

# Bridgeville Historical Society

102 S. William Street, P. O. Box 306, Bridgeville, DE 19933

April 2014



## Bridgeville's Sol Kline Department Store

Exactly when Solomon Kline located to Bridgeville is unknown. World War I draft records list his year of birth as 1874. According to U. S. census records, he was either born in Russia or Germany, although his great-granddaughter recalls being told he was born in Lithuania. Those records also reveal that he immigrated to the U. S. in 1892 and became a naturalized U. S. citizen in 1902



Solomon Kline

An article in the *Evening Star* (Wash., D.C.) on September 2, 1903, reported that the marriage of Mr. Solomon Kline of Bridgeville, DE to Miss Helen Fanny Goodman of Annapolis, MD, on September 1, was historic in that it was the first Jewish wedding in Annapolis. Goodman relatives in Seaford, DE were in the wedding party.

*"Five hundred guests from Baltimore, Washington and Annapolis witnessed the ceremony and attended the dance and reception that followed. A special train took the bridal party out of the city tonight."*

An early letterhead (shown below) has a photograph of the Sol Kline Department Store occupying the flat-roofed building so familiar to Bridgeville residents as well as the building on its west side that later became the American Store which was a grocery store. This letterhead was a recent donation from Jim Bowden.

An advertisement from the first Bridgeville High School newspaper, "The Tattler" in 1925 (shown below) reveals that a branch store was located in Greenwood, DE. How long or how successful that venture by Mr. Kline was has not been discovered.

**Kline's Dept. Store**

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Clothing, Shoes, Hats, Ladies' Suits,  
Ladies' and Gent's Furnishings.  
Dress Goods, Notions,  
Furniture, Carpets, Mattings,  
Blinds and Crockery.  
(Branch Store, Greenwood, Del.)

**Bridgeville, Del.**

From his writings as "The Old Timer" in the *Seaford Leader*, Koder Collison described the store and Mr. Kline this way:

*"The Sol Kline Department Store was truly a modern day emporium even back in those late 'teens and 'twenties. First class, name brand, merchandise was available; ready-made dresses as well as bolt goods could be purchased along with notions and costume jewelry, handbags, shoes, and what have you. Curlyheaded Sol Kline was a joy. Always smiling, he had a kind word for all, regardless of their economic standing."*



## Kline's Department Store



Clothing, Shoes, Hats, Ladies'  
Suits, Dress Goods, Notions,  
Ladies' and Gent's Furnishings.  
Furniture, Carpets, Mattings,  
Blinds and Crockery.

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## Bridgeville Historical Society

### 2014-15 Officers

President . . . . Howard E. Hardesty  
1st V. President . . . . Alice D. Min  
2nd V. President . . Phyllis A. Jones  
Secretary . . . . . Gerri L. Coble  
Treasurer . . . . . Sharon Hawk

### Directors

Eleanor Bennett Charles Hawk  
Marie Hitchens Byron Lewis  
Joan Morton Bill Nennstiehl

## Next Meeting

### Summer Social

Sunday, May 18, 2014

### The Sudler House

N. Main St. 3:00 p.m-5:00 p.m.  
Light refreshments  
Musical entertainment

## Time to Renew Your Membership

The Society's new fiscal year began on April 1, and it is now time to re-new your membership.

### Membership Dues

Single . . . . . \$15.00  
Family (at same address) . . . . \$25.00  
Patron . . . . . \$75.00  
Life member . . . . . \$500.00

Dues may be mailed to

**Bridgeville Historical Society,  
P. O. Box 306  
Bridgeville, DE 19933**

## In Memoriam

William L. Hartzell (1934 - 2014)

## Welcome New Members

Jay and Polly Mervine  
Darl and Diane Chaffinch  
Jean (Tucker) McQuaide  
Richard and Catherine Hagquist

## Officers and Directors for 2014-15



(L-R) Seated: Gerri Coble, Joan Morton, Marie Hitchens, Sharon Hawk, and Alice Min  
Standing: Howard Hardesty, Byron Lewis, Phyllis Jones, Bill Nennstiehl, and Charles Hawk.

## Christmas in Bridgeville

Chairpersons, Michael and Joanne Collison reported that the 38th "Christmas in Bridgeville" craft fair was a great success. This major fundraiser was held at the Woodbridge High School on Saturday, Dec. 7. The winner of the television was Virginia Derickson of Millsboro, DE.

## Apple Scrapple Festival

After Tom Wimbrow made seven new wooden frames to hold the "Minute of History" display boards and Kay Sue Hardesty reframed several of the boards to a uniform size, the efforts were for naught. The exhibit was to be in the bandstand for all to see, but the festival was a complete wash-out for 2013. At least we will be ready for 2014.

## Museum & Park Matters

**New signs** that list the "Rules and Regulations" regarding Cahall Park have been ordered and will be installed soon. Hours that the park will open are from 6:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. Littering, illegal drugs/alcoholic beverages, smoking, loud music, gambling, skateboarding, and playing in the pond area are prohibited.

The signs should serve as a reminder for all who visit to respect the park and neighbors. The posted rules will also make it easier for the local police department to deter loiters and prevent mischief.

**New gutters** have been installed on the Old Fire House/museum. It is hoped that this improvement will divert some of the water away from the building although other measures will have to be taken to improve the moisture leakage that seeps into the building around the windows.

**Docents are needed** for the museum openings on the first Sunday of each month from May-November. An experienced docent will be assigned for each opening and he or she will need at least one docent to help. You do not have to be an expert on Bridgeville's history or the museum in order to assist. Please call Michael Ballenger (337-7077) or Howard Hardesty (337-8595) if you can help.

## Meeting - January 8



Not one house to be seen on it though the whole in view for a genuine produce in pine and cedar rural banks, for which ships resupply distant climes destitute of blessing."

Last January, Emalu Myer Simpson presented a very informative slideshow on "Bridgeville in the 18th Century."

She spoke about pre-1700 land surveys and the network of roads and bridges that existed in the area of early Bridgeville before Gov. Cannon laid out the present grid of streets.

Early landowners were the Hailes, Hatfields, Browns and Sordens. After the program, members studied a large map she brought showing land surveys of the Northwest Fork Hundred.

## Meeting - March 12

In an attempt to explain the process of accessioning items into the Society's collection, some of the members of the BHS Archives Committee prepared a slideshow on the "Past, Present, and Future of Our Museum." Getting the collection records into the PastPerfect museum software is an on-going task that will take many years to complete. Having more room to display and store the collection is one of the more critical



L-R Tom Wimbrow, Judi Richards, Kay Sue Hardesty, Michael Ballenger, Phyllis Sterling, and Byron Lewis

(Sol Kline Department Store - Continued from page one)

Sol Kline died in 1942 and ownership of the store passed to his daughter, Hattie, and her husband, George Tuck. The store continued to prosper until the arrival of the big-box chain stores in the early 1980s.

After the Tucks closed the store, it was briefly used as an antique store before being purchased by Ralph and Paul Adams, Inc. It was demolished soon after and all that remains is an empty lot.

Three of the counters from the Sol Kline Department Store are being used in H. C. Layton's Hardware today.

— STATEMENT —

Bridgeville, Del., 12/29 - 1908

Mr. Charles Smith

To SOL. KLINE, Dr.

CLOTHING,

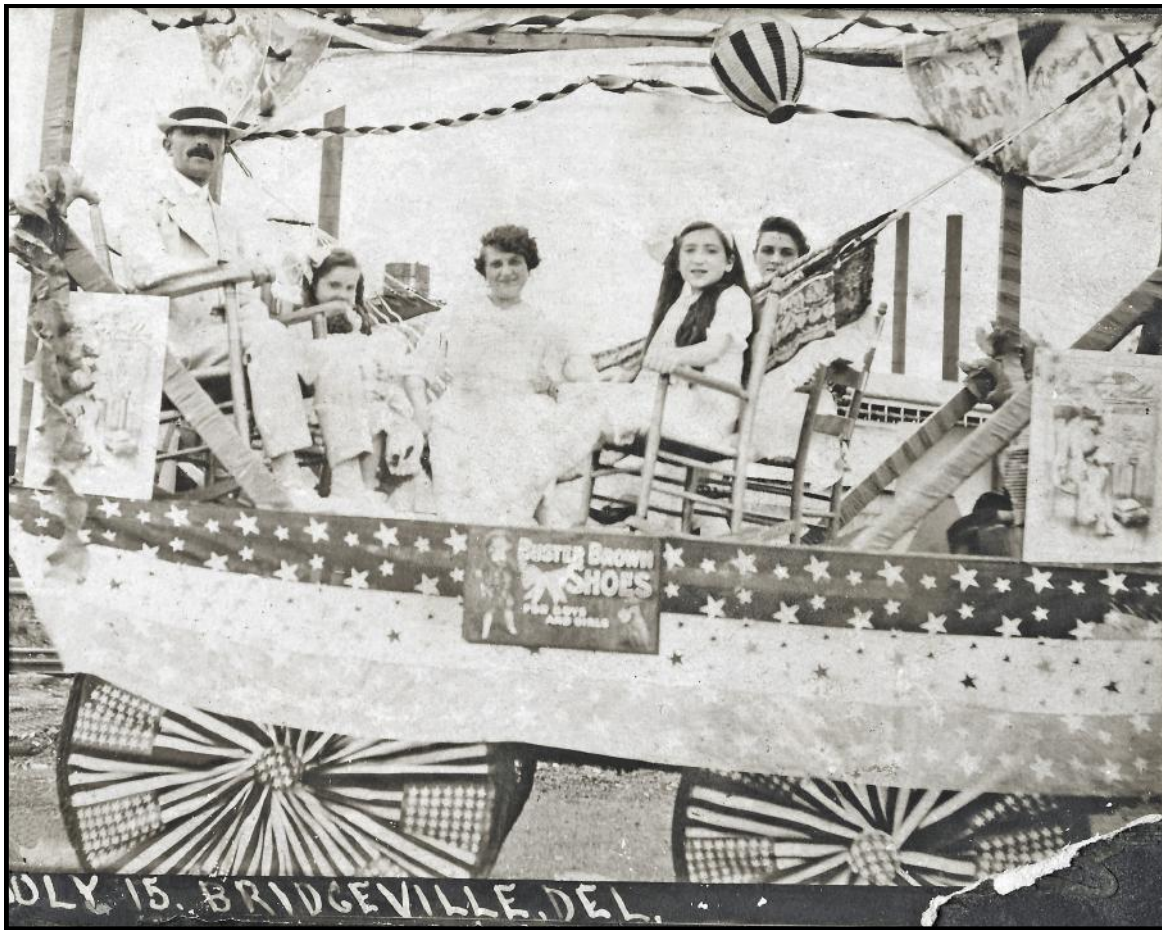
Shoes, Ladies' and Gents' Furnishings,  
SUIES MADE TO ORDER. Trunks, Suit Cases Etc.

Dec 29	1 parlor suit	30.00
	1 bedroom suit	26.00
	1 side board	17.00
	2 mattress @ 375	7.50
	1/2 dozen chairs	7.50
	1 rocker	3.00
	1 stand	3.00
	1 stand	1.75
	1/2 dozen chairs	4.75
	1 spring	1.75
	1 rug	20.00
	1 table	5.00
	8 yds step carpet @ 15	1.20
	10 yds lenolium @ 8.50	8.50
	1 table kitchen	1.50
	18 curtains @ 25	4.50
	4 " @ 45	1.80
		144.75

The bill of sale above belonged to Charles J. and Amanda Smith and shows what it cost to furnish a house for newlyweds in 1908. Thanks to their grandson, Donald Smith, for sharing this document.



Sol Kline stands in front of his store in this photo from a 1925 calendar in the Society's collection. The building on the right side which used to be the furniture showroom of Kline's was occupied by The American Store by that year.



This postcard shows the Sol Kline float in the 1915 Fourth of July parade in Bridgeville. L-R: Sol Kline; daughter, Hattie; wife, Helen; daughter Bessie and their house servant, name unknown.

*Bridgeville Historical Society Collection*



**Bridgeville Historical Society**

P. O. Box 306

Bridgeville, DE 19933

**Remember the Dates**

**May 4 Museum Open**

*12:00-3:00 p.m.*

**May 10 Cemetery Project**

*(Time to be announced)*

**May 18 Members Summer Social**

Sudler House, N. Main St.

3:00-5:00 p.m.

Entertainment provided

**May 23-24 Fundraiser**

Vanderwende's Creamery

**June 1 Museum Open**

12:00-3:00 p.m.

**July 6 Museum Open**

9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

**Sept. 6 AUCTION-SOCIAL**

*Don't forget to mail in  
your membership dues.*