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## Logan's Legacy: Historic path to be remembered



**Logan Marker**  
(Photo above)

By SCOTT KULAH - skulah@lockhaven.com

This monument to James Logan, originally dedicated in 1917 by Col. H.W. Shoemaker, sits near Zellers Spring on private farmland in Loganton. James was shot in the hip by Peter Pentz in 1771. At right, artist Robert Griffing's depiction of Chief John Logan of the Cayuga tribe.

McELHATTAN — Beneath a towering elm tree in Circleville, Ohio more than two centuries ago, Cayuga Chief John Logan revealed his frustrations to Col. John Gibson, after losing his family in a brutal massacre. Many today can still remember reciting those very words, known as Logan's Lament, each morning as the school day began. And, like the words he spoke that day, Logan himself has found his way into the history of Clinton County. In his travels as a peace-maker between the whites and Iroquois, Logan often traversed the dense forests of this area along a 50-mile stretch of trail, beginning near Chatham Run and cutting through the gap in Bald Eagle Mountain by way of Shoemaker Park and the Lock Haven Reservoir, crossing Chestnut Flat to Rosecrans. The trek then continued south through the mountain gap in Sugar Valley Mountain to Loganton, turned west to Booneville and then south again through Logan's Gap. Finally, it angled southwest over Nittany Mountain, Brush Mountain and Shriner Mountain, according to the book "Indian Paths of Pennsylvania" by Paul Wallace.

Today, the trail is called Logan's Path and the Wayne Township supervisors are going out of their way to preserve it as an integral part of local history. At the southern end, in Reedsville, where Logan's cabin once stood, a historical marker already pays tribute to the great chief, and the supervisors — with the help of local historian Harlan Berger — are in the midst of having another marker placed along McElhattan Drive, where Logan's Path crossed through Wayne Township. In mid-December they agreed to support Berger's attempt to commemorate Logan's Path with a historical marker by pledging up to \$2,000 and submitting an application to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. The township, however, will be reimbursed for half of the project's cost once it is completed.

The new marker, as proposed, will be unique in that it could be engraved with the historic dialogue Logan spoke that day. Until then, the application sits in the hands of the PHMC. "I think it's one of the prime

pieces of oratory, prose poetry, it's so cadenced that its hard for any writer or lover of language to look at it and not say this ranks right up there with the Gettysburg Address," said Berger. "It's unforgettable, it begs to be memorized, it begs to be spoken. It says, just as Thomas Jefferson said, that this is an indication of a culture and intelligence that is quite deep." Jefferson was one of many to regard Logan's Lament as a sign of a complex culture, rather than a society of degenerate savages that many whites at the time believed Native Americans to be. The message addressed to the Royal Governor of Virginia Lord Dunmore, after Logan had avenged his family at the expense of a number of whites, took little time to make an echo around the world. Soon after it was delivered to Dunmore, it was published in the Virginia Gazette and eventually in newspapers across the continent before making its way overseas to publications in Great Britain.

It's hard to imagine that one man who has touched so many lives through history regularly traveled these very forests of Clinton County, and in a way that most will never understand, according to Berger. "They lived here. I live here now, you do. We live in land they didn't own because they didn't think about it like that. They were here first," he said. "Basically, I've been intrigued with the fact that you and I and probably everybody else, through John Wayne movies, know all about the wretched redskins... We've forgotten totally that this was the frontier. We were the frontier. "That's what is intriguing about it," he added. "That's the other part of all of this. People think this must be books and history. No, we are right here, you can see some of it in your everyday life."

Logan, the son of Shickellemy, was born sometime around 1725 in Wasko, an Indian village in what is now Auburn, N.Y. As legend has it, Logan was killed in the early 1790s by his own nephew. According to a document by Wallace called "Logan, The Mingo," Logan's nephew said he was called on to kill the great chief, "Because he was too great a man to live... He talked so strong that nothing could be carried contrary to his opinions." The deed had supposedly been carried out at the request of the elders of Logan's tribe. According to Wallace, it was customary to appoint a close relative to carry out such duties to avoid the risk of starting a blood feud between families.

John Logan wasn't the only member of his family to have found a place in local history, however. Throughout history the great chief was often confused with his brother James Logan. James, whom Loganton is named for, served as a peacemaker much like his brother but in different areas of the state, according to President of the Sugar Valley Historical Society Steve Weaver. "He was also a peace envoy," Weaver explained. "He more or less worked the central to eastern part of Pennsylvania while John Logan more or less went westward." While John was described as a great specimen of humanity, his brother James was thought to have a "lame" hip after being shot by a man named Peter Pentz, during what is believed to have been a scuffle over a "white girl." Today a monument still sits on a piece of private farmland along Zellers Spring in Sugar Valley where Pentz is reported to have shot Logan in 1771. The monument was originally dedicated in 1917 by Col. H.W. Shoemaker and was restored in 1999 by the Sugar Valley Historical Society and the owners of the land it sits upon.

### **The Express**

9-11 W. Main Street  
Lock Haven, PA 17745  
570-748-6791

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