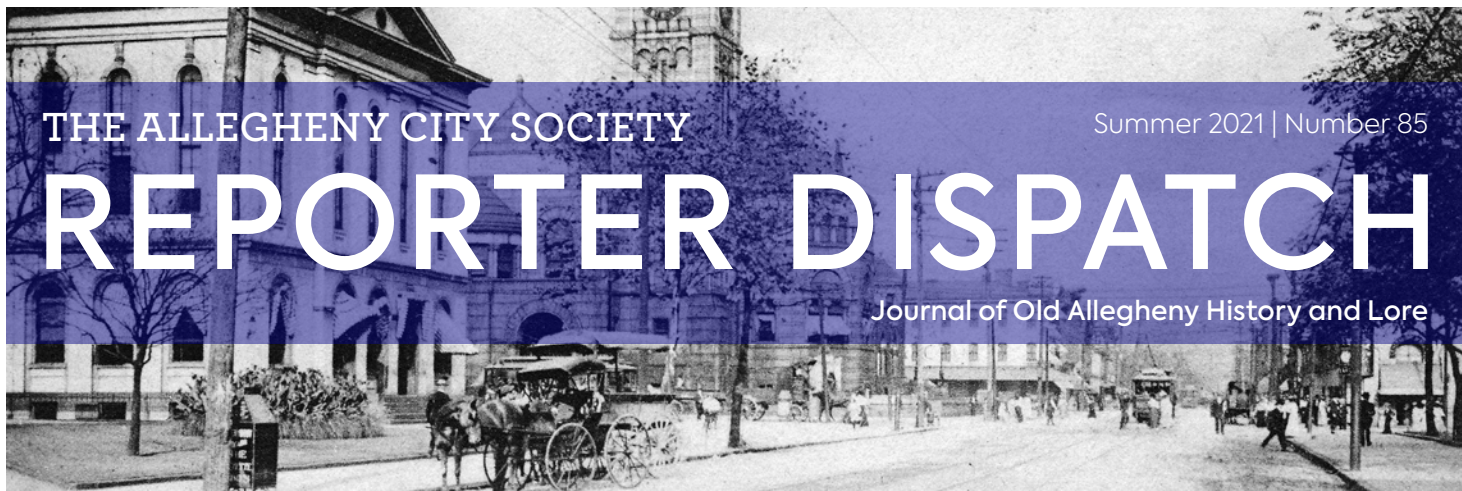


REPORTER DISPATCH

Journal of Old Allegheny History and Lore



ALTHOUGH THE TROLLEYS (or streetcars) that once traveled around the neighborhoods of Allegheny City (and later the North Side) are gone, many folks today remember them from when they were growing up. The rails are also gone, but were still on the streets for a long time after the trolleys themselves disappeared. The trolleys were called “horsecars,” but mules were also used to pull them. My husband Charlie’s, and his cousin, Father Jim Garvey’s, great grandfather Cornelius Blaney, drove a horsecar, and was then a conductor until his death in 1910 at the age of 70. During the advent of “electrical cars,” their grandfather, James Blaney was for a time a conductor, later taking a job with the post office.

According to Father Jim’s 1996 paperback *A Transfer Please: Memories of Riding the Streetcar*, horsecars first appeared in 1859 and were discontinued in 1896. He says one line went over into Manchester. The first electric streetcars appeared in 1888. It is unknown when the “electrics” appeared in Allegheny City. The Pittsburgh Railways Company, begun in 1902, gobbled up many smaller streetcar companies. People could ride all over the Pittsburgh area and beyond with normally easy transfers. The routes were numbered from 1 to 99. As these trolley routes were built up, they led to the expansion of Allegheny City.

Long-time ACS Board member and life-long North Side resident, John Canning shared, “Before learning to drive in 1955,

Trolley Memories

Sarah Schneider

my friends and I took streetcars to most places – the roller rink on Neville Island, Kennywood, the County Fair in South Park. Rides were 19 cents with a free transfer. On Sundays you could ride all day for 50 cents. We took rides to New Kensington, Charleroi, Ambridge – we being a couple of neighbor friends who were also paperboys. We always had a few bucks a week to spend on movies in town and West View Park.”

Fred Schneeman, now living in Harrisburg, says his father worked on the trolleys first at the Homewood Shop, and later at the Keating barn in Ross Township (now the site of the PAT bus garage). Mr. Schneeman had to take two trolleys to get to the Keating location. They referred to their area as the North Side (Shadeland Avenue, Superior Avenue, Brighton Road, California Avenue). The family would take the #15 Bellevue/West View or the #6 Brighton Road. The stops were either on Brighton Road or California Avenue.

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The 15 BELLVIEW on West North Avenue at Federal Street

Judy (Engle) Schreiber, a Duquesne University grad, grew up on Tripoli Street in East Allegheny. The trolleys were the #10 West View/Bellevue or the #11 East Street (rush hour only). She boarded going to town at East Street and East North Avenue. Coming from town, Judy got off at East North and Madison Avenues.

ACS member Judy (Cook) Robertson recalls, “The story goes that my Grandmother’s cats used to go up at the top of West McIntyre and wait for her to come home from the Market House on the trolley. I took the #8 Perrysville from Marshall Avenue to work at Boggs & Buhl Department Store, later to Joseph Horne’s, and then to Sears, Roebuck and Co. on the North Side. I put myself through Mt. Mercy College in Oakland. Took two streetcars to Mt. Mercy every day. One day, it snowed really hard and I had to walk from Oakland to my house on Marshall Avenue because the street cars couldn’t run.”

**The Pittsburgh Railways Company
had to dig out 150 trolleys stranded
throughout the system following the
big snow of November 24 to 27, 1950,
when a total of 28 inches of snow
blanketed the City.**

She also recalls, “I took the #8 Perrysville and transferred to the #10 West View at the car barn to go to the dances at West View Danceland every Friday when I was in high school. I also took the #8 Perrysville to town and then the #77/54 to Lexington Roller Rink on Saturdays to go roller skating. There was a #21 Fineview that came up through Spring Hill if you couldn’t get the #8 Perrysville. It came out at Perrysville Avenue and Charles Street.”

Father Garvey adds, “Quite by chance, I had the good fortune to be one of those people who rode the streetcar the last day they carried passengers across the Sixth Street Bridge to the North Side, Bellevue, Avalon and Emsworth – April 30, 1966.” “If you go to YouTube, look for a video called *Pittsburgh Streetcars in the 1960s - North Side Scenes*.” “A copy of *A Transfer, Please* is at the Pennsylvania Department of the Carnegie Library.” Father Garvey was the last pastor at St. Joseph’s Roman Catholic Church, Manchester, which closed on June 30, 1987. He wrote a history of the parish to mark its closing. As a retired priest, Father lived in and was active at Most Holy Name Parish, Troy Hill from 2009 to 2018.



The 21 FINEVIEW at Perrysville and Wilson



Stationed car 1678, Route 8 – Perrysville. The 8 PERRYSVILLE was the most heavily used North Side route, and the second-heaviest in the entire system. This car was made by the St. Louis Car Company and could seat 50 passengers.

**THE ALLEGHENY CITY AND NORTH SIDE
TROLLEY ROUTES**

- | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Spring Garden | 12 Evergreen |
| 2 Etna | 13 Emsworth |
| 3 Millvale | 14 Avalon |
| 4 Troy Hill | 15 Bellevue/West View |
| 5 Spring Hill | 16 Shadeland |
| 6 Brighton Road | 17 Reedsdale |
| 7 Charles Street | 18 Woods Run |
| 8 Perrysville | 19 Western Avenue |
| 9 Charles St. Transfer | 20 Rebecca |
| 10 West View/Bellevue | 21 Fineview |
| 11 East Street | |



Buena Vista United Methodist Church

David Grinnell

ONE HUNDRED YEARS AGO in 1921, a small group of Christians living on Pittsburgh's North Side met and formed the Charles Street Mission of the Methodist Episcopal Church under the leadership of Rev. B. J. Pogue. The setting was during the Great Migration, when numerous Black families were leaving the southern states and their rural agricultural economy behind for the hope of new beginnings in the northern cities where there was great need for industrial labor. The Black population in the Pittsburgh region was booming, and the Charles Street Valley with its proximity to the hum of manufacturing in neighboring Manchester along the Ohio River, was a significant draw. Charles Street would become a bit infamous for the new migrants settling into urban life, for it was here that the family of famed Negro League Baseball player Josh Gibson would also reside. Josh became one of the great heroes to so many young baseball players who were plying their skills in the numerous sandlot baseball diamonds around the city.

Families moving from the south would also bring many of traditions with them. While the North Side already had several well established African Methodist Episcopal and African Methodist Episcopal Zion congregations that had been founded long before the Civil War, these congregations were often home to folks with different expressions of worship. So, the new North Siders would work to establish congregations that reflected their traditions of music, praise, and celebrations. Thus, the emergence of Methodist Episcopal and Colored (now Christian) congregations occurred.

Within a few years, the Charles Street Mission would outgrow its space and need larger meeting and worship quarters. In 1930 they began worshiping in the church building on Buena Vista Street in the Mexican War Street neighborhood. The congregation that had previously occupied the building was a "white" Methodist Episcopal congregation that traced its roots back to the 1840s in Allegheny City. It had recently merged with Calvary M.E. Church at Allegheny and Beech Avenues, and continued to own the church property. But the Great Depression was in full force, and it was not easy to sustain

the budgets of a congregation still in its infancy, so the Charles Street congregation struggled, but with strong faith, and faith in one another they would survive. During this time, they began to share their space with the Phillips Temple congregation of the Colored Methodist Episcopal denomination, clearly a move that allowed them to share the expense of maintaining their worship space. By 1941, the Charles Street Mission was strong enough to petition the Washington Conference (an administrative body similar to a diocese or presbytery) to have a full-time minister assigned to shepherd this now strong and flourishing flock. Rev. J. D. Foy was assigned the task, which he fulfilled for six years.

During Rev. Foy's tenure the Phillips Temple CME congregation would officially merge with the Charles Street Mission. Calvary Church deeded the Buena Vista Street church building to the combined congregation, newly named Buena Vista Street Methodist Church. It was also during Rev. Foy's pastorate that the congregation would host the Annual Conference (the yearly meeting of ministers and lay representatives) of the Washington Conference of the Methodist Church - twice! To host the Conference session was always a great honor for a congregation.

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The Sunday School and the Buena Vista Street Church nurses in 1957

The 1950s would see new opportunities for the Buena Vista Street congregation. With the appointment of Rev. B. Milton Hargrove in 1956, came extraordinary organizational skills, and the congregation expanded its ministry in many areas including: a young adult fellowship, a Gospel choir, musical concerts, and much more.

In anticipation of the denominational merger (in 1968 to form The United Methodist Church) and its efforts to remove many of the institutionalized racial divisions within the new denomination, the Buena Vista Street Church became part of the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference in 1964. Until 1964, the Washington Annual Conference was made up of only Black congregations of the Methodist Episcopal (known from 1939–1964 as the Methodist Church) Denomination. The Conference encompassed a large geographic area that included Washington D.C., Maryland, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, Delaware, and more. The creation of the Western Pennsylvania Annual Conference was a result of merging the former white conferences, which included the Pittsburgh Conference, Erie Conference, and all those congregations that has been in the

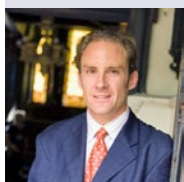
Washington Conference that were in the western section of the Commonwealth. While this effort was designed to eliminate structural racism within the denomination, The United Methodist Denominations, and specifically its urban congregations in Pittsburgh, continue to combat racism and social justice issues in the community and in the world.

While the Buena Vista Street Church did survive into the 21st century, it faced the challenges that many urban congregations across the U.S. continue to face, including a steady decline in membership and church attendance. In 2004, the Buena Vista congregation became part of the New Hope Parish, a merger of several North Side United Methodist congregations, but the decline continued, and by 2019 these congregations had disappeared and become only a memory.

So, as we remember the centennial of the formation of this congregation, we honor the many people – ministers and lay persons – who lived, created families, rejoiced, sang hymns, prayed, struggled, worked, and succeeded to live out their lives on Pittsburgh's North Side.

DAN HOLLAND RECEIVES THE WILLIAM RIMMEL AWARD

At the Allegheny City Society Annual Meeting, held virtually on April 21, 2021, members were delighted to hear from Dr. Daniel Holland who presented *Pittsburgh's Manchester Neighborhood Then and Now*, emphasizing the multifaceted changes that have taken place in this North Side neighborhood, including redevelopment, highways, housing, commercial and civic changes, and community activism. Dr. Holland is the founder of Pittsburgh's Young Preservationists



Association, is adjunct faculty at Duquesne University, and completed his master's and doctoral studies at the University of Pittsburgh. A significant portion of his research focused on community activism and the Manchester neighborhood. He has published several articles and spoken at numerous conferences about his research. His efforts have effected the preservation, scholarship, and the memory of a significant section of our Allegheny City community; therefore Dr. Holland was presented with the William Rimmel Award for his outstanding research and outreach. So, please join us in celebrating Dr. Holland's achievements and his dedication to historical preservation in both our section of the city, but also in the broader Western Pennsylvania region.



SOCIETY HOSTS CASSATT TOUR – THE FIRST TOUR OF THE SEASON

The Allegheny City Society made a gradual move back to public programming by honoring the legacy of the great artist, Mary Cassatt, who was born in Allegheny City on May 22, 1844. The event, a self-guided walk through “The Groves” section of the Allegheny Commons, occurred on Saturday, May 22. Images of Cassatt's work that spoke to her “Allegheny Roots,” and “the Cassatt family” were displayed. A number of Cassatt's works emphasized her role as an advocate of women's rights and her commitment to help American collectors in the acquisition of works by European artist, works that eventually became part of several major American collections.

ASTRONOMY HIS FAD

[Continued from the Spring issue of The Reporter Dispatch]

WHERE METHUSELAHS ARE BUT SIXTEEN.

Jupiter made quite an impression on the company with his oblique, brownish belts and four attendant moons, two shining on each side of him at the time. The information that one year on the Planet Jupiter equals about 12 earthly years caused that body to rise considerably in the estimation of the ladies and even led a number to express their regret that their lot had not been cast with the inhabitants of so highly favored a world, one where the Methuselahs are only "sweet 16."

Vega, in the constellation of Lyra, and a star of the first magnitude, was much admired. In the deep black of the heavens, it shone like a monster electric light, its edge scintillating rays of sapphire, amethyst and silver.

The wind, having again risen, was drawing the cloud curtain across the jeweled casket of the sky, so that the use of the telescope was for the evening no longer practicable.

It was the moon's night off, and to the great regret of the company no view was possible of the interesting luminary. Mr. Berger is especially up in moon lore and the misfortune was, therefore, the more to be regretted. The gentleman's photograph of the moon, the first ever taken in Pennsylvania is conclusive evidence. It is six inches in diameter, one inch larger than the Lick photograph – it is clearly defined in detail throughout and beautifully printed – finished and mounted by himself. Mr. Berger photographed it six times, September 5, between the hours of 10 and 11, directly from the sky with the telescope and at sharp visual focus without the aid of a photographic lens. Each photograph was six inches in diameter.

MR. BERGER AS A DISCOVERER.

There was also no backing of the plates with brown opaque coloring matter, thus setting at defiance all the traditions of astronomical photography. Scientists claim that the photographic and visual focus do not agree, or that when a sharp visual image of an object is obtained it will not affect the photographic plate. Mr. Berger's process is nothing more than the application of the microscopical photographic principle to the telescope, and, so far as is known, Mr. Berger is the first in its application to astronomy.

A unique specimen of Mr. Berger's skill as a photographer is a telescope photograph of the Court House tower taken from his observatory in Observatory Hill at a distance of nearly two miles. A fairly successful effort to fitly reproduce this photograph is made on this page. Berger turned his great telescope on the tower, adjusted his photographic apparatus and secured several splendid negatives with his objective glass alone. They can only be hinted at in newspaper illustration.

Ever since his boyhood Mr. Berger has been a student of the microscope and kindred branches of natural sciences. He has made a number of fine pictures of microscopic objects enlarged thou-

sands of times, particularly a fly's tongue, eight inches long, and a marine object enlarged a million times. Since he has the use of his telescope his attention has been devoted to photographing celestial bodies, nebula, star clusters, etc., rather than any extensive investigations or efforts at independent discovery. Now that he has succeeded in capturing a likeness of the coy and fickle full moon, he means to get it in all its other different phases, and to coax the sun to sit for his photo, when the spots are large and plentiful in its surface.

ON THE POINT OF THE HILL.

The observatory, which, by the way, was planned and designed by its owner, including his own original plan of making a spherical revolving cone roof, stands at the lower side of this spacious and beautifully situated grounds, and within a few rods of his residence in the west end of Observatory Hill. On a clear night the view over the two cities is a magnificent one, with thousands of stars above and thousands of electric lights below. The Berger mansion is a handsome structure of gray stone with verandas and long wide stone steps ascending from the private road, bordered with flowers and shrubbery. The house is furnished with the accustomed luxury of the homes of wealth, a library of books with costly binding, several hundred of interesting photographs taken by himself. Valuable cabinet specimens illustrating some branch in natural science distinguish it as being also the dwelling place of science and learning. Mr. Berger's wife, who has shared his studies, presides with kindly dignity over all, taking a masterly turn at the telescope in her husband's absence, although that gentleman's devotion to the instrument gives rise to the grave doubts of the possibility of such occasions.

Mr. Berger himself is a Pittsburger from early childhood, and for many years a successful businessman. He is F.R.M.S. (a fellow of the Royal Microscopical Society), a member of the British Astronomical Association, both of London, England, and an active member of the Lick Astronomical Society of the Pacific, receiving all the publications of the above three societies, including the publications of the Urania Astronomical Society, of Berlin, Germany, together with a number of American publications on natural science. His name is also found in the international directory of scientists of the world, which is published at Boston, Mass. Mr. Berger make a hobby of astronomy, microscopy and photography. It is his enjoyment, diversion and recreation after business hours when he has retired to his beautiful home on the brow of Observatory Hill. He claims that working with his scientific instruments rests his mind and freshens him up for the cares of his business.

STUDYING ASTRONOMY FIRST HAND.

With regard to the study of astronomy, Mr. Berger said: "Anyone with ordinary patience can in a year's time, with the aid of a first-class telescope, gain a pretty thorough knowledge of the heavens in connection with astronomy. I am a great believer in the telescope, and do not think the subject can be mastered, save by observation. In that time the student will know all the important stars by name; also, the month, day, hour and minute of time

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Allegheny City Society
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when they will be in the meridian. The appearance of the sky changes every month, so that at least 12 consecutive monthly observations will have to be made with the aid of a good-sized telescope and an instructor to give one a comprehensive smattering of the most sublime science of all sciences. It brings up into closer communion with our great Creator than any other science. In England astronomy is very popular among the ministers. Of the older writings on astronomy Rev. Mr. Dick's writings were very popular in their day, and of recent times Rev. Mr. Webb's work is considered standard for amateur astronomers and is very clear and comprehensive. Astronomers are like all professional men; they wish to surround their special calling with mystery and the secrets of the trade, some of which are very simple secrets indeed when translated into every-day English.

A certain highly respected minister of the city came to me recently saying, "You seem to have a regular university extension all of your own." I informed him that I entertained ministers and teachers who are actively engaged in the two cities on the subject of astronomy free of charge, providing they would make up parties of six or 12 persons of their own class; and the public at large should have one free week by ticket per year, and others could, by special arrangement, have an evening appointed and be instructed and entertained, however, only in parties of either six or 12 persons, and that my main object was to give people an enjoyable evening with the stars and planets in a thorough astronomical observatory style, which was almost among the impossibilities in our community until quite recently."

END



Exterior View of the Berger Observatory.

Pittsburg Dispatch. (Pittsburg Pa.) from Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers. Library of Congress.