



Binghamton Township Historical Society NEWSLETTER

Serving Past and Present Residents of the Town of
Binghamton, N.Y. and its Neighboring Towns

Vol. 7 No. 3

JUL – AUG - SEPT 2010

The Binghamton Township Historical Society is dedicated to the preservation of the history of the region and its inhabitants. It meets on the first Tuesday of every month at 1:30 PM. from April through October in the Fellowship Hall behind the old Hawleyton Methodist Church located at the junction of Hawleyton Road (an extension of Pennsylvania Avenue) and Saddlemire Rd. just after the Park Ave./Hawleyton Rd. Junction. Visitors are welcome. Annual dues are now \$10.00 for individuals \$15.00 for families payable after September – start of our fiscal year



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Annual “School” Reunion now called
“Remember When” will be held
September 18, 2010 in the old
fellowship hall. The annual meeting
with election of officers is also held at
the same time and place.

Another Great Loss to Our Town

We wish to express our condolences to Sheila and Shawn Lindsley in the death of their mother, long time resident, **Ann “Betty” Scanlon Lindsay**. Betty worked for the town in many capacities and was awarded their ***Citizen of the Year 2010*** award recently for her tireless service to our community.



In June we also lost another well known Hawleyton resident, **Ann Kolanda**, widow of Jack Kolanda. Our sympathy to their children, Cathi, Laura, Jack Jr. and Joe and their 12 grandchildren.

About This Issue

As our readership has quadrupled in the past few years, many new readers missed the history in the first few issues from the spring of 2004. Perhaps older members will forgive us for repeating some of the earlier, fine articles.

Early History of Our Town (From "Stumps" by Janice Reynolds)

In 1830 – 1850 the Town of Binghamton was a wild place covered with trees. Sarah Hawley, in a letter to her father, James, stated, "Nothing would give me more pleasure than to make a trip to that Hawley of yours. I have never been out any length of time in so wild and beautiful country as it must be from your description." James Hawley owned a saw and gristmill in Hawleyton.



Because of this wildness, early settlers spent much time and energy cutting down trees, removing stumps, and making clearings. Lumbering was the first industry in the Town. Early Settlers used the logs, sold logs and solid bark. Acid made from bark was used in tanning hides. There was a tannery on Tannery Rd., (now Maxian Rd.) The leaching of wood ashes made potash used in the making of soap and glass. Wood ashes themselves, sold for \$.12 a barrel. Lumber provided material for shingles, barrels, and lathe strips. Logs were also sold to log drivers.

Farmers would haul their logs to the Susquehanna River, about where the Washington St. Bridge is today. The log runners would buy the logs, from the farmers, and drive them on rafts down the river as far as Tunkhannock, PA. Another group of runners might drive the logs on down the river to Harrisburg, PA. The logs would be sold all along the way. Local drivers might walk back from Tunkhannock to Montrose to Laurel Lake and back home by way of the Montrose Turnpike, a distance of 90 miles. **(Interspersed by Editor: Ralph Carman told me that they used to stack logs in winter on the frozen rivers, then in the**

spring thaw, hire boys to run along the sides and keep the logs moving and from jamming. At a given distance, the group of boys would stop and be put up for the night before returning home and another group of boys would be ready to move the logs on to another point.)

For the generation who had cleared the land, planted seeds around blackened stumps, and farmed the cleared land, the fields yielded an abundance of foods and crops. For the



generations that followed, the diminished soil became thin and full of clay – "hard pan." The lack of trees caused erosion on the hillsides. Perhaps this is why Martin Hawley, James's father, moved to our Town to prove that farming could be profitable. Little was known about crop rotation and soil replenishment. J.B. Wilkinson in Annals of Binghamton 1840 wrote, "In 1833 Martin Hawley commenced a dairy herd and by various implements ascertained that these lands in the Town of Binghamton are of an excellent quality." He (Mr. Hawley) tried to demonstrate that there were solutions to soil exhaustion.

Early families "got long" by selling the plentiful lumber on these farms. The Timkin family who came from Dutchess Co. in the Hudson Valley settled in the NE part of the Town of Binghamton and the western part of the Town of Conklin. In 1840 John Timkin wrote back to his son in Dutchess Co., "Sold a pine tree and bought a cross cut saw." His son George wrote, "Father and I each have a pair of boots and we give 7 bunches of shingles for them." Trading was done to get things needed. We are impressed by all those families who worked so hard to settle our Town.



Hawleyton Mudcats (Condensed from the tape by Eleanor Haines.)

In September 2004, Bill Haskell entertained the old schoolhouse reunion with this recollection.

“The Mudcats started between 1934 and 1935. I guess I was ten or eleven years old. My brother Arnold played the guitar, my brother Jerry played the banjo...me, I played the mouth organ. Gordie Hyser played the jug, and Leon VanVorce played the bazooka. And the jug sounded just like somebody was playing the tuba ‘cause he blew into the jug, which is out there in the church if you want to look at it. It’s got the “Hawleyton Mudcats” on it.”

“Just fooling around, we got together...the five of us. And we got Leland Shimer. We even played at some houses and we also played in a funeral house one time. My dad ...knew somebody, and they wanted to hear us play. We’d do it just for something to eat or just for fun. We never asked for any money. Later on, Mrs. Giblin wanted us to come up on Saturday night and play for dancing. And I believe we was up there three or four times. And we really enjoyed it, going up there.”

“And then we got a call from the Woodhull Boys over in Kirkwood. They played for dances every Saturday night over in Benjamin’s Hall. ...And we played for dancing that night. They were good, the Woodhull Boys.”

“Oh, then we got a call from the police. They wanted us to play down to the Arlington Hotel at a banquet for them. Then we got a call from the firemen. We played down there for them for a banquet.

That was the best hotel in Binghamton or the Triple Cities because it was right by Chenango and Henry streets, and it wasn’t too far from the railroad tracks. Then we got a call to the Kalurah Temple and we played over there.” “We got a call from the WNBF radio station. A guy named the Lone Shepherd. ...played a couple songs. And then we played. We found out later that some of the kids kept calling the station to keep us on the air.”

“We got a call to come up to Franklin which is past Sidney. Gordie Hyser was driving. We played for dancing and music for three, four hours; and we got our dinner. Then they took up a collection; probably sixty or more



people there. Guess what we got. Three dollars! We didn’t even get enough money for gas. Elizabeth Lee rode back with us. I don’t know how we had room really. There was five, six, seven of us in Gordie’s car. It was foggy and we were doing about thirty, thirty-one miles an hour. Next thing we knew, a cop stopped us. I guess Elizabeth had a little extra money, which we needed to pay the fine, which was ten dollars. We didn’t go out and play after that. Wasn’t worth it.”

Leon Van Vorce,: “ Charley Shimer, Leland’s father, was our leader, and he did all the driving except once or twice. And I don’t think he ever got a nickel for gas or anything else. It was so we could have something to do. After all, we didn’t have TV then. About the radio station, we played there a couple of times. He (Shepherd of the Hills) said if anybody would like to have us back to be sure to write. I think all the kids in Hawleyton sent four or five letters each. Made him nervous I guess. He never asked us back

Gospel & Schools, & Literature Lots By Margaret Hadsell

In today's fast-paced world we use Google Maps or one of the other online maps services to calculate the best, easiest, and fastest way to reach our destination. Map lovers spend time perusing old maps to locate early roads and discover interesting nuggets of forgotten history.

The 1876 Town of Binghamton map includes two areas that are marked Gospel and School and Literature Lot. A quick look finds that only two of Broome County's other towns, Sanford and Windsor, have these unusual "lots". So what are they and why were they established?

The Board of regents was formed in 1784 to serve as trustees of Columbia University, then Kings College, for the purpose of supervising private chartered institutions. Soon after their beginning in 1784, the Regents and the Governor urged the New York Legislature to establish and provide aid for a system of common schools.



The Literature Fund, according to "Educational Legislation in New York", was set up by the act of 1786, which enacted that...

"in every township so laid out...the surveyor-general shall mark one lot on the map 'gospel and schools' and one other lot 'for promoting literature' which lots shall be as nearly central in every township as may be and the lots so marked shall not be sold but the lot marked 'gospel and schools, shall be reserved for and applied to promoting the gospel and a public

school or schools in each township and the lot marked 'for promoting literature' shall be reserved to the people of this state to be hereafter applied by the legislature for promoting literature in this state."

Public elementary schools did not exist in New York State prior to 1795 and only a few secondary schools and two colleges provided an education for a small number of students. Occasionally children attended "dame schools" which were operated by an elderly woman in her home.

The turning point came in 1795 when the Legislature provided that approximately \$50,000 be appropriated annually over a period of five years for the maintenance of common or elementary public schools. In



conjunction with this appropriation each town was to raise a sum equal to what that provided by the State. An act in 1800 to renew the appropriation, or state aid, for another five years was defeated in the Legislature. The common school cause was quickly re-established in 1801, when the Legislature, led by the efforts of two legislators, Jedediah Peck and Adam Comstock, passed an act that authorized a lottery to raise \$100,000. Of this sum, \$12,500 was paid to the regents for academies with the remainder distributed to common schools.

The Legislature, in 1805 set up a fund to support common schools, which allocated proceeds from state land sales as well as other assets. A landmark law in 1812 established a statewide system of common school districts that received the interest from the Common School Fund. "Town and city officials were directed to lay out the districts; the voters in each district elected trustees to operate the school.

State aid was distributed to those districts holding school at least three months a year, according to population aged 5-15.” Town and county property tax was used to match the state aid.

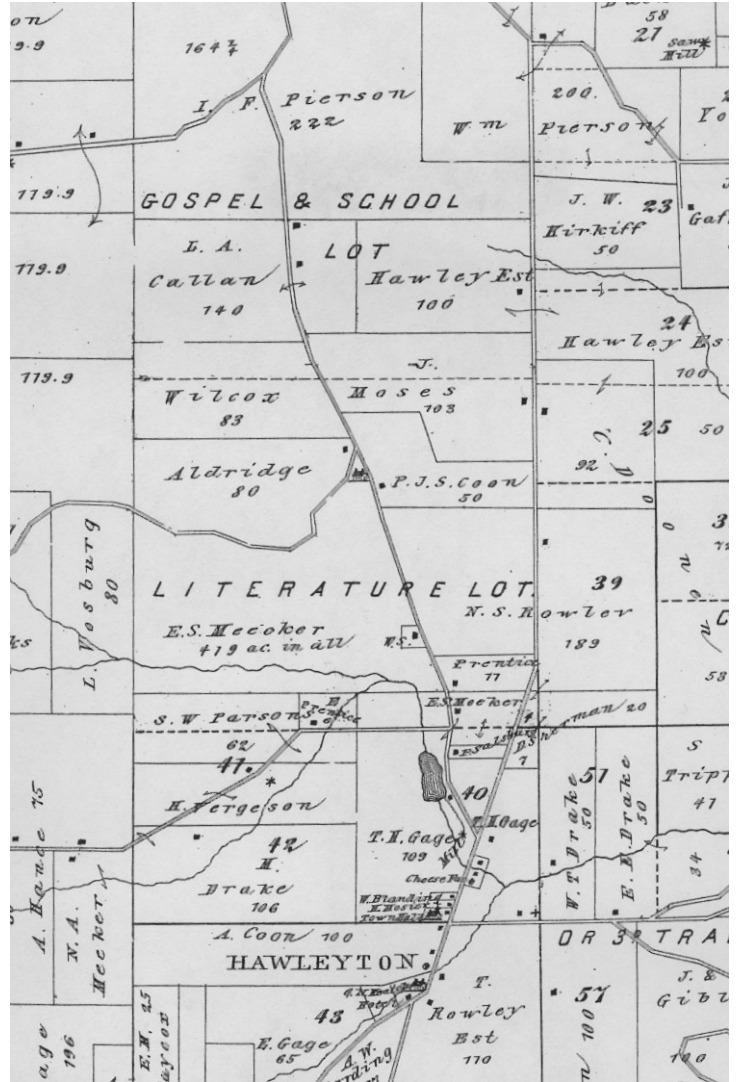
In their report of 1812 the regents recommended that the Literature Lots be sold to increase the literature fund. The proceeds of the sale were to be invested with the interest paid out annually.

During the period between 1800 and 1828, public enrollment went from 0 to 441,856 pupils and the common school fund increased to \$1,630,825. Under the provisions of the new Constitution, these “literature lotteries” were banned in 1821.

Between 1812 and 1852 state aid to schools came from the Common School Fund for common schools and the Literature Fund for academies. By the mid-1800s, New York had over ten thousand common school districts each with a one- or two-room schoolhouse where students learned reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, and geography. Between 1851 and 1901 a modest statewide real property tax provided additional revenue for school aid.

Erwin Webb owned the Town of Binghamton Literature Lot in 1899 as evidenced by this Binghamton Press article of Saturday August 15, 1899:

Webb, Edwin R., 44 acres, Literature Lot, bounded on the north by lands of Edwin R. Webb and H.L. Prentice, east by old Montrose turnpike, south by lands of Mrs. Manning Howard and Hance Road, west by lands of Emily Parsons and Hawley turnpike. Tax \$12.77.



Town of Binghamton Gospel & School and Literature Lot in 1876

The President’s Corner is missing due to the fact that Ed and Esther Pettengill have been in California accompanied by grandchild, Chantal Messinger, daughter of Jessica.

Drove 7150 miles
in
26 days!



Mother's Molasses Cookies

By
Linda Vanek McColgin 10/09

Other kids grew up on brownies and chocolate chip cookies. Not me! Mother was a wonderful cook, but I don't think she ever baked a brownie or a chocolate chip cookie. I didn't feel deprived. My grandparents emigrated from Czechoslovakia and settled on a farm in Hawleyton to raise their family which grew to fourteen children. The farm's bounty, eggs, butter, cream and lard were active and worked hard; there was no calories counting then. Grandmother and her five daughters were skilled at making delicious kolachkis, buchta, pies and sugar and molasses cookies.

Mother's molasses cookies were big, soft and studded with raisins. She said lard kept them soft and tender. She had always topped her sugar cookies with a bit of raspberry jam to add to their appeal and one day tried some on the molasses cookies as well. It was a winner!

I can still recall the enticing aroma that wafted out open windows when molasses cookies were baking. It drew my friends and me in from play. We'd stand and wait for them to cool, so enticing were they with their sprinkling of sugar and spot of sweet jam on top. One cookie filled a whole hand!

Mother passed away in 2001. Everyone's so busy these days, few seem to have the time to bake. But the recipe for these exceptional cookies should not be forgotten. I know mother would be pleased if others could make and enjoy her wonderful, old-fashioned treats.

Mary (Maxian) Vanek's Molasses Cookies

1 cup molasses (Brer Rabbit Green Label)
1 tsp. Baking soda
½ cup lard. (May substitute Crisco)
½ cup sugar
½ cup hot water
Sugar
3 ½ c. flour
1 tsp. cinnamon
1 tsp. ginger
1 tsp. Salt
½ c. Raisins
Raspberry jam



In large bowl, beat molasses and soda until foamy. Add lard and beat well. Add sugar, beat again. Add hot water and mix well. Sift dry ingredients together and stir into molasses mixture. Stir in raisins. Cover and chill dough 2 – 3 hours or overnight.

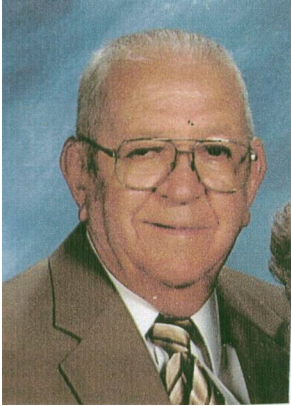
On lightly floured board, roll dough 1/3 inch thick. Sprinkle dough with sugar. Lightly roll with rolling pin to press in sugar. Cut with large (3 inch) scalloped or round cookie cutter. Lift with pancake turner to lightly greased cookie sheet. With back of a teaspoon, make a slight indentation in the center of each cookie. Spoon a scant tsp. of raspberry jam into each indentation.

Bake @ 400° for 10 min. Cool on rack.

BTHS Classes Held

Three sessions of **Genealogy & Family History** classes were held in the old Fellowship Hall with 10 attendees. Three of our BTHS genealogists taught the classes: Esther Pettengill, Margaret Hadsell & Esther Griffin.

Reminiscences of Leland Moses



I was born on July 13, 1924 in the family farm house on old Hawleyton Road, one mile north of the Hawleyton ME church. My parents were Vera Gaige Moses and Leland Barney

Moses. My birth was attended by our family doctor, Dr. Stoutenberg, who made a house call and then stayed overnight till daylight to travel the muddy and deep rutted road back to Binghamton.

I have one sister, Leora, four years my elder. My first eighteen years were spent living at home with my parents until I entered the U.S. Army within a week after graduating from Binghamton North High School in June 1943. My first eight years of schooling were at the one-room Grove School at the corner of Maxian Road and the Hawleyton Turnpike. Walking, carrying our lunch sack and books was the norm. Occasionally we sat with our milk cans on Dad's wagon or sleigh as he took them to the Turnpike for pick up by the milk truck. In retrospect, living in the old farm house without electricity, running water, insulation or modern communications must have been tough, but we took it as normal and now more appreciate the many modern improvements we daily enjoy.

When I went into the Army, I took infantry basic training at Fort Hood, Texas and then was assigned to the Army Specialized Training Program at North Texas University in Denton, Texas. From there I was sent to Fort Leonard Wood in Missouri for engineer training. Upon

completion in June 1944, I was sent to the 254th Combat Engineer Battalion. Thanks be to God that I survived the Battle of the Bulge, crossing the Rhine to end up in Pilsen, Czechoslovakia at war's end in August 1945. When I returned from Europe in 1946. I was discharged February 15 and the next day enlisted in the Army Reserve, serving in the Reserve till September 30, 1952. Since Reserve service was part time and from home, I was able to seek employment. Universal Instruments Corporation, a fifty-man tool and die shop, hired me in March, 1946 and I enjoyed forty years of growth by the company and myself. The company became two-thousand-plus persons and a world leader in manufacturing automatic assembly equipment for the electronics industry. I was manager of the Stamping Division, retiring in March 1986.

Always involved with the work and mission of the Hawleyton Methodist congregation, I took part in Sunday school from a very young age, including teaching youth and young adult classes. For a number of years I served on official church boards and as lay leader. During the late 1960's, I had the opportunity to work closely with our then-pastor, the Reverend Walter Proof, as chairman of a program committee to construct the new brick sanctuary which replaced the original mid-1800's wooden church structure. It was completed and consecrated in 1969.

In March 1946, after returning home from the Army, my thoughts, plans and efforts turned to establishing family and home. October 17, 1947 I married Helen Frederick with whom I had attended Sunday school and Grove school from babyhood to maturity. We moved into the rental house on the Frederick farm on Pennsylvania Avenue, and began plans to

(continued on pg. 8)

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The Moses Family



Back: G'son Ken, Son Ken J., G'son K.J.,
(Gia's dad,)
Front: Leland & Marguerite, Gia & mom,
Lindsay

(Lee Moses Autobiography - Cont'd)

build our own house on Park Avenue. We completed that in 1954; and, along with our son Kenneth who was born in 1949, it became our home. Kenneth is now dean of the School of Music at the University of Miami, Florida. Still today, July 2010, I continue to live in the same house with my second wife, Marguerite of Denton, Texas, whom I had met while attending North Texas University in 1943-44.

Three previous generations of Moses having served elected and appointed offices in the Town of Binghamton, it seemed I should continue the line; and I started by running for and being elected justice of the peace in 1950. Subsequent to that four year term, I was elected town councilman for eight years, 1954 to 1962. Serving on the town board was a good base

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for being instrumental in planning, organizing and obtaining a Company. I remained an active volunteer fireman for approximately twenty years. In 1987 I joined Volunteers in Mission, a program sponsored by the Methodist church in Michigan. We traveled to Haiti to help the poorest, most oppressed people we know. Program goals were to build schools and churches, and deliver food, clothing and medical supplies to the poor. In 1989 and 1990 I returned to Haiti again with teams from Michigan. In subsequent years I was able to persuade our local Wyoming Conference of the Methodist Church to send similar work teams to help our Haitian friends. Each year two, three, or four teams of ten to twelve volunteers from our Wyoming Conference continue their work to the present time, sponsored by our Haiti partnership.

