



# MANSION NOTES

## CENTRE FURNACE MANSION

NEWSLETTER OF THE CENTRE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume 46, Number 2

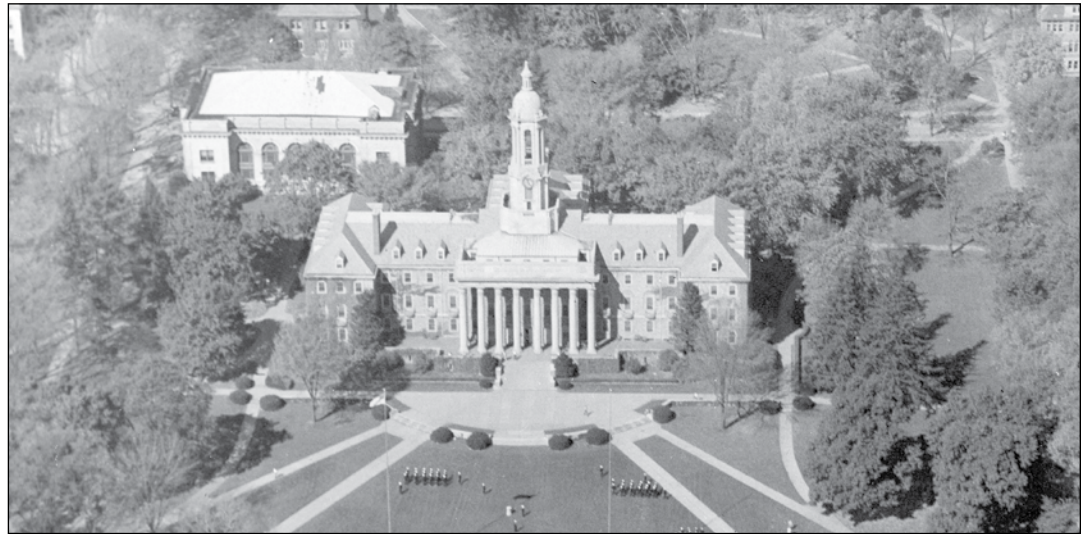
Spring 2024

## Becoming a Modern Public Research University: The Postwar Challenges of Penn State and Rutgers, 1945-1965

By Roger L. Geiger

Rutgers and Penn State are generally regarded as rivals—and not always friendly ones. This belief largely reflects an athletics mindset, especially now that Rutgers has joined the Big Ten. In fact, the two universities have had much in common over their respective histories. Both were among the earliest institutions designated by their states as beneficiaries of the Morrill Land-Grant Act. And today both are rated in the top 50 U.S. universities by the Shanghai Jiao Tong rankings of world universities—Penn State at 28th in research funding and Rutgers at 46th.

The intervening years also saw some significant links. George W. Atherton, Rutgers professor of history and political economy and staunch defender of the Land-Grant movement, was named president of Penn State College in 1882; and he is rightly regarded as the Second Founder of the university. In 1921 Penn State appointed John Martin Thomas as presi-



Old Main c. 1950. Courtesy of The Pennsylvania State University Archives.



John Martin Thomas.  
Penn State President 1921-25.  
Rutgers President 1925-30.  
Courtesy of The Pennsylvania  
State University Archives.

dent, who was dedicated to making the college into a true university. He was thwarted by the governor. In frustration—he welcomed the opportunity to become president of Rutgers. Having been designated the State University of New Jersey in 1917, Rutgers appeared to be accomplishing what Penn State could not. But Thomas's efforts in New Brunswick were undermined by his own Board of Trustees, who wished to keep the institution free of public interference. In 1929 the title of State University of New Jersey was rescinded, restoring the pretense of privateness. Thomas resigned the next year to join an insurance company, where presumably he would not be frustrated by dreams of universities or nightmares of state governments.

My subject concerns the frustrations—and accomplishments—that attended the transformation of these two institutions in the decades after World

War II—a crucial period for the formation of American research universities. Specifically, Rutgers and Penn State faced four challenges in the postwar era:

1. Defining relationships with their respective states;
2. Determining their share in the provision of higher education;
3. Attempting to establish the role of flagship university;
4. Creating a role in the federal research economy.

### 1) Relationships with the States

The unhappy experiences of John Thomas reflect the fact that neither institution was accepted as the state flagship university, nor did they enjoy the backing of anything like the majority of the state's citizens or lawmakers. Higher education in both New Jersey and Pennsylvania was dominated by the private sector—not as completely as in our neighbors to the Northeast,

but nothing like the prominent role accorded state universities farther to the West. Consequently, in a period of accelerating enrollments in higher education, Rutgers and Penn State had difficulty conveying the argument that their respective states should provide funds for the faculty and facilities needed to provide quality higher education for its citizens. And state politicians had no difficulty ignoring such arguments.

Growth was the greatest challenge of this era. Veterans who attended under the GI Bill were particularly drawn to state universities, which accommodated as many as possible, with all kinds of ad hoc arrangements. After they graduated, mostly by 1950, enrollments reached a low point at most universities, but still above prewar numbers. After 1951, enrollments began to rise at an accelerating pace.

*Continued on page 11*

# About the Centre County Historical Society

**Centre County Historical Society  
Centre Furnace Mansion  
1001 East College Avenue  
State College, PA 16801, (814) 234-4779**

CCHS Office Hours: MON-FRI, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Research at the Centre Furnace Mansion:  
Special arrangements for on-site research may be made by email or calling the office. For additional information, staff may be reached by calling 814-234-4779 or by e-mailing [info@centrecounty-history.org](mailto:info@centrecounty-history.org).

Archives: Spring hours Thursdays and Fridays, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and by appointment during regular office hours.

Centre Furnace Mansion Tours:  
Tours are available by appointment at the Centre Furnace Mansion on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday, 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.. Please call us at 814-234-4779 or schedule your tour online at [CentreHistory.org/visit-us/visit](http://CentreHistory.org/visit-us/visit).

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Mary Sorensen, Executive Director  
Johanna Sedgwick, Marketing & Events Coordinator

The Centre County Historical Society (CCHS) is a nonprofit, tax-exempt organization, under Section 501(c)(3) of the I.R.S. Code. Donations are tax deductible. Official registration and financial information about CCHS may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Founded in 1904, the Centre County Historical Society, the County's official historical society, is a non-profit educational organization that promotes appreciation and research of Centre County's historic and natural resources through its properties, collections, programs, publications, and advocacy.

History is an interpretive art, based on available evidence. Accordingly, the interpretations are, at times, controversial and contested. The Centre County Historical Society strongly supports freedom of speech and the First Amendment rights of our speakers, authors, and writers. The Society may not necessarily support the views, conclusions, and opinions expressed, yet believes they merit entry into the marketplace of ideas and the scrutiny it affords.

A community and volunteer-based organization, the Society is headquartered in the Centre Furnace Mansion, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This site includes the restored and furnished ironmaster's home, furnace stack, and landscaped grounds and gardens. Centre Furnace was home to the earliest 18th century industry: charcoal iron making. In the 19th century Centre Furnace played an important role in the beginnings of Penn State University. The Society also owns and operates the nearby Boegersburg one-room school.

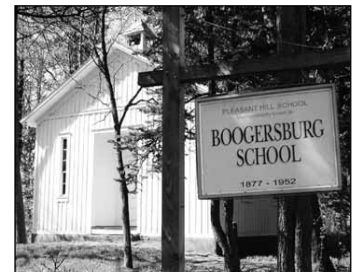
The Centre County Historical Society depends on financial contributions that help support our free public programs and educational opportunities for children, and provide necessary funds for the maintenance and operation of the Society's facilities and collections. Your membership and generosity are sincerely appreciated. Donations may be made by visiting [CentreHistory.org](http://CentreHistory.org) and clicking on "MEMBERSHIP" or by simply sending in the form on the back of this newsletter.

The Society also may be supported by contributing to the Centre County Historical Society Endowment Fund, managed by Centre Foundation at [CentreFoundation.org](http://CentreFoundation.org).

*Mansion Notes* is published as a benefit of membership in the Centre County Historical Society and is made possible through the G. Harold Keatley Fund.



Funding for this publication is supported in part by a grant from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.



## 2024 Business Sponsors

Panko Wealth Management  
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## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Late winter and spring mark a time of intense planning for CCHS amidst a whirlwind of spring and summer activities at the Mansion including visitor tours, programming, meetings, fundraising efforts, receptions, collections work, hosting community service groups, gardening, and numerous other activities!

The Centre Furnace Gardens have been bursting in a succession of bloom (and relentless weeds). Thanks to the weekly efforts of the Centre Furnace Mansion Gardeners, more than 800 plants have already been potted up in preparation for the upcoming Plant Celebration on Saturday, May 11. We are also thankful for the service groups, and community volunteers who help us keep the weeds at bay in the gardens during this bustling season.

Meanwhile, Centre Furnace Mansion docents remain dedicated to leading regular visitor and group tours, and are getting ready for elementary school tours alongside managing various behind-the-scenes tasks. Individual volunteers who work weekly with a focus on specific tasks include librarian Judy Speedy who manages the CCHS library collections, making them more browsable and searchable to patrons. Judy Heberling works on detailed processing and documenting incoming collections. Paula Wilson assists with collections care projects that help keep our object collections looking their best. And Liz Reed has begun assisting with needed office projects.

In March, 40 attendees aiming to develop some framework to inform decisions about what personal memorabilia to keep and what to purge attended CCHS Vice President Jackie Esposito's informative talk about Managing Your Personal Archives. It would seem that our children do not necessarily want all of our stuff... Jackie provided sage advice about what to do! Jackie comes in weekly to work on archives projects in the new archives room, assist researchers, and oversees intern projects related to the archives.

Our hands-on Board of Governors and Committee Chairs work throughout the year with regular meetings and projects to keep the CCHS wheels turning. Tasks include governance, fundraising, overseeing CCHS investments and financial world, property management efforts, event planning, collections management, human resources, editing the *Centre County Encyclopedia of History & Culture*, and heading up several standing committees.

A special thanks to interns Julianne Hart and Megan Kelby who have both made excellent contributions to the Encyclopedia and Megan to the archives, most notably in assisting Jackie Esposito with processing the Hamilton Collection.

Johanna Sedgwick and I came back from the PA Museums conference in April bursting at the seams with new information, and reconnected with professionals and volunteers from museums and historic sites around the state. We attended several meaningful sessions, including a tour of The State Archives of Pennsylvania, a new state-of-the-art facility giving us something to dream about!

Throughout each of our issues of *Mansion Notes*, you will find articles featuring the work that volunteers do for the Historical Society year-round. It represents more than 6000 hours of volunteer time which is an extraordinary commitment. We send a special shout out to everyone who volunteers with the Centre County Historical

Society during April National Volunteer Month! But we celebrate and are grateful for the work that our volunteer colleagues do here throughout the year. We truly could not do what we do without each one of you!

~ Mary Sorensen



Left: Tour of The State Archives scanning and photography room at PA Museums Statewide Conference in Harrisburg.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### Siting the Farmers' High School and Acquiring Its Land

By Roger L. Williams

In my previous Mansion Notes column—entitled “A Glaring Historical Error?”—I wrote about my frightful shock from seeing the date of June 20, 1855, listed by two historians for the Board of Trustees' visit to Centre Furnace Mansion to view the lands freely offered by ironmaster James Irvin for the site of the Farmers' High School of Pennsylvania.

Upon further research into original primary sources, I was able to confirm the correct date of June 26, 1855—the date that is listed on the new “Birthplace of Penn State” campus historical marker at the Mansion.

I also talked about now being able to research further questions about the deed to Irvin's lands. Where was the document located? When was it issued? And was there any kind of ceremony or meeting related to the event? The Centre County Historical Society has long maintained that “The papers to officiate this deal are believed to have been signed in the east front parlor of the Thompsons' Center Furnace Mansion, which is now called the Founders' Room.” Having never seen those papers, or even the deed, I wondered if this statement was fact, lore, myth, or perhaps wishful thinking.

At least I was able to locate and transcribe the deeds. There are two of them: one for the original 200-acre farm that the Trustees viewed on June 26, and the other for an additional 200 acres of adjoining land that Irvin sold to the Farmers' High School for \$12,000. But I have not yet been able to ascertain whether there was any kind of signing ceremony or celebration.

The whole experience, however, has prompted me to sort out the sequence of events that led to the decision of where to locate the Farmers' High School, now Penn State, and the acquisition of land that formed the original campus.

#### James Irvin and Frederick Watts

The prime movers in this story are the aforesaid James Irvin, Centre Furnace ironmaster (1828-58), and Frederick Watts, president of the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society (1851-55) and later President (1855-74) of the Board of Trustees of the Farmers' High School/Agricultural College of Pennsylvania.

Irvin was in a Centre Furnace business partnership with Moses Thompson. Moses lived in Centre Furnace Mansion with his wife Mary, Irvin's sister. Irvin lived in his own mansion, still standing, in Oak Hall, with professional offices in Bellefonte. Watts, a lawyer, judge, and president of the Cumberland Valley Railroad, lived in Carlisle. An agricultural innovator and champion of the farming class, he was elected founding president of the state agricultural society in 1851.

Politically, Irvin and Watts were both Whigs. This party favored a strong national government, central banking system and conservative fiscal policies, public education, tariffs to protect American industries, and internal improvements (roads, canals, railroads) that would accelerate the growth and development of the United States. By the mid-1850s, the party was fragmenting, with most Pennsylvania Whigs moving to the new Republican Party by 1860.

Irvin (1800-62), a lifelong resident of Centre County, and several partners bought Centre Furnace in 1828. Irvin became sole owner in 1838 and soon after brought his brother-in-law, Moses Thompson, into the business. Irvin retained two-thirds ownership, however. Moses moved into Centre Furnace Mansion in 1842 and lived there until his death in 1891.

*Continued on page 15*

## Upcoming Events

Please note that, due to limited seating, reservations are required for some programs by calling 814-234-4779 or reserving through the event listing at [centrehistory.org](http://centrehistory.org).

Centre Furnace Mansion Tours are available on Sunday, Wednesday, and Friday, 1:00-4:00 p.m. Please call us at 814-234-4779 or visit [CentreHistory.org/visit-us/](http://CentreHistory.org/visit-us/) visit for more information.

**May 8 & 9** - Centre Gives. Online at [CentreGives.org](http://CentreGives.org).

**May 11**, 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. 29th Annual Plant Celebration

**June 2**, 2:00 p.m. *The Way I Saw It* Talk by Pat Little RSVP required

**June 9**, 2:00–5:00 p.m. Centre County Explorers Day

**June 13**, 5:00 p.m. CCHS Volunteer Reception RSVP required

**July 28**, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m. CCC Legacy Day at Poe Valley State Park RSVP requested

**September 8**, 1:00–4:00 p.m. Boogersburg School Open House 1021 Fox Hill Rd., State College

*Mansion Notes*, 2009 through 2022 are available on our website at <https://centrehistory.org/research-explore/cchs-mansion-notes-archive>.

## Stay Connected

[www.centrehistory.org](http://www.centrehistory.org)  
E-Mail: [info@centrecountyhistory.org](mailto:info@centrecountyhistory.org)  
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YouTube: <https://rb.gy/sfxzk7>

## 29th Annual Plant Celebration

Saturday, May 11, 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m. Rain or shine!

*Since its inception in 1996, the Centre Furnace Mansion Plant Celebration has been a cherished tradition, evolving over the years while maintaining its original spirit—a community gathering of plant enthusiasts and garden lovers coming together to herald the arrival of spring, an abundant time of bloom in the gardens at the Mansion.*

Join us for the 29th Annual Plant Celebration hosted by the Centre Furnace Mansion Gardeners! We invite you to enjoy the beauty of the Centre Furnace Mansion, gardens, and grounds while supporting their upkeep.

You'll find a wide selection of plants and garden-related treasures curated by the CFM Gardeners and a selection of both familiar and new vendors. From perennials, annuals, and vegetables to shrubs to Mother's Day baskets, there's something for every garden enthusiast.

In addition to the plant sale, we hope you will stick around to enjoy other activities going on at the same time:

**Open House:** The Mansion will be open for tours throughout the event. A photography exhibit with rural themes will be on display inside the Mansion by Farmland Preservation Artist R. Thomas Berner to benefit the Centre County Historical Society.

This year we are pleased to introduce live music in the parlor provided by ensembles from Grace Lutheran Church.

- 10:30 a.m.–Noon: *The Whistle Tones*
- 12:30–1:30 p.m.: *Fair Winds III*

**Ask a Master Gardener:** Penn State Cooperative Extension Master Gardeners of Centre



County will answer questions, identify and evaluate plant samples.

**Book Sale:** Local history and gently used garden books.

**Refreshments:** Coffee, tea, and baked goods will be available from **Standing Stone Coffee Company**, 9:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m.

**Volunteers are still needed!** Call us at 814-234-4779 or sign up online at [CentreHistory.org/](http://CentreHistory.org/) plant.

**Parking:** Parking is available in the grass lot off E. College Avenue and in the parking lot off Porter Road. Please be aware of parking attendants! **Please do not park in the lot designated for Frye's Sweeper & Sewing Center.**

## Participating Vendors

Centre Furnace Mansion Gardeners  
Backyard Forest  
Brenda Horner Artworks  
Common Ground Organic Farm  
Deb's Flower Farm  
The Garden  
Go Native Tree Farm  
LizaJane Botanicals  
Meadowsweet Native Plant Farm  
The Rock Garden Nursery  
Rose Franklin's Perennial & Butterfly Nursery  
Shuey's Market  
The Xerces Society

Scan the QR code for full details and more information about the vendors.



Centre Furnace Mansion Gardeners potting up plants for the Plant Celebration.

## JOIN US FOR UPCOMING PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

### “The Way I Saw It”

Sunday, June 2, 2:00 p.m.  
At the Centre Furnace  
Mansion

Photographer Pat Little will present an illustrated talk detailing his journey into photography, sharing stories about some of his most famous images. He will also discuss his book: *Penn State Then and Now*, which juxtaposed images of “old” Penn State with updated images taken from the same vantage point. Numerous images from Pat’s career will be featured from his unique perspective, or as he put it: “The way I saw it.”

Pat’s work, beginning in 1977 during his senior year at Penn State, has been published worldwide in publications such as *Sports Illustrated*, *Time*, *Newsweek*, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, among others.

After working for a year



South Allen St., July 12, 1985. <https://www.facebook.com/PatLittleimages/photos>

with *The Philadelphia Journal* (Philadelphia sports newspaper), he returned home in 1980 to open a photo studio in downtown State College (1980-1982). In 1982 Bill Welch hired Pat to work for the *Centre Daily Times*. He left the paper in 2000 and continued working as a contract freelance photographer for The Associated Press until 2010. Pat also served as photo adviser at

the *Daily Collegian* from 2001 to 2015, mentoring over 200 photojournalists.

From 2001 to 2018, Pat pursued work as a traveling photo artist, showcasing and selling his work from Miami to Boston. In 2010, he joined Reuters News Service as a contract freelance photographer until his retirement in 2018.

Currently enjoying

retirement with his wife, Mindy, in Philipsburg, Pat stays busy with eight grandchildren and maintains a few photography clients, keeping his passion for photography alive.

RSVP will be required due to limited seating. Call the CCHS office at 814-234-4779 or visit [CentreHistory.org](http://CentreHistory.org) to RSVP.

### Centre County Explorers Day

Sunday, June 9, 2:00–5:00 p.m.



Melina Porro with Penn State’s Matson Museum of Anthropology

Centre County Explorers Passport program of the Centre County Historical Society will kick off for the summer season at the Mansion with an open house, and light refreshments. Passport partners will share insights into a variety of rich historic and cultural sites across Centre County. The Centre Furnace Mansion and Jackie’s Joinery Tool Exhibition of 19th century building tools will be open for touring.

Cultural and historical sites around Centre County are re-

opening and planning events for the 2024 season. See Page 10 for a listing of upcoming events, exhibits and tour hours.

*This project is made possible in part through a grant provided by the Centre County Board of Commissioners and The Happy Valley Adventure Bureau.*

Scan the QR code to view the Centre County Explorers Passport on your device.



### Legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps: Company 1333 – Camp S-63, Poe Valley

Sunday, July 28, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
Poe Valley State Park

CCHS is pleased to partner with the Pennsylvania DCNR and William Marcum, local historian and research authority on the Poe Valley CCC Camp, to host a day-long program about the CCC.

A collection of memorabilia will be on display for you to enjoy. You also may bring any mementos that you wish to share. Attendees will also learn how events brought about the creation of the Civilian Con-

servation Corps program that included the construction of Poe Valley State Park. An original rare film featuring the Poe Valley Camp will also be shown.

You also will enjoy a lunch inspired by authentic CCC menu boards. While there is no set cost for lunch, donations to help cover costs are appreciated.

For full details and to RSVP for lunch, visit [CentreHistory.org](http://CentreHistory.org)/CCC or call 814-234-4779.



CCC crew loading for the day. Photo courtesy of Bill Marcum

# Potter Township to Celebrate 250th Anniversary

## Heritage Day Potter Township's 250th Anniversary

Saturday, June 8, 3:00–8:00 p.m.  
Penn's Prairie at Tri-Municipal Park,  
2400 Upper Brush Valley Road, Centre Hall

It may be a stretch to call frontier soldier James Potter the Daniel Boone of Centre County, but there are similarities.

Just as Pennsylvania native Daniel Boone opened up the Wilderness Road in 1775 through the Cumberland Gap into Kentucky, so likewise did provincial soldier James Potter, the first white explorer to venture into the heart of the future Centre County and open it up for settlement.

Traveling up Bald Eagle Creek from the West Branch of the Susquehanna, Potter passed through Spring Creek Gap and crossed the Nittany Valley before cresting McBride's Gap of Nittany Mountain in 1764. Astonished, he looked out over the vast grasslands of the "Great Plains" of the future Penns Valley and proclaimed, "By God, Thompson, I have discovered an empire!"

Leaving the provincial army nearly a decade later, in 1773, Potter moved to Penns Valley, built a frontier homestead at the future Old Fort, and brought his fellow Scots-Irish followers to settle in the township that now bears his name.

The naming came just a year later, in 1774, as Potter Township became the first municipality in the future Centre County. Back then, the township was

in Northumberland County (f. 1772), then in Mifflin County (f. 1789) as it was carved out of Northumberland, and then in Centre County, carved out of Mifflin in 1800.

That was 250 years ago—a year before the Revolutionary War. And now it's time to celebrate Potter Township's unique status as the oldest municipality in Centre County.

And what a celebration it should be. Mark your calendars for **Saturday, June 8**—"Heritage Day, Potter Township's 250th Anniversary." The event will offer three main features: the Heritage Day Festival at Penns Prairie Park, Historical Bus Tours within Potter Township, and Campfire Ghost Tales back at Penns Prairie Park.

The anniversary committee—Amber Hubert, Sue Mazza, Dick Decker, Lynda Powell, David Whiteman, Denny and Sue Fouse, and Karl Eysenbach—has been working for months to put together a schedule that is still being fine-tuned.

The festival begins at 3:00 p.m. and ends at 8:00 p.m., with free admission. Rep. Kerry Benninghoff will open the festivities. The Centre Hall Fire Company will cook and serve free food from 5:00 – 6:30 p.m. Other food vendors will be on-site, along with live music and



Van Doren and Shadeacre Monument  
Photo provided by Potter Township Parks and Recreation

plenty of activities for kids. Potter Township Parks and Recreation and the Centre Hall Library will be on-site promoting their summer programs.

Two separate bus tours will stop at various township landmarks—the Andrew Gregg homestead, the Standford House, Eutaw House, Sinking Creek Cemetery, Van Doren and Shadeacre Monument, and more. Tour guides will be Penns Valley history teachers Jeffrey Wert and Martin Tobias.

The "Uncovering Potter Township Game Show" will begin at 4:00 p.m. Hosted by Centre Hall native Jeffrey R. Frazier, archivist of folktales (and author of "The Mystery of the Indian Steps" in the Summer 2023 issue of *Mansion Notes*). Prizes will include a trophy: "Smartest in the Valley," an original metal print of the valley by David Whiteman, and a Penns Valley gift basket.

Starting at dusk, Campfire Ghost Tales, with selections from Jeff Frazier's book, will cap the historic day.

Further information is available from Amber Hubert at [hubertpotterparks@gmail.com](mailto:hubertpotterparks@gmail.com).

And as for the founding father who started the whole thing, James Potter: Irish by birth, he served in the Pennsylvania militia during the French and Indian War. In the Revolution, he led Pennsylvania militia at the battles of Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine, and Germantown, being promoted to brigadier general. After the war, he was elected as a representative to,

and later vice president of, Pennsylvania's Supreme Executive Council. In 1782 he was elected major-general of Pennsylvania militia. He died in 1789, a victim of injuries incurred in a barn-raising accident.

For further reading about Potter and his township, consult:

Lee, Catherine, "A Hallowed Bit of Captain Potter's Empire," *Centre County Heritage*, Vol. 4, No. 2, October 1968, pps. 65-66. Reprinted in CCHS bound edition, 1975.

Linn, John Blair, *History of Centre and Clinton Counties*, Philadelphia, 1883. Reprinted by the Centre County Historical Society, 1975.

Macneal, Douglas, "Township Fathers: Gen. James Potter (1729-1789)," in *A Penns Creek Companion*, Aaronsburg, Pa.: Penns Valley Conservation Association, 2005, 2021, pps. 77-80.

Mitchell, J. Thomas, "James Potter," *Centre County Heritage*, Vol. 2, No. 1, February 1957, pps. 16-18. (articles from 1956 through 1975 reprinted in a bound edition by the Centre County Historical Society).

Risley, Ford, and Lee Stout, "Municipalities," *Centre County Encyclopedia of History & Culture*, Centre County Historical Society, <https://centrehistory.org/article/municipalities/>

Shanahan, Thomazine, and Lee Stout, "James Potter," *Centre County Encyclopedia of History & Culture*, Centre County Historical Society, <https://centrehistory.org/article/james-potter/>



Egg Hill Church  
Photo provided by Potter Township Parks and Recreation



# Volunteer Spotlight

Volunteer Appreciation Reception, Thursday, June 13, 5:00 p.m.

April is National Volunteer Month and on behalf of the Board and Staff of CCHS, we extend our most sincere gratitude for every one of you who has dedicated your time, talent, and passion to make a difference with CCHS. Your commitment and selflessness embody the true spirit of volunteerism, and we are incredibly fortunate to have an amazing community of volunteer colleagues.

The Centre County Historical Society is a community of

dedicated colleagues from a variety of professions and interests, most of whom are volunteers. With a number of initiatives and activities, the need for volunteer participation is critically important and continues to grow.

Whether your interest is local history, guiding tours, gardening, event planning, office projects, collections, writing, handy projects, educational programming, marketing or event planning, we need your help!

As an expression of our ap-

preciation, CCHS is hosting a reception on **Thursday, June 13, at 5:00 p.m.** to celebrate all of you who have contributed your time and talent to CCHS. Volunteers and CCHS Members are invited. Please RSVP by e-mailing Johanna at [jsedgwick@centrefurnace.org](mailto:jsedgwick@centrefurnace.org), call us at 814-234-4779, or scan the QR code.



# BOARD NEWS



O. Richard Bundy, III  
*Photo from UC Cincinnati t.ly/IPKVw*

The Centre County Historical Society is delighted to welcome O. Richard Bundy III of Boalsburg to its Board of Governors. Rich's appointment was approved by the CCHS membership at the March 10 annual meeting.

Most recently, Rich served as vice president for development and alumni relations at Penn State. In six years (2016-22), he completed the largest fundraising campaign in the University's history, raising nearly \$2.3 billion.

In late March, Rich was appointed president of the University of Cincinnati Foundation and vice president of advancement. A State College native, with family in the area, Rich will continue to make periodic trips back to State College while continuing to serve on the CCHS Board of Governors both virtually and in person.

An alumnus of Penn State, with bachelor's and master's degrees in history, Rich started his development career at Penn State. He then moved on to Michigan State, served as vice president for development at the Iowa State University Foundation, and then served as president and CEO of the University of Vermont Foundation.

At the CCHS, Rich will serve on the Board's development committee, providing the benefit of his 30 years of expertise, insight, and experience in fundraising.



## Rethinking 322

Strategies for the Proposed State College Area Connector in Penns-Brush Valley

On April 24, the Penn State Landscape Architecture 414 Studio class, Rethinking 322, did a wonderful job presenting their final student presentations. Led by Dr. Paul Daniel (Dan) Marriott, this marks the third studio class utilizing the State College Area Connector Project

as their case study. Representatives of local and state governments, non-profit organizations, community representatives, PennDOT, and other stakeholders in this project were invited to the presentations and have informal conversations with the students about their ideas and

with each other. As we continue our partnership with Dan, his students, and the Hamer Centre for Community Design, each studio class builds on the research, work, and community connections of the class before them to create resource materials to help inform the future design of the proposed highway project in the Penns/Brush Valley Rural Historic District. Looking ahead, the fourth studio class is scheduled for the fall semester. Stay tuned for the release of new booklets showcasing the work of the Fall 2023 and Spring 2024 classes this summer. When posted on our website, we will announce their availability.

Special thanks to Dan, his students, the Hamer Centre for Community Design, Lara Fowler, and Tom Yahner for this collaboration. And many thanks to College Township for the use of their meeting room.



2024 Penn State Landscape Architecture 414 Studio class students and Dr. Dan Marriott.

## GARDENERS' CORNER

With the Plant Celebration around the corner, our hats are off to the efforts of the Centre Furnace Mansion Gardeners who have been putting in overtime getting nearly 800 plants prepared for the Plant Celebration! And to the many community service groups and individuals for their help in the gardens so that the Garden Committee could focus on potting. Thank you to Penn State Homecoming Committee, Circle K, and Sigma Lambda Gamma Sorority for their service.



Sigma Lambda Gamma Service Day in late March.

The bloom season began in January this year with a colorful show of Snow Drops leading the succession followed by Winter Aconite, Squill, Daffodils and other spring ephemerals. If you've stopped by the Mansion very recently, you've been greeted by the fragrant blooms of *Viburnum carlesii*, or Korean Spice Viburnum. Several varieties of Lilacs in Laura's Lilac Bower, donated by Jeffrey Bower in 2005-06 in honor of his mother Laura Bower are beginning their early season of fragrant bloom. It is the enthusiasm, good cheer and

hard work of the Centre Furnace Mansion Gardeners that make this possible.

Every week on Thursday afternoons from 1:00-4:00 p.m. you will find a group tackling the garden areas that are most in need. As the days become warmer, they will transition to mornings from 9:00 a.m.-Noon. If you would be interested in helping out in this way, either stop by or contact Mary Sorensen at [msorensen@centrefurnace.org](mailto:msorensen@centrefurnace.org) for more information.

Special thanks go out to our "regulars" in the gardens who help out routinely with weekly work days or contribute routinely through the year in other ways: Frank Barksdale, Susan Bowser, Lucy Boyce, Mike Canich, Joyce Christini, Lisa Coggins, Michele Ebaugh, Rina Eiden, Katie Frieden, Yvonne Gaudelius, Carol Gouty, Judy Heberling and Michael Husband, Chris Igo, Beverly Lipski, Louis Mayer, Jo Merrell and Floyd Todd, Ruth Merritt, Carol Phillips, Sharon Phillips, Mark Pishak, Suzanne Thompson, Jan Villastrigo, Steve Wheeler, and Jane Whitaker.



Katie Frieden with spring urns that she designs and plants annually.



CFM Gardeners and friends gathered in mid February for a garden tool sharpening work day.



CENTRE COUNTY  
Encyclopedia of  
History & Culture

The online *Centre County Encyclopedia of History & Culture* continues to add intriguing articles about Centre County's past. The following articles bring the total of 182:

- *Faculty Cottages* - Juliana Hart, Penn State intern
- *Railroad Parks* - Michael Bezilla
- *Black Soldiers* - William Blair
- *Julia Brill* - Juliana Hart

The article featuring the Union Church, also known as the "Old

Mud Church," in Philipsburg has been updated to include a fantastic video provided by the Philipsburg Historical Foundation. We hope you will take a look!

We would like to express our gratitude to the volunteer contributors who have made the encyclopedia a successful and expanding repository of knowledge.

Scan the QR code to read more.



## DOCENTS' CORNER

"Our doors would not be open without you!! Docents are our public face and our interpreters of Centre County history to all who visit."

Our CCHS Docents do double duty, not only covering weekly public tour times, but handling school, other special tours, open houses, and also contributing to the many other events and activities that are a part of our year.

Over the last two months we welcomed young adults from the Church of Latter Day Saints in State College, new members of the University Women's Club, and a second group of Penn State Lion Ambassadors for specials tours of the Mansion.

As we head into May, the Mansion and the Boogersburg School will come alive through the contributions of a dedicated cast of school tour docents. At Boogersburg, docents assume the role of 19th century school

teachers to give tours to elementary age students. The Mansion also hosts elementary school students. Thank you to Lynn Royse for coordinating the field trips to the Mansion.

Jackie Melander once said, and we at CCHS enthusiastically agree, "Our doors would not be open without you!! Docents are our public face and our interpreters of Centre County history to all who visit." We would like to recognize the following Docents for their regular service this quarter: Elliot Abrams, Bill Blair, Elizabeth Dutton, Carol Gentry, Steve Gentry, Jude Larkin, Patty Mutzeck, Gloria Nieweg, Lynn Royse, Joy Schon, Bonnie Walter, Linda Witmer.

Are you a story teller, have a teaching background or just enjoy sharing history with people? If you have a little time and are looking for an interesting and meaningful way to contribute, we hope you will consider joining our docent team. For more information contact Mary Sorensen at 814-234-4779 or [msorensen@centrefurnace.org](mailto:msorensen@centrefurnace.org).



# Centre Gives

8:00 a.m. May 8 through 8:00 p.m. May 9

The Centre County Historical Society has participated in Centre Gives since its first year in 2012. We could not have imagined its impact at that time for CCHS and so many other area non-profits.

Your contributions to CCHS through Centre Gives provide critical funds that help support the many ongoing programs and activities that the Historical Society hosts and the historic treasures that it owns and maintains.

If you have attended talks or exhibitions, volunteered as a docent or gardened in the Mansion's period-inspired gardens, been an intern, helped with collections or data entry projects, volunteered for events, written for a newsletter or publication, then you are familiar CCHS's mission. You probably already know that through these and other activities, we work in collaboration with local, regional,

county and state organizations and individuals to help preserve and promote Centre County's historic, cultural, and natural resources.

*We can help you make a donation by phone! Call us at 234-4779 on May 8 and 9 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. if you would like help by phone or would like to stop in.*

## Donor-Advised Funds

Anyone who holds a Donor-Advised Fund at Centre Foundation may recommend distributions to participating organizations prior to the event. These grant distributions will qualify for the stretch pool through Centre Gives. Centre Foundation will also accept Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) from IRAs prior to the event. Please contact the Centre Foundation office at (814) 237-6229 or [info@centre-foundation.org](mailto:info@centre-foundation.org) for more information.

# Centre gives

Donate to CCHS Between

8:00-9:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8

To help CCHS win the Kick-Off Power Hour Prize of \$500!

## Prizes

Your donation of \$10 or more to the Centre County Historical Society through Centre Gives will not only qualify CCHS for a larger share of Centre Foundation's \$300,000 stretch pool, but for additional prize money during the event as well. Power Hour Prizes are awarded to the organization with the most number of unique donors during that timeframe.



Scan the QR code to go directly to CCHS Centre Gives donation form on May 8 and 9.

## An Invitation to Join the Jacqueline J. Melander Society



Jackie Melander, April 1986.  
*Clearfield County Historical Society, Negative Project.*

In April, a reception was held for the Melander Society at the Centre Furnace Mansion with nearly 40 in attendance. The Board of Governors invites you to consider a legacy gift to the Centre County Historical Society by way of your will, bequest, or other deferred giving plan.

When you do so, you will be entitled to membership in the Jacqueline J. Melander Legacy Society. It's easy to join. You only need to notify the CCHS

that you have included us in your estate planning and provide a written notice to that effect. How you provide for your legacy gift is a matter for you to discuss with your attorney and/or financial advisor; the CCHS does not involve itself in the particulars.

The Melander Society strives to build long-term financial support for the Society's mission of discovering, collecting, preserving, interpreting, educating, advocating, presenting,

and promoting Centre County's unique history.

It honors CCHS President Emerita Jackie Melander who served on the CCHS Board of Governors from 1980 to 2015. Jackie oversaw the first restoration of the Centre Furnace Mansion, established it as a national historic site and CCHS headquarters, and advocated energetically for historical preservation in Centre County.

Legacy gifts are for everybody! They represent a meaningful way to express your values and strengthen a cause you care about for the long term.

The Centre County Historical Society hopes to be that cause for you. For further information, contact Executive Director Mary Sorensen at [msorensen@centrehistory.org](mailto:msorensen@centrehistory.org) or 814-234-4779.



We thank the following Melander Society members for their commitment:

Anonymous  
Jeffrey M. Bower  
Mimi Barash Coppersmith  
Candace and Robert Dannaker  
Jacqueline R. Esposito  
Steven and Carol Gentry  
Robert and Janice Hazelton  
Gerard F. Jackson  
Jacqueline J. Melander  
Jo and Floyd Merrell  
Kathleen O'Toole and Gary Gray  
David Panko  
Richard Pencek  
Nancy Perkins  
Bob Potter  
Deborah Raykovitz  
Ford and Mary Risley  
Dolores and  
Arthur Simpson Rose  
Mary and Peter Sorensen  
Laura Glenn Steifer  
Leon and Delores Stout  
Ann Hamilton Taylor and  
Marty Gutowski  
Roger L. Williams and  
Karen Magnuson

*In Memoriam*  
Elizabeth Turner Taylor and  
Alfred H. Taylor Jr.

Left: Mary Lou Bennett, Roger Williams and Mimi Barash Coppersmith at the Melander Reception.

# ARCHIVES AND COLLECTIONS



Monogrammed goblet donated by Mary Lou Bennett.  
CCHS 2024.03.01-06

James Addams Beaver was a widely known attorney, a Civil War officer, and the governor of Pennsylvania from 1887-1891. He also played a leading role in Penn State's early decades and served as interim president for two years; today, the football

stadium bears his name. (From the *Centre County Encyclopedia of History & Culture*.)

Gov. Beaver was also the first president of the Linn Historical Society (now Centre County Historical Society) whose Articles of Incorporation

were acknowledged 120 years ago before the Centre County Recorder of Deeds on April 25, 1904.

Over the years, we have acquired collection donations attributed to James A. Beaver that are on display in the Centre Furnace Mansion. The most recent of these donations is a collection of six glass goblets with the initial "B" attributed to Gov. Beaver. They were donated by Mary Lou Bennett who purchased the goblets some time ago from a friend, Pat (Vera) Nead whose husband Benjamin Nead descended from James A. Beaver. According to their family lore, the goblets belonged to Gov. Beaver.

They complement a china set given by Bonnie Walter in 2013 also attributed to Beaver that also graces the Mansion's dining room table. In the Founders Room, the book *Life and*

*Achievements of James Addams Beaver* is displayed on the desk and is signed "Very Truly Yours, James A. Beaver." donated by Beverly Hickey in memory of William H. Hickey.

## BIRTHPLACE OF PENN STATE

The birthplace of Penn State was honored with the dedication of a historical marker, unveiled on Jan. 11 by the Centre County Historical Society and Penn State President Neeli Bendapudi.

Visit [CentreHistory.org/visit-us/centre-furnace-mansion](http://CentreHistory.org/visit-us/centre-furnace-mansion) or scan the QR code to watch the video produced by Kristian Berg for WPSU to capture the occasion.



Cultural and historical sites around Centre County are re-opening and planning events for the 2024 season. Please visit their website for full details about listed events and hours.

### Events

**Boalsburg Heritage Museum Memorial Day Celebrations, Monday, May 27.** Book signing event with local authors, live music, see what's cooking in the summer kitchen, and tour the house, the barn and the Light House. The David Boal Tavern will also be open for visitors.

**Book Signing, May 27, 10:00–11:00 a.m.:** Jackie Esposito will be doing a book signing, *The Nittany Lion: An Illustrated Tale* at the Boalsburg Historical Museum.

**Memorial Day at the Advent Monday, May 27, 10:00 a.m.** Following the Memorial Day observances at the Advent Cemetery (9:00–10:00 a.m.),

all are invited to sing along as the Stauffer and Watson families provide a program of traditional music. The museum and gallery will also be open. [adventhistoricalsociety.org](http://adventhistoricalsociety.org)

**Lemont Village Association: Concerts on the Village Green Friday evenings June 7–September 27, 7:30 p.m.**

**Milesburg Memorabilia & Family History Day, June 8, 10:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.** at the Milesburg Community Center. Families and friends are invited to share their photos, artifacts, & antiques from Milesburg. Family history experts, town historians, and an antique dealer will present as well. [milesburg.org](http://milesburg.org)

**Lemont Village Association Strawberry Festival, June 8, 3:00–7:00 p.m.** [lemontvillage.org](http://lemontvillage.org).

**History Book Discussion, June 9, 3:00 p.m.** Join the Boalsburg Heritage Museum for their first book discussion featuring *Blood and Thunder* by Hampton Sides.

**Bellefonte Union Cemetery Tour, June 22, 7:00 p.m.** with historian Chuck Young. Meet at the fountain near High Street. Hosted by the Bellefonte

Historical and Cultural Association.

**Monet's Picnic, July 27, 1:00–4:00 p.m.** Bellefonte Art Museum's annual fundraising event will be held at REfarm Cafe at Windswept Farm. For details or tickets, contact [bellefontemuseum@gmail.com](mailto:bellefontemuseum@gmail.com) or [bellefontemuseum.org](http://bellefontemuseum.org).

**Bellefonte Sunday Afternoon Chamber Music Series, Select Sundays, 2:30 p.m.** Sponsored by the Bellefonte Historical & Cultural Association and held at the Trinity United Methodist Church, 128 West Howard St. [bellefontearts.org](http://bellefontearts.org)

**Tours & Exhibits Bellefonte Art Museum** Friday-Sunday, 12:00–4:30 p.m. [bellefontemuseum.org](http://bellefontemuseum.org)

**Lions David House Heritage Museum, Snow Shoe** Third Saturday of the Month, 1:00–4:00 p.m. starting May 18. Typically closed December–March. [david-house-museum.org](http://david-house-museum.org)

**Milesburg Museum & Historical Society** Through October, Wednesdays 12:00–3:00 p.m., Sundays by appointment. [milesburg.org](http://milesburg.org)

**Boalsburg Heritage Museum** Tours on Sundays 2:00–4:00 p.m. Closed January–March. [boalsburgheritagemuseum.org](http://boalsburgheritagemuseum.org).

**Columbus Chapel and Boal Mansion Museum** Guided tours Wednesday through Sunday with one daily tour at 2:00 p.m. [boalmuseum.com](http://boalmuseum.com).

**Penns Valley Area Historical Museum, Aaronsburg** Museum open Saturdays through October 1:00–4:00 p.m. [pennsvalleymuseum.org](http://pennsvalleymuseum.org)

**Eagle Iron Works and Curtin Village** Guided tours held the 2nd and 4th Sunday at 2:00 p.m., June through September. [curtinvillage.com](http://curtinvillage.com)

**Plant Sales Central Pa Native Plant Festival, May 4, 10:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.** at Millbrook Marsh Nature Center. Full details at [panativeplantsociety.org](http://panativeplantsociety.org).

**Centre County Master Gardener Plant Sale, May 18, 9:00 a.m.–2:00 p.m.** at Penn State's Ag Progress Days site.

## Postwar Challenges

*Continued from cover article*

This growth was tilted toward the public sector. The public-private split was 50-50 in 1950, but in the ensuing decade, public institutions added 5 students for every 2 additional students in private colleges (1.3 million students vs. ½ million). Looming on the horizon were the Baby Boom cohorts, who would start graduating from high schools in the early 1960s. They would require a substantial expansion of places in public colleges and universities under any set of assumptions. Educational planning was not the forte of these state governments, to say the least; but they received a powerful jolt by the Sputnik crisis in 1957. Suddenly, expanding the quality and quantity of American higher education appeared to be a national imperative.

### Relations with the State—Rutgers

But back to 1945. In the fleeting aura of postwar idealism, Rutgers was restored as the State University of New Jersey. This act papered over the fact that the university was governed by a private Board of Trustees. A reckoning soon followed. A bond offering was proposed that would have provided funding for desperately needed buildings. Instead, it provoked the university's enemies to mobilize. Private college interests opposed expansion of the state university, and taxpayer groups attacked public funding for a privately controlled institution. Voters summarily rejected the bond issue in 1948, exposing the lack of popular support for the university and the vulnerability created by its private status. But the failure set in motion efforts to deal with this seemingly anomalous status.

Rutgers in 1950 was a conglomerate, public-private institution. It consisted of a women's college, a men's college that included the land-grant colleges of agriculture and engineering, and several other units in New Brunswick, Newark, and Camden. Officially an "instrumentality of the state," its 58-member Board of Trustees had a majority of self-perpetuating members—making it privately controlled. New Jersey supplied just one-



Robert C. Clothier, Rutgers University President 1932-51. *Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries.*

third of the operating funds for Rutgers, so that the rest of the budget had to come from student tuition, which was shrinking as the veterans departed. The university was badly squeezed, having to endure inadequate facilities and non-competitive salaries for faculty, which received a "C" rating by the American Association of University Professors.

These difficulties began to be addressed in the late 1950s. In 1956 a new Board of Governors, with a majority of public appointees, assumed governance of the whole university. The old board, which largely represented Rutgers College and its alumni, was reduced in size and function. The State University of New Jersey was now, in large measure, governed by the state. Then, the Soviet launch of Sputnik in 1957 provided the catalyst for a concerted push to improve and upgrade American education. Even the New Jersey legislature was not immune. This juncture marked the beginning of a decade and a half of large and growing appropriations for capital projects and operating expenses. And these were supplemented by an increasing flow of federal monies. In the seven years after Sputnik, undergraduate and graduate enrollments at New Brunswick doubled, aided no doubt by the fact that New Jersey did not yet have a state system of regional universities and community colleges. Enrollment growth and revenue growth at Rutgers engaged in a frantic race. The state's contribution to operating funds rose to 50 percent, and the rating of faculty salaries rose to an "A".

### Relations with the State—Penn State

The Pennsylvania State College suffered not so much from hostility in the state as from neglect. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has the dubious distinction of never establishing a public college or university. Penn State was founded by the state agricultural society; members of what is now the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education were all founded privately as normal schools for teacher education; and Pittsburgh and Temple were private universities until they were rescued from bankruptcy by the state in the 1960s.

Penn State was more fortunate than Rutgers in receiving state building funds after the war. It seems that Republican contractors and Democratic trade unions could agree on the benefits of spending public monies to erect buildings. And, conveniently, construction funds did not need approval from the legislature or voters. But also unlike Rutgers, Penn State was surrounded by rural countryside—it was described by one president as "equally inaccessible from all parts of the state." It could only teach students it could house, and a succession of dormitory complexes was erected from the late 1950s into the 1970s. New dormitories allowed the main campus to add 5,000 students in the 1950s and 10,000 in the 1960s.

For 20 years Ralph Hetzel had presided over the college. A proficient internal manager, he was noted for extreme caution and a myopic focus on state service. He did not believe that the college should seek students or research funds beyond the state borders. His successor in 1950 was Milton Eisenhower, one of the most dynamic and effective figures ever to lead the institution, if only for six years. And he was effective in Harrisburg as well. State appropriations for general operations rose from \$10.5 to \$25 million. After his departure—for personal reasons—the institution girded for the coming enrollment explosion and the state funding that would be required to accommodate these students, hoping for 40 percent of expenditures. Instead, the state appropriation was curtailed. Spending for public schools was



Milton S. Eisenhower, Penn State President 1950-56. *Courtesy of The Pennsylvania State University Archives.*

substantially increased, but not so much for higher education. Appropriations fell far short of requests, and the university had to resort instead to tuition increases. This became a more or less permanent condition in Pennsylvania—which is why the state has consistently had the highest rates of tuition for resident students.

### 2) What Share of State Higher Education?

Another fundamental issue is the role of the provincial state university in the provision of higher education. What portion of the state's students should it aim to educate? Every state has evolved its own answer. The University of Minnesota, for example, long attempted to monopolize ALL public higher education. The University of Virginia took the opposite approach, remaining small and selective. Where this issue was confronted directly and publicly, as it was in California, negotiating and resolving a solution presented enormous difficulty. Clark Kerr overcame these obstacles in pushing through the California Master Plan in 1960, which imposed a definite formula for the university role: namely, to educate the top 1/8 of high school graduates, while remaining open to transfers, and monopolizing education for the major professions, doctoral studies, and research. Elsewhere, however, the role of the flagship state university tended to be shaped by random events and circumstance.

After the War, most state universities enlarged their educational role by establishing

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## Postwar Challenges

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branch campuses. Michigan responded to overtures from Flint and Dearborn; Indiana moved into Indianapolis; Illinois into Chicago and Springfield; Purdue into Fort Wayne; Minnesota into Duluth. Thus, Rutgers and Penn State were in good company in their postwar expansions. In many cases state universities moved into the comparative educational vacuums of major cities—that is, localities that were underserved by existing or faltering private institutions. In some cases they annexed struggling private colleges, and in others built new campuses from scratch.

Why did they do it? Not for prestige. Branch campuses attracted commuter and part-time students; faculties tended to be less credentialed than those at the home campus; and branch campuses inevitably required major capital expenditures. In the 1930s Rutgers judged that such considerations weighed against taking over private schools in Newark.

Branch campuses nevertheless emerged serendipitously. Both universities established extension divisions before the War. Thus, extension centers were already serving clientele in distant locations. Once institutionalized, there were few obvious limits as long as demand existed. Under the GI Bill, universities relied on extension centers to educate large numbers who could not be squeezed into the main campus. Usually some trigger then occurred: a local gift or initiative prompted the elevation of a center into a branch campus. Such a move had many benefits for the locality—a quality institution of higher education, established more quickly, with some trickle-down prestige from the university; and localities soon developed deep loyalties to their branch campuses. For the university? A strong sense of public mission, particularly in the postwar years; fear of the emergence of a politically potent rival; and expectations that the state would pay the bills.

### Rutgers—Admitting All Who Qualified

President Robert Clothier de-

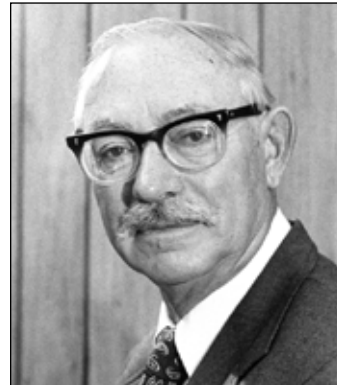
clared after the War that Rutgers “recognized a moral responsibility to accommodate all qualified veterans and high school graduates.” A university task force ten years later pledged “that Rutgers provide educational opportunities for all qualified persons” Of course, “qualified” can be an elastic concept. But the intent was no doubt sincere. Still, such rhetoric implied a demographic impossibility. Other considerations led to absorbing the University of Newark in 1946. Rutgers thought the merger would give it more clout with the governor and legislators, divert students for whom there was no room in New Brunswick, and prevent the emergence of a potential rival. It also gave Rutgers a law school and a business school, as well as some arts and sciences students. The takeover of a floundering, unaccredited law school in Camden five years later occurred under considerable political pressure.

### Penn State—Building a Massive Statewide System

Penn State also had reason to react to seeming vacuums in public higher education. Penn State had grown a large system of extension education in the interwar years. After World War II, Extension operated four undergraduate centers and engineering extension twelve technical institutes. Penn State would entertain any credible request for a center as long as the community furnished and maintained the facilities and the centers were self-supporting. With the Philadelphia and Pittsburgh regions dominated by private institutions, Penn State had a vast expanse of the state to potentially serve. The centers absorbed much of the GI overload, and then shrank in the early 1950s. But not for long. In 1953, the centers began awarding associate degrees, thus becoming, in effect, junior colleges. In 1959, fourteen locations were upgraded to Commonwealth Campuses, no longer part of university extension and no longer required to be self-supporting. The Pennsylvania State University was morphing on its own initiative into a state system of higher education.

The notion that Pennsylvania should develop a system of community colleges instead

of branch campuses was raised as early as 1957, but the Community College Act only passed in 1963. Although it offered state support for establishing such colleges, few communities found the terms attractive—just four were founded by 1966. Nonetheless, the legislature commissioned two successive



Eric A. Walker, Penn State President 1956-70.  
*Courtesy of The Pennsylvania State University Archives.*

studies to formulate a “master plan.” Both advocated converting some of the Commonwealth Campuses to community colleges. President Eric Walker and the university Board of Trustees were adamantly opposed. Walker repeatedly presented evidence that the campuses were more effective educationally than typical community colleges, even those of California. Moreover, Penn State continued to launch additional campuses, and to upgrade the existing ones, encouraged by considerable local advocacy and donations. This controversy raged through the mid-sixties. In the end, Pennsylvania had no master plan, and Penn State—referred to by some as “the octopus”—had 19 Commonwealth Campuses, enrolling more than 20,000 students.

Penn State in the 1960s wholeheartedly embraced the mission of providing public education for the Commonwealth. In 1965 it enrolled 3 of 8 students in public higher education. With a state government that was incapable of formulating a higher education policy, and unwilling to adequately support higher education for its citizens, Penn State took it upon itself to shoulder this burden. However, there were drawbacks. The main campus housed a faculty increasingly oriented

toward research and scholarship; but faculty on the campuses, nominally belonging to the same departments, were largely confined to teaching. And the state, traditionally unwilling to pay for public higher education, failed to provide the support that these initiatives warranted.

### 3) Undergraduate Education for Whom?

The distinctive feature of undergraduate education at postwar Rutgers was single-sex colleges. When the New Jersey College for Women was established in 1918, this practice was consistent with private colleges in the East. In addition, the Trustees’ determination to preserve private control was linked with keeping historically male Rutgers College as much as possible like neighboring Princeton. The College for Women became a coordinate college, like the Barnard College that Mabel Smith Douglass had graduated from, although on a far leaner budget. All this was in keeping with eastern notions of prestige—separate men’s and women’s colleges and a heavy emphasis on liberal arts. Plus, a prevailing Eastern disdain for coeducational state universities. Thus, the College for Women changed its name to Douglass College in 1955, as if to emphasize its coordinate status and distance itself from the state university.

### Rutgers—Overcoming a Split Personality

This structure was increasingly anachronistic in postwar higher education. It helps to account for the pattern of expansion already referred to: selective men’s and women’s liberal arts colleges in New Brunswick, and all manner of useful courses for New Jersey citizens in Newark, Camden, and through the University College. But it had its costs. The separate colleges in New Brunswick were inefficient and certainly cramped growth. Of course, all universities have separate units called colleges, but only Rutgers accorded these colleges their own separate departmental faculties, an arrangement that greatly impeded academic development. In the late 1960s, less than one-half of Douglass faculty had PhDs; and just 62 percent in Rutgers College. The consolidation of

## Postwar Challenges

*Continued from page 12*

academic departments in 1981 by President Edward J. Bloustein was later described by President Richard L. McCormick as “a giant step toward academic distinction.”

Being a state university—and a land-grant too—made the men’s and women’s colleges different from their would-be private peers. Students came overwhelmingly from New Jersey high schools, and a significant number were commuters. Douglass, for all its emphasis on liberal arts, had vocational roots in home economics and education—subjects disdained at the Seven Sisters. For Rutgers, the effort to preserve the ostensible prestige of single-sex colleges in a land-grant, service-oriented university produced a split personality that long endured.

### **Penn State—Transforming Itself Under Milton Eisenhower**

Postwar Penn State College faced the opposite challenge. Although the 14th largest institution in the country, it still carried an image of a cow college and was best known for its football team. Its inward-focused president did nothing to dispel this. However, President Milton Eisenhower perceived this to be a problem from the start: Penn State had to change



President Milton S. Eisenhower (right) adjusts the honorary doctorate robe for his brother U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower (left), speaker at the University’s Centennial Commencement on June 11, 1955. *Courtesy of The Pennsylvania State University Archives.*



Old Queens, Rutgers University’s main administration building. Founded as Queen’s College in 1766, Rutgers is the nation’s eighth oldest institution of higher learning.

*Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries.*

its image in order to establish its character as a major university. One of his first steps was to change the name to Penn State University. He carefully laid the groundwork for this by canvassing all interested parties and discovered—apparently no one cared! Then it was simply matter of going to the county courthouse and changing the charter. Eisenhower went further and renamed the various “Schools” in the university into “Colleges”, including establishing a College of Business Administration (1,100 undergrads by 1954). The symbolism was important, but far more significant was Eisenhower’s efforts to build morale among students and faculty—and also to enhance recognition of the university and its contributions throughout the state. And, of course, being the brother and close advisor of President Dwight D. Eisenhower in itself brought recognition. Eisenhower made a tangible difference: after just six years, Penn State looked and functioned like a major state university.

### **Both Rise to Highly-Selective Status**

Through the ’50s and ’60s, Rutgers and Penn State attracted above average students, but could not match the more selective private colleges and universities. When classifications were made in the late 1960s, both colleges were ranked “Very Competitive”—along with 160 other

institutions, including other state universities. Both catered to public high school graduates from their respective states. Eisenhower’s successor, Eric Walker complained, “Penn State is still not getting its share of the brightest students.” When student qualifications plummeted nationally after 1970, so did the SAT scores at Rutgers and Penn State. Rutgers remained technically “selective” by rejecting many students, since each of its units had its own admissions criteria; whereas Penn State found a place for virtually every applicant at its many campuses. By the mid-1980s, taken altogether, the average student at each university was . . . pretty close to average. How that changed in the following two decades is an intriguing story. By the 21st century, both universities had risen to the “Highly Selective” category, and the growth of research most likely had something to do with this.

### **4) How to Become a Research University**

Large public universities have an inherent disadvantage in the selectivity sweepstakes that preoccupy private colleges, but they have been more successful boosting prestige through research. However, only a handful of land-grant institutions were originally established as flagship universities, committed implicitly to academic advancement. Those few adapted to the aca-

ademic revolution of the late 19th century and emerged as research universities in the 20th century. Others were named A&Ms, or agricultural colleges, or just colleges, as were Rutgers and Penn State. In these institutions, research tended to be confined to agriculture, later engineering, and the basic academic disciplines remained stunted. Penn State was an agricultural & engineering school in the early 20th century, and Rutgers’s focus was on its liberal arts colleges.

The litmus test for participation in academic research is the awarding of Ph.D.s. They require both teaching and research at an advanced level, and the relatively small population of Ph.D. candidates flock to the leaders. In the 1930s Rutgers graduated just over 100 Ph.D.s, mostly in agriculture and related subjects, including chemistry. Penn State produced less than 200, half in chemistry.

### **Applied Research Fields and Centers**

They institutionalized research in applied fields and dedicated research centers, and these units often serve as seedbeds for expansion into more basic subjects. At Penn State, agricultural research stimulated development in both chemistry and physics. At both schools, such efforts began to bear fruit after 1945. At Rutgers, Selman Waksman’s great discovery of

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## Postwar Challenges

*Continued from page 13*

streptomycin led directly to the creation of the Institute of Microbiology (1954) that now bears his name. The Department of Ceramics provided another node of advanced research. Notably, both these efforts were related to (and supported by) important state industries.

Penn State exploited its engineering expertise after the war to break into federally sponsored research. From Harvard it acquired the Ordnance Research Laboratory focused on underwater sound for the Navy, and in 1955 began operating the first certified university nuclear reactor. Specialized undertakings such as these four examples expanded and diversified into adjacent scientific fields, both basic and applied. The difficulty for latecomers like Rutgers and Penn State was developing departments in basic academic disciplines.

In the 1950s, both schools increased Ph.D.s by a factor of six over the 1930s, but they were still skewed toward applied fields. Thirty percent at Rutgers were still in agriculture. At both, doctorates in the Humanities and Social Sciences were miniscule. Until well into the next decade, increasing the academic standing of the universities was merely one priority among many—and not very high on the list. Accommodating the rising tide of students was the uppermost necessity, and finding the resources that this required. In the 1960s, the National Science Foundation delayed science development funds for Rutgers until faculty salaries were raised closer to national norms, so that the necessary personnel could be hired.

### Latecomers in the Rankings

In 1966, the first rigorous rating of graduate programs, led by Allan Cartter, revealed the nearly marginal status of both universities. Roughly half of the 1,600+ departments surveyed were rated as distinguished, strong, or good. However, out of 30 departments, both universities had seven rated as “good” (English, History, Botany, Entomology, Physiology, Zoology, and Physics). Only microbiology was rated “strong” for Rut-



Selman Waksman, discoverer of streptomycin and winner of the 1952 Nobel Prize in Physiology.  
*Special Collections and University Archives, Rutgers University Libraries.*

gers; chemistry and geology for Penn State. What are we to make of such state of affairs? Let me conclude with three points.

First, in the state of the academic research system in the 1960s, rising latecomers like Rutgers and Penn State found niches in semi-applied fields that were not reflected in peer ratings. Thus, Rutgers's strength in ceramics, Penn State's in acoustics and nuclear engineering, did not register.

Second, the Cartter ratings changed perceptions of prestige. If universities played down the “rankings game,” deans and department heads did not. The ratings gave them a powerful incentive to seek to strengthen their faculties and graduate programs. Academic standing moved up several notches in institutional priorities and, more important, stimulated university investments in academic quality.

Third, they had a good deal

of company. An amalgamation of the departmental ratings placed Rutgers and Penn State in a range from 29th to 42nd in academic standing. A national report in 1960 had called for a doubling of American research universities from the existing 15-20. Only seven additional public universities might be said to have risen to that level by the mid-1960s. Rutgers and Penn State were poised to join that group.

### Rising Into the Top 40

And, indeed, that is where they are found today—comfortably within the top forty American research universities. So, what is new? In fact, in the expansive and highly competitive American system, this is a tremendous accomplishment. While the top of the academic hierarchy never seems to change, that is not true for the upper-middle ranks. Of the 13



William M. Breazeale, inaugural professor of nuclear engineering at Penn State and co-designer of the first U.S. university reactor, which reached criticality on August 15, 1955.  
*Courtesy of The Pennsylvania State University Archives.*

universities ranked in 1964 in the same stratum with Rutgers and Penn State, nine have fallen out of the top 40. In the last comprehensive ratings, the average departmental score was “strong” at both schools. Research expenditures currently exceed \$1.2 billion at Penn State, and two-thirds of that level at Rutgers. These are measures of enormous progress and achievement since the mid-sixties.

Becoming a contemporary research university—a world-class university—is a step-like process. Strenuous effort is required to attain a foothold on that high plateau, only to realize that the advancement of science and the competition from peers demand renewed efforts. That Rutgers and Penn State have repeatedly succeeded in such efforts—in the 1960s, again in the 1980s, and again since 2000—and have accomplished these feats with little assistance from their respective states—is testimony not only to the astute leadership of these universities, but also to their enduring spirit.

*Acknowledged as the leading historian of American higher education, Roger L. Geiger is Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Higher Education at Penn State.*

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## President's Corner

*Continued from page 3*

Irvin was described by historian Sylvester K. Stevens as “the highest type of industrial leader in the days before the Civil War; a man prominent in public service, optimistic and enthusiastic in support of progressive economic experiments, keen in the conduct of his business affairs, and generous to a fault.”

But he was not a man to be trifled with. Irvin was vastly successful in the iron-making industry. Besides Centre Furnace, he became the owner of Martha, Julian, Mill Creek and Hecla furnaces, and a part owner of the Milesburg Iron Works, Monroe Furnace, Washington Furnace, Hopewell Furnace, and Mercer Iron Works. He became one of the wealthiest men in Pennsylvania and general of a state militia division. A two-term U.S. Congressman (1841-45), he later ran, unsuccessfully, as the Whig candidate for Governor in 1847. He remained well connected and influential in state politics. And he had been talking about a “Farm School” for Centre County since 1850.

Frederick Watts (1801-89) was likewise one of those great nineteenth century “men of affairs” with multiple talents and interests. A highly successful Cumberland County lawyer, he also was a reporter for the Pennsylvania Supreme Court, authoring or co-authoring 22 volumes of court decisions, and a district judge for a three years. He was a trustee of Dickinson College. In addition, he served as president of the Cumberland Valley Railroad, another highly successful enterprise, from 1841 to 1873. His greatest interest in life, however, was agriculture and the advancement of the social, political, and economic standing of Pennsylvania farmers. An agricultural innovator in his own right, he introduced pest-resistant “Mediterranean Wheat” to Pennsylvania farmers (1839) as well as the McCormick Reaper (1840).

### The Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society

The life-paths of Irvin and Watts converged at the founding convention of the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society, in Harrisburg, on January 21, 1851.

Representing Centre County, Irvin was one of 262 delegates from across the Commonwealth.

Watts—elected president of the society at this same meeting—would begin his long arc of agricultural leadership and advocacy on the state and later national levels. Over the next thirty years, he would come to be regarded as “by far the most outstanding figure in Pennsylvania agriculture,” according to historian Stevenson W. Fletcher.

Watts’s two priorities were to build the agricultural society into a powerful statewide organization and to bring a new, scientifically-based agricultural college into being. He did both within the span of four years.

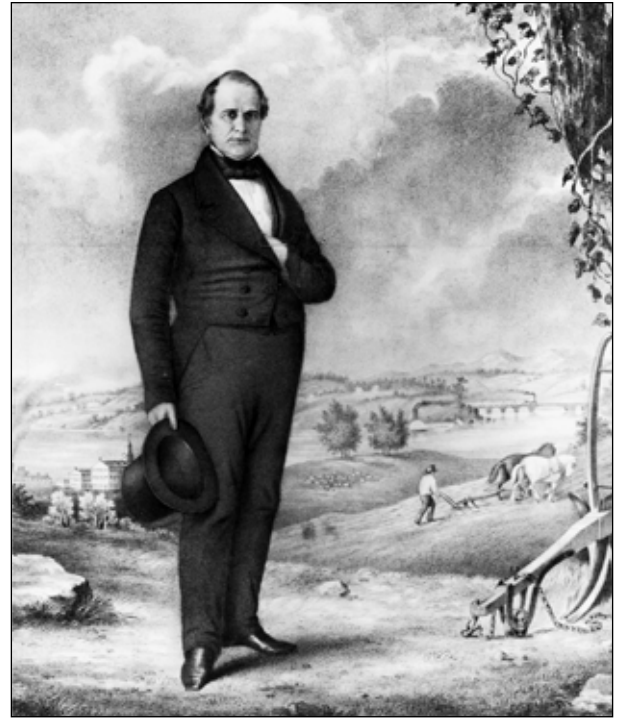
When Governor James Pollock signed the charter for the Farmers’ High School of Pennsylvania—an act passed by legislature passed on February 22, 1855—Irvin jumped at the chance to bring it to Centre County.

### Irvin Makes His Move

On that same day, Irvin wrote to the executive committee of the state agricultural society, which in turn passed his letter on to the new Board of Trustees of the Farmers’ High School. Noting the value of the school to the state at large, Irvin stated that “it would be especially beneficial to the particular district in which it shall be established, and I therefore desire its location in Centre County—If we would add dignity to labor, if we would have it held in honor by the community, we must associate it with Science, and if we would lessen the expense of acquiring Scientific Knowledge so as to bring the cost within the means of the farming community, we must connect its acquisition with manual labor.”

In this same letter, Irvin proposed offering 200 to 250 acres of free land to site the school—an offer later reduced to 200 acres.

Irvin was not alone in advocating for an agricultural college to be located in Centre County. In the wake of the January 1855 meeting of the State Agricultural Society in Harrisburg (to which Centre County had sent delegates), the Centre County Agricultural Society met on January 24. Under President George Boal, the Society passed a resolution en-



Portrait of General James Irvin in his Centre County environs.  
CCHS Thompson and Related Family Collection, 2002.06.01.98

dorsing the establishment of the Farmers’ High School and urging the legislature to issue a new charter for the institution (the original charter, passed in 1854, was to be rescinded because it called for an unworkable number of 65 trustees).

Of course, it was one thing to charter a new college; quite another to figure out where it was going to go. Thus, the chartering ignited a statewide competition with at least eight counties vying for the honor.

The first place visited by the Trustees’ site selection committee—Governor James Pollock, Frederick Watts, and Alfred Elwyn (plus four other trustees)—was James Irvin’s land on July 26, 1855. Irvin had honed his offer to one of three 200-acre farms for consideration, all of which the Trustees visited and settled on that which they deemed best. Afterwards they enjoyed a “sumptuous dinner” hosted by Mary and Moses Thompson at Centre Furnace Mansion. The next day, they departed to view offers from Erie, Allegheny, and Blair counties.

After examining those sites and receiving bids from landowners in additional counties—Perry, Huntingdon, Franklin, Union—the Trustees met in Harrisburg on September 12, 1855, to settle the matter.

### The Trustees Make Their Decision

Watts first moved to adopt “the proposition of General James Irvin,” noting that the Centre County site would “best promote the interests of the institution.” Then things got interesting. Trustees James Gowen and Alfred Elwyn made substitute motions for the offers from Blair County and Franklin County, respectively, but both motions failed. Watts then moved for a postponement of the vote, recommending instead a new selection committee to examine sites and propose a final location. Watts’s fair-handed motion was voted down, however. Then another motion was made to select the offer from Allegheny County but it too was defeated. Finally, Watts’s original motion to accept the Centre County site was approved. As the minutes of the Board of Trustees put it: “the question then recurring upon the original resolution [made by Watts] was decided in the affirmative.”

So was it unanimous? We’ll never know. “On leave given the Secretary does not here record the yeas and nays on the foregoing votes,” the minutes show.

Watts then moved to name a committee to “procure from

*Continued on page 16*

## President's Corner

Continued from page 16

Genl. James Irvin the title to the land proposed to be donated. Frederick Watts, H.N. McAllister and Alfred L. Elwyn.”

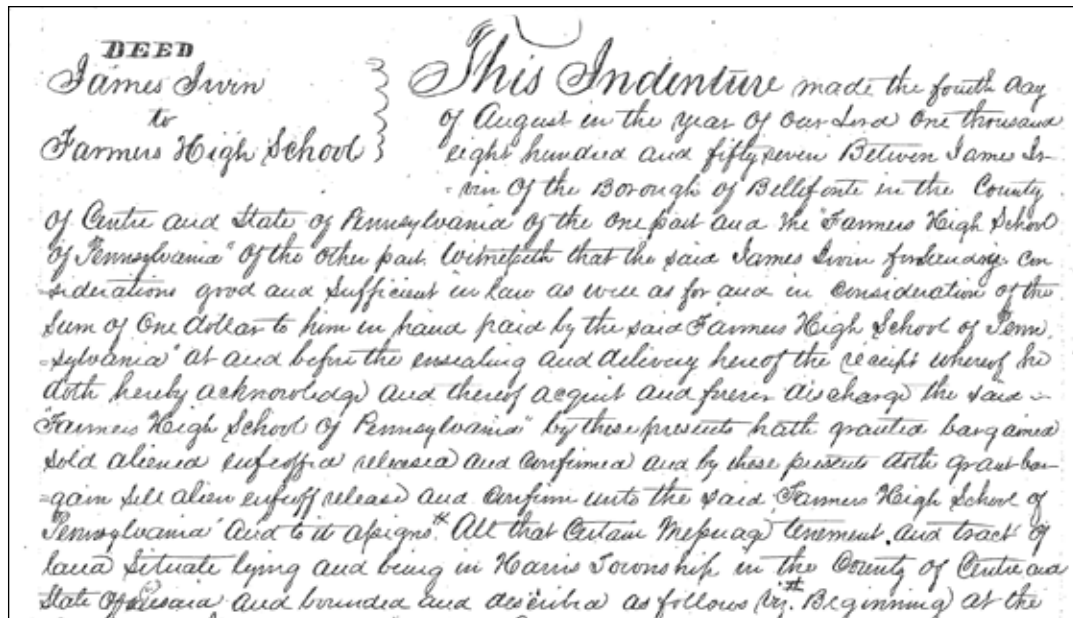
### Centre and Blair Counties Go Head to Head

There was a bit more in play at this meeting. To sweeten his offer, Irvin had proposed to provide an additional 200 acres of adjoining land for \$12,000. As Irvin described it: "...as the committee and those of the Trustees who visited the ground [on June 26] thought it would be desirable to have a larger tract than two hundred acres; I have laid off one hundred acres on the west and one hundred acres on the east making in all four hundred acres." This land would be leased for \$600 per year on the condition that it be purchased entirely for \$12,000 within five years.

In addition, Trustee Hugh N. McAllister of Centre County presented a guarantee—signed by Irvin, Andrew Curtin, and McAllister himself—that \$10,000 would be paid to the Farmers' High School upon acceptance of Irvin's offer of land: the "citizens of Centre and Huntingdon Counties have subscribed upwards of ten thousand dollars...on condition the Institution be located on the lands offered by Genl. James Irvin..." In other words, the money was a sure thing, particularly with a man of Irvin's wealth and standing as a signatory.

Elias Baker, the ironmaster of Allegheny Furnace and Forge in Altoona, Blair County, showed up at this same meeting. He had initially offered 200 acres of free land. But his offer was not as solid as it might have seemed. It depended upon a "proposition" from the citizens of Blair County to purchase an additional 200 acres of adjoining land from Baker that they would then donate to the institution. These same citizens would guarantee a payment of \$10,000. In other words, the money and additional land were contingent on the fundraising abilities of the Blair Countians.

Irvin's offer carried the day. Thus the newly chartered Farmers' High School of Pennsylvania—an experimental institu-



Dated August 4, 1857, this deed from Centre Furnace ironmaster James Irvin—with preamble shown above—conveys his personal gift of 200 acres to the Farmers' High School of Pennsylvania. Centre County Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Deed Book #21, pps. 20-21.

tion designed to instruct the sons of Pennsylvania farmers in the developing agricultural sciences—came to be sited in Centre County.

### Deeds at Long Last

As Irvin had noted, the Trustees knew they would need more than 200 acres to realize their plan. At their next meeting in Harrisburg on January 4, 1856, they voted to accept Irvin's proposition for the additional 200 acres and to take the lease of the acreage "at the price stipulated for five years with the right to purchase the same at sixty dollars per acres [\$12,000] at any time within that period."

What about the procurement of the title to the lands? The deeds would arrive, but two years later. The deed for the original 200 acres of free land was forthcoming from the Centre County Recorder of Deeds on August 4, 1857. The second deed, for the additional 200 acres of adjoining land sold for \$12,000 came through on November 4, 1857. These deeds, both written in handsome cursive, were sealed and delivered in the presence of Irvin on August 6, 1857, and again on November 6, 1857, respectively. Irvin had to show up personally before the Recorder of Deeds and the Justice of the Peace in Bellefonte to affix his seal.

There is another copy of the deed for the original 200

acres in the Pennsylvania State University Archives, in the Eberly Family Special Collections Library of Paterno Library. This version is in different handwriting and appears on faded blue paper. Is this the original that was presented to the Farmers' High School? Possibly, but not definitively.

### Deeds Now on Exhibit

The two deeds are now reproduced in large format, laminated, and on public exhibit with accompanying typed transcript in the Founders' Room of Centre Furnace Mansion. Copies are also available in the CCHS Archives. The deeds are genealogical in nature, tracing the intricate history of land ownership from the 1790s leading to Irvin's sole possession of the tracts.

As for my original quest to verify the statement that "The papers to officiate this deal are believed to have been signed in the east front parlor of the Thompsons' Centre Furnace Mansion..." I cannot find an answer. I consulted the Centre Furnace Time Book, also found in the University Archives, which noted the visit of the "State Agricultural Committee on June 26, 1855, to view the ground for the Model Farm" but could find no mention of any subsequent signing ceremony. Unfortunately, this same Time Book (1845-56) ends on June 30, 1856. There are no Time

Books to be found after that date.

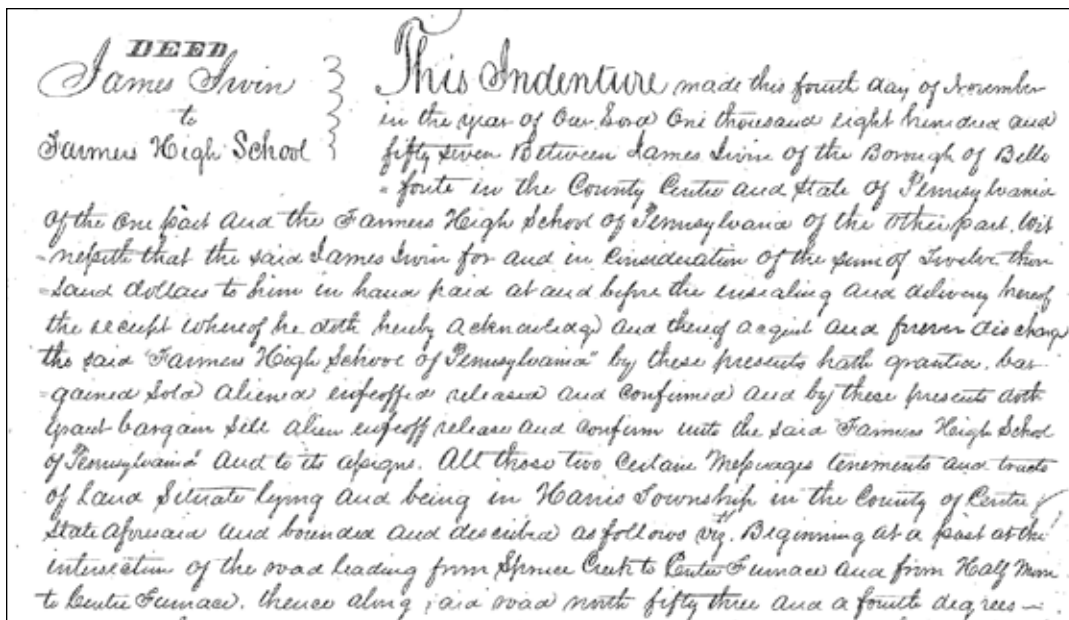
### Resolving the Purchase of the Additional 200 Acres

Apparently, the minutes of the Trustees' September 12, 1855, meeting sufficed to confirm their acceptance of Irvin's offer and allow the construction of campus buildings and grounds to proceed. At their next meeting, on January 4, 1856, in Harrisburg, they resolved "to take the additional two hundred acres at the price stipulated..."

Interestingly, Irvin's deeds to both of the 200-acre tracts arrived before the Trustees could actually purchase the additional 200 acres. At their special meeting at the Farmers' High School on March 17, 1858, the Trustees building committee reported that it was essential "to execute immediately the contract with Genl. Irvin for the purchase of the additional two hundred acres..." The deed for same had arrived four months earlier, in November 1857.

At their next meeting, on June 16, 1858, Watts, as chair of the building committee, reported that circumstances had occurred "which rendered it necessary and expedient to execute the contract with Genl. James Irvin for the purchase of the additional 200 acres of land, that they had received his deed for the land, and had executed bonds and mortgage to secure the payment for the purchase money."





Dated November 4, 1857, this second deed from James Irvin conveyed an additional 200 acres of land to the Farmers' High School for the price of \$12,000. This acreage was split into two tracts of adjoining land—100 acres to the west of the original 200 acres freely given—and 100 acres to the east. With these 400 acres, the original campus opening for instruction in February 1859 was bounded by current-day Route 322 business on the west, Park Avenue on the north, College Avenue on the south, and a point slightly east of Shortlidge Road on the east. *Centre County Office of the Recorder of Deeds, Deed Book #21, pps. 22-24.*

What was the physical extent, then, of the 400 acres that formed the original campus of the Farmers' High School? According to historian Sylvester K. Stevens, the boundaries were: "on the west by the eastern bounds of the golf course, on the north by Park Avenue, on the east by a point slightly east of Shortlidge Road, and on the south by College Avenue." We now refer to it as the historic core campus.

### Defending the Site from Criticism

The Trustees' choice to locate the Farmers' High School on Centre County land was met with something other than unabated glee. Critics across the state derided the site for its geographic inaccessibility, poor soil quality, lack of running water, etc. In his 1857 "Barn Speech" on campus, Watts defended the decision, declaring that "the most essential advantages of soil, surface, exposure, healthfulness, and centrality are combined in the ground we have met upon."

What did he mean by that? The 1857 memorial of a Trustees' committee asking for a \$50,000 appropriation provides some insight:

Soil: "The soil is a limestone clay, slightly intermixed with sand. It can be broken up to any

depth, is susceptible to the very highest degree of cultivation and improvement, and is adapted as well to horticulture as to agriculture."

Surface: "The land is all in cultivation, except about 40 acres." So most of the acreage was already producing crops. Irvin's sites were "shovel-ready," long cleared of the original hardwood forest used for charcoal making at Centre Furnace.

Exposure: "It is beautifully situated at the junction of Nittany and Penns valleys, with a gentle declivity to the south-east."

Healthfulness: With its "fresh, dry, pure air," the isolated site offered protection from the diseases and epidemics of the nineteenth century.

George Woodward, president of the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society and an ex-officio Trustee, addressed the Society's sixth annual state fair and expressed similar views:

"Centre County contains some of the best farm land and some of the best Farmers in Pennsylvania. No where are better crops of wheat and corn produced than in Nittany and Penn's valleys; and in one of the most healthful and beautiful portions...is the Farm School to be planted...The School will be some twenty miles from the Central railroad, and...that is

near enough. Boys had better be away from the temptations and annoyances peculiar to railroads, whilst acquiring education."

Centrality was a major consideration. The school was founded as a statewide public institution, non-denominational, purposely located at the geographic center of its huge constituency, and supported (theoretically) by state appropriations as well as tuition. Equally important, it was far removed from the meddling political strongholds of Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Harrisburg and the temptations of city life that farmers abhorred.

By the summer of 1856—with the deeds not yet in hand—the Trustees began to build. Construction of the campus barn and College Building (later called Old Main) were now under way. The school would open for instruction two and one-half years later, on February 16, 1859.

All of this was due to the visionary efforts of Frederick Watts and James Irvin. Through his leadership of the Pennsylvania State Agricultural Society, Watts brought the Farmers' High School of Pennsylvania into being, but Irvin brought it to Centre County.

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# CCHS Membership Surpasses 800 for Third Year in a Row

As of April 25, the 2024 CCHS membership campaign enrolled 863 members in four categories: renewing, new, sustaining, and life. This is the third consecutive year that membership has exceeded 800. This year's total of 863 members thus far is the highest to date at this same point in the two prior years. The final total in 2023 was 897 and we will be working to exceed that number over the remainder of the year. We are especially pleased with our new Sustaining Membership program, introduced in January 2023; little more than a year later, the program now enrolls 33 memberships—one third of the way to our goal of 100. For more information about becoming a Sustaining Member—requiring an autopayment of \$25 per month—go to <https://centrehistory.org/join-support/become-a-member/>. However you choose your membership, we are extremely grateful for your interest, enthusiasm, and support.

## Renewing Members

Jan Ablove Donahue & Bill Donahue  
Elliot & Bonnie Abrams  
Margaret Adam  
Kent & Mary Addis  
Joyce Adgate  
Carolyn Anderson  
Joel & Carol Anderson  
Anonymous  
Patricia Antolosky  
Frank Archibald  
Debbie Arnold  
Jean Aron  
William Asbury & Deborah Atwater  
Dan & Wendy Azzara  
Clarence & Darlene Bachmann  
Don & Charlie Bainbridge  
Keith Barry  
Ann Barton  
Henrietta Baylor  
Mary Lou Bennett  
R. Thomas & Paulette Berner  
Michael & Deborah Bezilla  
Frederick Bisbee  
Ingrid & Gordon Blood  
Diane & Berry Bloom  
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Ian Boswell  
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Joshua & Michelle Bram  
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James Brown  
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Stephen Brunner & Kathy Branigan  
Richard Bryant  
O. Richard Bundy Jr. & Christine Bundy  
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Gary & Marilyn Byers  
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Jim & Ellen Campbell  
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Lee Ann & James Cander  
Mike & Katherine Canich  
Amy & Nick Caputo  
Robert & Marge Carline  
Nancy Chiswick & Art Patterson  
Monty & Connie Christiansen  
Drs. Joseph & Christy Clapper  
Ronald & Hope Coder  
Ellen Coffman  
David & Lisa Coggins  
Catherine Cohan  
John Collins & Mary Brown  
Ted & Carla Conklin  
Annie Copeland  
Lee & Joan Coraor  
Anne Cornell & Tom Houseknecht  
Connie Cousins

Martha Cox  
Ruth Daugherty  
Alvin de Levie  
Edward DeBrasky  
Louis & Patricia Delattre  
John & Donna Diercks  
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Mary Dupuis  
Nancy Eaton  
Michele & Walter Ebaugh  
Robert Eisenbraun  
Jodi Eisenhooth  
Roger Eisinger  
Margaret Ekdahl  
Anonymous  
Terry & Janice Engelder  
Jenni Evans & Bruce Lord  
Carl Evensen  
Benjamin Fehl  
Jacob Fehl  
Linda Feltman  
Renate Ferree  
Melanie Fink  
Joe Fiocchetta  
Patti Fisher  
Michael & Clare Fitzgerald  
Heidi Nicholas & Bruce Fleischer  
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Megan Gilchrist  
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Margaret & David Gray  
Bill & Ann Gray  
Dianne Gregg  
Barbara & Chenzie Grignano  
Chris & Lianne Greshel  
Melody & Barry Grubb  
Anonymous  
Cynthia & Tom Hall  
Peg & Don Hambrick  
Marian Hammond  
Elizabeth Hanley  
Sue Hanna  
Sue Hannegan

Peggy & William Hartman  
Dan & Suzie Hawbaker  
William & Connie Hayes  
Karen & Don Hazel  
Robert & Janice Hazelton  
Sally Heffentreyer  
Judith Hefty  
Dennis & Marcia Heitzmann  
Richard G. Held  
Robert & Linda Hendrickson  
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Lynn & Julianne Herman  
Linda Higginson & Susan Youtz  
Susan Hochreiter  
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## REMEMBERING FRIENDS



Bob Donaldson, Mary Alice Graetzer, Bob Hazelton and Meli Diamanti hiking in Spring Creek Canyon.

Bob Donaldson served on the CCHS Board from 2005 to 2018 when he was given emeritus status.

As Executive Director of the Centre County Planning Commission, Bob devoted his career to urban planning. In addition to his professional commitments, he actively volunteered for CCHS, Clearwater Conser-

vancy, Bald Eagle Archeological Society, and other preservation-focused nonprofits. Bob possessed an unmatched network and was skilled at fostering connections between organizations, townships, and county agencies to advance various projects. He was a vigilant advocate for historic and cultural resources threatened by development and

infrastructure projects and advocated at countless township and county government meetings.

Bob, alongside Bob Hazelton, documented Spring Creek Canyon and other historical sites, emphasizing Native American history. His significant contributions included co-curating the CCHS 2012 exhibition *Those Who Came Before*, a collaboration with the Bald Eagle Archeological Society and the Matson Museum of Anthropology. Bob's enduring dedication and expertise enriched Centre County and CCHS, with his research materials remaining valuable resources. We sorely miss Bob's insights, wonderful stories, and ready smile when he would pop in at the Mansion to keep us informed and water house plants! He made a difference professionally and personally here at CCHS.

## In Memoriam

Donations have been received in memory of the following:

Edna Dombrowsky from Albert and Ellen Jarrett.

Fred Reed from Mary (Mimi) Reed.

Patricia Potter from Albert and Ellen Jarrett.

Betsy and Ted Taylor from: Rev. Bill & Cathy Amundsen  
J. David Ross  
Roselee Williams

Nils C. Fernelius from: John Rowland and Virginia Bramble Vincenti  
William and Patricia Tucker  
Karin Weyl

Our gratitude to the family of Nils C. Fernelius for designating the Centre County Historical Society for memorial donations.



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Your membership in the CCHS also makes the preservation possible for the Centre Furnace Mansion, Boogersburg School, and countless other explorations of our shared history and heritage – places that help us “get away” without even having to leave Centre County.

As we continue to schedule an engaging series of programs and events, we invite you to reconnect with the past and help preserve the beauty of the present through your membership. Your support means everything.

As our thanks to you for partnering with us on our mission to discover, explore, preserve, and interpret Centre County history, your membership benefits in CCHS include:

- 10% off CCHS publications (*Don't forget to mention that you are a member when purchasing books in our Museum Store. If purchasing books through our website, enter MEMBERS10 at the checkout.*)
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