

Friedenshuetten Monument Marks Site of 18th C. Wyalusing Indian Village

by Kurt Weidner

Two miles south of Wyalusing, on the north side of the Susquehanna River, is a monument which was erected in 1871 by members of the Moravian Historical Society. Less than an hour by car from the Back Mountain, the monument marks the site of Friedenshuetten, a settlement of Moravian Indians between 1763 and 1772. An obelisk, like the Washington Monument, it is but a few feet high and stands overgrown with weeds in a corn field just off a narrow dirt road.

Around 1756 a group of Delaware and Mohican Indians, having been pushed from the Delaware River Valley to the south by the encroaching white civilization, sought peace and refuge on the land above the north branch of the Susquehanna River. They sought permission from the Iroquois Confederacy who controlled the land and who later sold it to the Penn family.

John Papunhank, a Munsy chief, was in charge. He knew a relationship of some sort must be established with the white man if the Indians were to be able to live in peace. He was also having trouble keeping control of the group and needed a catalyst. He looked to Christianity.

Papunhank invited David Zeisberger and John Jacob Schmitt, two Moravian missionaries from Bethlehem, to come and live at the settlement. Papunhank and the missionaries did well together. The Moravians respected the human rights of the Indians who in turn accepted the white man's style of settlement life. They cleared the land and planted crops. They hunted and fished. They also squabbled among themselves.

Job Chillaway, an Indian, came to the settlement shortly after the initial settlement was established in 1756. He claimed he had been there before and owned the land, and sought control of the settlement.

Behind everyone's back he wheeled and dealt with the Penn family. A letter to the Penn family from John Papunhank and Joshua the Mohican dated 1769 hints of a conspiracy perpetrated by Chillaway.

"We wish to live in a friendly manner with Job Chillaway and all men. Everybody here has been kind to him and his family. But we never desired him to take up any land for us; and upon what reason he could call Wyalusing his land, we do not know. Our worthy brother John Papunhank was settled here two years before him and Job has but this year begun to clear some new land and has the least improvement of us all, but we shall not differ with him so long as he behaves well and lays nothing in our way and then we shall not make complaints against him."

The kind of peace and stability John Papunhank and Zeisberger envisioned for the settlement never came true. Chillaway kept things stirred up in the settlement to a degree where the Indians were not able to establish a firm cultural defense against the depredations of the white frontiersmen.

In the same letter Papunhank makes mention of the friction between the people of New England and the Indians and white frontiersmen. "With the New England people," he states,

"we have no connection at all, we never encourage them in their settlement and shall never do it."

Towards the end of Papunhank's and Zeisberger's involvement with the settlement, at least three "Pennymite" wars broke out between immigrants from Connecticut and Pennsylvania frontiersmen. Connecticut sought to project her boundaries west to take over the territory claimed by Pennsylvania. They disclaimed jurisdiction by Pennsylvania and sought to come under Connecticut law.

This was too much for the Pennsylvanians and open conflict took place between armed forces of both sides on three different occasions between 1770 and 1784.

Zeisberger, Schmitt, Papunhank, Joshua the Mohican and a small group of followers abandoned the settlement to Chillaway in 1772. They moved to Ohio and established a settlement at Goshen near New Philadelphia. It was built on the same design as Friedenshuetten. The new village was attacked and its inhabitants massacred by white men in 1782.

Chillaway was left as undisputed owner of the land. Historians later traced ownership of the land from Chillaway to the Pawling family, to the Stalfords and finally to Harry O. Schulze and Robert W. Biggins, who own the area today.

In June of 1972 Leslie L. Delaney Jr., of Kings' College, kicked off an archaeological dig at the Friedenshuetten site. With a slight pause for Hurricane Agnes, which flooded the Kings' archeology lab, the dig went for seven weeks and ended in late August.

Kings' College students and high school and junior high school volunteers found fire pits and a host of artifacts including pieces of pottery, porcelain, nails, glass and other European items that were traded to the Indians. They found cuff links, gun flints, arrow heads, a Jew's harp, clay pipes, lockets, and pestles.

At the site the young archaeologists also discovered some Owasco pottery. The earliest date for the Owasco culture is about 1070 A.D., the latest about 1310 A.D.

Paul Wallace, in "Indians in Pennsylvania" (1969) described the menu of a typical Delaware Indian. The basics included maize corn, beans and squash. Fish and fowl played a big part as did the meat from European livestock introduced by the missionaries. They ate fried locusts, chestnuts, hickory nuts, hazel nuts, berries and wild grapes. Potatoes and wild peas were available. Syrup was made from soft maple, box elder and hickory sap, and was often used to season meat.

A corn field now covers the site of the digs and grows around the monument down to the river. Except for a historical marker on Route 6 south of Wyalusing the casual passer-by would have no idea the monument existed. Many local residents have never seen it and cannot give directions to it.

The Friedenshuetten monument commemorates the Indian's unsuccessful attempt to live in peace and stability. Carved on one side is this quotation:

"And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation and in sure dwellings and in quiet resting places." Isaian XXXII, 18.



Photo by Kurt Weidner

Friedenshuetten marker, on south side of Route 6, two miles south of Wyalusing.



Photo by Kurt Weidner

"Remember the days of old. Consider the years of many generations. Ask thy father and he will show thee; thy elders and they will tell thee." Inscription on Friedenshuetten monument.

John Shipkoski Named Area Manager of ACS

A Harrisburg man, John P. Shipkoski, has been named area manager of 18 northeastern Pennsylvania counties for the Pennsylvania Division of the American Cancer Society, Thomas MaHaffey, executive vice president, has announced.

A native of Nanticoke, Mr. Shipkoski joined the society's professional staff in 1970 as executive director of the Luzerne Unit. In 1972 he was named director of service and rehabilitation for the state office of the society in Harrisburg.

In his new position, Mr. Shipkoski will manage ACS operation in counties with a combined population of over 1.3 million. Last year the society raised over \$400,000 in these units, which include Bradford, Sullivan, Carbon, Columbia, Lackawanna, Luzerne, Lycoming, Monroe, Montour, Northumberland, Pike, Schuylkill, Snyder, Susquehanna, Tioga, Union, Wyoming and Wayne Counties.

Before joining the ACS, Mr.

Shipkoski was an assistant district executive with the Penn Mountains Council, Boys Scouts of America. He is a graduate of Nanticoke Area High School and earned a BA degree from Kings College, Wilkes-Barre, in 1968.

Mr. Shipkoski is married and the father of one daughter.

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