



**The Squirrel Hill Historical Society is a membership organization established in 2000. It is committed to gathering and preserving the history and memories of our neighborhood.**

*The Squirrel Hill Historical Society, Inc. has been determined to be exempt from federal income tax under Internal Revenue Code Section 501(c)(3). All contributions to the SHHS, including dues, are deductible from federal taxes under Section 170 of the IRS Code.*

## **SHHS Programs and Projects**

From its inception, the SHHS has presented a monthly lecture series on topics of interest focused on Squirrel Hill's development and institutions and other historical topics. Programs are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. (except August). For the past year and a half, programs were held on Zoom due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We plan to resume live programs as soon as we feel it is safe to do so. Live programs are held at the Church of the Redeemer, 5700 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15217. They are free and open to the public. **Check the SHHS website, [squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org) for updates before attending.**

## **For More Information About the SHHS...**

Go to the SHHS website, [squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org), to find information about programs and projects, upcoming speakers and events, videos of past SHHS programs, links to other historical organizations, and other information about Squirrel Hill and the Squirrel Hill Historical Society. You can also email us at [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org).



# What's Been Happening



The SHHS has been keeping busy while the pandemic continues. This display highlights our ongoing projects and provides information about our future plans and programs.

You can find more information on the SHHS website, which has undergone a complete overhaul. Check it out to see what's new.

***squirrelhillhistory.org***

## 2022 Membership Campaign

The SHHS launched its 2022 membership campaign in October. Members can renew at any time. Our membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. New members who join after October 1 are included on our 2022 membership list.

SHHS members receive monthly SHHS Newsletters, filled with information about our programs, articles about various topics in Squirrel Hill's history, and notices about events in Pittsburgh that are of historical interest to our members. Members also receive invitations to SHHS walking tours.

In 2021, SHHS members went to the Woods House Scottish Pub in Hazelwood to hear a talk given by the owner and then enjoy a fine lunch. They also toured Carrie Furnaces in Rankin to hear about the history of that massive iron mill and the lives of the men who worked there.



# SHHS Website

Check out the SHHS website, [\*\*squirrelhillhistory.org!\*\*](http://squirrelhillhistory.org) It's been completely revamped, with a lot more information on it. Of course you'll find information about Squirrel Hill's history, but there's a whole lot more:

- Learn about the SHHS's project to restore the **Neill Log House** in Schenley Park and the Neill House's connection to the Lewis and Clark Expedition.
- Read the interesting **histories of some of the houses** of Squirrel Hill.
- Take a **Driving Tour of Squirrel Hill** to explore the various areas of your neighborhood.
- View all the **Squirrel Hill News** newspapers published between 1936-1970.
- Find **links for historical research** to help you do your own research about a topic you're interested in.
- Browse the archives of **SHHS Newsletters**, published monthly since 2014, for members only on the Members Page.

## Squirrel Hill Historical Society

*Note: Only the MEMBERS PAGE link is password-protected and is accessible only to SHHS members. The SHHS password is sent to new members when they join. The MEMBERS PAGE has all issues of the SHHS Newsletter.*

**HOME      ABOUT US      SQUIRREL HILL HISTORY      UPCOMING EVENTS**  
**SHHS PAST EVENTS BY YEAR      SHHS PROGRAM VIDEOS BY TOPIC**  
**SHHS MUSEUM BOARD EXHIBITS      SQUIRREL HILL NEWS NEWSPAPERS**  
**SHHS BOOKS      SQUIRREL HILL MAGAZINE ARTICLES (in progress)**  
**HISTORICAL PHOTOS      LINKS FOR HISTORICAL RESEARCH**  
**MEMBERS PAGE      DRIVING TOUR OF SQUIRREL HILL**  
**HOUSE HISTORY PROJECT      HOW TO JOIN/DONATE      CONTACT US**  
**LINK TO LEWIS AND CLARK NATIONAL HISTORIC TRIAL EXPERIENCE**  
**THE NEILL LOG HOUSE**



# SHHS Newsletters

**SHHS Newsletters** have been sent out to members every month since 2014. At first just two pages long, they have expanded to eight and sometimes even ten pages because we never seem to run out of things to write about. The newsletters offer a listing of our upcoming programs, announcements about other history-related events of interest to our members, and best of all—articles about various topics in Squirrel Hill's history.

Some of our recent topics:

- "The History of the Neill Log House"
- "My Happenstance with Henry Koerner"
- "How Did Flagstaff Hill Get Its Name?"
- "Car Dealerships in Squirrel Hill"
- "Tree of Life\*Or L'Simcha, Dor Hadash and New Light"
- "Squirrel Hill in the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Experience"
- "Walking on the Wild Side in Squirrel Hill"
- "August Wilson's First High-School Experience in Squirrel Hill"
- "Shady Forbes Terrace and its Connection to Pittsburgh's Breweries"
- "Jonas Salk"

SHHS Newsletters can be accessed only by members on the password-protected **Members Page** of the SHHS website. However, both members and nonmembers are welcome to submit articles concerning any topic about Squirrel Hill's history. Personal stories are especially welcome. Contact the SHHS for more information.



**Squirrel Hill Historical Society**  
NEWSLETTER  
OCTOBER 2021

**About SHHS**  
The Squirrel Hill Historical Society (SHHS) is a membership organization established in 2000. It is committed to gathering, preserving, and celebrating the historical memories of our neighborhood. The SHHS sponsors a monthly lecture series on topics of interest primarily focused on Squirrel Hill and Pittsburgh history. The programs take place on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. They will be on Zoom until January 2022. Live programming will resume at Church of the Redeemer, 5700 Forbes Ave., in January.

**How to contact the SHHS:**  
P.O. Box 8157  
Pittsburgh, PA 15217  
Website:  
[squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org)  
Email:  
[sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org)

Most of our programs are recorded. If you would like to view past programs, go to [squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org) and click on the link "Squirrel Hill Program Videos by Topic."

SHHS Newsletters are sent only to SHHS members. Past issues are posted on the password-protected Members page on the SHHS website. If you are a member and need the password, email the SHHS and request it be sent to you.

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**IMPORTANT MESSAGE: The October-December meetings will be held on Zoom due to the continuing spike in Covid cases. We plan to resume live programs in January.**

We remind program attendees that YouTube's recent update to its Terms of Service Requirements requires that we do not provide any information, particularly facial recognition, that would allow viewers to identify a person without their permission. To comply, we are requesting that viewers do not send video or other images that would allow people to identify those shown in the video unless they have agreed to this condition.

**CO-PRESIDENTS' MESSAGE**  
Dear SHHS members,  
The Co-Presidents of the Squirrel Hill Historical Society (SHHS) welcome you to our October newsletter. We have a number of interesting presentations scheduled for the coming months. See the program listings on pages 3-4 of this newsletter, and go to our website, [squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org), for more information.

October's presentation, "Reflections on the Tree of Life Shootings Three Years Later," will be on Zoom and is scheduled for Tuesday, October 12, at 7:30 p.m. The speaker, Beth Kisseloff, will discuss her book of first-person accounts that memorialize the Tree of Life massacre. I'm sure most of us can remember where we were and what we were doing when informed of this horrific event. To hear first-hand details from people who were actually there will certainly be mesmerizing.

November's speaker will be Kyle Houser, Executive Director of the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, who will present the history of the organization, including Pittsburgh Filmmakers.

In December, we'll have a presentation by Community Day School teacher Bill Walter, who oversaw an 18-year project to collect 6 million pop-can tabs representing Jewish lives lost in the Holocaust to create the *Gary and Nancy Tuckfelt Keeping Tabs: A Holocaust Sculpture* on the school's campus. Details about these and other programs can be found on our website, [squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org). We encourage SHHS members to contact us with ideas for future meetings or other suggestions.

The project to restore the **Neill Log House** in Schenley Park took another step forward as the process to organize the "Friends of the Neill Log House" (FoNLH) began. An impressive number of local historic and community organizations are involved and will be working with the City's Department of Public Works to make it happen. Fundraising will be necessary to fund the



**Car Dealerships in Squirrel Hill**  
Helen Wilson  
October 2021

**Editor's Note:** This article grew out of questions and contributions from SHHS members about car dealerships in Squirrel Hill. It presents what we've learned so far about the dealerships. We invite you to add more information to our limited store of knowledge. Email us at [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org) with your stories. We'll save the gas station stories for another time.

*"The [Squirrel Hill district], an affluent area which had the highest amount of automobile ownership and use in the city, had its fastest rate of development in the 1920s, especially after direct roadway connections with the downtown were made in 1922."*

This quote is from the chapter, "Infrastructure and City Building," by Dr. Joel Tarr in the book, *City at the Point*, edited by Samuel P. Hays (University of Pittsburgh Press, 1989). Automobiles had appeared around 1905, opening up the northern part of Squirrel Hill to increasing residential and commercial development after electric trolleys first began to open the hill to development when tracks were laid to the hill in 1893. The opening of the Boulevard of the Allies in 1923 brought an influx of people to the southern part of Squirrel Hill, many of whom were Lithuanian Jews from the Hill District. The Boulevard of the Allies led directly into the heart of Squirrel Hill via Beacon and Hobart Streets. By the 1940s Squirrel Hill was filled with housing—and automobiles. Car dealerships sprang up all over Squirrel Hill and the rest of the East End. And after the cars were purchased, they had to be serviced. The car dealerships had service departments as well.

The 1939 Hopkins plat maps on the [Historic Pittsburgh](http://historicpittsburgh.org) website, [historicpittsburgh.org](http://historicpittsburgh.org), show a number of dealerships in Squirrel Hill. The maps show only the locations and names of the dealerships. Additional information was found in various sources such as newspaper articles, advertisements, and personal accounts, especially from SHHS member Steven Winkler. Here is the information we have collected so far. We welcome your additions!

We'll begin at the bottom of the hill at the intersection of Forward and Murray Avenues and work our way up to Forbes Avenue. Standing at that intersection and looking south on Murray Avenue, you see the new Kraus Commons building the Morrowfield parking garage, and the towering Morrowfield Hotel. After the hotel complex was built in the early 1920s, the garage held the cars of its upscale clientele, and if you desired to purchase a car, a dealership was tucked into the lower corner of the garage.

The showroom in that lower corner of the Morrowfield garage held a number of occupants over the years. On the 1939 Hopkins map, it is **Horvitz Motor Sales**. An ad in a 1950 *Jewish Criterion* advertises that address as the **Morrowfield Oldsmobile Company**. It later was **Ed McLean Olds**, which moved to Liberty Avenue in Bloomfield and became a Honda dealership. The showroom in the Morrowfield garage became the first home of Hillel Academy, which later moved to Beacon Street. After that, the showroom was the Howard Levin Clubhouse, a community center supporting adults whose lives have been disrupted by mental illness. The Clubhouse, now the Sally and Howard Levin Clubhouse, moved into the new Kraus Commons Jewish Residential Services building next door. At present, the garage site is vacant.

**Samson Buick** Pittsburgh City Photographer Collection, 1960. (Archives & Special Collections, University of Pittsburgh Library System)

The 1939 map shows the Samson Buick building, which was simply marked "gas station," but it later became **Samson Buick**. A SHHS member pointed out that the door to the service area still exists on the far right of the building (left). The dealership moved to East Liberty. The photo of Samson Buick from 1960 (above right) is identified online as being at its Forward Avenue location, but the dealership was at its new location at Baum Boulevard and S. Euclid Avenue near Whole Foods when the picture was taken.

# 2022 SHUC-SHHS Calendar

The SHHS is working with the Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition to produce a 2022 calendar featuring photos of Squirrel Hill in the old days.

The calendar is a great idea for holiday gift-giving. Look for it in November at some local bookstores and on the SHUC website, shuc.org.



## Neill Log House Restoration

The addition of the Neill log house to the **Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail Experience**, lewisandclark.travel, was the impetus for the SHHS to begin efforts to restore the house, which is again in danger of collapse. The Neill house is believed to be the oldest domestic structure in Pittsburgh.

As of November 2021, a committee of members of the SHHS, SHUC, the City's Department of Public Works (which owns the Neill house), and major Pittsburgh historical preservation organizations in Pittsburgh came together to incorporate the **Friends of Neill Log House (FONLH)**.

Bylaws and articles of agreement will be filed in the very near future. A board will then be formed, consisting of members from SHHS and SHUC, a city representative, a descendent of Robert Neill, and others from Pittsburgh's major historical and preservation organizations. If you are interested in participating in this important endeavor or if you'd like more information about it, email the SHHS at [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org). Volunteers are welcome!





# SHHS Is Going Live

## Upcoming SHHS Programs

The SHHS is planning to resume live programming at Church of the Redeemer in January 2022. However, due to the spread of the Covid-19 delta variant, we are carefully monitoring the situation, so before you come to the church for any of the programs listed below, check the SHHS website, *squirrelhillhistory.org* to see if the program is live or on Zoom.

### 2021 Zoom Programs

#### **Tuesday, November 9: “Pittsburgh Center for the Arts”**

**Kyle Houser**, Executive Director, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, will talk about the history of the organization, including Pittsburgh Filmmakers. He says, “The organization has always been one that has had to adapt, change with the times, add new programs, and these days are certainly no different. Our shift to offering online programming and trying to keep our community safe as well as creative has been one for the books.”

#### **Tuesday, December 14: “Reflections on Keeping Tabs: A Holocaust Sculpture”**

**Bill Walter**, retired eighth-grade social studies and history teacher who taught at Community Day School (CDS) for 23 years, will talk about his role in creating the *Gary and Nancy Tuckfelt Keeping Tabs: A Holocaust Sculpture* on the CDS campus.

He spearheaded students' efforts to collect 6 million pop-can tabs to represent Jewish lives lost in the Holocaust. The pop-can tabs were given a permanent place in a nine-foot high Star of David-shaped sculpture made of 960 glass blocks.



# 2022 Live SHHS Programs

## Tuesday, January 11: “Welcoming the New Year”

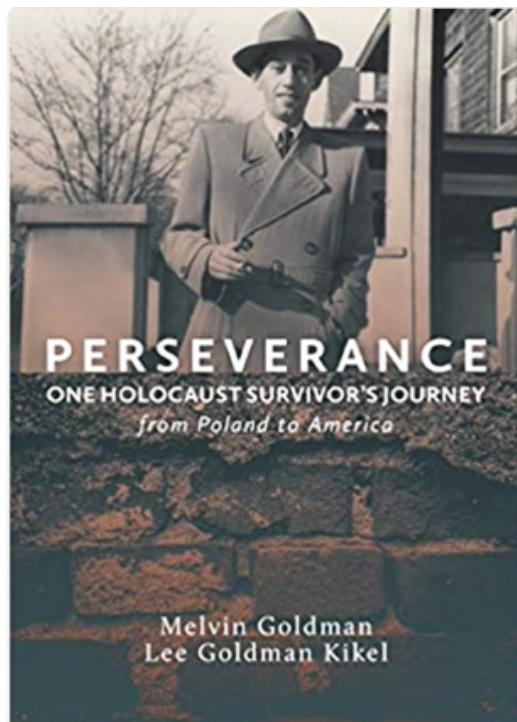
If all goes well, the SHHS plans to celebrate the New Year by having a light-hearted meet-and-greet with (individually wrapped) snacks and refreshments at Church of the Redeemer. SHHS Officers and Board Members will be introduced, and Vice-President **Helen Wilson** will give a short presentation about Squirrel Hill’s New Year’s festivities in the past, followed by a question-and-answer period where attendees can suggest topics for future research and programs. Then we’ll socialize!

## Tuesday, February 8: “The Chinese Laundrymen of Squirrel Hill”

Homestead Jewish historian **Tammy Hepps**, homesteadhebrews.com, will discuss the traumatic dispersion of Chinese laborers after the transcontinental railroad was finished, examining their lives as laundrymen in context the microcosm of Squirrel Hill and Homestead.

## Tuesday, March 8: “Perseverance: One Holocaust Survivor’s Journey”

**Lee Goldman Kikel**, author of *Perseverance: One Holocaust Survivor’s Journey*, will discuss her book, which one reviewer described as “the testimony of a Holocaust survivor and his daughter to one man’s journey and spirit.”



## Tuesday, April 12: “The Characters of Allderdice”

**Roz Sherman**; SHHS member and retired Allderdice teacher, will give a lively presentation about the characters she encountered at legendary Taylor Allderdice High School.

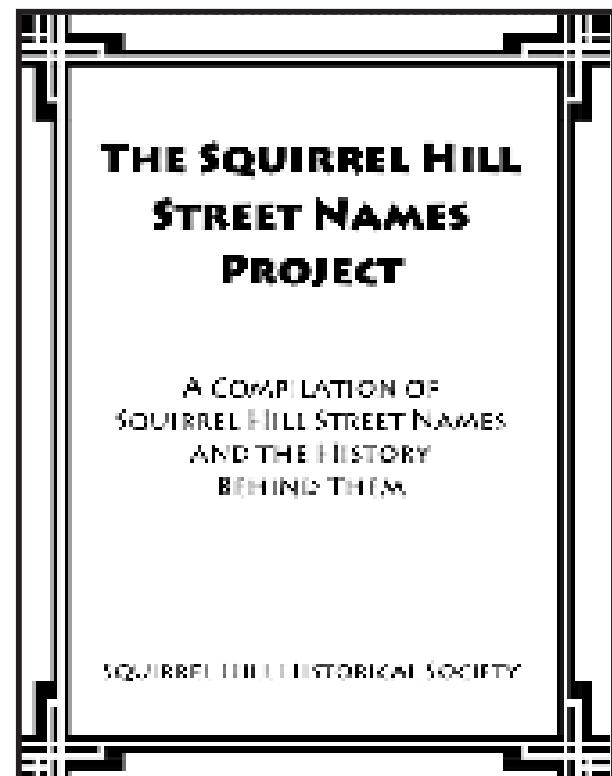


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# SHHS Street Names Project

Forbes, Murray, Shady ... Where did the names of Squirrel Hill's 200-plus streets, roads, avenues, courts, ways, lanes and bridges come from? We've found that the street names shed light on the history of the neighborhood from its earliest times—Shady Ave., Federal Hill Rd., Saline St.—to its most recent—the streets of Summerset.

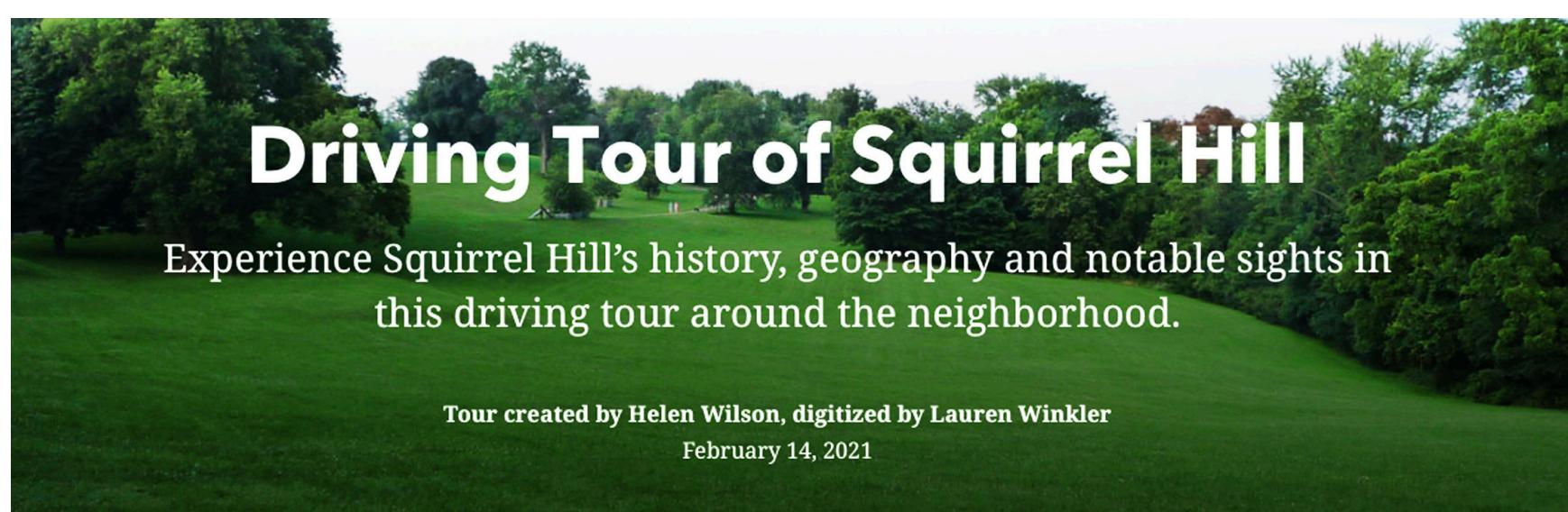
Let us know if you have information about where the name of your street comes from or if you would like to know its history. We're keeping a file of street names in our archives.



## Driving Tour of Squirrel Hill

What better way to discover the streets of Squirrel Hill than by driving around the neighborhood? Click on **“Driving Tour of Squirrel Hill”** on our website’s main menu.

SHHS member Lauren Winkler has created an interactive driving tour with information and pictures about what you'll see along the route. Follow the directions to experience the incredible diversity of our large neighborhood. You can help by suggesting places to add.



## Championship Tree Project

We've been doing a lot of walking in Squirrel Hill's parks and streets, and we noticed there were really big trees around, some with diameters of 4 ft. or more, with estimated ages of up to 200 years. We're keeping a list. Can you find a bigger tree? Let us know! Email us at [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org).

# Videos of SHHS Programs

## Do you want to know more about Squirrel Hill and Pittsburgh history?

SHHS programs began to be recorded in 2006. Since 2009, almost every SHHS programs has been recorded and put on YouTube—over 125 so far. They can be accessed through the SHHS website, **squirrelhillhistory.org**. Click on “SHHS Program Videos” in the main menu and choose a video to view.

The programs cover a wide array of interesting topics. Here are just a few examples. There are many more!

Changes in Squirrel Hill's Political Borders	Helen Wilson	7-13-21
Expert Analysis of Zone 4 Crimes	Officer David Shifren	5-11-21
Streetcar Days in Squirrel Hill	George Gula	4/10/18
Auto Dealerships and Service Stations in SH	Morry Sable	7/12/16
Squirrel Hill by the Numbers	Chris Briem	12/10/13
Squirrel Hill: A Sustainable Future	Eric Osht	2/14/12
Walking Tour of Forbes Avenue	Sandy Baskind	10/13/09
Squirrel Hill Retailing: 1966 to 2009	Jim Reich	4/14/09
History of Taylor Allderdice High School	Mina T. Levenson	2/12/19
History of Squirrel Hill's Public Schools	Helen Wilson	1/8/19
I Went to School in Squirrel Hill	Betty Connelly	6/9/09
Black Baseball in Pittsburgh	Bob Ruck	4/10/12
History of the Pittsburgh Pirates	Dave Finoli	7/8/08
Billy Conn, The Pittsburgh "Kid"	Paul Kennedy	7/10/07
The Irrepressible Sophie Masloff	Dr. Barbara Burstin	12/10/19
The Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh	Lauren Bairnsfather	4/25/17
Jewish Pittsburgh	Dr. Barbara Burstin	9/13/16
Tree of Life* Or L 'Simcha Congregation	David Dinkin	3/11/14
The Civil War in Pittsburgh	David Albert	11/13/12
Neill Log House	Dwight Fong	5/8/07
Deciphering Presidential Scribbles	Michelle Dresbold	6/8/21
Noteworthy Bridges in the Squirrel Hill Area	Todd Wilson	4/13/10
Pittsburgh Refugees and Resettlement in Pittsburgh	Dr. Barbara Burstin, Michael Ehrmann	12/5/17