

The History Center
Niagara County Historical Society, Inc.
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For Immediate Release
Non-Profit Organization

Re: New Exhibit: "Musical Memories."

Contact: Douglas Farley, Director-Development

Musical Memories

The History Center of Niagara County is proud to announce the opening of a new exhibit entitled, "Musical Memories," now on display in the Changing Exhibit Room of the Outwater Building at 215 Niagara Street in Lockport. This stroll down musical "memory lane" was crafted by the History Center's "Senior" Exhibit Designers, Donna Campbell and Joan Barry. This pair of volunteers has once again scoured the recesses of collection storage to find dozens of artifacts to delight visitors in keeping with the theme of Musical Memories.

A sample of their hidden treasures includes a display of military songs and memorabilia. Whether it's original sheet music for "Anchors Away," or "Over There," the exhibit will surely leave you humming the melodies that helped our servicemen "Pack Up Their Troubles" in times of conflict. Military hats, medic kits, and bugles from several wars add to the historical story surrounding the songs.

Another area in the exhibit features songs that are traditionally sung to chase away the winter blues, like Irving Berlin's "White Christmas" or the more whimsical, "Frosty the Snowman," immortalized by the sonorous strains of Beryl Ives. The exhibit also takes a look at music from specific historical periods such as the Vaudeville music of Al Jolsen with his songs like "My Mammy", or music from the Ziegfeld Follies.

Some of Lockport's unique musical legends are also featured. One display highlights artifacts from the famous Hodge Opera House. Step back in time and imagine yourself among the gentlemen with their high-top hats and ladies with their opera glasses and white kid gloves. The Irish strains of Lockport's own, Chauncey Olcott, are prominently featured through some of his original songs such as "My Wild Irish Rose" and "Once Upon a Time." Another legendary group on the Lockport music scene was the Hilltoppers whose music spanned several different states and decades.

While on site, ask one of the staffers to play a song or two on the History Center's original 1900s Edison phonograph. The Edison wax cylinder records were some of the first to be produced in vocal reproduction. The "Musical Melody" exhibit runs through the end of March and can be viewed Monday through Saturday from 9 AM to 5 PM. A small donation will be accepted at the door to assist the History Center with this and other programs throughout the year. For more information call 716 434-7433.