

**Turkeyfoot  
Valley  
Historical  
Society**

**PASS IT ON**  
Share our history

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Pass It On  
is a quarterly  
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Historical Society

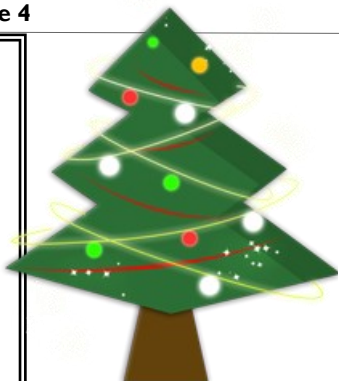
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#### NOTE TO MEMBERS

If you are interested in  
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**Merry Christmas  
& Happy New Year!  
Our next meeting is  
in March. Have a  
wonderful winter.**

### Christmas Facts from History.com

- Each year, 30-35 million real Christmas trees are sold in the United States alone. There are 21,000 Christmas tree growers in the United States, and trees usually grow for about 15 years before they are sold.
- Today, in the Greek and Russian orthodox churches, Christmas is celebrated 13 days after the 25th, which is also referred to as the Epiphany or Three Kings Day. This is the day it is believed that the three wise men finally found Jesus in the manger.
- In the Middle Ages, Christmas celebrations were rowdy and raucous—a lot like today's Mardi Gras parties.
- When Christmas was cancelled: From 1659 to 1681, the celebration of Christmas was outlawed in Boston, and law-breakers were fined five shillings.
- Christmas was declared a federal holiday in the United States on June 26, 1870.
- The first eggnog made in the United States was consumed in Captain John Smith's 1607 Jamestown settlement.
- Poinsettia plants are named after Joel R. Poinsett, an American minister to Mexico, who brought the red-and-green plant from Mexico to America in 1828.
- The Salvation Army has been sending Santa Claus-clad donation collectors into the streets since the 1890s.
- Rudolph, "the most famous reindeer of all," was the product of Robert L. May's imagination in 1939. The copywriter wrote a poem about the reindeer to help lure customers into the Montgomery Ward department store.
- Construction workers started the Rockefeller Center Christmas tree tradition in 1931.

## **Early and Middle Woodland Civilizations**



*Our November program was by Irene “Toby” Koontz who presented information on an archaeological dig on her property in the 1930’s. The next few pages contain information presented.*

### **New Deal Archaeology—Introduction**

From the harsh winter of 1934 to the eve of World War II, a small band of intrepid men roamed the rugged mountains of southwestern Pennsylvania seeking, recording, and excavating archaeological sites. Their hard work uncovered the remains of Native American villages, rockshelters, and even a small camp site. Scholars recognized the existence of the Monongahela culture based on their findings. Even today, more than sixty years since these men excavated their last village site, their work continues to shape our understanding of the past.

Yet, while new generations of archaeologists continue to study the records and artifacts left behind, the story of these men has been lost in the shadows of history. These men were not formally trained archaeologists. They were everyday people—coal miners, farmers, and railroad workers—who had lost their jobs during the Great Depression. Employed under a variety of New Deal programs, these men were grateful not only to have jobs, but were keenly aware of how they were helping write a new chapter about the past.



### **Reckner Site**

A WPA crew worked from May 27, 1937 to August 5, 1937 to expose the Reckner site (36 So 7). The site was located on the western and northwestern sides of a slightly rounded knoll whose high elevation provided villagers with a commanding view of

the surrounding hills and valleys. The Reckner site was divided into a palisaded circular village component that dated to ca. A.D. 1320 and several dwellings largely to the north of this palisaded component. The dwellings outside of the palisade are of unknown age but if all 58 dwellings at Reckner were occupied at the same time, the site's population would have reached around 461 villagers. More storage features were recorded at the Reckner site than at any other site within Somerset County. Several dwellings within and outside of the palisaded portion of the Reckner site had two or more of these storage features attached to their sides. Graves were located throughout the Reckner





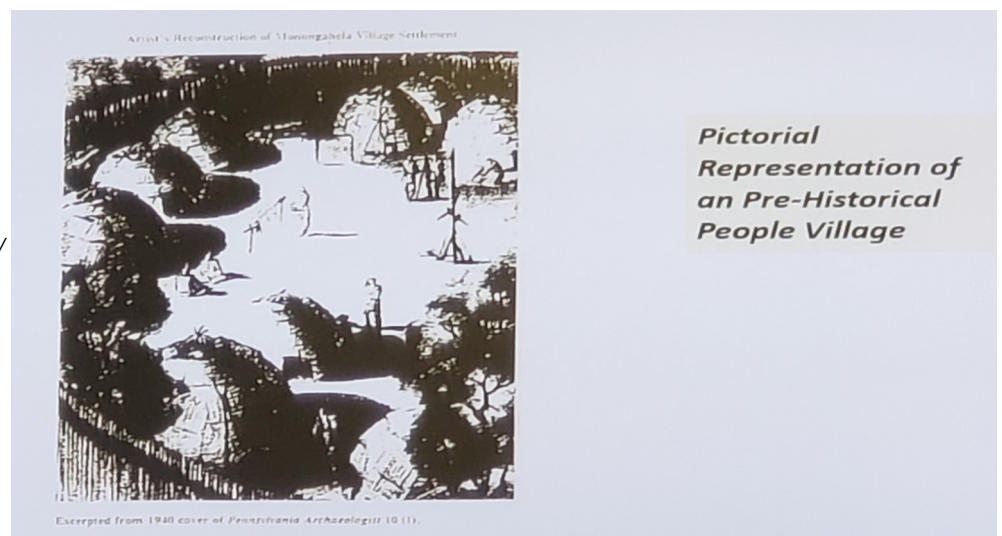
site, both within and outside the palisaded portion. A total of 36 definite and three possible graves were encountered at Reckner.

## Summary

From the excavations done in Somerset County during the 1930's, it has been discovered that none of the prehistoric people inhabiting the sites had ever had any contact with the white man. When Confluence was first settled, approximately in the year 1768, Somerset County was not inhabited by Indians, who were living in these large villages found. They had long since passed...

Conclusion: The people who inhabited this site (Reckner) were during the age period between 1,000 B.C. and 1,000 A.D. This period is labeled by archeologists as Early Woodland and Middle Woodland. The pre-historical people had no tribal names such as we know American Indians of today. It was the white man who gave the tribes their names. There is no written history of the thousands of people who were inhabiting America when the white man first landed here until the year 1673.

*Written by Edgar Augustine  
for the Pennsylvania  
Archaeologist 1930's  
[http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/  
portal/communities/  
archaeology/new-deal/  
reckner.html](http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/archaeology/new-deal/reckner.html)*





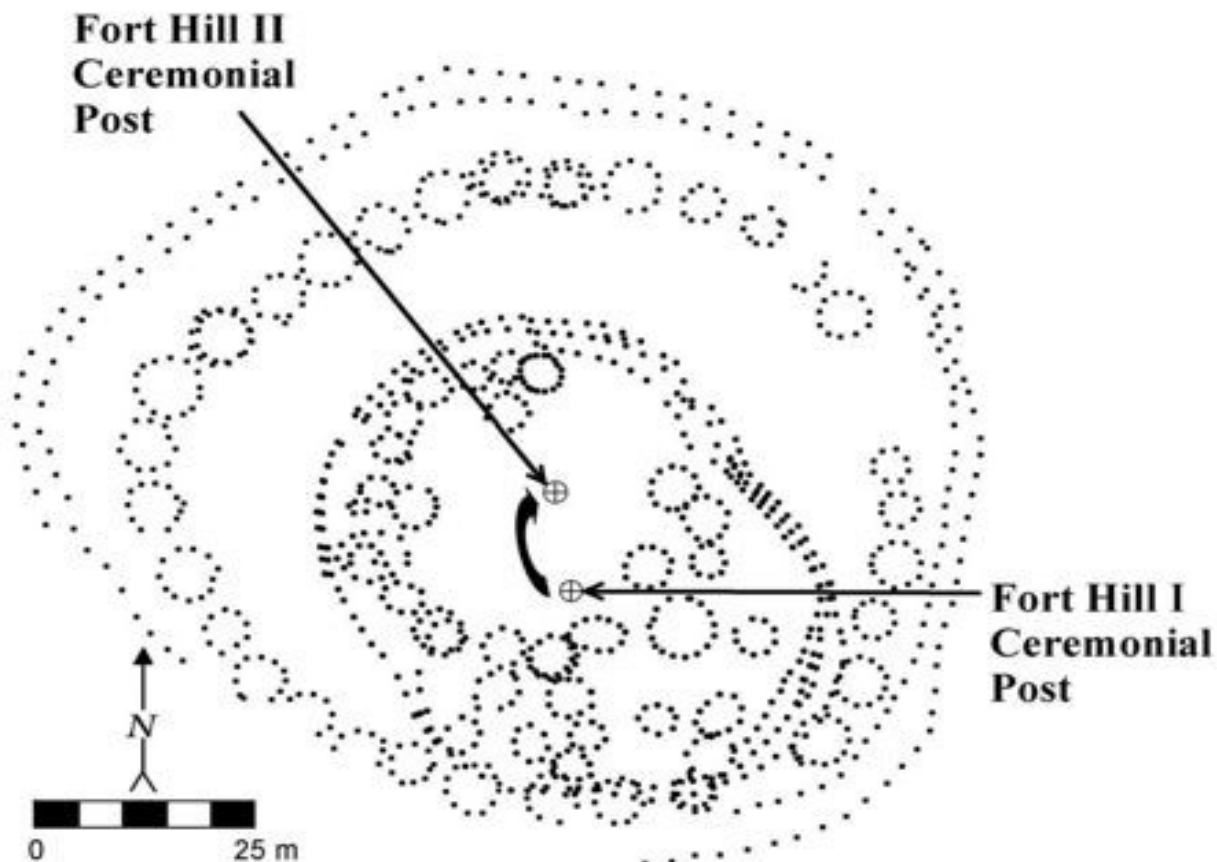


## Fort Hill Site

Situated atop a flat, mesa-like hill located near Confluence, the Fort Hill site (36 So 2) consisted of two overlapping village components. Freshwater springs on the eastern and western slopes of the mesa-like hill would have provided Fort Hill's Monongahela inhabitants with ready sources of water for drinking, cooking, bathing, and to maintain small garden plots. A WPA field crew excavated this site in 1939 and 1940. The smaller component, Fort Hill I, dated to ca 1275 A.D. and

202 people lived in its 34 dwellings. Crowding apparently led the villagers at Fort Hill I to expand their settlement into the much larger Fort Hill II, where approximately 270 people inhabited 35 dwellings around A.D. 1300. The central post around which Fort Hill I's inhabitants initially performed ceremonies and rituals was moved to remain central to the village's plaza, as that plaza shrunk. The relocated central post then became the central point around which Fort Hill II was designed.

<http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/portal/communities/archaeology/new-deal/fort-hill.html>

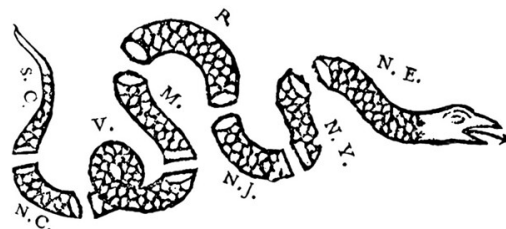


Site map of Fort Hill produced by Edgar Augustine in 1942. Fort Hill I is the smaller oval occupation located within Fort Hill II's plaza.

*A Clipping from The Republic—Meyersdale, PA*

## Revolutionary Hero.

Robert Colburn was a famer and owned a farm near Draketown, which is known as the Robert Colborn farm. He was a soldier of the Revolutionary war and served with distinction. He was detailed as a reserve, and went out on many hazardous expeditions for Washington.



**J O I N, or D I E.**

He was, also, one of the trusted messengers that helped to lay the plans for the capture of Trenton, when Washington crossed the Delaware on the 25th of December, 1777. He was declared an outlaw by King George of England on account of the part he took in the Revolution. He was married to Sarah Mitchell, a daughter of Robert Mitchell of England.

Abraham Colburn, his son, was born in the Turkeyfoot, in 1789. He was the father of Andrew J. Colborn and George W. Colborn. George married Harriet Wirsing, a daughter of Henry Wirsing, mentioned before, and was the father of Mrs. Louanna Cross and the late A.J. Colborn, our last Civil war veteran, who died about a year ago. Andrew J. Colborn married Susan Hartzell of Addison and was the father of Louis Colborn.

**Do you know who this young man is?**

**Answer on page 8.**



**We know this is an unknown Ursina restaurant. Does anyone know any other information on this photograph?**





*The Republic, Meyersdale, PA March 1, 1963*

## Confluence Man Found in Ruins Of Burned Home

The body of an aged Confluence area man was found Saturday in the ruins of his home which was struck by a disastrous fire early Friday morning.

The victim of the fire was identified as John Harned, 82, Confluence RD 3. His body was found by volunteer firemen.

### Suffocation Cause

Removal of the remains was directed by Somerset county coroner Robert H. Halverson and sheriff Norman F. Walker. Halverson reported that death was caused by suffocation.

The Harned home, made of brick, was located on Confluence RD 3, Lower Turkeyfoot township, along Route 53, one mile north of Ursina. Harned lived alone, authorities said.

The fire broke out about 2:30 a.m. Friday. Robert Harned of the same address, and a son of the victim, discovered smoke pouring from the dwelling. His father was known to have been at home at 10:30 p.m. Thursday, according to members of the family. The body of the aged man's dog was located in the basement.

Confluence, Addison and New Centerville firemen were called to battle the blaze which left only the walls standing. Assistant fire chief Dale Cramer of New Centerville said loss would be about \$20,000. It is thought the fire

(Continued on page 6)

## House Is Burned; Occupant Is Dead

(Continued From Page 1)  
started in the basement around the furnace.

### Conduct Investigation

An investigation was conducted at the scene by coroner Halverson, sheriff Walker and a representative of the State fire marshal's office.

It was not possible to recover the body Friday because the smoldering ruins were too hot. There was also the danger of walls collapsing. One of the walls fell into the ruins Friday afternoon. The search was resumed at 8 a.m. Saturday and soon thereafter Harned's body was found.

Mr. Harned was a retired construction worker. He was born on July 11, 1880, in Ursina, son of Bruce and Anna Harned.

Surviving are his wife, the former Nancy Cameron; five sons, Robert, Confluence RD 3; Charles, Iceland; James, Homer and John, all of Tacoma, Washington; two brothers, Frank, Somerset, and Everett, Coudersport; four sisters, Mrs. Orville Stark, Uniontown; Mrs. May Robertson and Mrs. Harold Neitz, both of Akron, Ohio; Mrs. Ethel Graham, St. Petersburg, Florida; 10 grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Service was conducted at Humbert Funeral Home, Confluence, Tuesday afternoon with the Rev. Jacob Duty officiating. Interment was in Jersey cemetery.

## **Book Store**

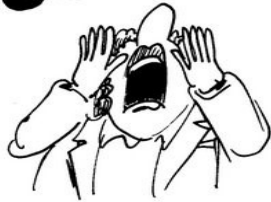
We have several items for sale in our book store area. Here is a partial list of items we have for sale:

We Remember WWI  
WW II Book  
Fort Life  
Native Communities  
Pioneer Community  
Quiet Courage

In addition to books, we have some Vintage Game Series, puzzles, rulers and other items which would make nice Christmas gifts for children.



# **Volunteers!**



## **Volunteers Needed**

If you would be willing to come and sit for an hour or two, this would help keep our building open for visitors. Please check with Pastor Ron Schaeffer if you can help out. Home phone: 814-395-5168 or cell 814-233-0117 and leave a message.

## **Local Trivia Quiz**

1. Who opened a motion picture theater in Confluence?
 

A. Joe Harned	C. Charles Yeagley
B. John Yeagley	D. Dr. Edwin Price
2. In what year was the theater opened?
 

A. 1946	C. 1919
B. 1920	D. 1918
3. What year was the Confluence Centennial?
 

A. 1976	C. 1972
B. 1970	D. 1973
4. In what year did the Turkeyfoot Valley Historical Society hold a commemoration of George Washington Journey through the Turkeyfoot?
 

A. 2001	C. 2003
B. 2002	D. 2004

# **QUIZ**

—Ron Schaeffer





Through the pages of time, a continuing history of Price Hospital and Confluence, PA.

132 page book - 2017 Release - Contact 814-395-5078

Book Series: Indian Pebbles

Tommie Tippee

Teddy Turtle

Fire Mountain (*Soon to be released*)

Cry of the Wolf (*Soon to be released*)

Dance of the Tall Reeds (*Soon to be released*)

*Books for sale—\$10 each*

Contact Irene Koontz: 814-395-5078



Did that young man look familiar? The photo is of Homer "Joe" Harned in 1942. It was taken during his Freshman Year at Roanoke, VA College.



Thank you to all who volunteer in any way to keep our historical society open. Also, thanks to all who did programs this year. They were GREAT!

# Membership News

We thank the following for their corporate donations to the Historical Society which have paid for the July, 2019 to June, 2020 Year.

**Beggs Brothers Printing**  
**Confluence Tourism**  
**Hanna House Bed/Breakfast**  
**Sechler Sugar Shack (Bronze)**  
**Turkeyfoot Lending Library (Gold)**



**Welcome New Member:**  
 Autumn Miller

# Thank You!

79% have paid for their memberships this year. If you have not yet paid, we trust you will consider doing so. A reminder will be in this newsletter for those who have NOT yet paid.