



The Columbus Historical Society April Newsletter

The Columbus Historical Society Awarded Ohio Archives Grant

The Columbus Historical Society is pleased to announce it has been awarded an archives grant of \$1,539 from the Ohio Historical Records Advisory Board, funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission of the National Archives. The money will go towards processing and preserving our Columbus Mayors Collection. The collection consists of papers, images and artifacts from the terms of Mayors Maynard E. "Jack" Sensenbrenner, Gregory S. Lashutka and Michael B. Coleman. These collections provide an unprecedented insight into the offices of the mayors between 1954-1960 and 1964-1972.

The grant runs from April 1 to December 1 and will culminate in a fully processed collection which will be accessible to researchers, teachers and the general public. The next step will be to digitize the collection and make it available on Columbus Memory, a digital archive that is managed by the Columbus Metropolitan Library. We hope this will lead to future donations of mayoral memorabilia. If you have any material you would like to donate please contact the Columbus Historical Society at 614-224-0822.

Submitted by Bonnie Chandler, Board of Trustee Member & Chair of the Collections Committee

2016 Columbus City Tour Series



The Columbus Historical Society's 2016 Columbus City Tour Series will begin on May 28. These popular bus tours take place the fourth Saturday of the month, May through October. This 2.5-hour tour takes guests around the Columbus area to locations such as Downtown, the new Columbus Commons, the Short North Arts District, German Village, the Arena District, Olde Towne East, the Discovery District, Franklin Park and more.

The Saturday tours are open to individuals and small groups with registration and payment required in advance. Special tours can be arranged for larger groups. Our bus tours often sell out, so visit our website to learn about pricing, ticket purchasing, and reservations. <http://www.columbushistory.org/programs-and-events>



Our current exhibit, "Reaching for the Sky: The History of Columbus Aviation", will be closing on April 17. Visit our museum inside COSI to see it before it takes off!

CHS Board Member Writes for Senior Times



"Postcard From Columbus" is Richard Barrett's monthly column in the Senior Times. Richard is a board member of the Columbus Historical Society and provides unique insight on the history of the city. The current issue features the novel *Ben Hur: A Tale of the Christ*, written by Lew Wallace. Barrett writes about the historical connection to Columbus because the play, based on Wallace's novel, arrived on tour in Columbus on March 16, 1903. Read this excerpt from his column below and click on the link to read the full story.

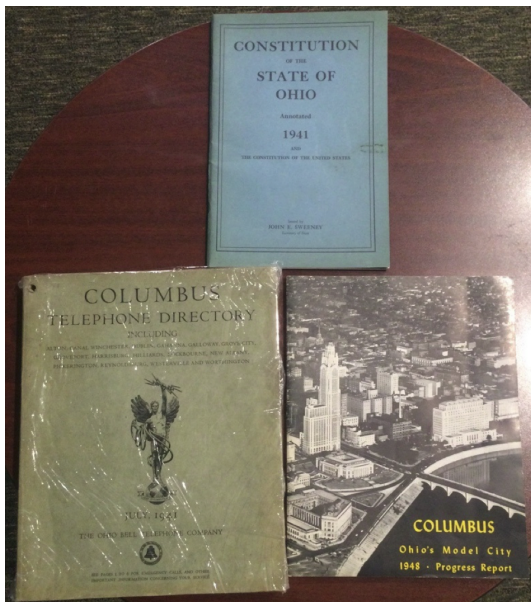
Ben Hur: A Tale of the Christ, a novel written by Lew Wallace, was first published in 1880. It was recently described as "the most influential Christian book of the nineteenth century," by Amy Lifson, assistant editor for *Humanities* magazine.

It became a best-selling American novel, outselling every book except the Bible until *Gone With the Wind* came out in 1936, and resurged to the top of the list again in the 1960s with the release of the Charlton Heston film version in 1959. It has never been out of print.

To read the full column, visit page four of the Senior Times [website](#).

From Our Collection





This month we received a gift from Larry Wilkes which contained some unique artifacts from 1940s Columbus. The first artifact is an Ohio Bell Telephone Co. telephone directory from July, 1941. It includes many cities from the central Ohio area and it may have been attached to a phone booth, as it has a hole drilled in the top left corner. The next item chronologically is a booklet version of the Ohio Constitution annotated in 1941 along with a copy of the United States Constitution. Another item gifted to the Historical Society was a copy of the 1948 Columbus Progress Report. This informational book gives a look into all of the improvements made in Columbus during the previous year. Also gifted was a Columbus city flag that spans approximately 10'x15' and is a pristine example of one of our city's symbols. We would like to thank Mr. Wilkes once again for his generous donation to the Columbus Historical Society!

From Our Friends at the Columbus Metropolitan Library

Inventor of the Concrete Mixing Truck
By Chuck Cody



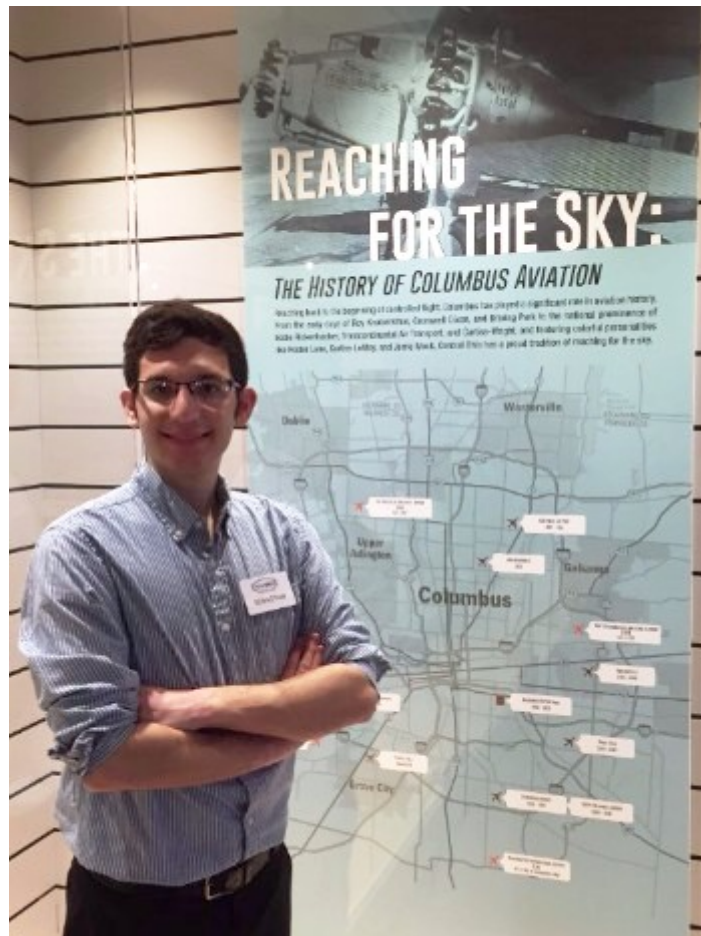
Stephen Stepanian (2/28/1882-10/18/1964), an Armenian immigrant from Turkey, came to Franklin County in 1906. Trained as a linguist (he reportedly spoke seven languages), Stepanian instead became an engineer with Jeffrey Manufacturing. Later he was president of the Central Ohio Concrete Company, Marble Cliff Quarries, and Arrow Sand & Gravel. Stepanian was the inventor of the motor-truck concrete mixer and is the "father" of the ready-mixed concrete industry. Stepanian designed a self-discharging motorized concrete transit mixer in 1916. Among his patents are:

- Wrench United States Patent No. 1,321,776, filing date: May 29, 1918, issue date: Nov. 11, 1919.
- Concrete Mixing and Transporting Vehicle United States Patent No. 1,935,922, filing date: Dec. 21, 1928, issue date: Nov. 21, 1933.
- Sample Display Holder United States Patent No. 1,730,439, filing date Apr. 24, 1926, issue date: Oct. 8, 1929.
- Compound Tool United States Patent No. 1,321,777, filing date: Feb. 24, 1919, issue date: Nov. 11, 1919.
- Elevator and Conveyor United States Patent No. 859,588, filing date: Sep. 9, 1904, issue date: Jul. 9, 1907.
- Building Apparatus United State Patent No. 2,440,920, filing date: Aug. 15, 1941, issue date: May 4, 1948.
- Garment United States Patent No. 1,997,703, filing date: April 7, 1933, issue date: April 16, 1935.

Less widely known is an episode in his life unrelated to his career. In the Columbus flood of 1913, Mr. Stepanian was reportedly marooned in a house near a tree where 13 people had sought refuge. He fashioned a raft from floating timbers and used a long pole to navigate flood waters, making multiple trips to take 2-3 people at a time from the tree to safety.



CHS Volunteer Spotlight



This month's volunteer spotlight is on Sebastian Smith, a third-year student at Ohio State from Circleville majoring in History.

What do you like the most about working for or volunteering with the Columbus Historical Society?

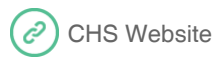
Sebastian: I like that I get to work with people who have a similar degree of interest in history as I do. I also like that I'm educating the public and informing them about Columbus' history.

Do you have any favorite artifacts in the current exhibit?

Sebastian: A wooden G Strut from the Wright brothers' Kitty Hawk airplane.

How did you get interested in history?

Sebastian: I was 10 years old when I went to a Titanic exhibit at a Ripley's Aquarium in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. My family and I were there for vacation; at first I thought the exhibit would be boring, but as I came out after going in, I was extremely interested with the Titanic. I wanted to learn more so I bought a DVD documentary at the Aquarium's gift shop. From there, I got into the history of corvettes, G.I. Joe action figures, the 1980s, and Tonka trucks.



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