

# A History of Talleyrand Park Bellefonte, PA



A Local History Information Flyer

by

The Talleyrand Park Committee of the  
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# History of Talleyrand Park 1964 - 2016

## A Story of Community Involvement

### 1964

Bellefonte Borough Council, with the Pa, General Assembly and the U.S. Dept. Of Housing and Urban Development, begins to develop park plans.

### 1971

The site bound by High St. and Spring Creek is cleared of decrepit commercial buildings. Grass and trees are planted.

### 1974

Facing problems in park development. Council considers selling the land. Twenty-five community members form the all-volunteer Talleyrand Park Committee (TPC) to help with park design, landscaping, maintenance and fund raising for the project.

### 1975

Council approves the general park design, and later the Gazebo, Pergola, and Promenade designs, developed by artist/engineer and founding committee member Rob Fisher with TPC input.

### 1976

Aided by businesses, non-profit and public agencies and Bellefonte Borough and with skilled labor donated by schools and organizations, the Gazebo is completed in time for the U.S. Bicentennial celebrations.

### 1978

At the request of TPC, the Gulf Oil Co. donates land along Water Street to the Borough and Park, after closing a gas station on the site. It becomes the George Gray Barnard Sculpture Garden

### **1983**

A bronze casting of the head of Lincoln, sculpted in 1917 by Bellefonte native George Gray Barnard, is installed using funds from the TPC and Borough.

### **1985**

A PA Conservation Corps (PCC) grant, with 1/4 matching funds from Bellefonte Borough for materials, funds the installation of a footbridge from the Sculpture Garden to the peninsula, employing and training disadvantaged youth.

### **1986**

A suspension bridge links the main part of the Park to the peninsula, using another PCC grant with 1/4 matching funds from the Borough.

### **1987**

Rest rooms are completed by the Borough near the Train Station with another PCC grant and 1/4 matching funds from the Borough.

### **1988**

The Pergola (arbor) and fencing around the head gates to the raceway are built under another PCC grant.

### **1989**

Using a grant secured by the TPC from the Pa. Dept. Of Environmental Resources, with additional funds from the Bellefonte Elks Garver Charity Fund, the Borough, and the TPC, the raceway is bricked over, creating the Promenade in front of the Train Station.

### **1993**

The Playground is completed, funded by Supelco, Inc. and built by Centre County Vo-Tech students, Supelco employees, and Borough workers.

## **1995**

The Governors Memorial bordering the High Street entrance to the Park is placed on a brick plaza built by Vo-Tech students and funded by the Jaycees. The existing flagpoles replaced, funded by the Garver Charity Fund of the Bellefonte Elks, and relocated near the Train Station.

## **2003**

Iron benches are added around the Park through a Community Development Block Grant and a grant from the Centre County Community Foundation (CCCF). The Bellefonte Garden Club and the Bellefonte Chamber of Commerce begin the ongoing Project Daffodils, and by 2016, thousands of daffodils have been planted in the Park and throughout Bellefonte.

## **2005**

Iron tables similar to the Benches are added to the Park, through donations to the TPC by a private individual and a grant from the CCCF...

## **2006**

The stairs and decking of the suspension bridge are painted, an ongoing periodic event over the years.....

## **2007**

The Borough reroofs the Gazebo. New memorial trees are planted, including the Kwanza cherries by the Promenade. Ten more metal tables are added.

## **2008**

Four new metal tables are installed.

## **2009**

A grant from the CCCF provides for native plants along the banks of the peninsula and near the Playground to help halt erosion. A new steel fence with an antique appearance replaces the vandalized historic wrought iron fence surrounding the Lincoln sculpture.

## **2010**

The Borough extends the Park to the south near the historic Match Factory, adding a bridge from the Sculpture Garden across the overflow from the Big Spring and into the new area. The TPC works with the Borough in selecting suitable new equipment for the Playground.

## **2011**

The TPC adds plants around the Lincoln bust and the historic stone horse trough in the Sculpture Garden and provides a new Victorian-style sign for the Garden entrance. An innovative Edible Landscape Garden is added to the Park extension, created by TPC members.

## **2012**

The existing stone wall behind the Gazebo along Spring Creek is extended, designed by the TPC and built in cooperation with the Centre County Conservation District, with funds from a Growing Greener grant, Bellefonte Borough and the TPC. Borough staff and inmates from the Centre County Correctional Facility help with the new wall, stabilizing the stream bank and creating safer access near the creek for Park users. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service creates a moundsill along the right bank to stem erosion.



**2013**

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The TPC obtains a \$12,000 grant from an anonymous foundation to create 140 more feet of mudsill farther upstream. In cooperation with the Conservation District and USFWS, and other entities, mentioned above, nearly 300 feet of stream bank are now conserved.

**2014**

The Talleyrand Park Committee is honored with the 2014 Award for Excellence in Historic Preservation from the Centre County Historical Society. This countywide award recognizes the effort of the TPC and Bellefonte Borough for developing and preserving environmental and architectural features of the Park including planning, design and fund-raising and ensuring the protection of the land and Spring Creek.

**2015**

A long-lost fountain from the Centre County Courthouse yard (1893-1971) is located and partially restored through the efforts of TPC members. Although non-functional, it enhances the Park as an artistic artifact from Bellefonte's history, enchanting children of all ages.

**2016**

A new Victorian style fountain is installed in the extension of the Park, honoring Gino P. Fornicola, mayor of Bellefonte (1982-1986) and Centre County Treasurer (1984-2000), whose civic contributions spanned 30 years.

A historic Railroad Freight House is moved from a location north of High Street to the Park. Saved from demolition by BHCA and a generous member, it will serve as a canoe and kayak museum.

## 2016 Continued

A Pollinator Friendly Garden was started in the park extension inspired by a science project of a Bellefonte Middle School student and executed by members of TPC, the Bellefonte Historical and Cultural Association and the Bellefonte Garden Club with advice of the Snetzinger Butterfly Garden.

True Fisher, founder and longtime Chair of the TPC, was given the 2016 Watershed Stewardship Award by the Centre County Conservation District for spearheading the conservation projects in Spring Creek at Talleyrand Park.