

W. H. Donner

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Greater Pittsburgh Day Sesqui-Centennial Committee

VALLEY HISTORIAN

Greater Monessen Historical Society
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A Salute to our Veterans

The autumn exhibit of 2009 has opened at the Heritage Museum and will run through December. It is a tribute to the veterans of the Greater Monessen area. The Museum is filled with photographs, uniforms and military memorabilia covering the War of the Rebellion (Civil War) through the Iraq Conflict. All service branches are represented. The Exhibit is in conjunction with the Veterans Day parade, which Monessen is hosting for the first time in twenty years. Also planned are "Saturday Coffee and Conversations with a Vet", in which veterans will be available to relate their wartime experiences and answer questions over coffee and donuts.

Watch the mail

We will shortly be sending each of you the annual fund appeal and the yearly membership renewal. We know the economy has not been the best, but the fund campaign helps offset the operating expenses of the Museum. Utilities have to be paid and supplies purchased as well as the expenses of the various exhibits and programs. Please be as generous as possible. The yearly membership runs from January through December. We currently have 250 members. To continue receiving the newsletter, please be prompt in renewing your membership. Membership is \$15 for an individual and \$20 for a family per

calendar year (January through December.). We are a volunteer organization and all funds go toward preserving the history of the Greater Monessen area and maintaining the Heritage Museum. We thank you for your continued support!

Time to Hibernate

Just like the groundhogs, we are getting ready to hibernate for the winter. The Heritage Museum will be closed for January and February, but instead of sleeping, we will be working behind the scenes. There is much to catalog. **We could use some help.** ☺ There is sorting and organizing to do. We also have to plan the next spring ethnic exhibit. What nationality should we honor next? If you have some historic memorabilia or family photos or genealogies to donate, please call, and we will make arrangements for you to drop it off. You may even catch us at the Museum on certain days. We will just not have regular open hours, as during the rest of the year.

Cooperative weekend Postponed

Speaking of spring, the “History Along the Monongahela” cooperative weekend sponsored by the Brownsville Area Revitalization Corporation, Donora Smog Commemorative Committee, Greater Rostraver Chamber of Commerce, Mon Valley Regional Chamber of Commerce, Monongahela Historical Society and the Greater Monessen Historical Society has been postponed until warmer weather returns. Candis Kelley will keep us posted on this worthwhile group effort.

Volunteers wanted

We wish to thank everyone, who volunteered to help at the historical society in the past year. We could still use some help. We need people with some computer knowledge, bakers, cooks, hosts and hostesses, exhibit designers, a manager and others with special talents and skills. Give us a call at 724-684-8460. Even if you are available only a few hours a month, a week or a day, you are needed. We are a volunteer organization that depends on people interested in preserving and saving local history. There is much to do. We need idea people too! The Greater Monessen Historical Society is everyone working together to get the job done.

School photos still needed

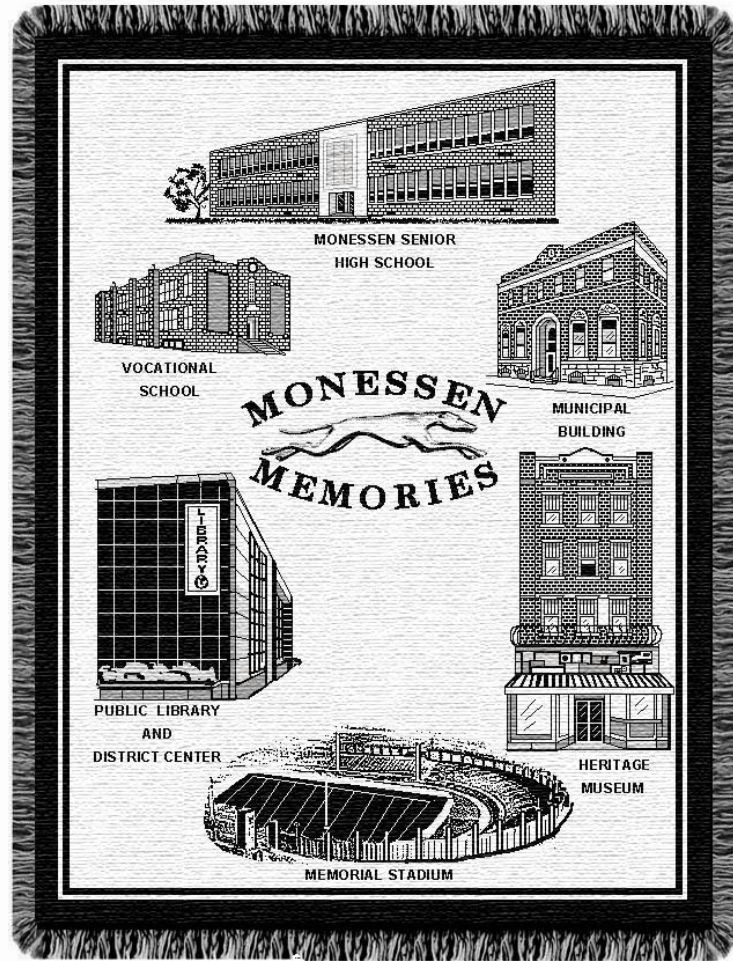
We are still looking for school building and school activity photos. Please check your scrapbooks, photo albums, cedar chests, attics, and cellars. We wish to borrow the photos and make a copy for our exhibits. Someone must have class photos or playground photos. .

We Appreciate Your Support!! ☺

During the last few weeks, the Historical Society sponsored two fundraising events at the Heritage Museum. We had representatives from Celebrating Home and Tastefully Simple visit and demonstrate their products. Thank you to all who attended. We hope you enjoy your purchases.

Monessen Memories Coverlet

Several years ago, we sold a woven coverlet featuring historic places that were just memories from Monessen. The project was so successful, we have created a new coverlet with new scenes. What a special Christmas gift! For this new coverlet, we chose the former Senior High School at Sixth and Reed, the old Vocational School on Rostraver (built by the WPA), the Municipal Building, our Public Library and District Center, the Memorial Stadium (built by the WPA) and the Heritage Museum. The coverlet is in shades of cream and black and is of good quality. They are priced at \$50 and are available for Christmas delivery, if ordered by December 1, 2009. What a wonderful Christmas gift for anyone with Monessen ties! Order today!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



We remind everyone that admission to the Heritage Museum is free. ☺

Cultural Heritage Days a success

Thank you to everyone who stopped by the Historical Society booth and purchased ethnic cookbooks, magnets, etc. We also are so happy to those who helped identify the large photographs from the Louis Studio and the people in the Hugo Parente albums. Everyone remarked how much fun it was to figure out the identity of the unknown people. We will do it again with another group of mystery photos.



Where will you shop for the Holidays?

As you think about your holiday shopping list, please remember to **shop Monessen**. The Heritage Museum Shoppe has unique ethnic cookbooks for those hard to choose for people on your list. We have a wide selection including Slovak, Ukrainian, Carpathian, Polish, Greek, and Italian. There are magnets, pens, postcards and travel mugs for stocking stuffers. We have tote bags, MHS yearbooks and books dealing with local history and by local authors. The Heritage Museum front window will once again be a look at Christmas from days past and be a creation of our volunteer, Shirley Beneccio. Thanks for volunteering to do this for us!

We want that Photograph!

Are they in albums inside a drawer? In boxes in the closet? Attic? Cellar? Each of us has family photographs that tell the story of bygone days. They may also tell the story of the Mon Valley area. Family photographs of neighborhoods, events, weddings, businesses, holidays, etc. exist. **We want them!** Our rich ethnic history was preserved through photographs that are hidden away. May we borrow them to scan? As you come across these gems that show Grandpa with his new Model T, please consider loaning them to the Historical Society. Our mission is to preserve the ethnicity and local history of the Greater Monessen area. You can help by letting us copy your family photos. We're waiting for your call! ☺

Do you have any suggestions or new ideas?

The Historical Society is always glad to have suggestions or new ideas. Do you have program ideas you would like to see or suggestions for events or fundraising activities? We are very receptive to what our partners think. Email your thoughts to: monessen@verizon.net

Recent Donations to the Heritage Museum

Thirty-nine photographs from Louis Studio: Al Colaizzi

Monessen 100 year birthday cake photo, centennial T-shirt, Monessen Jr. Sr. High photo, Monessen Raven Christmas photo 1995, Michael Moore parade album, Monessen Democratic Committee 11th Annual Banquet booklet, Monessen centennial stamper from Post Office: Ted Harhai

Memories of Marian Williams: Jean Witt

Finnish Hall photos, centennial caps, Map of Monessen 1900, drawing of War Memorial, Roll of Honor, Copy of check for police equipment: Ted Harhai

Altitude pressure gauge for a furnace from Monessen Plumbing and Electric: Joe Milosevich

Copy of program for Monessen High School stadium dedication, October 8, 1937: Ted Harhai

15th Air Force Reunion 1989 booklet: Mike Mazur

MHS photos of Class of 1922: Arlene Smith Weitz

Monongahela Valley Hospital Dedication Booklet: Anne Makinen

1937 Pittsburgh Steel Calendar: John Billy

1962 Aerial view of Monessen photo: City of Monessen

Photo of John Kennedy, Photo of Woodrow Wilson, Seneca Blvd Project report, Seneca Blvd photo album, Third Street houses photo album, 1979 Mayor's court book, Asst. newspaper clippings 1990-1995, Visitor's register 1980's, 1964 Code of Ordinances, 1901 Cancelled coupon bond series, Westgate urban renewal survey, 1991 Fair Housing Analysis, MHS cafeteria saucer

Binder of 1941-1942 Greyhound Gazette: Dorothy Jozwiak

Monessen Reds Football Team photo 1935: Marilyn Pivarnik

MHS yearbook 1924 & 1912, 1913 photos of Blast Furnace: Vito Beneccio

Station of the Cross from old St. Hyacinth Church: Ray Watras

MHS yearbooks, 1943, 1948, 1949, 1950 & 1953: Anonymous

Photos of B.V. Main Street, unknown A&P store photo, MSW #24 & #10 photo: Gary Strellick

Asst. Page Steel & Wire Division Fence products: Joseph Righetti

WWII photos of William and Lena Greco & William and Louis Greco, newspaper article on William Greco and John Columbus: Kathleen Kelemen

James W. Riddell booklet, "My Part in World War II", dog tags, medals, Arm patches, forty-eight star flag, scout scarves, 1969 Valley independent newspapers (2), Cunard White Star Line suitcase: Basil Luciani

Photo of 12th St. R.R. Crossing, Maronda Homes Building photo, Photo of NAACP Banquet: Ted Harhai

W.W.I picture of signing the armistice, picture of Herbert Allison, picture of Laurence Lescanac, VFW Diamond Jubilee Award, VFW Post 1190 photo album, Life Membership certificate of Allison-Lescanac Post 1190, Mortgage burning photo of 1983, Achievement award photo 1963 Marble champs, Donora Veterans Day parade 1981 photo, Monessen City Park Tank photo, 1974 Memorial Day photos, 1969 photo of U.S. Naval Training Center, Post 1190 photo of men, 1950 Monessen Veterans Day Parade photo, photos of Post 1190 funerals and parades: VFW Post 1190

U.S. Marine Flag of Mon Valley Devil Dogs, U.S. Marine uniform WWII: Mike Yusko

Newsletter from VFW magazine (10): Mike Mazur

Photo of Benjamin Franklin School: Virginia Mariozzi

Monessen Rail Mill Sign: Alumisource, LLC.

Monessen Greyhounds Terrible Towel: Sylvia Spadafore

MHS Girls Greyhound Jacket, MHS yearbooks (1969, 1971, 1976, 1977): Lynn Leone

Collier's Photographic History of WWI, Disabled American Veterans Plaque: Gene Veschio

A memorial contribution of one hundred dollars was given in memory of Eleanor Musial by Elayne Busovicki.

Visit the Veterans Exhibit

Please take time to visit the Heritage Museum and view the tribute to the men and women, who fought for the Nation. Admission is free as always!

Film wanted

We are searching for film of the burning of the old Monessen High School in 1946 or the visit of President John Kennedy.



Annual Architectural Design Challenge

About 135 middle and high school students from 17 Westmoreland County schools are participating in the 14th Annual Architectural Design Challenge, sponsored by the Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation (PHLF) and offered in 2009-10 in cooperation with the Greater Monessen Historical Society (GMHS).

During orientation sessions in Monessen on October 29 and October 30, students toured the main street area of Monessen, photographed and documented their building site, discussed the needs of the community, and learned about the design process. Vito Beneccio, Dr. Martin Dudas, Madeline Dudas, Candis Kelley, Susanna Swade, Julie Thieser, and Gary Strellick from the GMHS, along with Louise Sturgess and Karen Cahall of PHLF, served as tour leaders. We thank Pastor John Custer for allowing us to hold the orientation sessions on both days in Orchard Christian Fellowship Church.

Over the next several months, students will work in teams to (1) create a model showing their vision for the vacant Monessen Savings & Trust Building (500 Donner Avenue) and the vacant lot beside it; and (2) create a main street facade drawing of the south side of the 500 block of Donner Avenue incorporating their design recommendations (for signage, lighting, facade restoration, in-fill construction, etc.). Middle school students will present their models and drawings on Monday, February 22, 2010, and high school students will present on Tuesday, February 23. Professional architects, Monessen citizens, and members of the GMHS will be invited to listen to and comment on the student projects.