

Family on hay wagon, 1940



Walking Tour of St. Michael's Preserve

Friday, May 26, 2023; 6:00 pm
Presented by Rick Klevze

Meet at the north entrance to the Preserve

Rick Klevze hosts a walking tour of St. Michael's Preserve, including the land farmed by the Klevze family. Rick will explain the history of the farm, the orphanage and the farm's relationship to St. Michael's Orphanage.



Rick Klevze is a lifelong area resident who was raised on and worked the St. Michael's farm until 1997. He has a Bachelor's degree in animal science from Cook College/ Rutgers University and a Masters degree in soils and crops from Rutgers. He is currently employed by Growmark FS as a Certified Professional Agronomist and Certified Crops Advisor, where he has worked for 43 years. Klevze serves on the Farm Credit East Customer Service Council and is a member of the MidAtlantic CCA exam writing committee for the American Society of Agronomy.

Klevze's grandfather, Charles Murphy, came to St Michael's as an orphan in 1902. His grandmother, Mary Fish Murphy arrived between 1909 and 1920. They became a caretaker and cook respectively. His mother, Catherine Murphy Klevze, was born in 1932 and was raised on the farm. In 1949, his father, Frank Klevze, was sponsored by the Catholic Church and emigrated to the US. He was placed at St. Michael's to work the farm. In 1955, he partnered with Klevze's uncle, John Eichinger, and leased the property from the Diocese. He operated a dairy until 1976 and then continued with livestock and field crops until 1997.

Meet at 6 pm at the north entrance to the St. Michael's Preserve, past First Street just outside of Hopewell Borough. Parking is limited at the Preserve, with overflow parking at the Hopewell Elementary School, 35 Princeton Avenue. (The main St. Michael's lot further south also is in use for the new Awakening sculpture in the field.)

A Hopewell Valley Heritage Week event, sponsored by the Hopewell Valley Historical Society.

