



# THE CEDAR TREE

## Newsnotes from The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon

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

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SUMMER 2011

### Summer 2011

#### PRESIDENTS LETTER

On May 20, Society vice president Jim Wojcik, treasurer Dave Redding, and I attended a free conference hosted by The Heinz History Center for its HCAP (History Center Affiliates Program) members. The daylong program covered historical costumes (for docents), building small exhibits on a budget, social media, fundraising, and collections care.

It was a great opportunity for us to be in a room filled with representatives from other small museums and history centers where we could share ideas and, most importantly, have experts answer our questions.

Although we have no plans to add docents in period costumes to the History Center, the session on costumes was fascinating, and we got ideas and contact information to help us with future events, such as a St. Clair Cemetery tour we plan to host next year—our hope is to have docents wear costumes relating to different periods of the community's past.

Representatives of the Jefferson Country Historical Society gave us a fascinating glimpse into their move from a small building to a much larger one and how they build great exhibits on a very limited budget. They also provided ideas on how to attract businesses and individuals to sponsor exhibits. I never knew we could inexpensively build our own Plexiglas display cases; now I can't wait to try.

We are already using Facebook to inform people about what we are doing and share history facts and photographs, but thanks to this session,

I realized I'd been neglecting the events calendar feature.

Audrey Brouman of A.L. Brouman Assoc, a company that handles the Heinz History Center's fundraising/public relations, and Jeremy Burnworth, of the Fayette County Historical Society (with whom I went to the American Association of State and Local History conference last September), conducted the fundraising session. They discussed everything from grassroots efforts to building a database of supporters. This was a very informative session, as we will soon need to think about acquiring larger quarters—and larger quarters will require more funds.

Jim Wojcik is our collections management chair, so the final session on collections care was extremely useful to him. For the session, we visited the Heinz History Center's collections processing room where we received an overview on what supplies we should have on hand that will best preserve our treasures.

In all, it was a great day filled with ideas we can implement to make our center the best it can be. Many times the panelists suggested things that we are already doing, which made us feel great and super smart. Other suggestions provided "A-ha" moments—including hosting a member appreciation event, which we plan to hold later this summer or early fall.

We thank the Heinz History Center for sponsoring this event and making it so reasonably priced (I did mention it was free, didn't I?).

M.A. Jackson

## COLORING BOOK

“Mt. Lebanon: A Town of Colorful History,” the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon’s new coloring book, is now for sale! This lovely 76-page book is the perfect gift to keep visiting grandchildren busy or to teach your child about the history of their community’s past. Illustrated by 15 local artists—including architects, school art teachers, and cartoonists—the book is \$10 at the History Center; Lee Heckman Custom Framing, Atria’s Restaurant (Beverly Road); KoolKat Designs, The Art Loft, Rolliers (Washington Road), and A.B. Charles Hobby Shop (McFarland Road). You also can buy it at [www.hsmtl.org](http://www.hsmtl.org) using PayPal. For an additional \$5, we can mail the book to you.

Please remember that we also sell sets of **note cards** and **“I (heart) Lebo” T-shirts** in adult and youth sizes, as well as **baby onesies**

## THANK YOU

To **Anne Kemerer** for agreeing to chair our annual dinner... To **Joanne Ostergaard** for being our annual dinner sponsor at St. Clair Country Club... To **Mark Johnson, George Gula, and Paul Dudjak** for their help with the installation of the Center’s latest exhibit... To **Dave Redding** for once again driving us in the Memorial Day Parade (and rescuing us when the car we had planned to take broke down)... Once again to **Jane Johnson** for her ongoing transcribing work of our oral histories... To **Barbara Logan** for her work arranging a special January program (see the “2011-12 Speaker Series” item for details)... to **Yvette Yescas** for helping to prepare a grant that, if received, will pay for the Society’s planned photo display along Washington and Beverly roads for next year’s centennial... To **all the volunteers** who have worked our Center and special events... To **all of you** who have renewed your membership for 2011. Of all our members, only 14 did not renew... To **Jim Renckly** for scanning oversized pictures and documents.

We must give a very special thank you to **Jath Dicecco**, our high school intern. Jath began

working at the center last summer to earn volunteer hours, but kept coming back over the winter. He was a huge asset—helping with the computers and filing, as well as other tasks. Always pleasant, always upbeat, his presence will be sorely missed as he heads of to Washington and Jefferson College this fall. Jath plans to become a history teacher, and we hope he finds work in Mt. Lebanon so he can come back to volunteer again.

Another special thanks is due to **Muriel Moreland and her volunteers at the Dormont Historical Society** for opening their museum to us for a special tour in May. The museum is a wonderful community treasure, and if you did not make it to the tour, we encourage you to stop by. The museum is open Thursdays and by appointment. Contact 412-341-3667 (leave a message) or email [mrm1958@comcast.net](mailto:mrm1958@comcast.net).

## A SAD ANNOUNCEMENT

After 86 years of serving the community, the **Mt. Lebanon Woman’s Club** has disbanded. The club—that once owned a clubhouse designed by Ingham and Boyd on Hollycrest Drive—was a philanthropic organization and an active force behind the creation of several local institutions, including the Mt. Lebanon Public Library. At its peak in the 1960s, the club had 1,400 members, and membership was so prestigious that prospective members needed two sponsors to be accepted. The club has already presented the Society with a gavel—created from the Cedar of Lebanon trees that gave the community its name—as well as a framed letter of the club’s corporation filing dated March 20, 1930. Those items are displayed prominently at the History Center, and we have been told additional records may be donated to the Society’s collection. In June, the Woman’s Club presented a \$150 gift to the Society in recognition of **Jane Morton**, who served as the club’s president from 2008 until it disbanded in June. We would like to thank the club for its gift and for entrusting its wonderful, irreplaceable pieces of Mt. Lebanon’s past to our care.

### **BOOK AWARD**

Every year, The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon presents its History Book Prize to a Mt. Lebanon High School junior, selected by the high school's social studies teachers, as a way to recognize that student's passion for and interest in U.S. History and encourage future study of our nation's past. We also presented a copy of the book to the High School library in hopes of enlightening and edifying other students.

This year's recipient was **Nick Brown**. U.S. History Teacher Peter DiNardo says that Nick is an exceptionally bright, hardworking student as well as a nice, decent, and honest person. Although Dinardo feels Nick is destined for a career in science and math, he says Nick dedicates himself passionately to the study of U.S. History, giving time, attention to detail, and consideration to each and every assignment. Nick enjoys being challenged and, in class, will guide discussions, weaving in quieter students.

The book we presented was "Andrew Jackson: His Life and Times" by H.W. Brands. Dinardo suggested the book as Nick had used this complex and controversial United States president as a topic of debate.

We congratulate this fine young man and outstanding scholar. It was our privilege to award him with the 2011 Historical Society of Mount Lebanon History Book Prize.

### **2011-12 SPEAKERS SERIES**

All programs are 7:30 p.m. at the Mt. Lebanon Library unless otherwise noted. Please mark your calendar now with the following dates:

**September 28** - We will meet at the **Baptist Homes** on Castle Shannon Boulevard to hear a talk and see pictures of this 100-year-old facility that started as an orphanage and home for the aged.

**November 2** - Former Mt. Lebanon High School teacher **John Canning** and chief archivist of the Heinz History Center **David Grinnell**, will present a talk about the **Thaw family**. William Thaw was a Pittsburgh coal and railroad baron in

the 1800s. Son Harry, however, may have eclipsed the family's philanthropic endeavors by killing architect Stanford White for the love of Evelyn Nesbit, better known as the Girl in the Red Velvet Swing (her mother lived in Mt. Lebanon).

**January 18, 2012** - A very special program will be held at Temple Emanuel on Bower Hill Road for a viewing of a Nova documentary about history and the Bible. **Ron Tappy**, of the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, will be the guest speaker. We thank former board member Barbara Logan for her work in arranging this event.

### **WALKING TOURS & OTHER EVENTS**

Our summer walking tours have been very well received and our June tour of St. Bernard and Mt. Lebanon United Presbyterian churches drew a large crowd. Look for an article about the church tour in an upcoming **Suburban Living magazine**, which is part of the weekly Almanac paper. If you haven't had a chance to attend one of our tours, you still have time.

At 10 a.m., Saturdays, July 9, September 10, and October 8, we will host 90-minute **tours of Washington Road** beginning at the Mt. Lebanon History Center (200 Lebanon Avenue—across from Southminster Church). The tours will proceed 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 (find out where the owl and the eagle are on Washington Road!) The tour includes the inside of the Art Deco municipal building.

At 10 a.m., Friday, August 12, tour goers will meet in the Mt. Lebanon United Presbyterian Church parking lot (under the "drive-thru" arch) for "**Stains & Stained Glass**" tours of the nearly 100-year-old **St. Bernard Church** with the Spanish tile roof and beautiful frescos and **Mt. Lebanon United Presbyterian Church**—Mt. Lebanon's oldest (and first) church. The tours will cover the history of the churches with a primary focus on the stained glass windows.

Tours are \$5 for members; \$10 for nonmembers. Please call 412-563-1941 to make a reservation. If you get the answering machine, leave your name, your phone number, the date you will attend, and how many people will be attending. Or email [info@hsmtl.org](mailto:info@hsmtl.org) with the same information. Space is limited. Please wear comfortable walking shoes, Bottled water will be provided for the Washington Road tours.

Make sure to stop by the History Center at 200 Lebanon Avenue between now and the end of November for our new exhibit, **Trains, Trolleys, and Automobiles: Transportation in Mt. Lebanon.** The exhibit looks at how the community progressed from dirt roads to a thriving suburb, with a special section on the building of the Liberty Tunnels and its impact on the community's development. We have lots of great pictures of the long-gone trolley, so come in and reminisce.

Mark your calendar now for our **annual dinner** on Wednesday, October 19, at St. Clair Country Club. Details are still being worked out, but we will have a great speaker and an auction.

Look for our table on Washington Road **First Friday** events in July, August, and September. And we will once again co-sponsor the Washington Road **ULTRAparty** on Saturday, August 6. This event will feature the '80s cover band Velveeta.

#### **HISTORICAL SOCIETY TRUSTEES**

M.A. Jackson, president  
James Wojcik, vice president  
Dave Redding, treasurer  
Melissa Evans, secretary  
Jeanné Heid Bereznicki  
Mel Bickel  
Marty Carney  
Matthew Clark  
Gwyn Cready  
Kim Honath  
Maggie McDermott  
Bill Simpson  
Lisa White  
Wally Workmaster

#### **SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP:**

#### **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

##### **Centennial Memberships--\$100**

Cynthia and Jerome Richey (renewing)  
George and Eleanora Freas  
Chris and Anne Kemerer  
Rod and Julie Agar  
Ruth Foltz  
Barbara and Robert Logan  
Bud Stevenson  
Wally Workmaster  
Barbara Meharey  
Kent and Kathy Miller  
Jeanne and Scotti Mulert  
Bea Finke

#### **NEW AND RENEWING MEMBERSHIPS**

##### **New (individual)**

Judy Sutton (individual)  
Kevin Russell (individual)  
Charles Early (individual)

##### **Renewing (Senior)**

Joan and Jim McGinnis  
Carolyn Byham  
Mary C. Sweeney

##### **Renewing (Individual)**

Joan Lamprinakos

##### **Renewing (Family)**

Todd Depastio  
Susan Iannuzzi and Emil Shenouda  
Karen and Conrad Koch  
Helen Aldisert and Lang Krayner

### ARCADIA BOOK

According to publisher Arcadia Press, **our book, "Mt. Lebanon,"** will be released September 28. The book is part of Arcadia's "Images of America" series (Dormont released one last year) and features photographs of our community's past, including people, businesses, schools, houses, churches and schools. Although the book will be sold in bookstores and other venues, please consider purchasing the book directly from the Society as we receive all profits from those books. We plan to have a special Members Only party when the book debuts. Keep your eyes open for an invitation.

### CONSTITUTION CHANGES

According to the Society's Constitution, any changes to said Constitution must be advertised to the membership at least 60 days prior to the vote at the annual meeting in November. The following proposed amendments were initiated and passed by a two-thirds majority vote at the June 8, 2011 Board of Trustees meeting. These amendments will not be adopted or go into effect until they are approved by a two-thirds majority vote by the membership present and qualified to vote at the Society's annual meeting in November of this year. All remaining sections of the Constitution remain as currently adopted. Words to be removed or deleted from the current Constitution are identified with a ~~cross thru~~. Words added from the current Constitution are identified in **boldface type**.

### Article III – MEMBERSHIP

Section 4: The membership of the Society shall hold an annual meeting on a date established by the Board of Trustees and announced to the membership in writing. At this meeting members will receive the reports of the various officers of the Society, and members in good standing at the time of the meeting shall elect trustees for the coming year and conduct any other business brought before the assembly. A quorum to conduct business at the annual meeting shall consist of a ~~majority of members~~

~~present who are qualified to vote~~ - **minimum of 10 members present and in good standing.**

### Article IV – BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Section 3: Election of trustees shall occur at the Society's annual meeting from a slate of candidates prepared by a Nominating Committee named by the Board of Trustees and chaired by the Board Vice-President. Candidates may also be nominated from the floor provided their nomination is moved and seconded by at least two different members-in-good-standing of the Society. The term of each trustee shall begin on January 1 immediately following election.... **Members of the Board of Trustees can serve no more than two consecutive three-year terms in succession. However, nothing shall prevent a former Board of Trustee Member from being nominated and then serving on the Board after a year's absence.**

Section 4: The Board of Trustees shall meet ~~bi-monthly~~ **at least 5 times annually** at the Mount Lebanon Public Library or other convenient location to conduct the business of the Society. A quorum, consisting of a majority of the Trustees then sitting on the Board, shall be necessary for the Board to conduct business. The ~~Secretary~~ **President** of the Board shall give trustees ~~ten (10)~~ **no fewer than five (5)** days written notice, including the place and time, for each regular meeting.

### Article V – COMMITTEES

Section 4: A Nominating Committee shall be appointed for a term of one (1) year and shall be chaired by the Vice-President of the Board of Trustees. This committee shall 1) make recommendations for filling vacancies between elections and 2) compile slates of candidates for election as trustee and officers of the Society for presentation at the appropriate meetings. No later than sixty (60) days prior to the annual meeting, the Nominating Committee shall invite members

to submit names and brief resumes of possible candidates who would be willing to serve as officers or trustees. The Nominating Committee shall review these recommendations and exercise its best judgment in compiling a list of candidates from these and other sources. The proposed slate(s), ~~with supporting biographies,~~ shall be ~~distributed~~ **made available** to the membership no less than seven (7) days prior to the annual meeting.

If you have any questions about any of these proposed amendments or would like to know the reasons why the changes were suggested, please email [info@hsmatl.org](mailto:info@hsmatl.org).

#### **BOARD NOMINATIONS SOUGHT**

If you are interested in serving on the Society's board or would like to nominate someone, please contact Jim Wojcik at 412-563-4037 or [wojcik33@verizon.net](mailto:wojcik33@verizon.net) by September 1. To be nominated, you must be a member in good standing. The nominating committee will review all submissions and select candidates. Those names will be displayed on our website prior to the November 2 annual meeting/program where the new members will be voted in and directors elected.

#### **HISTORY CENTER**

The History Center is located at the corner of Washington Road and Lebanon Avenue (across from Southminster Church); our entrance is 200 Lebanon Avenue (by the driveway). Hours are: **10 a.m. to 1 p.m., Thursdays and 9 a.m. to noon, Saturdays.** If staffing allows, we will take reservations for special tours (such as reunion groups). Call the Center at 412-563-1941 to make an appointment or to ask a question. **If you have donations for the Society, please drop them off during office hours, or call to arrange a pick up.**

#### **HISTORY TIDBIT**

This is an excerpt from an old newspaper article—dated March 2, 1923. The entire article is in the Society's collection.

#### ***BIBLES GIVEN AT NEW MT. LEBANON SCHOOL***

*A color guard and a guard of honor for every public school were asked for last Thursday by William T. Kerr, president of the American Flag Association, in his Washington's Birthday address to teachers and pupils of the newly erected public school of Mt. Lebanon [Washington Elementary], when he presented a large flag and 15 Bibles on behalf of Castle Shannon council 297, Fraternal Patriotic Americans....*

*Just as Mr. Kerr finished presenting the flag and Bibles, four whitehooded Ku Klux Klansmen marched down the auditorium aisle to the stage and handed a flag and a letter to the speaker, who said he was taken by surprise.*

*The letter said, "We present this flag as a token that we as a body of Christian American men stand four square behind the public schools."*

*It was signed, "Pittsburgh Provisional Klan No. 5, Realm of Pennsylvania Invisible Empire Knights of the Ku Klux Klan"...*

*Robert Kelly, president of the school board, accepted the flag and Bibles from the patriotic Americans, but left the acceptance of the Ku Klux Klan flag to the audience, which approved. The Klansmen came to the school in automobiles and disappeared on delivery of the flag and letter.*

Let us hope they disappeared for good and were never heard from again.