

**Turkeyfoot  
Valley  
Historical  
Society**

**PASS IT ON**  
Share our history

Volume 19, Issue 2

2nd Quarter 2020

Pass It On  
is a quarterly  
publication of the  
Turkeyfoot Valley  
Historical Society

Address:  
600  
Logan Place  
PO BOX 44  
Confluence, PA  
15424  
Email:  
tfvhs@tfvhs.com  
Web:  
www.tfvhs.com

#### **Officers & Directors**

President  
Josh Sechler  
Vice President  
Lisa Hall  
Treasurer  
Ronald Schaeffer  
Secretary  
Janice Fike  
Directors  
Neil Bender  
Ginny Halverson  
Jerry Hall

#### **NOTE TO MEMBERS**

If you are interested in  
receiving your copy of  
Pass It On electronically,  
please contact the  
Society at  
[tfvhs@tfvhs.com](mailto:tfvhs@tfvhs.com)

## **H.C. "Joe" Harned Scholarship Recipients...**

At the Turkeyfoot Valley High School Graduation on Sunday, May 31, 2020, the following member students received this award. It is a \$5,000 college scholarship (\$1,250 per year for four years).

Autumn Miller (picture on right). Autumn is planning to major in nursing at the Pennsylvania Highlands Community College. She also received several other awards at the graduation.

Katelyn Pepe (picture on left). Katelyn is planning to major in Civil Engineering at West Virginia University. She also received several other awards at graduation. Katelyn is the Valedictorian and Top Technology Center Student. She gave a beautiful address as the Valedictorian. She is also a National Honor Society Member.



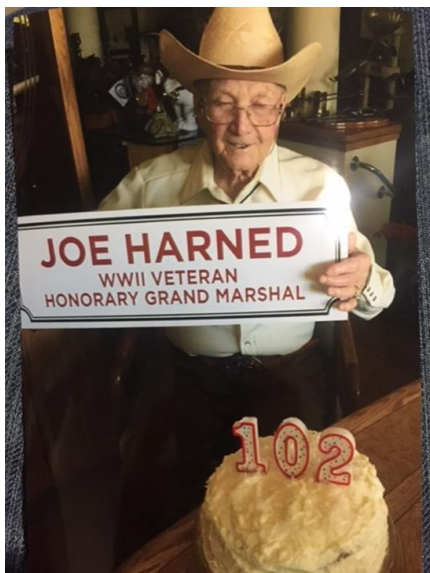
Katelyn Pepe, Pastor Ronald Schaeffer, Autumn Miller

Both of these girls have been members of the Historical Society for some time and have been attending our meetings. They have also given over 10 volunteer hours to the society.

It was an honor to preach the sermonette at the graduation and to share in these student's scholarship awards.

—Pastor Ronald Schaeffer

# THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF A MAN...



**H. C. “Joe” Harned** died June 2, 2020, at Good Samaritan Hospital in Puyallup at the age of 102. He is buried in Mountain View Memorial Park, Lakewood, WA. His son Lynn, his brother John and sister-in-law Eloise are also buried in proximity to his grave site.

Homer was born on September 6, 1917, in Ursina, PA, to John and Nancy Mae Cameron Harned. He was the fourth of six boys. Ernest, their first son, was born in 1905 and died at the age of 3. Robert, born in 1907 married Eva Nicola, had 5 children, and stayed in Ursina and worked the family farm and for the highway department. James, born in 1910 married Nova Gail Cross and moved to Tacoma, WA. Charles, born in 1919, married Mary, they adopted 2 children, and he made a career out of the Navy, eventually moving back to Confluence, PA and retiring from the U.S. Postal Service. John the youngest brother was born in 1923, married Eloise Bowser, had 2 children and settled in Tacoma, WA becoming a well-known and skilled masonry contractor as well as a successful real estate developer. Their mother, Nancy, was a blue star mother. All five of her boys served in World War II. Sadly, Homer’s death ends this generation of the Harned family.

There is an interesting family legend about how Homer got his name. At the time of his birth, America looked to baseball as an inspiration. Homer was born during the 1917 playoffs and his mother took one look at him and declared... “Looks like a homer to me.” So, the baby was named Homer Cameron Harned. The nickname “Joe” came from his military buddies in the 1930s.

Joe grew up during the Great Depression in Ursina, a town with less than 250 people. His family was poor, but everybody was at that time. Joe said he never forgot what it felt like to live in poverty. When he found himself in a position to give back, he started funding education. Joe felt that an investment in education meant investing in the potential of our city and nation, maybe even the world. He was fond of saying, “education was a friend for a lifetime.”

Joe graduated from Confluence High School in 1934. He recalled that “we were good, healthy and active kids. We played ball, picked berries and weeds, anything to keep us out of trouble.” Joe also traveled to Roanoke, Virginia, for work. He worked on freightliners, did all kinds of typing of invoices for the companies. He worked for a florist placing corsages on the bodies of the deceased. He was also a brakeman for the Pennsylvania Railroad in Baltimore.

After three years with the railroad, Joe enlisted in the U.S. Navy in 1942, before he could be drafted. He began in the Navy for pilot training and completed his bootcamp in Norfolk. He boarded the *U.S.S. Long Island*, which was a converted aircraft carrier. From San Francisco they traveled to the Panama Canal picking up Norwegian sailors that had been torpedoed. Joe said, “There was a famous squadron on board, along with ships, destroyers, cruisers, and battle wagons, all headed for Midway to do battle. We lost all planes but three on that mission.” Joe was at Guadalcanal when the first American planes landed on enemy held soil. Joe recalled, “There were two carriers operating in the Pacific, The *U.S.S. Long Island* and The *U.S.S. Saratoga*; the rest were incapable of action. Following the Battle of Midway, Joe’s carrier docked at Pearl Harbor—just months after the Oahu shipyard was attacked.

Joe spent his last six months of military service in Tacoma, testing catapults at a Navy shipyard on the tide flats. He was discharged in August 1945 and headed straight to Tacoma’s employment office to apply for the best-paying job he could find - cutting meat at Madigan Army Hospital for \$1.50 an hour. He was married as soon as he was out of the service to Vida Merle Young, whom he had met at Roanoke College. They moved to a rental house on Tacoma’s South Fawcett Avenue and had two sons, Lynn, and Keith. Lynn sadly died not long after serving in Vietnam. Keith works for AAA.

Joe completed his education at the University of Puget Sound in Washington in 1951, where he received a Bachelor of Science degree. He worked at service stations to complete school. Joe then became involved in real estate in 1952. He built houses, shopping centers, gated communities, and over 250 rental units.

He was a wonderful gardener and an avid sportsman; hunting, fishing, and camping throughout the North West, Canada, and Alaska. He and his brother John took many trips to these locations. Numerous times several other family members joined them.



**JOE WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR NUMEROUS CHARITABLE CONTRIBUTIONS, INCLUDING FUNDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW FACILITIES & THE PURCHASE AND RENOVATION OF OTHERS IN OUR AREA...**



In December 2005, the society purchased the building in Confluence, PA. The two-story building covers approximately 2000 square feet per floor. Restoration of the building exterior and interior first floor began in 2006. The official opening of the building was on October 4, 2008. The renovation project was accomplished by approximately \$135,000.00 of funds received from H.C. "Joe" Harned, and from grants from the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies. He also was the benefactor for the Turkeyfoot Valley Historical Society. This building was named in his honor... the H. C. Harned Center.

In October 2004 Joe attended the dedication of the United Community Church of God building in Ursina. The idea of building a church facility in the borough of Ursina was Joe's idea. He was looking for a way to help his hometown community and he felt that building a church was a great way of giving back to his community. Joe financed approximately \$1.5 million for the current structure that we now worship in. He wanted to see a facility that could be used by the community at large. While being a place where the body of Christ can worship together on Sundays and have Bible studies throughout the week. The church has also been used by the Confluence Fire Department, the local cub scouts, Somerset Trust to host community meals not to mention sports teams that come to practice and just a great place to gather for young and old alike.



The Kingwood Church of God was one of many local entities blessed by the generosity of H.C. "Joe" Harned. It was through his generosity that we came into possession of the former Kingwood Elementary School, now the Kingwood Church of God Fellowship Center. It was in that process that many of us in the congregation came to know and appreciate Joe. Joe's interest went far beyond just seeing that we obtained the building. He was very interested in what our plans were for it and how we were going about implementing those plans. When we had the formal dedication of the building, Joe, at age 98, flew into Pittsburgh by himself, rented a car to come to Somerset County and complained that it either wouldn't exceed 80 miles an hour or would not handle right above that speed. Despite all Joe had accomplished in his life, and it was impressive, he never forgot where he came from or the people from this area. He was generous with his finances, his time and his interest in local people and projects. We are among the many who were blessed to have known him.

## JOE'S MANY PHILANTHROPIC CONTRIBUTIONS...



**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
FOR THE ALLEGHENIES**

SERVING BEDFORD, CAMBRIA, SOMERSET, AND INDIANA COUNTIES

Over the years, Joe has supported the community as listed below.

- Turkeyfoot Valley Historical Society Fund has distributed \$43,500 to Turkeyfoot Valley Historical Society for operating support.
- Kingwood Church of God Scholarship has awarded \$25,000
- Turkeyfoot Valley Historical Society Scholarship has awarded \$90,000
- United Church of God Scholarship has awarded \$71,250
- HC "Joe" Harned Scholarship (inactive) has awarded \$260,755.55. This fund has also awarded Tacoma Community College \$96,970 for student scholarships.

Since 2005, that is \$543,975.55 of scholarships awarded. Helping over 170 students. Think about that!

include those that further education in both Pennsylvania and Washington. The H.C. (Joe) Harned Scholarship Fund was created through the Community Foundation for the Alleghenies with the intent to provide continuing scholarships through the Turkeyfoot Valley Historical Society and the United Community Church of God in Ursina for post-secondary education at accredited institutions.



### Comments on the passing of Joe Harned from members and friends of the Turkeyfoot Valley Historical Society:

Joe truly was one of the finest members of the greatest generation. He had such a kind heart, great laugh, and truly loved life and everyone that he interacted with. He never forgot his humble beginnings. He always made time for people. His contributions to our area of Somerset County will impact the lives of countless generations.

Josh Sechler

It was my great honor to know Joe Harned. His spirit of life and easy smile gave clear evidence of his indomitable spirit. Joe was a true example of determination having survived the Great Depression and World War II and all this nation's challenges that followed. His century plus life was a fascinating read in the grit of the American soul, the unwavering tenacity of the Greatest Generation, and the can-do spirit of a true gentlemen of both character and strength.

Eric B. Greisinger, Ph.D.

Joe once told me that he kept and displayed each of the students thank you notes from over the years. He sure was proud of everyone he was able to help.

Marisa Lehman • Donor Services Associate  
Community Foundation for the Alleghenies

His legacy to his home community is tremendous. The Community Foundation has been honored to work with Joe and to know him as a friend.

Mike Kane • President  
Community Foundation for the Alleghenies



Margi Harned, Joe Harned, Max Harned



## CONTRIBUTIONS IN WASHINGTON STATE...



### University of Puget Sound

Harned Hall—He created the Harned Endowed Scholarship at Puget Sound in 2006, in addition to making a significant gift to the construction of this building. Joe's civic and philanthropic work truly exemplifies the values of a Puget Sound education. The university named Harned Hall in his honor.

### Saint Martin's University

Harned Hall, a 20,700 square foot LEED Silver certified building includes an academic hub for the SMU community, eight multi-functional classrooms, a large computer lab, an electrical engineering lab, a team room equipped with computers for engineering students, an amphitheater style lecture hall, a student lounge, and café space.



### Tacoma Community College

H.C. Joe Harned Center for Health Careers. The center is named after H.C. "Joe" Harned, a college benefactor who recently contributed the single largest donation in TCC's history. With advanced equipment, a talented and skilled faculty and real-world learning spaces, the Harned Center allows students to get the training they need to strengthen their careers.

Thanks to Mike Kane, Pastor Dean Hay, Pastor Jim Monticue, University of Puget Sound, Saint Martin's University and Tacoma Community College for all the information so I could compile it to honor our friend and benefactor, Joe. —Lisa



In response to the recent COVID-19 pandemic the officers and the directors of the Turkeyfoot Valley Historical Society have decided that all programming and meetings for the society will be cancelled until further notice. The safety of

our members and visitors is our top priority. We are monitoring the situation and will inform you of any changes by email, on our website or by newsletter.

Meanwhile, we urge you to consider the value of our history, organizations like the Turkeyfoot Valley Historical Society, and others that will experience financial obstacles due to the effect of COVID-19.

Included within this issue is our membership form. Our new fiscal year began on July 1st. We encourage you to send your membership dues to PO Box 44, Confluence, PA 15424, along with your completed membership form. Any additional contribution at this time will be greatly appreciated.

This new year is also an election year for our officers and directors. Due to meeting cancelations we will need to officially vote in a different way. So, on the back of the membership form you will see the nomination list of Officers and Board of Directors for the fiscal years of July 1, 2020 to June 30, 2022. Please vote!

Thank you for all your cooperation. —Lisa





***Due to the pandemic, all programs are cancelled for the rest of 2020.  
Monthly meetings are cancelled until further notice.***

# Membership News

THANK  
YOU

We thank the following for their corporate donations to the Historical Society which have paid for the July, 2019 to June, 2020 Year. This is updated list as of 6/1/20.

**Beggs Brothers Printing (Bronze)**  
**Confluence Lions Club (Silver)**  
**Confluence Tourism (Silver)**  
**Hanna House Bed/Breakfast (Bronze)**  
**Sechler Sugar Shack (Bronze)**  
**Somerset Trust Company (Silver)**  
**Turkeyfoot Lending Library (Gold)**



Our membership year runs from 7/1/20 to 6/30/21. We are accepting membership dues and donations for the new year.

## Joe Holt

**April 02, 1927 - May 03, 2020**

Joseph Harold Holt, 93, of Confluence, passed away May 3, 2020 peacefully in his home. He was born April 2, 1927 in Canton, Ohio the son of the late Joseph and Marion (Young) Holt. Joe was preceded in death by his wife, Martha (Beggs), daughter, Jo Ann Vent, sister, Marion "Sally" Romesburg and brothers, Jess Chrise and Leroy "Buddy" Holt. He is survived by his granddaughter, Jamie Atala and husband Eric, Arlington, VA; great-granddaughters Emma and Morgan Atala; son-in-law, Thomas Vent, Bedford, sisters, Wilma Nicklow, Stoystown and Linda Loser, Somerset; brother-in-law, Richard Beggs and wife, Patricia, Kutztown and many nieces, nephews, great nieces, and great nephews. Joe was a caring, kind, gentle, father, grandfather, great-grandfather, brother, uncle and friend. He served his country during WWII in the United States Navy. He worked on the Western Maryland Railroad for over 44 years where he made lots of friends. Joe was also a member of the Masonic order and was an active and well known member of the Confluence community. He always provided a kind smile to everyone through his stories and through his actions. He enjoyed spending time with his family and friends and loved the railroad and his hometown of Confluence. Due to the current health regulations a private funeral will be held followed by interment in Addison Cemetery. A memorial service will be held at a later date and time for friends and family. In lieu of flowers, please donate to Joe's passion, the rebuilding of Western Maryland Steam Locomotive No 1309. Send donations marked "for 1309" to Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, 13 Canal Street, Cumberland, MD 21502, or donate online at <https://www.wmsr.com/1309>



**Joe Holt**  
**Vera Tressler**  
**Janet Noback**  
**H.C. Joe Harned**

## Vera Tressler

**June 29, 1932 - November 01, 2019**

Vera K. Tressler, 87, of Confluence, passed away Friday, November 1, 2019 at her home. She was born June 29, 1932 in Confluence, a daughter of John E. and Eva (McClintock) Phillippi. Her parents and husband, James E. Tressler preceded her in death. She is survived by three children, Johnny Tressler, Confluence, Marca Story, Fort Mill, SC and James Tressler, Cape Coral, FL; also 4 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. Vera was member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Confluence and the Red Hats. There will be no viewing or visitation. A memorial service will be held at a later date. Interment in Silbaugh Cemetery. The family suggests contributions in Vera's memory be directed to Trinity Lutheran Church, 701 Oden St., Confluence, PA 15424.