

# HAYCOCK HISTORICAL NEWS

The Newsletter of The Haycock Historical Society • Winter 2022

## THE HOLLAND FAMILY

HAYCOCK TOWNSHIP AND BEDMINSTER TOWNSHIP, BUCKS COUNTY, PA

BY DAVID FUNK

A long time ago, in Haycock Township, there was a small one-room schoolhouse at the southern foot of Haycock Mountain on Ridge Road. It was built of fieldstone and was called the “Hickory Grove School House”. It was on the righthand side of the road about one mile in on Ridge Road from Route 412 and the village of Harrow. It had a covered porch on the front with a center door and a school bell in a cupola on top. In later years, there was a short section of chain link fence in front to keep the children from running into the road. There were also two outhouses (“boys” and “girls”) a short distance away out back. In the early 1940’s, the Haycock Township School Board decided to sell off the schoolhouse.



Hickory Grove School circa 1942

My grandfather, William Holland, was planning his retirement at that time after working as a postman in the Frankford section of Northeast Philadelphia for many years. Frankford was also where he, my grandmother Edna, their four daughters, Dorothy, Marguerite, Helen, and Alva (my mother), and my great-grandmother Clara all lived. By this time, the eldest daughter, Dorothy, had married Dr. Dennis Stombaugh an osteopathic physician in Philadelphia, and they had since found, renovated, and moved into a house on Haycock Mountain some few years before, not far from the schoolhouse. The large white house had four two-story pillars in front and could be seen halfway up the mountain

from Ridge Road. There was a long driveway up, lined with pine trees on both sides. Aunt Dorothy and Uncle Dennis Stombaugh let my grandfather know about the upcoming sale of the schoolhouse. In September of 1942, my grandfather purchased the Hickory Grove School House and property from Warren High, Secretary of the Haycock Township School Board for the now amazing sum of just \$700. Over the next several years, my grandfather and my father worked to convert the schoolhouse into a home.



Dorothy and Dr. Stombaugh's House

Initially, the schoolhouse had no running water or central heat. On weekends and during free time, my grandfather and grandmother would drive up to the schoolhouse from Philadelphia to work on its renovation into a home. Often my parents John and Alva Funk, and aunts and uncles would come along too to help and join in the “fun.” Eventually, the schoolhouse was converted into a wonderful stone home. The plaster was removed, and the stone exterior was pointed, there was an addition built on the back and a fireplace built on the front. The door was moved to the west side, there were two bay windows installed, and a screened patio was built on the back. A two-car garage was also built where the

outhouses had stood, and a split rail fence surrounded the property. Another trim white picket fence made a small, enclosed yard at the new front door and handmade copper post lights from a craftsman in New Hope lit the way at night. My grandmother used her green thumb to surround the home with perennial flower gardens. The house was beautiful.



**Renovated School House 1958**



**Aunt Dorothy and Uncle Dennis by their fireplace**

Within a couple years, my aunt Helen and her husband William Dunham also moved up from Frankford to a stone home on Ridge Road in Bedminster Township, five houses down the hill from John and Rosie Freis' Garage. I do not know if they had the house built or if they bought it finished, but I remember hearing that it was built from stone from another old local building that had been demolished – perhaps near the Tohickon Village in Haycock Township.

Not long after that, my parents also moved up from Frankford to Bedminster Township and rented part of the old house directly across from the Kellers Church Cemetery. There was not much in the way of rental available, and they had to convince the owner to rent it to them. It was a

primitive side section of the house, with only an outhouse and a hand pump in the kitchen for water. It had a “bucket-a-day” coal stove for heat and yet my parents said they had the most fun ever living there. This would have been in the late 1940's. I remember them talking about a bad ice storm one winter which knocked out the electric, and my grandparents had to leave their newly renovated schoolhouse and come stay with my parents in this primitive little house because my parents had oil lamps and used coal for heat and to cook. No electricity needed!



**Late 1940's Ice Storm at the House Rented by the Funks**

In 1950, my parents bought a house on Ridge Road in Bedminster Township, for themselves, next to John Frei's Garage, and four houses up from my Aunt Helen's house. These were the days when you didn't necessarily need a realtor and they apparently just saw a “for sale” sign in front of the house and bought it privately from a family named Detweiler. It was a white stucco two story house with a stone fireplace and a shady porch on the one side and a garage on the other side. It was in an oak woods, as were all the houses down the hill on Ridge Road going towards the old Tohickon/Stover dam and the little Tohickon Village. Going in order down the hill from John Frei's Garage were the Funk, Greeson (later Aspinall), Ketterer, and Snyder homes, and then my aunt and uncle, the Dunhams. Then bearing right off Ridge Road onto the dirt road that went

down to the five-arched bridge at Tohickon Village, there were Mrs. Haas, the Wylies, and the Bainers. There was a path that we kids made that cut across the backyards of all these houses and was a throughfare for our travels throughout the neighborhood. If I remember correctly, there was a short little foot bridge of some kind over a ditch between Aspinalls and Ketterers. I remember we could stop at my Aunt Helen's for cookies, sitting at her green picnic table out back, and we could also climb the little hill in back of Ketterer's place and then roll down again.



**John and Alva Funk House later lost to the park**

We could take that path all the way down to the dirt road that went to the five-arched stone bridge in Tohickon Village and play and swim in the creek. I remember that there was an older couple who came frequently in an early '50's Plymouth and would sit and picnic and watch us play in the water. They were friendly and watched over us, but I have no idea who they were. It was an idyllic place to be a child. I remember the smells and sounds of the woods and the water, the birds singing and having lots of familiar friends – even if I was younger than most. I think that Susie Aspinall, Debbie Wylie, and myself were the youngest of the kids.

We were not allowed to walk down busy Ridge Road to the old Tohickon/Stover dam, but Mom would take us down often to swim and play in the large pool the dam provided. I remember a rope hanging from a tree that the older kids could swing out on and then let go - splashing into the pool. There was a dirt parking area there next to the creek, and I remember people using buckets of creek water to wash their cars.



**David Funk and Susie Aspinall**

A lot of the memories that I have of this time are episodic rather than from some larger context because I was only six when the state used eminent domain to take our properties for Nockamixon State Park. Many are just brief “snapshots” of memory but remain pretty clear after sixty years. Even at that young age, I was a car nut, and can remember to this day almost all the cars that the neighbors drove. Once there was a woman in a black Ford who got a flat tire out front and came knocking on our door to use our phone to call for help.



**David and his '54 Buick**

I remember there was a movable clothesline of sorts strung between our second story bedroom to Doug and Denny Aspinalls' bedroom next door that was used to clip "secret" kid messages to and pull them back and forth - though I never remember using it. I remember looking for and choosing a suitable rock from our driveway to take to kindergarten to paint a snowman on as a gift for my father. He kept it for the rest of his life, and I have it still. I remember seeing, or perhaps just hearing about, a kid who fell out of an apple tree up at Fleck's house on Indian Trail Road and broke their arm. It might have been Jerry Fleck. I remember seeing Mr. Printz's little Nash station wagon sitting at John Frei's Garage after being smashed in an accident. I remember one of the junk cars in particular, which sat in the field in back of John Frei's Garage. It was a red '49 or '50 Mercury. I remember stacked barrels of road oil (?), bowling ball sized "smudge pots", and piles of stone across from my aunt's house on Ridge Road halfway up the hill from Tohickon Creek. I remember going up to Trauger's Monuments where they had a little store with a counter having penny candies and rulers and pencils, and newspapers to buy. Bert Trauger would sell eggs from the backroom where I think I remember a big old coal cook stove. I remember the yellow daffodils my mom had planted growing at the edge of the woods in our back yard - and indeed their descendants still bloom there every spring sixty years later.

there then. Another very pleasant general memory I have of this beautiful area is riding in the back of my parents '54 Buick on Ridge Road with the windows down in the evening hearing the crickets and tree frogs singing and watching the fields and the cedar trees pass by as dusk came on. That is a very peaceful memory.



**Aunt Helen in front of the Dunham Home later lost to the park**

We were lucky to only have to move a few miles away once the park took our house in 1961. My parents built a new home on Sweetbriar Road in Bedminster Township and my grandmother built a home right next door, where my sister now lives. My aunt and uncle Dunham bought a lot across the road from us and built their new home, so we all created our own new neighborhood and did not get scattered apart. The park did not condemn my grandmother's schoolhouse at first, but my grandfather had passed away in 1953 and she didn't drive. When she and my parents realized that they would have to drive all the way around the new lake to get to her schoolhouse, they asked the state to buy her house, hoping that they would leave it standing for an administration building or historical site. It stood empty for a few years while the park was under construction, and then one day a neighbor called to tell my parents that they were "tearing down the schoolhouse." She said that they had uncovered the original blackboard that my grandparents and other relatives had all signed and written on before walling it over when making the renovations. We went up to see it and took pictures which unfortunately I can't find now. Shortly after that, the home was totally demolished and now nothing is left at the site. You can still vaguely see the outline of the property from the hedgerow surrounding it, because the neighbor continued to mow the property for years afterwards.

Shortly after my grandparents took possession of the



**The Five-Arch Bridge looking into Tohickon Village from Bedminster Township**

A treat for the whole family was a trip to Donahue's red brick garage at the end of Ridge Road at route 412 (Durham Road) for ice cream. It looked much the same back then except that there were two garage bays, and the ice cream store was on the left side - just like OWOWCOW is today. Apparently in the '40's my parents and grandparents used to go up to a different house across from Donahue's to buy pints of ice cream in the evening. I suppose Donahue's was not

schoolhouse in 1942, they found that someone had stolen the cast iron school bell from the cupola. However, the original schoolmaster's desk was still there along with some old textbooks. I still have the schoolmaster's desk and one single textbook that I picked up off the ground when they were tearing the home down. It is a little book of poem called Evangeline. It is still enclosed in a homemade brown paper bag cover and has a sheet of yellowed lined paper folded inside on which a child had written out the poem The Night Before Christmas. I also have the original deed to the property when it was sold to the school district in the mid-1800's, and the deed when the school district sold it to my grandfather in 1942.

to look. The last time I was up there, parts of the foundation of the barn and the house were still visible, and the concrete swimming pool was still there along with the remains of the pool house and pump.

Today, I have mixed feelings about Nockamixon State Park and how it came to be. It is a beautiful part of eastern Pennsylvania, and I am glad that it will never be developed, but instead will hopefully always remain a refuge for wildlife and a respite for people. However, the intangible cost of it was a tremendous loss of history, both personal and archeologically, along with the personal devastation that it caused for so many people, particularly those who had owned and lived on their land for many generations. For so many families, neighbors, and friends who were uprooted and scattered to the wind, it will never seem quite worth it.



**John and Marguerite Funk 1950**

So much history was lost under the waters of Nockamixon Lake, but for the state to demolish the Hickory Grove School House for no reason was very sad. My parents' house and aunt and uncle Dunhams' house, along with all the other houses in the oak woods going down the hill on Ridge Road were all torn down and knocked into their basements. You can still find some remains jutting out of the ground – blocks, bricks, bits of rain gutters, - but each year there is less to be found. My aunt and uncle Stombaugh's house up on Haycock Mountain stood empty for years. It was vandalized and eventually set on fire. After that it was torn down. The pine trees that lined the long driveway up to the house are mostly gone now, but some are still there if you know where



**William Dunham fishing at the Tohickon/Stover Dam**





**IN MEMORY OF**

**Robert Pope**

**December 24, 1923 -October 19,2021**



**IN MEMORY OF**

**David Myers**

**March 3, 1930 - January 5, 2022**



**Meet Henry Mercer**

Our November meeting was an informative and entertaining presentation by reenactor Jamie Bradley.

**Our May Meeting will be presented by Michael Cuba**

Originally from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Michael Cuba moved to Vermont in the mid 90's where, as a student in college, he first began to hone his woodworking skills. Michael founded [Knobb Hill Joinery](#), with Seth Kelley, to focus on preservation and restoration timber framing while occasionally designing and cutting new structures. He has spent a great deal of time documenting historic buildings, teaching classes, and demonstrating traditional timber framing methods. After moving back to the Mid-Atlantic, in 2013, he founded Transom HPC and shifted his focus toward dendrochronology work and assessments of historic buildings.

Michael is active in the [Timber Framers Guild](#), both as chair of the [Traditional Timber framing Research & Advisory Group](#) and as the editor of [TIMBER FRAMING](#), the Guild's quarterly journal. Michael serves on the boards of the [National Barn Alliance](#), the [Historic Barn and Farm Foundation of Pennsylvania](#), the advisory board of [Handshouse Studio](#), and historical societies in Pennsylvania and New Jersey.

## HHS ELECTIONS

Nominations for a new president and vice president will be open at the April meeting, and in May we will elect new members to fill these positions.

## FRIDAY MORNING COFFEE

Friday coffee at Stokes will resume each Friday starting in April. It will be nice to visit with everyone again. We will have seating under the tree if weather permits.

## STORIES WANTED

We are collecting stories from members about what you are doing during the isolation for the COVID 19 pandemic. These stories will be placed on our website under Haycock Stories. Years later the stories will tell how we coped with the situation.

Please contact Pat DeWald with your stories.

## FREE ACCESS TO PENNSYLVANIA RECORDS ON ANCESTRY

<https://www.phmc.pa.gov/Archives/Research-Online/Pages/Ancestry-PA.aspx>

Past years' issues of our Newsletter are available on our web site.

[www.haycockhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.haycockhistoricalsociety.org)

“Our Lost Tohickon Valley” and “Haycock Township and Eddie Bauer” are available as E-Books on Amazon

## PRINT VERSIONS

“Haycock Township and Eddie Bauer” is available at Stokes Headquarters, Haycock Township Building, and Margie Fulp

“Our Lost Tohickon Valley” is available at Sines 5&10, Stokes Headquarters, Haycock Township Building, The Treasure Trove in Perkaspie, and Margie Fulp

## MEETINGS

March 18, 2022: Postponed

April 21, 2022: 7 p.m. Covered Bridges. Presentation by Bill Wilson of the Covered Bridge Society of Bucks County.

May 19, 2022: 7 p.m. Dendrochronology Demystified. Presentation by Michael Cuba. This presentation will explore the science of dendrochronology (tree ring dating) and its applied use for dating and interpreting historic structures. We will examine the principles of the science and the more recent developments of isotopic dendrochronology in the UK. Several case studies will be presented featuring local examples of dated structures along with some prominent projects from overseas. While this science can offer conclusive felling dates for timbers used in building, interpretation and context for this information relies on both documentary and physical evidence. Michael will use examples of recent reconstruction projects of the Dominy House, in East Hampton, NY, and the reconstruction of one of the trusses from the Notre Dame de Paris Cathedral that was lost in a fire in 2019, to underscore the importance of documentation in preservation work.

Third Thursday meetings are held at the Haycock Community Center, formerly the Haycock Elementary School, at Old Bethlehem Road and Sawmill Road, in Applebachsville. The meeting room is Community Room West.

The Thursday meetings begin at 7 p.m.

## OFFICERS

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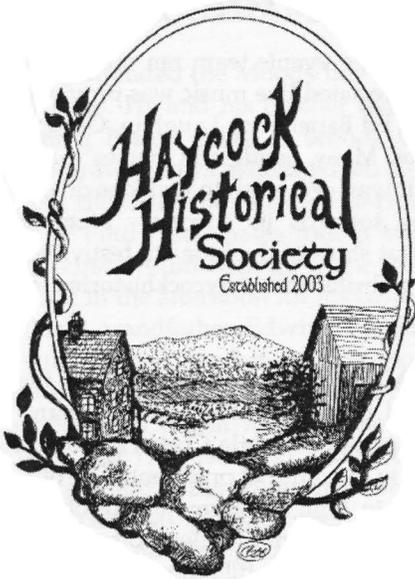
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## AN INVITATION TO MEMBERSHIP

YES, ENROLL ME AS A MEMBER OF THE HAYCOCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY!

I WANT TO BE PART OF RECLAIMING OUR HISTORY AND PRESERVING IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

- Individual Membership - \$20/year**  
Receive quarterly newsletter and attend all special functions this year – Jan. thru Dec.
- Family Membership (Parents & Children in household) - \$30/year**  
Receive quarterly newsletter and attend all special functions this year – Jan. thru Dec.
- Corporate Sponsor - \$100/year**  
Gain advertisement in our newsletter by yearly sponsorship (ad size smaller than business card)
- Corporate Patron - \$200/year**  
Gain advertisement in our newsletter by yearly sponsorship (ad is full business card size)
- Lifetime Individual Membership - \$200**  
Receive honorary lifetime status, receive quarterly newsletters and attend all special functions
- Lifetime Household Couple Membership - \$250**  
For just \$50 more, join as a household and enjoy all the benefits of lifetime membership

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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SEND APPLICATION ALONG WITH CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO HAYCOCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO:

P.O. Box 715, Quakertown, PA 18951