

**Click here to return to 2026 Newsletters**



# Newsletter

January 2026

## 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 monthly programs on topics of interest primarily focused on Squirrel Hill and Pittsburgh history. Monthly programs are held in Levinson Hall at the Jewish Community Center, 5738 Forbes Ave. A Zoom option is 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. SHHS derives no financial benefit from any business included in our publications or programs.*



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.

# Happy New Year!

## New Year's Resolution: Renew Your SHHS Membership!

Our 2026 Membership Drive continues until February! SHHS memberships run from January 1 to December 31. You can renew online through the SHHS website, by mail, and at our programs. Membership is still only \$15/single or \$25/couple. Details and a renewal form are on the last page of this newsletter. Aren't sure if you've renewed? Names of those paid for 2026 are listed on the password-protected Members Page of the SHHS website.

## President's Message

Dear SHHS Members:

Happy New Year! Welcome to the January 2026 Newsletter!

From now on, the SHHS will be holding its monthly programs at our new location in Levinson Hall at the Jewish Community Center, 5738 Forbes Avenue, near its intersection with Murray Avenue. We think you will like the seating arrangement, large viewing screen, and superior audio system. Another great feature will be that the JCC will set up and take down the table and chairs for the program.

Everyone is welcome to come to our free monthly programs, and you do not have to be a member of JCC to attend them. See page 2 for information about entering the JCC. Plus, you still have the option to watch the programs on Zoom. Program announcements with information about the program and the zoom link are sent automatically a few days before the program to members of SHHS. Anyone else can request the link by contacting us at [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org).

People find their way to Squirrel Hill to be part of the best place to live in Pittsburgh and to experience the vibrant cosmopolitan population, shopping, and dining at its many shops and restaurants. Squirrel Hill has the oldest continuously operating neighborhood theater—the Manor—opening in 1922. It also has superb schools, among them Pittsburgh Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh Colfax K-8 and Pittsburgh Minadeo PreK-5, Community Day PreK-8, Hillel Academy, and Carnegie Mellon and Chatham Universities. It also has great parks such as Frick, Schenley, Wightman, and Shelburne, with Mellon Park just across Shady Avenue in Point Breeze, as well as many smaller parks and playgrounds. Historic sites in the neighborhood include the Neill Log House and Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens. Squirrel Hill also has many sports venues, including the Bob O'Connor Golf Course, Schenley Park Sportsplex, pickleball and tennis courts, the, an ice-skating rink, and a swimming pool. The famous Pittsburgh

## 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, Alex Musicante, 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 Treasurer: Rod Permigiani Media Specialists: Audrey Glickman, Alex Musicante 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.

Vintage Grand Prix and Pittsburgh Marathon run through Squirrel Hill. There's still more, but that gives you a flavor of the neighborhood.

The Squirrel Hill Historical Society (SHHS), established in 2000, is committed to gathering, preserving and celebrating the history and memories of Squirrel Hill. It is the best place to hear and learn about Squirrel Hill through our monthly programs and newsletters.

Squirrel Hill Historical Society membership is only \$15 single/\$25 couple for the entire year. The cost of membership is really a great bargain with all it offers. We want to thank all our members who have renewed and the new members who have joined. Spread the word about SHHS, as we are looking for new members to help SHHS transition to the next generation of members.

Please visit the SHHS website, [squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org), to see all the links to Squirrel Hill history, past program videos, photo archives, historical research, plus a lot more.

The SHHS Board thanks all our loyal members. We hope to have many new members join the SHHS family to experience the fellowship, history, and programs available through SHHS.

Jim Hammond, President, SHHS

## Important Information about Our Move to the JCC in January

**Starting in January 2026, SHHS programs will be held in Levinson Hall at the JCC.** Program time will remain the same at 7:30. The SHHS board decided to make the change because they felt we were outgrowing the space at Church of the Redeemer. Since the JCC will set up and take down the chairs, and the room has built-in audiovisual equipment, attending the program will be an easier experience for all. While Church of the Redeemer has been a tremendous partner for us for many years, Levinson Hall can better accommodate our growing audience.

**You do not need to be a member of the JCC—or of the SHHS—to attend our programs there.** The venue is open to all. To gain access (member or not), enter the facility from either the entrance on Darlington Rd. or via the parking garage entrance on Forbes Ave.

**IF ENTERING THE JCC FROM DARLINGTON ROAD:** After you pass through the first set of doors, ring the bell/buzzer, and security will buzz you in. Let them know who you are and that you are there to attend the SHHS program in Levinson Hall. After satisfying any security requirements or concerns, they will direct you to Levinson Hall.

**IF ENTERING THE JCC FROM FORBES AVENUE:** You can enter only through the parking garage. After you pass through the first set of doors, ring the bell/buzzer, and security will buzz you in. Let them know who you are and that you are there to attend the SHHS program. After satisfying any security requirements or concerns, they will direct you to make a left and either take the stairs up one level or the elevator to the second floor, which is the main floor of the JCC. At the top of the stairs or outside the elevator on “2,” you will make a left, and the entrance to Levinson Hall will be down the main corridor 75 feet on your left.

**PARKING:** The JCC has a parking garage below it. The entrance is on Forbes Avenue side. The lot is run by the City of Pittsburgh Parking Authority, so you'll need to pay \$1.50 per hour for parking there. However, and likely more convenient for most, on-street parking is always free on Darlington Road, and free on Forbes and Murray Avenues after 6 p.m.

**We will continue to offer the Zoom option to those who can't attend in person.**

This move gives us the exciting opportunity to a more easily accessible location in the heart of Squirrel Hill and hopefully allow us to further expand our beloved SHHS through greater visibility to the public!

Our program scheduler Todd Miller, with assistance from Toby Chapman, has already booked almost all our speakers for 2026. It's a great lineup! Check out the program schedule on pages 3-4.



# **Click here to return to 2026 Newsletters**

## **Editor's Note: "New Year's Resolutions"**

January 2026

Helen Wilson

December was a season of opposites for me. The weather was balmy at times and frightfully wintry at other times. I huddled in my warm house but braved the cold to venture out to shop and party. Being with people I hadn't seen for a year or even more who were tied in with past parts of my life reopened old memories while creating new ones. And while going through "stuff" in my attic, I found a photo album of family pictures from two decades ago. Inhabiting the pictures were people who have passed on, children who are grown, and relatives I've lost touch with.

What I found intriguing about finding the album is that memories were triggered by seeing images. Without them, we live in the present without reference to the past, even though the past has made us what we are today. It is vital not to forget the past!

So my New Year's Resolution for the SHHS is to continue to discover and write about Squirrel Hill's history. The ***Squirrel Hill Street Names*** project is in progress (writing about 212 streets and bridges is a lot of work!), and we're also planning to work with another CMU intern this summer about an out-of-print book about Squirrel Hill's early years that needs to be annotated and reissued—***Right Here in Squirrel Hill***. In addition, the SHHS has hired someone to help with putting another 100 or so photos and documents that we have in our archives on the University of Pittsburgh's Historic Pittsburgh website, [historicpittsburgh.org](http://historicpittsburgh.org). Plus, I'll continue to write articles for the *Squirrel Hill Magazine*.

As the SHHS enters its 26th year, we look at how far we've come and what we can accomplish in the future. I've witnessed the transition of the SHHS board from its original members to new ones just coming aboard. I welcome the change. To keep the SHHS going requires the vision and energy of younger people. The evolution is ongoing as we remember and cherish the past while moving into the future. Photos and documents allow us to do that.

You can help! Contact us if you have photos or stories to add to our archives or if you would like to help with our projects.

## **2026 Calendars Discounted to \$20!**

We have a limited number of 2026 "Squirrel Hill—Then and Now" calendars left, and they'll be better off in your home than stored away in a box. When a friend looked at the January page in the calendar on my wall, she said, "Wow! I didn't know the Commercial St. Bridge was actually two bridges! I learned something!" Each page offers bits of Squirrel Hill history worth knowing. If you don't have a calendar, buy one at our January program or purchase one online!



## **Upcoming SHHS Programs and Events (Live and on Zoom)**

**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. Members will be sent a link to the Zoom program a few days before the program. Nonmembers may request the link by contacting the SHHS at [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org). 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, [squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org).

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** As of January 2026, our monthly programs will be held in Levinson Hall at the Jewish Community Center (JCC). Although the Church of the Redeemer's parking lot will no longer be available to us, plenty of free on-street parking can be found on Forbes and Murray Avenues and on Darlington Road, and there is paid parking in the lots under the JCC and Carnegie Library. We look forward to continuing our tradition of exploring local history in a modern space designed for community gatherings.

### **Tuesday, January 13: "A History of the JCC"**

To launch our programs in our new meeting location, we'll welcome **Jason Kunzman**, President & CEO of the Jewish Community Center (JCC) of Greater Pittsburgh; **Melissa Hiller**, the JCC's Community Engagement and Development Officer; and **Eric Lidji**, Director of the Rauh Jewish Archives at the Senator John Heinz History Center. Together, they'll trace the JCC's history from its beginnings in the Hill District and its years in Oakland to its establishment as a cornerstone of the Squirrel Hill community today. (Note: This is a regular SHHS program, not a JCC event.)



**Tuesday, February 10: "From Roots to Results: The Story and Ongoing Work of SHUC"**

**Maria Cohen**, Executive Director of the Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition (SHUC), will discuss the organization's founding, mission, and lasting impact on neighborhood life. Her talk will highlight community partnerships, planning successes, and SHUC's continuing efforts to enhance Squirrel Hill's vitality.

**Tuesday, March 10: "One Wild Place: The Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow"**

**Dr. Jeremy Goodman**, President & CEO of the Pittsburgh Zoo & Aquarium, will trace the zoo's fascinating history, its growth and transformation over time, and the initiatives now guiding its future.

**Tuesday, April 14: Mary Murrin**, Executive Director, Rivers of Steel, will talk about the history of Carrie Furnaces and the purpose of the Rivers of Steel organization.

**Tuesday, May 12: "The Swisshelm Park Solar Array"**

**Lilly Freedman**, Senior Manager of Development Projects at Urban Redevelopment Authority of Pittsburgh will describe the purpose and progress of the Swisshelm Park solar array planned for the brownfield above Nine Mile Run.

**Tuesday, June 9: "Squirrel Hill's Fourth of July Celebrations Through the Years"**

**Helen Wilson**, SHHS Vice President, will talk about Squirrel Hill's extravagant Fourth of July celebrations, mainly held in Schenley Park in its early years.

**Tuesday, July 14: "The Histories of Congregation Rodef Shalom & Temple Sinai"**

**Eric S. Lidji**, Director of the Rauh Jewish History Program & Archives at the Senator John Heinz History Center, will discuss the histories of Congregation Rodef Shalom and Temple Sinai.

**August: No program.** Enjoy your summer vacation!

**September 8: "Beyond Rust - Pittsburgh Brownfields and Renewal"**

Professional geologist **Rick Wice** works as a consultant for the characterization and cleanup of hazardous waste, former industrial sites, and military bases. He is an instructor at Carnegie Mellon University, where he teaches a graduate level course, Remediation Engineering. Rick is on the Board of Directors of the Pittsburgh Geological Society, where he is the outreach chair. He lives in Sq. Hill, rides his bike along our Three River Trails, kayaks in the local rivers, and is excited to have joined SHHS. In this presentation the concept of brownfields (reused industrial sites) will be introduced and why their clean up and reuse is important to our economic, social, and environmental well being. Examples of local sites in and around Sq. Hill that went from rust to reuse will be presented, along with some of the ways we clean up sites.

**Tues, Oct. 13: "Superstitions and Occult Practices of 18th-Century Irish Presbyterians in the Ohio Valley"**

**Peter Gilmore**, Historian, Author & Lecturer at Carlow University, Carnegie Mellon University, and University of Pittsburgh, will discuss the superstitions and occult beliefs held by Irish Presbyterians in the Ohio Valley.

**Tuesday, November 10: "The History & Mission of the Arnold Palmer Learning Center"**

**Eric Amato**, President & CEO, First Tee of Pittsburgh, will talk about the history and purpose of First Tee of Pittsburgh and the state-of-the-art clubhouse at the Bob O'Connor Golf Course at Schenley Park.

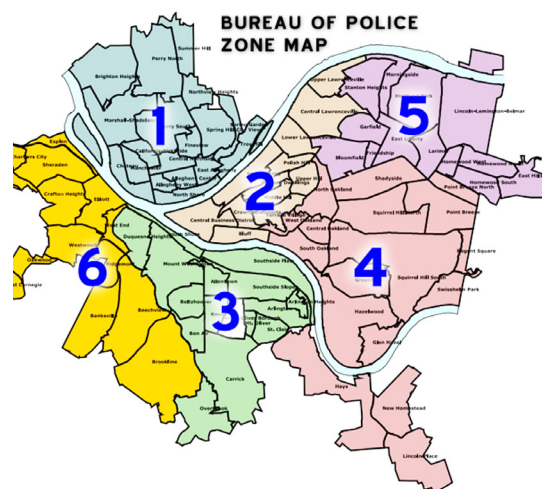
**Tuesday, December 8: To be announced**

**Jan. 15 Zone 4 Public Safety Meeting Announced in SHUC's "In a Nutshell" Enewsletter**

Do you want to stay informed about meetings and events taking place in Squirrel Hill? Sign up for the monthly Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition (SHUC) enewsletter, "In a Nutshell" by contacting SHUC at shuc.org. And make plans to attend the Zone 4 Public Safety Meeting at the JCC on January 15. Here is the announcement:

**Zone 4 Public Safety Meeting, Thursday, January 15, 6:30 p.m., Jewish Community Center** (Please use the entrance on Darlington Road)

**Zone 4 Public Safety Meetings** are open to everyone and are a great way to meet and talk with your neighbors and your neighborhood police and businesses, finding out about the resources the City offers, and letting your public officials know your concerns and ideas. Zone 4 includes Squirrel Hill North and South, Point Breeze, Greenfield, Regent Square, Shadyside, Hazelwood, Oakland, Uptown, Lincoln Place, Glen Hazel, Swisshelm Park, and Duck Hollow. Come and let your voice be heard!





# **Click here to return to 2026 Newsletters** **January Update on the Friends of Neill Log House (FONLH):** **A New Year for FONLH**

January 2026

*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 online 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.



As we turn the page on another year, it's hard to believe that our organization was formed more than four years ago on behalf of the Neill Log House—more than five, if you count our very first efforts! This promises to be a year of historic change for us. At our last quarterly FONLH meeting in December, our board took a major step in stating its resolve about the future of The Neill Log House. We hope to share details about this soon.

In the meantime, enjoy the postcard perfect photo accompanying this update, taken during a recent snowshoe walk around the log house during the pre-Christmas snowfall. Though not intended, the perspective of the house as shown turned out to be exactly the same as the logo created for us several years ago by Natalie Stewart, daughter of Charlie Stewart, and fifth great-granddaughter of Robert Neill.

While the house itself slumbers in the snow awaiting our second year's opening this spring, we continue to be active on many fronts. We met onsite recently with our restoration specialists to consult on a wooden gutter to be installed across the front of the house because of some drain issues at its base. Other plans include the funding and installation of period fencing around the house and its garden. And enhancements to the "narrative" contained in the history on our website will be featured through contributions by several of Charlie Stewart's cousins. This will include some timelines and other information on descendents of Robert Neill and some genealogy to be contained in a new Appendix that we will preview over the next few months.



## **The Neal Family**

*Preface by Tony Indovina*

*The article below is a contribution by Stephen Neal, a sixth-great-grandson of William Neal, oldest brother of Robert Neill, who built our Log House. Stephen grew up on the 200-acre historic farm featured in this article that is now operated by his brother's family. As Stephen relates, the Neals, who all began as farmers, would eventually also become academics and physicians, and he is both. We are indebted to Stephen for all the research he has provided to us on Neal/Neill family history throughout our project. His brother Brian, Brian's wife Stacey, and their children may be the only ones yet engaged in the Neal family's very long tradition of growing grain and raising livestock.*

*William was one of three (of four brothers serving in the Revolutionary War) who came to Western Pennsylvania after the Indian Treaties encouraged settlement here. William and his brother John first traveled together to Mt. Pleasant around 1780. John later acquired his land and stayed in Mt. Pleasant after the war. William settled in Armstrong Township, Westmoreland County, and eventually acquired over 3,000 acres for his farming in both Indiana and Westmoreland Counties. It is believed*

*both men learned surveying in order to warrant land and have it patented. Both started their farming tradition that was continued for many generations by the large families each had.*

*The third brother to come west, Robert Neill, would settle on his 262-acre tract of land called Highland, four miles from Ft. Pitt, also around 1780. Stephen has related to me elsewhere that although Robert shared his brothers' desire to own land, his goals were different than theirs. He chose to support his family as a wagoneer by traveling back and forth to Philadelphia, spending time where his father still lived, and had a business in Lower Paxtang Township, near Harrisburg, where Robert would eventually inherit half his father's property.*

*When a friend and I traveled to Indiana County in November to acquire cornstalks for our Neill Log House Harvest Festival, it was fascinating to learn that the Neal family has continued their farming tradition on land that was settled before William Neal first came to the area. It has now been three generations since this historic farm outside Homer City was first acquired by the family in 1931. When I asked Brian Neal what happened to the 3,000 acres once owned by their family, he quietly explained in his own words how all the large tracts of land have been lost over the years to speculators and their lawyers. And he talked poignantly about the pressures local farmers are under to hold onto their land. The now closed power plant that can be seen in the distance from his farm is being converted to an energy storage facility, and many are understandably apprehensive about what that means to all of them in this area as the operation seeks to expand its footprint.*

*Note: As we first did in the December preview of this article on The Neal Family Farm, we are publishing another commercial copy from the "Neal Family Farm" Facebook page in the belief that supporting small farmers, especially one with such a historic legacy, is consistent with the theme of our article. And we again state that SHHS derives no financial benefit from any businesses included in our publications or programs.*

## **The Neal Family**

*Stephen Neal*

John Neal and his wife Margaret, emigrated from Ulster, Ireland, to Paxtang Township, Lancaster County (now Dauphin County). On June 8th, 1738, John purchased 208 acres in Paxtang township for fifteen pounds Ten Shillings for each hundred acres. He patented and named his property "Neal's Garden."<sup>1</sup> They had four sons and four daughters—William, Robert, John, James, Margaret, Jean, Nancy, and Eleanor.<sup>2</sup> They were proud Presbyterians and members of the Paxton Presbyterian Church, the oldest Presbyterian church building in continuous use in Pennsylvania and the second oldest in the United States.<sup>2a</sup>

Around 1766, William, John, and James each purchased land in Cumberland County (now Franklin County), Pennsylvania.<sup>4</sup> All four sons, William, John, Robert, and James, were soldiers in the Revolutionary War.<sup>3</sup> After the war, the signing of the 1778 Treaty of Fort Pitt in Pittsburgh gave some settlers a sense of security to move to Western Pennsylvania. Around 1780, William, John, and Robert each purchased land in and moved to Westmoreland County; William's land was in what would become Young Township, Indiana County; Robert's land was in what would become Schenley Park, Allegheny County; and John's land remained in what is today Mount Pleasant, Westmoreland County.<sup>5</sup>

John was a farmer and one of the founding members of Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church (now called Middle Presbyterian Church of Mount Pleasant). He was one of six men (Revs. John McMillan, James Power, and Thaddeus Dodd; Elders, John Neal, Demas Lindley, and Patrick Scott) who founded Redstone Presbytery on September 10, 1781. Redstone Presbytery originally stretched from the Allegheny Mountains to the east, as far north as Lake Erie, to the south to Virginia, and "on the west by the setting sun."<sup>6</sup>

Robert purchased his land called "Highlands" on April 9, 1781. He eventually built the Neill (Neal) Log House, which still stands in Schenley Park. He also received half his father's land in Paxtang Township. He began a wagon trade route from Philadelphia to Pittsburgh.<sup>7</sup>

William purchased nearly 3,000 acres in Armstrong and Young Township and was a successful farmer, growing grain and raising livestock. He was a founding member of Bethel Presbyterian Church, the oldest church in Indiana County, founded in 1788. William and his family are buried at Bethel Presbyterian Church, and Neal family members attend the church to this day.<sup>8</sup> His house was used as the voting place in 1792 for Armstrong Township, Westmoreland County: "First District of Westmoreland County, PA shall hold elections at the House of William Neal, Armstrong Township."<sup>9</sup> William passed away on Sept. 5, 1813, with his land being divided amongst his children. Throughout the generations, the Neal family continued to grow, with some staying in the area and continuing to farm, some becoming teachers, and some becoming physicians. One of the physicians attended school in Vienna around the same time as Sigmund Freud and eventually became a missionary. He helped to start a medical school and hospital in Aintab, Turkey.<sup>9a</sup> Another physician in the Neal family opened the first Hospital in Indiana County, PA, in 1904.<sup>9b</sup> Whether farmers, teachers, or physicians, the Neal family continued to grow and be an integral part of Indiana County.





"Barn on Neal Farm" -- Neal Family Farm, RD Homer City, Established 1931. Photo by Stephen Neal.

Throughout the years, the land continued to be divided amongst descendants, including Quinn Oaks Neal and his wife, Mary.<sup>10</sup> Quinn and Mary were successful farmers, growing grain and raising livestock. Quinn's brother, Milton Neal, and his wife, Hilda, purchased farmland in 1931 in Center Township, Indiana County previously belonging to the Cummins family, who had settled in the area just before William Neal.<sup>11</sup> David Cummins and his wife Jeanette came to the area before the Revolutionary War, before the 1778 Fort Pitt Treaty, and prior to the 1784 treaty of Fort Stanwix, likely around 1770. They chose to leave the area and return to Cumberland County (now Franklin County), and then eventually go back to Virginia after scouts had been in the doorway of the house and around the house.

The story goes... "A scout looked into the door of their cabin in the dusk of the evening while she was sitting inside the door nursing her child, her husband being absent. The next morning, they found where two men had lain in the long grass near their house, but had disappeared. Taking alarm, they packed up what they could carry on horseback, buried their kitchen furniture and pewterware in the spring run, and left for a place of safety."

They lived in Virginia for several years until Mr. Cummins passed away around 1780. His death prompted the oldest boy, William, aged 17, and the next oldest, John, aged 14, to return to the home in Indiana County. They obtained some seeds from a neighbor and with the neighbor's help, raised some grain and cut some hay. They then built a house and eventually a barn. The boys then returned to Virginia and brought their mother and younger siblings back to Indiana County. The Cummins family members are also buried at Bethel Church Cemetery.<sup>12</sup> The log house was taken apart log by log in the 1990s and moved to Cambria County. The barn still stands and is used by the Neal Family Farm.

The barn is what is called a Pennsylvania Extended Bank Barn. It was built around 1780-1790. It is built with hand-hewn (by axe) beams, which are fastened and connected with wooden pegs. A bank barn is built into the side of a bank so that both the hayloft and the stables can be accessed from ground level. As the farm grew and extra stable space was necessary for livestock, an extension was built onto the stable end, creating a third level, hence a Pennsylvania extended bank barn.

Milton and Hilda Neal grew grain and raised swine, poultry, and dairy cattle. Milton passed the farm to his son Herman Neal and his wife Jean, who also grew grain and raised sheep, poultry, and dairy cattle, producing milk for Turner's Dairy in Penn Hills.

## Neal Family Farm



Homer City, PA

Call Brian Neal @ 724- 422-2293

Like us on Facebook at Neal Family Farm for updates!

**1/4 and 1/2 Freezer Beef \$3.00 per lb of hanging weight**

Once contacted with hanging weight  
**5 -7 days** to receive payment to Neal Family farm

**Butcher shop - Dixon Meats**  
5517 Parkwood Rd, Shelocta, PA 15774  
724-726-5732

Dixon's pricing:  
\$1.00 cut vacuum packed + frozen  
additional \$25.00 kill fee per 1/4

### Approximate cost estimation 1/4 cow:

230 lb hanging weight  
230 lbs X \$3.00 = \$690 (paid to Neal Family Farm)  
230 lbs X \$1.00 = \$230  
\$230 + \$25 = \$255 (Paid to Dixon Meats)  
\$690 + \$255 = \$945 total

**\*all prices are approximate and subject to change with the fluctuating market\***  
**ALL sales are final.**  
7/7/2025

"Neal Family Farm Beef Offering" -- Growing grain and raising cattle has been a Neal Family tradition in Indiana County since 1780.



Barn dating to 1780-1790 is 104 ft. long. All beams are original hand-hewn, and connected with wooden pegs -- topmost support by overlapped 54 ft, beams spliced together.



Herman passed the farm to his son Bradford Neal and his wife Mary, who also grew grain and raised dairy cattle, producing milk for Turner's Dairy. Bradford passed the farm to his son Brian Neal and his wife, Stacey, who are the current owners of Neal Family Farm. Brian is growing grain and raising beef cattle, which are sold as local farm-to-table freezer beef.

<sup>1</sup>[https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2350/images/33019\\_b078880-00065?pid=179642](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2350/images/33019_b078880-00065?pid=179642)

<sup>2</sup><https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/8802/records/1887860?tid=161467433&pid=152258463955&ssrc=pt>

<sup>2a</sup><https://paxtonchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/A-Brief-History-of-Paxton-Church-Revised-Nov-30-for-Website.pdf>

<sup>3</sup>[https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/14528/images/dvm\\_LocHist000688-00086-1?pid=163](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/14528/images/dvm_LocHist000688-00086-1?pid=163)

[https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/62200/images/62200\\_0035\\_1713?pid=687011](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/62200/images/62200_0035_1713?pid=687011)

[https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/62200/images/62200\\_0032\\_1535?pid=676300](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/62200/images/62200_0032_1535?pid=676300)

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/62200/records/687020?tid=161467433&pid=152258630433&ssrc=pt>

<sup>4</sup><https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2350/records/223329?tid=161467433&pid=152258463035&ssrc=pt>

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2409/records/95543?tid=161467433&pid=152258630337&ssrc=pt>

<sup>5</sup><https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2497/records/1750607?tid=161467433&pid=152258630433&ssrc=pt>

<https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/2497/records/1750598?tid=161467433&pid=152258463035&ssrc=pt>

[https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2350/images/33019\\_b079044-00789?pid=152331](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2350/images/33019_b079044-00789?pid=152331)

<sup>6</sup>Presbytery of Redstone - Wikipedia

<sup>7</sup>[https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2350/images/33019\\_b079044-00789?pid=152331](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/2350/images/33019_b079044-00789?pid=152331)

<https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:QPZN-PK7J>

<sup>8</sup>[https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/26763/images/dvm\\_LocHist011364-00235-1?ssrc=pt&treeid=161467433&personid=152258463035&usePUB=true&pid=460](https://www.ancestry.com/imageviewer/collections/26763/images/dvm_LocHist011364-00235-1?ssrc=pt&treeid=161467433&personid=152258463035&usePUB=true&pid=460)

<sup>9</sup>(Laws of PA. Vol 4, P 127). History of Indiana County Book.

<sup>9a</sup><https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/collection/1030/tree/161467433/person/152258660506/media/a9fe711b-0737-4177-8d54-cecf894f3256?galleryindex=1&sort=-created>

<sup>9b</sup><https://www.ancestry.com/mediaui-viewer/collection/1030/tree/161467433/person/152614375002/media/5c9b9f80-74c4-480f-921c-ee49bf96de57?galleryindex=1&sort=-created>

<sup>10</sup><https://www.ancestry.com/search/collections/6224/records/51819391?tid=161467433&pid=152258661962&ssrc=pt>

<sup>11</sup><https://indiana.pa.publicsearch.us/doc/149651118>

<sup>12</sup><https://www.familysearch.org/en/search/catalog/242324?za\>

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## **Pittsburgh's Pre-World War II Jewish Artists**

*Eric S. Lidji, Director, Rauh Jewish History Program & Archives, Senator John Heinz History Center*

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*Editor's Note: Throughout 2025, Eric Lidji has been focusing on Pittsburgh's pre-World War II Jewish artists in his weekly Rauh Jewish History Program & Archives Enewsletter. The following article is the conclusion of the series. During the year, 50 local Jewish artists were featured. To read about the artists go to <https://rauhjewisharchives.org/entry/newsletter/> To subscribe to the enewsletter, google "Rauh Jewish Archives enewsletter" and select "Sign Up" from the list of options.*

If you visited Pittsburgh at the start of the 20th century, you would have found two professional Jewish artists: Aaron Henry Gorson and E. Myer Silverberg.

By the start of the 1960s, many of the leading visual artists in the city were Jewish, including Shelly Blumenfield, Jerry Caplan, Anne Golomb, Aaronel deRoy Gruber, Jane Haskell, Lois Kaufman, Cecelia Lieberman, Anita Morganstern, Samuel Rosenberg, and Abe Weiner, among others.

What made this blossoming possible? Over those six decades, Pittsburgh developed the resources to nurture artistic careers locally. Milestones included the Carnegie Museum of Art in 1895, the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh in 1910, Carnegie Tech's Department of Painting and Illustration in 1911, and the Works Progress Administration Federal Art Project in 1935. Galleries came and went. A group of art critics including Douglas Naylor, Penelope Redd, and Jeanette Jena covered the Pittsburgh art world for local newspapers.

Starting in the mid-1930s and 1940s, the local arts community formed "guilds." These were collectives of like-minded artists who united to promote their particular corner of the art world. Sculptors broke from the Associated Artists in 1935 to found the Society of Sculptors. Potters formed the Craftsmen's Guild of Pittsburgh in 1944. A small group of painters interested in abstraction started the Abstract Group (now Group A) in 1944. Over the coming decades, numerous other visual arts guilds joined these original three.

These guilds and others representing writers, dancers, musicians, and actors formed the Arts and Crafts Center in 1945. The center was a physical home where local artists could gather for exhibits and events. The city of Pittsburgh made the Marshall mansion at Fifth and Shady available to the center.

## **[Click here to return to 2026 Newsletters](#)**

January 2026

The opening of the Arts and Crafts Center marked the end of the first chapter in local art history. The arts community now had the resources to approach self-sufficiency, leading to a flourishing of the local art world in the 1950s.

The Jewish community took part in building this infrastructure. It created the Irene Kaufmann Settlement Neighborhood Art School in 1917 and the Y Art Department in 1926. These two programs provided a basic art education to children and connected the most talented students to more advanced educational opportunities. The most important figure in this effort was Samuel Rosenberg. He helped launch both programs. Through his long tenure at the Carnegie Institute of Technology and his leadership within the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh, he created a direct connection between the world of Jewish-sponsored arts education and the larger world of fine art in the city.

Even so, the limited art market in Pittsburgh proved challenging.

To make a living as an artist in Pittsburgh generally meant finding an alternate source of income. Carnegie Tech only had a few available teaching posts. It took a while for other teaching positions to emerge at the University of Pittsburgh, Chatham University, the Art Institute of Pittsburgh, the Ivy School of Professional Art, and various high schools and colleges outside of the city. And so Jewish artists such as William Shulgold, William Wolfson, and Esther Phillips all left Pittsburgh, hoping to find better opportunities in bigger cities.

We're thankful to everyone who followed this yearlong review of Jewish artists in Pittsburgh before World War II. We hope to continue the story in the future.



"Untitled," by Esther Phillips, c. 1930. Gift of Sibyl Barsky Grucci [2008.1.5]

As part of our yearlong initiative to highlight Jewish artists in Pittsburgh, we've created a new entry for "Artists" on the Jewish Encyclopedia of Western Pennsylvania. The entry includes links to profiles of 26 local Jewish artists, including the artists profiled in the Enewsletter so far this year, as well as several artists who have collections at the Rauh Jewish Archives. We will continue to update and expand this entry in the weeks and months to come.

In 2025, the Rauh Jewish Archives highlighted stories of Jewish artists in Western Pennsylvania before World War II. If you would like to donate a material from this time period, or any historic materials documenting Jewish life in this region, contact the archive or call 412-454-6406.

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*If you haven't subscribed to the Rauh Jewish History Program & Archives Enewsletter yet, you are missing out on an incredible source of Jewish history in Pittsburgh. The following announcement was in the first enewsletter of 2026. To subscribe to the enewsletter, google "Rauh Jewish Archives enewsletter" and select "Sign Up" from the list of options.*

### **Announcement**

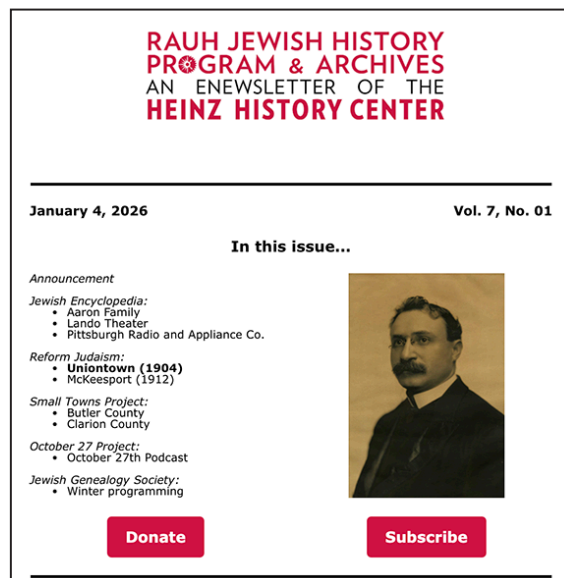
#### **We're unveiling a new format for our weekly email newsletter!**

Each year for the past six years, we've featured a yearlong review of a specific subject: Cookbooks (2020), Clubs (2021), Memoirs (2022), Restaurants (2023), the Early 1970s (2024), and Jewish Artists before 1945 (2025).

The new format will present a wider array of stories from the Rauh Jewish Archive. Each issue will feature profiles of people and families, organizations, and objects, as well as our popular miniseries on different historical topics. We're especially excited to share stories from the hundreds of new and expanded collections that have been given to the archive in the past decade.

The new format will also provide more frequent updates on our Small Town Jewish History Project and our October 27 Project, as well as information on upcoming programming hosted by the Rauh Jewish Archives and others.

Please let us know what you think of this new format. If you like it, consider forwarding the newsletter to a friend and encouraging them to subscribe.





## SHHS MEMBERSHIP FORM

The Squirrel Hill Historical Society membership year runs from January 1 to December 31. Dues can be paid at SHHS programs, by mail to SHHS, PO Box 8157, Pittsburgh, PA 15217, or through PayPal or credit card on the SHHS website. Go to [squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org) and click on the link HOW TO JOIN/DONATE in the main menu.

SHHS members receive monthly newsletters. Only members receive them. If you provide your email address on this form, we will send the newsletters via email, which saves the SHHS copying and postage costs. NOTE: We email newsletters to the email addresses provided on the membership forms. If two or more members live at the same address and would each like to receive a copy of the newsletter, please include all email addresses on the membership form. If you do not provide your email and you let us know you would prefer a hard copy, we will mail the newsletters to you.

Past newsletters are archived under the password-protected MEMBERS PAGE link on the SHHS website. The password is changed each year and the new password will be emailed to members in late February and to new members when they join. If you are a member but have forgotten the password, email the SHHS at [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org) and you will be sent the password. Put "Requesting Members Page Access" in the memo line.

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If paying by mail, detach this part of the form and mail it with your check to SHHS, PO Box 8157, Pittsburgh, PA 15217. Make your check payable to SHHS. Thank you for your support.

Annual Dues: \$15 individual \_\_\_\_ \$25 couple \_\_\_\_ Check No. \_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address(es) Please print clearly: First email: \_\_\_\_\_

If couple, Second email: \_\_\_\_\_

Check one: Renewal \_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_

Additional donation: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

For more information or questions, contact us at our website, [squirrelhillhistory.org](http://squirrelhillhistory.org), or email us at [sqhillhist@shhsoc.org](mailto:sqhillhist@shhsoc.org).

*The SHHS is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations, including dues, are tax deductible for federal income taxes.*