

### Lumber Heritage Region

# 2023 End of the Year Report

Prepared by: Lumber Heritage Staff

# The Staff

Our Staff grew this year. Join us in welcoming Rowan Crisp. Rowan is a much needed addition to our staff. Her skills and knowledge will be a welcomed contribution to the forward progress of our organization.



Holly Komonczi Executive Director January 2017 hkomonczi@lumberheritage.org



Jennifer Weld Project Manager October 2020

jennifer@lumberheritage.org



Rowan Crisp Education and Outreach Administrator October 2023 Rowan@lumberheritage.org

### **Our 2023 Board of Directors**

Joshua Fox - PA Lumber Museum- Chairperson Gary Llyons - Retired- Vice Chairperson Colleen Hanson- Visit Potter/Tioga - Secretary Amy Shields - Allegheny Hardwoods Utilization Group - Treasurer Jenny Picciano- Lycoming County Planning Hunter Stauffer - Domtar Kenny Kane- Generations Forestry Mary Alyce Knauff- Retired Rachel Wolfel - Wright Consulting Agency Katie Brooks- Penn State Extension Josh Zucal - Cameron County Commissioner

### Lumbering in Pennsylvania-A compilation of Thomas Taber III lumbering works.



Sample before reprint

During an LHR Board Retreat in 2019, the full board stressed the necessity of reprinting the Thomas T. Taber III book series to assure the longevity of the materials about the Forest Products Industry. LHR received a grant to begin this work in 2020. In, 2022/23 the staff brought this project to fruition. Before covid in 2020 a meeting with Mr. Taber himself took place and we were given the 'go ahead' to reprint the series. Mr. Taber was elated that there was interest. Unfortunately, the project took longer than projected and Mr. Taber passed before the books were complete.

The hardest part of the project was the digital transfer from a typewriter written version to a scanned Microsoft Word document. Dozens of hours were put into finding the digital 'mistakes' while keeping the integrity of Mr. Taber's writing style. However, little to no work was needed to successfully preserve the quality of the photos

These books are loaded with personal interviews about life in lumbering camps, firsthand accounts of tragedies and stories of success

and failure during the lumber boom. These books help the LHR reach a larger audience with the history and heritage from our region. In addition, these books serve as a source of funding for the work we are doing in the 15-County Region.

The books are being sold right now on our online store. We plan to expand our sales by offering them to retail locations across the region, allowing them to financially benefit from The new two volume series!! the sales. https://lumberheritage.org/shop/

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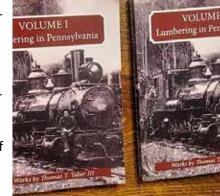
### LHR Develops a Marketing Plan

In 2017, the LHR began a new era with a new executive director taking the helm. One of the biggest questions at that

time was, "who/what is the Lumber Heritage Region". This ongoing question is being answered in several ways. The biggest being our marketing efforts. A new logo was created and the Lumber Heritage Region became the LHR. October 2020, brought on a new marketing professional... Jennifer Weld joined the team and our online and in person marketing exploded. Now the question arises internally of who/what is the LHR. Thus, we knew the need for a marketing plan became a priority.

No one knows our 15-county region better than the people who represent it. Our team created a leadership team including individuals from across the region with different experiences and insights. This team worked with Jennifer Weld at the wheel to develop our first Marketing Plan. You can find more information about the team and how you can be part of future projects on our website.

Early in the plan development process, the plan leadership team identified six priority areas to serve as the foundation for action. These priorities capture the current challenges and opportunities and offer recommendations for supporting outdoor recreation for all Pennsylvanians. The



Lumber Heritage Region Marketing Plan aims to promote and preserve the rich cultural and historical significance of the Lumber Heritage Region as a designated heritage area. This executive summary provides an overview of the key elements and strategies outlined in the comprehensive marketing plan.

- Enhancing Awareness
- Promoting Heritage Stories & Themes
- Emphasizing Outdoor Recreation
- Strengthening Partnerships
- Visitor Engagement & Education
- Education & Outreach

The Lumber Heritage Region, boasts a vibrant history deeply rooted in the lumber industry, which played a pivotal role in the region's development. With its unique heritage sites, natural landscapes, and diverse recreational opportunities, the Lumber Heritage Region has tremendous potential to attract tourists and stimulate economic growth.

### Diversity Study Ready for Delivery

In the months since the initial release of the report on the Lumber Heritage Region's Diversity Study, there has been a significant amount of feedback regarding the findings. For many years, the contents of this report were seldom found in the dialogue surrounding the lumber industry. So many stories like these have been left out of the standard nar-



This is a photo of Mary Bizzak from the private collection of the Bizzak Family. Mary would load, unload and drive thiese logs to the Day Chemical Plant.

rative for so long that some believed that many of the men and women who contributed to the success of the lumber industry never participated at all.

**Priorities at a Glance** 

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Working with Historic Researcher Hilary Jebitsch, the Lumber Heritage Region prioritized the need to document these stories in order to tell and preserve a more complete and inclusive history of the region for generations to come. As there has been very little priority given to this topic until now, the Lumber Heritage Region is grateful that so many were willing to share their stories.

Fast forward to 2023, as the LHR looks to share our meaningful findings with the world in hopes more people will become interested in the Forest Products Industry.

The research was first developed into presentations. Hilary conducted a few of the initial presentations across the region. The LHR teamed up with the Oil Region Alliance and did a presentation during women's History Month on the work of women in the Oil and Forest Products industries. (This presentation can be found on the LHR YouTube Channel). This particular presentation led to two things. One the LHR had some cookie cutter presentations done that can be used by anyone across the region. Two, the Oil Region Alliance contracting Hilary to do diversity research for their organization. If your organization is interested in hearing a presentation

about the diversity in the region, please let the staff know.

Phase two of the diversity deliverables was to have interpretive panels designed that could be placed in high visibility areas across the region. These panels are meant to educate visitors on the diversity during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It is important that all people feel a connection to the work done in the lumber industry, in hopes that the workforce can expand. The staff worked with local leaders in Tioga,





Panels like these make the history at the PA Lumber Museum more inclusive.

Clinton, McKean, Cameron, Lycoming and Potter counties to secure a location for each of the seven panels. There are also 9

panels at the Pennsylvania Lumber Museum. If you are interest- Sample interpretive panels you will find at visitor ed in sponsoring a panel in your county, please let the staff know.

The final stage of the deliverables for 2023 was to design a workable document to help our partners tell a more diverse story. This document contains information on how to put together a good presentation or develop indoor or outdoor interpretive signage. There are sample forms for making sure you are collecting the materials properly. The section on what to consider when interviewing subjects for data collection proves most helpful. Our next step with this is to have copies printed that can be given to groups who are interested in broadening their messaging, like historical societies, industry, government partners and more. A copy of this document can be found on our website https://lumberheritage.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/LHR-Diversity-Study-Implementation-Guide-.pdf

### Mini Grant Projects - Building Communities



DuBois Historical Society, Clearfield County, interpretive panel.

The Lumber Heritage Region has offered mini grants to communities and 501-C3 organizations since its beginning. Leveraging over 3 million dollars in project spending this 50/50 matching grant has served twelve of our fifteen counties. Any municipality or 501-

C3 within the 15-county region can apply for recreational and forest industry related projects. You can learn more about our Mini Grant program by visiting our website at https://lumberheritage.org/ grants/. As 2023 comes to a close we are wrapping up the program. It has been amazing watching the projects unfold and the communities embrace the outcomes.

The 2023 LHR Mini Grant Program received 14 applications for funding. We were able to support seven or one half of those applications. The recommended project activities were, but not limited to the following.

• Media pieces that highlight the history, heritage, diversity, and/or recreational opportu-

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Cameron County Dark Sky Programming

- Packaged itineraries and products associated with those itineraries.
- Elements from existing plans including but not limited to trails, watershed, greenway, or heritage community plans.
- Projects highlighting the LHR Diversity Study and other diversity related projects.
  Interpretive Panels highlighting History and Heritage, Forest Sustainability,

Diversity and Inclusion, Forest Products Industry Jobs



McKean County Historical Society, Fire Tower Project

The Seven awards are as follows:

• Allegheny Hardwoods Utilization Group- Several Counties, Forest Health and Sustainability Signage, Project Cost- \$10,000/Awarded \$5,000

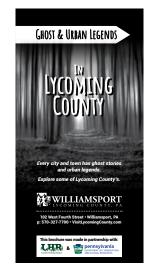
Cameron County- Dark Sky Programming- Project Cost- \$4511.10/Awarded \$2255.55

• Centre County Historical Society - Explorers Passport & Interpretive Signage - Project Cost-\$10,591/ Awarded \$5,000

• DuBois Historical Society - Clearfield County, Interpretive Panel (Tannery)- Project Cost- \$2000/ Awarded \$1,000

• Lycoming County Visitors Bureau - Tourism Brochures - Project Cost- \$12,316/Awarded \$5,000 McKean County Historical Society - Fire Tour Reconstruction - Project Cost \$13,000/Awarded \$5,000

• Muncy Historical Society- Lycoming County- Nature Trail Interpretive Panel - Project Cost \$11,000/Awarded \$5,000



Lycoming Co. Project

The LHR was awarded \$25,000 from DCNR's Heritage Area Program to make these projects possible. The Twenty-five thousand dollars leveraged \$60,000 in project spending for our local communities. Additionally, dollars will be spent in the communities by visitors to the region on overnight

stays, gas, food, and other expenses. According to a study done by DCED the average visitor spends over \$300 per per-

son for an overnight stay. In addition a report done by the PA Wilds states, regional spending is approximately \$1.8 billion annually. Our footprint is just slightly larger thank the Pa Wilds. Projects like the mini grant program is contributing to the future success of the communities in Lumber Heritage Region.

Here is a list by county, of the mini grant dollars leveraged over the years. This is not a complete list as the records are not fully complete.

County	Dollars Leveraged		
Cameron	\$69,105		
Centre	\$36,105		
Clarion	\$10,000		
Clearfield	\$13,400		
Clinton	\$60,000		
Elk	\$246.000		
Forest	\$42,000		
Jefferson	\$13,878		
Lycoming	\$234,500		
McKean	\$115,765		
Potter	\$10,000		
Warren	\$56,000		



Centre County Historical Society Project

A new round of mini grants will beaccepting applications until February 8, 2024. Watch for details and share this information with your county leaders. The application is available on our website @ www.lumberheritage.org/grants.

### **2023 Education and Outreach**

We don't always work in our office. Or maybe our office just isn't always indoors. In 2023, the LHR was able to reach thousands of people with our education and outreach efforts. Over 1,200 third and fourth graders saw the history of the industry come to life with the wood on glass photos. Thousands of people saw our booth and display at events across the region and hundreds more were educated on the diversity in lumbering industry. The LHR staff is visable throughout the region all year long. Below are some examples of the work done outside the offices. Contact us for a presentation at your event or meetings.



## **Our Partners**



In 2023, the Lumber Heritage Region welcomed 36 new partners, further enriching the collaborative efforts aimed at preserving and celebrating the rich history of the lumber industry. These partners, comprising of various businesses, local communities, historical societies, and environmental organizations, reflect a shared vision of honoring the contributions of the lumber industry to the cultural and economic tapestry of the

Lumber Heritage Region.

The diverse range of our partners brings unique perspectives and expertise, fostering a dynamic network that will enhance educational initiatives, promote tourism, and support environmental stewardship. Most every business and organization in the LHR Region is a potential LHR partner and we pride ourselves on asking the question; Would you like to be a LHR Partner? During a Women in Timber luncheon, I sat beside a lady from the forest



product industry. In getting to know her, if came to find out that her husband is a 2nd generation logger from McKean County. She began to tell the story of her Father-in-Law, Gus Crissman, who started Crissman Lumber in 1964, and how he had been in the forestry product industry all of his life, starting out with a sawmill and a few logging crews. Now his son, Tim Crissman runs Rocky Ridge Trading Company and now Rocky Ridge is one of the first companies in Pennsylvania to employ a tethered, winch-assisted traction solution. Being a LHR Partner was an easy choice for Rocky Ridge Trading and in becoming a partner, they have recommended other businesses in the area to join the LHR.



The LHR covers 15 counties, and it is our partners that help to share our mission, tell our story and help to keep the lumber heritage of the area in the forefront. By nurturing a sense of pride in the lumber heritage, the partners aspire to weave a narrative that transcends generations, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation for the historical significance of the lumber industry in the Lumber Heritage Region.

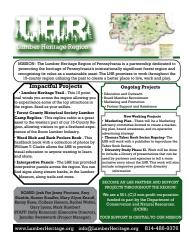
Through joint partnerships, the Lumber Heritage Region aims to create engaging experiences for visitors, highlighting the significance of the lumber industry in shaping the region's identity. Collaborative projects may include the restoration of historic sites, the development of interac-

tive exhibits, and the establishment of educational programs that showcase the evolution of lumber-related technologies. The LHR received a grant to create interpretive panels tell the diverse story or Women and Black History in the Forest Product Industry. The series of panels needed to be placed in high traffic tourism areas to make the biggest impact, so we reached out to our partners for options and input. The response was overwhelming and the partners we contacted were excited to help with the placement of the panels. Although, being a LHR Partner offers many benefits to the Partner, the benefit to having these business and organizations as Partners is just as important.



Looking ahead, the Lumber Heritage Region envisions a future where its partners continue to deepen their involvement in preserving and promoting the lumber heritage. Plans include expanding outreach efforts to connect with new audiences, leveraging technology to create virtual experiences, and fostering sustainable practices to ensure the long-term viability of the region's natural resources.

- Jennifer Weld, Project Manager



### **OUR PARTNERS**

#### **CAMBRIA COUNTY**

FOX/ABC WWCP-TC Greater Johnstown/Cambria County CVB Northern Cambria Community Dev Corp Rock Run Recreational Area \*Tacketts County Cottage \*Tacketts by the Lake WJAC TV

#### CAMERON COUNTY

Aroma Café Bearded Brewing Borough of Driftwood Cameron County Chamber of Commerce & Artisan Center \*Cameron County Historical Society Cameron County Recreation \*Cameron County Outdoor Youth Activites County of Cameron Driftwood Saloon and Grill Emporium Hardwoods Hometown Mentors Hygrade Inn Rich Valley Apiary \*The Little Museum

#### **CENTRE COUNTY**

\*Armistead Wood Design, LLC Centerline Golf Centre County Historical Society Clearwater Conservancy Dream Makers Event Planning and Bartending Eagle Iron Works and Curtin Village Full Circle Ranch Equine Haven Ice House Cafe \*John Henry Simler House Local Historia PA SFI Implementation Committee \*Philipsburg Revitalization Corporation \*Union 'Mud' Church

#### **CLARION COUNTY**

\*Clarion County Economic Development Corporation Cook Forest Sawmill Center for the Arts \*County of Clarion \*Hopper Corp. \*Kahle's Custom Wood Products North Central PA Pheasants Forever Chapter 630

#### **CLEARFIELD COUNTY**

4M Hay & Beef A&R Tree Removal and Trimming Aaron Rowles Logging Angry Goat Animal Graphics & Signs \*Aperitif Personal Bartending Service Arbor Pros Tree Service **Bilgers Rocks** \*Black Diamond Riding Ranch Blue Moon Media Clearfield Co Career and Technology Center \*Clearfield County Historical Society \*Coalport Area Coal Museum Crystal City Ranch Curry Racing Team Curwensville Pike Township Historical Soc Curwensville Regional Development Corporation Doolittle Station \*Downtown DuBois **DuBois Area Historical Society** \*Greater Clearfield Chamber of Commerce Greater DuBois Chamber of Commerce Heart of the Earth Crystals & Jewelry Holly's Crafty Cakes \*Irvin Manor Jordan's Chalk Couture KM Jewelrv \*Keystone Real Estate Photogrpahy Larry's Barbeque

Mud Bird Studio Narrow-Beam LLC North Central PA Building & Construction Trades Council Pennsylvania Grain Processing \*Pike Power Wash \*Pine Grove Nursery Prismatic Rose \*Redden Tile & Flooring RJ Swatsworth & Sons Logging and Lumber Rustic Memory Photography Lisa's Sew Crafty \*Spring Valley Maple Starr Hill Winery Super 322 Drive-In Theatre The Strawberry Tree & Tea Room \*The Woodland Wonderland Visit Clearfield County Winkler Gallery & Art Education Center Wisor Photography

#### **CLINTON COUNTY**

Broken Axe Brew House Castanea Rail Road Station City of Lock Haven Clinton County Arts Council - Station Gallery Clinton County Historical Society Clinton County Visitors Bureau \*Cross Life Ventures Fastidious Detailing, LLC Greater Renovo Area Heritage Park LH Jams Jazz & Arts Festival Little Red Barn Farm B&B PA State Flaming Foliage Festival Piper Aviation Museum Poorman Gallery QWIK Rock Restless Oaks Family Restaurant \*Ridge & Valley Woodworking, LLC Schlesinger Communications The Avenue Bed & Breakfast & Catering \*Well House Candle Co Wine in the Wilds WRI F WBPZ WSQV

#### ELK COUNTY

At Home Printing Castle Garden Bed & Breakfast County of Elk Elk County Council for the Arts \*PA Made Clothing & Arts Co Printing Plus Ridgway -Elk County Chamber of Commerce St Marys Lumber Company Straub Beer The Winery at Wilcox Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

> FOREST COUNTY Forest County Historical Society J&C Workshop North Clarion County School

INDIANA COUNTY Smicksburg Area Heritage Society

#### JEFFERSON COUNTY

Jefferson County Historical Center North Central PA Pheasants Forever Chapter 630 Pennsylvania Great Outdoors Visitors Bureau Punxsutawney Area Communtiy Foundation Punxsutawney Borough Punxsutawney Ground Hog Club Scripture Rocks Heritage Park Sweet Dreams Snack Shack

#### \* Denotes New 2023 Partners

#### LYCOMING COUNTY

Beech Creek/March Creek Watershed Heritage Museum Derone's Dynamite Dogs Hampton Inn Williamsport - Downtown Hatchet House Holiday Inn Express & Suites Williamsport Holiday Inn Williamsport Keystone Wood Products Association Lycoming County Visitors Bureau Montoursville Borough Muncy Historical Society New Trail Brewing Company PA Liberty Mountian Pennsylvania College of Technology Real Taste Taqueria & Catering The James Restaurant Williamsport Crosscutters Woodrich "Trees for Life"

#### McKEAN COUNTY

Allegheny National Forest Visitors Bureau Art in the Wilds CJ Spirits County of McKean Flickerwood Wine Cellars Hiking to Beer Kane Lawn and Garden Lutheran Home at Kane McKean County Conservation District McKean County Historical Society Mt Jewett to Kinzua Bridge Trail Club Penn Brad Oil Museum \*Rocky Ridge Trading Company Stroup's Pure Maple Syrup The Kane Manor Three Rivers Forest Management Wilds Sonshine Factory

#### POTTER COUNTY

\*Frosty Hollow Bed & Breakfast Galeton Area Rotary Club \*Highland Chocolates \*Mountain Graphics Pennsylvania Lumber Museum Pennsylvania Lumber Museum Assoc Potter County Education Council Tioga County, PA Historical Society Visit Potter Tioga PA Visitors Bureau

#### **TIOGA COUNTY**

Knoxville Public Library & Historical Museum Patterson Lumber Co \*Tioga County, PA Historical Society Visit Potter Tioga PA Visitors Bureau

#### WARREN COUNTY

Knoxville Public Library & Historical Museum Patterson Lumber Co Tioga County, PA Historical Society Visit Potter Tioga PA Visitors Bureau

#### MISC

Beyond Spots & Dots \*Lincoln Highway Heritage Corridor Michael Shultz \*North Central Regional Planning & Development Commission North Country Crafts and Creations Northern PA Regional College Pennsylvania Hickory Syrup Pixel & Hammer Ruffed Grouse Society & American Woodcock Society Seven Mountains Media Susquehanna Greenway Partnership The Lyme Timber Company Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

### **BEING CONNECTED Facebook**





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2023 was a big year for the LHR facebook page. We had several posts go viral! This was all done at no cost to the LHR. The ROI on our facebook is 100%.



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### **Our Newsletter**

#### WHAT YOU'LL FIND IN THE NEWSLETTER

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35

•Stories by county based on the LHT- (2023 theme)

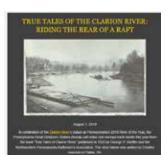
- •Themed articles and stories about Lumber Heritage
  - Partners section
    - Fun Facts





Death 6

64,363



MONTH	RECIPIENTS	OPEN RATE	TOTAL OPENS	CLICK RATE	TOTAL CLICKS
JANUARY	502	33.3%	311	3.4%	37
FEBRUARY	501	30.9%	262	6.2%	70
MARCH	497	33.2%	336	3.8%	36
APRIL	501	33.1%	298	7.0%	106
MAY	503	33.2%	319	4.6%	144
JUNE	503	27.4%	251	2.6%	28
JULY	501	25.7%	241	5.2%	73
AUGUST	505	31.5%	255	3.8%	66
SEPTEMBER	0	0	0	0	0
OCTOBER	502	34.3%	303	10.6%	104
NOVEMBER	505	36.8%	334	4.6%	32
DECEMBER	500	27.8%	229	2.4%	28
2023 AVERAGE	502	31.5%	285	4.92%	65.8
INDUSTRY AVE.	4100	28.59%	N/A	3.29%	N/A
2022 AVERAGE	475	27.3%	287	4.45%	81

## WHAT'S NEXT

The LHR is currently working on three major projects, outside of the marketing, education and partnership building being done every day.

The first of these projects is an APP that will tell the history of each of our stops on the LHT (Lumber Heritage Trail). Jennifer has been working hard to capture the voices of people from across the region so our visitors can hear an oral depiction of what was going on in the area during the lumber boom. Rowan has been capturing the interesting things about each county to get visitors moving about the region. This app will help meet the DCNR goal

of relating history to recreation as noted in their SCORP plan.

Another big undertaking for the staff is the Management Action Plan (MAP) update. This work is a collaborative effort of partners across the region as well as LHR staff and board members, DCNR partners and Mackin Engineering, our contracted partner. This important project holds the key to the next several years of the LHR's work. If you have information to share as we build our plan, please email and let us know.

Work has also started on the strategic plan for the Cameron County Dark Sky Park. Two proposals were received and are being reviewed by the Dark Sky Committee. This committee consists of Holly Komonczi, Rowan Crisp, Josh Zucal, Sophia Fragale, Joe Kellert, Randy Flament, Robert Kanter, and Don Bickford. Work will begin once a contractor is in place. Input into what you would like to see at this park will be much appreciated. Feel free to share your input or join our team as we build this future site for in the Lumber Heritage Region.



The LHT APP

Moving into the latter half of 2024, a mini grant round will be in place, work on resurrecting a fire tower at the PA Lumber Museum will begin, interactive display designs will take effect, and the new Educator will be actively looking for new schools to present our lumber history to.



Once again, thank you for your continued support. This work would not be complete without the assistance of our partners and friends. Have a GREAT 2024.