



# SHARPSVILLE AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

## Newsletter

The following will help acquaint you with two of our upcoming events . . .

Following the format of the popular PBS television show, our Antiques Roadshow will feature Pittsburgh-area antiques expert Mike Malley, proprietor of East End Galleries. Possessing broad experience in American and European antiques, Mr. Malley has particular expertise in silver, china and furniture.

Admission is \$5 per person, with each admission entitling you to identification and appraisal of one item. Tickets for additional items are available at \$3 apiece. The event will be held from 1-5pm on Sunday, September 15<sup>th</sup> at the Sharpsville VFW. The VFW's kitchen will be open for the event.

So bring down that odd figurine you bought at a garage sale twenty years ago—it may now be worth a mint. And, as we have seen with past Roadshows, much of the fun is in seeing what treasures your friends and neighbors have brought.

On Saturday October 5<sup>th</sup> at 8:00pm, the Historical Society will host Cahal Dunne's appearance at the Pierce Opera House. Billed as "Ireland's Happy Man," Mr. Dunne presents a captivating show of story, song, and wit. For those who are unfamiliar with the entertainer, know that his shows have invariably charmed his audiences. If you are familiar with him you are, in all likelihood, a great fan.

So, just like on that certain day in March when everyone is a wee bit Irish, come join us for that same fun and warm feeling from the Emerald Isle. Tickets are \$15, and are available at Sharpsville Floral, Muscarella's, Sharpsville Boro Building, or Mehler Insurance or by calling 724-959-5757.

### Membership Report

The following have recently renewed their membership:

**Mary Cournan Marilyn Linzenbold  
Bob Verholek Virginia Lange**

We also welcome the following new member:

**Jean Goodhart**

### Test your knowledge of our town

What were the "chicken coops"?

answer on back page

### Upcoming Events

#### ANTIQUES ROADSHOW

September 15<sup>th</sup> at Sharpsville VFW

Bring your antiques and collectibles for appraisal

Gambling Spree Bus Trip to Seneca Allegany Casino

September 25<sup>th</sup>

Call 724-813-9199 for reservations

Singer - songwriter - storyteller - comedian

ireland's "happy man"

**cahal dunne**

8:00pm Saturday October 5<sup>th</sup>

Pierce Opera House

Overnight Bus Trip to Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort

Mt. Pleasant Michigan. October 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>

call 724-813-9199 for reservations

### Items for Sale

#### 2014 COMMEMORATIVE

#### WALL CALENDAR

featuring twelve rarely-seen photos of old-time Sharpsville along with other nuggets of historical information.

Available at: Sharpsville Boro Building, A.J. Kovach Tax Office, Sharpsville Floral, Mela's Tax Service, Muscarella's, Lori Rollinson's Salon, Pizza Joes, Touch of Class Salon, Mehler Insurance

Cost \$10



still available

#### Scenes of Old Sharpsville

a DVD slideshow featuring 100 photos of Sharpsville in years past—\$10

## From the Archives

### Sharpsville in the Spanish-American War

Except when mentioned in a school textbook, the Spanish-American War has largely receded from our nation's memory. In part, this is due to its short duration (ten weeks) and its place in between the larger conflicts of the Civil War and the First World War. Moreover, while the war's stated aim was liberation of Cuba from the Spanish Crown, we may be apt to forget its discomfiting result—an imperial expansion with the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam held as U.S. colonies, followed by a bloody suppression of the Filipinos' own desire for independence. Nonetheless, the men who answered our nation's call for soldiers could not have foreseen this and would have been motivated by a patriotic sense of duty. It is their memory this brief notice intends to preserve:

**Officers: Capt. John W. Smith, 2nd Lieut. George B. Troutman**

**Sergeants: Charles C. Beckman, William B. Bolton, William S. Dunham, James H. Phillip**

**Corporals: Clifford B. Banister, Daniel F. Groscost, John W. Kagarise, Ralph H. Miller, Albert B. Morford**

**Privates: Jonas F. Anderson, Fred E. Austin, William R. Bilkey, Gilbert M. Bond, Clarence M. Carnes, William G. Dunham, William Gill, Fred W. Groscost, James H. Groscost, Lucien G. Hilderbrand, Washington G. Hunter, Charles F. Kreps, Fred Lynch, Sylvester T. Maning, James W. McBurney, Cecil E. McKnight, Martin Nickle, Fred J. Phillips, George A. Porterfield, Herman Shannon, Harry B. Smith, Wells Wheeler**

These 33 men were Sharpsville's contribution to the 109-man force of Company G of the Fifteenth Regiment of the Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry. The Company was raised at Sharon, one of eight from northwest Pennsylvania that composed the regiment. The regiment was mustered in at Camp Hastings, Mt. Gretna, Pa. on May 10 and 11, 1898, and from there the Company was ordered to Sheridan Point, Virginia, and then Fort Washington, Maryland for an anticipated defense of Washington, D.C. Though the war's last battle was fought in August, the regiment remained active and transferred to Fort Meade in Middletown, Pennsylvania in September and then to Athens, Georgia in November. A treaty with Spain concluded the war December 10, 1898 and the regiment was mustered out of service on January 31, 1899.

*The Sharon Herald* describes the departure of the Company from Sharon on April 27, 1898, just two days after war was declared:

With 'Old Glory' waving from the flagpoles of all public buildings and business houses, and State street filled with the soldiers of Co. G bidding their friends farewell before departing for Mt. Gretna, where the Pennsylvania militia is held in readiness for the call which will take them to the scene of war. A large crowd witnessed the departure of the soldiers, business throughout town being generally suspended. The public schools were dismissed and all the industries closed in order that the children and employees might take part in the demonstration.

The Company formed at the armory on west State street under command of Lieutenant J. Smith and, preceded by the Sharpsville Drum Corps, workingmen from the furnaces, iron and steel mills and other works, Sharpsville Post, G.A.R., Citizens Band, Hibernian Rifles, Sharon Post No. 254, G.A.R., and Sons of Veterans marched as far as Thomas' music store, where the line was halted while the children of the public schools sang patriotic airs . . . The enthusiasm as the boys moved along State street was unbounded. Cheer after cheer rent the air and many were the heartfelt blessings bestowed upon the soldiers who, to a man, are eager and ready to do their duty toward upholding the nation's honor. At the station nearly 3000 persons had assembled and it was with difficulty that the train was guided through the crowd. The last sad good-byes were said and Company G started on the journey amid rousing cheers and best wishes for good luck.

## A Look Back

*Sharpsville native Charles J. "Chilly" Doyle (1884-1959) was a long-standing sportswriter for The Pittsburgh Gazette-Times and Sun-Telegraph, covering the Pittsburgh Pirates from 1916 through 1957. He served a term as president of the Baseball Writers of America and his column "Chilly Sauce" was a favorite of sports fans. Employing a style characteristic of the Golden Age of Sportswriting, Chilly penned the following letter to be included in the 1924 Sharpsville Golden Anniversary supplements to The Sharon Telegraph and The Sharon Herald:*

Dear Friends:

"Eddie" Lally, who used to live across the street from "Scootchie" and "Skip" Reichard, but who now, after an adventuresome career in the Klondyke, is one of the "Lights of Broadway," just dropped into my room. "Eddie" and I were in the same room at school in Sharpsville as far back as the panic of '93, so when we get together here in New York we have something more to talk about than the fickle, giddy stuff on Broadway. We naturally talk about Sharpsville.

Well, friends, when I showed "Eddie" your kind invitation his eyes brightened and his memories were those that only home-town reveries can bring. Burdell Banister, a great boy of Sharpsville, who is now a successful attorney in this big town, had told Eddie of receiving one and when Ed glanced on my dresser and read about the golden jubilee he was ready

## A Look Back

### Reminiscences of Chilly Doyle (Cont'd from page 2)

to step on the first train. Unfortunately, his duties will keep him here, but his heart will be there.

My father and mother were in Sharpsville before the town was incorporated. Mother landed there in May, 1870, and father was there before that date. At the time of my mother's arrival there were only three houses on Main-st, one of which later became the Blaney home. At that time Larry Quillen owned the property and my mother stayed with them for a time. One incident which helps to keep that period fresh was an accident at the "cut" made by the Pennsylvania near the old schoolhouse. Part of the earth gave way on the workmen, and my mother's uncle, "Jimmy" Finerty, had a narrow escape, while Larry Quillen suffered a broken arm.

Nearly every fellow can look back to his "knee-pants" days and get a kick. Mine were spent in Sharpsville. With hundreds of others I developed an unfounded love of baseball at the old "Indian Playgrounds" and the "Boiler-shop Field." "Dad" McCabe, "Dooch" Doyle, "Spic" Fye and other interesting athletes of the diamond were headliners.

Remember how the crowd along the first-base line would swing around to a safety-first formation whenever "Spic" came to bat? "Spic" was a crackerjack hitter, but he only had the use of one hand for his power and when he leaned on the ball the bat would follow through for 30 or 40 feet. And remember how the opposing rightfielder would play a deep field every time "Dooch" Doyle came to bat and "Dooch" would smack one over his head anyhow? "Dooch" could hit and there wasn't anybody that could stop him.

Every kid in Sharpsville at that time could do something well in an athletic way. But there was no professional opportunity at that time to compare with the chance a boy of the present gets. Those "stonethrowers" of Sharpsville of 30 years ago were remarkable. They used to practice on the Pennsylvania railroad hill above "Point-Out" throwing across the Slackwater."

And who in Sharpsville doesn't know something about the "Slackwater"? The big dam near Ubers provided navigation for the old "Oneida," the fearless vessel which made regular trips between Sharpsville and Trout Island. And maybe that wasn't a keen place to skate when winter came!

A journey by skates from Sharpsville to Trout Island and Clarksville was considered quite a feat. I got as far as Trout Island once, but the region to Clarksville is still an unexplored mystery. My brother Tom, I think, with others made the entire trip to Clarksville, but Tom had a tough trip on the way back. He broke through the ice at the further end of the trip and had quite a time getting out as the water was deep. He had three or four miles ahead of him with his wet clothes, and rather than go home in this condition he went to the old roundhouse and stood in front of a fire long enough to dry his clothes, so the folks wouldn't know what happened to him.

And no tale about Sharpsville would be half-way complete without recounting some of the thrilling exploits of the gang that "minded cows." You couldn't be a "molly-coddle" or a "pussy-footer" and "mind cows" in Sharpsville. First of all the cows or pigs were as important to some of Sharpsville's families as was the grocer.

When Sharpsville became a borough some sort of an edict went out regulating the positions of the pig-pens, but pigs paraded the streets, and often ran away, long after the legal status of the town was fixed. The law was one thing and the pig was another, with the latter having the edge in popularity.

To pasture cows in those days called for an expenditure, which, while a conservative amount, was a big item in many families of eight or ten members. The town had any number of vacant plots wherein little or no harm was done by turning the cows loose, but eventually the practice was overdone. It was ruled under the ban of the law and "the pound" was established. "The pound" was a lockup for the cows picked up in places other than pastures.

With this edict in effect the practice of minding cows became quite precarious. You had to be a real two-fisted boy to take your cow out in the morning and bring her back into the barn at night. But "Nibs" Cleary, "Coakey" Doyle and the others were not easily tamed.

Before "the pound" threat became a reality the boys were able to mix much fun with the actual work of caring for the cows. A long rope and an iron stake was good for a whole forenoon or afternoon. Thus the cow would be staked and the boys would meet on the ball field or the whole crowd would head for one of the many swimming holds. "Point-Out," "Joker" and "Naughty" were three of the favorites.

But when the constable trailed them the lot of the "cow-minder" was troublesome. Instead of ropes and stakes, the average kid carried a stout broomstick. This was used to make the cows "step on the gas" whenever the enemy appeared. If the youngsters took a chance of staging a game of ball, they always posted a lookout, and the cows were footloose.

I remember once when the constable swooped down on the gang suddenly. There was a wild rush from the ball lot and the cows were soon on the run with the "cop" in pursuit. I got a scare that day. Tom was in charge of our cow that day, but he had no broomstick and it looked as if our cow would be caught. The contest continued from somewhere on Pierce-av to Ridge-st. "Coakey" Doyle managed to use his stick on his cow and ours, while Tom tried to take the attention of the constable. He had decided to get caught before he would give up the cow. It meant a bill of \$2.50 to get a cow out of the pound and Tom figured he could get out of the scrape if he saw the cow headed home. He escaped from the cop and the cow reached the barn in safety. Half a dozen families had whipped cream or scrambled milk that night for supper.

My most serious jam with the cow brought out heroic deeds on the part of five or six of the strong-armed McNally boys.



This photograph shows a football game at the field near the old Thirteenth Street School. It is thought to be from the 1920s, in the era of the leather helmet and the "watermelon" shaped ball.

### Reminiscences of Chilly Doyle (Cont'd from page 3)

In charge of the Doyle milk provider, I staked the cow one day and went swimming. When I returned the cow was missing. She had pulled up the stake and wandered into a big garden of corn. The owners of same garden were holding her for ransom when I finally located her.

Unable to put over a strategic move to retrieve the cow, I held a council of war with the McNallys. After a lot of scheming, one of my pals crept close enough to untie the rope, but before he could get her out of the garden, the man of the house dashed out and re-captured the prize. This time he tied her securely to a tree which shaded the house. Another conference, and this time, a courageous McNally (they were all that) stole into the yard and slashed the rope with a knife. He had the cow on the run the next instant and the raid proved successful.

I could keep this sort of stuff up for hours, enough has been told to let you know that there was some fun in Sharpsville those days. And there were many wet eyes in the Doyle home when "Charlie" Taylor came with his famed dray to move the family to Sharon. Only three miles away, yet it seemed like an ocean then.

Well, friends, "Eddie" Lally says to be sure to tell you how he'd like to be there. He doesn't think anything of turning down passes for the best shows on Broadway, but he surely would be tickled to be in Sharpsville for the big doings. And so would I.

Earnestly hoping the golden anniversary will be a tremendous success, as it cannot be anything else, I am,

Lovingly,

Charles J. (Chilly) Doyle

The Gazette Times, with Pittsburgh Pirates

### Collections update

The following have been recently added to our collections:

**Ken & Sandy Stottlemeyer** donated a collection of antique greeting cards dating from around 1890 to 1928.

**Jim Buynak** donated a police radio used by the Sharpsville Civil Defense police.

**Carol Drennan** donated photographs of the 1986 construction of the Walnut St. bridge, the 1991 high school addition, the 1985 Sharpsville Inn explosion, the Ranch House fire and miscellaneous views of Sharpsville from the 1990s.

**Willard Thompson** donated a 1933 magazine *The Police Review* with an article on Sharpsville and its police force.

**Bob & Gail Mahaney** donated photocopies of photos of a horse-drawn sleigh in front of the Pierce Mansion and of the groundbreaking of the Shenango Dam.

**Paul Mehalko** donated a copy of a program for a 1955 St. Bartholomew's Church picnic.

**Pete Grandy** donated photocopies of an early 20s Sharpsville baseball club and a letter documenting the names of players in a Shenango Furnace baseball team photo we have.

### Contact Us

website: [www.sharpsvillehistorical.org](http://www.sharpsvillehistorical.org)  
 email: [sharpsvillehistorical@hotmail.com](mailto:sharpsvillehistorical@hotmail.com)  
 or see our website for officers' phone numbers

Headquarters: 131 N. Mercer Ave., Sharpsville, Pa.  
 Mailing address: 955 Forest Lane, Sharpsville, Pa. 16150  
 Meetings are held the First Monday of the Month  
 at 7:00pm at our headquarters

Answer to quiz question: the "Chicken Coops" was the nickname for the simple oblong structures of the old 13<sup>th</sup> Street School.