

The Allegheny City Society Reporter Dispatch

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Society News

Second Annual Pittsburgh Civil War Soldier's Fair

This year's Pittsburgh Civil War Soldier's Fair got off with a bang literally when members of a re-enactor group, the Ninth Pennsylvania Volunteers, fired a volley round for one of the local television stations. In all more than 75 re-enactors both military and civilian joined with other exhibitors, crafters and information booths to supply information about Civil War activities in the tri-state area. More than 1,000 people visited during the day and were treated to a visit by Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Lincoln (Rick Miller and Joanne Shelby.)

The purpose of the Fair is to raise money to restore the Soldier's Monument in West Park and the Hampton's Battery Monument in East Park. This year \$1,500 dollars were raised. The Society would like to thank the sponsors of this year's event: Pennsylvania Humanities Council, National City Bank, *The Northside Chronicle*, National Aviary, and Parkvale Bank for their support.

Mark your Calender next year's Fair will be June 24, 2001



Members of the 63rd Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry from Beaver County march onto the grounds of West Park at the Second Annual Pittsburgh Civil War Soldier's Fair

Grant Received

The Society has received word from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development that it will receive a \$5,000 grant that will be used to hire a consultant to prepare recommendations on landscaping, signs and restoration of the Soldier's Monument overlooking Lake Elizabeth in West Park. Instrumental in securing the grant was State Representative William Robinson.

Restoration Work to Begin on Hampton's Battery Monument

The Society has been informed that through the City of Pittsburgh, Department of Public Works, restoration of the Hampton's Battery in East Park (near Sue Murray Pool) has been approved and will begin shortly. The work will be performed by Mariani & Richards and will include cleaning all stone and the surrounding base walkway, repairing the fence around the monument, replacing the missing rammer with one of bronze, and cleaning the cannon in front of the monument. Representatives of the Society met recently with Mariani and Richards to discuss the restoration of both monuments.

Help Needed

I have a painting of my grandmothers who lived in Northside from 1915 to about 1950. The painting was purchased in 191?. The tag is still on the back but not completely legible. The painting is titled *The Favorites* and is numbered 560 on a label on back of the painting. The painter is A. Storm. Can you help us find more information on this art piece. Some restoration needs done, but we do not want to do anything until we know the history of the work.

Thank you,

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Annual Meeting

The Society's Annual Meeting was held at Penn Brewery on April 26, 2000. Over 70 members and friends attended and were treated to a delectable German buffet followed by a talk by board member John Canning about the Germans of Allegheny City.

At the meeting the Society awarded the William Rimmel Award to Patricia Lowrey writer for the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette*.

Elections were held and new officers were installed. John Lyon, president; Michael Coleman, vice president; C. A. Eubanks, secretary and Ruth McCartan, treasurer. New members elected to the board are Tom Ohrman and David Grinnel.

Coming Up...

The **Manchester House Tour** will be held on **August 13 from 11:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.** Intended as a walking tour, the house and gardens can be viewed in any order and a pace preferred by the participant. Trolleys will also be available for transportation to tour destinations. Tickets are \$12 and can be purchased on the day of the tour at Conroy School or in front of 1410 Pennsylvania Avenue. For more information call (412) 322-4480

The Allegheny City Society will be sponsoring a tour of **Manchester Churches** some time in late September or early October. Watch for more information on this upcoming event.

Continued from the previous Reporter Dispatch:

The Arbuckle Family Fortune: Cotton, Coffee, Sugar - Part II

by Ruth McCartan

The years following the Civil War would be successful times for the family-run firm of Arbuckles and Co. John Arbuckle, now in charge of the company, had learned to love machines and their capability from his father and grandfather. With his mechanical ability and inventive mind John changed the coffee roasting business forever.

The story goes that John was always looking for a way to get a good cup of coffee. Before the Arbuckle roasting process was perfected, most coffee was sold green and roasted at home with mixed results. If the consumer wanted roasted coffee he could purchase it but would have to brew it right away because of its short shelf life.

In 1868 John Arbuckle patented a way to keep roasted coffee fresh by coating it with an egg glaze, which protected it from the air. This coating closed the pores of the coffee bean sealing in the flavor. The coating gave Arbuckles the ability to ship their roasted coffee nationwide having it arrive to the consumers coffee pot as fresh as the day it was processed. According to the company's newsletter *The Percolator* John Arbuckle was always working on inventions relating to coffee roasting and its packaging process all his life.

By 1879 automation was needed, the company had far too many orders to fill and couldn't process them all with the equipment available. Once again Arbuckle went to the drafting table and invented a machine that mechanically



Michael Coleman presents Ms. Lowrey with the Rimmel Award

measured one pound of coffee into an oiled bag.

Later he would invent the machine to seal the bag. Up until this time the only food item sold in paper bags was peanuts. Arbuckle's packaged roasted coffees had many skeptics in the beginning, even his loyal brother Charles had his doubts. Many believed the roasted coffee would be rancid by the time the consumers boiled his first cup. After drinking their first cup of Arbuckles Aroisia coffee unbelievers were convinced.

Business was booming. The Pittsburgh location on Liberty Ave. and Strawberry Way could handle the western markets but Arbuckles and Co. needed a base to supply the East coast. John Arbuckle showed to the Pittsburgh robber barons of the next decade, Carnegie, Phipps and Frick that a move to New York City would be good for business and increasing your wealth. So in 1871 the base of operations for Arbuckles and Co. moved to Brooklyn. Brother Charles worked out of the Pittsburgh branch while John moved east.

The Arbuckle coffee business, which began with a single roaster in 1868, had eighty-five machines running in Pittsburgh and New York in 1881. The coffee processing side of the wholesale grocery business was so successful the brothers decided to focus only on coffee, scaling back the

grocery division in the 1880's. Charles Arbuckle, eventually relocated to New York leaving the Pittsburgh branch in the hands of trusted employees. The New York plant was roasting and packaging more than 9,000 bags of coffee a day.

The Arbuckles traveled to the coffee plantations of South America buying coffee and shipping it to New York in their own fleet of merchant ships. With the coffee business as the main focal point of their partnership the company name was changed to Arbuckle Brothers.

The tall, broad shouldered and full bearded John Arbuckle, would be considered by the New York business elite as a country bumpkin. His belief that fried steak and pie was the best meal anyone could eat didn't help his reputation. But behind the unsophisticated exterior of John Arbuckle was a marketing genius. The evolutionary idea of including premium coupons, in their packaged coffee, redeemable for merchandise was one of the main reason Arbuckles Arosia Coffee was consumed by coffee drinkers from the Atlantic to the Pacific. At one time the Premium Department of Arbuckle Brothers handled over one-hundred-and-eight million coupons, cut from coffee packages, worth four million dollars in premiums. Examples of premiums offered were handkerchiefs, pairs of lace curtains, shears and straight razors. One of the most unique and favorite premiums was a wedding ring. "If all the rings of this pattern serve their intended purpose then we have been participants in eighty thousand weddings in a year" wrote M. E. Goetzinger in his History of the Firm of Arbuckle Brothers. Arbuckles Arosia Coffee along with giving you a good cup of coffee, offered you a chance for free gifts why wouldn't you buy it. No wonder the coffee was given the motto "The Coffee that won the West."

Brother Charles who never married died in 1891. With his death the complete control of the company fell on the shoulders of John. Admitted into the firm a few years later was John and Charles' nephew William Arbuckle Jamison. The new partners' father was Robert Jamison, who was a prominent dry goods merchant in Pittsburgh.

John Arbuckle who believed in trying new ideas decided he would try to sell pre-sweetened, roasted coffee. The unique idea of selling pre-sweetened coffee never caught on so Arbuckle decided to sell the sugar he purchased in small packages like his coffee. Sugar in the 1890's was sold in barrels to the grocer who sold it by the scoop to the consumer. In the beginning the Sugar Trust headed by Henry O. Havermeyer sold sugar to Arbuckle at a discount. Once they determined



the profit to be made by packaging sugar in one and five pound packages all, discount arrangements were off. So began the 10 year Sugar Wars.

John Arbuckle decided to build a sugar refinery and the Sugar Trust started to packaged coffee. The tactics used to hopefully win the Sugar Trust war hurt both combatants. The rivalry was great for coffee consumers the price of coffee went from .10¢ a pound green and .16¢ roasted in 1896 to .06¢ green and .08¢ roasted two years later. The cost of buying green coffee in South America, shipping to the United States, roasting, packaging and distributing could not be cut any more. The only alternative was to reduce the amount of pure coffee contained in the package. Arbuckle won the Sugar Trust war but at what cost. The firm could not longer state truthfully that Arbuckle Arosia Coffee was pure coffee free of additives.

If the coffee baron had lived the damages caused by the Sugar Trust War could probably have been reversed. It had been estimated that the clash between Arbuckle Coffee and the Sugar Trust cost the participants more than \$25 million. John Arbuckle was 70 years old in 1906, not the best age to try to reestablish a company's reputation. Arbuckle died on March 27, 1912 in New York City, a widower and childless. His heirs were his sisters Mrs. Catherine Arbuckle Jamison and Miss Christina Arbuckle.

The sisters remained on the North Side of Pittsburgh all their lives. The partnership stayed in the family, with John Arbuckle's sisters taking an active role in major board decisions, with the every day running of the company in the capable hands of nephew William. Under William Jamison's leadership the company increased its sugar refinery production and handled the public's swing from demanding whole bean to ground coffee.

In 1921 Arbuckle Brothers New York City location was more than 12 city blocks long with its own railroad and port facilities.

Because of the effects caused by the Sugar Trust War Arbuckles Arosia Coffee was no longer considered a premium grade coffee. The introduction of YUBAN coffee helped the company reestablish its presents in this specialty market.

The Arbuckle Brothers Company, the largest coffee distributor of roasted coffee stayed in family hands until 1929. In 1935 Arbuckles closed, the reason given dwindling sales because of bad management. For more than seventy years one of the largest mercantile companies, Arbuckles was exclusively owned by members of

the immediate family of its founders. In 1895, the Arbuckle fortune was estimated at \$61 to \$70 million, 30 years after his death when his estate was finally settled it had dwindled to \$900,000.

Much of the money went to philanthropies of interest to John Arbuckle in New York, such as boat trips for children and luxurious farm vacations for tired wage-earners. The Arbuckle hometown of Allegheny City was not forgotten and received much because of the giving nature of

Arbuckles famous Roasted Coffee



his sisters, Catherine Jamison and Christine Arbuckle. One example of their giving nature is the Community House on Union Ave. The Community House still stands as a living memorial to the Arbuckle family.

After 75 years of dormancy the name Arbuckles is back into the coffee roasting business.

Two companies' one in Pittsburgh and one in Tucson, Arizona are using the name recognition to sell specialty coffee.

Pat and Denny Willis of Tucson, Arizona formally of Harrisburg, Pa. founded in 1979 Arbuckle Coffee Roasters. They roast, flavor and package only the best coffee beans available. Their high-quality, specialty coffees have increased their customer base to more than 1,000 ranging from offices to restaurants. Via the World Wide Web the Willis have a mail-order coffee business which also sells aprons and coffee mugs with the unique Arbuckle Ariosa logo - The same logo used by the original founders of Arbuckle Brothers. Wonder what John Arbuckle would think.

A little closer to home is Arbuckles Coffee Co. on Curry Hollow Road in Pleasant Hills. Started seven years ago this Arbuckles Coffee Co. still roasts, grinds and packages all their own coffees. Talking to a representative of the company, the name Arbuckles was chosen because of the name recognition in the Western Pennsylvania. Arbuckle's fine roasted coffee can be found locally in Shop 'n Save and Foodland stores. A Web Site with mail-ordering capabilities is coming soon. But if you can't wait to taste their fine roasted coffee call them at 1-800-224-1440.

Check out the Society's Web Page:
<http://trfn.clpgh.org/cnnc/>

For more information on Society programs or to volunteer
call (412) 32208807

Cruikshank Brothers Company

By Mike and Eleanor Coleman

It was a crock - which Eleanor brought home from an antiquing expedition to Grove City. About 9 inches high and 9 inches across with a ceramic lid and wooden handle, it bore the markings:

**CRUIKSHANK BROS. CO.
PRESERVES, JELLIES,
<<FRUIT BUTTERS>>
ALLEGHENY, PA.**

Being "short-timers" in the North Side (only 20 years), we had never heard of the Cruikshank Brothers Company. So we decided to do some research. A few hours at the Heinz History Center resulted in the following:

Alexander Cruikshank, a Scotsman (who originally spelled his name "Crookshank"), gave up work as a stone contractor and started a grocery business in 1844. In 1875, his son, Zachariah, took over the business, and was soon joined by his brothers, Frank and George. Their specialties were teas, choice fruits and vegetables in season.

Frank started preserving the unsold fruits that were left over each day from the grocery store. To avoid waste, he cooked them in his mother's kitchen, making jellies, jams, and preserves to be sold during the following winter. Frank withdrew from the grocery business and went into the pickling and preserving business as a manufacturer. He originated the Cruikshank Brothers Company, which started operation at the corner of Monterey Street and Taylor Avenue.

Between 1880 and the turn of the century, the firm moved several times. A 1900 invoice show pictures of a large "preserving works" at 843, 845, and 847 Jackson Street and a pickling works" at 844 to 852 Penn Avenue. In 1915, it moved to a 116,000 square foot warehouse at Preble & Island Avenues. This plant was equipped with the "latest" Machinery and was noted for its cleanliness and neatness. By 1925, the company was serving the entire nation with more than 300 workers and 100 salesmen, distributing under the "Crubro" brand.

Frank's three sons, Allen, Frank Jr., and Vinton, entered the business. Vinton became president and in 1952, the company evolved into V.W. Cruikshank & Son, which moved to Beaver Avenue. (The son, being George Cruikshank). By 1956, Vinton's failing health and George's lack of interest in the business led to it being sold. A new company, Cruikshank Brothers Investment Company, was founded to invest the proceeds of the sale in local Pittsburgh companies.