

Sewickley Valley Historical Society

Signals

XLII, Number 3

January 2015

Thursday, February 5, 2015

Cash Bar, 5:30 p.m. — Dinner, 6:15 p.m. — Program, 7:30 p.m.

Shannopin Country Club, Ben Avon Heights, PA

Please Join Us for a Joint Dinner Meeting

with

Ben Avon Area Historical Association & Old Moon Township Historical Society

Hosted by Ben Avon Area Historical Association

featuring

The Homewood Cemetery in a Variety of Contexts

A Presentation by Jennie Benford

When The Homewood Cemetery was founded in 1878, its design and management were the most modern and forward thinking among Pittsburgh's various burial grounds. Jennie Benford, will present an illustrated talk that includes, but also looks beyond, the biographies of famous people at the cemetery. She will discuss the meaning of the cemetery's landscape design, the styles of monuments found within the grounds and some of the fascinating stories that only a cemetery insider can know.



Jennie Benford has been affiliated with The Homewood Cemetery for almost 20 years. She is now Director of Programming for The Homewood Cemetery Historical Fund, creating tours, talks, performances and other events that focus on the history of the cemetery, its landscape, monuments and "permanent residents." Prior to taking her current position, she was University Archivist for Carnegie Mellon University, archivist for Rodef Shalom Temple, a reference librarian for The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania and a Clayton docent at The Frick.

PLEASE NOTE:

Our members who are Pennsylvania residents will receive an invitation to the dinner from the Ben Avon Area Historical Association. It will outline the dinner menu, price and deadline for reservations.

Reservations should be made directly with them.

For SVHS members who do not live in Pennsylvania but who might be interested in attending the dinner, please contact this office at 412-741-5315 or email us at sewickleyhistory@verizon.net. We will send you the details.

SEWICKLEY CEMETERY was located above the Village on land purchased in 1859 from the Reverend Robert Hopkins (1798-1891). Rev. Hopkins had been an itinerant Methodist preacher before coming to the Valley in the 1840s; he was elected the First Burgess of Sewickleyville when the Borough was organized in 1853.

A new cemetery was needed. The cemetery at Graveyard Lane (today's Graham Street) had fallen into disrepair after fifty years of use, and the graveyard at the 1840 Presbyterian Church was about to be abandoned, as that congregation was planning to construct a new sanctuary across Beaver Road at Grant Street.

The Cemetery opened November 1, 1860, five days before the election of Abraham Lincoln as President. The dedicatory exercise consisted of a prayer by Rev. J. S. Travelli, Principal of Sewickley Academy, an address by Rev. Henry W. Baker, Pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the singing of a hymn composed for the occasion by Robert P. Nevin, a prayer by Rev. James Allison, Pastor of the Presbyterian Church and a benediction by Rev. John White of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Robert Peebles Nevin (1820-1908) was a lead merchant. He was also editor and founder of the Pittsburgh Times and later, editor of the Pittsburgh Leader. He was the father of musicians Ethelbert and Arthur Nevin.

An Act to Incorporate the Sewickley Cemetery of Allegheny County

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE SENATE AND HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY MET, AND IT IS HEREBY ENACTED BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE SAME, That G. E. Warner, Dr. John Dickson, D. N. White, John Fleming, J. W. F. White, J. P. Kramer, John Way, J. B. S. Ward, Dr. Wm. Woods, William Harbaugh, David Anderson, T. H. Nevin, George F. Rudisill, John Way, Jr., John Irwin, D. R. Miller, Robert P. Nevin, Bruce Tracy, John Thompson, Hugh Linn, Jacob Guy, George H. Starr, Joseph S. Travelli, Thomas L. Shields, S. D. Miller, Wm. Grimes, Alexander M'Donald, Dr. Robert M'Cready, Robert H. Davis and William Miller, be and they and their successors are hereby created a body politic and corporate in law under the name and title of the Sewickley Cemetery, and by that name shall have perpetual succession, and be able and capable in law to have and use a common seal, to sue and be sued, implead and be impleaded, in all Courts of law and equity, and to do all such other things as are incident to a corporation.

SECTION 2. That the said corporation shall, at least once in every year hereafter, fill by election by ballot, all vacancies which may occur, and may at the same time or other times, increase and add to their number from those who may be lot-holders in the cemetery, so that the said company shall never be reduced to less than ten, nor exceed thirty members; and they shall have full power to ordain, establish and put in execution all such by-laws, rules and regulations, not contrary to the Constitution and laws of the United States or of this State, which may be necessary for the proper government of this corporation, its officers and affairs, and, until the election of managers, shall exercise all the powers thereof.

SECTION 3. That the said corporators shall, at least once in every year, elect from their number seven managers, one of whom shall be designated as president, one as secretary and one as treasurer, who shall make a report of their proceedings and a statement of the finances at the annual meetings of the corporators, and as much oftener as may be required by a majority of the said corporators.

SECTION 4. That the said corporators' managers shall have power to receive all and singular such gifts, bequests and donations of property as may be made, and to use the same for the benefit of the corporation; to contract for and purchase from the owner or owners thereof a tract of land in Allegheny county, not exceeding in the whole fifty acres, and the same to lay out and ornament, and to divide and arrange it into suitable plots and burial lots, remove and alter old and erect new buildings, and to do all other things proper or necessary to be done to adapt the said ground for the purpose of a cemetery, and to sell and dispose of said plots and burial lots in fee simple, or otherwise, for the purposes of sepulture, to individuals, societies or congregations, without distinction or regard to sect under such conditions, rules and

regulations as the said corporators or managers may establish for the government of lot holders, visitors to the cemetery, and burial of the dead: PROVIDED, that the lots granted by the said association for burial lots shall not be used for any other purpose; and they shall be free from seizure, levy or sale, under or by virtue of any execution against any grantee or grantees of said association for such purpose.

SECTION 5. That the said corporators, or the said managers, after their election, shall have the power to appoint all other officers, agents and workmen which may be needful, and fix their compensation or wages, and the same to discharge at pleasure; to take from the treasurer security for the faithful performance of his trust, and to discharge him from his office upon occasion therefor; and that the said managers shall keep fair minutes of all their acts and doings.

SECTION 6. That the said corporation shall be capable of holding so much personal property as may be necessary for the purposes of this incorporation, and it shall be the duty of the managers to devote all the income of whatsoever kind to the purposes of the corporation; and after a sufficient sum shall have been received from the sale of lots and expended in the payment for the cemetery ground and improvement thereof, to set aside at least twenty per centum, and more if it can be spared, out of the proceeds of all subsequent sales of lots, to be invested in ground rents, mortgages or stocks of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, for the creation of a fund, the income of which will be applied as may be necessary for the perpetual maintenance of the cemetery in proper order and security; and any failure in the duties aforesaid shall subject said managers or corporators to the control of the competent judicial authority for correction.

SECTION 7. That the original conveyance of lots from the corporation to individuals may be evinced either by deed, or by a certificate signed by the president, and countersigned by the secretary or treasurer, as by the rules and regulations or by-laws shall be required; and such deed or certificate, specifying that such a person is the owner of such a lot or lots, shall vest in the proprietor, his heirs and assigns, a right in fee simple to such lot or lots; and said certificates shall have the same force and effect as deeds duly executed in other cases, and may be recorded, and certified copies thereof shall be evidence as in other cases.

SECTION 8. That any person who shall wilfully destroy, mutilate, deface, injure or remove any tomb, monument or gravestone, or other structure, placed in the cemetery aforesaid; or any fence, railing or other work for the protection or ornament of the said cemetery, or shall wilfully destroy, cut, break or injure any tree, shrub or plant within the limits of said cemetery, shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall upon conviction thereof before any court of competent jurisdiction, be punished by a fine of not less than five dollars or more than one hundred dollars, and by imprisonment in

the county jail for a term not less than one nor more than thirty days, according to the nature and aggravation of the offense; and such offender shall also be liable in an action of trespass, in the name of the said corporation, to pay all such damages as have been occasioned by his unlawful act or acts, which money, when recovered, shall be applied by the said, corporation, under the direction of the Managers, to the reparation and restoration of the property destroyed or injured as above; and members of said corporation or the lot owners shall not

thereby be prevented from testifying in any case at law to which said corporation shall be a party.

SECTION 9. That no street, lane or road shall ever be laid out through the lands so occupied as a cemetery, except under the authority of the corporation.

Approved the 11th day of April, A. D. 1859.

WM. F. PACKER.

Dedicatory Hymn

Sung at the Dedication of Sewickley Cemetery, November 1st, 1860

by Robert P. Nevin, Esq.

As pilgrims, on the barren waste
Of dreary desert-sands astray,
With anxious heed and earnest quest,
Anticipate the doubtful way,
And, timely, with the night in view,
Seek, ere the day leans to its close —
Thoughtful of ease through toils yet due —
Choice stead for shelter and repose;
Here, followers through a wilderness,
Of paths uncertain and remote,
While we a kindred aim confess,
A kindred care, Lord, we devote;
To meet the need that lies beyond,
And harbor seek to shield us best,
When life's last task of service owned,
We gather to our final rest.

Thanks to thy name, Almighty One!
For the sure promise thou dost deign,
That the deep slumbers thus begun,
Shall, waiting cease, not wait in vain;
That darkness, silence, and the pause
Of still oblivion shall have end,
And fair above the night's stern awes,
The dawn of a new morn ascend.
Sleep — only sleep; no ruder doom;
No vital wrest with wrest of breath;
No bane, suppressless, to consume,
Nor death — as doubters dream of death!
Sleep — only sleep; shut for a space
From the world's troublous sphere of strife,
To wake, regenerate, heirs through grace,
Of resurrection and of life!

Thus, with the rapturous faith at heart,
That challenges distrust and fear,
Stayed by the pledge thy words impart,
Lord, we approach thy presence here!
Own thou our mission, hear our plea,
That this our chosen camp of rest,
Protected by thy watch may be,
And by thy generous favor blest!
Forever be these shelters sure,
Warded from peril and from harm,
These silvan solitudes secure
From rude obtrusion and alarm;
Forever hallowed, nor profaned,
And, by our rite devoutly paid,
— Be thou the warrant! — hence ordained
Forever sacred to the dead!

Common Icons Encountered in Cemeteries & Graveyards

according to genealogist Gaylord Cooper

ANCHOR: hope (“Hope is the anchor of the soul.”)
ANGEL: messenger between God and man; guide
ANGEL (FLYING): rebirth
ANGEL (TRUMPETING): a call to the resurrection
ANGEL (WEEPING): grief
ARROWS OR DARTS: mortality, the dart of death
BIRDS: the soul
COFFINS: mortality
COLUMN (BROKEN): sorrow, life cut short
CROSS: salvation
DOVE: Holy Ghost
FATHER TIME: mortality
FLAME: life
FLOWER: the frailty of life

FLOWER (BROKEN): death
GARLAND: victory in death
GOURDS: the coming to be and the passing away of earthly matters; the mortal body
HAND (POINTING UPWARD): ascension to heaven
HANDSHAKE: farewell to earthly existence
HEART: the home of the soul; love of Christ; the soul in bliss
IVY: memory and fidelity
LAMB: Christ; the Redeemer; meekness; sacrifice; innocence
LAUREL: victory
LILY: resurrection: purity
PALLS/DRAPERY: mortality
POMEGRANATE: immortality
PORTALS: passageways to the eternal journey

ROSE: SOITOW
SCALLOP SHELL: the resurrection; a pilgrim's journey; the baptism of Christ
SCYTHE: time or time cut short
SKULL (WINGED): the flight of the soul from the mortal body
SKULLS AND CROSSBONES: death
SUN (RISING): renewed life
SUN (SETTING): eternal death
SWORD: martyrdom; courage
TORCH (BURNING): immortality; truth; wisdom
URN: mortality (a receptacle for bodily remains)
WHEAT: time; the divine harvest (often used to denote old age)
WILLOW: grief

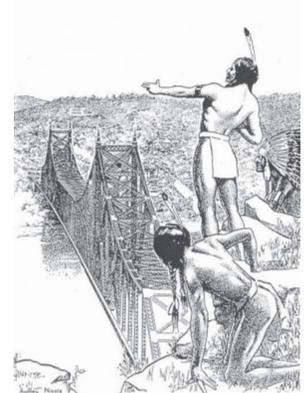
Special Contributions

Mr. & Mrs. Donald J. Kipke
Charles M. Murdock, in memory of his parents
Sewickley Valley Hospital School of Nursing, Class of 1963

Sewickley Valley Historical Society
200 Broad Street
Sewickley, PA 15143

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

January 2015



**SEWICKLEY VALLEY
HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

President

Michael Tomana

Vice-President

Connor Cogswell

Secretary

J. Judson Brooks, Jr.

Treasurer

David Genter

Directors

Charlotte Bober

Hal Bonnett

Julie Buscher

Fran Merryman

Marian Miller

Agnes Pangburn

Mary Anne Riley

Jean Sebolt

Dan Telep

Deb Thornton

Executive Director

Harton S. Semple, Jr.

Associate Director

Susan C. Holton

Friends, Sponsors, Patrons, Benefactors

Thanks to the following, who have supported SVHS with gifts in addition to membership dues:

Robert E Bagans

Nancy Baldwin

Barbara & Bailey Bishop

Mr. & Mrs. Matthew Braksick

Mr. & Mrs. T. Ronald Casper

David G. Caughey

Mike & Tina Chutz

Dr. & Mrs. Stanley Denver

Sally Dunbar

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Elste

Susan Gaca

Dr. & Mrs. Harlan R. Giles

Maleet Gordon

Tom & Toby Graham

Patricia A. Happe

Rev. Sarah Bird

Cary Blancett & Denise Dufour

John H. Brasuk

Mike & Tina Chutz

Dr. & Mrs. Stanley Denver

Tom & Toby Graham

Patricia A. Happe

Cynthia M. Hays

Kathryn F. Hays

Tom Hay

Cynthia M. Hays

Kathryn F. Hays

Art & Trudy Hetherington

Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth Johns, Jr.

Elsie O. Mackenzie

Anne B. Metcalf

Dr. & Mrs. C. M. Miller, Jr.

David & Virginia Monroe

Wayne & Mary Murphy

William Roemer

Brenda & Jim Roth

Constance Ruzich

Mrs. A. Reed Schroeder

Patricia Scott

Sewickley Traditions

Frank W. Simons

Mr. & Mrs. Richard C. Smith

Mr. & Mrs. Donald W. Spalding

Hon. & Mrs. William Standish

Joan B. Sullivan

Henry & Karen Thorne

Judie Vescio

W. B. Wardrop

Mr. & Mrs. Helge H. Wehmeier

Judy & Bill Wenning

Joe Wheat

Kenneth & Elyse Wright

New Members

Art & Trudy Hetherington

Aaron Joseph

Jana Joseph

Jeanette & Chris Kent

Marlene Koledin

Frank J. Kurtik

James & Michal Lea

Elsie O. Mackenzie

Geraldine Pivar

William Roemer

Constance Ruzich

Patricia Scott,

W. B. Wardrop

Kristin Camp Westerhoff

Joe Wheat

Duncan P. Whittaker, Jr.

In Memoriam

Mrs. Marvin Wedeen