



March 1, 2017

TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY'S MUSEUM . . . while dusting

Recently we received from the Elkland Twp. supervisors their old minutes records that had been housed in the Estella School prior to its demolition. A curious entry occurs on May 8th of 1893, entitled Record of Public Notice which goes as follows:

“The commissioners of Elkland Twp. [that’s the supervisors] will meet at the place where the bridge did span Elk Creek at the mouth of Shingle Run on Sat., May 13th, 1893 at 2 o.c. p.m. for the purpose of letting to the lowest bidder the construction of said bridge and abutments specified as follows.

“The foundation of which is to be dug between the bed of creek 12 inches so that there will be below the bed of creek forming said abutment to be not less than 3 ½ feet sq. and not less than 10 inches thick. The abutment on Eldred side of creek to be built on rock foundation of good large stone.

“A wing wall to extend from abutment on Battin side of creek up Shingle Run to turn said wing wall to be built of large flat stone. The foundation of which to be laid on solid ground and below the bed of creek.

“The wing wall together with abutments to be built solidly and in good workman like manner and subject to a strict examination of the commissioners.

“The bridge to be built on the arch system and when constructed to be 18 inches higher than old one. The particulars as to construction to explained on day of letting.

“The commissioners retain the right of rejecting any and all bids.

“The above is true copy to the best of my knowledge and belief, attest). J.J. Leevan town clerk.”

The piece continues with instruction as to the sills being made of hemlock and that the bridge is to be finish 30 days from the letting/awarding of the bid.

Township supervisors then did this and other kinds of road work without the assist of engineers or schooled learning of their own. In the case of this particular bridge, if you were traveling up the McCarty Ridge Road from Lincoln Falls, towards Stump Pond, there’s a road to the right that would lead you to the location of Shingle Run. That run emptied into Elk Creek and is shown on the 1872 map. Townships acquired the responsibility of roads and bridges, many of which were originally made and then maintained by land owners. Then, as not only land changed hands by either sale or generational change, but also roads became the ribbons of connection throughout the country side, the responsibility of township officials was blossoming. In today’s world it takes a lot more than just three (usually) men to draw up the needed repairs or replacement but we can appreciate the efforts of so long ago acceptance of responsibility.

For this and more, contact the museum for an appointment by phoning 570-946-5020 or emailing museum@scpahistory.com or just stop in on any Tuesday or Thursday by chance and we’d be so glad to see you. Also you can visit our web site at www.scpahistory.com and like us on Facebook.