

Sewickley Valley Historical Society Signals

XXXIII, Number 8

May 2006



Annual Meeting

Tuesday, May 23, 2006, at 6:30 p.m.

*The Shields Family of Sewickley Bottom:
Shields Chapel, the Family Mausoleum &
the Gardens of Newington*

Hosted by J. Judson Brooks
Newington, Shields Lane, Edgeworth

Don't miss **Celebrate Sewickley!** an exhibition showcasing art & artists of the Sewickley Valley
May 22-June 9, 2006

Reception Friday, June 9, 5:00-8:00 p.m. — \$25 per person
music, wine & hors d'oeuvres, plus a silent auction & sale of selected art from the exhibition
Sewickley Valley Cultural Center, 200 Broad Street, Sewickley

Sponsored by Sweetwater Center for the Arts, Sewickley Valley Historical Society & Old Sewickley Post Office Corporation
Proceeds to benefit the Old Sewickley Post Office building (Sewickley Valley Cultural Center)

Report of the Nominating Committee

The following have been nominated as officers and directors of the Sewickley Valley Historical Society for the year 2006-2007.
The election will be held at the Annual Meeting on Tuesday, May 23, 2006, at 6:30 p.m., at "Newington."

President:	Joseph Zemba	Directors:	Milana Bizic	John Kroeck
Vice President:	Cynthia Giles		Brewster Cockrell	Marian Miller
Secretary:	Charlotte Bober		George Craig	Steven Ratcliffe
Treasurer:	Joseph Goff		Annie Freitag	Betsy Stein
			Susan Kretzler-Falcone	Daniel Telep

Respectfully submitted, The Nominating Committee:
Charlotte Bober, Sadie Kroeck, Judy Semple, Marvin Wedeen, Mary Jane Williams

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.



In this photo from the SVHS Bicen Gallery, we see a parade of men from Sewickley before they went off to fight in the Spanish-American War. The troop made its first appearance on Decoration Day, May 1898. The day before the parade, several from the troop had enlisted in Hampton Battery B, which was commanded by Capt. Alfred E. Hunt. Hunt was a scientist and industrialist best known for inventing the process of refining bauxite into aluminum and founding the Aluminum Company of America (ALCOA). Capt. Hunt contracted malaria when the Battery was deployed to Puerto Rico and later died from complications at age 44. Marlatt's Livery Stable, which stood at Broad and Centennial, was used as an armory.

Sewickley & the Spanish-American War



This photo from *The Sewickley Valley* shows some of the boys of Battery B. According to the accompanying article, when they returned from Puerto Rico they were celebrated with one of the largest parades ever given in Sewickley, composed of school children carrying flags, Civil War soldiers, several of the boys of the Fourteenth Regiment home on furlough and leading citizens of the Valley.

This is a copy of the manuscript of an 1899 composition by Ethelbert Nevin entitled "To the Boys of Sewickley Valley, with the homage of one of them." The piece was performed under Nevin's direction at Memorial Day services at the Soldiers' Monument, Sewickley Cemetery, at the close of the Spanish-American War. The text was written in 1869 by Robert Peebles Nevin, Ethelbert's father.

To the Boys of Sewickley Valley, with the homage of one of them. Ethelbert Nevin. 1899.

Quietly, with feeling.

Roses, above the choicest of May. Over the grass where the dew lies, Be the warm presence

Blushes the boy, Type of the true love, one for the dead. Mark the steps, alight, the land, rest care,

Make the a-pace of the Old Days that, With the Rose crown the boys of this country - ing there -

Hal-low the beds where the Boys are at rest.

Just 20
A. P. Nevin
1869
(Copyright 1899 - The John Church Co.)

Golf Is More Than a Game

Who says golf is a game when we all know that in summer it's a way of life? Especially in Western Pennsylvania.

If you asked the average man on the street who started golf in the Pittsburgh area, he would probably credit Andrew Carnegie. That's because the game has always been associated with the Scots.

However, an article in *The Pittsburgh Gazette Times* dated March 24, 1926, calls John Moorhead, Jr., the father of Pittsburgh golf. Moorhead told the *Times* reporter he first played the game in 1893 at the Essex County Country Club in Manchester, Massachusetts. He was introduced to the sport by an old Scot playing on the nine primitive holes of the club.

Completely hooked, Moorhead dreamed of the possibilities for links in Western Pennsylvania between Altoona and Pittsburgh as he went homeward bound on the Pennsylvania Railroad. Once home, he got six old pea cans and laid them out on the old Homestead racecourse. And, as they say, the rest is history.

"I subsequently laid out the old course of the Allegheny Country Club on California Avenue in Allegheny, and had there really the pioneer course in the west," Moorhead said.

Extracts from the *Official Golf Guide* of 1899, compiled and edited by Josiah Newman, confirm Moorhead's claim and offer information about the club, then located on Pittsburgh's North Side.

ALLEGHENY COUNTRY CLUB: The scenes of the recent interstate tournament is two miles from the centre of the city, but can be reached by the Electric Street Railway. Organized 1895. Membership, 100. Entrance fee, \$100. Annual dues \$50.

This is a wealthy and progressive club and the local golf players have demonstrated their ability to hold their own against all comers. It is a picturesque and sporty course, which improves upon acquaintance, and is kept up in splendid order. There are many valuable cups and trophies competed for annually among the club members. The amateur record is 79, made by John Moorhead, Jr.

It may come as surprise that although the Allegheny Country Club was the first course in Pittsburgh, it was not the first in the Sewickley Valley. That distinction goes to the Shields Golf Club, located in present-day Edgeworth at the end of Woodland Road.

Here is what it says:

SHIELDS GOLF CLUB: Situated at Shields, Allegheny County, Pa., on the PFW&C Railroad. Organized 1898. Annual dues \$10. Membership, 275. The course was laid out by Robert Lowrie in April 1897, and consists of nine holes. Besides being a good and thoroughly interesting course, it is most picturesque and beautiful. President, James B. Oliver; Secretary, Sidney S. Leggett; Treasurer, George J. Gorman; Governing Committee: J. S. George, J. E. Porter, David Shields, A. B. Starr, James B. Oliver; Greens keeper, Charles Wolf. (Note: James B. Oliver's wife was Amelia Shields and David Shields, his brother-in-law.)



The decision to move the Allegheny County Club to Sewickley Heights with an 18-hole course and the nine-hole course initiated by the Edgeworth Club in 1900 certainly spelled the end for the Shields Club.

Where the greens once were, the wild daisies sprang up and Capt. David Shields rode his Morgan steeds, always named Chief, over the once-busy links. The club house stood well into the 20th century.

Drayton Heard, Jr., who grew up in the Woodland Road neighborhood of Edgeworth, remembers that in the 1930s golf balls were still being found. Said Heard in his charming reminiscences of a boyhood in Edgeworth, "The club house was over the top of the hill and even though it was locked and had a no-trespassing sign, it was readily accessible to us. There was a real scandal in the mid-thirties when neighborhood boys broke every window in the club house."

He also recalled, "For some reason Captain Shields took personal offense at this Confederate Uprising and there was hell to pay as well as a dollar for every glass pane broken."

Other golf clubs listed in the 1899 *Official Golf Guide* include: Brookville, Buena Vista Spring, Cresson, Edgewood, Foxburg, Johnstown, Osborne, Pittsburgh Field Club, Pittsburgh Golf Club, Highland Golf Club, Somerset and Washington. (Note. The guide had no statistics about the Osborne Golf Club. This was a small club with a limited membership, and few details are known concerning it.)

B. G. Shields

Sponsors, Patrons, Benefactors

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

George Alexander, Barbara A. Crnjarich, Maleet Gordon &
Steven A. Naple,
in memory of Joseph Reiser

George J. Berry III

Agnes N. Pangburn,
in memory of Joseph Reiser and Anthony Cicco



New Members

Michael Shealey & Thomas M. Way, Pittsburgh

The publication of the reprint edition of
Lights and Shadows of Sewickley Life;
or, Memories of Sweet Valley
by Agnes L. Ellis
has been delayed, but it will soon be available from the
Sewickley Valley Historical Society.

The cost is \$30,
plus \$5 shipping and handling if ordered by mail.

Please make checks payable to SVHS and mail to:

Sewickley Valley Historical Society
200 Broad Street
Sewickley, PA 15143

Visit our website at www.sewickleyhistory.org. A new addition, under the EDUCATION & OUTREACH link, is *Civil War Experiences: The Stories of John I. Nevin and John Dickson Tracy during the Civil War*, by Alex Bob, a 10th grade student at Quaker Valley High School. Alex used primary and secondary sources in the SVHS collection in the preparation of this International Baccalaureate project.

Signals is designed and edited by
Susan C. Holton



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