

Pittsburghers All

How do you record and save the things that matter most to you? Photographs provide great insight into what people consider precious and worthy of preserving. This is especially true of early historic images, when having a photograph taken required a trip to a professional studio and a commitment of time to allow the camera to record the scene. In its earliest days, photography was focused almost exclusively on individuals and families. These were the things judged most worthy of the time and money required to have a photo taken. Interestingly, one of the things people consistently considered precious, and so recorded along with the rest of the clan, was the family dog. A regal Dalmatian poses at the feet of Bishop Benjamin Tucker Tanner while the Hill family gathers on the front porch around their dog, who takes center stage. The presence of the dog became part of the family's identity, something worthy of including in a permanent memento.

As photography became less expensive and more widely available, family, friends, and loved ones remained high on the list of images to capture. Take a moment to think: what are the things that you typically photograph today? Comparing images across time reminds us that some aspects of the human experience remain constant, even as the technology and landscape around us continue to change. We want to preserve the faces of those who matter most to us. We search to find the images of family members who came before.

The History Center's collection documents a wide array of Western Pennsylvania residents from the early 1850s through the 20th century. These photos allow us to meet many of the fellow Pittsburghers who have called this place home, from 19th-century immigrants and children of the Great Depression through to their Baby Boom descendants and the people who make up the fabric of this city in the 21st century.



Brothers Frederick (left) and Thomas (right) Gretton, 1882.

College educated Welsh immigrants Frederick and Thomas Gretton arrived in Pittsburgh in 1881 with their parents and sister. A day after settling into their new quarters on the South Side, father William and his two sons were at J&L Steel interviewing for jobs, and the following day they started to work. Frederick, a chemist, became interested in photography and documented the people and buildings of J&L as well as the surrounding community.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of the estate of Mrs. Wilbur F. Galraith, MSP 328.

James Benney in front of the family's new house in Emsworth, 1889.

In late 1888, George Eastman revolutionized photography with his new Kodak camera, a small, lightweight box loaded with enough flexible film to take 100 photographs. With the slogan, "You push the button, we do the rest" he democratized photography by putting it in the hands of amateurs. Civil engineer James Benney purchased one of the first Kodaks and created a time capsule of Pittsburgh in the year 1889.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Ann Darsie Thomson, PSS 20.





**Betty Taylor of Friendship
snaps a photo of herself in
a hotel mirror, 1970s.**

Mother of two, Avon district manager, and 70-year member of First United Methodist Church, Betty Taylor relentlessly documented the everyday world around her. Here is a rare photo Betty took of herself.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of the Taylor family, 2016.0157.



Terry Bradshaw, 1970s.

Although this appears to be a selfie taken in a mirror, Pittsburgh Steelers quarterback Terry Bradshaw was actually captured here by press photographer Morris Berman.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Morris Berman, PSS 43.



**Marjorie Spector, Squirrel Hill,
1975.**

An avid photographer, Marjorie documented friends and family, life in the city, and herself in the mirror.

HHC Detre L&A, estate of Marjorie Spector, MSP 0431.



**Young boy, name
unknown, c. 1860.**

This young boy's name and history are unknown. What can we tell by simply looking at the image? This type of photograph, a daguerreotype, was popular from the early 1840s through the mid-1860s. He is wearing

a collarless sack coat in a check pattern with large buttons, which dates to the early-mid 1860s. He has light eyes and freckles so likely comes from the British Isles. His hair is uncombed and his pose is informal. Perhaps he was an indentured servant or apprentice sent for a photograph by his employer.

HHC Detre L&A, cased photographs.



**Anna Bird Moles
Woodson and James
Woodson, c. 1861.**

These are likely the wedding portraits of Anna Bird Moles and James Woodson who married in Pittsburgh in 1861. Born in Maryland, Anna moved with her family to Pittsburgh when she was a small child. Her father worked as a porter and river man. James Woodson, son of Rev. Lewis Woodson, took up the family trade as a barber. The Woodson family owned a number of barbershops, bath houses, and “shaving saloons” in the city, many in major hotels.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Robert Golden, 2000.0131.



**William and Pauline
Frank and their
children, early 1850s.**

German immigrants William Frank and Pauline Wormser, who married in 1843, were among the first Jewish families to settle in Pittsburgh. Active in both the business and philanthropic communities, William ran a dry goods store and later a glass factory and was among the founders of Rodef Shalom congregation. His wife Pauline founded the Jewish Ladies' Relief Association which assisted with fundraising to aid Civil War soldiers.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of James A. and Ruth Frank.





Barney Burns, 1850s.

Burns owned a grocery and general store on Third Street downtown in the early 1850s. A popular story about him recalls that he once sent a bill to storekeeper Daniel Negley for a wheel of cheese. Negley responded that he had never bought a wheel of cheese but that he had purchased a grindstone. Burns then recalled that he had forgotten to mark a hole in the middle of his circle. Nearly illiterate, he drew a circle to represent cheese and a circle with a central hole to represent a grindstone.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of James Ross Mellon.

Benjamin Bakewell, Jr., and unknown companion, c. 1852.

At 5'11" tall with blue eyes and brown hair, Benjamin Bakewell Jr., stood out in a crowd. This image of him (left) with an unidentified man (right) was taken by well-known New York daguerreotypist J. Guerney, probably in 1852, shortly before embarking on a trip to England with his uncle Thomas. Named for his grandfather, a famous early glass manufacturer in Pittsburgh, Bakewell began working for the firm in 1859.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Leila McKnight.





Rae Jean Sprigle of Coraopolis shows who's the boss, c. 1940.

Tradition says that pet owners often end up resembling their animals. If so, then young Rae Jean Sprigle and her pet bulldog might both take after Rae Jean's father, Ray Sprigle, an investigative reporter for the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*. Sprigle made headlines from the 1930s through the 1950s for his in-depth stories on topics such as a World War II black market meat ring in Pittsburgh and the experience of segregation in the Jim Crow South. Rae Jean would have been about five years old when this image was taken.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Rae Jean Kurland, MSS 0079.

Close up of a dog taken by James Benney with his new Kodak camera, 1889.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Ann Darsey Tomson, PSS 20.





The Rolling Rock foxhounds ready for an outing, 1936.

Fox hounds and hunting have been a tradition at the Rolling Rock Club in Ligonier since 1921, when R.B. Mellon turned the family estate in the Laurel Mountains into a country retreat for hunting and fishing. The fox hunt at Rolling Rock, founded during the height of the sport's popularity in Pennsylvania in the 1920s, was well-known for its pack of fine English hounds. The Rolling Rock Races' charity event drew thousands of Pittsburghers to the estate each fall starting in 1934 before it was discontinued in 1983.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of David Owsley and John Bodish, MSP 115.

Wanda and friends, 1934.

The Irene Kaufmann Settlement in the Hill District offered a Milk Well to provide children with a source of nutrition during the Depression. Resident Director Sidney A. Teller's dog, Wanda, shares the snack with neighborhood kids.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of the Jewish Community Center of Greater Pittsburgh, MSP 389.



#10443 Irene Kaufmann Settlement Playground Opening - The Milk Well Opens Nov 1934 (WANDA)



**Family and friends gather
on the Joseph Hill Farm in
Centerville, Washington
County, 1902.**

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Allan Johnston, PSS 0051.



Pequot football team and mascot, North Side, 1905.

The members of the Pequot football team on Pittsburgh's North Side pose for a group shot with their dog, who looks just as alert and tough as the players. The team enjoyed a reputation as one of the fastest of its kind in the early 1900s, but disbanded in 1906. A later group took up the name again in 1911.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Aline Wagner and Mr. and Mrs. Donald R. Miller, MSP 388.



James Cox Barrett poses in his baseball uniform with his faithful dog, 1920s.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of John Borger, 2009.0017.

**Emanuel Spector (right),
in Russia, c. 1910.**

In 1914, at the age of 16, Emanuel Spector was sent to the United States from Russia to study medicine. Instead, Spector went into business, opening his own clothing store on Fifth Avenue in Uptown. Heavily involved in the Jewish community, Spector helped raise millions of dollars for the United Jewish Fund and other philanthropies.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of estate of Marjorie Spector, MSP 431.



**Leah Temper and Pincus
Spector, c. 1918.**

This haunting photo is of Emanuel's sister Leah and father Pincus.

Gift of estate of Marjorie Spector, MSP 431.



Robert Wilson McKnight in a Scottish kilt, c. 1900.

Upon receipt of this photo, Robert's aunt wrote to his mother, "Tell him that he scares his Aunt Rachel with that shining Highland suit and the awesome thing in front on which to wipe his bloody sword! How cunning he looks! Did it make him very happy to be perpetuated in Scotch kilts?"

HHC Detre L&A, gift of McKnight family, MSP 250.



Men play traditional instruments in Chinatown, 1912.

Remnants of a now vanished downtown community, these musicians were part of Pittsburgh's Chinatown, an area situated along Second and Third Avenues between Ross and Grant Streets. By the early 1900s, the community featured a park, multiple stores, and two competing Chinese fraternal organizations. The community was never very large, and when construction on the Boulevard of the Allies started in 1921, the new roadwork eventually crowded out most of the stores and businesses. By the 1950s, only three families remained.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Elenore Seidenberg, MSO 0566.



The Kins family, Lawrenceville, 1920s.

Anthony Kozioziemski and Francis Konczal both emigrated from Poland, he as a teenager, she as a young girl. He shortened and Americanized his name to Kins. After their marriage, they lived briefly in Polish Hill before moving to Lawrenceville where they raised their three children Gertrude, Ray, and Henry.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Gertrude Kins, MSS 20.

Dr. George and Mary Turfley and family, c. 1900.

George Turfley, the first registered African American physician in Allegheny County, had his home and general practice in the Hill District. The beloved doctor attended patients for 56 years.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Zerbie E. Swain, MSS 0455.

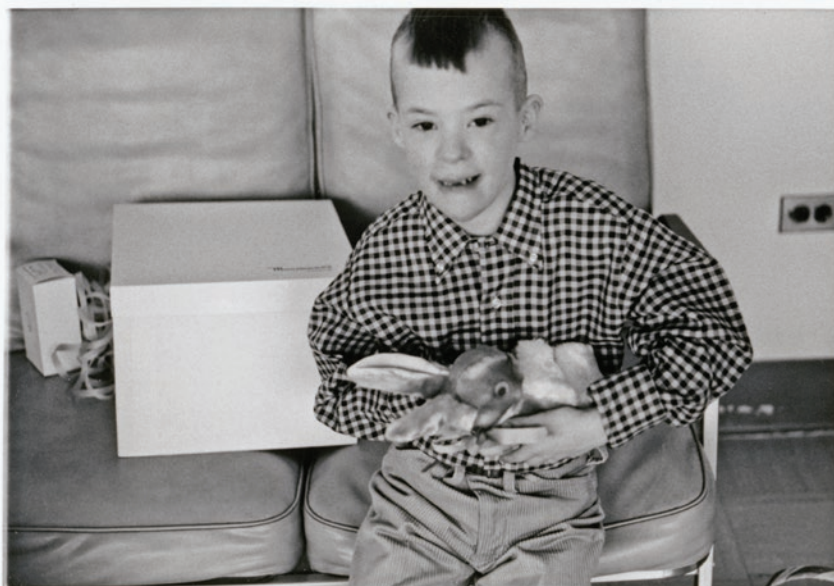




**Frank and Theresa Dergositz,
c. 1918.**

After his wife died, farmer Frank Dergositz and his four daughters immigrated to the United States from Austria in 1912. Frank found employment at the Armstrong Cork Factory and the family lived in nearby Troy Hill. After WWI, Frank and his daughter Mary returned to their home town while the remaining three sisters stayed in the States.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Margaret Haring, 2014.0010.



**Ricky Menges enjoys his
Easter basket, 1967.**

HHC Detre L&A, gift of the Taylor family, 2016.0157.

MAR • 67



Three young girls salute the flag at the Irene Kaufmann Settlement, Hill District, 1925.

These girls were just three of many children participating in the Irene Kaufmann Settlement's Arts & Crafts Exhibit in May 1925. But their flag salute underlines the real mission of the organization:

helping immigrants assimilate into American culture by providing them with new skills and other assistance. Founded out of an effort to help Jewish immigrant children, the Irene Kaufmann Settlement became a non-sectarian agency that offered courses in a broad range of skills, such as English, sewing, child care, and gardening.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Sidney A. Teller, MSP 78.

BECOMING AMERICAN:

THE RAJCAN FAMILY STORY



George and Mary Rajcan's wedding portrait, 1904.

AJH HHC Detre L&A, gift of Amelia Rajcan Zeller, MSP 157.



Daughter Amelia and her friend Emily at Kennywood Pool, 1927.



Mary with her six children (left to right)
Marie, Vera, Amelia, Joseph, Julius, and
George, 1940s.

At the turn of the 20th century, Pittsburgh was known for its smoke and industrial might. Changes in steel making technology created thousands of unskilled jobs in the region's mills, and immigrants flooded in from Central and Eastern Europe. Many had a familiar story to tell about their experiences—a new land and language, unrelenting hard work, becoming Americans while keeping native traditions, and often tragedy. The Rajcan family embodied all of these and more.

George Rajcan was 19 when he left Austria-Hungry to join his older brother in Duquesne, Pa. Like many single men, he moved in to a boarding house and quickly found a job at the Carnegie Steel Mills. Two years later, he met another young immigrant, Mary Majer, and discovered they were from the same small town. Mary took a job as a governess in Charleroi, but the two kept in touch and were married in 1904.

In 1907, while Mary was expecting their second child, George's doctor recommended they return to their homeland for his health. So the three of them, George, Mary, and baby Marie sailed back to their home across the Atlantic and stayed until the following year when George returned to Duquesne and resumed working at the mill. Mary and the two children remained to care for an elderly relative and didn't return to the United States for another three years.

By 1919 the Rajcan family had grown to five children and Mary was expecting again. This time she gave birth to triplets, but two of the infants died the following day and the third a few months later. Their final child was born in 1921 and the family was overjoyed with the latest arrival. The youngest, Vera, made them a family of three sons and three daughters.

In addition to his work in the mill, George bought a small apartment building with a corner grocery store. It had been damaged by fire but George did the repairs himself. Mary managed the store in addition to raising their six children. Though a strict disciplinarian,

George was also deeply religious and very loving. His daughter Amelia recalled, "We come from a family of huggers and kissers."

George and Mary also had a high regard for education. The children went to public school during the year, then in summer, took classes at the Slovak Lutheran church school where they received religious instruction and learned to read and write in Czech. George was so concerned about his children's education that he took out an insurance policy in each of their names so they could finish school should anything happen to him.

On Good Friday in 1929, George received a call from the mill that one of the crew members was unable to work the night shift. Rather than call another man to work, George left the house that night to begin work at 11:00 p.m. Around midnight the family awoke to pounding on the front door. Mill guards quickly escorted them to the dispensary where George lay on a table covered with blankets. George had been struck and run over by a hot metal train which severed both legs. He quietly said goodbye to each of them, admonishing the children to take care of their mother. Their son George and Rev. Gavlick accompanied him in the ambulance to West Penn Hospital, but George died before they reached the facility.

A widow at 45, Mary still had five children at home. She made ends meet with a small compensation check from the mill, rent from the other apartments, and the corner store. Her oldest daughter graduated from college and the others left home one by one to work or get married. Mary lived briefly with daughter Marie, but missed Duquesne and returned to live with her son Joseph when he built a house next to their old apartment building on Overland Street. She remained in Duquesne until she was 89 when her daughter Amelia convinced her to join her in Connecticut. Mary died there at age 94. When Amelia was cleaning out her remaining effects she found a writing tablet in which her mother



Mary outside her corner store at 22 Overland Street, Duquesne, 1948.

had practiced writing over and over in her best script, "I am an American."

The Rajcan Collection, befitting a close-knit and loving family, consists almost entirely of family photos covering nearly 80 years and three generations from early portraits of George and Mary before they married to Mary's last days in the Connecticut nursing home.



George Hasko in his native Slovak outfit, 1920s.

Emilia Cupka Hasko in native dress, c. 1920.

Slovak Club, 1940s.

George, a box maker in his native country, worked as a cooper at the Heinz factory on the North Side. He and his family, wife Emilia and daughter Lillian, lived in the Troy Hill and Spring Garden neighborhoods. Both were active in the local Slovak Clubs.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Lillian Hasko, MSP 463.



