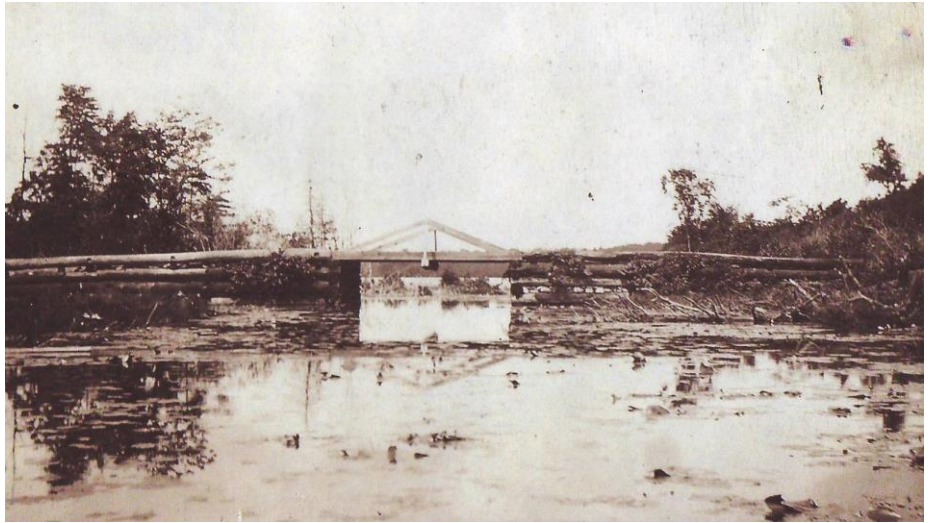


Feb. 27, 2019

TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY'S MUSEUM . . . while dusting

The micro film has given us so many more capabilities than we know of before having it at the museum. The film, the printer/reader, the computer tower and the copier were all gifted by Dick and Sally Kahler in 2013. Initially the purpose of having the micro film was to complete the



records we keep of obituaries on hand but the wealth of information beyond that has exceeded our wildest dreams. Recently to make a complete list of the award winners for the partnered Sullivan County organizations of Conservation District and Extension Office, a search of newspapers back to 1982 has now given them a full itemization to date. Then there have been any number of numerous bits during other searches that have uncovered subjects that we thought you'd be interested from past Sullivan Reviews. Such is the case for this week's article. Found in the June 10th issue of the Sully for the year 1937 is the following by "Senator" Jim Macfarlane, entitled The Strange Story of Lost Lake:

"South of Tannery Town, which was located near the foot-hills of Laporte, was a medium sized lake. This body of water according to the story covered upwards of one-hundred and fifty acres. Probably the same source which supplies the watering-trough not far from Ringdale. It was a picturesque body of water, and in the good old horse and buggy days was the scene of picnics and campers. The wild animals used to come down at night, and drink their fill, and the sight was filled with their weird howls and cries.

"Almost overnight according to traditions, which are difficult to check; this body of water disappeared and to-day is only a memory. Little evidence from the surface, that a lake ever existed in that far away spot.

"And now as to the theory of its disappearance. Was it due to the tannery activities, where wells were drilled? Was it caused by blasting? Some of the oldtimers think not. One theory advanced for this strange freak of nature, is rather hard to believe and I do not vouch for it in any way. However, we know that numerous events are happening daily, which are beyond understanding. This authority informed me that the lake was stocked by an old hermit, who was supposed to be a counterfeiter. And what did he stock it with? He placed fish which were imported from Japan. The species was known as the Burro Fish. They had a habit of burrowing in the deep waters to the very bottom. They had the appearance of an Auger, with two horns on the head and a small hook like a Rhinoceros on its nose. The ground in that vicinity being soft, and the bottom of the lake being brush and leaves, they soon opened up a subterranean passage. A heavy rain added to the weight of the body of water and soon these holes caved and the entire lake disappeared, and with it the precious cargo of imported fish. Several months later a few of these Lost Fish were found coming down the creeks of Muncy Valley. How they got there nobody know. But it has been one of the mysteries of Sullivan County.

"Perhaps some of the older residents can give us further information on the Lost Lake. [Remember, this was written in 1937.]

"An aftermath of this phenomenon was another mystery. The winds blowing from South East carried the ashes of the tannery from the wood or bark fuel directly over this swampy area and added to it were the oils and fats from the burned scrappings of the hides. These foreign matters settled on the bows and twigs and a

soap wood was formed. The soap wood was gathered by the residents for many years until it was entirely cleaned, and used for washing purposes. In fact, it was a perfect soap, created by one of Nature's Whims."

We, present day, are not attesting to the authenticity of these projections of findings any more than the author of this piece was. But, we do know that Mother Nature can be fickle and that there are many things under the sun that we do not understand.

For this and more, please feel free to contact the museum by phoning 570-946-5020 or emailing museum@scpahistory.com And visit our web site at www.scpahistory.com and like us on Facebook. Visiting by happenchance can take place on Tuesday and Thursdays from 9 to 3 (or 4) but depending on weather and personal schedules, we'd suggest you contact ahead.