



THE CEDAR TREE

Newsnotes from The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon

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www.hsmtl.org

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SPRING 2009

GRAND OPENING The Mt. Lebanon History Center will celebrate its grand opening on Friday, June 5, from 6 to 9 p.m.—which corresponds with the Washington Road First Friday events—and Saturday, June 6, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The Center is located on the corner of Washington Road and Lebanon Avenue (across from Southminster Church); the entrance is on Lebanon Avenue.

At a members' only open house, 7 to 9 p.m., Thursday, June 4, Historical Society board members will officially hang the Society's sign outside the Center. The sign was painted by former board member Dick Price.

The first exhibit, "What We Wore," will feature clothing that residents have donated or loaned to the society—from two children's dresses (circa 1890) that belonged to the McCormick family to a Mt. Lebanon band jacket from the 1980s. The clothing will be interspersed with historical photographs of Mt. Lebanon residents. Since the clothing items are fragile, the exhibit will run until Labor Day and then the items will be placed in archival storage boxes and kept in a climate controlled environment off site.

Although plans are still in the works for the opening event, there will be refreshments and perhaps a gift basket give-away. If you are interested in making homemade cookies for the event or volunteering in any way, please call Wilma at 412-563-7303.

After the opening weekend, the Center will be open to the public one afternoon/early evening per week. If manpower allows, special tours may be presented to groups. Call 412-563-1941 for updates on the hours. Once open, the public is invited to stop and look at the exhibits, share interesting tidbits about the community's past, and donate items. And if you have any old pictures of the community that you want to keep but are willing to share, you can bring them to the center, and a volunteer will scan them into our

database while you wait. The Center will have a visitor's computer with links to genealogy and history-related websites. Visitors can peruse an almost complete set of Mt. Lebanon magazines and many old Mt. Lebanon High School yearbooks. Please keep in mind that it will take months for volunteers to enter the society's entire collection into a computer database, so if you are researching a particular subject, please leave your name and phone number with a volunteer and someone will call you if anything related to that topic is found.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

In February, I took a trip to Cleveland and toured two very different museums: The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum and the A Christmas Story House.

The Hall of Fame comprises several floors, has numerous multi-media exhibits, a staff of hundreds, a huge budget, and visitors that number in the hundreds of thousands annually. The gift shop alone takes up a half the first floor and there's a cafeteria, three theaters and a stage. The museum's exhibits are all-encompassing, covering the roots of rock—bluegrass, gospel, delta blues—to rockabilly and rap. It took us *hours* to tour it and even then we didn't see everything.

Mostly by accident, my husband and I stumbled across the A Christmas Story House that pays tribute to the holiday movie classic "A Christmas Story." The house, which was used only for the exterior shots of the 1983 film, is located in a rather run down section of Cleveland, but the owners have renovated it and set up the interior to resemble scenes from the movie—the tacky leg lamp in the front window, a blue bowling ball under a Christmas tree, a faux turkey in the kitchen, bars of Lifebuoy soap in the bathroom. Across the street, the first floors of two other houses serve as a gift shop and a small museum featuring costumes, scripts, and other artifacts related

to the movie—all carefully displayed in museum cases. In contrast to the Hall of Fame, this museum was miniscule; it welcomes only a couple hundred visitors yearly (the majority come in December), yet it was extremely entertaining and thoughtfully laid out. The tour guide lives within walking distance of the museum and knew her subject well.

Now I was truly impressed by both museums, but the little A Christmas Story House really stood out as a shining example of what could be done on a minimal budget and with a small, but devoted, staff. It gave me hope for the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon's History Center endeavor.

When I look back on the last year, I can't believe how much the Society has accomplished. Then I look ahead and my head spins at what we still need to do.

By the time you read this, we will have completed a collections inventory—overseen by Heinz History Center volunteers—and will be working out the details for our opening event, our first exhibit, and our hours of operation. Our collections committee is beginning to (what is sure to be a long process) catalogue every item in our possession. On the upside, when they're finished we will, with just a mouse click, be able to locate anything in our collection.

I'd like to take this opportunity to invite you all to our opening on June 5 and June 6, and, if you are a member, to our "invitation only" open house on Thursday evening, June 4. We will announce our regular hours of operation at the event—probably one afternoon and evening per week. I'd also like to thank everyone who has helped us prepare the Center or who donated items and office supplies—unfortunately, I don't have room to thank you all by name, but rest assured that your work and your donations are *deeply* appreciated.

I also would like to thank the Society's board for their patience, their great suggestions, their excitement and enthusiasm, and their hard work. The Center would never have become a reality without teamwork.

I hope to see you at the opening.

M.A. Jackson
President

JANUARY 21, 2009 PROGRAM REVIEW

Meeting Room A of the Mt. Lebanon Library was jammed with folks who had remembered Bill

slogged through Europe. Those cartoons appeared in the "Stars and Stripes," the Army newspaper, and for many service personnel, were the only bright spot in an otherwise dreary experience.

Local author and historian Todd DePastino delighted the audience with stories from his biography, "Bill Mauldin, A Life Up Front." Mr. Mauldin was always a free spirit and Mr. DePastino recounted numerous incidents that brought forth smiles and even laughter, accentuating the stories with Mr. Mauldin's cartoons.

Both the book, "Bill Mauldin, A Life Up Front" and "Willie and Joe: The World War II Years," a complete collection of Mr. Mauldin's World War II cartoons, are available at the Mt. Lebanon Library.

Reviewed by Mel Bickel

MARCH 25, 2009 PROGRAM REVIEW

Ben Sota, creator and owner of The Zany Umbrella Circus presented an informative program on the history of the circus in America starting at the turn of the century through modern day. At the turn of the century the circus traveled by train (100 cars) and employed 800 men and 200 women with 407 horses, 12 elephants, and a menagerie of other animals. Interestingly, women performers were paid twice as much as the men. As the years went by, many performers entered vaudeville and then silent films. These forms of entertainment were great escapes from tumultuous times and the Great Depression.

This program was sponsored by the Pennsylvania Humanities Council.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE FOLLOWING 2009 PROGRAMS:

Our next free, public program is 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 27, at The Gilfillan Farmhouse in Upper St. Clair. Built by John Gilfillan around 1857, the farmhouse was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1979. In 2001, Margaret Gilfillan deeded the house to the Upper St. Clair Historical Society. She had lived in the house--along with her brothers John and Alexander--from the time she was two years old until her death at age 100. The farmhouse is restored and contains a justice of the peace office. It also has a garage which houses a variety of restored carriages and vehicles that the Gilfillan family used. This is a wonderful opportunity to tour a National Register home located in Mt. Lebanon's "back yard."

PLEASE NOTE: We will meet at the farmhouse (NOT at the library). The farmhouse is located on

Mauldin's cartoons of Willie and Joe, two GI's who Washington Road at Orr Road. Follow Washington Road/19S to just past South Hills Village (if you pass Westminster Presbyterian Church, you've gone too far south) and turn right into the parking lot on Orr Road across from the fire station. Jean Brown, president of the Upper St. Clair Historical Society, **suggests that attendees wear comfortable shoes.**

If you are wondering what happened to our plans to visit the Civil War room at the Carnegie Library in Carnegie, well, the trip has been postponed for a year—for a very happy reason: the library received a \$100,000 donation to renovate the Captain Thomas Espy Grand Army of the Republic Post #153—one of the most intact GAR posts in the country. Renovations begin April 5. The room will reopen in February 2010 to coincide with Abraham Lincoln's birthday. The Historical Society will host a tour to the room when it reopens.

Reminder for the remaining programs in 2009:

September 23: Our program will feature Muriel Moreland, President of the Dormont Historical Society who will describe Dormont's history 1909-2009, published last year.

November 4: Speaker to be announced

WE NEED VOLUNTEERS If you have any experience working in a museum or in collections management, we'd love to hear from you. We also need volunteers to man the History Center. You can pick your hours—an hour a month to several hours per week. You can sit and welcome people and, if the center isn't busy, attend to some easy tasks— sending out thank you letters, returning phone calls, filing, stuffing envelopes, and working on special projects. We also need:...

*Someone with a digital camera who could update the "Now" pictures for our "Then & Now" photo collection. This is a fun activity to do over the summer—it gets you outside and you make your own hours!

*Someone familiar with PC computers to help with data entry of our collection. We will train you in how to use our software.

*Someone with typing skills who could transcribe our oral history tapes.

*Someone to build and maintain scrapbooks.

*Someone to help maintain an obituary collection and business directory.

Anyone interested in volunteering their time at our

him at richard7788@comcast.net; or call Barbara Jucha-412-563-7025 or email: barbjucha@aol.com. Please call **NOW** so we are ready for operation by Friday, June 5th.

DONATIONS

FRIENDS OF THE MT. LEBANON PUBLIC

LIBRARY: Mt. Lebanon High School Yearbooks from 1948, 1949, 1950, and 1953

MT. LEBANON LIBRARY: Two filing cabinets, a chair, various old maps, documents, newspaper clippings, and a series of Washington Road business district photographs taken in 1964

DARLA DUFFY: Plastic magazine holders

RODGER RICCIUTI: Ashtray and booster button from Mt. Lebanon's 50th anniversary (1962) celebration

GINNY NICKLAS Two coins from the 50th anniversary of Mt. Lebanon issued by Commonwealth Bank and Trust (1962)

NELLIE AMBROSE: A 35-page photograph album of photos taken of Horne's Department Store, South Hills Village at the 1965 opening

HELEN AND CLARENCE BETZLER: Four Mt. Lebanon High School Band Builders buttons circa 1978-1985 and a First Night Mt. Lebanon 2000 pin

RITA LEVINE: Computer

SANDY MAREK and HEATHER LUCAS: Computer monitors

SPECIAL THANKS

To **everyone** who donated office supplies...To **Chris Buttlar** for installing a motion sensor light outside the Center and an emergency light inside...To **Helen and Clarence Betzler** for storing office furniture for *months*...To **Bob Williams**, who came to the Center to write an article for *The Almanac*, and returned the next day to donate a fire extinguisher...To **Kevin Maehling and the Mt. Lebanon Fire Department** for providing a smoke alarm (and installing it!)...To **Kent Miller** for the awesome coat rack...To an **anonymous donor** for the *boxes* of office supplies...To **Dick Price** for the fabulous signs...To **Jim Wojcik** for his advice...To **Mark Reis** for help with the computers and for dealing with Verizon issues...To **Terri Blanchette** and her volunteers at the Heinz History Center for the inventory and the advice...To **Tom Muldowney** for compiling "further reading" list handouts for our programs. To **John and Jeffrey Betzler** for hauling furniture.

History Center, call Dick Price 412-561-7646 or email
NAMING OPPORTUNITY

The Society needs glass enclosed display cases for the exhibit area of the History Center. We have located suitable models at Ikea; prices are \$60 for a vertical case and \$130 for a horizontal one. These cases are enclosed so our collection will be well protected (from both dust and curious hands) and are small enough to fit in our limited space. If you make a donation to purchase one of these cases for the Society, we will place a sign on it with your name or the name of someone you want to memorialize. Call 412-563-1941 if you are interested.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION BOARD
HOSTS BLOCK PARTIES

Spring is right around the corner, so book your Mt. Lebanon Historic Preservation Board block party tour now. Tours cover questions such as: Which is the oldest house on our street? When were the homes built and by whom? What are the styles of all these houses, 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. To book a tour, call 412-343-3407. Please call as far in advance as possible, as tour guides must research the neighborhood ahead of time. 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 5 p.m., the third Monday of every month in the municipal building, 710 Washington Road.

REMEMBERING DORMONT

Do you remember the Dormont pool boardwalk? How about Fibber McKee’s Tavern and Pearce’s ice cream shop? If those names bring back fond memories, get a copy of *Dormont 1909-2009*, a new book produced by the Dormont Historical Society and published by Arcadia Publishing as one of its “Images of America” series. The softbound, 128-page book features 207 black and white pictures that cover the borough’s history—from schools and businesses to recreation and general scenes—from its earliest years to the present in six chapters. The book is \$20 at the Dormont Library on West Liberty Avenue, the Dormont Municipal Building on Hillsdale, and Borders Books and Music. They also are available for \$23 by mail—send checks made out to “Dormont Historical Society” to: 2832 Espy Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15216.

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

Ruth G. Foltz
William F. Lewis
Kent S. Miller
Jeanne & Scotti Mulert
Stephen Patrick
Cynthia & Jerome Richey
George & Barbara Schoeppner
C. Bryson Schreiner
Iannuzzi and Emeil Shenouda
William J. & Kathleen Simpson
George and Margaret Smith
Eleanor M. Thomas
Toni Tierney
Elaine Wertheim
Wally Workmaster

**NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERS FOR THE
YEAR 2009 (NOT LISTED ALPHABETICALLY)**

Louise Sturgess - Family (R)
Sandy & Lee Golomb - Family (R)
Wilma Novogradac - Individual (R)
Ann P. Winkelstein - Senior (R)
Barbara Hinton - Senior (N)
Eleanor Kursopp May - Individual (N)
Jim and Peggy Wojcik - Family (R)
Bill and Bea Finke - Senior (R)
Ed McClain, Jr. - Senior (R)
Beth Hedin - Individual (R)
Dick Walker - Senior (R)
Conrad Koch - Family (R)
Stephen Feller - Individual (R)
Lucille Fuehr - Senior (R)
David Davis - Individual (R)
Marianne Siersdofer - Individual (R)
Pat Grubb - Senior (R)
Barbara Cusick - Senior (R)
Geoffrey R. Hurd - Individual (R)
Ardeth A. Tennyson - Senior (N)
Dr. and Mrs. David McKibben - Family (R)
Paul and Sylvia Garlitz - Family (R)
Jim and Nancy Lutz - Family (R)
Lois Martin - Individual (R)
Barbara and Bob Logan - Family (R)
Barbara Jucha - Individual (R)
Kenneth and Audrey Menke - Family (R)
James and Nancy Lutz - Family (R)
Robert and Joan Mitsch - Family (R)
Megan Gregory - Individual (R)
Connie Lopez - Individual (N)
Maggie Hendrix - Individual (R)
Jim & Ann Simmons - Family (N)
Luetta Waddell - Senior (R)
Todd DePastino - Family (N)
Margaret Jackson - Individual (R)
June S. Delano - Senior (R)
Martha Towns - Senior (R)
Jehnie Reis - Individual (R)
Gertrude McCrum - Senior (R)
Nancy & Richard Laitta - Family (R)
Nellie Ambrose - Individual (R)
Bill & Peggy Christopher - Senior (R)
Marilyn Freed - Senior (R)
Emmy Lou Ducray - Individual (R)
Jane Morton - Senior (R)
John C. Ferguson Jr. - Family (R)
Thomas L. Stevenson - Individual (R)

Elaine Loudon - Individual (R)
Elizabeth M. Ruh - Individual (R)
Chuck and Jill Brodbeck - Family (R)
David and Charlotte Borland - Family (R)
Betsy and Bernard LaQuinta - Family (R)
Michael F. Lacy - Individual (R)
Maxine and Melvin Bickel - Family (R)
Rita Roegge - Senior (R)
Linda K. Stewart - Individual (R)
Richard O. Price - Individual (R)
Carol Humphrey Gordon - Individual (R)
Chris and Anne Kemerer - Family (R)
Eleanor McHugh - Individual (R)
Carolyn Byham - Individual (R)
George W. Gula - Individual (R)
Jeanné Heid Bereznicki - Individual (R)
Mary Carney - Senior (R)
John Conti - Individual (R)
Maggie McDermott - Family (R)
Lynn Banbury - Individual (R)
Lori Humphreys - Individual (R)
Karen Kanell - Family (N)
Andrew and Laura Reinhart - Family (R)
Lee Veltri - Individual (R)
Albert W. Schnupp - Family (R)
Alice D. Stock - Individual (R)
Clarence and Helen Betzler - Family (R)
Emily McCann - Individual (R)
Jean D. Atutes - Senior (R)
Patrick and Clair King - Family (R)
Christopher A. Beck - Individual (R)
Mellie Ambrose - Individual (R)
Helen Aldisert and William Krayner - Family (R)
Toni A. Murray - Individual (R)

HISTORICAL SOCIETY TRUSTEES

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

<p><u>A LOOK BACK</u></p> <p>This article appeared in the February 11, 1942, <i>Lebanon Lantern</i> school paper (donated by Peg Smith). We think it shows how much...and how little...things have changed.</p> <p>Roving Reporter Queries New 10B's Concerning Problems of Senior High</p> <p>At the beginning of each new semester a poll on "How Do You Like It Here" is taken among the 10B's new in the senior high. We're going to find out what the younger generation thinks about all the various problems facing senior high-schoolers such as the "going steady" vs. "not going steady" problem.</p> <p>Jean Ross thinks the idea of going steady is "absolutely super-swell," while Joan Zook says, "Going steady is O.K. but playing the field and having fun with everyone seems like a better idea."</p> <p>When asked about Juke boxes vs. orchestra, it was found that Jules Polacheck favored an orchestra because it gave more "distinction" to the dance.</p>	<p>Wally Workmaster</p> <p>Revolutionist Eddie Trant said he didn't like either, "I hate to dance!" And Herb Volz prefers juke boxes because of the neat arrangements and name bands.</p> <p>Says Sally Powell, "I like the senior high swell and was awfully anxious to come over."</p> <p>In saddle-shoes vs. heels on a date Nancy Bohrkaste prefers saddles because they're easier to dance in and more comfortable. We found out that Don DeSanto likes saddles on any femme from 1 to 15 and it doesn't make any difference what they wear.</p> <p>Dave Carnahan and Harry Nelson like senior high best because of all the "neat women." Watching all the femmes at lunch doesn't leave any time for them to eat lunch. They also prefer juke boxes to orchestra.</p>
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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.*