

Garber's Store, about 1935. (GRB02) Garber's Store sold, among other things, newspapers, pipes, cigars, loose tobacco, and cigarettes, as well as rifle and shotgun ammunition, for over sixty years. The store was located on Lancaster Avenue just west of the property now occupied by Clay's Bakery, and appropriately, a stone's throw from where the TEHS archives now houses a large collection of Garber family memorabilia.

surveyors at Penn State shows a handsome group of recently graduated men posed with their professional equipment.

With over 300 photographs the Garber-Pyle Collection represents not only a unique and valuable family history, but also, due to the second part of the gift, a cultural picture of Berwyn. Within the collection about three-quarters of the images are family-related, and the rest depict groups of Berwyn school children, local baseball teams, the Berwyn Fire Company, and a 1917 Berwyn event. There are also deeds to two family properties in Berwyn, and several other items of printed matter such as two 1951 identification cards for Sarah Elizabeth Pyle, attesting to her status as a volunteer member of the U. S. Air Force "Ground Observer Corps."

Henry "Zeke" Pyle was the youngest firefighter ever voted into Berwyn Fire Co. membership, starting his tour of duty at age fifteen in 1945 while the company's older volunteers were fighting in World War II. By the time he was seventeen he was the company's youngest driver, and at age twenty-one, its youngest chief engineer. Four generations of Henry Oscar Garber's family served in the Berwyn Fire Company. Henry Oscar Garber was a charter member. His son-in-law Abram Pyle; his grandson Henry "Zeke" Pyle; and his great-granddaughter Whitney Pyle also served with the company. [12]



Henry "Zeke" Pyle, ca. 1956. (PYL21) His son Matthew Spencer Pyle was the donor of the large Garber-Pyle Collection. Henry "Zeke" was an auxiliary Easttown Township Police Officer, and in 1996 was honored with a *History Quarterly* article—*TEHCQ* Vol. 34 No. 1 (January 1996) p. 44—celebrating his 50 years of service with the Berwyn Fire Company.

Within the Garber-Pyle donation, a group of images illustrate Henry Oscar Garber's strong ties to the civic life of Berwyn. The shots of the Berwyn Fire Company (BFC) are

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In this photograph by Lucy Sampson, Henry Oscar Garber proudly sits in the driver's seat of the Berwyn Fire Company's new pumper. (BFC11) He almost certainly knew Lucy Sampson, as she made several photographs for him. The mount for this image is signed in her easily recognizable handwriting "L. A. Sampson, Berwyn, Pa." (see inset, upper right).

related to two images that have been in the collection for many years. The three new prints, very sharp and full of detail, are carefully mounted on gray boards, and identified on the verso: "L. A. Sampson, Berwyn, Pa." by the photographer, Berwyn's own Lucy Sampson. She printed many of her images on postcard stock, for sale in places like drug stores and post offices, but these mounted photos are larger, being five by seven-inch enlargements from the negatives. This may indicate that she valued them for subject or composition, or she may have prepared them for some type of presentation. The fire engine shown in these prints, a LaFrance pumper, was the first motorized engine acquired by the BFC, in 1917, and the entire suite of photographs suggests something like a community "launch" of the new equipment or a kind of "open house" event. She may have been asked by fire company member Henry O. Garber to do the photography, while he sat, clearly recognizable in his soft hat, in the driver's seat for this occasion. [13]



The Berwyn baseball team, 1910–14, with team manager Henry Garber, shown on the right side of the photo, with arms crossed and wearing a bow tie and a baseball mitt on his left hand. (TEH78) Several baseball teams and other group photographs were taken by Lucy Sampson. Her use of the words "Photographic Artist" in her stamp here suggests a degree of professional pride in her work.

Henry Oscar Garber wore many hats in his Berwyn civic life and we see him in another suite of photos, i.e. the shots of the Berwyn baseball team. Lucy Sampson took at least four photos of the team, posed carefully with bats, gloves, and team manager Henry Garber, who is shown with arms crossed and a baseball mitt on his left hand. Three of these prints are, like the fire company images above, five by seven-inch enlargements mounted on dark board. In this case two of the prints carry an ink stamp on the verso: "Lucy Sampson, Photographic-Artist, Berwyn, Pa." All of the images in this group reveal a wooden fence at the rear, with just the heads of some spectators visible above it. So before or after a game, maybe the final game of a season, Lucy took a rather formal set of photos of the team over a span of a few minutes. In each one the spectators in the background are standing in slightly different positions. It may well be that Garber asked her to create a nice team photograph with bats and gloves arrayed in the foreground. And like the Fire Company images, we now know of another suite of photographs that were not attributed to Lucy Sampson prior to the arrival of the Garber-Pyle Collection.



Independence Day Rally in Berwyn, July 4, 1917. (TEH57) The rally program announced that "As an added attraction Mr. Felix d'Albites, one time holder of Amateur 100 yards Championship of Australia will concede five yards to all comers in [a] 100 yards flat race."

Among the Berwyn images found in the Garber-Pyle donation were five previously unknown photographs of the Independence Day Rally at Berwyn, held on July 4, 1917 (TEH55–59). The event was a fundraiser for the American servicemen then serving in World War I. The location was the grounds of the Tredyffrin-Easttown High School, and persons of all ages are seen listening to the speakers, playing games, and enjoying refreshments. The rally was accompanied by a printed program referencing the recent entry of the U.S.

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into the war, with proceeds intended to "send an occasional gift to the boys from Tredyffrin and Easttown Townships." The interesting four-page program for the rally came to the TEHS in 2018 as part of the C. Herbert Fry donation, and has been scanned into the Image Collection database (TEH60–63).

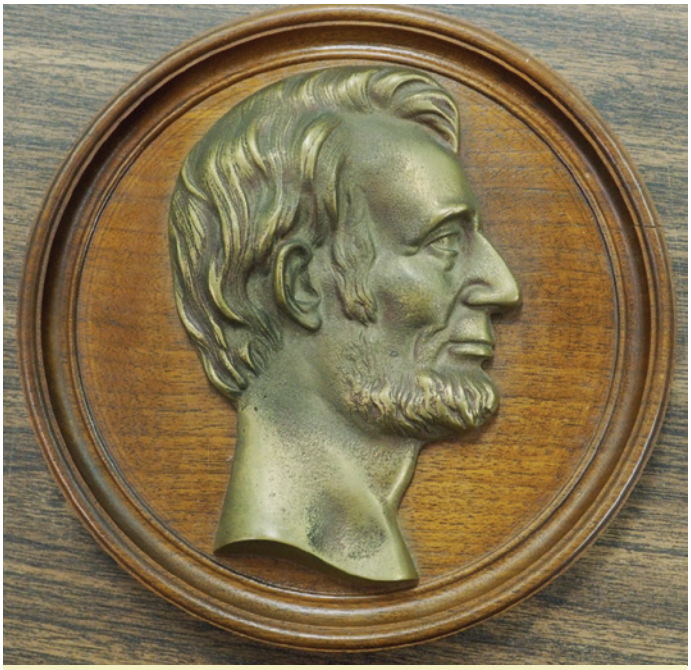
Selected 2021 Gifts

Neil Sardiñas, who grew up in Berwyn, donated five early-twentieth-century photographs of the town, including two taken after an ice storm (LAB89–90). There are also three of the Berwyn Fire Company building with several fire-engines displayed in the front (BFC14–16). It is clear that, then, as now, the fire officers were very proud of their equipment, showing off pumpers or engines in front of the fire house, carefully positioned for the photographer. Mr. Sardiñas also donated sixteen photographs he took at the Berwyn 75th Anniversary Parade, on May 17, 1969. Several shots show the T-E Junior High Band and the Conestoga High School Band marching down Lancaster Ave. And as is the case in many such parades, the Fire Company was represented by several pieces of equipment, as well as engines from at least seven other municipalities. [14]



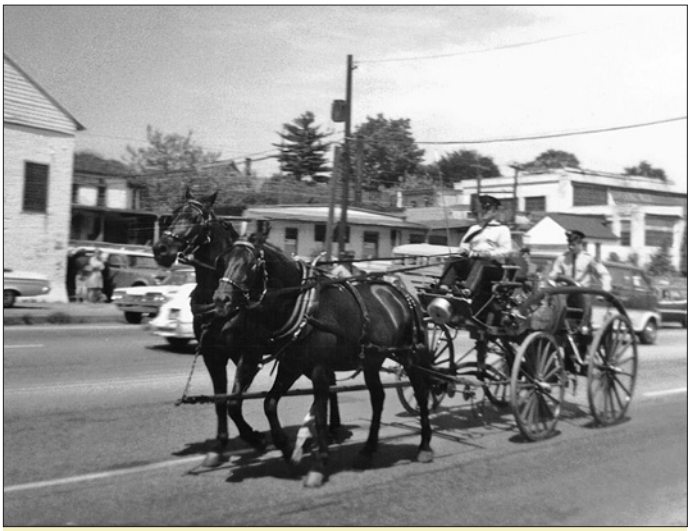
Intersection of Lancaster Ave. and Cassatt Avenue in Berwyn, looking west, after an ice storm. (LAB90) The smaller, darker structure in the middle of the image is Bill Makin's Cigar Store, with Ewing's General Mercantile behind it (the footprint of those two structures would now be in the parking lot on Waterloo Avenue across from Clay's Bakery). The large house on the left was later torn down and is today the site of a strip of stores, including Fellini Cafe. The building—yet to be built—immediately to the east of Makin's has been occupied for years by John Thomas's Barber Shop. That building, constructed soon after World War I, allows us to date the image to circa 1910. — *Roger Thorne*

Neil Sardiñas also donated a bronze medallion, showing a right-facing profile of Abraham Lincoln. The medallion was one of a group produced for the Governor of Pennsylvania in the late 1940s by the American Non-Gran Bronze Company.



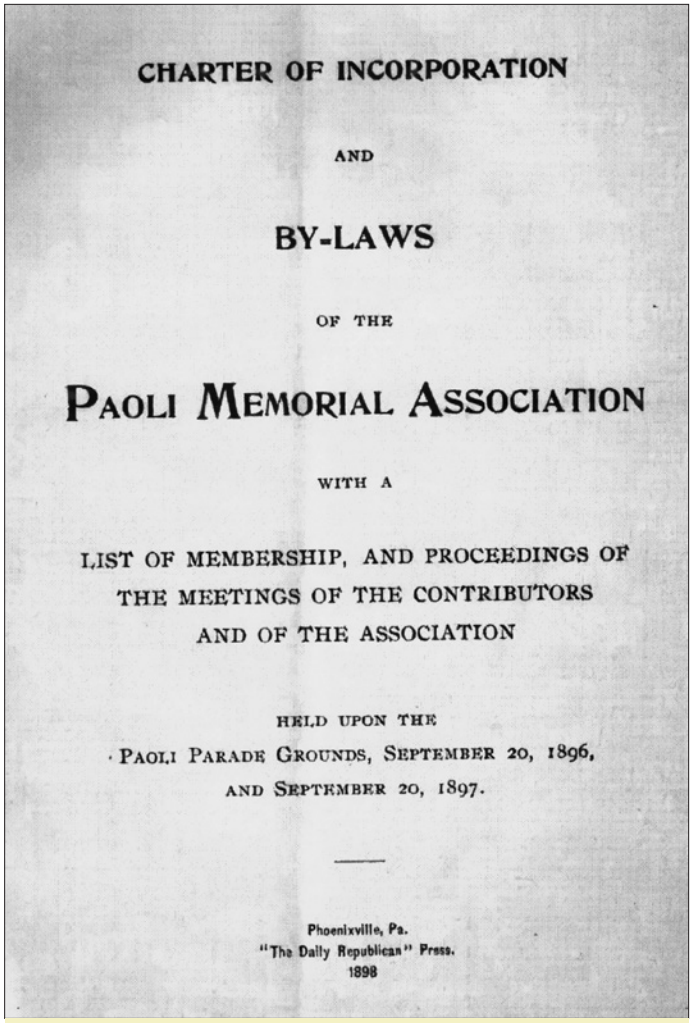
Abraham Lincoln, bronze medallion, 6 ½ inches high, ca. 1946. Pennsylvania Governor Edward Martin served from 1943 to 1947. He may have ordered these medallions in 1946 when he served a one-year term as president of the Council on State Governments. *Courtesy of Neil Sardiñas*

As described in the October 1957 issue of the TEHC *History Quarterly*: "During Edward Martin's term as Governor of Pennsylvania, he played host to the Governors of the other 47 states. As a souvenir, each Governor received a plaque with a head of Abraham Lincoln in bronze on it. This mold was made and the heads were cast at the Bronze. Many of you have probably seen them, as quite a few of them are to be found in homes around our community." [15]



Early fire pumper drawn by two horses. For the Berwyn 75th Anniversary Parade in May 1969, the Berwyn Fire Company showed off this vintage pumper (possibly the first piece of equipment it owned) drawn by a pair of horses as it would have been when used. The large flywheel at the back probably powered the pump. *Courtesy of Neil Sardiñas*

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CHARTER OF INCORPORATION

AND

BY-LAWS

OF THE

PAOLI MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION

WITH A

LIST OF MEMBERSHIP, AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CONTRIBUTORS AND OF THE ASSOCIATION

HELD UPON THE PAOLI PARADE GROUNDS, SEPTEMBER 20, 1896, AND SEPTEMBER 20, 1897.

Phoenixville, Pa.
"The Daily Republican" Press.
1898

Title page of the *Charter and By-Laws of the Paoli Memorial Association*, 1898. Today the Paoli Memorial Association oversees the cemetery and monuments at the 22-acre Paoli Memorial Grounds in Malvern Borough. *Courtesy of Bart Van Valkenburgh.*

TEHS member Bart Van Valkenburgh donated an important document relating to the history of the Battle of Paoli. The 40-page booklet titled on the front cover *Charter and By-Laws of the Paoli Memorial Association*, was published in 1898, to formally inaugurate the Paoli Memorial Association. It thus constitutes the founding document of this important local organization. The stated purpose of the Association was to "hold, improve and preserve the land and improvements thereon, known as the Paoli Parade Ground and including monuments now erected, … as a memorial park for all time to come."

The booklet includes lists of officers and members, the charter and by-laws, and a treasurer's report (all dated 1898). The second half of the document contains a "Program of Exercises" describing two separate commemorative ceremonies marking the 119th and 120th Anniversary of the Paoli Massacre (which occurred on September 20th, 1777). Those ceremonies took place on September 19th and 20th, 1896, and again on September 20th, 1897. These two commemorations were presented in the publication as the direct impetus for the association's foundation.

The "Program of the Exercises" lists prayers, military drills, band music, and the remarks in full of four speakers in 1896, and two speakers in 1897. The second set of remarks in 1897 consisted of "An Historical Paper Read by Miss Florence Yeatman…" in which she recalled the story she heard as a child from her grandmother, Mrs. Lavinia Yeatman, who had written down the recollections of her aunt Sarah Mather. The narrative described the brutal attack and thefts which took place at the "Admiral Warren" tavern (as the General Warren Inn was then known) by a group of British soldiers at the time of the Battle of Paoli.

The Battle of Paoli or the "Paoli Massacre" was a notorious engagement in the Philadelphia campaign of the American Revolution, fought in the area surrounding present-day Malvern, Pennsylvania. Following the American retreats at the Battle of Brandywine and the Battle of the Clouds, George Washington left a force under Brigadier General Anthony Wayne behind to monitor and harass the British as they prepared to move on the revolutionary capital of Philadelphia. On the evening of September 20, 1777, British forces under Major General Charles Grey led a surprise bayonet attack on Wayne's encampment near the Paoli Tavern. There were many American casualties.

TEHS member Lynne Dawson donated a very large metal real-estate sign, dating from the 1950s. The painted metal sign measures 40 x 50 inches (about 3 ½ by 4 feet). It advertises a group of newly built homes: "West Berwyn / New Homes / $5990.00 up / Turn Left at Underpass." These small homes were built by R. G. Funkhouser, and one can see them today just west of the Conestoga High School athletic fields. There are five homes on Conestoga Road and another seven around the corner on Old Lancaster. Many have had additions added on for more space. An advertisement for these homes boasted three bedrooms, tile baths, and "80 trains daily," (presumably referring to all trains in both directions!).



"West Berwyn / New Homes," painted metal real estate sign in wooden frame, 40 x 50 inches, 1950s. *Courtesy of Lynne Dawson.*

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PUBLIC LEDGER—PHILADELPHIA, FRIDAY MORNING, APRIL 4, 1930

Scenes of Disaster at Devon, Where Fireworks Blasts and Fire Wrought Havoc

PANORAMA OF DEVASTATION AT DEVON indicates power of blasts which utterly destroyed fireworks factory which stood just at left of house shown in lower right corner

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF STRICKEN AREA gives excellent idea of region which felt full force of explosion. Many injured were trapped in the houses

FIREMEN from dozen towns helped fight fires which followed blasts

INJURED VICTIM OF BLAST is loaded into one of many ambulances which helped carry the twoscore injured to Bryn Mawr and Delaware County Hospitals

VALLEY FORGE CADETS rushed at double-quick to aid in work of rescue and foil vandals. Here they are lined up before splintered P. R. R. signal tower

ONLY A SAMPLE OF DAMAGE wrought by fireworks blasts at Devon is contained in (top) exterior view of building not far from razed factory, showing shattered windows and demolished porch, and (below) interior view of same building, showing cracked walls

GROUP OF RESCUE WORKERS is shown here gathered near the shattered ruins of what was a comfortable small house before blasts in fireworks factory shook it to pieces. Debris caught fire and hampered efforts of rescue party in search of injured

CAVED-IN ROOF was only part of damage suffered by this sturdy little house under beating force of explosions which yesterday shattered big area in Devon and rocked large portion of Philadelphia. Toll of life and injury was heavy

"Scenes of Disaster at Devon, Where Fireworks Blasts and Fire Wrought Havoc," full-page of photographs of the Devon fireworks explosion from *The Philadelphia Public Ledger*, April 4, 1930. This full-page spread of photographs of the disaster provided graphic images of the devastation caused by the explosion. *Courtesy of Radnor Historical Society.*

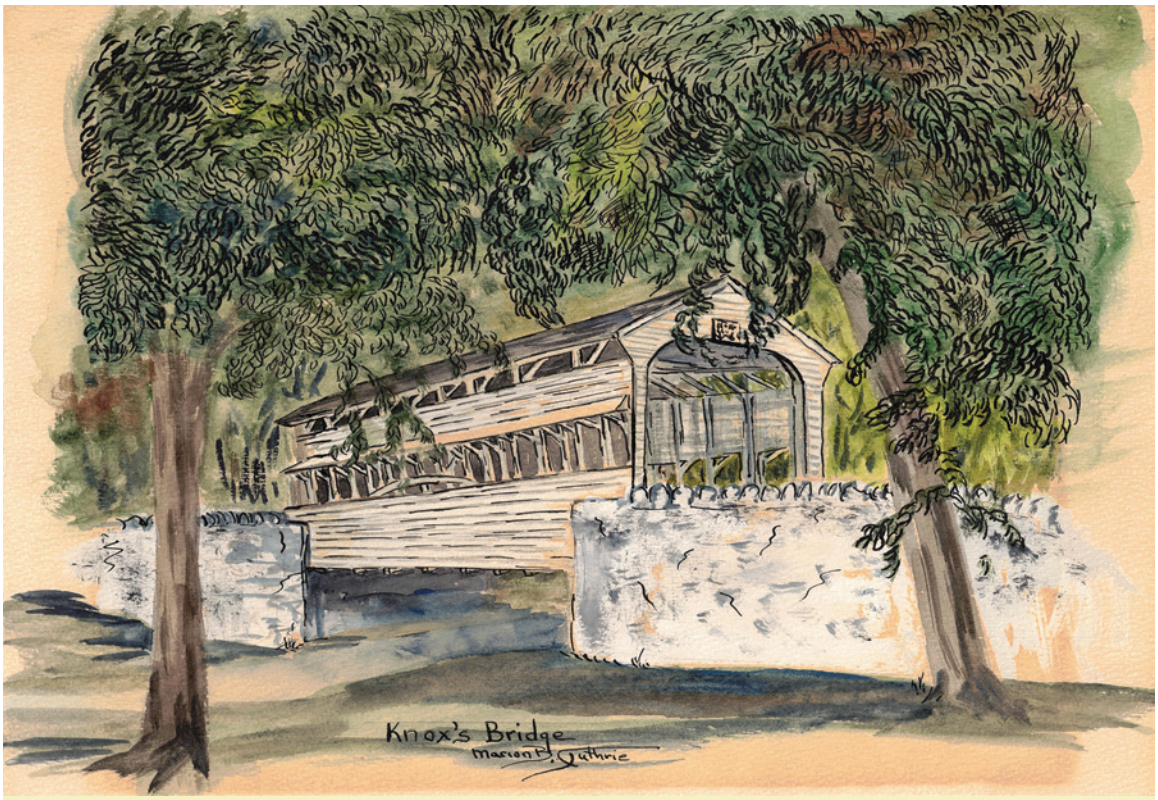
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The infamous Devon Fireworks Explosion in 1930 caused great loss of life and property damage, all of which are documented in various publications, including *History Quarterly* articles, and the TEHS Image Collection. The most dramatic contemporary coverage appeared in *The Philadelphia Public Ledger*, of April 4, 1930, in which a full-page of nine black and white photographs brought the horror of the scene to the full attention of readers' eyes. In 2021 staff at the Radnor Historical Society found an original page of the photographs that had been torn from the paper, and donated it to the TEHS. We now have not only clear evidence of the source of nine of the disaster photographs, but the optimal image resolution for each one. The page would have been part of a "gravure" section which newspapers in the early twentieth century often included, featuring photographs in this high-quality printing technique. Gravure photos were printed in a dark brown-colored ink, producing a dramatic and realistic image. While not in full-color, these photos were very popular images to cut out and keep. [16]

The Tredyffrin Easttown Historical Society thanks all those who donated historical materials to the archives. As our collection grows, so too does our ability to interpret and explain local history from Strafford to Paoli. The author thanks all the members of the TEHS and others who have contributed to this article.



"Camden-bound Conrail freight train from Pittsburgh passes Strafford station on Track 2, February 13, 1983." Color enlargement, photographed, captioned, and donated by Larry DeYoung. "The train had been briefly delayed in Paoli. The snow between the tracks had separated the air hoses, causing the brakes to apply automatically. I was monitoring its progress on my radio scanner, and the delay gave me enough time to get to the Strafford station and set up for the photo. The men visible under the shelter had just cleared part of the platform, and after the train passed had to start again. At Strafford the train reached 40 miles per hour, on track that had not been run on since the snowfall, making it a total "act of faith" on the part of the engine crew that there were any rails under that snow cover!"



"Knox's Bridge," by Marion B. Guthrie, undated watercolor and ink drawing, gift of Erin Duffy, on behalf of the Chatley Family of West Chester, Pa.

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TEHCQ = Tredyffrin Easttown History Club Quarterly
TEHQ = Tredyffrin Easttown History Quarterly

To view referenced articles online, visit the Tredyffrin Easttown Historical Society *History Quarterly* Digital Archives at **www.tehistory.org/hqda/qtoc2.html**

Endnotes

1 David Wilson Jr.'s birthplace in 1791 was the Wilson Homestead Farm located on Swedesford Road which his older brother John Morton Wilson inherited. After marrying Eliza Siter in 1812, the couple lived at Eliza's home in Siterville (now known as Strafford) until 1836, and likely wanted to avoid potential confusion by naming the new farm Elda Farm.

2 Conrad Wilson "Elda Farm: History and Recollections," *TEHCQ* Vol. 41 No. 4 (Fall 2004) pp. 111-117.

3 Ibid, p. 112.

4 *History Quarterly* articles: Conrad Wilson "The Original Wilson Home," *TEHCQ* Vol. 21 No. 4 (October 1983) pp. 127-32; William F. Wilson, "Memories of Elda Farm," *TEHCQ* Vol. 41 No. 4 (Fall 2004) p. 118; "Notes and Comments," ibid, p. 137. Also see the biographical files in the TEHS archives.

5 "Conrad Wilson - In Memoriam," *TEHQ* Vol. 42 No. 2 (Spring 2005) pp. 67-68.

6 Roger Thorne "Pursuing a Local Automotive Mystery," *TEHQ* Vol. 44 No. 3 (Summer 2007) p. 115.

7 The images in the Strafford Design Album have been entered into the TEHS Image Collection (images STR27–87). See the history of the Strafford Village development by Stephan C. Schifter, the son of its developer, in *TEHQ* Vol. 41 No. 1 (Winter 2004) pp. 33–36.

8 "Great Valley Area Limestone Quarries: Part I - Howellville Quarries" by Joyce A. Post *TEHQ* Vol. 42 No. 3 (Summer 2005) pp. 95–103.

9 See "Paoli Then and Now: A Social Transition 1900 to 2000" by William L. Nassau III, *TEHCQ* Vol. 40, No. 2 (April 2003) p. 67, and Image Collection CMR01–07 (Comer's store), PA59–62 (war memorial), and PRC01–27 (parade). George Pyle continued his generosity to the TEHS in 2022 with an important gift of ornithological notebooks compiled by TEHS charter member Franklin L. Burns. This collection will be described in a future issue.

10 "Finding Aid for the Garber-Pyle Family Papers, Gift of Spencer Pyle, 2020" in the TEHS online Document Collection **documents.tehistory.org/docs/doc312.html**

11 "Remembering My Grandfather and Garber's Store" by Henry "Zeke" Pyle, *TEHCQ* Vol. 33 No. 3 (July 1995) pp. 115–119.

12 "Berwyn Fire Co. Honors 50-year Member" — Henry "Zeke" Pyle, *TEHCQ* Vol. 34 No. 1 (January 1996) p. 44.

13 We now have many new pictures of Henry Garber in the Image Collection, and in several of these he wears similar soft hats. The 1917 pumper is identified in the fire company's 75th anniversary book, page 36. See also "The Berwyn Fire Co." by Florence Barnes, *TEHCQ* Vol. 15 No. 4 (October 1957) pp. 61–65. For more information on Lucy Sampson, see "Lucy Sampson: Berwyn Photographer" by Mike Bertram & Tim Lander *TEHQ* Vol. 48 No. 2 (June 2011) pp. 50–59.

14 The 1969 parade photographs were not digitized. Compare the horse drawn pumper to Image Collection image BFC05. See "Berwyn's 75th Anniversary" by Herb Fry and Mary Lamborn, *TEHCQ* Vol. 34 No. 3 (July 1996) pp. 115–22 for an article on the week-long Berwyn 75th festivities. Herb mentions a film that was made during the week, and which he later transferred to video, to show at a TEHS meeting. Sadly, neither the film nor the video survives.

15 "The American Non-Gran Bronze Company" by Florence W. Barnes, *TEHCQ* Vol. 9 No. 4 (October 1957) p. 90.

16 In the TEHS Image Collection, there are many duplicated images of these nine *Public Ledger* photos of the disaster. Readers may also want to read "Update on the 1930 Devon Fireworks Explosion Site and the Westover Bird Sanctuary" by Heidi Sproat and Michele Hawk in *TEHQ* Vol. 53 No. 2 (October 2016) pp. 22–27.



Another image from the Garber-Pyle Collection showing volunteers in elaborate attire serving refreshments at the Independence Day Rally in Berwyn, July 4, 1917. (TEH59)

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