

Valley Historian



Published by the Greater Monessen Historical Society
(Recipient of the Arthur St. Clair Award)
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Vol.19 Issue 1 Winter, 2019 (February)



James Patrick "Pat" Herron (1894 – December 20, 1967) was an American football player and coach

Spring Exhibit Monessen Professional Sports

The Spring annual exhibit at the Monessen Heritage Museum will focus on Monessen's long-time sports tradition. It will feature Monessen professional athletes and those who are part of the Mon Valley Sports Hall of Fame. In addition, the early years of Monessen and its sports heritage from 1898-1940 will be covered. Anyone having photos or

memorabilia to loan or donate, please contact the museum at 724-684-8460.

GMHS Annual Public Meeting Scheduled

The yearly Public Meeting of the Greater Monessen Historical Society will be held on Sunday, March 24, 2019, at 1 PM. Please join us as we discuss the society, our upcoming events and goals for the future. Light refreshments will be served.



**2019: the Year of Schoonmaker
Anniversaries**

During the year of 2019, we remember the 175th anniversary of the birth of Rebekah Cook Schoonmaker, wife of Colonel James M. Schoonmaker. We also will celebrate the 125th anniversary of Gretchen Schoonmaker's birth. She was the daughter of Colonel James and Rebekah Schoonmaker. Lastly, we recall the 155th anniversary of the famous cavalry charge at Winchester, for which the Colonel received his Medal of Honor. Stay tuned for further details.

**Greater Monessen Historical
Society
Annual 2018 Financial Report**

2018 Budget At A Glance

OVERALL SUMMARY

All Income

**\$34,846 -- 2018
\$49,324 -- 2017
\$48,794 -- 2016**

All Expenses

**\$28,542 -- 2018
\$22,840 -- 2017
\$39,427 -- 2016**

General Funds Details

Income

**Day of Giving Donations &
Matching -- \$2,760.00
Donations/Fundraising --
\$12,090.00**

**Building Fund Donations --
\$4,264.00**

**Annual Dinner & Founders Day -
- \$4,392.00**

**Membership Dues &
Sponsorships -- \$9,486.00**

Memorials -- \$600.00

**Museum Shoppe & Misc.
Donations -- \$1,254.00**

2018 Expenses

Variable Expenses -- \$10,296.00

This categories includes:

- Advertising,
- Office supplies & postage,
- Items for Exhibits
- General maintenance & repairs

**Monthly Operating Expenses --
\$18,246.00**

This categories includes:

- Utilities,
- Insurances & Security System,
- Pest control,
- No interest City Loan Payments

Total Expenses -- \$28,542.00

**In-Kind Donations -- We
appreciate our Volunteers!!**

Goods & Services -- \$3,405.00

**In Kind Hours -- 4,220 person
hours, or 2.02 volunteers**

**THANK YOU again for your
continued support of the
Greater Monessen Historical
Society and Monessen Heritage
Museum!**

**Mary Lou Simkins, Board
Member and Treasurer**

Annual Founders Day Dinner

Mark your calendars! The annual GMHS Founders Day Dinner will be on Saturday, October 19, 2019. Details to follow.

Gone but not Forgotten

The Museum lost a faithful volunteer, Maggie Franceschi, who was always ready to lend a hand in the kitchen. We extend our sympathy to her family and friends. May she rest in peace.

Memorial Contributions

In Memory of Don Hamilton by Dr. Martin and Madeline Dudas.

In Memory of Maggie Franceschi by Dr. Martin and Madeline Dudas.

In Memory of Maggie Franceschi by Virginia M. Fisfis.

In Memory of Eugene J. Lancas by his wife, Paula Shuma Lancas.

In Memory of Ferne Shire by Dr. Martin and Madeline Dudas.

In Memory of Barto Ferrero 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!

Before Doing Spring Cleaning, Please Keep in Mind that We are 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 February to April, 1919

One of the largest and best equipped meat markets in the valley will open at 546 Donner Avenue by Donahoe & Company on February 13, 1919. (02-04-1919) Monessen News

A meeting of the Soldiers Memorial Committee was held at the Trust Company Building, where a check for \$73.11 was presented from the proceeds of the sacred patriotic concert given by the Ukrainian Musical Society. (02-07-1919) Monessen News

The Kriterion Klub is a new organization that has been formed to bring together business men as well as the older and younger men of the town who are of reputable character and good standing. They will use the floor of the Famous Clothing Company on Donner Avenue, which has eight rooms. (02-12-1919) Daily Independent

The Monessen Athletic Association has been formed at a meeting in the Fifth Avenue Hotel. They plan on hosting boxing bouts and athletic exercises in the Opera House. (02-14-1919) Daily Independent

The Young People's Society of the First Baptist Church sent greetings to Prime Minister Lloyd George of Great Britain on the conclusion of the Great War. A reply was received from his office saying the Prime Minister acknowledges receiving the letter and extend a thank you to the society. (02-22-1919) Daily Independent



Monessen's brand new post office at Seventh Street will be opened for public view on February 15, 1919. (02-14-1919) Monessen News

George Nash will be the new Boy Scout master of Troop No.1 with Melford Anderson and George Barry as his assistants. The Monessen troop is the first troop in the United States to have a complete scout band. (02-21-1919) Monessen News

The Jewish congregation has a new rabbi, D. S. Meyers, formerly of Butler. He and his family will live in one of the new bungalows recently built by Morris Rozner on East Schoonmaker. (02-27-1919) Daily Independent

J. W. Afthan, of the Hill Top Garage, has obtained the room formerly occupied by the Bijou Theatre on Donner Avenue. He will continue to operate the garage and repair shop on Sixth Street Hill, but use the downtown space for display and storage. He will soon receive new Chalmer and Maxwell cars. (02-27-1919) Daily Independent

Wah Sing, the laundryman, will move his business April 1, 1919, from the basement of the Daily Independent building to 696 Schoonmaker Avenue. (02-27-1919) Daily Independent

St, Paul's English Lutheran Church raised \$3,700 at a Rally Day to pay off the balance of their mortgage. (03-18-1919) Daily Independent

The Monessen Light Infantry, under Captain J. E. Newcomer, of Reed Avenue, will disband after training 360 young men in military service over the past two years. In appreciation, Capt. Newcomer was presented with a traveling bag and morocco bound volume of the Holy Bible. (03-21-1919) Daily Independent

The Page Steel and Wire Company adopted the eight hour day. (03-26-1919) Daily Independent

The bakery of Frank Stefanski, at the corner of Rostraver and Knox, caught fire on March 27, 1919. The fire began in the furnace room and will amount to several hundred dollars. (03-27-1919) Daily Independent

The biggest raid on disorderly houses in Westmoreland County was carried out in Wireton, Monessen's suburb, by nineteen members of the PA State Police and County Detective, Paul L. Feightner. The first house, No. 83, was "Billie's Place". Ada Mickens, Amelia Ellis and Dorothy Potter were arrested. The young ladies were pretty and well dressed, while the house was clean, well kept and nicely furnished. The next house, No. 80, on Schoonmaker Avenue, resulted in Peggy Watson and Claudia Todd, who were both young, being taken into custody. Next, was "Kate Payne's Lunch Rooms", where Kitty Gordon and Loraine Morris were arrested. The women submitted gracefully. Last, the "Green House" was raided and Pauline Gant, Maude Anderson, Freda Jones and Bernice Clayton were taken into custody. At each destination, a number of men were found enjoying themselves and having a good time. Their names were taken. The ladies offered many excuses for their presence at the houses and all declared themselves guiltless. (03-29-1919) Daily Independent

At the Synagogue, a committee was established to endorse the movement for the restoration of Palestine. Alfred Tanzer, was appointed chairman, Mrs. Henry Cramer, vice president, Rose Cramer, secretary, and H. Cherkin, treasurer. The rest of the committee is composed of Mrs. Jake Bornstein, Rabbi Meyers, Mrs. J. Feldman, Mrs. Myer Miller, I. Mayer, and Jos, Safier. The group subscribed \$2,500 to the cause. (04-02-1919) Daily Independent

H. Dallas McCabe has sold his home on McKee Avenue to Councilman August Johnson for slightly under \$7,000. (04-25-1919) Monessen News

The National Slovak Society of Monessen will meet in the Star Theatre to pay tribute to the sixty-plus men who took up arms under the allied cause during the Great War. Parts of the program will be in English. (04-26-1919) Daily Independent

Soldiers, sailors and marines from District 8 will meet in the borough building to form an

organization of the American Legion. (04-29-1919) Daily Independent

Winter and Early Spring Weddings, Divorces and Engagements of 1919

James D'Angelo and Miss Kathryne Ginfrida wed on January 26, 1919. They will live at 1038 Schoonmaker Avenue. (02-01-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Anna Lang, of Monessen, and James M Saunders, of Charleroi, were granted a marriage license in Pittsburgh, on February 6, 1919. (02-07-1919) Daily Independent

Edna Bossert, of Charleroi, filed for divorce against Albert Bossert, for cruel and barbarous treatment. They were married on July 29, 1916. (02-12-1919) Daily Independent

Elizabeth Elias, of Monessen, daughter of Abraham Daumit, filed for divorce from Samuel Elias, of Washington citing cruel and barbarous treatment. They were married on January 1, 1917. (02-12-1919) Daily Independent

Edna Blake Kessler, of New Eagle, filed for divorce from John Floyd Kessler, for cruel and barbarous treatment. They were married on May 26, 1915. (02-12-1919) Daily Independent

Pierce C. Johnson and Miss Sara Shutterly, of Monessen, were united in marriage on February 15, 1919. They will reside in the Daily Independent building. (02-18-1919) Monessen News

Sam Meyers, local clothing dealer, will wed Miss Gertrude Reese, of Atlantic City on February 18, 1919. They will live on McKee Avenue. (02-18-1919) Monessen News

Miss Anna Maliniak and M. J. Tylavasky were granted a marriage license in Pittsburgh on February 19, 1919. (02-20-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Freda Munig, of Oneida, and Leland S. Davis, of North Charleroi, were married on February 24, 1919, in Wellsburg, WV. (02-28-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Maude A. McLain, a former public school teacher, wed John T. Wilson, after a twenty year courtship. (03-04-1919) Monessen News

Charles Meyers and Miss Sara Kramer were married on March 2, 1919. (03-05-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Josephine Van Vasoalear, of Charleroi, married Joseph Underwood, of Detroit on March 20, 1919. (03-21-1919) Monessen News

Vassalear and Underwood wedding. (Bride's last name spelled differently than above) (03-25-1919) Daily Independent

A marriage license was issued in Greensburg to Richard Webb and Ethel Saddler, of Monessen. (03-28-1919) Monessen News

It has become known that Miss Elizabeth Conden, of Erie and Sgt. William R. Berg were married on March 31, 1918. It was a well-kept secret. (03-29-1919) Daily Independent

Miss Lucy May Craig, of Uniontown, and John Anderson, of Monessen, are engaged. (04-01-1919) Monessen News

Miss Lucy May Craig and John Anderson were wed on March 29, 1919. The groom works for Pittsburgh Steel. (04-04-1919) Monessen News

Lewis Dorando and May Colley, of Monessen, received a marriage license in Greensburg. (04-05-1919) Daily Independent

Henry Manfred Branko and Grace Marie Ewanson, both of Charleroi, obtained a marriage license in Greensburg. (04-05-1919) Daily Independent

On April 17, 1919, Miss Annetta Wikstrom of Lock Four, will marry Zenobe Baudoux, of Charleroi. The groom is the Department Superintendent at the Allenport plant of Pittsburgh Products. (04-15-1919) Monessen News

Miss Gertrude Snyder, of 429 Knox Avenue, married on Easter Sunday, to William David Sauers, of 669 Knox Avenue. The bride was a stenographer for Cook Transfer Company, while the groom is a singer and also works for Pittsburgh Steel. (04-22-1919) Monessen News

John M. Ralston, of 666 Braddock Avenue, and Miss Maude Crichton, of Lonaconning, MD, wed at Wellsburg, WV, on April 19, 1919. Both are employed by Pittsburgh Steel. (04-25-1919) Monessen News

Miss Nellie O'Malley, of Linden Avenue, married Michael Mullen, of Luce Avenue, at Wellsburg, WV, on April 21, 1919. The

groom works for Pittsburgh Steel. They will live at First and Donner. (04-25-1919) Monessen News

Miss Amelia Rebar and John O. Kichinko, both of Monessen, were married on April 26, 1919. The groom is a mail clerk. (04-28-1919) Daily Independent

Winter and early Spring Births of 1919

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Tunney, of First Street, had a baby boy, on February 12, 1919. (02-14-1919) Monessen News

Mr. and Mrs. George Kessler, of Essen, had a baby boy, on February 8, 1919. (02-14-1919) Monessen News

Mr. and Mrs. Alex Krouse had a baby boy. (02-20-1919) Daily Independent

A ten pound baby boy was born to Mr. and Mrs. Frank Phillips, of 43 Knox Avenue, on February 22, 1919. (02-22-1919) Daily Independent

Mr. and Mrs. Dennis McCahill, of the Fifth Avenue Hotel, had a baby girl on February 26, 1919. They have three boys. (02-28-1919) Monessen News

Mr. and Mrs. G. E. Laughner, had a six and a half pound son on March 2, 1919. (03-03-1919) Daily Independent

Mr. and Mrs. J. G. Sheehan, of Reed Avenue, had a son on March 12, 1919. (03-12-1919) Daily Independent

A son was born to Mrs. John Mullen, of Luce Avenue on March 20, 1919. Mr. Mullen was a victim of the influenza. (03-21-1919) Monessen News

Mr. and Mrs. David Winstone, of McKee Avenue, had a baby girl, on March 21, 1919. (03-21-1919) Monessen News

Mr. and Mrs. F. F. Mankedick, of Rostraver Street, had an eight and a half pound daughter on March 31, 1919. (03-31-1919) Daily Independent

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. T. J. Welsh, of Second & Knox, on April 1, 1919. (04-01-1919) Monessen News

Mr. and Mrs. Jack White, of Belle Vernon, had a six pound baby girl, on March 28, 1919. The mother was formerly Miss Violet

**Leonard, of Monessen. (04-01-1919)
Monessen News**

**Mr. and Mrs. Louis Bartko, Steubenville,
Ohio and formerly of Monessen, had a baby
girl. (04-01-1919) Monessen News**

**Mr. and Mrs. George Paslawsky, of
Schoonmaker Avenue, had a ten and a half
pound baby boy on April 3, 1919. (04-03-1919)
Daily Independent**

**A baby boy was born to Mr. and Mrs. Fernon
Albert on April 2, 1919. (04-05-1919) Daily
Independent**

**A ten pound baby boy was born to Mr. and
Mrs. Steve Lancos, of Schoonmaker Avenue,
on April 9, 1919. (04-09-1919) Daily
Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. Trevor James had a baby boy.
(04-10-1919) Daily Independent**

**Mr. and Mrs. Carl Rostel, of Luce Avenue,
had a baby boy, on April 15, 1919. (04-18-
1919) Monessen News**

**Mr. and Mrs. J. A. Madigan, of the Victoria
Hotel, had a son on April 15, 1919. (04-18-
1919) Monessen News**

**The apartments were large, roomy and well
lighted. Each apartment had an individual
hall and separate bath and separate lockers
in laundry. The floors were sound proof.
The building cost \$35,000 to construct.**

**The first store to occupy the Giba Building
was the Cuddy and Sbrocco Gents'
Furnishings and Shoe Store that opened in
May of 1915. They moved from a smaller
location on Schoonmaker, where they sold
high grade merchandise. Another business,
Frederick's: World's Largest Piano House
was the second tenant to rent space. By
autumn, the Westmoreland Bowling and
Billiard Rooms moved into the basement with
three alleys and four tables. Upstairs, Dr.
and Mrs. T. B. Herron were renting rooms
where they lived. The stork delivered a baby
boy to the parents in September.**

**In April of 1916, the National Dry Goods
Store opened selling a full line of millinery,
dresses, waists, children's hats, wash dresses,
and ladies and children's spring coats. They
also gave Sterling Stamps for purchases.**

**Michael J. Giba passed away on August 30,
1923 and was buried from Holy Name
Church. Arrangements were handled by the
Check Morgue. He had also been a director
of the Citizens National Bank of Monessen, as
well as manager of their foreign department.**

**In 1924, Mr. LaForte, of the American
Talking Machine Company, leased
storerooms in the Giba Building as larger
quarters for his firm. They carried a full line
of Columbia Talking Machines, records,
Lester pianos, player pianos and sheet music.
In addition, they carry Singer Sewing
Machines.**

**A meat market was located in one of the
storerooms in 1928, along with a piano
teacher upstairs in one of the apartments.**

**In late 1933, a newspaper ad advertised a five
room apartment in the building with steam
heat, janitor service, instantaneous water heat
for \$30.00 per month.**

**On August 30, 1940, Patsy Sappo opened
Gabby's ice cream bar. In addition to ice
cream products, they specialized in
sandwiches and prepared Italian foods.**

**During World War II, the local War Price
and Rationing Board set up office facilities in
the building. Hugo Parente, who was the
chairman of the War Relief Service of the
National Catholic Welfare Conference and an
alderman, used the address as the
headquarters for a "Clothes for Italy" drive
along with St. Cajetan Church. The**

Dan's Archives

A Look Back



Giba Building Demolished

**In the summer of 1913, Michael Giba, a
Monessen grocer, purchased two lots at the
corner of Schoonmaker Avenue from August
Karlowsky for \$12,000. He planned to erect a
three story brick structure with store rooms
on the ground floor and apartments above.
When the Westmoreland Lumber Company
completed the building in the spring of 1915,
it was completely modern with steam heat,
hot and cold water, laundry, a combination of
gas and electric lighting and all conveniences.**

committee advertised that if you would not wear it yourself, do not give it. Following the war, the Monessen Booster Club moved into the basement, which was 100 feet by 46 feet, and had easy chairs, card tables, sofas, a ping pong table and pool tables. There were photos of most of the high school teams displayed. It had a membership of 390 persons.

In late 1947, the Booster Club agreed to vacate the basement to bring a new industry to Monessen, the Republic Pants Company. Twelve women were hired to start, with a projection of hiring a total of forty in the near future. Following a flood, where the sewers backed up in the basement in 1948, the company closed, because they could not locate a larger facility into which to move.

Ruth Hoover, a state nurse, was in charge of a new State Health Clinic that opened in 1948. They sponsored courses for expectant mothers in the building.

The Monessen Volunteer Fire Department purchased the Giba Building in early 1954 from the Giba Family for \$48, 500. After renovations, they opened the Firemen's Club in January of 1955.

Part of the building was used in later years as the office of the Magistrate.



Giba Family Memorial in Most Holy Name of Jesus Cemetery, Monessen

GMHS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Daniel Zyglowicz, President

& Editor of Valley Historian

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Tim Donner, Honorary Seat (Great Grandson of William Henry Donner)

George O. Morgan IV, Honorary Seat (Great Grandson of George O. Morgan I)

Easter Items Available in Museum Shoppe



Easter Basket covers \$20.00



Celebrate Easter bks. \$12 each