



# THE SOUTH PARK HISTORIAN

A PUBLICATION OF THE SOUTH PARK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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March 2023

## Exciting Programs Scheduled

### **March 28, 2023 – “Pittsburgh’s Old Stone Tavern” with Norene Beatty.**

The history of Pittsburgh’s oldest commercial building, the Old Stone Tavern, will be presented by Norene Beatty. The building initially operated as a tavern and inn. It served travelers and was a tavern where the Whiskey Rebellion conspirators once hatched their plans.

### **April 18, 2023 – “The Mt. Washington Transit Tunnel Disaster” with Mary Jane Hirt.**

One of Pittsburgh’s worst transit disasters happened on Christmas Eve in 1917. Ms. Hirt will tell of the disaster and the aftermath.

### **May 16, 2023 – “Unsolved Murder in Snowden Village” with Karen Lehr.**

The 1928 unsolved murder mystery in the village of Snowden, a section of South Park, is explored by Karen Lehr. The murder of a coal miner’s wife has never been solved. Ms. Lehr’s extensive research includes photographs, the coroner’s report, and statements from neighbors to answer the motive and other questions regarding the mystery.

### **June 20, 2023 – “Discovering a Family History: From the Famous and Heroic to the Infamous and Notorious” with Carleton Young.**

Researching his family history, Mr. Young discovered he was related to many famous people in American history. He also found that along with the famous and heroic, there were family connections to a few infamous rogues and murderers as well.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE REGARDING THE MARCH MEETING

Due to a scheduled event at Library Fire Hall, our membership meeting will be held on Tuesday, **March 28th** at 7:00 pm in the Library Fire Hall, 6581 Library Road, South Park, PA 15129.

## Handel House Mystery

Leonard Marraccini presented the much-anticipated program on the history of the Handel House History at the Society’s November 2022 meeting. In his talk, Len gave a detailed early history of the house that dated back to the original Kiddoo family and concluded with the most recent owners. The house once served as a stop for early settlers traveling from Brownsville to Pittsburgh, later a home and office for the justice of the peace, Herman Handel, his son, George, and later grandson, Cliff Handel. It also served as a polling place.



In recent years, the house was rumored to be haunted. Len and the Hauntings Research paranormal team investigated the home for any activity. Their results were very interesting.

The research and photos collected by Len enhanced his presentation, which was appreciated by the members and guests, who thoroughly enjoyed his outstanding presentation.

## Celebrating the Christmas Season

The Historical Society held its annual Christmas party on Tuesday, December 13, at the Library Fire Hall. Many members and their guests enjoyed the party, which was a huge success.

The Master of Ceremonies, Cheryl McKee, welcomed everyone with introductions and announcements.

A special recognition was given to Ed Almasy, a longtime member of the Society, for his contributions and years of tireless work as Museum Building Chairman.

Cyd West Comfort Catering prepared a delicious buffet. The outstanding entertainment for the evening was presented by Jim Felix, "Sounds of Elvis." His lively performance included participation by the attendees with great songs and moves of Elvis, which was enjoyed by all.

Thank you to Ruth McKee and her committee for another great Christmas party and to Cheryl McKee, the outstanding Master of Ceremonies. Thank you to the Library Volunteer Fire Department, Debbie Dongilli, Lisa Manion, and Jordyn Manion for the gift raffles.



*(l-r) Joy Marquis, Ed Almasy, Jean Brodt,  
Ruth McKee, Cheryl McKee*

### **A Friendly Reminder Membership Renewals Are Due**

Our membership chairman, Marilyn Moore, reminds us that membership renewals are due. To renew your membership, please use the form on the last page of this newsletter. If your information hasn't changed, you may send a check to South Park Historical Society, Attn: Membership, P.O. Box 555, South Park, PA, 15129.

## **Society Yard Sale in May**

Planning to clean out items in your home? We have just the place for them.

The Society is accepting donations of tools, decorations, and any household items in clean, reusable condition.

They can be brought to the Museum at 6425 Pleasant St., South Park (corner of the Port Authority Park and Ride) on Wednesday, May 10, 4:00-7:00 pm or Saturday, May 13, 12:00 noon-2:00 pm.

The Yard Sale dates are Friday, May 19, and Saturday, May 20, 8:00 am – 2:00 pm at the museum.

Your support and donations are greatly appreciated.

## **Join Us At The Museum**

The community is invited to bring family and friends to see the displays of coal mining, railroads, schools, veterans, county fairs, sports, and much more at the museum.

The museum is open on the second and fourth Saturday of each month, from 12:00 noon to 2:00 pm, except for holidays. It is located at 6425 Pleasant Street, South Park, at the corner of the Port Authority Park and Ride parking lot.

## **Discovering Local History**

The South Park Historical Society has published two books about the history of our community: "Historic Snowden Township (South Park Township)" and "History of Allegheny County's South Park: Farm Lands to Park Lands." The books are \$20 each (tax included) and can be shipped anywhere in the United States for an additional \$3.25. You can also purchase a copy at the South Park Township Library or by contacting Ruth at 412-835-9529 or jimru@verizon.net.

# ARCHIVED HISTORY

The Pittsburgh Press  
November 9, 1956

## **Snowden Hunts “City Hall” Site**

“Snowden Township will have to start looking for a new site for its proposed municipal building. The township has asked for a tract of land in Sleepy Hollow Road, South Park, but Allegheny County commissioners, acting on the recommendation of Parks Director George B. McDonough, today turned down the request.”

“Director McDonough told the commissioners that the Sleepy Hollow Road area is one of the most beautiful in the park and is slated for development into recreation and picnic spots.”

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The Pittsburgh Press  
October 23, 1956

## **Snowden Golf Course Tax Spiked**

“Snowden Township’s drive for an amusement tax at South Park’s two golf courses landed in the rough today.”

“County Solicitor Nathaniel K. Beck ruled that under a State Supreme Court decision, such a levy would be illegal. He explained that since the courses - one 18 holes and the other nine - are maintained by the County, the township where the park is located couldn’t impose the tax.”

“The high court has ruled, he said, that it is illegal for one taxing body to require another to collect taxes for the agency imposing the tax. Snowden sought the tax for revenue to hire a five-man police force.”

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Pittsburgh Sun Telegraph  
August 9, 1955

## **Free Food in Library**

“Snowden Township’s surplus food distribution is scheduled for the Fulton & Powell Market, in Library, and the Kirschman Market, in Broughton, from 4 to 9 p.m. tomorrow.”

Pittsburgh Post Gazette  
June 23, 1962

## **Traffic Light Sought For Death Corner**

Coroner Demands Action at Site  
Of Bethel Park Crash

“Coroner Joseph B. Dobbs asked yesterday for traffic lights and curbs at a five-way intersection in Bethel Park where a State Highways Department workman was killed.”

“The request was made at an inquest into the death of Nicholas Rech, 65, of 3836 Grant Street, Library, on May 17.”

## **Route 88 Crash**

“Rech was killed when an auto, struck in the rear by another, went off Route 88 into the Verscharen’s Market parking place.”

“Drivers involved in the crash which injured three other men were cleared. They are Joseph M. Betz, 29, of 123 Fidler Street, Mt. Oliver, and William A. Buresch, Jr., 20, of 6524 Brownsville Road, Snowden Township.”

“Betz said his car was struck from behind.”

## **Dangerous Intersection**

“The intersection, at the entrance to South Park on Route 88, has been the subject of controversy between state and borough officials. Division of costs is the issue.”

“The intersection brings together Route 88, Corrigan Drive, Baptist Road, Library Road and South Park Road.”

“Dobbs advocated action before county fair time in August when the intersection is heavily traveled. “If lights had been erected, Mr. Rech might be alive today,” he added.”

## Membership/Renewal Application

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please check one of the following:

Individual Membership - \$15.00

Family Membership - \$20.00

Senior Membership (65 & over) - \$10.00

Student Members - \$ 5.00

Donation \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make check payable to:*

**South Park Historical Society**

**P.O. Box 555**

**South Park, PA 15129**

## Upcoming Meetings and events

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with Norene Beatty

**April 18, 2023** – “The Mt. Washington Transit  
Tunnel Disaster” with Mary Jane Hirt

**May 16, 2023** – “Unsolved Murder in Snowden  
Village” with Karen Lehr.

**June 20, 2023** – “Discovering a Family History:  
From the Famous and Heroic to the Infamous and  
Notorious” with Carleton Young.

**July 18, 2023 – August 15, 2023** – Summer Hiatus,  
no meetings are scheduled.

Meetings are held at 7:00 pm in the Library Fire  
Hall, 6581 Library Road, South Park, PA 15129.

Our meetings are held with no charge and open to  
the public. Bring a friend and enjoy an interesting  
program.

For more information visit us at:

[southparkhistoricalsociety.com](http://southparkhistoricalsociety.com)

Or on Facebook at:

[facebook.com/southparkhistoricalsociety](https://facebook.com/southparkhistoricalsociety)

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