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Dingmans Ferry – Delaware Township Historical Society Newsletter

Spring, 2025

Editor: Susan Ridyard

We are off and running in another historic season! Our membership continues to grow each year, and we are at the greatest number of members that we have seen in years! We had a very good turn out for the “Thinking Inside the Box” program with Patricia Durante portraying all three women in the box at President Lincoln’s assassination. It was a great event that I hope you were able to attend. The rest of our program year will be just as exciting and informative. Check Page 2 and also our website for dates and times.

The Museum opened in April and we continue to be opened twice a month from 11am to 3pm; open dates are listed on the website. There have been several changes in the displays. Captain Hawkeye Pierce now inhabits the Korean display of the M.A.S.H. Swamp. We have also added a General Store display room that includes an old-fashioned Post Office and the sign from Arnold’s Country Store. The store is stocked with products from earlier times, and if you are so inclined, you can sit a spell and play a game of checkers. There have been some changes to the Veteran’s Room that I am sure you will find interesting. As always, private tours for members and their guests can be arranged both weekends and weekdays at no charge. Just send us an email at dfhistorical1735@gmail.com to make an appointment.

We have scheduled another Civil War Encampment Weekend for August 9-10. This year, we are planning a much larger event with a greater number of reenactors, displays and activities. Once again, it will be held at Akenac Park and is free of charge.

Lastly, 3 of our Board members recently attended a Genealogy Forum sponsored by the Wayne County Historical Society. The resources shared were vast and invaluable making an exciting, but truly daunting journey, fun and successful. Genealogy reference materials are on file at the museum. Our Historian/Genealogist, Brenda Snyder, as well as members of the Board, are available to aid and assist you should you need information relating to your ancestry research. To schedule assistance, please email your request.

Hope to see you at a meeting! ***Tim Singleton, President***

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Renew Your Membership!

Membership is yearly, starting in January. Be sure to fill out the Membership form that’s on the website and also in this newsletter.

Also be sure to add our email to your address book so our emails to you won’t be marked as spam:

[***dfhistorical1735@gmail.com***](mailto:dfhistorical1735@gmail.com)



Dingmans Ferry- Delaware Township Historical Society Museum at Akenac Park

- Free with 10 rooms of over 3,000 artifacts
- Watch for our banner announcing open days. In addition, we are always open when Akenac has an event.
- Open from 11am-3pm, typically on the 2nd Saturday and 4th Sunday of each month.
- We reopen each spring, and our upcoming dates are May 10 and 25, June 14 and 29, July 12 and 27, August 9-10 and 24, September 13 and 28, October 11 and 16, and November 8 and 23.
- Self-guided tour with Audio Recording
- **New Exhibits: General Store and Korean War Display**
- Featured in the Fall 2023 issue of the Journal (formally called Milford Journal) on pages 20-22. Click [here](#) to open the article.



Executive Board

- President: Tim Singleton
- Vice President: Skip Meyerhoff
- Treasurer: Diane Meyerhoff
- Recording Secretary: Patrice Singleton
- Corresponding Sec: Robert Gibbons

2025 Programs:

- **May 18 at 2pm. The Carving of Mt. Rushmore** by Lou DelBianco, grandson of one of the carvers.
- **June 22 at 2pm. - Ethnobotany Program.** Use of native plants for food, medicine, and other purposes by Lenape Clan Mother Shelley Windamakwi DePaul.
- **July 20 at 2pm. Mossback George.** A satire of the early life and times in Dingmans Ferry through the eyes of a local resident. Presented by Tim Singleton.
- **August 9-10. Civil War Encampment.** The NJ 2nd Brigade 7th Infantry reenactors will spearhead PA & NJ northern and southern units presenting the living history of Civil War soldiers. Museum open.
- **September 21 at 2pm. Thomas Jefferson Declares.** The story of the Declaration of Independence portrayed by Master Storyteller, Jonathan Kruk.
- **November 2 at 2pm. The Legend of Sleepy Hollow** by Master Storyteller Jonathan Kruk.
- **November 16 at 1:30pm. Members Only Luncheon**

Board Meetings

Board meetings are held monthly. Join us on the **first Saturday** of each month at **10am** at the museum.

These meetings are open to all. We encourage your feedback and participation.

Upcoming Programs



May 18 at 2pm: *The Carving of Mt. Rushmore: Out of Rushmore's Shadows*

Lou Del Bianco grew up knowing his grandfather was the artist who brought Mt. Rushmore to life, and rather than let him slip into obscurity, Del Bianco made it his mission to make sure America knew, too. *The Luigi Del Bianco Story* is the culmination of one grandson's 25-year quest to discover and secure his family's place in history.



June 22 at 2pm: *Lenape Ethnobotany Program: Use of Native Plants*. How the native American tribes use native plants for food, medicine, and other purposes. This program is presented by Lenape Clan Mother Shelley Windamakwi DePaul.



July 20 at 2pm. *Living in a Simpler Time: Mossback George*. A satire of the early life and times in Dingmans Ferry through the eyes of a local resident. Presented by Tim Singleton, President Dingmans Ferry-Delaware Township Historical Society.

Origins of the Dingmans Ferry Bridge (Source: Wikipedia)

In 1735, Andrew Dingman, a Dutch pioneer, operated a ferry that connected Old Mine Road in NJ to the Bethany Turnpike (now Route 209) in Delaware Township. The ferry thrived for over a century as pioneers utilized this important river crossing to move westward. Dingman named his original plot of land Dingman's Choice. The village of Dingman's Choice, which became identified with the ferry, had its name changed by the Post Office to Dingmans Ferry in 1868.

In 1836, the first bridge was built by the Dingmans and lasted until 1847, when high water washed away the Milford Bridge upstream and swept the debris into Dingman's Bridge. A second and third bridge were built, but storms and poor quality of materials washed it away again. The ferry was operated once again by the Dingmans until the property was sold in 1875 to John W. Kilsby, Sr. Kilsby's family operated the ferry until the turn of the twentieth century when the current bridge was constructed using some materials recycled from a railroad bridge on the Susquehanna River. This bridge has survived major floods in 1903, 1955, 2005, and 2006.

Records from an early logbook show tolls of 40 cents for a horseless carriage, 25 cents for a two-horse wagon, 10 cents for a horse and rider, 5 cents for a bicycle, and 2 cents for a footman. Under the terms of the original charter, no toll was charged for individuals traveling to church or a funeral, a custom which is still practiced presently.



Call for Volunteers:

We need your support and involvement to allow the Dingmans Ferry - Delaware Township Historical Society to continue to grow and flourish. We cannot do this without **YOU!**

Can you help with:

- Programs and Membership, Museum and Maintenance, or Advisory Board Nominations
- **August Civil War Encampment Program**

2025 Membership:

Membership begins annually **each January** and is \$15 for an individual and \$25 for family membership. Be a supporter of local history and join. The 2025 Membership form is on our website and enclosed in this newsletter.

Your member benefits include:

- Member only presentations
- Annual meeting & luncheon
- Private tours of our museum

Our Mission:

The Dingmans Ferry -Delaware Township Historical Society, Inc. was founded in 1994 to preserve the rich history of our area.

The Historical Society is dedicated to preservation of the records of the early settlers, and to the commemoration and preservation of artifacts, institutions and landmarks that constitute the history of our area.

The repository for the artifacts, books and files is the Society's Headquarters and Museum located at Akenac Park, Route 739 in Dingmans Ferry, PA.

Museum's Newest Exhibit: The General Store

Be sure to stop by the Museum to see our new exhibit: The General Store. Our checkboard is waiting for you!

