
Carlos and the second			Doug
2 100		Vicki	Robert
		Kathy	Kurt
		Steve	
	Agnes		Janene
		Char	les
			Verna
	Gary	Sharon	
			Jen
	Shane	Amy	
	Shane		Dawn
	Phillip	Hannah	Viewotym
		Jessica	Kierstyn
Dobort I Horzog		JUBBIU	

Robert L. Herzog May 4, 1918 - June 12, 2000

Herzog Milling Company R. L. Herzog Oil and Gas Service Justice of the Peace School Bus Contractor School Board President Lions and Rotary Club Member Indian Echo Country Club Herzog Brother's Trucking, Inc. Valley Petroleum Products, Inc. The Hub Convenience Store The Courtyard Family Restaurant The Court of Angels Banquet Hall Doug's Equipment Leasing, Inc. Allegheny Arms and Armor Museum



Smethport is a community in renaissance. Renaissance is a word that comes from the French meaning "rebirth." The components of this renewal are emotional, spiritual, and physical.

We possess all of the elements necessary to grow a great new community. We have plentiful, comfortable housing. We have an excellent recreational facilities. Smethport has easy access to outstanding educational facilities and programs. We feel safe in our homes, on our streets, and in our community. Most importantly, we possess the key element of all great communities—great people.

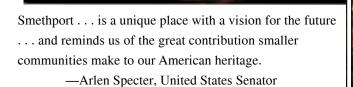
A COMMUNITY IN RENAISSANCE HOME

Home is where the heart lives, and Smethport is blessed with an abundance of comfortable, affordable homes. Our homes are the stately mansions that line the tree-covered walks of the main streets. Our homes are attractive bungalows that line the back streets and hillsides. Our homes are the cozy farm houses that dot the countryside.

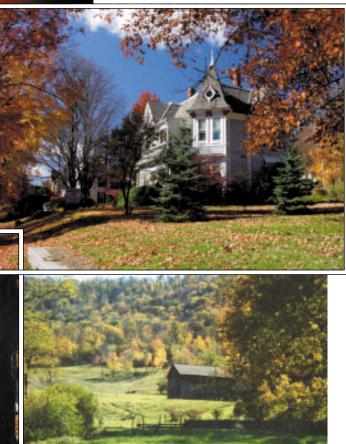
It is in our power to direct the look and feel of our town. Historic and natural preservation work hand-in-hand to ensure the conservation of housing in residential neighborhoods, the protection of historic landscapes, the community character



of our town, the conservation of farmland, and overall economic development and revitalization. The Sesquicentennial Celebration has brought a renewed interest in these priorities and an appreciation for what we already possess. Below: The Blackberry Inn Left: Hamlin Lake Sunset @ Les Jordan Jr.







Left: East King Street Above: Route 6 Farm

© Les Jordan Jr.

ARLEN SPECTER PENNSYLVANIA

COMMITTEES: JUDICIARY APPROPRIATIONS VETERANS' AFFAIRS GOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

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United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3802

June 21, 2003

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 310 SPRUCE STREET, SUITE 201 SCRANTON, PA 10503 717–346–2006

 Room 306, 116 S. Main STREET WLKES-BARRE, PA 18701 717-826-6265

Dear Friends,

Best wishes and congratulations to the town of Smethport on your Sesquicentennial anniversary! One hundred and fifty years ago, Smethport, Pennsylvania was in its prime with the lumber mills and wood chemical plants booming and the oil industry of Bradford bringing money and new people to the area. The town had four railroads, four hotels, a fairground, telephone service and even an opera house.

Smethport, the county seat of McKean County represents the growth and changes America has experienced and is a unique place with a vision for the future. This town holds strong to its historic Pennsylvania roots and reminds us all of the great contribution smaller communities make to our American heritage.

Congratulations and may you continue to have prosperity for another one hundred and fifty years.

Sincerely ile pecter Arlen Specter

United States Senate

COMMUNITY IN RENAISSANCE RECREATION

Smethport is a town that has created safe, walkable parks, and recreational facilities that promote physical and emotional well-being. Recreational opportunities center around the beautiful lake stocked with fish at the heart of our town. One will find baseball, softball, and soccer fields. There are picnic pavilions, walking and exercise paths, an outdoor swimming pool, swings, basketball and tennis courts, a skate park, and a seasonal ice rink. If you tire of the park, the beautiful hills, valleys, and streams provide

opportunities for hiking, hunting, fly-fishing, and cross-country skiing. The possibilities for recreation in the area are only limited to your imagination.





It is a rat race in the city. All there is time for is work in order to support the family because of the city's sky rocketing cost of living. Traffic jams during the commute take away from family time. It is a fourteen-hour workday. It takes two hours just to commute to work in the morning, then another two to drive home at night. While the city has many things for a family to do, there is no energy left for family activities after work because of the hectic pace. There is no sense of time. "It was impossible to slow life down and get to know someone". —Misty Hidalgo



Above: Family enjoys flying kites near Smethport High School. Above Left: Hamlin Lake provides moments to relax. Judge Mencer behind his home. Below Left: Miranda Bailey is one of many who enjoy softball on the playing field in the park. Below: Fishing in Marvin Creek. Photos © Les Jordan Jr.



Smethport is just the opposite. People are more laid back than in the city. It takes much less time to drive the same amount of miles as in the city with less chaos and urban congestion. I can be with my family much quicker. There is time for family activities.

Parents take time to be in involved in activities, especially sports. They take advantage of the abundant and free outdoor activities, too.

-Misty Hidalgo





Above: Misty Hidalgo and her family taking a moment to relax on a hike at Rimrock in the Allegheny National Forest. Many families climb Town Hill, or to the top of Devil's Den. Left to right: Jesse, Misty, Dameon, Tatum, and Skyler.



Smethport has provided a wholesome environment in which healthy, happy children can mature into well-balanced, successful adults.

-Jovanna Porter

I moved to Smethport with my boys, Tyler and Cory, because the town is quiet. There is very little crime, and the mountains are beautiful. Smethport is a good location for outdoor sports—right in my own backyard.

-Russ Koch

Directly below: Russ Koch and his boys enjoy fishing on a beautiful day at Hamlin Lake Park.
 Below right: Winters provides wonderful recreational opportunities. Photos: © 2003 Les Jordan Jr.



A WALK AROUND TOWN

walk down West Main Street is always a pleasant experience. People that I know often drive by, toot the horn and wave with a big smile. I wave back with an equal smile. I often will run across people I know.

We will pause and chat away about our lives, our families, the weather, even world events. The subject is never the same. Walking progress is slow, but that is part of the joy.

Downtown people are going in and out of the stores. I often see couples pushing children in baby strollers. They, too, smile with giant grins as we pass by. The kids look up and wave, their eyes bright and shining, and the parents gleam with pride.

I pass the Catholic Church. On Wednesday nights there is always a large group of teens from different religious denominations and parent volunteers outside enjoying "Hang Out Night". I can smell hot dogs and hamburgers cooking on the grill and see a game of volleyball in hot action beside the tarp set up for shelter beside the church. The lively laughter of teens can be heard above the passing traffic on the street.

After looping back westward at the Post Office, I head into the eastern end of Hamlin Lake. The sun is beginning to hang low in the sky. A cool breeze tailors the hot day into a gentle evening. I look across the sun reflecting across the shimmering water and see the silhouette of two boys with



fishing pools in hand sitting along the bank of the lake. Dad and mom are beside them lending a hand as they pull in trout to add to the evening's catch.



As I walk into the heart of the park, I can hear loud yells from abundant fans at a girl's softball game. I stop and pause a moment, taking in the site as if for the first time, and then turn and start across the wooden bridge that crosses Marvin Creek

and start across the v and leads onto the great island. A mom and her daughter in a stroller pass beside me and we all smile as we tuck ourselves in to make room for

the passing. Then comes a little boy with fishing pool in hand scurrying to the opposite shore in hopes of a giant catch. A husband and wife cross with a pet dog. We have crossed each other's path many times in the park. We pause for a moment, lean our arms over the railing of the bridge, and exchange talk while enjoying a leisurely view up the valley. Lights in the backside windows of Bowman Health Center catch my eye. I see the shadows of several people inside working out in the exercise rooms that were recently added to the original building. I reach down while talking and pet the dog as though we were old friends. As our talk ends, I turn to complete my journey across the bridge and see many fishermen lining the banks of the creek. Ahead, I can hear more sounds, voices, laughter, hoorays, whistles,



around town article. Smethport native, Les Jordan Jr., is responsible for the majority of the contemporary images in this book. and cars. I can see several walkers across the south channel of the island moving quickly along Willow Street, a favorite avenue for exercise.

Several families are gathered under a pavilion, which is a favorite for family reunions. The tempting odor of food being prepared on nearby charcoal grills wander into the air. Children dash about everywhere. Several men are involved in an intense game of horseshoes that all ends suddenly when a single woman's voice calls out that the food is ready.



A short moment later, I stand atop the stone bridge over the back channel and watch the setting sun turn red as it dances just above the horizon. Even in the midst of all the noise and excitement, there is a peace in the moment. Then, suddenly, I am distracted by the dull thud-like sounds of a basketball bouncing from the black top. A group of teenage boys are playing hard under the hoop. A group of girls sitting in the rich, green grass nearby watch them with careful eyes while they also talk among themselves.

Behind the girls are several families with plenty of kids swinging in and out of the sunlight filtering in through the trees at the playground near the baseball field. Some parents are pushing children on the merry-goround, as other parents stand and watch. Both children and parents are smiling with delight.

North of the playground, many are playing tennis inside the fenced court. But, they are out done by a hot baseball game being played in the stadium beside them where many moms and dads line the field to root their son on to victory.

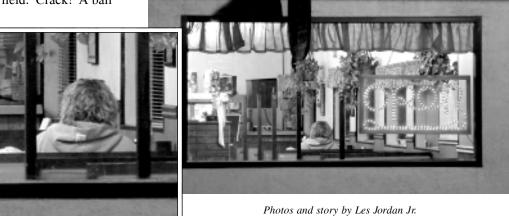
The swimming pool is alive with activity. Throngs of people sit on

the bleachers or along the fence in support of the Memorial Recreation Center's swim team. Like at the baseball game, the fence surrounding the area is filled with family watching and cheering on sons, daughters, or even friend's children in the swimming and diving contests.

I walk through the soccer field, tonight silent, and soon arrive at the Tastee-Freez. Several girls from the softball game are there with parents. A long line mixes with others in front of the building, all patiently waiting to be served. Everyone seems to be talking at once. Parents and children talk back and forth about the game. I again see families with strollers approaching the favorite spot for summer treats in town. Many that have already been waited on and are sitting on picnic tables arranged on the side of the building, where there is much chatter across the tables.

Not far away from the Tastee-Freez, the Little League field is packed. Cars from those attending the game seem to take up the entire valley on either side of Marvin Creek. I stand on the Rt. 6 bridge and gaze at the ball field. Crack! A ball

goes flying over the fence and into the creek. A loud roar issues from the hometown fans. Mom and dad will be so proud. Many of them will also end up at the Tastee-Freez and the chatter will increase. —Les Jordan Jr.





Left and Below:

The Smethport Area Elementary School was completed in 1986. Its completion marked the end of the regional grade schools throughout the district.

Right: In 2002 the Smethport Area Junior-Senior High School completed a \$10,000,000 renovation project that included construction of a new science wing, library, auxiliary gymnasium, heating system, wiring and a thorough upgrade of most of the major systems of the physical plant.

Right Center:

The renovations included a new composite track surface at the stadium overlooking the scenic Smethport hills.

Photos © Les Jordan Jr.

reat communities have access to great schools. Access to high quality education enables Smethport community members, both young and old, to develop their capabilities to the fullest. Our area is also in close proximity to the new Cattaraugus Campus of Jamestown Community College, University of Pittsburgh Bradford, and St. Bonaventure University.

We can boast of a magnificent library, and a new McKean County Historical Museum to preserve the past and educate for the future.

Recent renovations in the Smethport Area School District physical plant and innovative programs ensure that the children of our hometown will be well prepared to face the challenges and recognize the opportunities of the future.





CURRENT AND ELECTED TOWNSHIP AND BOROUGH OFFICIALS

MCKEAN COUNTY OFFICES

John M. Cleland, President Judge 2005 Lawrence Stratton, Jr., Commissioner, Chair, 2003 Al Pingie, Commissioner, 2003 James M. Weaver, Commissioner, 2003 Anne C. Bosworth, Recorder of Deeds, 2003 Harrijane B. Hannon, Register of Wills, 2003 Michele D. Alfieri, District Attorney, 2003 Francis D. (Frank) Cahill, Coroner, 2003 Donald D. Morey, Sheriff, 2005 Bonnie Moore Howard, Prothonotary, 2005 Thomas E. Ball, Controller, 2005 Nancy Evans, Treasurer, 2005 Betty Comes, Jury Commissioner, 2005 Wanita H. Lane, Jury Commissioner, 2005

SMETHPORT BOROUGH 201 W. Main Street Smethport, PA 16749 Borough Manager, Patricia Peterson Witchen Borough Mayor, Bernard Carr Borough Secretary/ Treasurer, Patricia C. Fay Borough Council Ward Baun II, Robert Murphy, Leonard Anderson, Gregory Rounsville, Brian Gustafson, Linda Lake, Roy Regis

> HAMLIN TOWNSHIP P.O. Box 235 62 S. School Street Hazel Hurst, PA 16733 Township Supervisors Richard Keesler, Chairman Tom Kreiner, Vice Chairman Kenneth Stroup

HAMLIN TOWNSHIP CONT. Township Secretary, Shirley Raught Township Solicitor, Woods Baker & Ross

KEATING TOWNSHIP P.O. Box 103 7160 Route 46 East Smethport, PA 16730 Township Supervisors Cecil Gallup, Chairman Mike Tanner, Vice Chairman Clair Sweeley Township Secretary Victoria Bickford Towhship Solicitor Anthony Alfieri

SERGEANT TOWNSHIP 126 Circle Drive/ Clermont Mt. Jewett, PA 16740 Township Supervisors A. Michael Aimonetti, Chairman James D. Olson Allen T. Walker Township Secretary Lenora Kane Towhship Solicitor Daniel Hartle

NORWICH TOWNSHIP 3853 West Valley Road Smethport, PA 16749 Township Supervisors Harry Comes, Chairman Tom Cioffi, Vice Chairman James Ponikvar Township Secretary, Patricia C. Fay Towhship Solicitor, James K. Angell

John H. Yoder, District Magistrate, 1999-2005

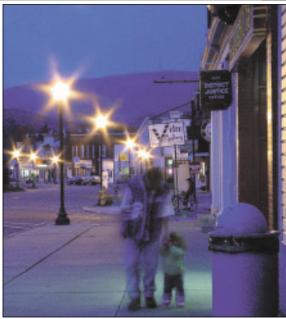


2003 Smethport Borough Council officials left to right: Bernie Carr, Mayor; Patty Witchen, Borough Manager. Members of the Council: Robert Murphy, Linda Lake, Ward Baun II, Leonard Anderson, Gregory Rounsville. Councilmen Roy Regis and Brian Gustafson are not pictured. © *Les Jordan Jr*.

COMMUNITY IN RENAISSANCE MEETING THE NEEDS

Every community faces its trials but Smethport has a long tradition of coming forward to meet the needs of our citizens in times of crisis. Family, church, and community all join together in unity to create a warm and secure environment which nurtures each of our citizens. Strong traditional values blend with community unity to create an atmosphere of interactive support. Smethport is still that kind of place.

When a benefit is held in Smethport for someone who has become disadvantaged, the whole community becomes involved. People here have an identity, a sense of community. They are compassionate even when they don't know you; "they care about each other". —Misty Hidalgo



Main Street evening. © Les Jordan Jr

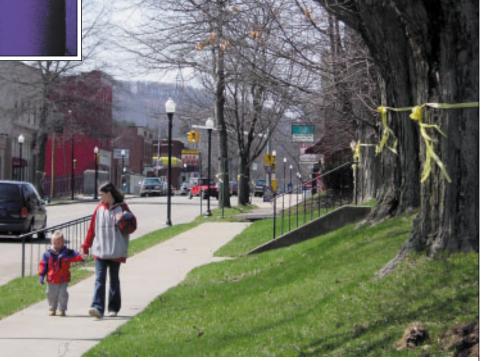
The people of Smethport should be proud of themselves and of their community. There is nothing better than coming home to a place full of kind, caring and hard-working people--people who look out for one another and are there for one another in good times and bad. In today's society, where many people believe the sense of commnity has been lost, the people of Smethport are truly blessed to have such a great hometown.

—Martin T. Causer, State Representative, 67th District



A view across Hamlin Lake towards the Bowman Health Center. © Les Jordan Jr.

I sense a heavy, trapped feeling when I am in my home city, but I don't feel that in Smethport. I recently brought my kids over here to the fair. I felt brightness and friendliness in this town. I felt free. —Anonymous



Emily Roberts and Jake Dunkle stroll in front of St. Elizabeth's Church on Main Street. © 2003 Les Jordan Jr.



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES WASHINGTON, D. C. 20515

Form Digenser

February 27, 2003

Borough Officials and Residents C/o Sesquicentennial Steering Committee P. O. Box 84 Smethport, Ponnsylvania 16749

Dear Friends:

Thank you for allowing me to participate in this wary special calebration for the Borough of Smathport. The Sequicentennial is a unique milestone in the bistory of the community and 1 sincerely hope that my schedule will allow me to take part in some of the feativities being held in June.

Undoubtedly, this year will bring with it mamerous anecdotes from years past. Over the last 150 years, the community has no doubt soon joyful times and laughter as well as difficult times and tears. It is important to reflect on both the good and the bad and to remember that it is your strength and unity that has helped you flourish and remain alrong as a community.

Please accept my warmest congratulations for achieving this milentone and best winhes, particularly to the Sesquicentennial Committee, for a very successful year. I look forward to visiting sometime soon.

Member of Congross

JEP/pea







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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES COMPONENTION PERFERING

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Dear Friends:

Happy Sesquicentennial!

Celebrating a 150th anniversary is quite an accomplishment. It is even more impressive when you consider how the community has maintained its historic buildings, its scenic environment and its traditional family values throughout its history.

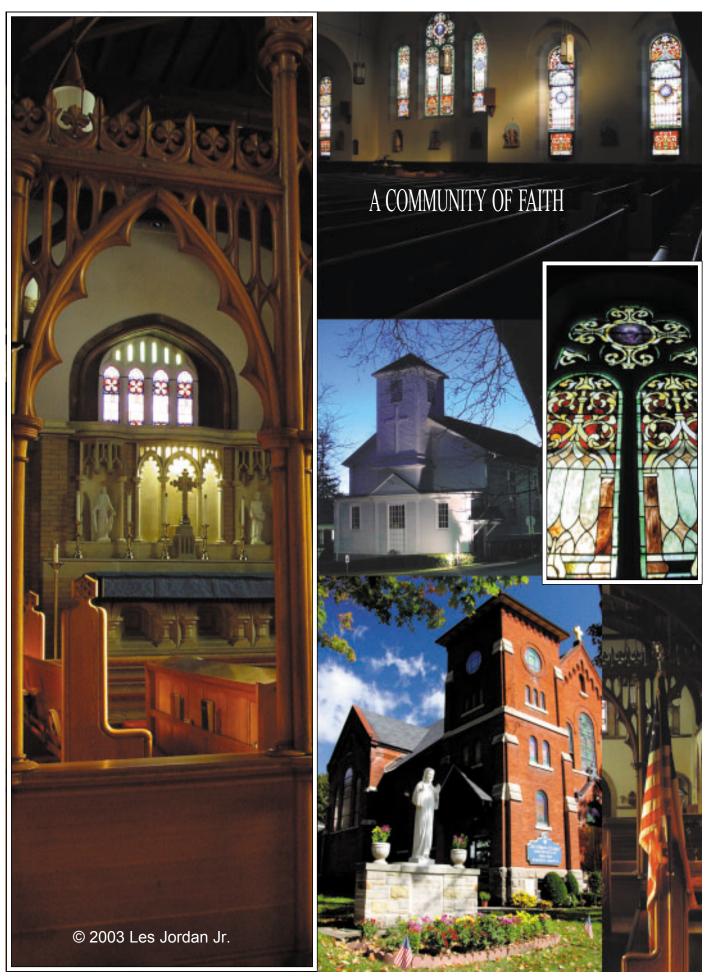
The people of Smethport should be proud of themselves and of their community. There is nothing better than coming benne to a place full of kind, earing and hard-working people – people who look out for one another and are there for one another in good times and bad. In today's society, where many people believe the sense of community has been lost, the people of Smethport are truly blessed to have such a great hometown.

I consider it a real honor to have the opportunity to represent this community and all of its citizens in the state House of Representatives.

Congratulations, and enjoy the celebration!

Sincerely,

Martin T. Causer State Representative, 67th District



RICK SANTORUM PENNSYLMA

REPUBLICAN CONFERENCE

WASHINGTON, DC 120 RUSHL SHAT OFFICE BULDAS WASHINGTON, DC 20510 (202) 224-6324

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COMMITTEES.

June 21, 2003

Dear Friends,

It is my great pleasure to congratulate the town of Smethport and its Sesquicentennial Committee on the 150th anniversary of this thriving community that was created around the logging industry and became the county seat of McKean County.

Smethport represents the growth and changes America has experienced over many generations and illustrates an enduring spirit unique to small town Pennsylvania. This town remains true to the old-time values of family, faith, community and country, which were cherished by its ancestors.

Best wishes to the community for another one hundred and fifty years of continued prosperity. Smethport is an integral part of our Commonwealth's history and it reminds us all of the great contribution smaller communities make to the larger American culture. From its incorporation in 1853, Smethport has been and remains a great tribute to the great state of Pennsylvania!

Sincerely. Sutorum Rick Santorum

United States Senate

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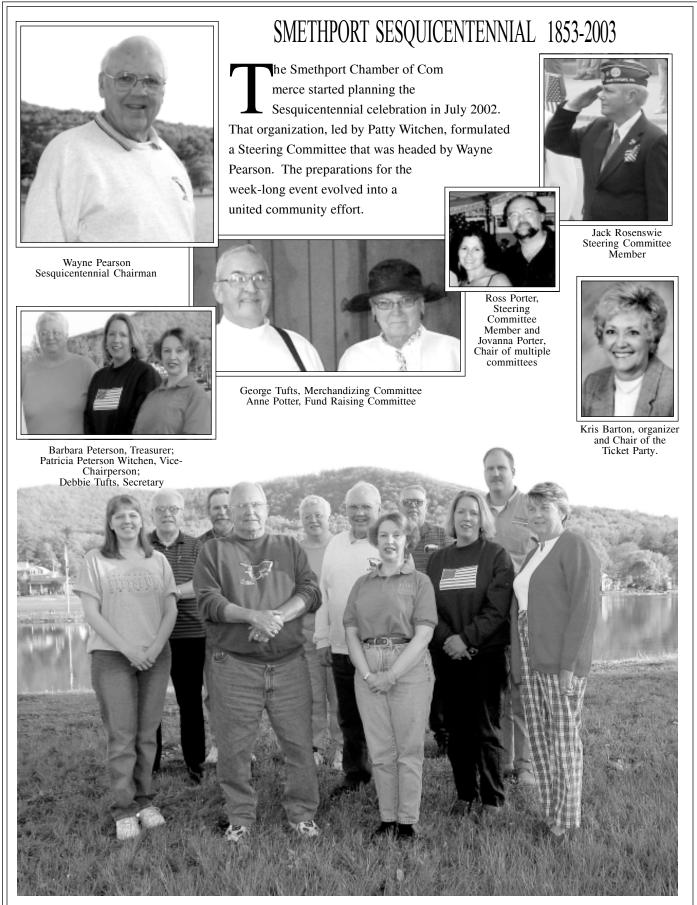
(412) 562-0533

COMMUNITY IN RENAISSANCE GREAT PEOPLE

Good people make a great community. Smethport's citizens are the heart of the renewal. The need for good planning to shape a community's future has never been greater. The celebration of the its Sesquicentennial has brought together all organizations in a concerted effort to maintain our community integrity for future generations.

We love our town, and we're proud of it. We leave this legacy for every future citizen of Smethport.





Kelly Herzog; Fran DeLancy, Steering Committee; Bart Barton, Steering Committee; Jay Stickles; Barbara Peterson, Steering Committee; Wayne Pearson, Steering Committee; Debbie Tufts, Steering Committee; Chuck Daniels, Steering Committee; Patty Witchen, Steering Committee; John Lenox, and Phillis Barnhart, Steering Committee.

SMETHPORT SESQUICENTENNIAL COMMITTEES

THE STEERING COMMITTEE: Wayne Pearson, Chairperson; Patty Witchen, Vice Chairperson; Barb Peterson, Treasurer; Debbie Tufts, Secretary; Ross Porter, Historian; Fran DeLancey, Publicity; Charles Daniels, Liaison to Fire Department; Phillis Barnhart, Bart Barton, and Jack Rosenswie.

SMETHPORT SESQUICENTENNIAL CELEBRATION COMMITTEES

Artist Demonstrations: Jovanna Porter

Auditing Committee: Bob Bailey, Ann Bateski

Balloon Rides: Carol Potter Johnson

Barbershop Quartet: Adam Brougham

Bed Races: Bob Cochran, the American Legion

Sesquicentennial Bell: Jack Rosenswie, Nate Smith, Dave Poulin

Gold Watch Bike Race: Ron Willis, Kerry Fetter, and the Smethport Lions Club

Bike Race (Youth): Ron Willis, Kerry Fetter and the Smethport Lions Club

Boat Flotilla and Parade: Bart Barton, Pete Digel, Pam Digel, Carol Potter Johnson

Book: Ross Porter, Editor-In-Chief; Jim Herzog; Les Jordan Jr.; Dave Johnson; Mary Pierotti; Jovanna Porter; Seth Digel; Kelly Swanson; Derek Lathrop; Rachel Wymer

Bookkeeping: Dona Cooper

Brothers of the Brush: Karl Fitzsimmons

Sisters of the Swish: Theresa Fitzsimmons

Car Show: Todd Witchen, Cory Cochran, Mike Taylor, David Ford

Children's Games: Betsy Swanson

Community Chorus: Carol Ball, Director

Theme Song by Carol Ball

Duck Race: Rotary Club

Armor and Sturdevant Concert: Jovanna Porter

Contact with Senators, Reps: Jack Rosenswie

Craft Show: Kayann Wolfe, Barb Peterson

Dinner Theater: Jovanna Porter

Ecumenical Service: Rev. Dick Shope and the Ministerium

Fifty\Fifty Tickets: Becky Smith

Fireworks: Tina Jones, Mark Fronkhart

Five K Race: Larry Hagg, Nancy Hagg, Ella Hahn, and Sports Boosters

Fund Raising: Patty Witchen, Anne Potter

Cook Book: Becky Smith, Barb Peterson, Patty Witchen, Carol Johnson Potter, Dona Cooper, Carol Neill

Quilt: Sandy Nick, Jackie Hazen

Garden Tours: Garden Club, Phillis Barnhart

Victorian Tea: Garden Club, Dorothy Dart

Historic Walking Tour Orientation: Ross Porter, www.smethporthistory.org

- Historic Walking Tours: Jovanna Porter, George Romanowski, Sandy Romanowski, Dick Digel, Greg Elderkin, Philip Herzog
- Trolley Rides and Excursions: Jovanna Porter, George Romanowski, Sandy Romanowski

House Decorating Contest: Patti Taylor, Kellie Herzog

Interpretive Workshop: Jovanna Porter

Toast of the Town Tour: Jovanna Porter, Anne Potter

Logistics: Chuck Daniels

Logo: Julie Mader, Jeff Keppel, Ross Porter, George Tufts

Marketing: Wayne Pearson, Kris Barton, Fran DeLancey, Kelly Herzog, Anne Potter, Jack Rosenwsie, Patti Taylor, George Tufts, John Lenox, Phillis Barnhart

Merchandizing: George Tufts, Julie Mader, Phillis Barnhart, Jeff Keppel, Patty Witchen, Tom Weiser

Opening Ceremonies: Jack Rosenswie, Marilyn Rosenswie

Closing Ceremonies: Jack Rosenswie, Wayne Pearson

Parade: Jay Stickles, Fran DeLancey, Bart Barton

Floats: Sylvia Houck, Bob Berne

Sesquicentennial Photographer: Les Jordan Jr.

Poetry Reading: Wayne Pearson, Jovanna Porter, Lora Zill, Woody Romine, Pauline Hergenrother

Publicity: Fran DeLancey, Patti Taylor

SAHS Scholarship Golf Tournament: George Romanowski

Senior Project Coordinator: Ross Porter

Senior Center Activities: Helen Cole

Sesquicentennial Ball: Mary Lee Pearson, Wayne Pearson, Sandy Wolfinger, Connie Edwards, Dale Smith, Cindy Smith, Woodward Romine, Jeanne Romine, Florence Carter, Harold "Sonny" Carter

Sesquicentenial Plate: Julie Mader and Rotary Club

Shop Window Decoration: Dee Buchanan, Amy Pierotti, Elinor Faull

Sidewalk Sales: Patty Witchen

Social Gathering: Tom Abbey, Dona Cooper, Peg Burdick, Phillis Barnhart, Kathy Enis

Community Street Dance: Chuck Daniels

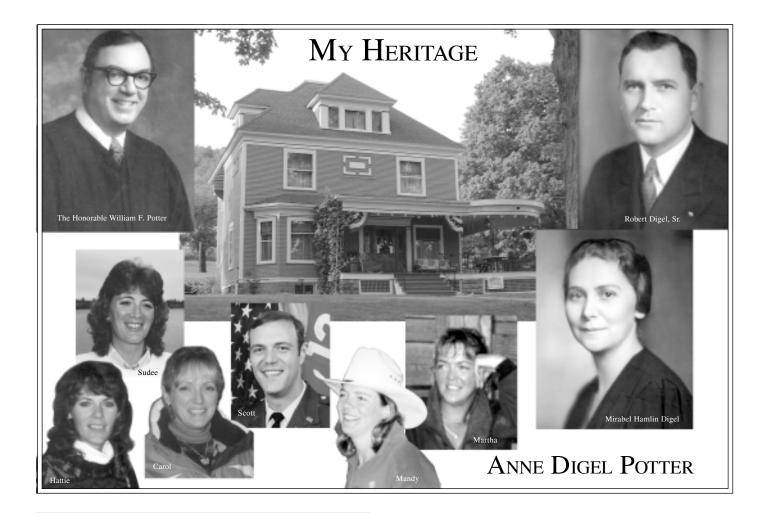
Teen Dance: Father Ted Marconi

Ticket Party: Kris Barton, Helen Cole, Al Alias, Jack Rosenswie, Marilyn Rosenswie, Bill Lake, Linda Lake, Paul Costa, Chuck Daniels, Troy Herzog, Bobby Dunn, Wayne Pearson, Bob Murphy, Judy Murphy, Toni Morris, Mary Lockwood, Smethport Senior Center

Time Capsule: Bart Barton, Eileen McKean, Lou Vandermark, Gail Murphy

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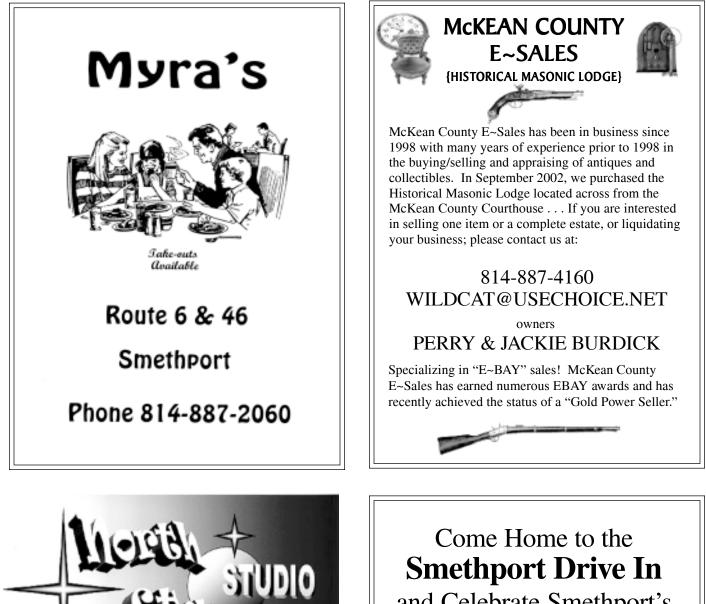
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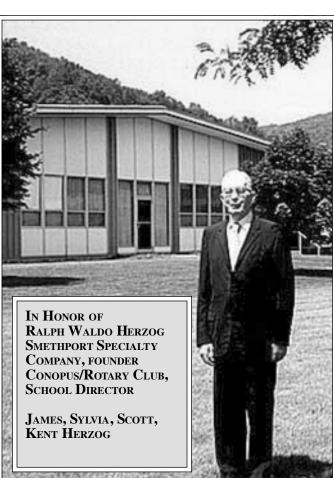
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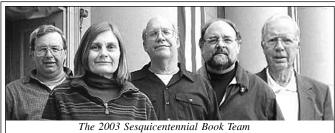
FROM THE EDITOR:

"No one owns history; we are only its caretakers" Ross Porter

T's been about seven months of 20 hour days, dedicated weekends and very late nights and very early mornings. It's been a team effort. What a great team. I first began working with Jim, Dave, Lester and Mary on the Planet Smethport/ smethporthistory.org project. Each of them just dripped of talent and the chemistry worked from the very beginning. When I first volunteered to head up the Sesquicentennial book project I immediately knew who needed to be on the book team.

Jim Herzog is a research fanatic. A true historian with a quest for detail and an energetic zeal that I knew we needed on our team.

Dave Johnson had a great background in history and a natural knack to fit words together. He had early on also been



Les Jordan Jr., Mary Pierotti, David Johnson, Ross Porter, James

involved with the Planet Smethport/smethporthistory.org project having spearheaded the Clermont research. My instructions for Dave on this book was to "hold a candle" for all the outlying communities that Smethport was indirectly or directly tied to. If any of us were stuck on our writing assignments we would turn to Dave to "Dave-ize" it.

Lester Jordan' also had been an early contributor to the smethporthistory.org project. Les' photo work is continually brilliant and I wanted him to be involved. It was Lester and I that reread and fit all the parts of the book together over countless days and nights during winter and spring of this year.

Mary Pierotti was our "Techie". Mary first became involved in the Planet Smethport project with her extensive research for us through the Library of Congress and US patent office. For this book, it was Mary who would troubleshoot any computer glitches and head them off at the pass prior to going to print. Mary also spent many "all-nighters" on this project. She and I are competing for least amount of sleep over the last few months.

It was my job to organize and keep the project cohesive and moving. One February morning at 3AM I totally resturctured the entire layout of the book, much to the shock of the rest of the team. I did layout and camera-ready construction for Sections I-III; Mary, Lester and I laid out and constructed Section IV and Mary and Les pretty much constructed Section V.

Mary also put together all the ads and managed to keep her sanity despite Anne Potter's tireless efforts to acquire still more advertising.

Anne really also needs to be congratulated.

The indexing at the end of the book is my work. Any mistakes are mine. One further note: a special thanks needs to be extended to my lovely



wife, *Jovanna*. It was Jovanna that held together everything else on the homefront while this project progressed. Through months of meetings and work sessions on the "third floor" to the last two months during the more solitary construction phase Jovanna maintained her support and sense of humor.

As far as the technical side, the book was constructed in Adobe Pagemaker 7.0. Sections I-III on my Apple Macintosh I-Book G-3 and Sections IV-V on a PC at Chef Specialties. Photos and all prepress were prepared with Adobe Photoshop 7.0.

Happy Birthday Smethport. We are so proud of you.

ps. Portan Mayn24c2003methport in 1981, I came home to this timeless environ

I had grown up in the small, rural, historic, farming community of Knoxville. Instead of forests I grew up in cornfields. My mom was from Gilson a few miles down a gravel road from Knoxville. Knoxville had a population of 1,800 then, just like Smethport now. Gilson was about the size of Crosby. I was instantly at home in our new, adopted hometown of Smethport.

It was an immediate love affair. Smethport was steeped in history, tradition and the kind of small town values that I wanted to share with my family. It was filled with fabulous buildings and historic mysteries just begging to be explored. The

McKean County wilderness was right at our doorstep beckoning to be hiked and biked.

The first week here we decided to climb Town Hill and take a picnic supper. Hiking with me on Town Hill that day were my son Izach, not quite 2, and my wife Jovanna. It was one of those spectacular Smethport summer evenings when the air turns cool and the sky turns a deep blue. The colors of the hillsides that surrounded us grew rich in the evening light. We sat on the west end of the hillside that looks over the country club so we could to get a view of the deep red sunset. As we relaxed on the hillside and drank in the rich hues of the evening we heard a wild thrashing. Crashing through the brush about 100 yards above us was a Smethport, Pennsylvania black bear. It was great to meet some of the locals. That same week we also witnessed a group of deer run through town, cross Hamlin Park and Hamlin Lake and head up toward Devil's Den. More locals.

We drove an old Chevrolet when we moved to Smethport. During that same August of 1981 we were headed to Bradford to do some shopping on a Sunday after church. Climbing Rew hill on Route 46 the fuel pump went out. I was able to navigate the vehicle onto the narrow shoulder of the road but we were stranded. Only a few minutes passed until a truck came by and immediately pulled up behind us. A husband and wife and their family were packed into the cab of the truck on their way to a Sunday afternoon dinner with the in-laws. The gentleman asked me the problem and I explained that the car had just died going up the hill. He looked under the hood, had me try to start the vehicle, and made the diagnosis that it was probably the fuel pump.

He told me he thought he had a fuel pump in a vehicle in a backfield that would fit. He said he would get it and be back. Away he and his family went. We were total strangers, having only been in Smethport a few days but he abandoned his plans and came to our immediate aid. About 45 minutes later he returned, entire family still packed in the cab of the truck, with used fuel pump in hand. He commenced removing my fuel pump along the side of the road, and installed his freshly removed "new" fuel pump.

Within a few minutes the car was started and all of us were on our way down the road. He refused to take payment and I never had an adequate chance to thank him for his efforts. I don't know his name. But his actions spoke so clearly to me of the special nature of the community and the values that are part of the regional culture.

The awe of this spectacular place has never been lost on me. It's been a twenty-three year love affair. And it just keeps getting better.

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Gifted Jeff Keppel contributed his special talents in multiple committees as an unsung hero. *Photo©Les Jordan Jr.*

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SESQUICENTENNIAL EVENTS CALENDAR JUNE 21-JUNE 28, 2003

SATURDAY, JUNE 21

10:00 AM-Opening Ceremonies at the Courthouse West Main Street With Community Chorus

-Craft Show-Mercantile Store Lawn-East Water Street 1:00 PM-Interpretive Workshop-215

West Main Street-Family Center 6:00 P.M.-Social Gathering\Class Reunions-West Main Street Smethport Country Club

SUNDAY, JUNE 22

9:00 AM-5K Race at the School-414 South Mechanic Street

-Car registration-Hamlin Lake Park 10:00AM -Craft Show-Sesquicentennial Mercantile Lawn-East Water Street

- 12:00 NOON-Car Show Judging-Hamlin Lake Park
- 1:00 PM -Children's Games Hamlin Lake Park

4:00 PM -Lions 7 Mile Gold Watch Bike Race-at the Court House-West Main Street

6:00 PM-Ecumenical Service-Sesquicentennial Mercantile Lawn-W.King

8:00 -Concert-Armor& Sturdevant-St Luke's Episcopal Church-West Main Street

MONDAY JUNE 23

8:00 AM -Senior Center Activities-West Main Street

8:30 AM-Big Screen Walking Orientation at the Lakeview Senior Care 9:00 AM-Musical Instrument Making Demo Family Center 215 West Main Street

- 10:00 AM-Craft Show-Sesquicentennial Mercantile Lawn
- 11:00 AM-Musical Instrument Making Demo 215 West Main Street-Family Center
- NOON -Trolley Tour to Kid's Concert in the Meadow-Sesquicentennial Mercantile
- -Scholarship Golf Tournament-Smethport Country Club-West Main Street
- 2:00 PM-Historic Smethport and Courthouse Trolley Tour from the Sesquicentennial Mercantile
- 4:00 PM-Poetry Reading- St Luke's Episcopal Church West Main Street 5:30 PM-Toast of the Town Walking Tour begins at the Sesquicentennial
- Mercantile -East Water Street 7:00 PM-Street Dance-Sesquicentennial Mercantile Lawn
- 10:00 PM Ghost Tour- meet at Sesquicentennial Mercantile

TUESDAY JUNE 24

8:00 AM-Senior Center Activities-West Main Street

8:30 AM -Big Screen Walking Tour at Lakeside Senior Care

10:00 AM-Craft Show on Mercantile Store Lawn

-Historical Walking Tour Sesquicentennial Mercantile

12:30 PM-Boy Scouts-Demonstrations at the Court House

-Kids "Toy Town" Trolley Excursion-Sesquicentennial Mercantile 6:00 PM-Brothers of the Brush and Sisters of the Swish Judging-Court

House

6:00 PM

-Dinner Theater-Murder Mystery Smethport Fire Hall-East Water and Nelson Streets

6:00 PM-Firemen's Carnival opens

10:00 PM Ghost Tour- meet at Sesquicentennial Mercantile

WEDNESDAY JUNE 25

8:00 AM-Senior Center Activities West Main Street

 $8{:}30$ AM-Big Screen Walking Tour Orientation at Lakeside Senior Care 10:00 AM

-Wood Carving Demonstration at the Court House

-Craft Show-Sesquicentennial Mercantile Lawn-East Water Street

-Historical Walking Tour- Sesquicentennial Mercantile



11:00 AM-Historic Smethport and Courthouse Trolley Tour-Sesquicentennial Mercantile

WEDNESDAY CONTINUED

12:30 PM-Garden Trolley Tour-Sesquicentennial Mercantile
1:00 PM-Spinning/Weaving Demonstration at Smethport Family Center 215 W. Main
2:00 PM-Victorian Tea-703 West Main St.
4:00 PM-Lions Bike Fun Race for children at the School- South Mechanic Street
6:00 PM-Dinner Theater-Murder Mystery at the Fire Hall-East Water and Nelson St.
-Firemen's carnival opens
7:00 PM-Teen Dance-7th grade and up

7:00 PM-Teen Dance-7th grade and up Costa's Old Grocery Store- E.Water Street

10:00 PM Ghost Tour- meet at Sesquicentennial Mercantile

THURSDAY JUNE 26

8:00 AM-Senior Center Activities West Main Street 8:30 AM-Big Screen Ghost Town/Lost Towns Tour Orientation-Lakeside Senior Care

9:00 AM-Sidewalk Sales-Main Street

10:00 AM-Craft Show-Sesquicentennial Mercantile Lawn

-Quilting Demonstration-Courthouse

11:00 AM-Ghost Towns/Lost Towns Trolley Excursion-

Sesquicentennial Mercantile

 $12:\!\widehat{30}$ PM-Blacksmith Demonstrations at the corner of Fulton and West Water Streets

5:30 PM-Toast of the Town Walking Tour at the Sesquicentennial Mercantile

6:00 PM-Firemen's Carnival Opens

-Boat Flotilla-Hamlin Lake

7:00 PM-Community Choir Concert-Sesquicentennial Mercantile Lawn 9:30 PM-Fireworks Display at Hamlin Lake

FRIDAY JUNE 27

8:00 AM-Senior Center Activities

8:30 AM-Big Screen Walking Tour at Lakeview Senior Care

9:00 AM-Sidewalk Sales-Main Street

10:00 AM-Craft Show-Sesquicentennial Mercantile Lawn

-Woodturning Demonstration at the Court House

-Historical Walking Tour at the Sesquicentennial Mercantile

11:00 AM-Historic Smethport and Court House Tour-Sesquicentennial Mercantile

NOON-Native American Crafts Workshop at St. Luke's Church West Main and Church Streets

12:30 PM-Dart's Horse Farm Trolley Tour at the Sesquicentennial Mercantile

4:00 PM-Hot Air Balloon Rides-Hamlin Lake Park

5:30 PM-Bed Races-Main Street

6:00 PM-Firemen's Carnival Opens

8:00 PM-Sesquicentennial Ball at the Court of Angels 505 West Main Street

SATURDAY JUNE 28

9:00 AM-Sidewalk Sales Until Noon-Main Street

10:00 AM-Craft Show-Sesquicentennial Mercantile Lawn -Ukrainian Egg Demonstration at the Family Center 215 West Main

Street 11:00 AM-Hot Air Balloon Rides-Hamlin Lake Park

NOON-Chicken Barbecue at the Fire Hall corner of East Water and Nelson Streets

1:00 PM-Firemen's Carnival Opens

2:00 PM-Duck Race at Hamlin Lake

4:00 PM-Sesquicentennial Parade-Main Street

7:00 PM-Closing Ceremonies at the Court House- West Main Street

With Community Chorus

HAMLIN BANK AND TRUST COMPANY



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