

WESTMORELAND

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSION STATEMENT: *The Westmoreland Historical Society is an educational organization dedicated to acquiring and managing resources related to the history of Westmoreland County and using these resources to encourage a diverse audience to make connections to the past, develop an understanding of the present, and provide direction for the future.*

The Westmoreland Historical Society pursues its mission by

- Maintaining a 5,000+ volume non-circulating research library of genealogical, local, county, and regional materials.
- Providing research services related to genealogy and county history.
- Publishing a tri-annual journal *Westmoreland History* and other occasional publications.
- Managing Historic Hanna's Town, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This has been done in partnership with Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation since 1969.
- Conducting programs at Historic Hanna's Town.
- Maintaining Historic Hanna's Town's archaeological collection of over 1 million artifacts.
- Documenting and managing a 700,000 item archives collection.
- Managing a curatorial (objects) collection.
- Providing educational materials via outreach to schools and teachers.
- Conducting adult, children, and family educational programs on a broad range of historical topics.
- Presenting changing exhibits about various aspects of Westmoreland County history and how it relates to national and world events.



The Westmoreland Historical Society is dedicated to advancing its mission by forming collaborations and partnerships with other public and private organizations that share the Society's philosophy and mission.

Governed by a policy-making Board of Directors, the Society's day-to-day operation and activities are the responsibility of a full-time executive director, two other full-time staff members, three part-time employees, one seasonal employee, and approximately 80 volunteers.

Priorities approved by the Board of Directors in Strategic Planning in 2018:

- *Work with related organizations*
- *Increase visitation and school programming*
- *Strengthen annual support*
- *Strengthen membership and volunteerism*

The Westmoreland County Historical Society, founded in 1908, is a 501 (c) 3 non-profit corporation registered in Pennsylvania. The Westmoreland County Commissioners and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission recognize the WCHS as the official historical society for Westmoreland County.

WESTMORELAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2020 Programs & Accomplishments

*Date-specific programs are summarized first.
Then longer term projects are featured.*



Jan. 1 – Oct. 24: *Gems of the Collection* exhibit in the Kendra Gallery featuring unique or special items from the WHS collection. This exhibit was FREE.



Feb. 8: Valentine's Program included vintage valentines, Storytime, exhibit tour, and giving hand-crafted valentines to Twin Lakes Rehabilitation Center.



July 4: Independence Day Celebration included militia demonstrations, living history displays, reading of the Declaration of Independence, and tours of Hanna's Tavern.



July 13: Posted an educational video about the Burning of Hanna's Town by Seneca and their British allies in 1782, (Posted on the anniversary of the attack.)



Sept. 27: Photography Workshop in partnership with the Westmoreland Photographers Society focused on flowers and native plants at Historic Hanna's Town.



Oct. 23 – Nov. 7: Created a FREE self-guided walking tour around Historic Hanna's Town featuring nine yard signs exploring the **history of Halloween traditions and folklore.**



Oct. 24: Fall Family Day included living history displays, militia demonstrations, craft kits, and treat bags.



Nov. 5: Virtual Historic House Tour revisited 12 houses from previous tours that hosted the *Toast the Tour* cocktail party. Above is the 1904 John Brennen house in Scottsdale, site of the party in 2016.



Nov. 7: Debuted a video – produced in-house – featuring the history of *Tea Through the Centuries*. Here, 18th century meets 19th century customs. Later, these ladies are joined by someone from the 20th century.



Nov. 21, 2020 – Jan. 16: *Christmas Memories: 1930-1959* FREE exhibit in the Kendra Gallery. Video produced.



Nov. 27 – Jan. 23: Offered a FREE self-guided walking tour around Hanna's Town featuring 19 yard signs exploring the **history of Christmas traditions.**

PANDEMIC 2020

A Covid-19 Public History Project

SAINT VINCENT COLLEGE

WESTMORELAND
HISTORICAL SOCIETY



The Mister Rogers statue reminded anyone traveling along Jefferson and Main streets in Latrobe to wear a mask to help control the Covid-19 pandemic.

Ongoing partnership with Saint Vincent College Dept. of History on a digital archive of the Covid-19 pandemic experiences of people in Westmoreland County.



Landscaping projects with new paths and native plants aided by Eagle Scouts. Funded by a Laurel Highlands Conservation Landscape Mini-grant, a project of the PA DCNR. Video produced.



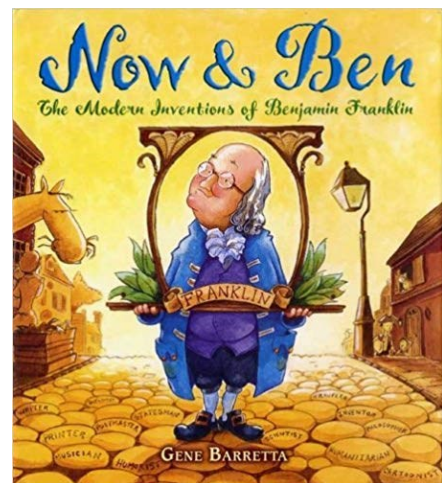
Created a textile exhibit in the Murry Beacom House (the Museum Shop before the Education Center was built). The exhibit explains the production of linen from the flax plant and the process to create fabric from wool.



Converted the log structure in front of the fort into a blacksmith shop. Rex Baughman provided the materials, equipment, and labor. His first demonstration was on Fall Family Day.



Created an educational video about the Hanna's Town Resolves, adopted unanimously May 16, 1775. "There is no reason to doubt that the same system of tyranny and oppression will be extended to every other part of America. It is therefore become the indispensable duty of every American ... who has any public virtue or love for his country to resist and oppose the execution of it, that for us we will be ready to oppose it with our lives and fortunes."



One of the read-aloud books featured in a series of virtual Storytime programs that were posted on Facebook and YouTube.

Designed and installed two interpretive wayside signs funded by the Rotary Club of Greensburg.



"Law and Order" features the Hanna's Town Resolves and Court at Hanna's Town. It was placed in the tavern/jail area.

"For Safety and Survival" was installed near the fort. It addresses the attack by Seneca and their British allies on July 13, 1782.



Relocated the donated Lefevre log house to Historic Hanna's Town, funded by the Lefevre estate. Created a video series illustrating processes, such as log placement, notching, chinking, daubing.



Repaired and reconstructed the storehouse/officers' hut in the fort (exterior completed), partially funded by the Robertshaw Charitable Foundation and several individuals, with labor donated by the I.B.W.C.P (Proctor's Militia).

COVID-19 Pandemic 2020!

A YEAR OF MASKS, DISTANCING, & CANCELLATIONS

In many ways, a year we would rather forget. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic was felt across the world and, of course, by the Westmoreland Historical Society and Historic Hanna's Town. Many of our programs were cancelled as we scrambled to post others online.

Right: Even the I.B.W.C.P. (Proctor's Militia) donned masks when inside the recently completed Lefevre log house.



In 2020, there were no SCHOOL FIELD TRIPS TO HISTORIC HANNA'S TOWN

March 18 Irish Genealogy Seminar with the Heinz History Center
by The Ulster Historical Foundation

May 4 Spring Tea

June 14 Pollinator Palooza

June 22-23 *Frontier Court Days* - Reenactments & Living History

July Two weeks of Colonial Camp

Sept. 9 Volunteer Picnic

Oct. 25 & 26 Jack-o-Lantern Tours

Nov. 2 Candlelight Open House

Nov. 9 Full Tea Served in 1913 Steel House

Dec. 3 Tavern Dinner for raffle winner

Dec. 7 & 14 *Three Centuries of Christmas in America*

Dec. 28 Holiday Family Day

FUNDRAISING SPECIAL EVENTS

Antiques & Collectibles Five (5) events - May cancelled - Second Sunday June - October

Chaired by John Mickinak

Attendance: 8,743 Net Income: \$13,718

Historic House Tour -- Virtual visit to houses that hosted the *Toast the Tour* party

Chaired by Clinton Piper and Joan DeRose

Net Income: \$8,889

St. Clair Historic Preservation Awards Dinner CANCELLED

HISTORIC HANNA'S TOWN 2020

Guided tours limited due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Wednesday - Sunday: June 7 - October 31

Limited to eight (8) per tour; timed reservations encouraged.

VISITS TO THE WESTMORELAND HISTORY EDUCATION CENTER:

Guided Tours of Historic Hanna's Town, Exhibit Gallery: 1,260

Other groups (Friday Book Club, New Neighbors, Pennsylvania Naturalists, & some county workers) met outdoors in the pavilion at Historic Hanna's Town several times over the summer for programs or to socialize. Many people were seen walking the grounds, often reading interpretive signs, but we cannot reliably count this number.

LIBRARY REPORT

Researchers: 197

Other Visitors: 161

Phone Queries: 912

Volunteer Hours: 1,163

RESEARCH CONTRACTS: 55

2020 WESTMORELAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY HISTORY BOOK CLUB

When they resumed meeting in May, they brought their own lunch and gathered in the pavilion at Historic Hanna's Town for the discussion. Starting in November, they met in the Westmoreland History Education Center where they could socially distance. While the club has 18 members, the number attending meetings this year was 6-10

- Feb. *Woman on Fire*, Gail A. Curtis
- Mar. CANCELLED-Covid-19 pandemic
- Apr. CANCELLED-Covid-19 pandemic
- May *Astoria*, Peter Stark (ZOOM)
- Jun *The Splendid and the Vile*, Erik Larson
- Jul *Lady Clementine*, Marie Benedict and/or
Clementine: The Life of Mrs. Winston Churchill, Sonia Purnell
- Aug *A Woman of No Importance*, Sonia Purnell
- Sep *A Woman's Crusade: Alice Paul and the Battle for the Ballot*, Mary Walton
- Oct *Year of Wonders*, Geraldine Brooks
- Nov *Thunderstruck*, Erik Larson
- Dec CANCELLED-Covid-19 pandemic

Westmoreland History Magazine

WINTER 2019/2020 ISSUE

“The Historical Founding of the Sisters of Charity of Seton Hill - *Always Moving Forward*”

by Donald J. Guerrieri, Ph.D.

“Establishment and Development of the Greensburg Library” by Beth McAtee

“Matt Cvetic at Saint Vincent” by Daniel J. Heisey

“Stand-off at Hanna’s Town Part 1: John Connolly, Aeneas Mackay and Devereaux Smith
and the Duel for Western Pennsylvania” by James V. Steeley

In Brief: “New Kensington City Lines”

Discover Westmoreland: Henry Coulter House & Skara Glen

First Person: “Remembering Miss Edna McFarland” by Beth Pearson McAtee

SPRING 2020 ISSUE

“A Living Museum: Powdermill Nature Reserve” by Pamela Curtin

“Vandergrift: The Workingman’s Paradise Celebrates 125 Years” by Judy Laurinatis

“Stand-off at Hanna’s Town Part 2: John Connolly, Aeneas Mackay and Devereaux Smith
and the Duel for Western Pennsylvania” by James V. Steeley

“Westinghouse and the Trafford Land Rush” by the Hon. Daniel J. Ackerman

In Brief: “The Day the Aeronauts Came to Level Green”

Discover Westmoreland: “Delmont: A Crossroads Community”

First Person: “Childhood Home Life at Kingston” by Richard Henry Johnston

FALL 2020 ISSUE

“For Your Girl and Mine: Westmoreland County Woman’s Suffrage Campaign 1903-1920”
by James V. Steeley

“The Old Gray Mare: A Champion of Women’s Rights”
(Emma Guffey Miller) by Samantha Hilyer

“Westmoreland County’s Field of Dreams: The 1936 Pennsylvania State Association
Championship Series” by David Finoli

In Brief: Hannah Jane Patterson by James V. Steeley

“She epitomized the New Woman of the Early 20th Century.

Discover Westmoreland: The Great Allegheny Passage in Westmoreland County

First Person: “My Favorite Story Book Forest Memories”

by Dolores Weimer Allison and Dorothy Weimer Barkley

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2020

Officers

Chairman:	Michael Cary
Vice-Chairman	Jim Clayton
Treasurer/Sec.	Daniel R. Dunlap, III
Secretary	Mary Ellen Miller

Directors

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Deborah Delisi	William Rathgeb
Laura B. Gutnick	Susan Sommers
Jason Hitchman	Ken Stough
Alice Kaylor	Ruth Tolbert
Robert T. Kendra	Denis Zuzik
Allen Kukovich	

Ex Officio (Non-voting):

Linda T. Assard	Philip B. Light
Linda G. Austin	John Mickinak
David S. Delisi	Robert Myers
Joan DeRose	Dr. Wylie Overly
P. Louis DeRose	Clinton Piper
Thomas Headley	John Turack

STAFF– 2020

Executive Director	Lisa Craig Hays
Coordinator of Collections & Interpretation	Joanna T. Moyar
Education Coordinator	Pamela Curtin
Library Coordinator	Anita Zanke
Executive Assistant	Barbara Scherrer
Maintenance Coordinator	Bruce Shirey
Researcher	Karen Kirkpatrick (by contract)

KEY VOLUNTEER POSITIONS – 2020

Museum Shop Coordinator	Joan DeRose
<i>Westmoreland History</i> Editor	Jennifer Sopko