

CROSSROADS OF THE ALLEGHENY VALLEY



FEATURING
A Taste of Honey
with Michelle Wright

Psychic Kids
come to Tarentum

Remember
Isaly's?



Tarentum youngsters painted colorful homes
for honeybees who pollinate the area.

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WE WANT YOUR INPUT!

HAVE SOME NEWS / A STORY?

HAVE A GREAT PHOTO?

PUTTING ON A PUBLIC EVENT?

Thank you for reading our first edition of *Crossroads of the Allegheny Valley*! We want to have the whole community contribute. Please feel free to send your stories, news, or beautiful photos, and you could see it end up here!

Email: carrierox170@gmail.com





UPCOMING EVENTS

Tarentum Recreation Board Events

Nov. 23 – Tarentum/Brackenridge Christmas Parade

– After Parade Activities with Santa at the Brackenridge Legion

Dec. 10 – Senior Bingo – Daltons Edge

Feb. 14, 2020 – Valentine Luncheon – Nick Fiasco “Vegas Theme”

Mar. 26, 2020 – Senior Bingo – Daltons Edge

Apr. 11, 2020 – Pictures w/Easter Bunny

For more information visit facebook.com/Tarentum175Years/ or contact Carrie Fox 724-448-1470

Tarentum Library Programs

Tues., November 19 & repeated November 20 WHO KNEW? series: Oldtime Radio,
6:00-7:00pm reservations needed

Tues., December 17 & repeated December 18 WHO KNEW? series: Happy Days: 50's & 60's
6:00-7:00pm reservations needed

All library programs are free to the public. Reservations can be made by stopping in or calling the library, 724-226-0770. More information about these events and more can be found at alleghenyvalleylibrary.org.



Tarentum:

A Brief History

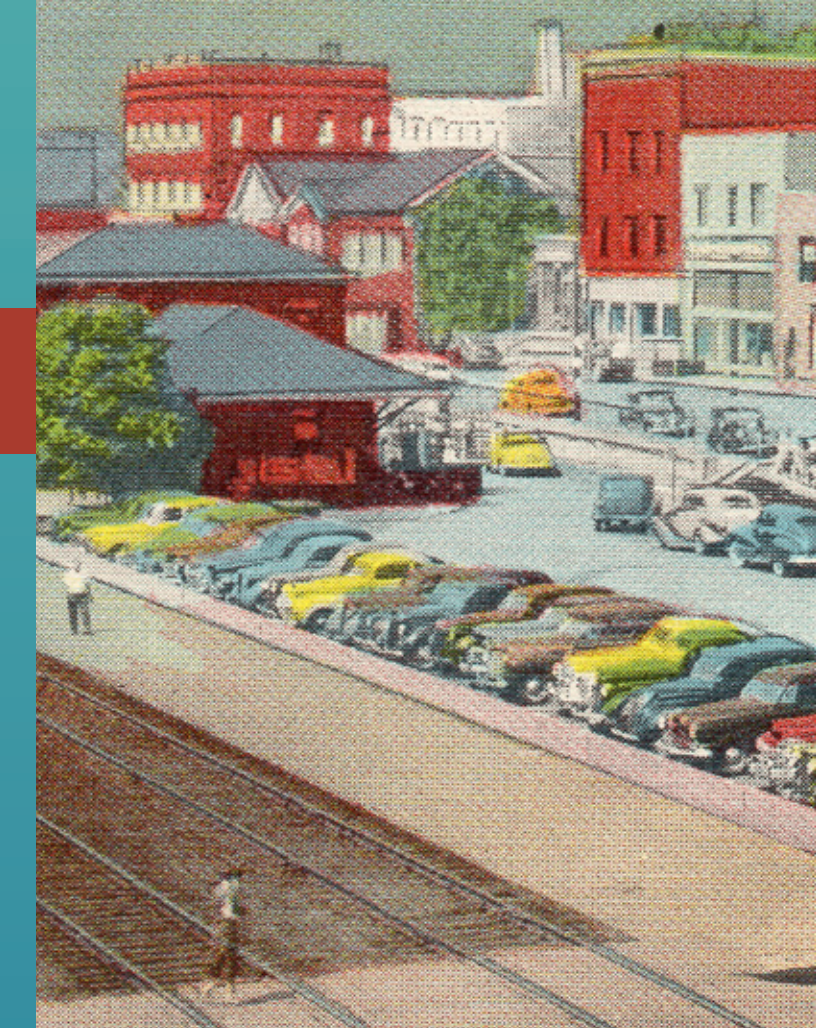
The town of “Tarentum” was founded by Judge Henry Marie Brackenridge in 1829 when the Pennsylvania Canal was completed between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. The canal gave birth to many towns along the route.

The site at the mouth of Bull Creek was first inhabited by Shawnee Indians who established a village here in 1729. In 1734, a Frenchman, Peter Chartier, maintained a trading post until the Shawnee moved down river in 1745. Old maps show the early site of Tarentum as “Chartier’s Old Town.” By 1783, the Westmoreland County Militia erected a log blockhouse on Bull Creek for the safety of scouts keeping track of Indian movement in the region. At the close of the American Revolution, settlement on the west bank of the Allegheny River began to multiply.

Brackenridge, who owned land between Tarentum and Natrona, surveyed an area between Ross and Lock Streets and named the town “Tarentum” after an ancient Greek city-state in Italy. Thirteen years later, with a population of 300, the citizens petitioned the courts to incorporate as a borough, which became effective March 7, 1842.

Tarentum soon became a frontier retail center and, in 1837, James K. Fulton opened the first general store in town. Several other businesses soon followed. The town could boast of a school and post office by 1850.

The Negley Tract, west of Bull Creek, did not become part of the town until 1842, when the widow of Felix Negley requested that her



property be included in the borough limits. Her husband erected a grist mill and a fulling mill on his property, and built a two-story German-style log house in 1800 that stood on West Seventh Avenue, until it was razed in 1945. The Negley property was laid out into lots in 1873 as “West Tarentum.”

The Methodist and Presbyterian churches were founded prior to 1842 and others soon followed. The first industry was C.L. Flaccus Glass, established in 1879 on Bridge Street. In 1884, Works 2, Pittsburgh Plate Glass was built in the West End, adjoining the Godfrey and Clark paper building, erected in 1885. Industrialization developed in the valley when the railroad replaced the old canal in 1866. Tarentum had a population of 4000 in the 1880’s. The Allegheny Valley Times, established in 1881, was the first newspaper. During that period, a fire company, several



fraternal lodges and a bank were established. A police force was organized in 1900.

Two companies of young men were raised here and went off to serve in the Civil War. The town has since been home to several veterans groups. Riverview Memorial Park was dedicated to the memory of all veterans on September 6, 1926. Tarentum established the first high school in the valley in 1892 on Second Avenue. Today the Borough is part of the Highlands School District.

Transportation was the key to Tarentum's development, first by the canal, then the Pennsylvania Railroad, and at present by the Allegheny Valley Expressway and the Pennsylvania Turnpike.

One-hundred years after its incorporation, Tarentum reached a population of over 9000 and was a leading mercantile center in the valley. The town looks to the future with the anticipation that greater things are yet to be.



Michelle Wright:

BUSY *as a* BEE



As a beekeeper the most common question I get is whether I get stung.

The answer is yes! Even though I suit up and try to prevent it, those little guard bees do a great job protecting their hive. Once, I was stung on my temple and my eye swelled so badly I had to take off of work for a week! Even so, the bees keep drawing me back because I'm fascinated by these amazing creatures that work tirelessly for our planet. Honeybees pollinate 1/3 of what we eat and they offer \$15 billion dollars worth of agricultural production. Without them we'd have a more limited selection of food and our grocery store prices would be much higher.

My adventure as a beekeeper started long before I set up Chapel Valley Honey inside the former St Paul's German Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tarentum. It started as a quest to find answers about CCD (Colony Collapse Disorder). Something mysterious was causing honeybees to die. In 2007 I met with expert beekeeper Jim Fitzroy in Penn Hills. He opened a hive and began explaining all that was happening in this hidden community. I was instantly hooked. The bees ignored us as we searched for the queen bee. There are 60,000 bees in each hive and finding the one and only queen was a bit like trying to find a





needle in a haystack. We finally spotted her doing what she always does, laying eggs. She can lay 1500 eggs every day!

As I started to calm down, Jim told me honeybees have to visit two million flowers to make one pound of honey and honeybees only make 1/12th of a teaspoon of honey in their entire lifetimes. As the buzzing continued all around me, Jim encouraged me to brush away some of the bees and dip my finger through the wax and get some honey straight from the hive. My heart pounded as I tasted the pure, sweet honey. I decided at that moment I wanted to take up this hobby.

I soon began to learn the many benefits of honey. Along with being a sweet treat, it is antibacterial and anti-inflammatory. It also soothes coughs and helps curb allergies. It never spoils and when it crystallizes (all real honey will crystallize) you just need to heat it up slightly for it to return to a liquid state.

Jim and I partnered soon after that to sell honey to local stores and now we have hives in Tarentum, New Kensington, Plum, Penn Hills

and downtown Pittsburgh. As we expanded our apiary we needed more space. In 2017, I bought the former Saint Paul's German Evangelical Lutheran Church on E. 8th Avenue in Tarentum and spent a year renovating it and added a commercial kitchen for my honey production.

I named it Tarenbee after both Tarentum and my honeybees. Thanks to our project manager Larry Mattoon along with electrician Mike Dialoiso and Dom DeMarco of DeMarco Construction we restored much of the original architecture to the space including the rock walls, hemlock floor, original beams, stained glass windows and the amazing pipe organ. We now rent out Tarenbee for weddings, bridal showers, baby showers, seminars and other parties.

The church was founded in 1889 and I often wonder what the founding pastor Rev. J. George Amschler would think of how we're using the kitchen now. I'd like to think he'd support our mission of being good stewards to this precious land and maybe his liturgy would include Proverbs 24:13 "My son, eat honey, for it is good."



Tarentum

Now A *Live Well Allegheny* Community!



The Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) announced on September 3rd the new Live Well Allegheny members: Tarentum Borough, the United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania and Jump with Jill.

There are now 193 community partners, 68 municipalities, 51 restaurants, 33 workplaces and 18 school districts participating in the campaign that have chosen to make health a priority in Allegheny County. All these communities and organizations are dedicated to working together toward a healthier Allegheny County.”

The Tarentum Borough will promote physical activity by encouraging walking and bike riding and by developing indoor and outdoor wellness trails accessible to residents of all abilities. The borough will promote and support farmers’ markets, encourage involvement with community volunteer activities and promote smoke-free buildings and perimeters. Tarentum will also utilize websites and social media to provide information on physical activity, nutrition, stress management, tobacco cessation, and other health and wellness related initiatives.

ABOUT LIVE WELL ALLEGHENY

Live Well Allegheny is a county-wide campaign to improve the overall health and wellness of Allegheny County residents. The campaign aims to improve health and well-being

of residents through collaborative work with partners, stakeholders, and residents. Live Well Allegheny connects communities, schools, workplaces, restaurants, and community partners in collective action to achieve our goal of making Allegheny County the healthiest county in the nation.

**Learn more at
www.LiveWellAllegheny.com**

“I applaud Tarentum for making a commitment to improving the health and wellness of residents,” said County Council Vice President Nick Futules, who also represents District 7. “They are also taking action to improve access to fresh and healthy food and physical activity, and to reducing tobacco use and smoking rates within the municipality.”

0 SUGARY DRINKS



WHAT IS THE TARENTUM RECREATION BOARD?

The Tarentum Recreation Board was established in September of 1968 by Tarentum Council ordinance No.1931. The Board is made up of 9 members and citizen volunteers. To be a Recreation Board member you must be a community minded, hardworking, and dedicated. Since its inception the Board of 9 members work hand in hand with local government, and have been instrumental in providing many wonderful recreational events and facilities for not only the residents of Tarentum Borough but many neighboring communities.

The Recreation Board events are the “Summer Concerts Series”, Valentine’s Day Luncheon, Casino Bus Trips, Senior Bingos, Pictures with the Easter Bunny, Holiday window decorating contest, Scarecrow Contest, Boo Festival, Tarentum/Brackenridge Christmas Parade, Summer Kid Days in the park, Historical Tours, Trash to Treasure and etc.

We are always willing to help others with their events. Such as the Tarentum Fall Festival and the Brackenridge Legion’s and Tarentum VFW plaque dedication for Sgt. Robert Adams (First Tarentum Resident Killed in Vietnam).

The Board has purchased the Gazebo, Cameras in the park and monitor, extension to the Snack Shack building plus additional pavilion space and a new roof and many other items. Monitoring the public expenditures of citizens dollars and raising funds to supplement budgeted funds by giving back to our community.

Tarentum Brackenridge Christmas Parade is a fantastic joint municipal event. Tarentum and Brackenridge’s Recreation Boards work closely to put together a parade that travels from Tarentum Borough up into Brackenridge Borough through the streets rain or shine with bands, music, firetrucks, dance groups, scouts, Wiener Mobile, dignitaries, and much more. What joy we all get to see the smiling faces of the citizens in our communities. The parade takes place every year the Saturday before Thanksgiving. We welcome all.

Through the years the Recreation Board has had a few campaigns. One of our proudest campaigns has been our “*Veteran Banner Program*”. We Honor Veterans from the past & the present The Board President Carrie Fox partnered with Gray Signs on Fifth Avenue Tarentum to put together a program to honor the Veterans. There is nothing that makes you more proud. The “*Veteran Banner Program*” is ongoing.

For More Please Visit: www.tarentumboro.com,
www.facebook.com/Tarentum175Years/ www.tarentumboro.com/recreation

Board Members:

Carrie Fox-President, Rebecca May-Vice President, Barbara Magnetta-Secretary,
Gina Landa-Treasurer, Hugh Fox, Tim Rapp, Lorraine (Fritzi) White

THE SWEET LIFE

What began as an immigrant's love for chocolate has turned into a family operated business for 99 years.



After immigrating to the United States from Chios, Greece in pursuit of better opportunity, Mathew Maskas began making homemade chocolate in the basement of his home and sold his products out of the trunk of his Studebaker. As demand increased for his chocolates, he moved his operation to a four car garage and then again several times until reaching its current location in Tarentum, Pennsylvania. In 1920, the young entrepreneur began to provide his customers with additional products to accompany his chocolates, and Maskas Distributors was formed.



Mathew and his wife Mable supplied local businesses and operated a walk-in retail location on Sixth Avenue for many years before leaving the business to Robert Maskas and his two brothers. Eventually, the brothers moved the business to its current location on the corner of Seventh Avenue and Wood Street in 1969.



Today, **M. Maskas & Sons Distributors** is owned and operated by third and fourth generation family members and continues to distribute candy, tobacco, snack foods, paper supplies, food service supplies and maintenance supplies to businesses throughout the Greater Pittsburgh Area as well as operate a walk-in retail location.

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The Power of the Triangle

and the Tarentum Bridge

By Thomas G. Leech

TRIANGLE AFTER TRIANGLE
AFTER TRIANGLE – the dominating feature of the metal elements of the Tarentum Bridge. Where did this notion of triangle, strength and long span bridge come from? The year is 1570; and at the height of the Renaissance, Italian architect, Andrea Palladio, wrote a small architectural composition, “*I quattro libri dell’ Architectura*” – translated: *The Four Books of Architecture*. In this writing, Palladio presented text, sketches and personnel interpretations of his “*inventioni*” - “inventions” - of wooden bridges he proposed to be built over small Italian streams. While it is not certain which, if any of these bridges, were actually built, these wooden bridge “inventions” were unique. Each bridge, though appearing quite differently, one from another, was formed by a series of wooden triangles, with rhythmic triangular patterns, repeating over and over again. Although more interested in form



Angelo Frederick became the first driver to cross the newly-minted Tarentum Bridge on Feb. 18, 1952.

than strength, Palladio uncovered an important engineering principle: the triangle is a powerful engineering form. Palladio did not give a name to his “invention” and his idea of repeated triangles, uncovered by contemporaries, became slowly put into use in the roofs of cathedrals, but forgotten as a use in bridges until the 19th century. With modest success in wooden and iron bridges in the 19th century, the truss – by modern definition: a rigid framework of individual members connected to form a series of triangles - became the workhorse of long span bridge types in the 20th century. None is better exemplified than the 1952 Tarentum Bridge, spanning the Allegheny River, 22 river miles upstream from Pittsburgh at the Point. The bridge, with its beautifully curved steel profile, graces the Allegheny River and carries on the tradition of the “*inventioni*” of Palladio.

Thomas G. Leech, retired Chief Engineer, Bridges and Structures of Gannett Fleming Inc. and presently instructor of Civil Engineering at Carnegie Mellon University. Tom is co-author with Linda Kaplan, of the book: *Bridges ... Pittsburgh at the Point ... A Journey through History*, available through Word Association Publishers, Amazon and many bookstores locally; also, see Facebook.com/BridgesPittsburgh.

Photos Courtesy of George Guido and his book *New Kensington: A Photographic History*. Also available at Word Association Publishers, and Amazon.



Concrete pouring on the approach from West Tarentum, June 11, 1951.

REMEMBER ISALY'S IN TARENTUM?

(1946-1987) Chipped Chopped Ham, Skyscraper Cones, and White House Ice Cream!

You can still see the ghost of Isaly's on Corbett Street. It's right there, no longer the iconic crisp white and black facade it once was, but it's Isaly's none-the-less. Anyone who knew that eatery—famous for its classic ice cream and soul soothing comfort food—can show you exactly where Isaly's was located in Tarentum. For many generations of children who were brought to downtown Tarentum to visit the dentist or doctor, Isaly's was the promised treat if you were brave and quiet during the visit. And the mere thought of a frothy Isaly's milk shake or hot fudge sunday was more than enough to give you courage when the doc approached you with that dreaded needle.

The Making of a Family Tradition

The story begins in 1833 when Swiss cheesemaker, Christian Isaly and his family crossed the seas with his family to join other Swiss settlers in the picturesque hills of Monroe County, Ohio. Packed with their belongings was Isaly's most precious possession: his copper cheese kettle.



Generations of the Isaly's family members carried on the business, expanding from cheese making to dairy farming, and delivering bottled milk from house to house in horse-drawn carts. Eventually they formed Isaly's Dairy Companies to sell farm-fresh dairy products and a wide variety of fresh deli meats and cheeses through Isaly's own chain of retail stores in Ohio, West Virginia and western Pennsylvania.

A tradition was born as families streamed in on warm summer evenings for the now legendary "Skyscraper" cones, butter, cheese, baked ham and bologna and, of course, Isaly's signature Chipped Chopped Ham and Old Fashioned Ice Cream.

Isaly's cafeteria-style dining was, for many, a first experience in dining out. In addition to their traditional breakfasts, in their wisdom, the creators of Isaly's menu never ventured far from what our Grandma's served in their kitchens. There was baked turkey and stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, grilled cheese and creamy tomato soup, baked beans, ham salad and more homestyle offerings.

The Tradition Goes On

In the 1980's, after the Isaly family retired, the baton was passed to long time provisioners and friends, the Deily family. After much success, the brand changed hands once more in 2015 when Tim Deily sold it to food industry veterans Jim and Leslee Conroy, owners of Conroy Foods, Inc. The Conroys have been in the food business since 1986, building Beano's Original Deli Condiments from a restaurant in Blawnox, PA of the same name. Tim trusted the Conroy family to carry on the incredible legacy of quality associated with the name Isaly's—keeping the brand, in essence, “all in the family.” Under the Conroys, Isaly's deli products have met steady demand in food chains and independent stores all over Southwest Pennsylvania, Ohio, West Virginia, and beyond by remaining passionately committed to preserving Isaly's original recipes and quality.

Today's Isaly's Nation

Once a fan, always a fan! Isaly's Nation exists here in Pittsburgh and around the country. Aside from your favorite grocery store, you can get an Isaly's chipped ham sandwich at Heinz Field or grab a scoop of Isaly's White-house Cherry ice cream at PNC Park. People who've moved away from Isaly's Nation make a point of taking Isaly's Chipped Chopped Ham back to their new hometowns. Pittsburgh Steeler Clubs around the country have Isaly's Chipped Chopped Ham shipped in for big games. And people who live where Isaly's is sold just keep going back for more -not just Isaly's Original Chipped Chopped Ham and Barbecue Sauce but Old Fashioned Ice Cream and a whole line of Isaly's Deli Hams, Turkey, and Cheeses. Did you “Remember Isaly's” when you shopped this week?

Though there was an Islay's in downtown New Kensington, in the Heights Plaza Shopping Center and other nearby communities,

generations who came of age within a certain radius of the Tarentum's Islay's, probably have special memories of it in connection with their first experiences with romance. In the 50s and 60s teens from all over flocked to the Tarena Roller Rink, not only to skate but for the dances. And if you were one of the throngs who enjoyed the the heat and the booming music of Henry's, you may have wandered, hand-in-hand with that special someone over to Isaly's for an ice cream cone and a stroll in our beautiful riverside park on a beautiful summer night. Could anything have been sweeter.

Additional Information from Isalys.com/history



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GHOSTS IN THE ALLEGHENY VALLEY

When A&E decided to reboot their 2008 show *Psychic Kids*, their debut episode brought them to Lower Burrell and Tarentum. The August, 21st episode “The Ghost in the Bed” focused on 9 year old Kendyll Pekarek.

Kendyll has been struggling to get a night’s rest since she was 6. Every night she is visited by what she describes as “grey people” and “spirits that don’t look nice.” Kendyll’s parents have tried all traditional modalities of behavioral health to find some relief for Kendyll, but nothing has worked. Feeling helpless and desperate the Pekareks reached out to *Psychic Kids*.

The A&E show decided to send Peri Zarrella (www.perinormal.com) and her sixth sense to the rescue. A 15 year old Peri was featured on the show’s original run ten years ago. Now Peri returns with a graduate degree in clinical psychology from Columbia University and has dedicated her life to offer guidance for psychically attuned children and adults.

Peri is teaching Kendyll how to use and channel the surplus energy that she experiences. One session brings a vision of a three story brick house. After Kendyll draws the house she sees, the production crew brings her to Summit Hose Fire Company in West Tarentum because their fire hall matches Kendyll’s description.

Tarentum’s Summit Hose Co Station 282, located on the west side of Tarentum Borough, has been known to have spirits roaming the fire hall for some time. Old members and new have had numerous unexplainable events happen in their presence.

Together Peri and Kendyll explore the fire hall tuning in to Kendyll’s energy and abilities. Afterward they present their findings to Chief Joshua Fox and former chief Tim Firko. The two were happy to hear an explanation for some of the footsteps, slamming doors, flashes, and other strange happenings they have experienced.

Peri and Kendyll said “There is nothing to fear” and that Summit Hose Company has friendly, warm and family oriented spirits at the fire hall.

You can see for yourself what they discovered, while Peri helps Kendyll with her fears and teaches her how to use her psychic abilities. *Psychic Kids* is available to watch on-demand, iTunes, and via the A&E app.

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ROAMING THE
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