



Day of the Rope 140 years later

This article was originally printed in the Pottsville Republican Herald June 21, 2017.

By **STEPHEN J. PYTAK STAFF WRITER**

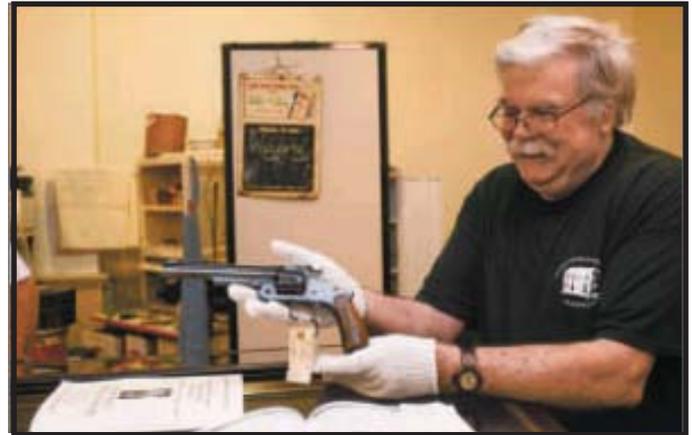
POTTSVILLE — Once upon a time in the anthracite region, justice was served at the gallows.

One case in particular has fascinated generations of historians and champions of the labor movement.

Today marks the 140th anniversary of “The Day of the Rope.” On June 21, 1877, 10 Irish coal miners who were allegedly part of a group of terrorists known as the Molly Maguires were hanged.

Six of them were hanged at the jail in Pottsville. Five were found guilty of the July 6, 1875, murder of Officer Benjamin “Frank” Yost. They were James Boyle, James Carroll, Thomas Duffy, Hugh McGeehan and James Roarity. Thomas Munley was hanged for the Sept. 1, 1875, murders of Thomas Sanger and William Uren.

Four were hanged at the old jail in Mauch Chunk, what is now Jim Thorpe, Carbon County. Alexander Campbell was hanged for the Dec. 2, 1871, murder



NICK MEYER / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Tom Dempsey, Girardville, shows a Smith & Wesson Model 3 Russian Model revolver on Tuesday that will be part of the Molly Maguires display at the Schuylkill County Historical Society, Pottsville.

of Morgan Powell and the Sept. 3, 1875, murder of John P. Jones. John Donahue was also hanged for Powell’s murder. And Michael Doyle and Edward Kelly were hanged for the murder of Jones, according to “A Guide to the Molly Maguires” by

See **140 years** on page 2

Pottsville Philanthropic Club Donates Funds to SCHS



Left to Right: Pottsville Philanthropic Club President, Carolyn Lord, SCHS President, J. Robert Zane, Esq. and Ellen Zane, Philanthropic Club member.

The Pottsville Philanthropic Club recently held their annual fundraiser with the proceeds being donated to the SCHS. The SCHS is extremely grateful for this kind consideration and appreciative of the donation to the Society.

Founded in 1908 by Ethel Beecher and Dr. Mary Kingsbury, The Philanthropic Club of Pottsville, continues to follow its dual mission of study and service. From its beginning the Club had been active in many city projects such as the prevention of cruelty to children, women’s suffrage, and setting up a library in the county prison. That is the service aspect of the Club. For the study aspect of its mission, the Club selects a yearly theme with each member assigned a topic on the theme to research before giving a presentation. This year’s theme was “medical discoveries” and each member was given a related topic to research independently before presenting a report to the group. The Historical

See **Philanthropic Club** continued on page 3

**Schuylkill County
Historical Society**



President

J. Robert Zane, Esq.

Vice-President

Richard J. Nagle

Secretary

JoAnn Chuba

Treasurer

Diana Prosymchak

Executive Director

Thomas Drogalis

Board of Directors

Dawn Morris-Bicht

Jean Dellock

Dave Derbes

Tom Eltringham

Allen Frantz

Colleen Hoptak

Randy Lindenmuth

Mary Ann Lubinsky

Richard Nagle

Pat McKinney

John Powers

Richard Tomko

John Walsh

Sch.hist@comcast.net
www.schuylkillhistory.org
305 North Centre Street,
Pottsville, Pennsylvania
(570) 622-7540

Society Hours

Wednesday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Thursday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Friday 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Saturday 10 a.m. - 2 p.m.

*Tourists, Historical
Researchers, Scholars
and Genealogists are
welcome*

The Purpose of the Schuylkill County Historical Society is to discover, procure, and preserve the records of the history of Schuylkill County and any data or materials which may establish or illustrate that history.

140 Years continued from page 1

H.T. Crown and Mark T. Major.

Today, that old jail at 128 W. Broadway, Jim Thorpe, is a museum.

It's important to recognize that moment in time, Tom Dempsey, Girardville, a local historian, said.

"People still ask questions about it, especially the younger generation coming up. There are lot of people who don't know anything about the Molly Maguires or the hangings or anything. They don't even know why they happened," Dempsey said June 13.

It's a dark time in our nation's history in terms of labor relations, Thomas B. Drogalis, executive director of the Schuylkill County Historical Society, said.

"It was a different world back then. There was far more violence. You had people taking matters into their own hands and so forth. And when you look at labor relations today, you always have to ask yourself have we learned anything from history. In this case, you don't want history to repeat itself," Drogalis said.

To mark the 140th anniversary of the mass execution, the Schuylkill County Historical Society, Pottsville, put together a new exhibit on the Mollies. Drogalis and some volunteers talked about the effort.

"It will be on the north stairwell on the landing between the first and second floors," Drogalis said.

It will be a permanent addition to the museum, he said.

This week, society volunteers decorated the area with a large vinyl mural featuring artwork from the period. The back of it was coated with adhesive, and it was stuck to the wall.

"It's 8 1/2 feet long and 6 feet tall. I think we're going to bring a professional paper hanger in because it's in two pieces and it's so large," Drogalis said June 13.

It includes a large scan of an illustration on file in the historical society.

It was put on the wall Saturday.

It's a scene of the Molly Maguires marching to their death at the prison yard at Schuylkill County Jail on "The Day of the Rope." The artist was Frank Leslie.

"It's a drawing. It's been used in publications on the subject matter," Drogalis said.

It cost more than \$300 and was made by Magic Murals, Smithfield, North Carolina, Drogalis said.

Under the mural will be a display case holding some artifacts.

It will include sections of the ropes that ended the lives of Boyle, McGeehan, Carroll, Roarty, Munley and Duffy.



140 Years continued from page 2

Also there was a “coffin notice,” Drogalis said.

“And Tom has a number of photographs that we want to have enlarged to put on the side walls there,” Drogalis said.

The historical society also has on file the transcripts of the trials of the 10 men hanged on the Day of the Rope, Drogalis said.

“In my opinion, many of the men who were convicted and hanged were probably not guilty. And if they were tried and convicted under today’s standards, none of them would have been convicted and hanged. But that was a different world back then. Back then the coal companies controlled everything from the day you were born to the day you died,” Dempsey said as he unwrapped a package and pulled out a pistol.

It was a S&W Model 3 Russian Second Model single-action revolver. It was manufactured between 1873 to 1878.

“It belonged to ‘Bully Bill’ Thomas of Mahanoy City,” Dempsey said.

“William ‘Bully Bill’ Thomas” was a “Mahanoy City tough and Civil War veteran who incurred the enmity of many men in the coal region. Thomas developed a criminal reputation over the years, specifically as one who was apt to fight with and shoot at those who would oppose him. One of Thomas’ favorite enemies was James Dugan, a local Irishman in Mahanoy City,” according to the book by Crown and Major.

“In the summer of 1876, several AOH members from across the county were tried and convicted of the attempted murder and conspiracy to commit the murder of Thomas and the Major brothers,” according to the book by Crown and Major.

The “Major brothers” were George and William Major of Mahanoy City and Jesse Major of Kaska, according to the book.

Dempsey and Drogalis did not have much information about the history of the revolver.

“‘Bully Bill’ Thomas owned it. He carried it with him. There’s no record of him having fired it at any of his assailants,” Dempsey said.

“It was donated to us,” Drogalis said.

He didn’t know who the donor was, but believed it had been part of the society’s collection for more than a decade.

In March, the commemorative booklet for the 2017 St. Patrick’s Day Parade in Girardville

was dedicated to this dark chapter of history.

Copies are available to buy at the Schuylkill County Historical Society.

Dempsey said his favorite books on the Mollies include “Making Sense of the Molly Maguires” by Kevin Kenny and “The Molly Maguires” by Wayne G. Broehl Jr.

Other places people can visit locally to learn more about the Molly Maguires is Mahanoy City.

In 2010, a statue made by world-renowned sculptor Zenos Frudakis, Glenside, was placed on its pedestal at the Molly Maguire Historic Park, located at the southeast corner of Centre and Catawissa streets near the Citizens Fire Company in Mahanoy City.

It’s a sculpture of a hooded man awaiting execution at the gallows.

“I cannot tell you if there are many visitors to the monument. We are working on digitizing the old Molly Maguire tour so that we can lend or rent it to attract more visitors,” Peg Grigalonis, president of the Mahanoy Area Historical Society, said Saturday.



Philanthropic Club continued from page 1

Society is grateful to the Philanthropic Club for its financial support and its dedication to the community. The Club’s mahjong tournament held in mid-June was both a financial and social success. The Historical Society encourages other civic groups to assist us in a similar manner.

WELCOME



The Schuylkill County Historical Society welcomes the following new members:

Nancy Speichert
 Nichholas Tucci III
 Chris Foran
 Jeff Watters
 Denise Marshall
 Janice Willis
 Brian McCabe
 Joyce Ingram Neufell
 Wendy Williams
 Margaret Schammert
 Beverly Serik
 Sandra Neas
 Chris Coyne
 John Fetterolf
 Sandra Fox-Moon
 Robert Hiestser
 Dan Madnell
 Loretta Perner
 Gwen G. Engler
 Karen Henderson

Mary Felton
 Alan Kirby
 Peter Valdes-Dapena
 Joseph S. Gnall
 H. Richard King
 Ed Short
 Sally Meisner
 Judy & Tim McKee
 David B. & Linda Hirst
 McGurk Family
 Marcovite
 Elizabeth Sonnenberg
 Ron & Mary Devlin
 Marijore & Bob Hoppe
 Diane M Jenkins
 Clayton M. Kline
 Richard Johnston
 Schuylkill Chamber of
 Commerce



During a recent visit to the Schuylkill County Historical Society, Diana Jenkins, was shown the game ball from Cass Township football season of 1957. The team was undefeated and unscored upon that year and won the State Football Championship. Diane is an alumni of Cass Township and has many cherished memories, "We had wonderful teachers and I have great friends and I keep in touch. It was quite the thrill to hold that game ball."

Schuylkill Area Community Foundation Grant provides funding for new lighting throughout the museum

Special thanks to the team from Richards Energy Group Incorporated for installing new energy efficient lighting throughout the museum. This upgrade will not only save on the electric bill, but has greatly enhanced the quality of lighting in all area of the museum.



From left Darrin, Tina, and George

Thanks

Recent Acquisitions

- Hummels furniture store display rocker, metal jewelry box. Donated by Bright & Suzanne Eiler from Pottsville, Pa
- 1941 map of St Clair, Pa. Donated by Mike Vuhsta from Pottsville, Pa
- Scrapbooks of photo and news articles donated by Margaretta Archbald Gille and Carolyn Archbald Krach from Timonium, Md
- Book Pottsville Personalities Vol 1, Charles Baber Cemetery, War Years 1939-1945 (3 books), Donated by Robert Defont from Pottsville, Pa
- Hodgons glass bottle, Doutrichs Mens hat, 2 vol Family History of Moyer Family, Ledger book of Moyers Farm donated by Anthony and Lois Dooley from Orwigsburg, Pa
- 10 Pottsville High sports photos, class 1950 basketball, 2 wooden folding chairs from Liners Furniture Store, set of 6 small knives from W. H. Mortimer, Pottsville, Pa
- 1927 Schuylkill County Public School Manual Booklet-Dedication Service Administration
- Building Schuylkill Co. Courthouse 1933, 2 leather wallets from H. R. Knapp, Pottsville donated by Jane Pritiskutch from Minersville, Pa
- 1924 map of Pottsville, 5th Ward street map, 1924, Jan 1906 Pottsville Map, Sweet Arrow Lake map 1928, Statement of real estate properties, Mt. Laurel Cemetery map 1907, Book on early transportation, Henry Clay Christmas ornament, PAHS 1853 Magazine, Good Will Fire Co. 125th Anniversary mug donated by Geraldine Nagle from Pottsville
- WW I and WW II laminated newspapers, Second Geological Survey of Pa Volumes include Southfield, Middle (eastern & western). Approximately 25 volumes plus maps donated by Ed & April Wytovich from Ashland
- Book Pennsylvania Railroad Operations & Coal Mines donated by Dan Marnell from San Diego, Ca
- Civil War memorabilia: Reproduced Documents, US Constitution, Gettysburg Address donated by Janice Johnston from Frackville
- Legion Plot 10-10-1946, Legion Community Park 12-1946, 2 maps donated by Jeri Nagle, Pottsville
- Letters to Dora (correspondence to Dora Morris) postcards, and a graduation certificate – Amelia Bardsley donated by Barbara A. Welch from Burke, Va
- 3 ea view finders, coal mining artifacts, equipment belts, shadowbox, respirator and a methanometer donated by Ann Anthony from Auburn
- Photo of the Larkin Hotel donated by Carl Larkin from Annapolis, Md
- Schuylkill Haven Year Book class of 1968 donated by David McDonald from Schuylkill Haven
- 7 Collectable beer glasses, local logos donated by Ralph Wood from Pottsville
- Julia Wolfe's Anthracite Fields CD and Musical program donated by Cheryl Taylor Desmond from Lancaster
- Commencement Exercise for Nativity BVM High School Class of 2017 donated by Desiree Marie Riegel
- Minersville Legion Uniform worn by John B. Di Sarro and Good Will Hat and Belt worn by Paul DiSarro donated by Ann DiSarro from Minersville
- Little tin logo cans, Coca Cola bottle, copper tea pot, hot iron, thermos bottle, glass milk bottle, baby food jar donated by Joanne O'Toole from Pottsville
- WW I letters, post cards, pictures, telegrams from a WW I vet Anthony DiCello Donated by Larry & Sue Alati

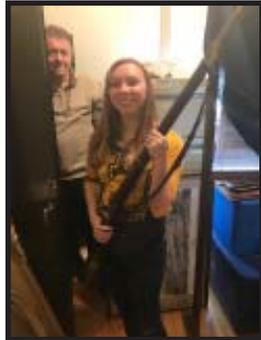


*The Schuylkill County
Historical Society gratefully
acknowledges a donation made by
Richard E. Tomko
in memory of Walter Lipinsky.*

Welcome to Our Summer Volunteers



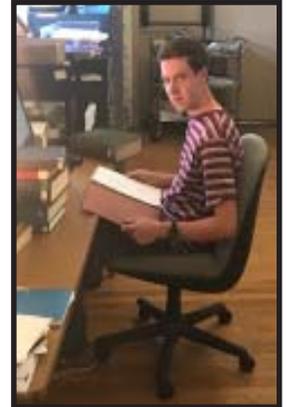
Heather Kapschoch (McCann School of Business) working with Diana Prosymchak in our gift shop.



Kathleen O'Toole (Penn State Schuylkill) working with Bill Webber in our archive department.



Dan Young (St. Vincent College) working in our Research Library.



Schuylkill County Historical Society Board Member Allen Frantz (right) working with Ryan Shatalsky (Bloomsburg University Senior) on an interactive map of the (28) Historical Markers located in Schuylkill County.

This project is part of Ryan's academic work while pursuing his degree in Geography and Planning at Bloomsburg University. In addition to the interactive map, an accompanying wall map and take-away booklet will be part of the project.

Ryan is currently serving as a Summer Intern at the Schuylkill County Conservation District. A special thanks to our Board member, Pat McKinney for introducing Ryan to the Schuylkill County Historical Society.

Memorial Donations

Looking for a meaningful charity to honor or remember a departed loved one? Look no farther. Memorial contributions to the Schuylkill County Historical Society are one way for families to keep their loved one's memory alive by helping the Society achieve its mission of honoring and promoting Schuylkill County's history. We will notify you of each gift made in your loved one's name, and acknowledge each person who makes a contribution. Donors will be mentioned in our newsletter and information given to the Republican Herald newspaper.



Schuylkill County Historical Society Board Members, Pat McKinney, above right, and Allen Frantz, left, display the newly installed "Welcome Sign" on the fence of the Schuylkill County Historical Society Museum Headquarters. Thanks to Pat and Al for designing the sign and working with the City of Pottsville to receive authorization to erect the new sign.

The Roaming Keg of Beer: From Pottsville To Chicago Via Wheelbarrow

The men at Louis Clausman's saloon peered over the froth of their beer goblets with undisguised admiration of the Great Man. Alongside the bar was the famous wheelbarrow, the tire of its wheel worn round. Everyone once in a while argument about the trip started but all disputes were forgotten when the next round of beers was served. Even the Great Man's dog, "Prince," a pretty little thing now somewhat the worse for wear, was an object of special interest. This was the ending - a happy ending - of Pottsville's greatest physical achievement of all time.

Charlie Guetling had wheeled a sextel of beer to the World's Fair in 1893 in a mere 28 days. Now Charlie Guetling was home to his wife and six children, returning to the very spot from which he had started 36 days before. The fire bells were tolling the midday alarm when 41-year old Charlie Guetling took a final hitch of his pants and examined for the last time the sextel of beer in a new and highly polished keg on the trough-like platform of his wheelbarrow.

The hoops were painted red, white, and blue and the keg itself weighted 17 pounds. Filled with beer, it weighed 30 pounds. The barrow's side boards were not taken along so all Charlie had to push was a 100-pound load.

There was a sign, "Charles Guetling to World's Fair from Pottsville, Pa.," to ward off questions by staring onlookers along the 880-mile trip from here to Chicago. The hoops were gilded "Yuengling and Son, Pottsville, Pa." and the beer was, of course, Yuengling's. No song jingle was needed to remind Pottsvillians it had been brewed since 1829.

The 157-pound brush-maker looked rather heroic in his figured shirt, light gray trousers, straw hat and roomy shoes. Over his back he had slung a grip containing his wearing apparel and a .38 pistol - just for safety's sake.

And then as thousands cheered and the scribes of the old "Miners Journal" looked out of the windows of their office hard by Louis Clausman's saloon,

Charlie Guetling pushed the wheelbarrow across Centre Street and trudged north. Two of his children followed him a short way and Guetling waved back to his wife and brood (it was his 12th wedding anniversary). And then he was lost to sight.

The first few miles almost convinced Guetling that some of his scoffers were right - that he wouldn't reach the World's Fair in a month. Within nine miles, the tire of his wheel came off and the spokes began to fall out. Repairs were made at Fountain Springs and by the time he reached Ashland, crowds lined the streets to cheer him and "Prince."

He could hardly elbow his way through the throng into Billy Campbell's saloon and dropped into a chair for his first wind - soaking wet.

Then the real trek over the mountains began.

Charlie wanted to play everything on the level. He took along letterheads and postcards for others to write - guaranteeing it was no hoax that he had passed through their towns. Then he couldn't be accused of faking his progress.

He was at Millheim in the eastern part of Cambria County. At Gallitzin, Blair County, he kept pace with a buggy up the rugged eastern slope of the Alleghenies for eight miles, stopping only once to rest (and a gentleman so wrote this news to the expectant folks back home who were following him through the Journal's columns.)

At Indiana, Pa., postcards reported, he had averaged 32 miles a day. Crowds along the way encouraged him and cheered him on. But it was no peaches-and-cream trip.



Roaming Keg continued from page 7

He was drenched by showers. Nails in his new shoes cut his feet so he bought a pair of slippers and cut off the soles to stuff the into the shoes. His trousers were in shreds. His coat and shirt went to pieces from the handle straps he wore around his shoulders.

Charlie was downright disappointed at the lack of liberality by his routers en route. The only money he earned was in Akron, he reported later, where a hotel proprietor gave him two dollars for drawing a crowd. He had one cent left when he paid his hotel bill at South Bend on August 13 and a boy bicyclist gave him 10 cents for a meal.

Once he asked for a meal at a farm house and was "politely" told he could chop a load of wood for a meal. "Of course I did not stop to consider the proposition," he said haughtily. He followed Lake Michigan for 18 miles but the sand was deep, the wheel became clogged and the pin of the hub got twisted as he neared Chicago.

It was Wednesday, August 16, 1893, and a tattered, tired man wheeling a sextel of beer showed up at the 57th Street entrance of the World's Fair.

There was no band to greet him, as promised, and he was right hungry. He hadn't eaten in two days. Finally some officials gave him a pass and

he checked in at the Pennsylvania building exactly at 7:01 PM.

He had been afoot over Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois for 28 days, three days earlier than his schedule called for. The keg of beer was intact; that had been one of the requirements.

What mattered is that Lucille Rodney, of Texas, had walked from Galveston to Chicago from May 16 to August 1 for \$5,000 wearing out eight pairs of shoes? She had averaged only 23 miles a day. But Charles Guetling had averaged nearly 32 miles a day, pushing a keg of beer!

He accepted \$25 from F. G. Yuengling and bought a railroad ticket home, getting another \$25 enroute plus \$5 from Louis Clausman. Some of the money he used to buy alum - to soften his feet; some to buy St. Jacob's Oil - for stomach troubles.

Charile Guetling is no more - but the story goes marching on. He had wheeled a keg of beer - wait a minute - what became of the beer?

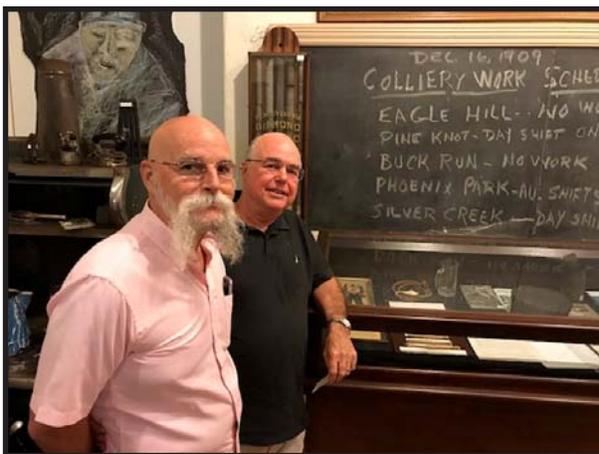
Why it was drunk by officials of the State of Pennsylvania at the Fair.

And it took him only 28 days - wait a minute, he was marching only 26 days actually.

The man who wheeled a keg of beer to Chicago drank some bad water in Ohio enroute and was sick in bed for two days.

(Pottsville Journal - July, 28, 1951)

Mollie Maguire Descendants Enjoy New Exhibit

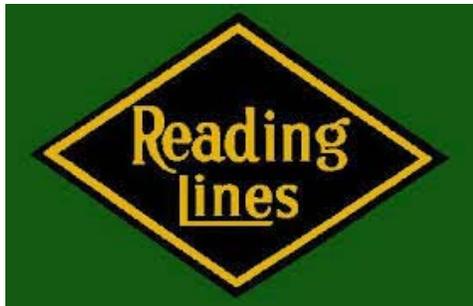


Brothers, Terry Strupczewski and Michael Strupczewski from New Jersey, visited the New Mollie Maguire exhibit on Wednesday, June 21st., the 140th anniversary of the "Day of the Rope". They are descendants of Thomas Munley, who was one of the six men hung on that day in Pottsville. Their great grandfather was the younger brother of Thomas Munley.

Reading Railroad Storage Yards

By Richard Nagle

The hauling of anthracite coal was the backbone of business for the Reading Railroad in this area. In 1890, the Reading began construction on a large storage yard for that coal about one and a half miles south of Schuylkill Haven. A new track was laid running parallel with the main line. An 1800 foot trestle, thirty feet above the ground, was built to facilitate the unloading and loading of the coal. The pockets or wharves began at the northern end of the track and ran parallel to it. The loading track was built between this track and the wharves extended to Landingville, a mile and a half below the chutes and connected there with the main line. The perpendicular height from where the coal was dumped into the chutes to the loading track was sev-



enty feet. The storage bins were 230 feet wide and 1800 feet long and held about 250,000 tons of coal. It was a mammoth complex surrounded by many outbuildings in support of the operation. Since much of the work was done at night, in December of 1891, an electric light plant was built for the sole purpose of providing power for the storage yard. Like many company towns in the coal mining area, houses for the workers were built near the yard. The storage yard was enlarged several

times and in 1903 it reached a capacity of one million tons of coal. The work in 1903 was completed according to

the "Pottsville Republican", by "an Italian padrone and three hundred of his countrymen".

The idea of the storage pockets was to prevent wasting of unpopular sizes of coal, such as chestnut, egg and stove. In summer the largest and smallest sizes were sold as fast as they were mined, but the household sizes were either sold at ruination prices or stored and this was the purpose of the storage yard.

The benefits arising from this action were steadier work for the mines and a uniform price the year round because of the Reading's ability to flood or starve the market at any time with anthracite.

Tragedy was a frequent visitor to the storage yard. Accidents and deaths were reported on a regular basis. The first recorded death came on March 14, 1892 when Harry Freiler was killed while coupling cars. The Christmas of 1897 was a sad occasion



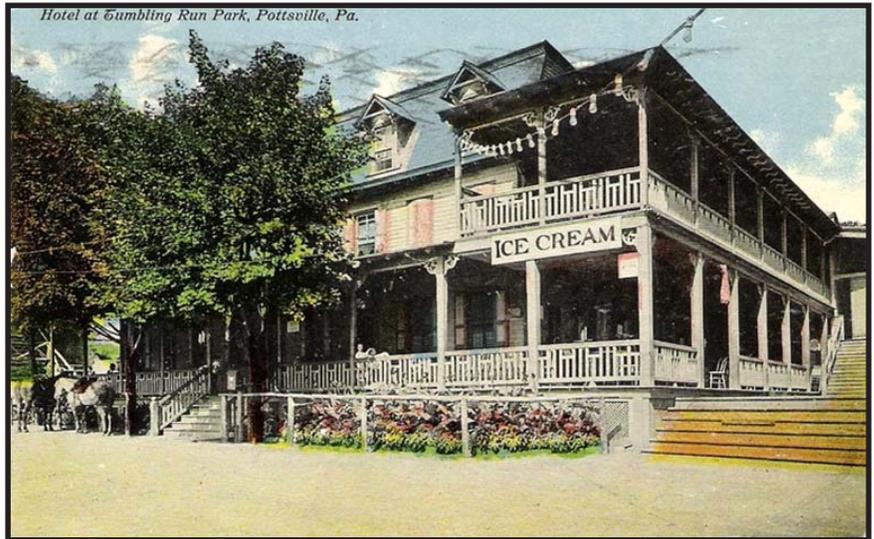
for the family of Charles Kirkpatrick as he was killed Christmas day by being squeezed between cars in the yard. One of the more dramatic accidents occurred on February 12, 1910. Coal stored in the bins froze in clumps during the cold weather. It needed to be separated for it to properly drop through the chutes to the waiting coal cars. This was done with hoses spewing hot water onto the ice caked coal to loosen it. This particular winter, the coal had frozen to a depth of twenty feet in the bins. While spraying the water on the coal, the bin collapsed, burying six men under more than one thousand tons of coal. Workers frantically began work to extricate the buried men. One worker, an Italian by the name of Pisco, died and the others were injured.

The storage yard was utilized until some time before World War Two. If you drive along the Adamsdale Road south of Schuylkill Haven, it is still possible to see where the storage yard was. Large stands of evergreens were planted in the area and the outline is still visible.

Tumbling Run: Summer Paradise

By J.R. Zane

Tumbling Run, a recreational marvel of a by-gone era, was the premier place to go in the summertime. For about five cents, one could take a trolley from Pottsville and Palo Alto heading east around the mountain that was considered part of Mount Carbon. Many would hike up to the Park and then take the trolley back. The trolley ride itself was entertaining as a passenger got fresh country air and a good view of the Schuylkill River and the majestic Tumbling Run Valley. Once at the



Park one would be greeted by the large lawn sign spelling out the name of Tumbling Run Park. A visitor had many options after arriving. Boating and swimming were both popular. Baseball was also popular and a large field was constructed to host the Atlantic League's Pottsville team. Schuylkill County's future baseball pro Jack Picus pitched there. Back then baseball was really popular; it was referred to as "America's pastime." Special trains were added to the normal schedule to transport visitors to these games. What kind of crowds? Well, in 1908 a crowd of 3,000 attended a Pottsville-Shamokin game with the Philadelphia Athletics' manager Connie Mack in attendance on a scouting expedition.



The legendary Park existed from the end of the 19th century to about 1914. William Henry Kline, a native of Lancaster County, moved to Pottsville in 1892 and opened the magnificent Tumbling Run Hotel, which was quite successful. He expanded his operations in Tumbling Run by operating the boathouse and establishing a restaurant. The Tumbling Run Park Association was granted a charter

by the state in 1902 to the Robert Lee family of Pottsville. It appeared as if the Park was here to stay and become a vacation resort rivalling Atlantic City.

Amusement rides for the young and the young at heart were at the Park such as a roller coaster and "the flying horses" or carousel. In 1920, the carousel would later be moved to Willow Lake outside of Schuylkill Haven. Restaurants could be found there although many visitors brought their own picnic baskets.

The primary draw of Tumbling Run, of course, was its refreshingly pure water within the two lakes used for swimming, diving, boating and fishing. Swimming had its perils, and there were many drownings over the years. Lifeguards were not utilized until the Volunteer Life Saving Corps began guarding the lakes in 1908, each guard wearing a blue uniform and a sailor-like cap.

See Tumbling Run continued on page 11

Tumbling Run continued from page 10

Pigeon shoots with large cash prizes were also popular events which drew large crowds. In 1909 west-end marksman Fred Coleman defeated Miss Annie Riecker of Lancaster County in a “*battle of the sexes*” attracting 1500 spectators. Despite her loss to Coleman, Riecker set a world’s record for female shooters, besting Annie Oakley’s prior record.

In the evening a large dance hall would fill its floor and electric lights would illuminate the boathouses. Minstrel and vaudeville shows would also draw crowds.

The baseball field was also used for lectures and speeches by prominent personalities of that era. In late July 1903 nationally known prohibitionist Carrie Nation, after smashing a bottle of expensive whiskey at the hotel, addressed a crowd on the evils of alcohol and cigarettes on the field. A nationally known socialist, J.G. Phelps Stokes gave a political lecture to a large crowd on the field in 1908.

As it is said that “all good things must come to

an end,” the glory days of Tumbling Run Park began to fade by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century. In 1910 three social clubs were forced to close by the officials of the Reading Coal and Iron Company because beer and other intoxicating beverages were being dispensed on the premises. The hotel had also closed its bar and surrendered its license. By 1912 swimming and bathing was prohibited by the company which spurred a fruitless call to boycott the railroad company.

As the lakes at Tumbling Run were created to provide a water supply for the Schuylkill Canal when it was constructed in the 19th century, the landowners had other plans than being the landlord of an amusement and recreation center. The land had been the property of the Silver Creek Water Company, an entity that was wholly owned by the Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron Company. The water was needed to supply neighboring towns and collieries with clean water. By 1917 most of the remaining cottages were scheduled to be demolished. Schuylkill County’s Camelot ended.

2017 Schuylkill Chamber of Commerce Leadership Class Visits Schuylkill County Historical Society



The Historical Society
Of Schuylkill County
P.O. Box 1356
Pottsville, PA 17901

Non-profit org.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Pottsville, PA 17901
Permit # 485

LOOK

at what's inside

Day of the Rope	1
Philanthropic Club	1
New Members	4
New Lighting	4
Recent Acquisitions	5
Summer Volunteers	6
Roaming Keg of Beer	7
Reading Railroad Yards ..	9
Tumbling Run	10
Leadership Class	11

Or current resident

Schuylkill County Historical Society WWI Exhibit is Open for Viewing

Below are a few examples of the many photos and exhibits that are on display that make up the World War I exhibit.



Army Private Frank Sawicki, a Shenandoah coal miner, was captured at the battle of Chateau-Thierry in July 1918. He was the first American to escape a German Prison Camp.



Many of the items that played a major role during World War I are on display.



From the production of ammunition, military products and household goods, around one-million women worked long, hard hours doing the jobs usually held by men. Some worked abroad with the Red Cross or the Salvation Army and others stayed home rolling bandages, knitting socks and working in military hospitals.

