

## CHAPTER 2

# Landmarks, Places, & Events

**P**ittsburgh's historic events and unique built environment have long attracted the photographer's interest. As soon as cameras became portable they were used to record newsworthy activities such as the Civil War Sanitary Fair in 1864 and the infamous Railroad Riots in 1877. The sheer number of photographs in our collection of the 1936 Flood—hundreds of them—speak to its enormous impact on the region, both physically and psychologically. Photographs don't just help us remember the immediate event. They provide context; they allow us to compare what happened with similar events; they advocate for a response.

Photographs also help both preserve and create a distinct sense of place. Iconic views of downtown from Mount Washington, experiences like a day at Kennywood, and landmarks such as the Carnegie Museum in Oakland are photographed over and over by successive generations as they share a common Pittsburgh experience. These photos not only document enduring attractions, but show how the city and its amenities changed over time. By comparing views of the Point, for instance, we get a visual record of its evolving uses—residential, industrial, and recreational—and gain insight into what was most important to Pittsburghers of successive generations.

Photos also document pieces of the city that are gone and live on only in memory. They tell of buildings that succumbed to fire, a once-bustling wharf now buried under concrete, neighborhoods removed for redevelopment, and venues that became outdated and abandoned. Photos freeze moments in time, allowing us to “recreate” a portion of the past.

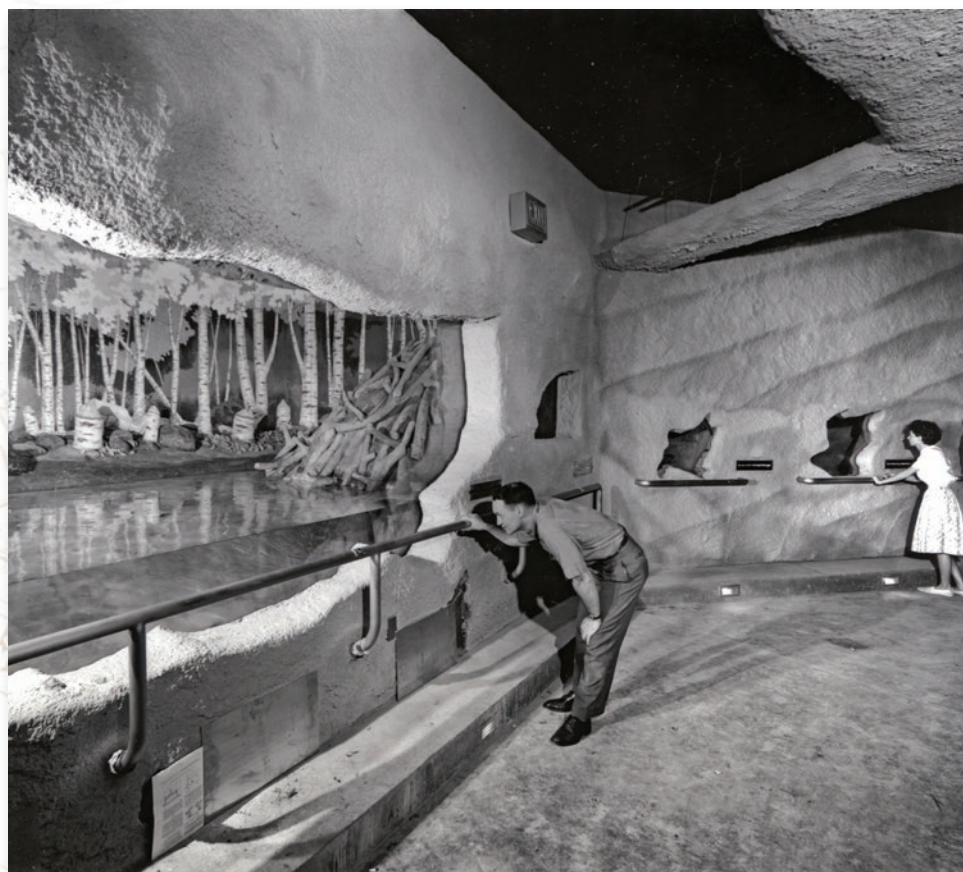




## The John Taylor family takes in the panorama of downtown from Mount Washington, 1970s.

Although Mount Washington has always had a spectacular view of downtown Pittsburgh, the Grandview Overlook didn't open until 1959.

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



## The Underground Zoo became a favorite part of the Highland Park Zoo in the 1960s.

Only the second of its kind in the nation when it opened in 1962, the Underground Zoo featured animals that lived underground and "slept by day and prowled by night." Children and parents peered through window-enclosed animal habitats in hallways meant to seem like a winding cave. This photo shows the largest exhibit in the new zoo: the beaver dam. In 1992, the display was re-themed as Niches of the World and featured reptiles, amphibians, and other small creatures.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of the Allegheny Conference on Community Development, MSP 285.B18.F22.





## Preserving bygone days

It did not take long for people to recognize photography's power to record the passing of time. In 1852, when it was announced in Pittsburgh that the old wooden courthouse in Market Square would be demolished to make way for new more permanent Market House, the *Daily Post* lamented the loss, but also suggested a way to preserve the old building's memory:

The loss of the old Court House will be a deprivation to many of our old citizens. When it is removed they will not know where to go, as it has been their favorite place to congregate for the last fifty years . . . To assuage the grief that they must necessarily feel when this event takes place, we would recommend that a daguerreotype likeness of the old building be taken, as large as possible, and hung up at some central place, where those good old citizens to whom we refer may see, at least, the picture of the place where they used to stop at, and recount the scenes of by-gone days.

- Pittsburgh Daily Post, April 7, 1852

## Ohio River celebration, 1929.

Pittsburghers line the Monongahela Wharf to see the flagship steamer *City of Cincinnati* and celebrate the canalization of the Ohio River from Pittsburgh to Cairo, Illinois. The completion of this project, which used a system of locks and dams to create a consistent nine-foot navigable channel all the way to the confluence of the Ohio and the Mississippi rivers, included the construction of 48 dams. It represented the culmination of more than a century of river improvements on the Ohio, a sustained effort prompted by the rise of the steamboat era on the western rivers, starting in Pittsburgh in the 1820s.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Robert Garland, PSS 9.





## Students ponder *T. rex* at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Oakland, 1951.

School children were not the only ones who stared up in awe at *Tyrannosaurus rex* in the old Hall of Dinosaurs. Today we think of *T. rex* as the king of dinosaurs and every child knows its name. But when this skeleton debuted at the Carnegie in 1942, it was one of only two specimens of the creature known to exist. The Carnegie purchased it from the American Museum of Natural History in New York City.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Pittsburgh Public Schools, MSP 117.B7.F4.





## Imagining space with the Zeiss Model II star projector at the Buhl Planetarium, 1940.

For some Pittsburgh landmarks, a key detail—something seen or experienced by everyone who visited—becomes a touchstone of memory that lasts long after the landmark itself is gone. For generations of school children, this strange-looking machine was the highlight of a visit to Buhl Planetarium. Rising out of the floor like some giant insect or alien creature, the Zeiss Model II projected the stars of the cosmos onto the darkened ceiling of the planetarium, transporting audiences to the realms of outer space. The projector literally put the world at its operator's fingertips, able to portray the night sky from any spot on the planet. It was dark, weird, slightly spooky, and magical. For many students, memories of the experience lasted a lifetime. At least two local astronauts who flew multiple space shuttle missions with NASA—Jerome “Jay” Apt, a graduate of Pittsburgh’s Shady Side Academy and Pine-Richland High School’s Stephen Frick—credited Buhl and the Zeiss II as inspirations for their careers. How many other students had similar dreams?

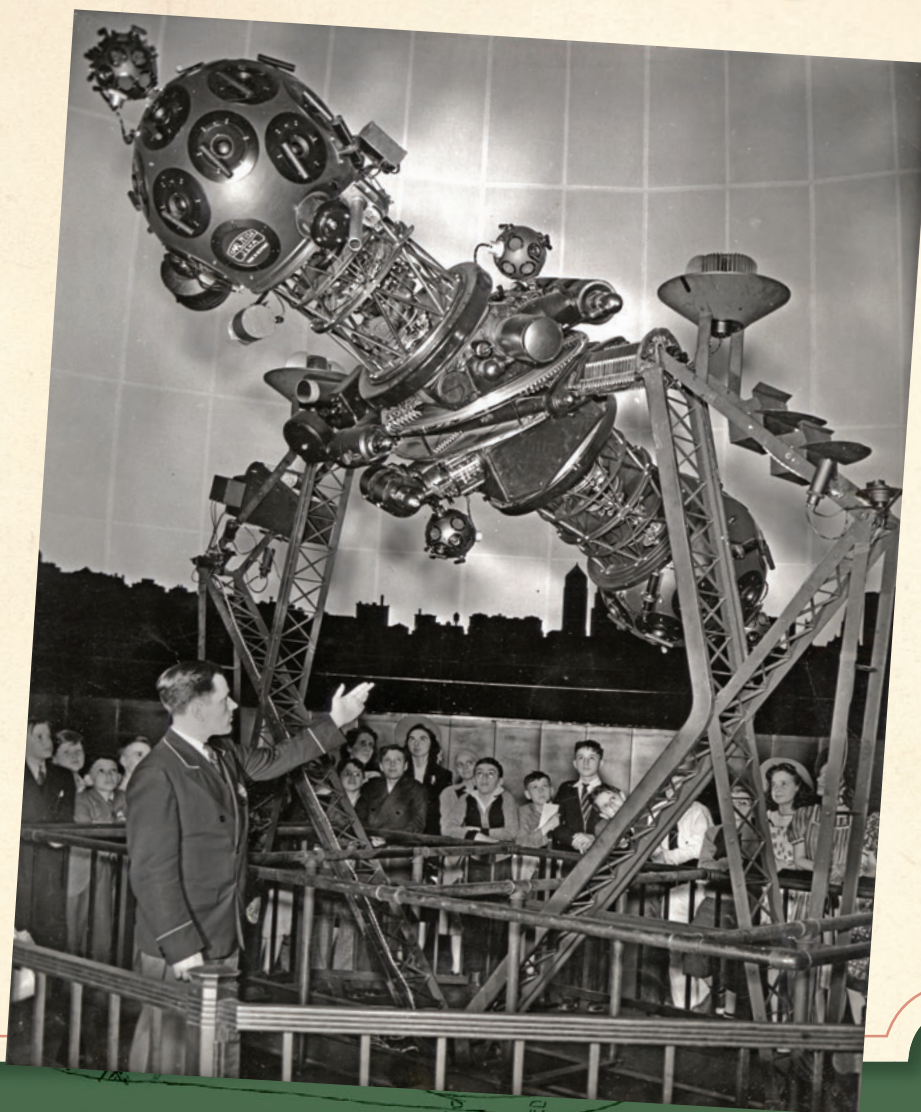
At the time it was installed, the Zeiss II symbolized global changes that would soon transform life in Pittsburgh. The planetarium that opened on the North Side in 1939 was just the fifth major institution of its kind in the nation, a statement about Pittsburgh’s scientific and technological aspirations. Its Model II projector, made at the Zeiss Optical Works in Germany in 1938, was the last of its kind. By the time the Buhl Planetarium was dedicated on October 24, 1939, Germany had been at war with the Allies in Europe for more than a month and Pittsburgh factories were already gearing up for the war effort. Ironically, the Zeiss projector was so accurate that it was eventually used to train pilots headed overseas to fight the Axis powers in Germany and

Japan. This photograph was taken sometime around 1940, when the planetarium was still new and symbolic of Pittsburgh’s vision for the future; approximately 200,000 people visited that year.

After the war, Zeiss Optical shifted to new projectors and discontinued the Model II. Eventually, the Buhl’s staff had to fabricate their own parts to repair the machine. It continued to fascinate generations of students and other visitors through the 1980s, when Buhl began the process of transitioning to a new location along the Ohio River. By the time

the Zeiss II ceased regular operations in 1991 (when the planetarium officially moved to its current home in the Carnegie Science Center) it was the oldest projector of its kind still in use in the world. Today, it can be viewed as an artifact at the Carnegie Science Center. Although it no longer rises from the floor to project star shows, it still serves as a reminder of the allure of space and the impact of Pittsburgh’s cultural institutions on the people who call this place home

**HHC Detre L&A, gift of Allegheny Conference on Community Development, MSP 285.B3.F9.**





## Fans gather to hear a band at Danceland, West View Park, 1961.

For many Pittsburghers, the main reason to head to West View Park was Danceland. Originally an open pavilion, Danceland attracted crowds to the amusement park all summer long. It hosted local as well as national bands, drawing teenagers ready to listen and dance to the latest music from Harry James, Bobby Vinton, or the new British import the Rolling Stones.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Larry Ward, 2012.0030.



## People enjoy a ride on the Skybus at the South Park Fairgrounds, c. 1965.

Skybus, a prototype elevated monorail meant to replace the region's tangle of busses and trolleys, ran on a two-mile loop around the South Park Fairgrounds from 1965 to 1971. Engineered by Westinghouse, the rapid transit vehicle was eventually to be fully automated, a forerunner of the work by Carnegie Mellon University and others to develop driverless cars. Mired in financial and political battles, the Skybus project ended in the early 1970s.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Elenore Seidenberg, MSP 566.





## Crowds gather outside of Forbes Field in Oakland for the World Series, 1960.

Diane Taylor holds a Pirates pennant outside of Forbes Field during the famous 1960 World Series at which Bill Mazeroski smacked the home run that won the Series in Game 7.

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

## Kiddie boats at Kennywood, 1960s.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Allegheny Conference on Community Development, MSP 28.B18.F25.



## Roller coaster at Kennywood, 1950s.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Allegheny Conference on Community Development, MSP 285.B18.F25.







**Ottmar von Fuehrer stands beside his colossal mural in the Hall of Dinosaurs at the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, c. 1950.**

Some people loved it and others hated it, but for more than four decades the mural of *Tyrannosaurus rex* created by Carnegie Museum staff artist Ottmar von Fuehrer loomed over visitors in the beloved Hall of

Dinosaurs. Completed in 1955, the work reflected the current scientific knowledge of its day. But over time, further archeological and scientific discoveries led to new theories about *T. rex*'s posture and behavior. In 1999 the old mural was removed to make way for an updated vision of *T. rex* which was later expanded in the new exhibit Dinosaurs in their World.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Allegheny Conference on Community Development, SP 285. B3.F10.





## The Diamond Market in Market Square, c. 1960.

For 47 years the Diamond Market presided over the activities of the space now known as Market Square. Home to a regular clientele of market stands as well as a roller skating rink and the Pittsburgh Police Traffic Division, the building became a symbol of the transition from the old Pittsburgh to the new city of the 1960s. A mainstay of Saturday mornings for years, Diamond Market's condition became an issue after a piece of the building's decorative cornice fell off and injured a woman. While the market had its advocates, many saw it as an impediment to modern development – one report called it a “Wall of China” standing in the middle of downtown Pittsburgh. When inspections revealed that the building would cost far more to renovate than demolish, Diamond Market's fate was sealed. The market closed on December 31, 1960, and was demolished the following summer.

HHC Detre L&A, GPC B2.F18.

## A seaplane flies over the Allegheny River toward the Point downtown, c. 1945.

This seaplane probably took off from Buck's Seaplane Base, once located near the base of the Sixth Street Bridge on the North Side. For a period during the 1940s and 1950s, multiple seaplane bases operated in downtown Pittsburgh as well as along the rivers in outlying communities. The photo was taken by Helen Rita Campbell-Koster, an amateur photographer and a seaplane pilot with Buck's in the 1940s.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Desiree Zappia, PFF 0059.







### **View of downtown from the Liberty Tubes, 1950s.**

Before there was that other famous tunnel view, there was this one: downtown Pittsburgh as seen by cars exiting the Liberty Tunnel and heading over the Liberty Bridge. Although the tunnels opened in 1924, the Liberty Bridge did not open until 1928. Originally, this view would have been marked by a decorative traffic circle where the red light stands. But traffic backups quickly became an issue, and the circle was first reduced, and then eliminated, starting in 1933.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Allegheny Conference on Community Development, MSP 285.B10.F24.



### **The Smithfield Street Bridge with its original decorative portal, 1900.**

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Elenore Seidenberg, MSP 566.



## Downtown Department Store Shopping



**Horne's Department Store decorated for Christmas, 1948.**

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Federated Department Stores, Inc. Lazarus Division, David L. Avetta, MSP 0398.

For more than a century, one of the quintessential experiences of visiting Pittsburgh or any major American city was a trip to a downtown department store. With floor after floor of goods that often could not be found anywhere else, a visit to a store such as Kaufmann's, Horne's, Gimbels, or Boggs & Buhl was a true family event. In the early days, store visits also provided a glimpse of technology that many people could not afford at home, such as electric lights when gas lights were still common. Many people rode their first elevator or escalator and ate at their first restaurant there. By the 1920s, the "Big Three"—Kaufmann's, Horne's, and Gimbels—provided jobs for thousands and competed fiercely to attract customers during the crucial holiday shopping season. A visit to their increasingly elaborate Christmas windows and toyland displays became a beloved tradition shared by generations of Pittsburghers.

The flagship downtown stores reigned supreme through the 1950s even as the economy weathered two World Wars, the Great Depression, and the ups and downs of an industrial economy. By the

1960s, as shopping tastes and new forms of transportation changed how Americans spent their dollars and their leisure time, the large downtown stores found it difficult to compete with malls and specialty stores located more conveniently for suburban shoppers.

Boggs & Buhl had already closed in 1958, a victim of a changing North Side that would soon see itself radically transformed by urban redevelopment. Others hung on longer, but in 1986, Gimbels closed, and the Joseph Horne Co. followed in 1994. Kaufmann's continued through 2006, when a takeover by Macy's Inc., retired the familiar local name. The landmark store, rebranded as Macy's, lasted until 2015, when it closed for good.

Although the stores are now gone, their legacy lives on at the Senator John Heinz History Center, where extensive collections of photographs, artifacts, and documents record the history of Kaufmann's and Horne's, as well as a number of the city's other department stores, including Gimbels and Boggs & Buhl.





Shopping for coats at Kaufmann's, c. 1918-20.

This image captures the activity in what looks to be the women's coat department at Kaufmann's around 1920. The large number of store clerks waiting on customers was a typical part of the shopping experience before the 1930s, when new ideas about self-service and grouping clothing by size began to emerge.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Kaufmann's Department Store MSP 371. B4.F14.

Looking for clothing at Kaufmann's, 1950. The retail shopping experience looks more familiar in this image showing the women's department during Kaufmann's 79th anniversary sale in 1950. Labor shortages during World War II accelerated the change in retail culture that started in the 1930s. By 1950, retailers understood that allowing customers to have greater access to merchandise actually encouraged them to buy more.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Kaufmann's Department Store, MSP 0371.



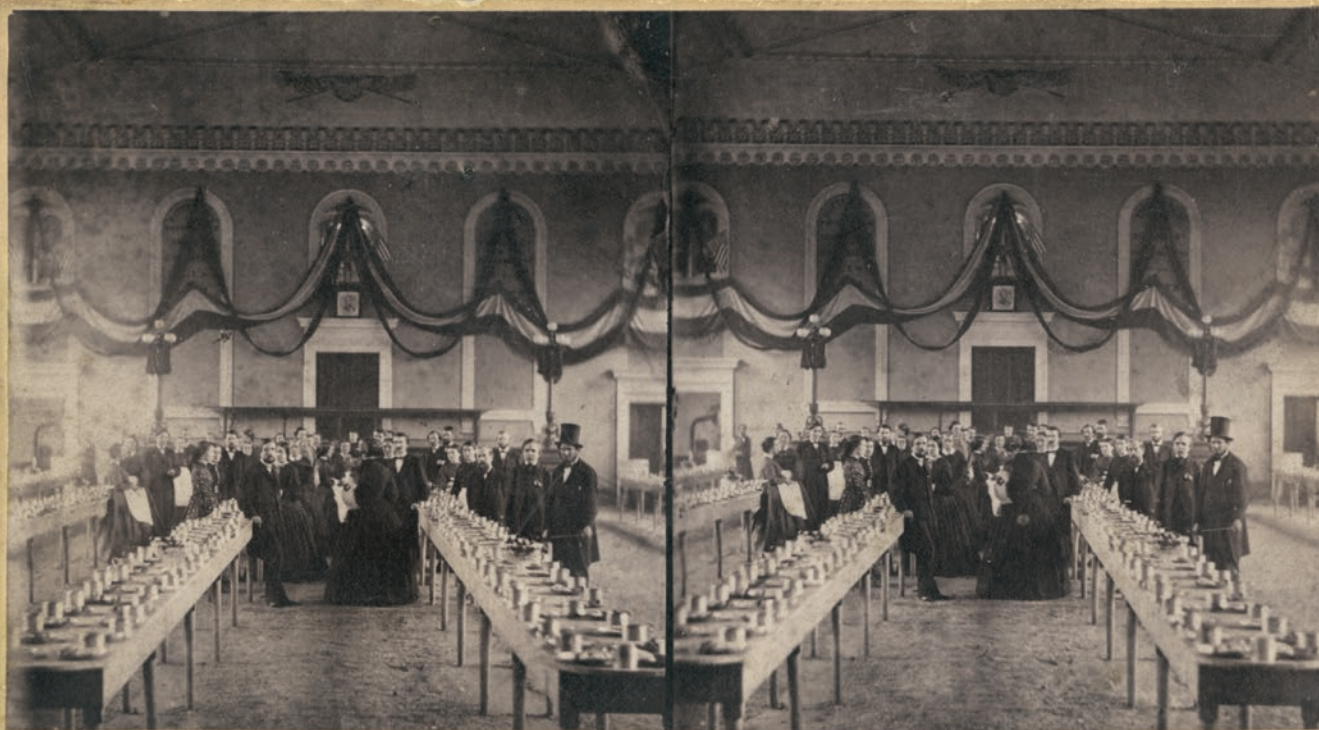
Christmas shoppers crowd Horne's Department Store, 1945.

It is hard to believe that anyone else could fit in the store in this photograph capturing the crush of people heading for the escalator at the Joseph Horne Co. Department Store during the Christmas shopping season of 1945. Perhaps people were in the mood to celebrate. World War II had ended months earlier, and 1945 was the first holiday season for many years with no war looming on the horizon.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Pittsburgh Public Schools, MSP 117.B18.F4.







### **“Interior View of City Hall,” 1864.**

During the Civil War, the city’s Subsistence Committee fed soldiers passing through Pittsburgh, often setting up long dining tables in City Hall.

HHC Detre L&A, GPC, Stereoviews.



### **“The Railroad War at Pittsburgh, July 21-22, 1877,” Strip District.**

After repeated wage cuts, railroad workers struck for higher wages and better working conditions. State militia violently suppressed the strike, killing and wounding nearly 50 people. Infuriated strikers retaliated by burning railroad buildings, engines, cars, and rails.

HHC Detre L&A, GPC, Stereoviews.





### **Rescue in Lawrenceville during the St. Patrick's Day Flood, 1936.**

Pittsburgh flooded nearly every spring, but the St. Patrick's Day Flood in 1936 was the city's worst. The Allegheny River inundated much of downtown and devastated neighborhoods along its banks.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 2005.0305.

### **Aftermath of the explosion at the Pittsburgh Banana Company in the Strip District, 1936.**

A gas explosion at the Pittsburgh Banana Company on Smallman and 21st Streets blew out all the windows in St. Stanislaus School and destabilized the bell towers at the church across the street.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Glenn Welling, PFF 61.







### **The steamboat *Island Queen* is consumed by fire, downtown, 1947.**

Thousands of downtown workers and visitors rush to the Monongahela Wharf in this photograph, vividly capturing the impact of one of the biggest river disasters in Pittsburgh history. The five-deck *Island Queen* was one of the largest excursion steamboats still in operation when it stopped in Pittsburgh as part of a 10-day river tour on September 9, 1947. At about 1:16 p.m. that afternoon, the boat exploded in a blast that was felt throughout downtown. Onlookers rushed to the scene along the Monongahela Wharf as well as Grandview Avenue on Mount Washington. So many people jammed onto the Smithfield Street Bridge that authorities cleared it for fear that the structure would collapse. Before going up in flames, the *Island Queen* was one of the last survivors of Western Pennsylvania's great steamboat past, having been partially built in Midland, Pa., in Beaver County along the Ohio River in 1924. Nineteen crew members perished in the disaster, which was estimated to have caused a \$1,000,000 loss.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Elenore Seidenberg, MSS 566.



### **Men checking draft boards in front of the Irene Kaufman Settlement House, Hill District, 1940.**

Men from the Hill District check military draft numbers posted at the Irene Kaufmann Settlement House in October 1940. The first peace-time draft in American history was issued by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1940 due to the escalating crisis in Europe, where World War II was already underway.

HHC Detre L&A, Irene Kaufmann Settlement House Collection.





### **The Eliza blast furnaces at J&L, Hazelwood, 1950s.**

James Laughlin built the Eliza blast furnaces along the Monongahela River in Hazelwood in 1859. A few years later, he joined with B.F. Jones who had rolling mills across the river on the South Side. Together they formed giant Jones and Laughlin, or J&L Steel Co. The blast furnaces dominated the neighborhood until they were torn down in 1983.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of LTV Steel, MSP 33.

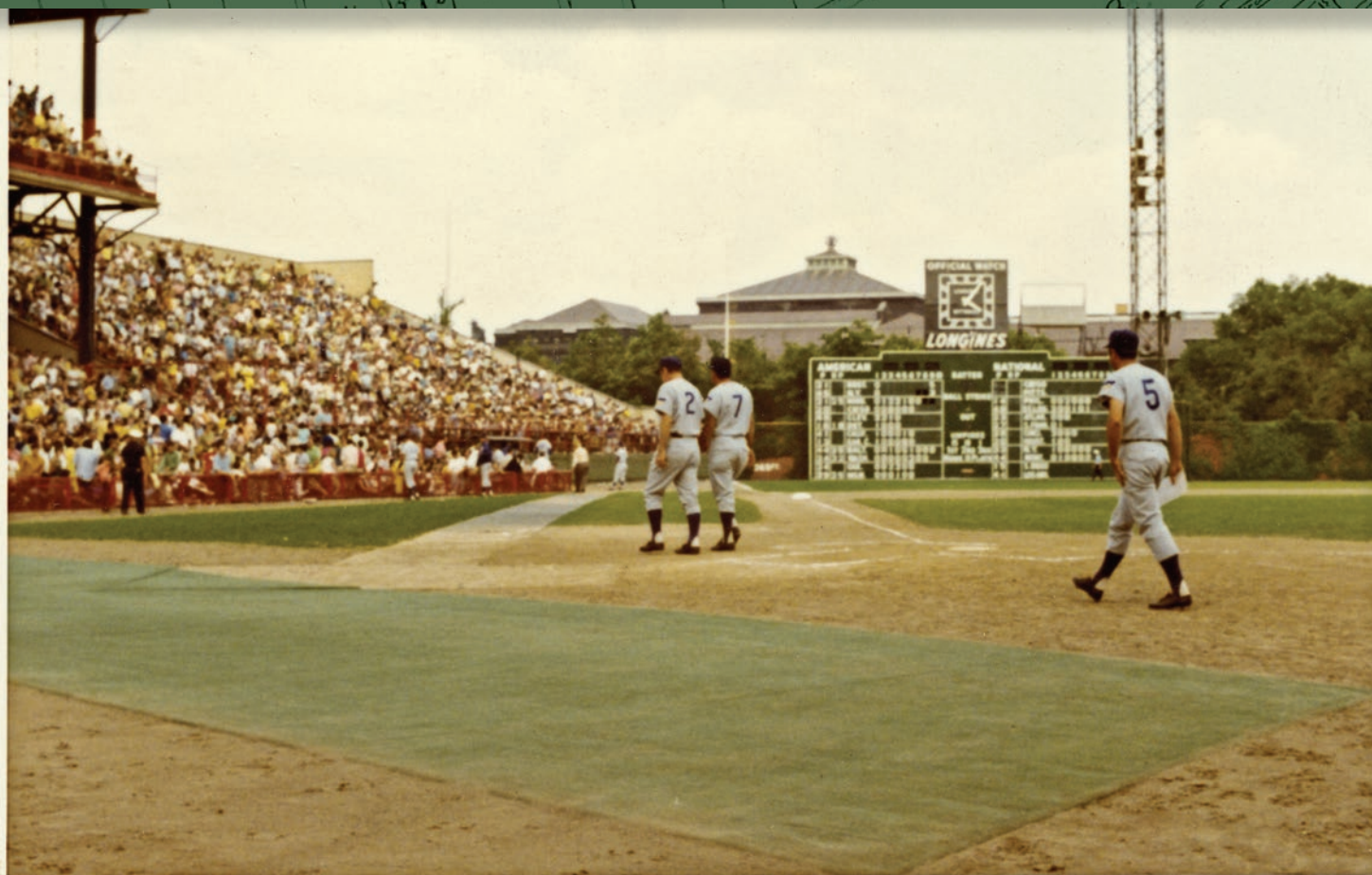
### **Construction begins on the south side of Mount Washington for the Liberty Tubes, 1921.**

One of multiple key construction projects started in the 1920s that created the city we know today, the effort to pierce Mount Washington with commuter tunnels was first proposed as far back as 1908-1909. Seen as a way to encourage growth in the new suburbs of the South Hills, the Liberty Tunnels, or "Tubes" as they are more commonly known, first opened to automobile traffic in 1924. At the time, their length of 5,889 feet made them the longest vehicular tunnels ever built.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of John and Clare Larkin, 2010.0169.







**The Cubs walk toward the grandstands after the last game played at Forbes Field in Oakland, June 28, 1970.**

Forbes Field opened June 30, 1909 with a standing room only crowd who came to see the Pirates play the Chicago Cubs. The visiting team won 3-2 but Pittsburghers were ecstatic with their new concrete and steel landmark. It stood in the heart of Oakland for 60 years. The Pirates fared better in their last game at Forbes Field. They took on the Cubs in a double header and won both games.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Jim Reisler, 2005.0185.



**Nobel Laureate Marie Curie tours the Standard Chemical Company works in Canonsburg, Pa., 1921.**

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Don Traub, 2001.0107.





## Steamboats *Homestead* and *Wm. Larimer Jones* race down the river, 1949.

Pittsburgh's Chamber of Commerce celebrated its 75th anniversary by organizing a festival called Welcome Week with a full slate of industrial tours, air shows, exhibits around town, and a special "old time" steamboat race. *The Homestead* and *Wm. Larimer Jones* raced from Neville Island to the Smithfield Street Bridge with the *Homestead* winning by a nose. It proved so popular that the steamers were rematched two years later.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Allegheny Conference on Community Development, MSP 285.

## The leaders of the Axis powers of Italy, Germany, and Japan become Beanie Booth targets at the Hobbytown Carnival at the Irene Kaufmann Settlement House during WWII, Hill District, 1942.

Hitler, Mussolini, and Hirohito became fair game for this bean bag toss during the Irene Kaufmann Settlement's Hobbytown "Victory Carnival" in August 1942. Although distasteful to us today, stereotypes such as the Asian caricature seen here were common during World War II, when a special level of animosity was aimed at the nation that attacked Pearl Harbor.

HHC Detre L&A, Irene Kaufmann Settlement House Collection.



1524-B Irene Kaufmann Settlement - Hobbytown Carnival - August 1942 - "Beanie Booth"





### **Pedestrians stream down Fifth Avenue under Kaufmann's clock, late 1930s.**

Crowded sidewalks demonstrate why Kaufmann's clock became such a popular meeting place in downtown Pittsburgh. Even on the busiest days, the clock was an easily seen landmark at the intersection of Fifth Avenue and Smithfield Street. But today's much-loved timekeeper wasn't the first one at this location. When the original store opened, a smaller version stood on a post at the same intersection. The current clock entered the picture during a major store expansion in 1913. Kaufmann's advertisements often used the "sentinel at the corner of Fifth and Smithfield" as an enticement to get shoppers excited about a sale, playing off of themes such as time "ticking away" on opportunities to save money.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Kaufmann's Department Store, MSP 371.B2.F4.

### **Shopping in the lower level of G.C. Murphy's Store No. 12 in Market Square, 1950s.**



Shoppers consider their choices in the Cosmetics Department at G.C. Murphy's Store No. 12 during the Christmas season. Shopping was always an adventure at the McKeesport-based G.C. Murphy's legendary downtown store, an experience that the *Pittsburgh Press* once called a "country fair brought indoors." With two restaurants, a Jenny Lee Bakery outlet, live product demonstrations, and a fortune teller, the store offered something for everyone. Charging no more than one dollar for most items, it was a hub of downtown activity for more than half a century, from its opening in 1930 until its closing in 1985.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Pittsburgh Public Schools, MSP 117.B6.F8.



## Celebrating the opening of the Liberty Bridge, 1928.

Cars and crowds line the span that was called "Allegheny County's longest, highest, costliest, and most picturesque river bridge" when it opened in March 1928. This view captures the excitement looking toward downtown from the northern end of the Liberty Tunnels, but the celebration was just as great from the other end of the tunnel. South Hills residents and merchants planned their own festivities marking the completion of the transportation network linking them to downtown. Businesses in Beechview, Dormont, Mount Lebanon, Brookline, Overbrook, and other outer communities gave their employees a "half-holiday" so they could participate in a parade that started at the intersection of Castle Shannon and Washington Road in Mount Lebanon and wound its way to the new Liberty Bridge.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Elenore Seidenberg, MSP 566.



## People walking to the Civic Arena, early 1960s.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Elenor Seidenberg, MSP 566.







## Crowds gather to celebrate the opening of the Parkway West, 1953.

Dignitaries including Pennsylvania Governor John S. Fine gather on a flag-bedecked platform to celebrate the opening of the Penn-Lincoln Parkway West on October 15, 1953. Envisioned by city leaders as a “magic carpet” connecting key locations of the larger metro area, the original nine-mile section of the Parkway West ran from Banksville Circle in the West End to the intersection with Route 30 at Clinton Township, past the new Greater Pittsburgh Airport. Authorities promised that the resulting 15-minute drive would be the “shortest trip to a major air terminal” in any big city in the nation. Concurrent with this construction, a similar project was also creating the Parkway East. The two roadways would connect with the opening of the Fort Pitt Tunnel in 1960.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Elenore Seidenberg, MSP 566.



## Three Rivers Stadium with Dravo boat at the Point, 1970s.

HHC Detre L&A, GPC B11.F11.





## View of the Point, 1896.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Allegheny  
Conference on Community  
Development, MSP 285 B12 F6.

## View of the Point, 2015.

HHC Detre L&A, gift of Charles Uhl,  
2016.0144.



Perhaps no view symbolizes Pittsburgh's cycle of change and rebirth better than the Point. Foundation of the city's existence, this confluence where the Allegheny and the Monongahela Rivers merge to form the Ohio has been a site of intrigue, industry, demolition, and redevelopment since the 1700s.

The earlier black and white image captures the Point in 1896, when barges and steamboats still lined the city wharfs, and the old wooden Union Bridge (1875-1907) still crossed over the Allegheny River to Allegheny City. The higher span to the right is the Point

Bridge, erected in 1875 and removed in 1927. Also visible is Pittsburgh's first Exposition Hall, a castle-like structure that was largely lost in a fire in March 1901. (It was rebuilt as a heavier steel, brick, and stone building.) Not so easily seen here is the warren of small residential streets that still lined the interior of the Point during the early 1900s.

The second color image captures the dramatic rebirth of the Point after successive layers of demolition, clearance, and development transformed the formerly industrial area into a park. Changing land

uses and demographics had made the neighborhood a slum by the 1930s. Clearance started after 1945 and took more than three decades, including the removal of railroad tracks, the reconfiguration of streets, and the demolition of hundreds of structures before the newly christened Point State Park was officially dedicated in 1974.