

THE ALLEGHENY CITY SOCIETY

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# REPORTER DISPATCH

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## Colonel James Anderson

### A life of service, business and books

Tom Wilson

The Andersons believed in service: service to their country, and service to their communities.

James Anderson's father, William Anderson, was born in Belfast in 1747. Perhaps the Andersons were in Ireland at that point because they had to flee Scotland. They may have been Jacobites who lost with Bonnie Prince Charlie at Culloden in 1745. William came to America in 1772 and settled in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. In 1776 he volunteered with Colonel William Irwin's Pennsylvania Regiment, and served with honor during the Invasion of Canada, fighting at the battle of Three Rivers.

The Invasion of Canada was not successful, but some prominent Pennsylvanians were there, including Arthur St. Clair and Anthony Wayne.

An army marches on its stomach, and Colonel Wayne put Anderson in charge of the foraging parties and commissary, after the retreat from Canada, where he rose to the rank of Major. He went on to cross the Delaware and take part in the Battle of Trenton, and winter at Valley Forge.

After the war, he moved farther west, and with his knowledge of supplying hardware, became a renowned contractor and builder, erecting public buildings in Huntington and Bedford, Pennsylvania. Success at those jobs got him the contract to build the White House at Washington in 1792.

William Anderson moved to Pittsburgh in 1797, and got into business, opening the first steam-powered saw mill and the second steam-powered grist mill west of the Alleghenies. Lumber and logs poured out of his mill, and he also opened a brickyard to meet the construction demands of the new, growing city.

He married Mary Cann, and they had four children: William, Paul, James and Clarissa. Clarissa was also prominent in the early days of Pittsburgh, as she went on to marry John

Herron, the man for whom Herron Hill was named, later Mayor of Pittsburgh 1849-1850.

Son, James was born on the family farm in Shippensburg on August 3, 1785. In 1811, he married Miss Ann Miller. James became a colonel because of his work in the War of 1812.

In addition to the more familiar battles, a lesser-known part of the War of 1812 occurred in the new state of Ohio, where the British were moving in from Canada. The British were arming and stirring up Tecumseh and many of the rebellious tribes across the Midwest. Some federal troops and a few state militias under General William Henry Harrison were out on the frontier and needed supplies. A convoy of 50 wagons left the Allegheny Commons on November 1, 1812 to carry artillery and supplies to the troops. Colonel James Anderson and his brother Paul headed up the supply effort with a company of militia and a group of volunteer Allegheny teamsters.

There wasn't much road to speak of across the northern part of Ohio, and lake-effect snow made for rather slow going. Brother Paul would lead foraging parties to contribute to the supplies (keeping foraging in the family business!). The terms of the volunteer agreement paid the teamsters \$20 a month, and they had agreed to drive until the 12th of December. They wanted to go home once they reached Mansfield. Colonel Anderson offered them a dollar a day in additional wages and since they were entering enemy territory, armed each teamster with a gun. They arrived at the Upper Sandusky and delivered their supplies to the American forces there on New Year's Day, 1813. One of the accounts of the teamsters relates that they left the horses, were given some tents and rations, and had to walk back to Allegheny!

The army and supplies at Upper Sandusky were then sent to General Harrison at Fort Meigs, the site that spring of one of the war's heroic moments and arguably the turning point in the war in the northwest. The Americans' successful repulse of the British and Indian forces at the siege of Fort Meigs was followed by Perry's victory on Lake Erie.

continued on page 2

In peacetime, James Anderson prospered with the growth of Pittsburgh. Early on, he partnered with his brother-in-law John Herron and bought father William's saw mill and brickyard at Eighth Street and Penn Avenue. His family with Ann grew. They had six children, but only three lived to maturity: Isabella, Henry and William. Partnering with prominent Pittsburghers, he formed the Allegheny Bridge Company in 1816. He built the Juniata Rolling Mill in 1824 near the present site of PNC Park, which was at the time the third-largest iron works in western Pennsylvania.

In 1830, he purchased two of the out lots north of Pittsburgh, in what would become Manchester Borough, and built a large house.

He served on the board of The Exchange Bank and the Western Pennsylvania Hospital House of Refuge; he was the inspector of the Western Penitentiary and President of the Manchester Savings Bank.

We surmise that he was an avid reader or at least a collector of books. He established *The James Anderson Library and Institute of Allegheny City* in 1850. It was first located in the second story of a building standing on the corner of Federal and Diamond Streets, and contained but a few hundred books. (During the uncertain times of the Civil War, the books were stored in the basement of Allegheny City Hall.) He also gave 400 books to the Borough of Manchester.

James's wife Ann died in May of 1859, and James followed two years later on March 11, 1861, at the ripe old age of 77 years.



Colonel James Anderson

## 2018 Annual Meeting

### Allegheny City Society celebrates the legacy of Col. James Anderson

The Annual Meeting of the Allegheny City Society was held at the Col. James Anderson house in Manchester on April 25th.

The meeting was called to order by John Canning, Vice President. A slate of Board candidates was elected that included new Directors, Mark Tomlinson, Sarah and Charles Schneider, and the re-election of Director Amelia Gehron. The newly elected Directors will serve until 2021.

This year's program comprised a series of brief presentations by Board members, all relating to Col. Anderson. These included Col. Anderson's life, the Anderson house & property, Anderson and libraries, the Home for Christian Women, and the work of the Manchester Historic Society.

The 2018 William M. Rimmel Award was presented to the Manchester Historic Society for their work in helping to preserve and promote the history of Manchester.

The Manchester Historic Society was founded in 1996 with an initial focus on encouraging the retention and restoration of historic houses in the neighborhood. In recent years, their mission has expanded to supporting the neighborhood through cleanup days, showcasing Manchester's success stories on an annual house tour, supporting neighborhood organizations and projects, and preserving the organization's new home, the Colonel James Anderson House.





# The Anderson House

## From country manor to urban landmark

Donald Zeilman

James Anderson purchased two out lots in the Reserve Tract from the Bank of Pittsburgh, being part of the Cromwell Farm situated near the Ohio River about one mile from Pittsburgh. The lots had been surveyed for the Bank of Pittsburgh in September 1827.

A warranty deed dated May 4, 1830, conveyed the lots (258 & 259) to James Anderson for the sum of \$2940. Out Lot 258 was bounded on the west by Lot 259, and on the south by a country lane (Beaver Lane). Out Lot 259 was bounded on the east by Lot 258, on the west by the Beaver Road, and on the south by Beaver Lane. The current boundaries of the property would be roughly, Pennsylvania Avenue to North Franklin Street, Fulton Street to Beaver Avenue. Each of the original lots was approximately 10 acres in size.

Shortly after acquiring the property, Anderson had a house built along the front ridge of Lot 259. The house faced south towards Pittsburgh, down the long slope to Beaver Lane (Pennsylvania Avenue). The west side of the house faced the Beaver Road and the Ohio River.

The original house was square in plan, constructed of hand-made brick masonry laid up in common bond pattern. The style was ostensibly Federal, with the unusual arrangement of principal rooms placed a full story above grade. The low-sloped gable roof appears to have had no dormers, but the paired chimneys on the sides of the house were ganged and extended through the eave line. There is evidence of corner pilasters at the front of the house.

The principal entrance doors, with sidelights and elliptical transoms, appear to have been at the upper level as well. Such an arrangement would have required exterior stairs and possibly galleries.

The section of Manchester adjacent to the river was laid out in 1832, and the whole area was incorporated as a Borough in 1843. During those early years, Anderson's property became part of a new grid of streets. Anderson must have subdivided the resulting blocks, and sold off lots, because, by his death in 1861, the property included only the area around the house.

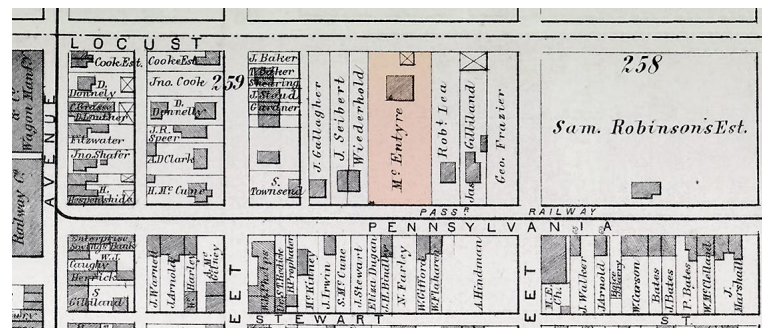
When he died, the house and adjacent property passed to his three adult children: Isabella B. Burnett, Henry S. and William G. Anderson. In 1865, the heirs sold the remaining property to Jonathan Gallagher.

Manchester became part of Allegheny City in 1867 just prior to the Gallaghers selling the property to Joseph McIntire. It was McIntire who sold the southern portion of the property, fronting Pennsylvania Avenue to William Frazier in 1872.

The large house that Frazier built on the property in 1875-76 was in the Italianate style. The sale left the Anderson house with a lot 110x122 feet, and a street face on Locust. The grading of Locust Street over time cut deeply into the ground adjacent to the house, and the new front yard became a steep slope.

In 1881 the house was purchased by the Women's Christian Association of Pittsburgh & Allegheny for development as a shelter for elderly Christian women. It functioned as the Christian Home for Women until 1983 – over 100 years!

The house was remodeled in 1905, and a twenty-one room annex was added. This Georgian Revival addition and renovation modified substantial parts of the original house. The north façade was re-faced with the same brick as was used for the annex, matching its running bond pattern as well. Dormers appear to have been added to the main house matching those on the annex, probably to increase living space in the attic story. The ganged chimney wall extensions were removed. A substantial new, two-story portico was built on the north façade, which had long served as the street face of the building.



Joseph McIntire (McEntyre) acquired the house and remaining property in 1869. The house faced Pennsylvania Avenue, and included a small out building at the back, along Locust Street. The “front yard” was sold to William Frazier in 1872.

In 1983 the Presbyterian Association on Aging assumed responsibility for ongoing management of *Anderson Manor* and converted it to a licensed personal care facility. In 1985, the Association began an extensive renovation program which included modernizing the heating system, installing a three-stop elevator, as well as complete interior and exterior renovations, all consistent with the historic nature of the house.

The Manchester Historic Society acquired the property in 2016 with plans to restore the original house to its early 19th-century appearance and possibly replicate Anderson's library.

Special thanks to Frank Stroker at Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation for providing copies of deed documents relating to the house and property.

# Bungalow on Chautauqua Street

## Appreciating a Carol Peterson House History

Janel Gunter

In 1887, Richard Pearson was elected Mayor of Allegheny City with the motto of: "...for the good of all, not for the limited few." Mayor Pearson served as a popular administrator at the time during which he recommended the expenditure of more than a million dollars for street improvements. After 1891 he couldn't be convinced to run a second campaign for Mayor and upon his retirement from public life he resumed his prominent position in the real estate world, and formed a partnership with Simon Kirschler, who had served as chief of police under his administration.

Upon his death in 1917 part of his extensive property holdings came to his son, Clarence, who, about 1924, built two small bungalow-style houses on property on what had been Clifton Avenue, now Chautauqua Street, as rental incomes.

Frank and Edna Rouse were the first tenants of 418 Chautauqua, and lived there with their four small children until their move to another rental in the 1930s.

In 1930 Henry and Emma DeBerry rented the house with their son Graham for \$45 a month. Between 1931 and 1937 the house was rented to Edward and Anna Pefferman. Between 1938 and 1940 the house was rented to Arthur and Marie Baroni. Between 1941 and 1943 the house was rented to Albert and Sarah Brunner. Between 1943 and 1948 the house was rented to Frederick and Elsie Valentine and they were likely the last tenants of Clarence Pearson.

Clarence Pearson died in 1942 and, following situations similar to many landlords and homeowners after the Great Depression of the 1930s and WW II, many of his properties fell into foreclosure sales to City and County control. In 1946, along with other Pearson properties, it was sold to the City and School District of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County for \$220.

In 1949, Carl & Irene Fisher bought the house for \$2,601 and became the first owner-occupants of the house. In 1953 the house was sold to Christian & Marion Kramer for \$7,800. In 1969 the house was sold to Charles & Rose Stanley for \$9,000.

Charles worked as a neighborhood handyman and truck driver and Rose worked, as it was known then, as a "domestic." Mr. Stanley's workbench is still prominent in the basement of the house, as is his row of baby food jar lids attached to the bottom of a high shelf in the basement; no doubt once holding those little jars filled with screws, nut and bolts. When I first came into the house in 1985 – when it had been abandoned for several years – there were still paint-by-number portraits of Martin Luther King, Jr. and John F. Kennedy on the walls.

Charles passed away in 1977 and Rose died in 1980. The house at 418 Chautauqua was once again in foreclosure.

I bought it in 1986 for back taxes owed: \$3,088. In March of 2008, the title for 418 Chautauqua was placed in the names of Janet Gunter and Tom Wilson in consideration of love and affection. Tom and I lived in the little "Bungalow of Dreams" until recently. It was sold to someone who I'm sure will care for it and respect its history.

If you have a Carol Peterson House History that you would like to share with the Allegheny City Society, contact us by e-mail at [info@alleghenycity.org](mailto:info@alleghenycity.org)

Please make House History your subject line, and provide the address of the house under discussion. Thank you!

## Summer Series Success

### A series of short historic talks in The Groves

John Canning

This Summer, the Society shifted into "high gear" in creating a series of short historic talks in the section of the Allegheny Commons Park known as "The Groves." The City administration, aware of the negative impact that the closing of West Ohio Street had on Gus and Yia-Yia's Ice-Ball stand, stepped in to organize Tuesday afternoon events to draw folks into the park. The ACS joined in this effort by creating a series of short talks every Tuesday evening in July and August. These talks focused on a variety of topics; Lafayette's afternoon reception at the Barlow-Preble home, Benjamin Tanner's career that started at the Avery Institute and Western Theological Seminary in the mid-19th century, the Commons as an enlistment center and training group for Col. Clark's 123th regiment in the Civil War, the biography of Jazz drummer Joe Harris, the Western State Penitentiary's operation within the Commons, and the dynamic leadership of North-Side activist Ethel Hegler. Some evenings had larger numbers of attendees than others, but all of the programs concluded in time for folks to walk over the chose their favorite flavor at Gus Kalaris's world-renowned Ice-Ball cart!



## Fall Excursions 2018

### Trips highlight ties to Allegheny City & the North Side

On Thursday October 4, ACS will be sponsoring a trip to the Museum of Ceramic History in East Liverpool, Ohio, and the Homer Laughlin China Company factory – the home of *Fiestaware*® – across the Ohio River in Newell, West Virginia. This section of the Ohio River valley had long standing ties to Allegheny City and Pittsburgh.

This area of eastern Ohio had great veins of clay that helped to make it a center of 19th and early 20th century, nationally recognized potteries. The Museum highlights many of the extraordinary products produced there in the pre-plastic world. The trip will include a look at the many Fiestaware products in their signature range of colors. The group will also have time to shop in the Fiestaware Outlet.

The tour will leave the North Side at 9:00AM and return by 4:00PM. Tour cost is \$50, which includes transportation, entrance fees, and lunch. For reservations call 412 766-5670 (H) or 412 860-6348 (C). September 30 is the deadline for reservations.

Then, on Saturday, November 10, a group will be heading to the Westmoreland Museum of American Art in Greensburg. At The Westmoreland, which added a great new gallery since the last tour over a decade ago, the group will focus its atten-

tion on works that were created by Allegheny City and North Side artists, such as Mary Cassatt, George Hetzel, Frederick Demmler, and Thaddeus Mosley. The trip will coincide with that 100th anniversary of Frederick Demmler's untimely death in Belgium during the final days of the World War I.

The tour group will gather on the North Side at 9:30AM and return by 4:00PM. Tour cost is also \$50, which includes transportation and lunch in Greensburg. For reservations call 412 766-5670 (H) or 412 860-6348 (C). November 5 is the deadline for reservations.



Westmoreland Museum of American Art  
Photo by Roy Engelbrecht

## Frederick Demmler

### An Allegheny City artist lost too soon

John Canning

Among the art works produced by Allegheny City/North Side artists that are part of the Westmoreland Museum of American Art collection are those of Frederick Demmler.

One of the seven children of Edward and Wilhelmina Meyer Demmler, Frederick grew up in a large house at the corner of Franklin Street and Chateau Avenue in Manchester. He attended the 6th Ward school of Allegheny City and graduated from Allegheny High School in 1907. After studying at Cornell University for two years, Demmler came to recognize that his major interest was improving and expanding his gift for painting, which led him to study at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

As a student at Allegheny High, Demmler was both a pupil and friend of Willa Cather, who was part of the school's English faculty. Perhaps it was this interaction with literature that motivated Demmler to read and study the works of Ibsen, Strindberg, Shaw and Synge.

In 1914, Demmler traveled to Europe with a friend and classmate, where he was able to meet such luminaries as Henry James

and John Singer Sargent. Following the start of the First World War, Demmler returned to Pittsburgh and set up a studio in a building at the rear of his parent's house.

In the following few years he moved his studio to the Garrison building at the corner of Third Avenue and Wood Street in Pittsburgh. It was in this studio, during the years 1915 to 1918 that most of Demmler's works were painted.

During those years the artist took an active role in the recently established Associated Artist of Pittsburgh. His work, *The Black Hat* (presently part of the collection at the Carnegie Institute of Art) was selected for the 1914 Carnegie International. In 1916 he was awarded the third prize at the exhibition of the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh. His portrait, *Vera* was the first work selected by the One Hundred Friends of Art for placement in the Pittsburgh Public Schools.

Late in 1917, as he became more deeply involved in the war, Demmler struggled with his pacifist beliefs and the demands of the national draft. He was drafted in April 1918, and by the summer's end was on the lines of the Western Front. On October 31 of that year, twelve days before the war's end, Demmler was gravely wounded by a shell fragment from which he died on November 2. He was only 30 years of age.



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## Bishop Benjamin Tucker Tanner

David R. Grinnell

Today in Pittsburgh, few know the name of Benjamin Tucker Tanner, but more than one hundred years ago many would have known this man's influence and name throughout the country. Born in Pittsburgh's lower hill in 1835, few would anticipate the influence he would have on life, culture and education in the African-American community.

Like his father, Benjamin would learn to be a barber, but it wasn't long before he felt drawn to education. In the early 1850s he enrolled in the Allegheny Institute, later known as Avery College, in Allegheny City, where he would gain a foundation in classical education. After only a year at the Institute, Tanner was drawn to a career in ministry, and became a student at the Western Theological Seminary, graduating just before the beginning of the American Civil War. Following graduation, he was ordained in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. He was called to serve the 15th Street Presbyterian Church in Washington D.C. Here he laid the foundation of his ministry – empowering African-Americans to educate themselves. While in Washington, and wherever he found himself stationed as a pastor (and later, Bishop), he would help to create “learned” or “literary” societies within the churches he was ministering to.

In 1872, the AME General Conference appointed Tanner to become the editor of the *Christian Witness*, the official newspaper of the denomination. During his tenure as editor, the newspaper would have the largest distribution of any black newspaper/periodical in the nation. During his life, Tanner was known to have been the author of numerous books on history and theology, particularly focused on the role of Africans and African-Americans in society and the world. Thus, he has been considered one of the great thinkers of 19th century African-American society.

In 1888, Tanner was elected a Bishop of the AME denomination and would travel extensively. He would be elected to represent his denomination in World Methodist Conferences, and travel to England where the Methodist movement had begun. Bishop Tanner died in Washington, D.C. in 1923, in the eighth decade of his life.

While Tanner did not return to Pittsburgh to live during his ministry, many members of his family remained here. His son Carlton returned to Allegheny City to be the pastor of Brown Chapel AME Church in the early 1900s. His daughter Halle would be the first female physician in Alabama. His son, Henry Ossawa Tanner, the painter, gained international fame and resided in Paris. Pittsburgh and Allegheny City.