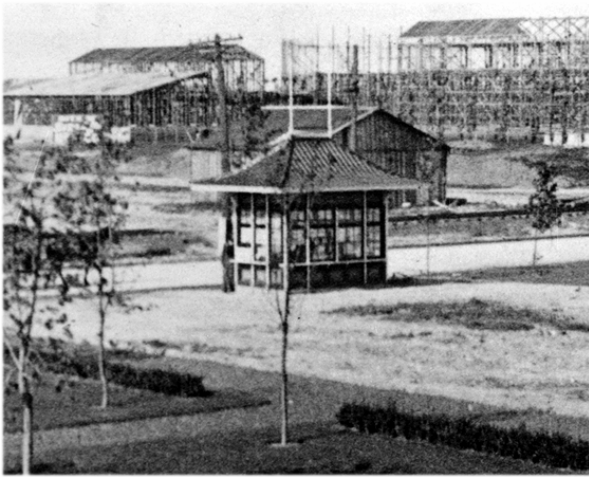


## The Little Building Comes Home

On August 7, 2000, The Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society (BECHS) will move an original Pan-American Exposition structure from West Seneca to its Resource Center on Forest Avenue.

Collections Assistant Melissa Wertman has been able to locate the little building on the original Pan-Am grounds through research in the photographic archives of the Historical Society. Through the photo below, Melissa has confirmed that the building, which has been in the backyard of a West Seneca home for 100 years, was indeed on the grounds. She has not been able to confirm its use, however. Could it be a security outpost, information booth, concession stand, or ticket booth? We don't know, but we do know that it's the real thing.



The "little building" on the Exposition grounds, ca. 1900. Image courtesy of the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society.

Through her research, Melissa has determined that the building was saved by the Simon family (of Simon Brewery fame), whose home was near the Pan-Am grounds. Melissa surmises that one of the Simon daughters begged to have the building saved as she watched the larger buildings being torn down, and her father rescued it and moved it to their summer home in West Seneca. And there it has been since.

The three daughters of the current owner of the property (now in their 50s) played in the little building during their growing up years, and their family called it the Gazebo. In fact, one of their dolls was just recently found in the Gazebo. As good luck would have it, one of the daughters is a restoration architect with one of the most prestigious firms in the country, John Milner & Associates of Philadelphia. She is providing the Historical Society with all the architectural plans and specs pro bono and is doing the necessary material and paint chip analysis.

The Town of West Seneca has given BECHS a grant of \$7,100 to fumigate the building and to move it into the Resource Center. BECHS will restore the building there and maintain it as a permanent part of the Pan-American collection.

All three of the daughters will be in Buffalo from their homes across the country to watch their childhood playhouse be moved back to the Pan-Am neighborhood. The Historical Society is planning a media event in conjunction with the family and the Town of West Seneca.

The architect/daughter estimates that it will take \$35,000-50,000 to do a full historic restoration of the building.