

## Upcoming Events

### **Tour Planned**

Join the members of the Allegheny City Society on a tour of the Heinz History Center Library. Board member David Grinnell, archivist at the library will host the members. February 11 - This will be a good time to spend the day checking out the exhibits at the History Center including *What We Wore: Hard Hats to High Heels; Heinz 57*, and the new *We Shall Overcome: Photographs from America's Civil Rights Era* - a Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibit that opens February 10.

The library tour and discussion is scheduled for 2:30 in the afternoon and is free with your paid admission to the History Center. Prices for admission to the History Center are \$6.00 adults, seniors 62+ \$4.50, students with valid ID \$3.00, children 6 to 18 \$3.00 and children under 6 free. Admission is free to members of the Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania. For more information call the Society at (412) 322-8807.

### **Civil War Seminar**

The Allegheny City Society will be supporting a one-day seminar at The Babcock on April 4, 2001, entitled *Two Aprils during the War 1861-1865*. Four distinguished authors and scholars will discuss topics relating to the over-all theme of the day. Dr. William Blair and Dr. Joseph Harsh will be the morning session speakers with Dr. Carol Reardon and Major Phil Cuccia handling the afternoon. The cost will be \$40.00 which includes a hot lunch. All net proceeds from the Seminar will benefit the Monument Fund of the Allegheny City Society. More information to follow.

### **Annual Meeting and Presentation of the Annual William Rimmel Award**

The Annual Meeting of the Allegheny City Society will be held the last week of April, 2001. The event will feature a dinner, speaker and presentation of the William Rimmel Award. The date of the meeting and recipient will be announced in March.

### **Antiques Show and Sale**

The 11th Annual Tiffany Treasures Antiques Show and Sale at Calvary United Methodist Church in Historic Allegheny West will be February 3, and February 4, 2001. 24 Quality Dealers are scheduled to attend. A \$3.00 Donation includes a tour of the Church. For more information call (412) 766-8619 or e-mail: tehrmanfyi.net

### **Allegheny City Church Named to National Register**

Emmanuel Episcopal Church, at 957 W. North Ave. an H.H. Richardson building was declared a National Historic Landmark this year. Better known to many as the "bake oven church," Emmanuel is in select company, being one of only eight National Landmarks in Allegheny County. On Sunday December 10, 2000 a dedication was held with the Secretary of the Interior in attendance.

### **Gift Idea**

For a lover of Allegheny City history consider giving them a copy of Clare Ansberry's book *The Women of Troy Hill*. John Hayes, staff writer for the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette* wrote "They survived the Great Depression, fought and won World War II, ended government-sanctioned segregation, built a new-world order...But the accomplishment, they're most proud of is that their children have passed their families' holiday traditions to the next generation. Nobody builds monuments for women who stay with their families despite hardships and raise their kids to be good people. Clare Ansberry, however, has honored them with a book."

Ansberry, is Pittsburgh bureau chief for *The Wall Street Journal*. The idea for the book originated with a article for the Journal about interdependence of senior citizens who spend a lot of their life in the same neighborhood. The book *Women of Troy Hill* subtitled *The Back-fence Virtues of Faith and Friendship* is from Harcourt.

### ***Had your fill of holiday cookies - now for a little holiday history***

Many families continue the traditions of baking holiday gingerbread--- a tradition dating back to the Middle Ages. The first gingerbread is believed to have been created by the Greeks with honey and spices. In medieval Europe, however, with its growth of spice trade, gingerbread took on its now-familiar appearance. The German town of Nuremberg became known as the gingerbread capital since it was the central crossroads of spice trading routes. German bakers incorporated a wide variety of exotic spices into the flat, dense cakes that they called *Lebkuchen*. From there, true creativity began.

Soon craftsmen were carving fancy wooden molds and artists were decorating and frosting with gold paints. Hearts, angels, wreaths, and other fanciful shapes were sold at fairs, carnivals, and markets. Gingerbread was once so precious that it was gilded and declared "fit for a king". It was so fancy that it took on fairy tale qualities. Hansel and Gretel were nearly lured to their deaths by a gingerbread house--- and gingerbread men could come alive, pop from the oven, and run away.

From Nuremberg, gingerbread was carried to every corner of World, and each region adapted it in a special way. In colonial America, gingerbread recipes were adapted to local supplies. New England cooks substituted maple syrup for sugar, while molasses became the important ingredient down south.

German immigrants arriving in Allegheny City brought their holiday traditions with them and gingerbread baked at home or store bought became part of the food, fun, and fantasy of Christmas.

*Adapted from an article from the newsletter of the Surratt Society*

### ***Some interesting facts***

As we approach the cold and flu season, did you ever wonder when cough drops were first introduced. Smith Brothers' Cough Drops were originally produced by James Smith, a Canadian candymaker who opened a restaurant in Poughkeepsie, New York. He bought the recipe for the drops from a friend for a reported \$ 5.00. Smith made the drops in his home kitchen and sold them at the restaurant. He began to advertise them in local papers in 1852. His sons (William and Andrew, the ones pictured on the box) took over the family business and went national---- and the rest is history. If you needed Smith's Cough

Drops in 1906 you could have gone to C. W. Smart, dispenser of pure drugs, at the corner of Anderson and Robinson Streets in Allegheny, Pa. Smarts also sold Bell-Cap-Sic plasters. Wonder how well they worked.

### Consultant Chosen To Create Allegheny Commons Park Master Plan

Marion Pressley, Pressley Associates, Inc. from Cambridge, Massachusetts has been hired to prepare the Master Plan for Allegheny Commons, the historic 80-acre park on Pittsburgh's Northside. Ms. Pressley is nationally known for her work on the "Emerald Necklace," a group of several parks in the



*West Park, Allegheny, Pa.*

West Park as it appeared in a post card from the early 1900's  
From the collection of the Allegheny City Society

Boston area. These parks wind through many different types of neighborhoods and provide much of the population of western Boston and the eastern portion of Brookline, Massachusetts with important greenspace. An important focus of the Emerald Necklace master plan were solutions which provide efficient maintenance, enhance public safety, handicapped accessibility, improved circulation and separation of pedestrian and vehicular systems. The result of these efforts integrated the historic landscape into the fabric of current, diverse community use.

While preparing a master plan for the 700 acre Forest Hill Park in East Cleveland and Cleveland Heights, Ohio, Ms. Pressley met the challenge of protecting the historic integrity of a landscape while also meeting the needs of current users.

Pressley visited Pittsburgh Thursday, November 30<sup>th</sup> through Saturday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> visiting Allegheny Commons. During her visit, she met with the Allegheny Commons Steering Committee which includes representatives from the neighborhoods surrounding the park, the National Aviary, the Pittsburgh Children's Museum, Western PA Conservancy, Pittsburgh History and Landmarks, the Garden Club of Allegheny County and the Allegheny City Society. In addition she also met with representatives from the City of Pittsburgh Departments Parks and Recreation, Public Works and City Planning.

As part of her research and documentation, Pressley began collecting data and documentation to begin Phase I of master planning for Allegheny Commons in preparation for future community meetings.

Two community meeting dates are scheduled for Friday January 19<sup>th</sup> and January 20<sup>th</sup>. The meetings will be held at the Allegheny Unitarian Universalist Church. These first two meetings will be held on a Friday evening and Saturday morning/afternoon. The

first will include a presentation of the park's inventory and include historic and existing conditions documentation and analysis. This will provide the community with a broad understanding of the history of the Allegheny Commons development and the current conditions and issues impacting the Commons today.

"The Community Talks to the Designers" will be the subject of the second meeting. This will be a workshop to determine user needs and have open discussions about current uses and future use potentials, as well as, to establish the public's concern for the historical integrity of the park. The workshop will be open to the community.

These two meetings will be followed by a third community meeting following completion of the preliminary master plan. Here presentation of the proposed preliminary master plan, as well as, a compilation of the results of the workshop will be presented.

The hope is that at this third meeting consensus can be reached on the master plan. Options may need to be developed for some areas or uses that are particularly controversial in order to try to reach consensus.

Finally there will be a fourth community meeting that will follow completion of the final master plan. If consensus has not been reached, another community meeting may be required. The final plans and the final report will be submitted after the final community meeting and final review with Northside Leadership Conference. The Conference is facilitating the master planning process for the project.

**Visit the Allegheny City Society on the World Wide Web**

**<http://trfn.clpgh.org/acs/>**

**or you can reach us by telephone (412) 322-8807**

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