

1842 - 1976

INDIAN LORE

As early as 1731 Jonah Davenport and James Letrol were Indian traders in this area of Pennsylvania, which includes Geistown as we know it today. A brutal and deceptive tribe of 250 Shawonese Indians, led by their chief Okewlah, were the first inhabitants of this area. During the first half of the 18th century some 300 Delawares, 150 Asswikales, and a few Mingoes also roamed this area.

This area had 26 Indian trails, one of which is old route 56. This trail followed a windy route because of the very steep grade over to Raystown, which is today known as Bedford. This path went up the east side of the mountain to an elevation of 2711 feet and came into Johnstown via a route near the source of Paint Creek, then to Elton, through Geistown, and then down into Johnstown, which was then called Conemaugh, a name given by the Indians. Their camp was called Kickenpawling.

The first white people to settle in Cambria County were Racheal, Samuel, and Soloman Adams. They came from Berks County in 1769. White People were prohibited from settling in these Indian lands until 1774, when the Adamses obtained a warrant from the government. This permission was called Adams' Improvement, and their deed included both sides of Soloman Run.

Samuel and a friendly Indian were ambushed by a group of hostile Indians a few hundred yards from the Coles' Homestead, which was at the angle of Geistown and Elton, on Hollow Road. Soloman, who had retracked because of the dog's disturbance, was saved and moved on to Bedford, where he became a Surveyor. Racheal Adams was later killed by Indians in Elton by Racheal's Stream, which was named for her. Only after Squire Horner came and paid the Indians for their land did the settlements become safe from attack.

This, I feel, is the authentic history of Geistown. Many facts were obtained through discussions with my grandmother, Catherine (Geis) Lulay, the last of the Geis family, who died in 1948. My son Richard (Kit) and I did this survey years ago. I have continued to gather information with the help of relatives, whom I thank, Cambria County records, the Bureau of Statistics, and the deeds of the Geis's. I feel this is as close as anyone can get to the real facts.

Bernice (Dravis) Tracik

Conditions of Sale

Leistown March the 24th 1871

The undersigned offers at Public Sale
a number of Lots to be hereafter described in the city
of Leistown, located fronting on the Johnstown &
Scalp Street Turnpike, upon the following Conditions,

first that the highest and best bidder shall
invariably be deemed the purchaser.

Second the purchaser is to pay One third in hand
and the residue in two equal annual payments
with Interest.

Third, the payments to be secured by judgment Notes
with approved Security.

further the Subscriber herewith binds himself and his
heirs to make and execute a good and sufficient Title
as soon as the above Conditions are complied with
at which time full possession will be given.

One bid is reserved for the benefit of the proprietor
in each case if he should see proper.

The moneys to be paid between this and the first of
April next.

Given from under my hand at Leistown this 24th
day of March 1871.

Geo Geis

Descriptions of Lots.

Lot No. 1 fronting on corner 4 Rods wide at East
end containing 42 perches,

Lot No. 2 fronting 4 Rods wide on Scalp Level Road
containing 49 perches,

Lot No. 3 fronting as the above 4 Rods wide
containing 54 perches,

Sold to Eli Rhinick for One hundred Dollars
and accepted by him according to the foregoing condition
Witness My hand and Seal March 24th 1871

Lot No. 4 front as the above 4 Rods wide containing ⁵⁶
64 Perches Sold to Josiah Meyer for One hundred
and Ten Dollars

Lot Nos fronting as the above 4 Rods wide
containing 76 Perches Do. Do. for One hundred
and ten Dollars

Lot No 6 fronting same as the above 4 Rods wide
containing 86 Perches Do Do for
the sum of One hundred and twenty Dollars,
The above lots No. 4, 5 & 6 Sold to said Josiah
Meyer and accepted by him according to
the foregoing conditions

Witness My hand and Seal March 24. 1871

Witness

Moses B. Miller Josiah Meyer





JOSEPH & MARY ANN GEIS

THE HISTORY OF GEISTOWN AND GEISTOWN BOROUGH

In 1812 William and Rebecca Hemphill Slick sold their land in Johnstown and moved three miles to the southeast to the hilltop that is now Geistown. This vast wilderness was inhabited only by Indians. The Slick's purchased a large tract of land and called it Slicksville. William Slick was an old-time Whig, and he became a Republican upon the organization of the party in 1856. He served for twenty years as a justice of the peace in Richland Township. The area's first church, which was Methodist, was established in William Slick's home on December 25, 1829. The Slick's lived on their farm, which also included a tannery, until 1866.

The Slicks had divided the land into three parcels, and Squire Horner bought one in 1842. The Squire then sold this farm, which cost \$950 and consisted of 1.8 miles, to Joseph Geis. Geis was born in 1813 in Aschaffenburg, Bavaria. He and his wife, Mary Ann Fleckenstine, came to America with a party of 17 members. They were traveling west via the Portage Canal, which started in Philadelphia and went through Johnstown and Pittsburgh en route to Ohio (passage was \$3.50 and food was \$1.50), when one of the members took sick. While waiting for their comrade's recovery, Joseph Geis took his young bride Mary Ann up into the mountains for a ride. Here they found a beautiful section of land, perfect in every respect. This was the first of many pieces of land that he bought.

Within fifteen months Joseph Geis had settled his homestead, so he went back to Bavaria to entreat his parents to join him in America. He returned to his farm, which were still called plantations, with Conrad and Anna Maria Geis. Conrad and Joseph Geis started a distillery, where they made rye and wheat whiskey. This distillery was located where Busy Beaver now stands. After the whiskey was made, it had to be shipped to Pittsburgh, via the Portage Canal, to receive a state stamp. The whiskey was then brought back to the area and sold for ninety cents a gallon. Joseph Geis enlarged his house and extended it into a tavern, which was used for travelers for food and overnight lodging. Although the family called it the Half-way Mountain House, it later was dubbed the Allegheny Mountain House. It was the principal stop for those traveling from Johnstown to Orris's Hotel and Tavern in Paint Creek, which took a full day.

Joseph Geis and his wife had nine children, three boys and six girls. One of the boys died when the whole family contracted small pox from a traveling salesman. The two other boys died at an early age, leaving only the six girls. After attending Blough School, Joseph sent his daughters to St. Aloysius in Loretto, which was under the supervision of the Sisters of Mercy. The sisters came from Pittsburgh in 1848. Sister Mary Catherine Wayne was the first supervisor of the School.



HALF-WAY MOUNTAIN HOUSE



FATHER MAXIMLAIN HERR, O. S. B.

During this time Joseph had divided his farm into lots and called it Geistown. This little village had no less than three hotels (taverns), two blacksmith shops, a distillery, and a few mercantiles. In approximately 1876 a shallow coal mining shaft was operated by a man named Koontz (Kuntz). The village also had a carpenter shop, a lumber mill, a bowling alley that was housed in Bernard Nees' tavern, a slaughter house, and an ice pond and a clear pond that serviced the slaughter house. Bernard Nees, who had married Helena Geis in 1870, bought land and established a hotel, mercantile store, and post office in 1876. Joseph Geis also had a large barn where he weighed wheat, oats, etc. from the surrounding farms.

Although Geistown's participation in the Underground Railroad had started before Joseph Geis's time, he continued to perpetuate it during his era. During the days of slavery in the states south of the Mason-Dixon Line, Johnstown was a recognized station on the railroad. Here many a fugitive Negro was aided in making his escape from his master on his journey to Canada.

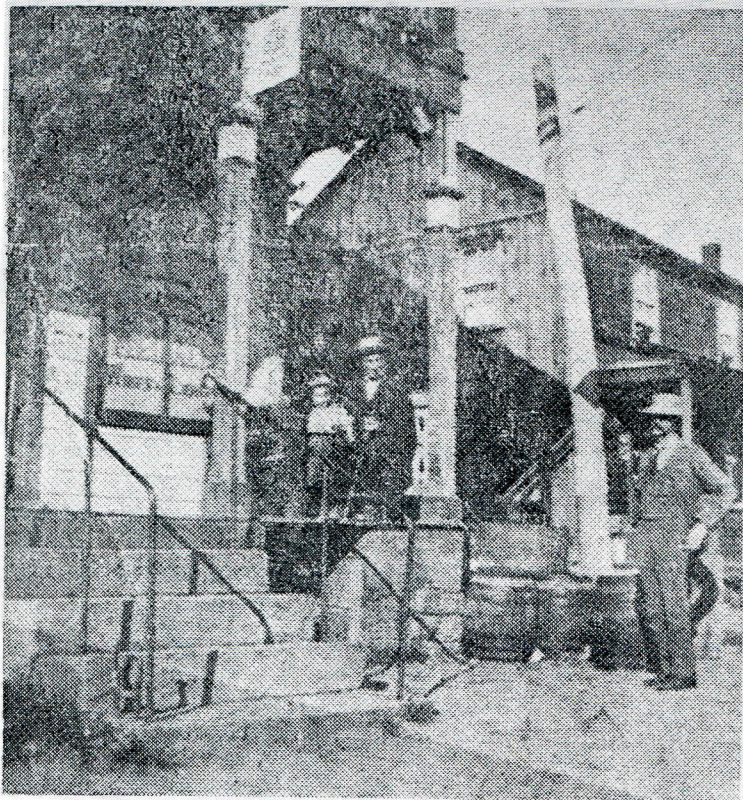
The railroad, which was established during the early 1800's, came through Bedford to Geistown, where a stop was at William Slick's farm. It went to Johnstown via Clinton Street and then continued north to Cherry Tree by way of Ebensburg. The people responsible for the operation of the underground railroad in the area were John Cushon, Frederick Kaylor, Henry Willis, William Barnett, John Meyers, Wallace Fortune, and James Heslop and his wife. Although it was a fairly successful route for Negroes escaping from slavery, it was not without danger. The first two slaves that came through were shot and wounded in the legs.

After the Battle of Gettysburg, which signalled the end of the Civil War, soldiers journeying homeward stopped at Geis' big spring, which was across from the homestead (Young American Furniture now stands here). These soldiers of 1863, who were cold, hungry, wounded, and weary, were too discouraged to continue homeward. They remained in Geistown until Abraham Lincoln, who was a good friend of A. A. Baker, came here to encourage them to continue their trek home.

People could travel from Geistown to Johnstown via a dirt road. A toll of six cents was collected at the Walnut Grove Loop. This toll was discontinued in 1809. Cambria County was finally persuaded to make the road macadem, and it remained so until the state changed the surface to concrete in 1923.

Geistown Public School started in 1899. The first teacher was Mr. Luther. In 1915 or 1916 the first high school, with Mr. Hoover as principal, was organized. Although it was extended in 1920 and again in 1932, the original building included only two rooms. This building, which was situated where the elementary school now stands, later became Geistown's Grange Hall before the fire company moved into it.

-- Attic Album --



Pictured is Joseph Geis, whose name should have a familiar ring to residents of Geistown, and Harry Smith, who held the position of Geistown postmaster for many years. In the picture, taken about 1896, Mr. Geis is holding his grandson, Thomas Nees, who now resides at 255 Cypress Avenue. The picture shows the old Geistown Hotel which was operated by Bernard Nees, and the Post Office to the right. Mr. Geis died in 1906 and is buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery.

The first Catholic School, which consisted of a small one room building costing \$800, was started in the 18th century and was built on land donated by the Friedoff's. The first teachers were Anna Nees and Margaret Ruth Kist, and the first Nun was Sister Aloysius. On November 11, 1911, a larger school, consisting of two rooms, was dedicated and named Saint Benedict's.

Catholic services were first held in Geistown in the Geis' house. A missionary priest, traveling to Gallitzin, stopped here by chance, set up his altar stone, and said mass.

The first and only church in Geistown started out as a small Catholic mission chapel for St. Joseph's Church. The building was located at the rear of their cemetery, and it housed an altar and pews. Its cast iron bell was German-made, specifically for this church. The land was bought in 1889, the first home priest came in 1893, and the church was named to honor St. Benedict. Father Maximillian Herr came as the home priest in 1911.

Various churches and synagogues have established cemeteries in Geistown. St. Joseph's Cemetery, where an original Indian cemetery was discovered in the upper corner, was started in 1890 and is the resting place of five generations of the Geis family. St. John's (1909) and St. Anthony's (1926) are also in Geistown. The two Jewish cemeteries are A-Havas Achim (behind St. Joseph's), meaning love of God, and Rodef Sholom (below St. John's, meaning pursuing peace.

In 1930 James Ruth, Ernest Heinrich, Charles Leventry, and Ralph Mowery decided to organize a borough. An election was held and in April of 1930 Geistown officially became a borough. Its borders were the Elton Road, Luther Road, the Windber Road (route 56) to Shaffer's tavern, Hillenbrand Court, and the city line. Through this first election James Ruth became the Burgess, Ernest Heinrich was the Council President, and Ralph Mowery was the secretary. Ollie Himmer was appointed as the first policeman.

Geistown's fire Company originated in 1931. Frank Hillenbrand was the first fire chief. Mrs. Nathan's (Nathan's Store) limousine, which was purchased for \$200, was converted into a fire truck by the four charter members. The first ambulance was an old hearse bought from Steve Conway.

Niessner's Greenhouse, which began about 1910, is the oldest and longest lasting business in Geistown. Business and industry thrived during the 20th century, and as of 1954 these shops and services were offered in the borough: three doctors, three dentists, a Catholic church, two schools, two beauty shops, Bloom's Pharmacy, Harry Dravis Roadside Confectionary Store, Bali Bra factory, two taverns, Campbell's Business Building, a dry cleaner, Von Lunen's Restaurant, Kern's Lumber Company, Harry Wise and Son's Lumber Company, Kiddie Corner, Saylor Bros. Hardware, Roger's Greeting Shop, Gene's Shoe Repair, the A & P Store, Lopresti's Market, Johnstown Bank and Trust, Kay's Ladies Shoppe, Campanella's Restaurant, Gelles' Bowling Alley, SMS Furniture and Appliance, The Highland Press (Geistown's only newspaper), two pottery shops, various used car lots, Eudy's Motel, two greenhouses, and a sub post office.



Four Geis daughters who stayed and made homes in Geistown until their deaths.
(Sitting left to right) Catherine (Geis) Lulay, Joseph Geis, founder, Helena
(Geis) Nees.

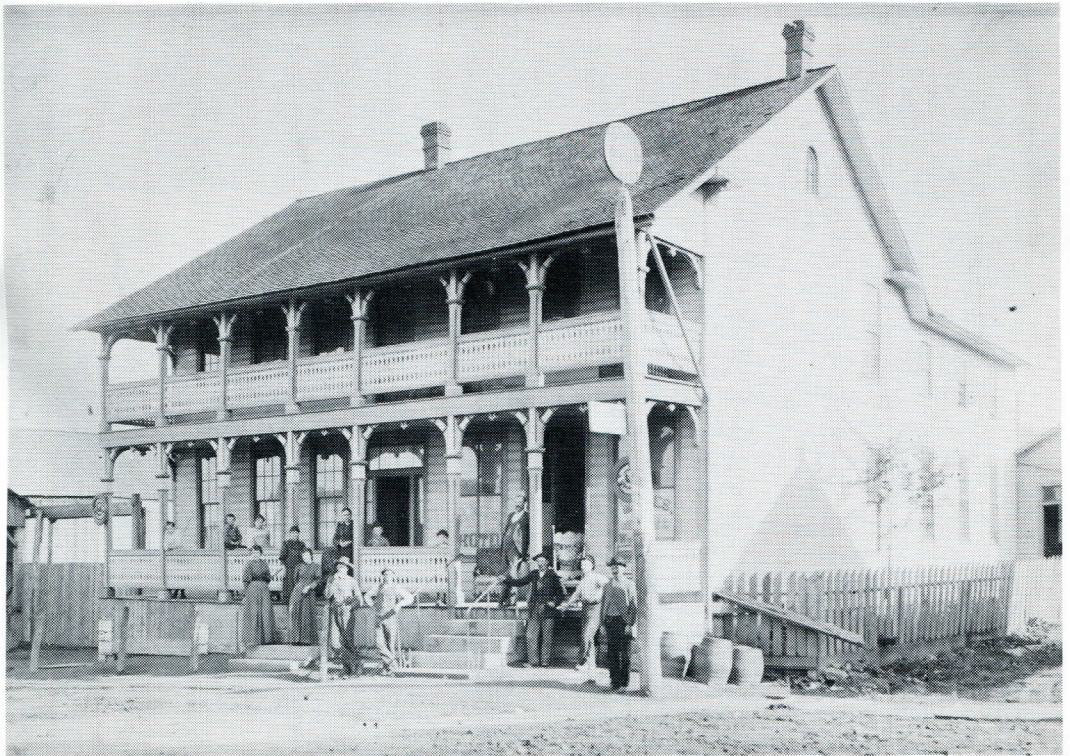
(Standing left to right) Rose (Geis) Nees, Clare (Geis) Hillenbrand.



FIRST CATHOLIC MISSION, WITH GEIS RELATIONS



GEISTOWN HOUSE



GEISTOWN HOUSE REMODELED

GEIS FAMILY – 1865-1871



GEIS FAMILY, 1865-1871

(1st Row) Reverend Hugh Martcie, Ottoman Grouch, Thomas Nees, Edward Mayer, Mercedes (Mayer) Young.

(2nd Row) Clarissa Martcie, Maria Martcie, Agnes (Nees) Grouch and Baby Paul, Daughter Agnes, Rose (Geis) Nees with William Nees, Katherine (Geis) Lulay, Bertha (Lulay) Lauer, Joseph Geis, Helena (Geis) Nees, Regenia (Hirsch) Mayer, Gusta Mayer, Helen (Mayer) McKee.

(3rd Row) Veronica (Hirsch) Martcie, and Daughter, Maria Fronie Nees, Helen (Nees) Moore Gertrude (Lulay), Rosemary (Lulay) Dravis, George Lulay, Conrad Nees, Bernard Nees, Katherine (Nees) Dongas, Mae Nees, Anna Nees, Rose (Nees) Hennrich, Anna (Hillenbrand) Miller, Katie Hillenbrand, Clara (Hirsch) Hornick, Mary (Hornick) McQuin, Dorothy (Dora) Nees, Maggie Nees, Josephine Nees.

(4th Row) Joe Martcie, Jake Grouch, John Nees, Lawarnee Nees, George Nees, Dongas, Gus Hillenbrand, Frank Hillenbrand, Frank Hornick, Paul Grouch.



**POST OFFICE 1876
HARRY GRUSH STORE, LAWRENCE NEES STORE**





EARLY GEISTOWN RESIDENTS AT A PICNIC



FIRST REUNION OF RICHLAND STUDENTS

GEISTOW DISTILLERY, 187

M

TERMS CASH.

All Bills subject to draft
after 60 days.



JOSEPH GEIS,

Wholesale Dealer in

PURE RYE & WHEAT WHISKEY,

GEISTOWN, CAMBRIA COUNTY, PA.

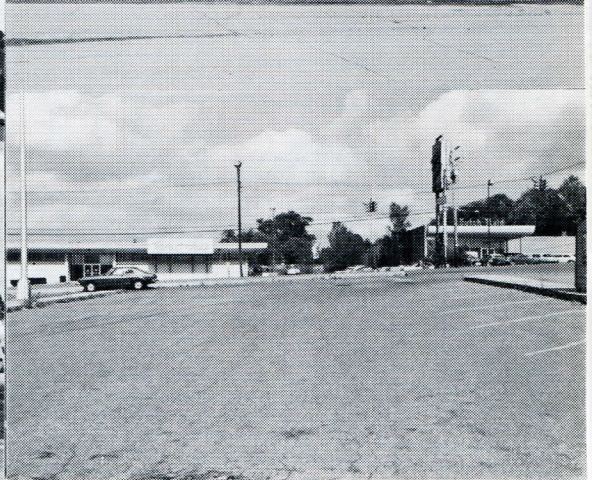
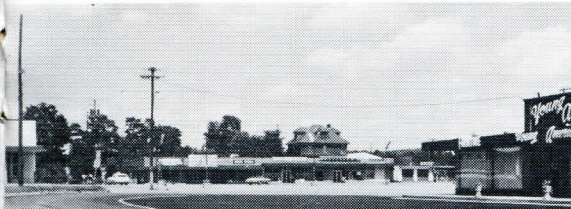


RED GERANIUM



OUR LITTLE SATURDAY AND SUNDAY STORE
(Geistown's First Drive In) Located in the beginning of Geis Avenue

GEISTOWN BUSINESS





BUSINESS DIRECTORY & YEAR OF ESTABLISHMENT

AUST AUTO REPAIR

634 Scalp Avenue
1952 2 employees

ANN'S PIZZA SHOP

2461 Bedford Street
1962 2 employees

BILL'S SERVICE STATION

2208 Bedford Street
1971 5 employees

BLOOM'S PHARMACY

2451 Bedford Street
1948 9 employees

BOB'S CUSTOM CARPETS

438 Belmont Street
1966 2 employees

B & L AUTO & RECREATION

696 Scalp Avenue
1976 1 employee

BUSY BEAVER LUMBER

132 Belmont Street
1965 11 employees

CAROL'S BEAUTY SALON

106 Nees Avenue
1971 1 employee

FOLLOW CHARLIE CAR WASH

Lamberd Avenue
1971 6 employees

CORNER COFFEE SHOP

2470 Bedford Street
1961 13 employees

DUTCH MAID BAKERY

809 Scalp Avenue
1960 31 employees

DR. HERBERT ALLEN, MD

2472 Bedford Street
1961 1 employee

DR. GEORGE BOYCE, Podiatrist

215 Belmont Street
1974 1 employee

DR. ROMUALD CAROFF, MD

Geistown Shopping Center
1962 3 employees

DR. CLYDE HARRIGER, MD

636 Scalp Avenue
1956 3 employees

DR. F. J. MISCOE, Chiro. Clinic

215 Belmont Street
1972 4 employees

DR. JAMES R. MOORE, Dentist

636 Scalp Avenue
1959 1 employee

DR. ALVY WALKER, Optometrist

636 Scalp Avenue
1956 1 employee

DR. DEAN WILSON, Dentist

636 Scalp Avenue
1952 1 employee

EASTERBROOK'S TAXIDERMIST

342 Teaberry Lane
1962 2 employees

ELECTROLUX CORP.

2451 Bedford Street
1972 14 employees

10-4 ELECTRONICS

2453 Bedford Street
1974 2 employees

ELSIE'S BEAUTY CENTER

2451 Bedford Street
1956 4 employees

EUDY'S MOTEL

709 Scalp Avenue
1952 2 employees

EVANS INSURANCE

100 Ohio Court
1969 1 employee

FISHER INSURANCE

636 Scalp Avenue
1975 2 employees

FRICK'S BEVERAGE

2468 Bedford Street
1971 3 employees

FRITZ ABEL & SON Plumbing & Heating

2470 Bedford Street
1955 2 employees

EBENSBURG OFFICE SUPPLY

643 Lamberd Avenue
1975 4 employees

GEISTOWN COUNTRY CLUB

330 Teaberry Lane
1938 1 employee

LOT PLANS	
NO.	NAME OF PLOT
1	REUBEN L. GRIFITH
2	W. J. LIND
3	W. J. LIND
4	HARRY H. DRAMA
5	MEL GRUNBERGER
6	GRISTON
7	CHARLES LOEBNER
8	DAVIDSON
9	J. H. MILLER
10	CHAS. J. LIND
11	W. J. LIND
12	W. J. LIND
13	A. W. STRONG
14	S. W. SHINE
15	FRANK SWANDE
16	W. J. LIND
17	ABRAHAM WOODLAND
18	LOUISA A. NEEL
19	WILLIAM SCHUBERT
20	WILLIAM SCHUBERT
21	WILLIAM SCHUBERT
22	ALICE MILLER
23	FRANK SWANDE
24	FRANK SWANDE
25	FRANK SWANDE
26	FRANK SWANDE



Geistown Borough
 SHOWING
 BOUNDARIES AND HIGHWAYS
 SCALE 1" = 200'
 COMPILED BY J. H. MILLER
 J. H. MILLER & COMPANY
 J. H. MILLER & COMPANY
 J. H. MILLER & COMPANY

GEISTOWN SCREEN & GLASS

2470 Bedford Street
1975 1 employee

GEISTOWN SERVICE STATION

660 Scalp Avenue
1961 3 employees

GEISTOWN QUAKER STATE

2467 Bedford Street
1947 2 employees

GEISTOWN TV SALES

2501 Bedford Street
1956 4 employees

GENERAL TELEPHONE EXCHANGE

204 Belmont Street
1952 3 employees

GLENDALE YEARROUND

636 Scalp Avenue
1976 20 employees

GRESH HOME BUILDERS

712 Scalp Avenue
1951 8 employees

GUARDIAN UNDERWRITERS

636 Scalp Avenue
1973 2 employees

HIGHLAND BEAUTY SHOP

2501 Bedford Street
1952 1 employee

HIGHWAY OIL CO.

2224 Bedford Street
1973 3 employees

HOF - BRAU TAVERN

294 Bentwood Avenue
1960 8 employees

HORNER'S 5 & 10 STORE

2451 Bedford Street
1956 3 employees

HORNICK'S AUTO SALES

2311 Bedford Street
1948 2 employees

J & O DRAPERIES AND CARPET STUDIO

100 Geis Avenue
1973 2 employees

JOCKEY CLUB

807 Demuth Street
1936 1 employee

JOHNSTOWN BANK & TRUST CO.

2459 Bedford Street
1952 11 employees

HIGHLANDER SELF-SERV LAUNDRY

130 Belmont Street
1975

KETTERER FUNERAL HOME

2503 Bedford Street
1946 2 employees

KEYBOARD MUSIC

2450 Bedford Street
1969 1 employee

KNIT & RAIL

2534 Bedford Street
1974 2 employees

LOU - JEAN TAXIDERMY STUDIO

Rear 903 Scalp Avenue
1974 1 employee

LOPRESTI'S MARKET

2458 Bedford Street
1939 10 employees

3 - M BUSINESS PRODUCTS

2441 Bedford Street
1974 16 employees

MAC'S TIRE SERVICE

2469 Bedford Street
1972 3 employees

MCDONALD'S

737 Scalp Avenue
1968 42 employees

METROPLITAN INSURANCE CO.

2445 Bedford Street
1975 250 Employees

MILKIES SUNOCO SERVICE

2431 Bedford Street
1970 6 employees

MOORE BUSINESS FORMS

100 Ohio Court
1971 5 employees

NIESSNER GREEN HOUSE

2227 Bedford Street
1902 5 employees

ORCHARD HOTEL

2434 Bedford Street
1950 4 employees

O'SHEAS CANDIES

2451 Bedford Street
1965 3 employees

PHENICIE INSURANCE

100 Nees Avenue
1955 2 employees

PIZZA HUT
736 Scalp Avenue
1972 14 employees

POOL CITY
2303 Bedford Street
1971 6 employees

PROTECTIVE SECURITY
213 Belmont Street

RED BULL INN
725 Scalp Avenue
1972 44 employees

RICK'S AUTO MART
699 Scalp Avenue
1969 6 employees

ROBERT HALL
801 Scalp Avenue
1956 9 employees

ROSS TURKEY FARM
115 Walters Avenue
1937 2 employees

SAYLOR BROS. HARDWARE
2470 Bedford Street
1946 5 employees

SCHRADER GREEN HOUSE
2078 Bedford Street
1904 9 employees

SHEETZ KWIK SHOPPER
130 Belmont Street
1973 8 employees

STRAND LABORATORIES
110 Kinsey Street
1961 14 employees

STAR-LITE MOTEL
907 Scalp Avenue
1953 3 employees

STATE STORE
2451 Bedford Street
1961 6 employees

TARRANTO'S BARBER SHOP
2470 Bedford Street
1956 3 employees

TESH AUTO BODY
205 Belmont Street
1962 2 employees

THOROFARE MARKET
2449 Bedford Street
1960 14 employees

TIMMURA BARBER SHOP
213 Belmont Street
1955 3 employees

TOWN & COUNTRY CLEANERS
2451 Bedford Street
1950 1 employee

TRAPANOTTO BARBER SHOP
2507 Bedford Street
1958 2 employees

TRENT INSURANCE AGENCY
2450 Bedford Street
1954 3 employees

TRAIL BALLOON
724 Scalp Avenue
1972 4 employees

TRIGONA & SONS PLASTICS
110 Lundy Lane
1974 14 employees

U. S. POST OFFICE
2470 Bedford Street
1960 2 employees

VARNER GUN SHOP
207 Hawthorn Street
1952 1 employee

WINDBER SIGNS
Rear 643 Lamberd Avenue
1965 4 employees

YOUNG AMERICAN FURNITURE
2450 Bedford Street
1961 7 employees

ZIP'S BOWLING LANES
645 Lamberd Avenue
1973 4 employees

Population of Geistown Borough as of February 1976; 3,741. 12 acres of land, that is open, not developed.

OLDEST RESIDENT OF GEISTOWN BOROUGH

Howard Lemon Pringle, 2770 Bedford Street, Geistown Borough, Pennsylvania. Born August 5, 1881 in Croyle Township, Summerhill, Pennsylvania. Husband of Josephine Melvine (Story) Pringle. Retired from Russell Meyers Chair Factory.

Married 1945 at Bethany United Methodist Church, 112 Leventry Road, Geistown Parsonage, by the Reverend P. L. Griffith. Came to Geistown Borough to live after the 1936 Johnstown Flood. He is 95 years old.

GEISTOWN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The first high school in Geistown was established in 1917-18 as a three year school held in the "Election House" with three students and Algie Baumgardner as teacher. In order to graduate, these students had to transfer to either Johnstown or Windber.

In 1918-19 classes were held in a three room building located on the Bedford Pike (Lamberd Avenue) with the first graduating class in 1920. This was later to be moved and enlarged and become a fire house.

In 1923, an eight room brick building was constructed to house the four year high school plus seventh and eight grades. The first graduating class from this building was in 1924. This building was later enlarged and remained the high school for the Richland Township School District until the High School was moved to new quarters in Richland Township (now known as East Hills Elementary School). The Geistown building has continued to serve the school district as administrative offices and elementary and kindergarden schools. At present only kindergarden and administrative facilities are housed there.



GEISTOWN RECREATION

The first Geistown Recreation Board was established by Borough Council on September 15, 1955, The original appointees were Leona Phillips, Lawrence C. Nees, Harry Stuart, Kathryn O'Conner and Arthur Singer.

The original program consisted of bowling, archery and baton twirling lessons, Several streets were also blocked off during snowy periods for sled riding.

During the second year of operation several new activities were added including roller skating, swimming and trampoline.

In 1967 Geistown's first playground was opened on Boise Street. The next year a "tiny tot" playground was added on Euclid Avenue.

The first organized athletic program was initiated in 1950, outside of the high school. Little League Baseball was started that year at the St. Benedict ball field.

In 1956 girl's softball was begun through the summer recreation program sponsored by the Richland School District and Highland Recreation Board.

June 14, 1976 Geistown Borough Recreation Program. July 23, 1976 the 12 month a year programs.

Bantam Theater – 25¢ plus I. D. Cards.

Skateland Roller Skating – Reduced Rates plus I. D. Cards.

Zip's Bowling – Reduced Rates plus I. D. Cards.

Senior Citizens Bowling any time—with I. D. Card.

SUMMER PROGRAMS

Playgrounds – Boise Street, Tuesdays 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. Arts and Crafts Geistown School, Tuesdays 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Playgrounds Outside – Boise Street, Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Geistown School – Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Softball League – Tuesday and Thursdays 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon. Four major leagues for girls teams. Four minor pony tail league teams.

Baseball Clinic—Boys 6 and 7 years. Learn the fundamental of baseball.

GEISTOWN VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT

Geistown Volunteer Fire Department filed for their charter on February 8, 1932 at 3:20 p.m. before Prothonotary, John Hite.

Charter was recorded in Cambria County Court by Recorder Leo F. McKerrick and certified by Recorder of Deeds, Dennis L. Westrick on March 15, 1932. Officers at the time of the charter were as follows: President, Robert V. Schuller; Vice President, Alonzo Baumgardner; Secretary, Charles Ruth; Assistant Secretary, Paul Gray; Treasurer, Ernest Heinrich; Fire Chief, Clement Erlinger; Assistant Fire Chief, Claude Diefenbach; 2nd Assistant, Bernard Sedlemeyer; Advisory Chief, Logan M. Keller. Trustees: L. C. Nees, Albert Fisher, Walter Mainhret, John C. Smith, Frank J. Hillenbrand, David Bheam, William Goebert and Bernard N. Neinrich.

Geistown Borough Seal placed on charter by James J. Ruth, Justice of Peace. Geistown Volunteer Fire Company started with 24 ambulance division headed by Harold Shultz and their first ambulance purchased was an Army surplus from Indiantown Gap. The first new ambulance was purchased in 1960 and the second in 1963. Two ambulances have been maintained since 1963. In 1947 the ambulance club had 300 members and made 14 ambulance runs. Geistown Volunteer Fire Company now maintains two fire trucks and two ambulances.

Ground breaking ceremony for the new fire hall was held April 20, 1968 at 2:00 p.m. Alfred "Pappy" Graves oldest active member turned the first spade of ground at which time Mr. Graves was made Honorary Fire Chief. The new fire company was completed in 1969.

Another division of the fire company is the ladies auxiliary.

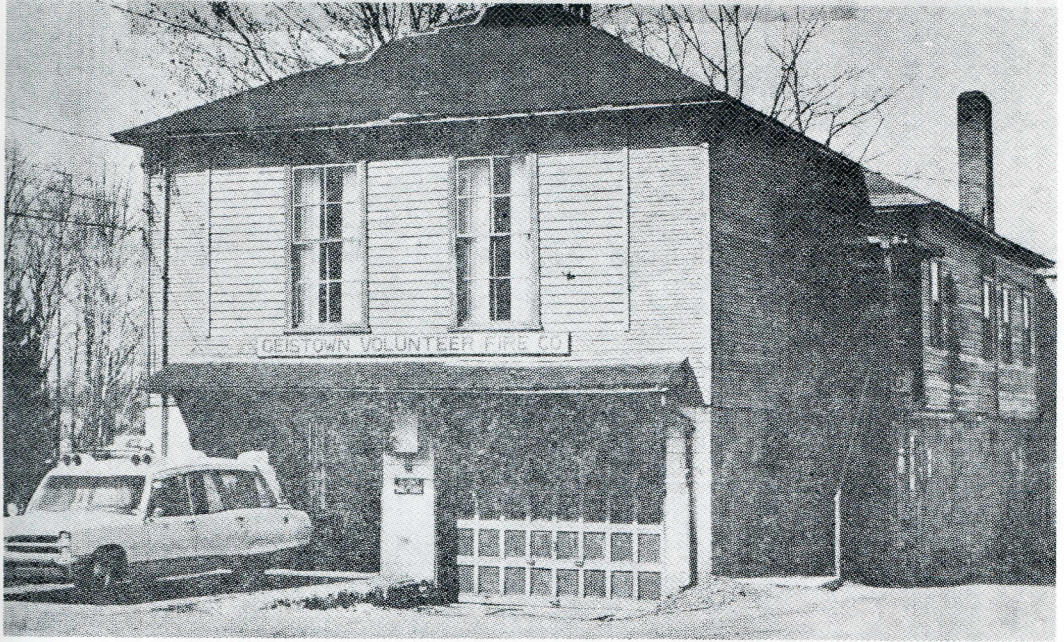
Geistown Volunteer Fire Company sponsors Boy Scout Troop 25 and Cub Pack 25.



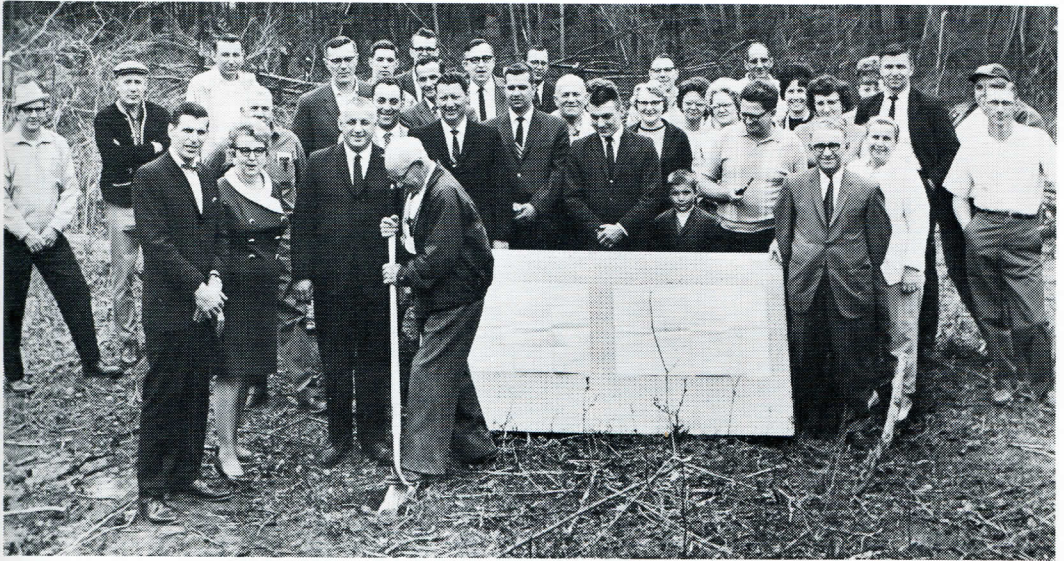
NEW FIRE HALL, GEISTOWN SCHOOL IN BACKGROUND

Wednesday, December 4, 1968

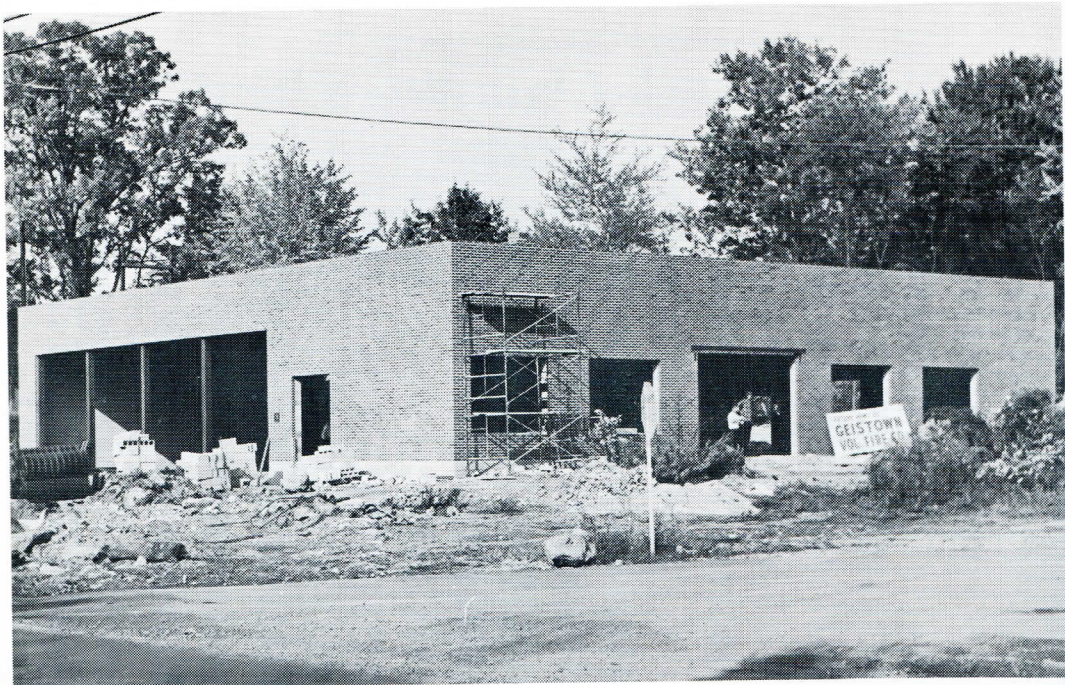
Landmark Changing Hands



The old Geistown Fire Hall, long a land mark in the community, has been sold to Trigona Plastics of Johnstown and will become an industrial site. The volunteer fire company and borough offices now housed in the structure will be moved into the new fire hall and community building directly across Lamberd Avenue :



GROUND BREAKING, APRIL 20, 1968



GEISTOWN FIRE HALL UNDER CONSTRUCTION



Alfred (Pappy) Graves presentation of birthday gifts. (He was the oldest active fireman in the area).

PRESENT GEISTOWN FIRE COMPANY OFFICERS



Officers for 1976 in the Geistown Volunteer Fire Company are (first row, left to right) Terry Murray IV, trustee for five years; Richard Miller, vice president; Stephen Seifert, President; Anthony Sestrich, fire chief, and Richard Seigh, delegate to Cambria County and state conventions; and (second row, left to right) Don Gawel, financial secretary, ambulance club; Frank Erb, financial secretary, fire company; Don Moore Sr., first assistant fire chief; Ben Grush, secretary; Vic Billick, treasurer; and Bill Berkhammer, assistant secretary. Absent were Ken Messina, second assistant fire chief, and Charles Miller, chief of fire police.

GEISTOWN LIONS

The Geistown Lions was chartered in April of 1947, the first president was Victor Erickson.

Geistown Lions started with 101 charter members. They meet on the second and fourth Monday of each month. The Lions honor their wives quarterly at their Ladies Night. The Lions celebrated their Twenty-fifth anniversary at a special dinner on March 19, 1973.

Geistown Lions take pride in their Community Services which include Beacon Lodge Camp for the Blind, Camp Arenda for Handicap Children, Leader Dog School for the blind, dog and receiptant are schooled in the state of Michigan, Lions International Foundation, Pennsylvania Eye Research, Eye Glasses for the needy, Easter egg hunt, program for Arbutus Manor, Geistown police dog fund, White Cane week, Inter Service Council, Arbutus Park Little League Baseball. The Lions chartered the Geistown Lions Little League. The League was organized 26 years ago with four baseball teams with Vic Erickson as Director, the position he still holds.

Members for the Geistown Lion are drawn from Geistown, Stoneycreek Township and the Richland Township areas.

GEISTOWN-RICHLAND KIWANIS

Chartered in February, 1962. The first president of the Kiwanis was Owen Ketterer. The current president is William Schrader.

The Kiwanis was open to all business men in the area, but, since opened its membership to all worthy citizens of the area.

The Kiwanis hold a dinner meeting every Tuesday evening at 6:15 p.m. Meetings now held at the Red Bull Inn. The members honor their wives quarterly at a dinner in different locations.

The Kiwanis sponsor the Richland High School Key Club as well as the Greater Johnstown Vo-Tech School. The Key clubs performs civic duties as well as school projects.

The Kiwanis also sponsor a baseball team in the area and they strive to help organizations in their area.

SCOUTS

Troop 25 chartered May 12, 1932 and were sponsored by Geistown Borough. The new Troop held their meetings in the Geistown Fire Hall. The first scout master was Harry J. Davis.

The Troop consisted of 10 adults and eight boys in 1939. The meetings were changed to the Geistown School. In 1940 the sponsorship changed to Richland Township School Board and the Troop met at the Richland High School which is now the Richland School District Administrative Office. In 1954 the sponsorship changed to the Geistown Volunteer Fire Department which is now their home.

Troop 25 boast many achievements back as far as 1943 with their first Eagle Scout, Carl Lindquist. Since that time 27 boys have gained the rank as Eagle Scout. Michael A. Verno received Bronze, Gold & Silver Palms above Eagle Scout, first ever in Troop 25. Timothy Hornick received National Medal of Merit in 1975.

Troop 25 participates in all scout camps at Roaring Run Scout Camp and Klondike Derby, a series of out door tests which is held during the winter months.

Raymond Miller was appointed institutional representative for Troop 25 in 1967 which he now holds. Troop 25 adults hold three silver beaver awards. Reciepiants are Charles Palm, George F. Seifert, Jr., Reverend Monsignor Gerald Stephens, past Diocesan Scout Chaplain and Raymond Miller. Mr. Seifert also received the St. George award from the Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. Pack 25 chartered by Richland School Board on December 17, 1946. The Pack held their meetings at the Richland School which was located in Geistown at that time. The Pack was active until 1951.

The Pack was reorganized on April 30, 1962 and was sponsored by the Geistown Volunteer Fire Company where it now holds their monthly meetings. Pack 25's first cubmaster was Fred Liebold. The Pack holds their weekly den meetings at the homes of their Den Mothers. The Pack holds their Pinewood Derby Races in January of each year in which each cub builds his own racer. In February the Pack holds their Blue and Gold banquet. At that time the cub are honored and adult members of the past year are honored.

HIGHLAND SEWER AND WATER AUTHORITY

The Highland Sewer and Water Authority was incorporated March 9, 1953 by Geistown for the purpose of installing sewers.

The Highland Sewer and Water Authority is governed by a board of nine members, all prominent, well qualified business men, selected and appointed by the governing bodies of Geistown Borough and Richland Township. Five members of the board are selected from Geistown Borough and four from Richland Township. Each member is appointed for a five year term.

The first Board members were: R. Owen Ketterer, 5 years; Fred J. Hite, 4 years; A. M. Baker, 3 years; Fred Rether, 2 years; and Thomas A. Blackburn, 1 year.

Its name was first called Highland Sewer Authority.

The name was changed to Highland Sewer and Water Authority in October 1954. They then purchased Richland Water Company in October 1955. This required buying water from Windber Water Company. They later purchased General Water Works System that included four dams.

The Authority had two employees in 1955. All fill work was done by contract to Windber Water Company. In 1976 the Authority has 21 employees who do all their own maintenance and small construction work.

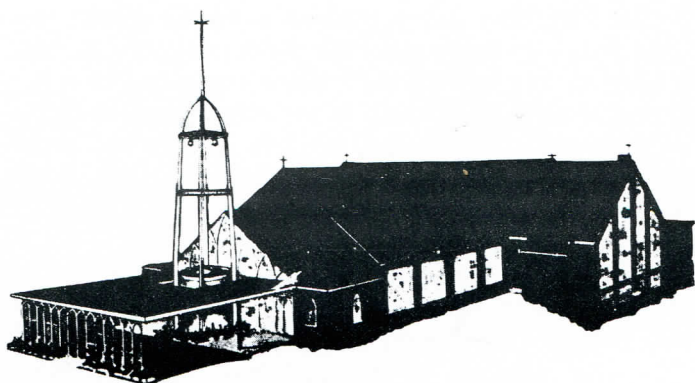
The Authority is serving 1,050 customers in Geistown Borough.

Present Board Members are: Francis J. Rizzo, Chairman; Alex P. Hagins, Vice Chairman; John E. Adams, Secretary; John R. Rosage, Assistant Secretary; Charles Leventry, Treasurer; Harry A. Schutte, Assistant Treasurer; Edward J. Sisk, Board Member; Robert L. Ruth, Board Member, (resigned) and Melburn R. Schatz, Board Member.

The authority has just completed a new dam with a capacity of 1,700,000 gallons of water now serving over 10,000 customers for the whole system.

Primary sources of water are from reservoirs located on the western slopes of the Alleghney Mountains, the most important being the Lloydell Reservoir, the two Bear Rock Reservoirs and the Sandy Run Reservoir. It is fortunate for areas, such as the Geistown area, that water facilities are available which have the capacity and elevation to supply today's increased water needs. The water from these sources is among the best in the country and may be supplied to the Geistown area by gravity, eliminating the expense and possible restrictions that come from pumping.

ST. BENEDICT CHURCH PAST and PRESENT



SAINT BENEDICT'S CHURCH

On November 13, 1893, the chapel was dedicated in honor of St. Benedict. First services in St. Benedict's Church, Geistown, near Johnstown, were held on Sunday, May 21, 1911 with the late Reverend Gregory Zeinlenhofer, O.S.B., pastor of St. Joseph's, officiating. The chapel had been in existence for some years before, being used exclusively as a cemetery chapel. But at this time, with the approval of Bishop Garvey, it was opened as a mission church from St. Joseph's for the residents of this hill district. On the following September 15th the late Reverend Maximilian Herr, O.S.B., affectionately called Father Max, arrived at St. Joseph's to take charge of this mission. Father Max at once set to work to build a little school for the children of the place, and it was blessed by him on October 31, 1911. It was presided over by a lay teacher, and had an enrollment of twenty-two. In the summer of 1921 Father Max replaced the school with a neat little two-room and auditorium brick building, which was formally opened on December 1, 1921, in charge of the Sisters of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis. Father Joseph Valerian was assigned to St. Benedict's as a resident priest in the early 1920's. He was a St. Joseph's mission priest. Succeeding Father Max was the Reverend Roman Nibler, O.S.B., who resided at the Rectory attached to St. Joseph's Church and who continued to administer St. Benedict's, a mission church to St. Joseph's until it was established as a parish in 1930 and was taken over by the Diocese of Altoona.

So St. Benedict's Mission Church became a parish church of the Diocese of Altoona and the first Priest of the Diocese appointed as Pastor was Father Cletus J. Barroner who came to live as a resident Priest in October 1930 and served until March 1935 at which time Father J. Donald Wagner came to administer the parish and served until January 1936. Father John B. Bender was appointed Pastor in March of 1936 and served as such until April 1940. Father James Fitzgibbon was appointed Pastor in May of 1940 and served until his death on August 7, 1961. During his Pastorate a four-room addition to the 1920 original four-room school (built in 1920) was built in 1953, two large wings were added to either side of the Church that had originally been built as a Chapel in St. Joseph's Cemetery and was later moved to the site of the present new Church. The present Rectory was built in 1955, and a convent was erected in 1957 to house eight (8) Sisters with another addition to the school consisting of five more class-rooms and a large all-purpose hall in 1958. Father Fitzgibbon was elevated to a Domestic Prelate with the title of Rite Reverend Monsignor on May 23, 1958.

Monsignor Fitzgibbon was succeeded by Father Gilbert Fremont in September 1961 and served as Pastor until his death December 25, 1967. During his Pastorate an addition was built to the convent consisting of eight (8) rooms as well the addition of eight more rooms to the school plus an office, boiler room and library built in 1963. The present beautiful Church was begun in 1961 and and dedicated in 1962 having a seating capacity of 1200. Succeeding Father Fremont was Father Gerald E. Stephens in March 1968 who was elevated to a Monsignor by Pope Paul VI July 15, 1974.

Priests who have served St. Benedict's parish as Assistants to the Pastor have been Fathers William McGovern, Paul Robine, Raymond Crosser, Julian Benson, Richard Clark, Henry Joly, Joseph Wiedmann, Clement Gardner, James Coveney, John Marshall, Lawrence Lacovic, Joseph Gaborek, John Vago, Leonard Voytek, Paul N. Hatch, Robert Conlin.

Number of Students at present time, 353, St. Benedict's School. Number of Parishioners, Families, 1,268, Souls 4,151.

1976 GEISTOWN BOROUGH OFFICIALS

Mayor – Henry J. Kist, 428 Danner Street

President of Council – George F. Seifert, Jr., 208 Churchill Street

Vice President of Council – Robert L. Roscoe, 252 Churchill Street

Councilmen – John G. Beblar, 117 Western Avenue

Joseph M. Solich, 240 Darr Street

Robert E. Sukenik, 128 Kinsey Street

Robert H. Stuart, 200 Melvin Street

Robert Lux, 237 Walter Avenue

Secretary – Betty J. Drugo, 1216 Erickson Drive

Treasurer – Matthew J. Oreskovich, 240 Churchill Street

Solicitor – Randall C. Rodkey Esq., 208 Cambria Savings Building

Engineer – Gwin Engineers Inc., 1126 8th Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania

Police Chief – Louis Nicoletti, 701 Scalp Avenue

Road Foreman – Robert Zimmerman, 130 Euclid Avenue

Zoning Administrator – George Wacker, 212 Churchill Street

Auditor – Milton Pfarr, 121 Geis Street

Codes Enforcement Officer – Alvin Brandon, 230 Rosewood Street

Tax Collectors:

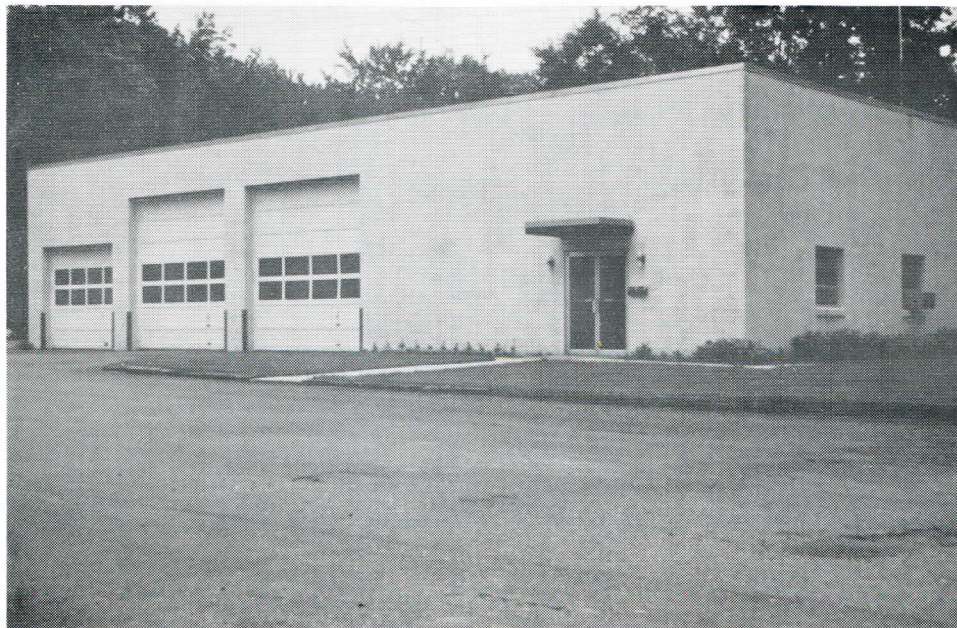
Real Estate – Fred Hite, 222 Churchill Street

Earned Income Tax – Bernadette Ruth, 212 Radian Drive

Occupation Privilege – Marie Goff, 251 Rosewood Street

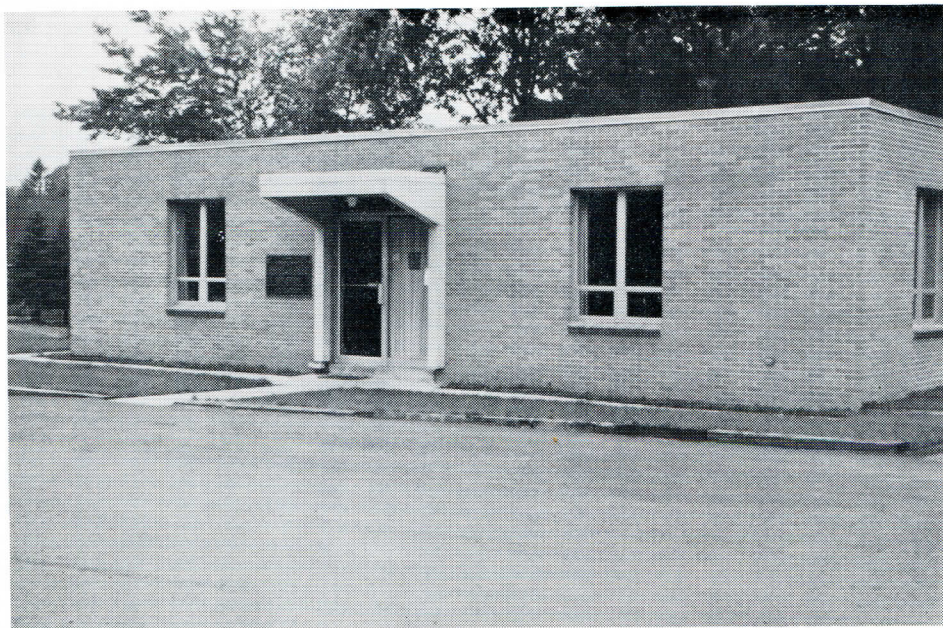
Garbage Fee – Bess Kist, 428 Danner Street

GEISTOWN BOROUGH MUNICIPAL BUILDING

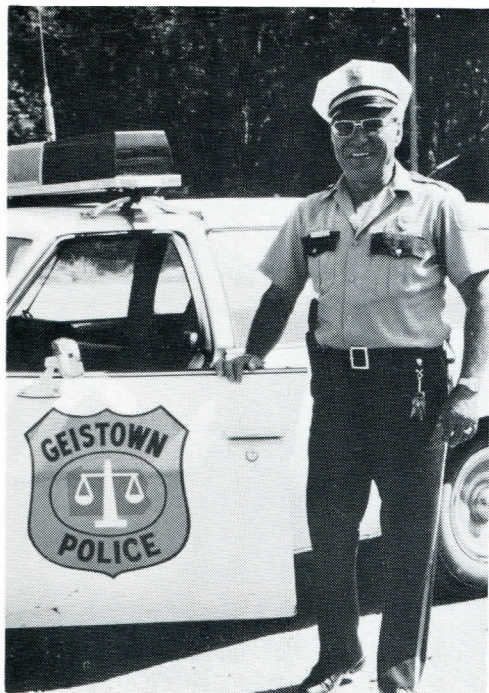




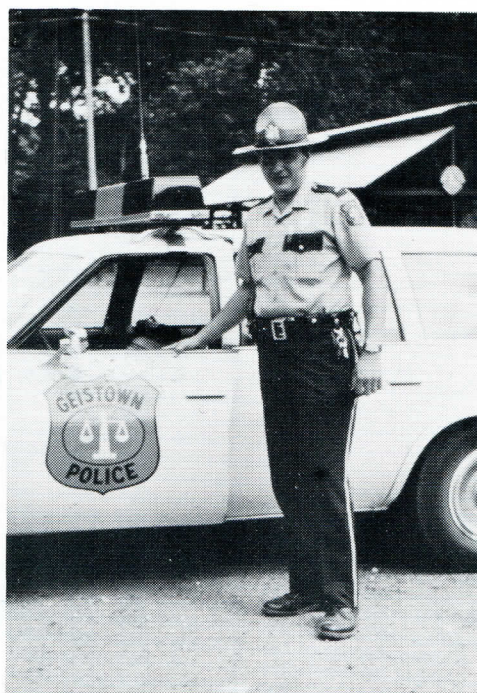
Geistown Borough officials start a blaze with simulated mortgages for two borough buildings: The municipal building and one that houses the offices of District Justice Joseph Chokran. Participating are (left to right) Joseph Solich, councilman; Randall C. Rodkey, solicitor; John Beblar, councilman, Betty J. Drugo, secretary; Matthew J. Oreskovich, treasurer; George F. Seifert Jr., council president; Mayor Henry J. Kist; and Councilmen Wilbur R. Mackin, Robert E. Sukenik and Robert L. Roscoe. Councilman Robert Stuart was absent at the time the picture was taken.



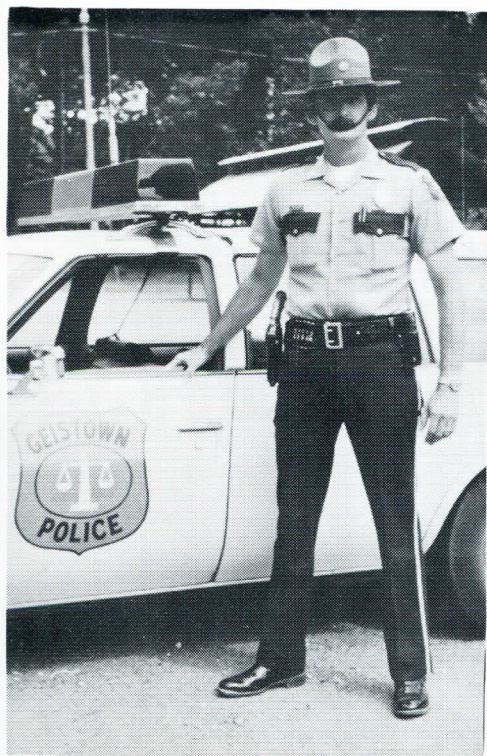
DISTRICT JUSTICE BUILDING



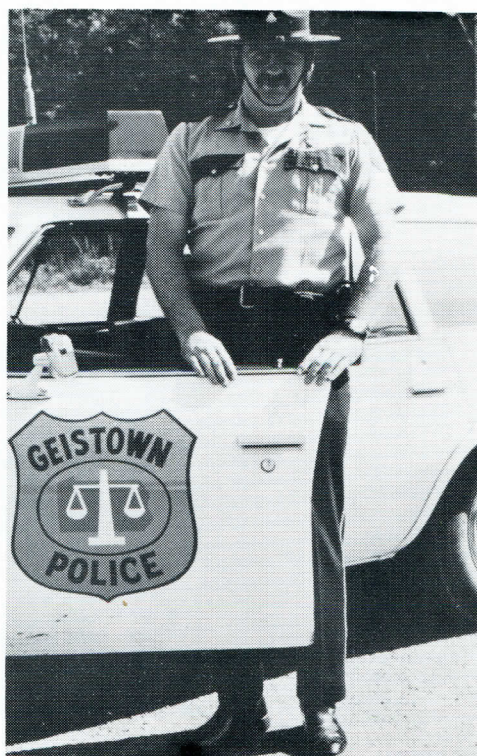
CHIEF LOUIS NICOLETTI



LT. LOUIS VALLE



OFFICER ROD MILLER



OFFICER JAMES McGRATH

HENRY J. KIST - MAYOR



K-9 CORPS

LT. VALLE AND BARON



GEISTOWN BOROUGH STREET DEPARTMENT

GEISTOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL IN SESSION



(Clockwise) Joseph Solich, Robert Lux, Robert Stuart, Randall Rodkey, Betty Drugo, Henry Kist, George Seifert, Matthew Oreskovich, Robert Roscoe, John Beblar and Robert Sukenik.



ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We wish to thank the Geistown Borough Recreation Board for the contribution of this publication of it's history.

Recognition goes to the chairman of the board Betty Miske, the secretary Paul Peterson, and members of the board Gary Molchan, Harold Fry, and Bruce Becker and our liaison Councilman Robert Lux.

Special thanks goes to Bernice (Dravis) Tkacik, who composed the history, Sybilla Gacka for the design of the cover and everyone who helped in some way to put it together and complete it.

Thanks to the Seifert Printing Company and the many people involved in the distribution of the booklet.

This is our contribution to our 200th year, the Bicentennial of the United States of America. HAPPY BIRTHDAY AMERICA.

GEISTOWN BOROUGH COUNCIL