



MEMOIRY

OF

'2012'

Memories of Lower

Pottsgrove



We would like to invite you to write a short story or essay about things you remember from your time living in Lower Pottsgrove. It doesn't have to be long, something about the size of the "Golden Oldies" piece they do sometimes in the Mercury would be great. But it can be longer or shorter, however you would like to do it. It doesn't have to sound professionally written, just anything in your own words sharing with us the memories you may have of life in the area. We thought it would be nice to share these memories with each other, and also make a collection that we could hand down to future generations. Things are so very different now than most of us remember, we thought it would be a good idea to create a collective memory of what life was like in the township during the earlier years that we could preserve for our descendants and the descendants of all the new people who have come to live in our community.

We will display each of these writings here on the website for all of us to read, and if we get enough responses, maybe we could put a booklet together.

Anything you would care to contribute would be greatly appreciated. You can mail your contributions to the Chapel or you can Email them to the website. The addresses are on the "Contact Us" page. We look forward to hearing from you.





Table of Contents

<i>Girl Scout Cookie Time</i> by BETH SCHERER	IV
<i>Skating on Sanatoga Lake</i> by GLENN ISETT	VI
<i>Kemp's Market</i> by BETH SCHERER	IX
<i>The Legend of the Ringing Rocks</i> by CAROL ISETT	XII
<i>The Alpine Dips</i> by CAROL ISETT	XV



Girl Scout Cookie Time!

by BETH SCHERER

Thin Mints, Shortbread, Peanut Butter Patties, Caramel Delites to name a few. Once a year these products taunt us for a few short weeks. That time is upon us and it is known as Girl Scout Cookie time. The Girl Scouts are celebrating their 100th anniversary this year and to commemorate this milestone, a new lemon flavored cookie, Savannah Smiles are being sold. Lower Pottsgrove like many communities is no stranger to Girl Scouting.

Girl Scouting has been active in Lower Pottsgrove Township since the 1940s. Troops of the Pottstown Council of Girl Scouts helped earn money through cookie sales for the purchase of Camp Forest Glen which was near Huff's Church in 1956. They enjoyed troop camping and day camping there for a number of years.



Many area women have volunteered their time and energy to uphold the very important title of Girl Scout Leader. One of the most influential Girl Scout Leaders in the area was the

late Sally Moyer. Girl Scouting opportunities in the township increased in the early 1970s due to her efforts. Her very active Cadet Troop 470 was sponsored by the Sanatoga Fire Company.

The Sanatoga Grange was one of the first Girl Scout troop sponsors in the area. The Pottsgrove schools have also sponsored troops throughout the years. It should also be mentioned that Boy Scouting has also been active in Lower Pottsgrove since the 1940s. Although the Boy Scouts sell popcorn, it doesn't compare to a Girl Scout cookie!



**Brownies Baking Holiday Cookies for
State Hospital residents in 1959.**



**Senior Troop 48 in the 1950's. Muriel
Lichtenwalner leader**

SUBMITTED JAN. 22,, 2012





Skating on Sanatoga Lake

by GLENN ISETT



Skating on the lake in the 1990's. Note by-pass in background.

Where did you go for your winter vacation? Stowe, Vermont? Aspen, Colorado? Back in the early 1900's -1930's and even today, people enjoyed winter sports and other activities at Sanatoga Park. There was skiing and ice skating and I think I can assume some sledding and tobogganing as well.

This author remembers skating on Sanatoga Lake in the late 1950's. I remember a bonfire by the side of the lake. Ice hockey was also played in my youth. The ice would be cleared with snow shovels and smoothed out as much as

possible. Lacking a Zamboni machine it was all done by hand. The hockey playing field was defined by a framework of 2x4s. No sidewalls for us. When you got checked you went down. Of course in those days the object was to put the puck in the net and not so much violence as there seems to be today.

Other people have remembrances of winter at Sanatoga Park. Elsie Mayer, a former Sanatoga resident, shares these memories of skating on Sanatoga Lake during the 1920's. After arriving home from Pottstown High School on the trolley, it was dressing for the outdoors and heading to the lake with some friends. Living on North Pleasantview Road across from the old Lower Pottsgrove Elementary School, it was quite a walk. They would simply leave the back of her parents property and walk diagonally toward High Street, sometimes picking up more friends along the way. There were very few houses in this area in those days so they could walk pretty much in a straight line through the fields. They would emerge at the intersection of Sanatoga Road and High Street near a relative's home on the Northeast corner of the intersection. From there they walked back Sanatoga Road past the Sanatoga Inn (now Cutillo's) to the lake. After an evening of skating they went home the same way, using the only power they had, the same two feet that had taken them there.



John Livingston and Nancy Kurtz skating on the lake in 1946



George Kurtz and friend skiing on the hill by the lake

Ice skating and sledding and hockey continued through the years even to the present time, so if you are looking for some winter fun, go on down to the lake for some skating, or sledding on the hill for the small fry. Sadly though, this winter has been too mild so far to provide you with any of these opportunities.

SUBMITTED MARCH 13, 2012
PHOTOS COMPLIMENTS OF RUSS KURTZ





Kemp's Market

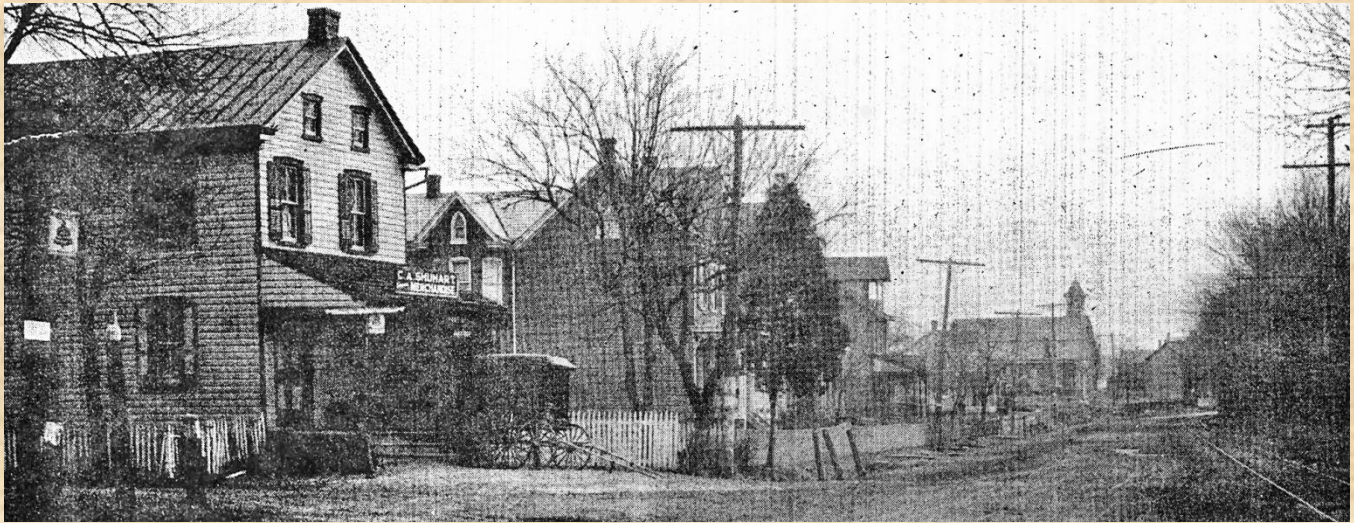
by BETH SCHERER



Sanatoga, formerly known as the village of Crooked Hill in Lower Pottsgrove Township, has a main street like any other small town. The East High Street address belongs to many businesses including the Sunnybrook Ballroom, medical offices, retail stores, eateries, and a firehouse. There are also a few traffic lights along this main strip of the village. One of these intersections is Pleasantview Road and East High Street. Although this intersection is not far from the Sanatoga Fire Company and currently has a vacant building, some time not so long ago, it was home to a couple of

Sanatoga's finest landmarks. In a previous article we learned that The Pleasantview Hotel once stood where the vacant building now stands. In this article we'll remember the little store that once stood on the northeast corner - Kemp's Market.

Kemp's Market wasn't always known by this name. In the early 1900's C. August Shuhart owned and operated this little general merchandise store.



Shuhart's Store left (note Chapel in background and trolley tracks along right side)

Harold E. Kemp took over the business in March, 1946. Some remodeling was done, the name of the store became Kemp's Market, and it became a popular little corner market. Robert A. Moyer joined Mr. Kemp in the business in 1980. Mr. Moyer became the sole proprietor in May of 1989, but kept the Kemp's name on the storefront. The store remained open until the end of May, 2000 for which the sign on the front of the store that showed weekly specials read as follows:

Due to the building of a new Eckerd Drug store, the intersection of Pleasantview Road and East High Street was re-designed. This meant that in February, 2004 that little corner market loved by many was torn down and is now just a memory. The Eckerd Drug store went out of business and has been vacant for several years. Perhaps historical buildings in Sanatoga should be preserved and remain standing?

The original Kemp's sign is now hanging at the chapel on East High Street which also serves as The Lower Pottsgrove Historical Society's museum and meeting place. It even gets lit up on special occasions.



SUBMITTED JUNE 24, 2012





The Legend of the Ringing Rocks

by CAROL ISETT

Do you remember going to summer camp when you were a child? Maybe you belonged to a Scout Troop that did some camping, or possibly the Indian Guides run by the YMCA. Many churches in the area sponsored their own camping programs for the children. If you did, you will probably remember that one of the highlights of the camping trip was sitting around the campfire at night telling ghost stories and Indian legends. Did you know that Lower Pottsgrove had its own Indian legend? – The Legend of the Ringing Rocks.



The rocks were objects of worship and adoration to the Indians in years gone by. This is how "The Legend of the Ringing Rocks", told in an 1896 pamphlet, came to be.

Once there was a young warrior named Atchokatha. He and Namechi, lovely daughter of Wekewapka, were in love. Wekewapka was the chief of a tribe which was an enemy of Atchokatha's people. The young warrior had met Namechi while sitting around a council fire at a peace treaty with his father and other braves in the village of old Wekewapka. The peace treaty did not

last, however, and before long the sound of the war-whoop was heard through the hills, and the brooks were red with blood.

During the brief time of peace, love had blossomed between Atchokatha and Namechi. It was only a day's journey from Atchokatha's home to the "Gray Rocks", as they were known to the Leni Lenape Indians. Four times each moon the lovers met by moonlight among the rocks.

But now the two tribes were at war again. On the day when Atchokatha and Namechi were to meet, ignoring the warnings of his tribesmen, he clambered over the rocks towards the Signal Rock, a large boulder in the center where the lovers would meet. Would she come to him now?

As he saw her climbing over the rocks reaching to take his eager, outstretched hands, suddenly there was the harsh twang of a bow string! An arrow, shot by Namechi's people, pierced

Atchokatha, but he stood there until his

faithful Namechi reached him, and he clutched her to his bleeding breast.

Then there was the sound of another arrow, as it winged its way from the bow of Atchokatha's brother. Namechi drooped, and, with a sigh, her spirit fled from her.

For just an instant Atchokatha stood there, erect and proud, holding her in his arms, as all around him the battle between the two tribes raged. Then his body relaxed and his tomahawk fell with a crash onto the surface of Signal Rock.

As it fell, there was a loud sound like a bell. All the warriors were startled and every hand was stayed. The forms of Atchokatha and Namechi swayed just a

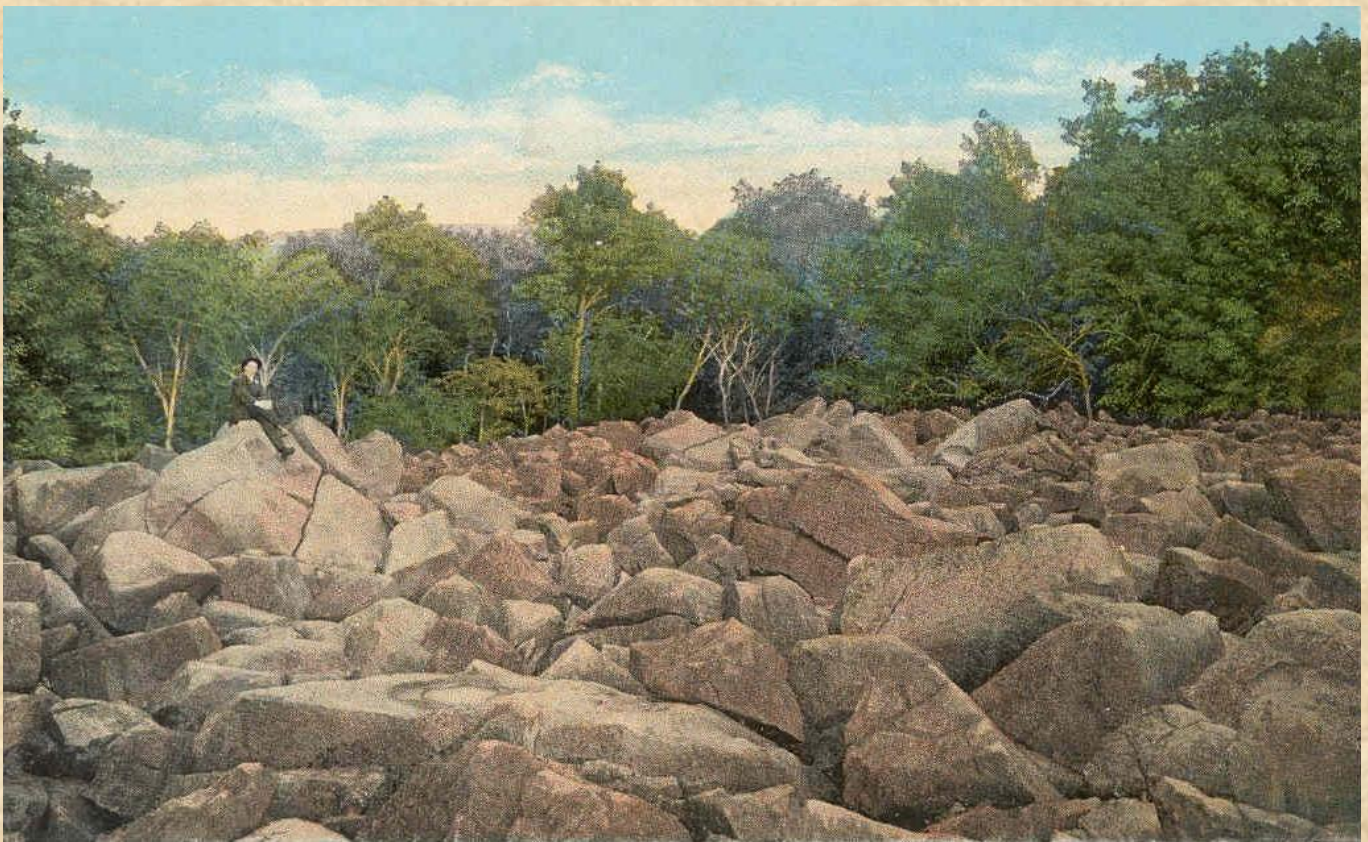


INDIAN ARROWHEAD - found on N. Pleasantview Road in the early 1900's

moment and then plunged to the ground, while clear and sweet and long above them rang the strange music from the Signal Rock.

From that day the Indians revered the Gray Rocks, because they sang so sweetly, and for the first time, when Namechi died.

Ringing Rocks Park was a place of wild natural beauty. If you stand near the rocks or in the woods on a still and quiet day, you can feel the romantic and haunting aura of mystery, traces of which linger today.



The Ringing Rocks

SUBMITTED AUG. 10, 2012

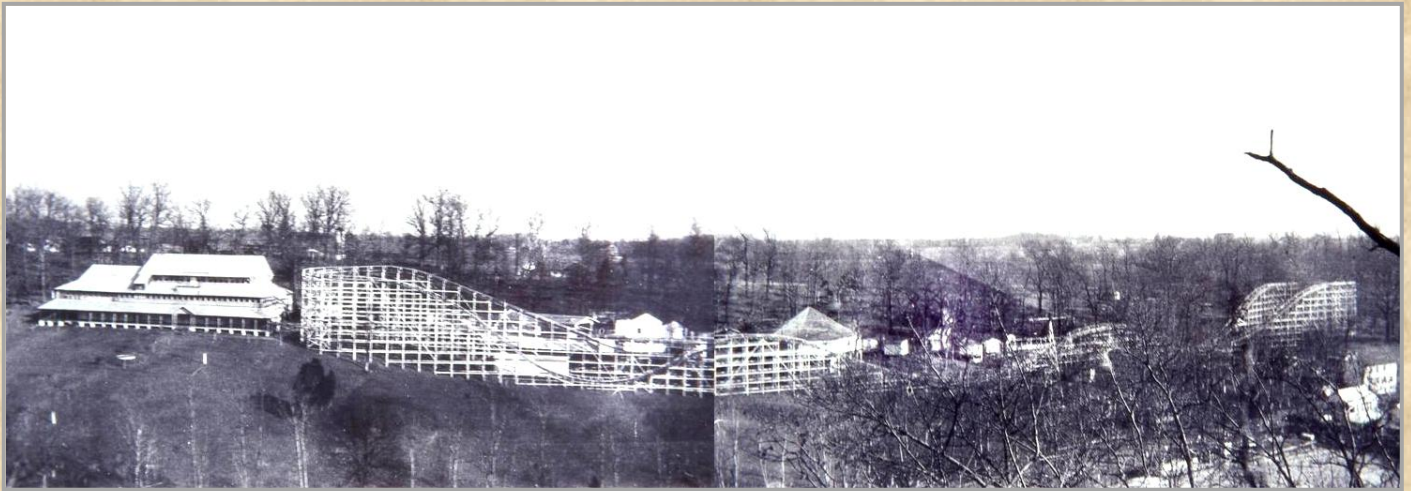




The Alpine Dips

by CAROL ISETT

We have come to the end of another long, hot summer. Fortunately for us, the warmer weather lingers much longer than it used to in our area, giving us a few more chances to visit the beach or amusement park for one last ride on everyone's favorite ride, the roller coaster.



The full length of the Alpine Dips roller coaster

Roller coasters have come a long way since the turn of the last century, but did you know that, according to an early souvenir booklet, our own Sanatoga Park had the very first ride of its kind that was ever built in any park. It was called the Alpine Dips and it was nearly a mile in length. Residents of Sanatoga and visitors were thrilled with the new roller coaster, which dominated the hillside on the east side of the lake, and excited screams of riders echoed

through the area. An exhilarating and sensational ride, it was designed especially for Sanatoga Park. Built in the most picturesque location, through the center of the park, on the crest of the hillside, where a full view can be had of its entire length, it was installed at a cost of nearly \$100,000 by the Philadelphia



Entrance to the Alpine Dips

Toboggan Company. It cost 10 cents to enjoy the thrills of this exciting ride.

According to the booklet, every possible safety device had been installed, and the cars were operated by highly competent guards, but there was one tragedy in the history of the Alpine Dips. A young boy, who had previously been warned by the guards against standing up during the ride, lost his balance and fell to the ground. It was one of two fatal accidents that occurred in the nearly forty years the park was in operation.

The roller coaster was operated at first by J. Rolland Kurtz, and he later purchased it during the last two years of its operation. But with the glory days of the fabled Sanatoga Park fading fast, it was sold to Amandus D. Moyer for dismantling in the late 1930's. Using the wood, he went on to

found the C. D. Moyer lumber business in 1939, a trusted and respected staple in the construction business to this day.

It is interesting to ponder how many buildings in this area were constructed using the lumber from the famous Alpine Dips from Sanatoga Park.



A shot of the roller coaster from on the tracks.

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