



THE CEDAR TREE

Newsnotes from The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon

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www.hsmtl.org

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PRESIDENT'S LETTER: About a year ago, I announced in this newsletter that the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon planned to open a history center in the basement of the stucco building at the corner of Washington Road and Lebanon Avenue. So where is this history center?

Believe me, the Society expected to have opened its doors by now, but bureaucracy has not been kind. Here's a brief synopsis of what we've been going through...

In early 2007, Society members contacted Lou Gorski from South Hills Area Council of Governments (SHACOG) about renting a space in the stucco house that once housed the Mt. Lebanon Tax Office (and before that the offices of Dr. McMillan). SHACOG rents the first and second floors of that building from the Mt. Lebanon Parking Authority, and we had heard they were looking to sublease the unused basement.

Society members toured the space and decided that while it was small, the rent was right and the space would be a perfect "starter home" for us. Once the parking authority confirmed that the Society met the zoning regulations for that space, we decided to proceed. In August 2007, the Society's board voted unanimously to rent the space.

At that point the board did two things—we (successfully) petitioned the Mt. Lebanon commission for funding to help us offset the cost of rent, and we contacted Lou Gorski to say, "Write up the lease!"

While we had hoped to start moving in by January 1, 2008, in late November 2007, we received a letter from the parking authority stating that we could sublease the space if and when certain criteria had been met.

One item was an occupancy permit from the municipality and the other was proof of liability insurance.

In December, we gathered names of insurance companies and made calls. By January, we had settled on Integrity First, a company located in Castle Shannon that provides insurance for the Heinz History Center in the Strip District. Once the policy was drafted, we waited for the parking authority to OK it, which they finally did in March.

A few weeks later SHACOG sent us a lease, which we promptly sent to a lawyer for review. Within a week, we'd returned it with a few changes. But then we were informed that the parking authority did not like the SHACOG lease and had decided to rewrite it.

In early September, Al Frioni—the parking authority board's president—told me that the authority's lawyers had just sent a revised lease to SHACOG and once their lawyers looked it over, then we'd be able to review it again. It seems like we are back to square one.

This whole process has been very frustrating, but our options are limited. We cannot afford the rent of a commercial space along Washington Road and there isn't any space in the library or municipal building. Several people have suggested we seek space in one of Mt. Lebanon's many schools. Unfortunately, we live in a post 9-11/Columbine world, where the school board would likely take issue with unauthorized people regularly wandering in and out of one of its buildings. Besides, the logistics would be a nightmare—could we be open at night or on the weekends when the school is closed? What about summer months? Would there be a higher chance of vandalism or theft? Would our insurance rates increase?

And so we wait and hope. I have faith that a history center is in Mt. Lebanon's future, and I'd like to thank everyone who has showed concern, offered suggestions, donated items, and offered to volunteer. Patience has never been one of my virtues; I hope it is one of yours.

M.A. Jackson
President

IT MIGHT NOT BE TOO LATE

Time is running out for you to reserve a seat at the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon's Dinner Fundraiser on Wednesday, October 15. Call Ginny at 412-531-5868 now to make sure you don't miss this great event.

The evening starts at 6:30 with a cash bar, dinner will be served at 7:30, and speaker Paul Ostergaard, AIA and senior vice president of Urban Design Associates, will take the stage at 8:30 with a presentation titled "The Architectural Pattern Book: A Tool for Building Great Neighborhoods."

The evening will also include a raffle of items donated by local businesses. All proceeds benefit the Mt. Lebanon History Center, scheduled to open next year.

GOODBYE

We regret to announce the death of a founding member of The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon. Foster Sisson died in July at age 100. His nephew Wally Workmaster (the Society's first president) says Foster "lived a long and full life."

For many years, Foster taught science and math at Mt. Lebanon High School and was the coach of the school's first track team. He later taught at Mellon Junior High, and eventually become the head of audio-visual services for the entire school district. He retired in 1971. Foster and wife, Ruth Root (also was a Mt. Lebanon teacher) purchased their Rockwood Avenue home in 1957.

We extend deepest sympathies to Foster's children, Reed and Sandy, his grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and extended family.

GREAT GIFT IDEA

Christmas is coming! Get a great stocking stuffer and help the Historical Society by purchasing a set of eight note cards that feature different buildings and scenes of Mt. Lebanon. A set of cards is \$10. Local artists drew the sketches, and all funds benefit the Society.

Cards are being sold at **Josephine's**, which recently moved from Castle Shannon Boulevard to Norman Centre across from Borders Books and Music; **Planet Art Gallery** on Washington Road; **Blooming Dahlia** on Beverly Road; **Mt. Lebanon Public Library** on Castle Shannon Boulevard; **Mt. Lebanon Pharmacy** on Mt. Lebanon Boulevard; and **Borders Books and Music** in Norman Centre. Cards will also be sold at Society programs. Thanks to the shop owners for helping us with this fundraiser.

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

The Society's Web site is www.hsmtl.org. It contains old pictures, information about upcoming events, some of our old newsletters, and other interesting facts. We just added some new pictures, so please check them out. If you would like to add information about a picture, e-mail us at info@hsmtl.org.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR A TOE-TAPPING GOOD TIME

The last Historical Society of Mount Lebanon program for 2008 will be held 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, November 5, at Mt. Lebanon Library. Speaker Paula Purnell's topic is "Women of Westsylvania in Story and Song."

Paula is a songwriter and performer who has come to appreciate and love the folk songs of generations past. From these wonderful old songs, we can learn how people of long ago interacted with each other, their environment, and the world at large.

Paula's presentations are active, foot stomping, music-making experiences. By celebrating and sharing the music of different times and cultures, participants come away with a better understanding and appreciation of the common bond that makes us Pennsylvanians.

This lecture was made possibly by a Pennsylvania Humanities Council grant. The program is free, and refreshments will be served.

Program dates and topics for 2009 will be announced in our January issue.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY TRUSTEES

M.A. Jackson, president
Marty Carney, vice president
Bill Simpson, treasurer
Dick Price, secretary
Lynn Geyer Banbury
Jeanné Bereznicki
Mel Bickel
David Borland
Lori Humphreys
Maggie McDermott
Wilma Novogradac
Virginia Nicklas
Wally Workmaster

CALL FOR TRUSTEE NOMINATIONS

If you would like to nominate someone to serve as a Historical Society of Mount Lebanon trustee, you must do so before the November annual meeting on November 5. Contact Marty Carney, nominating committee chair, at clmary@verizon.net, or 412-531-0616.

Nominees must be Society members in good standing. The nominating committee will review submissions and compile a list of candidates (which will be advertised on the Society's website www.hsmtl.org) by the end of October. The nominees will be voted on at the Society's November 5 annual meeting. Trustees up for re-election are: Marty Carney, M.A. Jackson, Dick Price, and Bill Simpson.

SEASON'S GREETINGS

Since there will not be another issue of the Cedar Tree until the very end of the 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 throughout December.

Membership renewal letters will be mailed in November. Please remember that Society

memberships now run January through December.

DONATIONS

BILL MOORE: Declaration of Dedication booklet from 1962 and four pictures of the Declaration of Dedication board that once stood in the Mt. Lebanon Municipal Building lobby. The Declaration was signed by residents "recognizing that our nation is engaged in a critical struggle against forces that would destroy our American way of life" and to support the country. The declaration recognized Mt. Lebanon's 50th anniversary and was created in response to President Kennedy's "Ask not what your country can do for you" speech.

FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY: 1986 and 1999 Mt. Lebanon High School yearbooks.

PAUL CLINE: 1976 program for the July 4, 1976 Mt Lebanon salutes the USA event.

DORMONT HISTORICAL SOCIETY: Memorial Day parade pictures circa 1990s; Stevenson Williams map of Mt, Lebanon/Bethel Park/ Upper St. Clair; Mt. Lebanon United Presbyterian Church program from September 10, 1933; invitation to the February 1932 Mt. Lebanon High School commencement and a name card for Mary Lou Kohl; post card of Mt. Lebanon from 1910; class photo from Room 4 of the Mt. Lebanon public school, May 1919; report card for William McGall, Orchard Hill Place, for grades 2 through 8.

PEG CHRISTOPHER: Fallout shelter construction instructions and other related items and brochures issued by the Office of Civil Defense Mobilization.

JAMES STEEN: 1945 Mt. Lebanon High School yearbook and 1982 Mt. Lebanon pool pass.

HELEN BETZLER: "The Story of 50 Years" about Southminster Presbyterian Church and newspaper articles related to Southminster Presbyterian Church.

BEN ROHRBECK: DVD and booklet about trolleys of the Pittsburgh Railways company.

CAROLANN KEARNS: Picture of Mt Lebanon

Public School (once located at Washington Road and Cedar Boulevard) and a picture of the school's sixth grade class.

SOCIETY RECIVES ANOTHER GRANT

The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon is happy to announce that it received the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) "Connecting to Collections Bookshelf," a collection of books and reference materials compiled to raise public awareness and inspire action to care for the collections held in public trust by libraries and museums throughout the United States. Titles include "Framework for Preservation of Museum Collection," "Preservation Management for Libraries, Archives and Museums," "A Legal Primer on Managing Museum Collections," and "The Nature of Conservation: A Race Against Time." These titles will be of great use to the Society when it opens its history center. More than 770 museums, libraries, and archives around the country received the Bookshelf, which was distributed by the IMLS, the Getty Foundation, the Henry Luce Foundation, and the Samuel H. Kress Foundation.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD HOSTS BLOCK PARTIES

The Mt. Lebanon Historic Preservation Board began a block party tour program this past summer that covered such neighborhood questions as: Which is the oldest house on our street? When were the homes built and by whom? What are the styles of the houses on our block, and why do they look the way they do?

Tours—conducted by present or former members of the Historic Preservation Board or volunteers who worked on Mt. Lebanon's Cultural Resource Survey—are a way to help residents learn more about the architectural character of their homes and neighborhoods and encourage them to preserve Mt. Lebanon's distinctive housing stock and update their properties with care. If you would like to book a tour for next summer, call 412-343-3407. Please call as far in advance as possible, as tour guides must research the neighborhood ahead

of time. The tours held this past summer were so successful that the board had problems keeping up with demand. If you would like to volunteer as a guide, contact Susan Morgans at 412-343-3780 or e-mail smorgans@mtlebanon.org.

The Historic Preservation Board is not affiliated with the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon. The Historic Preservation Board is a municipal board created to identify significant structures or sites within the municipality, recommend a historic marker system and nominations for the National Register of Historic Places, monitor developments in historic preservation and educate Mt. Lebanon property owners on preservation issues. The seven-member board meets 7 p.m., the third Monday of every month in the municipal building, 710 Washington Road.

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
Virginia Nicklas
Bertha Abbott Thomas

Benefactors: - Community Pioneers

William and Beatrice Finke
Ruth G. Foltz
William Lewis
Barbara and Robert Logan
Mr. & Mrs. James B. Lutz
Maggie McDermott & Bill Bates
Kent S. Miller
Jeanne & Scotti Mulert
Wilma Novogradac
Cynthia & Jerome Richey
George & Barbara Schoepner
C. Bryson Schreiner
William J. & Kathleen Simpson
Mr. & Mrs. George C. Smith
Elaine Wertheim

THANK YOU TO NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS – JULY – SEPTEMBER, 2008

Paul C. and Joanne Ostergaard – Family (New)
Margaret Stouffer – Individual (New)
Stephen Feller - Individual (Renewal)
June S. Delano – Individual (New)
Connie Lopez – Individual (New)
Scott & Jeanne Mulert – Benefactors (Renewal)
William & Beatrice Finke – Benefactors (Renewal)
K. George Schoeppner – Benefactor (Renewal)

SPECIAL THANKS

To Hospitality Chair Wilma Novogradac for the lovely table arrangements and tasty treats she provides for every program.

To the annual dinner committee: Chair Ginny Nicklas, Charlotte Borland, Emmy Lou Ducray, Connie Lopez, and Betty Ruh for their hard work, great ideas, and donation of time and resources.

SEPTEMBER 24th PROGRAM REVIEW

When our scheduled program “Life in a Pennsylvania Coal Patch” with Pamela Nixon cancelled, at the last minute, Society member George Gula was kind enough to present a very entertaining program regarding the Pittsburgh trolleys, which he entitled “Three Car Checks for a Quarter” ... 80 years of Pittsburgh memories.

George’s presentation included wonderful photographs of trolleys beginning the mid-1940’s. The included various views in Downtown Pittsburgh (one showing the Kaufmann’s clock), Oakland, lots of South Hills photos (Mount Lebanon, Dormont, Brookline, Brentwood, Carnegie, South Hills Junction), as well as the North Side (now known as the North Shore!), Forest Hills, Wilksburg, East Pittsburgh, McKeesport, Kennywood, West View, etc. George also had terrific photos of old bridges in the area, as well as inclines. At one point, some of the trolleys were traveling advertisement, i.e., Clark Bars, The Terrible Trolley (Steelers), etc. Many photos were from George’s personal collection, as well as the Trolley Museum’s collection. His presentation was a real incentive to visit the Pennsylvania Trolley Museum located at 1 Museum

Road, Washington, PA 15301. 724-228-9256.
Website: www.pa-trolley.org.

THE MYSTERY OF THE DISAPPEARING VETERANS

A booklet written for the 50th anniversary celebration of Mount Lebanon Township (1962) had a section entitled “MT. LEBANON – WAR RECORD that included the following paragraphs:

“In the foyer of the Municipal Building an “Honor Roll” in three large cases carries the names of 2,770 men and women who served in World War II and the Korean conflict that followed. There is a special niche for the gold star list of 65 – headed “Our Honored Dead” with the inscription “Great Love Hath No Man Than This, That a Man Lay Down His Life for His Friend” John XV, v13”

“These men and the deeds they performed are fresh in memory – from Corregidor to the Battle of the Bulge – beginning with Abbott, on through Bamford, Cappe, Kreps, Dean, McVay, Parr, Mullen, Murchison – and ending with Wolf.”

Forty-six years later no one seems to know what happened to that Honor Roll. Jim Herrod, who had been head of the Mount Lebanon Public Works Department for many years said he would not know where to look. He did offer two bits of information; he has been a member of the VFW for many years and he knows they don’t have it, and the Women’s Fortnightly group was involved in rearranging and re-decorating the Municipal Building foyer. More encouraging information was offered by Bill Moore, former head of the Recreation Department. He remembered the Honor Roll and had memories of the names being removed and placed into boxes.

We’ve posed the problem. Now it’s your turn. Do you remember the Honor Roll? Have you any idea of what may have happened to it? Where would you look? We need you. Commissioner Dan Miller has put together a group investigating how to properly memorialize the people who served during World War II and the Korean conflict. Finding the missing Honor Roll, or at least a Listing of those on that Honor roll would be an enormous help.

If you know of anything that might aid in solving this mystery, please contact Mel Bickel at mmbmpb@yahoo.com or call 412-833-1949.

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RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP TO THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF MOUNT LEBANON BY COMPLETING THIS FORM AND FORWARDING TO THE ADDRESS LISTED:

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

Please check applicable membership level:

Name: _____	Individual	\$20	___
	Family	\$35	___
Address: _____	Benefactor	\$100	___
	Youth	\$15	___
City/State/Zip _____	Senior	\$15	___
	Life	\$1,000	___

Phone: _____ **E-mail** _____

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
