

Fort Loramie residents reminded of pioneer roots

By Susan Fox

It was standing room only, Sunday, at the Wilderness Trail Museum during Fort Loramie Heritage Days. Fr. David Hoying was the speaker, and his talk served to remind many of the families in Fort Loramie of their pioneer roots.

Fort Loramie can look back to the days when it was Pierre Loramie's Indian trading post (1769-1782) and then when it was a military fort built by General Anthony Wayne built in 1794. The Greenville Treaty Line of 1795 runs through the town, dividing Indian territory north of the line from pioneer settlements to the south. Hoying explained that six square miles of land north of the line was kept by the government to provide portage across the Loramie Summit from Loramie Creek to the St. Marys River, connecting the waterways that

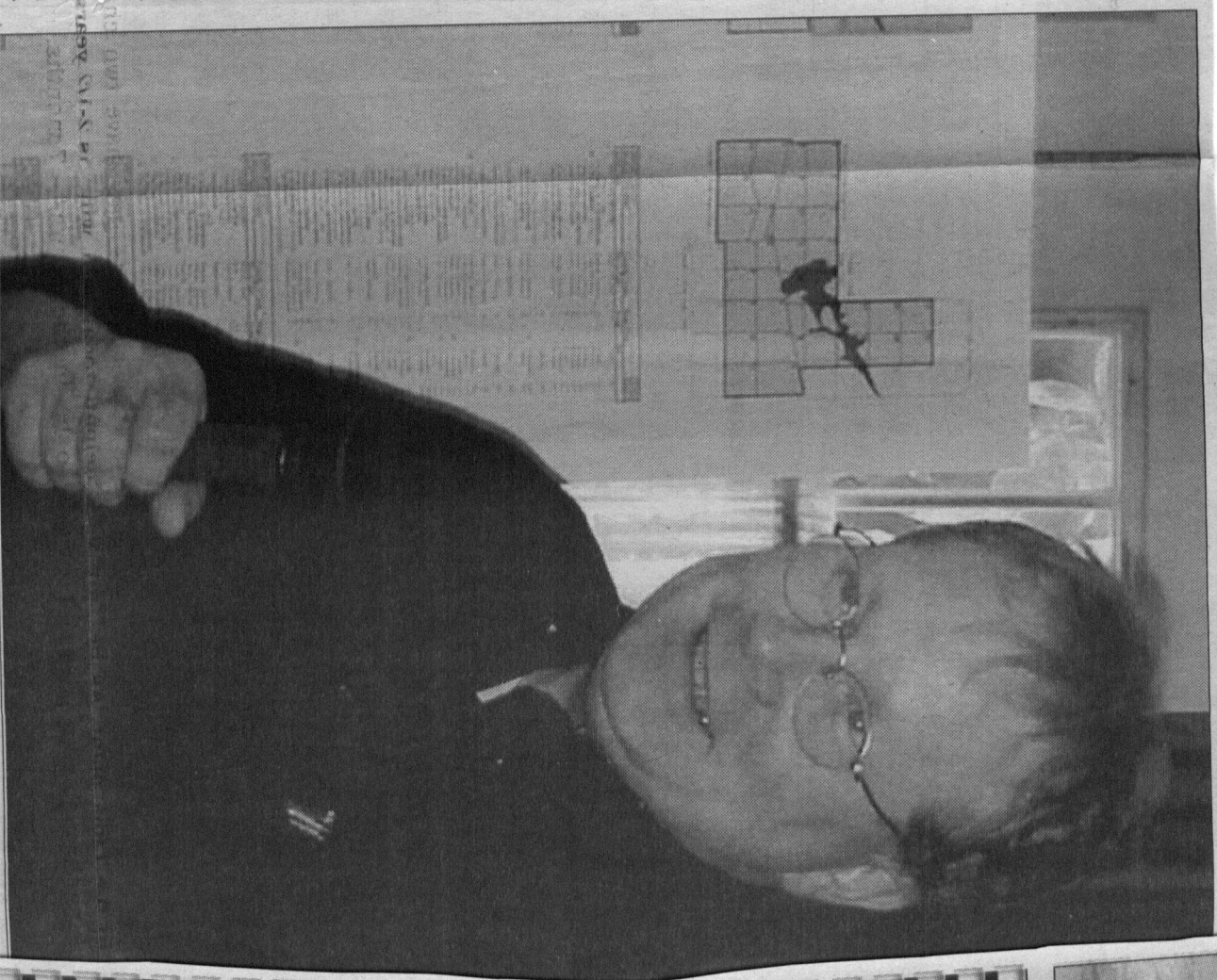
wound their way from Lake Erie to the Ohio River. That provided land for the fort built by General Anthony Wayne.

Pierre Loramie, or more correctly, Louis Pierre Lorimier, was born in Canada in 1748 and traded with the Indians and settlers alike at what is now the town of Fort Loramie. During the Revolutionary War the British enlisted the French Lorimier to arm the Indians at his trading post, and his store became an active outpost for the British. Lorimier didn't believe the colonists could defeat the British. General George Rogers Clark eventually destroyed Lorimier's trading post and he escaped, moving to Missouri. Although Lorimier never returned to the area, and the town was known as Berlin for a while, his name was anglicized to Loramie and his memory lives in place names throughout the area,

including the town of Fort Loramie.

In 1794 Fort Loramie was built, and it served as a supply station during the War of 1812. In 1814, the government sold the fort to James Furrow, who established a tavern and a post office in the buildings. Captain James Flynn was given a land grant near the fort in return for military service, and apparently squatted at the fort during that time. He eventually built a cabin. Although Furrow gave up his businesses at the fort, the town had begun to grow and settlers were moving into the area. The Treaty of St. Marys in 1818 gave the land north of the Greenville Treaty line to settlers except for some Indian Reservations far to the north. Many of the settlers were of German heritage. Joseph Christian, Nathan Mendenhall, William Prillman and Jonathan Schell

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FATHER DAVID HOYING IN FORT LORAMIE