



The Inkwell

45 East Corydon Street, Bradford, PA 16701

April 2015

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*The Bradford
Landmark Society is
501c3 non-profit
organization.*

It's been a rough winter, more than just snow and cold. It is with sadness that the Bradford Landmark Society announces the passing of three of our members, Ann Delucia, Pat Schessler, and Dick Robertson. Each of them contributed to the success of the Landmark in their own way, and will be sincerely missed.

Anna Delucia (2/6/2015) was one of those volunteers that were willing to pitch in and help where needed. She was especially good at organizing our files, judging what was worth keeping and what was superfluous, and what other information should be added. She and her husband, Elmer Delucia were huge community supporters, and Ann graciously donated programs, reports, flyers, pamphlets, tickets, and papers from various organizations and events that she and Elmer had attended, and fortunately for the Landmark, had kept. They are and will continue to be a great historical resource. Thank you, Ann.

Pat Schessler. Ah, what can I say about Pat? Pat loved history, especially Bradford; was an accomplished writer, and had published several articles on the oil history of western Pennsylvania. But Pat's greatest strength was in her ability to know small nuggets of history; I can't tell you how many times we would be at the Landmark, puzzling over a piece of a puzzle, trying to figure out how a person, place, or thing related to each other, when Pat would pipe up. "Oh, that's....." fill in the blank. She always had the key to the puzzle and amazed us every time. Pat died on March 21, 2015 in Allentown, near many of her children. We miss you Pat.

And then there's Dick Robertson (March 27, 2015). A local expert on so many historic things: the BB&K Railroad, McKean County railroads, Bradford's beautiful houses, local architecture, Main Street, trolleys, oil fields, Bradford bricks, the Genesee Valley Canal, and, particularly, the Kinzua Bridge. We never met a man so interested in so many things and we often told people to "go talk to Dick Robertson, he'll know."

He knew the relationships between so many of Bradford's founders, families, and businesses. How he kept all that information in his head was remarkable. He once told us "I know more dead people than alive ones." And did! Who married who? And why? Dick knew. Who lived in that house and when? Dick could tell you who built it, what they did for a living, and who the neighbors were. Wonder where a particular railroad was, when it began, and who owned it? Easy, Dick was an expert. And more than willing to share that information.

Dick often ended his slide shows with a photograph of him on the back of a caboose, waving goodbye. Dick, we hope you are waving at us now.

Ann, Pat, Dick. We miss you already.



The Crook Farm School Program will be held in May and June at the Crook Farm on Seaward Avenue. The Bradford Landmark Society created the School Program at the Crook Farm 36 years ago to create a unique learning experience for 4th and 5th graders in the Bradford school district and surrounding PA/NY state elementary schools. Its goal then and now is to bring history to life for school children by having each child participate in actual “hands on” activities on the farm and attend a one-room school house that demonstrates how children were taught over a hundred years ago. Since we began, over 25,000 children have gone through our program.



The Tuna Valley Trail Association “We Gotta Regatta” will be held May 16 at the Crook Farm, from 2:00PM to 6:00 PM. For the past four years, the Regatta has invited anyone to float down the Tuna Creek to the farm via canoe, raft, inner tube, kayak, etc., where a delicious pig roast and liquid refreshments await! Or, take part in the Tuna Trot, a 5 K, two mile run around the Crook Farm trail loop, or just come and enjoy the day and support the Tuna Valley Trail Association! Cost is \$20 for the pig roast; floating is free – come and have fun!



The 2nd annual Creative Women’s Workshop will be held July 25th at the Crook Farm. Last year was so successful that we can’t wait to do it again. One woman wrote on her Facebook “it was more than fun!” And it was. The goal is to give women a chance to try something new: quilting, candlemaking, photography, calligraphy, and woodburning are just a few of the classes that will be offered (last year we had 16 different classes). There will even be blacksmithing at this year’s event! Each woman gets to choose 4 different classes, and Cost is only \$30 FOR ALL 4 CLASSES! And a free lunch! Watch for further information in the newspaper. Classes are limited, however, to those 16 years of age and up.



As many of you may know, the United States Army once tried to utilize camels in the American Wild West thinking that they would be perfect for the western territories. The “Camel Corps” never really did work out; horses were frightened of the unfamiliar animals and their unpleasant dispositions made them difficult to manage. This article, which appeared in the Bradford Era on June 15, 1915, tells a humorous story of what really happened.

Our Army Camels

The Festive Orientals Uncle Sam Once Tried to Adopt

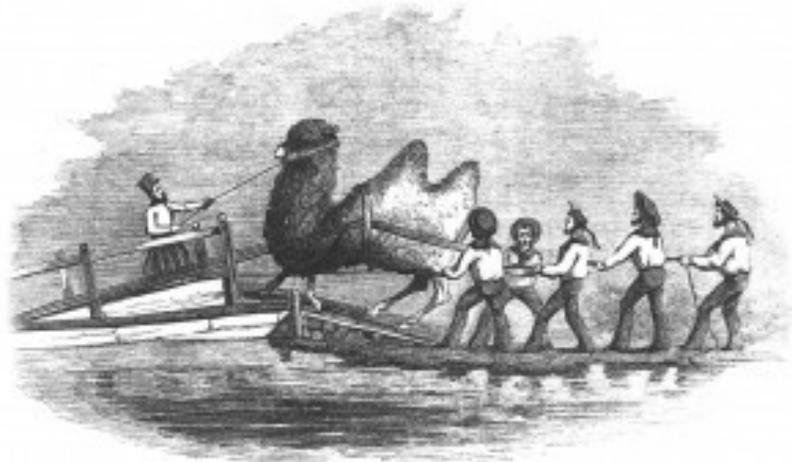
A Brief and Unruly Career

Their Deadly Hatred towards Mules, Their Craving for a Taste of Soldier and a Few Other Eccentricities Proved Their Inglorious Undoing

The United States government’s first and only venture into the use of camels as army transports on the south west frontier was sanctioned by congress through the efforts of Jefferson Davis, then a member of the military commission and later secretary of war. Davis had commanded troops in the southwest in the Mexican War and knew what it was to march for days over a dry, barren country in a scorching heat, with nothing to drink but hot, dry air and nothing to greet the eye except cactus and rattlesnakes.

The rapid development of California after a gold strike of 1848 made necessary provision for the transportation of troops and supplies to the new country over a desert trail, which was a task that set patriotism at a premium. Jefferson Davis asked for camels, and congress finally authorized an expedition to the orient to buy them. On March 3, 1855, the US Congress appropriated \$30,000 for the project and sent a ship to Tunisia, Greece, Turkey, Malta and Egypt to obtain the camels.

The expedition brought back nearly 100 animals, which were added to from time to time until the number grew to 128. They were stationed at El Paso, Yuma, Arizona, San Antonio, and other points on the frontier.



The return trip across the ocean with the camels is recorded in amusing detail by Lieutenant D. D. Porter, who was in charge. Each animal was provided with a competent chauffeur, who was caretaker, interpreter, and baggage master in one. Most of the animals got seasick, and so did the drivers and both complained bitterly of the arrangements. The camels wished they hadn’t come and showed it by kicking and biting pieces from various officers, who were not to blame.

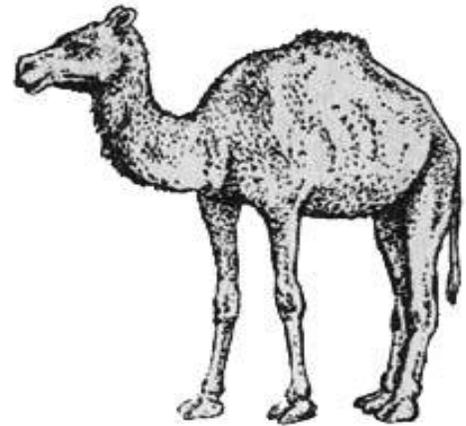
After landing in Texas, the camels did not improve perceptibly in their natures. Their particular aversion was the army mules. Even the younger, inexperienced camels learned quickly to kill a mule

with one blow of the hind foot and indulged in that pastime frequently. Their taste for army officers remained undiminished and the chauffeurs got the blame every time a captain lost some of his anatomy.

The soldiers took to the camel with reciprocal affection. In the first place, they didn't like his looks, contending that the soft, faraway look in the camel's eye indicated that he mind was not on his business. Then the soldiers couldn't get used to the odor radiated by the oriental beast- circuses not being in vogue – and many of them said that Kipling was correct in his opinion that a camel smelled most awful vile. Kipling hadn't said it yet, but soldiers are farseeing and knew that he was going to say it.

Besides, the camel was no good to ride, the soldiers agreed. His ambling, rapid stride made them seasick, and they wanted no animal which it took ten minutes to awaken when the Indians attacked them in the night. No American had lived up to that period who could tie a cargo on one of the beasts so that it would stay one. The camel is not constructed flat on top, it is remembered, and only a clever Arab chauffeur could load one to travel any distance without losing the supplies.

The high record in dead mules was made, it is said, by a camel in San Antonio whose name was Major. Major kicked seven valuable mules into eternity and one day some soldiers, friends of the late mules, took Major off up on a high cliff and came back and said that he had fallen off "accidentally." No exhaustive probe was made of Major's disappearance.



A caravan loaded with supplies went into the city of Sutherland Springs on one occasion, and the camels were watered at the town well. It was the boast of the city that the well had never gone dry. About half the camels took a drink and the well was dry. The disturbance caused by the remaining thirsty camels set the population into a panic.

But the endless feud between the camels and soldiers soon convinced the government that railroads would do just as well. The rush to California was well over and frontier troubles were well under control by the time the war broke out. The government withdrew the foreign camel agents and closed the foreign offices. By the time the war was over the camels died and some were stolen. Others escaped into the desert, and even today a hoary wild camel, white with age, terrifies Sunday newspaper feature writers into writing something about it. Very likely the ones which didn't go to the desert swam back to Egypt. Both reports are authenticated in the same degree.

* * *

The advent of the Civil War a few years later more or less ended the camel corps experiment. After the war all 66 camels were sold for \$31.00 apiece. Five of them wound up going on tour with the Ringling Brothers Circus, others roamed freely till their dying days. Feral camels, remnants of the original Camel Corps, continued to be sighted in the Southwest through the early 1900s, with the last reported sighting in 1941 near Douglas, Texas.

We invite you to try your hand at these questions – and yes, they are all true!

History Quiz Time! How Much Do You Know?

1. Rock Ledge Ranch, consisting of 93 acres between Bennett Brook and West Branch, was founded in 1916 by Dr. T. O. Glenn, E.L. Jones, and Walter G. Hall for the following enterprise:

- a. *Trophy deer hunting*
- b. *Breeding trotter horses for the local race track*
- c. *Raising pedigree hogs for market*
- d. *A health and wellness resort*

2. An article in the Bradford Era in 1893 offered a good way to prevent bee stings. It suggested:

- a. *Holding your breath so that the sting could not penetrate your skin.*
- b. *Dab crude oil on your wrist. Bees hate the smell.*
- c. *When a bee comes near you, wave your hands around in a circle until the bee becomes disoriented.*
- d. *Make a buzzing noise. Bees will think it's another bee and stay away.*

3. In 1910, a man began attacking women in various hotels and apartment houses in the city for an unusual reason, but ceased his activities when a woman named Maude Skinner fired a pistol at him when he approached her. What did the police name this intruder?

- a. *Jack the Hugger*
- b. *The Petroleum Pest*
- c. *Bradford Bounder*
- d. *Creeping Charlie*

4. Eight polar bears arrived by train to perform in a vaudeville show at the Grand Theater in February, 1912, but the show was cancelled because:

- a. *One of the bears escaped, only to be captured on Boylston Street.*
- b. *The owner of the bears became ill with appendicitis.*
- c. *There was a law against 'foreign' animals performing in Bradford.*
- d. *Too many people were afraid of that many bears in one place.*

5. In 1928, Dunn's Cigar store at 163 Main Street was asked by the Bradford Era how many cigars it sold in a month. The answer was:

- a. *150 cigars*
- b. *300 cigars*
- c. *1000 cigars*
- d. *5600 cigars*

6. The Bradford High School yearbook wasn't always called "The Barker." Several other names were used in the 1920s. Which was NOT a Bradford High School year book name?

- a. *The Blue and White*
- b. *The Senior Yearbook*
- c. *The Tunungwant*
- d. *The Owler*

7. In 1923, a new high school building was proposed. It was finally built and opened in September 1925 on Interstate Parkway, but at first there were several other locations considered. Which was one of the proposed locations?

- a. The old Bradford Cemetery on Kennedy Street
- b. At the intersection of Bolivar Drive and East Main Street
- c. At the end of Race Street (Zippo Manufacturing there now)
- d. At the old circus grounds (now UPB athletic fields)

8. Job Moses, who is credited with drilling the first successful oil well in the area (and has a memorial located across from Bylle Lanes Bowling) earned his initial fortune in a totally different manner. What did Job Moses do before he struck oil and began the Bradford Oil Boom?

- a. *He made and sold wooden bicycle tires.*
- b. *He invented a vacuum cleaner*
- c. *He sold patent medicines*
- d. *He was an evangelist preacher.*

9. In January 1931, a soup kitchen was opened on Pine Street to help feed the poor and unemployed during the Depression. How many people were served from January to June, the five months that the 'kitchen' was open?

- a. *19,753 people*
- b. *25,259 people*
- c. *45,387 people*
- d. *87,957 people*

And now, the Answers!

1. C. Raising pedigree hogs for market. The new enterprise purchased 93 acres, and bought registered Berkshire swine. While a breeding house (1000 x 26 feet) was built, it is unknown if the ranch ever really went into business.
2. A. Holding your breath so that the sting could not penetrate your skin. Again, not sure if this would really work. Why don't you try it and let us know?
3. A. Jack the Hugger. 'Jack' would run up to women and hug them, usually at night time when they were walking home or in the hallway of boarding houses or hotels. He was never identified and ceased his activities after Maude took a pot shot at him.
4. B. The owner of the polar bears, Ernest Alber, became ill with appendicitis and was taken to Bradford hospital. The bears were housed in a local barn until Alber was well enough to travel again.
5. D. Hard to imagine, but this little cigar store sold an average of 5600 cigars a month. Now, that's smoking!
6. D. The Oowler. While the Bradford High School athletic teams are named "Owls" (so named by Johnny Nelson, Era sports writer, when the football team was the first in the area to get lights on the playing field thus being able to play at night, like "owls") the yearbook was never called the Oowler. The yearbook was named "The Barker" in 1928. It's been that name ever since.
7. A. The old Bradford Cemetery on Kennedy Street was considered as the perfect spot for the new high school for several reasons: it was close to the main business district, the cemetery was going to be moved anyway, and it was affordable. It was later determined that the area was too small and had no potential for further expansion.
8. Moses sold patent medicines, and made a fortune by selling **American Medicinal Oil**, advertised as a cure-all but was in actuality crude oil from Kentucky, packaged in a glass bottle with a fancy label and **Sir James Clarke's Female Pills**. Moses' female medicine was sold all over the east coast for almost \$8 a bottle but pills were later identified – and banned - by various state Boards of Health as abortion pills. He went on to make even more money from drilling oil.
9. Total amount of meals served was an amazing 87,957 during those five months. Total expense was \$6,186.17. All food and milk was donated, as well as the gas to help run the stoves, electricity to run the lights, soup bones from local meat markets, bread from local bakeries, grocers donated groceries, and local organizations donated money. A huge success.

WHAT HAPPENED IN 1915?

Locally

In May 1915, the YWCA was founded; in June, 1915; the Kendall Creek Post Office was closed, and in the same month, the cornerstone of the new Knights of Columbus building was laid; Beacon Light Mission burned on December 30, 1915. The Community Mausoleum was dedicated up on Oak Hill Cemetery in April 1915; the Rev. William Coonan of St. Bernard's Catholic Church died after 38 years as priest in November 1915.

Nationally

The RMS *Lusitania* is sunk by a German U-boat, killing 1,198 on May 7, 1915. In January 1915, The United States House of Representatives rejects a proposal to give women the right to vote. The one millionth Ford automobile rolls off the assembly line. The cost of a first class stamp was 2 cents. The Liberty Bell traveled by train from Philadelphia to the Panama-Pacific International Exposition in San Francisco at the request of 500,000 California school children. D. W. Griffith's silent film "The Birth of a Nation" opens at Clune's Auditorium in Los Angeles - first 12-reel film in America on February 8, 1915. In March, 1915 Typhoid Mary [Mary Mallon] is arrested and returned to quarantine on North Brother Island, New York after spending five years evading health authorities and causing several further outbreaks of typhoid. "Of Human Bondage" by William Somerset Maugham, published. Woodrow Wilson becomes first US President to attend a World Series game on October 9, 1915.

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