



# Mountain Messenger

The official newspaper of  
Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS and  
Johnstown Flood National Memorial

Summer/Fall 2010



## Remembering The Victorian Era

QUEEN VICTORIA'S REIGN FROM JUNE 1837 UNTIL HER DEATH ON THE 22nd of January 1901 defines the Victorian Era, but scholars include years as far back as 1830 when contemplating this time period. With the Allegheny Portage Railroad in operation from 1834 to 1854 and the Johnstown Flood in 1889 it is interesting to see how the thinking of Victorian times influences our understanding of what happened and why.

The Victorian Era was a time of tremendous scientific progress and ideas. Darwin took his Voyage of the Beagle, and posited the Theory of Evolution. The Great Exhibition of 1851 took place in London, showing off the technical and industrial advances of the age. Progress in medicine and the physical sciences continued throughout the century. The Victorians were impressed by science and progress, and felt that they could improve society in the same way as they were improving technology.

During the Victorian era, science grew into the discipline it is today. In addition to the increasing professionalism of university science, many Victorian ladies and gentlemen devoted their time to the study of natural history. Natural history became increasingly an "amateur" activity. Particularly in Britain and the United States, this grew into specialist hobbies such as the study of birds, butterflies, seashells, beetles and wildflowers. Amateur collectors and natural history buffs played an important role in building the large natural history collections of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The 19th Century was a time of tremendous social and economic change. The Industrial Revolution created a consumer economy and a huge middle class with purchasing power. This new middle class felt that they had arrived at a higher social plane of existence. The ways of the farm and the tenement would not do for the family of a man who had made his way in the world.

By the end of the century specialized clubs were forming, such as the South Fork Fishing and Hunting Club. The Industrial Revolution brought the possibility of leisure to many and those who could indulge leisure hobbies did so with great enthusiasm. At the South Fork club house there were many activities beyond hunting and fishing. Boating, photography, family musical and theater productions, and regatta events were pursued.



Portrait of Queen Victoria

In science and technology, the Victorians invented the modern idea of invention -- the notion that one can create solutions to problems, that man can create new means of bettering himself and his environment. Is it then no surprise that the Victorians loved the technology and innovation of the Allegheny Portage Railroad, even as they knew it would be out dated almost as soon as it was built?

The Victorian Era in the United States was filled with social, economic, and scientific change, as was seen worldwide at the time. The citizens approached those changes in the enthusiastic manner for which Americans were known. They made their decisions and choices based on what they knew, what they expected, and what they hoped for at that time. They were not much different from us today. What judgements passed today will be admired 110 years from now?

### Welcome from the Superintendent

On behalf of the staff and volunteers of the National Park Service, I welcome you to Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site and Johnstown Flood National Memorial. I encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities to connect to the unique historic resources at these two sites. You can take part in a guided van tour at Johnstown Flood, join a ranger for a stone-cutting demonstration at Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS or hike the Incline 6 to 10 Trail at your own pace.

Find your visit especially inspiring? Interested in giving back to YOUR National Parks? Consider volunteering! To learn more about volunteer opportunities contact Diane Garcia at 814-886-6154 or Diane\_Garcia@nps.gov for Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS or Doug Richardson at 814-495-4643 or Doug\_Richardson@nps.gov for Johnstown Flood National Memorial.

As you explore Johnstown Flood National Memorial and Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site, we want you to enjoy your visit and to remember that these are YOUR national parks.

Keith E. Newlin  
Deputy General Superintendent  
Western Pennsylvania Parks

### Where am I?

Can you find me during your visit? Answer on page 3.



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U.S. Department of the Interior

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**Park Hours**  
Both parks are open 9am to 5pm  
seven days a week. Ask about special  
programs and events happening for YOU  
to enjoy during your visit

**Park Fees**  
Both parks charge \$4 per adult with chil-  
dren ages 15 and under free. Park passes  
are available and honored. Talk with a  
ranger to decide which would save you  
the most money!

The National Park Service cares  
for the special places saved by the  
American people so that all may  
experience our heritage.

# The American Highlanders

WHY ARE THERE SOLDIERS OF THE 19TH century patrolling the grounds of Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site? Don't be alarmed! They are rangers and volunteers portraying the American Highlanders, an 1840s militia unit based in "Summit", where the main park facilities are located today.

The militia system of the early- to mid-19th century was the equivalent of today's National Guard and Reserves. In Pennsylvania, this meant that all males between the ages of eighteen and forty-five were required to be enrolled in one of the state's units. Founded around 1846 by John White Geary, Superintendent of Motive Power on the Allegheny Portage Railroad (later a general in the Civil War and governor of Pennsylvania), the American Highlanders counted in its ranks workers from the Allegheny Portage Railroad, the Main Line Canal and others from the surrounding area of Cambria and Blair Counties.

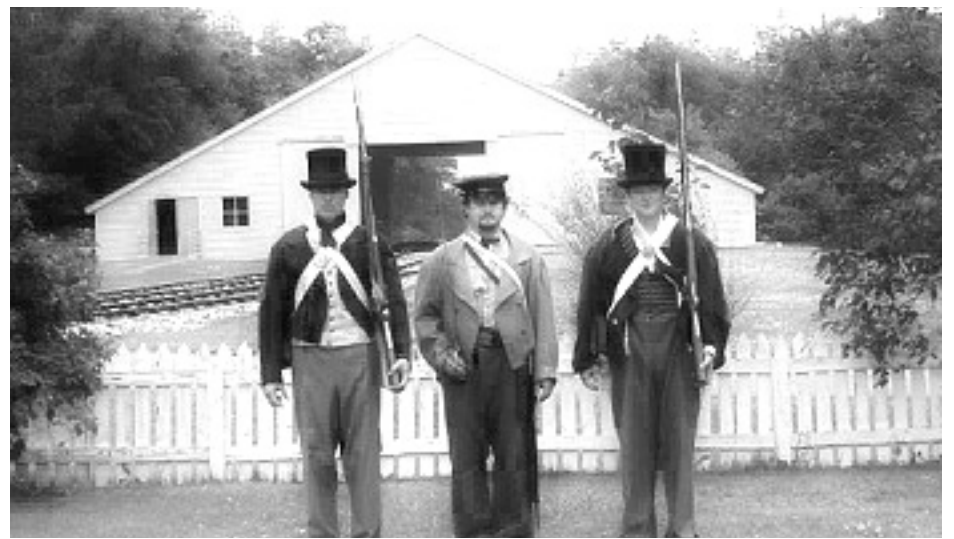
When hostilities broke out between Mexico and the United States in the spring of 1846, Geary and the American Highlanders volunteered their services to the federal government as part of the great wave of patriotism that was sweeping the nation. In early 1847, the unit was mustered into federal service as Company B, Second Pennsylvania Volunteers. Geary would eventually become the regiment's colonel. The Second Pennsylvania fought in many of the battles during Gen. Winfield Scott's Mexico City campaign and also took part in occupation duty until a peace treaty was signed in 1848. Of ninety-six men who served with the American Highlanders in the Mexican-American War, twenty-seven died during their term of service. Upon their return to "Summit" in July 1848, they were treated to seemingly endless rounds of banquets and speeches. The Civil War would soon overshadow what these men had done in the service of their country.

Here at Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS, we have begun to tell the long-forgotten story of the American Highlanders. Their story is being told as part of the larger tale of the workers who built and operated the canal and portage railroad. Along with our log hewing, stonecutting and other worker-related programs, we are also presenting programs about how these workers fit being a part-time soldier into their already busy lives. So during your visit to the park, you may see our rangers and volunteers performing 19th century infantry drills, including the firing of flintlock muskets, in reproduction clothing and gear. Ask in the visitor center when one of these programs will be offered and please attend. These local heroes have been forgotten for far too long.

Join us for a special Living History Day on June 19th where you may see the American Highlanders and other characters working, living, and training together.



Some of the weapons and equipment used.



Staff and Volunteer reenactors on patrol as American Highlanders.

## Junior Ranger and other Children's Programs

EXPLORE, LEARN, PROTECT! THE JUNIOR RANGER WAY! WOULD YOU LIKE TO become a Junior Ranger? Would you like to do some fun activities while learning about our parks? Just ask at the information desk to receive a Junior Ranger booklet. After you complete the booklet's activities and take it to the park's information desk, the staff will review it and swear you in as a Junior Ranger. As a Junior Ranger you will help the National Park Service in its mission by helping to preserve and protect the park and its resources for future generations. You will also receive a Junior Ranger certificate and a Junior Ranger Patch.

At Johnstown Flood National Memorial you will enjoy new Junior Ranger booklets with fun and creative activities in which children and adults participate. There are different booklets for different age groups; ages 5-7 years, 8-10 years, and 11-13 years. Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site's program has been in place for 3 years now. There is one booklet for all age groups, the number of activities required changes based on your age. If you are 8 years old, for example, you complete 8 activities. Twelve year old Junior Rangers complete 12 activities to earn the award. Ask a ranger for details!

Programs beyond Junior Ranger are offered to schools, scouts and other youth groups. Call ahead and the staff will work with you to meet your group's goals.



Girl Scout Brownie programs at Allegheny Portage

## Follow Us on Twitter

Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site is found listed under AlleghPortNPS



Johnstown Flood National Memorial is found listed under JohnstownFIdNPS



## Puzzle It Out

Word List:

Beale Bonnet Conemaugh Darwin Flintlock Geary  
Highlanders Industrial Juniata Mainline McCollough  
Musket Stovepipe Tam Victorian Winfield

V W K Z Z P Q C P C L A T A I N U J P K  
H S T O V E P I P E D A Z T T J Z E C M  
G E A R Y D L F H N K D I E H M W O N A  
U V H G U A M E N O C C K R H A L C I I  
O W I N V T B P V B J S N I T T Z E W N  
L S T C Y U Q W W W U G G O N S D D R L  
L H C A T N N I U M B H H I Q D U C A I  
O E Q U N O N T G Y L E L T W Y A D D N  
C Y V P S F R B Y A A F F M E L M K N E  
C N M F I Z S I N M S A Z U Y N L Z J I  
M Q G E W Y K D A T M Z M L X F N K A L  
G U L V L E E F W N A N P F J M M O V F  
K D S H F R F V J C M M Q M K C Q I B S  
S E T J S C H W Z V M E Q J W L A B O G  
A T K B E A L E L E O X S K C C E F D P

# Bonnet, Hat, Cap and perhaps a Tam O'Shanter?

HOW MANY HATS DO YOU OWN? ARE YOU WEARING A HAT right now? Do you have a collection of hats to match with your clothing or planned activities for the day? Imagine living in Victorian times when your answers to these questions might be different. A traveller would never forget to have the proper topper. Think about what sort of head covering you would be wearing if you were transported back in time.

The bonnet was the lady's fashion statement of the 1840s. They were most often a straw base adorned with tulle, ribbons, laces, artificial flowers, leaves, and ostrich tips. Bonnet strings (or ribbons) were wide, and often not tied but held by a brooch under the chin. Hairstyles were plain and well hidden by the bonnet. Most of the lady was well hidden at this time, too.

Men wore the 'stove pipe' hat which today we think of as the Abraham Lincoln hat. It was the ball cap of its day. Made of straw, felt, or silk, the stove pipe hat was worn by all classes of gentlemen. Other working hats and caps were available but far less popular than the stove pipe hat. Prince Albert, consort of Queen Victoria, started to wear a stove pipe style in 1850.

The 1850s saw the brim of the lady's bonnet grow smaller allowing the face and the hair to show. This particular style was most often worn by young women of the day, older women considered it to be unladylike. Daring or revealing fashion pieces, isn't that common for younger ladies regardless of the decade?

The 1860s brought a change in the style of the lady's bonnet. The dainty bonnet that sat atop the bun was quite popular. The younger set craved even more daring styles. The 1860s also saw the use of the "very" wide brimmed Southern Belle hat. In the movie *Gone with the Wind*, Scarlett O'Hara wore a Southern Belle hat. Where you lived and who you were dictated what sort of hat to wear.

The 1870s began with the smaller Victorian lady's hats of the 60s, but by the end of the decade as hair styles changed so did the Victorian hat. The most common material used in hat making had been straw, but now hats began being formed over wire frames and covered with velvets, silks, and lace. This was a time of abundance and clothing, hats, and even home furnishings showed it was a time of plenty.



The 1880s saw the Victorian hat get bigger with higher crowns. Trimmings, arranged to give a vertical line, could be elaborate and even bizarre: small birds, feathers, feather wings, aigrettes, beetles, flowers, fruit and vegetables intermingled with loops of fancy ribbon, velvet and/or tulle. At the same time, for country and sporting activities, plainer and rather masculine hats were in vogue. It was a time of contrasts and opposites, in life and in headwear.

For men, boaters introduced as early as the 1860s continued to be worn, straight or tilted, into the 20th century. Yachting caps were worn for sailing or at the sea-side. The tam-o'-shanter, for country wear, was a soft, round, flat cap or hat with no brim; in the 1880s it might be made of velvet, plush, cloth or crochet; a knitted version became usual later. As men took on new roles they tried on new hats, most literally.

Hats tell a story and the study of hats tell a story of the times. How a person felt about themselves, their position in society, and their place in the world would be reflected on the headgear they wore. Isn't it time for us to go back to wearing hats today?



Top Left: collage of mens & ladies hats  
 Top Right: Wearing a Tam O'Shanter  
 Bottom Right: Victorian ladies bonnet



1889 Johnstown Flood devastation

## Answer to "Where Am I?"

From Page 1.



The Staple Bend Tunnel, part of the Allegheny Portage Railroad, is found near the town of Mineral Point. That is nearer to the Johnstown Flood National Memorial Visitor Center than the Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS Visitor Center. Ask for directions!

# David J. Beale and the Johnstown Flood

AT THE TIME OF THE JOHNSTOWN Flood of 1889, Rev. Dr. David J. Beale was pastor of First Presbyterian Church on Main Street, one of the largest congregations in town. On that Friday afternoon, inside his parsonage on Lincoln Street, Dr. Beale was working on his sermon for the upcoming Sabbath, while outside the streets were underwater as a result of the heavy rains. Just after the 4:00 PM bells tolled in Johnstown, the town was struck by the waters and debris of the Great Flood. The Beale family scrambled for safety, and, with hundreds of others, spent a terrifying night in Alma Hall a few doors away.

After the Flood, Dr. Beale was named co-chairman of a committee charged with the recovery of the dead. Together with some associates, he created a handwritten "master" record of the dead, compiled from the records of the different morgues, intended mostly to assist those looking for missing loved ones. He drew national praise for his work in assisting the survivors of the Flood and was offered a contract to write a book on the disaster. (To complete this book, Dr. Beale solicited photographs and stories from his fellow survivors.)

Dr. Beale also became a controversial figure after the Flood. Some in his congregation opposed his decision to allow his church to be used as a morgue, while others accused him of profiting from the morgue records, and of dedicating too much time to the writing of his book. Tensions in his congregation came to a boil, and he left Johnstown in 1890, eventually accepting a charge in Philadelphia.

Historians of the Flood often wondered the fate of Dr. Beale's notes, papers, and, most importantly, the master morgue book. Astonishingly, all of these items

were found in the Philadelphia area a few years ago. The National Park Service and the Johnstown Area Heritage Association were able to secure the funds to acquire these treasures for preservation. They are too delicate to put on display, however.

Exact replicas of the morgue book were completed in 2009, and one is now on display at the Johnstown Flood National Memorial visitor center, surrounded by the names of 2,209 persons thought dead and missing from the Flood. The pages of this book, perhaps more than any other, demonstrate the horrific results of the breaking of the South Fork Dam.



Scouts and students working on luminaria for the 1889 Flood commemoration program.

## Volunteers-In-Parks

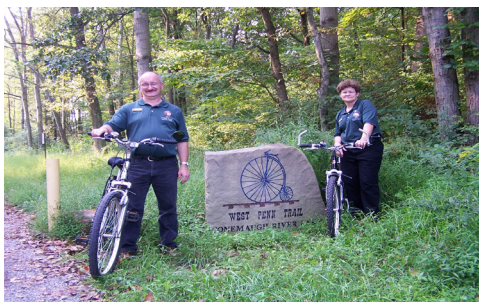
JOHNSTOWN FLOOD NMEM AND ALLEGHENY PORTAGE RAILROAD NHS ARE PROUD to boast a volunteer corps that, together, boasts over 150 years experience. Four of our volunteers, in fact, are past recipients of the President's Call to Service Award. Pauline Roberts, Frank Kozar, and Wayne Hillegas, each of whom have volunteered for over twenty years at Johnstown Flood, received the award a few years ago in recognition for their many years of dedication. Eileen Brown, Allegheny Portage Railroad's longest serving volunteer, was honored then as well.

Frank Kozar was one of the local residents that author David McCullough consulted while researching his book *The Johnstown Flood*. That was back in the mid 1960s. Today, park volunteers, including Mr. Kozar, are participating in a vibrant book club discussion focusing on Mr. McCullough's book. The book club is examining the sources that Mr. McCullough used, and is becoming more acquainted with the personalities featured in the book. This discussion is sponsored by The Friends of Johnstown Flood National Memorial, a new non-profit group that provides financial support and volunteer assistance to the park.

Each year, for the anniversary of the Flood, over 2,209 candles are lit in memory of the victims of the Johnstown Flood. This meaningful tribute would not be possible without the work of local volunteers, including every student from Forest Hills Elementary School in Sidman, and many local Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. To hear these young volunteers say "I helped do that" shows we are succeeding in our mission to preserve these stories for future generations.

Eileen Brown and her husband Bob are found on just about every hike offered at Allegheny Portage, and attend practically every Evening on the Summit program. Park staff may come and go but Eileen has been the anchor of the special summer programs for 15 years.

We are quite proud of the ratings we receive for visitor satisfaction at the parks. While the Park Rangers may boast about this, we are also very aware that much of this satisfaction comes from meeting our excellent volunteers, whether at the visitor center, Club House, Lemon House, or on a trail. They are simply remarkable examples of a remarkable community.



Volunteers Bob and Eileen Brown on a Bike Tour

## Hikes, Bikes, Buses and Van Tours- Oh My!

DISCOVER HOW THE ALLEGHENY PORTAGE RAILROAD STORY CONNECTS TO THE rest of the Main Line Canal . Hike from the park visitor center to the end of the railroad route (Inclines 6 to 10) on June 27, July 11, August 8 or September 19th. Or enjoy an easy saunter around the old canal basins, visiting Johnstown on June 13 and Hollidaysburg on October 24. Call the park for details and to make reservations.

Curious about the canal system itself? Join us for bicycle tours of the Lower Trail on July 25 or the West Penn Trail on August 22. You will need to bring your own bicycle and if you are escorting children they will need to be capable of staying with the group. Reservations are required so we know who to expect!

Not feeling up to a hike or bicycle tour? What about letting a park ranger escort you around the remains of the Portage Railroad on a van tour? It will take around 4 hours. Tours will be offered on June 12, June 26, July 10, July 24, August 7, August 21, September 18, October 16, and November 6 but require advanced planning as seats are limited.

And don't forget the very popular Halloween bus tours of Staple Bend Tunnel. Those reservations fill quickly, don't wait until the tour date of October 30 to call.

# Become a Friend of Johnstown Flood National Memorial



WANT TO KNOW HOW YOU CAN HELP JOHNSTOWN FLOOD NATIONAL MEMORIAL? Becoming a member of the Friends of Johnstown Flood National Memorial is wonderful way to help us fulfill our mission to protect and preserve the cultural and natural resources of our site. The Friends work collaboratively with the National Park Service to tell the story of the Johnstown Flood of 1889, gather resources and funds, increase public awareness of the Memorial, and support its volunteers.

For more information about how to become a member of the Friends of Johnstown Flood National Memorial call 814-539-6752 or go to <http://www.friendsofjofl.com/>



Men of Steel performing at Evening on the Summit

### Evenings on the Summit - Allegheny Portage Railroad NHS

Programs begin at 8 p.m.

- June 12 Barb Zaborowski\*\*  
*The Main Line Canal & the Underground Railroad*
- June 19 Full Kilt  
*Twist yer Kilt Celtic Rock*
- June 26 Men of Steel  
*Tales and Tunes of the Allegheny Ridge*
- July 10 Author Chris Lewie\*\*  
*Two Generations on the Portage*
- July 17 Dead Irish Blues  
*Traditional Music Passed on*
- July 24 The Michael O' Brian Band  
*Blitzin Gallitzin Irish*
- July 31 Author Dave Hurst \*\*  
*Pennsylvania's Allegheny Mountains*
- August 7 Aran  
*An Irish Serenade*
- August 14 Blair County Genealogy Society\*\*  
*Uncovering YOUR Family History*
- August 21 Heartstrings  
*Celtic and a touch of the Classic*
- August 28 Songmaster Tim Dabbs  
*Pennsylvania Highways*
- Sept. 18 Dr. Martin Rice\*\*  
*Enjoying the Night Sky*
- Sept. 25 Author Dennis P. McIlroy \*\*  
*Horseshoe Curve: Sabotage and Subversion*

Outdoor concerts have a \$2 fee per person (passes do NOT apply)  
\*\*Speaker programs are indoors and free of charge.