



SHARPSVILLE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY Newsletter

Collections update

The following have been recently added to our collections:

Olivia Lazor donated several items, notably programs to the opening of the Walnut Street Bridge, the 50th Anniversary of the 1946 Football Team, the 1982 visit to the 7th-Day Church here by Barbara Bush and a 1913 Sharpsville student newspaper.

Bob Verholek donated a promotional hand fan from Shaner's Jewelry Store, Walnut Street and three postcards of Sharpsville street scenes, ca. 1910.

Brian Scurpa donated a teacher's chair from the Deeter School.

The Sharpsville Service Club donated a one of the old Welcome to Sharpsville Santa signs.

Jim Lawton donated items relating to Samuel Clendinin, profiled here on page two.

Kevin Walko donated a photo of Sharpsville Civil War veterans and a World War II army uniform belonging to his father.

Lois Godfrey donated a items from the Kitch family, notably ca. 1905 photos of their home on Church St., an 1889 notice for a theatrical show "in Kitch's Barn" and a typescript diary covering the years 1916-1923.

Principal Matt Dieter on behalf of the Sharpsville Area School District donated 18 school newsletters from 1971-76.

Joe Barovich shared a large collection of digitized photographs, notably views of the construction of the Dam and scenes of downtown Sharpsville in 1957.

Bob & Gail Mahaney donated photos of the Service Club's Santa visits from 1953.

Mike Wilson donated a 19th century wooden-base cobbler's anvil with shoe forms and mallet.

Items for Sale

Natural Stone Drink Coasters
featuring lithographed scenes of old Sharpsville
17 different choices



\$8 each, any 4 for \$30

available at Mehler Insurance or through our website
at www.sharpsvillehistorical.org

With Gratitude

In July, the local community was once again brought together by our annual Ice Cream Social, with a continuation of our Outstanding Citizen Awards. Honored were:

the Sharpsville Volunteer Fire Department & Rescue Squad and the Sharpsville Police Department

The sound system for this and future events was donated by
Shenango Valley Performing Arts Council

And thanks to all who helped make the event a success,
especially:

D'Onofrio's Dean Dairy
South Py Dairy Queen
Sharpsville Borough Street Department
and performers
"Afternoon Delight" Rocky Piccirilli
Gary Sass and Dojo Shoto Ikki Kai Karate Dojo
"Y's Guys & Gals"

Traces of Lost Sharpsville

Some more lost streets

In our July 2012 newsletter (archived at www.sharpsvillehistorical.org), we reviewed streets found in old maps and directories of Sharpsville, but that have since been re-named, re-routed, or no longer exist. Since then, some additional maps and directories have come in our possession and add to our list of “lost streets.”

The alley running between Ridge and Hall Avenues is named in a 1929 map as Stone Alley. That map likewise shows a Thornbush Alley as running off High Street (across from Prospect Street) and then continuing behind the houses on the upper part of High at the edge of the hill. Thornbush then connected back to High Street via a street called Colton Place. The Railroad Street which once connected the present dead-ends of North 1st through 6th was long gone by 1929; however, the name was shifted over to a road that once connected the dead-ends of North 10th through 14th.

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Small-Town Life

Samuel Clendenin

A glimpse of the simple charm and personal bonds of small-town life, we hope are not entirely gone, is given in this 1926 newspaper notice about Samuel Clendenin who served for many years as guard at the rail crossing on Walnut Street.

Samuel C. Clendenin, crossing watchman, Sharpsville, Pa., E & [P] division retires on pension today after 43 years, six months' active service. Mr. Clendenin entered the service of the company as trackman on June 5, 1883 and 1910 was assigned to crossing watchman. For 15 years he has been located on the crossing at Walnut street, Sharpsville, during which time only one accident has occurred on the crossing while he was in charge.

In 1911 a man of 73 years attempted to go over the crossing ahead of a train and after flagging him Mr. Clendenin called to him and in endeavoring to rescue him had a narrow escape from injury himself. Sam is known far and near for his faithfulness.

He is also a friend of boys. For a long time three small boys have called on him every morning to see if he had anything for them to do. It had been his practice to keep his glass jug near at hand so he could give it to them with the request that they have it filled with water. After the boys get the water they always go away with a smile on their faces for Sam never disappoints them in reaching into his pocket and giving each a penny or nickel. He nicknamed these boys Joe Penny, Tony Penny and Mike Penny.

Not long ago Joe Penny got hurt and was taken to the hospital. On arrival the first thing he asked was “Do you suppose Sam will be up to see me?” He had hardly asked the question when Sam appeared to find out how serious was the boy's injury and of course Joe was mighty glad to see him.

Later Mr. Clendenin was taken suddenly ill while on duty at the crossing. Soon one of the Penny boys came along and asked what was the matter. Sam requested him to go tell Section Foreman Penniman to send up a man to relieve him. When the relief man came the boy said to Sam: “Now I am going to take you home” and he did.

Mr. Clendenin was born at Transfer, Pa. One brother William B., resides in Cleveland, O., a brother John in Sharpsville, a sister, Mrs. Isabella Dickson in Sharon and another sister Mrs. Lawrence at Transfer. Mr. Clendenin never married and has made his home with the same family in Sharpsville for 21 years.



A Look Back

Sharpsville Junior Republic

A recent acquisition by the Historical Society gives us a glimpse of a short-lived and heretofore forgotten institution—the Sharpsville Junior Republic. In a promotional flyer put out by the Empire Lyceum Bureau, the availability of Rev. Dr. Roscoe Luper Foulke for public-speaking engagements was advertised. It contains eleven testimonials (dated 1910 and 1911) to Dr. Foulke's character as well as the content and style of his lectures which focused on what was termed "the Boy Problem"—a perceived increase in juvenile delinquency and truancy. Street-corner gangs engaging in various degrees of mischief and crime were a reality in large cities, and a fear in smaller towns. Widely-discussed at the time, blame for the Boy Problem ranged from the flood immigrants with their un-American mores to dime novels to urbanization which robbed youths of a wholesome "Huck Finn" childhood. Titles of Foulke's five talks include "Unchiseled Gems," "Lost on the Streets" and "Some Mother's Boy" and indicate Foulke's sympathy for the natural goodness of boys who had been led astray by their peers and the temptations of the world.

An outline of Foulke's solution, the institution of a Junior Republic, is given in the flyer:

The Sharpsville Junior Republic was organized in March 1909. The problem presented in the average American boy is a large one and difficult to solve. Many fathers are seemingly too busy to play the part in the formation of the boy's character that the Great Designer intended and often boys become vicious in habits and slaves to passions that drag them to disgrace and ruin. Fathers and sons should live in common confidence with each other and no lesson directed at the boy's enlightenment and given for his protection should be deemed so delicate as to cause a father to hesitate at the full revelation of it to his boy. Our Junior Republic was organized with the broad aim of helping to preserve good boys in the lines of unsullied life, and if possible to help extricate boys, not intentionally bad, who have become acquainted with and possessed of evil ways, from the paths of error. In order to do this, and as means of gaining practical knowledge of municipal government, I have organized my boys into this Republic. They have gone through the forms of primaries and election and have their own Burgess, Councilmen, Board of Education, Board of Health, Justices of the Peace, Assessors, Tax Collectors and Policemen. They become acquainted by weekly talks with the duties of these various offices, also with the usages of parliamentary law, military science and tactics. Already they are proficient in regular and fancy drills. The work of the year closes with a twelve days' camping trip at Conneaut Lake, where they have a municipality of their own and carry into actuality what they have received in theory. They are uniformed for drilling purposes and dress parades. I love these boys and feel that the great responsibility connected with this plan and the almost endless amount of work involved sink out of sight when the value of true, pure, clean manhood is felt. We must do something for the American boy. Lift him up; he is the hero of the present; the strong right arm of the future.

If the name of the organization sounds familiar, it is because it belonged to the same movement as Grove City's George Junior Republic. Founded in the same year as Sharpsville's by William Reuben George, the Grove City institution was an off-shoot of the original Junior Republic George had started in Freeville, New York fourteen years earlier. (George had to pack his bags after allegations of sexual misconduct with girls at the Freeville academy.) By 1912, there were other Republics in Reddington, Pa., Maryland, Connecticut, California, two in New Jersey, and England. They all shared with Sharpsville's the basic premise of a mock town-government as a means to instill self-reliance, leading to responsibility and reform. The established Republics though were full-time boarding institutions for those youths given up as incorrigible; whereas, Sharpsville's participants went home at the end of the day. A similar self-governing scheme was the Boy City movement, with its constituent Boyvilles (Sharon had one) sending representatives to a national Boy City in Michigan each summer. Also belonging to this era, although operating on entirely different models, were the Boy Scouts and Boys Clubs.

At the time of his involvement with the Junior Republic here Foulke was pastor of the Sharpsville Methodist Church. Since only passing mention of the Junior Republic here is found, it probably did not last beyond Foulke's 1912 reassignment to a church in Erie. His popular sermon-lectures on the topic of wayward boys, however, did continue. One of the addresses, "Give Jack a Chance," advertised in the promotional flyer, was given as late as 1928.

Throughout his ministerial career, Foulke served at various congregations in northwestern Pennsylvania, western New York, and eastern Ohio. Rev. Foulke's father, Charles Wesley Foulke, was a widely known Methodist pastor in Lawrence County. His uncle Sidney Winfred Foulk (who omitted the "e" in the spelling of the surname) also had a connection here. As an architect based in his hometown of Greenville and later New Castle he designed the 1882 First Universalist Church of Sharpsville as well as the 1883 addition to the what would later be called the Deeter School.



ONE OF THE THREE DIVISIONS OF DR. FOULKE'S REPUBLIC

With Gratitude

If you were able to attend the recent performance of *Tosca* at the Pierce Opera House, we're confident you thoroughly enjoyed the virtuosity of the singers and orchestra, the costuming and staging that added a rich depth to Puccini's music, and the resonant sound and intimacy with the performers the historic interior makes possible. The Historical Society is proud to co-sponsor, along with Valley Lyric Opera, performances like these.

The cost of bringing professional-caliber opera productions to the Shenango Valley is daunting, even with large audiences like we had at the August performances. Nonetheless, **Dr. Francisco Cano** (local allergist/ immunologist and founder of Valley Lyric Opera), by inviting the Historical Society's involvement in this and past operas, not only helps us to bring cultural events to the area, but his generosity results in both artistic successes as well as financial successes for the Society. Likewise, **Meadville Area Federal Credit Union**—who recently opened here in the old McDowell Bank space—gave valuable support by sponsoring the Society's concession sales at the opera.

Lost Streets, cont'd.

To the list of previously mentioned streets named after nearby blast furnaces—Douglas Row, Mabel Row, Spearman Row, Mt. Hickory Row, Allen Row, and Old Furnace Row—we can add Ormsby Row.

The 1929 map assigns the name Dyer Court to the alley connecting Furnace and Canal Streets. In a 1947 City Directory, however, this alley is called Perkins Avenue (sometimes called Perkins Alley). That Directory also lists the street on the river side of the feed mill running past the old water plant as Riverside Avenue.

Some mysteries remain. An 1879 City Directory lists an address as the corner of Mercer Avenue and Franklin Street, and another household on Coal Street. An 1872 Directory lists a Center Street.

Contact Us

website: www.sharpsvillehistorical.org email: sharpsvillehistorical@hotmail.com
see our website for officers' phone numbers

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Meetings are held the First Monday of the Month at 7:00pm at our headquarters

Note: due to Labor Day, the September meeting will be held on Monday September 14th.

Contributions of articles or suggestions of topics for this newsletter are always welcome.