



# The Inkwell

The Newsletter of the Bradford Landmark Society

November 2016

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November can be a dreary month. Lots of rain, cooler, and nearly all of the trees have lost their leaves. Most of us look forward to Thanksgiving and then Christmas.

But history has been made in November, too. For example, the Bradford Army Navy Supply store on West Washington Street opened in November 1921. One wonders if they were selling used WWI equipment. The contract to build the Marilla Reservoir was awarded to William Hanley in November 1898. The 'eternal flame' which used to burn in Veterans Square, was dedicated and lit on November 10, 1969 by local veteran organizations. Pennzoil officials announced a purchase price of \$7.45 per barrel, an increase of \$1, for Bradford Pennsylvania Grade crude oil, the highest posted price for crude oil in this country during the 20th century. That happened in November 1973. The public square on Bradford's Main Street was renamed Veterans Square in November 1954.

A polo match, the first since 1931, was held at the Valley Hunt Club in November 1963. Bradford's four banks mailed Christmas Club checks amounting to \$1,191,890 to nearly 8,000 participants in the 1977 annual holiday savings. In November 1981, Bradford Area School Board approved the purchase of a Commodore computer system from Blumenthal's of Olean, NY at a price of \$5,334 for instruction in word processing and accounting functions. The county began 1995 in a financial shambles, but will end the year "in a very good, sound fiscal position," according to Commissioner Harrijane Hannon. The 53rd annual Kiwanis Kapers, titled "Rumor Has It," directed by Barbara Pederson and produced by Shane Oschman and Pat Ryan, was presented at Bradford High School Auditorium in November 2010 to receptive crowds. The hotly contested 2004 November presidential race brought out 62 percent of registered voters in McKean County. In 2013, Bradford geared up for the fifth annual Christmas parade down Main Street.

And in 1879, Patrick Brady, a Pine Street tailor, becomes a maniac from overwork. I am sure that we can all relate.

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## **New at the Landmark!**



Much thanks to Lacey Love, Bradford's librarian (she's been here two years already!), who recently donated this cabinet to the Landmark Society. "When we decided to get rid of it, I immediately thought of the Landmark" Lacey told me, and we are glad she did.

While we couldn't find the exact name of it anywhere on the Internet – we're just calling it a cabinet - its solid quarter-sawn oak, with heavy brass rollers, originally used in the library to store over-sized books, such as atlases. We estimate it to date from the 1940s.

The Landmark is using it to store our own oversize books, the Sanborn maps.

We puzzled over how to move it for awhile – you can imagine the weight, with solid oak sides, top and bottom with eight metal rollers – but quite by accident we found out that the rollers were removable by sliding out brass pins on either side. Once we took out the rollers, the weight was manageable, and my son Bill Costik and I hoisted it up into the back of my Subaru, and were off to the Landmark. We found the perfect spot for it in our middle room.

Now, getting those rollers back inside the correct spots in the cabinet was a challenge but we persevered, and soon filled it with books. It really makes a difference and we appreciate the Bradford Area Public Library donating this to the Landmark. Thanks again!

## **Thank you to our volunteers**

It's been a busy summer and spring. The Crook Farm School program, the Creative Women Workshop, the Crook Farm Country Fair all required hours of volunteer time. Thanks to all of you, and keep next year's calendar open, because we'll do it all again!

## **Fall Back! Regular Time Begins this Sunday, November 6**

Benjamin Franklin takes the honor (or the blame, depending on your view of the time changes) for coming up with the idea to reset clocks in the summer months as a way to conserve energy. By moving clocks forward, people could take advantage of the extra evening daylight rather than wasting energy on lighting. At the time, Franklin was ambassador to Paris and so wrote a witty letter to the Journal of Paris in 1784, rejoicing over his "discovery" that the sun provides light as soon as it rises.

Most of the United States and Canada observe DST on the same dates. But of course, there are exceptions. Hawaii and Arizona are the two U.S. states that don't observe daylight saving time, though Navajo Nation, in northeastern Arizona, does follow DST, according to NASA.

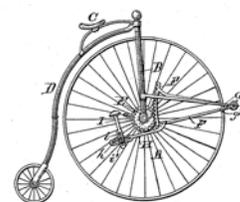
## Inventors Among Us

Thomas Edison said it best, perhaps: *To invent, you need a good imagination and a pile of junk.*

There is no denying the Bradfordians are a clever bunch. Some of us, though, are cleverer than others, and these are the people who became inventors – and took their inventions to the next level by patenting them. A search on Google patents will show that over 3,000 patents have been awarded to people from Bradford.

As you might imagine, here in the oil fields of Pennsylvania, there are quite a few patents awarded to devices for industrial use. But many of the inventions, especially from the old days, were created to fulfill a need that no longer exists in modern times. To us they seem odd; possibly even weird; and certainly unusual. But you have to give these intrepid inventors credit – they had a good imagination. Whether or not they also had a pile of junk is your opinion.

William Hambly decided to invent an adaptation for a bicycle for short people. Patented on Dec. 18, 1888 (Patent No. 290576), it was “to be used by persons short in stature, and to enable such persons to drive larger wheels than heretofore, and to permit of the largest possible leverage upon the driving-wheel, whereby the bicycle is made of more universal use in larger sizes and more easily adapted to the elevations and roughness of the common roadway.”

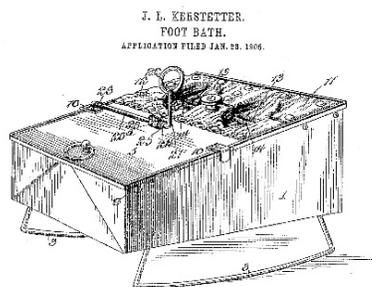
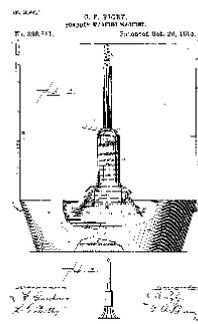


Patent No. 494,590, dated April 4, 1893 was an invention that combined both a suitcase and a place to sleep when you arrived at your destination. Augustus Newell: “The object of my invention is to so construct a trunk or chest that it will unfold and rest directly upon the floor, ground, or other support, the same constructed in a manner to be very firm and strong when folded up and to give the greatest possible amount of length when unfolded.” When unfolded, his invention formed a single or double cot or bed which was at the same time adapted to receive clothing for transportation.

James Leasure invented a better hotel register, in November 1886. His invention related to improvements in that class of hotel-registers in which a sheet of paper, upon which the name, residence, & company is recorded, wound from one roller to another. Not sure if this ever became popular.

Saba E. Moore was granted a patent in August 1909 for a design that kept skirt bands from creeping up upon the corset. Don't you hate it when that happens?

Clark F. Rigby of Bradford, invented what he termed the “Pounder Washing Machine.” (No. 328,811. Patented Oct. 20, 1885.) Using an ordinary washing tub, the device was fashioned to its sides with a special frame containing spring which counterbalanced the weight of the pounder, making it much easier to push dirty wet clothes up and down, similar to today's automatic washers.

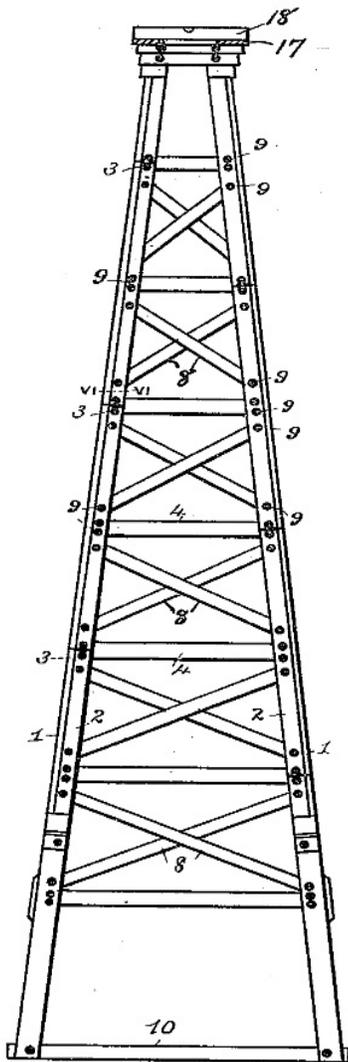


A new and useful Foot-Bath. (No. 794026. July 4, 1905.) was invented by James Luther Kerstetter. “The object of the present invention is to improve the construction of foot-bath apparatus and to provide a simple, inexpensive, and efficient device designed, primarily, for treating feet for various ailments such as rheumatism, gout, and the like.” The receptacle was rocked by the feet to agitate warm water back and forth over the feet as an automatically-oscillating heating device beneath the tub or receptacle kept the temperature uniform.

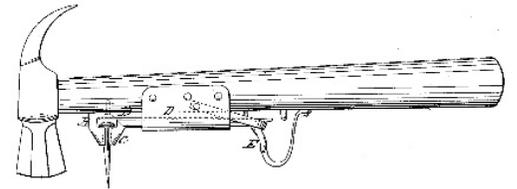
Ernest Laverne Appleby just wanted to keep his umbrella from being stolen. So he invented an umbrella lock. "This invention relates to umbrella-locks, and more particularly to portable locks; and it has for its object to provide a simple, cheap, and effective construction in which the locks may be adjusted to receive and firmly hold umbrellas having different diameters when closed and in which there is provided means for easily and firmly securing the lock to a post, rail, or other stationary object to prevent stealing of the lock with the umbrella." Future inventors used his idea to make bicycle locks. (No. 662,334. Patented Nov. 20, 1900.)

No. 342,638. Patented May 25, 1886. Perry Ross saw a need to keep your socks up and kids' underwear from falling down and invented a clasp "suspending stockings, drawers, children's underwear, and other portions of the garments, and which is provided with a blind button and devices which clasp the garment against opposite sides of the button, so that it is impossible for the clasp to work loose."

Perry Ross (apparently a man who was fascinated with different ways to keep articles of clothing secure) also invented a way to keep rubber overshoes on his feet. (No. 347,066. Aug. 10, 1886.) This invention provided an attachment for rubber shoes so that after the shoe was placed upon the foot its rear top edge could be contracted above the top of the heel of the wearer's foot, so as to prevent the rubber overshoe from coming off the foot.



One of the earliest patents in Bradford's history was granted to Ransom Green (No. 84,351. Nov. 24, 1868). He invented a better hammer and nail-holder, to provide a more convenient nail-holding device. It consisted of "the arrangement on the handle, near the hammer, of a fixed and a sliding clamping-jaw, the latter being provided with a spring, for causing it to clamp the nail, and a thumb-piece for retracting it."



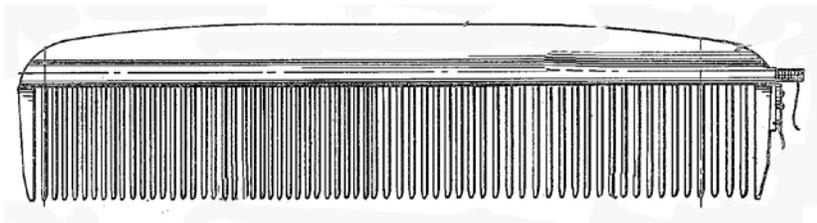
Simon Freeman invented a coffee pot strainer. (No. 601,955. April 5, 1898.) The invention provided an auxiliary strainer which had two straining-surfaces, each of which could be readily cleaned, and whereby, when the auxiliary strainer was used in connection with the coffee-pot, the liquid which was poured from the pot was perfectly clear.

George Corbett boasted that "my invention relates to improvements in towers in general, but more particularly it has reference to those towers or derricks used in connection with rigs for drilling and pumping wells; and it has for its object a portable derrick or tower that will be strong, durable, and inexpensive, and one whose parts may be prepared complete and ready for use at a factory or shop and shipped to the field in a knocked down and compact form and readily put together without the assistance of a skilled rig-builder." (No. 428,462. May 20, 1890.)

## These are a few more Bradford inventions – quite inventive!

- George Edmunds invented an improvement on regular horseshoes in 1883.
- Theodore Schirmacher invented a better oil can to be used in lighting oil lamps, in 1893.
- In 1921, John Cullinan was granted a patent for an ‘amusement device’ which, he claimed, afforded “a means of amusement, recreation, or pastime diversion which is unique and fascinating, especially to the young, while it is not without attraction for the more elderly.” It looked very much like a small wooden top.
- J. W. Hilton and R. Green invented a better axe head in 1868.
- Albert O’Dell liked to roller skate and invented a different kind of wheel for the skates, in 1886.
- Louise Bovaird invented a simple way to paint venetian blinds (the metal ones) in 1963.
- In June of 1936, Frank Hornquist was granted a patent for designing unique guard railings used on the platforms of sleds or wagons to prevent small children from falling out, and to provide an exceptionally simple and inexpensive construction readily adjustable for use with platforms of various widths.
- Joseph S. Bennett thought up a flight position indicator for pilots, using an indicator comprising an element hung by a strap carried across and in contact with the person of the pilot of the aircraft. “From actual test it has been found that indicators thus arranged and operated are neither irritating nor nerve racking in any way.” It was patented in June 1930.
- Holy Smokes! In October 1933 Milton Green invented “a light, strong and inexpensive "cigarette maker” which will permit the packing of the tobacco to suit the individual user’s fancy.”
- Ralph Moran invented a new, original, and ornamental Design for Coin Bank, commonly called the “bubble bank” in 1947. These can still be found on Ebay.
- My favorite, though, is the Fountain Comb. Invented by Alfred Taborski in 1940, his improved comb had two sets of channels running along the spine of the comb, and feeding down into the hollow teeth. One channel could carry shampoo or medication, and the other carried water. One simply combed the Fountain comb through the scalp.

Taborski did note that “It should be understood that the device will lend itself particularly well for use by a person taking a bath. If the device is used under these conditions, the container may be hung on shower curtain supporting rod so that adequate flow is assured.” And a lot less mess, I would assume.



Taborski eventually ended up in Buffalo, NY – but not before he invented a toothbrush that acted very much like the Fountain Comb (it also dispersed toothpaste and water through its bristles) and several variations on interchangeable bowties.

Interested in learning more about Bradford inventions? Search “Google Advanced Patent Search” and when it opens up, type “Bradford, Pennsylvania” in the ‘exact phrase’ box. You’ll spend hours learning about all Bradford inventions. And who knows? You might even find your own invention there someday! Good Luck!

November is upon us.  
Thanksgiving's nearly here.  
I've never been more thankful than  
the way I feel this year.

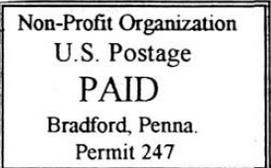
I'm thankful we have apple pie.  
I'm thankful we have beans.  
I'm thankful we have mashed potatoes,  
yams, and salad greens.

But, most of all, I'm thankful that  
my future isn't murky.  
My family's vegetarian  
and I am their pet turkey.

--Kenn Nesbitt



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