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Restoration work on historic church to begin in June

By THE STANDARD-JOURNAL

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TURBOTVILLE — The Warrior Run-Fort Freeland Heritage Society has received a grant from the Americana’s Corner Preserving America Grant Program.

According to a press release issued by the grant program, the funds will be used to support “hardware restoration with repainting and repairs to two sets of church doors.”

Heritage Society Vice President Melissa Kilgus said the work will be done as part of a larger restoration project to begin in June by Owen’s Preservation, of Freeburg. The project is expected to be completed in the fall.

“This grant is in addition to The 1994 Charles B. Degenstein Foundation (grant) that was received in September 2023 for church restoration,” Kilgus said. “The Owen’s Preservation Company will remove the entire windows, and take to their shop for repairs.

“The Degenstein grant will repair the windows where the glass panes need glazing replaced, priming and painting on both the interior and exterior of the windows, upper sashes will be reinstalled as a fixed unit, with lower sashes having the counterbalance systems repaired with new rope/chain for ease of opening and closing with appropriate period sash locks installed,” she said.

The work will “highlight the 1835 brick church’s classical Greek Doric design” and keep the structure sustainable for future generations, Kilgus said.

“The Warrior Run-Fort Freeland Heritage Society took ownership (of the church) from the Pennsylvania Historic Museum Commission in 2018, and relies on membership dues, grants, and private donations to keep the church, out buildings, grounds, and cemetery open to the public,” Kilgus said. “The society depends on volunteers for maintaining the area, and for special events.”

The church is available for rent for events such as weddings, baptisms and family gatherings.

The society’s annual membership dinner will be held Tuesday, April 30, at the Watson Inn, Watsontown. Tim Bittner will give a presentation on transportation from the White Deer area, including the narrow rail line to Loganton.

The society’s annual Strawberry Festival will be held starting at 11 a.m. Sunday, June 9, at the church, located at the corner of Eighth Street Drive and Susquehanna Trail, near Turbotville.

According to information provided by Kilgus “Americana Corner was founded by Tom Hand in 2020 as an online resource to help others rediscover America’s incredible founding and first century of expansion. The Preserving America Grant Program assists organizations that tell the story of our nation’s wonderful past and rekindle a love for American history in all its splendor.”

Kevin Mertz