

The Allegheny City Society

REPORTER DISPATCH

The Journal of Old Allegheny History and Lore - Volume 5 No. 2

Society Presents Annual William Rimmel Award to Christine Davis

Christine Davis, the president and founder of Christine Davis Consultants, Inc., was the fifth individual to receive the Allegheny City Society's William Rimmel award. The award was presented at the Society's annual meeting that was held in the Home Plate Club of PNC Park on April 26, 2001.

Ms. Davis has over 20 years of experience in cultural resource management, conducting over 600 archaeological and historic resource surveys, many in the area that was formerly known as Allegheny City.

Ms. Davis performed the investigation of the Pennsylvania Canal locks that were unearthed during the construction of I-279. Many of us were privileged to hear her descriptions of this first use of the Route 28 corridor in a presentation given to the Allegheny City Society a few years ago.

Her recent efforts, however, are a little closer to home. About 20 feet below our feet (PNC Park) was the location of the backyard of the home of General William Robinson. It was here that Ms. Davis dug up the dirt, so to speak, on the late General.

In 1832, a catastrophic flood moved the family's possessions from the house on Federal Street into this backyard where they were covered with mud left behind by the floodwaters. In the winter of 1999, Ms.

Davis and her team of archaeologists discovered hundreds of ceramic, glass and wood objects from that flood. The resulting



Christine Davis

collection is one of the earliest and most significant in the City of Pittsburgh. Ms. Davis and the Pittsburgh Pirates have collaborated in creating a permanent exhibition for a portion of this collection to be housed in our new PNC Park, conveniently located on the **South Shore** of the original City of Allegheny. Her sensitivity to our historical resources thus embodies the Rimmel tradition of making history come alive. It is indeed fitting that Christine Davis receive this award.

William Rimmel and the Rimmel 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. A few words of background about Mr. Rimmel would be in order:

William M. Rimmel, a lifelong resident of the Northside, was best known for the series of columns he wrote about life in Allegheny City. These columns earned him the President's Golden Quill Award in 1980 from the Pittsburgh Press Club.

Born in 1897, he was self-educated. He left school after the sixth grade because his family needed the money, becoming a copyboy for the Tri-State News Bureau at the age of 11. That job paid him very little, although his employer did give him a raincoat for his deliveries to the downtown newspapers.

In 1915, he joined *The Pittsburgh*

Post, a predecessor of *The Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* and later switched to *The Gazette-Times*, which offered him more money. After several years, he was promoted to police reporter at a salary of \$12.15 per week.

Over the 15 years that he held that job, he got to know thousands of people. In 1925, he began to handle general assignment reporting and he extended his circle of acquaintances to downtown politicians, businessmen, industrialists, civic leaders, and bootleggers (sometimes not different people). In 1928, he became assistant city

editor and held that position for 30 years.

After retiring in 1962, he continued to write his columns and maintained a busy schedule of meetings, speeches and writing. He was the author of *The Allegheny Story*, a nostalgic look back at Allegheny City. He died in May, 1988 and is buried in Union Dale Cemetery. So I guess we could say that his remains remain in his beloved Allegheny.

These remarks were presented by the Society's Vice President Michael Coleman at the Society's Annual meeting

First Civil War Seminar a Great Success

A full day was planned for the 80 attendees beginning at 8:00 a.m. with registration until 4:00 p.m. when the final question was answered. Four top-notch speakers, Dr. Bill Blair, Major Phil Cuccia, Dr. Joe Harsh and Pittsburgh native Dr. Carol Reardon kept the local Civil War historians involved the whole day. The seminar had something for everyone. Bradley's Book Cellar had a table with a vast array of Civil War literature available for purchase. Frames for the

Memories, a Castle Shannon frame shop, displayed original *Harpers Weekly* newspaper tear sheets depicting local and national subjects of the era displayed. Photo Antiquities located on East Ohio Street exhibited original and reproductions of photographic images of famous people and battles during the Civil War exhibited.

The driving force behind the Seminar was to raise money for the restoration of the Allegheny County Civil War Soldiers Monument located in West Park. With the help of two local Victorian re-enactors, Joanne Shelby and Mary Jean Ferguson, the history of the Ladies Monument Association and their struggle was presented. President of the Society John Lyon and treasurer of the Society Ruth McCartan gave the recent history and a condition update.

The seminar would not have been as successful without volunteers who gave of their time and expertise: Amelia Gehron, Doug Schreck, Ruth I. McCartan, and Charles Stone. Tom and Terry Streever graciously offered the use of their beautiful home on West North Ave. for the Friday evening reception.

Over \$2,000 dollars was raised from the event. But more than that 80 more people learned of our mission to restore this great stone icon.



Seminar organizers (l to r) Ruth McCartan, Ulli Baumann, Ed Hahn, Allison Barbash, and Darlane Abel

If you missed this years seminar, don't worry plans are in the works for the 2002 event. Mark your calendar now April 6 for the 2nd Civil War Seminar entitled "Bitter April".

The work has begun



April 11, 2001 will be noted in the record book of the Society as the day the work on the restoration of the Soldiers Monument commenced. What a beautiful day both in weather and reason for being there. The money for the ability to start the monument's structural evaluation was given to the society by Representative William Robinson. Maxim Crane Works, formally Anthony Hi-Lift, donated the use of a 60 ft hi-lift for the day. The Harry S. Peterson Company was hired to prepare a condition survey of the once moved and twice remodeled Soldiers Monument. Steven Konefal, an independent structural engineer will also be working on the project. A condition report will be presented to the Society in a few weeks.

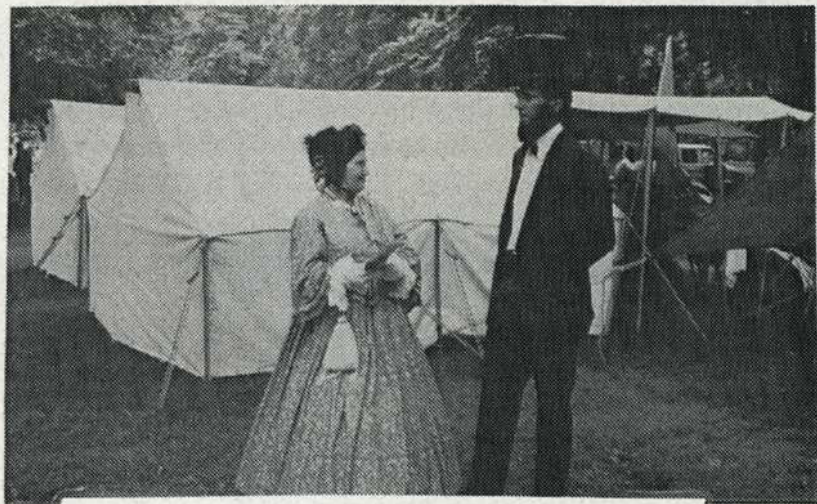
During the preliminary visual inspection of the base of the allegorical figure of "Fame" at the top of the monument it was discovered much of the mortar is missing. Correcting this lack of restraining mortar will be one of the Societies first undertakings.

A few cosmetic repairs were done during the day such as, high pressure water cleaning of the moss growing on the base and the re-cementing in two different locations of decorative finishing stones.

Third Annual Civil War Soldier's Fair Scheduled for June 24, 2001 in West Park

Money raised will go to restoration of Civil War Monument in West Park

Come to the 3rd Annual Pittsburgh Civil War Soldier's Fair on Sunday, June 24 and you just might meet President Abraham Lincoln and his wife Mary. Also Generals Ulysses S. Grant and Robert E. Lee have scheduled an appearance. The Fair will be held from 10:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. in historic West Park in front of the National Aviary.



Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln at the Second Annual Soldier's Fair

This day offers a chance to stroll the beautiful grounds of the tree-shaded West Park and mingle with period crafters, re-enactors and living historians. Plan on spending the entire day traveling back in time. At the Fair you can experience the life of a Civil War soldier in the military encampment area. Events planned during the day are military drills, artillery demonstrations, and battlefield medicine displays. In addition there will be lectures and talks by scholars in the Aviary Rose Garden.

This is a once-a-year chance on the North Side to visit and learn from living historians,

both soldiers and civilians, in authentic period dress, from all of Western Pennsylvania.

Admission is free and everyone is welcome. The Pittsburgh Civil War Soldier's Fair is a collaboration between the Allegheny City Society and various historical and reenactment groups from Western Pennsylvania with major funding from the Humanities-and-the-Arts initiative, a grant-making partnership administered by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council. Last year over 1,000 people attended the Second Fair and even more are expected this year.

Activities for the entire family

- Civil War Military Encampment, Civilian Recruitment and Children's Activities, featuring infantry, artillery and surgical re-enactment units from the tri-state area
- 12:30 p.m., Grand March of the Soldiers and Wreath-Laying Ceremony by State Representative William Robinson at the Civil War Soldier's Monument
- First Person Portrayals of President and Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, and Union General Ulysses S. Grant and Confederate General Robert E. Lee
- Raffle of Civil War Prints by nationally known artists Dale Gallon and Paul Martin with all proceeds to support the Monument Fund
- Unfurling of the Tri-states' largest U.S. Flag
- Informational Booths featuring area Civil War Roundtables, and Genealogical and Historical Societies
- Civil War Books and Prints available for sale
- Vendors and Civil War Sutler on site with wares for sale
- Plus Food and Refreshments

In The Rose Garden of the National Aviary

The focus of this year's talks will be the African-American experience during the Civil War (Talks are Free and Open to the Public)

- 10:00 a.m., Dr. Wilson Moses*, Professor of History, Penn State University will talk on *African American Leadership: Frederick Douglass and Booker T. Washington*. Dr. Moses discusses the myths and the realities surrounding these two leaders and how perceptions of them have changed over the years
- 11:00 a.m., Sala Udin, Pittsburgh City Councilman - will conduct dramatic readings from the works of Frederick Douglass
- 11:30 a.m., Dr. Nilgun Anadolu-Okur*, Associate Professor of African-American History and Literature, Temple University will discuss *Stories from the Underground Railroad*. Dr. nadolu-Okur uses music, illustrations, and lyrics to reveal the dramatic stories of escape to freedom by the real heroes and heroines of the time
- 1:15 p.m., Sala Udin, Pittsburgh City Councilman - Dramatic Reading from the works of Frederick Douglass
- 2:00 p.m., Laurence Glasco, Professor, University of Pittsburgh; Author; Historical Consultant for Allegheny County African-American Historic Sites Survey *Black Pittsburgh in the Civil War Era* Professor Glasco explores the period of the 1850's thru 1860's, a crucial time for escaping slaves and freemen seeking tolerance, work and education in the Pittsburgh region
- 3:00 p.m., Music in the Garden by Anne New and the Ladies Monument Association

*Commonwealth Speaker for the Pennsylvania Humanities Council

Hampton Battery Monument Rededicated



"Remember, Remember" said Lt. Col. Gregg Hampton as he and other descendants of the men of Hampton's Battery pulled the cord that unveiled the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Seal on the Hampton's Battery monument rededication on Memorial Day, May 28th. Lt. Col. Hampton had driven from Ft. Belvoir Virginia just to be at the unveiling. His great-great uncle Robert Hampton had formed the battery in 1861. Other descendants of the men who marched to war with Robert Hampton also joined in the ceremony. *(They are pictured in photo on left)*

Major Grey Berrier II of the 1st Battalion 197th Field Artillery gave a brief history of the Battery. The ceremony ended with the placement of a wreath by Councilwoman Barbara Burns followed by a Salute of Arms by the 9th Pennsylvania Reserves and Regional Battalion.

The monument was restored by the City of Pittsburgh at a cost of \$21,000. A new brass rammer and the Commonwealth seal were replaced, the monument cleaned and a new fence around the monument was erected. The ceremony was organized by the Allegheny City Society. The event was sponsored by The Allegheny City Society, Mercy Providence Hospital, Pittsburgh Professional Firefighters Local No. 1, and the Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Roundtable. Read more about the Hampton Battery on the Society's web site: <http://trfn.clpgh.org/acs/>.

Annual Report of the Allegheny City Society Year 2000

At the last annual meeting, held at the Penn Brewery on April 26, 2000, over 80 people were treated to a wonderful German buffet and discussion by John Canning of the Germans of Allegheny City.

Events for 2000 began with John Lyon's *Float 'Em and 'Tote 'Em, The Railroads of Allegheny City* at the Northumberland Library in February. Despite the icy roads about 30 people attended the talk.

Last Spring found the Society in West Park at the Second Annual Pittsburgh Civil War Soldier's Fair. About 100 re-enactors and others in period dress, met with fairgoers,



The tour guide for the Society's tour of PNC Park was Steve Greenburg, Vice President of the Pittsburgh Pirates Baseball Club who is pointing out a feature of the left field wall of the new ballyard

discussed Civil War History, and watched military drills. The event was highlighted by a visit by Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Lincoln and the unfurling of the largest United States Flag in Allegheny County.

It was back on the road again in June for Mr. Lyon as he presented the *Float 'Em* talk to a North Hills AARP group and the Sharon Archeological Society.

In the Fall, John Canning, the Society's tour specialist put together a trolley tour to Duquesne Borough or the Ward of Allegheny. It began at the Sarah Heinz House, visited Herr's Island (now Washington's Landing), St. Nicholas Church in Millvale and the wonderful murals painted by Maximilian Vanka depicting the Croatian experience in the United States, then to St. Nicholas Church on East Ohio Street before returning to the Sarah Heinz House. Once again the tour was a complete sellout.

With the help of State Representative William Robinson, in August the Society received a \$5,000 check from the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development that will be used to prepare a conditions report and action plan to restore and preserve the Soldier's Monument in West Park

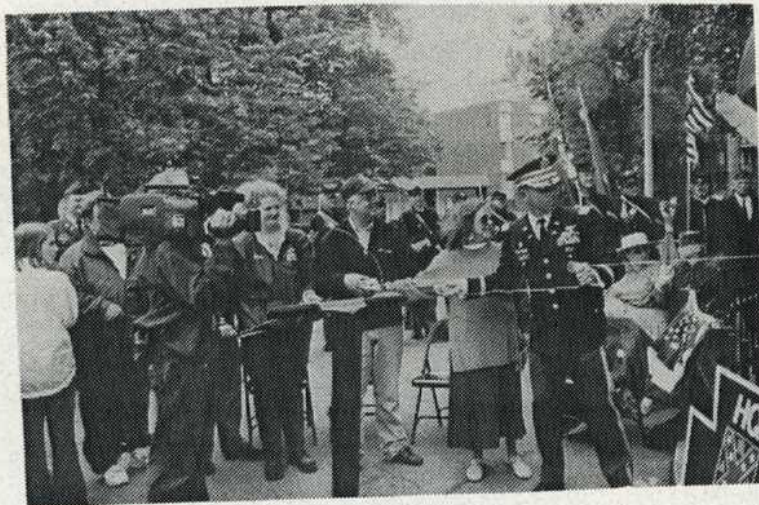
Through the remainder of the year board members were busy planning events for 2001.

In February 2001, board member and archivist David Grinnell led a group of Society members on a tour of the Library and research facility of the John Heinz Regional History Center. Mr. Grinnell displayed a number of items in the Library from Allegheny, Pennsylvania.

In April the Society partnered with the Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Roundtable to hold a Civil War Seminar, *April During the War* at The Babcock, in the North Hills. Over 80 people attended and the affair raised over \$2,000 for the preservation and restoration of the Soldier's Monument in West Park.

Recent events:

⊗ Rededication of the Hampton's Battery Monument on Cedar Avenue on Memorial Day, May 28, 2001. (This year marks the 130th Anniversary of the original dedication) The City of Pittsburgh has



Descendants of the men who fought at Hampton's Battery prepare to pull the rope that will unveil the Commonwealth Seal on the Hampton's Battery monument

cleaned the monument and replaced the fencing. The Society has been a partner in this restoration and is working with Michael Krause, a sculpture to replace the rammer. In addition we have secured a mold of the Commonwealth Seal that will be reinstalled on the monument. Everyone is invited to the ceremony that will begin at 1:00 p.m.

Still on the agenda for the remainder of 2001:

⊗ The Third Annual Pittsburgh Civil War Soldier's Fair - June 24, 2001 in West Park in front of the National Aviary. Come and visit with Mr. and Mrs. Abraham Lincoln, Generals Ulysses S. Grant

and Robert E. Lee. In addition, Councilman Sala Udin will perform readings from the works of Frederick Douglass.

☼ A tour of Division 11 of Union Dale Cemetery - August or September 2001 Talk on the Railroads of the Civil War that will first be presented at Borders in May to advertise the Civil War Soldier's Fair.

☼ Talk on the first "Trial of the Century," the murder trial of Harry White for the slaying of Sanford White:.

The Society continues to publish our official newsletter the *Reporter Dispatch* and answer questions and inquiries by telephone, letter, or e-mail. The sale of *The Story of Old Allegheny* and other history-related items is on-going. Members of the board of Directors serve on the Master Planning Committee for the Allegheny Commons and a number of other non-profit boards throughout the North Side. All board members are actively involved with preservation issues and restoration of the monuments in West Park.

The Society thanks its members, the Board of Directors and the community for their participation and support of our activities as we strive to preserve the history of our community and enhance the positive view of the North Side.

John H. Lyon, President

Other Events of Interest

July 19 - Book Sale sponsored by the Friends of the Allegheny Regional Branch Carnegie Library - 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m. Library call (412) 237-1890 for information

July 28, 29 and 30th - Allegheny West Garden Tour - no reservations - tickets can be purchased at the gazebo that will be located at the intersection of Galveston and Beech Avenues.

August 12th - Manchester Historic Society's 5th Annual House Tour 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. tickets are \$12 and can be purchased at Conroy School on the day of the tour. Call (412) 321-7707 for more information - web site www.manchesterhr.homestead.com

August 16 - Book Sale sponsored by the Friends of the Allegheny Regional Branch Carnegie Library - 10:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m. Library call (412) 237-1890 for information

Every Saturday at 10:00 a.m. representatives of the Allegheny City Society conduct a walking tour of Beech Avenue. The tour is made possible by the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, Office of Cultural Tourism, The Allegheny City Society and The Alcoa Foundation. Cost of the tour is \$3.00 per person and reservations are not necessary. The tour starts at Calvary United Methodist Church at the corner of Beech and Allegheny Avenues.

The Allegheny City Society

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The Reporter Dispatch
Published by
The Allegheny City Society
P. O. Box 100255

Non Profit
US Postage Paid
Pittsburgh, PA
Permit No 3842

THE ALLEGHENY CITY SOCIETY

PROUDLY INVITES YOU
TO ATTEND

The 3rd Annual



June 24, 2001

To Benefit Pittsburgh
Civil War Monument Restoration

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

West Park in front of

The National Aviary in Pittsburgh
FREE Admission

With Support from:

The National Aviary
The Pennsylvania Humanities Council
National City Community Development Corporation