

# 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. 8 – No. 4 – Autumn 2022

## ARG Celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

by Susan Gould, Board Secretary



Photo by Tom Huntoon

In November 1996, Witco Chemical Corp's Kendall and Amalie Division was sold to Sun Oil Company and there was much concern about the future of our refinery, which had been in continuous operation since 1881. However, in 1997 the refinery was sold again, this time to Harry Halloran, and today American Refining Group is continuing the work of refining Penn Grade crude oil.

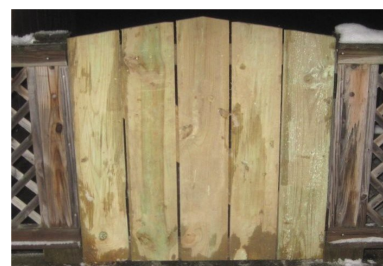
To celebrate this milestone, ARG personnel put together several events with past and present employees, suppliers, customers, partners, producers, and the Bradford community. On August 23, about 25 distributors, customers, and employees toured the Penn Brad Oil Museum, enjoying the new rig, Buffalo and Half-Breed Engines, and listening to President Tom Miller and Museum Manager Fran Bottone discuss the history of the Bradford Oil Field, which at one time produced 83% of the world's oil supply. Other events that week included refinery tours and the PA/NY Producer and Supplier Appreciation BBQ at Mystic Waters and Sporting Clays at the Bradford Gun Club.

Harry Halloran passed away in December 2021, but his family, including wife Kay and four sons, Neil, Brian, Kevin and Mark, were all present for the celebration. Neil Halloran has assumed the role of Chairman of the Board at ARG and we are assured that this refinery will continue into the future as a great asset to our community.



## New Gate for Safety

A new gate was recently added to the boardwalk of the museum. Fran Bottone, museum manager, built the wooden gate which can be closed and locked from the back door of the main building. The purpose is to keep errant visitors from wandering out onto the derrick and rig unaccompanied by museum personnel. This protects them from possible injury and the museum as well.



## PENN BRAD OIL MUSEUM

901 South Avenue - Bradford, PA 16701

Email: pennbrad.oilmuseum@yahoo.com

Web: penn-bradoilmuseum.org

Phone: 814-362-1955

Open: Wednesday to Friday

9 AM to 4 PM

Saturday

9 AM to 2 PM

Admission Cost:

Adults - \$5.00

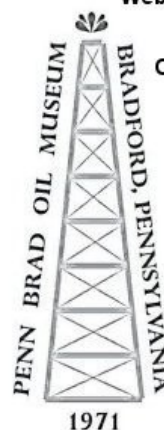
Seniors - \$4.50

Children (under 12) -

FREE

Active Military / Family -

FREE



## Fireside Pumpers Talks in September, October, November

by Isabelle Champlin, Corresponding Secretary  
with photos by Joyce Cline

With visual images and maps, Dr. Matt Kropf, the director of the Energy Institute at Pitt-Bradford, described the new George B. Duke Engineering and Information Technologies Building. The \$17.69 million project will be completed in January and is intended to positively impact economic development and collaboration throughout this region.



The building will include engineering labs, fabrication shops, maker spaces with rapid prototyping 3D machines, circuit and measurement labs including a wind tunnel, oscilloscopes and ultrasonic flaw detectors, metal fabricating stations with hydraulic presses and plasma cutters, and materials labs with compression and fatigue testers among many stress analysis machines. A virtual reality lab will have an 18-foot-high ceiling to accommodate sensors and cameras, and a SNAP (Systems, Networks And Projects) lab which can be used to create functional data operations centers.

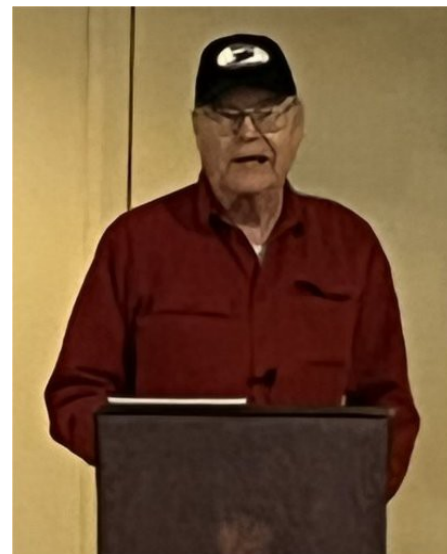
The innovative architectural design incorporates a centralized two-story atrium to be a collaborative commons area, to promote more team-based learning projects. In addition, the entire building is designed to reduce energy usage with, for example, a rooftop solar array which will be able to produce about 113,000 kWh/year.

Dr. Kropf also explained the new majors of Energy Engineering Technology and Mechanical Engineering Technology, which utilize hands-on experiences more than traditional engineering degrees require.

Bill Robertson, a local author of over 60 published books, explained his lifelong interest and many experiences with the supernatural world. He described several famous local ghost stories, including the Willowdale Cemetery ghost (which was covered by Buffalo TV in 1968), the "Lightning House" near the PA/NY state line, the roller-skating poltergeists of an old silk mill / skating rink, and haunted residences on High

Street and Derrick Road.

Ridgway's Halton Baby Cemetery, its graves decorated with children's toys, especially impressed him, as well as a 'spiritual assault' on the hillside of the Goose Hill Cemetery. His humorous anecdotes elicited many questions from his listeners.



Robertson recently published his fourth book in the guidebook series, *Ghosts Revisited*, which provides descriptions of, and directions to, about 30 sites in each book, all of which he has personally visited throughout western New York state and Pennsylvania. All four volumes are for sale in the museum's gift shop and on Amazon, or directly from the author at [buccobill@comcast.net](mailto:buccobill@comcast.net).

The final meeting of the 2022 Fireside Pumpers programs featured Fran Bottone, museum manager, presenting an overview of all the activities at the museum with over 100 Power Point photographs. The images were

of the volunteer work days, the Ice Cream Social opening event in April, Derrick Day in July (featuring the photos of Tom Huntoon and Angela Nuzzo), the Golubock Clay Shoot and Ironman Tournament in August, all seven previous Fireside Pumpers meetings, and Movie Night in November.



There were also pictures of construction projects like grass re-seeding and erosion control, the dedicated motorcycle parking area, the new flagpole and memorial brick installation, new highway signs, and the dismantling of a push-pull power on Seaward Avenue for eventual transport to the museum.

Excerpts from the museum’s Facebook page, photos of the museum newsletters, of the many special visitors and classic cars that visited during the year, and the new merchandise ordered for the gift shop were also shown.

Fran ended his review by reminding people that the museum’s gift shop will be open each Saturday until Christmas, from 9 am to 2 pm. And he announced that the museum will soon begin a search for a part-time assistant manager.



## Fireside Pumper's Breakfast

The Fireside Pumpers of the Penn Brad Oil Museum meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month for a breakfast buffet with a guest speaker, at Togi's Banquet Room, 412-422 East Main St, Bradford. The buffet begins at 7:30. A portion of the cost of the buffet goes toward museum improvements. The public is invited to attend. Announcements are published the Monday before each meeting in the Bradford Era and the Olean Times Herald.

### April 12, 2023

Jim Zoschg

*Invasive Species*

### May 10, 2023

Tom Frair

*The Music Mountain  
Historical Marker*

### June 14, 2023

Steve Appleby

*25 Years of the Eldred WWII  
Museum*

### July 12, 2023

Dr. Katie Zapel

*The Zippo Museum and Car*

### August 9, 2023

Ben Porkolab

*Elk Hunting & the Elk County  
Viewing Center*

### September 13, 2023

Steve Teachman

*Olean's Historic Treasures*

### October 11, 2023

Stan Pecora

*Review of Empire Oil*

### November 8, 2023

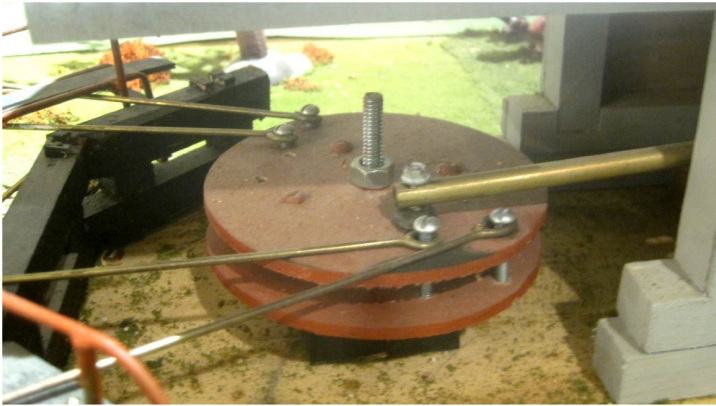
Fran Bottone

*The Year in Review*

## Salvaging a Piece of the Past

by Fran Bottone, Museum Manager

We here at the museum were recently made aware of an opportunity to recover one of the less common types of 'powers', known as a Push-Pull type. These Push-Pulls didn't use a traditional eccentric device, such as was used on the Direct Drive and Band Wheel types of powerhouses, but simply pushed a horizontal wheel one direction then pulled it the other, which then ran several traditional rod line jacks. Anyone who has seen our working powerhouse models here at the Penn Brad museum has seen a push-pull power in action.



Doug Wingard from Bradford Pipe and Supply gave us a call one day and told us that a young man named Austin Stewart, who owns the property on Seaward Avenue extension, would be willing to donate this equipment to the museum instead of scrapping it out. In late August, our board president Tom Miller, local historian Mike Fuoco, and myself, began to assess what it was going to take to get this 100+ year-old equipment loose from its moorings.



We revisited the site several evenings through autumn and after much blood, sweat, and tears, we

have it ready to be lifted off its foundations. This will require heavy equipment, as the machinery weighs collectively 5500 lbs.

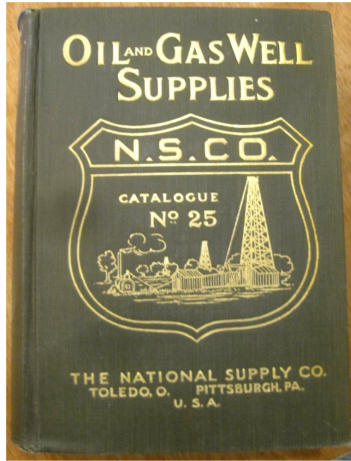


This machinery is being recovered for a future outdoor display here at Penn Brad, most likely at our new property north of the museum, and we will continue this project in the spring.

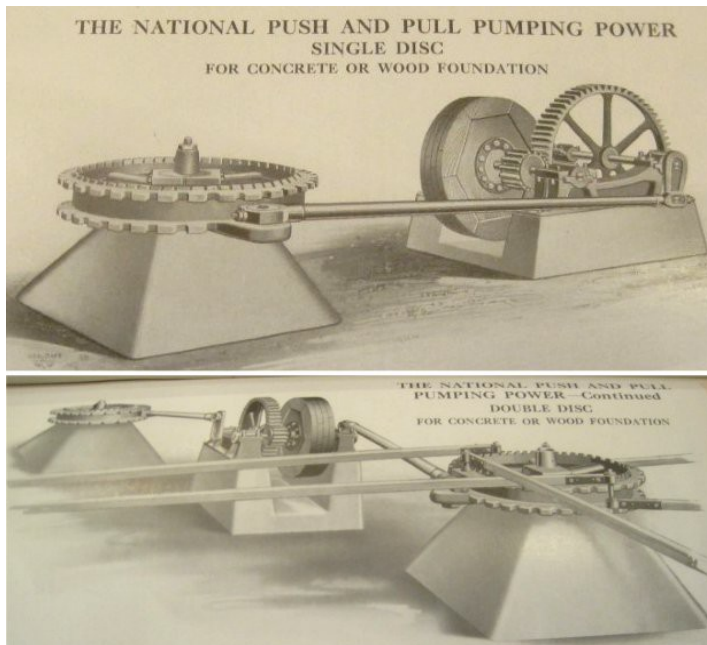


These powers were first patented in 1897 by Joseph J Kwis of Findley, Ohio, and were manufactured by several oil field supply companies of the day, including Bradford's own Bovaird & Seyfang, (the builder of this equipment.) These were still available in the Oil Well Supply Catalog as late as 1930. We estimate the age of this one to be from the 1920s.

The old half Breed gas engine that once ran this power was manufactured by the McDonald & Brennan company and is currently owned by local oil field restorationist Denny Griesbaum. One interesting footnote; a double version of this power was also available in the oil well supply catalogs.



These diagrams show both the single and double versions of the Push and Pull Pumping Power.



Thank you to Mike Fuoco for the technical specifications and patent information for this article.

### Oilfield Jargon

**Packer** : a piece of downhole equipment, consisting of a sealing device, a holding or setting device, and an inside passage for fluids, used to block the flow of fluids through the annular space between the tubing and the wall of the wellbore by sealing off the space between them.

## Overhaul Makes Kinley Library More Accessible

by Susan Gould, Museum Secretary

The library at the museum is undergoing an overhaul. We have a wide selection of books all donated by friends of our museum, including John Bulmer, who gave us a large group on petroleum engineering. Recent donations include five tubs of books by Scott Morgan of Kane and books owned by Sid Stahlman and donated by Sid's daughter and her husband, Sandy and Steve Mills. I am currently in the process of cataloging these new books.

At present, it is difficult to find a book quickly as they are not in any order. However, we plan to arrange the books in order of subject including biographies, area history, oil history, genealogy, water flooding, petroleum engineering, patents and more. Sherri Huston Schulze has been working on the patents and has acquired six 3-inch, 3-ring notebooks of patents that have come out of the Bradford Oil Field. We thank her for doing that difficult job.

For those of you who enjoy historical fiction, we have some of those, donated by Isabelle Champlin. We also have Bradford High School Barkers and a few Bradford City Directories.

Included in our recent donations is a book entitled "Oil on the Brain," a fun book that includes stories and anecdotes of life in oil country. One interesting biography is Ida Tarbell's book about John D. Rockefeller, Jr., which includes the story of his fight with Lewis Emery, Jr.

A card catalog will be available to quickly locate a book and by next spring a digital version of the collection will be available.



# Oil Well Willie

by Isabelle Champlin, Corresponding Secretary

Oil Well Willie was famous at one time, back when the petroleum industry was praised as being the lifeblood of American prosperity and industrial superiority. And back when cowboys and wildcatters were becoming the stereotypes for American individualism and entrepreneurship.

Oil Well Willie was a character on the Howdy Doody Show, the first nationally televised children's program in American television history. It was enormously popular, running for 13 years, from December 27, 1947 to September 24, 1960. The half-hour show was created by "Buffalo Bob" Smith, who was from Buffalo, NY. Besides marionettes like Howdy Doody, there were live characters like Clarabelle the clown and Princess Summerfall Winterspring. Oil Well Willie was one of the live characters and was played by Bill LeCornec, who also played the role of Chief Thunderthud (who made the phrase "Kowabunga" famous).

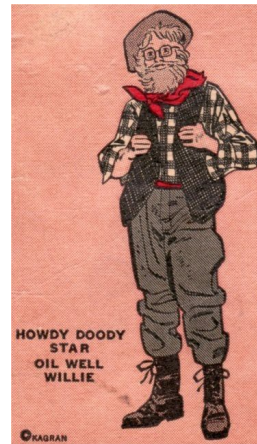


Hoody Doody memorabilia are more popular than ever and the original Howdy Doody puppet is now in the National Museum of American History in DC. Oil Well Willie is at the right in this insert from a 1951 "Howdy Doody Christmas Party" RCA record.

Oil Well Willie was similar to the "grizzled old-codger western sidekick" found in so many old Western movies and TV shows. An example would be Gabby Hayes who said things like "Yer darn tootin', ya whippersnapper." Oil Well Willie is often described as a Gabby Hayes type character, but he was more mild-mannered and neighborly.

The Hoody Doody Show was enormously successful for product promotions. Besides toys, comic books, puzzles, and records, the characters were licensed for selling just about everything that kids loved to eat, such as Hostess Twinkies, Twin Pop Popsicles, and Kellogg's Rice Krispies. Oil Well

Willie images were found on Wonder Bread wrappers, Blue Bonnet Margarine containers, and Welch's Grape Juice cartons.



This image of Oil Well Willie is from a Royal Dessert pudding box, with the caption "Oil Well Willie hadn't struck oil in many years, but he struck up many friendships when he moved to Doodyville. Now this old prospector helps Buffalo Bob keep order in Doodyville and continues his search for oil wells." The image and quote are from Jeff Spencer's 2009 article 'The petroleum history in trade cards, trading cards, and comic books', Oil-Industry History, v. 10, p. 115-119, which is available in the museum's library.

## Memorial Brick Display



The idea to relocate the museum's memorial brick area originally came when Museum Manager Fran Bottone noticed last year that the bricks were getting scuffed and starting to show some wear from being walked on by everyone who came through the door. After some discussion, it was decided to extend the new concrete walk all the way to the museum entrance and move the bricks to their own area adjacent to the walk, surrounding the new flag-pole. Work started mid-summer and was completed in early November, just before the snow flew. If you would like to purchase a brick, see page 7 for details.

## Board Of Directors

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

- Thomas Miller, President
- Fred Fesenmyer, Vice President
- Susan Gould, Secretary
- Joyce Cline, Treasurer
- Isabelle Champlin, Corresponding Secretary
- Jeff Brewer
- Stanley Pecora
- Meredith Fesenmyer
- Paul Phillips
- Matt Kropf
- Steve Pratt
- Chip McCracken
- Sherri Schulze
- Marsha McCracken
- Dale Smith
- William Pantuso
- Dennis Stromberg



Angela Nuzzo

## Memorial Gifts

**In Memory Of:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Given By:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 Loni Fesenmyer ..... John H Satterwhite  
 Henry James "Jim" Jackson, Jr.  
 ..... Kevin & Molly Lindahl  
 Donna Griesbaum ..... Kevin & Molly Lindahl  
 Melvin Dixon ..... Kevin & Molly Lindahl



Engraved personalized paving bricks can be purchased to surround the base of the new flag pole. 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.



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

Memorials received after November 15 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.

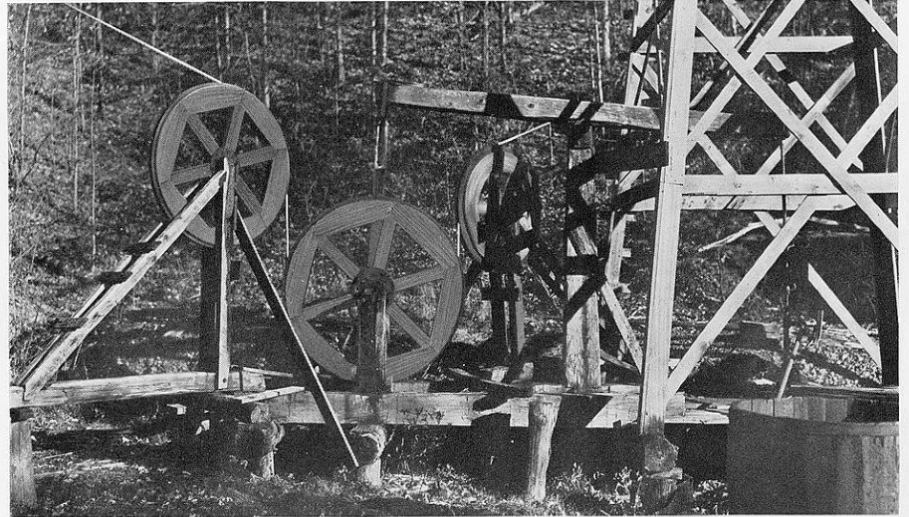
Clip and Mail Coupon

<i>(PLEASE CHOOSE IN MEMORY OF OR IN HONOR OF)</i>	<b>Memorial/Honoring Gifts</b>	<i>(PLEASE PRINT)</i>
IN MEMORY OF		IN HONOR OF
SEND CARD TO		FROM
STREET		STREET
CITY/STATE/ZIP		CITY/STATE/ZIP

## Movie Night at the Museum

by Isabelle Champlin, Corresponding Secretary

On November 1st, the museum held another Movie Night with historic videos from our collection. Freshly-popped popcorn was provided by Joyce throughout the evening. The most fascinating clip was about a unique form of pumping invented in 1874 by Wm. C. Stiles who used an “endless cable” driven by one engine and one operator to pump as many as 40 wells. This was in Volcano, West Virginia (now a ghost town) and was still operational in 1974 when the video was made. The wire cables were hand-spliced, and the band wheels, walking beams, and other wooden components were hand-hewn on site from local oak and poplar. An illustrated article in *The Producers Monthly* magazine dated July 1940, described the system. Both the magazine and the film footage are available at the museum.



*The cable runs over the guide wheel and down under the lower circumference of the operating wheel whose axle imparts motion to the walking beam. Thence the cable runs over the third wheel which guides it in the direction of the next well. The walking beam moves slowly up and down but seems to have energy enough to operate the sucker rod and pump the well's daily production*

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

PO Box 163  
Bradford, PA 16701