



"Not to live in the past, but to have the past live through us"

# West Pittston Historical Society Newsletter

Volume 3, Issue 2

June 2006

## 1857 - 2007 West Pittston Sesquicentennial Update Meeting

Sunday  
June 25, 2006  
1:00 PM

First United  
Methodist Church  
Wyoming Ave.  
West Pittston

We will be meeting to share committee reports and update activities for the up-coming West Pittston Sesquicentennial celebration in 2007. The public is invited to share ideas and plans for this exciting event in our borough's history.



## OUR NEXT PROGRAM Discovering History in Your Town

Bryan Van Sweden

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

We are pleased to present commonwealth speaker Bryan Van Sweden from the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission. Mr. Van Sweden's presentation will discuss Pennsylvania and specifically West Pittston architecture and design and what it reveals about our history. He will

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also focus on how architecture and landscapes offer clues to how people lived, how places devel-

oped, and how events unfolded. Bryan Van Sweden's work with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission is in the area of historic preservation, providing technical assistance to groups that are seeking to preserve historic buildings and neighborhoods in their communities and coordinating the bureau's efforts with regional and local heritage organizations.

As always, this program is free and open to the public and refreshments will be served. Please join us and bring a friend.

**Remember that our  
Sesquicentennial Update  
meeting will take place  
at 1:00 PM just prior to  
this program.**



A Wyoming Avenue residence "dressed up" for the 1907 Golden Jubilee celebration.

## Garden Village Memories

As another school year draws to an end and the children look forward to another fun-filled summer, I am reminded of the wonderful array of summertime activities that were available to kids in West Pittston when I was growing up the 1960's.

One of the best attractions was the playground program held at the high school football stadium. My favorite activity there was the football locker room that was turned into an arts and crafts center each summer. Long tables were set up and you could work all day on as many crafts as you had the patience to make. Some that I recall were, braiding gimp into lanyards and bracelets, weaving baskets out of freshly soaked canes, painting plaster molds (my personal favorite) and making pot holders from fabric loops. I think that somewhere in the depths of my attic many of my summertime creations still lurk. The playground also held a hat show and pet show each summer. One year my winning hat was made from a colander turned upside down on my head with kitchen tools tied to it. The pet show was always exciting since my tiny dog never met another dog that he didn't want to fight. My brother always had to help me keep Snappy under control on the pet show day.

Many kids today are fortunate enough to have

their own back yard pools but those were rare during my childhood. We all gathered at the town pool everyday to cool off. As grade school children, we enjoyed watching the older high school kids trying to look grown up. It was like watching one of those beach blanket bingo movies. The snack bar featured many wonderful treats of the time with my favorites being frozen Milky Way bars and Bonomo taffy. Usually you would smash the wrapped taffy on the sidewalk to break it up into bite size pieces but in the hot summer sun, that wasn't necessary and we just pulled it apart.

It seemed that every few weeks in the summer one of the organizations in town would hold their annual picnic. I remember picnics being sponsored by the Little League, the Moose, the fire departments and some of the churches. These picnics were loads

of fun for kids with inexpensive games and good food and, since all your friends would be there too, the social part was exciting as well.

Many of you probably recall some of these events and have fond recollections of your own summertime fun.

Mary Portelli

## WPHSWeb Site

[www.westpittstonhistory.org](http://www.westpittstonhistory.org)

*We are pleased to announce that our new web site is on the way to becoming a reality. The site is currently under construction but plans will include information on programs, historic photos and Jenkins Harding Cemetery information. Check back later this summer once the site is up and running.*

## Future Programs

*August (date to be determined) - How to Research Your Home's History*

*Sunday, October 8, 2006, 2:00 - Author, Juanita Patience Moss and Jean Colarusso discuss their West Pittston roots.*

## HITCHNER BISCUIT COMPANY



WPHS was happy to hear that the borough is working to save the Hitchner Biscuit Company building on Exeter Ave. Boyd Hitchner of Haddonfield, New Jersey, whose grandfather and uncles ran the company, was in town recently and he stopped by to check out the old building. We all hope that the borough's efforts to save the building will be successful.