



# 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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WINTER 2010

### PRESIDENT'S LETTER

One of the best things about working with the Historical Society is helping people. In December, we received an e-mail from Judy Lacken of Torrance, California, who was putting together a video scrapbook for her father, Eugene Karsh, a 1942 Mt. Lebanon graduate. Judy was looking for pictures of Mandell's drug store—where her father and mother, Carolyn Lee Craft (class of 1944), enjoyed malts at the soda fountain—and the Lebanon Lodge at the corner of Washington and Connor roads, where Eugene hung out as a young man. Her father's memory was a bit iffy on some of the place names, so our board member Mel Bickel—who is just a few years younger than Eugene—called Judy and helped with the details. After the call, Judy sent us the following e-mail:

*"I spoke with Mel—he was so full of information. After speaking with him, one of my two questions was answered almost positively. I spoke to my dad and the name Mandell's is the place he remembers, for sure. Also, the Lebanon Lodge is the place he remembers as well...I had seen on the [Society's] website that people are contributing memorabilia...I think that's wonderful. The amazing thing is that a friend of my mom's name is noted as having contributed a scrapbook. Her name was Patty Gordon. When I told my dad, he not only remembered Patty, but also her high school sweetheart, and future husband!"*

We were able to send Judy a packet of pictures, newspaper clippings, and other items for her video scrapbook. If you went to school with Eugene, and would like to contact him or his daughter, call 310-433-5850.

In December, we also received this e-mail from Betsy

Lynch Ahlborn of Brownsville, Pennsylvania *"I was surfing your website....oh so interesting...and I saw a picture of the Smith Castle. I grew up in Cedarhurst Manor, in fact, on Summer Place....As kids we used to play in the orchard at the end of Summer Place. I'm wondering if the Castle (a very scary place for us as kids!) still stands. Do you have any info on the history of the Smith Castle?"*

Well, we sent Betsy some information we had on Cedar Lake and she replied:

*"The articles arrived and I have just finished savoring each and every word of them! I was one of those children who learned to ice skate on the lake...we seemed to have colder winters in the 1950s as I remember the lake usually stayed frozen all winter. I do remember being told that 'if we ever slipped through a hole in the ice...we would never be found because there were underground mines.' And I see how partially true those words were as the lake was a coal-washing area for a mine. I can't even begin to imagine my son or daughter allowing their children to be out of sight and around a lake for hours upon hours (without adult supervision) ...my how times have changed!"*

If you grew up with Besty and would like to contact her, e-mail [betts11@verizon.net](mailto:betts11@verizon.net).

Finally, we received a letter from 84-year-old Irmarie Scheuneman Jones that told of life in Sunset Hills during the Depression—kick-the-can on Questend, picking blackberries at the foot of Fruithurst Drive, walking to the South Hills Theater in Dormont, and playing in the woods around Arlington Park. Irmarie moved to Massachusetts in 1939 after finishing tenth grade and is now a resident of Greenfield, MA, where she has been writing human interest stories for her

local paper, *The Recorder*, since 1977. She had seven children, 12 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren. She is writing a book about her childhood and wonders if anyone remembers her. If you do and would like to contact her, write to 63 Thayer Road, Greenfield, MA 01301.

We could not help these people if it wasn't for the donations we receive of old photographs, newspaper clippings, yearbooks, and other memorabilia. Please keep us in mind as you clean out your closets and attics. Items that you might think useless could very well be priceless to us or to someone working on a genealogy project. Also remember us if you have a child or grandchild who is doing a school project and needs an old photograph or basic information about the community. Thanks to everyone who has donated items to the Society. Please have a wonderful 2010.

M.A. Jackson, President

#### **HISTORICAL SOCIETY TRUSTEES**

We wish a fond farewell to trustees Wilma Novogradac and Lynn Geyer Banbury and welcome James Wojcik, Dave Redding, Barbara Logan, and Melissa Evans.

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

#### **HISTORY CENTER UPDATE**

Don't miss our latest exhibit, "**Washington Road: A History of Change**," which runs through March 2010 and features old photographs of Washington Road and items from long gone businesses. Stop by and take a stroll down memory lane.

In May, the Society will present an exhibit on **Washington Elementary School** and in October we will be working with the **Mt. Lebanon Soccer Association** to present an exhibit that will coincide with the association's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

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**. 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. When the weather is bad, call the Center to see if we have 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.**

#### **2010 PROGRAMS—MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**January 27:** Polly Power will speak about antique buttons. Please bring buttons for her to identify.

**March 24:** A speaker from Photo Antiquities on the North Side.

**May 26:** A trip to Carnegie Library in Carnegie to see the recently re-opened and restored GAR (Grand Army of the Republic) room.

**September 22:** To be Announced

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

#### **GREAT PROGRAMS**

At our November public program, "An Evening with Members of the 8<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the Continental Line: A Revolutionary War Re-Enactment Group," we learned where the terms "flash in the pan," "keep your powder dry," and "going off half cocked" came from. We saw bayonets, rifles, and muskets as well as wooden canteens and two very different styles of Revolutionary War uniforms. It was a great evening and we thank speakers Michael Mongelli and Gary Cramer for an enlightening evening.

We'd also like to thank Muriel Moreland, the president of the Dormont Historical Society, for being our September speaker. It was great fun to see historic pictures of our neighbor to the North and hear about the community's development.

## DONATIONS

**Ginny Nicklas:** October 1942 *Student Life* magazine; scrapbook of items from Mt. Lebanon High School; *Lebanon Lantern* school newspapers from 1943-1945; *Mt. Lebanon News* article about Dorothy Nicklas from September 2, 1954

**Emily McCann:** 1939 map of Mt. Lebanon

**Francie Robb:** Copy of a 1908 map of Scott Township and an assortment of photocopied maps

**Dave Redding:** Mt. Lebanon phone book; Walker Pontiac license plate holder

**Carmen DiGiacomo:** Mt. Lebanon Athletic Association track jacket; Multi-list realtor ruler; Trilli and Dunbar tri-fold ruler; Mt. Lebanon vs North Hills football program November 27, 1981; Mt. Lebanon vs Bethel Park football program, November 22 1981; Mt. Lebanon Blue Devils 1991 football schedule; Mt. Lebanon High School Handbook circa 1970s

**Bertha Abbott Thomas:** Mt. Lebanon United Presbyterian Church program from June 13, 1954

**Wayne and Kim Honath:** Wooden Mt. Lebanon Sign; two plat maps from 1934

**Bonnie Rosaro:** 1940 Mt. Lebanon High School yearbook (belonged to her mother, Mary Ann Falk Metting)

**Lynne Crawford:** Swingline staple book from Whitman's Stationary Co, 675 Washington Road

**Anonymous donor:** Mt. Lebanon High School senior day cap 1958

**James Steen:** Two black and white photos of school children circa 1944 playing on a farm in the Cedar Boulevard area

**Judy Messnar Grand:** 1966 Mt. Lebanon High school diploma; 1940s era wedding gown (belonged to her mother)

**Peg Smith:** Know Your Town booklet 1995

**Mt. Lebanon Recreation Department:** South Hills 911 Dispatch Center sign

**Mark Scott:** List of street names from 1930 issued by the Mt. Lebanon Fire Department

**Steve McQuillen:** Eight photos of Fulton Farm circa 1900-1910

**Nichole McBride:** 1946 Mt. Lebanon pool pass

**Steve Feller:** Plumbing code book circa 1929; Mt. Lebanon Zoning book from 1940; framed picture of the Ammon Avenue Elementary School

**Marty Carney:** 1960s Little League Baseball, glass scooper from Algeo's general store

**Dorothy McClelland:** A scrapbook of Washington

Elementary School class photos from 1938 to 1977) belonged to her sister-in-law Eleanor McClelland, a Washington Elementary School teacher

## LET US HELP YOU RESEARCH YOUR HOME

The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon and the Mt. Lebanon Public Library are renewing their popular Home History project. Historical Society trustee and cultural resource survey volunteer Lori Humphreys will conduct the research and put the information together using the available permits and microfiche. This is not a title search, though the first owners' names are available. Residents can pick up the completed packet at the library's reference desk. Contact Lori at [marieh6@verizon.net](mailto:marieh6@verizon.net) or complete a form at the Library so that we can contact you as to the extent of information available. You may also call the library at 412-531-1912. There is a \$30 fee for the basic research; \$60 will get you expanded research information. The fee is considered a donation and will be divided equally between the library and the Society.

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## 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@hsmtl.org](mailto:info@hsmtl.org).

### **DO YOU LOVE THE HOLIDAYS?**

We are seeking a volunteer to coordinate the display the Society mounts at the library every December. We need someone who will come up with a theme—it could be holiday related, history related, or a combination (for instance, the 2009 display was “I’ll Be Home For Christmas,” which combined historic items from World War I and World War II with Christmas items). We need you to find the items and set up the display on December 1 and take it down by December 31. It’s a lot of fun; we just need some fresh ideas and someone with a passion for the holidays! Please call us at 412-563-1941 if you are interested, and we will give you more details.

### **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).

### **DORMONT DEDICATION**

In September, the Historical Society of Mount Lebanon was honored to be invited to a dedication ceremony by the Dormont Historical Society. The ceremony was for a marker that commemorates Dormont High School. The school, which was located at Annapolis and Grandin Avenues, opened September 5, 1922 and was razed in 1996. Mt. Lebanon students attended this school before the Mt. Lebanon High school opened in 1930. The marker stands in the parking lot of what is now Dormont Elementary School.

### **ANNUAL DINNER WRAP-UP/THANKS**

The Historical Society of Mount Lebanon's annual dinner fundraiser at St. Clair Country Club on Wednesday, October 28, 2009 was a big success.

Speaker Art Rooney Jr.—vice president of the Pittsburgh Steelers—kept attendees laughing as he shared stories about his childhood, his father (The Chief), and the Pittsburgh Steelers. A few lucky individuals even got to try on his Super Bowl ring.

Many people worked on the dinner to make it a success. We would like to thank the dinner committee: Virginia Nicklas, chair; Charlotte Borland, Emmy Lou Ducray, Connie Lopez, Wilma Novogradac, Bette Ruh, Dave Borland, and Elsie Waddell. St. Clair Country Club once again did an outstanding job with the meal. We need to thank Carol Thomas and The Embassy, Sarris Chocolates, and PSH & Associates for their help in planning and carrying out the event, as well as the following businesses for donating items for the auction and raffle:

Art Rooney Jr., Steelers memorabilia; Steve Feller, Mt. Lebanon Municipality; Cynthia Richey and Julie Mareino, Mt. Lebanon Library; Gene Roach, Mt. Lebanon Police Department; Nick Sohyda, Mt. Lebanon Fire Department; Neal Vavrek, Denny’s; Lee Heckman, Lee Heckman Framing; Todd DePastino; Greg Langel and Kathi Connelly, The Frick Art & Historical Center; Terri Blanchette and Ann Fortescue, Sen. John Heinz History Center; Mineo’s Pizza; David Donnellan, Mt. Lebanon Recreation Department; Petra Fey & David McKibben, The Book Cellar; Wynne Fedele, CLO; Tammy Sampson, The Fabric Place; Barb Herzing, Delightfully Different; Joanne Paganelli, Favorites; Bellingham’s Hair Salon; Bradley Michaels Furniture Direct; Giant Eagle; Rania Harris, Rania’s Catering; Bravo, The Galleria; Nina Trout, Jezebel, The Galleria; Borders Books & Music; Lillian & Reg Tate, Potomac Bakery; The Satterfield’s, Rollier’s Hardware; Rebecca Potrocky, Barefoot Stitches & Gifts; Melissa Sacco, Blooming Dahlia; Bruce Harshman, Salon La Te Da; and Barbara Joyce, Stone Pepper Grill

### **THE HISTORICAL GLASS CLUB OF PITTSBURGH**

will hold an antiques and collectibles identification event from 1 to 4 PM, Saturday, January 30, at Mt. Lebanon Library. Teams of appraisers will identify all types of antiques and collectibles, including pottery, glass, toys, coins, furniture, primitives, and ephemera. Cost is \$5.00 for two items and includes an admission ticket to the Club’s Antique Show and Sale at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Fort Couch Road, on February 20 and 21. For information, call 412-563-0830 or 412-341-5286.

In late November, we sent out membership renewal forms. We thank everyone who has renewed – your membership allows us to offer free programs, create a newsletter, maintain a website, operate a History Center, and accomplish much more. If you have not yet renewed, won't you please take a moment to do so now?

**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  
Ralph Fuehr  
Connie Lopez  
Nancy & James Lutz  
Kent S. Miller  
George & Barbara Schoeppner  
George and Peg Smith  
Eleanor M. Thomas  
Wally Workmaster

**2010 RENEWING MEMBERS:**

Nellie Ambrose  
Paul & Sylvia Garlitz  
Lucille Heckman  
Geoffrey Hurd  
Karen & Conrad Koch  
Margaret Jackson  
Barb Jucha  
Bernard & Betsy LaQuinta  
Rita Levine  
Eleanora Kirsopp May  
Edward McClain Jr  
David & Cecelia McKibben  
Robert & Joan Mitsch  
Bruce Murray  
Toni Murray  
Andrew & Laura Reinhart  
Albert & Dominga Schnupp  
Nancy Sofis  
Alice Stock  
Mel and Maxine Bickel  
Helen & Clarence Betzler  
Dale Colby  
David Davis  
Todd DePastino  
Ann & Jim Simmons  
Jane & Sam Morton

Bette Ruh  
James Wojcik & family  
Gertrude McCrum  
Jean Atutes  
Pat Grubb  
Nancy & Richard Laitta  
Judy Macoskey  
Eleanor McHugh  
Edward Reno  
Bill and Peggy Christopher  
Charles Brodbeck  
Jean Baldwin  
Nancy Bucey  
Ardeh Tennyson  
Sandy and Lee Golomb  
Barbara Cusick  
David & Charlotte Borland  
Elaine & Joe Wertheim  
Fred & Marianne Siesdorfer  
Joan Fisher  
Ken and Audrey Menke  
Scotti & Jeanne Mulert  
Richard Price  
Bryson Schreiner  
Jon Delano  
Helen Aldisert & Lang Krayser  
Linda Stewart  
Lee Veltri  
Luetta Waddell  
Barbara Logan  
Lori Humphreys  
Toni Tierney  
Marilyn Freed  
Bette Mucha  
Carol Humphreys Gordon  
**2010 NEW MEMBERS**  
Joan Laprinakos  
Jona Keadle  
Betty & Bob Newcomer  
Joseph Dimperio  
Sheila & Paul Feldman  
Bonnie Van Kirk  
Lillian & Reginald Tate  
Louanne Brunenmeister  
Sarah Beck  
Sue Hornbaker  
Carmen DiGiacomo  
Mary Failor Hughes  
Bill Callahan  
Bunny Schorr  
Joan & James McGinnis

**QUESTION ANSWERED:** This last article relates to a question one of our members asked in an issue of "The Cedar Tree" regarding information about the name of Park Entrance Drive and whether or not there ever had been a park accessible from that street. Well, another of our members, Wally Workmaster, says the answer is an emphatic one, "NO. There never was a public park, actual or intended, as a part of the Lebanon Hills Subdivision, other than the grass median between the two lanes of Park Entrance Drive, a parklet on steeply sloping triangularly-shaped land bordered by Lebanon Hills and Connecting Drives, and another small parklet beyond Main Entrance Drive. Those are part of the landscape design of the subdivision rather than actual parks for major recreational purposes like team sports or picnicking." Wally believes the name of the developer of the Lebanon Hills Subdivision was Frank McGillick, who was much influenced by the then very new landscaping of Mission Hills and sought to imitate it on a reduced scale. The median and parklets really didn't cost him much in terms of space for saleable lots and it vastly improved the ambiance of the development. Wally met Mr. McGillick several times when his grandfather had dealings with him. McGillick was a gruff old farmer who wasn't about to lose a penny, if he could avoid it. Wally continues,

"I think Mr. McGillick simply liked the sound of the name "Park Entrance"...it sounded impressive to people buying lots in the subdivision. I can well remember when the brick paving of Park Entrance Drive and Lebanon Hills Drive both ended abruptly in open fields. The Mt. Lebanon Fire Department used to come each year to supervise the burning of the dead grass in those fields to prevent unwanted fires, just as they did in other parts of the township. I flew kites several times in those open fields, but that's about as much recreational use as I ever saw them receive. I happened to be standing in one of those fields when Pittsburgh Coal set off an experimental charge during World War II in one of the galleries of the old Beadling Mine, which had been abandoned in 1922 or 1923, to see if it might be practical to reopen it. It caused the ground to tremble under my feet. There were several other controlled explosions in other parts of the mine under different portions of Mt. Lebanon on other occasions, but the decision was that it would not be practical to reopen the Beadling Mine, despite the pressing need for coal in relation to the war effort. I hope this satisfactorily answers the question."

A new question will be published in the spring issue of "The Cedar Tree."

***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: _____	<b>Individual</b>	<b>\$20</b>	___
	<b>Family</b>	<b>\$35</b>	___
Address: _____	<b>Benefactor</b>	<b>\$100</b>	___
	<b>Youth</b>	<b>\$15</b>	___
City/State/Zip _____	<b>Senior</b>	<b>\$15</b>	___
	<b>Life</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	___
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.***