

YESTERYEAR

Celebrating 25 years of the Barrett Township Historical Society



43:—I am nutty over the Pocono Mts. In Pennsylvania.

Postcard from the BTHS Collection

2018

A Brief History of the Barrett Township Historical Society and the Cresco Station Museum

2018 is the 25th year of the Barrett Township Historical Society. This year's calendar includes some of the early history of the BTHS along with some of our more traditional historical calendar features.

The genesis of the BTHS was an idea raised at a gathering of five people (Mary Ann Miller, Jake and Kathleen Sengle, and Jacqueline and Wolden Magann) in the late spring of 1993. It was decided to have a public meeting on Friday, July 30, 1993 at the Barrett Friendly Library (now the Friendly Community Center). The meeting announcement and sign-in sheet (from the back of the announcement) are this year's January pictures. Four additional meetings were held in 1993 (there was no meeting in December). Officers were selected, work was started on a mission statement, a logo, and a constitution; and the newsletter was started. Each of these meetings included a historical presentation. This meeting format has continued to the present. By the end of 1993, there were 66 Charter Members.

The society continued meeting about every month, with numerous presentations and recorded history.

On August 25, 1998, the Weiler Family Foundation presented the keys for the Cresco Station to the BTHS for use as a museum. The building had been closed since 1968, and the Weiler Corporation had leased it since 1970, first as storage and then as a small sales outlet. Weiler had been restoring and maintaining the building during this time; many changes were required to provide for public occupancy (for example, the doors had to be re-hung to swing outward). The key-passing celebration, pictured here, drew a large crowd.

A large effort followed over the fall and winter, involving gathering exhibits, construction, and organization. On December 13, 1998 BTHS held an "Old Fashioned Christmas" Open House at the Cresco Station. The BTHS Corporation Papers were filed on May 3, 1999.



Karl Weiler handing the Cresco Station keys to Jacqueline Magann on August 25, 1998. Note the window is boarded up. About a year before, vandals had smashed windows, doors and light fixtures.



The station inside was attractive, but pretty bare, when the keys were presented.



The Grand Opening of the Cresco Station Museum was celebrated on May 30, 1999. Again, a large crowd attended. Much work had been done in the museum to prepare displays of local history. Karl Weiler commented that “the progress the Society has made in the last nine months [since the keys were passed] is nothing short of remarkable and is what I would have expected in about two to three years of effort.” The displays included an old fashioned kitchen, featuring “Cresco Annie”.

The displays in the Cresco Station Museum continued to expand as more artifacts were contributed. The ownership of the building had been changing, too. It was owned by the Erie-Lackawanna railroad from 1960, and closed in 1968. Weiler had initially leased the building in 1970. Conrail took over the railroad (and property) in 1976; they sold a portion of the railroad (including the station) to the Monroe County Railroad



Authority in January 1994. The Weiler Family Foundation finally was able to purchase the station in October, 2005. With full ownership, extensive major restoration work was undertaken. The museum closed to allow the work to be done.

The Grand Re-Opening was held on May 19th, 2007, again with a large crowd in attendance.

Information from Barrett Township Historical Society and Weiler Corporation files. Photos from the Weiler collection.

The interior looks more like a museum, with exhibits and display

The
BARRETT HISTORICAL
Society
FORMING

FRIDAY
JULY 30
7:30 P.M.

Barrett
FRIENDLY LIBRARY

INFORMATION: 595-3173

Donny and Smilla
William Miller
Suzanne Darnay
Kimmy
William & Burg MB
Virginia Susan Barry
Mabel G. Schneider
Eileen E. O'Connell
Tara Haca
Mary Prater
Joyce M. Barona
John & Bill Rice
Walden & Jackie Kaplan
John & Kathleen Eagle
May Sophie
John & Lisa
Stephanie + Jim
Matthew
Gertude Grace
Cora Mae Dyson
Sister J. Dyson
E. Luning & Walter H. Newlin, Jr.
Joseph A. Bendisch
John L. Style
Alexa Mezargle
Eileen May
Charles & Emily Siny
Gwendolyn Custer
James L. Berger

Our first meeting! The sign-in used the back of the poster advertising the meeting.



Barrett Township Municipal Building and
Atlantic Gas Station

It's hard to realize the Barrett Township Municipal building was once a busy garage and gas station. Built in the 30s by Bill Cooper it passed through several owners and was purchased in 1956 by K. Edward Price. The Price family lived in an apartment attached to the garage. It was sold to Paul Nauman, who owned it from the early 60s to 1972. From there it was a motorcycle shop, a bank, and was purchased by the Township who renovated it to the building it is today.



Theo B. Price Building

In 1902 J. W. Swaine opened a successful store that sold general merchandise and mining prop/lumber supplies. Swaine rented office space in his building to Theo B. Price, who operated a sprag factory next door. In 1912, Swaine sold Price his business, and hardware and lumber were added.

When Mary Ann (Theo's granddaughter) and Mickey Miller became owners they added the Country Store and began selling foodstuffs, crafts, toys and antiques and an assortment of art. The Sprag Mill Gallery displayed the works of local artists up until the summer of 2017 when the business was sold to Steele's Hardware.

The top photo is undated, but is probably no later than around the 1920's. The middle photo is from 2015, and the bottom from 2017. Careful examination reveals the distinctive roof line of the main T. B.

Price building in all three photos.





The Sopko Building

(Top photo) The northern-most house near 390 and Mill Creek was Sharbaugh's Store and Post Office. At some point the owner of this successful store was Ted Ford, who sold it to Rapha and Emma Sieg in 1925 and they lived in the house nearest Mill Creek. Siegs added a soda

fountain. There was a large hall in back where basketball was played and 2 nights a week silent movies were shown. At some point there was a fire and the building's appearance changed. There is no known date for when gas pumps were added. Siegs sold the store in 1936 (to take over Laurel Grove Inn). The store was called Handy's Groceries and Walter's Grocery at different times. The stores housed the Post Office from 1914 until 1970. Eventually the two buildings were joined (bottom photo) and Sopko's Landscape Business operated from there. Presently there are no businesses on the premises.

Laurel Grove House, Canadensis, Pa.



*I have no room to offer you from any
15th no vacancies until Aug 22nd
Resp James Besecker*



LAUREL GROVE HOUSE. CANADENSIS. PA.



The original building was two story with a flat roof, built in 1883. C. W. Bruton was the first manager until the early 1900s. The building housed 35 guests. The next owner, James Besecker, increased guest capacity to 50 and charged \$8-12 per week. The well known arched portico was added in 1923. The Sieg family (Rapha and then Charles, his son) took over in 1936. The Inn also offered 1, 2 or 4 room cottages, with a private lake, boating, golf course, tennis, shuffleboard and planned activities on the grounds.

The Inn was sold by Charles and Emily Sieg in 1986 and was again sold in 1989 and 2007. Improvements are being made presently to the cottages, some of which are rented. As one can see, the grand old house is still impressive.

The top two photos are from old postcards – note James Besecker's signature on the right photo. The bottom picture was taken in 2017.



Linn Lake Lodge and Spruce Lake

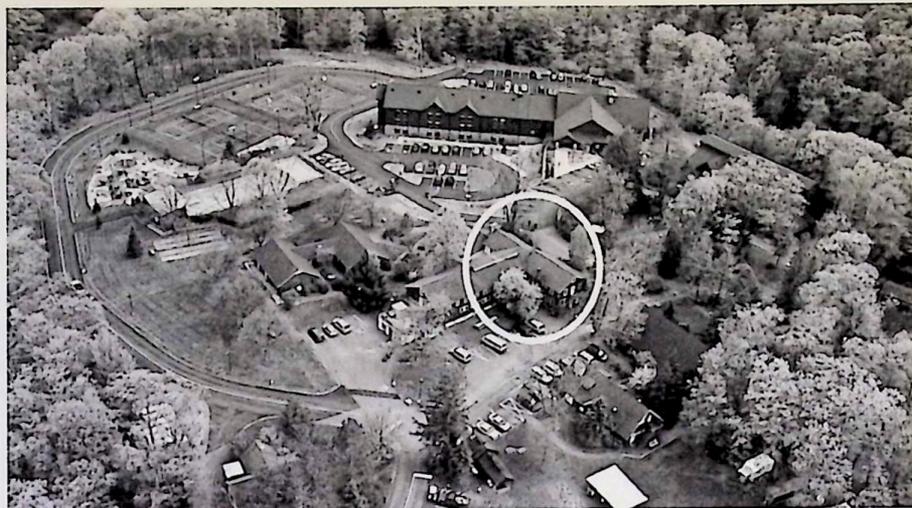
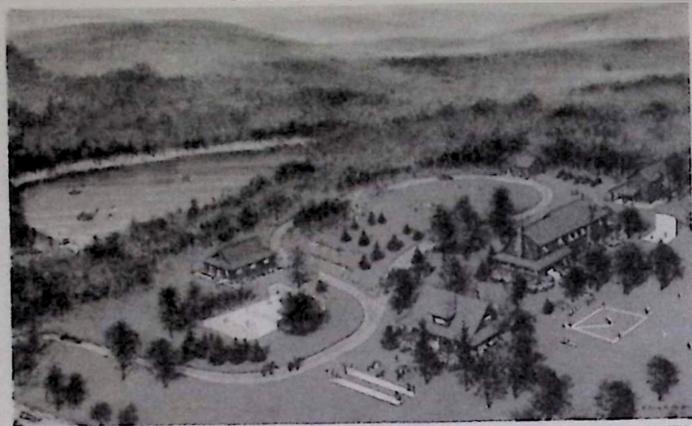
Linn Lake Lodge, owned by Fred "Fritz" Dalton, was operated for many years as a resort and offered swimming, boating, fishing, sports and social activities on a large campus. In 1963 the property (the Lodge and 36 acres) with an additional 240 adjoining acres was purchased by the Franconia

Mennonite Camp Association, Inc. and named Spruce Lake Retreat. In 1971, 70 more adjoining acres were added to total 346 acres. The Retreat was created to provide a camp for Christian teaching, fellowship and guided recreation in a spiritual atmosphere.



The pictures on this page show the main entrance on Rt. 447 north of Canadensis. The top photo is before 1963, and the bottom one from 2017.

LINN LAKE LODGE, CANADENSIS, PA.



Above: Mennonite women quilting at Spruce Lake in the mid-1960s

When the Christian Mennonites were looking for property in the Poconos in 1962, their search led them to Linn Lake Lodge, which was for sale. Fritz Dalton, the owner, remembered the selfless volunteer rescue work done by the Mennonite churches during the cleanup in Stroudsburg after the Flood in 1955. He gave them a generous price on the property and Spruce Lake Retreat opened in 1963.

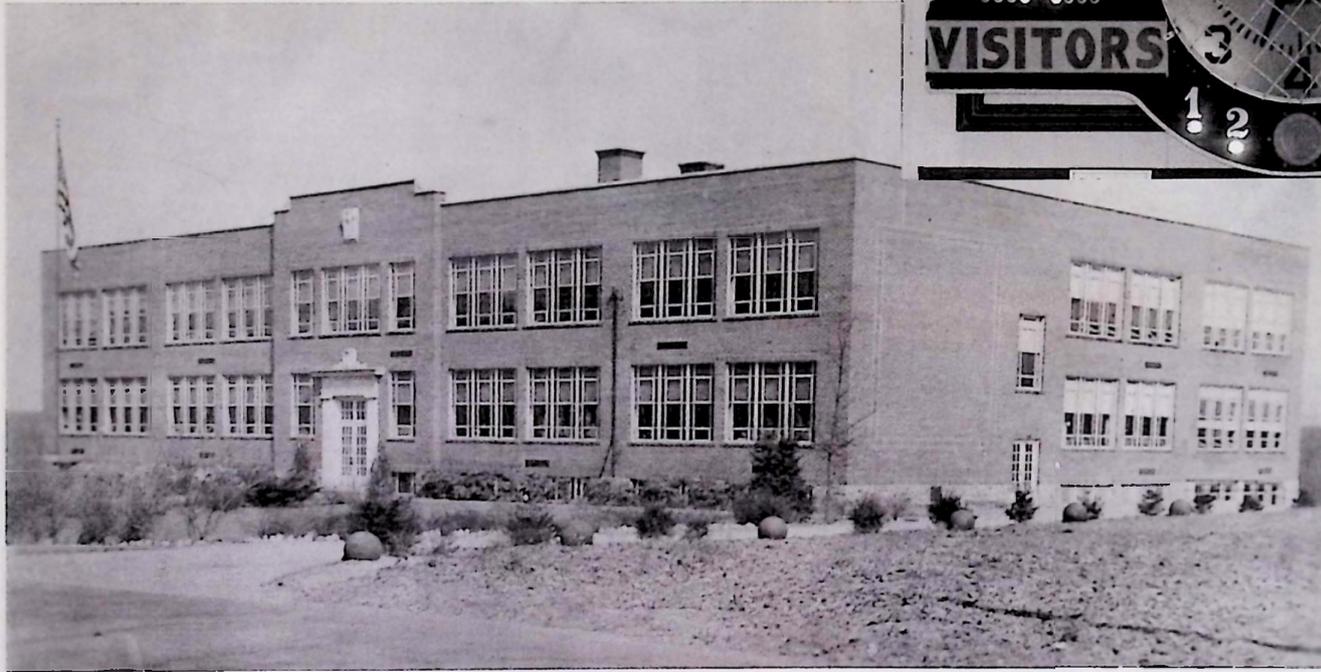
The newest building, Spruce Lodge, was built in 2013. Today Spruce Lake is 888 acres offering space for conferences, retreats, outdoor education, summer and day camps, with recreation that includes camping, kyaking, fishing, hiking and swimming.

The top left picture on this page is from the BTHS collection; the other five photos are from Spruce Lake. The two aerial views are from different angles; the circled building in the right-hand view is the large building in the left-hand view.



Woodlawn House and CVS Pharmacy

Through the years this site has had many names and transformations: the Woodlawn House (top left); Bon Air Lodge, owned by Dr. J. Miner DeKay; later Ravelli's Restaurant (which burned in February of 1953, top right); followed by Ugucioni's Restaurant; and then Cook's Touch (bottom left), which was razed and replaced by the CVS Pharmacy. Even though the present CVS does not resemble the old hotel or the more modern restaurants, if you squint your eyes and listen closely you may still see the shady grove and flower carpeted woods or hear clink of dishes or smell the wonderful aromas wafting from the restaurants.



Barrett Township
Consolidated
School in
Mountainhome

The School opened in 1927 and was known and loved by many local folks. It started out with grades 1 through 12 with the elementary students on the first floor and the high

schoolers on the second. Later it became an intermediate school with grades 1 through 6 when the big kids moved to the Pocono Mountain campus in Swiftwater. The Pocono Mountain Academy, the district's alternative high school, moved here in 2003; it closed in 2011. The building was razed in 2016.

“Clapping erasers out the side door, making as much dust as possible”, “chatting with friends in the Bab Room”, “eating downstairs in the cafeteria, remember the mystery meat?”. All those memories. So sad to see it gone... but stop at the Cresco Station Museum and check out the scoreboard – the home team is winning and you can almost hear the cheers.



Stonewall Garden and Garage, Canadensis

Originally a blacksmith shop, Elaine Bubb's great grandfather, John Kerz, purchased the Garage (its only known name) for her grandfather, John Kerz II, as a wedding gift. Later on, gas pumps were added. The business failed mainly as a result of the Depression. Elaine's uncle, Bill Kerz, took over the property as Stonewall Antiques.

It stood empty for many years before Elaine rented the property from family in 1991 and purchased the property in 2001. Not having any formal background in gardening, Elaine's shop has been in business now for 27 years. Selling trees, shrubs and

bushes, flowers, seasonal plants and yard décor on the outside, she offers pots and plant-foods, area rugs and birdfeeders, whimsical trinkets and honey, syrup and jams in the Gift Shop. A snow-induced roof collapse occurred at some point – notice the walls of what was the front half of the garage now form the outdoor yard for Elaine's garden items, while the inside of the shop is the back half of the garage.



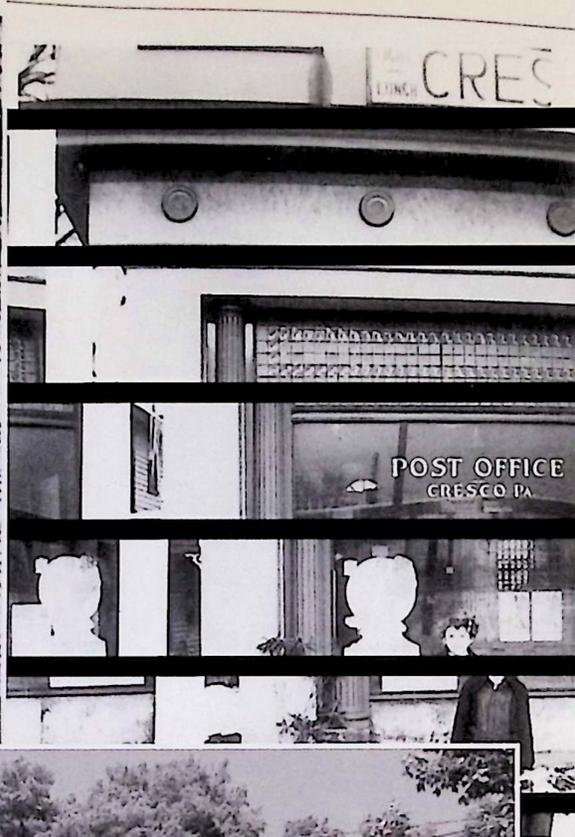
PRICE'S MOUNTAIN HOUSE, MOUNTAINHOME, PA. 7735
*Dear Fritz, Please furnish me a dozen postals like one
you sent me & I will send you price of them when you let
me know what they will be. Would you print 50 for the
prices & for how much please send word. Thus we thin*

Henry Price House (Mountain House)



In 1886, there existed enough registered accommodations in the Poconos to house 250 guests, including the Henry Price House. Also known as Mountain House, it was listed as the Henry Price House, Cottage, Bungalows and Tents, and appealed to nature lovers, while claiming to be one of the earliest resorts in this region. Like so many other resorts, the Henry Price House burned, most likely by arsonists. All that remains are the two chimneys.

The postcard was mailed in August of 1907; the photo of the lone chimneys is from November 2017.



Cresco Post Office – Barrett
Township Historical Society
Library and Research Center

It is not known why Millard Price, the original builder in 1928, chose this style, so different from other buildings in the area. It may have been because Art Deco architecture was used for many post offices in the 20s. The building looks much the same as it did years ago, except for the windows. It has been an ice cream parlor, a coffee shop, apartments, computer center, fitness center and now the Library and Research Center for the Historical Society.

If you can identify any of the people, please let us know!



The BTHS Research Committee gathered information about how the Flood of 1955 affected the people living in Barrett Township. It was an event that stamped a memory on each resident. Fortunately there were no known deaths in Barrett Township but there was much damage and many lives changed as a result of this flood. How could this event be marked for the Township? The result was the creation of a road sign commemorating the results of the storm on August 18 and 19 of that year.

October 1, 2017 was a bright and sunny day for the dedication. The Research Committee worked long and hard to get everything correct and accurate on the sign. Karl Weiler gave permission for the sign to be placed on the property near our newly acquired Library and Research Center-- the reasoning being there would be room there for vehicles to pull off the road to read the sign, which is placed geographically correct for the viewer to be facing true North toward where the sign is oriented.

Barrett Township Historical Society (BTHS)

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