

January 2005 — The Newsletter of the Battle of Homestead Foundation — vol. 1, no. 6

## Dedicate three Pump House 'Battle' memorials

Eight years after it opened its doors for public events, the Pump House at the former Homestead Works now has two permanent historic memorials installed in the building and one the side overlooking the battle site of 1892.

Representatives of the United Steelworkers, the AFL-CIO, the Steel Industry Heritage Corporation, the community and retirees from the Homestead Works joined the Battle of Homestead Foundation in dedicating the memorials, each commissioned by the Foundation through grants formed through matching contributions from various unions in the Commonwealth and matched by the state.

Allegheny County Labor Council President Jack Shea acknowledged the importance of the Pump House and the permanent labor heritage memorials. He pledged an additional \$ 1,000 from the Council to launch the Pump House Maintenance Fund (see page 2) which supplements the more than \$20,000 contributed by the state AFL-CIO, various Central Labor councils, district councils and many local unions. The three memorials dedicated include:

**The exterior bronze plaque.** Executed by Pittsburgh sculptor Brian Reneski, this bas-relief bronze tablet reproduces the famous Edwin Rowe lithograph of the battle, and is situated at the southwest corner of the Pump House with

a sight line directly in front of the railroad overpass, under which the Pinkertons arrived the morning of July 6, 1892. Under the reproduction is the statement of the Homestead Strike Committee that month, which stated the fundamental causes of Liberty and freedom in the workplace which are still relevant today (see page 3).

**Banner/window coverings.** Baden union activist and artist Bill Yund has designed, painted and hung 14 banners which are used to cover the Pump House windows when programs call for film or elec-

### *Three permanent memorials tell the story of steelworkers, battle and heritage*

tronic projections, but which convey the history of the historic mills of the Monongahela Valley. Steelworkers throughout the century of the Homestead Works are portrayed as well as generic representations of the industry, all secured on specially-designed iron holders that allow for easy closure (see page 4).

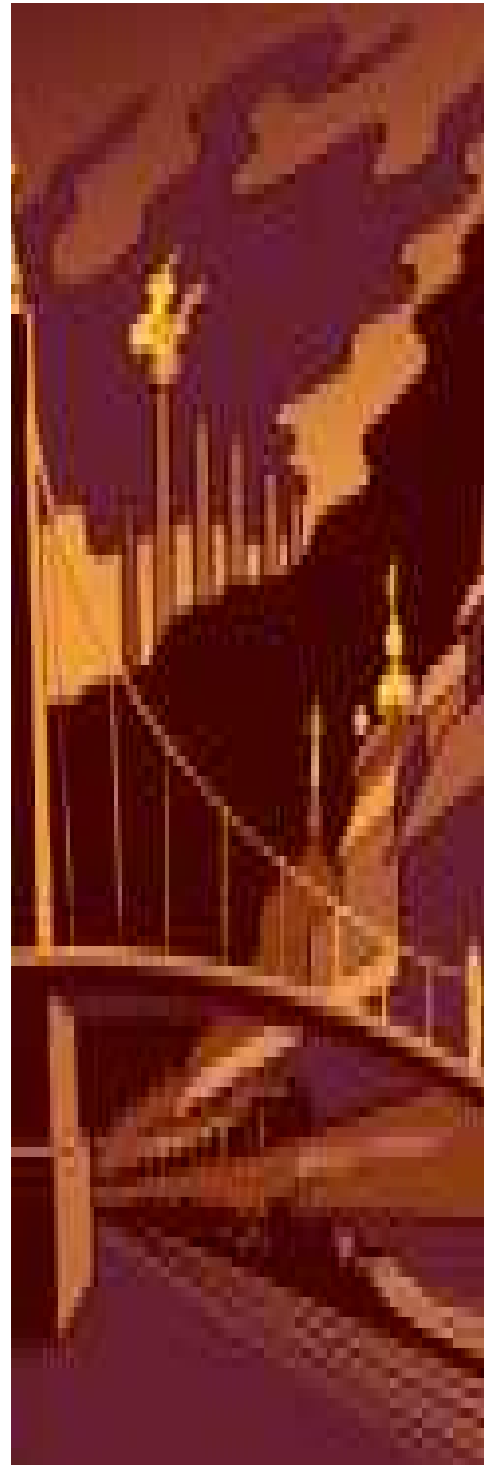
**Model of the 1892 Battle.** Don Sentner, a Bethel Park industrial designer, built and secured a movable model of the Pump House, water tower and the mill landscape as it appeared during the 1892 confrontation, with the Pinkerton barges docked on the river. A special base for the model incorporates a humidifier and electric equipment for the lighting and "hands-on" sequence of the events which affords visitors to follow the events of the Battle. The model was made to scale from company blueprints, contemporary photos and newspaper and magazine articles which described the site(see page 2).

### *In This Issue*

**2004 Pump House Lecture Series ..... 3**

**Bill Yund Window coverings ..... 4**

**Phase II Maintenance Fund raises \$5,200 ..... 2**



*One of Bill Yund's banner/window coverings at the east end of the Pump House.*

# Model of the Battle for visitors at the Pump House

Members of the public, students and occasional visitors of the Pump House will now have an interactive model depicting the Battle of Homestead in the structure where much of the battle took place 115 years ago.

Created and crafted by Bethel Park industrial designer Donald Sentner, the 3 by 5 foot Model in eludes the original Pump House as it was in 1892, the railroad tracks that faced the river and the location of the attempted Pinkerton landing from the barges. Steel billets from which workers and townspeople returned fire are also shown with lighting that enables visitors to follow the course of the battle.

The model was removed to the Bost Building, site of the headquarters of the Amalgamated Strike Committee during the lockout, where it can be seen by visitors to the Steel Industry Heritage Corporation during the winter months.

*Model of the Battle of Homestead (above) created and completed by industrial designer Don Sentner for the Foundation. The model was removed for the winter months from the Pump House to the Bost Building, the Steel Industry Heritage headquarters on Eighth Avenue.*



## More than \$5,200 raised in Phase II maintenance fund

More than two dozen Pennsylvania unions, several federations and labor councils and many individuals have contributed to the Phase II Maintenance Fund for the Pump House, with a total of \$5,220 being raised as of December 1, 2004.

Phase II was initiated by two sizable contributions made to the Battle of Homestead Foundation, earmarked for maintenance and advancement of the Pump House site, following the July 10 dedication. They were from long-time board member and SEIU leader Rosemary Trump, for \$1,000 and the Allegheny County Labor Council, whose \$1,000 contribution was announced by President Jack Shea during his remarks at the dedication.

The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO sent \$500 with a note of congratulations from President Bill George. USWA District 10 and SEIU Local 668 contributed \$250 each and \$200 came from USWA Local 8567 and IBEW Local 459. Other contributions were made by the following unions and individuals:

CLUW Philadelphia; IBEW/ PSEWA; AFSCME Local 2579; USWA Local 12698; Faculty Federation CC Philadelphia; United Labor/ Reading & Berks County; USWA Local 1557; Joel Woller.

UFC Local One (Utica); AFGE Local 1916; George Kantes; Thomas J. Sullivan; Letter Carriers Branch 84; AFSCME Local 1982; **IBEW Local 385**; William G. Wood and AFGE Local 1923.

NABET/CWA Local 28; Laurie Graham Shearer; Operating Engineers Local 66; USWA Local 1196; IBEW Local 201; Judy Ruzkowski/Ken Regal; USWA Local 1355; District 1199P.

George M. Koma; Russell W. Gibbons; Robert J. Schertzer; Kenneth Wolensky; Kari J. Parrish; UFC Local 325; Rev. Jack O'Malley; UFC Local 23; Courtney Maloney; David Demarest and AFSCME Local 1989.

Contributions to the **Phase II Maintenance Fund** should be sent to the Battle of Homestead Foundation, PO Box 11421, Pittsburgh, PA 15238. The Foundation is a non-profit organization.



**Battle of Homestead Foundation  
NEWSLETTER**

**January 2005, V. 1, No. 6**

**PO Box 11421  
Pittsburgh PA 15238**

**Tel 412-782-0171  
FAX 412-784-8801**

**[www.artswire.org/mvm/battle](http://www.artswire.org/mvm/battle)**

*Editor: Russ Gibbons  
Photography: Jim Hohman  
Artist: Bill Yund*





Sculptor Brian Reneski describes the process for the bronze marker of the Battle of Homestead which was dedicated in July. Right: closer view of the sculpture.

## **Bronze marker of the 1892 Edwin Rowe depiction**

Sculptor Brian Reneski describes the process for the bronze marker of the Battle of Homestead which was dedicated in July. Right: closer view of the sculpture.

One of the Pump House lecture series during the Summer of 2005. Several hundred visitors were on site for the events and plays scheduled over seven months.

An exterior bronze plaque depicting the famous Edwin Rowe lithograph titled “The Battle of Homestead” was installed in July, allowing site visitors to gain insight into the events of July 6, 1892 on occasions when the Pump House is closed. It is located Just west of the building with a sight line of the present railroad bridge.

Lawrenceville sculpture artist Brian Reneski designed a 52 in. high concrete, steel and bronze design on a 36 x 60 in. base, incorporating part of the famous lithograph of the battle by artist Edwin Rowe, entitled “Workmen Cannonading the Barges.” The marker is located at the southwest corner of the Pump House, allowing visitors to view the existing railroad bridge whose abutments existed when the Pinkerton barges arrived on July 6, 1892.

The plaque includes the Declaration of the Strike Committee, composed of the amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers and the Homestead Assembly of the Knights of Labor, dated July 20, 1892: “The employees in the mill of Messrs. Carnegie, Phipps & Co., at Homestead, Pa., have built there a town with its homes, its schools and its churches; have for many years been faithful co-workers with the company in the business of the mill; have invested thousands of dollars of their savings in said mill in the

expectation of spending their lives in Homestead and of working in the mill during the period of their efficiency. . . .

“Therefore, the committee desires to express to the public as its firm belief that both the public and the employees aforesaid have equitable rights and interests in the said mill which cannot be modified or diverted without due process of law; that the employees have the right to continuous employment in the said mill during efficiency and good behavior without regard to religious, political or economic opinions or associations; that

it is against public policy and subversive of the fundamental principles of American liberty that a whole community of workers should be denied employment or suffer any other social detriment on account of membership in a church, a political party or a trade union; that it is our duty as American citizens to resist by every legal and ordinary means the unconstitutional, anarchic and revolutionary policy of the Carnegie Company, which seems to evince a contempt [for] public and private interests and a disdain [for] the public conscience. . . .”

---

## **2004 Pump House Lecture Series and ‘Dorothy 6’ drama**

The eighth annual Pump House -Lecture series included six consecutive plays, the annual Poetry Forum, seminars and programs themed around restoration, the workplace and the environment. They included the following: **APRIL 17:** Save our steel: Bethlehem preservation program and steelworker archives; **APRIL 27:** Mercyhurst College, History Department field visit; **MAY 8:** Friends of the Riverfront: South Side based environmental group.

**JULY 10:** 114th Anniversary of the Battle of Homestead: Dedications of three historic projects; **AUG 17:** USWA Class from Linden Hall; **AUG 28:** Labor’s Songs: A workshop with Mimi Yahm; **SEPT 12—OCT 17:** Six Sunday performances of “Dorothy Six”. An original play by Jim McManus, performed and produced by Pittsburgh Playwrights Theatre; **SEPT 14:** Work Accidents in Pittsburgh, Personal & histori-

cal perspectives: Scan George, Steamfitters LU 449; Steve Mellon, P-G photographer; Chas. McCollester, activist/historian, PA Labor History Soc.; James Watta, PA Labor Center, IUP.

**SEPT 25:** Tony Buba: A Retrospect and Updating. The distinguished Braddock filmmaker shows and discusses selections from such works as “The Braddock Chronicles,” “Lightning over Braddock,” “Struggles in Steel” —plus a trailer on his recent trip to Cuba. **OCT 9:** 7th Annual “Poetry At The Pump House”. Poet Robert Gibb, a native Homesteader, reads from his new book, *The Burning World*. Fiction writer Elizabeth Gargano reads from *Ember Days* her draft novel about three generations of girls and women in the coal patch towns of Washington County. **OCT 21:** Environmental Journalists Association. Visit and Presentation (bus tour as part of EJA national convention).



Artist Bill Yund explains the banner concept at July Pump House dedication

## Bill Yund window coverings depict century of steelworkers

Although a journeyman tradesman with the Asbestos Workers, Bill Yund has spent much of his working life in the steel mills of Western Pennsylvania, doing contract work in the industry.

His performance as a labor artist, however, led to his securing funding for the production of 13 2 foot by 8 foot banners which also serve as window coverings in the historic Pump House. Mounted on iron swivel rods, they can be closed when programs call for films, videos and electronic programs.

Yund said in his July 10 dedication remarks that “the ideas between these banners

is to salute the people who worked in Homestead and other mills and give some sense of the energy and the dimension of the steel industry.” He related how photos and resources were used to create composites of workers in each of the decades of the century of the Homestead Works.

“The idea is that any visitor who ever had a relative or neighbor who worked in the mills might be able to find some portrait here that resembles ‘Grandpap Joe’ or ‘Uncle Stush.’ Hopefully, those who never had contact with the industry will also find a story” Yund said.



African-American worker loading steel plate, c. 1920



Woman worker in the mill, circa World War II, 1940s

## Rebirth of the Carrie Furnaces?

In January the Allegheny County Bureau of Economic Development reported that the 250-acre site for the Carrie Furnaces, the onetime blast furnaces for the old Homestead Works in Rankin, may be developed as a Steel Heritage site with residential and commercial development.

The 92-foot high furnaces, whose original structures date to 1902, is a last reminder of the Homestead Works on the northern bank of the Monongahela. It may be designated as a 35-acre Steel Industry National Historic Park. Restoration of the steel facility is estimated to cost more than \$78-million.

The site is flanked by the river and the proposed Mon-Fayette Expressway. Preliminary plans call for a hotel and conference center and a residential development that would be in Swissvale. An Office park development is also envisioned. The site is presently owned by the Cleveland based Park Corporation, which donated the Pump House and its site as a non-profit facility.

## Pump House Banner Art

The Battle of Homestead Foundation and the United Steelworkers of America have published a brochure titled **A Century of Steelworkers: Pump House Banners**.

The eight-page brochure reproduces all of the individual period workers at the steel industry from the 1880s through the closure of most of the mills a hundred years later. Artist Bill Yund has contributed a brief narrative of each depiction, which chronicles the Amalgamated union period, the non-union era and the organization by SWOC and the Steelworkers in the 1930-40 decades.

African-American workers, women workers and the various ethnic groups that were represented in the mills during that century are represented by Yund, who edits, writes and illustrates an award-winning newsletter of Local 2 of the Asbestos Workers. Bill is also a board member of the Foundation.

Copies of the brochure will be available at the lecture series which commences in April 2005 or by writing PO Box 11421, Pittsburgh, PA 15238 (enclose stamp for return postage).