



# Newsletter

March 2025

## About SHHS

The Squirrel Hill Historical Society (SHHS) is a membership organization established in 2000, 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. Programs take place on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Church of the Redeemer, 5700 Forbes Ave. A Zoom option is also available.

### 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 Past Program Videos and Events."

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 to request it be sent to you.

*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.*



The Squirrel Hill Historical Society (SHHS) is committed to gathering, preserving, and celebrating the historical memories of our neighborhood. To submit an item of historical interest for publication, suggest a topic for a speech, ask a question, or give feedback, send an email to [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org), or write to SHHS, PO Box 8157, Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

## NOTE ABOUT WEATHER-RELATED PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS

Even though winter is almost over, bad weather can still occur. If we decide to cancel the March program or hold it only on Zoom, we will send an email to all our members and those on our extended mailing list to let them know. If you don't receive an email notice and want to check the status of the program, contact us at [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org). We will also post the notice on our website.

## President's Message

Dear SHHS Members:

The SHHS membership drive for 2025 is over. Thank you for renewing! You'll continue to enjoy the monthly newsletters, and this year's issues will be especially interesting as we celebrate our 25th anniversary! Your support is appreciated to help with the success of the SHHS.

You should have received the new password for access to the member's page on our website, with all our newsletters archived on it. Another perk of membership is that only SHHS members will automatically receive the Zoom link to the monthly programs. Non-members must request the Zoom links through the SHHS website.

**Don't forget to sign up for our Passive House Tour on April 27, featuring a house on Fernwald St. that was designed to have extremely low environmental impact. More information about the tour is on page 4, and the registration form is at the end of the newsletter.**

We encourage you to visit our SHHS website, [squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org), to see all the information on it, such as updates about our historical research, our photo archives, and announcements of upcoming programs and events.

Spring is right around the corner, and the month of March has many noted and unusual holidays. I have listed a few, but it's fun to google March holidays to see more. March is **National Women's History Month**. **Ramadan** started on March 1 and ends March 30 on **Eid At Fitr**. **Dr. Seuss's birthday** is March 2. **Mardi Gras** (Fat Tuesday) is March 4. **Ash Wednesday** is March 5. **Daylight Saving Time** starts March 9 ("Spring Forward One Hour"). **Purim** begins at sundown on March 12. The **Ides of March** is March 15 (Julius Caesar was assassinated in 44 BC). **National Goof Off Day** is March 22 (a favorite of many). **Crayon Day** is March 31st (a very colorful day—welcome back the Dandelion crayon!) Spring also brings the start of building and road projects, so be careful walking or driving, and watch out for potholes.

Thank you for your continuing support!

Jim Hammond, President, SHHS

## SHHS Officers and Board

The SHHS is an all-volunteer organization. Board Members are Toby Chapman, Audrey Glickman, James Hammond, Tony Indovina, Stanley Klein, Todd Miller, Rod Permigiani, Charles Succop, Helen Wilson, Todd Wilson, and Eveline Young.

President: Jim Hammond  
Vice-President and Newsletter Editor: Helen Wilson  
Program Coordinators: Todd Miller and Toby Chapman  
Membership Coordinator: Stanley Klein  
Email Coordinator: Tony Indovina  
Acting Treasurers: Jim Hammond and Tony Indovina  
Media Specialist: Audrey Glickman  
Website Manager: Janine Michael  
Principal Researchers: Helen Wilson and Tony Indovina

All SHHS members are welcome to contribute articles, suggest programs, and participate in our activities.

## Editor's Note: Updates on our 2025 Projects

Helen Wilson

The SHHS has always undertaken projects that explore the history of Squirrel Hill. For the past 25 years, we've held monthly programs that feature topics pertaining to the community. We've published two books about Squirrel Hill. We present outreach programs to organizations. We give neighborhood tours. We have a display board about Squirrel Hill's history at Carnegie Library. We've always planned projects, and the same is true for 2025. Here's what's in the works for our 25th anniversary year:

We're continuing to work on getting **City Historic Designation** status for the crown jewel of Pittsburgh's parks—Schenley, the first and most elaborate of them all. The park is located almost entirely in Squirrel Hill except for Schenley Plaza..

We've been approved for an **intern** from Carnegie Mellon's Dietrich College to work with us over the summer on a book about where the names of Squirrel Hill's streets, bridges, and buildings come from and how the names relate to the way in which the neighborhood grew. We've interviewed some candidates and hope to select one in March. Our incredible mapping specialist Lauren Winkler has already compiled a list of the names of Squirrel Hill's 200-plus street and bridge, and board member Charles Succop, City Archivist, will offer his expertise to help in this project.

With the help of our webmaster, Janine Michael, we're finally accomplishing a project that had been dear to past president Michael Ehrmann's heart but kept getting put off—**uploading all 55 (and counting) Squirrel Hill Magazine articles** about Squirrel Hill's history written by Helen Wilson to the SHHS website.

We continue to work on the **Neill Log House** restoration effort and plan to open the house to visitors in spring. (See the FONLH Update in this newsletter.)

**As was stated in the previous newsletter, volunteers are needed to help in various ways. We're still looking for a Treasurer and Secretary. We'll need people to help with tours and gardening at the Neill Log House. We can use people to help at our monthly Tuesday evening programs. Contact us through our website, squirrelhillhistory.org, or email us at sqhillhist@shhsoc.org.**

**And now for the fun part!** After watching Rick Sebak's "25 Things I Like About Pittsburgh" program on WQED, we thought we could run with the idea and feature **"25 Things I Like About Squirrel Hill"** in an upcoming issue, and we want to hear from you!. Send us some things YOU like about Squirrel Hill. We'll compile the entries and publish the list.

Meanwhile, we're going to compile other lists of 25 things (and people) throughout the year. We'll tell you the theme in one newsletter, ask for members' input, and publish the final results in the next. The first list is **"The 25 Most Significant Objects in Squirrel Hill."** Rick Sebak says that objects tell stories and resurrect memories, and it's true! Email your choices to sqhillhist@shhsoc.org, and we'll compile them and put the top 25 in our April issue. The candidates below were suggested by the SHHS board. What are yours? And not to worry if your choices don't make the first list. They can be candidates for other lists, too.

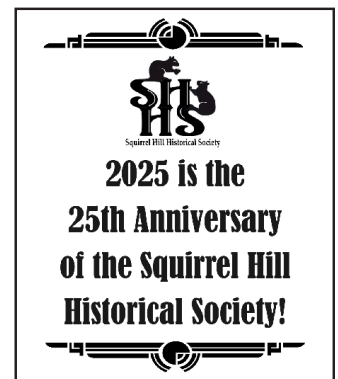
## 🌸 The 25 Most Significant Objects in Squirrel Hill 🌸

*Criteria for 25 Significant Buildings, Bridges and Artwork list:*

- *Must be an object that exists that embodies an important piece of Squirrel Hill's history*
- *Can be a building, bridge, statue, knick-knack, or memorial*
- *Can't be a private home, except for the Koerner House*
- *Can't be a place, such as a park or road. We will do that as another list*
- *Can't be a photo, but it can be an artwork such as a sculpture or painting*

### THE LIST, IN NO PARTICULAR ORDER:

1. **History of Squirrel Hill**, New Deal Mural in the Squirrel Hill Post Office
2. **Gary and Nancy Tuckfelt Keeping Tabs on the Holocaust Sculpture**, corner of Forward Ave. and Beechwood Blvd.
3. **Anne Frank's Tree**, corner of Forward Ave. and Beechwood Blvd.
4. **Stone "whimsey" retaining wall at Shady and Beacon**, all that's left of the E. C. May mansion (drugstore chain owner)
6. **Homestead Grays and Anderson Bridges** (These "sister" bridges are both extremely rare Wichert Truss bridges.)



7. **Massive stone retaining wall on Browns Hill Road**, built when a hillside was removed in 1936
8. **Veterans' Memorial** monument in the American Legion Memorial Gardens at the intersection of Beechwood, Dallas, and Forbes (It used to stand in front of the American Legion building, now Orr's Jewelers, in the business district.)
9. **Little's Shoes**, Forbes Ave.
10. **Squirrel Hill Café**, Forbes Ave.
11. **61C Café**, Murray Ave.
12. **Jewish Community Center**, Forbes Ave.
13. Remains of the **train trestle in Duck Hollow** that carried slag cars to the slag dump in Nine Mile Run
14. **Pittsburgh Allderdice High School**, Shady Ave.
15. **Neill Log House**, E. Circuit Rd., Schenley Park
16. **Frick Park Gatehouses**—designed by John Russell Pope, who designed the Jefferson Memorial, Beechwood Blvd.
17. **Blue Slide** in Frick Park, Beechwood Blvd.
18. **Second Avenue Bridge in Duck Hollow**—first all-steel bridge in America, once carried Second Ave. from Downtown to Braddock Ave.
19. **Squirrel Hill Tunnel**, Interstate 376, Parkway East
20. **Mineo's Pizza**, Murray Ave.
21. **Manor Theatre**, Murray Ave.
22. **Citizens Bank** building—one of two remaining Mellon Bank buildings built in 1965 in the mid century "Corporate Modern" style of architecture, Murray Ave.
23. **Beth Shalom Synagogue**—first congregation founded in Squirrel Hill, Beacon and Shady
24. **Westinghouse Memorial** in Schenley Park
25. **Guastavino tile stairway in Baker Hall** at Carnegie Mellon University—Breathtaking 1904 staircase at Carnegie Mellon University, one of the most famous creations of structural tilemaker Rafael Guastavino, with a 4-inch thick shell of masonry spiraling in three dimensions
26. **Worthington Mansion/Temple Sinai**, Forbes Ave.
27. **Henry Koerner House**, Negley Ave.
28. **Tree of Life Synagogue**, Wilkins Ave.
29. **Morrowfield Apartment Hotel**, Murray Ave.
30. **Community Day School** (formerly St. Philomena's), Beechwood Blvd. and Forward Ave.
31. **Poale Zedeck synagogue**, Phillips and Shady Avenues
32. **Sixth Presbyterian Church**, Forbes and Murray Avenues
33. **Randall's Toyes and Gifts**, Forbes Ave.
34. **Building on the corner of Forbes and Shady** housing How Lee and the Independent Brewing Company (It has a long history of many businesses in it)
35. **Colfax School**, Beechwood Blvd.
36. **St. Edmund's Academy**, Darlington Rd.
37. **Church of the Redeemer**, Forbes Ave.
38. **Ten Millstones** in Frick Park, including some from the Swisshelm mill

## Remembering Snomageddon

*Helen Wilson*

2025 marks the 15th anniversary of Snowmageddon, when a monster blizzard dumped 21.1 inches of heavy, wet snow on Pittsburgh on February 5 and 6. The storm's effects were felt from California to the East Coast, and Western Pennsylvania was one of the hardest hit areas. The city was paralyzed for days while crews worked to clear streets, restore power, and return to normal. People shoveled the snow off their cars and parking spaces on streets and then put chairs out to protect those precious spaces from others looking for an easy place to park. Huge piles of snow remained for weeks.

Here is a picture of my son and me shoveling our driveway after the storm passed. I have to say the picture didn't evoke any pleasant memories!





## Upcoming SHHS Programs (Live and on Zoom) and Other Events of Interest

*UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, all programs are presented both live and on Zoom on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. unless inclement weather causes a program to be aired on Zoom only. In that case, a notice will be sent to members and those on our extended mailing list the day of the program. Live programs are held at Church of the Redeemer, 5700 Forbes Avenue. Free parking is available in the Church of the Redeemer and St. Edmund's Academy parking lots. Members will be sent a link to the Zoom program a few days before the program. Programs are recorded and put on YouTube and can be accessed a few days after the program through the "SHHS Past Programs and Events" link on our website.*

### **Tuesday, March 11: New Collections in the City of Pittsburgh Archives**

**Charles Succop**, City of Pittsburgh Archivist and SHHS board member, will discuss new material discovered in the archive since his last presentation, including letters submitted to City Council by Squirrel Hill residents from 1911 to the 1950s.

### **Tuesday, April 8: "South of Pittsburgh: Poems from Northern Appalachia"**

Poet **Michael Comiskey** will talk about and read selections from his book of Northern Appalachian poetry using traditional and modern poetic forms to survey the human and natural landscapes of that unique and often overlooked region. Topics are as varied as the delicacy of the region's wildflowers, the devastation wrought by mountaintop removal mining, Northern Appalachian folklore, and the state of the region's working class.

### **Sunday April 27, 1:30-3:30: Passive House Tour at 2883-2885 Fernwald Road (See the registration form at the end of this newsletter.)**

**Lucyna (Lucy) de Barbaro**, owner, will give a guided tour of Squirrel Hill's first passive house, an energy-efficient home designed by Dunn and Associates of Squirrel Hill to have low environmental impact. The 4,000 square-foot duplex, built in 2017, meets a variety of Green Building and EPA standards and features solar panels, building materials that have low environmental impact, a permeable driveway, cisterns for rainwater harvesting, a rain garden, and two rock wells. "Passive house" is a voluntary standard for energy efficiency, reducing the building's ecological footprint. The result is an ultra-low energy building requiring little energy for heating or cooling. The passive house concept was developed in the U.S. in response to the Oil Shock of 1973-74 and is popular in Europe. Proceeds from the tour will benefit Energy Efficiency Empowerment, which improves energy efficiency in low-income housing.

### **Tuesday, May 13: "Pittsburgh Rising: From Frontier Town to Steel City, 1750-1920"**

**Rob Ruck** and **Ed Muller**, co-authors and professors of history at the University of Pittsburgh, will discuss their recently published book, *Pittsburgh Rising: From Frontier Town to Steel City, 1750-1920*.

### **Tuesday, June 10: "Pittsburgh's Orphans and Orphanages"**

**Jim Wudarczyk** and **Joann Cantrell**, co-authors, will discuss their recently published book, *Pittsburgh's Orphans and Orphanages*. Their research showed that in the early 1900s, orphanages in the United States housed more than 100,000 children, thousands of whom lived in Pittsburgh. Buildings that became group homes were constructed through churches and fraternal organizations. For the orphans living in such homes, everything was communal and privacy was nonexistent. Some children still had a living parent, but due to dire circumstances of the times, their fate was in the hands of those who operated the orphanage.

### **Tuesday, July 8: Members' Social Celebrating the SHHS's 25th Anniversary**

It's time to get together to celebrate the SHHS's 25th Anniversary. Members and guests are invited to a social gathering to celebrate the SHHS's own history! This event is still in the planning stages but will definitely include refreshments and a presentation consisting of our members sharing their Squirrel Hill and SHHS stories with everyone.

### **Tuesday, August 12: No Meeting**

The SHHS generally doesn't schedule programs in August, so enjoy your summer vacation!

### **Tuesday, September 9: "Redlining in Pittsburgh"**

**Randy Weinberg**, Professor of Information Systems at CMU, will discuss the origins and substance of racial covenants and other discriminatory housing practices in the City of Pittsburgh throughout much of the previous century.

### **Tuesday, October 14: "Tales from the Graves of Smithfield Cemetery"**

In keeping with this spirit of Halloween, **Jan Kurth**, editor of Print, Pittsburgh's East End Newspaper, will share captivating stories about some of the people buried in Smithfield Cemetery.

**November 11: "Pittsburgh's Historic Stadiums and Arenas"** Mark Fatla (more information later this year.)

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## March Update on the Friends of Neill Log House (FONLH): Welcoming the Public to Tour the Neill Log House

March 2025

*Tony Indovina, FONLH President and SHHS Board Member*

### 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 on-line donations by credit card or PayPal, go to the SHUC website, [shuc.org](http://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.



The long-awaited public opening of the Neill Log House will begin in April with pre-arranged group tours hosted by several members of our Friends of Neill Log House. This will entail sprucing up the log house after the winter and dusting off our “cheat sheets” with the wealth of information on the building and its inhabitants we have amassed. One tour group has already been scheduled, and we plan to give preference to other local groups who make requests. (Direct tour requests to us using the CONTACT US button on the SHHS homepage). Beginning in May, we hope to have the benefit of regular staffing, including our former intern Madison Smith, who helped as a docent in the log house during the November tours following our ribbon-cutting ceremony. The regular seasonal schedule being finalized is for the house to be staffed several hours a day on two weekdays and one weekend day.

By May, you will be able to find the new seasonal schedule on our SHHS website by clicking on the “Neill Log House” link. The schedule will be on a link at the top of the Neill Log House page. For now, viewers will still see wording that says “...watch here for announcement of regular opening times to be scheduled...” We hope to spread the word as many ways as possible that this page on our website is the place to go for information about preparing for visits. The page for the Neill Log House on the Lewis and Clark National Trail Experience website has already been updated to direct those visiting Pittsburgh on the Trail to look for open hours on our website. We note on this website that those visiting from out of town on days other than when we are open can contact us to plan a visit.

Most of the people who visit the log house inquire about seeing the loft, but we will always have to inform them that this area is not open to the public because the narrow, winding steps built during an earlier reconstruction to replace the ladder Neill built for access are not suitable for public use. An old sign posted in the loft says, “no more than 3 individuals at a time,” and we will continue to adhere to that directive for members of FONLH and our volunteers and workers who go there for necessary reasons. The photos below show two views of the loft of several we plan to display during tours to give visitors an idea of

what the loft looks like.



The photos show some of the original wood door framing stored there. We eventually plan to have a table and lamp in place in the loft for volunteers to examine some of our historic artifacts not on display on the floor below.



**Note on volunteering:** There will be many opportunities for help going forward, including substitute docent work and other duties in the log house such as examining and preparing artifacts. And there will be much to do on the grounds, including taking care of the garden. If you are interested in volunteering, send us an email through CONTACT US on our SHHS Homepage to express any interest and inquire about specific help most needed. Donations are also being sought for a serviceable 6-ft. folding table and old floor lamp for work in the loft.



## Neill Log House Featured in the HCAP E-Newsletter

Helen Wilson

A few years ago, the SHHS joined HCAP, the Heinz History Center Affiliates Program, consisting of more than 125 regional historical societies and organizations dedicated to preserving local history primarily the counties of Western Pennsylvania.

Membership in the program brings the extensive expertise and resources of the History Center's staff to these organizations, especially in the areas of museum and archival work that enable each affiliate organization to reach its goals.

HCAP recently began to publish an e-newsletter, and we were pleased to see the Neill Log House prominently featured as the first item this month.



SENATOR JOHN HEINZ  
**HISTORY CENTER**  
AFFILIATES PROGRAM

We're excited to share our second History Center Affiliates Program (HCAP) newsletter! Our goal is to highlight the accomplishments of HCAP through four sections, including, Happenings, Collaborations, Announcements, and Positive Impact.

Learn more about what our affiliates have been up to this winter, join an upcoming initiative, and discover how your organization can get involved.



**Happenings**

- In November 2024, the **Squirrel Hill Historical Society** and the **Friends of Neill Log House** held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the reopening of the Neill Log House in Schenley Park after several years of restoration. The Neill Log House is the oldest existing residential structure in Pittsburgh.

## What's in a Picture? T. B. Moreland's Livery Stable

Helen Wilson and Lauren Winkler

This column, which hopefully will be in every issue going forward, will look at photos people ask about. Last month we researched a vintage photograph of stores on Murray Avenue to discover more about Schulberg's restaurant at the corner of Murray and Bartlett.

This month we're looking at a picture that someone asked about a while ago—Where had horses been stabled in Squirrel Hill in the mid to late 1800s after farms had been replaced by residential development? That led us to the picture below, which was in our first book, *Images of America, Squirrel Hill* (Arcadia 2005). The sign on the building says, "T. B. Moreland, Undertaker, Livery and Boarding Stable, 6102 and 6100." Was it in Squirrel Hill? No location was given in the book. Using the numbers in the picture—obviously addresses—as a clue, SHHS researcher Lauren Winkler found it wasn't located in Squirrel Hill at all but rather at 6100 Penn Avenue in East Liberty at the corner of Sheraden Square where Chase Bank is now, according to Google Maps. And the fact that it was both a stable and an undertaker (See the hearse on the left side of the picture) was explained by obituaries in newspapers all the way back to 1875 that said funeral carriages "would be leaving from T. B. Moreland's stables at 6100 Penn Avenue."

A 1942 obituary of T. B. Moreland in the *Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph* states, "Until eight months ago, Mr. Moreland operated a funeral home founded by his father 84 years ago at 401 North Highland Avenue." Doing the math, the funeral home was founded in 1858. The North Highland address is just around the corner from Penn Avenue, so it's the same place. Maps from 1890 to 1923 show T. B. Moreland as the owner of the property, so father and son must have had the same name. Interestingly, on the 1923 map, part of the Moreland property is the Sheridan Square Theater.



An interesting thing about the 6102-6100 address is that in spite of its hills, Pittsburgh tried to keep a grid system of numbered streets all the way down Penn Avenue from Downtown. But if you stand on the corner of Shady and Forbes Avenues in Squirrel Hill and look at the street signs, they say 5800 and 6300. What happened to the 5900-6200 blocks? The numbering of the streets from downtown to the Wilkesburg border couldn't maintain that pattern up the steep slope of Squirrel Hill from Fifth Avenue, hence the missing blocks at Shady and Forbes.





There followed much discussion about technical matters, such as the type of canvas to be used. And there was a light fixture over a bulletin board that Alan asked to have moved, as it impinged on mural space. At first that seemed possible, but by late



December of 1941 there were other priorities, so Alan worked with the space he had. I am impressed with how many letters were exchanged between Alan and a Mr. Ed Rowan, Assistant Chief, Section of Fine Arts. No topic was too mundane, and they even corresponded about the local draft board's call for him to enlist. Eventually, Alan received a short deferment, which gave him time to complete the mural.

The next issue to be decided was where to paint. As the mural was nearly 16' by 4' he had to find a large space. Fortunately, back home in Sharon, his father, who was a building contractor, owned a large building in his lumberyard. The building had a loft, and with the addition of a potbellied stove, it had heat. After his father built a frame for him, Alan was ready to begin painting.

The mural is divided into three sections:

The left depicts the contemporary (1940s) Squirrel Hill neighborhood with ladies chatting, a newspaper boy hawking his wares, another woman looking through fresh produce, a city bus and, among other figures, a dog walker. The central figure is a tall and dignified man—the Rabbi. Our eyes are drawn to him.

The center section consists of a frontiersman holding his long shotgun, wearing his powder horn, with his dog at heel. This section is shorter than the other two, to accommodate the space over the door.

The right-hand side is crowded with figures, many of whom are engaged in agriculture—the woman spinning wool, the farmer plowing his field, and a man grinding corn. And to the far right, perhaps jarring to our 21st century eyes, is the depiction of a Native American defending his way of life.

In his letter describing the meaning of his design, Alan said, “This is simply a portrayal of the sacrifice, courage and struggle that has made this town, and in a larger sense, All America, the great place she is today.” He wrote this in April 1942. He also wanted to convey the fruitfulness and abundance of the community.

Alan was always interested in making a pathway in his paintings through which the eye could travel. And odd numbers were always more interesting to him than evens. In this painting our eye moves from the Rabbi to the frontiersman, to the woman spinning wool, to the man grinding corn and to the Native American. All five figures share a similar look of determination and fortitude.

So Alan returned to his hometown of Sharon to begin working in his studio loft. He often recounted the story of how he took a break one afternoon and went downtown. On his way he spotted “a pretty girl in a red jacket” and they began to chat. This “girl,” who eventually became my mother, knew all about the mural because she worked for the local newspaper, the *Sharon Herald*, which had reported on and photographed the mural's progress. When Alan asked her if she'd like to see the mural in person she readily agreed. She must have liked what she saw, as they dated for the next few months while he finished the mural and waited to go into the army. Shortly after finishing the mural, Alan proposed marriage but was turned down because my mother said she was going to join the Navy! She eventually did so and spent the war in Washington, as a naval intelligence officer.

In October, 1942, Alan went into the Army and in due course found himself on a troop ship heading to the South Pacific. He spent the ocean journey drawing pencil sketches of his fellow soldiers, who wanted a portrait to send home. He had a sliding price scale—so much for a private on up to a colonel.

It was fortunate that my mother spent the war in DC. It was a large enough city that she could almost always find some art supply store and fulfill Alan's requests for more tubes of a specific paint color. He returned from the war with a portfolio of watercolor sketches. Many of these sketches show beautiful tropical scenery, turquoise water and palm trees. For fun I am including photos of two scenes from the Philippines. As in his mural, Alan enjoyed depicting people going about their daily lives.

Government Approves Mural For Post Office







The last 50 years of his life he primarily used watercolors and painted mostly landscapes and still lifes. After retirement from a NYC advertising agency, he had a new career as a teacher of watercolor. Late in life, despite diminished vision, he continued painting vibrantly colored impressions of the classical music to which he listened. Alan died in 2003, aged 95.

Judging by all the materials he kept from his student days in Pittsburgh it was a very special time and place for him.

*Many thanks to Cathie Talbert for contacting the SHHS and writing this article about her father, whose WPA Post Office mural, "The History of Squirrel Hill," is one of the most important artifacts of the community.*

## Hulley Houses Everywhere

*Tony Indovinba*

Helen Wilson and I recently watched Rick Sebak's 2020 video from his *Pittsburgh History Series* called "Houses Around Here" and learned about a particular style of house he called the Hulley House. In a segment of the video, a woman from Regent Square presented research she had done about her house and its builder, E. B. Hulley. Much of what's presented in this article about "The Hulley House" is from Sebak's program. There are reportedly about 700 of this style house throughout Pittsburgh, built mostly in the 1920s and mostly in our eastern neighborhoods, including here in Squirrel Hill. Once you understand its signature design, you will have fun recognizing the Hulley House everywhere, as we have.



Before presenting the particulars of all of this, it is necessary to place this little house and its features within the tradition that is said to be very generally part of the American Craftsman Home. As will be explained, Mr. Hulley is believed to have utilized a very recognizable design feature into his houses along with other interior features that clearly seem to have been drawn from the Craftsman tradition that could be mass-produced to accommodate budgets of emerging middle-class homeowners in Pittsburgh during this period.

In her article, "Craftsman-Style Homes: The History and Simplicity Behind Their Classic Character," in *Design and Décor Magazine* (updated June 30, 2021), Allison Robicelli refers to a style of construction that takes different forms across the country but has its origins in the 19th century when architecture was influenced by the Arts and Crafts movement, an international trend in the decorative and fine arts that began in the British Isles and spread to Europe and America. The Craftsman name and style was popularized in the early 20th century by a magazine called *The Craftsman*, which sold residential home blueprints by the well-known arts-and-crafts furniture designer Gustav Stickley. Regional styles varied from the classic Mission style of the West and Southwest to the Prairie style popularized by Frank Lloyd Wright in the Mid-West to styles in the Eastern United States that evoke Victorian traditions. Common to many of these are houses "characterized by wide, low layouts, gabled roofs, open floor plans, wood framing, and front porches that feature support columns and exposed rafters." The houses were designed for easy construction, with only one or two stories on a small footprint "with the second story usually nestled under the roof." And they are easily identified by gabled roofs that extend far beyond the eaves, either in a bungalow or by making room for a second story. Exterior construction would often draw upon regional tastes and vary from wood, stucco, or stone to rustic brick. Classic interior elements, today renovated out of most old homes, included use of natural wood trim on doors and windows, hardwood floors and more wood extending up stairways, with stained or leaded glass windows along with built-in cabinets and bookcases. The layout most often allowed you to step into the living room, with the dining room beyond and a small kitchen in the rear.

It is necessary to say something about another trend in the production of mass housing, the catalog houses sold by Sears from 1908 to 1942. (*SearsHouses.com*) Our Mr. Hulley built his homes in Pittsburgh in the middle of the era



when other companies such as Sears were seeking to fill the need for quick and affordable housing for America's rising working-class families. I believe there is sometimes confusion about whether Sears homes are Craftsman homes. This has to do with the Sears brand name of Craftsman, its line of tools and other products, but this Sears brand name had nothing to do with the Craftsman Home that came out of the Arts and Crafts movement. Even though the building styles Sears offered included choices of the Craftsman-style home, Sears homes came in many styles designed for quick and affordable construction.

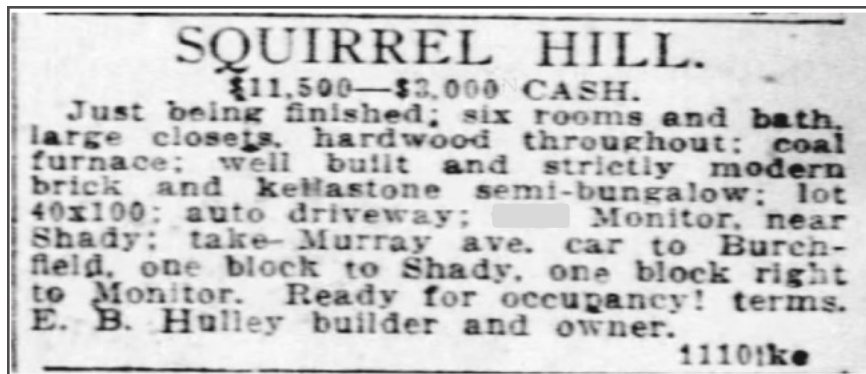
So who was E. B. Hulley? Online searches reveal multiple individuals named Elkanah Hulley, but only one was Elkanah Bunce Hulley. "Our" Mr. Hulley preferred to be called E. B., so this was likely him. Information found in *Newspapers.com* says he was born in 1884 in the city of Chester, Delaware County, in Metropolitan Philadelphia, and died in 1967 in the city of Holly Hill, Florida. It is reported that our house developer took coursework in architecture and has been characterized as "somewhat of a wheeler-dealer." If we have the correct E. B. Hulley here, he was probably a very ambitious individual to have designed and built most of these homes while still in his forties—and financed many of them himself. A 1922 ad in *The Pittsburgh Press* featured the house and all amenities for \$1,500 cash and \$85 a month (*Ancestry.com*). The basic cost of these houses was about \$9,000, built on lots that cost about \$1,000. All the houses around Pittsburgh are said to have been built from the late teens to the early '20s, but county tax records show some on my road in Greenfield were built in 1928.

Regardless of exactly when E. B. built these houses, they all have the same basic footprint and the same recognizable, signature design formed by the "rakes," or angled edges of the roof on his houses, which start at the peak on both sides and end at the front porch. What appears to be a second-story dormer in the center of the front roof is really just an extension of the second floor, the same width as the living space behind the front roof. The more economical house E. B. built is a two-and-a-half story, 1,400 sq. ft. house constructed this way. The optional three-story version, on the same footprint, featured an actual dormer coming out of the front roof, slightly narrower than the second-floor space below it. Both second, or second and third floor living spaces projecting from the front roof, were originally faced in shingles or stucco, now mostly covered by vinyl or aluminum siding.



The raked-roof feature represents the distinctive exterior design E. B. Hulley may have intended to evoke the Craftsman Home he likely learned about from his architectural coursework. Features inside the Hulley House are also said to evoke the Craftsman Home, with the simple and clean use of unpainted wood in all the house's trim and stairwell, including both basic and optional built-in wooden cabinets and bookcases and small stained-glass windows. Another option for those whose budgets permitted it was an enclosed back porch, forming a tiny space called "the refrigerator room," allowing ice delivery without entering the small kitchen and living space.

The first Hulley Houses we found in Squirrel Hill South were on Monitor Street (*see ad on left*), and we noted that this



was a more likely location for them to have been built than on Beechwood Boulevard above Monitor, with its larger, more expensive, houses on wider lots. And you can somewhat follow this formula if you would like to find Hulley Houses elsewhere throughout the eastern neighborhoods, since the emphasis was on economy and affordability and built on 25-ft. rather than 50-ft. lots.

It's also interesting to note that realtors might say they can steer you toward Craftsman

Homes in Squirrel Hill, but my reaction to seeing what they are listing is that these are high-end properties, with roof designs that might vaguely suggest the style but are probably more distant cousins to the Craftsman than the more modest houses built and marketed by Hulley. During my visits to see family in San Francisco, I have been awed by the striking beauty of classic Mission-style Craftsman homes in the Bay Area. In Pittsburgh, I have found a few examples of Mission-style homes from Highland Park to Perry Hilltop. And very recently, while sitting in traffic on Forbes Ave., I noted a house with many elements of this classic style very near the Church of the Redeemer, our SHHS meeting place. But once you start recognizing the Hulley House in Squirrel Hill and elsewhere, you might have trouble believing that there were only 700 built in Pittsburgh.



*Personal Footnote: Shortly after submitting the final draft of the above article on Hulley Houses to my editor, I forwarded some photos from some of our city neighborhoods to her. When I viewed some houses from Morningside, I was dumbstruck to realize I had a personal connection to a Hulley House—growing up visiting one belonging to a dear aunt who lived in her Hulley house on Morningside Avenue for over sixty years, then moving into a nearby independent living home until she was almost 104 years of age. The memories I had of the countless hours spent there in that smallish home with its warm woodwork and built-ins, where she raised my four cousins, came flooding back to me.*

## An Editorial: A Personal Appeal to Support our Public Media

Tony Indovinba

The inspiration for the Hulley House article came from having watched the Rick Sebak program called “Houses Around Here” in his *Pittsburgh History Series*, archived by our local PBS affiliate, WQED. If you have not yet taken advantage of this donors’ benefit called “Passport,” you absolutely have to learn about it! It’s the PBS alternative to giving donors coffee cups and flashlights—For the ridiculously low level of \$60 a year, you get a password to this site that you can access on your computer or stream on your TV. Most programs and series, from the oldies like the History Series to archived episodes of Masterpiece Theatre and many hundreds of other videos new and old are accessible to search and watch by category.

Perhaps most importantly, today you can access and watch a variety of live and other current news broadcasts, with the reliability and integrity that only public broadcasting can provide. We all need to be concerned about supporting public media sources during these times that they are specifically being targeted for defunding. I have recently doubled my giving to this source, and am stepping up to give additional donations to our local NPR radio news source, WYEP, a recent SHHS presenter. For the same reasons as I am concerned about supporting public media, I signed up to receive home delivery of our locally published *PRINT: The East End Newspaper* after owner and publisher Ann Belser gave a presentation to the SHHS on November 12 last year, entitled "Writing the First Draft of History." Her talk can be viewed on the SHHS website on the link, "Past Program Videos and Events." Most recently, I took out a digital subscription to the *New York Times*.

I appreciate having the opportunity to share this most important personal concern with you. In the words of one of my '60's icons, Joni Mitchell: “Don’t it always seem to go that you don’t know what you’ve got ‘till it’s gone....” I urge our members to go to [protectmypublicmedia.org](http://protectmypublicmedia.org) and learn about a critical funding deadline coming before Congress on March 14.

**You can help with our Squirrel Hill Street Names Project!** This summer, a CMU intern will be helping to research and compile information about the names of Squirrel Hill's roads, bridges, and buildings for a book in which we'll relate that information to aspects of Squirrel Hill's history. You can help by sending us any information you have about the name of your street or building! We'd love to hear your stories! Contact us at [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org).

### List of Squirrel Hill Street Names

Over 200 Avenues, Streets, Roads, Lanes, Terraces, Courts, Places, Ways, Boulevards, Bridges, and Interstate Highway

Albemarle St.	Burketon Ln.	Fairstead Ln.	Imogene Rd.	McFarren St.	Parkview Blvd.	Solway St.
Alderson St.	Carriage Rd.	Federal Hill Ave.	Imperial Dr.	McFarren St. Bridge	Penn-Lincoln Parkway	Squirrel Hill Ave.
Anita Ave.	Caton Pl.	Fernwald Rd.	Imperial St.	McLean Pl.	I-376	Steelview Ave.
Annette Way.	Caton St.	Ferree St.	Inez Way	Mellon Park Rd.	Penton Rd.	Summerset Dr.
Arco Way	Charles Anderson Bridge	Forbes Ave.	Inverness St.	Melvin St.	Phillips Ave.	Sunapee Way
Asbury Pl.	Circuit Dr. (East)	Forbes Ter.	Ira Way	Monitor St.	Phillips Pl.	Tech St.
Aylesboro Ave.	Circuit Dr. (West)	Forest Glen Rd.	Irma Way	Monmouth St.	Pittcock St.	Techview Ter.
Aylesboro Ln.	Colma Way	Forward Ave.	Isle Way	Morewood Ave.	Plainfield St.	Tilbury St.
Barnsdale St.	Commercial St.	Frank Curto Dr.	JHF Dr.	Morrowfield Ave.	Pocusset St.	Timberline Ct.
Bartlett St.	Cosentino Dr.	Frew St.	Kamin St.	Mt. Royal Rd.	Prospect Dr.	Unger Ln.
Beacon St.	Covode St.	Frew St. Ext.	Keith Way	Mulhatton St.	Quinn Dr.	Valmont St.
Beardsley Ln.	Crescent Pl.	Frick Ln.	Kemper St.	Munhall Rd.	Raleigh St.	Ventner Way
Beaumont Ln.	Crombie St.	Garetta St.	Kinsman Rd.	Murdoch Rd.	Ridgeville St.	Victory Way
Beck Way	Crystal Way	Gatewood Dr.	Kipling Rd.	Murdoch St.	Robin Rd.	Waldron St.
Beechwood Blvd.	Dallas Ave. (South)	Gilda Ave.	Kittanning Way	Murray Ave.	Robin Way	Warwick Ter.
Beechwood Blvd. Br.	Dalzell Pl.	Gladstone Rd.	Landview Rd.	Murray Avenue Bridge	Roselawn Ter.	Weak Way
(Greenfield Bridge)	Darlington Ct.	Greenfield Rd.	Leath Way	Murray Hill Ave.	Rosemont Ln.	Wendover Pl.
Beechwood Pl.	Darlington Rd.	Guarino Rd.	Lilac St.	Negley Ave. (South)	Rosemoor St.	Wendover St.
Beechwood Ter.	Denniston Ave.	Guy St.	Lomar Way	Neville St. (South)	Saline St.	Westland Dr.
Beeler St.	Desdemona Ave.	Hamerschlag Dr.	Ludwick St.	Nicholson St.	Sandels Way	Wightman St.
Beelermont Pl.	Devereaux Ln.	Hasley Ln.	Luster St.	Normlee Pl.	Schenley Dr.	Wilkins Ave.
Bellerock Pl.	Devon Rd.	Hazelwood Ave.	Lynne Haven Rd.	Northumberland St.	Schenley Rd.	Wilkins Heights Rd.
Bellerock St.	Devonshire Rd.	Hempstead Rd.	Maeburn Rd.	Old Browns Hill Rd.	Scott Ln.	Woodland Rd.
Bennington Ave.	Dorset Rd.	Highmont Rd.	Malvern Ave.	Olla Way	Serpentine Dr.	Woodmont St.
Bills Way	Douglas St.	Hobart St.	Maple Heights Ct.	Olympia Pl.	Severn St.	Woodwell St.
Biltmore Ln.	Dunmoyle Pl.	Hollendon Pl.	Maple Heights Rd.	Overlook Dr.	Shady Ave.	Worth St.
Birchwood Ave.	Dunmoyle St.	Holyrood Rd.	Margaret Morrison St.	Overton Ln.	Shady Court Dr.	Yeshiva Way
Boundary St.	Ebby St.	Homestead Grays Bridge	Maria Way	Panther Hollow Bridge	Shady Forbes Ter.	
Braeburn Pl.	Eldridge St.	Hydin Rd.	Marlborough Ave.	Panther Hollow Rd.	Shaw Ave.	
Browns Hill Rd.	English Ln.	Ibsen Way	Marlborough Rd.	Parish Ln.	Shelburne Ln.	
Burchfield Ave.	Fair Oaks St.	Ikon Way	Maynard St.	Parkton Pl.	Sherbrook St.	

## Click here to return to 2025 Newsletters Of Interest to our Readers ...

March 2025

It's hard to keep track of the many events in our local area that are of interest to SHHS members—public safety meetings, DAM meetings, programs, exhibitions—so we'll just present a few here for your consideration. Our local historical society counterparts—the East Liberty Valley Historical Society and the Lawrenceville Historical Society—both offer lecture series with interesting topics. We've just included the presentations for the next few months here. We'll list future presentations in upcoming newsletters.

Speaking of public meetings, we've attended two recently. One was at Greenfield School concerned the future of the Squirrel Hill Parkway East Interchange. The proposed changes are massive, but they are still years away, so we'll report on them as the plan develops. Right now various options are being considered.

The second public meeting was a construction update meeting held on January 29 about a solar farm slated to be built on the deserted field in Swisshelm Park across Nine Mile Run from Summerset. The contractors chosen for the project presented their plans for what the Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh (URA) bills as the "Swisshelm Park Solar Remediation" project. The area is a slag wasteland, where an original URA project had been planned to build more houses, but that plan fell through because of the cost of remediation. In the 1970s, two TV towers, since removed, blinked red every night. Looking at maps on the Pittsburgh Historic Maps website shows no other buildings were ever on the site.



**The East Liberty Valley Historical Society**  
*Dedicated to preserving the unique history of Pittsburgh's Greater East End.*

### Spring 2024 Marilyn Evert Lecture Series

All Lectures Begin at 7:00 PM

Calvary Episcopal Church Parish Hall  
315 Shady Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15206

*A question-and-answer session will follow each lecture.  
Parking in the adjacent church lot and on-street is free.*

Wednesday, March 12, 2025

#### **"Frankenstein's Monster; or The Reanimated Detritus"**

Architectural historian and ELVHS board member Justin Greenawalt shows how restoring the house next door using materials salvaged from historic buildings, including a window from the recently demolished Shady Avenue Cumberland Presbyterian Church, increases pride of ownership in the entire neighborhood.

Wednesday, April 2, 2025

#### **"East Liberty: An American Parable"**

With a history of more than two centuries, Pittsburgh's East Liberty neighborhood has been reinvented over and over again—from a commons open to all during the colonial era to one of the wealthiest trolley-line suburbs in the United States, a community welcoming immigrants from Europe and migrants from the South to an urban neighborhood marred by ill-conceived urban development. Now as a gentrifying neighborhood, for better or worse, East Liberty reinvents itself again. Ed Simon, whose first neighborhood was East Liberty, discusses this historic community as the story of Pittsburgh in miniature, and even more importantly, as a symbolic story of America itself. A book sale and signing of Simon's "The Soul of Pittsburgh" will follow.

Wednesday, May 7, 2025

#### **"Mal Goode Reporting"**



This picture taken by Helen Wilson of the old industrial site where the solar farm is planned shows Summerset in the background.

**MARCH TO  
NOVEMBER**



**TUESDAY'S  
6:30 P.M.**

**L E C T U R E   S E R I E S**

# 2025

**March 18 .....A Holocaust Story of Love and Resilience**  
Deborah Stueber

**April 15 .....Creative Ironworking** John Steel & Chris Holt

**May 20 .....Nineteenth Century Lawrenceville Artists**  
Gary Grimes

**Lawrenceville Carnegie Library, 279 Fisk Street.**  
**Starting time - 6:30 p.m.**  
Admission is free and open to all.  
Parking available on Fisk Street or the Foster Center parking lot.





**THE SQUIRREL HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY IS PROUD TO SPONSOR  
A TOUR OF SQUIRREL HILL'S FIRST PASSIVE HOUSE**

Sunday, April 27, 1:30-3:00 p.m.

2883-2885 Fernwald Road, Squirrel Hill 15217



The Squirrel Hill Historical Society is pleased to offer a tour of Squirrel Hill's first passive house, an energy-efficient home designed by Dunn and Associates of Squirrel Hill to have low environmental impact. The 4,000 square-foot duplex, built in 2017, is owned by **Lucyna (Lucy) de Barbaro**, who will lead our tour, and her husband, **Ayres Freitas**. Their home meets a variety of Green Building and EPA standards and features solar panels, building materials that have low environmental impact, a permeable driveway, cisterns for rainwater harvesting, a rain garden, and two rock wells. **Passive**

**house** is a voluntary standard for energy efficiency in a building, which reduces the building's ecological footprint and results in ultra-low energy buildings that require little energy for heating or cooling. The passive house concept was developed in the U.S. in response to the Oil Shock of 1973-74 and is popular in Europe. Proceeds from the tour will benefit Energy Efficiency Empowerment, which improves energy efficiency in low-income housing.

Questions? Contact **Todd Miller**, SHHS Program Coordinator, at [toddprmtg@gmail.com](mailto:toddprmtg@gmail.com) or **412.848.1082**. Registration deadline is Friday, April 18. *Registration is limited to 25 people.*

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**REGISTRATION FORM**

Register online at <https://squirrelhillhistory.org/> or complete the form below and mail it with a check, payable to Squirrel Hill Historical Society, to: SHHS; P.O. Box 8157; Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

***Please register by Friday, April 18.***

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone(s) or email(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of SHHS members @\$10 ea. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of SHHS non-members @\$20 ea. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

You do not need to be a SHHS member to register for the tour, but members are given priority, and becoming a member entitles you to take the \$10 discount for members.

Number of SHHS Individual mbshps. @\$15 ea. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of SHHS Couples mbshps. @\$25 ea. \_\_\_\_\_ \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL ENCLOSED** \$ \_\_\_\_\_