

Bedford County Historical Society



1767 Townships Celebration held at the Bedford County Courthouse.

All photos courtesy of Bedford County Historical Society.



High Schoolers attended the annual Vietnam Veterans Exhibit.



Annual Quilt Show held on the second floor of the Historical Society.

Spotlight on HCAP

History Center
Affiliates Program

- The Bedford County Historical Society (BCHS) traces its roots back to April 30, 1874. On July 4, 1937, however, Albert S. Ritchey and Major Simon M. Lutz organized the current society and dedicated it to the mission of documenting, preserving, protecting, and promoting the history and heritage of Bedford County for the benefit of current and future generations.
- Since 2009, the BCHS has been headquartered in a 5,000-square-foot repurposed barn to include spaces for archives, exhibits, offices, meetings, and reference material. The barn's second floor, the Hall at Kinton's Knob, is a generously sized space, which the society rents to the public for private events. BCHS is managed by an executive director, volunteers, and an eight-person Board of Trustees composed of civic and community leaders in the county.
- The BCHS curates an impressive collection of artifacts and archives that comprises the rotating exhibitions. Popular exhibits are *Bedford Boys in WWII*, *the John E. Duffy Collection of Indian Artifacts*, and *Bedford County in the American Revolutionary War*. The society also lends exhibits to interested civic groups for educational purposes.
- Among the society's collection is a Confederate flag that was captured and returned by a Bedford County resident who participated in General Sherman's famous March to the Sea. Another is a portrait of Lawrence Taliaferro (a United States Army officer best known for his service as an Indian agent), who married Elizabeth Dillon from Bedford County. Taliaferro is known for officiating at the marriage of his slave Harriet Robinson to Dred Scott.
- The BCHS maintains collections of historical maps, photographs, genealogy books, public records, and cemetery records. These records are available to the public, either free for members or at a nominal fee for non-members. The society also provides several types of research services.
- The society welcomes new members and volunteers, and residency is not a prerequisite for membership. In fact, only about 20 percent of the society's 375 members live within a one-hour radius of its headquarters. Membership benefits include subscription to the quarterly *Pioneer Magazine*; unlimited use of the Pioneer Library; trip discounts; discounts or free admission to seminars; voting rights; and finally, a voice in Bedford County preservation efforts.

- The BCHS hosts many events each year. The calendar for 2019 includes a bus tour in January to visit the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia; Bedford County Day (March); the Annual Historical Banquet (April); Whiskey Rebellion bus trip (July); Silent Auction and Pig Roast (August); and the popular Quilt Show (October). BCHS will be hosting the Heinz History Center exhibit *We Can Do It! WWII* from November 23, 2019, to January 28, 2020. The society is eagerly looking forward to 2021, when it will celebrate Bedford County's 250th birthday.
- The Bedford County Historical Society is located at 6441 Lincoln Highway, Bedford, PA 15522. Reach them by phone by calling (814) 623-2011 or by email at bedfordhistory@embarqmail.com. Learn more at www.bedfordpahistory.com.

The History Center Affiliates Program, HCAP, is a membership-based network that allows local and regional historical societies and museums access to museum professionals and best practice standards through the Senator John Heinz History Center.

To find out more about HCAP or to apply for membership for your organization, please contact Robert O. Stakeley, History Center Affiliates Program (HCAP) Coordinator, at rostakeley@heinzhistorycenter.org or (412) 454-6359.



Exterior of the Bedford County Historical Society.



Flag Dedication outside the Historical Society.