



The Bradford County Heritage Association Heritage Village and Farm Museum

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Looking Back At 2022

The 'Farm Days 1866' program returned after a 'Covid Break' with a record number of schools and students participating. The Pennsylvania Heritage Festival, 'Christmas in the Village' and the Maple Festival were all successful events. In addition: 'Bessie' our life size 'Milking' cow was a hit with the public at the Bark Peelers Festival, Miller's Maze and Troy Fair.

We provided the food booth at the Troy Town Cruisers first Car Show of the season, and a food booth plus hands-on activities at 'Miller's Maze.

Community Outreach included museum volunteers helping at the Fay's Pancake Breakfast, a float in the Troy Memorial Day Parade, participation at the November Yard Sale, Alparon Park and providing a site for training for Serve Inc. students.

The Gregory Inn's 200th Anniversary special events included a Trivia night, Troy Band Concert/Ice Cream Social and Historic Building Tour as well as a special focus at the Pennsylvania Heritage Festival.

The Troy Heritage Garden Club, along with their dedication to the Village Gardens and the help of Boy Scout Troop 1361 installed a bird house in the flowerbed of the Gregory Inn, Dedicated to club member Pat Yearick.

Our Teas in the Gregory Inn included an added feature of a craft.

The biggest change you will notice in our appearance is the ramp/porch/walkway project connecting several of our buildings.

Our museum's Artifact Collection Team dedicated hours to the project of cataloguing the museum's artifacts.

We are extremely grateful for the outpouring of Community support in manpower, in-kind gifts, memberships, memorial and financial donations. AND the many dedicated volunteers who carry out the mission of the Museum.

Our focus in 2023 includes our new General Store Exhibit, the inside bay has been packed up, large furniture moved and soon we will be putting everything back in place.

This year's Museum Guide will highlight the new General Store Exhibit with stories/pictures of surrounding Community General stores.

Looking Ahead At 2023



The Windmill is expected to be erected, a donation from Red Run Inn a number of year's ago and progress is noted on the wooden silo. Development of our inside 'Community Room' and under revision is our web page and logo.



The Old-time General Store was a Symbol of American Enterprise

www.alleghneyhistory.org, by Richard Palmer
Allegheny County Historical Society, Andover NY

Literally forgotten, the old-fashioned general store could be found in every community in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Its stereotype proprietor sported a moustache and protected by a long white apron, carried almost every large and small item needed in the home or on the farm.

In this commissary would be found groceries, meats, hardware items, drugs and toilet articles, boots and shoes, clothing,

bolts of cloth, pots and pans and dozens of other necessities.

In the old days most everything arrived in bulk. There were very few packages or cans. The storekeeper did not overstock on canned goods since it was the general practice for each household to preserve most fruits and vegetables during the summer.

Since money was scarce, some business was done in barter, although in general it was a strictly cash business. The exception to the rule was the rural housewife who traded eggs, butter and farm produce for staple groceries, and maybe a piece of gingham or other cloth for a dress. Credit was only extended to reliable customers. Here a youngster, for a few pennies, could procure licorice and peppermint stick candy at a cent apiece.

The farmer might drop in to purchase a hoe, axe or saw. The village man might enter the store with a tin can and a gallon jug asking for kerosene and molasses, respectively. In some instances there was a device resembling an old-fashioned water pump from which kerosene was pumped from a tank in the basement .

A carpenter might come in to purchase some tools and it behooved the proprietor to have just the right ones on hand. A true carpenter was very fussy about his tools and he would lift a hammer and "heft" it to be sure it was balanced to suit him, or he wouldn't buy it. A delivery and errand boy was usually employed to deliver orders to families in the village who made hefty purchases and were accustomed to having goods sent to their homes. Flour came to the store in paper bags of 24½ to 48½ pounds, as packed at the mill, which might be near by in those days. Smaller quantities were not bothered with since every household did a great deal of baking and always purchased in bulk. This usually consisted of general purpose flour suitable for pies, cakes and bread.

Granulated white sugar was delivered in 100 pound sacks and was dumped into a covered metal box to be dipped out as needed with a tin scoop. Sugar was packaged in paper bags, the tops of which were folded over and tied with a string. During canning season a single family might purchase as much as 100 pounds of sugar to use in canning preserves. Brown sugar also came in loose form, but in many cases was substituted with molasses which, like vinegar, came in barrels. Fine salt came in 100 pound bags. Someone might need this much to cure pork, other meats or to make sauerkraut.

The one-pound cloth bags were cherished by little boys who used them to store marbles or chestnuts. Coffee beans were packed in a large sack. When someone wanted a pound or two, the clerk weighed them out and then ground them with a big-wheeled red mill sitting on the counter.

The coarsely ground coffee was then packed into a paper bag. This coffee was boiled in a pot as the percolator had not yet been invented. It then had to be strained when pouring to catch the grounds.

Molasses and vinegar were stocked by the barrel, the customers furnishing a jug as a container. Kerosene, the universal light fluid of those times, came in drums. The purchaser brought a pouring can of one, two, or five-gallon size. If there was no cup on the pouring spout, a potato or cork stuck on sealed it from leaking.

Always at the counter would be seen the "wheel" of cheese. When a preferred customer made a purchase, the proprietor gave a sample by cutting a sliver of the yellow product and passing it to the patron on the point of his long butcher knife.

The old-time country store was a gathering place as well as a commissary. This is where terms beginning with "cracker barrel" originated. Here, men of leisure met quite often. In winter, they sat around the red-hot pot-bellied stove and gossiped about politics, and spread the news. The proprietor didn't mind—he often joined the idlers in conversation. Come night fall, he was in no hurry to close shop, but lighted the big kerosene hanging lamp and drew up a chair or bench along side the others. The loungers might also while away the time playing a game on the well-worn board using sliced corn cobs for checkers.

If he was so inclined, the shopkeeper might bring out a small table and a deck of cards. A pitcher of cider and glasses also came for this time of year assuring the gentlemen of a pleasant hour or two beside the fire.

At the general store the carpenter purchased nails and edging tools, the tailor his thread, buttons and shears, the shoemaker his thread, wax, awls, and occasionally leather. The store also sold what was then politely termed "spiritous liquors."

Since cash was very scarce, most business was done by trade, or barter. The farmer exchanged for the storekeeper's wares assorted grains and seeds; butter and eggs; eggs, meats, pelts, hides, tallow and lard. Often the housewife in the very early days turned in the product of her spindle and loom for the goods she needed.

Newspapers of the day carried advertisements of goods available that are totally unintelligible to the present generation. Among the dry goods that might be advertised for sale would be coatins, kereseymers, swansdowns, corduroys, thicksetts, biases, woolen checks, humhums, colored cambric muslins, calicos, peelings, lute- strings, and an a sorting of the most fashionable leghorn bonnets.

Grocery items might include, Hyson, Souchong and Bohea teas; allspice, and upper leather. Other strange names were tammies, half-thicks, persians and pelongs, blue sagatha and red bunts, tickelburghs and black everlastings; and an assortment of handkerchiefs with such names as bandanoe, lungee, romals, culgee, puttical and silk setetersoy.

Many improvements were made in country stores as the years past. Newspaper accounts reflect great prosperity and development between 1820 and 1850. By the end of that era, the storekeeper now had glass cases to display cutlery, musical instruments, jewelry and other items.

The storekeeper stood on a raised dias railed in and lighted from the sides, which stood in the center of the floor. This was the great seat of local commerce and merchandising. He was a master accountant and his leather-bound records were referred to as "doomsday books" as he kept accurate records of every debtor. Depending on the size of the business, there might be a bookkeeper and "money taker" also employed. These usually were shrewd men with a trained eye. Then there were the salesmen and peddlers who dared not cross the threshold of the storekeeper's pulpit. At the rear of the store was a long shed to house large items such as new farm tools and machinery painted all the colors of the rainbow. The store carried an arsenal of agricultural tools including hoes, axes, cross-cut saws, corn stabbers, scythes, grain cradles and an assortment of many other odds and ends for farming.



The first cash register was invented by James Ritty in 1883. Ritty was a saloon keeper in Ohio and nicknamed the invention the "incorruptible cashier." The machine used metal taps and simple mechanics to record sales. A bell sounded when a sale was completed, leading to the phrase "ringing up" — which we still use today.

This invention went on to spark the ease of customer checkout for over a century, as it was quickly adopted for retail sales.

Prior to this, many businesses had trouble keeping track of their accounting and often didn't know if they were operating at a profit or a loss. Over time, advances in cash registers have worked to make them more resistant to theft. bigcommerce.com

- Tammies- a glazed woolen or mixed fabric, used for linings, undergarments,
- Half-knits— a knitted fabric
- Woolen checks— wool fabric with a checkered pattern
- Black everlastings— a flower
- Kereseymers- a fine woolen fabric with a close nap made in fancy twill weaves
- Swansdowns-the down or under plumage of a swan, used for trimming, powder puffs etc. a fine, soft, thick woolen cloth, a sturdy flannel with a thickly napped face.

May
15 & 16



'Farm Days
1866'

The 'Farm Days 1866' Educational Program for area 4th grade students is in **need of sheep to be shorn.** Can you help us out? Know of someone?

School/Home School Groups— Monday May 15 still has openings, (Tuesday is full). Please contact us to make reservations.

New volunteers are most welcome, roles include: assisting a demonstrator, school tour guide, building monitors, demonstrators of an activity described in the book *Farmer Boy* (books are available at the museum).

Please contact Barbara Barrett, event co-chair
bbarrett362@comcast.net 570-786-9482.



The public is invited to the next regular
BCHA Board meeting
Wednesday February 15
1PM at the Museum
In the event of inclement weather we will follow
the Troy School District schedule.
No school— no meeting,
Early dismissal— no meeting School delay—yes meeting

2023 BCHA Board of Directors

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