

## JACOBSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

### 2004 Calendar of Events

*\*Updated with each Issue\**

(Phone 610-746-2809 for more information and/or reservations)

May 15-16—"Warren County Heritage Festival" (Henry gun & Society gunmakers exhibit at Oxford Furnace, New Jersey)

June 11—"History of Belfast" (lecture program at the Henry Homestead about nearby village of Belfast)

June 19-20—"Kentucky Rifle Frolic" (annual living history encampment at Boulton)

June 26-July 4—"Kutztown PA German Festival" (Henry gun & Society gunmakers exhibit at the Kutztown Fairgrounds)

July 11—"Easton Heritage Day" (Henry gun exhibit at 1753 Bachmann Publick House)

July 23-25—"Dixon's Gunmakers' Fair" (Henry gun & Society gunmakers exhibit at Dixon's Gun Shop, Kempton)

July 28-30—"Junior Historians" (summer youth program at Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center)

July 24—"Slate Belt Heritage Day" (Interpretive bus tour to Boulton & the Pennsylvania Longrifle Museum)

September 24—"Heidelberg & Lynn Township Heritage Day" (Henry gun exhibit at Ontelaunee Park in New Tripoli)

October 17—"Walnutport Canal Day" (Henry gun exhibit along the Lehigh Canal)

October 30-31—"American Fur Trade Rendezvous" (annual living history encampment at Boulton)

# THE JACOBSBURG RECORD

## Jacobsburg celebrates 10th annual Kentucky Rifle Frolic at Boulton this Father's Day weekend

This year marks the 10th anniversary of the Jacobsburg Historical Society's annual Kentucky Rifle Frolic. This living history encampment has been held every Father's Day weekend since 1994 at Boulton, the Henry family's historical gunmaking community. The heart of



Rifle Frolic-goers at Boulton pass by a sutler's tent where re-enactors are encamped.

Boulton today includes the John Joseph Henry Estate and Henry Homestead and grounds on Henry Road in Bushkill Township, Northampton County. This year's Rifle Frolic takes place June 19 and 20.

The pre-1840-style encampment is a recreation of what rural social life was like for men, women and children living on the eastern frontier of early America. Like Rifle Frolics of yesteryear, Jacobsburg's Rifle Frolic will be complete with knife and tomahawk throwing competitions, black powder shooting, primitive fishing and archery events, and hearth cooking.

Period-dressed craftsmen and women will be plying their frontier trades throughout

the weekend-long event. All the sights, sounds and smells of real history will come alive for Rifle Frolic-goers at Boulton this Father's Day weekend!

The Pennsylvania Longrifle Museum at the Henry

Homestead will be open all weekend long. A marvelous collection of

Henry and other gunmak-

ers' firearms—including original Kentucky Rifles—will be on exhibit at the museum. A cadre of Pennsylvania Longrifle experts will be on hand, and visitors are encouraged to bring along their family gun to learn more about its history and its maker.

The 1834 John Joseph Henry House at Boulton will also be open for historic house tours all weekend long. Come see what refined country living was like for the Henry family of gunmakers!

The Kentucky Rifle Frolic runs from 10-5 Saturday and 10-4 Sunday. Admission is free for Jacobsburg Historical Society members. A \$3.00 gate fee is charged for non-members. For more information, contact the Boulton Heritage Program Office at 610-746-2809.

## The history of nearby Belfast and vicinity is topic of special community program at the Henry Homestead on June 11

Retired schoolteacher, local historian, author and newspaper columnist Jim Wright will present a program on the history of nearby Belfast, Pennsylvania at the Henry Homestead at 7:00 p.m. on Friday, June 11.

Belfast, said to be called so by Ulster Scot settlers after its namesake city in Ireland, is likely one of the oldest settled communities in Plainfield Township. It is situated only about one-half-mile east of Boulton. After leaving the family gunmaking business at

Boulton, William Henry III set up shop as a storekeeper for some time in Belfast. He and his brothers, John Joseph and Matthew Henry, were instrumental in financing construction of the first church there, built in 1828.

This program is free-of-charge and open to the public. However due to limited seating, reservations are required. For more information or to make your program reservation, contact the Boulton Heritage Program Office at 610-746-2809, or by email at [jacobsburg@fast.net](mailto:jacobsburg@fast.net).

# A message from the president...

With the advent of spring, we all look forward to spring housecleaning, days spent outdoors, and the upcoming summer season. Spring and summer at Jacobstown also present opportunities to recover from winter weather, clean and fix up the properties and do major maintenance before we are back into wintertime once again.

Some critical improvements are being made to our properties, with major roofing repairs at the John Joseph Henry House and the Henry Homestead. We are preparing the Museum of the Pennsylvania Longrifle at the Henry Homestead for its opening season the first Sunday in May, and we're doing major repairs at the Stone Farm House on Bushkill Creek.

Thanks to Joe Flemish and his museum exhibits committee, we have some excellent professional displays installed at the Henry Homestead with more in design. Richard Hujisa and his riflemaking team are underway with another of the Society's gunmakers classes. And Phase I of the Society's archives and records management program has begun. Eventually, the Society's collections of historical photographs and documents will be professionally archived and readily accessible to the public for research and study.

The only thing missing from the Jacobstown scene is YOU! With ambitious plans for opening the Pennsylvania Longrifle Museum, presenting some 20 community programs and working hard to reopen the John Joseph Henry House, we need your help. Come visit us at the Henry Homestead any Sunday this year from May through October, and talk to one of our volunteer museum docents about volunteering your time at Jacobstown. Not only can we use volunteers at the Pennsyl-

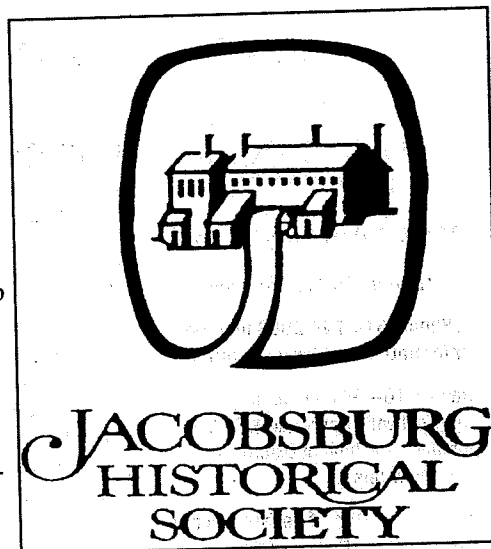
vania Longrifle Museum, but we also need help maintaining the lawns, gardens and grounds in general.

On a more somber note, I hate to inform you that we are losing a rock solid performer. Jim Wilson has a wonderful job opportunity and is moving to Harrisburg. While

we all wish him every success, we also wish he was not leaving Jacobstown. Jim has made major contributions to the Society. He has been deeply involved in almost every aspect of Jacobstown's operations—community programming, collections management, interpretation, fundraising, office administration and publishing this newsletter. Jim will be missed.

Check out the 'Calendar of Events' in this and every newsletter and make plans to come visit as often as you can!

Bob Sadler, President  
Jacobstown Historical Society



## Jacobstown Historical Society

### Officers

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*The Jacobstown Historical Society is a member-supported nonprofit organization dedicated to preserving and presenting the art and industry of making early American firearms, and the character of the individuals and community that created and sustained that enterprise. The Jacobstown Record is published bimonthly by the Jacobstown Historical Society, 441 Henry Road, Nazareth, Pennsylvania 18064, 610-746-2809, and is mailed to Society members and supporters.*

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# My historic moment: from Jacobsburg to Harrisburg

## By Jim Wilson, editor, *The Jacobsburg Record*

Goodbye, Jacobsburg and the Boulton Heritage Program Office. Hello, Harrisburg and the Rachael Carson State Office Building.

After nine years at Jacobsburg, the bittersweet time has come for me to move on. I've accepted a job as a Development Projects Specialist with the Grants Project Management Division of the Pennsylvania Bureau of Recreation and Conservation in Harrisburg. My last day at Jacobsburg is Friday, May 14.

Working at Jacobsburg has been an absolute pleasure, and I've enjoyed every day of my nine years here. One of my favorite regular tasks has been editing this newsletter the past year-and-a-half. Jacobsburg has been like a second home to me. And while I'm sad to leave the people and places of Jacobsburg, I look forward to the challenges and security that comes with my new job in Harrisburg.

It has been very rewarding to work for both the Jacobsburg Historical Society and the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks, Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center all these years. I'm incredibly proud of all that we have accomplished together at Jacobsburg during that time. And I have every confidence that the dynamic partnership between the Bureau of State Parks and the Jacobsburg Historical Society will continue to protect, preserve and showcase the cultural history and natural resources of the Bushkill Creek greenway at Jacobsburg. What this partnership can do is yet untold.

Between the Society's historical and cultural collections of archives, artifacts and historic buildings and its expert human resources, and Jacobsburg EE Center's nearly 1,200-acres of public open space, recreational and educational assets and professional program staff, this partnership embodies and administers the most perfect matrix of public and private resources in the Lehigh Valley. The Jacobsburg Historical Society and the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks have proven the power of partnerships in preserving and providing a better quality of life experience for the Valley's residents for more than 30-years, and I'm proud to have been part of the program at Jacobsburg for almost a decade.

It has been a wonderful privilege to get to know the historical Henry family of Pennsylvania Rifle makers, and the history of so many other families and individuals who have lived at Jacobsburg. The human story of the Jacobsburg reach of the Bushkill Creek is one of the most colorful and fascinating cultural histories of any state park in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. From Jacob Hubler—Jacobsburg's colonial namesake settler—to the last of the Henry gunmakers and their families, it has been an honor to learn of and to help preserve their stories of early American life and land use here in Northampton County. These stories are being packaged and presented at Jacobsburg as part of the partnership's interpretive and educational program. It has been a most challenging and satisfying experience to help in this process.

If I had to choose a favorite Henry, it would be James Henry. Not because we share the same first name, but because like me, James Henry was a 'nature boy' at heart. While he was responsible for running the family gun-making business at Jacobsburg for much of his life, he had a real passion for the environment; writing an entire series on forestry, helping to preserve Henry's Woods for us today and drafting one of Pennsylvania's earliest environmental laws. And while I hardly measure up to James Henry's standard of conservation, it is my love of nature that first brought me to Jacobsburg in 1995 as an environmental education specialist with the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks.

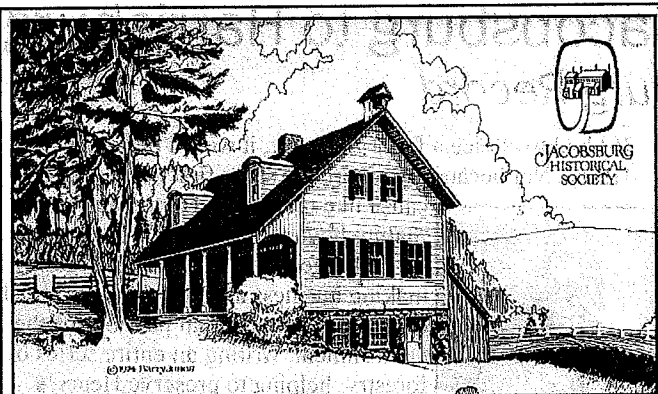


Dale Prinkey, right, state park manager at Jacobsburg EE Center and me, Jim Wilson, program specialist, Jacobsburg EE Center and Jacobsburg Historical Society Heritage Program Partnership.

In early 1997, my state park boss at Jacobsburg, Dale Prinkey, invited me to work as a liaison between the EE Center and the Historical Society in developing Jacobsburg's cultural history so that it could ultimately be integrated into the Center's environmental education program. I said 'yes' and as they say, 'the rest is history.' Over the course of the next seven years, we drafted long range and annual program plans, and a site facility master plan. We established a heritage program office at Jacobsburg, a monthly community program series, a summer youth history program and historical land use and human history education programs for visiting school students. We've been, and continue to be active partners in a number of regional heritage tourism and heritage education programs and events. We raised over \$370,000 to prepare the historic Henry Homestead to house the Pennsylvania Longfellow Museum, create museum and wayside exhibits, secure technical program assistance and develop a professional archives and records management program. It's been a great run. My time at Jacobsburg has certainly been the most creative and rewarding work experience of my life.

I'd like to thank Dale Prinkey for that original invitation, and his confidence in me to develop and manage Jacobsburg's cultural history program. Many thanks to my Jacobsburg EE Center program supervisor, Bill Sweeney, and all the Center staff for their time and patience with me in developing our heritage program. I'd like to especially thank the Jacobsburg Historical Society board of directors for their faith and trust in me, for their constant support and for unrestricted access to their historic buildings, and their wealth of archival collections, which are national treasures.

Harrisburg is only a couple hours' drive from Jacobsburg. I plan to visit as often as possible to experience the partnership's continued program developments, and I invite you to do the same. Hope to see you around. Until then.....



### The Pennsylvania Longrifle Museum at the Henry Homestead

Now open 1-4pm every Sunday through October

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*"Boulton rests silently now, a century removed from the glory of a thriving industry. Void of virtually all modern-day trappings, the area echoes of a time passed—an ideal setting in which to rekindle the spirit of history by developing the Museum of the Pennsylvania Longrifle at the Henry Homestead."*

#### Urban Research & Development Corporation Boulton Facilities Master Plan

The Jacobsburg Historical Society has raised over \$345,000 for the Pennsylvania Longrifle Museum project at the Henry Homestead. We still need \$30,000 to fully complete this one-of-a-kind heritage attraction. We are grateful for those who have generously supported this project. Please consider making a gift toward completing the Pennsylvania Longrifle Museum. Come visit the museum this year to see what has been done so far, and how you can help complete it. Thank you.

## Ethan Allen Weaver, local historian and one of the first commissioners of the Pennsylvania state archives, was born and raised at Jacobsburg

Historical preservation has a mighty long history at Jacobsburg. We are indebted in no small measure to a native of Jacobsburg for much of the lore and history of Northampton County, as well as the preservation of the Pennsylvania state archives. Born at Jacobsburg in 1853, Ethan Allen Weaver was a great-great-grandson of Jacob Weygandt, founder of the first newspaper published in Northampton County, who rose from the rank of private to that of captain while actively serving the cause of American independence in the Revolutionary War.

Ethan Allen Weaver liked to comb through the files of early newspapers for items of historical interest. In the course of his research in the Easton newspapers, he collected several articles by Matthew S. Henry which appeared in the *Easton Whig* in 1851. The Henry articles may be found on pages 223-231 of a volume entitled *Local Historical and Biographical Notes, collected by Ethan Allen Weaver from files of newspapers published in Easton, Penna.* This book was printed in Germantown, Pennsylvania in 1906. This is only one of several volumes written or compiled by E.A. Weaver, which may be found in the historical room of the Easton Area Public Library.

In the course of his historical searching, Weaver found an unpublished and unedited manuscript by Matthew S. Henry, begun about 1851, containing the histories of several of the townships of Northampton County. Weaver gave the Henry manuscript to the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, which in turn gave a typescript copy to the Easton Library, where the bound volume bears the title *Manuscript History of Northampton County, by M.S. Henry*. The Bushkill Township chapter contains important information about Jacobsburg, Boulton and nearby Filetown, and the people involved in the early history

and development of the area.

Ethan Allen Weaver attended the public schools in nearby Nazareth from 1859 to 1864, and studied with a private tutor in 1869 and 1870. He was graduated from Lafayette College with the degree of Civil Engineer in 1874; received the degree of Master of Science in 1877; and the honorary degree of Master of Arts in 1924. In 1877 he began the study of law, but did not pursue it. In that same year he also worked as a reporter for the *Easton Express*. From 1878 until retirement in 1923, he was employed in the civil engineering department of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. In 1905 he was one of six citizens appointed to a commission to direct and supervise the preservation of the historical archives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, and continued in this service through successive appointments by four governors until 1919.

Mr. Weaver was a member of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, the Moravian Historical Society, the Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society, the historical societies of Bucks and Montgomery Counties, the Pennsylvania German Society and various heredity and learned societies and fraternal orders. In 1896 he compiled and edited the Decennial Register of the Pennsylvania Society of Sons of the Revolution.

Ethan Allen Weaver, son of William Henry Weaver and Elizabeth Abel Weaver, was born at Jacobsburg on June 7, 1853 and died in Germantown, Pennsylvania on May 26, 1929. In 1883 he married Mary M. Patterson, who was baptized as an infant at First Presbyterian Church in Easton on June 27, 1855 and who died in Germantown on October 25, 1920. Ethan A. and Mary M. Weaver had four children, of whom two were still living in Germantown at the time of their father's death.

## The Jacobsburg reach of the Bushkill Creek profiled in recognition of "Watershed Awareness Month"

In observance of May's "Watershed Awareness Month," we'll take a look at our corner of the Bushkill Creek Watershed here at Jacobsburg.

In a nutshell, a 'watershed' includes all the land that drains into a particular water source, like a creek or river. We all live and work in a watershed. Jacobsburg is part of the Bushkill Creek Watershed, the largest watershed in Northampton County. It drains about 82-square-miles in the heart of Northampton County, including the nearly two-square-miles that encompass Jacobsburg.

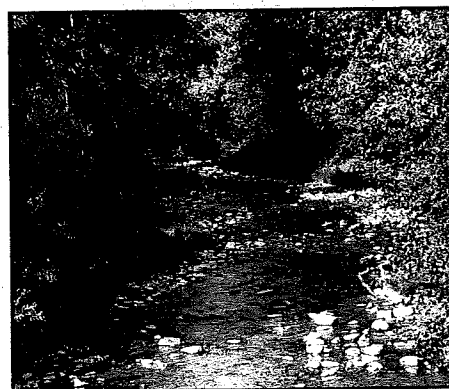
Jacobsburg is situated right on the 'main drain' of the Bushkill Creek. All 1,168-acres of state parklands and the historical society's 24-acres are drained by some five-miles of the Bushkill and its tributaries, which include Sober's Run, Engler's Run and a number of springs and unnamed streams. Our corner of the Bushkill watershed also includes Henry's Woods—a 40-plus-acre stand of old growth forest that represents perhaps the last surviving fragments of the watershed's original character.

The ecological importance of a watershed is found in its natural layers, and how they work to maintain the health of the water, the land and the organisms that live there—including us. At Jacobsburg, the forest canopy provides shade for the Bushkill and helps maintain cool water temperatures, which are crucial for the creek's trout fishery. Tree roots and groundcover slows surface runoff after heavy rains, which helps prevent soil from eroding off the land and into the creek, where it could choke aquatic life. And the soil layer itself serves as a sponge and filter that absorbs rainwater and snowmelt, and allows it to slowly percolate back into the earth for use by plants, and to help recharge the ground water supply.

Because Jacobsburg is a protected greenway with very little development, our neck of the Bushkill watershed is high-functioning and quite healthy. But that doesn't mean its free of all threats. Well over 200,000 people recreate at Jacobsburg every year. That kind of human impact can take its toll, especially on trails and the forest floor. Heavy foot traffic in Henry's Woods, especially at the popular 'beach' area along the Bushkill Creek, has worn away virtually all the ground vegetation. The ensuing erosion has exposed roots of some of the giant, old-growth trees there,

several of which have been toppled into the creek by recent high water events.

To combat this, a \$112,400 grant from the Commonwealth's *Growing Greener* initiative will fund a major erosion control project by the Bushkill Stream Conservancy in Henry's Woods. The project will include lining the stream bank with a protective stone barrier, and constructing stair-like structures for beach access, thus protecting the forest floor and ground vegetation. The project is slated to begin this summer...a great example of watershed partnerships.



Some five-miles of the Bushkill Creek and its tributaries drain nearly two-square-miles of parklands at Jacobsburg.

## Lafayette College students use GIS technology to map historical and environmental features at Jacobsburg

Students from Lafayette College's Geographic Information Systems in the Geosciences class have begun to map historical and environmental features at Jacobsburg using the latest technology. This technology employs the use of satellites and state-of-the-art, hand-held receivers, known as Global Positioning Systems (GPS), to acquire latitude and longitude values for unknown locations in field mapping.

Led by professor John Wilson, Laboratory Coordinator, Department of Geology and Geosciences at Lafayette College, and teaching assistant Derek Pizarro (class of '04), the students are mapping historic buildings and histori-

cal ruins at Boulton, as well as the 18-miles of trails throughout Jacobsburg EE Center for incorporation into a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) database for Jacobsburg. Historical features at Jacobsburg Village and Henry's Forge will eventually be added to the database.

In addition to learning about the use of GPS mapping, the students' data will be incorporated into research currently being conducted at Jacobsburg by teaching assistant Derek Pizarro. With the help of Jacobsburg EE Center program staff, Derek is mapping seeps, springs, vernal pools (seasonal ponds), wetlands and old growth forests to identify environmentally unique and sensitive areas at Jacobsburg.

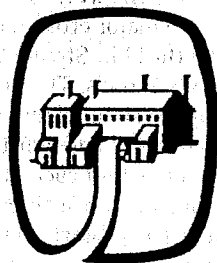
Derek has designed and is implementing this research for work in an advanced GIS course. The GPS mapping of historical and environmental features at Jacobsburg is planned to continue into the future in order to create as comprehensive a GIS database as possible.

The historical features layer of Jacobsburg's GIS database may be of great value one day should the Historical Society ever produce a Cultural Landscape Report of Boulton in its future program or facilities development plans. Such a report would better delineate historical, man-made structures and provide spatial analysis of these features for a better understanding of Boulton's cultural history.

Jacobsburg Historical Society

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*The Jacobsburg Historical Society was founded in 1972 to save and interpret the historical Henry family estate and industrial properties, the family's gun and iron making heritage, and to help establish the Jacobsburg National Historic District. In partnership with the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks, Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center, the Society also preserves and presents the cultural history and interconnected story of human life and land use in the Jacobsburg reach of the Bushkill Creek watershed with interpretive and educational programming. The Society operates the Museum of the Pennsylvania Longrifle at the Henry Homestead, and maintains the 1834 John Joseph Henry House at Boulton as a historic house museum with administrative and curatorial offices*

JACOBSBURG,  
WHERE HISTORY  
LIVES!

## Membership Form

\_\_\_ Renewal.....or.....\_\_\_ New Member

*Please check appropriate category*

\_\_\_ Student \$7.00  
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