

The Allegheny City Society **REPORTER DISPATCH**

The Journal of Old Allegheny History and Lore - Spring 2003

Eye of the Storm - The Allegheny Connection

The Virginia Historical Society's traveling collection of 96 of Robert Knox Sneden's Civil War watercolors and maps has opened at the Heinz History Center. These eyewitness interpretations of the horrors of war, the trials of military service and the routine of the everyday soldier gives the 21st century a perspective of this era never before available.

This major exhibit has been expanded to reflect the contributions of Western Pennsylvania. This is achieved with artifacts and archival materials from the large collection of the History Center, the Carnegie Museums and local collectors. The nation's own history repository, the Smithsonian has contributed items from their collection in Washington D. C. Thanks to this national association, the sword used by Erie Pa. native, Colonel Strong Vincent, a hero of Gettysburg has come out of storage.

The sub-title of the *Eye of the Storm* exhibit reads "unknown stories of the Civil War". These are the stories that tell of Allegheny City. Both Congressional Medal of Honor badges of Archibald Rowland, who lived and was an attorney in Allegheny City. The original medal given to him for action as a scout with the 1st West Virginia Cavalry. This was the one he was to return to the government before receiving the newer revision of the medal in 1873.

A tinted photograph is all that remains of the original oil painting of General Alexander Hays, after the victory at Pickett's Charge, dragging Confederate battle flags in front of his troops. Before Hays rejoined the Union army at the start of the Civil War he was the City Engineer of Allegheny.

Tucked in a corner is a copy of a never displayed interior photo of captured Confederate officers in the Western Pennsylvania Prison. This prison was in the Commons of Allegheny, (the present site of the National Aviary) before moving and becoming the "Big House on the Ohio River".

The keepsakes associated with the Civil War experience of Levi Bird Duff are the most poignant of the exhibit. Duff enlisted in Co. D of the 105 Pennsylvania Volunteers in 1862 and rose to the rank of captain. While recuperating from wounds received in the Battle of Seven Pines he married an Allegheny City woman named Harriet Nixon. Miss Nixon's, father was the fourth mayor of Allegheny. (See biography of Hezekiah Nixon in Story of Allegheny pg. 122.) Returning to active duty in 1863 Levi sent flowers from the various battlefields with a short note telling of his love for her. Dated July 4, 1863, a letter describes the horrific aftermath of the



Horsing Around - several members attending the seminar attempt to ride a horse at the Heinz History Center

Battle of Gettysburg. "I send you a kiss on a rose bud I picked on the field yesterday while the battle was raging. It grew amid the carnage"

The wounds received at the Battle of Petersburg, 1864 ended the military career of Duff. At war's end Harriet had pressed more than 30 flowers in her encyclopedia. She had received flowers from such places as Chancellorsville, Spotsylvania and Cold Harbor. The volume containing the pressed flowers sent to Harriet and the watch chain of her hair carried by Levi, during his life are the romantic highlight of the exhibit.

The last exhibit wall on the 5th floor of the Heinz History Center shows photographs of the only memorials to the soldiers of the Civil War in the Pittsburgh area. Illustrations of the Hampton Battery and the Soldiers Monuments both found, you guessed it, in the Commons of Old Allegheny.

The Eye of the Storm exhibit will run until September 30, 2003.

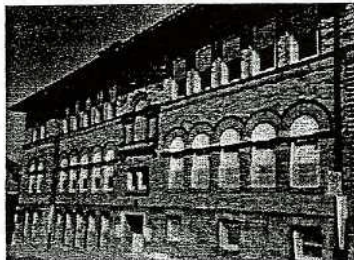
The mission of the Allegheny City Society is the protection and restoration of the monuments of the Commons. The Society with the financial help of the City of Pittsburgh and donations from concerned citizens has restored the Hampton Battery Monument in the East Commons. Sponsoring events such as the Civil War Soldiers Fair and Seminar, the Society is raising money to renovate the Soldiers Monument in the West Commons.

Upcoming Events

- May 8** John Lyon, president of the Allegheny City Society will speak at the Cranberry Library in Cranberry Township at 7:00 p.m. on Civil War Railroads
- May 13** John Makar, board member of the Allegheny City Society, will give a slide presentation on the Harmony Trolley Route at the Homestead Carnegie Library on 10th Ave. 7:00 p.m.
- May 18** *Glorious Sounds from Round II*, sponsored by the Allegheny Historic Preservation Society at Calvary United Methodist Church on Beech Ave. at 4:00p.m. Ticket information call 412-323-1070. This is a chance to see the newly-restored Resurrection Window in the Church. This window is the second of three William Comfort Tiffany windows to be restored and at the 4:00 p.m. concert, the light should be shining in and you will be able to see the window at in it's full glory.
- May 19** The Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Roundtable, at 7:00 p.m. "*Lincoln's Assassination: The Investigation Continues*", The Babcock Meeting Room, North Hills
- May 20** John Canning, will speak at Northland Public Library at 7:00 p.m. for the North Hills Genealogist on Historic Congregations of Allegheny City Churches
- May 22** Allison Caveglia Barash, with speak at the Lawrenceville Historical Society on Diversions of the Blue and Gray. The Society meets at Canterbury Place, in the McVay Auditorium on Fisk St. Talk begins at 7:00 p.m.
- May 28-31** Conference of the National Genealogical Society, David L. Lawrence Convention Center. To register <http://www.ngsgenealogy.org>
- June 14-15** Soldiers Fair, Commons in front of the National Aviary reenactors and crafters

June 21 Beginning Genealogy, Carnegie Library Lecture Hall beginning at 10:00 a.m. Free and open to all

Allegheny City Buildings in the News



The John Morrow School and **Allegheny General Hospital** were recently awarded Historic Landmarks Plaques by Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation. The following description comes from the Foundations newsletter written by Walter Kidney.

“**The Morrow School** of 1894, in Brighton Heights, already shows a departure from the plain, factory-like school of the Mid-Victorian period. Samuel McClarren designed a building with variegated Roman brick and hipped roofs to impart a warmer impression. (As with many of these schools, additions have

complicated the original appearance)” *If you would like more information about John Morrow, a superintendent of the Allegheny City school system, see the Reporter Dispatch Spring 1997.*

“**Allegheny General Hospital** on the North Side, designed in 1930 by York & Sawyer. The whole-brick building, with touches of blue and green terra cotta and pink and gray granite, is perhaps the most beautiful hospital in Western Pennsylvania.”



Osterling Buildings in Brighton Heights Receive New Life

Tending Loft Condo's hangs below the For Sale sign out front of the



three matching buildings at 3603-3607 California Ave. in the Brighton Heights section of the North Side. The Osterling Flats feature the original facade with a completely renovated interior. Local Allegheny architect Frederick Osterling originally designed the buildings. Frederick Osterling is remembered for the design of the Union Trust Building, and the 1893 remodeling of Henry Clay Frick's house, Clayton. After falling into years of neglect and a recent fire the Brighton Heights Citizens Federation decided to renovate them. This was the Federation first development project. What a fabulous job they did. With the design help from architect Eve Pickering,

from no-walls productions and Edge studio the Osterling buildings are back among the gems of city living. A special thanks goes to City Councilwoman Barbara Burns, the URA and Dollar Bank for financial help. (For more information on the architect Frederick Osterling see board member John Canning's booklet on his life and works.)

Did You Know... Destroyed by fire on February 2002 was the Henry Buhl house at 1241 Western Ave. The building was recorded in the Allegheny County Historic Resource Survey. Henry Buhl, was a partner in the retail establishment of Boggs and Buhl, the premier shopping destinations for the people of Allegheny up until the 1950's. Too bad the Buhl Foundation, which he created upon his death couldn't have had a plan to reuse the building. The remarkable Queen Anne house built in 1895 had been vacant for years.

Older Than Dirt Quiz: Count all the ones that you can remember not the ones you were told about! Ratings at the end.

- | | |
|--|--------------------------------|
| 1. Blackjack chewing gum | 12. Howdy Doody |
| 2. Wax Coke-shaped bottles with colored sugar water candy cigarettes | 13. 45 RPM records |
| 3. Soda pop machines that dispensed bottles | 14. S&H Green Stamps |
| 4. Coffee shops with table-side jukeboxes | 15. Hi-fi's |
| 5. Home milk delivery in glass bottles with cardboard stoppers | 16. Metal ice trays with lever |
| 6. Party lines | 17. Mimeograph paper |
| 7. Newsreels before the movie | 18. Blue flashbulbs |
| 8. P.F. Flyers | 19. Packards |
| 9. Butch wax | 20. Roller skate keys |
| 10. Telephone numbers with a word prefix (Forest-4) | 21. Cork popguns |
| 11. Peashooters | 22. Drive-ins |
| | 23. Studebakers |
| | 24. Wash tub wringers |

If you remembered 0-5 = You're still young, 6-10 = You are getting older, 11-15 = Don't tell your age, 16-25 = You're older than dirt

"God and soldiers all men adore
In times of trouble and no more
For when war is over, and all things righted
God is neglected and the soldier slighted"

Please take time to remember those who sacrificed, in war and peace, that we may enjoy our freedom

Civil War-athon Seminar 2003

Reviewed by Allison Caveglia Barash

What would you call 12 hours of Civil War immersion? A Civil War-athon, of course! Fifty people came together at the Heinz History Center and our usual meeting place, The Babcock, on Saturday, April 5, to share their mutual obsession with all things Civil War.

This major event, jointly sponsored by the Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Round Table, the Allegheny City Society and the Heinz History Center, started bright and early at the History Center with a continental breakfast. We were then led upstairs where Ann Fortescue, Director of Education, and Nick Ciotola, Exhibit Curator, gave us an overview of the exhibit, *Eye of the Storm: Unknown Stories of the Civil War*, which is the recently discovered collection of Robert Knox Sneden's sketches and watercolors depicting soldier life.

After having ample time to peruse the beautiful display of artwork and artifacts, we were treated to a talk by Licensed Battlefield Guide (LBG) Christine Wolfe on the short but courageous life of Strong Vincent, whose sword was featured in the exhibit.

After lunch on our own, we proceeded to The Babcock for the remainder of the program. Timothy Smith (LBG) started off the afternoon session with an in-depth discussion of Jubal Early's raid in Pennsylvania which occurred in the days just prior to the battle of Gettysburg.



Two seminar attendees prepare for Bob Zeller's 3-D presentation with their special glasses

Tim's talk was followed by a discussion of several important Gettysburg monuments presented by Diana Loski, (LBG). She focused on the significance of the monuments and what they can tell us today about the battle.

Garry Adelman, another Licensed Battlefield Guide (LBG), entertained us with a "then and now" look at many historic sites in Maryland, Pennsylvania and Virginia. We were pleasantly surprised to learn that many of the historic structures are still standing.

All three talks were complemented by slides which enhanced the already fascinating presentations given by these accomplished battlefield guides/authors.

With our intellectual appetites sated for the time being, we satisfied our physical hunger with a delicious dinner prepared by Jackie and her staff. But the day was not over yet-after dinner we were treated to Civil war music performed by Home Front - individually known as Chuck Krepley and Tom Crytzer. We enjoyed many familiar tunes including "Garry Owen", "Dixie", and "Hard Times Come Again No More".

The evening's grand finale was Bob Zeller's 3D slide presentation. Each of us was given a pair of 3D glasses with which to view the many stereoscopic photos that bob projected onto the screen. Photos in 3D seem to almost come to life, which explains the Victorians' fascination with stereoscopic viewers.

Seminar committee members Darlane Able, Allison Barash, Ulli Bauman, Ed Hahn and Ruth McCartan would like to thank all of our wonderful speakers and especially our seminar participants. We hope that this year's seminar was one that you will long remember, and that you will be sure to join us again next year.

Following article from the newsletter of the Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Round Table If you didn't attend the April 5, seminar at the Babcock you missed a educational experience of the first magnitude. This years seminar raised over \$1,800 for the restoration of the Civil War Soldiers Monument in the West Commons.

New Location for Archives

On a Sunday in late March the bulk of the Allegheny City Society archives moved to its new digs. A row house at 912 Western Ave. will be the new home. Board members Eleanor Coleman and Lois Yoedt have taken on the herculean job of inventorying and cataloging the collection.

The Society Board has decided to purchase a computer and related software to better store and organize collection information. Watch in following newsletters for bulletins on specific items from the collection.

Harmony Route Tour



The February trolley tour of the Harmony Route was fun and informative for everyone who attended. The weather was even accommodating, sunny with a dusting of snow on the ground, which helps you see the original placement of the trolley tracks. Board members John Canning, David McMunn, John Makar and Ruth McCartan organized and researched the tour which sold out two Molly's Trolleys. For the sake of historical correctness the four climbed the

overgrown and steep hill across from Microbac laboratories on McKnight Road to determine the correct location of the trolley right-of-way.

The tour could not have happened without the vast knowledge and expertise of trolley guru, John Makar, who has researched the Harmony Route for years. Copies of original trolley passes and timetables were given to attendees. Bill Fronczek, former president of the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum in Washington Pa. gave an informative slide presentation a few days before the tour and traveled with the group to give expert commentary during the tour.

For all those people who missed this tour and want to learn more about local trolley history mark your 2004 February calendars. The Society is planning another original trolley event THE BULTER SHORT-LINE. Watch for details.



Lois Sundgren and David McMunn dressed for the Trolley Tour

Civil War Music Home Front

Chuck Krepley and Tom Crytzer, the duo that makes up the musical group the Home Front have a new Compact Disc out, Parlor to Campfire. The group has enriched many society events from the reception at Holmes Hall in 2002 to the recent 2003 Civil War Seminar.

The CD features a selection of war songs and popular favorites of the Civil War era. Stephen Fosters ballad "Hard Times Come Again No More" is beautifully performed in true period style. The Home Front, will again be performing at the Pittsburgh Civil War Soldiers Fair June 14-15 in the Commons of Allegheny.

The CD is selling for \$15.00 plus tax and can be purchased through the Society or at the Fair.

Local Genealogists find help

The North Hills Genealogists have published a new book entitled "Pioneer Cemeteries of Pine and Richland Townships, Allegheny Pa.". This hard bound 530 page book documents the final resting place of many early Pittsburgh and Allegheny families. Featured in this library-quality book is an Everyname index of over 7,000 names including maiden names. The cemetery committee of the genealogical has done a great service to future generations by doing readings of thousands of weathering tombstones. If you have ever walked in an old cemetery looking for a headstone containing vital information in your research chain and discovered it has faded away, you know how important this type of book is.

The book can be purchased by sending \$ 39.95 to the North Hills Genealogists, Book Order c/o Northland Public Library 300 Cumberland Road, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15237-5455.

Stories of the Civil War in Western Pennsylvania

The companion book published by the History Center for the exhibit Eye of the Storm is entitled Industry and Infantry. Editors Brian Butko and Nicholas Ciotola have selected 8 classic essays to be republished from the Western Pennsylvania Historical Society magazine collection. An array of topics are covered but the two Allegheny related ones are the construction of the massive earthen forts around Pittsburgh and Allegheny and the Sanitary Fair held in the Commons.

The book can be purchased at the History Center, with a discount if you are a member or at local bookstores. The cost \$19.95.

Allegheny City Merchandise For Sale

The Story of Old Allegheny City

Originally published by the Allegheny Centennial Committee in 1941, reprinted by the Allegheny City Society in 1994..

Hardbound Edition: \$30.00 Members; \$33.50 Non-Members Softbound Edition: \$20.00 Members; \$21.50 Non-Members

The Official 1899 Map of the City of Allegheny

Full color lithograph originally published by the City of Allegheny in 1899, reprinted by the Allegheny City Society in 1994. It is wonderfully detailed with major buildings, institutions, traction companies, inclines, engine houses and much more scaled at 1 inch = 1000 feet.

The map measures 19 ¼" wide by 17 ½" long and is printed on heavy paper stock suitable for framing. \$15.00 Members; \$18.00 Non-Members

Pa Pitt and Miss Allegheny Postcard

Originally published by Meda Logan in 1907, reprinted by the Allegheny City Society in 1996. 3 Postcards for \$4.50 Members; \$5.00 Non-Members

Coffee Mug - The Allegheny City Society

Very nice ceramic coffee mug, white with black image of the Allegheny City Society seal on one side and the Allegheny Free Public Library on the other. Mugs are available while they last. \$5.00 for members and \$7.00 for non-members.

Tour Booklets From different annual tours of the Allegheny City Society. The multiple page booklets are chock full of historical details and numerous illustrations: **Brighton Heights (Davisville), Troy Hill,**

Duquesne Boro, and Frederick Osterling in Allegheny Pa.

Booklets are \$5.00 each for members and \$7.00 each for non-members.

Booklet - *When I Look Back and Think*, by Susan Cooper Walker - a former resident writes about growing up and her life in Brighton Heights.

Cost \$8.00 members and \$9.00 non-members

Book -*The History of the City of Allegheny Fire Department* by Mary Wohleber already in the second printing, relates the history of the Fire Companies of Allegheny City and the men who fought and risked their lives to make Allegheny City safe. The book is autographed by Troy Hill and the Northside's most noted historian.

Cost: \$19.95

All prices include sales tax. A one-time shipping/handling fee of \$2.50 must accompany any mail order for multiple "ship to" addresses add \$2.50 for each address. Please make check or money order payable to The Allegheny City Society and mail to:

The Allegheny City Society

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