



THE SOUTH PARK HISTORIAN

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The Honorable Michael E. McCarthy



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The Society's June meeting's feature presentation was "My Life as a "Can Do" Seabee by the Honorable Michael E. McCarthy. McCarthy is an active sitting Judge in the Allegheny County Court of Common Pleas. Judge McCarthy shared the details of his deployment to Vietnam and how his military experiences shaped his life through his many positions on his way to becoming a judge in 2007. It was a most enthralling presentation and was enjoyed by all in attendance. The Society is most thankful for Judge McCarthy's attendance at the meeting and sharing so much of his personal and professional experiences.

Joy Marquis, President Emeritus



Pictured above: The Honorable Michael E. McCarthy, past SPHS President Joy Stilley Marquis & current SPHS President, Steven Tkach

Also at the June meeting, the Society celebrated the twenty-ninth anniversary of the establishment of the South Park Historical Society as well as the recent retirement of Joy Marquis as President. Joy's contributions to SPHS as a founding member and fifteen years as President were recognized by Allegheny County Chief Executive, Sara Innamorato via a formal Certificate of Proclamation. Many thanks to Joy who is remaining on the Board of Directors and is being formally recognized for her service as "President Emeritus".

Library Movie Theater Burns

On Monday, August 19, 2024, the original Park Theater was engulfed in flames. The fire was battled for more than two hours and as pictured below had as many as four ladder trucks dousing the heavy flames from multiple angles. The building debuted as the "Park Theater" and in 1948 was the venue for the



movie premiere of "Miracle of the Bells". Vacant for many years the theater was most recently known as the Ruby Daugherty School of Dance. The cause of the fire is still under investigation and as pictured below, it appears to be a total loss.



South Park Community Day

South Park Township always sponsors a fantastic Community Day; this year will be another fun-filled day for everyone. The theme for this event is "Party In the Park," and the South Park Township Recreation Department, the township's supervisors, and the manager have planned many exciting activities for young and old. A large parade will kick off the start of the day, followed by contests, sports, and exhibits. As in the past, the Society will be located in the Agricultural Building and will have a large photo exhibit and historical information. Also, the Society's two published books will be available for purchase. We always look forward to the hundreds of people who stop by our booth to view our display and discuss our rich history, and we hope you will join us at Community Day at the Oval in South Park on September 21st.

Annual Christmas Party

Everyone is looking forward to the annual Christmas party on Tuesday, December 10, at the Library Fire Hall. As in years past, this fun-filled evening is much anticipated and well attended by members and their guests.

A wonderful buffet will be prepared by Cyd West Comfort Catering. The entertainer this year is the Comedic Master Magician, *"The Fabulous Flanzinee"*. Raffles, door prizes, and this BYOB event will be something you won't want to miss.

An RSVP form and further information will be in a special membership mailing in early November.

Join Us At The Museum



The community is invited to bring family and friends to see the vast displays of railroads, coal mining, schools, veterans, county fairs, sports, and much more at the museum.

The museum is open on the second and fourth Saturday of each month, from 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm, except for holidays. It is located at 6425 Pleasant Street, South Park, at the corner of the Port Authority Park and Ride parking lot.

If you are considering donating photographs, documents, or other archival material to the Historical Society's collection, please contact Ruth McKee, archivist, at 412-835-9529.

ARCHIVED HISTORY

Pittsburgh Post Gazette
July 11, 1931

Yard Caves In Under Woman

Wife of Library Striker Falls 20 Feet Into Entry Room of Montour Mine.

Mrs. Anne Hadalin, of Library, was recovering yesterday from the shock of falling 20 feet into a mine entry room of Montour mine No. 10 of the Pittsburgh Coal Company when the earth in the yard of her home gave way.

Mrs. Hadalin, wife of a striking miner, was raking her garden when the ground collapsed and precipitated her into the darkend entry, where she was imprisoned for nearly an hour before her cries attracted the attention of John Humes, fire boss at the mine.

Humes, with the aid of other miners, cleared away the dirt and brought the woman to the surface.

The Pittsburgh Press
April 12, 1971

Dynamite Rocks Library Lanes

A Library bowling lane was damaged heavily in an explosion and fire today but damage could have reached into the town itself if 12 unexploded sticks of dynamite set in the apparent arson attempt had gone off, authorities believe.

South Park Twp. Police said a loud explosion in Parkside Lanes, at the intersection of Brownsville Road, Route 88 and Library Road, rocked the community about midnight, causing upwards of \$75,000 damage.

Firemen from Broughton and Library battled the flames for about two hours before bringing them under control, then found the unexploded dynamite, and about 200 gallons of gasoline in 50-gallon drums, scattered about the building.

An Army demolition team from Irwin, Westmoreland County, was summoned to dispose of the explosives.

One of the demolition experts estimated half of the town of Library could have been destroyed had the 12 remaining dynamite sticks exploded. He estimated two sticks had exploded.

State police fire marshals are cooperating with the township police in an investigation.

Damage to the bowling establishment was estimated by firemen at \$75,000 to \$100,000.

ARCHIVED HISTORY

Pittsburgh Post Gazette
April 13, 1971

14 Sticks in Bowling Alley

Dynamite Is Found After South Park Fire

After South Park Township firemen doused a blaze at the plant which manufactures Grandma's Pirogis, 4120 Brownsville Road, they found 14 sticks of dynamite and nine intact 35-gallon gasoline drums in a bowling alley on the first floor.

Theodore L. Hale, chief of the Library Fire Co., said he also found three burnt gasoline drums in the Parkside Bowling Lanes, which was gutted.

Part of a wall exploded at 12:50p.m. Sunday and a gas water heater was blown out of the building several feet, unleashing a steady flow of natural gas from a three-quarter inch pipe, Hale said.

While part of the crew battled the flames, another crew searched for the valve to shut off the gas.

"We didn't even find the dynamite and gasoline drums until we put the fire out and put in the exhaust fans to blow out the smoke," Hale said.

Only one minor injury was reported. Howard Barr, a fireman with the Broughton Fire Co., stepped on a nail and was treated at St. Clair Memorial Hospital.

The two-story building, located about 50 yards from the intersection of Brownsville Road, Route 88, and Library Road, also housed a Scott Oil Co. gas station, a laundromat and Grandma's Kitchen food Co.

Andrew Levitske, one of the owners of the building, said yesterday he had no idea where the dynamite and gasoline came from.

A two-man U.S Army demolition team from Irwin, Westmoreland County, went to the scene at 5:30 a.m. to dispose of the explosives. Hale said the gasoline drums and the dynamite were scattered through the 16-lane bowling alleys. Although the building is primarily a steel, brick and concrete structure, wooden partitions on the first floor fueled the fire, Hale said.

The two South Park Township fire companies from Broughton and Library fought the fire with a Bethel Park fire company. State police fire marshals and township fire and police officials were investigating last night.

A Message From the New Board President

STEVEN TKACH

On behalf of the Society Board of Directors, I would first like to thank everyone for being members of the South Park Historical Society. Membership participation is a critical element to the success of our organization.

Additionally, I would like to apprise our membership of some changes to our organization in the coming year.

Firstly, we are going to be publishing the Membership newsletter from quarterly to the first day of the following months: March, June and September. As the new publication schedule is rolled out, you will be noticing some exciting updates to the format and content of the newsletter. The evident change in this edition of the publication is the addition of color pages. We hope you enjoy the coming changes and welcome any feedback.

We will also be sending out a special Membership mailer at the beginning of November highlighting the holiday season museum hours as well as a formal invitation and RSVP return for the Society's Annual Christmas Party. Be on the lookout for this in early November.

Secondly, we are in the process of updating the website for the Society. We will be adding new content and building the infrastructure of the web platform to allow for the viewing of Archived materials, special content and some future web based presentations. This will allow for our members who are in other areas of the country to view Membership meeting presentations as well as participation in web based Society events.

This is an exciting time and we hope to work on increasing not only our membership but expand our reach so as to include more participation in exciting programming.

I look forward to seeing and hearing from all of you in the very near future.



Membership/Renewal Application

Name _____

Street _____

City _____

State _____ Zip Code _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Date _____

Please check one of the following:

_____ Individual Membership - \$15.00

_____ Family Membership - \$20.00

_____ Senior Membership (65 & over) - \$10.00

_____ Student Members - \$ 5.00

_____ Donation _____

Please make check payable to:

South Park Historical Society
P.O. Box 555
South Park, PA 15129

Upcoming Meetings and events

September 17, 2024 - “Olive Thomas—A Shooting Star Across the Silver Screen” , presented by Vincent T. Ciaramella.

October 15, 2024 - “Witches of the Monongahela” , presented by Thomas White.

November 19, 2024 - “A Historical Review of the Mines of South Park” , presented by Dan Stellute.

December 10, 2024 - The Annual Christmas Party. Join us in celebrating the season at this great evening of fun, a wonderful meal, and outstanding entertainment.

Meetings are held with no charge and open to the public, at 7:00 pm in the Library Fire Hall, 6581 Library Road, South Park, PA 15129.

For more information visit us at:
www.southparkhistoricalsociety.com

Or on Facebook at:
facebook.com/southparkhistoricalsociety

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