



July 26, 2017

TOURING SULLIVAN COUNTY'S MUSEUM . . . while dusting

The semi-anthracite coal taken from Sullivan County was said to be less dense and compact, therefore greatly used in the generation of steam fuel, free of gases and sulphur. For this reason, the region of Bernice with the development of the railroad to transport coal to the cities became an industry in and of itself. In those early days in all of the industries throughout the settling of frontier regions, such as Sullivan County, work was done by hand. If you had the means to afford a horse or ox or mule, or had children of an age and health to help you, then you may not be working alone. But, even a two man saw was tedious at best. Or to plow a field, you may become a replacement for a four footed animal to pull a plow. Eaking out a living was precarious at best and that was for men and women alike. Safety in any field of industry in the 1800's and into the early 1900's boom to our region was only as good as they could make it for the time. People relied on brute force and their own ingenuity to accomplish tasks that today we'd not even think twice about attempting. But given the time frame, modern methods and conveniences were only beginning to be evolved.

A sad example of an outcome for one person is in the following obituary on page one of the April, 1933 Sullivan Review:

"Fatal Accident – A fatal accident occurred in the Monahan Mines at Forksville, Wednesday evening when Frank Subaticanic of Murray[town] was caught under a fall of rock and instantly killed. His companion had just left the place in which they were working when the accident happened. The first fall of rock imprisoned him and a short time later a second fall of rock crushed his life out. Working rapidly about 100 tons of rock had to be removed before the body was recovered. Dr. Dailey and the Tubach ambulance from Dushore were summoned. The body was brought to the Tubach undertaking parlor at Dushore and later taken to his home at Murray.

"Mr. Sabaticanic was 35 years of age and came to Murray about 2 years ago from Pittsburgh. He is survived by his wife, Anna Eurena Subaticanic. Funeral service will be held Saturday morning. Burial in the Greek Catholic cemetery at Lopez."

For a man's life to be ended so instantly was not uncommon in various fields of industry, this one just happened to be in the field (or rather cave/tunnel) of mining.

On Sat., July 29th at 1 p.m., the Society will be hosting a talk on mining at the Barn building within the complex of the museum located behind the courthouse in Laporte. This is not only free but also is open to the public. Cory Richmond of the Sullivan County Conservation District and David Fowler, mine enthusiast and Society board member will be talking about everything

from the early history of mining to the reclamation of land from mining. All are welcome to an enjoyable afternoon of learning about the bygone industry of mining in Sullivan County.

To contact us for an appointment or information, phone 570-946-5020 or email museum@scpahistory.com and like us on Facebook.