

OCTOBER 2019

Hours

The Osceola Mills Community Historical Foundation's museum is located in the historic Brisbin House on Lingle Street in Osceola Mills, PA. Regular museum visitation hours are from **2:00 until 4:00 on Sundays**; from Memorial Day until the end of October. **The OMCHF meets on the first Wednesday of each month (excluding December through February) at 7:00 pm in the Brisbin House.**

Remember, all are welcome to visit our museum and attend our monthly meetings. The OMCHF wants and needs you! Come to our museum and experience the rich local history of the Osceola Mills area! The displayed artifacts, books, photos, etc. have all been donated by those, near and far, with a warm attachment to Osceola Mills. Community pride is on display at our museum!

President's Report

The OMCHF has been busy this year, even without keeping regular public hours. We are in the midst of replacing our heating system to insure both warmth and efficiency. The second floor ceiling has been painted and the walls will be done this autumn and winter. The board is examining ways to place a chair lift in the stairwell leading to the second floor, as well as upgrading the second floor lighting with LED lights.

Nevertheless, we managed to open the museum for visitors attending the car show in June and the large amount of locals and out of town guests who came to Osceola Spirit Day in September. The weather was fine this year!

Also, we sadly note the passing of Mildred "Moodie" Thompson, earlier this year. Moodie was a founding member of the OMCHF, a dedicated worker and valued friend. May she rest in peace!

Museum Tours

Tours for individuals or groups, outside of regular hours, can be arranged by calling 814-378-5748 or 814-339-7778.

Recent Events

The OMCHF museum was open on Sunday, June 30 during the annual car show in town. A good number of visitors toured the museum and some Osceola and Cowtail logo tee shirts and sweatshirts were sold.

July 4th Week: The OMCHF and the entire local Osceola community honored the 100th anniversary of the founding of both the American Legion and its local Post #313 in Osceola Mills. (see accompanying article). Our parade float featured three veterans and Legion members and was decorated with an original American Legion banner, found in the Legion office of the Brisbin House.



Mike Burns, Bob Mattern and Jim Rice in the 2019 July 4th Parade in Osceola Mills

The OMCHF supported the Osceola Mills Women's Civic Club's annual **Flower Show** in July. The theme was *Art In Bloom*. **Christmas caroling** is planned for December 22.

Another Big Event!

Osceola Mills Spirit Day: Unlike last year, the weather was warm and sunny and the crowds came out to attend Spirit Day on Saturday, September, 7. The day was the best sort of example of what a small town can do for itself. There was music in the park; a library used book sale and plenty of craft and food vendors to make the day a great success. The OMCHF did not sponsor its soup sale this year, but sold a record number of Osceola Mills and Cowtail logo to tee shirts, sweat shirts and ball caps! Thanks go out to Shirley Hollenbach, Marie Golemboski, and Joanie Myers.

Congratulations!

Warmest congratulations and thanks go out to Floyd and Janet Hauth, of Spike Island, for being honored with the Osceola Mills Community Service Award at Spirit Day, September. They have lived in quite a few locations throughout Floyd's military career as a United States Air Force colonel. Afterwards, they came back to Janet's home town and, since, haven't stopped working for the betterment of the greater Osceola Mills community. Civic organizations, Immaculate Conception RC Church, the VFW Post 5020 and certainly, the OMCHF have been made all the better by their tireless service! They are both proof that being retired does not mean going into retirement! Osceola Mayor Ida Reams presented the award to them.



A Century of Service to Military Veterans and the Osceola Mills Community

The founding of the Gorman-Peters American Legion Post # 313, in Osceola Mills, coincided with the founding of the national American Legion, a century ago, in 1919. Fifteen returning veterans of World War I banded together to create the post charter. The number was expanded to include thirty-three charter members. Its first commander was H.B. Witherite. In 1969, to honor the fiftieth anniversary of the post's founding, The Progress reported that all thirty three were then still living.

The post was named for Pfc. James Gorman, who was killed on the Western Front, in France, on August 28, 1918 and for Lt. Harry Peters; also killed in action on October 15, 1918. Both soldiers were part of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive; designed to break the German lines and win the long stalemated trench bound war in the fields of northern France. Major US combat action lasted for less than a year, but the casualty rates were horrendous.

In 1921, the remains of Lt. Peters and Pfc. Gorman were removed from France and shipped home for reinterment at Umbria and Immaculate Conception cemeteries. (see photo on page 5) The post's women's auxiliary was established in 1920.

The Legion post eventually purchased the old Brisbin House to be used for its meetings and, as it expanded, for its social club. Membership dwindled, in time, and the Legion granted use of their building to the newly formed Osceola Mills Community Historical Foundation in 1987. Post members still regularly meet in the Brisbin House.

Annual Dinner

Richard Hughes, local historian, of Clearfield, whose generational roots are in Spike Island and Osceola, gave an excellent presentation detailing the beginnings of the John Nuttal operation of the earliest area coal mining town in Powellton; near Sandy Ridge. (see photo on page 5)

Osceola Mills Native and WWII Veteran Don Stevens' Visit To Normandy For The 75th Anniversary of the D-Day Landings

My son Scott and I landed in France on June 1, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the D-Day landings. Getting back to Omaha Beach to be with our adopted French family was like coming home to us. The combined twenty hour flight and drive times had us tired, but sharing our host's five course French welcome dinner soon made us forget that. After dinner, we were told of a special surprise awaiting us; so we loaded into a WW II Jeep and drove the short distance to the US 2nd Division Street that borders the beach.

What a great surprise it was! The local region had voted to honor veterans with photo banners and attach them to light standards in town and around the region. The first honored Charles Olard, whose family found my brother, Paul's temporary wooden cross, in 1944; that started our family bonding. It was a well deserved tribute.

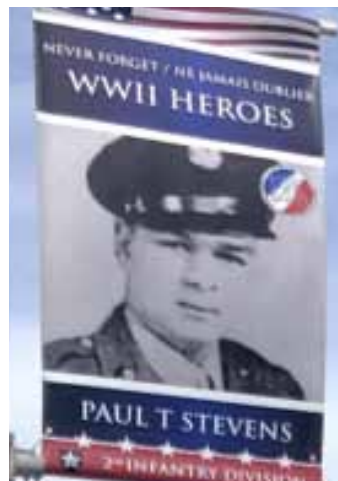
Then the real surprise came with Paul, Bill and me being shown on the next three standards. (see pictures) We had only been there a couple of hours and already the emotions were out of control. What a great honor to be remembered after so many years! The standards will be up every summer for the next five years, so I hope I may visit Normandy again and feel the pride that goes with them. Every day of our eleven day visit added something special; but space and time will limit what I can pass on in this writing. I have chosen a few photos to describe; as I think they will be of interest.



Our VIP seating on the platform was behind President Macron and Trump.



The "pied piper" was surrounded by fifty four of my ten year old French student's friends at Paul's cross.



Osceola Mills Native and WWII Veteran... (continued)



Do you remember Rosie the Riveter? She was the poster girl for WW II war industries. Seeing the young Rosie, and now the older one, was interesting.



Talking with Michel Sardou, a popular French singer, songwriter, actor and decorated veteran was a real treat for me. His history is indeed interesting!



Frank Wawrynowicz's Gate



My son, Scott, "adopted" a French son Ludovic and the old sailor. What a threesome!



This gate, in 1944, opened to a heavily defended orchard, where, Frank said, he knew he was going to be wounded or be in a body bag. He was seriously wounded and survived due to his commando training. I visited the site with him in 1994 and watched as he relived that day in a way that was uncharacteristic of Frank. It was scary and all of us were concerned for his safety. His story is still being told there and the road has been named Captain Carter Road, in honor of the field surgeon killed while tending Frank.

In remembrance and honor, our Stars and Stripes fly with the French Tricolor at many Normandy homes.



Osceola Mills is more than just a small town. It is the heart of America.

By Don Stevens



1921 Funeral Procession of Pfc. Gorman



Railroad in Powelltown

Clothing for Sale

The OMCHF continues to sell Osceola Mills and Cowtail logo tee shirts, sweat shirts and ball caps. **These items make great gifts and are a good way to show your Osceola Mills pride!** Please contact Shirley Hollenbach at 814-339-7942 for information regarding designs and shipping.

Tee Shirts	\$12.00	Sweatshirts . . .	\$20.00
Hoodies	\$30.00	Ball Caps	\$12.00

Books and DVDs for Sale

<i>Osceola Mills From The Beginning</i> by Jasper Fritz	\$10.00
<i>Hills of Penn</i> by Jim McNeish	\$6.00
<i>Chief Osceola, Patriot and Warrior</i>	\$2.50
<i>Days and Events That I Remember</i> by Bud Hollis	\$6.00
<i>Osceola Mills Photo Slide Show DVD</i> by David Caslow.	\$12.00
<i>Osceola Mills From the Beginning DVD Volume 2</i> by Jerry Fritz	\$12.00

Books and DVDs can be ordered from the OMCHF. See address below.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION AND/OR ANNUAL DUES RENEWAL

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone/Email _____

Type of Membership (please list and circle one): _____

Individual \$5.00 Family \$15.00 Organization/Business \$25.00 Lifetime \$100.00

**Please enclose a check payable to OMCHF and mail to: OMCHF
600 Lingle St
PO Box 212
Osceola Mills, PA 16666**

Memorials and donations accepted

Osceola Mills, PA 16666
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