

# THE FANLIGHT

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Monroe County Historical Association • [www.monroehistorical.org](http://www.monroehistorical.org)

Spring 2022



"Dansbury Depot" by Sterling Strauser, one of more than 140 pieces of Sterling and Dorothy Strauser's artwork recently donated to the Monroe County Historical Association.

## Strauser art collection entrusted to MCHA

By Amy Leiser  
*Executive Director*

When I walk through the four floors of the Stroud Mansion Museum and Library, I am in awe of the fantastic items in the museum's collection and of the unique resources we have in the library. For over 100 years, the Monroe County Historical Association has collected, preserved, and shared artifacts and documents that reflect our area's rich history and diverse culture.

The MCHA is extremely fortunate to have a supportive community that donates Monroe County memorabilia to the organization. From family genealogies to one-of-a-kind artifacts, each item has a story, and each item is treasured. Having the public's trust to care properly for these items of both monetary and sentimental value is an honor that the staff and I cherish.



Dorothy and Sterling Strauser

Our Association recently received a generous gift of more than 140 pieces of art by well-known local artists Sterling and Dorothy Strauser. The collection comes from the estate of Arthur E. Arnold II, who had served on our Board of Directors and was a life member. He passed away at the

Story continues, Page 2

### Stroud Mansion Museum and Library open again

The Stroud Mansion Museum and Library have reopened to the public!

After many months of locked doors during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, the historic building is once again alive with visitors.

Plan to stop by to research your ancestors in the Library or tour the exhibits in the Museum.

#### Our Hours

The Stroud Mansion Museum and Library is open  
**Tuesday through Friday  
from 10 a.m. to noon  
and 1-4 p.m.**

(We are closed during the noon hour for lunch.)

The Library is open during business hours and tours of the Museum are offered at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. or by special appointment.

Appointments for tours are suggested, but not necessary. Face masks are recommended.

We hope to see you soon at YOUR historical association!



### MCHA Officers

**President** | Russell D. Scott, III  
**Vice President** | Douglas Arnold  
**Treasurer** | Patricia J. Saylor  
**Secretary** | Precie A. Schroyer

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**Curator** | Bret Fowler  
**Research Librarian/  
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 Tania Shelton  
**Bookkeeper** | Karen Doherty  
**Newsletter Editor/Webmaster**  
 Kim de Bourbon

### 2022 Meetings

The MCHA Board of Directors meets the fourth Tuesday of most months at 7 p.m.

#### Now meeting via Zoom

January 25  
 Sunday, February 27 – Annual Meeting  
 March 22  
 April 26  
 May 24  
 June 28  
 July – No meeting  
 August 23  
 September 27  
 October 25  
 November 22  
 December – No meeting

The Monroe County Historical Association is a cultural and learning center that assists our diverse community of residents and visitors in connecting the county's past with the present.

## MCHA Out and About in Monroe County

*Stop by and visit the Monroe County Historical Association's table at these community events this year.*

**Tuesday, May 3**

### In This Together: 2022 Children's Roundtable Community Night

6-9 p.m., Northampton Community College – Monroe, 2411 Rt. 715, Tannersville.

**Saturday, May 28**

### Monroe Farmers Market

8 a.m.-noon, Courthouse Square, N. 7th & Monroe Sts., Stroudsburg

**Sunday, June 5**

### Pocono Pride Festival

Noon-5 p.m., Courthouse Square, N. 7th & Monroe Sts., Stroudsburg

**Saturday, July 16**

### Music in the Valley

10 a.m.-4 p.m., Quiet Valley Living Historical Farm, 347 Quiet Valley Rd., Stroudsburg

**Friday, August 26**

### West End Fair

2-9 p.m., West End Fairgrounds, 570 Fairgrounds Rd., Gilbert

**Saturday, October 1**

### Pickle Me Poconos Festival

Noon-5 p.m., Crystal Street, East Stroudsburg



"Noah's Ark,"  
a hooked rug by  
Dorothy Strauser

## Strausers

Continued from Page 1

age of 93 on June 20, 2021. The son of Aaron Arnold and Gertrude (Mader) Arnold Hahn, Arthur collected Strauser artwork, amassing the over 140 pieces that hung in his home.

Many of us are familiar with the work of this artistic couple. Sterling Boyd Strauser (1907-1995) began painting at age 15. An Impressionist-style painter, he is known for his florals and local landmarks. Dorothy C. "Dot" (Ferry) Strauser (1908-2005) was a watercolor artist, also known for her fanciful hand-hooked rugs.

The donation of this collection was made possible by MCHA

member Kathryn L. "Mimi" Mikels, who appreciates the importance of preserving local history and wanted to make sure Arthur's wish to keep the collection together in a museum setting would be honored.

"The forthcoming addition to the Mansion House would seem to be an ideal place to house the works of these noted Monroe County artists so that they may be exhibited for the pleasure of our community," Mimi said.

Along with the Board of Directors, I thank Mimi for graciously donating the Strauser collection. I am eager to one day share this impressive collection in its entirety with the public and to create impactful programming using Strauser pieces in new and creative ways.





## Collections Corner

# Alan Price Young, an Air Force life in flight

*Editor's note: This column highlights some of the Historical Association's recent donations to the museum and library.*

**By Bret Fowler, Curator**

Many Monroe County residents know Alan Price Young and his wife, Marie Conklin Young. Alan recently retired from practicing law in Stroudsburg, and Marie was the founding chairperson of our successful Wine Pairing dinner and auction fundraiser.

Most do not know that Alan Price Young is a highly-decorated Vietnam War veteran, having flown 130 combat missions over Southeast Asia as a tactical fighter pilot in an A-1 Skyraider, the last propeller fighter used by the U.S. Air Force.

Born in Texas and raised in Canadensis, Young graduated from Pocono Mountain High School. He received a bachelor of science degree in electrical engineering from Lehigh University in 1968, where he was a member of Omicron Delta Kappa Honor Society.

After college, he joined the Air Force and entered Officer Training School, where he received extensive pilot training, including water and jungle survival and tactical combat crew training. As a first lieutenant, Young was stationed at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base, where he flew as a tactical fighter pilot with the 1st Special Operations Squadron (call sign HOBOS), logging 1,100 hours as pilot in command in an A-1 Skyraider.

Compared to the faster, higher-flying jets, the 1st SOS HOBOS, in their prop fighters, were able to fly lower and slower over the narrow and twisting valleys along the mountainous Ho Chi Minh trail. This proved to be an advantage when it came to performing interdiction strikes against enemy targets and provided close air support for combat search and rescue missions and covert Special Operations extractions in North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

Cited for his professional skill and airmanship, 1st Lt. Young distinguished himself in many aerial fights, earning four Distinguished Flying Crosses, seven Air Medals, and the rank of captain.

After his tour in Southeast Asia, Capt. Young continued his career at Craig Air Force Base in Alabama as a pilot instructor and systems analyst. He evaluated Air Force flight training requirements worldwide and presented briefings on his findings to officials at the Pentagon in 1973. Capt. Young ended his illustrious Air Force career in 1974 as an instructor in the Pilot Instructor Training program.

The Historical Association thanks Alan Price Young for his service and his recent gift of five Air Force uniforms, two combat-worn flight suits, and the dossier containing his complete service record.



Above: Capt. Alan Price Young standing underneath the 13'6" four-blade propeller of his A-1 Skyraider, c. 1971.



Left: Young's flight suit, now in the MCHA collection, labeled "Coveralls, Flying, Man's, Very Light, K-28, 8-Jan-1968."

The suit features his machine embroidered name and captain's bars, and applied shoulder patches on the right sleeve.



# End of Year Appeal 2021

Thank you to the following MCHA members and friends who contributed to the 2021 End of Year Appeal. Your generosity is overwhelming!

This fundraising drive is essential to our organization as it supports programming and the day-to-day operations at the Stroud Mansion Museum and Library. Your continued support enables the Monroe County Historical Association to serve as the area's cultural and learning center, assisting our diverse community of residents and visitors by connecting the county's past with the present.

Thank you to these caretakers of Monroe County's rich history for taking an active role in ensuring that our past is promoted, protected, and preserved for the next century and beyond.

John H. and Beverly Abel  
Ian and Elaine Ackroyd-Kelly  
Douglas and Dora Arnold  
Jeanette C. Arnone  
Dr. Donald R. Biffen  
Michelle and Donald Bisbing  
Craig B. and Anita Bluestein  
Marge Brennan  
Jane I. Brodhead  
Dr. Elizabeth T. Bugaighis  
Roger Burkhart  
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John Dennis  
Dorothy Fabel  
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Wayne and Eileen Furman  
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MaryAnne Heeter  
Claude Heller  
Ed Henning  
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Jim and Carol Hillestad  
Carol Hoff  
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Janet Weidensaul  
James Werkheiser  
Dr. and Mrs. Linford Werkheiser  
Marty and Susan Wilson  
Sue and Charlie Wilson  
John and Nina Woodling  
John and Cathy Young



## Hiking and History in Cresco, June 11

Join us on a guided hike through Fieldstone Farm Tank Creek Preserve in Cresco on Saturday, June 11 from 10 a.m. to noon.

Historical Association member Jim Vagliardo, president of The Older Adult Learning Community (TOALC), will lead guests through the 52-acre preserve, highlighting the rich history of the ruins of an old stone farmhouse, railroads, and natural resources located at this pristine location. The preserve also features two ponds, springs and wetland areas. The Monroe County Historical Association is proud to partner with the Pocono Heritage Land Trust for this event. Space is limited; reserve spots by email to [admin@monroehistorical.org](mailto:admin@monroehistorical.org) or call 570-421-7703.





# Starting Soon!

Live at the Stroud Mansion  
Third Thursdays • 7 p.m.

May 19

## A Brief History of Comedy in the Poconos

① Jessica Delfino

June 16

## Forgotten Stroudsburg Character: The Story of Sam Collins

② Bill Weitzmann

July 21

## The Delightful Dinkey: Delaware Valley Railway East Stroudsburg to Bushkill, 1901-1937

③ Kim Williams

August 18

## Ice Harvesting in Monroe County

④ Bill Leonard

September 15

## The Forebay Barn: Its Evolution and Distribution in America

⑤ Ken Sandri

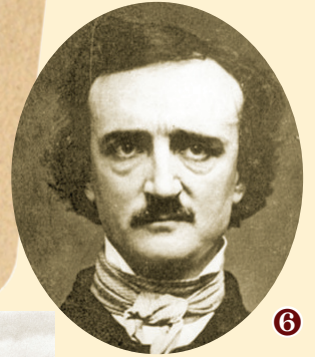
October 20

## Edgar Allen Poe

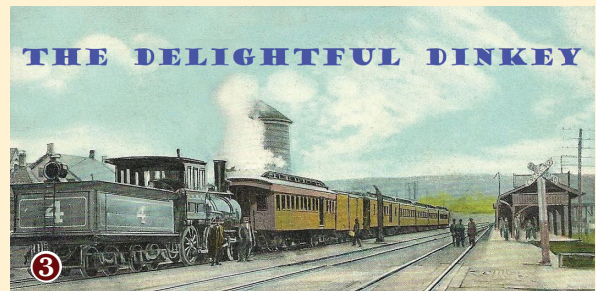
⑥ Rick Smith



# Third Thursday LECTURE SERIES



**LECTURES  
WILL BE  
RECORDED  
AND POSTED  
ONLINE**



MONROE COUNTY  
**MEMORIES**  
AN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

**Share Your Stories**

**Add your voice to our  
Oral History Project**



## Tell us your tales of times gone by

The Monroe County Historical Association is recording videos for "Monroe County Memories: An Oral History Project."

We have uploaded 24 videos to our YouTube channel to date, with topics ranging from the creation of the Pocono Raceway and the history of the Jonas Hotel to stories about summer work at a resort and nightlife in downtown Stroudsburg — all relating to the county's past.

If you have a story to tell, let us know. All histories are recorded at the Stroud Mansion. Email us at [admin@monroehistorical.org](mailto:admin@monroehistorical.org) or give us a call at 570-421-7703.



# Sponsors of the MCHA



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\$5,000

Lehigh Valley Hospital -  
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## Past Premier Sponsors

2021 | Pocono Raceway  
2019 | Buck Hill Falls  
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West End Fair Association  
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## Municipal | \$250

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## Grants

Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic  
Security (CARES) Act  
COVID-19 Monroe County Relief  
Block Grant Program  
ESSA Bank & Trust Foundation  
Monroe County Commissioners  
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Pennsylvania Humanities Council  
R. Dale and Frances M. Hughes Foundation  
Stroudsburgs Rotary Foundation





## Remembering Laurel Blossom Time

During my weekly luncheon with the Monroe County Mouse Society, Sam, the Penn Stroud Hotel mouse, told some fascinating stories of an elegant past, with graceful young ladies and beautiful flowers. He was referring to the Laurel Blossom Festival, a mainstay in Monroe County culture for many decades.

Pennsylvania's state flower is the mountain laurel, whose delicate pink and white flowers can be seen for a few short weeks in early summer. The Laurel Blossom Festival, held in June, was the perfect way to inaugurate the summer tourism season in the Poconos.

Pawing through Stroud Mansion records, I learned that Laurel Blossom Time started in 1931 with a weeklong celebration that began with a special dinner at the Penn Stroud Hotel on June 12. The guests of honor were Her Majesty, Queen of Laurel Blossom Time, Elsa Beamish, and her Court of Princesses. Queen Elsa was from the greater Philadelphia area, and her father was an associate of the governor. Her princesses represented 14 different colleges.

The impressive menu included broiled filet mignon au champignon, lobster and shrimps cardinal, and fromage petite Gruyere. Such fancy delicacies are mouthwatering to a little mouse!



In my digging, I found that during the week, the queen and her court made appearances around the county, staying at resorts and posing for photos. The 1931 festivities culminated with a Coronation Ceremony at Wolf Hollow Country Club in Delaware Water Gap on June 19. Tickets were 25 cents, which included a program. The Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Rotary Club, Kiwanis, Lions Club, Monroe County Automobile Club, and the Monroe County Chamber of Commerce were all represented,

and the Dance of the Laurel Blossom Fairies included ladies from all parts of Monroe County.

There followed a display of athleticism, featuring both summer and winter sports, and the program ended with a Laurel Pole Dance by the Fairies. What a day!

The festival was featured in the July 1934 *National Geographic*, and although it faded during World War II, it returned in the 1950s, with parades of as many as 23 floats. Celebrities such as Jackie Gleason and Fred Waring crowned the queen. Laurel Blossom Time existed in different forms until the mid 1980s, and it was always a unique way to invite people to our beautiful Pocono Mountains. I can't wait to report back at the next Mouse Society luncheon!

### 1931 Laurel Blossom Time Guests

*Queen of Laurel Blossom Time in the Poconos: Miss Elsa Beamish*

#### Her Princesses

Miss Frances Christine.....	Pennsylvania State College
Miss Ruth Freihofer .....	Beaver College
Miss Elizabeth Gegler .....	Moravian College
Miss Alice Gillespie .....	Marywood College
Miss Helen H. Kelly .....	College Misericordia
Miss Muriel Lodge .....	New Jersey College for Women
Miss Margaret Miller .....	Mansfield Teachers College
Miss Eleanor Pedlow .....	West Chester Teachers College
Miss Jean Pelton.....	East Stroudsburg Teachers College
Miss Edith Searle .....	Cedar Crest College
Miss Lois Wilhelmina Strickler .....	Ursinus College
Miss Elizabeth Trainer .....	Kutztown Teachers College
Miss Cora Wagner .....	Bloomsburg Teachers College



Former Mayor W.W. Glass crowns Elsa Beamish with a garland of mountain laurel at Wolf Hollow Country Club in Delaware Water Gap, crowning her the first Laurel Blossom Time queen in 1931.



**MONROE COUNTY  
HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION**

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**STROUD MANSION**

900 Main Street, Stroudsburg, PA 18360

10 a.m. - 4 p.m. Tuesday-Friday  
Closed Noon - 1 p.m. for lunch

*Tours daily at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m.  
Appointments recommended*

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If you have a new mailing address  
or email address, please let us know.

We don't want you to miss any  
of the exciting events, fundraisers, programs  
and workshops we offer.

Email [admin@monroehistorical.org](mailto:admin@monroehistorical.org)  
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