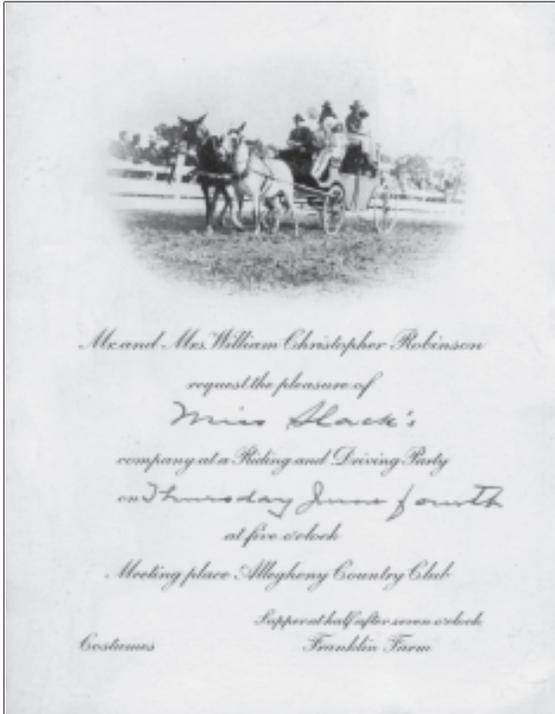


Sewickley Valley Historical Society Signals

XXXIV, Number 1

September 2006



The Sewickley Valley Historical Society's first program of the year...

Riding and Driving Party

Saturday, September 23, 2006, 4:00 p.m.

Sewickley Heights History Center
1901 Glen Mitchell Road, Sewickley

Sewickley Heights has always been known for its equestrian lifestyle. One tradition in the 1920s was the Riding and Driving Party, a social event hosted by Mr. and Mrs. William C. Robinson of Franklin Farm and held the day before the annual Allegheny Country Club horse show. Guests were expected to come in costume. The invitation at left is from the collection of the Sewickley Valley Historical Society, as are the other Riding and Driving party photos on this page.

In the spirit of this event, the Sewickley Heights History Center will host a benefit featuring antique automobiles, carriages, equestrian exhibitions and the Sewickley Hunt, plus cocktails, dinner and swing music. The nationally renowned Heinz Hitch with its eight Percherons will also make a special appearance.

Supporting the Riding and Driving Party helps the admission-free Sewickley Heights History Center preserve the history of the Heights with the addition of new exhibitions, lectures, films and family-based activities. Please join us for this special evening.

Special reduced donation for SVHS members:

\$40/person, \$75/couple

To receive this reduced rate, send your check, made out to SVHS,

by Wednesday, September 20, 2006, to

SVHS, 200 Broad Street, Sewickley, PA 14143

Donation at the door: \$50/person



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.

Sponsors, Patrons, Benefactors

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

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New Members

From Sewickley: Sally Ann & Joseph J. Cortese; Dave & Laura Doty; Jane & Larry Hitchins; Don & Laura McKee; Joan Miles, Clifford Bob & Family; The Rev. Daniel A. Valentine. From Pittsburgh: David & Jean Henderson; Mary Jane Kuffner Hirt. From Katy, TX: Gene Ford.

In Memoriam

The Sewickley Valley Historical Society mourns the loss of

Mr. George F. Barber; Mr. William Boyd, Jr.; Mrs. Bernard E. Lefkowitz; Mrs. William P. Snyder, III; Ms. Patricia C. Zipper

Sewickley's Harvest Festival



Come to Broad Street on **Saturday, September 9**, between 10:00 and 5:00, and visit the Historical Society's booth. Among the items we'll have for sale are our new postcard history of the Valley, *Sewickley*, and a reprint of Agnes Ellis's 1893 volume *Lights and Shadows of Sewickley Life*.

If you'd like to volunteer to help man the booth—it's fun, and you get to visit with your friends and neighbors—please call the Society at 412-741-5315. We'd love to have you!

Boggs & Buhl

COMING TUESDAY--ANNUAL JULY SALE

Approximately 86,000

Handkerchiefs

the most conspicuous sale of its kind in the entire country

This ad appeared in the *Herald* on July 14, 1923. Did Boggs & Buhl have inside knowledge that KLEENEX tissues would be invented in 1924 as a "marvelous new way to remove cold cream"? In 1926, KLEENEX was introduced in Canada as a handkerchief replacement. The first pop-up cartons were introduced in 1928; the first colored tissues, in 1929. No wonder there was a sale on handkerchiefs!!

Signals is designed and edited by
Susan C. Holton

The Camp Meeting Grounds

In 1868, the Mount Sewickley Camp Meeting Grounds were built in a grove of oaks on a hill above Leetsdale. Founded by the Methodists at the same time as Chautauqua, Mount Sewickley was dedicated to promoting friendship and the work of God. Besides picnic groves and cottages, there were at one time three hotels, recreational facilities, and a tabernacle for non-denominational religious services.

The following is from a pre-World War I promotional piece in the Historical Society's collection:

Over 45 years ago a number of good Methodists came together and decided to establish a Camp Meeting Association on Mt. Sewickley because of its ideal location and the fine grove and good water...

Mt. Sewickley is fourteen miles west of Pittsburgh on the Ft. Wayne R. R., one mile from Leetsdale Station, on top of a high mountain ridge, being 1,200 feet above sea level and is reached by one of the finest roads in the western part of Pennsylvania. The water is excellent, coming from an artesian well, over 180 ft. deep, being cool and refreshing, and as a health resort, 'Mt. Sewickley' compares favorably with other resorts about Pittsburgh.

It is a delightful walk from the railroad station to the Camp Ground. The Camp Meeting road is shaded with tall trees of years' growth; but for those who do not care to walk, automobile service has been established. The round trip fare for two or more persons is 50c each. Parties of 10 or more can secure special rates of 40c for the round trip...

Mr. Sewickley Camp is a rare bit of nature to which has been added a little of the 'artificial,' but not enough to mar the beauty of the natural scenery. Here you will find a retired spot where quiet prevails. A park of natural oaks lift their heads heavenward amid which a great number of cozy cottages nestle with their happy occupants.

One "happy camper" wrote the following poem. It was given to the Historical Society by an unknown donor, with this note attached: "This poem, with apologies to the original meter, was composed by Mary Eleanor McMaster, whose parents, grandparents and great grandparents belonged to the past life of Sewickley in a very definite way..."

MT. SEWICKLEY

I remember, I remember,
The Camp Grounds where we went,
And with our Northern friends so gay,
A happy summer spent.
The tennis court provided fun,
We bought food at the store;
The cottages were numbered,
Our cottage, sixty-four.

I remember, I remember,
The chapel on the Grounds,
Each Sunday morn a bell would ring
To call us with its sounds.
Beautiful hymns we used to sing,
That brightened up the day;
They always will be close to me
And help me on my way.



This postcard from the Sewickley Valley Historical Society collection is postmarked August 12, 1912.

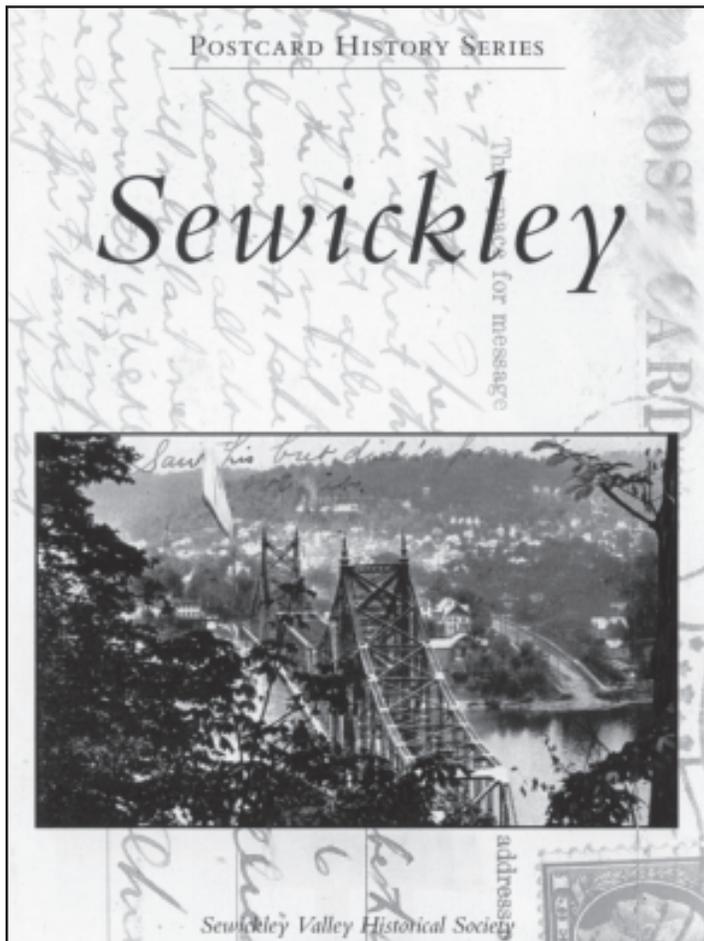
I remember, I remember,
Where flowers used to bloom,
The daisies and the buttercups;
I saw them from my room.
Over the hill beside the brook,
We'd often take a walk;
Just we girls in the evening time,
As far as Lovers' Rock.

I remember, I remember,
The season at its end;
When cooler weather made the Camp
Lose every single friend.
I thought of what we did up there,
All winter until spring,
And then I could not wait to see
What joy the months would bring.

Another reminiscence, by Dr. F. K. White, appeared in the *Sewickley Herald*, July 7, 1935. Here are excerpts:

The first two years of camp we lived in canvas tents. Then seventy-three cottages were built, and a little wooden chapel where we held our services when it rained. The plan of the camp was somewhat like the shape of a banjo... A board fence enclosed the grounds of each cottage. The cottages, which were built of hemlock boards, had open fronts on the ground floor... When the camp was very new, water was carried by hand for use in the kitchens... Some of the cottagers would often go to camp two weeks before the meetings started, and that was when we had most of our fun. There were picnics, taffy pulls, melon parties, and plenty of time for games of every description... During this carefree period before the meetings began, the men... would slip out early in the morning or evening with their guns in hand to bag a little game. As a result of these hunting expeditions, many a gray squirrel found his way into a meat pie. The memory of those delicious pies still makes my mouth water. My reader must remember that this was before the days of game laws and posted property...

A fire in early August, 1938, destroyed 20 of the cottages in the original "circle," and through the years there wasn't enough money to maintain the grounds. The corporation was dissolved, and the Camp Meeting grounds were finally sold in 1963. Today, the area is a residential subdivision.



Sewickley

is a fourth useful history of the Valley, joining Agnes L. Ellis's *Lights and Shadows of Sewickley Life; or, Memories of Sweet Valley*, Franklin Taylor Nevin's *The Village of Sewickley*, and Frances C. Hardie's *Sewickley: A History of a Valley Community*.

The project was challenging, as the story had to be told using available postcards; normally, one would write the story and find appropriate images to illustrate it. The book is the work of Betty G. Y. Shields, Harton S. Semple, Jr., and Susan C. Holton, staff of the Sewickley Valley Historical Society. We hope that you will find this new postcard history both interesting and informative.

Published by Arcadia Publishing, Portsmouth, NH, *Sewickley* is a 128-page, paperbound book with over 200 captioned photos, plus an introduction giving the history of the Sewickley Valley. It is available for \$19.99 (plus 7%

Pennsylvania sales tax) or for \$25 postpaid from the Sewickley Valley Historical Society, 200 Broad Street, Sewickley, PA 15143.

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



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Sewickley Valley Historical Society
200 Broad Street
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