

AMD&ART



Creating Community Assets

Volume I, No. III - July 1997

SAMA, Altoona to Host AMD&ART Exhibit

The AMD&ART Project is excited to announce the opening of our exhibit, *From Rust to Renewal*, at the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art (SAMA) in Altoona. The exhibit will run from July 24th through August 3rd in the Paul I. Detwiler Education Center of the Altoona museum. The exhibit is being sponsored by Mid-State Bank, the Office of Surface Mining (Department of the Interior), Pennsylvania Rural Arts Alliance, and the Internship Program of the Allegheny Heritage Development Corporation. Also, the Portage Museum, the Central City Museum, and Denise Weber, Vintondale historian, have allowed AMD & ART to reproduce or borrow items for the exhibit. *From Rust to Renewal* was prepared by a hardworking team of interns, many of whom have previous experience in museum work. Thanks to everyone who made this exhibit possible!

Exhibit Events

During the week-long showcase of our exhibit in Altoona, several events have been planned to inform the public about acid mine drainage and the AMD&ART Project.

- On Tuesday, July 29th, at 8:30 a.m., the Cambria County Conservation District will hold its monthly Agency Breakfast at SAMA in Altoona.

- Also Tuesday, July 29th, from 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., a Senior's Day is planned. Project team members will be present at the museum to answer questions and discuss the project.
- Wednesday, July 30th, SAMA has graciously arranged a Gallery Luncheon followed by an AMD&ART Project Update. Speakers include Allan Comp, team historian and project director; Bob Deason, team scientist; and Angelo Ciotti, one of the team artists.
- On Thursday, July 31st, the Highlands Playground Group will attend a Children's Day at the exhibit.

The Exhibit Travels to Other Sites

In addition to the showcase at SAMA in Altoona, *From Rust to Renewal* will also go on display at several other sites around the area in the near future. The exhibit will be at the Johnstown SAMA from August 22nd through October 26th. AMD&ART will also display the exhibit at all three project sites throughout the month of August. Look for us during the following festival weekends:

- Central City (Somerset County) Heritage Days, August 16-17th.
- Portage Summerfest, August 8-10th, in the Portage Museum.
- Vintondale Homecoming, August 30-31st. We look forward to seeing many faces as our exhibit travels throughout the region!

AMD&ART Newsroom

*** As of April, our address has changed (don't worry, we've still been receiving mail at the old address!) We are now located at:

**1107 12th St., Mezzanine, Suite 2
Altoona, PA 16601**

**814-943-7924
AMDandART@soundcity.net**

phone

*** The Public Art Review, the national magazine for public art in America, has recently featured the AMD&ART Project. The article focuses on all four aspects of the project; history, science, art, and community involvement. It gives a comprehensive description of the Project, and it looks great!

*** Thanks to Team Artists Michael Oppenheimer and Angelo Ciotti, and the hard work of their students at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, models of two AMD&ART sites are complete. The models of the Hughes Bore Hole and Dark Shade will be a part of future displays on the project, and the Dark Shade model is included in *From Rust to Renewal*. Thanks again to both the Team Artists and their students, and a special thanks to the AmeriCorps Survey Team from Somerset for their topographical survey of the Hughes Bore Hole that provided base maps used for constructing that model and for additional design purposes.



*** Somerset County Commissioner Dave Mankamyer has offered to help AMD&ART continue to develop a plan for treatment of the Central City discharge into Dark Shade Creek. In addition to the benefits for Central City, treating this discharge has the potential to restore additional fishery areas in the Stonycreek River, due to the good work that the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project (SCRIP) has already accomplished in the sub-basin. We look forward to a continued partnership with Commissioner Mankamyer.

*** On May 13th, AMD&ART met with people from the STUDIO for Creative Inquiry at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh to catch up with each other. STUDIO has supported AMD&ART in the past, and their continued interest and assistance is encouraging. Of special interest is the STUDIO 9-mile Run Project, which seeks to transform an urban industrial waste site into a sustainable environment of private housing and public greenspace.

*** We have a few announcements about the AMD&ART Team. Rob McCombie has taken a job as the project coordinator of the recently formed Kiski-Conemaugh River Basin Alliance (*see article p.3*). John Turner is staying on the Project a second year as an AmeriCorps member through the Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps. Shelbie Knox, AMD&ART intern, is in town for the summer, and doing an excellent job. Krista Patterson, a senior at Penn State University, has also been helping out this summer. Thanks to Congressman John P. Murtha's office, where she is interning; and special thanks to the Congressman's aide, Brad Clemenson, for pointing her in our direction.

Special Vintondale Update and Meeting Announcement

Since the last newsletter, the Vintondale Pilot Project has taken great strides. AMD&ART has been busy designing the site, talking to residents, searching for funding, and making final preparations. After a lot of encouraging progress, we are now ready for another round of community input, to exchange more ideas about advancing this project.

To this end, AMD&ART is excited to announce a second town meeting in Vintondale. Since the last public meeting, the AMD&ART Team has been busy planning the design for the site, thanks to all of the great ideas we received from the Vintondale community.

The plans for the Vintondale pilot project are now ready for review by area residents on Tuesday, August 19th at 7:00 p.m. in the Vintondale Fire Hall. Please come out and get involved in this unique design process!

Speaking of meetings, members of AMD&ART recently met in Vintondale with John Paone, Water Pollution Biologist of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Mr. Paone determined that there were no significant wetlands on the site which would be disturbed by the proposed AMD&ART project there. This news ensures that we will not need a costly permit to disturb existing wetlands.

Even more recently, AMD&ART Team members met in Vintondale with John Dawes of the Heinz Endowments. Mr. Dawes expressed an interest in the Vintondale project on behalf of Heinz, and we look



forward to further dialogue with the people there. We will keep you updated as to the status of our funding application.

Finally, AMD&ART is planning to display the Vintondale portion of our exhibit *From Rust to Renewal* at Vintondale's upcoming homecoming celebration in late August. The exhibit will be a wonderful opportunity to further inform the community about the project, and allow us to interact with area residents.

We are looking forward to even more progress as a result of the approaching town meeting and exhibit display. Look for the results of these events in the next newsletter.

Kiski-Conemaugh River Basin Alliance hires Rob McCombie

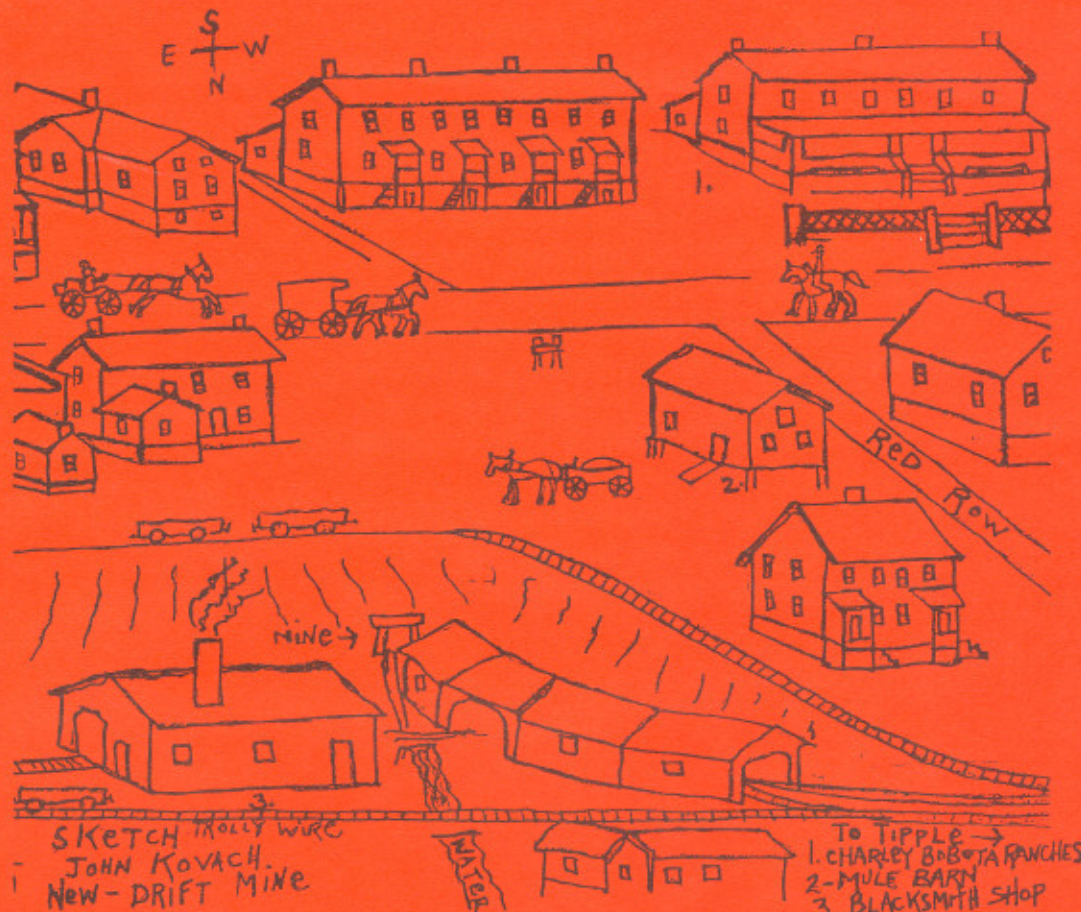
The Kiski-Conemaugh River Basin Alliance, a coalition of regional watershed groups, has hired Rob McCombie as their new Project Director! Rob spent two years as AMD&ART Project Coordinator through the Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps. For the next 2 years, the Alliance will be working to get the entire Kiskiminetas Basin, which covers Cambria, Somerset, Indiana, and Westmoreland Counties (including all three AMD&ART sites) on the Rivers Registry. The registry was established by the PA Rivers Conservation Program in order to recognize rivers which have conservation plans and local support. Registry status of the Kiskiminetas Basin will enable watershed groups operating in the region to achieve funding more easily. This effort by the Alliance is funded by a grant from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Good luck, Rob!

AMD&ART

1107 12th St., Mezzanine Suite 2
Altoona, PA 16601

Vintondale Public Meeting!

Tuesday, Aug. 19th
7:00 p.m.
Vintondale Fire Hall
Come get involved!



A sketch by retired miner John Kovach of Portage. Mr. Kovach has generously offered to allow AMD&ART to use some of his sketches in our upcoming exhibit (see inside for details!) This sketch came to us courtesy of the Portage Area Historical Society.

This project is sponsored by the **Allegheny Heritage Development Corporation (AHDC)** and the **Pennsylvania Rural Arts Alliance (PRAA)**. AHDC is the private non-profit outgrowth of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Preservation Commission, which works to enhance historic, recreational, and cultural resources within the region as focal points for cultural tourism, economic development, and community improvement. PRAA is an eight-year-old non-profit service organization answering the needs of rural artist and arts organizations in this Commonwealth, with a primary service area in the Allegheny Highlands. It is a member organization with representation from twenty-one countries.

AMD&ART has benefited from the generous support of the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, Interdisciplinary, Visual Arts, and Local Government Programs; the Office of Surface Mining, Department of the Interior; STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, Carnegie Mellon University; the Pennsylvania Mountain Service Corps of the National AmeriCorps Program; the Heinz Endowments; the Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art (SAMA); the Cambria County Conservation District; the Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project (SCRIP); the Blacklick Creek Watershed Association (BCWA); and EarthTech, Inc.

The AMD&ART Team also wishes to thank the communities of Vintondale and the Blacklick Valley, Central City and the surrounding townships, and the Portage area for their kind help and support.

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