

[\(00:01\)](#):

music

Sean Duffy ([00:27](#)):

So, you had a Wheeling at the time that Schmulbach was growing up, that was a rough and tumble place. It was sort of a Western gateway. There were boat workers here, working class men, industrial workers, stagecoach drivers, railroad workers, riverboat men, and they had appetites, you know, they liked to gamble. They liked women. And, uh, you know, these were single men largely, and, uh, many of them were immigrants and they liked imbibing. So, there were a lot of saloons in Wheeling, you know, by the turn of the century, there were probably a hundred of them, maybe 140 or so up and down main street. And a large number of those were run by German saloon keepers. And of course, we know they got into brewing and they were the dominant brewers here in Wheeling, including Mr. Schmulbach and Mr. Reymann. So, you had a converging in Wheeling, cultures that appreciated beer and an environment in which beer was a welcome sort of less expensive alternative sometimes to say wine or, or, uh, hard liquor.

Hal Gorby ([01:44](#)):

Ah, the sounds of satisfaction. Beer served as a major player in Wheeling, West Virginia's rise as an industrial powerhouse. Beer quenched the thirst of hardy working class men in saloons. It was key in a variety of ethnic and cultural social functions, and also employed large numbers of men and women in spinoff industries, such as glass bottle making, keg making and wood products. But it also flowed out of Wheeling along with other manufactured products to markets across the state region and nation.

Hal Gorby ([02:18](#)):

And of course, beer is a very popular drink of choice at this time. Uh, at a time when there's no filtrated water here in the city of Wheeling.

Sean Duffy ([02:26](#)):

That's right. You were advised to drink the beer. It had been pasteurized.

Hal Gorby ([02:32](#)):

Yes, Schmulbach even often advertised his beer as sort of the beer of the home, as sort of the healthiest drink you could consume in Wheeling, which,

Sean Duffy ([02:39](#)):

That's correct. I think he took a tip from the Guinness brewery in Ireland by touting his beer as medicinal and, uh, something that gave you strength. It was yeah. As you say, the beer of the home.

Hal Gorby ([02:52](#)):

Yes. Drink the water with care but drink your beer without worry was probably the watch word in Wheeling. Brewing has deep roots in Wheeling's history. Commercially, the first brewery in the city dates to 1812. For the next 100 years, beer would be produced in hoppy abundance. However, by 1912, the state of West Virginia would vote to go dry, thus ending an era in Wheeling's development. The man most synonymous with beer in Victorian Wheeling is, of course, Henry Schmulbach. We saw in episode one, Schmulbach learned the art of business through working on packing boats, owning his own

company by age 19, and then entering the wholesale liquor business. All the while he was making investments, acquiring stock to set up his expansion of what would become the state's largest commercial brewery in south Wheeling. While successful, he was not Wheeling's only commercial brewer. His friendly rival was fellow German immigrant, Anton Reymann. Both men rose as Wheeling's own captains of industry like the Andrew Carnegie's of their day, but they took different paths.

Hal Gorby ([04:03](#)):

This is Henry the life and legacy of Wheeling's most notorious brewer. A production of Wheeling heritage media. I am your host, William Hal Gorby, a teaching assistant professor of history at West Virginia university, whose research has focused on West Virginia and Wheeling's working class and immigrant history during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. In this episode, we will look at Schmulbach's role as a brewer and how it was tied in with the saloon trade in town. We will take a tour of his former brewery that still stands in south Wheeling and is an architectural character all its own. We will also hear about his rivalry with Anton Raymond, best seen in Schmulbach's efforts to build a record park high above the Ohio river. By the 1870s, Wheeling was already well known as an industrial town. As the rest of West Virginia's economy remained underdeveloped, Wheeling benefited from its antebellum roots in the making of nails, iron, tobacco, and glass.

Hal Gorby ([05:05](#)):

And the region continued to attract businesses. By 1900 Wheeling had 32% of all state manufacturing investment and 31% of state industrial employment. There was an entrepreneurial spirit in the air in the years following the civil war. In the early 1870s, Wheeling was known as nail city, leading the nation with 40% of all cut nail production. The city had innovative glass houses, the famous Hobbs Brockunier company in south Wheeling, not far from Henry's brewery, founded in 1845, produced Flint and colored glassware. Their Wheeling peach blow and glass chandeliers were desired in many Victorian homes. Victorian Wheeling was also a center of steel tube and tinsplate, pottery and tobacco manufacturing. So it was perfect timing. Henry Schmulbach was rising at the moment Wheeling was being jump-started by innovative business owners and craftsmen. The numerous spinoff businesses and small shops throughout town meant more money and opportunities for a budding entrepreneur like Schmulbach, but what field to make his mark? Part of the entrepreneurial spirit is finding a niche, a market where there is a lack of innovation and wisely developed a new way of doing things at a profit, of course. Rather than just selling others' alcohol Schmulbach would try to control all aspects of the process and become a commercial supplier of beer instead.

Speaker 1 ([06:34](#)):

music

Kevin Ayers ([06:46](#)):

No, I even, I even noticed reading some of the history of Henry Schmulbach. Um, he was doing what about eight, 8,000 barrel a year, uh, before then he expanded. Um, and literally it was to become like the beer in every house. Um, and when he was able to open his own bottling line, uh, which saved a ton of money for him, uh, you know, and to do that all in house. And he, he, he literally jumped from that 8,000 to like 50,000 barrels a year, which is ridiculous in today's like West Virginia market, as far as craft beer. I mean, you're starting to see some of the big timbers and Greenbrier starting to get there, especially big timber opening their new location. Um, but it it's, it's just, you know, to, to think that that was right here in our town is, is amazing.

Hal Gorby ([07:34](#)):

Yeah. Yeah. That we had commercial breweries that were some of the largest retailers for them, this sort of seven, eight state region.

Kevin Ayers ([07:40](#)):

Oh, absolutely. Yeah. I mean, it was, it was, you know, you say or not you, but, you know, you say in general that, uh, you know, he was a large brewery and Wheeling, well, no, he was large in general. Like it regionally, he was, he was massive when he got to that point. Unfortunately it was right towards the end. Then he retired and then passed away. So it was unfortunate, but it was very, very successful. I mean, he literally paved the way, I think, uh, for what we are all doing now.

Hal Gorby ([08:10](#)):

That was Kevin Ayers, owner of brew keepers explaining how Wheeling's history of brewing has inspired his own efforts. Brewing was deeply rooted in Wheeling's early history. Schmulbach History expert, Ryan Stanton, who we heard from in episode one, explained the natural benefits that helped the industry take off.

Ryan Stanton ([08:29](#)):

Documented brewing in Wheeling, uh, starts really, really as early as about 1812, there was the Uptograph family, two Quaker brothers. They operated a brewery in north Wheeling, uh, and a lot of the early brewer breweries were located in north Wheeling because there was an abundance of spring water there, uh, and also access to caves for storing the beer. Um, Henry Moore was another early brewer in the 1820s that was successful. Uh, George Smith would probably be Wheeling's first major brewer because he had a branch in Wheeling and a branch in Pittsburgh located near the point. So I, a lot of it was our natural resources. We have the natural resources, but we're also in the 1850s starting to get a lot of that German heritage, uh, or German immigrants are coming here and they want to preserve their heritage. And so, you know, we're, we're ripe for large brewery, uh, or a large brewing industry.

Hal Gorby ([09:27](#)):

These natural benefits made Wheeling a brewing hub. By 1882, the city's breweries produced over 338,000 kegs of beer and ale. Henry Schmulbach was not the first Wheeling brewer, but will over time emerge as the city and state's most successful one. After acquiring stock in the nail city brewing company, Schmulbach moved to quickly revitalize the factory and increase beer production and quality.

Ryan Stanton ([09:55](#)):

When Schmulbach acquired the nail city brewing company, they were brewing maybe five to 6,000 barrels a year and Schmulbach, as we know, being the entrepreneur that he was, that wasn't good enough. He wanted to, he wanted to grow this business so very quickly, they escalate, uh, the property and the grounds, the equipment, uh, they boost that up to 50,000 barrels a year pretty quickly. And ultimately at Schmulbach's high point he's brewing over 200,000 barrels of beer annually.

Hal Gorby ([10:25](#)):

Uh, it makes sense that, this Wheeling and its environment is providing a sort of nice hub for him to expand production, because at the same time, you're seeing the city expand its glass production, uh, in various factories, particularly around, of course, glass bottling, right. Which is a nice sort of, uh, ancillary

thing. There, it has a lot of railroad connections that are expanding and developing at this time, natural river transportation of which Schmulbach understands very clearly from his early days. So it makes it a nice center of production, uh, in a, in a place that's providing the sort of, um, ancillary other businesses that would help support. And also likewise brewing would help support them too.

Ryan Stanton ([11:05](#)):

Right. Yeah. So, uh, our transportation, the national road, river traffic, railroad traffic, it's very easy to start a business here and then very quickly ship that product throughout the tri-state area and take a brewery beer, something that everybody wants. It's a hot commodity. Uh, so you can find Schmulbach bottles, you know, today, you know, in Maryland, Pennsylvania, uh, and people's barns and attics and basements, you know, they're all over the place, or they end up all over the country for that matter, as people move and took them with them, or during prohibition possibly use those bottles, um, you know, to brew their own home brew. Um, but, uh, so there's a lot of artifacts that exist, you know, from the brewery, such as that, that kind of show you how widely, uh, they were distributing their products.

Hal Gorby ([11:54](#)):

Almost from the start, the brewery grew by leaps and bounds. In 1882, he began expanding the site, adding new buildings and machinery. Beer output grew stupendously from about 6,000 barrels a year when he took over to 200,000 barrels by 1890 alone. In the summer of 1883, a Wheeling register reporter wrote about the influence of the German brewers in Wheeling. In a story titled Zwei Lager, the reporter wrote about south Wheeling. Here's his description of Schmulbach's brewery. Quote, "this building, which stands at the intersection of 33rd and Wetzel streets is imposing in appearance and unexcelled in the machinery and quality of the article they turn out." End quote. Driving to the intersection of 33rd and McCulloch streets in south Wheeling, tucked tightly against West Virginia route two, you can see a series of dark reddish brick on either side of you. In earlier days, 33rd street was a route on Wheeling's extensive streetcar system.

Hal Gorby ([13:03](#)):

Nearby railroad lines would have crossed the area running north to the LaBelle nail mill and south to the Hobbs Brockunier glass house. In front and to the left are a series of taller buildings. One has a pheasant bird flying through hops and barley interlaced with a giant S around which says Schmulbach brewing company. I toured the site with Ryan Stanton and Betsy Sweeney. Betsy works at Wheeling heritage as their historic preservation program manager. The area is a busy industrial area to this day. So you may hear some heavy traffic in the background, along with traffic on the highway above us. Starting along Wetzel street, just below route two we can see what was once the stables.

Ryan Stanton ([13:49](#)):

So, we are in Wheeling, West Virginia, uh, in what is referred to as the south Wheeling area. And we're standing in a little bit of a industrial looking area here. Um, but at one point this was one of the most successful breweries in the state of West Virginia. Um, well, what we have left today are a lot of the buildings actually still intact, which is rare, uh, for, uh, pre-prohibition breweries to, uh, to have survived like this. But, uh, one of the things that makes it unique is we have most of the buildings still standing. Some are actually, uh, successfully occupied by businesses and others, not so much, but, um, there is definitely a potential to, to preserve them. And so one of the buildings that's actually currently being used by a business is the old stables for the brewery. Um, once the beer was brewed, it had to be delivered.

Ryan Stanton ([14:43](#)):

And so, uh, the wagons, drivers, horses, you know, played a really big part in that. And the stable is currently occupied by Kennedy's hardware, uh, which has been a long time Wheeling business since the 1930s. Um, but what eventually, what led to the building of this was the original stable for the brewery burned down. It was just a, you know, a big wooden barn, burned down in a fire and Henry Schmulbach, the owner of the brewery wanted, uh, something that was going to last, that they wouldn't have to worry about catching on fire and burning down. And so he went all out with, uh, a huge stable. Do you maybe want to describe?

Betsy Sweeny ([15:24](#)):

So, the stable itself was really interesting because it does occupy such a large footprint in the complex. It's a substantial building. The brick construction and the stone foundation is a little different than your traditional timber frame stable you might expect it. It's substantial. The pyramid roof is built in a way that is very steep and will accommodate a large hayloft, another kind of nod to the level of production that's happening here, that they would need to store so much hay. And then when you're on the primary facade that's kind of facing west you can see the original hayloft doors on the second story are still present along with the decorative scroll motif with the date of construction, which I believe is 1894, 1894, and Schmulbach really loved his horses right?

Ryan Stanton ([16:11](#)):

Schmulbach took great pride in his horses. And so I can imagine that this would have been one of his favorite parts of the brewery. Um, all the horses actually had names. If you look into, uh, one of the old Schmulbach ledgers, um, they actually took an inventory one time. They had all the horses, their age, their names, and their value actually listed there. So, um, you know, they were thought of as obviously workers for the brewery, but also pets that they took a lot of pride in taking care of.

Hal Gorby ([16:40](#)):

Okay, we're now standing here on 33rd street, sort of looking up at one of the more Southern buildings that appears to have Schmulbach's name on the front of it, here at the top.

Ryan Stanton ([16:50](#)):

Right. So, uh, there's actually, you have this building and then a building behind it. They would have been used for, uh, this building that we see on the front here, uh, would have been for actually washing the kegs. And then the building behind it would have been the Cooper shop where they would have been actually, uh, making kegs. So a big part of the brewing process was of course, keggering the beer, uh, but then sending it out to saloons or you could even order a keg and have it sent to your house. Uh, so these were really two important buildings. And what is significant about this building, and it is still preserved today, is the Schmulbach brewing company logo up at the top. And so Schmulbach was a very elaborate person. He went all out, uh, in anything that he would do including his logo. So you have the, the S with the, a pheasant flying through the S, and then you have a hops and barley depicted in the background. And, uh, this, this, uh, this logo would have appeared on the embossing of almost of his beer bottles, uh, would have been on the paper labels and, uh, in the Schmulbach building that you can also find that logo on the door knob. So, uh, it's very impressive from that standpoint.

Hal Gorby ([18:02](#)):

What an amazing site. This complex of buildings gives you a sense of how Schmulbach crafted an efficient beer making process in the late 19th century. The location also highlights how old factory structures throughout Wheeling can continue to serve practical purposes. This podcast is brought to you by Clientele Art Studio, an art gallery and studio space in east Wheeling. From art shows to concerts. Clientele has event space, as well as multiple studios for rent. Learn more at clientelestudio.com. Schmulbach was quite innovative in how he maximized the production of beer, but like anything in the art of entrepreneurship, he was not alone. Wheeling was large enough to have multiple breweries to feed demand. Throughout his life, Schmulbach's main competition came from a fellow German immigrant, Anton Reymann. Reymann was a unique character in his own right. Both men were German immigrants who rose through their own initiative. While not as colorful as Schmulbach, Reymann was just as prominent in Wheeling. Reymann was older. He was born in 1837 in Hessen Darmstadt. He came to America following the German 48ers we heard about in episode one. Arriving in Wheeling at age 16, he took a slightly different path to brewing than Schmulbach.

Ryan Stanton ([19:34](#)):

So, uh, Anton Reymann, uh, actually traveled the Midwest as a young man learning, uh, the craft of brewing beer, learning the latest, you know, uh, technological advances that were coming along and brought those to Wheeling. So, Schmulbach was a businessman, not necessarily an expert, maybe, on brewing. Anton Reymann was a little bit different and he married into a family that had already owned a very small brewery. Uh, his, uh, father-in-law's name was Peter Paul Beck. He owned a very small brewery and beer garden, uh, in the Manchester section of Wheeling near present day rock point road. Um, and so, uh, he marries into that family and then, you know, had a, has a little bit of that Schmulbach entrepreneurial spirit, too. He wants to, you know, uh, create a brewery that's mass producing throughout the tri-state area. Um, and so there's no like real documented evidence per se of a rivalry, but both men owned the largest breweries in the state.

Ryan Stanton ([20:41](#)):

So naturally I'm sure one existed, uh, between these two, uh, men. There's no evidence of them, uh, ever publicly conversing about being rivals or, you know, making a bet or anything along those lines, even though Schmulbach was known for his betting, um, never gets involved in anything, uh, in that nature. I think it's safe to say that they probably ran in different crowds. Anton Reymann was more of a family man. Schmulbach would be a bachelor until age 69. And he definitely enjoyed, uh, the nightlife and having a good time where Reymann, you know, again, seemed to, uh, play it a little bit closer to home. But were they rivals for sure? Were they personal rivals maybe, but, um, everything kind of suggests that it was friendly, nothing too vicious.

Hal Gorby ([21:33](#)):

So what was the rivalry between the two men? We'll get to that later in the episode. Suffice to say Reymann was a skilled brewer. He went through a formal apprenticeship learning the trade. He eventually took over the Beck brewery by the time of the civil war. And from there built his own brewing empire. In 1880, he built the massive Reymann brewing company in east Wheeling. It seems almost appropriate that both men's crown jewels were physically located in different sections of the city, east versus south Wheeling. Both were often called the largest breweries in West Virginia at different times. Even so Schmulbach's brewing process was unique. Here's Wheeling historian, Sean Duffy, describing some differences in approach.

Sean Duffy ([22:21](#)):

Uh one of the things he did was use natural gas in his brewing process, which helped lower costs. He was all about lowering costs. Schmulbach was a businessman, okay. Reymann was a master brewer, Schmulbach was not, but he was a master businessman. He made, um, modernizations and innovations to his setup that increased his ability to produce beer, uh, cheaply. So as brewmasters were using natural gas to process the beer created a more consistent flavor, increase the profits. He could turn those profits into things like, you know, whereas most breweries used storage caves to keep their beer cold. He created his own ice, even sold ice. And eventually he used mechanical refrigeration before any of the other brewers did in town. Um, he used more modern equipment and his production was an assembly line and he even started to produce his own bottles, his own bottling plant to, uh, bottle the beer. So he didn't have to outsource that. Another cost savings and allowed him to increase profits and please his investors. And he quickly became the biggest brewer in the state at 200,000 barrels a year.

Hal Gorby ([23:41](#)):

Both men also lived different lives. As Ryan Stanton noted, Reymann lived a quieter existence while Schmulbach was a known bachelor who enjoyed Wheeling's nightlife. While both men had different characters they also mirrored one another at times. Both men were very active in city affairs. Schmulbach was a leader in the Republican party and Reymann, a leader with the local Democrats. Both were noted philanthropists. Both had a large number of investments across the city. Both also had a keen interest in outdoor recreation too, as we'll see. Regardless of their personal differences, both Reymann and Schmulbach made their wealth selling their beer, but to sell a product one must have willing customers. And boy did Wheeling have a lot of thirsty customers. And Schmulbach made his mark on the industry, not necessarily for his brewing knowledge, but for his understanding of the business. One way to do this in the late 19th century was through selling your beer wholesale to saloons. The saloon or working man's club was the primary social space where thirsty men could imbibe and relax after a hard day's labor. And Schmulbach was very savvy at advertising and marketing a wide assortment of popular beers.

Ryan Stanton ([25:12](#)):

The breweries of Wheeling were very unique at advertising. So they would advertise a beer for breakfast, a beer for lunch and a beer in the evening. So, um, imagine all of the beer that's that people were drinking, Schmulbach's got to keep up with that. Uh, and so they had a lot of, uh, you know, neat advertising gimmicks to get people hooked. Um, you have the German heritage, of course, important to them.

Hal Gorby ([25:36](#)):

Uh, were there any particular like, uh, today, if we were thinking of a brewing company, we would think they have sort of maybe premium stout or premium sort of, uh, uh, lager beer of various types. Were there any sort of, uh, common sort of brands that were very, very popular at that time?

Ryan Stanton ([25:52](#)):

So Schmulbach he brewed a lager beer. Uh, that was probably almost always on tap throughout the city of Wheeling. He had a ale that he called crown ale, but, uh, one of the things that Schmulbach was known for is the different types of brews or seasonal brews that he would release. And these would be advertised in the newspaper, for example, like Bach beer for a limited time, you know, two weeks only, or they would tell you what saloons and you could get it from. Uh, and they were very big into the Oktoberfest style of beers. Um, and so, uh, yeah, they, you know, they played off of that heritage, but

also used it from an advertising standpoint. Uh, later on one telephone comes to Wheeling, the brewers were some of the first subscribers to the telephone, uh, so that way they could have people call the brewery and then have beer actually delivered to their house. So, um, they were brilliant when it came to marketing

Hal Gorby ([26:47](#)):

If only that service existed today. Um, but it's interesting just to think that, you know, a hundred plus years ago, this sort of drive today for craft brewers and sort of different varieties and seasonal varieties, that was still something that we often maybe didn't associate with that earlier time period, but it was obviously part of their business success.

Hal Gorby ([27:11](#)):

Breweries today produce a gas station effect. Where there's one others will develop. At this earlier time, saloons proliferated in much the same way. There often were multiple saloons on a single street. At the height of the saloon in Wheeling's history in 1904, there were 199 licensed saloons. Emphasis on the word licensed. Don't worry. We'll talk more about that issue in episode four. Saloons were dependent on the breweries by the 1880s. High liquor licensing fees made it tough for saloons to keep their doors open, but brewers like Schmulbach had it all figured out for their clients. He could sell them beer at a reasonable price along with providing other amenities. This process was known as the tide house system. Saloons were subsidized by the city's largest brewers, Schmulbach or Reymann or others. The brewer contributed to the rent, license fee and sometimes even supplied the bar fixtures and artwork.

Hal Gorby ([28:17](#)):

In exchange, the saloon keeper agreed to sell no other brand of beer and reimburse the brewer by paying a special tax added to each barrel of beer. This created a reciprocal relationship which helped make saloons the site of many social and political functions. If you're wondering if this arrangement had any critics, don't worry. It sure did. And boy, was it heated. But thirsty working class Wheelingites weren't complaining. For new immigrants to the city the foreign owned saloon could provide aid and assistance for unemployed workers and even provide a free lunch. Oh yes, there was once a free lunch. It did exist. Walk into any saloon at this time and you would be met by a line of meats, cheese, pretzels, hard-boiled eggs and breads, all of which were provided for free. Of course, what all these items contributed to was increasing thirst. How might you quench that thirst?

Hal Gorby ([29:18](#)):

Ah, that was what the saloon keepers counted on. Men could then purchase a beer for five to 10 cents a glass. What a business model. In the early 1890s, one Saloonkeeper surmised that a working man can board round by spending 15 cents a day for beer. The common price of a nickel for a drink and lunch and a dime to fill a growler pail and meal were common. Conrad Untermoffin's saloon at the corner of 36 and wood streets near the Hobbs Brockunier Glassworks served a free lunch every day from nine to 12 in the morning. As we will see this practice irritated many a reformer in Wheeling, leading city government to ban the free lunch in 1909. Thanks.

Hal Gorby ([30:16](#)):

One of the most obvious manifestations of a rivalry between Anton Reymann and Henry Schmulbach was in terms of recreation. Both men were involved in the promotion of sports and other amusements. Reymann bought the home of Thomas Hornbrook. Located four miles east of the city along national

road, Reymann developed the site into a German beer garden and private amusement park. It had a rollercoaster and a casino. The park was the last stop on Wheeling streetcar line in the early 20th century. In 1924, the land was acquired by the city and opened as Wheeling Park. It was praised at the time, but Reymann's park was located in the developing middle and upper-class suburbs east of the city center. It tended to cater primarily to that audience. But what about working class Wheelingites? What about those who couldn't afford the fare and time to travel miles from the city. Ever the entrepreneur, Schmulbach decided he would also develop a recreational park, but closer to those who worked in his brewery and nearby mills. Schmulbach created Mozart Park based on his own interests and outdoor recreation.

Ryan Stanton ([31:25](#)):

Yeah. So, of all the things that Schmulbach accomplished in his lifetime, uh, I would say that Mozart Park was probably one of his proudest accomplishments. Uh, and this park would serve as a majestic hilltop getaway from the city atmosphere of Wheeling. The idea for Mozart Park started with Henry Schmulbach's vision, uh, of a park for the people of south Wheeling. So, there was Wheeling Park that was owned by Anton Reymann, which was of course a park slash beer garden that only served of course, Reymann beer. So here's where the competition kicked in a little bit. Schmulbach wanted to do the same thing, but he wanted to do it for the people of South Wheeling. So, the park would eventually open in 1892, but as early as 1880 Schmulbach offered the north end of Wheeling Island as also a park and he also operated a racetrack there. So he was, you know, involved in a lot of different business interests, but he was also, you know, if you've mentioned, uh, had an eye for, uh, starting different recreational businesses to, to promote, uh, his brewery. And he also enjoyed gambling. So he had a horse track on the north end.

Hal Gorby ([32:35](#)):

The site Schmulbach chose would add to its intrigue also.

Ryan Stanton ([32:39](#)):

And so the original site for Mozart park was called the Frazier farm and it was purchased in 1892 for \$13,000. And the farm was high atop a hill that overlooked south Wheeling. And at one time had been a very large peach orchard. So additional lots were purchased in 1893, which brought the total land purchases to about \$17,000. And the park site was also conveniently located near the Schmulbach brewing company, which was located on 33rd street and the park would serve in an exclusive outlet for Schmulbach beer. So during the early stages of the park, there was a lot of construction activity. Uh, workers were busy constructing the main building that was to contain a bar, a billiard room, bowling alley, reception rooms, a large hall and, as they advertised, toilet rooms. Uh, the first official gathering at Mozart park occurred on July of 1892.

Ryan Stanton ([33:38](#)):

And, uh, it was an exclusive event for members of the Mozart singing society. And so it was advertised or stated in the newspaper that the group had picnics and, uh, enjoyed the orchards. The park opened to the public though, in the following year in July of 1893 and its official grand opening occurred on October 25th, 1893. Um, and so one of the most unique things about this park was accessing it. So, it was high atop this hill in south Wheeling. And, um, you know, you didn't want to walk up this hill to go to the park. So, uh, and streetcar, trolley lines at that time were not powerful enough to go up the hill. So Schmulbach had the idea, let's put an incline there. So that was one of the main attractions of the park

actually is going on the incline that would take you up. You could view the city, you get to the top of the park and then you get to take part in all the different activities that they offered. Uh, but you know, the, the incline also shows, I think, uh, the creative spirit that Schmulbach had, we have a problem. Here's a solution.

Hal Gorby ([34:44](#)):

The incline station was located near 43rd street. If you find yourself in Mozart, the brick foundations rising up the hill near the power lines are still visible today. The incline opened in the fall of 1893 and members of the press took a trip on the incline to see the magnificent view from the summit. A reporter from the Wheeling Daily Register recalled the experience fondly.

Alex Weld ([35:11](#)):

Yesterday afternoon, the board of directors of Mozart Park, accompanied by representatives of the press and a number of invited guests made a trip up the incline railway to the park on a tour of inspection. The time slated to start was three o'clock, but delay was caused by the workmen tightening the cables and perfecting the working of the same. While waiting the waiting rooms and arrangement at the bottom of the incline were surveyed. Besides the main waiting room, the apartment branches off to each side where the passengers from the cars are deposited or get aboard. In one corner is stationed a fine steam pressure engine. This is to pump the water from a pipe attached to the city main to the boiler at the top of the hill. This engine is also fed with steam from the self-same boiler. Communication between the upper and lower station is had by a system of electric signals.

Alex Weld ([36:02](#)):

When the pressure of the finger upon the button is made at the bottom the engineer at the top knows when to start the cable. Arriving at the top of the hill, the party visited the park and then buildings. The result was both satisfactory and surprising. What was only a brow of a hill with a log cabin, a stable and a manure pile had been transformed into a magnificent park with drives, walks, and young trees, which in a few years will spread and beautify one of the most attractive pleasure seeking places of the surrounding vicinity. A large and fine building is erected just a quarter of a mile or more from the top of the incline road. In this are four fine bowling alleys and a large bar room in front. In front of this building is a pretty garden enclosure with seats distributed about. A short distance away is a large dancing pavilion, 100 feet in diameter.

Alex Weld ([37:04](#)):

Above the waxen floor, probably 10 feet, is a section reserved for the orchestra. Steps lead from the floor below to the tower at the summit of the pavilion, from which the party enjoyed probably the finest view that can be seen from any points around the city. He can look over the tops of all the hills surrounding Wheeling and for miles, both on this side and the other of the river, ranges upon ranges of hills, almost mountains it seems, surrounding him on all sides, as far as the vision of sight can be carried. To the beholder, the break in the monotony is only near and below him. Wheeling is lying apparently on the bottom lands of a stream, which winds its way between the high embankments on either side. Martins ferry, Bridgeport and the island and that part of the city lying near the river can be seen when looking northward. The Ohio coming together at the lower point of the island is lost when just a little below the view of the park. It reappears when looking southward over Kettler's hill. In this direction is Bellaire also plainly visible. To the east is Bloomersville. And through the valley to the Northwest can be seen a long alley and at the end, the road that leads down the hill to the county courthouse. It is certainly a

magnificent view. A gentleman who was visiting here from Germany stated that no scenery along the Rhine could compare with it. It is said Saint Clairsville can be plainly seen on a clear day. The autumn haze and the coloring of the trees add an extra charm to the natural beauty of the Hills and surrounding country.

Hal Gorby ([38:47](#)):

What a grand ride and view. You can almost hear the ragtime and German music playing around the pavilion, large mugs of Schmulbach beer of course sold for 5 cents. And 5 cents got one a large Keizer sandwich as well. And Mozart park had plenty of interesting attractions.

Ryan Stanton ([39:08](#)):

Well, they got into the bicycle craze, for example. So there was actually a bicycle track on the property, they would do outdoor plays. Um, there's a lot of strange events that, that happen there that are kind of fun to look into. At one time they were actually housing, a black bear, um, on the property just as kind of like a little makeshift zoo, I believe they also had some other animals too.

Hal Gorby ([39:31](#)):

Mozart had a roller coaster, a bowling alley, and the state's largest dancing pavilion, which could hold up to 5,000 people. There was also a third mile bicycle track and casino. The park hosted German singing societies, vaudeville shows, even a parachute jump. The park did have some things that didn't work so well. The parachute jump had some issues, but one of the wildest stories involved a zoo at the park.

Ryan Stanton ([40:02](#)):

So very early on in my research about Henry Schmulbach, uh, people had told me stories about how there was this mob that killed a bear for a bear feast. And I thought, well, that's, that's really interesting. I got to know more about this. It turned out to be a much more organized event. It turns out that the bear apparently just kind of became a nuisance. And so they advertised the bear feast. And so it was a big event, uh, that they sold tickets to. And I remember reading in the newspaper article that, uh, people said the bear was a little on the tough side. It wasn't necessarily, uh, the best meal per se, but people enjoyed eating, you know, this bear.

Hal Gorby ([40:39](#)):

Aside from the bizarre bear feast, Mozart park on a regular weekend could host hundreds, even several thousand people at a time. And it remained the most affordable site for working class leisure in Wheeling until World War one. By the time Mozart park opened in 1893, Henry Schmulbach was one of the city's leading captains of industry. He was someone to be admired. However, every person has skeletons in their closet. Did you know Wheeling may have never gotten to taste his amazing brews or traveled on his incline or rode Victorian bicycles around his pavilion at Mozart Park? In the sweltering summer heat of August 1878 Schmulbach could have been remembered as a rising businessman who ended up in prison following a questionable death out the pike. Did Schmulbach commit cold blooded murder? And what happened to the man who died then? We will hear that story in our next episode. This has been "Henry the life and legacy of Wheeling's most notorious brewer." This episode was written researched and narrated by me, William Hal Gorby. We had help in producing this episode from Wheeling Heritage. Editing and voice acting provided by Alex Weld. Sound and music editing and recording done by Dillon Richardson and Johnathon Porter. Audio interviews were done with Kevin

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