



# NEWS RELEASE

## CENTRE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
DATE: May 27, 2025  
CONTACT: Mary Sorensen  
PH: (814) 234-4779

### **Boogersburg School Open House**

1021 Fox Hill Road, State College  
SUNDAY, JUNE 1, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

**State College, PA** – The **Centre County Historical Society (CCHS)** will hold a public open house and celebration of the newly restored **Boogersburg School**, 1021 Fox Hill Road, State College, from 1:00 – 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, June 1. A brief welcome and recognition of those who contributed to the restoration will be held at 1:30 p.m.

The CCHS has preserved and operated the historic one-room schoolhouse since 2004, when it was gifted to the Society by Robert Struble and Susan Crary. Over the last nine months, the structure was restored inside and out and the grounds landscaped, all financed by an over \$200,000 fundraising campaign completed last summer.

“We are honored to showcase this unique piece of Centre County history to our members, donors, friends, and the community,” said CCHS Executive Director Mary Sorensen. “The building and grounds are in great shape to accommodate our mission of education and outreach for the next generation.”

Over the years, thousands of elementary school children from Centre County and beyond have participated in the school’s classroom experience, under the tutelage of CCHS docents—“schoolmarms” in period dress. Visiting children are summoned into the classroom by the ringing of the school bell, still crowning the rooftop cupola. Students relive history as they step into the school day of their youthful counterparts from the late 1800s and compare it to their own modern experiences.

“The Boogersburg School is the last surviving example of the 180 one-room schools that once existed in Centre County,” said CCHS President Roger Williams. “One-room schoolhouses were the physical expression of the ‘common school’ movement, which began in the 1830s and lasted up to the 1950s. Guided by the belief that the American democratic experiment needed a literate, educated populace to function properly, the common school movement provided America’s youth with free elementary education in grades one through eight. Pennsylvania’s Common School Law of 1834 left it up to local township school boards to accept the free schools and collect the taxes to finance their operation.”

Intended for Patton Township children, the Boogersburg School was built in 1877 on land deeded by Moses Thompson, former Centre Furnace ironmaster and the County’s largest and wealthiest landowner. Thompson had several such schools built to educate the children of tenant farmers living on the far reaches of Centre Furnace Village, which had its own one-room school. Serving three generations of children over 75 years, the Boogersburg School eventually became part of the State College Area School District until its official closing in January 1953.

## CENTRE FURNACE MANSION

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“We believe the school is especially important because it also holds symbolic value for Centre County's history and heritage,” Williams said. “The four small cities of the Alleghenies each have their own defining industrial heritage: Johnstown, iron and steel; Altoona, railroads; Williamsport, lumber; for State College, it's education.”

“The Centre County Historical Society is deeply committed to its preservation—not just as a historic site, but a living history museum where visitors of all ages can connect with the past in a meaningful way,” Sorensen said. “It recreates the educational experience of American schoolchildren over a century of our nation's history.”

Parking for the open house is available on the adjacent lawn near the School and along Pleasant Hill Road.

For information, contact Mary Sorensen at the Centre County Historical Society at Centre Furnace Mansion: (814) 234-4779, or email [msorensen@centrefurnace.org](mailto:msorensen@centrefurnace.org). **For more info, visit:** <https://centrehistory.org/visit-us/boogersburg/>.

# # #

The restoration of the Boogersburg School would not have been possible were it not for **The Hamer Foundation**, leadership gift benefactors, and generous donors. We are also grateful to them, and to Alan Popovich for his guidance, and our contractors for their work that will endure for years to come: Veronesi Building & Remodeling, Inc., Alex's ProScape, Cutting Edge Tree Professionals, House Wire Electric, and Homewrights Construction.

# The Hamer Foundation



Homewrights Construction





*Boogersburg School, Spring 2025*



*First school tour of Spring 2025 with Docent Doyle Wilkerson, "Miss Lee"*