



NEWSLETTER

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Changes Come Even to the Barrett Township Historical Society

It is 2026, the year of America's 250th anniversary – our Semiquincentennial. We look forward to a year of exciting events and celebrations to mark this auspicious occasion. There has been a dedicated group of Barrett Township Historical Society volunteers diligently working to ensure that the events planned here will rival those in Boston and Philadelphia. Okay, we don't have the resources of Boston or Philadelphia but what we do have is great neighbors and volunteers. From midway through 2025, BTHS has been meeting with the Paradise Historical Society, and the 2 townships will ensure that we coordinate all our efforts. Mike Stein of Paradise Township graciously took on the role of Chairman for this group. He organized and ran all of the meetings and I thank him greatly for that.

As we enter the new year there are changes afoot at the BTHS and so many other people to thank, so I am going to do it here:

Mickey Miller for his years of service to the Cresco Station Museum. BTHS moved into the Cresco Train Station in 1997. The first 6 years Russ Walters managed the station on behalf of the Society. Then in 2003 Mickey accepted the responsibility. He has filled that position ever since. A remarkable run of 22 years! For that entire run one need only stop by the Station on a Sunday afternoon to visit

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Presidential Message

Happy New Year! The Semiquincentennial is nigh and we look forward to honoring the memories of that time and our ancestors that forged it. One of the ways we hope to do this is to generate a list of those ancestors whose lineage can be traced to those of us living here in the greater Barrett Township region 250 years later. I am proud to be one of those people.

I am one of those that can claim to be a 9th generation Speicher in America. In 1736 Ulrich Speicher and his sons Michael and Peter arrived in the Port of Philadelphia aboard a ship named the Charming Nancy. Upon arrival they settled on the frontier of Pennsylvania Colony in what is present day Bern Township, Berks County. The naming of the township is significant as they had emigrated from the Canton of Appenzelle in the northeastern corner of Switzerland. There is a town named Speicher in Switzerland to this day.

My direct lineage is Ulrich, Michael, Christian, Jacob, Jacob, Allison, Edwin, Russel, then me. I have two adult sons Jordan and Jacob making them the 10th generation Speicher's in America. I know all of this because there are close familial ties among the Speichers, and in 1961 the first edition of A History of the Speicher, Spicher, Spyker, Family was published by the Speicher Family Reunion Association. As that also coincides with the year of my birth, I am not listed among Ulrich's descendants; but I am in the second edition published in 1983. The reason for the triple spellings of the family name is due to changes that were made over the years when having to fill out official documents.

My father Russel was born in a farm house in Bern Township without electricity or indoor plumbing. He was the first in our line of descent to attend college. He had a remarkable gift for music and attended West Chester State College to become a music teacher. There he met my mother, Elizabeth Jordan. They were married in the summer of 1958. In 1960 my dad was hired as a music teacher for the newly created Pocono Mountain School District. He would go on to head the music department and stayed at Pocono Mountain for 32 years. Upon his passing we bought the house I grew up in from my mother.

In addition to publishing the family history, the Speicher Family Reunion Association also erected a monument to the family in the New Heidelberg UCC in Bern Township the same year, 1961. Jackie and I made the pilgrimage a few years ago. While there I walked among the final resting place of several of my direct ancestors - Jacob, Jacob and Allison. My grandfather Edwin was interred at the Bern Church alongside my Grandmother Luella.

So, that's my story. What's yours? If you have tales of family members present during the period of our Nation's founding, we would love to hear them and publish them with your permission.

In closing I want to thank my good friend, Walter Lewis, who had to step aside as the President of the Barrett Township Historical Society. He brought great enthusiasm and energy to the Society. The direction he steered for the Society during his tenure will continue to guide us into the future. I know that he will stay involved and I look forward to his advice on all matters associated with making the BTHS the best we can be.

Happy Semiquincentennial everyone. I hope to be celebrating this historic milestone with you all in the year to come.

Darryl Speicher

BTHS President



(`)/ Whoops, a Mistake...

If there is something that needs to be corrected, speak-up. Please email me at alesiagallop@yahoo.com or give me call/text at (570)972-6422.

2026 Board of Directors

Patti O'Keefe, Dottie Telesky, Sharon Rose, Laurie Dunlap, Ellen Davis

2026 Executive Officers

President	Darryl Speicher
Vice President	Walter Lewis
Recording Secretary	Janis Tafuri
Corresponding Secretary	Patti O'Keefe
Treasurer	Dottie Telesky

2026 Executive Committee

Acting Curator for LRC	Jayne Blair
Archivist for LRC	Laure Dunlap, Patti O'Keefe, Mary Price, Jacqueline Magann and Susan Seese
Cresco Station Museum Co-Curators	Patti O'Keefe and Marge Babaz
Digital for CSM and LRC	Dottie Telesky
Finance	Dottie Telesky
Grants	OPEN
Historian	Jacqueline Magann & Laurie Dunlap
Hospitality	Jean Bibber
Information Systems	Jim Bibber
Library Research Center	Jacqueline Magann and Committee of Seven
Membership	Dottie Telesky
Newsletter	Alesia Gallo
Oral Tradition	OPEN
Programs	Jacqueline Magann and Dottie Telesky
Publicity	Alesia Gallo
Research	OPEN
Ways & Means Committee	Walter Lewis
Ad Hoc Semiquincentennial	Jacqueline Magann & Dottie Telesky

Exec Committee Meeting Dates

Executive Committee meetings are held on the 2nd Monday at 3 pm

January 12
February 9
March 9
April 13

General Membership Meeting Dates

Barrett Paradise Friendly Library
Weiler Community Room
January (No Meeting)
February (No Meeting)
March @ 2pm
April @ 7pm

Committee Reports

Station Museum Patti O'Keefe and Marge Babaz

The Cresco Station Museum will be open Sundays in January, February, March and April on the second Sunday of the month from 1 pm – 4 pm (weather permitting)

Library Research Center

The Center will follow the Cresco Station Museum schedule. The LRC will be open Sundays in January, February, March and April on the second Sunday of the month from 1 pm – 4 pm (weather permitting). In addition the LRC will be open every Tuesday from 10 am – 2 pm (weather permitting).

Memberships for 2026

We are off to a good start for the New Year. Thanks to all who renewed their memberships so far. If you have not renewed yet, please consider renewing now. We have many exciting things happening for our nation's 250th celebration of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. You don't want to miss out. Just contact us at Barrethistorical@gmail.com or www.Barrethistorical.org. If you are new to the Society and do not have a membership form, just let us know. We will provide what you need to join. All are welcome!



Upcoming Programs

NO PROGRAM IN JANUARY

NO PROGRAM IN FEBRUARY

March 20, 2026

Dave Matsinko, known as the "Minstrel of the Mountains" will perform traditional music from the Revolutionary War Period.

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Program Recaps

October

Our program for October was Eastern Cherokee Basketry: "How a Craft Keeps the Tradition of a Culture Alive" by Barbara Tracy. Her presentation started with a brief history of the Cherokee Indians who have carried on the tradition of the Qualla baskets. The Qualla Boundary or the Qualla is a territory held as a land trust by the United States Government for the federally recognized Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians (EBCI) who reside in Western North Carolina. The area is part of the large historic Cherokee territory in the Southeast, which extended into Eastern Tennessee, western South Carolina, northern Georgia and Alabama. The tribe purchased this land in the 1870's. It is not a reservation created by the government. They have their own constitution but did not obtain citizenship until after World War II. Individuals can buy, own and sell the land provided they are enrolled members of the EBCI tribe.



Cherokee Baskets

Qualla comes from the Cherokee word kwalli (old woman) and refers to Polly who was an elder

Cherokee woman who lived in the area. The treaty gave the Cherokee the right to gather river cane along the river forever. They have made these baskets for generations passing the craft down to their children to carry on. The two styles for these river cane baskets are single and double weave. Using double weave, the artisan essentially builds two baskets in one which provides an extra layer of strength and durability. Baskets were used for storage as well as for transporting items. "If there is one craft object that is Cherokee culture, it is the rivercane basket," one historian remarked. Barbara has an extensive collection of these beautiful baskets that she shared with us. For more information or to purchase a basket, go to Qualla Arts and Crafts Mutual which was formed in 1946 and is the oldest Native American Cooperative.

DBQE WMC ATLEA

Tsalagi talutsa
(Cherokee basketweaving)

The Importance of Traditional Baskets to the Eastern Cherokee and to the Women Who Made Them



Barbara Tracy with her Baskets



Baskets

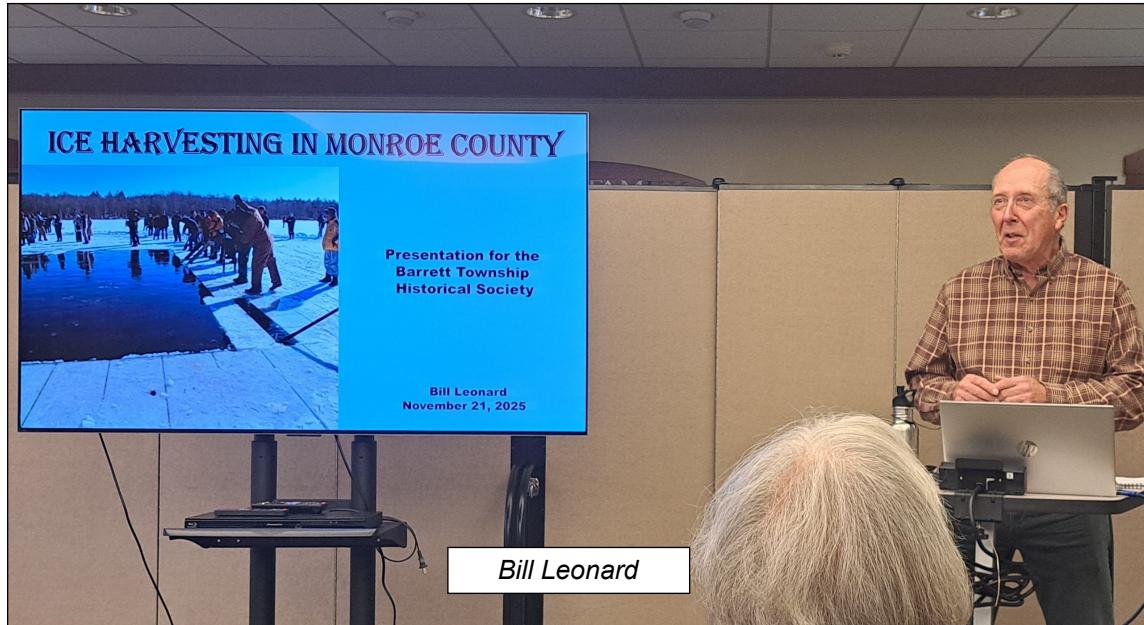
Program Recaps Continued from Page 5

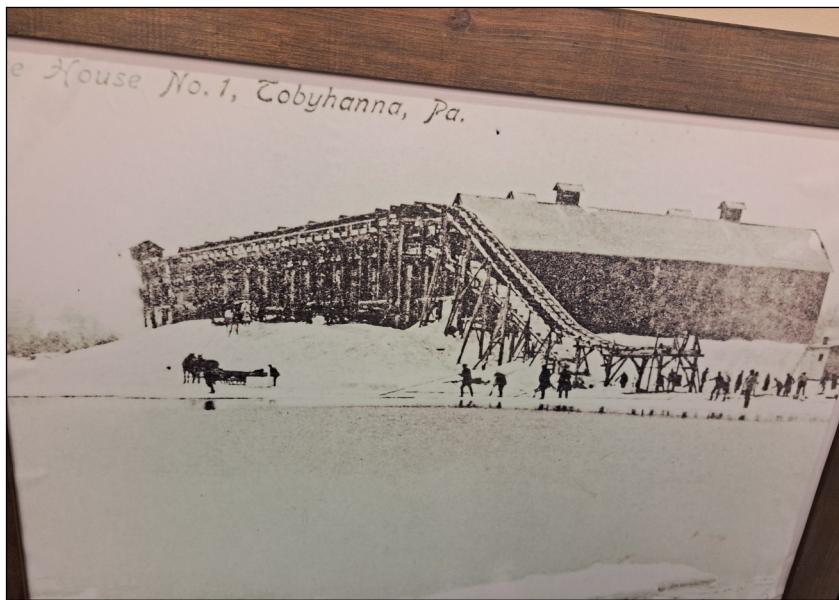
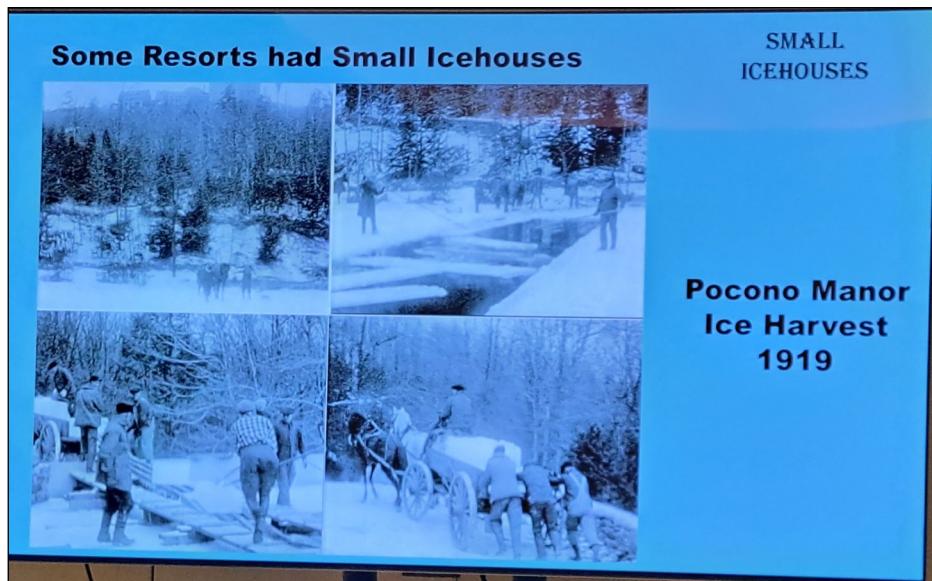
November

Our program for November was "Ice Harvesting in Monroe County" by Bill Leonard. The ice harvesting industry in the Poconos started in 1806, but the ice plow was not invented until 1825. In late December or early January, once the lakes were frozen at least 12" to 14", horses (wearing special shoes) pulling an ice plow, scored the ice into the proper size for breaking the blocks apart and transporting large sections at a time to the shores for unloading. Needless to say, this was a very difficult and dangerous undertaking. Ice harvesting reached its peak from 1880-1910. The 1950's saw the end of the era due to the invention of mechanical refrigeration.

Large buildings were constructed to house the blocks of ice, which could weigh up to 300 lbs. The sides of the ice houses were insulated with sawdust, which kept the blocks frozen as late as the following October. Also, straw was used to cover the top layer of the blocks of ice. Conveyer belts were used to get the blocks from the ground up into the ice houses. Up to 100 men were employed during the ice harvest season. There were even job opportunities for young boys. Chunk boys removed broken pieces of ice in order to keep the large blocks moving along the conveyer. Shine boys were employed to clean up horse manure from the surface of the ice. Once the warm manure was removed, a shiny area would remain on the sanitized ice. Twenty-five million tons could be produced in a year. Ice was delivered throughout the area and shipped as far as New Jersey and New York by rail.

Since 1994 ice harvesting at Tobyhanna Mill Pond #1 has continued each year, providing there is enough ice to cut. You can participate in the 2026 harvest, held the 31st of January from 9 am to 2 pm. This free event is located at the Coolbaugh Township Historical Association, 2071 Lakeside Drive, Tobyhanna, PA.





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November Program Recap Photos—Continued from Page 7

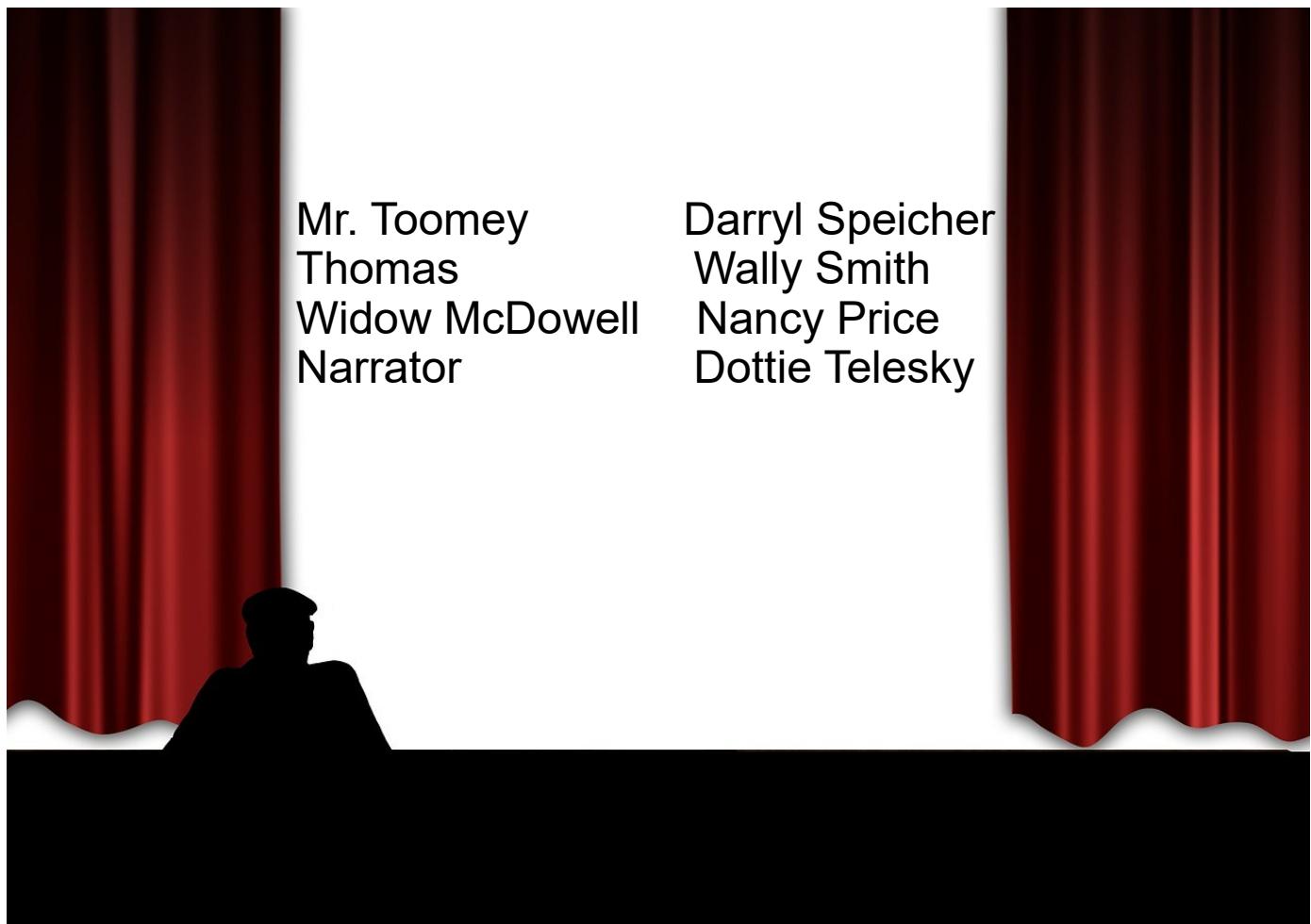
Tools of the Trade



December

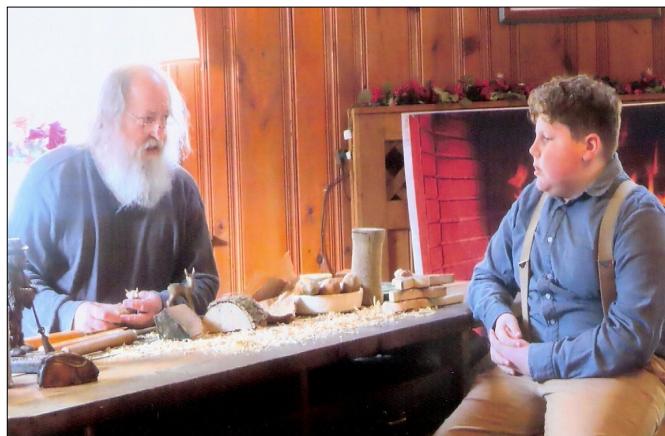
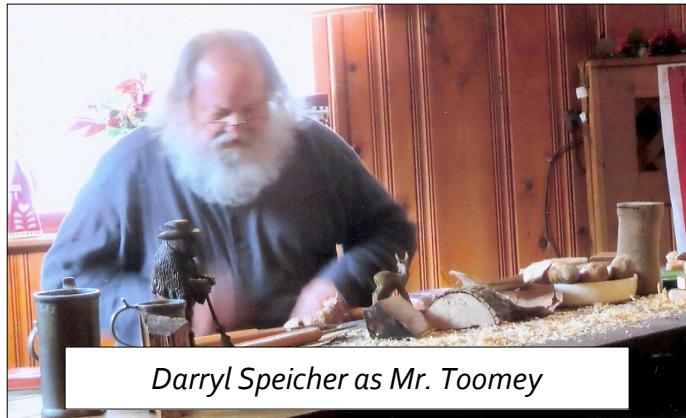
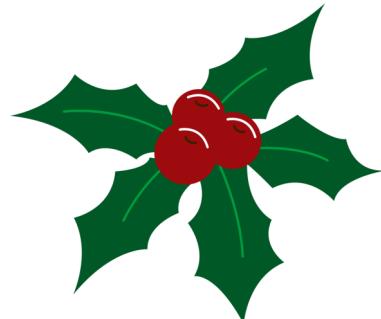
On December 13th the Barrett Township Historical Society celebrated the holidays with a Christmas Luncheon at Carrazza's Italian Restaurant. It was a great time of enjoying good food and being able to socialize with the people who make our Society what it is today. We had a great turnout and appreciate all those who came out to spend the afternoon just having a good time enjoying the food, the company and, of course, the performance by the latest edition of the "Frogtown Players". "The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey, Woodcarver" definitely entertained everyone with lots of laughter included. Special thanks to all those participating in this wonderful performance.

Cast of Characters for “The Christmas Miracle of Jonathan Toomey, Woodcarver”



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BTHS Wordsearch

F C Z R W V X L V W B Q O W B
R A Z C P T G Y N V X J N O A
E R J X M O U N T A I N S O R
E D Y I U X T C N G X W E D R
D I V O N Z G Q H B T Y B C E
O N O C I D P C Z K M U A A T
M A L O S D E J H J M M S R T
W L U U C Z I P Q A W B K V J
C J N N A L N C E N N Y E E R
C C T T L X A L S N H G T R H
Q V E R E R Z M T I D N E U B
R X E Y N D C L V B P E Q S O
Q C R Y D H E J E L S H N M U
G Y S P A T R I O T B X W C E
V G N X R O F M H A E A M Z E

Independence	Volunteers	Woodcarver
Mountains	Cardinal	Calendar
Changes	Patriot	Freedom
Barrett	Country	Basket

Changes Come Even to the Barrett Township Historical Society Continued from Cover Page

with a true gentleman. When the season slowed down in November Mickey let it be known that he would be stepping down from his position at the station. We accepted his decision with heavy hearts.

Jackie Magann for her years of service to the Library and Research Center (LRC). I have fond memories of helping her create the Barrett High School exhibit which was oh, so long ago, but feels like yesterday. Jackie also announced her desire to turn over responsibility for the LRC.

Ellen Davis for years of dutiful service as the Recording Secretary for the Executive Committee meetings. She did a fabulous job keeping the minutes, getting them to the committee in a timely fashion and drafting agendas for the monthly meetings. Ellen also organizes the exhibits in the BTHS display case at the Barrett Paradise Friendly Library.

Malinda Bender for her tireless efforts to find and coordinate the programs that are the hallmark of our monthly membership meetings. More recently she also took on the position of membership chair and assists Alesia with publication of the quarterly newsletter. Later this year Malinda will be moving to Texas.

Everyone mentioned and many more are responsible for the incredible slate of activities we will be offering the community this year. The effort they have put into planning has been inspiring. Sometimes thank you just doesn't seem to say enough but there doesn't seem to be a suitable synonym to replace it; so, let's say it again - thank you, thank you, thank you, thank you the work you have done on behalf of the Barrett Township Historical Society and the community we serve is greatly appreciated. More importantly, we love you all.



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Homage to Mickey Miller

By: Jacqueline Magann

Mickey began his membership with the Historical Society as a founding member in 1993 along with his wife Maryann, Jake and Kathy Sengle and Wolden and Jackie Magann. He has supported many, many activities of the Society and served as Society President in 1999-2000. However, the Cresco Station Museum has been his baby from the get-go. He and Joanne Seese were a team as co-chairs for many years. When Joanne retired Mickey took over. One has to be a Jack of all Trades to be in charge! When you think of tending to the Museum, it isn't just being there to open for the public on a Sunday afternoon but of being responsible for obtaining and maintaining the Museum's precious collection. One has to be prepared for special events, especially on Train Excursion Day from Steamtown. Imagine 200 people stepping off the train expecting to find food, drink and music (which may entail setting up tents).

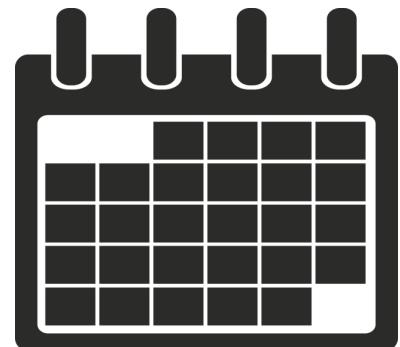
Mickey has turned the Museum keys over to Patti O'Keefe and Marjorie Babaz to continue in his stead. They have been apprentices for a year. They know they have big shoes to fill but are willing and able. If you are inclined to volunteer in this Semiquincentennial year, they could use the help.

We picture Mickey still spending Sundays at the Cresco Station Museum but in the role of a visiting storyteller. Do stop by Sunday afternoons beginning Memorial Day from 1 to 4 pm.



Calendars for 2026

Calendars are available at Ace (Steele's) Hardware and at the general meetings of the Barrett Township Historical Society. Calendars are in color, and the theme for our 2026 calendar is Semiquincentennial with a cost of \$10.00 each. Be sure to pick up your copy before they are gone.



SEMIQUINCENTENNIAL EVENTS

In celebration of the 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the Barrett Township Historical Society has scheduled a series of programs for 2026. We hope you will join us as we honor our Patriots, observe our country's accomplishments, and gather with the rest of the nation to celebrate this milestone. Our events are listed on the calendar pages, detailed below, and are open to the public. We look forward to welcoming you, your friends, and family!

Friday, March 20, 2026
2:00 PM

Barrett/Paradise Friendly Library

Dave Matsinko, known as the "Minstrel of the Mountains," performs traditional music from the Revolutionary Period.

Friday, April 17, 2026
7:00 PM

Barrett/Paradise Friendly Library

Semiquincentennial celebration kicks off. Students will read their winning essays and receive their prizes.

Friday, May 15, 2026
7:00 PM

Barrett/Paradise Friendly Library

John L. Moore, author and historian, will present a program on the American Revolution in Pennsylvania.

Sunday, June 14, 2026
1:00 – 4:00 PM

Cresco Station Museum

Flag Day celebration and ice cream social, featuring early American craft demonstrations and children's games.

Saturday, July 4, 2026
10:00 AM
Stroudsburg, PA

Barrett Historical Society will have a float in the Monroe County parade held in Stroudsburg.

Sunday, July 12, 2026
1:00 PM

Barrett Township Municipal Building (BARC)

Patriot Descendants Recognition Day and Independence Day Celebration, featuring the American Legion color guard, DAR representatives, and a Fife and Drum Corps from Philadelphia.

Sunday, August 16, 2026**1:00 – 4:00 PM****Parkside Chapel, Henryville**

Open house at the only building in Barrett and Paradise Townships on the National Register of Historic Places. Music will be provided.

Sunday, September 13, 2026**2:00 PM****Mountainhome United Methodist Church**

A musical presentation entitled "Music of 1776" under the direction of Ruth Kochera, including a skit featuring George Washington and Betsy Ross.

Friday, October 16, 2026**2:00 PM****Barrett/Paradise Friendly Library**

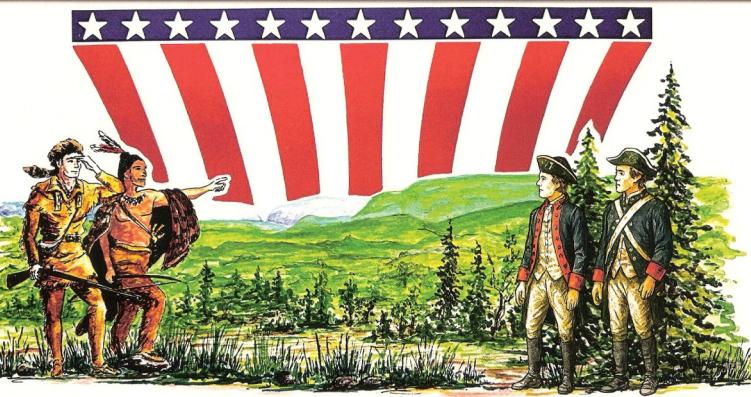
Russ Cramer presents a program on Native American Artifacts of the Poconos.

Friday, November 20, 2026**2:00 PM****Barrett/Paradise Friendly Library**

Jacqueline Magann, a Bicentennial Living History Volunteer at Valley Forge National Park, will present her program "Quilts of the Revolutionary Period."

Friday, December 18, 2026**2:00 – 4:00 PM****Barrett/Paradise Friendly Library**

A Colonial Christmas Gathering featuring holiday refreshments, a slide show highlighting past winters in Barrett Township, and fellowship with our neighbors and volunteers who made 2026 successful.

**BARRETT TOWNSHIP – FRONTIER TO FREEDOM****1776-2026****RETURN TO
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Robert Lansdowne Obituary

Robert K. Lansdowne, 93, of Mount Pocono, passed away Wednesday afternoon, December 31, 2025 while under hospice care at Brookmont Healthcare Center in Effort. He was the husband of Shirley A. (Bisbing) Lansdowne with whom he shared 70 years of marriage.

Born on January 2, 1932 at home in the Glen Brook Country Club clubhouse, where his father was the golf pro; he was a son of the late Harold Sr. and Ethel (Altemose) Lansdowne. He was a lifetime resident of Monroe County and served in the United States Navy, mostly on the USS Leyte air craft carrier, for four years.

When a youth, Bob caddied at the Shawnee Inn & Golf Resort, often caddying for Fred Waring. After his naval service, he worked in quality control at Tobyhanna Army Depot and then in 1959 founded the family business, Lansdowne Insurance Agency in Mount Pocono of which he operated for 34 years before retiring.

Bob was very active in his community and his memberships included Mount Pocono United Methodist Church where he served as a Trustee; a 50 plus year member of Mount Pocono Rotary where he was a past-president; Pocono Lodge #780 F&AM; Barrett Township Historical Society; Paradise Township Historical Society; Pocono Mountains Penn State Alumni Association; and USS Leyte Association of which he attended reunions. He served on the first planning commission for the Borough of Mount Pocono and was also a former member of the Pocono Mountain Volunteer Fire Company where he called bingo at the annual carnival for 50 years.

He was an avid golfer and participated in the Pocono Manor golf league for over 30 years. He enjoyed traveling with family and friends. He especially enjoyed twenty years of wintering in Arizona with his wife Shirley where they socialized with many other friends from the Poconos and danced the night away at various dance halls on a regular basis.

In addition to his wife, surviving are two children, David S. Lansdowne and wife Lynn of Pocono Manor, and Mara J. Reed and husband Glenn of Reading; two granddaughters, Chelsea Lansdowne Beardsley and husband Jeffrey of Pocono Manor, and Ashley Lansdowne Salter and husband John Luke of Cresco; a great-granddaughter, Dorothy Lynn Salter; a sister-in-law, Edith Lansdowne; and several nieces, nephews and cousins.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister, Charlotte Heimbach and two brothers, Harold Lansdowne, Jr. and William Lansdowne.

Barrett Township Historical Society Display Case at the BPFL

The display for December and January features a diverse collection of Cardinal figurines collected over a number of years and includes both winter and spring settings. Be sure to stop into the Barrett Paradise Friendly Library and admire this unique flock of feathered friends.



Other upcoming displays will include a collection of crystals in February. March will feature an exhibit by the local Girl Scout group and April will be a display of tatting. Enjoy!

Historical Recipes side by side: Sweet Potato Pudding

Edited by Mary Kate Reeves-Hoché

Did you know that the sweet potato was cultivated, grown, and eaten before the white (Irish) potato? It came to the United States, likely from Peru, and was taken to Europe by Christopher Columbus. It was a staple of our early American Ancestors as it was easy to grow, provided great nutrition, and kept the struggling colonies, and young nation from starvation.

Potato pudding, or sweet potato pudding is listed in the 1747 cookbook by Hannah Glasse The Art of Cookery made Plain and Easy which was the most popular cookbook in America during the time of the American Revolution. Hannah Glasse didn't have a recipe for a pie, but instead for a pudding made in a casserole dish.

1747 Hannah Glasse The Art of Cookery made Plain and Easy "Potato Pudding"

Boil two pounds of potatoes, and beat them in a mortar fine, beat in half a pound of melted butter, boil it half an hour, pour melted butter over it, with a glass of white-wine or the juice of a Seville orange, and throw sugar all over the pudding and dish.

21st Century Recipe for Sweet-Potato Pudding from Joy of Cooking

Oven 350 Degrees F

Combine and beat well:

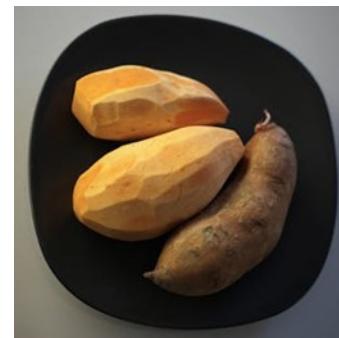
2 cups cooked, mashed sweet potatoes
1 cup sugar
½ cup melted butter
6 beaten egg yolks
1 ½ teaspoons grated lemon rind
1 cup orange juice
¼ cup nutmeg or 2 tablespoons rum

Fold in:

2 stiffly beaten egg whites

Bake pudding in greased baking dish about 1 hour.

After the pudding is baked and cooled, it may be topped with meringue made with the left over 4 egg whites (beat egg whites with ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar, as peaks are just beginning to hold shape gradually add 3 tablespoons sugar until egg whites are stiff)



Sources:

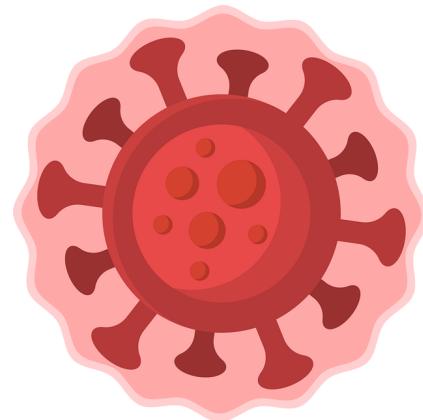
1747 Hannah Glasse The Art of Cookery made Plain and Easy

1977 Irma S. Rombauer & Marion Rombauer Becker Joy of Cooking

What's New with COVID-19? By Mary Kate Reeves-Hoche

If you haven't had an up-dated COVID-19 vaccination since last year (before November 2025) you should consider getting a booster. The latest update was released in November and covers the current circulating strain.

The 2025-2026 Formula is an updated vaccine indicated for active immunization to prevent COVID-19 caused by SARS-CoV-2 in individuals 65 years of age and older, or 6 months through 64 years at high risk for severe COVID-19.



As a Reminder, it is flu season, and that Flu and COVID-19 can be confused, and you can have them both at the same time. They are both communicable, so stay home if you are sick.

Sources:

CDC <https://www.cdc.gov/covid/index.html> accessed Nov 19, 2025



Mission Statement

Mission statement of the Barrett Township Historical Society is to promote the history of Barrett Township and surrounding areas. The service of the Society is dedicated to educating diverse audiences through a variety of resources and programs. Specific goals include:

- I. Preserve and disseminate information about the township and its people through the support and maintenance of a historical file and a research center
- II. Promote and encourage historical research and study, particularly the discovery, collection, preservation and publication of the history, historical records, data, writings and speeches pertaining to Barrett Township
- III. Collect and preserve archival materials including books, newspapers, maps, genealogies, manuscripts, letters, journals, film footage, radio and video tapes and oral histories.
- IV. Collect and preserve historical artifacts including portraits, paintings, engravings, relics and other objects and materials which illustrate various traditions and cultures of the township.
- V. Collect information relative to the growth and development of the population, wealth, education, agriculture, arts, manufacturers and commerce of the township.
- VI. Develop and present educational opportunities to all age groups, including on-site and outreach opportunities to school groups, elder groups, service clubs and the community at large.



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PATRIOT RECOGNITION DAY

**If you are a lineal descendant of a Revolutionary Patriot, you
are eligible to be recognized by the Barrett and Paradise
Township Historical Societies on Patriot Recognition Day, July 12, 2026.**

**To qualify, your lineal ancestor would have been unfailing in
loyalty to the cause of American Independence.**

Name _____

Contact info _____

Ancestor's Name _____

Ancestor's date and place of birth _____

Brief description of ancestor's service _____

Cemetery (if known) _____

Please send your application to:

**Barrett Township Historical Society
PO Box #358
Mountainhome, PA 18342**

Barrethistorical@gmail.com

DEADLINE TO APPLY IS APRIL 15, 2026