

# " Looking Back on Barrett "



# 1996

*Prepared by The Friends of Barrett Friendly Library*



## The Early Years

Through its first settler, John Price , located in this area in the late 1700's, its active history begins about 1810 when a number of families moved into the rural township, cleared the land of its thick growth of timber, and dug from its rich soil not only a good living for their families but more than enough to enable them to develop the natural wealth of the township. There was little thievery in those early times, so the pigs, cattle and poultry were branded for recognition and allowed to roam free.

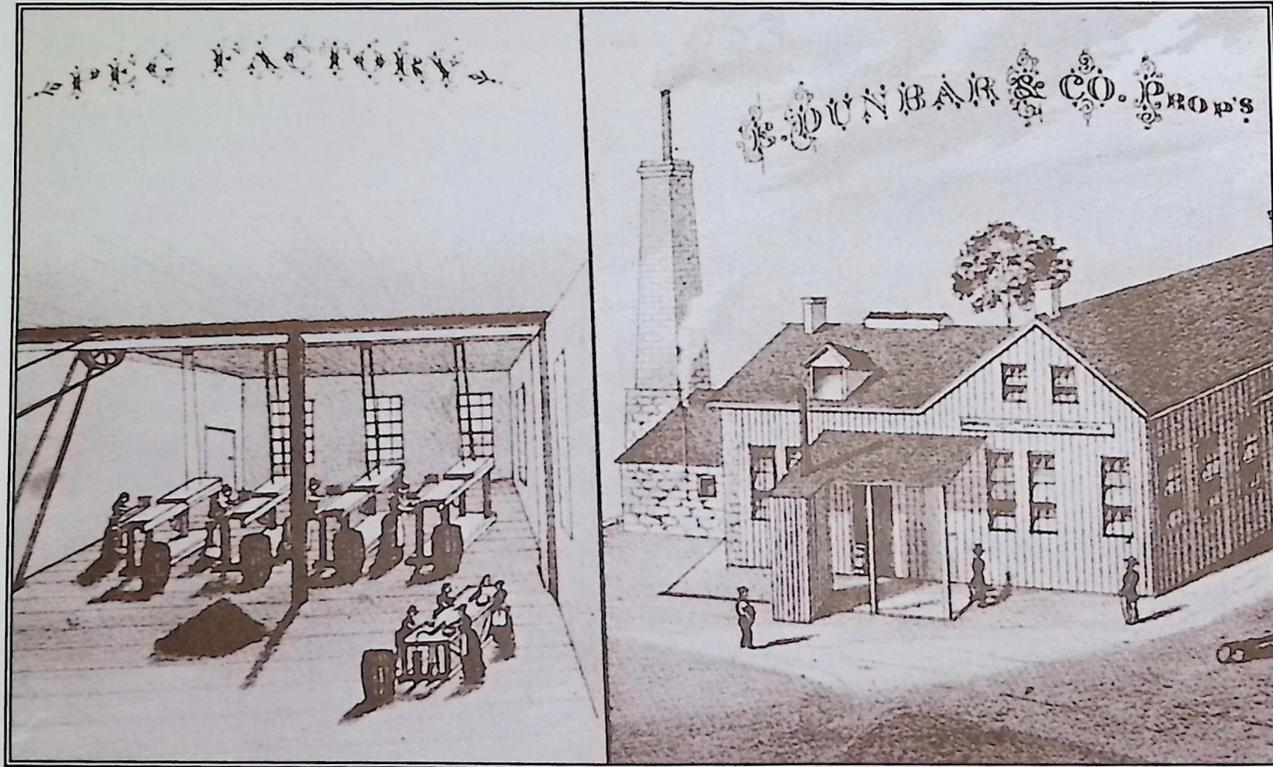
By the middle of the 1800s, the immense tracts of timber assumed financial importance and attracted capital and industry to the town. Since leather played a such an important part in machinery and everyday life, a tannery was erected in Canadensis and one later at Oakland to convert hides into leather. Sawmills were built throughout various parts of the township to cut lumber for housing and other enterprising dreamers. The Lackawanna railroad opened a depot and shipped mine props and sprags (blocked the wheels of a mining car from moving) to the Anthracite coal regions.

The little villages thrived, schools opened and church influence grew as word of steady work rapidly spread. The industries and the population grew to such an extent that by 1859 a new municipality was created from portions of Price and Paradise Townships. It was called Barrett, in honor of George H. Barrett, the President Judge of the Monroe County courts system of the time.

By 1885, Barrett township began to suffer some industrial crises. Much of the best timber had been cut and the large Mountainhome tannery burned to the ground. Following this, one after another of the various enterprises closed until only the saw mills remained around. Finally, only the Shafer-Rhinehart saw mill remained to cut lumber. That business closed up once its founder was buried beneath the ground.

A factory which manufactured shaved flour barrels and apple hoops struggled along... until a better product (steel hoops) destroyed that enterprise. A pottery business was established; surveyors found flagstone. Quarrying the blue rock soon became one of the leading businesses of the town. Once city folks acquired the taste, a thriving huckleberry industry developed and shipped carloads of ripe berries out of town.

Long before the Poconos became associated with the tourist industry, Barrett had lodgings for guests. Visitors came for the excellent fishing, beautiful scenery, recreation and healthiness of the place. By 1911, Cresco was the receiving station for forty-five boarding houses and hotels, having a total capacity of about 2,000 guests.



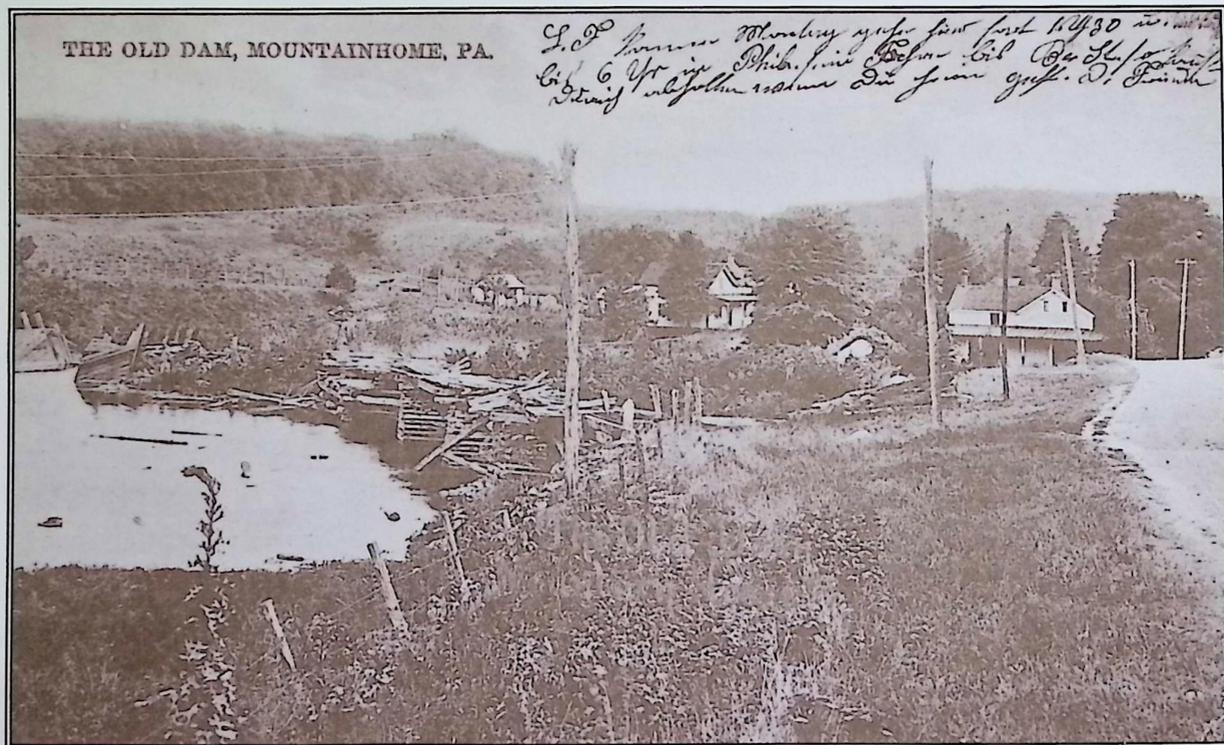
## Industry in the Villages

As America grew, so did her demand for manufactured goods. Palen and Northrup opened their Canadensis enterprise in 1847 to transform animal hides into workable leather. By 1856 the demand for shoes, boots, aprons and harnesses and other leather products had become so great that White and Brakely built a larger tannery in what is now known as Mountainhome. By the late 1860's, E. Dunbar and Company built the Shoe Peg Factory at Mountainhome. Once orders slipped (and before it burned to the ground), the factory was converted into a clothespin mill; later a veneer factory.



P.O.S. of A.

Preceding the Canadensis unit by several years, the Mountainhome Patriotic Order, Sons of America opened in the late 1800s. The main purpose of the branches was patriotic. As part of their many activities branches served as community centers and distributed American flags and Bibles.



### Shafer - Reinhart Dam

George S. Shafer and Marten B. Rinehart formed a partnership in building a saw mill. After they dammed Mill Creek Stream, they installed a water wheel to create a source of power. Lumber sleds, drawn by horse or oxen, carried the trees from as far away as the "Beech" (La Anna) back of Bush Mountain to the sawmill.



## Cliff View Cottage

The Cliff View is recognized as one of the old, old hotels in the region. It was built in the 1800s and owned by Charles and Amanda Kolb. Its spacious veranda was one of the real attractions, located in view of the cliff and fronting on the highway.



## Cresco Railroad Station

The Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad first came through the area in 1851. The Cresco depot (originally called Oakland) was once a thriving freight and passenger gateway to Barrett Township.

The Cresco Hotel, pictured behind the depot, was owned by George F. Smith. The structure which later burned to the ground provided first-class accommodations for transients.



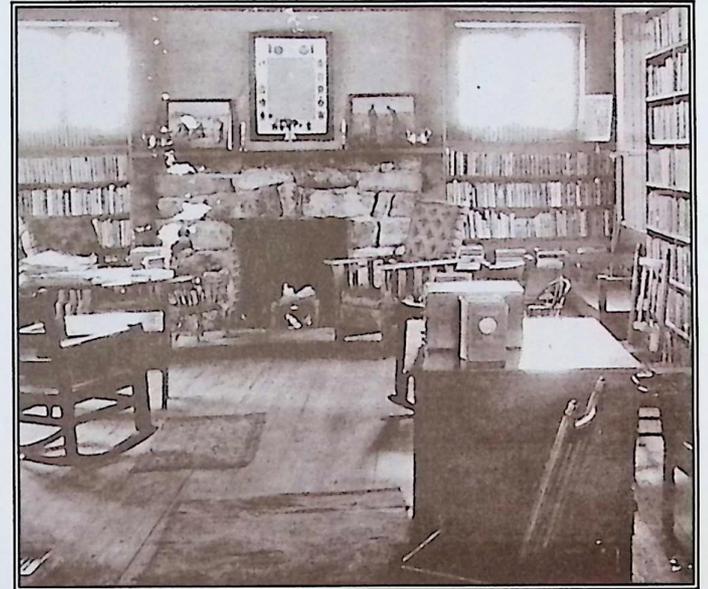
Buck Hill House (1878)

Allen Price built his hotel (one of the first two) at the forks of the road leading to Canadensis and Buck Hill Falls. By 1896, his inn (which had the first tavern) was a famous stopping place. Shown in the photograph (left to right): Doctor Rodgers, Iva Price Swaine, Bertha Freeland, Roland Price, Allen S. Price, Porter Price, Claddy Freeland and Rabbadine ( a Frenchman).



Buck Hill Falls Inn (1901)

Alfred H. Jenkins was one of the original group of five men who pioneered the opening of the resort. It was build as a summer settlement for "Friends and Friendly People", and persons of quiet tastes who wished to get near nature. "All healthful forms" of recreation were encouraged.



## Barrett Friendly Library

By 1909, a number of cottagers and guests at the Inn at Buck Hill Falls decided to raise money and collect books to establish a permanent library for the community. A year later, there already were 317 books catalogued and 100 members enrolled. The first meeting of the new organization was held in the home of Mrs. Charles N. Thompson, the driving force behind the effort. For a lack of a permanent location, the books were kept on the side porch of the Mabelle Cottage. Mrs. Harry Geissinger, the proprietor, became the first librarian. Thanks to subscriptions, pledges, and volunteer labor, construction on a permanent location was begun in 1912. By 1913, the Barrett Friendly Library had been completed.



## Spruce Cabin House

Memorialized by Spruce Cabin Road today, Spruce Cabin House was one of the best-known resorts in the early days. It was originally built in 1887 by Wesley J. and Milton D. Price on the old Price homestead. It burned in 1891 and was rebuilt in even finer glory, hosting satisfied customers until it burned again in 1920. It was never rebuilt. Spruce Cabin House claimed to be the best inn in the center of the best fishing streams, but was also noted as a health and recreation center.



## Mountainhome Band

In the early days, the social spirit was a part of everyday life. During the summer months, these artistic twelve played music and merry was the fun.



Casper Buck and Funeral Wagon

Casper Buck and George Shafer were undertakers together, first Shafer by himself, then the two together. Casper worked by himself, but took in George Arnst later. Embalming was done in the home with ice.



### A Bountiful Harvest

Hunting camps were started around 1908 or '09. Trophies were much larger than they are today. Three hunters have been identified (left - right): Allen Price, Jake Brush (with his dog, Towser), and Tony Caprioli. Can you identify the rest?

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## **ORGANIZATIONS**

**Barrett Ambulance Corps.**  
Meetings: 1st Monday  
at Ambulance Bld.

**Barrett Business Association**  
Meetings: 1st Monday  
call 595-9767

**Barrett Community Club**  
Meetings: 1st Thursday  
at Ambulance Bld.

**Barrett Historical Society**  
Meetings: Last Friday, except 5/24, 11/22, 12/20  
7:30pm Barrett Friendly Library

**Barrett Lions Club**  
"Serving the Community since 1949"  
Meetings: 2nd and 4th Monday  
7:00pm at Cappucino's

**Barrett Volunteer Fire Co.**  
PO Box M  
Buck Hill Falls, PA 18323

**Barrett YMCA**  
Meeting: 2nd Tuesday  
7:30pm at Barrett "Y"  
1st and 3rd Tuesday Bridge Party 7:15pm

**Concerned Citizens of Barrett**  
Meetings: 3rd Thursday 7:00pm  
Oct-May Barrett Elem. Center  
June-Sept High Acres Park

**Harvesters**  
Meetings: 1st Tuesday 12 noon  
at Canadensis United Methodist

**Paradise Willing Workers**  
"Supporting 20 organizations"  
Meetings: 2nd Tuesday 8:00pm  
call 595-7068

**Pocono Mt. Rotary Club**  
Meetings: every Wednesday  
6:00pm at the Forks

**Barrett Friendly Library**  
**M-TH 12-5:00pm & 6:30-9pm**  
**Fri. 12:00 - 4:00pm**  
**Sat. 11:30 - 3:00pm**  
**Call 595-7171**

## **MUNICIPAL OFFICES**

**Barrett Township Supervisors**  
Meetings: every Friday 9:30am  
and 2nd Wednesday, 7:30pm at Barrett Twp.  
Municipal Bld.  
595-2602

**Paradise Township Supervisors**  
Meetings: 1st and 3rd Tuesday, 7:00pm at Paradise  
Twp. Municipal Bld.  
595-9880

## **CHURCHES**

**Canadensis Moravian**  
Sunday School: 9:30am  
Worship: 10:45am  
1st Sat. from May-Oct. Craft Sale

**Canadensis United Methodist**  
Sunday School: 9:30am  
Worship: 10:45am

**Friends Quaker Meeting**  
Memorial Day to Columbus Day  
at Camp Club, Buck Hill Falls  
Sunday Worship: 10:30 - 11:00am

**Keokee Chapel**  
in Paradise  
Sunday Worship: 9:30am

**Mountainhome United Methodist**  
Sunday School: 9:30am  
Worship: 8:30am & 11:00am

**Paradise Valley Baptist Church**  
Sunday School - 10:00am  
Sunday Service - 11:00am and 6:00pm  
Thursday Evening - 7:00pm

**Paradise Assembly of God**  
Sunday Service: 8:30am, 10:50am, 7:00pm

**St. Bernadette's Catholic**  
in Canadensis  
Services: 9:00am/11:00am Sunday  
5:30pm Saturday and 4:00pm confession