

Descendants of Lumbermen Return Annually to Ricketts

Several building foundations are all that remain of a once thriving logging town named Ricketts. However, descendants of the original lumbermen still gather each year near the site of the old town for a reunion and picnic.

At one time participants in the annual event numbered in the hundreds. At the Aug. 8 meeting, there were about 30 present—but these were interested enough to come from Connecticut, Massachusetts, New York, Florida, as well as this area.

The town of Ricketts was created in 1890 when Colonel Robert Bruce Ricketts, General Harry Trexler and Harry Turrell formed the Trexler & Turrell Lumber Company, and built a sawmill and town about three miles north of Lake Jean on Route 487. Remains of the ghost town's building foundations are still evident where the Mountain Springs road leaves Route 487.

The mill and log pond were southwest of the town; the pond still visible from the highway. Because the Sullivan-Wyoming County line bisected the town of 1,000, there were two schools, one for each county.

The sawmill at Ricketts had a capacity of 75,000 board feet per day and contained a circular gang saw and band saw. This was the largest mill in this part of the country. There was also a stove mill which cut barrel staves. In 1913, when all the timber had been cut, the mill operations ceased and the town disappeared.

The timber cut was primarily virgin hemlock and the northern hardwood group, beech,

birch, maple and cherry. There was also some white pine and spruce timber cut. American chestnut, the predominant tree of the northeast prior to the onset of the chestnut blight, a fungus disease introduced to this country about 1904, grew primarily at the lower elevations and was found on the slopes up to the top but not on the plateau where Ricketts stood.

The cleared fields north of Lake Jean, near Ricketts, were an old farm which was cleared and worked to provide feed for the logging stock. This farm operation encompassed about 500 acres. Original settlers had cleared about 200 acres, and Colonel Ricketts had 300 more cleared for pasture and hay fields. The fields are still open, and are said to be a good place to spot deer and wild turkey.

Dr. Joseph Rothrock, a school teacher who helped to operate the first known summer school in the area, was later to be known as the "Father of Pennsylvania Forestry" for his lectures promoting forest management. These lectures resulted from a \$12,000 legacy given by a French botanist, Francois Andre Michaux, to finance a 15-year (1877-1892) lecture series on forest management. Dr. Rothrock became the conservation spokesman of his time. His was the voice decrying the very devastation which was later to be wreaked on the timbered plateau around the town of Ricketts. Had Dr. Rothrock been heeded, Ricketts might have remained a thriving community.

To open up the vast supply of timber in this area, the Lehigh

Valley Railroad built a loop off their main line. They started the loop at Kingston and Towanda, and in 1890 extended the line from Lopez to Ricketts to serve the Trexler-Turrell Lumber Company. In 1893 another branch was completed up Bowman Creek and a spur ran down from Ricketts to Lake Ganoga. With the country opened up to logging, lumber companies were formed all along the branch lines. The railroad stopped running above Mountain Springs in the 1930's, and from Noxen in 1948.

Colonel Robert Bruce Ricketts was the son of one of the original settlers to the area in 1800. During the Civil War he enlisted as a private and eventually captained Battery F, which gained fame July 2, 1863, at Cemetery Ridge when they helped repulse a charge during the Battle of Gettysburg.

Upon returning from the Civil War, Colonel Ricketts began an ambitious land buying program. By 1873 he owned outright or controlled some 66,000 acres (over 100 square miles). From this acreage came the community of Ricketts, with its rich surrounding timber, and in more recent years the Ricketts Glen State Park.

By 1957, the land dwindled from 66,000 to 2,000 acres. This remaining 2,000 acres of the estate was sold in 1957 by heirs to the Ganoga Lake Association for a private housing development.

Nostalgic memories of their former home town of Ricketts, keep a number of old-timers returning to the site year after year for the annual reunion.



(J. KOZEMCHAK SR.)

Descendants of Ricketts lumbermen gather annually at the remains of the once-thriving logging town.

Army Commission For Lt. Lawson

Lt. Donald M. Lawson, son of Mr. and Mrs. William Lawson, 86 Perrin Ave., Shavertown, was graduated from Infantry Officers Candidate School at Fort Benning, Ga., July 9, and has received his commission in the U.S. Army Signal Corps. Lt. Lawson was educated in the Dallas Area schools and received a B.S. degree in mathematics from Wilkes College in 1970. While at Wilkes he was a member of the lacrosse team.

Enlisted in the U.S. Army in April, 1970, Lt. Lawson had his basic training at Fort Dix, N.J., and trained with the Combat Engineers at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Lt. Lawson will be stationed at Fort Gordon, Ga., for basic Officers Signal School for 11 weeks and then will go to Fort Hood, Texas, as a combat signal platoon leader in the new Tricamp Division.

Lt. Lawson is the grandson of Mrs. Obadiah Lawson, 27 Oak St., Wilkes-Barre, and Mr. and Mrs. George M. Yench, 458 S. Franklin St., Wilkes-Barre.

Local Air Reservists On German Tour of Duty

Ninety-eight officers and airmen of the 92nd Aerial Port Squadron (Reserve) located at Wyoming, will leave for a two week training tour at Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany, Aug. 7. Rhein-Main Air Base, is located 15 miles from Frankfurt and handles almost all of the military personnel, dependents and cargo in and out of Europe.

While in Germany, the local airmen will be attached to the 630th Military Airlift Support Squadron, and carry out all of the functions of the active duty establishment.

The squadron will be based from Wyoming to McGuire AFB, N.J. for the seven hour flight to Germany in a C-141

Starlifter. The C-141 jet transport can handle up to 157 passengers or 90,000 pounds of freight.

The 92nd Aerial Port Squadron was organized in 1956. Its primary mission since then is to train and maintain fully qualified personnel in the air transportation specialty field as an ultimate part of the Military Airlift Command. The unit must maintain a constant "operational readiness" status throughout the year and accomplish this through the most modern training procedures available from the Air Force at the Wyoming Valley Reserve Center and at Dover AFB, Del.

Monthly training is performed at the Wyoming Valley Reserve Center. This is supplemented by quarterly flyaways to Dover, where on the job training is performed and a two weeks active training tour, where the men work and train in their assigned specialty field with regular Air Force personnel.

Retired Men Continue Working Says SS Official

About 40 percent of the men who "retire" on social security continue to work at least part time, according to Emerson M. Perrine, social security district manager in Wilkes-Barre.

That estimate is based on a survey of men who had just begun to collect monthly social security retirement benefits. Eligible workers can claim full social security retirement benefits at 65—or reduced benefits at 62.

The survey indicated that 20 percent of the men starting to get social security retirement benefits are self-employed, Mr. Perrine said. About 7 out of 10 of them keep working—possibly because "they can adjust their hours and work pace more easily than payroll employees," he said.

Of those who don't continue to work after they begin receiving social security benefits, many are retired workers from businesses and industries with pension plans.

"About 14 percent of those who have worked in manufacturing keep working," Mr. Perrine said. "About 24 percent keep working in transportation, communication, real estate, and insurance; 25 percent in public administration, and 30 percent in mining."

But two-thirds of all workers in farming, forestry, and fisheries keep working after they're first entitled to social security retirement benefits, the study indicates.

"Because of their generally lower wages, farm workers may find it easier to continue working and stay within the social security retirement earnings test," Mr. Perrine added.

A retired worker may collect his full benefits unless he earns more than \$1,680 a year. He may collect his full benefit amount for any month in which he earns \$140 or less.

Check Your Drying Methods—You can tumble dry bath rugs or mats that have polyurethane foam, polyester or cotton backing, says Ruth Ann Wilson, Extension clothing specialist at The Pennsylvania State University. But air dry any article containing foam rubber or latex. When heated, foam rubber materials can, under certain circumstances, produce fire by spontaneous combustion.

Illegal Dumping Brings Complaint

Five green plastic bags containing assorted garbage along with a white porcelain gas stove which was found dumped on property at Green Road, Kingston Township, were traced to Daniel Smith Jr., 37 Carpenter St., Luzerne. A charge of illegal dumping has been filed with District Magistrate Frederick W. Anderson by Kingston Township Patrolman Paul Sabol.

A hearing has been set for Aug. 23 at 2:30 p.m.

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Dallas Fall Fair Plans Hobby Auction at Show

The Dallas Fall Fair which will be held Sept. 3, 4 and 5 at the Lehman Horse Show Grounds, will feature a new attraction as part of its Craft and Hobby Show this year. A hobby auction is scheduled at 4 p.m. Sept. 5, when any exhibitor may enter a craft or hobby to be sold. Entries to be auctioned must be entered in the Craft and Hobby Show by noon of Sept. 3.

The fair, which is sponsored jointly by the Dallas Kiwanis, Lions, and Rotary Clubs, will present the New Christy Minstrels and The Bentons, and will introduce for the first time in addition to the auction, a bargain alley and bingo.

Lawsuits on Death Of Students Settled

Two settlements in lawsuits arising from accidental deaths of two College Misericordia students were approved last week by Lackawanna County Court. Settlements of \$6,666 were made in the suits of Robert P. and Marguerite Lynch, of Scranton, as the result of the death of their daughter, Sharon, and by Gabriel and Teresa Durso, Jessup, as the result of the death of their daughter, Rosemary.

Both girls were killed in an accident April 23 on Route 309 near the Huntsville Road intersection. They were 19 years of age and were freshmen at College Misericordia. Also killed in the accident was Carol Freaster, 19, of Williamstown. Suits were against Jamie Joseph Kazokas, Edwardsville, driver of the car in which the girls were riding.

The Lynch and Durso girls died from multiple traumatic injuries, and Miss Freaster died from a fractured skull, according to the coroner's report.

The fair schedule conforms with the State Premium Book for fairs, issued by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. Everyone is invited to exhibit. Over \$400, plus ribbons, rosettes and some merchandise awards are offered as prizes. An entry fee will be charged for all exhibits in keeping with the policy of Pennsylvania Fairs as follows: one exhibit, 50 cents; two to five exhibits, \$1; six or more exhibits, \$2.

Cash prizes are listed for each class. Ribbons will be awarded in each class—blue for first; red for second and yellow for third if sufficient entries are worthy. A rosette will be awarded for the best blue in each section or division.

Entry cards and summary sheets will be available at the fair grounds or exhibitors may write in advance to Robert Coscia, Spring Garden Street, Trucksville, for them.

There are approximately nine departments in the show. Section 1 of Department 3 is vegetables. Vegetables selected for exhibition should be specimens that would bring the highest market prices. One should select medium-sized specimens and varieties should not be mixed. Factors to be used in judging are trueness to variety types, uniformity of shape, size and color, perfection of specimen, condition and maturity.

Section 1 of Department 4 is fruits which should be selected from specimens that would bring highest market prices.

Used as the basis for judging fruits is form, size, color, uniformity, and freedom from blemish.

The use or display of artificial flowers is prohibited from floral exhibits in Department 7 except when indicated in arrangements classes, and plants must be growing for at least two months by exhibitor.

Division A of Department 7 is house plants. Section 1 is house plants in bloom and Section 2 is foliage type house plants. Division B is specimen flowers.

Division C is artistic arrangements which carry the theme, "As You Like It," unless otherwise stated.

Department 5, home and dairy products, includes baked products in Division A. All products must be made by exhibitor. Division B is canned products which will be judged on quality, general appearance, and container which must be clear glass, one quart jar with new lid and cover.

Division D is butters, honey spreads, jams, jellies, marmalades and preserves, to be judged on appearance, flavor, consistency and neatness of package.

Department 9 is domestic and fine arts. Division A is clothing; Division B is needlework; Division C is rugs, Division D is handicrafts (mixed materials); Division E is household furnishings; Division F is paintings, oil, gouche, acrylic; and Division G is water color painting, drawings and prints. Division D includes wax, leather, cone bead, shell,


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