

The Mahoning Valley Historical Society Newsletter

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS



PRESERVING THE VALLEY'S HISTORY FOR 134 YEARS

Volume 37 Issue 1

July & August 2009

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Play Ball! Sports in the Mahoning Valley

Playing sports was one of the most popular pastimes of the 20th Century in Youngstown and the Mahoning Valley. Athletic events brought people together, both to play and to watch, and the evidence of this rich sports history is maintained in the collections of the Mahoning Valley Historical Society. Photographs, sports equipment, trophies, and programs tell the stories of baseball, basketball, football, track and field, golf, bowling, boxing, cycling, and more. From youth to adulthood and beyond, sports have had an important role in the lives of many people of the Mahoning Valley.



Women's Soccer League during the 1970s. It also celebrates the teamwork of local high school athletes and community sports leagues.

Another sports acquisition came from local resident Judy McGuire. Ms. McGuire donated a team photograph featuring the McKelvey's Department Store baseball team, 1955 Champions of the National Amateur Baseball Federation. Accompanying the photograph is a Louisville Slugger, engraved with the championship title as well as the names of all of the team members.



A new exhibit, opening Saturday, July 11 at the Arms Family Museum of Local History, will feature these stories and more. *Play Ball! Sports in the Mahoning Valley*, will feature images and objects from local sports of the 20th Century, and will remain open through October of 2009. 🐾

Founders Day Events

Founders Day Dinner

Thursday, September 10th
5:30 to 8:00 p.m.
McMahon Hall, Mill Creek
MetroParks Farm
Canfield

Celebrate the 134th Anniversary of the Historical Society with dinner and guest speaker Mark Peyko. Publisher of the *Metro Monthly* newspaper, Peyko has recently completed editing *Remembering Youngstown: Tales from the Mahoning Valley*, a beautifully rendered collection of vignettes with stories of inventors, movie moguls, local cuisine and sports heroes. Signed copies of the book will be available to order with your dinner reservation at a 15% discount (proceeds will benefit the Historical Society).

Founders Day Open House

Sunday, September 13th
1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

The Arms Family Museum
(648 Wick Avenue)

Enjoy tours of the Arms Family Museum, games and activities for kids on the lawn and historical walking tours of Wick Avenue at this free public open house. 🐾

From This Direction: Annual Report

The 134th Annual Meeting took place on Tuesday June 16, 2009, at the Youngstown Historical Center for Industry and Labor. Over ninety members and guests convened for a lovely dinner, a business meeting which included election of new Directors, and presentation of the 2009 MVHS Historic Preservation Awards.

Board Development Report

Charlotte Gelhaar, member of the Board Development Committee, presented the following nominees who were elected to serve three year terms on the MVHS Board of Directors: Karen Abrams, George D. Beelen, Ph.D., Charlotte Gelhaar, Donald Gubany, Rev. Lewis Macklin II, Tricia Perry, Mary Lou Reyes, Rebecca Rogers, Charles Rumberg, J. David Sabine, Janice Tattrie, and John H. Yerian

Treasurer's Report

Karen Abrams presented the following:

Balance Sheet

Assets

Current Assets

Unrestricted Assets	\$594,550.59
Restricted Assets	114,794.99
Capital Campaign Assets	<u>1,077,567.63</u>
Total Current Assets	\$1,786,913.21

Property and Equipment

Land, Building,	
Artifacts & Equipment	\$1, 667,373.59
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(618,647.91)</u>
Total Property & Equipment	\$1,048,725.68

Endowment Funds

Olive F.A. Arms Trusts	\$1,493,954.28
General Endowment Fund	<u>692,555.95</u>
Total Endowment Funds	\$2,186,510.23

Total Assets \$5,022,149.12

Liabilities & Fund Balances

Total Unrestricted Fund Liabilities	\$165.77
Total Fund Balances	\$5,021,983.35

Total Liabilities & Fund Balances \$5,022,149.12

Statement of Operating Support, Revenues and Expenses for the period ending May 31, 2008.

Total Support	\$120,318.46
Total Revenue	<u>330,587.91</u>

Total Support & Revenue	450,906.37
Total Expenses	<u>473,609.69</u>

Excess (Deficit) **\$(22,703.32)**

In Memoriam

Historical Society members who passed away in the previous year: R. Thornton Beeghly, Claire Cerepak, Charles DeMarsh, Mary Edwards, Richard C. Gelhaar, Marjorie Kidston, Rodney Latsko, James V. Marter, Roy W. Scarazzo, Sr., Dr. Edward Arthur Shorten, Nancy James Stillwagon, Fred Tod, Jr., Ray D. Travaglini, Edith Wilms.

Thanks to these generous Annual Meeting Donors

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J. David and Madelon Sabine
Rick Shale
Patricia Sweet

Progress Report

Executive Director H. William Lawson presented many highlights of the accomplishments and initiatives made by the Board and staff in the past fiscal year. Here are some of the highlights:

- Attendance for the Arms Family Museum, Historical Society Archives and outreach programs and events is up almost 20% in the current fiscal year, bolstered by public response to the Holiday decorations in the museum which drew more than 1,700 people to the site in December and January.

- The Vindicator* listed the Historical Society's acquisition of the Harry Burt/Ross Radio Building for the new Mahoning Valley History Center among the top ten entertainment news stories of 2008.

- The Historical Society's website - www.mahoninghistory.org - received a facelift over the past year, and the Society now has a presence on several social media sites.

- The Education Department reached 3,681 people with outreach programs, and several community groups held meetings at the downtown History Center site.

- The Collections Management staff, volunteers and interns worked together to meet this year's goal of 80 cubic feet for processing backlogged collections.

- Members of YSU History professor Dr. Donna DeBlasio's History Conservation class undertook a research and documentation project involving the Harry Burt/Ross Radio Building. Their final report is excellent and very thorough, and will be helpful to the Historical Society as it works to adapt the building into the new Mahoning Valley History Center.

- The Business & Media Archives of the Mahoning Valley staff has processed and digitized more than 5,600 individual objects and over 7,000 linear feet of WKBN-TV 27 news videotape.

- Members of the Mahoning Valley Collecting Institutions Roundtable, led by MVHS staff, distributed questionnaires to local historical societies, museums and libraries to gather vital information toward the publication of a regional resource guide of collections. ✪

2009 Historic Preservation Awards Program

Special thanks to the program sponsor the **Raymond John Wean Foundation** and to members of the judging panel: George D. Beelen, Ph.D., Facilitator; Alex Bobersky, Thomas Leary, Ph.D., Norma Stefanik, and Brenda Williams.

Community Revitalization Award

Fallen Fire Fighters Memorial Bridge

The bridge formerly known as the Spring Common Bridge was refurbished and re-named the *Fallen Fire Fighter's Memorial Bridge* in 2008. The location of this bridge marks the site of the first permanent



European settlers to the Youngstown area. The bridge is also the location of the first bridge to cross the Mahoning River, built in the early part of the 19th century. The Bridge was designed by the engineering firm of Wilbur Watson and Associates of Cleveland and constructed in 1949 by the Mt. Vernon Bridge Company.



Bill Lawson, Randy Partika, Richard Marsico and representatives from the Fallen Fire Fighters Bridge project.

The objective of restoration was to enhance the Bridge while preserving the original design, materials and appearance. The deck was replaced; a new sidewalk was constructed with new railings; and structural steel repairs were made to the beams and girders. The structural steel was cleaned and repainted a shade of red

that both commemorates the fire fighters and compliments the surrounding environs. 🦉

Commercial Revitalization Award

John R. Davis Building

Youngstown's late 19th and early 20th century history of development from a small Midwestern town into a thriving metropolis is well documented by the built environment in its downtown. Stemming from concern of the rapid loss of these assets, the three architects of Faniro Architects, Ron Faniro, Frank Rulli, and Paul Hagman, formed the Sweet Jenny Land Company for the purpose of rescuing and rehabilitating the John R. Davis Building. Built in 1899, with Charles H. Owsley as the designer, the architects saw this building as an opportunity to save an historic structure and to develop it in such a manner as to serve as a model of a mixed-use, adaptive reuse of a historic urban property.



Paul Hagman, Ron Faniro & Frank Rulli accepting the award.

The structure houses a street level retail space, the offices of Faniro Architects on the second level and a loft style residence on the upper floor. The judging panel called this a worthy and commendable example of rehabilitation. 🦉

MVHS Directors Awards of Achievement

Emerald Street Homes – The Bolan Family

Built between 1900 and 1912 presumably by the steel mills as worker homes, the eight remaining row houses along Emerald Street in Smoky Hollow were acquired by the Bolan Family between 1999 and 2008. Four of the homes are completed and occupied by members of the family, while the remaining four are in various stages of rehabilitation. Early focus has been on painting, driveways, sidewalks and retaining walls. The family wanted to create an eye catcher rather than an eye sore. Their main challenge has been balancing



Katy Bolan, Bob Bolan, Bill Lawson, Ruth Bolan, Sarah Floor and Mike Bolan.

"My father instilled in us: We're very rich, we just don't have any money."

the use of historic materials with cost considerations. The renovations have been funded completely by the family who want to protect the environment by reusing and recycling materials, restore the homes on the outside to as near as authentic as possible, use



local businesses and vendors, and improve the quality of life in Smoky Hollow. The judging panel commended this family for undertaking such a huge project and for preserving a part of the boom town period in Youngstown. 🦉

Thank You to these Members that contributed in the July 2008 to June 2009 Year!

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Keep our Historical Society Strong ~ Planned Giving Options

Did you know that there are many ways to make a difference in the future of the Mahoning Valley Historical Society? Speak with your attorney or financial advisor on the benefits of giving through bequests, life insurance policies, or the tax advantages of donating stocks and securities. These planned giving options are easy and tax-free.*



After more than a year of work, the Historical Society's Capital Campaign is past the halfway point toward a \$6 Million goal, with \$3,378,000 in receipts and pledges secured so far from 75 individuals, corporations and foundations. There was a transition in Campaign management this spring as the Bentz Group of Warren, Ohio completed their contract at the end of February 2009 after leading efforts to organize volunteers, Board and staff members and a long list of Campaign prospects since October 2007. The Board is pleased to welcome Carol Potter as the new Campaign Director. Carol began her work on May 4, 2009 and brings much enthusiasm, organizational skills and knowledge of the community to the Historical Society. ✨



Bill Lawson introduces Carol Potter at the 134th Annual Meeting.

IN MEMORIAM: EDNA D. PINCHAM

Edna Pincham, a member of the Mahoning Valley Historical Society's Board of Directors since 2007 and a passionate community leader, educator and advocate, passed away on June 24, 2009, after a short illness.

Born and reared in Quitman, Georgia, Edna moved to Youngstown after high school graduation to study medical technology at Youngstown College. She and her husband, H. Howard Pincham, Sr., founded the H. H. Pincham Moving Company in Youngstown in 1960. When their two children reached school age, Edna began her long relationship with the Youngstown City Schools as a parent-volunteer. She then moved up to leadership positions in the local and state Parent-Teacher Associations. In 1983, Edna ran the first of four successful campaigns for election to the Youngstown Board of Education, where she also served multiple terms as President of the Board.

Edna's long list of involvements in community organizations included many firsts on Boards and in leadership roles as an African-American woman. She served as Assistant to Youngstown Mayor Patrick J. Ungaro for 12 years, and ran unsuccessfully for Mayor of the City in 1997. Since 1998, she and her family operated The Pincham Initiative, an educational resource center that prepared city high school students for proficiency testing and graduation, which was first located in her former mayoral campaign headquarters. Her leadership in and dedication to the community was often recognized on the local and state level, with the most recent honor being her induction into the Ohio Senior Citizens Hall of Fame in May of this year.

Edna's involvement with the Historical Society and local history included narration of part of the script for *The Valley Experience* exhibit multi-media presentation in the Arms Family Museum of Local History in the 1990's, and sharing her experience as a very young African-American woman who migrated alone to the Mahoning Valley in the mid-1950's for the 2001 exhibit *Far From Home: Stories from Immigrant Children to the Mahoning Valley*. She also was a member of the Oscar Boggess Historical Marker Designation Committee and the Friends of Historic St. Augustine Episcopal Church.

Read an excerpt of Edna Pincham's story from *Far From Home* on the MVHS blog site:
www.mahoninghistory.blogspot.com

Get your Hands-On: Backyard History Articles

The Education staff continues to contribute articles about local history to *The Vindicator's* Newspapers in Education (NIE) section. The NIE program encourages educators to use newspapers in their classroom as a teaching tool, and includes articles with discussion question, vocabulary words and math problems.

What Do You Know About ...

Joseph G. Butler, Jr.?

"I was practically born in the [iron] business, my entrance on the stage of life having been made within two hundred feet of the casting house of a blast furnace..." said Joseph G. Butler, Jr. in his autobiography "Recollections of Men and Events." The third of 10 children, Butler was born at Temperance Furnace, Pennsylvania on December 21, 1840. In



1841 his family moved to Niles. Without phones, electricity, railroads, radio, movies, and cars, Butler's childhood was enjoyable: hunting excursions, swimming, wrestling, and pitching horse-shoes, skating on the river and dam in winter, and fishing, once catching a fish that weighed 42 pounds.

With his father, grandfather and great-grandfather all in the iron industry, it seemed that the iron business was Butler's destiny. From this job he learned the methods of business. He organized the Girard Iron Company with Governor David Tod circa 1865 and later became the General Manager of the Brier Hill Iron & Coal Company. In his 38 years of management, there was only one strike. He was part of the birth of the steel industry as one of the first directors for the Ohio Steel Company and played a large part in the creation of the Ohio Steel Works.

A firm believer in giving back to his community, Butler created the National McKinley Birthplace Memorial in Niles as a tribute to his boyhood friend and schoolmate William McKinley. His better known legacy, however, is the Butler Institute of American Art. After a fire in his home destroyed all of his personal paintings except one, he wanted a safer place to house his art. He then decided to create an art gallery that would educate residents, encourage local talent, and be a credit to the community. He also decided to restrict the paintings in the gallery to American artists, hoping to increase the public's love and appreciation of art and American ideals. Opened in 1919, Butler contributed to the endowment fund from his own means. ✨

Artifact-ually Speaking

Lea Mollman, Registrar

Leather and Lace

Processing and storing the many artifacts in the Historical Society's collection allows for research into the ways local residents have participated in national history. The stories behind the following objects illustrate this point.



The heavy leather satchel (above and below) carried by Carl Kleeh during the American Civil War was donated by his great-grandson, Martin E. Welsh, Jr. Originally identified as a knapsack, an on-line search revealed it really to be a .58 caliber infantry cartridge box M1855 (an 1855 model), with the brass "U.S." plate, cartridge tins, and brass finial still intact.



Every infantryman wore a cartridge box, made of thick leather slung the shoulder. On the front flap was a brass "U.S." plate; later boxes had the U.S. stamped directly into the leather. An inner flap offered more protection over the main compartment which held forty explosive cartridges: each was a paper tube filled with a minie ball and black powder. Besides the main compartment, lined with tin for safety, there was a smaller pouch for musket tools and

cleaning patches. Cartridges were issued in small packages, each containing ten rounds. Union soldiers were usually given sixty to eighty rounds of ammunition to carry when they were on a campaign. What could not fit into the cartridge box was often carried in the soldier's pockets or knapsack. Included in the Society's collection is Mr. Kleeh's government issue rifle and bayonet. Mr. Kleeh used this cartridge box for decades after the war.

A very different contribution is represented by a donation of two Battenberg lace Christmas ornaments similar to the 200 ornaments that Bessie Smith, of Austintown, made to decorate a tree at the National Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institution in 1988.



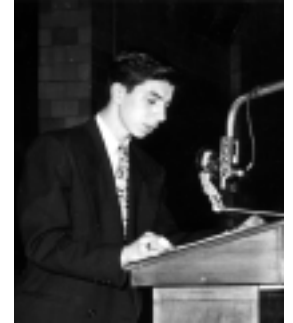
Every year the Smithsonian receives thousands of entries from people eager to decorate a tree with handmade ornaments. Mrs. Smith's proposal was accepted and she had just months to fabricate enough ornaments to cover one of the five new "Trees of Christmas." Mrs. Smith learned to make tape lace, or Battneberg lace, the year before. The shape formed by the tape is filled in with delicate needle lace stitches that have been in use since the 15th century. Originally used to decorate bed and table linens, doilies, and undergarments, the lace form was adapted to a modern use in Christmas ornaments. You can see traditional forms of Battenberg lace in the dining room of *Greystone* at the Arms Family Museum of Local History.

Mrs. Smith's ornaments became part of the Smithsonian's permanent collection. She contributed two more Battenberg lace ornaments and an essay on their history to the collection of the Mahoning Valley Historical Society. ✨

Sight & Sound

Business & Media Archives of the Mahoning Valley

The late Richard D. "Dick" James, a staple on the Youngstown radio airwaves is most remembered for his personal sign off of "Keep the Faith." James had a wonderful mellow voice that allowed him to work for WBBW, WQOD and WNIO.



Dick was born in 1929 and graduated from Wilson High School on the southside of Youngstown. He is pictured here at a Student Congress high school debate in 1948.

His career experiences included Great Trails Broadcasting in Springfield, Ohio and Elliot Broadcasting in Akron. Between 1962 and 1982, James was vice president and general manager of WBBW and WQOD radio in Youngstown. In 1968, he was elected to the Radio Affiliates Board of the Entertainment Network at ABC, where he served as its chairman. In 1971, he was elected president of the Ohio Association of Broadcasters, having served six terms as a member of its board.

In 1982, Dick James became a full-service faculty member at Youngstown State University's speech, communications and theater departments. James was promoted to assistant professor and gained tenure in 1987. He served as coordinator for telecommunication studies in the department until retirement in January 1993. Although retired, he continued to teach as a limited service faculty member until 1994. The University's Trustee Board conferred on him the title of professor emeritus.

Holiday in Motion

The 2009 Holiday display in the Arms Family Museum is shaping up to be a spectacular showcase of rare, one-of-a-kind vintage animated Santas, reindeers, trains and ornaments from both the Historical Society's permanent collections and from local collectors.



Due to the overwhelming response from the community last season, the Historical Society staff would like to provide a self-guided tour experience of the museum from the day after Thanksgiving through January 3rd.

Volunteer docents are being recruited to staff stations throughout the first floor of the museum to provide a watchful eye over the collections and to answer questions from guests.

Regular shifts are Tuesday-Sunday from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. with possible extended hours that are yet to be determined. If you are interested in volunteering your time please contact Rebecca Whittenberger at 330-743-2589. ✨

The Mahoning Valley Historical Society,

founded in 1875, educates and promotes an interest in the history of the Mahoning Valley by collecting, preserving and developing material representative of the people who have inhabited the region.



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Historical Happenings

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Leann Rich, editor



Thank You!

Thank you **Lutz Greenhouse** for providing hundreds of annuals that have brightened the gardens of the Historical Society's campus. Thanks also to **RL Smith Printing Co.** for the new membership cards and free admission cards being distributed this year.

Upcoming Events

- | | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Saturday, July 11 | Play Ball! Mahoning Valley Sports Stories
Exhibit Opening | |
| Saturday, July 18 | History on Tap
Membership Mixer
325 West Federal Street, Downtown Youngstown | 7:00 to 10:00 p.m. |
| Thursday, September 10 | Founders Day Dinner
McMahon Hall at Mill Creek MetroParks Farm | 5:30 to 8:00 p.m. |
| Sunday, September 13 | Founders Day Open House
@ the Arms Family Museum
Free to the Public | 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. |

You can stay on top of upcoming events and special announcements by joining the MVHS Email List.

Send an email with "subscribe" in the subject line to: mvhs@mahoninghistory.org

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