

A Journey Through Time: Tracing the Legacy of Confluence

Assembled by Jeffrey "Pope" Pankey

The Youghiogheny River has flowed through this valley since before the formation of the Appalachian mountains. It is said to be one of the oldest rivers in the world.

The Appalachian Mountains, estimated to be approximately 480 million years old, are among the oldest mountain ranges on Earth. The Appalachian Mountains were once part of the super-continent Pangaea, and through the process of continental drift, sections of the range are now found in regions like Norway and the Scottish Highlands. Over time, the mountains have undergone extensive erosion, resulting in the formation of the valleys and lowlands that exist today. The sculpting of the Appalachian landscape can be attributed to various factors, including the effects of multiple ice ages that occurred over the past several millennia.

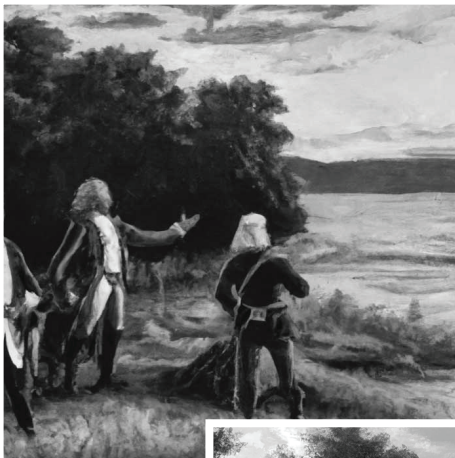
The Monongahela lived here until 1617, where their people were decimated by European diseases. This Allowed the Iroquois to expand their territory south into western Pennsylvania. The Delaware and Shawnee, displaced by European settlers, also moved into the region

1754: Colonel George Washington and his party. They ventured to the junction of the Youghiogheny and Casselman rivers to survey the area. Legend has it that an Indian guide enlightened Colonel Washington about the unique shape formed by the confluence of three water bodies - the present day Youghiogheny, Casselman, and Laurel Hill Creek. The area resembled a turkey's foot, leading to the name "Turkeyfoot." It was here that Colonel Washington recognized the potential of the land, envisioning a fort that could be established in this strategic location.

1763: Arrival of Andrew Ream - Andrew Ream is believed to have arrived in the Turkeyfoot region, where Confluence is located. He owned the land on which Ursina now stands.

1765: First Cabin Built on "The Point" - Built by Henry Abrahams

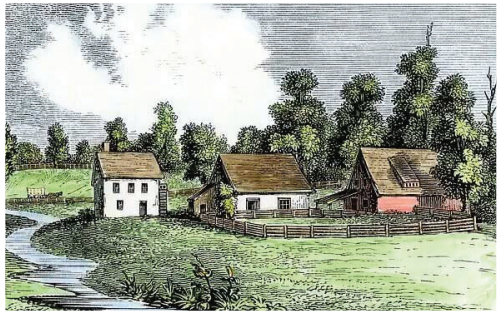
1775 to 1783: The American Revolutionary War - Also known as the American War of Independence. began as a conflict between the thirteen American colonies and the British Empire over issues of taxation without representation and governance. Tensions had been building for years, but things escalated in 1775 with the Battles of Lexington and Concord, marking the start of open warfare. The colonists formed the Continental Congress to coordinate their resistance, and they later declared independence in 1776, proclaiming the United States of America an independent nation.





1794: Whiskey Rebellion - George Washington played a pivotal role in the Whiskey Rebellion that took place in western Pennsylvania during the 1790s. The rebellion emerged as a response to the excise tax imposed on distilled spirits by the newly formed federal government. As the rebellion escalated, Washington, who was then serving as President of the U.S., recognized the significance of preserving the authority of the federal government and upholding the rule of law. In a show of strength and determination, Washington led a force of nearly 13,000 militiamen towards western Pennsylvania to suppress the rebellion and restore order. Before any significant bloodshed occurred, rebellion dissipated. Washington's decisive actions in handling the Whiskey Rebellion demonstrated the young nation's commitment to maintaining a strong central government and served as a crucial test for federal authority.

Issac Tissue
Son of William Tissue



1798: Arrival of William Tissue - Captain William Tissue bought 250 acres of land from James Spencer in 1798. It was known as good "Good Fane" in the patent. Sometime before his death he sold one part of his land to his son Isaac and the other part to another son William Jr. This land lies between the Casselman River and Laurel Hill Creek.

1800 - 1850's: Early Settlement and Development - The area around Confluence began to see increased settlement and development - especially farmers - laying the foundation for future growth.

1856: Jacob Sterner buys "The Point" - He buys 167 ½ acres of what we call the "West Side") from George Heimbach. One of Streners's daughters Ida married George Reynolds and lived her entire lifetime on "The Point."

1861 to 1865: The American Civil War - Slavery and states' rights dominated the Civil War, one of the most important events in US history. Abraham Lincoln's election in 1860 sparked the conflict. Seven Southern states formed the Confederate States of America after Lincoln's election. After the Civil War began at Fort Sumter in April 1861, four more joined them. Naval blockades and warfare were crucial strategies in significant battles like Antietam, Gettysburg, and Atlanta. In 1862, the Emancipation Proclamation freed enslaved individuals in Confederate territory, recasting the war as a fight for slavery's eradication. The war killed over 600,000. In April 1865, General Robert E. Lee surrendered to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at Appomattox Court House in Virginia, ending the Confederacy. After the war, the tough Reconstruction Era sought to reconcile Southern states and grant African Americans rights. The Civil War abolished slavery and reshaped American politics and society.



1871: Town Layout Begins - April 7 marks the official establishment of the town and the planning of its layout.

1871: Railroad Arrives - On June 26, the B&O Railroad and Western Maryland Railroad had lines that passed through Confluence, providing a transportation link for the town and the surrounding area. The railroad line in Confluence facilitated the movement of various commodities, including coal, lumber, and agricultural products. The transportation of goods and people by rail was crucial for the local economy, allowing businesses in Confluence to connect with broader markets.

1872: Establishment of Pottery and Stoneware Manufacturing - A pottery and stoneware manufacturing facility was erected by A. G. Black. This added diversity to the local industrial landscape.

1873: Incorporation of the Borough of Confluence - The borough of Confluence was officially incorporated, and its first Council meeting took place. This marked the beginning of organized governance and decision-making for the community.

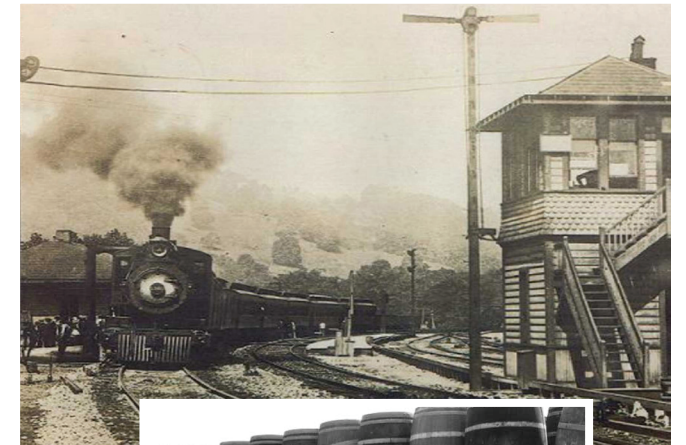
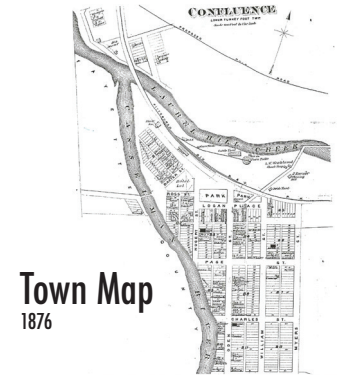
1875: Stave and Heading Factory - Built by a Pittsburgh company, this added to the manufacturing capabilities of the town. Stave mills produce the narrow strips of wood that compose the sides of barrels. Barrels were vital for the transportation of goods in the days before easily fabricated boxes and waterproof plastic containers.

1885: Installation of The Flume - A flume is a watertight trough that is used to transport water or timber. In the context of the timber industry, flumes were used to transport logs from the mountains to sawmills.

1894: Establishment of the Tannery - T. G. Beggs and W. S. Cobb established a tannery in Confluence, which became the most significant industry in the town. It employed many workers and contributed greatly to the local economy.

1903: Confluence Hospital Opens - Built by Dr. Hemminger. It was sold to Dr. Frantz in 1911.

1903: Confluence Electric Light Plant Started - An electric light plant, owned by the municipality, was completed July 29, 1903.





Kurtz Department Store Opened on the Town Square

1905: Invention of Combination Plier and Crown Stretcher - Dr. W. Wolford, a local inventor, patented a combination plier and crown stretcher for the dental profession.

1905: Bowers' Hosiery - Wm. Bowers started a knitting industry at his restaurant, producing high-quality hose.

1905: C.E. Yeagley Ice Cream & Bottling Works Opens - There was an Ice Cream Factory in Confluence! It would go on to become one of the biggest employers in town.

1906: Formation of the Confluence Volunteer Fire Company

1914-1918: World War I - Confluence, like the rest of the world, was impacted by World War I. Many local residents served in the war effort, and the community experienced the social and economic effects of the global conflict.

1915: Liberty Theater Opens - The theater has played an important role in the amusement and growth of Confluence and the surrounding areas. In the town's earliest history an Opera House was built before the 1900's. Opera companies came in and gave live shows. School plays were held there and it was used by the Methodist Church during the building operations of the new church. It had a seating capacity for several hundred.

1924: Closure of Yeagley Bottling Works - The Yeagley Steam Bottling Works and ice cream manufacturer ceased operations. This event marked the end of an era and necessitated economic adjustments for the town.

1936: Patrick's Day Flood - This flood was one of the most devastating natural disasters in the region's history. Heavy rains combined with snowmelt caused the river to overflow, leading to widespread flooding in many areas of Western Pennsylvania, including Pittsburgh. The flood resulted in significant property damage and loss of life.

1941: Price Hospital Opens - Dr. Edwin Price buys the Hospital from Dr. Frantz and the "Price Hospital" years begin. Doctor price made a lasting legacy.

1940-44: Construction of Youghiogheny Dam - Work on the dam had just begun when the bombing of Pearl Harbor thrusts Pittsburgh into the weaponry business. Construction had reached a critical stage in June 1942. If the dam was not finished, a flood could damage war industries in Pittsburgh. On the other hand, continued work on the dam would rob war-support projects of manpower and machinery. It was a gamble, but the engineers agreed the danger of flooding was so great that the dam should be completed immediately. This was the only federally funded project to continue through WWII due to its significant impact on Pittsburgh and the steel industry. The Youghiogheny Dam and Reservoir were completed, creating a large recreational area for boating, fishing, and other outdoor activities. This development brought new opportunities for tourism and outdoor recreation to the area.

1939 - 1945: World War II - After so much loss, the end of World War II brought a sense of relief and optimism to the entire nation. The community welcomed back returning soldiers and began rebuilding from the war years.

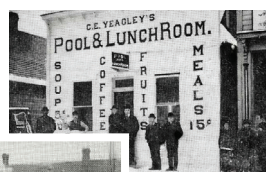
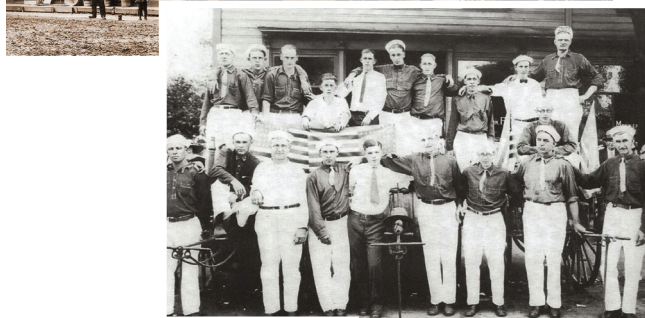
1950: Formation of Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District - The Turkeyfoot Valley Area School District was formed, bringing together multiple local school districts under one administration.

1954: Flood in Confluence - This flood finally warranted the construction of the Casselman River Levee in 1962.

1973: Confluence Centennial Celebration - The Centennial Celebration in 1973 marked the 100th anniversary of the founding of Confluence, Pennsylvania.

1977: Construction of Casselman River Bridge - The construction of the Casselman River Bridge, a historic covered bridge, was completed. The bridge stands as an iconic landmark and attracts visitors to the area.

1978: The Great Allegheny Passage - On June 9th, the formation and naming happened here in Confluence. The construction began on converting Western Maryland Railroad's old tracks into "River Trail" between Confluence and Ohio Pyle.



1987: 27 Car Freight Train Derailment - This tragedy killed one individual and destroyed the town's railroad tower.

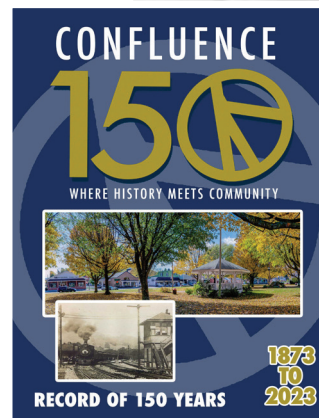
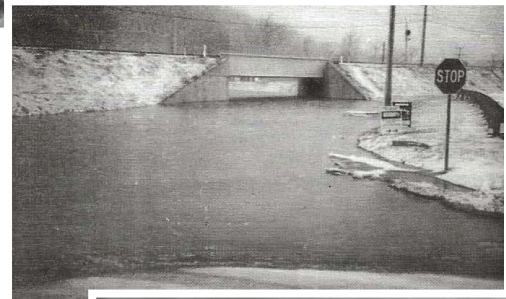
1996: Flood in Confluence - On January 20 the heavy rain and snow melt, caused a formation of an ice jam on the Susquehanna River, which blocked the flow of water and caused the rivers to rise rapidly, The floodwaters reached a peak of 32.5 feet at the Confluence gauge, which is the highest level on record. The town of Confluence was declared a disaster area by the federal government, and the recovery effort took several years to complete.

2013: Completion of the Great Allegheny Passage - The long awaited connection to the C&O Towpath finalized a dream to create a bike trail connecting Pittsburgh and Washington D.C.

2018: Tornado Touches Confluence - On July 4 an afternoon thunderstorm dropped a brief tornado that ripped through town. Thankfully no lives were lost.

2021: The Great Allegheny Passage named a "Top Ten" American Bike Trail

2023: Sesquicentennial Celebration - Confluence celebrated its 150th anniversary reflecting on its history, accomplishments, and community spirit.



1962 Drug Store Fire



Riverside Ford



Mountain Chevrolet

Doctor Price

