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### A Momentous Day for the BRHS

The BRHS is very pleased to announce that the Board of Regents of the University of the State of New York has amended the BRHS Museum’s provisional charter and granted and made Absolute our Permanent Charter on April 9, 2019. This establishes the Museum as a full-fledged educational institution. The permanent charter is a momentous achievement by the Trustees, Board of Directors and volunteers that have dedicated their endless time and efforts to establish this museum and place the four communities of Black Rock, Riverside, West Hertel and Grant Amherst at the forefront of importance in the history of the City of Buffalo and the nation.

### Our Museum in Action

Our annual fundraiser “Music of the Ages” this



The Heenan Brothers

year was held on May 5 at Sportsman’s Tavern. “Music of the Ages” provided music that spanned over 100 years, from Erie Canal days

through the 1960’s with the Heenan Brothers, Joe



Joe Giambra

Giambra Jazz Quartet & Big Wheelie. Rick Falkowski, music historian and author, took us on a journey of Buffalo entertainment between performances. It was an impressive presentation and a real

treat to see and hear these great musicians together. We are also grateful to Duane Hall for covering the bar tab for this event.



Big Wheelie

As a cold and rainy spring turned to sunnier skies, the BRHS moved outside with various events.

At Discover Downtown Black Rock in early



June, the BRHS exhibited circus memorabilia, put together by museum exhibits coordinator Michele Graves. Children and adults enjoyed coloring in our new BRHS coloring books that premiered that day and were



free thanks to the donation of the West Side Youth Development Coalition at Buffalo State College. The goals of the WSYDC and BRHS align as we strive to promote healthy alternatives through positive initiatives that work to decrease underage drinking and drug use and abuse.



### Commemorating the Fenian Invasion

On June 15, the BRHS joined with the Ancient Order of Hibernians to commemorate the Fenian Invasion at the foot of Hertel Avenue at Towpath Park. For those who haven’t had the chance to visit the monument, the inscription reads:



Tom Lambert, president of the New York State Ancient Order of Hibernians.

### The Fenian Invasion of 1866

*The Fenian Brotherhood was a group of Irish Nationalists founded in the United States in 1858 with the goal of creating an Irish Republic.*

In this vicinity, from the decks of the Pratt Iron Works, on the night of June 1, 1866, the Fenians embarked for Canada in the cause of independence for Ireland. between 500 and 800 battle-hardened Civil War veterans under the command of General John O'Neill mustered in Buffalo's Old First Ward before crossing the Niagara River to land at Fort Erie. The Fenian movement's goal was to seize Canada so it could be bartered for Irish freedom. The Fenians did all they were asked and more. On June 2nd they defeated Crown forces twice, first at the Battle of Ridgeway, and then later that same day at the village of Fort Erie.

They did this outnumbered and outgunned, for some Crown units had repeating rifles and they had none.

General O'Neill's success was short-lived, since the Fenian reinforcements were turned back by the presence of U.S. gunboats on the Niagara River. President Andrew Johnson dispatched Generals Grant and Meade to quell the Fenian invasion once and for all. Unwilling to disobey their former commanders, the Fenians withdrew to the New York side of the river and were paroled a short time later.

As a result of the invasions, the momentum grew for the independence of the two former British colonies.

This was granted to Canada in 1867 and won for Ireland after the "Troubles" of 1916-1922.

"While Ireland holds these graves  
Ireland unfree  
shall never be at peace."  
Patrick Pearse

Recently, Irish Ambassador Daniel Mulhall visited Buffalo to view the University at Buffalo's vast collection of its James Joyce archive and manuscript collection. Travelling with his wife Greta and Escorted by Senator Tim Kennedy, they also visited Niagara Falls and the Fenian monument at the foot of Hertel Avenue. Representing

the BRHS, board member William Butler III was also present and took this photo later at the Curtiss Hotel where the Ambassador spoke at a meet & greet.



Irish Ambassador Daniel, Mulhall,

It is hard to believe, but three years have passed since two other dignitaries visited our museum and the monument (2016) for the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fenian Invasion: Lord Mayor of Dublin, Criona Ni Dhálaigh and Barbara Jones, Consul General of Ireland in New York.

### BRHS at Tall Ships Festival

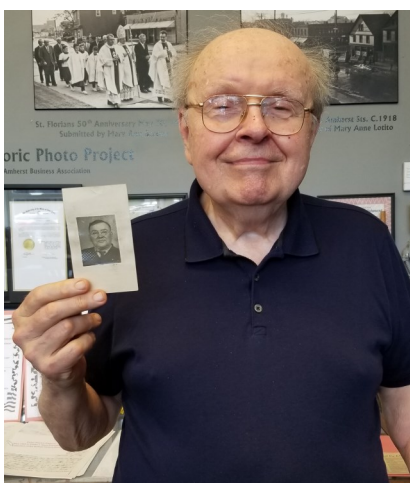


Michele Graves (left) and Jeanine Baran (right) show a family the beach glass exhibit from Michele's personal collection.

This month's 4th of July celebration was a first for us at Canal Side as we had a tent at Basil Port of Call Tall Ships Festival, with portable exhibits and informational materials. We met lots of people, and prospective members and donors. It was a terrific three days for us with huge crowds and much exposure.

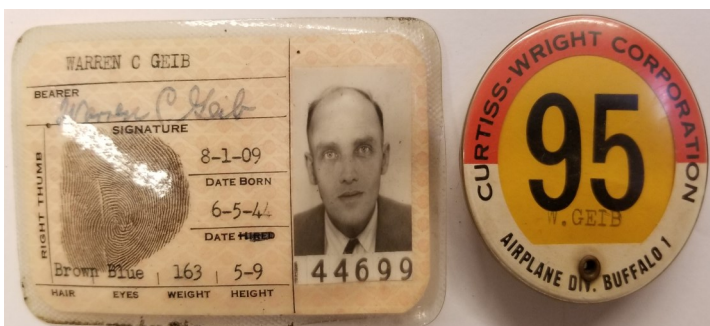
## Visitor finds Grandfather in Museum

George Gieb visited the museum with his



wife, Mimi and nephew, Tarek and cousin, Marilyn McKenzie when he surprisingly found a picture of his grandfather, Irving W. Geib on exhibit. He couldn't believe it as he had never see it before and couldn't believe his likeness to the photo. Mr. Gieb

is a retired history professor from Butler University at Indianapolis. He also mentioned that he was an



extra in the movie *Hoosiers*. His cousin, Marilyn has lived in Riverside her entire life.

## TOGETHER helping our museum grow

The BRHS is not only our museum-it is *Your* museum! You have helped to get it off the ground and helped it grow. Together we are building collections, we are creating a buzz in the community and we are playing a significant role the renaissance of the Niagara Street Corridor. The Black Rock Historical Society would not have come this far in five short years without your financial support, donations of artifacts, expertise, elbow grease, and countless ways. We are truly proud of all the things we have accomplished together. And we are so thankful for a supportive community.

In this newsletter we are launching a new initiative to help us to continue to grow and prosper, together, into an important destination point in Black Rock, Buffalo, NY.

Periodically we will be identifying a specific need for the museum and seek your help in getting the project to the finish line. For instance, one of our current priorities is to protect the amazing array of old trophies that were donated by the NHS. They are all relevant to our area and showcase sports achievements at the turn of the century.

The ten trophies in our collection are from the Black Rock Cycle Club and date back to 1908.



However, they need to be polished and placed in a display case to protect the trophies from oxidation into the future. This project will carry a cost of about \$2,000.00 for the display case

and specialized silver polish and copper cleaner. If you are interested in funding this project at levels from \$25 to \$250, we would be most appreciative and you would be helping to preserve an important piece of our past. Donations can be by check, cash or credit card and we will provide you with a donation receipt. We will also acknowledge your donation in subsequent newsletters, unless you prefer to remain anonymous.



Watch for more projects that you may be interested in helping to fund. We also want to hear



**Black Rock**  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1902 Niagara Street  
Buffalo, New York, 14207

**Summer Hours during  
July and August**  
Monday.-Friday 10– 3 PM

**Find us online!**

[www.blackrockhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.blackrockhistoricalsociety.com)



## The BRHS

### Seeks Volunteers

Your interest and/or love of history are the best reasons to volunteer! Students, seniors and everyone in-between are welcome to volunteer in various areas of interest: office/computer, education, outreach, maintenance, etc. You can strengthen your community, learn about preservation, and meet new people. Every volun-

### Artifact Donations

We continue to seek items and photos that tell the story and history of our area. Cleaning out an attic or basement, not sure if the family items are important or not? Give us a call or bring the items to the museum for donation or loan. Things that depict local family and or commerce history such as artifacts, vintage household items, old tools, period clothing, written history, photos, etc. can be brought to the museum for review or we can pick up. Please call to set up an appointment or discuss your finds.

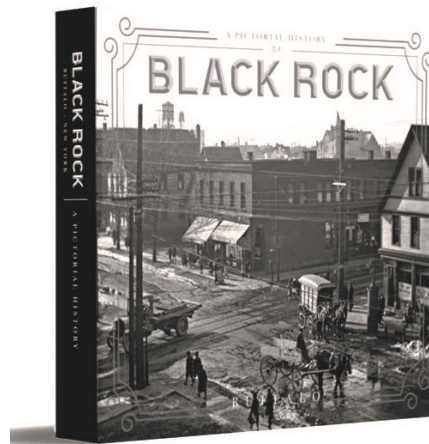
(call 716-510-4007).

your ideas regarding what types of programming, speakers or displays that would be of interest to you.

### Upcoming Events

- Visit us at the Niagara Celtic Heritage Festival September 14 & 15, 10am-5pm at Niagara County Fairgrounds, Lockport, NY.
- Fall Speaker Series will be coming up in October & November (more info later).

The second edition of  
*A Pictorial History of Black Rock* is now available at the BRHS.



This extraordinary hard-cover book contains 352 pages with 650 images, spanning 100 years and presents a compelling photographic history of Black Rock, Buffalo, NY.

Price is \$60.00 (includes sales tax)

### Welcome new members

Joan Miller  
Paul & Mary Buchanan  
Alexandra Kahn  
William Parke

### Thank you donors:

Lakomy Lyles Fund  
Believe in Black Rock  
Kenneth Boos  
Margaret Alfano

### Thank you renewing members:

Pricilla Knisley  
Linda Chiarenza  
Diane Cress  
Rebecca Torres

### Welcome new volunteers

Lisa Barkley  
Rebecca Torres