

SAFETY FIRST

March 2009

Thank You!

Rivers of Steel gratefully acknowledges these patrons who have donated artifacts, photographs or documents to our archives in February 2009:

Sisters of St. Joseph, Russell Barefoot, Leo Stember, Clara Duncan, and Kenneth Koncerak

Donations

The Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area Museum and Archives collection is always growing, thanks to donations of individuals, businesses, cultural institutions and corporations. These donations help us fulfill our mission to preserve, interpret and promote the industrial heritage of southwestern Pennsylvania. Accepted donations must relate to Rivers of Steel's mission to preserve records and artifacts of industrial, social, and cultural significance to communities within the Heritage Area (which includes Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Greene, Washington, and Westmoreland Counties). Examples of items in our collection include:

- Photographs, films, video and other multimedia
- Clothing (industrial and cultural)
- Tools and equipment
- Personal items such as Union and ID badges or cards
- Books and manuscripts
- Brochures, pamphlets, magazines and other ephemera

If you have artifacts or documents that you are interested in donating, please contact rbaraff@riversofsteel.com or temig@riversofsteel.com, or call 412-464-4020.

Safety First

Steel mills historically have been, and still are, inherently dangerous places. Workers must always be on their guard, for their lives and livelihood depend on their safety.

During the course of the twentieth century, many measures were instituted by management, workers, and unions alike to lessen the dangers of the industrial workplace and maintain steady production rates. The culture of safety was ingrained into the everyday work practices of the mill through training classes, films, manuals, posters, signs, personal protection devices, and tools. Working under the belief that repetition is the best way to enforce a message, Safety First became the mantra of every aspect of life in the mill. Reminders were found at every turn - from the locker room to the work floor, and from the meeting hall to the board room. Safety was paramount. Safety meant success for all.

Rivers of Steel's new exhibit incorporates films, manuals, posters, signs, personal protection devices and tools to experience what workers were exposed to on a daily basis to ensure their safety, and promote an accident free environment in the workplace. The exhibit opens March 23 at The Bost Building.



Boarding Soon...Rivers of Steel Tours!

Summer is approaching and that can only mean one thing...tour season is just around the corner. Listed in the book *1,000 Places to See in the USA and Canada Before You Die*, the Babushkas and Hard Hats Tour captivates through its mix of industrialists, immigrants and natural resources. The Lords of the Mon Tour, in partnership with the Gateway Clipper, turns back the clock to reveal the Monongahela River as it was in days gone by even as you savor its present beauty. Don't let another season pass without experiencing the sights and sounds found only on a Rivers of Steel heritage tour! Visit www.riversofsteel.com for more information.

Remembering Nick Jordanoff

Rivers of Steel recently suffered a great loss with the passing of board member Nick Jordanoff. Nick was a lifelong member of the Bulgarian Macedonian National



Educational and Cultural Center (BMNECC), former president of the Macedonian Beneficial Association, former artistic director of Duquesne University's Tamburitzans and the

Pittsburgh Folk Festival, dance director of the BMNECC's Otets Paissii Folk Ensemble, and longtime board member and friend of Rivers of Steel National Heritage Area. (Photo courtesy of BMNECC.)

Hammer-In

Several years ago, the Smithsonian Institution completed a study of the W.A. Young Brothers Foundry and Machine Shop in Rices Landing and referred to it as "one of the most rare and unique historic machine facilities in the United States." On April 18, the annual Hammer-In presents an opportunity for you to visit the 108-year-old heritage site to experience the art of historic metalworking. Local enthusiast George Blystone will be on hand to explain the operation of the century-old, line shaft driven machinery.

The Hammer-In is a 30-year tradition that brings scores of blacksmiths to the tiny hamlet of Rices Landing for a day of blacksmithing demonstrations, tours of the foundry, a live auction of handcrafted iron work, and a picnic style lunch. The proceeds from the auction and lunch support the preservation of the historic machine shop and foundry, the Pittsburgh Area Artist Blacksmiths Association, and the Appalachian Artist Blacksmith Association.

John Steele, President of the Pittsburgh Blacksmiths Association, says the event is like "stepping back in time" to see traditional blacksmithing demonstrations by craftsmen such as Honest Bob Cruikshank, Boyd Holtan, and Bob Rupert whose work style is based on techniques from the 1700s.

Take advantage of this great opportunity to learn about this unique foundry and meet many of the smiths that will have items available for the 1:00 p.m. auction.



Local Folk and Traditional Artisans Receive State Funding

Rivers of Steel is proud to announce local artists who were recently awarded Fellowship and Apprenticeship grants from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA). These grants are awarded on an annual basis to individuals who demonstrate artistic excellence, and they help to support folk and traditional artists who are masters of a living artistic tradition learned and practiced within their own culture or group.

The highest award recognizing artistic excellence given by the Commonwealth is a Fellowship. David Motak, Polish-American *szopka* (creche) artist was one of the recipients in this year's Fellowship round. Motak is the creator of Cracow Creche Workshop, which sponsors lectures and workshops in western Pennsylvania and across the country, hosts an annual exhibition of student works, and sponsors an annual Holiday Tour to Poland. In 2008, Motak received an Apprenticeship to study in Poland with master creche artist Maciej Moszew. (Photo courtesy of Dave Motak.)



Archives and Museums Interns

The Rivers of Steel Archives and Museums Division is happy to have the assistance of three talented interns this semester. Sarah Zimmerman is a graduate student at Duquesne University's Public History program. Sarah has been assisting in the development and installation of Rivers of Steel's new exhibit, Safety First. Also from the Public History program is Chris Kauffman, who has been processing a number of collections, including the Vince Martelli Collection (which contains photos, drawings, and other materials from the Edgar Thomson mill in Braddock). Adrian Byerly from the University of Pittsburgh's School of Library and Information Services has been working with Rivers of Steel's oral history and film collections to assist in their preservation and make them more accessible to researchers. A big thank you to all three interns!

Guinean dancer Kadiatou Conte-Forte received an Apprenticeship this year to teach Guinean dance and song to apprentice Chrisala Brown. Conte-Forte is a 2008 recipient of a PCA Fellowship. She is the Artistic Director of Balafon West African Dance Ensemble through which she teaches and performs.

Rivers of Steel staff provided technical assistance to Motak and Conte-Forte by aiding them in applying for the PCA Fellowship and Apprenticeship Grant programs. To learn more about Fellowship and Apprenticeship, please contact Julie Throckmorton-Meunier at jthrockmorton@riversofsteel.com or attend one of our grant workshops listed at www.riversofsteel.com.