

CURATOR'S REPORT

THE BERLIN AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

SEPTEMBER 14, 2021



**BEAUTIFUL FLOWER GARDENS AND
HOME OF CHARLES "BUMPS" BAKER**

FAIRHOPE TOWNSHIP!

AUCTION AT SANDY HOLLOW FARM ROGER AND JAYNE (HITTIE) PLATT

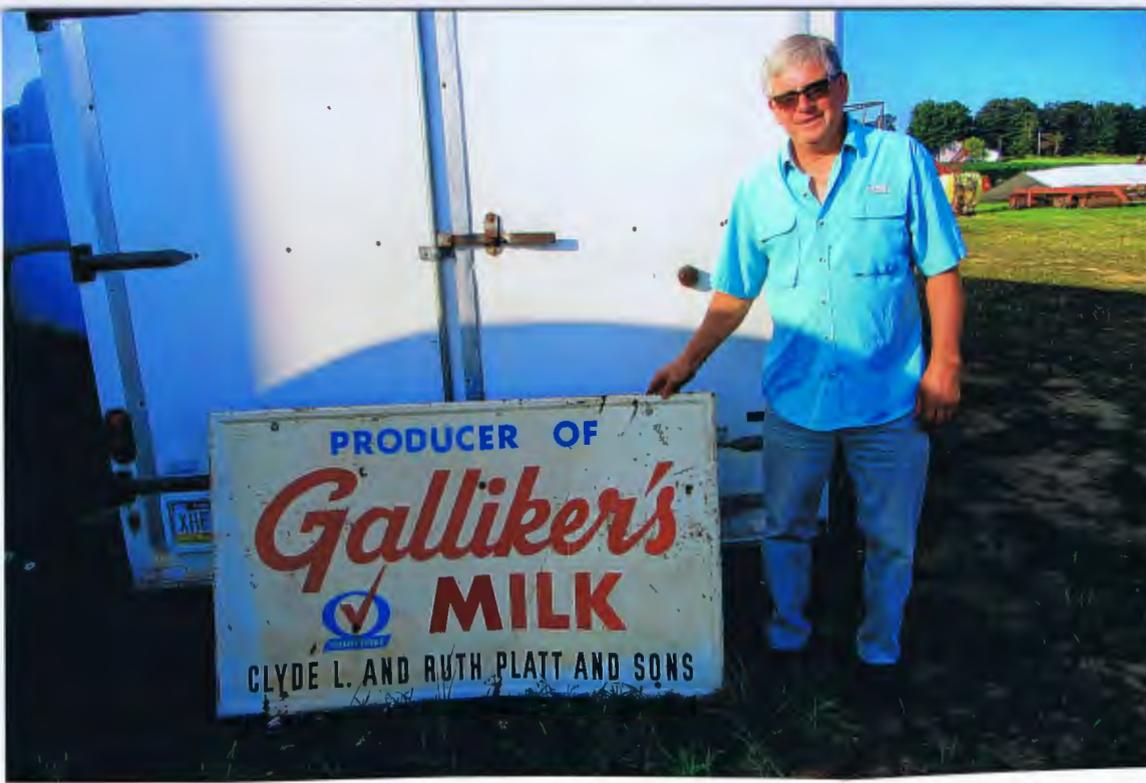
AUCTION OF JOHN DEERE FARM EQUIPMENT – AUGUST 5, 2021 – AT SANDY HOLLOW FARM

Prospective buyers from near and far converged on “Sandy Hollow Farm” in the Brotherton area of Brothersvalley Township on August 5, 2021 for the auction of farm equipment at the long-time farm of Roger L. and Jayne (Hittie) Platt. In recent months the farm - with two homes, the former dairy barn, and other buildings - has been sold to Kent and Elaine Wolf from Wisconsin.

Approximately 1888 Sandy Hollow Farm passed in ownership from earlier relatives to Emanuel L. and Emma Susan (Schrock) Meyers. For half a century, Emanuel “Mony” L. Knepper had been accounted as one of the prominent farmers in the Brotherton area. By 1905 the ownership of the same farm passed to Galen S. and Minnie (Adams) Platt. (Minnie was partially raised in the E. L. Knepper home.) At that time, Emanuel Knepper built a retirement home with a barn on the western side of his farm along the Brotherton Road.

In 1955 Clyde L. and Verna Ruth (Shockey) Platt took over ownership of Sandy Hollow Farm, where they raised their children. Their son and daughter-in-law, Roger L. and Jayne (Hittie) Platt purchased the farm in the 1980s, which they operated as a dairy and crop farm until earlier in 2021 when the farm was sold to Kent and Elaine Wolf of Wisconsin.





ROGER L. PLATT DISPLAYS THE FARM SIGN PROVIDED BY GALLIKER'S DAIRY DURING YEARS WHEN HIS PARENTS WERE OPERATING SANDY HOLLOW FARM.



STEVEN "STEVE" D. PLATT STANDS IN FRONT OF THE FORMER DAIRY BARN OF HIS PARENTS, ROGER L. AND JAYNE PLATT ON AUGUST 5, 2021 AT THE AUCTION!

**AUCTION AT SANDY HOLLOW FARM
ROGER AND JAYNE (HITTIE) PLATT**

DALE S. AND VILLA MARIE (LAYER) LESLIE MARRIED AUGUST 3, 1951

Layer-Leslie

Miss Villa Marie Layer of Dover, Del., became the bride Cpl. Dale S. Leslie of the 148th Fighter-Interceptor Squadron stationed at Dover Airforce Base, Friday, Aug. 3 at 8 p. m. the Base chaplain, John S. Patton (Captain) performing the ceremony.

Miss Florence Ann Hubbard of Dover, was maid of honor, and Cpl. John R. Granan of Reading was best man. The bride wore an aqua ballerina length gown, nylon mits, white lace hat and a yellow rosebud corsage. She carried a Bible.

Cpl. Leslie is the son of Mr. and Mrs. John I. Leslie, Meyersdale RD 2. He is a graduate of Meyersdale High School, class of 1947 and did farming before entering the service last October. His father John I. Leslie, is a veteran of World War I having served in Germany with Company C.

The couple is housekeeping in Dover.



**PRESENTED WITH A PROCLAMATION FOR 70
YEARS OF MARRIAGE FROM STATE
REPRESENTATIVE CARL WALKER METZGAR**

Cpl. Leslie Weds in Dover



**THE WEDDING OF VILLA MARIE
LAYER TO DALE S. LESLIE ON August
3, 1951**



People born in the
50's have lived in
7 decades, 2 centuries
& 2 millenniums.
We had the best
music, fastest cars,
Drive-in theaters,
soda fountains
& happy days.
And we are not
even that old yet,
we're just that cool.

SEPTEMBER 2021

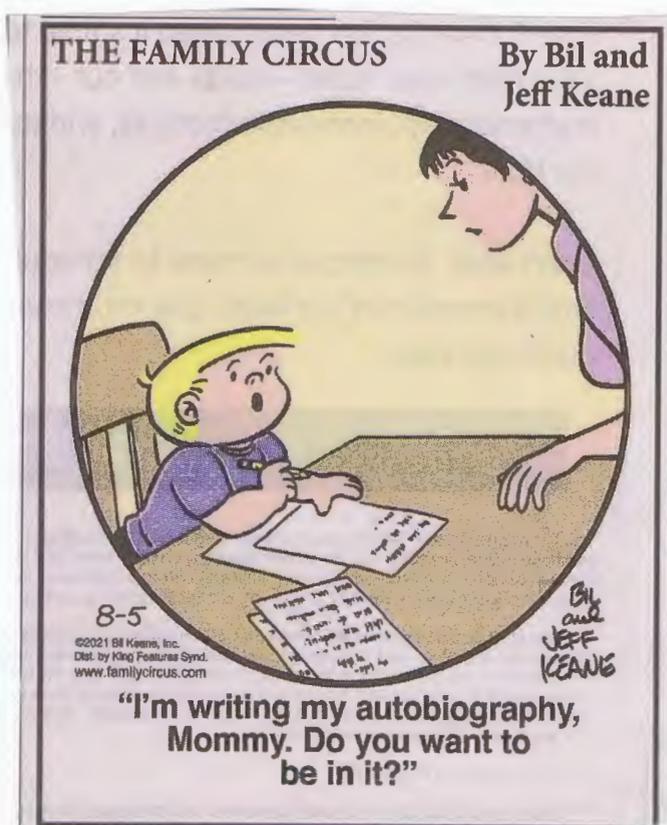
August and early September were exceptionally busy times for volunteers at the Berlin Area Historical Society as we took reservations for our annual dinner meeting, received dues payments for 2022, and sold raffle tickets for beautiful items given away at our annual meeting. Thanks to all the volunteers for all you do to keep things moving at BAHS. Judy Cook filed the paper work for our 2022 dues payments.

Work continued on the Main Street project of replacing sidewalks. Fox Pizza announced plans to open in the former Gianni's Pizza location.

David R. Hay, Curator



**VIRGINIA "GINNY" (SARVER) BERKEY
HILLEGAS FORMER OWNER OF
GINNY'S RESTAURANT IN BERLIN**



SEPTEMBER DONATIONS

Lonnie Dietle donated the petition of Isaac Miller to operate a tavern in Berlin (1838). **Harry and Ellie Deeter** donated a college savings bank given to patrons of the First National Bank. **Mary Ann Showers** translated our Katharina Fritz fractur. **John Coughenour** donated an old tool. **Ernest Saylor** donated a Shawnee Park swimming picture. **Hubert Weyant** donated four 1948 Shanksville class reunion photos and a reunion program.

Ruth Ann Kimmel donated a Philson Bank bottle cap, a Berlin mug, and a Philson National Bank pewter plate. **Suzanne Walker** donated a copy of a picture taken at 306 Broadway in Berlin when it served as a restaurant and was owned by the Ream family.

'Remarkable moment'

Somerset Co. funeral home honored for 200 years of service

BY DAVID HURST
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STOYSTOWN - Founding Father James Monroe was the nation's president when David Ross began handcrafting coffins in the Shanksville area in 1820.

The borough itself was in its infancy when his family began expanding into the funeral business along the Stonycreek River.

Those milestones are part of 200 years of history that Deaner Funeral Home supervisor Don Deaner is looking back on this week as the family celebrates two centuries of service to the community.

Deaner, who has been in the business since 1981, represents the sixth generation to run the operation, with his daughter, Lindsey, representing the seventh.

Since the mid-1800s, when Deaner's great-great-grandfather relocated the business, and since 1896 when his son Charles Ross, became the first to attend embalming school, the family has adapted to changing times, Don said.



Funeral home supervisor Don Deaner displays licenses that his ancestors carried over much of the family's 200 years in business at Deaner Funeral Home in Stoystown.

PHOTOS BY DAVID HURST/THE TRIBUNE-DEMOCRAT

"The mission hasn't changed. We serve the living - by caring for their dead."

(over)

Aug 2021



Deaner stands next to a child's casket that his great-grandfather built more than a century ago.

"For a long time, there was no embalming process," he said.

The era's funeral directors would travel to prepare the dead for burial. They brought caskets, fresh flowers and other supplies to hold services inside homes, he noted.

Don's grandfather, John Deaner - who married Francis Ross in 1928 - opened the family's Stoystown funeral home in 1945, where their family now operates inside the Graham House, a one-time hotel believed to be the first on Route 30 west of the

Allegheny Front.

Don Deaner recalled spending time as a boy inside the funeral home where his grandfather and father, Charles, worked. After he graduated from the Pittsburgh Institute of Mortuary Science in 1981, he started supervising the business, too, while it grew to add locations in Hooversville and Berlin in the second half of the 1980s.

DON DEANER, DEANER FUNERAL HOME SUPERVISOR

He estimated he has served 4,000 families over his tenure - just a fraction of the number served collectively by his ancestors over the generations prior.

"But the mission hasn't changed," he said. "We serve the living - by caring for their dead."

The family learned many years ago that, if they complete

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HOME

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their tasks with professionalism and compassion, people won't forget.

Once, a man came to the family with a small, narrow hardwood coffin Deaner's great-grandfather had built more than a century before, Deaner said.

It was originally created for a sickly child, but when the boy miraculously recovered, his family set the box aside in a barn, expecting they would later need it.

"Fortunately," Deaner said, "that day never came, and the family ended up giving it back to my father to display."

Today, that box is part of the business' collection of keepsakes.

State Rep. Carl Walker Metzgar said Deaner Funeral Home should be proud of its history.

"It's very unusual to have any business have that level of survivability," he said. "Seven generations. They deserve recognition for it."

On Saturday, Metzgar will present the family with a House citation during Shanksville Community Days. The Somerset County commissioners are also planning to attend, according to Deaner.

"This is a remarkable moment," Deaner said. "We can't let this moment pass by without noting it."

David Hurst is a reporter for The Tribune-Democrat.