

The Historic Union Cemetery in Bellefonte: An open-air museum that must be preserved

By Jim Baldwin, president, Bellefonte Cemetery Association

As a child growing up in Bellefonte, it may surprise you to learn that I played in the Union Cemetery. The section between Howard and Lamb streets was just near my childhood home. That little section didn't have graves on it, so my friends and I played football there. It was playground to me. As a teenager, I walked from my house through the cemetery to get to my friend's house who lived up by High Street. At that time there was a fence that you had to lift up to go under. That was the late 60s.

Around 1979, I bought a house on Howard Street, directly across from the cemetery.

I would often take daily walks through the cemetery. I was about 28 years old. After a couple of years, I started to pay attention to the grounds. There were no paved roads in the cemetery until 2021 when an anonymous donor generously made it possible. So, the terrain was rough. But even then, there was a lot of brush, weeds growing wild, trees needing trimmed, tombstones knocked over—you know, just unkept. Still, some time went before I thought, "Is there something I could do? Is this something I should do?"

I asked around town and learned that there was an Association in charge of the cemetery. I joined the Bellefonte Cemetery Association and went to work. I was cutting grass, shrubbery – really thinking I could make a difference in one year's time. I was out of my mind. It was a lot of work and lots to be done. Maintenance of a historic cemetery is an endless job.

Little did I know it would take me a lifetime to fix all that needed fixing.

To say that I am passionate about the cemetery is probably an understatement. I guess it makes sense, since I love history. But I wasn't always a history nut. I read a book on Lincoln once and that led me to the Civil War. I was so intrigued with the Civil War and Lincoln. Reading tombstones at the Cemetery connected me to Bellefonte history, then Centre County history which tied in with the Civil War. As I worked in the cemetery, I started reading tombstones: their names, dates, religion, sometimes their profession. It would pique my curiosity and I would research the person's name, and I would be amazed at what I learned about the person, his or her family and what they contributed to the community. I would then learn which Victorian house they lived in... the history

just goes on and on. Then you read another tombstone, and then another, then another. There is so much history to learn in the Union Cemetery.

Unfortunately, I'm at a point in my life where I can't retain all that knowledge I learned.

The new community interest that began in January of 2022 in the preservation and restoration of the Union Cemetery has reignited something in me. I am more motivated and energized that there are other people interested in the cemetery who have the same interest as I do. And, hopefully, people to take over after I'm not able to do so.

The Union Cemetery is an open-air museum. It provides links to our past, and clues to our history. Here you will find people who helped to make this town, this county, and maybe this country. Inventions were made here; fortunes were made here, and you will find these people buried in the 22 acres of the Union Cemetery. There are 930 Veterans in the Union Cemetery, 31 percent of whom fought in the Civil War, including Medal of Honor recipient George Harris and Hardman P. Petriken, who died from wounds incurred at Antietam and whose sword worn and lost was returned to his family by Confederate veteran William Robbins in a grand ceremony in April 1898. I'm proud that we have members of the United

States Colored Troops buried in the Cemetery because many cemeteries didn't allow Blacks to be buried alongside Whites.

I like to believe that some from Bellefonte and Centre County helped to win the Civil War.

Cemeteries are great teaching sites for our younger generations. When I see a group of high school students from Matt Maris's high school history class in the cemetery on a walking tour, they're engaging with local history.

When I see students from Penn State helping to clean headstones and creating an online walking tour for us, I know that they'll leave with the knowledge that a number of leaders who helped found Penn State and shape its early development are buried in Bellefonte's Union Cemetery. It all gives me hope. It gives me hope that there are just a few, or just one, who understand what this cemetery means.

Preserving the Union Cemetery and preserving its records are vital to the legacy of those who came before us.



Image from Facebook: Union Cemetery in Bellefonte, PA

About the Centre County Historical Society

☞ Contact Us ☞

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@centrecountyhistory.org.

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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 Boogersburg 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 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.

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.



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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.

Upcoming Activities

Please note that reservations are required for some programs due to limited seating by calling 814-234-4779 or reserving through the event listing at centrehistory.org.

Centre Furnace Mansion Tours:

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/visit for more information.

SUN March 12, 2:00 p.m.: CCHS Annual Meeting CCHS Members are invited to join the Board of Governors for a recap of 2022. This will be held via Zoom.

SUN March 19, 2:00 p.m.: Reporting the Civil War by Ford Risley at the Centre Furnace Mansion. RSVP required.

TUE May 2, 7:00 p.m. Lay This Body Down Book Signing and talk by Charles Fergus

WED May 10 - THUR May 11: Centre Gives @ CentreGives.org online fundraiser.

SAT May 13, 9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.: 27th Annual Plant Celebration & Garden Sale at the Centre Furnace Mansion.

SUN June 4 Centre County Explorers Day Featuring demonstrations, Mansion open house, light refreshments and more!

SUN July 30, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.: Legacy of the Civilian Conservation Corps at Poe Valley State Park

Programs to See Again

See recordings of some past CCHS talks on our YouTube channel at: <https://rb.gy/sfxzk7>.

THUR 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. It's around the corner! Weekly gardening at the Centre Furnace Mansion. All are welcome. Starting mid-March, or as weather permits. Call 814-234-4779 for more information.

Stay Connected

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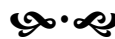
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President's Corner

By Roger L. Williams



One of the unexpected joys of my work with the Centre County Historical Society is learning from members and friends about their deep familial ties to Centre County that go back generations.

As a historian, my special interest is Penn State history through the first 50 years, roughly the last half of the nineteenth century, as well as the larger context of the American land-grant college movement and higher education history in general.

Thus I was thrilled to chat recently with my old friend Lynn Herman, now a State College resident and a retired member of the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, having represented the old 77th District from 1983 through 2006.

Lynn told me that he is a direct descendant of John Herman, whose claim to fame is that he was the first "employee" of the Farmers' High School to actually live on campus before it opened to students in February 1859. John Herman was, in fact, Lynn's great-great-great paternal grandfather.

But first, a bit about Lynn. A native of Philipsburg, Lynn attended the University of Pittsburgh, graduating magna cum laude in 1978 with two degrees: a B.A. in political science and a B.A. in history. In 1980, he earned his master of public administration degree. Lynn entered politics in 1982, being elected to the state House at the age of 26 and serving for nearly a quarter century. He served on the House Education Committee and chaired its Higher Education Subcommittee, on which he was a strong advocate for Penn State. In 2006, he received the inaugural Friend of Penn State Legislative Award sponsored by the Penn State Alumni Association. In retirement, Lynn has stayed active in ways too numerous to mention. He served, for instance, on College Township Council from 2013 to 2016, when he resigned because of his move to State College. He currently chairs the State College Borough Tree Commission.



Lynn Herman

Lynn has great historical interests and sensibilities. He is president of the Central Pennsylvania Civil War Roundtable, president of the Centre County Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, and president and active Civil War re-enactor of Company "C" of the 148th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Regiment. And Lynn has done extensive genealogical and historical research to flesh out the John Herman story.

About John Herman

So who was his great-great-great grandfather, John Herman? For want of a better term, he was farm foreman for the Farmers' High School from 1857-59. Herman was hired by William Waring, who was serving as general superintendent of the Farmers' High School. Waring was hired on January 6, 1856, by President Frederick Watts and the Board of Trustees. Waring's charge was to lay out the grounds, agricultural plots, and buildings, and manage all of it—a 200-acre plot donated by James Irvin, ironmaster of nearby Centre Furnace, with the option of buying 200 adjoining acres. Not surprisingly, Waring needed help.



Photo of tintype thought to be John Herman

Enter John Herman, an experienced hand at farming. According to research by Jackie Melander, president emerita of the Centre County Historical Society, John Herman and his wife were probably tenant farmers in the 1840s on land owned by James Irvin, along the old road that is now Elmwood Street in Lemont. John Herman also worked for the Centre Furnace operation. There is a reference to John and his brother William in an 1848 Centre Furnace ledger: "June 16, 1848—John and William Herman, one day mowing." Various tax records show John Herman living in Harris Township in the mid to late 1840s; residing on Centre Furnace property from 1850-53;

Continued on page 14

Director's Message

Fall and winter have been bustling seasons since our last Mansion Notes published in early November. Leading into the holiday season, CCHS's signature Stocking Stuffer holiday market was a grand success attended by over 800 members and friends.

This was closely followed by the joint meeting and program of the CCHS and Central Pennsylvania Civil War Round Table featuring Jan Lauer who gave a fascinating talk about Civil War era dressmaking. She featured the history of dressmaker Elizabeth Keckley who was born into slavery and later become the personal dressmaker and confidante to Mary Todd Lincoln.

CCHS co-hosted a meeting in which Dr. Dan Marriott's LArch 414 studio class at Penn State presented their semester-end student presentations about various aspects and exploration of the 322 corridor in Penns-Brush Valley Rural Historic District. The product of these presentations is nearly finished and will be hosted on our website at: centrehistory.org/connector by mid-February as a resource for community members and organizations to understand the process and options for design for the State College Area Connector project.

We have continued moving forward with restoration work at the Centre Furnace Mansion with the help of CCHS Board member Alan Popovich, AIA leading efforts. We started with shutters, and now window sashes that could be done in shop by Anders Olsen Construction and Renovation in Centre Hall. Fundraising is concurrently underway.

2023 is getting off to a great start. In January we hosted the John H. Ziegler Historic Preservation Awards program in the historic Pennsylvania Match Factory in Bellefonte. A fitting location for this year with Bellefonte well represented in the 2022 award nominations.

A display case exhibit at the University Park Airport has been installed about the early air mail history in Bellefonte.

Thanks to many members and friends, we have had a successful 2022 Annual Fund campaign and our 2023 Membership campaign is well underway to generate much needed funding.

Finally, we are thankful for the writers and presenters who make possible and available to the public so much rich programming and articles in the Centre County Encyclopedia of History and Culture and our Mansion Notes newsletter

The common thread that ties all of these CCHS activities together is the people who help make them happen through their generosity. Donors, members, business sponsors, granting agencies, volunteers, friends and our Board of Governors and committee chairs provide the critical foundation for CCHS on which success can be built and preservation efforts grow.

With great appreciation and best wishes for a healthy and wonderful New Year.

~ Mary Sorensen

Upcoming Programs and Events

Reporting the Civil War

Talk by Ford Risley
Sunday, March 26, 2:00 p.m.
Centre Furnace Mansion



This talk, based on the book *Civil War Journalism* by Ford Risley, presents a unique synthesis of the journalism of both the North and South during the war.

This program is part of the Henszey-Pyle Distinguished Author Series underwritten by the Anne Hamilton Henszey Pyle and Kenneth B. Pyle Educational Fund for Regional Heritage Preservation (Henszey-Pyle Fund.)

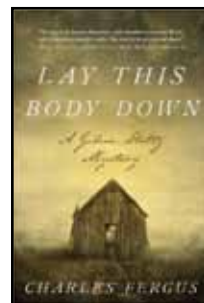
CCHS Virtual Annual Meeting

Sunday, March 12, 2:00 p.m. via Zoom

We invite you to the Annual Meeting of the Centre County Historical Society on March 12 at 2:00 p.m. After the business portion of the meeting, Mary Sorensen and Alan Popovich will present program about Phase II of the Mansion Restoration project. This program will be held via Zoom. A link to register will sent via email and will be posted at CentreHistory.org.

Lay This Body Down

Book Signing by Charles Fergus
Tuesday, May 2, 7:00 p.m.
Centre Furnace Mansion



State College native, Charles Fergus writes mysteries set in Pennsylvania in the Jacksonian Era of the 1830s. He will present a talk and book signing about his third Gideon Stoltz Mystery, *Lay This Body Down*.

This program is part of the Henszey-Pyle Distinguished Author Series underwritten by the Anne Hamilton Henszey Pyle and Kenneth B. Pyle Educational Fund for Regional Heritage Preservation (Henszey-Pyle Fund.)

Centre Gives

May 10 & 11

On **May 10 & 11** your gift of \$10 or more through Centre Gives helps the Centre County Historical Society compete for a larger share of the stretch pool provided by the Centre Foundation and Hamer Foundation as well as qualify for additional prize money! We hope you will consider support of CCHS this coming May 10 & 11. Details will follow by postcard and email.

28th Annual Plant Celebration and Sale

Saturday, May 13, 9:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.
Centre Furnace Mansion

Centre Furnace Gardeners will host a favorite Centre Furnace Mansion tradition featuring native and non-native plants from local and regional growers, and from the Mansion Gardens. Details will follow by postcard and email.

2022 John H. Ziegler Historic Preservation Awards of the Centre County Historical Society

The Centre County Historical Society recently hosted its 34th Annual Historic Preservation Awards in January. Over three decades, the awards program has recognized 240 individuals and organizations for their outstanding work to preserve Centre County history. If you missed the Awards Program, the C-NET filming of the program is available on C-NET and on our website at: CentreHistory.org/events/awards. You will also find past year's programs and award nomination forms on the page. Photos at the right are listed in order of their following awards. We congratulate and thank the 2022 award recipients for their commitment to Centre County history and preservation.



EDUCATION & ADVOCACY

Patricia House ~ Bellefonte Art Museum

For efforts to preserve the Linn House in Bellefonte while repurposing it into a cultural treasure in Centre County. It now stands as an engaging showcase of art, history and education through programs and exhibitions.

HISTORY AND HERITAGE

Barbara Franco ~ The Advent Historical Society in Milesburg

For decades of commitment to local history through advocacy, research, documentation and preservation of the Marsh Creek Advent Church and its history. The Church was recently added to the National Register of Historic Places in November 2022 thanks to Barbara Franco and the Advent Historical Society.

PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

Jonathan Virgilio and Chris Virgilio ~ Gamble Mill in Bellefonte

For restoration and rehabilitation of the historic Gamble Mill in Bellefonte and for contributing to community revitalization through preservation. Gamble Mill was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

SUPPORT AND VOLUNTEERISM

Jim Baldwin ~ Union Cemetery

For three decades of volunteerism and dedication to maintaining the historic Bellefonte Union Cemetery and documenting the rich history that it contains.

THE JACQUELINE J. MELANDER AWARD

Joan Hawbaker Brower and Cathy Horner, Aaronsburg to Zion: The Amazing Centre County Postcard Collection of Joan Hawbaker Brower

For outstanding and long-term advocacy of and commitment to historic preservation in Centre County through Joan Brower's decades of collecting and curating her postcard collection. She collaborated with co-author Cathy Horner to write a visual history of Centre County. Making the history of communities in every corner of the County come to life through the postcards.

CCHS PRESIDENT'S AWARD

Beverly Lipski

For long-term and outstanding service to the Centre County Historical Society since 2000 through her dedicated weekly work as the Society's Garden Committee Chair, as a long-time Centre Furnace Mansion Gardener, and more recently, as the CCHS Treasurer.

We extend our gratitude to Centre County Government for C-NET sponsorship and to the American Philatelic Society for contributing venue space. Many thanks to Tom Berner for contributing portrait photography and David Lembeck for graphic design for the Historic Preservation Awards. Special thanks to Awards co-chairs: Katie O'Toole, emcee and Ford Risley, and our Awards Committee members: Rebecca Inlow, Matt Maris, Jackie Melander, Bob Hazelton and Dick Pencek. Thank you to event supporters: Ted and Carla Conklin, Elizabeth Dutton, Chris Igo, Linda Kao, Lynn Moore, Beth Raney, Beth Richards, Heather Ricker Gilbert, Lee and Dee Stout. And thank you to those who assisted with the event: Susan Bowser, Joyce Christini, Elizabeth Dutton, Katie Frieden, Carol Phillips, Jackie Esposito, Steve and Carol Gentry, Chris Igo, Deb McManus, Ann Mollenbrock, Gloria Nieweg, Bob Potter, Lynn Royse, Johanna Sedgwick, Maddie Shaffer, Annie Taylor, Suzanne Thompson, Roger Williams.





Thank you!

We are and many members and friends turned out to purchase treasures



captions

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Gardener's Corner

N^o_o THUR 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. Weekly gardening at the Centre Furnace Mansion. All are welcome. Starting mid-March, or as weather permits. Call 814-234-4779 for more information.

Docents Corner

T^his s

Library Corner

Library piece – Betty Arnold and Judy Speedy

Nittany Lion Selection Committee

*By Jackie R. Esposito, Penn State University
Archivist & Librarian Emerita*

On a cold blustery January weekend in Happy Valley, the Nittany Lion Selection Committee (11 Members) gathered to choose the next “Man in the Suit.” As the co-author of *The Nittany Lion: An Illustrated Tale*, I was invited to serve on the Committee. It was not my first selection committee assignment but each one is unique based on the qualifications of the candidates and the overwhelming importance of the process. As at least one candidate commented, the Nittany Lion represents Penn State traditions, values, heritage, honor, and “pawsitivity” which makes the selection critically important to the University’s history, image, and brand.

The committee consists of coaches, former Lions, fund-raising support personnel, alumni association representatives, and Intercollegiate Athletics staff. The criteria for selection is based on five (5) intrinsic “cheer” concepts. Each candidate should have a strong understanding of the nature and responsibilities of the position, be able to entertain an audience, be a great representative of PSU, have outstanding communication skills, and display excellent athleticism. To that end the process of selection has three (3) phases.

Phase One features a written application answering numerous questions including high school activities, PSU sports attended, the candidate’s feelings about the Nittany Lion’s importance to the University, suggested performance improvements, personal skills or traits that a candidate brings to the job, motivation for trying-out, answers to the question why should you be selected as mascot?, aspects that interest the candidate, proficiency in sports and/or other skills, and finally, three personal references. The application is due at least three weeks before tryouts begin.

Phase Two features the physical tryout. This aspect includes a two-minute skit, a thirty-second improv, fifty (50) one-armed push-ups, and a cowbell performance. The physicality of the job requires that the tryout represent key aspects of the on-field performance requirements.

Phase Three is a one-on-one interview between the candidate and the committee members. Each committee member reviews the applications, attend the tryouts, and comes to the interview with at least three (3) questions for each candidate.

When all three phases have been completed, the Committee meets as a whole to select the next mascot. The process involves anticipating time management skills, understanding charisma and personality, representation of Intercollegiate Athletics and PSU, as well as valuing the 100+ years of tradition, heritage and legacy behind the mascot’s image.

The 2023 Nittany Lion Mascot Selection Committee evaluated eleven (11) candidates (including the first female in 25 years) and chose ??? for the post. As required by tradition, the mascot is not revealed until his last performance where he takes off his head before a hometown crowd. His first performance will be at the April 2023 Blue-White Game. It will be preceded by training with

the current mascot and the Cheer Squad under the tutelage of Curtis L. White, Jr., Penn State Spirit Team Director.

Students and Interns

M^{any}

From the Archives

Building State College

By Judy Heberling

The place we now know as State College was a latecomer to the town-building game. In 1860 it was barely a dot on the map, just a post office called Farmer’s High School, surrounded by a smattering of farms and a small settlement around Centre Furnace, Moses Thompson’s nearby charcoal iron-making plantation. The area grew slowly, keeping pace with the development of Farmer’s High School, which became Pennsylvania State College in 1875, twenty years after the school’s founding.

In 1896, the year the village of State College became a borough, a young barber named George Graham moved his family down from Philipsburg to take advantage of the business opportunities he saw developing all around him. More than 600 people lived in the small town by then, and the college enrolled about 300 students. Years later Graham reminisced about State College as he had found it in 1896, and the Centre County Historical Society published his short memoir in 1976.

The population boom at the turn of the century created a housing shortage, a situation the local newspaper highlighted in 1904. It was especially acute for those looking to rent, and, as a result, boarding houses and back alley structures sprang up to meet the demand. As the State College walking tour brochures tell us, “In 1912 more than 70 building tradesmen—contractors, carpenters, painters and paperhangers, plasterers, plumbers, stone and brick masons—provided their services to a town with a population of only 1,650.”

The town was ripe for real estate development, and several astute businessmen whose families owned large farms in the immediate vicinity of downtown State College created real estate and contracting companies to sell and develop the suburban lots they carved out of their property. Members of two of those families, the Fosters and the Hamiltons, have recently donated interesting collections to the Centre County Historical Society, including material that helps document the development of the area immediately south of downtown State College in the early 20th century.

The Fosters were farmers and merchants, whose homestead was a large Victorian farmhouse on the



Foster Building c. 1910 at 142 E. College Ave., State College. The horse-drawn wagon is parked in front of what was then the Post Office. CCHS Places & Spaces Collection 1998.PS.1988

high area south of what became the Beaver and Pugh intersection. William S. Foster, who established the family farm, was an associate of many of the important early business and professional men of the county. His son William L. Foster owned a general store in downtown State College and constructed the town’s first apartment building, at the corner of College Avenue and Pugh Street. The Foster family owned and developed several blocks of South Allen Street and many of the east-west streets in that neighborhood and sold lots in the Highland Park Addition through their Highland Park Real Estate Co.

In 2019 and 2021 Patricia Sosinski and Rebecca Foster donated two complementary collections of Foster Family material. Included are deeds and legal papers, photographs, financial records, personal correspondence, and genealogical records for William S. and William L. Foster and their immediate families, as well as material related to David and George Boal, Thomas Dale, James Beaver, and other 19th and 20th-century family and business associates.



The Highlands. CCHS Thompson Family Collection 1999.26.32.22

John Hamilton was a prominent farmer, treasurer of the Pennsylvania State College, and superintendent of the college farms, who married Moses Thompson’s daughter Elizabeth. In 1890 the Hamiltons built a large Queen Anne-style house they called “The Highlands,” up the hill from the intersection of Locust Lane and Beaver Avenue. The Delta Upsilon fraternity acquired the property in 1922 and subsequently remodeled the house in the then-popular Tudor Revival style, giving it the look it has today. John and Elizabeth Hamilton’s daughter Anne married Joseph W. Henszey in 1906, and the Hamilton-Henszey family, along with John Henszey’s partner Eugene H. Lederer, ultimately developed the extensive Hamilton farm property into the Highlands subdivision of upscale residences and attractive fraternity houses. Lederer also was instrumental in developing his wife Lucy Kemmerer’s family property into residential neighborhoods adjoining the Hamilton subdivision.

In 2022 Anne Hamilton Henszey Pyle, a direct descendant of the Thompsons, Hamiltons, and Henszeys, and her husband Kenneth Pyle gave the Centre County Historical Society a large collection of Hamilton Family letters, diaries, and photographs, all related to life in State College in the late 19th through mid-20th century. This collection, along with other material in the archives of the Centre County Historical Society, including drawings, plans, and photographs related to a number of significant area architects, gives us further insight into many of the people and town-building enterprises that helped lay the foundation for the vibrant State College we know today.

Recent Acquisitions

November 2022 - January 2023



Ogee mantel clock on the mantel of the CFM period kitchen.

2022.22 CCC chest from Poe Valley CCC camp.

Gift of Daniel Wolfe

2022.23 VCR tapes of films made by the Penn State Film Studio in the late 1950s.

Gift of Robert Struble

2022.24 Ogee mantel/wall clock with reverse painting of “City Spring Baltimore” on glass. Clock once belonged to Mary Armstrong Beaver with note attributing it to the Centre Furnace Mansion.

Gift of Marjorie Tuthill

2022.25 Late 19th Century hearing device.

Gift of Elizabeth Manlove

2023.01

Gift of Louise Heberling

2023.02 Collection of Bellefonte calendars, photos and postcards from 2001-2023. Also books for the CCHS library and museum store.

Gift of Candace Kent

Grants

The Centre County Historical Society is grateful for grant support from the Lumber Heritage Region Mini-Grant program provided through the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation and Conservation. This grant will help fund interpretive signage and Centre County Explorers Passport materials.

Airport Exhibit

This s

Union Cemetery

Continued from cover page



Image from Facebook: Union Cemetery in Bellefonte

Current Preservation Efforts:

When co-founders James Dunlop and James Harris laid out Bellefonte in 1795, they set aside land to be used as a public burial place forever. It was called the “Bellefonte Cemetery.”

According to Linn’s History, James Burnside, Edward C. Humes, James T. Hale and Hugh N. McAllister purchased between four and five acres adjoining the Bellefonte graveyard and fenced it with a view to the formation of a cemetery. “A meeting of the citizens was held on the 14th of June and a resolution passed to connect the old graveyard therewith by removing the East fence, and that the corporation to be formed, called ‘The Bellefonte Cemetery Association,’ should take charge of the grounds.”

The Articles of Incorporation for the Bellefonte Cemetery Association were filed May 2, 1856, by Burnside, Humes, Hale and McAllister.

The charter was entered in the Office for the Recording of Deeds on July 19, 1859.

The Bylaws, they wrote, established a “superintendent” who was to live on the property of the cemetery to lock and unlock the gate, attend to visitors, “maintain the same in proper conditions,” as well as handle funerals, and even dig the graves.

We no longer have a caretaker nor do we own the gatehouse. I guess you could say I am the superintendent. Of course, times have changed in terms of funeral homes and grave diggers, but the founding fathers of the Union Cemetery put the Association and its managers in charge of the property. It’s a role we all take seriously.

Of course, back then, it was all woods. According to the articles, they thought about the fact that the “avenues and walks” needed to be free of grass and obstruction, and the trees and shrubbery in the woods needed to be trimmed.

They thought about vandalism of trees, gravesites, tombstones, and even the discharging of firearms in the cemetery, writing that any person willfully doing these things “shall be liable to a fine or not less than five or more than \$100, and an imprisonment at the discretion of the Court.” They even had a policy in place about dogs, stating, “No dogs will be permitted on the grounds under any circumstances.”

While the charter was created in 1856, the first burials were much earlier. William Harris, who was from Nova Scotia and who practiced medicine in Bellefonte in 1798, is recorded as the first burial in April 1806. Cemetery documents have the oldest legible tombstone being that of James

Smith, owner of Smithfield, who died in 1808. (Smith is buried near the Dunlop family in the Old Grounds.)

Think about that: 1806. 1856. 2023. That’s 217 years of graves buried in the Cemetery.

A lot has happened in 217 years. What happens 217 years from now?

The Victorians romanticized the relationship between the living and the dead. History tells us that cemeteries doubled as places where one could picnic on a Sunday, with children playing games among the headstones and elegant ladies and gentlemen promenading along the avenues.

I don’t think the Victorians or the founding fathers thought about what happens when these large headstones settle, or the ground erodes over time, or what snow, ice, and decades of moisture do to headstones. What happens when stones break, fall, crack, or trees planted grow and uproot stones, or that little critters called voles will make their homes. Or, even when cemeteries run out of space. And, they definitely didn’t think about grass growing (and growing) between stones or the equipment needed to maintain acres of headstones in varying sizes and placement. It all takes money and people.

The Union Cemetery is among one of the oldest in the country. That’s just my guess considering that Arlington National Cemetery was created in 1864. Compared to other cemeteries, the Union Cemetery is small with just 22 acres and nearly 9000 at rest here, including 930 Veterans, three former Pennsylvania governors, Penn State founding fathers, members of the USCT, and of course, the co-founders of Bellefonte, Harris and Dunlap. That’s a lot of burial cards. Yes, cards.

About 12 years ago, I transferred all the burial cards to computer, using the advent of Find a Grave to help me complete records. Since I had a fulltime job, it took about five years.

The records of those buried in the Union Cemetery are of great importance. Some of you may have been involved in the cemetery inventory project started by R. Steven Houtz of the Centre County Genealogical Society in the 1980s to compile in book form all of the cemetery inscriptions in Centre County.

Lisa Carey, a veteran and volunteer board member of the Association, has taken on the huge task of preserving the records of the cemetery and making them accessible. We’ll soon have the records online and the cemetery graves and maps in digital format. We now have a website, online donations, email and a Facebook page.

Unlike most cemeteries, the Union Cemetery is managed by a volunteer board of managers with officers. Prior to my joining, there was always a full board in place, but people died over the years and their positions remained vacant. For many years, it was just a handful of us on the board doing what we could do. Vicki Benner, who lived next to the cemetery, and I took on the mowing and Paul Badger still handles the finances. Of course, it just wasn’t enough to really handle all that needs to be done.

Bellefonte Borough has been extraordinary in its assistance throughout the years. We have had a long partnership with the Rockview Prison, which allowed its Inmate Detail to help with mowing and weeding—two of the biggest tasks we have. That detail was pulled during the pandemic. Thankfully, it returned this past growing season. We also were blessed with a volunteer board member, David Sexton, who not only is knowledgeable about the commercial-grade lawn mowers, but who also dedicates more than 30 hours

Continued on page 13

Union Cemetery

Continued from page 12

a week, mowing and weeding. We need more people helping with grounds and new commercial equipment.

We've had amazing media coverage over the last year which brought in new volunteers for community cleanup days, private donations and grants. This was the first time we've applied (and received) a tourism grant from the Happy Valley Adventure Bureau, as well as participating in the Centre County Day of Caring and the National Wreaths Across America.

Members—those who have loved ones buried in the Cemetery—now have a more direct point of contact with us and our online donation on our website allows anyone to make a gift to help in the preservation and restoration efforts.

One of the most powerful forms of community assistance came from Steven Snyder of Snyder & Co. Monuments in Tyrone. After seeing a media story, he reached out and offered to raise some fallen headstones. I had no idea of what goes into doing something like this, so it was a great learning experience. Because of his expertise and equipment, we were able to raise four headstones on a Saturday in August. One of those headstones was that of the McGarvey sisters, Blanc and Mary. Mary had a photography studio in her house at a time when women didn't own businesses. The stone was about 1200 pounds. Sometime around 2010, two young children were playing hide-and-go-seek and knocked down the headstone. A lot of these large old stones are set with just two iron pins which over the years will erode, causing stones to simply topple over in a strong wind let alone someone leaning against it. We estimate we have about 200 such stones that need some kind of resetting, repair or replacement.

Will it all get done? Well, I was foolish enough once to think I could fix everything in a year, so I won't make that mistake. But, if we can keep up this momentum, I am excited by the idea that someday in my lifetime all 22 acres will be mowed, weeded, free of holes, all 9,000 headstones upright and cleaned on the same day, every day. Members and visitors will take walking tours, sit on benches to enjoy a picnic with loved ones, access history and stories at their fingertips, and the Union Cemetery will have a working foundation, Veteran Day services and events and be a National Park landmark.

When I take my walks through town, I like to stop across the street from Governor Hastings' mansion, close my eyes, and picture the horse-drawn carriages pulling up the driveway to the tall white columns, letting out dignitaries, senators, and other important people as they walk up the stairs to be greeted by Governor Hastings and his wife.

I guess I have the same romantic vision for Union Cemetery as the Victorians.



Image from Facebook: Union Cemetery in Bellefonte

2022 Annual Fund

Many, many thanks to all who have contributed to our 2022 Annual Fund Campaign! This fund provides much-needed income to pay operating and maintenance expenses for our buildings and grounds, support our small professional staff, and otherwise pay for so much of what we do.

Donations received October 1, 2022-February 1, 2023.

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John Herman

Continued from page 3

and eventually living on the property of the Farmers' High School from 1857-59. It should be noted that Centre Furnace originally was in Harris Township until 1875, when College Township was carved out.

The first campus building to be erected was a large barn, designed by Frederick Watts and completed at a cost of \$3,500 in late 1856. Construction on Old Main, then called the "College Building," had started on June 24, 1856, with excavators doing the preliminary work. The first stones of the foundation were laid on August 18, 1856. The "West Wing" of the College Building would be completed and ready for occupancy by February 1859, but the entire building—designed to house 330 students and everything else—would not be finished until December 1863.

The college farmhouse, later named Oak Cottage, was built in 1856-57 at a cost of \$1,500. It was located directly north of the College Building (later Old Main), across what would become Pollock Road, and just east of present-day Old Botany.

Waring, as farm superintendent, was not the first to live in it, however: The first occupant was John Herman. His first wife, the former Mary Kline, had died in 1851, but they had a son, Charles C. Herman, who became a 1st Sergeant in Company "C" of the 148th Pennsylvania—the so-called "Centre County Regiment," the re-enacting vestige of which Lynn Herman is now president! Charles was mortally wounded at Chancellorsville on May 3, 1863, and died on July 1 of the same year. Mary also gave birth to two other sons, Moses and Rubin. John Herman remarried Nancy Shirk and the couple produced six children, three dying in infancy and three—Robert, Jacob, and Sara—surviving into adulthood.

About Oak Cottage

As Waring described the structure in his report of 1857 to Frederick Watts: "A farmhouse now occupied by the family of Mr. John Herman (newly appointed farm foreman), a handsome cottage of appropriate architectural design and found to be very comfortable...It contains on the first floor a parlor, a large and pleasant dining room, kitchen, buttry, pantry, closet, two entry halls and three first hearths; and on the upper floor, five chambers with closets; and has ample



*Residence of Prof. Wm. G. Waring, 1860.
Photo from Penn State Libraries*

cellars. A filtering cistern in the rear is 27 feet deep and will supply the purest and best water in the warmest months..."

And so, in the rude, isolated encampment that was the aborning Farmers' High School, the John Herman family lived in relative comfort. Although there is little in the historical record about Herman, his work as Waring's foreman involved getting the Farmers' High School ready to go in the years from 1857 through 1859. Construction continued on the College Building but came to a temporary halt in the summer of 1858 as the contractors went bankrupt. Meanwhile, roads leading to the school were laid out and petitions for a mail route to the school were submitted. Other facilities such as corn cribs, wagon sheds, cisterns, and other

appurtenances were under way as well. The West Wing of the College Building and the surrounding farm and fields were sufficiently usable when the school opened on February 16, 1859, with 69 students and four faculty members.

By that time, Waring had been named acting principal of the school and, accordingly, was encouraged to live in the farmhouse occupied by the Herman family. The Warings, having relocated from their nursery near Oak Hall, spent a few troubled and unhappy months there. On August 27, 1859, seven months after the school had opened and two months before founding President Evan Pugh would arrive on campus, Waring wrote to Trustee Hugh N. McAllister of Bellefonte: "Since the death of her little boy (said to have been the first death on campus) Mrs. Waring seems unable to bear up against the annoyances of her hemmed in and prison-like life and insists strongly on moving..."

Move they did and soon after the house became a residence for various vice presidents and faculty members through the 1860s into the early 20th century. By the 1890s, however, the house had been moved from its original site. Interestingly, after the death of Penn State's seventh president and "second founder" George Atherton in 1906, his widow, Frances, occupied the first floor of the house from 1908 until her death in 1913. Frances's daughter Helen lived with her for two years, until her marriage in 1910. Oak Cottage was home to Chi Omega sorority from 1929 to 1948.

The Rest of the Story

The Herman family moved out of Oak Cottage, back to Harris Township. In 1860 he was listed as a "sadler," residing on the property of Emmanuel Erb, according to township tax records. John Herman died on February 20, 1861, at age 41. He is buried in the Spring Creek Presbyterian Cemetery, near Centre Hills Country Club, alongside his first wife, Mary.



Tombstone of John Herman

After John's death, his second wife, Nancy Shirk Herman, married Robert Craig (1825-87). In 1890, three years after Craig died, Nancy bought a plot of land for \$350 on College Avenue from joint owners E.C. Humes and sitting Pennsylvania Governor James A. Beaver. On it she built a boarding house for Penn State students, which she operated until her death in 1904. Her property lives on to the present day, however. The "Craig/Tavern House," as it was recorded in the deed book, became the nucleus of what is now The Tavern Restaurant. Lynn Herman verified as much with the aid of the former owner, the late beloved Pat Daugherty, and Pat's friend Whit Yeagley, who had researched the deeds to The Tavern.

And old Oak Cottage? In 1889, it was moved about 100 yards north, into "the woods"—a site that is today just west of Mueller Laboratory (1963) and east of Pattee (1940) and Paterno Libraries (2000). This last vestige of Penn State's earliest years was demolished in 1972, because it was judged to have outlived its usefulness and was too expensive to maintain. (The 1856 Watts barn was moved in 1889 and destroyed by fire in 1891; the original College Building—by then called Old Main—was razed and rebuilt on the same site in 1929-30).

But there was at least some protest. Shortly before his

John Herman

Continued from page 14

retirement in 1972, the eminent faculty historian Philip S. Klein lamented thus to the Centre Daily Times: “How can we believe that a University, aspiring to greatness, will indifferently throw on the dump the one original building left on campus, the only one which every alumnus has seen since the first graduating class, and one which is not a monstrosity, but a tiny jewel in its human and artistic appeal.”

The end of the story? Not quite. Lynn Herman lobbied vigorously with the University and the Penn State Alumni Association to have a campus historical marker dedicated to Oak Cottage. The marker was installed just off Pollock Road and unveiled on June 15, 2001, near the cottage’s original site.



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Remembering Friends

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Thank You

We are thankful for the many things that people do every day to help out with CCHS. Whether through service, donated items, or providing program support. We thank the following for their contributions:

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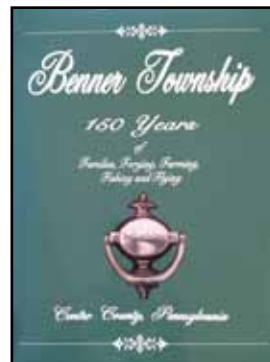
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Museum Store

New to the CCHS Museum Store are two necklaces created by local artist Claire Lorts. Claire has been using slag from local iron furnace sites to create beautiful pendants. Stop by to see the artistry created from this interestingly beautiful, yet discarded material. For more information about Claire’s “Stones with a Story” visit Clairelorts.com.



Benner Township: 150 years of Families, Forging, Farming, Fishing and Flying is back in stock! This book is filled with pictures and stories about the families that settled in Benner Township and the industries that followed. It can also be purchased online through our Museum Store at CentreHistory.org.



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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.

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