

Do You Remember?



Submitted

Going, going--gone!

Memory check: What did the “Ruthorn,” the “Rustic” and the “Valley” have in common?

Nonagenarian Amanda Pletcher can enlighten you. Sixty-odd years ago her husband, Ken, and his good friend, Dick Sparks, built the landmark Valley Drive-in Theater in Frogtown (a suburb of Indian Head, Pennsylvania). It was situated on a leveled slag pile cattywampus from the Indian Creek Valley Community Center on state Route 711 South.

“Ken ran the projector,” said the oldest living resident of the rural Saltlick Township village. “We opened the shows with live performers, pickers and grinners; and set off fireworks on the Fourth of July.”

CRHS member, Gerry (White) Marks remembers “Buck Night” at the popular hangout. “Teenagers would cram like sardines into an old jalopy—including the trunk—and head for the box office.”

The unflappable owners didn’t lose any sleep over the antics of the youthful freeloaders. They had once been young themselves and knew that before the evening was over those hollow legs would gravitate to the concession stand to fill up on snacks: popcorn, chips, French fries, ice cream, candy, and pop.

According to 93-year-old Amanda, foul weather proved to be more of a concern than the deadheads. Wind. Rain. Thunder and lightning. About halfway through the feature, fog so thick you cut it with a knife would roll in to obscure the screen. Not to worry. The unflappable owners cheerfully provided free passes for a return visit. On the bright side, since the season ran from Memorial Day to Labor Day, neither Ken nor Dick had to shovel snow.

Instead of uncooperative weather, the flickering blue lights in the living rooms of the 1960s were the culprits that did them in. “People took to staying home to watch TV,” mused Amanda.

Like the Valley, the Rustic (at Norvelt) subsequently passed from the scene; whereas, the Ruthorn (outside Mount Pleasant) morphed into the Evergreen with multiplex screens. It is still going strong today as is the Comet (at Connellsville) and the Hi-Way (at Latrobe). If taking in a blockbuster under the stars isn’t your cup of tea, you can shop till you drop at their outdoor flea markets on Sundays.

-- Eileene Rose

Gifts and Donations

- Three vintage photos –Ann & Merle Shields, Acme.
- Seven Rolling Rock Club memorabilia items; Covenant church membership photo booklet; vintage catalogue; two drivers test manuals--Sandy Smail, Mansville.
- Six piece miniature nativity set--Becky Heide, Stahlstown.
- Copies of five vintage photos; early map of Ligonier Valley, laminated; Commissary Voucher for provisions dated 7-16-1777 issued to Capt. Richard Williams--Kathy Hall Hugo, Ligonier.
- Kopper’s Co. script, pay statement from Melcroft mine dated 1-15-1937--Jack Anderson, Melcroft.
- Seven area school photos; two military news clips--Tom Dix, Jones Mills.
- *Early History of Saltlick & Springfield Townships*; news clips; notes regarding *descendants of Horatio Lloyd Sparks*, 5pp.--Robert Craig, Connecticut.
- *A Military Miscellany*, hardcover book--Robert Fuller, Scottdale.
- *The Kantorik Family Tree; the Hout Family*--Chris Kantorik, Champion.
- Two *Chestnut Ridge Community V.F.D. Ladies Auxiliary Cookbooks*--William E. Hoffer, Carlisle.

New Members

Gloria Williams – Acme.

Roger Pritts – Indian Head.

Curt Klein – White Oak.

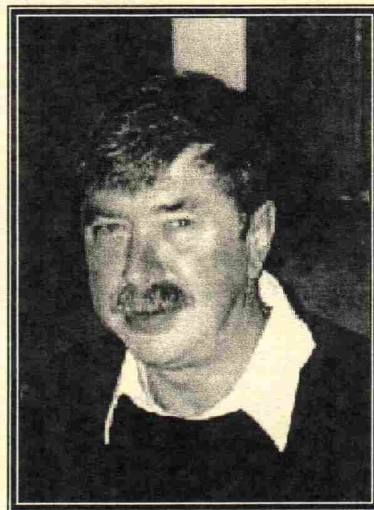
Tina & Donald Yandrick – Ligonier.

Ray White – Freeport.

Jerry & Marlene Kalp – Donegal.

Kevin Thomson – Derry.

Now You Know



CRHS Archives

Now he has more clunkers than he can handle. He’s Jerry Temple the proud owner and operator of Jerry Temple Tire & Auto in downtown Acme.