

ON THE LAZY BENCH

Penn Brad Oil Museum strives to preserve the history of the Bradford Oil Field and the unique culture that developed along with it. The Museum also honors the people and their families whose lives contributed to making Bradford the "Highgrade Oil Metropolis of the World."

A Quarterly Newsletter

Vol. 11 – No. 4 – Autumn 2025

SUSAN GOULD, RECORDING SECRETARY AND LONG-TIME BOARD MEMBER, RESIGNS

By Patty Popiel Lehosky, PBOM Recording Secretary

Penn Brad Oil Museum has lost a much-valued Board member, Susan Gould.

Susan was born in Bradford and her biological mother passed away during childbirth. She was adopted by a maternal great aunt and great uncle, Frank H. and Lillian Burrell Gibson. She also had a brother who passed away. She has five generations of family involved in the Pennsylvania oil industry. Susan attended Bradford Area High School and graduated from Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky, with a Bachelors Degree in psychology and bible. She worked for a psychiatric hospital in Lexington, Kentucky, and following that, was employed at Bradford Hospital for 23 years.

In 1995, she was approached by Jim Bryner, the founder of the Penn Brad Oil Museum, to volunteer. At the time, the museum consisted of a toolhouse and a tractor barn with a few items.

Susan soon held the positions of both Treasurer and President simultaneously, the latter from 2003 through 2014. Her initial volunteer duties included giving tours when paid employee, Sherri Schulze, was not available.

Susan loved the museum because her dad was an oil producer involved in his family's business, J.H. Gibson Oil Co. She'd often listen to her father and his brothers, Jim and Norman Gibson, talk about the oil industry. It was a time when companies' employees were treated like family.

During Susan's tenure, two tornadoes caused rebuilding of the museum. Texas oil people donated monies for rebuilding. Susan, along with PBOM's then Vice President, Fred Fesenmyer, co-signed a \$65,000 loan in 2016 supporting one addition to the museum. Through its revenue stream, the museum was able to pay off most of the loan, with the final balance being covered by a generous award from a local memorial foundation in 2019.

In 2015, Susan and Sherri Huston Schulze were honored with the

PBOM's Yellow Dog Award for their contributions to the museum.

For years, Susan has supported the museum by organizing our inventory, plus researching and writing newsletter articles.

She enjoyed mission trips to Columbia twice and Paraguay four times. She has worked the elections, serving as Board Majority Inspector. Her current plans are to finish the PBOM inventory and continue to study Hebrew and photography. Susan has been fluent in American Sign Language since attending college. She is the proud momma of one dog and two cats.

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PENN BRAD OIL MUSEUM

901 South Avenue - Bradford, PA 16701
Email: pennbrad.oilmuseum@yahoo.com
Website: penn-bradoilmuseum.org

Phone: 814-362-1955

Open:

Thurs. & Friday
9 AM to 4 PM
Saturday
9 AM to 2 PM

Admission Cost
Adults - \$6.00
Seniors - \$5.00

Children (under 12) - Free
Active Military / Family - Free



****Susan Gould continued**

I didn't have much of an opportunity to get to know Susan because I served on the Board for only about a year prior to her resignation. My impression was that she is a beautiful lady with a kind soul and a strong, long-term dedication to the museum. My opinion has not changed since meeting with her several times to gather information on this article.



Photo by Mickey Clark

Susan scoops up sloppy joes at the 2022 Ice Cream Social

Sherri Schulze wrote about Susan, "I went to the museum one day to do a research project of my own and met with Mr. [Jim] Bryner. The subject went rapidly from my project to if I could give tours. The first person he introduced me to was Susan Gibson Perry [now Gould], who rapidly became my best friend. We had so much in common between oil and family, it was a team. I have never met a person so in love with the industry, area, people, and history as Susan. She did it all in her time and always topnotch in execution of duties. Born into the oil industry and from a multitude of family in the industry, she was exposed to all aspects from birth to sharing her knowledge with so many anywhere she found an opportunity."

***Susan sharing her knowledge during Derrick Day 2023***

"Sharing is her best attribute whether stories, dropping the squibb at a shot on her Father's well, rhymes, recipes, encouragement, support, aid, and direction, she doesn't hold back. Whether or not you agree, she shared her beliefs and knowledge of our Savior and Creator with those who gave their lives to build this most necessary industry to the betterment of the lives of all she has met, oily and otherwise. She is my friend and teacher, home, church, oil patch."

Most recent past President, Tom Miller, wrote, "I don't quite remember just when it was, but I joined the Fireside Pumpers back when we would sometimes have as many as 75 oilmen in attendance at a breakfast. In those days, Jim Bryner would draft members to volunteer at the museum, and I did so. When I was driving by on the way to pumping one of my leases, I would stop at the museum if for nothing else than just to visit. One day when I was making a repair to the old standard rig, Susan, who was President at the time, asked me if I would like to join the board of directors. I accepted her offer and served with her for many years. Susan has become a close friend to this day. She is a wonderful person of faith who has served not just the museum but humanity in many ways with dedication and humility."

The Museum Board wishes to thank Susan for her many dedicated years to the museum. We are grateful she has agreed to continue volunteering at PBOM with projects of her choosing.

***Susan & Isabelle serving ice cream at the 2024 Social***

The museum wants to thank everyone for their visits and support this past season. We look forward to seeing you in the Spring. We will open for the 2026 season on April 2.

Yellow Dog Award Dinner - October 29, 2025

By Patty Popiel Lehosky, Recording Secretary, with Photos by Francie Long, Museum Manager

The refinery in Bradford, Pennsylvania, was founded in 1881 by Eli Loomis, William Willis, and Robert Childs, and named the Bradford Oil Refinery. In 1902, it was faced with legal issues, including bankruptcy, and was saved in 1905 by Otto Koch, who rebuilt it, making the oil a leading motor brand. In 1913, it was incorporated as Kendall Refinery. In 1943, the company merged with Witco, becoming the Kendall Witco Refinery. Sun Oil Company purchased the Kendall brand and all product formulations in 1996. In 1997, Harry Halloran, Jr., purchased the refinery for \$1, and it became the American Refining Group, Inc., also known as ARG, to the present day.



ARG employment currently numbers more than 340. By Harry Halloran's purchase of the refinery, he saved and increased many well-paying job opportunities in our area. He was known as a hands-on owner, commonly found throughout the refinery dressed in coveralls. He was a dedicated philanthropist and was recognized as being kind.

Halloran Philanthropies was founded by Harry Halloran, Jr., Adriana Fernandes-Halloran, and Tony Carr. It supports innovators, change makers, and stakeholders by backing partners who need funding for their endeavors. They have gifted hundreds of thousands of dollars to the area in support of local education and entrepreneurship. In addition, ARG donates thousands of dollars focused on education, economic development, human services, and health care.

Harry Halloran, Jr., passed away December 18, 2021, at home in Villanova, PA, surrounded by his family.

We are forever grateful Mr. Halloran chose to pursue our local refinery as a venture, and that his philanthropy continues to benefit our area indefinitely. On October 29, 2025, we presented his sons, Neil and Brian, with the Yellow Dog Award, the acknowledgment of their father's major contributions to our area's economy and oil history.



Matt Kropf presents the award to Brian & Neil Halloran

The ceremony and dinner were held at the University of Pittsburgh at Bradford's Muikayama University Room in the Frame-Westerberg Commons.

We would like to thank our Entree Sponsors: American Refining Group, Inc.; University of Pittsburgh at Bradford; McCracken Energy Services; our Appetizer Sponsors: Belser Hale Inc. Excavating; Joyce Cline; Patty Lehosky; and our Flowers Sponsors: Isabelle Champlin; Worth W. Smith Hardware.



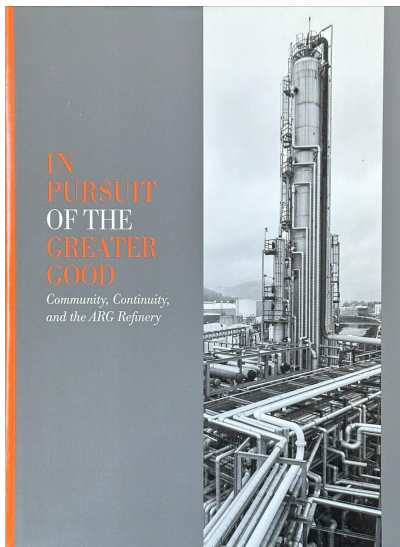
Cindy & Dale Smith and Stan Pecora enjoy the ceremony

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Flower Arrangements were by Graceful Blooms. The Model T Bar and Grill donated goods.

Although no longer in print, you may be able to locate a copy of the book *In Pursuit of the Greater Good: Community, Continuity and the ARG Refinery*. It was written by Beth and William Sulit Kephart and is a story of the ARG part of Harry Halloran, Jr.'s, life.



Museum Improvements Underway Ahead of Spring Reopening

by Brenda Fish, President

We are excited to share several recent improvements made to the museum.

A new conference table has been added to the library, creating a more functional and welcoming space for meetings, research, and educational activities. (see photo on page 6)

We have also installed a new television that will be used to share information and short films highlighting the rich history of the oilfield.



In addition to interior updates, exterior maintenance has been completed. The outside of the building and all walkways have been thoroughly pressure washed, giving the museum a fresh and well-maintained appearance for our visitors.

These updates are just the beginning. We have many more improvement projects planned as we continue working toward our spring reopening, and we look forward to welcoming the community back to an enhanced museum experience.



Photo by Francie Long

One of several unique donations to the museum this year.



Photo by Francie Long

Nicely branded merchandise added to the gift shop.

Fireside Pumpers Talks in September, October, & November

by Isabelle Champlin & Patty Popiel Lehosky

“From Well to Market at ARG” was presented at the September Fireside Pumpers breakfast meeting by Brenda Fish, the regional sales manager at American Refining Group, accompanied by Dave Cook, the crude oil relationship manager. Brenda Fish is also the current president of the Penn Brad Oil Museum, and Dave Fish is also the vice-president of the Friends of Drake Well Museum, and both are active in many industry organizations and community boards.



They explained the history of ARG (the longest continuously operating refinery in North America) and pointed out the uniqueness of Pennsylvania “sweet” crude oil which is low in sulfur and asphalts. ARG currently has 425 crude oil suppliers in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio and West Virginia; more than 340 employees; and over 120 refined products useful in numerous industries.

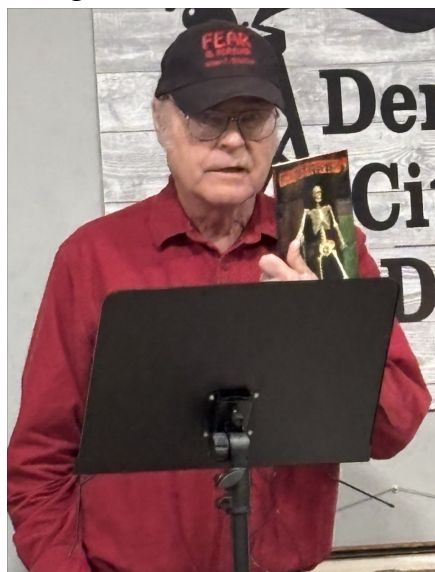
ARGuard lubricants include specialty engine oils, hydraulic and drill oils and wireline lubricants, while their Kensol brand includes drilling mud fluids and well de-paraffining solvents. The Kendex brand provides base oils, extracts and resins, and different Kenwax paraffin and petrolatum

formulations are used in many applications.

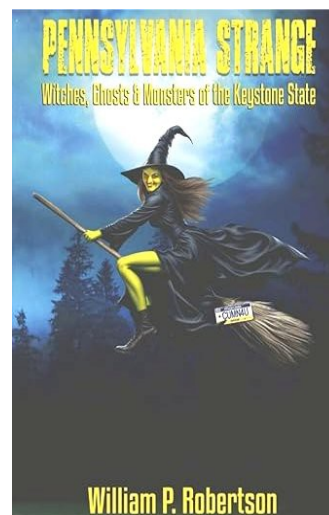
ARG’s research and development laboratories continually do quality control testing on ARG products. The labs are also used to provide customers with individually tailored solutions to specific problems, a major source of pride and a focus of ARG’s mission.

Another source of pride is that 25% of ARG’s profits go to Halloran Philanthropies, which provides community grants mainly used in western Pennsylvania, western New York state and eastern Ohio. This month’s Fireside Pumpers meeting was, appropriately, sponsored by ARG.

On October 20, at the Fireside Pumpers breakfast, local author William “Bill” P. Robertson made his presentation about *Pennsylvania Strange: Witches, Ghosts & Monsters of the Keystone State*, one of his many published books. It is among his collection of eerie stories told from facts he has gathered while visiting 57 locales throughout the state.



Our apologies go out to Bill as the background noise was elevated at the diner, causing him to cut his talk short. Thankfully, he remained afterwards to answer questions and provide us with a selection of his books for purchase.



Bill was born in Bradford, PA, and graduated from Mansfield State College with a B.S. in English. He has worked in factories, taught high school English, and run a house painting business. He began freelancing his short stories, poetry, audio books, articles, and novels in 1978, and they have appeared in over 500 magazines worldwide. Some of his work has been co-authored.

He is a Civil War re-enactor, follows the Pittsburgh Pirates, and takes spooky photos of area desolate mountains.

Credit for this article is given to information contained in Bill’s websites and books. I encourage you to check out Bill’s following websites and Facebook page to learn more about this author dedicated to writing and research.

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www.bucktailsandbroomsticks.com

www.youtube.com/@williamp.robertson1884

www.thehorrorhaven.com

This month's meeting was sponsored by Worth W. Smith Co. and Wright Monument Works, Inc.

In November, museum manager Francie Long gave a "Year in Review" for the last Fireside Pumpers program of 2025. Her 45-slide Power Point presentation highlighted our activities from the April 3 opening through the closing on October 31, especially the spring Ice Cream Social, summertime Derrick Day, and autumnal Golf Scramble events.



Many photos from the Yellow Dog Award Dinner in October and various postings from the museum's Facebook page were also shown.

She showed our many upgrades, such as new signage and new furniture, our recent donations such as an oil worker lunch pail and a presentation gavel, as well as new merchandise for the gift shop.

There were approximately 750 visitors at the museum this past year from all around the country and from Canada, Australia, China, the Philippines, Hungary, Italy, Denmark, Japan, and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. Our visitors included motorcycle clubs, Chapel Ridge senior citizens, teens from Cosmos' Lounge, and even Tullah Hanley's niece. (If you don't recognize the name of Tullah Hanley, Bradford's flamboyant ex-exotic dancer and philanthropist, check out her biography at the St. Bonaventure University Archives: <http://archives.sbu.edu/hanley/tulla.htm>)

Our generous sponsors for this month were Howard Drilling, Inc. and Kessel Construction, Inc.

PBOM Receives Grant

by Brenda Fish, President

Penn Brad Oil Museum is proud to announce it has been awarded a grant from ARG's Our Legacy Fund to help preserve the rich oil history of our area and to support significant renovations within our library. This funding will allow for the restoration and modernization of multiple historical displays, ensuring that future generations can learn from and appreciate the industry that helped shape our community.

The grant will be used to upgrade existing exhibits, develop new educational displays, and enhance archival preservation efforts. These improvements will strengthen the museum's role as a community hub for local history and learning.

This grant is a tremendous opportunity to honor and protect the legacy of our region's oil heritage. It allows us not only to preserve the past, but also to create engaging, informative experiences for visitors of all ages.



Francie Long is presented a check by Jim Kelly and John Landes at the Legacy Fund dinner held at the Bradford Club in September



The grant has already been used to purchase a new conference table, chairs, and credenza for the library. Exhibit updates have begun with the reorganization of several displays.

Photo by Francie Long

Board Of Directors

The Penn Brad Oil Museum Board of Directors is as follows:

- Brenda Fish, President
- Fred Fesenmyer, Vice President
- Patty Lehosky, Recording Secretary
- Joyce Cline, Treasurer
- Isabelle Champlin, Corresponding Secretary
- Jeff Brewer
- William Pantuso
- Matt Kropf
- Stanley Pecora
- Chip McCracken
- Sherri Schulze
- Marsha McCracken
- Dale Smith



Memorial & Honoring Bricks

In Memory Of: _____ **Placed By:** _____
 John Reetz Sr and Jr Bradley Reetz
 Vic Robinson Elisha Kasinskas

Engraved personalized paving bricks can be purchased to surround the base of the flagpole. The bricks can honor people who have been involved in the oil industry or be used as a memorial to a deceased person. Bricks can also be purchased personally to show your support for the museum.

The Museum would like to give a heartfelt thank you to Jim Frick for placing the bricks under the flagpole. Joyce says that he has been "super dependable" and always sends her photos after each brick is planted.



Remember or Honor a Loved One with a Gift to the Penn Brad Oil Museum

Memorials received after December 4 will appear in the next newsletter. Memorials are available by calling 814-368-6824, or by mailing the coupon below to: Penn Brad Oil Museum, P.O. Box 163, Bradford, PA 16701. If ordering a brick, please call the number for more details or print out the order form available on our website. A notice will be sent to the recipient. Penn Brad Oil Museum is a 501(c)(3) entity and all donations are tax deductible.

Clip and Mail Coupon

Memorial/Honoring Gifts	Check one: In Memory of _____	Name _____
	To Honor _____	
Amount Enclosed \$ _____		Send acknowledgment to:
Donor's name _____		Name _____
Donor's address _____		Address _____

A Unique Donation to PBOM



A special item was given to the museum in September. It is a framed wooden gavel and block handmade by J. O. Osadnick, the head of the procurement division of Witco and presented in 1975 to William Wishnick, then president of Witco Chemical Company, once the owners of ARG refinery here in Bradford, PA. The plaque explains "this gavel and block has been made from an original derrick timber located in Oil Creek Valley near Titusville, PA. It was erected less than two years after Col. E. L. Drake "struck oil" at Titusville on August 27, 1859". We thank John Osadnick, the maker's grandson, for this generous donation.

[Visit our Facebook page for more articles, photos, and updates. User name: Penn Brad Oil Museum.](#)

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