

The Mahoning Valley Historical Society Newsletter

HISTORICAL HAPPENINGS



PRESERVING THE VALLEY'S HISTORY FOR 132 YEARS

Volume 35 Issue 3

November & December 2007

In this issue

- **Feature Story:**
New Archives Collection
- **From This Direction**
- **Get Your Hands On:**
School Tours
- **Artifact-ually Speaking:**
Holiday Decorating
- **Sight & Sound:**
The Business and Media Archives of the Mahoning Valley

Contact MVHS for information about

- Membership
- Museum Tours
- Archival Library
- Outreach Programs
- Facilities Rental

Phone: 330-743-2589

Fax: 330-743-7210

mvhs@mahoninghistory.org

www.mahoninghistory.org

Business & Media Archives

330-744-7621

business_media@mahoninghistory.org



MVHS Archives Receives Significant Collection

The MVHS Archives recently received a large collection of photographs and equipment from the late John D. Megown, a local photographer. He specialized in photography of the "home, flashlight, view and commercial work" according to his business card.

The collection was given to the Mahoning Valley Historical Society by Ida Jean Megown, daughter of John D. Megown through her cousin Melvin Megown.

The collection consists of one box camera with case, used by Megown; a dark room light manufactured by Kodak in its original box; and a large group of glass plate negatives, all produced between 1907-1920.

Subjects include the Megown Family; interior views of the Reuben McMillan Free Library; scenes of Mill Creek Park; and the YWCA of Youngstown, Ohio.

A large portion of John D. Megown's photographs were sold at auction and many were purchased by local collector Tom Molocea. Mr. Molocea has graciously allowed MVHS to borrow his local and "historically significant" glass plate negatives and photographic prints for duplication for the MVHS collection. Permission has also been granted by Molocea to reproduce the images for interested patrons. This collection includes images of the Youngstown Ice Company; Falcon Motor Works; several company baseball teams, the William Tod Company; Idora Park; early 20th century Presidential hopeful William Jennings Bryan's visit to Youngstown; and the laying of the Mahoning County Courthouse cornerstone. ✪



Above: Laying of the Mahoning County Courthouse cornerstone

Below: Carousel enclosure at Idora Park

Both ca. 1908



Enjoy the Holidays at The Arms Family Museum

Holiday Preview Party

Friday, November 30th

5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

\$15 MVHS Members - \$20 Guests

Cocktails & Hors d'oeuvres

Be the first to view the spectacular holiday decor and preview the new and improved exhibit *The Valley Experience!*

Holiday Open House

Saturday, December 1st

1:00 to 5:00 p.m.

Free Admission

Gift Shop Specials

Pioneer Crafts for the Kids
Refreshments

Decorations up December 1st through January 6th!

Welcome!

Our New Members

Ms. Jackie LeViseur
Mrs. Sara C. Scudier
Mr. Daniel Weilby, Jr.
Ms. Alicia Wopat

Preservation Society

Thanks for your continued support!

PRESERVATIONIST

Mrs. Gretchen Birrell

RESEARCHER

Paul M. & Sallie Tod Dutton
Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Fleming
Mr. J Kai Lassen
Ms. Ellen Newman
Mrs. Raymond Peterson
Mr. and Mrs. John H. Yerian, Jr.

INTERPRETER

Dr. and Mrs. Roberto Bacani
Mr. David Beacom
Dr. and Mrs. George Beelen
Mrs. Linda S. Blough
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Calcagni
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas J. Carney
Ms. Mary Edwards
Mr. & Mrs. Jeffrey Houlette
Mr. and Mrs. Philip Kocon
Dr. Chander & Mrs. Karen Kohli
Dr. and Mrs. Milton Lenhart
Mrs. Ann B. Madej
F. Wm. Scragg and Nancy Morris
Dr. Jane Reid
Dr. and Mrs. Robert Sacherman
Mr. and Mrs. C. Reid Schmutz
Ms. Louise Schwartz
Mrs. Karl Soller
Mr. and Mrs. John Stone
Dr. and Mrs. David Sweet
Ms. Janice Tattrie

If you ever have questions regarding your membership status or benefits, please contact the Historical Society office at (330) 743-2589.

From This Direction

This issue's cover story features one of the dozens of new historical collections received in 2007. The Mahoning Valley Historical Society has been blessed over the years with thousands of individual donations of materials that increase our knowledge and appreciation of the Valley's history.

Two other recent acquisitions are particularly interesting to this writer because of their connection to our community's industrial history. GF Office Furniture, Ltd. contributed a large collection of sales brochures, company records, photographs and product samples as they prepare to close their last local office. The General Fireproofing Company's history in the Mahoning Valley goes back to 1902. Members of the Tod family transferred to MVHS all legal records and files related to their shareholder's lawsuit against the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company in response to the terms of Sheet & Tube's merger with the Lykes Steamship Company in 1969.

The staff looks forward to unlocking the information contained in these collections as they are processed in the coming months. Until then, Happy Thanksgiving, and we look forward to seeing you sometime during the Holiday Open House weekend! ✨

~H. William Lawson

Founders Day Festivities Thank You!

MVHS would like to extend a BIG thank you to the board and staff of the Tod Homestead Cemetery Association for graciously opening their facility to MVHS members and guests for the Founders Day Dinner. Other donors for the events were: Germaine Bennett, George and Sharon Berlin, Robert and Eva Doyle, Richard and Charlotte Gelhaar, Richard Hill, Phil and Katie Kocon, Joanne Dove Prisley, Angelyn J. Scarmuzzi and Something New Florist. ✨

Fall Foliage

Thank you to **Petitti Garden Centers** for donating the wonderful plants that appear on the museum grounds this fall. ✨



Get your Hands-On: School Tours

Rebecca Whittenberger, Curator of Education

Fall is a busy time for local school children, and this year the museum is pleased to help host a new Youngstown City School project called "Getting to Know My Downtown in Third Grade."

A brand new local history textbook for third graders was created by Matt Farragher, a former Mahoning Valley Historical Society intern, and focuses on the history of downtown Youngstown in the 19th and 20th centuries.

A special series of school tours to complement this textbook are currently underway: over 500

children from seven elementary schools in Youngstown are visiting specific cultural landmarks to enhance this new local history classroom curriculum. MVHS is thrilled to be one of the special historical landmarks these children get to experience.



During their visits, the children are treated to a scavenger hunt created especially for

them and designed to enhance what they've learned in their new textbooks by answering questions about the unique period rooms and artifacts in *Greystone*.

By the end of the 2008 school year, these children will have visited the museum twice: once this fall to focus on 19th century history, and again in the spring of 2008 to focus on 20th century history. Tour coordinator Holly Burnett-Hanley from YSU's Center for Urban and Regional Studies said, "It was obvious that the children were genuinely engaged in their hunt, and they had FUN!" The staff is so pleased to facilitate use of the home left to MVHS by Olive Arms which continues to make local history come alive for generations of school children. ✨

Artifact-ually Speaking

Jessica D. Trickett, Manager of Collections & Curatorial Services

Every December, MVHS staff and volunteers decorate the Arms Family Museum of Local History for the holiday season. The museum, or *Greystone* as it was known by Olive Arms, is decorated in keeping with its Arts-and-Crafts style architecture. Simplicity is at the heart of the design scheme, and the decorations themselves are from and inspired by nature.



A 'white tree' in the Greystone sitting room

At the center of the holiday setting is the 'white tree.' The white tree was en vogue at the turn of the 20th century, a reaction against the fussy, overcrowded Victorian tree of the late 19th century. The tree was very simple, mimicking designs found in nature with cotton 'snow' on branches, glass icicles, and silver pinecones. Though initially adopted by the upper class, members of the middle class borrowed these ideas for their trees as well, achieving the look by washing the colored paints off their ornaments.

Greenery used throughout the home includes incense cedar, berried juniper, American holly, and English boxwood. These and other materials, like pine and fir cones, dried flowers and grasses, fruits, and nuts, harmonize with the natural theme in early 20th century holiday decorating.

Poinsettias adorn Greystone's fountains and window seats, although live poinsettias were rarely used in early 20th century decorating because they were difficult to grow. They were more often seen decorating Christmas postcards than people's homes. The chrysanthemum actually preceded the poinsettia as the most common winter flower. Long-blooming, late-blossoming, hardy, and easier to grow, it was widely used in Europe and America in the late 19th and early 20th centuries to decorate churches and estate houses during the holidays.



Poinsettias with berried juniper in the solarium

MVHS members and guests can preview this year's holiday trim at the Holiday Preview Party on Friday, November 30 at 5:00 p.m. The museum will remain decorated until January 6. Come experience the splendor of Greystone decorated for the season! ❄️



White chrysanthemums surrounded by fir fronds in the Greystone library

Sight & Sound

Business & Media Archives of the Mahoning Valley

Television advertising rates are determined by the number of people watching at any given time. According to Telepulse for the Youngstown Metropolitan Area, September 18-24, 1955, WKBN-TV's audience share far surpassed all of its competitors, including stations from Cleveland and Pittsburgh, in all time slots. In the popular 6:00 p.m. to Midnight, Monday through Friday time period, WKBN-TV's rating was a 45, with the closest competition coming in at 33.

In program ratings, which rank television shows by popularity, WKBN-TV broadcasted the top 16 once-a-week programs and 23 of the top 25; and in multi-weekly programs the top 7, and 10 out of the top 15.

Here is the listing of the top 10 once-a-week shows from September 18-24, 1955:

1. \$64,000 Question
2. Climax
3. Two for the Money
4. Godfrey & His Friends
5. Toast of the Town
6. I've Got a Secret
7. Damon Runyon Theatre
8. Stage 7
9. Playhouse of Stars
10. Four Star Playhouse



Promotional brochure cover for potential advertisers from the BMAMV collection

The top five multi-weekly programs:

1. Patti Page Show
2. Douglas Edwards News
3. Warren Guthrie News
4. Local Edition NEWS
5. News Today - News at Home

For more information on ratings and programming from the 1955 Telepulse report visit the MVHS Blog:

www.mahoninghistory.blogspot.com ❄️

Greystone Gifts

The holiday shopping season is underway and Greystone Gifts has a wonderful selection of unique gifts! Here are just a few things you can find in our shop: Books & DVDs on local history topics, historic photographs of area landmarks, old time radio programs on CD, crystal radio kits, notecards & postcards, totebags, jewelry, nostalgic toys, ornaments and Arts & Crafts tiles. ❄️



Take 30% off any one item

Greystone Gifts

Valid through 12/31/07

Cannot be combined with current member discount.

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.



648 Wick Avenue
Youngstown, OH 44502-1289

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Youngstown, OH
Permit No. 140

Historical Happenings,

is published bi-monthly by the Mahoning Valley Historical Society. It is sent as a free benefit of MVHS membership. MVHS is a private non-profit corporation, which owns and operates the Arms Family Museum of Local History, the MVHS Archival Library, and the Business and Media Archives of the Mahoning Valley.



Upcoming Events

- | | | |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------|
| Saturday, November 10 | History to Go | 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. |
| | Mahoning County Courthouse Tour | |
| Friday, November 30 | Holiday Preview Party | 5:00-7:00 p.m. |
| | Arms Family Museum of Local History | |
| Saturday, December 1 | Free Holiday Open House | 1:00-5:00 p.m. |
| | Arms Family Museum of Local History | |
| Monday, December 31 | First Night Youngstown | 6:00-9:00 p.m. |
| | Events @ the Arms Family Museum of Local History | |

MVHS Board of Directors

C. Reid Schmutz, *President*
J. David Sabine, *First Vice President*
John H. Yerian, Jr., *Second Vice President*
Dr. George D. Beelen, *Secretary*
Patricia Sweet, *Assistant Secretary*
Karen Abrams, *Treasurer*
Philip Kocon, *Assistant Treasurer*

Paula Barrett	Rev. Lewis Macklin II
Germaine F. Bennett	Joan Madej
Sharon Berlin	Neil Maxwell
Robert Calcagni	John McNally, IV
Sallie Tod Dutton	Nancy Morris
Suzanne Fleming	Marilyn Oyer
Charlotte Gelhaar	Edna Pincham
Jeffrey Grdic	Dr. Jane Reid
Donald Gubany	Frank A. Rulli
Tazim Jaffer	Charles Rumberg
Betty H. Jagnow	James H. Sisek
C. Gilbert James, Jr.	Patricia Sweet
Karen Kohli	Janice L. Tattrie
Rita Lopez	Jeanne D. Tyler

Administrative Staff

H. William Lawson, *Executive Director*
Jessica D. Trickett, *Manager of Collections and Curatorial Services*
Leann Rich, *Manager of Education and External Relations*
Pamela L. Speis, *Archivist*
T. Lea Mollman, *Registrar*
Rebecca Whittenberger, *Curator of Education*
Constance L. Jones, *Project Manager, BMAMV*
Charles W. Kelso, Jr., *Media Specialist, BMAMV*
Anthony Worrellia, *Building and Grounds Supervisor*
Mary Ann Richards, *Bookkeeper*
JoAnne Nunziato, *Administrative Assistant*

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