



# THE CEDAR TREE

## Newsnotes from The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon

200 Lebanon Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15228 (412) 563-1941

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

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SPRING 2010

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Well, this winter sure was historic. February 2010 was the snowiest February on record, and I am sure that for the next few decades people will be telling stories and showing pictures of Snowmageddon. I hope you all made it through safely and with little damage to your home and property. The History Center closed for much of February—I did not want to run the risk of anyone slipping on ice (although our landlords took wonderful care of our sidewalks) and figured history was probably the furthest thing from anyone's mind as the snow kept falling and falling and falling.

But now spring is here. As I write this (in mid March) I've already seen robins and crocuses, Daylight Savings Time has begun, and the official first day of spring is less than a week away. We are gearing up for a great and busy summer. In the next few weeks, I will be attending meetings about installing the Center's next exhibit (to debut May 7), resuming the walking tours of Washington Road (dates TBA), and organizing a "party" to gather old pictures of the community (see the item "We Need Your Old Pictures"). In addition, the society's proposal for an Arcadia book was approved, so we will soon be gathering a couple hundred photos, scanning them, and writing captions. The finished product—a book of old photographs that will join the series that already includes books about Dormont, Upper St. Clair, and other neighboring communities—will debut in 2011 shortly before the community's centennial. And, yes, we are already thinking of what we will be doing for Mt. Lebanon's 100th celebration.

In other good news, our membership renewal drive was very successful, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who renewed. However, as I was updating our membership list, I was very sad to remove the names of three long-time, devoted Society members who died in the last few months. So, amidst all the happy news, I wish to take a moment to say goodbye to:

**Bryson Schreiner.** Bryson was born May 21, 1913 in the Schreiner family home on Bower Hill Road. His father, Samuel A. Schreiner, was the founding solicitor of both Mt. Lebanon and the school district. Bryson graduated with the first class of Mt. Lebanon High School in 1931 and was a devoted member of Mt. Lebanon United Presbyterian Church. Throughout his life, Bryson enjoyed sharing his knowledge of family and local history with the community and unstintingly donated items and his time to the Society, of which he was a founding member. We are grateful to his family—Kathryn Schreiner, Martha Dreisbach, Sally Youngquist, and Samuel Agnew Schreiner III—for generously donating portions of Bryson's archives to the Society.

**Rita Roegge.** Rita, a retired Mt. Lebanon Spanish teacher and a long-time member of St. Bernard Church, was a founding member of the Society.

**Dale Colby.** Dale was a devoted community leader, having served on the Mt. Lebanon Commission for two terms, with the Mt. Lebanon Soccer Association, and on other community boards and organizations. Dale was the leading force behind the Mt. Lebanon Community Endowment. Dale was a strong supporter of the Society, and I will miss his kind eyes and the

genuine interest he always had for our endeavors.

The Society is grateful to Bryson, Rita, and Dale's support. They will be missed.

**M.A. Jackson, President**

### **WE GET EMAIL**

Reg Volk e-mailed: "I am looking for information on James Chambers family at Lower St. Clair - 1880-1899."

If you have information, e-mail Reg at [regvolk@silk.net](mailto:regvolk@silk.net)

William R Crowe e-mailed: "I was in the Marine Corps with Tom Bird stationed at MCAS Santa Ana. This was 1964+. We were good friends and had some great times together." (Tom Bird was the first Mt. Lebanon resident killed in Vietnam; Bird Park is named for him.)

If you would like to contact William, e-mail: [wmcrowe@dishmail.net](mailto:wmcrowe@dishmail.net).

### **HISTORY TIDBITS: STORIES FROM THE HISTORY CENTER**

In January, **Bud Stevenson** stopped by to tour the Mt. Lebanon History Center. Bud, who ran the ski slope on Bower Hill Road in the early 1960s, dropped off two photos from the Denis Theater opening night in 1937. The Center brought back a lot of memories, and Bud shared with the volunteers how the bowling alley on Cedar Blvd. was called Alderdice Bowling and how there was another bowling alley in the shopping plaza where Washington Square apartments now stands called Hogle Bowling. He said there used to be a railway that ran from Castle Shannon along Shady Drive then went through a tunnel under Washington Road and exited somewhere near Clokey and then ran along Banksville Road. It served the coalmines in Castle Shannon. And he mentioned that Burly Grimes, a teacher at the high school, was the owner of the Mt. Lebanon Camera Shop on Washington Road in the 1960s. Thanks for the great stories and pictures, Bud!

### **VISIT A NATIONAL TREASURE**

At 7:30 p.m., **Wednesday, May 26**, the Historical Society will hold its speakers' series program at Carnegie Library in Carnegie where attendees will enjoy a special tour of the recently reopened and restored GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) room. **The Capt. Thomas Espy GAR Post No. 153** is one of a half dozen most intact GAR posts in the country. To put that number in perspective, in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century there were more than 6,000 GAR posts across the United States serving Union Army veterans as a fraternal organization. In the South Hills, the Espy Post was created in 1879 and named for an Upper St. Clair Township resident who was wounded at Gaines Mills, Virginia, on June 27, 1862, and died in a prison camp. For 28 years the post's members rented rooms for their meetings until in 1906 they secured a second floor room in the Andrew Carnegie Free Library. Members custom-furnished the room with Civil War motifs, GAR paraphernalia, and memorabilia. When the last post member died in the mid 1930s, the room was closed and the door locked. The room remained untouched for more than 50 years. Last winter, work began on restoring the room—as much as feasible and knowable—to its original state. **The Society's program is a chance to get a private tour of this national treasure.** Attendance is limited, so call Lori at 412-561-6649 or e-mail [marieh6@verizon.net](mailto:marieh6@verizon.net) to register.

### **OTHER UPCOMING GREAT PROGRAMS**

September 22: "**The Brady Stewart Collection**" Speaker Michael Stewart will talk about and show photographs taken by his grandfather Brady Stewart and father, Brady Stewart, Jr. Most of the pictures focus on Pittsburgh in the early- to mid-1900s, as Brady Stewart Sr. was a Pittsburgh Leader Press photographer and a city of Pittsburgh photographer. To get a sneak peek, log on to [www.bradystewartphoto.com](http://www.bradystewartphoto.com).

November 3: **Marilyn Holt** from the Carnegie Library will talk about Andrew Carnegie.

Both programs start at 7:30 p.m., at Mt. Lebanon Library.

### **GREAT RECENT PROGRAMS**

#### **BUTTON PROGRAM A BIG SUCCESS**

We had a large crowd for Polly Power, aka The Button Lady, in January. Polly's talk covered the history of buttons—back to the 12<sup>th</sup> century and the first definite button—through the 18<sup>th</sup> century when buttons became works of art on men's clothing (women's clothing was laced). Polly showed the audience some of her extensive collection of buttons made from a wide variety of materials, including pewter, pearl, ivory, Lucite, Bakelite, glass, and drupe (the hard shell of a fruit). At one time there were button factories all up and down the Mississippi River as manufacturers used the shells in the river to make pearl buttons. Button collecting became popular in the 1930s, as it was an inexpensive hobby; it still is today. Judging by the interest in the audience, Polly may have inspired several new collectors.

#### **PHOTO ANTIQUITIES PROGRAM**

We had another large crowd on March 24<sup>th</sup> who thoroughly enjoyed the presentation by Bruce Klein, Founder, of Photo Antiquities located at 531 East Ohio Street on the North Side. Photo Antiquities is a museum of photographic history, photographs and equipment used from 1839 through 1939. Examples of Daguerreotypes (the earliest form of photograph –1839-50's), ambrotypes (images on glass plates –mid 1850's–60's), tintypes (images on a thin metal plate - 1856-1870's), and albumen prints (image from a glass plate negative produced on paper (1850-90) were shown and described in detail. Some attendees brought their old photographs to obtain historical information from Mr. Klein on the type and age of their photographs. The Museum of Photography definitely sounds like a "must see."

#### **HISTORICAL SOCIETY SEEKING IMAGE OF DICKLER'S MARKET**

We need a picture of Dickler's Market, which once stood on Beverly Road, for a coloring book project we are working on. If you have one that you can lend us, please call 412-563-1941. Or, scan it and email it to [info@hsmtl.org](mailto:info@hsmtl.org).

### **PRESERVE YOUR TREASURES**

Mt. Lebanon Library will host "**Preserve Your Treasures**," 7 p.m., **Tuesday, May 11**. Presented by Jeanne Drews, chief of binding and collection care division at the Library of Congress, the talk will cover the collection steps necessary to care for family heirlooms and collectibles, including digital photos.

#### **WE NEED YOUR OLD PICTURES**

The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon and Mt. Lebanon Municipality are **seeking old pictures of the community** to use in exhibits, books (including an Arcadia "Images of America" edition), and promotional materials during Mt. Lebanon's centennial in 2012.

To gather as many images as possible, the Historical Society and the Municipality will host a scanning party where old photographs will be scanned into a computer database, **9 a.m. to noon, Saturday, May 15, Mt Lebanon Municipal Building, 710 Washington Road, 1st floor**. Drop off your pictures and go shopping (May 15 is Mt. Lebanon's first Sidewalk Saturday and farmers will be setting up booths) or stick around so those priceless heirlooms will never leave your sight. You will be asked to provide basic information about the picture—date taken, location, and names of anyone pictured—and sign a release form.

Pictures taken more than 50 years ago are especially in demand, but anything that spotlights a long-gone business, past way of life, or a special Mt. Lebanon event, person, or family will be accepted. For time reasons, please limit the number of pictures to 10. **Can't make it? Then stop by the Center during regular hours and a volunteer can scan the picture then.** Questions? Call 412-563-1941 or 412-343-3790.

#### **A SPECIAL THANK YOU**

To the **Mt. Lebanon Commission** and the **Mt. Lebanon Police Association** for their generous financial support. We really couldn't do it without you!

an appointment or to ask a question. When the weather is bad, call the Center to see if we have

### **HISTORICAL SOCIETY TRUSTEES**

M.A. Jackson, president  
James Wojcik, vice president  
Bill Simpson, treasurer  
Melissa Evans, secretary  
Jeanné Heid Bereznicki  
Mel Bickel  
David Borland  
Marty Carney  
Lori Humphreys  
Barbara Logan  
Maggie McDermott  
Virginia Nicklas  
Dave Redding  
Jehnie Reis  
Wally Workmaster

### **SOCIETY TO GO NATIONAL!**

Representatives from the Heinz History Center have asked Mt. Lebanon Historical Society President M.A. Jackson to participate in a panel presentation at the **American Association of State and Local History's** annual conference in Oklahoma City this September. Titled "Getting a Second Wind – Making the Most of Community Outreach," the panel will focus on and address proficient and cost-effective ways to build stronger more enduring community connections in hard economic times. Sandra Baker and Terri Blanchette, of the Heinz History Center, will head the panel. Also participating is Jeremy Burnworth of the Fayette County Historical Society. This is a huge opportunity for the Society as it gives us NATIONAL exposure!

### **HISTORY CENTER UPDATE**

The History Center is located at the corner of Washington Road and Lebanon Avenue (across from Southminster Church), and our entrance is 200 Lebanon Avenue (by the driveway). Hours are: **10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Thursdays; 9 a.m. to noon, Saturdays; and 6 to 9 p.m., the First Friday of every month between May and October.** If staffing allows, we will take reservations for special tours (such as reunion groups). Call the Center at 412-563-1941 to make

closed for the day. **If you have donations for the Society, please drop them off during office hours, or call to arrange a pick up.**

**"Washington Public School: 1921-2010"** will open **Friday, May 7.** The Mt. Lebanon History Center will host an **open house** that night from 6 to 9 PM.

### **WALKING TOURS**

On Saturdays, May 8, June 12, July 10, August 14, September 11, and October 9, the Historical Society will host walking tours of Washington Road. The tours begin at 10:00 AM at the Mt. Lebanon History Center, 200 Lebanon Avenue (across from Southminster Church).

There will be two tours offered: an hour-long one that proceeds from the Center down Washington Road to Clearview Common and back, and a two-hour tour that proceeds from the Center down Washington Road to Rolliers and back. Along the way, the history of Mt. Lebanon's central business district will be discussed, old pictures shown, and architectural details pointed out. The tour includes two buildings that have been designated Historic Landmarks by the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation. Tour goers also will visit the Municipal Building's lobby to see the decorative murals and the Art Deco features. The tour concludes at the History Center's new exhibit about Washington Elementary School.

Tour leaders are award-winner romance novelist and long-time Mt. Lebanon resident, Gwyn Cready and anthropologist Pat Calvelo, who has been a Carnegie Museum of Natural History docent for 20-plus years, has led the second grade walking tours of Washington Road, and worked on Mt. Lebanon's cultural resource survey.

Tours are \$4.50 for members; \$5.00 for nonmembers. Call 412-563-1941 to make a reservation. If you get the answering machine, please leave your name, your phone number, as well as how many people will be taking the tour activities pin, two football programs from October 1974, 1974 Mt. Lebanon High School

along with you. Or, email [info@hsmtl.org](mailto:info@hsmtl.org) with this same information. Space is limited. Please wear comfortable walking shoes; bottled water is also suggested.

### **DONATIONS**

Metal Homes Digest fall 1994 issue containing an article about the steel frame house on Orchard Drive—Ute and Werner Phillip

1958 Mt. Lebanon Women's Club Bulletin, 1942 map of Mt. Lebanon, history about the house at 1167 Cedar Boulevard—Ann Thompson

Seven boxes of materials and photos having to do with the Schreiner family and Mt. Lebanon, dating back to the mid 1800s—the Schreiner family

Magnets from local businesses, Algeo's wooden nickel, Mt. Lebanon pool passes from 1941 and 1977, matchbooks from Mt. Lebanon businesses, Blue Devils Football banquet program, 1979 Mellonaire, 4<sup>th</sup> of July button, items regarding Washington Elementary School from the 1970s—Carmen DiGiacomo

“In Pursuit of Excellence,” book on the Mt. Lebanon School District—unknown donor

Mt. Lebanon High School class photos from 1939 (grade 11 B) and 1940 (grade 12 B)—Joe Polk

Picture of Joseph Power playing for the Mt. Lebanon Baseball team in the 1930s—Polly Power

1940s pit helmet and arm band from the Civilian Police Corps belonging to Templeton Smith—Louise Sturges

Two pictures taken on the opening night of the Denis Theater, 1937—Bud Stevenson

Band jacket, 10 year reunion book for class of 1974, Mt. Lebanon High School Student ID card,

commencement program, 1971 Mellonaire, 1973-74 Blue Devils glass mug—Susan Blackburn

Photo album that belonged to the Keefer family (formerly of Bower Hills Road – Elinor Ross

### **RECOGNITION OF MEMBERS**

#### **– Life Memberships**

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

#### **2010 Benefactors: - Community Pioneers**

Ruth Foltz

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George and Peg Smith

Alexander “Bud” Stevenson (New)

Eleanor M. Thomas

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Wally Workmaster

#### **RENEWING BENEFACTORS**

Barbara Meharey

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#### **RENEWING**

Mike Lacy

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Maggie McDermott

Edgar and Carol Gaston

Maggie Hendrix

Jeanné Heid Bereznicki

June Delano

Emily McCann

Patrick and Claire King

Emmylou Ducray

Barbara Hinton

Lynn Banbury

Sarah Beck

researcher for the Historical Society, will seek out who was the architect of your house, who applied

Nellie Ambrose  
George Gula  
Bette Ruh  
Palle and Joanne Ostergaard  
Dave Redding  
**NEW**  
John and Lee Scott  
Mary Sweeney  
Yvonne Rameas  
Ronald Block  
William Keslar  
Rod and Julie Agar  
David and Colette Frankowski

### **TROLLEY PICTURES FOR SALE**

Society member Carmen DiGiacomo, a talented photographer, is selling copies of a 42/38 Mt. Lebanon/Beechview trolley in the old Clearview Loop for \$15 at the History Center. The photograph is matted but not framed. Carmen is donating all proceeds to the Society. It's a great gift for trolley lovers and longtime Mt. Lebanon residents. To order a print, stop by the history center or call 412-563-1941.

And speaking of great gift ideas, the History Center is selling sets of 8 note cards—each featuring a different Mt. Lebanon scene drawn by an area artist—for \$10. The cards make a perfect hostess gift or present for a graduation, birthday, or special event. Also available at the Center are “The Way We Were” history books (\$25), “Living with Styles” architecture books (\$20), and Historical Society polo shirts (\$25).

### **OPEN THE DOOR TO YOUR HOUSE'S HISTORY!**

“Open the Door to the History of Your House”—a joint fundraising project of the Mt. Lebanon Public Library and the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon—is **designed to discover the history of your house using available records**, including permits from 1924-1957 and microfiche copies of home plans. This is also a great way to celebrate any occasion and provide a unique personalized gift to that special home-owning friend or relative. Lori Humphreys,

for the first permit, what changes have occurred, who the original owners were, who the builder was, and what alterations were made. The Basic Home Research Information costs \$30 and includes available copies of original permit with builder and first owner names and microfiche drawings of home, if available. For \$30 more, you will also receive available descriptions of home alterations, architect information including other projects, available building information and subdivision information. Please note that not all information is available for every house, and that we do not conduct deed searches. To sign up, call the library at 412-531-1912.

### **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, we will have some easy tasks—sending out thank you letters, returning phone calls, filing, and working on some special projects—to keep you occupied and help the Society. We'd also like to hear ideas for new projects that you'd like to work on. And we need...

- \* 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
- \* Help with the exhibits
- \* A membership chair
- \* A Holiday Exhibit chair (see item “Do You Love the Holidays”)
- \* An assistant for the Arcadia book project

If you are interested, call 412-563-1941 and leave a message or e-mail [info@hsmatl.org](mailto:info@hsmatl.org).

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**  
**200 Lebanon Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15228**

**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*