

Acknowledgments

I have two goals in publishing this second volume of the *LOOKING BACK: The Best of Glenn Tunney* series of books. Doing so furthers my mission of placing the newspaper columns I wrote for the *Herald-Standard* into a book format, which is more lasting than yellowing newspaper clippings. Preserving these articles in books will enable future generations to read these tales of the people, places, and events that shaped Brownsville's colorful heritage.

Secondly, I will continue to donate a portion of the sales proceeds from this *LOOKING BACK* series of books to worthwhile community organizations. Last year, sales proceeds from Volume One were donated to BARC to support its efforts in revitalizing Brownsville. This year, I plan to donate a portion of the sales proceeds from Volume Two to the Brownsville Free Public Library, which has always occupied a special spot in my heart.

The Brownsville Free Public Library is housed in the same building that Charles Snowdon built for it back in 1927. It still serves the people of the Brownsville area, making modern information technology available to its patrons along with the familiar books and periodicals it has always provided.

Unfortunately, dwindling levels of financial support from local and state government and from the local school district have left the library struggling financially in recent years, scrambling to pay the monthly bills. I have been a patron of the Brownsville Free Public Library since I was a child and have borrowed hundreds of books, which have provided many hours of pleasure and imparted valuable knowledge over the years. I am gratified that publishing this book will help preserve the town's history and at the same time financially assist the community's library.

Fittingly enough, Chapter 13 of this book is entitled *The Banker and the Librarian: The Story of the Brownsville Free Public Library*. It features reminiscences from former and current Brownsville library patrons who describe many pleasurable hours spent in the little building on the corner of Seneca and Charles streets. I am hoping that perhaps a few readers who still harbor fond memories of the library may be inspired to offer their own helping hand to a very deserving community institution.

Readers who have read Volume One and who leaf through the pages of Volume Two will note that there are more than twice as many historic photographs in this second volume as there were in the first. There are two reasons for that. The reasons lie in the simultaneous occurrence of

two events this past winter.

First, Mrs. Dorothy Richardson, widow of my late friend Harold Richardson, who was a lifelong collector of Brownsville-related vintage photos, documents, and historic memorabilia, graciously allowed me to digitally scan hundreds of prints from Harold's collection of historical photographs of this area. She also allowed me to scan Harold's collection of several hundred picture post cards portraying historic Brownsville. Many of these photographic images have rarely if ever been seen by the general public. I would like to extend to Dorothy the community's gratitude as well as my own for allowing me to share images from her late husband's collection with the people of the town he loved.

While I was scanning Harold's photos and post cards this past December and January, a second opportunity arose out of the blue. I had struck up an email conversation with one of Harold's boyhood friends, Norman (Bill) Patterson of Wesleyville, Pennsylvania. Bill was a loyal reader of my newspaper column over the years and often contributed anecdotes and photographs for it.

From childhood, Bill has been fascinated with photography as a hobby. He has devoted many years to taking photos (including many of Brownsville), developing prints, and restoring deteriorating photos. Bill moved away to Erie years ago to teach at the Penn State campus there, while Harold stayed in Brownsville. Nevertheless, these two childhood friends became a natural team as they sought to preserve Brownsville's photographic history. Harold would locate historic images of Brownsville at auctions, estate sales, or through his many contacts. He would then call upon Bill to work his photographic magic on them, particularly if they were fading or damaged. Bill would restore the images and make two prints, one for himself and one for Harold.

Over the years, Bill accumulated a collection of over 1,100 print images of Brownsville and vicinity, including many stereoscopic cards designed for use with an old-fashioned "3-D" viewer. Bill took quite a few photographs of Brownsville himself over the years, and they are also part of his collection.

In the course of our email conversation, Bill, who is in his eighties, wondered aloud what he should do with his collection, since his children were not raised in Brownsville and would not have an appreciation for the photographs. I suggested that he consider BARC as a repository for them. When he responded favorably to the idea, I traveled to Wesleyville in January and visited with Bill, who told me wonderful background stories about some of the photos, and I brought his

remarkable collection back to Brownsville to its new permanent home with BARC. It is an incredibly generous act by Bill Patterson.

Imagine! Two treasure troves of images of historic Brownsville becoming available for viewing within a remarkable two-month period. And perhaps best of all, many photos from both collections will now be included in these *LOOKING BACK* books, giving readers an unprecedented look at these rare pictures of their community's past.

With so many wonderful images from which to choose, I have revised my original plan for the *LOOKING BACK* series. That plan called for publishing four volumes of selected newspaper articles with a few dozen photos in each book. Instead there will be five volumes, one published each year. There will be more photographs in each book than was originally planned, and more articles can be included in the series.

Some images in the Richardson-Patterson collections portray scenes or people about which I never wrote an article, so they would not normally have appeared in any chapter. To address that issue, each subsequent volume (beginning with this book) will include a special all-photo chapter showcasing many of those rare pictures. Volume Two concludes with a picture chapter featuring more than twenty images of pre-1900 Brownsville, accompanied by detailed captions describing each photograph.

In addition to the Richardson-Patterson collection, I have been able to draw from many other vintage and personal photographs generously offered by citizens and organizations within the community. This brings up a dilemma. When publishing historic photos taken over a century ago by long-dead and often anonymous photographers, to whom should photo credit be attributed? Often the same images can be found in the collections of several people or organizations that have offered to share them.

Under the circumstances, rather than assign photographic credit for a specific image to a specific individual or organization, which cannot properly be done with many of the images in this book, I wish to gratefully recognize and thank the following individuals and organizations, each of whom made historic images available for publication with the original *Herald-Standard* articles in which they appeared and/or for inclusion in Volume Two.

These contributors, some of whom are now deceased, include Harold Richardson (photographs, post cards, and photos of memorabilia), Bill Patterson (original and reprinted photographs), Brownsville Area Revitalization Corporation (BARC), Brownsville Historical Society, Brownsville Area High School library, Brownsville

viii ♦ LOOKING BACK: The Best of Glenn Tunney

Free Public Library, David Gratz (from his vast collection of Monongahela Railway images), DuWayne Swoger, Ray Christner (post cards), Harry McKnight, Theresa Flannick Dobak, Sammy Bill, Doris Moffitt, and Jack Sabo.

I also wish to thank Norma Ryan, who tirelessly proofread the manuscript of this book, and Kari Zeigler of Mechling Bookbindery, whose expertise was invaluable in preparing the book for printing. I commend the entire staff at Mechling Bookbindery for being so accommodating and for the high quality of their work.

Finally, on a personal note, I lovingly dedicate this book to the memory of my late sister, Kathy Tunney Filburn, who during this past year lost her courageous struggle against a difficult foe, cancer. Kathy was only fifty years old, far too young.

She will continue to be my inspiration to try to make every day, every moment, count.