

# Society acquisition turned into a mystery:

Several months ago, A gentleman stopped into the Society’s offices and brought a unique model of a coal mine scene, with coal cars and two miners hard at work. Constructed out of wood and modeling materials, it received quite a bit of attention. The lack of donor and creator names hindered cataloging and credit assignment for the donation.

Archivist, John Sherrick recounted the story of a man who came into the office several months before carrying the piece. “I instructed him to place it in the conference room for cataloging. When he came out we struck up an in-depth conversation,



**Andrea Josefowicz explains to Juliana Zarzycki and John Sherrick the methods her father used in his creations.**

after which, the man left without leaving any information on himself or the artisan.”

Recently, while positioning the object to utilize the small light above the scene, questions about its origins resurfaced, reigniting the



**Ambrose Tkatch (Kotch)**

mystery.

A Facebook post requesting information on the piece netted a call from the donor’s sister



**Model of Susquehanna Coal Co. mine donated to the Society in 2024**

Nanticoke native, Andrea Josefowicz.

She related that Her brother Thomas Kotch, generously donated the coal mine model fashioned by their father Ambrose Tkatch (Kotch). She acknowledged the donation to the Society and expressed her desire to donate another piece created by her father. Josefowicz described how Ambrose spent long hours building the model of a Susquehanna Coal Company mine using various materials, meticulously sanding spoons to resemble shovels and plastic soldiers to resemble miners.

Tkatch served in the Pacific on LST 699, a WWII-era landing ship designed with bow doors and ramps for easy disembarkation without docks or cranes. Two brothers, George and Joseph Tkatch (Kotch) were killed in the war in 1942 and 1944 respectively.

Ambrose Tkatch documented the brutal attacks by *A depiction of a miner loading a coal car with tools and toolbox all created meticulously by Ambrose Tkatch*

Japanese ships and Kamikaze aircraft in his handwritten diary. The diary is a family heirloom that documents the daily experiences and risks faced by men who served in the armed forces. Josefowicz believes the hobby helped him to resume a somewhat normal life after the war. He enjoyed the quiet solitude of his workshop.



*The mine model is of substantial weight and size*

We at the Nanticoke Historical Society truly appreciate donations such as these. Not only do they represent a time long gone, but they also stand for the strength and fortitude of those who mustered through difficult times and in this instance leading to the creation of artifacts we all can enjoy and ponder.

