
The Allegheny City Society

REPORTER DISPATCH

Fall, 2005

The Journal of Old Allegheny History and Lore

Society's Fall Show and Tell

By Ruth McCartan

If you could not make it to CCAC's Student Activities Center on Saturday, September 17, you missed Allegheny and North Side treasures that you may never see again unless you are asked to visit and view them privately. And what are the chances of that!!!!

As you entered the student activity area, your eyes could not miss an original Allegheny City banner celebrating the cities centennial 1840-1940. John DeSanitis, the owner, informed us that the banner hung along Federal Street during the centennial celebration. He also displayed an original two and half-foot high natural gas light chimney fixture that once hung in the Allegheny Commons.



ACS member Peg McCall brought photos from her late mother's collection of the dedication of the new Columbus school, patriotic parades that passed by Boggs and Buhl's during World War II, and a photo of the boathouse on Lake Elizabeth. The highlight of the photo display was the devastation caused with the water well collapsing in Fineview.

Former ACS board member, Terry Mowrey, brought his large collection of Wolverine toys. Terry has an impressive collection to which he adds to often with purchases via E-bay. One attendee told of his job in the shipping department of the Wolverine factory and how he marveled at the freight cars full of toys that left the factory daily.



If paper goods' relating to Allegheny City and North Side were your passion, you would have spent hours looking at the display of Doug Lucas and Miles Bausch:

- a calling card engraved with the name "Laura P. Myers – Graduate Nurse" who lived at 115 East Montgomery Ave. North Side, Pittsburg , Pa.;
- a self-published book, *The Traitor*, written by Harry K. Thaw, giving his side of the story of the murder of the architect Stanford White;
- an original piece of sleet music given to Doug's family from the daughter of Stephen Foster was encased in plastic. The torn edges were delicately sewn together to prevent more damage. The music was entitled "The Song of Songs", a refrain from one of the verses read, "after the war is over 'No Irish need apply'".

R. Livingston brought a great variety of North Side football memorabilia including:

- original football jerseys from famous amateur and high school teams. Irish roots/were showing with the naming of the football team “The North Side Celtics”;
- photographs of teams playing ball at forgotten Monument Field, now a CCAC parking lot;
- a football program from a game between St. Peter’s and St Cyril’s from the 1950’s;
- photos of the Pittsburgh Steelers when they played at Forbes Field.



Board member, John Makar, brought his fabulous postcard collection. Anyone who collects cards dreams of having a collection like his. One card that was a hit with the attendees was a picture of old St. John’s hospital and under it was hand written “our old battlefield”. It was addressed to a Stella Yetka, Queens Hospital, Honolulu, Hawaii. The postmark on the card was 1910 and the author was a lady named Isabel asking Stella when she was coming home.

A special thanks goes out to all who helped to make this day a success.

The First Professional Football Game

By Mike Coleman

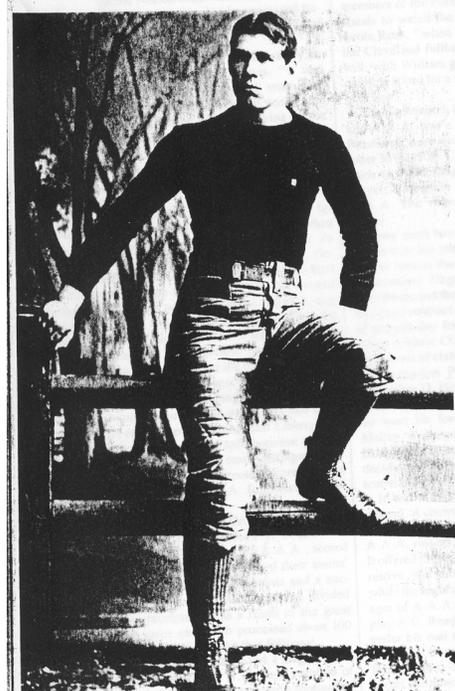
The Allegheny (City) Athletic Association (A.A.A.) was organized in 1889, specializing in football because it had a few good players from Yale University. The Alleghenians’ chief rival was the older Pittsburgh Athletic Club (P.A.C.). The P.A.C.’s star player was William Kirschner. Although he was on the payroll as the club’s physical education instructor, during the

football season his phys. ed. classes were cut in half, while his salary was doubled!

The first game between the two clubs was held at the P.A.C.’s field in East Liberty, Pittsburgh, on October 21, 1892. The game ended in a 6-6 tie. (At that time, a touchdown scored 4 points and the point after, 2.) The two teams split the gate receipts of \$1,200. The P.A.C. accused the A.A.A. of deliberately injuring Kirschner. The A.A.A. countered that he shouldn’t have been playing at all since he was a professional. Back came the P.A.C., arguing that the A.A.A. paid some of its players with free meals and other favors. But the A.A.A. had the upper hand when it disclosed that the P.A.C.’s center, playing under the name of “Stayer”, wasn’t a club member, but was actually A.C. Read, a former captain of the Penn State football squad.

Because of the great interest in the game (3,000 people had attended), a rematch was scheduled for November 12, 1892 at Recreation Park in Allegheny City, two blocks north of the soon-to-be-completed Calvary Methodist Church and one block north of Emmanuel Episcopal Church.

In the weeks preceding this second game, both clubs maneuvered behind the scenes to acquire “assets” that would give them the edge.

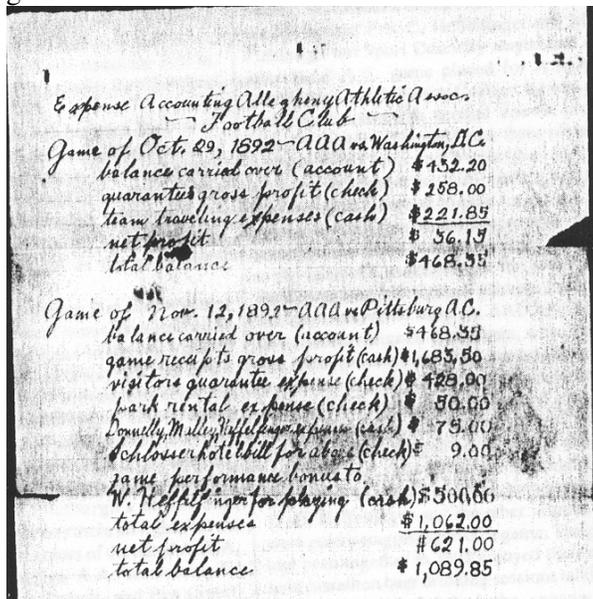


Attention focused on William Walter (Pudge) Heffelfinger who had played guard for Yale in 1888-1891 and was a three-time All-American. (Amos Alonzo Stagg had been his teammate.)

The *Pittsburgh Press* of October 30th reported the rumor that the P.A.C. was offering \$250, each, to Heffelfinger and another All-American, Knolton (Snake) Ames. But when the teams came out on the field, there was Heffelfinger, not with the P.A.C., but with the Alleghenians! Joining him were two of his former teammates from the Chicago Athletic Association, Ed Malley, a shot-putter from Detroit, and Ben (Sport) Donnelly, a former Princeton star. Snake Ames had decided not to risk his amateur status and didn't show up.

There was a crowd of over 3,000 watching as the P.A.C. protested the presence of the ringers. But the A.A.A. pointed out that A.C. Read was playing, along with Clarence Lomax of Cornell and Simon Martin of the Steelton, Pennsylvania Athletic Club. The teams finally decided to play an "exhibition" game of two 30-minute halves, with all bets canceled. The A.A.A. won, 4-0 with Pudge Heffelfinger picking up a fumble by one of his teammates and going 25 yards for a touchdown. (Ed Malley missed the extra point.) The arguing before the game had delayed it, so darkness ended it 18 minutes into the second half.

The original accounting ledger showed that Heffelfinger was paid \$500 and Heffelfinger, Malley and Donnelly were paid \$25 each for expenses. The A.A.A. made a profit of \$621. This document led the National Football League to recognize this football game, played on a field in Allegheny City, Pennsylvania, as America's first professional football game.



Presentation at the Carnegie Library

The Allegheny City Society proudly presented Patte Kelley, Senior Librarian of the Allegheny Regional Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, with four Cassatt Biographies and a Cassatt poster on July 19, 2005.



Shown here is ACS President John Lyon reading to kids from the Butterfly Garden Early Learning Center who visited the library on that day.

Elsie Yuratovich Passes Away

ACS member Elsie Yuratovich, who touched the hearts of many with her optimistic spirit and valiant efforts, passed away on July 27, 2005 at the age of 83. She still resided in her childhood home on East Ohio Street in the house in which her grandfather had run a grocery store just down the street from St. Nicholas Church.

When the church was threatened with demolition due to the planned Route 28 expansion, she became its most ardent supporter, conducting tours of the church, meeting with PennDOT and speaking at public hearings. She helped convince City Council members to designate it a city historic structure and PennDOT decided to re-route the road around the building. The diocese closed the church anyway, citing ongoing costs and maintenance problems but did form a committee to examine the possibility of turning the church into a Croatian shrine.

Two years ago, the nonprofit Preserve Croatian Heritage Foundation, established when the church was threatened with demolition, made Ms. Yuratovich the building's unofficial public relations person.

Throughout her struggle to keep the church open, she never lost faith in her religion or its clergy, and was elated when Bishop Donald Wuerl had his driver stop his car in the St. Patrick's Day parade so he could come out and greet her on the sidelines.



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