



Historical Happenings

The Newsletter of the Grove City Area Historical Society

www.grovecityhistoricalsociety.org

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Volume 12, Issue 1

April 2012

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A SOCIETY FRIEND FROM TEXAS

In 2006, I had a phone call from a man in Texas by the name of Bob Humphreys. He asked me what Cooper Bessemer material we had at the historical society. I told him we had very little—just odds and ends, but nothing much. He said he would take care of that.

Bob was born and raised in Grove City. His home was on Chestnut Street at the corner of North Center Street. His father worked for “The Bessemer” and so did Bob. He began his career with Cooper Bessemer at the age of 16 when he delivered mail in the Mt. Vernon, Ohio plant 4-6 times a day. Mt. Vernon was the home office of Cooper Bessemer. Bob joined the Army Air Force, attended



Skip Sample and Bob Humphreys

Otterbein University, then began working again at Cooper in Tulsa, Oklahoma. During his long career with “The Bessemer” he lived in Tulsa, New Orleans, Mt. Vernon, Ohio and finally in Houston. While having a permanent residence in the United States, Bob traveled around the world setting up, supervising and consulting on many engineering projects. He was Market Manager for gas and oil production world wide. In 1972 he and his family moved to Houston where he still lives.

Bob began to put together informational “frames” and three ring binders about the many products and engines that Cooper built. If you go to the Industrial Room on the second floor, you will see the information he has provided for us. Also in the library are several 3 ring binders that tell the story of many different engines, including engines for yachts.

Recently, I went to Houston to visit our son and his family. I called Bob and we met for lunch. It was delightful to sit and visit with him in person after all the times we have emailed and talked on the phone. Sitting on his living room floor was another “frame” that he has ready to send.

Bob is hoping to get to Grove City this summer for the Cooper Reunion. It would be great for him to see the results of all his labors.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Winter seems to be over, if it ever was, and the calendar tells us that spring is here. As we sit on our back porch each day and look at the beautiful forsythia and the buds coming out on all the trees, we realize that spring really is here, perhaps a bit prematurely.

The opening of the Historical Society has been delayed a week this year because of the Easter holiday. We will open on April 17th. The volunteers luncheon/orientation will be held on April 14th at 11:00 AM. We hope you will continue to volunteer if you have done so in the past. If you have not volunteered in the past, please consider doing so. It entails 3 hours a month. Some days you are very busy with people coming into the society. Other days there are very few people. These "slow" days give you an opportunity to familiarize yourself with all the things we have in our building. If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, contact Anita DeMarco at 724-202-6374.



Current President, Skip Sample

Over the winter is when the society shuts down and everyone takes a rest. At any given day, however, you may find people working. Monica Ondrusko, Frank Hoffman, and Heidi Adams are in almost every Tuesday working with the accessions. Gary Forsythe is frequently around painting. Linda Beatty, Jenny Drahuschak and Bob and Jean Heflinstine are working to place items that were accessioned many years ago and put in temporary locations into the correct rooms. The cleaning and display crews are routinely working – Linda Beatty, Jane Cleary, Marty St. John, Mary Ann McClinton and Phyllis Myers. So right now, the windows on the first floor are cleaned, the curtains are washed and put back up and displays are ready for a new year.



Construction in the basement

However, sight unseen, the big work was done in the basement. This has been a project that has been on going for a couple years. The room in the basement that had a dirt floor now has a cement floor and an exit to the outdoors. There was an air shaft between our building and the building where 4 Star Pizza is located. Water from this area was leaking into our basement because the wooden floor of the air shaft had holes in it. The only way to get to this area from either building was through a window in our kitchen. This meant climbing up over the kitchen sink, then jumping into the air space. Getting into this area was not too difficult, but getting back into the kitchen was tough. So, after much discussion we had this floor removed. We had a cement block wall built up around the shaft area in the basement and a door put in so that we can access this area. There is a drain in the middle of this area so that water will not back up into our basement.

As of now the construction part of the basement is complete. Now we have to decide what we are going to do with these areas. Some of us have ideas, but we have to get a group together to determine a positive use for these areas. We don't want these areas to become "junk collector" areas – which could very easily happen.

Recently I was asked if I could have anything I wanted for the building what would it be? I didn't have to think very long. I would like an elevator so that people who have difficulty walking steps could get to all 3 levels. The area where the air shaft was is the perfect place. So an elevator is the top of my "way out" wish list.

As we begin another season, we again ask for donations of cleaning supplies, paper products, stamps, office supplies, bottled water and of course, monetary donations. Expenses keep going up so any donations are greatly appreciated.

SLIPPERY ROCK UNIVERSITY STUDENT PROJECT

Students from Slippery Rock University are helping the Historical Society with fundraising efforts this semester. Sarah Miller, Anna Salamon, Liam Nute, and Brett Dains are enrolled in a class entitled “Philanthropy and Development”, taught by Assistant Professor Alice DelVecchio. The team of students selected the Historical Society for their semester project. The first assignment for the team is to create a brochure for the Historical Society. They will also plan a fundraising event—complete with ideas for a news release, postcards, and promotional displays. In addition, they will create long range plans for further fundraising.

Grant writing will be another area of the students’ focus. They will apply for several grants for the Society, and also make a list of additional funding sources that would be likely to support historical societies. As membership dues provided for only about 15% of the Society’s annual expenses last year, fundraising efforts are needed for building maintenance, newsletters, and special projects. Stopping water running down the building along the alley has resulted in water damage to interior walls. This is an example of badly needed maintenance. The Society would also like to raise funds for the reprinting of *Wolf Creek Legacy*, a history of the area written by Lillian Reeher. *The Light from the Barn*, a history of agriculture in the area, is another book the Society is hoping to publish. Equipping the newly renovated basement space into a classroom is yet another initiative the Society would like to realize. All of these dreams require funding, which, hopefully, the Slippery Rock students will assist us in acquiring.

- Jane Cleary

ACCESSION STORY



All of the items at the Historical Society have a story. We try to get the donor to tell us the story when the item is donated and the accession form is filled out. Recently, when I was in the Accession Office, there was a Palmer Smith purse on the counter. The purse had a picture of a small airplane and the letters/numbers TAR 16. However, there was no accession form to tell us the story of the purse, or who donated it.

Palmer Smith did a lot of custom work. This purse, I am sure, was a custom design. We would love to know the story behind TAR 16. If you were the owner of the purse, please tell us the significance of the little airplane and TAR 16. We look forward to hearing from you.

Have you checked out the website lately?

Another round of web updates will have happened by the time you receive this newsletter. Set aside some time to browse through the pages today!

<http://www.grovecityhistoricalsociety.org>



A NO FREE LUNCH MOMENT

When the new year began I asked Marty St. John, our Membership Chairperson, to print out a new membership list. I was sitting one winter afternoon going over the list to see who our members were. I was surprised how many members are still on our list but their memberships have expired. When your membership is due you are sent a renewal notice. If you renew you are sent a “Thank you” letter. If you do not renew, you are not sent another notice, but you are still on our list and continue to receive our newsletters.

Please check your records and see if your membership is current. I counted this afternoon when I began this article. We have 80 expired memberships – some expired for as long as 6 or 7 years. Admittedly this is not the best way to run a railroad let alone our historical society. With our budget so tight we cannot afford to have so many non-paying members on our membership roll. If you do not know if your membership has expired contact Marty or me. We have the lists and we can very easily tell you the status of your membership.



July 22, 2012 COOPER BESSEMER SECOND REUNION

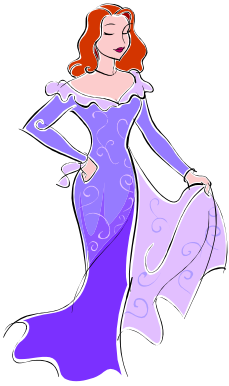
Two years ago former employees of Cooper Bessemer and Cooper Cameron had their first reunion. It was a huge success. The Historical Society was able to participate in the event by having the society open, College Avenue blocked off and old Cooper engines brought in for display. This year on **July 22, 2012** their will be another Cooper Reunion. Again, College Avenue will be closed and we are hoping to have more engines than before. We are also going to have a “Wine/Punch and Cheese” reception for our members as well as for the people from the reunion who want to come to visit the Headquarters and see the engines.

The last event was well attended and enjoyed by everyone. Many former employees from Mount Vernon , Ohio also came. So, it was a day of remembering and story telling.

THE WINE/PUNCH AND CHEESE RECEPTION WILL BE FROM 2:00 TO 5:00. We hope the Historical Society members will come to enjoy the refreshments and to share in the fun of the Cooper Bessemer reunion.

For information about the Cooper Bessemer Reunion contact Dick Yard at 724-458 -1232.

FASHION SHOW FUNDRAISER



June 30, 2012 is the day for this year's major fundraiser. It will be a Victorian Tea with a **Prom Gown Theme**. It will be held at the Carnegie Alumnae Building at Grove City College. The event will be held from 12 – 2 P.M.. Tickets will be \$20 each and can be purchased at B' Gifted and Daffins Candy Store on Broad Street as well as at the Headquarters.

Prom gowns that have been popular through the years will be featured. If you are interested in being a model, please contact Mary Ann McClinton at 724-458-6862 no later than May 31st. *Hint Hint – You must be thin to fit into these gowns. Remember how we used to be? If you are still thin – join the fun!*

We hope to have a good attendance for this fun event! This will be our main fund raiser for the year. So, invite your friends, neighbors, daughters, granddaughters, and come for an elegant afternoon. Tea sandwiches and cookies will be provided by the College catering service.

GENEALOGY



Genealogy is a very important part of any historical society. Our Society is very fortunate to have 2 people serving as genealogists. Jane Cleary and Don Cook are at the headquarters 2 days amonth - the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays. We have Ancestry.com on our computer and we have just received a donation for the World Explorer database. This will include more than 1 billion records from 15 countries from outside the United States including 800 million records from the British Isles with some census records from England, Scotland and Wales. There are also 126 million records from Canada, including the Canadian Census Collection (1851-1916).

Ancestry.com is an easy to use online database which enables you to create a family tree, search census records, online books, births, marriages, deaths, military collections, connect with other researchers and much more. **Visitors may search our Ancestry.com database for free whenever the Society is open, beginning April 17th, Tues.-Sat. noon to 3:00 p.m.**

To request assistance via email contact Jane Cleary: cleary2@zoominternet.net or Don Cook: thumper@zoominternet.net who can help you with your genealogy requests. You may also reach Jane by phone at 724-748-3044 and Don at 724-458-5229.



Become a member of the Grove City Area Historical Society!

Take advantage of all of the great perks of being a member, use the form on the back cover to sign up today! (All membership contributions are tax deductible!)

Grove City Area Historical Society

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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

DONATIONS:

\$	_____
\$10.00	Student / Senior
\$20.00	Individual
\$40.00	Family
\$50.00	Corporate
\$500.00	Life
\$1,000.00	Founding

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!**

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YOUR MEMBERSHIP ENSURES OUR SUCCESS