



Vol. 10 No. 3

# THE CEDAR TREE

## Newsnotes from The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon

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[www.hsmtl.org](http://www.hsmtl.org)

FALL 2007

**PRESIDENT'S LETTER:** It's fall again, time to put in the storm windows and turn up the heat. If you're like many people, somewhere in your house you have a shoebox filled with old photographs. I can't think of a better winter project than putting those pictures into some kind of order. If you're looking for a really meaningful holiday present for a child or a grandchild, why not take this opportunity to label the pictures and put them in an album?

First off, toss the really bad pictures—the ones that are so dark or out of focus that you can't tell if it's a portrait of granddad's old Buick or your great-aunt Tilly after a big meal. I promise no one will miss them.

Then label the pictures you're keeping. And I don't mean writing "Grandma Drake" on the back. In two generations your descendants will be scratching their heads over whose grandma she was, and how she is related to them. Write down the person's entire name, when (or approximately when) the picture was taken, and, if possible, the subject's birth and death date. You can buy photo albums that offer plenty of space to include additional information about the person and where the picture was taken. Be as generous with information as you can. If they are vacation photographs, write down the location and date of the trip. If it's a picture of a house, write down whose house it was, the address and dates the person lived there. When writing information on the backs of photos, use only a No. 2 pencil.

I have found some beautiful albums at Marshalls and T.J. Maxx at discount prices, so you don't have to break the bank on this project. But, make sure they are acid- and lignin-free albums, especially if they are really old photographs. And if you have your pictures in those albums with the sticky backing and clear plastic sheeting over top, get them out NOW! For great archival albums, log on to [www.lightimpressionsdirect.com](http://www.lightimpressionsdirect.com) or call them at 1-800-

828-6216 for a catalog.

If you've kept your negatives, place them in either PVC-free plastic sleeves or acid free paper envelopes.

If you have a lot of slides, set up the projector, pop some popcorn and take a walk down memory lane. The really good ones can be taken to a pharmacy and turned into photographs inexpensively. If you know someone who is computer savvy (like a grandkid) and has a scanner that can scan slides, turn your collection into a slide show and store it on a CD. Thanks to software like PowerPoint, you can include captions of pertinent information and even add charts and graphs. If you want to save the slides, buy slide sleeves and put them in a binder or get acid free slide boxes, but be sure to label the slides and/or include a sheet of information about each picture.

When you're done filling the album, draw a family tree inside the front cover so future generations can easily track how everyone is related.

Now, here's the part where the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon comes in. If you find pictures of interest to us—buildings, houses, stores that are no longer around or radically changed for instance—give us a call. We'd love to see them, scan them and add them to our collection. Old pictures of your child in his football uniform or her cheerleading sweater are also of interest as are grade school class pictures, street scenes and special events (such as the 1976 Bicentennial parade or the 1962 celebrations for Mt. Lebanon's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary). These pictures provide wonderful clues about what people wore, what cars they drove and how life was lived. They may not seem historic to you since you remember when the events occurred (and no one is saying you're historic!), but in a few decades they will be.

So, there you go. You have a project that's win, win. You'll clear out some clutter, you'll have something to do during snowstorms, you'll rescue your

family heirlooms from improper storage (acids from paper boxes—like shoe boxes—can make photographs brown and brittle), you'll have a very special gift to present to your children and grandchildren and you'll provide a lasting legacy for the historical society. Oh, and I guarantee you'll have a lot of fun doing it.

**M.A. Jackson**

### **DON'T MISS**

Woodville Plantation, 1375 Washington Pike in Bridgeville, will host the lecture "Men's Clothing of the New Republic," 2 p.m., October 14. Clothing expert Dave Vargo will discuss what the men who lived in this area in late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century wore.

### **SOCIETY'S SEPTEMBER PROGRAM REVIEW**

**"EVERYONE A HISTORIAN: Write Your Own Memoir."** On September 12, Lori Humphreys presented a program she designed for the Chautauqua Institution. She related how to leave a written legacy for our families or our communities. It was a marvelous evening of interaction between Lori and those in attendance. An outline of important information was supplied to help obtain pertinent facts from family members. Lori emphasized how critical it is to acquire as much data as possible, as soon as possible. Thank you, Lori, for a fascinating evening.

### **RESEARCH THE HISTORY OF YOUR MOUNT LEBANON HOME!**

Ever wondered who built your home? Ever wondered who designed the original plans? With the value of the architecture and design of Mt. Lebanon homes – most built in the early years of the last century – being rediscovered and recognized, the Historical Society of Mt. Lebanon is joining with the Mt. Lebanon Public Library to assist residents in finding out who built and designed their homes. Because the records are fragile and irreplaceable, Historical Society trustee and Cultural Resource Survey volunteer Lori Humphreys will be at the library twice each month to help you research the information. Please call the library at 412-531-1912 to make an appointment as the schedule may change. NOTE: If your house was built before 1924, there will **not** be a Building Permit Number, which makes obtaining the information about your home more difficult to find.

### **NOTE CARDS FOR SALE**

The Society is selling sets of eight note cards featuring different buildings and scenes of Mt. Lebanon for \$10 a box. Local artists drew the sketches and all funds benefit the Society.

Cards are being sold at **Josephine's** on Castle Shannon Boulevard, **Planet Art Gallery** on Washington Road, **Blooming Dahlia** on Beverly Road, and **Borders Books and Music** across from Village Square Mall. Our thanks to the shop owners for helping us with this fundraiser. Cards will also be sold at Society programs.

### **CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE**

The Society's Web site is [www.hsmtl.org](http://www.hsmtl.org). It contains old pictures, information about upcoming events, some of our old newsletters, and other interesting facts. And please be sure to sign our newly added **Guestbook!**

### **RECENT DONATIONS**

**Kelly Kuzemchak**, Northwood Realty Services: An old seat, a ticket box, exit sign, three reels of film and marquee letters from the Denis Theater.

**Janet Cummings**, Castalia, Ohio: A 1932 Lebanon Log yearbook from Mt. Lebanon High School and an album filled with programs, clippings and other items relating to the class of 1932. The album also contained an October 1936 program for a Mt. Lebanon High School/Burgettstown high school football game, a December 21, 1934 Lebanon Lantern high school newsletter and letters from 1930. These items belonged to Ralph Martin, Janet's father.

**Mt. Lebanon Public Library**: Three booklets commemorating Mt. Lebanon's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**Dormont Historical Society**: Photographs and newspaper clippings relating to Mt. Lebanon from the Roy Dear estate.

**Carol Mueller**: Two photographs of Mt. Lebanon police officers in the old Walker Pontiac building circa 1930 and a *Pittsburgh Press* article about the retirement of Fire Chief Ray Goettel.

**Eleanora Kirsopp May Freas**: An 8-page history (including pictures), of her father Ewart Kirsopp. For many years Ewart owned the grocery store on Gilkeson Road at Cedar Boulevard.

**Lori Humphreys**: "Frosty's Coloring Book" issued by Mt. Lebanon Federal Bank.

We thank everyone for passing on these wonderful pieces of Mt. Lebanon's past.

## WELCOME

The Society would like to welcome Jehnie Reis, who will be keeping our membership roles and preparing/ mailing program flyers. Jehnie recently completed her PhD in history from the University of Virginia and is currently teaching part-time at Point Park University. Jehnie takes on the job from Anne Kemerer, who has done the job for several years. While we're sure Jehnie will do a wonderful job, Anne's attention to detail will be missed!

## SPECIAL THANKS

To Mt. Lebanon resident Robert Mitch, CPA, for performing the annual audit on the Society's books.

To M.A. Jackson and Wilma Novogradac for providing the refreshments for the September program.

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR –

**UPCOMING PROGRAM DATE:** November 7 (annual meeting), 7:30 p.m. at the Mt. Lebanon Library, 16 Castle Shannon Boulevard. The topic will be the care and research of historic houses and properties.

## ORAL HISTORIES BEING TRANSLATED

Kathy Mull, a court reporter, has signed on to transcribe some of the Society's oral histories. The histories—interviews with long-time residents as well as past municipal managers—were recorded onto cassettes. Transcribing them to paper will allow the public easy access to these fascinating stories. The Oral History Committee—Lori Humphreys, Marty Carney, Maggie McDermott and Mel Bickel—continue to collect histories. If you know of someone who would make an interesting interview or would like to help the committee interview subjects, please call Marty at 412-531-0616 or Lori at 412-561-6649.

The most recent history collected by members of the Oral History Project is that of Clare "Micky" McDermott, a resident of Mount Lebanon for over 75 years. Micky was born in McKees Rocks and moved to Cochran Road in 1929. He has many fond memories of playing in the woods with his buddies, the Rusty Skulls.

After graduating from Mt. Lebanon High School in 1942 and spending two semesters at Notre Dame, his education was interrupted by World War II, in which he served for 3-1/2 years as a Tech Sergeant.

Upon returning to the U.S., he earned his B.A. from Duquesne University and went on to the University of Pittsburgh's Law School. He then taught at the law school for 6 years. In 1960, he became a labor arbitrator for the Board of Arbitration for U.S. Steel and the United Steelworkers of America. He opened his own arbitration practice in 1974 on Washington Road and continues to arbitrate on a part-time basis. In 1980, he was president of the National Academy of Arbitrators.

Mick has been married to Eleanor Hatch for 60 years. They have 5 children (2 of whom reside in Mt. Lebanon) and 11 grandchildren.

## LOOKING BACK

Last issue, we mentioned receiving a donation from the estate of Roy Dear, Parker Drive. Among the items donated was the following newspaper article. We do not know what newspaper the story appeared in, but it is dated February 21, 1908—four years before Mt. Lebanon became a township. There is also no mention of the Bennett house address. Here's the article:

*February 21, 1908: **BIG FIRE IN MT. LEBANON***  
Former Home of Laura Bigger Bennett Destroyed at Early Hour Thursday Morning.

The two-story brick residence owned by Mrs. Laura Bigger Bennett, on Washington Avenue, Mt. Lebanon, and occupied by J.C. Pack, was destroyed by a fire at an early hour Thursday morning. A bucket brigade of residents, who were aroused by the ringing of the school bell, made every effort to save the building, but could accomplish nothing on account of the high winds prevailing. Their efforts were then directed to saving the residence of Mr. Welsh. The house was slightly scorched and several windows were cracked by the heat of the flames, but there was little damage.

Mr. Pack and family moved into the house several months ago, renting it from Mrs. Laura Bigger Bennett, who formerly occupied it. She is now in New Jersey. Mr. Pack was absent Wednesday night, but Mrs. Pack, a niece, her father and mother left the house early in the evening to attend the theater. Mrs. Eden and Mrs. Copley of Georgia, guests at the house, remained at home. After the theater performance, Mrs. Pack and her companions remained in Monongahela House over night and did not learn of the fire until late Thursday morning.

Mrs. Eden and Mrs. Copley were aroused at two o'clock by the smoke pouring into their rooms. They

secured some wearing apparel and a few trinkets and hurriedly left the house to go to the residence of Leor Welsh. The lower part of the house was in flames. The fire is thought to have started in the laundry in the basement. The telephone operator at the Mt. Lebanon exchange aroused a number of families in the locality and one of the residents rang the bell of the Mt. Lebanon school. A bucket brigade tried to check the fire, but the entire building was burned to the ground. Nothing was saved. The flames spread to the one-story frame meat shop of Leor Welsh and it was also destroyed. The residents, however, prevented the flames from setting fire to the Welsh residence, directly in the rear, by hard effort.

The loss on the Pack home and furniture will reach at least \$12,000, while Welsh estimated his loss at \$1,800. He had stocked his meat shop with a large supply a few days ago. The district is without organized fire protection and it is said that had the wind veered to one side five or six buildings probably would have been destroyed.

#### **HALLOWEEN PARADE**

Weather permitting, look for Society trustees Wilma Novogradac and M.A. Jackson in the Great Pumpkin Patch Parade, 11 a.m., Saturday, October 27 on Washington Road. Wilma and M.A. plan to wear outfits that represent what women wore in 1912—the year Mt. Lebanon was founded.

#### **CALL FOR TRUSTEE NOMINATIONS**

According to the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon's constitution, the Society's Nominating Committee must invite its members to submit names of potential candidates to serve as officers or trustees before the November annual meeting. Candidates must be Society members in good standing. The Nominating Committee will review submissions and compile a list of candidates. The proposed slate will be advertised on the Society's Web site ([www.hsmtl.org](http://www.hsmtl.org)) by the end of October and will be voted on at the November 5, annual meeting.

Trustees up for re-election are: Virginia Nicklas, Mel Bickel and Jeanné Bereznicki.

If you would like to nominate someone, please fill out the following form and mail it by October 15 to: Marty Carney, Nominating Committee Chair, The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon, 812 Kewanna Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15234.

#### **NOMINATION FORM:**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Biography: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

#### **HISTORICAL SOCIETY TRUSTEES**

M.A. Jackson, president

Marty Carney, vice president

Lori Humphreys, treasurer

Dick Price, secretary

Lynn Geyer Banbury

Jeanné Bereznicki

Mel Bickel

Maggie McDermott

Wilma Novogradac

Virginia Nicklas

Bill Simpson

Wally Workmaster

#### **THANK YOU TO NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS – JULY 2007 – SEPTEMBER 2007**

Alice D. Stock – Individual (Renewal)

Lee Veltry – Individual (Renewal)

James S. Wojcik – Family (New)

Andrew & Laura Reinhart – Family (New)

Ralph & Lucille Fuehr – Family (New)

Jean Baldwin – Individual (Renewal)

D. Raja – Individual (New)

#### **RECOGNITION OF MEMBERS:**

##### **Life Memberships - The Green & White**

Mary Ann Depalma Burnett

Mr. & Mrs. David Fasulo

The Donald D. Mateer Foundation, c/o Charlotte M.

Stephenson, Trustee – The Green & the White

Mr. Glenn Morrow

Ms. Virginia Nicklas

Bertha Abbott Thomas

##### **Benefactors: - Community Pioneers**

Beatrice Finke

William Lewis

Barbara and Robert Logan

Mr. & Mrs. James B. Lutz

**Benefactors: - Community Pioneers (cont'd)**

Maggie McDermott  
Wilma Novogradac  
Cynthia & Jerome Richey  
C. Bryson Schreiner  
William J. & Kathleen Simpson  
Mr. & Mrs. George C. Smith  
Elaine Wertheim  
Wallace F. Workmaster  
Ruth G. Foltz

**MEMBERS: WOULD YOU LIKE TO HELP?**

We are seeking members to help us plan our programs for next year. We are looking for ideas, we are looking for assistance. If you would like to be a Program Committee member, contact Lori Humphreys at 412-561-6649 or [lorih@nauticom.net](mailto:lorih@nauticom.net). Any program suggestions, call or email same.

**BYLAW CHANGES**

According to the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon's constitution, all amendments to the Society's bylaws and constitution must be advertised to the membership prior to the November annual meeting. The board of trustees proposed the following amendment to Article III (Annual and General Membership Meetings), Section 1 at its September meeting.

The line: "The annual membership meeting of the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon....shall take place the first Wednesday of November" will be changed to read: "The annual membership meeting of the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon....shall take place the first Wednesday of November following election day."

**HOLIDAY SEASON**

Since there will not be another issue of "Newsworthy Notes" from the Society until the very end of this year, we want to wish everyone a very happy and healthy holiday season.

Be sure to visit the Society's holiday exhibit in the Mt. Lebanon Public Library's two display cases that runs December 1 through January 5, 2008.

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(detach here)

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO THE MT. LEBANON HISTORICAL SOCIETY BY COMPLETING THIS FORM AND FORWARDING TO THE ADDRESS LISTED.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MOUNT LEBANON  
P.O. BOX 13423, Pittsburgh, PA 15243

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please check applicable membership level:

Individual	\$20	___
Family	\$35	___
Benefactor	\$100	___
Youth	\$15	___
Senior	\$15	___
Life	\$1,000	___

Date of Application \_\_\_\_\_ New ( ) Renewal ( )

Membership runs January 1 to December 31.

Life Memberships are recognized upon payment of total amount within any single 12-mo. period.

Names of donors will appear in newsletters and appropriate membership announcements and mailings.

The Society is classified as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, charitable organization.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible check made payable to: The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon

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