

August Update on the Friends of Neill Log House (FONLH):

Log Hewing Demonstration at the Neill Log House

Tony Indovina, SHHS Board Member and FONLH President

Mission Statement for the Friends of the Neill Log House (FONLH Inc.)

Adopted February 2022



"We secure funds to restore and maintain the Neill Log House, foster knowledge of its historic significance, and work with interested parties to ensure the continued educational use of the structure and its site for future generations."

Individual support for the FONLH restoration effort will always be needed. To make online donations by credit card or PayPal, go to the SHUC website, shuc.org, and click on the "Projects" link in the black menu bar at the top of the page. A pull-down menu will appear. Select "Friends of the Neill Log House." Alternatively, checks can be sent to SHUC (put FONLH in the memo line) at the following address: SHUC, 5604 Solway Street, Pittsburgh, PA, 15217.



In my previous update, I announced that there would be a log-hewing demonstration on site at the Neill Log House the afternoon of August 5th. This is meant to be a "ground-breaking event" for actual construction work on the Neill Log House, which will begin near the end of August. As this newsletter is being finalized, there are plans to separately send out personal invitations to our members. This will be a ticketed event with advance registration required. It will offer free ice cream, lager, and lemonade.

Some of the white oak logs were brought to the site on July 7 by our contractor, Village Restorations and Consulting, Inc. One log was

left unfinished and will be hewed onsite by Roland Cadle, who is a master with years of experience in hewing miles of logs, as those attending will learn.

The techniques of converting round green logs into squared building timber by hand have been refined through a European tradition dating back to the 1100s. These skills were passed along by immigrants here in the New World through the 18th and 19th centuries.

The basic tools are hand saw and cross saw, most commonly a broad axe for most work, with an adz for finished work. Log hewing starts with V-shaped notches in the log, and then the wood in between is gouged out. If you observe the entire log house structure, you can recognize the "signature" score marks left on the finished flat wood surfaces by the original log hewers. A master hewer like Roland can duplicate those marks on newly hewn logs or leave a smoother surface if he desires.

Everyone attending will learn about all of this, and we plan to record the demonstration to be archived and shared.

NOTE: Please be aware you might be pictured in photographs and news reports at the event.



SHHS Photo



The log-hewing event will take place on Saturday, August 5, from 2–4 p.m., rain or shine, at the Neill Log House. Registration is required. The best way to register is to use the QR code on the invitation on the next page. If not using the QR code, type "Eventbrite Neill Log House hewing demonstration" into your search engine and click on the link with the same name. The full web address is <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/neill-log-house-hewing-demonstration-free-tickets-676049681797>.

SHHS Photo



Friends of
NEILL LOG HOUSE

The Neill Log House Is Going To Be Saved!

Join FONLH for a Groundbreaking Celebration
August 5th, 2 - 4 PM

LOG HEWING will be demonstrated by Roland Cadle from Village Restorations. This is the method used to shape logs by hand using tools that were available in 1795.

Free Ice Cream, Lager and
Lemonade
Please Register at:

@EVENTBRITE



FAMILY FRIENDLY OUTDOOR EVENT! Learn about the historical building that is practically in your back yard. Hear about our development plans and enjoy refreshments. Children's activities will be offered. The Neill Log House is Pittsburgh's oldest domestic log house, and one of a few existing buildings in the city surviving from the 18th century. The chimney and two fireplaces are original. Wood from the fireplace mantel has been scientifically dated to 1795.

Unfortunately the house has structural deficiencies that prevent public access. FONLH has contracted with Village Restorations to reconstruct the house to safety and historic standards beginning in late August. Additional plans include rebuilding the steps, landscaping, installing a garden, fencing and placing artifacts from the period to tell the complete story of family life during the house's historic times to benefit future generations of students and visitors.

Location: 5229 East Circuit Rd in Schenley Park



Parking is available on both sides of E Circuit Rd approaching from the east on Darlington Rd or from West Circuit Rd. A small portion of the road will be closed to accommodate vendors and registration tables. Access to the house involves climbing stairs or walking on uneven ground.