



Historic QUAKERTOWN

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September 2021 Newsletter

Hello to all,

The Board met on September 8, 2021 and discussed the possibility of having a Membership Meeting sometime in the fall. There is still quite a bit of uncertainty as to the effects of the recent variant to Covid-19 and just how that would affect attendance. The last Membership Meeting that was held was on November 14, 2019. The membership Committee is exploring the various possibilities.

At the Board Meeting on the 8th, the number of Directors was set at eight.

As a reminder, the Annual Meeting will take place on September 22, 2021 at 7:30 PM at McCoolle's Arts & Events Place at 10 S. Main Street, Quakertown, PA. At the meeting, along with reports concerning fiscal year 2020/2021, there will be an election of Directors. Those individuals presented by the Nominating Committee for election are Jan Hench, Christina Landis, Jim Lukens, and Jack Schick.

If you are interested in helping with the continuing archive work, please contact Steve Potsko or Jack Schick. You can do so by leaving a message at one of the Society addresses.

Jim Rosch was a long-time member of the Quakertown Historical Society. He passed away on April 30, 2021 at the age of 88. He is remembered as a long-time employee of the former K&L Lumber Company on Front Street, long-time announcer of the Quakertown High School football games at Alumni Field, long-time announcer of Quakertown Blazer baseball games at Memorial Park, and, in the heyday of shopping in downtown Quakertown, playing Santa Claus at Christmas time.

He wrote the undated "essay" that was found in the archives of the Society. As always, for some, it will bring back memories and, for others, a curiosity of what is listed.

Short Memories

By Jim Rosch

Undated

A lot of years are behind us, if you remember

Sections of Quakertown called Fishtown, Bennertown, Hickeytown, and Bungalow Park...Babe Ruth dying of throat cancer...cranking a car to start the motor...Scholl's one-room school house...Aero Jockey Field on Mill Street...Shelly's Taxi, then later years Meck's Taxi...Quakertown Scholastic Baseball Team with Herk Scheetz, Bob Strunk, Cliff Reese, Hacklong, and others...Red Cabin Inn Restaurant near Shelly...Dumont TV network with Jackie Gleason's "Cavalcade of Stars" show...Trumbauersville's Ducky Detweiler's 40-game hit streak at Evansville, Ind. of the Three-I League...Big Little Books...Red Diamond Restaurant later known as Trainer's Restaurant...Huckster farmers selling eggs, fruits, and vegetables by going house-to-house each week on their regular route...E.S. Ritter Grocery Store at Main & Broad Streets...another store nearby – Foulke and Jones Meat Market...Roy Napier's Gas Station...Circle J. Ranch fire.

You are no youngster if you recall

Ten cent hot dogs...all wood baseball bats...Louie Pfaff pitching baseball at LuLu Park...bridge over the trolley tracks going north on Route 309...W.T. Grant Store in the Quakertown Plaza Shopping Center...Cliff

Shearer as secretary of the West End Fire Company... Wally Keenan as WPTZ Channel 3 weatherman... Joe Polk wrestling big time events and later a bouncer at Trainer's Restaurant... Regent Clothing Factory that is now the Main Street Theater... newscaster Lowell Thomas signing off each night with "So long until tomorrow"... also other radio newscasters Elmer Davis, H.V. Kalenborn, Drew Pearson, Cal Tinney and John Charles Daly, whose voice we heard announcing the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor... group of Young Fellows congregating on the Quakertown National Bank building steps at Third & West Broad Streets many summer evenings... Ray Z. Hartman as the public address announcer for Q.A.A. baseball games... Clyde Smoll, Sr. pitching for the Philadelphia Phillies... bobby socks, penny loafers, and saddle shoes... iron lung machines helping tuberculosis patients breathe... Carver's high diving horses performing at the Steel Pier in Atlantic City – the Carver horse farm was located just outside Quakertown near Shelly. Later, the horses also "wintered" at the Fretz farm on Grant Road with their owner Lorena Carver.

You have a few gray hairs if you remember

45 RPM records... swimming in the Tohickon Creek at Eichner's Grove... long line of gas pumps at Fronheisers on Eighth Street... girls wearing poodle skirts... hula hoops selling for \$1.98... Dorney Park's Castle Rock Ballroom... W.T. Smith Tire Store on Hellertown Avenue... area firemen's carnivals on Friday and Saturday nights... Willis Meyers and his Bar X Ranch Boys plus Brother Ray Meyers – the Armless Wonder – performing at the carnivals... fallout shelters for protection of an atomic bomb attack... Dick Strayer in charge of the summer playground on Alumni Field. Included were fishing trips, crafts, ping-pong, pet shows, games, running through the sprinkler, pushing the big six-foot canvas ball, and much more... Witmer Photography Studio... baseball gloves left on the field while team batted... Quaker Construction Company, headed by Jake Stoneback, building the Q.A.A. baseball park for \$12,000.00... Vern Craig's open mike show on radio station WKAP in Allentown... R.H. Hager Pontiac garage on Main Street... Rudy Vallee's catch phrase, Heigh-Ho Everybody... all peanut butter sticking to the roof of your mouth... Johnny Smoll's Sportsmen Shop... Erdman Bottling Works in Steinsburg.

We have experienced many a case of spring fever if you remember

Getting the victory garden started after the last frost disappeared... sulfur and molasses and castor oil were home cures worse than the ailments... ice picks... Quakertown Ice and Storage on Belmont Avenue... Hess's large sign blinking many different colors at Ninth & Hamilton Streets in Allentown... approving the 19th Amendment giving women the right to vote... the famous Dust Bowl Drought... Kooker's Furniture Store... the teacher during school study time allowing the children to look out the windows and watch an airplane flying overhead... Walt Disney's "It's a Small World" ride at the '65-'65 New York World's Fair... Jimmy Durante's raspy voice sign off of "Good night Mrs. Calabash wherever you are"... Joe Penner asking "Wanna buy a duck?"... double feature movies at the Karlton Theater... China Clipper Airplane... the expressions Huba-Huba, The Cat's Meow, 23 Skid-do, Here come da judge... penny postcards and three cent stamps needed to send a first class letter.

We have walked many a mile if you recall

The Little Lake Motel on Route 309... President Harry Truman's whistle stop campaign in the Lehigh Valley... the smack of the rug beater raising a big puff of dust that floated off on a spring breeze... getting the glider swing out of storage for a summer of fun... repairing the wood frame window screens with new wire... cupboard shelves covered with oilcloth... celluloid toys made before the plastic age... counting the days until school ended and summer vacation began... dandelion bouquets for mom or that special girl – they usually wilted by the time you got them into the house... church bells calling people to church every Sunday morning... Aunt Jemima Pancake Jamboree at Memorial Park with all the pancakes you could eat, cosponsored by the Quakertown Connie Mack and Little League baseball organizations... WLS Barn Dance radio program on Saturday night with LuLubell's Song "Does your chewing gum loose it's flavor on the bedpost overnight?"... Thomas Edison cylinder records with their tinny sound spinning on the Victrola... learning to ride a two-wheel bike... using a push mower to cut neighbor's lawns for \$.50 or \$1.00... the northeast extension of the turnpike opening it's 110 mile road in 1957... running boards on cars... rumble seats in coupe automobiles... Easter egg hunts at old LuLu Park.

We have experienced more good times than bad if you remember

A.W. Treffinger Funeral Home... Board of Health quarantine signs displayed on the front of a house when a person had a contagious disease... Jackie Robinson, the first black player, breaking into the lineup with the

Brooklyn Dodgers...cooking with lard...jitterbugs with their wild dance antics...Sleepy Hollow Ranch on old Route 663 with Pete and Elmer Newman, the Murray Sisters (Sophie and Julie), and comedian Hank Harrigan. The "gang" broadcast many programs from the "Ranch" over Philadelphia's WFIL radio...Kettle Bands...baseball games at LuLu Park before Park Avenue was extended...WWII rationing limiting motorists to 25 to 30 gallons of gasoline per month...America going officially dry as Prohibition began...Farmer's Market in the Old Stove Works Building on West Broad Street...Atlas Overhead Garage Doors manufactured in Quakertown...Coblentz's Clothing Store next to the State Liquor Store...television programs like Double or Nothing with Bert Parks, Super Circus with Claud Kirchner and Mary Hartline, Paul Winchell and Jerry Mahoney, Speidel Show, The Millionaire, and the Masquerade Party game show.

Charles "Charlie" Meredith III was the publisher of the Quakertown Free Press for many years. It was in the Meredith family for three generations. It was a local newspaper that was, at one time, published every day and, ultimately, once a week. Apart from his responsibilities as publisher, he was very active in local, as well as county, activities/organizations. The article, as dated, appeared in the Free Press, and highlighted the parade celebrating the 150th Anniversary of Quakertown Borough

Now That's What I Call A Parade
By Charles M. Meredith III
Quakertown Free Press June 2, 2005

Dear Friends, Wow! Quakertown's 150th celebration continued Saturday with a parade stretching over a mile. It took almost three hours for the 163 floats, exhibits, and participants to wind their way through the town. The parade was divided into 10 divisions with lots of bands and vocal groups.

I've never seen so many fire trucks...from all over the Philadelphia region. Even Quakertown, New Jersey, arrived with their hook and ladder. The equipment sparkled from the firemen's elbow grease. Some of the vintage pumpers were from the 19th century.

After the parade, I chatted with Richard Wycoff, a former resident who served as master of ceremonies. He presided on the grandstand at Fifth and West Broad Streets. Richard, his wife Barbara, and their friends Ronnee and Dr. John Ricks came from Hershey and Boiling Springs, respectfully.

Richard is the Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Association of Broadcasters, an organization of television and radio stations. His first job in radio was with WBUX, years ago. Richard was just 9 when Quakertown's 100th occurred.

"It had an old-town feeling," Ronnee began. "It was very nostalgic...like going back in time."

C.R. Strunk Funeral Home had an unusual float...a horse-drawn hearse with a coffin showing through its windows. Coincidentally, the Zion Hill Junior Troop 807 (Brownies) marched right behind the hearse, prompting Richard to quip, "If those cute little girls had been "daisies" instead of "brownies" they could have been carrying a sign reading, Pushing up Daisies!"

Richard praised Ken White who organized the parade activities. "He gave fabulous leadership," Wycoff observed. "Ken had a great committee."

Richard noted that Sine's 5 & 10 was closed during the day. "All the employees were on (or marching with) the Sine's float." He laughed. He also enjoyed the Red Knights Motorcycle club, which promoted, Motorcyclists for Safety." Incidentally, none of the riders wore helmets.

We were standing with the crowd at 10th & Juniper. I chatted with Marlene and Sam Gugliandolo who used to operate the delicatessen just a block away. The Gugliandolos will celebrate their 44th wedding anniversary this month. Mighty Betsy and I remember taking them to dinner at Trainer's Restaurant right before their wedding. Do you remember the elegant Don Dor Mar Room? The Gugliandolos were featured in a bridal section in The Free Press in 1961. We were enjoying our first anniversary with them.

Governor Ed Rendell got to the parade on time....and he walked the entire way! Ed loves crowds and had a ball. Local politicians were well represented in the parade. State Representative Paul Clymer, State Senator Rob Wonderling, and County Commissioner Jim Cawley waved and smiled at all those voters.

The Quakertown Band played majestically from a float. There was Conductor Richard Karschner, ringing the bell during the band's rendition of the Sousa march, "Liberty Bell." The band played its Quakertown Sesquicentennial March. By the way, their 15-performance summer schedule is available. If you didn't get one, write the band at 112 N. Hellertown Avenue, Quakertown, 18951 or use their Web site: www.quakertownband.org.

And speaking about music, we were impressed with the Celtic Classic Bagpipe Club. The crowd grew quiet as they played Amazing Grace. Only a few pipers blew the first verse. But then, all the pipers joined in with the remaining verses. It was sensational.

Our daughter, Catherine, was snapping pictures with her new camera. We laughed when about 15 antique cars...a few Model A's and T's (some older) drove by. One by one they sounded their horns, "OOOOOogah." It reminded us of how just one barking dog can influence every dog in the neighborhood. If one dog barks, the rest join in.

The Reilly Raiders drum and bugle corps marched by playing "When Irish Eyes are Smiling." They were dressed in appropriate colors...bright green.

Two floats reminded me of the Centennial Parade, 50 years ago. Television star Sally Starr was in both parades. She must be approaching 90 but still has pizzazz. And the Centennial Queen and her court were also looking great...but 30 years younger than Ms. Starr.

I thought about Ralph Butler who chaired the centennial event. It's too bad that he couldn't have ridden in a convertible at the head of the parade. He left this world for the next just months before the sesquicentennial events began. Ralph's efforts helped push the 150th celebration along.

Miss Pennsylvania was her charming self. She looked very carefully at the beauties from the Centennial Parade. I'll bet that she was hoping that she wears as well.

The Quakertown National Bank float was fun to see. It was a replica of the old bank building at the southeast corner of Third and Broad. President Tom Bisko, in a top hat, was assisted by employees who handed out wooden coins. Actually, the first headquarters for QNB was in The Free Press building, long before my grandfather bought the property and added four columns on the front porch.

Many of the 163 participating organizations passed out candies, peanuts, mementoes, and advertisements. When I looked at the pile, which I'd collected, there was a card promoting Bob Ward's ballooning adventures (I'm terrified of heights, but MB is not). Quakertown Rita's passed out coupons, which will add a few pounds.

Some cheerful, muscular person handed me a massage deal. The Pennsylvania Institute of Massage Therapy (or PIMT) wants to give me a one-hour massage for \$30 or teach me how to give massages. (I think I'd prefer the latter). The Quakertown Historical Society gave coasters, a nice souvenir.

Finally, the First United Church of Christ promoted its sesquicentennial show, "A Little Bit of Broadway," which runs June 18 and 19 at the Quakertown High School Auditorium. Call 215-536-4447 for more info...tickets cost only \$5.

And, speaking of churches, there must have been 25 floats promoting churches new and old in that parade. Many of them featured musicians who kept the crowd's interest. I can understand why some of the evangelical churches are attracting young people.

And the beats goes on.

Before I close today's column, I smiled when Richard Wycoff remarked how pleased he was to learn that the Sesquicentennial Ball has been a sellout for almost a month. The Ball is only a few weeks away and will attract 300...can you imagine 150 men wearing tuxedos? That's impressive. I looked at my old tux, which has turned a sickly shade of green. I'll have to stop in at Fischer's Tuxedo on West Broad to remedy the situation.