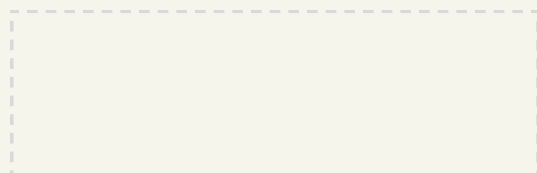




FOREST COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

206 Elm Street
PO Box 546
Tionesta, PA 16353



The FCHS membership rate will increase to \$15 on Jan. 1, 2020.

Renew at the current rate of \$10 until Dec. 31, 2019! See website for membership form.

FCHS IS MODERNIZING COMMUNICATIONS

As you have noticed, FCHS is giving its communications tools some attention. While we are all about history, we felt it was about time we modernized our communications.

We have spruced up our newsletter format and hope you enjoy this new look! Our membership renewal mailing in January will give you the opportunity to choose how you receive future FCHS newsletters — by mail, email or on our website.

We also developed a beautiful new website, which allows us to offer online payment of memberships, memorials and donations, as well as share our events and other news.

Our new web address is:

www.ForestCountyPAHistory.org

Please take a few minutes to visit the new website and let us know what you think! We also plan to offer some of our merchandise online in the near future, so watch for this addition in the coming months.

You will also notice that we have a new logo, which we are quite proud of! It incorporates the circular saw blade from our original logo, but also uses the evergreen trees most people relate to Forest County, and the fan-like architectural detail from the peak of the Robinson House.

The fourth element to our update of communications is new profile graphics on our Facebook page. These match our website header and utilize our new logo, giving an updated, consistent look on all of our communications.

Finally, we will soon begin to use an email service—MailChimp—for emailing group notices to our members. This will make it easier for us to send mass communications and help keep our messages out of your Spam and Junk folders.

We hope that you like our efforts to update and improve communications!



Telephone: 814-755-4422 • E-Mail: FCHS@zoominternet.net • www.forestcountypahistory.org

Volume 24, Issue 2

September 2019



FOREST FRAGMENTS

FOREST COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

OFFICERS:

- Mike Thompson, President
- Janet Fennell, Vice President
- MayAlyce Knauff, Secretary
- Toni Vrboncic, Treasurer

DIRECTORS:

- Mary Lee Lehman, Corresp. Sec.
- Jackie Kuhn
- Carol Barnett, Memorials
- Burke Beach, Buildings/Grounds
- Becky Pillsbury
- Ron Heasley, Technology

HISTORIANS:

- Leonard Nicklas
- Brian Hale

FROM THE FCHS PRESIDENT

Greetings to all members, Here we are with our summer season drawing to a close. Your History Center has been open for about 75 days and has welcomed over 300 guests to experience our exhibits, attend our programs and do research.

One of our key new activities has been our "Wisdom Wednesdays", held every Wednesday evening. These presentations have attracted crowds of 10-20 people to meet and discuss topics of historical interest to Forest County and Pennsylvania.

We have also expanded our

use of digital technologies to better reach out to you, our visitors and the general public. In this effort, lead by Ron Heasley and ably executed by our extremely talented intern Amiee Hazlet, we have developed user touch screen presentations on the Range and Blood families and the contents of some of our exhibit rooms.

In addition, we have created a new website for the History Center to explain who we are and what our current calendar of activities is. This website will also allow you to purchase books and other items that we have for sale,

as well as to sign up for membership in the Society.

As many of you are aware, the roof on the History House needs to be replaced. To date, we have secured a \$10,000 grant to assist in the funding of this estimated \$27,000 project. Your donations to our Annual Fund Drive will greatly help us with this project.

Please sign-up to attend our Annual Fall Dinner. The details will be found in this Newsletter. I look forward to seeing you there.

Respectfully,
Michael Thomson

MARK YOUR CALENDAR:

Annual Dinner Meeting

Oct. 17, 2019
5:30 - 8:00 pm
St. Anthony's Church

Halloween at the History House

Oct. 31, 2019
5:30 - 7:30 pm

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

This year's Annual Fall Dinner will be held at St. Anthony's Church Hall, 112 Bridge St., Tionesta, on October 17th.

We will begin with a social time at 5:30, followed by the meal served at 6:00. The menu this year is roast turkey and stuffing, mashed pota-

toes, mixed vegetables, coleslaw, assorted pies, coffee, tea and iced tea. The cost this year will be \$15.00. We will also offer a Chinese auction.

All reservations must be received no later than October 9th either via credit card on our [website](http://www.forestcountypahistory.org), or by check

mailed to Toni Vrboncic, PO Box 367, Marienville, PA 16239. The form to mail with your check can be found in this issue or on the website.

Due to the loss of the local grocery store, we cannot accept reservations after the established deadline.

Telephone: 814-755-4422 • E-Mail: forestcountypahistory@gmail.com • www.forestcountypahistory.org

INDIAN FESTIVAL AT FCHS



The museum had several visitors during the Indian Festival, and the ladies from our Board once again manned the Cookie Barn on our front lawn to raise funds for our Museum.

The crowd attending the parade was larger than we have seen in many years! The ladies worked hard selling cookies donated by several of our members and other residents. They were also offering our new Forest County license plates, local history books, and other merchandise.

It was a successful week, with nearly \$1,000 raised toward our much needed roof replacement project!

We also brought our Model T and buggy out of storage on parade day. The crowd enjoyed seeing these displayed on the front lawn.

Thank You, to all who volunteered, made cookies, or stopped by and purchased at the Cookie Barn!



Mary Lee Lehman, MaryAlyce Knauff, Becky Pillsbury, Laura Flick and Joyce Milberg manning the FCHS Cookie Barn.

HALLOWEEN AT THE MUSEUM

“Do you know who is who and how they influenced Forest County history?”

The Forest County Historical Society Board Members and

friends will once again pass out treats on Trick or Treat night in the Borough of Tionesta.



Trick or Treat at the Museum will be held on Oct. 31st from 5:30—7:30pm and we will be there dressed as characters from For-

est County's past.

Some of the characters from last year were: Marion Blood, Johnny Appleseed, John Range, Martha Robinson, Teddy Collins, June Carringer, Nellie Adams, and Samuel Harrison Kinch. Do you know who is who and how they influenced Forest County history?

Please enter at the front porch door and exit at the side door.

SUMMER INTERN WELCOMED BACK IN 2019

This summer, the FCHS welcomed back Aimee Haslet as our summer intern. She is a student at Clarion University with a strong interest in her hometown history.

Aimee spent twenty hours a week this summer working to improve our History Museum. She did much research and created a digital tool for visitors to learn about our found-

ing fathers, Cyrus Blood and John Range.

She also set up a video so that handicapped people who can't go to the second floor may view the entire floor via video.

Aimee was also one of the presenters at our Wisdom Wednesday events, telling us about the history of funeral homes in Forest County.

The Board would like to thank and congratulate Aimee on her diligence and accomplishments this summer!



2019 FALL DINNER RESERVATION

Wednesday, October 17, 2019 St. Anthony's Church, Tionesta

Registration & Social Time at 5:30 pm • Seated Dinner at 6:00 pm

Program featuring Mr. Jeff Pierson at 7:00 pm

Menu: Turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, assorted pies, coffee, tea, iced tea.

Food Allergies/Dietary Preferences: _____

Names(s): _____ Phone: _____

E-Mail: _____

Number of Dinners: ____ x \$15.00 each \$_____ Dinner Total

\$_____ Donation

\$_____ Total enclosed

Make Checks payable to: FCHS

Mail to: Toni Vrboncic, PO Box 367, Marienville, PA 16239

~ Reservations Due by October 9, 2019 ~

ABOUT OUR DINNER SPEAKER

The Speaker for our Fall Dinner will be Mr. Jeff Pierson on the topic of Nitroglycerin and well shooting. Jeff spoke at one of our Wisdom Wednesday events, was very interesting and knows his subject well. Jeff and his daughter Katelyn produced a booklet entitled "Nitroglycerin and its use for Well Shooting in the Oil Industry". Oil wells were shot all over Forest County, perhaps the largest companies being in West Hickory and Fagundas. Even if you were at his previous talk, you will likely learn some additional interesting information.



Join us for our Annual Dinner!

RECENT MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Recent memorials received at FCHS included:

In Memory of Melvin Sandrock:
From: Forest Grange

In Memory of Lois Wike:
From: Mary Remington; West Hickory Vol. Fire Dept.; Douglas & Joan Myers; FCHS Board of Directors; and Becky Pillsbury.

In Memory of Bert Lehman:
From: Carolyn Gresham; Faye Brown; Thomas Melody Neely; Good Shepherd UMC; Laurie

Weaver; Helen Watson; Denny & Martha Lamb; Jody & Becki Weaver; Barb Karg; Steve & Mandy Bogel; and Russell & Sandy Weaver.

The Board has established a committee to make decisions about the use of memorial donations. The committee consists of Carol Barnett, Mary Lee Lehman and Toni Vrboncic.

If you would like to donate in memory of or in honor of a

friend or loved one, please provide the following information:

- Name of person to be honored or remembered
- Name and address of donor (individual or organization)
- Person or organization and address to be notified of your gift
- If you wish to remain anonymous

Send information and check to:

Memorials
Forest County Historical Society
PO Box 546
Tionesta, PA 16353

You may also use our **online donation option** by going to www.forestcountypahistory.org/join-donate and click on the Donate button.

Thank you to all who have made memorial donations to FCHS. We will put your contributions to good use!

MUSEUM ROOF REPLACEMENT NEEDED



Our Museum building is in need of a new roof. The Toll Booth and garage both had roof replacements in the last two years, so they are good

for many years to come.

While the roof on the History Museum may look good to the casual observer, it is at the end of its life. Even

one small leak could destroy historically significant artifacts—not to mention the structure of the museum itself.

This project will include removal of all the old layers of roofing—including the original wood shingles. It will be replaced with a layer of 4'x8' sheeting, new shingles and flashing.

The estimated project cost is \$25,000—\$30,000. However, Building & Grounds chairman Burke Beech says we should get about 40 years out of the new roof. Quotes will be sought once funding is secured.

We have secured a \$10,000 grant from the J. Bowman Proper Charitable Trust, but are seeking donations for the rest of the cost. Any and all donations are very much appreciated to help us cover this major expense!

You may simply mail your check with the notation "Roofing Project", or donate online via credit card at www.forestcountypahistory.org/join-donate. Just click on the "Donate" button.

"George Robinson very much enjoyed a garden..."

HISTORY CENTER GARDENS

Many thanks to our volunteer landscaper, Becky Pillsbury. Becky has put many hours into creating a comfortable look to the gardens.



We have read that George Robinson very much enjoyed a garden, so we try to keep up

with the gardens on our property.

This summer, Becky has concentrated on the front and side of the house. She is in the planning stages of a formal Victorian "Meditation Garden" for the back yard.

Although the weather has not cooperated with her this summer, she has secured flowers from Lois Wike's estate and from Full Circle Farm & Artisan Center. She is cultivating

these, along with some other sources, to create her meditation garden. She hopes people in the future will feel free to sit and chat or just take in the beauty of the gardens.

We have installed wood benches both in the back garden and near the lumberman statue in the front yard. These benches were made from the large maple tree that used to stand in our front yard, which was dying and had to be removed.

TREES ROOTED IN TIONESTA

Through a grant from the TreeVitalize program, FCHS planted 10 decorative trees at Tionesta Park, two elm trees at Riverside Cemetery and two in the front yard at the History Museum.

Marah Fielden of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and other

volunteers planted the trees on Saturday, May 11.

Tionesta Borough and SCI Forest's Community Service Program dug the holes.

The idea for the project originated with a dream of FCHS board member Burke Beach who wanted to return the elm trees to Elm Street.

We thank all of the individuals who are a part of this latest effort to be enjoyed by all for years to come.

Read more about this project in the article on our website at: <https://forestcountypahistory.org/2019/09/06/tree-planting-in-tionesta/>



VETERANS ROOM UPDATE



Our display table set to show honor POW/MIA service men and women.

Our Veterans Room in the History Museum is curated by our local AmVets Post 113 of Tionesta. This summer they added a POW/MIA table.

According to <https://navylive.dodlive.mil/2014/10/06/the-powmia-table-a-place-setting-for-one-a-table-for-all/>:

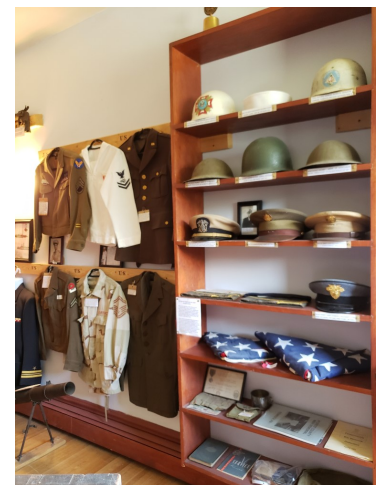
"The tradition of setting a separate table in honor of our prisoners of war and missing comrades has been in place since the end of the Vietnam War. The manner in which this table is decorated is full of special sym-

bols to help us remember our brothers and sisters in arms.

- The POW/MIA table is smaller than the others, symbolizing the frailty of one prisoner alone against his or her oppressors.
- The white tablecloth represents the purity of their response to our country's call to arms.
- The empty chair depicts an unknown face, representing no specific Soldier, Sailor, Airman or Marine, but all who are not here with us.
- The table itself is round to show that our concern for them is never ending.
- The Bible represents faith in a higher power and the pledge to our country, founded as one nation under God.
- The black napkin stands for the emptiness these warriors have left in the hearts of their families and friends. A Purple Heart medal can be pinned to the napkin.
- The single red rose reminds us of their families and loved ones. The

red ribbon represents the love of our country, which inspired them to answer the nation's call.

- The yellow candle and its yellow ribbon symbolize the everlasting hope for a joyous reunion with those yet accounted for.
- The salt upon the bread plate represents the tears of their families.
- The wine glass, turned upside down, reminds us that our distinguished comrades cannot be with us to drink a toast or join in the festivities of the evening."



A display of military uniforms in the Veterans Room at FCHS.

2019 SEASON DOCENTS

When was the last time you took a tour at the Forest County History Museum? We have many members who volunteer as docents (tour guides) each summer and, hopefully, your docent made your visit truly memorable.

These folks greet you at the door and welcome you to "The Robinson House". They will then offer you the type of tour that fits your fancy: Guided Tours, Highlight Tours, Children's Tours, Self-guided Tours

and Architectural Tours.

They will accompany you through the house then the garden, toll booth and lumber camp pointing out details and answering questions.

Our docents are trained yearly by Board Member Janet Fennell, who sets the schedule for the season. This is often a difficult task as we are all volunteers and have things come up to make us unavailable on any given day. If you enjoy history and have a few hours

available, please consider volunteering to be either a regular or fill-in docent.

Special Thanks to our 2019 regulars: Mike Thomson, Bernadette Holzer, Jake Knauff, Carol Barnett, Janet Fennell and Ron Heasley. We also greatly appreciate our fill-ins: Becky Pillsbury, Jackie Kuhn, Amiee Haslet, Leonard Nicklas, Burke Beach, and Mary Lee Lehman. To these and any others we may have missed naming, we thank you all!

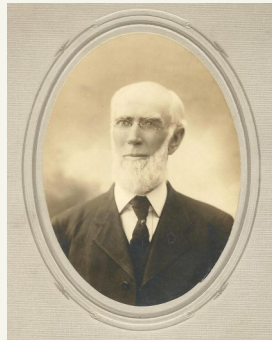
"These folks greet you at the door and welcome you to The Robinson House."

FOREST COUNTY HISTORY MUSEUM
(AKA: THE ROBINSON HOUSE)

Why do we often refer to the Museum as “The Robinson House”? Because that is family who first owned and occupied the house.

George and Martha Robinson married in 1867 and moved here in 1872 ,already having two daughters aged 4 and 2 and then having a son while in Tionesta. One of the daughters, Martha Arletta “Artie” Robinson, then lived in this house until 1958.

George and Martha Robinson seem to have first lived across the street and had the house built for them by the Dale’s.



George W. Robinson

From *Buildings of Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania* by Lu Donnelly, H. David Brumble IV, and Franklin Toker: “George Robinson House 1873—This large Stick Style house was in the Robinson family for eighty-five years from 1873—1958. The wooden

detailing of the porch and the fanlike ornament above the porch and on the third-floor gable end are particularly attractive. Among the largest houses in Tionesta, it is open to the public as the Forest County Historical Society.”

From the Pennsylvania Historical Resource Survey Form: “*The Robinson House is a standing monument to the craftsmen and the people of our past. The house is described as an (Eastlake-Stick Style) Victorian house. The interior of the house is impressive. The trim and the molding are in cherry wood and the high ceilings add to the beauty. There are six bedrooms and three fireplaces. The house has a full basement made of cut stone, and is now the site of the largest tool collection in the county. There is a garage which was once a carriage house.*

Much of life revolved around small-town America, this one laying on the banks of the Allegheny River. Lumber was king of this area as exemplified by the house around you. Much wood and fine craftsmanship abounded in the homes of this town. Rougher sawmill towns grew up around this area, harvesting the forest so that this town could house more refined homes, such as this one.”

Come experience the story of The Robinson House!

FOREST COUNTY HISTORY

“Forest County has a unique and storied history.”



Cyrus Blood

Forest County has a unique and storied history. It very much has two sides happening at once. The following information is taken from The History of Tionesta by Edwin Patrick:

“On the West side, as early as 1749, Captain Celeron claimed the area for France, then in 1767, David Zeisberger was preaching to the Indians here. In 1792, The Seneca held Council here in Tionesta. In 1785, the land where Tionesta stands was given to Lt. John Range as a reward for serving in the Revolutionary War. In 1816, John Range moves to Tionesta and begins to settle the area.

On the East side, in 1833, Cyrus Blood settles in Marienville. In 1848, Cyrus Blood, by way of a Joint Resolution, sets up Forest County with four townships taken from Jefferson County. The hamlet of Marienville (named after his daughter Marien) is the center of the county and a courthouse is erected there.

In 1866, Forest County is enlarged by annexing some of Venango County to make Tionesta, Green, Hickory and Harmony Townships. This doubled its area and quadrupled its population. This move happened in large due to the Dale Family of Tionesta and some political pull.

Although legend has it that a team of horses or oxen and a wagon were used to “steal” the courthouse from Marienville, the fact remains that an act approved on October 21, 1866, officially made Tionesta the County Seat.”

Visit the Forest County History Museum to learn more about these two founders and other people important to our history, and see related artifacts. You can find our hours online at www.forestcountypahistory.org.

Please become a member to support our preservation of this history and enjoy free admission. Or you may come visit for a small donation of \$5 per adult and \$3 per child over 13.

WISDOM WEDNESDAYS SERIES



Our weekly lecture series, “Wisdom Wednesdays,” turned out to be a hit! They were well attended by nearly 200 people.

From June 5th through August 28th, FCHS hosted 13 speakers who presented on a variety of topics related to local and regional history.

Pictured at left are Rodney Daum and Cindy McCoy dressed in their Civil War era garb. Their program was about Forest County’s 83rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Regiment of the Union Army.

Other topics included the 1985 tornadoes, pioneer crafts, lumber history, the Forest County Courthouse, the Kelly Mansion in Tionesta, the Tionesta Dam, nitroglycerine and shooting oil wells, and others.

Read more details in the article on our website at this link: <https://forestcountypahistory.org/2019/04/29/prayer-for-the-old/>

The Board plans to continue this series in 2020. If you would like to present or suggest a topic, call or email our office.

MARIENVILLE’S HISTORY OF FIRE

By Leonard Nicklas,
East Forest Historian

Marienville has a long history of recovery from fire.

1833 – Marienville, PA, Forest County, Jenks Twp. A very busy and flourishing town, with many businesses and a railroad.

1890 – Things began to happen, and not for the better. A fire started in Harps Barber Shop, then spread to Whitlings Shoe Shop to Dr. Stonecipher’s Drug Store to J.B. Watson’s Hotel to T.J. Reyner’s mercantile store and two warehouses. All were a total loss.

1902 – A devastating fire started at the home of J.T. Smith. With the help of a strong wind, the fire began its path of destruction, destroying every home and business in it’s path including the railroad depot, 8 RR cars ad ½ mile of track. When the fire was over, approximately 80 businesses, houses, etc. were in a pile of

ashes, covering an area of 20 plus acres. All that was left standing was the bank, Fidlers Hotel, 2 restaurants, and the hardware’s machine shop.

1909 – Three more businesses, a house and the Marienville Express Newspaper were fire victims.

1913 – Mintz’s big department store went up in flames.

1914 – The Red and White Grocery Store and Meely’s store, including the Marienville Express, burned.

1917 – The large 2-story grammar school burned to the ground.

1922 – A fire started in the bank, spread to Kiefer’s Store, to the theatre, then to the printing office, the feed mill, Mealy’s store, Menche’s warehouse, then to the Glass Plant, Nye’s store, a restaurant then 41 houses. All were a complete loss.

1930 – The Glass Plant

burned again and they rebuilt a modern plant.

Other fires destroyed the Morrison House next to the diner and a bed and breakfast next to the Morrison House.

2000 – In January, Baughman’s Grocery Store burned.

2016 – Baughman’s Grocery Store again burns, and would not be rebuilt.

The Keystone Hotel was rebuilt two of the three times it burned. Harps Barber Shop

burned and was rebuilt three times.

Most homes were rebuilt, most businesses rebuilt. Out of all these fires, only a few minor injuries occurred.

The information above was found in *History of Marienville*, published by the Marienville Women’s Club in the 1970s, a Knox Glass newsletter called *Opportunity Knox* (Summer 1945), and *March of Progress Newsletter* by L.W. Helix, 1933.



Marienville from the passenger train after the 1902 fire.