

LEGACIES

By Elizabeth A. McMullen



History Center members Tom and Anne Medsger.
Courtesy of Tom and Anne Medsger.

Anne & Tom Medsger

History Center staff loves connecting with visitors, especially those who are active participants in our programs and events, and support the History Center through membership.

Anne and Tom Medsger, members since 2010, participate in events such as Pittsburgh's Hidden Treasures, Members' Day at Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village, and more. They are proud to say that they "have visited the History Center with our family for years and it is a favorite place to bring visitors from out of town."

Anne and Tom are long-time residents of southwestern Pennsylvania. Tom moved from New Jersey with his family as a child when his father took a job with U. S. Steel (National Tube Division) in 1945. A Lancaster County native, Anne has called Pittsburgh her home for the last 48 years—moving here a few years after

the couple was married in 1962. Through their interest in local history and genealogy, Anne and Tom discovered that they both have roots in the region (including Somerset, Bedford, and Fulton counties) dating back to the mid-1700s.

Tom enjoys coin collecting, bird watching, and playing golf. Anne is a photographer,

gardener, and knitter. Together they enjoy theater, antiquing, genealogy, and of course, spending time with their sons, Philip and Eric, and their families—all of whom now live in Pittsburgh. Like many Pittsburghers, the family loves following Pittsburgh sports—especially hockey. Philip and Eric played hockey in high school and college, and now coach their teenage sons who play amateur hockey at the RMU Center on Neville Island. Given the family's interest in hockey, Anne said, "for all of us to see the Stanley Cup at the History Center [in 2010] was a special treat for everyone."

Tom's interest in sports does not end with hockey. In 2014, his baseball signed by Babe Ruth was featured in an episode of *Pittsburgh's Hidden Treasures*. Tom also loved the opportunity to attend the *Books in the 'Burgh* event last year with Jim O'Brien, author of *Golden Arms: Six Hall of Fame Quarterbacks from Western Pennsylvania*.

Anne and Tom have also found a special connection at Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village in Avella, Pa. They first visited Meadowcroft five years ago during Members' Day and loved it. Anne especially enjoyed sharing the schoolhouse with her grandchildren as it was the same as her early school experience—no electricity or running water. This past fall, Anne and Tom once again

Tom Medsger's Babe Ruth-signed baseball is assessed at the 2014 *Pittsburgh's Hidden Treasures* annual event held at the History Center.

HHC Communications.



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attended Members' Day with the whole family, finding the activities and lectures in celebration of Archaeology Day particularly intriguing and relevant.


Tom's grandfather, Oliver Perry Medsger, a well-known botanist and author of several nature books, was born in Jacobs Creek, Westmoreland County. He served as a scientific consultant to the Carnegie Museum of Natural History's Botany Department in the 1920s and 1930s. In 1944, he sent Tom a letter and cigar box full of Native American artifacts (arrowheads, a spear head, pieces of pottery, and even what he believed was a skimming knife) which he had personally collected at the Indian burial mounds "south of Pittsburgh." Tom's grandfather wrote in his letter "if these pieces could talk they could tell you some interesting stories of adventure." At Meadowcroft Rockshelter, Tom and Anne can learn more information about the items Tom's grandfather shared with him and hear some of the stories that continue to be uncovered about the people who traveled through the region thousands of years ago.

The History Center hopes to continue to have active members like Anne and Tom share their story and tell us how they make connections to our region's history in their own lives. As Anne said, "there are a huge number of activities and opportunities at the History Center ... we have only scratched the surface."

The History Center values its members, who play an essential role in the success of the History Center's mission. Our members, supporters, and friends make it possible for the History Center to preserve the rich history of Western Pennsylvania and to present award-winning exhibitions and public programs that engage visitors of all ages. For as little as \$57 a year, members can enjoy:

- Unlimited access to the History Center, the Western Pennsylvania Sports Museum, Fort Pitt Museum, and Meadowcroft Rockshelter and Historic Village
- Invitations to member-only events
- Subscription to *Western Pennsylvania History* magazine
- Subscription to *Making History* quarterly newsletter
- 15% discount on all purchases in the Museum Shop
- Discounts on tours, lectures, classes, Detre

Library & Archives services, and even parking

History Center members also receive a membership to the Smithsonian Institution, including a subscription to *Smithsonian Magazine*. 

For more information on becoming a member or to give the gift of membership to someone you know, contact Membership Manager Shirley Gaudette at sagaudette@heinzhistorycenter.org or 412-454-6436.



Detail of Medsger's signed baseball.