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Scheduled Monthly Meetings for Members & Guests: 3rd Wednesday of the Month. Meetings are held in the cafeteria, starting at 7PM

September 20, 2023
October 18, 2023
November 15, 2023

December 20, 2023 - NOTE - This meeting will be held in the Museum to celebrate the formal opening of our up-dated School Room.

Fleetwood's 150 Year Anniversary Plans

Sept 28-30 - Carnival in the Park
Concession Stand opens at 5PM; Rides open at 6PM Local Community Groups stands open at 6PM Entertainment each night 6:30 to 9:30

Sept. 28th The New Individuals (Oldies/Variety)

Sept. 29th Sloth Love Chunk (80s Pop/Rock)

Sept. 30th Chuck Mead (Country Rock)
More details on the Facebook page:Fleetwood Council of Community Organizations (FCCO)

Sept. 30 - Anniversary Parade Starts at 2PM at the Middle School (Richmond St), then L onto Arch St, R onto Willow St to Main St. West on Main then R onto Chesnut and conclude at Vine & Chesnut. Check FCCO Facebook page for more details and a Map.

October 6 - FIREWORKS (6PM) following Homecoming activities at the High School

October 8 - Community Church Service



Fleetwood Area Historical Society Newsletter

www.fleetwoodpa.org • FleetwoodHistory@fleetwoodpa.org • 610-944.5800

FALL 2023

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President's Message

It's hard to believe another quarter has gone by. Thanks to our members, we did very well with the book sales and are anticipating another printing. The volunteers working at the Carnival kept selling books and handing out pre-ordered books, leaving us with few remaining copies to be picked at the Historical Society.

The Open House at the Borough Hall and Historical Society Museum went well. We had people coming through the entire time we were open - Noon to 4PM. It was interesting to listen to some of the comments from people passing through who didn't know there was a Fleetwood Museum.

Some of our members attended the Gala Event held that Saturday evening. The hit of the evening was the film "Finding Fleetwood". An assortment of the film's characters turned out to be none other some of the Historical Society's members: Russell Anderson, Bill Strause, Bob Knoll and yours truly. If you get a chance to see it, I'm sure you will enjoy it.

The School Room is moving along at a good pace. The volunteers have been getting photos of the High School Band members from the old class yearbooks which we will be scanning and displaying. Note that we have very few band photos in our archives, so more photos needed to be scanned which is time consuming. The volunteers have found some great photos which I think you will enjoy. We are looking to have a Grand Opening Celebration of the School Room at our December Membership Meeting.

The 150 Year Anniversary Parade will be held September 30th and a Carnival in the Park is scheduled for September 28th thru the 30th. Look for our floats in the Parade and our stand in the Park for Book Sales and Membership Drive.

Art Counts

Future Programs

Presentations will be held in the cafeteria, starting at 7PM. The downstairs Museum will be open after the meeting.

Sept. 20, 2023 Richard Polityka
Reading and Berks during World War 1:
Explore life at home during the Great War. The war was fought on foreign soil, but the effects could be felt at home. Learn about the impact on the lives of the citizens of Berks County.

Oct. 18, 2023 To be announced

Nov. 15, 2023 Richard Polityka
Christmas Past on Penn Street
Enjoy the images of Reading from Christmas years ago, with a nostalgic walk down Penn St. This photographic presentation explores the joy of visiting downtown Reading during the Holidays..

Enclosed in this newsletter is a Membership Renewal form. We've simplified the categories a little bit - hope it works well for everyone. Please be sure to include your current E-mail address. If you wish to receive the newsletter by E-mail ONLY, note that on the renewal form. Return your form via the U.S.Mail, bring it in during Museum hours/Mondays 9 to noon, or bring it to a monthly Membership Meeting. We appreciate your support of The Fleetwood Area Historical Society.

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FLEETWOOD SUMMER CARNIVAL

Volunteers helping at the Historical Society's booth during the Summer Carnival. Left to right:Genevieve (Feinour) Heffner, Russell Anderson, Clair Derr and John Koller. It was great to see the favorable response to our 150th Anniv. Book. If you haven't ordered a copy of the 2nd printing of the book, don't wait. A limited number will be available.

STAHLER FAMILY - FLEETWOOD PLANING MILL

Glancing at the inside cover of the 150th Anniv. Book, shows just a few of the family-owned businesses that helped give Fleetwood it's character. Future newsletters will introduce our readers to some of these families along with their business ventures.

The Stahler family has been embedded in Fleetwood's history since the early 1900s. Starting as The Fleetwood Planing Mill, Jeremiah Stahler began business on E. Locust Street in 1911. In the recently published Anniversary book, check pages 189 thru 191 for photographs of the outside and inside of the original building. The business activity involved planing boards & making cabinets for offices, churches, banks and homes. This included trim and fixtures. Jeremiah had 3 sons who took over the business in 1920 and changed the name to Fleetwood Manufacturing & Planing Millworks. Officers were Paul, serving as President, Clifford. Vice-President, Charles was Secretary and Roy Deisher was the Treasurer.

In February 1928, according to an article in The Reading Eagle, the business experienced a fire which started in the conveyer carrying sawdust and shavings out of the main plant. These are highly combustible by-products of the planing and milling operation, so the fire spread rapidly. The "Eagle" article acknowledges the heroic efforts of Fleetwood Fire Company as they worked to save one of the town's largest industries. This is significant because the fire occured when the cold temperatures caused freezing of the hose lines and the water formed icicles on the firemen.

The fire damaged the building to the point where a new mill was constructed along with a separate building to apply paint and finishes on the woodwork. This was built behind Clifford's home, which was across the street from the original brick building.

Clifford's son Irvin, was not initially a major part of the family business. He instead moved to New York City, as did his 2 sisters, Charlotte and Florence. Irvin worked in a drug store/soda fountain and Charlotte was a nurse. In the late 1930s he moved back to Fleetwood and met Grace Kline, a school teacher who became his wife. WWII broke out and Irvin was serving in the Army, working as an officer's cook. He was stationed in Europe, once cooked a meal for General Eisenhower (1943) and was known to sneak officer's food, especially pies, to Albright Strause who was stationed nearby. Albright would arrive at night in his Jeep and hide the food under the seat. That is, till they got caught! Sister Charlotte, who also joined the Army, got to see Irvin while they were both stationed in England. The 75th Anniv. Book mentions Charlotte on page 86, referencing her Military Service and on page 85 is her photograph. Irvin was part of the 2nd landing at Normandy, where tents were erected on the beach for cooking meals.

After leaving the Army in 1945, Irvin went back home to Fleetwood where he worked in the millworks. He bought a house and walked across the back yard to work. He took over Stahler Supply Shop, as it was then named around 1950. His father, Clifford died in 1960. Along with Irvin, the other workers were brothers Al and Gus Schukraft and Russ Mertz. The business was sold in 1966 and Irvin joined the Halbeisen Bros.Corp. in Reading.

For more information related to this article, come to The Fleetwood Area Historical Society. Our rooms are full of "Oh, I remember that" memories. The museum is open on Mondays 9:00-12:00.

Fleetwood Area Historical Society

Officers

- President Arthur Counts
- V. President Bill Strause
- Rec. Secretary
- Treasurer David Dreibelbis
- Corr. Secretary Becky Schroeder

Directors

- Clair Derr Jim Shade Grant Moyer
- Dale Adams John Koller

Contributors:

- Genevieve Heffner, Linda Reichardt
- Russell Anderson, Betty Hilbert
- Roger Moyer, Connie Snyder

Museum Hours Mondays 9:00-12:00

BREAKFAST BROTHERS ORIGINS by Russel Anderson

Early in 1971 a small group of men decided to organize in order to contribute to Fleetwood’s up-coming Centennial Celebration scheduled to take place in 1973. After meeting, it was decided that they would serve breakfast the third Sunday of each month at the American Legion Post in town. The first breakfast was served in March of 1971 and was attended by a total of 69 patrons.

The organization began holding meetings on Tuesday evenings and Larry Weidner was elected as the first President. Originally, the Breakfast Brothers consisted of about 15 men, but quickly grew to a roster of 35. In October, the group began holding meetings immediately following the monthly Breakfast in order to improve attendance.

As the momentum for the Centennial Celebration grew, it was decided that the group’s main focus should be directed toward that celebration. As a result the Breakfast Brothers informed the F.C.C.O. that they would chair the Centennial Parade. The result was an event that the people of Fleetwood would long remember. Additionally, the group also sponsored the creation of a Centennial Movie, which was filmed by Carl Herman at a cost of approximately \$2500.00.

The Brothers soon saw the need to purchase additional equipment in order to improve efficiency and expedited service at the Sunday breakfasts. By the time of the week-long Centennial Celebration in August, over 700 individuals were served. Although attendance has fluctuated over the years, the Break-fast Brothers currently serve between 100 and 150 breakfasts each month.

Following the Centennial festivities, the group decided to remain active and reorganize. As a re-sult, they adopted a set of By-Laws and raised the membership roster to 55. The main purpose of the or-ganization became the promotion of a better community through help to such organizations as the Sr. Y-Teens, European Soccer Team, the Lioness Christmas Party, equipment for the Fire Company Ambulance, Little League and the Fish & Game Association.

Through the years, the Breakfast Brothers have continued to thrive and are a driving force in our community. They continue to serve breakfasts monthly in the old High School Cafeteria and welcome your patronage and support.

MYSTERY PHOTO

In the last newsletter, we included a Mystery Photo which came from the recently published 150th Anniversary Book.

Take a look at the photo on pages 132-133. It is the Shlegel Log Cabin, which was next to the Spatz home on Franklin Street.

This structure dates back to the 1800s. Mr. Shlegel is pictured at the back of the cabin on page 134.

