



Foundations

A Periodic Publication of News and Historical Interest
For Members of The Beaver Area Heritage Foundation

www.beaverheritage.org

Winter 2008

Model Railroads and Gingerbread

Charming Holiday Display Helps Museum Set New Attendance Record



Railroad engine emerges from a tunnel

“Over and over again, people said this was their first visit and that they didn’t know the museum and log house were here – never heard anything about it before,” marveled Shirley Pow, one of the docents volunteering at the Heritage Museum on Beaver’s Light-Up Night in November 2007. Pow estimates that more than 300 visitors rode the chartered trolley from downtown Beaver to see the holiday display.

This special end of year display capped a record year for museum attendance. During 2007, more than 2,000 visitors enjoyed our remarkable showcase of Beaver area history.

Many guests came at the urging of students from College Square and Dutch Ridge Elementary Schools, who constructed the gingerbread houses placed throughout the museum. Parents remarked: “Our family all came – grandparents, parents, kids, cousins, and aunt – just to see our daughter’s gingerbread house!” Others said: “We didn’t know the museum was here. We’ll be back; it’s great!”

Complementing the gingerbread house display, and delighting young and old alike, was another Christmas classic: the model train display on loan from local

collectors Mark High and Ralph “Buss” Morton. High, who, along with his father Jack has collected trains since his childhood in Beaver, says he grew up with a train under the Christmas tree each year. To share his holiday memories with museum visitors, High created a large, detailed winter scene complete with 1950s vintage paperboard houses, antique figurines and old metal toy cars.

A Lionel train travels around the village and over a bridge that High painstakingly decorated with tiny, colored lights. In a separate display case is a rarity, a 1933 Lionel-Ives train set including a classic red caboose and a transformer disguised as a station house.



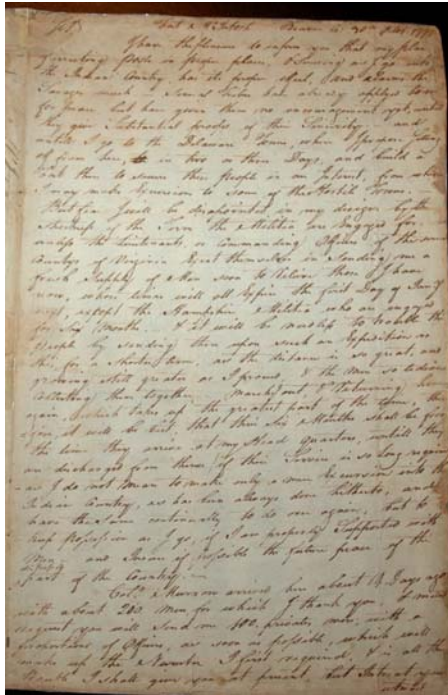
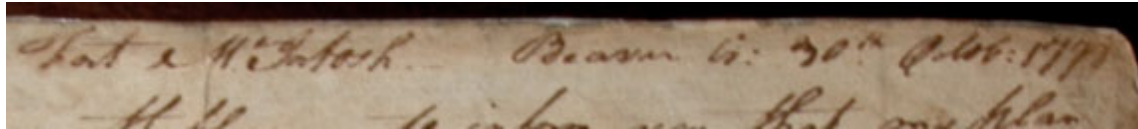
Charming, small town ambience

If children could be persuaded to leave their gaze of the train display, they were invited to do coloring pages and ring the train bell. Then, on to the historically decorated log house, where they were treated to homemade gingerbread cookies and cider warmed in the kettle over an open fire, cheerfully doled out by docents in period costume. Children enjoyed making their own tree ornaments to take home as souvenirs of their log house visit.

-- by Paula Soto

Museum Obtains Second McIntosh Letter

One of Beaver's 'Holy Grails' ... Written at the Fort in 1778 ... Discovered in Dallas!



In the winter of 1777-78, the outcome of the Revolutionary War was at risk due to troop desertion. Men were leaving in large numbers to return home and protect their families in the western colonies, who were under Indian attack. George Washington met with McIntosh at Valley Forge, where a plan was created for two forts to be built as stepping off points heading toward Detroit to “quell the Indian Nations.” Ft. McIntosh, the first of the two forts, was built that summer in ‘Beaver Town,’ then a French trading post and Indian hunting ground, with forests so frighteningly dense and dark that scouts had to be sent 50 yards ahead of the troops to insure against Indian attack. Successful operation of the Fort paved the way for the town of Beaver as we know it today.

In the letter, McIntosh acknowledges that troops are scarce and that his request may not be granted; nevertheless his words portray a tone of optimism put into action as he describes plans to move forward into Ohio “Indian Territory” with 200 men who arrived from another regiment just 14 days prior.

On a whim one morning before work, Adam Fitz, owner of Highland Laurel Gallery, logged onto e-Bay and discovered what he considers “the Holy Grail for us in Beaver.” He is referring to a 1778 letter, obtained from a Dallas auction house, written by Gen. Lachlan McIntosh shortly after the founding of Fort McIntosh in Beaver. Addressed to Col. Van Liveringham, a Virginia militiaman, it requests 100 troops to replace those leaving in four days for an expedition into the Ohio “Indian Territory.” Midge Sefton, head of collections at the Heritage Museum, says the letter is “incredibly significant to the formation of the town” of Beaver due to its relevance to the operation of Fort McIntosh.

The letter differs greatly in tone, and even in handwriting slant and style, from the earlier McIntosh letter that the museum obtained late last year, written in 1780 during McIntosh’s two year incarceration by the British. In that first letter, he instructed his colleague Col. Ball to maintain dialogue with the British to arrange a prisoner swap, then anxiously asked for a personal favor – to safeguard McIntosh’s wife and son. We know today that McIntosh’s wife and son were unharmed, and that his son went on to become a military officer. Fitz plans to find out if the troops requested in the 1778 letter were sent to the fort.

-- by Paula Soto

Heritage Foundation Forms Boy Scouts Troop Post 1967

The Heritage Foundation has partnered with the Boy Scouts of America to form Post 1967, led by Michael Shovlin. The objective is to encourage a love of local history among local students aged 14 to 20 and to promote historical-based professions.

The post will teach students about museum curatorships and planning and presenting programs of historic content in our community.

Plans for the 2008 involve oral history interviews with military veterans and submitting them for publication to the Library of Congress for publication. The group also plans to take part in an archaeological excavation in Washington County.

If interested, please attend a meeting at the museum on Sun., Feb. 10 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. The cost will be only \$7 for the 2008 year. Questions? – please call the Shovlins at 724-728-2070.

Heritage Foundation Receives \$5,000 Grant to Equip Garrison

Pittsburgh 250 Community Connections Awards \$1 Million to Community Projects



Celebrating the Heritage Foundation's "Pittsburgh 250" grant are, l-r: WQED Communications CEO George Miles, Midge Sefton, Allegheny County Chief Executive Dan Onorato and Mark Miner

PITTSBURGH, Dec. 19, 2007 – The Heritage Foundation was among 100 regional and grassroots organizations to receive grants from Community Connections, an initiative of Pittsburgh 250, for activities and events occurring during the region's 250th anniversary in 2008. Only one in five of all applicants received funding.

"Our 250th anniversary represents an opportunity for all of the region's communities to celebrate our heritage and highlight the assets that make Southwestern Pennsylvania one of the best places to live, work, visit and invest," said James Rohr, chairman and CEO of PNC Financial Services and chairman of the Pittsburgh 250 Commission and Allegheny Conference on Community Development.

First Company Fort McIntosh Garrison Revitalization - The Heritage Foundation was awarded \$5,000 to help equip the reenactment regiment representing the Fort McIntosh Garrison of 1778 with new uniforms and gunpowder for muskets and cannons. The fort was recognized by Pittsburgh 250 as the first permanent peacetime post of the U. S. Army and as a Beaver County connection to the Revolutionary War.



In recognition of our role celebrating local history, and drawing visitors to the region, the Heritage Foundation has been granted a license to use and display the attractive "Pittsburgh 250" logo.

2008 Heritage Foundation Schedule

- Membership Meetings** - 7:30 p.m. - Trinity Episcopal Church:
 - Feb. 19 – Morgan Carriage Works
 - March 18 – World War II flying ace Dale Karger
 - April 22 – History of Michael Baker Corporation
 - Nov. 18 – The Story of Legionville
- Charter Day Dinner** – Seven Oaks Country Club – Oct. 25
- Memorial Day Parade and Program** – May 26
- Garrison Day** – June 14
- Fourth of July** – Walking tour of Third Street business district (July 4); River City Brass Band concert (July 6)
- Board Meetings** – at 7 p.m. at the Borough Building second floor council room: April 15, Aug. 19, Oct. 21.

Donations to the Museum: July-September 2007

Anthony Hovanec for Beaver Borough Police – hand-written letter to Mayor of Beaver (1993), Air Mail envelope stamped for National Air Mail Week (1938), unused envelopes of the police department with 3 cent stamp embossed, 1 twenty-nine cent stamp featuring Grace Kelly

Arthur Cornell Jr. – five National Geographics from 1979, 1980, 1981, 1982 and 1983 with articles by Priit Vesilind

Adam Fitz and others – letter handwritten by Gen. Lachlan McIntosh as a POW in military prison (1780)

Kevin Fry – fragment from a cannon barrel

John Gutermuth – 15 color photos of the museum's baggage cart before its restoration

Jean Lloyd – black & white photo of the fourth grade at Aiken School in Brighton Twp.; P&LE Railroad time table (1979)

Sally McDanel – box of letters circa 1890s; leather-bound almanac/date book (1893)

Edwards McLaughlin – three duck-pins and ball from the Fort McIntosh Club bowling alley

John McLaughlin Jr. – information re. Harriet Ward Farm; World War II helmet worn by his father-in-law Charles Zerby

Mark and Elizabeth Miner – portion of magazine; "The Republican National Convention" re: Matthew Quay (1900).

Robert Mitchell – teaching certificate - Daniel Twiford (1879)

Richard Pontillo – four Matthew Quay 45p postage stamps from the Isle of Man; handbill from the Beaver Theatre; Beaver College Bulletin (1909); *Lost Gold of the Republic* and *National Geographic Explorer* books by Priit Vesilind.

Craig Nunamaker for the Rotary Club of Beaver – 177 35mm slides showing Beaver residents (1960s and 1970's)

Charles R. Snitger Jr. – three *National Geographics* from 2000, 2002 and 2003 with articles by Priit Vesilind.

James Spear – three black and white online photos of the Beaver railroad station, P&LE railroad bridges, and New York Central PA 1 diesel train and tracks

Elsie Stammelbach Welfling – miscellaneous photographs and newspaper clippings.

In Memoriam

The Heritage Foundation lost a great friend in **Blanche (Edwards) Shaw** who passed away at the age of 99 in Akron, Ohio on Jan. 16, 2008. She was a generous philanthropist who funded the railroad freight station restoration to become our museum, and memorials at the Fort McIntosh site. We express our deep condolences to her daughters **Mary Rigdon** and **Sarah Wright** and their families.



Beaver Area Heritage Foundation
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2008 Museum Exhibit Schedule:

- March 23** – “Beaver’s Greatest Generation”
 honoring our World War II heroes
- Early June** – “Rags to Riches” – the Michael
 Baker Corporation story
- Early Fall** – “Gingerbread Houses”

News Notes

At the unanimous vote of the museum trustees, ratified by the Heritage Foundation board, our museum name has been changed to the “Beaver Area Heritage Museum” to eliminate confusion and to build upon the Heritage Foundation’s 40-year brand of excellence.

New Webpages on BeaverHeritage.org



Our BeaverHeritage.org website now has 10 new or upgraded pages, highlighting the special qualities that set us apart. The page designs and website hosting are provided on a *pro bono* basis by Johanna Semonik. The new pages

feature Fort McIntosh Overview - Fort McIntosh Garrison - Fort McIntosh: First Post of the Old Guard - 1802 Log House - Log House Landscaping - Authentic Vegetable and Herb Plantings - Partnerships with Schools - Collections Management - Your Next Corporate Event - and In the News.

Beaver Borough Launches New Website

The Borough of Beaver has launched a new website to provide information resources for residents and potential business owners alike (www.beaverpa.us). The site contains many photos of our museum, log house and Fort McIntosh site as well as a link to our BeaverHeritage.org website.

Corporate Member Spotlight

Spanos Group of Merrill Lynch

Led by Samuel Spanos, this team of accomplished financial advisors has a combined 70 years’ experience in the financial services industry. The team’s goal is to help clients create and grow wealth, protect and preserve wealth, and allocate the distribution of wealth in the most tax-advantaged way.

Allan Jewelers

Allan Jewelers, with store locations at 500 Third Street in Beaver and 755 Shenango Road in Chippewa, is committed to style and value in all of its offerings. The variation in style and remarkable value of its jewelry comes from every corner of the world. Allan is pleased to offer breath-taking diamonds which offer great brilliance, fire and scintillation.

Michael Baker Corporation

Founded by Beaver resident Michael Baker Jr. in 1940, Michael Baker Corporation today provides professional services for its engineering and operations and maintenance clients’ most complex challenges worldwide. The firm’s primary practice areas are focused on the aviation, environmental, facilities, geospatial information technologies, pipelines and telecommunications, transportation, water/wastewater, and oil and gas markets.