

Sewickley Valley Historical Society

Signals

XL, Number 1

September 2012

Wednesday, September 19, at 7:30 p.m.

Old Sewickley Post Office

Collecting Art Through the Ages

An Illustrated Presentation by Robert J. Trombetta



The vast majority of the world's great art museums owe their existence to the efforts of a small number of individual collectors. Through the ages, starting in antiquity, collecting beautiful and thought-provoking objects has been a part of human nature.

Mr. Robert Trombetta will join us to discuss the great movements in art history and the collectors who controlled the art market. We will learn how many of the decisions of these past collectors influenced the art world and museums of today. Included in the discussion, will be prominent Pittsburgh collectors of the past.

Robert J. Trombetta, retired director of the Fort Pitt Museum, has participated in the quest for rare art and artifacts for over fifty years. A native of Washington County, Mr. Trombetta began collecting Native American artifacts at the age of seven. He quickly became a devoted collector of art and artifacts from around the world. He has spent years studying other collectors and the institutions they helped to create. His recently published book, *David Michael Bowers, the Evolution of an Artist*, explores the career of a Pittsburgh artist who is quickly gaining international recognition.

October Field Trip to Old Allegheny

Plan to join the Sewickley Valley Historical Society and the Allegheny City Society on Saturday, October 6, 2012, for a FREE two-part walking tour of Old Allegheny!

The tour, emphasizing "Sewickley Connections," will be divided into two parts, with lunch in the middle. It will begin at Henry Hobson Richardson's Emmanuel Episcopal Church. From there, we will walk around the corner to Calvary Methodist Church, then stop at homes on Western Avenue. After a Dutch Treat lunch (probably at the Modern Cafe), we will walk up North Lincoln and Ridge Avenues and visit Byers and Jones Halls at the Community College of Allegheny County.

You can participate in either or both parts of the tour, with or without joining us for lunch. The tentative schedule is as at right:

- 9:15 Meet at the Old Sewickley Post Office (if you wish to carpool)
- 10:00 Arrive at Emmanuel Episcopal Church and begin morning segment of tour.
- Noon Break for Dutch Treat lunch (location and price to be announced)
- 1:00 Begin afternoon segment of tour
- 3:45 Return to Sewickley

Final arrangements will be announced in late September. Please call headquarters at 412-741-5315 to let us know if you plan to attend and how much of the day you plan to participate in. Thanks!

The mission of the Sewickley Valley Historical Society is to promote interest in and to record, collect, preserve, and document the history of the Sewickley Valley.

Special rates for SVHS members!

Donations benefit
SEWICKLEY HEIGHTS HISTORY CENTER
Adults \$60
Children \$20

RIDING AND DRIVING PARTY

**SATURDAY
SEPT. 22, 2012
STARTING
AT 4PM**

INCLUDES:
Family Fun and Surprises!
Bar and Dinner
Live Music
Jumpers, Dressage and Other Equestrian Exhibitions
Professionals and Children on Horseback
The Hunt and Hounds
Whimsical Circus Acts
Antique Automobiles and Carriages from the Late 1890's/Early 1900's
Under a Tent - Rain or Shine!
Incredible Views of Sewickley Heights
Same Location as Fern Hollow Nature Center
ATTIRE: Dressy Casual

**For More Information: 412-741-4487
www.sewickleyheightshistory.org**



North Hills Genealogists To Hold Conference

North Hills Genealogists of Pittsburgh is hosting an all-day conference on Saturday, October 20, 2012, 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m., at the Wildwood Golf Club, 2195 Sample Road, Allison Park (Pittsburgh), PA 15101 (just south of North Park and about 2 miles from either McKnight Road or Rt. 8). Registration by September 18 is \$35 for members and \$45 for non-members; after September 18, \$40 for members and \$50 for non-members; walk-ins are welcome for \$55. Continental breakfast (beginning at 8:00 a.m.) and a buffet lunch will be provided.

The conference speaker will be D. Joshua Talor, MA, MLS, a featured genealogist on the NBC television series *Who Do You Think You Are?* His subjects will include "Discovering USGenWeb," "Bridging the Gap: Finding Ancestors in the U. S. Between 1780 and 1830," "Mapping Your Success: Employing Maps for Genealogical Research," and "Putting It Together: A Case Study." For further information, contact North Hills Genealogists at P. O. Box 169, Wexford, PA 15090, or www.NorthHillsGenealogists.org.

St. James 150th Anniversary Celebration

As part of the 150th Anniversary Celebration, St. James Roman Catholic Church, Sewickley, will launch the grand opening of a **Historical Photo Gallery** on Friday, September 21, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m. in the Gathering Space adjacent to the church's parking lot.

Sewickley Valley Historical Society members are cordially invited to attend.



Ladies of St. James Parish were photographed in the early 20th century with the Pastor, Rev. Miles Sweeney.

Changes at Headquarters!

As you can see from the photo at right, there have been some major modifications made to the office at Historical Society headquarters. Over the summer, we have not only had high shelving constructed over the file cabinets to accommodate large archival boxes, but have also acquired a handsome second-hand card catalog to house the Dorothy Moore Collection of genealogical material. A sturdy “stocking” ladder gives us access to the shelves, and large labels make identifying the contents of the boxes quite easy.

These changes have freed up space in our storage room in the Old Sewickley Post Office, where we now have a complete run of the *Sewickley Herald*. All of this helps us answer the many questions we receive from our membership and the public on the history of the Sewickley Valley, its architecture and its inhabitants.

We invite you to visit and see the changes for yourselves!



Donations

The Ann and Frank Cahouet Foundation

In Memoriam

Mrs. Henry Chalfant; Mrs. Jean Homitsky; Mr. John M. Roberts IV

Friends, Sponsors, Patrons, Benefactors

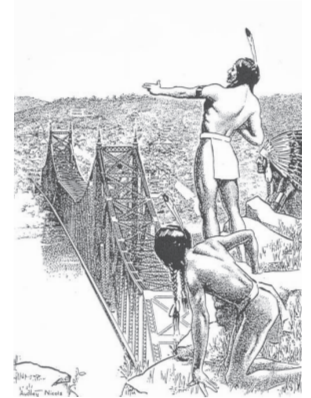
Thanks to the following, who have generously supported the Sewickley Valley Historical Society with gifts in addition to membership dues:

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September 2012



Visit the Historical Society booth at Sewickley's Harvest Festival, Saturday, September 8, 10:00-5:00

A Gift of Way Material

On a recent visit to the Historical Society, Bee (Way) and Woody Rutter presented us with several boxes of material relating to the Way family.

Among the treasures is the following, transcribed by Frederick Way, Jr., from the diary of David Shields (1780-1857). Shields moved from Washington, Pennsylvania, to "Newington," his wife's property in Sewickley Bottom, in 1823. He was appointed first Postmaster in the Valley in 1824, serving in that capacity until his death. His descendants still live at "Newington."

1830. Dec 16th. It may be worthy of notice for the inquisitive eye of a future reader (when the writer of this shall also have disappeared) that of the original wild game of this Country there are Red deer and Turkeys on the hills immediately back of this Sewickley Bottom. A wolf was killed near this place some 5 or 6 years since. None have been seen since of those destructive animals. Opposums [sic], Foxes, Minks, raccoons +c are numerous here at all times...

1834. Nov 8th. A Bear was killed yesterday by one of the Scotts, about 2 miles up the Creek. Bears have been strangers in this part of the country for many years – this Autumn there have been several seen, who have probably come from the North, there being no nuts or acorns in the Country...

1839. Dec 8th. A Fire occurred this day P.M. in the house occupied by Nevin & Champ as a boarding school [the 1810 Way Tavern, still standing on Beaver Road, Edgeworth, a forerunner of today's Sewickley Academy], which destroyed the Northern or old end. The day was calm and atmosphere damp and heavy and the people zealous. On the 9th the rubbish was removed and on the 10th carpenters began to rebuild and repair.

1840. Feb 6th. The Plasterers finished their work at Way's house [the Abishai Way House, also still standing on Beaver Road, Edgeworth], the Carpenters having finished theirs some days previous.