

# August 9, 2018

## HATT Membership Meeting

43 attended both members and guests

### **The Life and Times of Sir William Johnson**

Rick Bodenschatz opened the meeting at 5:35 p.m. welcoming all who came. We had the Pledge of Allegiance. He reminded all to send in membership dues if not done so already. Fliers for the annual dinner meeting for September also are available at the welcome desk along with membership registration forms. The Annual meeting will be September 12<sup>th</sup> at the Lake Naomi Club House. Rick asked that all sign up early so that we can get a most accurate count. Publicity fliers were handed out to volunteers. October 11<sup>th</sup> meeting will be on "Pocono Prolusion of the Past" and the November 8<sup>th</sup> meeting will be on "Pennsylvania in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Continental Congress". All will be at Clymer Library beginning at 5:30 p.m. Rick also reminded folks that we need committee members for next year – specifically for communications and programming and the display committee. The slate of officers was presented to be voted on at the September Annual Meeting:

Kris Avery – President

MaryAnn Hadjuk – Vice-President

Peggy Rapp – Secretary

Ruth Berke – Treasurer

Jerry Hanna – Director

Rick also reminded all there were historical books and a DVD for sale – proceeds to benefit Clymer Library. Rick announced a thank you from Trudy Denninger for HATT support for the Clymer Library House Tour. It was a huge success netting over \$16,000 for this free standing library.

Rick then introduced our speaker, Frank Salvati who presented the program on Sir William Johnson. He began by taking us to a church in Johnstown where there was considerable flooding in the early 1900's. A coffin appeared and investigators found a crypt below the church never known to the congregation. The body in the coffin turned out to be Sir William Johnson. It was an incredible find but curious because the contributions of this man to early settlements in America were considerable. He held jobs as Frank outlined at some point in his life:

- Built the city of Johnstown
- Was the richest trader of his time
- Was constable for the county of Albany

- Local Justice of the Peace
- Local Judge
- Superintendent of Schools in the area
- Head of the Anglican Church
- Held influence with the Iroquois Tribe especially Mohawks

Sir William was born in Ireland of a wealthy English Mother and poor Irish farmer. Holding little standing in society, Sir William was given his opportunity by his uncle who sent Sir William to the colonies to oversee his considerable estates along the Hudson River upward toward Albany. From that point, “Billy” was determined to make the best of everything. He had the unique ability to treat everyone equally, and for that he was respected by the American Indians. His work with them won him many battles in which he was engaged – with the French.

The winning ways he had with American Indians proved useful in other ways as well. He used the methods of Indian “dreams” to acquire even more land and grow his crops and trades. He was also a womanizer and rumored to have over 300 offspring. He married twice and his second wife was an American Indian descent. He built two homes and lived in the latter until his death. His life was colorful, full of alcohol and shrewd trading practices, but in all of this, he was loyal to the crown. It is speculated that is the reason why his remains were forgotten even though he made considerable contributions to the growth of the colonies and created the alliances with American Indians.

After many questions and a sharing of many more ‘colorful’ stories about this gregarious and interesting man, the meeting was wrapped up at 6:45. A thank you certificated was given to Frank Salvati for a fine presentation

Respectfully submitted,

**Peggy Rapp**

Peggy Rapp, Secretary