

MUSEUM MEMOS

Mt. Airy Museum Newsletter



VOLUME 8 NUMBER 3

September 2008

The President's Pen

Mike Eacho

One year ago Mount Airy endured another serious fire. Many local businessmen and women and residents suffered serious setbacks. Many of these businesses managed to overcome this setback in the new, temporary business park constructed in the area behind the Mount Airy Train Station. Soon, these businesses will occupy space in the beautiful new buildings that are nearing completion in the heart of Town. Once again the residents and businessmen of Mount Airy have come together to overcome a major disaster.

Art Brett, a good friend of Mount Airy and a member of the Historical Society, died August 21. Art was inducted into the Mount Airy Hall of Fame in March of this year in recognition of all his volunteer activities with veterans and the youth of Mount Airy. Please remember in your prayers Art Brett, Mary Jane, his wife, and Mary, Jeanne, and Michele, their daughters and their families. We will all miss him.

Thanks

The Historical Society of Mount Airy, Maryland wishes to sincerely thank all the individuals and businesses who have made contributions to help the Society continue its work. The individuals and businesses that have made donations to the Historical Society since May are:

Evelyn Burdette

The Historical Society of Mount Airy, Maryland Meets the first Tuesday of every month (except July and August) in the lower level of Mount Airy Fire Hall. The meetings begin at 7 pm. Please join us.

Mr. Arthur J. Brett

Arthur J. Brett, 76, a good friend to many in Mount Airy, died Thursday, August 21, 2008. Art was born September 28, 1931, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He was the husband of Mary Jane Schuster Brett for 55 years.

He served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, and afterwards he served in the active reserves as a first lieutenant of the artillery.



Art graduated from Marquette University in Milwaukee, and did graduate work at George Washington University. After graduating, he became the funeral director at his father's funeral home in

Milwaukee. Later he worked for the Social Security Administration and after six years he transferred to the State Department's Foreign Service branch. He became a consular officer with the rank of Consul and served on a five-year assignment to the American Consulate General in Frankfurt, Germany.

He was an American Legion member for 55 years and held positions up to the state level. He was twice commander of the American Legion Gold Star Post 191, here in Mount Airy. He was also a member of Locale 155 La Societe des 40 Hommes et 8 Chevaux (the 40 & 8), an honor society of American Legionnaires.

Art was a great lover of history. He was a member of the Historical Society of Mount Airy for many years and was inducted into Mount Airy's Hall of Fame in March of 2008 in recognition of all his volunteer activities with veterans and the community's youth.

The Mount Airy Canning Company

The following description of the Mount Airy Canning Factory was presented in "The Way We Were" on March 17, 1991. The "Way We Were" was a column written by Mr. Herman "B" Beck for the Mt. Airy News.

The Mt. Airy Canning Co. was established in 1915. It was developed on the property now occupied by the Mt. Airy Cold Storage Co., one of the largest meat distribution facilities on the East Coast.

On April 10, 1915, the trees on the property were cut down and work began on the construction of the factory. The buildings were spread over five acres of ground; a warehouse 50-by-80-feet, processing rooms 60-by-80-feet, and a husking shed 40-by-135-feet. There was an engine room with two boilers and two engines. There were three viners to hull peas and beans. By August 15, the factory was completed and in operation.

The factory had its own well, 285 feet in depth, which supplied all the water needed for the canning operation. It could produce a continuous four-inch stream of water.

Sometime later two huge vats were added to produce sauerkraut. These were housed under a shed roof shelter on the west end of the warehouse. There were a number of other canneries in the vicinity in Frederick, Westminster, and Woodbine just to name a few.

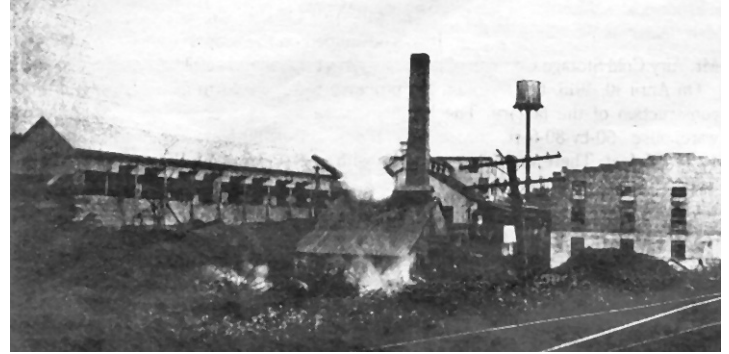
The produce canned included-peas, lima beans, com, tomatoes, and later, sauerkraut. These crops were raised by local farmers under contract. In one particular year in the 1920's for example, the factory contracted for about 1,000 acres of sweet com, 250 acres of peas, 229 acres of beans, and 125 acres of tomatoes. They also maintained about two-and-a-half acres of land for experiments on seeds.

At this time, factory employment during the packing season amounted to about 250 persons. About five persons were employed the year round to label cans and ship out orders by rail. (The B&O railroad had a siding which permitted loading from the warehouse door.) Later in the 1930's, staffing reached a peak of 700 persons during the busy season.

In the beginning the factory was run by the following officers: Mr. N.H. Fooks, president; Mr. R.M. Peacock, manager and head mechanic; and Walter R. Rudy, assistant manager. (Rudy was a Mt. Airy leader for many years, and eventually was

appointed Commissioner of Motor Vehicles for the State of Maryland. He became a partner in many of the early Mt. Airy business enterprises. Mt. Airy would never have been what it is today without him.)

The farmers were paid for their peas in August, beans in October, and corn and tomatoes in December. This enabled the factory to sell some of the pack to pay off rather than borrow the money to do it. The factory not only provided a market place for the local farmers, but employment for their women and children during the summer.



The Mt. Airy Canning Co.

As an example of the way the com was processed, there were usually about 18 shuckers working in the husking shed. They could each husk about 60 ears of com per minute, or one per second. After shucking, the corn was conveyed to the process room on an endless belt for washing. Then it proceeded to the cutting room where eight cutters worked. After the corn was cut off the comb, it was conveyed to the second floor and passed through machinery which screened out short pieces of cob and hard grains of corn. The corn was conveyed next to the cookers. After cooking the corn was moved to large funnel-shaped fillers.

Cans were run from the warehouse or directly from the box car, one to each capper on can lines, gravity fed. The cans were purchased from Continental Can Co. of Baltimore by the box car load. There were three capping machines which filled the cans from the filler and a line of syrup piped down by gravity from the floor above. The cappers could each fill and cap 60 to 120 cans per minute. The cans were packed by hand into large baskets which had a capacity of 450 cans.

Continued on page 3

The Mount Airy Canning Company (Continued)

These baskets ran on a track conveyed by a crane to a kettle. There were 14 kettles holding three baskets each. The corn was cooked for one hour and ten minutes. After cooking the baskets were moved on their tracks to the cooling tanks which ran from the processing room to the warehouse.

In the warehouse the cans were taken out of the baskets by hand and packed in cases of 24 cans each. They were then wheeled into the warehouse and stacked. After cooling in the warehouse for at least several days, the cans were labeled at the rate of 4,000 cases per day. The cans were then repacked in cases by machinery and then taken to the nailers. The cases were nailed by machinery and then moved either to trucks, box cars, or back to the warehouse. In the 1930's, the nailers were eliminated and cardboard cases substituted.

Each crop, of course, went through a similar but slightly different process. I worked in the factory myself from 1937-1940 in the summers. The man who hired me and most of the others was Milton Watkins, a year-round employee. Watkins had lost an eye by the nailing machine at some time in the past, and was a good boss for the part-time worker. Others who worked near there at this time were Lester Moxley, Anthony "Tony" Kimmel, Guyer Penn, Earl Mullinex, John Flair, Leonard "Pat" Gartrell, Joe Lettore, Buck and Milt Dayhoff, Maude Smith, John Myers, and his wife Christina. There were many, many more. One-armed John T. Norwood ran a snack shack, using his prior experience as a grocer. Blacks and whites worked side by side. The plant would run 24 hours a day during pea season. I worked 20 hours a day often for 20 or 25 cents an hour.

The factory branded their caned goods "Boris" and most were shipped north to Philadelphia, New York, or Boston. Depending on the crop, the factory could turn out 150,000 cases per year. Eventually, peas were canned for the Mt. Airy facility in other plants in Oakland and Mountain Lake Park, Maryland.

The end came via a bankruptcy proceeding in 1941. The last year I worked there the old pros were gone - Fooks, Peacock, and Rudy were either dead or out of the business. Their replacements bought some cans that year which did not fit the lids exactly, cheap, or so they thought. The cans had to be stamped in a die to stretch them ever so slightly. Many of them cracked at the seam in this process. The result was that many cans spoiled and blew up in the warehouse.

The tough part was that the explosions could not be predicted, and sales soon dropped to zero. The company went broke.

After sitting idle for a little while, the buildings and land were sold at auction for \$20,000. During World War II, the warehouses were rented to the government by the new owner to store war supplies.

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HOUSE PAINTS

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Generations of satisfied users say that this house paint is tops for beauty, protection and long life. It's easy to apply . . . the colors are beautiful and the white cleans itself. **\$6.58** Gallon
- **COLORAMA TRIM COLORS**
These beautiful colors are alkyd enamels, similar to the finish on many automobiles and refrigerators. They dry fast . . . resist fading . . . and wear for years. **\$8.48** Gallon
- NEW! FOR WHITE TRIM ON BRICK HOMES**
Colorama Hi Gloss White is a Yacht type white that will make your white trim the envy of the block. Extremely white high gloss and will not wash down over the body of your home. **\$6.79** Gallon

DAVIE DECORATOR SAYS:
It's not the price per gallon, but the price per year that counts.

10% DISCOUNT ON 5 GALLONS OR MORE

Cramer Paint & Hardware, Inc.
Main Street MT. AIRY, MARYLAND Phone 80

From the Community Reporter September 19, 1958

Mount Airy History 101

On Saturday, September 13, The Mount Airy Main Street Association (MAMSA) in cooperation with the Historical Society of Mount Airy will conduct another of its historical tours of the downtown area. Mr. Oscar Baker will be the tour guide and historian for the 11am and the 2pm walks through Mount Airy. He will describe the history of many of the Town's buildings and people. He will also describe the fires that have plagued the town since 1903. Each tour will be limited to 25 people, so please arrive early. The Historical Society is considering offering additional tours later in the day if there is sufficient interest.

E-mail us at: mountairyhistoricalsociety@earthlink.net

Maryland Senior Citizen Hall of Fame Selectees

In April, the Historical Society nominated three very deserving Mount Airy residents for the Maryland Senior Citizens Hall of Fame. Our three nominees were: Joan Collins, Arlene Runkles, and Helen Simpson. We were notified in June that Joan Collins and Arlene Runkles were selected and will be presented with the award at a luncheon to be held at Michael's Eighth Avenue, 7220 Greyburn Drive, Glen Burnie Maryland. We were very disappointed that Helen Simpson was not selected, however, she will be next year.

The presentation will be on October 23, 2007, starting at 11:00 AM with a social period. Luncheon will be served at 12 Noon. We are encouraging a good response to support Joan and Arlene. Therefore, we will make reservations through the Society so we can sit together as a group. This is open to members and friends, also. As much as possible, we will arrange for car-pooling.

If you are interested, please contact Mason Wilburn, 1111 N Main St, Mt. Airy, MD 21771.

SAVE \$1.00
(Any Make — Any Model).

August 22nd	Lubrication	\$.75
to	Brake Adjustment	1.00
October 1st	Total	\$1.75
	Regular Price —	\$2.75


CHUCK CRESWELL CHEVROLET
Mt. Airy 67

From the Community Reporter September 19, 1958

Mount Airy Hall of Fame


It is that time of year again when everyone in Mount Airy should begin considering who would be a good nominee for the Mount Airy Hall of Fame. Applications can be obtained from the officers of the Historical Society.

The Mount Airy Museum is open every Friday and Saturday from 12 noon until 4pm.
Come visit and enjoy photographs and memorabilia from Mount Airy's past.
The Museum is located in the Flat Iron Building at the corner of Main Street and Park Avenue.



BIRDS EYE SPECIALS

Green Peas	19c
Fordhook Limas	29c
Spinach	19c
Broccoli	29c



FOR QUALITY AND ECONOMY

DEL MONTE: Fruit Cocktail, #2½ can 38c - Peaches, #2½ can 31c
Pineapple Juice, #5 can 2 for 55c - Sliced Pineapple, #2½ can 35c
Pineapple & Grapefruit Juice, #5 can 2 for 57c

Land O'Lakes Golden Sweet Corn, med. cans, 2/31c; Spry, 3-lb. 84c
Niblets Corn, 12-oz. cans, 2/31c; Domino 10X Powdered Sugar, 2/27c
Pet, Pearl or Carnation Milk, tall cans 6/89c; Morton Salt, 2 pkgs. 23c
Pillsbury Golden Pie Crust Mix, 2 pkgs. 27c; King Syrup, #2½ fin 36c

HEINZ: Ketchup, 14-oz. bottles, 2/47c - Campside Beans, 2/43c
Pork and Beans, 2/33c - Hot Dog or Hamburger Relish, jar 27c
Breast O'Chicken Tuna: light meat 37c, white meat 39c, chunk 33c
Gold Medal Flour, 5-lb. bag 52c Kleenex Table Napkins, 2 pkgs. 45c
Soft-Weave Toilet Tissue, two-pack 25c; Wisk, reg. 2/69c, giant 63c
Dove, reg. bar 2/39c

ESSKAY: Ready-to-eat Hams, 69c lb. - Sweet-Korn Bacon, 1b. 65c
Bacon (½-lb. pkgs.) 78c lb. - Franks, 61c lb. - Dix. Maid Franks, 47c lb.
Chipped Beef (¼-lb. pkgs.) 45c lb. Esskay, Swifts Picnics, 48c lb.
Esskay, Swift's and Myers Regular Hams (½ or whole) 64¢ lb.

LINDSAY L. BROWNING

Phone your orders before 10 o'clock and let your GA truck deliver
MT. AIRY, MARYLAND Phone 65-W

From the Community Reporter September 19, 1958

Welcome New Members

The Historical Society would like to extend a welcome to the following new members:

Bob & Faith Arrington Dean & Etta Griffin

Mount Airy Artifacts Needed

The Historical Society of Mount Airy, Maryland is still looking for photographs of people, places, and events in Mount Airy and the surrounding area. If you have any photographs that relate to the people, businesses, or history of Mount Airy, and you would allow them to be displayed in the Mount Airy Museum, please contact Mike Eacho, Pete Bowlus, or one of the other officers of the Historical Society. We will scan them and immediately return them to you. Photographs are the most popular attraction in the Museum and we would like to display more and different photographs. Any other artifacts you would like to donate to the Historical Society, such as business cards, matchbook covers, pens, railroad implements, and other Mount Airy memorabilia, would be welcomed.

OFFICERS

Mike Eacho, President
Pete Bowlus, Vice-President
B. J. Dixon, Secretary
Pat Norwood, Treasurer

Historical Memories from Fifty Years Ago

Compiled by Althea Miller

The information for these Historical Memories was compiled from articles and ads in the July, August and September, 1958 Community Reporter.

- The lions Club installed the following officers: Pres. Willard Eckrich; 1st v.p. Preston Brown; 2nd v.p. Hanford Moxley; 3rd v.p. Ralph Buckman; Secretary Joe Gosnell; Treasurer Joe Hess; Directors Harold Thompson and Gil Morgan (7/4/58)
- A Bar-B-Cue Chicken Supper will be held Saturday, July 12 from 3-8 P.M. at the American Legion...sponsored by Kiwanis Club...\$1.25 each. (7/4/58)
- Thirty-four Brownies from Troops 489, 1076 and 679 enjoyed a picnic at the Raymond Zeltman farm on Wednesday, July 2. Following games, a hayride and a picnic lunch they observed milk being transferred from a tank to a tank truck. (7/11/58)
- Ivan Colburn, president of the Kiwanis Club, accompanied by his wife and family and Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Reaver, recently returned from Chicago where they attended the Kiwanis convention. (7/11/58)
- Andrew W. Mason was named principal of Mount Airy Junior and High School. He had taught at Westminster High School and was principal of Taneytown High School prior to this assignment. (7/11/58)
- Norma Lee Etzler recently attended the Red Cross National Aquatic School in Prospect, PA and is presently working for the Baltimore Area Council of Girl Scouts as Swimming Instructor at Camp Whipporill, Pasadena, Maryland. (7/11/58)
- Sharon Lee Wright and Robert Franklin were married at the Locust Grove Church of the Brethren on June 29. (7/18/58)
- Local 4-H members place in the county fair: vegetables (5 specimens of 1 vegetable)—David Pickett; vegetables (5 different)—Faye Farver. (7/25/58)
- Troop 460, BSA recently returned from a week at Broad Creek summer camp, including Tom Ogle, Tom Wagner, Mark Coale, Bruce Sutherland, Bruce Clutter, Eugene and Mark Eyler, Tom and Joe Swann, Jeffrey Jackson, Pete Kimmel and Topper Coburn. (Senior Patrol Leader Sonny Myers was at Scout Explorer Ranch in New Mexico.) (7/25/58)
- An ad: Watch for grand opening...Kitchen Maid Kitchens (now on display) Old Nicodemus Building—Main Street...Donald E. VanSant...phone 346-R. (7/25/58)
- Grand opening: Friday, August 1—Henley's Electricenter...advertised Westinghouse refrigerator for \$249.95. (7/25/58)
- New postal rates...effective Friday, August 1: 1st class letters—4 cents an ounce; postcards—3 cents...reported by Jack Steele, postmaster. (8/1/58)
- The Lynn Shop (children's shop) advertised: boys reversible jackets-\$4.50 (were \$5.95); raincoats-\$3.79 (were \$5.49); all girls dresses reduced 20%. (8/1/58)
- The 22nd annual meeting of the Gilbert-Sellman clan was held Sunday at Prospect Hall. Mrs. Virginia Linton conducted a program of hymn singing, scripture and prayer. Robert R. Buckman was re-elected president. (8/1/58)
- Locust Grove Church of the Brethren will hold its' Homecoming and Dedication of the new parsonage on August 10. (8/8/58)
- The annual Kiwanis/Ki-Wives picnic was held at the Burdette's summer home in Woodbine. Ivan Colburn, President, welcomed the 67 adults and children in attendance. (8/15/58)
- Mrs. Mary Lowman, Mount Airy's oldest resident, will celebrate her 95th birthday on September 28. She has pieced four quilts and several small ones in the past year. (8/22/58)
- An ad described a Style Show to be held on September 12 at 8:15 in the MAHS Auditorium. Clothing from the Hecht Co., Edmonson Village will be displayed by local models. Tickets are \$1.00. The style show is sponsored by the Ki-Wives. (8/29/58)

- Wayne Wagner, president of the Key Club and Oliver Davis, vice president, represented MAHS at a Training School at Monticello. The Key Club is sponsored by the local Kiwanis Club. (9/5/58)
- A Crab Feast will be held Sunday, September 7 from 1-6 at the American Legion Home, Post 191...cost \$3.00 per person. (9/5/58)
- Patricia A. Reaver and R. Kenneth Hood were married on September 6 at Prospect Methodist Church with many family members attending them. (9/12/58)
- A new medical center is under construction on the former Cliff Mullinix property. Dr. William B. Culwell, local physician, is building the center. (9/12/58)
- Shirley Lettiere and Charles Norwood were married at the Watersville Methodist Church on September 6. (9/12/58)
- Mr. and Mrs. John Watt are the parents of a third child, a second son, on Saturday, September 13. (9/26/58)
- The B.S. Dorsey Co. has announced it is for sale. The establishment has been in business here for over a century. Over the past 25 years the business has been managed by Mrs. Viva O. Dorsey (widow of the former owner), Mrs. Pearl Thompson and Lester Lowman. The business sold hardware, house furnishings and farm equipment. (9/26/58)
- House numbers are being assigned. The project was proposed by the Chamber of Commerce while the Mount Airy Lions offered to buy the numbers and to deliver them to each home. Residents are asked to place the numbers in a conspicuous position. (9/26/58)
- An ad of interest: Apples—Cider (Grimes, Jonathan, Delicious)...Cider by gallon or barrel...Walker Orchards...Call 74-J. (9/26/58)



The Historical Society of Mount Airy, Maryland
P.O. Box 244
Mount Airy, Maryland 21771