

The Reaching of a Milepoint

Fifty years ago on the evening of March 4, 1953 a small organization was born in St Johnsville. For some time veterinarian Fred Cairns, Herbert Snueller, both of St Johnsville and Willis Barshied Jr had discussed the possibility of starting an organization of local people who were interested in old firearms. At the first meeting held at the VFW room the following people assembled: Fred Wagner, Herbert Smith, Fred Cairns, Max Hook, BR Kiesling, Harald Sreen, John Warn, James Triumpho, Richard Mueller, Donald Willis, Herbert Muller and Willis Barshied Jr.

Elected as officers for a one year period where:

Willis Barshied, President

John Warn, Vice President

Herbert Muller, Secretary

Fred Cairns, Treasurer

In the months ahead others joined the fledgling organization that was named the "Tryon County Muzzle Loaders". The organization was incorporated on May 21, 1954.

Soon a search began for a fitting headquarters for the new organization. The search continued until a lease was secured to Fort Klock from its owner Alex Don on September 10, 1954. The Fort Klock property was overgrown and rapidly falling into ruin. Thus the project of restoring Fort Klock as a Mohawk Valley landmark began. Through the years and onward to the present many people have come forward to contribute to the success of the organization and its activities. The property has been open to the public for the summer months each year since 1961.

To ensure the future of Fort Klock as a landmark available to the public the membership of the "Tryon County Muzzle Loaders" created a new organization in 1964. "Fort Klock Historic Restoration" was chartered by the regents on September 20, 1964. Fort Klock was designated as a National Historic Landmark in 1973.

Skip Barshied

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