

Paradise Past

THE NEWSLETTER
OF THE

VOLUME 27 • SUMMER 2022

PARADISE
Historical
Society



PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Mark your calendar for September 11, when we'll hear the fascinating story of how people around the world are working to put the famous American Chestnut tree back in our woods. In October, we'll celebrate the Halloween month with a look at the life and work of Edgar Allen Poe, with local researcher Rick Smith. And in November, Carol Hillestad will share the story of how our Township's many nature preserves and open space properties came to be.

I always look forward to our annual member picnic at The Roof park off Keokee Chapel Road in the Township. This lovely shady spot along the Paradise Creek is the perfect place to meet friends and neighbors, catch up on news of the day, and share stories of days gone by. Hope to see you there! Not a member? Sign up at the picnic! For time and date, check the program information in this newsletter.

Jane Jane Niering, *President*

"The Last Resort"

A Place Like No Other

AS REMEMBERED BY

Mary Ellen Flood & Suzanne McCool

What a great place **The Last Resort** was in the 1970s — and what a perfect name for this tiny, cozy, friendly bar, tucked away in the woods in Paradise Township on Carlton Road, near the entrance to Merry Hill Road and right up from Forest Hills Run.

This small club was owned by Arthur Flood, a highly respected New York lawyer. Art bought 100 acres in Paradise Township in the 1940s. He had a



stone house built there after the war, and it was his family's summer home. Art and Margaret Flood had four children — Kevin, John, Margaret and Lois. He named the property *Kejomalo*, using the first two letters of each of the children's names.

It was a large, two-story home, featuring the kitchen on the lower level and a finished attic. Art brought the cobblestones from Brooklyn to use in its construction.

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COLLECTING, PRESERVING
& DISSEMINATING PARADISE HISTORY

Summer

MEETINGS: Crime, Memory Lane & More...

In July, moderator Peter Gonze sparked conversations about life growing up in Paradise Township with long-time residents Suzanne Fretz McCool, Skip Davis, Harold Metzgar, and Linford Werkheiser.

Talk about “first cars” set off laughter when Linford said his 1932 crank-Chevrolet cost him a whopping \$35. Harold still has his 1931 Model A Ford roadster. Skip’s first car was a 1941 Ford two-door sedan, and Suzanne’s was a 1966 Chevy SuperSport in white and turquoise. People remembered gas at prices from 12 cents a gallon all the way up to 29 cents.

There was talk about first jobs, from digging potatoes for a dollar a day to babysitting to every job under the sun at local boarding houses and resorts. Many people shared memories of Walt Fossa’s *Pocono Mountain Inn*, aka *PMI in the Sky*, Mr. Strickland’s renowned *Strickland Inn*, and Alvin Slutter’s *Elvin Inn*, and the huge “teddy bear” sign for Pete Rossi’s *Pocono Gardens*.

Of course the Flood of 1955 came up. Harold remembered the whole valley being a river, yet he found his way to where Devils Hole Creek had burst through and completely blew out the railroad embankment. The railroad tracks were just hanging in the air from one side of the embankment to the other — yet he saw railroad repairmen actually drive their repair vehicle across those aerial tracks!

Many more personal stories were shared. You can listen to the full meeting at paradisehistorical.org by clicking on the *Archives* tab.

At our May 1 Meeting, James Kanavy treated us to a review of Organized Crime in the Poconos.

Professor Kanavy is an Adjunct Professor of Criminal Justice at Marywood University and has taught criminal investigation, white collar crime and criminal justice administration. He was formerly an Investigations Manager in the PA Office of Inspector General, and was a Special Agent with the Pennsylvania Crime Commission. The very detailed talk was based on the state-funded books “Report on Organized Crime” for 1970, 1980 and 1994, for which he was responsible.

He is a graduate of East Stroudsburg University with a B.A. and M.A. in Political Science. It was a fascinating tale, and we are fortunate to have had him share the story of organized crime in the Poconos. To listen to Professor Kanavy’s talk, go to paradisehistorical.org, and click on the *Archives* tab. [PHS](#)



PHOTO: DIANE METZGAR



PHOTO: KIM WILLIAMS

“The Last Resort” A Place Like No Other

AS REMEMBERED BY **Mary Ellen Flood & Suzanne McCool**

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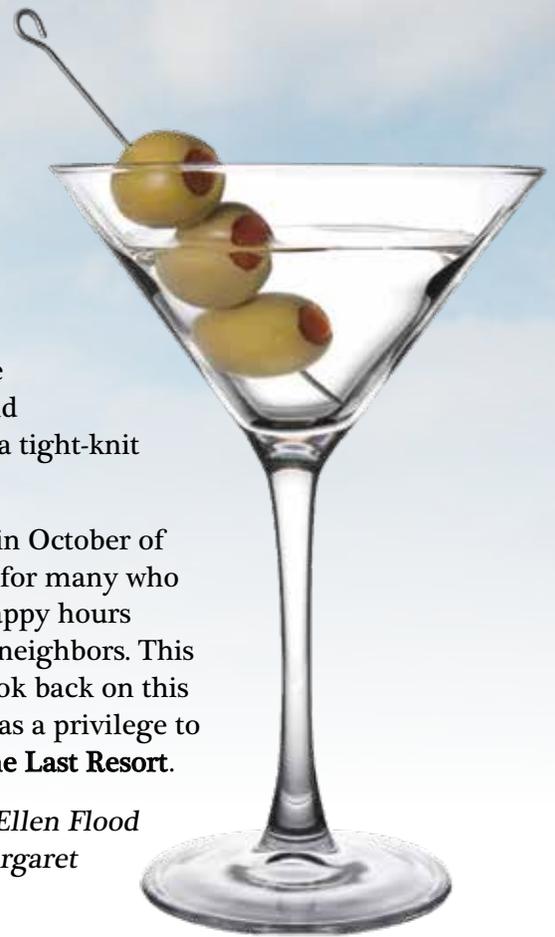
In the 1970s, this house was converted into a resort, with rooms to let upstairs. The downstairs basement became a restaurant and bar. Many of Art’s New York friends would come up to the Poconos to relax at **The Last Resort**. It also became a popular place for locals.

A favorite bartender was Charlie Dross, a son-in-law of the Floods. Everyone called him “Fat Charlie,” which he seemed to like. He was a really fun guy, and was good friends with the McCools, who owned the McCool Shooting

Range and Gun Company over the hill in Henryville. The Poconos, and especially Paradise Township, was a tight-knit community in those days.

The house and club burned down in October of 1975. What a very sad day that was for many who loved the place and spent many happy hours there, socializing with friends and neighbors. This was the end of an era. Today we look back on this beautiful gem and realize that it was a privilege to have been part of the history of **The Last Resort**.

Information contributed by Mary Ellen Flood (daughter-in-law of Arthur and Margaret Flood) and Suzanne McCool. PHS



Don't Miss These Fun & Fascinating Programs!

On **August 14**, our potluck member picnic starts 2:00PM at The Roof park. Bring a covered dish to share, and enjoy swapping stories with neighbors. If you are not yet a member, you can join Paradise Historical Society during this event.

At our **September 11** meeting, we'll have a report on work underway to re-establish the American Chestnut tree in the wild. A representative from The American Chestnut Foundation (<https://acf.org>) will be the speaker. This beautiful tree once dominated our local deciduous forests — and much of Pennsylvania. Known as “poor man’s oak,” it was used in mantelpieces, interior doors,

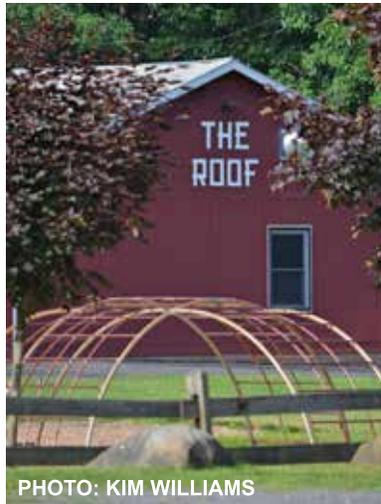


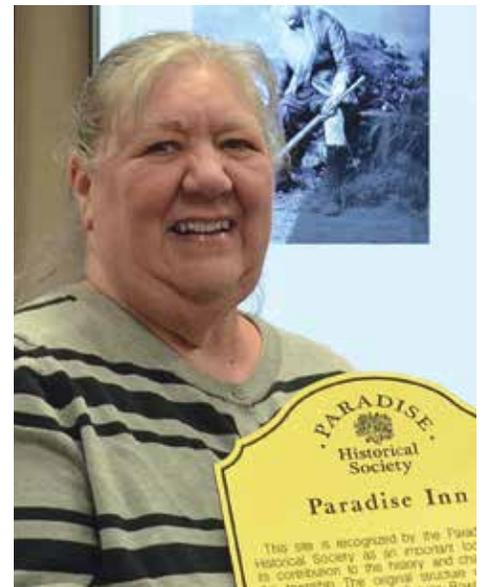
PHOTO: KIM WILLIAMS

porch columns, even staircase banisters and baseboards in older houses in the Township. Wiped out by a blight at the turn of the 20th century, it still survives in the wild — though before it matures, the blight kills the young re-growth. Scientists, arborists, and others are working to restore this elegant, majestic tree in our woodlands. Come hear the story! PHS



Interested in Genealogy?

PHS Board Member Sandy Dietz welcomes people with an interest in family histories to take part in the Society’s Genealogy Committee. Speak to Sandy at a meeting for more information! PHS



Paradise Historical Society
P.O. Box 94
Henryville, PA 18332

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ELECTRONIC SERVICE REQUESTED

Thank You Tree Shakers Tree Service!

A special thank you goes out to Bill Stiner of **Tree Shakers Tree Service** in Henryville for donating labor to clean up several winter's worth of debris from one of our Historical Marker sites in the Township.

Winter storms had literally buried the historical marker at the entrance to the former *Forest House Hotel*, opposite Swiftwater Post Office.

Fallen trees covered the small park where the sign was erected about 10 years ago, next to the front walk that served the hotel and related buildings (1888-1968). Bill's men did a thorough job of clearing the dead wood, along with several logs which had landed dangerously close to the roadway.

We appreciate Bill's donation of services in this much needed cleanup!





YOUR MEMBERSHIP COUNTS!

Please help Paradise Historical Society collect, protect & share the interesting history of our area.

- Student or Senior (65+) - \$8.00
- Individual - \$10.00
- Couple - \$20.00
- Family - \$25.00
- Corporate - \$50.00
- Sustaining - \$100.00

First Name: _____

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (_____) _____

Email: _____

Please send the completed form and check (no cash) to:

Paradise Historical Society,
P.O. Box 94, Henryville, PA 18332



Summer 2022

PHS WELCOMES THESE NEW MEMBERS:

Amanda Dietz Brooks
Ron and Robyn Franz
Tim and Mary Helman
Rick and Fay Opshinsky

The Directors & Officers of Paradise Historical Society are:

Bruce Estell Peter Gonze
Carol Hillestad Aaron Imbt
John Layton Laura Layton
Harold Metzgar Jane Niering
Sandy Dietz

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