

Hunter-Martin Settlement Museum

Off Route 611 North on Church Road, Martins Creek, PA



Spring, 2018

Dear Friends and Members,

The following officers were elected at our September, 2017 meeting:

Elizabeth Bush, President
Katherine DiFebo, Treasurer

Dwight Jones, Vice President
Rita Rhein, Secretary

Our programs last year were very enjoyable. Museum member, Jodee James, displayed talents we didn't know she had. She truly did entertain and enlighten us on "Welsh Heritage and the American Revolution" in story and song. (No one else knew the Welsh words so we did not sing along.)

We also had Peggy Moser, the restorer and caretaker of the Horner Cemetery near Bath. As a reminder, it is all that remains of the Craig Settlement which was settled in the early 1730's, about the same time as our Hunter-Martin Settlement here in Martins Creek. What a big project she undertook with a very successful outcome. How proud she must feel.

The entries to our Veterans Book have slowed down but we are still able to handle more. May sound like a strange way to do it, but we check the local obituaries for the mention of service records and fill out the form to add this information to our book. Many obituaries have a picture that adds realism to the records.

The museum is still watching over the Scotch-Irish Presbyterian Burial Ground, the quiet neighbor just to our west. We had a couple more large tombstones come down but thanks to the generosity, skills, and hard work of our friend, John O'Brien (a member of the Association for Gravestone Studies), they are now standing as tall as before--and maybe even a little straighter. He had help from his friends, Dave and Charlotte Morris, and museum members, Dwight Jones and Lib Bush. A new footer was needed and put in place by Gary Hoffman, (local mason who worked on the cemetery wall a while back) and paid for by a generous donation from Art Foresman (a descendant of the Foresmans buried in that cemetery). John and his helpers had a little time left after the McIlhaney stones were replaced so they worked on several other stones that had been broken for quite some time. Many more need repair but time and resources are in short supply. We have some interesting pictures showing how all this was accomplished, and how the many hands helped complete the task. It's hard to believe that this new super epoxy can actually hold two huge pieces of "stone" together.

We received a note from Art Foresman regarding a website connecting Russia to Martins Creek he thought we might be interested in. This information was passed on to Cindy Smith who printed out all the details about a wedding at the Martins Creek General Store on August 20, 1939. We had heard about this wedding before but Cindy and Art supplied us with the details. A former Russian Prime Minister (who was in exile) named Alexander Kerensky married his lady, Lydia Ellen Tritton (from Australia), by Justice of the Peace, Harry Stein. No one knows why they chose Martins Creek to take their wedding vows. Other storekeepers that we know of at that location were Snyder, Karabinus and Ahearn. The current occupant, Tighe Nostrand and his wife, now operate an antique shop there. Details on this may be found in the "General Store" file. For those not familiar with the area, it's on the right after you cross the bridge as you leave Martins Creek, before going up the steep hill on the way to Belvidere.

We're so used to putting dresses on mannequins it seemed strange to dress one up in men's clothes. Our treasurer, Katherine DiFebo, is the granddaughter of Herb Fosbinder who was a local butcher in the area for many years a long time ago. We have an excellent picture of him standing next to his handsome horse and butcher wagon. Katherine found the long white butcher coat he was wearing in the picture. We found him a new hat like the one he was wearing and dolled up the mannequin to look like the man near his wagon. He looks quite impressive and think you would agree.

We have several local books which may be of interest. A new book about the past is titled "The Bootleggers of Montana Mountain" by Richard Dalrymple. This goes into detail about the activities of many of the local people during prohibition. Even though it was illegal and dangerous, it saved many a family farm during the depression. Montana Mountain is just across the river from the museum and it's what we see when we look out the front door. Many names were familiar to some of us old timers. Did you know the term "bootlegger" came from the people strapping bottles of illegal "home brew" to their legs or in their boots? They would sell whatever the desired amount wanted by lifting the pants leg, passing the bottle, then replacing it in the boot or on the leg for the next sale. We think everyone was glad when prohibition ended.

The other book was compiled and published by our friends to the north, The Slate Belt Heritage Center. This is titled "Letters to Homefront Magazine: A Love Story Between a Community and its WWII Soldiers." These are letters of appreciation sent from the servicemen to Horace and Mona Strunk, the publishers of the Homefront Magazine. A brief reminder, this was a magazine with pictures and local news sent to our service people during WWII to let them know what was happening back home and that the home folks were thinking about them. Some of those involved in the book will be putting on a program here at the museum on June 26, at 7:30 PM. Much time and effort went into this project and the details they present should be very interesting. They will be bringing copies for sale if you would like to own one.

Does anyone know anything about the ancestors of movie star Sally Field who were supposed to be from our area? Their names, Ralph Morden and Anne Durham, were found on old, local tax records. There are several others we couldn't help: Kristen Fawcett from Utah requested information on Palmer & Schug. Robert Weaver from Connecticut was looking for a birth or death certificate for Peter Deats. C. B. Crawford from Alabama wants whatever he can find on John Crawford, wife Rebecca Moody Crawford, and son Elijah H. Crawford. Any information you have would be greatly appreciated.

Many more artifacts have been donated: Tony & Kathy Lelli; Information on Alpha Cement. Dwight Jones; A primitive potato planter and several old corn huskers that were worn on the hand. Fred & Diana Nemeth; Information on their family history with pictures, certificates, deeds, & old fruit cake tin. Bill & Mariann Bischoff; Old newspapers with local veterans names listed. Marian Borneman; An old curling iron that needed to be heated on the stove or in a fire. Rich & Gina Grucela; A 1939 issue of a yearbook called "The Wolf". Wolf Junior High was a three year school in Easton where some students from Martins Creek went after graduating from Centerfield School. Kathering DiFebo gave us the playbook and newspaper picture of the cast, for "Silas Smidge from Turnip Ridge". A play put on in 1938 by members of Mt Zion UCC in "Community Hall" (the old Presbyterian Church). Ron & Nora DePue; Sheep shears, drill bit & screw driver, cane with the center cut out and 8 glass marbles inserted, unique carved peach pits in the shape of baskets and a pitcher, 12 civil war bullets w/display case. We had several monetary donations that are greatly appreciated and will be put to good use.

We are sad to report the loss of more members and friends: Bert Pitoni was 90 years old and a lifelong resident of Martins Creek, owned and operated a store, lent a helping hand to many, and was well liked by all who knew him. Loretta Pacchioli was 87; Margery Nicholas was 87; Grace Falcinelli was 94; Doris Mann was 91; Maizie Boettger was 95; and Lois Frederick, who was our museum's first curator, was 80. Their names will be added to our memorial plaque, and they are missed by all who remember them.

This quote bears repeating: "When an old person dies, a library is lost."