



## BEAVER AREA HERITAGE MUSEUM AND 1802 LOG HOUSE

# OFFICIAL MUSEUM GUIDE

*A concise description of the principal artifacts and displays in the museum and log house. This guide is intended for the use of greeters, guides and volunteers in the conduct of tours and in fielding questions from visitors.*



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## The Museum

After many years of seeking a home for a local heritage museum, the old P&LE Railroad Freight Station property became available when the railroad was acquired by the CSX Railroad Company and much of its real estate was sold. The property was purchased by Beaver Borough, and in 1996 an agreement was reached with the Beaver Area Heritage Foundation whereby the site could be leased for 99 years for the sum of one dollar. The property extends from the corner of East Second Street and East End Avenue south to the edge of the embank-

ment toward the river. The cost to rehabilitate and remodel the building and develop the exhibits was projected at \$350,000, of which \$300,000 was raised from local public donations and corporate subscriptions, plus a state grant of \$53,000. The Foundation elected to contract the project independently, and much of the work was done with donated services and materials at significant savings.

## The Freight Station Building

The freight station was built in 1910 at the same time as the nearby Ohio River railroad bridge. It replaced a smaller building that stood closer to the passenger station. At this same time, the passenger station, built about 1900, was moved intact about 100 feet east of its original location, and expanded in size. The move was made necessary by the relocation of the mainline railroad tracks, resulting from the construction of the new bridge over the Ohio. About this time that a large quantity of additional slate roof shingles was brought in to expand the roof line.

The left-over shingles from this project were stored in the basement of the passenger station for the next ninety years, when they were reclaimed for use in rebuilding the entire Museum roof.



## The Log House

In 1999, the Foundation was offered an original log house more than 200 years old, on the condition that it be removed from its former site on Buffalo Street. A careful study and authoritative analysis suggested that the logs dated to the late 1700s, and may well have been salvaged originally from the ruins of Fort McIntosh in 1788. With the considerable help of volunteers, the house was dismantled and tagged, log by log, and placed in storage until a time when it could be reconstructed on the museum property. The rebuilding project was completed in 2002, the year of Beaver's 200th anniversary, and for this reason

it was given the title of the "2002 Log House". While the logs are original, the constructed building has a mixed old and new flavor. The roof, floor, doors and windows are a newly-made, while the stone chimney and fireplace is built from stone salvaged from the 150-year-old Beaver County Jail.



## Outdoor Sign

The lighted sign at the corner of the property is an exact replica, which accurately echoes in miniature the design of the familiar platform shelters that were part of the original P&LE passenger station.





## The Water Fountain

This unique cast iron fountain is one of a pair that was donated to the town about 1890 by the Ira Mansfield family. The Mansfield's lived in a fine Victorian home, which stood on the corner of River Road and College Avenue, on the site of the present Beaver Area Memorial Library. Through a series of overflow pipes, the fountain provides drinking water for people, horses and small animals. The water flow is automatically regulated on demand by a special motion detector, so that it conserves water when not actually in use. This fountain was originally located at the corner of Third and Beaver Streets, by the Bank. Its twin sister is now located in the Clock Tower Plaza at Third Street and College Avenue.

Area Heritage Foundation.

## The Flag Poles

The three flag poles display the American Flag, the Pennsylvania State Flag and the flag of the Beaver Area Heritage Foundation. According to custom, the flags are lighted at night.



## The Main Entrance Door

The Museum front door was originally the doorway to the Walter Kidd mansion, which until 1998 stood on Sharon Road across from the Wooden Indian Restaurant. Both the door and the frame with its glass sidelights are original, and as luck would have it, were a perfect fit for the opening left by the original freight door at this end of the building.



## The Entrance Foyer

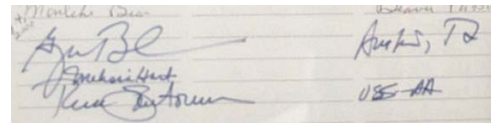
The foyer features a large bronze plaque upon which are engraved the names of some 200 people and organizations who were financial contributors to the Museum Project at a level of \$500 or more. To the right is a wooden



plaque with brass plates listing the donors of various commemorative gifts. Also, here is a portrait of the late Harry Phillips, founder and first president of the Beaver Area Heritage Foundation, who provided the spark that ultimately ignited this major community effort.

## The Visit of President George W. Bush

In August, 2000 the Museum became the first stop on a cross-country whistle-stop campaign which ultimately led to the election of President Bush. The framed memento of this visit on the wall shows a photo of the Bush party on the rear platform of the train, and bears the personal autograph of the President of the United States.





## The Life-Size Beaver

The very existence of the town of Beaver, as well as its name, is derived from the aquatic mammal seen here. During the 18th Century, beavers were abundant in the streams and rivers of this area, and their pelts became highly prized for hats and other apparel, both here and in Europe. The French explorers and traders who first came here saw the chance to build a profitable trade in furs. They built a lively commerce with the local Indians who brought the pelts to this place to sell or trade. Our specimen is a large male, weighing nearly fifty pounds. The taxidermy display is the work

of John McLaughlin Jr. of Beaver.

## Indoor Flags

During its more than 250-year history, this area has lived under the dominion of three flags, those of France, Great Britain and the United State of America. These flags are each represented here by the *Fleur de Lis*, the Union Jack and the Betsy Ross 13-star flag of the American Revolutionary War period.



## Historical Timeline Mural

The mural high on the wall that greets visitors tells the story of the people, places and events that were of primary significance in the history of the Beaver Area from 1750 to 2002. The painting is fifty-three feet long and four feet high, and was produced by a digital process that converted a much smaller original to the size you see here. The original was done in four-foot sections by Dan Bridy, a commercial artist from Pittsburgh, who has also done mural work at the John Heinz Pittsburgh History Center. The jig-saw ends of the sections were then matched end-to-end and mounted on the wall. The entire mural was the gift of Beverly O'Leary of Beaver.



## The Surveyor's Instrument

Among the vignettes of the mural is a simple compass instrument of the type used by Daniel Leet to layout the town of Beaver, and by other surveyors of the period to lay out property boundaries. Nearby, on the platform below, is a later version of this called a surveyors transit, which combines the compass with a rotating telescopic sight and a spirit level for determining both elevations and directional lines. This particular transit dates from the 19th century and was owned by Michael Baker, Sr., who was the official Beaver County surveyor from 1896 to 1940.

## Notable Additions to the Mural in 2004:

While the mural traces 200 years of important events, the most recent 50-year section includes Beaver's designation to the National Register of Historic Places, America's longest-serving mayor Bob Linn, and the rehabilitation of Beaver's downtown Streetscape, with the replica bell tower from the 1877 Court House.

## Biographical Profiles

The exhibit panels that border the display area present an image and brief biography of some thirty persons who have had a significant role in the history of the Beaver Area over the past 250 years. They are displayed in general chronological order and reflect the same story found in the timeline mural. Most (but not all) of these profiles are included in abbreviated form on the back of the foldout timeline brochure.



## Revolutionary Soldier

The soldier figure is outfitted in the uniform of the First American Regiment, which had Fort McIntosh as its first duty post in 1784. The blue regimental coat is made of wool and, lined in muslin. The red lapel and cuff facings were standard for the period, however the extra yellow trim on the hat and around the buttonholes (or "lace" as it was called) distinguished this soldier as a member of an artillery company. His field equipment was limited to what he could hang on his person, and included a haversack for personal belongings, a water canteen, a cartridge box to hold ammunition for the musket, and a bayonet sheath.

## Musket

This soldier carries a flint-lock, muzzle-loading musket. The musket differs from a rifle in that it has a smooth bore, which

fires a round ball projectile rather than a pointed bullet. It is called a flintlock because it depends on a spark from a flint stone to ignite the charge of black powder loaded in the barrel from the open end of the muzzle. The range is not much more than a hundred yards and the accuracy is very limited. This particular model is called a Charleville ("Charleyville") and is typical of the standard musket used by the French and furnished to the Colonies in great numbers during the Revolution.



## Wooden Water Pipe

Beaver's original water supply was from the springs located near the intersection of Fifth and Beaver Streets. In the early 1800's, the water was carried to the center of town near the courthouse by a line of hollowed-out logs such as this one.



## Canal Boats

The canal boat models are the handiwork of the late Elvin Batchelor of Monaca. Each is built to exact scale to represent a particular type of service or function. The canal boats were designed for the type of traffic being served. Some were made to accommodate passengers for several days while en route to their destination, while others were strictly designed to haul cargo of various kinds. With the construction of the Beaver-Lake Erie Canal in the late 1830s, the whole of northeastern United States was opened to two-way commerce. Beaver and Bridgewater became an important transfer port for many goods and commodities and for passenger traffic. Locally-made stoneware, glass, metal products and animal hides could be shipped to New England, while manufactured goods from the east and overseas could be marketed economically in this area and down river. Some early canal boat passengers who passed this way included Andrew Carnegie and Presidents Martin Van Buren and James Garfield.



## Large Boat Models

The two larger boat models were donated to the museum by the builder, the late Elvin Batchelor. Each has a connection to the Beaver area. The "Michigan" was the first steel-hulled ship ever built, and it was fabricated in

Beaver County. The steel plates were shipped from Bridgewater on the Beaver-Lake Erie Canal in sections, and were assembled on Lake Erie. The skeptics were sure that it would sink when it was launched, but of course it did not. The perfect scale model of the steamer "Betsy Anne" was also built piece-by-piece by Mr. Batchelor, working from the original blueprints of the actual classic paddle wheeler. The Betsy Anne was owned by Captain Fred Way of Sewickley and was a familiar sight for much of the middle 20<sup>th</sup> century as it passed Beaver on its many trips up and down the Ohio.



## The Propeller Blade

During World War II, the Curtiss-Wright Corporation operated a plant in the Vanport section of Beaver where they manufactured thousands of propellers for war planes of all types. Seen here is an actual blade from a three-blade propeller for a P-47 "Thunderbolt" fighter plane similar to the one pictured in the mural, which has survived for more than 55 years and come back home at last to Beaver. Also on view are cross-sections of an actual propeller blade, showing the shape and construction of the hollow blade.

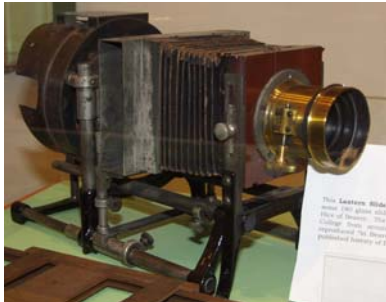




## Fort McIntosh Exhibit

In 1984, the Beaver Heritage Foundation created a small museum in the Beaver Area Memorial Library to house the artifacts and displays associated with the Fort McIntosh site restoration of 1978. These display cases are the same ones formerly shown in the library, in a more compact arrangement.

There is also a push-button sound system which provides a three-minute recap of the story of Fort McIntosh and its place in our history.



## Lantern Slide Projector

Soon after arrival of electricity, this lantern-slide projector appeared on the scene. It uses glass-mounted transparencies which are projected on a wall or screen. This projector came to us from the Beaver Area Memorial Library, and was the gift of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Holt, who found it in the attic of their earlier home on Fourth Street. It comes complete with several dozen scenes and photos of people, all taken in Beaver before the turn of the century.

## Stoneware

The stoneware exhibit features hand-made pottery and stoneware manufactured in the Beaver area during the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. For a period of fifty years, starting in the early 1840's, Beaver was the center of a flourishing stoneware industry. During the period that the industry existed, a total of thirteen different potters operated in the Beaver area, producing the hand-made salt-glazed pottery and stoneware which is, today, highly prized by collectors who appreciate the quality of the hand-thrown local product and the beauty of its folk-art decoration.



## Stained Glass Window

This window was originally in the south wall of the United Methodist Church on College Avenue, and dates to at least 1904 when the church was built. (The present church building replaced a previous church building which was located in Irvine Square, near the present Gazebo). When the church added the Sunday school wing many years ago, the window was removed and placed in storage.

## Senator Matthew Quay Office Chair and Portrait

This hand-carved wooden chair originally belonged to Senator Matthew Stanley Quay, Chairman of the Republican National Committee in the 1890s. The chair was used in his office on College Avenue in Beaver. The unique arm rest carvings are said to represent the heads of wild boars. The chair was donated to the museum by John and Nicky McLaughlin Jr. The portrait of Quay seen behind the chair is personally signed by the Senator.





## Red Glass Art Windows

The red glass in the doorframe was salvaged from the Ira Mansfield home on River Road prior to its demolition in 1962 to make way for the Beaver Library. Such decorative glass was a trademark of fine Victorian homes of this period. It is not known exactly where the glass was originally used in the Mansfield house, but it was not uncommon to find it in door frames such as this outstanding example.



## Polar Clothing and Equipment

Beaver's Dr. Harrison "Hyde" Richardson made his first trip to the South Pole with Admiral Byrd in 1939 at the age of nineteen as trainer of the sled dog teams. Seen here is some of the actual equipment used by Dr. Richardson during that expedition, including the Norwegian-type skis on which he traveled over 1,600 miles with his dog team, his seal-skin lined trousers and gloves, a knife which he made entirely from scratch while aboard ship, and his multi-layered boots, complete with their ice-gripping clamps. The stuffed penguin and the smaller white bird called a "snowy petrel" are also authentic souvenirs of the 1939 expedition. In 1956, Dr. Richardson made a second trip to the South Pole, this time as the expedition's primary doctor.

## Silver Trophies

These trophies are those of Beaver's Bill Butler. In the early 1930's, Butler set a number of Track records at Geneva College, including running the 100 yard dash in .09.8 seconds, a record that still stands in 2005. Butler later graduated from Howard University Law School and for several years was chairman of the Pennsylvania State Parole Board. He also was a newspaper columnist who wrote a regular weekly column titled "Around The Beaver Valley With Bill Butler."

## Suspended Globe Light Fixtures

The ceiling lights found in both the exhibit hall and the freight office are original to the Fischer hardware Store on Third Street. They were salvaged by Don Dawson of Fischer Hardware and have been completely reconditioned and rewired for use in our museum.





## Electric Time Clock (above entrance to freight office)

This wall clock was original to the Lincoln School Building on Fourth Street. It is electrically operated and contains adjustable pegs to control the timing of the classroom bells used to signal class periods. It is fully operational.

## Framed Posters

All of the excursion posters and the Beaver Theater poster are original. Since the common practice seems to have been to omit the year in the date on these posters, we can only guess, but it seems likely that the train posters were from about 1890 and the movie poster from about 1930.



## Service Counter

The wood counter is original to the freight office and stands in its original position. It has been restored to serve as a unique and functional sales counter for the Museum Shop.



## Freight Office Desk

This fine walnut desk was found in a railroad freight office in Titusville, and was made in about 1880. It is known as a Wells-Fargo desk, for the company which used this design with its many cubbyholes and even a secret compartment. Although not original to this location, it is a fine example of office furnishings that would have been common to an early 1900 freight office.

## Freight Office Wall Clock

No railroad office, whether freight or passenger, was complete without a reliable clock. This example is typical of the so-called "Railroad Regulator" clock, a reliable key-wound instrument that would run for eight days on a single winding. This clock is an

original Seth Thomas model in good running order and keeps near-perfect time.



## Locomotive Bell

This brass bell once stood proudly atop a Pennsylvania Railroad K-4 steam-type passenger locomotive, and was always heard as the train pulled into the station or prepared to start up again after a stop. Until the late 1930's the Pennsylvania Railroad operated a passenger station near the Ohio River bank, reached by a wooden pedestrian bridge at the foot of College Avenue, seen in the nearby photo.



## Two-wheeled Handcart

Original to this building, the two-wheeled handcart is a stock model freight dolly used by depots throughout the P&LE Railroad in 1900. This cart was in daily use until the office was closed in 1965. It was returned from the Beaver Co-Op (now Agway) on Sharon Road-where it had reposed in a dark corner for many years, and was the gift of Mr. Earl Cookson of Rochester, who was the freight agent in this building prior to its closing.

## The Four-wheeled Baggage Cart

Used to move express between this building and the railroad cars, the original four-wheeled baggage cart was located and restored by the late Mr. Frank Morrow. It is back in position on the outside rear platform; in the same place where it had stood from the time the freight station was built. Along with the two-wheeled handcart, this is the second of the two items original to this building.



## The Restroom

Until 1945, the freight station did not have any restroom facilities. At that time, a crude lavatory was installed which served until the building was closed in about 1965. Today's beautiful modern restroom is equipped for handicap use and features customized ceramic tile donated by Summitville Tile Company.



## Lower Level—Permanent Collections/Archives and Research Library

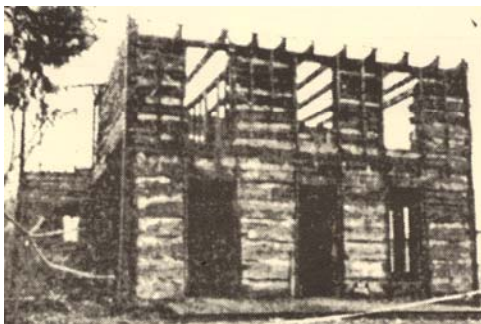
The original crawl space under the building was fully excavated to provide a large clean, dry and serviceable. Today, this space houses a permanent collection of more than 20,000 rare artifacts that have been made or used by the people, businesses, schools and other important places of Beaver, Bridgewater, Brighton Township and Vanport. Once an item is accepted for accession, it is catalogued, assigned an identification number and filed for future reference by

researchers or for public display. A dedicated committee meets each Thursday morning to research and catalogue the queue of donations.



## The Log House

This center for educating children is a reconstruction (as opposed to a restoration) of an original log house that once stood at the corner of Buffalo Street and Georgetown Lane. It was unrecognizable as such due to a veneer of wood siding probably applied in the latter 1800s. At the time it was originally built, the western boundary of Beaver Borough was in the center of Buffalo Street, which would have placed the building in Vanport Township. However, at about the time the new High School was built, the properties on the west side of Buffalo Street were annexed by Beaver Borough.



Given the estimated age of the timbers, and the distinctive hand-hewn markings of axe and adz, and given that many of the original hand-hewn logs from Fort McIntosh were known to have been appropriated for other purposes when the fort was torn down in 1788, it is a likely probability that these logs also came originally from the fort.

In the reconstruction, it was impractical to exactly duplicate the latter configuration of the building, since a second floor had been added sometime around the Civil War. This was evident from the differences in the type of wood and of the way it was constructed. Also, the upper part of the house and the roof had already been dismantled before the house was donated to the Heritage Foundation.

However, the footprint of the original house was clearly apparent, as well as the location of doors, windows and a chimney. It was therefore decided to return the house to how it most likely looked when it was originally built, with a center door, wood shake roof and stone fireplace and chimney. All the logs are original, and are placed in the same interlocking way as originally. The “chinking” is new, and incorporates some 21st century hidden insulation. The house sits upon a full concrete-panel wall basement, which was also incorporated to create valuable “free” storage space. The attic is quite spacious, and like the basement is accessible through a trap door. This also is used only for storage.



## The Gardens and Landscaping

The view of the Log House is framed by a carefully-designed selection of ground plantings, shrubs, trees and flowers, all enclosed by a traditional split rail fence. The wild flowers and herbs are all native to Beaver County and could have been found here in 1802 when the log house was still new. The intent is to help visitors take a 200-year step back in time, as if they were standing in the clearing of a dwelling, surrounded by vegetation.

The herb garden, which is closest to the house, contains more than 40 varieties of culinary and medicinal herbs, all of which fulfilled a necessary role in the well-being of early settlers. The herb garden is a living memorial and was funded by contributions made in memory of the late Wandalea Smith.



An extensive vegetable garden is located nearer to the iron fencing on the east side of the property. All of the plantings have been carefully re-researched and planned by professional landscape designer Nancy Lonnett-Roman. Much of the development and maintenance was provided by volunteers from the Penn State Master Gardeners program.



## The Artifacts

Since the Log House serves continually as a living history classroom, with just a few exceptions, the furnishings are reproductions. These represent common items that would have been used in a 200-year-old frontier cabin, but which may be freely handled by students and other visitors. The focus is on the kitchen area, which was the center of frontier living. Here you will find the tools and articles needed to support life in that period, including cooking utensils, sewing and weaving equipment, and other common household articles such as wooden buckets for carrying water.



## The Fireplace

This is a typical fireplace from a frontier house. The hearth and chimney are hand made from native sandstone originally quarried near present-day Dutch Ridge Road, and used originally in the Beaver County Jail (1856). The “smoke box”, an inward-sloping stone that funnels smoke toward the chimney, is a one-piece hand-hewn granite slab that spans the entire width of the opening. It was found on the farm property of the McLaughlin Family in Brighton Township. The iron hardware in the fireplace includes a crane, fire grate, and hand tools, all hand-forged specifically for this building, along with the iron hinges on the outer doors.



## **The Farm Table**

The large walnut table in front of the fireplace was a typical all-purpose work table and dining table, used for everything from rolling bread dough to dressing chickens to bathing the babies. This beautiful example was made in 1840, and came from a farm in upstate New York.

## **The Spinning Wheel**

This is a genuine antique which was donated by Anne Firestone. It would have been an essential piece of functional furniture for frontier settlers, who would have had to make their own clothes and other household items of cloth.



## **The Pennsylvania Long Rifle**

This is a genuine fully-functional original flintlock rifle, made in Pennsylvania in the late 1700's. Along with the powder horn and the all-purpose fur hide on the wall, this was a basic tool of frontier living.

