

THE NEW ALLEGHENY CITY SOCIETY

Reporter Dispatch

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Welcome to the Allegheny City Society's newsletter and journal and history of Allegheny City. Upcoming issues will bring you more information about Society events and stories of the history of Allegheny City and its residents.

Soldier's Monument

With the help of the City of Pittsburgh, the restoration of the Allegheny County Civil War Monument is almost complete. The City stepped in last summer and agreed to pay for moving the stone tablets in the ground in front of the monument and also covering the facing concrete retaining wall with stone that would match the finish that was on the wall when the Monument was moved to from Monument Hill.

In a moving ceremony, the Monument was rededicated on Veterans Day, November 2004. Over 100 people including Civil War reenactors and Society members attended the rededication. After the ceremony, there was a reception at the Inn on the Mexican War Streets. Thanks to Jeff and Carl the innkeepers for their help on this special day.



Mrs. Abraham Lincoln (Joanne Shelby at the November dedication

monument were completed. This was followed by more fund-raising and in 2004, \$5000 was donated by Columbia Gas of Western Pennsylvania that enabled the project to reach its current state of completion.

Still ahead are the plantings around the base of the monument and signage explaining the significance of the Monument.



Society Treasurer Ruth McCartan at the dedication in November

The Society would like to thank all those who helped in this effort including The Greater Pittsburgh Pennsylvania Civil War Roundtable, Ninth Pennsylvania Reserves, Lois Sundgren, Marini and Richards, Mike Gable of the City of Pittsburgh Department of Public Works, Ruth Byers of Community College, Al Stone, and Mayor Tom Murphy.

The restoration began more than five years ago when the Society, with a grant from the Department of Economic Development performed a survey on the condition of the monument. Over the several years, the Society sponsored The Pittsburgh Civil War Soldier's Fair and Civil War Seminar to raise money for the project. The money raised by these events helped secure money from the City of Pittsburgh monument restoration fund and in 2003 the cleaning and repointing of the

Save the date
April 27, 2005 - 7:00 p.m.
Allegheny City Society Annual Meeting
Calvary United Methodist Church

Upcoming Mary Cassatt Program

On May 22, 2005, The Allegheny City Society will host a lecture, at the Allegheny Campus of CCAC, by Sally Webster, Professor of Modern & Contemporary Art at Lehman College of the City University of New York marking the 161st anniversary of the birth of famed artist and native Alleghenian, Mary Cassatt. The lecture will be at the Tom Forester Student Center (2nd floor).

Webster will be presenting findings gathered for her 2004 publication entitled, *Eve's Daughter/Modern Woman: A Mural by Mary Cassatt* (University of Illinois Press), a ground breaking book which challenges the art world to view Cassatt as not "merely the creator of sentimental images of mothers and children" but as an artist of radical convictions. Webster bases her research on the Cassatt mural *Modern Women*, created for "The Women's Building" at the 1893 World's Fair in Chicago.

In 1859 essayist Thomas Wentworth Higginson wrote in the *Atlantic Monthly* that education for women would bring about "Frightful results which have followed this taste of the fruit tree of knowledge [and] the woman who knows the alphabet has already lost a portion of her innocence." A decade later, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony formed the National Women's Suffrage Association, By 1892, for the first time in history, women were planning to be part of a world's fair. The World Columbian Exposition, scheduled to open in Chicago in 1893, would include "The Women's Building."

One artist was to be selected to create an evocative 58 ft X 12 ft mural for the Women's Building, entitled "*Modern Women*," a manifesto which would triumphantly illustrate how women had broken from servitude since the time of Adam and Eve to emerge as a powerful force in modern civilization. Mary Cassatt, respected as a fierce advocate for women's emancipation, was chosen to create the masterpiece. She courageously accepted the challenge. Her mural was hung in the Hall of Honor but sadly no longer exists.

Last year we were all delighted with the lectures of Dr. Nancy Mowll Matthews in celebration of Cassatt's Allegheny legacy. Building on this new tradition, we hope that you will please join us for this highly anticipated lecture by Sally Webster, also a world-renowned authority on Mary Cassatt. Please watch your mailbox for a postcard announcement. — Barbara Ruane & David Grinnell

Mary Cassatt Programs sponsored by the Allegheny City Society

One of the many missions the Allegheny City Society has undertaken is to insure the legacy of Mary Cassatt, born in Allegheny in 1844, is remembered. As a result, board member Barbara Ruane has visited schools libraries and other organizations to tell of Mary Cassatt's life and art.

"Cassatt was passionate about literature and created numerous paintings of readers immersed in their books," says Ms. Ruane.

On January 11, 2005, the Allegheny City Society donated four copies of Cassatt biographies, *Mary Cassatt, Family Pictures* by Jane O'Conner to the Beginning With Books Storymobile.

Beginning with Books is one of the oldest early literacy organizations in the country and is built upon the strong link between reading aloud regularly to children from infancy and their later success in school.

The Society also had a booth at the Home and Garden Show that highlighted Mary Cassatt's work, the dedication of the Mary Cassatt historical marker and plans for the new garden to be built at the corner of Ridge and Allegheny Avenues.

Membership Survey

Enclosed with this newsletter is a survey prepared by board secretary David McMunn. The Society would like to know what kind of programs and events that you would enjoy. Rumor has it that one of the persons who returns a survey will be the winner of a gift certificate from Max's Allegheny Tavern. Please respond today. **Thanks.**



Dr. Sally Webster

ACS Board Members attend Allegheny Commons Restoration Pilot Program Groundbreaking

Board members of the Society turned out for the groundbreaking on for the Allegheny Commons Pilot Project that will transform the area of East Park from West Ohio Street to the Hampton's Battery into a demonstration for the recommendations of the recent master plan in a section of the 80-acre park at East Ohio St. and Cedar Ave.

Phase One of the Pilot Project includes new paths, historic lighting and the addition of thirty-one



Board members (l to r) Barbara Ruane, Eleanor Coleman, Ruth McCartan, Michael Coleman, David Grinnell, John Canning and Ruth McCartan, Sr. at the groundbreaking

trees. Phase Two will add benches, a perimeter railing and new signage. Phase One funding has been secured from the City of Pittsburgh, the Heinz Endowments, Allegheny General Hospital, Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, Equitable Resources Foundation and an anonymous donor.

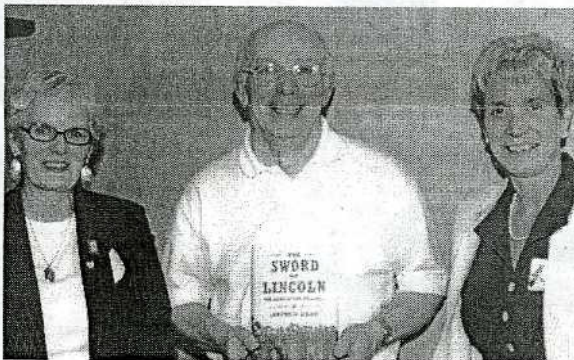
Completed in 2002, the Allegheny Commons Master Plan by Pressley Associates of Cambridge,

MA outlines a program of rehabilitation and maintenance for the 137-year old park. The Buhl Foundation, the National Aviary, the City of Pittsburgh, the Richard King Mellon Foundation and The Garden Club of Allegheny County funded the two-year study.

The park restoration is guided by the Allegheny Commons Steering Committee, a volunteer group of Northside residents and various park stakeholders formed to preserve and protect the park. Ongoing operating support is provided from the following Northside businesses: Babb, Inc., Citizens Bank, the Pittsburgh Steelers and Merrill Stabile/D.L. Clark Building.

Additional projects in Allegheny Commons in 2005 include landscape improvements in West Common and the planting of twenty trees along North Ave. The Laurel Foundation, the Allegheny Foundation and The Garden Club of Allegheny County are funding these initiatives.

Fifth Civil War Seminar a Success



The Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Roundtable and the Allegheny City Society held the Annual Seminar at the Holiday House on McKnight Road. The day included speakers including Dr. Jeffry Wert, author of *The Sword Of Lincoln*. Pictured at left are Ullie Bauman, president of the Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Roundtable; author Jerry Wert; and Society Treasurer, Ruth McCartan

Upcoming Events

In addition to the talk in April By Sally Webster, the Society is planning to hold a Show and Tell event in late August or early September. This will be a chance for all to bring in their Allegheny City memorabilia for display. In addition, the Society plans on having a photographer present to copy an Allegheny City photographs for preservation in the Society's archives.

Society Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Allegheny City Society will be held on April 27, 2006 at Calvary United Methodist Church (corner of Allegheny and Beech Avenues). The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Before the meeting visitors can view Calvary Church's magnificent Tiffany stained glass windows from 6:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. A member of the church will be on hand to talk about the history of the windows and the church.

The William Rimmell Award will be presented to Ed and Mary Ann Graf. The Graf's were responsible for the restoration of The Priory, A City Inn; turning St. Mary's Church into The Great Hall at the Priory; and recently restored 528 East Ohio Street and opening The Priory Fine Pastry Shop in the building. Their long-term commitment to the North Side and the history of Allegheny City is something for which we can all be proud.

The speaker for this meeting is Jerry Ellis from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission who will discuss the *Allegheny City Archives: A View of 19th Century Urban History*.

The official Allegheny City archives had been stored first at the Allegheny Regional Branch of Carnegie Library, then at a warehouse of the University of Pittsburgh. The archive, consisting of 43 pallets were moved to Harrisburg in 2003.

"Here's a 19th-century collection. A complete package," said Jerry Ellis in an article in the *Pittsburgh Post Gazette* in August 2004.

Among the documents are records from the public graveyards that opened in 1843, payroll records for teachers and Allegheny City employees, minute books from the commission for public buildings including specifications for a soldier's monument, and criminal and financial records.

The financial records are contained in more than 300 volumes including bond books, fees paid by merchants, and correspondence from various Allegheny City departments.



John Canning, board historian reviews some of the Allegheny City archives before they were moved to Harrisburg

Society Part of Lincoln Exhibit at Community College

Society president, John Lyon, held a talk on *Abraham Lincoln and Civil War Railroads* during the *Forever Free, Abraham Lincoln's Journey to Emancipation* that was held at the Allegheny Campus of Community College last fall.

In addition to the talk, Mr. Lyon conducted a tour of Civil War sites in the Allegheny Commons. Featured were the Soldier's, Armstrong and Hampton Battery monuments. The history of the park, the Widow's Home in the Mexican War Streets and Sanitary Fair of 1863 were discussed.

At right, Mr. Lyon talks about the original site of the Soldier's Monument on the hill overlooking Ridge Avenue



**Volunteer to help the Allegheny City Society
It's a great way to learn about the history of
the North Side
Telephone: (412) 322-8807**