

# Valley Historian



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Monessen Heritage Museum

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The Greater Monessen Historical Society

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*Monessen Founder Philander C. Knox with President  
William Howard Taft*

## Annual Founders Day Dinner

The annual Founders Day Dinner will be held on Saturday, October 19, 2019, at Jozwiak Hall, in the St. Vincent DePaul Society Building on Grand Boulevard. This year's theme will be the one hundredth anniversary of the two day visit of former president William Howard Taft to Monessen in 1919. He spoke to the

Board of Trade regarding the debate over the League of Nations. The meal will replicate the food served to the president at the Pittsburgh Steel Company. Call the Museum today to reserve your ticket. **724-684-8460.**

## Rebekah Schoonmaker Research



During the year of 2019, we remember the 155<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of Rebekah Cook Schoonmaker, wife of Colonel James M. Schoonmaker. The former Miss Rebie Cook, of Cincinnati, was a beauty, who won the heart of a widowed war hero. After their marriage, she became a leader of Pittsburgh society and volunteered her time and money for

many organizations and groups. Little was known of her charities and generosity. Through research, we have compiled a list of some of the groups to which she associated herself.

- \*Allegheny Century Club**
- \*Altar Society of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension**
- \*American Red Cross, Pittsburgh Branch, Women's Division**
- \*Armenian Relief Fund of the First United Presbyterian Community House, Northside**
- \*Bath Club**
- \*Bishop Bowman Alumnae Association**
- \*Christian Home for Girls**
- \*Christian Home for Working Girls**
- \*Community Fund**
- \*European Relief Council**
- \*Federation of Girl's School Societies**
- \*Garden Club of Allegheny County**
- \*Industrial Home for Crippled Children**
- \*Mask and Wig Club of Pitt University**
- \*National Horse Show Association of America**
- \*National Surgical Dressings Fund**
- \*Nurses Club of Pittsburgh**
- \*Pittsburgh Blind Association**
- \*Pittsburgh Field Ambulance for the Allies Committee**
- \*Pittsburgh Women's Section, Navy League of the United States**
- \*Pittsburgh's May Music Festival**
- \*Robert J. Caster Scholarship Fund**

- \*Ruth McMannis Bible Class**
- \*San Francisco Earthquake Relief Committee**
- \*Sewickley Horticultural Society**
- \*Sewickley Society**
- \*Small Parks Association**
- \*Spring Horse Show**
- \*St. Margaret's Hospital, Dispensary Board**
- \*Tuesday Musical Club**
- \*Twentieth Century Club**
- \*Unemployed Women Society**
- \*Visiting Nurses Aid Society of the East End**
- \*Welfare Fund and Emergency Association of the Chamber of Commerce**
- \*Western Pennsylvania Institute for the Blind**
- \*Women's Guild of St. Stephen's Episcopal Church, Sewickley**
- \*Women's Industrial Exchange**
- \*Women's Relief Corps Auxiliary to the Grand Army of the Republic**
- \*Yale-Princeton Glee and Mandolin Club**
- \*YMCA War Work Fund**

**Special Note: Rebekah Schoonmaker was also noted for growing flowers, especially dahlias, for which she won many prizes at flower shows.**

**She passed away on January 12, 1946 in Miami Beach, at her winter home, aged 82.**

## **Gretchen Schoonmaker research**



**Gretchen Vandervoort Schoonmaker was the daughter of Colonel James and Rebekah Schoonmaker. During 2019, we remember the 125<sup>th</sup> anniversary of her birth. She was known as Greta by her family and friends, and was a gifted sculptress. She also owned many fine race horses, which competed and won at various horse shows. Gretchen was known to volunteer for Pittsburgh area organizations. She passed away in 1990, at the age of 95, in Miami.**

**Our research indicates the following were some of the groups to which she gave her time, talent and money without seeking recognition.**

**\*Allegheny Country Club**

**\*Allegheny Country Club Horse Show**

**\*American Legion Ball**

**\*American Overseas Committee of Emergency Aid**

**\*Cincinnati Riding Club**

**\*Committee for Liberty**

**\*Drop-Stitch Club (knitting)**

**\*Emergency Aid of Pennsylvania Overseas Committee**

**\*Girls' Patriotic League**

**\*Home for Convalescent Women at Harmarville, PA**

**\*Industrial Home for Crippled Children**

**\*Junior Auxiliary of the Homeopathic Hospital (President)**

**\*Junior League of Pittsburgh**

**\*Juvenile Court Association**

**\*Liberty Loan Drive**

**\*Misses Masters' School Society**

**\*Navy League, Sewickley Branch**

**\*Pittsburgh and Allegheny Milk & Ice Association**

**\*Red Cross Preparedness Branch of Pittsburgh**

**\*Republican Women's Committee of Allegheny County**

**\*Sewickley Horse Show**

**\*Soldiers and Sailors Paris Clubhouse Benefit**

**\*Soldiers Overseas Tobacco Fund**

**\*Tuberculosis Hospital**

**\*Western Pennsylvania Emergency Aid Society**

**\*Women's Board of the Maternity Dispensary of Pittsburgh University**

**\*Women's Guild of the Episcopal Church of the Ascension.**

**\*Women's Industrial Exchange**

**\*Women's Motor Corps of the Red Cross**

**\*Young Women's Christian Association**



### **Monessen Synagogue Closes**

Temple Beth Am held its final service and disbanded, due to an aging and dwindling congregation. Membership dropped to below twenty families. Monessen Jews formed the Keneseth Israel Congregation in the early years of the twentieth century and built a synagogue on Schoonmaker Avenue. In 1952, ground was broken on Watkins Street for the present building. It was the last Jewish synagogue in the Mon Valley area. The building is currently for sale. The Historical Society will preserve the history of Monessen’s Jewish heritage. Anyone wishing to donate items or photos are asked to contact the Heritage Museum.

### **Cookbook Recipe**

#### **Summer Zucchini**

- 2 med. Zucchini, cut into ¼ in. slices**
- 1 tsp. salt**
- ¼ tsp. pepper**
- ¾ tsp. dried basil leaves**
- ¾ tsp. dried oregano**
- ½ tsp. garlic, minced**
- 6 slices bacon, cooked crisp & crumpled**
- 2 med. Tomatoes, cut into ½ in. slices**
- 1 lg. sweet onion, sliced thin**
- 1 c. (4 oz.) grated Swiss cheese**

Arrange zucchini in a 2 ½ quart casserole. Sprinkle with 1/3 of the salt, pepper, basil, oregano, and garlic. Add tomatoes and more of the seasonings. Top with onions and remaining seasonings. Cover and bake at 400 degrees for 30 minutes. Uncover and add cheese and bacon. Bake for 10 minutes longer until cheese is melted.

Recipe can be found in the “Monessen Memories Cookbook” available in the Museum Shoppe.

### **Memorial Contributions**

**In Memory of David Dyky by Lisa Murdock.**

**In Memory of David Dyky by Karen and Gene Fritz.**

**In Memory of Henry Glogosh by Dr. Martin and Madeline Dudas.**

**In Memory of Richard W. Kuhar by Dr. Martin and Madeline Dudas.**

### **Membership Renewal**

**Please make sure your GMHS membership is current! You are the reason why we are here! We depend on your generosity to sustain us and help us grow! Please be as generous as you can be. We need your donations to continue the Annex renovation work! Memberships cover the expenses of keeping the museum open and preserving local history. Gift memberships make great gifts!**

**Please Keep in Mind that We are Always In Search of:**

- \*Ledger books**
- \*Society minute books**
- \*Membership lists of organizations**
- \*Church bulletins**
- \*Funeral prayer cards**
- \*Advertising items for local businesses**
- \*Photos of ethnic celebrations**
- \*Photos of religious celebrations**
- \*Photos of old businesses**
- \*Photos of schools**
- \*Photos of industries**
- \*Event programs**
- \*Family genealogies**

## **Social Media**

**The Greater Monessen Historical Society has a Twitter account. Follow us at @MonessenHistory. We are also on Facebook and have over 3000 followers worldwide! We can be located on Facebook under “Greater Monessen Historical Society”. See our latest events, news and photos of previous events. Google us and find our webpage filled with all the necessary information to visit, donate, join or learn about us!**

## **Planned Estate Giving**

**Make a Plan. Make a Difference. Create a Legacy.**

**Making a gift of estate assets can be simple to do and will provide lasting support for the Greater Monessen Historical Society’s efforts to connect people to history. It will also ensure that the heritage and legacy left by our immigrant ancestors continues into the future.**

## **Volunteers wanted**

**Do you have talents to share? Do you have spare time? Do you want to give back to the community? Do you enjoy history? If so, please consider joining our group and volunteering at the Museum. Call for details.**

## **One Hundred Years ago in the newspapers May to July, 1919**

**The Star Theatre, on Sixth Street, caught fire on May 15, 1919. The blaze began in the third story under the roof. The fire caused \$5000 in damage, but W. A. McShaffrey, the owner, carried no insurance on the 46 x 100 ft. building. (05-16-1919) Daily Independent**

**The seventh annual contest between members of the Shakespearean and**

**Tennysonian Literary Societies will be in the High School auditorium on May 16, 1919. (05-16-1919) Daily Independent**

**The Wayman A. M. E. Church will celebrate their annual Educational Day on May 18, 1919 by featuring Professor Gilbert H. Jones, Ph.D., who is considered the best African American scholar of the day. He is the author of a Greek text book used in the Yale curriculum. (05-17-1919) Daily Independent**

**The Daily Independent has installed a Duplex Flat Bed Web Press, which will print six thousand papers per hour. It uses rolls of paper that are four miles long, instead of individual sheets, as in the old cylinder press. The press occupies a 12 x 16 ft. floor space and weighs 24,000 pounds. (05-21-1919) Daily Independent**

**Monessen High School will graduate thirty-eight students, the largest class ever. (05-27-1919) Daily Independent**

**Five hundred Greek and Italian residents of Monessen have left within the past two months to return to their native countries. It is believed they are carrying a half million dollars. (05-28-1919) Daily Independent**

**Dr. T. B. Herron purchased an X Ray machine with the Coolidge Tube for fluoroscopic and radiographic work. It is the only one of its kind in the city. (05-28-1919) Daily Independent**

**The well-known confectionery store of Miklarius and Berbatis, which is also known as the Palace of Sweets, was sold to James Lukis and John Morris. The firm was established in 1905. (05-31-1919) Daily Independent**

**Agnes Marshall, of Monessen, conducted an investigation and discovered her husband, Harold M. Corbine, had married Madeline Howard, of Chicago, in 1911, and herself, in 1912, when he called himself, Russell Gaut. After deserting Miss Marshall, he then married Miss Grace E. Harvel, of Pittsburgh. He was arrested and pled guilty. (06-11-1919) Daily Independent**

**The Board of Directors of the Pittsburgh Steel Company will erect one hundred new homes on the seven acres of the McMahan**

Homestead, as well as in Allenport. It is thought the McMahan homestead homes will be built of concrete. (06-11-1919) Daily Independent

A band of gypsies, headed by Maori, the Queen of Zealand, has been camping on the old carnival grounds near the Charleroi Monessen Bridge. She secured a license to place a tent on the vacant lot on Donner Avenue between Fourth and Fifth Streets to conduct a phrenologist's séance in her scant attire of colored garments. For a payment of a small sum, she would read the bumps on the head to tell the past, present and future. Two additional royal queens soon opened for business. The Police Chief ordered the royal court to move back to the bridge. (06-12-1919) Daily Independent

Two separate boy scout troops were organized for the children of employees of the Pittsburgh Steel Products Company. Z. C. Baudoux will be the scout master and be assisted by A. W. Blackburn and O. W. Sadler, Jr. (06-20-1919) Monessen News

Monessen's Welcome Home for the soldiers of the Great War and Fourth of July Celebration was held with intense heat and beautiful decorations, including a magnificent arch on Donner Avenue at Fifth Street. The foreign societies of the town constructed floats for a parade that moved along Donner to Oneida, then to Schoonmaker to Tenth, Tenth to Donner and to Electric Park for the speakers. It is estimated that twelve thousand people were in Electric Park or Page Park for the fireworks, with thousands others on the hills and the viaduct. (07-05-1919) Daily Independent

Henry and Minerva Turner, the pioneer African American residents of the city, have sold their home on McMahan Avenue and will return to Virginia after twenty years. (07-18-1919) Daily Independent

The newspaper reported that powdered milk will be found on the kitchen shelf. (07-22-1919) Monessen News

The Gibsonton Distillery will close down on August 1, 1919, due to prohibition. The distillery was built in 1856-1857. At one time as many as 100,000 barrels were stored in the warehouses. (07-26-1919) Daily Independent

### Spring and Early Summer Weddings, Divorces and Engagements of 1919

Zig Niga, of Monessen, and Miss Mary Frick, of Rostraver, received a marriage license in Greensburg, on May 2, 1919. (05-05-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Ruth Bromwich, of Monessen, and Melford Trew, of Fairhope, were wed on April 28, 1919 at Wellsburg, W.V. The bride is a cashier at A. R. Ney Department Store. (05-06-1919) Monessen News

John L. Sutton, of Monongahela, and Miss Bessie L. Ridge, of Roscoe, obtained a marriage license in Pittsburgh on May 7, 1919. (05-08-1919) Daily Independent

Jack Breining, the Superintendent of the Galvanizing Dept. of Pittsburgh Steel, wed Mrs. Louis Sampson, of Charleroi, in Philadelphia on May 3, 1919. They will reside in Charleroi. (05-09-1919) Monessen News

Miss Beatrice Gould, an Army nurse, married Charles Edward Gray on Easter Sunday. (05-10-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Marion Dainty, of Charleroi, and Edward McCleary, of Allenport, were married on May 1, 1919. The bride is a student nurse. (05-10-1919) Daily Independent

Richard Thebom, of Monessen, and Miss Hazel Murphy, of Charleroi, were married in Wellsburg, WV, at the Catholic Church on May 9, 1919. (05-14-1919) Daily Independent

Keenan/Griffith wedding (05-15-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Catherine Keenan, of Monongahela, married Liet. H. Miltop Griffith on May 14, 1919. The groom owns Griffith Flower Shop in Monessen. They will live in Monongahela. (05-16-1919) Monessen News

Mrs. Bella Taylor, of North Belle Vernon, filed for divorce from Edward Taylor, who she married on January 13, 1908. She cites cruel and barbarous treatment. (05-15-1919) Daily Independent

Mrs. Mary Slavick, of Monessen, filed for divorce from Mike Slavick, who she married on June 29, 1918. She cites cruel and barbarous treatment. (05-16-1919) Monessen News

Mrs. Jessie Insley, of Monessen, filed for divorce from James H. Insley, who she married on September 8, 1912. She cites adulterous practices with Bertha Brown and diverse others. (05-16-1919) Monessen News

Charles B. Hobson, of Monessen, filed for divorce from Mrs. Grace Hobson, who he married on August 5, 1915. He says she violated her marriage vows and gave herself up to adulterous practices with Cleveland Simmons and others. (05-16-1919) Monessen News

Jessie Casson Insley has separated from James Insley. (05-17-1919) Daily Independent

Rev. Paul Albert Weidley and Miss Olive Gertrude Reighard were married. (05-19-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Theresa Roscoe, of Monessen, wed William Groman, of Cleveland, Ohio, on May 18, 1919 at the Greek Catholic Church. (05-20-1919) Monessen News

Cyril Quinlan, of Rostraver Street, and Miss Sara Monaghan, of Oliphant Furnace, will soon marry. (05-20-1919) Monessen News

Frank Percich, of Schoonmaker Avenue, and Miss Gertrude Brown, of Charleroi, will soon marry. (05-20-1919) Monessen News

Miss Hilja Palomaki, of Rostraver Twp., married Charles Tasanen, of Monessen, on May 18, 1919. (05-20-1919) Monessen News

A marriage license was granted in Greensburg to Edward Cigleer and Miss Anna Yurenek, both of Monessen. (05-23-1919) Monessen News

Monaghan/Quinlan wedding. (05-27-1919) Monessen News

Alfred Cooley and Miss Janet Currie eloped to Wellsburg, W.V. on May 24, 1919. The groom works for the P&LE. The bride was a clerk in the August Mahieu Store on Schoonmaker Avenue. (05-27-1919) Monessen News

Percich/Brown wedding. (05-29-1919) Monessen News

Mrs. Catherine C. Taylor, of Monessen, filed for divorce in Greensburg, from Alex H. Taylor on grounds of infidelity. They were married on January 28, 1905. She cites adulterous practices with various women. (05-29-1919) Monessen News

Miss Irene Bulger married Arthur Willetts, of Erie on May 27, 1919. (06-03-1919) Monessen News

Homer Frazier, former MHS star, married Miss Margaret Jeffires, of Pittsburgh, on May 31, 1919. The groom is employed by the Motz Lumber Yard. The bride worked for the Pittsburgh Steel Company. (06-04-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Mary Reardon, of Charleroi, and Jesse J. B. Wall, of Monessen, wed on June 2, 1919. (06-05-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Tena Estenfelder, of Charleroi, and H. Homer Dunn, of Latrobe, married in Latrobe on June 5, 1919. (06-10-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Marie Traynor, of Monessen, and Clyde Hall, of Belle Vernon, wed on May 31, 1919, in Youngstown, Ohio in secret. (06-12-1919) Daily Independent

Lena Deanes, of Webster, filed for divorce from Daniel Deanes, of Monessen, citing desertion. (06-10-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Estell Christine Rutt Kamp, of Pittsburgh, will wed Rev. D. Vincent Gray, on June 17, 1919. (06-12-1919) Daily Independent

James Conias and Miss Marie Billos, both of Monessen, received a marriage license in Greensburg. (06-12-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Mary Elizabeth Dunlap, of Grapeville, filed for divorce from Orie O. Dunlap, of Pleasant Unity. They married on December 27, 1904. She cites cruel and barbarous treatment. (06-13-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Kathryn Guillar, of Belle Vernon, and Elisa Marshall, of Elizabeth, received a marriage license in Pittsburgh on June 11, 1919. (06-13-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Verna Campbell married Richard Pender on June 16, 1919. (06-17-1919) Monessen News

John Moller and Miss Anna Blasick both of Charleroi, married on June 18, 1919. The groom is employed by Pittsburgh Steel. (06-18-1919) Daily Independent

Roy A. Dixon, of West Newton, and Miss Sarah B. Naylor, of Webster, received a marriage license in Pittsburgh, on June 17, 1919. (06-18-1919) Daily Independent

Arthur Williams, of Belle Vernon, and Miss Nina E. Bulger, of Elizabeth, were granted a

marriage license in Greensburg. (06-19-1919)  
Daily Independent

Miss Alice Hayden, of Webster, and Charles Navin will marry in St. Charles Church in Donora on June 24, 1919. (06-23-1919) Daily Independent.

Miss Freda L. Nedrow, Delaware Avenue, and Charles Williams of Knox Avenue, wed on June 22, 1919. The bride was a clerk at Kirk's Drug Store. (06-24-1919) Monessen News

Jesse Pierce and Miss Susanna Elgin, both of Monessen, received a marriage license in Pittsburgh on June 23, 1919. (06-24-1919) Daily Independent

James Taylor married Miss Olive Barber, of Roscoe, on June 24, 1919, at the Fort Pitt Hotel. (06-27-1919) Monessen News

Miss Valeri Bissiere wed William Hanam at St. Leonard's on June 25, 1919. The bride was employed at Goldberg Shoe Store. The groom works for the Tin Mill. (06-27-1919) Monessen News

Demerious Poyomkia filed for divorce from Mary Poyomkia, who he married on September 18, 1913. He charges his wife took \$575 and deserted him. (06-27-1919) Monessen News

George Freeman, of Monessen, filed for divorce from Estelle Freeman, who he married on October 3, 1910 in Pittsburgh. He cites desertion. (06-27-1919) Monessen News

Emma Ward, of Monessen, filed for divorce from Newton Ward, who she wed on September 27, 1893 in Campbell, VA. She cites cruel and brutal treatment by beating her, abusing her, rendering her condition intolerable and her life burdensome. (06-27-1919) Monessen News

Donald Goslyne, the Pittsburgh Steel Chemist, wed Miss Josephine Taylor, of Belle Vernon, on June 24, 1919. They will reside in Belle Vernon. (06-27-1919) Monessen News

Miss Anna E. Hendershot, of Charleroi, and John H. Harman, of Turtle Creek, wed on June 26, 1919. The bride was a teacher in the Fallowfield Twp. Schools. They will reside in Turtle Creek. (06-28-1919)

Miss Mabel Shoaf, of West Newton, and Kenneth Sittman, of Clairton, married on June 28, 1919. They will live in Clairton. (06-30-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Ebba Anderson, of 1030 Schoonmaker Avenue, married M. J. Layman on June 26, 1919 in Washington, PA. (07-01-1919) Monessen News

Miss Lillian Johnson, of Knox Avenue, got married on June 25, 1919. (07-01-1919) Monessen News

Miss Kathryn Elizabeth Guiler, of Belle Vernon, will marry Ellis Thurston Marshall on July 25, 1919. (07-01-1919) Monessen News

George A. Anderson, of 34 McKee Avenue, wed Miss Margaret Glaister, on July 2, 1919 in Pittsburgh. They will live on McKee Avenue. (07-08-1919) Monessen News

Captain Charles L. McLain, of Indiana, married Mlle. Bertha Hardy-Thee, age 23, of Paris. France. (07-09-1919) Daily Independent

George Buyonvich, of Export, and Miss Eva Lapicky, of Monessen, received a marriage license on July 7, 1919 in Greensburg. (07-10-1919) Daily Independent

Mrs. Elma M. (Schooley) Zufall, of Monessen, filed for divorce from Henry J. Zufall. They were married on April 12, 1911. She cites desertion. (07-10-1919) Daily Independent

George F. Lear, of 35 Reed Avenue, married Miss Mable Fay Wagoner, of Monongahela, on July 9, 1919. The groom is employed by Pittsburgh Steel. (07-11-1919) Monessen News

Mrs. Maude B. Madden, of 626 Reed Avenue, married Clyde Miller, of Belle Vernon, in Greensburg, on July 14, 1919. (07-15-1919) Daily Independent

George John and Miss Josephine Horner, both of Monessen, received a marriage license in Pittsburgh, on July 16, 1919. (07-17-1919) Daily Independent

John Lengrel and Miss Julia Kavic, both of Monessen, received a marriage license in Greensburg on July 19, 1919. (07-22-1919) Daily Independent

John Tchoryk and Miss Teresy Paramiah, both of Charleroi, will marry on July 23, 1919. (07-22-1919) Daily Independent

George R. Warman, manager of Warman Grocery Store, at Sixth and Reed, and Miss Ella R. Ammon, of Webster, received a marriage license in Pittsburgh on July 21, 1919. (07-23-1919) Daily Independent



**Hugh A. Smyth, of 169 Schoonmaker Avenue, wed Miss Alice M. Murphy, of Belle Vernon, on July 22, 1919 at St, Leonard's Roman Catholic Church. They will reside in the Craig Flats. (07-25-1919) Monessen News.**

**Miss Elsie, Mitchell, formerly a Monessen school teacher, will marry Joseph Clonan, of Monessen, on July 29, 1919. The groom is a clerk in the G. A. Homann Shoe Store. (07-29-1919) Monessen News**

**Miss Kathryn Reagan, of Uniontown is engaged to Walter J. Tormay, of Monessen. They will marry in August. (07-31-1919) Daily Independent**

### **Spring and early Summer Births of 1919**

**Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin Dregalla, of First Street Hill, had a nine pound baby boy on May 2, 1919. (05-05-1919) Daily Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. Nelson Crow, of McKee Avenue, had a baby boy on May 6, 1919. (05-06-1919) Daily Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. Charles Brown, of McKee Avenue, had a ten and a half pound baby girl. (05-16-1919) Daily Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. Hugh McGee, of Delaware Avenue, had a baby girl. (05-16-1919) Monessen News**

**Mr. and Mrs. Weiland Michaels had a baby girl on May 10, 1919, at their Schoonmaker Avenue home. (05-16-1919) Monessen News**

**Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Sanson had a son. (05-27-1919) Monessen News**

**Mr. and Mrs. Matthew Vetrso, had a ten pound baby boy at their 1008 Morgan Avenue home on June 9, 1919. (06-09-1919) Daily Independent**

**Lieutenant H. Leigh Lewis and wife had an eight pound baby boy on June 12, 1919. (06-14-1919) Daily Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. Alex McGowan, of Second Street, had a baby girl on June 14, 1919. (06-17-1919) Monessen News**

**Mr. and Mrs. Albert Reynolds, of Schoonmaker Avenue, had a baby girl. (07-01-1919) Monessen News**

**Mr. and Mrs. Peter Mockko, of Herminie, adopted Charlie Morgan, the child of Samuel**

**and Eva Morgan, of Webster, PA. The child is one year and six months old. (07-09-1919) Daily Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. Herman Hofmann, of the Brunswick Apartments, had an eight pound baby on July 10, 1919. (07-10-1919) Daily Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. George McGill, 420 Donner Avenue, had a baby girl on July 9, 1919. (07-11-1919) Daily Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. Steve Monack, of 173 Schoonmaker Avenue, had a baby boy on July 13, 1919. (07-14-1919) Daily Independent**

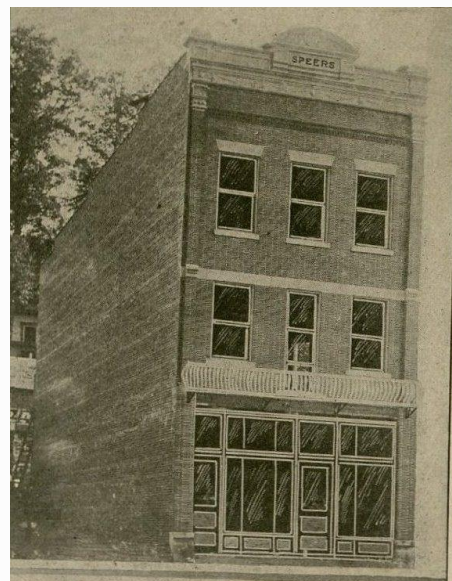
**Mr. and Mrs. George B. Crum had a baby girl on July 19, 1919. (07-23-1919) Daily Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. James D'Ricco, of 39 Schoonmaker Avenue, had a nine pound baby boy. (07-24-1919) Daily Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. Peter Vivian, of Chestnut Street, had a baby girl on July 27, 1919. (07-29-1919) Daily Independent**

## **Dan's Archives**

### **A Look Back**



**Speers Building Demolished**

**As Monessen is forced to demolish historic buildings in their business district that are slowly collapsing, we continue to look at the stories behind the structures, although in some cases, records are lacking or missing. In October of 2017, the one hundred and**

fifteen year old Speers Building, at 550 Donner Avenue, suffered a roof and structural collapse, following heavy rain storms. During the spring of 2019, the city began emergency demolition of the historic structure that was located next to the former Citizen's National Bank.

The building was opened for business in November of 1902, with the Miller Carpet and Wall Paper Company as the first tenant, boasting 32,000 rolls of wall paper in stock. By March of 1904, the business was gone, and E. A. Daniels Drug Company was opening their store for business. Again, in two years, in mid-1906, it had become Thatcher's Drug Store.

In 1913, Druggist Guy R. Eddy, was celebrating the opening of his Rubber Goods Dept. at 550 Donner Avenue with free candy for the ladies, free cigars for the men and free rubber balloons for the children. Eddy also served Reick's Ice Cream at his soda fountain and stressed its purity, and quality, along with his up to date service.

In 1920, Eddy was advertising, through his drug store, opportunities to purchase a share in three wells for \$100 near Olympia Park, through the "Good Faith Oil and Gas Company". By 1921, he was having a "Drug Store Cash Removal Sale" with rubber goods selling at 33 1/3 percent off. He was moving his business to the First National Bank Building opposite the P&LE depot.

In September of 1922, the Boston Store was opening in the location as Monessen's new bargain citadel. Ladies flannelette gowns were selling for sixty-five cents each. The Boston Store sold their lease in January of 1925 and began a Quitting Business Sale. The ad said rather than transport the merchandise to Donora, they will have unheard of prices offered.

In March of 1925, Hirsch's, the only exclusive women's and children's shoe store in western Pennsylvania opened. They advertised short, vamp, French toe pumps. However, by May of 1926, Hirsch's vacated the building, and William Sklov purchases the stock of Moss Brothers Company at 461 Donner and moved it into 550 Donner for a receiver's sale. Items advertised included watches, jewelry, silverware, cut glass, ivory ware, cutlery, fire arms, leather goods, sporting goods and musical instruments. Following the sale, the Vogue Jewelry Store opened, but by March of 1927, the business was having a sheriff's sale.

In October of 1927, the Salvation Army opened a fund drive using 550 Donner

Avenue as the headquarters for the drive. Their goal was to collect \$3,500 for the needy of Monessen, Charleroi, Donora and Monongahela.

D. Sober opened the Newark Shoe Store Company in March of 1928. They advertised \$4 shoes and a free pair of hosiery for the grand opening. A year later, in March of 1929, it had become the Shoe Factory Outlet Store.

In April of 1930, the G & G Clothes Shop opened selling "a new standard of clothes" showcasing smartness, finer quality and greater value. They had a complete line of men's hats, shirts, ties, underwear and hosiery. However, by September, they were closing and Labow's Store was moving there from Fourth and Donner. The building was listed at this time as owned by Dr. Day.

Labow's operated at 550 Donner Avenue until 1941, after which Agnes's Shoppe, the Milady Store, opened. They stayed until 1963, when they moved down the block.

In early 1964, the executive offices of the Park Holding Company, owned by Mayor Hugo Parente and his associates, renovated the building for their use. At this time, it was listed as being owned by the estate of Henry and Rose Cramer. In 1968, the Civic Finance Service, Inc. purchased the firm and began giving loans. In 1972, in the upstairs rooms, F. Pillitteri, M.S. W. announced the opening of an office to provide psychotherapy and marital counseling.

Later, Lucas Floral would move into the building, before it was left empty for many years.

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