MEADOWCROFT
ROCKSHelter AND
HISTORIC VILLAGE

Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village Kicks Off
50th Season on May 5

The National Historic Landmark will celebrate its milestone 50th season with a full slate of exciting 2018 public programs-

PITTSBURGH, April 11, 2018 – Truly a hidden gem in Western Pennsylvania, Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village will open for its 50th season on May 5.

Recognized as the oldest site of human habitation in North America, the Washington County site has grown from a small attraction to an international destination for archaeologists, a family-friendly getaway for regional tourists, and a National Historic Landmark operated by the Smithsonian-affiliated Heinz History Center.

Meadowcroft will commemorate its 50th season with an exciting lineup of programs and everyday offerings that take visitors through 16,000 years of history – from the prehistoric wonder of the Rockshelter, to a 16th century Monongahela Indian Village, and through the lives of Upper Ohio Valley residents during the 18th and 19th centuries.

In addition to experiencing living history, visitors can enjoy a stroll over the beautifully restored Pine Bank Covered Bridge. Originally constructed in 1871 and rehabilitated last year, it is the oldest existing bridge in Washington County.

50 Seasons of Meadowcroft

When farmer Albert Miller opened Meadowcroft for its first season in 1969, it offered tours of its 19th century village, which included log houses, a covered bridge, a blacksmith’s shop, and a one-room schoolhouse.

In 1973, Dr. James Adovasio and his team of University of Pittsburgh students excavated artifacts from underneath a rock ledge overhang on the site – all discovered because Miller had stumbled upon a groundhog hole and unearthed a prehistoric American Indian artifact in 1955. Radiocarbon dating by the Smithsonian concluded that the Meadowcroft Rockshelter once served as a campsite for prehistoric hunters and gatherers 16,000 years ago.

In the decades that followed, the site expanded to include a 16th century Monongahela Indian village and an 18th century frontier trading post.

In 2005, the U.S. Secretary of the Interior designated Meadowcroft Rockshelter a National Historic Landmark.

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Now celebrating 50 seasons, Meadowcroft’s historic structures and interpretive stations work together to tell 16,000 years of history in Western Pennsylvania, from the hunting and gathering of the region’s earliest inhabitants to the daily lives of 19th century rural Americans.

**Meadowcroft to Host Exciting Lineup of Public Programs in 2018**

Highlights of Meadowcroft’s 2018 public programming include the following:

- **Life with a Shawnee Family, May 19**: A visiting Shawnee family will demonstrate the daily life skills crucial to their 18th century ancestors who once inhabited Western Pennsylvania’s hills and forests.

- **21st Annual Atlatl Competition, June 16**: Beginners are invited to try their hand at the atlatl, a spear-thrower used by prehistoric hunters, and then watch some of the world’s top atlatl competitors compete for high score. This annual event is held in partnership with the World Atlatl Association.

- **Vintage Base Ball Day, Aug. 18**: Meadowcroft will host a “base ball” game between the Somerset Frosty Sons of Thunder and the Addison Mountain Stars, who will wear vintage-style uniforms and follow rules used during the 1860s.

- **Frontier Heritage Weekend, Sept. 22-23**: The 18th century frontier was a dangerous and difficult place to live. Visitors can discover the skills necessary to survive and learn how American Indians and European settlers borrowed ideas from each other to build a better life in the Western Pennsylvania wilderness.

- **Insider Tours of Meadowcroft Rockshelter**: On select dates, visitors can enjoy exclusive Insider Tours with James M. Adovasio, Ph.D., who achieved international acclaim with his archeological excavation of the Rockshelter in 1973. Dr. Adovasio will present a lecture and lead a special tour of the site on June 23, Sept. 8, and Nov. 3 at 10 a.m.; and on Sunday, Oct. 14 at 1 p.m. For reservations, please contact Frances Skariot at 724-587-3412 or frskariot@heinzhistorycenter.org.

Throughout May, Meadowcroft is open Saturdays, noon to 5 p.m. and Sundays, 1-5 p.m. From Memorial Day through Labor Day, Meadowcroft is open on Wednesdays through Saturdays from noon to 5 p.m., and on Sundays from 1-5 p.m.

Admission is $15 for adults, $14 for senior citizens, and $7 for students and children ages 6-17. Children age 5 and under and History Center members get in free.

Special thanks to **EQT Foundation** for its generous support of Meadowcroft’s educational programming throughout its 50th season.

For more information, visit [www.heinzhistorycenter.org/meadowcroft](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/meadowcroft) or call 724-587-3412.
**Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village** operates in association with the Senator John Heinz History Center, an affiliate of the Smithsonian and Pennsylvania’s largest history museum. Meadowcroft, a National Historic Landmark, is the oldest site of human habitation in North America and features a massive rock overhang used by the region’s earliest inhabitants for shelter more than 16,000 years ago. The 16th century Monongahela Indian Village includes wigwams, recreated prehistoric artifacts, and hands-on activities related to agriculture. Two 18th century structures help to spotlight the similarities and differences between the everyday lives of European settlers and American Indians in the Upper Ohio Valley. Meadowcroft’s 19th century village features a covered bridge, one-room schoolhouse, blacksmith shop, and church that create a charming country village setting. Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village is located in Avella, Pa., Washington County, within an hour’s drive of Pittsburgh. For more, visit [www.heinzhistorycenter.org/meadowcroft](http://www.heinzhistorycenter.org/meadowcroft).

Now in its 50th season, Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village is a National Historic Landmark and the oldest site of human habitation in North America.

Visitors to Meadowcroft’s 19th century historic village can step back in time to watch a blacksmith forge red-hot iron or enjoy a lesson in a one-room schoolhouse.

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