Most know Johnstown PA for massive floods, and huge steel outputs. But did you know that one of the Iwo Jima flag raisers was raised just outside of Johnstown in Franklin Borough Pa (adjacent municipality from Johnstown). Also this is home to 3 of our members currently and a memorial park was formed a few years ago and maintained by the local Marine Corps League in Franklin Borough.

Sgt. Michael Strank from Franklin Borough, Cambria County who served in the United States Marine Corp. during WWII, was the ranking officer of the squad that raised the flag in the iconic photo that was captured by photographer Joel Rosenthal on Mount Suribachi. Michael Strank was born in Jarabina, a small Rusyn-inhabited village in Czecho-Slovakia (now in Slovakia). He was one of three sons of Vasil Strank (later, in the United States, known as Charles Strank) and Martha Grofikova, natives of the village. Vasil Strank moved to Franklin Borough and found work in the coal mines for the Bethlehem Steel Corporation and brought his family to Pennsylvania three years later when he could pay for their voyage. Michael Strank attended the public schools of Franklin Borough and graduated from high school in 1937. He joined the Civilian Conservation Corps., served for 18 months, and afterwards became a Pennsylvania state highway laborer before joining the Marines in 1939. He was killed a few days after the flag raising during fighting on Iwo Jima, but the photo lives on, being one of the most iconic photos of all time.