



## **Patriots of Captain Bell's Tavern announce the creation of a Board of Directors "Save the Bell Tavern!"**

By Eric Kelso  
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**Silver Spring Township, Cumberland County, PA –**

Concerned citizens and history professionals have come together to form "Patriots of Captain Bell's Tavern," a committee intent on saving the historic tavern.

### **About Captain Bell's Tavern**

What we do know about the property is that it was once a Tavern owned by James Bell and after his death his son, Thomas, took over the tavern and changed the name to the "Sign of the Rattle Snake." The present stone structure was built circa 1780. James Bell heeded the call for America's independence, and in August 1780 served in The 3rd Battalion 1st Company of Cumberland County's Militia as Captain. In this way, Captain James Bell aided in the founding of this country.

On July 3, 1788, the Tavern served as host for the Stony Ridge Convention. This was a gathering of Anti-federalists leaders who opposed the Federal Constitution without a bill of rights. According to the meeting minutes, it was resolved that the Federal Constitution as it stood was "Destructive of that Liberty for which so much blood and Treasure has been spent" and a convention in Harrisburg needs to take place to write and submit a bill of rights to Congress. The Harrisburg Convention met on September 3, 1788.

At the time of the 1992 Historical Resource Survey by Nancy Van Dolsen for submission to the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the Bell Tavern was deemed "architecturally and historically significant." On January 6, 2016, Triple Crown Corporation began demolition of the Bell Tavern.

Silver Spring Township solicitor submitted an immediate stop order once township staff realized the historical significance of the building. After researching the permit process and seeing it was obtained legally, the township removed the stop order. However, Mr. Disanto has temporarily volunteered to halt the demolition while negotiating with the township through its solicitor.

## **About the Patriots of Captain Bell's Tavern**

On February 25th, 2016 a group of concerned citizens and history professionals met, and formed the "Patriots of Captain Bell's Tavern Association." The group elected the following board members: Christine Musser of Silver Spring Township, President and Eric Kelso of Newberry Township. Musser is the author of Silver Spring Township: a pictorial history (Arcadia Publishing Images of America series), and Kelso is a recent graduate of Northern Kentucky University's Public History Master's program.

The Patriots of Captain Bell's Tavern Association is active in saving and eventually restoring the tavern to function in a way that enriches the Silver Spring Township community through preservation, education, and community engagement. "While negotiations concerning the future of the property are ongoing we are taking a proactive approach by raising money now to shore up, and protect what's left of the Bell Tavern. The tavern is locally and nationally historically significant. Every effort must be made to save this piece of our nation's history for future generations." –Eric Kelso. In the long term the association hopes to acquire, restore, and operate the Bell Tavern as a Silver Spring Township museum and a hostel for Appalachian Trail hikers.

### **How can you help?**

We are asking for help from anyone and everyone who can contribute in any way. Right now what the association needs most are funds to help stabilize the building. Donations can be made online at [Go Fund Me Save the Bell Tavern](#). We are also currently in talks with Preservation PA to develop a pledge drive.

Please sign the petition: [Save the Bell Tavern](#)

### **Media Contact:**

To learn more about this committee, please contact

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