

Sewickley Valley Historical Society *Signals*

XXXIV, Number 4

February 2007

Ring in the NEW year with something OLD
at the
Sewickley Antiques Road Show
Saturday, February 17

Bring your art and antiques to the Old Sewickley Post Office
for appraisal by a team of experts.

Verbal appraisals: \$5.00; Written appraisals: \$15.00

Proceeds to benefit the Sewickley Valley Historical Society

Appraisals will begin at 8:00 a.m.

A program featuring the most interesting items:

10:00 a.m. - noon

among the appraisers —

BLAIRBAUER: A lifetime resident of Sewickley, Blair owns and operates the Sewickley Traditions antique shop on Beaver Street. He and his mother, Anne Bauer, have been a mainstay of the Sewickley antique and auction business for over 25 years. Blair exhibits at the Scott Antique Show, a monthly show in Atlanta, Georgia. He is an avid collector of and expert in antique silver.

JOHN KROECK: John participates in a number of antique shows, is owner/manager of the Morgantown and Greensburg antique shows and is a dealer at The Antique Center of Strabane in Cannonsburg. He restored the oldest remaining structure in the Sewickley Valley, Lark Inn, where he and his family have lived since 1984. He is currently on the boards of the Sewickley Valley Historical Society and The Harmonie Associates at Old Economy Village.

JOHN MICKINAK: John, an antique dealer and appraiser in Greensburg, PA, for 32 years, is owner of Ligonier Antique Gallery and the Mickinak Antique Gallery. He is active on the antique show circuit and is co-owner of two antique shows. He serves as a docent at the Westmoreland Museum of American Art in Greensburg.

HEATHER SEMPLE: From 1989-2001, Heather was Corporate Art Curator at PNC Bank. She has been free-lancing since 2001, when she received a degree in Fine Art Appraisal from New York University. Heather is a certified member of the AAA (Appraisers Association of America) and is licensed in USPAP (Uniform Standard Professional Appraisal Practices).

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.

The Social Mirror Reprinted

The Historical Society has recently reprinted Adelaide Mellier Nevin's 1888 volume *The Social Mirror: A Character Sketch of the Women of Pittsburg and Vicinity during the First Century of the County's Existence: Society Today*. Adelaide (1852-1908), a daughter of Daniel Eagle and Margaret Irwin Nevin, was the society editor of the *Pittsburgh Leader*. In the words of Robert Burton, digital production librarian at the University of Pittsburgh, "Certain volumes stand out ... as invaluable materials to social historians While not politically correct by today's standards, [*The Social Mirror*] provides a wonderful insight into gender and social status of the era."

In her preface, the author states: "On the following pages is given a most complete sketch of Pittsburg womanhood as it is to-day, together with a brief look back at some of the more notable characters in Pittsburg society of the past. The list is as complete as the time taken in the preparation of this work would permit; and while there may be omitted some very worthy and cultured members of society, it cannot but be admitted that it is an accurate index of the character of Pittsburg's society as it now is. For this reason it must be



recognized as an invaluable addition to the local literature of this Centennial year [of the founding of Allegheny County]. Great care has been exercised to have the sketches accurate in every particular. The work is given to the public in full confidence that it will meet with a hearty reception and approval on account of its inherent merit."

Chapters include *Beauty, Gifted Women, For Sweet Charity's Sake, Musical, Women of Wealth, Artists, Ministers' Wives, Temperance Workers, Society and Society of the Suburbs*.

The book is great fun to read and includes descriptions of several Sewickley Valley women, including Mrs. D. C. Herbst, Mrs. Harry Oliver, Edith Oliver (Rea), Mrs. Mary Olver, Miss Rebecca Shields and Miss Agnes Way.

This 199 page, hardbound reprint edition, measuring 7" x 8", was produced by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA. It is available at the Historical Society for \$25.00, tax included. For mail orders, add \$5.00 postage and handling. To see other items for sale, visit our website, www.sewickleyhistory.org.

Sponsors, Patrons, Benefactors

Thanks to the following, who have generously supported the Sewickley Valley Historical Society with gifts in addition to membership dues:

Matthew Braksick; Ellen & Jay Brooks; Mrs. Clinton L. Childs, Jr.; George & Ada Davidson; Mr. & Mrs. Joseph D. Dury, Jr., in memory of Dr. Claude R. Joyner; Paul & Lily Euwer; Dr. & Mrs. Robert Fusco; Caroline F. Holdship; Mrs. William R. Murdock; Mr. & Mrs. Francis B. Nimick, Jr.; Margaret Pollard Rea-Joyner; Beth & Ken Rom; Mr. & Mrs. Donald Spalding; The Hon. & Mrs. William L. Standish; Rob & Tina Thomas; Diane D. Tito; Leslie Traugott; R. Bruce Williamson

New Members

Michael Messina, Hammonton, NJ; Brent & Molly Stater, Sewickley; Leslie Traugott, Sewickley

In Memoriam

Dr. Claude R. Joyner

The Phaonmneal Pweor of the Human Mind

Aoccdrnig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in what order the ltteers in a word are; the only iprmoatnt thing is that the frist and lsat ltteer be in the rghit pclae. The rset can be a taotl mses and you can still raed it wouthit a porbelm. This is bcuseae the human mind deos not raed ervey lteter by isrllef, but the word as a wlohe.

Amzanig huh? Yaeh and I awlyas thought spleling was ipmorantt!

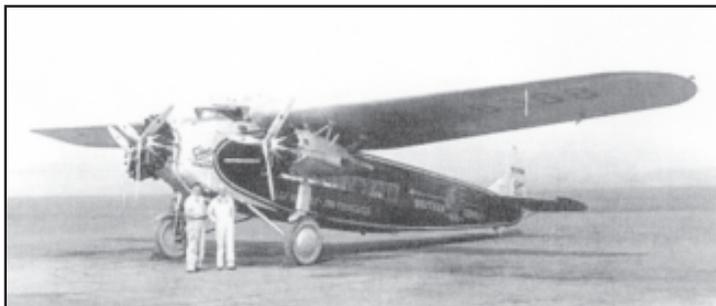


Signals is designed and edited by
Susan C. Holton

A Cross-Country Flight in 1931

This charming article by Theodora Locke from a February 1931 Pittsburgh newspaper is entitled "Society Visitor Flies from Coast to Pittsburgh." It describes an airplane journey by Mrs. George Graham Henderson, the aunt of Alice Painter Thompson (Mrs. LeRoy Thompson), who kindly provided the clipping. We tend to forget that the airplane has only been in existence for 100 years, and that not too long ago travel by air was a novel experience.

The sophisticate of summers, and winters, too, nowadays, breakfasts on Los Angeles eggs and toast, and dines the following evening in one of New York's smartest restaurants, this of course allowing the passing of a night in Kansas City, the midway stop of the Transcontinental and Western Air Service.



Early last week Mrs. George Graham Henderson arrived in Pittsburgh from Pasadena, Cal., to visit Mr. and Mrs. Charles A. Painter of the Hotel Schenley, and she arrived by airplane, landing at Bettis Field, just about 20 hours' flying time from the Western coast. "A most delightful way to travel, clean and very comfortable," said Mrs. Henderson, alighting from the 12-seated passenger plane.

From her home in La Jolla, Cal., Mrs. Henderson motored to Pasadena to take off at 8 o'clock in the morning from Alhambra Field. Between Pasadena and Kansas City, where accommodations for the night had been made for the plane passengers, there were four 10-minute stops at Winslow, Ariz.; Albuquerque, N. M.; Amarillo, Tex.; and Wichita, Kan. Flying conditions were splendid on the day Mrs. Henderson was a passenger on this transcontinental service, and the plane arrived at each field about 10 minutes ahead of time.

"Fields in the West are more expansive, naturally," Mrs. Henderson commented. "And the field clubhouses create such a hospitable feeling. They are generally of the cream-colored stucco, so prevalent in the West, and Spanish in architecture. Numerous large chairs and davenport in the reception rooms give an informal atmosphere. Albuquerque's club even boasted a large, roaring fireplace at one end of the room."

"Meals have never been quite so high," said Mrs. Henderson, smiling. Luncheon and supper time came miles above any chef and kitchen. Individual trays were served by the steward, each with hot bouillon

from a thermos bottle, of course, and fruit salad and sandwiches, all with the compliments of the air plane sponsors. At other times the steward served as a guide for passengers, helping them to locate ranches, and pointing out for them a large meteor crater just west of Winslow. Pilots were changed three times during the day.

As the plane whirred onto the Municipal Field at Kansas City, taxis drove up to the hangar to receive passengers and dash them into the city for the night. "My driver had been individually assigned to drive me to my hotel, and called me by name as I alighted from the plane," Mrs. Henderson said, illustrating the complete coordination of the service.

Six-thirty-five the following morning found Mrs. Henderson again seated in her comfortable parlor car chair aboard the plane, just seven hours west of Bettis Field. "The weather that morning wasn't all that could be desired by a pilot," Mrs. Henderson said, "so we quickly rose to an altitude of 5,000 feet above the storm clouds, just in time to watch the sun rise."

Snow flurries greeted the plane at Columbus, but the change in temperature was unnoticed in the heated compartment of the plane. The comparatively short hop to Pittsburgh was completed at 3:15 in the afternoon.

Enthusiastically, Mrs. Henderson talked of her trip, for it was her first travel by plane, and it was "indeed an interesting venture, and a great saving of time, which compensated for the expense. I was as comfortable throughout the trip as I am now," she said, seated in a high-back cushioned chair. "The only drawback was that I had neglected to take any magazines along." And there were no news vendors aboard, but doubtless the progress of time will remedy even that!

Bettis Field was opened as the Pittsburgh-McKeesport Airdrome in June 1925. In November 1926, the airdrome was renamed Bettis Airfield to honor a distinguished Army pilot, Lieut. Cyrus K. Bettis, who died in September 1926 of injuries incurred in a plane crash in Bellefonte, PA. Charles Lindbergh visited the airfield in August 1927 during his tour of the world in the "Spirit of Saint Louis," welcomed by a crowd of 30,000 people. The Allegheny County Airport opened in 1932, and thereafter Bettis Field was used only by private aircraft. It survived until January 1949, when the facilities were sold to Westinghouse to become the Bettis Atomic Power Laboratory, which builds nuclear reactors for submarines, surface ships and electric power plants.

Transcontinental and Western Air Service (TWA) emerged in October 1930 when Postmaster General Walter Folger Brown, under Pres. Herbert Hoover, forced Western Air Express and Transcontinental Air Transport to merge in order to get an air mail contract. The airline offered coast to coast passenger service in 36 hours with an overnight stop in Kansas City, MO. The Fokker tri-motor F-10A aircraft (shown above) was employed, carrying 12 passengers. The month after Mrs. Henderson's journey, March 31, 1931, TWA Flight 599 crashed between Kansas City and Wichita, apparently as a result of failure of the wooden wing, killing Coach Knute Rockne of the University of Notre Dame (most famous for popularizing the forward pass) and all others aboard. All Fokker F-10s were grounded, and a new all metal aircraft manufactured by Douglas, the DC-1, was brought into service. The pioneering Transcontinental and Western Air Service, later named Trans World Airlines, finally went bankrupt in 2001 and was absorbed by American Airlines.

2nd Annual Celebrate Sewickley! March 9-24

The Sewickley Valley Historical Society, Sweetwater Center for the Arts and the Old Sewickley Post Office Corporation will team up for the second annual **Celebrate Sewickley** art sale and exhibition, to be held March 9-24 at the Sewickley Valley Cultural Center. The event will include work in all media, either by local artists or depicting the Village of Sewickley. The exhibition will open on March 10, from 6:00-9:00 p.m., with a reception featuring live entertainment, wine and hors d'oeuvres, and a silent auction. Tickets are \$30 per person and can be reserved by calling Sweetwater at 412-741-4405. All proceeds will benefit the Sewickley Valley Cultural Center, home to the three organizations.

Noted local artist Jebby Potter has created a new painting representing the Village's picturesque Wolcott Park specifically for the event. Posters of the painting will be for sale at the Center during the exhibition, and a limited edition canvas *giclée* will be included in the silent auction.

Wolcott Park, by Jebby Potter



Visit our website, www.sewickleyhistory.org – or – e-mail us at sewickleyhistory@verizon.net



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