

## HISTORICAL SOCIETY NOTES AND DOCUMENTS

### HISTORICAL TOUR OF 1972

MARGARET L. POLLARD

In spite of a downpour just before sailing time, the forty-third summer tour of the Society was a gala event. Two hundred and forty-one people sailed up the Allegheny River on the *Gateway Party Liner* and listened to Captain Frederick Way's fascinating stories about points of interest along the river.

Never having been on the Allegheny before, I was amazed by the juxtaposition of the man-made and the natural. Lovely hills covered with trees and vines competed for my attention with smoking power plants; yacht clubs flourished next to steelmills; and backyards sloped to the river with children diving into the water.

There were many leftovers from the recent floods to be seen — an island used by campers with litter hanging from the trees, large logs bobbing in the river over which our boat passed with a thump, muddy foliage along both banks, and the usual flotsam that a large storm leaves behind. I was impressed with the skill of the helmsmen of the motor boats pulling water skiers in avoiding the floating objects. Over all, however, was the peace and quiet of the river with the only sound coming from the lively orchestra and the happy voices of the passengers.

I have been through locks before, but I always find the procedure fascinating. The crew members in their bright orange life-jackets, a requirement of the Coast Guard, are experts in securing the heavy lines that keep the boat steady during the lock operation. The passengers gave three cheers whenever an accurate flip was given to release the lines wound around the bollards. We had the river pretty much to ourselves and did not have to wait in traffic to go through the locks.

Coming back, we picked up the current and made a speedy trip down stream. The captain took us past the Point down the Ohio a short distance and then turned about so that we had a perfect view of the night skyline of Pittsburgh, aglow with countless lights and reflected in the water. A lovely ending to an enjoyable trip.