

# Sewickley Valley Historical Society Signals

XXXVI, Number 6

April 2009

Wednesday, April 22, 2009

## A Visit to the B. F. Jones Memorial Library, Aliquippa, PA

Meet at 5:30 p.m. at the Old Sewickley Post Office,  
200 Broad Street, Sewickley,  
to carpool to the B. F. Jones Memorial Library, 663 Franklin Avenue, Aliquippa.

**RESERVATIONS REQUIRED! CALL 412-741-5315**

After a tour of the building conducted by the Library staff, we will view a DVD on the history of Aliquippa that was prepared for the town's 2008 centennial.

The video will be followed by refreshments.

The B. F. Jones Memorial Library in Aliquippa was dedicated in 1929, a gift to the community from Elizabeth McMaster Jones Horne in memory of her father, B. F. Jones, Sr., co-founder of Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation. The building, designed by architect Brandon Smith, was placed on the U. S. Department of the Interior's National Register of Historic Places in 1979. It is a one-story, T-shaped structure built of Indiana limestone in a "style adhering to the classic lines of the Renaissance while also reflecting a sufficiently modern treatment of freshness," according to William J. Wewer, Executive Director of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, which processed the building's National Register nomination. Wewer added that "the library's educational, recreational and social significance is as remarkable as its architectural beauty."

Inside, the design of the library is restrained Italian Renaissance. In the foyer sits a heroic bronze statue of B. F. Jones by sculptor Robert Aitken. Among the features of the interior are ornamental plaster ceilings; copies of Andrea della Robbia's *bambini* from the porch of the Foundling Hospital in Florence; ornamental bronze doors; in what was formerly the Children's Room, charming leaded glass window medallions depicting nursery rhymes designed by Henry Hunt; and a portrait of Mrs. Horne by Dutch painter Alfred Hoen.

We hope that you will join us for a tour of this landmark building, donated to a neighboring community by a family that was so important to the development of our own community, especially Sewickley Heights.

### Report of the Nominating Committee

The Nominating Committee (Charlotte Bober, Chair; Pat Casella; Susan Craig; Margaret Dury; Betty G. Y. Shields) proposes the following slate of officers and directors for election at the Annual Meeting, May 20, 2009:

President: John Kroeck  
Vice-President: George H. Craig, Jr.  
Directors: Margaret Dury, James Haines, John Menniti, Mary Lou Scholl, Mike Tomana

*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.

# Arthur Nevin's Diary, June & July 1903

*This red leather diary measures 7" x 8.25" and is inscribed in Nevin's hand. "Arthur Nevin, Vine Acre, March 1903."*

*After one page on which he notes when and where two of his operas were produced, the following is written, in pencil.*

*We have transcribed Nevin's spelling and punctuation as accurately as possible. Our additions or corrections are in square brackets.*

## Ditch Camp Blackfoot Reservation, Montana

June 23<sup>rd</sup>—1903 [actually Saturday, June 20]

Arrived at Browning Sat. evening at 7'o'c in a rain storm. Drove to Agency and took lodgings there. Sunday morning hired bronchos [broncos] and rode ten miles to Ditch Camp where Indians are working on irrigation. Upon entering camp two squaws recognized Walter at once and called to him by his Indian name (White Weazle [sic]). The Indian wigwams number 136 and the number of Indians, about 250. The lodges (or wigwams) are pitched in a circle, perhaps a quarter of a mile in circumference. Different colors decorate these lodges in a very crude style of art. To the South of the camp—which is on a plateau—flows the Cut Bank river. To the West the Rockys [Rockies], with their snow-patched sides; seemingly but a mile away, but actually, 15 miles. To the North and North-East, the rolling prairies.

After tying our [broncos], (Sun. 21) we walked into the circle of lodges, making our way to a lodge where we heard some rattles being played. We entered the tepee and, circled around the lodge, were ten Indians, singing their weird songs and praying "for horses, cattle and good luck and that they might live to be old men." Walter met with a warm reception from most every Indian and they would most always take my hand too. What they would say, of course I could not understand. From the "Medicine Camp"—prayers etc.—we cut across the circle to Jack Bear Childs [sic]—often called Jack Behind-The-Ears as he once shot a man behind the ear in their late wars with the Whites—wigwam. With Jack Bear Child, was his wife: Big Mike and other chiefs. They all called out Walters [sic] name—adopted name—in Indian, making motions for us to enter. With the help of an interpreter, they told Walter they heard he had been killed. That he had gone to war and was shot. After a talk with them, we went to Mad Wolf's widow's lodge (Mad Wolf—chief—adopted Walter five years ago) and there was a scene I shall never forget. As we entered the lodge, Mrs Mad Wolf was seated on some blankets, & upon seeing Walter, held out her hand and groaned; then, taking mine. No one who had seen the expression on that squaw's face, could ever say the Indians have no

sentiment. She would look again and again at Walter, each time with a sigh significant of days gone by and her life with Mad Wolf. We sat in absolute silence for over ten minutes, nothing disturbing the quiet of that wig-wam but the groaning and sighing of that sorrowful soul. At last she said that she "was sad and could not talk" but for us to come round again.



We left her lodge and strolled around to a number of other lodges. About five we mounted our [broncos] and rode out over the prairies where we had our lunch. Returning to the camp we heard some drumming going on at Jack Bear Child's lodge. We made for it, threw open the flap of the lodge and entered. There were seven Indians, Jack in the centre and Spotted Eagle, Big Mike & others seated on either side of him. At the right and left sat a number of squaws. The coloring of the interior of the lodge—blankets being stretched from the ground up, as far as their width permitting, as a panelling. Brilliant shades of red, yellow, blue, green and black were these blankets. Then the red and green and yellow blankets wrapped about the squaws, and the chiefs with their faces painted. Jack claims to be Son of Thunder and, painted across his fore head, in black, with a background of yellow, was a streak, supposedly the lightning. One very attractive person was a squaw in a rich green blanket and her face painted red. She was very attractive looking.

In front of the Indians, blankets were stretched and upon these blankets were skins of beaver, weazle [sic] and bear. Eagle wings, crows stuffed, pieces of reed and many feathers fancifully colored. Each article represented a song which was sung by the "bucks," while the squaws danced the characteristic dance of the Indians. One thing, among many, that

struck my notice particularly was, when I made signs for a drink of water, the cup was passed completely around the lodge until it reached me, whereas it could have been handed me but a few feet distance at the beginning. While the singing of the songs was going on, the "bucks" accompanied themselves with a drum i.e. a band about three inches wide and about fifteen inches diameter, and covered with raw-hide.

They were played with sticks, the end of which was wrapped with cloth. Every now and then an Indian would arise and carry his instrument to the fire (which was in the centre of the lodge) and heat the hide so the tone would be better. The scent of their tobacco is most fragrant, being made from the willows growing near the stream—dried and prepared for the pipe and called "Kenikanick." The pipe is filled and lighted by one buck whose entire business is to look after that pipe and see that it is cleaned and filled then passed to the singers, one after the other puffing three or four times then passing it on.

We (Walter & I) left the camp about half past eight and reached the Agency at a quarter to ten. The twilight is very long here. It reminds me of Berlin as it is not absolutely dark at ten o'clock. Riding to the Agency, the odor of the "Balsam Poplar" was very strong and a most delightful odor it is. After reaching the agency—a ten mile ride—we were both very tired and immediately went to bed.

Monday, June 22<sup>nd</sup>—1903

The morning was taken up by our trying to arrange for horses for our stay here. Heavy dark clouds hung over the mountains and about noon the rain began. However, Walter succeeded in getting a [bronco] for me from Blood Jim. I am to pay him seven dollars and a half for the [bronco], saddle & bridle until the 6th of July. Then Walter got a nag for himself from Johnie Ground. About five in the evening, we hired an Indian to drive our luggage out to Ditch Camp. We stopped at the Agency for supper and at seven started out to the camp (Ditch). Then I found out what an excellent little [bronco] I had. Three gaits: pace, single-foot and loop [lope], never walks but keeps up a slow pace continually when reined in. We had a delightful ride to the camp. The clouds had emptied themselves of rain and the wind was lifting them, slowly, from the mountains and just as the sun was setting, the mist was illuminated, in rich colors, the contrast being magnificent with the snow

covered peaks. We rode slowly that we might see the grand changes of coloring of this sunset. Now and then parties of three or four Indians would gallop by on their spotted ponies. It was all so novel to me and thrilled me. We had to ford Cut Bank River twice and the reflections of the sinking sun, just at twilight and after a heavy rain storm, made the waters fairly sparkle as they rippled along in their swift, dashing current. We reached camp at about ten at night. Some of the lodges were lighted up by their camp fire within, but the majority of them were dark, cone shaped heaps and silence within. The only white man in the camp was a civil engineer—Mr. Price—surveying for an irrigation ditch the Indians are building. He took us in his lodge with him for the night. After tethering our [broncos], we walked about the camp a bit then rolled up in our blankets for the night.

Tuesday, June 23<sup>rd</sup>—1903

In the morning I was awakened by a yell and hearing galloping hoofs coming nearer and nearer to the lodge. I was sure the horses were in a stampede (there are about 400 head here)—and that they would crash into our lodge. I didn't move, but watched the other two fellows and if they made the slightest motion I was ready to dart out of the tent first. Instead, Price called from his couch, "Well, that means work, boys." The night herder was bringing in the horses. A number of them had broken away from the main body, and he was galloping after them, yelling so as to turn them back.

By the time we sat down to breakfast, we saw the Indians starting off to the ditch to begin work. After breakfasting we straightened out our blankets etc. then about ten, saddled our [broncos] and rode over to where the Indians were at work. What a sight it was to see those dark faces, streaked with red and yellow paint, hair—jet black hair braided—two braids, one hanging from either side of the head—wearing for trousers yellow-dark, dingy yellow blankets cut in two, each trouser leg having a wide flap where the seam is made. Moccasins beaded, ear rings and bracelets and necklaces [sic] of beads. There were these Indians plowing and scooping with eight horses to drag the instruments. We ran up against George Starr—half-breed—who is fore-man. We rode about the different parts of the ditch with him. They have excavated about six or seven miles of it, so far. At twelve o'clock this George Starr rides to one of the highest swells of the prairie and waves his hat. Immediately you see the Indians drop their work, unharness, mount and gallop off to the camp for their lunch.

In the afternoon we got an old squaw to pitch our lodge for us. This is one of the many duties of a squaw and they can do it better than the men. Walter caught a couple of pictures of her while she was at work on it. Walter's lodge was made for him by some of the Indians and they painted different illustrations of their experiences on it. It created a general curiosity and admiration. After we had eaten our supper Walter took his

camera and was gone until quite late. During his absence I entertained about twenty Indians at intervals. I sat in our lodge, by the little lodge fire and after a couple of Indians would leave I'd chance to look up at the opening of the lodge, and there peering in, would be a couple of dusky faces, painted, looking in at me, the lodge fire being bright enough to show the colored faces. I would say "oki" ('come in,' and the only Indian word I've learned). In they would come and sit on the opposite side of the fire from me. The position they would take is as I've always seen them pictured. One leg they put under them, sitting upon the foot, while the other is in front of their body, bent close so that the knee reaches almost to the chin. Wrapped about them is their brilliant colored blanket, over head and all, so that the grimy face is all that can be seen. Some times they would bring a young boy with them to interpret for them (boys—most of them—speaking English), but they talked very little.

What would sort of startle me would be to suddenly see those faces at the lodge opening. One can't hear them approach on account of their moccasins.

*The photo on page 2 is by Walter McClintock.  
The remainder of the diary will be published  
in forthcoming issues of Signals.*

## New Members

Mr. & Mrs. William S. Kelly, Sewickley

## In Memoriam

Kathryn Laura Warren Kruse; Anna R. Roolf

## Donations

*In memory of Mrs. Glen Mulford Crain*

Minta Roberts Brown

*In memory of Elysabeth Cochran Barbour Higgins*

Margaret Pollard Rea Joyner; Mr. & Mrs. Harton S. Semple, Jr.; Betty G. Y. Shields; Mr. & Mrs. Frank Wasco

*In memory of Wilson Kipp*

Donna L. Kipp

*In memory of Phyllis Keister Semple*

Mr. & Mrs. Robert E. Batina; Minta Roberts Brown; Mr. & Mrs. James E. Cavalier; Mr. & Mrs. R. Britton Colbert;

Donna L. Kipp; Dr. & Mrs. Francis L. Lally; Mrs. Barbara F. Lowe;

Mr. & Mrs. James Soutar; Mr. & Mrs. Frank J. Wisen

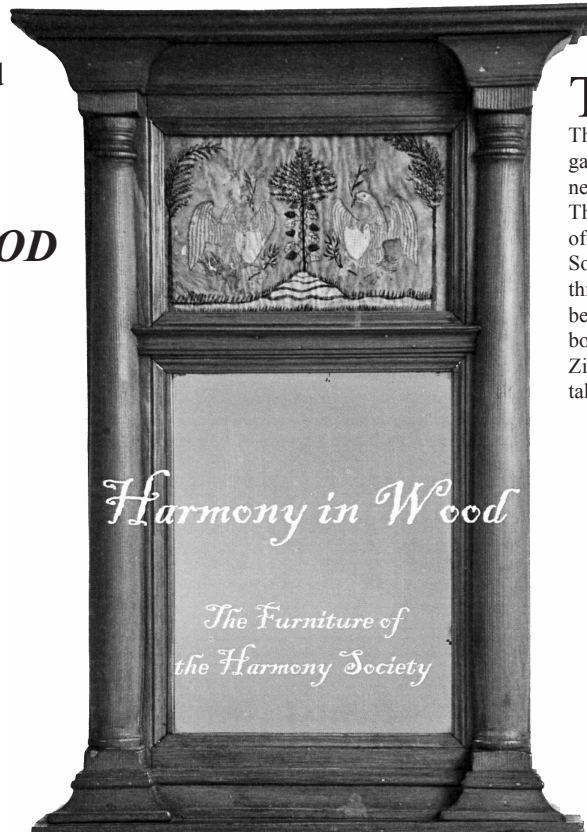
You are cordially invited  
to attend  
a private opening of

## ***HARMONY in WOOD***

an exhibition of  
Harmonist Furniture

Friday, May 1, 2009  
seven to nine o'clock  
—light refreshments—

Old Economy Village  
Visitor Center  
270 Sixteenth Street  
Ambridge, PA 15003



The Harmony Society made most of the furniture it needed within the community. The craftsmen built pieces using knowledge gained in Germany, but they also developed new ways to make furniture here in America. This exhibition explores the characteristics of different types of furniture made by the Society and discusses its significance within this communal group. The exhibit has been developed as a result of the upcoming book *Harmony in Wood*, written by Philip Zimmerman. Prepublication orders will be taken for the book.

Please reply before April 24, 2009

Old Economy Village  
270 Sixteenth Street  
Ambridge, PA 15003

or

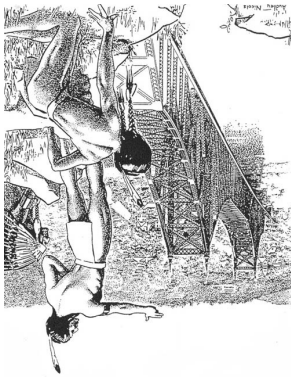
c-evoss@state.pa.us  
(write *Furniture* in subject line)



---

*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.

---



April 2009

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

Sewickley Valley Historical Society  
200 Broad Street  
Sewickley, PA 15143