



Air Mail Pilot Elmer R. Vanatta. Photograph from the collection of Irene (Vanatta) Benfer of Millflinburg.

Air Mail Planes Across the West End & the Story of Pilot Elmer R. Vanatta Part II

Elmer R. Vanatta's desire to fly airplanes did not end in July 1920 following his discharge from active military service. One month later, August 5, 1920, he signed up with the Air Mail Service of the U. S. Postal Service, transporting mail between Washington, D.C. and Newark, New Jersey. On August 25, 1920, only a few weeks after joining the Air Mail Service, Vanatta lost his way while flying to College Park, Maryland, landing several miles off course. After sending a telegram to headquarters of the Air Mail Service as to his location Second Assistant Postmaster General

Otto Praeger responded in his usual brusque manner – “*stay with the ship until you can get same off safely. Fly ship to College Park without getting lost again or it will mean your separation.*” Fortunately for Vanatta he was able to get the airplane off the ground and safely to College Park without getting lost again.

In October 1920, Vanatta transferred to the Cleveland – Chicago division of the Air Mail Service. On March 30, 1921 Vanatta was flying de Havilland biplane No. 85 from Cleveland, Ohio to Bellefonte when engine problems forced him to land the plane at Kersey, Pennsylvania. In his report Vanatta provided the following details about the accident:

“The airplane and motor worked perfectly (after takeoff), but after flying for one hour and fifteen minutes I noticed the air pressure going down fast, so turned on the gravity and landed. After landing tried to investigate the trouble but could find no leak in the lines anywhere. After being on the ground fifteen minutes, the pressure started coming up again, and I took off. It then worked alright and continued to do so for the next fifty-five minutes when it went down again causing another forced landing at Kersey, Pa. I was on the ground at that place for five minutes, when the pressure started coming up again, and I tried to get off, but due to the different air cur-

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The Millmont Times

MAY 2009

Millmont Mailbox by Postmaster Sam Smith

As promised previously, this article will cover the new rate increase effective Monday, May 11. First class letter rates will increase 2 cents from 42 cents to 44 cents. The second ounce will remain 17 additional cents. Postcard stamps will increase 1 cent to 28 cents per card. 1 and 2 cent stamps are available now. If you bought the Forever stamps, (depicting the Liberty Bell), do not add any postage to them as they will always be good for the current one ounce First class rate, regardless of the price you paid for them. On May 8, rolls of 100 44 cent flag stamps will be available. There will be no increase for Priority Mail. Fees for certified letters will be \$2.80, and a return receipt will be \$2.30. Postal Money Order fees will be \$1.10 for Money Orders from .01 to \$500.00, and will remain \$1.50 for Money Orders from \$500.01 to \$1000.00. Delivery Confirmation will be \$.70 on Priority Mail and \$.80 on all other classes of packages. First Class letters to Canada will be: 75 cents, Mexico: 79 cents, and other countries: 98 cents. For more information on rates and other services, visit www.usps.com. On May 7, 44 cent stamps depicting the Simpsons will be issued, and on May 8, 44 cent King and Queen of Hearts stamps will be released. The Post Office will be closed with no delivery on Monday, May 25, to honor Memorial Day.

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While there was no indication on the reverse side of the above photograph as to when and where it was taken, it may very well have been taken following Vanatta's fatal biplane crash at Mitchell Field, Long Island, NY. This, and other Vanatta photographs, is from the collection belonging to Elmer's niece, Irene (Vanatta) Benfer of Mifflinburg.

rents and light air, the machine would not takeoff the way it should, and when it finally did get off, the motor cut out and the tail surface caught on a tree causing the airplane to wreck. Damage done to the airplane – four wings broken, radiator, propeller, four front longerons, stabilizer, elevators and rudder. The motor is apparently alright.”

Shortly after this accident Vanatta transferred to the New York – Cleveland division. A portion of that route was over familiar territory since he was now flying almost directly over his homestead northwest of Hartleton in Union County.

During the time Vanatta was piloting airplanes (1915-1921) both in the military and as a civilian, he lived a rather charmed life. His good fortune had seen him through nearly seven years of flying airplanes. Walking away from one airplane accident was in itself incredible, yet Vanatta walked away from six accidents. It was reported that during three of those accidents the airplanes he was piloting were destroyed.

On Friday April 22, 1921 Vanatta's luck came to an end at Mitchell Field, near Hempstead on Long Island, New York. Violating Air Mail Service's anti-stunting rules Vanatta was taking off in a de Havilland biplane when he attempted to

make a 180-degree vertical turn about 50 feet off the ground. His plane side-slipped, hooked a wing, crashed, and caught fire. Vanatta was pinned beneath the wreckage until rescuers could free him. Severely burned, Vanatta's life hung in the balance over the next eight days. This was his seventh airplane accident, and unfortunately for him and his family it was his last. At 4:00 a.m. on Saturday April 30, 1921, in a hospital at Hempstead, Long Island, Elmer R. Vanatta succumbed to injuries suffered as a result of the April 22nd crash.

Earl G. Vanatta rushed to his brother's bedside upon learning of the accident. He and an official of the Air Mail office at Hempstead, Long Island accompanied Elmer's body to the home of his grief-stricken mother. Elmer R. Vanatta, age 27, the WWI aviator and pioneer of the U.S. Air Mail Service was returning home. He was laid to rest in the Hartleton Cemetery just over the hill from his childhood home.

The funeral service for Elmer R. Vanatta was held on Wednesday May 4, 1921 at his mother's home off Glover Road, Millmont. Services then moved to the Hartleton Presbyterian Church, where a large crowd gathered to pay their last respects to a native son. U. S. Postal Service officials as well as his colleagues in the Air Mail Service were in attendance. One of Vanatta's fellow air mail pilots paid tribute to his fallen comrade by circling the Presbyterian Church and the Hartleton Cemetery in a U. S. Mail biplane. One can only imagine how difficult that day was for Elmer's mother. Having lost her husband in 1914, Agnes (Getz) Vanatta, a mother who had given birth to six sons, was for the third time burying one of her children.

A credo among pilots in the Air Mail Service was one that some adhered to and others did not. That set of guidelines stated rather simply that there were: *“old pilots and there are bold pilots, but there are no old, bold pilots.”* Emboldened pilots were putting their lives as well as their livelihood in serious jeopardy.

The actions of U.S. Air Mail pilot William “Wild Bill” Hobson could probably be considered rather bold. In July of 1920 he was assigned to the New York – Bellefonte section of the Air Mail Service. While waiting for an assignment at the airfield at Bellefonte he was anxious to attend a function later that day in New York. His plans for making the trip to New York did not materialize as he had hoped so he decided to hitch a ride on an eastbound air mail plane. Since there was only room for the pilot and his cargo of mail Hobson rode on the wing of the airplane operated by pilot Frederic Robinson. Clinging to the wing of the plane Hobson's

ride to New York took just over two hours. A newspaper account of the incident stated: *“When he left Bellefonte Hobson was standing up in the air, but he laid down later and was taken safely to his destination, arriving in New York on scheduled time.”*

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Pilots of the Sky

by William H. Ely

At night I see them swiftly go
In storm and sleet and rain and snow
And somehow they seem to be
The bravest of all men to me.

‘Neath a silvery moon or a starlit sky
I have often watched them sailing by
And know that these men have nerves of steel
To keep their planes on an even keel.

The poem above was written during the late 1920's or early 1930's by William H. Ely (1877-1943). It was provided to me courtesy of his granddaughter, Jane (Ely) Foster of Camp Hill.

BIRD TALK

by Jim McCormick



It has been a cool, sometimes even cold, April, except for an unusual heat wave near the end of the month. We spent the first third of the month traveling around the Deep South, passing through Kentucky, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and the panhandle of Florida. It was unusually cold in the south too; it was 28 degrees in Alabama and people were wearing parkas! It is amazing to watch the unfolding of spring in just a few days, going from the earliest signs here when we left to the height of spring in Louisiana. We had expected to bask in the low seventies, but ended up with fifties and sixties. We were fortunate, though; there were blizzards to the north of us, tornadoes to the west, thunderstorms and flooding to the east and hailstorms to the south. Somehow we seemed to be in a safety bubble, managing to avoid it all. While in Louisiana we took a flat-bottomed boat tour of a bayou, which was two hours well spent. It was a weekday and there was only one other couple on the boat. The tour guide took us through many different habitats and we were fortunate the weather was cool and dry, not the typical hot and humid. We saw some familiar birds like Green Herons and Great Blue Herons, as well as birds we had never seen before such as a nesting pair of Yellow-crowned Night-Herons. We also saw, really close up, several alligators of different sizes. This is definitely something anyone passing through Louisiana should do. We also saw many wading water birds in the shallow water of the crawfish farms, including Ibises and Roseate Spoonbills. We saw a lot of interesting sights, but that is too much to go into here. Coming home we watched spring in reverse, which would be depressing if it weren't for the fact that we would now get to have spring unfold at its normal rate after we got home.

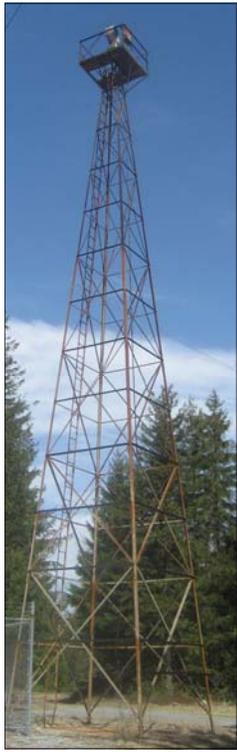
On the first morning after our return, I was delighted to hear a chorus of Robins at dawn. It was amazing how vocal the morning had become in my absence. I was anxious to get out and see which birds had arrived while I was gone. I always feel ambivalent going away at this time of the year; it's nice to get away, but I hate to miss the bird watching here. The Tree Swallows had returned sometime in the first week of April as they normally do. Even the Barn Swallows had returned, early I think. The Canada Geese had all paired off and were obviously defending their nesting territories. Boy, are they noisy!! I noticed the Phoebes had also returned while I was gone. I would have expected to see them late last month, and had been watching for them. Toward the end of the month I heard the call of a familiar bird. I had to stop and listen for a while; every year I go through this. Is it a Mockingbird? No, it's too melodic; it has to be a Brown Thrasher. There it was, high up at the top of a tree, singing out its long string of songs. On the last weekend of the month, I started to notice for the first time female Red-winged Blackbirds. They arrived over two months after the males had returned. I noticed them first in Wilson's field on the edge of town. Later, along Shirk Road I heard and saw a flock of birds I didn't recognize at first. As I looked closer, I realized they were all female Red-winged Blackbirds. It might have been an illusion, but they seemed to have 'brighter plumage' than nesting females. Was this the way they look when they first return, then becoming 'duller' when they start to nest and need better cover? While two-thirds of spring has already passed, the last third is really the busiest time for bird watching. There are many more birds that will be arriving over the next month; get out there and enjoy.



The photograph above shows an Alligator with a Great Blue Heron in the background. Below is a close-up view of an Alligator. Photographs courtesy of Jim McCormick.



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Latter day airway beacon light located at the west end of Round Top Road.

When the postal service turned the delivery of air mail over to private contractors Hobson signed on with National Air Transport Company. He was killed when his plane crashed on October 18, 1928 near Polk, Pennsylvania while flying the New York to Chicago route. Frederic Robinson, who took Hobson from Bellefonte to New York on the wing of his airplane, was killed in an accident September 27, 1920. The biplane he was flying struck a wire spanning the Susquehanna River near Millersburg, Pennsylvania. The plane flipped, landing upside down in the river.

From the inauguration of Air Mail Service in 1918, until the postal service turned the delivery of air mail over to private contractors in September 1927, just over 200 pilots were hired to transport the mail. Of those 200 air mail pilots 35 died as a result of flying accidents. The number of pilots who were injured or disabled during that time is unknown.

Transcontinental air mail from New York to San Francisco, a route of more than 2,700 miles, first opened on September 8, 1920. This service was only capable of operating during daylight hours. However, the U. S. Postal Service wanted the capability to fly mail across the country during nighttime hours as well. They devised a plan whereby airway beacon lights were established at various intervals to aid pilots during nighttime flying. These lights, usually on mountaintops, were first installed in portions of the route beginning in 1923.

Transcontinental night and day air mail flights officially began on July 1, 1925. The New York to Chicago airway section, which included the section through the West End of Union County, was illuminated through the use of 150 airway beacon lights.

The early beacon lights consisted of four headlights similar to those used on Ford cars. One of the lights was adjusted to cast a beam of light $\frac{1}{2}$ a degree above the horizon, one at 1 degree, another at 1[^] degrees, and the fourth light at 2 degrees. The cluster of lamps revolved six times per minute. A stationary red light was located atop the tower to indicate to the pilot that the light was a route beacon and not an emergency landing field light. The lights produced enough brightness (or candlepower) so that they could be seen for 40 miles, or more, on clear nights. The U. S. Postal Service subsequently handed the operation and maintenance of the airway beacons to the Aeronautics Branch of the Department of Commerce. Jim Tate and Howard Reaser were two individuals that I am aware of who were associated with the operation and maintenance of the airway beacon lights in the West End of Union County.

As a youngster living with his parent's in their farmhouse on Long Lane (near Glen Iron) Bruce Shirk of Middleburg recalled nights when he was able to count the rays from 7 different beacon lights. He indicated those opportunities depended first and foremost on weather conditions. The beacon light located on Stone Mountain, northwest of the former Laurelton Center, was one that Shirk could see clearly from his home. There were also airway beacon lights situated atop mountains at Catawissa, Snyderstown, New Berlin, Millheim, and Bellefonte. In addition to the mountaintop beacons, there were beacon lights at the emergency airfields located at Hartleton, Elysburg, Sunbury, and Woodward.

Ernest Boney, a longtime resident of Millmont, recalled occasions when weather conditions were just right that the rays from the slowly revolving airway beacon light on Stone Mountain illuminated the bedroom of his Maple Street home.

David Diehl of Lewisburg remembered the beacon light atop the tower at the Hartleton emergency landing strip. That tower was located near the barn on the property now (2009) owned by Ammon Martin. In addition to the lighted tower there were also lights along the border of the runway. Jack Shirk, a life long resident of Hartleton, recalled the lighted airstrip when he was a youngster in the mid 1930's. He said that on those occasions when he was riding in his parent's vehicle (after sunset) on Route 45 at the east end of Hartleton he looked north to see the lights that ran along the runway.

According to a newspaper article the emergency landing field at Hartleton was established



Site of the emergency airplane landing strip at Hartleton, just north of 114 Cold Run Road. Property currently owned by Ammon Martin (2009).

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Penns Creek Angler

by Bruce Fisher

Is there room for everyone?

It's funny to me that we have a jewel of a creek to fish but hardly anybody fishes from October to May. My favorite time to be on the water is October until May; then I put the rod away for a while or fish the dark of night because of the crowds. Once the Green Drake is gone for another year the creek becomes empty of anglers once again. The only thing that stops me from fishing from that point on is water temperature and level. It's unsporting to sit at the mouth of a feeder creek and fish for trout when the water temperature is over 76 degrees in the afternoon. Most of the trout that you catch will die because of the stress of being caught.

Some people think the fishing starts at Coburn and ends at the Glen Iron Bridge, this is far from the truth! Above Coburn there are miles of fishable water if you ask politely for permission. The water from Coburn to about the town of Weikert is easily accessed by using Poe Paddy State Park and holds some very nice fish. It's one of my favorite places to fish in the early morning. The other access is the fish commission parking lot at the end of Weikert Road. This access will give you the ability to fish about 4 miles of creek upstream to Poe Paddy.

The water below the fish commission parking lot is posted in certain places but for the most part there are several access points along Weikert Road. Just look for the cars and you will see these spots. In the town of Weikert there is another fish commission parking area that gives access to about 3 miles upstream and 3 miles downstream that ends about where the sportsmen's club property starts. If you are not a member of the club you can still use the parking lot to walk down to the creek and fish several miles downstream. If you do some investigation or stop at a fly shop you will gain information about other areas that are off the beaten path.

All in all we have about 25 miles of trout water to fish. I have found trout as far down as the town of Penns Creek, now that's a lot of water. So the next time you find yourself in a bind and can't find an area to fish, simply ask other fisherman or stop in at Penns Creek Angler. I might not tell you all the secrets because the fun of fishing is finding your own spot and catching fish but I will help you catch more fish.

This year should be one of the best in many years to come to Penns Creek. The water levels have been perfect and many trout have held over from the fall stocking that was done by the Union County Sportsmen's Club. If you don't belong to the club you should think about joining or buying a fish buton that provides money to feed the fish and helps provide the great fishing on the lower end of the creek that is stocked.

However, there are many spots down low on the creek that hold beautiful native trout. So finding a spot should never be a problem. I've been fishing Penns Creek for 32 years and never ran into a problem where I could find some water to myself. But again that's where your local tackle shop comes into play. When I go fishing out West or another stream I don't know, I'll tell my secret about how to find out what's hatching, where to go and how to present the flies. Its just this simple: walk into the local tackle shop put a \$20 bill on the counter and ask the shop owner where should I go, what do I need as far as flies, and how should I present them. It's the easiest and fastest way to the trout. Catch ya later! - Bruce Fisher



Photograph courtesy of www.pennscreekangler.com

Editor's Note: Penns Creek Angler is located at 17745 Old Turnpike Road (intersection of Route 45 and Fairground Road) and offers angling and hunting supplies, custom rods and repairs, lodging, and fly tying courses. You can telephone Penns Creek Angler at 570.922.1053, or visit the website at: www.pennscreekangler.com



Field Notes, by WCO Dirk Remensnyder

While conducting a Hunter Education Class at Buffalo Valley Sportsmen's Club I was telling the students "Game Warden" stories from my past experiences. Since a lot of these stories related to our use of "Robo-deer" to discourage road hunting incidents, I guess that I shouldn't have been surprised when one instructor came inside to inform me that there was a bear outside the club feasting on the remains of the clubs last fish fry dinner. The students didn't believe that there was a real bear outside. They thought that I was playing a joke on them and had a "Robo-Bear" set up just outside the club doors.

Spring gobbler season should end up being a great one this year. With all the flocks of turkeys that have been reported no one should have trouble locating a place to hunt that holds birds.



Meanderings

by

Hertha S. Wehr

Whoopie Pies

I never thought I'd be writing a column about Whoopie Pies, but here you have it. Whoopie Pies were brought to my attention when The New York Times saw fit to feature it in their Dining Section.

Most of the information about its supposed origin was derived from that article and you are free to believe it, reject all of it or part of it, or just wonder where they got all the information they printed. They claim they are staples in Maine and parts of Pennsylvania Dutch Country, and some pockets in Ohio. The questions start with its name, is it really a pie, a cookie with filling, or a cake-like sandwich, or perhaps a sandwich-like cake? Take your choice, any way you name it, it has a lot of calories.

They claim it has begun to show up at Magnolia Bakery in Manhattan, no price given. However, they have shown up under the name "sweety-pies" in the catalog from William-Sonoma (that's one catalog that doesn't seem to have my name). They are heart shaped, claim to be made in Maine with local butter and organic eggs, and sell for \$49.00 a dozen. How many dozen would you like to order?

As to how it got its name. Their research says it derived from when Amish farmers opened their lunch pails and saw

one of the pies and yelled Whoopie. You can believe that or not. Personally I don't know many farmers who carry a lunch pail. Or do I know any farmers who carry a lunch pail?

How the cookies traveled to Maine is a bit of a mystery. One theory says they were brought to Maine during the Great Depression through the Yummy Book, a recipe pamphlet first published in 1930's by Durkee-Mower the Massachusetts company that makes Fluff.

Don Durkee, whose father co-founded the firm, discredits that notion. After checking the company's collection of pamphlets the earliest appearance of whoopie pies he found was during the 1970s. "I'm baffled" he said.

There is a bakery in Evanston, Illinois that specializes in chocolate and pumpkin each with vanilla filling. They say they produce the pumpkin long after the leaves have fallen as they are a very good seller.

The biggest variety of whoopie pies I saw was at the County Muzzle Loader Shoot held near the Union County Sportsmen's Club. There were chocolate with vanilla, chocolate with teaberry, chocolate with mint, and pumpkin with vanilla. There are several restaurants in the area that sell whoopie pies. The ones I know about are the Old Turnpike Restaurant and Ard's Market, both along State Route 45. I'm sure there are more but I haven't seen them or just wasn't looking.

Cranberry Island's whoopie pies, which supply Williams-Sonoma, are made with chocolate or vanilla cake. Filling flavors include rum, peppermint, Cointreau, raspberry, and espresso.

To quote Ms. Oliver, the food historian, "That upscale approach misses the point. It's like making a peanut butter and jelly sandwich with almond butter. It's not meant to be fine cuisine."

Well there you have all I know about Whoopie Pies. They may not be fine cuisine but they are mighty fine eating, once you convince yourself that there aren't that many calories in "just one."

Happy 90th Birthday to John Wesley Showalter!

On May 12th, Millmont resident John Wesley



Showalter will celebrate his 90th birthday. Anyone wishing to send along birthday greetings to John may do so at: 2650 Paddy Mountain Road, Millmont, PA 17845. I am sure that he would certainly appreciate any cards and letters.

Sarah Shively and Mary Louise (Shively) Jones, have asked me to inform my readers that Dennis Shively of Mifflinburg, who recently suffered a debilitating stroke, has been admitted to Rolling Hills Manor. Those wishing to send cards of encouragement to Dennis Shively can do so c/o Rolling Hills Manor Room 5, 17350 Old Turnpike Road, Millmont, PA 17845.

Blood Drive

A blood drive will be held at the Church of God in Christ Mennonite, Route 104, Mifflinburg, PA on May 28th from 1:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. All persons 16 years of age and older, in good health, and who weigh at least 110 pounds are urged to consider donating blood. For an appointment visit www.givelife.org or you can call 524.0400. Please bring photo identification.

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Elmer R. Vanatta's simple headstone located in the Hartleton Cemetery. Etched in the top of the weathered marble stone is a biplane (see insert).

in the spring of 1925, on property that was then owned by George Hickernell. The lease agreement between the U. S. Government and Hicker-nell was never recorded in the Union County Courthouse. Hickernell sold the property to Wil-liam "Clark" and Edna Korman in June 1929, who continued to lease a portion of their farm for use as an airstrip. The first lease agreement recorded in the Register and Recorders office that I found was between the Department of Commerce (Aeronautics Branch Airways Divi-sion) and the Korman's. That lease agreement, dated July 23, 1932, included nearly 62 acres of land for which the government paid the Kor-man's \$744 per annum. The Commerce Depart-ment also leased an additional 1.4 acres from Frank W. Culp for \$30 per year. Although it was a one-year lease it provided for an extension at the option of the government each year until 1943. Exactly when the government abandoned the Hartleton airstrip is unknown.

Jack Shirk also recalled when Jessie Hacken-burg kept a small airplane at the Hartleton land-ing strip. Hackenburg was known for taking

local residents on airplane rides from time to time. As a youngster Ernest Boney recalled watching the late Charles Dorman take off in an airplane at the Hartleton airstrip. Perhaps it was in an airplane piloted by Jesse Hackenburg? Boney also re-called when HARTLETON was painted in large letters on the roof of Diehl's Garage at the intersection of Cold Run Road and Route 45. Those identifying markers aided pilots unsure of exactly where they were.

The first airplane mail pickup occurred on May 12, 1939. This "air mail on the fly" took place at various places in Pennsylv-ania, New York, and several other states along the east coast. While operated by an independent company, and not by the U. S. Postal Service, it continued for a period of about 10 years. During this time more than 23,000 pickups were made. The crew consisted of a pilot and a flight officer who worked the pickup mechanism.

Leon Sheesley of Mifflinburg recalled an occasion when he had an opportunity to witness airmail being picked up on the fly at the Hartleton airstrip. Sheesley, the son of the late Carl and Adrenna (Smith) Sheesley, was born in 1931. He speculated that he was about eight or nine years old when he heard a low flying airplane heading east toward his home on Water Street in Hartleton. Fascinated with the low flying airplane he hurriedly peddled his bicycle north on Cold Run Road to the site of the airstrip. He arrived in time to see a man on the plane lowering a grappling hook from the tail section of the airplane. The airplane, which was quite low, used the grappling hook to pick up a canister of mail and continue on its way. How frequently such activity occurred at Hartleton Sheesley did not know, since he only witnessed such an event on that one occasion.

Researching and writing the story has been enjoyable. Particularly noteworthy is the fact that an early aviator, both in the Army Air Corps and later as a civilian for the U. S. Postal Service, was born and raised here in the West End of Union County. Vanatta, whose adventurous spirit took him all over the country and across the Atlantic Ocean during WWI, pos-sessed a passion for flying airplanes. Were it not for that passion he most likely would have found a different occupation af-ter his first accident as air mail pilot. It must have been especially thrilling for him whenever he had opportunities to fly his biplane over his hometown of Hartleton. We will never know how many times he may have buzzed his homestead off Glover Road. Elmer R. Vanatta, who was only 27 years old at the time of his death, was aware of the risks involved in flying. Al-though he was killed in an unfortunate and tragic accident he died doing something he enjoyed – flying airplanes.

Sources: Smithsonian National Postal Museum website: www.postalmuseum.si.edu; "Bellefonte and the Early Air Mail 1918 - 1927" by Kathleen Wunderly (a book donated to me by Dick Dagle of Lewisburg); www.flightglobal.com; www.arago.si.edu; www.centennialofflight.gov; The Lewisburg Saturday News; The Mifflinburg Telegraph; Jacob G. Shively's diary; and U. S. census records.

My thanks to the following people for providing information for this article: Irene (Vanatta) Musser of Mifflinburg; Hazel (Vanatta) Benfer of Milton; Ernest Boney of Millmont; Leon Sheesley of Mifflinburg; Tillie (Catherman) Folk of Millmont; Dick Dagle of Lewisburg; Bruce Shirk of Middleburg; David Diehl, Lewisburg; Elaine Royer of Danville; and Carol Man-beck of the Union County Historical Society.

Recipe of the Month

by Janice (Dorman) Shively

Grilled Hot Sausage

1 ¼ lb. ground turkey
1 lb. fresh pork sausage
1 ½ tsp. paprika
1 tsp. dried basil
1 tsp. dried oregano
1 tsp. dried parsley
1 tsp. red pepper flakes
½ tsp. black pepper
½ tsp. cayenne pepper
½ tsp. garlic powder

In a large bowl, mix all ingredients with your hands until well combined. Refrigerate for at least 24 hours so that the flavors blend. Shape into 8 patties. Place patties on a large piece of non-stick aluminum foil. Thinly slice one large bell pepper and one large onion.

Place onion and pepper slices on top of patties. Drizzle with olive oil. Close aluminum foil to seal all edges. After wrapping patties in non-stick foil I like to wrap a second time in heavy-duty aluminum foil. Place on grill over medium-high heat. Grill for 15 minutes on one side. Flip foil and grill for 10 minutes more. At this point you may remove patties from foil (careful when opening foil that you don't burn yourself with the steam) and grill for two minutes on each side to brown.

These patties are delicious served on a roll with a slice of American cheese. This hot sausage is also very good shaped into meatballs, baked, and added to your favorite spaghetti sauce!

This recipe was developed in our kitchen in an effort to create healthier hot sausage. You can adjust the seasonings to suit your taste. These patties are mild-hot, not intensely hot.

ENJOY!



From the diary of the late Elder Greene Shively, born in White Springs in 1870 and a resident of Millmont from 1918 until his death in 1954:

Wednesday May 21, 1935. Temperature was 50 -75 degrees today, and clear. Worked in the garage and finished laying block. This evening I was at Commencement of our High School, two years course. Graduates—Marie Blyler, Fredia Catherman, Eunice Herendeen, Arabella Knauss, Louise Kaler, Luella Arney, Theodore Catherman, and George Willow. I had charge of the invocation, and benediction. Dr. Boyer delivered the address. Kenneth played in the orchestra.

Thursday May 23, 1935. Temperature 48-68 degrees. Printed Confirmation Certificates. Edmund set the type.

Sunday May 26, 1935. Temperature 50 to 78 degrees, and clear. A very beautiful day. "The Lord's Supper and Communion" Matthew 26:17-30. General Text I Corinthians 11:24. Present 92 Con. \$2.72. This afternoon I officiated at the funeral of Mrs. Missouri Blackford, Mary E. (Stetler) Blackford. Born March 7, 1859, died May 23, 1935.

At the morning service Mr. Clarence Burd taught my SS class. Brother Mark addressed the S.S. I spoke from Romans 12.

Recognize anyone?

The photograph to the left was provided to me courtesy of Dahle Bingaman of Millmont and was from the collection of old photographs belonging to his father, the late Harry Bingaman. Although there was no indication of where or when the photograph was taken, after examining it closely I am convinced that it was taken on or around the 30th of June 1920. On that date U.S. Mail Plane No. 92 en route from Heller Field, Newark, New Jersey to Bellefonte was forced to land near the village of Weikert due to engine trouble. After making the necessary repairs the pilot attempted to get the biplane airborne. In doing so he ran through a rail fence and subsequently into a wire fence. After striking the wire the nose end of the biplane hit the ground and suffered serious damage. According to a newspaper account the pilot was unharmed, other than suffering a "severe shaking up." The Weikert columnist for the Lewisburg Saturday News also reported that "Quite a number of spectators witnessed the plunge and some of the fair sex were badly frightened when the accident occurred."

A number of young ladies and young men positioned themselves on the biplane and posed for the photographer. If you know the names of anyone in this photograph I would appreciate it if you would contact me at 570.922.4297, or tshively@dejazzd.com



Penlines From my Kitchen to Yours

by Lucy Hoover

March 16, 2009

Nephew Nevin Shirk of Iowa has been visiting his relatives in this area for a few days.

March 19

Today was the wedding at neighbor Vernon Martin's for their daughter Roseanne and Marvin. We were invited to help cook the meal.

Aaron and Susie Zimmerman are now living in the new house that was built on their property. Their son Clair and Lucinda moved on the farm, and Aaron and Susie's son Melvin will be getting married to Lucille Reiff, daughter of Isaac and Ruth, on April 16th. They will live in the house that Clair and Lucinda vacated.

Clair and Esther Horning of Mifflinburg have a son named Stephen. He has two brothers and two sisters. Grandparents are Samuel and Alice Horning and Joseph and Margaret Hoover.

March 26

Today was the wedding at Elvin and MaryElla Zimmerman for their daughter Elaine and Calvin Zimmerman. Calvin and Elaine will move in the house across the road from her parents.

March 29

Wilmer and Marlene Zimmerman of Mifflinburg have a son named Jordon Paul. He is their first child. Grandparents are John and Esther Zimmerman and Paul and Louise Reiff.

April 2

Esther M. Zimmerman of Mifflinburg has been in the hospital for six days. She had surgery on Friday. She will come home tomorrow and stay at her sister's house to recover.

Henry Oberholtzer of Mifflinburg had surgery today. He may come home tomorrow too.

April 5

Rebekah Lynn, two month old daughter of Edwin and Lori Oberholtzer of Mifflinburg, and who recently had heart surgery, was at the church for the first time. She is doing well.

April 6

Lydia Ann Martin of Mifflinburg had one day surgery.

April 11

"Vintage Iron Club" came to Lewis and Verna Hoover to plow their fields with their antique tractors. Seventeen plows followed each other across the fields.

Looking Back

The following article was copied from an article in a local newspaper first published in May 1943.

30 Laurelton Girls Baptized

A special service of baptism, confirmation, and Holy Communion was held at the Laurelton State Village Church of the Good Shepherd Sunday afternoon, at 2 o'clock.

Following the opening hymn, the Rev. Stephen Bidlack, Methodist Pastor of Laurelton Lincoln Chapel and former Chaplain at the Village, read the Scripture lesson and led the group in prayer.

The Rev. Robert R. Clark, Chaplain at the Village, then received into the membership of the Church of the Good Shepherd by the rite of adult baptismal service, 30 Village girls. Following the baptism service, Chaplain Clark received 11 girls into church membership by the rite of confirmation. Dr. Effie Ireland, Superintendent of the Village, read the names of the girls as they came forward and knelt for the baptisms and prayers of blessing. Certificates of baptism were given to those baptized, and certificates of confirmation will be given to those confirmed in the near future.

The Village Choir, under the direction of Mrs. Earl Walter, sang an anthem entitled, "My Jesus As Thou Wilt," which was followed by a brief sermon by Chaplain Clark, after which all those girls not taking Holy Communion were dismissed.

The confessional service was read by Dr. W. M. Rearick, pastor of Mifflinburg Lutheran Church, and the Holy Communion was administered to 217 girls and friends by the three lead pastors. Following prayer led by the chaplain and a hymn, the benediction closed the service. Chaplain Clark administered communion to seven girls in the hospital following the service.

The girls who were baptized were: Glenna Diantha Belmar, Esther Benedict, Katie Benedict, Grace Thelma Boyer, Georgia Dunbar, Evelyn Sara Gifford, Virginia May Gilbert, Merla Margaret Grombling, Mabel Viola Hamill, Aletha Harvey, Naomi Sophie Hauck, Beatrice Raucher Hummel, Goldie Irene Jones, Evelyn Mary Keenan, Irene Elizabeth Koch, Susan Doretta Kyler, Evelyn McField, Grace Florence Oldham, Miriam Samantha Renard, Myrtle Richards, Ida Minerva Ruff, Amelia Anna Rusnak, Irene Lulu Slater Schilling, Helen Arlene Slider, Fern Irene Snyder, Lucy Catherine Steese, Vivian Edna Travis, Fern Marie Trostle, Mamie Walter, Irma June Wood, and one girl who had been baptized several weeks before, Gertrude Weiler.

The girls who were confirmed were: Mabel Brader, Clarace Marcella Clark, Flora May Coble, Doris Annara Eggleston, Clara Edna Ernst, Florence Annetta DeHaven, Stella Hoover, Anna Katherine Kentzel, Ruth Beulah Slater, Eleanor Anna Stokum, Marie Mildred Swoyer.

The small photograph located in the upper left hand corner of page one shows a biplane that apparently was forced to land near Weikert. The third person from the left is George Sholter (1855- 1930), grandfather of Leona (Sholter) Wirt. The photograph is from Leona's collection and was provided to me courtesy of the late Dr. Donald Mays.

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In honor of Earth Day (April 22, 2009) everyone is talking about 'Going Green.' There is so much information available that it can get overwhelming when trying to decide where to start. So I have listed some statistics below that will help you decide where to start based on what you have to spend and what you feel you need to be more conservative about. Start by making improvements where you feel you are the most wasteful. Don't jump in too fast and try to do everything at once.

Maybe you're tired of paying for trash, if this is the case look into composting. With summer coming we should all be thinking about ways to save water so look into water conservation. No matter what you choose the easiest way to save money and be green is to CONSERVE. If you have any questions or comments please contact me, your local eco-consultant, at elisa.selinsgrove@greenirene.com or visit my website:

www.GreenIrene.com/1158

Here are a few tips on how to save money.

These tips won't cost you anything:

Set water heater to 120° - annual savings \$450

Set your thermostat 2° cooler during the winter and 2° warmer in the summer - annual savings \$250

Wash clothes in cold water - annual savings \$40

Clean lint trap in dryer - annual savings \$34

Tips that cost less than \$100 of investment:

Install aerators on faucets - annual savings \$44

Reusable sponge clothes - annual savings \$51

CFL light bulbs - annual savings \$10

LED night light - annual savings \$11

EcoTouch waterless carwash - \$15

Hot water heater blanket - \$36

Investments that cost between \$101-\$500:

Programmable thermostat - annual savings \$125

Rain Barrel - annual savings \$20

Install ceiling fan - annual savings \$65

Seal duct leaks - annual savings \$320

Investments that will exceed \$500:

Air seal attic - annual savings \$300

Insulate basement walls - annual savings \$150

Replace furnace - annual savings \$200

Reflective roofs - annual savings \$325

Blessings from the Bible

by Brenda Weaver

For thus saith the Lord God "Behold, I, even I will both search for my sheep, and seek them out.

As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered; so will I seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day.

Ezekiel 34:11-12

"Grandma, this one will work."

Although I was yawning and drifting off to sleep, I was not too sleepy to be amazed at my grandson's compassionate observation. The book I had been reading to Hans kept slipping from my hands while sentences I began to read dwindled to nonsense or monosyllables.

Hans was not nearly as ready for a nap as his grandma was! Aware of my struggle to stay awake and read to him, he climbed off the couch and went to the bookshelf. The children's book he returned with had more pictures and fewer, uncomplicated sentences. Somehow with all his two-year-old perceptiveness he had decided to help his grandma by getting her an easier book to read. He'd made a wise choice; I was able to read it all without falling asleep. Later, when I awoke from a restful nap with Hans sleeping in my arms, I remembered his remarkable act of kindness.

Then I thought of the kindness God had shown me recently as I read from His Book. Recent Sunday school lessons had me reading the book of Ezekiel. I've sometimes avoided books like Ezekiel, that contain visions and prophecies that are hard to understand, but this time I was blessed by reading it. As happens when delving into the depths of a good poem, I'd discovered nuggets to contemplate and appreciate. I found glimpses of Christ and redemption threaded through this Old Testament book of prophecy. I noted the sovereignty of God and his intolerance of sin and idolatry. Visions and word pictures conveyed God's profound disappointment and sense of loss over Israel's sin. He held the nation accountable; He held the leaders of countries accountable. Though God punished His people through many years of captivity and hardship, yet He offered the hope of restoration, return to their homeland, and eventually redemption through the coming Messiah.

I was reminded again God does not wink at sin ("*the soul that sinneth, it shall die*") yet His judgment is balanced with longsuffering and mercy. "*Behold, happy is the man whom God correcteth: therefore despise not thou the chastening of the Almighty; for he maketh sore, and bindeth up: he woundeth, and his hands make whole*" Job 5: 17, 18.

The last chapters of Ezekiel also show God to be a God of detail and order as He describes exactly the measurements of the temple and the methods of dividing the land.

You might not want to begin reading the book of Ezekiel when you are yawning and nodding, but you just might dig up some encouragement and deeper understanding of the attributes of God when you do. You may also ponder about whether the prophecies given in this book have been fulfilled or are yet to be fulfilled.

And remember, reading God's Word is certain to bring life and breath into dry bones! (See chapter 37.)

Prayer for Today: *Dear Lord, Thank You for Your Word and the inspiration and instruction that can be found there. Some of the books of the Bible are hard to understand and we tend to avoid them or yawn through them. Give us a hunger and thirst for Your Word. Help us to long to know more about who You are and what You expect of us. Thank You for faithful prophets of old. Keep us faithful and true. Amen*



Remembrance

Nessie (Shively) Watson, 90, of 602 Walnut St. since 1938, entered into rest at 8 p.m. Monday, April 6, 2009, at her home.

She was born November 14, 1918, in Lewis Township, a daughter of the late Clarence E. and Mary S. (Miller) Shively. On August 25, 1938, she married John C. Watson in the First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mifflinburg, Rev. William Rearick performing the ceremony. John preceded her in death on September 3, 1989.

Nessie was a 1935 graduate of Mifflinburg High School. She earned an associate degree in liberal arts from Susquehanna University in 1983. She was a member of First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Mifflinburg, where she sang in the choir for 30 years and was a Sunday school teacher.

Nessie was a Welcome Wagon hostess for many years, welcoming newcomers to the area and assisting expectant parents. She delivered the Philadelphia Inquirer to Mifflinburg residents. She was a member and past president of the Mifflinburg Civic Club and Mifflinburg Athenaeum Club, a past matron of the Order of Eastern Star and was an active 4-H club leader. Nessie enjoyed bowling at Mifflinburg Lanes, where she bowled better than a 200 game in her late 70s. She also enjoyed traveling, watching birds at her home, ceramics, needlework and crafts. Nessie made her own Christmas cards every year. She was a collector of many items, such as cups and saucers, paper weights, shoe horns, shoe buttoners and owls ... as Nessie would say, "not live ones." Nessie had many photo albums and scrapbooks of her family and travels. She was a Philadelphia Phillies fan and attended a game last August.

Nessie's true inspirations in life were her children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great-grandchildren. Surviving are two sons and one daughter-in-law, John C. Watson Jr. and Jace D. and Carla A. Watson, all of Mifflinburg; three daughters and two sons-in-law, Gail R. and Richard R. Erdley of Mifflinburg, Kimm S. Watson of Washington, D.C., and Gwen D. and J. Eric Hull of Winfield; one sister, Hertha S. Wehr of Mifflinburg; eight grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; one step-great-granddaughter; and two great-great-grandsons.

She was preceded in death by nine siblings, Nellie S. Mitch, G. Luther Shively, Clark A. Shively, Fred E. Shively, T. Ralph Shively, Ned M. Shively, Lynn R. Shively, Roger M. Shively and Fern S. Klose. A private burial was held in the Mifflinburg Cemetery.

What's Happening at Christ's United Lutheran Church

Courtesy of Shirley Kerstetter

The following concerts are scheduled at the church: May 17, Hannah Bingaman; June 14; Paradise; July 12, Messenger; August 16, Teresa Fink; September 20, Larry Mitchell's One Man Electron Band. The concerts begin at 6:00 p.m. and there is no charge. A free will offering will be taken.

The church Youth Group will be holding a Yard Sale on May 23. This event is a fund raiser for the group's trip to New Orleans.

June 4 - Tour De Revs. The ride begins at the 4-Bell Church at 3 p.m. and will end at the synod office in Lewisburg at 4 p.m. If you are a cycling enthusiast contact Rev. Sarah Hershberger at 570.922.1929 for more information. They will be raising money and awareness for ELCA World Hunger.

There will be a Special Worship Service held at the church on Sunday June 28 with the Re-Creation.

Ordering times for Angel Food this month: Friday May 8 from 9:00 a.m. until noon and from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. and Monday May 11 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Distribution will be Saturday May 16 from 9:00 a.m. until 10:00 a.m.

For more information on any of the church events or to get more information about Angel Food Ministry (view menu) visit the church website at: www.4bellschurch.com

Thank You!

I would like to thank the following people for making monetary donations toward the publication of this newsletter: Diana Sigler, Eagles Mere; Dean and Emilie Jansma, State College; Robert and Anna Klingman, Kenneth and Rhelda Rishel, Robert and Carolyn Wagner, Paul and Lois Sheesley, and Fannie Chupp, all of Mifflinburg; Walter and Janet Russell, Panama City, FL; Paul and Jane Foster, Camp Hill; Ruth Kostenbader, Lewisburg; Hazel Benfer, Milton; and the Millmont resident who wishes to remain anonymous.

If you would like to receive a FREE color version of The Millmont Times each month via the Internet you can log on to the website: www.millmonttimes.com and download the newsletter directly onto your computer. All of the newsletters published between January 2004 to the current issue are available on the website.

Thanks to everyone who renewed their subscriptions for an additional year. Your support is what helps to make this newsletter possible, and is greatly appreciated!! I would like to welcome the following new subscribers: Helen P. Strunk, Elizabethtown; Diana Sigler, Eagles Mere; and Susan Muth, Milton.

I would also like to thank William Kahl of Hartleton for allowing me to copy a circa 1890 photograph of his home when it was owned by Frank Culp; Internet subscriber Steve Guffy for providing a photograph of the memorial headstone of Robert Erdley located at the Rays Cemetery; Susan Wenner of Pleasant Grove and Gail Hanselman of Mifflinburg for providing me with a copy of a letter from a Hartleton resident dated June 1847; Mike Bezilla of Lemont for providing me with a copy of a map of Union County from the 2nd Geological Survey in 1888; Delphia Shirk of Millmont for sharing books, photographs, and a newspaper clipping relative to Jimmy Catherman; Eugene Hoffman of Mifflinburg for loaning his book "Railroads of Pennsylvania Encyclopedia and Atlas", by Thomas Taber; Judy Wagner of Mifflinburg for providing information relative to Shively's Baskets; and Jane (Ely) Foster for providing copies of poems written by her grandfather, the late William Ely. Thanks also to Jeanne Sampsell of Laurelton for loaning her books, photographs, and newspaper clippings relative to the "Last Raft" that came down the Susquehanna River in March 1938. Jeanne's grandparents, the late Mr. and Mrs. John Bain, were passengers on the raft when it crashed into the pier of the railroad bridge at Muncy on March 20, 1938. Both John and his wife survived the accident that claimed the lives of seven people.

Union County Historical Society Program

The Union County Historical Society will offer the program "An Eye on the Past: History of Photography in Union County" on Thursday, May 14 at 7:30 p.m. at the Buggy Museum, 598 Green Street, Mifflinburg. Photographer Keith Orndorf of Montandon will present this program on photography and the early photographers who captured the scenes and events of local history. Keith bought his first camera, an Instamatic 100, when he went into military service in 1965, serving in Vietnam and Southeast Asia. "This is a memorable moment in my life," he thought. Keith worked in photography for about 15 years, including having a studio in Mifflinburg for several years. He has been involved in photography for over 30 years. His current subjects - now using digital equipment - include nature study and his family. Early in his career, collectors such as "Cool" Snyder and Gary Slear would have him copy old photos and photo postcards. He will discuss some of the pioneering Union County photographers during his illustrated presentation.

This program, which is free and open to the public, will be given at the Buggy Museum in Mifflinburg. [Directions: from Route 15 in Lewisburg, take Route 45 west to Mifflinburg and continue through the borough to 6th Street, turn left and go two blocks to Green Street. The museum is at 6th and Green. Signs are posted.]

The Historical Society has published a book on early photographers and their work, *Rural Delivery: Real Photo Postcards from Central Pennsylvania 1905-1935*, which can be purchased from the Society.

For more information, contact the Society office at 570-524-8666, Monday through Friday.

Photographs & Information Wanted

I am interested in obtaining information and photographs relating to a number of people and places:

Photograph of a train using the Laurelton spur line which ran from Laurel Park to the Village. This rail line was in place from 1927 until about 1955.

Photograph of a train exiting the Paddy Mountain Tunnel.

Charles Finley Sanders, Charles Loy Sanders, or Clay Sanders.

If you, or someone you know can provide anything pertaining to the above mentioned people I would appreciate it very much if you would contact me at 570.922.4297. My mailing address is P.O. Box 3 Millmont, PA 17845. Or you can send an email to: tshively@dejazzd.com

May Birthdays & Anniversaries

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| 1 - Helen P. Strunk | 11 - Caroline Wenrick | 21 - Eddie Weaver |
| 2 - Joseph Smith | 12 - John Wesley Showalter | 22 - Lee & Norma Sauers - 1965 |
| 2 - Faye Lyons | 12 - Dion Shively | 23 - Donald & Evelyn Miller - 1970 |
| 4 - Norma Sauers | 13 - Shirley Catherman | 23 - Tyler Dorman |
| 5 - Brian Ulmer | 14 - Eugene & Darlene Hackenburg - 1960 | 24 - Kendrisa Kerstetter |
| 6 - Melvin Walter | 14 - Jean Marquardt | 25 - MEMORIAL DAY |
| 7 - Mark & Mary Bingaman - 1983 | 15 - Carolyn Wagner | 25 - Glenn & Norma Catherman - 1957 |
| 7 - Beverly Catherman | 15 - Steve Bilger | 25 - Dolores Starks |
| 8 - Matt & Angie Dorman - 2004 | 17 - John Dunkle | 26 - Bob & Shirley Catherman - 2001 |
| 8 - Bruce Shirk | 18 - Spencer Boyer | 28 - Carl "Bup" Sampsell |
| 9 - Jeannie Sampsell | 18 - Kenneth & Helen Hugar - 1946 | 29 - Mike Fultz |
| 10 - MOTHER'S DAY | 18 - Annie R. Nolt | 30 - Harold Shively |
| 10 - Betty Auman | 19 - Sam Smith | 30 - Henry Bartolo |

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