

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. 10 – No. 2 – Spring 2024

Ice Cream Social Jump-starts the Season

by Angela Nuzzo, Editor

The young girl with the pink camera who was taking a photo of the Silsby fire engine summed up the afternoon the best when she exclaimed, "WHOA!"

I've been to several Ice Cream Socials at the museum that have been well attended, but the 2024 season opening event on May 18th was a sight to behold. There were SO MANY PEOPLE!



A few early birds came in, but then the crowd kept getting bigger towards noon and stayed that way until closing. A Boy Scout troop wandered through the displays. People travelling to other museums stopped in when they saw the event sign along the road.



Tom shares his wisdom with visitors

There were lots of families with

kids. An older couple took advantage of the rocking chairs on the lease house porch. And everyone was talking and having a good time.



Susan & Isabelle serve up the goodies

The sloppy joes, sundaes, popcorn, cookies, and brownies were enjoyed by all. The sales of t-shirts, sweatshirts, and souvenirs seemed to be going well also.



Francie rings up a customer

As I mingled with the crowd, both inside and out (what a beautiful day it was!), I took note of comments that were being made like; "I can't believe I've never been here before!" ; "This is

amazing!" ; "There's so much to look at." But I think the comment I agreed with the most was from the gramma of the young girl with the pink camera, "This is COOL!"



Jeff & Joyce discuss POPCORN!

Thank you to all of the board members, volunteers, and friends of the museum who helped with preparations, donations of food and supplies, and clean-up.

The season is off to a great start!

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



Museum Manager Says Good-bye

by Fran Bottone

This has been very difficult to write, and for all intents and purposes will be my last entry to 'The Lazy Bench'. When I took this job four years ago, it was with the understanding that I would be retiring officially at the end of last season and with the hopes that I would be able to work with and train my replacement through at least part of last year. Our board had been actively searching for the last two years and maybe longer for a worthy replacement, but unfortunately in today's job market it seems a tall order to find a qualified candidate.

At the end of last season, I told our board of directors that in a worst case scenario and with no takers, I would come back for 2024. Well... you know what they say about the best laid plans. A family health emergency came up that would take me out of commission for close to two months (in a best case scenario). This also left me with almost no time to train someone new before I would be out of the picture. Luckily, at the 11th hour, two new recruits appeared. Which brings us to today.

Anyway, enough about all that. I have to say that I feel very lucky to have held this job and have much enjoyed my time at Penn Brad. What a cool place to work for a local history junkie like myself! You never expect to end up working at such a unique and historically important place like Penn Brad, but I like to think I held up my end of the bargain. I also have to say that as a kid growing up running the hills and watching the old pumpers, I never thought I'd be starting one of these power house engines on a fairly regular basis!

I met so many great people over the last four years and made such great connections, not to mention learning a lot that I didn't know about our local oil history. I had some great teachers from our board of directors that I need to thank, with board president Tom Miller leading the way. Tom comes from a multi-generational oil family and at almost 75 years young, still works hands-on in the oil business.

But the list goes on: Susan Gould, our museum's genealogist and past president spent a lot of time with me and we really hit it off; Joyce Cline, our treasurer and so much more, did a lot for me behind the scenes and was always there when I needed



something; Chip McCracken needs no introduction; Stan Pecora, a local legend and walking history book; Jim Frick, who was with the board my first couple years and who was a lot of fun to work with; Dale Smith of Worth W. Smith fame and lately Rock City fame; Isabelle Champlin, past big cheese in the Archeology department at Pitt; the late (and great) Dennis Stromberg; everyone's favorite banker Bill Pantuso; Matt Kropf, Jeff Brewer, Brenda Fish, Marsha McCracken, Fred and Meredith Fesenmyer, and Sherri Shulze. The list reads like the who's who of Bradford Oil. I will also miss my Saturday morning visits from Mike Fuoco, our local oil field engine and artifact expert.

I think that pretty much covers it. Everyone helped me out a lot in their own way and to the best of their ability, and I have to say treated me very well. One last person I have to mention and thank is Angela Nuzzo, our Lazy Bench Editor-in-chief. She does a great job with it and we would be up the creek without her. Not to mention she is a super nice person.

In closing, I will miss the museum and everyone associated with it. With a house to finish, another to sell, a brand new grandson, and already being two months behind schedule, I won't be wanting for anything else to do this year. I do wish our new hires the best of luck moving forward and hope they enjoy the job as much as I did.

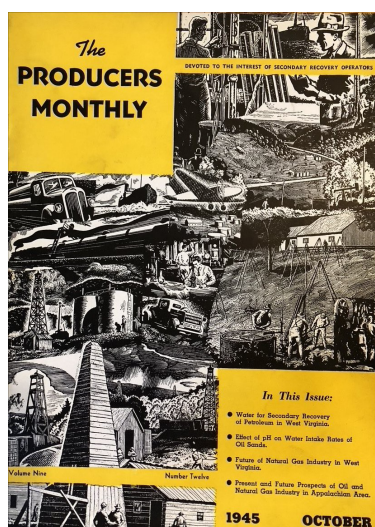
Sincerely, Fran Bottone

Producer's Monthly Digitization Project

by Isabelle Champlin, Corresponding Secretary

Matt McEwan, a recent graduate of the University of Pittsburgh-Bradford, worked as a 2023 summer intern for the Penn Brad Oil Museum under the supervision of Dr. Matt Kropf, a museum board member and director of the Energy Institute at UPB.

McEwan digitized the museum's physical collection of *The Producer's Monthly*, an oil producers' magazine which ran from the 1930s to the 1960s. The magazine was published by the Bradford District Pennsylvania Oil Producers Association.



Each issue, as stated in the masthead, was 'devoted to the interests of secondary recovery operators', and contained historical articles, biographies and obituaries, a 'Washington Review' column, one called 'Production Research', one called 'New Equipment' and an inside joke column called 'Off Tower' but pronounced

'Off Tower', as well as several more. The advertisements are especially informative and evocative, with photographs of innovative drill bits, cable tools, stuffing boxes, jacks, compressors, downhole pumps and other machinery and vehicles.

In May of this year, at the Petroleum History Institute's annual symposium, McEwan presented his research on the impact of WWII on the Bradford oil field; specifically, how the oil producers' change in attitude and relationship towards the government can be seen in what was published in the magazine before, during, and after the war. He wanted to show how the oil producers, who were writing about their own industry in their own magazine, continued to defend their own economic interests while also showing patriotism and support for the government once America entered the war.

McEwan's poster was titled "The Patriotic Oilman: The Producer's Monthly and the Bradford Oil Field during the Second World War." It won an award for

the best poster presentation. He had traveled to Canmore, near Calgary Canada for this conference, accompanied by Dr. Drew Flanagan, director of the History / Political Science Program at UPB and a specialist in WWII history. Both travelers were sponsored by the Energy Institute.



McEwan remarked that "I really didn't expect to enjoy oil history as much as I did. All in all, my biggest takeaway after my internship was that there's a history to everything and anything if you have the eyes to see it."

This digitization project was originally begun in 2016 by Sherri Schultze, a former museum manager, and was sponsored by StratResources Geologic Consulting PLLC, JKLM Energy LLC, Range Resources-Appalachia LLC, and the Pittsburgh Association of Petroleum Geologists. Matt McEwan's research will be published with the symposium proceedings in Volume 25 of the Petroleum History Institute's Oil-Industry History.



Tom Miller accessing the paper files at the museum

Fireside Pumpers Talks in April and May

by Isabelle Champlin with photos by Joyce Cline

The 2024 Fireside Pumpers series began in April with Todd Witchen and his father Bob Witchen speaking about the national Wreaths Across America project.



Founded in Maine in 2007 to honor veterans' graves at Arlington National Cemetery with fresh evergreen wreaths, it has grown to include placing wreaths in all 50 states at several thousand cemeteries, as well as a mobile education exhibit, a museum of memorabilia, participation in parades and social media, international cemetery placements, outreach programs with veteran organizations, and an 'adopt-a-tree' program for Gold Star families.

If you are interested in sponsoring or helping volunteers place wreaths in December in ten local cemeteries, go to wreathsacrossamerica.org and type "Bradford" or "Smethport" into the Location and Group Search for more information.

Carolyn Stroup, president of the Kinzua Trail Club, talked about the successful work the members have done to create and maintain a section of the Knox and Kane Rail Trail, which won the Pennsylvania state "Trail of the Year" award in 2023. This Fireside Pumper's program was sponsored by the Worth W. Smith Company.

The talk was illustrated with many photographs of the transformation from an abandoned railroad bed to a graded level aggregate path with culverts, repaired trestles, parking lots, fencing, picnic pavilions, benches, mile markers, and historic signage for timber, oil, and glassmaking. These projects and their maintenance are funded by many state and

county grants, local donations, memberships, and fundraising efforts such as a memorial/dedication bench program and merchandise like T-shirts, walking sticks, and decals.



The popular MJ2KB section of the trail is used by marathon runners, hikers, birdwatchers, dog walkers, horseback riders, bikers, cross-country skiers, snowshoers, fat-tire bikers, and snowmobilers.

Since our Oil Museum has parking lot access to the local Blaisdell trail of Bradford's Tuna Valley Trail Association, we asked for advice. Stroup said rail users especially like porta-potty facilities and shaded rest areas. We were encouraged to seek funding.

You can learn more about the MJ2KB Trail at www.mj2kbtrail.club or visit the club's headquarters on Main Street in Kane.



Tom & Pat Miller and Angela Nuzzo spent a day getting the bulk of the new railing built along the entrance walkway. An Amish contractor installed the posts beforehand and Tom and Jeff Brewer will be completing the job by adding wooden sucker rods for the handrails.

Penn Brad Oil Museum



DAN PALMER MEMORIAL GOLF SCRAMBLE

Sunday, August 4, 2024



10am Shotgun Start

West Warren Road ~ Bradford, PA

- \$75 entry fee per person
- 18 holes ~ Includes golf, cart & lunch on the course
- Pro shop monies awarded following scramble
- Sign up in person at the Pro Shop or call Pine Acres at 814.362.2005 to register
- 50/50 raffle

All proceeds benefit the Penn Brad Oil Museum's capital improvements

Skills Competitions

- Casino Hole
- Closest to the Pin
- Longest Drive
- 100 Yard Shootout (following scramble)
- Skins

Sponsorship Form

___ Event Sponsor*** \$ 2,000

___ Hole Sponsor \$ 100 ___ Cart Sponsor \$ 50

(Sponsors signs placed on carts / Hole Sponsors will be listed on sign at clubhouse)

***Four complimentary registrations

___ Check enclosed made payable to **Penn Brad Oil Museum**

___ Credit Card please call Joyce at 814.368.6824

(Business) Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Your sponsorship is tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law (501 (c)3)

Penn Brad Oil Museum PO Box 163 Bradford, PA 16701-0163

Fireside Pumpers Breakfast

The Fireside Pumpers of the Penn Brad Oil Museum will meet each 3rd Monday of the month at 8 am for a breakfast meeting with a guest speaker, at the Derrick City Diner, 563 Derrick Road, Bradford. Attendees will individually order off the menu beginning at 8 am, with cash being preferred over credit cards. The program will begin at 8:30. The public is invited and encouraged to attend. If you or your business would like to sponsor a breakfast, please complete the form on our website or call the Treasurer at 814-368-6824. Sponsorship profits go toward museum improvements.

July 15, 2024

Marc South

The History of Dresser

August 19, 2024

Tom Riel

Bottle Collecting

September 16, 2024

Jamie Pierotti

Backus Factory in Smethport

October 21, 2024

Jeff Brewer

ARG Processes & Products

November 18, 2024

PBOM - The Year in Review



Petroleum Sunday

by Joyce Cline, Museum Treasurer

“It is the third Sunday in April 1949, throughout the Western Hemisphere, families whose livelihood comes through the rich smelly crude gathered for the social and religious occasion. The hour is 12-noon; the setting, a religious one; the purpose, for prayer.”

What was the occasion? It was PETROLEUM SUNDAY!

In May of 1949, City Limits magazine (found at the Bradford Landmark Society) featured an article titled “Petroleum Sunday”, by Mavadell Dodaro.

Dodaro wrote, “It is important for those engaged in taking oil from the earth to recall from time to time the fact that Someone placed it there. Also, it is timely to pray for the living, as well as the deceased members of the industry, and the industry’s welfare.”

“A Mass is being offered to thank Almighty God for having provided, for the use and benefit of mankind, this precious gift. Producers, refiners, lease owners, office workers, drillers, gasoline station owners, with the families are gathered here today to unite in an hour of prayer with a common purpose—OIL.”

“Father De La Roche D’Aillon, a Franciscan Missionary, was the first to record the existence of oil on the North American Continent. His discovery is reenacted at Seneca Oil Spring, near Cuba, N.Y. The Franciscan College of St. Bonaventure, so closely associated with oil from the first recorded history, offered its accommodations as an appropriate site for the first observation of Petroleum

Sunday in this area.”

“A hundred male voices blend together, bringing peace to the scene and to the crowd. There is a hushed something that seems to be telling many stories. Men’s thoughts here, brought outward by the intonation of prayer, seem to take leave and combine into one Cross, one Soul, one Race; all free individuals! Women also know the rise and sweep of the industry. They have married and mothered the men who have worked it from its depths.”

Sarah Johnson, whose husband Sam was an oilman, noted that there were times when she used to climb up on the derricks after the drillers had left for the day and look down into the valley below. “There was beauty and power and danger, and the forever forbidding. ‘You keep off those rigs!’ was one of the first things I can remember my mother saying to me.” Continuing, she said, “At night I lay in bed. I would listen for the sounds of pumping, the noises of the night crew baiting the bit, the whispering of the pines on the hillsides—the noises in the night were endless.”

The speaker at the service reminded Sam of his father. Sam started thinking, “Dad, you surely had your heart set on me going on with your railroad. Somehow I never could feel an interest in railroads; but oil . . . that was different. My heart was gone the first time I saw a derrick. I remember the day that I was 15; It was on a Sunday . . . we had just come from church. Knowing how you planned for me to take your

place someday kind of made things bad . . . I wanted to spare you disappointment. But you called me into the back room where you had a big oil desk.”

“Sam,” he said. “You think that you want to go into this oil fame. Well, that’s all there is to it. You and I are different in our likes. I know why I chose the railroads and you know why you want oil. You don’t have to apologize to me for deciding as you have. Oil is rapidly becoming a giant and will continue to rise into a great industry. This will mean a higher standard of living, higher than this country has yet known. But where there are giants there is always trouble. Labor and management in an industry such as this must work in union.”

“The power that oil builds must be handled by men who will use it to advantage. Where there is such wealth and power, there will be greed. I want you to have wisdom and foresight. I have money and it will be yours one day. If you invest this money in Oil, be wise and shrewd; make it grow for you. Never get so busy that you can’t stop and thank the Almighty.”

The speaker concluded, “Men and earth are bound together by the force and laws of the Almighty god. God gave man rich resources in the earth—resources so that he can better his way of life. Man has taken these first and has risen through enterprise and progress; Once in a while man should pause in his wealth and thank the Bountiful God for the treasures He has given and will continue to send as long as man is on this earth.”

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 Marsha McCracken
 Meredith Fesenmyer Stanley Pecora
 Brenda Fish William Pantuso
 Matt Kropf Sherri Schulze
 Chip McCracken Dale Smith

**In Memory of
John W. Bryner**

**In Memory of
John W. Bryner, Jr.**

**In Memory of
Harrijane H. Moore**

**In Memoriam
Dennis Stromberg
Fellow Board Member**

**Dennis Stromberg
Penn Brad Oil Museum
Board of Directors**

Memorial & Honoring Gifts

In Memory Of: **Given By:**
 Dennis Stromberg David Brown
 Dennis Stromberg Book Friends

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

Memorial & Honoring Bricks

In Memory Of: **Placed By:**
 Dennis Stromberg Fellow Board Member
 Dennis Stromberg Museum Board Members
 Harrijane H Moore Jennie H Toal
 John W Bryner Margaret Bryner &
 Sara Bryner Delo
 John W Bryner, Jr Margaret Bryner &
 Sara Bryner Delo



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

Memorials received after June 9 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 _____	



Derrick Day

Saturday July 27, 2024

901 South Ave (219 South), Bradford, PA

10am-3pm

814-362-1955

FREE ADMISSION

Donations Appreciated

- ** Antique Engines & Displays
- ** Historical Movies in the Doghouse Theater
- ** Local History Lectures w/ Stan Pecora & Susan Gould
- ** Tour the Museum
- ** 50/50 Raffle & Silent Raffle

Tasty Treats Available

- * Phatt Grady's
- * The Lunch Bus
- * The Good Place Food Trailer
- * Campers Kettle Corn
- * Rock City Apple Press
- * Mr. D's Donuts, Dogs & Drinks

Heritage Crafts

- ** Quilting in the Kinley Library
w/ the Kinzua Quilt Guild
- ** Broom Squire
- ** Chainsaw Carver
- ** Candle Dipping
- ** Basket Weaving
- ** Tree Weaving w/ Nancy Dryden

Live Music w/ Fair to Fiddlin'

Fun for the whole family!

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

PO Box 163
Bradford, PA 16701