



Westmoreland County Historical Society
THE STAR OF THE WEST

2021 Program Report



Westmoreland History Education Center



Hanna's Tavern

At Historic Hanna's Town: 809 Forbes Trail Road, Greensburg, PA 15601
www.westmorelandhistory.org 724-836-1800

WESTMORELAND

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2021 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, four 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.

2021 Programs & Accomplishments

Penn's Woods: Plenty for the Use of Man opened June 19 in the Kendra Gallery

This exhibit explores how Pennsylvania's forests shaped our livelihoods through displays of historic woodworking tools, furnishings, photographs, documents, and stories across centuries.

Five **themes** with sub-sections:

An Ancient Land, a Changing Forest

First Woodworkers—Native Americans

Penn's Woods - Building a Log Home

Seeing the Forest and the Trees

- * Kinds of trees - the right wood for the job
- * Plenty for the Use of Man—Sawmills
- * Conservation efforts

The Right Tool for the Right Job:

- Carpenter
- Joiner
- Cabinet maker
- Chairmaker (Windsor chairs)
- Cooper
- Wheelwright
- * Wooden Patterns for making other things
- * Making Craftsmen: Masters & Apprentices
- * Ora et labora *Pray and Work*
at Saint Vincent Archabbey
- * Household objects made of wood

Westmoreland Woodworkers

- * Woodworkers of the past
- * On the Cutting Edge:
Contemporary Woodworkers



Two Special Weekends Draw Biggest Crowds & prove to be both fun and educational!

June 19 & 20 Frontier Court Days

This signature event returned after a year off for the Covid-19 pandemic. Organized with the help of I.B.W.C.P. (Proctor's Militia), activities included two court sessions reenacting select cases heard at Hanna's Town 1773 to 1786; 18th century military encampment; multiple living history demonstrations; a Frontier Kids Station; period music; and a food booth.



July 31 & August 1 Civil War Encampment & Reenactment

This event, held every other year, was organized by Bob Sidley of the 40th Reg. 11th Pa. Reserve Co. C, but over 200 reenactors participated from more than half a dozen units! Presentations provided something to interest and engage everyone: displays throughout the day; scheduled talks, including a first person portrayal of Gen. George Meade; battle reenactments; a Children's Mock Battle; and a concert by the 46th PA Regiment Band.





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



All, including I.B.W.C.P. observed a moment of silence.

September 11 Anniversary Commemoration inside the stockade/fort at Historic Hanna's Town: featured readings and personal recollections and a moment of silence.

Programs in the Education Center Complement Exhibit

Land Use in Colonial America by Michael Doucette, Service Forester at Forbes State Forest, presented on the differences between Native American management of the forest and the settlers' practices.

Tools and Trades that Built America by Bob Kendra, the exhibit's guest curator, explored how tools were brought to and used in the colonies.

July 19–23: Summer Camp Returns **SOLD OUT**

Ages 6-12 enjoy special activities every day to explore how people lived on the frontier

Top: Story time in the Lefevre house

Middle: Blacksmith Rex Baughman is always a popular feature at Summer Camp

Bottom: Campers focus on how archaeology reveals 18th century life on the frontier





Oct. 29 & 30: Fortune telling in Hanna's Tavern, part of the Jack-o-Lantern Tours about 18th century Scots-Irish folklore that influenced our Halloween traditions.



Oct. 30: Fall Family Day included living history demonstrations, crafts, treat bags, and hay rides!



Nov. 28: Museum Store Sunday -The Westmoreland History Shop joins museums around the world to offer inspired shopping. Purchases support our mission. 20% off merchandise (except consignment). Fun activities keep the children entertained while parents shop!



Dec. 4 & 11: *Three Centuries of Christmas in America*
Right: Belsnickel accompanies guests from the 18th to the early 19th century!



Dec. 5: Dean Helfer, Jr., from Channel Craft, a "Made in the USA" company, provides informative talk, demonstrations, and giveaways about traditional wooden toys, games, and puzzles.



Dec. 29: Holiday Family Day—a fun day of hands-on activities and crafts for all ages celebrating winter and the holiday season.

PROJECTS

Two new features enhance the textile exhibit at the Murry Beacom House



The Master Gardeners worked with staff to create a Dye Garden and develop a handout.



Donated Loom is always on display, but it is used during special events, including Summer Camp



The interior of the storehouse/officers hut in the fort was finished and furnished by the I.B.W.C.P, (members pictured inside). This building is part of the Guided Tours and used for special programs.

ADMISSIONS THROUGH JANUARY 1 - OCTOBER 31, 2021 - 3,134
a 3-fold increase over this time last year (1,032)

Open Wednesday - Sunday

Also, many people walk the grounds, often reading interpretive signs,
Guided Tours limited to eight (8) per tour.
Timed reservations encouraged.
Antiques & Collectibles Attendance: 8,253

The Covid-19 pandemic continues to have an impact.
There were very few school field trips or motorcoaches; however, there were some group visits.

Pennsylvania Master Naturalists—3 times	Children of the American Revolution
College Club	Laurel Mt. Classical Academy School
Delta Kappa Gamma	Wee Care Day Care
Philanthropic Educational Org. (PEO)	St. Vincent College Public History Class
Hempfield Garden Club	Democratic Women of Westmoreland County
Sloan Family Reunion	Boy Scout Troop & Eagle Scout project
Master Gardeners	

Phone Queries: 555

Volunteer Hours:

Library: 1,236
Historic Hanna's Town TBD

Research Contracts: 46

Other Programs:

March for Parks with Westmoreland County Parks & Recreation
Irish Genealogy Workshop (virtual) - Two-day program In partnership with
the Heinz History Center & Ulster Historical Foundation
Remember When All that Glittered was Glass at the Greensburg Country Club
Civil War Homeschool Program
Be a Better Birder in partnership with Westmoreland Land Trust
Full Tea served in 1913 Steel House SOLD OUT
Bus Trip to Fort Pitt & The Heinz History Center
Candlelight Open House

Outreach:

A Brief History of Westmoreland County for Leadership Westmoreland
Colonial Toys & Games for Summer Camp at Pike Run Country Club

2021 WESTMORELAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY HISTORY BOOK CLUB

While the club has 21 members, the number attending meetings this year was 10-15

- Jan. *Imperfect Union*, Steve Inskeep
- Feb. *Women with Silver Wings*, Katherine Sharp Landdek
- Mar. *Braddock's Defeat*, David Preston
- Apr. *In the Hurricane's Eye*, Nathaniel Philbrick
- May *The Bookwoman of Troublesome Creek*, Michelle Richardson
- June *A Star for Mrs. Blake*, April Smith
- July *Empire of the Summer Moon: Quanah Parker and the Rise and Fall of the Comanches, the Most Powerful Indian Tribe in American History*, S.C. Gwynne
- Sept. *Grant*, Ron Chernow
- Oct. *American Nations: A History of Eleven Rival Regional Cultures of North America*, Colin Woodard
- Nov. *Caste*, Isabel Wilkerson
- Dec. *Book of Ages: Life and Opinions of Jane Franklin*, Jill Lepore

Westmoreland History Magazine

SPRING 2021 Issue

"A Homecoming Gone Bad: The 1965 PGA Championship at Laurel Valley Golf Club"
by David Finoli

"The Pennsylvania Canal: Westmoreland's Forgotten Waterway"
by Daniel J. Ackerman

"Mutt Wuslich and the Legacy of Export's Photographers"
by Michael Mance and Melanie Litz

In Brief: Here We Stay 'til the Bonus They Pay:

Westmoreland County WWI Veterans Join the Depression-Era Bonus Army

Discover Westmoreland: Export Borough by Melanie Litz

First Person: "Working in the Coal Mines of Westmoreland County in the 1930s and 1940s"
by Walter F. Haile, Sr.

WINTER 2021 Issue Pending

FUNDRAISING SPECIAL EVENTS

Antiques & Collectibles Five (5) events Second Sunday May – October

Chaired by John Mickinak

May rained out

Net Income: \$16,994



Historic House Tour

Chaired by Clinton Piper and Marilyn McSparrin

Gone but Not Forgotten: Virtual tour featured photos and stories of 19 houses and hotels from Westmoreland County that no longer exist.

Net Income: \$6,772

Above: “Rachelwood,” James Mellon residence in St. Clair Township,

St. Clair Historic Preservation Awards Dinner Rizzo’s Banquet Hall

Chaired by Mary Ellen Miller

Net Income: \$8,283

Awardees:

Timothy Kelly, Margaret Power, and Michael Cary

Authors of *Hope in Hard Times, Norvelt*

and the *Struggle for Community During the Great Depression*

Murrysville Historical Preservation Society

Management of historic buildings for related educational programs

Mike Payne

Outstanding service to preserve the history of the Lincoln Highway

James Clayton

Edward H. Hahn Outstanding Volunteer Service Award

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2021

Officers

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

Directors

Phyllis Bertok	Allen Kukovich
Deborah Delisi	Rob Malley
Denise Hegemann	Marilyn McSparrin
Jason Hitchman	William Rathgeb
Alice Kaylor	Ruth Tolbert
Tom Klingensmith	Denis Zuzik
Ted Kopas	

Ex Officio (Non-voting):

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

STAFF– 2021

Executive Director	Lisa Craig Hays
Collections Manager	Joanna T. Moyar
Education & Interpretation Manager	Pamela Curtin
Library Coordinator	Anita Zanke
Administrative Assistant	Stacy Greenaway
Bookkeeper	Barb Scherrer
Maintenance Coordinator	Bruce Shirey
Seasonal Education Assistant	Joslyn Rodell
Researcher	Karen Kirkpatrick (by contract)

KEY VOLUNTEER POSITIONS – 2021

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



More pictures – just for fun!



Starting at the top left and moving clockwise:

1. Cracking walnuts and spinning with a drop spindle.
2. The reenactors were treated to a hayride at the end of Fall Family Day.
3. A reproduction barrel made by the I.B.W.C.P. for the storehouse/officers' hut.
4. Marion "Mitch' Mitchell of Proctor's makes and sells authentic Bentwood boxes. They are for sale in the Museum Shop!
5. The pillory is a popular stop for families!
6. The flag raising during Frontier Court Days was attended by boy scouts and reenactors of the militia, British Army, & Continental Army.

