

NANTICOKE LEGACY

NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Samantha Mill House, 495 E. Main Street, Nanticoke, PA - 570-258-1367

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In this undated Nanticoke Historical Society photo these miner's wives and their children may well have been of the many that lost husbands, fathers, brothers and sons in Nanticoke mining accidents

NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY MISSION STATEMENT:

The object of this society is for educational, charitable, and literary purposes with a primary focus to research, preserve, develop and disseminate the history of Nanticoke, Pennsylvania. To collect artifacts, memorabilia and historical documents and facts of Nanticoke, Pennsylvania and to store such items in a central location or specific area where these articles may be preserved, appreciated and used by the citizens of Nanticoke to enhance their heritage

NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Samantha Mill House
(Next to the Mill Memorial Library)
Off of Kosciuszko Street
495 East Main Street Nanticoke, PA 18634
570-258-1367

**Upcoming meeting
schedule**

Thursday – November 15
No Meeting in December
Thursday – January 31
Thursday – February 28

All meetings take place at 7 p.m. at the Samantha Mill House located next to the Mill Memorial Library.

Enter the parking lot off of Kosciuszko Street.

To get directions call the society office at 570-258-1367.

We Encourage All to Attend

**ANNUAL CHRISTMAS
PARTY**

Sunday – December 2,

R Bar in Nanticoke – Time will be announced in the near future on Facebook and our Website www.nanticokehistoryonline.org.

Our Web Site

www.nanticokehistoryonline.org

Email

nanticokehistorical@yahoo.com
history@nanticokehistoryonline.org

OFFICERS

President: Julianna Zarzycki

**Vice President/Corresponding Secretary/Treasurer:
Chester Zaremba**

**NEWSLETTER EDITOR, STORIES AND NEWS
Judith L. Minsavage**

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Individual \$20

Family \$30

Lifetime \$100.00 Individual

Please advise us of any changes in email or home mailing address

RESEARCH

Non-member – research fee \$25 for the first hour – By Appointment. See our website for more information.

Editor's Note: Two lives one fatal decision

This edition of the Nanticoke Historical Newsletter reminds us of a time when many of our forefathers came to this country to start a new life. The new life they found was tough and dangerous as many risked their lives daily in the mines. The story herein of 26 men and boys entombed at the #1 Slope Mine in Honey Pot, reflects that danger and the profound sadness of not recovering a father, son, brother or uncle's body from one of the deadliest mining accidents that occurred in the Wyoming Valley. My father, William Pernisek, a young man growing up near Pittsburgh, barely made it out of a mine cave-in and vowed not to go back, He became a barber. My husband's father, Vincent J. Minsavage, left the mines in Nanticoke to become a barber, but for whatever reason unknown to us went back into the mines. He was killed in a slope mine similar to the one in the story published in this newsletter. His body was recovered. He is buried in St. Francis Cemetery.

Judy Minsavage, newsletter editor

WE HAVE DONE RESEARCH FOR NANTICOKE RESIDENTS WHOSE DESCENDANTS ARE NOW LIVING IN:

New Plymouth, New Zealand
McKinney, Texas
Somerset, New Jersey
Rochester, New Hampshire
San Marcos, California
Edgewood, Washington
Port Orchard, Washington

THE NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS:

LIFETIME MEMBERS

George Shern
JoAnn Gerrity
Robert Ottensman
Phillip Shern
Michelle Jones
George James

REGULAR MEMBER

Mark Leno –

NEW COMPUTER DONATED TO SOCIETY OFFICE

The Nanticoke Historical Society is happy to announce that a new Asus, 2 terabyte hard drive computer with monitor, has been donated to the society by Mike and Janice Stachowiak of Honey Pot.

With this generous donation, the society will be able to continue adding even more photos and documents to our already immense data base.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR RECENT DONATIONS:

Your donation helps us to continue to enrich our community through our history:

Frank Wojick
JoAnn Thomas
Ray & Betty Blockus
David Kormis

Thank you for your support

SOCIETY NEWS

LCCC HOSTING SOCIETY DISPLAY



The Luzerne County Community College Library recently hosted a display of Nanticoke history from the Nanticoke Historical Society. The display showcased items from the Nanticoke Historical Society's collection. From left, are Nanticoke Historical lifetime member, Lori Shemanski, Forty Fort, reference librarian, LCCC; Julianna Zarzycki, Nanticoke, president, Nanticoke Historical Society; and Sally Gorgas, Nanticoke, member, Nanticoke Historical Society

KENNEDY SCHOOL DISPLAY UNVEILED -



From the overwhelming reaction from students and teachers regarding the Nanticoke Historical Society displays at the Greater Nanticoke High School, came a request from James Litchkofski, History Teacher at GNA. Before the opening of the new

KENNEDY DISPLAY UNVEILED - cont'd

Kennedy Childhood Center this past August, Litchkofski, contacted the society to set up a display focusing on President John F. Kennedy, for whom the school was first in the country to be named. Zaremba agreed, and his first call was to Sally Gorgas, lifetime member of the society. Gorgas was in possession of a great deal of memorabilia surrounding Kennedy, the man and his presidency. Gorgas agreed to lend her collection to add to those items in possession of the society for the display. With the continuing support of Dr. Ronald Grevera Superintendent of GNA School District and Amy Scibek, Principal of GNA High School, the display was set up for all to enjoy.

A GOLD MEDAL STARTED IT ALL

In an article in our February 2015 newsletter we focused on Roger Gilbert who contacted the Nanticoke Historical Society and told Chet Zaremba, society vice-president he was in possession of a gold medal once presented to David Price, star player for the Nanticoke High School State Championship Basketball Team. After much discussion, Zaremba offered Price two lifetime memberships in exchange for the medal.



Price agreed, but Zaremba knew exactly where that medal belonged. The medal has been set in a place of honor in the Greater Nanticoke Area High School display case next to the trophy the 1926 team received after winning the District Championship. To read the full story in our February 2015 newsletter and see a photo of the presentation log on to www.nanticokehistoryonline.org.

That one event began an association with the school and also started a hunt for the some 1300 trophies that various Nanticoke teams had garnered over the years.

Zaremba and his team retrieved the trophies from different storage areas, cleaned and polished each and set about finding ways to display them. Over the next two years display cases were attained through donations and finally students and teachers could appreciate their school's sports history. Through that first association The Nanticoke Historical Society began setting up displays of the various, basketball, football and baseball teams, and recently produced a display focusing on past commencements, giving students a visible connection to past graduating classes. To read the story from our February 2018 newsletter log on to our website www.nanticokehistoryonline.org



The Society, in cooperation with the schools, will be changing displays either monthly or semi-monthly so that students will be able to continue to gain knowledge of the history of their school and the community in which they live. 

WHY NOT BECOME A MEMBER OF THE NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY AND HAVE ACCESS TO OUR LIBRARY AND REFERENCE MATERIALS.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Individual \$20

Family \$30

Lifetime \$100.00 Individual

Congratulations to our winners.



This past September the Nanticoke Historical Society sponsored a lottery basket raffle. Thank you to all who participated. Here are our winners.

**Margaret Turchanik
George Marr
David Yeager**

Congratulations and keep watching for our next lottery basket raffle!

HERE'S ANOTHER GREAT WAY TO SUPPORT THE NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Along with the being a part of the **Amazon Smile Program**, which helps garner donations for the society through ordering online using the Amazon Smile Program, We are now part of the **ShurSave Community Rewards Program**. A program that allows local non-profit groups the opportunity to earn 3 cents for each purchase of the family of STORE BRANDS by Gold Card members. The more you buy the higher the donation.

Simply register your Gold Card today at shursavemarkets.com

Then shop often at your local ShurSave Supermarket. You'll get credit for all purchases of participating brands. Here's how to sign up

- 1. Go online to shursavemarkets.com**
- 2. If you do not have an account, click Register and complete the quick registration.**
- 3. Login to your new account and click Show Account**
- 4. Click on the Community/School Rewards tab and select the Nanticoke Historical Society.**

It's as easy as that!

The 3 cents IS NOT added onto your purchase.

THE NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY APPRECIATES YOUR PARTICIPATION.....



In Honor of Our Military



The Nanticoke Historical Society is honored to hold a vast amount of military information in its archives. It is our pledge to focus on those hometown heroes who sacrificed so much for our country's freedom. A new partial list of the many names of local veterans of all wars will be listed in our "In Honor of Our Military" Section of each Newsletter. The lists are long, so if a loved one's name has not appeared, please follow upcoming issues. Information obtained from the Nanticoke Historical Society archives.

100th ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF WORLD WAR I OBSERVED THIS MONTH

Known as the First World War also the Great War, World War I lasted from July 1914 to November 1918. The brutally fought war ended on November 11, 1918 at 11 a.m. with a signing of an armistice with Germany.

VIETNAM

Stephen R. Kubasik – Served in Vietnam from 1966 to 1968

Bernard K. Kuprionas, Sr., 173rd Unit of the 82 Airborne Division

Frank Osmanski - Spec Asst to Commanding General US Army. Awarded the Distinguished Service Medal

Edward Shovlin – US Navy

WORLD WAR I

John Albitis - Pvt. Wounded in action

Thomas Aleczyk - Pvt. Reported severely wounded

John Aleszczyn

Clarence D. Angle

George Antolik

Thomas Antonelli - Killed in action

John Aponick

Peter Arisin

Aylesworth, Charles Miner Aylesworth- 311th Field Artillery.

Alfred A. Baker - Wireless operator

Isaac Baker - Inducted into the Telegraph Corp of the US Army

John Baker - Enlisted in Co G, Local Infantry, PA Reserve Militia

Frank Baldowski

Gustave Ball

Zigmund Baranski - Inducted into the Telegraph Corp of the US Army.

NOTE: These names are as listed in our Historical Society Records. If there are misspellings, we apologize. Please contact our office to correct any discrepancy. Thank you....

WORLD WAR II

James B. Adams - Killed in the CBI theatre

Joseph N. Andruskewicz- Killed in plane crash in Texas

Domini Angradia- Released from German camp

Edward J. Antonik- KIA

Archibald F. Antonio

Charles W. Arnold

Leo Augustine- Staff Sergeant

John Balashak- Served in Germany

SEE WHAT'S IN OUR ARCHIVES

FOR A COMPLETE LISTING OF ALL THE RECORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS THAT ARE IN THE NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY ARCHIVES, GO TO OUR WEBSITE

www.nanticokehistoryonline.org

CLICK ON THE "WHAT'S IN OUR ARCHIVES LINK."

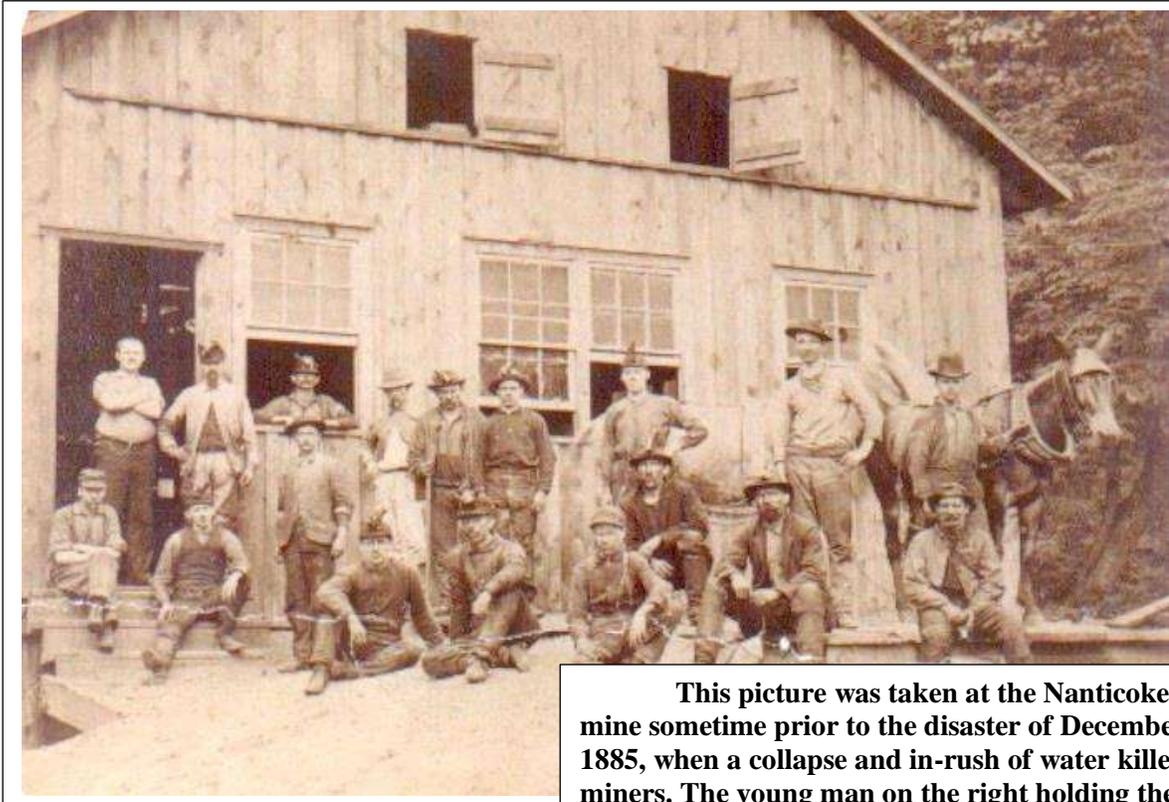
KOREAN WAR

John Cybulski - U.S. Air Force

John Cybulsk - U.S. Army; veteran of WWII and Korea

Stanley W.Dombrowski - Veteran of WWII and the Korean War.

Stanley J.Drozdzowski - KIA. Corporal, Marine Corp.



This picture was taken at the Nanticoke No. 1 mine sometime prior to the disaster of December 18, 1885, when a collapse and in-rush of water killed 26 miners. The young man on the right holding the mule is Miles LeRoy Davenport (1869-1932) of Plymouth. He had been injured the day before and was not at the mine the day of the disaster. He never went back to work at the mines, he finished high school and went on to earn a Doctorate in Veterinary Medicine at Cornell College.

Buried Alive - The Susquehanna #1 Mining Disaster Of 1885

By Judy Minsavage

Adding to the already staggering amount of miner's deaths and injuries as a whole in 1885, it was 11 days into the final month of the year and already there had been four deaths attributed to Nanticoke mining accidents leaving three widows and 15 children. As mining families prepared for the upcoming Christmas season, though, there would be another 26 names added to the list of those killed, leaving eight widows and 19 children.

Miners at the No. 1 Slope Mine of the Susquehanna Coal Company at Honey Pot reported to work as usual, most looking forward to the coming holiday season when families would be sharing food, attending church services and perhaps even exchanging a few meager presents. However, the occupation in which most of these young men worked would prove deadly and change the lives of so many people.

Unfortunately, it was the nature of the beast as all who entered into the mines daily knew of the risks, but

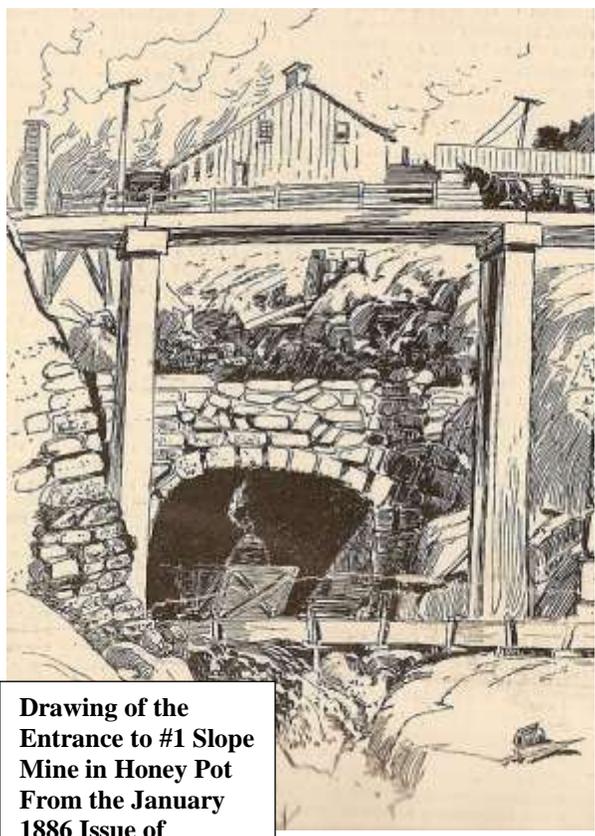
hoped that somehow they would be spared injury or death as they struggled to feed and shelter their families.

On December 18, 1885, miners at No. 1 Slope started their workday. Very soon after, those working in the Ross vein about 1,000 feet away from the exit shaft, found themselves being buried due to a cave-in. Some men working in another part of the mine narrowly escaped but not before the in-rush of a soupy mixture described as quicksand quickly blocked exits leaving the miners scrambling to try to find a way out.

RESCUE OR RECOVERY

In the aftermath, fellow miners quickly gathered their thoughts and began a rescue effort. Workers toiled throughout the night feeling an overwhelming responsibility to make every effort to rescue the men, however as time went on most feared the worst. By 7 a.m. the next morning, rescue efforts looked dim as the once liquid mixture had now begun to harden cementing the openings.

Upon reporting to work the next morning, miners refused to go in to the operating parts of the mine to begin their workday until they knew the fate of their comrades in the Ross vein. Even without knowing when they would see their next pay check, the community started a fund to help the wives and children of those buried below. By December 21, after working in shifts around the clock, rescuers were only 245 feet into the gangway with approximately another 750 feet more to go to reach the chamber where the men were working. Three mules were discovered in a chamber alive; each had marks on their torsos that showed the water had reached their necks, optimism of finding the miners alive heightened.



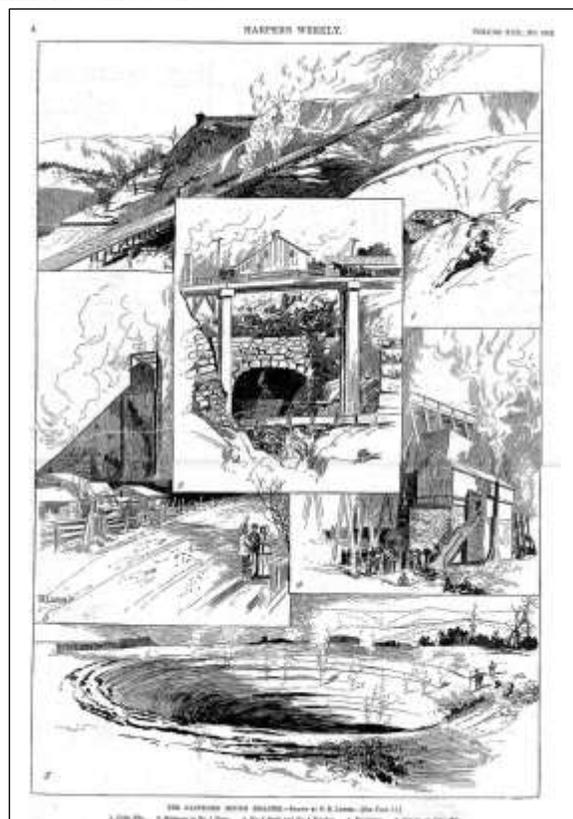
Drawing of the Entrance to #1 Slope Mine in Honey Pot From the January 1886 Issue of Harper's Weekly

Large numbers of family and friends gathered at the rescue site, their hope of seeing their loved ones emerge from the mines still intact. However, at 9 p.m. that evening, optimism turned to despair as another cave-in drove the rescuers to flee for their lives. The gangway filled with sand and culm a distance of 250 feet, 60 feet more than it was when the rescue started 4 days before. With the discovery of the presence of black damp, a mixture of unbreathable gases consisting of

nitrogen, carbon dioxide and water vapor, the superintendent of mines shut down the rescue operation, listing the fact that the men, if not dead from the cave-in, would have most likely succumbed to the deadly gas. At the news, the scene at the mine was described in an article published December 22 in the New York Times as, "Sullen with despair as disheartened and exhausted miners sat around the mouth of the mine, while wails of anguish filled the air. "The town of Nanticoke is a place of universal mourning and lamentation,"

FINDING THE CAUSE

It was first believed the cave-in was caused by the collapse of a large culm bank described as piled at least 47 feet high sitting on top of an abandoned portion of the mine. As the roof of the mine caved in under the weight of the massive mound, a pond, also on site, emptied into the mine creating a cement-like mixture that filled the vein and sealed the exits, leaving 26 miners buried alive.



The top portion of this drawing collage from the January 1886 issue of Harper's Weekly, shows the layout of the land surrounding #1 Slope Mine in Honey Pot. The bottom sketch shows the crater that formed on the surface after the cave-in. A close up of the center drawing is pictured on the left.

WE MUST REMEMBER

But a report of the Inspectors of Mines of the Anthracite Coal Regions of Pennsylvania dated 1886, stated that “a large funnel-shaped depression was discovered to have taken place on the culm bank about three thousand feet away from the entrance of the slope. This indicated the point where the cave-in had initially taken place. After a second cave-in on Dec 21, surveyors were tasked with finding exactly where over the mine the cave-in began.

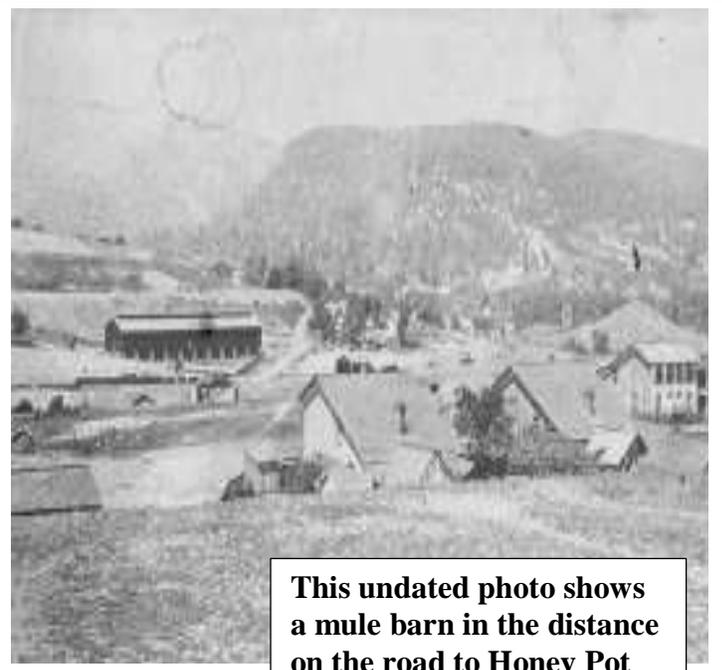
Sadly this is just one of the many mining accidents that took the lives of a great many men not only in Nanticoke, but all across the Anthracite region and beyond. The Nanticoke Historical Society has many names of local mine workers who were killed leaving their families struggling to find a way to survive all the while mourning their loss. If you are interested in research, please contact the society. 

A BURIED VALLEY DISCOVERED

When the survey was completed officials found it was in a different spot than first thought. It was reported that “The disaster occurred at a point several thousands of feet southwest of the gap through which the river passes out of the valley over the edge of the coal measures and seven hundred feet north of the present bed of Newport Creek.” Mr. Charles Ashburner, geologist in charge of the Second Geological Survey of the state, describes what he found in a paper published entitled “The Buried Valley of Newport Creek near Nanticoke with Special Reference to the Mine Accident of Dec. 18, 1885, “From the south end of the Susquehanna Coal Company’s coal separator to the Nanticoke Gap, we have no sufficiently precise data to exactly locate the bottom of the “buried valley,” in the same way that the bore-holes drilled to the southwest of the separator have permitted us to locate the bottom of the valley in that section. We have, however, sufficient facts to enable us to approximately locate it.

Bulletin 494, Bureau of Mines entitled Buried Valley of the Susquehanna River – Anthracite Region of Pennsylvania by S.H. Ash, dated 1950, details the accident at the No. 1 Slope and states in essence that the disaster was unavoidable and was caused by a geologic anomaly. The disaster was listed as an accident due to in-rushes of sand gravel and water into mine workings, because of failures in the rock strata underlying the buried valley. In the report, a buried valley is described as a clay, sand and gravel deposit situated in the Northern field of the Anthracite region near Wilkes-Barre and throughout the Wyoming Valley.

In essence, deposits of water and gravel are trapped in potholes created by glacial action and water erosion. The report goes on to state, “Potholes are present in the area comprising the buried valley; these were formed by swirling currents of water carrying abrasive materials during the advance and retreat of glaciers. They extend below the normal bottom of the buried valley. Some large potholes are visible at the surface of the ground in the Scranton area.” The condition of the water bearing deposits created weaknesses in the strata and were hard to detect.



This undated photo shows a mule barn in the distance on the road to Honey Pot



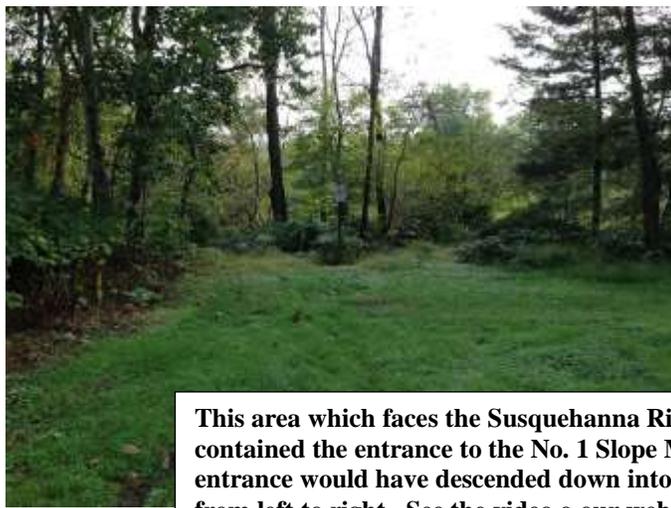
This undated photo represents what the #1 Mine gangway might have looked like.

A MEMORABLE VISIT TO THE SITE #1 SLOPE MINE – HONEY POT

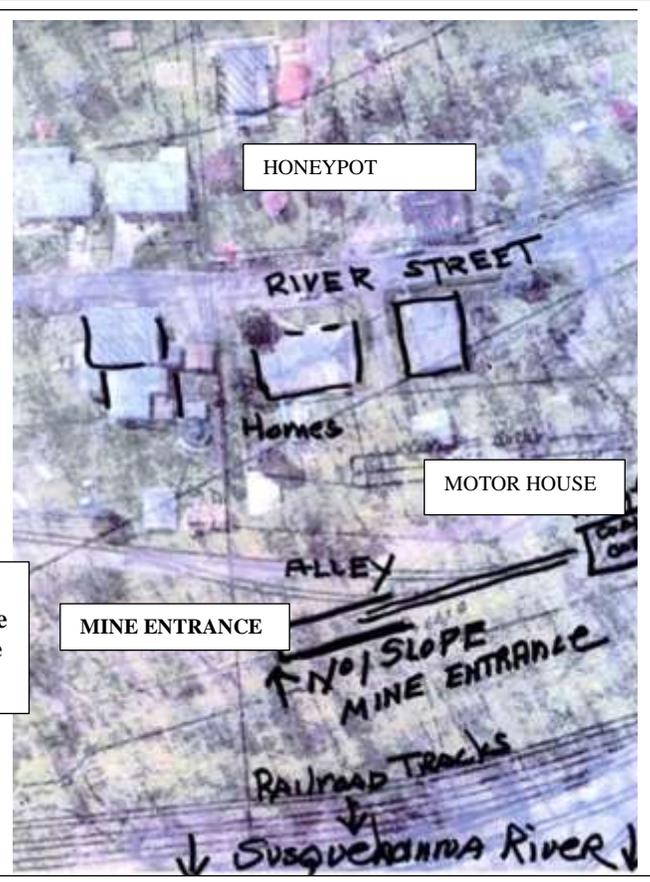
Judy Minsavage, editor

It wasn't a long walk from the beginning of River Street in Honey Pot to an alley that took Mike Stachowiak, John Sherrick and me to what was once the entrance of the Susquehanna #1 Slope Mine, the mine in which 26 men and boys lost their lives and are still buried from a cave-in which dates back to December 18, 1885. As we approached the site, the one thing that stood out for me was the peacefulness. The pleasant sound of birds chirping in the distance and rustle of leaves on the tall trees. Homes of nearby residents lined one side of the path. Likely most of those residents are unaware of the horror that happened just across the street.

A foundation of an old motor house was barely visible through the thick underbrush. Stachowiak explained that the building contained mechanical devices which enabled coal cars to be pulled up from the mines after the #1 stopped using mules. We reached the clearing where the mine's entrance would have been. It's flat and at the back of the clearing showed just a few signs of its history, small pieces of coal heaped in a mound and some large stones that looked to have been excavated possibly to make way for the mine shaft. But what was most apparent was the fact that with time, no one will remember this place or the tragedy that occurred. Families lost sons, brothers, husbands, 26 in all. Forever entombed in this peaceful place. We must continue to remember.



This area which faces the Susquehanna River contained the entrance to the No. 1 Slope Mine. The entrance would have descended down into the mine from left to right. See the video on our website.



This overhead view of Honey Pot shows the location of the #1 Slope Mine entrance, motor house, and general location in relation to the Susquehanna River. It shows the gradual decline from the motor house to the mine entrance.



Small bits of stone and coal remain at the back of the property.

SEE OUR VIDEO:
JOIN US ON THIS JOURNEY TO THE LOCATION OF THE #1 MINE
GO TO OUR WEBSITE www.nanticokehistoryonline.org follow the link

**Nanticoke Mine Disaster - 1885
Names and ages of Deceased as
per Inspectors of Mines Report
dated Dec. 20, 1886.**

**Michael Adamchick, 24 - miner
Thomas Clifford, 14 - doorboy
William Danahey, 15 - driverboy
John Dragno, 35 - miner
William Elkie, 17 - runner
Edward Hargraves, 22 - miner
John Hawk, 26 - laborer
Wadislaw Jelgoshinski, 24 - laborer
Oliver Kivler, 32 - miner
William Kivler, 18 - laborer
Frank Kivler, 30 - miner
Max Longoskie, 16 - driver
Abram Lewis, 35 - miner
Andrew Low, 26
Vincent Luke, 23 - laborer
Edward Matthews, 20 - laborer
August Matule, 45, - miner
Peter Motulwick, 25 - laborer
Joseph McCarty, 25, - miner
John Nowack, 26 - laborer
Adam Rubinsky, 26 - laborer
Isaac Sarver, 26 - miner
John Sarver, 20 - laborer
John Sloff, 27 - laborer
John Shutt, 28 - miner
Thomas Williams, 21 - laborer
One other miner was discovered to be
among the dead, but his name was
unknown.**

INTERESTING FACTS:

The Kivler family lost three of their sons, and the Sarver family lost two of their sons in the #1 Mine Disaster accident.

David T. Williams, a survivor, later ran for the Maryland House of Delegates (Republican) in October 1901.

In the report released by the Inspectors of Mines of the Anthracite Coal Regions of Pennsylvania dated 1886, the location of the No. 1 Slope entrance was described as such, "The No.1 slope entrance is about half a mile west of the center of the town of Nanticoke. It was sunk on the south dip of the Red Ash vein, the lowest workable vein in this mine. Its total length is fifteen hundred and seventy feet, and the grade of its inclination about thirteen degrees. Below it on the same seam, the workings of No.2 shaft, which are very extensively opened, connect; and below that again the workings of No. 1 shaft. "The report also stated that the gangway was re-opened by 1886, a distance of more than two thousand feet, "but not one of the bodies has, as yet, been recovered. No efforts to that effect have been made since April 21. 1886."

UNDERGROUND NANTICOKE: No stone left unturned

THE TUBBS FAMILY

Our Underground Nanticoke series focuses on sites throughout the city that have long since been forgotten, but still exist hidden away from our everyday life. Such is the stone containing the Tubbs family name which is located outside of a dwelling that has been the object of curiosity over the years, the log cabin on Shea Street. At first glance one would believe there is great historical value to the cabin, but actually it was built in 1940 and hides the location of the above named stone, which will forever remind us of the presence of the Tubbs family in Nanticoke.

A LITTLE HISTORY

Almon L. Harter and Frank R. Tubbs created the Harter Undertaking and Livery business on Shea Street in 1907. The company boasted a funeral car weighing 2,000 lbs. with eight columns, improved rollers and eight electric bells. By 1909, the business was known as F.R. Tubbs Undertaker and Embalmer, and was one of the longest running established funeral homes operating in Nanticoke. By 1911, Tubbs constructed a new 2-story funeral home at 20 Shea St. The first floor contained a waiting room, casket display room and an office, which could be transformed into a chapel. The second story was a modern 6-room apartment. By 1916, family member, Ralph S. Tubbs, began to sell cars and became an agent for the Davis Automobile which was produced by the George W. Davis Motor Company of Richmond, IN. Davis was an American automobile manufacturer based in Los Angeles, CA. The company produced odd-looking three-wheeled automobiles from 1947 to 1948. The design did not go over well with consumers and the company was quickly out of business. Sadly, Ralph and his wife lost a 10-month-old daughter to spinal meningitis in October of 1920.



The Tubbs family name is enscribed on this stone outside of the log cabin on Shea Street



THE CURIOUS CASE OF THE NANTICOKE CABIN

Society records presently hold that Ray Tubbs built the cabin situated on Shea Street in 1940. The structure was described as such in an undated article published in the Wilkes-Barre Record, “The logs for the cabin were selected and were as uniform as a box of matches,” with each log carefully skinned to present “the fine appearance that only nature can provide in logs that have all the cleanliness of new growth with the bark removed.”

Shea's Alley, behind the former Strauss store; the article went on to state, will "probably prove a mecca for the folks of this section who will derive plenty of pleasure in just looking at the cabin." The article was correct in that fact that the dwelling, although tucked away just off of Main Street, has over the years been a source of interest for many who discover it.

It is also believed that the property on Shea Street was purchased from the Tubbs family by a gentleman who then built the cabin to house his many hunting trophies and "oddities." When and by whom the Tubbs stone was manufactured, and when it was placed near the entrance to the cabin is unknown and we at the society will continue to pursue the correct story. But for now, the origin of the stone with the Tubbs family name inscribed, is a mystery and remains one of Nanticoke's hidden treasures. 📷

UNDERGROUND NANTICOKE:

Next issue:

**What was behind this
architecture...**



**DO YOU KNOW WHERE THERE IS
A SECRET GEM HIDING IN THE
CITY THAT MAY HOLD AN
INTERESTING TALE OR WOULD
PERHAPS BRING BACK SOME
MEMORIES OF DAYS GONE BY?**

**CALL US AT 570-258-1367. WE'RE
NANTICOKE'S HISTORY
DETECTIVES. WE'LL DO OUR BEST
TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT YOUR
HIDDEN GEM.**

Repurposed:

**A Nanticoke gem gets
a new life**



PIANO HAS LONG HISTORY

JoAnn Jones of Edicott, New York, contacted the Nanticoke Historical Society to find out more about this upright grand piano which was built by the Waltham Piano Company in Milwaukee, Wisconsin between 1890 and 1895.

According to what documentation is available at the Nanticoke Historical Society, it is believed that the piano made its way from Milwaukee to Nanticoke, PA and was sold either through the Hildreth & Company Department Store, or the Clarence Yetter Piano Store, both of which were located in Nanticoke. It may have originally been purchased by the Charles Haag (or Haig) Saloon business located at 22 North Market Street in Nanticoke.

Again, while unproven, it is likely that the piano stayed at 22 North Market Street, even though the business at that address changed hands many times as follows:

- Simon Savage Grocery Store (about 1891-1894)
- Charles Haag (or Haig) Saloon (about 1894-1894)
- Simon Savage Saloon (about 1901-1910)
- Clement Knoll Saloon (about 1911)
- John “Snowball” Osmanski Saloon (about 1911-1923)
- Mary Kempinski Saloon (1923)
- Building destroyed in a fire 1923 and rebuilt
- Mary Bozinski Saloon (or Bozemski or Bozenski) (about 1926-1945). It is believed that this is the married name of Mary Kempinski.
- Danny Bozinski Beer Garden, renamed to Café (about 1945-1957)
- Pete’s Tavern (about 1958-1961)
- Building demolished in 1965



The interior of the piano shows the Waltham Company Stamp

A New Life: A Piano's Journey

By JoAnn Jones

Sometime between 1940 and 1943, the piano was purchased by my Grandfather from the Mary Bozinski Saloon (or Bozemski or Bozenski, depending on what source you use) which was located at 22 North Market Street in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania.

My grandfather gave me the piano in 1981, and we moved it to Endwell, New York, which has been its home for the past 37 years. The piano weighs over 500 pounds and no longer holds a tune, no matter how often the piano tuner is here. We tried to give it away to someone who would “love” it as much as I do, but no one wanted it, even for free. I have great memories of my grandfather playing the piano when I was a young child and while growing up, so I hated to see the piano destroyed.

I am a great HGTV fan and enjoy Flea Market Flip and other shows like it, so I was aware of the concept of repurposing, but it was my husband who came up with the suggestion. He pointed out that I could still keep the memories alive by repurposing the piano into something lighter, smaller, and more usable. He offered to do the work of disassembling it and I started the search for someone who would work with old wood.

It took almost 2 years, but I finally found someone willing and enthusiastic about working with old wood. I had already designed a buffet, using an idea I got from an old buffet of my grandmother’s that I had always liked. Then I added some ideas of my own, like leaving an open space for wine bottles and using the black piano keys as wine bottle separators.

PIANO

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My husband started the disassembly process and found:

- Various stickers and warranties
- Each piece is numbered, so it is obvious that each piece was made specifically for this piano.
- Signatures of what we believe are the 2 men who built the piano
- Indications that at one time, a large mirror had been attached to the back of the piano, we assume so the piano player in the saloon could see what was happening behind him.

We are now the proud owners of a much smaller, lighter, more usable piece of furniture that keeps the memories alive because it was made from a piece of history. 🇺🇸



The interior portion of the piano, although old, looks brand new.



Waltham supplied a ten year warranty from the date of manufacture.



The Repurposed piano is now a beautiful buffet with a new life.



The repurposed pieces of the piano are assembled.

ARE YOU IN POSSESSION OF A PIECE OF NANTICOKE HISTORY AND HAVE A STORY TO TELL? LET US KNOW.

NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY WEBSITE:

We are committed to making your future visits to our web site a pleasant and an educational experience and are constantly looking for ways to enrich your knowledge of the history of Nanticoke. Please log on to read more regarding the stories published in our newsletters. Follow our fundraising efforts, and check our calendar of events for meeting dates and times. We also invite you to keep following us on Facebook.



LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS
ISSUE'S STORIES ON OUR
WEBSITE:

www.nanticokehistoryonline.org

NANTICOKE HISTORICAL SOCIETY DISPLAYS

See photo and read the full story of the gold medal presentation to the
Greater Nanticoke Area High School

Also, read the complete story behind the Nanticoke Historical Society
revolving displays at the Greater Nanticoke Area High School

Log on to www.nanticokehistoryonline.org.
follow the links on our Home Page

The Susquehanna #1 Mining Disaster Of 1885

SEE OUR VIDEO:

**JOIN US ON OUR JOURNEY TO THE LOCATION OF THE #1 MINE
GO TO OUR WEBSITE**

www.nanticokehistoryonline.org follow the link

The Nanticoke Historical Society
Samantha Mill House
495 East Main Street
Nanticoke, Pennsylvania 18634
570-258-1367

HISTORICAL RESEARCH/PHOTO REQUEST FORM

Thank you for contacting the Nanticoke Historical Society in regard to your research/photo request. Please complete this form as completely as possible and mail it to the NHS at the above address.

There is a \$ 25.00 charge for all responses and that fee covers one hour of research. The base fee must accompany this request form and also covers up to four (4) pages of photocopies. There is a separate fee and postage schedule for photographs. Should your request require more than one hour of research, you will be contacted regarding the additional fee.

DO NOT send requests asking for all information available about a subject, family name or specific person. Such requests are too broad for our volunteer staff to handle.

IMPORTANT: The fee you pay is based on the time spent on the research, not on the results. While many searches produce results, not all do. Although every effort will be made to obtain the information, there may be no information available. Submission of this form indicates the acceptance of these terms.

Requestor Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip _____
Email: _____ Phone: _____

Description of Research/Photo Request: _____

Subject Name: _____

Pertinent information to assist with your request:

SIGNATURE

I understand that this service of provided as a courtesy and that all research is done by NHS volunteers. Requests are processed in the order that they are received and may take any amount of time to produce any results. I understand that the volunteers are not responsible for the data contained in my results, or lack thereof. There is no guarantee associated with this service. Research fees are nonrefundable.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

WONDERING WHAT TO DO WITH OLD PHOTOS AND MEMORABILIA?

Our loved ones have a history. Their life stories are deeply rooted in their community as residents, veterans, business owners, teachers, members of organizations and so much more. The Nanticoke Historical Society realizes and respects how important each person's story is to their relatives and friends as well as the community in which they lived.

That is why the society respectfully asks those who have lost a loved one to consider the historical society when taking stock of memorabilia and photos. The society may already have pieces of a family's history in its vast database to which pictures of an old homestead, business, rare family photos or writings may be added completing a genealogical picture in tribute to those who have passed. We sometimes find ourselves with memorabilia or photos passed down through generations. Some of these photos may contain scenes of old Nanticoke, a street, or building that has been long since razed. Society information officers will scan and return items to families if requested.

We do reserve the right to accept or deny items that we can and cannot use, or store ourselves, but at the very least, we may be able to take some of the burden off of family members who find themselves undecided as to what to do with countless old photos and/or memorabilia that may contain valuable pieces of the city's history. For more information or to donate items Contact the Historical Society at 570-258-1367 or Email: history@nanticokehistoryonline.org.

LOOKING FOR A YEARBOOK?

THE FOLLOWING YEARBOOKS ARE LOCATED AT OUR OFFICES:

Check our website for availability

Nanticoke High School

John S. Fine or GNA (Greater Nanticoke Area High School)

Newport High School, Wanamie,

Newport Twp.

GAR High School

Bloomsburg University

Wilkes University

Kings College

Duplicates from each high school are available for purchase.

For more information call our office at 570-258-1367.