

Historical Happenings

The Newsletter of the Grove City Area Historical Society

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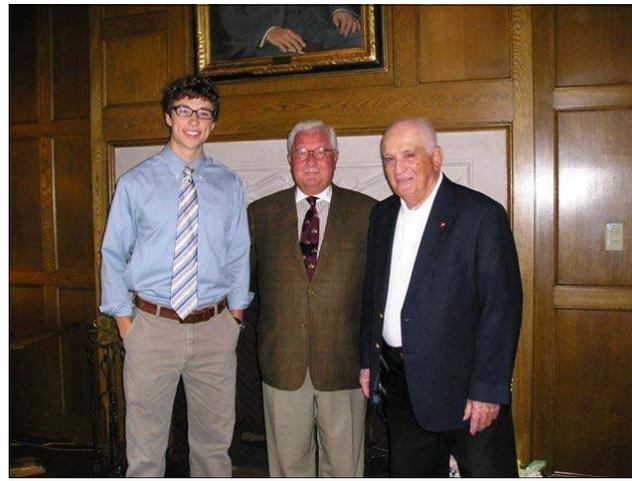
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JONATHAN RIDDLE

Last January you may recall that a young man, Jonathan Riddle, who had recently graduated from Grove City College, asked if he could do archival work on the material that was given to the Historical Society by Alice Ketler. Jonathan, with a proposal in hand, went to Dr. Jewell at Grove City College and



L-R: Jonathan Riddle, Dr. Jewell, & Joseph D. Monteleone

asked for funding to pay his salary while he did the work. Dr. Jewell pledged \$7,000 toward the project if we could match that amount. We did not have an extra \$7,000, so we asked Joseph D. Monteleone if he would give us the matching funds. He agreed to do so. With \$14,000 toward this project Jonathan started. Following is his report of how he spent the last 7 months.

“It’s hard to believe that July is already coming to a close, and with it, my time here at the Grove City Area Historical Society. It was only a few weeks ago, it seems, that I was dreaming up this opportunity. Yet here I am, my second-hand couch has now become third-hand, I’ve taken the pictures off my wall, and I’m looking back on my work here.

In order to preserve the Ketler Collection, my first task was to take the documents from their various and sundry boxes, envelopes, folders, and drawers, and put them into neat, archival-quality folders and boxes.. The funding for this project ensured that I’ve had a ready supply of these materials.

Next up was the creation of an outline, or index of sorts, of all those folders and boxes...the Collection currently spans about twenty-four banker’s boxes! Though the fruit of this labor is only a handful of printed pages, it was an important step. The outline is a broad, comprehensive map of the Ketler Collection, and enables us to go forward in a systematic way.

In an era of Google searches and online library catalogs, the last step was of vital importance to the usefulness of our archives: scanning each and every document, and entering them into our digital catalog. This process

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It's hard to believe that summer is almost over and we will soon begin our fall schedule. We have had, as it now seems to be always the case, a busy summer at the Historical Society. In the last 3 weeks we have had visitors from Texas, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Iowa, California, Michigan, and Ohio. We have had 2 groups of visitors from class reunions, a sidewalk sale, a Victorian tea and 2 luncheons with the ILR (Institute for Learning in Retirement) of Slippy Rock.

The class reunions were the classes of 1951 and 1956. The sidewalk sale netted us a little over \$1,000. This was less than we made the last two years. The sale is a tremendous amount of work for Marty St. John and Darlene Shaner. We decided that it was too much work for the return, so we will not be having another sidewalk sale for awhile. We will let everyone collect more stuff and then we will probably have another sale in a couple of years.



Current President, Skip Sample



L-R: Dylanne McClinton, Traci Samu, & Kesi McClinton

We have tried something new at the suggestion of Mary Ann McClinton. We had a Victorian Tea. Again, it was a lot of work but a lot of fun. Each of the eight tables was set with a variety of linens, dishes and silverware. We had young women, granddaughters of some of us, model wedding gowns from various time periods while the guests had sandwiches, tea and cookies. One dress that was modeled belonged to a descendent of Valentine Cunningham. The dress is over 100 years old. Unfortunately we do not know to whom the dress belonged. We have tried to contact the donors, but our letters have never been returned. We had over 60 people attend and we made \$850.

With all of our activities, we must constantly keep our financial shortfall in mind. So, the amount we earned from the sidewalk sale and the tea were important. We have been fortunate in years past that donations from members and from the surrounding townships have made it possible for us to meet our expenses. Our dues only cover about half of our annual costs. Recently two of our earliest Life Members passed away: Miff McBride and Hank Limberg. Miff was our very first Life Member. He was also our legal counsel from the beginning of our organization and was always ready to answer any questions we had. Both members will be missed.

Our rooms upstairs are works in progress. In a sense they will never be finished as new items are constantly being accessioned. As new things are donated, they are assigned to their specific room for storage and/or display. It is interesting to see how the rooms are evolving. Anyone interested in working with the organization of these rooms, or in any capacity, please let me know. We always need new volunteers.

(JONATHAN RIDDLE, cont.)

has gone very well; all the records we've added are word-searchable and accessible from the foyer and library computers. But this work is laborious and slow. As of this writing, we've added 1,251 records to the catalog...but there are a couple thousand more to go.

I say "we've added" above because I've hardly been alone in the cataloging process. Five Grove City College history students have begun working on the archiving project—four of whom will continue as Archives Interns during the upcoming school semester. Through workshops, software, and visits to other archives, these interns are being trained to do careful and effective work here at the Society.

You will notice a few changes the next time you're in: the old bathroom in the main room has been converted into the Archives Room, the Ketler Collection has moved from the Grove City College Room to the Archives Room, and archive work is now being done downstairs in the Publications Room.. These are important developments towards preservation and continuing archival work—and are among the million and one ways the Society has helped me and this project along.

Though weeks and months fly by, hours and days rarely do. Indeed, progress on this task has been incremental. But a few months of doing one thing at a time does add up. Thanks to all the help from folks at the Society, and to the hard work of our student volunteers, we're beginning to see encouraging results.

I remain grateful to the Society for so generously facilitating this project, to Grove City College and Joseph D. Monteleone for funding the work, and to Alice Ketler, who got this whole thing started a decade ago through her donation of this rich collection.



Pictured: Jonathan Riddle (Issac Ketler is featured on the screen)

Perhaps the chief reward of my experience here was the chance to have worked alongside the many welcoming members of the Society. Thank you for your friendship and hospitality—from local recommendations to delicious dinners, from town tours to aluminum-crafting lessons. And thank you for allowing me to join your important work of preserving the history of this great town.”

Jonathan's last day was July 29th. The headquarters seems empty without him. We all enjoyed his presence. He was a breath of fresh air to have around. I used to tease him that I could always tell when he was coming down the steps because he ran down. He did not come down one step at a time as many of us do.

Jonathan has gone to Waco, Texas to begin graduate work at Baylor University in History. One request that I had when he started was that he leave us a manual of procedure so that future students who come to work at the Headquarters will have guidelines to follow. He did just that. We are now set to continue the archival work that he started. He has recruited 5 Grove City College students who will continue his work when school resumes.

We wish Jonathan all the luck possible and hope he can return to Grove City sometime to visit with us.
GOOD LUCK JONATHAN! PLEASE KEEP IN TOUCH WITH US!

GENEALOGY



Pictured L-R: Don Cook, Jane Cleary, & Mr. Mitchell

Genealogy is becoming an increasingly important part of our program at the Society. Jane Cleary, a retired reference librarian and associate professor at Slippery Rock University, has been working with genealogy for over a year. She has recently been joined by Don Cook, a new member of our organization.

After retiring from General Electric Don Cook became interested in cemeteries in the area. He is the assistant caretaker for Woodland Cemetery. As of now, he has 100% of the information recorded for the Woodland Cemetery. All of this information is online (<http://www.findagrave.com>) with pictures of the gravestones. He is working on the Catholic Cemetery on Gill Road, the Presbyterian Cemetery on Greenwood Drive, the Daugherty Cemetery on

Gill Road, the Crestview Cemetery, and the Methodist Cemetery on North Broad Street.

A third person working on genealogy from her home is Sarah Campbell who lives in Pittsburgh. She is related to the Youngs and Campbells of the dairy industry. She has been to the Headquarters several times and is sharing her personal family histories with us and is also helping Jane when necessary.

The Society has Ancestry.com. This provides information for the United States only. We are getting more and more requests for information that includes international data. There is a program available for international data, but it is very expensive—about \$25 per month. If anyone is interested in us adding this to our database and would be willing to make a contribution, we will add this part of Ancestry.com.

Remember, any contribution you make to the Society is tax deductible since we are a 501©3 organization.

ROOM COORDINATORS

IF YOU ARE IN CHARGE OF A ROOM ON THE SECOND FLOOR, PLEASE MAKE AN EFFORT TO HAVE THE ROOM ORGANIZED AND SOME DISPLAYS SET UP BY THE DEDICATION ON NOVEMBER 12, 2011.

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN DILIGENTLY WORKING TO MAKE THEIR AREA INTERESTING.

A NEW HOME FOR RECORDS

As I was walking home one day about two months ago, I saw something that stopped me dead in my tracks: a large, wooden flat-file cabinet...sitting on the curb. At the time, the Society needed a way to safely store its many oversized records (maps, photographs, old newspapers, etc.). I had searched high and low for such a cabinet, but to no avail. It seemed the only option was to buy a new one for hundreds of dollars—a non-option really. So imagine my excitement at finding one sitting on the curb!

I approached the owner, who was clearly moving out, and he said, “Take it!” So I did just that. It was trash day, so time was of the essence. I went home and conscripted my roommate and his car to help, and we brought it to the Society that afternoon. We have since moved it to its new home in the library. And after a serious cleaning, it looks pretty sharp.

A little searching yielded a rough provenance of the cabinet. The man who gave it to us is Dr. Michael Zieg, a professor of geology at Slippery Rock University. He picked up the piece while doing his dissertation work at Johns Hopkins University. From the original label, we know that the cabinet was made by the Hyde-Murphy Company of Ridgeway, PA, with the inscription: “Public Buildings Administration, FWA, Mr. Underwood, Room 5330, Federal Works

Building, Washington 25, D.C.” According to the Ridgeway Heritage Council’s website, the Hyde-Murphy company went out of business in 1961. How the cabinet got from Washington to Baltimore is yet unknown. We do know, however, that the cabinet is at least fifty years old, is impressively built of all solid wood, and will be a great new home for many of the Society’s valuable records.



The Map Chest

Jonathan Riddle

July 25, 2011

EBAY AND AMAZON

As I have mentioned many times before, finances are a constant concern. We are always looking for new ways to raise money. When items are accessioned we ask the donor if we can dispose of an item if it is not needed at the Society for historical purposes, or if it is a duplicate of something we already have. Most times people say it is fine to dispose of the item as we see fit.

One thing that we have duplicates of I high school and college yearbooks. When we have duplicates we are going to determine which book has the most interest and is in the best condition, then we are going to offer the other book for sale on either Ebay or Amazon. One of the college students who will be working with us this fall will be in charge of this. There will be a separate checking account set up for just this purpose. It will be interesting to see if this becomes a new source of revenue.

So, if you have a yearbook sitting around that you never look at, bring it our way. It may be one we need, or it may be a duplicate that we can turn into cash.

CHRISTMAS OPEN HOUSE



Each year we have a Christmas Wine and Cheese open house for our members. It is always coordinated with the downtown Christmas Open House. This year it will be earlier than it has been in years past. It will be held on:

NOVEMBER 12th FROM 3:00 to 5:00

Please mark your calendars now so that you will remember to come, enjoy delicious snacks, have a glass of wine and visit with your friends.

We will also formally dedicate our rooms on the second floor.

There will NOT be another newsletter to remind you of the Wine and Cheese! Please mark your calendars NOW!

FALL SEMINARS—*Mark your calendars!*

This year we plan to have 3 seminars. A fourth seminar is a possibility, but as of now there is not a definite commitment. The seminars will be at 7:00 PM.

The seminars are:

- **September 19th**—Larry Bruno, owner of Diamonds by the Waterfall will discuss the dig at Springfield Furnace.
- **October 3rd**—Dr. Harp, Professor of History at Grove City College will discuss the Civil War and the Connection to Western Pennsylvania.
- **October 17th**—will be a discussion of the one room schools in Pine, Liberty, Springfield, and Wolf Creek Townships. Plan on a “Walk Down Memory Lane” and join us for a fun remembrance of school days past. You may be able to find yourself in one of the class photos.



As always, refreshments will be provided by Cameron Catering.

IT'S A SMALL WORLD AFTER ALL

Recently, Carol Ann Uber Cogswell was visiting the Historical Society. She was touring the rooms on the second floor. When she came to the Women's Clothing Room, she was looking at the dresses when she discovered a little First Holy Communion Dress. Believe it or not, it was her dress from when she was a child. She made her first Holy Communion on May 24, 1953. After she wore the dress her mother gave it to a neighbor, Mary DeJulia, for her to wear when she made her First Holy Communion.. You can imagine Carol Ann's surprise when she saw her dress. Where the dress has been for all these years is unknown, but it found a permanent home at the Historical Society in 2003.



Carol Ann in 1953



Carol Ann looking at the dress with Mary Ann McClinton



Check out our newly re-designed website at:

<http://www.grovecityhistoricalsociety.org>

Lots of great new content and easier navigation designed to help us serve you better!

Grove City Area Historical Society

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Tuesday-Saturday 12:00PM - 3:00PM

Website:

www.grovecityhistoricalsociety.org

Email: gcahs@zoominternet.net

To join or renew your membership, please send your payment along with your name, address, phone number and email address to the Grove City Area Historical Society.
Founding and Life Memberships are payable over 3 years.

Make Checks Payable To: Grove City Area Historical Society

GCAHS is a tax exempt charitable 501c3 organization. All membership contributions are tax deductible to the extent of the law. **THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!**

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:	
Founding	\$1,000.00
Life	\$500.00
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YOUR MEMBERSHIP ENSURES OUR SUCCESS