

111 College Ave. Grove City Pa 16127

The Grove City Area Historical Society Newsletter

www.grovecityhistoricalsociety.org 724-458-1798 gcahs@zoominternet.net

Volume 17, Issue 1

April 2017

Board of Directors

Kathy Jack, President
Grove City Borough

Gary Forsythe
1st VP
Grove City Borough

Jean Waugaman
2nd VP
Member-at-large

Dr. Tom Armour, Treasurer
Member-at-large

Laurie McCandless
Secretary
Wolf Creek Township

Linda Beatty
Liberty Township

Mary Ann Collins
Springfield Township

Cathy Coulter
Member-at-large

John Horne
Grove City Borough

Lillian Reeher
Pine Township

Harold McCracken
Member-at-large

Rev. Robert McCreight
Member-at-large

Marty St. John
Member-at-large

A New Year = New Opportunities

With the arrival of spring, we are looking forward to another prosperous year at our Historical Society filled with many opportunities for improvement and continued preservation of our historical treasures. One project, in particular, that has caught my attention is the restoring and displaying of an antique mail wagon that was donated to the Historical Society several years ago by Board Member Lillian Reynolds Reeher's cousin, Robert Reynolds. Their grandfather, R. Hood Reynolds, delivered mail from the wagon, beginning in 1917, to residents in the Grove City area. Grove City College is currently storing the wagon for us until we complete the restoration and placement of the wagon in a prominent downtown location for viewing by both Grove City residents and visitors. As is the case with most worthwhile preservation projects, a significant amount of funding is needed to complete this project. Our Board of Directors is currently considering different options to raise the needed funds. This old mail wagon may be the last of its kind in the entire state, and we can be proud, as Grove City residents and Historical Society members, that it belongs to us. We plan to establish a committee to oversee this project, so please contact me if you are interested in helping.

Our Board of Directors is also currently establishing guidelines for our members and also community residents to use the Historical Society building for meetings and events. This is an opportunity to encourage more visitors to the building and, in turn, generate an increased interest in our Historical Society. A minimal usage fee will be charged to community residents, but Historical Society members will have the privilege of using the building at no charge. If you are interested in scheduling a meeting or event at the Historical Society, please call the Historical Society at 724-458-1798 or contact me directly at 724-264-4439.

And, as always, please know that our Historical Society cannot exist without the time and efforts put forth by our loyal volunteers. So, in starting a new year here at the Historical Society, I encourage and welcome you to join us as a volunteer. If you are unable to commit to a specific volunteer schedule, we have many opportunities for you to volunteer at your convenience. I would be pleased to personally discuss with you our many volunteer opportunities and assist you in choosing one that will work for you.

Kathy Jack



Last year I asked for help with increasing our number of visitors. We had 1145 visitors in 2015. Last year we succeeded in increasing that number to 1280! So, thanks to all who stopped by and helped increase our number of guests. Maybe this year we can add 100 more.



Giesmann Photograph Collection

By Jane Cleary

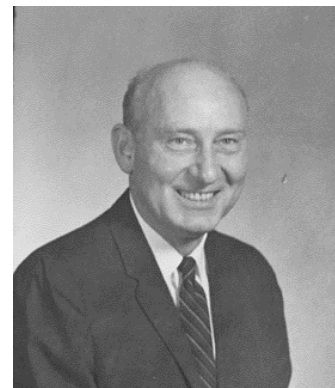
Several years ago the Historical Society received 55 large boxes of photographs and negatives, taken in Grove City, covering several decades from 1950 – 1981. Family portraits, graduation, passport, and business pictures were created largely by the Carl Giesmann Studio, located on Broad Street. The boxes were in chronological order and, at first glance, we wondered how we would ever be able to use the collection.

Linda Bennett, former Historical Society president, contacted the Heinz History Center in Pittsburgh, and they informed her that the collection was priceless, offering a wonderful “snapshot” of the people in our community during a sizeable period of the 20th century. So, we were determined to make the over 6,000 photographs accessible.

Volunteers began by alphabetizing the photos within each box. Student volunteers in the summer then started entering the names, within each year, into a database spreadsheet. Jean Waugaman and Rev. Robert McCreight continued the project, when the students went back to school. The final result, after several years of labor, is an alphabetical list of people and businesses from Grove City from 1950 – 1981. You can search for pictures by name or year.

Copies of these photos will be available for purchase. To learn if we have a specific person or business, you can visit the Historical Society and ask to look at the Giesmann Catalog, in the Library. You may also inquire by contacting Jane Cleary, 724-748-3044, cleary2@zoominternet.net. If we have a photo you want, we will get it reproduced at *Marshall's Printing*, for a nominal fee, and make it available for you in a few days.

In the spring window display at the Historical Society, you can see the original Giesmann Studio camera, which dates from the turn of the century. The camera and the photographs were a generous donation to the Historical Society by Ruth A. Curry. She and her husband, Jack Curry, bought the Giesmann Studio in 1980, and continued with studio photography. Marty St. John worked for both Carl and Jack and helped in the acquisition of this rich compilation of Grove City history. Many thanks to all who have made this resource a reality.



Carl Giesmann

Lorena Montgomery

By Chris Guarnieri

In Grove City, we had an outstanding historian: Lorena Montgomery. Born and raised in Grove City, Lorena worked as a secretary, but she was also a member and an officer of the Daughters of the American Revolution. As Registrar and chair of the History Committee, Lorena was responsible for helping prospective women trace their ancestors to the Revolutionary War, thus gaining acceptance into the DAR. As Registrar, Lorena more than doubled the size of the General Hugh Mercer Chapter (founded in 1919).

She didn't rest there, however. She and the women on her History Committee searched all of the cemeteries in Mercer County, locating and marking graves of Revolutionary War soldiers who died in Mercer County. A daunting task today, when Internet searches make "discoveries" easy, in the 1920s and 1930s when Lorena travelled throughout the county, she did so in an early automobile over many dirt roads! In her courthouse searches, she also uncovered many previously unknown Revolutionary War pensioners and land grantees.

After locating and marking these graves, Lorena then recorded and published all of the information she found about these soldiers and their descendants in a multi-volume work, which was donated to the Grove City Community Library by her family, after her death. Although her legacy was destroyed by an uncaring librarian, there is a copy of her work in the National DAR archives in Washington DC.

We hope that you will consider searching your own genealogy, learning about the people in your family and, like Lorena, recording that history. If you are interested in learning more about the Daughters of the American Revolution, and perhaps joining a Grove City chapter, please feel free to contact me at 724-813-2677.

Candyland part 2

By Eleanor Scott

Eleanor Scott, in response to our article on Candyland by Linda Hughes Thomssen in the last issue, wrote with her memories of the store before 1953. Eleanor is Linda's cousin and she worked at Candyland before she married and moved away. Our previous photo is, as Eleanor remembers before 1953, with the grill and soda fountain on the left. The drawing by Linda in our last issue, shows the grill and the soda fountain on the right, as you walked in the store. So the interior layout must have been flipped sometime about mid-century. With the two of these memories of Candyland, we have a wonderful history of this almost forgotten treasure of Grove City.

Roy and Gertrude Martin bought Candyland before 1953 and went into partnership with their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Hoffman. The Hoffman family did not stay in the business with them very long until they wanted out. That's when Vic and Leandra Hughes joined the business. Vic Hughes continued from that time to manage Candyland until it closed.

The store itself was located on Broad Street across from Shelley's (now Saxony House). There was a drive on the south side that went back to the skating rink.

As you went in the door to Candyland, on the left was a long soda fountain with high stools along the side. Behind the high counters was where the tasty dishes were prepared.

The evening crowd was mostly high school and college students. The high school students had more money to spend and sometimes even left a tip. They didn't linger. The college students would order a cup of coffee and spend the whole evening, leaving few tips.

On the right was an equally long show case with chocolates, both boxed and on display trays. In the back were rows of well-constructed wooden booths which could each hold six people. I was often sent to the record store to buy new records for the jukebox. There were always a few that were played so often they got worn out.

After the store was closed for the evening we all worked together to clean the store. When we finished, we were permitted to make ourselves a sundae of our choice. We could be creative. When those dishes were washed, we were ready to leave.

Another Grover, Beverly Montgomery, sent an email with her memories of Candyland: "I graduated class of 1965 but as a 6th grader, most of us attended Dotty Stewart's Ballroom classes (if memory serves me correctly, the ballroom classes were where the American Legion building is now) – anyway, we would all go to Candyland after ballroom for our cherry or vanilla cokes. And the specialty drink was called a "Suicide!" Many years later, I once asked Mr. Hughes what was in a Suicide drink – he smiled and said it was coke with a "squirt of everything else at the soda fountain including chocolate".

Local Business Disappearing from Our History

A sad fact about Grove City's history is that some of it is being lost forever. Some of the business that once lined Broad Street have already been forgotten or their history is slowly becoming a vague memory in time. I hope to restore at least a small part of that history so we can share it with future generations.

The next business that I am going to research is Wardle's and Laurie McCandless is doing Parkview Diner. If you have photos or memories you would like to share about either Wardle's or Parkveiw Diner please contact me at the Historical Society or by email at cathycoulter1@yahoo.com. Also, if you have a business that you feel is disappearing from our history, let me know and I will see what I can do to change that.



If you are interested in working on your family tree this summer and would like help, we have two genealogists who would be glad to help you. Cathy Coulter and Jane Cleary will be in the building every 2nd and 4th Tuesday, starting on April 11th this year. You can also contact Cathy Coulter at cathycoulter1@yahoo.com, 724-967-2622 or at the Historical Society.

100 Years Ago: World War I part one by Cathy Coulter

100 years ago was a turbulent time in world history. The Great World War was raging across the ocean and it looked as if the United States would not be allowed to remain on the sidelines. Grove City's National Guard Company M would soon be deeply involved in the war. Below is a timeline of events leading Company M through this historic period.

April 6, 1917 America entered World War One

June 18, 1917, in order to meet the numbers needed to enter into WWI Grove City Pa. opened a recruiting office on this day.

July 27, 1917 Company M was mustered into federal service

October 17, 1917 Company M 15th Regiment became Company M of the 112th Regiment.

May 14, 1918, Company M reached Liverpool England

May 16, 1918, Company M traveled to France.

July 8th - July 14, 1918 Company M in the

Chateau Thierry Sector

July 15th - July 18, 1918 during the Champagne Marne Defensive

July 18th - Aug. 6, 1918 Company M in the Aisne Marne offensive

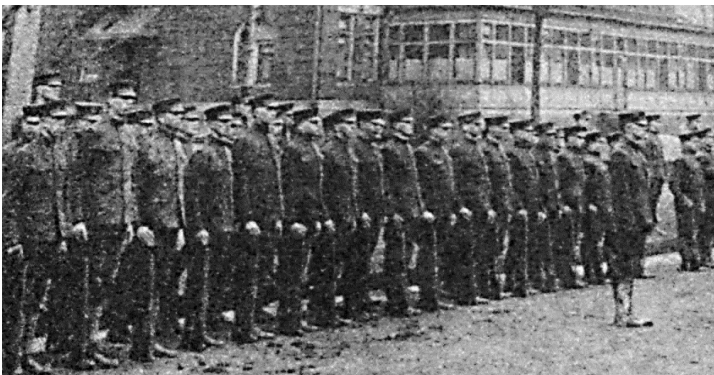
Aug. 7th - Aug. 17, 1918 Company M in the Fismes Sector

Aug 18th - Sept. 7, 1918 Company M in the Oise Aisne Offensive

Sept. 26th - October 10, 1918 Company M in the Meuse Argonne Offensive

Oct. 16th - Nov. 11, 1918 Company M in the Thiacourt Sector

April 30, 1919 Company M arrived back in the U.S. 1 year, 24 days after the U.S. entered WWI



Grove City College Battalion-1918

These men are standing in front of what had been the Grove City College Colonial Building. They would soon be heading off to fight in World War I.

Spring a Season of Change

As with every spring there is a feeling of change in the air. This year spring has brought that feeling into the Historical Society building. This feeling has been embraced by some of the volunteers, and they have been busy making changes and preparing the building for the new year. Come for a visit and see just what they have been doing.

You will find that the displays on the first floor have changed. In the lobby, you will now see a display for the 100th anniversary of the U.S. entering WWI. You will also find in the lobby an Easter display in the case under the counter.

As you walk into the next room, you will pass by the alcove where, just a year ago, you would have found a Christmas tree with all of its lights and Wendell August ornaments. This year though you will find that the Christmas tree and its decorations have been moved down to our Aluminum Room. It will continue to display the Wendell August ornaments there.

In the next room, you will find a display case that once held a dairy display that is now filled with Palmer Smith linens and aluminum items. The long case that once held items from Cooper Bessemer, GE, and Alcoa has been changed and now holds items from small area businesses. The Highland Band pictures along with the Cunningham chart, have been replaced with advertising from several of the small businesses. A display using two racks that were donated by B'Gifted have added a touch of spring to the room. A card rack is filled with Easter post cards from 100 years ago and another rack displays women's hats.

Once again, Bob McCreight has put together a schedule for highlighting local churches in the Church room on the second floor.

When you visit the Historical Society this year, you will find that there is something different about the Museum Shoppe. A recent donation has transformed the look and feel of the Museum Shoppe.

The new gift is the mirrored display case that used to be inside Wardle's bike shop. If you have ever had the fortune to enter the bike shop when it was open, you will likely remember the display case. It is a delightful addition to our building, and I am sure it will bring many smiles in memory of Wardle's.

A coal mining display is currently being created in the basement and we are all excited to see the end result of all the hard work. An article and pictures, will be in the newsletter when it has been completed.





Palmer Smith Display



Highland Band Display



Part of the World War One Display



Spring Display



Election Results

As we welcome in the new year, we also welcome the new Board Members. This year we would like to introduce John Horne, Mary Ann Collins, Harold McCracken and Rev. Robert McCreight. We look forward to having you on the Board and getting to know each of you better.

At this same time, we also would like to say thank you to those who are leaving the Board. Thank you for all of the time and effort you have put into the Historical Society. You have done a great job and made the Historical Society better for being on the board. We look forward to your continued involvement in the Historical Society.

YOUR MEMBERSHIP ENSURES OUR SUCCESS

NAME _____ TELEPHONE _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PLEASE CIRCLE: new member renewal change of address

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES:

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

Yes, I would like to volunteer. Please contact me about what opportunities are available

Founding and Life Memberships are payable over 3 years.

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, Box 764, Grove City, PA 16127

Make Checks Payable to: Grove City Area Historical Society

Grove City Area Historical Society
Cathy Coulter, Newsletter Editor
cathycoulter1@yahoo.com
111 College Ave
P.O. Box 764
Grove City, Pa. 16127

NON-PROFIT
Bulk Rate
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
GROVE CITY, PA.
PERMIT NO.764

Museum and Gift Shoppe Hours
Tuesday – Saturday 12:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Our first day of the year is April 11th
Our last day for this year is Dec.9th
724-458-1798

Website:
www.grovecityhistoricalsociety.org
Email: gcahs@zoominternet.net

As we welcome spring we are also looking forward to another year of greeting our visitors and preserving Grove City's History.

SPRING ○ EVENTS

Saturday, April 8, 2017 - Volunteer Luncheon and Orientation 11:00 – 1:00 pm

Tuesday, April 11, 2017 – Opening For the Year, Noon – 3pm

Monday, April 17, at 7 p.m. - Interviews of Grove City's World War II /Veterans, Lois Hamilton
Experience how World War II impacted our community through videotapes of our veterans' personal stories.

Monday, May 1, at 7 p.m. Living with your Collection, Mary “Skip” Sample
Collecting is a fun past time. See what some of your friends and neighbors collect and how they "live with their collection."

Monday, May 22, at 7 p.m. - Grove City's Cemeteries, Don Cook
Join us to learn interesting information about the historic cemeteries in our community.