
The Allegheny City Society **REPORTER DISPATCH**

The Journal of Old Allegheny History and Lore

Winter, 2007

Great Event Planned for Annexation Commemoration

A banquet to mark the anniversary of the annexation of Allegheny City by the City of Pittsburgh will be held at the Grand Hall at the Priory in Deutschtown (aka East Allegheny) on Thursday, December 6th from 6 to 10PM. It will include an entertaining program featuring Barbara Russell and pianist Tom Roberts. The three-course dinner will include a choice of Vegetarian, Chicken or Pork. The cost for this event will be \$30 per person. A Cash Bar will be available all evening. Advanced reservations are required and must be received by November 27th. Send your check to the Allegheny Society, including a phone number and address. Please indicate your choice of entrée. Business attire is suggested.



The Grand Hall at the Priory (the former St. Mary's) is located at the corner of Lockart and Nash (reach via Pressley). Valet parking is available.

On April 13, 1840, the Borough of Allegheny (formed April 14, 1828) was incorporated as Allegheny City. As we all know, Allegheny City, which had become the third largest city in the Commonwealth, ceased to exist as a separate city on December 7, 1907 when it was annexed by the City of Pittsburgh (over the objections of many Allegheny citizens). The election that decided the annexation was set up so the majority of the combined vote in both cities would determine the outcome. Although the majority of the voters in Allegheny opposed it, the majority of the voters in Pittsburgh wanted it. Pittsburgh had a population of about 350,000 in 1907 and Allegheny had a population of about 150,000. We didn't have a chance!



This is the postcard (originally a political cartoon, published in 1907) that depicted Pa Pitt escorting Miss Allegheny across the river.

Allegheny City 1840-1907

Hot off the Press

Allegheny City 1840-1907 has been published on schedule, and will be available for sale at the banquet on December 6th at a price of \$21, which includes sales tax. The ACS is accepting mail orders now. That price is \$22.50 including tax and shipping.

This book, published by Arcadia Publishing Co., includes over 200 images which serve to document the short history of this remarkable city.

North Side Bus Tour a Great Success

If you were busy doing yard work on Saturday, October 20, you missed a premier event: a guided, all day, bus tour of all the wards of Allegheny City, starting with the early first wards and ending at the various edges of the City. From the Commons to Riverview Park, from Irish, German and Italian ethnic churches to a present day state prison or long closed orphanage, no historical, cultural, or natural sites were missed. It was not all older or lost sites that the bus stopped at, two present day coffee shops, the Vault in Brighton Heights and Amani in East Allegheny were visited: a time to get to know your fellow passengers and enjoy a cup of your favorite hot beverage.

One area was missed, as the bus company owners stated the streets were too narrow to be safe: Fineview. The company must not have realize that PAT buses go up into those hills everyday. The streets of Fineview would have been easy compared to the drive down Voskamp Street with parked cars on either side, or the straight up climb on Goshen. The bus driver sure could maneuver that bus.

A passenger was heard to say, "I was on streets I was never on today and I live on the North Side." Everyone learned something new about the great former City of Allegheny, and had fun doing it. Not all of the sites in the North Side could be viewed in one day, but the group did manage to see the natural spring for which the Spring Hill area was named.

Thanks for the success of the day go to David McMunn, John Canning, Amelia Gehron and Marian Helffrich.



Mary Ann Knochel , Darlane Able, and Janet Faxio (with David McMunn in the background) discussing Allegheny City events in front of Amani's Coffee Shop



Dedication of the Barbara Ruane Memorial

Saturday, September 29th was a beautiful sunny day and a fine setting for the dedication of the memorial to Barbara Ruane in the Mary Cassatt Garden, located at the corner of Ridge and Allegheny Avenues. Barbara, an Allegheny City Society Board member, was the guiding spirit and a dynamic force in the creation of the Cassatt Garden and in telling the story of Mary Cassatt, the great impressionist artist who was born near the location of the garden.

Barbara's husband, Harry Pinkofsky, her sisters and brothers from New York, Maryland, and Virginia, and representatives from PennDOT, joined a number of Allegheny City Society members in the dedication of the memorial. Alicia Volk, Barbara's sister, added soil from Mary Cassatt's home in France to that in the flowerbed surrounding the memorial. On the memorial were the following: "Barbara Ruane, April 27, 1944 – October 10, 2006, a woman of great courage, who decorated life and the world with beauty, joy, and love."

The Allegheny City Society's Cassatt Garden/Ruane Memorial Fund will be used to maintain and expand the beauty of this site, a fitting tribute to two wonderful women. Contributions will be gratefully accepted by the Society.

Event at Bridge Cancelled

The December 7th event at the Clemente Bridge has been cancelled. The mayor will be out of town at a conference so the Society would have to pick up the entire cost of Security and Stage Rental. The Board of the ACS regrets that we were unable to hold this event as planned.



Workingman's Savings Bank Building Saved from the Wrecking Ball

The Allegheny City Society, partnered with the East Allegheny Community Council, has nominated the former Workingman's Savings Bank & Trust Company Building as a City Historic Structure. This building, located at the corner of Madison and East Ohio Streets, was constructed in 1902 with a one bay addition added in 1921.

After much research by Michael Shealey and Timothy Zinn, both members of the ACS, it was determined that the building was constructed by the A & S Wilson Company. The architect, as was typical of this period, was not identified, but records indicate that Giaver & Dinkelberg designed the addition. These gentlemen had been employed by D.H. Burnham & Co. in 1902 and thus this building can probably be classified as a "Burnham Building".

While employed by Burnham, Dickleberg is credited with producing landmark designs for the Flatiron Building (1902) in New York City, and the Hayworth Building and the Railway Exchange Building, both in Chicago (1904), among many others.

Giaver is credited with involvement in the design of several bridges over the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers. While with Burnham he supervised the structural design of over 400 buildings, including the Frick and Oliver Buildings in Pittsburgh.

Under President Emil Winter, the bank became a state bank with "principle office" in Allegheny City. Emil was also the Executive Director of the Pittsburgh Exposition of 1902.

When the original Exposition burnt down in 1901, he hired Burnham to design its replacement.

The nomination of the Workingman's bank as an historic structure has passed its first hurdle. On November 7th, the Pittsburgh Historic Review Commission (HRC) responded to the presentation of the nomination by the ACS by voting to accept the nomination as non-frivolous. That means that the building is now protected and cannot be demolished nor altered without permission by the HRC until the Pittsburgh City Council determines its final status. The HRC will hear public testimony at its next meeting and will make a decision at its following meeting as to whether to recommend its historic designation to the City Council.

According to the Pittsburgh City code, a structure can only be designated as historic if it meets one or more of ten criteria. The ACS believes that it meets at least two: *"Its exemplification of an architectural type, style, or design distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness, or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship"*; and *"Its association with important cultural or social aspects or events in the history of the City of Pittsburgh, the State of Pennsylvania, the Mid-Atlantic region, or the United States."*

After the HRC makes its recommendation, the City Planning Commission will evaluate the nomination and also make a recommendation to the City Council. When both recommendations have been received, the City Council will make the final decision.



Allegheny City Society
P.O. Box 100255
Pittsburgh, PA 15233-0255

Non Profit Org.
US Postage Paid
Pittsburgh, PA
Permit 3842

Happy Thanksgiving

