

The Allegheny City Society REPORTER DISPATCH

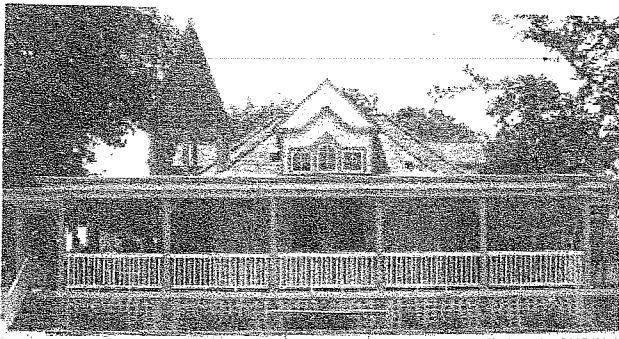
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Annual Meeting of the ACS

The Annual meeting of the Allegheny City Society was held this past April at the newly restored Watson in Riverview park. Over 40 people attend to enjoy a wonderful buffet meal and presentations by Darris Jeffcoat, member of the Allegheny Parks committee and Phil Grarczka, who presented a review of the restoration of the Chapel.



(Photo by Janet Gunter)

The coveted William Rimmel was presented to Lisa Miles (See below) and the President's Award was presented to Mark Fatla, executive Director of the North Side Leadership Conference, for his effort in helping to gain City Historic Designation for the Workingmans' Savings Bank.



(Photo by Ruth McCartan)

An Historic Tour of Manchester Sunday June 14, 2009

By John Canning

Images of the Manchester neighborhood are myriad. They might include Franklin Beach, PHLF preservation efforts, the Hippidrome Theater, Allis Chalmers, Harriet Preble's School for Young Ladies,

"Little Jerusalem," Enterprise Bank, The Salt Works, Bidwell Church, the MCG, and so many other sites connected with this vibrant community.

Few other communities had their center of commerce totally torn up for a highway and found a way to rebuild for the future. The Allegheny City Society's tour of Manchester will focus on renewal as well as history. If you haven't been to Manchester in a while join our bus tour, enjoy some great oral histories, and have a glass of the "Blend" made famous by Manchester's Reymer brothers. Plan to share your memories and recollections with us.

Margaret Deland, in her tales of "Old Chester" and "Dr. Lavender's People," was one of the first to highlight the distinct features of Manchester. Our tour will look at sites that help us see the transformation in time of this once tiny village of country cottages along the Ohio, through its industrial heyday, to its contemporary community preservation efforts.

The Manchester Tour program will begin every hour from 12 to 3 at the beautiful facilities of the Manchester Citizens Corporation, located at the corner of Allegheny and Pennsylvania Avenues. (Parking is available next to the MCC headquarters.

Following a brief overview we will travel about the community for an hour or so and then return to the MCC community hall where there will be displays picturing present and past scenes of Manchester as well as several oral histories of folks who call Manchester their home. Reservations should be made for tour groups starting at noon, 1:15, 2:30, and 3:45. Tour Cost ---\$ 15

Call Ruth at 412.354.6132 or Cannings at 412.322.3974 for reservations and directions.

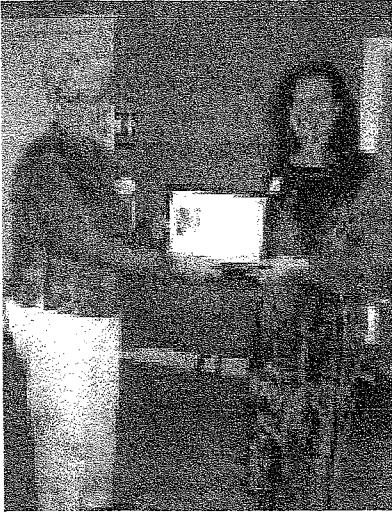
Information can also be found on the A.C.S. website www.alleghencycity.org

Lisa Miles Receives Award

The Allegheny City Society has established the William Rimmel Award to recognize and honor an individual or organization for outstanding achievement in preserving and interpreting the history

of that portion of the City of Pittsburgh that was the City of Allegheny.

This year's award was presented by incoming President, Ruth McCartan, to Ms. Lisa Miles at the ACS Annual meeting in April, 2009. Lisa published her second book, *Resurrecting Allegheny City: The Land, Structures & People of Pittsburgh's*



(Photo by Tom Wilson)

North Side. As a consequence of this book, she ran a series of workshops funded by the Buhl Foundation for at-risk youth, looking at the intersections of history and current-day civic engagement. This had a major community component—a culminating showcase at

renowned telescope maker John Brashear's old house and factory.

Lisa's work here, and on her books, was spotlighted in an hour-long TV interview in December, 2008 on the PA Cable Channel's "PA Books" program.

ACS members are invited to join the Pittsburgh Civil War Roundtable for a local tour.

By Ruth McCartan

Calling all Civil War students in the Pittsburgh area. Come join members of the Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Round Table for a visit to the historical town of Lisbon, Ohio on June 13, 2009.

This will be an all day tour. We will muster at 0900, leaving by 0915 from the Sheraton 4 points in Cranberry where we will form up into a caravan for the trip overland.

New Lisbon, as the town was called until 1898, is the second oldest town in the state of Ohio with two-thirds of the buildings in the downtown area of 1800's

vintage. Before reaching the town, we will visit the surrender site of General Morgan outside of the town of West Point, Ohio. Traveling into Lisbon we will visit and tour two historical museum sites maintained by the Lisbon Historical Society: the Old Stone House and the restored Erie Railroad Station.

Members of the Fighting McCook lived in New Lisbon. Lunch will be purchased at the "Taste of Country", the restored former home of Levi Hanna, built in 1821. You will learn more about the Hanna clan on tour. An on-site bakery is available for purchase of vitals if needed for the drive home

We will walk off some of the calories consumed at lunch with a stroll around the town. Early settlers of the eastern part of Ohio were the Society of Friends, who brought their beliefs of anti-slavery with them. The Quaker meeting house and school are still standing and currently private residences. The headquarters of the Western Anti-Slavery Society was in New Lisbon.

While up on the hilltop we will walk through the Lisbon cemetery, the final resting place for many of Lisbon's sons who fought in the Civil War. Next to the Columbiana County Courthouse is the restored Pickling Building built in 1806, the office location of Edwin Stanton's law practice in 1840. While enjoying the town square, we will view the architectural marvels of a past century. Our last stop will be the family home of Clement Vallandigham, cooperhead and thorn in Lincoln side during the war.

On the way out of town will be stop at the remains of Lock 24 on the Sandy and Beaver Creek Canal built between 1827 and 1847.

Now I know you are wondering how much can this all day historical experience be? Can you believe this? The Roundtable will cover the cost of the entrance to the museums, and all you will have to pay for is your gas and lunch. Unbelievable, I know but true. We will arrive back in the area late afternoon and if you are hungry we can do dinner.

Remember history is everywhere especially in Lisbon Ohio.

Questions: Mike Graswich at 412-486-3637, Ruth email theruths03@yahoo.com or call 412-364-6132 or Joann Chiriano at 412-781-7254 email joey627@gmail.com.

The Radium Water Worked Fine until His Jaw Came Off

[titled borrowed from the *Wall Street Journal*,
1932]

by *Tiffani Emig*

Popular children of Allegheny include Andrew Carnegie, Mary Cassatt, Martha Graham, H.J. Heinz, and Gertrude Stein. But this is the story of an all-but forgotten Alleghenian, a strapping young chap named Eben Byers.

Eben was born in 1880 to Alexander Byers, a prominent iron and steel industrialist. Destined to take over the business from his father, Eben attended Yale, where he was quite popular among the ladies. Also a successful athlete, Byers claimed the U.S. Amateur Golf championship in 1906.

Life was going well for Byers, until a night of revelry on a party train after the Harvard-Yale football game landed him with an injured arm. To cure the pain, a local doctor prescribed the revolutionary Radithor – a combination of concentrated radium and esothorium in water.



Byers became an unofficial spokesman for the drug, touting its healing powers and consuming approximately 1400 bottles of the juice over a period of several years. Unfortunately for him, ingested radium eats away at the body from the inside out. After suffering extreme weight loss and general pain (which of course led him to consume even more Radithor), Byers lost his teeth, suffered from holes in his skull, and eventually lost his jaw. He died from the disintegration of his bones in April, 1932.

I cannot resist the urge to draw a grand analogy about the life of Eben Byers and the fate of Allegheny City after its annexation by the City of Pittsburgh. In Allegheny, Byers lived like a king;

in Pittsburgh's North Side, he died like a jellyfish (perhaps there's a better analogy, but it escapes me). Like Allegheny City, Byers's memory has been nearly erased from local history. Let us take a moment to remember both Allegheny City and Eben Byers with a mixture of warm nostalgia and profound pity.

This article was originally published on the web site, "Pittsburgh Dish" in May, 2008

[Rumor has it that Eben's grave in New York is designated as a Hazardous Site due to the radiation that will be emitted for the next several centuries. The half-life of radium is 1630 years.

Ed.]

New DVD Coming in July

By Tom Wilson

A new 10-minute DVD production from the Allegheny City Society, *The Glorious Parks of Allegheny City*, premiered at the Chapel Shelter in Riverview Park at the 2009 Allegheny City Society Annual Meeting to warm reviews.

The DVD features rare stills and postcard images from Ober Park, the Commons and Riverview Park. Narration was graciously provided by Observatory Hill native Maurice Gordon, and music evocative of the era was composed and performed by Tom Roberts.

Copies of the DVD will be available for sale for only \$5.00 beginning July 1st, 2009 through our website at www.alleghenycity.org, or by mail at PO Box 100255, Pittsburgh, PA 15233.

