

Downtown Mural Project



Sayre Mural #1

Subject: The Walking Bridge

The famous Sayre, PA Walking Bridge! For 91 years, 1896 to 1987, it spanned the Lehigh Valley Railroad's engine terminal and yards in Sayre, PA. It was constructed to eliminate a grade crossing that went from the Eastside of Sayre to the downtown area. There is still a stone block from the original bridge with the year 1896 carved in it, located in Howard Elmer Park on the Guthrie Square.

Different generations used two different terms for the bridge. In the earlier and middle 20th century, Sayre residents called it "The Foot Bridge", then in the 1980's everyone said "The Walking Bridge."

The bridge was approximately 400' in length and spanned 17 tracks which included mainline, engine servicing and yard tracks. There was a center stairway that let down to the engine terminal that employees would access to safely enter that area for work. This is the stairway shown in the mural.

Sadly, the end came in 1987 when the bridge was 91 years old. By this time, the LV had been gone for eleven years. Conrail used the engine terminal for a few years, but never to the extent of the Lehigh Valley R.R. The Bridge came down because Conrail thought they could take container trains south. What they did not take into account was the low height of the Athens Bridge and Vosberg Tunnel.

Trains were much less common through Sayre than they had been back in "the good old days", and the Walking Bridge essentially no longer had any reason to exist. People could cross the tracks at the nearby Packer Ave Bridge, and pedestrians mostly just walked straight across the tracks in the vicinity of the Sayre station. So needing maintenance and upkeep, and having no reason for being, the bridge came down.

Many Sayre residents still have memories of crossing over the bridge, including the Seck family, owners of the Blackburn Building on West Lockhart Street who requested this mural subject.

Our mural artist tells the story of being carried over the bridge in 1944 to the Robert Packer Hospital by his mother, when he was quite ill. When she returned without Frank, one of the security guards at the Lehigh Valley Shop entrance on Thomas Ave. asked to the whereabouts of her son. She said Frank was very sick and needed blood transfusions. He said "wait right here" went into the Lehigh Big Shops and came out with 20 railroad men willing to donate blood, which they did twice.

The restaurant has a book with many photos of the bridge and workers. Stop in and take a look.



Sayre Mural #1

Artist: Frank Evans

Frank Evans is a valley native who loved drawing as a child. During lunch hours at school he could often be found in the art room creating artwork. Frank spent time drawing automobiles, painting Twin Rivers Motorcycle Club Emblems on leather jackets and carving design into hunting rifle stocks. He stenciled bowling team tee shirts and painted many local store signs and later trains.

Frank was very involved in the efforts to establish the railroad station museum in Sayre and penned the book 25 Years at the Junction. In 1982, Frank opened the Sayre Hobby Shop currently located at 809 N Lehigh Ave in Sayre.

In November of 2021 Frank was approached to submit a drawing of the Walkover Bridge for a mural. His drawing was selected and painting started in the spring of 2021. Frank was assisted by his daughter Amy and always there keeping a close watch was his wife Sally Evans. Frank completed his work on July 21, 2021.

Frank shares, "The memories and comments shared about the mural from local residents, family and friends have been very gratifying for The Blackburn 1897, the Sayre Public Art Mural Committee and the Evans Family, who are forever grateful to the Railroad Workers and Families who gave us a solid history of Sayre to stand on".

Sayre Mural #2

Subject: A Tree in Bloom

This mural depicts an old and gnarled tree, still vibrant that continues to share beauty, hope and happiness to all who pause beneath its branches. The swing invites all to pause and take a photo as though swinging from the branch. The mural is painted on the alley side of the building located at the corner of West Packer Avenue and Chacona Lane across from the Borough Hall.



Sayre Mural #2
Artist: Dana Twigg

Dana is a native of the valley area having spent the majority of his life involved with the community. A career art teacher for 35 years, several of his students received regional, state and national awards for their work and Dana was named educator of the year in 2012 prior to his retirement. Dana continues to create art at his home studio creating art in a variety of media for magazines, advertising, and fine art exhibits.

Dana lives in Sayre with his wife Toni. His two daughters Tiffany and Ashlee, lead creative and exciting lives nearby with their families. Most of Dana's current work can be seen on his website at CreativeCartooning.com. Dana was assisted by Toni Twigg, Kevin Heath, Erik Franklin and Tina Ackley.