Anthracite Heritage Museum and Scranton Iron Furnaces
This Pennsylvania Trail of History guidebook focuses on the growth and development of one of the commonwealth's most important industries—coal mining. In addition to helping guide a visitor through these two northeastern Pennsylvania historical sites, this volume provides a well-illustrated overview of the lives of the thousands of immigrants who came to the region in search of work in the coalfields.

Industry and Infantry: The Civil War in Western Pennsylvania
Edited by Brian Butko and Nicholas P. Ciotola. (Pittsburgh: Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 2003). Illustrations, index, 140 pp., $19.95 softcover
Collection of eight essays culled from back issues of Western Pennsylvania History that explore various aspects of the Civil War and its impact on the Pittsburgh region. Topics include the election of 1860, the “Bucktail” regiment, the Pittsburgh Sanitary Fair, New Castle’s response to the war, and Pittsburgh’s industrial contribution to the Union military machine.

Pennsylvania: A History of the Commonwealth
Edited by Randall M. Miller and William Pencak. (University Park: Penn State University and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 2002). Illustrations, maps, 654 pp., $49.95 hardcover, $29.95 softcover
This volume, the first comprehensive overview of the history of Pennsylvania in 30 years, contains 16 essays which detail the history and culture of the commonwealth. Some essays are thematic, covering topics such as archaeology, oral history, and folklore; others are chronological in scope. Numerous illustrations enhance the narrative.

The Pirates Reader
This volume—a tribute to the Pittsburgh Pirates franchise and its fans nationwide—uses the writings of journalists, sportswriters, and ex-ballplayers to provide an exciting account of one of baseball’s most beloved teams. Historic and contemporary photographs of prominent players help to bring these stories to life.

To Battle for God and the Right: The Civil War Letterbooks of Emerson Opdyke
Edited by Glenn V. Longacre and John E. Haas. (Champaign, Ill.: University of Illinois Press, 2003). Illustrations, index, 332 pp., $34.95 hardcover
Collection of letters written by northeastern Ohio (Trumbull County) native Emerson Opdyke during his service with the 41st Ohio Infantry and the 125th Ohio Volunteer Infantry. The letters provide a compelling, first-hand account of the horrors of war and the day-to-day life of a typical Civil War soldier.

Wilmerding and the Westinghouse Air Brake Company
This photographic history commendably illustrates the life and times of air brake inventor George Westinghouse and the growth and development of Wilmerding, the industrial community that he founded in 1890. Nearly 200 vintage photographs capture many aspects of life in the southwestern Pennsylvania industrial town and headquarters of Westinghouse Corporation.

Richard David Wissolik, general editor. (Latrobe: Saint Vincent College Center for Northern Appalachian Studies, 2001). 225 pp., 390 illustrations, bibliography, index, $35 hardcover
Available from Saint Vincent College, Northern Appalachian Studies, 300 Fraser Purchase Road, Latrobe PA 15650 (add $2.10 tax) or http://facweb.stvincent.edu/academics/english/faculty/wissolik/airport.htm
Reviewed by Bob Downs

A Place in the Sky is a book that should be on every pilot’s bookshelf and in every historian’s library. It is a storehouse of information that, if not collected now, would have been lost forever as the witnesses to so many of the events are now regularly passing away. The jacket of the book is a panorama of color graphics that only hints at the wonderful stories of local early aviation and personalities to be found within. It is a tribute to those pioneers, and it serves as an inspiration for the rest of us.

A Place in the Sky started out as a history of the airport at Latrobe (now named Arnold Palmer Regional Airport but starting as Longview Flying Field and evolving through Latrobe Airport and Westmoreland County Regional Airport). However, it soon expanded to include other regional highlights such as The Saint Vincent College Aviation Field and the neighboring airports at Greensburg, Carbon Hill, New Alexandria, Bettis, Harrison City, and Rostraver.

It tells of the world’s first aeronautical school at Saint Vincent, the founding of the OX-5 Pioneers of America Club (now a national organization), and the first scheduled airmail pickup on May 12, 1939. All of this happened at Latrobe, hometown to golfer-pilot Arnold Palmer, hence the airport’s new name. (Arnie was even there to see that groundbreaking airmail pickup in 1939.)

There are stories of the beginning of the early airlines and their evolution: from Clifford Ball Airlines (Pittsburgh’s first airmail airline) through Pennsylvania Airlines, Pennsylvania-Central Airlines, and Capital Airlines, eventually becoming United Airlines, and the trail through All American Aviation, Allegheny Airlines, and USAir to US Airways.

Biographies of local pioneering aviators include Charlie Carroll, founder of the airport and a catalyst for many exciting aviation developments; George Allen, the first black commercial pilot in Pennsylvania and the chief instructor at Latrobe Airport in the 1940s; Lloyd Santmyer, who did development work on today’s Instrument Landing System (ILS) by flying at nearby Allegheny County Airport; Dr. Lytle Adams, inventor of the airmail pickup, who hailed from nearby Jeannette. Clifford Ball, who started the first airmail airline in Pittsburgh; Pittsburgh TV personality and air show announcer Don Riggs; and Cole Palen, founder of Old Rheinbeck Aerodrome. These are among the many, many personalities covered in the book.

First-person stories of the early days of the airport fill a whole section of the book and add a personal element. The major air shows at the airport, where the Thunderbirds, Blue Angels, and Snowbirds performed, are also described.

Financial support for this publication was provided by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, the R. K. Mellon Family Foundation, and the Westmoreland County Airport Authority. A Place in the Sky is a book that locals will find filled with recognizable names and places, and that others will find filled with pioneers of today’s aviation industry.

Bob Downs is President of the Aero Club of Pittsburgh. He has a BSME from Carnegie Mellon University and is a retired engineer. He has been a pilot for more than 25 years, is an airplane owner, and was named Flight Instructor of the Year 1999 for the FAA’s Allegheny Flight Standards District Office.

Malice Toward None: Remembering Pittsburgh Mayor Joe Barr
Reviewed by David W. Craig

Malice Toward None reports the intriguing events of Joseph M. Barr’s terms as mayor of Pittsburgh during the 1960s. Using inside facts gathered from many witnesses, newsmen McCarthy, a nephew of Mayor Barr, provides the reader with a useful bonus – an understanding of the role of skilled
and honest "politics" in producing good government. We learn that Joe Barr, a Pennsylvania state senator and state Democratic party chairman before his turn as mayor, produced good results for the people because he wasted no time on antagonism. The book opens with State Senator Joe Barr's response to his sister when she wondered why he supported a former governor who had differed with him. "I can't bear malice," he said.

Beginning with the 1960s war on poverty, McCarthy's book chronicles how Barr, a sound executive as well as a party leader, produced a Community Action Program that benefited needy families without political favoritism. Barr's pragmatic management was wise, according to Aldo Colautti, the mayor's longtime executive secretary. (Colautti later worked at the Ford Foundation, and served as Allegheny County's director of administration, the Pittsburgh School District's business manager, Pennsylvania's secretary of public welfare, and consultant to the Pennsylvania Supreme Court.) Colautti noted that Pittsburgh, in Barr's years, received more federal anti-poverty funds per capita than any other city. The late Byrd Brown, a NAACP leader, remembered that a telephone call from Mayor Barr to Vice President Hubert Humphrey eliminated unproductive federal auditor demands upon the city's poverty program. Mayor Barr's friendship with President Johnson and with Pittsburgh area congress members also helped greatly.

Before the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King in 1968, Pittsburgh was the only major northeastern city that had not faced a "sea of civil unrest," the book notes. In 1967, Joe Barr, as president of the Conference of Mayors, had convened big-city mayors and civic leaders to form the National Urban Coalition to deal with urban unrest. Mayor Barr also supported his police superintendent and safety director in the adoption of specific firearms control rules for the police. After the nation-shaking assassination of Dr. King, Pittsburgh had relatively peaceful days until the following Sunday, when some looting and fires beset the city's mostly black Hill District. The mayor called for National Guard assistance as a precaution, but his police kept the peace with no breach of their firearms rules.

McCarty's account also details how Mayor Barr's avoidance of antagonisms fostered the upgrading of the fire bureau as well as the police. When firefighter union members picketed city hall, the mayor responded without resentment to produce a collective bargaining agreement with the firefighters' union. With the firefighters' advice, he also helped improve their equipment and training.

Barr's reaction to police problems is also portrayed as productive. An investigation of payoffs to police by the illegal (but non-violent) "numbers" lottery operators had resulted in the firing of a popular assistant police superintendent. Noting the too-low pay scale for the police, the mayor subjected his department to scrutiny by the International Association of Chiefs of Police. The result was improvement in police services as well as improvements to their salaries and benefits.

Using extensive interviews of public officials and citizens, author McCarthy also details the Barr administration's role in matters such as urban renewal, resulting not only in Three Rivers Stadium and the Civic Arena, but also housing improvements for low-income families, and not just for those qualifying for public housing. The book's reporting of the inside stories of Barr's Democratic party provides insight for readers without political experience, who may be inclined to see each of the two major parties as a solid alliance of like-thinking members.

In Joe Barr's real political world, however, there were internal party clashes and power struggles. Indeed, the book points to another set of circumstances which disprove the illusion of party harmony. When Barr chose not to seek reelection as mayor in 1969, his decision may well have been influenced by the tensions he experienced as chairman of his state's delegation at the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago, where there was rioting outside the hall and bitter debate within.

Finally, the book speaks of family support, a real and necessary asset to politicians. With his wife Alice, his daughter Candi Loughney, and his son Joe Jr. at his side until his death in 1982, Joseph Barr always had their love as he faced the stresses of public office.

McCarty's Malice Toward None entertains us with the story of a man and his times. Mayor Barr accomplished the best results by using his political skills productively and keeping himself free of malice toward critics and opponents.

David W. Craig was Pittsburgh's director of public safety during the Barr administration.