

Squirrel Hill Historical Society

2025 is the 25th Anniversary of the Squirrel Hill Historical Society!



The Squirrel Hill Historical Society (SHHS)
was founded in 2000. Since then, we've
accomplished a lot!

squirrelhillhistory.org

In the Beginning

The **Squirrel Hill Historical Society (SHHS)** was founded in 2000 by architect **Terry Necciai** and his wife **Sharyn**, who was pursuing a master's degree in landscape studies. They were preservation activists, but in founding the society, they stated that "the group has no agenda beyond encouraging awareness of the neighborhood's history and perhaps starting an oral history project and a photograph and document archive."

When Terry left in 2002, **Michael Ehrmann** became president. He gathered a group of dedicated friends and neighbors to run the SHHS, including **Ralph Lund, Patricia Hughes, Patty Gillespie, Betty Connelly, Esther Tucker, Anita Newell, Eveline Young, and Audrey Glickman.**



Squirrel Hill couple proposes historical society

By Patricia Lowry
Post-Gazette Staff Writer

A historical society for Squirrel Hill?

It's an idea whose time has come, say Squirrel Hill residents Terry and Sharyn Necciai, who have scheduled the first meeting of the Squirrel Hill Historical Society for 7 p.m. Tuesday. The meeting will be held at Sixth Presbyterian Church, which will honor its own history with a sesquicentennial celebration this year.

Featured speaker is Chris Potter, managing editor of City Paper, whose topic is "A Rite of Passage: Squirrel Hill Comes of Historical Age."

"Squirrel Hill was built and developed very quickly in the 1920s and some of the things that preceded or are from the 1920s have fallen by the wayside," Necciai said. "Very few people know who Thomas

The group has no agenda beyond encouraging awareness of the neighborhood's history.

Wightman was or remember who Thomas Watkins was."

Wightman, an Irish immigrant, headed the Thomas Wightman Glass Co., with factories in Pittsburgh and Monongahela, and, with a little help from his wife, Isabella, fathered nine children. The family settled on 10 acres in Squirrel Hill, straddling Forbes Avenue east of Wightman Street. The Wightman

house stood approximately where Marlborough Street meets Forbes.

Watkins was an early Squirrel Hill developer who built Forbes Terrace on the eastern portion of Wightman's former land.

Although Terry Necciai, an architect, and Sharyn, who is pursuing a master's degree in landscape studies, are both preservation activists,

they say the group has no agenda beyond encouraging awareness of the neighborhood's history and perhaps starting an oral history project and a photograph and document archive.

Topics of future meetings could include the neighborhood's architecture, gardens, developers, ethnic groups, merchants, Homewood Cemetery, Willa Cather's life and time in Squirrel Hill — and anything else members want to hear about.

"We just want to have a good time with a good speaker and some analysis," Necciai said.

SHHS's Mission

The founders composed a mission statement that is still the SHHS's guiding principle:

“We are committed to gathering, preserving and celebrating the historical memories of our vibrant neighborhood.”

The mission statement appears in the original membership flyer (left below). The other flyer describes the history of Squirrel Hill. Both were designed by Patricia Hughes. The SHHS still uses updated versions of the flyers.



SHHS's Nonprofit Status

In 2015, the Squirrel Hill Historical Society applied for nonprofit status so that members' contributions would be tax-deductible.

"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 SHHS Logo

The SHHS logo was designed by Helen Wilson in 2023. But we'd like to add some colors to it, like other organizations do. Let us know what symbolic color scheme you'd like to be used in the logo.

Ideas: GRAY for the gray squirrels around here, BLUE for Jewish Squirrel Hill, GREEN for all the trees Squirrel Hill has; BROWN for our wildlife; the choices are endless. What are your ideas?



SHHS Monthly Programs

From the start, the main focus of the SHHS has been monthly programs in which speakers present talks about local history. Programs are free and open to the public. They are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Church of the Redeemer, 5700 Forbes Avenue. They are listed on the SHHS website. Since 2002, almost all of the programs—over 200 so far—have been recorded and uploaded to the SHHS website, first by Ralph Lund and then by Audrey Glickman.



Tuesday, September 9: “Red-lining 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 the 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, author of the book, *Pittsburgh’s Historic Stadiums and Arenas*, will present information about many of the city’s iconic sports venues, including Forbes Field, one of the first “modern” concrete and steel ballparks; PNC Park, the best of the new millennium’s retro design movement; Schenley Casino and Duquesne Garden, the first artificial indoor ice rinks; and the engineering marvel of the Civic Arena’s movable dome.

Tuesday, December 9: “The ABCs of Pittsburgh Aviation”

Western Pennsylvania History magazine editor **Brian Butko** and public historian **Sue Morris** will discuss the thrilling early days of flying in their new book, *Bettis: Where Pittsburgh Aviation Took Off*. Beginning in the 1920s, the daredevil women and men of West Mifflin’s Bettis Field helped shape the industry from barnstorming to passenger service in less than a decade. A book sale and signing will follow.

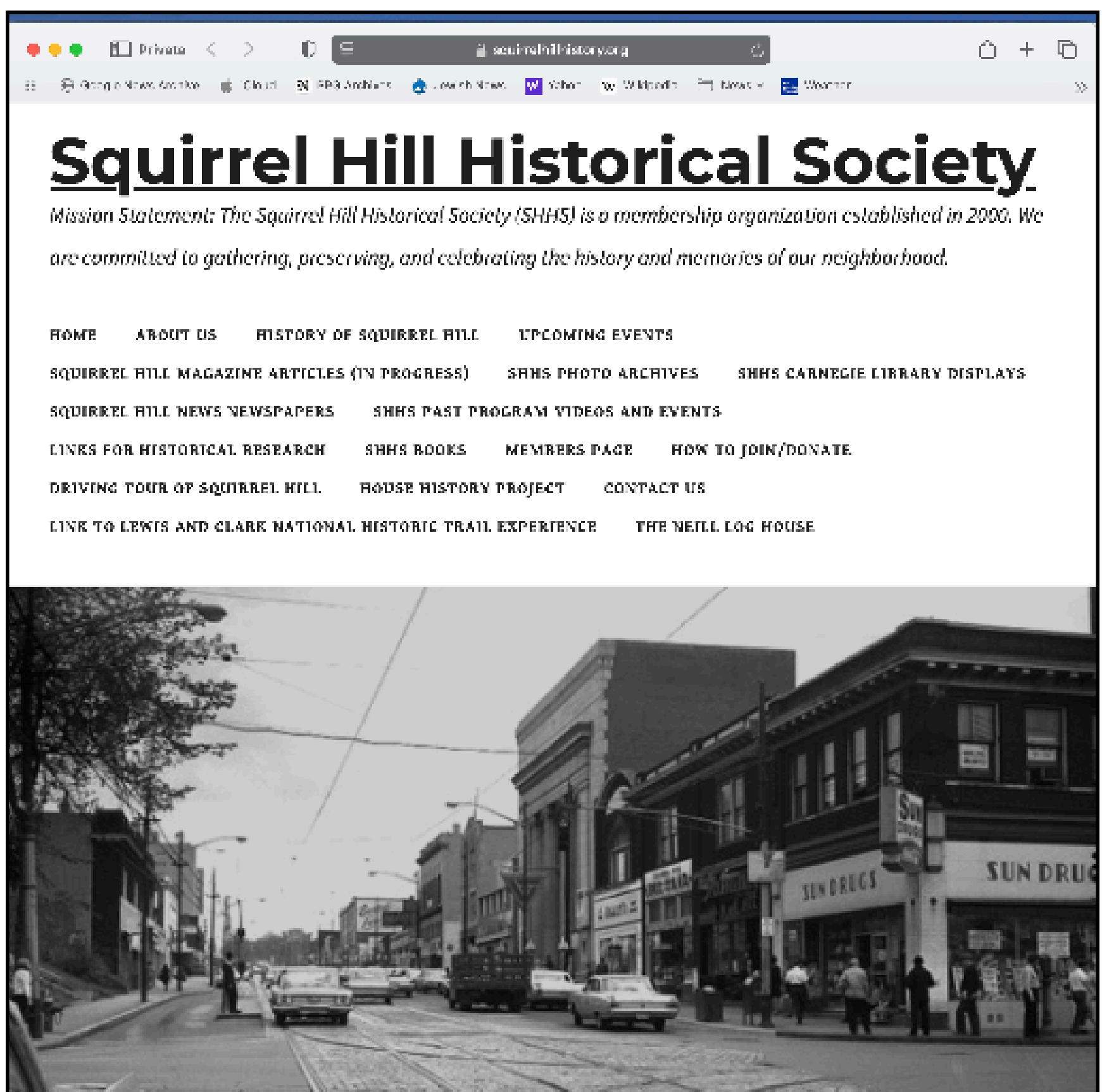
SHHS Website

squirrelhillhistory.org

The SHHS's website, **squirrelhillhistory.org**, was created by webmaster Patti Hughes in 2002. The website was redesigned in 2018 by Janine Michael, who is now webmaster.

The website is the place to go to find information about the SHHS and Squirrel Hill history, announcements of upcoming speakers and programs, ways to join the SHHS, how to contact the SHHS, and much more.

Below is a screenshot of our opening page.



SHHS Volunteer Opportunities

We need volunteers to help out in various ways. Talk to us at our Tuesday evening programs or contact us through our website, squirrelhillhistory.org.

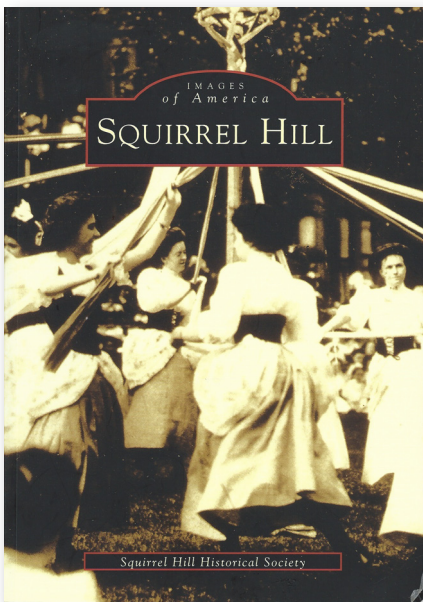
The SHHS has plenty of volunteering opportunities to offer!

- Come to programs early to help set up.
- Volunteer at the Neill Log House as a substitute docents when the park ranger can't be present during the times the house is open, take care of the garden after it is planted, weed the grounds, and more.
- Volunteer to scan documents and photos in the SHHS's collection and prepare them for uploading onto the University of Pittsburgh's Historic Pittsburgh website, historicpittsburgh.org. This volunteering effort requires knowledge of Photoshop and Excel. Carnegie Library Main in Oakland has a digital lab where the scanning can be done.
- Research the name of your street for our Street Names Project. We can help with tools for research.
- Research and write an article about a topic that interests you about Squirrel Hill's history and submit it for possible publication in the SHHS Newsletter.
- Look for large trees to identify and measure to add to our Champion Tree Project.
- Research your house's history and write a story about it for our House History Project.
(Right: Koerner House)



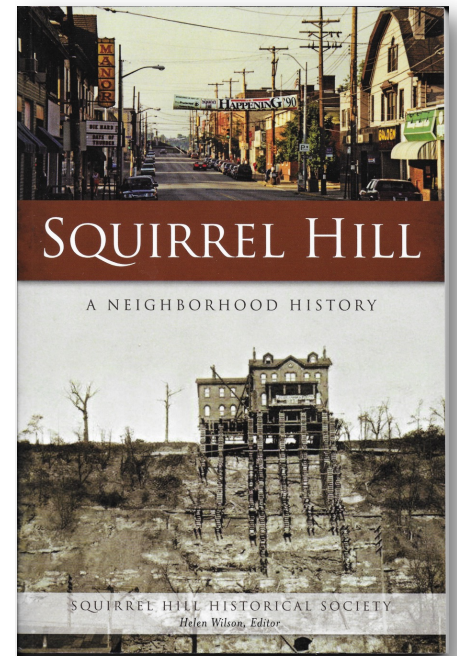
Two Books about Squirrel Hill

In 2005, the SHHS produced an Arcadia book, *Images of America, Squirrel Hill*, written by Michael Ehrmann, Laurie Cohen and Betty Connelly, who also served as editor. It was filled with photographs, supplemented by chapter introductions and captions.



As we continued to research our neighborhood's history, we decided to write a new book that would add to the information in the first book.

Squirrel Hill: A Neighborhood History, was published in 2017. It was written by Michael Ehrmann, Wayne Bossinger, Dr. Barbara Burstin, Betty Connelly, and Helen Wilson, who also served as editor.



In 2021, we inserted an addendum about the **Tree of Life** shootings.

Both books can be purchased at SHHS meetings, online, and local bookstores.

About the Authors of *Squirrel Hill: A Neighborhood History*

Michael Ehrmann became SHHS president in 2003. He was a real-estate appraiser for nearly thirty years before his retirement in 2013. His specialty was historic properties, and he has appraised historical buildings throughout the country.

Helen Wilson, SHHS co-vice president, has been researching and writing about Squirrel Hill's history since she retired in 2006 from the Pittsburgh Board of Public Education, where she taught art and worked in the Division of Curriculum Development as a writer, editor, graphic designer and illustrator.

Betty Connelly, SHHS co-vice president, has been a member of the SHHS since its first meeting. She values the living history that our older members contribute and is interested in preserving the informal layers of our community's fabric.

Wayne Bossinger, SHHS member, has been researching and writing about Squirrel Hill's history since retiring in 2014. His experiences as an operations manager for the City of Pittsburgh give him unique insights into the city's neighborhoods as well as government records, such as deeds and probate documents.

Barbara Burstin, PhD, is on the history faculty of the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University. She has written three books on the history of the Pittsburgh Jewish community: *Steel City Jews 1840–1915*; *Steel City Jews in Prosperity, Depression and War 1915–1950*; and *Jewish Pittsburgh*, a book in Arcadia's *Images of America* series.

Squirrel Hill News Project

In 2017, under the leadership of late board member Ralph Lund, the SHHS arranged to give a stack of bound volumes of the *Squirrel Hill News* newspapers dating from 1935 to 1970 to Carnegie Library's Pennsylvania Department in Oakland to be digitized and put on microfiche. The next step was to have the University of Pittsburgh's *Historic Pittsburgh* website put the newspapers online so that everyone could have access to them.

The newspapers can be accessed through the SHHS website, squirrelhillhistory.org. They have proven to be a treasure trove of information about Squirrel Hill. The newspapers themselves are in storage at the Heinz History Center and are available for viewing.

SQUIRREL HILL NEWS

The Home Paper of Pittsburgh's Leading District

VOL. V, NO. 34 PITTSBURGH, PA., THURSDAY, JUNE 2, 1938 TWO CENTS

Jewish Bakeries Here Not Affected As Bread Strike Grips Rest Of City

Four Stick-Ups End In Apprehension Of Bandit

Squirrel Hill sat high and dry today above the swirling waters of striking bakers and drivers with the announcement that none of the local bakeries would be closed and that deliveries would not be affected. A spokesman for the International Brotherhood of Bakers of America, Local 44 and Local 242 said that only the Bakers and Drivers

Local Women Pass Exams

A list of persons eligible to receive appointments to supervisory positions in the Department of

Hill Escapes Inconveniences In Serious Bakery Strike

SQUIRREL HILL NEWS

The Home Paper of Pittsburgh's Leading District

VOL. VI, NO. 15 PITTSBURGH, PA., THURSDAY, JANUARY 26, 1939 TWO CENTS

KIDNAP NOTE DEMANDS \$1,000

Two Major Problems Face Reassembled Congress

Money Is Placed on Porch—Future Criminal

On porch, he pointed a gun at her, locked the door, and the kidnapping and demanding \$1,000 by the family, detectives investigated as the work of a crank.

WEALTH TAX

NEUTRALITY

Four Here Named Deputy Constables

Police Capture Pajama-Glad Man At Busy Corner

Commencement Exercises To Be Held January 30th; Convocation Today; Many Earn Honor Ratings

SQUIRREL HILL NEWS

The Home Paper of Pittsburgh's Leading District

VOL. III, NO. 6 PITTSBURGH, PA., THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 1935 TWO CENTS

Bike Rider Causes Man's Death

Trade Board Outing Race Event Results

They'll Just Steal Anything Now!

First Hit-Run Death From Bicycle Occurs

SQUIRREL HILL NEWS

The Home Paper of Pittsburgh's Leading District

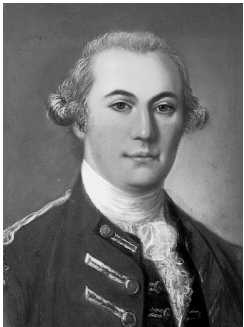
VOL. III, NO. 35 PITTSBURGH, PA., THURSDAY, JANUARY 9, 1936 TWO CENTS

SLIPPERY STREETS CAUSE MANY MOTOR ACCIDENTS

190 Students Graduate Alderdice At Mid-Term

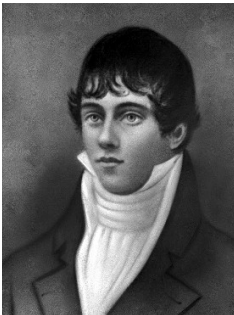
Police Capture Pajama-Glad Man At Busy Corner

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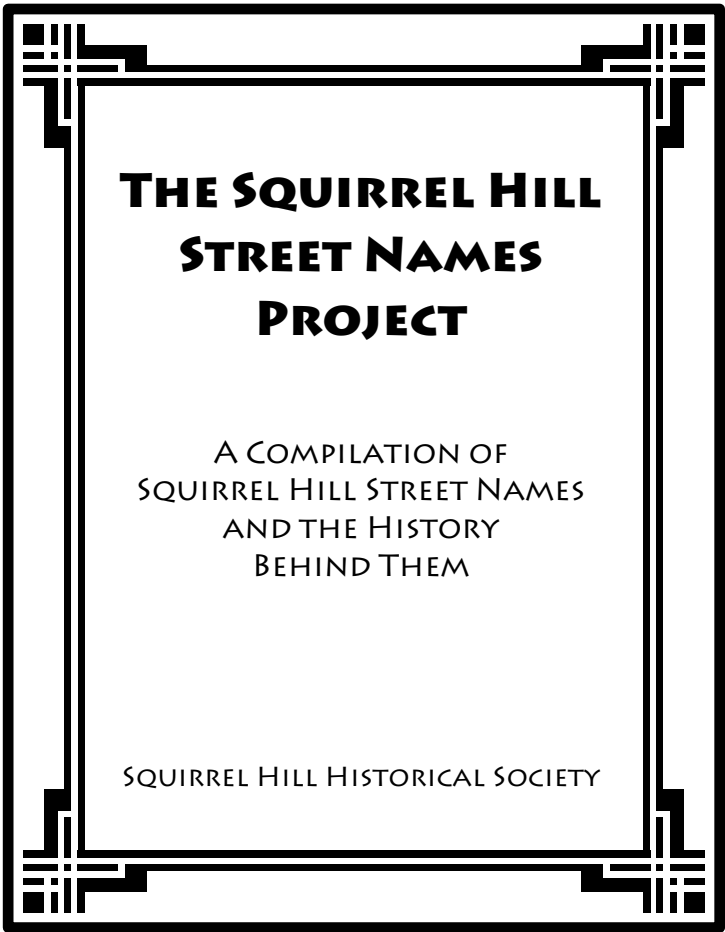


General John Forbes
(1707-1759)

Squirrel Hill Street Names Project



Mayor Magnus M.
Murray (1787-1838)



You can tell a lot about an area by looking at the names of its roadways. Squirrel Hill has around 212 streets, avenues, boulevards, roads, courts, places, terraces, ways, bridges, trails, and even an Interstate highway! Each was named for a particular reason. Some, like Saline Street, Forward Avenue, Shady Avenue, and Pocusset Street, date back to the earliest years of the neighborhood. Others, like the streets in Summerset, are brand new. Some Squirrel Hill streets were

named after early landowners, some after noted people, and some after a natural feature. Quite a few were renamed several times. The SHHS has been looking into the interesting history of the names of Squirrel Hill’s streets and is working on a book about its findings.

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.	Pittock 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.	

Monthly SHHS Newsletters

Every month since 2011, SHHS members have received a newsletter either via email or regular mail. The newsletters contain information about upcoming programs, news about SHHS projects, and articles reporting on current research. Vice-President Helen Wilson is editor. Anyone is welcome to submit articles to be considered for publication. Contact the SHHS for more information.

July 2011



NEWSLETTER

JULY 2011

About the SHHS

The Squirrel Hill Historical Society (SHHS) is a membership organization established in 2000. We are committed to gathering, preserving and celebrating the historical memories of our neighborhood.

The SHHS sponsors a regular lecture series on topics of interest, primarily focused on Squirrel Hill institutions, with occasional talks on more general history.

Meetings are free and are held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Church of the Redeemer, 5700 Forbes Avenue.

We welcome new members! A member/sponsor application form is on the back of this newsletter.

Annual dues for 2011:
Individual \$10/year
Couples \$15/year
Patron \$25/year
Benefactor \$50/year

Many historical societies have newsletters. Here's ours! This first issue is an announcement of things to come in September.

We invite your participation. If you would like to submit an item of historical interest for publication, suggest a topic for a speech, ask a question or give feedback, contact us at historysqhill@hotmail.com or 5638 Northumberland St., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Our next meeting will be held on September 20 rather than on September 13 due to a scheduling conflict. All other meetings will be held as usual on the second Tuesday of each month.

Fall Lineup of Speakers

Tuesday, September 20: "August Wilson—A Personal Remembrance"
Sala Udin, August Wilson, and Rob Penny co-founded the Centre Avenue Poets' Theatre Workshop in the Hill District in 1965. The three also co-founded the Black Horizon Theater in 1968. Udin will share his personal reminiscences about August Wilson in this interesting talk.

Tuesday, October 11: "The Thaws of Pittsburgh, Allegheny and the East End"
David Grinnel, Chief Archivist at the Heinz History Center, and John Canning, Vice-President of the Allegheny City Society, will give a talk on the convoluted history of the Thaw family, one of the most significant families of 19th century Pittsburgh. The Thaws made the headlines of the region's newspapers for several decades. Their mansion, "Lyndhurst," was located at 1165 Beechwood Boulevard.

Tuesday, November 8: "Homewood Cemetery"
Marilyn Evert, Director of Development for Homewood Cemetery, will discuss the history of Homewood Cemetery. The cemetery is currently undertaking a major restoration effort to maintain the Lawn Park intention of the cemetery's design.

At times people contact SHHS with questions and requests for information about Squirrel Hill history. Sometimes the requests are so specific to Squirrel Hill that we are soliciting our members' help. Here are some requests we've received in the past few months. If you have any information to share, contact us at historysqhill@hotmail.com or 5638 Northumberland St., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

What people are looking for:

- vintage pictures of the Gulf Station that used to be at Forbes and Murray
- vintage photographs of the Forbes and Murray intersection
- information about the Underground Railroad house that was located at the corner of Darlington and Murdoch
- interior photos or other information about Lyndhurst, the Thaw mansion on Beechwood Boulevard

Helpful information: Do you have precious old photos, 8 mm movies, videotapes, slides and other media containing irreplaceable memories you'd like to preserve or duplicate? Rewind Memories is located at 2002 Murray Avenue. Contact information: 1.800.504.4782 or info@rewindmemories.com

August 2017



NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2017

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How to contact SHHS:
Online:
www.squirrelhillhistory.org
Email:
historysqhill@hotmail.com
Write: P.O. Box 8157
Pittsburgh, PA 15217
Call: 412-417-3707

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 (including dues) to the SHHS are deductible from federal taxes under Section 170 of the IRS Code.

If you weren't able to attend a SHHS meeting or would like to view a past presentation, go to squirrelhillhistory.org and click on the link "Videos on YouTube" in the left yellow column of the website.

New presentations are posted on the website a few days after each meeting.

If you would like 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 historysqhill@hotmail.com or write to SHHS, PO Box 8157, Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

We have a number of months to go, but 2017 has already been an outstanding year for the SHHS. Here is a list of developments to date:

- Membership continues to grow, up to a record of 182.
- Nearly 40 members and friends participated in two walking tours, CMU and Schenley Park, in the past two months.
- We have had a number of good contributions to the SHHS Newspaper Project, which I discussed in previous newsletters.
- Our new book, *Squirrel Hill A Neighborhood History*, has been published, and sales and reviews have been excellent. A number of our members and others have already purchased books.

Our achievements would not be possible without the strong membership base that we now have. For this month I have a simple message to all of you:

THANK YOU!

Best wishes that your summer continues to be enjoyable. I hope to see you at our August 1 meeting and upcoming fall events.

Regards,
Michael Ehrmann

SHHS August Presentation

Tuesday, August 1 (Rescheduled from June 13): "History of Giant Eagle"

Josh Shapira, a member of one of Giant Eagle's founding families, will discuss the history of Pittsburgh's premier supermarket chain. He'll talk about the Goldsteins, Porters, and Chaits and their Eagle Grocery, and the Moravitzes and Weizenbaums and their OK Grocery, and relate how they merged to form Giant Eagle.

★NOTE: After the August SHHS meeting, we will show a short PowerPoint presentation about our new book, *Squirrel Hill: A Neighborhood History*. Everyone is welcome to stay to view it. Books will be available for purchase at this time. The cost of the book is \$20 for members and \$22 for nonmembers.

More information about the SHHS speakers and topics can be found on the SHHS website, www.squirrelhillhistory.org.

December 2024



NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2024

About SHHS

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Most of our programs are recorded. If you would like to view past programs, go to squirrelhillhistory.org and click on the link "Squirrel Hill Past Program Videos and Events."

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HAPPY HANUKKAH!



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO ALL!



Squirrel Hill Historical Society

Our 2025 Membership Drive Continues

SHHS's membership year runs from January 1 through December 31. Members can renew for 2025 online through our website or by mail. See the last page of this newsletter for details.

For anyone who joins the SHHS from October 1 onward, their membership extends to December 31, 2025.

President's Message

Dear SHHS Members:

SEASONS GREETINGS! HAPPY HANUKKAH and MERRY CHRISTMAS to all. We hope everyone is able to celebrate the holidays with family and friends.

With the long election season finally over, we will be able to relax from all the TV and mailing ads and hopefully have peace and security in the year to come.

The Squirrel Hill Historical Society is a membership organization established in 2000 and will be 25 YEARS OLD in 2025! The SHHS is committed to collecting and preserving the history of Squirrel Hill. One way we have done that since 2006 is by recording our monthly programs and uploading them to our website, squirrelhillhistory.org. Thank you, Audrey, who does the recordings! The 200-plus videos can be searched by topic, title, presenter's name, or date of presentation. The SHHS website is available to all and has information on upcoming events and projects, photo archives of Squirrel Hill, *Squirrel Hill News* newspapers from 1936-1970, links for historical research, updates on the Neill Log House restoration project, and much more. The website is truly a great asset of the SHHS, and we are glad to share it with everyone.

In 2011, SHHS Vice-President Helen Wilson began writing the monthly SHHS Newsletters that are sent to members. The newsletters contain articles about

January 2025



NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2025

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Squirrel Hill Historical Society

A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE!

A NOTE ABOUT WEATHER RELATED PROGRAM CANCELLATIONS

This winter, the SHHS will NOT announce program cancellations on KDKA. If we decide to cancel a program or hold it on Zoom due to bad weather, we will send an email to that effect to all our members and those on our extended mailing list. If you don't receive an email and want to check the status of the program, contact us at sqhillhist@shhsoc.org.



Squirrel Hill Historical Society

Congratulations, SHHS, on your 25th Anniversary!

Our 2025 Membership Drive Continues

SHHS's membership year runs from January 1 through December 31. Members can renew for 2025 online through our website or by mail. See the last page of this newsletter for details.

President's Message

Dear SHHS Members:

HAPPY NEW YEAR 2025 to all! I hope everyone is enjoying all the festivities that Pittsburgh has to offer at this time of year.

Thank you for your loyal membership in the Squirrel Hill Historical Society. Your support is greatly appreciated, as we are an all-volunteer organization. SHHS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, so dues and donations are tax deductible.

Carnegie Library Display Board

Since 2014, this SHHS “Museum Board” has showcased topics of Squirrel Hill’s history. The display is changed every few months. Past displays are uploaded to the SHHS website to be viewed at any time.



Here are just a few of the subjects that were covered:

- **“Are You Standing in the Heart of Squirrel Hill?”**—A look at how the intersection of Forbes and Murray Avenues developed through the years
- **“What Makes Squirrel Hill, Squirrel Hill?”**—An examination of the characteristics that make Squirrel Hill unique among the neighborhoods of Pittsburgh
- **“Squirrel Hill Then and Now”**—Old and new pictures taken at the same locations in Squirrel Hill at different times
- **“Beth Shalom—Celebrating 100 Years”**—The inspirational story of the first synagogue to be founded in Squirrel Hill
- **“The Morrowfield”**—The little-known story of the Morrowfield Apartment Hotel, the place to “see and be seen” by celebrities and flappers in the Roaring Twenties
- **“The Bridges of Squirrel Hill”**—A look at the large and small spans that connect Squirrel Hill to surrounding areas
- **“Squirrel Hill Goes to the Movies”**—A showing of the six theaters Squirrel Hill once had (only one is still open), plus a listing of scenes from movies filmed in Squirrel Hill
- **“Squirrel Hill Tops the List”**—The many ways Squirrel Hill sits at the top of different Pittsburgh lists—largest neighborhood, largest Jewish population, largest parks, the only golf course in Pittsburgh, and much more
- **Squirrel Hill in the Time of Pandemic**—A display showcasing the activities we undertook while the pandemic was going on



SHHS Walking Tours

The SHHS has walking tours—a popular feature in the society’s annual round of events. The tours are led by experts who share their specialized knowledge with attendees and often take them into places off-limits to the general public.

The tours have taken us to places such as Carnegie Mellon and Chatham Universities, the Morrowfield Hotel and Watkins Development, Frick and Schenley Parks, The Homewood Cemetery, the Squirrel Hill business district, the Hill District, and many other places. In 2025 so far, the SHHS has toured The Dragon’s Den in Homestead, Lucyna de Barbaro’s passive house on Fernwald Street, and the Neill Log House in Schenley Park.



SHHS Outreach Activities

Besides its monthly programs, The SHHS gives presentations about Squirrel Hill's history to other organizations on request. It also participates in local events.

2024

Sixteenth Annual

TURNER CEMETERY

HISTORY WALK

Tour Pittsburgh's Second Oldest Cemetery

3424 Beechwood Blvd., Pittsburgh, PA 15217 on the border between Squirrel Hill and Greenfield. Look for the bright red fence.

Saturday, October 12, 2024

12:00–3:00

FREE

ADMISSION

Come to learn about historic Turner Cemetery, which dates back to 1785. It holds the remains of early settlers of Squirrel Hill, Native Americans, and veterans of the first four wars fought by the United States.

Turner Cemetery is a historic half-acre graveyard dating from 1785 to the 1880s, containing the remains of Native Americans, early settlers of Squirrel Hill, and military veterans from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War. It is located on land originally owned by Simon Girty, which later passed into the hands of his half-brother John Turner. New military tombstones have been installed to honor veterans of the Revolutionary War and other early wars and for Mary Girty Turner, the mother of John Turner and Simon Girty. The History Walk will be self-guided. Informational placards will be set up in the cemetery at individual graves, on the fences, and at other places that have historical importance. Cemetery researchers will be on hand to answer questions about its history. A Welcome Table will have information about the cemetery and the Squirrel Hill Historical Society.

Parking is available along Beechwood Blvd. The cemetery is handicap accessible, but the ground is uneven and pitted in spots. Be careful when walking in the cemetery. By attending the History Walk, you are agreeing to not hold Friends of Turner Cemetery, MSBA Church, or the SHHS responsible for any injuries incurred. No restroom facilities are available in the cemetery.

THE TURNER CEMETERY HISTORY WALK IS SPONSORED BY THE FRIENDS OF TURNER CEMETERY OF MARY S. BROWN MEMORIAL CHURCH AND THE SQUIRREL HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

For more information, go to www.turnercemetery.org or www.brightredfence.org.



Squirrel Hill, Greenfield and Hazelwood Holiday Mingle, 2024

THE MANOR

where the good movies play

1 THE DEVELOPMENT

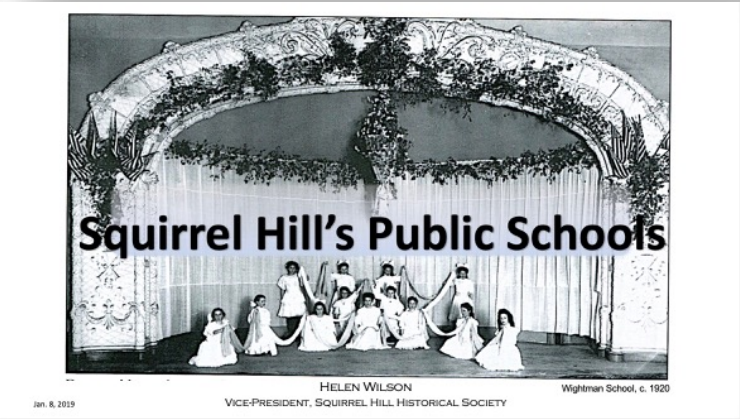
2 OF SQUIRREL HILL

3 A JOURNEY THROUGH

4 TIME AND ART PART ONE

HELEN WILSON

VICE-PRESIDENT, SQUIRREL HILL HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Squirrel Hill Night Markets



Carnegie Library History Day, 2024

You Are Here

But Where Is Here?



National Night Out, Frick Park, 2024

Neill Log House Restoration

In 2020, the SHHS was contacted by a contractor for the Lewis and Clark Trail Experience, lewisandclark.travel. The contractor said Meriwether Lewis may have stopped at the Neill Log House on his way to Pittsburgh to pick up the keelboat and begin his journey down the Ohio River. The Lewis and Clark connection sparked the SHHS's interest in the Neill Log House. SHHS board members went there to assess its condition and found it to be precarious.



Together with the Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition (SHUC), the SHHS founded Friends of Neill Log House, Inc., and began restoration of the house in 2020. Work is still ongoing. The Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony was held in November 2024, and the house is now open for tours. Go to the SHHS's website, squirrelhillhistory.org, and click on the "Neill Log House" for the visitation schedule.



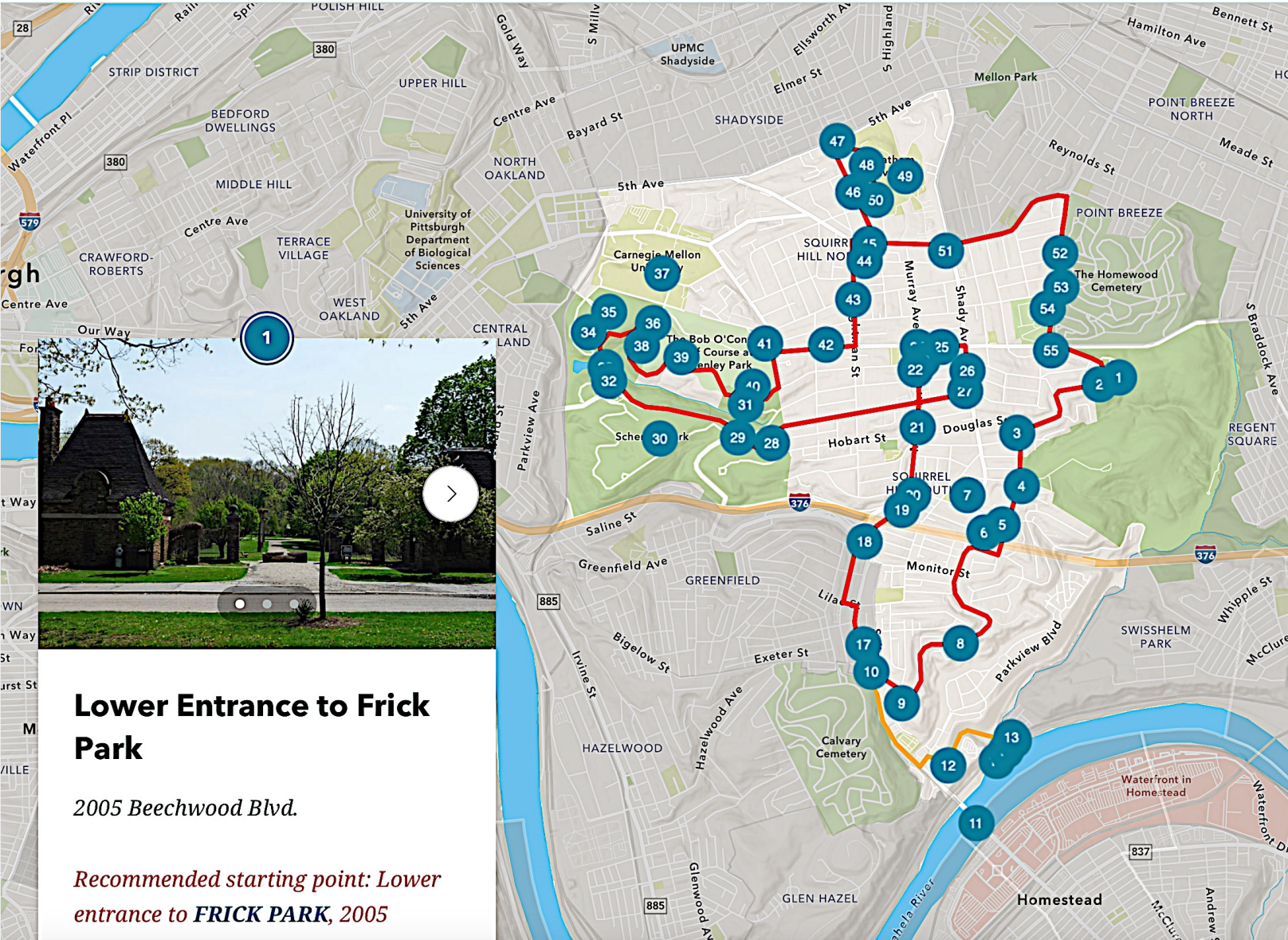
SHHS Photo Archives

The SHHS is putting its photo archives online through the *Historic Pittsburgh* website, historicpittsburgh.org. The archives can also be accessed through the SHHS's website, squirrelhillhistory.org. So far, 60 historic Squirrel Hill photos have been put online, mostly taken by Patricia Hughes in the 1990s. The SHHS has at least twice that many photos still to do.



Driving Tour of Squirrel Hill

The SHHS created an interactive **Driving Tour of Squirrel Hill** in 2020, digitized by Lauren Winkler. It covers 55 points of interest within the four square miles of the neighborhood.



House History Project

Squirrel Hill has a vast array of houses with interesting histories. The SHHS is collecting stories of houses in the neighborhood. We are inviting interesting stories about your houses in Squirrel Hill, their histories, styles, locations or anything else that you can share. Send your submissions to sqhillhist@shhsoc.org, with “House History” in the subject line. Please do not identify a house by the exact numerical address. Create a title for your story with the street name or theme. By making submission, you are granting SHHS permission to include this information in our newsletters and to create a posting on our House History Project link. When you go to the House History Project link and click on an article, it will take you to a link about the house.

Individual House Histories To Date

Neill Log House (current version)

Squirrel Hill’s Passive House Duplex—A Building with the Future in Mind (posted 9-2023)

Pocusset House, “Union Baking Company (posted 5-2020)

Phillips Avenue at Pocusset, “What’s a Mikvah?” (posted 5-2020)

“Cooking mash in my basement” (posted 6-2020)

“Viewland” (posted 6-2020)

The Frank House (posted 7-2020)

The Samuel S. Brown Mansion and the Jewish Home for the Aged (posted 7-2020)

More About the Samuel S. Brown Mansion (posted 8-2020)

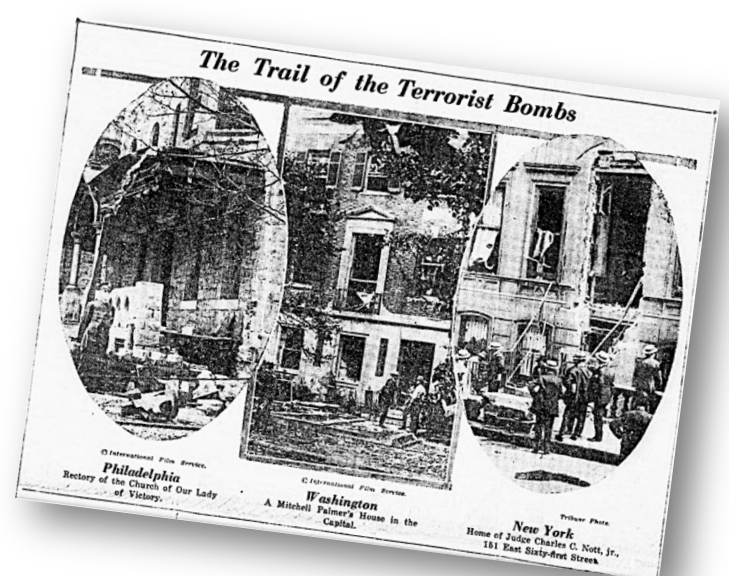
Of Debutantes and Anarchists: An Aylesboro House History (posted 9-2020) (*right*)

The Weiss House on Beechwood Boulevard—
”Living Light Upon the Land” (posted 9-2020)

H. Miller and Sons (posted 11-2020)

The Koerner House (posted: 10-2-2021)

The House That Time Built – further reflections by Caroline Boyce, after March 2025 National Historic Place Designation of The Koerner House (posted: 3-2025)



Champion Tree Project

The SHHS is looking for and documenting the biggest and most unusual trees in Squirrel Hill. Oaks, sycamores, London plane trees, maples, lindens, chestnuts—they’re on the list, and more!

Do you know of any trees to add to the list? Let us know, and if you’d really like to have some fun with this project, take a string and wrap it around the tree at a 4-ft. height to get the circumference. Then do the math to find the diameter.

Diameter = Circumference ÷ π (3.14)

Different kinds of trees grow at different rates. If you have an iPhone, an easy way to identify a tree is to take a picture of its leaves and then click on the circle below the photo with the i in it.



Red oak on E. Circuit Rd. in Schenley Park: 60” diameter. Age (estimate) 240 years

Top Ten Champion Trees of Squirrel Hill						
Type of Tree	Location	Lat./Long.	Circ. at 54” and Diam.	Growth Factor and Est. Age	Date Measured	Notes
American Beech	Clayton Trail in Frick Park	40.437737, -79.904569	C: 101” (8.42’) D: 32”	GF 6 192 yrs.	8-15-20	Smooth light bark invites carving of initials in beech trees. This one has incredible roots.
American Chestnut	Undisclosed location in Frick Park	N/A	C: 39” (3’ 3”) D: 12.4”	GF 3 37 yrs.	7-28-20	Tree is believed to be one of the few American chestnuts in Frick Park, location undisclosed to protect it.
Chinkapin oak	Top of Flagstaff Hill, Schenley Park	40.439887, -79.944630	C: 128” (10’ 8”) D: 40.76”	GF 5 200 yrs.	8-11-20	Unusual park trees were planted as specimen trees.
Ginkgo	Frick Park below Country Club Hill	40.430529, -79.909482	C: 132” (11’ 3”) D: 40”	GF 4 168 yrs.	8-12-20	Ginkgos are living fossils, dating from 270 million years ago, rediscovered in 1691 in China, brought to the US in the late 1700s.
Variety of ornamental maple	Grove in Frick Park below Country Club Hill	40.431281, -79.911175	C: 154” (12’ 10”) D: 49”	GF 3.5 172 yrs.	8-23-20	One of several different specimen trees in grove, all different kinds
Linden	Grove in Frick Park below Country Club Hill	40.431281, -79.911175	C: 138” (11.5’) D: 44”	GF: 4 176 yrs.	8-23-20	One of several different specimen trees in grove, all different types
Ornamental cherry	Turner Cemetery	40.420869, -79.92645	C: 102” (8’ 6”) D: 32.5”	GF 3 97.5 yrs.	8-26-20	Planted as a memorial. Has at least two tightly joined trunks
Red oak	Weak Way	40.421251, -79.925469	C: 164” (13’ 8”) D: 52.3” (4.35’)	GF 4 208 yrs.	7-20	Tree is on private property but can be seen from Weak Way.
Silver maple	To the left of the junction of Riverview Trail loop on gravel trail	40.431687, -79.911023	C: 157” (13’ 1”) D: 50”	GF 3 150 yrs.	8-23-20	This tree is at the edge of what had been a fairway of the old country club golf course.
Sycamore, probably a London plane tree	Intersection of Tranquil Trail and Falls Ravine Trail in Fern Hollow in Frick Park	40.432958, -79.900208	C: 168” (14’) D: 53.5” (4.46’)	GF: 3.5 187 yrs.	7-20-20	Forest ranger said it is difficult to tell the difference between an American sycamore and London plane tree except American has a whiter trunk

Squirrel Hill Calendars

From 2021-2023, the SHHS worked with the Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition (SHUC) to produce a Squirrel Hill calendar featuring vintage photos of the neighborhood. We'd like to do future calendars, hopefully for 2026!



Get Involved with the SHHS

The SHHS is an all-volunteer organization. Officers are also board members. We welcome volunteers who would like to get more involved with the SHHS.

Current SHHS Officers and Board Members

President: Jim Hammond

Vice-President and Newsletter Editor: Helen Wilson

Treasurer: Rod Permigiani

Recording Secretary: Audrey Glickman

Email Coordinator: Tony Indovina

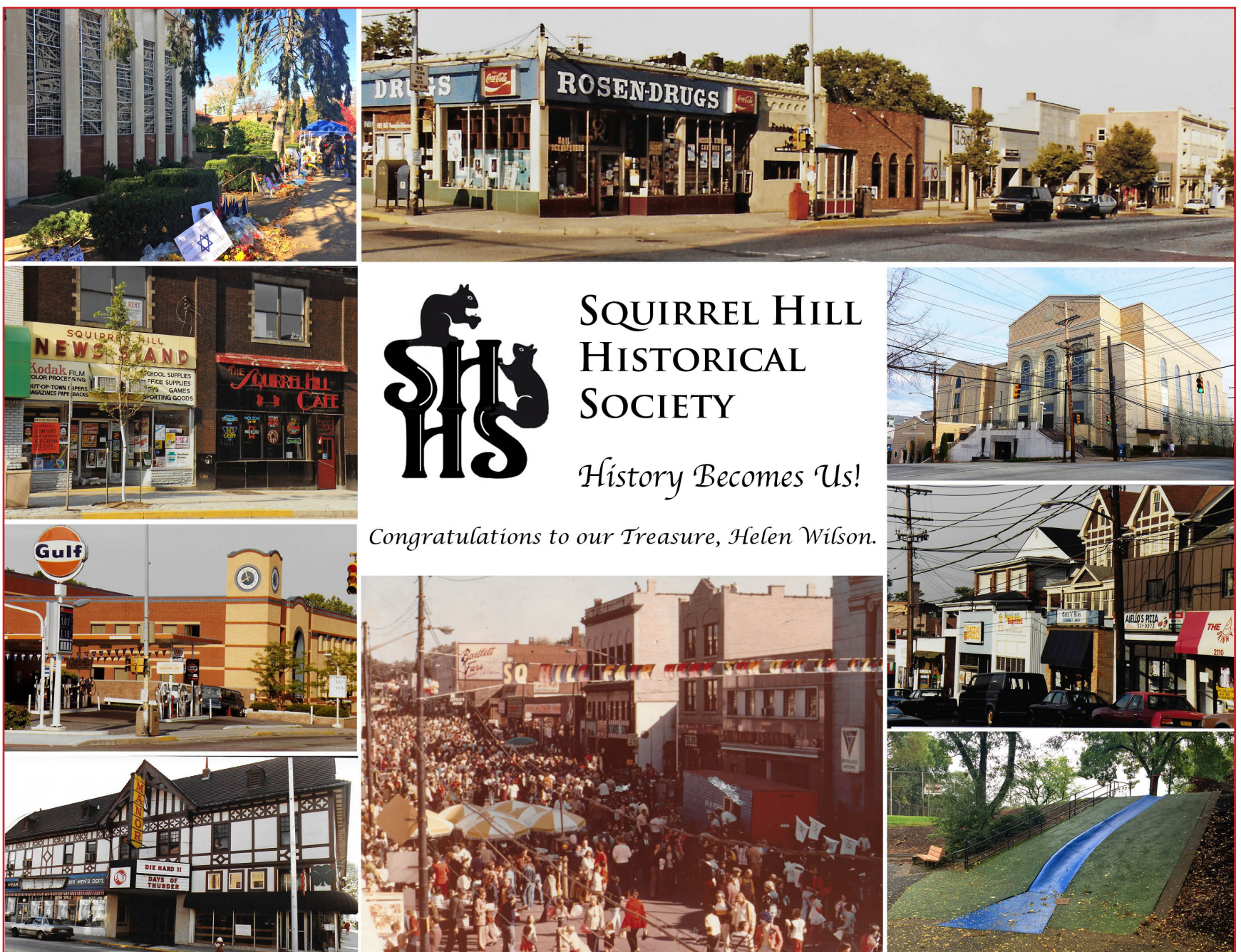
Membership Coordinator: Stanley Klein

Media Specialists: Audrey Glickman, Alex Musicante

Program Coordinators: Todd Miller and Toby Chapman

Additional Board Members:

Eveline Young, Charles Succop and Todd Wilson



Congratulations to our Treasure, Helen Wilson.

The SHHS's Wish List

The SHHS is looking for original photos and documents that relate to Squirrel Hill's history—any era. Here is our wish list. Contact us at sqhillhist@shhsoc.org if you have any to offer. We'll scan them and return the originals to you.

We are looking for

Original photos that show the neighborhood. We don't need photos that have been published previously and/or are already online.

Copies of the *Squirrel Hill News* newspapers that are not in our collection—mostly prior to 1936 and after 1969. (You can check what we have on the link to the newspapers on our website.)

Copies of the *Squirrel Hill Gazette* and *Pittsburgh East*. We have very few of either. We don't need copies of *The Forward*, *Allderdice's* newspaper.

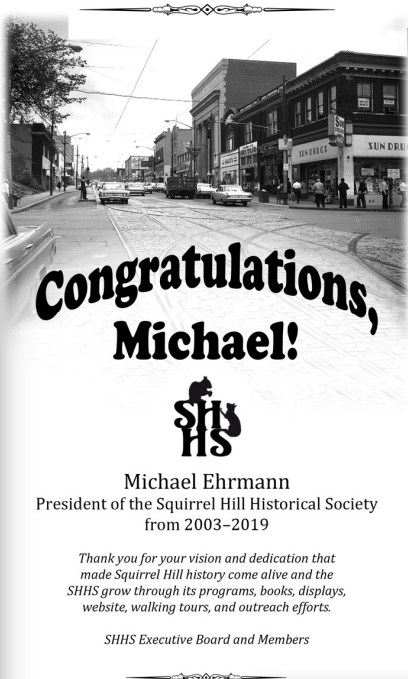
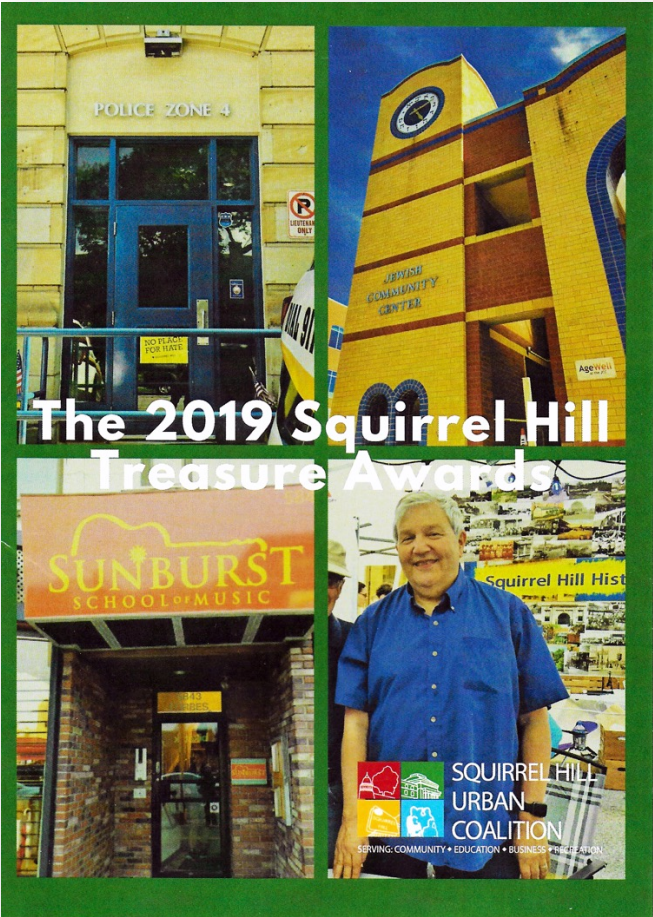
Postcards, letters, booklets, and other documents that are not already online or in our archives.



Squirrel Hill Treasures

The Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition (SHUC) has honored two SHHS members and the Neill Log House as Squirrel Hill Treasures.

SHHS President Michael Ehrmann, Squirrel Hill Treasure 2019. City Council declared Tuesday, May 14, 2019, to be “Michael Ehrmann Day.”



SHHS Vice-President Helen Wilson was named a Squirrel Hill Treasure in 2023.



The Neill Log House, a joint SHHS and SHUC project, was named a Squirrel Hill Treasure in 2024.



Where Do Your Membership Dues and Donations Go?

First of all, thank you for your support! The SHHS relies on dues and donations to run the society. All of the officers and board members are volunteers and are not paid for what they do. The only paid staff member we have is our website manager.

Your dues and donations are used for

- Rental of the church hall and insurance;
- Purchase of copies of our books from the publisher to and give to speakers at our programs and events;
- Rental for our Post Office Box;
- Cost for printing and mailing the SHHS Newsletters to members without emails;
- Cost for printing SHHS flyers, posters, documents, and displays at the Squirrel Hill branch of Carnegie Library;
- Annual fee for membership in the Heinz History Center's Affiliates Program, a group of over 100 historical societies and preservation organizations;
- Cost for digital services such as website maintenance, Zoom, and Google Drive.
- Other incidental expenses.

SHHS Board Members with speaker Dr. Stacy Wentworth in 2023.

