

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (12 Jan 12, 2022)

President John Golbeck called the meeting to order at 7:05 p.m. He announced that the Club officers decided, due to Covid-19's resurgence, to replace in-person meetings with Zoom meetings from January through March. They will decide then whether or not we can meet in person in April through June. Peter Jurs, this month's scheduled presenter, requested that his presentation be postponed until a time when he can speak in person. Carolyn Wilhelm has offered to speak this month. Because of the death of Carl Sillman, who was due to speak in March, Art Goldschmidt will talk on some aspect of the contemporary Middle East. John congratulated Roger Williams on his election to head the Centre County Historical Society. John called for a vote on admitting Terry Engelder to membership. Lee Stout moved, Roger Williams seconded, and the vote was unanimous. Art Goldschmidt reported on the plan of some members of the International Association of Torch Clubs to write a history of the IATC in time for the 100th anniversary of its founding in 1924. He also announced that the IATC Convention will take place in Saratoga Springs, NY, on 16-19 June 2022. He invited the members to consider attending. John Golbeck and Larry Ragan announced that our club will soon have its own web page.

John introduced tonight's speaker, Carolyn Wilhelm, who gave an illustrated Torch Talk entitled "Art Inspired by Homer's *Iliad*." She began with the geographical and historical context of ancient Greece and explained that Homer's epic poem dealt at length with only an episode that occurred near the end of the ten-year siege of Troy carried out by Mycenae aided by Sparta. A complete video of her talk, including the slides that clarified the geography of ancient Greece and of the siege and showed statues, amphorae, wine cups, tapestries, and paintings that depict scenes from the siege and the fights that are described in the *Iliad*. Carolyn took care to describe the details of the depictions and the social context within which the European artists, Joachim Wtewael, Peter Paul Rubens, and Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, did their work. In addition, she gave a lucid explanation of the siege of Troy and the significance of Homer's account of the gods and men involved in the events. The video was posted on the Internet by Larry Ragan on 14 January 2022 at 10:33 a.m. and all members should have received it.

Questions following Carolyn's talk: did Ingres intend to make the Greek God Zeus resemble Napoleon (yes), ate the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* still taught in public high schools (probably not), has anyone depicted the beauty of Helen of Troy (Homer never mentions Helen), and why are lions depicted in the landscape (in ancient times the climate was different, and lions and other tropical animals could be found in the lands around the Mediterranean).

John announced that Dick Jones will speak in the 9 February virtual meeting on the MIT-Sloan ENROADS Climate Simulator. The meeting was adjourned at 8:05 PM. Attendance—27.

Respectfully Submitted

Art Goldschmidt, corresponding secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (12 Feb, 2022)

President John Golbeck opened the meeting at 7 p.m., following 30 minutes of online socializing. He remarked how recent presentations have been relevant to events and topics in the news. As an example, he noted that the coverage of the James Webb deep space telescope talked about how Lagrange Points in its orbit were given names from ancient Greece, and that Carolyn Wilhelm's January presentation on art inspired by Homer's "Iliad" helped him know more about those names.

John also reported that the club's new website, which he built, has just been launched. He asked for thoughts about putting a member roster on the public part of the site or giving members an opt-out. Several members offered ideas, including listing members' names but not email addresses.

Minutes of meetings also will be on the site: <http://centralpatorch.org>

John asked for guests to be introduced. Dick Jones introduced his wife, Ann, and the program's co-presenter, Sylvia Neely. Sylvia is a retired Penn State professor of French history and volunteer co-leader of the State College chapter of the Citizens' Climate Lobby.

John introduced Carol Baker, an associate research professor in microbiology.

Peter Jurs introduced Kim Steiner, retired Penn State professor of forest biology and the retired director of The Arboretum at Penn State.

Speakers: Dick Jones and Sylvia Neely, "An Interactive Demonstration of the MIT-Sloan EN-ROADS Climate Simulator."

John then introduced the night's speakers, Dick Jones and Sylvia Neely. Dick is senior consultant for the R.W. Jones Agency, a national media relations firm, and in semi-retirement has been active in the Citizens' Climate Lobby, where he works with Sylvia.

Dick said the purpose of the MIT EN-ROADS Climate Simulator was to "help people teach themselves" about what combination of manmade changes could hold the increase in global warming to 1.5 to 2 degrees Celsius by the end of the century. Without changes it has been projected to rise by 3.6 degrees C by 2100. The interactive program is used around the world and has been translated into many languages. It can be found at this site:

<https://en-roads.climateinteractive.org/scenario.html?v=22.1.1>

EN-ROADS is the acronym for energy rapid overview and decision support. The simulator presents 18 public policy tools, or levers, within six categories: energy supply, transport, buildings and industry, growth, land and industry emissions, and carbon removal. Changes made by increasing any one or a combination of those levels show in a change in the temperature rise by 2100. Sylvia explained each of the policy tools and demonstrated how the simulator calculates effects from policy changes.

Within the categories, the policy tools are:

Energy supply: coal, oil, natural gas, nuclear, bio-energy, renewables, near-zero carbon, and carbon price.

Transport: energy efficiency, electrification.

Buildings and industry: energy efficiency, electrification

Growth: population, resources growth

Land and industry emissions: deforestation, methane and other

Carbon removal: afforestation, technological

The reason for concern is that the Earth's atmospheric carbon dioxide is higher than in the last 800,000 years. A chart showed that it did not rise above about 300 parts per million until 1950 and has since risen to about 410 ppm.

Dick and Sylvia encouraged members to use Zoom chat to type in suggested changes in the 18 levers. Fifteen suggestions quickly followed and the results of these suggested changes were shown on the simulator on members' Zoom screens.

Of the policy tool changes suggested, the carbon tax provided the biggest effect among the options. Methane reduction also showed results but faces cultural resistance around the world since it would require a sharp reduction in meat consumption. However, as Dick and Sylvia emphasized and as the simulator showed, no one change produced the desired outcome; it would take a number of changes in combination to reach the goal. Discussion also included the political difficulties and realities of making big changes.

Dick urged members to look into the Citizens' Climate Lobby and its State College chapter: (<https://statecollegeccl.org/>)

Attending – 25

The meeting ended at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Dillon, recording secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (9 Mar, 2022)

President John Golbeck opened the meeting at 7 p.m., after 30 minutes of online socializing. He reported that the officers had met and, with guidance and data from Dr. Charles Maxin, decided to resume in-person meeting at the Ramada for April, May and June. Attending members are asked to be double-vaccinated and to wear a mask when not eating or drinking. The meeting will also be on Zoom for those who want to attend remotely.

John remarked, as he did at the last meeting, that members' talks continue to be relevant, citing Bill Arden's November talk on "Celestial Navigation – Shackleton's Way Home" and the just-announced discovery of Shackleton's sunken ship, Endurance, lost since 1915.

John also said he spent two days researching Torch Club records kept in the Pattee Library Special Collections. Among the items, he found the club charter, minutes of the first meeting and the list of 39 charter members. He has added some historical records to the club's new website, <https://centralpatorch.godaddysites.com>, including the past 10 years of meeting minutes.

John introduced several guests: Connie Sherman, who was with Bill Arden, and Carol Baker. Art Goldschmidt announced that he was working on the Centennial History project and he invited members to attend the IATC Convention, which will be held from June 16-19 in Saratoga, NY.

Scheduled speaker: Art Goldschmidt, "Afghanistan: History and Mystery."

John introduced the night's speaker, Art, professor emeritus of Middle Eastern history at Penn State. However, as Art began his presentation a bad internet connection prevented members from hearing Art adequately. John then decided it would be best to move Art's presentation to the June meeting at the Ramada.

Before wrapping up the meeting, John gave members a tour of the club website, highlighting the tabs at the top of home page. "About us" includes club history, members' names and past presidents. A form allows interested persons to contact the president about joining. "Historical corner" includes minutes from 2012 on, and the annual trifold program schedules from 1955 on (these are in the Pattee archives, which includes material from 1947 to 2006).

Vice president Larry Ragan suggested the idea of a panel of experts as an optional presentation format, possibly including one guest expert. He urged members who have not given a talk in two or three years to consider doing so. Art Goldschmidt asked Larry to reach out to those who have not given a talk in a while.

Attending – 23

The meeting ended at 7:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

John Dillon, recording secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (13 April, 2022)

President John Golbeck called the meeting to order at 6:55 p.m. There were two guests. Peter Jurs introduced Kim Steiner, the former director of the PSU Arboretum. Carolyn Wilhelm introduced Kevin Alloway, Professor Emeritus of Neural Biology in Penn State's College of Medicine. Art Goldschmidt announced the IATC Convention, which will be held in Saratoga Springs, NY, on 16-19 June.

Larry Ragan introduced Joe Humphreys, who is internationally renowned as a fly fisherman. Aged 93, he has introduced famous new techniques of fly fishing. He is enthusiastic about teaching people formally and informally about caring for the environment, especially water quality. Penn State's program in fly-fishing now bears his name. He caught his first trout in 1936 and is still fishing now. George Harvey was his mentor in fly fishing technique. Runoff pollution from local chemical industry ruined Spring Creek in 1956, wiping out the Green Drake (a kind of fly that fish like). State College's treated sewage flows into the Duck Pond which then overflows into Spring Creek. This should be remedied. Joe showed the prize-winning film "Live the Stream: The Legacy of Joe Humphreys." It depicts the forest environment and trout streams, teaching us how to manipulate the fishing rod, the line, and the fly on its end to outsmart a fish and catch it. In most cases one unhooks and releases it back into the stream. He loves the running waters, their sound and even taste.

The film shows a tool that makes bird calls to attract wild turkeys. Joe also demonstrates how to cast, overhead, sidearm, even from the ground; but he mainly seems to throw the line out into the stream. One also learns how he manufactures his own flies. The film pays tribute to George Harvey, who spoke about how trout have become much scarcer now than when he began fly fishing. He demonstrates his technique. Joe notes how fishing with George laid the basis for their lifelong friendship. Fishing is the "greatest leisure time activity there is," one that you can do all year round. Joe enjoys teaching and helping people. He urges the viewer to protect the earth, the forest, and the streams. Physical training is necessary. Excitement of novice fisherwoman. Joe recalled taking George to Spruce Creek when he was in his nineties. Let's enjoy the fishing while we can. How does he feel about stocked fish? He accepts stocking streams. Spring Creek used to be fed by many springs, but most no longer flow.

The growing population of the area causes more demand for water. He enjoys cooking and eating fish occasionally, but usually catches and releases them, using forceps. You must never touch a fish directly when you take it out of the water, for handling it kills it. Nowadays, fish are smaller because so many big ones have been caught before they could reproduce. Fishing in Pennsylvania is gaining popular appeal. People come from afar to fish here. Only president he ever fished with is Jimmy Carter, who is excellent and eager to learn more. He advises fishermen to stand away from the stream because fish can see them if they stand in or near the water. Fly fishing goes back to the ancient Macedonians. Although Spring Creek supports a healthy fish population, there are other waters around the country that support larger numbers such as Idaho's Green River. Joe hopes to fish for the rest of his life, hoping to snag a certain 20-pound brown trout, even if he must live to 108 to do so.

Next meeting on 11 May will feature Bob Sills, speaking on "Outward Bound."

Attendance was 28 in person and 7 on Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,

Art Goldschmidt, secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (11 May, 2022)

President John Golbeck opened the meeting at 6:52 p.m., following dinner. Guests were introduced: Julianne Sills, wife of the night's speaker; past member Lou Persic and his wife, Freddie; and Kim Steiner, a second-time guest.

John reported on the officers' meeting on May 6. The bylaws were discussed but no changes proposed. The club is thriving, with 47 members, up from the low 30s several years ago. He reminded members of the "household member" category in the bylaws for \$20 a year and urged members to "consider bringing your spouse or significant other." He reported that this year the club experimented with two outside speakers, sports historian Ro Smith, who has since joined the club, and noted fly fisherman Joe Humphreys. Next year, a slot for one outside speaker is planned.

John also said he has spent time with the Torch Club's historical records in the Pattee Library. The State College chapter was founded in 1955. He has put each year's trifold on the club website. Several highlights of his research: Years ago, the application process was quite involved and has since been streamlined; in 1982 the bylaws were changed to remove men-only references, but it wasn't until 1991 that the club voted to admit women.

The club has one vote in the IATC vice presidential election, which has two candidates. After previous consultation with Corresponding Secretary Art Goldschmidt, John asked members for their assent to vote for Art Bloom for that position. Assent was given.

Lee Stout gave the treasurer's report. There is a balance of \$2,566.53, which will be \$2,021 after an outstanding Ramada bill is paid. "Where we normally are" at this time of year, he said.

Vice President Larry Ragan said next season's speakers have been tentatively lined up, except for the May and June meetings. Jim Serene then offered to speak in May. Larry said the December meeting will try a new format – an open mic with topic updates from past speakers.

Speaker: Bob Sills, "Outward Bound"

John then introduced the night's speaker, Bob Sills. After 15 years in the construction industry Bob enrolled in a master's program at Rutgers University and became an ag-science teacher. He entered the doctoral program and completed his degree in vocational-technical education. His dissertation, "The Effects of an Outward Bound Course on Two Dimensions of Teachers' Sense of Efficacy," propelled him into a 16-year career with Outward Bound. Bob began as a lead instructor in the open enrollment program but moved into working with educators and corporate executives in leadership training and team-building programs. He worked with many Fortune 500 companies and universities.

Highlights of Bob's presentation:

- Outward Bound is a nonprofit experiential education organization. Participants must interact with instructors and other participants in challenging environments and reflect on their experiences.

- Its history goes back to the early 1940s when Lawrence Holt, a shipping line owner, sought a training program to toughen young sailors to survive if their ships were torpedoed. Kurt Hahn was headmaster of Gordonston School in Scotland, which Holt's son attended. Hahn had developed physical and wilderness challenges to teach perseverance, skill, teamwork, leadership and service. In 1941 Holt and Hahn opened the first Outward Bound school in Wales, using the action learning cycle model.

- Josh Minor brought Outward Bound to the U.S. in 1962, opening the first school in Marble, CO. A separate program opened in Puerto Rico for Peace Corps recruits. Several others followed. Today there are 35 schools worldwide, with 10 in the U.S. Outward Bound USA charts new schools, provides safety

design and monitoring, and maintains a website listing courses. Each school is independent; together they serve 250,000 students each year.

-- In its early years, many teachers took courses and became instructors. At one Denver high school, the principal noticed the changes in his teachers – stricter with student achievement, giving students more independence, encouraging student participation and decision-making, communicating better and being willing to take more risks. Such results at Outward Bound programs led to the development of an Educational Services Division for teachers and administrators, and the opening of Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound schools, a whole-school reform program based on interdisciplinary thematic learning. Today 150 public and public charter school participate.

-- In the mid-1970s, Outward Bound Professional was developed to serve team building and leadership training needs of corporations and both public and private companies. Outward Bound facilitators and program managers develop a program to meet the assessed needs of a particular organization. Programs can be delivered anywhere, from the wilderness to hotel ball rooms. Bob spent many years with this and Educational Services as a program manager.

-- A small part of Outward Bound is its adjudicated youth programs for teen offenders who are given the choice of prison or an Outward Bound course.

-- By far the largest of Outward Bound's offerings are the open enrollment programs for anyone who can pass the physical. Catalogs are online; courses run from seven days to a semester at various locations; main activities include backpacking, sailing, canoeing, kayaking, dog sledding, and more. Courses are wilderness- and urban-based. For instructors, two skill sets are needed – the hard, technical skills of having mastered the activity, and the soft skills of managing a group. Briefs and debriefs of participants are essential.

-- Bob then described the general steps commonly experienced by open-enrollment participants, culminating with a final expedition in which the students are on their own as a team. This is followed by a final debrief. "It tends to be a very emotional time and often lasts well into the night," Bob said.

-- Bob said he fully retired from Outward Bound at 71 "with the belief that I had made a difference in the lives of many folks and organizations."

A number of questions from members followed. The meeting ended at 8:15 p.m.

Attending – 28 in person, eight on Zoom

Respectfully submitted,

John Dillon, recording secretary

CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA TORCH CLUB MINUTES (8 June, 2022)

President John Golbeck cancelled the meeting due to Covid-19 concerns.

Torch of State College Meeting
Ramada Inn State College, PA
September 14, 2022

Larry Ragan opened the meeting at 6:55 PM.
23 members attended in person, several via Zoom.

Announcements:

The group has 51 active members and we will continue to recruit new members.
Dues are \$60.00 yearly and are due now for the 2022-2023 year.
The dinner is \$22.00 and payable on the meeting date and the dinner is served at 6:00 PM.
The presentation starts at 7:00 PM and is available live and over the internet.

Guests: Representing the Torch International is Tim Spaeder from the Erie, PA Torch Club.
He is a member of the IATC board. He was introduced by Art Goldschmidt. He spoke briefly about his responsibilities with the organizational leadership.

Two new members were accepted for membership. They are Kevin Alloway and Kim Steiner.

Tonight's presentation is Art Goldschmidt: **Afghanistan: History and Mystery.**

Afghanistan is bordered by Pakistan to the South and East, Iran to the West and Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan to the North and a sliver of China to the North.

The land area of Afghanistan is comparable to the area of the state of Texas with 250,000 square miles and has a population of approximately 40 million.

The capital is Kabul with a population of 4,273,000 and there is ongoing animus between Kabul and the tribal rest of the population. The other 5 major cities including Kandahar 615,000, Herat 555,000, Mazar-i-Sharif 469,000, Kunduz 356,000 and Jalabad with 263,000.

The majority of the population is Pashtun (38%) with half of the Pashtun living in Afghanistan and half living in Pakistan. 25% of the Afghanistan population is Tajik, 8% Uzbek, 19% Hazara and 10% other.

The Durand line established in Afghanistan in 1893 was meant to protect the English India from Russian influence.

Much of Afghanistan is mountainous with the middle of country marked by the Paropamisus Mountains and the mountainous Hindu Kush in the eastern half of the country.

There are few rivers in Afghanistan. The Kabul river which is dry much of the year and drains into the Indus River in Pakistan. The Amu Darya drains into the Aral Sea which is rapidly disappearing.

Roads are few and the major Ring Road was built in the 1950's to connect major cities with the help of the United States. There are few roads in Afghanistan. There are no railroads which limits development.

Leadership

Nadar Shah Afshar was Persian and belonged to the Safavid dynasty (1501-1736). He was assassinated in 1736 which lead to the rise of the Durrani family who ruled Afghanistan up

to 1973. The Durrani family all of whom were distantly related and belonged to the Pashtun ethnic group's Barakzad tribe.

Important leaders include Dost Mohammad Khan (r.1826-1863). Abdur Rahman Khan "the Iron Amir" ruled from 1880-1901. He led successful resistance to the British invasion during the Second Anglo-Afghan war. However the Afghan population continued to view themselves as Muslim members of a tribe and not Afghans. They remained illiterate nomads or peasants.

The next important leader was Amanullah Khan (R.1919-1929). He attempted many reforms and failed in part from opposition of the Afghan tribes and the British in India.

Much of the population were Afghan nomads who were strongly tribal and herded horses, donkeys and camels. Some were subsistence farmers.

Next is leader is Mohammad Zahir Shah who led the country till 1973 when he was overthrown in a coup by Mohammad Daoud Khan, a cousin of Zahir Shah. Mohammad Zahir Shah then became the first Afghan president from 1973-1978. He was overthrown and killed in a pro-communist coup in April, 1978. The University of Kabul was founded in 1976 and strongly supported by Mohammad Daoud Khan. The University played a major role in the modernization of Afghanistan.

Russian Influence

Next leader was Nur Mohammad Taraki, an Afghan Communist leader (r. 1978-1979). He was followed by Secretary General Hafizullah Amin (r. 1979). His short-lived leadership furthered controversies from beginning to end. The Soviets were dissatisfied with Amin. The Soviets invaded the country, intervened and installed Babrak Karmal as Chairman of the Council of ministers (1979-1986). The Afghan Mujahidin rebelled against the Soviet occupation. The US assisted with the rebellion and gave Stinger anti-aircraft missiles to the Mujahidin, helping to defeat the Soviets. Osama bin Laden, founder of al-Qa'ida joined the rebellion and sought refuge in Afghanistan. After a ten year occupation and rebellion, the Soviets left Afghanistan in 1989.

Mohammad Najibullah was president from 1987-1992.

Mullah Omar founded the Taliban ("students") in 1994. They quickly took over most but never all of the provinces of Afghanistan. Omar was the self-styled Amir of Afghanistan and fled the country in 2001 when the Americans invaded. He fled the country to Pakistan where he died in about 2013.

9/11 and the American Invasion

Osama bin Laden plotted and arranged the terroristic attacks on 4 airliners in the US on September 11, 2001. President Bush demanded the Taliban turn over the al-Qa'ida leadership and the Taliban refused. Bush invaded Afghanistan to hunt the perpetrators of the 9/11 attack (Osama bin Laden) and continued the war.

President Hamid Karzai followed.

Osama bin Laden was found in Pakistan and killed by American Seals on May 2, 2011.

Ashraf Ghani was trained as an anthropologist at the American University of Beirut and at Columbia University. He was elected president in 2014 and reelected in 2019. He was unpopular as president. He escaped Afghanistan on 8/31/2021, the day the Taliban seized Kabul.

The estimated military cost is \$1 trillion for the 20 year war with 2,000 American lives lost. The US withdrew from Afghanistan on 8/31/2021.

The Taliban now rule and Muslim law is instituted throughout the country. Poverty is estimated to affect 90% of the population. Women cannot work and there is not enough food. The population of the educated is shrinking.

The next meeting of the Torch group is Wednesday, October 12, 2023. The meeting is at the Ramada Inn. Social time is 5:30 PM, dinner at 6:00PM and presentation at 8:00 PM.

Peter Jurs will speak on The American Fur Trade of the Far West.

The meeting ended at 8:00 PM

Respectfully submitted,

Charles W Maxin
Recording Secretary
cwmaxin@gmail.com

Torch Meeting Minutes

Ramada Inn State College, PA

October 12, 2022

Larry Ragan opened the meeting at 5:55 PM.

35 members attended in person, several via Zoom.

Announcements:

Membership is at 53 for the Torch Group in State College.

Dues are \$60.00 yearly and are due now for the 2022-2023 year.

The dinner is \$22.00 and payable on the meeting date and the dinner is served at 6:00 PM.

The presentation starts at 7:00 PM and is available live and over the internet.

Roger Williams introduced guest **Roger Geiger, PhD**, Professor at PSU 1987-2012

Roger Geiger has three degrees from University of Michigan, Research in American Higher Education

John Dillon introduces guests **Gene Tyworth** with degrees in Supply Chain Management, Penn State faculty 1976-2016 and **Ford Risley**, Professor of Journalism Penn State 1995, Interests and work: American Civil War

John Golbeck announced progress on family memberships with three new spouses joining, **Mary Serene**, **Julianne Sills** and **Connie Sherman**

The search is on for the 2023-2024 presentations, contact John Dillon with your interests.

Presentation by Peter Jurs:

The American Fur Trade of the Far West

1807 – 1843

The Mountain Men

Peter Jurs began his presentation with the goal of telling the story of the lesser known part of the westward expansion across the continent. The American fur trade encouraged the exploration and settlement of the Far West.

The story starts with the inauguration of Thomas Jefferson in 1801, the Louisiana purchase in 1803 and the Corps of Discovery 1804 through 1806 with the Lewis and Clark exploration of the Western United States. Prior to the early 1800's little was known of the west. Exploration was limited to the area east of the Mississippi.

With the Louisiana Purchase, Jefferson encouraged the exploration west of the Mississippi River and wanted Lewis and Clark to map the region, explore the headwaters of the Missouri River and map the northwest coast of the Pacific. He wanted to know about the vast new area added to the United States. He was aware of the English visits to northwest coast of the

continent and the discovery of the Columbia River. He was interested in a portage from the Missouri river to the Columbia River. The Louisiana purchase doubled the size of the United States. It also provided access to the Gulf of Mexico.

The Corps of Discovery Expedition as the group was known, was formed in 1803 and wintered 1803-1804 in present day Indiana. They left Saint Louis in 1804 with 40 men traveling north up the Mississippi River. They crossed the area of Missouri and were in the area of North Dakota by late October, 1804. They befriended a French trapper Toussaint Charbonneau who agreed to guide them west. They were joined by Sacagawea, a teenage Shoshone woman who was previously captured at age 12 near the continental divide in present day eastern Idaho. The corps spent the winter of 1804-1805 with the Mandan Indians at Fort Mandan, a fort built by the corps in present day North Dakota. The trapper and Sacagawea agreed to guide the corps west.

They encountered grizzly bears, many new animals, plants and carefully collected and saved samples. They reached the mouth of the Yellowstone River in three months near the present-day border with Montana. They followed the Missouri River and in July arrived at the three forks, named Madison, Jefferson and Gallatin. This was where Sacagawea was captured by the Hidatsa 5 years earlier.

They got horses from the Shoshones and crossed the Rocky Mountains with an 11 day forced march over the Bitterroot mountains. They traveled down the Columbia River in dugout canoes and reach the Pacific in early November, 1805. They wintered in Fort Clatsop built by the Corps near the mouth of the Columbia River.

They spent 3 months at Fort Clatsop and noted only 12 days without rain. The Clatsop and Chinook Indians were essential for survival, trading for food. They became tired of eating salmon every day. They left Fort Clatsop March 23, 1806 and by August 14 were back at the Mandan village and by September, 1806 they were back in Saint Louis, finishing a 8,000 mile trip in 2 years 4 months and 10 days. They drew 140 maps. One man died during the journey and one man stayed in California.

The Rocky Mountain Fur Company was formed in 1822, established by William Ashley and Andrew Henry who advertised for trappers. Jedediah Smith (age 23) and Jim Bridger (age 18) were two of the most famous Mountain Men who trapped for the RMFC.

The men trapped beaver with steel traps and sold beaver pelts to make felt for top hats. The trapping trade was based on groups of trappers, the rendezvous trade nexus, and the overland supply routes to the eastern US and to Europe. The system remained intact for the next ten years. Indians also participated in the trade along with white trappers. There were multiple main rendezvous sites and most were west of the continental divide.

The sites operated and were similar to the great fairs of medieval Europe. The trappers traded beaver pelts for gunpowder (called DuPont), lead to make bullets (called Galena), knives, traps, tobacco, coffee, and lots of liquor. All this was packed in by pack trains from Saint Louis.

Jedediah Smith (1799-1831)

He was the first overland traveler to California, first to cross the Sierra Nevada Mountains, first to traverse the Great Basin and first to travel overland to the Columbia River.

Jim Bridger (1804-1881)

Bridger was born in Virginia. He joined William Ashley's group of trappers in 1822. He was one first to see the Great Salt Lake in 1824. He trapped in the 1820's and became one of the owners of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company in 1830's. He established Fort Bridger in 1843 to trade with immigrants. He got shot in the back with an Indian arrow from a skirmish and a missionary removed the arrowhead in 1835.

Kit Carson (1809-1868)

Carson was born in Kentucky in 1809 and became involved in trapping in the 1830's. He met John C. Fremont in 1842 and went on three expeditions with Fremont. He was involved in the Bear Flag revolt in California.

Treaty of Guadalupe Hildalgo 1848

The treaty of GH in 1848 ended the Mexican war. The treaty ended with 525,000 square miles transferred to the United States. This included the states of California, Nevada, Utah, and Colorado. It also established the Rio Grande River as the border between Texas and Mexico. The US paid Mexico \$15 million or 4.5 cents per acre for the land

Summary

The legacy of the Fur Trade Era:

Expansion of Geographical Knowledge

The exploration of the country around the sources of the Platte, Green, Yellowstone, Snake rivers and the region around the Great Salt Lake were opened by the mountain men.

The exploration of the western continent.

Mountain men were guides for overland settlers.

Mountain men were guides for Fremont and others.

Mountain men were important for the development of the economy of Saint Louis.

Mountain men were the first wave of Europeans to exploit the natural resources of the west.

Respectfully submitted,
Charles W Maxin, MD

Torch Meeting Minutes 11/9/2022
Ramada Inn State College, PA
November 9, 2022

Larry Ragan opened the meeting at 5:45 PM.
50 members attended in person, several via Zoom.

Announcements:

Larry introduced guest Graham Spanier, PhD

Next Meeting: Wednesday December 14, 2022

Presentation by Graham Spanier:

Dr Spanier was interviewed by Roger Williams regarding Dr Spanier's recent book:
In the Lions' Den: The Penn State Scandal and a Rush to Judgment.

Dr Spanier begins with the observation that he did not expect nor wanted to be part of this story. He offered his resignation to the Penn State Board of Trustees on November 9, 2011. The Board accepted and the story begins.

He was limited in what he could say initially by a gag order from the Board and later by a variety of lawyers. The book was written to clarify what happened. Throughout the events of the next ten years Dr Spanier states nobody was telling the whole story. This book tells Dr Spanier's story.

Dr Spanier and Roger Williams spent an hour with a back and forth conversation. Approximately 30 minutes of comments and questions followed.

The next meeting is December 14, 2022 at the Ramada Inn in State College at 5:30 PM, Dinner is served at 6:00 PM and the presentation is at 7 PM.

John Dillon will present: Sunshine Laws and the Freedom of Information Act.

Respectfully submitted,
Charles W Maxin, MD
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Torch Meeting Minutes 12/14/2022
Ramada Inn State College, PA
December 14, 2022

Larry Ragan opened the meeting at 5:55 PM.
34 members attended in person, Zoom was partially available for this meeting

Announcements:

Guests

John Dillon introduced his guest Jan Dillon.
Bill Arden introduced his guest Jean Lee.

John Dillon gave an update on special interest groups (SIG) that are used in other Torch organizations.

John Dillon requests members to consider presentations for the upcoming year 2023-2024.

Membership is at 53 for the Torch Group in State College.
Dues are \$60.00 yearly and are due now for the 2022-2023 year.
The dinner is \$22.00 and payable on the meeting date. Dinner is served at 6:00 PM.
The presentation starts at 7:00 PM and is available live and over the internet with Zoom.

The January 11 meeting with Wayne Osgood:

Delinquency, Daily Life, and the new Adolescence: the Rise and Fall of Teen Culture

Today's presentation is by Jon Dillon

John Dillon is professor emeritus in the College of Communications at Penn State where he taught from 2007 to 2017 and was Norman Eberly Professor of Practice in Journalism. Before coming to Penn State, he worked at the Richmond Times-Dispatch in Virginia for 32 years. John previously presented in 2020 "Ripe for Disruption the Rapid Decline of Local News." John and his wife reside occasionally in State College when they are not on the road visiting family and friends. John is a road warrior bicyclist and has competed in several marathons.

**Sunshine Laws and the Freedom of Information Act
What to Know About Your Right to Know**

All states in the United States have freedom of information acts and sunshine laws to allow the public free and unencumbered access to information created by their governments. Rep John E. Ross, D-CA was a US Representative in the US congress from 1953-1978. He believed there was too much secrecy and his general philosophy was for full agency disclosure. It took 12 years to enact the new law on July 4, 1966 signed by Lyndon Johnson.

Anders Chydenius was a Swedish Lutheran pastor who got the government of Sweden to enact the Swedish Freedom of the Press Act, December 2, 1776. The act allowed citizens to access, except for classified documents, official documents.

The United States Freedom of Information Act was signed by President Lyndon Johnson 200 years later. The vote was 306 yes, 0 nays and the rest (129) of representatives abstained.

- The Act describes a general philosophy of full agency disclosure
- Applies only to agencies under the executive branch
- Make records “promptly available to any person
- Request must reasonably describe the records sought
- There are nine exemptions.

Exemptions

- National Defense and foreign policy classified secrets
- Agencies’ internal personnel rules, practices
- If exempted by another federal law
- Trade secrets and privileged commercial or financial information
- Documents in agency litigation
- Certain law enforcement records affecting fair trial, privacy, etc.
- Personal privacy including personnel and medical files
- Geological/geophysical information involving wells

FOIA use today

The FY 2021 annual report lists

- 119 agencies
- 838,164 requests
- 838,668 processed

The agencies with the most FOIA requests

- Homeland Security - 443,000
- Justice - 98,000
- Health and Human Services - 33,000
- Veteran Affairs - 28,000

The Agencies with the least FOIA requests

- Among the 13 with less than 10 requests:
- Denali Commission - 9
- U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board - 5
- Gulf Coast Ecosystem Restoration Council - 4
- U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness - 0

Who makes the most FOIA requests

- Businesses
- News media organizations
- Individuals Law Firms
- Nonprofits

The Backlog problem - requests pending for more than 20 days FY 2021

- Requests are up 6%
- Backlog up 8%
- Justice Department - 33% of the total
- Simple requests - averages 33 days
- Complex requests - 80% under 100 days
- FOIA-related costs are \$561 million

Interesting Things we have learned

- 1980s- EPA knew paper mills were discharging dioxin, a toxic substance into rivers.
- 2005 - Wasteful government spending during recovery efforts after Hurricane Katrina
- 2013 - Three nuclear trigger switches activated with a B-52 with two warheads crashed in North Carolina in 1961. The fourth switch did not, averting a catastrophic nuclear explosion.
- 2016 - Major U.S. supplier of Parmesan cheese was substituting wood pulp for parmesan in its products.
- 2022 - FBI considered buying Pegasus spyware to hack cell phones and extract their contents.

Odd things we have learned

- FCC complaints about inappropriate “South Park” content
- FBI Twitter sling dictionary
- White House beer recipe
- CIA cafeteria complaints

Filing an FOIA request

- Anyone can, citizen or not
- Is the information area available
- Request made in writing and “reasonably described?”
- Send the request to the agency’s FOIA office
- No special form needed
- No initial fee
- Certain charges are allowed.

In Pennsylvania

- the Sunshine Act describes how public meetings are conducted
- the Right to Know Law describes access to the public records or governmental bodies.

The Right to Know Law before 2008

- presumed records were not public
- A citizen had to prove otherwise

After 2008

- Records presumed open to the public
- Agency has to prove otherwise

The Pennsylvania Office of Open Records

- Quasi-judicial and independent
 - Director is appointed by the governor
 - It is a binding authority on citizen access
 - Makes “fair and open” determinations
 - Trains public officials on the RTK (right to know) and Sunshine laws.
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- the 2021 annual report lists 2,990 appeals, the most ever
 - 2913 decisions, the most ever and up 35% in the past 5 years

Some things we earned in 2021

- IBM paid the state \$33 million to settle a lawsuit over its failed overhaul of the state unemployment computer system
- Internal PA Turnpike report showed \$104 million uncollected during the switch to all-electronic toll collections
- Philadelphia transferred \$5 million to foster children’s Social Security benefits to the city’s general fund
- Inspections identified 229 smoke detector violations at child care facilities over 19 months

Ernie Lazar, Who Trawled for Secret Government Documents Dies at Age 77

“If there were some prize for ‘Important and Consequential People Who Are Unknown to the General Public,’ Ernie would be the top contender.

Happy Holidays!

Respectfully submitted,
Charles W Maxin, MD