

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. 2 – Spring 2025

Ice Cream Social Kickstarts the Season

by Angela Nuzzo, Editor

We were a little worried that the dreary May weather had taken its toll this time, but an hour into the event we proved, once again, that people just can't say no to free popcorn, ice cream, and sloppy joes. Young and old alike gathered around the table in the library enjoying lunch and goodies. Families and friends wandered the displays, snacking on their popcorn. Most even ventured out into the rain to get a glimpse of the standard rig. There was a steady flow right up to closing, with many visitors getting the first stamp in their McKean County Museum Trail passport. Thank you to all of the volunteers who donated supplies and their time to make the Ice Cream Social a success.



ANFVB Bus Tour in May

photos by PATRAILCENTRAL



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



Emery Office Renovation Completed

by Patty Popiel Lehosky, Recording Secretary

The refurbishment of the Honorable Lewis Emery, Jr. office at Penn Brad Oil Museum has been completed thanks to the labor and monetary donations of Marsha and Chip McCracken, Fran Bottone, Jim Frick, Tom Miller, and Fred Fesenmyer. Mr. Fesenmyer is a great-grandson of Mr. Emery.



Emery's personal desk sits center stage

The office now characterizes the classic look of an office of the years in which Mr. Emery lived in McKean county as an oil producer. He also served as a Pennsylvania general assembly representative beginning in 1878, quickly advancing to a senator in 1880 until 1889. In 1906, he made a strong run for governor of Pennsylvania, but was defeated by a small majority by Edwin S. Stuart, who became the 24th governor.

Lewis, Jr. was known as a vocal and ardent supporter of business existence. He was a pioneer oil producer, philanthropist, refiner, banker, manufacturer and miner. He was widely-known for his loyalty, devotion and, more so locally, his generosity to all the

city's religious, philanthropic, educational, and social institutions.

Lewis, Jr. apparently inherited ambition from his father, who was known to be resourceful and highly motivated. In his early years, Lewis, Jr. accompanied his father to work. Lewis, Sr. was born in Conway, New Hampshire, and made a career in the woolen manufacturing industry, working in Ohio, New York, and Michigan.

Lewis Emery, Jr. was born near Cherry Creek, NY, in August 1839. He was married in 1863 to Elizabeth Ann Caldwell of Vistula, IN. Together they had five children: Clara, Delevan, Grace, Earl, and Lewis III. Elizabeth passed away in October 1915. In 1917, Lewis, Jr. married Leta Card, who passed away in August 1941.



Marsha & Chip McCracken install drapes to hide the kitchenette

Lewis, Jr. was the youngest of seven children, born August 10, 1839, in the Cherry Creek, Chautauqua County, New York area, to Lewis, Sr. And Maria Gilson Emery. He attended Hillsdale College in Hillsdale, MI, and became the owner of a successful flour mill in his mid 20s in Illinois, where he also operated a

sawmill and a country store. The Civil War brought misfortune to many businessmen there, including Lewis, Jr.



Marsha checks out her handiwork

From Illinois, Lewis, Jr. moved to the Pithole / Titusville area of northwestern Pennsylvania after becoming intrigued with the emerging oil industry of the state. He quickly became a respected producer, on a path to wealth. But, within a few years, he was one of hundreds of successful producers who were ruined by the failure of Jay Cooke & Co. of New York, and the financial panic that followed.

Lewis, Jr. forged ahead, not to be discouraged by his overwhelming debts. He often had his eye on McKean County, suspecting there was an abundance of petroleum to be discovered. He leased and purchased about 14,000 acres of land without providing money. He was known for his knowledge, leadership, and ambition, and people had the utmost confidence in him. Even though he was bankrupt, he received unlimited credit from the firm of Eaton, Cole, Burnham Company of New York.

Lewis, Jr. began operations in McKean County in July 1875. His first well was at Toad Hollow, what was known as the Tibbetts farm, about two miles south of Bradford. The well started out at 42 barrels per day. With this success, he was able to wipe out all of his debt and yet still accumulate wealth. It was a victory that opened up the world's greatest oil territory. Emery, Jr. eventually owned over 600 wells.



File cabinet for The Producer's Monthly

When the petroleum industry began to experience the burden of increasing freight rates from corporate monopolies, Lewis, Jr. was chosen as a legislative candidate for representation of McKean County, the center of the northern oil field. In his positions as Representative and Senator, he courageously battled and was found to be a hard champion. One of his greatest successes was to originate legislation that reduced the power of railroad and corporate monopoly.

Emery, Jr.'s business interests were diversified. He was sole proprietor of the Inca Mining Company in Peru, South America; Emery Oil Refinery; Bradford Gas

Company; Delavan Oil Company; Emery Oil Company; Hamsher Oil Company; L. Emery, Jr. and Sons; Test Oil Company of Oklahoma; Emery Petroleum Company; Emery Hardware Company; Emery Manufacturing Company; Minard Run Oil Company; American Alkali and Acid Company; Godbout Lumber Company of Godbout, Quebec; Lobdell-Emery Manufacturing Company and American Wood Rim Company of Onaway, Michigan; Onaway Oil and Gas Company; Harmony Natural Gas Company of Tionesta, PA; Quintuple Oil Company; Lewis Emery, Jr., Inc.; McKean County Trust Company; and Onaway State Bank in Onaway, MI. All of these business interests were directed from his Bradford office building, erected in 1919 and 1920, on Main Street.

Additionally, he was associated with many leading organizations and clubs, not only in Bradford, but also throughout the state and nation.

Following an illness of six months, Mr. Emery, Jr. passed away on November 19, 1924, at Hahnemann Hospital in Philadelphia, PA, under the care of medical specialists. His body was first entombed in the Emery family mausoleum at Oak Hill Cemetery in Bradford, but was later transferred to an underground Emery family mausoleum at Willow Dale Cemetery, Bradford.

The funeral was held at Emery, Jr.'s Congress Street home. It was simple and brief as was the ceremony at Oak Hill Cemetery, even though he was described as Bradford's most distinguished citizen. Guests attended from New York, Canada, Pittsburgh, Harrisburg,

Philadelphia, Michigan, and New Jersey, as did Dr. Joseph Mauck, President of Hillsdale College. Emery, Jr. was one of the most generous benefactors of Hillsdale College, donating both money and artwork.

Many businesses suspended operations during the funeral and procession to the cemetery, and flags were displayed at half-mast. Citizens lined the streets of Bradford with their heads bowed in respect. Pallbearers were Emery, Jr.'s employees of Emery Manufacturing Co. and Minard Run Oil.

Although the majority of his estate was left to family, monetary amounts were left to Bradford Hospital, Bon Air Sanitarium, and Beacon Light Mission. Some 24 faithful employees were also bequeathed money ranging from \$1,000 to \$10,000 each.

We welcome you to visit the museum and admire the new look of our Emery office. Of particular note is the personal desk of Mr. Emery, Jr.

Many thanks to Molly Popiel Lindahl of The Bradford Historical Landmark Society for her assistance in gathering news articles on the Emery family.



A perfect view from the office window

Fireside Pumpers Talks in April and May

by Isabelle Champlin, Corresponding Secretary

At the Fireside Pumpers meeting in April, Rustin Lippincott, the new Executive Director of the Allegheny National Forest Visitor's Bureau (ANFVB), explained much about its plans for promoting tourism in McKean County.



To lessen the confusion between the acronyms ANFVB and ANF (Allegheny National Forest), the ANFVB has been rebranded 'Trail Central'.

Due to the closure of the popular Kinzua Bridge State Park's Skywalk for the next three years, Trail Central created the McKean County Museum Trail passport program.

The 7 participating museums are Zippo / Case Museum, Marilyn Horne Museum, and the Penn Brad Oil Museum, all in Bradford; Eldred World War II Museum in Eldred; McKean County Historical Society's Old Jail Museum in Smethport; Mt. Jewett's Kinzua Bridge State Park Visitor Center; and Kane's Historic Kane Depot and McCleery Discovery Center.

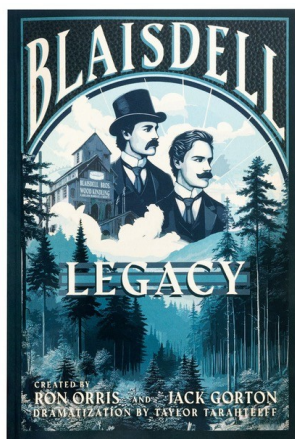
The passport can be stamped at these museums anytime all year and a completed passport is eligible for prizes at the Trail Central headquarters in Bradford or at the Chamber of Commerce in both Bradford and Kane. More information is at visitanf.com/mckean-county-museum-trail/

And because the #1 reason that people travel is to visit family and friends, the Backyard Tours program will continue to introduce people to local county attractions via a 50-passenger bus trip one day each spring. As usual, one of the stops was at our museum on May 2nd of this year.

(See pg 1 for photos of bus tour)

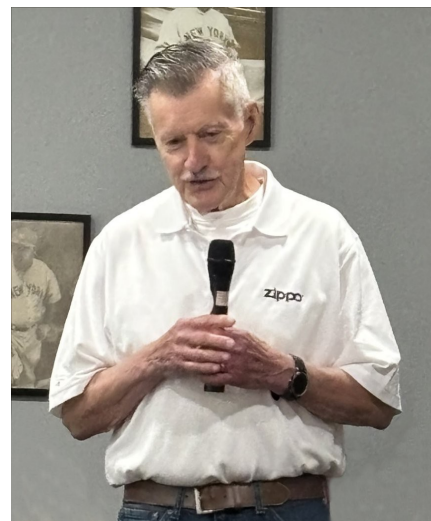
Questions from the audience included Rock City Park, advertising via social media, road signs, and digital advertising.

This program was sponsored by Luciano & Sons Builders and also McCracken Energy Services.



At the Pumper's meeting in May, Ron Orris, director of the Philo and Sarah Blaisdell Foundation, and Jack Gordon, Zippo historian, described how they came to create the book "Blaisdell Legacy."

Along with authorship and artwork by Taylor Tarahteef, it was published in 2024 and tells the story of the Blaisdell family of Bradford before George Blaisdell invented the Zippo lighter.



Jack Gordon

Based on an annotated and detailed diary kept by patriarch Ebenezer Blaisdell (1823-1901), a cooper from Maine, the accomplishments of his 8 entrepreneurial sons are recounted, especially those of the eldest, Philo.

In 1882, Philo invented a machine to bundle unused loose wood that was left over from making boards and planks, furniture, barrels, railroad ties, and other products. The bundled wood pieces, sold for a penny each, were 'an absolute necessity' for lighting coal cook stoves and furnaces. The Blaisdells eventually built many factories near enormous lumber mills, that could kiln-dry, cut, and pressure-pack the wood bundles on hundreds of special machines every day, warehouse them and ship them to cities like New York by barge and railroad.

The factory in Bradford could process 15 box car loads of bundles each week.



Ron Orris

The book relates how all of the Blaisdell brothers, like many Gilded Age businessmen, became millionaires, owning diverse companies that operated over a hundred plants across twelve states. They became profitable oilmen; vacuum pump, pressure and mining machine inventors; and of course eventually owner of a cigarette lighter factory. The Blaisdell Foundation, a nonprofit charity begun by

the Blaisdell family, generously and frequently supports local organizations.

This meeting was sponsored by Bradford Pipe and Supply Company and also by Roger and Kathy Davidson's DEW Services. Copies of "Blaisdell Legacy" are in the museum's Kinley Library and are available in the gift shop.

Thank You to Fireside Pumpers Sponsors

The museum would like to give a special shout-out to the sponsors of our breakfast meetings in 2025. These individuals and businesses help to keep the public outreach program successful and we appreciate their dedication to our fundraising efforts.

- American Refining Group
- Bradford Pipe & Supply
- DEW Services
- Dresser Pipeline Solutions
- E&M Engineers and Surveyors, PC
- Edward Oil Co.
- Howard Drilling, Inc.
- J.A. Luciano & Sons Builders, LLC
- Kan's Water Hauling
- Kessel Construction, Inc.
- McCracken Energy Services
- Meredith M. Fesenmyer
- Worth W. Smith Co.
- Wright Monumental Works, Inc.

Fireside Pumpers Breakfast

The Fireside Pumpers of the Penn Brad Oil Museum meet each 3rd Monday of the month for a breakfast meeting with a guest speaker, at the Derrick City Diner, 563 Derrick Road, Bradford. Attendees order off the menu beginning at 8am and the program starts at 8:30. The meetings are open to the public as an educational outreach and fundraising effort by the museum. 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.

June 16, 2025

Rod Johnson

Search & Rescue Bloodhounds

July 21, 2025

Bart Barton

New Displays & Programs at McKean County Historical Society

August 18, 2025

Rowan Crisp

The Lumber Heritage Region

September 15, 2025

Brenda Fish

From Well to Market (ARG)

October 20, 2025

Bill Robertson

Pennsylvania Strange (book)

November 17, 2025

Francie Long

PBOM - The Year in Review

Nine security cameras were installed at the museum in April. They are continuous monitoring and accessible through a cell phone app. Board members Chip and Marsha McCracken donated the cameras/modem and installed them. This will provide an extra layer of security on days the museum is closed during the season and especially when it is closed for the winter.



Derrick Day

Saturday, July 12, 2025

10am—3pm

901 South Ave (219 South), Bradford, PA 16701 814.362.1955



FREE ADMISSION

Donations appreciated



**Bike/Trike/Hike
on the Blaisdell-Emery Trail
w/ prizes for kids!**

- ➔ Antique engines & displays
- ➔ Watch short historical movies in the Doghouse Theater
- ➔ Local Historical Lectures
- ➔ Tour the museum
- ➔ 50 / 50 Raffle & Silent Raffle

Heritage Crafts

Broom Squire



Candle Dipping

Basket Weaving



Tree Weaving ~ Nancy Dryden



**The Lunch Bus
Rock City Apple Press**



Live Music



Ms. Hoshi's Trio

Details subject to change.
Check our Facebook page for updates.

Fun for the whole family!!!

Friends of PBOM please return your membership forms and donations as soon as possible. Thank you!

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
 Susan Gould
 Matt Kropf
 Chip McCracken
 Marsha McCracken

William Pantuso
 Stanley Pecora
 Sherri Schulze
 Dale Smith



Dusk-to-dawn lights were installed to light up the standard rig thanks to a donation of labor and materials by Puretech.

Photo by
 Marsha McCracken

Memorial & Honoring Gifts

In Honor Of: _____ **Given By:** _____
 John Greeley's 60th Birthday Meghan (Snow)
 Petruzzi & Family

In Memory Of: _____ **Given By:** _____
 Richard Dallenbach American Refining Co.

Memorial & Honoring Bricks

In Memory Of: _____ **Placed By:** _____
 Richard Dallenbach Gregory S Dennis



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.

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

Memorials received after May 20 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.

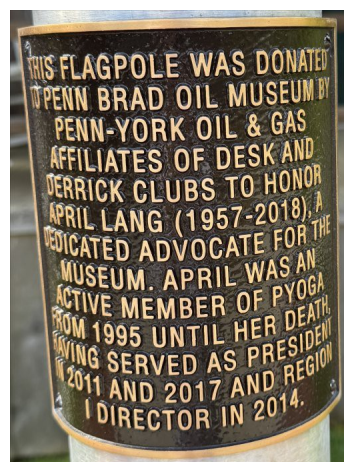
Clip and Mail Coupon

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

Flagpole Dedication

Photos by Francie Long and Patty Lehosky

On May 3, friends and family of April Lang and the members of the Penn York Oil and Gas Affiliate of the Desk and Derrick Clubs met to dedicate the memorial flagpole which had been installed at the museum's entrance in honor of April Lang. In her speech, Jennifer Smith emphasized the outstanding contributions of April Lang to the Desk and Derrick Club, "As the flag waves in the breeze, let it remind us of her unwavering spirit, her selfless dedication, and her profound impact on both our club and this museum."



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