

# Annual Newsletter Brooklyn Historical Society

# 2023

PO Box 58, Brooklyn, PA 18813

## ANNUAL 2023 UPDATE THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It always amazes me how quickly a year can pass! We already find ourselves marching through spring, well on our way to summer and the annual Brooklyn Historical Society meeting. At last year's meeting, Sara Stone Miller and Joe Thomas gave an outstanding overview of the Stone property located at the southwest corner of Maple Street and Main Street in Brooklyn.

The house and surrounding property formerly belonged to Sara's father and mother, Curtis and Margaret Stone. Curtis and Margaret were both founding members of the Brooklyn Historical Society, with Curtis being arguably the Society's most accomplished member to date. How many Pennsylvania small towns can boast a single individual who was an Olympic and Pan American Games athlete, university professor, *and* World War II Veteran? Margaret's musical skills, teaching, and talent for writing were equally impressive.

The property that they both bequeathed to Sara has had an outsized role in Brooklyn's history, not only as the site of a magnificent house, but also the site of a former store and doctor's office. Sara was kind enough to share with the Society the painstaking work that has gone into the continuing restoration of the house and the property. Sara explained how, under the direction and skill of Joe Thomas, the foundation of the house was not only restored but made stronger. The process involved bringing in steel supporters to hold the house up while foundational elements were re-laid. Eventually, the steel support system was removed while the house resettled onto its new foundation.

One of the most fascinating parts of the story Sara relayed was the discovery of an old brick bread oven in the basement. Such an oven would likely have had a hot fire built within or under the brick structure. The oven vented through the main chimney of the house and would have been used to produce piping hot loaves of bread or other baked and heated goods back in the day. It is basically the same principle that we see today with brick-oven pizzerias, which have become enormously popular.

Sara continues to invest in the restoration of her family property and regularly shares updates with BHS officers. The Society is lucky to count Sara as a friend, and we look forward to working together to help preserve an important part of Brooklyn's history.



*The Stone property. Photo by Richard Zick, Sr.*

In addition to the ongoing restoration of the Stone property, Brooklyn saw another construction project unfold over the past year. The former Brooklyn School and Township Building was demolished in November 2022. The old school was part of so many people's lives; I have not yet met one person who did not feel somewhat sad to see the passing of this old edifice. I spent kindergarten plus six grades at Brooklyn Elementary. I have nothing but fine memories and am grateful for the teachers I had there and the education that I received. There are lessons that I learned there that I carry to this day. Later on in the newsletter there is a piece on the passing of this landmark building to help us remember.

I look forward to seeing you at this year's annual meeting on July 16, 2023, at 2 p.m. at the Universalist Church in Brooklyn. We will host a presentation by Cassandra Coleman, Executive Director at America250PA, on the local events marking the 250th birthday of the United States. At the meeting, we will also cover the Society's business and election of officers. We welcome new members and officers in the Society and hope to have more folks involved in our activities and projects. See you in July!

— *John Darcy, President*

Following many years of efforts to save it, the Brooklyn School building on Maple Street was finally brought down in November 2022. Prior to demolition, the building's contents were saved and salvaged, including the unique large folding doors in the second-floor meeting room and the piano in that same room. These items and others will live on as symbols of nearly 100 years of service to Brooklyn's children and youth. Numerous other items were saved and will eventually be displayed in a museum-like setting. The building is gone, but in its place will be a community pavilion.

A small number of bricks were also saved by the Society and will eventually be offered as memorial keepsakes to members and the public. Stay tuned to the Society's Facebook page and website

([BrooklynPAHistoricalSociety.net](http://BrooklynPAHistoricalSociety.net)) for more information on these memorial bricks.

The building was erected in 1923 on a lot below the Universalist Church purchased for \$2,200. The building itself was erected at a cost of \$36,500; a considerable amount in the 1920s. Even today, its construction would be considered high quality. The company that demolished the building (for much more than \$36,500) commented on the high standard of the construction material and techniques, which time and nature had overcome. Before its demise, I was able to take some pictures of the building's abandoned interior including an interesting photo of comments written on the main beam that supported the large folding doors in the second-floor former meeting room. The comments on the beam were in



*Above: Folding doors and a piano salvaged from the second floor of the school building. Below: A wooden beam with notes in pencil. Photos by Dave Palmer.*



pencil and identified the beam's destination as the "Brooklyn school building." The building was last used as a school building by the Mountain View School District in 1991, prior to the consolidation of the Brooklyn, Clifford, and Harford Elementary Schools at the present-day site across from the Mountain View High School.

Though now physically gone, its memory will live on with a new community pavilion, celebrating Brooklyn Village and its surrounding communities' children and youth for years to come. ■

Learn more about the history of Brooklyn schools: The Society's publication, "Brooklyn Township Schools 1800-1991," is available for purchase. Use the order form on page 9.







# Scenic overlook update

by Jessica Hibbard

From 1912 to 1915, the Delaware, Lackawanna, and Western Railroad shortened its Clarks Summit to Hallstead route by 3.6 miles. This project included construction of the Martins Creek Viaduct (Kingsley Bridge) and the Tunkhannock Creek Viaduct (Nicholson Bridge). The Martins Creek Viaduct was completed first, becoming the world’s largest reinforced concrete bridge. Today, after Nicholson, it remains the second-largest bridge of its kind. The massive structure, completed in 1914, is 150 feet tall and 1,600 feet long.

The Brooklyn Historical Society worked with the current landowner and local partners to make the best view of the viaduct available to the public. A new scenic overlook, with informational signs and a gravel parking lot, opened in 2022.

Following the July 10 annual meeting, BHS invited the public to a ribbon cutting ceremony at the new scenic overlook.

On August 28, Jon Meyer, host of WNEP’s “On the Pennsylvania Road,” visited the scenic overlook and interviewed BHS officers Dave Palmer and Richard Zick, Sr. The segment aired on August 31. ■



### Visit the Martins Creek Viaduct scenic overlook

From U.S. Route 11 in Kingsley, turn west on Charles Road and cross the bridge. At the intersection of Creek Road and Zicks Hill Road, continue up the hill on Zicks Hill Road for about one-third of a mile. The overlook is on the right.

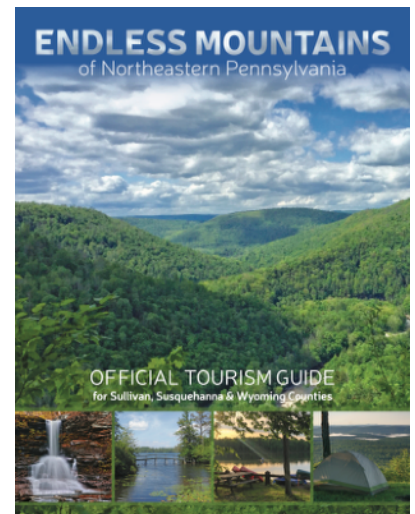
Find the overlook via Google Maps by searching for “Scenic Overlook (Kingsley Bridge) Viaduct” or via GPS: 340 Zicks Hill Road, Kingsley PA 18826.



Ribbon cutting ceremony. Photo courtesy of Jacquie Holgate.



Channel 16 at the overlook. Photos by Jacquie Holgate.



The Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau featured the Martins Creek Viaduct in its latest visitors guide, and the Society placed an advertisement to promote the overlook. Request a copy of the guide and read the article online at [endlessmountains.org](http://endlessmountains.org).



## Wreaths Across America at the Dennis Farm

by Dave Palmer

Since the last annual meeting of the Brooklyn Historical Society in July 2022, the Society formally applied for and was approved to be the official Veterans graves representative for the military Veterans buried in the Perkins-Dennis Cemetery at the Dennis Farm. This responsibility includes maintaining the Veterans service markers and American flags provided by the Susquehanna County Veterans Affairs Office. Two Revolutionary War Veterans, one War of 1812 Veteran, and one Civil War Veteran are buried in this cemetery.

In addition, the society registered with Wreaths Across America in 2022 and funded the acquisition and placement of Christmas wreaths on each of the graves, as well as the cemetery gates and Perkins-Dennis Family Cemetery Monument. BHS hopes to continue this tradition each December, and would like to invite youth groups to participate in the future.

“The Dennis Farm Charitable Land Trust and descendants of the Perkins-Dennis family are honored and thank the Brooklyn Historical Society for placing the ‘Wreaths Across America’ wreaths at the cemetery, in recognition of the American Revolution, War of 1812 and Civil War veterans resting there. Each Veteran served in the United States military so that all Americans could enjoy the freedoms we enjoy today,” said M. Denise Dennis, DFCLT President & CEO, “We are deeply appreciative that their service is being recognized.”

The BHS is also coordinating an effort to replace the Veterans’ government headstones in the Perkins-Dennis Cemetery on behalf of the Dennis Farm Charitable Land Trust. ■



Above: The cemetery monument. Photo by Jessica Hibbard. Below: John Arnone, Annie Palmer, and Richard Zick, Sr., placed eight wreaths at the Perkins-Dennis Cemetery in honor of the Veterans interred there. Photo by Dave Palmer.



## BHS attends Cemetery Preservation Workshop

by Dave Palmer

Cemeteries play an important role in genealogy and preserving our family and community heritage. Brooklyn Historical Society Secretary Dave Palmer recently attended the inaugural Cemetery Preservations Workshop in April at the Susquehanna County Library. Conducted by the Endless Mountains Heritage Region (EMHR), the sessions were sponsored by the Susquehanna County Marcellus Legacy Fund and open to all county residents.

Each day included opportunities to learn about the history of cemeteries, research sources, and methods for documentation. Appropriate cleaning

techniques, including hands-on demonstrations, were the focus of the workshops. Each participant received an instruction workbook and a toolkit of supplies to take home for use in their own community’s cemeteries.

BHS has identified four cemeteries in Brooklyn Township: Mountain View Cemetery, Westside Cemetery, Evergreen Cemetery, and the Perkins-Dennis Family Cemetery. Let us know of other cemeteries as we develop a map for the next issue of this newsletter: Contact Jessica Hibbard at [jesshibb@gmail.com](mailto:jesshibb@gmail.com). ■

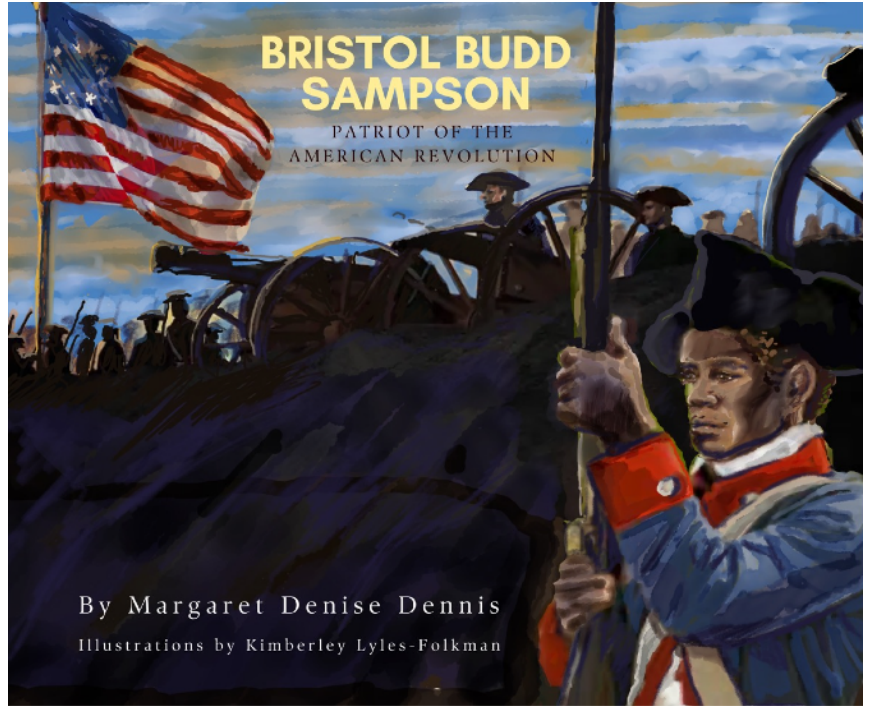
## Dennis Farm to be honored with a Liberty Bell replica

by Jessica Hibbard

This summer, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania will begin its celebration of the nation's 250th birthday and honor the Perkins-Dennis family's legacy by placing its first commemorative replica of the Liberty Bell at the Dennis Farm. A dedication ceremony is scheduled for June 28.

As part of the Pennsylvania Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial's preservation mission, America250PA will place commemorative bells across the Commonwealth to highlight historically significant locations. Each bronze commemorative bell is six feet tall and weighs 1,300 pounds.

Also in June, Keystone College Press will publish a new children's book, "Bristol Budd Sampson: Patriot of the American Revolution," written by M. Denise Dennis with illustrations by Kimberley Lyles-Folkman. Guests at the bell dedication ceremony will receive the first copies of the book. After the ceremony, books will go on sale to raise funds for the Dennis Farmhouse Museum. Bristol Budd Sampson, a



Above: Sales of new book about Revolutionary War Veteran Bristol Budd Sampson will help fund the Dennis Farmhouse Museum.

Revolutionary War Veteran, was Prince Perkins' son-in-law, and is interred in the Perkins-Dennis Family Cemetery on the Dennis Farm. ■

## Learn about America250PA at the BHS Annual Meeting

Cassandra Coleman, Executive Director for the America250PA initiative, will be the guest speaker at the Brooklyn Historical Society's Annual Meeting this summer. Coleman will share more about the program and Brooklyn Township's special part in celebrating America's 250th birthday.

BHS members and the public are invited to attend the Annual Meeting at 2 p.m. on Sunday, July 16, at the First Universalist Church, 6925 Maple Street in Brooklyn. ■



Left: Cassandra Coleman.

### Remembrances

The Brooklyn Historical Society wishes to remember Society members and family members who have passed. We extend our sincerest condolences to the family and friends of Amy Ely Bush (daughter of BHS member Ken Ely), BHS members Grace Rose and Homer Gere, and BHS founding member Paul Gere.



Written evidence in the records of the First Universalist Church on Maple Street in Brooklyn referenced a time capsule in the cornerstone of the church foundation. Placed there in 1872 upon the completion of the present-day edifice, the capsule remained hidden, despite one unsuccessful attempt to locate it in the 1990s.



Photos by Dave Palmer.

Last summer, technology came to the rescue in the form of ground-penetrating radar. The Trustees of the church contacted the archeology department at the State University of New York at Binghamton to request assistance in locating the time capsule. In June, a two-person team from SUNY Binghamton found an “anomaly” behind the cornerstone.

Still not sure that the capsule itself was found, the church decided to take a risk and expose the anomaly. In October, Kenny Mason of Brooklyn Township and his team carefully drilled a hole in the cement seam of the cornerstone and located a metal object. Initial excitement turned to disappointment, as the recovered metal box had been exposed to the elements for many years, and the contents were mostly destroyed. The team recovered a few small pieces of what appeared to be leather, which may have been part of a small Bible.

The only surviving object is a large metal plate inscribed with the following text:

*This house erected for the worship of almighty God, the sovereign architect of his universe and truth, hope, and cherished faith in God. Hope in salvation and charity to all mankind.*

*Samuel Weston     Alfred Tiffany  
Amos Bailey       Fred Bailey  
Charles Perrigo    Enoch Lord, Principal  
                                 Architect + Master Builder  
Cornerstone laid 22nd day of July 1824.*

The verbiage and date indicate the plate was in an earlier time capsule at the original church across from present-day Mountain View Cemetery, which was once the Universalist Cemetery.

On July 22 this year, the Universalist Church will place a new time capsule in the church cornerstone. The public will be invited. ■

## Can you answer these family history questions?

The BHS received two intriguing genealogy inquiries via Facebook. If you have answers to these questions, please contact Dave Palmer at 570-498-6637.

“I am researching someone in my family tree, and I would like to know some facts about her. She was supposedly born in Brooklyn, PA. Either Sarah A. Martin or Sarah A. Maryott. Her parents were buried at Old Hill Cemetery. I would love some help finding records of births from the early 1800's. This birth would have been around 1818-1822.”

“I’m looking at an article in the Montrose Democrat from 3 Aug 1899 referring to the old M.E. Church at Brooklyn (PA), where the Tewksbury Family gathering was held. I’m a Tewksbury descendant and trying to compile a comprehensive Tewksbury tree. Does this church or its records still exist? Also would you have any contacts that could help me with Jersey Hill Church records?”

## Friendship quilt returns to Brooklyn after 146 years

by Dave Palmer

In late summer 2022, the Brooklyn Historical Society was offered and accepted the donation of a friendship quilt that was completed by several Brooklyn Township women. The quilt, dated August 1, 1876, was discovered in a family cedar chest in Baldwinsville, New York, and offered to the BHS by Tom Tallet and his wife. Tom had remembered that his mother was given the quilt for use after a pool party at a friend's house in the Binghamton, New York, area in the 1970s. In lieu of towels, this quilt was offered to provide drying warmth to her children, including Tom. Tom found the BHS through an internet search for Brooklyn, and contacted Dave and Annie Palmer about the quilt. BHS hopes to display this generous gift in a museum-like setting.

More research is needed on the names on the quilt, but many of the surnames indicate a connection to the Universalist Church in Brooklyn.



The quilt was made for a friend named Erin Barnum, who passed on August 10, 1876. Age and penmanship present some challenges, but the names on the quilt look to be: R.H. Smith; Eliza Bailey; Sarah Peckham; Parisa Gere; Adaline Bailey; Lucinda Bailey; Sophia Breed; Caroline Bailey; Mary Peckham; Henrietta Smith; Jenette Norton; Henrietta Kent; Lucy Daley; Sarah Esther Peckham; ? A. Daley; Maria Guernsaey; Amy Palmer; Erinica Bolles; Nancy Palmer; Eunice Palmer.

We're thrilled to make this marvelous acquisition from a gracious couple with no known connections to Brooklyn. Let us know if you have any information about this quilt, and come to the Society's Annual Meeting on July 16 to see it in person. ■

## Newsletter delivery leads to architectural mystery

by Dave Palmer

Following the publication of last year's Brooklyn Historical Society newsletter, Colene and Stephen Baker requested additional copies. BHS agreed to deliver newsletters to the property the Bakers had purchased and were renovating just north of Brooklyn on State Route 167. The house was referred to as "the Yachymiak place" and that family's name had featured in the newsletter.

When I stopped by, I was pleasantly surprised to find Paul and Mary Gere's sons working in the house on behalf of the Bakers. The historic structure was built in the early 19th century and included a construction feature the Geres had never seen before. Their remodeling had uncovered the inside of the exterior walls on the east side of the house, which were made of one-inch to two-inch pieces of stacked lumber laid on its sides, rather than the classic timber frame construction typical of 19th-century American homes. It appeared to be hemlock or pine in remarkable condition, so they had decided to leave it exposed on the interior for the viewing enjoyment of future occupants.



Photo by Dave Palmer.

Initial research has revealed little about this construction practice. Are you familiar with such techniques? If so, contact Dave Palmer at [davesolopalmer@gmail.com](mailto:davesolopalmer@gmail.com) or 570-498-6637. We would enjoy learning more about it.



# Membership and publications

Make checks payable to Brooklyn Historical Society.

Return this form with payment to: Brooklyn Historical Society, PO Box 58, Brooklyn, PA 18813.

## ORDER FORM

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP code: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership dues**     \_\_\_ at \$5 per person    Annual membership

\_\_\_ at \$100 per person    Lifetime membership

**Additional donation**     \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Publications**     \_\_\_ at \$15 each    The History of Brooklyn, PA 1787-2005 (softcover)

\_\_\_ at \$25 each    The History of Brooklyn, PA 1787-2005 (hardcover)

\_\_\_ at \$5 each    Brooklyn Bicentennial Picture Book

\_\_\_ at \$10 each    Brooklyn Township Schools 1800-1991

\_\_\_ at \$5 each    Farms, Homes, and Unimproved Lands of Brooklyn, PA  
(Traces ownership of property back to 1890)

\_\_\_ at \$50 each    A History of Brooklyn, Pennsylvania 1787-1887  
(Weston's; Republished in 1987)

\_\_\_ at \$20 each    The Martins Creek Viaduct & the D.,L.&W. Railroad in  
Alford, Kingsley & Hop Bottom, Pennsylvania, USA  
100 Years Ago (by John Martin Darcy II, Ph.D.)

**Other items for sale**     \_\_\_ at \$20 each    Commemorative box car from the Kingsley Viaduct  
Centennial Celebration (some assembly required)

**Shipping fee**     \$5 flat rate    Applies to any number of publications and/or box cars

**TOTAL ENCLOSED**    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Annual Meeting announcement: July 16 at 2 p.m.

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Mark your calendar and plan to join us this summer.

All current, new, and life members are invited to attend the Brooklyn Historical Society Annual Meeting: **Sunday, July 16**, at the **First Universalist Church** (6925 Maple Street) in Brooklyn, starting at **2 p.m.**

BHS will conduct its annual business meeting and officer elections, followed by remarks from a guest speaker: Cassandra Coleman, Executive Director at America250PA, will share more about the program and Brooklyn Township's special part in celebrating America's 250th birthday.

*Read more about the Annual Meeting and America's Semiquincentennial on page 6.*

### **Officer nominations**

President - OPEN

Vice President - Richard McKnight II

Secretary - Dave Palmer

Treasurer - Jacquie Holgate

Family History - Lana Fluck

Publications - Jessica Hibbard

President Emeritus - Richard Zick, Sr.

Artifacts & Memorabilia - Grant Palmer

Members may submit nominations at the meeting. For more information about joining the board of trustees, contact Dave Palmer at 570-498-6637.



BROOKLYN HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
PO BOX 58  
BROOKLYN, PA 18813