

ABRAXAS & YOUR COMMUNITY

Abraxas Youth Center Partners with Fort Loudon Historical Society for the Fort Loudon Restoration Project

Helping to restore Fort Loudon has instilled in our residents a curiosity about history and an appreciation for preserving it.

BY:
Trevor Peachey
Abraxas Youth Center
South Mountain, PA



Restorative justice is a common theme in the juvenile justice system, with emphasis on accountability, making personal amends, and giving back to one's community. For the last several months, the Abraxas Youth Center (AYC) Secure Treatment Program has provided clients with a direct way to give back to the local community. Since November 2018, clients from AYC have been participating in the Fort Loudon Restoration Project, under the guidance of the Fort Loudon Historical Society, to restore the Patton House and historical fort.



A Brief History:

Fort Loudoun was one of the frontier stockade posts built in Pennsylvania in 1756, to fortify its western communities against hostile Native American tribes. During the French and Indian War, many forts were raided for food and supplies. Fort Loudoun replaced a fortification at nearby McDowell's Mill and provided the settlers with protection during the war. After the French and Indian War ended, the fort experienced a plethora of small rebellions and conflicts. Some of the events that took place were Pontiac's Rebellion in 1763 and in 1765; the fort was fired upon by James Smith and his Black Boys. These historic events made Fort Loudoun a significant piece of Pennsylvania's history. In 2018, the Fort Loudoun Historical Society began the restoration of the fort and so the partnership began.



To date, our clients have assisted in completing the remodeling of the Patton House into a historical museum and aided the Historical Society with the demolition, dry walling, carpentry, and gardening for the museum. Now as the weather gets warmer, the opportunities are endless. Currently, the focus of the project will be inside the actual fort. Our clients along with the Fort Loudoun Historical Society will remodel the fort to resemble its original structure in the early 1760s.



This opportunity has provided our clients with hands on skills that will benefit them for the rest of their lives. It has also instilled in our residents a curiosity about history and an appreciation for preserving it. Our clients have benefited by utilizing problem solving, active communication and teamwork skills. The opportunity to participate in the project has positively affected their motivation and drive to better themselves and achieve their treatment goals. As a vocational project, the reward is often quite visible by simply observing the pride each resident has in their contribution.