



Warrior Run Fort Freeland Heritage Society Newsletter

November, 2018

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Message From The Brick Maker

Hower/Slote House Almost Torn Down

It all started on June 8, 1955, with the consolidation of two school districts, North Mont SD (Turbotville and two townships in Northern Montour County) and West Branch SD (Watsonstown and surrounding area), which would become The Warrior Run School District. The jointure consisted of two high schools and eight elementary schools. On April 17, 1956, two professors from Penn State University - Dr. Hugh Davison and Dr. Walter DeLacy - took a tour of the district and generated a plan. Some elementary schools would be closed and some renovated, but the first priority was a new high school.

They wanted the new high school to be centrally located in the district. The School Board came up with four sites. #1 was thirty-five acres on the Lew Werner Farm behind the Warrior Run Church, #2 was a field across Rt. 147 on the Patterson Farm, and #3 was the Menges farm site on right side of Rt. 147 before the WR church. Site #4 was in McEwensville on a plot of thirty acres on the Montgomery Farm. They decided on site #2 - the Patterson Farm and instead of one field, they would buy the whole farm of one hundred twenty acres.

The people in Watsonstown had wanted the high school closer to them. They were leaning toward joining the Montgomery School District. It landed on the Governor's desk to decide what to do. One board member said "if a plaque was made, his name better not be on it." The District was made up of eight municipalities, five board members from each municipality comprised the forty-member school Board. The next time you are in the main lobby at the middle school, look at Watsonstown with four member's names. The high school was built and opened the fall of 1959.

The Hower/Slote house and barn were on the property. The barn was used by the FFA. They stored hay, straw and grain for some animals they raised. The house was empty after the school district bought the farm.

In 1976, Mr. James Bullock, a science teacher in the high school, had applied and got a grant to create two environmental ponds in front of the Hower/Slote House. The Williamsport Area Community College had their heavy equipment class use it for training. The project took two years and at the end a student said, "We can level that old brick farm house."

Well, the word got out and the older people in the area who knew the history of the site wanted to save the house. This is when the WRFFHS was formed to restore the house.

The house was in very bad condition, windows were knocked out, ground hogs had taken over the basement and a new roof was needed.

A new roof on the north side was put on, and the south side one year later. The house was never updated, so it never had a bathroom, kitchen cabinets or plumbing. The electric was improved and the basement door was rebuilt. A back porch was built and later the front porch was rebuilt. It is called the Hower/Slote house because Hanna Hower married James Slote and they built the house in 1829. The farm was seven hundred acres, it went over to Rt. 44, down Rt. 147 and close to Schell Road. James Slote made the bricks for the Warrior Run Church in 1835, but it isn't known if he made bricks for his own house.



The house has come a long way, but needs a lot of maintenance to keep it in its restored condition.

Leon Hagenbuch, President

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Watsontown, PA 17777

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Daniel Vincent's Narrative of Freeland Fort Battle

Published in 1811, Loudon's Indian Narratives, Volume II, by Archibald Loudon, just 22 years after the historic event. Found on pages 66 – 89. Volume I was written in 1808.

This information gives an additional account of the Battle of Fort Freeland and Daniel's life in captivity. The week before the Battle, he was involved in the event that occurred in the corn field behind and near the Fort. His brother Issac was killed, as also Elias Freeland and Jacob Freeland, Jr. Daniel's brother Ben was captured along with Michael Freeland. Daniel was able to jump a high fence and get back to the fort. The next week Daniel was involved in the Battle, the surrender of the Fort, and becomes a prisoner.

There have been numerous accounts written about the Battle of Fort Freeland by such as Historian/researchers – J.F. Meginess, Frederic Godcharles,, Charles F. Snyder, John Carter, Roger Swartz naming a few. None found and used this source of information.

Written as in the book:

These selections are interesting Narratives of outrages committed by the Indians in their Wars with the white people. An account of the taking of Freeland's Fort, communicated by Daniel Vincent, one of the unfortunate prisoners taken and carried to Canada, at that time.

“In the year 1779, the continental troops was ordered from Fort Muncy, on the west branch of the Susquehanna to join General John Sullivan, at Wilkes Barre, and all the inhabitants evacuated that branch, down as far as Fort Freeland, where they had erected a stockade by building two houses, and collected about thirty men, and 48 women and children, all inhabitants of that part; the men began to be careless, expecting that Sullivan's army had drew the attention of the Indians top the north branch and on the 21st day of July, six men out in a field adjoining the fort, were attacked by about twenty-four warriors, three men were killed, two taken prisoners, and one made his escape into the fort. This caused them to keep more close for a few days, and on the 27th ten men left the fort to join a party at Boon's fort, to go and waylay the Indian paths, and on the night of the same day, a party of about thirty Tories and British commanded Captain John MacDonell, surrounded the fort in the dead of the night; the Indians kept a howling like wolves all night, and early in the morning on the 28th, Mr. James Watts, brother of General Watts, went out to see if the wolves had been amongst the sheep, and when about ninety yards from the fort, he was seized by one of the Montieures, a Seneca chief, who wished to make a prisoner for the sake of information, Mr. Watts halloo-ed for help, and alarmed the garrison, and at that instant the Indian struck his tomahawk into Watts' head and he fell also; and immediately the Indian yell began all around the fort and the Indians closed in as nigh as they

dare, and began a heavy fire on the fort, the British and Tories paraded on the side of the hill in front of the fort, with music and colors flying advanced toward the fort and covered themselves behind some old buildings, and commenced a brisk fire on the fort, which was very spiritedly returned from the fort. The woods and a log fence being close to the North West corner of the fort, the Indians crept on the brush and behind the fence, so close as to shoot many bullets through the port holes; in this close order they continued until about nine o'clock, when the firing ceased, and captain John M'Donald hoisted a flag, and marched toward the fort, within about sixty yards in front of the garrison, when he was met by one of the men from the fort; from whom he demanded a surrender of the fort immediately or every man, woman and child should be put to the tomahawk, when the fort agreed to capitulate, being but nineteen men, and two killed; and the men able to bear arms were to march out in front of the fort and ground their arms and march prisoners to Canada, under a guard of white men, and not to be treated as Indian prisoners, and all the women and children to go to the interior parts of the country, wherever they pleased unmolested, together with four old men not able to bear arms. Immediately after the fort surrendered the Indians took possession, plundered all they could get and set fire to the fort, houses, barns, and mills, and while all was in a flame, a party of thirty volunteers, under the command of Capt. Hawkins Boone, a very brave officer, came up and fired on the Indians and killed one on the spot and wounded one more, and the Indians retreated a small distance and rallied again, and advanced, the volunteers retreated about half a mile and halted a few minutes to consult; and in the meantime the Indians spread themselves very much in the woods, and pursued until they came up with them, attempted to surround them, and before they discovered the Indian flanks, they were nearly in a half moon around them, and killed eleven men, Captain Boone was among the slain. Several of those men fell; with their wounds, and were scalped. In this affray three Indians were killed and five wounded, while in this confusion two of the prisoners which had been taken in the fort attempted to make their escape, and were overt; by the Indians and tomahawked."

Additional comments:

General Watts mentioned above was Brigadier General Frederick Watts, from Cumberland County. In 1769, the James Watts Family bought 300 acres one mile east of Fort Freeland, North of Route 54 and on the Warrior Run which crosses that road. Their log home stood on the west side of Liadacker Road, which in later was built through the 300 acres, when the property was split in half. James started establishing a farm there in 1773. Previously, James Watts farmed in Rye Township, Cumberland County and served with the Cumberland Militia in 1776. He was a Sargent at Fort Freeland in 1779, and died on the morning of July 28, 1779, the Battle of Fort Freeland. James Watts was Randy Watts's 5th great-grandfather.

Randy Watts



Newsletter Articles

Please email articles to be included in the newsletter to kyhouser@windstream.net. You can simply write the report in the email or copy and paste from another document. The best format is a Word document or an Open Office document. PDF files cannot be used in the producing of the newsletter.. If you have a photo you want to share, you can send that to me, as well. Thank you for all the information you send making our newsletter very interesting and informative.

Karen Y. Houser

2018 Membership Meeting

The evening program will have the election of the 2019 to 2021 term board members and election for the next year's officers. Have approval of candidates from at large.

There will be a review of this past year's society's accomplishments.

In addition, there will be a DVD presentation of a showing of this years Heritage

Days using a drone. Very interesting. If enough time and interest, Randy's can show his 15 minute DVD presentation of his Hike to Fort Niagara. Yes, Randy's insanity got the 275 hike completed and he returned in time to help with another successful Heritage Days.

Apprentice Program



Apprentice Parade



Rich Nornhold with Ethan Whitmoyer - Journeyman in Paper Making.



Scott Gelnett with Alexa Sparventa - Journeyman in Tinsmith



WRRFHS got seven new apprentices this year – Austin Confer in Rake Making, Carter Marr in Shingle Making, Dakota Adams in Rope Making, Beau Rovenold in Blacksmithing and Colin Moore, Caden Snyder, and Cooper Wilkins in Coopering.



Peggy Gelnett with Maris Kilgus - Journeyman in Hearth Cooking.





Warrior Run Fort Freeland Heritage Society
Calendar of Events - 2018

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Place</u>
November 12	Membership & Board Mtg	7:00 p. m.	HS Library
December 8 (Second Saturday of December)	Candlelite Service	7:00 p. m.	WR Church
December 10	Board Meeting	7:00 p. m.	HS Faculty Lounge



Historic Warrior Run Church
Annual Candlelight Service

Saturday, December 8th 2018
7:00pm

*Warm Mulled Cider and cookies will be
served after the service.*

*Please dress warmly and bring a flashlight.
Come in historic attire if you choose!*

** Warrior Run Fort Freeland Heritage Society **



WARRIOR RUN FORT FREELAND HERITAGE
SOCIETY
FALL DONATIONS 2018

John & Nancy Marr
Daughters of American Revolution
Tim Morrissey
First Presbyterian Church
Kathleen Shafer

Cathy Metzger (Treasurer)

Warrior Run Fort Freeland Heritage Society

Board of Directors

(Terms run from January 1 to December 31)

2016 - 2018

Steve Moser
Melissa Kilgus
Peggy Gelnett
Randy Watts
Al Reeves

2017 - 2019

Leon Hagenbuch
Jane Koch
Bradd Mertz
Doug Ertel
Sue Whitmoyer

2018 - 2020

Traci Pawling
Ruth Webb
Scott Pawling
Cathy Metzger
Landon Koch
Wayne Greiner

(Student Member)

Maris Kilgus / Ethan Whitmoyer

Officers

President - Leon Hagenbuch (570-490-8279)

Vice President - Jane Koch (570-538-1756)

Secretary - Melissa Kilgus (570- 538-5593)

Treasurer - Cathy Metzger (570-713-4816)

Assistant Treasurer - Al Reeves (570-538-1928)

Membership (appointed) - Cathy Metzger (570-713-4816)

Audit/Finance - Scott Pawling, Melissa Kilgus (570- 538-5593)

Nominating Committee - Randy Watts, Steve Moser (570-437-4048)

Historian - Vacant

Newsletter - Karen Houser (570-538-2557)

Committee Leadership

Church -Jane Koch, Landon Koch, Doug Ertel (570-538-1756)

Church Grounds - Mark Keithan (570-538-5610)

Weddings - Traci Pawling (570-538-9582)

Strawberry Festival - Wayne Greiner (570-604-7451)

Heritage Days - Betsy Watts, Jane Koch

Candlelight Service - Al Reeves

House/Property - Leon Hagenbuch, Steve Moser, Rich Nornhold

Honorary Board Members

Janet Hause *

Jane Shuman *

Betty Miller *

Virginia Hartman *

Donna Meyer

Ruth Moser *

Preston Webb *

Mike Slease *

Hall Williams *

Bob Franks

Rich Nornhold

Al Reeves

* denotes deceased member

CHECK THE YEAR ON YOUR CARD AND MAKE SURE YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS CURRENT

Bringing our history to life....

Place
Stamp
Here

*Warrior Run
Fort Freeland
Heritage Society*

*P. O. Box 26
Turbotville PA 17772*

E-mail: info@wrffhs.org

*Check us out on the web!
www.freelandfarm.org*

KEEP your membership current

****Note your membership status on the mailing label ****

Membership is key to our group's mission. It's an important step towards funding our projects and goals. Your membership allows you to receive four annual newsletters which inform you of the calendar of events, our organization's achievements and ways to become an active member.

Please register me/us as:

- ☐ LIFE MEMBER (\$200 per person in one payment)
☐ CONTRIBUTING MEMBER (\$20.00 per adult person per year)
☐ STUDENT MEMBER (\$1.00 per year – having student status)
☐ SUSTAINING MEMBER (\$50.00 or more per year as a special support member)

Name (s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email address: _____

To update your WR/FFHS membership status, please mail this form with the proper amount to:

Cathy Metzger
2151 Main St PO Box 176
Dewart PA 17730
cemetzger02@windstream.net
570-713-4816
(make checks payable to WR/FFHS)