

2025 Friends Approved Annual Report

2025 Friends Annual Report



The
Friends
of
Hopewell Furnace
National Historic Site

2025 Friends Approved Annual Report

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President's Letter

December 7, 2025

Dear Friends

Introduction

It has been a privilege to serve as President and I have enjoyed working with a wonderful group of board members.

Our monthly Sunday Programs are very important to us, and many look forward to attending them at the Park. Edie Shean-Hammond has been finding many different kinds of interesting people to present their area of interest. We invite those who attend to consider joining the Friends, and frequently new members are found this way.

The Friends have supported Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site (the Park) using the donations received from the members. In this past year, we have witnessed changes in the way that the Park is required to do business and, as a consequence, the Park has requested that the Friends provide financial support for key Park programs. Public donations have been critical for that increased level of support. General donations also provide funds for new programs that provide new ways to the Park, such as the Yoga at the Park and Art in the Park series. We are most grateful for these donations, and we are always looking for ways to improve what we do.

Changes to our Board

In 2026 Dave Steele will serve as First Vice President. He has assisted with review of the financial needs and organization of funding for our major initiatives. He has also assisted in the review of our Work Plan for FY2026.

Becky Hughes has departed from the Board but will continue to maintain the Friends Facebook page and work on special projects.

Nancy McClelland has returned to the Board and will serve as assistant secretary in 2026.

Gene Delaplane is finishing his service as First Vice President and will remain on the Board as President Emeritus.

Recognition

Recognition needs to be given to all of the Officers and Board members who carry out their areas of responsibility. Each Board member's contributions help move forward the goals of the Friends and is much appreciated. The Board Members made themselves readily available for meetings and consultation with the Park when short term needs were conveyed to the Board, so that the Board could respond in a timely fashion.

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Special recognition to Edie Shean-Hammond for finding interesting people who are able to provide the monthly Sunday Presentations. Edie also served as our Director of Communications and provided important information to the public on the status and need for financial support for the Animal Program at the Park. These communications were very successful in providing a firm financial basis for the Friends continued support of the Animal Program.

Special recognition to Second Vice President Jenn Shelgren who did a fantastic job of organizing the 4th of July writing contest with the local public schools. Jim McClelland handled all of the 34 essays that were submitted via email. Each of these essays required a version with the personal identifying information removed. This version of each essay was provided to each of the three volunteer judges to determine the first, second and third place winners for the 6th to 8th graders group and the 9th to 12 graders group. At the 4th of July Celebration at the Park, the winners read their papers to the audience from the porch of the Iron Master's home. The Friends provided funds for the cash awards to winners of the contest.

Special recognition to Treasurer Peter Hammond who has been handling all aspects of the publication and sales of the various books and DVD. Peter also handles all of the Friends financial transactions and compiles a treasurer's report presented at each of our Board meetings.

Special recognition to Louise Griffiths who takes the Board minutes as well as handling the membership responsibilities.

James N. McClelland Jr,
President of Friends of Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site

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Mission Statement

As provided in the current Bylaws (August 20, 2020):

The Friends of Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site (hereinafter referred to as "Friends") is an organization whose mission is to support the preservation, maintenance, and activities of Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site, (hereinafter referred to as the "Park"). The Friends shall be a voluntary, non-profit, incorporated association and shall have the following objectives:

1. To create public support for an expanding park program.
2. To encourage gifts, endowments, and memorials for the park.
3. To intensify community awareness and use of the park.
4. To provide direct financial assistance by purchasing special and unusual items which would be of benefit but cannot be purchased from the budget of the park.
5. To sponsor programs designed to aid the mission of the park.
6. To encourage people to become park volunteers.
7. To sponsor educational seminars.
8. To author and publish pamphlets and books about the park's history.
9. To organize social events at local establishments.
10. To bring together individuals and groups at local, regional, and national levels.
11. To promote awareness of the programs and activities through social media.
12. To assist and/or advocate the protection of natural and cultural resources.
13. To comply with the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and to the laws of the United States of America pertaining to the Internal Revenue Service code 501(c)(3).

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Board Members

Officers

		Start of Service
1. President	Jim McClelland	January 2016
2. Vice President	Gene Delaplane	January 2014
3. 2nd Vice President	Jenn Shelgren	January 2021
4. Treasurer/Publishing	Peter Hammond	June 2015
5. Secretary/Membership	Louise Griffiths	January 2014

Directors:

6. Programs/Public Relations	Edie Shean-Hammond	January 2015
7. Outdoor Activities	Davida Waters	January 2013
8. Hospitality	Clare Hammond	January 2016
9. History/Nominations	Joel Moore	June 2016
10. Bylaws	Stan Weinstein	June 2021
11. Programs	Nancy McClelland	January 2015
12. Park Activities/Facebook	Becky Hughes	January 2016
13. Archeology	Phil Diltz	January 2022
14. Programs	Carolyn Royer	April 2025

NPS Liaison

1. Park Manager	Jeff Jones	2021
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Board Meeting Minutes

The Board meeting monthly minutes are available either in print or in digital format upon request.

Friends Activities

2024 October 24 Held at Hopewell Furnace, Ronald Sloto, Geologist, presented “Geology of Hopewell Big Woods”

2024 November 10 Held at Hopewell Furnace, Wade Catts, Archaeologist, Rowan University, presented “America’s 250: The Battle of Red Bank.”

2024 December 15 Held at Hopewell Furnace, Harold Y. Finigan, Historic Preservationist and Educator, Darby Quaker Meeting presented “Darby Quaker Meeting & The Underground Railroad.”

2025 January 12 Held at Hopewell Furnace, Kristine Parkes, Skeleton Key Genealogy, presented “America’s 250: Mark Bird Patriot Ironmaster.”

2025 February 9 Held at Hopewell Furnace, Bob Sullivan, Veteran Historic Presenter and Educator, Sullivan Press, Elverson, PA, presented “18th&19th Century Bookbinding”.

2025 March 9 Held at Hopewell Furnace, Daniel A. Graham: Noted historian and researcher, presented “Colonial And Early Ironworks of Berks County”.

2025 April 6 Held at Hopewell Furnace, Sharon Brahmstadt, Educator, Historian, presented “Rebecca Lukens First Female CEO of An Industrial Company in the United States.”

2025 May 11 Held at Hopewell Furnace, Dr. Ilise Feitshans, Author, Educator, Lawyer, Widener University, presented “America’s 250: Abigail Adams, Founding Mother”.

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2025 June 8 Held at Hopewell Furnace, Robert Donnelly Operations Manager, Visitor & Community Engagement Major (Ret.) USA (Cavalry/Armor) Valley Forge National Historical Park, presented “America’s 250: Cannon Production for the Continental Navy during the American Revolution.”

2025 July 4 Held in front of the Iron master’s home at Hopewell Furnace this year’s ceremony includes: musical performances by Amanda Spotts and Amelia Shelgren, the presenting of colors by local scout troops, and the readings of winning essay submissions from this year’s Independence Day Writing Challenge. The ceremony concludes with the public being invited to take part in a shared reading of the Declaration of Independence.

2025 July 6 Held at the White Horse Tavern in Morlanton Village, features playwright & actress Christine Emmert, Berks Opera Workshop performers, Berks Friends with Fibers. Hosted by the Historic Preservation Trust of Berks County and sponsored by Amity Township; the Friends of Hopewell Furnace; and the Society for Pennsylvania Archaeology, Chapter 21.

2025 August 2 Held at Hopewell Furnace celebrated 87 years as a National Historic Site also known as Establishment Day. Programs highlighted the park’s significance both as a furnace and as a site for recreation and learning including aluminum molding and casting demonstrations, historic bake oven cooking, Revolutionary War era historic weapons demonstrations, fiber arts, blacksmithing, and more. At 11:00 a.m. park volunteer colliers began the summer charcoal burn which demonstrates the historic process for converting wood to charcoal. The charcoal burn lasted 7 days around the clock concluding on Saturday, August 9th.

2025 August 10 Held at Hopewell Furnace the Penn State Master Gardeners explored the Award-Winning Gardens of Hopewell Furnace.

2025 September 21 Held at Hopewell Furnace Brad Kissam President, Preservation Trust of Berks County presented “Discovering Daniel Boone Homestead”.

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Financial Summary and Member Count with dues collected

The monthly treasurer reports are included separately and are a part of this report. The following is an extraction from these monthly reports and gives a summary of the membership count, the dues collected, income received, expenses paid out and total funds available.

Notes:

Comparing 2025 to 2024

There is a drop in dues collected of \$83.80

There is a decrease in the number of members donations for dues from 36 to 27.

Several of the individuals who designated donations for the animal care fund also expressed interest in becoming a member.

Donations received

Donations designated for the animal care fund by check totaled	\$16,677.00
Donations designated for the animal care fund via PayPal totaled	\$8,032.33
Total donations designated for the animal care fund is	\$24,709.33
Total donations from all categories	\$29,866.51

Expenses

Expenses paid out for animal care	\$2,669.78
Total Expenses paid out including animal care	\$8,203.23

Total Funds Available	\$29,860.75
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If you are interested in more information, see the treasurer's monthly reports.

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Period Dates		# of members paying dues / period	Dues Collected / period	Total Income / period	Total Expenses/ period	Total Funds
Start	End					
9/16/2024	10/20/2024	8	\$475.00	\$680.54	\$0.00	\$10,454.45
10/21/2024	11/10/2024	0	\$0.00	\$10.82	\$0.00	\$10,464.53
11/11/2024	12/15/2024	5	\$230.00	\$230.00	\$0.00	\$10,694.53
12/16/2024	1/12/2025	4	\$640.00	\$1,011.25	\$32.90	\$11,681.84
1/13/2025	2/9/2025	2	\$48.57	\$56.57	\$0.00	\$11,738.41
2/10/2025	3/9/2025	2	\$45.00	\$52.02	\$100	\$11,690.43
3/10/2025	4/6/2025	0	\$0.00	\$20,937.35	\$1,485.27	\$32,063.01
4/7/2025	5/11/2025	1	\$25.00	\$3,163.56	\$467.52	\$35,647.67
5/12/2025	6/8/2025	1	\$500	\$2,437.74	\$3,488.08	\$32,860.00
6/9/2025	7/6/2025	0	\$0	\$810.98	\$2,173.92	\$32,249.97
8/11/2025	9/21/2025	4	\$148.06	\$396.04	\$224.90	\$30,011.71
9/22/2025	10/19/2025	0	\$0.00	\$79.64	\$230.64	\$29,860.75
Totals		27	\$2,111.63	\$29,866.51	\$8,203.23	\$29,860.75

Financial Audit

1. A monthly review of the financial reports is performed by the board and the outcome documented in the board minutes.
2. An annual review of the financial reports is performed by the board and the outcome documented in the board minutes.
3. Cash donations collected at various activities are not possible to trace to a donor and are deposited identifying the activity that collected the donation.

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I certify that during my tenure as treasurer of the Friends of Hopewell Furnace NHS, the checking and savings accounts have been reconciled monthly and that any discrepancies or differences have been minor and were immediately corrected. The banking account statements are available for review.

Peter B. Hammond

Peter B. Hammond, Treasurer

James N McClelland, Jr

James N McClelland, Jr President of the Friends of Hopewell Furnace NHS