

PO Box 154, Kingsley, PA 18826

## ANNUAL 2022 UPDATE

### THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is hard to believe that another year has passed and that it is time for the Annual Newsletter of the Brooklyn Historical Society. It was only 10 months ago that we hosted M. Denise Dennis from the Dennis Farm Charitable Land Trust to give the Society an update on all the activities and plans slated for the Dennis Farm. For those unfamiliar with the Dennis Farm, it is an historical, educational and cultural site in Brooklyn Township where free African Americans settled after the Revolutionary War at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. As the Dennis Farm historical site and project develops and grows, its uniqueness and prominence in Brooklyn Township, the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and, indeed, the Nation continues to grow. As Denise shared with BHS members back in

ber 6, 2021 at the Dennis Farm 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium that America250PA would award the first such commemorative bell to the Dennis Farm right here in Brooklyn Township! To learn more about the Dennis Farm and its unique place in Brooklyn's history and the nation's history visit, [thedennisfarm.org](http://thedennisfarm.org).

Hosting the kind folks from the Dennis Farm was one of the highlights of volunteering with the BHS last year. I have enjoyed working with the Society and its members; it has been a true pleasure. The last year has proven to be a very busy one, however, with increasing responsibilities and significant travel for work. As such, I



will not run for President of the BHS for this coming year but encourage others to consider volunteering and getting involved with the Society.

Having said that, it is time to look forward to the future of the Brooklyn Historical Society. In the Newsletter you will find nominations for next year's officers as well as updates on current projects and issues of interest. Please take time to consider the nominations and join us at the Annual Brooklyn Historical Society Meeting on July 10<sup>th</sup> at 2PM at the Universalist Church on Maple Street in Brooklyn (where the meeting was held last year). We look forward to involving you in the discussions on the future direction of the BHS and where that may take us. I look forward to seeing you there!



M. Denise Dennis addressing BHS Members July 18, 2021.

Pennsylvania Commission for the United States Semiquincentennial (also known as America250PA). It was announced on Octo-

- John Darcy, President

# A True Brooklyn Hero

By John Darcy, PhD

I always knew growing up in Brooklyn, PA that it was a special place. In many respects, it is, and has been, a place out of a story book. Founded in 1788, it has roots extending back almost to the Revolutionary War and we can find soldiers in our cemeteries dating back to that period and those who have fought in practically every major conflict since. The town has a rich history with lively churches and an old school surrounded by homes and farms. It is nestled in a valley with a stream among rolling hills whose greenery is so brilliant in the spring and summer that it could easily be mistaken for Ireland. Brooklyn is indeed special, and special places give rise to special people. I would like to, in this short column, draw your attention to one.

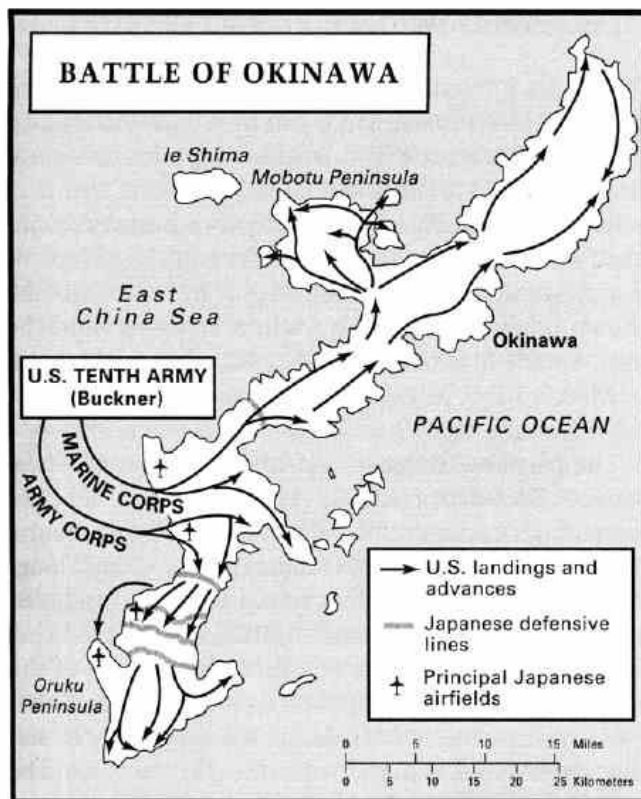
John Yachymiak was a native son of Brooklyn, PA. He was the son of Mr. and Mrs. Louis Yachymiak also of Brooklyn. John had five sisters, Minnie, Josephine, Nellie, Julia and Helen, and he had three brothers, Frank, Edward and Louis. John graduated from Brooklyn Vocational High School in 1941, entered World War II, served in the Pacific Theater and was killed in action at age 21. Many brave young men and women perished in WWII but it is what John Yachymiak did and how he died that make him so special and truly a hero of his native Brooklyn.

We all learn in school of the terrible impact and horror of World War II. As the gap between our “now”, and that distant time

grows, the conflict seems more and more a distant echo from a world that many of us would not recognize save what is happening now in Ukraine. But for many who are older, it is still a living memory, even if they were only children. John Yachymiak left the idyllic Brooklyn of his boyhood to go off and fight a war 10,000 miles from Pennsylvania on tropical islands with bad water, biting insects, an oppressive sun and danger everywhere. He served in some of the bloodiest and deadliest conflicts of the entire war. John (Yak)

Yachymiak was a Pharmacist's Mate 3<sup>rd</sup> Class in the United States Marines. He served with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Defense Battalion Antiaircraft Artillery Unit in Paleliu, Micronesia where he was wounded in the line of duty. He re-joined that unit in 1943 on the Island of Guadalcanal before it was disbanded. Subsequently, John was transferred to the 7<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the 1<sup>st</sup> Marine Division that eventually made its way to Okinawa, Japan. John died at the Battle of Okinawa on May 10, 1945, three months before the Japanese WWII surrender. The Battle of Okinawa, April 1<sup>st</sup> to June 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1945, was the costliest battle in the Pacific

Theater. The United States lost 12,520 people, 36 naval vessels and as many as 55,000 US soldiers were wounded. The invasion force for Okinawa was double that of the D-Day Invasion of Normandy, with 1,400 vessels and 180,000 allied troops. The severe fighting on Okinawa was considered a prelude to how difficult and bloody the invasion of the main Japanese islands would be for the Allies. The Okinawa experience became a significant factor in the decision to use atomic bombs at Hiroshima and Nagasaki. (Continued P. 3)



Just serving under the circumstances of these conflicts is a heroic act itself but John Yachymiak went above and beyond his call of duty. He died while in service to his fellow soldiers delivering battlefield medical care to the fallen. His heroics were summed up by Pharmacists Mate, Robert A. Vanston under whom he served but who survived the war: “On Okinawa, 1945, after having been caught in a pocket formed by a horseshoe shaped ravine, “Yak”, on seven separate occasions crawled to the side of a wounded comrade, dressed his wounds, and returned to our dress-

ing station, under severe fire, courageously protecting his man. On the eighth trip into the valley, we watched while he administered succor [aid] to another wounded man, when he was fatally wounded after placing his body directly over that of his injured comrade.”

John Yachymiak’s story is a remarkable example of bravery and heroism at a very young age. According to the US Navy’s History of the Medical Department in WW II, more



Wounded Marine being assisted at Battle of Okinawa., 1945. WWII Museum, New Orleans.

and returned to our dressing station, under severe fire, courageously protecting his man. On the eighth trip into the valley, we watched while he administered succor [aid] to another wounded man, when he was fatally wounded after placing his body directly over that of his injured comrade.”



National WWII Museum, New Orleans  
OKINAWA'S BEACHES. U.S. NAVY PHOTO 108-19

## Hold Funeral Today Of John Yachymiak

The funeral of John Yachymiak, pharmacist's mate, third class, Marine Corps, will be held from the family home, Brooklyn, Pa., today with mass at 10 a. m. in St. Patrick's Church, Nicholson. Interment, parish cemetery.

Marine Yachymiak, who entered the Navy in November, 1942, later transferred to the

Marines. He was killed in action at Okinawa May 10, 1945, when 21 years old.

Navy and Marine medical personnel were killed in the line of duty than combat personnel in the Pacific war. Newspaper reports indicate that John Yachymiak was nominated for the Congressional Medal of Honor but the outcome of those proceedings is unclear (if anyone knows, please inform myself or David Palmer). John, however, was awarded a “Silver Star: First Award”, the third highest honor in the military, posthumously by the United States Navy in 1947. The character, dedication and heroism of John Yachymiak is something that the entire Yachymiak family can, and should be, proud of. It also makes John, without a doubt, a true Brooklyn Hero.

*A special thank you to Coleen Baker for sharing the John Yachymiak story with the Brooklyn Historical Society.*

# Barns Abound..... Continued

By David J. Palmer

Few images sadden me more than that of an ancient barn slowly falling to the ground out of neglect. In a perfect world it would be great to have a charitable trust that provided funding to maintain and restore these vestiges of our rural heritage. Fortunately, in our area, we have a family that also appreciates these unique symbols of American rural heritage.



Old barn prior to the rebuild

I am happy to follow-up with this article as promised in last years annual newsletter on this new old barn and “Back to the Future.” That family I refer to is the John and Ann Corbin family of Brooklyn Township. Their love of two barns, one in Brooklyn Township and one in Lathrop Township resulted in a



The effort has begun

resurrection of one, with material from the other.

That other is the new barn located on the old Korban Farm in Lathrop Township, that John and Ann inherited a few years ago. I was able to witness this resurrection all this past summer, as I daily traveled to and from home in Lathrop Township.



Exposing Time

This farm and barn were occupied by my Great -Great-Great Grandfather, one Thomas Jefferson Robinson according to a map from 1858. We believe the barn was built between 1830-1850. My Grandmother Anna Robinson Pratt was born there and grew up with her sister, my Aunt Cora Robinson Corbin. I spoke more about their life here on this farm in last year’s newsletter. I am sure last summer’s construction at the farm has them smiling. I visited the worksite daily.



The old milking parlor

Smiles were always on the face of Brandon Piper and his crew, when they were busy resurrecting this barn; some of which included salvaged material form the barn on the Corbin farm in Brooklyn Town-

One last comment. The highlight for me was donating the antique lightening rod glass balls for the final addition on the barn. I had these packed away in my home for at least forty years from another family farm property, and I was honored to be able to contribute these to the effort.



New milking parlor, without the drops

ship. Brandon is the owner of Big Woods Timber Frames LLC. A picture is worth a thousand words, so I'll quit talking and immerse you in some of my pictures of this effort. And check out the pictures of this effort on the Big Woods Timber Frames website. The barn's future will be for mostly storage of hay. The day of milking cows in the milking parlor are no more, though the milk house has been restored and even has water!



Placing the first of three glass lightening rod balls



Getting a new roof and life



Placement of the final glass ball on a lightening rod

## Bridge Overlook Complete

The Brooklyn Historical Society is pleased to announce the completion of the work on the Kingsley Bridge Overlook. The Society wishes to thank the many individuals and businesses which have contributed to the project. Last year's plans to hold a ribbon cutting ceremony were delayed due to the covid-19 omicron variant. The BHS will look to conduct the ceremony this autumn. In the mean time, the overlook is complete and people are already enjoying the view! Please check our BHS Facebook page for date and time later this summer. The BHS wishes to thank the following enterprises and individuals for their efforts and contributions to the project.

- The Susquehanna County Room Tax Fund and Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau
- Peoples Security Charitable Foundation
- Endless Mountains Heritage Region, Inc.
- Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
- Bureau of Recreation and Conservation
- Brooklyn Township Supervisors
- Masters Concrete Products
- Molenko Sign Company LLC
- Christopher F. Simone
- Nicholson Lumber Company
- John Arnone
- Craig Robertson
- Joe Thomas



Above:

People out on side-by-sides stopping to enjoy the view last September (2021).

Left:

The historical markers and signs delineating the history and significance of the area and bridge.

# Remembrances & Announcements

The Brooklyn Historical Society wishes to remember those members of the Society who have passed and we wish to extend our sincerest condolences to their family and friends:

**Nancy Bruce**

**Nancy Hunter**

**Curtis Stone**

## **Curtis Stone: Brooklyn Historical Society Founder**

Dr. Curtis Stone passed away July 30th 2021. Curtis was born in Brooklyn, PA on November 19, 1922. He is one of Brooklyn's most accomplished, if not the most accomplished, native son. He attended Brooklyn School and also Penn State University where he obtained a degree in journalism in 1947 and returned to earn a doctorate in history and secondary education in 1963. Before completing his education, Curtis, served in WWII in England fulfilling his military and patriotic duties until the war was concluded. Curtis was well known for his athletic abilities. He ran track and field in high school, at Penn State and eventually become one of the premier distance runners in the United States in the 1940's and 1950's. He won two gold medals in the Pan American Games for 3000 meters steeplechase and the 10,000 meter run. He was a member of the 1948, 1952 and 1956 US Olympic teams, with his best being sixth place in the 5000 meters in the 1948 London Olympics. These accomplishments barely scratch the surface of Curtis' many noteworthy achievements and a full description can be found at the Bartron's remembrance pages: <https://bartronmyerfuneralhome.com/tribute/details/2359/Curtis-Stone/obituary.html>



Curtis and his wife, Margaret, helped found the Brooklyn Historical Society on May 21st 1987. They published three books together on local history as members of the Society. Curtis took an active interest in the Society and guided it through many years as President or as a supporting officer or trustee. His interest in history never waned and he remained active up until the time of his death. The Society in large part owes its existence to Curtis and his curiosity, drive and interest will be dearly missed. Curtis is survived by his daughter Sara (Terry) Miller of Kent, Ohio, step-granddaughters Sonia (Robert) Srichai of Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Esther (Bob) Thatcher of Kent, Ohio, five step great-grandchildren, nephews Andrew (Tracey) Stone, Ralph Lewis, and James (Melody) Lewis, nieces Holly Stone and Heather (Todd) Dunkerly, many great-nephews and nieces, and a host of friends. He is predeceased by his wife Margaret (Lewis) Stone in December 2017 and also his parents, uncle and stepfather Dan B. Stone and his brothers Bryce L. and Dan C. (Judy) Stone.

We are happy to announce that as of May 2022, the Brooklyn Historical Society (BHS) has formally registered with the Susquehanna County Veterans Affairs Office to annually maintain the graves and markings of the four Veterans buried at the Perkins-Dennis Family Cemetery. This will involve annually ordering new American flags for the four graves and placing them prior to Memorial Day each Year.

The Dennis Family Charitable Land Trust (DFCLT) welcomes this initiative on the part of the BHS to protect the legacy of service of each of these American Military Veterans. These Veterans are:

George W. Jackson – Civil War, Co. F., 31<sup>st</sup> Regiment U.S. Colored Troops

Dennis James – War of 1812, 1<sup>st</sup> Rifle Regiment

Price Perkins – Revolutionary War, 2<sup>nd</sup> Connecticut Continental Regiment

Bristol Budd Sampson – Revolutionary War, 2<sup>nd</sup> Connecticut Continental Regiment

## Endless Mountains Heritage Region Heritage Management Workshops

The Endless Mountains Heritage Region (EMHR) and Lione Heritage Consulting, LLC (Brian Michael Lione) teamed up to conduct a series of workshops geared toward educating historical organizations and entities in Susquehanna County about the proper care and storage of historic artifacts and documents.

This three-part series of courses known as “Caring for Collections - the Basics of Managing Museum Objects and Archives” provided training to staff and volunteers who work for various museums, historical societies, and historic sites across the county, ensuring they have the knowledge and tools necessary to keep their priceless artifacts, documents, and relics alive. Each participant received guidance, training materials, and direct instruction on the proper documentation, handling, packaging, and storing of heritage objects. All participants who completed all three workshop sessions received a “starter kit” of archival materials they can use to apply safeguards to the collections in their respective organization.

These workshops were held at the Susquehanna County Library in Montrose on the Saturdays of March 26, April 9, and April 23. The topics covered included general museum management and risk assessment; handling, packaging, and storing of collections item; and the documentation and cataloguing of objects and archives. Each session included up to sixteen participants from a variety of Susquehanna County organizations, such as the Forest City Historical Society, Clifford Township Historical Society, Harford Historical Society, Susquehanna County Historical Society, Center for Anti-Slavery Studies, and our own

Brooklyn Historical Society. Our Brooklyn Historical Society was represented by Richard Zick, Annie Palmer, and David Palmer.

These workshops were funded in part by a Susquehanna County Marcellus Legacy Fund Grant, the Dennis Farm Charitable Land Trust, and our own Brooklyn Historical Society. The EMHR plans this successful event to be a pilot and proof of concept to bring it to Bradford, Wyoming, and Sullivan counties in the future.



## ANNUAL MEETING DETAILS:

- WHO:** All current, new and life members
- WHAT:** Brooklyn Historical Society Annual Meeting
- WHERE:** Brooklyn Universalist Church, Maple Street Brooklyn, PA 18813
- WHEN:** Sunday, July 10, 2022 at 2PM
- DETAILS:** The BHS will conduct it’s annual business meeting and elections followed by a discussion of the future of the Society and collaboration with Sara Miller and the Curtis Stone Estate

### Officer Nominations:

- |  |  |                                      |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|
| <b>President:</b> OPEN                     | <b>Vice President:</b> Richard McKnight II       | <b>Secretary:</b> David J. Palmer    |
| <b>Treasurer:</b> Jacque Holgate           | <b>Family History:</b> Lana Fluck                | <b>Publications:</b> Jessica Hibbard |
| <b>President Emeritus:</b> Richard Zick I. | <b>Artifacts &amp; Memorabilia:</b> Grant Palmer |                                      |



*The BHS has commemorative box cars from the Kingsley Viaduct Centennial Celebration still available! Great Holiday or Commemorative Gift! Some assembly required. \$20.00 each. Use order form below.*



**PUBLICATIONS INFORMATION**

The latest publication of the Brooklyn Historical Society, The History of Brooklyn, PA 1787-2005, is now available. Cost: \$15.00. 270 pages; over 200 pictures. (Hard Cover edition: \$25.00.)

**Other publications also available:**

+Brooklyn Bicentennial Picture Book \$5.00.

+Brooklyn Township Schools 1800-1991 (\$10.00)

+Farms, Homes, and Unimproved Lands of Brooklyn, PA. (Traces ownership of property back to 1890.) (\$5.00)

+Weston's A History of Brooklyn, Pennsylvania. (1787-1887) Re-published 1987. (\$50.00)

+The Martin's Creek Viaduct \* the D.L.&W. Railroad in Alford, Kingsley & Hop Bottom, Pennsylvania, USA 100 Years Ago. (Author: Dr. John Darcy II.) (\$20.00)

Please add \$3.00 mailing fee for each publication or item ordered.

DUES FORM: {Return/Payable to **Brooklyn Historical Society, PO Box 154, Kingsley, PA 18826**}

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PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ (    ) \$5 annual dues *per person* (    ) \$100 lifetime *per person*  
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COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_

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