

# Sewickley Valley Historical Society

# Signals

XLI, Number 4

January 2014

**Thursday, January 23, 2014**

Cash Bar, 5:30 p.m. — Dinner, 6:15 p.m. — Program, 7:30 p.m.  
The Edgeworth Club, East Drive, Sewickley

**Please Join Us for a Joint Dinner Meeting**

with

Ben Avon Area Historical Association & Old Moon Township Historical Society  
featuring

## *Quintessentially Pittsburgh*

A PowerPoint Presentation by Robert D. Regan, PhD

**Q***uintessential* has come to mean something that is the most typical or something worthy of a pattern to be imitated. The adverbial form, *quintessentially*, means “in a manner that is typical or characteristic of a thing’s nature.”

One could argue that it is Pittsburgh’s nature to be, well—Pittsburgh; and many features that are typically “Pittsburgh” are certainly worthy of imitation.

In his new book, *Quintessentially Pittsburgh*, Dr. Regan highlights many of the unique aspects of the City. In particular, he discusses its historic trolley and incline systems, its rich tradition of athletic stadiums and its historic theaters—only a few of the many facets that give special significance to the place called Pittsburgh.

Bob Regan is a research professor at the University of Pittsburgh and a consultant specializing in Geographic Information Systems (GIS). His professional career has included senior level positions in the federal government, major corporations and universities. On a personal level, his interests revolve around bicycling, and he covers 2,000-3,000 miles a year biking in the area!

Dr. Regan is the author of three previous books about the City: *The Steps of Pittsburgh*, *The Bridges of Pittsburgh* (both with photographer Tim Fabian) and *The Names of Pittsburgh*. In this presentation, he will draw from his research to point out to us the factors—some intangible—that attest to the quintessence of the place in which we live.

**THE ORDER FORM FOR DINNER RESERVATIONS  
CAN BE FOUND AT THE END OF THIS NEWSLETTER.**

*Reserve early! Space is limited!*

## Friends, Sponsors, Patrons, Benefactors

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

George J. Berry, III; Nancy & Jim Chaplin; W. Brewster Cockrell; Mr. & Mrs. James D. Darby, Jr.; Bernard & Ashley John; Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth E. Johns, Jr.; Peter D. Jones; Mr. & Mrs. Frank Wasco, Jr.

## A Special Thank You

to Yankello's Video & Audio, Sewickley, for providing A-V equipment for our November program

## In Memoriam

Dr. Leroy J. Egan

## Some Recent Acquisitions

Sewickley Valley Historical Society regularly receives gifts of items of historical interest significant to the Sewickley Valley and Western Pennsylvania. The Society also purchases books and other materials. Here are some of our latest acquisitions:

- Nancy Orlando gave us a transcription of the 1887 diary of Sarah Springer Harbaugh, daughter of William and Sophia Thorne Harbaugh, containing descriptions of a busy household on Maple Lane in Edgeworth.
- We purchased the book *Chanel Bonfire* by Wendy Lawless (Gallery Books, 2013), a memoir by the step-daughter of Oliver Rea, who was married to her mother, Georgann Lawless, for a time in the late 1960s.
- We purchased *The Civil War in Pennsylvania: A Photographic History*, published by the Senator John Heinz History Center in 2013.
- Sewickley Cemetery gave us a number of copper engraving plates that were used to print various cemetery publications.
- Betty Ann Miller presented an original copy of the magazine *The Valley Gossip*, published by Gilbert A. Hays for one year only, 1881. This publication was one of the many precursors to *The Sewickley Herald*, which began publication in 1903.
- Betty Ann Miller also presented a collection of materials relating to William Larimer Jones, son of Thomas Mifflin Jones and nephew of Benjamin Franklin Jones of "Franklin Farm" in Sewickley Heights. W. L. Jones lived on Chestnut Road in Edgeworth. These items, both personal and relating to the family business, Jones & Laughlin Steel, join others given earlier by Mrs. Miller.
- We purchased five albums of newspaper clippings, mostly from *The Pittsburgh Gazette Times*, preserved by a Pittsburgh resident named H. B. Bart. The clippings date roughly from 1910 to 1920, and some are historical essays by historian George T. Fleming. Many interesting subjects include a description of the dedication of the memorial Fame in Sewickley Cemetery in 1866; a visit to the John Way farm in the early nineteenth century; George Washington's three trips to the West, including riding through the Sewickley Valley in 1753; Virginia's claims in Western Pennsylvania; and biographical sketches of Guyasuta, General Alexander Hays, Philander Knox and Samuel P. Langley, among others.
- Artist Susan Gaca gave the Society a complete set of the GALS Sewickley calendars, which she illustrated and published with Carroll Logsdon between 1987 and 2008, plus some original drawings she did for the *Three Rivers Cookbooks*.
- George Engel presented thirty-four black and white photographs of the Rea mansion, "Farmhill," in memory of Oliver Corcoran Binney, grandson of Henry Robinson Rea.
- Ken Ruzik brought in a photocopy of a handwritten copy of the original 1853 Charter of Incorporation of the Borough of Sewickley. It includes the names of freeholders who voted and voters who were not owners of property, as well as the original map of the Borough drawn by Alexander Hays.
- B. G. Shields presented us with five leather-bound ledgers relating to Shields family activities. One volume records in meticulous detail 935 experiments conducted by David Shields between 1889 and 1912, investigating the feasibility of using coal as fertilizer. Another volume comprises the Thomas Leet Shields homestead household records from 1866 until 1936, with monthly listings of the wages paid to and the names of servants. A third volume contains records of a garden and orchard business begun in March 1854 on Shields land in what would become Edgeworth, with entries continuing through December 1863. This venture eventually became the Shields and Wardrop Nursery, which gave today's Maple Lane the name Nursery Lane.



- We purchased a magnificent album of photographs belonging to the Holdship family. In addition to family pictures, there are loose photographs of well-known Sewickley residents and events. Most prized are numerous photographs of the Riding and Driving parties hosted by the W. C. Robinsons in connection with the annual Sewickley Horse Show.
- We purchased *Allegheny City: The History of Pittsburgh's North Side*, by Dan Rooney and Carol Peterson (University of Pittsburgh Press, 2013), an addition to our several histories of the city that was annexed by the City of Pittsburgh in 1906.
- The photo below was donated by Roxanne M. Leighton and belonged to her mother, Bertha Brooks (Mrs. John S.) McCormack, daughter of Ruth Walker and Joshua Twing Brooks. It depicts a 1907 visit of Sewickley residents to Devil's Den, Gettysburg, in a Packard and a Pierce Arrow. The following names are written on the back of the photo in Phyllis Semple's handwriting (although there are more people than names): Bennett Walker; Henry Oliver, Jr.; Hartley Walker; Mr. & Mrs. Hay Walker, Jr.; Mame Oliver Robinson; Lil Oliver (Mrs. Henry); Mr. & Mrs. Charles Doyle; Henry Oliver.

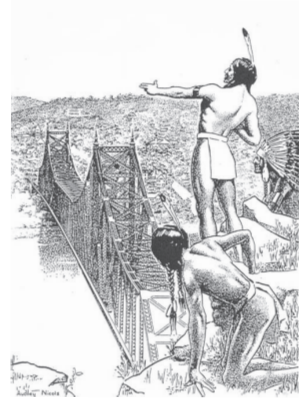


**If any of the above piques your interest—  
or if there are other aspects of Sewickley Valley history you'd like to explore,  
VISIT US!**

We have a collection of books, maps, photographs and other material made accessible by a computer database. In addition to a complete run of the *Sewickley Herald*, we also have the extensive genealogical file compiled by our late Archivist, Dorothy Moore; the files and photographs of Edgeworth Preservation, which were used in the publication of *Historic Houses of the Sewickley Valley*; plus special collections of documents relating to, among others, the Way, Shields, Nevin, Jones and Walker families.

**Sewickley Valley Historical Society**  
**200 Broad Street**  
**Sewickley, PA 15143**

**Non-Profit Org**  
**U. S. Postage**  
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**Permit 70**  
**Sewickley, PA**



**January 2014**

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## **DINNER MENU**

*(All entrées are served with salad, rolls and butter. The price includes tax and gratuity .)*

Chicken Fontinella/Quartered Redskin Potatoes *or* Lump Crab Cake/Wild Rice *or* Vegetarian Plate  
Green Beans & Carrots  
Chocolate Cheese Cake, Coffee/Tea

**Please reserve** \_\_\_Chicken Fontinella \_\_\_Crab Cake \_\_\_Vegetarian **dinners @ \$30 per person**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I (we) would like to be seated with: \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_ Please have the Committee seat me (us).

Please make checks payable to Sewickley Valley Historical Society and return with this form to:  
SVHS, 200 Broad Street, Sewickley, PA 15143

**DEADLINE FOR DINNER RESERVATIONS IS FRIDAY, JANUARY 17, 2014.**

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*Signals* is designed and edited by Susan C. Holton. Visit our website, [www.sewickleyhistory.org](http://www.sewickleyhistory.org) — e-mail us at [sewickleyhistory@verizon.net](mailto:sewickleyhistory@verizon.net) — or call us at 412-741-5315. We're open 10:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, or by appointment.

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