

# Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation

NEWS FOR MEMBERS - NUMBER FOURTEEN  
AUGUST 1969

## NOMINEES FOR DIRECTORS

The nominating committee under the chairmanship of J. Judson Brooks has presented the following nominations to be elected at the forthcoming annual meeting. Names marked with a star are candidates for re-election. Mr. Brooks welcomes further written nominations for directorships prior to the annual meeting, the date for which will be announced within the next few weeks.

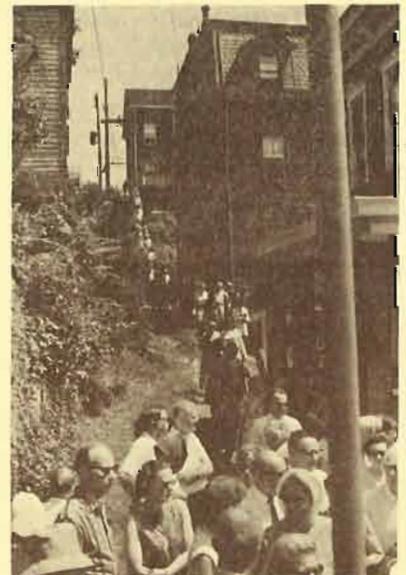
- \* Charles Covert Arensberg
- \* Stanton Belfour
- Mrs. Kenneth S. Boesel
- \* Theodore Bowman
- Henry Chalfant
- Mrs. George L. Craig, Jr.
- Mrs. Robert B. Dickey
- \* Mrs. Robert E. Fulton
- \* Samuel Golden
- \* Mrs. Henry P. Hoffstot, Jr.
- Mrs. B. F. Jones, III
- Oliver M. Kaufmann

- \*Julian Miller
- Henry Oliver, Jr.
- Mrs. John C. Oliver, Jr.
- \*William R. Oliver
- Mrs. Bitner Pearson
- \*Mrs. Cleveland D. Rea
- Mrs. William O. Robinson
- S. Murray Rust, Jr.
- \*Edward E. Smuts
- \*Charles M. Stotz
- \*James D. Van Trump

## SUNDAY AFTERNOON WALKING TOUR NORTH SIDE CULTURAL ELL 14 September 1969

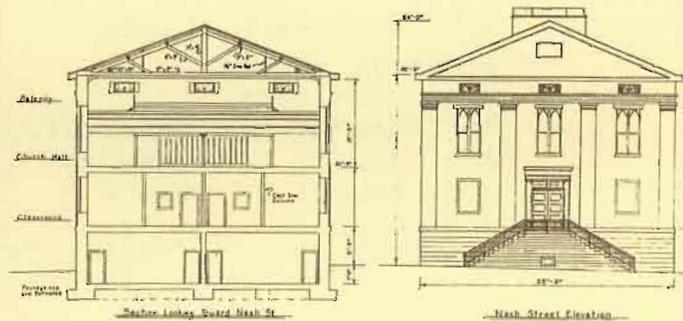
We will walk through the area that we have been promoting in our Museum campaign including the new Allegheny Public Square, the Post Office, the Aviary, the Allegheny Commons, and then we will view the restoration work that took place this summer in the Mexican War Street area. No charge. Meet at the North Side Post Office at 2:00 p.m. and adjourn by 4:00 p.m. Call the office to make your reservations, 281-6207.

On the bright summer Sunday afternoon of 13 July 100 members joined by about 75 residents took a walking tour along the ancient flagstone side-walks and hillside stairways of Troy Hill. After unveiling one of our historic landmark plaques on the Shrine of Saint Anthony's we toured that phenomenal building with its incredible collection of relics. Mrs. Wohleber, a lifetime resident of Troy Hill and a member, served as guide with Mr. Van Trump and she proved to be a rich source of information. The ladies of the Church of the Most Holy Name of Jesus baked delicious German pastries and some of the boys from the church entertained us with German songs.



Work is now well underway on our North Side Expressway documentation project. Under a grant of \$45,540 from the Federal Bureau of Roads and the Pennsylvania Department of Highways we initiated the work by employing Ellis Schmidlapp, an architectural student at Carnegie-Mellon University, to produce measured drawings of the most important structures in the Dutchtown district.

INTERSTATE 79 PROJECT Charles Shane of our staff has also been photographing both interiors and exteriors, and Mr. Van Trump has been exploring the area in detail to aid his library research. Shown in photo one are some of the persons interested in Avery Institute, a doomed building (See LAAC, p. 145) that was important as a Negro College at one time. Included are Rev. Elijah Pettus, Albert Saunders, John Knox, and Samuel Golden. Mr. Golden is president of the Western Pennsylvania Research & Historical Society and a member of our board. In photo two our summer students, Ellis Schmidlapp and Cleveland D. Rea, Jr. measure the doorway of Avery. Photo three shows Mr. Schmidlapp's measured drawing of the facade of Avery.



#### BOOK REVIEW

The Inland Island by Josephine W. Johnson  
New York, Simon and Shuster, 1969. \$5.00

Josephine Johnson is a writer of fine prose, a poet, a lover of the land, the American land. This book, essentially a calendar of a year in the life of her "inland island", her farm in Ohio, displays her clear observation of the natural world and her passionate concern with the increasingly ravaged terrain of America.

Anyone who is interested in architectural preservation will neglect, only at his total peril, the land from which our buildings rise.

This book is the land's champion. It is more than a "nature" book; she who wrote it has been compared to Thoreau, but she is also facing up to problems that were only faintly visible in Thoreau's day.

The American land is for the author--"the alderliest, the most beloved, that which has held the longest possession of the heart". If the land is still to hold the heart we must take action. If the land is wounded mortally so are we. This book must be read. -- J.D.V.T.

The response to our volunteer program has been very gratifying. Co-chairmen Mrs. Oscar Shefler and Mrs. Nathaniel Silon have organized the men and women who have indicated that they would like to help us and a number of VOLUNTEERS are already at work carrying out research, cataloguing artifacts, filing and typing, and chauffeuring Mr. Van Trump when he goes to look at artifacts and conduct interviews. We are now trying to initiate an accessions catalogue for all of our artifacts and we are very grateful to Mrs. Elizabeth Hood at the Fort Pitt Museum for organizing this project for us.

The Pittsburgh Junior League recently announced that its Allegheny Adventures project has ended. Three years ago, as its first project in cooperation with our organization, the League gave the Pittsburgh Board of Education a commitment that the League would visit each of the eighty-nine elementary city schools twice within a three-year period to lecture on Pittsburgh history to fifth grade students in those schools. ALLEGHENY ADVENTURES approximately 10,900 students heard the lecture in addition to students in various private schools, Girl Scout troops, and other interested groups. The League now plans to put the lecture on tape with the help of the Board of Education. Tapes of the lecture will also be presented to the Fort Pitt Museum, the Allegheny County schools, and the Pennsylvania Room at the Carnegie Library.

Aunt Bertha's lace curtain for the front door, Grandma's paisley shawl neatly folded, wrapped and pinned, a wedding gown so lovingly cared for for almost 100 years, that as it rests on its hanger one can almost see the radiant young bride going to meet her groom. There is a World War I MUSEUM uniform proudly kept by a mother, wife and brought to us by a daughter. DONATIONS Tintypes, hat pins to hold the hugh velvet hats laced with ostrich plumes.--Things of a forgotten era? How many times were all of the items that have come to us been unpacked, inspected, and carefully put back in their resting place by the hands of each new generation?--Never really forgotten--just waiting. Of such treasures museums are made, our Museum of Pittsburgh! What memory can you bring to us?

#### NOTEPAPER PRINTED

We have now printed special notepaper that is available to members. Each box contains 12 folded sheets with envelopes and there are three each of four charming water color scenes of early Pittsburgh. These include the Point in 1818, a steamboat, a steelmill, and the contemporary Point viewed from Mount Washington with an incline car in the foreground. All are printed in full color and are available in plastic top boxes for your personal use and as gifts at a cost of \$1.86 including tax and postage.

Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation  
900 Benedum-Trees Building  
Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15222

Please send me \_\_\_\_\_ boxes of notepaper @ \_\_\_\_\_ including tax. My check is enclosed.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please contact me about selling PHLF notepaper to organizations that I hold membership in.

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## PENN THEATER INTO SYMPHONY HALL?

We continue to be concerned about the ultimate disposition of the Penn Theater at Penn Avenue and Wood Street. Everytime that we pass its marble and bronze box-office pavilion on Sixth Avenue, we think of the bustling and now vanished glory of its moving picture palace past and what the building could be once again if only a sensitive and necessary restoration of its still valid structure could be arranged in this part of the downtown area which has become so dull and lusterless.

Opened in September 1927, the Penn was the largest and most ebullient local example of the moving picture palace, a building type very eminently and gorgeously representative of the glittering decade of the 1920's. As a youth we were impressed with its full-blown Baroque splendors and its brocaded opulence, its cinematic elegance, its full-blooded architectural eloquence. Attending a movie performance there was a rich, dramatic ritual, a theatrical experience that packed a punch! We feel that in the new context of symphony going the splendid old building could still be extremely useful and just as dramatic.

As the movie-going experience--once a thrilling social occasion--was reduced to the dull and tepid ambience of the family living room, the Penn failed and in 1964 it closed its doors as a theater.

For awhile we were fearful that the great building, now empty and yet echoing with its past glories, might share the fate of so many other dis-used structures of its time, but in 1967 the Heinz Foundation bought it--ostensibly to hold it "in reserve" as a symphony hall, pending a final decision on the projected Art Center in the Upper Hill.

The Old Penn Theater is a large and handsome building, a Pittsburgh landmark; it is conveniently situated close to public transportation routes and ample parking lots; its musical acoustics are reported to be good; the area around the theater very much needs a shot in the arm. Recently both St. Louis and Youngstown, Ohio very handsomely converted great moving picture palaces into symphony halls. Why shouldn't we follow suit? J.D.V.T.

PITTSBURGH HISTORY &  
LANDMARKS FOUNDATION  
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